

NORTH PACIFIC 590 SKYLOUNGE

A NEW FLAGSHIP FOR LONG DISTANCE CRUISING
AND DAYS OFF-GRID ON THE HOOK.

Tendrils of fog swirled above Lopez Sound like serpent tails, pushed hither and yon by the wind that, at 8 a.m., was already gusting to 20 knots. I sat transfixed by the stark contrast of colors on display in the Rosario Strait—the expanse of evergreens on the surrounding islands ran right to the steep, rocky shores that disappeared into mid-night blue waters dotted with whitecaps.

It was another splendid morning in Washington’s San Juan Islands, the site of *Passagemaker’s* Trawlerfest event in the Pacific Northwest. I was on board our test steed, the North Pacific 590 Skylounge, which was making her world debut. The builder’s largest-ever vessel, the 590 is a big jump from its 49-foot flagship, including a number of firsts that coincide with its 20th anniversary.

“She is the culmination of everything we’ve learned over the past 20 years, and the result of striving to improve and refine our vessels,” North Pacific CEO and founder Trevor Brice says from the companion seat at the helm.

I make tiny adjustments to her heading from the matching Llebroc helm chair, and I must say, it feels great to be aboard this inaugural enclosed flybridge model from North Pacific. (The 590 is also available with a lower pilothouse and flybridge.)

The 590’s helm is on centerline. Five forward-facing windows and rectangular side glass give the captain a wide range of visibility. Her standard electronics suite—a trio of 16-inch Garmin multifunction displays, Sleipner variable-speed bow and stern thrusters, autopilot and engine controls—is smartly arranged and in easy reach from the destroyer-style wheel. Aft the helm area, an L-shape settee with a folding table and a workspace that abuts the after bulkhead invite guests to join the captain and co-pilot in comfort.

Our command position is accessed from an internal, midship staircase (a day head at the bottom of the stairs serves the skylounge) or from the cockpit and boat deck. The only thing I’d add would be the optional 1,500-pound capacity davit to the boat deck, to complement the FreedomLift for tender stowage at sea.

As we moved along at 9 knots, the 590 made mincemeat of the sloppy 3- to 4-foot seas. What struck me, sitting well above the waterline (air draft is 21 feet, 4 inches), was how quiet she was. Brice says her sole is cored with foam and then insulated.



NEW BOATS



LOA: 61'4"
Beam: 18'4"
Draft: 5'10"
Displ.: 114,000 lb.
Fuel: 1,800 gal.
Water: 400 gal.
Power: 2/405-hp
Cummins QSL9



The sound deadening is quantifiable, as noise levels ranged from 52 to 59 decibels, only exceeding 60 when we pushed her to wide open. At its lowest level, noise was about the same as a quietly running refrigerator.

In another first for North Pacific, Hull No. 1 has a twin-engine configuration. The standard setup is a single 405-horsepower Cummins QSL9. Higher-horsepower twins are also available. During our sea trial, the twin 405s proved an ideal match for her CE Class A hull, returning impressive range for a semi-displacement boat: 3,240 nautical miles at 6 knots; 2,835 nm at 7 knots; 1,851 nm at 8 knots; and 1,156 nm at 10 knots, all with a 10 percent reserve. She topped out at just shy of 13 knots, where she will still make more than 500 nm. Twin skegs protect the running gear.

North Pacific's continued evolution of its interiors, which we first saw a few years back on the 450 Pilothouse, adds refinement on the 590. Classic-style interiors are available throughout the model line, but I liked the horizontal-grain teak with wenge accents. They are a fine contrast to the white oak soles and leather-wrapped handrails throughout her one-level salon.

The galley is amidships with a few



barstools at the long Corian countertop. It delineates the salon from the forward dinette, where a C-shape settee can easily seat six. As in the skylounge, windows here are bonded for a more modern look.

Like its other vessels, North Pacific's 590 has an asymmetrical layout. There's a wider starboard side deck that can be accessed from the cockpit or via a pantograph door in the salon. A model with full side decks is an option. On the asymmetrical version, the roomier side deck is fully protected by the skylounge overhang, with beefy side rails that came out above my waist. I'd feel safe at sea if I had to head to the Portuguese bridge or foredeck seating area.

Belowdecks access is split via two companionways, with the forward stairwell leading to the full-beam, en suite, amidships master stateroom and the forward VIP. They are separated by a guest stateroom with twin berths that slide together for a double. The VIP and guest stateroom share a head.

A similar set of gracefully curved stairs from the salon accesses the

engine room, lazarette and engineering room, including tools and a workbench. There's a single berth here for crew or overflow, and owners can nix the engineering room in favor of a head and shower.

The owners of this first hull have used her extensively since taking delivery in late May. They summered in Puget Sound and completed a circumnavigation of Vancouver Island. They spend significant time on the hook in remote anchorages, so the boat is outfitted with a beefy, dual-anchor windlass, an FCI watermaker and a Li-ion battery suite mated to Victron chargers and inverters, all backed by a 20 kW Northern Lights genset.

Compared to the first boat the brand launched in 2004, this new one marks quite a few milestones.

"We've come a long way from our first North Pacific 42 Pilot-house," Brice says. "At the time, I couldn't imagine building something like our 590."

Twenty years and 160 boats later, the 590 is a harbinger of more good things to come. —Jeff Moser