

SPECIAL EDITION

BY *press*Mare

# 60 YEARS OF CRN

From master shipwrights to hi-tech  
bespoke handmade luxury yachts



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**60**  
1963 **CRN** 2023

CRN: 60 YEARS OF SUCCESS,  
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— *Introduction*

# From master shipwrights to hi-tech bespoke handmade luxury yachts.



CRN has left an enduring mark on the era of great luxury yachts made of metal, with an oeuvre of fully artisanal and personalised builds. The Ancona shipyard is now one of the most advanced in the industry, and its vessels represent the state of the art in yachting technology. We have chronicled this epoch through the additions to the CRN fleet down the years.



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**1963**  
**2023**

The story of the  
CRN shipyard



It's not easy to distil 60 years of CRN history into a few pages. This is the tale of a yard whose bespoke luxury yachts take three, four, even five years to take shape. Each of these splendid ships is a story in itself: everyone is unique, created by the efforts of hundreds of people working in harness for months, a community whose memories and anecdotes could fill a book after each launch and delivery.

A project is about calculations, engineering and precision but also expertise and experience – knowing how to do things properly, weaving together the diverse skillsets that all those people bring every day. CRN's innovative thrust comes to the fore in the design, the naval architecture and the engineering.

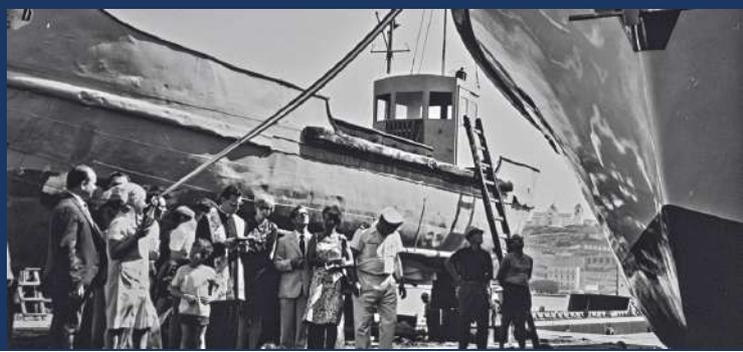
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## CRN: 60 YEARS OF SUCCESS, BY PRESSMARE



To write about CRN in technical terms is essentially to recap the boatbuilding developments and technological advances that the sector has seen over the last 60 years. What began as a master shipwright's workshop has developed into a modern superyacht factory with all the latest technology, a model of efficiency with a heavyweight team of engineers, architects and designers.

Visiting the Ancona yard today and stepping onto a great CRN luxury yacht under construction gives you an idea of just how much technology these vessels contain. You realise how many specialists it takes to install it all, how the hangar is a great hive of activity creating solutions on tap to meet a whole gamut of needs.





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The sheer length of piping, cabling and raceways lacing the skeleton of the ship goes to show how many systems there are to serve, and the array of components making up a superyacht like the facets of a mosaic simply boggles the mind. It all needs to be done, to be done well, to be tailor-made – and to be finished on time



Human talent is as crucial now as it was six decades ago, when Sanzio Nicolini founded CRN, then Costruzioni e Riparazioni Navali, in Ancona. Leveraging his previous shipbuilding experience, he immediately decided to flank the working boats with pleasure craft production. Focusing on the high end of the market, he used the construction materials he knew best: steel for the hulls and aluminium for the superstructures.

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## Metal has mettle

**90% of the 400+ units launched to date by CRN and the Morini yard, acquired in 2002, are made of metal, from ferries and pleasure vessels to fishing boats, military ships and merchantmen.**

The use of fibreglass was in its infancy in the early '60s; apart from the great pleasure yachts, the craft that cruising enthusiasts put to sea in were still made from wood, mostly Dutch- or Italian-built.

CRN's first constructions combined a steel hull and a wooden superstructure, although Nicolini would soon abandon wood for aluminium, as it was light, quicker to build with and easy to shape into a personalised design. It was a decision that would very soon bear fruit.

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## **SUPERCONERO**

**CRN launched 32 units in its first 10 years:** mostly SuperConeros, flybridge motor yachts measuring 23 metres by 5.6 that reached speeds of up to 13 knots. But there were smaller models too, like the 21-metre Papo in 1966 and the 10.4- to 21.61-metre Micoperi motor launches from 1965 to 1968.

Metal was the material par excellence for major projects – and Carlo Riva knew it too, a man of great talent who was looking to expand his output from dreamy luxury runabouts in wood into larger-scale projects built overseas.

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### VARMAR

#### **Nicolini instilled a culture of supreme quality at CRN right from the outset.**

He was a visionary with a fervent attention to detail. And clearly, he was right, the SuperConeros' instant success fully justifying the production approach. His boats lost nothing in comparison to the Dutch hulls, for CRN's fine Italian-made creations were already stunning and beautifully built. Given Riva and Nicolini's shared insistence on quality, it was no surprise that they joined forces in a partnership that would last almost throughout the 1970s. The Ancona yard produced a 23.5-metre Marco Polo followed by the largest Vespucci to grace the waves (at 30.5 metres long, 6.1 metres in the beam and with a gross tonnage of 170 GT), each based on the SuperConero's technical design.

With a displacement hull offering a range of more than 1,500 nm at 11 knots, she had a beautiful bridge fit for a great ship with an angled 180° windscreen – a style feature that Riva liked so much, he also used it in the iconic office-cum-helm-station that he built for himself at his Sarnico yard. Starchitect yacht designer Jon Bannenberg then penned three CRN projects for an owner family from Greece: the 32.5-metre Varmar inspired by the Vespuccis, Akitou (52.8 metres) and the 42.8-metre Vanina.

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CRN 127'  
MOTONAVE da mt. 38,60

scala 1:50

da. et. .001/0 - Vascella "Beverat" del. rfa. 1964

## BAGHEERA E FATH AL KHAIR

But the Vespuccis weren't the first pleasure vessels with hull lengths over 24 metres that CRN had built in Ancona. The 38.6-metre Bagheera had been launched back in 1969, a displacement yacht with a 7.2-metre beam, an angular stern vaunting three decks plus a sundeck, and a gross tonnage of 227 GT. Then came the 30.8-metre, 150-GT superyacht Gazzella in 1974, followed two years later by Moneikos (170 GT / 35 metres). 1979 brought another of the same length, Caribe III, along with the 36-metre Santa Cruz Tres.

CRN and its units achieved international renown, winning ever-larger contracts in Greece and other Mediterranean countries, all for quality bespoke builds. Even the Emir of Qatar was impressed, taking delivery in 1978 of a 47.2-metre displacement megayacht with a gross tonnage of 367 GT, named Fath Al Khair. With her streamlined bow, tapered wheelhouse, upper-deck Portuguese bridge and the great slanting fashion plates linking the decks, the yacht was a real coup for the Ancona yard, marking the brand's entry into the lucrative Arabian market.

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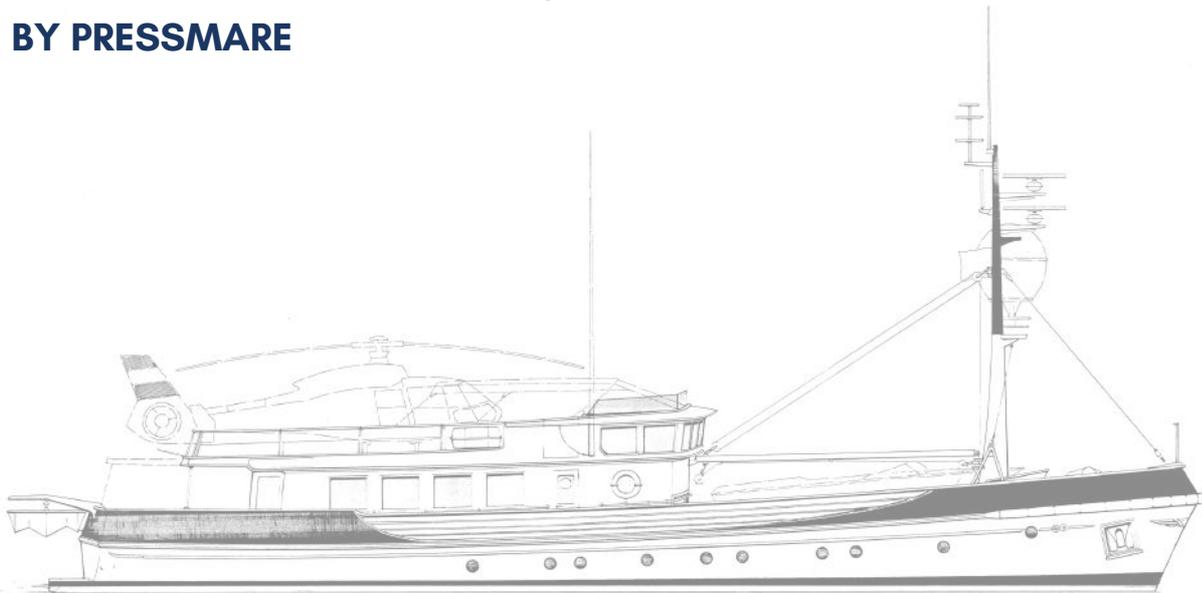
## **F100**

**In 1983, twenty years after the firm was founded, CRN delivered one of the most iconic yachts of the day. This 33-metre displacement hull had a compact, back-set superstructure with a long, uncluttered foredeck featuring only an impressive mast with crow's nest and a trawler-type boom for launching the generous tender.**

The design also offered a touch-and-go capability to accommodate owner Gianni Agnelli's trusty helicopter.

Devised by German designer Gerhard Gilgenast, the F100 is still cited as the forerunner of today's explorer yachts. For Agnelli, who had already owned a dozen sailboats or motor yachts, she was probably the perfect embodiment of the passion he felt for the sea – a simple yet highly functional vessel that could take him wherever he wanted and was an absolute joy to be aboard.

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**The F100's innovations, though, weren't just a question of style. She was also technically avant-garde, one of the first pleasure vessels with a futuristic feature that is now increasingly popular in boats with sound eco-credentials:** a diesel generator allied to an electric motor, coupled directly to the gearbox and linked to a rechargeable battery pack. The route to green yachting had begun to open up.

Thus CRN and Ferretti Group embarked on a journey over many years to develop ships with hybrid diesel-electric propulsion. These highly advanced and efficient systems offer features like the zero-emission mode for cruising short distances without firing up the internal-combustion engines and for spending hours at anchor without using generators to power the air conditioning or other on-board services.

CRN is taking the green-yachting concept into the future, developing all the technologies needed to build a 100% carbon-free yacht. That means everything from solar panels to the fuel cells for generating the energy for driving and enjoying the yacht. Although 30 sqm of solar panels can currently generate only about 1% of a 70- to 80-metre ship's 450-500 kW energy needs, CRN and its world-class partners are already close to ramping that percentage right up, courtesy of the latest-generation superconductors.





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Today, working within the constraints of the naval design and its engineering implementation, CRN leverages the latest technology throughout the build process to enhance the quality, streamline the timescales and take the personalisation concept as far as it can go. The yard prides itself on its ability to accept alterations even after construction has begun, where feasible.

Satisfying the client whenever possible, then, has been part of the CRN DNA since at least the '80s. So, it was no surprise that the team soon found themselves tackling owner projects on a grand scale – including for ships over 500 GT.

Even as the 44-metre Jameel was being delivered in 1985, the yard was already working on Il Vagabondo, 61.2 metres long by 10.1 wide, architected by yacht designer Terence Disdale and launched in 1986.

The build spanned three large covered decks with an immense outdoor sundeck, while the 5,000+ nautical mile range at 12.5 knots was positively oceanic in ambition; the twin DEUTZ-MWM SBV 12M 628 engines generating a total of 6,600 hp could power her to 18 knots. Breaking the 500-GT barrier certainly raised the bar, as the certification and safety rules added to the project complexity and duration.

In 1986, CRN's new owner Giandomenico Palmerini relocated the yard to its current base. A number of boats were built in the 1990s, even though the wider nautical market was feeling the shock waves from the Gulf War in '91. Notably, the units delivered in these years were nearly all of different lengths and tonnages.

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## AZZURRA

**After landing in the American market with another project by Gilgenast with interior designer Paola D. Smith – the 47-metre Azzurra, launched in 1988 with a top speed of 20.0 knots, a cruising speed of 17.0 and a 6,000-nm range at 12 knots – the yard delivered the 65-metre Awal II, another Disdale design, in 1990.**

Also that year, the 50-metre Maracunda was launched with interiors furnished in Alberto Pinto's unique, sophisticated style. Then came Lady Anne PB, a 40-metre build from 1994, and the 48-metre Pegaso two years later; Sahab IV and Pestifer, both 50-metre yachts, followed in 1998. Pegaso and Pestifer were commissioned from yacht designer François Zuretti, who created them in harness with Studio Scanu.

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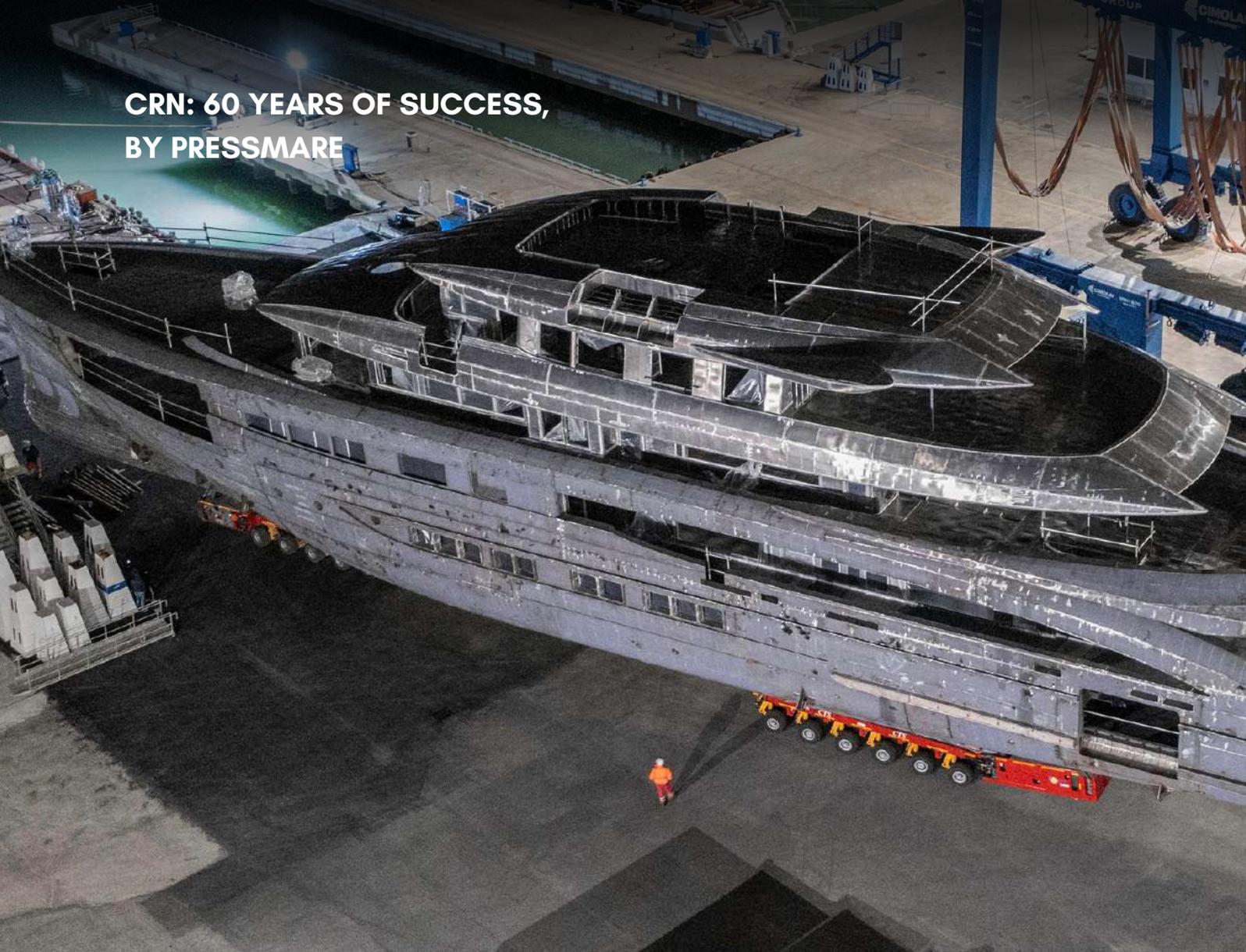


The elegant Numptia, a 61-metre yacht of 1,049 GT, featured a rounded stern, a beautiful bow and a Portuguese bridge between the helm and the long wheelhouse. She slid into the water from the CRN slipway in 2000, another pivotal opus from the brand's first 60 years, bridging two eras in its history and output.

For while the boat was under construction, CRN and its facilities were taken over by Ferretti SpA in a 14.885 billion lira deal, as a 98.68% stake rising to 100% in 2000.

The listed company CRN SpA was established, which joined forces with the Custom Line brand (a builder of semi-custom vessels in composite) to become the Forli-based group's Superyacht Division.

By late 2001, the holding company controlled the Ferretti, Riva, Pershing, Bertram, CRN, Apremare, Custom Line and Mochi Craft brands and was already investing in the facilities. In 2002, CRN's neighbour was also acquired – the former Mario Morini yard, another major player in Ancona's development as a renowned shipbuilding hub. The two had already collaborated on several yacht-building projects, and the deal gave the production capacity a further boost.

An aerial photograph of a massive yacht under construction in a large industrial dry dock. The yacht's hull is made of dark, reflective material, possibly aluminum or composite, and is supported by a complex network of steel beams and scaffolding. The dock is filled with various construction materials, including stacks of concrete blocks and large metal components. A worker in an orange safety vest is visible on the ground near the yacht, providing a sense of scale. The background shows the extensive infrastructure of the shipyard, including cranes and other vessels in the water.

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Investing in expanding the facilities at the Ancona hub has been a multi-stage process that continues to this day and has seen it develop into the Ferretti Group Superyacht Yard. Spanning 80,000 sqm (around 33,000 of which indoors), it can accommodate 24 superyachts and pleasure vessels under construction, from 30 to 90 metres in length.

This multi-brand centre builds all of CRN's steel/aluminium and all-aluminium superyachts and megayachts,

the entire Custom Line range of 30- to 42-metre composite yachts, plus the aluminium Custom Line Navetta 50, the new aluminium Pershings and the Riva Superyacht Division yachts in steel and aluminium – all icons of innovative design, fine craftsmanship and cutting-edge technology.

And the stretch of water that opens out in front is a unique space and a precious resource, a gateway to the Adriatic and a private tourist marina to full effect. Extending 250 metres along the coast, it provides large berths for fitting out and finishing up to 15 superyachts at once.

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## MAGNIFICA

**On joining the Ferretti holding company, CRN greeted the millennium with a new superyacht: the 43-metre Magnifica, designed by Nuvolari Lenard to another new in-house naval architecture.**

repeated some emblematic CRN solutions and aesthetic features – like the tapered wheelhouse and Portuguese bridge – cementing the brand's status as a leading global yachting player for its concepts and style.

The 2000s were an excellent time for CRN. Magnifica lent her name to a line of superyachts based on the same naval platform, all Nuvolari Lenard designs. She was followed by Kooilust Mare and Saramour, both 46-metre vessels with an 8.4-metre beam, a gross tonnage of 410 GT and a 4,100-nm range.

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## ABILITY

**The same concept was applied to the subsequent builds, now on a larger naval platform, for a range of fully customisable ships from 54 to 60 metres.** The first to launch, Ability, marked the start of the CRN yard's collaboration with Zuccon International Project, a studio that had already designed boats for other Ferretti Group brands

This 54-metre ship's array of technical treats included a touch-and-go helipad and a master cabin with a balcony over the sea for a spectacular wow-factor effect. She also featured an openable stern – the first multipurpose area at the water's edge combining a fitness space, wellness zone with sauna and Turkish bath, and an external area that opens out for owner and guests to relax in, get active and live the sea to the full.

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**Both structurally and in terms of the dynamics, opening a stern or hull is a complex affair and a serious technical feat.** With a garage door, for example, there's all the hydraulic mechanism and usually also a crane for handling the tender. It's not just the mechanical workings that need careful attention but also the entire surrounding structure, taking account of the potential loads. Group acquisition – the integration into the hull is done by the yard's in-house team that specialises in this type of calculation.

While the door and the hydraulic interface are developed to a very detailed specification by an external supplier – such as Umbrian firm Fratelli Canalicchio, a recent Ferretti Group acquisition – the integration into the hull is done by the yard's in-house team that specialises in this type of calculation.

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Each design, whether for a shell door or a balcony or any other kind of opening to be created, is analysed by CRN Engineering using a Finite Element Method (FEM). A 3D structural model of the feature in question is made, which turns the structure into a multi-node mathematical matrix.

The finer the discretisation, the closer you get to that 100% safety, reliability, efficiency and functionality to which the yard aspires when designing a ship and all its structures. Other Computer-Aided Engineering (CAE) systems simulate the usage and stress conditions in order to validate the pre-processing, the solution and the post-processing.



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## MARAYA

That is what was done with 2007's Maraya, the first boat with a terrace opening out on to the sea. The owner suite terrace was built as a platform right over the water using a shell door that folds out by 90 degrees.

The design challenge is all the greater when these doors are in tricky positions – on a double-curved or especially elongated bow, for instance.

In such cases, CRN also uses a 3D scan to ensure that the various forms match up and the door fits to tight tolerances. Otherwise, copious stucco would be needed to reconstruct the shape, but this is now rarely required in CRN builds thanks to these modern technologies.

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## **BLUE EYES**

**CRN began working with Technogym to create fitness areas in the early 2000s. The project culminated in the development of a personal on-board wellness line that has since featured on many of the brand's ships. Collaborations grew with leading tech suppliers and renowned furnishing brands, as CRN yachts became a model of excellence to aspire to.**

As sales boomed, Ancona was building the Custom Lines as well as two composite CRN models produced with modular moulds: six CRN 128's and seven CRN Navetta 43s, respectively 40- and 43-metre vessels, were launched.

In a technical advance on both ranges, the innovative Mitsubishi ARG gyroscopic stabiliser systems were introduced to the pleasure-boating world in an exclusive partnership between Ferretti Group and the Japanese tech giant. CRN flourished as the market thrived, signing contracts to deliver ever-larger yachts as the next decade began.

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### CLOUD 9

The plain-sailing good times in the yachting and shipbuilding world were promptly disrupted by the financial crisis that hit in 2008, with repercussions for the entire international nautical industry. In this fast-moving scenario, there was also a change of ownership for Ferretti Group and with it CRN, in 2012. 75% of the Group's shares were acquired by the far-eastern industrial giant SHIG-Weichai, which immediately threw its weight behind the revamped growth strategy for the yard and its iconic brand.

Cloud 9, a 74-metre megayacht launched in 2017, was the first unit built entirely under CRN's new regime, helmed by current Ferretti Group CEO Alberto Galassi. It symbolised the holding company's renewed financial solidity and the clients' trust in this established elite pleasure-boating brand.

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### J'ADE

**In 2012, CRN also launched the 60-metre J'ADE, the yacht that pioneered the floodable tender garage, the waterside guest area that was a centrepiece of the naval architecture.** This feature made it much easier to handle the tender – a 9-metre Riva Iseo runabout – without needing a crane to launch or haul her out.

J'ADE's side-opening garage is one of the yacht's key interior spaces: a multipurpose lounge area that combines with the beach club to create a unique open-air tender bay, a delightful and characterful setting for the owner and guests to enjoy. This was the umpteenth complex technical challenge that CRN's engineers had risen to with brilliant aplomb, creating an unprecedented feature for a yacht of this size.

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This relentless drive to keep improving the products in every way has never ceased. An oceangoing range, for example, is a must for the market, but the way to achieve it is not with larger fuel tanks but by reducing the weight and enhancing the hull hydrodynamics.

But with the in-depth knowledge our technicians have amassed over the years, new projects never have to start from scratch.

This experience has been distilled into a portfolio of familiar hulls to choose from, depending on the dimensions and performance required. Once the basic hull has been identified, the CRN engineers optimise its forms, appendages and fluid dynamics in a series of computer analyses. If the design requires a totally new hull, a scale model is first created to check the computational fluid dynamics (CFD) calculations in a test tank. With today's powerful CFD systems, the accuracy is now close to 100%.

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## RIO

**The style innovation of vertical and inverted bows has prompted a redesign of the bulbs, waterline features that increase fuel efficiency by up to 15%. Naturally, the reduction in running costs can be considerable.**

There's a similar focus on decreasing and positioning the weight to optimise each ship's centre of gravity and metacentre.

Everything brought on board is meticulously checked and weighed, even for a 70-metre displacement unit with a top speed of 16 knots. Remaining within the calculated parameters is vital to assure performance, so lightness is key for all the materials used, starting with the marble. The concept of lightweight marble may seem a contradiction in terms, but today's technology makes it possible. The answer is thin sheets – as little as 3 mm thick – mounted on honeycomb panels developed in the aeronautical industry in composite material or aluminium.

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Besides achieving weight reductions of up to 70%, they offer greater resistance to flexion and compression, assuring solidity and a longer life. A ship's stability is vital not just for safety; it's also a question of comfort. Stabilisation systems for use when cruising and, especially, at anchor are now a must for owners wishing to enjoy their villa on the sea in absolute peace.

They are integral to the design, and the yard works closely with the companies who supply them and other technologies and fittings. VideoWorks, another Marche-based firm, develops on-board entertainment systems and is now a world leader in the audiovisual and home-automation sector; CRN has been working with founder Mauro Pellegrini since 1973.

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## **CHOPi CHOPi**

**2013 saw the launch of what is still the largest unit that CRN has ever built (until the 85-metre CRN M/Y 144, currently under construction, is delivered): the Chopi Chopi. This 80-metre, 2,363-GT megayacht is all about on-board wellness, offering a helideck, 6 suites with balconies and terraces over the sea, and a relaxation area with fitness zone, spa, sauna, hammam, massage area and hair salon.**

She took 660,000 hours of work to build. For this flagship of the CRN fleet, Zuccon International Project created the external lines and the internal layout, while the concept and furnishing style inside are by interior designer Laura Sessa.

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## SARAMOUR E YALLA

As the 2,363-GT Chopi Chopi was taking shape, the yard had another two major builds under way. With the 61-metre Saramour, designer Francesco Paszkowski created a real cultural experience with a wealth of paintings and art installations on board to enjoy,

while the 73-metre Yalla marked the start of a partnership with Dutch studio Omega Architects while featuring interiors by Droulers Architecture. These units also launched a new 73 x 12.5-metre naval platform for a gross tonnage of 1,709 GT.



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## ATLANTE

**A 55-metre Nuvolari Lenard creation launched in 2015, Atlante vaunted an original design with angular military-style lines. She has several unusual features in terms of both form and functionality, like the boat's entrance on the lower deck and the unconventional raised stern accommodating the tender garage at the end of the main deck.**

The latter is a pioneering full-beam multipurpose space: the tender garage transforms into a convivial daytime living area, a comfortable cinema or even a spacious open-air party venue for gala dinners and lunches.

Here too, CRN totally redesigned and re-engineered the yacht layout to satisfy the client's every wish, dreaming up architectural and functional solutions that made the seemingly impossible possible.

In 2018, the superyacht Latona was launched, inspired by the classic SuperConero lines and with Liberty-style interiors, while 2019's Mimtee continued CRN's collaboration with Laura Sessa and Ferretti Group that had begun with Chopi Chopi. Both exterior designs – the 49.8-metre / 498-GT Latona and the 79-metre / 2,200-GT Mimtee – are by Zuccon International Project.

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## VOICE

**CRN began the millennium's third decade by launching Voice, another ship tailor-made for her owner. This 62-metre, 1,288-GT superyacht was a collaboration with Nuvolari Lenard for the interior and exterior design.**

She is a fine example of contemporary design with her unmistakable vibrant lines and unexpected colour combinations – like smoky quartz and metallic sand, with black accents for the external livery.

CRN is constantly working to reducing its yachts' polluting emissions. Achieving the latest IMO Tier III certification with Voice was a major step forward, slashing harmful emissions of nitrogen oxides (NOx) in exhaust gases by 70%. All CRN yachts of over 500 GT have met this standard ever since.

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## CIAO

**Three yachts were launched from the CRN slipway in Ancona last year.**

The two arches designed by Frank Laupman and Omega Architects add character to the lines while shielding the deck and assuring guest privacy, in a supreme piece of design where form follows function.

The interiors are by Pulina Exclusive Interiors.

The next yacht to touch the water was CIAO, a 52-metre build with a 9-metre beam and a gross tonnage of 499 GT. Another Omega Architects design, her convivial outdoor spirit chimes with a sublime sense of continuity and connection with the interiors by Massari Design.

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## **M/Y 141**

**The last pleasure yacht of 2022, delivered in the December, was the 60-metre CRN M/Y 141 Comfortably Numb.** The yard's 141st build has an all-aluminium hull and superstructure light enough to reach a top speed of 25 knots and cruise at 22.5 despite her voluminous size of 1,000+ GT. This is a superyacht with remarkably dynamic external lines conceived with a painstaking attention to every detail and a modest enough draft to cruise and moor in shallow seas.

Her impressive performance is also down to the in-line propellers made to superlative design-and-build standards. She was constructed with a meticulous eye for the materials for the awnings and finishings, selected after an in-depth study of their properties, to assure the extraordinary performance required under the contract in terms of weight and speed.

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## **M/Y 139**

**Launched in March 2023, the CRN M/Y 139 is a new 72-metre, 1,880-GT full-custom megayacht with a 12.4-metre beam designed and built by CRN. The concept and exterior lines are the work of Vallicelli Design, while architects Nuvolari Lenard took care of the interiors and their subdivision together with the yard.**

A vessel with a striking sense of style, she combines functional and design solutions in a sophisticated overall harmony; the superstructure exudes a visual concision emphasised by smooth lines that impart an original, elegant aesthetic.

The Superyacht Yard is currently constructing another three fully custom CRN yachts – the CRN M/Y 143 (67 metres), CRN M/Y 144 (85 metres) and CRN M/Y 145 (70 metres).

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