

Taming Seas

with Experience and Innovation



Latest application of Gazebo style pontoons at Pendik Marinaturk



Erhan Kavlakoglu

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF ASKA, ERHAN KAVLAKOĞLU HAS PUT HIS SIGNATURE ON SEVERAL OF THE NEW GENERATION MARINAS IN TURKEY. THE ISTANBUL PENDİK YACHT HARBOR, THE CONSTRUCTION OF WHICH IS SOON TO BE COMPLETED, IS EXPECTED TO BECOME THE YACHTING SECTOR'S DISPLAY CASE AS TURKEY'S LARGEST MARINA. KAVLAKOĞLU SHARES HIS OPINIONS ON MARINA CONSTRUCTION TECHNOLOGIES AND THE GENERAL OUTLOOK OF THE SECTOR WITH MARINA IN VOGUE READERS.



Yachts mooring at Pendik MarinaTürk

Turkey has achieved significant progress, both in marina construction and marina operations within the last 10 years. Exemplary facilities have ensued as a result of joining together the best in aesthetics and engineering. The application of floating systems constitutes a very important milestone in this area. Having combined technology with experience, Aska has initiated a brand new era in marina construction by producing floating docks with aluminum framing and timber covering instead of concrete floating docks.

In conjunction with the Canadian firm Structurmarine, Aska is putting its signature under important projects both in Turkey and abroad. Aska's Chairman of the Board Erhan Kavlıkoğlu describes Structurmarine's owner Yves Lepine as an "old sea wolf, who is young of heart" and says "a regular participant to the transatlantic races with his aluminum hull sailboat, this good friend of mine has a sincere fondness for Turkey". Thanks to the harmony between the two partners, Aska and Structurmarine have maintained an extremely successful business venture for 10 years. "Now we're working to raise the bar even higher," adds Kavlıkoğlu.

The floating docks at the Çeşme yacht harbor constitute the first project realized by the two partners. Immediately after that, they constructed

the Port Göcek marina docks. An important project on the world scale with its concept, design and technology, all of the pontoons at Port Göcek, including the 36-meter breakwater, are composed of floating systems. This is how Kavlıkoğlu describes the effect: "The pontoons, with their shaded gazebos, can be toured on golf carts. The 'wave breaker' technology we have employed at this site is an important breakthrough for Turkey". Kavlıkoğlu points out that whereas in the past marinas could hardly hold 17 or 18-meter yachts, following the construction of Port Göcek boats up to 45 meters can easily be accommodated. Having used the same technology in their second project at D-Marin Turgutreis Marina, Aska led another innovation with finger docks that enable easier berthing for the boats. Explaining that they have also upgraded the energy, communications and fire prevention systems on the dock to meet international standards, Kavlıkoğlu adds "we have achieved a sturdier and more aesthetic result by using tropic wood siding from IPE trees (also known as Ironwood).

Abroad, the two partners built 11 facilities of different sizes for sailboats and ferryboats at Malaysia. At the same period, Aska also constructed floating docks for the Siğacık Yacht Harbor. The company entered and won the Turkish Coastguard Command tender for the TCGC docks at



Yachts up to 45 meters can moor at Port Göcek

Marmaris and Fethiye. Kavlakoğlu emphasizes the fact that these docks were designed for military use and can therefore stand stormy weather conditions as well as the most stringent maneuvering of boats. 240-ton ships, higher than 40 meters can safely be moored at these docks. A similar system is presently being implemented at the TCGC dock at Güllük. Another continuing project is the crescent shaped superyacht marina under construction at the Four Season Hotel in Qatar's capital, Doha.


Kavlakoğlu says that they are about to finish the construction of a marina with a capacity of 100 superyachts at Poruklu Bay (generally known as Ayten Bay) in Göcek, and points out that this facility will be the first of its kind in Turkey because of its shape: two arcs, in keeping with the surge of the waves into the bay. This design minimizes any jostling since the boats take the waves from the stern and aft. Additionally, the widths of the docks here have been expanded to 5 meters instead of the standard 3 meters, thus widening the space between the boats, as well as mitigating some of the traffic on the dock. The shading system relieves any discomfort Göcek's summer sun might inflict. The floating Café that will go into business in the summer of 2009 will be an additional boost for the yachters.

Kavlakoğlu goes on to explain that another project about to be finished is the Pendik Yacht Harbor, which will enhance the important urban centers in the area such as the airport, the Formula 1 Racing Circuit

and the fairgrounds. The Pendik Yacht Harbor will be Turkey's largest marina with 54,000 square meters berthing capacity. Also the first marina to be built since 25 years in Istanbul, it is an advanced design and technology product befitting the city. Yachts of up to 80 meters will be accommodated at the facility, which will go into service next summer. Projected to host marine exhibitions as well, the marina will become a showcase for the Turkish yachting sector with its vast size, its proximity to the Tuzla shipyards and its support facilities.

As an experienced entrepreneur, Aska's Chairman of the Board Erhan Kavlakoğlu stresses the urgency of moving quickly for the construction of new marinas and specifies his views on this subject: "We have to accept that in Turkey, investing in the sea is really a challenge. The difficulty starts with the legislation. In principle, the law is intended to regulate the state of affairs on land. When you attempt to do something on the sea, everybody becomes uneasy. Although some progress has been achieved in the last 5 or 6 years, there are still issues that haven't been covered and these gaps slow down investments. On the other hand, the lack of planning related to yacht tourism is another negative factor. The contribution of government-built yacht harbors to yacht tourism is arguable. The most beautiful yacht harbors in the country have been built in Trabzon, Mersin and Gazipaşa, but there are no yachts. The first priority in yachting is to have nearby inlets that allow for safe cruising and an enjoyable vacation. Unlike ships, yachts are not

vessels that travel from port to port in the open seas. Therefore yacht harbors are not merely venues where the boats take shelter as they pass by.

Yacht harbors are the 5-star hotels of the seas, and should be planned with that logic. Our primary goal should be to invest in places like Göcek, Marmaris, Hisarönü, Gökova, Güllük that offer natural beauty as well as varied and well developed means of transportation. None of us would believe that there isn't a better shore than Didim for the realization of the magnificent project that Doğu Holding has presented to Turkey. Even under these conditions, it takes around 10 years to implement a project. This is the most opportune moment to plan and execute yacht harbors that can house large boats, just as yachts are constantly growing in size. Because, apart from accommodation, these boats generate an unbelievable economic dynamism with their technical repair and maintenance requirements. With smart planning, we must make good use of our shores and get our piece of the pie. As a native of Ankara who loves the sea, if am able to come up with this line of reasoning, I am sure that folks who were born and raised by the sea would be much better able to assess the situation". 



Sığacık Marina near Çeşme, Izmir

The marina at Poruklu Bay in Göcek has an innovative form of a bow

