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COLUMBUS SPORT HYBRID 40M

# CRUISING COMFORT

The 40m Sport Hybrid made its first appearance at last year's Monaco Yacht Show and immediately won over lovers of modern design and clean technology. Her contemporary profile, the work of Sergio Cutolo, is her most striking feature, but the real story is in her engine room, where a hybrid Diesel-electric engine gives her trans-Atlantic range, and the ability to cruise in almost total silence.

By Alain Brousse Images Thierry Amelot



## Columbus Yachts made no effort to hide their pride when presenting

**Cruising at 8-knots in electric mode, the only noise in the cockpit is the water along the hull**

their latest yacht, the 40m Sport Hybrid in Monaco. The first yacht of this length to receive Green Plus certification, she is a floating testament to the ecological sensibilities of the Palumbo Group, the parent company of Columbus Yachts. Her environmentally-friendly build impacted all aspects of design and construction, right down to the wood used on her interior, which is 'eco' certified, along with the pain used on her all aluminium hull and superstructure. However, the greatest impact was of course on her engine, which is a hybrid design and installed in an engine room that is as spotless as a gourmet kitchen, at least when we viewed it. Everything down here is installed and placed with meticulous care, the immaculate nature of the engine room as a whole reflects the efficiency of the 1,920hp twin MTU 12V2000M94 engines. Each is coupled to shaft-drives, but also two 60 kW Siemens electric motors, which are powered by twin 80kW Khoeler generators, giving the yacht the ability to cruise at slower speeds on just her electric motors.



**Drop down balconies  
in the salon open  
up the space for  
entertaining**



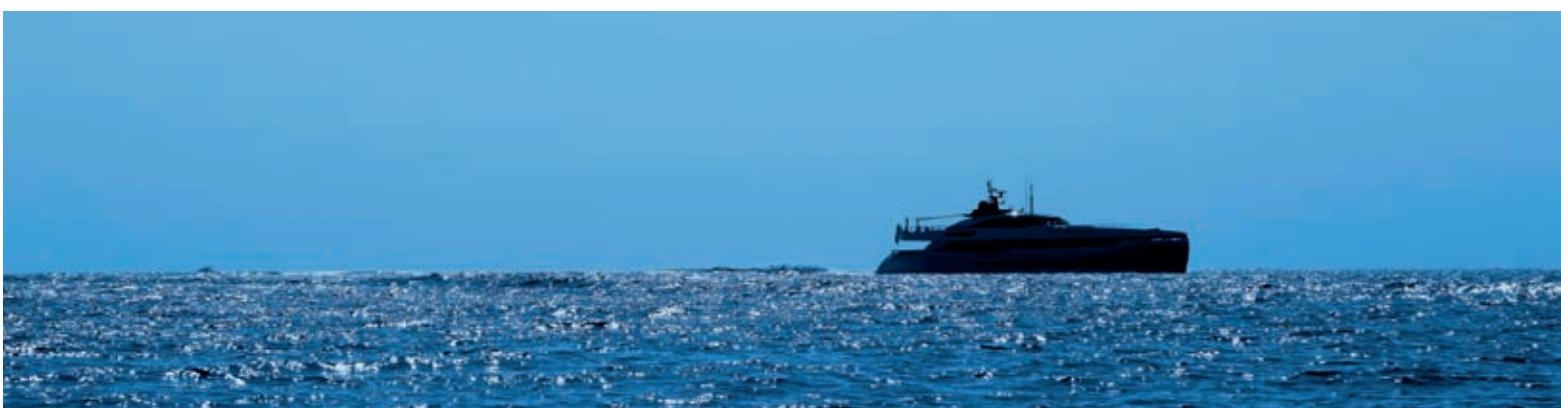
In this electric mode, the yacht is exceptionally quiet, with noise levels in the salon reaching just 45 decibels and 40 in the owner's suite - and most of that was from the ventilation system and water along the hull! We had to stop and concentrate to actually perceive the noise made by the generators powering the electric engine. The benefit for the environment aside, this will be a welcome feature on destination-intensive cruises if the owner wants the crew to get the yacht underway early, but doesn't want to be woken by the sound of the main engines starting up. In electric mode, the Columbus Sport Hybrid 40M can manage 8-knots, but with her main engines running she'll easily reach a cruising speed of 15-knots. Consuming 270 l/h at this speed, her 44,600 l tanks will provide her with a range in excess of 2,400 nautical miles. Even at 15-knots,

however, the noise levels in the salon and owner's suite are never louder than 60 decibels.

As a yacht built for ocean crossings, the Sport Hybrid 40M is equipped with a truly impressive wheelhouse. Fitted out with the same level of finish as the guest areas, we can't help but admire the ergonomics of the control console, which is extremely clean and uncluttered, with three central display screens and a handful of controls, the rest being touch-screen.

The absence of a helm chair is questionable in terms of crew comfort, but the backrest pedestal achieves its goal of keeping the bridge open and spacious with a small office and settee for three, complete with small table, aft. From the U-shaped settee, guests will

## The upper salon is undoubtedly our favourite area



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have a good view out, but this could have perhaps been improved by raising this area slightly more. To port and starboard a sea door opens onto the Portuguese bridge. Moving forward, we find a foredeck relaxation area that includes a large sunpad and Jacuzzi. However, with a few simple rearrangements, the sunpad can be converted into a sunken U-shaped dinette. This space overlooks the bow, which houses a tender and crane.

An open hardtop, the 40m Sport Hybrid does not have a flybridge, but moving way aft, we step onto a huge aft terrace that is home to a sitting area and bar under the hardtop, with plenty of space for sun loungers against the stern rail. A canvas Bimini can also be erected during the day for additional protection from the sun. Directly below, an outdoor dining area for ten is located in the cockpit and is almost entirely covered by the upper deck. Descending a pair of symmetrical stairs to the bathing platform, we find that it is in actual fact a drop-down transom door, which creates a charming beach club complete with bar area, day head and shower. The beach club provides access to the tender garage,

**The interior is flooded with natural light thanks to large rectangular portholes**



which opens laterally to port and houses the 5m RIB Novurania tender, while the rest of the hull is of course given over to guest areas and crew, with two VIP cabins and two guest cabins located amidships. Crew quarters are located forward in the bow, with a galley, crew mess and four cabins for the 7-man crew, including the skipper. Up one level is the main deck, with its salon, dining room, galley and owner's suite. The design here has maximised the internal volume, while also providing impressive sea views from just about any area of the main deck except the galley, which is professionally equipped with Gaggenau and Miele appliances for high-end formal entertaining. The principal feature of the salon, however, are the drop down bulwarks to port and starboard, which create balcony extensions that open up the space for large parties. It isn't a revolutionary feature, but rather than reinvent the wheel, Columbus have sought to bring all these modern features and innovations together in a package that is extremely attractive for spending time at sea. Forward, past the ten-seater dining room table and the galley, we find the owner's suite.

This is an extremely personal and custom-designed



A folding transom turns into a large beach club





space, created specifically for the owner and his wife. There are vast ocean views to port and starboard through large rectangular windows, but the suite does lack the 180-degree views common to yachts this size, as the enormous en-suite, complete with full-size bathtub and separate twin-head shower, is located forward. To port of the king sized bed is a walk-in wardrobe that almost rivals the galley in terms of size, while an antechamber to starboard doubles up as an office and personal relaxation area with a settee and large windows. Our favourite area aboard the yacht we have left for last, however. Found on the topmost deck aft of the wheelhouse, the upper salon is a beautifully-designed zen area in which to relax underway. A few subtle ornaments enrich its minimalist design and a giant drop-down screen converts it in the blink of an eye into a world-class movie suite. Opening onto the large terrace and bar, it is a magnificent owner's retreat when cruising with a full load of guests.

Although the homegrown Italian super yacht market may be under strain, the nation's shipyards and designers have continued their work apace, relying on the export market for survival. It is for this reason that we think the Columbus Sport Hybrid 40M is going to be a global star in the years ahead. ■

**Subtle design cues  
enrich the minimalist  
style of the yacht**

COLUMBUS SPORT HYBRID 40M

**LOA:** 40m (131' 3")  
**Beam:** 8.20m (26' 11")  
**Draft:** 1.75m (5' 9")  
**Fuel:** 44,600 l  
**Water:** 5,700 l  
**Displacement:** 203 t (full load)  
**Gross Tonnage:** 395 GT  
**Max engine:** 2 x 1,920hp MTU 12V2000M94  
**Electric motors:** 2 x 60 kW Siemens  
**Max speed:** 23-knots  
**Cruising speed:** 15-knots  
**Cruise consumption:** 250 l  
**Autonomy:** 2,500 nm  
**Speed in electric mode:** 6-8-knots  
**Naval Architect:** Sergio Cutolo (Hydro Tec)  
**Exterior Design:** Sergio Cutolo (Hydro Tec) and Palumbo Group  
**Interior Design:** Hotlab Yacht Design and Palumbo Group  
**Builder:** Columbus Yachts Palumbo (Naples - Italy)