

ISSUE SIX
FEBRUARY 2013

The Superyacht

TRUTH • OPINION KNOWLEDGE • IDEAS & SUPERYACHT OWNER INSIGHT



OWNER

BILL DUKER

Owner of 70m *Sylaris* in build at Perini Navi describes his unique 'spirit of agreement' contract.

NEW ZEALAND CALLING

Superyacht owners have another excuse to discover the country's unspoiled beauty.

MARTIN LANTING

The Dutch businessman has a provocative set of ideas, starting with owners taking command.

CHARTER GAME

Industry experts and yacht owners argue the charter-versus-private debate.



“WE CAME INTO YACHTING OUT OF A DESIRE TO BRING OUR FAMILY TOGETHER AS OPPOSED TO THEM HAVING A BACKGROUND OF SPENDING TIME AT SEA.”
– THE OWNER OF M/Y *SuRi*

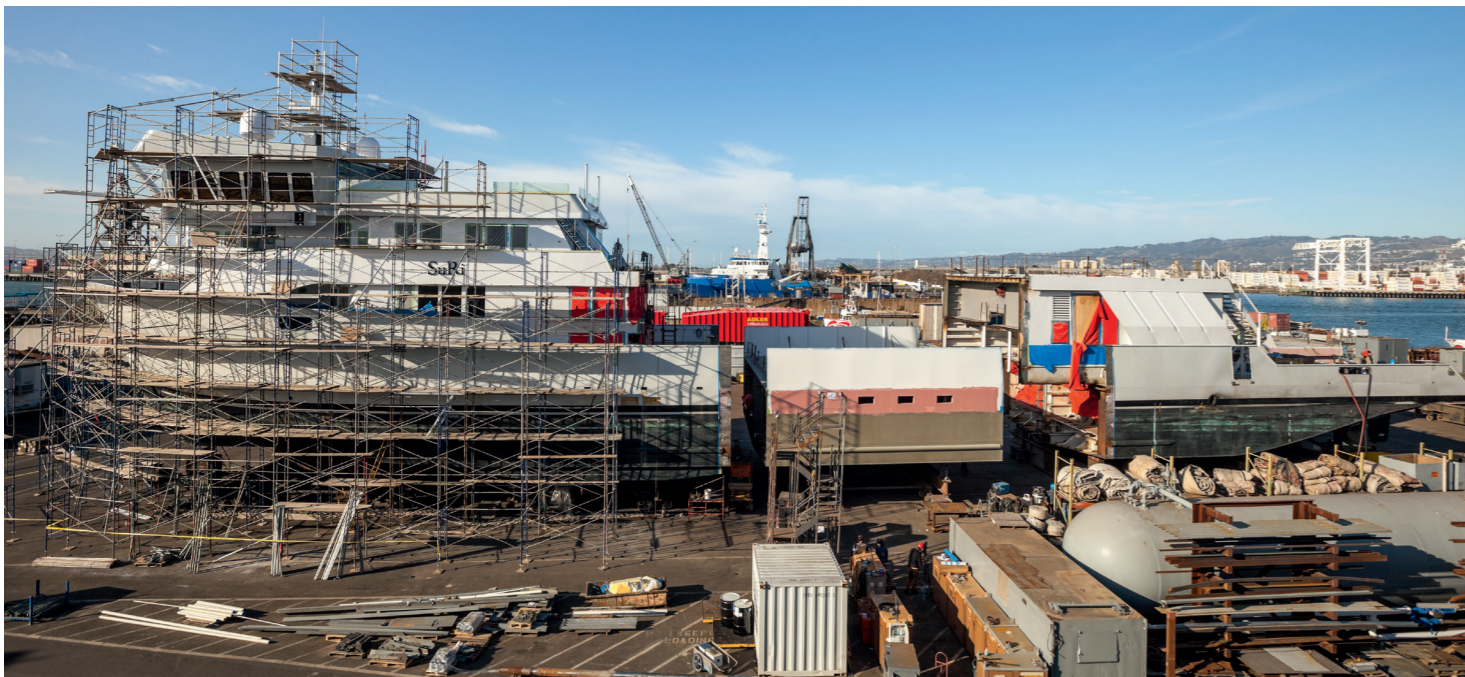


SURI

OUT OF THE SHADOWS

– WORDS BY ESTHER BARNEY AND
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JIM RAYCROFT

When the owner of Hakvoort’s M/Y *JeMaSa* chose to expand his cruising capabilities by adding an ex-crabber shadow vessel to his fleet, little did he realise that five years later the support vessel would become his primary yacht. The American businessman first embraced superyachts after experiencing how it could bring his family together. After years of enjoying the vessels, investing heavily in two refits for the shadow boat *SuRi*, he decided she would undergo an extensive conversion to create the perfect vessel for his needs. Selling *JeMaSa*, he set to work on a technically challenging extension with some pioneering additions to create the ultimate expeditionary platform for family adventures. Here, Esther Barney discusses with the owner *SuRi*’s unlikely metamorphosis, what most excites him about her new design and why it’s all been worth it. 📖



“I AM AN IMPULSIVE PERSON. WERE I TO DO IT AGAIN, I WOULD HAVE A SET OF PLANS. WE HAD SIGNIFICANT UNNECESSARY EXPENDITURES ALONG THE WAY THROUGH THE COMBINATION OF THE TWO REFITS. TEARING THINGS UP AND PUTTING THEM BACK WAS MUCH MORE COSTLY THAN DOING THINGS RIGHT THE FIRST TIME. BUT WE DO ENJOY HER A GREAT DEAL.”
– THE OWNER OF *SuRi*



Previous page: *SuRi* passes under San Francisco’s Golden Gate Bridge to head for new adventures after her extension and Bay Ship & Yacht. **Opposite:** *SuRi*’s 10.9m plug was built at the shipyard before she arrived, to speed up the process of the extension.

“*SuRi* has been part of an iterative process for us in boating,” says her contented West Coast-based owner, looking forward to her impending adventures. “About 10 years ago or so, my wife and I decided to begin the journey of building a motoryacht with Hakvoort in Amsterdam, named *JeMaSa* after our daughters. It was a fabulous piece of artistry. At just less than 50m, she was the largest yacht they could build in their shed. We really enjoyed the process and loved the use of the yacht.”

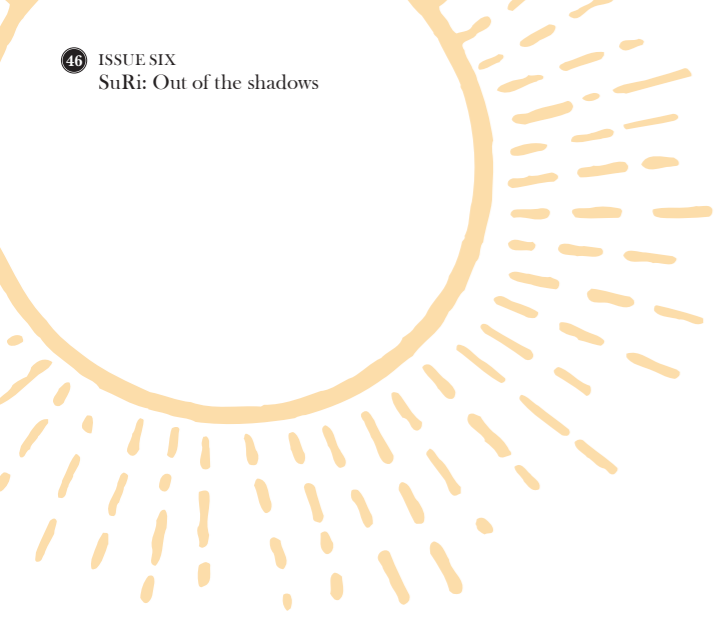
“We came into yachting out of a desire to bring our family together as opposed to them having a background of spending time at sea. We had three girls, all of whom – like all teenagers – were going through a normal distancing of themselves from their parents. We decided to try chartering a yacht to see if it would be a magnet to bring us all together. It worked like a charm and we chartered a number of times.”

“We ultimately decided to build the yacht in order to enjoy it as a family, with my wife and I embarking on an odyssey around the world. We envisaged at the time that we would put as many things on it as we could, and she was a very spacious 50m boat.”

JeMaSa had a number of tenders and a helicopter stowed on the aft deck. With time, however, experience revealed that more rugged tenders were necessary for diving and fishing requirements, and the extensive cruising took its toll on the helicopter in such an exposed position.

“Like a lot of yacht owners, the boat all of a sudden became too small and we looked at the idea of selling it and buying a bigger one. We have never enjoyed hanging out in the likes of St Tropez and wanted to go to exotic locations with our yachts. In our view, a bigger superyacht would have been a lot more expensive without necessarily allowing us to get in and out of the places we wanted to visit. So we decided to create a shadow vessel with a 52m out-of-service crabber boat from Alaska.”

Although initial plans were simple – for the shadow vessel, *SuRi*, to carry the toys and helicopter, plus a couple of cabins – the conversion project grew far more than originally expected, spanning two refits, one in San Francisco and a second in New Zealand. “The capabilities probably outstripped the foundation of the boat in respect to the piping and infrastructure; so we went back and did it.”



another refit on her,” says the owner. During the second refit, *SuRi* began to evolve beyond simply a tender garage to become an independent yacht capable of entertaining and hosting the family for a trip in its own right, complete with “creature comforts” on board.

“I am an impulsive person. Were I to do it again, I would have a set of plans. We had significant unnecessary expenditures along the way through the combination of the two refits. Tearing things up and putting them back was much more costly than doing things right the first time. But we do enjoy her a great deal.”

In 2011 the family used both yachts independently; *JeMaSa* took in the Norwegian Fjords and the Mediterranean, while adventurous *SuRi* explored the South Pacific. But their owner felt that he “couldn’t do justice” to both yachts, so sold the original Hakvoort. The focus turned to *SuRi* and her capabilities, and plans took motion for a transformation.

“Our family has now expanded to include grandchildren and we felt that *SuRi* didn’t quite have enough capacity to house us all in the way we wanted it to,” says the owner. “There were two choices: sell the yacht and build another, or, as our engineer suggested, add 90 per cent of the capabilities that we would get out of a new boat with a refit. We decided to challenge ourselves and do something different.”

The owners, naval architect Boris Kirilloff and designer Jeff Botwin imagined her with a 10.9m mid-body extension, created by a five-level plug that adds 650sqm of space to *SuRi* and takes her to 63m. As well as adding four cabins to allow all the family to stay on board, the lounging spaces have been expanded on the main deck and sundeck (which has more focus on the swimming pool and added high-tension awnings). The hangar has grown, allowing toys such as submarines to be brought on board for trips, to sit alongside the already dizzying array of options, from a dune buggy, jet skis and hovercraft to a 10.6m mahogany StanCraft speedboat, sportfishing boat and helicopter.

Perhaps the most unique addition to *SuRi*, however, is to be found below the water’s surface: “One of the interesting new features of the boat is our ‘windows to the sea’, which are two four-by-six-foot glass sections to be able to observe the marine life outside, and we have watertight doors that close the room for when the yacht is in

motion,” says the owner. “Our engineer came up with a chum dispenser that is just forward of the windows, so we should get some great views there.”

Following a search in the South Pacific and the US, the decision was made to take her to Bay Ship & Yacht in San Francisco for this refit. As well as an economically competitive bid and close proximity to the family home in California, explains the owner, one important influence in the choice was the yard’s ability to precisely build the plug in an on-site warehouse before *SuRi* arrived, in order to expedite the yard period. She entered the yard in January 2012, the plug having been partially completed the month before, and the majority of the extensive facelift and extension took less than six months. It was a bonus that the investment in the refit would stay within the domestic economy, adds the owner.

The family is on board for two to three months a year, with hard usage. After the extension and refit was completed at the end of the summer, *SuRi* headed south to take in Patagonia, Chile and Antarctica. As she charts to clients seeking luxury combined with adventure, there are a number of trips booked with *SuRi* as a platform to explore the Sea of Cortez and Antarctica before she returns to her regular stomping ground in the South Pacific.

Although the journey to reach his family’s ultimate exploring vessel has not been a fast one, *SuRi*’s owner remains philosophical about the process, and appreciates that the experiences he has yet to enjoy on his newly enhanced superyacht will be priceless. “I see the yacht as purely for enjoyment rather than an investment,” he says. “I have two sides of me: one side tries to make a return on my investment activities, and the other enjoys spending money for pleasure. We have enjoyed the processes of building and refitting as well as the use of the yachts. I haven’t done it in the most efficient way possible, but life is a one-time pass-through and we are having a lot of fun.” □



TO COMMENT ON THIS ARTICLE GO TO:
WWW.THESUPERYACHTOWNER.COM



This page: (Top) The owners of *SuRi* enjoy exploring their cruising grounds with the vessel’s onboard helicopter; (Right) The ‘windows to the sea’ have been specially designed for a unique perspective of the marine life.

“I HAVE TWO SIDES OF ME: ONE SIDE TRIES TO MAKE A RETURN ON MY INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES, AND THE OTHER ENJOYS SPENDING MONEY FOR PLEASURE. WE HAVE ENJOYED THE PROCESSES OF BUILDING AND REFITTING AS WELL AS THE USE OF THE YACHTS. I HAVEN’T DONE IT IN THE MOST EFFICIENT WAY POSSIBLE, BUT LIFE IS A ONE-TIME PASS-THROUGH AND WE ARE HAVING A LOT OF FUN.”
– THE OWNER OF M/Y *SuRi*

