



Green Energy: The Future of the Megayacht Industry

By Shayne Benowitz

There is a coastal desert plateau in the south of Peru thought to have the most constant wind on the planet. The region has never seen rainfall, and the mythic Nazca Lines—best viewed aerially—are a series of miles-long ancient geoglyphs etched into the sand in the shape of animals and other geometric designs. This is Paracas, home to an astoundingly unique ecosystem rich with biodiversity and pre-Incan cultural history. It is fitting, then, that Paracas Yachts, makers

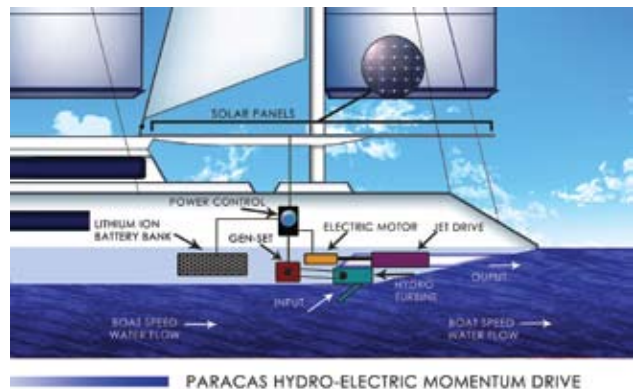
of the world's first environmentally-conscious, clean-energy megayacht, has borrowed its name from the nature reserve.

Paracas' luxury sailing catamarans have combined the unique geometric benefits of multihull design with wind power to create the first self-sufficient, fully electric megayacht, available in designs of 82, 120 and 158 feet. The Paracas 120 will be the inaugural vessel, and is expected to begin construction by the end of the year.

Paracas was born in the spring of 2010, when architect Andre Aisner—a lifelong sailor who once studied with Ken Freivokh, most famous for designing the *Maltese Falcon*—had an idea. "As a sailor, I had been designing a boat in my head," Aisner said. "I was always thinking how to improve the boat. One day, my wife said to me, 'Stop thinking. Do it.' She sent a letter to Ken telling him that I was designing a catamaran, and he answered immediately. That

was my motivation to put everything on paper."

Aisner went to England with his plans and met with Freivokh, who advised him on the project. The resulting design's light hull displacement, low draft and wide beam buoyed by a tall mast—as opposed to a lead keel—have created a vessel that is not only more efficient and spacious, but also faster. Aisner explains the transition from old designs with the analogy that men once built opulent castles that today have been abandoned for sleek luxury homes: "It's not going to look like the megayachts of yesterday (just like) it's not going to look like the castles in Ireland, but it might look like the houses in the



Caribbean. We have change."

The Paracas concept is thoroughly modern and not without its appeal for potential owners. With price points starting at \$7 million, founding partner Travis Uchacz explains that Paracas has all the luxuries and amenities of a typical monohull megayacht while boasting little to no operating cost and nearly double the space: "This hasn't been done before. This will be the largest luxury catamaran ever built, and it doesn't burn fuel because it's all clean energy."

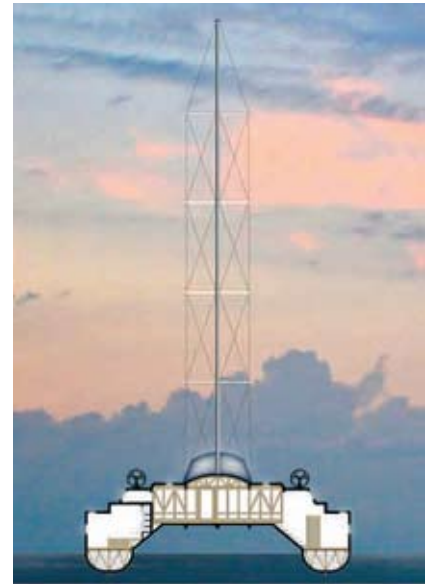
Utilizing multiple micro hydro-electric turbines and generators for electric propulsion, 360kw of energy can be produced in a day's sail, then stored in large lithium ion battery banks with up to 99% efficiency. That's enough energy to power all of the electrical amenities for a week or more without fuel or dockside power.

In addition, a solar array on the top deck can generate another 13kw of power per day.

Aisner believes Paracas Yachts is just the tip of the iceberg. He envisions a luxury resort concept in Monaco, private charters in the Bahamas and a tony corporate amenity in San Francisco Bay, but he also sees the technology revolutionizing other sectors of the boating industry, such as fishing. "Forget luxury," he says. "Take the 10 cabins and use them for ice."

Uchacz agrees. "We're building the megayacht, but anything can be built custom with this technology."

Indeed, with her lean design, cutting-edge green technology and high-minded ambitions, Paracas Yachts is charting a course into the future of the megayacht industry and beyond. One could say she's



the seductive total package.

Visit www.paracasyachts.com. ■

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