

CRUISE & FERRY

Info

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VISIONS



The ALYSSA is the latest delivery from the productive Cantieri Navale Visentini shipyard located on the River Po delta just south of Venice. A particularly interesting feature of this new vessel is the separate cardeck.



Another Visentini for the Mediterranean

The family owned Cantieri Navale Visentini yard has gradually expanded its capability and can now produce annually up to three highly sophisticated vessels up to a maximum length of about 190 metres. Two side-launching building berths are complemented by a large dock.

The complete design of ALYSSA is made by NAOS in Trieste, while final outfitting is carried out in Chioggia or Ravenna. This reflects Visentini's policy, unique among Italian yards, of relying to a large extent on subcontractors whilst employing only a limited number of permanent staff.

The ALYSSA is an improved version of the MERSEY VIKING and LAGAN VIKING which were built by Visentini in 1995 and have been on charter to Norse Irish ever since. The vessels have proven very successful in service, especially their good service speed and low fuel consumption. The combination of limited passenger and large freight capacity has been profitable with both freight and passengers increasing consistently. However, the stowage of passenger's cars could be improved and Visentini has addressed the problem on the new ship.

Also owned by one of the shipowning companies within the Visentini group, the ALYSSA has a very striking exterior dominated by an unusual funnel shape and streamlined accommodation block. NAOS is to be congratulated for evincing the typical block form of many recent ro-pax vessels based on "production friend-

liness" and introducing some flair into the exterior profile.

Access into the vessel is via a 16.5 metre wide stern ramp/door with a length of 13 metres plus 3 metre flaps. The starboard side of the ramp leads to the 4.9 metre high maindeck while the portside can be used for direct access onto the wide fixed internal ramp leading to the upper trailer deck. Having such a wide ramp permits two-way traffic that considerably expedites cargo-handling speeds.

Unlike the Norse Irish sisters, the upperdeck is covered while incorporating large openings on each side for ventilation. The open cardeck above can accommodate up to 146 cars and is reached via a hoistable ramp. Passengers therefore have a very quick and convenient route to their cabins.

It is interesting how few ro-pax vessels have solved the dilemma of car transportation in an adequate way. Even some recently built vessels such as the

FINNCLIPPER have no separate cardeck. Other ro-pax designs, such as the SUPERFAST series, rely on cardecks beneath the maindeck but access to the cabin deck and public areas can be problematic if the passenger lifts are not working properly or they are congested, a very common scenario when the ship is loading.

At least 50 per cent of the maindeck has to be cleared of freight before the cardecks can be unloaded, which can be a frustrating wait for car drivers even if trucks drive off very quickly. Ideally the cardeck should be completely separate from the freight areas so that loading and unloading can take place independently.

The new P&O North Sea Ferries vessels building in Fincantieri have a completely separate cardeck with side access from the shore. This is clearly the best option if shore facilities permit. The Irish Ferries newbuilding has an exclusive internal ramp system both fore and aft for cars, which permits them to drive directly to the cardeck closest to the accommodation. This was pioneered some

Facts & Figures ALYSSA

Yard	Cantieri Navale Visentini
Length o.a	186.0 m
Length p.p	169.5 m
Beam	25.6 m
Depth (main deck)	9.15 m
Depth (upper deck)	15.0 m
Draft	6.5 m
Deadweight	7,500 t



GT	21,500
Capacity	2,300 lm plus 221 cars
Speed	23 kts on 5.6 m draft
Engines	2 Wärtsilä
Output	18,900 kW

years ago on an SNCM ro-pax, the MONTECINTO, which was equipped with a separate stern ramp for passenger cars leading directly to a fixed internal ramp accessing the cardeck.

Access to the lower car deck

and tanktop is via a 3.7 metre wide fixed ramp on the starboard side. The fixed cardeck has a free height of 1.95 metres and has sufficient area for about 75 cars to be parked. While it is possible for the cardeck to be used for passenger cars, direct access to the accommodation decks has not been provided so the area will be used for the transport of new cars.

The fixed ramp arrives at the 4.35 metre high tanktop at the forward end of the space giving little room for manoeuvre. There is no space for trucks to turn so vehicles will either have to reverse up or down the ramp slowing the whole turnaround.

The ALYSSA was actually delivered as a pure freight ro-ro vessel but her accommodation has subsequently been outfitted for 240 passengers. Thirty six two berth cabins are located on the embarkation deck along with the free flow restaurant and lounge areas. While these are not as large as on the MERSEY VI-

KING, the quality is very high for a freight-orientated ro-pax vessel. Forty-two four berth cabins are to be found on the deck above, the Drivers deck, although it is more likely that regular car passengers will use the cabins.

While maintaining the same hull form as the MERSEY VIKING, Visentini have increased the service speed by installing a pair of MAN/B&W 9L48/60 main engines, each with an output of 9450 kW at 500 rpm.

This compares with the earlier pair's two 7800 kW Wärtsilä 8R46 engines. At a draft of 5.6 metre, corresponding to normal trailer deadweight of about 4500 tons, the vessel is capable of a service speed of 23 knots. The engines drive a pair of 4.8 metre diameter cp propellers via vertically offset gearboxes that are located within very narrow skegs. The unique hull form adopted by Visentini is a combination of free flow and twin skeg form offering a good compromise between high hull efficiency and low vibration levels.

With the engine room also squeezed between the B/5 longitudinal bulkheads, Visentini has chosen to locate a number of compartments including the

engine control room, workshop and storeroom on the maindeck, underneath the fixed ramp aft. Three Caterpillar 3512 gensets each with a 1070 kW output are located between the engines and are complemented by two 850 kW shaft generators.

Apart from the twin rudders, the ALYSSA is equipped with two 680 kW bow thrusters. A pair of Fincantieri fin stabilisers is also fitted for passenger comfort.

Long term chartered by Tunisia Ferries, a division of CoTuNav, the ALYSSA partners their other newbuilding, the CARTHAGE, on the Marseille/Genoa - Tunis service, providing a year-round service for freight as well as regular passenger and driver sailings.

While the CARTHAGE has space for only 866 lane metres of freight, the ALYSSA accommodates 2300 lane metres as well as over 200 cars.

Demand for freight capacity is year-round while peak passenger demand is mainly during the summer and other public holidays. Overall profitability would therefore seem to favour the ro-pax and this is why the vessel type is becoming increasingly popular. ■