

# ATHOS READY TO REIGN

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Still making waves after her debut in 2010, the schooner *Athos* is back on the water, refitted for her latest owner and ready for new adventures

After a year of charter voyages and a season of sailing with her new owners, the two masted Schooner *Athos* returned home to the Netherlands for a refit of almost unprecedented scale. Under the supervision of her original Naval Architect Hoek Design, alongside her Dutch yacht builder Royal Huisman, the refit begun in September 2021. *Athos* has undergone a 1.25m hull extension and interior re-modelling by Peter Mikic Interiors.

56m (184ft) on deck and over 61m over spars, *Athos*' launch back in 2010 was received with great attention. The Schooner format was given the 'Spirit of Tradition' treatment by the Hoek office, subjecting the design to extensive tank and wind tunnel testing. Numerous underwater appendages and rig iterations were assessed to obtain optimum

performance from the platform, with the yacht's 11m beam not only providing great scope for rig power but capacious interior volume for a sailing yacht.

Starting with *Athos*, the Hoek office has developed its hallmark deep-V hull form over the years, the low deck line sweeping up at both ends and combining with a shallow draught keel and centreboard.

From launch, the rig has sported furling booms, carbon spars and fibre rigging, with captive winches for sheets and halyards. Since then, push button operation has become commonplace in large sailing yachts and technologies have come on leaps and bounds to ensure reliability and improved load handling. These features would be revisited and upgraded to maintain the boat's focus on performance.







Hoek Design was responsible for the interior design, exterior styling and all naval architecture during the original build at Holland Jachtbouw in 2010. Eleven years later, they once again took a pivotal role in overseeing the update at HuisFit.

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Seizing the opportunity of a full refit, wide reaching changes were made across the board. The guest accommodation, owner’s cabin and main saloon all received considerable work, not to mention functional areas such as the crew service areas and galley. A stern

extension to the aft overhang added 1.25m to the length on deck, allowing for an increase in size of the owner’s aft cockpit. Re-modelling the deck architecture has facilitated a change of crew circulation aboard; the addition of a crew/navigational deckhouse forward was a game changer for *Athos*’ Captain Tony Brookes and his 10 crew.

According to Brookes, early feedback suggests that the refit was worth every penny. TIDE caught up with him just after he captained *Athos* on a rapid 16-day passage from Holland to the Bahamas for the new owner’s first cruise after the refit. He confirmed she is “definitely faster and quieter,” adding that “the stern, booms and crew deckhouse have been very well received by my industry peers”. The PBO rigging has been changed for carbon, and the booms are far lighter which Brookes says “has improved righting moment and stability, as well [as being] far more aesthetically pleasing.”

A huge emphasis is placed on the interior spaces and the hospitality side of the yacht, and yet so much of the Superyacht sailing experience comes down to the day-to-day operation, relying on sail handling and mode switching between racing/cruising/offshore/delivery. I asked Brookes to share his insights on how the latest update to *Athos* contributed to this aspect of her running. “In the 11 years I have been running *Athos* there has been a continual optimisation process. We change easily between racing, cruising and passage-making, requiring only a couple of days to switch. *Athos*’ sea keeping is the best I have experienced in my 42 years running many different sailing vessels. She is very well mannered at sea!”

The crew roster speaks well to the vibe onboard: 60% of the crew remain the same from the previous owner and with a global itinerary taking shape for the next few years, you can’t help but feel a little jealous. The yacht’s website reads more like the pages of National Geographic than a charter offering, so I asked Captain Brookes to elaborate on what comes next. “Four to five years round the world trip starting last November.” After *Athos* races in the St Barths Bucket this March, she’s off to Panama. “Alaska for the summer then south to Baja and Ise de Coco at the end of this year before heading for South Pacific. That’s the first year and a half anyway!” Brookes himself has completed 57 Atlantic Crossing and 6 Circumnavigations, but I can still sense the enthusiasm, and with a yacht like *Athos* to go the distance, who can blame him.

Revitalised for her owner, *Athos* retains her unique character whilst moving with the times. As her Captain says, “the adventure continues!”

