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This NORTHERN DREAM is No Mirage

*Cabo's largest
home port luxury
fishing yacht!*

-by Ardith Stephanson | photos by Francisco Estrada-

Imagine a luxury yacht with an understated opulence that makes you feel welcome but still pampered. Picture a vessel designed with meticulous attention to detail, right down to the television that swings down for viewing in the upper deck hot tub.

Envision fishing on a platform with a square footage of 300 feet and custom setup of up to 32 rods and reels, unheard of on a yacht. Then sit back and experience the hospitality of the down-to-earth, laid-back personality of the owner.

If it sounds like a dream, it is.

It's Northern Dream, and its hometown is Cabo San Lucas.

If you've fantasized about enjoying life on the water on a yacht such as this, it is available for private charter. You can sail the seas and watch heads turn at its sleek design and unique hazelnut color.

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The rest of the time, you might see its owner Barry Stewart fishing in the waters of the Pacific Ocean or the Sea of Cortez, getting full enjoyment from the craft he designed from bow to stern.

Stewart was born in the northern Canadian community of Hay River, Northwest Territories. Growing up next to Great Slave Lake, it's no wonder Stewart loves being on a boat. He made his living in the building supply business, but he has made his life on the water.

Now his dream of the ultimate fishing yacht has become the Northern Dream, a permanent resident in the Cabo San

Lucas Marina that flies the Mexican flag.

Stewart grew up fishing and playing hockey, typical of a Canadian boy, especially one living next to the 10th largest freshwater lake in the world. After playing junior hockey and earning a tryout with the NHL's Edmonton Oilers, he returned to Hay River and got involved in the family business, a small building supply company.

At 23 years old, Stewart became the President, and led the growth and success of Igloo Building Supplies Group, which he moved to its current home office in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. After four decades in the business, he began to think





about stepping back somewhat and he and his wife looked for a winter home. He wanted to be close to the water and he's delighted they chose Cabo San Lucas several years ago.

"We fell in love with Cabo," Stewart says. "The weather is great, the fishing is fantastic, and the people are fantastic. It's the perfect environment. There's so much to do. You can go hiking, fishing, and ziplining. You can go in the desert on dune buggies. There are so many great restaurants. Whether you want to retire or you want a great vacation, this is the place. And it's very safe, we've never had an issue."

With an established home in Cabo,

Stewart then started to ponder getting a boat so he could fully enjoy his love of the water surrounding Baja Peninsula. He had boats before, but this beauty is his first yacht, and he wanted to do it right.

"I usually never use the word yacht," Stewart says somewhat modestly, exemplifying the values of his parents, who taught him not to forget his upbringing. "I always just call it a boat. If it was someone else's, it would be a yacht. When we're referring to mine, I call it a boat."

(FAR RIGHT AND ABOVE) | OPPOSITE PAGE: Sun bed on the bow. Owner, Barry Stewart. **THIS PAGE:** The Wheelhouse. An 18-ft Robalo tethered to the sun deck. The fly bridge.

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Make no mistake. This boat is a yacht, and has enough extraordinary features to make it stand out from many others on the water.

Northern Dream is a Westport hull, originally built by Sovereign Yachts in 1999, that Stewart purchased in Florida after searching for exactly what he wanted. He looked at new boats but decided to do a custom re-design of an existing one. He had it hauled through the Panama Canal to a small shipyard in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada.

"We've been in Cabo for 12 years," he

says. "I'd been out on larger boats and yachts. I couldn't find a boat that I really liked for fishing off, or just being on the water that was comfortable enough to charter down here. So I decided to look for a boat. I looked for new boats to start with, but I couldn't see the type of boat set up the way I wanted it for Cabo. So then I decided to buy an older boat and make it the way I wanted for Cabo."

He spent three and a half years completely renovating the vessel, right down to the skin, and rebuilding it to his standards. His fastidious attention to detail means every



inch of the ship bears his signature - and that of his family. His daughter chose the hazelnut exterior color, and his wife Izabela completed all the interior design, bringing the special shade into the cabins, California deck and salon of the yacht. Stewart was able to supply a lot of the products, and of course the many ideas and innovations he wanted for his Dream boat.

He extended the yacht from 120 to 130 feet to make it the largest super fishing boat in the world. (It was the biggest until one in Europe passed it by 10 feet.) He made the ceilings higher, and enlarged the staterooms and bathrooms, which are typically small and cramped on boats of any size. He made it maintenance free, inside and out. He

added the newest technology and the most modern finishings.

When it arrived in Cabo in late 2018, it took its place on the Cabo San Lucas Marina, and that's where it has stayed.

Let's get a sense of what makes the Northern Dream so special.

"A lot of money was put into the fishing cockpit," Stewart says. "Yachts don't usually have the room for a fishing cockpit."

The back end of the yacht features a fishing platform of 25 feet x 12 feet. He added two large kill boxes to keep the catch on ice and a big live well for bait. Everything

(FAR LEFT, ABOVE AND BELOW) | OPPOSITE PAGE: Salon, bar, dining area. **THIS PAGE:** "Let's Go," a 42-foot Freeman, alongside Northern Dream. The fishing cockpit.

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can be processed in the back of the boat, from cleaning to vacuum sealing. Stewart likes his boat kept clean, and he didn't want anything brought inside to package.

He has 32 setups with custom Shimano gear, and everything is cleaned after every use and put away into custom storage - out of the weather and out of the way. Stewart didn't want his fishing boat to have rods and reels stuck under the beds when the fishing was done.

After the fishing platform is a large California deck, which fully opens into the salon, the fully open doorway also not typical on a large boat. A large seating area, dining area and bar greet you, along with a stunning onyx wall that's backlit to add to

the hazelnut tones of the design throughout the yacht.

The staterooms are large and welcoming, including a master bedroom, two VIP rooms and a two-bunk children's quarters, each with their own bathroom. All have lots of natural light, big bathrooms and showers, electronic controls, sound systems and televisions. In fact, the bunk room has two TVs to keep the kids from arguing over what to watch.

Added touches like a steam shower and multi-colored lighted ceiling in the master bedroom, heated floors and warming towel racks in all the bathrooms, and laundry and cleaning facilities on every level add sophistication and practicality. Guests enjoy

(BELOW AND FAR RIGHT) | THIS PAGE: *The California Deck.* **OPPOSITE PAGE:** *The Master State Room.*





every amenity, and it's easy for the crew to clean each level to a shine without hauling anything up and down the stairs.

The crew's quarters are finished to the same standards as the guest rooms, and they have a private lounge area as well.

The galley received extra attention, creating a workable area that's comfortable for the full-time chef. Stewart did mock-ups of the workspace with plywood, experimenting with different designs until he got the final layout right.

The upper deck has a large open area and

a fiberglass top that Stewart added in the renovation. He installed the largest electric barbecue grill made - electric for safety reasons. There's a hot tub and that TV that swings down so you can watch (what else) hockey - or anything else - while soaking in the tub.

"I can't tell you one thing I would do differently," he says. "I had time and I changed things as we went."

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(ABOVE, BELOW AND FAR RIGHT) | THIS PAGE: *The VIP State Room. The Engine Room. OPPOSITE PAGE:* *Northern Dream's galley.*

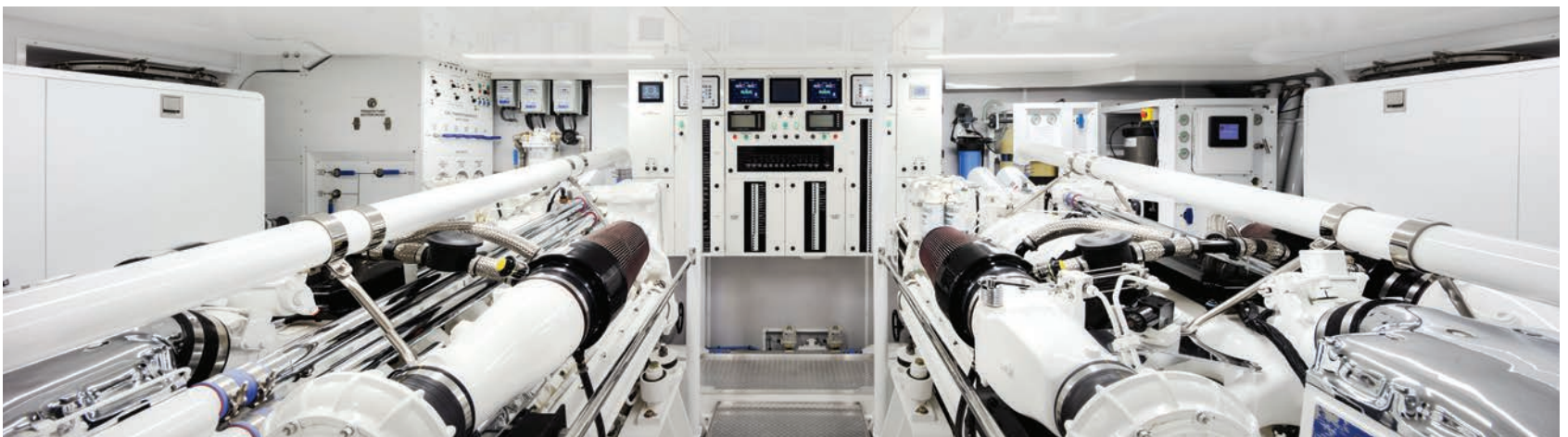
Did we mention he likes everything kept clean? That includes the massive engine room and its 3800-horsepower turbocharged engines.

"You should be able to eat off the floor of my engine room," he says. It's true, as a red carpet leads you through the gleaming white structures, where it is indeed clean enough to enjoy a meal.

The engine was completely rebuilt, and he guesses the 28,000 liters of fuel needed could get him back to Canada at cruising speed. Everything else in the engine room was also taken out and re-done, and the

yacht has its own desalination system along with greywater and blackwater processing capacity.

The wheelhouse was also completely renovated with state-of-the-art systems, like a flare camera that can guide the vessel through fog, along with all the other navigation and fishing systems you can imagine. Navigation screens are the size and clarity of big-screen TVs. An at-rest stabilization system means the boat doesn't rock in rough waters when it's anchored, once again a unique feature of the Northern Dream.





The end result is an extremely reliable vessel that has a strict maintenance and safety inspection schedule.

I saved the best for last - the food. Well, everything about this watercraft is envious, but then Stewart offered to share the fresh dorado he caught the day before, prepared by the world-class chef who is in charge of the galley. He once cooked in France with Gordon Ramsay, and used the fresh dorado to prepare delicious ceviche and grilled tacos with handmade blue-corn tortillas. I won't

even attempt to describe the exquisite flavors bursting from the dishes, with a white-glove service that made me feel like royalty, but is in fact offered to every guest on the yacht.

"You can have the nicest boat, but people will complain if the food isn't good," concludes Stewart, who says his mother was a great cook and his father loved to entertain. In fact, one of the main reasons he bought

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the boat was to entertain customers, as well as enjoy with his family and guests.

The chef is one of the full-time operations crew, along with the captain and engineer, hostess, service staff and cleaning staff. After every use, the yacht is completely cleaned. The crew also looks after Stewart's 42-foot Freeman LR, which is Stewart's other fishing boat. This incredibly fast fishing vessel brings a whole new adventure to fishing in the Cabo area. It can join Northern Dream on longer trips to allow guests to cruise to more remote locations for fishing, diving, and whale watching.

As mentioned, Stewart uses Northern Dream himself, to entertain customers or friends. His family all love to fish, and they occasionally head out for a sunset cruise at Land's End or a vacation up the Sea of Cortez. He also donates the boat for charity fundraisers, as he's proud to have the yacht in Cabo and wants to support the community.

A private charter can be arranged through any yacht charter company. Charters have included people from all over the world, and all walks of life. Actors, professional athletes, and business people are just a few of the customers who have enjoyed the yacht.





Movies have been shot on deck, and guests have celebrated weddings and anniversaries. Get on board to enjoy the daytime fun, and when night falls, the lighting and ambiance bring a completely new feel to Northern Dream.

This yacht is set up for fishing but also for anything else guests may enjoy. Stewart says some people fish, some people party, and some just relax. A typical day charter involves going out early to fish, then setting anchor in the Cabo San Lucas Bay to enjoy the multitude of toys on board. There are three Sea Doo's that lift down with the davit crane (along with an 18-foot tender which can run you to shore). There are sea bobs, kayaks, floating platforms, paddleboards and more, all replaced or added to every two years to keep up with the latest trends.

There are a lot of repeat customers, and once you see the boat, you know why. One customer used Northern Dream when her usual charter yacht was not available. She later told the charter company she didn't want to see that other boat again. Once you've lived the Northern Dream, you want to return.

"I want people to go on Northern Dream and have an experience of a lifetime," Stewart says. "Sometimes with a charter I'll come by after and ask people how their day was. They don't know me, so they say, 'We had a great time! You should try it sometime!'"

"I love to see people happy. Nothing makes me happier than guests or customers having a great day on the boat."

That day on the water is truly a dream. It's a Northern Dream.

El Fin!

(FAR RIGHT, ABOVE AND BELOW) | OPPOSITE PAGE: The floating dock. THIS PAGE: Launching the jetski. Northern Dream in the bay with floating dock and jetskis aft.

