



Seventh Heaven

THE LATEST FROM MONTE CARLO YACHTS—THE MCY 96—
KEEPS THE FLAME BURNING BRIGHT WHILE ALLOWING
OWNERS TO LIGHT THE WAY WITH CUSTOMIZATION GALORE.
BY JASON Y. WOOD



We've come to know the MCY look, but each new yacht from this yard still offers pleasant surprises.

LOA: 96'0"
Beam: 22'9"
Draft: 6'10"
Displ.: 98 tons (dry)
Fuel: 2,906 gal.
Water: 436 gal.

Test Power: 2/2,200-hp MTU 16V2000
Power Options: 2/1,900-hp MAN V12
Price: Upon request

How would *you* do it? It's the same question we often face in our day-to-day lives, a wealth of choices that can lead to decision paralysis. In that way, you have to respect how the management team at Monte Carlo Yachts, led by President Carla Demaria and Managing Director Fabrizio Iarrera, goes about its business. It was only in 2009 that the Monfalcone, Italy-based brand was created to serve the high-end motoryacht segment for parent company Beneteau Group, the French boatbuilding leviathan. And MCY, as the company has come to be known, is targeting boaters who are sophisticated and opinionated. After all, they can have the best available. The designs have to appeal to hearts as well as minds, without appearing cliché, or dated, or trendy.

Seven models later, MCY has not looked back. That's a new model for each year of existence since the first launch (the MCY 76) in 2010, including a 105-footer introduced in 2015. The boats have a consistent design DNA, thanks to the steady work of the Italian design firm Nuvolari Lenard in partnership with MCY's inhouse designers and engineers. It's so consistent that this collaboration has created everything that MCY has built.

"The challenge is always to be the first and never be the follower," says Carlo Nuvolari of Nuvolari-Lenard. "We need to understand well the competition and the customers' taste in order to design boats with a rational approach. Our yachts need to have all what other yachts have and what the customer may miss." While those market forces set the tone, there are other factors in the equation. "But we need also to offer nonrational values: emotion and beauty," he says.

The MCY 96 continues the line, but like any parent, the builder has encouraged the progeny to grow and succeed beyond the limits previously reached by the forebears. This builder continues to learn as it goes, and it shows. And when you really think about it, the truly remarkable achievement is that as the line grows, the later boats are not all just enlarged versions of the same thing.

I asked the design team how they balance the originality of new designs with the successes of the past. "I frankly don't know how we do that," Nuvolari said. "I will answer you with a question: Is the 96 perceived as part of the MCY family but with its own character? If the answer is yes, then we succeeded in our task. There is no rule. We look at the design and we change it and polish it until we like it." The models in the fleet will unmistakably remind you of each other, like siblings in a family photo.

What sets MCY apart from other builders is its level of customization; other builders don't want to spend time returning to the design studio to redraw accommodations plans and re-engineer supporting bulkheads and wire chases and plumbing and weight studies. Instead, MCY offers a selection of options, but owners may deviate

From the welcoming salon (right), to the main-deck master (below right), to the shippy pilothouse (below far right), the MCY 96 shows superyacht tendencies, no surprise since her two-year-old thoroughbred stablemate, the MCY 105, was so well-received.

from that. Still, sticking with the options list may help resale value. In the case of the 96, there is a main-deck master and then a selection of three- and four-stateroom layouts for the belowdecks accommodations. All are en suite, and the VIPs (many of these staterooms qualify for that designation based on square footage and amenities) will welcome guests with generous aplomb. Forward there are serious crew's quarters with space for up to six crew built around a commercial-grade galley with dinette.

That master forward positioned on the main deck means quite a few things for the discerning boat buyer. First, it takes privacy to the next level. Also, the sole-to-overhead windows let the owners benefit from cutouts in the bulwarks that allow for uninterrupted views (except for a simple safety rail). Then there's the lounge area—a proper sofa where owners can escape their guests but don't have to sit on the king-size berth. A walk-in locker and head are forward. But herein lies the challenge of trying to capture a custom boat for the discerning audience of *Power & Motor-yacht*: So much of this yacht's overall feel depends on the final choices made for her interior—the textures and colors evoked by fine materials well finished, including Italian marble, fabrics by Hermès and Armani, and expanses of flawless lacquer. In short, your finished MCY 96 may look and feel very different from the one at the boat show that helped lead you on the course to this model.

And while we're talking about the course, that main-deck master stateroom also results in a raised pilothouse that provides the enviable position of overlooking a bow with pretty much every kind of seating you can imagine, from a huge centerline sunpad to a settee to a pair of lay-flat sunpads that turn into a dining area with foldup backrests and a couple of matched, facing tables.

For all the luxurious lounging areas and fashionable design, this yacht will also appeal to the cruising sensibilities. Between aft mooring bollards concealed behind artful stainless corner pieces, a 1.2-ton-capacity hydraulic H+B swim platform brings the sea closer for bathers, while the aft garage ships a Williams 445 jet tender. The spacious cockpit has a transom lounge with table shaded by the flybridge overhang.

Entering the expansive salon from the wide-opening cockpit door, I was greeted by a huge, low-slung lounge to starboard that, though luxurious, subtly downplays its size to make the space feel even more open. Large windows aft turn into sole-to-overhead expanses of glass on either side amidships as you move forward, and in fact those panes are large glass sliding doors, offering access to foldout balconies built into the hull-sides. Any dinner party held on this yacht will be unforgettable, thanks to the views guests can enjoy. The dining area is served by that lower-deck galley, with separate crew stairs.

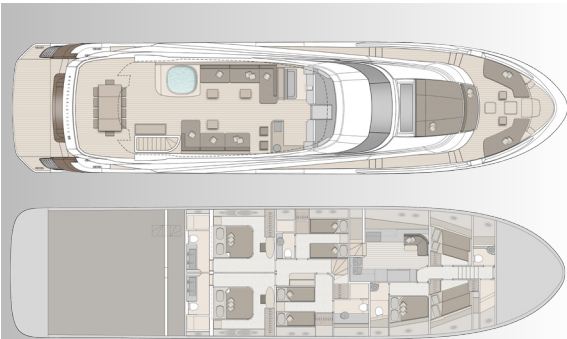
And if that cross-ventilated table for eight does not somehow provide enough fresh air, the party can repair to the cockpit, or even up to the huge flybridge, where a carbon-fiber hardtop shelters 80 percent of the top deck, including a lounge with hi-lo table, plenty of additional lounge seating and helm and companion seating. A large fabric panel

in the hardtop retracts so guests can enjoy the sun as well as each scenic port of call or secluded anchorage. This hardtop is black and sleek, and somehow actually enhances the lines of the yacht, fitting seamlessly into the overall design. I don't find myself saying that very often about hardtops, a necessity in many cruising areas. And for its size it has less impact on performance and dynamic stability than you'd think, thanks to its lightweight, high-tech construction.

A pair of 2,200-horsepower MTU diesels made this boat a moveable feast for the senses as the big props dug into the water off Cannes. From the flybridge helm position, I put her through a few aggressive turns at speed as the company skipper and my fellow journalists looked on appreciatively. She handled well with a bit of lean into the turns, making better than 24 knots at her top end. We detected a bit of prop ventilation in a full-throttle, hardover starboard turn, and the MCY representative explained that one blade of prop had been damaged when it hit a submerged object on the delivery to the boat show, and that it would be fixed.

So if I were to really ask, "How would you do it?" how would you respond? You may have your own ideas. But if, after eight years or so of operation, you produced a yacht on the order of the MCY 96, with the fit and finish and all of the options that this yacht generously provides, you would take your rightful place on the world stage. The decision is yours. □

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RPM	KNOTS	GPH	RANGE	dB(A)
550	5.7	2.4	6,213	53
1000	9.2	9.5	1,266	53
1250	11.5	21.4	703	57
1500	13.3	39.1	445	60
1750	15.4	54.9	367	64
2000	18.2	79.5	299	65
2250	22.3	99.6	293	68
2400	24.2	116.0	273	68

TEST CONDITIONS: Air temperature: 78°F; humidity: 75%; seas: 1-2'; load: 50% fuel, 70% water, 12 persons. Speeds are two-way averages measured by GPS. GPH is taken from the MTU engine-monitoring system. Range is based on 90% of advertised fuel capacity. Sound levels were recorded at the lower helm. 65 dB(A) is the level of normal conversation.

