



OCEAN BOUND

The Northern Marine 76 is designed
and built for serious passagemaking

By Chris Caswell Photography by Neil Rabinowitz

There are not too many boats, and certainly not many 76-footers, that can give you a stiff neck looking up at the bow from the dock. The new Northern Marine 76, *Zeus*, is an exception.

First glimpsed from a distance in the marina at Anacortes, Washington, she is the yachting version of Shaquille O'Neal in the Tokyo airport.

From a distance, she loomed. Up close, *Zeus* towered. The sheer girth of this yacht, which clearly draws on commercial boats undaunted by the rugged North Pacific, has an immediate impact. Could you hand up a bowline to someone on the foredeck? Not a chance. Could you toss a fender? If you're strong, perhaps. This is a big, bluff bow meant to shoulder aside head seas and nuzzle up against glaciers.

Of course, simply having high freeboard forward does not a true expedition yacht make, but, with *Zeus*, it's just the tip of the iceberg. The rest of this yacht, from the design to the construction to the systems to the smallest details, is intended for serious long-distance passagemaking.

Northern Marine is synonymous with these types of rugged offshore yachts, though the company's reputation was built in just a few years. The first Northern Marine trawler was *Spirit of Zopilote*, a replacement for the 70-foot Delta *Zopilote*, which achieved celebrity status among cruising yachtsmen for her publicized, wide-ranging voyaging. The co-founder of Northern Marine, Richard "Bud" LeMieux, was the production manager on *Zopilote*. When the yacht was lost on a rocky pinnacle in Alaska, it seemed natural that the first yacht from Northern Marine should be

the 64-foot *Spirit of Zopilote*. Northern Marine made headlines again when it built the 76-foot *Starship*, which served as the mothership for a documentary film crew on a 78,000-mile, three-year circumnavigation.

Zeus is the latest incarnation of that 76-footer, and each new build benefits from innovations and improvements made in earlier launches. But regardless of the interior layout, the various systems, or even the décor, Northern Marine's fine craftsmanship remains constant.

"We build every boat as though the owner was leaving immediately to go around the world," said Stuart Archer, Northern Marine's vice president and naval architect.

Though the Northern Marine 76 is built to American Bureau of Shipping standards, that's only part of the story. Consider, for example, that a Lazzara 76 weighs about 40 tons. Although Northern Marine uses coring above the waterline and sandwich construction in the bulkheads, *Zeus* still tips the scales at 115

Zeus' dining area (right) and saloon (below) highlight Northern Marine's wide range of customization and the builder's attention to detail.





The Northern Marine 76's high bow profile allows for a private and sizable master stateroom on the main deck level. The granite nightstands are a nice touch.

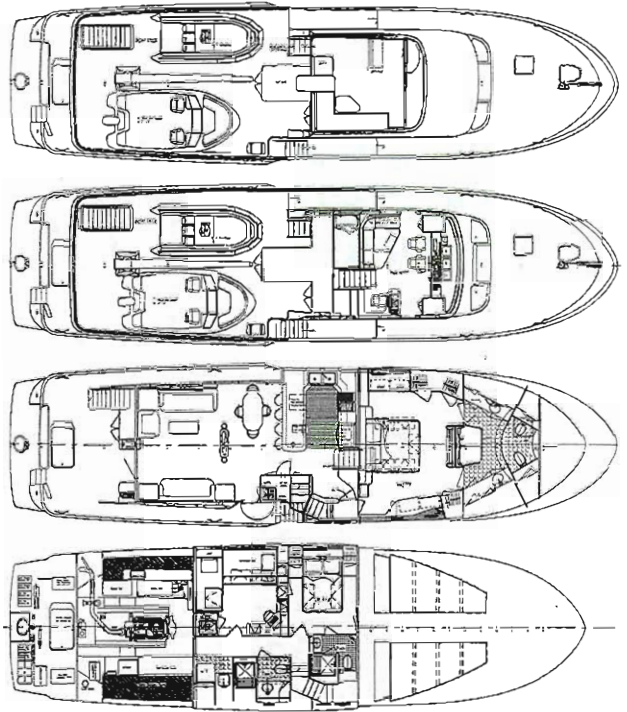
tons, indicating the brute muscle of this yacht. These muscles are flexed throughout the 76.

Take the stem band that runs from the signature breast-plate at the bow right down to the bulb keel (more about that later). Most builders slap on a trim strip and leave it at that, but Northern Marine takes a 2-inch stainless-steel propeller shaft to a machine shop, where it is painstakingly sliced in half. The resulting half round becomes the first line of defense at the bow.

Even the best-handled yacht occasionally goes bump-on-the-bottom, particularly when exploring areas of the world where charts bear only a vague resemblance to reality. Since *Zeus* and her sisters have a long keel for tracking and stability, Northern Marine adds a protective cap to the bottom of the keel. This is 1½ inches of solid steel that stretches from near the bow to the rudder. The propeller, 4 feet tall, is above the keel bottom, and the steel plate also provides protection to the rudder.

The arrangement of the Northern Marine 76 requires a multitude of ups and downs to accommodate all the deck levels, which can be off-putting to those more accustomed to conventional yachts. The saloon is on the main deck with walkarounds on each side, and the pilothouse is on the level of the raised foredeck, with twin doors for access. At "half-deck" levels are the boat deck above the saloon and the flying bridge atop the pilothouse.

Zeus' saloon is reminiscent of an English gentlemen's club, with makore bulkheads and furniture stained a dark reddish hue, and a beamed ceiling overhead. Detailed raised paneling showcases Northern Marine's craftsman-



ship, with brushed silver sconces on the bulkheads. A sitting area is aft, separated from the formal dining room by a center divider. The divider, with two fluted columns, also holds an aft-facing 52-inch plasma-screen television behind tambour doors. The formal dining area includes handcrafted jatoba and is separated from the galley by a breakfast counter with four stools.

The master stateroom fills the area beneath the main deck from the pilothouse to the anchor locker. A centerline king berth faces forward beneath a Craftsman-style mirrored headboard with fluted columns and granite nightstands, and an overhead treatment with makore rope accents gives the effect of a canopy above the bed. Even when tucked in for the night on a long passage, the owner remains informed, since the starboard nightstand conceals a Brookes and Gatehouse instrument repeater panel. A flat-screen television in the overhead above the bed is linked to the security cameras.

Stairs opposite the galley lead to the lower deck, where a VIP stateroom is to port, and the day head is opposite. Another cabin is to port, arranged primarily as the owner's office with a large desk, but four bunks will absorb extra guests.

The pilothouse is the nerve center of
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SPECIFICATIONS

LOA	77'0"
LWL	68'4"
BEAM	21'6" max.
DRAFT	6'10" max.
DEADRISE	N/A
DISPL.	230,000 lb.
FUEL	5,200 gal.
WATER	1,000 gal.
BLACK WATER	175 gal.
GRAY WATER	125 gal.
DESIGNER	Stuart Archer
INTERIOR DESIGN	N/A
ENGINES AS TESTED	1x 660 hp Cummins QSK diesel
OPTIONAL POWER	1x 480 hp Cummins N14-M diesel
GEAR/REDUCTION	ZF 4:1
PROP/MANUFACTURER	48" 4-blade Teinbridge
GENERATOR	1x 27kW; 1x 21kW; 1x 12kW
STEERING	Hydraulic
ENGINE CONTROLS	Mathers Micro Commander
PRICE AS TESTED	N/A

any passagemaker, and on *Zeus* it's thoughtfully arranged with a trio of Stidd helm seats behind the instrument panel, a raised settee with table, and a ship's office and nav station out of the way with a flat-screen computer and pull-down chart stowage in the overhead. Two wing doors provide easy deck access and cross ventilation when needed.

The term "boat deck" is only partly accurate for *Zeus* because, though she has a pair of tenders, there is also an enclosed garage for the owner's Harley Davidson built into the stack that supports the mast. The motorcycle is stowed on a sliding rail, which rolls out so the 3,000-pound crane can launch the Harley in a cage to shore on either side.

Her flying bridge is equipped with a centerline helm with electronic repeaters as well as wing controls on each side for



The builder's attention to craftsmanship is evident in the businesslike pilothouse.

maneuvering (a fourth station is aft on the lower deck). A wet bar and lounge area with table are also here.

If the looks of *Zeus* make a promise of serious passagemaking, that prom-

ise is kept most visibly in the sophisticated and seamanlike engine room. Power is provided by a single 660 hp Cummins QSK engine turning just 1800 rpm, according to the builder. For those concerned about single-engine cruising, *Zeus* has more-than-ample backups. There are three Onan generators with hydraulic power take-offs: a 21kw for normal use, a 12kW for night operation and a 27kW for the hydraulic systems. *Zeus* is designed to run comfortably at 6 knots by bringing a hydraulic motor online with a chain drive to the prop shaft.

Central sea chests handle raw-water intake (with a removable grating) and discharge, and the engine compartment is watertight with twin Freeman dogging doors. An interesting touch is that all the plumbing runs are labeled not just for content, but for direction of flow.

Under way, *Zeus* is designed to offer what you would expect. Her top speed is 11.5 knots, according to the builder, but she is built to cruise comfortably at 10 knots, burning just a gallon a mile from her 5,200-gallon fuel tanks. That should provide a comfortable transoceanic range in all directions. □

Contact: Northern Marine, Inc., (360) 299-8400; www.northernmarine.com.

Chris Caswell is a frequent contributor to YACHTING.