

SOUTHERN[®] BOATING

More than a location, it's a way of life.

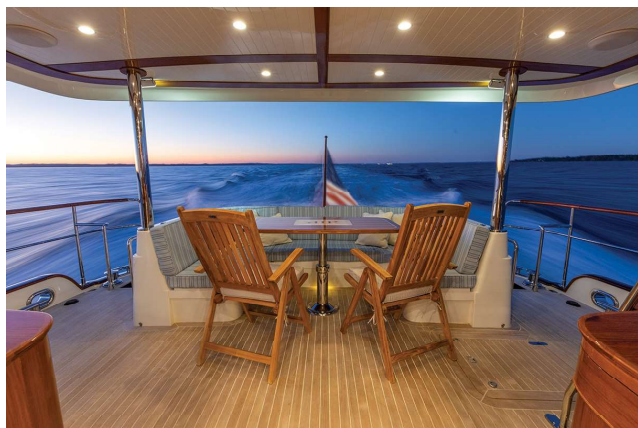
August 2023

Inside the
Hunt 68

Four Favorite Cruises

PLUS: Two Oceans 555





Each boat has its own personality, even if it's a simple, no-thrills 20-footer. There are a lot of white boats plying the waterways, which is why one with hull color makes you look a few seconds longer as it brings out more of its style. The same goes when you step aboard. More than anything, the interior truly reflects the owner's personality, and I was reminded how beautiful the elegant look of rich wood invites one into a timeless space of traditional luxury.

Home Away from Home

I'm on the new Hunt 68, the latest in its Ocean Series. This particular owner loves the classic, traditional look and after owning a Hacker-Craft, a 34-foot Hinckley runabout, and a 43-foot Hinckley flybridge, he moved to a more comfortable Hunt 68. His model is the flybridge edition. The size gives him and his wife plenty of interior and exterior room to enjoy a day on the water, and with the grandchildren and lots of friends, afternoon and weekend cruises are the norm. "He's very busy...and it's really his second office," says Pat, the yacht's captain. However, he loves boating and finds relaxation on his home away from home, even spending nights aboard when it's at the dock. "It's like a little bit of an oasis for him," adds Peter Truslow, managing director for Hunt Yachts.

The flybridge and the cockpit are the most lived-in spaces. The fresh breeze and open air are two of the most logical reasons to have a boat; taking a break from everyday life is another. The flybridge model offers two helms, so if the weather does get dicey, the yacht keeps on cruising.

The owner's priority in the build was elegance and day boating with occasional short cruises, but the yacht can easily handle long distances. Primarily spending the summer up north and the winter in Florida, a trip over to the Bahamas isn't unheard of. The interior is designed for that purpose and not setup for long distances, but it can be. "I think this boat for him is an excellent layout for just what they do," says Truslow. "They've got the galley up for entertaining."

"They don't do a lot of overnight stuff," adds the captain. "They wanted to go as minimal on galley as possible. ...They'll do all their cooking on the grill or bring it on from the house."



JIM RAYCROFT/ROBERT HOLLAND



BUILT FOR LIFE

The latest Hunt Ocean Series 68 Flybridge
reflects its owner's character.

By Steve Davis



Left: Double glass doors open to the interior air-conditioned salon, where a winding staircase leads up to the flybridge (right).

The galley up saves on time and keeps the chef part of the social action. Although smaller than a full galley below, there are under-counter refrigerators, a Wolf three-burner cooktop, and a double stainless steel sink set in an L-shaped counter. Because this owner decided on the galley-up design, they turned the extra room below into a pantry where a washer/dryer could be installed or, in this case, a full-size fridge.

Accommodations below include three generous ensuite cabins. The midship, full-beam master with an island king berth that has storage underneath boasts a settee to port and a desk to starboard along with a full-height, cedar-lined closet. The VIP cabin with a walkaround queen berth is at the bow, and the starboard mid cabin has twin bunks. The entire level, as well as the salon, shines with the most elegant African Cherry wood (imagine a mahogany color).

Unlike a place where you're afraid to sit down because you might ruin the furniture, the owners have made this "home" a cozy, comfortable space where they can relax or have family and friends on board in the sun, the shade, or in air-conditioned luxury. Most of their time is spent up on the large covered flybridge that is the perfect spot for additional entertaining. These owners put a huge sunpad along the aft rail. The grill and a sink area divide the aft seating from the L-shaped settees on each side with tables. Two Stidd Admiral captain chairs are forward with a full helm for control. With Strataglass clear vinyl fitted to the hardtop, owners and guests can still enjoy the flybridge in inclement weather.

The flybridge extends far aft enough to provide protection over the main-deck cockpit from the sun or

rain. It's a great area with many uses, from enjoying a meal, sipping cocktails, having a cup of coffee, reading, or watching the kids playing out in the water. A stairway on each side leads down to the swim platform that hydraulically lowers into the water for easy access, which also makes it easy to launch and retrieve an inflatable tender. The owner of this model employs a captain, and the crew quarters and engine room are accessible from this deck. Speaking of which, the engine room has plenty of space for service and as Capt. Pat noted, it's air conditioned.

Built from Experience

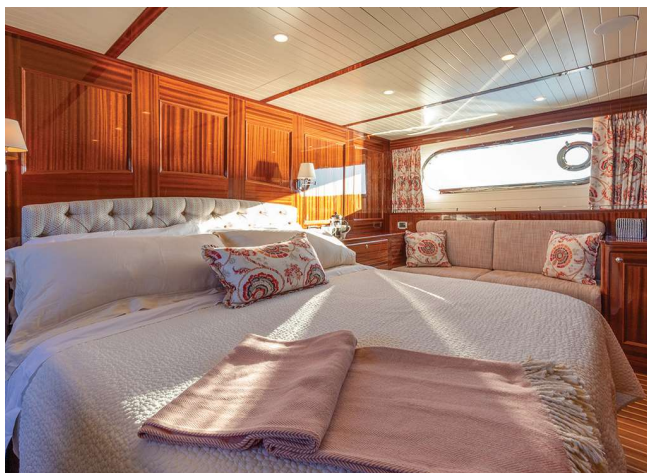
Hunt is very well known for its legendary deep-V hull design. The Ocean Series hulls are engineered to be the best riding hulls among others in this model's category. The hull rises quickly onto plane and affords a comfortable ride throughout a range of conditions and speed.

"These boats are overbuilt," says Truslow. "They're pretty heavy, but really solid and structurally sound."

Capt. Pat gave us one experience when he started the trip north. The forecast heading out of St. Lucie Inlet was for two-foot seas. "We got out there, and it was two-foot seas... for an hour," he says. "And then it built, and it built, and it built...coming out of the northeast, so we were probably in four to sixes. We threw on the stabilizers and you took a little bit of spray, but it wasn't stuff coming over the top.... We were walking around. We didn't have our legs spread apart for balance. It's a really comfortable boat."

"It's not revolutionary, but it's a planing hull, so it gets up and gets all the dynamic stability because it's lifted, so it's drier and stable," adds Truslow. "And then just about on all

JIM RAYCROFT



A warm, full gloss African Cherry wood carried throughout the boat gives her a classic, traditional look, such as in the galley (top left), lower helm (bottom left), and master stateroom (bottom right). Top right: The engine room has plenty of space for service.

of the boats, we have the Humphree stabilizer system with the interceptors and the foils. They're amazing."

The Ocean Series is also noted for speeds near 30 knots. This flybridge model has a top speed of 27 knots with a cruising speed at 24 knots, plenty of power with the upgraded Caterpillar C-32 engines to get back quickly if conditions warrant it. She's also equipped with the most advanced electronics and systems available to make piloting this boat a breeze, including Garmin GPSMAP 8617 multifunction displays, C-Zone to control DC circuits, as well as the aforementioned Humphree stabilizers and fins to smooth the ride.

Owner's Choice

Hunt makes a point of including owners to be part of the build process that makes it more personal. As mentioned, this owner loves the classic, traditional look, and it shows with it its warm, full gloss African Cherry wood. It's exquisite and is the accent throughout the boat, including the staircase that winds from the salon to the flybridge.

In contrast, the owner of a Hunt 63 chose the opposite, a much lighter theme, and one currently in build is going with a pickled oak that has a somewhat whitewashed look. The point is, Hunt works closely with owners to meet their wishes. For instance, the granite countertops on the 68 exactly match those in the owner's home.

Hunt boats are more than semi-custom. "We have the hull and the deck," says Truslow. "Whatever you want without moving bulkheads and stringers. Ray Hunt Design has literally designed every interior corner and then does the weight studies and all that." In other words, Hunt doesn't make modifications without a strict analysis of how the boat will float. "He is involved through the whole process of what the owner wants because if you want a larger kitchen or different equipment, he has to be part of that."

Needless to say, this new Hunt 68 is exactly what the owner wanted and knows that he's found a boat that is beautifully built to last; one that he can comfortably fit into the demands of everyday life yet allow for his escape. 🍷

SPECIFICATIONS

LOA: 72' 11.5"

Beam: 19' 6"

Draft: 5' 4.5"

Fuel/water: 1,620/490 U.S. gals.

Displacement (half load): 100,000 lbs.

Power: 2x Caterpillar C-18 @ 1,136 bhp (standard)

Max/Cruise speed: 27/24 kts. (standard)

Range: 380 nm @ 24 kts.

Contact: Hunt/Hinckley Yachts

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huntyachts.com