

Words - Stewart Campbell  
Photography - Mike Burns Photography

*Pitted travertine walls, coconut furniture, leather roses, even a stingray staircase feature in the unique aesthetic of ILLUSION V, launched at the Monaco Yacht Show. Yet thanks to designers Tina Green and Pietro Mingarelli, the 58 metre Benetti is a relaxed home for a young family as well as a statement of style.*



## Cover Boat

Lady Tina Green is about to burst with excitement: “I’m like a child. I just want to jump up and down,” she says, ushering us proudly around the 58 metre Benetti *Illusion V*, which is making her debut here at the Monaco Yacht Show. The superyacht was designed inside and out by Green and her business partner Pietro Mingarelli and the pair have spent the last two weeks camped in a chase boat at Benetti’s Livorno facility, urging the build along to make sure everything was completed in time for the show.

“You should have seen her two weeks ago – there was still so much work to do,” Green says, buzzing. “Everyone said it couldn’t be done.” I’m tempted to suggest we sit for a while and take it easy in one of the comfortable lounges on board, but this is Monaco and we have to hustle. And anyway, Lady G, as she’s affectionately known, is in no mood for sitting, “Let’s go,” she says. “You have to see this!”

*Illusion V*’s experienced owner has an enviable track record, having started out with a couple of Mangustas – a 72 and 92 – before he switched yards with an ISA 120. So far, so sporty. But when he started a family, he thought about going bigger because space on board had become a priority. He found it on his last boat, also called *Illusion*, a half-built 45.6 metre Benetti that Green & Mingarelli Design (G&M) adapted before its launch in 2010. “He bought that boat halfway through its build, so it wasn’t 100 per cent us,” Green says. “This,” she adds, sweeping an arm around the spacious main deck saloon, “is 100 per cent us.”

The exterior style is a fusion. There’s some Bali in there, as seen with the use of coconut and mother of pearl on the external furniture, a hint of ancient Rome in the copious use of travertine and even some Thai, evident in the pen shell ornaments and wooden Buddhas. But the central theme – the symbol most prevalent – is the simple rose. Whether embossed, engraved or embroidered the motif is unavoidable, with details of the flower evident in everything from cushions to carpets, walls to windows. “The owner saw what Pietro and I have done with Lalique Maison, and how we had used the rose motif,” explains Green, “and he liked it so much he wanted us to make it the major theme on his boat.” As well as working on yachts and houses, Green and Mingarelli also design and produce a collection of furniture and accessories that make up the lifestyle arm of Lalique, most famous for its glass and crystals. No fewer than 480 crystals are used on *Illusion V*,

in the floor, ceilings and walls – all carrying the rose.

You’d think the design might become repetitive but the duo have cleverly avoided monotony by playing with the shape as much as possible. For example, cushions are covered in scattered petals, while the staircase features leather walls embossed with the full three-dimensional beaded flowers. It’s like this on all Green’s yachts: they start with a single theme, whether a flower or, in the case of a 65 metre she designed recently, an antique woodcarving picked off the floor of a market in northern Thailand.

The other thing that strikes you about her designs, particularly *Illusion V*, is how comfortable they are, probably a consequence of Green living on a yacht up to six months a year. Thanks to this lifestyle, she knows what works and what doesn’t. Small wonder clients trust her judgement.

It’s a measure of this client’s confidence in Green and Mingarelli that he didn’t visit the yard once during the build. “I saw the boat for the first time this weekend,” he tells me. “They did an amazing job. When my wife and I met with the designers originally, we told them how we wanted the yacht to feel. I didn’t want lounges where you were too scared to sit on the sofa, I wanted to feel at home. They managed to pull it all together plus our requests for certain colours and a certain vibe – casual and relaxed.

“It’s a superyacht and supposed to be luxury and high-end, but we’re quite young with a young family and don’t want anyone to feel like they can’t go anywhere [on board].”

A great example of this “comfort max” ethos is the TV area leading into the main-deck master suite. Usually this would be a study or an office, but that would just be wasted space, the owner felt. “Nowadays you’ve got laptops, iPads, your phone. The world we live in doesn’t require you to sit for hours on end behind a desk with a computer on it. So we turned it into a room we might actually use; where the kids can come in in the morning and jump on the sofa and watch TV. So they’re in the owner’s area, but, you know, not on your bed!”

Guests get treated well, too, since it was important that *Illusion V* had a successful charter career. The big VIP cabin is on the lower deck, occupying the full beam of the boat and has the only bathroom outside the owner’s with the full white-onyx treatment. Four roomy guest cabins sit in front of it: two doubles and two twins (the twins could almost be doubles, so wide are the beds). Discreet but voluminous storage is in all cabins: “One thing we’re very known for is our hidden cupboards,” Green says.



*The elegant lines of Illusion V were penned by Lady Tina Green and Pietro Mingarelli, but she remains recognisably a custom Benetti and shares some of the characteristics of the owner's previous boat, the 45.6 metre Illusion. One big difference, however, is the more heavily raked windscreen, giving the yacht a more aggressive, purposeful presence on the water*



*The sundeck has a central dining area that can be closed off fore and aft to create an all-weather dining space that seats 12 and has some of the best views on the water. The lack of levels across the entire platform is striking; very little legwork is required to get you into the spa, forward*

*The designers wanted the sundeck to be lived on, so they kept the space open and comfortable*







All the requisite A/V is tucked neatly away in the guest suites. “You need your big media, you want your remotes to do everything, you want enough plugs to charge your phones, you want your Apple TV,” the owner tells me. “It’s all got to be there but you don’t want it in your face.” Unless, that is, you do. The spiral staircase leads to another area that will have the charter market frothing: a cinema room with sofas so deep they’re writing poetry.

The upper deck is where the after-dinner action will take place. There’s an option to turn the area into another large cinema space, with a big screen that rises out of a sideboard, although people are more likely to cluster around the bar – one of five on board.

“There are a lot of bars,” the owner admits. “That doesn’t make me an alcoholic – it tells a story. Bars are a focal point and on my last *Illusion* we didn’t have as many. You know, this is my house when I’m on it and I love to mix my own drinks. I don’t want to be waited on constantly and it’s great to be able to go behind the bar and just grab a drink.”

If the party ends in the upper deck lounge, it starts up top. The sundeck of *Illusion V* is spectacular, offering clear uninterrupted views from the rear sunloungers to the raised foredeck spa pool. Better still, it’s all on a single level and incredibly versatile. In the middle of the deck is a dining area that seats 12. Clear doors fore and aft can be opened or closed depending on the wind, making this a year-round, all-weather dining space. Forward is another bar, panelled in matt coconut and embellished with travertine – while the chairs in front of it, also made from coconut, are highly lacquered with mother of pearl inlays, “for that feeling of luxury”, explains Green. As with all the external spaces, the plants up here offer a contrast to the warm beige palette and give life to the decks.

However, none of this cosmetic detail makes it onto the foredeck, which has been left clear. “I’ve never understood why people use that space right in front of the bridge for sunbathing. Why do you want to lie in front of the crew?” the owner asks. “It’s also nice for the crew to have a spot to go and grab fresh air. But if we wanted to use it for a barbecue in the evenings we can do that, or put some mats, even equipment, out for morning exercise, or set up a paddling pool for the kids. It’s a massive, open, transformable area, not a fixed space that becomes totally non-versatile.”

The textures and materials throughout the yacht are something of a G&M speciality. All the exterior dining

chairs are made of coconut and mother of pearl, with chenille fabrics, for instance. “No one else is doing this,” Green says. “We made coconut sophisticated!” All the loose exterior furniture was made in Bali, and Green and Mingarelli posted their own experts there to lacquer it. Elsewhere, parchment – goat skin to the uninitiated – is used to give depth and texture to coffee tables, including the enormous one in the main deck saloon while shagreen (stingray skin) is used on the upper deck side tables, coffee table and panellings on some of the fixed furniture.

“Tina and Pietro have been all over the world finding this stuff,” the owner says. “The skill is that they don’t go and buy out of a catalogue. I go on some boats and I can tell you where most of the furniture comes from: the same catalogues, the same places. [G&M] build, buy and create specific products that you’ll never see anywhere other than on the yacht they’re working on. It’s nice to be unique.”

This focus on design is fine so long as the boat works. The owner admits he is highly sensitive to movement and noise: “Honestly, I’d rather be on land! So it’s important the boat is incredibly stable and quiet. When I got on board yesterday, I said to the captain the boat was listing two degrees to the right. He came back and said, ‘Yep, it’s listing two degrees to the right.’ We’ve had lots of people working with Benetti to make sure the boat runs smoothly, quietly and with no vibrations. All these technical things have been completed to a different standard than before.

“And I don’t want to hear generators. We can sit at anchor in Greece for two months without going into a port, with the generators running constantly. So any vibration or noise, or smoke or smell was something that I wanted Benetti to concentrate on specifically. We managed to get the generators built on special blocks, so that we shouldn’t be able to hear or feel them at all.”

With the boat sitting at the show, it’s hard for me to gauge how successful Benetti has been in this regard, but following successful sea trials, it obviously went well, and she is now heading off to the Caribbean, where the owner will join the boat with his family for Thanksgiving. After that, she’ll head back to Europe for the Monaco Grand Prix. “That’s the plan, anyway,” the owner says, estimating he spends about three months a year on board.

Given that amount of boat-time, it’s understandable that he wants something supremely quiet and supremely comfortable. We can confirm that at least the latter has been achieved – and with aplomb. “Love, passion and comfort” is how Lady Tina Green sums up the boat when we ask her to provide a neat soundbite. When I tell this to the owner the next day, he laughs and confirms: “Yeah, love – lots of love. It’s our home.” ■

See more on the iPad edition



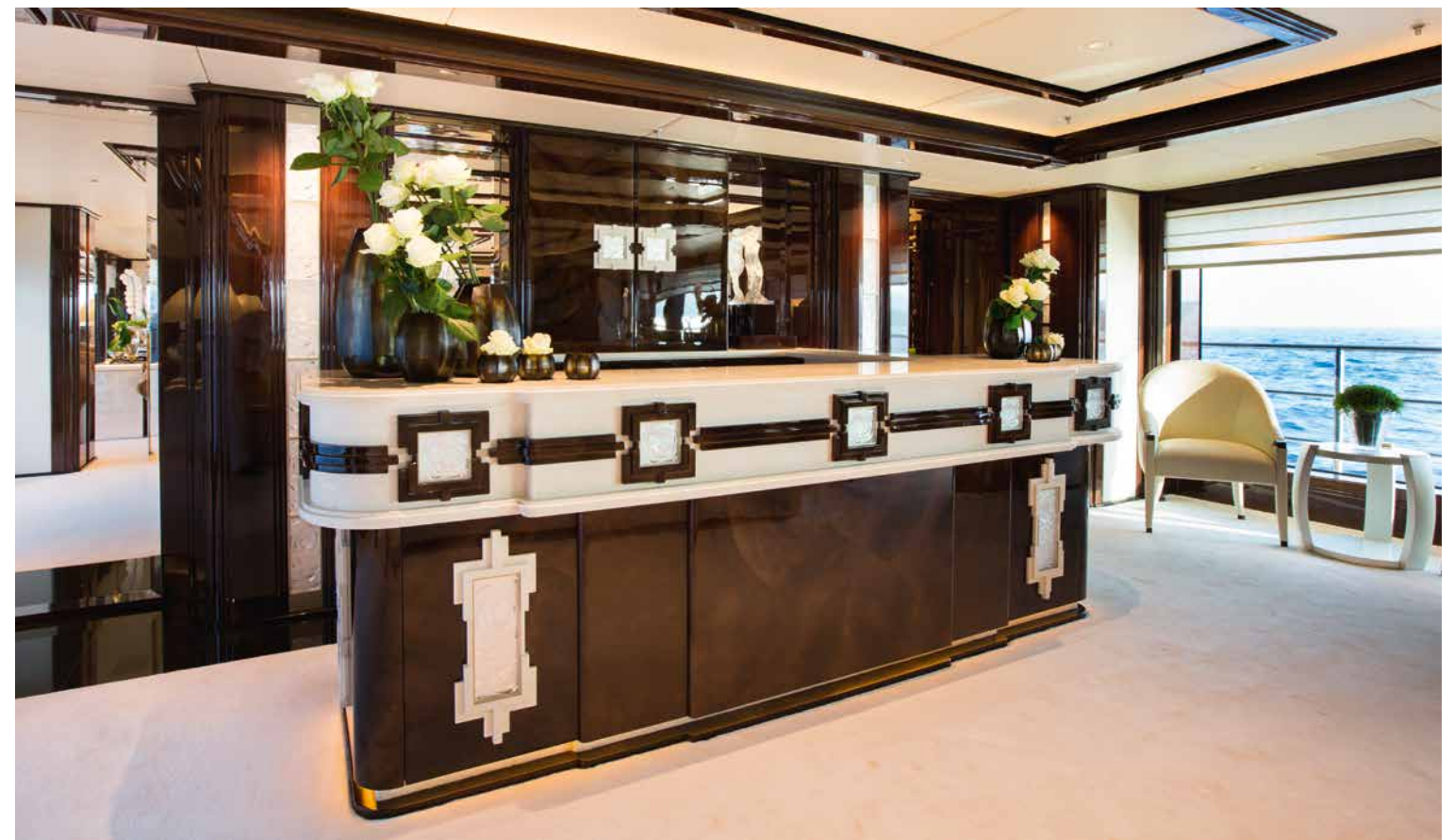




*“I didn’t want lounges where you were too scared to sit on the sofa, I wanted to feel at home”*



*Opposite top: the sundeck pool area, with another bar, fabulous built-in barbecue and adjustable table that can be made bigger for outdoor dining. Opposite below: the first thing you see as you come on board is a U-shaped sofa, with one of five bars and a wide staircase allowing easy access to the upper decks. This page: the main deck saloon is a huge space with floor to ceiling windows giving uninterrupted views, a 75-inch hidden TV and a bar (below) that provides a focal point. “More like a home than a yacht,” says Green*







Above: the roomy VIP is as big as most master suites. Right: the master itself is full beam, and features huge headboards and cushions, embellished with intricate beaded roses and highlighted with crystal bugal beads. Lalique roses are designed into all the furniture, as seen in the side tables, as well as subtly included in the carpets. Opposite below: The bathroom is also full

beam, made from onyx, with one huge bath, a shower, and his-and hers private toilets. Below and left: the foyer and spectacular staircase, with its leather walls, three-dimensional roses and creme et marfils floors inlaid with Lalique crystal

“One thing that strikes you about Green’s designs, particularly Illusion V, is how comfortable they are”







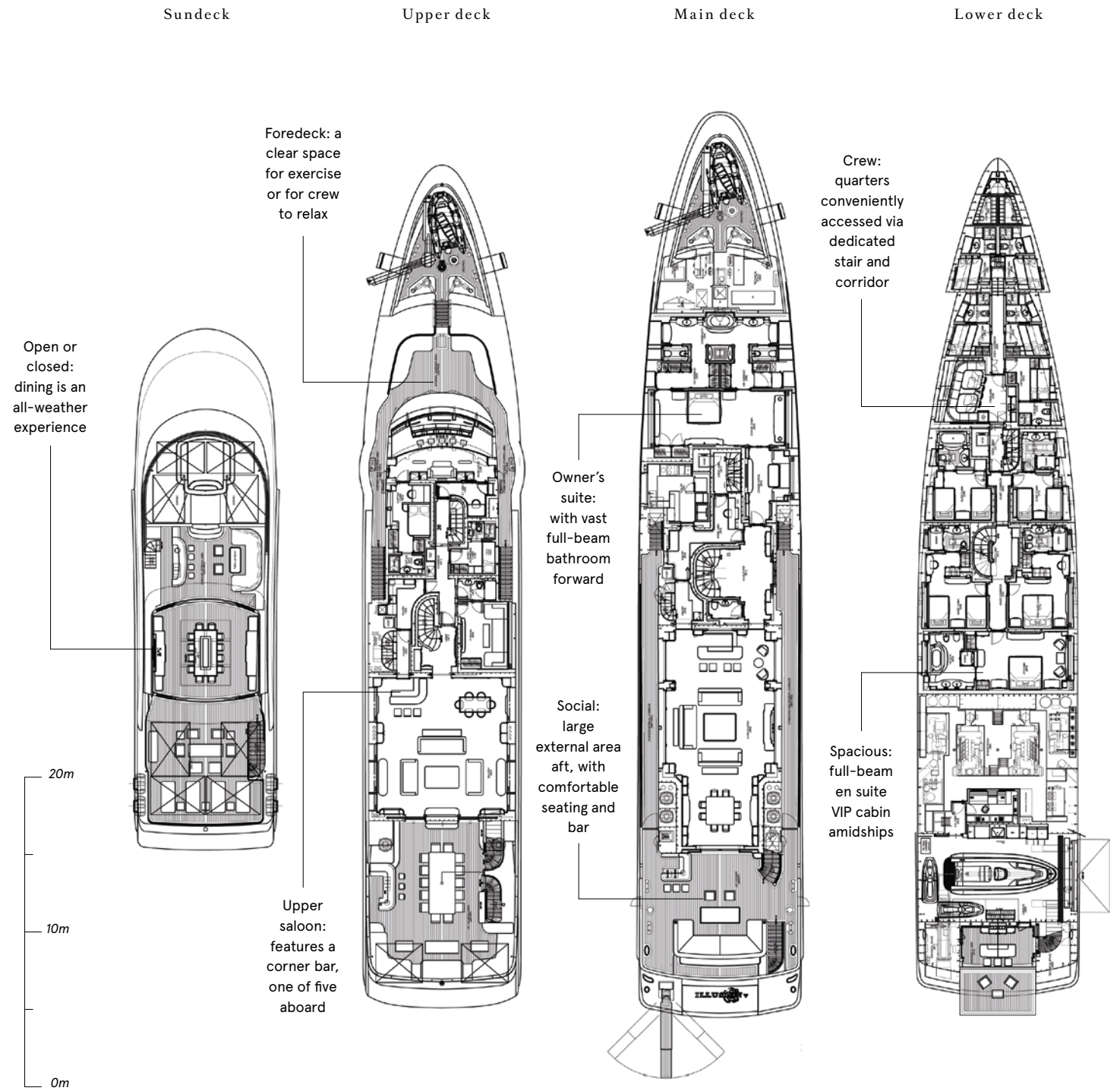
Above and right: the upper deck saloon features a large coffee table of parchment and shagreen, from G&M's own collection, as well as three large sofas with fringed cushions and petal details used in the magnificent creme et marfils bar



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S P E C S

Illusion V – Benetti



<b>LOA</b> 58m	2 x Caterpillar 3512C, 1,380kW @ 1,600 rpm	400V 3ph @ 50 Hz; 1 x Cat C4.4 82ekW, 400V 3ph @ 50 Hz emergency	<b>Crew</b> 13	<b>Naval architecture and exterior styling</b> Benetti/Green & Mingarelli Design	t: +44 207 009 1950 e: charters@camperandnicholsons.com w: camperandnicholsons.com
<b>Beam</b> 10.8m	<b>Speed (Max/Cruise)</b> 15.5 knots/15 knots	<b>Fuel capacity</b> 115,000 litres	<b>Tender</b> 1 x 7.5m Daeli	<b>Construction</b> Steel hull; aluminium superstructure	<b>Builder/year</b> Benetti/2014
<b>Draught</b> 3.27m	<b>Range at 15 knots</b> 5,000nm	<b>Freshwater capacity</b> 20,000 litres	<b>Classification</b> 100 A1 SSC YACHT MONO G6, [X]LMC, UMS	<b>Interior design</b> Green & Mingarelli Design	<b>For charter</b> Camper & Nicholson International
<b>Displacement</b> 800 tonnes (half-load)	<b>Generators</b> 2 x Cat C9 200ekW,	<b>Owner and guests</b> 12			
<b>Gross Tonnage</b> 963GT					
<b>Engines</b>					