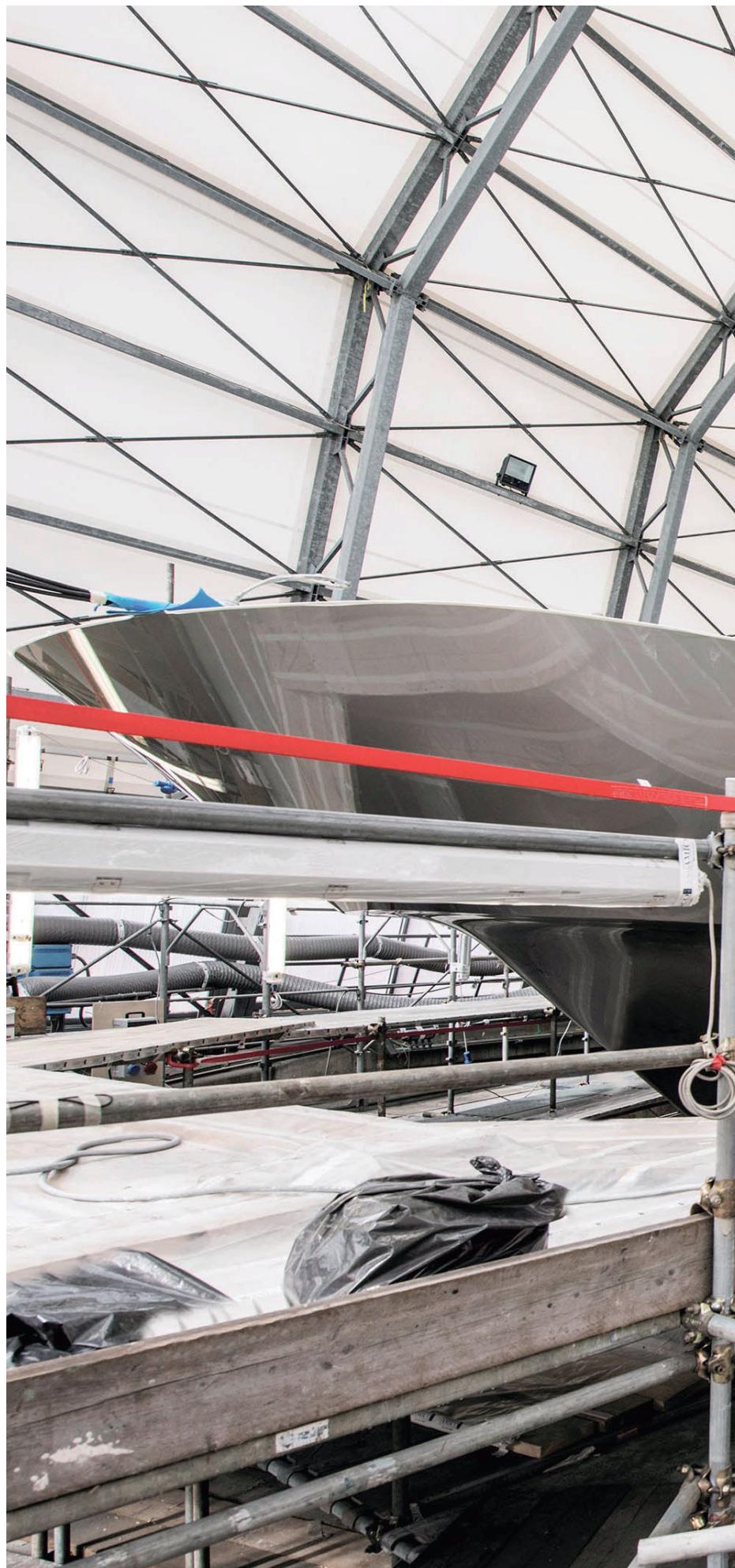


Yards ahead

Refit is big business and there are more yards popping up or transitioning from traditional commercial work into the superyacht arena. But, what is it that makes one shipyard stand out? Why should one be better for your yacht than another? **Captain Michael Howorth** investigates facilities and considers what crew need to think of when choosing and entering a yard

At some point in their career, unless of course it is a very short one, all superyacht crews will visit a shipyard. They will do so either in charge or as part of a team overseeing a refit or repair project. So, it makes sense that crews take an active interest in what makes a shipyard work for them when it comes to choosing one to work on a yacht. Yacht owners like to be involved in the way their yachts are run. Many take an active interest in the way it looks and how it is crewed, but very few owners get involved in the refit or repair process themselves.

Of course, most yacht owners have involvement at the beginning and the end of a project. At the start, they set out a list of changes they want made and then, at the end, they inspect the finished work and pay the final invoice. It is a fact though, that the grunty bit in the middle of the project, is crew led. So, while it is true that as in all things to do with the yacht, it is the owner who is the boss or as shipyards would call him; the customer or client, the fact is it is the project manager who is the one the shipyard has to satisfy.





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NCA Refit offers exceptional infrastructure and services to all superyachts crossing the Mediterranean. Thanks to constant and significant evolution, NCA Refit is considered one of the most important high-level and prestigious shipyards in the Mediterranean area. The yard counts 100,000sqm operative space, 1,320sqm subcontractors' production workshop, 11 warehouses, 200m private dry dock (the biggest in the Mediterranean and the only able to allocate even 200m yachts), 2,000m docks, floating dock for yachts up to 100mt with a maximum capacity of 3,300 tons, private heliport and in-house upholstery and steel workshop. An exclusive concierge service is also reserved for crew members to make their stay at the shipyard enjoyable out of working hours.

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the sole purpose of refitting and repairing superyachts, KRM Shipyards specialise in servicing superyachts in the 30 to 40 metre range but is capable of handling craft up to 50 metres. The main facility of the KRM shipyard is located in Tuzla, just 15 minute drive from the international airport and allows for quick and easy access for crew and owners alike.

As a facility it is part of a large marina with shopping malls, entertainment places, cinemas and a luxury hotel all located within walking distance. With secondary service points in Gocek, Antalya, Bodrum and Yalova, the company offers a Turkey wide support service to local craft and visiting foreign flagged superyachts.

Shipyards with a good reputation often acknowledge that history has played a major role in their modern day success servicing superyachts

Some modern day facilities are not even shipyards in the true sense of the word. They are instead clusters of nautical excellence and Bordeaux Superyacht Refit in the north west of France is a prime example. Developing refit and maintenance activity among superyachts along the Atlantic seaboard is the main mission for Bordeaux Superyachts Refit, an association of local shipyards, marine equipment manufacturers and companies. The nautical cluster provides and promotes on-site hosting of contractors, in order to position Bordeaux and the Nouvelle Aquitaine Region as a superyacht stopover, refit and maintenance destination for superyachts.

A 10 million euro investment has been made available for the development of the refitting and yacht repair activities and this includes the recent renovation of the drydock known as Bassins à Flot ship repair hub and is just part of the many major strategic projects being spearheaded by the Atlantic Port of Bordeaux. The local authority realises that encouraging and supporting this initiative will be a boost for local income and geographically, the

location is perfect for yachts crossing to the Americas or those just looking for a trusted alternative to the southern French yards.

Perhaps one of the newest entrants into the market is the 300t Origins shipyard, a dedicated refit facility for superyachts in the 30 to 50 metre range. Created by MB92 La Ciotat shipyard, the facility, as the name suggests, is dedicated to maintaining and refitting yachts up to 300 tonnes. The facilities include 14 spaces on the hard, 4 of which are fitted with keel pits, as well as a 50 metre paint cabin.

Ben Mennem, President of MB92 La Ciotat explained this new venture: "The 30-50 metre segment is our historic area of expertise and requires a different approach. In order to cater for this smaller, yet just as discerning size range, we decided to create a dedicated facility that is able to provide our clients with a 'boutique' experience to maintain and refit their yachts. As such, I am very happy to appoint one of our longest serving team members, Philippe Escousse, who is a seasoned skipper and