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STORY KIM KAVIN

OUTER REEF, AFTER MERGING WITH LYNX YACHTS IN THE NETHERLANDS, IS ALREADY IN PRODUCTION ON A STEEL-HULL ADVENTURE 780.

OUTER REEF

In September, Florida-based Outer Reef Yachts announced a strategic merger with the Dutch shipyard Lynx Yachts. One month later, news broke that Hull No. 1 of the Adventure 780 was already under construction. Launch is expected over the winter, with a possible U.S. debut at the 2025 Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show.

“We’ve been working on this for a long time,” says Jeff Drupek, president and CEO of Outer Reef Yachts.

Indeed. Drupek founded Outer Reef in 1996 and has been building fiberglass boats in Taiwan for more than 25 years. There’s currently a three-year wait for new builds, which is what started his search several years ago for another shipyard, to add capacity.

He looked around in Turkey, but wanted more consistency in manpower and the final product. He thinks of Holland as the pinnacle of yacht building, and followed a long-shot lead that there might be an opportunity with Lynx. Negotiations took about 10 months, and then the deal was announced, along with news that the Adventure 780 will be the first Outer Reef with a steel hull.

“Our product line is so varied—we have nine different models in our Classic line,” Drupek says. “It’s a lot of tooling, expensive tooling. In steel, there’s no investment in tooling. It’s re-engineering, but you have to do that anyway, and it’s just a new cutting file to cut your steel plates. You can react

Outer Reef tapped Bernd Weel, a Dutch naval architect, to design the 780 Adventure for a younger audience.



ADVENTURE 780

LOA: 78ft. 7in.

Beam: 22ft. 2in.

Draft: 6ft. 6in.

Displacement: 236,000 lbs.

Fuel: 3,962 gal.

Water: 1,050 gal.

Engines: 2x 425-hp Cummins QSB6.7

Contact: outerreefyachts.com



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Outer Reef President and CEO Jeff Druke says the Adventure 780 is for adventurous cruisers who want to drop the hook farther afield than the usual Bahamas anchorages.

HER STANDARD POWER PACKAGE DELIVERS AN ESTIMATED RANGE OF 3,000 NAUTICAL MILES AT 7 KNOTS.

much more quickly in steel.”

For instance, he’s already responding to a client who wants a 70 based on the 78. Outer Reef fans who aren’t familiar with steel hulls may take more time to come around, he says, but that’s why his sales staff was headed to Holland in November for a week of immersive education.

They’ll also be fielding plenty of questions about the 780 Adventure’s design, which, as Druke says, is “definitely a different look” for Outer Reef.

“Our typical client with our Classic series is traditional. They come out of Burgers and old Chris-Crafts that have really shippy lines, or they’re sailboaters who are used to Swans and Hinckleys,” he says. “But there is a bigger market for something that is a little more contemporary.”

Bernd Weel, a Dutch naval architect, designed the Adventure 780 to appeal to a younger demographic that wants exploration capabilities.

“These people are in their late 20s to late 40s and have a lot of expendable wealth and want to be in yachting,” Druke says. “They’re more adventurous than your average 60- or 70-year-old client that wants to do coastal cruising and drop an anchor in the Bahamas.”

They also have different ideas about what boating should be, he says: “They need to carry a lot of toys. They want to take their kids. They want to go far afield and bump icebergs and travel the fjords in Norway or cross the pond.”

One of the things Druke says he likes most about the Adventure 780 is its volume. Gross tonnage is about 140, which means it has 20 percent more interior volume than the 90-footer that Outer Reef builds.

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“It’s massive,” he says, adding that a wider beam helped, as did the tankage, which takes up less space because the steel hull supports it. “I was at the shipyard about a month ago, and they’re finishing the interior now, and the volume is just unbelievably huge.”

The hull design is fast-displacement, which gives owners the characteristics of a full-displacement boat for seakeeping, plus an 18-knot top hop with optional Cat C32s,

This page: Exterior views are a key component of the model’s interior design, giving everyone on board a connection to the outdoors at all times.



From top: Accommodations can be four staterooms plus two crew cabins forward—all en suite—or a full-beam master stateroom amidships with five staterooms below; The helm is outfitted for go-anywhere itineraries.

he says. Standard power is a pair of 425-hp Cummins diesels, which, the company says, delivers an estimated range of 3,000 nautical miles at 7 knots. Displacement speeds are 11 to 12 knots, returning a 1,450 nm range.

Steel also allows for flexibility in design, he adds. The foredeck can fit an 18-foot tender along with personal watercraft, or can have guest seating, or whatever else owners want. With fiberglass, tooling would have to be redone; with steel, if it can be welded, faired and painted, then it’s no problem.

“That’s one of the main characteristics of a metal boat,” he says. “It gives you the opportunity to make changes on the fly without

the expenses of building new molds.”

Accommodations can be four staterooms plus two crew cabins forward—all en suite—or a full-beam master stateroom amidships with five staterooms below. “There’s all kinds of flexibility,” he says.

Druek says he’s fielding about a half dozen leads for Hull No. 1 while he’s thinking about going significantly bigger with the next Outer Reef model out of Holland.

“I’ve had a 43-meter project on the books that’s fully engineered and designed for a year and a half now, but we didn’t have a shipyard to build it,” he says. “This shipyard in particular, can build it. We can build things that are larger—much larger.”