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the NEXT level

MONTE CARLO YACHTS' MCY 96 UPS THE BUILDER'S STYLE, SPACE AND PERFORMANCE GAME.

BY PHIL DRAPER



The MCY 96 is the second-largest model in the builder's lineup, which ranges from the MCY 65 to the MCY 105.

THE MCY 96 FALLS between the 4-year-old MCY 86 and 2-year-old MCY 105 in the Monte Carlo Yachts lineup. The MCY 86 provides a conventional two-deck flybridge general arrangement, and the MCY 105 is the brand's flagship, raised-pilothouse model. The MCY 96 has its own formula: a raised pilothouse and main-deck owner's stateroom with three or four more staterooms below, plus quarters for five or six crew in three cabins. ¶ The design — with a capital D — force behind these models is Nuvolari Lenard, the Venice-based creative studio of Carlo Nuvolari and Dan Lenard. Space and volume, often best in class when it comes to Monte Carlo Yachts, are key ingredients in all that Nuvolari Lenard does. A host of more obvious design cues — sweeping sheers, high flared bows, Portuguese bridges, high bulwarks, bow lounges, flybridge overhangs, fashion-plate buttresses, tunnel side decks, sporty black hardtops and double-hoop portlights — add to the unique DNA of this brand.

SHIPYARD OF KINGS

Monte Carlo Yachts' waterside yard is just outside Monfalcone, on Italy's northeast border with Slovenia. And the word *yard* sounds way too folksy for what is one of the most advanced factories I've ever toured. During the MCY 80 launch party in July 2016, I attended a gala dinner in the facility's painting booth, which was more impressive in all sorts of ways than some world-famous hotel ballrooms. When it's not hosting guests, this space customizes exteriors, most often with a Dupont metallic paint job, a common owner's choice. My test yacht, the first MCY 96, *Mia*, had a gold hull. ¶ Production engineering is another key ingredient in Monte Carlo Yachts' house recipe. MCY hulls are built efficiently and quickly. Most of the large moldings and bulkheads are resin-infused, plus

they incorporate carbon fiber and Kevlar. Stronger, lighter structures translate to better power-to-weight ratios underway and better economy for owners. ¶ Most of the interior work is assembled off the yacht, in jigs, before it's craned aboard, a plug-and-play approach that requires considerable accuracy and precision, and that pays for itself in man-hour savings. According to the builder, it takes just five months, and conceivably a little less, to build an MCY 96: a motoryacht with a 215,000-pound dry weight.

INTERIOR VIBES

Mia's salon is conventional enough: open plan with a dining area, all measuring around 412 square feet. Except the whole space can open to the cockpit via aft deck doors, and to the side decks and fold-down balconies. With every-

thing open, it's hard to imagine a better outdoor-indoor arrangement for a 96-footer. The furniture throughout is free-standing, which means owners can personalize the décor. ¶ Nuvolari Lenard is responsible not only for exterior styling and general arrangements throughout the MCY range, but also for the decorative options pack. *Mia* has a relatively muted color palette of mostly grays, browns, oaks and pine, with a magical mix of lights and darks, textures and tones, and radii, grains and gloss, mattes and silks, and stainless steel and distressed lacquer work. Fabrics are from Hermès, Armani/Casa and Rubelli, and there are bleached-oak soles and white Italian marbles. ¶ It all sounds way too busy, I know, but it works.

OWNER'S CHOICE

Sporting a floor area of about 266 square feet, the owners' en suite stateroom has picture windows on each side and a rectangular skylight for natural light. A sofa is along the port side with a vanity to starboard. On the lower deck, *Mia* has four more staterooms: two doubles and two twins, whose beds slide together to create queens. The portside twin also has a Pullman berth, which is a little different in that it's positioned athwartships. ¶ *Mia* also has a galley-down, combined with a crew mess, but galley-up options are available. Monte Carlo Yachts can also accommodate owners who prefer one VIP stateroom instead of the doubles or the twins, or who want a gym instead of a stateroom.

BOLD MOVE

Monte Carlo Yachts is a brand that seems always to have been around, but it was formed in late 2008, launching its first model, the MCY 76, in 2010. Since then, the builder has added six models from 65 to 105 feet length overall, and has become a major global player.



The master stateroom on the MCY 96 has about 226 square feet of space and rounded hullside windows to offer impressive vistas.

SPOTLIGHT > MONTE CARLO YACHTS MCY 96 > *Luxury is in this yacht's DNA*



Note the foldout balconies to port and starboard of the dining area. With them and the aft doors to the cockpit open, the salon becomes indoor-outdoor.



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The hardtop's retractable sunroof covers about 480 square feet of the flybridge's 650 square feet of space.

FUNCTIONAL ART

I love the stainless-steel details of the “fairlead cage” that adorn each after corner of the MCY 96. At a distance, they look delicate, but I can assure you they’re not. They’re fabricated from solid bars and are well up to the task of guiding any threaded mooring lines, regardless of loading. They are one of the most attractive examples of detailed design I’ve seen aboard any yacht. At the moment, only the MCY 96 has them, but I hope that every next-generation MCY model gets a similar treatment.



SERIOUSLY QUIET

Monte Carlo Yachts soft-mounts all of the MCY 96’s interior modules to minimize sound and vibration. During my sea trial, I was walking around chatting with Federico Peruccio, MCY’s marketing and communications manager, and just happened to look out the windows while we were in the owners’ stateroom. I hadn’t really registered that we were underway. We were doing about 10 to 12 knots, but the noise levels were so low I actually commented on it — and that was before Peruccio closed the stateroom door, which was like pressing a mute button. ¶ I don’t have specific decibels for you, but I know quiet when I hear it ... or don’t. And I know what is normal *grrrrring* in the presence of 2,179-cubic-inch V-16 diesels. This is one quiet boat.

GREAT OUTDOORS

Outdoor spaces aboard Monte Carlo Yachts are always impressive, and *Mia*’s are no different. Furnished with deep-cushion, free-standing furniture, her flybridge

measures just over 650 square feet, and more than 480 square feet of it has hardtop protection. The bow lounge and foredeck terrace are more than 270 square feet with a Bimini top, and pop-up lights create a magical spot come nightfall. Also cool is the way the windlasses are tucked away beneath the bow’s lift-up steps: no mechanical clutter to spoil the oasis. ¶ An optional layout includes a spa pool on the foredeck; a locker abaft the ground tackle is built to keep fenders hidden, yet easy to access.

CRUISING ESSENTIALS

The MCY 96 is offered with two powertrains. The standard setup is twin 2,200 hp MTU 16V 2000 M86s, ZF V-boxes and five-blade props, which deliver 27 knots at full chat, according to the builder. During our Mediterranean Sea test east of Genoa, *Mia* achieved a consistent 26 knots with five people aboard in late-afternoon, late-November conditions: wind and seas slight, air and sea temperatures both a little over 63

degrees Fahrenheit. Fuel and water tanks were a quarter and a third full, respectively. ¶ The vessel’s fast cruise would be around 20 knots, at which those MTUs would burn around 79 gallons per engine per hour, allowing for a 10 percent reserve. Those figures translate to a 330-nautical-mile range. A much less hurried 12 knots would allow around 700 nm. At 10 knots, 1,000 nm. *Mia*’s Latvian captain, Pavel Cintins, who was also with the owners’ previous yacht, a Princess 88, says he prefers to cruise at 14 knots, which means a maximum 460 nm between bunkering stops. ¶ The yacht’s optional package is less powerful: twin 1,900 hp MAN V-12s, which should deliver a top speed around 22 to 23 knots. As of late November, all five of the MCY 96s sold had been spec’d out with the bigger MTUs. ¶ Owners of this Italian head-turner, it seems, want to pair serious power with serious style, no matter where they plan to cruise. ☛

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FIRST CRUISE

Mia’s maiden voyage saw her navigate the whole of Italy’s eastern seaboard. Once she cruised around the heel of Italy, she took an early port of call on the southeast corner of Sicily: the ancient city of Syracuse, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Then it was up the Sicilian coast to Riposto and through the Strait of Messina, which separates the mainland region of Calabria at Punta Pezzo from Sicily’s eastern tip, Punta del Faro. The family cruised around the Aeolian Islands, including Lipari, famous for its picturesque fishing village. Med cruising doesn’t get much better than this.