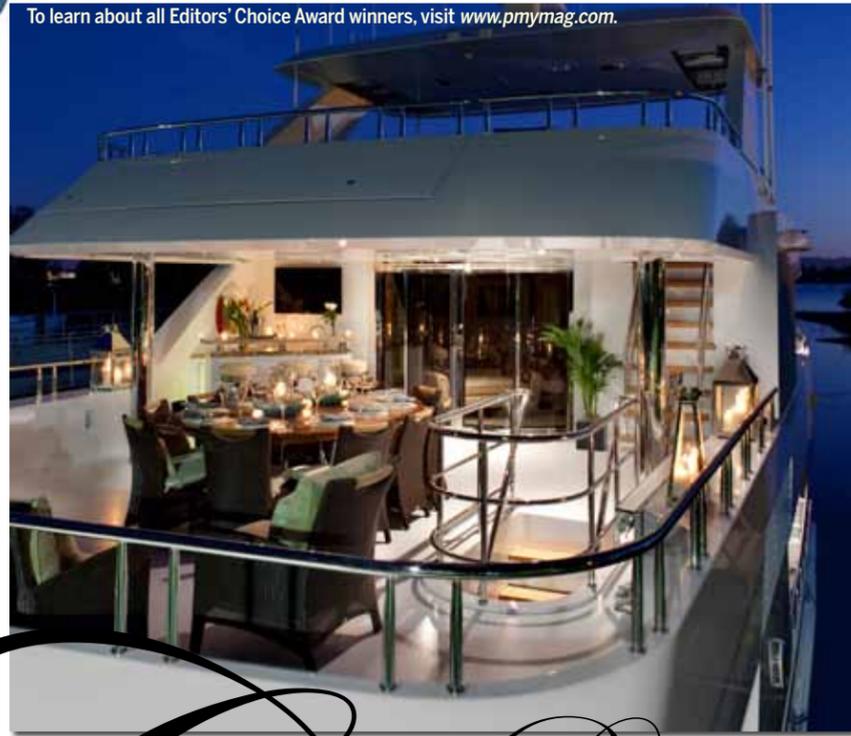




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Best in Class

TAKE TWO BOATBUILDERS SERVING DIFFERENT MARKETS AND LET THEM EACH PLAY TO THEIR STRENGTHS IN A SINGLE PROJECT.

CHRIS CASWELL TAKES A LOOK AT WHAT YOU GET WITH THE NEW OCEAN ALEXANDER 120.

Collaborations are nothing new in the business world, and the focusing of two minds on a project often results in remarkable achievements. Think of Messrs. Rolls and Royce, for example. Pratt and Whitney. Proctor and Gamble. Even Ben and Jerry.

The new Ocean Alexander 120, though marketed under the Ocean Alexander name, is a collaboration that came from out-of-the-box thinking by two major boatbuilders, and the result is nothing short of spectacular.

So spectacular, in fact, that the OA 120 was named Best Overall Boat of the Year at the 2012 Active Interest Media Marine Group Editors' Choice Awards literally *one day* after the yacht made her debut at the Ft. Lauderdale International Boat Show. (Active Interest Media publishes this magazine.)

Ocean Alexander, whose primary market has been yachts between 60 and 80 feet (though they've built a 100-footer), was interested in a yacht in the 115- to 120-foot range. Richard Allender, the director of Ocean Alexander's U.S. operations, could see the impact of the economic downturn and approached OA owner Johnny Chueh with a proposal—team up with a company already building large yachts rather than starting from scratch on their own.

LOA: 121'2"
BEAM: 25'2"
DRAFT: 6'6"
DISPL.: 420,000 lb.
FUEL: 6,000 gal.
WATER: 1,200 gal.
STANDARD POWER: 2/1,450-bhp MTU 12V 2000 M72
TRANSMISSION: ZF 3050 with 3.28:1 gear ratio
PROPELLERS: 48 x 40 5-blade Nibral Veemstar
GENERATORS: 2/76-kW Caterpillars
WATERMAKER: 2/1,200 gpd FCI
PRICE: \$19,900,000



Allender first needed a designer who had experience in large yachts and who could bring a fresh look to this largest-ever Ocean Alexander, and he settled on Evan K. Marshall, an American designer based in London who had a good feel for both American and European sensibilities.

Next Allender considered a number of builders and it became clear that Christensen Shipyards, the composite megayacht builder not far from the Ocean Alexander offices in Seattle, would be ideal.

Christensen president Joe Foggia quickly grasped the concept and signed on as what Allender calls, "a godsend."

The collaboration worked both ways, and both companies came away with expanded knowledge: Ocean Alexander learned about innovative exhaust systems, and Christensen benefited from OA's weight-saving technologies.

There was another plus that lay behind the collaboration for buyers of the Ocean Alexander 120: the charter benefits of a U.S.-built yacht. In an economy that strains the finances of even the wealthiest yacht owners, the ability to offset costs with charters is a major appeal, and something not available to Ocean Alexanders built in Taiwan. The new 120, however, is built to ABS (American Bureau of Shipping) classification and MCA (Marine and Coastguard Agency) rules, so she can charter worldwide with no constraints (see "Better Boat: The ABCs of Classification," on page 51).

It's clear that Marshall had chartering in mind when he arranged the 120, starting with a distinctive trideck styling that includes a spacious main-deck master suite plus four large staterooms on the accommodations level and ending with dedicated stowage areas for guest luggage.

Marshall's interior draws styling cues from both Ocean Alexander and Christensen to create a clean and contemporary décor that is notable for a high level of craftsmanship. Combining the burlled woods of Ocean Alexander with the exquisite marble and granite stonework of Christensen makes the Ocean Alexander 120 a contender with any yacht in the world.

The exterior profile is notable for the high sheerline that runs from the bow aft to become bulwarks around the pilothouse and skylounge. This gives the 120 a take-no-prisoners seaworthiness and also allows the master suite to take full advantage of the 25-foot beam.

The master suite is fit for royalty, with a centerline berth, a comfortable sitting area with a sofa, an expansive desk/vanity, and two oversized hanging lockers. His-and-hers heads are forward and also span the full beam, separated by an oversized shower and a whirlpool tub, all accented by the intricate Christensen marblework.

Marshall created a distinctive exterior look by using vertical windows and portholes, and all the guest areas benefit from these large windows that allow both a view and natural lighting.

A private stairwell near the saloon leads to a foyer on the lower deck, again notable for inlaid marble, that is fitted with a mini-pantry to serve guests. Aft are two mirrored VIP staterooms with queen berths facing inboard, with beautifully appointed en suite heads lined with marble that feature crystal vessel sinks and fixtures befitting a five-star hotel. Each of the guest cabins is individually decorated, with distinctive stonework, joinery, and color schemes.

Though the VIP staterooms back up to the engine room, exceptional attention to insulation combined with floating floors keeps the decibels to a whisper, measuring at the same level as a 165-foot Christensen megayacht.



The 120's saloon and dining area give guests the unmistakable feeling they're on a much larger yacht.

The main deck has an openness that makes her seem far larger than 120 feet, starting with a marble-lined entry through electrically operated curved sliding doors from the afterdeck. A seating area with couch and chairs faces a pop-up TV to starboard, and the entire saloon is lined with full-height windows that bring in light and offer good views.

The formal dining area is forward and, in a clever design touch, offset to port to create an unblocked passage fore and aft. The magnificent hand-crafted dining table seats 12 atop a marble sole for easy maintenance, and cabinets of black walnut and maple hide china, crystal, and silver behind frosted art deco doors. A sliding door in one corner allows seamless service from the galley just forward.

That galley was clearly designed by someone with either chef or restaurant experience, because it has been laid out intelligently for access to all appliances with the least steps. A granite counter divides the galley, putting the chef to one side with space for servers to prep without intruding. A Liebherr stainless steel fridge with drawers is backed up by a freestanding Liebherr freezer, and the chef has a 36-inch Dacor wall oven plus a five-burner Dacor cook-

top to handle any dining need. Other amenities include a stainless steel microwave, Asko dishwasher, and glass-front wine cooler.

The galley also includes a large dinette with table next to oversized portholes, creating an airy country galley for use by guests who want to participate in the cooking process. This is a touch aimed at North American owners or charter clients, rather than Europeans who prefer their galleys to be neither seen nor heard.

The skylounge on the upper deck has the feel of a private club, with burlled cabinetry, art deco frosted doors, and, like the saloon, full-height windows. A variety of needs are addressed by a wraparound couch, a midroom chaise, a hidden wet bar, and a game table for four. Rather than the usual pop-up version, the TV is concealed behind artwork on the after bulkhead. An oversized dayhead is just forward.

There's no shortage of alfresco seating on the 120, with dining tables on both the main and bridge afterdecks, each of which is protected by overhangs. Just forward of the pilothouse is another seating area that wraps around a table that would be pleasant when at anchor.

And, of course, the sundeck has another alfresco dining table as

well as room for several sun lounges, and the large whirlpool spa forward has built in sunpads on each side behind a low venturi windscreen. This still leaves ample space aft for a hidden davit and deck space large enough for several personal watercraft or water toys. Because the yacht was designed for an international audience, there is no helm on the top deck, since Europeans prefer privacy to work on their all-over tans.

The pilothouse is seemingly transplanted from a much larger yacht, with a wraparound dashboard holding five monitors, chart tables to port and starboard, and a pair of Stidd pedestal chairs behind the wheel. Just aft, a center island has a leather settee with table for guests to enjoy the operations and, tucked into the after bulkhead, is a compact ship's office. That settee-island isn't just for guest comfort, though: It allows full-sized flat chart stowage underneath. The captain has his own cabin just abaft the pilothouse, with a double berth and private head with shower.

The Ocean Alexander 120 is likely to have a very happy crew, too, since the crew's quarters for six are forward in three private double cabins, each with its own head with shower. The area also has a crew mess, mini-galley, dual stacked washers and dryers,

SELF SERVICE: RECORD SETTER

"The first thing that comes to mind, especially with a new boat, is documentation," says Capt. Mike Petty of the Ocean Alexander 120. "Document everything that goes wrong or that needs attention, no matter how big or small, so that you have records to look back on, and you'll see that things typically have trends." The trends that arise will begin to direct the boat's preventative maintenance plan. "You'll get timelines on the lifespan of equipment," Petty says. "It goes down to how fast the decks get dirty to how long a pump seal lasts. If you document everything, absolute trends arise." Depending on how complex your boat is, a computer program or notebook may suit the job best. "Section the boat off in areas—whether it's exterior, engine room, interior, wheelhouse—break it down to its smaller components," Petty says. "If it's a used boat and you're taking over, get as much information from the last owners as possible."

— Jason Y. Wood



Check out additional photos and scan this QR code to enjoy video of the incredible Ocean Alexander 120 @ www.pmymag.com.



The main-deck master stateroom offers beautiful wood accents and a huge berth with sitting area.



Bridge Level

Main Level

Lower Level

Better Boat: The ABCs of Classification

Owners moving from smaller yachts into those over roughly 80 feet will quickly learn a new alphabet: ABS, DNV, BV, LR, RINA, and more. These are organizations that set rules governing the construction, maintenance, and operation of yachts. Called "classification societies," there are 13 members of the International Association of Classification Societies (www.iacs.org.uk), but many do not classify yachts, instead governing everything from container ships to supertankers. Classification societies started more than 250 years ago when Lloyd's of London insurance underwriters set standards for the ships they insured, and the Lloyd's Register of Shipping (LR) is the original classification society. Each society has rules for the design, construction, maintenance, and operation of a vessel and, while classification is theoretically voluntary on the part of the owner, it is really a gun-to-the-head choice. A requirement to register a yacht in many flag-states is being classed to an approved society, and some insurers will not cover an unclassified yacht. Aside from ensuring the safety and seaworthiness of the yacht, one argument in favor of classification is that it lowers the cost of insurance. But the reality is that even a large savings is unlikely to offset the added cost of yacht classification.

Building "to class" is not inexpensive, since it often starts with plan approval, requires on-site surveyors to monitor the construction at certain stages, and then regular inspections after launching for the life of the yacht. Among the common classification societies for yachts are ABS (American Bureau of Shipping), BV (Bureau Veritas), DNV (Det Norske Veritas), LR (Lloyd's Register), NK (Nippon Kaiji), and RINA (Registro Italiano Navale). In the case of the Ocean Alexander 120, she was built to the prestigious American Bureau of Shipping classification, and carries the ABS +A1 Commercial Yacht Service-AMS designation. Deciphering this, the plus sign (a stand-in for the Maltese Cross) means the yacht and her machinery have been built and tested under ABS survey for unrestricted ocean service. The A1 covers the hull and equipment under the rules for vessels in commercial yacht service, which generally means charter use. When the class is spoken, it would be "Maltese A-1." The AMS indicates all machinery and systems onboard have met ABS standards and testing. For the collaboration between Ocean Alexander and Christensen Shipyards, the latter already had extensive experience building their megayachts to ABS class rules, just one more benefit.

and a hidden access door to the lower deck guest cabins to make service that much easier for the crew.

Along with considering the potential "charterability" of the Ocean Alexander 120, the designer and builders also made an effort to create a yacht that will be economical to operate. The power is provided by a pair of MTU 12V 2000 engines that have been detuned to about 1,450 horsepower each, which allows them 12,000 hours between overhauls, or twice the service hours of more powerful engines. This gives the 120 a transoceanic cruising speed of 11 to 12 knots but, because the engines have a continuous-duty rating, the yacht can run all day at 16 knots without concerns.

The engine room is one area where this is clearly a Christensen, and the piping, plumbing, and electrical systems obviously share

the same pedigree of much larger Christensen megayachts. Because the yacht is fitted with ABT/Arcturus digital stabilizers that have "at-rest" stabilization, the yacht was equipped with twin Caterpillar C4.4 generators of 76 kilowatts each. That's more power than would normally be needed, but it allows the yacht to run just one generator at night and still have all systems, including the at-rest stabilizers, on line.

The engine room's after bulkhead has a largish "dent," and this allows a garage in the stern that will hold a diesel tender up to 15 feet long on a railed launching system—hidden tenders seem to be a preference for European clients. When not in use, the garage becomes a teak-lined beach at water level.

It's hard to explore the Ocean Alexander 120 and not keep thinking, *This has to be larger than a 120-footer*. It's a tribute to everyone involved, builders and designer alike, that the airiness and space

create a feeling of opulence and privacy that is usually the province of much larger yachts.

With both Johnny Chueh of Ocean Alexander and Joe Foggia of Christensen pleased with this first collaboration, there are sure to be more. Like all Christensen hull molds, those for the OA 120 are adjustable and there are already plans for 135- and 155-footers, which could also use some of the superstructure tooling. This gives great flexibility, and allows the builder to restyle these yachts in the future.

The first Ocean Alexander 120 has proven to be exceptional enough to win awards and, though an extremely successful collaboration with Christensen, future yachts will remain under the Ocean Alexander nameplate.

Sorry, there's not likely to be a "Johnny and Joe" version. □

Ocean Alexander, 954-779-1905; www.oceanalexander.com