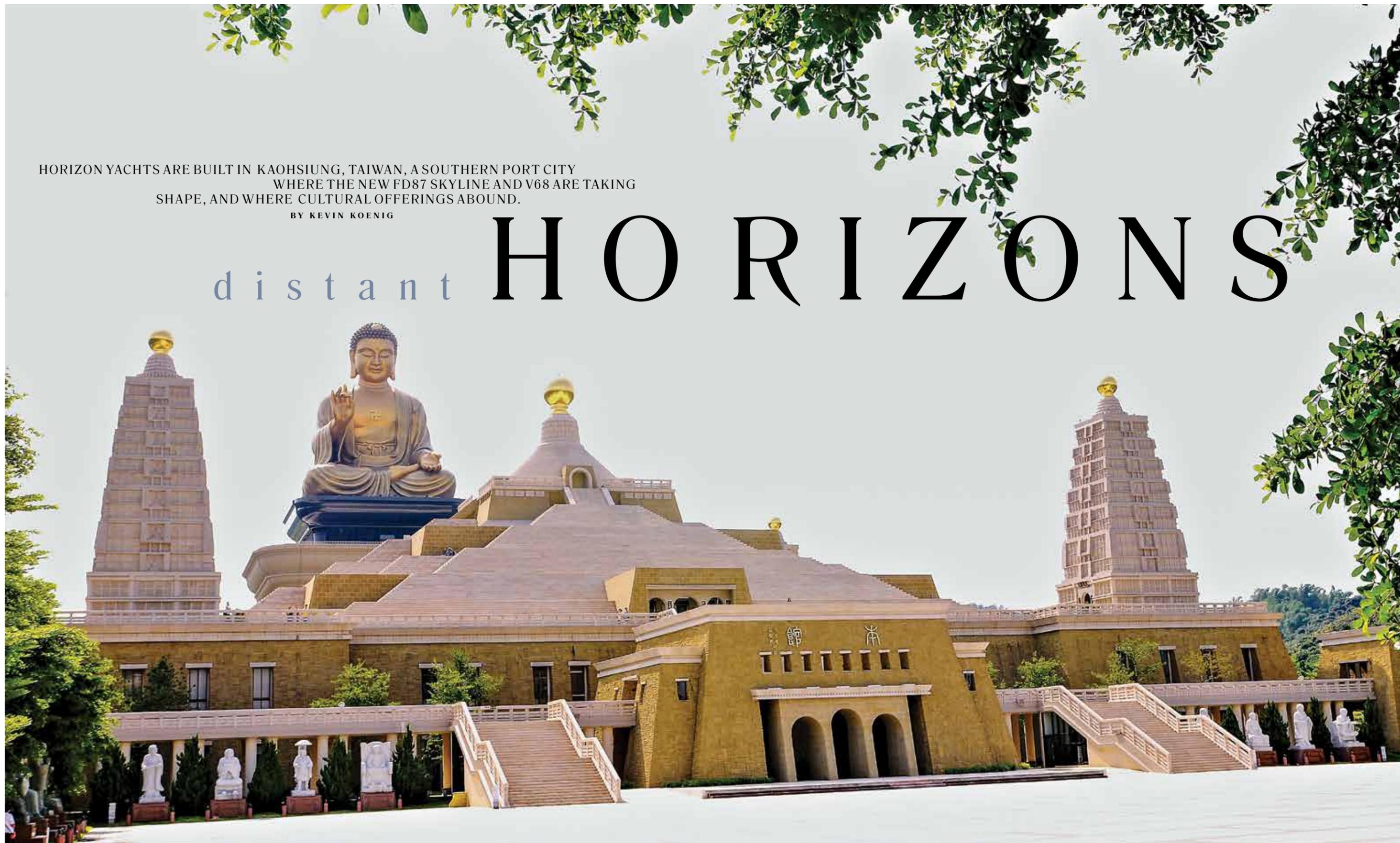


HORIZON YACHTS ARE BUILT IN KAOHSIUNG, TAIWAN, A SOUTHERN PORT CITY
WHERE THE NEW FD87 SKYLINE AND V68 ARE TAKING
SHAPE, AND WHERE CULTURAL OFFERINGS ABOUND.

BY KEVIN KOENIG

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WHEN YOU'RE SPENDING A LOT OF MONEY ON SOMETHING, LIKE, for example, a multimillion-dollar yacht, you're going to want to see where it's built — even if the yard happens to be halfway around the world, as is the case for Americans who want a Horizon. Taking a trip to see the factory is the best way to ensure the quality of a future prize possession. Plus, the journey is a cool opportunity to forge a connection with a company that an owner will be intertwined with for some time. Business is all about relationships, after all. ¶ Horizon builds its yachts in Kaohsiung, an industrial city in southern Taiwan that serves as the country's boatbuilding hub. Horizon's headquarters is where soft debuts of the FD87 Skyline and V68 models recently took place, showcased at the builder's marina near the main facility, a combination of sites that most other companies here can't offer. ¶ The FD87 Skyline, so named because of her blue-and-white paint job, is a Cor D. Rover design that's meant to be a liveaboard cruiser. Hull No. 1's owner plans to be aboard about six months a year, sailing the Caribbean with his family and home-schooling the kids. As such, the yacht has substantial interior volume for her size, as well as a leggy range of 1,780 nautical miles at 10 knots. ¶ The Jonathan Quinn Barnett-designed V68 is a beamy (19 feet 6 inches) motoryacht with a plumb bow and a bow deck

STRENGTH IN NUMBERS
Horizon owns four shipyards in Taiwan, including Horizon, Vision, Premier and Atech. The builder employs more than 800 people. Horizon subcontracts nothing, which helps the company to control the build process and ensure quality. There are in-house design teams for naval architecture, engineering, interior design and electrical systems.

THE CUSTOMER'S ALWAYS RIGHT

Though it's not a fully custom yard, Horizon can do nearly whatever a customer asks for, outside of moving structural components, a practice that the builder says deteriorates the level of onboard safety. Horizon's amount of flexibility has led to some new models. The E98 was created for an owner who felt the E88 was too small, but the 105 was too large. After the E98 made her world debut at the 2017 Palm Beach International Boat Show, the model was so well received that Horizon ended up adding the 98 to its E series, where additional owners could add their own personalizations.



PREVIOUS SPREAD: CHUN HUI WANG FO GUANG SHAN BUDDHA MUSEUM; LOTUS POND—HORIZON GROUP; THIS SPREAD: HORIZON



The owner of the first FD87 plans to use the bridge deck as an office, though clearly, it's not going to be all work and no play up there.



PREVIOUS SPREAD: HORIZON; THIS SPREAD: CHUN HUI WANG FO GUANG SHAN BUDDHA MUSEUM CHUN HUI WANG FO GUANG SHAN BUDDHA MUSEUM/LOTUS POND—HORIZON GROUP

DISTANT HORIZONS > BEHIND THE SCENES

BLUE SKIES
The FD series, which includes the new FD87 Skyline, represents a design departure from previous Horizon builds. The line ranges from 85 to 125 feet length overall and was five years in the making in conjunction with Dutch designer Cor D. Rover, who also has designed yachts for Azimut, Benetti and others. The Horizon FD87 in Kaohsiung has a main-deck master stateroom and a salon with sole-to-ceiling windows, much like those found in the designs of today's far larger yachts.

lounge that seats at least 12 — one of the largest I can remember seeing on a yacht in this class. She is designed as an owner-operator's vessel and has three- and four-stateroom layouts with optional crew's quarters. A gaggle of enthusiastic Australians had made the trip to check her out. ¶ To fully appreciate where these yachts come from requires not just making the journey to Kaohsiung but also making a journey through the city, to better grasp the Taiwanese culture. Kaohsiung's many Buddhist temples and religious sites, and the famous Dragon Tiger Towers on Lotus Lake, can make many Westerners feel like they're on a different planet. That is, until one of the locals catches your eye, smiles and hands you a Coca-Cola from their food stand, as happened to me. It was a small gesture, but one that made me feel welcome so far from home. (I guess I looked a little bit lost.) ¶ A late-night trip to perhaps the city's most famous attraction, the Night Markets, is also eye-opening for the exotic foods served up: Whole frogs, colorful snails and crustaceans of all manner line the smoky, labyrinthine streets, which buzz with motorcycle traffic and the *rat-tat-tat* chatter of machine-gun Mandarin. I dare you to give the mullet gizzards a kick in the tires if you ever make the trip. ¶ The primal, alien nature of the Night Markets is in stark contrast to the Horizon factory, which is modern and pristine to the point of feeling almost whitewashed. Horizon uses tools and technologies including computational fluid dynamics for tank testing, a five-axis router for precision when tooling molds, resin infusion for hulls and superstructures, and non-destruction testing to check yachts thermographically and sonically for structural integrity. ¶ The result is builds like the FD87 Skyline and V68, which join a lineup that has helped the builder increase market share in recent years. And the company's pride in its tech-forwardness was patently evident as executives led a tour through the cavernous space, showing off all the things I had come so far to see. *Take the next step: horizonyacht.com* ¶

HORIZON YACHTS HAS ITS OWN MARINA NEAR ITS SHIPYARD, A COMBINATION OF SITES THAT MOST BUILDERS IN TAIWAN CANNOT OFFER.