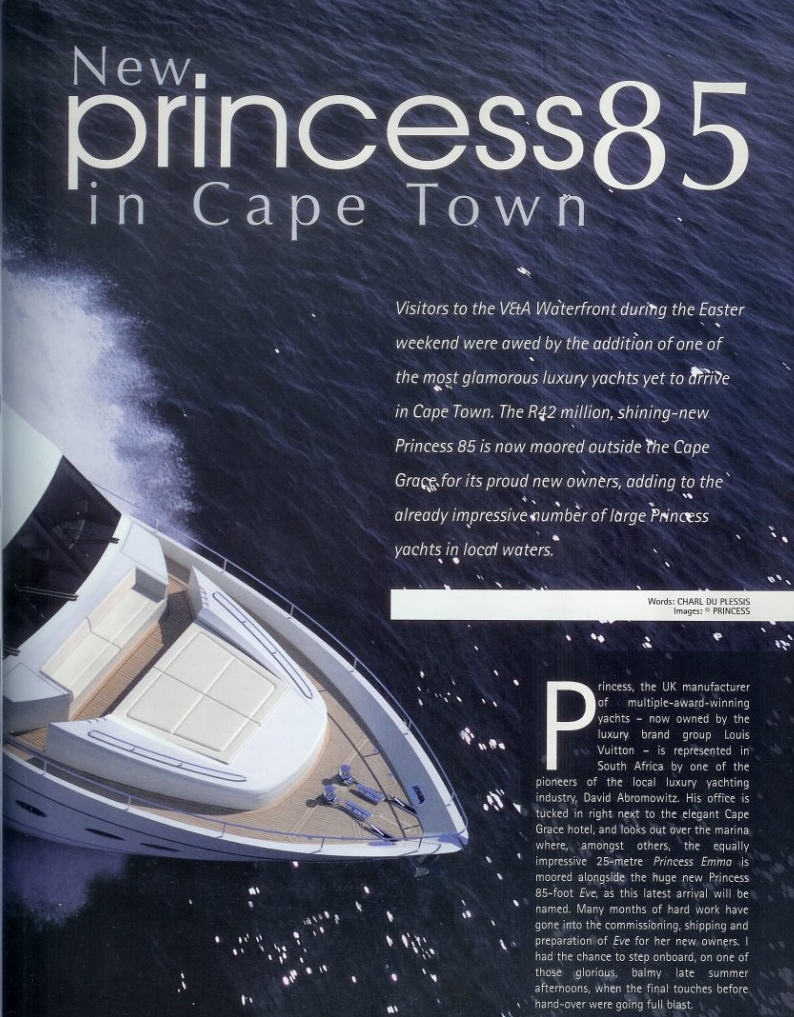


New princess85 in Cape Town

Visitors to the V&A Waterfront during the Easter weekend were awed by the addition of one of the most glamorous luxury yachts yet to arrive in Cape Town. The R42 million, shining-new Princess 85 is now moored outside The Cape Grace for its proud new owners, adding to the already impressive number of large Princess yachts in local waters.

Words: CHARL DU PLESSIS
Images: PRINCESS

Princess, the UK manufacturer of multiple-award-winning yachts – now owned by the luxury brand group Louis Vuitton – is represented in South Africa by one of the pioneers of the local luxury yachting industry, David Abramowitz. His office is tucked in right next to the elegant Cape Grace hotel, and looks out over the marina where, amongst others, the equally impressive 28-metre Princess Emma is moored alongside the huge new Princess 85-foot Eve, as this latest arrival will be named. Many months of hard work have gone into the commissioning, shipping and preparation of Eve for her new owners. I had the chance to step onboard, on one of those glorious, balmy late summer afternoons, when the final touches before hand-over were going full blast.



there is plenty of room and seating to share the magnificent views from the top. Peeking forward, I notice the separate entertaining and sunbathing area on the foredeck coach roof. Amazing what extra luxuries you can introduce onboard when you have those extra few feet of space.

The Princess 85 Motor Yacht is suited for long medium range cruising, thanks to a deep V hull and the draft-reducing propeller tunnels, ensuring easy handling. Ending our tour on the teak-laid flybridge, with its fully-equipped bar and generous seating and sunbed, Nicole van der Wall, David Abramowitz's assistant, waxes lyrical about the new stabiliser systems that make cruising on the open sea almost undetectable as well as preventing roll while at anchor. Nicole stays on to have a sundowner with a tired crew, as I drag myself off to another meeting. What a life to own one of these yachts!



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Stepping onto the transom, we pass the access to the crew cabins at the back of the yacht and enter the main saloon and lounge area. The sense of space is palpable, mainly because the area is all on one level and surrounded by enormous windows that let in the play of the late afternoon's soft light. At this size, with a permanent crew of three, the galley is enclosed to the front. The owners of these size yachts apparently entertain while others pour and prepare for their guests. The galley is equipped to the highest standards with granite surfaces and generous refrigeration, as well as ample storage space and access to the port-side deck. A separate dining table seats eight within a dedicated dining area amidships, while the saloon is fitted

with a contemporary U-shaped seating area and an entertainment centre, incorporating an LCD TV with up and down movement stowing itself in the starboard sideboard. Heavy, triple sliding doors keep the weather outside.

Forward to the helm, the captain has a wide view perched on a seat at a panel that would make racing drivers green. All the latest technological wizardry has been fitted, but I am mostly struck by the stylish leather trim of the companion nook adjacent to the captain's seat. This yacht can cruise the distance, and I can imagine some family members with laptops and charts sharing this comfortable space with the captain while planning the day's route. Or perhaps, with guests or kids busy

elsewhere on the yacht, a few minutes of quiet time for Eve, for whom the boat was named, curling up on the bench next to the captain, the two of them silently enjoying the approaching harbour lights after a good day's cruise.

Below decks almost make you wish for rainy days. The master stateroom is set in the middle, the widest part of the yacht, and feels like a good six-star hotel bedroom. I smell the new carpets and wood oils used on the panelling. Four portholes each side bring the water close and add light. The granite-finish bathroom en suite has a size bath that would be the envy of any tall NBA basketball player. Off to port side, a walk-in closet adds the final touches.

The guest cabins to the fore all have a similar feel of elegance and plenty of storage space. This area comes standard with two more double cabins and one bunk cabin for the youngsters, yet owners can choose between a three or four cabin layout, all with en suite facilities.

Crew quarters are located aft of the machinery space, allowing separation from the main guest owner accommodation. The large Caterpillar engines in this space ensure all the privacy one may need.

The fun part is on the upstairs flybridge area. Not many local yachts are large enough for a jacuzzi, so how could one not notice this feature. The tender is neatly hidden to the back with its hydraulic crane discretely folded away, while to the fore,

