



le marin

# Yachts 2017

**Employment:**

Unfair competition within the EU

**Ship registrations**

under the RIF on the rise

**Explorer yachts**

come in all shapes and sizes

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# The rise of the RIF flag

Since early 2017, fourteen more ships have been registered under the French flag (RIF). It benefits from the new regulations on blue economy, and is reaping the benefits of a long-winded work conducted by its sponsors.

**U**nder the law on blue economy, headed by former French MP Arnaud Leroy, ships up to 49 ft are now eligible for registration under the French flag. This law is a real success for the RIF, which registered eight 49-78 ft ships out of the 14 new registrations since the beginning of the year. Several 65 ft catamarans are also on the list.

'For a ship already registered for commercial use, there is hardly any difference, Antoine Mathys, head of the single RIF office, remarks. For ships that were registered for recreational purposes, it opens up doors to professional services in terms of record-keeping, minimum crew numbers and safety.'

The RIF, which now includes 44 yachts, is not relying on new regulations for its development. Recently, the **Black Swan**, a 132ft9 sailing yacht, and the **Vertige**, which has become the largest French-flagged yacht (163ft7), have joined.

'Increasingly, owners approach us directly because they have overcome their preconceptions and have realised that the RIF is



The 'Vertige' in Bonifacio on one of her first journeys.

simpler than other flags like Malta and that there are fewer intermediaries, fewer complex procedures and solid backing for their projects', Fabien Raffray, the RIF yachting manager, added.

## Two foreign owners

However, preconceptions are difficult to get rid of, especially when they come from the French them-

selves. Admittedly, the RIF flag is suffering from an unsuitable category ranking system that regularly calls for exemptions pending an amendment.

Another predominant complaint is that it imposes international navigation and does not allow for use for both private and commercial purposes.

But as far as French seafarers are concerned, it is the most competi-

tive flag. Owners are not fooled. In the second half of 2017, fourteen more ships could be registered under the RIF flag, including two projects of over 131 ft.

Another positive signal is that, though most owners are French, a second foreign owner has just applied for the French flag.

Camille Bleuet

## The 'Vertige', a giant sailing under the French flag



The 'Vertige' was completed in late April 2017 by Italian shipyard Tankoa.

The largest French-flagged ship so far is the **Vertige**, a 164 ft yacht that was completed in late April 2017 by Italian shipyard Tankoa and owned by a Frenchman. She is the first unit of the S501 series, designed by Francesco Paszkowski with a hull designed by Massimo Visibelli. She has a capacity for twelve passengers and nine crew.

Extensive noise damping work has been made, not exceed 50

decibels in the master suite at her cruising speed (12 knots). She is actually available for charter services for a mere €250,000 a week, without supply fees.

Tankoa is gradually turning to megayachts: the **Suerte** (196 feet) was delivered in 2015 and a 190 ft unit is currently under construction.

C. B.