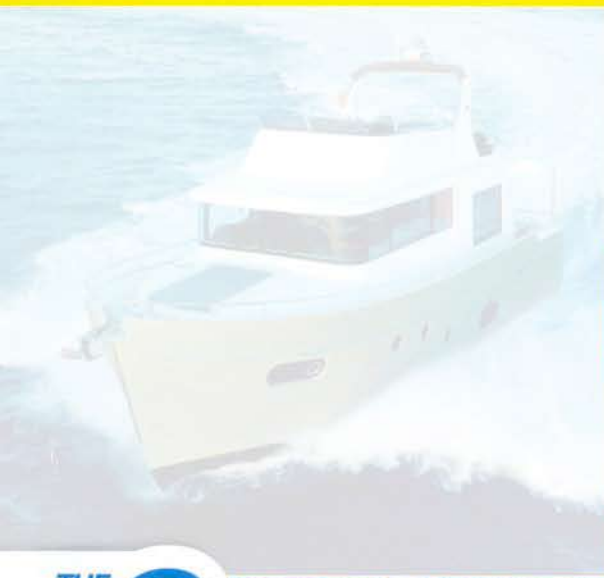


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ABSOLUTE NAVETTA 58

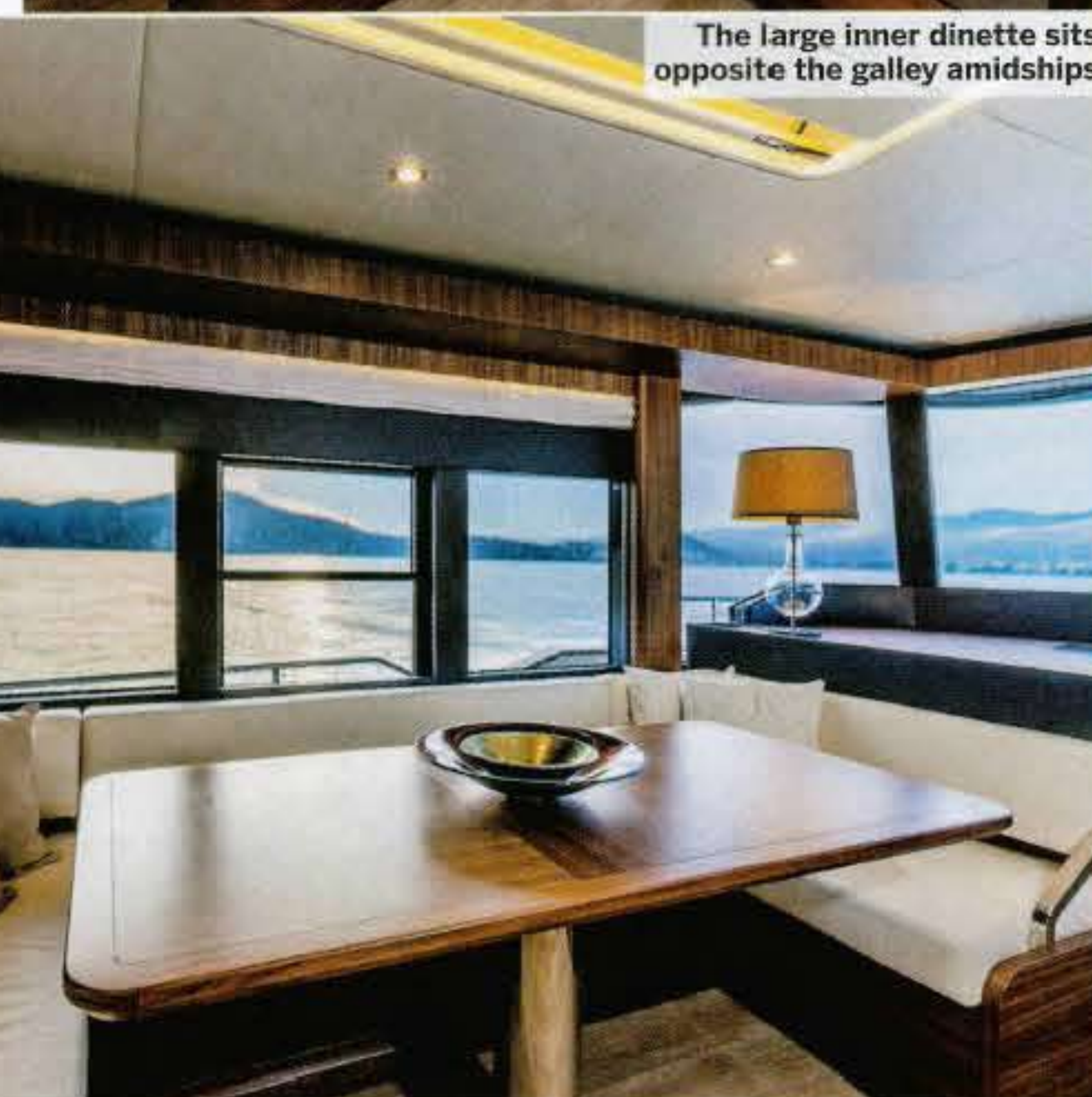
A trawler in disguise, Absolute has cherry-picked the best bits and added its own twist, creating a modern marvel in the process

Text: Jack Haines

Absolute has always been a yard that pushes design boundaries – for better or worse



The galley amidships has space for a full-height fridge/freezer



The large inner dinette sits opposite the galley amidships



Lots of lounging space in the large saloon, looking forward to the dinette to port and the galley and helm to starboard
The cockpit benefits from a privacy shade that slides down between the two flybridge supports



The extended flybridge has heaps of great features, including a spacious dinette, extending sunshade and well-specced wet-bar



Don't mention the T word on board the latest model from Absolute Yachts. Absolute insists that the new 58 is not a trawler but a *navetta*. This word, which you will have heard before from yards such as Custom Line, translates loosely from Italian to English as 'little ship'. The reason behind avoiding the trawler moniker is that for Absolute the word brings with it certain connotations. Traditional lines, varnished teak, chugging diesels, shafts, a high bow but a low top speed – nothing wrong with any of this, but it's not what Absolute was going for with the 58.

In fact, the 58 couldn't be further away from these trawler core values. It uses Volvo Penta's IPS pods (IPS600 is standard but our test boat had IPS800 meaning 625hp per side), it has a very slender, vertical bow, Absolute's typically striking hull glazing and, oh yes, a hull colour so punchy *Strictly Come Dancing's* costume department may consider it a little too loud. This can be swapped for something more sober but hull number one was designed to catch eyes at the Cannes Boat Show, so I'd call that mission accomplished.

What does it look like in the flesh? As a person who spends his life in jeans and deck shoes I am no style guru but for what it's worth the 58 isn't exactly classically beautiful. She is a tall boat with upright topsides, a vertical windscreen and a stubby, forward-raked hardtop. All of these features combine to give the 58 a towering quayside presence and a somewhat top-heavy stance. The mint hull colour doesn't help here because it extenuates the slab-sided hull; a more neutral tone is likely to soften the effect a touch.

I actually think it's quite a handsome craft, but one that is going to divide opinion in a love/hate sort of fashion rather than trying to appeal to everybody. Absolute has always been a yard that pushes design boundaries – for better or worse – and, actually, this attitude makes a lot of sense on a boat that is as different as the *Navetta*.

ROOM TO SWING A CAT

The flipside of that tall exterior is the sheer amount of space there is on board. Headroom throughout is excellent, even in the impressively spacious crew cabin with its two berths and small shower room, plus every

cabin gets its own bathroom. Even the twin guest cabin is treated to an ensuite that has a separate shower cubicle with a large, opening port. The VIP cabin has hull windows nearly as large as the master cabin's, something that Absolute has been fitting to its flybridge boats for years. The three large, square panes on each side, plus a round opening port, mean the cabin is bursting with natural light. The absence of big steps up to the bed is a welcome touch and having the space for a proper dressing table and large mirror will make your guests feel very much at home.

It's a small boat to have a crew quarters so if you are an owner/operator that cosy little cabin – complete with transom glazing – can be assigned to a couple of kids, who will love the fun of entering their cabin via the chunky transom door.

The saloon, the heart of the boat's living spaces, is another beneficiary of the 58's external design because the long wheelhouse means Absolute had lots of room to play with. The aft end of the saloon is the main lounging area with squishy, U-shaped seating to starboard and a wide bench opposite. Massive, one-piece panes of glass either side deliver exceptional views out from these sofas and make for a great spot for drinks with friends or simply as a place to relax if it's a little nippy on the other side of the cockpit doors. On a practical note, to see a square of recessed and backlit handholds in the ceiling in this area is commendable, especially with the lack of any cabinetry to mount a handhold on.

This seating area aft pushes the galley to a raised position up a couple of steps amidships. For me, this is a great spot for the galley on a boat, not as well connected to the outdoor spaces as an aft galley but very much in the action for the person prepping food and drinks and with fine views out of the surrounding windows. This positioning of the galley also allows space for a full-height fridge/freezer and eye-level lockers without them dominating the space, like they can do in galleys located by the aft doors.

In a prime location opposite the galley is the internal dinette, which is just about big enough to cater for a full compliment of guests, but is also the best place for guests to sit on passage to keep the skipper and navigator company.

Our old friend, headroom, makes itself known at the lower helm where you can stand in front of the wheel with a superb view out of the vertical screens. I really like being able to

Absolute says that the Navetta should provide the best of both worlds' cruising

stand up properly at a lower helm station and, although the two bucket seats are there, found myself doing so for most of the sea trial. I like the view it gives you and the closeness to the helm and various controls and that, when you're entering a marina, you can open the side door and pop your head out to communicate with crew or check proximity to a pontoon.

While we're at the lower helm, I think it looks really good, too. Okay, the heads of the screws holding the mock carbon fascias on are exposed, but the leather lining looks and feel smart, as do the Mercedes-style air vents paired on either side, and the traditional wooden steering wheel feels great to the touch.

The upper helm doesn't fair quite so well in that the multi-function screens are a long stretch from the helm seat and the IPS joystick is located closer to the wheel than the throttles when it is the latter that you want to be able to grab hold of easily. And the steering wheel is a cheap and nasty affair, like something you would get on a 10hp hire boat in Torquay. It needs changing.

Having said that, there are some smart touches, such as the Plexiglass screen that slots in directly behind the helm to aid the fixed windscreen in diverting the breeze over the skipper's head and the shock-absorbing helm seat. I would argue that actually you would want the shock-absorbing chair at the lower helm where you're closer to the action and more likely to be seated when things cut up rough. However, as I fed in the power and felt the 58 rise into an easy 22-knot canter, the seat gently bobbing up and down with the motion of the boat made for very relaxing progress.

ON THE THROTTLES

Driving the Navetta is beautifully easy thanks largely to IPS and its super-light steering but also thanks to the Auto Trim system. Like the best driver aids, the beauty of this system is that you don't even notice when it's doing its work. Using the familiar interceptor trim blades, the system reacts automatically to adjust the running attitude depending on how the boat is being driven. Pin the throttles and the blades deploy to get the boat on to the plane more quickly, turn hard one way or the other and the system will balance the boat out and flatten the turn to keep the boat level. If the breeze is affecting the running angle the system senses it and deploys the appropriate amount of tab to right the boat.

It's brilliant and leaves you to play with the throttle and enjoy the ride.

We had the sort of test weather that makes you want to set a course for Corsica and not look back, which is great unless you want to give the hull a decent work out. It felt solid cutting through the wake of passing ferries but it's not the first time the driving experience on an Absolute has been punctuated by the squeaking of cabinetry.

The sharp bow makes neat work of slicing through chop but it's so fine that it does tend to send licks of spray up and on to the deck. I imagine in a big following sea, things could get quite soggy.

Absolute says that the Navetta should provide the best of both worlds' cruising – where you can comfortably slip along at 8 knots or blast along at more than three times that if needs be. To that end, our test boat had the €93,000 (ouch!) optional Seakeeper NG9 to keep things steady at displacement speed. It is more efficient at single digit speeds but not by as much as you'd think. Even at 8.6 knots the range is only around 460 miles and then once over 10 knots there is only a 0.02mpg difference between dithering at 11 knots and the 28.6-knot top speed. The message? If you want to get a lick on, you won't be harshly penalised.

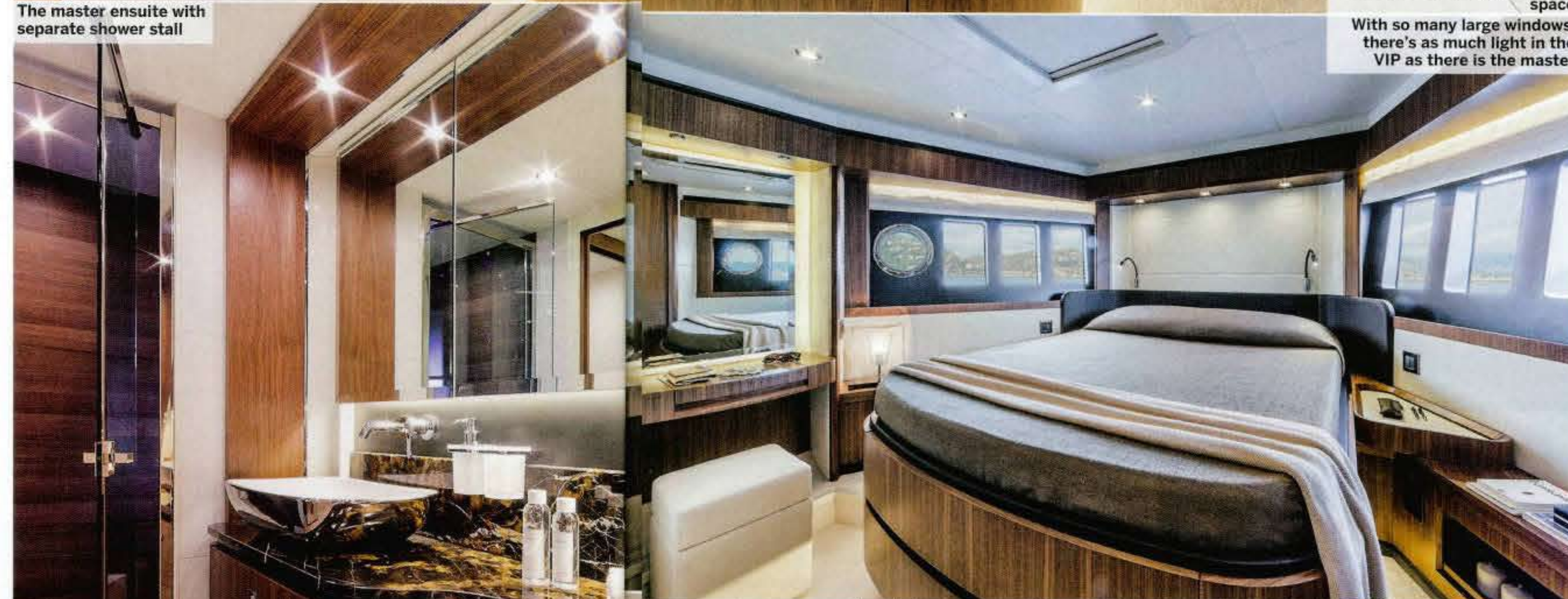
And with such great deck spaces at your disposal, you're probably going to be in a hurry to get to where you're going and drop the hook. The extended flybridge that plays such a big part in the look of the Navetta also grants you a huge amount of useable space. The helm station is flanked by useful, forward facing benches and in the middle of the deck a spacious dinette and very well specced wet-bar sit opposite one another. The space aft is clear for free-standing furniture and is crying out for a couple of sunloungers away from the cover of a hardtop.

There are some thoughtful touches, too, such as the electric, extending sun shade that comes out from the aft end of the hardtop and a shower head that pulls out from the dinette base so you can cool off or swill down the decks. There is even a teak-covered drain in the sole, and it's all very nicely done.

Then there is the cockpit, which also has a privacy shade that glides down between the two flybridge supports. If you still can't avoid prying eyes then move to the bow where Absolute has managed to fit a raised sunpad with tilting headrests and a bench beneath the windscreen. When we were



The master ensuite with separate shower stall



No steps around the bed in the master increase the sense of space
With so many large windows, there's as much light in the VIP as there is the master



The plush finishings continue in the VIP's ensuite
Side-by-side berths are a nice touch in the third cabin instead of bunks

SEE THE VIDEO



mby.com/nav58



A CLOSER LOOK WITH JACK HAINES

BOW AREA

This big boat feature is becoming a must on boats of this size. The break between bench and sunpad also makes nipping from deck to deck very easy.



CREW CABIN

Although a €20,000 option, the cabin fit-out is well worth having because it is finished well enough to count as another – probably kids – cabin in its own right.



UPPER HELM

Absolute has sensibly included a piece of Plexiglass that slots in front of the upper helm to divert breeze over the head of the skipper.



ENGINE ROOM

Main access is via the transom gate and crew cabin but a hatch in the cockpit sole is fine for quick checks. Access to both sides of the engines is fine and the same can be said for the pods.



The Auto Trim system is brilliant and leaves you to play with the throttle and enjoy the ride



Water-tight transom door makes it easy to enter and ventilate the optional crew cabin



A brilliant bow area supplements the flybridge and cockpit as a great external living space



A shock-absorbing seat and Plexiglass screen aid upper helm comfort

Absolute's signature bow windows suit the look of the Navetta better than some of the yard's other models and the effect from the inside is spectacular



THE HELM VIEW

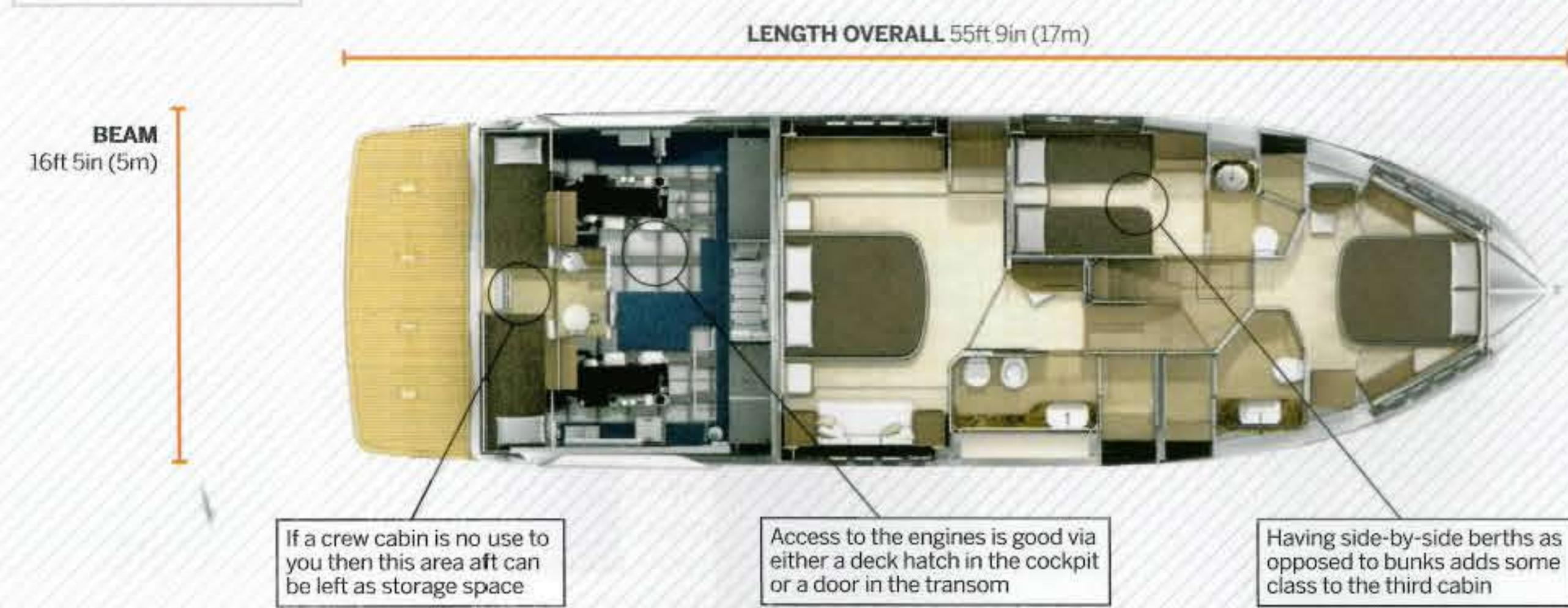
It sounds picky but the exposed screw heads do let the side down on a helm that, in general, looks and feels the part

There is a red light system incorporated above the helm to aid night-time navigation

The helm being so close to the upright windscreen makes for an excellent view out

Mercedes-style circular air vents are a nice touch

THE DATA



FUEL CAPACITY
528 imp gal (2,400 litres)
WATER CAPACITY
132 imp gal (600 litres)
DRAUGHT
4ft 4in (1.34m)
RCD CATEGORY
B for 14 people
DESIGNERS
Absolute Yachts
DISPLACEMENT
32.1 tonnes

If a crew cabin is no use to you then this area aft can be left as storage space

Access to the engines is good via either a deck hatch in the cockpit or a door in the transom

Having side-by-side berths as opposed to bunks adds some class to the third cabin

PERFORMANCE

TEST ENGINES Volvo Penta IFS800. 625hp @ 2,450hp. 6-cylinder, 10.8 litre diesels

MBY FIGURES	ECO						FAST			MAX	
	1,100	1,300	1,500	1,700	1,900	2,100	2,300	2,450			
RPM	8.6	10.5	11.8	13.7	17.6	21.5	25.8	28.6			
Speed	35.4	54.1	88.4	114	137	164	190	219			
LPH	7.8	11.9	19.4	25.1	30.1	36.1	41.8	48.2			
GPH	1.1	0.88	0.61	0.55	0.58	0.6	0.62	0.59			
MPG	466	373	256	231	246	251	260	250			

SOUND LEVELS dB(A)

Saloon	68	67	69	70	71	72	73	73
Cockpit	78	81	82	84	83	85	85	86
Helm	59	62	63	65	67	69	71	74

Speed in knots. GPH & MPG figures use imperial gallons. Range in nautical miles and allows for 20% reserve. Calculated figures taken from on-board instruments, your figures may vary considerably. F1 for sea trials in calm sea. Prices include VAT at 22% in Italy.

THE COSTS & OPTIONS

Price from	€1.00m (IPS600)
Price as tested	€1.61m (IPS800)
45,000 BTU Mediterranean air-con	€28,500
Bow thruster	€7,500
Passerelle	€21,500
Hi-lo bathing platform	€19,400
Seakeeper NG9 gyro stabiliser	€93,000
Crew cabin fit-out	€19,500
Turquoise hull colour	€9,000
Flybridge T-top	€23,000
Volvo Interceptor trim blades	€13,700
12kW generator	std
= Options on test boat	

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