

KETCH

ME

IF

YOU

CAN

COVER BOAT
SIMENA

*For its first superyacht, Ares Yachts dived into the deep
end with a 62-metre classically inspired ketch.
Sam Fortescue sets sail on board Simena*



As we slipped out of Port Hercule aboard the classically styled ketch *Simena*, just completed by Turkey's Ares Yachts, people flocked to the end of the jetty to witness our departure. I was struck by the certainty that history was repeating itself. How many times must the citizens of the ancient coastal city of Simena, for which the yacht is named, have waved off the great sailing vessels of its age? Its ruins are now underwater off the coast of Antalya in Turkey, while the cityscape of Monaco serves as the backdrop for our own age. Forgive my waxing lyrical, but there is something about the elegance of Ares' debut superyacht that demands it. With her long bowsprit, gleaming mahogany work and low-profile superstructure, there is a definite air of romance to *Simena*.

Commenced for an owner back in 2022, the 62-metre (58-metre excluding bowsprit) yacht was completed on spec after he dropped out early on. "There was only a single steel box actually built when that happened, so we could have simply cancelled the project," says Piraye Şahinkaya Orhun, Ares' yacht projects director. "But we were very happy to build the yacht anyway, because [yard owner] Mr Kalafatoğlu is very fond of classic yachts. We really wanted the first yacht built by Ares to be a sailing yacht."



A comfortable foredeck lounge is positioned just aft of the main mast, nestled under the windows of the wheelhouse. It makes a private spot when moored stern-to



WITH HER LONG BOWSPRIT, GLEAMING MAHOGANY AND LOW PROFILE SUPERSTRUCTURE, THERE IS A DEFINITE AIR OF ROMANCE

Meeting RINA Charter Class, *Simena* is a heck of a debut yacht for a builder whose heartland has traditionally been fast steel and composite boats for military and emergency services. With her steel hull and composite superstructure, she neatly encapsulates two of the yard's great strengths. It has required a big step-up for Ares to achieve superyacht-finish quality, but here *Simena* does not disappoint. With an efficient build time of 28 months and an asking price of \$45 million (£33.4m), broker Sean McCarter of Northrop & Johnson estimates she represents a substantial reduction in price compared to a Northern European equivalent.

Taka Yacht Design of Istanbul is responsible for the exterior looks of the boat, which owe something to the traditional Turkish gulet. Hallmarks such as the deep sheer line, weighty mahogany bulwarks and the clipper bow are elegant and in full proportion to the ketch rig, whose mainmast towers almost 60 metres above the water. "Although clipper ships were an effective inspiration for her styling details, the DNA of her hull shape comes from wooden



The classic stern influenced the placement of the swim platform on the starboard side amidships, where it also facilitates tender boarding. The yacht's wide beam is reminiscent of a Turkish gulet





A clipper bow and long bowsprit contribute to Simena's elegance. Right: the sundeck offers guests shady dining or sunny lounging, while twin helm stations give the crew a great vantage point from which to sail



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“THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE WAS NOT TECHNICAL CAPABILITY, IT WAS MINDSET”



ketch designs,” says Taka founder Tanju Kalaycıoğlu. “The concept behind her superstructure is designed to serve contemporary cruising requirements.”

A gloriously glossy exterior paint job highlights Simena’s graceful lines. AkzoNobel supplied all the primers and fairing compounds, as well as all interior paints. The exterior finish uses Awlgrip’s Topcoat G-Line in Light Ivory, while the superstructure is finished in Awlgrip Topcoat Stark White. The masts received Awlcraft SE+HDT Clear in Light Ivory, and all exterior varnished surfaces were finished with Awlwood.

Although this is Ares’ first big yacht, I would be doing the shipyard a disservice if I didn’t point out that it originally built small yachts at its launch in 2006. Nor is it a stranger to superyacht interiors, having built several under contract for expedition yachting brand Arksen. Admittedly, there’s a scale difference, but the experience with fine leather, varied woods and upholstery is all there.

As Şahinkaya Orhun tells me repeatedly, all the crafts were already in house. “The biggest challenge was not technical capability,” she says. “It was mindset. In superyachts, you still need engineering discipline, but it has to be matched with a completely different level of precision, detailing and finish



“THERE WAS A CLASSIC EXTERIOR
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quality. Every surface, every transition and every material has to be consistent, controlled and visually refined. That requires a different way of thinking across the entire organisation.”

Luckily, the interior design was guided by industry veteran Design Unlimited. As she was built on spec, the British studio developed widely appealing styling featuring a muted palette, brass detailing, stained oak panelling, woven leather and textured wall coverings. “We had quite a tight brief,” says Design Unlimited associate designer John Everett. “There was a classic exterior and we wanted to reinvent the wheel with a modern take on the interior. But we had the freedom of creativity, because there was no client saying: ‘I’ve got some art we could put here.’”

Take the owner’s cabin, for example: lit with deep oval portholes down each side, its joinery is routed into curved profiles with clean fiddles and the central panels covered with fine woven leather from Lance. Bronze lacquered panel work mimics the metal without the glitter. It’s a modern take on a classically neutral palette. I particularly like the owner’s bathtub, whimsically arranged on a dais with a view of the rest of the cabin.

“Throughout the boat, we designed a lot of furniture,” continues Everett. “In the master cabin, the bed is the centrepiece with woven metal mesh encased in glass above the headboard. It catches your eye as soon as you walk in. There’s a sofa outboard – we had a few goes at getting the ergonomics right for that”

There are four guest cabins in this part of the yacht, though they remain well separated from the owner’s area by a heavy door and a corridor. A modest difference between standard and VIP cabins translates into a few extra square metres and a larger shower room. A fifth occasional guest cabin aft can otherwise be turned to crew use.

The staircase is really the linchpin of the lower deck, resembling a cross with its two athwartships arms angled up to the main deck and the other two angled down to the central corridor. “The shape of the stairs came from Taka, but we asked how we could make it really special,” says Everett. “It was challenging geometry in places, and the finishes were quite difficult. We designed a gorgeous integrated handrail feature, and the staircase included custom fabric, leather and woodwork, and a custom light feature.”

Besides guiding guests below to their cabins and out to the side bathing platform (the stern shape precludes a modern beach club), the stairs are meant to emphasise motion and underline the four cardinal

*Ottomans in the saloon are in Lance Woven Leather, while the sofa is upholstered in cashmere calf leather from Edelman.
Design Unlimited added light button tufting to give the upholstery texture*





DESIGN UNLIMITED'S STYLING FEATURES BRASS DETAILING, OAK PANELLING, WOVEN LEATHER AND TEXTURED WALL COVERINGS

points of the boat. The light presides over it all, formed of sinuous layers of black painted mesh. "We were inspired by the idea of currents flowing around the Mediterranean," says Everett. "They're simplified in their form here, but the idea was to communicate a sense of gentle oceanic motion."

Ares is very sensitive to the distinction between crew and guest, and a goal of the design was ensuring that privacy can be maintained easily – as much as can be expected on a sailing yacht. The staircase is one example, with the galley, mess and accommodation for nine crew laid out aft of the stairs. There is also a smaller service staircase that leads into the saloon.

Up on deck, efforts have also been made to remove sailing functions from the main guest areas. Heavy sheets from the main, mizzen and genoa run to captive winches, while the halyards and reefing lines are turned onto giant Bamar winches at the foot of each mast. Push-button

controls are accessible in the wheelhouse and at twin helm stations on the sundeck. Just the size of the hydraulic rams for the backstay makes their presence felt – that and the genoa sheets running at ankle height past the side exits from the saloon.

It frees up the generous cockpit and aft deck, where we spend much of the day basking easily in the light reflected off a thousand glass balconies ringing Port Hercule. Two burnished mahogany tables here can be combined to seat 14 for a meal, and further aft are more sunpads around a glorious sunken spa tub nestled into the deck. There's also a wet bar and grill for entertaining.

Only a few key spots are clearly designed to accommodate crew and guests cheek-by-jowl. The wheelhouse is one, where Captain Paolo Martinuzzi's domain contains a broad, clubby sofa in attractively cracked chocolate leather. Here an owner who loves their boat can recline, out of sight of the other guests, enjoying the view

ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY: STUART PEARCE/YACHT SHOT;
MICHAEL KURTZ; BREED MEDIA; GIULIANO SARGENTINI



Top: the main stairwell features
a custom light inspired by
Mediterranean currents and integrated
handrails that hug the architecture

LEGENDARY KETCHES

AQUIJO (85.9 m)

The world's biggest ketch was a one-of-a-kind collaboration between Dutch yards Vitters and Oceanco. She's a study in extreme engineering, with loads of 180t in the cap shrouds and 40t custom sheet winches. A proprietary rudder system transmits hydrodynamic feedback to the flybridge helms, giving the buzzy handling of something much smaller while she manages speeds of 20 knots plus.



BADIS (70 m)

Perini Navi is renowned for its robust ketches, and *Badis* (ex-Sybaris) is the largest they've ever built. Launched in 2015 with design from Philippe Briand, the yacht has a lifting centreplate keel, which reduces her eyewatering sailing draught of 12.5m. She has an 18m flybridge and six cabins for 12 guests served by 11 crew.



VERTIGO (67.2 m)

Sweet proportions and a low-profile superstructure belie the 67m length of *Vertigo*. Philippe Briand is the designer to thank for that, making the flybridge almost invisible and concealing fold-down balconies in his deft styling. Delivered in 2011, she is the flagship of Alloy Yachts. Liaigre designed an interior that would do a city penthouse justice – all dark humid woods, soft leather and pale upholstery.



HETAIROS (66.9 m)

Baltic Yachts' flagship is a magnificent floating *trompe l'oeil*. Exuding classic charm with her long bowsprit, overhung stern and gentleman's deckhouse, she is a miracle of modern design. Built in carbon fibre, she spreads a huge area of canvas and features a lifting keel and rudder to access shallow anchorages. This is a race-winning, comfortable-cruising machine.





“THE BED IS THE CENTREPIECE WITH WOVEN METAL MESH ENCASED IN GLASS ABOVE THE HEADBOARD”

of the horizon and keeping an eye on navigation.

The sundeck above is another such area. As the captain demonstrates his docking prowess from the helm up here, using the feed from some of the 39 cameras positioned around the boat, we relax at a mahogany table under the shade of the opening hardtop. A huge expanse of sunpads spreads aft.

There's barely a breath of wind to trouble the water off Monaco during my visit, but Captain Martinuzzi spells out the performance under sail during the 1,000-nautical-mile voyage from the yard in Antalya, Turkey, to France. “The boat is quick,” he says. “Twelve to 15 knots of wind is ideal for sailing at 10 knots, but we managed up to 14 knots on a broad reach. I am quite sure that we could do 16 knots!”

Just as importantly, *Simena* is extremely stable and comfortable in offshore conditions – as well she should be with 90 tonnes of fixed keel and a draught of 4.7 metres. She is designed to heel no more than 20 degrees, at which point you would need to get a reef in. The mizzen rig and twin headsails give plentiful sail options and allow you to jockey canvas for balance and speed.

There are almost as many engine options thanks to the parallel hybrid powertrain. The main workhorse is the 882-horsepower MAN engine giving a top speed of 14 knots, but there is also a 220-horsepower electric motor capable of 8.5 knots in near silence. “The boat is completely silent in electric mode,” says the captain. “It's great for night-



Attractive heavily veined Turkish marbles are on display in guest bathrooms. Top: the owner's cabin includes a well-appointed walk-in dressing room and has private access to the foredeck lounge area via a hidden emergency staircase. Opposite page: guest cabins number five with a small twin (top left) able to double as crew quarters

Simena has world-girdling capability with power from a MAN diesel engine, an electric motor and almost 1,600m² of sail

time manoeuvring. There are six navigation modes, including full electric and power take-off.”

Curiously, *Simena* has no dedicated battery bank, so the electric motor must be supplied by the three 86kW generators. Electricity generated by the propeller when the boat is sailing in hydrogeneration mode cannot be stored either. It can only cover the yacht’s hotel needs at that moment – something it does easily from around seven knots of sailing speed. Şahinkaya Orhun explains it as a play to save the weight, cost and complexity of the batteries. “The idea from the start was to have only one engine and small gensets,” she explains. “We could easily add 100kWh of batteries to the next boat, if a client wanted it.” This way, the boat’s hotel needs can be covered by a single generator operating at optimum efficiency, rather than a bigger engine barely idling.

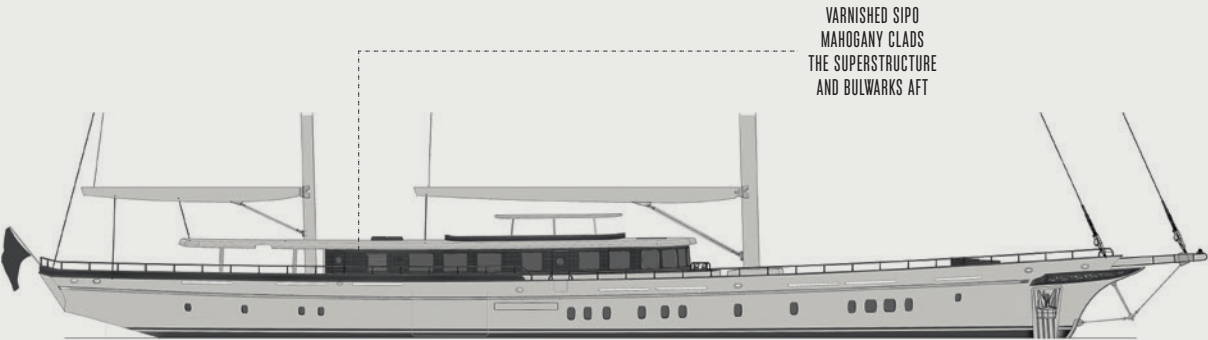
Range is 4,000 nautical miles at nine knots or a globetrotting 6,000 nautical miles at seven knots using only the electric motor. It gives her a potential that goes well beyond her native Mediterranean – a fact attested to by broker McCarter. “I always thought that there were maybe 10 to 15 people in the world who could buy this boat,” he says. “But what we’ve found is that people are coming from the motor yacht world. We’ve got one client coming up from New Zealand because the boat would be great for the Pacific – you could cross the ocean on a single tank of fuel.”

You can almost hear Captain Martinuzzi praying for an adventurous buyer. “I know the Mediterranean like my own pocket,” he tells me pithily. “I’d love to sail to the Faroes, to Svalbard and Greenland – the cold seas.” I suspect he’d be just as happy in the Pacific. No matter where *Simena* goes, it’s likely this mammoth ketch will draw attention in every port she graces. ■

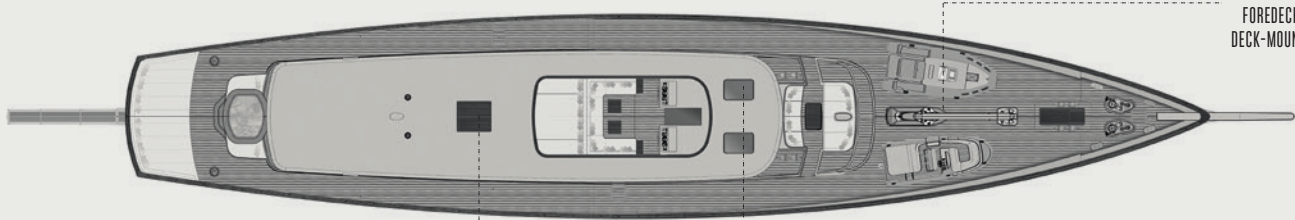
SIMENA

ARES YACHTS

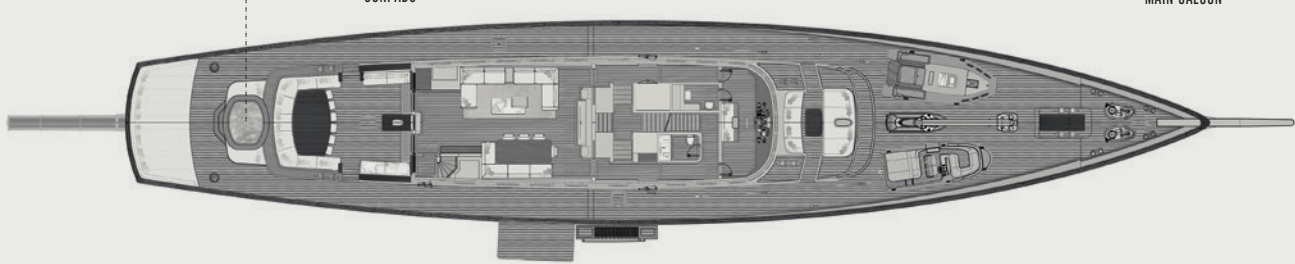
PROFILE



SUNDECK



MAIN DECK



LOWER DECK



LOA (INCLUDING BOWSPRIT) 62M
LOA (EXCLUDING BOWSPRIT) 58.3M
LWL 48.9M
BEAM 10.7M
DRAUGHT (FULL LOAD) 4.72M
GROSS TONNAGE 499GT
ENGINE 1 X MAN 2862LE438

GENERATORS 3 X 86KW
CATERPILLAR C4.4
SPEED UNDER POWER (MAX/CRUISE)
14/9 KNOTS
RANGE AT 9 KNOTS 4,000NM
SAILS DOYLE SAILS
SAIL AREA 1,584M²
MASTS AND BOOMS DÖKAR

FUEL CAPACITY 45,600 LITRES
FRESHWATER CAPACITY 14,000 LITRES
OWNERS/GUESTS 12
CREW 9
CONSTRUCTION STEEL HULL;
COMPOSITE SUPERSTRUCTURE
TENDERS
CUSTOM 7.4M ARES LIMO; 7M RESCUE

CLASSIFICATION RINA C ⚓ HULL •MACH
"YCH", UNRESTRICTED NAVIGATION
WITH RIG CERTIFICATION
NAVAL ARCHITECTURE
TAKA YACHT DESIGN
EXTERIOR DESIGN
TAKA YACHT DESIGN
INTERIOR DESIGN DESIGN UNLIMITED

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PRO

BOAT

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SIMENA IS THE SECOND-LARGEST SAILING YACHT (EXCLUDING BOWSPRIT) BUILT IN TURKEY, AFTER MALTESE FALCON