

# ROBERTSON & CAINE

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## SA's largest boat-builder celebrates 20th anniversary



### Robertson & Caine spokesperson

ROBERTSON & Caine (Pty) Ltd was founded by John Robertson and the late Jerry Caine in 1991. The founders have a long and proud history of boat-building going back 30 years, with more than 800 boats launched.

Robertson & Caine is South Africa's largest boat-builder manufacturing for the export market, and has delivered hundreds of boats globally.

The 39ft, 46ft and recently launched 44ft sailing catamarans and the 47ft Powercats are destined for the world's exotic sailing grounds, including the US East Coast, the Caribbean, the Seychelles, the Mediterranean, Asia and the South Pacific. The new 39ft Powercat will be launched shortly and will make its world debut at the Annapolis Boat Show in the USA in October this year.

### Serious competitor

As a result, Robertson & Caine remains a serious competitor in the international catamaran market and continues to enjoy a dominant position in the significant North American market. Initially, the business involved custom

sailing-yacht building and over the years it has built boats of various types and size, from basic 36ft fibre-glass monohulls to state-of-the-art carbon-fibre racing boats up to 70ft in size.

### Impressive list of racers and cruisers

The company has produced an impressive list of racers and cruisers, including international winners - all hand-built by master craftsmen in the Cape-based boat yard.

It has some remarkable credits to its name: "Best Overall Import Boat in the USA 2005", "Best Multi-hull 40 feet and Under", Sail Magazine's "Best Boats 2005" and Cruising World magazine's "Charter Yacht of the Year 1998" for the Leopard 45 catamaran. The Leopard 39 was named the "Best Multihull Cruiser", as well as "Import of the Year" in the 2010 Boat of the Year awards. The Leopard 39 / Sun-sail 384 won the "Sail Best Boats 2010" Cruising Multihull award.

The 70ft maxi, Broomstick, won the Cape to Rio International Yacht Race in 1993, and Orion Express impressed international racing enthusiasts. This interest enabled the company to be awarded the licence to manufacture the Mumm 36 racer, designed by one of the world's leading naval architects, Bruce Farr, and to be one of only five boatbuilders in the world to obtain such a licence.

rans, and the advances in design in the different models has seen the catamarans winning numerous international awards.

Leopard Catamarans are also bought privately through Tui Marine's Private Leopard sales division, which has agents worldwide.

### Three boats launched a week

The company's production facility is situated in Woodstock, a few kilometres from the city centre and the harbour, and this year it will be producing and launching

approximately three boats a week. Robertson & Caine Inc, based in the Tampa Bay area in Florida, USA, is a subsidiary company of Robertson & Caine (Pty) Ltd in South Africa. This USA office brings the company closer to its market in order to enhance sales and after-sales service.

Other functions of this office include a purchasing department for all components and equipment bought from suppliers in the USA, and the facilitation of spare part purchases for boat owners.

The office in Tampa Bay also includes an in-house technical and design department.



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### International exposure

This international exposure drew the attention of The Moorings, which entered into an agreement with Robertson & Caine (Pty) Ltd to manufacture superbly designed sailing catamarans for its global charter fleet.

In the 17-year relationship the South African yard has enjoyed with Tui Marine, which encompasses the two largest yacht charter companies in the world, The Moorings and Sun-sail, it has supplied more than 800 catama-

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### Proud association

#### Cape Town Boat Building Initiative spokesperson

THE Cape Town Boat Building Initiative (CTBI) is proud to be associated with Robertson & Caine on the occasion of the company's 20th anniversary.

With up to 14 boats on the assembly line and, at peak production, two boats being launched every week, Robertson & Caine leads by example.

As the industry representative body for boat-building in the Western Cape, CTBI prides itself on its close relationship to the industry and its strong partnerships with the Provincial Government of the Western Cape and the City of Cape Town.

CTBI is instrumental in cluster development, networking in the sector, marketing, skills development, economic development and SMME growth, and is proud to host the International Council of Marine Industry Associations (ICOMIA) and the International Federation of Boat Show Organisers (IFBSO) Congress next year, a first for South Africa and a significant success for the broader South African maritime industry.

The boat-building industry in the Western Cape is predominantly focused on catamarans, sail or power, 38 feet and over, building in excess of 100 such vessels each year. The vast majority of these vessels are exported to the charter markets of the USA, the Caribbean and Europe. The global trend has been for an increase in vessel size and, following suit, South Africa now manufactures many catamarans between 50 and 76 feet.

The boat-building industry is scattered all around the Cape, with a large hub in Cape Town. Athlone, Epping, Paarden Island, Montague and Killarney Gardens areas all support the industry. The hub extends along the West Coast to St Helena Bay and all around the eastern side, along the Garden Route to Knysna. There are more than 30 boat-building firms in the province with more than 150 support or auxiliary firms.

**CTBI**  
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