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## Absolute Navetta 48 review – the inland yard’s outstanding offshore cruiser



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**The 48 takes all that is good in the Absolute Navetta range and boils it down into an impressive sub-50ft package**



Photos: Alberto Cocchi

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Part of the reason why the Absolute (<https://www.mby.com/reviews/brand/absolute>) Navetta 48 has such a voluminous interior is because it has to be split in half. Let me explain. Absolute builds its boats in Piacenza, a town in the Emilia-Romagna region of Italy, roughly 150km north-east of Genoa.

Every boat it builds has to be transported to the sea by road and, to negotiate the road network, the only way to do this is to move the boats with the hull and deck on separate trucks. Once a boat has been thoroughly inspected and signed off in the tanks at the shipyard, the decks are prised apart for the journey and then bonded together securely once down on the coast.

This unique set of circumstances has lead Absolute to conjure up a novel way of constructing its boats in its ISS (Integrated Structural System). The ISS is like a huge jigsaw puzzle where intricate panels of marine plywood slot together before being bonded to create the boat’s skeleton. The wiring, piping, cabinetry and all the fittings are then secured to it before the whole shebang is affixed to the hull and clamped beneath the deck.

It creates an inherently rigid structure and an unusually voluminous interior without the need for steps and stringers to reinforce it. This is the way all of its boats are built, but the smaller the boat, the more you notice the towering headroom and huge doorways with their clever space-saving sliding doors.



The galley is packed with neat storage solutions

It's not just the spaciousness that impresses on board the Absolute Navetta 48 but how this space is utilised, especially in the forward master cabin. This is a spectacular cabin for a boat just shy of 50ft, bursting with light and sporting an angled island berth that sits on a flat floor without any obstructions overhead.

It's a forward cabin so beautifully appointed it flies in the face of the theory that modern master suites need to be in the middle of the boat. And unlike an amidships master cabin the hull windows won't be aligned with those of your neighbour when in port.



The offset berth in the master cabin maximises floor space

The rest of the accommodation is no less impressive, especially the VIP cabin, which feels like a mini master thanks to its hull window and walk-around double bed. Though there are a few small intrusions in the floor and overhead, the geometry is such that where the headroom drops so does the floor, and where there's a step up the headroom rises to compensate.

There are steps to negotiate but there is no need to stoop, even if you're 6ft tall. It doesn't have its own ensuite bathroom – it has to share a commendably large one with the twin cabin next door – but it does have a remarkably large walk-in wardrobe that goes some way to offsetting this. It's an unexpected but welcome addition that guests will appreciate.



The amidships VIP cabin is so luxurious it could easily be mistaken for the master cabin

### **Solid performer**

One feature that is common to all different deck levels is an unshakeable feeling of solidity under foot. There isn't a soft or creaky panel anywhere you tread and the flooring is reassuringly robust from stem to stern. The main deck drinks in huge gulps of natural light thanks to the array of long, single-piece panes of glass down either side of the saloon and a similarly unobstructed upright windscreen.

There are a couple of steps between the dinette and aft galley but they are shallow and supplemented by an artistically integrated handhold on the inboard edge of the galley counter. I like the fact that specially shaped storage voids with soft-close lids are tucked behind the galley counter to stow cups and saucers, and that bespoke crockery drawers slide out from beneath the settee opposite the dinette so you don't have to mess about lifting cushions and locker lids.



The vertical, one-piece screen means there are very few blind spots from the lower helm

It's the same at Navetta 48's lower helm where the ergonomics, fit and finish are top drawer. Audi's dash design was an inspiration, and you can see that in the neatly ordered switchgear, the chunky steering wheel that feels great in your palms and the satisfying click of the air vents as they rotate on or off. It's a helm that works equally well whether you stand or sit, and the huge side door is always a welcome addition.

### **Absolutely fabulous**

What of the flybridge? Well it's almost a perfect rectangle with a perimeter of seating that is only broken by the companionway hatch and wetbar. The hardtop (fitted to the test boat but not the one pictured) is an option that most customers will choose but it does nothing for the Navetta 48's already top-heavy aesthetic.





A Plexiglas wind deflector pops up from behind the helm

If anything, the driving environment is even better on the flybridge where, as skipper, you sit at a central helm with your guests either side on benches that blend into the forward sunpad. It's a commanding driving position made all the better by the optional (€1,708) sprung helm chair. It's worth the outlay because it elevates what is an already refined ride to the realms of magic carpet as you gracefully bob along with the shock absorbers smoothing the edges off any bumps.

With Absolute's affinity for pod drives it comes as no surprise that IPS600 is the only engine option, but it works so damn well there will be few complaints. There may well have been if this were a regular flybridge boat, given the top speed of just over 27 knots, but the Navetta 48's laid-back nature and more long distance cruising mentality excuses the lack of outright pace. It settles at 20 knots beautifully, where it is consuming somewhere in the region of 130lph.



The flybridge wetbar has all you need for outdoor dining

Though the Navetta 48 can hardly be described as a driver's boat it hasn't stopped the yard from ensuring its driving dynamics are as polished as the driving position. It reacts tidily to the helm and falls into a nice natural trim attitude; so sweet are the ergonomics at the flybridge helm that you find yourself actually wanting to steer and interact with the boat as opposed to giving the autopilot the pleasure. It's a tall boat, but it doesn't wobble all over the place when using the joystick at slow speeds and is in fact a joy to handle around the marina.

Opinion-splitting looks aside this is an impressive package, a concentrated cocktail of all that is good about the Navetta range in a sub-50ft package. I don't think I've ever tested a hull number one of any new model range that felt so well put together and tightly engineered. Absolute's inland location may have forced it into a unique construction method but the results, in this case in particular, are outstanding.

## Specification

**Top speed:** 27.2 knots

**Cruising speed:** 20 knots

**Fuel consumption:** 129lph

**Range:** 223 miles

**Noise:** 69Db(A)

**Price as tested:** €1,240,000 inc V AT

**Price from:** €864,000 inc V AT

**Test engines:** Twin 435hp Volvo Penta IPS600

**LOA:** 48ft 11in (14.93m)

**Beam:** 15ft 3in (4.65m)

**Draught:** 4ft 1in (1.25m)

**Displacement:** 23.5 tonnes (loaded)

**Fuel capacity:** 1,800 litres

**Water capacity:** 530 litres

**RCD:** B for 14 people

**Designer:** Absolute Yachts

