



Something Different Something Different

I TOLD A FRIEND of mine recently that I had done a boat review on a 42 ft Trawler from Beneteau and his first reaction was that I had been out in the sun too long.

"Beneteau don't build trawlers" he announced in a rather commanding tone - "they build yachts and bloody good ones at that".

Unfortunately that might be the perception of many but late last year John Waters of JW Marine in Sydney decided to bring the Beneteau range of power boats to Australia. After all, Beneteau are the largest manufacturer of recreational boats in France and their racing and cruising yachts are highly regarded around the world. But for a manufacturer better known for yacht building to produce a trawler style cruiser was probably a surprise to many - as it was to me.

Perception is often a good thing but sometimes not so good. Most people's perception of a trawler style cruiser is

of a boat built like a State School outhouse, little style, lots of functionality but not much more.

With the Swift 42 Trawler, Beneteau have certainly broken the mould and I have to say that when you have done so many boats reviews over time, it is often hard to differentiate the good from the exceptional. But make no mistake, from the moment we saw the Swift 42, she made an immediate

impression. Her classic styling and hull lines are definitely European - she has that elegance expected of a boat with a yacht racing pedigree.

In the design and development of this trawler style cruiser, Beneteau have excelled in building a boat with the classic spaciousness and wood grained finish of a yacht interior, the reliability of a trawler hull with the efficiency of modern design technology.



JW Marine Principal John Waters at the helm of the Swift 42 Trawler



This has given us a boat that can eat up the cruising miles in complete comfort and safety.

If you were expecting the Swift 42 Trawler to be of that big, heavy work boat mould, get ready to be surprised. Here is a cruiser with all the style and grace of a motor yacht. Our test boat had a mirror finished royal blue hull with white superstructure and topsides - classic colours, the Swift 42 is beautifully presented but then the French are well known for their style and finesse.

We had arranged with JW Marine to test this new offering from Beneteau in Sydney but as the 42 was on display at the Sanctuary Cove International Boat Show, it presented a great opportunity to test the boat in conditions which are ideally suited to cruisers of this type.

It was late in the afternoon by the time we rendezvoused with John Waters and Tod Holzapfel (JW Marine's Queensland representative) at Wave Break Island, just inside the Gold Coast Seaway. Approaching with the afternoon sun on her, she looked an absolute picture. A quick transfer and we were away. John's son Adam was planning a night run back to their home base in Sydney later that evening; such was the confidence the Waters family had in the boat, so we decided to put her through her paces outside the Seaway.

Conditions, although not ugly, weren't the best but it certainly gave us the opportunity to test the boat's stability, ride and handling capabilities.

Although by no means a speed

machine, the hull design and stability of the Swift 42 allows the boat to literally eat up the sea miles without any discomfort to passengers and crew. We were punching into a stiff 18 knot south easterly and running at maximum revs (3500 rpm) on the twin Yanmar diesels; the Swift 42 was as stable as a church and achieved 16 knots over the ground. This boat truly is a passage maker of some note.

Capable of cruising comfortably in most conditions at 12 - 14 knots (2500 rpm) this is the type of family cruiser that has become synonymous with coastal cruising and given the handling capabilities of the Swift 42, I have every confidence that this model will make inroads into the existing bay/trawler style cruiser market. The agility of the boat surprised me. Trawler hulls aren't noted for their turning capabilities but the hull design of the Swift 42 allows it

to turn in a little over its own length. When turning, the boat doesn't lean or cavitate - it was a most impressive performance and its turning capabilities are certainly better than some sports boats I have been on.

Whilst our test was fitted with twin 200 hp Yanmars, Beneteau offer as an option, twin 370 hp Yanmars which gives a top speed of 27 knots and a cruising speed of 18 knots.

The Swift 42 is moderately priced for a boat of this quality and fitout. Tipping the scales at \$645,000, boat buyers get a lot of boat for their money.

In decking out the boat, Beneteau have clearly used their knowledge and experience in yacht building to deliver some added benefits to the Swift Trawler. Walk-around deck access is a prime example as is the teak decking and teak rails although some might prefer a larger duckboard.

The boat offers two helm positions - one on the flybridge which is mounted forward of midships while the saloon helm is located on the starboard side.

The flybridge extends the full length of the aft cockpit to give all weather protection and shade - it is a great design feature and something more flybridge models should offer. Stainless steel safety rails fully enclose the





extended flybridge while a Sunbrella bimini on stainless steel frame provides shelter. A centrally mounted mast accommodates a radar dome, navigation lights and aerials. The mast and retractable boom would allow for a small sail to be set when running down wind.

I found the flybridge helm station simplistically laid out and comfortable both sitting and standing. The analogue gauges are functional and the dash housed an E120 Raymarine GPS Radar Plotter, Yanmar gauges and radios.

The layout of the flybridge was also uncomplicated. A fold down table and L-shaped lounge featured. There was also a fridge mounted on the starboard side complete with sink for those entertaining occasions. I was also impressed with the steps leading up to the flybridge. I am often critical of convertible and flybridge boat builders who insist on using ladders as access to the bridge area rather than moulded steps. Here Beneteau have provided a

different option - scooped wide timber treads on a ladder with a moderate deadrise. Access to the flybridge area, as a result of this cleverly design ladder system, is no longer the domain of the young and nimble.

The fitout of the interior of the boat is superb. Cherrywood has been used throughout and instead of the traditional leather lounges, Beneteau have gone with fabric upholstery to complement the timber feel of the boat. The varnish work on the cabinetry and floor is sensational and the mirror finish most impressive. Given the fully walk-around decks with their high gunwales, the saloon or wheelhouse is long and although appearing a little narrow, is none the less, spacious. The layout is practical with convertible lounge to starboard complete with moveable dining table.

The entire port side is given over to rich cabinetry providing copious amounts of storage including housing the boat's

air-conditioner and a drawer dishwasher.

The galley is located opposite the starboard helm with its period style raised arm chair and sliding doors either side of the galley and helm provide access to the deck and great ventilation.

The galley is a cruiser's delight with a three burner gas stove, twin bowl sink, fridge, preparation benches and a rubbish bin located under the helm chair.

Natural light floods the saloon through three large fixed glass panels, all with windscreen wipers and the saloon windows feature pull-down blinds for privacy.

The saloon helm is beautifully appointed - an E80 Raymarine screen is mounted mid dash while a Plastimo Offshore Compass is mounted above.

The dash also houses conventional engine instrumentation, a VHF radio, sound system, bow thruster and a very useful rudder gauge indicator. All switches are rocker mounted and I was most impressed with the Cherrywood steering wheel - a very nice touch!

Below decks is warm and inviting as a result of the use of Cherrywood timber throughout. A shower and toilet is located to port of the companionway. It has an unusual yet practical fitout with a high vanity, storage areas and a 3/4 mirror located on the door. The starboard cabin features a huge moulded bed with ample storage under, reading lights and locker. The companionway floor lifts up to provide access to the pumps and sea cocks.

The master cabin has its own bathroom set to starboard and I very much liked the timber benchtop above the toilet to stop the toilet seat getting wet. The use of triangular mirror panels is also distinctive.

The island bed has been raised to provide storage drawers under the bed. There is plenty of storage in the cabin with shelves running the full length of both sides of the cabin as well as hanging lockers, bed lamps and an oval mirror. Plenty of natural light is available through an overhead hatch and two side portholes.

It might seem a bit strange as many boat manufacturers have gone for the complete high tech fitout on their boats but believe it or not, there is not a television to be seen on the Swift 42.



LOA	13.60 metres
Beam	4.17 metres
Draft	1.05 metres
Empty weight	10,500kg
Max displacement	15,500kg
Fuel capacity	1500 litres
Fresh water	640 litres
Cruising speed	20 knots
Engines	2 x Volvo D6 310hp
Accommodation	5 +
Price starting from:	\$715,650.00

**Test boat supplied by
JW Marine, Gold Coast
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For the full Go Boating review on this vessel please visit www.jwmarine.com.au

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From my perspective, that is good news as time well spent in the company of good friends and family was once what boating was all about - not sitting in front of a TV screen. There is ample time for reading, cards and socialising without these mod cons.

As with most passage makers, storage is copious with a large lazarette, three under floor lockers plus gas locker located in the transom. A centrally located transom door provides access to the swim platform.

The engine room, while compact,

provides good room for maintenance and access. A 7 kVa generator has been installed in the lazarette to provide onboard 240 volt power. The fuel tank is located forward of the engines which greatly aids stability and the engine room hatch also has a light sensor to aid entry. Up forward, there is a sun lounge on the deck while deep storage lockers are located either side of the anchor.

Equipped with the fuel efficient Yanmar diesels, the Swift 42 Trawler is a superb passage maker. It would be equally at home on trips around a bay or on an extended coastal cruise. Creature comforts are of a high standard, stability is excellent and the fitout of the boat would allow for many years of low maintenance boating. Beneteau are to be applauded for the foresight shown in the design of the Swift 42 - if anything, the trawler tag is somewhat misleading as the style, comfort and capability of the boat is far in excess of what would normally be expected of a trawler hulled cruiser. The Swift 42 Trawler is something quite different.

Peter Scott