



Flåm makes the perfect setting for the yacht ... with breathtakingly beautiful views, clean air and strikingly blue waters

A Beautiful Shelter

Bel Abri

By **Ellie Brade**

TYR visited the 52.3-metre Bel Abri, the sixth LIMITED EDITIONS 171 from Amels, in Flåm in the heart of fjordland in Norway. She was moored there following a maiden cruise with her owner on board after her launch on 24 of April, and sea trials during which she was approved by Lloyd's and the owner's representative in just one day. Flåm made the perfect setting for the yacht, as the accompanying images ably demonstrate, with breathtakingly beautiful views, clean air and strikingly blue waters – a notable contrast to the standard photo shoot backgrounds. It is access to this type of less common destination that demonstrates the pleasures of ownership, or chartering in locations beyond the standard cruising grounds.

As the sixth 171, *Bel Abri* is also the last, with the design having evolved into the LIMITED EDITIONS 177 platform, part of the Amels premium semi-custom range, designed by Tim Heywood. The 177 model incorporates a length extension aft, enhancing the profile and adding a beach club area. The first of the 177s, *Addiction*, has already launched, before *Bel Abri* in fact. Including those 171s already delivered – *Deniki*, *La Mirage*, *Were Dreams*, *Lady Nag Nag*, *Unity* and now *Bel Abri* – this brings the total of 171/177s delivered and in construction to 11 yachts, with the order book for this model reaching into 2013. This is a demonstrable example of the success of the series, the first of which only launched in 2007. Of all the delivered yachts, only one resale (*Unity*, ex *Addiction*) has so far been seen.

Bel Abri has been built to charter and is under the management of Imperial Yachts. Fittingly, she was due to depart

after our visit for a charter around Norway before eventually making her way to the Mediterranean to undertake further charters and be shown at the Monaco Yacht Show. Amels are pleased that *Bel Abri* has come to charter as, with all previous 171s being private yachts, this is an

... a fine demonstration of why many owners do go down the semi-custom route

opportunity to showcase the model and have potential owners experience it through charter. Her clean and light interior is by Laura Sessa Romboli, supplied by Metrica. Although the boat was always designed for charter, it is finished to the standards of a private yacht and still very much incorporates the taste of the owner, whilst retaining a pleasantly neutral palette for charter guests to enjoy.

Bel Abri's interior is a demonstration of the difference a change in interior can make across the series –

something that is a key selling point of the semi-custom series. This allows the owner to personalise the yacht so that is not a carbon copy of another in the series. Laura Sessa worked with Amels to develop a basic template for the LIMITED EDITIONS range, upon which changes can be overlaid

by owners. There are, therefore, undercurrents of the familiar throughout *Bel Abri*, incorporating typical Laura-style features such as the Venetian shutters and high gloss in the design. Small features vary across the series according to owner taste, however – for example in the inlay detail, the material used for handrails and the stairwell style. Although Sessa worked with the yard to develop a base design for LIMITED EDITIONS, it varies according to owner, indeed Hulls 455 and 456 made use of the design work of Nuvolari Lenard.

YACHT REPORT | BEL ABRI

On board *Bel Abri* Sessa's influence also extends beyond the design to the loose furniture. It is worth noting that loose furniture is not something that comes in the yacht package price, and as such is owner-specific, allowing the owner to work within their own budget to furnish the yacht to their taste, rather than being restricted, or indeed put off, by a PC sum.

A variety of wood types are used throughout *Bel Abri*, varying from deck to deck with the main deck, for example, incorporating maple to complement the warm red colour scheme. The sky lounge, one of my favourite spaces, features woven leather panels and zebrano wood on the doors. For the design the client gave a relaxed brief and with elements such as the large, bed-like, sofa in front of the television screen I suspect that this is a room, with its comfort and views, that will see a lot of use, more so perhaps than the more formal areas. Outdoor space is also made good use of, with an oversized Jacuzzi – another owner-specific change – and a bar space and teriyaki grill under a hard cover on the upper deck.

Bel Abri features four guest cabins which are styled in the same mould but with different themes; two of which are VIP and include their own dressing room. Interestingly, considering it is a charter boat, the owner opted for an owner's study rather than take the option of a fifth cabin; nor are there any Pullmans in place in the guest cabins, which could have increased guest capacity on charter. All the guest cabins have a warmer feel than the main communal areas on board as they lack the high gloss finish. An attractive design feature by Laura Sessa is the use of 'Picture Stone' in the guest showers. This is a rare type of sandstone that has been sliced thinly in half and then the two matching halves used opposite each other, with the veins matching, to form a beautiful pattern for the shower wall.



The master suite, the main salon and the upper lounge



The companion way, her mast and Bel Abri under way in Flâm????



Drawers????, a bridge control???? and an example of Bel Abri's woodwork

The owner's area is spacious, incorporating the large office space that the fifth cabin was sacrificed for, a walk in wardrobe and large bathroom, making for an enjoyable and personalised space. Small touches on board are a reminder that to own an Amels is to be part of a wider family. One example was an installation designed by Metrica to showcase the neck of the champagne bottle used to christen *Bel Abri*, a gift the yard give to all owners.

Evident when looking around the yacht are the manifestations of the advantages of working with their parent company Damen, and the experience and knowledge that this imparts into the semi custom series. One example is the quality of the noise-reduction technology on board. Amels Sales Manager Johan Kaasjager told us that it is almost too quiet on board and thus you need a good entertainment system – in this case provided by Lantic – to ensure that there actually is background noise. Either that or, as we joked, hope that you have quiet neighbours.

Worth noting is that *Bel Abri* also features generous crew areas, including a spacious laundry and a dumb waiter serving the bridge and sun deck to make life easier for her crew. The impressive integrated bridge is by Alewijnse, with the control buttons replicated across uniform bridge panels, which is also

class approved for paper chart free navigation, as with all the 171s.

Overall, *Bel Abri* forms a great package for her owner, and is a fine demonstration of why many owners do go down the semi-custom route. Viewing her, there is an air of satisfaction about the yacht; this is a yacht that will be very much enjoyed by both her owner and her charter

guests. Roughly translated *Bel Abri* means 'Beautiful shelter' in French, and *Bel Abri* is just that; one extremely beautiful shelter.

Images: Marc Paris

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SPECIFICATION	
BEL ABRI – LIMITED EDITIONS – AMELS 171	
LOA	52.30m
LWL	46.90m
Beam (max)	9.00m
Draught (loaded)	3.35m
Construction	Steel hull, aluminium superstructure
Class and LY2 compliance	Lloyd's register 100A1 SSC Yacht Mono G6 LMC, UMS, in compliance with LY-2
Displacement	687t
Gross Tonnage	642
Naval architect	Amels
Exterior stylist	Tim Heywood
Interior designer	Laura Sessa
Main engines	2 x MTU 16V2000 M70 1,050kW @ 2,100 rpm
Speed (maximum/cruise)	15.5 knots, 13.0 knots
Fuel capacity	115,000 litres
Range at cruising speed	4,500nm (13 knots), 9,400nm (10 knots)
Water capacity	17,000 litres
Number of owner/guest cabins	5 double cabins
Number of crew cabins	8 cabins – 1 cabin with double bed 2 cabins with single bunked 5 cabins with twin bunked
Tenders	1x Pascoe 6.2m (SOLAS MOB boat) 1x Yachtwerft Meyer, 6.8m luxury tender Launching by foldable foremast crane