

ASIA'S LEADING YACHTING LIFESTYLE MEDIA



GROWING APPEAL OF MULTIHULLS

SUNREEF, LAGOON, FONTAINE PAJOT, LEOPARD, BALI, EXCESS,
AQUILA, SILENT, ILIAD, NEEL, LEEN, PMG, PRESTIGE, BLUEGAME

CATAMARAN REVIEWS: 100 SUNREEF POWER,
LEOPARD 46 POWERCAT, BALI 4.4

OTHER REVIEWS: SUNSEEKER 65 SPORT YACHT, DUFOUR 61,
BENETEAU GRAN TURISMO 45, NIMBUS T11

LEADER: MICHAEL KÖHLER, SILENT-YACHTS

INTERVIEW: FIRST PRINCESS X95 FOR SOUTHEAST ASIA

SHOWS: SANCTUARY COVE, DUBAI, LA GRANDE MOTTE

RACING: SAILGP, CLIPPER RACE

HONG KONG: HKD80

CHINA: RMB90

SINGAPORE: SGD12

MALAYSIA: MYR32

THAILAND: THB350

PHILIPPINES: PHP 450

VIETNAM: VND200,000

INDONESIA: IDR 125,000

REST OF THE WORLD: USD12



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ISSUE 65



COVER PHOTO: 100 SUNREEF POWER

OPEN FOR FUN

Now in Asia, the Gran Turismo 45 is sleek, sporty and seriously versatile, with Beneteau's new express cruiser flagship offering a range of flexible features designed to improve life at anchor.

WORDS MICHAEL VERDON PHOTOS BENETEAU





Most builders in the 40-50ft range are trying to be all things to all boaters. Foldout transoms, convertible cockpits and even vertical bows attempt to replicate boats closer to 65ft in terms of usable space and amenities. Some work, others look like Frankenboats.

Beneteau's new Gran Turismo 45 is in the 'Swiss Army knife' camp of design, and honestly, on my first visit to the boat, I wasn't *that* impressed. It has an almost retro look, with a long profile reminiscent of a 1990s express cruiser and a curved hardtop that has been a standard feature on some competitors' boats for three or four years.

But on the second visit, the detail in the design was more apparent, as was the builder's focus on creating a multipurpose but open layout in a limited envelope. On this boat, the devil is in the details – and multiple functions.

BEACH CLUB TO BARBECUE

Starting at the transom, which has become one of the go-to places for owners in this category, the pieces are put together as nicely as

a Chinese tangram. First, the hydraulic swim platform has tender chocks built into the surface. It lowers into the water for easy launch and retrieval, and provides a nice platform for people who want to go diving, snorkelling or just sit partially submerged in the water.

The aft sunpad is also multifunctional and includes drink holders embedded in the soft upholstery (no skin-sticking-like vinyl covers on this seat) and a foldup headrest. Best of all, the entire sunpad unit lifts hydraulically to reveal a garage for a second tender, dive tanks or storage.

Furthermore, the aft end of the sunpad reveals a fold-up electric barbecue that allows you to grill from the swim platform. I like the idea of the grill here because it moves the cooking and smells away from the cockpit, although this is not such a problem in a boat with such an open, breezy design.

The midsection of the cockpit is also well thought out, with some nice second-gen features from an earlier Gran



The hydraulic swim platform provides a hub while moored (above); a key selling point is the tender garage under the island sunpad (top)



The foredeck sunpads can be partially shaded by a bimini (left); the interior includes a wet bar and retractable TV to starboard, while the aft window can be raised (right)

Turismo. First, the door on the portside folds flat against the side, while the aft single-piece glass window can lift into a slot along the ceiling via electric actuators. This allows the end of the covered area to be wide open for extra breeze and views during hot months and closed during cooler or rainy times.

To port is a wet bar with fridge, icemaker and sink, while a pop-up television is embedded in the back of the unit.

Opposite is the main dining table and a C-shaped sofa, which basically offers covered alfresco dining when the aft window and door are open. The table can fold in half to create more space or during rougher running, as the stainless supports underneath the teak slats offer both curved grabrails as well as drinks holders.

CURVES AND OPENINGS

The curved hardtop is a feature Beneteau points to during tours, noting that its competitors typically join different pieces held together

rather than its single-piece design. It not only looks better than the others, with no seams or caulking, but also has higher structural integrity.

However, the feature I liked most was the huge sunroof opening, measuring 45sqft, because it lets the sun in while still offering protection. The side windows have sliding panels to give a cross breeze if the cockpit is buttoned down. The area also has vents near the helm and midsection for the 24,000BTU air-conditioning.

The helm area has a single captain's chair and double companion seat, both with bolsters, along with a minimalist, uncluttered dash. The GT 45 has Beneteau's Ship Display, which monitors engines, as well as the Volvo IPS glass helm, shown on a 16-inch Garmin display, for the IPS system.

The system includes electronic throttles with joystick controls for easier manoeuvring around the docks. The GT 45 also has

The 30-plus knots driving experience is enhanced by a double companion seat, side windows and a 45sqft sunroof





The hidden grill at the end of the island sunbed offers an ideal place for cooking outdoors

a Sidepower bow thruster for more precise control in big winds or currents. On this unit, the Volvo 600s produce 440hp for each engine.

Forward of the windscreen is a large sunpad for two to three people, which provides a nice place to hang out and can be partially covered by a retractable bimini.

LOWER-DECK LIVING

Below deck, the jigsaw puzzle configuration continues. At the bottom of the stairway to port is a full galley featuring a fridge/freezer – and nice push-button security to keep the doors closed in big seas – as well as a convection microwave and two-burner stove.

Across is a C-shaped sofa and a table for indoor dining or just hanging out, with a window and opening to port. The head just forward of the galley has two doors – one in this common area, to make it a day head, and the other in the forward cabin for private use.

The lounge can be modified into a berth with a filler cushion. If the owner wants a third cabin with bunkbeds, Beneteau can add a bulkhead,

although this would dramatically reduce the area's open feeling.

The bow cabin has scissor berths, which can either stay together as an island bed or split apart as singles for non-couples. Storage is decent, and both the overhead escape hatch and two side windows provide good light.

Aft of the lounge is the full-beam master. The engine placement aft on the IPS system comes in handy with IPS-equipped boats, as it allows more space for the rear suite. Beneteau did a nice job with the layout, placing the queen-sized berth in the centre, and then designing separate bench seats and storage areas on either side, with good windows.

The head is large for this size of boat, with a separate shower stall. The boat incorporates Beneteau's Alpi wood panelling, a blend of natural and synthetic composites, along with a teak floor both inside and on the outer deck area. Fit and finish is clean, precise and what you would expect from a top production builder.



The lower deck can include a dinette to starboard (left), galley to port, full-beam master suite midships (right) and forward VIP cabin



The table can be fully opened for dining or folded to create more space

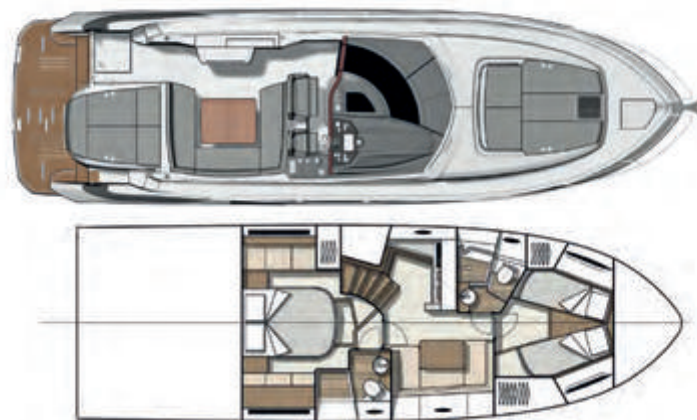
CLASSY TOUCHES

However, the designers also added thoughtful touches throughout the boat, almost like subliminal messaging to up its luxury game. They include curves along the steps from the swim platform to the cockpit, the residential-feel upholstery on the aft and forward sunbeds, embedded phone chargers and the Fusion sound system. The heads have basin sinks, and the headboard in the master suite is backlit.

Other details that matter for onboard living include 17-inch-wide passages on the gunwales and stainless rails along the sides, with slight, outward-sloping curves, that are 24 inches high.

There are two access points to the engine room – one just off the swim platform and the other in the tender garage – and a hot-and-cold shower near the swim platform. There's also a 7.5kW generator and hot-water heater.

The boat has a 32-knot top end, according to Beneteau, and cruises nicely at 23-24 knots. The boat's air-stepped hull is designed for stability rather than speed, as one would expect from most stepped hulls.



DECKS & SPECS

Length overall 14.78m (48ft 6in)

Hull length 13.5m (44ft 3in)

Maximum beam 4.2m (13ft 9in)

Hull beam 4.15m (13ft 7in)

Air draught 4.59m (15ft 0in)

Draught 1.2m (3ft 9in)

Light displacement

11.24 tonnes (24,782 lbs)

Fuel capacity

900 litres (238 US gallons)

Fresh water capacity

400 litres (106 US gallons)

Engine options

Z-drive Volvo 2 x D6 380cv/hp

IPS 600 Volvo 2 x 440cv/hp

CE certification B12/C12

With all its bells and whistles, the GT 45 should certainly be a strong contender for anyone who wants a fast cruiser that can also make a great weekend home. ☺

www.beneteau.com

www.simpsonmarine.com

Now in Hong Kong following a sale by Simpson Marine, the GT 45 leads an express cruiser range that also includes 32, 36 and 41 models

