



The perfect nautical experience

A good looking yacht that suits all your needs perfectly is what you aim for when you have your own ship built. Leiden-based yacht designer Guido de Groot knows how to incorporate your demands into the most beautiful and practical boat you have ever seen.

TEXT: JANINE STERENBORG | PHOTOS: GUIDO DE GROOT DESIGN

“Designing a yacht is always a combination of aesthetics and technique,” explains De Groot, owner and founder of Guido de Groot Design. “We strongly listen to our clients’ wishes, work closely with engineers and combine the needs of both into one design. The result must always be a yacht that is the prom queen of the harbour, because everything in the design is right. The proportions and views from all sides must be perfect.”

Guido de Groot Design designs both interiors and exteriors for yachts. “Every design is custom. Our clients have a list of demands, for example how big it should be,

whether it should be a fast or a slow yacht and what it will be used for.” Some yachts are meant for short stays on board, others for long ones. “And different people live differently,” he continues. “We discuss the needs of our clients with them and based on all the information we receive, we determine for example how many cabins should be in the yacht, how big the galley should be, but also the look and feel of the ship. Thanks to our many years of experience, we know how people live on a yacht, so we understand our clients’ wishes well.”

Guido de Groot Design started in 1997 and specialises in innovative interiors and

exteriors for luxury motor and sailing yachts. De Groot started out as a car designer: “this gave me a good understanding of shapes and surfaces and a keen sense for 3D objects. My love affair with yachts began back in 1986 when I saw the fourth ‘Highlander’ close to completion at the De Vries Feadship yard. Awestruck by the majesty of this 45-metre masterpiece, I started drawing yachts parallel with my career in car design. The next decade I spent learning everything there was to know about luxury yachts.”

The experience and knowledge that is present within the company, has its impact



on the clientele. “We collaborate with prestigious shipyards in the Netherlands, Italy, China, Russia, Taiwan and Turkey and our clients come from all over the world,” he says.

When starting out with a new client, De Groot starts with logical steps: “Each project starts with several meetings with our client. We need to get a good understanding of what the client wants and needs. After that we start to draw preliminary concept drawings. At this stage, the exploration of ideas is quite free: we wish to push the boundaries and at all times produce good and interesting solutions.” After this, De Groot presents the designs to the client. The best one will be developed further. “That’s when 3D computer programming comes in. This allows us to make visuals for both the exterior and interior of the yacht. This way we make it much easier for the client to get an idea of the potential boat, long before the vessel has begun construction.”

Over the years, Guido de Groot Design has designed a large number of yachts. The design studio now employs seven people, all with a love for yachting and a background in industrial design, engineering or architecture. By now, the team designs about eight yachts per year. “Besides designs requested by clients, we develop our own conceptual yachts. We make something we think is innovative, something that might hit the market or something we think is interesting to clients.”

Through the years, the focus on what is important in a yacht has changed slightly. “Because of the financial crisis, it has become more and more important to focus on becoming more innovative to attract potential clients. This, together with the fact that international safety regulations for yachts have changed, has led to better yachts and better designs.”

Another shift De Groot sees is the demand for ‘toys’. “Submarines on board are start-

ing to become popular,” says De Groot and adds: “the accommodation of these has an impact on the appearance of future yachts.” A submarine might sound extreme, but many requests have passed De Groot’s ears. “We’ve built yachts that can go 50 knots (which is over 100 kilometres per hour) for example.”

After spending almost thirty years in the yachting business, De Groot hardly ever blinks an eye at what might seem like extreme requests. “We have seen it all. Besides, a request is a challenge, not a problem.” Talking about challenges: “We are not easily shocked by requests!” De Groot hints.

www.guidodegroot.com

