



PROJECT AMERIGO

The authors' story

WHO WE ARE

Massimo Franchini: My father Michele founded Cantiere Navale Franchini in 1946. Together we launched over 300 boats of every sort and size. With more than forty years of experience in all the roles, dealing with yachting I can satisfy the requests of a wide range of clients, including the most demanding. I've personally dealt with yacht construction, sales, consultancies and much more, but my real passion is architecture and design. To do just this I graduated from Florence university in 1977. And once I had set aside my entrepreneur's hat, I plunged back to design projects for motor-sailing yachts which according to me are still today the most interesting with Michele Ansaloni: who has been with us on almost every project design that Franchini Yachts have completed over decades. He sports a past experience as skipper, a degree in architecture and a masters in yacht design at the "Westlaw Institute of Marine Technology" and is as always, very keen on technology, hull project design as well as building systems,

by Massimo Franchini

naval engineering and he's also a shipwright. We founded Tairon yachts together which develops design projects which comprise maximum innovation blended with the more solid traditions of naval architecture without neglecting feasibility in practical terms. Our motto is: You can't mess about with the sea!

THE SHIPYARD

The first task for this new / old partnership is "Project Amerigo" commissioned by Mondo Marine, an ideal partner with whom to develop a new line of vessels "Blue Water" ones. We're talking about a shipyard which has been building commercial ships for nearly a century which has recently been taken over by Alessandro Falciai and Roberto Zambrini as managing director. Thanks to their healthy spirit of enterprise they are upgrading to the same standing of the strongest producers of custom built superyachts.

Project Amerigo

INTRODUCTION

“Project Amerigo” is based upon what is known as “Blue Ocean” marketing strategy. It wants to represent a niche market currently defined only by large sailing cruisers derived from the racing world on one side and by explorer type motor yachts and small ships “navette” on the other. In the course of the past twenty years no one has given much serious thought to a small sailing ship. Every superyacht shipyard mainly those building vessels longer than 30 metres focus on displacing yachts, however there have been no proposals with the characteristics concerning the kind of comfort typically found in small ships with mixed propulsion in other words engine and sails. Commercial shipping can count on several vessels, to quote one there’s the Amerigo Vespucci (navy cadet training ship) a splendid example of mixed propulsion which is considered as being one of the finest training vessels in the world today, and cannot be considered as a pure sailing ship.

AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF SHIPS DEPLOYED AS YACHTS

In the beginning motor propelled ships had little power and had to reduce beam to reduce drag. Things did not improve in terms of seagoing capacity even when they reached a 9 to 1 length to beam ratio. These very slim ships were not sea kindly and had poor sea keeping qualities and at top speed they tended to dip their bows dangerously deep into the water. Later in the course of the



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initial decades of the twentieth century as engines became more powerful to match weights and displacements, the preceding extreme ratio of length to beam became obsolete. The hull centre was brought further back and the sterns became consequently beamier. And so shipbuilding progressed to semi displacing hulls sporting partially submerged transoms which gradually differentiated motor propelled ships from classic sailing ships carrying a lot of canvass up to the top of their masts and featuring elegant slim stern lines. However in a relatively recent past, to reduce leeway deeper keels were adopted, sailing ships began to take on board “delta” shaped sails which have been recently re-discovered and can be deployed in both types of ships, those with no engine and therefore pure sailing vessels and in those essentially propelled by engines and propellers.

WHYS AND WHEREFORES FOR THE CHOICE

The reasoning which has led us to develop a new typology of ships featuring power and sail as a means of propulsion is summed up as follows: the superyacht market is expanding and it is reasonable to foresee a further segmentation of the same. Clients coming from a sailing background are in the main, now looking at high performance vessels and can’t find equally “attractive” alternatives, and among the clients coming from fast motor yachts there’s more request for “navette” or small ships, explorer type models and displacing ones which generally boast a considerable range in terms of nautical miles, reduced fuel consumption, great sea keeping qualities, excellent comfort and safety both underway and at anchor. The main requests from this category of ship owners are basically two: maximum range, and lower running costs. On such basis it is reasonable to understand the need for a new category of highly versatile ocean going vessels for the more discerning clients, even those coming from motor yachts certainly feel attracted and charmed by autonomous ocean going sailing yachts where only this most recent typology which combines engine power & sail can guarantee, without having to do without maximum comfort and spaces such as those found on small displacing ships.

PROJECT INPUT

In conjunction with Mondo Marine’s current production, “Project Amerigo” wants to differ in some of the more qualifying features: It opts for discreet styling targeted to clients preferring “to be” rather than “to appear”; in other words a timeless style: albeit in a new yacht but one that’s been for ever cruising oceans, is essentially formal and highly functional. Our main objective is to build and to deliver something which is from a technical and functional view point “simply natural” and looks good while voyaging beyond the perception of time, is also rugged and awesome as well thanks to its capacious interiors and harmonious well balanced silhouette; it is also dynamic as it can cruise to anywhere. With these assumptions “Project Amerigo” wants to be a ship “which never stops” and is different to many of those built to be used inshore. This yacht will be able to perform at fair speeds, autonomously, with very little energy and cross every ocean. “Project Amerigo” is not only about designing shapes, introducing technology, plants, decor and details but is above all a project aimed at creating precise atmospheres which guests will be able to enjoy deploying all their senses: great work has been carried out to obtain accrued natural light and to enhance perception of the interior spaces which sport many large, see through surface areas for one’s delight and to be able to remain in constant contact with the exterior surroundings at all times. Care-



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fully chosen fabrics and natural materials have been used to enhance tactile experience, while special wood essences release their pleasant scent to satisfy sense of smell. Sound proofing has been widely deployed for the benefit of your sense of hearing while the installation of hi- quality loud speakers from which to listen to your favourites are a guarantee in themselves. Special attention has been paid to make all convivial areas more enjoyable at all times. Privacy has been object of much careful planning as well, since the layout of all interior and external passages has been devised so that the owner and his guests can move about freely without interfering with each other or with the crew. Contrary to a "universal" style which tends to stratify homogeneously, decor and atmospheres not considering the context into which they are installed and the use they will serve, "Project Amerigo" wishes to convey and recall things nautical so that no one will ever forget they are at sea. Everything will be a friendly reminder of this concept from: the size of the interior spaces, seats, grab rails, while rounded shapes and padded surfaces will further a sense of safety and ease even when the yacht is close hauling in a steep head sea. These characteristics will generally have to blend with great understanding of owners' wishes to add and "customise" to their liking thereby transforming "Project Amerigo" into their very own exclusive, unrepeatable unique yacht. To make this happen "Project Amerigo" encourages ample customising, re- distribution as well as decor changes. The only limit imposed lies in maintaining coherency with the general idea. And any contribution presented by owners or consultants in line with Mondo Marine's custom made philosophy is gladly accepted. Naturally it has to respect the spirit with which Amerigo came to be and the project's invariables are there to preserve the yard's "imprimatur" and sea keeping qualities. In a nutshell the concepts that went into drawing up the exterior lines and the interiors are: functionality, harmony, connection with the surroundings, tradition, novelty/surprise, brightness of the interiors, lightness and authoritativeness. We built the yacht's body with the right mix of these ingredients. Few other variations were exploited on the theme to obtain a wide range of products capable of satisfying current clients' tastes and without altering the general poise we gave it spirit.

INNOVATION AND R&D

"Project Amerigo", in addition to being the project for a new yacht, it also represents the first leg of a truly innovative route. We are convinced that energy saving, is ecologically speaking a necessity



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coming before cost saving exercises and with "Project Amerigo" we wish to put together innovative solutions in a quest for efficient sustainable energy. In this optic "Project Amerigo" is a technical platform from which to implement innovative solutions extending yachts' cruising range from no limits to all seas as we prefer to say.

A METHODOLOGIC APPROACH

Any idea, irrespective of how genial or congenial it may be must develop through teamwork: project designers, shipyard, suppliers, university, Class registry bureau all together represent the team involved with "Project Amerigo" each one in the appropriate field of competence where: Drag reduction and resistance to forward motion is checked with detailed computerised C.F.D. programmes, tank testing, optimisation of overhangs, specific treatments to immersed areas. Propulsion through large pitch propeller: Energy produced via multiple use of micro turbines, solar panels, wind vanes, and water activated vanes while underway. Exploitation of sails which are set at the push of a button with simplified rig. Compliance with environmental norms, on board pollution management plant, grey and other polluting exhaust water treatment plants, use of low impact and recyclable material. Weight saving measures in the form of pre-constructed aluminium sheets for decks and honeycomb structures for the interiors, GRP piping, electricity panels and motherboards with digital readings.

PROPULSION

To obtain maximum saving in terms of consumption we've acted on two fronts: a 1000 KW diesel engine which exploits a variable pitch propeller which can be deployed with the

sails, and with no engine running the feathering propeller blades will set so as to offer minimal resistance to forward motion or drag. A 950 square metre ketch rig with easy to use squared main and mizzen sails which perform best when running before the wind. A software manages and monitors the efficiency of engine power and sails together and can fine tune the single components such as pitch, angle of propeller blades, engine rpm for best results semi automatically.

GENERATED ENERGY

Is obtained from small D.C. generators with variable rpm linked to solar panels and micro-turbines which keep AGM or lithium battery banks charged.