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Allied Marine's 80th Anniversary Celebration: A Night of Heritage and Festivity

By Jill Bobrow

Contrary to popular belief among Americans, the iconic song “*Volare*” was not originally performed by Dean Martin. Instead, it was written and composed in 1958 by Italian artist Domenico Modugno. The memorable lyrics “*Nel blu, dipinto di blu*” and the repetitive, catchy refrain of “*volare*” have an irresistible appeal, making it almost impossible not to sing along. This infectious spirit took center stage at Allied Marine’s 80th anniversary party, held on Halloween eve during the Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show. Jon Burkard, President of the Allied Marine Group, led the charge by belting out “*volare*,” and soon all the guests followed suit. The evening demonstrated music’s ability to unite people, foster conviviality and create camaraderie—even among guests who had never met each other before.

A Landmark Celebration and Festive Atmosphere

To mark its milestone anniversary, Allied Marine brought together a vibrant mix of clients, colleagues, brokers, yacht managers, yacht designers, and friends. The event, sponsored by Kimberly Pucci and Robert Allen Law, showcased hallmark Italian fare including hand sliced prosciutto, Parmesan Reggiano, Italian caviar and blinis, sparkling Bellavista Franciacorta, and other signature cocktails and mocktails but most of all was a platform for mingling and merrymaking. Two of the Allied Marine yachts on display were also open for cocktails al fresco. Jazz singer Mafalda Minozzi, accompanied by guitarist Paul Ricci, set the tone with her engaging performance, reading the crowd and encouraging guests to join in the dancing and singing. Meanwhile, DJ Siso kept the energy high with a lively playlist, featuring mostly Italian songs.

White Party Elegance and Amalfi Coast Flair

The celebration's white party dress code lent an air of sophistication, with attendees looking particularly chic. With a style and flair, Silvia Nordio, Allied Marine's Head of Partnerships and Events, transformed the Bahia Mar in-water boat show display into a scene reminiscent of the Amalfi Coast. The perimeters were decked out with potted lemon trees, dripping with fruit and infusing the space with a fragrant, mediterranean atmosphere. The soft décor elements, designed by Kimberly Pucci, draw inspiration from the timeless *Dolce Vita* lifestyle of the 1960s, featuring high-performance textiles in a vibrant lemon-yellow palette. A stunning graphic backdrop depicting the world-famous Faraglioni rocks provided the perfect setting for guests to capture memorable photos against an immersive Capri-inspired scene, while the magnificent yachts on display at the Allied Marine floating barge beautifully completed the sophisticated atmosphere.

Allied Marine: Eight Decades of Excellence

Although South Florida boasts many yacht brokerages, Allied Marine stands out for its distinctive history and approach. Founded in 1945 along the Miami River, the company initially served returning World War II veterans, offering them boats and recreational opportunities on the water—hence the name “Allied.” In 1978, the company was acquired by Winthrop P. Rockefeller, a passionate yachtsman and fisherman and great-grandson of John D. Rockefeller.

A significant milestone came in 2008, when Ferretti SpA cemented its acquisition of the company, renaming the business Allied Marine. Today, the company specializes in new yacht sales, brokerage, and post-sales service. Allied Marine's enhanced partnership with its parent company, The Ferretti Group, has evolved over the years and in 2018, it became the exclusive United States dealer for Ferretti Yachts, Pershing, and Itama, East Coast dealer for Riva, as well as an authorized agent for Custom Line and CRN.

In 2022, the opening of the renovated Fort Lauderdale Ferretti Group Flagship Showroom marked another milestone. This sprawling contemporary in-water showroom spans 20,000 square feet featuring an Italo-style reception area with intimate seating groupings, a Riva Lounge, covered slips for yachts and superyachts, and private meeting rooms.

Allied Marine is a leading name in the yachting world. As a proud member of the Ferretti Group, and as the exclusive U.S. dealer for several distinguished yacht brands, it also offers wide ranging services such as luxury yacht sales, bespoke charters, new-build project management, as well as handling brokerage boats of all types.

The Allied Marine Difference according to its leadership

“Not all brokers can sell elite products,” says Simone Meletti, Managing Director of Ferretti Group Americas. “The way I see it is that it is fundamental for Ferretti Group to have experienced brokers who can educate clients about a new build and who can enhance their enjoyment of the best side of yachting.”

Jon Burkard, President of Allied Marine Group, echoes Meletti’s sentiment about experienced brokers. He says, “Our experienced brokers, are as comfortable in the engine-room as on the flybridge. Most are as knowledgeable about a yacht as the project manager on the build. This experience makes all the difference.” Burkard knows about experience. He has been with Allied Marine for 45 years. “I started working when I was a teenager after school in the parts department.” He continued working at his ‘boat hobby through his college years. His first year of law school, he sold two sizeable boats and decided it was more exciting than law. He went with his passion. Over time, he became CEO of Allied and then during the Ferretti acquisition he became president.

Burkard adds, “What sets us apart from other brokers is we are wholly owned by the largest luxury boat builder in the world. We have 7 brands from 27-feet to 90 meters in length. No other brokerage is in that position.”

Clearly, owner loyalty plays a big part in Allied Marine’s success. While Allied Marine is indeed a part of the Ferretti Group, the multi-national brokers at Allied also are well acquainted with wide cross section of other yacht brands. If, for instance, a client wants to sell his Mangusta and move into a Ferretti Group yacht such as a Pershing, it is not a problem. According to Burkard, they can do it all!

Nel blu, dipinto di blu means literally “In the blue painted in blue,” *Volare* in Italian means to fly....perhaps the song being sung at the fun celebration for the 80th anniversary of Allied Marine can be seen as a metaphor...flying away into the blue ocean aboard a yacht of your dreams. Any way you look at it, the lovely event at the 2025 Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show was an apt way to celebrate the legacy of Allied Marine.

About Allied Marine:

As a Ferretti Group company Allied Marine is one of the largest yacht brokerages in the world. Allied Marine is the Exclusive US Dealer for Pershing, Itama and Ferretti Yachts and, the Exclusive US Central and East Coast Dealer for Riva. Allied Marine is also an Authorized Agent for Custom Line and CRN. Allied Marine is a global dealer in preowned and new yachts sales, as well as memorable superyachts charters.

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