



LOA 36.6m

Gross tonnage 334

Builder Moonen

Brigadoon

Dutch yard Moonen returns to form with a beautiful showcase and a beloved cruiser for her London-based designer owner

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Photography Jeff Brown/Breed Media



Brigadoon is the first boat on Moonen Yacht's semi-custom 36m high-tensile steel Martinique hull

platform, and combines proven performance and seakeeping ability with a 16.5 knot top speed

Mike Fisher knew what he wanted in his next boat:

**“A classic, something that was not over-designed,
nor too show-offy.”**

“We wanted slightly more of a gentleman’s yacht, rather than flash. And we wanted more space and the ability to go farther.” There were a few other boxes to tick: steel hull, around 35 metres, already in build, comfortable and quiet. He tasked his captain, Benjamin Landuyt, with the job of finding it.

Two years later, Fisher was still waiting. Landuyt had almost given up hope when, he says, “I sort-of just stumbled upon this yacht.” The boat he had spotted was a Martinique model from Moonen Yachts. The 36.3 metre hull had been started on spec and had recently come out of a period of stasis, much like Moonen itself.

The builder, known for its elegant, high-quality steel superyachts, endured a period of suspension in 2015 when its relatively new parent company, AHMSA, Mexico’s largest steel manufacturer, ran into difficulties. Moonen had three yachts in build at the time – a 29.9 metre Matica model and two 36.3 metre Martiniques – and work on all three slowed to a standstill. When trading conditions improved for AHMSA in 2016, Moonen was recapitalised and the focus was placed on getting the Matica finished; it was delivered in 2017 as *Bijoux*. Attention could then turn to the first Martinique hull (the second was in very early steel-cutting stages), which, being a bigger, more demanding project, needed a buyer. Landuyt says: “From what I could see, it looked like this was the boat we had been looking for.” A visit to the Moonen facility confirmed it.

The boat made an attractive proposition: solid Moonen bones, Diana Yacht Design and René van der Velden naval architecture and styling, and an almost complete Nauta Design interior. The next step was selling it to Fisher – which wasn’t too hard. “We were pretty impressed from the start,” he remembers. “Although it was above our original price bracket, the boat exemplified Dutch build quality. We realised instantly that it ticked all of our boxes and had some welcome surprises, too.”

Fisher, it should be pointed out, is the owner and founder of London-based design company Studio Indigo, which was responsible for the interior design of the 70 metre Feadship *Joy* (a World Superyacht Award winner in 2017), so it was key that the Martinique offered him and his team an interior canvas they could adapt and tailor. It helped that the spec yacht had originally been designed with a large family in mind, says Luca Pedol from Nauta, so it wasn’t “over-designed”.

“We wanted to personalise it, basically. We wanted to finish it off,” says Fisher. “Nauta’s restrained, teak-finished interior was well-considered, disciplined and very architectural. Every detail had been thought through and its understated style provided the perfect backdrop [for] our own aesthetic stamp.”

The changes Fisher desired to make would require more yard time – but he still wanted the yacht ready for the 2018 Mediterranean cruising season, giving his team at the studio a limited window to design the loose furniture and supply all the fabrics, lighting and carpets. Externally, he asked Moonen Yachts to fabricate an aluminium hardtop to replace the soft bimini on the sundeck for more external shade and for the spa pool to be removed entirely. “We’ve got an ocean – what did we need a Jacuzzi for?” he quips.

The personalising started in the main saloon, says Fleur Liversidge, senior associate at Studio Indigo. “We wanted the interior to be comfortable and practical. We avoided anything that felt contrived or unnecessarily precious.” This was especially important because Fisher always travels with his two American cocker spaniels, Lucy and Farah.

“The dogs bounce around all over the place and they do sit on the sofas, so it’s got to be a pretty robust interior,” he says. “But one that won’t date. It’s not trying to be pretentious, it’s just cool and easy.”

The flow of the main deck is fairly conventional, with a saloon and dining area leading into a master cabin forward and a galley to port, but the way these individual spaces are arranged is a little different.



Large volume and semi-displacement speed were two of the owner’s requirements. With four

exterior areas to socialise or relax, the yacht lives larger than her modest length would indicate





Handmade details

The master suite on board *Brigadoon* features a hand-woven leather headboard, created by the US company Lance Woven Leather. The tartan effect was chosen as a reference to the fictional Scottish village Brigadoon, which featured in the 1947 musical of the same name and starred Gene Kelly.

The colour combination and the scale was created in collaboration with Studio Indigo. Lance Woven Leather had worked with Studio Indigo previously on several residential projects, via their partner in London the Yarn Collective.

"Our specialty is to interpret, in leather, looks that are usually done as fabrics," says Anne Arnold, creator/proprietor of Lance Woven Leather. "You are familiar with the look, but leather creates a surprise, and it smells much better than wool or cotton."

Every panel is custommade, handwoven to a specific size, using the same grade of Italian calf skin that would be employed to create fine handbags, rather than ordinary cowhide.

"We do not use looms," says Arnold. "It takes almost four square feet of leather and four hours of work for each square foot of woven [leather]."

To create depth and interest, each strip is also hand-dyed in order to achieve different nuances in the same colour. Inspired by Wabi Sabi, the traditional Japanese aesthetic of beauty that is "imperfect, impermanent, and incomplete", Lance Woven Leather's hand weaving is also purposely imperfect.

"We can create intentional minor 'imperfections' that add to the texture and communicate a unique and handmade quality, but still within the precise parameters required by this type of installations," says Arnold.



Impressed with design and the quality of finish, World Superyacht Awards judges singled out Brigadoon as

best yacht in the category of Planing or Semi-displacement Motor Yachts 33-39.9 metres





The upper saloon furniture reflects the indoor/outdoor hybrid vibe, with loose furniture pieces from the Linley for Summit Collection and a tactile external carpet from Tim Page emphasising the informality



The galley, for instance, is oversized for a boat of this length, and as much attention has been made to the finish as in a guest space. "Food is our hobby," says Fisher. "Cooking is an essential pastime on the boat. Everyone is expected to join in – including the guests and crew."

In the forward main deck master, the bed is facing aft, instead of forward as you might expect, but views were limited forward anyway by the high superstructure and the steps that link the Portuguese bridge with the foredeck. However, the superstructure steps down port and starboard to let in plenty of light and scenes of the surroundings. It is something that has been changed in the layout for the second hull, which Studio Indigo has laid out and designed in collaboration with Moonen Yachts.

To avoid teak panelling becoming too monotonous on the four-cabin lower deck, pale horsehair sections have been introduced on the walls – one of the major interior changes Fisher and team were able to make in the three-month window – and art from Fisher's collection, mostly from a house recently sold in South Africa, animates the bulkheads. The stand-out feature of all of the cabins is a contemporary woven leather tartan-effect headboard in the master made by American firm Lance Woven Leather, which plays with the Scottish provenance of the yacht's name.

The original budget for the interior, anticipated by Moonen, was £80,000; in the end, Fisher and team spent £465,000. "But what we felt was, a boat of this quality had to have the kind of quality interior you'd find in an €80 million [£70 million] house, so it had to be stepped up. We had to break up the wood and we also had to try and give the cabins a bit more character." To aid this effort, lamps by Charles Paris were introduced, as were gunmetal and nickel touches throughout.

The aggressive delivery schedule was met, and Fisher spent summer 2018 cruising to the eastern Med and back with friends and family. He admits to barely leaving the upper deck saloon. If the main deck is conventional, the upper deck is the opposite; it's a true inside/outside space, with teak deck flowing straight into the saloon and enormous windows creating a winter garden with eternal views. "I wanted a winter garden on *Joy* and here I am getting one of my own," Fisher says.

The sense of ease on this boat is exemplified by the sundeck, where the bar is open to guests instead of being a serving station for crew. "We're much more communal in the way that we live on the boat. It's not 100 metres long, it's 36. You help yourself if you want something to drink. It works well," says Fisher.

As for Captain Landuyt, he's happy that the boss is happy – but he's equally pleased with how the yacht performs. *Brigadoon's* hull was built in grade AH36 high-tensile steel, which is an unusual choice, as it's more expensive than standard Grade A steel commonly chosen for yacht building. But it's stronger, so you need less of it – which means, when combined with *Brigadoon's* fast displacement hull form and long waterline length (the bathing platform, for instance, is a continuous part of the hull and not overhanging), this boat is a relative speed demon, topping out at 16.5 knots on sea trials.

"And she's very stable," adds Landuyt. "She's got a lot of waterline, she's got two tunnels for the propellers and CMC electric stabilisers, which are extremely quiet and efficient when acting at zero speed. With this boat I have the feeling that you could be adrift in bad weather with stopped engines and you could fix your problem without excessive roll. That is something that, on many yachts, is not the case."

Brigadoon is a superbly well put together yacht, finished with the kind of exacting detail you'd expect of this yard and the pedigree of designers involved. The problem is that no one ever wants to leave.

"We brought my mum and dad on in the summer. They were only supposed to stay for two weeks; they ended up staying for four," sighs Fisher.

But if that's your biggest snagging issue with a new-build superyacht, you know you've bought a good one