



Pushing the Envelope

It may sound like an oxymoron, but eco-friendly superyachts are on the rise. Dutch shipyard Heesen Yachts proves just that with their uncompromising first hybrid superyacht, Home.

Powered by capable generators that allow her to efficiently power through the waves at up to 9 knots without even using her main engines, Home's noise level is decibel equivalent to the sound of softly falling rain.

Heesen's 50-metre Home takes innovation and fuel economy to a whole new level. She is the first fast all-aluminium displacement build that can also be labelled as a hybrid. In fact, Home is the sixth incarnation of Heesen Yachts Fast Displacement Hull Form, but unlike her predecessors, which were built for speed, Home is focused on efficiency. And while previous hybrid yachts have used a diesel electric power base, with lithium-ion batteries for storing excess power produced by the yacht's diesel generators, Home takes the technology to a whole new level. Rather than being either all conventional diesel-mechanical or all diesel-electric with batteries, Heesen offers both.

Combining a 12-knot cruising speed with a range of 3,750 nautical miles, and a top speed of over 16 knots with the throttles wide open, Home is over 30 per cent more efficient than a traditional superyacht of the same size. This is partly due to her incredibly efficient hull design, developed for Heesen by Dutch naval architects Van Oossanen. The revolutionary Fast Displacement Hull Form technology bridges the divide between speed and range, meaning that less power is required throughout the speed curve, which of course equates to less fuel burned.

Besides being super-efficient, she is also whisper quiet when cruising, especially when just using her two shaft-driven electric motors. Powered by capable generators that allow her to efficiently power through the waves at up to 9 knots without even using her main engines, Home's noise level is decibel equivalent to the sound of softly falling rain. Consuming around 98 litres of fuel per hour at cruising speeds of 12 knots and only 57 litres per hour at economical speeds of 10 knots, she is the most fuel-efficient vessel in her class. With her main engines running, when more speed is required, the electric motors can be used to provide free electricity to the yacht. Or with everything at full capacity, they can provide a boosted speed of up to 16.5 knots. Best of all, there's no need for those expensive Lithium-ion battery banks that take up space and, as with those Toyota Prius batteries, eventually need replacement.

Furthermore, less powerful engines mean small engines, which means more liveable space than similar sized yachts.

Heesen has not stinted on the design of this extraordinary vessel either. One of the most impressive looking superyachts afloat, her ultra modern exterior is the work of Frank Laupman at Omega Architects. "Modern and innovative with striking lines and a lot of glass," is how he describes her exterior styling. Her almost vertical stern looks radical on the water, and also reduces vertical acceleration thus improving comfort when cruising. Laupman also gave her a modest 2.15-metre draft allowing her to cruise the shallow waters of the Bahamas, or even Galápagos, with ease.

Another key feature that sets her apart from other yachts of her size is the large beach club area. Accessed via a broad aft stairway leading from the main deck, it doesn't need to swing open like most yachts, so it can be used even when she's on the move. Plus, from the stern there's a door to the lower-deck wellness area that features a spa and gym facilities. She also boasts a spectacular sun deck with a large shaded bar and spa pool, and shaded dining area.

The spacious exterior and interior areas take inspiration from open-air beach villas. Panoramic glass walls offer unblemished views, while cutaway bulwarks and floor-to-ceiling mirrors help bounce light around the airy interior. A strict colour palette of white, grey, silver and burgundy is used throughout, with varying materials, including brushed spruce and grey Koto, Nero Setta and Bianco Neve marbles, used to define the different guest areas. The full-beam main-deck owner's apartment sits forward, while a further five guest cabins, including a full-beam VIP cabin, are housed on the lower deck.

Home is an impressive yacht that shows Heesen's pushing the envelope in their efforts to meet owner's demands for fast yet fuel-efficient motoryachts that don't compromise on style. Perfection in any form of technology or construction can never be achieved without passion and the desire to innovate, but this yard has seemingly has it in spades. 

