A CAT WITH DIFFERENT STRIPES

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PHOTOS BY ONNE VAN DER WAL

THE AQUILA 70 HAS A SMART EXTERIOR DESIGN, A TOP-NOTCH INTERIOR AND PEPPY PERFORMANCE.

The Aquila 70 has the range and onboard amenities for remote-island cruising.

Between

50 AND 70 FEET length overall, everything changes. That's especially true of multihull designs, where volume increases dramatically because of the vessel's wider beam. Engines, onboard systems, space for the tender and more get upsized, creating a higher caliber of yacht. ¶ The Aquila 70 is an example of this principle and shows how the builder transitioned from the production mindset to a semicustom mentality. ¶ "The aesthetics and speed are what really drove the 70's design," says Lex Raas, president of Aquila product development. "The majority of powercats don't perform; they have very wide beams, and with the wrong length-to-width ratio, you're challenged on speed. We made our yacht perform." ¶ The 70's design allows for a top-end speed north of 27 knots, also thanks to Aquila saving weight by using a higher ratio of carbon fiber on the 70's construction than on its other boats. The builder worked on the running-surface

69'9"
LENGTH OVERALL

26'11"
MAXIMUM BEAM

NUTS AND BOLTS
The twin 1,000 hp Volvo Penta inboards have good working space around them, with stand-up headroom. The Kohler gensets, Marine Exhaust Systems underwater exhaust and Webasto BlueCool V77 air-conditioning system are on a long list of name-brand equipment aimed at easy service.

design using computational fluid dynamics. "We did extensive CFD and tank-testing on the hull and running gear, even down to the rudder shape, to get those numbers," Raas says. Stability was also a primary goal. ¶ J&J Design, which has penned all of Aquila's models, was tasked with creating a profile that didn't look boxy. J&J used tinted glass, curves and a raked superstructure to achieve that goal. In profile, the yacht could pass as a 70-foot monohull. ¶ The ride, as I discovered on a jaunt into the Gulf of Mexico from Clearwater, Florida, is pleasant but different than it would be aboard a similar-size monohull. There's no rolling thanks to the twin-hull form; high up, it almost felt like the 70 was gliding over the water, rather than punching through it. The yacht reached a 27.3-knot top hop at 2,470 rpm, and the cruise speed at 2,000 rpm was 21.3 knots, with fuel consumption of 62 gallons per hour. The 1,000 hp Volvo Penta D13 diesels, paired with ZF 500-1 A gears, felt like the

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The Aquila 70's twin hulls help keep the vessel stable underway and at rest.
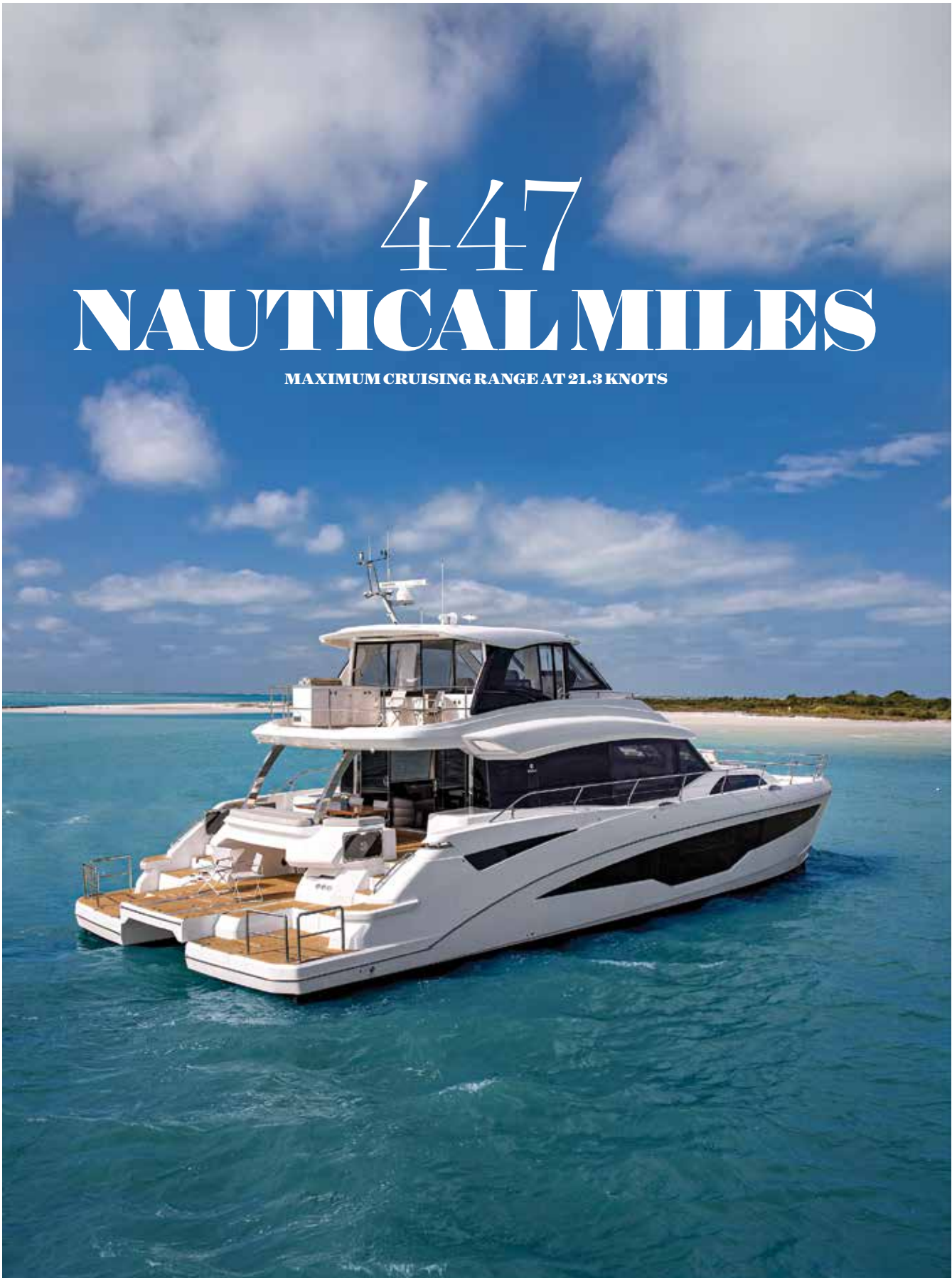
THE KING TREATMENT

The full-beam master stateroom forward has a table and lounge as well as a king-size berth occupying the central area, which is lit by windows along the sides. To starboard is an en suite with a private head, two sinks and a glass-enclosed shower. To port is stowage with pullout drawers, overhead cabinets, and a walk-in closet big enough for liveaboards.

WHO NEEDS A GARAGE?

One of the highlights of the Aquila 70 is the custom-made Aquila tender, a 13-foot cat designed to be hoisted and secured between the yacht's twin hulls. Designed by Morrelli & Melvin, the tender offers better stability than a similar-size monohull, with more carrying capacity. Aquila says the tender makes it easier to ferry people and gear to and from the dock, and that securing the tender flush against the deck is more efficient than hanging a tender off the stern. When the tender's in the water, the platform can be used as a beach club.

Alpi wood complements light-tone fabrics and furnishings, creating a bright feeling inside.

447
NAUTICAL MILES
MAXIMUM CRUISING RANGE AT 21.3 KNOTS

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1,447 GAL.
FUEL
CAPACITY

412 GAL.
FRESHWATER
CAPACITY

right power choice. ¶ The forward section of the flybridge is enclosed, and the helm console is laid out well. There are three Stidd pilot seats, and there are lounges abaft for guests to enjoy the view underway. The open aft deck has a Kenyon grill, an Isotherm fridge and freezer, and a stainless-steel sink, making this place ideal for a barbecue on the hook. ¶ The Portuguese bridge, which has joystick controls outboard to port and starboard, makes it easy to access the bow through center-line steps. There are also passageways along the side decks to move fore and aft on the main deck. Aft, stairs on both sides of the cockpit offer access to the water, while a custom tender is stowed in the transom, flush with the yacht. ¶ Inside, Raas says, "the interior needed yachtlike DNA, so we incorporated the highest-end appliances, a proper dining table and Italian furniture." Just forward of the cockpit is the 70's main social area, measuring 300 square feet with 9-foot headroom, it has

SPACIOUS SALON
The 300 sq. ft. salon/galley is populated with top brands for preparing meals (including a Gaggenau cooktop, oven, microwave, espresso machine and wine chiller) and for relaxing (the Natuzzi Italia decor includes a coffee table, bar chairs, a lounge and dining furniture). Other features such as electric blinds, Denon HEOS surround sound and controllable LED lighting deliver a high-end feel.

a galley with top-drawer appliances (see "Spacious Salon") to starboard and a salon with a separate dining area to port. Fit-and-finish is excellent. Calming, light-colored Alpi wood covers the walls and ceiling, while details such as leather-wrapped, stainless-steel rails and a touchless faucet add a sense of subtle luxury. ¶ The four-stateroom, five-head layout of Hull No. 1 (buyers can choose different layouts) includes a full-beam master stateroom, VIP staterooms aft that stretch along both sides, and a captain's cabin that connects to the engine room. Thanks to windows everywhere, natural light permeates the spaces. ¶ Looking at the yacht from the dock, the Aquila 70 is most certainly a catamaran. But step inside, and the yacht's look and layout feel like a sizable monohull wrapped in luxury, speed and the comforts of home. ♥

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"There's no rolling thanks to the twin hull form."

A 13-foot tender can be stowed on the platform between the Aquila 70's hulls.