"I am the master of my fate, 
I am the captain of my soul"

William Ernest Henley
Singapore's small coterie of superyacht owners has welcomed news that property developer and investor David Eng is returning to their ranks after purchasing Florida-based John Staluppi’s 52m Benetti Quantum of Solace and renaming her Elysium. New York-born Staluppi, a highly successful car dealer, began his spectacular boating career with the ultra-fast, Frank Mulder-designed Octopus, built in Holland, followed by Moonraker in Norway, Thunderball by Dennison Yachts of Florida and Casino Royale from Christensen. Since launching Millennium Yachts in 1998, there is also The World Is Not Enough, and lately Benetti’s Quantum of Solace, and Diamonds Are Forever. Doubtless Skyfall is on the drawing boards somewhere. David Eng has strong US connections too, stemming from when the late, legendary Mike Kelsey Snr was at the Palmer Johnson yard in Wisconsin. Kelsey’s landmark trips to explore the emerging Asia-Pacific market, two decades ago, led to him selling a large sportfisher, Prime Time, to Singapore McDonalds franchisee Bob Kwan. Then in 1994 Eng, whose major apartment developments included a very notable one on Penang Island in Malaysia, took delivery of the PJ 45.5m (149′) La Baroness. Eng’s next PJ project, the 60m (196′) La Baronessa, delivered in 1996, was the largest private vessel built in America since the halcyon boating days of the Vanderbilts and the Rockefellers. She was also the largest all-aluminum motor yacht constructed in the States. We went on sea trials in the Great Lakes, and would describe her interior, by renowned Novulari and Lenard of Venice, as “elegant minimalist”. Brian Chang and his brother Julien, the latter a regular at Monaco Yacht Show and sometimes at Ft Lauderdale, have their 80 m (259′) pros Asean Lady at Singapore’s Raffles Marina when not cruising the region, and Shaw Vee King of the Shaw Brothers Chinese movie family keeps his 52 m (170′) Frank Mulder-designed Sea Shaw at Republic of Singapore Yacht Club. Former two-time Feadship owner Goh Cheng Liang’s 61 m (201′) White Rabbit Echo returned recently after a refit in Auckland, New Zealand, under the command of Captain Francois Voisin, and Captain Lange has switched to sail with Bob Kwan, who uses his latest Delta 36 m (120′) expedition yacht Sinbad quite extensively. Other owners have 80-120′ motor yachts at places such as Marina at Keppel Bay and One 15 Marina. Captain Mark O’Connell is believed to be aboard Elysium, which has been spending time in the azure Andaman Sea, near the Thai holiday isle of Phuket.

NISI 1700 For US Northeast Cruising

Innovative NISI Yachts, now a regular exhibitor at European and US boat shows, has sold another model at the smallest end of its 1700 to 2600 range. Called the NISI 1700 Xpresso, it is described by NISI’s CEO, Christos Livadas, as “delivering more new ideas that break common industry barriers.” Models are usually outfitted with Pod propulsion, but this latest owner, a prominent NE American entrepreneur, politician and philanthropist, had custom needs in his particular cruising environment. The owner therefore selected twin Caterpillar C18s, delivering 2,300hp, mated to an UltraJet propulsion package. Performance, using either Pods or UltraJets, indicates top speeds approaching 40-knots. Naval architecture for the 1700 Xpresso is provided by America’s Setzer Design Group, and interiors are crafted by superyacht suppliers SMI Group of New Zealand. It is the wide spectrum of ideas and styles implemented aboard that has made these vessels a talking point, confirmed by the yard’s collection of recent awards in Cannes and Ft Lauderdale, the latter for “Best Design” from the International Superyacht Society. NISI are also available for commissions of custom builds from 100′ to 150′ (30m to 45m).

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