



CRUISE CONTROL

Opposite *Home's* exterior styling, by Omega Architects, includes a spacious aft platform. **Below** Fine dining in the glamorous interior

This year's Monaco Yacht Show concluded in customarily cacophonous manner: at 6pm on September 30, the 125 remarkable superyachts on display in Port Hercules harbour each blared their horn simultaneously. Then *Home*, the new 50m vessel built by Holland's Heesen Yachts, headed up the farewell parade, leading a cavalcade of spectacular vessels into the Mediterranean and beyond.

That it secured such a coveted position is testament to *Home's* prestige, but it's an ironic placement for a superyacht that is meant to go unnoticed. The world's first fast-displacement superyacht equipped with hybrid propulsion, it offers what Heesen calls "the ultimate luxury": a silent cruising mode.

The technical explanation, briefly: with a unique hybrid engine that melds diesel-mechanical and diesel-electrical power sources, *Home* can reach up to nine knots in 'silent mode', meaning it cuts through the ocean with about as much clamour as a waterborne Tesla, around 46 decibels.

It seems unlikely, but it works. Aboard that departing voyage, I watched as Monaco diminished and the suite of surrounding superyachts dispersed. Finding ourselves alone somewhere near Cap Ferrat, the captain initiated silent cruising. The puff and purr of the engines subsided; we moved on in quiet, save for the sound of waves dissolving against the hull and (counterintuitively) our own excitable chatter extolling how remarkably peaceful it had become. As with an air-con



TOP DECK

The master suite features floor-to-ceiling windows; one of *Home's* bathrooms; the styling on the sun deck bar is relaxed and welcoming, with a beach-club ambience



unit turned off, we hadn't realised how much white noise was produced by the ship until it was absent.

That enveloping tranquillity, long assumed an impossibility for motor yachts of this size, is *Home's* defining feature, and the inspiration for its unusually simple aesthetic. Placed alongside the other vessels in Port Hercules, its plain, polar-white interiors looked almost clinical; it was only when the ship got underway that I understood the rationale. For the American owner, "the artwork is outside" and so the purposeful lack of visual clutter within encourages guests to admire those peerless sea views from the floor-to-ceiling windows spread throughout.

But there are intricacies to the interior design despite its apparent simplicity. With such a sparse palette, designer Cristiano Gatto needed to ensure being on the yacht "didn't feel like being in a hospital" and so those all-white fixtures are made from 14 different materials – including leather, lacquered wood and marble. Textures differ subtly throughout, pops of burgundy "juice things up" and lights were modified to provide a warm, honeyed glow come nightfall.

Interior and exterior spaces merge seamlessly. On the upper deck, the outside area's teak flooring is perfectly mimicked in appearance by a wood-effect rubber floor in the saloon. Liquid-repellent, it provides for worry-free parties. The saloon's lightweight couch and chairs, by Paola Lenti, are hardy

SPECIFICATIONS

The bar

Gatto's "masterpiece", the sun deck's bar comprises 16 slabs of translucent Hi-Macs moulded seamlessly together. Its nebulous form is meant to resemble clouds. Lights within radiate a rainbow of colours.

The dining table

Extendable from 10 to 14 seats, the all-white table is made of Corian, lacquer, leather and stainless steel and took three months to design. As Gatto explains, "Developing Superyacht furniture can require all the time and money you'd invest into the prototype of an object being made 10,000 times – but here it's created only once."

Master bathroom

The owner removed the tub from his bathroom to further declutter *Home* – there's more than enough water to dip into outside. The shower walls are laid with Bianco Neve marble, which shimmers like snow in sunlight.

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enough to be used outdoors and can easily be popped on a dinghy if guests wish to lounge in comfort on a deserted beach.

Those thoughtful touches have combined to create a cossetting, calming superyacht that is fully deserving of its comforting name. Following its delivery in June, the owner spent eight weeks straight on board – near-unprecedented among owners of such statuesque superyachts. And *Home's* unique features have piqued broader curiosity too. To shorten delivery time, Heesen builds about half of its yachts on speculation. Currently under construction and due for delivery in 2019, a sister ship to *Home*, again accommodating 12 guests and with the same technology, has already been snapped up. Yet another, of exactly the same size and technical ability as *Home* but with interiors determined by the eventual owner, is due for delivery in 2020 and is on sale for €32.3m. (*Home's* final cost was probably similar.)

As with every superyacht, it's an exceptional amount of money to part with, but Gatto is convinced the yachting fraternity will find it good value. "I've designed a lot of yachts," he says, "but this one has really captured my mind. It's so peaceful. This is not a boat for show, it's a boat for living in – with our lives being so chaotic, to find a place where you can just exhale and be is so special."

heesenyachts.com; next year's Monaco Yacht Show takes place September 26-29 2018, monacoyachtshow.com

