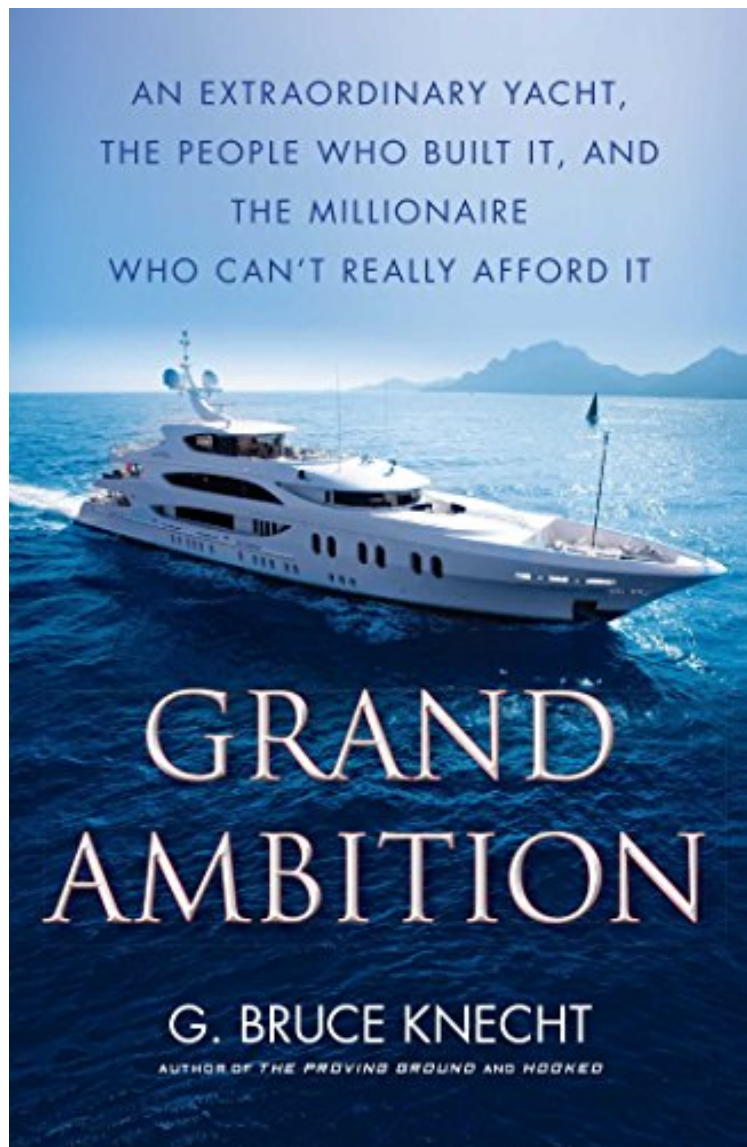


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## Grand Ambition: An Extraordinary Yacht, the People Who Built It, and the Millionaire Who Can't Really Afford It

*G. Bruce Knecht*

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**G. Bruce Knecht : Grand Ambition: An Extraordinary Yacht, the People Who Built It, and the Millionaire Who Can't Really Afford It** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Grand Ambition: An Extraordinary Yacht, the People Who Built It, and the Millionaire Who Can't Really Afford It:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating and reads like a story!By Lisa DunckleyDoug Von

Allman wants to build a yacht; not necessarily the biggest one ever made, but definitely the best one ever made in the US. In an era when the rich got richer and the poor got poorer, having a yacht was freedom, privacy, and most of all a status symbol. Yachts cost millions of dollars. The BEST yacht, in this case, is projected to cost \$40 million. The people working on the yachts are comprised of union metalworkers, mural artists, marble importers, custom furniture makers, rare woods workers. The people involved in the yacht industry include the builders, the yacht salespeople, and most of all the owners. This book reads like a story! Here is what I liked about it: 1) I learned a lot about yachts. I always love it when a writer can make a subject that I know nothing about, fascinating. The cost to maintain a yacht each year is roughly 10% of its purchase price, who knew? There are multiple yachts bigger than 400 feet. Many yachts have garages with other, smaller, boats inside them! 2) I learned a lot about the work that goes into building a yacht; the weeks of work that goes into painting murals, or selecting expensive sections of exotic woods for walls and furniture. There were several portraits of the unique craftsmen as well as the laborers. 3) Doug Von Allman was scammed into a Ponzi scheme; this was really interesting. I've already ordered 2 more of the author's books; which is pretty much the best kudos I can give an author! 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating tale By Mr. C. Doyle At first glance, the building of a giant luxury yacht may not seem a fruitful area for an exciting and readable book. But this begins just before the big recession, when everything was looking rosy, and goes on through difficult times when not only were no new boats being built, but it seemed uncertain the yard would even be about to finish. Throw in that the owner gets taken for a hundred million by a Ponzi scheme and you have an exciting narrative. Bruce Knecht follows the lives of many of the people involved and in working on the boat so you get to understand many things about the current economy including the fast declining middle class in the US, and the ironic reality that the rich bemoan illegal immigrants at the same time as these same immigrants toil on their projects in hazardous conditions. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Real food for thought By Patrick D. Burke This book is thought provoking on many levels. Feckless capitalism, bruised egos, especially when "shined off" by a Russian who was also nouveau riche, and the need to "show him". Clueless capitalism also, in being suckered by a Ponzi scheme. There was no real interest in sailing that I could detect. The main aim seemed to be sitting on the deck and gloating over the hoi polloi going past the Yacht Harbor somewhere that was not here. The boat turned out to be a pretty piece of furniture for the most part, ironically welded together by working stiffs who earned \$18.75 an hour. I hope they save their pennies so that someday they can purchase their own \$50,000,000.00 yacht. How reliable, how seaworthy, seemed to be secondary considerations to the lavish interior decoration. The vital electronics, almost an afterthought. I think Capitalism is wonderful, but this illustrated Capitalism that, initially anyway, was profoundly bored. It is so difficult to keep up with the Smiths...

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