

STORY DAN HARDING JR
PHOTOS LISA AND TIM ARMAND

SOMEWHERE BEYOND THE HORIZON

*For Tim and Lisa Armand,
building their dream
yacht—a Fleming 85—is all
about creating memories
with family and friends.*





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Tim Armand made one thing crystal clear as we cruised aboard his new Fleming 85 Enclosed Bridge off Greenport, New York: *Somewhere* is his ultimate boat, but not necessarily his last. “Never say final,” he says with a chuckle.

His boating background makes that much evident. The first boat he registered was a 1967 Shell Lake, which he describes as “the classic little red runabout with the plastic windshield and a 35 Johnson.” Then, he owned a number of sailboats before buying a 36-foot Carver, 44-foot Sea Ray, 48-foot Sea Ray motor yacht, 57-foot McKenna, 65-foot Outer Reef and 75-foot Viking Motor Yacht. His 85 is the first Fleming ever built with an enclosed bridge, and is quite a bit bigger than the first Fleming he became infatuated with: the 55.

“It was my dream boat from the time I ever first laid eyes on it,” Tim says. “I just never could quite connect on the right timing of the 55. But then as we were looking for our ultimate boat, we really wanted a country kitchen and an enclosed bridge. We came very close to pulling the trigger on another traditional type of yacht with those elements.”

In December 2020, he learned that Fleming was coming out with an 85 that had an optional enclosed bridge and a country kitchen. “I called my friends at Burr Yacht Sales and said, ‘Where have you been hiding this thing?’” he recalls. “I signed a deal on it within 24 hours. I wanted to get our name on the next available hull number, which was number three.”

Building the boat was fun and rewarding, he says. “I can’t speak highly enough of Fleming and the way they work so collaboratively with their clients, and the answer to everything is almost always yes,” he says. Because of the pandemic, Tim and his wife, Lisa, weren’t able to see the boat in-build in Taiwan,

One of their first big cruises aboard the 85 was to the Bahamas, where, during six weeks of cruising, they welcomed 19 guests aboard.

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but they were able to incorporate design changes to fit their cruising style.

"They give you a lot of choices to make, but they also allowed for some reasonably significant changes as well, like that day head in the pilothouse," he says. "I also asked to add a climate break at the top of the stairs to the bridge, so when we run with the bridge opened, we don't spoil all the air conditioning from down below. We also turned our master shower into more like a bathtub for a grandbaby."

In addition to regular calls, emails and meetings, Fleming sent imagery of the entire construction process, from the layup and preliminary woodwork through the sea trials. "I probably have 8,000 pictures of the build," Tim says. "It's an amazing process to see."

Tim and Lisa say that as they made their first cruise up and down the East Coast, everyone from day boaters to Fleming aficionados stopped them, wanting to learn more about *St. Somewhere*. Her classic lines and styling make her a standout, as does her enclosed bridge. "Fleming doesn't build an enclosed

Left: The family pooch enjoying the warm Bahamian waters.
Below: When Tim Armand learned that Fleming had an 85-footer with an enclosed bridge option, he "signed a deal on it within 24 hours," he says.



bridge,” people routinely say, with Tim replying, “Well, they do now.”

During our short jaunt down the coast, there were times when it was raining, and we had the bridge closed up tight. The air-conditioned quiet was perfect. When the weather changed to bright and crisp, we opened the side and aft doors. The space filled with fresh air and the sound of water rushing down the hull. I was quickly sold on the enclosed bridge feature.

“I understand that it doesn’t look exactly the same as all the other Flemings,” Tim says, “but the adaptability that we have and the flexibility that we have and getting the country kitchen that my wife loves is perfect for us. It’s been great. It’s been everything we’d hoped for.”

Another high point of versatility for the 85 comes in its performance. On paper, the 1,550-hp MAN V-12s allow for ocean-crossing range and efficiency with a 25-knot top end. Tim confirms

that top speed, but says he prefers to cruise in the 10- to 12-knot range.

“The speed at 20 knots is only a 65-percent engine load,” Tim says. “For us, I don’t want to say that’s purring along, but that’s an all-day speed. I don’t really focus on wide-open throttle speed; you’re never going to run it that way. But the real all-day legit cruising speed is in the low 20s for sure.”

At 10 knots and burning 14 gallons of fuel an hour, with nearly 3,200 gal-

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Grandaughter Meredith quickly became an expert snorkeler.



A couple of Tim and Lisa’s favorite boating guests: Tim’s daughter Julia and her boyfriend Cam.



lons of fuel on board, range is more than 2,200 miles. At 8 knots, the yacht burns 8 gallons an hour. At idle speed of 6½ knots, *St. Somewhere* burns 4 gallons an hour. “I don’t think anyone would cross an ocean at idle speed,” Tim says. “It’d be a long trip across the Atlantic, but you could. We only fuel up a few times a year.”

St. Somewhere also has a bank of seven lithium-ion batteries in an air-conditioned machinery space forward of the engine room. It’s accessed through the accommodations level sole. The impeccably organized space—an engineer’s dream room—is also equipped with four stacked

4-kW inverters, providing 16 kW of inverter power for silent living off the grid.

Tim and Lisa are born entertainers who relish sharing their good fortune and their boat with others. One of their first big cruises aboard the 85 was to the Bahamas, where, during six weeks of cruising, they welcomed 19 guests aboard. And that doesn’t include all the boating friends they knew previously or met along the way.

“We’ll have friends, family, buddy boaters all together,” Lisa says. “We will either get together in the evening on their boat or ours and have cocktail hour and dinner. One of my favorite pictures is of when we

From top: The 85's hydraulic swim platform transforms the cockpit into a beach club. **Below:** A Bahamian local.

had five or six dinghies just hanging off the back of the boat from people visiting."

That image reminded me of being a kid with a bunch of bikes laying in a home's front yard. "It's like this is the ultimate adult version—excellent way to put it," Lisa says. "And because of the configuration of this boat with the dining room and the galley, we can seat 30 people for dinner without busting out a folding chair. Our basic philosophy is: Nothing is worth having if you can't share it. We always have friends, family, relatives, acquaintances on the boat with us, I don't say all the time, but a lot. And the good news is, we can run the boat just the two of us as well."

Still, the 85 is beamy and beefy. With a 20-foot air draft, a 20-foot, 6-inch beam and a 183,000-pound displacement, she looks every inch an ocean-crossing bruiser. And yet, in most marinas, the couple handle the docking themselves and save the two crew cabin cabins for stowage. (A single captain's cabin option is also available.)

Aiding the docking process are the 85's six stations: the main helm and five wing stations.

"This is, by a very wide margin, the easiest boat to operate I've ever owned because of the joysticks and the thrusters and all that good stuff," Tim says. "The position-hold ability is impressive, as is the ability to maneuver with the joystick and shifters, because the propellers can slip. If you put the boat in gear with your propellers doing 2500 rpm right off the bat, you jerk forward. But if you just ease that to as low as 800 rpm, you get incredible control.



And then also because it's got a full keel, it doesn't overturn. If you tell it to turn, it turns; if you tell it to stop turning, it stops turning. And I've put this boat in and out of some really tight spots just because of the systems that make it that way."

The real beauty of having the boat, though, is getting away from it all and connecting with family and friends. With our destination coming into view on the horizon, I ask Tim not only what the 85 has brought to his life, but boating in general. He thought for a moment then said, "I think having raised my kids on the boat and then having been raised as a kid on a boat, I think boating is very family oriented. It's a great way to get away from it all and connect with each other. I think it's made my family relationships tighter in all directions, between us



A postcard-perfect afternoon on the hook in the Bahamas.

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LOA: 85ft. 2in.
Beam: 20ft. 6in.
Draft: 5ft. 5in.
Displacement: 183,050 lbs.
Fuel: 3,170 gal.
Water: 500 gal.
Engine: 2x 1,550-hp MAN V-12
info: flemingyachts.com

and our kids, our kids with each other and then with our friends. I think it's a socially binding activity that brings people together in a lovely environment. What's not to love?"

As I watched them and a friend don headsets and pull into a dock as simply as if they were driving a dinghy, I was impressed. Lisa walked out of the salon and into the cockpit, pointed to a smartly dressed woman coming down the dock with a small suitcase, exclaimed, "Oh my God!" and ran down to meet her daughter, whom Tim had flown in as a birthday surprise.

And with that, I knew that everything Tim had told me was true: The Fleming 85 is a ship of the highest quality, and is at its best when it's shared with family. ✨