



Nahema is an elegant sailing cat with interiors by Franck Darnet, a designer whose philosophy is 'space is luxury'.

Beyond the current orders H2X has a range of wind powered monohulls currently in development — the neo-classic *Alliance* will be available in sizes of up to 27m (90ft); the speed cruiser *Evoë* has been designed by Berret Racoupeau and will be built from 25m-40m (80ft-130ft); and the *Fusion* — also planned to range from 80ft-130ft — will be a Course Croisière intended for both private and charter use and built using H2X's Cellwood technique.

**YI's first superyacht launches: the Yapluka 85DD (top) and a plan of the Blubay 92.**

## Yachts Industries

Normandy's Yachts Industries was founded in 1999 and specialises in supersize catamarans in response to what founder and CEO Jean-François Bourdin identified as a gap in the market when he set about looking for his dream yacht — an aluminium catamaran he wanted to use for circumnavigation with his wife and children.

Strong interest in his new cat led Bourdin to launch an operation in La Rochelle in western France. In 2004 YI relocated to Mondeville, near Caen, Normandy. There the yacht builder has a 6,000m<sup>2</sup> (64,580ft<sup>2</sup>) yard, which employs 55 people and oversees every stage in the production of its two lines of 20m-plus (65ft) catamarans — Yapluka Yachts and Blubay Yachts, the latter added to the portfolio in May 2006 when YI bought the marque.

Available from 20m-40m (65ft-130ft), YI's aluminium-made Yaplukas are for family cruising with vast living areas inside and out. From 26m (85ft) up, each Yapluka model boasts a double deck with the master cabin in front of the salon, offering superb sea views via a panoramic windscreen.

YI's Blubay range, on the other hand, is built for

speed. Available in either aluminium or carbonfibre, Blubay hulls have been designed for a combination of performance and comfort that YI says is perfect for people who want to mix sporting fun with comfort.

Yapluka models available are the 65 (20m), 75 (23m), 85 (26m), 85DD, 100DD (30m), 115DD (35m) and 130DD (40m), while the Blubay line features the 75, 95 (30m), 105 (32m), 122 (37m), 142 (43m) and 162 (49m). YI also has the capabilities to work on special products exceeding the 49m (162ft) of its largest model.

"We put the stress very much on customisation," says Bourdin, "all our yachts are manufactured on the basis of our customers' inspirations and expectations, whether they are in terms of technology or aesthetics."

Water toys, special riggings and helicopter platforms are just some of the requests that YI designers have to consider when developing boats of between 37m-40m (120ft-130ft) long. But even before these projects come to fruition, YI still promises some interesting developments for 2008, including its first superyacht launches since 2006's purchase of Blubay.

A Blubay 92 (28m) hit the water in February this year. With a 13m (43ft) beam and features including a hydraulic swimming platform and a four-seater Jacuzzi, the vessel is set to live up to the YI brand trademark of spacious luxury. Two 315hp diesels back up a 35m (115ft) mast and 230m<sup>2</sup> (2,475ft<sup>2</sup>) mainsail on the MCA-certified LY2 vessel.

YI is set to launch yet another Blubay in summer 2008. Slightly longer than its predecessor at 29m (95ft), this aluminium-structured sailing cat was based on the 92 model, but with longer transoms. The interior will be contemporary, with dark tinted oak and elm chosen for the cabins to contrast with the light and vivid elements to be found elsewhere on the boat. This Blubay 95 will be exhibited at 2008's Cannes and Monaco shows.

Due for delivery in March 2009 is YI's third superyacht and first double-deck release — a 26m (85ft) Yapluka. The main aspect of this sailing cat is the vast owner suite complete with private terrace. Other features include direct access from the master cabin into the hulls, where a dressing room and bathroom/spa area can be situated.

YI has also added portholes just above the waterline, for more light in the cabins. The yacht will also be equipped with a hydraulic tender lift and gangway.

In addition to the claim of being the sole company in the world to produce only very large catamarans, YI says that by launching the two Blubays in 2008 it will become the first firm in the industry to deliver two cats of such a size in the same year — not bad for a firm who made its superyacht debut just last year. As demand for its larger models continues to grow, YI has expanded its range conceptually to build yachts of up to 49m (162ft). Green appeal could be the secret to the yard's success — YI reports that clients' concerns for the environment are key in choosing their large wind-powered cats. □