



Even before he saw *Carinthia VII*, Cakewalk's owner had already decided that he needed a bigger boat in order to carry larger tenders. Tenders make the luxury yacht experience complete, he believes. Discussions for a new boat began two years later, and by fall 2005, Zinser had a fairly complete specification ready to share with European yards known for building large yachts. But a bit of discontent lingered at the back of the owner's mind—he wanted to build the boat in the United States and not the least of those reasons was the fact that it would be possible for him and his wife to visit the project frequently during construction.

"Our team firmly believed we could build a yacht of similar quality to northern European yards in the United States, so we began to discuss the project with various American yards," Zinser said. "In the meantime, there was no reason not to assemble the same designers we would most likely have used if the vessel was built in Europe."

The key design element, and the second biggest change from the previous Feadship, would be the profile—and the first call was to Tim Heywood, the designer behind *Carinthia VII*, with a request to design a new *Cakewalk*. "From the rubber gaskets out,"

For naval architecture, Zinser said he and the owner favored the same approach they experienced with not only the 204-footer but also her predecessor, the 132ft Feadship *Fifanella*, which was refitted into a 142ft *Cakewalk* from spring 1995 through fall 1996. Hugo van Wieringen had been the lead designer on both of those yachts for De Voogt Naval Architects, and van Wieringen, under the mantle of his current company, Azure Naval Architects, signed onto the project. With the addition of Florida-based interior designer Liz Dalton, who had been part of the last four *Cakewalks*, momentum grew for U.S. construction.

"Our decision to build this ambitious project in the U.S. was based on our knowledge of the incredible skill sets available to us in the New York and Connecticut market. Our quality standards are the highest in the industry, and Derecktor assured us they would achieve

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Cakewalk truly has the luxury of space. Large rooms, wide, vaulted doorways, and a grand staircase.

The man behind Cakewalk understands manufacturing. His wealth comes from smartly buying small companies that make things and improving them and their profits, often by lending them the capital to bring new ideas to the marketplace or by acquiring strategic partners for them. They make widgets and containers, recycle wood and refine minerals; the products may not be glamorous, but they are things everyone needs on a regular basis. Cakewalk's owner grew up when America was the largest manufacturing nation on earth, and like a lot of pragmatic capitalists, is more comfortable with an economy based on manufacturing than on services. The home page of his company's website begins with the words: "Build Something of Consequence."

So, long before politicians found it useful to talk about jobs in every speech, long before the public began faulting outsourcing, the owner of Cakewalk and his wife decided that they would like to build their next motor yacht in the U.S.

At 281 feet and 2,998 tons, no one would argue that *Cakewalk* is not something of consequence. At the risk of stating the obvious, she is the largest yacht by volume to come out of the United States. The only U.S.-built yacht that exceeds her length on deck is *Corsair IV*, launched in 1991.

In 2002, the owner and his family were aboard "old Cakewalk"—a 204-footer built by Feadship and a winner of a 2001 ShowBoats Award for Best Full-Displacement Motor Yacht. He and his longtime captain, Bill Zinser, were on deck when *Carinthia VII* pulled into the yacht club at Antibes. The design of that 318ft yacht stopped the two of them in mid-sentence and the image of that moment has directed the course of events since.

them," noted the owner. While quality is a relative term, there is no gray area to the yacht's classification: Lloyd's Maltese Cross 100 A1 SSC Yacht, MCA 1Y2.

"As it turned out, Hugo already had forged a relationship with Derecktor Shipyard, and the idea of building there did not phase him," said Zinser, adding that during the first two years of the build the question he was most often asked was, "Why not?" The better answer is that "My short answer was always, 'Why not?' The better answer is that Derecktor has sixty years of yacht-building experience and substantial commercial ship experience as well. One of their yards has turned out [280 foot] Coast Guard cutters and another built two high-speed car ferries, each over [230 feet]," he explained.

When Cakewalk gently floated out of her dry-dock on August 8th, "achievement" was an understatement. The 4,000-ton dry-dock that set her free was also new, having been built by Derecktor and only christened eight weeks before.

Like many custom yachts, the project started with a shorter target length—in Cakewalk's case, 250 feet. "Everything fit, but the profile looked a bit squat," said Zinser. At 270 feet, the next drawing showed wider decks, which was instantly recognized as an improvement by the owners. "We looked at the drawing with Tim and the owner asked if it wouldn't look just a bit better with a longer bow and stern, suddenly here was the elegant look he envisioned," he said. Heywood recalls that the only sensitive item was the length. "They were very clear that [281 feet] was big enough," he said.

While long ends, strong horizontal lines, and a sweeping sheer define the profile, the interior brief had several details: A central staircase, an elevator, and all guest suites on main deck. With a beam of nearly 47 feet, these things were not only feasible, but possible on a grand scale; she presents three times the volume of the 204-footer.

While naval architect van Wieringen worked on structure systems, weights and balances, and stability analysis, interior designer Liz

