

In conversation with
megayacht owner Jan Verkerk





For **Jan Verkerk**, owning not just one but two megayachts is his business. SEA+I talks to Verkerk on the challenges he faced transforming **Legend** into the first A1 icebreaking superyacht in the world.

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by **Miriam Cain**

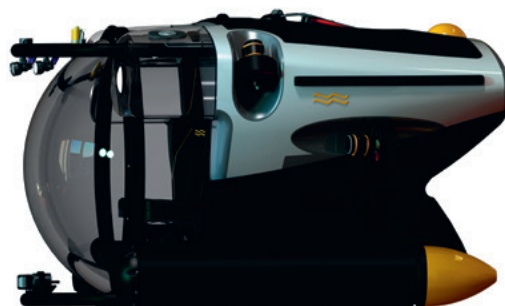


You already own the explorer vessel Sherakhan, what made you take on the extensive project of transforming Legend?
During the past few years I have had the opportunity to explore Antarctica on board Sherakhan, a superyacht that I refitted in 2005. My experiences allowed me further insight into the expertise required to cruise in such remote locations, so I wanted to create a vessel that could go anywhere in the world, but also provide the luxuries that have become standard in the superyacht industry.

What made you choose the vessel that has now become Legend rather than starting a new build project?
Not only was Legend built by a quality Dutch shipyard, she was built as an A Class Icebreaker - the highest rating for an ice-classed ship. She had already been transformed into an explorer superyacht by her previous owner and had been a highly successful charter yacht for a number of years. I also liked the history that accompanied Legend. She was built for the Soviet Union during the Cold War and has seen active service. This shines through her personality - that cannot be acquired in the build of a new yacht.

How has your experience in converting Sherakhan helped with the rebuild of Legend?
What I learnt in the years spent transforming Sherakhan into the mega yacht that she is today - and the subsequent years of owning and running her as a charter business - have proved invaluable in my attitude and knowledge for the rebuild of Legend. From creating and adapting a reliable engine room, to safety features, low noise levels, high-end air conditioning systems, vibrations, stability and even where to locate certain areas such as the galley and crew mess, are all of utmost importance when rebuilding a yacht of any size, let alone a 73.5-metre. All of these have been fine-honed on board Sherakhan and are now perfect on board Legend.

In 1995 Verkerk entered the world of superyachts with the 37-metre motor yacht Jaguar. After six successful years of charter he transferred the knowledge he had learnt to the rebuild of the 69.95-metre Sherakhan (ex Princess Margaret, an abandoned training vessel for Dutch merchant sailors). Fully SOLAS regulated and with the same papers and classifications as a passenger ship, Sherakhan is one of only a handful of superyachts that can operate as a yacht but carry up to 26 guests. Finding his niche in the market, Verkerk has taken Sherakhan to some of the world's most remote cruising grounds, including Patagonia and Antarctica. Such adventures were just the beginning of the creation of Legend.



What have you changed in the rebuild of Legend?
Everything except the hull and main engines have been changed. Working with Icon Yachts and Diana Yacht Design, we have literally rebuilt the vessel.

What unique additions have you made?
Legend now boasts a fully certified helicopter platform, including refuelling systems. She also features a submarine for three people that can be used to explore the underwater world of Antarctica. In addition to the impressive submarine, will be tenders, and water toys including everything from snow scooters to wave runners, ice diving equipment, as well as equipment for the warmer waters she will explore. In addition, we have extended her stern, which now boasts a swim platform and swimming pool.

What are your plans once she is launched later this year?
We will head to Antarctica as we have a charter booked during the Christmas period and our plans are to remain in Antarctica until the end of February. After this, the days shorten and start to close in, and the weather is less predictable, so we will work our way up South America to the Caribbean. We need to be in Greenland by May for further charters. We will stay in the Arctic region throughout the summers for charters around the Baltic before heading back to Antarctica for Christmas again. My plan at the moment is to do this year-on-year, and to follow the Polar summers.

And finally, what makes Legend so unique?
Legend is the only ice-breaking yacht in the world allowing guests to travel anywhere they would like. I wanted to create a luxury vessel that could make all itineraries possible and in Legend we have done this and more - anything and everything is possible on board.

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LEGEND

Length

77.4m (254')

Beam

13.63m (44'7")

Draft

6.4m (21')

Builder

IHC Holland by Verkerk Yachting Projects

Interior design

Verkerk Yachting Projects/ Diana Yacht Design

Year + refit

1973/2015

Engines

2x 4000hp
Bolnes 3008L

Fuel consumption

350 lph

Speed

10 Knots, Maximum
16 knots

Accommodation

26 guests in
13 staterooms

Crew

20-30
(10 extra berths
for expedition crew)

Charter prices

from €455,000 per week

