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Superyacht of the week: The magical sailing yacht Elfje



Sunday, 12 July 2015

By Charl van Rooy

Designed to stand the test of time, structurally and technically, the 'NextGen' modern classic *Elfje* by Royal Huisman is setting the standard in the design of large sail yachts. With one eye set on the future, *Elfje* has been created from deep within the mood rooms of Hoek Design Naval Architects and emerged as a timeless and elegant yacht, ready to cruise the seven seas in comfort, style and speed.



With a clear vision from the owner in mind, calling for the design of a strikingly beautiful yacht that will remain advanced well into the future, the teams at Hoek Design and Redman Whiteley Dixon set out to create the ultimate performance sailing yacht while having every guest feel right at home in an eco-friendly environment. As long distance cruising and prolonged periods in remote locations were also part of the owner's plans with *Elfje*, vital features such as adequate provisions storage, guest comfort and advanced, reliable equipment onboard were non-negotiable.



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SuperYacht Of The Week

Elfje



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With her exterior styling, Hoek Design drew *Elfje* with low freeboards and deckhouses to satisfy the owner's request of a clutter free and efficient hands-on sailing environment. These design cues lends the yacht a distinctive timeless and traditional appeal, reminiscent of old-school pilot cutters. Her clean flush teak deck set on top of a custom soft-grey hull adds another level of simplicity and enhances the uncomplicated and natural look of *Elfje*.



Guests are invited to unwind in any of her numerous exterior social areas. The cockpit presents the perfect gathering spot where 8 guests can get comfortable around a large foldable table for the ultimate dining experience while at anchor or simply to relax in a wind-free setting on one of the four separate L-shaped sofas while underway. A brilliant private aft cockpit consisting of a U-shaped sunpad, small breakfast table and two deck couches on either side, placed at the very stern of the yacht provides the owner with a comfortable area to unwind. This space is extremely well protected by the aft deckhouse and gives direct access to the master cabin below.



Elfje features a cleverly designed side boarding platform that neatly folds into the hull to create a flush surface once again when closed. This platform is served by a hatch through the hull allowing for the easy transfer of diving and watersports gear and can also be used for the loading of provisions when at anchor. From here guests can also safely board *Elfje*'s 5.8m Novurania tender before being taken ashore. The tender is cleverly stored on the foredeck in a recessed bay which can be completely closed to create a flush foredeck when deployed.



With the intention of racing *Elffe* in sailing regattas, the yacht has been optimised to be able to cruise fast and also operate at a professional level with a team of skilled sailors on board. Advanced hydraulic sail handling systems designed to be fast and efficient have been installed to achieve this. Two beautifully designed helm stations not only serve as the yacht's command centre, but whose elegant design will certainly prove to be a key discussion topic at meal times out in the main cockpit.



Elffe's repertoire of eco-friendly running and handling systems on deck has influenced the interior design at the same time. Redman Whiteley Dixon and the team at Pod Interior Style paid special attention to the owner's wishes of creating an interior fitted with sustainable and renewable resources, whilst achieving a relaxed and subdued environment with a touch of tradition. Despite the need for lowered deckhouses and freeboards outside, the interior design teams still managed to succeed in achieving a great feeling of spaciousness and mobility on board.



The wonderfully light colour scheme used in the decorating of guest areas is accentuated by the use of darker European walnut flooring. To adhere to the design brief of having a smooth flow throughout the interior, curved shapes in staircases, passageways and meeting areas were introduced. The salons features furniture specially designed by Redman Whiteley Dixon with a selection of exclusive materials such as silk and velvet complimented by the use of rich coloured scatter cushions and throws.



Keeping to the merging of adjacent spaces, the main dining area below deck is conveniently placed next to the stylish galley as you make your way down the main staircase to port. The area benefits from its low placement in the hull to provide a comfortable and social setting even when underway. Separated by the keel trunk, to starboard is the main salon, decorated with homely and oversized velvet chairs and custom furniture

pieces.



Elife's most magical interior space has to be the master suite. Here, as in every other guest area on board, special attention to detail has been paid to every decoration and material used to create a classy and truly liveable space. Featuring a private corridor leading forward and a staircase leading up to the owner's deckhouse and ultimately out onto the deck, the master suite was created to adhere to the owners' requirement for privacy.



A unique feature found in the master suite is a custom glass topped 'oculus' table designed for viewing marine life even at night when the underwater lights are on. This opening in the hull also provides the suite with natural light that reflects off the shallow sandy surface below when at anchor during the day.



Three other cabins can be found on board, consisting of a double, twin and a flex cabin, designed for the use of an extra guest, crewmember or special staff.



To ensure *Elife* reaches her remote destinations, Royal Huisman has fitted her with a series of efficient generators, battery banks and main propulsion system. The ability to adjust the power output of the generators on board depending on the current load, paired with highly efficient lithium-ion batteries that are able to supply power for longer, has a beneficial effect on the fuel consumption and therefore the range of the vessel. Cruising at 10 knots alone allows *Elife* to reach 3690nm, using her single Scania D1 16 552kw engine.



Throughout the yacht one cannot help but notice the intricate design and attention to detail applied to every guest area. The remarkable joinery and finishing standard is of the highest quality and once again proves Royal Huisman's ability in building a world-class yacht, dedicated to the design of a vessel that is set to change the field of super sailing yachts.

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