

They say you should never judge a dentist by the state of their teeth, but can you choose a yacht designer based on their own boats? *Cecile Gauert* investigates the passion projects of the biggest names in the business

THIS TIME IT'S PERSONAL



Andrew Winch had no trouble selling his much-loved Jeanneau 64 (right). He replaced it with two boats he can keep close to his home in the UK, a lovely Dutch-built PTS 26 runabout he had customised extensively and a graceful 5.5m Tofinou daysailer (above)

PHOTOGRAPHY: KATHY MANSFIELD. COURTESY OF WINCH DESIGN



Andrew Winch

Studio: Winch Design

Notable yacht projects: *Madame Gu*, *Dilbar* and production yachts such as the Jeanneau 64

Owens: Tofinou sailboat *Bagheera* and PTS 26 *Baloo*

"I've always had a boat," says Andrew Winch, who learned how to sail at 14, and crossed the Atlantic on a 16-metre Out Island at 21. That boat was "perfect for a marina," he says, and between breakdowns in machinery (they lost the generator) and crew communications, the sail was a hairy one. "We went past the Canaries and by pure chance we got to Antigua." Among all the boats he has had, he remembers fondly a 22-metre sloop called *Golden Opus* that he built with Ron Holland and an Irish partner in New Zealand. "For about three years, I co-owned that boat until I could not afford it anymore because I had school fees."

In recent years it's been the arrival of grandchildren that has steered him in a new direction. He sold his Jeanneau 64 *Polar Bear* to American clients after one last sail in Greece. "They bought it with everything on it, the dinghy, the china. I was very pleased," he says.

When he first got the boat, Winch invited naval architect Philippe Briand to sail with him in a regatta; they won. "I have this little cup, which is rather nice." Despite all the memories, he decided it was time to move on and replaced *Polar Bear* with two boats that the whole family can enjoy. "I've got two grandchildren now," he says. "It's hard to take little kids on a sailing boat."

The first motor boat he's commissioned is a Dutch-built PTS 26 he called *Baloo*, and he also bought a smaller sailing yacht, a classic fibreglass Tofinou, which he named *Bagheera*.

"[The Tofinou] has a small two-stroke diesel engine and it's beautifully done - mahogany caprail, beautiful North Sails and four of us can sail together in it," he says. The PTS 26 is inspired by a 1930s design by Carl Gustaf Petersson; the modern-day version is by Vripack and is built by Statement Marine. Winch, who had the two boats colour matched, says it was a bit of a "luxury decision" but it is perfect for the family. "We've got heating, a dinghy to get to the beach, a little cabin, dayhead, a hot water shower at the back of the boat, and a galley to make some tea. It does 20 knots and I can go from our harbour to the Isle of Wight in one hour and a half. It is one of the highest-spedded boats [Statement Marine] have built," he says. It also has a davit and an anchor, a first for one of these craft. Where a pole and rope may suffice on the inland waterways of the Netherlands, an anchor is a must for the British coast. "We engineered the whole thing. I also did two tables that go down so I can make a big day bed to relax, and two chairs that go up and down. I absolutely love it." Since the world-famous designer ordered his boat, the shipyard has sold five more in the UK.

The boats arrived last summer, so the family has had little time to cruise so far. "This coming year is going to be about going to the beach, having a glass of rosé, listening to music, it is going to be about family time," he says. But Winch is already looking beyond next season. "I'd like to build a wooden boat," he says. "I can't be without a boat."

