

# IN BUILD: THE OYSTER 885

*Commissioned to sail the Oyster World Rally, the first Oyster 885, Lush, circled the globe straight 'out of the box', sailing 30,000 miles without an issue. The reputation was set. Now three years on the eighth is in build, and the latest launch, Firebird, on handover immediately set course for this summer's Mediterranean Superyacht regatta scene, with adventure ski-sailing in Norway to follow. Completed according to different intents and focus, each 885 is individual, commissioned and planned precisely to very specific preference across a fascinating mix of sailing.*

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WORDS BY MIKE OWEN

'Choice not compromise' is the line. You get what you want with so much more opportunity than offered by others in the world of series-built yachts this size.

The options of two different deck superstructures and three saloon configurations begin to illustrate the scale and breadth in that choice. Then consider that the entire interior arrangement can be customised and reconfigured for anything up to six cabins, six heads: four for owner and guests up to ten, and two for a crew of four. And add in how these are physically laid and scaled into the plan according to emphasis, be it for optimal owner personal space and privacy or more equal arrangements for friends and family charter, for which the Oyster 885 is well set being commercially coded under MCA. Reflecting the defining principle of today's Superyachts, in all there's a clear separation of crew and galley quarters from guest space.

Externally, the Raised Saloon on 885s *Guardian Angel*, *Firebird*, and *Project TM3*, still in build, stands 300mm/12in taller than the Deck Saloon which topped the first three built, *Lush*, *Karibu*, *Clare* and then the fifth, *Bacchus*. With that raised profile the aesthetic remains, outwardly the line still every inch an Oyster, the glazing panel size just enhanced to match the underlying purpose to elevate eyeline and outlook from within, achieving this by raising and also building the floor at a single level. >>

PHOTO BY MIKE JONES



PHOTO BY NICO MARTINEZ



Between times, though, in one option for the lower deck superstructure, the saloon is not just levelled but enlarged to extend its span full-beam by actually lowering the floor this time to create good height for seating stretching under the side decks. Intriguingly, the as yet unnamed and in build, *Project TM3*, has opted for the benefit of both the Raised Saloon deck structure and this Lower Saloon floor. The wide open, spatial sense is extraordinary. Almost 2.5m/8ft headroom and, when heeled, panoramic views through both the deck house and wide hull windows from a single vantage point. This was an owner with vision! He knew what he wanted and suffered no compromise.

The same applies to general arrangement. Convention at this boat size is to maximise planned cabin numbers. With a near 90-footer like the 885, that's three suites aft: a master in the stern and a twin or double to either side of the corridor, with then a fourth cabin forward of the saloon opposite an enclosed galley, through which the crew have their two cabins, one double, one bunked. The balance and space throughout is excellent.

But what if you want more for yourself? Simple, request it. Any complexity is ours not yours, yet by planning for extensive change from day one, the shell and core of the 885 was design engineered to best enable such customisation. *Project TM3* is a good example with the owner requiring a larger suite aft, incorporating a linked private sitting room in what otherwise might have been a guest cabin. The forward guest cabin was then given a bigger heads and shower, making it more equal with the remaining aft guest suite. The final part of this story is that with the lower saloon floor, there is a reduction in engine room height necessitating a longer machinery space, hence the saloon is actually longer as well as wider, which means reconfiguring galley access and work areas.

With another different treatment forward, the third built 885, *Clare*, has a second saloon space or, with sliding panel and door, a snug that quickly converts to fourth guest cabin.

The fourth built 885, *Guardian Angel* with Raised Saloon, has a dinghy garage in the transom for which the aft bulkhead needed moving



Computer generated images

forward, claiming a little extra of the accommodation floor, yet the three cabin plan is retained. The loss is just a little space in the master heads, and now a shared heads and shower for the two aft guest cabins. The forward section shows more change though, with big utility and locker area for this race-keen owner's many code sails that fly from a custom-integrated carbon bowsprit. A very personal choice influenced by a race programme including the RORC 600, Malta Sea Race and other IRC events, so not just Superyacht regattas.

*Firebird*, which launched into racing this summer with the Loro Piana event in Porto Cervo and then Palma Superyacht Cup, has the Raised Saloon, too, but with a more conventional aft end, and forward the fourth guest cabin converts out of a very comfortable, well served owner's private office. That hints at extended stays aboard and, with exploration and winter ski-sailing in northern waters in the heart of the brief, there's full climate control to cope equally well be the boat in tropical sun or polar chill.

The versatility and capability of the 885 is clear, and second off the line *Karibu* is set to enjoy that next year extending her dual role as family cruiser and finely tuned regatta racer to become world girdler, as she's now set to join the Oyster World Rally 2017-2019.

The range of sailing and owner profile simply covers the world. Leaders of industry, sportsmen, British, Irish, Russian, German and serial Oyster owners, as well as others new to the marque, discovering the benefits of customising a series-design which brings proven engineering for reliability and quantifiable savings. It's quite a story to tell.