

USA
BOAT

INTERNATIONAL



Antonisa



The magnificent Antonisa designed by Bruce King and built at Hodgdon Yachts in East Boothbay, Maine has been launched. Built for an Italian gentleman with extremely discerning taste, she is simply extraordinary in every way. Text by Alessandro Vitelli.

Photography by Dana Jenkins

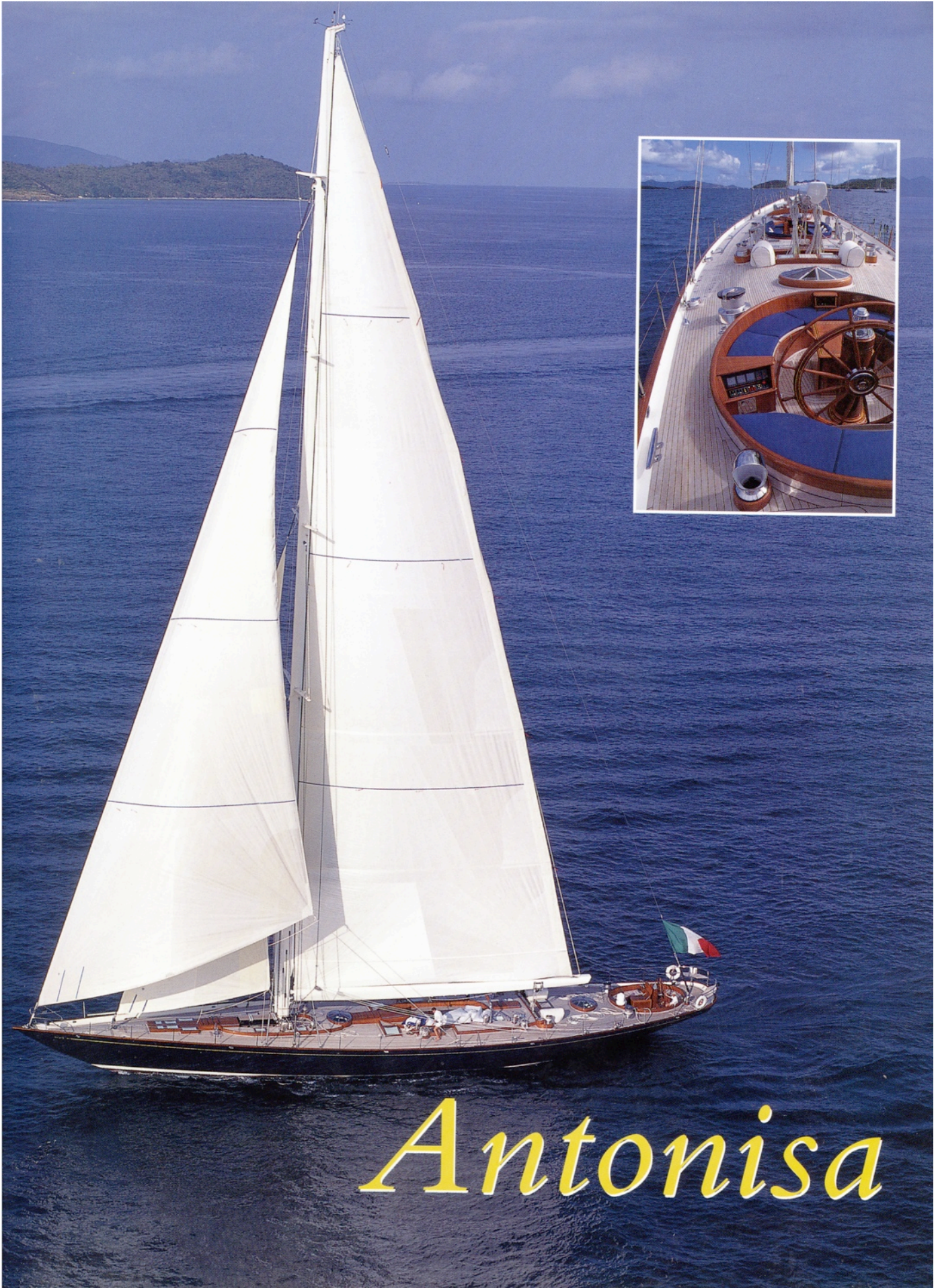
Above and opp inset: The polygonal skylight dome and circular cockpit enhance the look of the incredible expanse of flush deck. Opp main picture: Antonisa is extremely impressive under sail.

I remember reading, somewhere in a biography of Johann Sebastian Bach, a marvelous description of the Master settling into the organ loft and rattling the window panes of the Church of St Thomas in Leipzig with his Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor, just for the hell of it, because he had access to a great organ and he could play it incomparably well.

There is a very direct connection between that image and *Antonisa*, the most recent launch from Hodgdon Yachts of East Boothbay Harbor, Maine. After sailing on her I came away with the distinct impression that Hodgdon's craftsmen went beyond the required, and expected, level of excellence and decided to show us what they are really capable of – rattling, so to speak, our nautical window panes.

In this understandable impulse to pull out all the stops they were fortunate indeed to be working with a design from the board of Bruce King, who has penned several lovely, traditional large sailing yachts. He, in turn, had the good fortune to be designing a yacht for an owner with an educated visual sense, willing to compromise in order to please the eye. If ever a symbiotic relationship in boatbuilding can be found, *Antonisa* is surely a perfect example.

The first thing noticeable when approaching her is that she is truly flush decked. To quote Bruce King: "It



Antonisa



is unusual to find an owner ... whose sense of aesthetic issues is strong enough to override the nearly overwhelming temptation for a deck house. It is astonishingly rare to find an individual eager for this, particularly with a vessel of this magnitude."

The absence of a deckhouse also means that the boom can be brought down to a visually pleasing height above deck; and the low boom in turn enhances the sleek elegance of *Antonisa's* long overhangs and graceful sheer. The combination of these features with a tall, subtly raked fractional rig, produces a truly striking, powerful-looking vessel.

Her construction is wood epoxy, with carbon fiber mast and boom. A remarkably shoal draft of only 10ft (with the centerboard up) will allow her to enter many harbors and anchorages normally closed to yachts her size, while the deep centerboard guarantees excellent sailing performance when lowered. *Antonisa's* deck is 125ft of teak flawlessly laid and properly nibbed. All hatches, deckboxes, coamings, and skylights are varnished teak, with stainless steel hardware throughout.

When inspecting yachts, the level of meticulousness applied to their construction is easily ascertained by applying the screw slot test: look at any





Opp top details: The spars were shipped all the way from New Zealand.

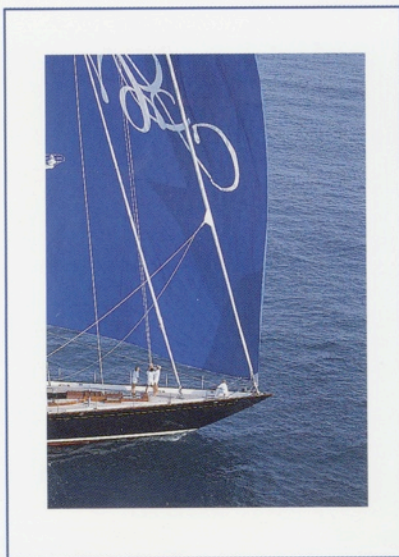
Opp bottom left: In the saloon are two facing sofas with a coffee table that raises and lowers to port and a working fireplace.

Above: The dining table seats ten.

Bottom left: The beautiful and thoughtfully laid-out galley is separated by the island from the traffic flow to the crew's quarters.

Below: The finely-crafted wineglass cabinet.





piece of hardware fastened on deck (or below, for that matter) and check that the screw slots are aligned. The Hodgdon crew passes with flying colors. A further detail, today rarely found even on high quality yachts, are the proper locking scarf joints on the bulwark cap rails. Particularly worthy of note are the many flush hatches providing air and light belowdecks, and the trademark Bruce King polygonal skylights. The latter are paned with beveled glass, an unnecessarily fussy detail. The traditional, and appropriate, hexagonal binnacle uses beveled glass panes as well which, besides being too fussy, make the compass hard to read.

I was particularly struck by the mainsheet bail on the main boom, a stainless steel tour de force of caged rollers which provides perfect alignment at all angles of sail.

The deck layout follows the familiar big boat practice of accommodating the owner's party in a center cockpit, while concentrating boat-handling functions in the aft steering cockpit. This, needless to say, is less a class distinction than a safety issue, considering the large loads carried by the running rigging. *Antonisa's* two anchors are permanently rigged on hydraulically retractable arms; the heavy ground tackle is thus stowed below deck and well aft of the stem, with no clutter of rollers spoiling the fine lines at the bow. Both jib and forestaysail are controlled with hydraulic furlers, while the fully-battened mainsail is set from a roller furling boom. All controls are positioned by the helm, allowing for relatively short-handed sailing.

The main companionway, located at the forward end of the center cockpit, leads below decks via gracefully curving

stairs. And once below, the eye is immediately drawn to the focal point of the main saloon: a gem of a cabinet organ located right under the main skylight, a proper tracker action baroque pipe organ with one manual, pedal board, and five ranks of pipes. Unfortunately, I cannot report on its tone, as its installation was being completed when I went sailing.

If she is impressive on deck, *Antonisa* is breathtaking below. Her interior, varnished black cherry with white bulkheads and overhead, looks not so much crafted as sculpted, carved from a single block of wood. Many design features – the chamfered overhead panels; the hanging knees so appropriate in a classic wooden yacht; the fan louvers

cleverly concealing air-conditioning outlets; the arched doorways and locker panels – are carried throughout the boat, providing a high degree of design cohesiveness. The painstaking execution of these design features takes them beyond the mere visual into an almost tactile dimension, a virtuoso application of the joiners' abilities. One example: the moldings at the base of the open lockers show no miter joints; they are made from a solid piece of wood sawn to shape. Thus, no miter joint which will eventually dry up, shrink and open.

The main saloon features two facing sofas to port, separated by a low table, with a working fireplace centered between them. The table can be raised to



Opp top: the full-beam owner's stateroom is masterly crafted with French curves.
Opp bottom: The spinnaker carries the owner's monogram.
Left: the owner's bathroom features a wooden bathtub.
Above top: There are endless stainless steel custom fittings.
Above: Looking aft at the lovely cockpit and helm.

permit this area to accommodate additional diners. The fixed dining table is to starboard, with seating for up to ten.

Just forward of the main saloon, past the organ's wind chest, is a large galley, the work space separated from the traffic flow forward to the crew's quarters by a center island. The dishwasher and wash basins are located on the island, keeping the cleanup functions away from the cook while meals are served. The captain's cabin is to port of the galley, while the crew mess, two crew's cabins and washer/dryer for the ship are located forward. Ahead of the crew quarters is a large storage forepeak, accessible from deck.

A passageway leading aft from the saloon provides access to the three guest cabins, each with a double berth and an



additional occasional extension berth. Guest cabins all have en-suite heads. The owner's cabin aft is full width, clearly designed by a masterful hand with French curves, the built-in furniture and joinerwork here also reflecting the impressive level of skill which is demonstrated throughout. The commodious owner's head features a lovely varnished wood bathtub.

Engine and machinery space are logically positioned under the center cockpit, extending outboard to port. There is ample, easy access to all mechanical components, an important consideration in a modern sailing yacht with such an impressive array of mechanized sail-handling equipment besides the engine, generators and various pumps. The space is heavily soundproofed, with double door access.

On centerline just aft of the engine room is the enclosed navigation station, with its own companionway leading on deck. I found this space a bit cramped, but mainly I feel it is too remote from the steering cockpit, although the helmsperson also has a full set of repeater instruments, as well as a radar screen cleverly installed on a swing-up panel set into the cockpit table.

Under power *Antonisa* can be maneuvered easily in tight quarters, aided by a bow thruster and her Hundestet variable pitch propeller, which can be used as a stern thruster. However, it is under sail that she truly comes alive. After all, yachts like her are about sailing – if they don't sail well, if they don't offer exhilarating performance, then all the teak and varnish and luxury are a waste of time, because the boat has failed in her principal purpose.

On the other hand, if they perform well and nobly, then all that teak and varnish

and lovely details come into their own, enhance the experience. And *Antonisa* does indeed perform. With the board down, she eats her way to windward in light and medium breezes, and she loves a good romp with the wind abaft the beam. She is not fussy to steer, and her powered systems make sail-handling a pleasure rather than a chore. As we sailed out of East Boothbay into Maine waters, even the lobstermen, not an easily impressed crowd, went out of their way to take a look, giving us thumbs-up signs of approval.

It wasn't much of a stretch of the imagination to picture myself sailing along offshore, all the stops literally pulled out, rattling the hatches with a good loud fugue on the organ, just for the sheer pleasure of being able to do so. *Antonisa* is that kind of yacht. □



Top left: A romantic name for a romantic yacht.
Top: 125ft of teak grace the flush deck.
Above: The owner resisted a deckhouse in favor of maintaining an uncluttered deck and a sleek profile.

ANTONISA

LOA 124ft (37.8m)	350,000 lb (159 tons)	Interior design Bruce King Yacht Design
LWL 90ft (27.4m)	Sail area 6,761sq ft (628sq m)	Builder Hodgdon Yachts Inc
Beam 25ft 6in (7.8m)	Spars: Marten Spars	Murray Hill Rd
Draft (board up) 10ft (3.0m)	Main engine Luggar 6140, 530 SHP,	PO Box 505
(board down) 26ft 5in (8.1m)	IRM 350PL 2.864:1	E Boothbay, ME 04544
Displacement (half load)	reduction, Hundested VP7	Tel: (207) 633-4194
	Designer Bruce King Yacht Design	Fax: (207) 633-4668

