

CASINO ROYALE

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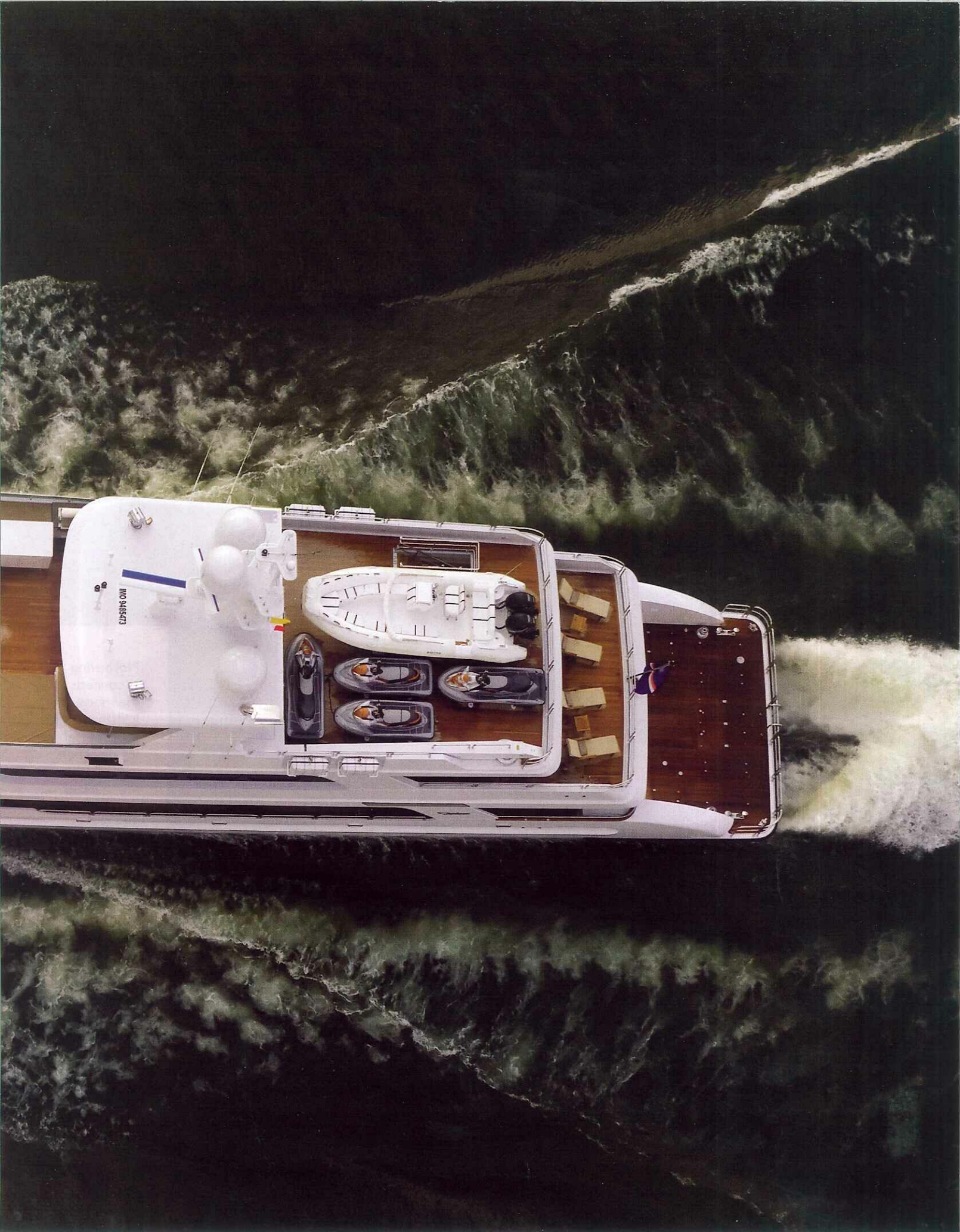
The only trouble with fast boats ...well, there is no trouble, especially when your name is John Staluppi and you've commissioned some of the world's quickest and most impressive yachts afloat, including the 68-knot, 140ft Millennium *The World Is Not Enough*. How surprising then that the newly launched Millennium Edition *Casino Royale*, a 163ft Christensen tri-deck (the shipyard's largest build to date), is the slowest vessel Staluppi and naval architect Frank Mulder have built since launching the Millennium range in the mid 1990s.

Straight-talking Staluppi is a man of few words. In fact, his success (apart from an undeniably overall astute business acumen) may lie in just that trait – he knows what he wants and how to get there – both literally and figuratively.

"This is a very different vessel compared to what I'm used to," says Staluppi. "Every boat I built, all did in excess of 50 knots, and this boat does 17, maybe 18 knots. It's totally different, especially when I take the time to go somewhere.



The largest Christensen built to date, *Casino Royale* revels in her Bond-themed design and spacious five stateroom layout.





Not having to concern themselves with the weight of the vessel, the designers gave *Casino Royale* inlaid sapele wood and granite, creating a higher sense of beauty and comfort.

A ROULETTE WHEEL AND OTHER CASINO MOTIFS ARE WOVEN INTO THE INTRICATE DESIGN.



It's very different to being able to just get on it like a day boat and make great time."

Even though Staluppi says he wishes his latest was, "a little faster" – "at least another 10 knots would be good," he says – he really appreciates the extra comfort and quiet, and not having to be concerned about weight.

"When you build a high-speed boat, that's the first thing you have to worry about," he suggests. "All the materials we were able to put in this vessel – the granite and wood – give a beautiful level of comfort and plushness. And the boat rides extremely well."

Indeed, *Casino Royale* is the largest and most spacious Millennium Edition to date, as evidenced by her voluminous and often ornately trimmed public areas and accommodations, which are finished in raised sapele mahogany paneling and intricately inlaid marble floors. These include an extended skylounge with almost the same footprint as the main saloon and a five-stateroom guest deck arrangement that features an impressive, full-beam VIP and capacious bathroom in lieu of the sixth stateroom.

This latest contribution to the ongoing parade of Bond-themed boats truly revels in its generosity of space and unabashed extravagance. (So much so that even the crews' quarters are more spacious than most.)

It's very apparent that Staluppi and interior design firm Carol Williamson & Associates had fun. The 007 theme is celebrated throughout, from Bond girl silhouettes in etched glass panels that clad the spiral staircase to Vesper Lynd look-



alike statues watching over the main saloon and aft entrance. In fact, *Casino Royale* lives up to her billing at every opportunity, with an intricately crafted roulette design (featuring mother of pearl, petrified wood, black onyx and a stainless-steel wheel) worked into the aft main saloon entrance, and playing card-themed coffee tables on the sun deck, all precision designed and executed by stone master Jeff Homchick.

A Bond girl presides over the dividing bureau between the dining lounge and main saloon, which sports an ornate, almost



The clubby feel of the richly designed dining room is accented by the gold leaf bordered table with gold pedestals, while a striking onyx-topped bar highlights the skylounge.



LOW SILL TREATMENTS BATHE THE MAIN SALOON IN LIGHT, GIVING THE ORNATE



Rococo style, dominated by facing high-back, three-seat couches flanking an ornate, onyx-topped, embellished coffee table with a Dale Chihuly glass centerpiece.

Equally impressive, the formal dining lounge is ruled by an eight-seat, glass-topped, gold leaf-bordered dining table supported by twin flourished, ornate gold pedestals that play off the gold regency stripes of the high-back dining chairs. It is a deliberately formal area whose clubby feel gives off an unmistakable aura of richness and luxury.

Overall, this principal lounge, bathed in natural light, enjoys unobstructed panoramas, thanks to the low sill treatment, a Christensen hallmark.

Casino Royale's 163 feet make her Christensen's largest launch to date, although the builder has plans to build 200-foot plus vessels at its new Tennessee facility, expected to be in operation within two years. Interestingly, this voluminous vessel (6,900 square feet) doesn't exaggerate her mass on the water, thanks to a clever paint treatment that emphasizes her gracious form, and high bulwarks that extend her forward line well aft, giving a remarkably streamlined sense for so relatively large a vessel.

Forward of the owner's office, with large walk-in, cedar-lined closets, the main deck master suite cossets with rich colors for a fairly traditional feel. While more restrained than the extravagance of the main saloon, the mood is still rich, with a distinctive, beveled glass headboard framing the king-sized bed, along with overhead oval mirrored ceiling detail and recessed fiber optic lighting below the frame that throws a warm,



Vesper Lynd look-alike statues as well as other Bond girls-like images adorn table-tops and hallways.



romantic glow onto cut pile cream carpeting.

A reading ottoman to starboard creates a natural escape in which to relax, while the vanity to port (with a large, concealed self-lighting mirror) is built into an expansive bureau. On the aft wall, a large oil depicting an Italian scene slides up to reveal a full-sized flatscreen TV. More cabinets on either side yield further storage, with drawers below.

However, the show stopper is the his-and-hers en suite head, a symphony of superbly detailed onyx and marble, all bathed in natural daylight from a pair of strategically private skylights. Center is a full-sized spa tub, while pinwheel etched-glass doors open to the head and bidet to starboard, to the double steam shower to port – as well as another walk-in closet. Twin hand basins set in an onyx counter are beneath gilt-framed mirrors that complement the gold faucets.

Intricate bronze inlays and book-matched marble panels underscore the stonemason's craftsmanship here and throughout the vessel, with floor panels for the foyer, main saloon and captain's head, all carved from the same block.

With entertainment on a luxe level always in mind, it comes as no surprise that the commercial-grade galley is generous and well planned, with a forward port side pantry located over the crew staircase offering plenty of storage, including a wine cooler. The work flow has been well thought out, with marble-topped counters and matching high, marble backsplashes throughout, as well as mahogany cabinets that reflect the same level of finish as elsewhere aboard the yacht. The expanse of marble makes for easier cleaning. Appliances include a built-in double Sub-Zero refrigerator and Miele dishwasher, and there is a monitoring



BRONZE INLAYS AND BOOK-

system beside the dining room entry.

Access downstairs to the forward crew area, like the quarters themselves, is sensibly roomy, opening onto an airy lounge with a large booth opposite a sizable laundry with three stackable washer/dryers, as well as an adjacent walk-in fridge and freezer.

Casino Royale's mix of guest accommodations offers plenty of choice, from forward twins and a pair of king-sized staterooms, all elegantly finished, to the forward staterooms with en suite showers, and aft kings with full baths.

However, most coveted will surely be the full-beam VIP, with its generous bathroom, adorned by Jeff Homchick's



MATCHED MARBLE PANELS ARE ENHANCED BY THE STRATIGICALLY PLACED SKYLIGHTS.





Raising the Standard

Christensen's collaboration with John Staluppi (and largest build to date) brings several new features to the shipyard's Custom Series yachts, says company President Joe Foggia. These include a considerably extended sport deck that allows more room above and full-height storage below—something for which crews are always looking.

The added space also accommodates the stern thruster, which is a first for Christensen. The retracting stern thruster turns 360 degrees and is tied into the forward bowthruster. The coordinated use of both bow and stern thrusters makes for much easier docking. Ultimately, it also forms the basis—a testing platform—for a full Dynamic Positioning System, planned for inclusion on future models, which in conjunction with GPS technology will allow the thrusters to automatically maintain position in waters too deep to drop anchor.

Foggia points out that the yacht's overall structure was enhanced to accommodate the massive, full-beam skylounge, and also offers the first head to be installed on the flybridge. These features now will become standard on future builds, along with a skylounge walkaround that will allow the crew to operate freely outside. There's also a lot more storage located throughout the boat, which was in some ways technically challenging, but well worth the effort.

A noted classic car collector, Staluppi also introduced the yard his metal specialist, says Foggia. "He finished the engine room to a more elaborate standard than usual, with an impressive expanse of polished stainless steel everywhere, and was happy to pass on the finishing techniques to the builder's own metalworkers." Foggia says the new higher level of finish will be the standard as well. *Casino Royale* amounted to a "very fun project", says Foggia. "Mr. Staluppi's team was great to work with—and we're already looking at the next Millennium project."



wall sculpture of mermaids flaunting mother of pearl tails, swimming in a sea of polished and matte-finished stainless steel, with shell and malachite detail.

The guest foyer, detailed in etched-glass and Erté limited editions, includes a small night kitchen, and also conceals easy access to the vessel's fire suppression system.

The guest areas are comfortably understated in contrast to the more ornate public spaces. All are linked by the ornate elevator with etched glass door and intricate marble inlaid floor.

With entertaining never far removed, the expanded skylounge results in a wide open area with limitless possibilities that combine for an ideal social space. The principal seating area is a high-back settee, wrapped around a quadrant-styled glass-top coffee table over four box ottomans that slip out for extra seats. A round table with high-back armchairs is to port, while a striking back-lit onyx bar occupies the starboard side aft. Compared to the heavier, far more formal main saloon, the mood here is light and airy, with plenty of glass and full-width sliding doors to the aft deck and canopied dining area. Here too is another full-featured entertainment space, with wet bar, al fresco seating for 12 and added protection from optional zip-on screens.

Sun seekers and party goers can revel on the open-plan sun deck, an all-out play area if ever there was one. The granite-topped starboard bar, under the communications arch, boasts 10 high-back barstools and a swing out, all-weather flatscreen TV. A dayhead tucks into the port side while the forward step-up hot tub is trimmed with stainless-steel railings and petrified wood inlay. Shelter comes courtesy of a small windshield of just the right height so as to be

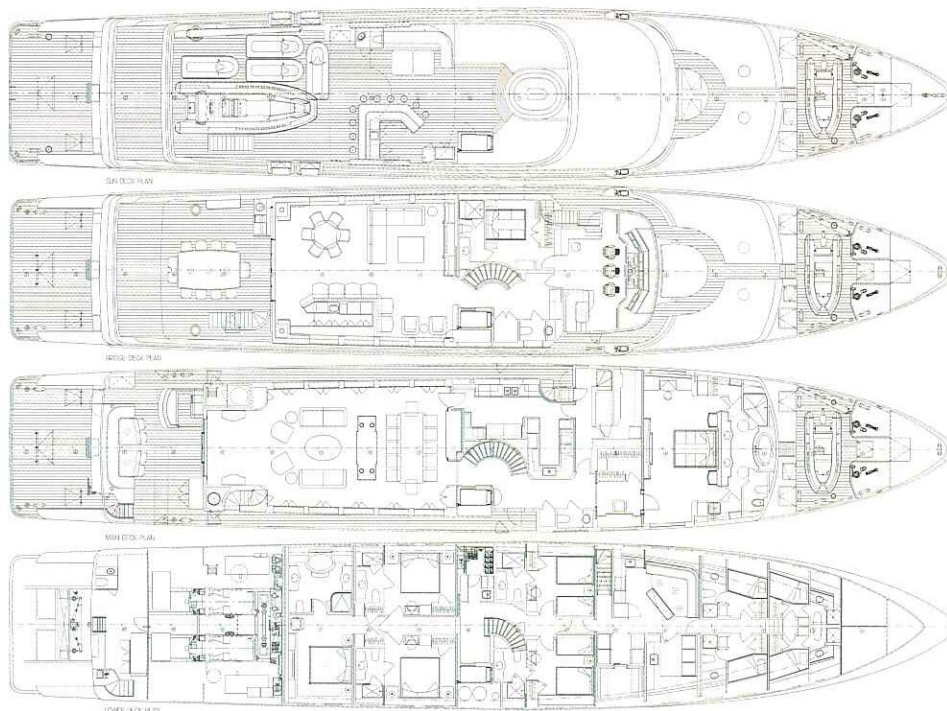


effective without interfering with the vessel's horizontal line.

On the working side, a CT5000 davit is neatly stored flush into the port bulwark, well concealed but readily accessible for launching the 24ft Nautica, Zodiac or any of the four personal watercraft, as well as loading supplies on the galley side. Another Nautica is stored forward of the distinctive Portuguese bridge.

Dominating the pilothouse is a trio of tan leather Stidd command chairs grouped around the wheel. All enjoy excellent visibility thanks to the vertical, wraparound, "destroyer-style" windshield, with eight

All the staterooms are lavishly appointed, but the most sought after cabin would be the full-beam VIP.



interchangeable screens beneath. The chart bureau and communications center are to port, just forward of the comfortable captain's double berth and en suite. An observation booth with a tan leather banquette (concealing accessible computer servers) and granite pedestal table is raised aft on the starboard side.

The roomy pilothouse not only echoes the spaciousness of this vessel but also underscores her rugged cruising abilities. Her shakedown cruise across the Olympic Peninsula and north to Alaska close-encountered plenty of rough weather.

"The boat handles very well. It feels a lot sturdier than 163 feet – more like 180," says Captain Zak Matten who, though used to running much faster vessels, is duly impressed with *Casino Royale's* sedate yet seaworthy performance, especially in 8 to 10ft seas. "Thanks to the Quantum stabilizers she doesn't move around and still manages a good turn of speed at 17.7 knots fully loaded." Matten also credits the 1,800-gallon trim tank in the bulbous bow for added stability and was surprised by the responsive rudders with rarely more than 20 degrees used.

"I'm very impressed with the girl so far. She handles equivalent to any European yard vessel I've experienced – while there may be lot of chrome on board, she's very serviceable. She's the belle of the ball when she's all dressed up."

Even though she's a little more laid back (though not reserved), John Staluppi is impressed with his newest Bond girl.

However, old habits die hard.

Not one to sit around, John Staluppi is already planning the next Millennium, currently being tank-tested.

"Most likely another Christensen," he says – but it will do at least 27 knots.

"I like the finish and luxury this boat has – but I still want to have that little bit of speed when I want to get there fast!" |



Although *Casino Royale* may not be as fast as her Bond-themed predecessors, her seaworthy performance and sturdiness is a tribute to the Christensen legacy.

SPECS

LOA: 163ft (49.68m)

LWL: 147ft (44.80m)

Beam: 29ft 6in (9m)

Draft: 8ft 4in (2.6m)

Displacement: 850,000lbs

Engines: 2 x MTU 12V 4000 Series

Propellers:

2 x 5-blade NiBrAl, CNC Machining

Speed (max/cruise): 18 knots, 12 knots

Fuel capacity: 15,000 gallons;

1,000 gallons reserve

Range: 4,500nm @ 12 knots

Bow thruster: 24in Dual Props, Arcturus

Marine TRAC

Stern Thruster: Arcturus Marine TRAC

Stabilizers: Zero-Speed at anchor, Model QC

1800 with ARC-3001 elec. control unit

Generators (main/emergency): 2 x Kohler

125kW/1 x 99kW @ 1,800rpm

Watermakers:

2 x 2,000gpd, Village Marine Tec

Freshwater capacity: 3,600 gallons, including

2,200 gallons in main; 1,400 in forepeak tank

Grey/Black water capacity: 700 gallons

Sewage system: 350 gallons, Headhunter

Fire-control systems: Marioff Hi Fog Hi-

Pressure Fire Suppression

Security systems: CSL

Monitoring system: Christensen Integrated

Monitoring, installed by Johnson Electronics

Air-conditioning: Cruisair 36-ton chiller unit

Communication/Navigation electronics:

Furuno, Northstar, Anschutz, Raymarine

Entertainment systems: Interior Audio

Owner and guests: 12

Crew: 10

Tenders: 4 x personal watercrafts, 2 x tenders

Tender-launching system: Deck crane

Steelhead Telescoping CT 5000, 1 x 20hp hyd.

powerpack or Bow Davit Steelhead-2500, with

MCA-approved reserve power

Passerelle: 20ft Sanguinetti

Paint: Awlgrip

Construction: Composite

Classification: ABS A1-AMS & MMA

Unlimited Cruising

Naval architecture: Christensen Shipyards

Exterior styling: Christensen Shipyards

Interior design: Owner, Carol Williamson & Assoc.

Broker: Peter Thompson,

Ocean Independence Cavendish White

Builder/Year: Christensen Shipyards/2008

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