

In one of the bays of the White Sea, Makarenko came across a ship rusting away on a sand bank. He found the organization that owned the ship. He then bought the ship for the price of scrap-metal and towed it to Arkhangelsk. Two years of hard work transformed the former German trawler. As it turned out, the ship had an excellent steel hull which was in good condition, the 100-horse-power motor could be rebuilt and the interior could be restored.

Anton Makarenko is proud to show his ship. A tour of the vessel must begin with the wheel-house. As is usually the case on sailboats, polished copper, nickel, and panelling are everywhere. Beside the wooden wheel there is radar, several radios, a direction finder, an echo sounder - in short, everything required by international convention to assure safe sea navigation. Inside the 40 metre hull are several cabins, the crew's quarters, the galley, a smoking room, the mess room, a storeroom, a cargo hold, and the engine room with a diesel engine. According to the ship's documents, the "Grumant" has an unlimited range of navigation, and even has an ice classification. Being a three-masted ship with a sail surface totalling 250 square metres, it can travel at a speed of up to 8 knots. Restoring the boat cost Makarenko 17,000 roubles, not including his own personal labour. In early May of 1989 Arkhangelsk's first private ship owner went into operation. Within half a year expenses had been recuperated, with money left over.

"There are a lot of organizations which are in absolute need of a small ship that can come to shore at any point," Makarenko explains referring to his commercial activity. "The primary customers are geologists, meteorologists, ecologists and many others. It's more economical for them to hire a smaller, cheaper ship. I charge 700 roubles a day while a large ship runs into the thousands. For groups of specialists of 5 to 7 people that's a real bargain. On the first voyage I sailed around the entire shore of the White Sea. We even entered the Arctic. The expeditions were one-and-a-half to two months in length. In between I took Soviet and foreign tourists for trips into the Severnaya Dvina and around the White Sea, and sailed to Solovki."

At present, Makarenko's main preoccupation is the restoration of a second vessel. He has already retrieved it from the ship graveyard and has it moored in Arkhangelsk.

"It's a good ship, plenty of room. It's twice as big as the 'Grumant'," says captain. "I've already ordered the sails and made a deal with a ship-repair plant. For 70,000 roubles, the yacht will be like new."

For the next navigation season Makarenko counts on having two ships, which will increase his commercial possibilities. He has received some interesting proposals, including one from a company interested in organizing a trip around the world. Foreign tourist travel companies are inquiring about short cruises.