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ANDREA BOCELLI'S GAMMA 20

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Gamma 20

THE IMPORTANCE OF FREEDOM

THE MOST CUSTOMIZED CAMARO 30 YACHT, WITH SMART DESIGN FROM VERACOR, WAS BUILT FOR BEACON CITY YACHTS AND OWNER ANDREA BOCELLI. *By Giles Watkinson*





GAMMA YACHTS RECENTLY delivered the 22.1m M/Y *Libertas*, the third to be completed in its Gamma 20 'mini' superyacht series, to Italian opera tenor Andrea Bocelli. With innovative design by Dutch company Vripack, the yacht has impressive guest space for its length overall and excellent fuel efficiency.

Built and designed in Holland, the yacht combines the precision and technical capabilities of the Dutch with world-class interior furnishings and materials from Italy. Although the traditional threshold for a superyacht starts at 30m in length, Gamma Yachts CEO Guido Bonandrini explains that the degree of customisation available to an owner in the Gamma 20 is much closer to that of a superyacht than any other vessel in this size range.

"The main elements of the Gamma 20 that are dictated to a client are the hull and superstructure shape; almost all other aspects can be adapted to the client's tastes, much like you would expect on a yacht of a larger size. Particularly to the exterior fly bridge, we have seen major variations in each of the vessels delivered so far. The owner of M/Y *Libertas*, celebrated opera singer Andrea Bocelli, took the customisation even further than the previous Gamma 20 customers," says Bonandrini.

For his yacht's exterior, Bocelli specified a table and sofa to be placed forward of wheelhouse to offer an immersion into the surroundings, particularly when underway. There is also a custom-built diving board on the extended fly bridge to jump off the uppermost point of the yacht, and the hull is painted in an eye-catching metallic electric blue. The decking comes in teak as standard and there is an optional hydraulic swim platform that lowers into the water at the stern.

Making full use of the volume provided by the wave-piercing bow with quarters for two crew, the Gamma 20 offers 170sqm of living space including the lower deck, main deck, fly bridge and walk-around. The addition of a fourth cabin in this yacht increases the accommodation to nine guests, and the windows in the master cabin have been increased to let in more light and views of the surroundings.

Double-glazing insulates the interior, allowing the piano and recording studio equipment to be used in the main salon. However, he's not planning to record an album on *Libertas*. "On board I have an electric piano, which has, however, the same mechanism as a classical piano. Since it's electric, the advantage of this system is that it can't get out of tune, and permits volume adjustment,



Italian opera tenor Andrea Bocelli



SPOTLIGHT

- Gamma 20 -



according to the requirements of my family. But, for recording, I need equipment that is much too heavy and bulky for my boat."

For the interior finishes, Bocelli chose matte oak panelling with natural oak floors. The galley is fitted out with white Parapan and grey stained oak flooring.

The award-winning designers from Vripack carried out extensive testing and modelling to ensure the Gamma 20 matches the expectations of an owner looking for a superyacht experience in a more compact vessel. Vripack worked on the noise and vibration testing with Dutch firm Van Cappellan Consultancy, which also provided the insulation. Stabilisers from Naiad offer guests comfort at anchor or docked in a marina.

As well as adding additional space for crew accommodation forward, the bow shape also provides excellent fuel economy for the yacht, which has a range of 1,270nm on 5,500 litres of fuel.

"The Gamma 20 has more to her than meets the eye. Below the curvaceous shape lies a luxury yacht concept that we approached with our holistic design philosophy. We believe that a great boat functions as a whole instead of a loose combination of separate parts," says Marnix Hoekstra of Vripack.

"There are a number of striking features that prove the power of such holistic thinking," adds Bart Bouwhuis, also of Vripack. "For instance, the lack of steps and obstructions: each deck is truly on one level, preventing the risk of tripping. This is combined with fast displacement hull lines that are used specifically for comfort at anchor and at sea. The approach goes as far as the actual structure of the yacht to minimise the build time, applying our proprietary Smart Kit building technology. This allows the boat to be built faster as well as for a more rigid end product, which reduces noise and vibration to improve the guests' experience."

Thanks to the intelligent design and construction of the Gamma 20, the yacht was constructed and delivered in just 10 months. A larger





model of 26m, the Gamma 24, is also available in the series, with accommodation for up to 12, with design based on the principle features of the Gamma 20.

Bocelli, who has owned several vessels in this size range, says the Gamma 20 is by far his favourite.

"I love the way space has been arranged so that our large extended family can be together, enjoying closeness and intimacy, while at the same time respecting everybody's privacy," he says. "A yacht must meet precise needs and be able to make us feel at ease. It must comply with – and express both architecturally and technically – the same priorities as those living on it. Coziness, warm materials, safety, low noise levels and comfort – these were my needs, and they have been fully met. I needed a solid, safe and comfortable boat, and I am very happy with my choice in the Gamma 20."

There is an interesting story behind how he found out about the Gamma 20. "Strange but true, I found the Gamma Yachts shipyard in a specialised magazine. It was my son, Amos, who saw and read the specifications of the boat to me, and so I started to think of contacting them," Bocelli says, before explaining how he chose the name of his new yacht.

"Peace and freedom are two of the most important values for me. One of my previous boats was named *Pax*, and I chose *Libertas* in order to remind myself – and those who will have the opportunity to sail on this boat – of the importance of freedom."

Bocelli started yachting at a young age. "My father always had a boat of five or six metres. I think my passion for boats is rooted in those vacation days when my father, my brother and I went to sea for short and really prudent trips. Early in the morning my brother Albert and I would load on our shoulders the heavy engine that my father always kept safely in the cabin at night, and soon we would be beyond the buoys where we could finally turn on the engine and start our short trip."



With his busy performance schedule and world travel, Bocelli isn't sure how much time he will spend on board *Libertas* this year. "Time spent on board depends firstly on my work commitments, which luckily are still many. Secondly, it also depends on the type of boat. For a few years, for example, I had a 10-metre boat – very convenient and fast, but not particularly comfortable for everyday use. With a boat like *Libertas*, instead, the greatest thing is moving aboard and spending both day and night in peace, perhaps without setting a foot ashore."

He plans to keep *Libertas* moored in Carrara Harbour, on the west coast of Italy in Tuscany. "But for my work and my journeys, which are long and numerous, I will use a plane... a totally different way to travel," Bocelli says.

www.gamma-yachts.com
www.vripack.com

| | GAMMA 20 |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| LOA | 22.1m (73ft) |
| Maximum Beam | 5.90m |
| Draft (1/2 load) | 1.45m |
| Displacement (1/2 load) 58 tonnes | (127,868lbs) |
| Maximum Speed | 16kts |
| Cruising Speed | 14kts |
| Cruising Range | 1,270nm |
| Fuel Consumption (economy) | 36 l/h |
| Fuel Tank | 5,500 litres (1,211 gallons) |
| Engines | Caterpillar C9 ACERT 575 CV/ Optional C12 ACERT 669 CV |
| Generator | Onan 1 X 22.5Kw/ Optional 1x9Kw |