

Life under sail

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CELEBRATING THE SAILING LIFESTYLE

**"SAILING THIS YACHT IS
LIKE LIVING A DREAM":
ON BOARD WITH THE
OWNERS OF RIBELLE**

**DISCOVER THE SECRETS
OF CIRCUMNAVIGATION**

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HIGH SEAS: WHY
ROYALS LOVE TO SAIL**

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



BOAT



Our design for life

IN PLANNING THEIR 12TH YACHT, *RIBELLE*, SEA LOVERS PAOLA AND SALVATORE TRIFIRO' KNEW WHAT THEY WANTED – DOWN TO THE FINEST DETAIL

Words – Clare Mahon Photography – Jeff Brown/Breed Media





sail to some beautiful spot then run off their boat to go to some noisy restaurant. The real enjoyment is getting away from it all and enjoying a meal in a quiet bay under the stars. That’s living like kings.” In fact, she prefers only to go ashore to shop for fresh local fish and ingredients.

“We were looking for a slim, competitive, light boat, capable of competing very well and comfortable for cruising”

Paola worked closely with McKeon and Rémi Tessier, who has now done the interiors of two Trifirò yachts. “Taste is taste, but if you want the boat of your dreams, you have to have clear ideas,” she says. “You can’t just let your architect do what he or she wants to do. You must insist on having what you prefer because real luxury is not a brand, it’s being surrounded by all the things you love.”

What Paola loves is cooking, so designing the galley was very important. “There are three sources of energy that drive a sailing boat,” she says. “One is the wind, another is the engine. The third is food.

“Even on our first boat, where we had one pot, one plate and one glass, I would always make a hot meal. I insisted on real tableware



The 32.6m Ribelle is more responsive than the Trifiròs’ previous 50m Zefira

Paola Trifirò does everything with love, passion and joy. You get the sense she wakes up smiling, barely able to contain her enthusiasm for a new day.

“I live in Milan,” she says, “and we also have homes in Paris, Portofino and Cap d’Antibes. And there’s also *Ribelle*, of course, my home in motion. I live a life of privilege and I have many splendid things, but I remember to always ask myself why I have this lovely life.”

In her Milan apartment she lives surrounded by light, colour and the contrast that comes with living in an ultra-modern apartment in a 17th century building. Contrast with her busy everyday life is one of her favourite things about time spent aboard *Ribelle*, a 32.6 metre Malcolm McKeon design built by the Dutch yard Vitters

in carbon composite. “*Ribelle* offers the privilege of living in silence and nature, surrounded by the best of the things I love,” she says. “Boats are dreams; sailing this boat is living a dream.”

Paola’s husband, Salvatore, introduced her to sailing and they have owned more than a dozen boats, sailing the world. “Every stage of our lives has had a boat in it, and in recent years we started building our own,” says Paola. The Trifiròs began with a seven metre Calife Jouët and moved all the way up to the 50 metre *Zefira* before they decided to go smaller. “And slimmer and faster,” adds Paola.

At this point Salvatore joins the conversation. “Years ago we had a 32 metre Jongert with a steel hull and I decided to race against other yachts like it. We came in first and I thought this is pretty fun,” he says with a twinkle in his blue eyes. “Then we participated in another regatta against lighter and faster yachts and came in

last.” The face that he pulls at this point says it all. “I have spent a lifetime at the top, from school all the way through my professional life as a lawyer. The only yacht that represents me is one that can come first. Maybe I do my best and don’t win, but at least if I lose, I did my duty and tried not to.” The Trifiròs have since become fixtures on the regatta circuit, and if occasionally Salvatore isn’t first across the finish line, he’s always number one on the floor at the owners’ dinner-dance.

While being competitive is important for Salvatore – the yacht won her class at the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup in her first season – being generous is equally important to Paola. In *Ribelle* they have found the yacht that lets both of them shine. “For me, the privilege of being aboard *Ribelle* is the silence,” says Paola. “I really don’t understand why people would



A down-draft vent in the Elica induction hob allows a window in the galley. Under-counter features include Sub-Zero fridge and freezer drawers

and real food because these are the things that give me satisfaction.

“People say I’m a fantastic cook,” she says, laughing and shaking her flaming red hair. “That may or may not be true, but for sure it’s my art and a passion that I have followed throughout my life. I want to tell the world that even a fast boat like *Ribelle* can have a gourmet soul. All of my kitchen machines stay on board, even during regattas,” she says with emphasis. “Well, maybe not all of them.” She smiles. “The meat slicer stays on the dock.”

When Paola proposed an island in the galley, even McKeon wasn’t sure it could be done. “I told him I knew what I was doing and I designed it. And I want to tell anyone who is building a custom yacht: don’t ask; know what you want and explain it. Express your will. In my case it was my galley, I knew what I wanted there. *Ribelle* is my style, my life and my special place for living well.” Of course, *Ribelle*’s Singaporean-born chef benefits from the insistence on a great galley as well.

When downsizing from their previous 50 metre, what did Paola leave behind? “Nothing really,” she answers. “Sure, we had some art from *Zefira* that we don’t have on *Ribelle*, but this yacht is a work of art unto itself.”

Knowing what you want can sometimes be a touchy subject when it comes to guests, but Paola has a solution for that, too. “We are 🍷



“For me, the privilege of being aboard *Ribelle* is the silence. A meal in a quiet bay under the stars: that’s living like kings”



Clockwise from top: the galley; Paola Trifirò aboard *Ribelle*; the dining area with teak chairs, Society Limonata porcelain and Sambonet cutlery

PAOLA’S ONBOARD ESSENTIALS

Ribelle’s galley is designed around kitchen machines that include a blast chiller for proper food conservation and an instant water boiler for a quick plate of pasta.

Paola spotted *Ribelle*’s induction cooker with a built-in down-draft exhaust vent at a recent Salone del Mobile. “Since I don’t have an overhead hood, I can have a proper window in the galley,” she says.

She is possessive of her personal knife set and especially proud of her cup-warmer drawer. “I was talking with the owner of a large explorer yacht and mentioned my cup-warmer. He said, ‘Let’s trade boats, I’ll sail and you can motor around Polynesia.’ Everyone looked at us in amazement, but he said, ‘I could entrust much more than my yacht to a woman who is attentive enough to have a cup-warmer drawer!’”

“When we eat on deck at the tables under the boom, I use simple place mats and Puiforcat dishes with a nautical theme,” she says. “For eating inside, I get a bit more elaborate. I have beautiful linen tablecloths and ultra-thin dishes by Society Limonta and I use napkin rings from my collection. I set out black and blue candles and use stones or something from outdoors as a centrepiece to remind us to be modest and see nature. The copper in *Ribelle*’s saloon gleams like gold at night and reflects the stars that shine through the glass.”



“A boat is a place for getting your energy back and enjoying yourself. Surround yourself with what you truly love”

both lawyers, but we don't invite business contacts, only friends who are happy to live the boating life we enjoy. Over the years we have eliminated the ones who want to run ashore to see and be seen. We have a core group of four or five couples who really share our love for living aboard. Or maybe they don't," she jokes. "I can never really be sure if they come for the boat or for the food, because at breakfast they are already asking me what we'll have for lunch."

What does Paola pack for a yachting trip? "I live comfortably. One thing that drives me crazy are those tiny drawers only a couple of inches high that so many people do on yachts. I told Rémi to make our drawers look small with fake fronts, but be large inside. That way I can keep my T-shirts in one, my ballerina flats in another. Oh, and my shawls in another – I have some beautiful shawls."

So, good friends, good food, a T-shirt and you're off?

"Yes, because a boat is a place for getting your energy back, for enjoying yourself. You have to think about what you bring aboard and chose only the things that you love the best. Bring things that make you feel good. Life is so short, we really have to enjoy the small big joys that are sun, fresh air, wind and good food. Surround yourself with what you truly love because you have to be hospitable, even towards yourself." ■

PAOLA'S TIPS FOR BUILDING A BOAT

- You must first have clear ideas. Even the best designers can't reach a perfect result without clear indications of the spirit and the goal in the owners' hearts
- To totally enjoy nature and to relax, you must have as much natural light as possible in the interior
- Dare to have what you really want. You can't let the shipyard tell you that something can't be done
- If you plan your spaces well and only bring things that you truly love aboard, you'll live very well
- You'll only be living your dream if your style comes out on your boat
- Pay attention to the layout. Only an owner can know personal habits and necessities. Some things can't be changed later without destroying the boat