

# ON THE HORIZON



A chance encounter at a boat show led Dutch designer Theo Werner to create a graceful motor yacht, equally at home on inland waters as offshore

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There's a point about two-thirds of the way through every boat show when stand-holders who've had middling sales seriously consider packing up and going home. Such was the feeling of yacht designer Theo Werner at the 2004 IJmuiden summer show. He was contemplating leaving when a gentleman stopped at his stand and began examining a model of a 68ft classic runabout. The visitor commented that it was by far the prettiest model he'd seen, but before Werner could strike up a serious conversation, the man was off. Werner didn't give it much thought, but was pleased to find a message on his answerphone later that evening: the prospective client wanted to discuss ideas. He arrived two days later at the Werner Yacht Design offices in Volendam, Holland.

The brief was unusually concise but very clear: the client and his family wanted the prettiest yacht ever designed, but it also had to be technically advanced and extremely reliable. Size and budget were mentioned briefly, but it soon became apparent that they weren't the main issues – the yacht's overall design was of paramount importance. From that initial meeting, the ideas came thick and fast, recalls Werner.

Designers dream of attracting such accommodating clients and Werner is no exception. With a background in mechanical engineering, he started designing yachts at the age of 24. Initially, he worked for two years in the offices of Pieter Beeldsnijder, followed by six years alongside Andre Hoek as he set up practice, before establishing his own studio in 1997. It's probably true to say that this early collaboration helped to establish two of the best-known names in classic boat design, with Hoek drawing sailing yachts and Werner providing the yardstick in motor yacht design.

Werner believes it's easy to give a yacht an expensive-looking appearance, but feels that it is far more challenging to design a graceful yet powerful ship that stands out from the crowd. But he has clearly achieved that objective with his design for *Orizzonte* – Italian for 'horizon'. Working without a target length or budget, Werner and his small team began

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Great all-round visibility from the saloon with its retro sofa and club chairs.



The galley's quality teak furniture complements stainless steel fixtures.



designing and creating layouts. He concluded that the yacht should be 27m overall, a length that would accommodate all his client's wishes, yet remain a manageable cruising size without the need to hire crew.

After presenting the initial design sketches, key decisions quickly followed. Since he was professionally involved in shipbuilding, the client had a keen eye for space and proportions. He didn't need explanations as to why doors should turn a certain way, or why particular features needed to be aligned. Granted considerable artistic freedom, Werner was able to create a logical design that is full of character.

*Orizzonte* sports a tremendous seamanlike flair in the bow sections, which run smoothly aft towards an equally pronounced tumblehome in the stern, with an exquisite sheer that is seldom seen on modern-day yachts. Once on board, the quality woodwork demands attention, as do the custom-made stainless steel fixtures. The alloy superstructure is covered with 20mm teak, finished with a high-gloss varnish.

Access to the yacht's interior is via double opening doors leading to the pilothouse. The wheelhouse has two high settees, one on each side, and an electrically operated Recaro seat in front of the joystick-style helm position. The simple layout of the bridge and its controls takes its inspiration from Dutch commercial vessels, with a vertical column of computer screens for engine management, radar and electronic chart navigation, flanked by control levers on either side: one for engine throttle, the other for the steering tiller and bow and stern thruster joysticks.

A few steps down and you're in the split-level day saloon with more steps forward that lead down into the dining saloon, galley and guest accommodation, plus steps aft leading to the owner's accommodation. Furnished with leather club chairs and sofas, the saloon has a retro seventies feel, exemplified by the detailed joinery work and the choice of walnut wood furniture. The off-white paintwork on the deckhead combined with light curtains

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The full-width master cabin offers generous headroom.



The wheel-less helm, with joysticks and a tiller, takes its cue from commercial vessels.



Twin Caterpillar C12 engines provide *Orizzonte's* driving force.

give the interior a cool, tranquil atmosphere. Moving aft from the saloon and down five steps is the owner's accommodation with its full-width master bedroom and stylish ensuite bathroom right aft. A second double cabin with bathroom and a separate room for laundry, equipped with Miele appliances and plenty of storage space, completes the area. Forward from the saloon and down a few steps, you come to the dining table, to port with its U-shaped seating area. To starboard is an ample though not huge galley, fully equipped for family use. Further forward, a modest double-bed guest cabin lies to port and a twin-bed cabin to starboard, both of which share a rather small but functional bathroom.

The owner has lavished much time and financial investment in creating a perfect engineroom; every inch demonstrates his seamanlike approach. He has specified two Onan generators: one for daytime use, and a smaller one for night-time. Twin Caterpillar C12 engines and Twin Disc gearboxes drive two five-bladed propellers to give the yacht a useful ten knots of cruising speed. With a maximum speed of 13 knots, *Orizzonte's* engines are tuned for continuous duty and she can easily handle long passages under full load. When lower speeds demand less power, she benefits from a slip differential system, which utilises trolling valves on the gearbox. This feature is particularly useful in speed-restricted Dutch rivers and canals, and a serious asset when negotiating locks and berthing.

Designed for an owner who wants to explore his local waterways, *Orizzonte* is completely at home on Dutch rivers – and that hull will effortlessly cut through the steep wake from passing cargo vessels. Eventually, she will head south to a berth in the Mediterranean. She has yet to make her maiden ocean voyage, yet judging by the boat's performance so far, a smooth ride on the high seas is guaranteed. *MBY*

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## ORIZZONTE'S SPECIFICATIONS

LOA	88ft 3in (26.90m)
Beam max	19ft 3in (5.86m)
Draught	5ft 6in (1.68m)
Top speed	13 knots
Cruising speed	10 knots
Fuel total	9,554 litres
Fuel day tanks	500 litres
Fresh water	6,198 litres
Engines	Twin 380hp Caterpillar C12
Construction	Steel/aluminium alloy
Design & interior styling	Werner Yacht Design
Classification	Lloyd's 100A1, SSC Yacht, Mono G6
Builder	Cona Vroegh, Holland
Contact	Werner Yacht Design www.werneryachtdesign.com

