

ON BOARD

ADELE

Exceptional beauty

The longest modern classic produced by Hoek finally leaves the Vitters yard, after a five-year wait, to show her splendour and the effectiveness of a concept originally drawn up almost ten years ago.

The passion for beautiful boats shown by the owner of Adèle is only matched by his evident delight in taking them to sea and exploration. To demonstrate the first it is enough to remember that the comfort and habitability of this ketch could easily have been achieved in a yacht of modern design 30, or even 50, feet shorter, although such would inevitably lack the elegant silhouette of the Adèle's sheer and her rakes. Because the truth of the matter is that, without this elegance, the owner, who had to wait almost six years for his dream to become reality, would not even have wanted her, and Adèle would never have been built. Thus she was built with those extra fifty feet, complicating her entry to port, increasing maintenance costs and the work required of her crew, all for the sake of an aesthetic ideal.

As for the second, her owner's passion for the sea, this is still better demonstrated by the months that immediately followed the delivery of Adèle by the Vitters shipyard, a cruise in Arctic waters, with more than 5,000 miles of ocean navigation, involving various parties of guests to share Adèle's polar explorations, a definitive test for both the skills of her crew and the effectiveness of this newly commissioned yacht.

Throughout this demanding schedule she managed to demonstrate not just the effectiveness of the Dutch shipyards design but also the seriousness of the engineering provided by André Hoek and his team for whom this yacht, we must remember, represents the largest project they have embarked on to date.

Ample decks

Her length means that a number of elements, which usually have to be left out in the design of modern yachts are natural attributes for Adèle. One of these is her ketch rigging, essential to her looks when seen from a distance; as well as her precise rake at the stern, the carbon profiles, equipped with Park Avenue booms providing the desired aesthetic finish to complement the sheer of her deck, while also having the virtue of distributing her surface of canvas and helping with the manoeuvring of the sails, in a yacht of this size is on the verge of being problematic, and at the same time decreasing the size of the mainmast, which means that Adèle can pass through the Panama Canal. Another of Adèle's exclusive characteristics consists of her three deckhouses, distributed along the length of the deck and which, when added to the two cockpits, plus the recess, where the main tender is stored, located just forward of the mainmast, define the form of her deck, while still leaving an uncluttered extent for the use and enjoyment of those aboard. Finally, we must also make special mention of the second cockpit at the stern, built onto the aft



deckhouse and providing a private area for her master, corresponding to a much meditated wish, that it was only possible to fulfil by passing from the 130 feet of his last yacht to the present 180 feet.

Aft of the main deckhouse, on the widest and most comfortable part of the deck, there is a large cockpit mainly set aside for relaxation, where varnished teak benches frame an authentic monument to comfort and classical sea-going carpentry. Her monumental coamings are open at the sides, to allow for entry at deck level, while along both sides of the deckhouse itself two more benches are provided, offering excellent sea views when sailing. A fixed awning adds a final touch to her silhouette, adding a final horizontal counterpoint to the stylised lines of her hull and her elegant deckhouses.

Direct rudder, captive winches

Another aspect of Adèle that transcends the norm is her direct rudder transmission, without the aid of a servo, prescribed by André Hoek and her owner in view of the latter's desire to feel her every response in his fingertips. To this end Edson developed a two-speed wheel mechanism that would, in light winds, allow an extremely direct relationship with good feedback, while adding a lower gear that, on the other hand, will help to domesticate the great force registered by the rudder when Adèle, sailing before a strong breeze, starts to reach speeds of around 16 knots or more.

The tackle chosen for this design demands some serious work by the crew, who have to struggle with a mainsail of enormous proportions. In winds of over 50 knots, or so her skipper has informed us, she has been brought to heel and performed in a most satisfactory

manner. In fact her booms, with their classical reefs, have been specifically designed for bad weather sailing, where furling mechanisms fail to provide full reliability.

The command posts, located aft of the main quarter deck, allow the helmsman a complete view while remaining in contact with his companions. With the captive winch controls within easy reach, and also just a short distance from the navigation screen and external winches, for the spinnaker sheets and backstays, the helmsman can control and converse at the same time. Although, of course, he will also need the help of at least four people for any manoeuvre.

The reduced beam hull, with profiles designed through the use of a test channel, have provided the expected results, allowing Adèle to sail above wind speed in breezes of 9 knots or more, establishing 11 or 12 knots when the wind speed is above this level. At 15 knots her mainsail will have to be reefed and, of course, with winds of over 20 knots she would usually be sailed with only a half-set foresail and mizzen sail at over 11.

Hoek's neoclassical aesthetics have provided a brilliant resolution to the many deck elements: mushroom cowls and ventilator coamings in bright metal, elegant, elliptical deck lights, partners with backlashes, crew's hatch, with room being found for tool chests or anchor windlasses that do not spoil or interrupt the harmony of her lines. There are 15 hidden captive winches, for use in the most usual manoeuvres, while the drums for the backstays and spinnaker sheets, due to their enormous polished diameter, form a notable part of the deck's landscape. There are over two dozen large covers distributed around the deck and disguised in the teak planking, providing access to captive chests, storage space for