Written by MARK JAEGER
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Boat builders from Korea, Canada unveil new Bill Prince vessels

The world economy may be going through a financial tempest, but the sailing has been full tilt for Port Washington yacht designer Bill Prince.

Prince designed the Altima Voyager 68, an oceangoing cruising yacht that was unveiled this week by Altima Yachts.

Prince's company, Bill Prince Yacht Design, has been the center of attention for two recent boating announcements.

Last week, Korean boat maker Hyundai Yachts unveiled the Prince design used for a new luxury line, the Asan 62 Motoryacht.

This week, the Montreal-based Altima Yachts announced a Prince design is being used for its new 68 Voyager Motoryacht series.

The rapid succession of announcements fails to reflect the lengthy process involved in designing the high-end boats.

"I was approached by Hyundai Yacht just prior to the 2010 Miami Boat Show," Prince said, who is a mechanical engineer by training.

"We met at the show and listened to their plans to develop a 60 to 65-foot ultra-contemporary motoryacht with a maximum amount of interior volume, to be used as their bold first step into the international large-yacht market."

Prince said "large" is a relative term when talking about luxury boats, since very high-end crafts can be as large as 400 feet and cost over $100 million.

That high-end market "has become a vibrant architectural playground in the past decade, with owners demanding architecturally significant designs, much the same way that the tallest skyscrapers are designed to make design statements," according to Prince.

Officials at Hyundai hoped much of that innovation would trickle down to the 62-foot Asan yachts they asked Prince to design, capturing “the look of an ultra-modern superyacht in a smaller, limited production offering.”

“Given their requirements, we went to work on something that we knew would differ from the typical swoopy sport yacht, a look that is often associated with Italian builders and their followers and has saturated the market over the past 15 years,” Prince said.

“As a pragmatic engineer, I insisted that we deliver a proposal which provided excellent deck access, high freeboard and efficient performance, wrapped in a smart, ‘ultra-contemporary’ skin they specifically asked for.”

The boat makers expect to produce 16 to 24 of the Asan models at a cost ranging from $2.5 million to $3 million, depending on materials used and options included.

While Prince said that while the focus of the Hyundai boat was to be cutting edge in appearance and performance, the design criteria for the Altima Voyager was to be “a very traditional-looking cruising yacht which will appeal to experienced cruisers wishing to live aboard for long periods.”

The craft is designed to operate with or without a professional crew. It has four luxurious staterooms, plus a private cabin below the aft deck for the crew.

Prince said the Voyager, with an overall length of just more than 68 feet, is designed for cruising in style, with sustainable speeds of 11 to 17 knots (12.5 to 20 mph).

“These two boats illustrate my company’s broad range of design solutions for wildly different clients,” Prince said.

It does not come as a shock that his design work has drawn international attention.

Prince won the 1996 U.S. National Marine Manufacturers Association yacht-design competition, besting naval architects from the U.S. and Europe.

Prior to founding his own company, he worked for yacht designer Michael Peters, America’s Cup winner Ted Hood and Island Packet Yachts.