



EQUIPPED WITH A CRYSTAL CLEAR BRIEF, THESE OWNERS—AND THEIR LONGTIME DESIGNER—KNEW THAT DELTA COULD BUILD THE YACHT OF THEIR DREAMS.

SLOJO

STORY: TIM PAWSEY

PHOTOS: KRISTINA STROBEL



One continuous piece of steam-bent steel with a teak railing winds up the height of the three-level stairwell—a tour de force of glass and stainless steel, with exquisite joinery, situated at the vessel's heart.



When building your dream yacht, it pays to have a designer on board. Literally.

slojo, the 156ft composite, semi-displacement motor yacht built by Delta, is by now threading her way around another remote South Pacific atoll. Her owners and guests may well be settling in for a post-dive cocktail, relaxing on her spacious aft deck—perhaps re-living the day's diving adventures. And chances are that savoring the moment will be Tom Stringer, the Chicago designer whose longtime clients and good friends commissioned him to shape not only the vessel's interior but just about every facet of the onboard experience.

The design program for *slojo* was not delivered by the owners in a dossier. Instead, it came through a series of conversations and experiences during years of travel together, for in this owner/designer relationship, friendship came first.



"WE ASKED OUR DESIGNER TO MAKE IT LIVABLE RATHER THAN UNTOUCHABLE; WHERE BATHING SUITS ARE PERFECT ATTIRE."



The airy and spacious master suite is quietly luxurious, with a relaxing, contemporary feel. A dramatic wall feature of Onice Fantastico stone graces the master bath.



"WE DIDN'T WANT LIFE TO CHANGE WHEN WE WENT TO SEA."



The interior, says Stringer, who heads Tom Stringer Design Partners, captures the essence of contemporary architecture. The design is restrained yet detailed; clean and open spaces adorned with a collection of primitive Asian, African and ethnographic art.

"Our primary focus was singular in vision. Warm water and warm weather—thus fifteen degrees either side of the equator. *slojo* was designed for outdoor living—breakfast, lunch and dinner," say the owners, who have a passion for remote travel. "We asked our designer to make it livable rather than untouchable; where bathing suits and towels are perfectly acceptable attire and thus designed accordingly."

With an initial design brief in place, the owners and designer then set about chartering other yachts, using them as a platform for further travel, discussion, and refinement of the design. Along the way, a healthy amount of fun was had, making this designer's assignment a very pleasurable one. The result is a clear and concise expression of the owners' desire to build a yacht of lasting quality and contemporary style, capable of traveling the far reaches of the world in their own style and at their own pace. This vessel was never intended for charter, and is instead a personal and intimate home on the water, a home to share with friends and family.

Delta's brief was to build a highly maneuverable, long-range, shallow draft, diving craft. In developing the hull design, Delta opted for efficiency over a broad range of operating profiles, rather than target a single optimized top speed point (an all-eggs-in-one-basket approach). Recognizing that most yachts are not operated at maximum power very frequently, Delta created an evolved hybrid shape that produces less drag at lower speeds and still allows the yacht to perform well when it is time to pick up the pace to beat a weather system. In spite of her relatively modest draft, *slojo* has ample range and capability for long ocean passages.

When the client first approached Delta, the instruction was to produce a modern classic that was distinctly American in aesthetic and a move away from the Euro-styled exteriors prevalent in similar-sized vessels. The collaboration between Delta, client and Stringer produced an overall silhouette that showed a beautifully proportioned vessel that exercised restraint from excessive ornamentation and styling clichés. Particular focus was given to the placement and size of the windows, where the integration of interior and exterior becomes most critical. The selection of the flag-blue hull color emphasizes the long line of the hull and gentle curves of the superstructure.

"Being able to work so closely with Tom Stringer was a refreshing experience," says Jay Miner, Delta's chief naval architect—and, in the end, proved invaluable. "He was able to not only focus on the schedule but also, because of his long history with the client, he knew the best way to solve problems and get answers. There are thousands of decisions to make in a project of this sort, and all too often, owners can find the whole process quite overwhelming if the pace and order are not managed properly. Tom did

a wonderful job of making things fun for the clients and getting us the answers we needed," says Miner.

From inception to launch, Stringer says it has already been an interesting journey.

In fact, the process unfolded during a number of exploratory voyages leading up to

construction. As they cruised, the owner-design team became their own most ardent critic, scrutinizing every aspect.

"We wanted to punch holes in our plans. We spent significant time talking to the charter crews to get a sense of how things worked in practical terms. Based on that research, when space was added it was to the benefit of the crew area, not the guest quarters. The owners were concerned with the comfort of the crew for reasons of job satisfaction, and ultimately, crew retention.

In contrast to the usual, more formal style of the main saloon, *slojo's* welcoming, relaxed, and very familial personality is immediately apparent upon entering. Large windows with low sills allow in plenty of natural light and convey a sense of added space. Two distinct seating areas include four armchairs around a portside ottoman and a starboard settee.



Woods are light and the color scheme throughout is neutral with subtle earth tones, while Stringer designed custom-made carpets that interpret traditional African patterns. Artifacts such as shell money are displayed in individual art cells that divide the living and dining areas. Lined with off-white leather and face lit, these cells will become the home to the rare and unique collections discovered throughout the voyages and adventures of *slojo* and her owners; pieces that reflect the places traveled.

The arrangement of the main saloon, stairwell and lower guest foyer were designed to accommodate the overall design aesthetic that reflects a more modernist sensibility. *slojo's* three-level stairwell is at the vessel's heart. It is a tour de force of glass and stainless steel, with exquisite joinery—most notably the one-piece, steam-bent, teak rail that winds its way from top to bottom; an engineering feat in itself. In addition, it grants easy access to the bridge deck and lower guest accommodations, served by a handsome, capacious foyer that allows traffic to flow seamlessly to all quarters.

Off the main foyer and serving as an entrance into the owners' stateroom, is a fully equipped service bar with wine cooler. Nineteenth century Chinese panels that

Going green. For real.

The ultimate irony of travel to far flung destinations is that marine pollution truly knows no boundaries. Even the smallest and most remote islands are affected and their communities are also the least capable of dealing with the problem. Imagine being in the middle of the Maldives, marveling at the beauty of a pristine deserted white sand atoll, when the tide comes in—with a solid sea of clear plastic bottles. It happens all too frequently.

To that end, *slojo* follows an aggressive recycling—you could call it pre-cycling—program that sees virtually no packaging allowed on board. When *slojo's* crew goes provisioning they take with them the ship's supply of 40 cloth shopping bags (complete with ship's logo) and whenever possible purchase locally produced goods. Before being taken aboard, the chief steward unpacks all supplies dockside, with plastic and cardboard separated and recycled onshore.

Everything used on board is biodegradable and the crew washes down using only environmentally friendly, chemical-free products. It's all part of a concerted effort to give back to the communities visited. To that end, as an active member of The International SeaKeepers Society, *slojo* is equipped with the SeaKeeper 1000 water and weather data monitoring system, and also carries specialized supplies for remote communities as part of its involvement with Yacht Aid Global.

How serious is *slojo* about its garbage-free existence?

The trash compactor normally spec'd for the galley is gone—replaced by a state-of-the-art ice machine. Nor are plastic water bottles allowed. Neither will you find on board any paper towel, napkin or paper plate. It's just more efficient, more economical, and more environmentally sensitive. And more luxurious for the crew—who greatly appreciate their cloth and china.

Eschewing a VIP suite that might overtly favor one guest, the owners opted for four similar guest rooms below. The lower guest foyer continues the overall aesthetic, reflecting a more modernist sensibility while allowing traffic to flow seamlessly to all quarters.

adorn the temperature-controlled cooler closet are further testimony to the passion and originality that define this vessel. Originally acquired by a celebrated Swedish collector of Gustavian and Asian antiques, the one-inch door panels were painstakingly cut from tall boards before being resin-injected and laminated.

The airy and spacious, full-beam master suite, clean-lined and uncluttered, includes a concealed, ceiling-mounted, flip-down flatscreen (as does the main saloon)—again a departure from the usual "fixed screen" all too reminiscent of hotel accommodations. Here again the mood is quietly luxurious with a relaxing, contemporary feel. In the master head, dominating the aft bulkhead is a dramatic wall feature of Onice Fantastico stone, with vibrant strains of ochre, sand and earth tones, while sinks (as in all heads) are in Paloma Bianca limestone.

Cooking in *slojo's* galley is a treat, says the yacht's chef, whose naturally lit workspace boasts the professional feel of a commercial kitchen, but is brimming with warmth thanks to an expanse of teak and natural light. As one of the owners is an avid home chef, she too delights in this space, in which she can plan and cook with every conceivable amenity, from a Pacojet ice cream maker to a Cryovac sous-vide system. Also, long-distance provisioning is never a problem, as all the refrigerators on board convert to freezers.

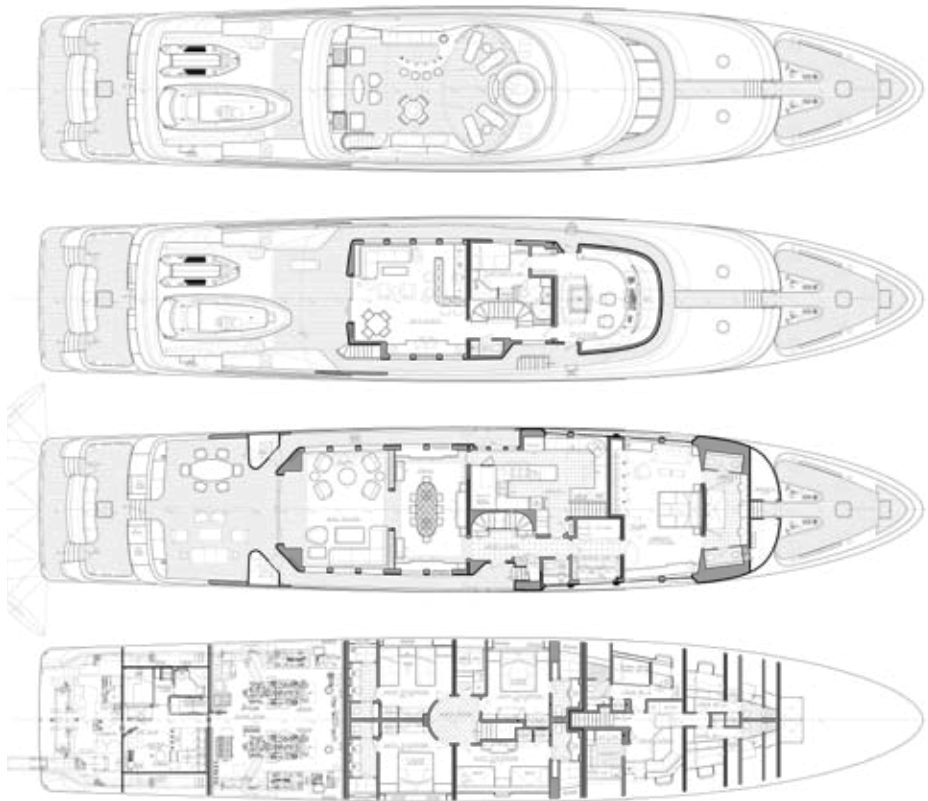
Below, while the four guest staterooms differ slightly, a conscious decision was made not to construct a VIP suite that would overtly favor any one guest, though still conveying a personalized flavor in each instance. The contrasting king and twin staterooms aft enjoy slightly larger bathrooms, with separate water closets. The portside aft suite yields a convertible "king to twin" arrangement, while the forward starboard twin sports an unusual "end to end" configuration, perfect for children, with much more personal space than the usual sharing arrangement.

slojo's wheelhouse is a multipurpose space that doubles as a command center and planning room. Sightlines from the twin Stidd chairs are superb, thanks to a full 180-degree panorama. A flatscreen aft of the raised observation booth can be used for charting upcoming activities—for reviewing the day's video highlights or any other shipboard media, with the exception of TV and videos, which are not permitted on watch.

Wrapped in dark Mozambique wood and with warm, mocha and orange tones, the skylounge makes for a natural evening haunt for relaxing at the corner bar or playing cards around the Émile-Jacques Ruhlman-inspired games table. Moveable bar stools, which can be attached to the foot rail in the event of bad weather, are another Stringer innovation. "We didn't want life to change when we went to sea," says the designer, who strove to make every feature usable but still attractive, with the emphasis always on practicality.

Stringer also says that he and the owners paid a great amount of attention to the design of the outdoor spaces, given that when near the equator, morning noon and night, the aft and sun decks become the main living areas. Here again, the team's exploratory





voyages yielded strong ideas, including easily installed, one-piece fiber canopies (of two different sheers) that stretch the breadth and width of the sun deck, as far forward as the sunpads and spa pool and aft to the lounge area, bar and games table. Also unique are custom made, removable halogen "Tiki" lights that plug into weatherproof sockets for added ambiance. The collective opinion is that this very spacious and highly flexible space is the vessel's "sweet spot"!

Equally adaptable, the fixed aft deck, twin-pedestal, honeycombed marble-top dining table may be completely mirrored with the lounge furniture in a matter of minutes, depending on the position of the sun and prevailing winds. And it can also be enlarged for more dinner guests, or, more critically, reduced for playing cards—as the clients are avid game players.

Testament to the prowess of both designer and builder, *slojo* has been cruising since the very day she was delivered, and is already well into her circumnavigation. Her twin CATs deliver a top speed of 16.5 knots, although with a cruise of 12 knots she has an impressive range of 3,500 nautical miles.

The designer has nothing but praise for the quality of Delta's build and for the degree of in-house craftsmanship, from stainless steel to joinery. "While some of the design elements may appear quite simple, with the reveal details and the way in which the materials connect it becomes a lot more challenging, and a far more complex design issue," says Stringer.

The designer says his experience as an avid diver and boater has proved invaluable. "The client understands that I grew up on boats. It's not a foreign lifestyle. And that made adapting their lifestyle to the water that much easier." However, what excites the designer most is that it's not just a question of creating an attractive interior. "Yes. It has to be beautiful. But at the end of the day it's a machine and you always have to come back to that."

The end result as stated by the owner, "It's casual elegance without stuffy formality; the joy of traveling the seas rather than the hassles of ports; deserted beaches rather than rich desserts. It's the road less traveled and the journey, not the destination. |

SPECS

LOA: 156ft (47.55m)
LWL: 138ft 10in (42.05m)
Beam: 28ft 8in (8.74m) (molded)/
 29ft 4in (8.94m) (extreme)
Draft: 7ft 6in (2.29m) at half load
Displacement: 354 long tons (half load)
Engines: 2 x CAT 3508B 1,300hp @
 1,835rpm
Speed (max/cruise): 16.5/15 knots
Fuel capacity: 14,870 gallons
Range: 3,500nm @ 12 knots
Generators: 2 x Northern Lights 99kW
Stabilizers: Quantum QC 1800 Zero Speed
Bow thruster:
 Arcturus Marine TRAC 120hp
Freshwater capacity: 2,470 gallons
Watermakers:
 Sea Recovery, Coral Sea 2,800gpd
Air-conditioning:
 Dometic Environmental 30-ton
Entertainment systems:
 AV Concepts and Design
Paint: Awlgrip (Flag Blue)
Material: Composite
Tenders: 1x Nautica 24ft Express Diesel Jet IB,
 1x Nautica 14ft O/B
Cranes: 2 x Nautical Structures EZ5000 FB
Special features:
 Nautilus Underwater Systems
 Nitrox dive compressor
Owner and guests: 10
Crew: 10
Classification: Lloyd's Register 100 A1 SSC
 Yacht Mono G6 MCH
Naval architecture: Delta Design Group
Exterior styling: Delta Design Group
Interior space planning: Delta Design Group
Interior design: Tom Stringer, Inc.
Builder/Year: Delta Marine Industries/2008
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 Seattle, WA 98108
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Much emphasis was placed on the vessel's exterior spaces, and *slojo's* sun deck, with its flexible layout, is certainly the boat's "sweet spot"!

