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PHOTOGRAPHY

SUNSEEKER INTERNATIONAL



GO

The Sunseeker 100 Yacht distils years of experience

WITH

into a 30-metre that sets itself apart in a crowded field

THE

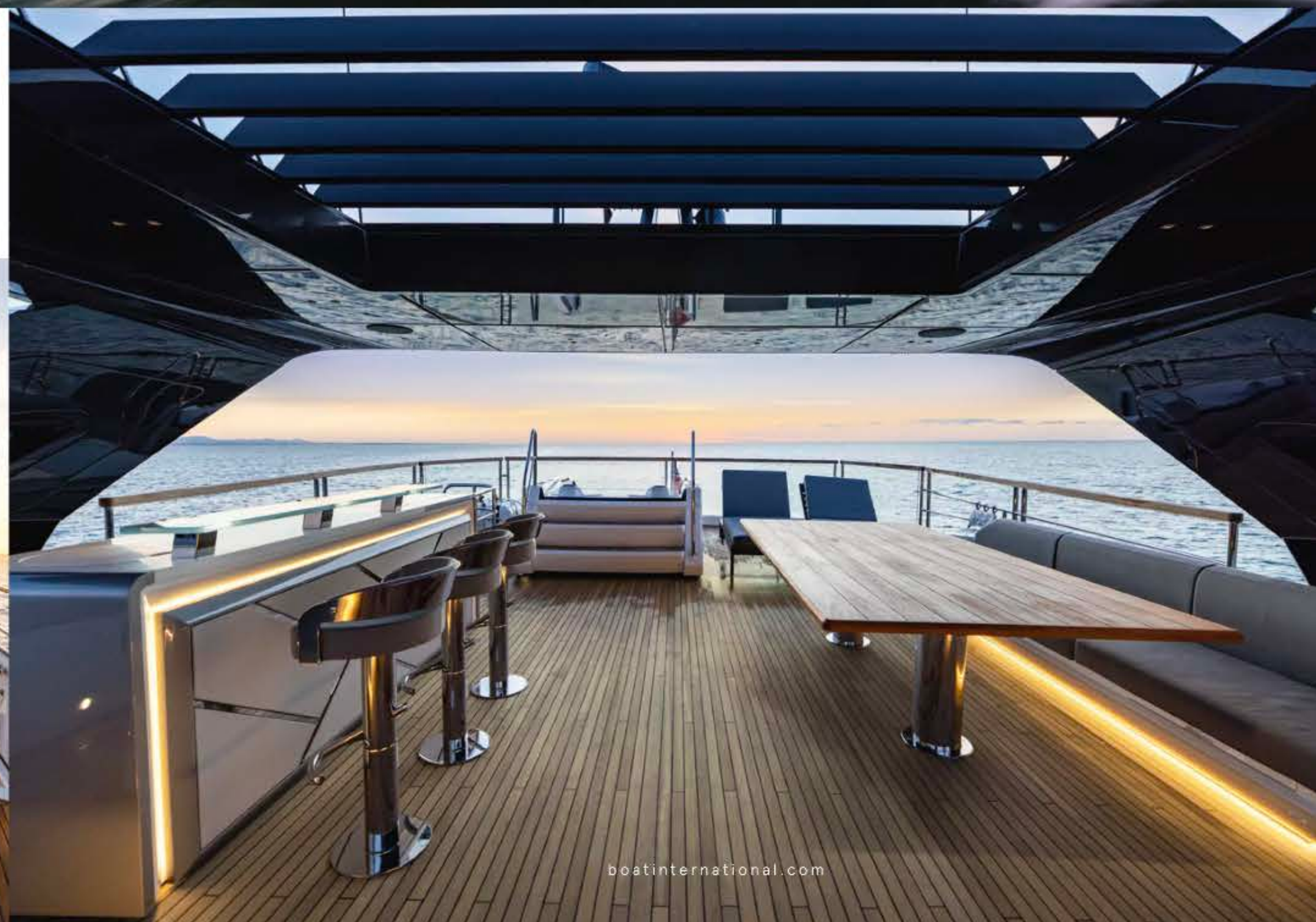
of lookalikes. *Kevin Koenig* takes the grand tour

FLOW





High freeboard at the bow of the 100 Yacht allows for a unique walkaround top deck. The raised pilothouse design nestles the wheelhouse subtly between the main deck and sundeck



A

Attempting to improve upon something that's already been done well is always a tall order. Such is the case for builders competing in the crowded market segment where 30-metre motor yachts reside. Where, pray tell, is there room for improvement?

Sunseeker thinks it knows the answer, and it has a lot to do with room to move freely around the decks. The 100 Yacht represents something a bit different from the British builder. The aim was to create appeal to clients who appreciate the "Predatoresque" profiles of the sportier Sunseekers but who prefer the interior volume and versatility of spaces that their flybridge yachts offer.

To pump up the volume, Sunseeker adopted an asymmetrical layout on the main deck, the first it has done to date according to sales manager Mark Chinery. The starboard side deck ends amidship to maximise the space at the entrance of the owner's suite.

And for the main course, the yacht has a rather revolutionary design that connects the top deck to a private alfresco owner's area at the tip of the bow. It's a topside arrangement that demands prospective buyers in this class give the 100 Yacht a thorough glance.



Design Unlimited layers textures and mixes furniture and fabrics for a look that is "timeless with a modern twist". Opposite page, top: two guest cabins have twin berths that convert into doubles



"OUR FIRST PRIORITY WITH THE SALOON WAS TO MAKE IT OPEN AND VERSATILE. WE HAD A LOT OF ROOM TO PLAY"



As Sunseeker CEO Andrea Frabetti puts it, "The owner [a previous Sunseeker owner] had 20, 25 people here for a party. This is what people want – they want space."

All of this required deft engineering and smart design, particularly when it came to the vessel's profile. Put succinctly, this is quite a bit of boat for a vessel that falls below 24 metres at the load line. To package it in a way that was acceptably sleek is an impressive feat.

"It's important to us that a Sunseeker look like a Sunseeker," says Ewen Foster, the builder's chief technology officer. "Our mantra is to build the best technical boat that is also beautiful. We have a lot of long-time employees, but we also have a lot of new employees coming in, particularly from the car industry, and we may need to teach them some things about boats – where technical equipment goes and how to make a boat safe – but we certainly don't need to teach them what looks good."

As far as her looks, perhaps the first thing that jumps out is the high freeboard in the bow area, which forms an arrow-shaped profile. Through clever exterior design, there is no appearance of a flat, unbroken forward section to this vessel as with most yachts this size. Furthermore, dark windows expertly lengthen the profile. The design lends the yacht a bit of a snarl, like the

look of an English bull terrier that has had quite enough of you already. (Go on, Google it.)

A steeply raked pilothouse windshield nestles into the profile so thoroughly that you really must look for it. The black hardtop above the massive flying bridge all but disappears. The overall effect is an exterior appearance that is remarkably low profile and makes this 29.9-metre (with a 23.9-metre moulded hull length) appear sleek and smaller than she really is.

Yet for all of the 100 Yacht's specificity, she is still recognisable as a Sunseeker. "We want to make sure that [our designers] honour the past," Foster says. "We are fortunate in that we have these longtime employees to teach them; our sales director, Sean Robertson, for example, has been [with Sunseeker] since he was a teenager."

Foster, who has been with Sunseeker for 38 years, also points out that Chinery is going on 28 years. This longevity comes with a lot of knowledge and he was unusually hands-on with the 100 project.

"I take a lot of pride in our hulls," Chinery says. "I like to think that we get them just right. We hand lay them completely, and that's so we can get the finish exactly as we want it to be."

The 100's hull has a hard chine and gets on plane easily, he says. Unfortunately, the boats



**IT'S AN EXCEPTIONAL
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The owner's cabin, forward on the main deck, is exceptionally bright and airy, thanks to large side windows, generous headroom and a sliding door to a private foredeck terrace



have been busy with owners and we couldn't give them a try ourselves. Sunseeker reports that at 110 tons, she can still hit 30 knots with twin 2,000-horsepower MTU 16V M96Ls (the more powerful option available), and cruise happily in the low 20-knot range.

"The crew [of hull No 1] discovered the sweet spot on this boat to be 17 knots," Frabetti says. Fuel economy is more important than ever. "The market has changed, and the culture has improved," he adds. Chinery echoes this sentiment: "Nobody goes anywhere on a boat full out. The entire industry has gone slower. A popular cruising speed for boats this size right now is 14 knots, and that's because of noise and vibration reduction and overall comfort – not necessarily economy."

To that end, Sunseeker has stuffed this model with sound-deadening materials such as foam and high-density cork in the walls and ceilings, particularly near the engine room. That engine room has typical European dimensions – tight but workable. It has a few more steps than I'd like to be negotiating, but otherwise there is little to henpeck, particularly when it comes to important things like access to major points of service.

The yacht also comes with Sunseeker's ingenious X-TEND system at her transom. (Sunseeker first applied this design on its 88 Yacht and 90 Ocean models.) That feature, which won Innovation of the Year at the 2022 BOAT International Design & Innovation Awards, is a clever way to multiply the enjoyment of that popular space on board, closest to the water. The system allows the transom door to reveal an extra seat/sunlounger large enough for four adults, or to fold out like a clamshell to reach storage space for water toys or even a Williams Sportjet 460 behind it and, finally, to rise to meet the aft deck, extending that convivial space with substantial extra seating.

Moving inside, the yacht's saloon mirrors the flybridge when it comes to spaciousness, owing in large part to the asymmetric side deck scheme. It benefits from sole-to-ceiling windows and an attractive open-plan design. The entire interior design was the responsibility of Design Unlimited, a studio that is about 65 kilometres from Sunseeker's headquarters.



THE YACHT ALSO COMES WITH SUNSEEKER'S INGENIOUS X-TEND SYSTEM AT HER TRANSOM

"Our first priority with the main saloon was to make it open and versatile," says Mark Tucker, founder of Design Unlimited. "There are no steps or intrusions or bulkheads, thanks to very smart structural people, so we had a lot of room to play." The freestanding furniture on hull No 1, which I see, was all custom designed by Design Unlimited, but the firm also works with well-known brands such as Minotti, Poltrona Frau, B&B Italia and others to fit a client's tastes exactly.

Another notable feature is the 100's fully walled-in galley. A massive refrigerator and freezer unit with satisfyingly chunky stainless-steel latches greets me as I step inside the room. There are also a full eight Miele burners, and ample counter space in an engineered stone that was inspired by residential design. Cooking for a crowd aboard this Sunseeker should be a pleasant experience, and that was the point.

"We wanted something that would be much more generous than what the competition is offering – somewhere you can really cook," Tucker says. "That's why the ergonomics of the space and the equipment got so much attention."

The crew accommodation for five, which includes three cabins and a small mess area, is well done. "We believe that a happy crew makes a happy boat," Tucker says.

The multi-talented transom door – which won Innovation of the Year at the 2022 BOAT International Design & Innovation Awards – rises flush with the main deck to create extra seating

The Sunseeker 100 Yacht has a standard four-cabin layout available on the lower level. The staircase, however, is a bit more of a feature by design. "The [staircases] are directly above each other and act in unison to create a light airy feeling, with loads of natural light," Tucker says. "The stairwell can be quite dark, so we made floating steps that let light come through from both port and starboard and flood into the stairwell below."

As for the owner's cabin, it's on the main deck and this is where it gets most interesting. The headroom is two metres in the cabin, which comes with an en suite with a double vanity and a rain shower. Windows on the sides hardly get the notice they deserve with the tempting space outside the forward sliding glass doors. That's a private owner's terrace populated with director's chairs and a teak table; it's an exceptional place to enjoy a morning cappuccino or evening Aperol spritz. But more importantly, the lounge provides access to the entire rest of the flying bridge via a few steps – no need to walk back through the main deck. This foredeck lounge is effectively part of the flybridge design.

It's hard to stress enough just how distinctive a 30-metre yacht with a walkaround flybridge is. I can't recall having seen anything quite like it in 14 years of yacht hopping. "A walkaround flybridge deck from bow to flybridge, it's pretty singular," Bryan Jones, Sunseeker's marketing manager, says. "This yacht is level from the foredeck to the flybridge save for one small step, and I am hard-pressed to think of any direct competitors [doing that]."

It's divided into several self-contained areas. A massive recreation area with sunpads is forward. It includes a U-shaped lunch spot with a teak table and multiple refrigeration units underneath. A sunshade propped up by stowable carbon-fibre poles provides soothing relief from the tropical climes this yacht will no doubt patrol.

Wide side decks on both sides slope gently up to the largest portion of the flybridge deck. An optional spa pool feels indispensable here, and as

When closed, the transom unfolds to reveal a wide sunlounger by the water's edge. Bottom: on hull No 1, the pilothouse hosts the yacht's sole nav station; the sundeck is reserved for guests only



“IT’S IMPORTANT TO US THAT A SUNSEEKER LOOK LIKE A SUNSEEKER. OUR MANTRA IS TO BUILD THE BEST TECHNICAL BOAT THAT IS ALSO BEAUTIFUL”



Foster points out, is one of many options available to personalise the deck. “You can have moulded or freestanding furniture, and all of it, of course, with an open feel,” he says. “You can put a tender up there too, but we don’t see many of those anymore – they mostly go in the garage.” Regardless of the layout, the carbon fibre (without its tell-tale cross pattern, which Foster deems a bit overdone) and fibreglass hardtop shades a good portion of the deck. Notably, there is no helm up there on the hull that I see (though a second helm is an option that Sunseeker says a much smaller percentage of these boats will have). The absence of a console up here is a privacy-driven idea that comes from Sunseeker’s larger models. “We don’t have a flybridge helm on the 131 or the 42-metre concept,” Foster says. “This is a big boat with a sizable crew and there’s a good argument to be made for having them in their own space.”

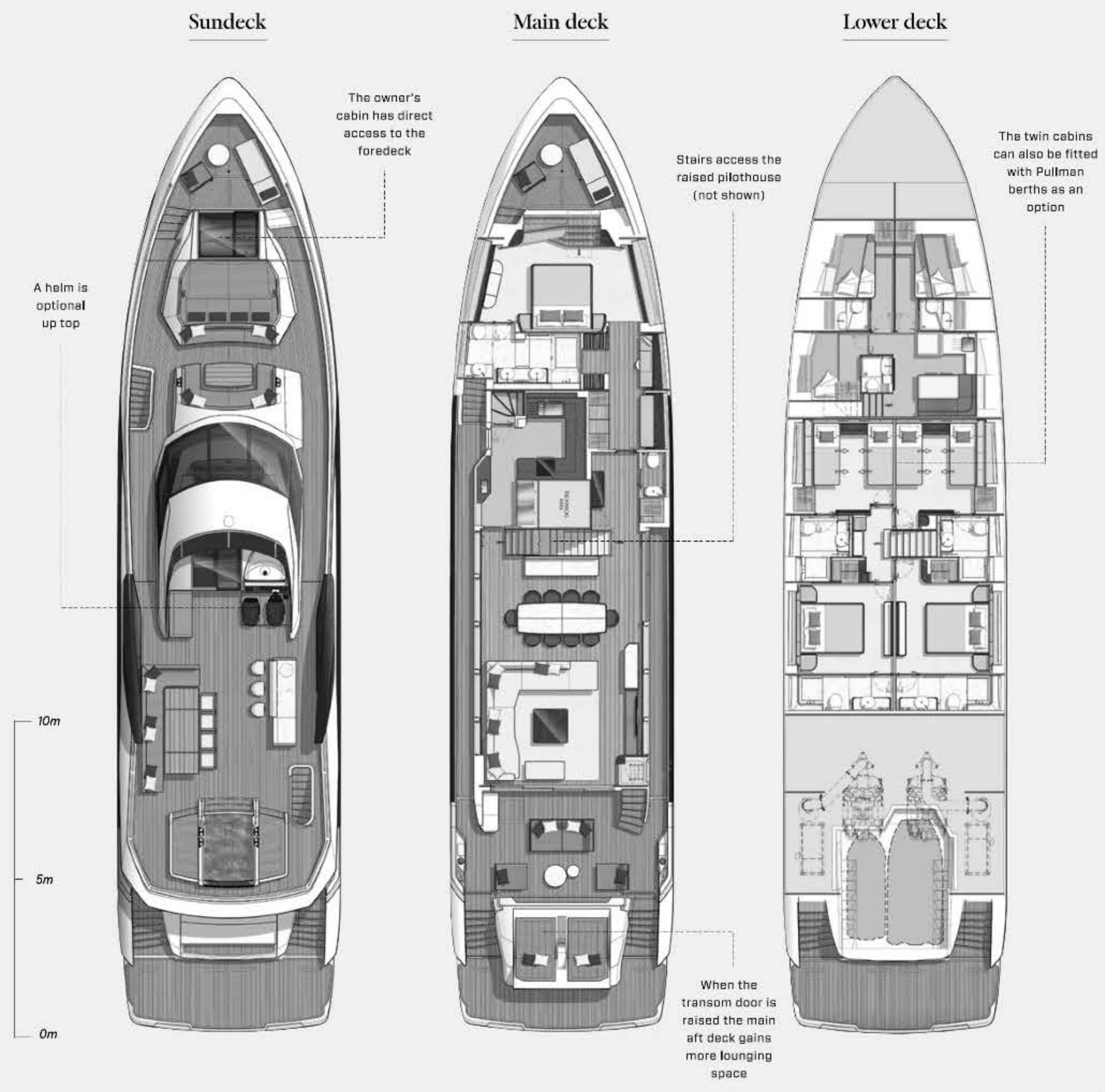
That space, a raised pilothouse, is all business at the helm, where a lone Besenzonei captain’s chair enjoys usable lines of sight – if not sweeping vistas – through that sharply raked windshield. An L-shaped lounge houses curious guests. Fit and finish, manifested in the neatly spaced stitching on all the upholstery, is top notch, and a testament to Sunseeker’s level of quality, as even the crew spaces received expert attention to detail.

Thus far, the extra attention has paid off, as the yacht has sold well in America, Europe and Mexico – with one hull even going to South Korea. As of this writing, 19 had been sold worldwide. Foster believes the appeal lies in the confluence of style and practicality.

“We like to think of this boat as aggressively elegant,” he says. We put a lot of thought into the flow between socialising spaces – on the flybridge, for example – and we think that type of design fits well with modern boating and the modern Sunseeker client. And I think we did all of that without losing our Sunseeker DNA, and I’m proud of that.” □

100 Yacht

Sunseeker International



LOA 29.85m	Engines (standard) 2 x MTU 12V 2000 M96X	Range at 12 knots 1,300nm	Owners/guests 10	Naval architecture Sunseeker International	Builder/year Sunseeker International/2022
LWL 22.9m	Generators 2 x 32kW – 40kW Kohler	Fuel capacity 12,800 litres	Crew 5	Exterior styling Sunseeker International	Pool , UK
Beam 6.9m	Speed (max/cruise) 30/20 knots	Freshwater capacity 1,800 litres	Construction Composite hull and superstructure	Interior design Design Unlimited	+1 954 606 0445 sales@owyg.com sunseeker.com
Draught 2.1m		Tender Williams Sportjet 480			
Gross tonnage 187GT					