



Actress Brigitte Bardot christens movie producer Raoul Lévy's yacht, *Le Babette*, in 1959.

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# All Decked Out

Luxury yachts are getting bigger, faster, and—thanks to a raft of new toys—even more fun.





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## A Tight Ship

How your yacht should look now, according to go-to designer Guillaume Rolland.

by Joe Harper

**“DESIGNING A YACHT** interior is like playing *Tetris*,” says Guillaume Rolland, head of yacht design for French furniture brand Liaigre, referring to space efficiency as the ultimate priority. “Solving problems is something that everyone gets excited about, so my clients often want to participate, and I become a little like a doctor telling them what they need.” In the past, for example, yachts would include grand dining rooms for seating 12 to 16 people. “Nobody uses those anymore,” says Rolland, noting a trend toward dining less formally, mostly on deck. “So I have to be able to say, ‘Look, you’re never going to use this—maybe once or twice for the holidays—so why don’t we make it smaller and use the extra space for better things?’”

Rolland launched the yacht department at Liaigre in 2002 (the brand’s stunning use of wood in its minimalist rounded furniture has made it a leading source for outfitting

pleasure craft). He grew up in Brittany, amid a culture so synonymous with the sea that blue-and-white-striped Breton shirts—part of the French navy’s iconic uniforms—are named for the region. He began sailing at age 10 and taught himself how to sketch naval architecture in his teens. After architecture school in Paris and Milan, he worked for Philippe Starck on acclaimed megayachts, like former Lebanese deputy prime minister Issam Fares’s *Wedge Too*. With four boats of his own, he knows exactly what is needed—and what is not—when it comes to design.

“Some people want a floating chalet for heli-skiing in Alaska. Others prefer a beach house style for visiting that remote island that nobody else can access,” says Rolland, who explains that owners today focus more on incorporating adventure-driven necessities and shy away from showy design, gravitating toward understated

*Clockwise from top left:* The living room of Alloy Yachts’s 220-foot *Vertigo*, 2011; the dining room of Perini Navi’s 184-foot *Rosehearty*, 2007; Guillaume Rolland.

aesthetics—muted tones, natural materials. “Yachting is no longer a demonstration of wealth, but more about the freedom to choose where you want to travel and with personalized comfort,” he says. His goal is for the design elements to inconspicuously wash over the clients by making sure phone chargers are conveniently next to the beds and that there are places to stow luggage easily. “For me, the beauty is not entirely in how everything looks—that’s too personal—but instead in how it all feels,” says Rolland. “Sure, you need to control proportions, make sure materials and colors play well together, but you can’t create serious harmony without the foundation of efficiency.” [liaigre.com](http://liaigre.com)

Baglietto's 157-foot *Andiamo* was completed in 2017.



## Need for Speed

Storied Italian brand Baglietto drops anchor in the American market.

**SOUTHERN FLORIDA** boaters will tell you how long it takes their vessels to get to Bimini, 60 miles away and the closest island of the Bahamas. Sure, a speedboat can hop along in an hour, but a superyacht (79 feet long or more) can take over two. Americans like things big *and* they like them fast, which has created a niche for large, fast yachts that can zip around the Bahamas and the Caribbean quickly—and with comfort. Enter Baglietto, the famed 164-year-old Italian brand, which opened its first U.S. office in Fort Lauderdale last year. The company has since sold two boats to North Americans, one reaching 131

feet, the other 177 feet. “Speed is part of our heritage,” says Baglietto CEO Michele Gavino, who mentions its historical partnership with the Italian navy. “We had a cross-fertilization with airplanes during World War I, which made us one of the first to use aluminum.” The brand is known for its innovative use of the metal, which is more expensive than steel but just as strong and far lighter. Gavino says Baglietto is now focusing on shallower hulls, so the boats can access more islands across this part of the Atlantic. “And, of course, we’re always looking for more ways to reduce noise and vibration,” he says. *baglietto.com*—J.H.

## NATIONAL TREASURES

These countries are building some of the world's best boats right now.

### ITALY

**Azimut** boats (*azimutyachts.com*) are known for their chic style and speed, while **Benetti** (*benettiyachts.com*), a sister brand, builds some of the largest Italian superyachts. For large-scale sailing vessels, **Perini Navi** (*perininavi.it*) is one of the world's most renowned builders. Its 289-foot *Maltese Falcon*, with innovative square sails, is among the most impressive sailboats at sea today.

### NETHERLANDS

**Feadship** (*feadship.nl*) has a beloved Heritage Fleet with many yachts available for charter. Next year it will construct a shipyard in Amsterdam to address the rising demand for boats longer than 500 feet. **Amels** (*amels-holland.com*), another Dutch giant, builds customs that can take years to complete, so it offers a Limited Editions series, shortening construction time dramatically. **Heesen** (*heesenyachts.com*), known for aerodynamic innovations, is currently making a 262-footer that will become one of the world's fastest for its size and class. Sailing yachts from **Royal Huisman** (*royalhuisman.com*) are beautifully crafted with book-matched woodwork.

### UNITED STATES

**Westport Yachts** (*westportyachts.com*) builds numerous designs—including one of the most popular models for families, the Westport 130, with expansive common areas. Other top American brands include **Trinity Yachts** (*trinityyachts.com*), which revolutionized the two-story master stateroom, and **Christensen Shipyards** (*christensenyachts.com*), shown below, featuring some of the finest stonework interiors. —Kim Kavin





## Dream Boats

A glimpse into the future of yacht design.

by Stephen Wallis

**INNOVATIONS IN THE** yacht business tend to come about as fast as an old sloop on a windless day. But that doesn't mean there aren't enterprising designers and shipbuilders eager not only to push the boundaries of speed and efficiency but also to turn design conventions on their head. Take Philippe Starck's 469-foot Sailing Yacht A for Nobiskrug, which made waves last year for its knifelike features. Break-the-mold thinkers are following suit with yacht concepts—their yet unbuilt—using imaginative, if not once-unimaginable, forms.

Take Igor Lobanov (originally a car designer), who conceived the futurist vessel Star, resembling the top half of a four-point star, with symmetrically sloping sides that rise to a sharp peak nearly 200 feet above the sea. Equally head-turning is his project with boat builder Oceanco, called Tuhura, which will feature a gracefully tapering hull inspired by hollowed-out canoes. More



From top: Renderings of Benetti's Se77antasette, by architect Fernando Romero; the hybrid-powered Crystal Blue by Rolls-Royce; Igor Lobanov's Tuhura for Oceanco.

and more, designers are breaking up the ordinariness and rigid horizontality of typical stacked-deck formats. They're introducing fluid layouts with soaring interior spaces and offset levels that connect dynamically as you move





around the boat. That's the approach architect Fernando Romero took with his Se77 antasette concept for Benetti, a 253-foot design he has described as "a seamless and sophisticated ecosystem of programs and connectivity." In general, there's an emphasis on openness and enhancing ties with the sea and sky, using abundant glass and maximizing outdoor spaces, from fold-out balconies to swim platforms. Some designers are bringing nature on board in the form of gardens, and you can find over-the-top features like waterfalls and even underwater observatories.

Fuel costs and concerns over climate change are helping to spur advances in boats powered in part—or even fully—by solar, electric, liquefied natural gas, and hydrogen fuel-cell technologies. Naval architect Mathis Rühl has proposed a trimaran sailing yacht with rotating wing masts that

could be fitted with turbines to charge the vessel's batteries while anchored. And Rolls-Royce proposed its own concept, Crystal Blue, whose 203-foot hull is propelled using batteries and liquefied natural gas.

Also influencing concepts are innovations with materials, especially carbon fiber and other lightweight composites. Boat designer Philippe Briand would use the durable, antibacterial composite Krión to build his Noble Path, a minimalist yacht whose superstructure is mostly open in front, with sides wrapped in a striking Arab-inspired latticework. He, like so many other visionaries, just needs a client with the mindset and the resources to bring it to fruition. "It has to be driven by the people using the yacht," he says. "The design of a yacht is not art—it's architecture with a purpose." Even if that architecture can be pretty spectacular.

Philippe Starck's 469-foot Sailing Yacht A, built by Nobiskrug, features masts reaching 300 feet.



Above: Gustavia harbor in St. Bart's.

## SHOWBOATING

Where the yachting crowd goes to see and be seen throughout the year.

### CANNES FILM FESTIVAL

Held in mid-May, this celebrity-studded event is near the French city's harbor, where red carpets cover the quays, directing starlets and producers alike to after-parties. If you are looking to host any large on-board event, plan far in advance for logistics like security and catering.

### MONACO GRAND PRIX

Some spend multiple weeks in May moving from the Cannes Film Festival to the Monaco Grand Prix at the end of the month. From the highest perches (read: the tallest yacht sundecks and crew's nests) in Monte Carlo's harbor, you can watch Formula 1 cars zip through the principality's streets.

### LES VOILES DE ST.-TROPEZ

Held annually from late September into early October, this event caps off the Mediterranean season for the world's finest sailing yachts. It includes J-Class America's Cup veterans, newly built stunners with every modern amenity, and race-technology leaders—plus opportunities to network with world-renowned owners, skippers, and sailors later on land.

### NEW YEAR'S EVE IN ST. BART'S

The dock at Gustavia harbor can't fit the biggest superyachts (David Geffen's 454-foot *Rising Sun*, Paul Allen's 303-foot *Tatoosh*), so they anchor out, creating the Caribbean's most luxe festival of on-the-water lights and music. —K.K.





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## Fun and Games

The latest must-have toys and accessories for yacht owners. *by Josh Dean*

### FUNAIR BEACH CLUB SEA POOL

One of the few limitations of a megayacht is that it doesn't come with a beach, though more and more do have giant platforms, with bars and gyms, at the stern. Here's the perfect capper for that: an inflatable pool, shown above, surrounded by a deck large enough for lying out on and protected under the water with netting, so that you can swim in the open water without fear of jellyfish stings or shark attacks. \$23,000; [funair.com](http://funair.com).

### LIFT EFOIL

Hydrofoil boards are the biggest thing in surfing, because they allow you to surf—often over huge distances—without waves. (The key is a winged keel

under the water that provides lift.) This is the first hydrofoil board with an electric motor, which means you can ride up to 25 miles per hour anywhere there's open water. All you need is the handheld Bluetooth controller, a charged battery, and good balance. \$12,000; [liftfoils.com](http://liftfoils.com).

### SEABOB F5 SR

The Seabob is, in essence, an underwater Jet Ski. Just grab the handles, hit the throttle (there are seven speed settings), and hold on as it propels you across the water, either on top or underneath for as long as you can hold your breath. The SR is the fastest of all Seabobs and comes with an HD camera embedded in the nose. \$16,775; [seabobadriatic.com](http://seabobadriatic.com).

### JETLEV FLYER JF-300

It seems that every generation has promised us jet packs. And only Jetlev, a German company, has actually marketed one—in this case, a pack that uses jets of water for thrust. The JF-300 is capable of 47 mph and flies up to 33 feet in the air, which is as far as you can get on the tethered hose that carries the water up from a small, autonomous carbon-fiber boat that trails behind. \$113,815; [jetlev-flyer.com](http://jetlev-flyer.com).

### TRITON 3300 SUBMERSIBLE

For the first decade of Triton's existence, cofounder and president Patrick Lahey would travel to boat shows, make his pitch, and, he recalls, "get basically ridiculed." Now, his submersibles—simple personal submarines—are some of the most sought-after toys in the yacht world. "It's comfortable, it's quiet, it's sublime," says Lahey. "It's like sitting in your living room"—only at the bottom of the ocean, with rare deep-sea life staring back through the acrylic bubble that is Triton's trademark. The 3300 is Triton's most popular model. It seats three and descends to 3,300 feet. \$3.6 million; [tritonsubs.com](http://tritonsubs.com).



The Seabob F5 SR, essentially an underwater Jet Ski.

FROM TOP: COURTESY FUNAIR + MY LOON; COURTESY THE SEABOB COMPANY



**Still Making Waves** Italian boat maker Riva has branched out into superyachts—but it's the classic speedboat that thrills collectors.



Riva's 110-foot Dolcevita yacht. Below: Vintage Aquaramas moored in Portofino, Italy.

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**FEW NAMES CAN SEND** the hearts of vintage-boat lovers racing quite like Riva, the storied Italian boat maker that traces its roots back 176 years to the town of Sarnico, on Lake Iseo. It was Carlo Riva, the company's leader during its golden era in the 1950s and '60s, who elevated Riva to a brand, like Ferrari or Porsche, so renowned for style that people want to wear its logo on a shirt or a hat.

When Carlo began designing, Riva was known for fast, sleek, wood-hulled powerboats. But he took aesthetic and technical refinements to another level, with prices to match. He created iconic models like the Tritone and the Florida, whose marriage of speed and elegance

made them favorites of counts and princesses and movie stars. In 1962, Carlo unveiled his masterpiece, the Aquarama. It had a mahogany hull, a wraparound windshield, and a chrome stripe affixed with screws he insisted be hand-turned so that the Phillips heads formed perfect crosses. "The obsession of Carlo Riva was the details, always the details," says the company's historian, Ricardo Sassoli.

Production on the Aquarama ended in 1996, but Riva—which has been owned by the Ferretti Group since 2000—is still turning out exquisitely crafted speedboats, including the Rivamare, a dashing 39-foot museum piece that'll set you back at least \$1 million. Riva also makes big yachts, of course, such as the 110-foot Dolcevita, whose sporty lines nod to Riva's heritage. Larger vessels are built in La Spezia, on Italy's western coast, but Riva's Lake Iseo shipyard continues to build models up to 66 feet. (Lucky clients get to visit Carlo's yachtlike



office, now on Italy's national register of historic places.)

Meanwhile, the Aquarama—only 784 of which were ever built—is among the most collectible of all vintage speedboats. After 30 perished in a 2000 fire at a Swiss shipyard, prices more than tripled, according to Sassoli, with good-condition examples now fetching upwards of \$250,000. All of which seems to validate Carlo Riva's defense of his exacting, expensive standards. "Yes, it costs more," said the designer, who died in 2017. "But in the end you get it back." *riva-yacht.com*—J.D.