



Symphony

*The biggest superyacht ever built in the Netherlands is a masterpiece of detail,
poise and execution. It's a yacht that makes absolutely zero compromises.
Take your seats for the overture...*

Words – Stewart Campbell

Photography – Feadship

cover boat
Symphony



Right: the six metre contraflow pool on the main deck is well screened thanks to the flying buttresses either side. Below: the fully certified helideck is good for a 3,000kg chopper. Below right: light pours through the almost full-height windows into the main saloon. Peter Marino's exotic interior uses roughly 300 finishes, each of which had to be thoroughly fire-tested to meet the demands of the Passenger Yacht Code. Headroom is 2.2m throughout, and 2.3m in the ceiling trays



This had the potential to be a challenging build. A quartet of designers: Tim Heywood for the exterior, François Zuretti for the layout, Feadship De Voogt for the naval architecture and interior styling by avant-garde American designer Peter Marino, working on his first superyacht. A growing platform – from 90, then to 93 and finally 101.5 metres, making it the biggest build ever undertaken at Feadship – and in the Netherlands. Three hundred different interior finishes, all of which had to meet the demands of a rigorous new yacht classification that hadn't even been finalised when steel was first cut, and a pair of flying buttresses added to the rear of the main deck late in the game. Throw in vast 12 metre hatches at water level, an evolving GA, bang-up-to-date AV and you're dealing with a level of complexity rarely seen on a superyacht. But those maestros at Feadship's Royal Van Lent shipyard managed to compose all these details into a soaring 101.5 metre movement. It turns out *Symphony* is well named.

Heywood first put pen to paper in 2009. His brief? To design “a navy blazer and white trousers yacht, timeless and elegant”, he says. The final exterior was settled three years later, in early 2012, while construction was well under way. Running in parallel with the design was the massive learning experience demanded by the new Passenger Yacht Code (PYC). The owner always intended to charter the yacht – to keep boat and crew busy – and wanted *Symphony* to carry more than the 12 guests allowed by the Large Commercial Yacht Code. Enter PYC, introduced in 2010. In a nutshell this new classification allows you to accommodate up to 36 guests on board, without the vessel being deemed a “commercial ship” and subject to all the restrictions therein, including metal staircases, high door sills and a pair of not-so-sexy lifeboats hanging off the sides, all of which *Symphony* has avoided. You don't get it all your own way, however: PYC demands more watertight compartments, vertical escape routes through every one of those compartments, and fire safety taken to extreme levels. Each surface had to be sent away to be blow-torched by experts to test its flammability. It took two years to approve them all.

Building any boat to a standard not yet written is a brave decision. In fact, *Symphony* was the first PYC yacht started anywhere in the world (although Oceanco's 91.5 metre *Equanimity* was delivered before it). “An important consideration in building *Symphony* as the first PYC-compliant Feadship was that, with cabins for 16 guests plus four more for personal staff, she would be essentially unique in the charter market,” says the owners' representative. “The highly successful charter record enjoyed during the first season after she was launched and the nearly 10 weeks of charter already booked for the upcoming summer have proven this approach was well founded.”

And cleverly managed. Only a professional could notice where the PYC has imposed itself. There are seven vertical escape routes on the lower deck and four on the main deck, but nowhere are they obvious. ►



Top: the beach club by day is a restful space, leading on to a big fold-down platform. To see it in "disco mode", turn the page. Note the big glass windows in the overhead, giving a view into the main deck swimming pool.

Top right: the owners' deck features his and her studies – hers is seen here. The whole upper deck is dedicated to the owner, with this just one of five rooms in the impressive suite. Right: the owners' bedroom, with those incredible views forward. Through the forward doors is a private terrace, with spa pool and sunpads.

What you don't see is an electronic passerelle, which deploys from the deck above, offering a route for guests from the helipad to the bridge deck, to avoid them going through the owners' quarters



The B15 fire doors in front of each guest cabin slot secretively away and the impact on other areas is fairly muted: the floor plating in the engine room is stainless steel rather than aluminium, for instance, and the engines and generators are in separate compartments, although Feadship says it would have done this anyway.

The fact that you don't notice any restrictions in the guest areas is a tribute to the shipyard. Feadship could have demanded the designers use lots of stone and metal and other non-flammable materials, to keep the surveyors happy and shorten the build time, but instead it gave Peter Marino free rein to create one of the most detail-rich and elaborate interiors ever seen on a superyacht. "We didn't want to give the interior designer lots of restrictions," says the yard's project manager Jan-Pieter Braam. "We said, 'you do the design, and we'll figure it out.'" The process of "figuring it out" took two whole years. Companies in Belgium and Germany were used to fire-test each surface material. "There was an unprecedented amount of research – even by Feadship standards," says Feadship director Jan-Bart Verkuyl. "All of *Symphony's* base interior is non-combustible and all the special finishes – from plasterwork to lacquer, fabrics to leathers – have been certified low-flame spread, many for the first time." The result of this effort is a truly sensuous, tactile interior; one that reaches out to you. Without thinking, you find yourself running your hands along the walls, and tracing the sublime marquetry in the corridors.

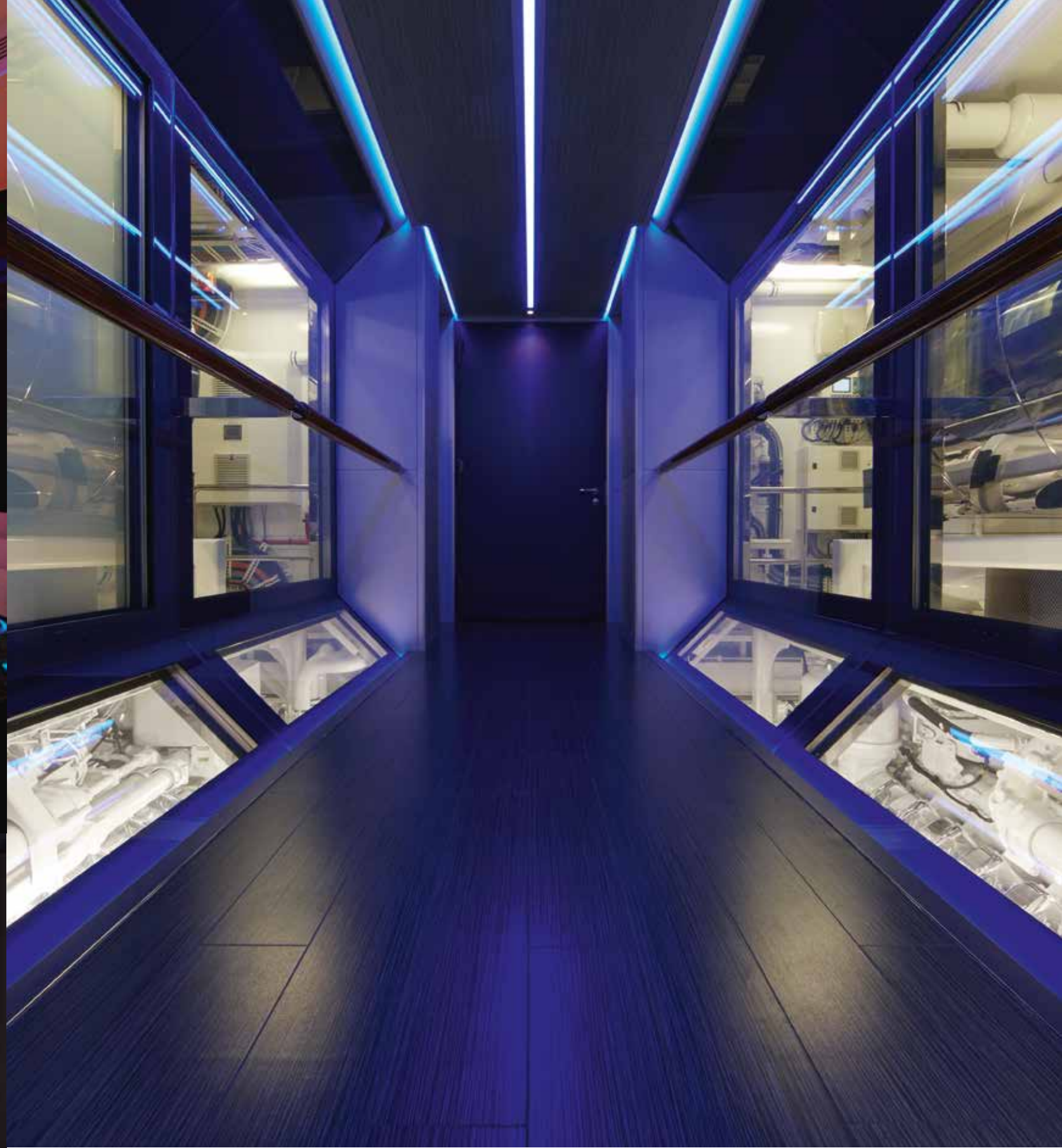
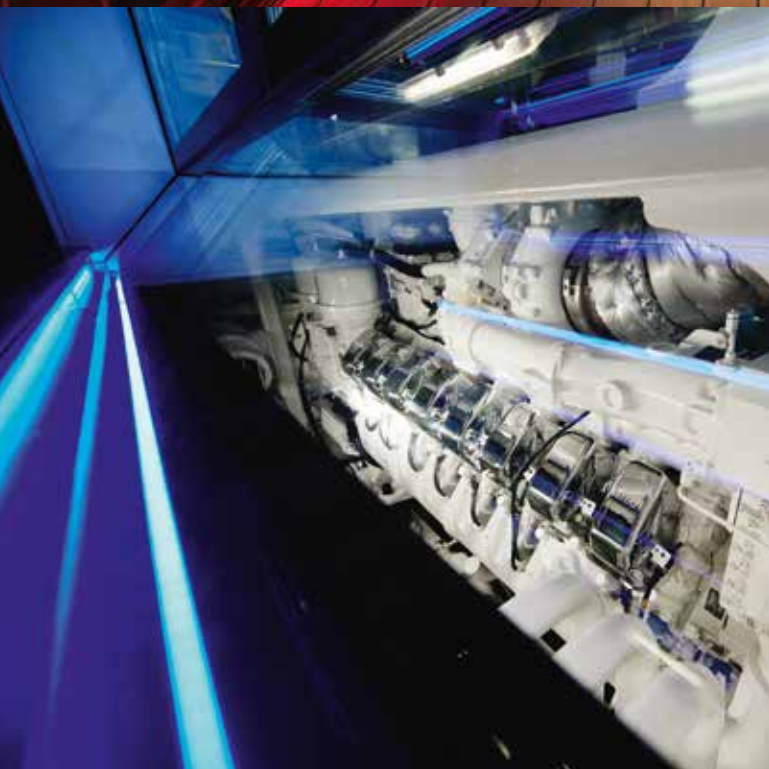
"*Symphony* is a summerhouse on the sea, initially inspired by residences in Bali and Thailand," says Marino, who is best known for his work with luxury powerhouses such as Christian Dior and Louis Vuitton. Also in his portfolio is the Yacht Club Costa Smeralda in Porto Cervo. "Influences from Africa were added in the form

of a breathtaking diversity of textures and artwork. Materials such as bronze, satinwood, palm and banana leaf, as well as bamboo, natural silk, textured leather and rough parquet in large planks blend together to create an exotic, ethnic atmosphere."

Nowhere is this forgotten: even the dayheads leave you agape, each individually finished with no luxury spared. Strangely, the floors and loose furniture are not subject to the same extensive fire-proofing required by PYC, and here Marino went to town with long, luxurious planks of hand-scraped French oak in the living areas that accentuate the natural feeling and invite you to walk bare-footed. "The client insisted on the largest possible windows and lowest possible bulwarks throughout to reinforce *Symphony's* relationship with the water," says Verkuyl. "In the library and dining room, the glass extends from just 20cm off the floor right up to the ceiling, with the result that one is gazing at a full glass wall."

The main deck's living spaces feel vast and open on to a long aft deck and its centrepiece: a six by three metre contraflow infinity pool. Just forward is a comprehensive gym and an intimate lounge that Feadship is calling a "pool saloon". The guest cabins – six double suites and a VIP – occupy the whole front end of this level, with the three forward-most cabins able to be closed off to form a family apartment. The entire upper deck is dedicated to the owner. His and her offices, bathrooms and dressing rooms sit behind a bedroom with sweeping 200-degree views, and access to a private terrace with spa pool and sunpads. All the way aft, meanwhile, is an automatic pop-up golf tee that will prove popular with charter guests.

The views get better with each deck you climb, reaching their peak at the observation lounge on the sundeck. Here, huge glass ►



Top: as the sun sets, the party starts in the beach club. Far right and above: views of the engine room through the big glass walls in the guest corridor leading to the beach club. Right: the wheelhouse offers good visibility and places to relax for guests on passage

The four big MTU engines that can be seen through the glass feed into two shafts, giving a top speed of 22 knots



Symphony is the largest Feadship to date, and also holds the record as the biggest superyacht ever to be built in the Netherlands. A few of her superb details are pictured here, including her

Pascoe tenders, the pop-up golf tee on the owners' deck and the mast, which Tim Heywood says was inspired by a dolphin tail. The owners' terrace features a private spa pool (top middle)

The image shows the interior of a yacht's bridge deck saloon. The space is modern and open, with large glass windows and doors that look out onto the sea. The ceiling is made of wood with recessed lighting. In the foreground, there are two round, low coffee tables with a central hole, one with a dark wood finish and the other with a reddish-brown finish. There are several armchairs and sofas with patterned cushions. In the background, a staircase with a glass railing leads up to the sundeck. The overall atmosphere is bright and airy.

“Symphony is a summerhouse on the sea, initially inspired by residences in Bali and Thailand,” says designer Peter Marino

doors open smoothly to create a single inside/outside space, while on the deck behind is a long teppanyaki bar and what Heywood describes as his “beach”. This is a water feature that runs serenely into a spa pool surrounded by seating and more sunpads. “We considered several options for this area but I thought it would be great to have a waterfall slot at the aft end, with a sloping surface running forward to the jacuzzi,” says Heywood, who designed all the exterior spaces and furniture. “The sand on the sloping surface is captured in clear resin and sculpted into ripples as on a beach. With water flowing across the sand and around the pebbles, the effect is very natural and very restful.”

It’s far from the only surprise on board. When laying out the boat, Zuretti included a glass-walled corridor for guests, running from the lower deck cinema area right through the engine room and into the beach club, giving views of the machinery spaces. It makes a feature of the behind-the-scenes and is coolly lit with blue LEDs. For added interest, a large interactive touchscreen display designed by VBH is set into one of the glass panels and can be manipulated to show speed, rpm, location, build drawings and even the view from underwater cameras. “We had to figure out a way to do it without interfering with the design of the space,” says VBH’s creative manager Casper Kleiman. “The glass walls needed to stay, so we used one of them and doubled it as a screen. By adding privacy foil in the glass, we can switch between transparent and opaque, allowing us to project an image from behind. With an IR touch field just in front of the glass, it effectively becomes interactive.” The four MTUs that can be seen through the glass feed into two shafts, giving a top speed of 22 knots when all are engaged. Even at full revs, this passage can be used by guests, such is the quality of the sound insulation.

“Silence throughout the yacht was a key requirement and Feadship rose to the challenge,” says the owners’ representative. “We laid out the most stringent requirements in terms of noise and vibration attenuation so that all guest spaces are remarkably quiet, even when under way. This required the yard to do an exhaustive amount of engineering and more research and development than it has ever done before on a single project.”

This is most evident in the supremely comfortable lower deck cinema – close the door and the only sound you can hear is yourself breathing. The corridor from here through the engine room will get plenty of use as it gives access to the beautifully finished beach club. When the 9.6 metre Pascoe tender is deployed, and the 12 metre shell door is down to create an extended platform over the sea, this becomes ►



The entire upper deck is dedicated to the owners, whose bedroom has sweeping 200-degree views forward

It's easy to see why Symphony has proved a charter favourite, with massive doors folding down to create water-level platforms. The well-stocked toy box contains two Pascoe RIBs and twin jet skis



The elevator, above and below, is a real highlight, offering two different viewing options: aquarium or outer space. Right: the main stairwell is wrapped in textured marquetry. Far right: the view forward from the main deck library. Below right: the lower deck cinema



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one large water-level saloon filled with loose furniture plucked from storage on the port side, where another door folds up for easy retrieval of toys and two Pascoe RIBs. A further door drops from the transom, adding to the already huge area of water-level deck.

The rearmost space on the lower deck operates as a lounge by day and a nightclub by night. As evening falls, disco balls are installed, extra large speakers slot on to the walls and a DJ booth is rolled in. Drinks come from the bar to starboard and atmosphere is added by glass panels in the ceiling looking up into the six metre infinity pool on the main deck. With such huge shell doors and what is basically an unsupported pool, longitudinal strength became an issue. The yard compensated by adding a lot more steel in this area and using thicker stringers. Despite it being a “huge technical challenge”, Verkuyl calls the beach club area a “highlight”, saying: “It’s nice to remember that our priority for this yacht was providing a beautiful environment for a great deal of fun for all her guests.”

Above, the feeling around that main deck pool has changed considerably since originally conceived by Heywood. Shortly before the keel was laid, the owners chose to extend the superstructure aft, dropping a pair of buttresses from the upper deck to the transom, allowing the main and upper decks to be screened off with retractable

glass so guests can dine or lounge outside out of the wind. “The buttresses sweep up and around the aft of the upper deck in a very sculptural form, which enhances the look of the yacht. They are both aesthetic and functional,” says Heywood.

Aesthetic and functional are two words that describe the yacht’s elevator shaft, one of the *Symphony*’s showpieces, perfectly. Running right from the lower deck to the sundeck, the elevator has been embellished with a video wall running the entire height of the shaft. Not only that, you stand on a screen, too. It has two settings: outer space and aquarium. “The original idea was to have an actual aquarium,” says VBH’s Kleiman. “But it was not feasible as fish get seasick in a space like that. Also, it’s not guaranteed that the fish would populate all levels of such a large tank. So instead we created a virtual aquarium, where we could control what happens.” The wall is made up of 25 screens across five decks, with two more in the floor. As you rise through the yacht, the colour of the water changes and the fish in the floor get more distant, as if heading to the surface. It’s one of the biggest installations VBH has ever done, and the first in an elevator shaft. If switched over to the space theme, a meteor shower is triggered when the system senses movement. It’s a bit of magic that draws you in, like so much on this superyacht – and the best symphonies. ■



Tim Heywood's "beach" on the sundeck, above, where water flows over sand captured in resin into a spa pool. Right: the back of the bridge deck is the place to catch an open-air movie. One deck below, the owners can have breakfast in perfect isolation on their private terrace – and then cool off



Marino had free rein to create one of the most detail-rich and elaborate interiors ever seen on a superyacht



LOA 101.5m	Speed max/cruise 22/16 knots	Fuel capacity 256,559 litres	Owners/guests 16	Naval architecture Feadship De Voogt Naval Architects	Available for select charter e: charter@my-symphony.org
LWL 93m	Range at 16 knots 5,500nm	Freshwater capacity 56,000 litres	Crew 27	Exterior styling Tim Heywood	Builder/year Feadship – Royal Van Lent Shipyard/2015 Haarlem, Netherlands
Beam 14.10m	Generators 2 x MTU 12V2000 M51A; 1 x MTU 12V2000 M41A	Tenders 1 x 9.6m Pascoe tender; 1 x 8.3m Pascoe RIB; 1 x 7.85m Pascoe RIB	Construction Steel hull; aluminium superstructure	Interior design Peter Marino/ François Zuretti	t: +31 23 524 7000 e: info@feadship.nl w: feadship.nl
Draught (full load) 4.10m			Classification *100 A1 Passenger Ship *LMC UMS SCM ECO PYC		
Engines 4 x 2,560kW MTU 16V4000 M73					



Can you feel the African influence in the owners' saloon? Works of art are well chosen and pepper the living spaces. There's an earthy, natural feel about the whole interior, which is brilliantly lit throughout with discreet LEDs, as seen from the side decks, left

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