

Into the Wild



Captain Colin Griffinson has continuously renovated the Pacific Yellowfin since acquiring it in the year 2000.

Launched in 1943, this former U.S. Navy mine planter has lived several remarkable lives throughout the second half of the twentieth century. Today, she sails once more—this time as a high-end charter yacht exploring the spellbinding coastline of Western Canada.

Texte Marc Fleury - Photos DR

OPENING THE STORY of Pacific Yellowfin is like stepping into one of the most turbulent chapters of modern history. In the early 1940s, World War II was raging, and the U.S. Navy feared German U-boats might strike along America's East Coast. In response, an ambitious naval construction program was launched, producing a large fleet of military vessels designed to counter the threat. Among them was JMP-64, launched in 1943. Built at Billings Shipyard in Deer Isle, Maine, using traditional plank-on-frame construction, this 35-meter "Junior Mine Planter," designed by naval architect H.C. Hanson, was intended to lay defensive minefields protecting American harbors. During wartime, she also transported heavy equipment and personnel. When the war ended, her career took a scientific turn. In 1946, she joined the Califor-

The Pacific Northwest coastline remains one of the most captivating sailing areas on the planet.



From the shores of Vancouver to the southern reaches of Alaska, the boat's destination and itinerary vary according to the seasons and demand.



nia Department of Fish and Game, serving as a hydrographic and offshore fisheries research vessel. In the decades that followed, she operated in Cuban waters during the Missile Crisis and the Bay of Pigs invasion, then roamed numerous seas as an expedition and research vessel for the U.S. Navy. Her story then entered a more clandestine chapter: she was chartered by the United Fruit Company, later revealed to have acted as a CIA front in Central America. Eventually, she was moored along the Sacramento River in California, where she remained motionless for ▶



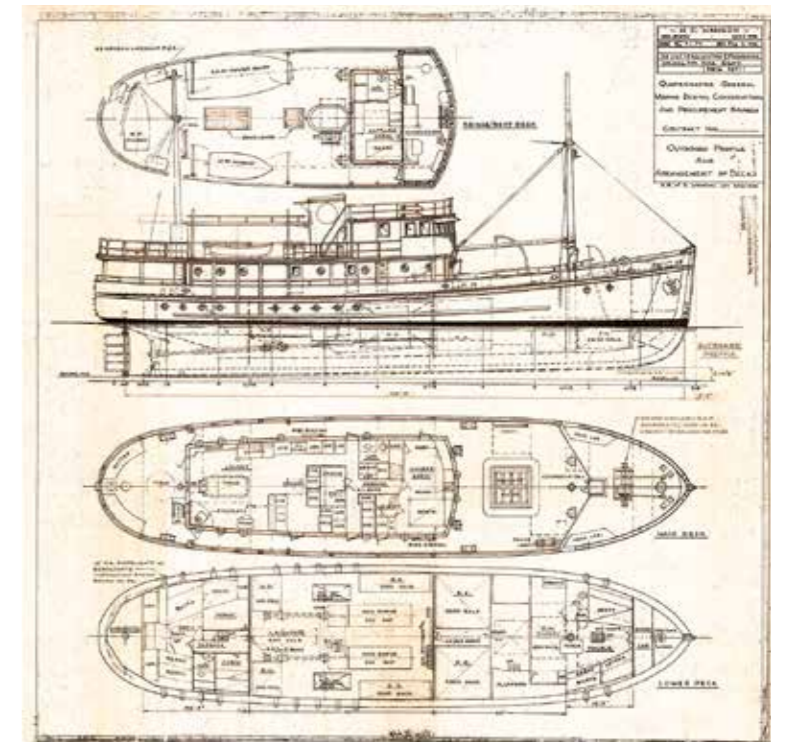
The boat's lines have not been modified since its construction. Its current owner has endeavored to modernize it while preserving its original spirit.



The JMP 64 belonged to a fleet of 75 identical ships built during the 1940s.



This former minesweeper served as a houseboat on the Sacramento River, in California, in the 1960s.



The boat was built using traditional plank-on-frame construction by the Billings Shipyard, located in the state of Maine.



Visible deck beams, large copper portholes, original flooring... The various renovations carried out on the boat have managed to preserve its classic yacht spirit.



The presence of a large skylight above the vast saloon floods this living space with superb natural light.



The dining area occupies the aft section of the main deck. Passengers enjoy a panoramic view of the surrounding nature.



Photo of the galley during its refitting. Its layout is now perfectly suited to the needs of a vessel operating as a charter yacht.

► nearly twenty years, seemingly destined to fade into obscurity. But the vessel was not finished yet. In the 1980s, she was purchased by Tacoma Tow Boat Company and returned to service as a research vessel. Later, an oil magnate acquired her with the intention of restoring her for-

mer glory. In 2000, he sold her to Colin Griffinson—her current owner and the man responsible for her remarkable renaissance. Griffinson renamed her Pacific Yellowfin and has devoted the last quarter century to an extensive, meticulous restoration. From recaulking and refastening to replacing planking and completely refurbishing the interior, the yacht has undergone an almost total refit, as reported by Superyacht Times.

YET MODERNIZATION never came at the expense of authenticity. The vessel retains her original spirit while benefiting from discreet upgrades. She is still powered by her two Atlas-Imperial diesel engines—icons of early twentieth-century marine engineering that equipped countless working vessels until 1950. These engines, dating back to 1920, have been carefully modernized to ►



With its mountainous coastlines and numerous islands, British Columbia offers a truly grand natural playground.



A massive ship's wheel stands at the center of the impressive bridge. Note the presence of the engine room telegraph to the right of the wheel.



Entering the engine room is a true journey back in time. Dating from 1920, the two original Imperial Atlas diesel engines have been modernized to meet current safety standards.

► comply with today's safety standards. Her hull, constructed of yellow cedar, fir, and oak, remains true to her origins. Today, Pacific Yellowfin cruises at 10 to 12 knots and offers luxury expedition charters through the vast, untouched wilderness of British Columbia on Canada's west coast—one of the most captivating cruising grounds on Earth. Stepping aboard is like entering a living museum of maritime heritage. The expansive saloon and dining area, adorned with period wood paneling, exposed deck beams, and large copper portholes, immediately transports guests to another era. A generous skylight floods the space with natural light, enhancing the warmth of the original timber floors and craftsmanship. Four guest cabins—modernized yet faithful to the yacht's classic character—provide refined comfort. Depending on configuration, they can accommodate up to twelve guests in total. Five crew members, including the captain, ensure a seamless onboard experience. The galley and bathrooms have also been updated with contemporary equipment suited to the demands of a high-end charter operation. On deck, the at-

The long side decks add to the charm of this witness to last century's shipbuilding.



mosphere is equally distinctive. Long side decks emphasize the vessel's purposeful lines, while an imposing wooden wheel dominates the bridge. The original engine room telegraph remains in place beside the helm—a powerful reminder of the yacht's working past. Below, entering the engine room feels like traveling back in time, where gleaming Atlas-Imperial engines stand as mechanical sculptures. But beyond heritage and aesthetics, Pacific Yellowfin is designed for exploration. She carries three ►



The Pacific Yellowfin offers the opportunity to discover the raw and unspoiled beauty of Canada's West in exceptional conditions. The boat can reach a speed of 10 to 12 knots when needed.

A WITNESS FROM THE LAST CENTURY TO DISCOVER BREATHTAKING LANDSCAPES.



SPECIFICATIONS

LENGTH	34.60 m (113 ft)
BEAM	9.14 m
DRAFT	3.66 m
DISPLACEMENT	443 tons
DRIVE	Shaft drive
ENGINES	2 x 325 hp original Atlas-Imperial diesels
FUEL CAPACITY	68,137 liters
WATER CAPACITY	17,043 liters
CABINS	4
GUESTS	Up to 12
BUILDER	Billings Shipyard (Maine, USA)
CONSTRUCTION	Wood

Aluminum tenders, kayaks, stand-up paddleboards, mountain bikes, 50cc motorbikes... The Pacific Yellowfin is richly equipped to set off on exploration.



It is not uncommon to spot humpback whales while sailing through the Strait of Georgia, which separates Vancouver Island from the mainland.



Grizzly bears, along with wolves and eagles, are often part of the scenery during cruises.

► aluminum tenders, multiple kayaks, and stand-up paddleboards, along with water skis, wakeboards, fishing and diving equipment, and even mountain bikes. A waterslide extends from the flybridge, allowing guests to plunge into the surprisingly warm waters of Desolation Sound, where summer temperatures can reach 24°C.

THIS VAST FJORD, located south of British Columbia's island chain, benefits from minimal currents and tides, its waters warmed by the summer sun. As the season shifts, so does the adventure. From June through August, the yacht cruises Desolation Sound, taking full advantage of its calm, warm waters. In September and October, itineraries head north toward the Great Bear Rainforest and the southern reaches of Alaska. There, the experience becomes a true wildlife safari. Humpback whales surface in the Strait of Georgia between Vancouver Island and the mainland. Orcas, dolphins, grizzly bears, wolves, and bald eagles populate this rugged wilderness, offering encounters found nowhere else in the New World. Few former warships can claim to host a jacuzzi on the foredeck or a waterslide for guests—but Pacific Yellowfin blends history and indulgence with remarkable ease. ■

TRAVEL INFORMATION

Location

Pacific Yellowfin cruises along the coastline of British Columbia, Canada's vast western province, stretching from the surroundings of Vancouver to the southern limits of Alaska.

Getting There

Direct flights from Paris to Vancouver are available with several airlines. From Vancouver, guests transfer to the yacht by seaplane.

Entry Requirements

No visa is required for most European travelers, but a valid passport is mandatory. An electronic travel authorization (eTA) must be obtained prior to departure.

When to Go

June to August: Desolation Sound for warm-water cruising.
September to October: Northern expeditions toward the Great Bear Rainforest and Alaskan waters for exceptional wildlife viewing.



It is quite unusual to see a former warship equipped with a water slide...

Modernized, the cabins have retained all their charm.

Charter Rates

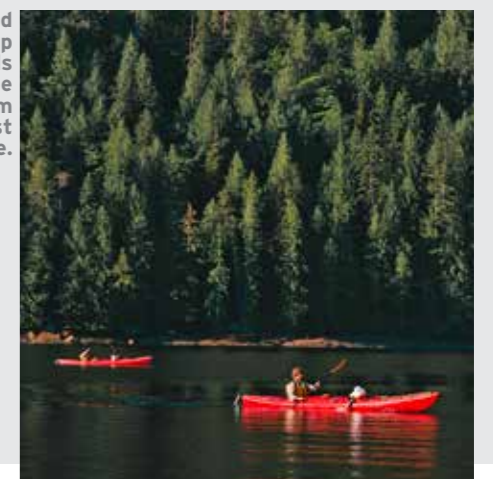
From € 111,000 per week for nine guests. The rate includes a fully all-inclusive experience: gourmet dining, beverages, and access to all onboard equipment. Four crew members sail in addition to the captain.

■ **Information and bookings**
pacificyellowfin.com



Up to 12 passengers can take part in the adventures offered aboard the Pacific Yellowfin.

Kayaks and stand-up paddleboards reveal the islands from their wildest angle.



What could be better than a jacuzzi on the foredeck to admire the sunset?