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Modern Classics

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WHERE CAN I SOURCE NEW TENDERS IN A RETRO STYLE?

A growing trend we have seen developing over the past few years – but with rapid growth in the last 12 months – is classic-style tenders. These boats are specifically styled to look old, with the graceful, sweeping lines of traditional launches (such as those of the Riva Aquarama) but with the implementation of modern construction techniques, up-to-date equipment such as air conditioning, navigation equipment and the use of new materials such as carbon fibre rather than traditional woods.

Yachting is an industry in which clients continually strive to be different and tenders are an area where creativity can be showcased to great effect. The “Riva trend” was revived over 10 years ago when certain very large yachts invested in original Rivas as owner’s tenders. The downside of owning these boats is that, although they are without question beautiful, they are extremely expensive to own, labour intensive to maintain and a little fragile to operate. These are not boats to be driven by an inexperienced crewmember and require an experienced team of varnishers on a regular basis to keep them looking 100 per cent.

Other, more modern boats that became popular are the Venetian taxis. These vessels are considered by many to be the original limousine tender, as luxury bespoke versions of the original launches are produced for yacht clients. These boats are available based on the original design but using more modern materials and updated technology to make them more suitable for yacht uses. Companies such as Serenella are well known for their high-end Venetian limos.



Photo by Riva Archive

A British company, Cockwell makes an up-to-date focus on the traditional boat. This company is the opposite of Serenella in that it makes boats of a very modern design using traditional construction techniques. The attention to detail is superb and the end result is a handcrafted boat of a very cutting edge design.

Other companies produce modern classics, such as the Austrian company Frauscher with its 757 St Tropez boat, and the Norwegian company Dolvik, which produces a wonderful wooden classic tender, all traditional craft built with modern techniques.

More mainstream companies such as Chris Craft and Hinckley build modern boats along the classic lines. Models such as the Chris Craft Corsair and Hinckley T29R stand out from the crowd as something a little different but are also very well built, comfortable and stylish. These are very popular as tenders on larger yachts and can be custom built to suit any application.

If your yacht has the space for a special, “owner’s use only” tender and there are the resources to operate and maintain such a boat, there is no better way for the owner to arrive in style than in a custom built modern classic. There was a time when such boats were considered imitations of the originals but this is certainly no longer the case. Build quality and technology have made such huge progress over the last few years that you can now have the style, build quality and reliability of a modern boat with the beauty of a classic. These are not everyday boats and they do not offer the practicality of an all-rounder but they really are the perfect owner’s launch. ■

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