



WHEN THE APTLY NAMED *WINWIN* TOOK ST BARTHS BY STORM THIS YEAR, ALL EYES TURNED TO HER UNKNOWN SPANISH DESIGNER, JAVIER JAUDENES. SARAH NORBURY FINDS OUT MORE

WHO IS JAVIER JAUDENES





Above: *WinWin* came 3rd in the Superyacht Cup in Palma, losing out by a mere ten seconds off the top spot. Below: Jaudenes's latest project, a 46m/151ft design with a similar concept

Earlier this year a new superyacht appeared at the St Barths Bucket and won the first race she'd ever entered. She hit the headlines in the yachting press and scooped a brace of superyacht industry awards.

Her name was *WinWin*. She's a Baltic 33m/108ft ultra-modern object of desire. Built in carbon, she's panther-sleek, with a plumb bow and wide Volvo racer-style stern. She looks more like a record-breaking speed machine than a luxury cruiser. Hailed as a breakthrough in sailing superyacht design, she is a thrilling fusion of performance and comfort.

Adding to this radical new boat's mystique is the fact that her Spanish designer, Javier Jaudenes, seems to have come from nowhere. He is not Baltic's usual designer (Judel/Vrolijk) nor one of the elite that usually gets the call when a new project is in the offing.

There is no list of smaller superyachts on which he 'cut his teeth' – the only boats with his name on, along with that of design partner Lieven Theys, appear to be a TP52 and a production 31-footer called the Pacer 10. His company, Surge Projects Studio, described as 'specialising in naval architecture, speed prediction and fluid dynamics computation, 3D modelling and product engineering' has only been around since 2012.

How did this apparent newcomer catch the eye of *WinWin*'s owner, and how did he convince him to commit millions of pounds to an untried design? Tracking him down to find out wasn't too difficult. The Surge studio is in superyacht-central, Palma, Mallorca, where Jaudenes is feted as the next big thing in superyacht design.

The handsome, gentle-mannered 41-year-old speaks animatedly about his vision for a new generation of superyachts. As we talk it becomes clear that Jaudenes has a history that would have made him less of a wildcard, more of a calculated risk in the eyes of *WinWin*'s owner.

With a grandfather who competed in a Dragon in the 1968 Olympics and

a father who owned a series of racing yachts, Jaudenes sailed from an early age. As soon as he was old enough he joined the Spanish youth sailing programme in an Optimist dinghy, later moving up to a 420 and throughout his teenage years he raced at a high level on his father's boats.

"I knew I wanted to be a yacht designer when I was nine years old," he tells me. "It was always the behaviour of the boat in the water that interested me most. My friends remember me making model boats and testing them in Port Andratx in the summer holidays. Every year I made two boats, the hulls from things like polystyrene with sails cut from plastic bags, and tested them against each other."

STUDYING IN BRITAIN

Determined to fulfil his dream, he spent his university years in Britain studying for the highly regarded Southampton University's B.Eng in Naval Architecture. "It was a huge change from Mallorca," he says, "and when I arrived I could hardly speak English."

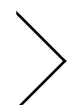
"I was focused on my work," he adds. "My tutor was Andy Claughton, who's now the technical director at Ben Ainslie's America's Cup challenge."

His singlemindedness paid off when his final-year project, a design for an ILC40, won the RYA annual design award.

His first job after graduation was with Barracuda naval architects in Madrid before joining a team converting a 65m/213ft tug into a luxury explorer yacht, now named *Seawolf*, in Mallorca. Then came two years in Rotterdam as site manager and owner's representative on a new-build 71m/233ft motor yacht, *Tuek*, for a Saudi prince. This job, says Jaudenes, was "like a master's degree in luxury yacht construction".

At the end of the project he returned to Palma with a strong desire to focus on sail rather than engine-powered boats and set up a design office with his friend Lieven Theys.

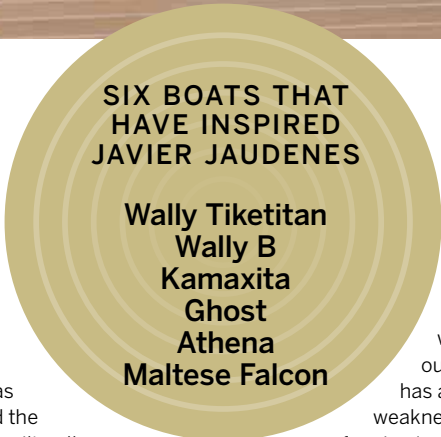
"It's very hard to make it in yacht design in this day and age."



"It was always the behaviour of the boat in the water that interested me most"



An impression of the interior of the Surge studio's new 46m/151ft yacht designed for the Mediterranean



**SIX BOATS THAT
HAVE INSPIRED
JAVIER JAUDENES**

- Wally Tiketitan
- Wally B
- Kamaxita
- Ghost
- Athena
- Maltese Falcon

he declares. "Somehow you have to break into the superyacht world, but it's so competitive, you need luck, and to find someone to trust you, to make a leap of faith."

Luck came in the form of a commission to design a TP52 for a Spanish owner that turned sour. The owner walked away leaving the boat half-complete at a yard in Hamble. If he hadn't, the project wouldn't have been taken up by Charles Dunstone, billionaire owner of Carphone Warehouse, and Jaudenes wouldn't have raced with him on *Red*, as the TP52 was christened. After *Red*, Dunstone invited the young designer to race with him on his 38m/125ft *Hamilton II*. This was Jaudenes's break into superyacht racing.

From the decks of *Hamilton* he observed the superyacht fleet and didn't much like what he saw. "The boats were built for cruising, but the owners were very keen on racing, so we were really pushing the boats. Owners commissioned yachts saying: 'No, no I don't want to race', so they bought a luxury cruiser then decided that, yes, they did want to compete.

"That's asking a lot from a structure and design point of view. Most boats were slow. I realised that compared with the latest racing boats these superyachts were outdated and I set my mind to designing a boat that would combine exciting performance with cruising luxury."

PASSION FOR THE CONCEPT

Fast forward, his concept ready, he showed it to Dunstone, but the billionaire didn't bite. This should have been a bitter blow, super-rich potential owners being like hens' teeth, but as fate would have it Jaudenes had been racing on the 29m/95ft Jongert *Scorpione dei Mare*, whose owner just happened to be looking to commission a new, faster boat.

Three other designers were in the frame, but Jaudenes's proposal won over the owner, a German businessman, by a big margin. Perhaps his passion was a factor. "I really felt this was something new and exciting, that I was introducing him to a new concept of boat," says Jaudenes.

From three potential yards specialising in high-tech composite hulls the project team chose Baltic because they could build the entire boat in one place without having to move it. The British studio Design Unlimited was responsible for interior styling.

Jaudenes worked all-out on the project for three years, testing "as many hull shapes and aesthetic ideas as possible, in the smallest detail". He constructed models of more than a dozen different versions.

The finished result, *WinWin*, is influenced by the latest racing hull shapes and is styled with what Jaudenes calls a Nordic aesthetic. The boat is extremely lightweight, from her pre-preg carbon-fibre hull to the interior furnishings. The innovation that's gathered the most press is the retractable prop system, seen for the first time on a sailing yacht, developed for *WinWin* by the Ship Motion Group.

As well as her immediate racing success, *WinWin* has already notched up 15,000 cruising miles, taking in Norway, Scotland, the Canaries and Caribbean.

I still want to know Jaudenes's secret. What is it that inspired him to create such a radical boat?

So I ask him about sailing and his philosophy.

"Well I'm a professional sailor," he explains, "when I have time." As skipper, tactician or strategist he has won a string of regattas and championships. It turns

out his talent has another use besides winning races. He has an uncanny ability to pinpoint a boat's strengths and weaknesses, a skill developed throughout his life in the course of racing in competitive fleets – he beat Ben Ainslie in Palma in 2001 when he won the first race in an IC45 regatta.

In the last few years he has used this talent to optimise a number of large racing yachts, most recently the winner of the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup in Sardinia, a 17-year-old Wally, giving her new Jaudenes wind beneath her wings. The designer raced on board as tactician.

"An optimisation project starts with me sailing on the boat as a doctor, diagnosing the boat's weaknesses, detecting them by feel. Then I run design solutions through sophisticated computer programs," he explains.

His overriding design philosophy seems to be inspired by his passion for sailing. "Older boats were hard to steer," he says, "but *WinWin* sails like a dinghy. That's really important in superyacht racing, which has an owner-driver rule. And when they cruise, boats should be sailing, not motoring." He cites "old" superyachts that "barely move".

With modern hull lines, boats can be powerful in light airs, he advocates. "I want to bring back the feeling of sailing, for real sailors. I believe boats like *WinWin* are the new way."

How important was it that *WinWin* put in an impressive performance in her first regattas? Very, admits Jaudenes. In the St Barths Bucket she won the first race, proving her speed, but a disqualification denied her overall victory. "We came 2nd overall in the Europeana race and 3rd in the Superyacht Cup in Palma. We came close to winning, we only lost by ten seconds. But the aesthetics are as important as her performance. We needed both. The boat had to be judged to look good too."

The next concept from the Surge studio is a 46m/151ft superyacht for the Mediterranean, similar to *WinWin* in matching performance and comfort, but this time a collaboration with two other companies. "We're developing this exciting boat that lets you feel that you're sailing," enthuses Jaudenes. "Her speed is unbelievable, easily 16 knots. She has a very open transom, is easy to handle and super-comfortable."

Does he see a revolution in superyacht design? "Yes, *WinWin* is first in line, now others are coming, like the Baltic 130 and 115, and new Swans. It's an exciting trend. We are taking as many influences as we can from racing yachts and applying them to luxury sailing boats.

"I hope what I have done with *WinWin* will open the minds of owners, creating new opportunities for young designers."

