

THE SWEET HOME
Enjoying the clever, individual layout of *Lady Candy*



LAID BACK HI-TECH
The trimaran from the Far East with far-reaching ambition



ECO-LOGICAL
Discovering a greener future on the Columbus 40S Hybrid



BOAT

top 100
2014
world's largest yachts



INTERNATIONAL

GRAND DESIGN

...N's 80m flagship conceived around a family oriented interior

CRUISE EVOLVED

...exploring the Galápagos on charter yacht *Integrity*





Baltic Yachts turns 40

► Baltic Yachts is celebrating 40 years in business this year, its longevity based on a reputation for using the latest technology to create high-performance sailing yachts.

The Finnish yard was founded in 1973 by five employees of Nautor's Swan who wanted the freedom of their own company to try out ultra-modern methods of construction. 'The basic philosophy from the beginning was to build a lighter boat without sacrificing strength and safety, by using more modern building materials and techniques,' says PG Johansson, co-founder and formerly technical and marketing director of Baltic Yachts. 'In that way creating boats that were faster and more comfortable to sail. Through the years we stayed very faithful to that philosophy.'

The yard started by using 'unidirectional' fibre rather than the conventional woven rowings. The former are stronger and don't require extra chopped matting to remedy resin shrinkage, something that adds extra weight to woven rowings. The yard's first yacht, the Baltic 46 finished in 1974, was therefore built from unidirectional fibres, with sandwich construction in order to reach high panel stiffness.

The range expanded to include the Baltic 33 (C&C Design) in 1975 and the yard built its first custom yacht in 1975: the C&C designed two-tonner Tina I-Punkt. Baltic delivered 15 yachts in 1975 and 28 in 1976.

'We never planned to become a big serial-production yard,' says Johansson. 'We wanted to have custom production, fewer boats but where we had the possibility of more flexibility built-in.'

As producers of small series sailing yachts industrialised their processes, reducing costs, it also made business sense for the yard to move towards larger, tailor-made sailing yachts – and today Baltic is a custom builder of up to and over 60m. As it underwent this development, the purchase of the yard by Finnish shipbuilder Hollming in 1977 gave Baltic the cash to increase output and ramp up its marketing.

But in the recession of the late 1980s, the parent company decided to divest itself of Baltic to concentrate on its core business. The 34 employees of the yacht builder restarted the company in 1991 and Baltic has continued its building, development and research and ever since. The yard began to work extensively with epoxy, kevlar and carbon fibre in the 1980s – at first only as reinforcements on high-load areas of a boat. It produced its first fully epoxy carbon craft, the Baltic 67 *Aledoa*, in 1995. Vacuum infused laminate followed, and later full pre-preg epoxy carbon; Baltic still holds the record for the largest pre-preg laminate yacht – 66m ketch *Hetairos* – and most of its yachts are now made this way. In its anniversary year, the yard began work on 53.7m *Pink Gin VI*, and launched 32.64m *Inukshuk*, proof Baltic is able to achieve comfort and style as well as speed.

'We've done real performance yachts for people who want racers but still a bit of cruising comfort; we've also done boats that are high-performance cruising, not aimed at racing, a bit heavier with more comfort, but still substantially lighter than other "cruising yachts",' says Johansson. 'But all that matters is that our clients are happy.'