



Homer's famous poem conjures the stirring deeds, determination and glory of warriors, heroes, kings and gods. And in 2019, an exciting new range of power catamarans was launched that evokes the epic's themes to deliver legendary long-range performance and affordable customisation.

The international power cruising catamaran market has boomed in the past decade, and advances in design and construction technology have produced vessels that tackle oceans with impressive speed, comfort and economy.

However, few production and semi-production power catamaran manufacturers offer buyers the ability to customise their boat to suit their individual needs without radically increasing the price. Consequently, today's marinas are awash with homogenous power boats that don't inspire much sense of passion from their owners.

The innovative new ILIAD Catamarans shipyard is subverting this trend with the launch of a range of power catamarans that allows buyers to truly personalise their boat to a luxurious standard at a price that challenges the world's production and semi-production power cat models.

The company has invested years of research and development with an internationally accredited team of designers and naval architects to create the ILIAD 50, 60 and 70, with plans for the 90 now on the drawing board. The ILIAD 50 was the first of the range to be launched and was unveiled at the 2019 Sanctuary Cove International Boat Show, with

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the inaugural model selling to a couple just minutes before its official christening.

The ILIAD 70 followed closely on its heels, launching at the 2019 Sydney International Boat Show with its Australian owners now enjoying the boat cruising the Great Barrier Reef and Queensland coast. The ILIAD 60 will be launched in Asia Pacific in 2020.

The catamarans are particularly unique in that clients are able to customise many aspects of their chosen model to reflect their individual style and needs but without the epic cost involved in changing aspects of most production and semi-production power catamarans. Clients are free to choose

their own preferred layout, timber finishes, electronics package, fabrics, engine options and more, at an extremely cost-efficient rate.

Yet, all of the ILIAD catamarans are also stunning achievements in power cat design, delivering safe and comfortable offshore performance with some of the longest-range capabilities in their market segment (2500nm-6000nm).

EXPERTS AT THE HELM

ILIAD Catamarans is the successful collaboration of Global Marine and ITAC Marine with both entities bringing a wealth of expertise to the project. ITAC Marine has been designing and managing international boatbuilding projects in China for almost 10 years, while Global Marine is currently developing a strategic international dealer network for the brand.

The range is produced in Zhanjiang at YuanHe Xinlong shipyard, one of the few established shipyards in China that constructs premium quality explorer-type boats for the world market and uses only the highest quality internationally imported materials. Its impressive facility overlooks the famous Zhanjiang Bay Bridge with waterfront launching access and boasts an expansive team of internationally trained staff who have already made waves in the industry with the construction of Bering's luxurious 65, 77 and 80-foot motor yachts.

The mastermind behind the design of the ILIAD range is renowned naval architect Riccardo Bulgarelli who worked in Italy for many years for some of the world's leading shipyards before establishing his own design office in China. Bulgarelli has designed and project-managed the build of many exclusive custom vessels as large as 112ft for successful export to the world market.

Recently appointed Asia Pacific dealer Multihull Solutions purchased the initial prototype based on the ILIAD philosophy and design. Multihull Solutions has a strong reputation in the Asia Pacific region and wanted to be confident it was the right product to add to their range.

The prototype was extensively tested with sea trials and ocean passages across the South China Sea, meeting head on with conditions that would challenge any ocean-going craft.



Above:
The ILIAD catamarans' shallow draft allows better access to remote beaches.

Top right:
Excellent light and ventilation in the ILIAD 50 saloon.

Bottom left:
The ILIAD 50 flybridge is well equipped for entertaining.

Bottom right:
Passage planning in style on the ILIAD 70.

Multihull Solutions general manager Andrew De Bruin said the 2017 Christmas typhoons that hit Vietnam were a real test for the boat.

"The crew got caught for 24 hours in seven-metre seas with winds of 70-80 knots before they made shelter. However, they felt very safe and comfortable on this boat even in the most intense conditions," Andrew said.

After clocking 1000 engine hours and almost 10,000nm, the data from this prototype project was analysed by all stakeholders, including the design team, and implemented across the ILIAD range to ensure the market would receive a boat that was up to the planned demanding standards.

"This project, while costly, was worth every dollar and hour invested. We wanted to get this right, not sell the first boat to a client and see them go through the typical 'first-boat debugging' challenges," Andrew said.

"Multihull Solutions has handled dozens of new model releases over the past 12 years but we wanted to ensure we approached this project differently and learnt everything possible to fully understand the systems, make recommendations and minimise compromises that are evident in all boats, then give feedback to the builders," he said.

LEGENDARY FEATURES

While the ability to truly customise each model is a major feature of the ILIAD range, the 50, 60 and 70 also impress with their optimal strength and commanding performance in offshore conditions.

ILIAD Catamarans CEO Mark Elkington said the boats are true long-range power cats that make no compromises.

"Each cat has been designed with an emphasis on safety, strength, stability and economy," Mark said.

"While we wanted to first and foremost create a range that allowed buyers to design a power boat that suited their unique needs without the exorbitant cost, we also have employed the finest minds in naval architecture to ensure each boat delivers outstanding performance in the most rugged conditions," he said.

Many engine options are available, and all ILIAD Catamarans come with standard inclusions, including dual-control electronics as well as systems for fuel transfer, blackwater and power management, and full protective keels for total protection of running gear.

Each model also features flybridge hard tops, resin-infused PVC foam-core hulls in

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vinylester resin, Tecma fresh-water flush electric toilets, bathroom extractor fans and an ocean of other premium-quality fixtures as standard inclusions.

ILIAD Catamarans are built to CE (Cat A) as standard, however all models can be built to any specified international survey classification and include a five-year internationally supported structural warranty for commercial operation and maximum peace of mind.

IN HARMONY WITH THE SEA

ILIAD has designed each model to evoke the comfort and style of luxury apartments with unsurpassed space in all their living areas.

Conceptualised with long-term cruisers in mind, the catamarans are extremely functional with excellent flow across the various zones. The standard forward lounge

in each model provides amazing 360-degree views, and, unlike many other modern power cats, ILIAD has introduced an option for a spacious master suite in the main deck to optimise the use of space and create a naturally light, airy and idyllic retreat for those cruisers who want to live on one level.

Beautifully appointed gourmet galleys are standard across the ILIAD range, and storage facilities are in abundance for extended cruising. As with the rest of the boat, the galley can be completely customised to adapt layouts, or clients can add and remove any fixtures or styles they desire.

The flybridges can be left entirely open or can be fully enclosed with ducted air conditioning, or owners can elect to have the best of both worlds with high-quality clears that can be opened and closed as the elements demand. Sedan options are also available if a flybridge is not a requirement or bridge height restrictions are a factor.

Wide, safe walkways are part of each design with hand rails at a comfortable height for complete security at sea, while clear, uncluttered decks and huge deck storage facilities make offshore passages practical, safe and carefree.





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INTREPID PASSAGE MAKERS FOR REMOTE CRUISING

Just like the legendary Achaean ships of Homer's epic, ILIAD's catamarans are designed to face the most treacherous conditions with confidence, which is a heavily tested hallmark of the ILIAD range's DNA. Ideal for extended-passage cruises, each model affords impressive range and speed with competitive fuel efficiency.

The company's standard recommended engines deliver a long-range cruising speed of seven knots at a fuel burn between 1.2 and 1.5 litres per nautical mile with a range of up to 6,000 nautical miles (depending on model). Well-trimmed fore and aft at all speeds, the catamarans are able to explore farther than their competitors with the protective grounding skegs making them beachable in emergencies or for servicing in remote areas.

Mark Elkington said the ILIAD design is all about minimising the many compromises in

both mono and multihull vessels for extended liveaboard cruising to more remote places to see unspoilt cruising grounds and locations that are just not accessible with most mainstream power boats.

"Firstly, we wanted to make a boat that was as safe and comfortable as can be for each model's size, to offer more comfort for the crew," Mark said.

"Multihulls were the natural choice for this project as they not only offer the stability without complex stabilising systems, but we have a separate engine room in each hull.

"In the event of water entering an engine room, having separate engine rooms offers real peace of mind. You are highly likely to always have one engine to get you to safety.

"Not many power boats offer such shallow drafts of 1.25 - 1.35m (depending on the model) while offering such volume per metre of boat.

"Shallow draft allows safer anchoring as you can access the most interesting bays and inlets to see places you'd normally pass by.

"Further, you have the security of a keel/skeg to protect your running gear should a grounding occur, or more likely, if you touch the ocean floor while at anchor at low tide.

"While we are not promoting that our boats are designed to run aground, the design does

offer owners peace of mind if they touch the ocean floor while at anchor or while navigating at low speeds into a difficult shallow waterway or an area of poorly charted water," he said.

Standard fuel specification by model provided can be discussed with each buyer and increased if the specific choice of model requires more range at a particular speed.

Mark said that with multihull hull design, buyers cannot have it all.

"A top speed of 25+ knots does not necessarily give you fuel efficiency and longer range at lower speeds, just as impressive fuel burn figures of seven knots that achieve just over one litre per nautical mile will not give you a high top-end speed," he said.

"ILIAD has balanced design around the best of both worlds, offering very impressive long-range fuel burn numbers of 1.2 - 1.5 litres per nautical mile, depending on the model, with respectable top-end speeds of 20 - 22 knots; ideal passage-making speeds of 8 - 9 knots with very comfortable fast cruise speeds of 16 - 18 knots.

"Our boats will not appeal to those buyers who just want speed, bling and gadgets. Simplicity and ease of operation is our ethic, and you will see this in all our boats.

"Systems have to be simple, logical and manageable with the resources you have on

Above: Space to host large groups on the ILIAD 70 flybridge.

Top left: The ILIAD 70 on Sydney Harbour.

Below left: ILIAD Catamarans naval architect Riccardo Bulgarelli.

board. All clients are not engineers, mechanics and electricians, so minimising complex systems is part of ILIAD's objective. Back-up systems and redundancy can be built into each ILIAD - that's our power of choice," Mark said.

FIRST CATS OFF THE RANK

Multihull Solutions has already sold an ILIAD 70 to Queensland buyer, Ty Hermans, who has been closely involved in customising his boat from the early design stages and completed its handover in 2019.

Ty and his partner Gina had been in the market for a power cat for almost two years before choosing a new ILIAD.

"When we embarked on our next project we literally spent 18 months developing the spec we wanted to see in our new boat," Ty said.

"We looked at every multihull on the market, scoured every boat show in Australia, Europe and the USA to ensure we saw everything that was on offer on the planet.

"The decision to finally purchase an ILIAD from Multihull Solutions ended up being an easy one, as they had looked after us so well with our last boat purchase (a Fountain Pajot Saba 50 Hull #1).

"The team at Multihull Solutions were sensational and took our detailed spec to ILIAD, and the next thing we knew we were building this mountain of a boat and having a blast along the way.

"We loved that ILIAD was setting out to design a range of boats that we could have a lot of influence in and be able to include the features and design elements that we wanted.

"Obviously, price was another driving factor that allowed us to simply get so much more for our money.

"Finally, we just love being part of a brand that we believe is offering a real game-changing product to the multihull market," Ty said.

Ty and Gina brought specific requirements to the shipyard's design team when they made the decision to order an ILIAD 70.

"For us, it was important to balance functional design with features that make extended trips or living onboard comfortable. Our shopping list was extensive and we weren't really concerned with the type of blinds we were going to pick, but rather that everything for us had to be functional.

"Our experience with the Saba 50 taught us that 95 per cent of the time we were on the boat by ourselves, so we focussed on the design being extremely comfortable for us as a couple while also very welcoming for when we had multiple families or groups on board.

"Above all, the boat had to be able to be managed by us without crew, and single handed if the other person was out of action.

"The main deck master bedroom is perfect and offers a huge volume of seamless living



Above:
The ILIAD 70 master suite can be designed on the main level or below deck.

space when it is just the two of us – something that no other boat could provide – while also being very private when guests are onboard.

"The square window design is very practical resulting in maximum interior volume, and it minimises UV light and heat into the interior living spaces. Having four other guest bedrooms comprising two huge king-size VIP rooms, one guest king bedroom and a three-bed bunk room, provides a level of accommodation that we would have had to buy a 120ft monohull to get even close to!

"The internal raised pilot house is a sensational feature for extended voyages, and the way we have arranged it all really works in with the main deck layout.

"The huge hydraulic platform and flybridge-mounted crane offers us the flexibility to carry a range of tenders, jetskis and other toys (I am definitely swinging my Harley onboard for the east coast trip!)

"Storage for us was an important feature, and the dedicated dive lockers and surfboard storage on the 70' are unreal, and the rest of the boat has really well planned storage spaces and utility rooms.

"So there are some big features that we love, but I reckon it's the small features that have gone into the ILIAD 70 that are going to make a huge difference for us living on the boat," he said.

Ty and Gina have big plans for their new ILIAD 70 to take advantage of its outstanding range.

"The 70 has a fuel range out to 4,500nm, so we can take her almost anywhere on the planet, which is pretty cool. We plan to

spend a few years in and around the east coast of Australia and the nearby Pacific Islands so our family and friends can enjoy the boat.

"Then, if we haven't yet upgraded to the ILIAD 90, we will take the 70 across to the Med for a few years. We had such a great time in the Med on the Saba 50, and the ILIAD 70 is going to be an unbelievable platform for exploring the region, so we can't wait to get back there.

"Then we can circle back to Australia via the Americas and perhaps be the first ILIAD to do the full round trip," Ty said.

The experience of being involved in the initial design and build process of their boat has been a key highlight for the 70's first buyers.

"Obviously things are still relatively new for ILIAD and there is so much the brand will learn along the way, but I can 100 per cent recommend to anyone looking at their next 40-100ft power boat that they should take a look at ILIAD Catamarans," Ty said.

"The semi-custom nature of the boats themselves and your ability to maximise the value of your investment in a great quality boat, supported by a cracking team, is why I reckon ILIAD Catamarans has to be part of any boat-buying journey – if nothing else, just so you can see what is possible!"

ASIA PACIFIC LAUNCH

Global Marine has appointed Multihull Solutions as their first dealer with exclusive rights for the Asia Pacific region.

Mark Elkington said interest in the range has already been very strong and that Multihull Solutions was the ideal partner to take best advantage of the opportunities in the region.

"Before we even officially launched the range to the world market, Multihull Solutions had sold three ILIADs and have sold three more since while dealing with strong interest on orders across the range," Mark said.

"It's an extremely exciting start to what we are confident will become one of the most successful power cat projects in the industry." ■

MORE INFORMATION

Read full reviews of the ILIAD 50 and ILIAD 70 in this edition.

T: +61 7 5452 5164

E: info@multihullsolutions.com.au

W: multihullsolutions.com.au