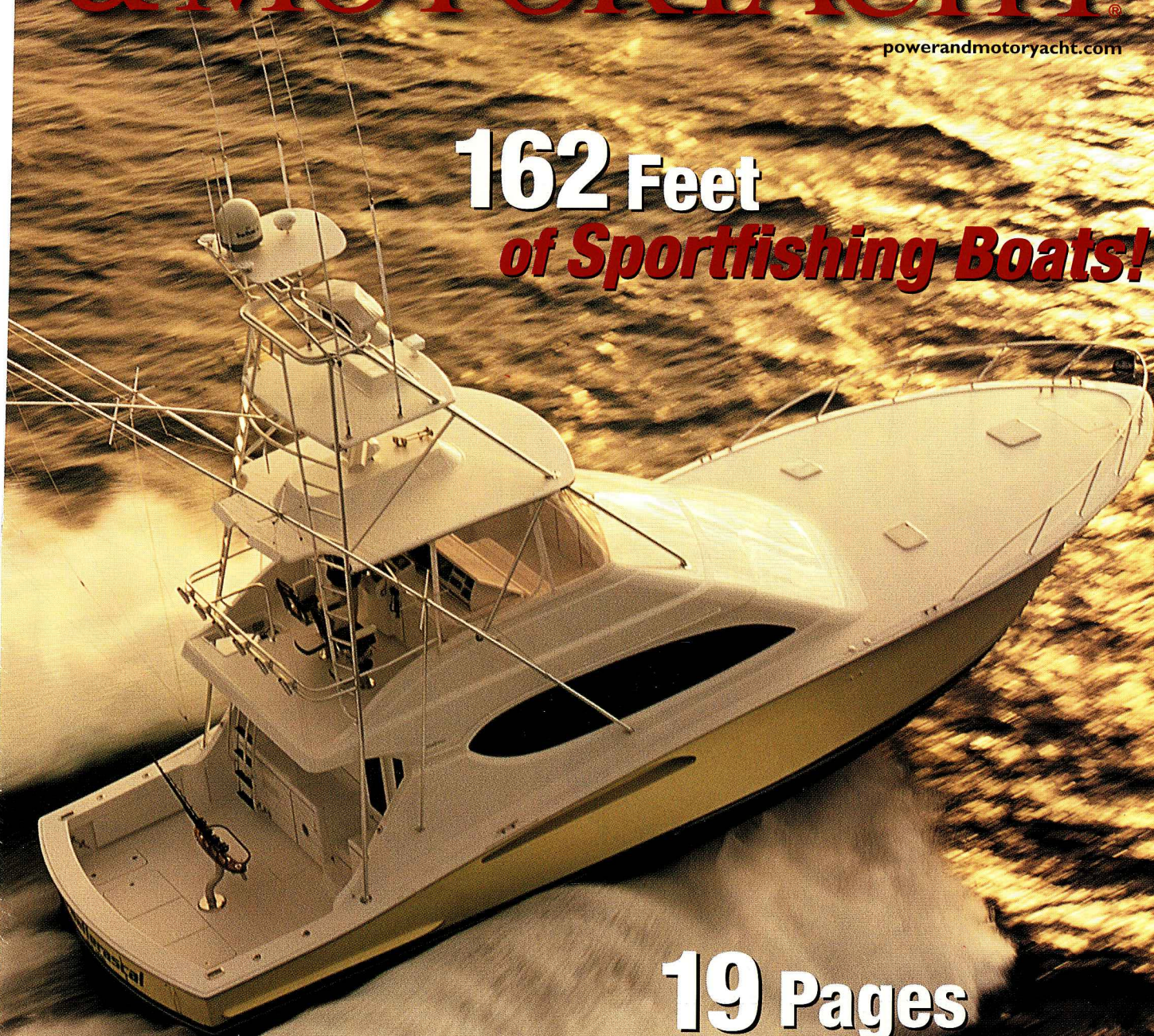


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EXCLUSIVE

The Third Time's the Charm

Why do owners keep returning to Hargrave Custom Yachts? Ask Oscar Menzano.

By Diane M. Byrne • Photography by Pamela Jones

In nearly a decade of covering megayachts, I've walked into my fair share of builders' displays at boat shows. Many times there's been a good deal of activity going on, with handfuls of interested buyers making appointments to see the yachts in the water or waiting to board them. But over the past few years, I've noticed something different at the Hargrave Custom Yachts display: couples standing behind the reception desk, trading cruising stories with one another, and individuals scattered about in

chairs, chatting with show-goers who've just stepped off the docks.

Now, you might assume that these people were all Hargrave staff members or maybe temps hired to help out in the booth. But the truth is, they're all Hargrave and Monte Fino owners (Hargrave's Fort Lauderdale-based office also distributes Monte Finos) who wanted to share their experiences with other potential buyers, whether or not their yacht was on display—or even delivered yet, in some cases.



A notable difference between the Hargrave 94 and other similar-size yachts is the degree to which the upper deck extends aft.



Above: The sky lounge bar and seating area keep guests close to the action at the helm. Below: Upholstered bulkheads, fine woodwork, and unusual window screens are some highlights of the master stateroom.

Why do they do it? In conversations I've had with some of these owners, they've all mentioned how Mike Joyce, president of Hargrave, and his staff actively solicit their input not just for the yachts they've commissioned but also for ones Hargrave intends to develop in the future. Several of these owners were also repeat customers,

largely crediting the Hargrave team's desire to give them what they wanted.



Oscar Menzano is a prime example of a repeat customer. He bought his first boat, a 60-footer, from Joyce 14 years ago, and in the past eight years, this native of Mexico has purchased the first 65-foot Monte Fino and the first 55-foot Monte Fino, and recently took delivery of the new 94-foot model in the Hargrave Capri series, which he christened *Carissima*. I met Menzano about two years ago and was immediately struck by his delightful personality and zest for life. He certainly has a zest for the cruising lifestyle in particular—he and his family lived aboard their first boat seven to eight months at a time and traveled the Caribbean, East Coast, and much of Europe over several years. More recently, the Menzanos took the 94 to the Bahamas and are about to take her south from Florida through the Panama Canal and then up the West Coast to Vancouver, remaining there all summer. And that's just for starters: The fall will see *Carissima* and company head to Australia and New Zealand.

It's fitting that Menzano has these plans, as he's just one of the

many owners who told Joyce and his staff that they wanted Hargrave to combine the volume and style of a megayacht with a vessel that emphasized family cruising and good space for crew.

One of the most noticeable ways this is achieved aboard *Carissima* is through the use of intricate inlays and unexpected details in the decor. In many rooms, interior designer Shelley Higgins and the Menzanos selected woodwork with ornamental grain patterns covered with a healthy dose of high-gloss varnish. Menzano is so delighted with the result that he says it wasn't just made with care, "It was made with love."

Individual rooms received personal attention as well. In the saloon, for example, there's a striking woven-wood pattern on the buffet-like room divider. While oftentimes you'll see a simple column at the base of a staircase, when it comes to the floating staircase on the 94 (opposite the dining area), there's an art niche instead. Even the aft-deck dining table has intricate inlays at each end.

All of these details highlight a practical, open layout. "This is my floating house, not [just] a boat," Menzano says, referring to how comfortable he feels aboard. "I can enjoy staying in any one [room] for a while." For example, the saloon and dining area occupy the same deck space but are separated by a buffet-like room divider. That room divider in turn conceals a pop-up television, positioned for easy viewing from the bar in the aft port corner or the conversation area in the middle of the saloon. It's easy to imagine the Menzano children, ranging in age from three to 27 years old, watching one of their favorite videos or, if *Carissima* is en route to a major destination, the family calling up a chart of the area, as the yacht's integrated computer system allows information to be shown on all mon-

itors and TVs. Regardless, the central seating area is definitely more convivial than the customary approach of flushing furnishings to each side of the room.

Also more convivial is the galley layout. As you'd expect of a 94-footer, *Carissima* has a country kitchen, featuring a C-shape settee



Diner's delight: There's a formal dining area forward of the saloon (above), but there's also a second large eating area facing the galley's granite-topped prep island (below). This latter arrangement is certainly more family-oriented.

and table. But it faces aft, a different configuration than previous Hargraves and even most other builders' offerings, treating the Menzanos to the finest show onboard. Also as an improvement over





Note the compass rose inlays on each end of the aft-deck table—just one example of the abundance of intricate woodworking aboard *Carissima*.

previous models, the galley contains two extra drawer-style refrigerators and freezers, beyond the customary stand-up unit; those will certainly be put to good use on the Menzanos' voyages.

The Menzanos could—and should, in my opinion—opt to dine outside on the upper deck. Most tridecks up to 100 feet LOA feature a rather small area that's really only suitable for stowing a tender, but *Carissima* features one of the largest upper aft decks I've seen on a yacht this size. Hargrave decided to extend the deck to fully overhang the main aft deck below. This created room for a C-shape banquette to port, opposite a sink and a space large enough to retrofit a grill, plus a davit and tender aft.

Back inside, in a step that's mindful of young children and even those adults who sometimes have two left feet, Hargrave placed glass panels alongside the floating staircase, opposite the dining area. It

leads up to the enclosed bridge and sky lounge, which features more of the intricate design work mentioned previously. In the sky lounge, the bar to port is adorned with black-leather triangles and gold-tone diamonds. (I overheard one Hargrave staff member, referring to the bar's proximity to the helm, joke, "It's always good when the captain gets his own bar.") In a clever touch, when the family is seated aft in the sky lounge, they can watch the television that's to starboard either by simply bending down and opening the cabi-



A centralized seating area makes *Carissima's* saloon cozy and inviting.

net doors or pressing a button to have it rise up.

Continuing the emphasis on family, the 94 features all four state-rooms off the same foyer, accessed via an aft staircase in the saloon.

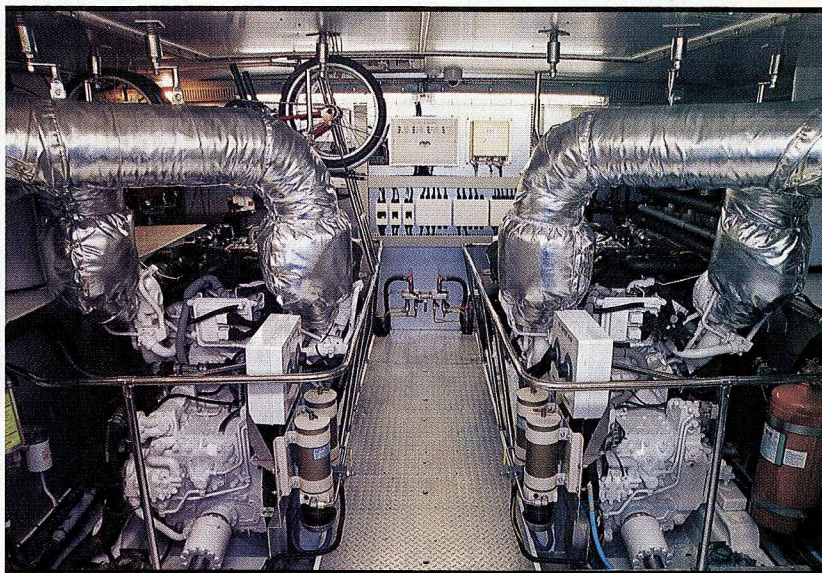
(In a smart move, that foyer also contains a concealed washer and dryer.) Shoji screens in each room—the master with double-door entry, two twin staterooms with Pullmans, and a queen stateroom—have a subtle bamboo pattern on them. But the most striking touches are reserved for the master. Leather and high-gloss wood cover bulkheads, and there are even decorative inlays on the closet doors. The woodwork is smoothly finished on all sides (I even ran my hand underneath the TV cabinet and above the vanity to check).

If the Menzanos decide to stay in port for a while and give the crew some time off but still want extra friends or family to stay aboard, the crew area, accessed forward of the galley, could certainly do the trick. A bunk-berth stateroom shares a head with a double cabin below decks. Since the area was designed for crew, however, there's a dining mess (which also contains a concealed washer and dryer) and, in the bunk stateroom, a ladder leading to a foredeck hatch.

And even though guests typically don't venture into engine rooms, Hargrave gave it the same spacious treatment as the relaxation areas. I paced off about eight feet of space from the entrance to the twin Caterpillar 3412s, and headroom appeared to be about six and a half feet. There's also one step down between the engines, although there isn't outboard walking space.

When Menzano and I last spoke via satphone while he was still in the Bahamas, he had just finished telling me how he wanted to help make Hargrave more of a national name, and even an international name, by exhibiting the yacht at shows in Newport, California; Seat-

le, Washington; and Sydney, Australia, when his three-year-old daughter entered the room. She kept asking who was on the line, so he simply handed her the phone, and the two of us promptly had a short but sweet conversation, ending with her telling me she was blowing kisses ("besos!"). Not until she's much older will she realize



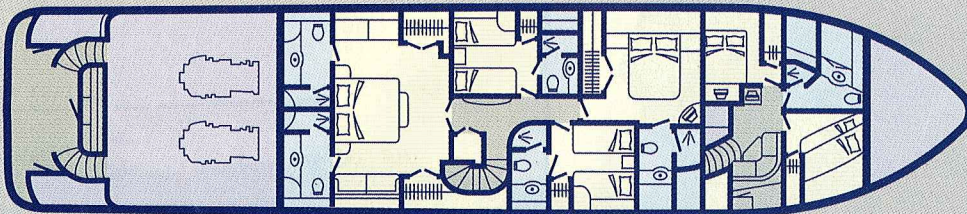
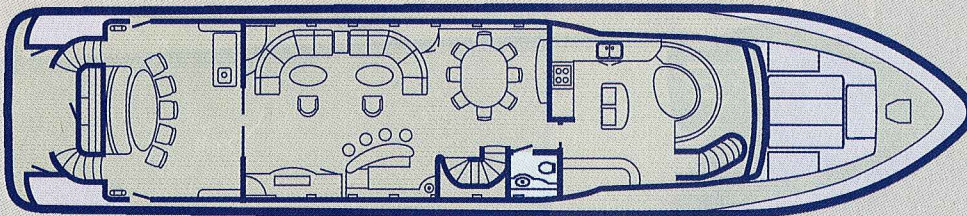
The 94 has a healthy size engine room, containing well-labeled pumps and systems.

how fittingly she embodied the sharing spirit of so many Hargrave owners, just like her dad. ❄

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HARGRAVE'S *CARISSIMA*



LOA: 94'8"
Waterline Length: 84'6"
Beam: 20'0"
Construction: Vacuum-bagged fiberglass (solid below waterline, cored above)
Classification: Det Norske Veritas
Fuel Capacity: 3,400 gal.
Water Capacity: 726 gal.
Engines: 2/1,400-hp Caterpillar 3412 diesel inboards
Generators: 2/32-kW Northern Lights
Watermakers: 1,200-gpd Sea Recovery
Stabilizers: Naiad
Windlass: Maxwell
Air Conditioning: 12-ton Cruiseair
Electronics: Raymarine package (72-NM radar, 10-inch color LCD screen radar/plotter, GPS w/WAAS, wind instruments, depthsounder, autopilot), Standard VHF, SeaTel satphone
Interior Design: Interiors by Shelley
Naval Architecture: J.B. Hargrave Naval Architects