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REVIEW: ABSOLUTE 72 FLY

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Welcome to a world of total luxury. The Italian Absolute 72 Flybridge embraces all you would expect of Mediterranean fashion and style.

If there is one thing you can say about Italians generally, it's that they've got style. I can think of lots of examples: Armani, Dolce & Gabbana, Ferrari, Alfa Romeo, the list goes on. Yet for all their style and elegance, Italians never seem to lose sight of practicality. After all we're talking about the same country that gave us pizza, pasta and the Lambretta motor scooter. And now the latest import from Italy, the luxury Absolute 72 Fly has arrived and to us, captures the essence of Italian style, elegance and functionality.

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Based in Piacenza near Milan, Absolute Yachts was formed in 2002 by founders considered among Italy's pioneers of modern luxury powerboat manufacturing and builds boats from 40ft across five ranges.

At just under 72ft LOA, the Absolute 72 Fly is the flagship of the range. Euro-chic with plenty of wow factor, she's not all just about style and good looks, as she proved in her European debut at Cannes' prestigious Festival de la Plaisance in 2012. There the Absolute 72 Fly took out awards for "Best Layout" and "Most Innovative Design" categories.

Officially launched in Australia at the 2014 Sydney International Boat Show, Steve Hannes from the brand's Australian importer Premier Marine told us that since then the interest and enquiries have been outstanding and feedback extremely positive. With our review boat already sold into Melbourne, in conjunction with Premier Marine's associate Lee Vitiello from [Melbourne Boat Sales](#), the marque is looking at a bright future here and Steve tells us he's already got another 45F and 52F on order, with serious discussions on a 64F and 40F also underway.

DESIGNER LIVING



Step aboard the Absolute 72 Fly and into the saloon where large panoramic windows and glass sliding doors out to the cockpit fill the room with natural light. Plush leather seating is both stylish and practical. Timber shelving and storage aft in matt Canaletto walnut contrasts elegantly with rich jute-coloured leather upholstery and timber flooring. Entertainment comes courtesy of a 46in LED 3D TV with Wi-Fi connection, radio, DVD, Blu-ray and MP3 all standard.

Forward to starboard of the Absolute 72 Fly, the dining area features a beautifully crafted timber table and chairs comfortably accommodating eight for dinner and adjacent, an elegant timber and glass cabinet includes dedicated storage for bottles, glasses and crockery. Opposite to port the galley features state-of-the-art appliances including pyroceramic cooktop, designer sink with flickmixer, under-bench microwave, dishwasher and a domestic-size three-door fridge-freezer incorporating a dedicated wine cooler. Plenty of other storage and bench space abounds, including the island bench opposite, while 240V outlets close by mean there are all the facilities and the room to prepare large meals or snacks for family and guests. Importantly too the galley, while central to everything, is subtly separated from the saloon and isn't a thoroughfare, which means that anyone working here need only cope with the (pleasant) distraction of fabulous water views. Farther forward a clever use of space features L-shape seating providing the perfect spot to sit and relax, especially underway.

ACCOMMODATION



The Absolute 72 Fly's full-beam master located amidships befits a chic luxury apartment. Large hull windows and opening portholes flood the room with light. Soft leather and warm timber used in the furniture and fittings, including the stylish bedhead, are all tastefully executed and blend nicely with the microfibre ceiling with contrasting timber inserts. The queen-size bed with side tables is centrally located and there's storage in built-in cabinets along the port side. To starboard, a chaise lounge provides a nice spot for a bit of 'me' time and farther forward there's a mirrored beauty/writing table and chair. Nice touches and fine detail everywhere, including light dimmers, and a small fridge built into the cabinets means anyone relaxing here doesn't need to leave the room for a refreshing drink or snack.

The en suite bathroom is aft past a walk-in wardrobe that features more storage and hanging space. Spacious and elegant the bathroom lives up to the standard. His-and-hers sinks with stylish tap ware are recessed into the marble benchtop running the length of the room, with mirrored cabinets above and storage below. Opposite are a toilet, bidet and a wall-mounted towel warmer. On the portside the large shower with seat has glass doors and opening portholes (with sensors to prevent getting underway while still open) providing plenty of fresh air and ventilation.

The Absolute 72 Fly VIP stateroom forward is fitted out in a similar chic and elegant style. It too has a spacious feel, thanks to high headroom, large windows and opening hatch overhead. The island bed features bedside tables and storage under. Large mirrored wardrobes provide ample space to hang clothes and store all the things you'd need for extended time away.

Self-contained crew quarters are located aft and accessed through the transom, while a watertight door at the end of this cabin leads directly into the engine room. Step through into a vestibule (where the AC/DC panels are located) and there's a kitchenette with twin-hob electric cooktop and sink. To port is the head with toilet, mirrored vanity and shower, and across to starboard a cabin incorporates twin beds, storage, hanging space and even a fridge and TV.

In Australia, boats of this size are mostly owner operated, whereas in Europe it's more usual to find them crewed. If there were no crew I could imagine this area as a fabulous teens retreat or even storage space and of course, guests enjoying a swim off the large hydraulic swimplatform could conveniently use its toilet and shower.

ALFRESCO LAYOUT



If you like the idea of alfresco living the Absolute 72 Fly provides plenty of choice. The large, fully covered cockpit has seating and a table along the transom making a great spot to relax over drinks or a meal. The saloon is literally a couple of steps away, as is the swimplatform, and there's easy access from here to the foredeck or flybridge. An optional electric-operated translucent blind that lowers from the cockpit overhang adds to the versatility of this space.

On the foredeck are more options, with seating around a table and forward of that a large sunpad with adjustable backrests and inbuilt drinkholders. Just the spot for working on that tan or settling back with a couple of sundowners to watch a fabulous sunset. Large lockers outboard of the seating provide storage for covers, lines, fenders etc., while at the bow is a 50kg anchor with 100m of chain, anchor washdown and remote controls for the winch.



Accessed via a moulded staircase from the cockpit, the flybridge is another highlight on this luxury floating resort. Spacious and with plenty of choice, there's seating for eight around a table and opposite a wetbar incorporates electric grill, sink, icemaker, refrigerator and storage for glasses, bottles and crockery. Forward to port is the flybridge helm with twin skipper and companion chairs and more seating for guests opposite to starboard, and forward of that is another sunpad.

The targa arch overhead incorporates an inbuilt rain shower head for cooling off in warmer weather and serves as a platform for the radar scanner, sat dish, aerials etc. An electric bimini automatically extends forward from the targa at the touch of a button.

PERFORMANCE



I took the helm at the lower station as we headed down Melbourne's Yarra River and out into Port Phillip Bay. Apart from the second helm on the flybridge, there's also a docking station in the cockpit. With the sun shining and just a slight sea it was a beautiful day for boating but less than ideal for a boat test. It also meant we were unable to test out the gyro stabiliser but having used them before, I know they work well.

At the helm, twin fully-adjustable helm and companion chairs face the dash finished in rich dark leather. Stylish and practical the colour eliminates any possibility of glare. Vision forward and to either side is good and a door leading out to the sidedecks is both practical and convenient. Plenty of room on the dash for three large screens plus a full complement of everything you'd expect at this level: autopilot, trim tabs, winch controls, chain counter, joystick, bowthruster etc.

What I found slightly unusual was the location of the wheel. Situated centrally means that when driving off the wheel you need to be standing between the chairs. The theory is that when using the wheel skippers generally prefer to stand and when on autopilot, you're seated. That's true to a certain extent; however my preference would be for the wheel to be directly in front of the skipper's chair, as it is at the flybridge station.

Underway the Absolute 72 Fly performs well and is very manoeuvrable at slow speed, both off the wheel and the joystick. She is surefooted and soft riding at speed, even when throwing her around on full lock with no drop-off in revs, just the characteristic slight lean into the turn that you get from pod drives. I found her ever so responsive and easy to handle and had to keep reminding myself that she's a big boat.

Top speed at WOT was 28kts and I found the sweet spot at around 1800rpm with half tabs down. At those revs the instruments showed 20kts using 188lt/h, and that's economical cruising for a 72ft boat. The 72F carries 3500lt of fuel and at that rate, with a safety margin, she'd have a range of around 330nm at cruise. She also carries 1000lt of water, plenty enough for travelling up and down the coast, but if you were staying out somewhere for a while, investing in the optional watermaker might be a good option.

THE TRADE-A-BOAT VERDICT



There's a lot to like about the Absolute 72 Flybridge. She's a luxury boat coupled with power and performance. She'd make a great corporate entertainer and with her ease of handling would suit a couple wanting to spend the kids' inheritance enjoying winters up north, summers down south, with family and friends occasionally flying in for some R&R on board a 5-star floating resort.

HIGHS

- Layout and design
- Ease of handling
- Performance
- Alfresco options
- Master suite
- Flybridge

LOWS

- Wheel position at lower helm
- No internal staircase to flybridge
- Would expect many of the options to be standard inclusions at this level

ABSOLUTE FLY 72 SEA TRIALS

Twin 900hp Volvo Penta D13B-G MP w/ IPS1200 pod drives

RPM	SPEED (KTS)	FUEL BURN (LT/H)
1000	8.5	43
1200	9.8	72
1400	10.7	111
1600	12	175
1800	20	188

2000	22.2	247
2200	26	296
2300 (WOT)	28	336

* Sea-trial data supplied by the author. Fuel combined for both engines.

ABSOLUTE 72 FLY SPECIFICATIONS

Absolute 72 Fly price: \$4,410,250 (priced as tested)

OPTIONS FITTED

Air-con, 27kW genset, electronics and navigation packages, CCTV, cockpit docking station, underwater lights, hydraulic swimplatform, gyrostabiliser, deckwash, cockpit sunshade, serviced crew cabin, bimini, LCD TVs and DVD/Blu-ray readers, bow dinette and sunbed, marble bench tops, and more

PRICED FROM

\$3,896,269

GENERAL

MATERIAL Fibreglass

TYPE Planing monohull

LENGTH 21.6m overall

BEAM 5.61m

DRAFT 1.63m

WEIGHT 43.96 tonnes

CAPACITIES

PEOPLE (NIGHT) 8+2

FUEL 3500lt

WATER 1000lt

ENGINE

MAKE/MODEL 2 x Volvo Penta D13B-G MP w/ IPS1200 pod drive engines

TYPE Six-cylinder turbo-diesel marine engine

RATED HP 900 (each)

DISPLACEMENT 12.78lt (each)

WEIGHT 1560kg (each)

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