

NEW BOATS



LOA: 49'10"
Beam: 14'6"
Draft: 3'10"
Displ.: 49,824 lbs.
Fuel: 423 gal.
Water: 127 gal.
Cruise speed: 23 knots
Top speed: 27.2 knots
Standard power: 2/480-hp Volvo Penta IPS650s
Price: Approx. \$885,000

ABSOLUTE 50 FLY

Absolute's newest model comes standard with "why didn't I think of that?" solutions.

Every now and then you come across something on a new boat that seems so sensible, and so obvious, that you wonder why you haven't seen it before—and why everyone else isn't doing it. Of course we've all seen the occasional sliding door on a boat before now, but Absolute's designers have truly invested in their potential on this new 50. It's got a three-cabin, two-head layout. That's five internal doors below decks, and three of them—to the forward cabin and to each head—slide smoothly away into their bulkheads, aiding comfort and convenience while saving a disproportionate amount of space. Leave conventional doors open and they make things seem smaller, but leave sliding doors open and everything feels bigger.

This new family cruiser from Italy is pretty smart in every sense. Absolute was founded in Piacenza, near Milan, in 2002 and has never been afraid to go its own way, whether in engineering, naval



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architecture or styling. It has certainly always produced distinctive-looking craft. The 50 Fly's uncompromisingly angular looks accentuate expansive areas of glass in both hull and superstructure. The interior looks bright and feels spacious, with an unobjectionable color scheme of glossy dark oak veneers contrasting with matte light oak, and sanded oak floors with a sawcut finish. Cheat lines emphasize the already pretty generous headroom—a full 6 feet, 5 inches in the salon, and 6 feet, 2 inches in the midships master cabin. The beds are full-size—a king and a queen in the owner's and VIP suites, while even the twins in the third cabin are 6 feet, 4 inches long.

As well as a huge hardtop that does full justice to the size of the fly-bridge, options available include a side door to the salon, a set of cool roller blinds in the cockpit for privacy, a bewildering variety of audio-visual equipment and a hydraulic aft platform with 880-pound lift capacity. You can also request a crew cabin in the stern, tropical air conditioning, a "lighting kit" to add a little excitement after dark, and even a small fridge in the master cabin.

There is just the one engine option: IPS pod drives coupled to a pair of Volvo's 480-hp, 5.5-liter straight sixes. These are harnessed to the full software package as standard, offering total control at the helm, with a joystick for maneuvering, cruise control, autopilot, automatic trim and electronic steering.

I took the first 50 Fly out for a sea trial in Italy, and clocked just over 27 knots. That might be slower than most of its rivals, but that's because it's packing a lot less horsepower—and the smaller D6



motors make more space available down below for accommodation, particularly with pod drives making it easy to mount the engines well aft. Power certainly didn't feel like an issue at the helm; there was plenty of torque, a responsive throttle and easy handling. The medium-V hull planed willingly and was happy to stay there at speeds as low as 16 or 17 knots, making for relaxed and economical cruising in the low 20s. —Alan Harper