



custom



comforts



Proving that quality built Australian catamarans have never been more popular Lightwave Yachts are busy supplying this growing market with innovative designs, as shown by the latest 45 Grandé, reports KEVIN GREEN.

pics by KEVIN GREEN

THE LATEST LIGHTWAVE, THE GRANDÉ 45 HAS just hit the water and with four other boats under construction the Coomera based yard is maintaining its reputation as being one of our most prolific catamaran builders. With the same Tony Grainger designed hulls as the popular Lightwave 45 Sport that launched in 2005 and has gone on to become a popular seller, the Grandé version developed from a 46 motor cat project that morphed into a 'supersized' new deck layout on the Lightwave 45. The result is a more spacious deck and saloon with about a 25% increase in the latter: What hasn't changed is the elegant raked lines of the boat's profile and the stepped cabin sides, a prettier arrangement than some other slab sided cat designs. The Lightwave Grandé model is also offered as a power or motor-sailer catamaran. These boats are designed to be comfortable bluewater cruisers and with a very active and far flung owners' association giving feedback to Lightwave, the effervescent managing director Roger Overell and team can offer semi-custom builds to ensure your dream ship really does become reality. So as hull number 70 lay against the company's wharf on the shores of the Broadwater I went to take a look.

Deck

Unzipping the wrap around clear tent, like a late Christmas present, revealed a gleaming interior which I attributed to the very high standard of polished finish on all bulkheads and the fully extended overhead hardtop ensured this tented deck area stayed dry. This gives protected cockpit seating for 12, while nearby on the portside is Lightwave's signature raised helm station enclosed with a shapely hard-topped cubby. Nice touches here include the flip-out steerer's seat with 140L fridge underfoot, which means the skipper never needs to leave the helm for his stubby. The review boat, that's destined for New Zealand, came with a helm station festooned with electronics. Apart from the standard Raymarine ST60

right from top:

Covered stern deck with seating for 12 and inside navigation station adjoining helm all works well.

The helm has quality switchgear, a comfortable seat and swing out plotter setup.

The steerer's cubby is both stylish yet allows good views forward and solar panels come as standard.

Deck table swings out for buffet style dining and a sink by the barbecue completes a good entertaining area.

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'Take me there' moments captured by our loyal owners in all parts of the globe are sent to us as a constant reminder of the opportunities and experiences owning a Lightwave brings.



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Galley ventilation is greatly helped with open bulkheads and natural light bountiful with the double sets of side windows. (top)

The saloon features dual access to portside, opening windows and L-shaped lounge seating with wide sliding door access for alfresco dining. (above)

readouts, which I prefer over the latest non-user friendly ST70s, the engine controls were all at a viewable waist level in a customised bulkhead setup. Other smarts for this boat included forward sonar by Interphase and the responsive touch screen Garmin 7015 plotter which swung out from inside the saloon. The medium diameter stainless steering wheel, hydraulically operated, and electronic throttles complemented a very functional helm setup. And with all lines running aft to the cockpit, shorthanded sailing could be the norm on the Grandé. These lines are neatly stowed in bulkhead bins behind the quality Anderson A52 primary winches. Other good features on the stern deck include the ability to swivel the table out, turning it into a bar style arrangement, ideal for serving buffets. For shore leave the moulded davits on the transom can quickly deploy the rubber ducky – a luxury Aurora centre console model on the review boat – that I dropped into the briny without incident. Handily, beside the transom mounted barbecue is a small sink and tap. Other nice details include the curved grab rails leading to the waterline and pop-up cleats on the swim platforms.



For those with total decadence in mind, or perhaps during stinger season, a deck spa can even be installed in this area. The company's design team has maintained Lightwave's profile with lots of curved bulkheads and this concept continues as you move forward along the clean decks, helped by sturdy triple wire safety lines, towards the wide expanse of the foredeck. Anchoring is taken care of via a deck mounted Muir Storm 2200 vertical windlass with anchor bridal going through a deck roller cavity but there is another roller up front as well. Behind the collision bulkheads are twin bow lockers with large hatches, ideal for storing the gennaker and fenders.

Rig and hull

Designed as a serious bluewater cruiser the L45 is intended as a fuss free sailboat

when it comes to the rig so a self-tacking jib is standard with obligatory big roached mainsail. However there are plenty of options if speed is the need. A roller furling genoa, screecher and carbon laminated main, all by Quantum Sails was bent onto the review boat. The double spreader Allyacht Spars mast with oversized swept back outboard shrouds looked sturdy and being a cat of course, no backstay but a topping lift held the boom up since no vang is needed. Up front the small prodder is used for deploying the screecher or asymmetric. The mainsail is sheeted by double blocks and a pair of Anderson A52 winches either side of the transom with separate sheeting lines for either side, designed to ensure good purchase and put some twist on the fully battened mainsail. Spinlock jammers are also used to lock

Owner's queen size bed has ensuite forward and plenty of surrounding locker space. (above left)

Two port guest cabins are separated by a bathroom and are airy berths with storage below. (above centre)

Second guest starboardside cabin has plenty of head space along with windows gallore but blinds are needed. (above right)

Guest bathroom has a separate shower area and accessed directly by both guest cabins. (below left)

Highlights in the starboardside galley include 135L front opening two drawer fridge and single 65L freezer unit by Vitrifrigo with pleasant Beechwood finishes throughout. (below right)



The Muir Storm windlass rode runs through a deck cavity. (right)

Bridgedeck escape hatch fitted in saloon, in case of inversion. (far right)

Foredeck has two lockers and a Muir Storm 2200 vertical windlass is used to deploy the anchor through a bridgedeck cavity. (below)



lines down and all other running rigging lines and halyards lead aft, hidden neatly under gutters, including the reefing lines.

The aesthetics of the L45 are greatly helped by plenty of waterline length but also the flair of the narrowish hulls add to this effect while giving good topside height to ensure a high bridgedeck clearance (0.95m) to avoid the customary cat slap as you bash to windward. Low aspect keels are designed to allow beaching of the L45 while protecting the saildrives and composite shafted rudders. For extra grunt to windward an optional

portside hull dagger board can be specified, again showing the customisation available from Lightwave.

Earlier in the day I walked around the relatively new Lightwave production facilities where a 40 strong workforce was busy. The company's Louise Overall pointed out the two stage build process, with hull moulds done in one facility then deck interfaces and overall completion in another with final detailing done in a dedicated paint shop, to give that high gloss finish I mentioned earlier. Hull construction is GRP-foam sandwich with

biaxial glass over Divinycell closed foam core which is vacuum-bagged and hand-laid to ensure lightness and quality. Modified epoxy resin is used below the waterline to prevent osmosis and polyester resin above. Bulkheads are foam cored sandwich construction. The bulkhead between engine room and hull accommodation is fully sealed to prevent fumes and this is a cavernous area with good access to the 75hp Volvos fitted to the review boat but the more fuel efficient 55hp Volvos come as standard. Tankage is also very good with 800lt fuel and similar water, giving a maximum range

of 1300nm motoring on one standard engine. In the starboard engine room there is space allocated for a watermaker and I also noted the emergency tillers – deployed singly or together through deck fittings.

Accommodation

An important design aspect of Lightwaves is the centralisation of accommodation and therefore weight around the inner core of the boat. The other main benefit is more sea kindly berths which is also helped by lowering the bunks in the hulls. However this doesn't limit the choices of layout with several available, ranging from four cabin, four toilet charter setup to a dedicated owner's hull. Destined for a family with young children the review boat came with the galley down starboardside behind the owner's suite and two double cabins portside with shared bathroom facilities between. Good headspace in the owner's suite and the queen sized bed should ensure comfort and a great idea is the forward facing hatch so the

skipper can check where he or she is going even while resting. Plenty of cupboard space, a dressing seat and vanity mirror area as well as extra hanging space just outside, nicely finished off the owner's area.

Another good feature was the flexibility offered by the stern double cabin starboardside which can convert into singles or a double. Ablutions are well taken care off with a manual toilet in each hull, with separate shower area and enough space to comfortably move around in. One downside throughout was the lack of blinds or curtains on the review boat.

The lightly shaded Beechwood was neatly finished throughout as were all fixtures and fittings, always a sign of quality in a boat. The partly open inside bulkhead on the galley allowed the steerer to watch the kettle boil as they sailed along and ensured the cooking area is well aired and pleasant. Nice features here included the 135L front opening two drawer fridge and single 65L freezer

unit by Vitrifrigo with a three burner LPG stove-oven. Deep double sinks with pleasant deck eye views and stylish composite moulded surfaces completed a functional area.

This layout leaves the main saloon clear for lounging with the port quarter given over to a navigation table with neat swing-out stool. The saloon is open and airy with plenty of large opening toughened glass windows for natural light and airflows are also helped with dual passageways to the portside guest cabins. The laminated wooden floor hid the necessary escape hatch in case of inversion. The internal saloon bulkheads positively gleamed thanks to the high standard of 'two pak' paint finish on them – something that Lightwave spend a lot of effort doing in their dedicated shop.

Under the L-shaped lounge settee the securely laid out bank of batteries can output 800AH (600AH standard) with the review boat optioned with a Mastervolt inverter and five KVA Paguro generator in the portside engine room.

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Good bridgedeck clearance (0.95m) and note forward facing hatches for accommodation. (above)

The nearby main circuit board fittings looked sturdy with neatly organised cable runs, fuse boxes and main power shut-offs.

On the water

After motoring out to a blustery Broadwater with tide and wind behind us company MD Roger Overell and I quickly set to work, hoisting the mainsail easily with the electric Andersen winch. With a pleasant 12-14kt working breeze the

screacher was then rolled out of its Profurl furler and we accelerated cleanly in the shallow confines of the bay. From my unimpeded helm view I set a course on the wind while Roger cranked the gear in. Both standing or sitting positions on the padded double seat proved comfortable with the large diameter stainless wheel responsive to the hydraulic controls connecting the rudders. No sooner had I found my groove than the Raymarine depth sounder was





Greg Page



Yanmar Innovation Powers a LightWave Yacht

Greg and Lynn Page spent a great deal of time planning their ultimate boating package with Yanmar a key onboard their Lightwave cruising catamaran 'Skedaddle'.

Stepping from a diesel-powered flybridge cruiser, Greg had a broad range of diesel choices for his new sailing cat and opted to go with twin 54mhp Yanmar 4JH4AE diesel sail drive packages, complete with Gori 3 blade folding propellers and the latest Yanmar flywheel generator technology.

"I did a lot of research before we made the decision to go with Yanmar," said Greg. We chose Yanmar because of their international parts availability, the simplicity of their engine design and the advantage of their new flywheel generator for our onboard power requirements."

Our onboard flywheel generator provided more than enough power for our electrical needs, including an air conditioner. The Gori 3 blade propellers provides excellent motoring and maneuverability performance and the unique overdrive feature is helping to keep our fuel costs to an absolute minimum when motor sailing."



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Power shut-offs, inverter and cable runs neatly recessed in saloon bulkhead. (above left)



Stored power of 800ah on the review boat and 600ah as standard from the battery bank under the lounge settee. (above centre)



Engine rooms are spacious (note genset in lower of pic fitted on review boat) with saildrive 55hp Volvo or Yanmar standard. (above right)

The Lightwave powers to windward strongly with twin sheets to control the main. (right)

warning of shallows so we tacked off, a manoeuvre that kept Roger pretty busy, with the twin mainsheets to control as well as headsail sheets. This sheeting layout was similar to other cats I've sailed and for energetic tacking (or racing) a person on either side of the boat is preferable. But remembering that this is a bluewater performer where you may lay a tack for a day or two, so it shouldn't be an issue. Performance felt quick with the big cat speeding over the sheltered waters, with only a small chop to impede us. For the record, off the wind with



screecher I managed 8.4kts in the dying 11kt breeze while running at 120°. With the afternoon moving along nicely we then doused the screecher and rolled out the genoa and went for a series of gybes: mainsail wound in, helm over and jib sheets changed and around we sped. With 360° views from the helm the steerer can keep an eye on all the action, with only some of mainsail obscured by the hardtop helm protection. Our speed kept up in the eights, with 8.1kts recorded hard on the wind at 45° which showed the L45 to be a slippery boat, though a more thorough test on a sloppy seaway would have been good. But the high bridgedeck clearance should ensure performance is still up there. Of course these boats are already well proven, with sister ship *Innforapenny II* having just completed a successful circumnavigation and looking none the worse for it when I looked over it at the yard earlier in the day. This L45 also distinguished herself by winning the multihull division of the ARC rally, no mean feat given the stiff French competition in that category.

Overall the latest Lightwave 45 Grandé proves that quality Australian built boats will continue to own a strong niche market, where quality and personalisation rewards discerning owners with a refined boat.

Pros

- Quality and attention to detail throughout;
- Semi-custom build;
- Proven design.

Cons

- Sail sheeting a handful shorthanded;
- Lack of curtains (review boat).

Options fitted to review boat

Boat reviewed priced at \$1.008m incl GST, with extras including:

- Built to NZ Cat 1 standard
- Custom additional timber features throughout including TV entertainment/ bar cabinet in saloon
- Stereo and TV system upgrade throughout boat
- Custom layout, 4 cabin, 2 bathroom
- Electronics upgrade including Garmin 7015 plotter/ Garmin radar; Satellite phone aerial
- Upgrade engines to 75hp
- Genset and air conditioning



Powered up with screecher, it doubles the sailplan size. Alternatively the self-tacking jib is the standard option for easy sail handling.

SPECIFICATIONS

Price	\$897,500 (std boat)
Price	\$1.008m (review boat)
Length Overall	13.7m 45'0"
Beam	7.3m 24'0"
Head Room	
Saloon	2.00m 6'6"
Hulls	2.05m 6'9"
Mini-Keel Draft	1.2m 4'0"
Mast Height off (DWL)	20.8m 68'2"
Bridge Deck Clearance (DWL)	0.95m 3'2"
Displacement – Basic Light Ship	6500kg 14 330lb
Max. Disp. DWL	9500kg 20 944lb
Fuel Capacity	800lt 211 US gal.
Water Capacity	800lt 211 US gal.
Engines	2 x 55 Yanmar or Volvo Penta Engines
Propulsion	Twin 3-blade folding propellers on sail drive legs
Consumption (flatchat):	9.5kts 7.5Lt per hour
Consumption Cruising Speed	8kts 4.0Lt per hour
Range (under power-cruising)	One motor 1300nm
Range (under power-cruising)	Two motors 800nm
Sail Areas	
Main Sail	75m ² 808sqft
Self Tacking Jib	30m ² 323sqft
Overlapping Genoa	41.5m ² 447sqft
Spinnaker	154m ² 1655sqft
Screecher	70m ² 753sqft
Maximum Speed	16kts plus
Length to Beam Ratio (for each hull)	11.5:1
Sail area to displacement ratio SAD (jib & main)	30.67

Accommodation

Standard: three cabin layout six persons
Many layouts available with customisation