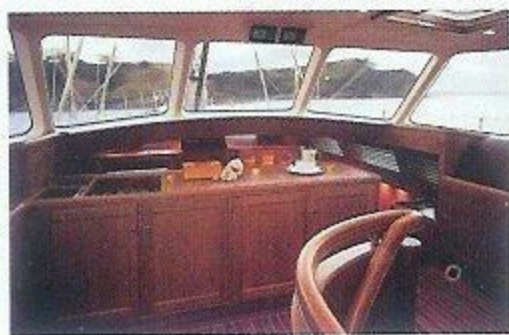


# HIGH FIDELITY ON THE HIGH SEAS

Classe' surround processors, Sonance Mariner speakers and a Fujitsu 42-inch plasma provide audio/video comforts aboard the S.Y. Avalon



STORY BY KEN WARD

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREW BRADLEY

It's difficult to imagine a custom home theater installation that never gets to knock out a wall here, add a wall there, or raise a ceiling somewhere in the pursuit of proper acoustics and optimum interior design. However, when your project inhabits a 109-foot yacht, such moves are often impossible—just ask Michael Fuschi, owner of Michael Fuschi Design, Inc., who undertook such a task aboard the Sailing Yacht Avalon.

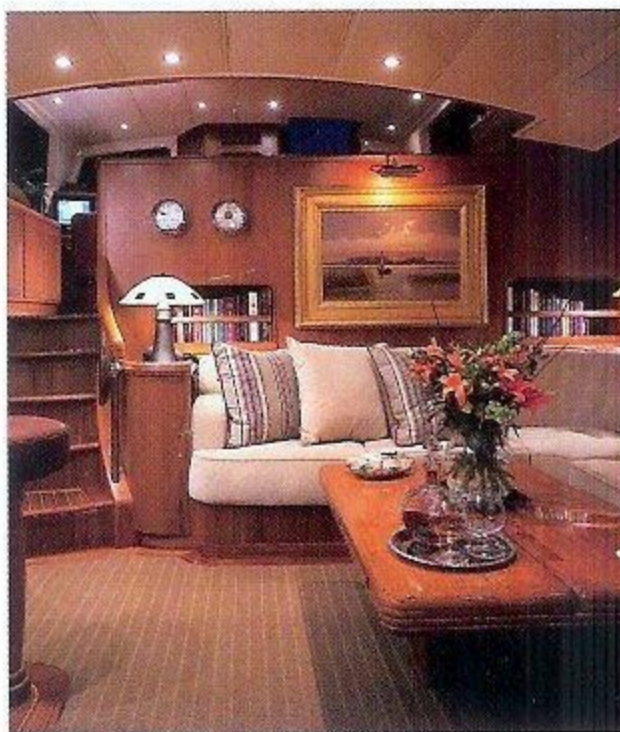
Ron Holland Design, the original marine design firm responsible for the craft, handled all modifications of the interior for this project while Fuschi designed and installed a bow-to-stern audio/video system. This particular project used a stealth approach, with as much equipment hidden as possible. During the year and a half this project required, Fuschi spent more time in New Zealand managing and installing the project than he did in his home state of California.

"There were many challenges on this project but it was an amazing experience for me," recalls Fuschi. "Marine installations up the ante on so many aspects, especially equipment reliability. It's a major factor when you consider the harsh environment of the ocean and the various global locales that make service calls somewhat challenging."

The Avalon spends little time berthed in Dover, Delaware; since the installation she has traveled from Auckland to Sydney, Australia, then Fiji, and as of this writing she was visiting Bali. The mobile nature of the system created another set of challenges. Some were due to the variety of video and broadcast standards around the world. Four different types of satellite receivers were used for

world-wide broadcast support, all connected to a single computer-controlled dish. The receivers were specially installed to make in-port exchange and card access simple and quick. The videocassette recorder is a multi-standard unit, handling PAL, SECAM, or NTSC tapes.

Electrical power was also a concern. The entire boat is powered by generators and batteries and is wired for 110V and 220V equipment. "The original DC/AC inverters were old, traditional sawtooth inverters that can wreak havoc on digital processing equipment," Fuschi notes. "We replaced them all with True RMS Sine Wave units." Whenever possible, 220V gear was used, a decision Fuschi credits for better sound performance. The electrical system was augmented so that switching from battery power to generator power to



shore power will not affect the performance of the system—in fact, the audience shouldn't even notice.

The keystone of the Avalon's theater systems is the salon system (especially since the salon's sources feed the deck system as well). While the audio/video gear is always critical, possibly the most important choice in this system was the means of



*Riding the rough seas is smooth sailing inside the Avalon's cozy salon which holds a Fujitsu 42-inch plasma, surround sound components from Classe' and a Pioneer Elite DVD player.*



control: the Crestron STS controller. The Crestron translates infrared, line-of-sight remote control commands into radio-frequency signals which can travel around corners and through walls, doors and the like. Due to the extreme flexibility the Crestron allows in creating a customized user interface—even the fonts and colors are selectable—Fuschi considers this control system the finest available. "We installed one in the salon and another in the master suite," he says. "We took care to construct their menus along parallel lines

so that the user would be familiar with operation of the system."

Classe' provided the CAV-150 amplifier, the surround processor, and the FM tuner. The DVD and CD changer are Pioneer Elite units, and the Aiwa multi-standard VCR is in the salon system as well. Any of the other systems on the craft can access whatever audio/video program is being played by these components of the salon system. Sunfire's Signature True subwoofer handles the lowest frequencies while Italy's Sonus Faber handles the two front channels and the center. For the rear-channels, Fuschi installed Sonance's D6001 ceiling-mounted speakers.

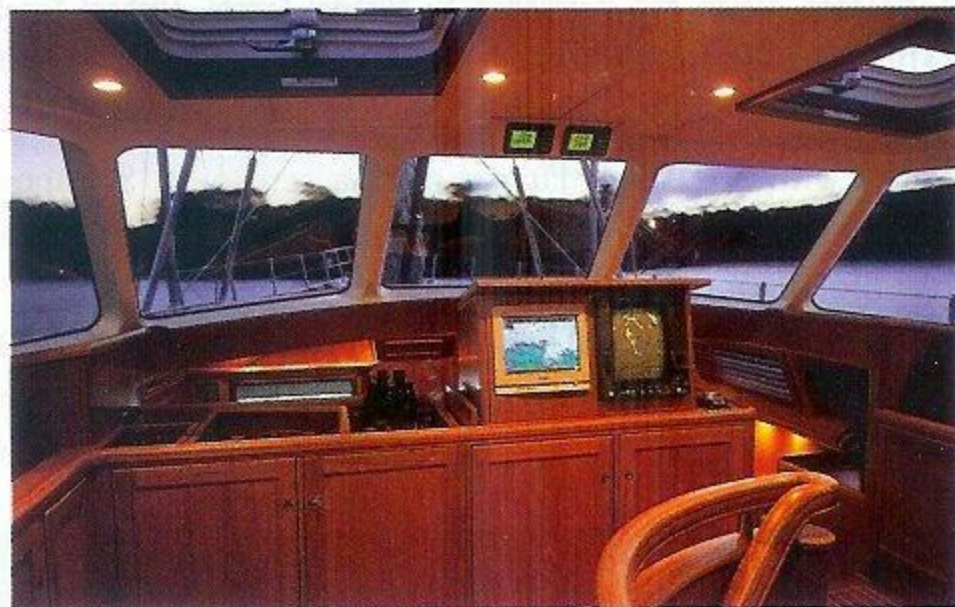
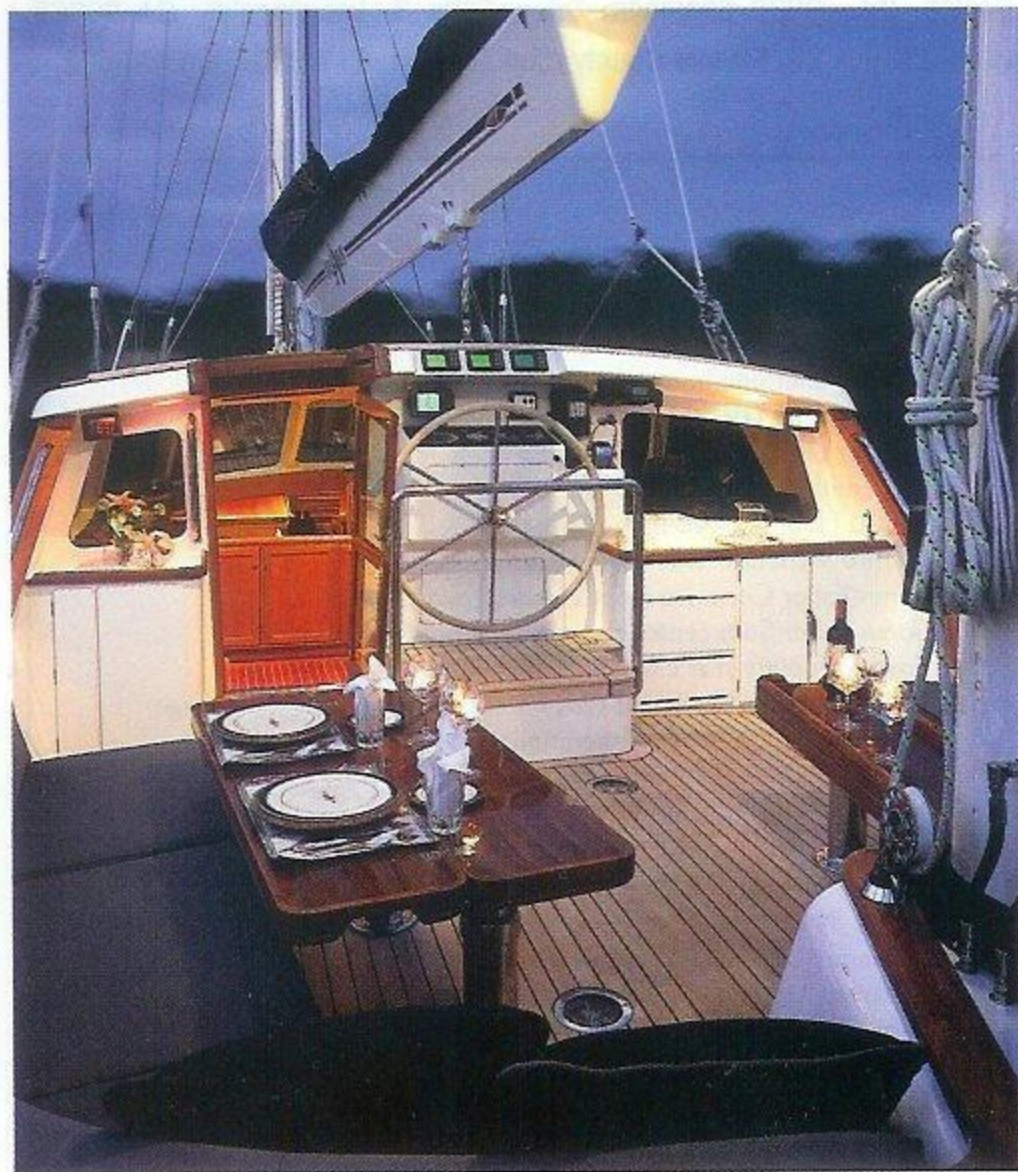
A Fujitsu 42-inch plasma gives the Avalon excellent video in such tight quarters. "Fujitsu has really taken a lead in helping to advance plasma televisions," says Fuschi. "The picture quality rivals the best tube monitors with a total depth of only a few inches."

Fuschi used component video from the DVD to the screen using Transparent cabling. The deck routes the same signals that are available in the salon to a Classe' CP-35 preamplifier, and another CAV-150 power amp. Two pair of Sonance's Mariner line of speakers

were installed as were one pair of Sonance T3500 speakers. Independent volume controls are located at key locations to facilitate real-life use of the deck speakers.

The master cabin uses the Classe' Electronics with the smaller CAV-75 amplifier. "They look as beautiful as they sound," notes Fuschi. "This system is visible to anyone entering the room." Working within a small space, Fuschi mounted Sonance in-walls for front and rear-channels and he rounded out the speaker roster with a smaller Sunfire sub.

## High Fidelity on the High Seas



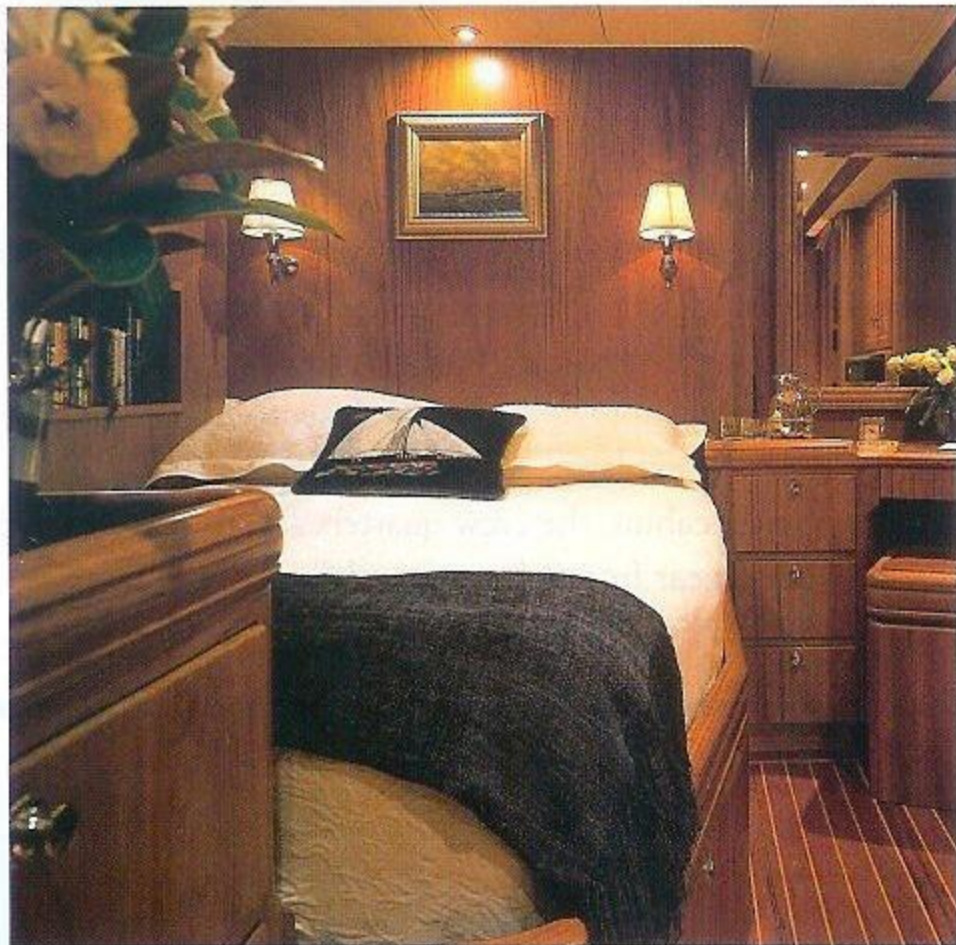
Space constraint also made video placement in this room a significant challenge. An NEC 33-inch plasma screen was used in order to get every last inch of display surface, and Fuschi custom built a remote-controlled motorized repositioning system that angles the screen toward the viewer. "This gives the impression that it's closer to the center than it really is," he explains.

Two guest cabins, the crew quarters and the galley hold audio/video gear from Marantz and Sonance. The guests have 13-inch Sony televisions, while the crew space was

Audio/video design and installation by Michael Fuschi, Michael Fuschi Design, Inc., 9080 Shoreham Drive, Suite 3, Los Angeles, CA 90069; (310) 271-1631. www.mfdinc.com. Craft/interior design by Ron Holland Design, PO Box 23, Kinsale County, Cork, Ireland, 011-353-21-4774-866.

gifted with a 21-inch Fujitsu plasma screen. A Sonance remote volume control was installed in the galley to make real-life use of the system easy.

And finally, the wheel house has another Marantz AV-480 receiver and a pair of Sonance speakers. A Digitron 15-inch LCD monitor serves as a video display for the salon



#### Salon

Crestron STS control system  
 Classe' SSP-25 surround processor  
 Classe' CAV-150 power amplifier  
 Classe' tuner one fm tuner  
 Pioneer Elite DV-09 DVD player  
 Pioneer elite pdm-59 CD changer  
 Aiwa multi-standard VCR  
 Fujitsu PDS-4221 42-inch plasma TV  
 Sunfire Signature True subwoofer  
 Sonus Faber Concerto front channel loudspeakers  
 Sonus Faber Solo center channel loudspeaker  
 Sonance d6001 rear channel loudspeakers  
 DSS receivers (4 different types of receivers for global coverage)  
 Transparent audio/video interconnect & speaker cable  
 Monster cable  
 Xantech  
 Channel plus

#### Deck System

Sonance Mariner 300 loudspeakers (2pr)  
 Sonance T3500 loudspeakers (1pr)  
 Sonance VC-51WR volume controls (3)  
 Classe' CP-35 preamplifier  
 Classe' CAV-150 power amplifier  
 Transparent speaker cable

#### Crew Quarters/Galley

Marantz SR-480 A/V receiver  
 Marantz DV-930 DVD player  
 Fujitsu 21-inch plasma TV  
 Sonance GR8 loudspeakers (2pr)  
 Sonance VC-51 volume controls  
 Transparent A/V Interconnect & Speaker Cable

#### Master Cabin

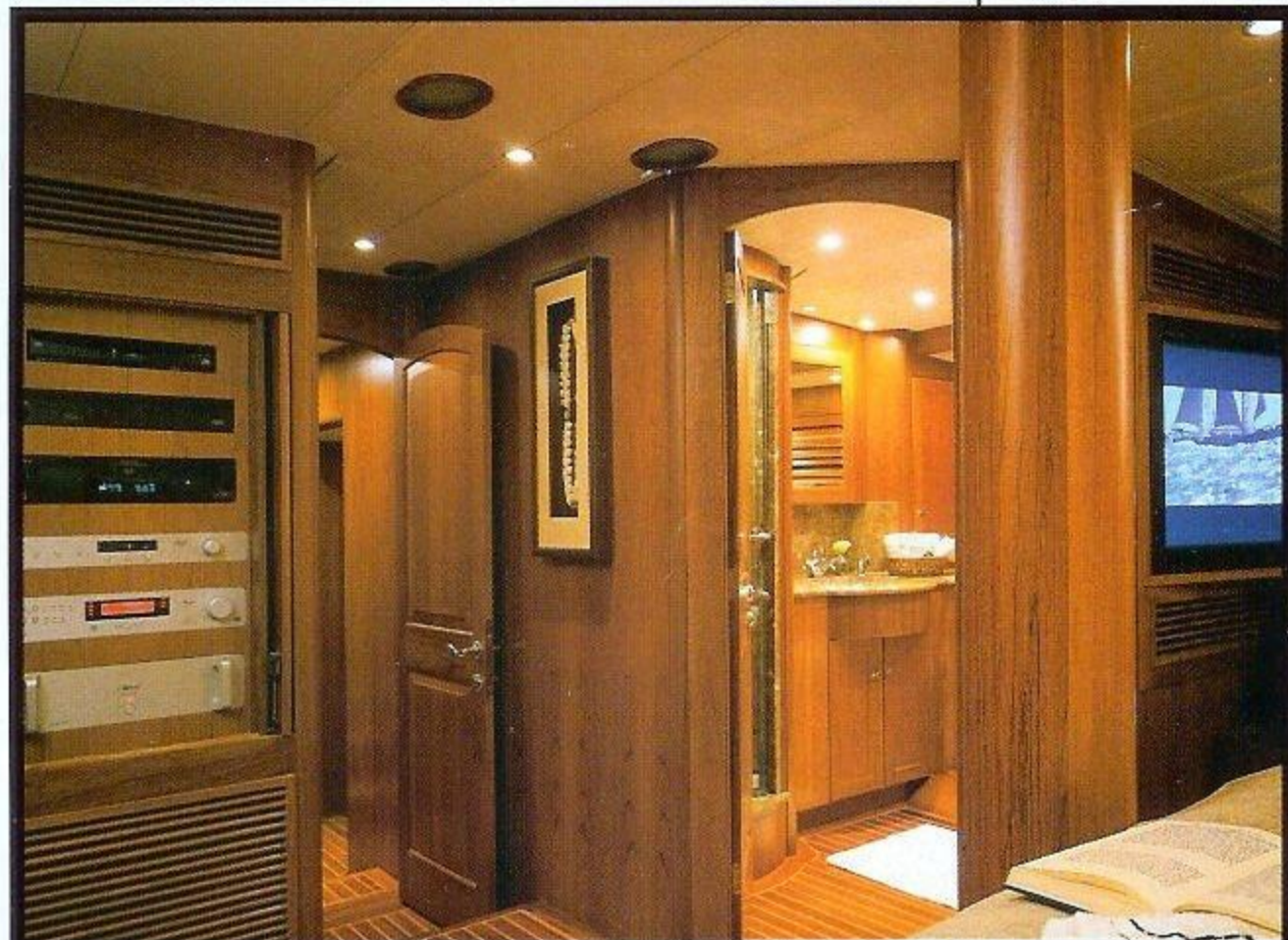
Crestron STS control system  
 Classe' SSP-25 surround processor  
 Classe' CAV-75 power amplifier  
 Classe' Tuner One FM tuner  
 Sony ES DV-7700 DVD player  
 Sunfire True Subwoofer MKII  
 NHT VS1.2A center channel loudspeaker  
 Sonance D8001 loudspeakers (front)  
 Sonance D5501 loudspeaker (rear)  
 DSS receivers  
 NEC Plasmasync 3300 33-inch plasma TV  
 Transparent A/V interconnect & speaker cable  
 Adcom GFA-5200 power amplifier  
 Sonance GR8 loudspeakers  
 Sonance VC-51 Volume control

#### Guest Cabins

Marantz SR-480 A/V receivers  
 Marantz DV-930 DVD players  
 Sonance T4000 loudspeakers  
 Sony 13-inch TVs  
 Transparent A/V interconnect & speaker cable

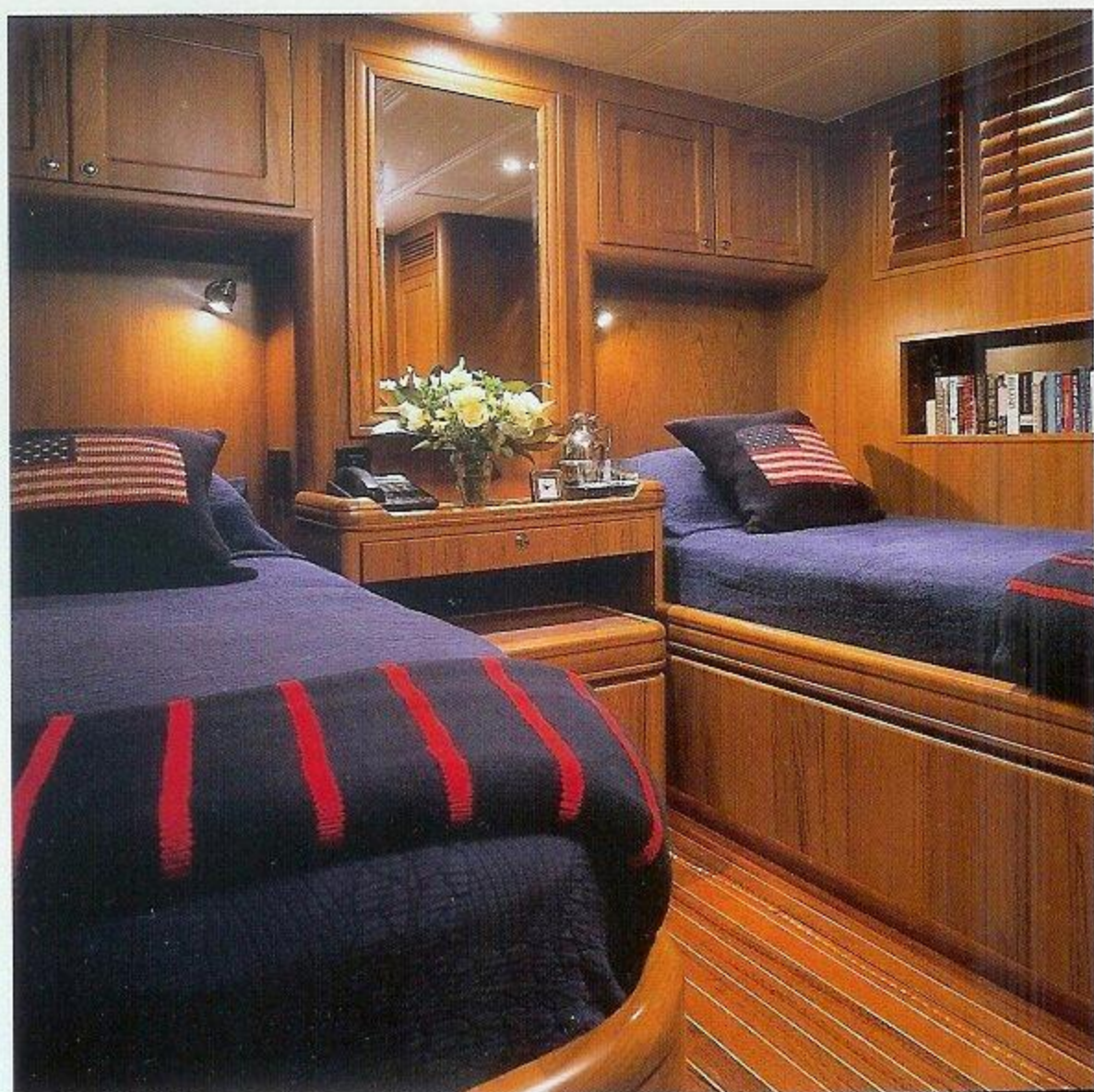
#### Wheel House

Marantz SR-480 A/V receiver  
 Digitron XL15AV 15-inch LCD video monitor  
 Sonance T4000 loudspeakers



*The master cabin displays an impressive line of Classe' components as well as a 33-inch NEC plasma television. Sonance in-wall speakers and a Sunfire subwoofer provide sea-shaking surround sound even in tight quarters.*

## High Fidelity on the High Seas



playback gear, a monitor for two security cameras; and it also supports video games—only in port, one hopes.

In the Avalon, technology—from plasma displays to radio-frequency remote controls, to power supply gear to unique motorization systems—was used with one overriding theme: the ultimate in audio and video reproduction aboard a sailing yacht. In attaining this goal, the system's designers stayed on course and reached their destination. ♦

