



YES, SHE'S BIG AND POWERFUL, BUT THE TRUE MEASURE OF CAKEWALK IS IN HER TONNAGE: 2,998 TONNES – THE LARGEST YACHT BY VOLUME EVER LAUNCHED IN THE USA

words: Marilyn Mower  
photography: Jeff Brown/  
Superyacht Media;  
Andy Frame; Jim Raycroft

# Cakewalk

The man behind *Cakewalk* understands manufacturing. His wealth comes from buying small companies and improving them and their profits, often by lending them the capital to bring new ideas to the marketplace or by acquiring strategic partners for them. They make widgets and containers, recycle wood and refine minerals; the products may not be glamorous, but they are things everyone needs on a regular basis. *Cakewalk's* owner grew up when America was the largest manufacturing nation on earth, and like a lot of pragmatic capitalists, is more comfortable with an economy based on manufacturing than on services. The homepage of his company's website begins with the words 'Build Something of Consequence'.

So, long before politicians found it useful to talk about jobs in every speech, long before the public began faulting outsourcing, the owner of *Cakewalk* and his wife decided that they would like to build their next motor yacht in the US.

At 85.6 metres and 2,998 tonnes, no one would argue that *Cakewalk* is not something of consequence. At the risk of stating the obvious, she is the largest yacht by volume to come out of the United States. The only US-built yacht that exceeds her length on deck is *Corsair IV*, launched in 1931.

In 2002, the owner and his family were aboard 'old *Cakewalk*' – a 62.2 metre yacht built by Feadship and the winner of the 2001 ShowBoats award for best full-displacement motor yacht – when *Carinthia VII* pulled into the yacht club at Antibes. The design of that 97 metre yacht stopped

the owner and captain Bill Zinser in mid-sentence and the image of that moment has directed the course of events since.

Even before he saw *Carinthia VII*, *Cakewalk's* owner had already decided that he needed a bigger boat in order to carry larger tenders. Tenders make the luxury yacht experience complete, he believes. Discussions for a new boat began two years later, and by autumn 2005, Zinser had a fairly complete specification ready to share with European yards known for building large yachts. But a bit of discontent lingered at the back of the owner's mind – he wanted to build the boat in the United States and not the least of those reasons was the fact that it would be possible for him and his wife to visit the project frequently during construction.

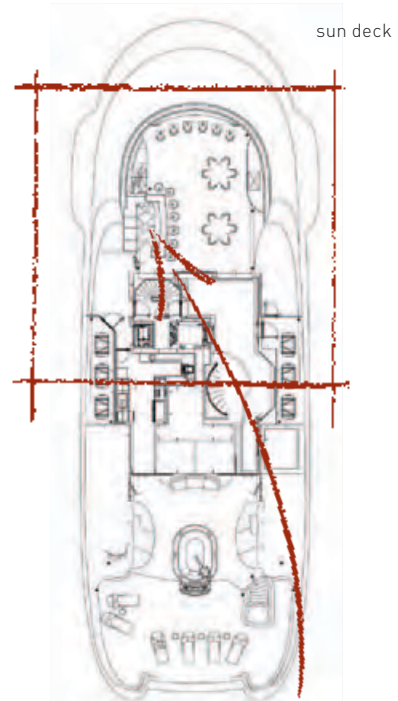
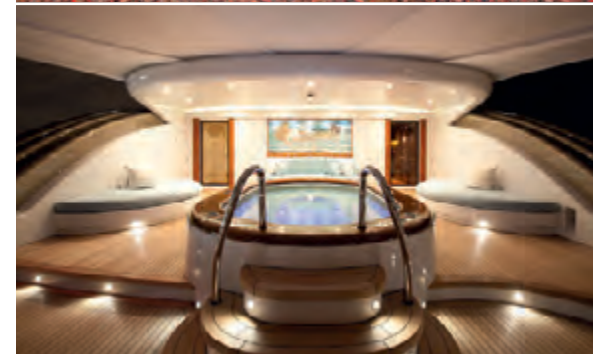
'Our team firmly believed we could build a yacht of similar quality to northern European yards in the United States, so we began to discuss the project with various American yards,' says Zinser. 'In the meantime, there was no reason not to assemble the same designers we would most likely have used if the vessel was built in Europe.'

The key design element, and the second biggest change from the previous Feadship, would be the profile – and the first call was to Tim Heywood, the designer behind *Carinthia VII*, with a request to design a new *Cakewalk* 'from the rubber gaskets out'.

For naval architecture, Zinser said he and the owner favoured the same approach they experienced with not only their previous *Cakewalk* but also her predecessor, the 40 metre Feadship *Fiffanella*, which was refitted

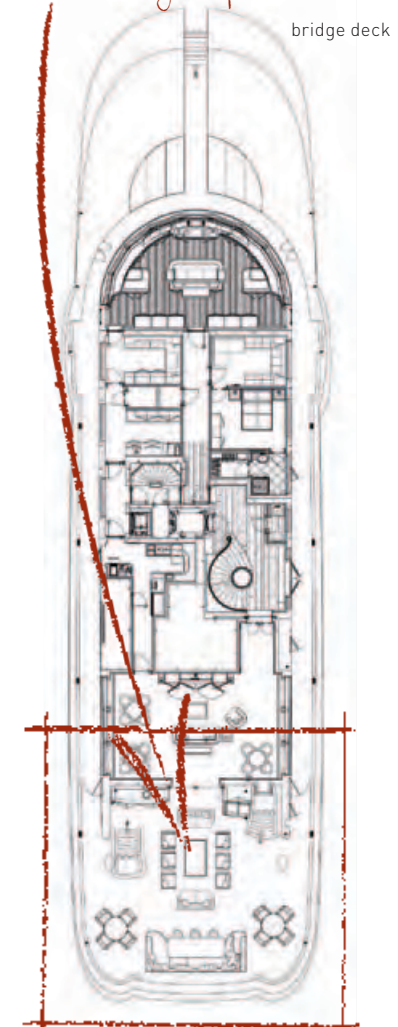






The three-zone sun deck has a shadeable lounge forward with a bar

The bridge deck features an alfresco seating area for relaxed drinks



into a 43.3 metre *Cakewalk* between spring 1995 and autumn 1996. Hugo van Wieringen had been the lead designer on both of those yachts for De Voogt Naval Architects, and van Wieringen, under the mantle of his current company, Azure Naval Architects, signed on to the new project. With the addition of Florida-based interior designer Liz Dalton, who had been on the team for the last four *Cakewalks*, momentum grew for US construction. 'Our decision to build this ambitious project in the US was based on our knowledge of the incredible skill sets available to us in the New York and Connecticut market. Our quality standards are the highest in the industry, and Derecktor assured us they would achieve them,' notes the owner.

'As it turned out, Hugo already had forged a relationship with Derecktor Shipyard, and the idea of building there did not phase him,' says Zinser, adding that during the first two years of the build the question he was most often asked was, 'Why are you building in the US?' 'My short answer was always, "Why not?" The better answer is that Derecktor has 60 years of yacht-building experience and substantial commercial ship experience as well. One of their yards has turned out 85 metre Coast Guard cutters and another built two car ferries, each over 70 metres,' he explains.

When *Cakewalk* gently floated out of her dry dock on 8 August, 'achievement' was an understatement. The 4,000-tonne dry dock that set her free was also new – it was christened eight weeks before.

With the exception of a small aft deck area and a saloon for card playing, most of this deck belongs to operations

Like many custom yachts, the project started with a shorter target length – in *Cakewalk's* case, 76 metres. 'Everything fit, but the profile looked a bit squat,' says Zinser. At 82 metres, the next drawing showed wider decks, which was instantly recognised as an improvement by the owners. 'We looked at the drawing with Tim, and the owner asked if it wouldn't look just a bit better with a longer bow and stern, suddenly here was the elegant look he envisioned,' he says. Heywood recalls that the only sensitive item was the length. 'They were very clear that 85 metres was big enough,' he says.

While long ends, strong horizontal lines and a sweeping sheer define the profile, the interior brief had several details: a central staircase, an



The layout of the bridge deck is the ultimate expression of the planning that went into the yacht – and to the latitude Captain Zinser had in ensuring its efficient operation. The helm console is low for good visibility

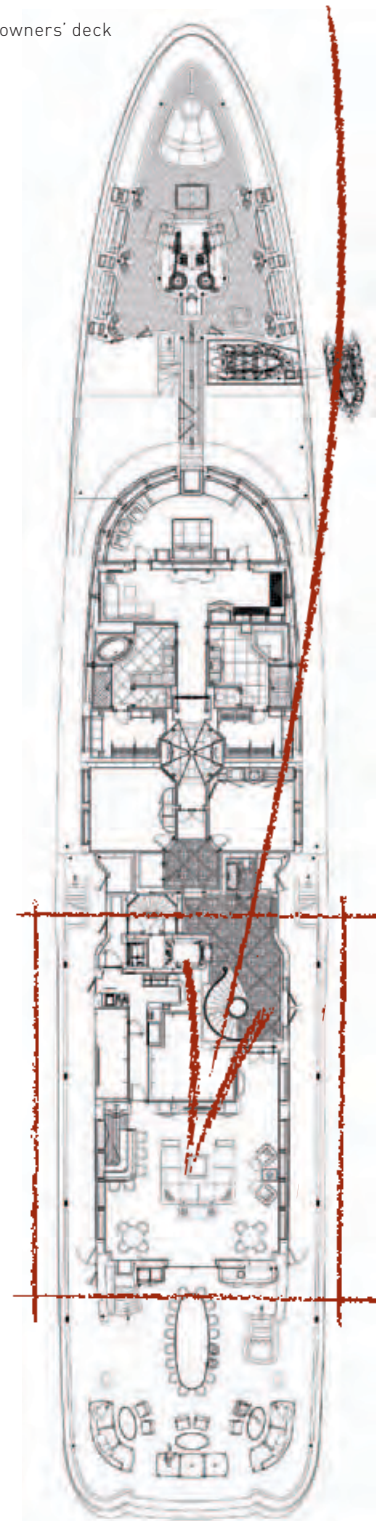




The owners' private saloon (main picture), called the Oak Room, has a cosy seating area and a bar. The room is also configured as the yacht's cinema. A large screen is hidden behind the painting



owners' deck



All the way forward, facing windows that sweep 180 degrees, is the owners' bedroom with a canopied king-size bed

elevator and all guest suites on the main deck. With a beam of nearly 14.3 metres, these things were not only feasible, but possible on a grand scale; she presents three times the volume of the previous *Cakewalk*.

While van Wieringen worked on structure, systems, weights and balances and stability analysis, Dalton refined Heywood's general arrangement around a family and charter-friendly interior and used 3D geometry to create the staircase. While some yachts grow remarkably heavier during build as owners take the opportunity to add features, van Wieringen notes that at launch, *Cakewalk* was exactly on target.

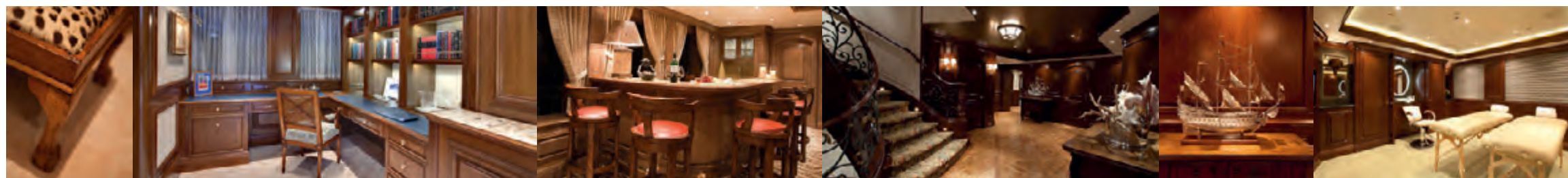
While everything about *Cakewalk* is bigger, the central staircase, designed by Dalton and fabricated by Zepsa, which begins its graceful

pirouette through the yacht at main deck opposite the starboard entry doors, is truly impressive. Although the rolling wrought iron balustrade, cherry handrails and carved newel posts with gold-plated rosettes extend to the highest deck, each of the landings has a slightly different theme. On the main deck, the raised panels behind the staircase have been painted white, which, in concert with the Jerusalem grey gold limestone underfoot, sets off the architecture like jewellery.

With all six guest suites and a supernumerary cabin on the main deck, this starboard foyer also serves as the entrance to the guest area, where all cabins are equal in size and appointments and open off a centreline corridor 18 metres long. 'Although we charter, the layout was specifically

designed to provide the most comfort and convenience for not only the charter guests, but our family as well,' explains the owner. 'For us, this means all guest suites are located on the main deck, which provides not only larger quarters, but larger windows. This is a significant improvement over typical guest suites being located below the main deck.'

Dalton explored a classic theme in the guest suites with raised-and-fielded panels, crown moulding, and even the desk chairs. Each suite has a different colour scheme introduced with fabrics and the stone selected for the heads. 'Our brief was for an interior with architecturally interesting spaces,' says Dalton. 'Not too formal, but still exuding the fitting degree of classic details that the owners are comfortable with and which a yacht



The owners' private area is not a just suite but a full deck, including his and hers bathrooms, each with adjoining dressing rooms, a massage room and an office. Antiques mix with flawless reproductions

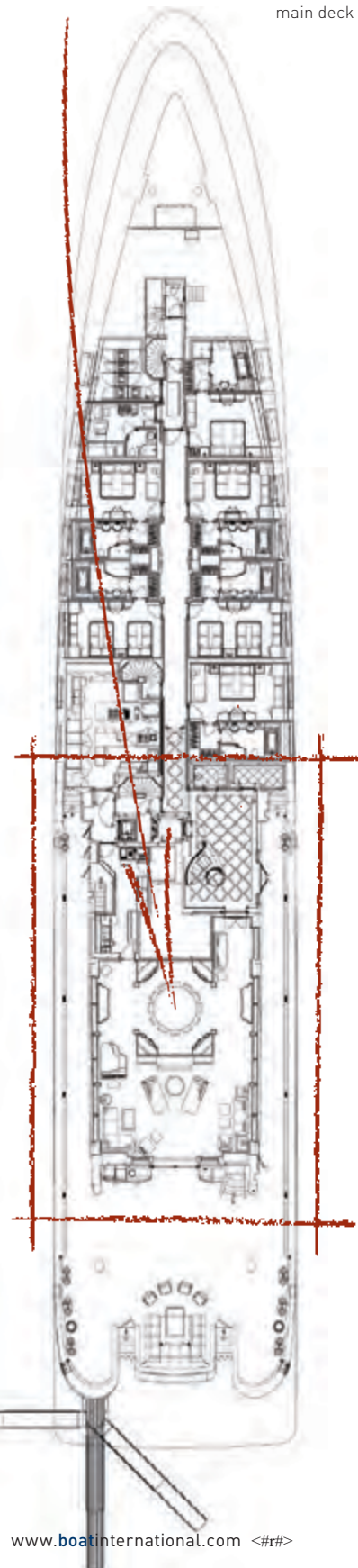






The 12-place dining table is flanked by four floor-to-ceiling rosewood china cabinets - made, as was much of the interior, by Merritt Woodwork - set at 90 degree angles, which serves as testimony to the beam

main deck



of this gold standard has to match. It wouldn't be fitting to have lots of modern, loose furniture rolling around, nor to do without all the lovely crown moulding, plinth blocks, friezes, raised panels and pilasters.

'The wife in this couple is very much the taste master, and she encouraged spaces of different character like the difference in the feel between the main saloon, the owners' saloon and the bridge deck,' adds Dalton. 'Each space provides a certain joie de vivre.'

Cakewalk certainly succeeds with interesting architectural spaces. Most guests will board the yacht from the stern, either from the quay or from a tender. Wanting to balance the sheer scale and drama Cakewalk's six cascading decks present from the stern, the aft deck is purposely kept

small. Glass doors open not to a cavernous saloon but to a cosy library with a fireplace, intimate seating and a Steinway grand piano. Also carved out of the nearly 170 square metre saloon is the private dining room, which is uniquely designed as a rotunda on centreline. The table weighs three-quarters of a tonne, according to Dalton. 'Weight was never a problem with this project,' she adds.

Between the main and bridge decks is the owners' deck: forward of the spiral staircase is a private, seven-room suite. A gymnasium is to port, opposite a yoga studio that doubles as a beauty salon and massage room. A series of double doors either keep the entire suite private or allow guest access to the exercise rooms only. Forward of the two bathrooms and

dressing rooms is a full-beam sitting room and study while all the way forward, facing windows that sweep 180 degrees, is the owners' bedroom, its signature element a canopied king-size bed.

At the opposite end of this deck is the primary outdoor dining area, which easily sits 16 at one large table but also has three small tables with combinations of fixed and loose seating that hold a similar number of guests. The service bar for this area is within the owners' saloon, which is also the yacht's cinema. As with each of the four decks devoted to owner and guest use, this one is served by a pantry of proportions and equipage that would make celebrity chefs jealous.

With the exception of a small aft deck area arranged for casual dining

Glass doors open not to a cavernous saloon but to a cosy library with a fireplace, intimate seating and a Steinway grand piano



The saloon on the main deck is divided into various spaces, including cosy seating areas and a library. 'It's a room that feels important not just because of its size but also because of its detail,' says Dalton



CAKEWALK Derecktor Shipyards

<p><b>LOA</b> 85.6m  <b>LWL</b> 75.1m  <b>Beam</b> 14.3m  <b>Draught</b> 4m  <b>Engines</b>                  2 x 16V 4000 @ 3,306hp  <b>Gross tonnage</b>                  2,998 tonnes</p>	<p><b>Speed (max/cruise)</b>                  17 knots/15 knots  <b>Range</b>                  5,000nm @ 15 knots  <b>Fuel capacity</b>                  367,000 litres  <b>Generators</b>                  2 x MTU 2000 Series V12 @ 660kW, 2 x MTU 550 Series</p>	<p>@ 350kW, 1 x MTU 400 Series @ 275kW  <b>Stabilisers</b>                  4 x Quantum  <b>Bowthruster</b>                  Jastram 400kW  <b>Owners and guests</b>                  12  <b>Crew</b> 24</p>	<p><b>Tenders</b> Riva, Vikal, Intrepid, Zodiac  <b>Construction</b>                  Steel/aluminium  <b>Classification</b> Lloyd's #100 A1-SSC Yacht (P) Mono G6  <b>Naval architecture</b>                  Azure</p>	<p><b>Exterior design</b>                  Tim Heywood Designs  <b>Engineering designer</b>                  BMT Nigel Gee and Associates, Gibbs and Cox  <b>Interior design</b>                  Elizabeth Dalton, ASID  <b>Project manager</b>                  Bill Zinser</p>	<p><b>Charter broker</b>                  Christine Casas                  Yacht Logistics                  Fort Lauderdale                  tel: +954 527 0909                  web: www.yachtlogistics.com  <b>Builder/year</b>                  Derecktor Shipyards/2010                  www.derecktor.com</p>
---	---	--	--	---	--



In advance of IMO regulations, *Cakewalk* was designed with separate crew and officers' messes and six single cabins. From the main deck down to the tank deck there are three sets of crew staircases for ease of movement and privacy

lower deck



and a charming saloon for card playing, most of the bridge deck belongs to operations. Although the bridge is enormous and features three seating areas, auxiliary spaces are really the stars. The captain's office is arranged with three workstations for visiting service technicians. The crew office is separate from the radio room, both of which are independent from the navigation area where two computing systems run simultaneously for redundancy.

As to the space that drove the entire project, the 'boathouse' is aft of the crew area and systems control room on the lower deck. A pair of overhead cranes handle movement of a 11.3 metre Vikal limousine tender also designed by Heywood (and winner of the 2010 ShowBoats Design Award for limousine tenders), a 10 metre Riva Cento and a 10.7 metre Intrepid sportfish with twin Volvo diesels and a lowering hardtop, plus four PWCs. With the extras such as toy stowage and dive gear in other areas, this bright, white climate-controlled area is totally dedicated to tenders and their maintenance.

To accomplish the build, Zinser and Paul Derecktor agreed on a system of subcontractors and on the owner's team supplying a significant amount of the equipment. A great deal of the physical beauty is due to Merritt Woodwork and Zepso Interiors, which worked with the Derecktor team on Dalton's intricate interior and furniture. To manage the build and

construct the dry dock that would eventually launch the yacht, Paul Derecktor turned to his brother, Tom, to direct the army of workers and subcontractors and coordinate daily with Zinser's team. 'It's the first time we've had this sort of relationship with the owner and a build team; it's a real collaboration,' says Paul. 'When you go to a project of this size, that alone is typically the challenge, but our project approach was uncompromising. I'm proud our people built *Cakewalk*. I'm proud of the economic impact it's had on the area for four years.'

Derecktor is by nature quiet. He brushes aside talk that the project was built under the world's largest microscope and that a lawsuit brought by a former customer delayed *Cakewalk* and nearly derailed the yard, preferring instead to think in terms of the completed yacht. 'My father always said the product should speak for itself,' he concludes.

'Take a look at the exterior woodwork,' says Heywood. 'The guys have shaped, smoothed and lacquered until there was no way to improve their work; it is craftsmanship of the highest order.'

As for the owners, they too brush aside the nearly 12 month delay in *Cakewalk's* delivery. 'A vessel of this magnitude always takes longer than anyone projects. I take a long-term view of every investment I make. In view of the design, technology, and quality, the end result is clearly worth the wait,' he says. 🏠

'With MTU for engines and generators, Heinen & Hopman for air-conditioning, Van der Velden for the steering and Bardwell for the navigation, we are ending up with essentially the same boat we would have built in a European yard,' Zinser says

