



# REBEL YELL

*This exacting Generation X owner shouted “More, more, more!” – and Horizon Yachts delivered, packing everything from a sky lounge to a beach club into a newly created 87ft model, finds Kate Lardy*



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*Skyline* lies alongside in Horizon City Marina, Taiwan's only private yacht marina, dressed in a polarizing blue hull. Some of us instantly love the color; some, well, not so much. I am firmly in the former camp. I find it a cheerful, bold

beacon against the grayness of Kaohsiung.

I have traveled halfway around the world to see the yacht at Horizon's open house event, where Asia's top yacht builder shows off new models while fêting its dealers and clients from around the globe.

*Skyline's* owner, Travis Fox, hails from my neck of the woods, Florida, and I am a bit taken aback to realize that he is my age, a Gen X-er - just a much more successful one. He is at the perfect point in life - established enough to have built a company but young enough to indulge his explorer dreams with his wife and teenage daughters.

The Fox family had gotten their feet wet, so to speak, with a 53ft Azimut Magellano, designed by Cor D Rover, that they took to the Bahamas. But, as Fox puts it, "You know that joke that a boat loses a foot every day you're at sea? Well, after two months, it was really tiny!"

So he went shopping at the 2016 Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show, where among the 18 builders he visited, he came across Rover's Fast Displacement designs at the Horizon display. Already a fan of the Dutch designer's work, he was attracted to the drawings of the voluminous FD85. But he wanted more.

"Americans always amaze me," Rover says. "We thought this is the biggest boat you can have with 85 feet, you can't get any bigger, and the first question he asks me is 'Can we have a sky lounge?'"

But that wasn't all - he also wanted a beach club, a bigger galley and a substantial foredeck lounge. This was where Horizon put the "custom" into semi-custom.

With an engineering background, Fox has the ability to visualize more than your average yacht owner, a useful skill considering his vision entailed a complete re-design. When I ask what specific input he had, I get only laughter from all parties. "Everything," is the succinct answer. "Just look at my email inbox," says Roger Sowerbutts, head of Horizon Yacht USA who worked with the yard, Rover and Fox to create what has become a new model in the FD series, the FD87.

Apparently the thousands of emails this took didn't make him nuts. "That's the way we improve," Sowerbutts says, "by listening to our clients."





## Inside out

Designing the FD series began with the question of how far forward he could push the owner's cabin and still have it look acceptable, says Cor D Rover. "The big challenge was figuring out if we could sell this to Europeans, who can be quite critical when it comes to looks, often sacrificing space (in favor of styling)." When hull No 1 debuted two years ago at the Taiwan boat show, a man approached Rover and, with the directness the Dutch are famed for, said: "You are Cor; you are the designer of that ugly boat." "I just asked him if he had been on board yet, and he said he would tour it soon," Rover says. "The next day he said, 'It's growing on me.' Long story short, three months later he bought it. He fell in love with the volume, space and glass. Sometimes good design has to grow on you."

The doubtful man and his wife are taking delivery of hull No 5 this month, which they will keep in Mallorca for a Dutch winter escape.

### LIGHT AND BRIGHT

The main deck from the aft deck (above) through the main salon (right) to the master stateroom (below) is all on one level, save for stepping a few inches down into the master.

The interior is exceptionally bright with huge windows and a skylight in the master





#### **PARTY READY**

The table top folds in half and the piece can be moved aft to open the space between the salon and galley. The height-adjustable chairs then can become stools. Upstairs, the party continues with a bar behind the helm and plenty of social space aft (below)





Watching his and Fox's easy camaraderie at the open house, I believe him. "At this stage of the process, most people are pretty stressed," Fox says. "I am actually going to miss these guys."

The most obvious difference between the 85 and 87 is the enclosed bridge, which turns the raised pilothouse into a tri-deck. This frees up space on the main deck for an athwartships galley open to the salon instead of the 85's portside closed one. If desired, the 87's galley also can be concealed with a hidden door on the port side and a tempered glass partition that rises over the counter.

The sky lounge, Fox's favorite spot on board, adds 500 square feet of living space. Behind the helm is a new spin on wheelhouse spectator seating – a bar where those seated have a forward view under way, hopefully with something on the rocks in hand. Aft of this is a lounge area that leads outside to a bar-fronted hot tub and grill.

Sowerbutts's favorite place is on the other side of the bridge tucked beneath its forward-raked windows: the foredeck. The impressive al fresco lounge has several settees and tables that can be covered by a sun shade, in addition to a purposely sunny sunpad forward.

The extra two feet went into the back to incorporate a beach club. Kept as close to deck level as possible, the sunken space is two steps down. First seen on the Horizon E88, this club takes the concept to the next level, Sowerbutts says, estimating it at twice the size. It features a modern glass-topped bar fronted by a backlit panel, a kitchenette, television and lounge area that converts into a table and seating. Fox enlarged the windows in the transom door to make this a usable space under way.

The double staircases that lead from the hydraulic swim platform to the oversized aft deck and up to the top deck are features of the original FD85 design. They're unusual on a boat of this size, as Sowerbutts points out, but you can't deny the functionality and the wide 23ft 3in beam supports them without infringing on the aft deck space.

Huge expanses of glass are another highlight of the FD series. They make an immediate impact when you enter the salon, and the floor-to-ceiling port and starboard sliding doors in the dining area only add to the effect. This concept of fresh air flow is repeated in the sky lounge, which can be even more breezy thanks to a sliding sunroof.

As on the 85, a full-beam master lies forward on the main deck, flanked by low windows that put the owner right on the sea, and four additional en-suite staterooms are below, where Fox also requested larger windows.

The hull that gives the fast displacement series its name is a versatile tunnel design, transitioning from a hard chine forward to a soft chine amidships and aft and delivering lower resistance over a range of speeds. Its real secret, however, is its High Performance Piercing Bow, or what Horizon CEO John Lu jokingly refers to as the Pinocchio bow. Developed by Rover and Horizon, the submerged protrusion lengthens the waterline and has a sharp entry to reduce underwater currents and dampen pitching in a head sea. Tank testing and CFD show it offers a 10 percent decrease in resistance and fuel consumption over a traditional planing bow, resulting in higher efficiency and greater speeds. With 1,136hp Caterpillar C18s, *Skyline* tops out at 16.6 knots.

The interior design – a collaboration between Horizon's in-house team and the owner – is light and contemporary with white oak flooring in lieu



of carpeting throughout and cool pale gray lacquer walls, which are softened by white vinyl headliners and wall panels. Satin-finished anigre adorns the main and lower decks, while the sky lounge features a darker walnut. Accent walls of striped Australian red gum and the backlit ceiling panel in the guest foyer add unexpected touches.

All of this was accomplished in a mere 14 months between the 2016 Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show, where Fox first saw the FD85 plans, and my sunset cruise in Kaohsiung's enormous harbor at the open house.

*Skyline* – a name in tribute to her builder – was shipped to Florida for the Palm Beach International Boat Show in March, then she will take the Fox family anywhere from the Virgin Islands to the Great Lakes.

In true adventurer style, Fox himself will be at the helm as he plans to run with only his family for crew. With 87ft of boat, this seems possible, perhaps pushing the limits of owner-operator due to her huge volume, but a manageable length for securing marina slips.

You might say Fox represents a new age of owner: knowledgeable, energetic and hands-on with both the build and running of his yacht. He found a receptive builder in Horizon and talented designer in Cor D Rover Design – a mutually beneficial relationship that has given Horizon an exciting new model it has already sold to another owner.

Move over Baby Boomers, Generation X is coming. ▣

#### OUTDOOR LIVING

They said it couldn't be done on a boat this size but Horizon proves the naysayers wrong with an exceptionally comfortable beach club. Below: the owner also specified a new railing style for the upper aft deck and foredeck using Plexiglas inserts for a clean look



**SKYLINE**

**HORIZON YACHTS**

**BRIDGE DECK**

**MAIN DECK**

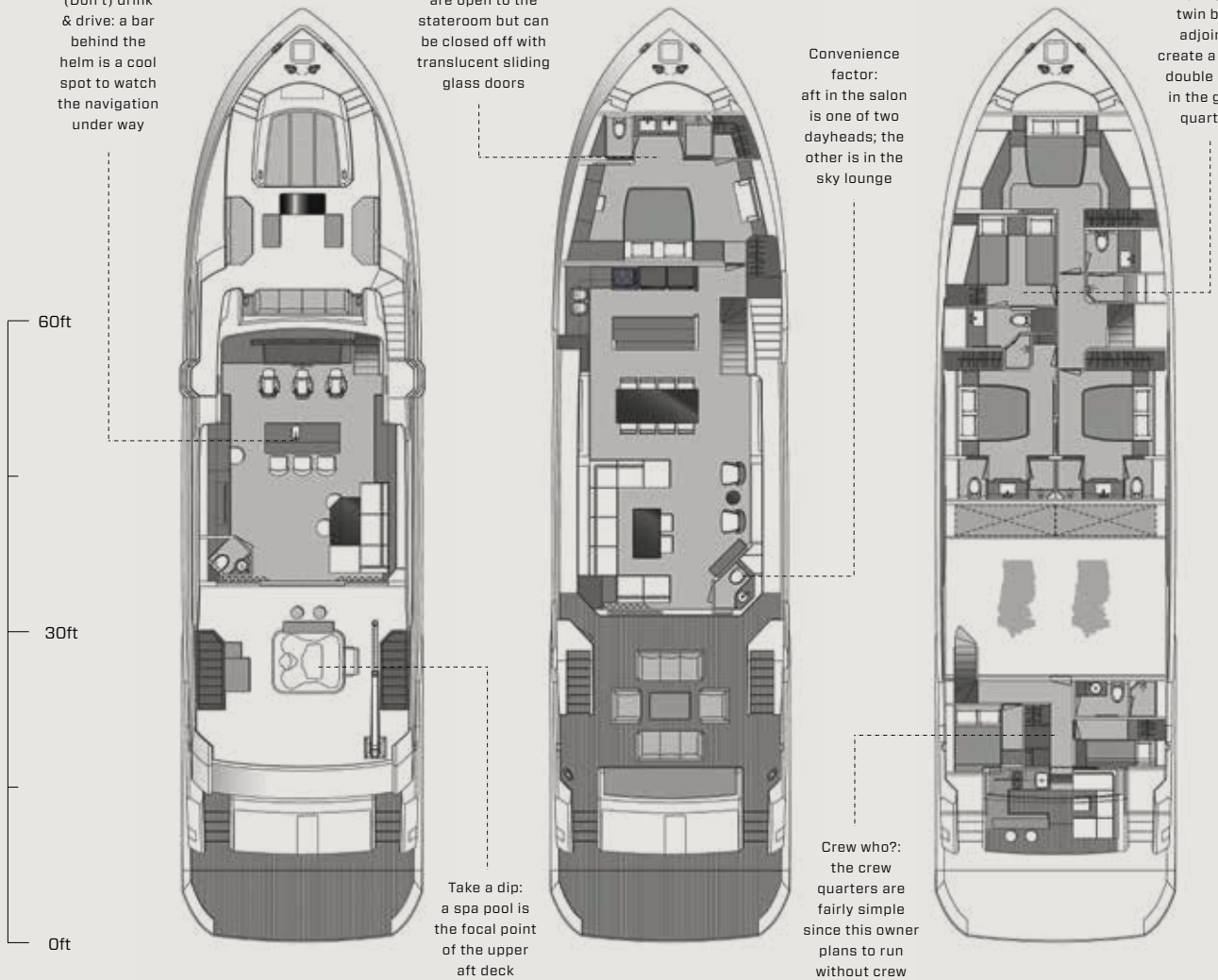
**LOWER DECK**

(Don't) drink & drive: a bar behind the helm is a cool spot to watch the navigation under way

Peek a boo: the master en suite's dual vanities are open to the stateroom but can be closed off with translucent sliding glass doors

Convenience factor: aft in the salon is one of two dayheads; the other is in the sky lounge

Sleep together: twin beds adjoin to create a fourth double berth in the guest quarters



60ft

30ft

0ft

Take a dip: a spa pool is the focal point of the upper aft deck

Crew who?: the crew quarters are fairly simple since this owner plans to run without crew

**LOA** 90' 1"  
**LWL** 78'  
**Beam** 23' 3"  
**Draft** 5' 5"  
**Displacement**  
 95 tonnes

**Gross tonnage**  
 190GT  
**Engines** 2 x 1,136hp  
 Cat C18 ACERT  
**Speed max**  
 16.6 knots  
**Range at 10 knots**  
 1,640 nm

**Generators**  
 2 x 29kW Onan  
**Fuel capacity**  
 3,480 gallons  
**Freshwater capacity**  
 400 gallons  
**Tender**  
 Up to 16' on swim platform

**Owners/guests** 10  
**Crew** 4  
**Construction**  
 FRP hull and superstructure  
**Naval architecture**  
 Horizon Yachts

**Exterior styling and space planning**  
 Cor D Rover Design  
**Interior design**  
 Horizon Yachts; owner  
**Builder/year**  
 Horizon Yachts/2018

Kaohsiung, Taiwan and Horizon Yacht USA  
 North Palm Beach, FL  
 t: 561 721 4850  
 e: info@horizonyachtusa.com  
 w: horizonyachtusa.com