Life Force

If you yearn to cruise in style and comfort then it might be time to start specifying your new Outer Reef, because the long list of options will take lengthy consideration. John Ford would like to think he has already picked his bedspread colours.
J

issei is Japanese for life. After spending time on the Outer Reef 630 Long Range Motor Yacht of the same name, it could just as easily describe that satisfied exhalation after the first sip of a relaxing cocktail at the end of the day.

Relaxing on the deck of Isssei as the sun made its way west, it was easy to believe that all was well with the world. Such is the effect of the boat’s luxurious surroundings and, after all, if being on the water on a balmy winter’s day doesn’t result in a contented heart then what could?

Outer Reef claims its yachts are built for maximum cruising pleasure and long-range capability. From my time on board, I would attest to the first part and owners. Simon and Celagh Calliea, with their two young children, are about to check the second, with trips to Queensland and Tasmania planned in the near future.

Based on the experience of other Outer Reef owners they should have no worries. Outer Reef craft have cruised the Pacific and Atlantic oceans, so a voyage along our eastern seaboard should be a breeze. As added assurance, all the company’s craft are built to European standard Ocean Category A enabling ‘unrestricted navigation’ in open oceans to a wave height of six metres and sustained winds in excess of 40kts.

Outer Reef is an American company, with much of the design and administration team based in Florida overseeing a range of long-range yachts from 55 to 115ft. For the last 20 years, construction has taken place at the Tania Boatyard in Kaohsiung, the heart of Taiwan’s burgeoning boatbuilding precinct. Fulltime Outer Reef engineers and designers are on hand and the yard itself is ISO 9001 certified to ensure appropriate design and quality control mechanisms are in place.

MODERN CLASSIC
The all-white 630 blends a traditional trawler look with modern touches for a conservative, timeless appeal. The semi-displacement pilothouse cruiser has covered walk-around decks, Portuguese bridge, fully covered flybridge and a covered cockpit. In the bow a modest bridge leads to high timberlook sides with a black stripe following the sheerline aft and reflecting colour accents inside. Square port holes reflect the shape of the pilothouse and saloon windows framed by sturdy mullions that contribute to the boat’s serious seagoing nature.

Below the waterline the handlaid fibreglass employs a vinyl ester resin barrier for osmosis protection, while the hull has a patented Quiet Roll Spray Rail System to deflect spray and reduce hull slap underway. Rigid foam sandwich in the superstructure keeps weight down and helps keep it cool. Underneath the staid exterior a Ken Freivokh-inspired fitout steps away from conventional style into a modern classic’ blend of quality material and use of space. The England-based designer has brought a horizontal grid and long sightlines to the saloon for a spacious open plan interior that is both visually integrated and functional.

For Simon and Celagh, their journey to a 630 was a gradual progression in size through a Bayliner 26, a Riviera 38 and a Mariner 43 before having the desire and wherewithal to move into something even more substantial. Criteria leading to the choice of the Outer Reef included the boat’s structural integrity but also the amount of input they could control in customising the interior to their needs. Simon was effusive in his praise of the local agent Andrew Coffey who he said offered an unbelievable level of customer care during and after the build.

“Outer Reef craft have cruised the Pacific and Atlantic oceans, so a voyage along our eastern seaboard should be a breeze”
The Calleis’s options didn’t come without a price but they have a boat that is exquisitely finished and the personal touches give them a real sense of belonging. Options included selection of chelting materials, choices of galley appliances, a mega sound system throughout the boat and a complete redesign of the master stateroom. To increase range in anticipation of extended voyaging they also added as much fuel capacity as possible, ending up with 5,000lt in four tanks.

During the 12-month build the couple were invited to the Taiwan factory and were impressed with both the quality of craftsmanship and the way they were welcomed to be involved in decisions throughout the project.

As the camera boat backed up to the boarding platform of the Outer Reef I was impressed with the removable stainless steel stapler that facilitated an uneventful transfer. Winter wasn’t the right time to test them, but I imagine the hot shower and swivelling blade would be well used in summer.

Stay either side ascend to the cockpit and a central watertight door leads down to a utility room and a two-berth crew/guest cabin with head, and through to the engine room. A beige Sunbrella-clad lounge joins with an intricately inlaid teak and white ash table to make a great breakfast setting in the covered cockpit. Gates either side ease transfers from a wharf, and wing doors on the side decks can be closed to keep the breeze down when underway.

If breakfast extends into the late morning, a drawer under the lounge means there’s no need to go searching for a cold drink.

Sliding watertight doors open to the cockpit where the view goes on forever through to the raised pilothouse. Wide horizontal panels of satin teak are defined with dark wenge break lines to maximise the feeling of space and render a modern interpretation to this nautical material.

The white oak-coloured floor covering and cream Ultraleather lounge and ceiling give the room a light, airy ambiance aided by a flow of natural light through three windows on either side.

With a long U-shaped lounge and low table to one side and a narrow cabinet to the other there is plenty of room to entertain a dozen or so guests. Or the family could lounge in comfort while watching the 42in television that appears from its cabinet at the flick of the remote.

Three steps lead up to a U-shaped galley equipped with all the comforts needed for extended travel. Calleis must have done a deal with the LG factory for one of each of their kitchen products. The impressive array includes a convection microwave, oven with four induction hotplates, rangehood, garbage compactor, dishwasher and a 610lt French door fridge with freezer drawers down low.

Twin stainless steel sinks have teak covers and to augment already generous benchtops finished in a glossy, black granite with a satin so deep you’d swear you could swim in it.

LUXURIOUS ACCOMMODATION
A bespoke stainless steel and leather handrail guided me down a spiral stairway to the lower deck where a hallway opened onto the master amidships and two guest cabins forward. There’s a Bosch washer and dryer in the wide hallway as well as a handy place to store clean bedding in a large linen cupboard.

To port is a twin-cabin and forward is a double where the queen bed has steps each side to assist the climb onto the high mattress. No need to skimp on the luggage – there’s plenty of storage in hanging cupboards.

ABOVE: Luxurious helm has the best navigational aids, practical handrails and great visibility.

ABOVE RIGHT: Beautifully-appointed and open salon; the pick of the staterooms is the spacious rear double, with exquisite furnishings and via large windows.

BELOW RIGHT: Practical layout that falls easily to hand and once cleaned, the boat offers plenty of space and entertaining features.

Sea Trials

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*See trial data supplied by author. Fuel-burn figures are combined for both engines.

They have a boat that is exquisitely finished and the personal touches give them a real sense of belonging.”
under-bed drawers and long shelves along the hull. Each cabin has its own sound system and television and they share a well-equipped en suite with monster shower, Tecna head and black granite vanity.

If anything represents the quality and refinement of Jinsel it’s the master stateroom. Stretching the full width of the hull it offers a roomy relaxing space away from the rest of the boat. With the island queen bed central there is unhindered space for a lounge on one side and a vanity on the other.

Black leather weave feature panels offset the horizontal teak and wenge walls, while cream carpet and ceiling reflect natural light from ports either side. There are two walk-in wardrobes, the rear one opening to the engineers room and the second leading to added storage under the stairway.

This elegant theme is continued in the en suite with parchment wallpaper, black tiled floor and black granite vanity. There’s even a black granite seat in the giant shower and with 1100lt of fresh water and a 2833lt/h PML watermaker below lingering here won’t be a problem.

Forward of the galley is a walkway through to the pilot house where the skipper has the best of everything at his fingertips. Set on a sculptured platform, the black leather Sitid couches match the wrap around matt black dash and overhead console.

Twin Furuno TZ16 screens display information from the sounder, GPS, 40-mile digital radar or FLIR night-time camera, while two digital readouts provide data from the twin Caterpillar C9 engines. Ancillary equipment includes ABB-TRAC automatic stabilisers, Furuno autopilot, front and rear thrusters, and hydraulic winches for the twin anchors.

With its expansive views forward the pilothouse will find favour with crew when travelling and they can be treated to a wide lounge and table – but in a way I’m surprised there is no second helm chair to keep the skipper company.

A stairway on the starboard deck leads to the covered flybridge and boat deck. Skippers have the option of driving from this outside helm and its controls and screens are a mirror image of the lower station, although with a white Sitid chair and dash.

Behind the bridge the boat deck has a wet bar, Seaster barbecue and an expansive area for entertaining, although the 4.2m Williams tender would need to be lowered on the davit to take full advantage of the space. A ladder leads to the flybridge roof where the radar arch has been cunningly configured to fold so the boat can head home under Sydney Harbour’s Spit Bridge without having to wait for an opening time.

Entry to the engineers from either the boarding platform or the owner’s cabin gives the option of giving tradersmen access without having to come into the main living quarters. Twin CAT C9 engines rated at 500hp each have ample room for servicing and are surrounded by stainless steel safety rails.

ON THE WATER
Our time on the 630 included a short romp past Sydney Heads and into a slow rolling swell, just unsettling enough to have the stabilisers working when side-on to the sea. We motored along at a cruising speed of 8kts and 1600rpm, burning 41lt/h from both engines. Plant the throttles and top speed is just over 13kts, but the fuel burn goes to 190lt/h.

Underway the Outer Reef is smooth and very quiet with only a faint rumble from the underwater exhausts and no hint of vibration through the hull – rest the champagne flute on the table and it’s still going to be there after the barbecue is cooked.

This Outer Reef is designed for the owner to take control of the helm and head off towards that sky-blue horizon.

Thrusters make unlocking possible, the electronics will guide your way and there’s fuel to get you to where you want to be. What’s keeping you?

Maybe the price.

All this luxury and technology doesn’t come cheap, and with a price around $2.5m it’s for those fortunate ones ready to take on a new adventure. The enduring quality and selling ability of the Outer Reef will enable them to enjoy places the rest of us only dream of.