



# The colours of Corsica



With a high freight and car intake as well as a swish accommodation for 800 passengers, the PIANA sets a new standard for the ferries plying the Marseille-Corsica trade.

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The huge success of the shorter routes to Corsica has caused a dramatic decline in the number of passengers using the ferry from Marseille. For freight, however, Marseille remains the premier gateway to "l'île de beauté". Serving Corsica from Marseille are SNCM and their partner La Méridionale, the trade name of Compagnie Méridionale de Navigation (CMN). Unlike semi-privatised SNCM, La Méridionale, a subsidiary of the Paris Bourse quoted STEF logistics group, has not invested in expensive, uneconomical cruise ferries or hi-speed craft, but has favoured ro-pax tonnage instead. Since the introduction of the purpose-built KALLISTE in 1993, La Méridionale has further modernised its fleet through the acquisition of second hand ro-pax tonnage from Greece. Ultimately, nothing beats a purpose-built ship, especially when it comes to the confines of a port like Bastia, the island's principal port for both passengers and freight.

Shortly before the 2008 credit crunch, when the shipbuilding business was still at its peak, La Méridionale ordered its first newbuilding since the KALLISTE. With their order books bulging, many shipyards quoted prices that were deemed unattractive. La Méridionale also talked to South Korean shipbuilders; none of them appeared to

be interested in building a "one off" ship. The French shipowner eventually signed a EUR 150 million contract with Brodosplit Shipyard. This state-owned Croatian shipyard had built a series of cruise ferries for Viking Line and ill-fated Euroway in the 1988-1994 period. In recent years, they also built the P-Max product and crude tankers for Stena Bulk. The lack of experience in building complex ro-pax ships resulted in a delayed delivery and the PIANA was eventually commissioned in late December,

nine months behind schedule. However, the end result is stunning, with much of the interior outfitting being completed by renowned French ship interior contractors such as Ateliers Normand and Agencement Paul Champs.

## A taste of Corsica

Piana is a picturesque Corsican mountain village, which is world famous because of its UNESCO World Heritage listed "ca- ▶

### Fleet CMN

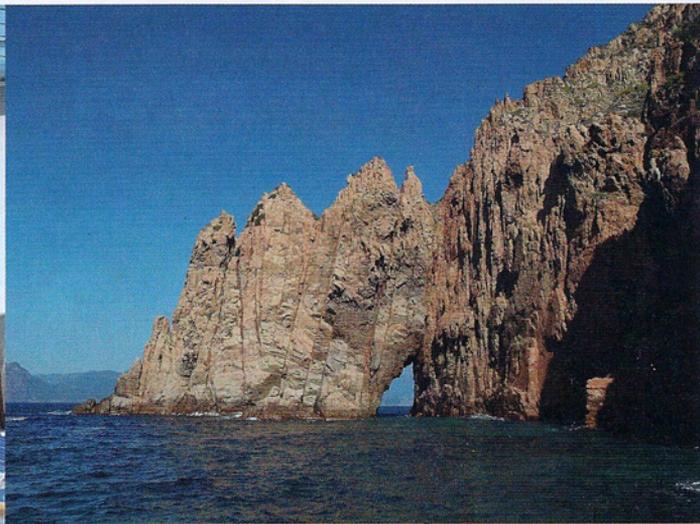
	Year	Loa	Beam	Lanem	Pax	Kts
SCANDOLA(*)	92	150.4	23.4	1,800	900	19
KALLISTE	93	165.2	29.2	2,340	550	19
GIROLATA	95	177.3	27.0	1,927	650	23
PIANA	11	180.0	30.5	2,447	800	23.8

(\*) SCANDOLA has been put up for sale following the introduction of the PIANA

ShipPax Database

Despite the external resemblance with SNCM's PASCAL PAOLI, the PIANA is completely different internally.





The "Piana" à la carte restaurant is based on the colours of the famous reddish brown "Calanques" rocks, where land meets the sea.

► lanques", the deep rocky inlets on the west coast of the island. The magnificent natural scenery in Corsica has clearly inspired AIA interior designers. This is reflected in the colours and patterns of the furniture, fabrics and fittings. Brown is the colour adopted for carpets and cladding because it is the typical colour of inland Corsica. The touches of green highlight the local vegetation, whereas blue tones refer to the sea. This is AIA's first assignment for La Méridionale, completing the list of French ferry operators for which AIA has worked during the last 25 years. AIA is currently making itself known outside of France, having designed the interiors of Scandlines' new Gedser-Rostock ferries.

With her raked bulwarks at the bow and twin rounded funnels, one inevitably associates the PIANA with SNCM's PASCAL PAOLI. Despite the external resemblance, the PIANA is completely different internally. A range of new concepts has been introduced therein, making the ship surprisingly innovative. The addition of an extra deck results in a higher car and

passenger capacity with more cabins and public facilities.

Foot passengers embark the ship in the stern. The wood effect wall panelling in the escalator hall is very light at the entrance, but it gets darker the higher you climb. This hall and the corridor that leads to the reception plaza on Deck 8 are decorated with pictures of dramatic Corsican landscapes. Most of the pictures on board were taken by the Corsican photographer Stéphane Guiraud; some of them were artistically reworked by Drole Doizo.

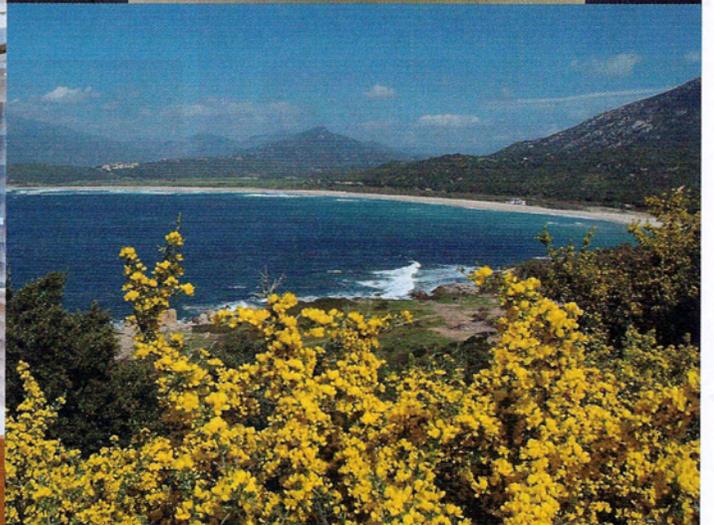
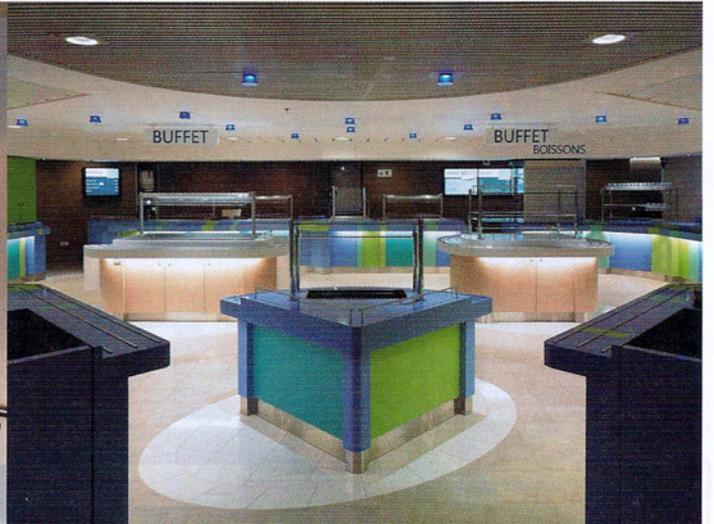
Decks 8 and 9 are the passenger decks. There are additional public spaces on Deck 10 starboard aft. The officers and crew are accommodated on this deck, abaft the bridge. French shipowners generally spoil their crews and this is also the case on the PIANA. Each crewmember has an individual outside cabin with a double bed. An all-outside cabin concept for the crew could only be achieved thanks to the creation of a central patio - a unique feature indeed.

The upper decks are divided into three

fire zones that are separated by spacious halls. The accommodation as a whole feels very roomy with wide (cabin) corridors and vast lounges. Deck 8 holds 157 cabins for 564 passengers in total. There is also a 50-seat reclining lounge just behind the aft lobby with an information desk. Next to the reclining lounge is a sanitary block with showers.

The forward fire zone on Deck 9 has 43 more cabins and a 100-seat conference auditorium that doubles as a cinema. In the aft of the forward hall there are the port side à la carte restaurant and the starboard side self-service restaurant. A wide starboard arcade leads past the self-service restaurant to the aft hall that gives access to the main bar with a separate VIP corner. A secondary bar and two meeting rooms can be found on the Deck 10 aft.

Access from the vehicle to the upper decks is via stairs and escalators in the side casings. These are supplemented by central stairs in the accommodation areas. The central aft stairway, which starts opposite the reception desk and ends on Deck 11,



For the buffet restaurant the architect has found his inspiration in the colours of the typical sandy beaches on the island, such as Palombaggia beach.

allows access to an open deck between the massive funnels. The blue-illuminated wall panelling with multi-coloured scattered stripes in this stairway evokes an image of Corsican waterfalls, with water gliding over stones. This effect is further enhanced by small, blue fibre optic lights.

Much attention has been paid to the comfort of physically less able passengers, with five disabled cabins and easy access throughout the vessel. Each stairway has a truncated dome strip that gives warnings to visually impaired persons.

A special comment must be made on the toilets. Access to the toilets from the corridors or the halls is not direct, but via a vestibule. As in other areas, anise green colour has been used for the toilet doors, tiling and washbasins.

### Dining on the beach

Dining and wining on board of a French ship is always a great experience. The PIANA has two dining venues: the "Piana" à la carte restaurant and the "Le Palombaggia" self-service restaurant. Both are acces-

sible from the full-width forward hall and, as their names suggest, they are Corsican beach themed. The elegant surrounding of the 160-seat à la carte restaurant, with its soft colours and warm woodwork, exudes the uniqueness of Piana's "calanques". Where the land meets the sea: the reddish-brown laminated wood refers to the rocky coast; whereas the blue carpet and backlit columns between the picture windows represent the sea. The photo on the partitions is an example of Drole Doizo's work, depicting the red rocks of Piana. As befits a ship operating in Corsican waters, a selection of traditional Corsican specialities is on offer. Because the menu is reasonably priced, the à la carte restaurant has a surprisingly big following.

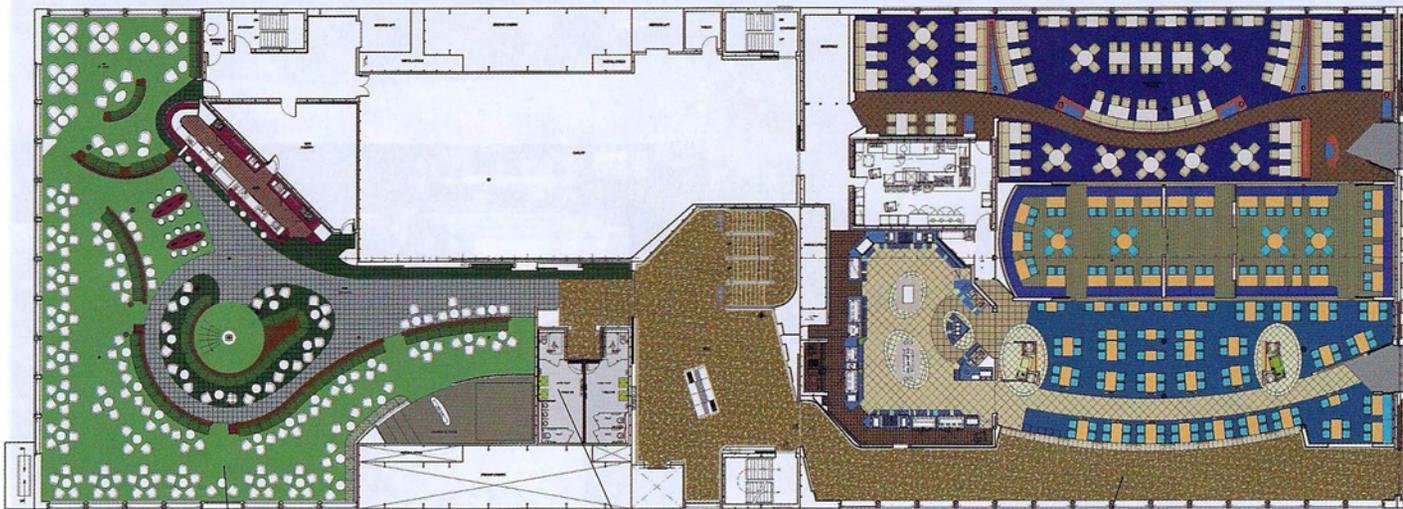
The coast theme continues in the self-service restaurant, albeit with more vivid colours and a lighter wood panelling, reflecting a typical Corsican sandy beach. The dining section receives natural light through a slightly curved wall with glass panels and louvres. Pictures of Corsican coastal views are printed between the glass

sheets. A tiled walkway leads from the restaurant's entrance to the walk-around free-flow servery area with two checkouts.

The 120-seat capacity of the self-service restaurant is probably insufficient when the passenger traffic peaks during the holiday periods. Given its popularity, even the larger à la carte restaurant may have to cope with capacity constraints during the busiest days of the year. Cleverly, both restaurants can be extended thanks to a modular 120-seat multifunctional inboard dining area sandwiched between the self-service and à la carte restaurant. The louvred inner walls of either restaurant are foldable, central room openings onto one or both restaurants, thanks to the modular concept with sliding doors between the three compartments. The interior designers have successfully tried to create a beach cabin atmosphere complete with light grey wood effects for the flooring and wall covering, a (fake) wooden ceiling and genuine teak chairs.

### Inland Corsica

From the sea to the land, the aft bars give ▶



► a distinctive flavour of inland Corsica and are appropriately named “Le Figuier” (The Fig Tree) and “L’Arbousier” (The Strawberry Tree). These fruit species have been the source of inspiration for the decors of both lounges. The fuchsia light columns in “Le Figuier” are wrapped in fig branches and the motif has been repeated on the green carpet and on the partition of the port side VIP corner. The colours of a cut-open fig have been adopted for the chairs. The spiral staircase in front of the bar is the room’s centrepiece, connecting the main bar with a foyer that allows access to the outer deck and “L’Arbousier”. Seating in the main bar is a combination of chairs, couches and stools arranged around raised tables near the bar counter. Many passengers nestle themselves comfortably there to watch TV or read the complimentary newspapers.

As this is the ship’s principal lounge, the children’s playroom with TV and climbing frame can be found near the entrance.

The “L’Arbousier” bar on Deck 10 has a more introvert character and is only open on busy sailings. The brown, orange and green upholstery together with the vinyl flooring releases a somewhat cool “seventies” ambience, which is again very hip. In keeping with the colour of the typical southern French strawberry variety, shades of orange and yellow prevail on wall decorations, which include photos of strawberries and their blossom.

In the corridor that connects the aft hall with “L’Arbousier”, there are two well-equipped, windowless meeting rooms with the capacities of 18 and 20 seats, respectively. Larger groups can be accommodated in the terraced conference room cum cinema on Deck 9. Films are shown free of charge.

The PIANA has fairly limited outside deck space for a Mediterranean ferry. But, on the other hand, it is a night ferry and even during the summer months the sun sets soon after the ship has left the port. This is why the deck furniture is limited to just a handful of uncomfortable benches. Smoking inside the accommodation is prohibited, but raised “smoker’s tables” have been installed under a canvas awning on Deck 10. The spiral staircase between

Decks 9 and 10 continues on the outer deck, connecting Deck 10 with 11, the open deck between the funnels.

### Comfortable cabins

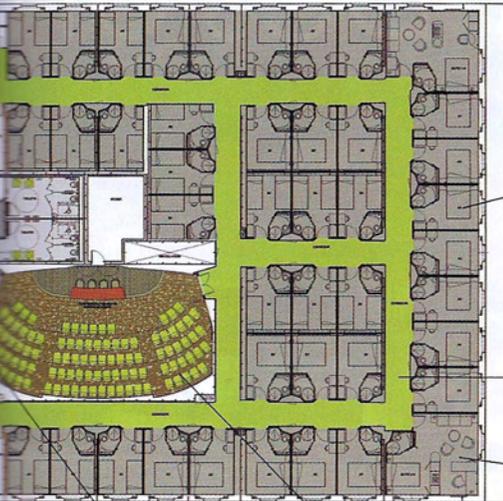
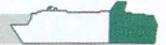
The PIANA has an 800-passenger certificate and a combined cabin and reclining seat capacity for 750 passengers, which is the ship’s maximum “commercial capacity”. The 50 non-accommodated passengers will only travel with the ship in case of an emergency. Most likely this will be fire brigade crews who are required on the island to extinguish e.g. forest fires.

The PIANA is essentially a ro-pax, but her cabins are more akin to that of luxury cruise-ferries. All cabins are standard ensuite two or four berth. Instead of twin beds, all 42 two-berth cabins - 14 of which are inside - have double beds. These cabins, completed with TV sets, a standard feature, are reminiscent of hotel rooms. The cabins have energy saving switches that are operated by inserting the key card.

There are also four VIP suites, one on either corner of Deck 8 and 9. These suites can’t be booked because they are reserved for company guests or representatives. The VIP suites have front and side-facing windows and they come with a double bed, separate sitting corner, mini-bar and writing desk. One type of bathroom units is fitted in all 200 passenger cabins and,

### A selection of suppliers PIANA

<b>Agencement</b>	
Paul Champs .....	Turn-key
AIA .....	Interior designers
Ateliers Normand ..	Turn-key
Becker .....	Rudders
Bureau Veritas .....	Classification
Cargotec .....	Ro-Ro equipment
Georg Eknes .....	Air seats
Hyde Marie .....	Water ballast treatment system
Lautex .....	Ceiling
Loipart .....	Galley
Marioff Hi-fog .....	Fire extinguishing
Quinette .....	Cinema chairs
Rolls-Royce .....	Fin stabilizers
Vescom .....	Vinyls
Vingcard .....	Cabin locks



although rather compact, they are all one needs for a single night crossing. Both the wet units and the prefabricated cabins are supplied by Lubmor, a Polish company with a 60-year track record.

There are four colour-coded cabin zones. The colours (yellow, pale blue, fuchsia and anise green), which are those of pervasive species of Corsican flowers, are clearly displayed at each corridor entrance and are repeated on the cabin doors and in some design details inside the cabins. The floors of the four cabin zones are covered with a deep brown carpet, with stripes referring to the colour of the zone. Framed photos of the four different flowers can be found on the walls of cabin corridors. These flowers are also depicted on the illuminated recessed bed head walls of the inside cabins. The colour of the flower perfectly matches the respective reference colour.

### Bastia-max

Specifically designed for the Marseille-Bastia route, the PIANA forms part of the joint SNCM-La Mériidionale concession granted by the French Government for services to Corsica requiring a level of year-round service including daily departures to both Ajaccio and Bastia with additional direct sailings to the smaller ports of Porto Vecchio, Propriano and Ile Rousse in exchange for a measure of subsidy. As

pointed out before, the port of Bastia is quite restricted, limiting the ship's overall length to 180.0m. While there are plans to build a brand new port, it will take many years before it may be realised so the goal of the designers was obviously to maximize the vessel's freight intake on that restricted length.

Normally, vessels depart at 19.00 in the evenings with arrival at 07.00 the following mornings, requiring a minimum service speed of 21 knots. However, departure delays resulting from late arriving freight are a common problem, as is the seasonal Mistral wind, so the vessel has significant reserves of power to make a 23-knot service speed. During trials, the PIANA achieved a speed of 27.6 knots in ballast.

With 12 hours in port, cargo handling

is not as intense as on most shortsea ro-ro services, but the reality is that the supermarkets on Corsica require their trailers to be driven off almost immediately as their island distribution system requires just-on-time deliveries. Usually the trailers return on the same ship after dropping their loads. Loading in Marseille also seems to be achieved at the last minute, so the activity is intense just before departure.

### The vehicle decks

The PIANA has three ro-ro decks devoted solely to freight. The car deck (Deck 7) is located above the upper trailer deck and, unlike the PASCAL PAOLI, extends the whole length of the deck. La Mériidionale wanted to totally separate the passengers

## PIANA

Facts & Figures

### Dimensions

Length overall .....	180.0
Beam .....	30.5
Depth to upperdeck.....	15.8
Depth to maindeck.....	9.8
Draft max .....	7.5
Draft design.....	6.7

### Tonnage

Deadweight.....	7,569
GT.....	42,180

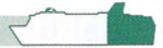
### Machinery

Engines .....	4 x Wärtsilä 8R46F
Mcr .....	38,400 kW

**Service speed**.....21 knots

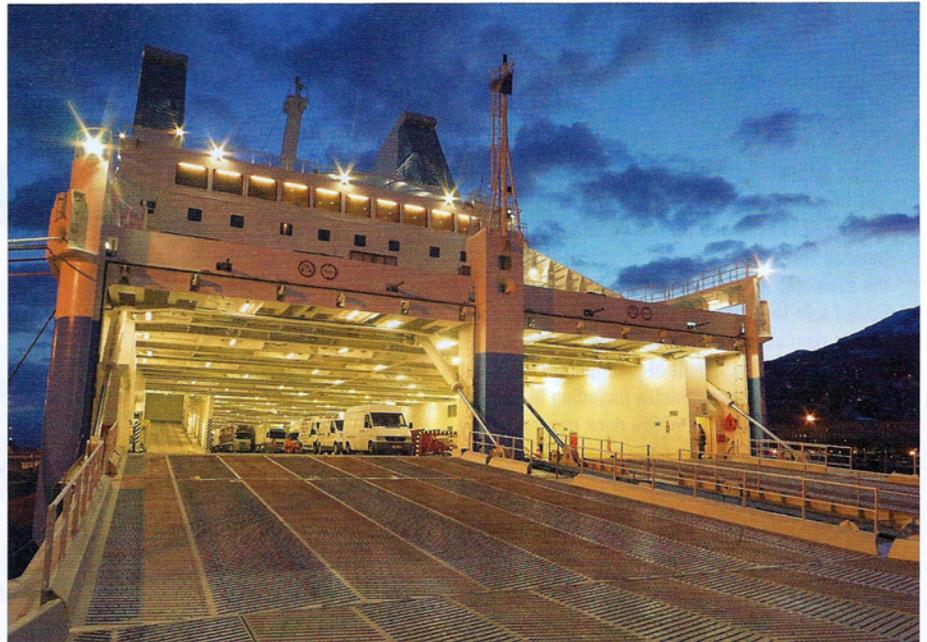
### Capacity

Lanem.....	2,447
Car lanem (on deck 7) .....	1,156 (200 cars)
Passengers.....	800
Cabins.....	200
<b>Class</b> .....	BV



from the cargo traffic, both for safety reasons but also to improve the “on board” experience for passengers. This they have achieved admirably. As the level of the main deck is considerably higher than the fixed ramps in the ports, the stern ramps need to be unusually long. The Cargotec MacGregor ramps are directly operated by hydraulic cylinders and are 16.0m long plus 3.0m long flaps. The starboard ramp has a driving width of 9.7m plus an extra 1.5m for the passenger access to the escalator, the portside ramp having a clear 11.0m width. Despite the large beam of the vessel, centreline pillars have been avoided to allow trailers to be shunted around the decks with the minimum of obstruction.

For operational reasons, the internal ramps are located optimally to allow trucks to drive on board and then turn in the



The 3.0m wide dedicated car ramp, going all the way from Deck 3 to Deck 7, is on the starboard side and is completely enclosed.



The 5.2m wide fixed ramp to the upper deck is located on the portside with a top-hinged watertight door at the upper end of the ramp.



Access to the lower hold is via a fixed 4.0m wide centreline ramp covered by an end-hinged single panel cover measuring 49.5m in length and 4.6m wide.



In order to accommodate IMO class cargoes that are forbidden to be parked under deck, the aft part of the upper deck is open. Eight trailer slots can be separated from the remaining deck by a huge 24.8m wide by 4.8m high gastight guillotine door.

## just delivered

► decks before reversing into their parking position. Experience has shown this to be the most expeditious rather than reversing

all the way from the quay. Consequently, the entrance and turning area of the main deck has an above average height of 5.0m,

also to accommodate project and heavy lift vehicles, reducing to 4.5m forward.

A total of 1,104 lanes can be parked ►

The dedicated car deck on Deck 7 has been laid out to resemble a car park in a shopping mall, for example. It is very well lit, has generous 2.4m wide parking lanes and a number of spaces adjacent to the escalator for disabled passengers. The deck is divided into four signage zones so that passengers can easily relocate their cars prior to disembarkation. The deck has a free height of 2.4m permitting most types of passenger vehicles including MPVs and 4x4s. The forward end of the deck nearest to the access ramp has been strengthened for 3.5t vehicles in recognition of the growing number of large passenger vehicles. There are also generous areas for parking motorcycles and bicycles. As La Méridionale has decided that the accommodation should be pet-free, kennels have been located next to the car deck.



A unique feature of the vessel, hopefully setting a new trend, is the total elimination of CO2 as a firefighting medium. Instead, Marioff HI-FOG high pressure sprinklers have been installed on all the vehicle decks as well as in the accommodation. Despite some reservations expressed by the crew concerning the activation of the system, the HI-FOG system is now approved by IMO and the French authorities for use in engine rooms and vehicle decks as well as the accommodation. The same system has also been chosen for total flooding in the engine rooms. The pumps and valves are located in a machinery compartment just forward of the lower hold.

Manoeuvrability within the tight confines of Bastia harbour as well as in the strong Mistral wind conditions which are seasonally experienced in Marseille is clearly an important factor, so the PIANA has been outfitted with a pair of Becker TLKSR high-lift flap rudders. These incorporate a twisted leading edge for maximum propulsive efficiency. Twin Rolls-Royce bow thrusters of 1,900 kW output are driven by Koncar electric motors. By virtue of the very strong winds and the 4,283m<sup>2</sup> windage area of the ship, the mooring equipment also has a high specification. Supplied by Aker Pusnes, four frequency controlled electric mooring winches are located aft and four forward, two of which are combined anchor/mooring winches. As a consequence of the vessel's high GM, large stabilizers have been fitted. Rolls-Royce have supplied a pair of Neptune 500 fins each with a 14.2m<sup>2</sup> area.



On the KALLISTE, La Méridionale opted for Wärtsilä machinery, both main and auxiliary engines being 32 bore diesels. On the PIANA, four Wärtsilä 8L46F main engines have been installed, each with an output of 9,600kW at 600rpm. The engines are of the latest common rail design, helping to reduce NOx emissions. All four engines are located in a single short compartment but there is surprisingly ample overhauling space above the engines. Renk twin input single output gearboxes each have a pto spur coupled to 2,200kW Koncar generators. The propellers have been supplied by Wärtsilä Lips. Most ro-pax ferries are specified with a central machinery casing but as the owners wanted a large 24m diameter turning area aft on the main deck, two side casings have been incorporated in the design. Each exhaust line is fitted with an Aalborg thermal oil boiler and a large silencer. Reducing noise and vibration levels has been a key aim of the designers in order to achieve the highest Bureau Veritas Comfort 1 class notation. The Danish noise and vibration experts, Ødegaard & Danneskiold-Samsøe, now part of the Lloyd's Register Group, were consulted at an early stage of the design process to identify potential problem areas in the structure.



## just delivered

- ▶ on the main deck, 1,056 lanem on the upper deck and 287m on the tanktop giving a total intake of 2,447 lanem. This is equivalent to 180 trucks, of which reefer points are provided for 100 units.

### **Powerful PIANA**

Despite their experience from the past, Brodosplit Shipyard needed to relearn many skills to build a ship of the PIANA's complexity and quality. The delivery delay was therefore not unexpected but the final result is the best possible showpiece for the Croatian shipbuilding industry. Despite the many restrictions now being imposed by Brussels, it would be a great shame if yet another ferry building yard would be forced to close. ■



While the shaft generators take care of all electrical needs at sea, three Wärtsilä 8R20 gensets, each of 1,500kW output at 1,000rpm, take care of the high extra loads during manoeuvring and in port. As the vessel spends many hours every day in ports which are located close to housing, noise and emissions are of considerable concern. La Méridionale has therefore specified that the vessel can be hooked up to shore power at a later date. The PIANA has been equipped with cabling leading from the switchboard to the starboard side of the main deck aft. The exact method of "cold ironing" connection has not yet been decided but future installation will be greatly simplified.



As part of the PIANA's "Clean Ship" class notation, as well as La Méridionale's ISO 14001 certification, great attention has been paid to the garbage and waste disposal systems which have been supplied by Deerberg. A ballast water treatment plant has been supplied by Hyde Marine with a capacity of 300 m<sup>3</sup>/hour.