

SEPTEMBER 2024 / BOATINTERNATIONAL.COM

US EDITION

# BOAT

International

## AUDACIOUS ESCAPADES

FROM ANTARCTICA

TO TANZANIA...

AND SPACE!

ShowBoats



**+**  
STAYING  
SAFE IN THE  
RED SEA

PREVIEW  
THE LIKELY  
NEWSMAKERS  
ATTENDING THE  
2024 MONACO  
YACHT SHOW

## COMPACT CRUISER

HOW FRIENDSHIP BUILT 138FT KASIF,

BILGIN YACHTS' FIRST EXPLORER

**PLUS** BRING A CLEAN SHIP TO PRISTINE PLACES

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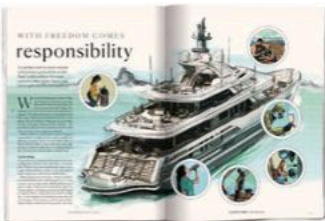
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ON BOARD



## Eternally entertaining

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The Hot Lab interior of Bilgin Yachts' *Eternal Spark*, the new Bilgin 163 by Unique Design, shows its charter-friendly features. The decks hold up to 100 people quayside, with five separate bars and six outdoor social areas at the guests' disposal. These include a generous 69ft sundeck featuring a huge spa pool, a 39ft bridge aft deck, and a spacious main aft deck. *Eternal Spark* debuts at the Monaco Yacht Show. [bilginyacht.com](http://bilginyacht.com)

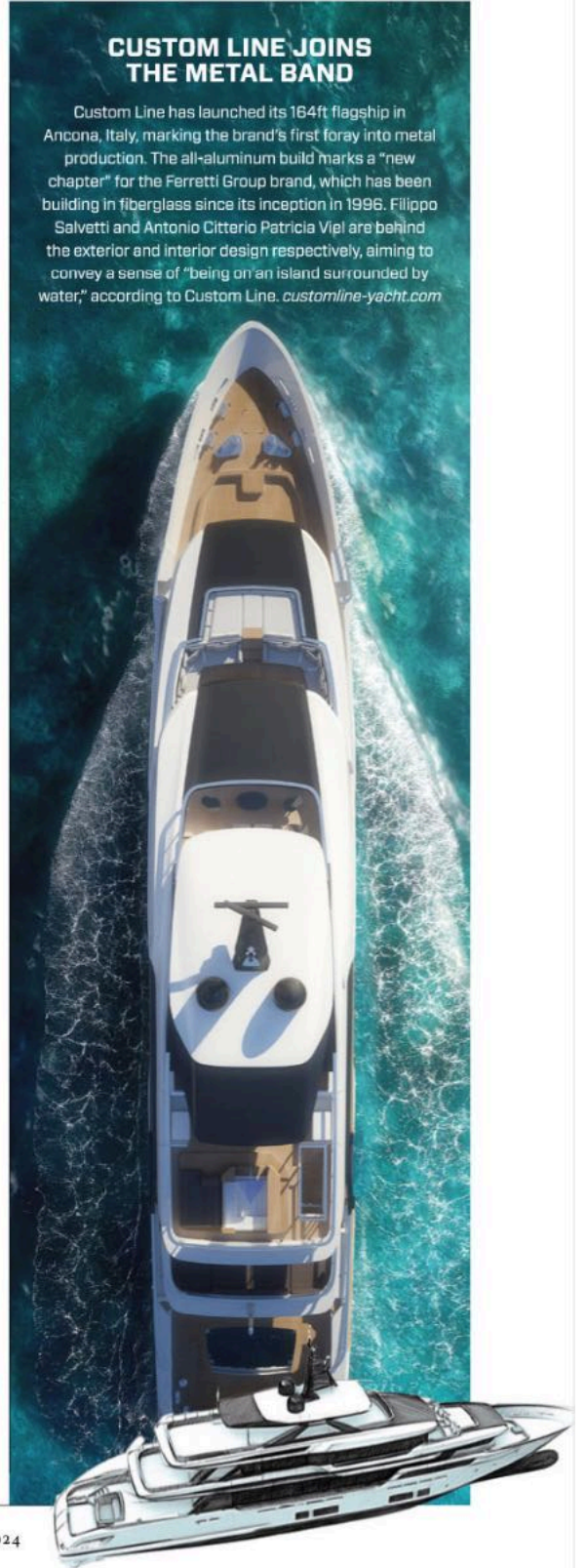


## Speedy sale


Baglietto has sold the first of its new speed-optimized 164ft Fast50 models just a few months after the project's reveal. The Francesco Paszkowski design meshes historical "trendsetters" from Baglietto's past and references to the automotive world. [baglietto.com](http://baglietto.com)

## CUSTOM LINE JOINS THE METAL BAND

Custom Line has launched its 164ft flagship in Ancona, Italy, marking the brand's first foray into metal production. The all-aluminum build marks a "new chapter" for the Ferretti Group brand, which has been building in fiberglass since its inception in 1996. Filippo Salvetti and Antonio Citterio Patricia Viel are behind the exterior and interior design respectively, aiming to convey a sense of "being on an island surrounded by water," according to Custom Line. [customline-yacht.com](http://customline-yacht.com)







# The life aquatic

A fish-inspired explorer yacht from Bilgin is the first of its kind for the Turkish builder — and the culmination of a shared dream for two close friends, *Risa Merl* discovers

PHOTOGRAPHY ERAY ALTAY

# It

started on a motorcycle ride. About eight years ago, two longtime friends – one a yacht designer, the other a captain and fish farm entrepreneur – took to the open road. When they hung up their helmets at the end of the day, the talk turned to building a yacht, and the idea for *Kasif*, an 138ft explorer yacht from Bilgin, was born.

“The owner is my very close friend – we shared a house at university,” says Emrecaan Özgün, director of Unique Yacht Design & Naval Architecture. “We had a dream of one day designing something together. So on that motorcycle trip, I said, ‘Let’s start... I’m going to begin sketching a yacht for you now.’”

That first sketch was for a yacht of around 85ft, which soon stretched to 92ft and then 99. When work began in earnest on the engineering design package, the yacht was nearly 115ft and it grew further still. In the years leading up to *Kasif*’s build, the owners’ budget improved, as did their understanding of what they were looking for in a vessel. That’s how the project eventually landed at the sweet spot of 138ft.

*Kasif* means “explorer” in Turkish, and the key to the owners’ brief was that the yacht be designed with the looks, heart and seaworthiness of an explorer vessel. Owners Tolga and Selin Vural envisioned merging the concept of a floating office – to visit their farms in the Med and Aegean seas – with a luxurious home on the water for their young family.

“We embarked on a meticulous design process to create a robust and unyielding explorer with every detail carefully considered to ensure both safety and functionality,” Tolga Vural explains.

“We had other boats before, but they were smaller,” he adds. “I went from driving a 42-footer myself to going up to 42 meters.” To figure out what they wanted in a larger vessel, he and his wife scoured boat shows and chartered a few yachts. A large enough platform to accommodate their growing family became a priority and so the length extended.





Kasif means “explorer” in Turkish, and the key to the owners’ brief was that the yacht be designed with the looks, heart and seaworthiness of an explorer vessel





"We agreed we needed this size – we had twins and I have an older child, so the cabins are designed to suit our needs," Vural says. *Kasif* has an expansive owners' suite forward on the main deck, but the couple is more likely to use the amidships VIP on the lower deck as their bedroom, at least for now. "It's cozy, comfortable and I like that the faint engine noise helps lull me to sleep," he says. This location also puts them close to the three guest cabins and the children.

*Kasif* has a thick steel hull balanced by an aluminum superstructure, and it meets the owners' needs for efficiency and seakeeping. "We required a vessel that is not only rugged but also safe for travel to our farms situated at least three miles from the coastline," Vural says. "In heavy weather, the boat is really stable."

This project is the eighth collaboration between Unique Yacht Design and Bilgin Yachts, who worked together on projects like the 262ft *Tatiana* and the identically sized *Leona* (a BOAT Design & Innovation Award winner for outstanding exterior design in her category). But Unique Yacht Design created a brand-new

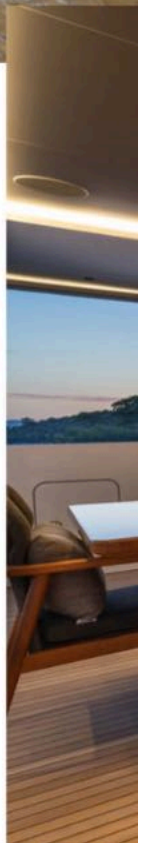
profile for Bilgin Yachts with this rugged 138ft explorer.

"Breaking new ground in both design and performance, *Kasif* is a testament to our dedication to pushing boundaries," Bilgin Yachts shipyard director Mehmet Şengün says. The yacht also marks a milestone as the first to emerge from the builder's Antalya facility (Bilgin Yachts also has a large facility in Istanbul).

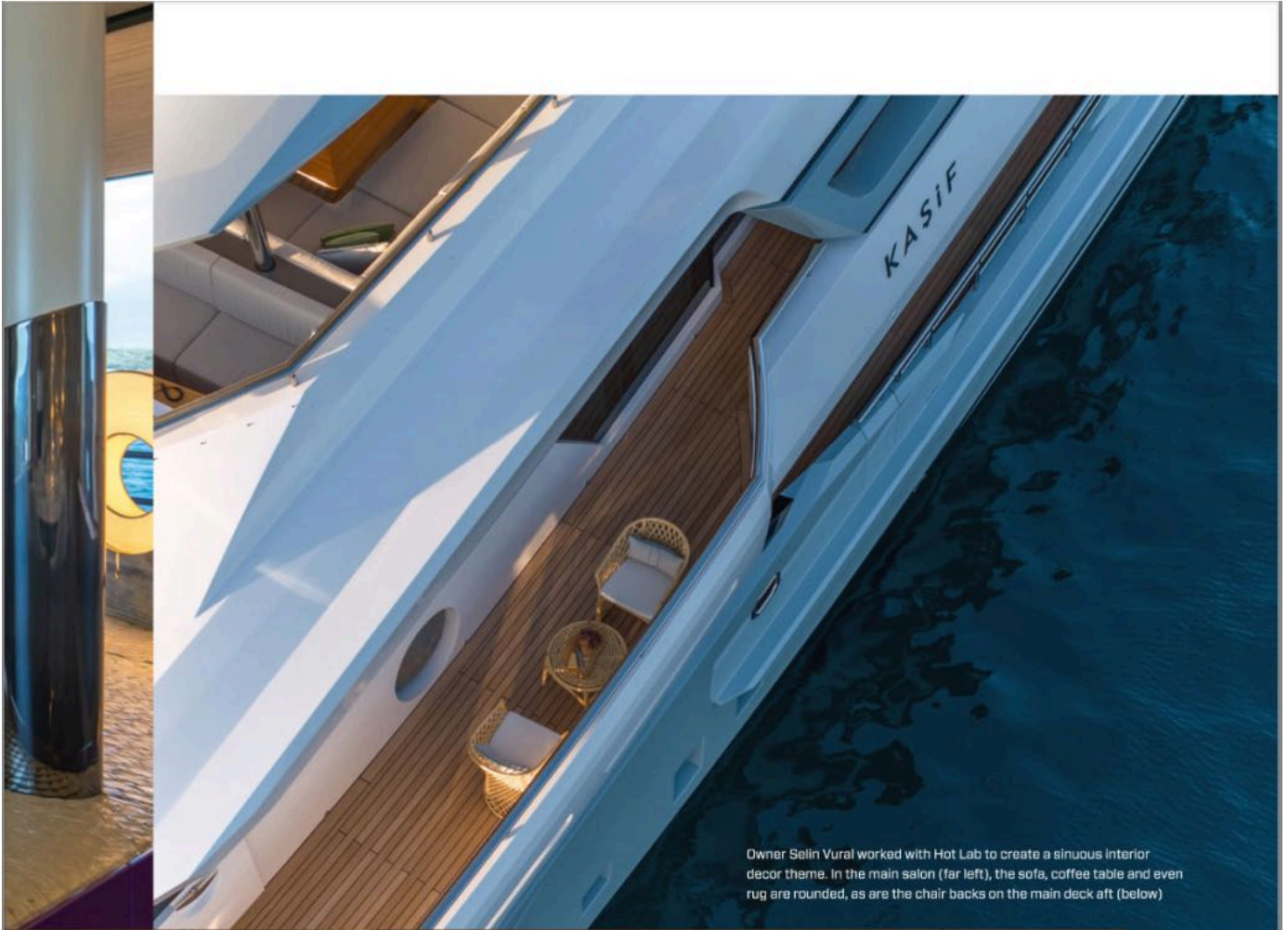
"*Kasif* embodies the sporty and dynamic appearance that we cherish [in other Bilgin yachts]," says Bilgin's commercial director, Berkay Yilmaz, who notes that *Kasif* shares design cues with the builder's new Bilgin 163 series yacht (the first of these, *Eternal Spark*, debuts at the 2024 Monaco Yacht Show).

"We spent a lot of time on the design process for the 42-meter, which was very helpful for creating the new 50-meter (163) series," Özgün says. The familial styling between the two is evident in the angular features, asymmetrical windows in the forward portion of the hull and the vertical rectangular windows on the lower deck.

*Kasif*'s owners wanted their yacht to evoke exploration through her design, which blends the high bow and







Owner Selin Yural worked with Hot Lab to create a sinuous interior decor theme. In the main salon (far left), the sofa, coffee table and even rug are rounded, as are the chair backs on the main deck aft (below)



## FISH TALES

When entering *Kasif's* main salon, an unusual material that frames the entryway and tops (under glass) a cabinet behind a sofa catches the eye. If it looks like real fish skin, it's because it is, from pirarucu (also known as arapaima gigas or paiche,) a fish native to the Amazon Basin.

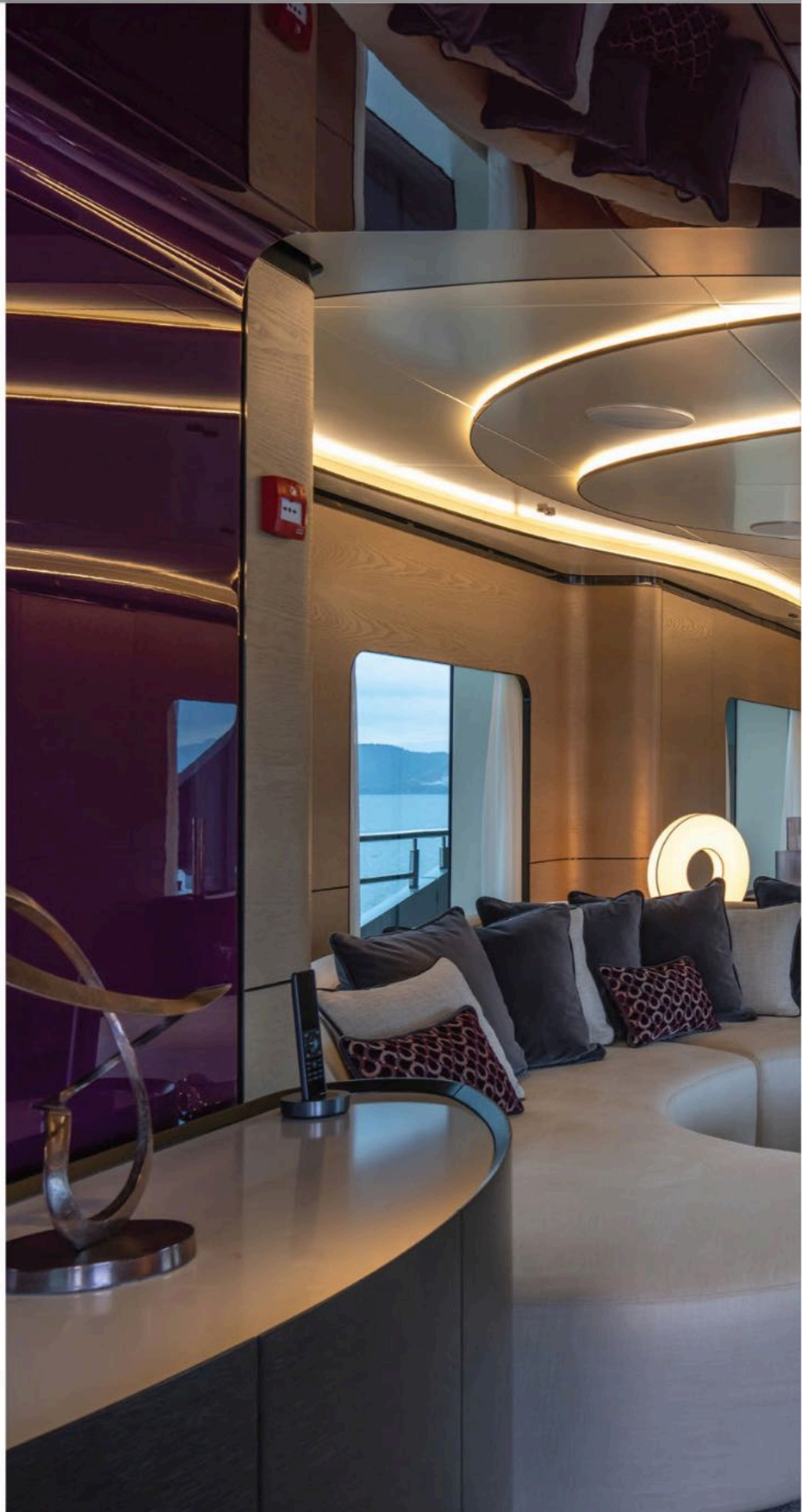
"The choice to incorporate this unique material resonated strongly with [the owners'] personal and familial ethos, enhancing the yacht's interior with a tangible link to their maritime heritage," Hot Lab's furniture and equipment specialist Chiara Pastore says.

"Pirarucu leather is derived from the skin of the pirarucu fish — it is a by-product of the food industry and is sourced from sustainably managed farms that are controlled and regulated by IBAMA (Brazilian Institute of Environment and Renewable Natural Resources)," she explains.

Organic tanning technology produces high-quality fish skin leather, free of heavy metals, which is treated and dyed. A specialized tanning process also ensures its durability and resistance to environmental factors such as the salty conditions on board a yacht.

"Pirarucu leather can present some challenges due to its unique texture and thickness, but skilled artisans can work with it effectively to create luxurious finishes," Pastore says

Turin-based company Foglizzo, which sources the fish skin through a local fabricator, supplied the pirarucu leather used on *Kasif*.





Curves and organic shapes define *Kasif*'s interior. "We wanted the interior to be fluid, like a wave"



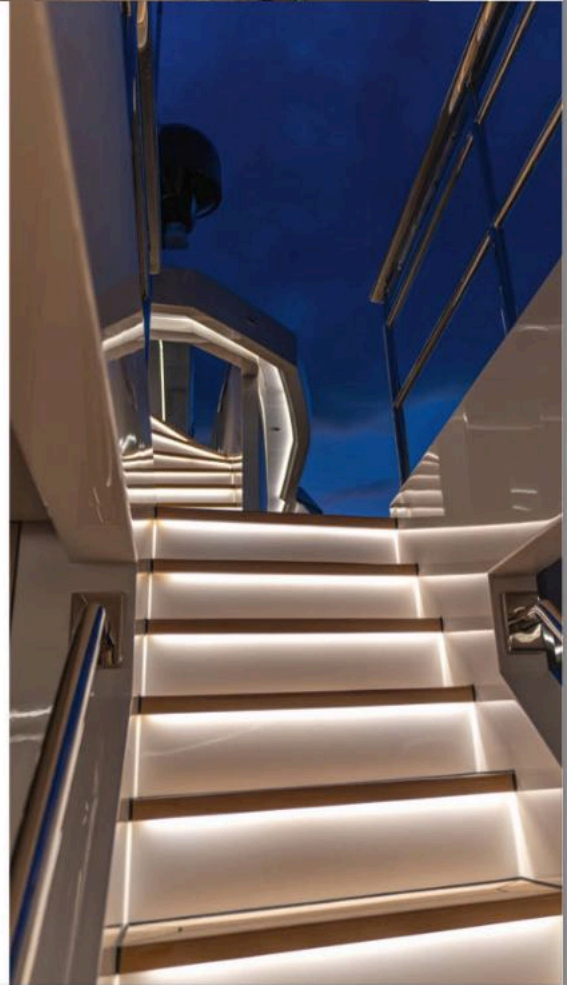
stocky build of an expedition yacht with modern exterior lines and geometric shapes that add a sense of dynamism. The high bulwarks feature a cut-out with stainless-steel handrails at the midsection to allow views from the main salon. Side decks disappear behind an expanse of glass on either side as the interior stretches to the full beam forward on the main deck. On the port side, the glass hides an entrance to the light and bright galley; on the starboard side, a staircase connects the main deck with the bridge deck. Up there, the superstructure bulges out to create wide side decks and enhance the sightlines for maneuvering.

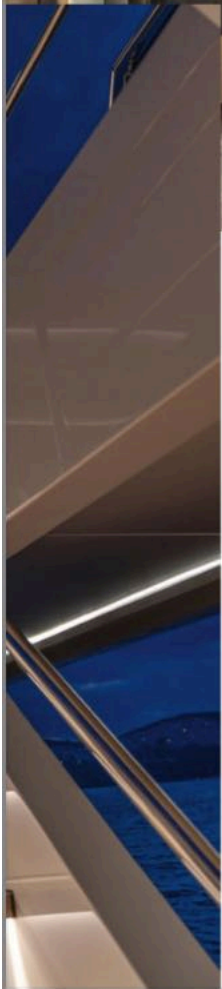
Beneath the surface, a defining feature of the displacement hull is the pronounced bulbous bow. "It works like a wave breaker," Özgün, who was also the naval architect, says. The bulb cuts into the waves, pushing the water alongside the boat for a smooth ride. The 262ft Bilgin yachts that Özgün designed inspired the hull form, which was optimized for the shorter length.

"The bulbous bow shape, aft end and propeller locations is very similar to our 80-meter (262-footer), so we don't have any question about the efficiency," Özgün says. *Kasif* burns as little as 16 gallons per hour at 10 knots, giving the yacht a range of more than 5,000 nautical miles at that speed. "At eight knots it's very interesting because the fuel consumption drops down to 30 liters (eight gallons)," Özgün adds.

An interior motif that evokes the sea goes hand in hand with the yacht's explorer soul. An architect herself, Selin Vural worked closely with interior designer Hot Lab on the concept for *Kasif*. "She had her tastes and preferences clearly in mind, even if she always asked for our advice and relied heavily on our suggestions," says Antonio Romano, commercial director of the Viken Group and co-founder of Hot Lab.

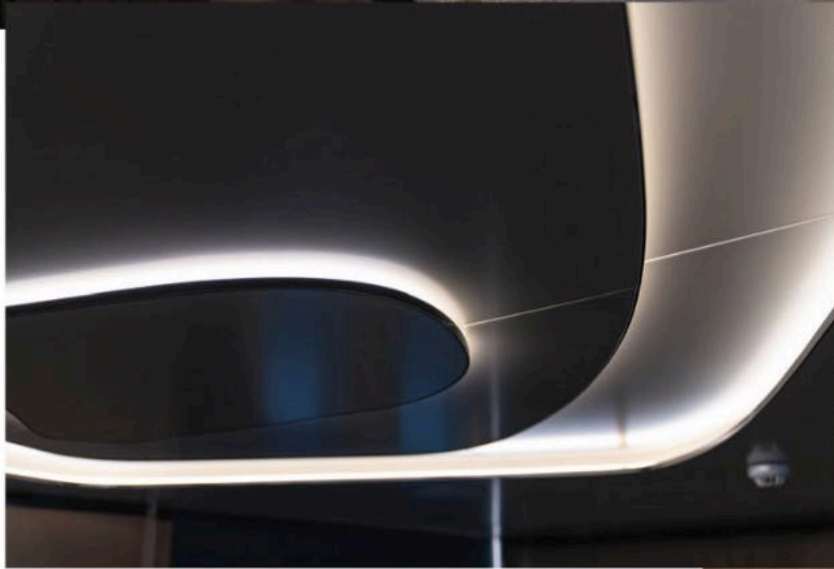
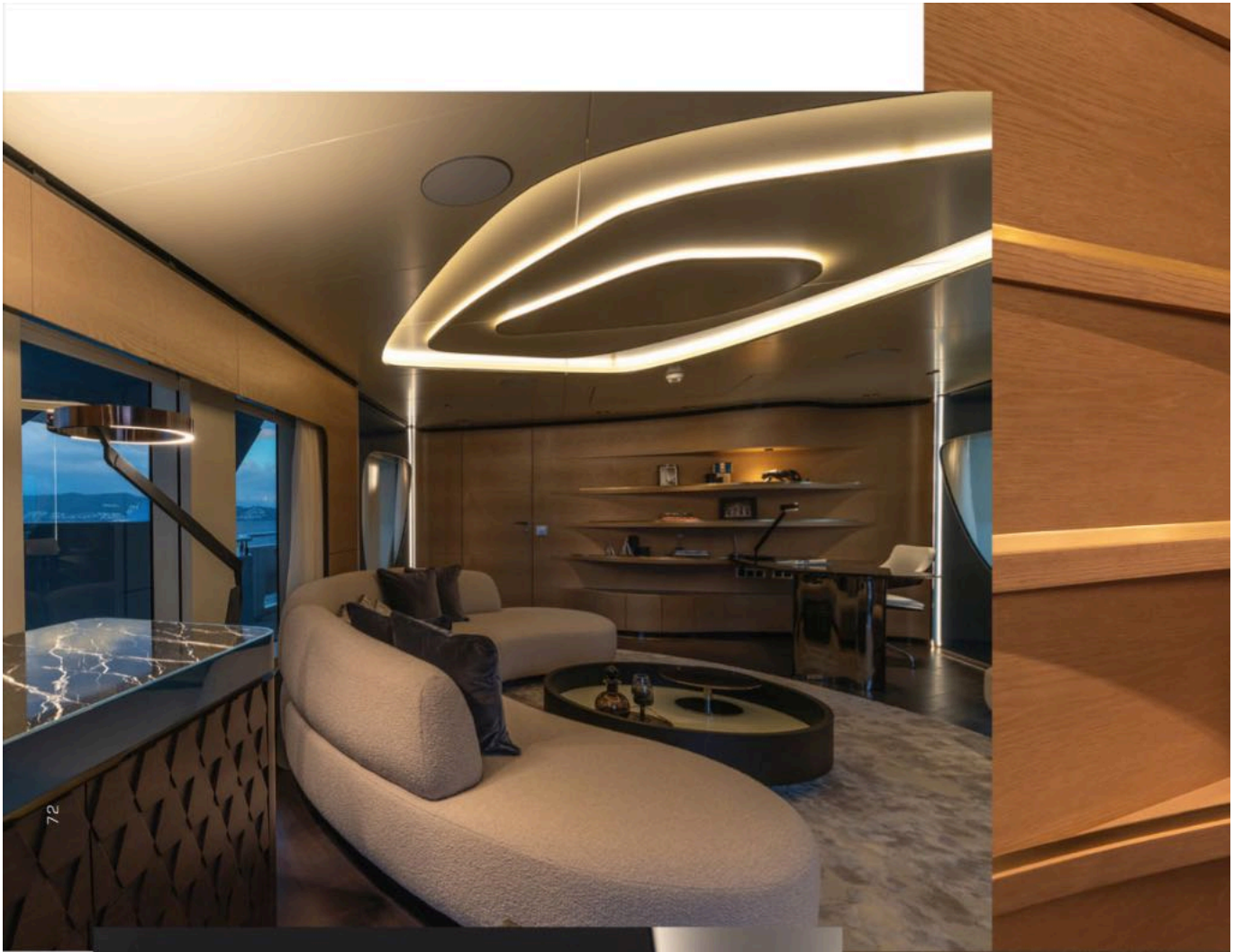
With a shared language of design and architecture, the meetings between the owners and Hot Lab were "more like discussions than presentations,"



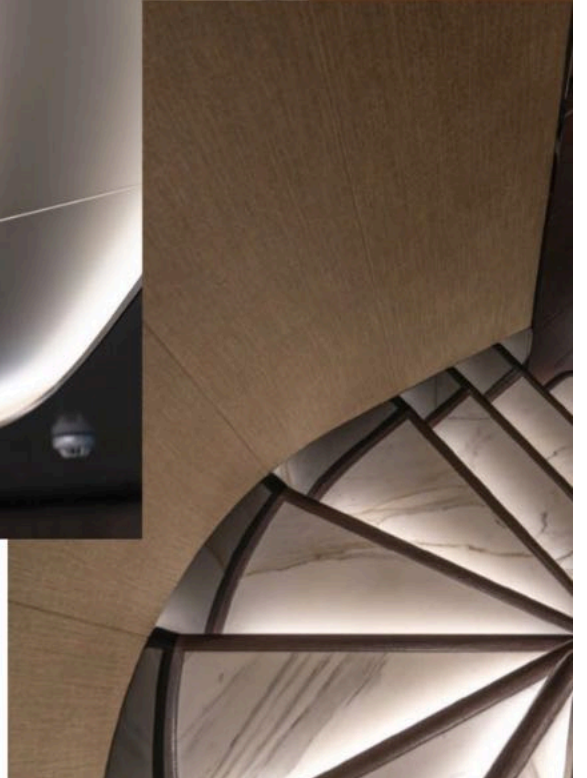


The owners' suite (this page) is on the main deck, while a VIP, two double cabins (opposite page, top) and a twin on the lower deck sleep eight guests. The decor is contemporary, with muted colors brightened up by works of art that fit the sea theme





Continuing the curvy theme, the sky lounge houses the office, which was a non-negotiable. The tray ceilings here and in the salon below evoke a sense of movement with their asymmetrical shapes





The office, the owner notes, is his favorite space on board. A custom black marble-topped desk with a stainless-steel base seems to grow out of a wall of curved shelves



Enrico Lumini, partner and head of design at Hot Lab, says. "From a professional point of view, it has certainly been one of the most fun and stimulating projects that we have had in recent years."

The brief was for a modern, almost contemporary interior style with interesting materials and personalized elements referencing the owners' fish-centric business. The entryway to the main salon is framed by an arch constructed in a burgundy-colored lacquer. This is punctuated by fish-shaped cut-outs inlaid with fish skin from the giant Amazonian pirarucu. At the forward bulkhead of the main salon, the wall behind the dining table is aglow with a backlit sculptural work of art depicting a circling school of fish. Other art on board gives a subtle nod to the sea, such as the abstract seascapes in the guest cabins.

Curves and organic shapes define *Kasif's* interior. "We wanted the interior to be fluid, like a wave," Selin says. In the main salon, the curved sofa, round coffee table and a kidney-shaped chaise sit on a circular carpet. It's hard to find a single sharp corner on board. Even the stained-oak wood walls are formed to create the illusion of a single fluid piece of wood, with curves negating any harsh corners. The tray ceilings above, layered



The transom opens to reveal the beach club, which features a giant illuminated undulating resin artwork by Alex Turco

in asymmetrical forms, also give a sense of movement. Hot Lab has gone for mostly Italian brands – Italian furnishings, with pieces from Minotti, Opera Contemporary, Poltrona Frau, Paola Lenti, i 4 Mariani, Paolo Castelli, Giorgetti, Tribù and Poliform punctuate the interior. Lighting comes from specialists such as Cantalupi, Vistosi, Fisionarte, FontanaArte and Occhio.

The interior color palette morphs to differentiate the various spaces on board. The bold burgundy accents on the main deck give way to lighter pastel shades in the four lower deck cabins. “Finally, we move on to more masculine shades for the salon on the upper deck, which is dedicated to the owners’ office,” Lumini says.

Fittingly for a yacht intended to function as a floating office, there a space on the upper deck dedicated entirely to a private office. This, the owner notes, is his favorite area on board. A custom black marble-topped desk with a stainless-steel base seems to grow out of a wall of curved shelves. Meetings can be hosted on the round sofa, or perhaps out on the aft deck. The office can also transform into a cinema in the evening, with a television dropping from the ceiling. “Televisions are not a focal

point – we don’t really need televisions when we are here [on board],” Selin says. When the family is on board, they prefer to be outdoors, whether feeling the breeze on the lofty sundeck, which hosts a second helm station, or playing by the water’s edge in the beach club. Here, a blue-and-green sofa sits under an undulating piece of resin artwork that evokes the sea. It was made by artist Alex Turco, one of the several commissioned pieces found on board.

For the owners, *Kasif*’s name has a deeper meaning than literal exploration. “It’s the notion of exploration, not just of the Earth, but of the self, encapsulating a lifetime’s journey,” Vural says. “With *Kasif*, we have found the perfect balance, enabling us to cherish moments of solitude while savoring the companionship of loved ones aboard this remarkable vessel.”

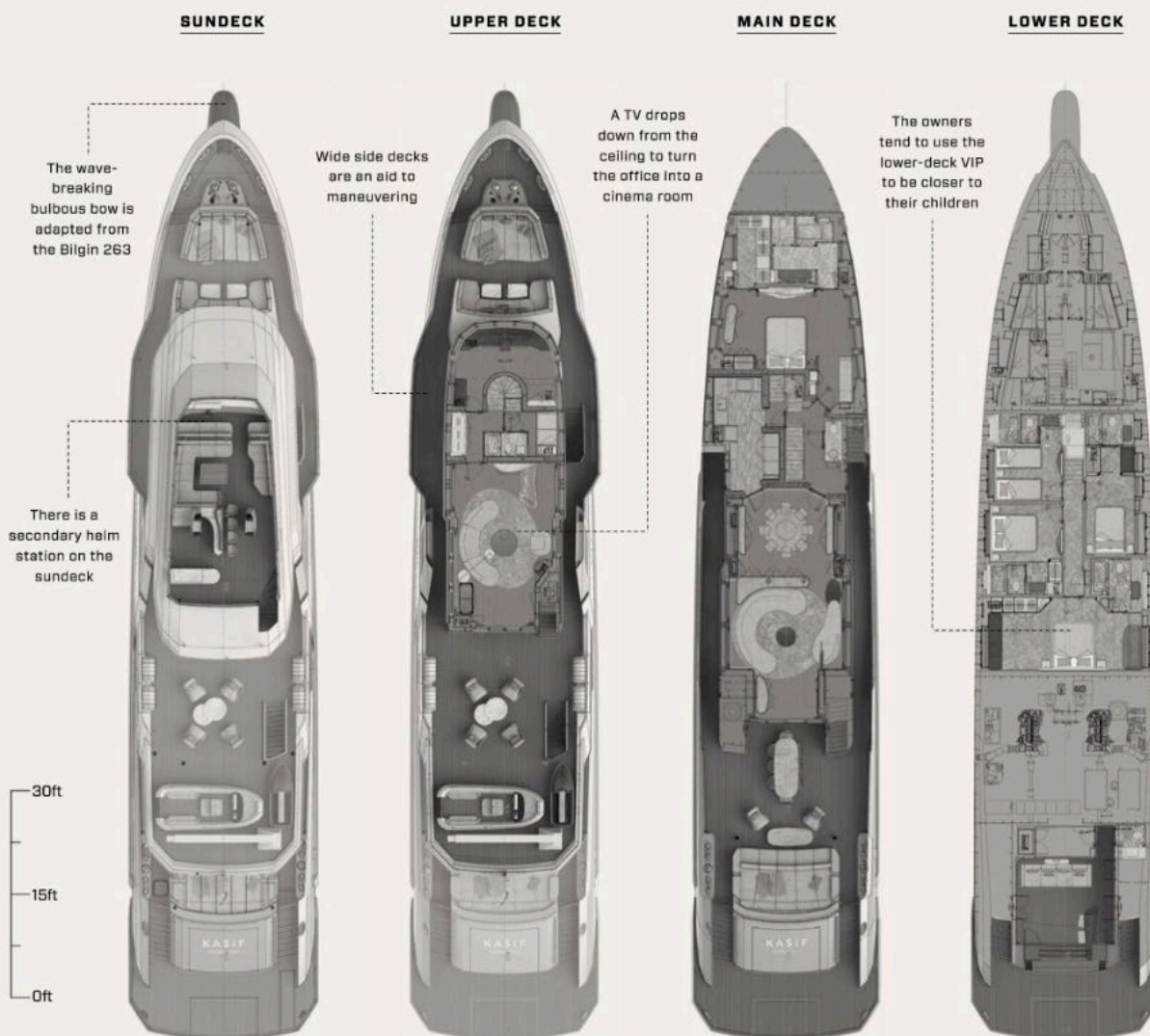
*Kasif* also marks the culmination of a shared design journey – and long friendship – for her owners and designer. At the launch, both Vural and Özgün cried happy tears.

“It’s a long story for us. We’ve known each other since we were 18, and now we are in our 40s,” Özgün says. “I promised him I would design the best boat for him, combining his ideas and mine, and we succeeded.” ▢



**KASIF**

**BILGIN YACHTS**



**LOA** 137' 6"  
**LWL** 127' 7"  
**Beam** 27' 7"  
**Draft** 8' 2"  
**Gross tonnage**  
 381GT

**Engines**  
 2 x 500kW  
 Caterpillar C18  
**Generators**  
 2 x 75kW  
 Caterpillar C4.4  
**Stabilizers** 2 x At rest  
 ABT Trac stabilizers  
**Speed** (max/cruise)  
 14.5/10 knots

**Range at 10 knots**  
 5,000+nm  
**Fuel capacity**  
 11,095 gallons  
**Freshwater capacity**  
 2,695 gallons  
**Tender**  
 16' Zodiac YL  
 490 DL

**Owners/guests** 10  
**Crew** 6  
**Construction**  
 Steel hull; aluminum  
 superstructure  
**Classification**  
 RINA- C, +Hull, MACH  
 Ych, Unrestricted,  
 EFP, DMS

**Naval architecture**  
 Unique Yacht Design  
**Exterior styling**  
 Unique Yacht Design  
**Interior design**  
 Hot Lab

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