

AT HOME ON BOARD IN MALTA

*From Antibes to Grand Harbour, Kalani's journey has spanned decades, thousands of sea miles and countless memories. Designer **Derek Frost** reflects on the restoration, evolution and enduring appeal of a yacht that became far more than a boat.*

In the mid-1990s, shortly before closing my interior design business, I was invited to work with a brilliant team of naval architects and related specialists

on the construction of a technically groundbreaking 40-metre sloop, Philanderer, in Thailand. Adding this project to my design portfolio allowed

me to work on a second nautical design project, one that continues to this day. The boat in question was not new, having been launched in 1971. Her name is Kalani.



Photography: Derek Frost & Edouard Duprat/TWW Yachts



Today, more than a quarter of a century after arriving in Malta, Kalani has become one of the most recognisable classic yachts in Maltese waters. Her distinctive profile, elegant lines and unusual green hull have made her a familiar and much-admired sight throughout the islands.

Kalani's Maltese story began in 2001. Her new owners, good friends, bought her in Antibes, France, that year. Having found her a captain and crew, they cruised along the southern coast of France before heading to Corsica and on to Italy. They intended to bring their boat to Malta, but by the close of that first cruising season, near Naples, her engines failed, and she would go no further.

It was in Naples that I first saw Kalani and where I took on the job of overseeing her first major upgrade.

There was much work to be done, including replacing a large number of the steel plates that make up her hull, installing a new signal mast, extending the top deck aft, sandblasting and

repainting all metal surfaces, repairing the failed engines and much else besides. Little time or budget was then available to consider work on her interior.



The following spring, Kalani arrived in Malta, an island centrally located in the Mediterranean, boasting spectacular harbours and, to this day, her home. On arrival, the owners instigated a change of captain, who remains her excellent master and is essential to the safe and effective running of the boat.

Over subsequent seasons, further improvements have been made. New engines, generators, stabilisers, timber decks, air conditioners and a water maker, plus the installation of black and grey water tanks, including an upgrade to all plumbing and entirely remodelled interiors. Kalani is most certainly in better condition now than at any time since her launch some 55 years back.

Initially white, another friend, a successful naval architect, advised that a hull colour darker than the superstructure lends a boat a sleeker line. Kalani's owners followed this advice, and she became dark beige and cream until she was awarded her distinctive colour, likely the colour she will remain, the superstructure still cream and the hull a green that some call eau de nil.

It is an unusual choice that has won Kalani, already much admired for her »

classic lines, additional attention and praise.

The greatest compliment, often repeated, occurs when captains of some of the world's larger private yachts have told Kalani's captain how much they admire her by saying, "That's exactly the sort of boat we'd like to have if we had a boat of our own."

At a time when yacht ownership increasingly focuses on size, technology and complexity, classic yachts such as Kalani offer something different. They possess character earned over decades, stories woven into their structure and a sense of permanence that cannot be manufactured. Their appeal lies not simply in how they look, but in the lives that have been lived aboard them.

Unlike most impersonally styled private boats, Kalani has truly become a home for her owners. Her interiors, her light-filled saloon and spacious cabins with ensuite heads, now substantially upgraded, are filled with paintings, books, objects, maps



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and guidebooks related to the many sea miles she has travelled and ports she has visited both in and outside the Mediterranean since she first came to Malta.

This personal expression of home and story overlays interior spaces that are finely crafted to withstand the repeated rigours of life on the high seas, concealing generous storage and easy access to multiple technical installations.

Timber Venetian blinds in the saloon shade harsh light, provide privacy and hold their position in rough water. The



TECH TALK	
Year 1971	Length 25M
Displacement 99T	Hull STEEL
Engines 2 X CATERPILLAR 3406C	
Cabins 3	Crew 2

colour of the sea and the hull is repeated on the walls, upholstery, and carpeted floor. Polished stainless steel tubing, reflecting the boat's period, is repeated externally on the guardrails and the top-deck sunshade, and internally on the furniture supports and balustrades.

Above the saloon's sofa, there's a painting that captures the joyful, carefree life she and her family lead on the water — loving family and friends at leisure, enjoying some of the best and happiest moments of their lives.

Kalani is a home which continues to see great joy.

Aft of the saloon, a substantial teak table, in place when the boat was purchased in 2000 and surrounded by stacking chairs supplied by Satariano, continues to provide excellent service both for meals and throughout those many lazy sunny days spent on board.

Home for Kalani, her permanent berth, is the first row on the Grand Harbour side of Malta's premier pontoon and best-run



secure marina. As a result, she enjoys unparalleled views across the water towards Valletta, encircled by two of the island's other historic cities. Motor Yacht Kalani is a spectacular floating home enjoying one of the finest addresses in Malta.

With regret, and conscious that time eventually catches up with us all, her owners have now decided to sell her. For

more than twenty-five years, she has been part of Malta's maritime landscape and part of the lives of those fortunate enough to call her home.

Let us hope her next chapter continues to be written in Malta. [S](#)

For more information and technical specifications, contact yacht broker Matthew Gusman at matthew@twwyachts.com.