

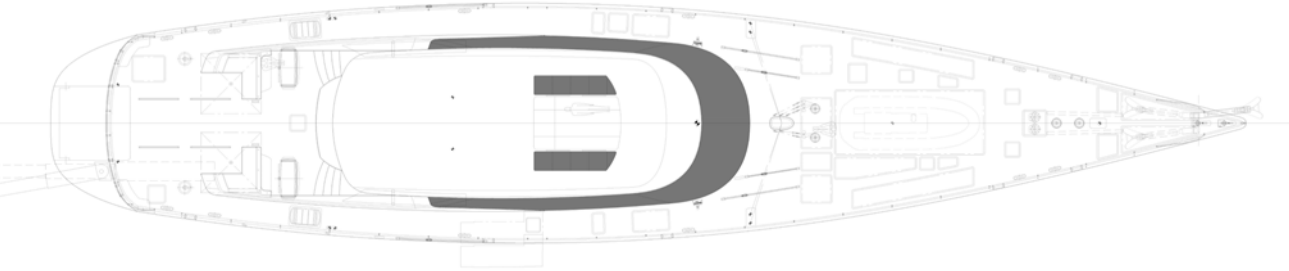


Zefira

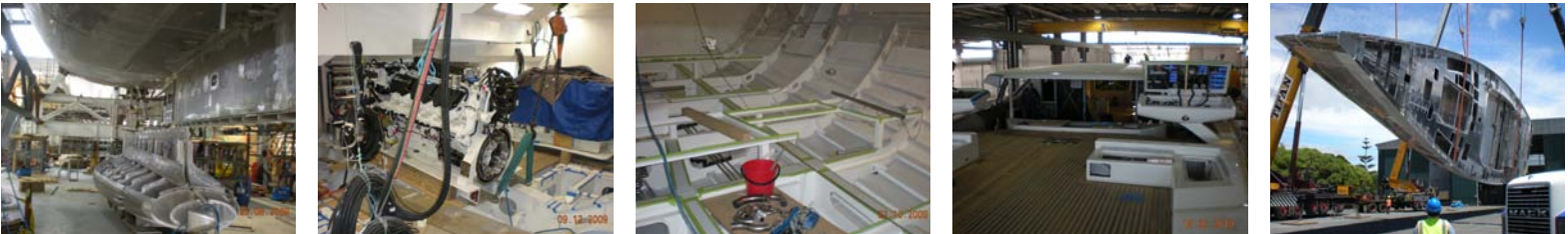
words: Zoe Hawkins
photography:
Jeff Brown/Superyacht Media;
Sargentini

EXPERIENCED ITALIAN OWNERS BROUGHT
TOGETHER A TOP TEAM OF DUBOIS,
FITZROY AND TESSIER TO PRODUCE THEIR
DREAM YACHT: SLEEK, SOPHISTICATED AND
IMPRESSIVE UNDER SAIL





Work begins at Fitzroy’s yard in New Zealand (right). The owners originally planned to build a 46m boat, but increased the waterline length to 50m to add strength to carry the vast sails and increase performance



‘To get good visibility from the helmstations we had to lower the accommodation as much as possible, while keeping an open feeling,’ says McKeon

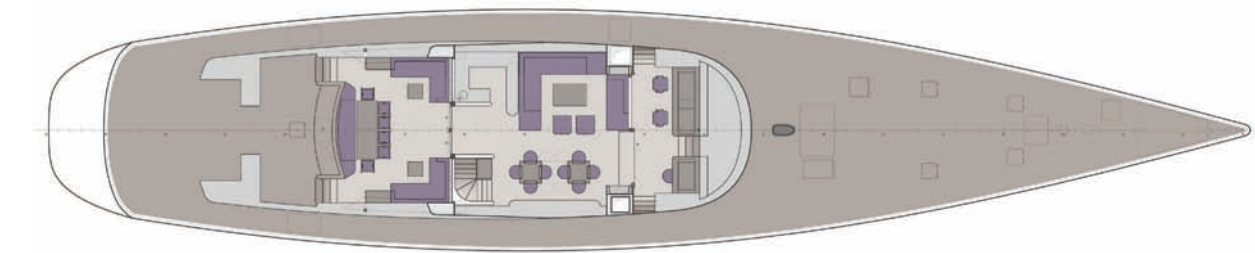
An artist only believes a painting or piece of sculpture is complete when every detail exists in absolute perfection. He must feel that there is nothing he can add or take away that would make his work better. So it is for *Zefira*, a boat considered by her owners to be a work of art, an example of flawless excellence and an entire world of its own within which every detail has been conceived and perfected by artisans. The 50 metre sailing yacht was commissioned by an Italian couple who sought the design expertise of Dubois Naval Architects and Remi Tessier, and chose Fitzroy Yachts of New Zealand to build her.

Both owners are highly experienced sailors. Before *Zefira* they owned a succession of boats, starting with seven metre racers and a 11.5 metre Dufour. The pair travelled extensively around Europe and North Africa aboard smaller boats before investing in a 25 metre luxury yacht that would take them across the Atlantic, where they cruised the Massachusetts coast and southern states. On board their next boat, a 31 metre Jongert, they went whale watching up the west coast of the US and voyaging north to Alaska, before purchasing the 40 metre *Kokomo of London*. Owning *Kokomo* instigated a relationship with Ed Dubois and sparked their desire to build a vessel that would be theirs in every way.

Naval aesthetics

‘We wanted a big sailing boat with every comfort,’ explains the owner, who sought to achieve the same pure sensation under sail that you get from a small dinghy, with regatta-winning performance in light breeze and the ability to aggressively tackle strong conditions. As lovers of fine art and minimalist design, the owners also demanded that aesthetic decisions be a fundamental driver of the naval design. With four aft cabins and accommodation for up to nine crew, *Zefira* was to be the quintessential sailing ship, with a low profile, plumb bow, flush deck, generous sail plan and the latest thinking in keel design. She was also

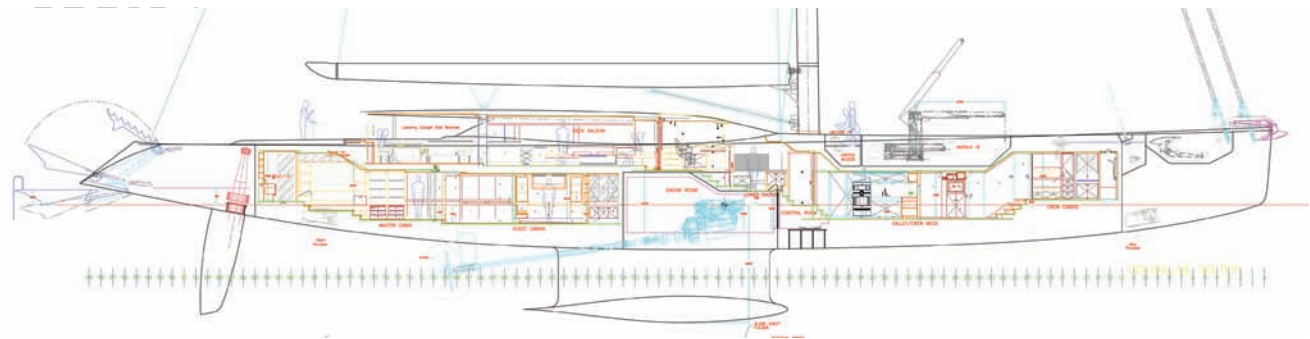
to be striking, sleek and minimalist. *Zefira* is the biggest Dubois sloop ever built without a flying bridge, a decision that was driven by the owners for stylistic reasons. They wanted long, lean and clean lines. ‘The emphasis was on a very clean, sleek design that would stand the test of time,’ says Malcolm McKeon of Dubois. The push for a single level between bridge, saloon and cockpit, combined with ultra-sleek aesthetics, nudged the Dubois design team into new territory. ‘To get good visibility from the helmstations we had to work hard to lower the accommodation as much as possible, while keeping an open feeling,’ adds McKeon.



From the clean lines of the minimalist helm station, to the bright, carefully designed living spaces that are flooded with natural light, *Zefira* is certainly eye-catching. Guests can dine semi-alfresco, shaded from the sun



‘Today we finally own *Zefira*, a magnificent, lean aluminium and carbon 50 metre yacht. A project in which, together with our designers, we put our heart,’ says the owner



The main deck saloon is divided into dining and seating areas, and the lower saloon also serves as a relaxing library (below). Here, Tessier's stunning white leather 3D ceiling was manufactured within a single mould



Decks are uncluttered with dark grey caulking and virtually no extraneous details such as margin boards or hatch surrounds on deck. Tenders are cleverly concealed in the transom and foredecks, and to maximise interior window space, the lower edge of the window line is flush with the teak deck.

The result of two and a half years of contemplation is a boat that oozes appeal and power. From the dock she is understated yet eye-catching, and from the twin helmstations the skipper has the rare treat of an unencumbered view from the wheel, directly over the saloon and to the very tip of the bow. The structure is equally transparent from the main deck through layers of glass in the wheelhouse to the front of the vessel. The 50 metres at waterline length ensures sufficient volume in a

single level to achieve a high level of luxury plus the strength to carry a 62.3 metre rig, under Panamax specifications, and also sufficient to carry the 3,000 square metres of sail necessary to make the single-masted boat perform well.

A refined interior

Remi Tessier, mastermind of the interior of the Dubois-designed and Perini-built 52 metre *Squall*, was initially a reluctant partner in the project because of the distance to New Zealand. However, the owners loved *Squall*, and felt he was the best person for the job. They invited him to visit their home in Milan and asked him to translate the minimalist modernity there to the interior of a sailing boat.



‘I had a precise idea of what I wanted to do,’ says Tessier. ‘A pure, harmonious, light interior, where the light and the sea come inside; minimal but very comfortable’



Passion for the sea: the owner's story

At first I wasn't even interested in sailing; I loved skiing instead, I was almost a champion. But athletics was my forte, running and jumping, and I wasn't bad with ice skating either. My only acquaintance with sailing was through Van de Velde's or Turner's paintings or during weekends in Liguria, when we used to look at the ocean and the small boats sailing away in the distance. It was a different story for my husband, being passionate about boats since his childhood. In the southern region of Italy where he is from there is no shortage of sea, but in the aftermath of the Second World War, nobody could even dream about buying a boat, not even a small one. When we first met, he told me all about his childhood, when he tried with little success to build his first boat out of war memorabilia. In later life,

thanks to his profits in business, he managed to buy a six metre dinghy that he berthed at the lake. Because of his infatuation, I got involved and became passionate about this new sport: At first in the treacherous waters of Lake Maggiore, then in Portovenere and Portofino. Maybe one love leads to the next, or maybe it's a new, 'independent' feeling. Even today, I cannot tell, it doesn't really matter. Over the course of the years we built a series of 14 boats, from the early seven metre yacht (a French Calife) to the various Jongert, from Italy (Cantieri di Pisa) to New Zealand. Today we finally own *Zefira*, a magnificent, lean aluminium and carbon 50 metre yacht. A project in which, together with our designers Ed Dubois, Malcolm McKeon and Remi Tessier, we put our heart.



The drop-down beach area has several uses: swimming or arriving by tender are key. The galley is the domain of the owner's wife. The engine room on centreline is well organised. The mess is for eight crew on board

ZEFIRA *Fitzroy Yachts*

LOA 49.7m
LWL 44.6m
Beam 9.95m
Draught 4.9m
Displacement 322 tonnes
Engines
Caterpillar C32, 1,450hp @ 2,300rpm

Speed (max/cruise)
15.5 knots/ 13.5 knots
Range at 13.5 knots
3215 nm
Thrusters
OYS Swing Thruster 125hp
Generators
2 x Northern Lights 90kW

Fuel capacity
37,380 litres
Rig Sloop
Mast and boom
Southern Spars (Carbon)
Sailmaker
North Sails
Freshwater capacity
10,440 litres

Owner and guests 10
Crew 9
Tenders
Castoldi
Construction
aluminium
Classification
Lloyd's #100 A1 SSC YACHT
MONO G6 MCH

Naval architect
Dubois Naval Architects
Exterior styling
Dubois Naval Architects
Interior designer
Remi Tessier

Builder/year
Fitzroy Yachts/2010
Ocean View Parade,
Private Bag 2014,
New Plymouth,
New Zealand.
tel: +64 6 769 9380
email: rmartin@fitzroy.co.nz
web: www.fitzroyyachts.com

A gourmet heart



Zefira is a boat with a gourmet heart. The owner, whose love of cooking arguably surpasses even her love of sailing, took the kitchen design into her own hands, using as much space as she could persuade her husband and captain to give up from the engine room and other functional parts of the boat. The result is a galley that is applauded for its effectiveness as a work space and which reflects the time and consideration that she put into making it exactly the way she wanted it.

In the centre is a large island, which effectively turns a relatively limited space into a big kitchen. Gaggenau and Sub-Zero appliances and a Vintec wine cellar are matched with full stainless steel throughout the working areas, an expansive cold room and a Miele espresso machine tucked into its own service area. The ingredients for the kitchen – from Italian pastas and New Zealand olive oil, to leaf teas and the very best chefs' knives – were personally selected by the owner and reflect the time that she will spend in this room preparing beautiful food.



The result is a light, bright interior ... It is an efficient and versatile use of space, in which not one millimetre is lost, and into which the outside world can flow

'I was very inspired and had a precise idea of what I wanted to do,' says Tessier. 'A pure, harmonious, light interior, where the light and the sea come inside; minimal but very comfortable, mixing straight lines and organic curves, as is found in nature.'

He selected a limited palette of pure materials and colours in order to achieve a fresh, natural interior. Flooring is bleached wengé with a natural finish. The walls and ceilings are bleached sycamore with a white water matt varnish, and bleaching and colour-matching of the sycamore joinery and aligning the grain as closely as possible across numerous panels took great forethought and planning on the part of the shipyard.

There is baby-soft pure white leatherwork in cabinetry and ceiling panels, on the sofa, blinds and headboards, which can only be described as impeccable. Stainless steel, matt and polished, was used for accessories, lines, frames, hardware, taps, counter tops, bars and furniture frames, for the most part manufactured in-house by Fitzroy, and providing a contrast to the softer woods and leather.

Even while the interior is minimalist, it offers a great deal of clever visual interest. A prominent piece of sculpture in the main saloon by Arnaldo Pomodoro, created for the Italian film director Federico Fellini, was chosen by the owners to set the scene for other subtle but often intriguing touches.

Glass tops on the dining table, coffee table and counter top, by glasswork artist Bernard Pictet, are described by Tessier as 'resembling silver or pearl water with a touch of starlight inside', and are a metaphor for the reflection of the sun on the sea. The strategic use of carbon fibre and steel reflects the boat's high-tech engineering while the white leather framework creates a soft contrast. Small square tables are expanded by unfolding the corners to make a bigger square, with the hingework and clasps providing an opportunity to showcase perfection in steelcraft.

In contrast to the overall lightness of *Zefira*, bold black beams span the wheelhouse windscreen, creating a cathedral effect in the lower

saloon and office, which features a three-dimensional curved leather ceiling that Tessier used to absorb and blend the different levels.

Other artworks featuring from the owners' personal collection are framed in sycamore to match the boat's joinery, and include two further Pomodoro pieces that were a gift from the artist to the owners, a series of maps by Vincenzo Coronelli, and futurist and modernist abstracts from the 1930s by Nicolaj Diulgheroff and Pippo Oriani.

The result is a light, bright interior which is surprisingly spacious for a couple and their guests. It is an efficient and versatile use of space, in which not one millimetre is lost, and into which the outside world can flow. 'I love smart thinking,' says Tessier.



The full-width owners' suite is an oasis of calm; the pale colours evoking a tranquil mood. Fine silver thread running through upholstery fabric is light, feminine and elegant. Three further cabins, a twin and two doubles are for guests



Performance

As well as offering superior aesthetics, the hull represents an ongoing development from the Dubois drawing board, with *Zefira's* fine entrance and squarer transom giving better performance in heavy air reaching, plus greater stability and waterline length. The keel also represents the next stage in research and innovation. The owners requested minimal movable parts below the waterline, so the bulb keel is a conventional one, with an efficiently shaped T Foil with a vertical leading and trailing edge.

The finished boat met her target weight exactly, and early sea trials were rewarding for all concerned. Under delivery main only, the boat achieved 7.5 knots in just six knots of breeze on a beam reach. A key mandate of the design brief – to perform well in light breeze – had been admirably achieved, and in subsequent sails she was found to be lively and perform beyond expectations, sailing above windspeed in breeze of eight to 15 knots, and achieving speeds in excess of 18 knots in 25 knots of wind on her fastest point of sail.

The sleek, lightweight and low windage carbon fibre rig utilises in-mast lock systems for the headsail halyards and staysail stay, with a new-look tapered boom. *Zefira* and *Imagine* are the first to use Southern Spars' new carbon EC6 hybrid rigging, with *Zefira* also incorporating a new batten car system. Sails were manufactured by the North Sails loft in

Auckland and designed by Emirates Team New Zealand's lead sail designer and North Sails director, Burns Fallow. 3DL Taffeta, with carbon and kevlar blend, was used for the working race sails, both gennakers are nylon, and the delivery main and staysail are Spectra carbon panel. An astonishing 2,777 man hours went into finishing the sails, and the 1,746 square metre gennaker is the largest ever built by the loft. *Zefira* is capable of 12 knots over a 4,000 mile range, and her engine room is accessed off the galley. This is a generous space with full headroom and impeccable organisation.

Zefira is the seventh Dubois design Fitzroy has built, and many say it is the best yet. Across all aspects of the boat, particularly interior finishing and cabinetry, all suppliers were pushed to deliver the very best that they could achieve.

Oscar Wilde once quipped, 'I have the simplest tastes. I am always satisfied with the best.' And that sentiment, say the owners, matches their expectations in every aspect of life, and definitely in relation to their boat. 'After three years dreaming about *Zefira*, we feel a lot of emotion. We do everything with love. This is more than sport – it is passion for something that is living, like the sea. This is not a boat that Dubois could sell us, it is our boat, and we have loved it from a baby, to now, when it is complete and perfect.'