



Floating high-profile 'Concept Yacht' finds Perfect Showcase at Abu Dhabi Yacht Show

Middle East's high net worth clientele a key target for one-of-a-kind 'Concept' Super and Megayachts, to be fitted according to the owner's desire

The 2nd Abu Dhabi Yacht Show has provided the perfect platform for several high-profile 'concept yacht' showcases – with the highly anticipated models of the two WHY yachts – a collaboration between Wally and Hermès; a model of the special series of 41m Motor Yacht Catamarans being built through the teaming up of Royal Falcon Fleet, Porsche Design and Green Line Yacht Interiors; the Magellano yacht concept by Fincantieri Yachts; and the ES117, a Weyves Couture by Elie Saab megayacht to be built by prestigious megayacht builder Oceanco, all unveiled for the first time to the admiring eyes of yachting enthusiasts, the media – and most importantly, potential clients – at this year's show.

According to Jacopo Marchi, Project Director, WHY, although the concept of the "floating island inspired"

WHY megayacht was launched earlier, the decision to present the actual models of the yachts at ADYS was driven by the level of interest expressed by the region post-launch.

"When we announced the JV, the fact was that in the first three months the majority of enquiries came from the Middle East. We had to choose a show in the region that would enable us to showcase this revolutionary design to the most appropriate customer base, and we chose the Abu Dhabi Yacht Show," said Marchi. "We are here for the first time and we are very pleased with the level of interest. We have had a lot of enquiries – more than we expected to – and although some of these will obviously reflect the natural curiosity of people to see how two companies such as Wally and Hermès, with strong sailing and design heritages, have worked together, it will be interesting to see how some of the other enquiries progress," added Marchi. The two WHY models showcased at ADYS include 37x24m and 58x38m yachts that defy the standard "long and narrow" design aesthetic of superyachts. The broad beamed-yacht will not fit into a traditional berthing space and is designed for owners wishing for a vessel that can almost act as a movable private island – with expansive living areas and an enormous beach deck. "Clearly the region is very responsive to unique yacht concepts such as WHY, and bringing it to the ADYS was an appropriate business decision," concluded Marchi.

Fincantieri Yachts also unveiled a new 130m concept at ADYS, the Magellano, which Andrea Piantini, Head of Marketing, Fincantieri Yachts, says is still in the first stages of development and therefore offers a great deal of flexibility – something highly prized among the Middle East's private yacht owners – in the ultimate realization of the project.

"We consider this region a key region in terms of clients. The vessels we deal with – usually over 70-100m – are special and specific and require special and specific clients. We have the will and interest to be here, to be visible and talk to the right people," said Piantini.

"For yachts such as the Magellano, which are in the very first stages of development, the advantage is the flexibility to the potential owner. We can fit and fill the vessel to the client's preferences and there is great potential to work with the owner on specific features within the concept design," added Piantini.

But if buying and customizing your own superyacht seems a slightly overwhelming project to take on, Royal Falcon Fleet – in collaboration with Porsche Design and outfitted by UAE-based

Green Line Yacht Interiors – is building a fleet of sleek and innovatively designed 41m Motor Yacht Catamarans that will be offered on a fractional ownership scheme for four weeks' cruising in different locations, fully crewed and serviced, starting at €4 million. A model of the vessels – which will also be offered for sale at upwards of €35 million – was showcased at ADYS.

“The advantage here is that the project is fully financed, we don't need any customer finance to build these vessels. The response at ADYS has been great. There has been a lot of interest expressed, especially from UAE and Russian visitors to the show,” said Bahman Bayat, Business Development Manager Turkey, Porsche Design Studio.

Held under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, ADYS will take place on February 25-27, 2010 at Yas Marina, Abu Dhabi and is the region's only show dedicated to the super and megayacht industry comprising sailing and motorised yachts over 25 metres in length.

The Abu Dhabi Tourism Authority (ADTA) is the event's headline sponsor, with Aldar Marinas signed on as the show's associate sponsor, Bentley as the exclusive associate car sponsor and luxury Swiss watchmaker Ulysse Nardin the official watch sponsor. Other supporters include broadcast partners CNN and Al Arabiya, and The Times, Al Ittihad and The National as official newspapers.