

Europe's Premier Motor Cruising Magazine www.mby.com

MOTOR BOAT & YACHTING

SEEN IN
JULY
2006
ISSUE



EST: GALEON 440

SOMETHING SPECIAL

latest from Galeon packs in a proper-sized third double cabin

at a Glance
Length
13.0m (13.72m)
Top speed
17 knots
Engine
2 x 480hp Volvo TAMD75P EDC
Price from
£9,300 inc UK VAT



THE THIRD DIMENSION

Fitting a fully functioning third cabin into a medium-sized flybridge boat is ambitious. We go on test with the latest model to attempt this conjuring trick

TEXT: DAVID MARSH PHOTOS: LESTER MCCARTHY



or those of us hankering after a flybridge cruiser around 40-46ft (12-14m), the great choice of boats around gives us some difficult decisions to make. And none more difficult than the 'two cabins or three?' dilemma.

Sure, most of us would opt for the third cabin, all things being equal – even the most antisocial of us must have at least five

beds! But all things aren't equal. Specifically, designers are unable to conjure space from thin air, so a third cabin inevitably involves compromise. In this case, the design of the boat, it often ends up being cramped – no more than a token-gesture cabin with a single berth. Or if it is a proper cabin with separate single berths or a double, as on the Galeon 440, there is a risk that berth-room will have been sacrificed at the expense of acceptable levels of storage, the very thing you need to maximize on a flybridge cruising boat packed with six people.

Either way, that third cabin will force the galley up into the saloon, which inevitably limits the amount of galley storage and impinges on the feeling of

space in the saloon. There are upsides, though: the galley is in a far more sociable and practical position; there are no steep steps to climb with food and drink in hand; and the helmsman is able to make a cup of tea and grab a sandwich while maintaining a safe lookout – a real boon for those times when your five friends have deserted you.

The all-new Tony-Castro-designed Galeon 440 is one of the elite bunch that has managed to fit three full twin cabins into its 45ft 0in (13.72m) length. The question is, how have the inevitable compromises been handled?

Inside the 440

If your taste is for the immediate razzle-dazzle of ultra high-gloss joinery and decadent Italian fittings, the 440 is not going to knock you for six, at least not straight away. Not that it's entirely devoid of such charms; it's just that the 440's appeal is more subtle. Its demure mahogany joinery may not scream at you, but it is solid and very well finished on the surface and behind the scenes, and a



Dash looks boxy but vital instruments point directly at driver.



ny Castro has pulled off a magical space-conjuring trick below: it's an arrangement



age, lots
p. But
ad lockers.



ss in the
erplate.



Below: useful second sink and draining board in galley.

match for most of the more famous European production builders. Almost all the finishing touches that influence style and feel so much – carpets, countertops, fabric linings, upholstery and so on – can be changed, so it would be easy to transform the relatively sombre scheme inside our test boat into something more bright and breezy.

Tony Castro has pulled off a magical space-conjuring trick down below. The lobby linking the cabins and the day heads is unusually spacious, and yet the cabins still have good-sized berths: 6ft 5in-long (1.96m) singles in the port cabin, for instance; and a 6ft 4in (1.93m) long by 5ft (1.5m) wide double to starboard. Stowage in the forward double cabin and the port-side twin is on a par with a typical two-cabin boat, so it's a big surprise to find such exceptional stowage space in the starboard double cabin as well. So good is this, along with its more usable floor space, that some owners might consider employing it as their main cabin, even though it lacks the forward cabin's ensuite facilities.

Despite their satin mahogany finish, the cabins are all well lit, with the switches conveniently at waist level – a more costly but practical solution than overhead switching. Auto-illumination inside the wardrobes and loads of locker space in the two heads compartments are other benefits. Altogether, this is a very successful below-decks arrangement that requires none of the compromises you might expect on a tri-cabin boat this size.

Upstairs, there's no doubt that the U-shaped seating is slightly smaller and the saloon less roomy than on board most of its conventional galley-down stablemates. However, I reckon the sight that greets you when you step from the cockpit into the saloon – the imposingly tall helm seat-back and the unbroken mahogany wall of the galley – is as much to blame as the few inches that may have been deliberately (and sensibly) traded with the below-decks cabins and heads. Drop the seat-back, visually break up the end of the galley and lighten the colour scheme, and the 440 would appear to grow inside.

Cordon bleu chefs will fill the solitary large under-sink locker in no time, but they do have three useful deckhead lockers as well, including one with a big carousel. Cooks also get generous countertop space, which is as good as



The good storage in the main owner's cabin forward is actually bettered in the main guest cabin.

+ We like

Being able to buy a sturdy 30-knots-plus flybridge cruising boat with three genuinely usable double/twin berth cabins and good storage for as little as £300,000.

- We don't like

The stiff steering at marina manoeuvring speeds.

It requires none of the compromises you might expect on a tri-cabin boat this size

ival's. What the galley-down crowd can't offer is the 440's great view
r the easy two-step trip to the folding dining table.
sh air breezes in courtesy of the electric window, which sits directly over
ountertop. UK dealers Penton Hook are adding a stainless rail around the
' perimeter, which will improve cabin safety in bumpy conditions, and
de a handy place to hang tea towels and the like.
e saloon seats are firm but a comfortable shape, and the port-side seat-
can be pulled across to the folding table at mealtimes. Both offer a good
out through the lower windows. In the rough, the big heavy metal base
elp keep the table upright. Like all the stainless steel we found on the 440,
iding cockpit door is good-quality fare, and it glided open and shut more
than most. Just like the below-decks cabins, the saloon's appeal may be
e, but it all works well and there is little to grumble about beyond the
erate trade-offs of a galley-up layout.

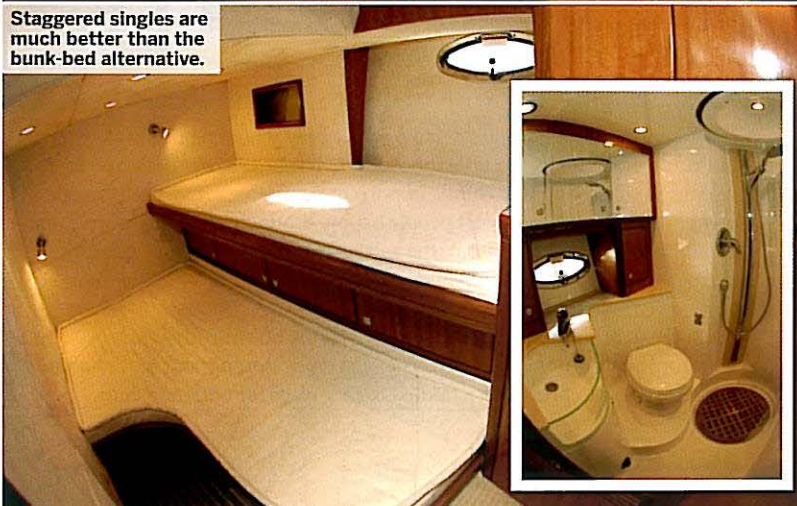
ving the Galeon 440

euuvring out through the lock at Chatham Dockyard and into the
es Estuary, the 440's stiff steering held the promise of an arduous
out at high speed. So it was a wonderful surprise to find that the faster
10 went, the lighter and sportier its steering became. Unsurprisingly
45-footer, there's no power steering as standard, so Penton Hook are
ubt right to put the 440's nippy steering at higher speeds down to
rudders. Consequently, the 440 can be a lot of fun to drive. It carved
banked turns around the mildly choppy waters at the mouth of the
res, and it's certainly more agile and sporty than the average shaftdrive
dge cruiser around this size.
' feeling is that the 440 could actually manage with a few degrees less
er angle. So effective are the big rudders at speed that with the help of the
blowing across the bows, it is (just) possible to perform something close
: sort of handbrake turn that sterndrive boats are so good at. This is not
blem - it just doesn't feel seemly in a flybridge cruising boat!

The excellent second cabin doesn't feel crowded with two occupants.



Staggered singles are much better than the bunk-bed alternative.





gh-quality
el handrails
-style fairleads.



ard
ces
om in
low.



Hingeing helm
seatback flips back so
base adds to seating
around table.



Teak covers hide
cleats and handy
baskets for tails of
mooring lines.

the faster the 440 went, the lighter and sportier its steering: it can be a lot of fun to drive

The 440 was also happy in a straight line, not at all bothered by the light conditions we found. Unfortunately, these conditions were too light to stretch Tony's hull, but its lovely deep-vee shape does hint at good heavy-weather performance. For no obvious reason, the 440 trims slightly higher than usual, up to 6.5° at 20 knots. Our speed trial figures show this dropping to its top speed of 30.7 knots, but that was with a 22% dose of trim tab, and we found improved the speed and the running trim. However, the skipper's visibility remains fine even at 6.5°, as does the handling and performance, so this high trim is no big deal.

Design details

Notes regarding the 440's detail reads like my school reports – okay, could do better with a little more effort. The boxy lower dash may look odd but it works fine, and the all-important adjustable seat-wheel-throttle ergonomics should keep most people happy, although some might welcome a foot-rest. A big plus of the galley-up layout is the convenient chart table that the galley countertop provides, far larger than the conventional dash-based offering.

On the flybridge dash, Galeon are moving the bow thruster control to the stern of the boat but the trim tabs also need repositioning, and no thought has been put into providing a fiddled resting place for odds and ends.

On a rudimentary level the dash works okay, but with a few changes it could be more refined. The helm seat is fixed, which means a stretch for shorties, but it has a hingeing back-rest that allows the double seat to add to the main seating around the table.

Access to service items in the spacious engine room is okay but could be improved. Specifically, moving the raw-water strainers and the fuel filters inboard and onto the rear bulkhead would help. Galeon have gone overboard with their bright alloy checker-plate and this makes it so easy to move around safely with a big flat non-slip floor to hunch down on. There's a remarkable amount of space down here, so much that I'm surprised that more of this was not absorbed into the useful lazarette behind – a safer place to store things with no whirling machinery. In the lazarette, access to the steering gear is excellent, and this is supported with a particularly chunky latticework of stringers. Likewise, the laminate schedule I've seen shows the hull shell to be noticeably heavier than normal along the highly loaded areas of the chine and the keel, and considerably thicker than usual over the bottom.

Galeon's homegrown stainless steelwork was excellent too – strapping 30mm guardrails with ground and polished welds are not what you expect to see in this price and size bracket. The stern mooring gear deserves a special mention, with its sturdy multi-angle fairleads and adjacent rope bins providing a really practical solution more often found on boats half as big again.

atafile Galeon 440

Verdict

Boats such as Galeon, who haven't yet built the cachet of Princess or Sunseeker, have to offer something special. And with their new 440 they have done just that. Specifically, this boat successfully achieves its most important mission – that of providing three fully functional double berth cabins where many of its rivals, even slightly cheaper ones, have two cabins and a token third. Squeezing six berths into 45ft (14m) is not difficult, but for them all to be in a more comfortable non-bunk-bed form, and to sit alongside cabin storage that varies from reasonable to extremely good, is an impressive achievement for a 45-footer. It is what will separate this boat from many of its similarly priced rivals.

The 440 doesn't have the panache of an Azimut or the intense detailing of a Riva, and a few areas would benefit from a spot of tweaking but there is nothing here that warrants condemnation. It has plenty of important everyday practicalities that are praiseworthy. Significantly, the 440 doesn't need more money spent on it – it's just a question of Galeon taking time out to refine a few things. This is a process that UK dealers at Penton Hook clearly had under way when we tested the 440.

On the subject of money, you can't ignore the 440's price, which is the other key, unlinked ingredient of its appeal. The roughly £300,000 tag pitches it against the very competitive offerings from the likes of Bénéteau. Consequently, there are few boats that can provide the same full-fat double-cabin experience at the same semi-justified price. All told, Galeon have done a good job and produced a competitive, sturdy and very worthwhile three-cabin addition to the flybridge marketplace. **MBY**

Data

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Overall length | 45ft 0in (13.72m) |
| Hull length | 37ft 3in (11.35m) ex pulpit & platform |
| Beam | 13ft 5in (4.10m) |
| Displacement | 14.8 tonnes light, 16.5 tonnes loaded (loaded = light + 100% fuel & water) |
| Draught | 3ft 7in (1.10m) |
| Air draught | 15ft 6in (4.72m) |
| Fuel capacity | 330 imp gal (1,500 litres) |
| Water capacity | 101 imp gal (460 litres) |

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| RPM | 1,600 | 1,800 | 2,000 | 2,200 | 2,400 | 2,600 | 2,800 |
| SPEED | 11.0 | 13.5 | 16.7 | 20.2 | 23.7 | 27.2 | 30.7 |
| TRIM | 5.0° | 5.5° | 6.0° | 6.5° | 6.0° | 5.0° | 4.5° |
| LPH | 37.6 | 51 | 67 | 87.4 | 115 | 148 | 196 |
| GPH | 8.3 | 11.2 | 14.7 | 19.2 | 25.3 | 32.6 | 43.1 |
| MPG | 1.32 | 1.20 | 1.13 | 1.05 | 0.94 | 0.84 | 0.71 |
| RANGE | 351 | 317 | 299 | 277 | 247 | 221 | 188 |

Speed in knots; GPH & MPG figures use imperial gallons; range in nautical miles. Calculated figures based on standard (idealised) engine propeller demand data, but engines over-revving by 200rpm, so treat all theoretical consumption figures with caution. Your figures will vary (sometimes considerably) depending on: hull fouling; fuel, water, stores & crew load; air, water, engine room & fuel temperature; and other factors. Range allows for 20% reserve, 75% fuel, 100% water, 4 crew, safety stores, 10°C air temp, 16°C water temp, 1,020mb pressure, light chop, Force 2 for speed trials.

| | |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Slow cruising | 25.5 knots, 234 miles @ 2,500rpm |
| Flat out | 30.7 knots, 188 miles @ 2,800rpm |
| Price from | £289,300 inc UK VAT (twin 430hp) |
| Price as tested | £326,520 inc UK VAT (twin 480hp) |
| Designer | Tony Castro, 2005 |
| RCD category | B (for 12 people) |

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Contact | Chris at Penton Hook Marine Sales Tel: +44 (0)1932 570055 Fax: +44 (0)1932 570655 Email: sales@pentonhooksales.co.uk Website: www.galeonboatsalesuk.co.uk |
|----------------|---|

| | | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| SOUND LEVELS dB(A) | Saloon | Cockpit | Flybridge | Inside Helm |
| Cruising @ 25.5 knots | 80 | 86 | 74 | 79 |
| Flat out @ 30.7 knots | 81 | 90 | 77 | 80 |

Engine and drive systems

Twin Volvo TAMD75P EDC 480hp @ 2,600rpm
6-cylinder 7.28-litre diesels

Thumbs up or thumbs down?

UPS

- ▶ Three proper double cabins
- ▶ Good stowage for cruising
- ▶ Sociable galley-up layout
- ▶ Roomy engine room/lazarette
- ▶ Joinery and stainless quality
- ▶ Stern mooring gear
- ▶ Sturdy deep-vee hull
- ▶ Big bathing platform
- ▶ Sunbed-forward flybridge

DOWNES

- ▶ A few service access points
- ▶ Limited galley stowage
- ▶ Unrefined flybridge dash

Rivals



Bénéteau Antares 13.80



Jeanneau Prestige 46

Even if we ignore boats with smaller bunk-bed cabins, the tri-cabin rivals provide the 440 with stiff competition. Two such boats are the Bénéteau Antares 13.80 (MBY March 2003) and the Jeanneau Prestige 46. Close in price, the Antares 13.80 feels larger inside than the 440 (despite its immensely wide side decks), and offers superb engine room access and an unmatched view out of its huge saloon windows. The 32-knot Prestige 46 is more expensive than the 440, although not relative to its extra space inside – enough for a second raised dinette by the internal helm.

Sealine's F43 has an ingeniously disguised aft cabin (with separate heads and shower), which means privacy unmatched by conventional boats, while its versatile third sleeping area can be arranged as a permanent mid-cabin or a more adaptable convertible dinette.

If speed is not an issue, consider the 23-knot Belliere 40 (MBY December 2003). This boat is a gem, very solidly but beautifully built, as much little ship as flybridge cruiser. Its deep-keel semi-displacement hull provides a smooth upwind ride in conditions that would see planing boats slow to a crawl.

Galeon 440 layout

