

Little Big Boat

The Lagoon 39 packs a lot of punch—and a ton of features—in a compact, well-executed package.

THE PRECISE MOMENT I came to realize that the new Lagoon 39 was a special entry-level cruising catamaran occurred last February on a windy, 20-knot morning in a significant Atlantic Ocean seaway off the coast of Florida. As we clawed upwind in short, 4- to 6-foot waves in the pumping easterly, I made my way forward to check out the view from the windward bow-pulpit seat. And what I saw was a revelation, especially considering that my perch was aboard a sub-40-foot vessel.

The fine entries of the twin bows sliced through the chop efficiently and with noticeable buoyancy. There was no slamming on the bridgedeck whatsoever. Most surprisingly, as I was prepared for a good dousing, was that with the exception of an odd splash of droplets, I remained completely dry.

Making my way aft, I soon discovered that not only was the ride impressive but so too were the numbers. Hard on the wind, which fluctuated between 18 and 22 knots, and under the self-tacking jib and the square-topped main with a single reef in, we registered 6.1 to 6.4 knots. Cracked off to a close reach, the speedo shot above 7 knots, and eventually settled at 7.5 as we leveled away to a beam reach. As we fell off even more, with the wind on the aft quarter,



the speed climbed to 8 knots. What's more, with all the changes in heading and sail trim, the motion remained fairly smooth and appropriately balanced.

It occurred to me that this was something I could get used to.

Down below, the

innovative layout also received favorable marks. I've long admired cats that reserved the entire starboard hull for an owners suite with a dedicated stateroom that can be closed off for privacy from the central saloon via a sliding door and that includes a king-size double

The Lagoon 39 is a sister ship to the new Lagoon 52 and shares many characteristics, including a square-topped mainsail and identical vertical bow treatments that are extremely buoyant and effective in choppy seas. In the main cabin, the forward-facing nav station, to starboard, has great visibility thanks to its corner placement.

berth aft, a midship desk/vanity, and a large en suite head and separate shower stall forward.

On the Lagoon 39, the builders took this very good, well-executed idea and doubled down on it: The port hull and stateroom is the mirror image of the starboard cabin. At face value, it doesn't seem revolutionary, but it speaks to the way many owners actually use their boats, and it's a smart, cool use of space. (And, of course, more traditional three- and four-cabin accommodation plans are also available.)

Yet thoughtful design and efficient systems and features are themes carried out over the entire Lagoon 39, from the top of the double-spreader fractional rig—which is located farther aft than usual, to maximize power and minimize pitching—to the tips of the twin mini-keels that promote stability and lateral resistance.

In between are all sorts of nifty items, including a generous cockpit, a raised helm station, centralized sail controls, and a very nice main saloon, which includes a fine, forward-facing navigation station, a well-laid-out galley, and a generous dining table around which to socialize.

How Lagoon managed all this in less than 40 feet may not be a miracle, but it's close.

H.M.