

never excelled at Physics. I'm not sure why, being somewhat scientifically inclined, but I saw more success with test tubes and Chinese hamster ovary cells than with mousetraps, eggs and popsicle sticks. Having muddled through what seemed like an excruciating semester of high school physics – my mousetrap-powered vehicle spun in reverse, the egg-drop project bombed, the popsicle bridge looked more like an ashtray – it was with suspicious dread that I received the final assignment of the year: build a boat. Not just any boat, mind you, but one that floats and can carry you and the three giggling teammates you've been assigned to work with. We were to meet at the local pool the following week to test our projects. I trudged home to search for a surplus of Styrofoam while the rest of my team went



off to lighten their hair with lemons and look for bathing suits. A week later, our cardboard raft disintegrated within minutes. I had glued some popsicle sticks on for good measure but they apparently didn't help.

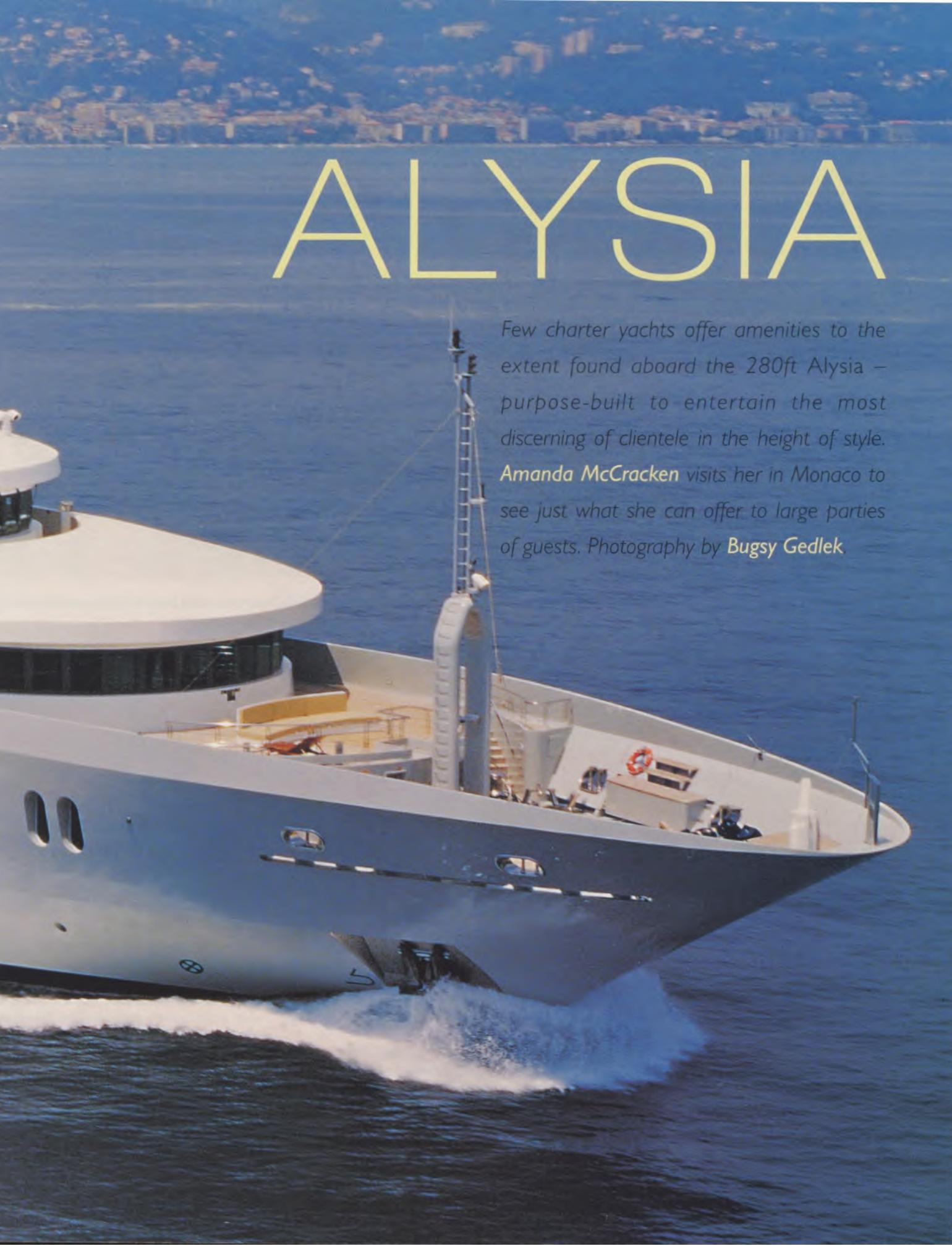
Luckily for the megayacht industry I abandoned this budding boat building career, concentrating instead on getting to know real builders who could teach me a thing or two. One such meeting was with the team at Westport Shipyards, led by experienced boat builder Daryl Wakefield. Over the past 30 years, Westport has evolved to lead the North American industry in composite construction, recently reaching a new milestone with the launch of the first of their 50M series, the 164ft Vango (page 110). Westport is just one of the prolific North American builders making headway on the world superyacht scene, in the company of notables such as Burger, Trinity and Delta Marine. In this issue we highlight their significant projects in our listing of the 100 Largest North American-Built Yachts (page 73), a compilation that has seen an impressive 13 new additions in the last year and now spans from 135 to 325 feet.

Years after I sank the USS cardboard, I found myself wandering from stateroom to stateroom, critiquing the finish and quality aboard the 280ft Alysia (page 98). She was preparing for back-to-back charters in the Med and was abustle with activity, her marble work polished to mirror-like finish. Now this is a purpose-built project, designed specifically for charter and offering guests the very best in amenities, including the most extensive spa facilities we've seen on a boat this size. And, from the ultimate in charter to the ultimate in sailing regattas, we happily participated in the recent St. Barth's Bucket (page 44) and Antigua Classic Week (page 48) events, annual reminders of what enjoying a superyacht is all about – whether motoring around as a spectator or participating as crew aboard a running classic. Maybe I could give boat building another shot, this time with some professional advice, like that offered in our feature Concept Through Construction (page 118), a complete guide to building your own custom superyacht.

...on second thought, maybe I should leave that to the experts.

Rebecca





ALYSIA

*Few charter yachts offer amenities to the extent found aboard the 280ft Alysia – purpose-built to entertain the most discerning of clientele in the height of style. **Amanda McCracken** visits her in Monaco to see just what she can offer to large parties of guests. Photography by **Bugsy Gedlek**.*



The saloon on the main deck (above and below right) is more formal than other areas of the yacht, making it the ideal place to listen to music and enjoy cocktails before dinner. The reception area (below left) is spectacular when lit at night.



P rincipalite de Monaco. The name itself evokes images of royalty, fast cars and diamond-studded glamour. Not only is she the playground for the rich and famous, but she features a

harbor that at one time or another will see every superyacht that has ever been launched — and one that is home port to some of the most spectacular and elegant yachts in the world. Home of the world-famous Grand Prix, a multitude of cultural exhibitions, and the infamous Casino de Monte Carlo,

Monaco is the place to be seen. She is also home to the 280ft Alysia, a true "grand mistress" of the sea. Sistership to the 280ft Annaliese, Alysia is the result of a successful project executed by businessman Andreas Liveras.

Mr. Liveras' passion for yachts is legendary among owners and industry professionals in the superyachts fraternity, as is his ferocious appetite for the yachting business. So it is no surprise that just two years after launching Annaliese he added Alysia to his collection. Both yachts are built to SOLAS (Safety of

Life at Sea) regulations and accommodate up to 36 passengers with an impressive crew to guest ratio of 1:1. Experience and the ability to listen to existing clients is important when you are building a yacht for charter, especially when you want to reap rewards on your investment. The essential ingredient of any charter yacht is to understand what your clients want and will love about being on board a glamorous yacht — a throw back, if you like, to the Golden Era when film stars were photographed aboard with politicians and the rich and famous. Rather astutely,



The vast formal dining room (below) is one of the several dining areas onboard and is on the main deck which adjoins the main deck saloon (above). Silver candelabras, crystal and china make for a splendid table setting.



Liveras has filled an untapped market between yachts that can accommodate 12 guests and the vast impersonal cruise ships.

Alysia's naval architecture came from the boards of Alpha Marine, with exterior styling by Alpha Marine and Lally Poulas, and interior design by the same team along with Sophia Dafnia. Unlike many large yachts, for which chartering is a secondary consideration after personal use, both Annaliese and Alysia were built specifically for charter, with the full intention of offering the best in facilities, in much the same way that an exclusive hotel

offers fabulous comfort, decoration and service, with the utmost attention to detail. But these vessels have a distinct advantage—they offer a different view every day and the menu is whatever you desire.

Bringing Alysia directly from the Neorion shipyard in Greece to Monaco was intentional and a shrewd business move on Mr. Liveras's part. Our visit happened to coincide with the Top Marques show, where fantasies of car enthusiasts, many of whom own superyachts, are lived out to the fullest. All around the breathtaking exhibition of prototypes of the

newest—and most expensive—luxury cars in the world, deals are quietly taking place for orders of new and rare thoroughbreds. And where you find fast and expensive cars, you will certainly find talk of helicopters, jets, planes and yachts. So what better way to capitalize on a venture than to use your yacht as a platform at the show for VIPs who are essentially potential charterers?

As we headed towards the harbor, still deliberating whether to buy the Bugatti Veyron or the Aston Martin DB9, we spied the distinct but not inelegant lines of Alysia



Ideal for an al fresco buffet party or casual dinner under the stars, the bridge deck aft (above) is one of the most popular areas for guests to congregate. The helicopter drop-off pad (below left) makes a perfect platform for sunloungers, while the plunge pool is found at the bow (below right).



through the tangled wires and half-erected grandstands for the upcoming Grand Prix. We turned to musing about the possibility of James Bond roaring down the road in the latest prototype car or dropping onto Alysia's helicopter pad for some menacing action... but we mustn't get too carried away.

Alysia stands head and shoulders above the other yachts, except possibly Lady Mourn, but her lines are well proportioned to take in the vast areas that lie within her steel hull and superstructure. It is certain that she will not have a couture interior like some private

yachts of similar length, as it would be foolhardy to lavish such extravagance on a vessel that is in use 365 days a year, or to display original works of art that a spirited child might decide to enhance, although we all know this was a ploy of many an old master. The intention was always to make this yacht a dwelling that could cater to the whole family as well as high profile companies and individuals. Stepping on board we were taken up to the bridge deck where we joined guests at an exclusive luncheon party already in full swing. An attentive Liveras watched guests' every

move while speaking to each one individually and welcoming them on board. As he mingled he turned quietly to his stewardess and enquired whether the wine was chilled to the correct temperature, the tables were set properly, the guests were getting sunburned and the buffet laid out to his satisfaction. The chefs and stewardesses impressively and calmly negotiated their way around guests to set out the feast that came from the yacht's professional kitchen. The vessel is managed with military precision by young Ukrainian captain Leonid Matkovsky, but this isn't silver service,



The versatile upper deck saloon (this page) is a relaxing retreat in the daytime and in the evening the ambiance can be completely changed with the use of lighting while guests enjoy a drink at the bar.



it is service with a smile from a crew of young, pleasant staff of numerous nationalities. Alysia is vast and bursting with every conceivable luxury that one could desire while on vacation, from huge pop-up plasma television screens, personal entertainment systems, toiletries, and swathes of white fluffy towels and robes, to a cinema for viewing your favorite films and spa facilities offering an extensive variety of pampering services.

There are four decks for guests to explore with a fifth dedicated to the essential machinery and expansive engine room with

twin 2,750hp Caterpillars powering the yacht to her cruising speed of between 16 and 18 knots. On the lower deck, the magnificent spa area, completely bedecked in exotic marbles, among them Azul Paraiso from Brazil and Arabescato and Michaelangelo from Italy. The Egyptian Silvia Oro marble lends a magnificent natural golden hue to the wet areas. The spa is the largest on any vessel we have seen to date, taking up almost a third of the total internal space on this deck. Services offered include thalassotherapy, massages, manicures and hairdressing from

full-time professional beauticians, including a steam room and sauna. All treatments are included in the price of the charter, although the products are extra. A well-equipped gym shares the same space as a children's playroom, just off of the main room with its indoor circular spa pool.

Guests are welcomed onboard in the main deck lobby, strikingly high in structure and fitted out from top to bottom in stark white marble, except for a small reception desk. From here, the modern open tread main staircase, also in white marble, winds upwards







A favorite spot for children, the cinema (above) is equipped with hundreds of DVDs to enjoy from the comfortable viewing chairs. This area also has a computer for guest use and an area for playing cards.

past a stunning piece of blue Macaub Brazilian marble art, suspended like an enormous painting. For those who prefer not to take the stairs, there is a conventional elevator which travels between decks.

Arranged over three decks, the majority of the guest staterooms are forward on the main and upper decks on either side of the long, rather pedestrian-looking corridors. The cabins themselves, however, are far from ordinary, and even the normally heavy fire doors to each room work with effortless ease. Ten of the cabins are named after Liveras' children or grandchildren and the rest after

Greek islands. Similar in size and design they all have Arabescato and Michaelangelo Italian marble bathrooms, walk-in closets, (with full-length mirrors) and large double or single beds with small sofas, and a view of the ocean through large windows.

Each of the cabins is individually decorated in rich colored silks, satins, velvets, alcantara and cotton, set against a background of brushed limed oak. The feel is ritzy and elegant, but at the same time relaxing. Sophia Dafnia, who has been working with Liveras on the interiors of his yachts for over 21 years, knows exactly what is needed when putting the

practicalities to work. "When choosing the luxurious fabrics," she explains, "I try to go for interesting relaxing shades to suit all tastes and to blend in well with the wood. The fabrics used are very fine quality, and many have been low flame treated to comply with the rules and regulations. I look at the practical side when choosing the fabrics and all the other interior furnishings from the service ware, domestic equipment, decorative items and even the crew uniforms. One has to think how the crew will look... without being too delicate or taking up too much of their time to maintain or clean while on charter, as it is most important for the



The VIP suite (above right column) enjoys privacy, located away from the rest of the guest bedrooms on the bridge deck. The area comprises a bedroom, large bathroom and separate office, which is found just behind the bridge area, with views from starboard-side windows.

crew to concentrate on the service requested by our demanding clients."

On the upper deck is the master suite, placed all the way forward and utilizing the whole of the beam to the side decks. The area can be completely closed off from the rest of the vessel, with a separate staircase for private entry and security purposes if desired. The suite includes a children's or personal staff twin cabin, forward of which is the office and bedroom. The bed faces a large semi-circle of deep recessed windows, which offer an almost unobstructed 180-degree view. To port is a massive marble-clad bathroom and

substantial his-and-hers walk-in dressing rooms. A private deck for sunbathing or enjoying a quiet breakfast is reached through a door from the bedroom. A separate VIP suite is found on the bridge deck just behind the hi-tech bridge, with its own sitting room, bedroom and large bathroom. Both of these suites are decorated in a similar fashion to the rest of the cabins.

The upper deck houses the cinema, which offers a guest computer with internet access along with a games table for those who aren't in the mood to watch a film from the individual reclining seats.

There are two massive saloons onboard. The main deck saloon is the largest and has a more formal ambiance. As you enter there is an ante room with a sofa, coffee table and games table which is a very pleasant place to relax with a book. Through a swathe of off-white custom-made carpet one enters a symmetrical drawing room with a bar and grand piano. At the press of a button the lighting can be changed to set any mood. This is the ideal place for enjoying cocktails before entering the adjoining formal dining room. Dining by candlelight is particularly pleasant here, with huge candelabras gracing the two oval tables.



The guest rooms are all elegantly decorated in a similar style with soft colors and plush furnishings.

The upper deck offers a complete contrast in an atmosphere with a more fun al fresco air. Shaded by the deck above, two magnificent solid wood dining tables make a delightful place to enjoy any meal. Moving indoors one reaches the saloon, similar in size to the one on the main deck, but constructed in a completely different style. Although still light and modern in style, the sitting area is far more conducive to family get-togethers with the square edges of the room softened by built-in sofas and loose chairs. There is also a bar at the entrance and a card table opposite.

Above is a dedicated sundeck for the sunworshippers where the drop-off helicopter pad becomes a raised sunbathing area adorned with reclining chairs. There are two bar areas, one with barbecuing facilities and a spa pool with surrounding sunpads. There are numerous hidden retreats as well.

Interior designer Sophia concludes, "SOLAS did restrict us in many ways, and this is where private yachts differ to our two charter vessels. You have to have certain features which are not so chic, for instance, the orange life boats, heavy safety doors, safety equipment etc..."

Yes, this element is something to be aware of but we didn't really notice the lifeboats, as they were cleverly aligned with the profile of the yacht – and let's face it you are not going to go looking for them. Alysia and Annaliese are set to enjoy continuous chartering and those who are lucky enough to step aboard either of these yachts will be assured of a wonderful experience. □

LOA: 280ft (85.3m) LWL: 244ft (74.4m) Beam: 47ft (14.44m) Draft: 13ft (4.2m) Displacement: 2,887 tons Engines: 2 x 2,750hp Caterpillar 3606 Propellers: 2 x KaMeMa variable pitch Speed (max/cruise): 18/16 knots Fuel capacity: 61,936gals Range@ 14 knots: 7,000nm Bow thruster: KaMeMa Tunnel Thruster 1100-50, 300kM Stabilizers: Fincantieri retractable Generators (main/emergency): 3 x 500kM Caterpillar 3412 1 x Caterpillar 3406 Watermakers: 2 x TEMAK 10,566gals per day Freshwater capacity: 29,115gals Grey/black water capacity: 10,321gals Sewage system: EVAC AquaMar Bio-Unit

Fire-control system: Marioff Hi Fog Security/monitoring systems: Kelvin Hughes MANTA 2300/Vosper Thornycroft Air-conditioning: Heinen Et Hopman and Carrier Communication/navigation electronics: Kelvin Hughes MANTA 2300 and Vosper Thornycroft Entertainment systems: Sony Mega, Bose Owner and guests: 36 Crew: 34 Tenders: 2 x 26ft Special Craft: 1 x 16ft RIB, Glyfada Marine Tender launching system: Mor Saverio Passerelle: Mor Saverio Paint: Balid Awlgrip Construction: Steel hull and superstructure/aluminum deckhouses Classification: SOLAS Passenger Vessel, Det Norske Veritas, Class Notation @ 100 A1

Yacht management: n/a Naval architect: Alpha Marine, Greece Exterior styling: Alpha Marine, Greece, and Lally Poulias Interior design: Alpha Marine, Greece, Sophia Dafnia and Lally Poulias Charter: Martina Rakus Liveras Yachts Tel: + 377 97 97 45 10 info@liverasyachts.com Charter rates: 94,500 per day (\$121,000) plus food, drink, fuel and all other expenses Price guide: n/a Builder/Year: Neorion Shipyard/2005 Contact: Neorion Shipyard 1 Neoriou Street Hermoupolis, 84 100 Syros Island, Greece Tel: +30 22810 96000 Fax: +30 22810 82008 sec@neorion-shipyards.gr www.neorion-shipyards.gr

