

WHEN THE OWNERS OF TWIZZLE INVITED ME TO A MEETING IN HOLLAND, I HADN'T ENVISAGED THAT I WOULD BE PART OF A DISCUSSION ABOUT THE ONGOING DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR 189FT SAILING YACHT, AND I HAD NO IDEA THAT THEY WOULD LET ME LITERALLY CRAWL ALL OVER THEIR YACHT TO GET AN EXCLUSIVE INSIGHT INTO HER DNA.

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY RAY MAIN / BUGSY GEDLEK

*The owners are no strangers* to yachts, having started out on the water in a 34ft Sunseeker, progressing through a series of ever-larger power boats and then, to *Andromeda La Dea*, the 154ft Perini Navi built by Tom Perkins. When the urge to travel further afield kicked in, they decided that a sailing yacht wouldn't make the best mode of transport as motoring would probably take precedence over sail, and a fixed keel would hinder reaching secluded anchorages. So, they changed tack, designed and built the 182ft Feadship motor yacht *Twizzle*, named after one of their children's favorite puppet characters. With many happy nautical miles and memories under the keel, one day they pulled into an anchorage and were struck with "mast envy"—and that sowed the seed for the design of *Twizzle*, the sailing yacht.

Reassembling many of their former design team, discussions and visits to yards worldwide began. The owners' brief for a fast, comfortable, go-anywhere sailing yacht with capabilities for shoal draft and all the finest accoutrements from their motor yacht were the rudiments of the wish list. The yacht had to look unique—streamlined, sexy, purposeful, and above all, work in all climates.

# TWIZZLE



They also requested a low superstructure, placement of tenders under deck, a boarding ladder and passerelle that work in all conditions, and a beach deck to swim off of and arrive at by tender.

The next chapter emphasized the need for gracious living, large crew quarters, a galley for all the chef's needs plus lots of stowage, spacious and luxurious cabins, several relaxation areas, an integrated bridge with all the latest programming and controls, an engine room that was easy to maintain and plenty of systems redundancy. Most importantly, they requested an interior volume below 500GT so they didn't have to go into complicated regulatory issues associated with large ships. A list like this would probably make most builders want to walk the plank. And by the way, there is no such word as "no" in the vocabulary of these owners.

Looking at the custom engineering required for this yacht, it

seemed there were a handful of yards around the world that could deliver, but only one that the owners felt could realistically build their "dream home" on the sea, be close enough for them to visit on a regular basis, and treat large or small details equally as priority items. The yard deemed to have the pedigree to deliver this kind of custom detailing, albeit at a price, was Royal Huisman in Holland. It was a real coup for Huisman as this is its first open flybridge sailing yacht.

I knew from the moment the profile drawing was revealed that this was not only going to be an exciting experience, but also a great insight into how dedicated and knowledgeable owners propel themselves wholeheartedly into the processes leaving no stone unturned. With 20 people around the boardroom table, discussions for any of 46 other meetings like this began. Our two-day itinerary midway in the build outlined the work: lighting issues, the tint for the windows,

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*this page*  
Pick your spot!  
Twizzle has the perfect place, day or night, at sea or at anchor. The beach deck and owners' cockpit can both be shaded.



*these pages*  
 In warm beige tones, the master suite is an inviting retreat. The observation deck lounge transforms from a daytime relaxation spot to an evening dining venue.

the two bridges, a guest cabin mock up, and how to overcome a problem for cold storage off the galley. Representatives from all sectors involved in the build—the yard, the captain, first officer, Dubois Naval Architects for the naval architecture and keel, Redman Whiteley Dixon for the outside styling and interior layout, Todhunter Earle for the interior styling, lighting consultant Sally Storey, Arjo Spans from Royal Huisman Shipyard, and the owners' project manager Steve Jacover—had notebooks at the ready.

The owners' goals that day split in two directions: his, the bridge consoles; hers, the crew cabins, reuniting for the lighting and mock-up discussions. As the teams' missions cracked on at pace it became evident how much time and detail was threaded through the yacht by the Huisman team who were kept on their toes by the owners who researched absolutely everything and, when it didn't exist, it had to be drawn up and executed.

At the shipyard's in-house furniture facility, the whole yacht was mocked up to make sure everything fit exactly. On this day, we looked at a 1:1 mock-up of a guest cabin complete with door, bed frames, window recess alcoves dressed with suede-covered shutters and blackout blinds. Everything is checked from the height of the sill to the mechanics of the blinds and the depth of the mattress on the bed. Changes are made to the color of the door handles, the length of stitching on the leather. Sally tries three different light effects, gets it right, but then there is a heat problem, so it's back to the drawing board.

In a newly constructed technical laboratory, all the bridge equipment, satcoms, instruments, and monitors are tried and tested. The tint on the one-way glass is a concern for the owners, and the next meeting is with German company Yachtglass, which shows sample tints for windows, but nothing works: The sky either looks grey or too blue, and the pieces are rejected. The company agrees to research a new color film.

Later that day, a visit on board shows the yacht has evolved from an aluminum skeleton to a full-fledged beauty. Even when she is teeming with workmen, sample after sample is carried on to the boat by Todhunter Earle's team to check dimensions and cushion fill. One of



With the bridge a half-deck above, the entire area behind the main deck's curved forward windows has been freed for a magnificent theater lounge, easily transformed for casual dining. The views are panoramic and spectacular.



## On the Water



With a top speed of 15.4 knots under motor, *Twizzle* is certainly no slouch—but the essence of a yacht like this is, of course, her sailing performance. On her maiden voyage from The Netherlands to Monaco, she clocked 16.5 knots in 20 knots of breeze (and that was without trying), and since then she has exceeded 18 knots. She has even reached 16 knots fully reefed in 32 knots of wind.

Many large sailing yachts have serious problems getting going in light airs, and one would expect *Twizzle* to be no exception—after all, she displaces 550 tons. However, she carries a total upwind sail area of 21,007sqft (main, genoa, stay sail, and mizzen), and even without the staysail, which can disturb the airflow across the sails in light air, she still boasts 18,978sqft of canvas. The huge mizzen and main were set simultaneously in two minutes almost silently—even on the flybridge I didn't notice it. In close to nine knots of true wind she effortlessly achieved around eight knots at an apparent wind angle of 40 to 50 degrees. Even as the wind died down to nearly five knots she kept a speed of five knots.

*Twizzle* has a neutral buoyancy

centerboard that swings down from a minimum 12ft 6in draft to a maximum of 35ft 5in in one minute even at speed. Some 100 tons of internal ballast is around the keel so stability remains constant. This, and her extensive North Sails wardrobe—including a genoa with a 105ft length (the largest 3DL sail ever)—offers quite a number of options to react to increasing wind strength.

The steering itself is a special pleasure because there is some feedback from the helm thanks to a new fly-by-wire system developed by Royal Huisman. It uses hydraulics and a custom rudder feedback system, which measures the axial forces on the rudder stock and converts them into directional loads on the wheel via an electronic actuator. The hydraulic assistance means the feedback is always under control.

In spite of the distance from the flybridge wheels to the jib luff, the telltales can be seen easily, as can the sailing instruments on the fully sunlight-readable screens. Joysticks integrated into the glass bridge allow the helmsman to trim all sails via 19 captive winches. Indeed, *Twizzle* could even be sailed singlehanded.

—JOCHEN HALBE

the major late changes on deck was the decision to add a sunken cockpit: no frills, no tables, just a lovely place to sit with a hidden Bimini for overhead protection, reading lights, an iPod station, and an entrance to the owners' areas. As I stood on deck with the owner's wife, she turned to me looking quite concerned and asked in all seriousness, "Do you think people will get it?"

After four-and-a-half years in the making, seeing *Twizzle* anchored off Monaco was an emotional experience. Her deep navy hull and prominent style lines gleaming in the sunlight show she is stunningly elegant and purposeful, and her two Southern Spars masts dress the yacht's proportions perfectly.

Stepping on to the main deck brings a vista worth waiting for: the openness and space is simply stunning. The areas aren't staged, they flow freely—it is difficult to work out where the exterior ends and the interior begins, just as it should be. "Getting it to look simple and clean is very difficult," said Justin Redman of Redman Whiteley Dixon (RWD). There isn't a captive winch or a cowl to spoil the lines, instead cross planking is used on the aft deck, flybridge, and interior, with fore and aft wide planking of uninterrupted teak and pale grey caulking stretching as far as the eye can see, highlighted by myriad tiny lights giving an impression of a river of light. With safety as a priority, high bulwarks more akin to a motor yacht add a feeling of purposefulness and an unvarnished caprail, which thickens to accept the genoa sheet track, is as stylish as the curvaceous Rondal stanchions.

Passing the sunken cockpit, you step down into a huge semi-circular main cockpit, where I know the seating fill is the right consistency because I was there when they tested it! The change to natural oak flooring brings you through a wall of open glass for a seamless entry to the salon. A feeling of calm is immediate with a clever palette of pale colors and textures that you would normally deem too few, against a dark chocolate and black canvas, accessorized with lamps and candles that set the perfect atmosphere. Storage cupboards masquerade as window seats, secured with hidden magnets to stop them moving when under sail, and entice you to sit and take in the ocean views through huge windows.

Unlike other sailing yachts, the interior bridge is on a mezzanine deck away from guest areas. This arrangement caused RWD to squeeze every inch of headroom out of the height to avoid the "block of flats" look. So, what replaces what would have been the pilot-house? Ingeniously, RWD has created a sitting room, filled with natural light and with a complementary palette of sea blues meeting beach pebble colors. Views from here are straight over the foredeck and out to sea through the acres of curved glass. Just one small issue that I noticed was the snug fit for one of the 21ft Castoldi tenders in the carbon fiber-lined bay, which only really comes to light when you see crew legs through the windows as they try to maneuver a tender past the main mast.

The owners have a suite of rooms aft that will certainly be copied on other yachts. Gone is the double cabin with his-and-hers head aft; instead much thought has gone into how they will use this area. Entering from the main guest corridor you come into an oasis of cream, white, and the prettiest palest wash of colors. Nearly all the furniture seamlessly fuses into the side of the yacht and the deep window recesses. I don't think I have seen a better layout: a walk-in dressing room and separate bathroom for her off the bedroom, and in his area aft, a purpose-built shower room and an office with access up to the sunken cockpit. This area can be converted for use as a guest cabin.

The guest cabins are all designed to the same theme: Silks, cashmere, white cotton, and textured fabrics bring delicious, subtle warmth to the rooms with just a dash of bright color for a change in tempo. The shower



rooms are cozy and inviting in identical champagne marble. Each cabin has a docking station for an iPhone and individual iPods and an Apple iTouch to control the audio-visual system and television.

*Twizzle's* interior layout has everything the owners wanted with every inch of spare space used for storage. However, nothing looks shoehorned, in fact, quite the opposite—the whole feel of the yacht's interior is of spaciousness. Moving around the yacht is safe when underway as a great deal of thought has been made to place handrails and handholds in strategic places.

The flybridge is a masterpiece. Removable twin carbon-fiber wheels front a sophisticated helm console where the curved glass covers for the monitors and controls are skillfully designed so that they simply disappear out of view at the touch of a button, revealing a dashboard which is simply a work of art. This is the domain of the captain when racing, but guests will love sitting here day or night. The high-backed seats give shelter from the wind to the cozy seating area behind where teak built-ins hide a barbecue, fridge, and cool box. One item that you will not find

up here, or anywhere on the boat, is a spa pool, simply because the owners feel you are on the biggest swimming pool you could ever wish for, so why bother?

I could natter on about synergy, symmetry, and all that stuff, but I am not going to. The fact is that this yacht simply ticks all the boxes; I can't find anything that wouldn't work. Royal Huisman and its sister company, Rondal, should be very proud of what their teams have achieved. This yacht is a superb example of 21<sup>st</sup> century living. Those lucky few allowed to charter her are in for a real treat before the family whisks her off to far-flung places, with the Caribbean Super-yacht Regatta and Rendezvous in the B.V.I. this March in their sights for her first races.

Do I think people will get it? Oh yes, they will. ■

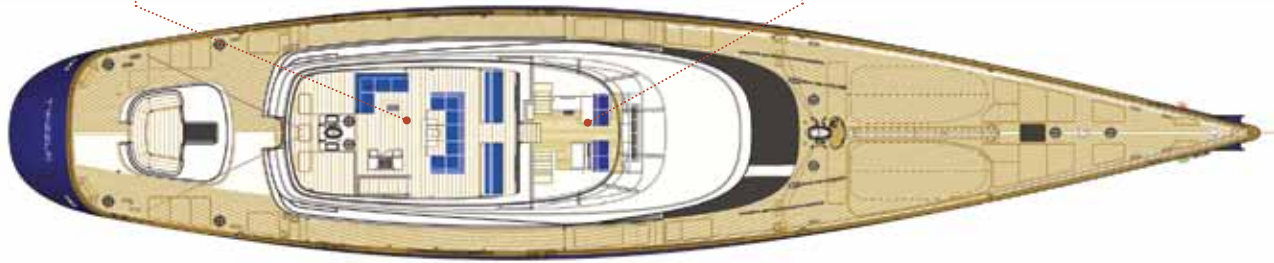
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With the high-backed helm seat providing shelter, the guest area is given a motor yacht flybridge



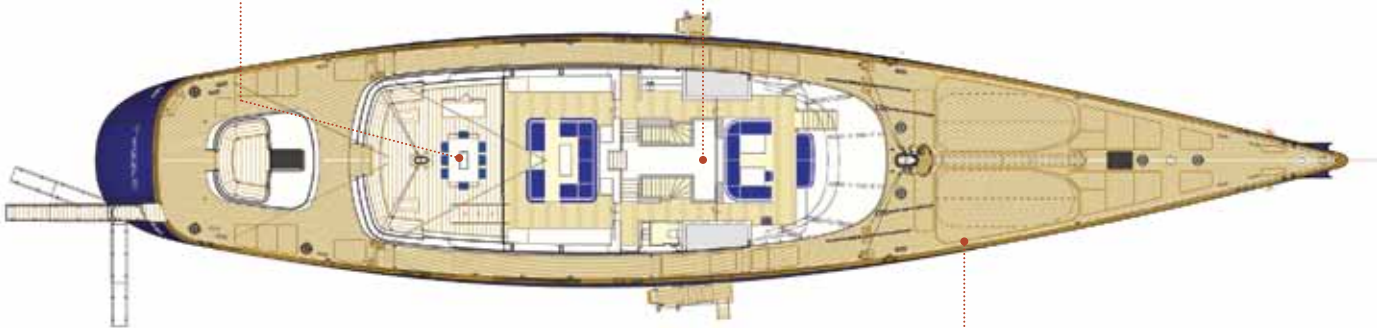
**FLYBRIDGE:** A recessed seating area includes a barbecue grill and expanding table for impromptu dining.

**EXTERIOR HELM:** Electronic actuators provide rudder feedback to the twin carbon wheels.



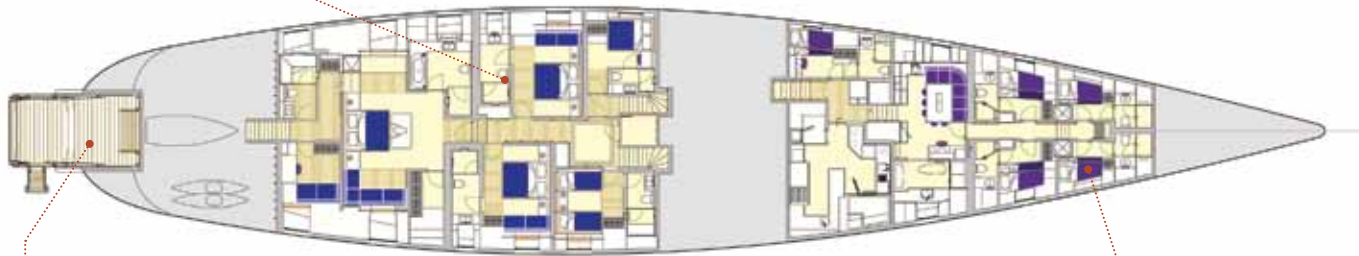
**AFT DECK LOUNGE:** The flybridge overhang shades the informal lounge and dining area providing privacy and protection.

**WHEELHOUSE:** Nav and com electronics by Radio Holland and Marine Technologies feature an integrated bridge and dynamic positioning.



**ACCOMMODATIONS:** Delightfully asymmetrical, the owner and guest accommodation are finished in light oak.

**TENDER STOWAGE:** Carbon-fiber hatches covered with blind teak scarf joints completely hide the tenders below deck.



**STERN PLATFORM:** For boarding and swimming, the hingeless platform can be positioned at various levels to account for various sea states.

**CREW QUARTERS:** Five en suite cabins house the crew. The galley, chiller room, and dry stores are a few steps up and aft.

LOA: 188FT 8IN (57.5M)  
 LWL: 160FT 5IN (48.9M)  
 BEAM: 38FT (11.6M)  
 DRAFT (BOARD DOWN):  
 35FT 5IN (10.8M)  
 TONNAGE: 496GT  
 ENGINES: CATERPILLAR C32  
 ACERT, B-RATING, 970 KW  
 @2100 RPM  
 SPEED (MAX/CRUISE):  
 17 KNOTS  
 RANGE: 4,000NM @ 12 KNOTS

GENERATORS: 3 X NORTHERN  
 LIGHTS, M1066H, 155KW  
 FUEL CAPACITY: 11,663 GALS.  
 SAILS: NORTH SAILS 3DL  
 RIGGING: SOUTHERN SPARS  
 RIGGING EC 6+ ROPES AND  
 GLEISTEIN, SPECTRA  
 OWNER AND GUESTS: 8  
 CREW: 10  
 CLASSIFICATION: MCA LY-2  
 AND LLOYD'S 100A1, SSC,  
 YACHT, MONO, G6, LMC, UMS

NAVAL ARCHITECTURE:  
 DUBOIS NAVAL ARCHITECTS  
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 DIXON  
 INTERIOR DÉCOR: TODHUNTER  
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