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Setting new standards

Ocean spoke to former hotelier and race car driver Rod Salmon onboard M/Y *Oneworld* about bringing a superior level of charter experience to Australia.

Ocean Magazine (OM): Why did you select Gulf Craft to build *Oneworld*?

Rod Salmon (RS): We weren't in a hurry, and had been watching the brokerage market. We travelled to the Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show where we looked at a Palmer Johnson and even placed a deposit on the yacht. It was a great yacht, around 40 metres, but when we started looking at the costs of not only updating the interior to our taste, but putting her in the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) survey, it became apparent that building would be just as cost effective.

We were introduced to Gulf Craft and they impressed us with their clear growth plans and dedication to building quality yachts. We felt we were going to get more from a smaller, new build with Gulf Craft than spending the same money retrofitting a larger yacht.

OM: Why did you want the yacht built to AMSA survey?

RS: My wife and I are still heavily involved in our business and professional lives. Yes, we wanted a yacht, but at the same time we saw an opportunity to utilise the asset in the Australian charter market. We wanted to undertake day charters on Sydney Harbour for up to 80 guests and have the opportunity to seat up to 50 guests for dinner, so we needed the yacht in an AMSA class.

Although we ordered *Oneworld* before Gulf Craft delivered *Ghost II*, we decided to wait for the new model, Majesty 100. We were encouraged by the yard's work with *Ghost II* and AMSA, but the clincher was the yard agreed to have the contract state *Oneworld* was to be built to AMSA standards.

OM: You are now looking at an 140-foot yacht with Gulf Craft, why?

RS: It's all about the tender! Although I firmly believe we have managed to incorporate more into this yacht than if we had retrofitted a larger yacht, we need a bigger tender – and for that we need a bigger yacht.

Also, we are still active in business and will be Australia-centric for the next two to three years. For that, *Oneworld* will suit us and the Australian charter market perfectly. Then we have plans to cruise much further afield – the Mediterranean, even. For that, we will need a bigger boat, and the 140 impressed us. But again, we are not in a rush, and don't intend on taking delivery of the next yacht until 2020.

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OM: Why did you choose to place *Oneworld* into RINA and Cayman Island LY3 survey as well?

RS: It wasn't so much a choice; Gulf Craft builds to RINA. The LY3 is not that different to AMSA and is well recognised worldwide; it made sense to do it.





OM: What would you say to another owner about building to AMSA specifications?

RS: It had its challenges, but in the end it was worth it. Aside from adding value to the yacht when we eventually go to sell, it was a great deal easier to build a new yacht to AMSA than a refit a brokerage yacht.

OM: Which areas of Australia are you particularly keen to cruise?

RS: Obviously, the Great Barrier Reef and the Whitsundays Islands. *Oneworld* will spend two to three months there around September this year. Tasmania is pencilled in the calendar for January 2019. Then we will start exploring the South Pacific, starting with Fiji.

OM: What takes priority – charter or personal use?

RS: Definitely charter first. The family will fit in around charter. We are still working very hard and see *Oneworld* as a business asset to be maximised. We specifically employed the crew for their global yachting experience and as a team, we have developed a plan and key performance indicators for the yacht.

OM: Why was it important for the crew to have Mediterranean experience?

RS: Service is key to repeat business. We wanted to differentiate ourselves in the Australian market and offer services that

Left: A spacious foredeck entertaining space allows guests to relax while taking in spectacular views. It's positioned so as not to interfere with crew functions at the bow.

Above: The first of the Majesty line to feature a sky-lounge, the 100 can host 80 guests at a time, and seat 50 for exclusive dinner functions.

Below: Kylie and Rod Salmon intend to make *Oneworld* the benchmark for charters on the Australian east coast.

keep people coming back. There is a level of service expectation in Europe that we want to replicate here, and you can't do that without the people who have delivered it before.

OM: What will you bring from your professional life to *Oneworld*?

RS: Our hospitality experience. We understand the expectations of the market and we know how to deliver it. The crew share a similar ethos to my wife and I, and they appreciate our efforts in delivering that service. If we need to invest in people or equipment to deliver the right service, then we will.

OM: The yacht has made quite a splash since launching onto the market. What is the importance of marketing to a successful charter yacht?

RS: We are looking to replicate standard practice in Europe, so we brought out photographers and videographers from France. They know exactly how to present the yacht.

We are also keen to get involved in all the events. We launched the yacht at the Australian Superyacht Rendezvous, and will attend the Sanctuary Cove and Sydney boat shows. We want the market to know we are here.

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