



# LAGOON 50

An example of fresh thinking in every way

BY ZUZANA PROCHAZKA

**T**railblazing, it turns out, is hard work. Maybe that's why some people say there are no new ideas, just tweaks of old ones. When particularly grumbly, I'm tempted to agree with that sentiment, so when I headed over to see the new Lagoon 50, I expected two hulls, one mast, a saloon and cockpit and... wait a minute, what's this?

Greeted by the French builder's product marketing manager, Martina Torrini, I was happy to be schooled on innovation and all the fresh thinking that went into their latest catamaran for launch. The Lagoon 50's angular design is by VPLP and Patrick Le Quement and the general aesthetic has become a staple in Lagoon's quiver. But there are differences, many of them, that are visible even from the dock.

**ON DECK** The new design's wrap-around glazed vertical windows create the illusion that they're continuous, but in fact they're made up of panels that provide a terrific view all around.

The hydraulic swim platform (the teak beach) looks different too. Yes, it still carries the tender—but in a new way.

The ends of the platform flip up and in to reveal added chocks for the dinghy. With the ends turned down, there are no chocks to get in the way so you can walk from one transom to the other without needing to step up into the cockpit. The job of the platform is the same, but it's done differently.

The two squared-off transoms steps that lead to the cockpit on either side are nice and low so they look better and are easier on the knees. To satisfy new industry regulations, the engine room hatches that are located on the cockpit level now open up

underway will keep you in the cockpit and not out on the steps, which is safer.

**COCKPIT** Next is the cockpit itself where a seat spans the transom. It's sandwiched between a stowage locker to port and a grill to starboard. The grill is housed inside a locker that swivels out and over the transom steps so you cook while standing farther aft, keeping the smoke and heat out of the cockpit. Nice.

The dinette to port has an extending table that stays folded for intimate breakfast on-the-go or folds out to accommodate a crowd at dinner. A small seat forward of the table detaches and moves



over the molded-in steps (that lead up to the side deck) to provide additional seating when the table is extended.

To starboard is a twin lounge and an outdoor galley with a sink, a fridge, cutouts to hold bottles and a large countertop for food and cocktail prep. Because of this module, there are no steps to the starboard side deck unless you go back out of the cockpit and around.

The foredeck adds more lounge space with a sunpad and a U-shaped cocktail settee where the cover over the windlass serves as a small table. The forward saloon window opens manually so drinks can be passed to the foredeck party directly from the galley.

With the sun beating down from the west when swinging to anchor in the trade winds, this will be the shadiest spot to curl up with a book and a glass of happy hour beverage.

**FLYBRIDGE** If neither end of the boat suits your lounging style, move up to the flybridge. About 50 percent of the Lagoon 50s are expected to do charter work and most of these are likely to be flybridge models just like our test boat. The views from up here are spectacular.

The helm station is dead centre behind the mast, which makes visibility forward a little awkward but the long bench seat can accommodate at least four so there's room to move around and still stay within reach of the wheel. The two-level angled dash holds B&G MFDs and wind instruments angled toward the driver, with the autopilot and remote windlass control on the lower level. Engine throttles are to the right and two cupholders to the left. (The French need to upsize their cupholders to accommodate thirsty types on this side of the Atlantic.)

Three Harken winches manage all the lines including the self-tacking jib sheets that are led here via sheet



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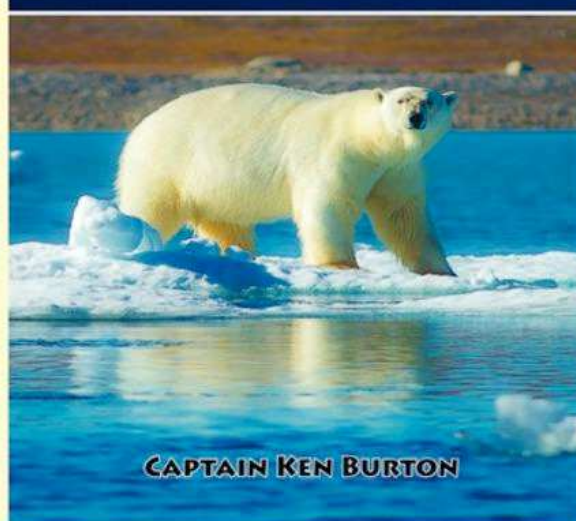
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stoppers. Three integrated sheet bins manage the sheets and halyards and an electric drum controls the continuous traveller sheet.

Aft of the bench seat is the piece-de-resistance lounge: a triple-wide sunpad with lifting headrests and elevated sections at the knees. On long passages with the autopilot steering, this will be the place to hang out and I made sure to test this area extensively.

Steps to starboard lead down to the side deck (but not all the way to the cockpit). The

staircases on both port and starboard need more handholds as we learned during the bumpy conditions of our sea trial.

**INTERIOR** The Lagoon 50 is offered with three to six cabins and three to six heads, and that's great for charter, but for private ownership, it's unthinkable not to opt for the owner's suite that spans the entire starboard hull. You enter the master stateroom via steps amidships. An elongated desk with a built-in bookcase and a small settee greets you. Aft is a large island bed that's accessible from either side and forward is a divided head that has a separated toilet compartment, a double vanity and a large shower.

A walk-in closet is inboard. This complete dressing area has three rows of drawers and a skylight to the saloon above.

Overall, the stowage space in this cabin is mindboggling. Huge hanging lockers have additional space behind them for storage of seldom-used items such as luggage. (This is where the extra cabins get shoehorned in for the charter version.) The back of the sliding door to the stateroom also forms a bookcase and magazine rack. Anyone who can't find home-style comfort in these extravagant accommodations probably shouldn't be boating. I'd happily move aboard tomorrow and never feel put out.

All around are fixed hull ports with opening insets and plenty of overhead hatches so the whole cabin is light and airy as if it weren't down in the hull at all. Two en suite cabins share the port hull in the standard three-cabin version.

The main deck is no less interesting and it seems that

Lagoon zigged when everyone else in the industry is zagging. Although increasingly the trend has been to meld the inside and outside, thereby almost negating the need for a separate saloon dinette, Lagoon rethought the inside social area so that it's much more inviting.

The nearly full-beam settee faces aft and butts up against the wrap-around forward window. It molds around a centreline console that holds a popup flatscreen TV. Between the sofa and the TV is an optional table that is a work of origami art. It's chrome-accented legs articulate down to lower the table and at the same time move it forward toward the console making more room in "lounge mode" after dinner. I moved it up and down at least three times, marveling at the engineering behind it. Although it's an

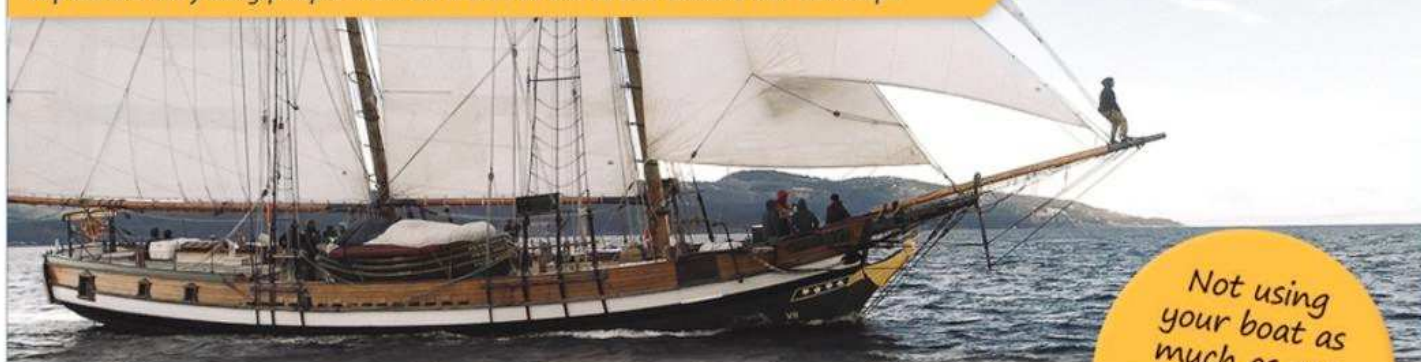
1. Lagoon has rethought the inside social area and the result is an open, inviting space. 2. The divided head has a separate toilet compartment, a double vanity and a large shower. 3-4. The staterooms are luxurious to say the least. 5. The nearly full-beam settee with articulating table.

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option, I'd say for anyone who wants to wow dock neighbours, it's a must.

The aft port corner contains most of the galley. It's kind of a three-part area with a three-burner Eno stove and sink to port, two refrigerator drawers to starboard, and a bar built into the middle console that wraps around the compression post for the mast.

To starboard is a large, outboard-facing nav desk with lots of optional equipment. A B&G display, a VHF and an autopilot control can be added here and for a cruising couple on long passages, this will provide a second helm of sorts. Here, our test boat showed off some of the nice décor upgrades with a desk clad in leather, stainless steel accents and Alpi wood in various shades of dark brown. It seems Lagoon is trying to break the love affair with grey and is moving back to darker colours that add a richer feel and a more finished aesthetic. I'm glad to see this changing.

**UNDERWAY** With 12 to 16 knots of true breeze, we sailed at 5.1 knots at 60 degrees off the wind and reached up to 7.4 knots as we cracked off to 140 degrees even in bumpy conditions.

With 1,700 square feet of upwind sail area between the standard full batten mainsail and an 87 percent self-tacking jib, our test boat had plenty of canvas up. The mast, which has been moved aft to prevent hobby-horsing, is 87 feet high giving this cat a higher aspect ratio rig to catch the wind up high. The model displaces nearly 46,000 pounds dry (add another 20,000 pounds when fully loaded) so to get things going, we opted for the code zero that briefly delivered 11.4 knots on a beam reach.

The twin 80-horsepower Yanmar diesels (standard is 57 horsepower) with Saildrives and folding propellers, delivered 9.5 knots at 3,000 rpm

**THE SPECS**

**LOA:**  
14.75 m / 48' 5"

**LWL:**  
14.3 m / 46' 11"

**Beam:**  
8.1 m / 26' 7"

**Draft:**  
1.4 m / 4' 7"

**Sail Area:**  
158 sq-m / 1,701 sq-ft

**Displacement (light):**  
20,831 kg / 45,926 lbs

**Water:**  
480 L / 126 USG

**Fuel:**  
1,040 L / 274 USG

**Mast Height:**  
26.5 m / 87' 0"

**Headroom in saloon:**  
2.06 m / 6' 9"

**Engines:**  
Twin 57-hp Yanmar diesels

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(wide-open-throttle). A more efficient but still respectable cruising speed can be found at 2,200 rpm and 7.5 knots. With 274 gallons of fuel, this is a go-far feline for sure.

**CONCLUDING REMARKS** I'm on a lot of boats and although I love them all, I do have trouble remembering the minute details of some when it comes to writing up their nuances. This is not the case with the Lagoon 50, which showed herself to be a breath of fresh air in a sea of the same old (pun intended). For anyone who is looking to do distance cruising and needs the space, you can hardly ask for a more thought-out and luxurious 50-footer than this Lagoon. Maybe blazing a trail isn't as hard when the right minds are put to work.