

A photograph of a 31-metre carbon fibre sailing yacht at dusk. The yacht's boom is prominent in the upper half of the frame, featuring a large red logo and the word 'NOI' in red. Below the boom, the deck is visible, showing a dining table set for a meal with plates, glasses, and lit candles. The yacht's cabin is illuminated from within, and the background shows a calm sea and a darkening sky.

NOI

THIS SMART AND SLEEK 31 METRE
CARBON FIBRE SAILING YACHT
SEES NAUTA YACHT DESIGN AND
PERINI NAVI BRANCHING INTO
PRODUCTIVE NEW TERRITORY

X NOI



The stylish mark of Nauta Yacht Design is renowned among sailing fans. For more than 30 years we have been used to its sleek lines, its modern classic profiles, always easily recognisable from afar. Through these three decades, from the old Nauta 54 and Nauta 70, it has refined its language of composition.

In recent times the creativity of Nauta's two Milanese architects, Mario Pedol and Massimo Gino, has been in demand on ever larger superyachts, including the recently unveiled 180 metre Project Azzam, under construction at Lürssen and destined to be the largest yacht in the world. But these grand exercises, however complex, affect neither their passion for pure sailing yachts nor their skill in designing thoroughbreds.

The *Xnoi* story (in Italian 'X', the multiplication sign, is pronounced 'per', so 'Xnoi' is shorthand for 'per noi', meaning 'for us') began years ago when Nauta sold the owner a pre-owned Nauta 70. His satisfaction with the

boat was the beginning of a friendly relationship with Nauta's partners, and four years ago he asked Pedol and Gino for a larger boat. The three of them discussed and defined a yacht whose high performance soul should be held behind lines of timeless elegance.

Nauta also completed the naval architecture (underwater lines, sail plan and appendages), beside their usual undertakings: general design, the deck plan, the interior layout and décor.

'This process involved repeated and progressive testing,' says Pedol, 'and eventually resulted in a performance hull, with an excellent displacement:LWL ratio. We managed furthermore to keep the VCG (vertical centre of gravity) very low, mostly thanks to the 'T' torpedo keel geometry. The two aspects constitute the base for *Xnoi's* outstanding performance.'

To keep the displacement light, Nauta chose to use the most advanced carbon, pre-preg, vacuum dry lamination for



hull, superstructure and mast construction. Nauta's experience with carbon construction dates back many years and several hulls. It has designed Southern Wind's entire range of carbon performance cruisers; and with Cookson of New Zealand it built the latest *My Song*, a 26 metre racer/cruiser, which employs a clever system that lets you remove parts of the interior for racing. With Italian firm Indiana Yachting Nauta was also responsible for the 22 metre *Kirribilli* for renowned architect Renzo Piano, and refitted *Capricorno* (ex *Morning Glory*), a very fast 25 metre full racer, for another client.

Back in the early 1990s Pedol, in a sabbatical year from his own office, managed a yard in Venice called CCYD. Here, using an imported team of New Zealanders with specialised knowledge of working with carbon fibre, he built the WOR 60 *Winston* for Dennis Conner, who went on to finish third in the 1993 Whitbread Round the World Race. Working alongside the New Zealanders on *Winston* was CCYD's Italian team, managed by Lorenzo Puccini. As fate would have it, Puccini would go on to become CEO of Indiana Yachting, one of Italy's few boat builders with the knowledge of working in carbon.

Years later, with these relationships in place, Pedol, Gino and the owner could begin *Xnoi's* pre-preg lamination at Indiana; the builder's carbon fibre experience and equipment (including a post-cure oven

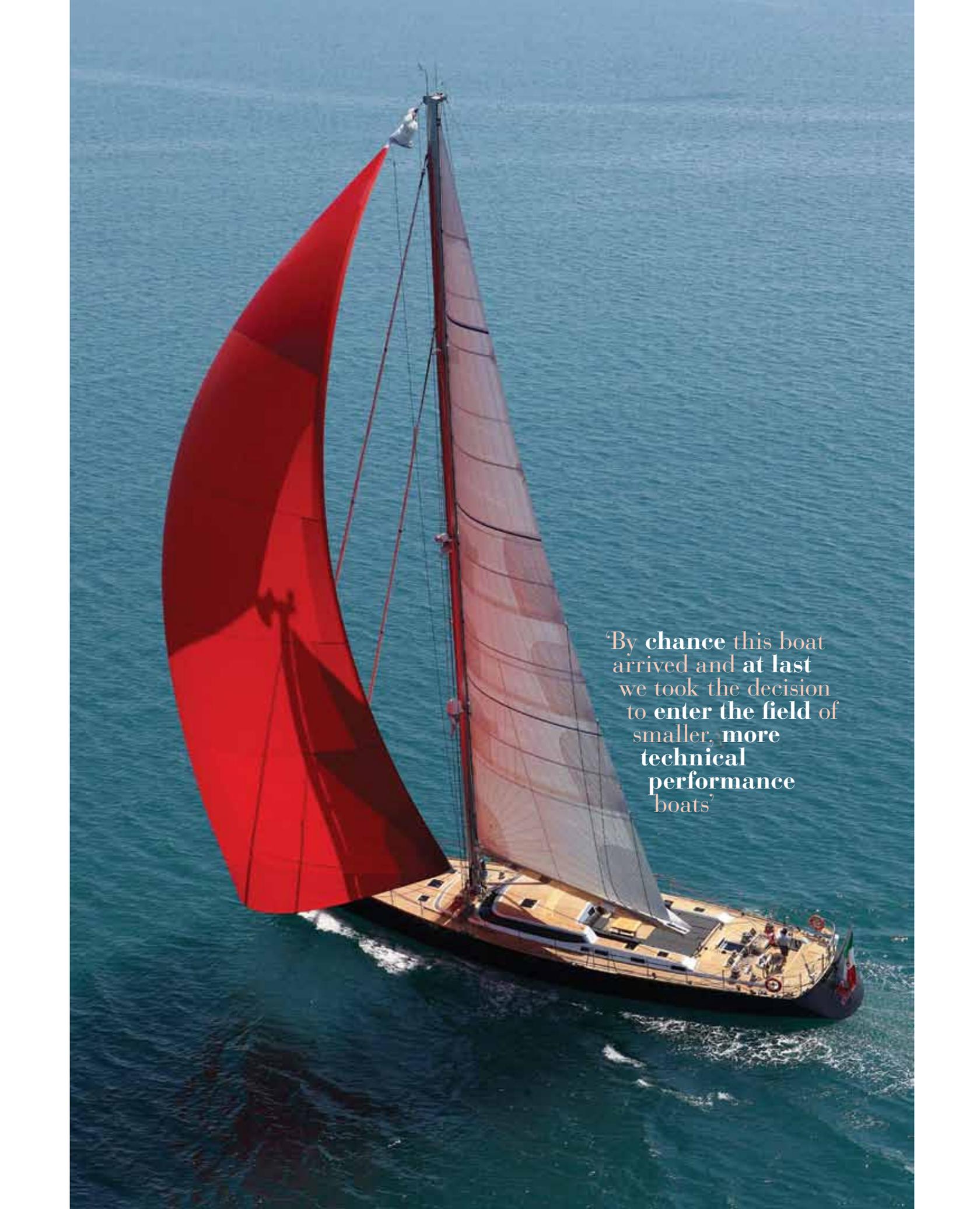
that can handle pieces up to 30 metres long) guaranteed a reliable construction.

Once Indiana had gone as far as it could in the process, the owner asked his friend Fabio Perini of Perini Navi to complete the boat. The Perini team relocated her to its La Spezia yard, where the Vitruvius motor yachts are built under the brand name Picchiotti. The yard director Vanni Marchini is a very good sailor and all-round sailing enthusiast, and in 2008 the yard built the pure, Briand-designed sailing yacht *P2* – a 38 metre aluminium sloop all rigged in PBO, which has collected top results in international races.

'More than once we have received a request to build a carbon fibre hull,' says Giancarlo Ragnetti, Perini Navi's managing director, 'but we didn't feel prepared, and moreover our core business is the 50-plus metre blue water megasailer. Then by chance this boat (*Xnoi*) arrived and at last we took the decision to enter the field of smaller, more technical performance boats. It's a tiny, but very interesting niche where we want to use our skill. *Xnoi* has Perini Navi's usual style, performance and high standards of construction, but this boat is unbranded so as not to mix up "genders" (only boats designed in-house are given the Perini Navi brand).

'The yard can now work on carbon hulls as well as metal hulls. We are open to other designers' projects as a custom

The use of carbon fibre in construction, even at the helms, contrasts pleasantly with the more traditional teak decking. All the deck fittings bar the winches are titanium

An aerial photograph of a sailboat with a large red sail and a white sail, sailing on a blue sea. The boat is viewed from a high angle, showing its deck and the surrounding water. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

‘By **chance** this boat arrived and **at last** we took the decision to **enter the field** of smaller, **more technical performance** boats’



Inside, one can feel the **light**, the surrounding **panorama** and a **permeating** sense of **well-being**



boatyard, as a builder for third parties and as an outfitter. We have already been using carbon fibre spars in cooperation with Future Fibres of Valencia, and our competence on the material is widening; after *Xnoi*, we feel ready for this market.'

I join *Xnoi* on a warm mid-summer Saturday, moored in the Flavio Gioia marina in Gaeta, an historic fortified harbour 40 miles north of Naples. *Xnoi's* captain Marco Castelli welcomes me at her gangway, proud to show his boat. I immediately appreciate the two helm stations – with carbon wheels – and the two consoles hosting the compasses, a couple of repeaters, the engine controls, a plotter to port and to starboard the VHF, both placed close to the centre line for easier use from both sides.

The modern reinterpretation of the binnacle, from a design point of view, is really effective. Just forward is the entrance to the crew quarters, through a very flat, tiny companionway, bracketed on the sides by the powerful main sheet winch and a smaller traveller winch. Four more winches, two primary for the genoa and gennaker sheets and two smaller for the inner jib sheets, complete the sailing cockpit, which is very much concentrated around the helm stations. All the sheets are kept inside the sailing cockpit, giving a deck free from clutter.

The guest area is gorgeous. A wide square sunbathing area with raised coamings precedes the guest cockpit, which also acts as open dining and conversation area. The companionway is slightly displaced starboard for two reasons: outside it creates a nice corner for a seating area; inside it gives more space to the dining area on the port side. The transom is fitted with a foldable platform, creating a beach with swim ladder. In front, the familiar Nauta deckhouse ends at the mast base, leaving the fore triangle perfectly flush and clean. Just four winches around the mast base control the relevant halyards and running rigging.

All deck fittings except the winches are titanium, a logical and technological combination with carbon. The stanchions are higher than usual, due to *Xnoi's* Rina Charter Class classification, but the matt-finished titanium seems somehow less imposing. The material matches the silver and dark grey metallic paint and the pink-shaded teak, blending the classic and contemporary sides of this yacht's personality. Both companionways are protected in heavier weather by large spray hoods, which in fine weather are hidden under recesses in the teak deck.

Entering the sliding, stainless steel, watertight door of the main guest companionway, you meet another Nauta classic: the raised saloon. With windows throughout, in the two sitting areas – dining to port and a coffee-conversation area on the starboard side – you feel the light, the surrounding panorama and a permeating sense of well-being. Further forward and down four steps is a living and conversation area on port side, with a recessed TV, and on starboard a study with a long desk.

Adjacent is the owner's apartment, with a king-sized master suite to port and a twin berth just forward. A door closes off the whole area to give the owner privacy. Two twin guest cabins are located aft of the saloon and even

further aft are the crew quarters with two Pullman cabins, a spectacular galley and a very well organised navigation and control area.

The Perini/Picchiotti hand is visible in the high quality finishing all over the boat. Around the skylights, for example, the Alcantara fabric of the deckhead is stitched with shaded thread to make a sharper corner and to give guests the impression of a completed work. The well-organised engine room is another Perini/Picchiotti minor masterpiece, and leaves plenty of room for crew doing maintenance.

At last the mainsail rises on the carbon boom, the genoa is unfurled and *Xnoi* close-hauls to a light wind, building her speed close to that of the wind. 'Up to 18 knots we keep full main; over that we take in one reef, just to lighten the rudder and not heel too much,' says Captain Castelli. 'The comfortable cruising speed is 13 to 14 knots, depending on the wave size. Reaching, the boat is always very fast, and with well-shaped waves it's easy to touch 18 knots.' The light displacement of *Xnoi* allows exciting acceleration and fast cruising in most conditions, with a long-range cruising speed under power of 10 knots.

Xnoi is yet another beautiful Nauta Yacht Design project, and an opportunity for Perini/Picchiotti to enter a rich niche market. She also offers sailing enthusiasts an opportunity to enjoy that performance soul wrapped in a timeless skin, as *Xnoi* is available for charter. Fair winds aye!



Xnoi's interior offers light, airy spaces to gather, cook or navigate (opposite). The large twin cabin to port (right) is one of two amidships

XNOI Picchiotti

LOA 30.65m
LWL 25.4m
Beam 7.2m
Draught 4m
Displacement 72 tonnes
Gross tonnage 82GT
Engine
 Cummins 305hp

Speed under power (max/cruise)
 10/9.5 knots
Range at 9.5 knots
 930nm
Bowthruster
 Max Power 32hp
Generators
 1 x 25kW Northern Light;

1 x 12kW Northern Light
Fuel capacity
 4,700 litres
Freshwater capacity
 2,730 litres
Sails
 North Sails 3DL
Total sail area 420m²

Furlers, jib and staysail
 Reckmann
Tender
 BSC 430 Yamaha 40hp
Construction Carbon fibre
Classification
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The large sunbathing area forward of the helm is an ideal place for guests to gather

The fore triangle is free of clutter, with just four winches around the mast base

The signature nauta raised saloon offers two seating areas and plenty of windows for light. Forward is a TV room and a study area

The owner's suite to port contains a king-size bed

