

BETTER THAN NEW

CHOOSING TO DO A REFIT OR FULL RESTORATION IS A POPULAR WAY TO OBTAIN THE YACHT OF YOUR DREAMS.

By Glen Watson





Alucia

WHEN PRINCESS YACHTS was looking for a way to celebrate the British builder's 50th anniversary, it was decided that restoring one of the yard's first yachts was the way to go and Project 31@50 was born.

It was a restoration of the original Project 31 cruiser, the first model built by Princess Yachts International, and the end result has wowed visitors at boat shows in Cannes, London and Singapore.

Blending the new with the old, the Project 31@50 team replaced the well-trodden wooden cockpit floor with a state-of-the-art resin-infused fibreglass structure. Developed for application in the aerospace industry, resin-infusion brings the combined benefits of increased stiffness and significantly lighter weight, as well as consistent material integrity and quality, when compared to traditional hand laid glass fibre.

Resin-infusion techniques have been adopted throughout the Princess product range, which today spans 39ft to 132ft luxury yachts.

The project also demonstrates how Princess combines technology with traditional craftsmanship to create some of the finest yacht interiors in the world. Timber parts being renewed on Project 31@50 have been modelled using Computer Aided Design (CAD) software then precision cut on one of the company's Computer Numerical Control (CNC) machines ready for assembly by a skilled carpenter.

Princess Yachts' special in-house Kit Parts department is home to over 250 highly skilled professionals, machining and handcrafting parts for smaller sports yachts to the flagship



Enigma XK



Princess 40M tri-deck superyachts.

Another way to refit a yacht is to take one kind of vessel and turn it into another, such as a military boat into a sea-going luxury yacht.

Enigma XK

The 71.4m M/Y *Enigma XK* conversion project completed at Atlantic Refit Centre in La Rochelle, France, has given Philippe Briand's Vitruvius Yachts an opportunity to showcase the design company's skills when it comes to a challenging-yet-rewarding interior project.

The ex-military vessel, previously named *Norna*, was built in 1988 by Richards Shipbuilders as a fishery patrol vessel for use in the North Sea. As such, its naval architecture called for a very robust hull that was able to withstand extreme sea conditions.

The Owner bought the vessel because he had a vision to convert this once stark and functional ship into a timeless expedition superyacht, equally matched in comfort and robustness, that was capable of tackling all manner of sea conditions, with a very large range provided by the 230m³ (230,000 litre) fuel tanks.

Enigma XK is now a powerful, well-built vessel, fitted with two 3,000hp engines powering her up to a speed of 18 knots. The full tank capacity provides an impressive range of 12,000 nm at cruising speed (11 knots).

Alucia

Auckland-based refit specialist Diverse Projects was selected to undertake the third consecutive refit of the 56m research and exploration vessel *Alucia*.

"It was a special brief for Diverse Projects on several levels" says Diverse Projects Director Lars Bjorklund. "As an Auckland-based



The project is a first for the company that has previously used its own experts for all installations, no matter where the yacht was lying. However with this latest project, IMED worked with onsite project managers and installers to deliver a seamless helm installation process. Cosmetically appealing, waterproof and backlit for night vision, these slickly branded new panels boast state-of-the-art controls, sticks and an integrated air horn control. The attention to detail in the work is evident in the overall aesthetic of the panels, through to the ability to select any colour of back lighting the operator chooses.

A Dubois design built in 2002, this modern classic yacht has a rigorous charter schedule that demands consistent high performance from all components on board. IMED's well-designed helms come with a small panel of spares that allow the on-board engineer to change any parts necessary while on the go.

IMED is unique in that it is not only creating new and effective solutions to functionality and waterproofing, but is also producing some of the most elegantly designed and aesthetically appealing work on the market.



company, we are tremendously proud to see a vessel we have so much history with, return to us for refit. The uniqueness of this vessel was built to broaden our scientific understanding of the ocean and illuminate its myriad natural wonders."

Alucia's refit commenced in San Francisco in December 2015 shortly after filming for the three-part BBC series Great Barrier Reef with David Attenborough was completed.

Diverse was appointed for its expertise in complex refits with demanding timeframes, and relocated to base San Francisco for the duration of the refit. The project began before Christmas 2015 as winter set in, and was completed at the beginning of March.

The rigorous refit included interior works, engine and machinery services and an entire hull paint job. The refit also included upgrades to multiple systems from the bridge through all areas of the vessel were undertaken, and *Alucia's* five-year regulatory needs were also completed.

Submarines play a huge role in the extent of exploration *Alucia* is able to undertake, and the refit project also included the rebuild of several submarines utilised in the vessel's iconic expeditions, which were being tested in Mexico.

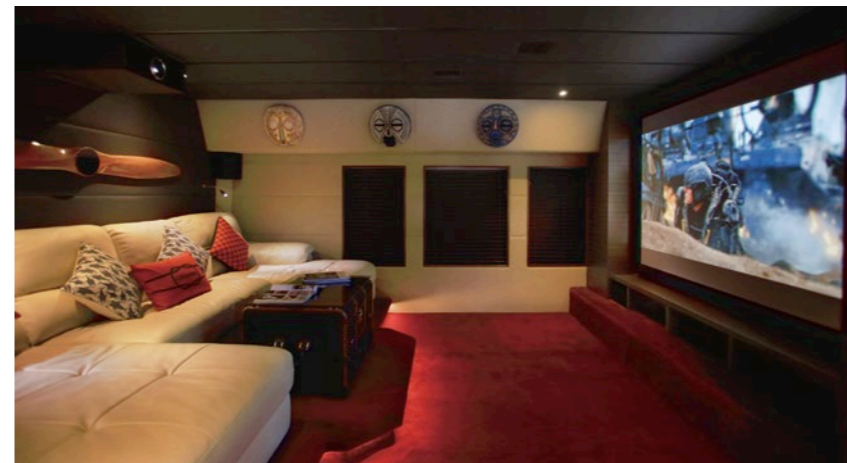
The project management team kept to an exacting delivery schedule, and the three-month refit saw the explorer yacht launch at the end of February and depart mid-March.

The refit is the third undertaken by Diverse Project on *Alucia*. She underwent an extensive upgrade in 2014 to stay in survey for her multi-faceted operational requirements. The work, carried out over 12 months, saw a radically refreshed yacht leave the yard.

The refit was carried out at Bay Ship & Yacht Alameda, with a Synchrolift capable of hauling out vessels out to 1,200 tonnes and up to 62 metres, and dry dock lift capacity up to 3000 tonnes.

Electronic Upgrades

Custom helm builder IMED recently supplied four new helm panels on a 45-metre charter yacht in the Mediterranean from its base in Auckland.



Stabilisation

There might not be a pill that really cures seasickness, but a Seakeeper gyro stabiliser might be the next best thing. Nicknamed the "wifekeeper", these stabilisers have proven they can reduce roll and boat motion by more than 90 percent.

Available on many new builds, Seakeeper gyros can also be included as part of a refit package. In fact, Seakeeper says 25% of installations are refits.

Two of Seakeeper's partners in Asia are working on some gyro installations. Brett Engineering in Hong Kong is installing a Seakeeper 5 on a Princess 43. The unit is being installed in the lazarette.

Meanwhile, Marina Yacht Services in Singapore recently completed the installation of a Seakeeper 5 on a Fountain 48 Express Cruiser.

Seakeepers can be installed anywhere in the aft section of the boat. They do not need to be installed on the centre line.

Appearance

Other reasons for a refit have to do with looks, as well as safety. SeaTrek's Indonesian phinisi *Ombak Putih* and *Katherina* recently underwent refits.

"The reason for doing the back end of *Ombak Putih* was to give her more traditional lines, increase safety in following seas and give guests 360 access to the boat as well as a place to try their luck at ocean fishing," says SeaTrek Operations Manager and Boat Architect Frank Hyde.

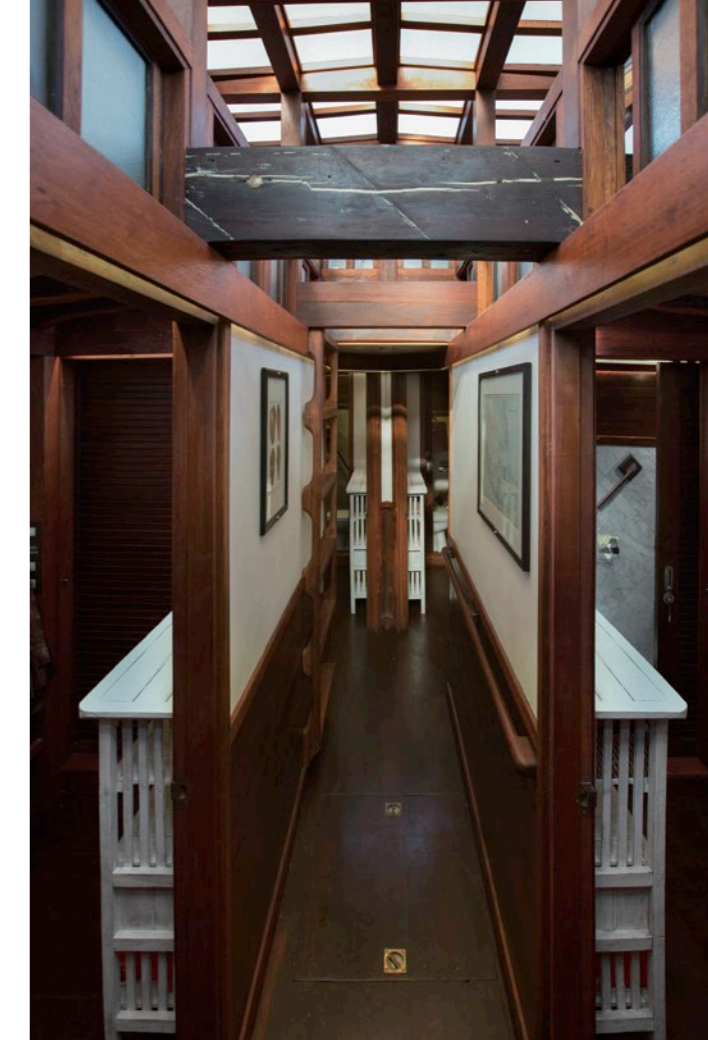
"Future upgrades are adding more crafted lounging areas to upper deck rear lounge area. Sailing rig enhancements for improved light air sailing.

"The tail end refit in many ways was more demanding than the *Katherina* one and certainly used more traditional boat-building skills.





Katharina



The tail end work was pretty out of the norm in terms of the way they were building with fire and roots while hanging in the air. The hull planking was delivered by canoe, cut with chain saws, bent with fire and placed with love.

"Then her curvaceous stern was achieved by sculpting frames and planks from curvy tree roots so that the grain of the wood follows the curve of the boat so she has a firm and strong rear end.

"We hope to continuously upgrade our boats by blending the classic building practices of the past with the latest materials and technologies. Our goal is to keep the traditional boat building skills of the past alive and give our guests a comfortable view of the past.

"Year after year we aim to add that little bit more that gives our guests a glimpse of the wonder of Indonesia's traditions while experiencing the incredible biodiversity of the area's islands and seas.

"We also strive to put our guests in touch with the boat building traditions of Indonesia by using the traditional Bugis boatbuilders to craft our cabins and sailing rigs. Guests not only get to see, but can touch and feel the quality of time honoured techniques of fine woodworking in all of our cabins and sailing rigging."

Yacht Solutions

The busy shipwright team at Yacht Solutions in Thailand have re-designed and are currently undertaking the full interior rebuild on 23m *Savan*, as well as taking the time to assist visiting superyachts on crucial emergency repairs and carpentry works, including M/Y *Sapphire*, M/Y *Big Fish* and M/Y *La Familia*.

"Our painting and finishing team has completed the total respray of superstructure and non-skid deck on 37m SY *Bliss*," says Managing Director Gareth Twist. "Yacht Solutions has become the service centre for many international brands including Yamaha and Fischer Panda, and brought new services to Thailand such as Miele and Clearvac Group, allowing for the first time qualified technical assistance within the Andaman region." Yacht Solutions recently picked up the Asia Boating Award for Best Asian Yacht Refit for the 208ft expedition vessel *SuRi*. The western-managed team of up to 100 Thai technicians completed both exterior and interior works over a three-month period at Bangkok Dock's dry dock, located in the heart of the capital on the Chao Phraya River.

HYS and Cklass

Another nominee for Best Asian Refit was *Cklass*, a 45.4m former Japanese research vessel that was turned into a luxury yacht by HYS Yachts Philippines. The *Cklass* project includes a private owner's penthouse suite, crow's nest and Jacuzzi, a heli-deck (which doubles as an outdoor entertainment platform), four guest cabins, a tender deck complete with twin 6.5m tenders launched by dual beam-lifts, a four-deck guest elevator, zero-speed stabilisers, bow and stern thrusters, and

a 10,000nm range. A veteran of 14 major conversion projects and scores of refit contracts, HYS has significantly changed the game with the "Highbred" *Cklass* project.

"*Cklass* is as close as you can get to a new build... without the price tag," says HYS President Mark Prangnell. "What's important to note about this project is that this isn't a mere conversion as the yachting industry commonly understands the term; this project is more accurately described as a 'Highbred' yacht.

"Our Highbred construction model... which we initiated with *Cklass* is much more efficient to build while affording the owner greater leeway in customising the internal/external arrangement to their satisfaction."

"A typical yacht conversion," explains HYS Naval Architect Simon Jupe, "essentially involves physically altering existing spaces within a vessel. Using a 'Highbred' project workflow, the only items we retain



from the original vessel is the meticulously maintained Japanese Government hull and prime mover systems. Everything else – from deckhouse construction to exterior and interior fit-out to hotel services and all supporting equipment – is all brand new and as per the Owner's requirement."

The Owner of *Cklass* was so thrilled with the outcome of his shiny new 45m that he decided immediately to order an 80m from HYS.

ICOMIA Refit Group

The International Council of Marine Industry Associations' (ICOMIA) Superyacht Refit Group represents quality refit, repair and maintenance yards. Working towards maintaining and improving global superyacht quality, the Refit Group follows professional working standards and specified environmental practices. ICOMIA Superyacht Refit Group members conform to a unique Code of Practice, which brings certainty to refit and eases the owner's concerns on how their yacht's refit will be managed and the quality that will be achieved. In addition, Refit Group members offer their clients a standard framework contract developed by prominent international marine lawyers.

ICOMIA Superyacht Refit Group members consist of Amico & Co, Astilleros de Mallorca, Blohm + Voss, Compositeworks, Huisfit (Royal Huisman), Marina Barcelona 92, Monaco Marine, NCP-Repair Shipyard, Nobiskrug GmbH, Pendennis, Pinmar and Lusben.

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