

Canova

She burst onto the scene in 2019 as the latest next-generation, super-eco sailing yacht, and ever since, the 43m Baltic-build *Canova* has proven her worth. Here, Laura Nicholls learns how the owner made it all happen

In an honest Milan-to-Amsterdam Zoom call, the owner of *Canova* explains that the brief for the custom-made sailing yacht wasn't exactly the *War and Peace* of proposals. Instead, it was quite simple: the passionate owner created smart solutions for the issues he had encountered on many of his previous yachts.

Having retired from his banking career, the owner invested his time into creating *Canova*. "After I sold my previous yacht in 2015, I started thinking: 'I have no more responsibilities in running a business, I'm quite free.'" This newfound space and time was put to good use. He reflected on the build-process of his previous and fourth 35.78-metre Baltic yacht, realised his regrets in "delegating too much," and decided to hit the ground running with his vision for a next-generation 43.3-metre Baltic 142 project.

Together with his right-hand-man, qualified engineer and project manager turned captain, Mattia Belleri, the owner was able to have his ideas and "stupid questions" translated into technical possibilities. The pair have spoken everyday for the last 4.5 years, planning and plotting the priorities for *Canova's* three-year build.

Ease of maintenance was of utmost importance for him, which he figured would be catered for if the yacht could sit on her keel to be tended to on land. "Impossible," he was told initially, but the result speaks for itself. "We found a way for *Canova* to be able to retract her keel, meaning that I don't require a maintenance yard with cradles. Of course, if I need to stay three months out of the water it is better with cradles, but for a small intervention I can have the work done with a slipway. This gives me a whole new level of freedom and lowers my costs – I can go into a fishing harbour if I need to." Although this is a clear success, what has been "disappointing" to the owner is the fact that a custom build requires custom parts which can take some time to become available. His solution? "Just have enough spare parts and have the setup to be able to intervene easily, and then it can work better," he explains with a smile.

Next on the list was comfort. The joy of sailing for *Canova's* owner is found in spending up to eight months a year on board. "It's more my house than my boat. A lot of people tell me that it is empty because it is not full of furniture. But for me, space is luxury and everything there has a purpose. This purpose is our quality of life." With the interiors decorated with smooth materials, white bulkhead panelling, teak veneers and hidden technical tricks, it is clear that quality isn't something the owner shied away from – and for good reason. "My wife suffers from sea sickness so we have our cabin amidship with a bed that can adjust up to a 12-degree heeling angle." This untraditional positioning of the central master suite required a rethink of the design, and the owner soon opted for pushing the dinette upstairs and

upgrading to 43.3 metres of length "to make the lines and layout more harmonious."

Then there's the yacht's much-discussed capability to run with zero emissions in the right conditions. "To have an electrically-driven pod we had to consider the yacht's weight and how we could use the blades to help the propeller function as a generator. We found that we could achieve complete autonomy with our 420kw electric engine to regenerate up to 90% of the energy needed for consumption, and it comes with a big enough propeller to power the boat. If we are running at half-load, we might be able to be autonomous during a cross-Atlantic trip – but only if there is enough wind!"

He continues: "On my previous yacht, I had two small generators with 2kw battery banks that had to be running 95% of the time. *Canova's* configuration means that we only have to run the generator for four hours a day giving us a silent boat. It is so quiet that I could put my cabin next to the engine room."

The owner is confident that he "does his bit" to care for the planet, by consciously opting for "smart living choices," regardless of the return on investment. "My house in Italy is fitted with a rain harvesting system that helps to generate electricity. I know I will never recover my initial investment, but I did it to be environmentally friendly, to have a clever house and to preserve its value. The same goes for *Canova*. She will maintain her value because the design is timeless, not because of the technology on board. What might be futuristic today won't be in five years' time, but I believe that we are in a good position to follow the market because we already have the architecture and systems in place that allow for future improvement. We had all of this in mind right from the beginning."

With this carefully-considered infrastructure already over a year old, you might assume that all of *Canova's* tricks and traits would be well-documented by now. But there is so much more to come from this blue-water heroine – how will she be adapted to house new technology in the future? Will she really make it around the world? To what extent will she cruise autonomously? All questions which will undoubtedly bring her devoted sailor-owner and crew exciting challenges in the years to come.

CARLO BORLENGHI(3)



THE OWNER REQUESTED A **PROTECTED COCKPIT** TO BE ABLE TO STAY OUTSIDE AND SHELTER FROM THE CHANGING WEATHER.

Crew wellbeing is a key factor for the owner. "They work hard on board and so need their own autonomy and separation from the guests."

HOW TO PUT TOGETHER A CUSTOM BRIEF

ADVICE FROM AN EXPERIENCED OWNER

Ask yourself: 'What do you want to do with this boat?'
.....
Never make any compromises.
.....
Find ways to save time. Are you spending too much time reading?
Try audio books.

Don't build something for all seasons. Riding a storm is unlikely, as now we can predict weather and move yachts via transport.
.....
Build your own boat – not what the designer or project manager wants.

Find people who are ready to listen to you.
.....
Think about how space on board big sailing yachts will change over the next 10 years. We will not need a set position for the engine room. ♦

While under sail, the highly-efficient front-facing propeller acts as a hydro-generator which turns the 420 kWh electric motor, storing energy in the six onboard battery banks.

When cruising through Panama, a mast must be no taller than 62 metres. To fit these requirements, the owner opted for his yacht dimensions to suit the Panama Canal.



INFINITI YACHTS' **INNOVATIVE DSS FOIL SYSTEM** IMPROVES STABILITY AND REDUCES THE YACHT'S HEEL ANGLE WHEN UNDERWAY.



A THREE-CABIN LAYOUT FOR UP TO SIX GUESTS, **INCLUDING A 65-SQUARE-METRE FULL-BEAM MASTER SUITE** AMIDSHIPS THAT IS FINISHED WITH A PRIVATE LOUNGE AND STUDY, A SAUNA AND A HIDDEN TREADMILL.

A carbon rig by Rondal with Carbo-Link standing rigging supports an all-round sail plan. The square-top main is equally powerful with one reef in it, allowing the head of the sail to come in below the top deflector and simplifying gybing and tacking manoeuvres.