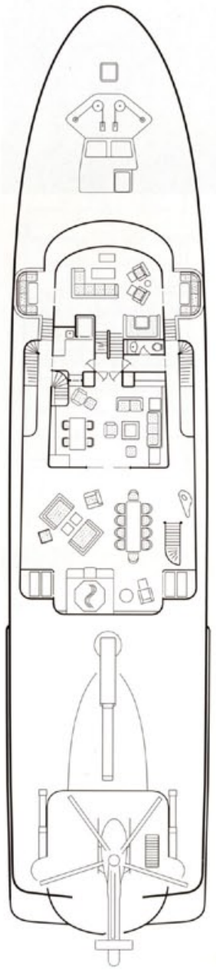
SENSES

Right: *Senses possesses a go-anywhere capability which, in combination with her accommodation, deck spaces, tenders and toys, makes her, one of the most enviable yachts of her breed.*



Jack Setton has very firm ideas on superyachts. Following two circumnavigations aboard his 57.3m (188ft) Feadship, *Belle France*, he realised that his next world cruising superyacht would need to be a rugged vessel with long endurance. It should also be capable of carrying a wide range of ancillary craft to meet every situation from water skiing in a calm lagoon to an independent two-day expedition up a river or among shallow islands. The yacht that he created to meet this need was the 77.7m (255ft) *Simson S* (now *Lone Ranger*), an ocean-going tug whose deckhouse and lower deck were transformed into luxury accommodation, while its winch deck was modified to carry an Aladdin's cave of boats and aircraft. The *Simson S* concept has been much emulated, but Jack Setton is also a perfectionist, always ready to improve his ideas, and even while he cruised aboard *Simson S* he was planning her replacement.

When Jack Setton plans a new yacht, it is not just a case of listing his requirements to a designer and making minor modifications to the resulting drawings. Setton is also totally immersed in the design and construction process, creating the specifications and providing most of the design solutions – he is the leader of the team's creative element and a constant source of ideas which are subsequently refined and transformed into paper drawings by those about him.

The team that he chose to assist him with his new yacht was both highly talented and vastly experienced. Its key figure was Claus Kusch, the head of the Hamburg-based Kusch Yacht Agentur, which has been responsible for the conversion both of *Simson S* and her near sistership, the 87.5m (287ft) *Arctic*. Not only was Kusch Yacht Agentur to manage the Setton project, selecting the many sub-contractors and suppliers, but it was also to be pivotal in the design of the hull, its tank testing at the Hamburg Institute of Shipbuilding, and the engineering of all the yacht's systems. Because the Kusch was also busy with

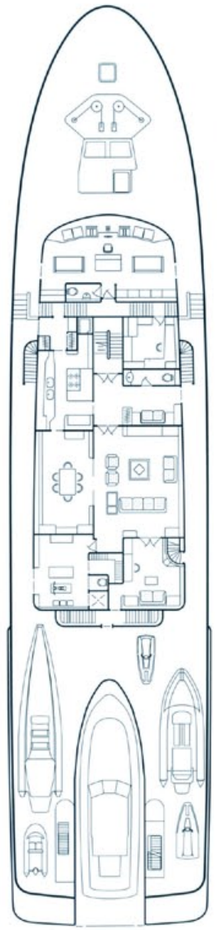
Le Grand Bleu and the 85m (279ft) *Tatoosh*, assistance with the styling of the new yacht was devolved to Martin Francis. But Setton made it clear from the outset that he didn't want Francis to design the yacht, just to draw up his own ideas and add a touch of his inimitable flair for a well-balanced profile. With both parties recognising and respecting the other's particular talents, the final shape of the vessel evolved during intensive meetings that drew heavily upon the latest 3-D computer modelling techniques.

The main improvements that Setton sought from his new yacht were threefold: she was to be smaller than *Simson S*, more economical to run, and capable of being managed by a numerically smaller crew. An overall length of 46m (150ft) was the initial target, but the requirement to carry much the same support craft as *Simson S*, including her sturdy 12.8m (42ft) Nelson motor cruiser, and the added need for a double helicopter landing facility so that guests could visit with their own helicopters, soon drove the yacht's length back up to 59.2m (194ft 3in), when the overhang of the aft heli-platform is included.

Another requested design improvement concerned the Nelson. Aboard *Simson S*, this had been launched and recovered using a hydraulic crane, but the 14.5-tonne weight of this craft was difficult to control on a single-point lift, particularly if the mother yacht displayed the slightest roll. The solution, Kusch suggested, was to use a system employed on German North Sea offshore rescue craft in which the tender would be carried within an inclined ramp built into the stern of the yacht. This would allow the Nelson to be safely launched and recovered in just about any sea condition. Schweers Shipyard on Germany's River Weser, which holds the patent for this system, was therefore asked to draw up a design to suit the Nelson. The impressive launching system that

Left: *With a simple press of the button, the stern door opens to reveal the Nelson 42. By using a remote control unit to release a securing clamp, this tender rolls easily down the slip into the sea.*

Right: *The owner's artistic bias is evident in the main saloon, where an amalgamation of Pre-Raphaelite paintings and ethnic artefacts provide a distinctive style.*



resulted ensured that *Senses* – the chosen name for the new vessel – would stand out from every other yacht.

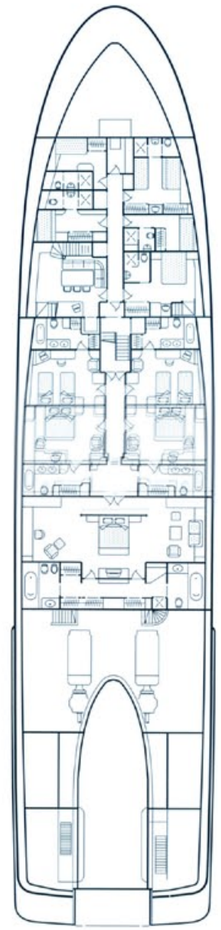
Claus Kusch's plan was to build *Senses* in north-west Germany, sharing the task between two sizeable shipyards and a host of highly experienced subcontractors. The hull was constructed from steel at the Stahl Bau Nord (SBN) shipyard in Bremerhaven at the mouth of the River Weser. Then, with its major machinery in place, it was shipped some 20nm upstream by floating crane to Schweers Shipyard in the village of Elsfleth, where the yacht was fitted out. Schweers itself was directly responsible for the wiring, piping and, of course, the Nelson's launching arrangements, while the interior joinery was sub-contracted to a group of four German companies which unite for larger projects under the name of SKS.

In appearance, *Senses* is a wolf in sheep's clothing. While her design ancestry can be traced back to her predecessor, *Simson S*, her attractive sheerline bears clear signs of 'gentrification'. Her superstructure has the rounded elegance and large windows of a superyacht and, just like any other superyacht, she has a private sun deck on the upper level, while the aft section of the deck below carries an extensive, beautifully equipped outdoor living area, again with laid teak underfoot. Her light grey hull is faired and painted with Awlgrip but, unlike most superyachts, it is matt rather than gloss finish and there is no sign whatsoever of decorative varnish. But *Senses* has more – much more – than the average superyacht. Her steel hull and aluminium superstructure also incorporate the best of practical seagoing design: a purposefully high bow, vertical pilothouse windows to give optimum visibility, particularly wide decks at both levels to provide excellent access around the yacht, and a high level of in-built safety under Lloyd's 50m Passenger Ship classification and Britain's Maritime & Coastguard Authority (MCA) certification.

But it is the aft 20m (66ft) of her hull that sets her apart from most yachts. Central to this area is the slipway built into her stern – an inclined dry dock – for the Nelson 42, whose launch and recovery operation is totally automated. At the press of a button the stern door hinges outward to create an extension to the launching slip, lowering to some 32 degrees below the horizontal, at which angle the two tall and solid guidance posts welded to the door's inboard side are vertical. With the slipway prepared, the helmsman of the Nelson presses the button on a remote control unit, releasing a securing clamp on the stem, and his craft rolls down the slip into the sea. This is a remarkably easy operation whose only dramatic moment is the spectacular splash! Recovery is equally straightforward. Once the stern is opened, the 'travellator' – a small V-shaped carriage which incorporates an automatic hook-up device – is run down a central trackway and positioned between the two guidance posts. The Nelson is then driven between the posts, exactly aligning it with the travellator, which automatically snaps on to a fitting on the tender's keel. Once secured, a powerful hydraulic chain-drive hauls the travellator up the slipway, together with its captive craft, with the weight of the Nelson being carried on the slipway's permanently fitted rollers. Once located in its stowed position, a second clamp secures the stem of the Nelson and the travellator is backed off and released. The system eliminates the need for crew to connect hooks or steady a swinging load manually, and can be operated at sea with the yacht in motion.

In the case of *Senses*, the Nelson's launching slip integrates extremely well with the stowage of the other tenders and watercraft because of the yacht's sizeable 12m (40ft) beam. No space is wasted. The slip itself is bridged by the aft helicopter landing platform, which incorporates automatic fold-down railings and a Jet-A1 refuelling station. The platform's port leg houses the yacht's bunkering station and each leg mounts a small crane capable of launching an adjacent safety boat or jet-ski. The deck around the slip harbours a further collection of enviable toys that are launched by a crane built by KGW, whose massive 19m (62ft) reach enables it to pick up craft from beyond the stern and lift them to the upper helideck. Among these boats, the star attraction is surely the 11.6m (38ft) Fabio Buzzi RIB which, powered by twin Yanmar 300hp engines, will achieve a hair-raising 60 knots, but then there is also a sturdy 7m (23ft), 40-knot Halmatic RIB powered by a 300hp Yanmar and Mercruiser, a two-

Below: *Bremen-based interior designers, Gisela Miescke and Ute Harder, were responsible for equipping the yacht with the finest cutlery and china.*



Below: *This sheltered deck area sports a Miescke and Harder-designed dining table together with a pair of Starck's Neoz sofas.*

man pedal powered kayak, a range of three jet-skis as well as the MCA rescue boat. And that is not all: there are so many toys that the overflow is stored temporarily on the upper helideck aft of the mast. It's not often that you see an 8.5m (28ft) keelboat stored on a yacht's uppermost deck but, here, *Senses* carries an L Francis Herreshoff-designed Stuart 'Knockabout' as well as a 5.4m (18ft) Hobie Tiger catamaran, two Hobie Rhumba sailing dinghies and a Sea Cycle pedal-powered catamaran.

Quite appropriately, the purposeful exterior of *Senses* is matched with a suitably understated interior. This is not to say that it is other than extremely comfortable, carefully laid out and beautifully decorated – it certainly is all of these – as well as having the advantage that no one will ever tire of it. Throughout, the dominant colour is white – white panelled walls, white carpets, white chair covers – a tone that is lifted and emphasised by splashes of colour from a range of ethnic rugs and tribal artefacts, a superb collection of Pre-Raphaelite paintings and some delightful yacht models.

To this list of artworks one should also unreservedly add a series of photographic prints by Jack Setton himself and paintings by his sister Laurence, who also created the yacht's sensually elegant logo. Form, too, has its impact, and a collection of furniture and lamps from French designer Philippe Starck and the smoothly contoured *La Chaise* chair by Charles Eames could certainly be listed among the yacht's art collection.

One of the triumphs of the yacht is the manner in which Jack Setton's lifestyle is embodied within it. The tenders, toys and their ready deployment are part of this success, and so too is the layout of the interior. This follows the European principle that the yachts should function efficiently with minimum contact between the owner's party and the crew. In this respect *Senses*' crew have their own stairs and passageways to permit easy movement throughout the forward part of the yacht. From the bridge, located on the same level as the foredeck, stairs descend one level past the ship's office to the crew accommodation deck, where there is a crew mess, the captain's cabin and three crew cabins sleeping a maximum of eight. From this level, a further flight of stairs descends to the lower deck, where the laundry, two further twin crew cabins, a dry store, freezer room and storage refrigerator are located. The crew area is separated from the guest quarters, and at the same time united with it, by the yacht's main stairwell, which rises vertically through the yacht from the keel to the sun deck, overtly connecting the guest areas and providing stewardess access at every level through discreetly concealed doors.

Guest accommodation, located in the central portion of the hull, extends over four decks, the uppermost of these being positioned above the bridge where, because of the half deck offset between guest and crew areas, it is effectively on a mezzanine level. This saloon above the bridge is a superb observation lounge, offering a continuous 180 degrees of vertical, almost reflection-free windows, a magnificent panorama that is best appreciated from the deep-seated Starck sofas which, together with a small breakfast table, furnish the room. Starck designates these sofas LWS – Lazy Working Sofa – and it is true that in this evening hangout they provide the most perfect setting from which to discuss one's new yacht, refer to a book from the ample shelves, or just take in the view. This view can be immeasurably expanded from the private deck that surrounds the saloon, accessed from doors to port and starboard. Here, two built-out semicircular 'wing station' dining and lounging areas,

protected from the wind by glass screens, are ideal for a warm evening, breakfast in the sun or, with the table lowered and covered with cushions, they make a fabulous sunbathing area.

Half a deck down, the pool house lounge opens aft from the stairs. This air-conditioned saloon, united through huge opening windows to the deck beyond, is the yacht's prime indoor/outdoor living area. The saloon has a lounging and dining capability, the latter around an interesting Starck table whose complex pattern of loosely fitting and carefully polished components are locked into position by a newly felled birch log of severely contrasting texture, which runs lengthways beneath the table's top. If the need is for a light meal, this can be prepared in the adjacent owner's pantry, while meals from the galley, one deck below, can be delivered here by dumb waiter.

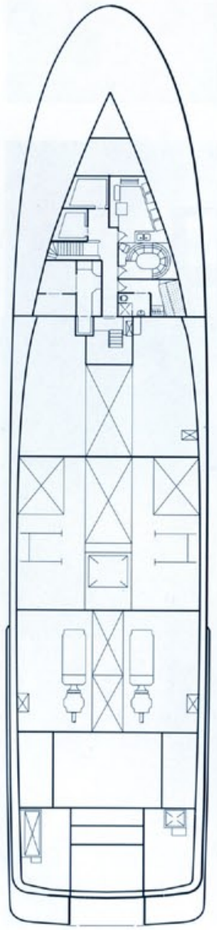
More of Starck's comfortable long-seated furniture can be found beyond the glazed doors on the open deck, a sheltered indoor/outdoor area protected by glass windbreaks, whose forward portion is shaded by the helideck above and its aft open to the sun. A pair of sofas and a remarkable 3.2m-long, (10ft 6in) 10-seater, marble-topped table comfortably furnish the lounging and dining area. Further aft, a pair of raised sunbeds and a carved wooden sun lounger, together with a sizeable Whirlpool spa pool and a Starck-designed freestanding shower, its shoulder-high surround stave-planked in teak, complete the deck's amenities.

The main saloon is located one deck below on the main deck, where it opens aft from the yacht's main entrance lobby. Again, the design is pleasantly understated, relying on the furniture, soft furnishings and ethnic art to create

an atmosphere of comfortable relaxation. Guests may lie back in the huge day-bed sized Starck Neoz sofa to watch TV, video, laserdisc or DVD projected onto a large screen; they can relax with a CD and a book, or feast among the Pre-Raphaelite works that surround the white marble-topped dining table. Gluttons, however, will be reminded of their excess by the adjacent gymnasium, unusually located in the aft port corner of the main saloon, where its treadmill, cycling machine, a sauna with aromatherapy option, and steam room all promise to remove unwanted pounds.

Top: *An African theme prevails in the pool house lounge.*
Above: *The observation lounge offers a panoramic vista.*

Right: *A red chair-back and desk lamp bring a splash of colour to this elegant double guest cabin.*
Below: *All the guest cabins are furnished with settees and desks, and provided with adjoining bathrooms.*



Abeam of the gym on the starboard side is the owner's study, which also doubles as a private sitting room. One of the owner's design requirements was that he should be able to move around the yacht with ease. In this respect, his study, with ready access to the saloon, dining saloon and gymnasium through one set of doors, to the boat deck through another, and down a flight of private stairs leading directly to his suite on the lower deck, is the hub of his most frequently travelled routes.

The master suite is enormous. The stateroom, which includes a private sitting room and large-screen entertainment system with surround sound, stretches a full 11.5m (37ft 9in) across the yacht's beam and 4.75m (15ft 7in) on the fore and aft dimension, if the suite's dressing room and twin bathrooms are included. The latter, in conformity with the yacht's white decorative scheme, make use of white Corian and include a steam shower and bath, while the dressing room, positioned between the bathrooms, has wardrobes with doors of frosted glass and highly customised shirt and shoe storage. Beyond a wall-to-ceiling screen at the head of the bed, a lobby opens through watertight doors to a passageway which leads forward to the foot of the central stairwell.

Senses' bridge is positioned just aft of the foredeck, on

Left: *Philippe Starck made significant contributions towards the selection of loose furniture, as seen here in the master suite.*

the mezzanine between the yacht's main and saloon decks, from where the visibility, if not optimal, remains excellent because of the room's 180 degrees of vertical windows and the yacht's low bow profile. Thanks to Captain Neil Wade, the bridge has been thoughtfully laid out and equipped, and it can also lay claim to being the first aboard a private yacht to meet Lloyd's requirements for a centralised control station.

Senses' impressive engine room runs almost 30m (100ft) from the crew quarters, beneath the guest cabins and right aft to the transom, with standing headroom throughout. It is therefore unsurprising that this superb area is both spacious and immaculately ordered. Its forward compartment, on either side of the centrally positioned fuel tanks, is a huge pump room containing such items as air-conditioning plant, refrigeration compressors and pumps for the high pressure washdown system that is piped to the decks, while the central 'cathedral', which houses the twin MWM/Deutz 1,600hp main engines, rises aloft through the deck above. Aft, the room is divided by the bulk of the stern slipway, providing scope for two enclosed generator rooms to port and starboard, each bypassed by corridors that lead aft through watertight doors: starboard to the diving equipment room and port to the diving maintenance room.

Jack Setton may well have tailored *Senses* to his own needs, but many of these are shared by a large proportion of owners or charter clients – as such, she is a trendsetter that is sure to be closely examined by anyone involved in the world of the superyacht.

SPECIFICATIONS

LOA	57.00m (187ft 0in)
LWL	51.50m (168ft 11in)
Beam	12.70m (41ft 8in)
Draught	3.20m (10ft 6in)
Displacement (light)	1,143 tonnes (approx)
Propulsion	2 x 1,600hp MWM/Deutz 620-series diesels
Gearbox	2 x Deutz/Reintjes
Propellers	Piening
Generators	2 x 173kW Deutz & 1 x 55kW Deutz
Fuel capacity	120 tonnes
Speed (maximum/cruise)	14.8 knots/13.4 knots
Range (at 13.4 knots)	4,800nm (approx)
Bowthruster	Schottel 130kW
Watermaker	HEM
Stabilisers	2 x Blohm & Voss
Air-conditioning	Messrs Sick
Sewage treatment	Rump (Hamworthy)
Fire sprinklers	Wormald
Cranes	KGW & Cramm
Electronic installation	D & P Limited (UK)
Guests	10 in 3 doubles & 2 twin cabins
Crew	14 maximum
Classification	Lloyd's ⊛100A1, SSC YACHT (P) G6, ⊛LMC, CCS; MCA compliant
Construction	Steel hull & superstructure
Naval architecture	Lasse & Pache
Exterior styling	Setton/Martin Francis
Interior design	Setton/Miescke & Harder, Bremen
Builder/Year	Schweers Shipyard/ Stahl Bau Nord/1999