

## Tower and Power

*Stellar sailing performance and a towering flybridge helm perch are defining characteristics of the Lagoon 52.*

AS ONE OF TWO LAGOONS introduced earlier this year in the United States at the Strictly Sail Miami boat show, the new 52 shares many characteristics with its smaller, 39-foot sibling. (See “Little Big Boat,” page 65.) The exterior lines and features of each cat—including the sweet, elegant, “diamond-shaped” vertical bows—were sculpted and specified by the well-respected French naval architecture consortium Van Peteghem Lauriot Prévost, while the accommodations plan and interior styling were the domain of the Italian firm Nauta Design.

VPLP is known for its offshore racing cats, and the centralized mast placement in both models is an idea borrowed from the racecourse; this not only opens up visibility to the helmsman but also expands the foretriangle and provides a wider range of optional downwind sails. (The spars on each boat are stepped on an infused beam for structural integrity and load dispersion, though the 39's is also tied to a full grid running beam to beam, while the 52's is a single longitudinal member.)

Finally, both yachts were similarly constructed using anti-osmotic and polyester resins, with an infused balsacore sandwich in the decks



**The Lagoon 52** is a big, rangy cat with an expansive flybridge steering station, oodles of room on both levels for lounging and relaxing, and multiple headsail options, including a versatile code zero light-air reacher. Down below, the staterooms are spacious and luxurious, as are the adjacent en suite heads.

and the topsides of the hulls; below the waterline, the layup is infused solid glass.

Given the size discrepancies, however, the similarities, for the most part, end there.

Nowhere was this more obvious than when one is perched behind the articulating wheel (it can either be centered or cocked slightly to port or starboard) of the 52 on the expansive, raised flybridge. The wide, commanding view was spectacular, as was the powerful performance. With a full crew of talented sailors aboard for our test run in the open ocean off Miami

(at one point, there were seven of us on the bridge, and it was most definitely not crowded), I did my best, from my second-story vantage point, to keep them hopping. Working through the headsail progressions, under genoa and full main, in about 17 knots of true wind, our closehauled speeds ranged from 8.5 to 10 knots. But when we swapped the working sail for the gargantuan code zero reacher and spun the wheel down a few degrees, the 52 really took off, making a solid 12 knots with ease.

Once I handed over the driving duties and returned

to deck level, I realized that the operative word to describe the 52 is simple: big.

Everything about the boat seems spacious, but the flow from the wide aft cockpit to the roomy main saloon, and from there down into the accommodations and staterooms, is natural and intuitive. In other words, it may be a very large vessel, but it still feels accessible and inviting. There are, of course, multiple layout plans from which to choose, but the boat we sailed had a most unusual and interesting option: a vast owners suite aft, to port, with a sole entryway from the cockpit. It takes the notion of truly private quarters to a whole new level. And on a cat with many levels, it was just another pleasant surprise.

*H.M.*