

# INDIA BOATING

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BOAT SHOW ISSUE

PHOTO: ROHINI TEKHANDNEY

“Dr. Mallya always wanted to own a gentleman’s yacht. When he bought *Kalizma* she was in a bad state and he had to practically rebuild the entire boat. She has sailed extensively in the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean. For Dr. Mallya it’s like owning a piece of history and he finds it a very comfortable and homely boat to spend quality time with family and friends.”

- Commodore Mongia who has been working with Dr. Mallya for the past 15 ½ years.

She tells the story of a tempestuous romance between two of the biggest Hollywood legends. The on again, off again lovers Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor spent much of their time romancing on this gleaming wood and brass motor yacht. Burton presented it to her after she won an Oscar for *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, and it was onboard this classic Edwardian yacht that he lavished upon her the famous 69.4 carat diamond engagement ring!

I recall the many stories about this legendary yacht as I am welcomed onboard by her Captain Jari Lindgren and erstwhile captain Avnish Dhall. The *Kalizma* is now owned by the flamboyant tycoon Dr. Vijay Mallya and presently anchored in Mumbai Harbour.

“The *Kalizma* carries with her a glamorous past and present. One of the oldest Edwardian motor yachts afloat, *Kalizma* was used by the Royal Navy in both World Wars, and was once owned by Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton. ”

# KALIZMA

– 103 YEARS OF ROMANCE

The luxury yacht on which Richard Burton romanced Elizabeth Taylor, *Kalizma*, is a 165 foot Edwardian motor yacht which sleeps ten and has a crew of eight, was bought by the Hollywood couple in 1967. The boat has undergone a three million dollar renovation. The *Kalizma* was named for Burton’s children, Kate (now appearing on Broadway), Liza and Maria. The dining room is furnished with antiques. The main bedroom has a four-poster bed, and there are several works of art aboard, including paintings by van Gogh, Monet and Picasso. The *Kalizma* is based in Malta.

She's 103 years old but still draws admiring glances. And speak of shipboard romances - The *Kalizma* has seen the most famous of them all. But her glamorous past also includes service to the Royal Navy during the two World Wars. She was bought by Burton in 1967, reportedly for £18,000 and the couple spent a fortune renovating the yacht, and named her 'The *Kalizma*' after Burton's children Kate, Liza and Maria.

The legendary yacht, presently in Indian waters has been lovingly restored by its present owner, the liquor tycoon - Dr. Vijay Mallya who has added her to his collection of yachts. The vintage motor yacht was built in 1906 by Ramage and Ferguson to a design of renowned yacht designer G.L. Watson. Acquired 11 years ago by Mallya for his personal use, the yacht underwent an extensive restoration in 2006, and is today acclaimed as one of the finest Classic Motor Yachts afloat.

The 165-ft *Kalizma*, built in 1906, is all gleaming old wood and brass. Originally built to house 10 people, she was equipped with three double cabins and two twin cabins, a TV lounge room, a formal dining room and a study. But the yacht is more famous for her past, than the luxury she offered. And although it was on *Kalizma* that the Hollywood couple spent their most romantic moments, their ownership of the yacht outlasted their marriages.

The *Kalizma* passed through a few owners before she caught Mallya's eye. His penchant for 'collecting' the unique and historic may have influenced his acquisition. He purchased *Kalizma* 11 years ago for his personal use and has since restored her to her former glory. When in Indian waters, she can often be spotted in Mumbai or in Goa - her owner's favourite playground, gleaming like a diamond against the azure blue sky and sea. And she has sailed extensively for her owner in the Mediterranean, The Gulf, and The Far East.

*Kalizma* has been further updated to make her unique amongst the classic motor yachts still afloat. After her 2006 refit, *Kalizma* now sails proudly as one of the finest Classic Motor Yachts afloat. Speaking of her latest rebuild in 2006, Avnish Dhall, her erstwhile Captain recalls "We did a complete re-build. Only her hull is intact, but even that was reinforced to strengthen her; specially as we added a new Top Deck."

The yacht was restored at the cost, 3 million dollars. at the docks in Mumbai...a gargantuan task that involved major changes, including the engines being pulled out completely, and replaced. "I almost killed myself restoring her," laughs Avnish, as we chat at the exquisitely refurbished dining area on the aft deck. "I almost killed a lot of people too! There are people who won't talk to me anymore! And considering that I stayed onsite 24x7 for months, I certainly turned myself into an alcoholic."

I am ushered into the saloon and see a plush, elegantly restored boat, beautifully appointed with artifacts and paintings. A large saloon with a bar leads to a magnificent formal dining room and a modern galley. Further ahead, the fore deck is well equipped with two Jetskis for the adventurous. Four ensuite cabins (2 twin, 2 double) are located a level lower. A staircase from the dining area leads you up to the Owner's Deck with the ensuite State Room at the fore, and a private lounge area, bar and a luxurious Jacuzzi on the aft deck. The new top deck accommodates the Cockpit and the Bridge.

It is obvious that this elegant yacht has been refurbished for personal use and pleasure. She's guarded jealously by her proud owner and only sails for her crew, her owner or his friends and associates. The crew, under the guidance of Captain Jari Lindgren is fully trained to entertain the owner's guests at a moment's notice.

Though *Kalizma* is available for charter, Mallya has claimed that he will never sell her. But sometime back he had to reject rumours of the Hollywood star Brad Pitt buying the yacht for his then wife and Friends star Jennifer Aniston for 3 million dollars as a symbol of his love.

Stories about the *Kalizma* abound aplenty, and as I leave this iconic yacht it is obvious that she will draw admiration and attention wherever she goes. **IB**

PHOTOS: ARJUN CHIPALKATTI



PHOTO: JARI LINDGREN