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NORTH PACIFIC 44 SEDAN

A well-built single-engine trawler with a timeless teak interior

BY PETER A. ROBSON

It was a blustery gray day as we motored out into 15-plus knots of wind and a two-foot chop in Bellingham Bay. At the helm of the North Pacific 44 Sedan was company founder Trevor Brice. BC-based North Pacific Yachts was founded in 2004 and to date has produced more than 120 trawler-style, China-built yachts from 38 to 59 feet. The success of North Pacific is largely due to their practical and well-thought-out designs and layouts, an abundance of traditional teak in their interiors, high quality construction and finishing and their competitive price point.

DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION The 44 Sedan uses the same proven, planked-look fiberglass hull as the company's 45-footer. The superstructure, however, is all new. Instead of the com-

pany's trademark raised pilothouse, the deckhouse resembles that of a traditional "Europa-style" trawler with covered side decks and a single-level saloon/helm area.

The hull is constructed from solid hand-laid fiberglass, while the decks and house incorporate honeycomb coring. All interior floors are supported by aluminum frames for added rigidity. Where reinforcing is required, such as around the pulpit, window frames and cleats, marine plywood is glassed in instead of honeycomb coring. The hull deck joint is a standard shoe-box fit bonded with fiberglass mat and epoxy.

ON DECK Boarding is via a single centreline transom door or any of three bulwark doors (two to starboard, one to port). This gives lots of options depending on the dock arrangement. The test boat had an Olsson stainless davit mounted on the integral swim platform that allows the dinghy to be launched and retrieved via an electric motor without blocking access to the swim platform. Many owners, though, will likely opt for storing their dinghy on the cabin top where it can be launched and

retrieved via a hydraulic davit.

The swim platform, cockpit sole and side decks are covered in Flexiteek, a proven synthetic product that looks like real teak but is easy to wash, non-skid and does not fade like "real" teak. The covered cockpit is relatively small, but this is compensated for by additional space in the saloon. Under the cockpit sole is a huge lazarette. A ladder leads up from the cockpit to the flybridge. The side decks are a comfortable 16 inches wide. Aft of the pilothouse, the walkaround bulwarks are high and topped with stainless handrails. Stairs from the forward ends of the walkaround lead to the bow area where the bulwarks are low, but with sturdy railings to provide safe access. A molded seat at the forward end of the raised cabin top has a folding backrest and is a cozy spot to enjoy the view. Standard anchoring equipment includes a Maxwell windlass, a Rocna anchor and 300 feet of chain. To keep anchor mud from off the deck, a lip with an integral drain is built into the aft end of the bowsprit/windlass platform.

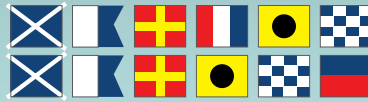
The flybridge, accessed from a cockpit ladder, is huge with a standard hardtop and room for the whole gang in perimeter settees and around a triangle-shaped table. The seating is raised enough so that everyone has a 360-degree view. The centreline helm console comes with two helm seats and the usual duplicate controls. There's tons of storage under the settees. Aft of the seating area there's plenty of room for a dinghy and davit.

INTERIOR Access to the saloon from the cockpit is via a heavy aluminum-framed sliding door. There's a full 80-inches of headroom throughout the interior, with plenty of fiddles and a well-placed overhead handrail to make it safer to move around in rough conditions. Large, stainless-framed ▶

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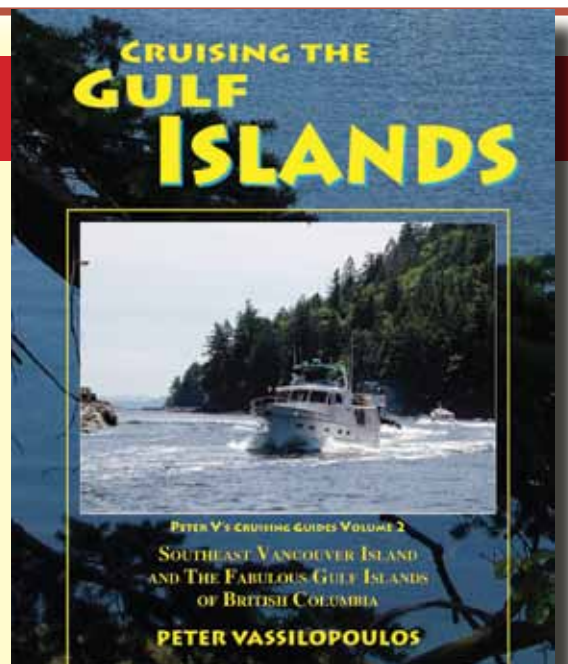


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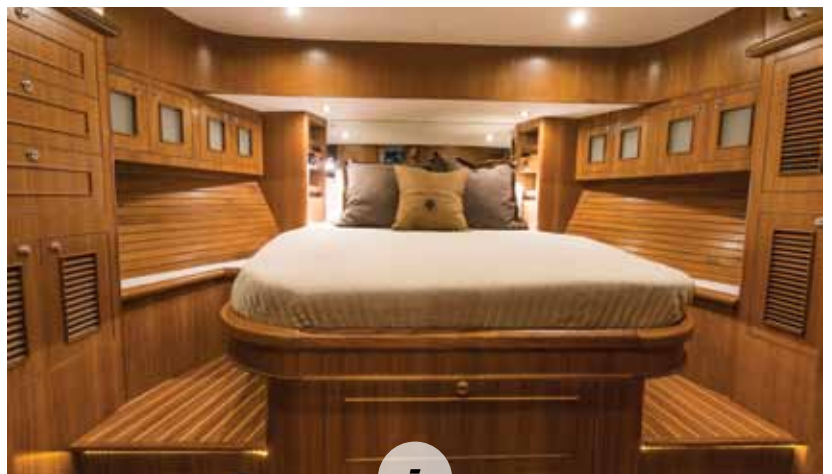
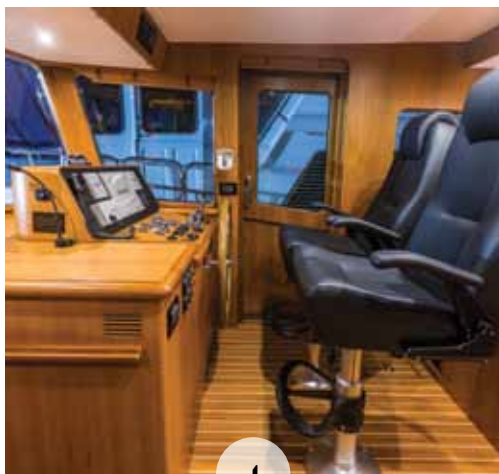


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saloon windows bring in ample light while opening ports, starboard and aft bulkhead windows, and a sliding door adjacent to the helm provide good ventilation. Soft vinyl headliner panels are velcroed in place and this makes future access easier.

I really like classic interiors that boast an abundance of teak panelling, cabinetry and

1. Large, stainless-framed saloon windows bring in ample light. **2.** The guest cabin with two twin berths is to starboard, though a number of layout options are available for this space. **3.** The linear galley is to port while the fridge and freezer are built into a cabinet to starboard. **4.** The helm console is fronted by two leather Llebroc helm chairs. **5.** The master is larger than one would expect, and this is due to the almost-plumb bow and broad hull.

teak and holly floors. North Pacific certainly doesn't skimp when it comes to using teak (which is pretty well all farmed these days). Among the unique interior features are the rounded, solid-wood fiddles and trim pieces that are bent and laminated around the corners, which is much more labour-intensive than standard miter joints. Small details like this demonstrate the fine workmanship throughout. That workmanship also shows in the many louvred doors and the dovetail joints used on all the drawers. The satin-finished teak contrasts nicely with the white Ul-traleather upholstery of the L-shaped settee to starboard (with high-low table that converts to a berth) and the twin lounge chairs to port.

Indirect lighting is hidden behind valances and at floor level and these help show off the rich woodwork.

The linear galley is to port while the fridge and freezer are built into a cabinet to starboard. The galley features granite countertops, propane stove and oven, deep sink and tons of storage in drawers and cupboards. A hinged portion of the granite countertop hides the stove when not in use and makes for extra counter space. I found the tall cabinet unit—located forward of the settee and aft of the helm—was a bit awkward as it blocked most of one of the starboard side windows. However, the height is necessary to fit the nine-cubic-foot NovaKool fridge and freezer, plus there's added storage in a

handy bookshelf nook. It might be possible to instead use drawer fridges/freezers to lower the cabinet height, though some storage space would be lost.

The helm console is fronted by two leather Llebroc helm chairs. A sliding door to starboard is also adjacent to a bulwark door and this should make it easy to step from helm to dock. The main features of the helm are a 12-inch Garmin touch screen, analog engine gauges, Cummins digital throttle and shifter, hydraulic steering and bow and stern thruster controls.

ACCOMMODATION It's four steps down to the accommodation area. The test boat was fitted with a freezer under the stairway, though ▶

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THE SPECS

LOA
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LWL
12.6 m / 41' 4"

Beam
4.17 m / 13' 8"

Draft
1.37 m / 4' 6"

Dry weight
15,422 kg / 34,000 lbs

Fuel
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Water
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Holding
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a combination washer/dryer could be installed instead. However, it is quite a deep compartment and a bit of a reach. The 44 has only a single head, though there is an option for a second head. The test boat's head had a separate shower stall with a built-in seat. The master stateroom is in the bow and it is a single step up to the queen berth. The access has been configured to make it easy to make the bed, something that is a common problem with island berths. The master is larger than one would expect, and this is due to the almost plumb bow and broad hull above the waterline. There's great storage here, including bookshelves, two hanging lockers and a number

of drawers—enough for an entire wardrobe—or two.

The guest cabin with two twin berths is to starboard. A number of layout options are available for this space, including converting it to an office, changing the twins to a single double berth or incorporating sliding berths that become a double. In the two-head version, the aft bulkhead would be moved further aft and this would allow for a head to be located forward of the guest cabin.

ENGINE AND SYSTEMS

Standard power is a single 355-horsepower Cummins QSB diesel with ZF transmission, straight shaft drive, dripless shaft seal and four-blade propeller. The engine

room is accessed under the saloon floor (any of five hatches) and there's "crouching" headroom with easy access around the engine. All wiring and plumbing is cleanly laid out and properly labelled. Heat is provided by a low-power-draw Espar forced air diesel heater (reverse cycle is optional). The SidePower bow and stern thrusters are oversize and use 24 volts, which, because of their higher voltage, draw less amperage than 12-volt models. Auxiliary power is provided by a six kW North-ern Lights generator.

UNDERWAY The 44 proved to be extremely stable and our movement through the chop was gentle, and even when

beam to the seas, there was minimal rolling. That stability is partially due to the fact that the test boat was built for an 87-year-old gentleman and his wife. The couple previously owned a North Pacific 38 Sedan and were clearly sold on the brand. However, because of their age, they wanted additional stability and so after delivery they had sponsons added. These additions angle down and out from the hard chines and are similar to fixed stabilizers, but much longer. While North Pacific's have never had an issue with excessive rolling, the sponsons provide a noticeable increase in stability and are almost as effective as active fin stabilizers. The sponsons protrude out from the hull, but if wide fenders are used, there is no issue with the them getting damaged when alongside a dock.

At 1,700 rpm and a slow cruise of seven knots—the sweet spot for fuel efficiency—we were sipping fuel at a rate of 3.2 gallons per hour (12 litres per hour), which translates to just under 2.2 miles per gallon (0.58 miles per litre). At seven knots, the range works out to more than 780 miles, with a 10 percent reserve. At that same speed, the two-inch-thick sound insulation in the engine room worked well, with a reading of only 69 dB in the saloon. At just under eight knots (1,950 rpm), our fuel consumption increased to 5.5 gph (20.8 lph), which gave us 1.44 miles per gallon (0.38 litres per mile). Wide open throttle was 3,000 rpm which drove us at 11 knots while burning 18 gallons per hour (41.6 lph). Of course, running at full speed is never fuel efficient and is best saved for when it is necessary to run for shelter when bad weather is imminent.

Overall, acceleration was good for a heavy trawler and

there was no cavitation or slipping while accelerating or in hard-over turns. From both the upper and lower helm there is good visibility over the bow and all round.

CONCLUDING REMARKS
Trevor Brice stresses that North Pacifics are not built

to a price point. Instead they are built well, then priced. North Pacifics come with an extensive list of standard equipment. Brice says that all owners really need to buy is a dinghy and their personal gear. Looking at the fit and finish and the extensive use of teak woodwork, it is clear

that the North Pacific 44 is well built. With only a single engine, the 44 may not be a speedster, but that pays off in very good fuel economy, however, when necessary, it can do a very reasonable 11 knots.






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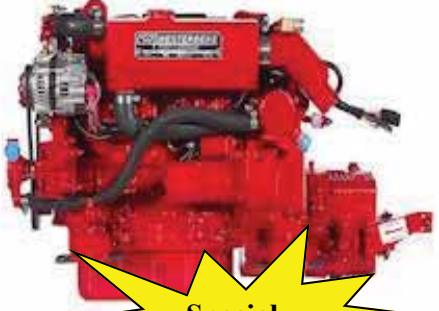
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