

THE LUXURY ISSUE

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# BOAT

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EXCLUSIVE

# LADY LARA

LÜRSSEN'S ULTRA-PRIVATE 91-METRE REVEALED FOR THE FIRST TIME

Cover boat  
LADY  
LARA



BEHIND HER SINOUS CURVES LIES CLASSIC HOLLYWOOD GLAMOUR. *RISA MERL* GETS A PEEK INSIDE 91-METRE *LADY LARA*, REVEALED FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE HER 2015 LAUNCH

# LADY'S

# DAY

Photography Quin Bisset



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"She's the one that got away," says designer Pascale Reymond wistfully as we stand quayside in Monaco staring up at the 91-metre *Lady Lara*. Delivered by Lürssen in 2015 under a cloak of secrecy, the boat was destined for strictly private use. Yachting aficionados could only admire her sinuous exterior lines. It was evident from the outside that *Lady Lara*, built under code name Project Orchid, was something special, even by Lürssen standards, but her interior decor and endless amenities would remain a mystery – until now.

Eight years after I wrote the news story on *Lady Lara's* delivery for *boatinternational.com*, I stepped on board with her designers, Pascale Reymond, Andrew Langton and Jon Bevan of Reymond Langton Design. The UK-based studio designed both the exterior and interior of the yacht, while naval architecture came from the in-house team at Lürssen.

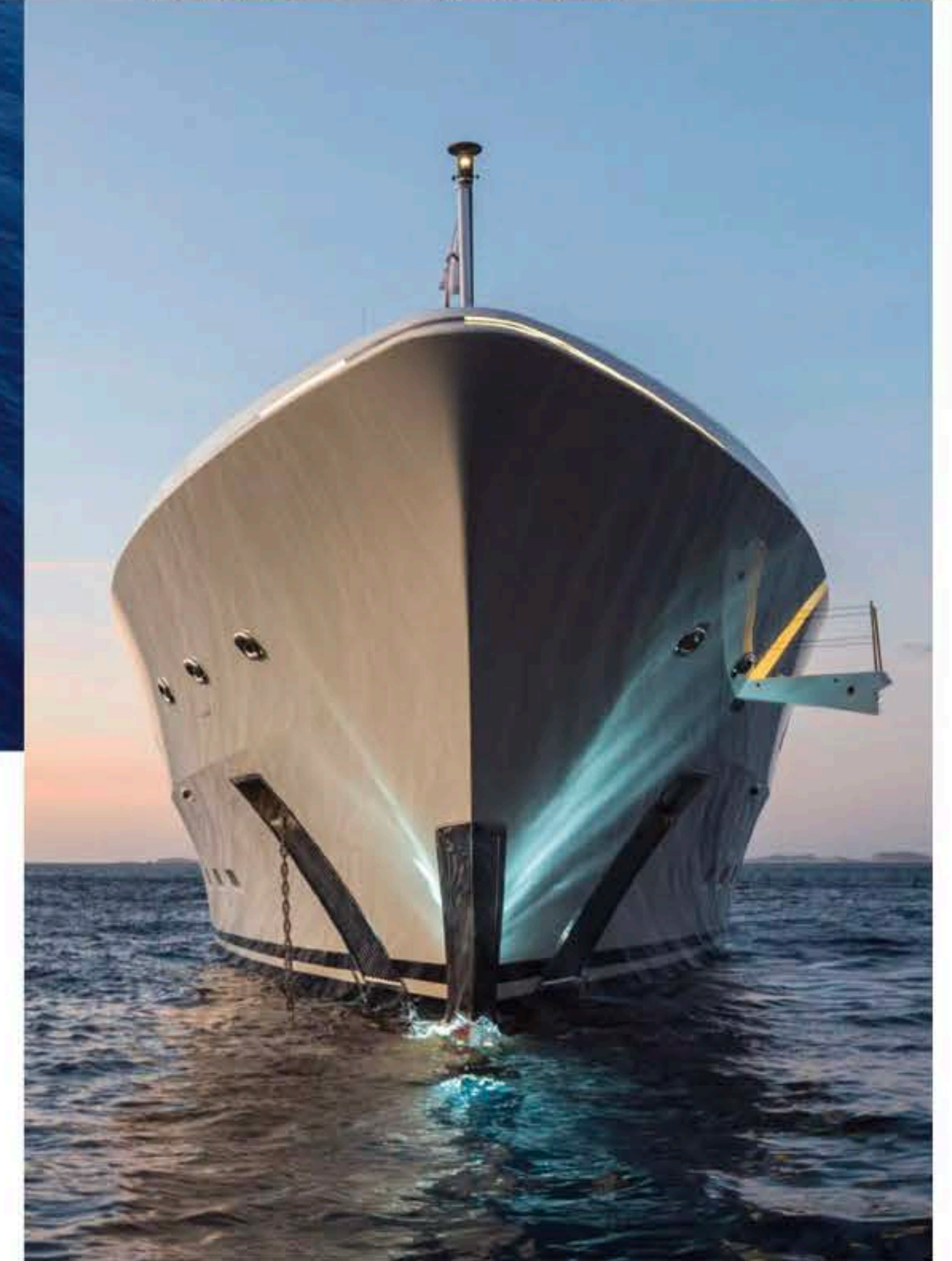
She is, it turns out, an elegant lady with surprises at every turn, from immense Damien Hirst artworks commissioned for the yacht to a swimming pool that transforms into a discotheque and a snowy white interior that nods to classic Hollywood glamour – all in harmony with her sculpted superstructure. It's no mean feat that *Lady Lara* is feminine without being girly, glamorous without being blingy, clean without being boring and architectural without being cold.

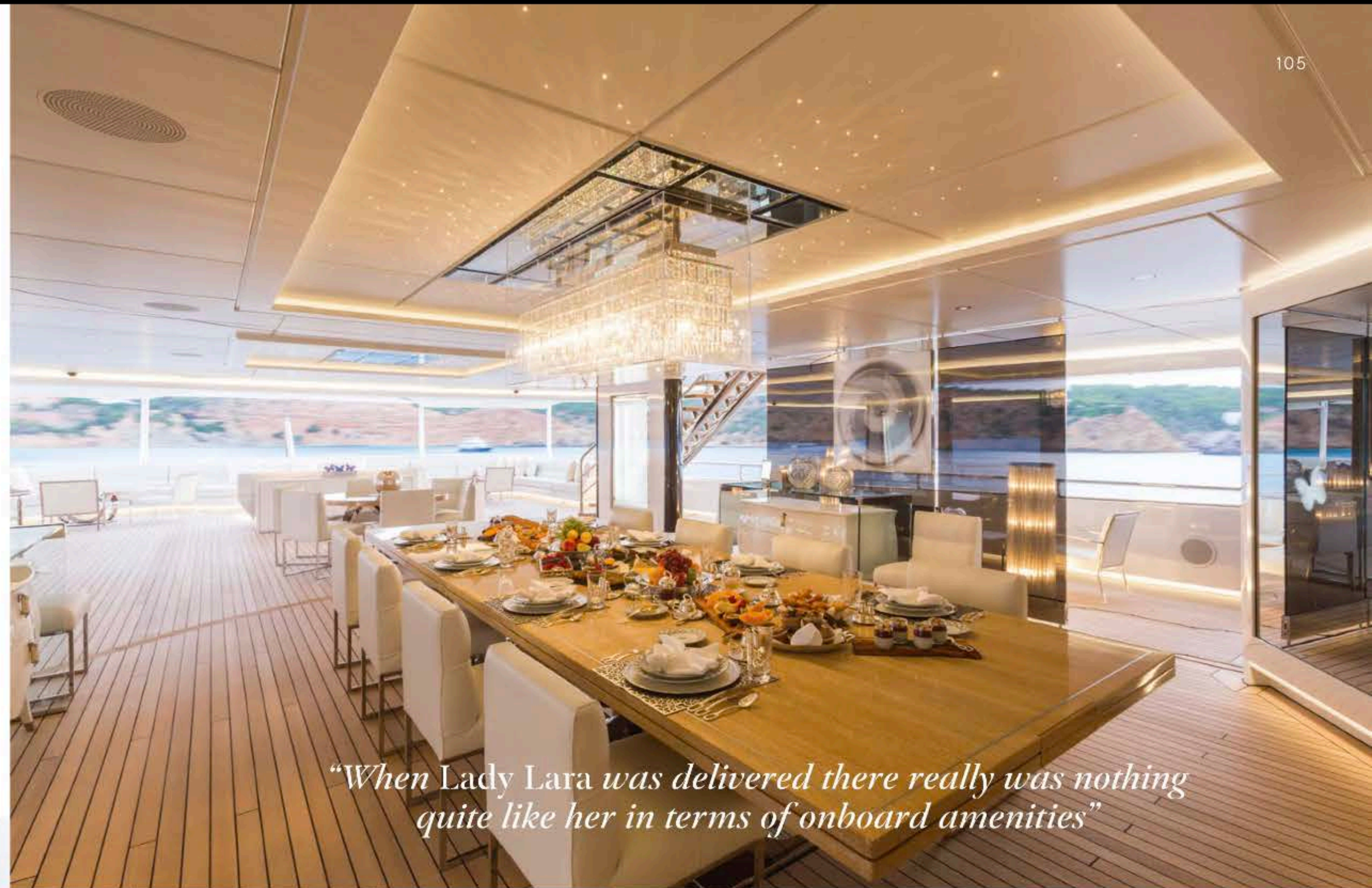
She finally made her public debut – or semi-public, since access was strictly controlled – during this year's Monaco Yacht Show because she is for sale for the first time, jointly offered by brokerage firms Y.CO and Merle Wood & Associates. Y.CO has been involved with the yacht since her inception, project managing her build and her operations since delivery, and is offering her for charter this winter. "In terms of what she offers – her versatility and the sheer number of amenities on board – she really is a modern-day icon," says Gary Wright, Y.CO co-founder and chairman. Merle Wood describes her as "exceptional" in every category, "from her exceptionally inspiring design to her exceptionally well-conceived layout". He also credits her "pedigreed Lürssen build, and the top quality of care and maintenance since new by her highly experienced owners and their team".

Key to her assets was Reymond Langton Design, which had originally been contacted to pitch for the interiors. "There was already another exterior stylist in mind, which I didn't know about at the time," says Reymond. "When we had initial meetings, I came with everything, exterior and interior ideas, and [the

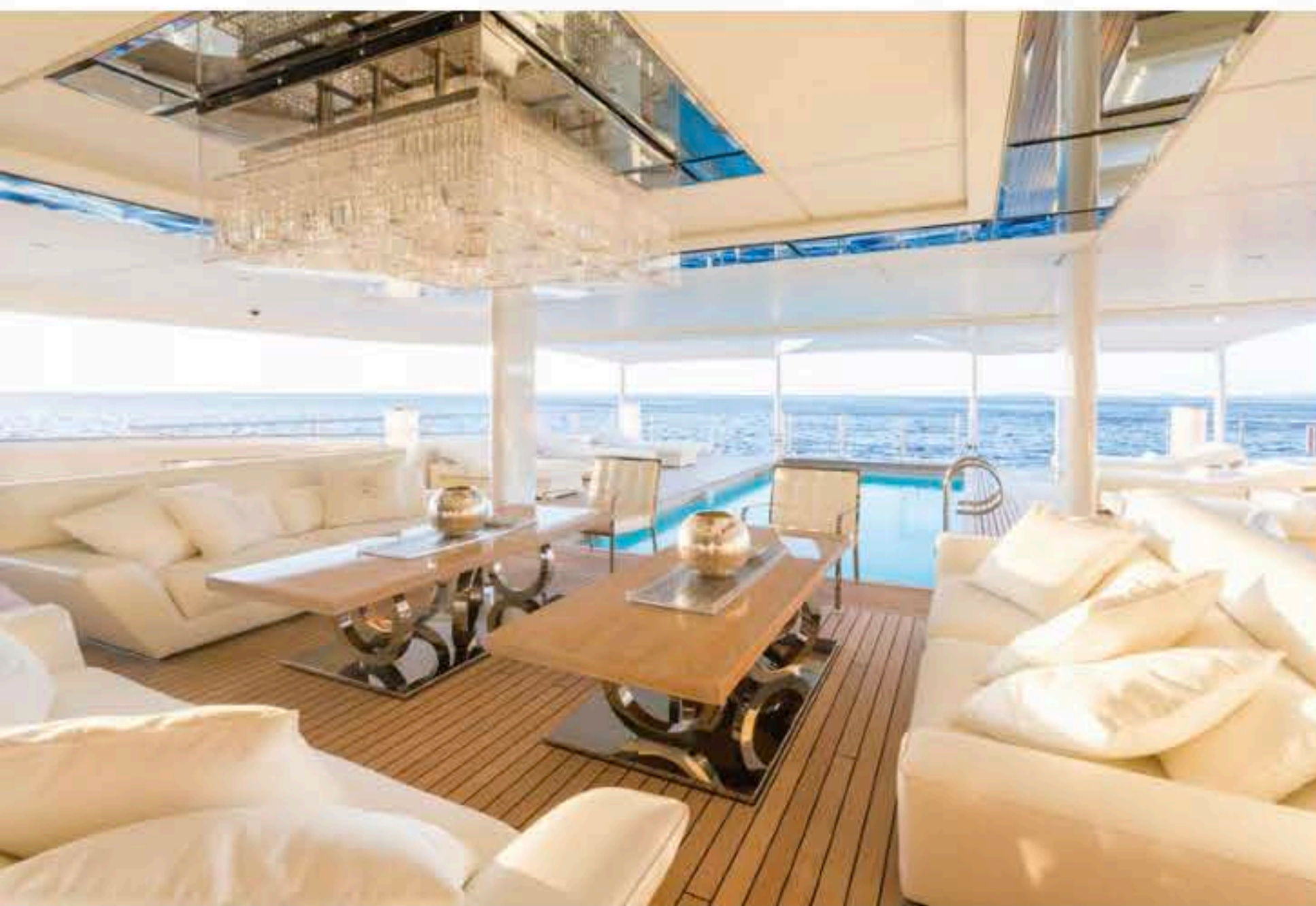


*Reymond Langton treated Lady Lara like a sculpture in creating her exterior. Listing broker Merle Wood calls her an "exceptional iconic masterpiece of nautical art". A detailed lighting plan makes the yacht unmistakable at night*





*"When Lady Lara was delivered there really was nothing quite like her in terms of onboard amenities"*



*Even the exterior living spaces have a touch of glamour with crystal chandeliers from Fendi, as seen on the main aft deck (above) and owner's deck winter garden (opposite top). Opening the centre door in the beach club (right) after the tender is launched creates a full-beam oasis*

owners] got really hooked on some of our projects. When we walked out of the meeting, it was suddenly like, 'Actually, we want you to do the exterior also.'

As Michael Breman, sales director at Lürssen, puts it: "The owners are experienced yachtsmen, and they expressed an interest in having a yacht built to their specific taste and requirements. Raymond Langton translated their wishes perfectly."

Ahead of one of the meetings with the owners, the designers carved into a foam model of the yacht with a scalpel and sandpaper to bring out the dramatic details they imagined for *Lady Lara's* undulating form. To best appreciate the artful exterior, the designers and I stand on the dock and gaze upwards at the 2,945GT yacht that floats before us. Andrew Langton points out the voluminous forms that flow along the superstructure at each deck level. "We put these big convex volumes on the sides, in a long arc, then cut into them [underneath] with a concave shape, which gives a shadow. The cap structure has big shapes as well and is a bit like a car bonnet of an Aston Martin from the front," he says. "There's great drama and a sculptural effect close up, but from a distance you have beautiful, elegant lines."

It was important that her profile appear smooth from afar. Effort was made to hide everything, from the navigational lights and life rafts to the barely visible wing stations, which are tucked into the curved superstructure rather than bulging out at the



*The pure white onyx was difficult to source. “I don’t think there’s been a boat with this much white onyx before or since”*

sides, and even the ventilation. “Often on the back of boats you’ll see big stainless vents,” says Langton. “Here we just put a long [horizontal] slot in the superstructure for the vents, which follows the yacht’s curves and arcs.”

On the main deck aft, mooring equipment is concealed by covers that blend in with the low-level bulwark. “For line handling, the covers are lifted hydraulically, allowing access to proper sized bollards, capstans and hawses,” says Lürssen project manager Dietrich Kirchner.

Langton admits that they gave Lürssen quite a challenge to construct these precise shapes. “They didn’t complain; they just said afterwards it was very hard,” says Langton with a laugh. “But to get the lines this crisp and perfect... there aren’t many yards that would be able to do that.”

Carving into the voluptuous curves of the superstructure, as well as in the forward portion of the hull, creates depth and gives the illusion of shading on the all-white exterior. “It’s graphic without using any additional paintwork,” adds Reymond. When the light from the water reflects on these reverse surfaces in the daylight, everything sparkles.

At night the yacht’s lines and facets are highlighted by an extensive 1,000-metre-plus architectural rope light system, created by Sally Storey of Lighting Design International. There are even spotlights that shine back onto the boat for added effect. “You can see every line,” says Langton. “It’s unmistakable at night that it’s *Lady Lara*.”

In hindsight, perhaps there were clues in *Lady Lara*’s curvaceous profile hinting at the soft nature of the interior that’s found inside. “It’s a very feminine yacht,” says Reymond of the interior motif. “It’s very glamorous – very light and nothing heavy. Old Hollywood glamour without being pastiche.”

Stepping inside the main saloon, I’m greeted with a sea of white and ivory, from the wood and onyx to the leather furnishings and sumptuous carpets. “Everything is white, but it’s not stark white; it still has some warmth,” says Reymond. To achieve the white hue of the fiddleback sycamore joinery, the wood was “bleached to death” to extract any colour. This highlights the ripple effect in the wood, which adds a subtle dimension to the walls. The designers played with textures within the monochromatic colour palette, whether it’s bringing out the pattern in the wood, or layering wood panels in the stairwell to create a sense of depth.

Over time, the sycamore has gained a lovely patina. “You can’t control wood, it has a life of its own – it will mellow and get warmer





*The eye is drawn to the forward bulkhead, where a large piece by Damien Hirst depicting a mandala of blue butterflies presides over the dining table*

*The designers used silver details, like silver leaf borders in the ceiling and silver light fixtures, to add a cool complement to the white interior*

with age," says Reymond, noting that the joinery used to be lighter but is now more creamy and golden. "But it has mellowed uniformly, so it looks like it's meant to be this colour. Now it goes even better with the white onyx."

That pure white onyx – devoid of any black veins or yellow details – is used throughout *Lady Lara* and was extremely difficult to source. The designers bought the biggest stock they could find for the yacht, and since then it's been nearly impossible to find white onyx of this purity. "I don't think there's been a boat with this much white onyx before or since," Langton says.

Amidst the clean-white interior, the eye is drawn to the forward bulkhead of the main saloon, where a large piece by Damien Hirst depicting a mandala of blue butterflies presides over the dining table. Custom china, designed by Hirst to match the painting, is on display in backlit nooks in the walls of the dining room and main saloon. Overhead, a mirrored inset in the ceiling holds a rectangular crystal chandelier, which pours glimmering light onto the stone dining table and leather chairs.

Like the undulating exterior, curves are found in abundance inside as well, with rounded leather sofas and armchairs inviting guests to recline in the main saloon. A focal point in the saloon is



## LADY'S NIGHT

*Lady Lara* was built with entertainment in mind. On the main deck aft, the 8m by 3.5m by 1.35m swimming pool (above) sits flush with the deck so it can easily be covered and transformed into a dance floor with a disco ball dropping down from the deckhead. A high-spec Bond sound system, DJ booth and built-in party lights mean she's ready for a soiree without the need to bring on tonnes of equipment.

"The interior and exterior are fitted with a sophisticated network-based entertainment system scalable in performance from individual purposes per guest up to generous party set-ups on all decks," says

project manager Dietrich Kirchner. "The exterior entertainment system is complemented by an integrated party light feature creating a multitude of settings, from low-profile club style to high-end techno effects." It is supported by a power plant that economically adjusts for the load to achieve an optimal consumption-to-power ratio, he adds.

For more relaxed evenings, a cinema is found down on the tank deck, which can be accessed via a glass lift that runs from the bridge deck. The sundeck, with yet another pool, this one with a swim-up bar (pictured top), is also a favourite spot for entertaining and unwinding.



A skylight over the bed filters light into the owner's suite (above). Two main-deck guest rooms have fold-down balconies (right), while the others enjoy floor-to-ceiling windows (opposite page)



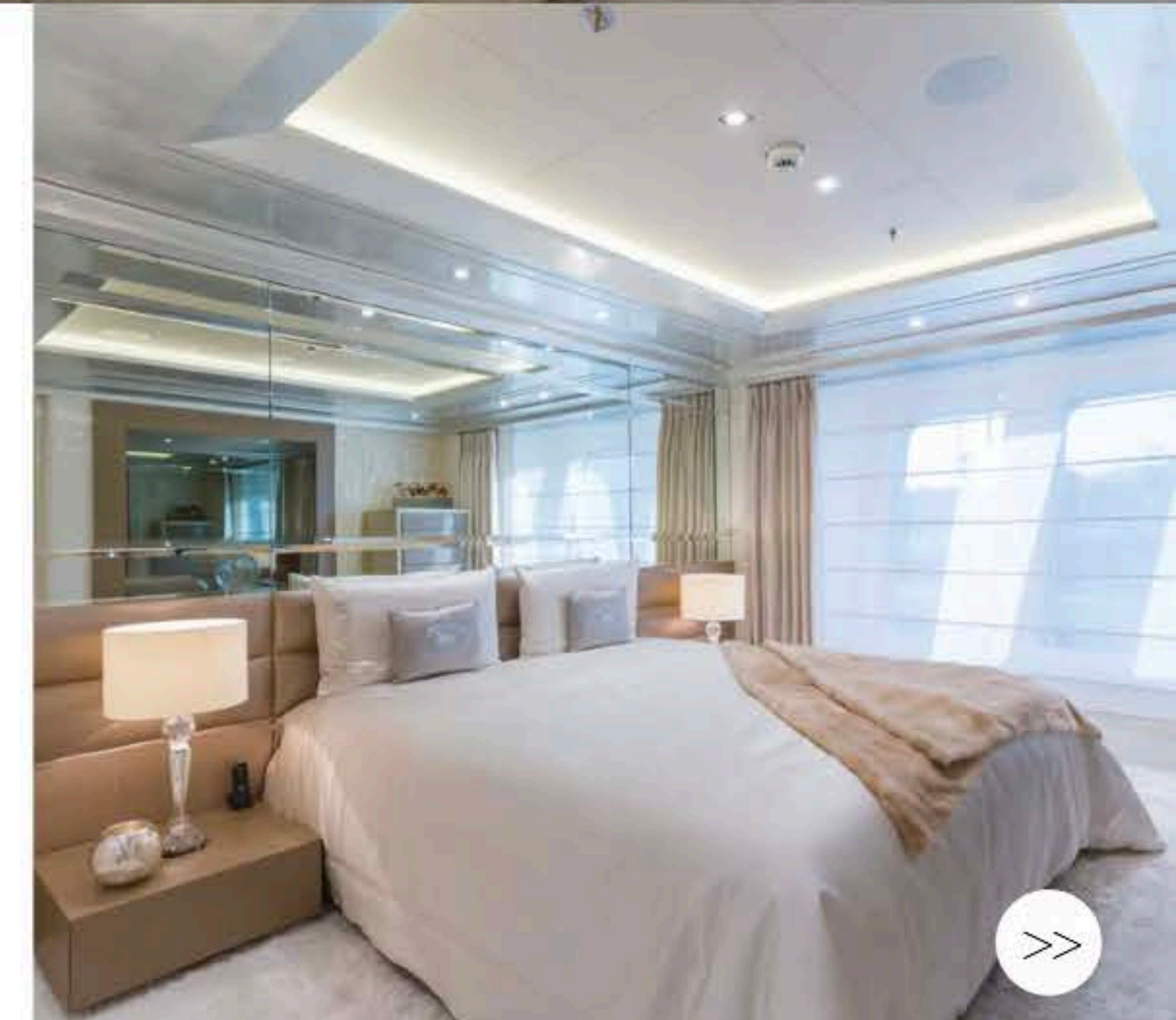
*"Every piece of loose furniture, every throw, every cushion, it's all Fendi"*



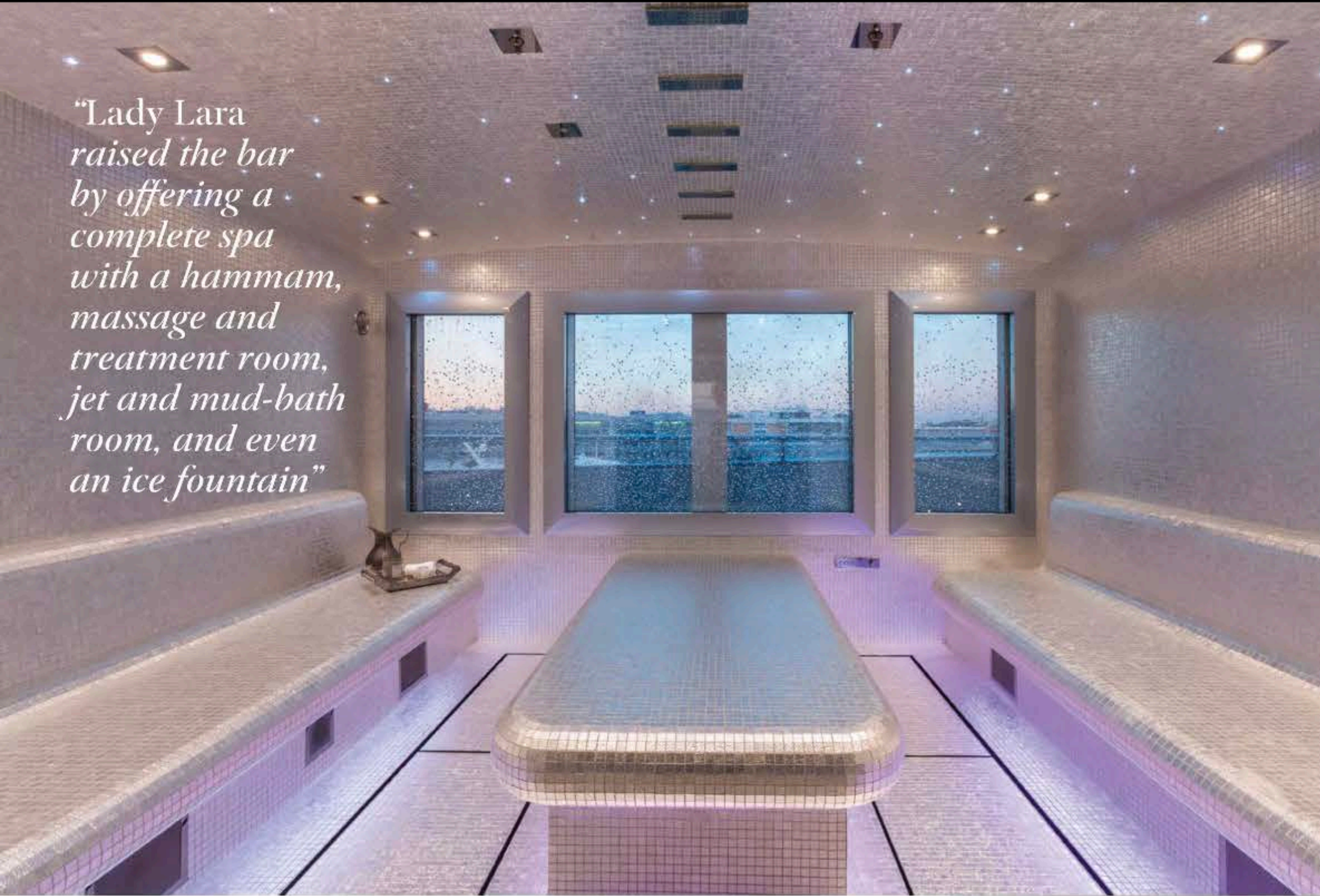
a player-piano, serving as a divider between the lounge area and formal dining forward. "And you can play it, too, if you're musically inclined," says *Lady Lara's* captain Tim Bridger.

I lose track of the number of times I inquire about the origin of this lamp or that rug only to be told it's Fendi, until Captain Bridger clarifies: "Every piece of loose furniture, every throw, every cushion, it's all Fendi." All of *Lady Lara's* guest areas are decked out in pieces from the Italian label, but there isn't a sea of logos dominating the interior - many of the items, like crystal light fixtures, leather panels and angular sofas, you wouldn't necessarily know are Fendi until closer inspection.

*Lady Lara's* white interiors and loose furnishings present a blank slate for a new owner to instill their own design sense. "She has personality, but you can build around it," says Reymond. "If you don't like Fendi, you remove the rugs or take the chandeliers down, and suddenly you have something entirely different." From a buyer's perspective, this gives the yacht versatility and possibilities without



*“Lady Lara raised the bar by offering a complete spa with a hammam, massage and treatment room, jet and mud-bath room, and even an ice fountain”*



*The spa facilities on Lady Lara are ahead of her time in terms of scope and size. Adjacent to the fully equipped gym on the bridge deck, they make up a complete well-being area on board*



an extensive refit. And she really doesn't need one. She's been immaculately maintained over the years and has a new feel despite being liberally used by her owners. In fact, in the winter of 2022/23, *Lady Lara* received a €15 million (£13m) refit, which included a full exterior paint job, interior updates and maintenance works as well as upgrading her navigation, IT and security systems.

The yacht is replete with wish-list items that are more common in superyachts launched today. “When *Lady Lara* was delivered there really was nothing quite like her in terms of onboard amenities,” Wright says. For example: “While most superyachts her size might have a massage room and a Jacuzzi, *Lady Lara* raised the bar by offering a complete spa and well-being area, complete with a sizable hammam, massage and treatment room, jet and mud-bath room, and even an ice fountain. This is in addition to a hammam and sauna adjacent to the water in the beach club area. It put her leagues ahead of anything the industry had seen before.”

There's also the extensive use of glass and a custom gym by Gym Marine on the bridge. All six of the main deck guest cabins have enormous floor-to-ceiling windows, and the two largest cabins have fold-down balconies. You'd be forgiven for thinking that the first main deck cabin to starboard, with a long walk-in wardrobe worthy of a master suite, is the VIP, but in fact the VIP suite is found amidships on the lower deck, across the hall from two staff cabins, which are finished to guest standard. Hirst's artwork is seen throughout the yacht on a smaller scale, such as in the guest cabins, where Fendi display cases holding butterflies are marked with the artist's signature.







*“We’ve done so many yachts, but she is still my favourite. She was meant to be timeless and she has aged well”*

The owners have a dedicated deck, set between the main and bridge decks. The forward-facing bedroom, which enjoys access to its own private foredeck lounge with a spa tub, is complemented by an office and his-and-hers en suites and dressing areas. The aft owners’ deck saloon has plenty of space to entertain guests, if desired, and opens out onto an ample aft deck with a dining table, seating 24 when extended, set inside a winter garden. Guests can dine al fresco, with windbreaks pulled open along the side when required, or glass panels can enclose the space entirely.

In the starboard-side beach club, a vast terrace opens connecting the space to the sea. The tender garage to port has been finished to the same standards as the beach club, so when the tender is launched a dividing wall pulls back and transforms the area to a full-beam lounge.

Reymond says *Lady Lara* is still one of her proudest achievements. As proof, she brandishes her business card. “Andrew and I have different cards with each of our favourite boats on them,” she says. “Andrew has *Aviva*, and I have *Lady Lara*. When she came out of the shed, I had goosebumps. She was like a sculpture. We’ve done many yachts, but she is still my favourite. She was meant to be timeless, and she has aged well.”

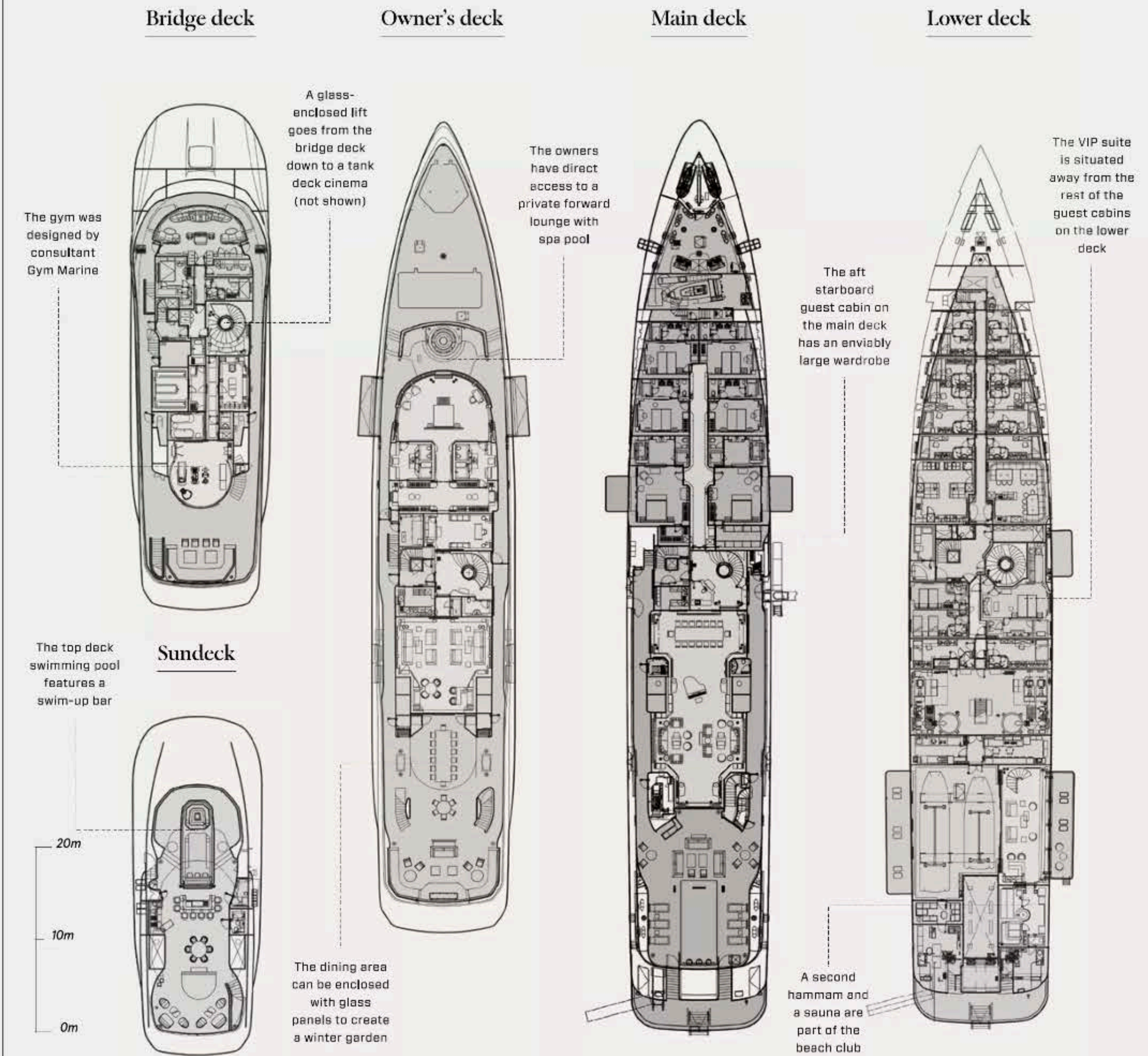
Since her launch, *Lady Lara* has stayed firmly planted in her designers’ minds while simultaneously sparking the curiosity of the yachting world. Now that she has been revealed, it’s apparent that her elegant interiors and architectural exterior will keep her relevant for years to come. ■



*Lady Lara’s transom slides closed over the stairs at night or when cruising in less safe areas. The tender garage is fitted out to the same standards as the living areas*

## Lady Lara

## Lürssen



<b>LOA</b> 91m	<b>Generators</b> 2 x 490kW MTU 12V 2000 M51A; 1 x 385kW MTU 8V 2000 M41A	<b>Fuel capacity</b> 220,000 litres	<b>Owners/guests</b> 16	<b>Naval architecture</b> Lürssen	<b>Builder/year</b> Lürssen/2015 Bremen, Germany
<b>LWL</b> 79,15m	<b>Speed</b> (max/cruise) 17/14 knots	<b>Freshwater capacity</b> 42,300 litres	<b>Crew</b> 27	<b>Exterior styling and Interior design</b> Reymond Langton Design	<b>For sale</b> Y.CO; merlewood.com
<b>Beam</b> 14,4m	<b>Range at 12 knots</b> 6,000nm	<b>Tenders</b> 9m custom Compass; 11.6m Compass limo; 6.8m Xtenders rescue boat	<b>Construction</b> Steel hull; aluminium superstructure		<b>For charter</b> Y.CO
<b>Draught</b> 4m			<b>Classification</b> Lloyd's #100 A1, Mono yacht SSC G6, [⊕] LMC, UMS, ShipRight IHM; MCA LY2 compliant		
<b>Gross tonnage</b> 2,945GT					
<b>Engines</b> 2 x MTU 16V 4000 M63L					