INTERVIEW

Jason Wilkes is currently the largest Superyacht in the world with 180 metres. This ambitious project by Lurssen Yachts has taken the construction of luxury yachts to a whole new level. This sophisticated vessel was constructed and engineered in record time, and is capable of exceeding 30 knots. M/Y Azzam calls regularly to Gibraltar.

DID YOU KNOW?

Jason Wilkes, entrepreneur and 10-time Ironman competitor, visits Gibraltar regularly with his family onboard M/Y Ikandi, a 21-metre Sunseeker Predator 62. Jason says ‘Ikandi’ is home from home, specially considering how well equipped his yacht is, including 5 TVs, 2 ensuite bathrooms with 5 berths, galley, washer downstairs, ample lounge area upstairs fitted with a large TV and Bose surround system. Outside does not cease to impress with sunbathing areas, BBQ, garage and a jet boat for sea toys.

What do you like about Gibraltar?

We love the friendly local people, and The Rock itself. Walking up and down Main Street looking at the English shops (we live in the Canary Islands so it is just like UK for us). Cinema, bowling, ice skating: our kids love all that.

What are the benefits of calling at Gibraltar?

Competitive fuel prices. Fuel is one of the most important costs when owning a yacht, and any savings in this department is always a bonus. Tax-free shopping is also a benefit.

How competitive is Gibraltar when compared to other ports?

Marina Bay is cheaper than other nearby ports in Spain, we have known the staff there for years now. Recommended.

What do you enjoy most about being at sea?

Being at sea provides freedom and also quality family time.

What has been your most challenging moment onboard M/Y Ikandi?

With the family we left a Spanish port heading for Gibraltar in a totally flat sea. We did not tie the tender on, or lock the anchor. During our passage via the Strait of Gibraltar, the sea got rougher and rougher causing the anchor to break free, striking the hull. I put the throttle into neutral so the chain would not tangle into the props but while I winched the anchor back up, the yacht was pushed beam on. Everything went everywhere inside, the tender was half on. My wife and kids were terrified — schoolboy error.

Are the high maintenance costs a myth or is a yacht expensive to keep?

Certainly not a myth, the bigger the boat the more it costs to keep. Before you ‘invest’ make sure you find out and budget for annual running costs including insurance, berthing, servicing and general up keep. If you do not look after your pride and joy properly then it will soon deteriorate.

Your favourite book:

Bravo Two Zero by Andy McNab.

Your favourite ship:

Ikandi...

On a larger scale, Queen Mary.