

## THE SOVEREIGN OF THE SEAS

It is the dream of Giovanni Scardinale - A talented Italian cabinet maker - to reproduce in miniature the "**Sovereign of the Seas**" popularly known as the "most costly ship in the world". He is aiming to complete the project for the Sydney 2000 Olympics.

Giovanni Scardinale has built many faithful miniatures of some of the best known ships of history but the "**Sovereign of the Seas**" will certainly be his biggest challenge yet. The 2.7 x 1.9 meter ship is decorated with hundreds of sculptures which he will cover in 23 carat gold, its 100 small cannons will be operable and will actually shoot. At its completion the "**Sovereign of the Seas**" will be made up of over 20,000 individual pieces and will have taken more than 10,000 hours of work over four years.

Mr. Scardinale is hopeful of finding sponsors to finance the expensive task of building the ship and its accessories. The model will not be for sale but will be available for lease to clubs and commercial centres for exhibition. Half of the rental moneys will be allocated to a charity assisting needy children and the other half will go to Mr. Scardinale to finance other models which he is proposing to build.

### **HISTORICAL NOTES ON THE "SOVEREIGN OF THE SEAS"**

At the time of its launch in 1637 this ship was known as the "the most costly in the world". It was commissioned by King Charles I who instructed naval architect Phineas Pett to "build the biggest and best ship ever seen, regardless of cost". The ship measured 38.70 meters in length 14.63 meters in width and of 7.16 meters draft. This was the ship that cost the head of the king as the taxes he levied for the payment of the ship created great discontent among his people.

The ship, ahead of its time by more than one hundred and fifty years, cost £65,586, 16 shillings and 9½ pence at a time when any other ship with 40 cannons cost only £6,000 to build. It was the most grandly decorated ship of its time and during its many battles the Dutch named her "the golden devil" for the way the sun reflected on the gold decoration. On the rudder the inscription: " He who commands the seas, the tides, the winds and the ships protect this mighty ship oh great Charles". And the ship was indeed protected for much longer time than the sovereign who built her. However, she underwent so many transformations in her lifetime that at the end she was a much different ship than that launched in 1637.

She fought many battles without defeat, but it was an overturned candle which sealed her fate in 1696.