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August 2019

Room to Move

Horizon's FD77

COCKTAIL CRUISE

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The WOW FACTOR

Step aboard Horizon's FD77 to get a real feel for her size.

By Kate Lardy

It was hot, like only a South Florida boat show can be. To dodge the unrelenting sun and crowded docks, I took cover inside the beach club of Horizon's new FD77. Settling into the corner sofa and looking out, I immediately understood why these spaces have become so popular in recent years. Being by the water's edge was an instant revitalization.

That was just the beginning. This was a yacht, I would soon learn, that you have to experience to truly grasp what the Fast Displacement (FD) series is all about.

Introduced three years ago with the FD85, the series has taken off. "But you need to get on board and touch and feel it," says Elise Moffitt, Horizon's U.S. marketing director. "It's a new concept, not only for Horizon but also for the industry."

"New concept" translates to an unconventional look. Dutch designer Cor D. Rover, working with Horizon, approached the series' design from the inside out, he says, beginning with the question of how far forward they could push the on-deck owner's cabin and have it look acceptable. As a result, the 80-foot yacht carries a 23-foot beam, extremely wide for the length, which gives it a bit of a chunky look that takes some getting used to, but is a design that grows on you.

From the inside though, it is unquestionably spectacular. In the immense main salon, flanked by floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking the side decks, the combination of glass, space, and volume is irresistible.

The décor amplifies the light, airy feeling. "The layout is so open; we wanted the design to capitalize on that. We didn't

A 23-foot beam allows plenty of space for entertaining, and the full-height salon windows amplify the voluminous interior.

want to bring any heaviness into it," says Moffitt about this Hull No. 1, which was built on spec for the American market. Horizon's in-house team employed light American oak with accents of high-gloss walnut throughout, Carrara marble in the heads, Cambria quartz in the galley, and bright, white lacquer panels overhead. The floating staircase to the flybridge is enclosed in glass and, unusually, so is the ensuite in the on-deck master. At the stateroom's entrance, there is a wall of clear glass to port, as a solid wall would have felt confining opposite the walk-in closet to starboard. If privacy is desired, flip a switch and the Polyvision glass instantly frosts over.

In addition to the décor choices, the salon also feels open because there is no dining table eating up space. "Most of our clients are getting away from doing formal interior dining; they tell us they may only do it once a month," says Moffitt. Instead, there is a breakfast bar looking into the galley (which can be closed with privacy glass if needed), while the aft deck includes a 10-seat table that can be re-situated mid-deck as a full walkaround with more chairs.

Of course, that is just the layout of this hull; Horizon is incredibly accommodating when it comes to customization. "We can do so many different things on this boat," says Moffitt. For instance, the beach club could be a tender garage, or it could be smaller if more storage or larger crew quarters were needed. This hull has an open bridge, but it could be enclosed, encompassing a skylounge as well. Want a country kitchen instead of an on-deck master? One FD owner chose that. "This series retains all the flexibility we have with our other series and people can really put their mark on the boat," she adds.

That's how the FD87 was born, from an owner's particular vision for the 85 that evolved into a whole new model. His legacy is seen on the FD77 in what Horizon calls "bump outs," overhangs on either side of the bridge with plug-ins for remotes that give the skipper excellent sightlines when docking. "Our owners have great ideas, and we like to incorporate them into other boats," says Moffitt.

Storage was another consideration because the full-height salon windows give a true uninterrupted view not blocked by

SPECIFICATIONS

LOA: 80' 6"
Beam: 23'
Draft: 5' 2"
Displacement: 77 tons
Fuel/Water: 2,700/400 U.S. gals.
Power: 2x MAN V8 @ 1,200-hp
Cruise/Max Speed: 12-15/18 knots
Range: 1,650 nm @ 10 knots
Price: Inquire
Contact: Horizon Yacht USA
(561) 721-4850
horizonyacht.com

The FD77 design provides a wide open layout with a décor that is light and airy.

cabinetry. "We're always coming up with creative solutions; it's really important," says Moffitt. For instance, a 55-inch television folds down from the overhead, which frees up one of the aft cabinets for storage. A freestanding cabinet that runs along the back of the L-shaped sofa athwartships and behind the breakfast bar's artistic mirror finish is additional storage. And with Bahamas-bound clients in mind, Horizon Yacht USA made sure the galley was loaded with extra refrigeration, freezer, and pantry space.

Although the 77's beam is just three inches less than the 85 and 87, it's a completely new hull, the product of five years of discussions with naval architect Donald Blount and tank testing. "People wonder why it is the same beam," explains Moffitt. "It's just the evolution of the design; if we know we can get you 23 feet, why settle for 21 or 22?"

This is no ordinary motoryacht hull. The fast displacement design delivers lower resistance over a range of speeds, but there's more to it. Rover and Horizon's engineers developed a unique High Performance Piercing Bow—a submerged protrusion with a sharp entry forward of the hull that lengthens the waterline. It cuts through underwater currents and dampens pitching to improve efficiency and comfort at slower speeds and performance at higher speeds. In fact, the FD77 can reach 18 knots yet still has the amenities of a displacement hull, a true best-of-both-worlds scenario. So while the FD77 initially catches the eye for its beamy, bright interior, the performance becomes the real wow factor when clients learn what is going on below the waterline.

The series has struck a note globally with owners looking to get more from a smaller LOA. "When we introduced the FD87, I jokingly said that she is the smallest 150-footer we have ever designed, offering the same content mostly found around 150 feet, like five staterooms, including an on-deck master, a skylounge, a salon with floor-to-ceiling glass as well as a serious beach club," says Rover. "For the FD77, the joke still counts; I would say she's the smallest 140-footer we've done, but this one doesn't need any crew."

With 139 gross tons of volume, it's a lot of boat for an owner-operator though. Hull No. 1 does include a crew cabin with two sets of bunks between the beach club and engine room, which could be configured in any number of ways to suit an owner's experience level. For example, if a crew couple assisted the owner, there could be a queen berth here instead, or if more crew space was needed, the quarters could take the place of the beach club. A true owner-operator could send the grandkids back there, making it the fifth guest stateroom.

For anyone on the fence, Horizon has solved the "crew or no-crew" dilemma with an intriguing upcoming addition to the FD series. In development is the FD70 with all the views, volume, and performance in an easier-to-handle package. Like the FD77, I'm sure you'll have to see it to believe it.