

# CUSTOMIZED BEAUTY



➤ ABOVE Hull #2 has a pilothouse with a galley on the main deck instead of a master stateroom (which hulls #1 and #3 opted for). INSET Hull #1 has an enclosed flybridge with a helm station, as does hull #3.

The Marlow Explorer 97E is a gem from a builder who blurs the traditional distinctions between custom and production yachts.



BY CHRIS CASWELL

**D**avid Marlow just doesn't get it. For an otherwise successful and experienced boat builder, he can't seem to comprehend the difference between "production" and "custom" yachts.

Production builders let you pick the color scheme. Period. But Marlow, despite having set new benchmarks for production-line efficiency, allows his clients to run rampant — moving bulkheads, changing equipment, literally providing all the perks of more expensive custom boat-

yards. And a fine example of Marlow's "weakness" — catering to a client's needs — is his third Marlow Explorer 97E.

Marlow's attentiveness to consumer needs is paying off, because this 97E was built for a client who already owns a Marlow 78 that he uses nearly every weekend along the South American coastline of Venezuela and Brazil. It has, according to Marlow, more miles on it than any other 78. But, after five years of heavy usage, the owner had a clear idea of what he wanted in a larger Marlow. And that's exactly what Marlow built.





➔ LEFT The spacious salon of hull #1 leads to a formal dining area and a galley. MIDDLE Up a few steps from the dining area is the forward main-deck master. BELOW Hull #1 shows off at the dock.

For starters, the interior was completely rearranged to provide a fully enclosed galley forward of a formal dining area that seats 10. The aft bulkhead of the galley can be opened between the countertop and the overhead cabinets, but it is designed to separate chef and guests. With powerful exhaust fans venting to the sidedecks, all cooking odors can be removed. There is an entry to the galley from the sidedeck, to allow private access for the chef and crew, as well as direct loading of provisions without tracking through the salon.

A clever touch is the walk-in pantry with access from three sides, so snacks can be grabbed from outside the galley, while the chef can reach staples from the inside. Larger than the double-door SubZero galley fridge, the pantry has shelves adjustable in 2-inch increments for maximum use.

Another custom touch is the private sun lounge just

forward of the command bridge, surrounded by a 24-inch bulwark in the style of a Portuguese bridge. Measuring 10 by 19 feet, this area has sunpads and lounges with both privacy and wind protection, plus access via comfortable stairs from the foredeck.

The main-deck master suite is spacious, with private deck access and wrap-around windows. The master head features granite floors and a clear glass shower measuring 6 by 4 feet. Windows provide a view of the outside from the shower but can be darkened for privacy at the touch of a switch.

Guests have access to five staterooms on the lower deck, including four with king-size berths and one with upper/lower bunks, and four luxurious heads. A complete galley for the guests — with a refrigerator, an ice-maker, sinks, a microwave, a beverage center and a snack pantry

— should appease a midnight snack attack. A full-sized laundry with Bosch appliances is also on the lower deck.

The crew has accommodations finished to the quality of the guest areas, with four twin beds and a galley, plus a private head with a shower.

The enclosed command bridge has been extended to 17 by 20 feet, with a fully disappearing entertainment center that, when open, is reminiscent of a fine gentleman's club. The semicircular command station has a double Stidd chair surrounded by the navigation and communication electronics, as well as the various ship systems and monitors. Port and starboard doors are another change for this 97E, giving the skipper access to protected areas outside the enclosed bridge for maneuvering, and an extra-wide door from the bridge leads aft to a large summer kitchen protected by the bridge overhang.

Because the yacht will operate in remote areas, Marlow equipped the 97E with deep freezers to provide full independence at sea or in anchorages for extended periods.

## Equipment Extravaganza

Other special equipment includes a 79-inch-wide by 21-foot swim platform that provides direct access to the adjacent water toy storage garage as well as the gyroscope, which augments the hydraulic stabilizers at low speeds and while anchored.

The 17-foot tender is launched by a 1,000-kg hydraulic crane with an extending arm, and this 97E is fitted to tow a 37-foot Intrepid from custom towing eyes built into the transom laminates.

Standard power is a pair of Caterpillar C18 diesels, 1,015 hp each, and through enhanced soundproofing, this 97 had the lowest decibel readings of any Marlow built to date. Under way, the yacht is no slouch, with a top speed of 30 knots. Given its 4,600 gallons of fuel, the 97E has reserves for 3,700 n.m. at 8.5 knots, or 900 n.m. at 30 knots.

With the proprietary Marlow Velocijet nozzles and Strut Keels to protect the CNC-cut S-class propellers, this



➔ TOP Guests can enjoy one of four staterooms with king-size berths. There are five guest rooms in all. ABOVE The master head includes a soaking tub.

## SPECIFICATIONS

LOA 97 FT., 7 IN. BEAM 21 FT. DRAFT 5 FT., 6 IN.  
DISPLACEMENT (LIGHT) 158,000 LBS.  
FUEL CAPACITY 4,600 GALS. WATER CAPACITY 600 GALS.  
GRAY/BLACK WATER CAPACITY 400 GALS.  
POWER TWIN 1,760 HP CATERPILLAR C32 DIESELS  
TOP SPEED 30 KNOTS RANGE 3,700 MILES @ 8.5 KNOTS  
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yacht draws just more than 5 feet, giving it access to many areas normally off limits to a yacht of this length. The Marlow Explorer 97E is also built to Bureau Veritas' highest classification: Unrestricted Navigation.

Hull #3 of the 97E is fitted with a pair of detuned 6L Caterpillar heavy-duty marine generators, each capable of producing 66 kw but reduced to 44 kw for exceptionally long maintenance schedules and longevity. Custom Lex-an enclosures were designed and built by Marlow to allow casual inspection of the gensets without having to remove the sound attenuation boxes, and transformers capable of multiple voltages and hertz provide a flow of clean, filtered power to all the onboard equipment.

The immaculate engine room follows standard Marlow practice with mandrel-bent polished 316L stainless steel piping, while the engine exhaust is via carbon fiber and phenolic-encapsulated pipes capable of withstanding 2,000 degrees. All piping exposed to salt is coated with industrial acid-containment materials to isolate the inner metal from seawater, and the yacht has multiple system re-

dundancy, from the hydraulic pumps to the steering. Backup water pumps are ready to continue pumping at the flip of a switch, and four filtration systems ensure domestic water to less than 5-micron filtration for clear ice cubes and odor-free water. A 1,400 gpd continuous-duty water-maker has automatic shutdown and maintenance. No matter how scorching the South American sun, the 97E has 186,000 Btus of chilled-water air conditioning that can be run in tandem or as stand-alone units for redundancy.

The finish on this new yacht is standard Marlow, with a Flag Blue Awlgrip hull and a porcelain-like superstructure. Sawn Burmese golden teak decks feature carefully in-laid king planks for traditional styling, all created by the skilled artisans of Marlow Yachts.

Truly a "small ship" ready for extended adventures, the Marlow Explorer 97E hull #3 is the result of a knowledgeable and experienced owner combined with a builder who blurs the traditional distinctions between custom and production yachts. Good-looking and built to exceedingly high standards, this is a luxurious and long-range cruiser. 🇺🇸

➔ TOP LEFT The flybridge helm station on hull #1 is fully outfitted and is the only helm on the yacht. TOP RIGHT The bow provides comfortable seating for a dozen or more guests. BELOW The flybridge helm of hull #2 is done in fiberglass, as the bridge can be opened up.

