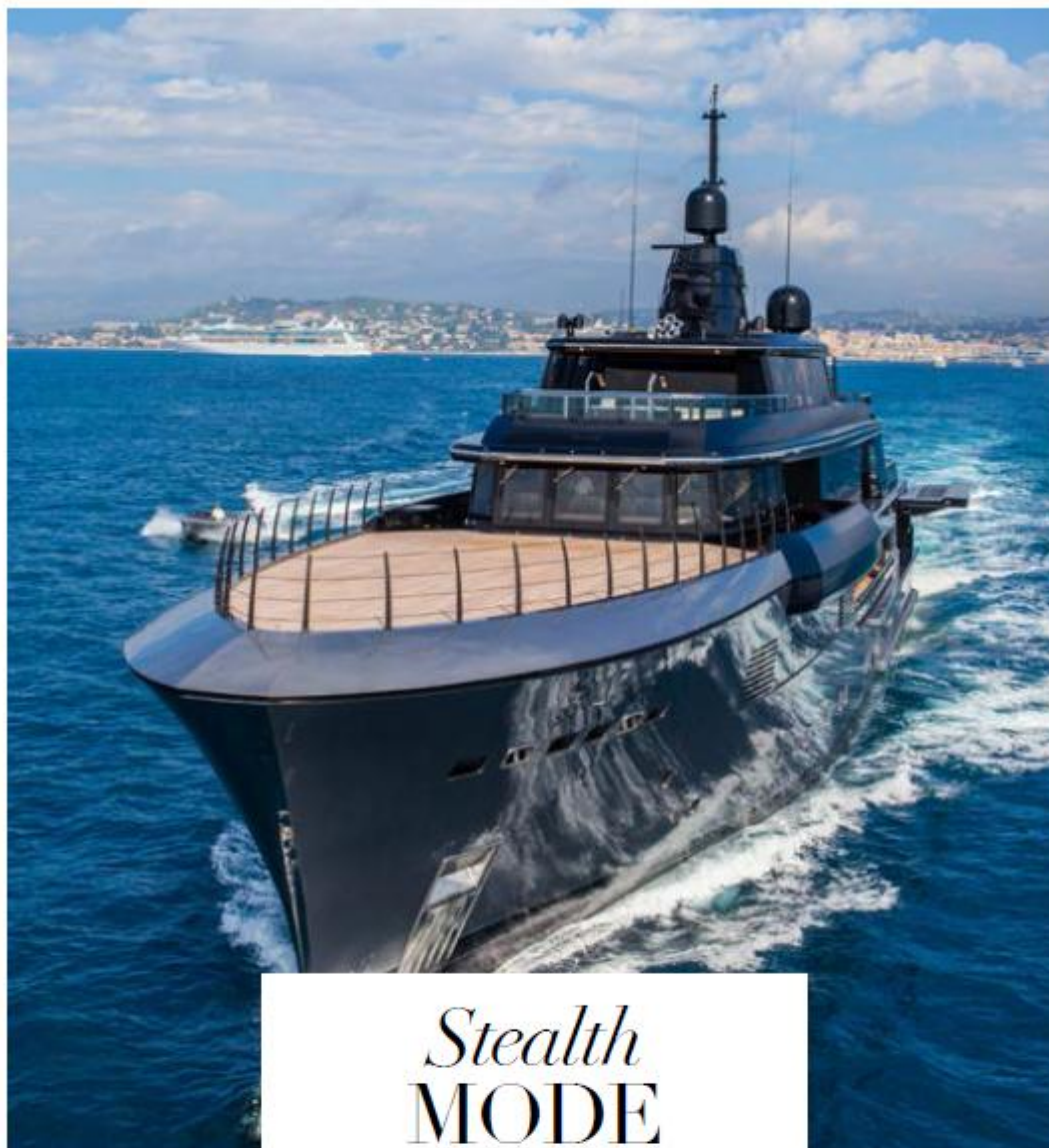


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Stealth MODE

It might look like a military ship, but the Atlante is a floating palace, complete with stylish oak and marble interiors – and Turkish baths

DESIGNING YOUR OWN superyacht is the stuff of dreams – but rather like buying a Picasso at auction or dropping eight-figure sums on Cartier jewellery once owned by Elizabeth Taylor, you're far more likely to read about it than do it. Out there on the water at the moment are roughly 5,000 superyachts, making the global yacht-owning population no bigger than a small market town.

One of the most recent to take to the

water is Atlante. It was designed and built by the world-renowned Italian shipbuilder CRN, took 30 months and 320,000 man hours to build, launched last May, and is owned by – well, who knows. Superyacht owners can be a secretive bunch.

What we do know about Atlante's owner is that they are into military history and four-wheel-drive German cars.

'Every client asks for different things,' says Lamberto Tacoli, CRN's chief

executive. 'I remember my amazement when the owner told us he had in mind the military-inspired icon of the automotive world, the Mercedes G-Class, and initially I was quite perplexed. CRN has always been a pioneer in innovative design solutions, but this time, as the project took shape, it was immediately clear to us that Atlante had a uniqueness we had never experienced before.'

The 55-metre yacht was unveiled at

The Pick

last year's Monaco Yacht Show. Inside, it's dominated by strong, masculine lines and rich, polished oak panelling, a la the old-school gentleman's clubs of London and New York. But it's intimate too, with soft, open spaces with sea views for formal entertaining that are reminiscent of suites at the St. Regis resort in Bali.

The 520m² (5,500ft²) of interior space set across four decks takes in a home theatre, a pool and Turkish baths. There are custom furnishings designed by Gilles & Boissier, and acres and acres of marble – the owner's staff personally selected each piece of the 20 tonnes of the boat's marble from Carrara and Verona.

Atlante's military inspiration is more evident from the outside. The superstructure is jet black, with a grey metallic hull, giving it its stealth look. Very covert ops. There are two nine-metre custom tenders by Nuvolari Lenard, and space at the bow to accommodate touch-and-go helicopters up to three tonnes.

Its final trick is that it's quiet, too, thanks to state-of-the-art insulation and damping treatments that make it eerily silent and vibration free when cruising. And for the record, it has a 120,000-litre tank that can cover a transatlantic crossing with a cruising speed of 14 knots.

Which just leaves one question. The cost of Atlante has never been confirmed, but rumour has it you'd need \$50m to build your own. Stuff of dreams...

www.crn-yacht.com

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