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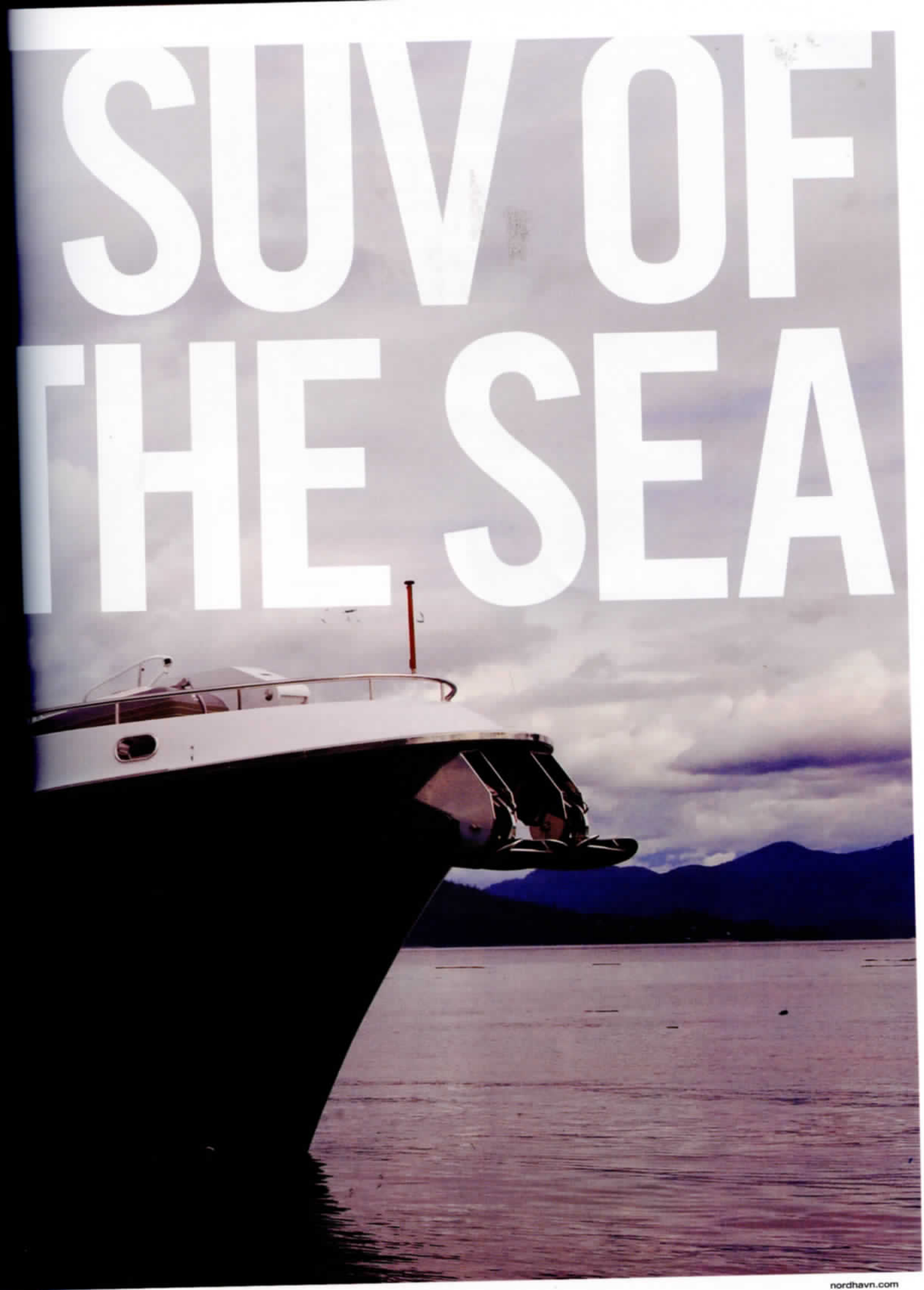
THE LABEL 'EXPEDITION YACHT' IS USED ALL TOO READILY THESE DAYS, BUT THE GO-ANYWHERE, DO-ANYTHING NORDHAVN 86 IS ONE OF THOSE RARE VESSELS FOR WHICH THE TERM WAS INVENTED. **CHRIS CASWELL** REPORTS.



nordhavn.com

SAFARI SUITE
The Nordhavn 86 is perhaps the perfect motor yacht to cross the world and return with treasures from distant shores. The test yacht *OCEAN* stepped aboard was suitably adorned with zebra patterened lounges and a collection of fine furniture, proving you need not be deprived of creature comforts while conquering the globe.

The first "sport utility vehicle" was the Jeep which, although originally designed for war, later introduced several generations to the joys of offroad exploring. Seeing its success, car manufacturers quickly climbed on the bandwagon with poseur versions that were really just sturdy-looking bodies on flimsy cars. Now the roads are populated with "luxury sport-utes" with leather interiors, macho names and no more business being offroad than a pair of roller skates.

The same thing has happened in the yachting world, where the term "expedition yacht" has become such a catch-all moniker you can find some of the strangest creations being labeled as such. Builders (or more accurately, marketers) are taking boats suitable for nothing more than coastal cruising, slapping on reversed pilothouse windows (because that's what commercial boats have), Portuguese bridges (ditto), and bigger fuel tanks (long range seems to be important), and proclaiming they have created an expedition yacht capable of pushing around icebergs or exploring the upper Amazon.

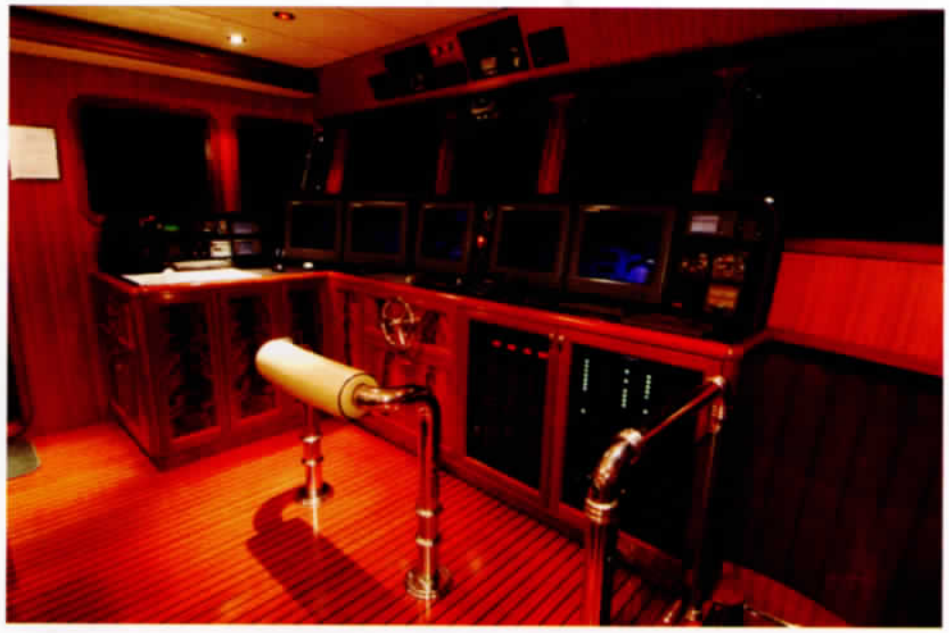
On the other hand there are yachts like the Nordhavn 86. Even the most fleeting glance is enough to tell you that this vessel is clearly designed to go, as US naval hero John Paul Jones put it, "in harm's way". Towering over other more conventional yachts, the Nordhavn exudes the polished but faintly menacing air of a really good bodyguard: put a streetfighter in in an Armani suit, and he'll still be tough as nails. The Nordhavn 86 stands out in a marina full of plastic cocktail cruisers like heavyweight boxer Mike Tyson at a debutante ball. This is a yacht with serious attitude.

If you want specifics about the sheer brawn of the Nordhavn 86, consider displacement. A Marlow 86, for example, weighs in at around 60 tonnes. An Ocean Alexander 98 tips the scales at about 110 tonnes, and a Horizon 108 is up to 145 tonnes.

The Nordhavn 86 trumps all those with a displacement of around 181 tonnes. Yipes!

Still not impressed? OK, how about this: this Nordhavn carries 26,500 litres of fuel – enough to allows her owners to depart from the East Coast of the US, cross the Atlantic, pass Gibraltar, wander up the coast of Spain, enjoy the Balearic Islands, and then cross the Med to Italy without stopping to refuel. Then there's the beam of 24 feet (7.3 metres), and the main saloon that

THE NORDHAVN 86 STANDS OUT IN A MARINA FULL OF PLASTIC COCKTAIL CRUISERS LIKE HEAVYWEIGHT BOXER MIKE TYSON AT A DEBUTANTE BALL



stretches for over 36 feet. The 86 can carry a 20-foot tender thwartships on the bow, launched with a 1500kg crane. The watermaker can produce over 7500 litres of fresh water a day. Beginning to get the picture? This yacht isn't just big: it's a mothership.

Despite its awesome spec sheet, the Norhhavn carries its iron fist in a stylish velvet glove. Inside the saloon doors is a world of luxury, from the cherry (or mahogany) interior to the finest marble and luxurious fabrics. That vast saloon is lined by large windows and comfortable sofas for entertaining. As with most yachts of this size there is considerable flexibility in the accommodation plan to suit the needs of the client: one 86 owner has placed a low divider with a pop-up TV to separate the forward dining area with seating for eight, while another chose to offset the dining table to port and put a curved bar to starboard.

The galley is a chef's dream, with ample granite counters and a full array of appliances including SubZero fridges, garbage compactor and dishwasher. There is a food prep area with a door into the dining room, and another door to the side deck to make loading provisions painless.

The master stateroom is down a short flight of stairs from the saloon level, and spans the full beam under the forward well deck. A centerline king-sized bed is set in a mirrored and burled wood headboard, facing a 42-inch flat screen TV on the forward bulkhead. Layouts vary, but most include a built-in desk/vanity on one side, and a comfortable lounge seat or sofa on the other. Forward, his-and-hers heads each have a marble counter and large shower stalls, although a spa tub can be optioned in.

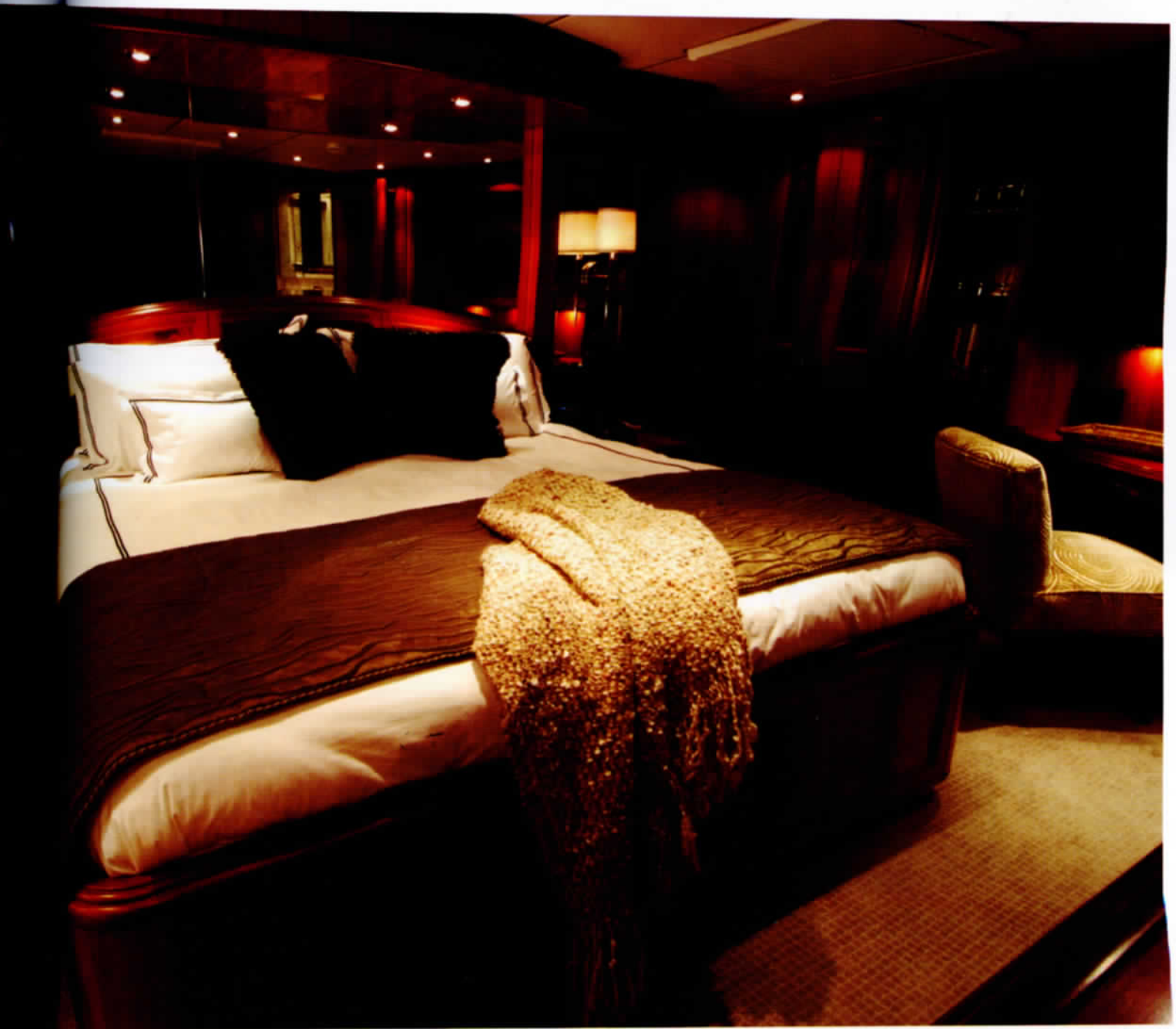
Guests aboard the Nordhavn 86 don't get short shrift either, with two equally-sized staterooms, each with king-sized beds and ensuite heads, including one with a tub. A smaller guest cabin is in the forepeak, with over-under bunks and another head with shower.

The crew cabin is aft of the engineroom, with a private entry from the side deck. This cabin has criss-crossed bunks and a head with shower, plus a separate laundry room and direct access to the engineroom.

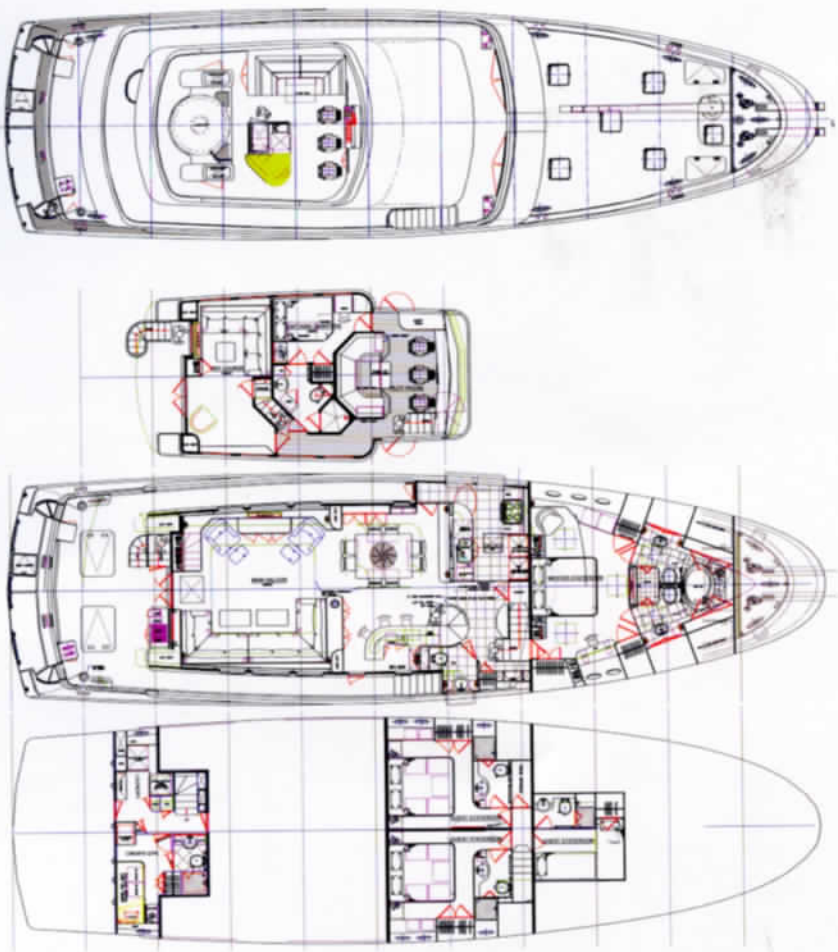
If there were a "command center", it would be the pilothouse level with a wheelhouse verging on that of commercial ships. The large windows are 5/8-inch thick and tempered, while twin weather-proof Pacific Coast Marine Dutch doors lead to the Portuguese bridge. Electronics are left to the owner's choice, with room for six large monitors and ample space for an array of systems. Three Stidd helm chairs are standard, although some owners have opted for leaning posts. In either case, a curved dinette is raised behind the helm area so guests have a good view of their surroundings.

THE NORDHAVN CARRIES ITS IRON FIST IN A STYLISH VELVET GLOVE

STEPHEN CRIDLAND / DAVID J SHULER



STATE OF PLAY
Main: the master stateroom has a king-size bed and ensuite head. Top left: a commercial shipping style wheelhouse means business. Right: the galley has a door to the dining room and another to the side deck, to make provisioning simple.



BUILDER	Nordhavn
COUNTRY OF BUILD	China
DESIGNER	Jeff Leishman
NAVAL ARCHITECT	Jeff Leishman
INTERIOR DESIGNER	Dee Robinson
YEAR OF BUILD	2008 to present
LOA	26.4m / 86'7"
LWL	23.75m / 77'11"
BEAM	7.32m / 24'
DRAFT	2.49m / 8'2"
HULL	Composite
SUPERSTRUCTURE	Composite
ENGINES	2 x MTU Series 60 diesels
OUTPUT	600hp
PROPELLERS	Hungshen 48x40 4-blade
SPEED (MAX)	12 knots
SPEED (CRUISE)	9 knots
FUEL CAPACITY	7000 gallons
RANGE	4000nm
FRESHWATER	900 gallons
BLACKWATER	250 gallons
GREY WATER	210 gallons
BOW THRUSTERS	Hydraulic 50 hp (bow and stern)
GENERATORS	1 x Onan 40kW, 1 x Onan 27.5kW
OWNER AND GUESTS	8
CREW	3
PAINT	Awlgrip Awlcraft 2000
TENDERS	up to 6.15m / 20'
PRICE AS TESTED	custom

The captain's quarters are just aft, with a double berth and private head, plus a desk to create a ship's office. The remainder of this level is devoted to a skylounge, which can be fitted with a sofa and lounge chairs in various arrangements.

The crowning touch, towering four stories above the waterline, is the flybridge, featuring a fiberglass helm console forward and a pair of pedestal chairs. To one side is a wraparound settee with dining table and, in the center of the bridge is a wet bar (with permanent stools) and an outdoor kitchen featuring a barbecue grill, sink and fridge. Completing the hedonistic delights is a spa tub large enough for eight.

Standard power for the Nordhavn 86 is a pair of MTU Series 60 diesels rated at 600hp, which may not seem much in this era of thousand-horsepower-engines, but these are connected via a 3.43:1 reduction gear to 48-inch propellers. That's right – the 86 has four-foot props. With the torque of these engines and that reduction gear, the Nordhavn 86 could probably climb Victoria Falls if it had a tail wind. A transatlantic cruising speed is about 10 knots, and trolling along at 9 knots gives the yacht a range of more than 4000 miles. Underwater configuration includes integral skegs with attached rudders, so the props are protected within apertures. With common-rail electronic injection, wet exhaust and commercial transmissions, the propulsion system of the Nordhavn 86 is virtually bulletproof.

Standard equipment is extensive, including a central hydraulics system that powers stabilizers (20 square foot either side), 50hp bow-and-stern thrusters, and hydraulic bilge pumps. Dual Onan generators of 40kW and 27kW provide electricity to a universal worldwide-use AC system. Construction is, if desired, to ABS +A1 Yachting Service standard for the hull and AMS rating for machinery. Every Nordhavn 86 has 20 full-length stringers as well as interior transverse floors to create an exceptionally rugged hull. With 30,000 pounds of fixed lead ballast and another 4000 pounds for trimming during commissioning, the 86 will sit on her lines regardless of an owner's layout choices. A minimum of six watertight bulkheads are standard, with Roxtec through-bulkhead fittings. The external finish is Awlgrip Awlcraft 2000 to the highest standards.

For long-distance voyaging and weathering the elements in maximum comfort, the Nordhavn 86 is a refreshing change from the norm. This is an honest, capable yacht, and one in which you could happily place your trust – and your life – in the most adverse conditions. Pale imitations beware.

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