

## Yacht Building

# Sea Leisure Yachting Group: Creating a New Culture in Sailing

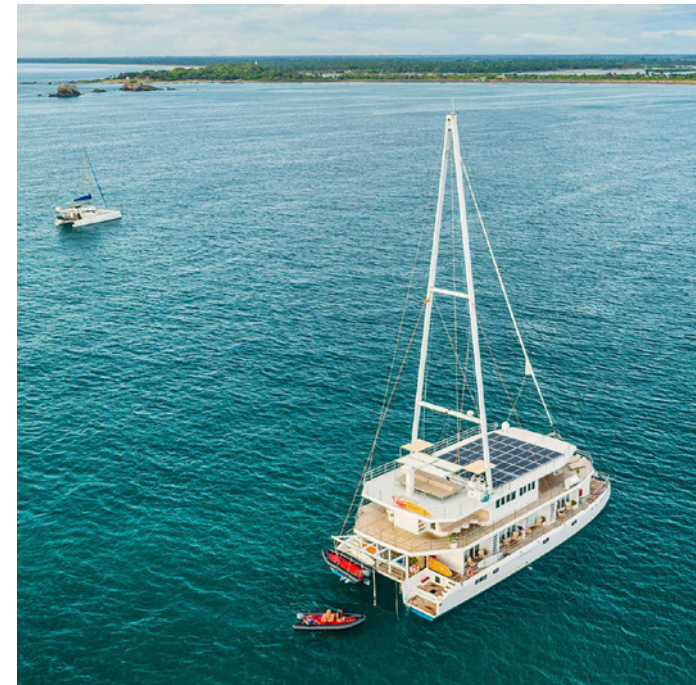
Manufacturer of charter and cruising catamarans, rigid hull boats, and sailing dinghies in Sri Lanka and a pioneer in the marine leisure and tourism market, Sea Leisure Yachting Group (SLYG) aims to transform Sri Lanka into a global hub for yacht manufacturing, charters, yacht harboring and other yacht-related services.



Since 2014, the Sea Leisure Yachting Group has operated in four key verticals, contributing to Sri Lanka's maritime sector and the global yacht industry. SLYG comprises BAFF Polymech specializing in boat building, managing two BOI-approved boat yards in Koggala, and Welipatanwila, Sabrosa Rain Advance Technologies, the first yacht designing office in Sri Lanka, Solar

Impulse specializing in sail and mast making and other infrastructures, Sail Lanka, the boat chartering business, and joint ventures with several international companies. Pierre Pringiers, a Belgian national, who has served in Sri Lanka as the general manager for Bergougnan Lanka, the first industrial tyre factory set up in Sri Lanka in 1980, is the man behind SLYG. He ventured to rebuild

the southern coast of Sri Lanka in the aftermath of the 2004 Tsunami through the Solideal Loadstar Rehabilitation Trust (SLRT) set up in 2005 with his partner Dr. Jinasena with a budget of US\$6.7 million, reaching 15,000 direct and 25,000 indirect beneficiaries. In 2006, he set up the Building A Future Foundation (BAFF) as an extension of the SLRT to uplift the lives of the underprivileged



Luxury Ocean Diamond.



Pierre Pringiers, Chairman, Sea Leisure Yachting Group.

**At the core of SLYG's business is an ethos of adding value to lives, capacity building, empowerment, and creating economic self-sufficiency with an environmental, social, and sustainable approach.**

youth depending on the resources of the ocean, create a sailing culture on the island, and develop a yachting industry from boat building, sails, and masts making to infrastructure and charter services.

At the core of SLYG's business is an ethos of adding value to lives, capacity building, empowerment, and creating economic self-sufficiency with an environmental, social, and sustainable approach. His vision, he claims, is based on sailing boats built, owned, and operated in Sri Lanka and the region as a positive complement to Sri Lanka's tourism industry. He wanted to create and promote cruising as a new and ecologically sustainable tourist activity in Sri Lanka and the greater Indian Ocean region. The overarching objective is to maximize the socioeconomic returns and benefits to the country and the people

of Sri Lanka.

SLYG began its journey on a humanitarian mission governed by the astute business vision of its founder and chairman, Pierre Pringiers. Today, SLYG has earned a reputation for its boat-building prowess through its specialist companies focusing on expertise areas and business verticals. In 2008, SLYG ventured into manufacturing light and rigid catamarans through BAFF Polymech. With a 250-strong team, the company uses high-tech materials and advanced boat-building techniques to take projects from design to finish. BAFF Polymech says it is the first and largest boat manufacturing company to use vacuum infusion technology for production.

The company has five well-known brands: the Ceycat for water-based

tourism, the Minibee for calm journeys or competitive sailing, the Ocean Diamond, the Ocean Voyager, designed for professional day and overnight charter operators the Pulse rigid inflatable boat ranges, ideal for leisure and rescue purposes.

The Ocean Voyager day charter catamarans range debuted in 2017 when SLYG entered into a Joint venture with Grand Large Yachting (GLY), one of France's most prominent and fast-growing boat builders, birthing Grand Large Yachting Asia. In 2022 SLYG took over 100 percent of the business from GLY.

According to Pierre Pringiers, the joint venture and later on the total takeover of GLY were a natural progression of its Ceycat and Ocean Diamond charter catamaran range that the company was building in Sri Lanka. Moreover, SLYG understands the French brand and its offer to the charter boat industry well, having worked with it previously on selected boat models, with a commitment to continue the parent company's policies, such as hardware and software support and advice to charter companies to ensure continued business success.





Ocean Diamond with comfortable cabins and private balconies offering spectacular ocean views.

Ocean Diamond is the Group's flagship range, most suitable for luxury cruising.

The Ocean Voyager range includes four designs, Ocean Voyager '40, Ocean Voyager '53, Ocean Voyager '64, and Ocean Voyager '78, which with their different dimensions, sizes, and features, cater to a range of customer requirements.

Ocean Diamond's range of yachts is the Group's flagship range, most suitable for luxury cruising, highly customizable, and ideal for professional charter operations and

live-aboard cruises. It has over 600 square meters of living area, allowing customers to design their bespoke yacht with the company's in-house team of naval architects and expert partners. The Ocean Diamond 80-foot floating boutique hotel has 12 cabins complete with private balconies offering a spectacular ocean view, customized specifically for the tropical market, featuring an open flybridge and sea-facing

configuration.

Supporting yacht building is Sabrosa Rain, SLYG's naval architecture bureau, focusing on yacht design. Led by a French maritime architect with ten specialist design engineers, SR operates with advanced 3D design software capabilities. SR works in cooperation with international design studios such as VPLP and close collaboration with international certification agencies



Private balcony deck



Plush dining area



such as Lloyd's and CE. The SR team works closely with the BAFF Polymech team.

SLYG manages its manufacturing processes from three large-scale boat yards, with two located in the south of Sri Lanka and one in the north. The Koggala Boatyard includes the Group's subsidiaries, BAFF Polymech and Grand Large Yachting situated inside the Koggala Export Processing Zone. The Ceycat, Minibee, and Iguana range of boats are

vessels are manufactured at this facility, which has a fully equipped gantry crane, a 25-tonne movable crane, and a dust extraction system.

Replicating the Building A Future Foundation of Pierre Pringiers, the Jaffna boatyard opened in 2021 with a training center conducting courses in the basic skills of mechanical engineering, electricity, welding, refrigeration, and air-conditioning,

Practical training provides training in the manufacture of yachts such as the Ocean Diamond and the Ceycat, two vessels used for diverse requirements, one as a luxury floating boutique hotel and the other as a 55-foot sailing catamaran for water-based tourism.

Solar Impulse, a SLYG subsidiary since 2011, has been aiding the manufacturing process, specializing in marine electronics, mast, boom, and sail making, rigid hull boat manufacturing, modern sailing catamaran manufacturing, and commercial mini marina operations. SLYG currently operates two marinas in Sri Lanka – one in the Colombo Port City and the second in the Mirissa Fisheries Harbour.

SLYG sailing into the leisure sector in 2014 through Sail Lanka changed the leisure sector to a new horizon offering locals and foreigners a new experience around Sri Lanka's beautiful shores.

manufactured at the BAFF Polymech facility while the Ocean Voyager range of yachts are manufactured at the GLY factory.

The Welipatanwila boatyard in Ambalantota has two acres of land adjacent to the sea with a launching capacity of boats up to 160 feet. The Ocean Diamond and Ceycat range of

followed by hands-on experience in dedicated boat building, and outboard and inboard engine repair and maintenance.

The yearlong courses include a mixture of theory and practical training to enable the graduates to work in the emerging boat manufacturing industry in Sri Lanka.





Marinas at  
Colombo Port City.



South Sea Sailing.

experiences. Colombo Port City's notable yacht tours are Sail Lanka's latest offering. Accompanied by the prominent location and the facilities available at the Port City, Sail Lanka is planning to enlarge the experience in the near future with a restaurant and sailing club.

Engaging with the sea also carries a responsibility to safeguard

its ecosystem while providing guests with a genuinely one-off experience of Sri Lanka's beautiful marine life and azure waters. While being environmentally conscious, the company also commits to being socially responsible, using its business of showcasing the island's beauty from the ocean to empower local communities and

contribute to preserving the island's marine environment. Therefore, the yachts operated by Sail Lanka are mainly designed and built by BAFF Polymech and Solar Impulse in Sri Lanka. Wind and solar power are the primary sources of energy that power the fleet. Sail Lanka employees receive in-house training and education, including sailing skills, yacht maintenance, technical repair skills, and sailing-related sales and marketing, and operational and administrative skills. Sail Lanka operates a dynamic fleet of vessels, from high-speed inflatable tender or dinghy to 80 feet catamarans, making it the leader in the day and multi-day charter market in Sri Lanka.

As a BOI-certified group of companies engaged in multiple business verticals, SLYG has uplifted the lives of thousands by training and gainfully employing them in a sector that it has elevated to new heights and taken Sri Lanka's capabilities in human resources and technology in boat building to a global landscape. [\[6\]](#)