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OUTER REEF 70

DESIGNED AND BUILT TO UNCOMPROMISING STANDARDS, THIS CRUISER ALSO BELIES HER SIZE.

Jeff Druk builds things. BIG things. Big FANCY things. Big, fancy, QUALITY things.

His penchant for building reached a plateau when he was fashioning ultra-custom homes for well-heeled clients in the Hamptons, Long Island, New York. But for the past decade and a half now, he's focused his considerable perfectionist drive and skills on building Outer Reef Yachts. The lessons he learned while building homes have served him well in building yachts, as he came to realize that catering to a customer's needs and offering more flexibility in terms of quality and amenities was the key to one-upping his competition.

As a youngster growing up on the Eastern shores of Long Island, New York, Jeff built his first boat when he was in his early teens and then utilized it as a commercial fishing vessel, becoming a 'Bayman', and establishing his first business. After buying and selling a series of boats he signed up for the Merchant Marine Service, after which he returned home and began a construction company, eventually employing over 130 workers.

As a result of his success, in 1994 he was able to build a 60-

foot trawler in Taiwan, eventually building a 75-footer, at which time he realized that by employing the lessons learned in home construction, he could structure a yacht-building company in a similar manner. His land-based business model has worked out equally well on the water.

But Jeff doesn't oversee just the construction of his yachts—he also designs them with clients... sometimes on the fly.

"I made over 170 changes to that first design, moving all sorts of things, right down to the [electrical] outlets," he rattles on himself. Then, in 2002, he became a full-time boat builder when he established Outer Reef Yachts.

Jeff gives special credit to the yard in which Outer Reefs are built, the fourth generation-owned Tania Yacht Company located in Kaohsiung, Taiwan. There, General Manager Karl Lin, along with Lead Engineer Chaucer Chen, share Jeff's passion for quality construction, as well as a commitment and willingness to make changes according to the desires of each individual owner.

By L.J. WALLACE, JR. / OUTER REEF PHOTOS



The unfettered view from the back of the saloon sweeps all the way forward to the windshield. Note the overhead teak grab rail. Right: The master stateroom.

"No two boats we build are the same. Given the monolithic manner in which the boats are constructed (see sidebar), there are very few—even major—alterations that can't be made," Jeff explains.

Stepping aboard onto the swim platform of the newest Outer Reef, a 70-footer (actually, it's 71 feet, 6 inches), you immediately get a feeling and sense that this is a serious passage maker. A pair of curved stairways sweep up to the aft deck, which is enclosed in EZ2CY when buttoned down and air-conditioned making it an informal extension of the saloon. Entering the cabin, that passage-making feeling starts reverberating, and not just underfoot. Above, a curvaceous but entirely functional teak grab rail running down the centerline of the entire saloon adds a serene feeling of comfort and security, even when the boat sits rock-solid at the dock. Hardly earthshaking, but it's the little touches like that that



speaks volumes about a boat.

The saloon, finished in pleasing satin-finished teak, sports a large L-shaped couch to port opposite a pair of bucket chairs to starboard. Looking forward, the view sweeps all the way to the windshield, through the galley area, right up to the pilothouse, which you'd normally just consider to be the helm area. Instead, flick a switch and a bulkhead, just aft of the settee and table located behind the helm, raises up cordoning-off the pilothouse from the rest of the living quarters, a nice convenience when a little privacy is required or when running at night.

Moving through the galley towards the helm you notice that the



An electrically operated partition rises up, separating the wheelhouse from the galley.



instrumentation is uncomplicated and straightforward, unlike many consoles that have enough screens, switches and knobs to resemble the control panels in a nuclear power plant. There are port and starboard watertight doors leading out to the side decks. The one to starboard sits in between stairways with one leading topside (aft of the door), and the other curving downward to the cabin deck.

Below deck, an ensuite guest cabin with queen berth and pullman above for that occasional extra guest is located across from the bottom of the stairway with the VIP cabin forward, also with an ensuite head with a large shower. You'll find a washer/dryer behind one of the corridor's closet doors. The full-width master cabin has a king-size berth, ensuite head to port, dedicated computer desk and walk-in closets both

fore and aft. Open the aft closet and at the back of it you'll find a watertight emergency door that leads to an extremely well laid-out and uncluttered engine compartment. Continue moving aft to another bulkhead watertight door and you enter the crew quarters, voluminous by any standard, with a starboard side over/under bunk or can be an optional workshop. The captain's cabin to port sports a queen-size berth and direct access to the larger than average head and shower with additional access from the hallway. There's also a mini-galley so this would equally be a great place for the kids to call home. Move aft further still, through another watertight door, and you're back at the swim platform.

Lest you think the only access to the crew compartment and engine room is through the owner's closet or transom door, think again. Another stairway is situated to starboard just in front of the compartment which winds its way back up to the aft portion of the saloon with a second washer/dryer near the foot of the stairs. Honestly, as you make the full tour circuit you can't help but think this boat HAS to be bigger than 71 feet.

Up on the flybridge, this boat again starts deceiving you about her size. There's room for up to a 20-foot tender on the boat deck without encroaching on the entertainment area, which includes all the amenities you'd expect to find topside on a cruising yacht like this: dual settees with tables, grill, sink, fridge and LOTS of storage. The helm remains on the centerline

SPECIFICATIONS

LOA: 71' 6"

Beam: 18' 6"

Draft: 5' 3"

Displacement: 115,000 lbs. (half-load)

Fuel: 2,350 gallons on test vessel/

STD 2,000 gallons

Water: 400 gallons

Standard Power: 2 x CAT

503-hp C-9 ACERT

Cruise/Top Speed: 11-15 knots

Range @ Cruise: 2,600 nm

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Passengers can enjoy the same view as the captain while dining. Below: The spacious owner's head.



and the whole entertaining area is covered with a hardtop, atop which sits the electronics mast. Open the barely visible panel in the back of the hardtop and there you'll find the block-and-tackle mechanism that lowers the mast, reducing the overall height of the vessel to 20 feet, 6 inches.

With such sound construction and nearly infinite customization options available, all things considered, Jeff Druke is undeniably one heck of a boat designer and builder. 🐟

Outer Reefs are hand-laminated with bi-directional laminates and vinylester resins with solid construction below the waterline and cored above with closed cell Divinacell® PVC coring materials. All coring is vacuum-bagged. The hull is finished with five coats of epoxy osmosis barriers for resistance to water infiltration into the laminate.

The longitudinal and traverse stringer grid systems are constructed of closed cell PVC foam, fully encapsulated with multiple alternating layers of mat fiberglass and Roven Woven. All stringers are constructed with limber-hole passages to ensure that any nuisance water drains to the centerline of the hull, where it can be evacuated via the bilge pump system and that no water is trapped standing anywhere on the hull.

Outer Reefs are fabricated from only three major molds ensuring watertight integrity and maximum rigidity. With the utilization of fewer pieces, tabbing and caulking-in parts is non-existent. With its unitized construction and many opposing angles and surfaces, in one piece of fiberglass, a truss-like structure is created that is self supporting, spanning the entire hull. This allows for flexibility of interior layout that does not dictate placement of interior bearing walls. In fact, Outer Reefs "live in the mold" for an extended period of time until all interior components are installed and properly fiberglassed into place. This ensures that once the boat is released from the mold, there is no chance of deflection, movement or warping. And talk about customer service: Upon delivery every owner is supplied with the cell phone numbers for the commissioning manager, selling broker, service manager and even Jeff Druke himself.