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## Absolute Navetta 52

By [Capt. Richard Thiel](#)

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### The Info

**Builder:** Absolute

**Model:** Absolute Navetta 52

**Year:** 2016

**Boat Type:** Cruiser

**LOA:** 52'6"

**Beam:** 15'3"

**Draft:** 3'10"

**Standard Power:** 2/435-hp Volvo Penta IPS600s

**Base Price:** \$1,119,545

**Optional Power:** none

**Test Engines:** 2/435-hp Volvo Penta IPS600s

**Transmission:** Volvo Penta, 2.0:1 gear ratio

**Props:** P4 propset

**Fuel Capacity:** 528 gal.

**Water Capacity:** 145 gal.

**Optional Equipment:** Noteworthy Options: hydraulic swim platform (\$25,570); FRP bridge hardtop (\$19,840); electric cockpit shade (\$4,160); transom barbecue and sink (\$3,920); Raymarine radar (\$5,025); bow thruster (\$9,890); lower helm side deck door (\$4,360); teak cockpit table w/ 3 folding chairs (\$6,240)

**Price Tested:** \$1,421,000

**Generator:** 20-kW Kohler

## Head Turner

**Beneath the Absolute Navetta 52's distinctive Italian exterior beats the heart of an exceptional coastal cruiser.**

Once when you thought of Italy, a particular kind of boat came to mind, one that was fast and sleek and offered acres of sunning area. But as Italian boatbuilders began penetrating markets all over the world, they started venturing into distinctly un-Italian genres, often with considerable success. When they decided to venture into cruising yachts, however, a lot of boaters—myself included—wondered if

they could make the leap.

Most of us never doubted the Italians' abilities in terms of hull design, construction, and engineering; what we wondered about was whether they could nail the styling—or, to put a finer point on it, whether Italian cruising yachts would look, well, Italian. When it became clear that Italians weren't about to abandon the styling cues that made their yachts so distinctive, the question became: Would American boaters warm to a cruising yacht that was so stylish, so different?

With its Magellano series, Azimut proved that they would, and now comes Absolute with its 52 and 58 Navettas. (Navetta is the term Italians apply to serious cruising vessels.) I tested the new 52 in Seattle, an area of the U.S. that has produced some of the world's most competent and successful cruising boats, vessels that look like they're absolutely unintimidated by inhospitable waters.

The 52 was never designed to be that kind of boat, but rather one aimed at the boater who wants to make extended coastwise passages in comfort and style. Our 52 certainly qualified in the latter category. Dockside, her plumb bow, upright superstructure, large glass area, and copious foredeck seating stood in stark contrast to the boats that surrounded her. As the day progressed, we turned many a head among the locals, and, admittedly, many of the looks were disdainful. But I also noticed admiration and, yes, even occasional envy, in many others.

Whether you consider the 52 pretty depends on your aesthetic point of view, but if you're a cruiser, you're bound to be intrigued by evidence that Absolute has done its cruising homework. The side decks are wide, sheltered by superstructure overhangs and protected by generous fiberglass bulwarks, not just rails. The cockpit is also protected, completely covered by the flybridge overhang so that it's usable in most any weather. Another overhang on the forward end of the superstructure enhances visibility from the lower station and provides shade for those seated on the aft foredeck lounge. It's a lovely, serene place from which to enjoy the ride in placid weather, although the guests of our 52's owner probably won't be sitting there, or reclining on the foredeck chaises, as they transit the Straits of Juan de Fuca. That the foredeck sunpad has been sized and positioned to leave plenty of open deck will no doubt make for easier docking. Likewise, elevating the vertical windlass to waist level should translate into easier rode handling during anchoring.

This, and the 52's safe and easy foredeck access, make her a viable option for the cruising couple, although, since there are no side doors, a line handler will have to hustle forward from the cockpit. There's also no internal access to the bridge, but hey, you can only do so much with an LOA of 52 feet, 6 inches. And besides, placing the nicely equipped galley at the after end of the saloon shortens the trip with food and beverages to both the bridge and the cockpit.

The bridge is bound to be a popular dining venue, if only because of the generous size of the port-side, U-shaped dinette. It and the helm are covered by the standard hardtop, leaving the after portion of the bridge deck exposed to the elements, so everyone will have their choice of sun or shade, assuming they ordered the optional aft seating module that was on our boat. The short hardtop contributes to what is already a somewhat stubby profile, a look that's thankfully softened by the full-length, blacked-out main-deck glass. Still, when I first looked at the 52, I worried that she might be tender underway.

She wasn't, and that's testament to Absolute's careful weight management, along with a rather unusual hull. The boat has three lifting strakes per side; because the uppermost one terminates at the stem, a couple of feet above the waterline, it's effectively a spray knocker. The other two provide lift, but not so much that there's more than about three degrees of attitude change as the 52 comes on plane. We had fewer than 10 knots of wind and very mild seas on test day, so I couldn't fairly evaluate how well the spray knockers work. Suffice to say that despite some pretty erratic maneuvers, I was unable to put a drop of spray on either windscreen.

### Test Notes

Can a chic Italian Navetta find acceptance in the Pacific Northwest?

Look Past the Italian styling and you'll see Absolute has done its cruising homework.

The upright profile draws eyes anywhere she's moored.

Good side decks make this a viable couples' boat, even without side doors.

You won't see many wet bars and grills on swim platforms in the Pacific Northwest.

A cruising boat with foredeck chaise longues? Why not?

There are no engine options, and at 22 knots, they don't seem necessary.

This hull seems perfectly matched to the 52's only propulsion package, a pair of 435-horsepower Volvo Penta IPS600 pod drives, something else that will no doubt raise a few eyebrows among Pacific Northwest cruisers worried about their vulnerability to the submerged flotsam that's so common in the region. Yet it's hard to argue with the resulting performance results. Besides a nice turn of speed, the IPS 600s produce relatively good fuel efficiency, especially at 2,000 rpm (0.94 nmpg) and 2,250 rpm (0.78 nmpg). Two alloy fuel tanks are just forward of the mains, where changes in load should have minimal impact on running angles; total capacity is 528 gallons, enough to provide just about all the range that the owner of this boat is likely to want.

The size and location of the IPS powerplants also provides enough room for a practical, three-stateroom, two-head layout, plus a crew's quarters/lazarette storage locker over the pods. The latter space even has a wet head and aft windows, so you could press it into service as a

stateroom for guests that you don't want to overstay their welcome. Access is through the cockpit sole, not via the transom as you might expect. That's partly because you can option a wet bar with electric barbecue on the aft side of the transom. It's an option that promises to get a lot of use in a calm anchorage but also presents some logistical challenges if you're planning on stowing your dinghy on the standard submersible swim platform.

There's no question that the 52 breaks the mold when it comes to Pacific Northwest cruising boats, and I suspect it will take a while before the locals—some of them anyway—accept it. East coast cruisers will no doubt be more welcoming, but in either case, those who aren't put off by the 52's styling and take the time to give her a fair look will be impressed by what they find: a well-designed, well-executed coastal cruiser that's bound to turn heads.

# Boat Tests

## SPECIFICATIONS

**Builder:** Absolute

**Model:** Absolute Navetta 52

**Model Year:** 2016

**Boat Type:** Cruiser

**Generator** 20-kW Kohler

**LOA:** 52'6"

**Beam:** 15'3"

**Draft:** 3'10"

**Displacement:** 26.5 tons

**Standard Power:** 2/435-hp Volvo Penta IPS600s

**Optional Power:** none

**Fuel Capacity:** 528 gal.

**Water Capacity:** 145 gal.

## Layout Diagram



## OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT

Noteworthy Options: hydraulic swim platform (\$25,570)

FRP bridge hardtop (\$19,840)

electric cockpit shade (\$4,160)

transom barbecue and sink (\$3,920)

Raymarine radar (\$5,025)

bow thruster (\$9,890)

lower helm side deck door (\$4,360)

teak cockpit table w/ 3 folding chairs (\$6,240)

## CONDITIONS DURING BOAT TEST

Air temperature: 71°F; humidity 55%; seas: 1-2'; wind: 5-8 knots

## LOAD DURING BOAT TEST

260 gal. fuel, 145 gal. water, 3 persons, 400 lb. gear.

## TEST BOAT SPECIFICATIONS

**Test Engine:** 2/435-hp Volvo Penta IPS600s

**Transmission/Ratio:** Volvo Penta, 2.0:1 gear ratio

**Props:** P4 propset

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### Absolute Navetta 52 - Final Boat Test Numbers:

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RPM	KNOTS	GPH	RANGE	dB(A)
1000	5.4	1.8	1,426	66
1500	7.0	4.8	693	67
2000	9.2	9.8	446	68
2500	11.4	14.6	371	69
3000	15.5	29.8	247	71
3500	22.0	44.2	237	72

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Speeds are two-way averages measured w / Raymarine GPS. GPH estimates taken via Volvo Penta monitoring system. Range is based on 90% of advertised fuel capacity. Sound levels measured at the lower helm. 65 dB(A) is the level of normal conversation.

## OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT ON TEST BOAT

Noteworthy Options: hydraulic swim platform (\$25,570)

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*This article originally appeared in the August 2016 issue of Power & Motoryacht magazine.*