

Do not—ever!—rely on your friends who say, “Ahh, it’ll probably only cost ten grand to fix ‘er up.” Unless, of course, they own a boatyard experienced in refits and, probably even then, get other estimates.

Score Your Refit Yard

You wouldn't think of hiring a building contractor without doing due diligence, so pick your refit yard with equal care. Interview several yards to find out what they offer and see if you have a "connection" with their team. Don't be shy about asking for references, either, and follow up on them. Here are some questions to ask:

1. **Does the yard** have a good pollution-prevention program? The generator of any pollution (the boat owner), not the yard, is responsible for EPA violations. YES NO
2. **Does the yard** have a climate-controlled, dust-free paint shed that will reduce flaws (and required resprays)? YES NO
3. **Does the yard** allow your subcontractors free access to work on the boat? YES NO
4. **Does the yard** have secure storage for equipment removed from the boat during refit? YES NO
5. **Does the yard** have a reputation for on-time, quality work? YES NO
6. **Does the yard** have specific experience in the type of work you plan, e.g.: repowering, fiberglass repair and modification, or finish joinery? YES NO
7. **Can you schedule** your refit for yard down time, such as the off season, for better rates? YES NO
8. **Are they willing** to give you a comprehensive written quote? YES NO

COUNT 2 FOR YES 0 FOR NO TOTAL SCORE: _____
How Does Your Selection Rate?

- 12-16:** Give the yard manager a hug. Your boat has a new home.
6-10: Remind yourself that everything is a compromise and proceed.
0-4: Continue the search. This yard may be someone's hobby.



Reader's Choice

Here's a list of our readers' top boatyard picks.

- Atlantic Yacht Basin, Chesapeake, VA
- Bradford Marine, Ft. Lauderdale, FL
- Brewer Yacht Yard at Glen Cove, Glen Cove, NY
- Brewer Dautless Shipyard, Essex, CT
- Canal Boatyard, Seattle, WA
- Constitution Marina, Boston, MA
- Continental Marine, Wareham, MA
- Crosby Yacht Yard, Osterville, MA
- Delta Boat Works, Isleton, CA
- Deltaville Boatyard, Deltaville, VA
- Dodson Boatyard, Stonington, CT
- Eldean Marina, Macatawa, MI
- Hampton Watercraft and Marine, Hampton Bays, NY
- Marina Jack, Sarasota, FL
- Marlow Marine, Snead Island, FL
- Mears Great Oak Landing, Chestertown, MD
- Merritt's Boat & Engine Works, Pompano Beach, FL
- Murrelle Marine, Lantana, FL
- Norseman Shipbuilding, Miami, FL
- Pirate Cove Marina, Portsmouth, RI
- Robinhood Marine Center, Georgetown, ME
- Sea Love Boat Works, Ponce Inlet, FL
- Smokey's Marine Service, Prospect, Kentucky
- Snead Island Boat Works, Palmetto, FL
- Stuart Yacht Harbor, Stuart, FL

5

Plan ahead to interface with what exists. Try to use as much of the old boat as possible without getting into major structural projects. Moving a bulkhead an inch or two is just foolish.

6

Consider the long-term effects first. Adding a fuel or water tank can change the balance of a boat and seriously affect performance and handling.

7

Expect the unexpected. You never know what you'll find once you start opening up bulkheads and overheads. Build a little "wigggle room" into your budget.

8

Get all the warranties you can, both from the manufacturers of the systems and the refit yard.

9

Keep your insurance company in the loop. Find out if the yard is carrying liability on your project. It's also a good idea to continue your hull and machinery policy during the refit, and update your valuation as the project is progressing.

10

Have Fun!

riors in Ft. Lauderdale (www.karenlynninteriors.com), has done a number of refits on Ferretti, Sunseeker, Hatteras, and other production yachts, and she has developed five essentials of a successful refit.

"First is planning and second is setting a realistic budget," she says, adding, "third is assembling an experienced and quality team, fourth is having regular meetings and updates to keep everyone current, and last is carefully controlling all changes that affect the budget or the schedule."

Tom Slane has seen the refit world change. "In the '80s, you could gut a boat and rebuild it with new engines and systems for half the price of a new boat," he recalls. But the economic realities have changed.

While the cost of labor and equipment for a refit has remained rela-



Karen Lynn Interiors



Slane Marine



Slane Marine