

Going, Going, Gone.

MARLOW'S VOYAGER-CLASS FLAGSHIP SETS A LOFTY GOAL:
TO CIRCUMNAVIGATE THE GLOBE WITHOUT COMPROMISE.
BY JEFF MOSER / PHOTOS BY TOM SERIO





While the hull is constructed to tackle any weather, the salon is built for comfort.

The objective was to create a small composite ship that could survive the world's more unpredictable weather patterns and have the legs to travel the world," the owner of *Ice* told me whilst on board the 102-foot Marlow flagship, moored in Frenchman Bay off Bar Harbor, Maine. They arrived a few days earlier as part of an extended maiden voyage that took them around Florida and up the Eastern Seaboard—all without a hiccup, the owner noted. But the last leg of the trip would prove challenging: The crew was aware of a worsening forecast as the day wore on, so they made their way from Nantucket to Maine at 16 knots.

But as night—and visibility—fell and conditions worsened, the captain decided the risk of damaging running gear was too great for *Ice* to attempt to slalom through the thousands of lobster pots in the Gulf of Maine. They were forced to hold station with both the ABT digital stabilizers and the heavy-duty, commercial-rated Seakeeper 30HD activated to slow the roll of the 112-ton vessel.

"Pushed in a 3-meter sea is a test," the owner said. "When you can't move, you're in trouble. But *Ice's* stability was incredible." He also reported that they were comfortable for the duration of the evening as the vessel duked it out with 10- to 12-foot seas and 50 knots of wind.

Ice's owner (who politely declined to be named) first met Marlow Yachts' principal David Marlow when the builder took him for a ride on his personal 76-foot Voyager. At the time, the owner of *Ice* had "lost his crew" when his children moved on to college and was several years out of the game, thinking of getting back into boating. That ride convinced the former owner of a blazing-fast Fountain and a Hatteras 64—a 40-plus-knot boat—that slow and steady often wins the race. "It was so peaceful," he told me, "taking in the moment as we cruised along at 9 knots." But he wasn't sold just yet.

He looked at other explorer-type vessels—and rattled off the names and attributes of each like an old salt—but was most impressed with the Marlow ethos over the last two-plus decades: To build a line of uncompromising vessels and seamlessly merge systems found on commercial ships with openness and superlative wood and metalwork craftsmanship that rank among the best in class.





The four-stateroom layout features an open design accentuated with Marlow's exquisite woodwork that guests can admire on long passages.

I learned quite a few more tidbits from the owner, a self-professed gearhead. I was aware that the entire hull is cored and vacuum-bagged utilizing Kevlar and carbon fiber following Marlow's Full Stack Infusion process that bonds hull and deck in one shot for the optimal strength-to-weight ratio. What I didn't know was how the owner's steadfast obsession with keeping a very low center of gravity would match—dare I say surpass—Marlow's.

The owner insisted that the proprietary Velocijet keels be filled with 2,000 pounds of resin and steel shot, which was executed. Marlow's team also kept the weight down up in the skybridge via extensive utilization of carbon fiber. In addition, her hull has additional layers of Kevlar from the boot stripe to the hull bottom and multiple layers of Kevlar on the leading edges. And the vessel's bulbous bow doubles up with both extra layers of Kevlar and stainless steel. *Ice's* owner has found that all of these attributes work in concert for a very stable ride at sea. "Because of the weight of the boat and the bulbous bow, it's comfortable to work in the galley while running," he told me.

For a traveler of the world, "redundancy is the marching order," Marlow said, with all essential systems having back-ups to the back-up, including her three steering units and an electrical system that's backed by a trio of transformers and, in case of failure, a transfer switch, inverters, two 55-kW gensets and industrial-duty 165-amp alternators on each of the mains if all goes kaput.

The 102-footer is also equipped with seven watertight compartments, each with dedicated pumps backed by Honda electric crash pumps. The proprietary heat exchange system utilizes cupronickel pipes, which are impermeable to barnacles and other parasites, a must

for the voyager-class vessel that looks to make excursions from the Arctic to the Amazon. And in the engine room—one of the most stunning that I've seen in person, with its carbon fiber soles and twin, commercial-rated Baudouin diesels finished in French blue (I swear I heard "La Marseillaise")—two additional Hayward pool pumps can back flush the sea chests or be pressed into service for firefighting.

It was the owner who insisted on the commercial French mains, citing their 15,000-hour warranties and use by the NY Waterway System ferry fleet, among other attributes. He pointed out that at start-up, the engines automatically pre-lube and pre-heat prior to start. He also cited something that Marlow has spoken about—the powerplants can be rebuilt in the engine room and completely serviced without heavy equipment. Each of the 12 cylinders have individual heads that weigh about 80 pounds, so they can be removed or serviced one at a time, with no need for a crane.

With Bureau Veritas unrestricted navigation categorization and a four-stateroom layout, roomy salon and galley finished in exquisite, grain-matched teak paired with a robust fuel capacity—*Ice* carries 5,500 gallons of diesel—the vessel is ready to travel far and wide. For the captain, there's a private en suite cabin aft of her command bridge, with crew quarters for two abaft of the engine room.

When I asked where he'd go next if the world were not in a pandemic, he answered, without irony, "Greenland," and waxed on about making a go at the Northwest Passage, or perhaps the opposite pole. "We named her *Ice* because of our love of Antarctica and our dream of one day taking her into the ice," the intrepid owner told me. He certainly chose the right vessel to make it a reality. □



LOA: 102'
Beam: 22'6"
Draft: 5'6"
Displ.: 224,000 lbs.
Fuel: 5,500 gal.
Water: 600 gal.
Power: 2/1,500-hp Baudouin
12 M26.3 diesels
Cruise Speed: 16 knots
Top Speed: 22 knots

With its Baudouin mains, numerous redundant systems and 5,500 gallons of fuel, there is no corner of the world that is off limits.

