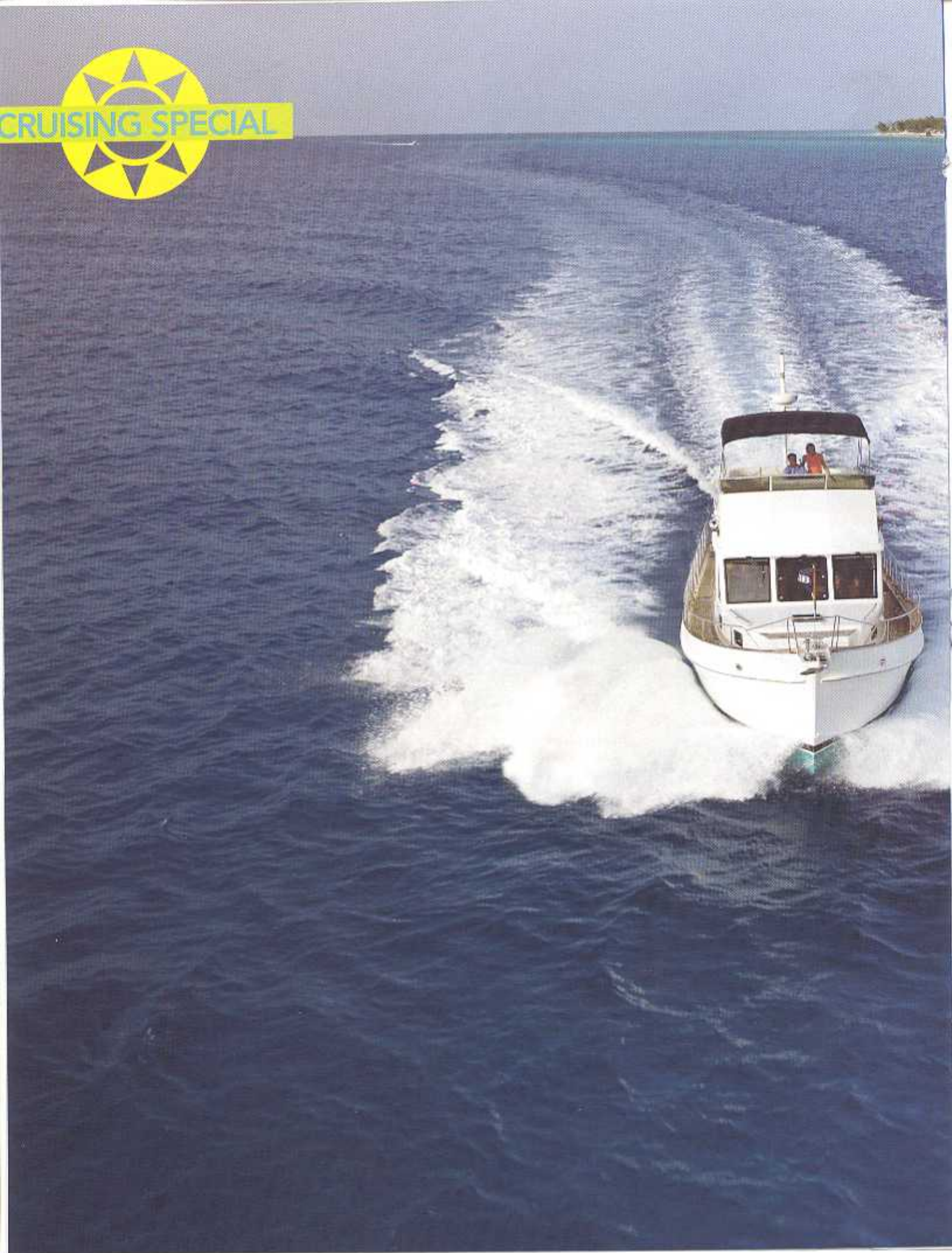


CRUISING SPECIAL





Family Values

THE GRAND BANKS 47 HERITAGE CLASSIC REPRESENTS THE NEXT GENERATION FROM THIS VENERABLE BUILDER BY GEORGE SASS JR.

"They're calling for ten footers outside of Man O'War cut," I reported back to my friend Mark Mitchell, "but we gotta get going!"

"George, are you sure?" he cautioned on the other end of the line from Ft. Lauderdale, "that's heavy stuff."

"We've been stuck in Marsh Harbour for four days and I really need a break to clear my head. We're going."

Mark, a professional delivery captain, and I were supposed to piggy back two Grand Banks 42s to the Caribbean. However, he was waiting out the weather system that stalled over the Bahamas while I was already in the Abacos. And I was running out of time and falling under the spell of the local rum punch. It was time to escape to the safety of the sea.

To make a long story short, we were pounded by severe weather for the entire trip to the Virgin Islands (log onto www.boatdigest.com/node/192 for the complete adventure), but my respect for the Grand Banks 42 Classic was solidified. We had been to the brink together, and she delivered me back safely creating a loyal disciple forever in her debt. In order to fulfill my journalistic requirements, I need to mention that I worked for the company for several years.

Thus it was with a tempered amount of excitement kept in check by a small dose of skepticism that I approached my evaluation of the new Grand Banks 47 Heritage Classic that would replace my old friend. The GB 42 Classic was first introduced in 1965, which is arguably the longest production run in boating history. To "replace" a model that had spawned an industry of imitators and

Family Values

PERFORMANCE

RPM	KNOTS	DB-A
900	6.9	67
1200	8.6	68
1500	9.1	71
1800	12.4	74
2100	17.5	75
2400	21.2	77
2500	22.9	77

Speeds measured by GPS off of Bimini w/six adults aboard, 170 gals. water and 270 gals. fuel. Sound levels measured at the lower helm in dbA. Seas were calm, winds 15 knots, temperature 82 degrees.

SPECIFICATIONS

Base Price.....	POR
LOA.....	46'9"
Beam.....	15'9"
Draft.....	3'10"
Displacement.....	53,333 lbs.
Fuel.....	600 gal.
Water.....	260 gal.
Test Power (2) 567-hp Caterpillar C9 diesel inboards; Standard (2) 455 hp Caterpillar C7 diesels.	



defined traditional cruising design was something that Grand Banks did not take lightly. Even before its introduction, loyal GB 42 owners were bemoaning the introduction of the 47 and questioning the direction the company was taking.

The most significant change of this new genre of Grand Banks that sent shivers through the saloons of GB loyalists is the underbody hull design. (See "V for Victory," January/February 2007 or log onto www.boatdigest.com/node/248 for a full explanation of the genesis of the new hull design.) The issue confronting Grand Banks was the fact that the original 42 hull design was intended to be powered by smaller, six cylinders, 120 hp Ford Lehman diesels that would miserly sip fuel while pushing the GB 42 along at 8.5 knots. Over time, however, buyers began to yearn for more speed, demanding larger horsepower diesels. A typical combination is a pair of 375 hp Caterpillar

3208TAs or a pair of 350 hp 3116TAs. Some buyers even requested up to 435 hp Cats and 465 hp Yanmars. Basically, if enough horsepower is applied, the 42 will plane and ride on the after, flat chines. However, the efficiency quickly diminishes. It is not a secret that at speeds 16 knots or higher the 42 pushes a lot of water.

Personally, I think the GB 42's sweet spot is around 12-13 knots. The boat is dry, economical, and clicks the miles off the log. Yet the Grand Banks folks charged with selling new boats could not ignore that their dealers and customers were demanding more horsepower. They realized that if this was the case, then they needed to provide these bigger engines in an efficient hull design, necessitating more radical changes than what were done before. The decision was made to enlist the naval architects from Sparkman and Stephens. The notable firm



penned a modified V-hull and first introduced this on the company's Europa version of the 47.

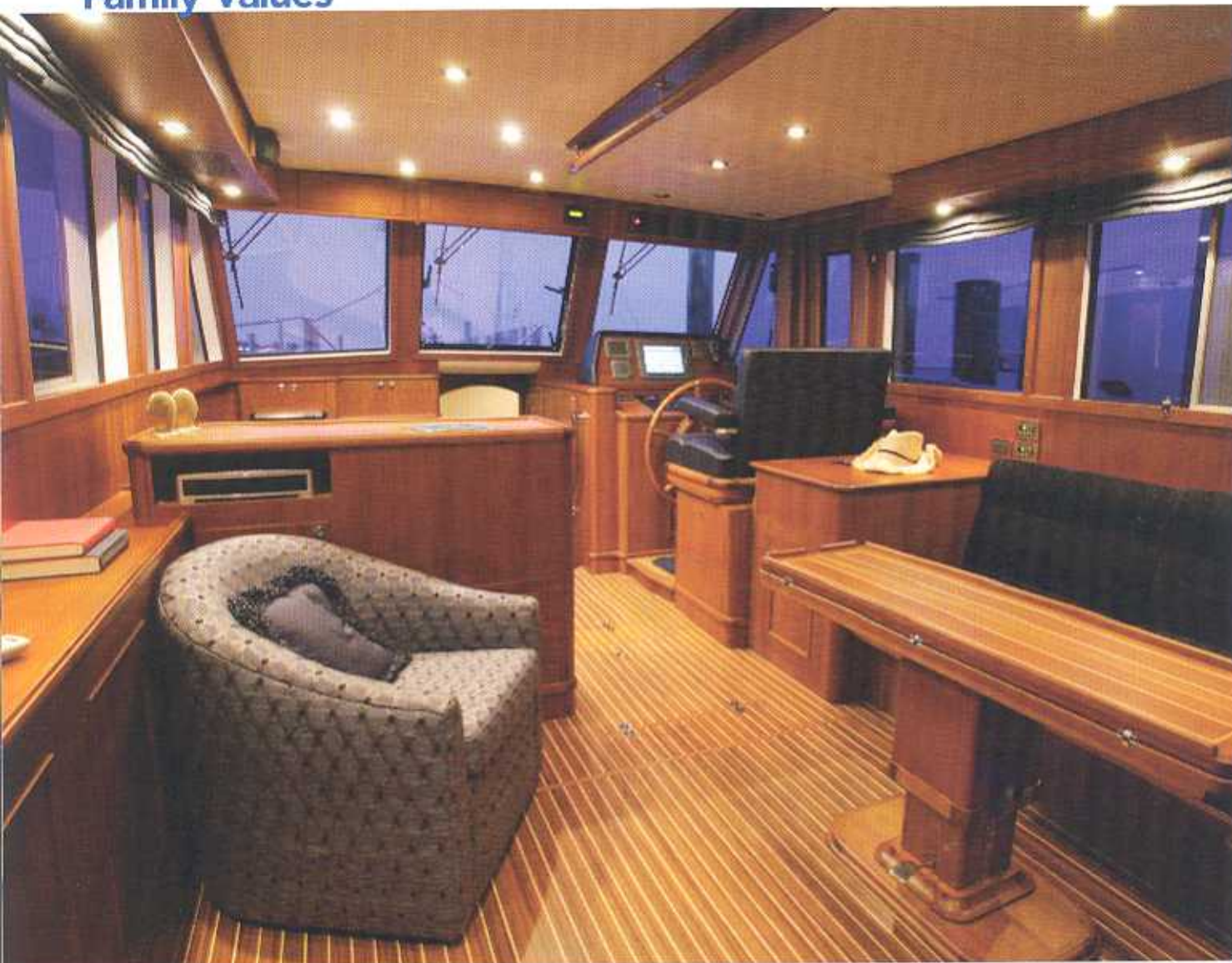
While I was driving the first 47 Heritage Classic off Bimini we were in a fairly sloppy sea, running about three feet with a few larger lumps thrown in to keep us alert. I throttled back the twin 567 hp Caterpillar C9 diesels and reacted as if I was driving the original GB with the deep forefoot and longer keel. "Try picking her up a bit," offered Larry Crouch, the west and southeast customer service manager for Grand Banks, noticing we were wallowing a bit in the troughs. Ah, of course, I'm on a planing hull and need to get back on top of the waves. Sure enough, I punched the throttles up to 2000 rpm and we settled in at 16 knots and the boat was comfortable and dry. The concept of the new design is not to blaze a trail at high speeds, but to run efficiently in the upper teens, speeds in which the 42 was

less efficient. Score one for the new 47.

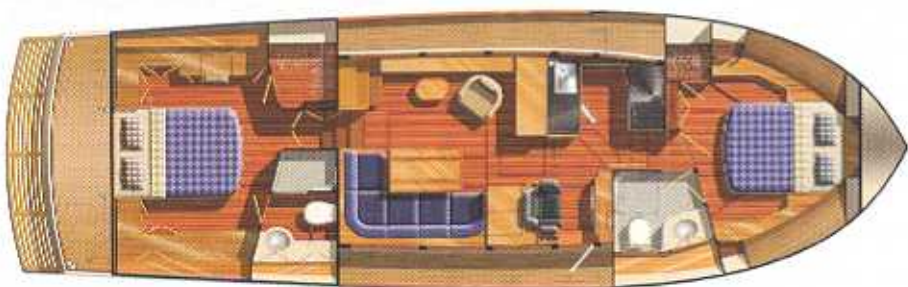
But beyond performance, how did a boat that replaced a venerable cruising classic stack up when it came to cruising amenities and comfort? I had two days in the Bahamas, a crossing from Bimini to Ft. Lauderdale, and an overnight stay in Florida to find out.

The first thing I noticed when stepping on board is the beam. The 47's measures out at 15-foot, 9-inches, which is 2 feet more than the GB 42 and 4 inches more than the company's 52. This provides a large saloon area, while still allowing wide walkaround side decks. With a nod towards the company's traditional heritage the decks are teak. However, with an equally forceful nod towards the company's embrace of new design and technology, gone are bronze screws and bungs. Today, GB lays the teak deck down into layers of epoxy and seals the teak on

Family Values



The photo above is of the two-stateroom model. The galley is forward to port.



The 47 is available with two different layouts, including a three-stateroom model (bottom).

the deck, leaving no screws or holes. The debate about teak decks is an old one. Personally, I like teak decks and feel that there is no better non-skid in the world. I've hydro-planed on fiberglass decks, but have never lost my footing on a teak deck.

The 47's fly bridge is leaps beyond all previous GB models in terms of comfort and functionality. A Stidd helm chair provides a great perch for the captain and there is room for another to starboard. A forward facing bench seat is to port. The L-shaped settee is extremely comfortable and I found it a great spot to kick back with a book on the return leg to Florida. Opposite is a wet bar and icemaker,

Family Values



There is no wasted space in the 47's galley.

which is a fairly new item on a GB and perfects the space for cruising endeavors.

Another area that reveals vast improvement is the access to the fly bridge from the saloon. On the 42 you exit from a door at the forward port end of the deckhouse and then after walking along the deck, negotiate two very small teak steps onto the top of the aft cabin house, and then climb three stairs to the bridge. This is okay in perfect weather and when empty handed. But throw in some rough stuff or a cheese platter, and you're begging for trouble. On the 47, a companionway door leads directly from the saloon to the after deck house and then up to the fly bridge. In addition, wider steps recessed into the side of the deck house are easy to negotiate while remaining out of the way.

Grand Banks addresses dinghy storage by placing chocks on the top of the aft cabin house and recessing the optional davit into the side of the bridge. I didn't have the opportunity to launch the tender, but in theory it's a smart application. It allows a practical stowage spot for a tender that keeps the weight low and negates the need for davits. In my opinion, not enough thought is given to tender storage on boat's intended for cruising. Score another one for the 47.

The 47's interior reflects a concentrated effort from Grand Banks to update the overall styling of each new model. The interior is wrapped in the golden teak the company is known for, yet the joinery and execution reveals a more contemporary flair. The trick when doing this is to straddle the line between what's pleasing to the eye and what's practical in a boat designed to go cruising. For the most

Reservations for Two

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The master stateroom benefits from the 47's hefty beam.

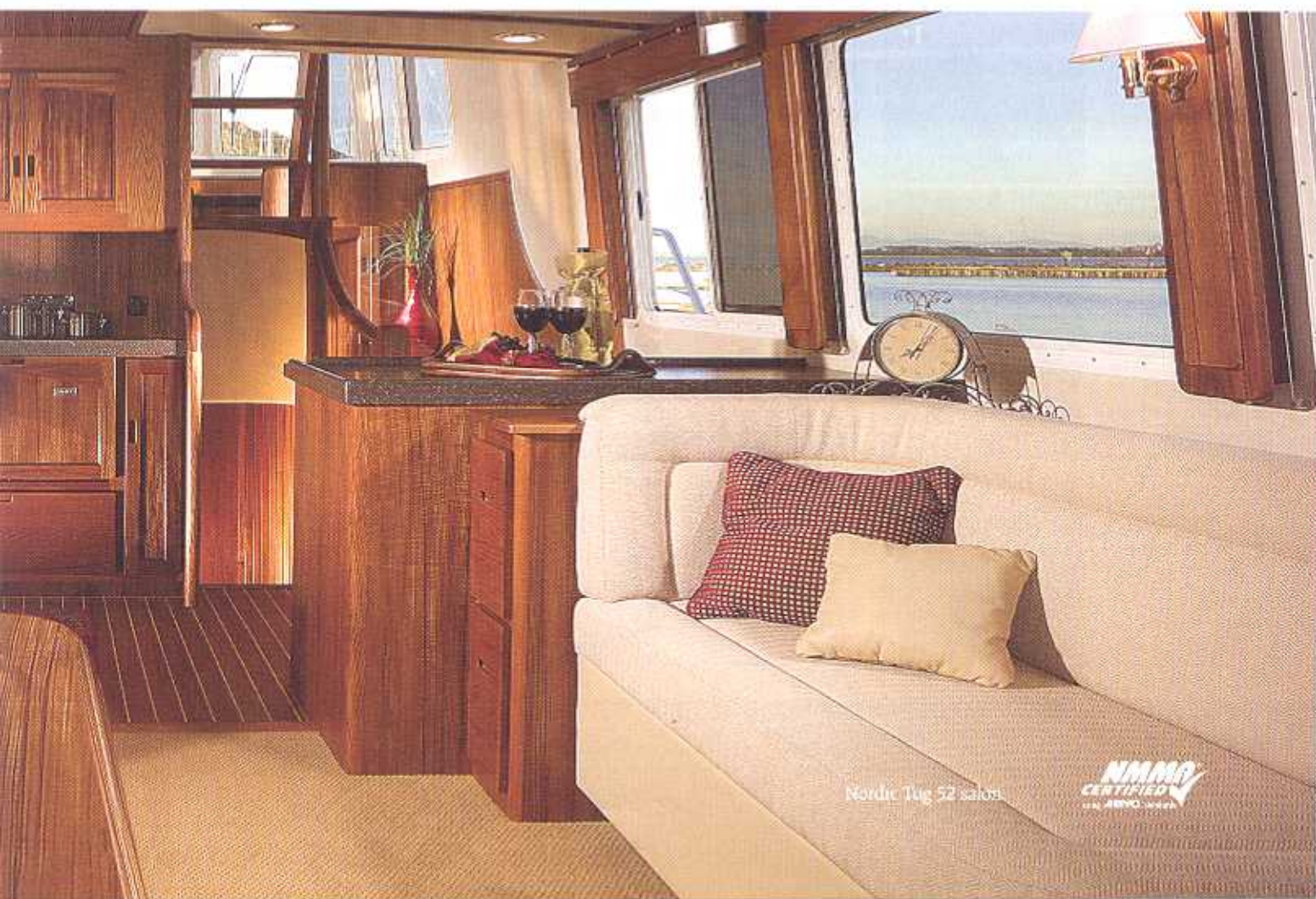
part, it appears as if Grand Banks applied a fine mix of style and functionality. There were a few items, however, that I would change. For instance, the drawer pulls under the master berth have sharp, hard corners, and are positioned exactly at ankle height. Plus the company replaced barrel bolts and hooks used for securing doors with magnetic latches. These are much more convenient, but when we were in a chop, the magnetic latches could not hold the doors and they were banging around.

Thanks to the beam, the layout wants for nothing, and Grand Banks did a superb job of maximizing space. The galley is a step below the saloon area and is a great compromise between a down galley and an up galley arrangement. After a photoshoot,

we easily accommodated ten people in the saloon. And just like at home, we were mostly gathered around the galley, serving up some snacks, and chatting away. Storage in the galley is more than sufficient for long cruises with the family, and in fact is abundant throughout the boat. The L-settee is opposite the retractable flat-screen television and made a comfortable place to kick back and relax. The double helm seat easily slides and the line of sight from the lower helm station is good.

Both staterooms are heads and tails beyond the GB 42. The guest stateroom has an island berth that replaces the traditional V-berth of the 42 Classic. The head, although still technically a wet-head, is spacious and airy. The aft shower is one of the best I've seen on a boat less than 60 feet. The stall is spacious and the water pressure is better than my house. If it was my boat, I would install a hand rail in the stall adding a level of safety enabling you to shower while underway.

Except for a few of the hardware details and some odds and ends, there was nothing that the 42 did better than the 47. Yes the hull design is different, but again it reflects what the current buyers are looking for. The overall role of a serious coastal cruiser is not diminished in the slightest, so you may just get to your destination a little quicker, in a lot more comfort. As in all things that involve families, it may be time for the 42 to make a little room at the table for the next generation of Grand Banks. *Grand Banks Yachts, (206) 352-0116; www.grandbanks.com.*



Nordic Tug 52 saloon

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