

SPEED QUEST

Jim Clark's new toy

SERENITY NOW

Charter to change YOU

REAR VIEW

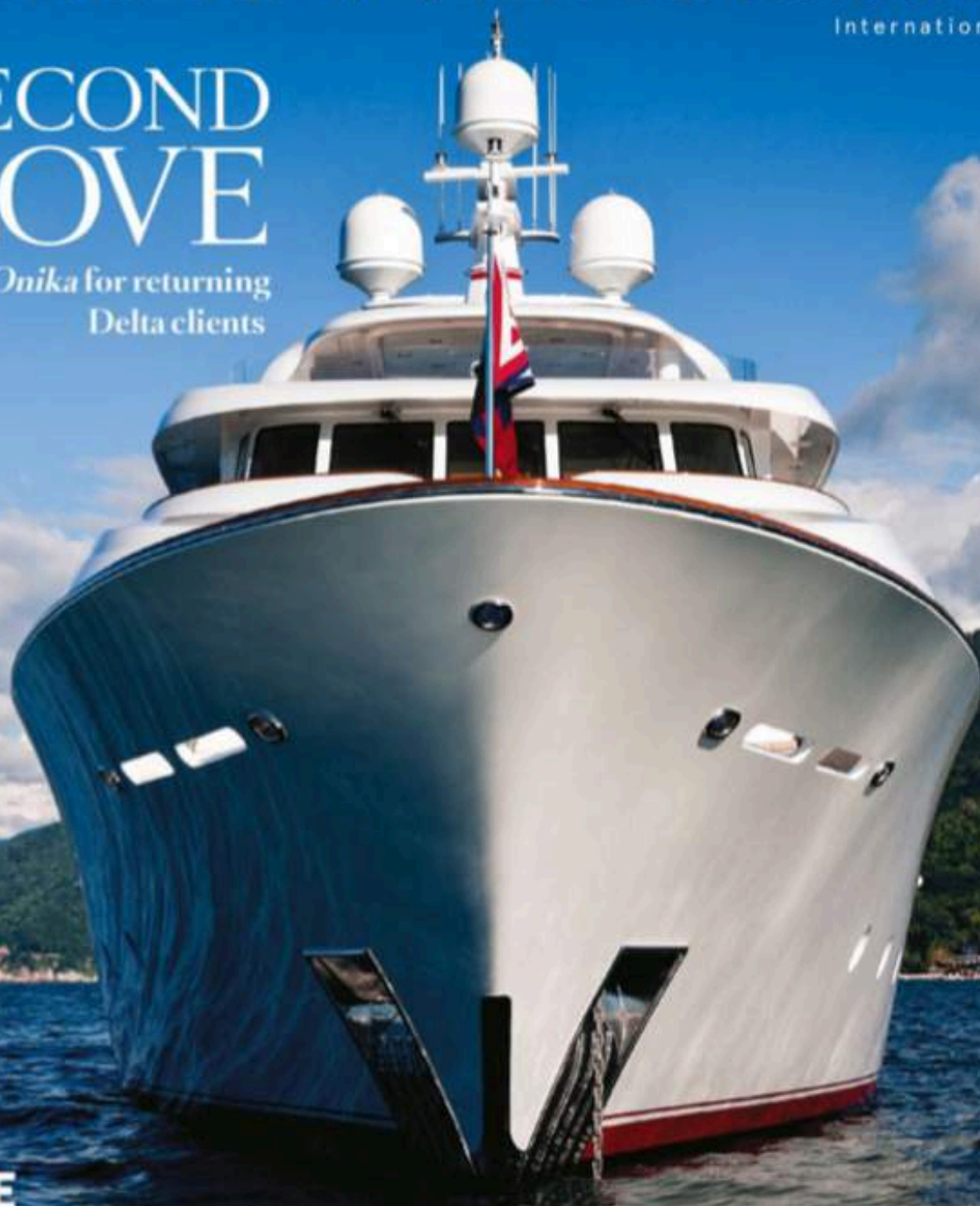
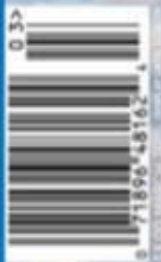
Navetta 28's transom multitasks

ShowBoats

International

SECOND LOVE

A new *Onika* for returning Delta clients



NEW LOOK
more lux
& lifestyle

MADE FOR THE USA

The new Benetti model that's captivating America

Andrea Bocelli sounds off

World's best 5-star spas by boat

Fabien Cousteau takes on the family biz

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OWNERS' CLUB

INSIDE THE LIVES – AND BOATS – OF OUR EXCLUSIVE READERSHIP



BOAT
SUPERYACHT
OWNERS'
CLUB

JOIN OUR CLUB *If you're the current owner of a superyacht, have owned one in the last couple of years or are buying one, you might be eligible for entry into our exclusive network of yacht owners. To find out more about the club and the benefits available, email roger.lean-vercoe@boatinternationalmedia.com.*

THIS MONTH: Andrea Bocelli (above), a man whose ship has come in — a very custom, very blue one, and cruising tips from our club members ▶



*On board
with*
**ANDREA
BOCELLI**

Globetrotting superstar Andrea Bocelli loves Miami, the sea and using boats as a mode of transportation. He tells Marilyn Mower about his latest floating acquisition and the Andrea Bocelli Foundation.



► IT WAS THREE DAYS BEFORE CHRISTMAS in characteristically warm and sunny Miami and famed tenor Andrea Bocelli was uncharacteristically late for an interview. Our appointment was to talk about his new motor yacht *Libertas*, a customized Gamma 20 designed by Vripak. It's a proper 72-foot steel yacht with lots of volume for its length and yet, surprisingly, a good turn of speed. And where was Bocelli? He was taking the long way home from an appointment on Miami Beach in a small boat lent to him by friends. His teenage son Amos was driving – teens and schedules unfortunately being things of occasional intersection.

Not that I minded. The setting by the pool looking east across Biscayne Bay to Bal Harbour was lovely and serene – exactly the sort of environment one comes to Florida to enjoy. It was a characteristically Bocelli address, too – chosen not to impress but to give the impresario just what he needs, a warm place to relax and take in the sunshine and breeze between concert dates



From the top: Once Andrea lost his sight, Alberto took on the role of watching out for his brother on the beach; the flute is the first thing he packs when traveling; Bocelli Family Wines produces six varietals—five reds and a Prosecco, the Tuscan archipelago



QUICKFIRE Andrea Bocelli

SAIL OR POWER?

Power

SPEED OR STYLE?

It depends. In general, speed, but two years ago I decided to change the style of my life on the ocean.

IDEA OF LUXURY?

I don't like the luxury; I prefer the practical things.

FIRST THING YOU PACK?

My flute and computer

FAVORITE BEACH?

The islands off Tuscany

FIRST BOATING MEMORY?

I was ten when my father bought a rubber boat and took my brother and me down to sea. He loved everything about the sea. We would just ride around in the boat all day;

I still clearly remember the 50-horse Mercury outboard.

I can only ride two or three times a month." He and Alberto, with his wife Cinzia, have continued to develop the family farm, now encompassing 160 hectares, to include a vineyard, tasting rooms for the Bocelli wines and two rental apartments that tie in with very upscale Tuscany tours.

When Bocelli began customizing the details of his yacht with Gamma owner Guido Bonandrini, it started in a rather odd place—the bow—and a request for forward seating for the maestro. Bonandrini is a former world-class powerboat racer turned boatbuilder in 2000, but as Italy is full of boatbuilders, he sought out a small production niche in custom boats with flexible design and delights in customizing them with the client's family.

"We are a small company and I didn't want to compete with the fiberglass boatbuilders," Bonandrini says. "Steel is forever. Steel is safe, the boats are trialed in the North Sea. Sound and insulation is different in a steel boat."

Gamma boats are designed by Vripak, well-known for the less-is-more philosophy of its owners, Marnix Hoekstra and Bart Bouwhuis. Not only did Bonandrini support 3D analysis and full tank testing for the most efficient semi-displacement hull shape and maximum use of space, he adopted a construction method devised by Vripak called "Smart Kit" to shorten the construction time by pre-cutting the majority of the yacht's parts. The Gamma 20, which is really some 22 meters long (about 72 feet), can be built in 10 months.

"You would be amazed how knowledgeable Mr. Bocelli is about hull speed and the performance of different types of boats," Bouwhuis shared with us. "When we met with him to learn what he wanted (*Libertas* is Hull No. 3 in the series), he told us that because of his schedule, the boat would mostly be used for two- to three-day voyages in the Med. Although Gammas are designed for owner/operators, *Libertas* needed to accommodate crew—Bocelli has had the same female captain for years."

Thus, *Libertas* offers 1,830 square feet of living space. The addition of a fourth cabin increases accommodations to nine guests, and the master cabin windows have been enlarged to let in more light and views. For the interior finishes, he chose matte oak paneling with natural oak floors—Bocelli is a fan of a sense of warm, natural materials.

About the bow, Bocelli said, "I like to stay in front of the boat. In general it is a silent boat, but up front has more silence, more air;

it is more possible to smell the ocean. For this reason I decided to have a small table with a chair to have a coffee. It would be a great place to have a cigar...but I don't smoke."

One of the attractions is that each of the decks is a single level and the main deck has walkaround side decks and a 360-degree view so Berti can keep an eye on things and little daughter Virginia, who's only two. The flybridge rails were modified for better safety and it has the ultimate feature – a diving board. Amos, who recently obtained his captain's license, is looking forward to spending a lot of time running the boat himself next summer. "It will be quite the party boat," he confides.

"I love the way space has been arranged so that our family can be together, enjoying closeness and intimacy, while at the same time respecting everybody's privacy," Bocelli notes.

The open-plan salon has double-glazed windows befitting its Yamaha electric piano and plentiful speakers. Bocelli's time aboard is spent mostly relaxing or practicing new material. "When I have to study a new opera, I bring a pianist and I study on the boat," he says. Bocelli himself is an accomplished pianist. Playing and singing in a bar helped him pay his way through law school. His favorite instrument, however, is his flute.

His concert schedule isn't the only thing that keeps him busy; Bocelli started the Andrea Bocelli Foundation (ABF) in 2011. As one who knows what it is like to be in need of help from others, he decided that success gave him the chance – he calls it "the joy" – to give back. It's become a binding priority in his life.

The ABF is a two-pronged effort. One goal is to create a device to aid people with low vision. ABF is funding work at MIT where researchers are developing technology to help blind people perform daily life activities more independently and efficiently. It's not that different from self-driving cars, Berti notes.

The other effort is supporting programs that break down cultural or economic barriers for the poorest of the poor, such as in Haiti. One of the current projects is called WHEAT standing for Water, Health, Education, Action and Time. It supports the running costs of three schools serving 243 Haitian children, giving them food to take home to their families and delivering clean water six days a week to three areas currently without potable water.

Why Haiti? "We met an American priest, Father Rick Frechette, by chance in Miami several years ago and were impressed with his

Split engine rooms allow all the lower deck staterooms to access a central corridor and divide the owner's stateroom aft from the guests forward.



St. Luke Foundation. Now ABF helps St. Luke provide education, medical care and farming instruction to more than 800 families.

"You don't choose such a program, it chooses you," says Berti.

In December, the United Nations Correspondents Association awarded Bocelli and Berti its UNCA Global Citizens of the Year title for the Foundation's devotion to helping those in need. ABF recently brought clean water and blankets to 1,500 refugee families in Iraqi Kurdistan in conjunction with UN's High Commission for Refugees.

"The amazing lives we have been gifted offer us the privilege, opportunity and responsibility to give the less fortunate a better future and opportunities," Bocelli says.

Speaking of opportunities, the day after Bocelli took possession of *Libertas* they set off for Valencia, Spain, where he was to record "Turandot" with Zubin Mehta. They spent 15 days on the boat including a 280-mile, 65-hour, nonstop shakedown cruise. It was a rough trip but Bocelli had a great time being at sea. The yacht had no more tied up in Valencia than Bocelli threw open the doors and began to rehearse. On the dock, a man asked a crewmember if he'd come off the blue Gamma that had just arrived. When he nodded affirmative, the stranger said appreciatively, "That's some sound system you have."

"No," he shook his head, "It's live."

We should all be so lucky to be in port when *Libertas* arrives. ■

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