



*right*  
The guest cockpit and aft seating area are comfortable yet functional for sailing. The deck is uncluttered with gear concentrated in specific areas.

*below*  
Almagores II sails off Southern Wind Shipyard's home base of Cape Town, South Africa.



# Almagores II

SOUTHERN WIND'S NEWEST MODEL SWAYED A LONG-TIME MOTOR YACHT OWNER TO RETURN TO SAIL.

TEXT BY CLARE MAHON PHOTOGRAPHY BY PETER SCHREIBER

*It was a clear, sunny day in Portofino*, one of the most beautiful towns on Italy's Ligurian coast, when I boarded Southern Wind Shipyard's first 102 DS, *Almagores II*, for a test sail. Geographically speaking, this stretch of Italian coastline is a far cry from the extreme and stunning vistas of Table Mountain in Cape Town, South Africa, where the new Southern Wind 102 DS series was born.

Yet the builder has strong ties to Italy. Willy Persico, the charismatic engineer who founded the company 21 years ago, is a Neapolitan who lives in Genoa where Pegaso, the yard's marketing representative, is based. Recently, after thinking about where the market could be heading and the gaps in current commercial offerings, Persico made the decision to invest in new projects, a brave move given the economic climate—but a move that was bold, not brash, and which led to the creation of the SW 102.

With the success of the SW 100 series, a semi-custom line that has seen 13 yachts built and launched since 2006, it might seem self-defeating to plan a new series that is just a few feet longer. But many things change in six years and Persico saw the opportunity to make big

improvements in interior volumes with a more innovative hull shape. He went ahead and started building the first 102's carbon fiber and Kevlar sandwich hull on spec.

Both the SW 100 and the SW 102 are Nauta Yacht Design and Farr Yacht Design collaborations. Farr, the naval architects who will design the new VOR 65s, are particularly adept at adapting innovations from the grand prix racing circuit to the cruising environment. Nauta Yacht Design has been collaborating with Southern Wind for years on general arrangement plans and interiors.

With this in mind, it's only natural to compare the SW 102 to the 100. At first glance, the easy sweep of the hull lines seems similar; the differences are less in the looks and more in the numbers. As Jim Schmicker, Farr's vice president and senior naval architect, says, "The SW 102 in general is much more like Southern Wind's current flagship, the SW 110 that was launched in late 2009, than the SW 100. The lines are much straighter both longitudinally and in section and the stem has much less slope. The stern is significantly wider and closer to the water with respect to transom immersion when the boat is both upright and





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A low-key interior is highlighted by satin-finished teak and linen-clad furnishings. Every available space for storage has been exploited. The master (below) is located aft in the beamiest section.



propriety he must get admiring the numbers on the instruments and the expanse of teak spreading out in front of him must not be bad either.

The yacht's capacity to accommodate and adapt to all aspects of life at sea is evident in the guest cockpit, a safe, well-protected lap of luxury that still offered easy access to the main companionway. An intermediate sunbathing area separates the guest cockpit from the helms station. The major part of maneuvering gear is concentrated in a clean, well-distributed space, and before long everyone aboard had found a comfortable space to sit and chat. Movement fore to aft was mostly on a level through passages that are wide enough to be comfortable, but not so much so as to be dangerous in heavy seas. Foot chocks are removable so they don't become stumbling blocks.

The wide transom opens to create a beach platform that also provides access to the tender garage. And there is still room remaining for lateral lazarettes big enough for all kinds of sailing and sports gear.

Adaptability and functionality are also a constant in the interior where the planning and use of space are a tribute to Nauta Yacht Design and Southern Wind's longstanding collaboration. "We plan systems and furnishings together so that we can put even the tiniest of spaces to their best use," says Andrea Micheli, Pegaso's commercial manager. In the main salon the dining table opens on pistons to reveal a split personality; it doubles as a large, shallow teak box that can be used for charts and maps or even table settings. The table on the starboard side also folds out and converts so it can be used as a low coffee table, an extra dining table or a card table. These, along with curved glass windows that let in extra light and views from the guest cockpit, are just some of the touches that make this cool, low-key interior that revolves around satin teak and natural linen go from good to great.

In a departure from Southern Wind's usual layout that places the crew aft, *Almagores II* has an owner's cabin with separate his and hers bathrooms aft. "I think that a major factor in the owners deciding to go back to sailing yachts after years of motor boats has to do with the spaces that you can get on sailing yachts these days. Things have changed from the days when performance only came with discomfort," says Captain Donati. A closet-lined corridor leads to two twin en suite cabins, one with a retractable bunk berth. As the owner enjoys plotting the route, the nav station is in a buffer area between the main salon and the galley and a VIP cabin is just starboard of it. Access to the crew area, which includes two twin en suites, is through the galley. The crew companionway leads down from the foredeck.

Southern Wind has made a real effort to keep sturdiness and reliability high and displacement low. This was particularly evident in the engine room. A 305-hp Cummings engine is mounted at the center, flanked by twin Onan generators for central, balanced and logical weight placement. Watermakers and boilers are low and symmetrical and a system where water can be transferred quickly from port to starboard tanks provides extra righting movement when necessary.

Throughout the yacht, a symbol made of three rings bound together at the base kept catching my eye: It was on the transom, the winches, even on the drain of the bathtub. The crew said it was part of the owner's family crest, but then a memory clicked in my mind; it is the image of the system that physicists use when three particles are bound and balanced. And balance bound with elegance and performance are the words that sum up this yacht. [SB](#) ENHANCED DIGITAL CONTENT ON THE IPAD APP

heeled. Since the 100 was actually an extended ninety-eight-footer, the 102, which is actually a bit over one hundred and three feet, is five feet longer in all the associated parameters and also in the general "feel."

The beam is carried almost unchanged from its maximum point amidships to the stern and this spaciousness, almost 20 percent more than the SW 100, is immediately apparent upon boarding. The beamy transom also makes for good downwind performance and easy cruising and has allowed for significantly larger volumes aft.

*Almagores II*'s owner competed extensively in the early '80s under International Offshore Rule with his previous *Almagores*, a Doug Peterson design and the first Italian yacht to win an Admiral's Cup (1981). He transmitted his passion for the sport to his sons then switched to motor yachts before returning to sail with this build.

While Portofino will be her homeport, the posh backdrop does not mean that *Almagores II* was built for sitting pretty. She has already proved her mettle with a month-long maiden voyage that involved

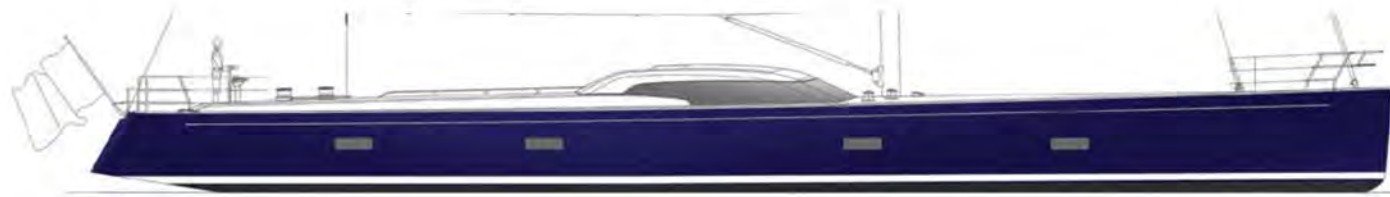
changing hemispheres, a junket that all Southern Wind yachts are subjected to just as a shakedown. One of the owner's sons came along for the crossing and never missed a watch. Since arriving in the Med, the owner and his wife and guests have been aboard constantly, cruising Corsica and Sardinia while only spending three nights at port. They are now debating an Atlantic crossing and a winter of Caribbean cruising. This is a yacht that knows how to reconcile the soft life with serious sailing.

While capable of taking on all kinds of conditions, *Almagores II* was designed to perform well in light winds and those are just the conditions we encountered. We headed out of Portofino and rounded the tip of the bay to southwesterly winds at about nine knots and very light seas. The boat performed constantly at or just above wind speed and was a real joy to helm. "When the owner is aboard, I can't tear him away," says Captain Francesco Donati. With a boat this easy and light to the touch, that's easy to understand. And the sense of power and

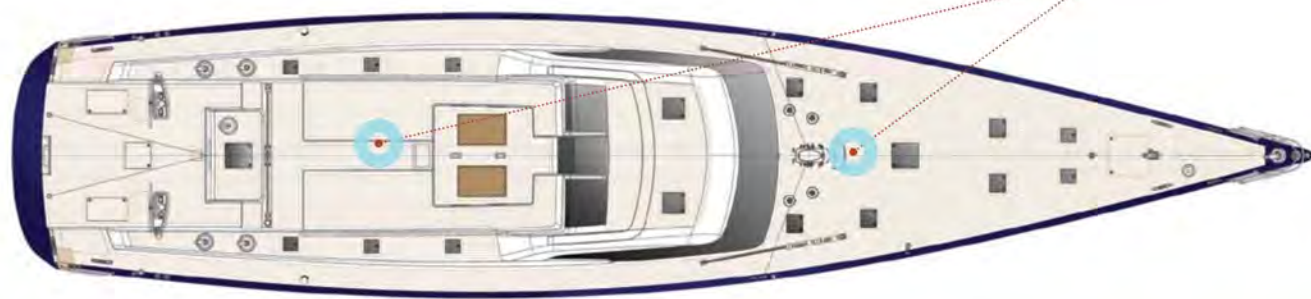
The space offered on today's sailing yachts can woo owners back to sail. "Things have changed from when performance only came with discomfort." – CAPTAIN FRANCESCO DONATI







**RIG:** The Bermudan rig allows for a clean deck and ample room for sunpads and a large sitting area for guests separate from the helms.



**OWNER'S SUITE:** Moving the master aft, rather than the yard's usual placement forward, gives the owner more stability and space.

**CONSTRUCTION:** The interior was constructed of a honeycomb sandwich structure with teak veneers to save on weight.



**GARAGE:** The transom opens to facilitate bathing and access the garage that houses a 12-foot tender with a crane for launching.

**CREW ACCESS:** The crew quarters can be accessed from either the foredeck or through the galley.

**Specifications:**

**BUILDER:**  
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**LOA:** 103' 1" (31.4m)  
**LWL:** 90' 11" (27.7m)  
**BEAM:** 22' 8" (6.9m)  
**DRAFT:** 13' 1" (4m)  
**DISPLACEMENT (LIGHTSHIP):** 64.5 tons  
**RIG:** Bermudan sloop  
**MAST AND BOOM:** Southern Spars  
**SAIL AREA:** 5,134 square feet  
**SAILMAKER:** Quantum Sails SA

**FURLING SYSTEMS:** Bamar  
**WINCHES:** Harken  
**POWER:** 1 x 305-hp Cummins QSB 5.9 MCD  
**FUEL CAPACITY:** 1,506 U.S. gallons  
**THRUSTERS:** Max Power R450 and R300  
**GENERATORS:** 2 x 19kW Onan  
**FRESHWATER CAPACITY:** 634 U.S. gallons

**GRAY/BLACK WATER CAPACITY:** 230/230 U.S. gallons  
**OWNERS AND GUESTS/CREW:** 8/5  
**TENDER:** 12' Genius tender  
**CONSTRUCTION:** Carbon fiber, Kevlar  
**CLASSIFICATION:** RINA Pleasure Class Certificate, C Hull MCA, Y  
**NAVAL ARCHITECTURE:** Farr Yacht Design  
**EXTERIOR STYLING/INTERIOR DESIGN:** Nauta Yacht Design

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