

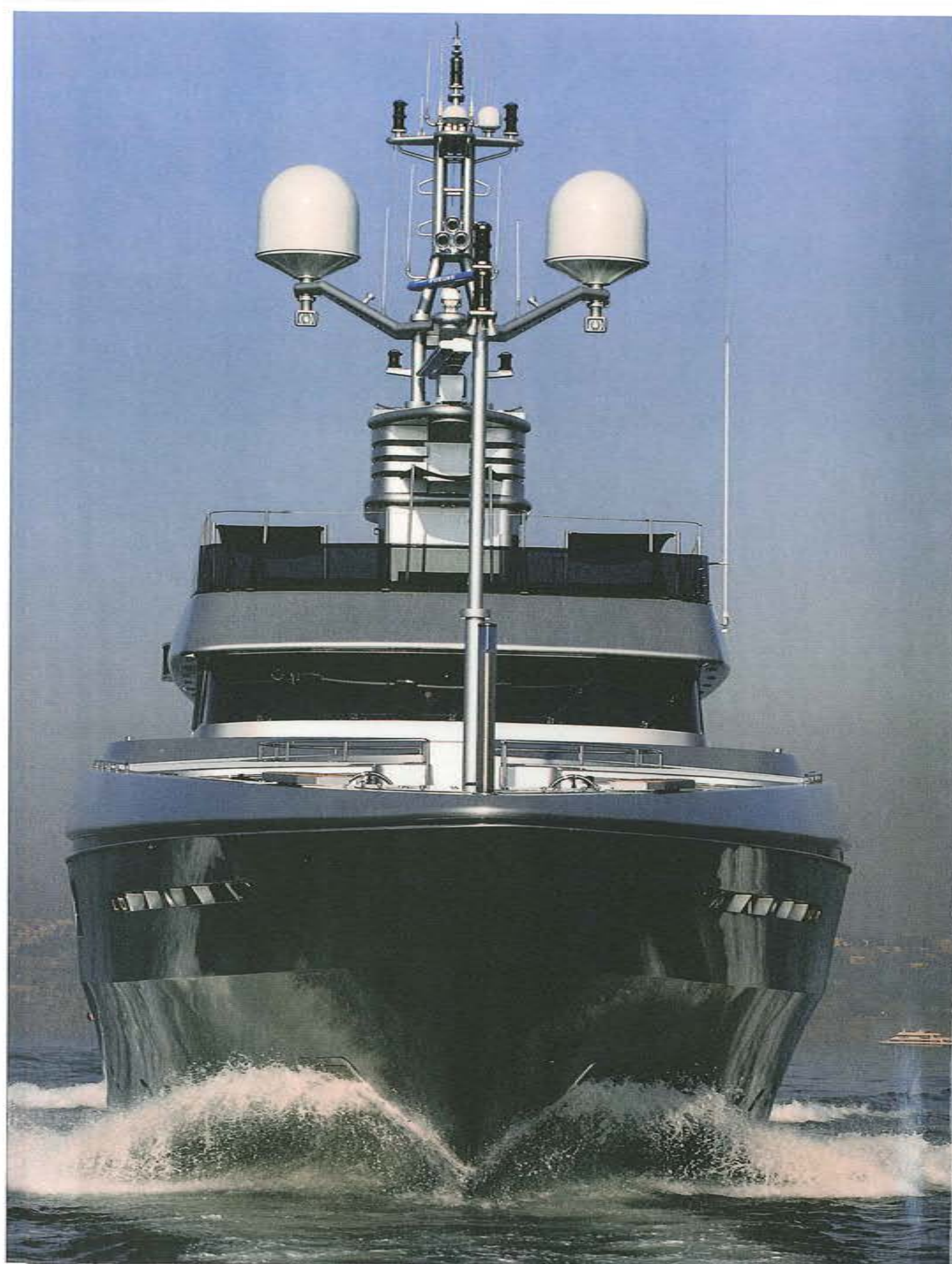
BOAT



Regina d'Italia

CODECASA 51

INTERNATIONAL



Regina d'Italia

The 51 metre Codecasa motor yacht *Regina d'Italia* is probably the most extraordinary yacht afloat. Her décor, inspired by the owner Stefano Gabbana, a partner in the world-famous fashion house Dolce & Gabbana, was designed in detail by Rome-based Lazzarini Pickering Architetti. It is absolutely unique and can perhaps be described as an underlying architecture of strict minimalism, onto which is superimposed a surface of incomparable richness, both of materials and effects. The real genius of the owner and designers has been to create something that is both ultra-modern and deeply traditional at the same time.

'Normal, ordinary, usual, are words that do not apply to this ship. There is nothing, apart from the fenders, that you can have seen on any other ship.' This is one description of the yacht, but actually it is not quite true. The hull and all of its mechanical systems are perfectly conventional, having been commissioned by the family-run Codecasa shipyard of Viareggio as a speculative project, which is its usual practice. Among Italian yards, Codecasa is particularly noted for the high quality of its mechanical and electrical systems and those aboard *Regina d'Italia* certainly live up to this reputation. Similarly, the yacht's naval architecture is by the shipyard's own designers, while its exterior styling is by Franco and Anna Dellarole, who have worked with Codecasa as stylists and interior designers for many years.

When the yacht existed as a bare hull, it was purchased by Stefano Gabbana and there followed approximately one year of design and outfitting. This was incredibly fast work as virtually everything required for the fit-out



The sleek, silver hull and restrained exterior styling of this 51 metre Codecasa gives very little away about the utterly extravagant and extraordinarily rich interior within. David Pelly is dazzled by a yacht that more than lives up to her name. Photography by Buggy Gedlek

was specially designed and made. You have to admire the amazing confidence of Italian design; not just the ability to create something utterly different but also the will-power to carry it through, down to the smallest detail. This is a yacht in which even the door-handles are special. In fact, every single door-handle is a little work of art in itself, sculpted, cast and gold-plated, every cabin having the head of a different animal, while the bathrooms are entered by grasping a superbly crafted, life-sized human hand. Special indeed!

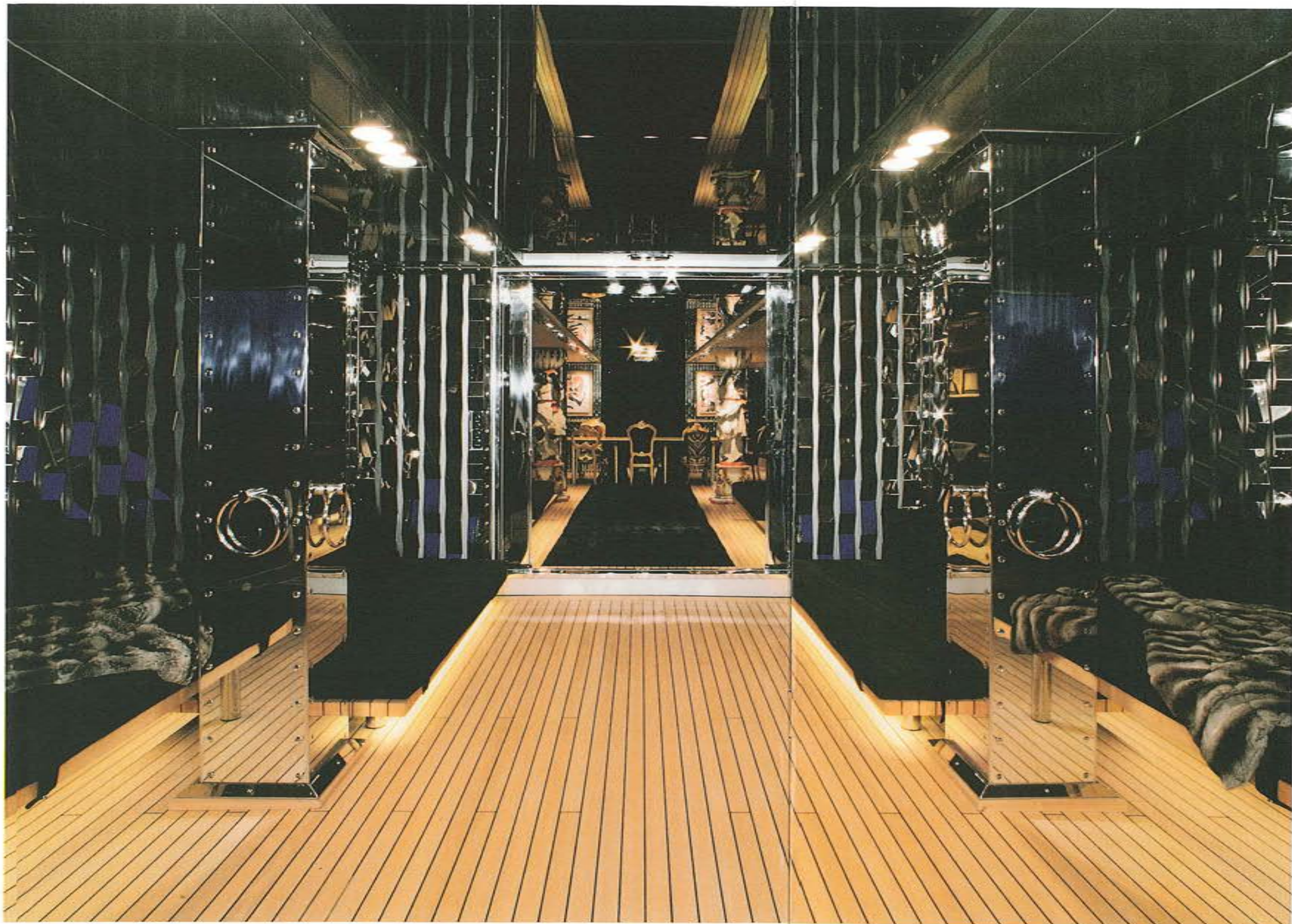
It seems that Mr Gabbana had a clear picture in his mind of what he wanted – this must be the real genius of a designer – while Lazzarini Pickering expressed his vision and numerous artists and sculptors brought it to reality. Perhaps the most surprising thing about *Regina d'Italia* is that the yacht is not intended as a showpiece to dazzle visiting fashionistas but as a private retreat into which Mr Gabbana and a small number of his guests can relax and escape from the pressures of business.

In describing *Regina d'Italia*, it is tempting merely to say 'Look at the pictures', but they do require explanation. From the moment you step aboard, your senses are outwitted by a series of trompe l'oeil effects that have the effect of making all the interior spaces appear longer and larger. Even before reaching the interior, your eyes are dazzled by a series of mirror surfaces that shimmer like the sea in sunlight. This effect is created by polished stainless steel strips that are bent at apparently random angles to reflect light in every direction. Massive pillars are also covered with polished stainless steel and feature huge ring-bolts, as if they were part of a magical harbour wall.



Main picture: silver-grey paintwork gives *Regina d'Italia* a powerful demeanour. Insets clockwise from left: the simple yet stylish sundeck notably does not have a spa pool as the owner prefers swimming in the sea; the yacht's signature black extends to the bridge; alfresco dining at a black Corian table on the upper aft deck.





On either side of the main aft deck entrance there are low benches made from teak planking covered with black cotton sailcloth – like nearly all the seating aboard – and onto these are casually draped enormous chinchilla furs. As we shall presently discover, skins and precious furs of every kind adorn this yacht's surfaces or are elsewhere used to heighten dramatic effect.

The next thing of note is that the teak planking, which is used for the exterior decking of virtually every luxury yacht, continues into the main saloon and in fact is used as the flooring of every compartment. This has a double effect; the converging lines of planking create a potent perspective which makes the rooms appear to continue towards infinity, especially when the end wall is actually a dark mirror. At the same time, the planking gives the impression that the interior is a continuation of the exterior, with



no physical separation of the two. In reality, the 'indoor' decking is sanded smooth and waxed to give it a slightly polished appearance and the usual rubber seams are replaced by strips of ebony. On a practical level, the teak decks are easy to clean and will not stain like carpet, but, on the other hand, fragile objects such as glasses might not survive a fall on them.

On entering the main saloon, you are struck by the severe simplicity of the lines, which are always rectangular, contrasting with exotic surfaces and artworks. Down the centre of the teak floor runs a 'catwalk' of black astrakhan, which is matched by a dark mirror overhead. Along either side of the

Left and above: the aft deck lounge area sets the scene for what lies within, with teak planking, shimmering stainless steel surfaces and chinchilla fur throws draped over black cotton sailcloth upholstered benches

overhead mirror there are continuous service modules providing lighting and air-conditioning in the manner of an aircraft interior. The forward bulkhead is also a dark mirror, which supports a pair of consoles made from gold-plated metal strips in the form of bamboo canes. On either side of the 'catwalk' stand a pair of antique mori, life-size statues of black men carrying large bowls on their shoulders. Once again, low black benches provide the seating, except for an extraordinary collection of antique baroque armchairs, each one different, which surround the simple oval dining table.

To one side, a cabinet used to store tableware is surfaced with eel skin, a material that is found throughout the interior, with the narrow strips of skin being sewn together to form a continuous sheet that is dyed black and bonded to a backing material. Black



velvet and black silk shantung provide the background to a pair of reclining panthers by Cartier. It is important to realise that on this yacht nothing is faux; gold is gold, mink is mink, croc is not mock. There is an absolute passion with black as the background colour. The dayheads, for instance, are panelled with black Portoro marble streaked with gold, and the inox steel toilet-roll holders are filled with rolls of black paper. In the saloon, paintings by Fontana, Haring and Perego stand out brightly against the sombre background.

From the simple hallway, the ever-present teak planking leads onwards to the owner's suite and even exists on two levels, with an 'upper deck' providing a simple seat or shelf

Above and right: the upper saloon's black eel-skin walls provide a theatrical backdrop to striking works of modern art, including an early Warhol, while jaguar, ocelot and leopard-skin rugs animate the signature black benches





The linearity of the main saloon, emphasised by the longitudinal teak planking, the long benches and the black astrakhan catwalk, is punctuated by antique statues, modern art and a striking chair that is a sculpture in itself



Above: to one side of the main saloon 'daybed' benches appear to float on a raised platform of teak planking, while a jaguar by Cartier rests on an eel-skin-clad cabinet. Left: the black-tiled circular staircase is lit by a round skylight



in the study. The desk is a simple rectangle, cantilevered from this shelf, covered with dark brown crocodile skin and flanked by a pair of antique chairs upholstered in brocade fabric. A pair of lamps by Padua take the form of giant light bulbs.

The full-width bedroom is similar to the saloon, appearing as a glass box with no visible limits. Once again the floor is teak planking, while structural pillars in polished stainless steel disappear into a dark mirror ceiling. The walls are panelled in eel, astrakhan and black velvet with overheads of pale shantung silk. Dominating the room, however, is the king-sized bed which is covered by an absolutely stunning honey-coloured mink counterpane, so large that it overflows the bed and cascades down onto



A motley collection of baroque antique dining chairs surround the dining table at the head of the astrakhan catwalk (above), while gilded bamboo cane-effect wall lamps and consoles provide a glitzy backdrop (right)

the floor, while another large square of the same fur acts as a rug. In one corner of the room stands a colossal golden throne that would definitely be fit for a queen. Over the centre of the room is a large circular skylight, allowing you to lie in bed looking at the stars. The room is noticeably free from any of the clutter of personal items that people usually bring to their bedrooms, such as books or photographs, nor are there any of the normal practical features to be expected in a bedroom, such as a wardrobe or a bedside table with a telephone. The occupants, it seems, must be as disciplined as the architecture. There is, however, a television on the forward bulkhead and somewhere a Crestron tablet to control the television, lights, curtains and air-conditioning.





Centre: the centrepiece of the owner's cabin is an utterly luxurious mink counterpane.
Top: rectilinear swathes of gold-veined black Portoro marble furnish the master bathroom
Above: the owner's private gymnasium

The mystery of where the owner keeps his clothes is solved by a concealed door, behind which is a large walk-in dressing room with many spaces specially tailored for every item. Even the coat-hangers are custom made. Outside the wardrobe is a gymnasium area with a couple of exercise machines. Forward of the bedroom, the two identical bathrooms are as rectilinear as the remainder of the yacht, all the counters – and even the wash basin – being cut from square blocks of

Portoro marble. But even with such luxury comes practicality – the marble floors of the shower stalls have been cut with grooves so that they do not become slippery. The wash basins have the most exquisite taps, each bearing a tiny individual gold-plated sculpture, while the handles have a surround of precious stones, rubies and sapphires.

The actual layout of the yacht is conventional; from the lobby a circular staircase descends to a lobby with four guest cabins opening from it. Less mobile guests can avoid using the stairs as there is a lift from this lobby to all the decks above, including the sundeck. Each of the four cabins is named after an animal, with a sculptured door handle to match: elephant, rhinoceros, crocodile and

giraffe. The elephant's tusks have already claimed some victims! The cabins have been designed with the same care and originality as the remainder of the yacht, but not quite the same severity. Eel (in light and dark colours), snake and astrakhan decorate these cabins and cleverly placed dark mirrors increase the apparent size. A particularly ingenious feature of the double cabins is that the entire wall separating them from their bathrooms splits and slides out of sight to create an 'open plan' of much increased volume.

The upper saloon is just a little more relaxed with jaguar, ocelot and leopard rugs thrown casually onto the black sailcloth benches. There is a bar with a gold-leaf counter but the usual clutter of bottles and

glasses is kept from sight. Also out of sight until needed is a large television, which pops up from a cabinet. Some exceptional examples of modern art are displayed on the black eel-skin walls. Who would have expected that a pretty little picture of blue flowers would turn out to be an early Warhol?

Conventionally, the spot chosen for dining is on the upper deck, where a large black oval Corian table can accommodate up to 12 guests, while the large settee set against the aft rail provides a convivial resting area, before or after a meal. A fully equipped pantry, with a food lift rising from the main galley, makes it easy for the crew to serve this table.

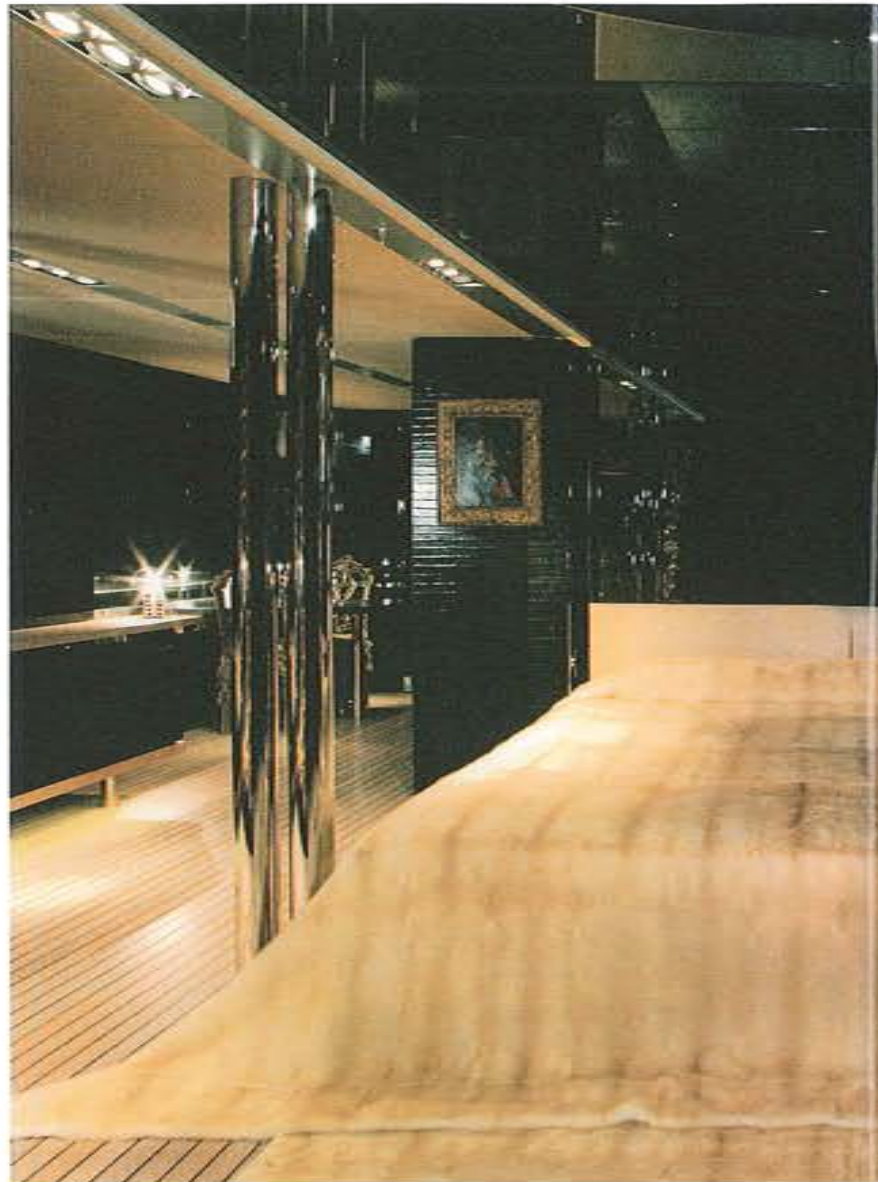
If you are seeking a place to really relax on this yacht, it would probably have to be the

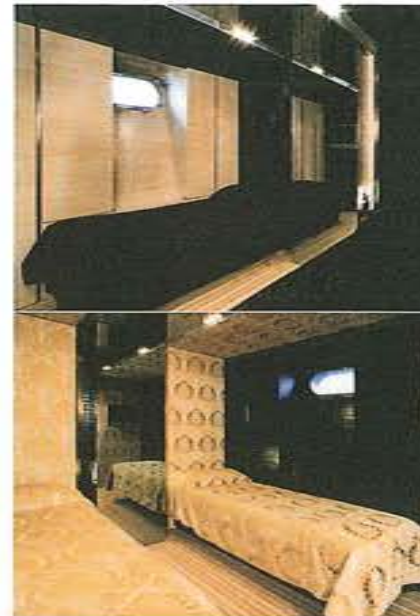
sundeck, which has been set up in a completely open and simple style with a very large sunbathing area aft and some comfortable sofas and tables grouped around the mast. There is no spa pool as the owner apparently thinks it ridiculous to sit in a tub of warm water when the entire ocean is available in which to swim. Here we have a hint of a physically active man, who loves to swim in the sea or dive below it, an image reinforced by a visit to the lazarette, which contains a complete scuba outfit and other watersports equipment, as well as the Castoldi water-jet-powered tender. In addition to this main tender, which is launched aft by an overhead hoist, there is another small boat that fits neatly into a small shelter on the foredeck. A detail

Top: guest cabins have a lighter feel, but the gold walls of this double guest cabin ensure that glamour is not lacking. **Above:** mirrors and a sliding wall between bedroom and bathroom enhance the spacious feel

worth noticing is a pair of small platforms that swing out from the sides of the foredeck. Apparently the bow has so much overhang that it is impossible to see the anchors without these little 'cat-heads' to lean on.

The crew of 11 have comfortable quarters in the forward part of the lower deck, which incorporates a fully equipped laundry opposite the mess deck. There is also plenty of storage space, including cold rooms on a sub-deck below the crew quarters. The





Top and above: traditional-style fabric is used to dramatic effect in both twin guest cabins
Below: stern access to the lazarette in which the Castoldi Jet tender is stored along with scuba gear and watersports equipment

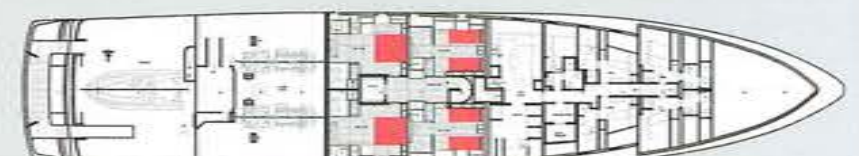
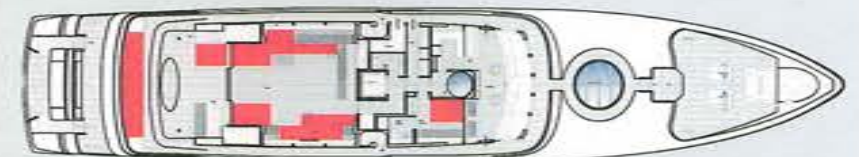
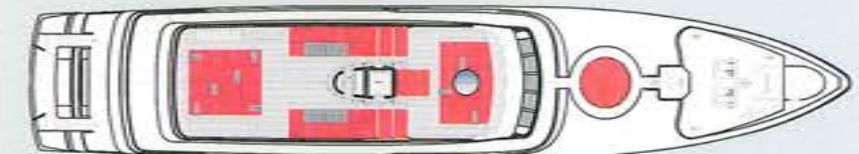
captain has his cabin in the traditional position abaft the bridge, beautifully fitted out in black leather and containing all the latest navigation and communications gear.

Even before you step aboard *Regina d'Italia*, whose silver-grey paintwork marks her out as being quite different from most yachts, the impression she gives is incredibly powerful. The interior design is so strong and novel, the use of materials and textures so lavish and yet so controlled, the décor so modern and at the same time so traditional, that she practically overwhelms the critical faculties. Some, especially those whose idea of yacht design is based on varnished mahogany and polished brass, will not like her. But there is no denying that this vessel is absolutely special and cannot be compared to any other yacht in existence. Unique, spectacular and extravagant – *Regina d'Italia* will be widely admired. □



REGINA D'ITALIA

LOA 51m	Freshwater capacity 19,000 litres	Construction Steel hull, aluminium superstructure
LWL 43.68m	Sewage system Hamann Mini Frame	Classification Lloyd's, @ 100 A1 SSC Yacht
Beam 9.5m	Fire-control system n/a	Mono G6, @ LMC + UMS, MCA
Draught (loaded) 3.3m approximately	Security systems n/a	Yacht management Codecasa
Displacement (fully loaded) 565 tonnes	Monitoring system n/a	Naval architect Codecasa
Engines 2 x Caterpillar 3516B	Air-conditioning Francesconi	Exterior styling Franco and Anna Dellarole
Propellers 2 x Finnscrew 5 blades 'S' class	Communication/navigation electronics C. Plath, Furuno, Skanti, Simrad, Sea-Tel	Interior designer Lazzarini Pickering Architetti
Speed (max/cruise) 17.5 knots (light displacement)	Entertainment systems Sony	Broker Not applicable
Fuel capacity 100,000 litres	Owner and guests 12	Charter Not applicable
Range at 16 knots 4,600nm	Crew 10	Charter rates Not applicable
Bow thruster Chottel type STT-060 LK	Tenders 1 x Castoldi Jet Tender 21; 1 x Zodiac rescue boat	Builder/year Cantieri Navali Codecasa/2006
Stabilisers Quantum QC 1800 ZS	Tender launching system Napoli	Via Amendola 55049, Viareggio, Italy
Generators 2 x Caterpillar C9 power converters, 1 x 80KW Atlas frequency converter	Passerelle Napoli	Tel: +39 (0)584 383221
Watermakers 2 x Idromar reverse osmosis	Paint Dupont	E-mail: info@codecasayacht.com
		Web: www.codecasayachts.com
		Guide price Not applicable



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