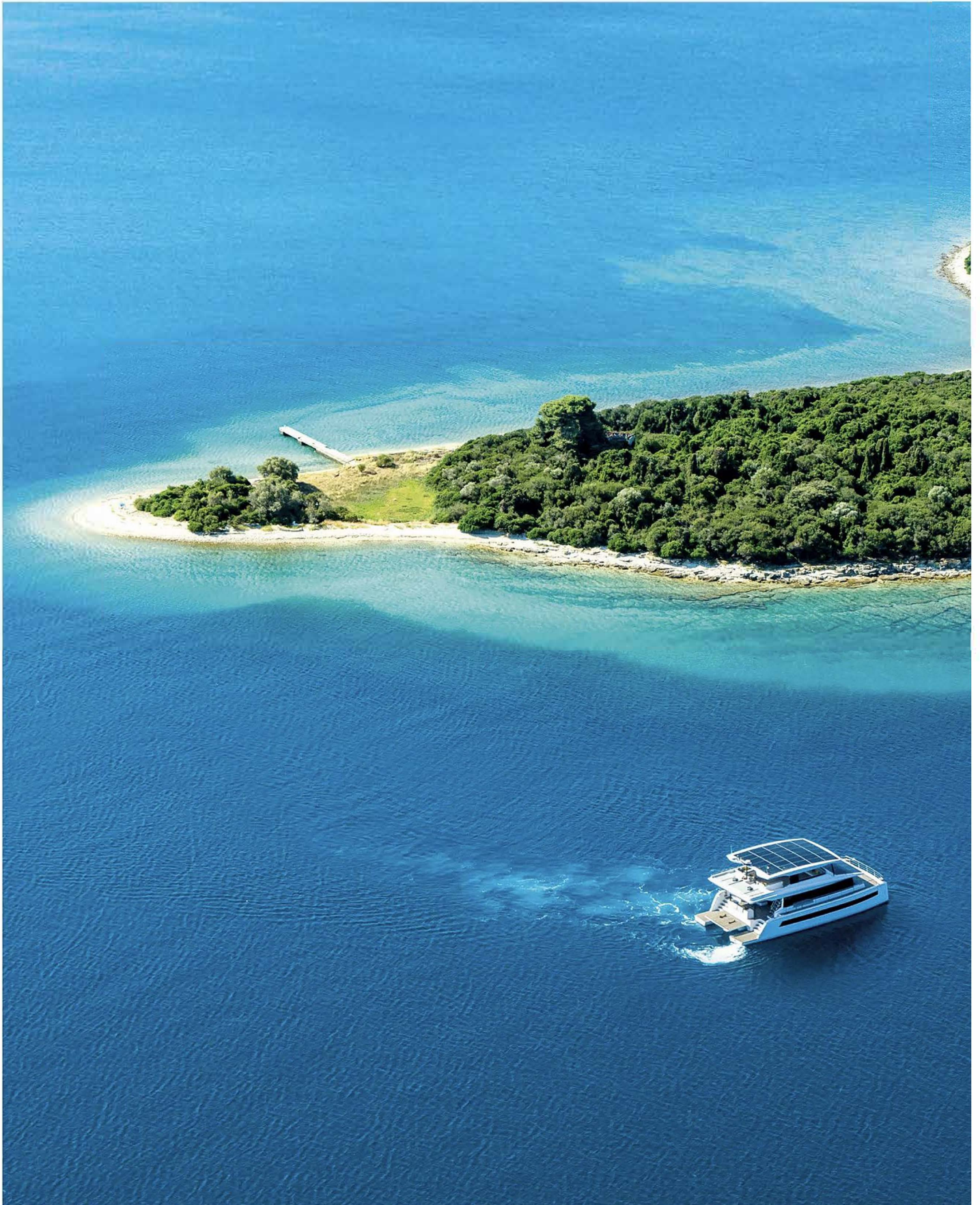


MOTORBOAT & YACHTING

BOAT TEST





SILENT
62
OPEN

*It's big and it's clever – but is an electric power cat
really what you need?*

WORDS: Alex Smith

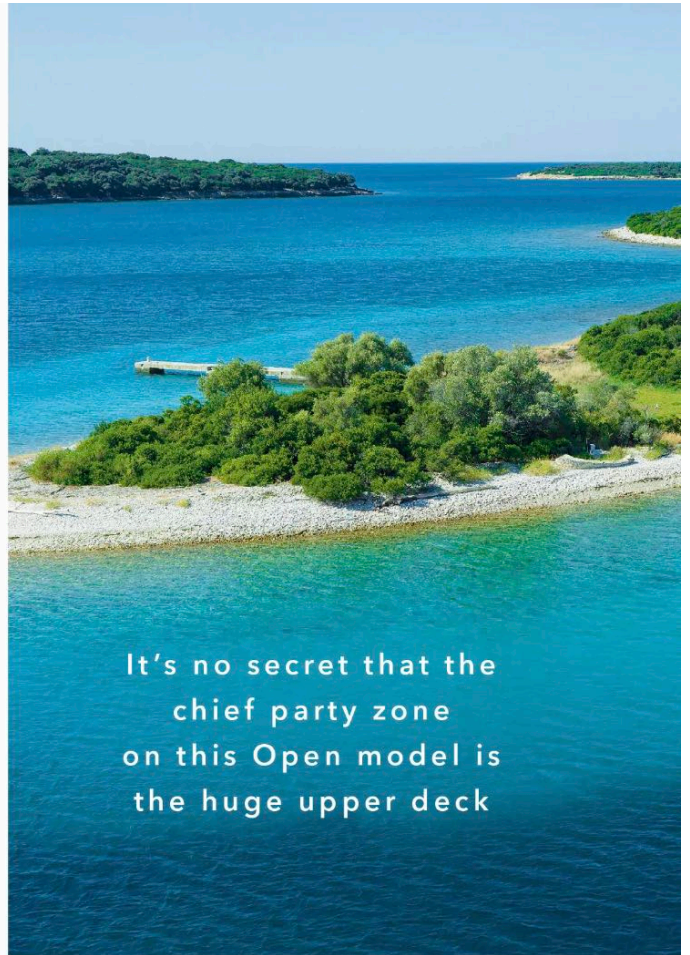
BOAT TEST

BELOW: Facing settees make good use of the space in the sheltered aft cockpit

BOTTOM: Though not huge for a boat of this scale, the aft galley is well placed to keep you involved

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itting alongside at the old port in Cannes is a boat that looks supersized almost to the point of excess. If that much is only to be expected of a 62ft power cat with a 29ft beam, the option of a fully enclosed upper deck and near vertical lines, it's pleasing to reflect that the forthright styling is very much counterbalanced by the lightfootedness of the concept. Because what we have here is a cat designed to cruise indefinitely in quiet, and largely emissions-free serenity, thanks to a combination of solar panels, high-capacity battery banks and back-up generators. That certainly makes plenty of sense, given that this Austrian yard (very aptly named Silent Yachts) has been dedicated to the production of fully electric solar-powered catamarans ever since its foundation in 2016. But before we get to all of that, let's jump on board the more aesthetically pleasing Open version and see just how much space this lofty, flybridge power cat actually delivers...



It's no secret that the chief party zone on this Open model is the huge upper deck



DAY SPACE OPTIONS

The aft cockpit is by no means the chief outdoor party zone but it still does a very decent job. There's a seating and dining area to port, as well as a built-in aft bench, and if you look further aft, beyond the symmetrical steps at each side of the transom, there's a pair of fixed bathing platforms as well as a central high-low section capable of handling a 500kg tender. With a beam in excess of 29ft, there's plenty of room in the cockpit for freestanding furniture too, as well as the flybridge steps and an optional grill and fridge, but it's forward of this point that the fun really kicks in.

The outdoor bow lounge, for instance, is delightful – partly because its sunken setting provides an extra sense of intimacy and protection from the elements and partly because, in addition to some overhead shelter from the extended roofline, you also get direct access to the main deck saloon via a watertight central door in the middle of the windscreen. Some attractive asymmetry generates sunbathing space to port and sociable seating to starboard – and if you make your way back down those broad side decks, you'll find another pair of intimate little bench seats, one on each side, recessed into the superstructure, facing directly out to sea. As for the practicalities of the bow space, there's ample storage beneath the raised section of the deck for all kinds of gear, from paddleboards and SeaBobs to a range-extending kite sail. And you also get the option of a pair of bright and well organised ensuite crew cabins here too.

But it's hardly a secret that the chief party zone on this Open model is the huge upper deck. Silent tells us it provides around 650ft² of space but that seems like a modest estimate to us. It's so spacious, you can just imagine the designers' eyes lighting up at



BELOW INSET:
Bench seats recessed into either side of the superstructure are as charming as they are unusual

BELOW: If you don't need the full-beam owner's cabin, the sunken bow lounge is a lovely place to tuck yourself away



the rich, blank-canvas potential of it all – and what they've decided to do at the port side is create what amounts to a 'helm lounge' rather than merely a helm, thanks to an L-shaped bench seat alongside some more bench seating forward. You could easily seat nine or ten people here on a long passage and the fact that it butts up against a big wet bar further aft means you don't have to travel far for your drinks and nibbles. There are no cooking facilities up here but there is of course no shortage of energy on hand should you want to specify an electric hob or grill.

On this test boat, what you get instead is a large fridge and ice maker, a decent sink, lots of storage and a huge expanse of wraparound work surface plus a fore-and-aft bar with space for

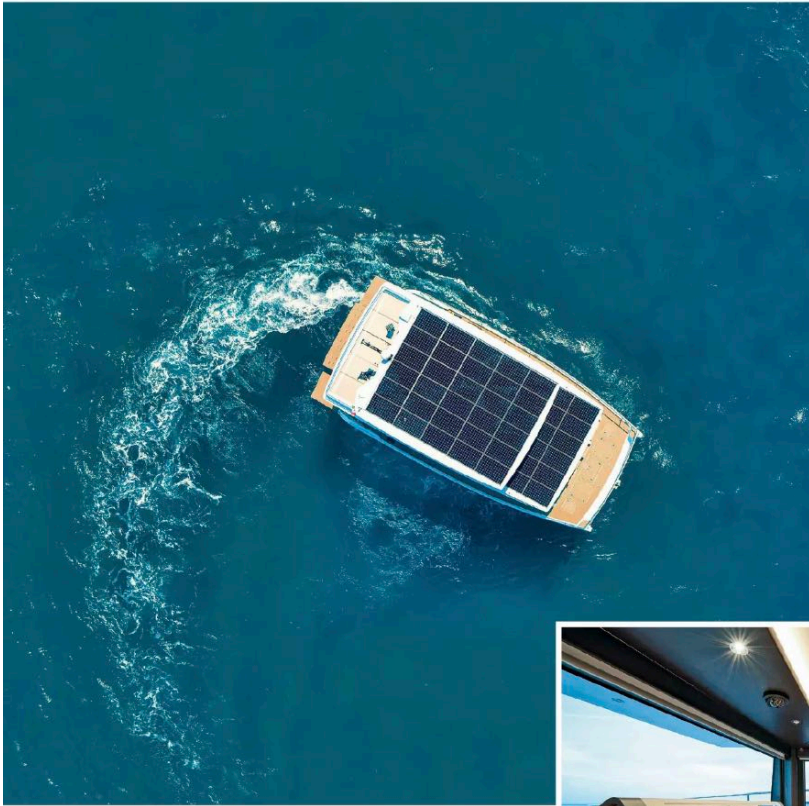
three people to perch with a drink. Behind that is another enormous L-shaped lounge area, which is broadly mirrored on the starboard side. There's also a huge amount of open deck here, should you want to litter it with freestanding furniture or lay out some exercise mats. And at the very aft end of the upper deck, up three steps, beyond the remit of the hardtop, a slightly elevated plateau of cushion-lined loungers looks aft through a set of low-profile wraparound guardrails.

Taken in its entirety, it is a stupendous recreational space and, effective though this layout is, you can of course configure it as you please, with everything from dining tables to settees, gym equipment and Jacuzzis. ▶



LEFT: With a wet bar, a port lounge and a forward bench, the upper helm is brilliantly sociable
RIGHT: The aft end of the flybridge leads up three steps to a big raised sunpad beyond the reach of the hardtop

BOAT TEST



LEFT: A wide beam and obstruction-free roof structures enable the solar array to generate up to 100kWh per day

BELOW: The raised triple helm on the main deck is almost as sociable as the one up top

CRUISING LAYOUTS

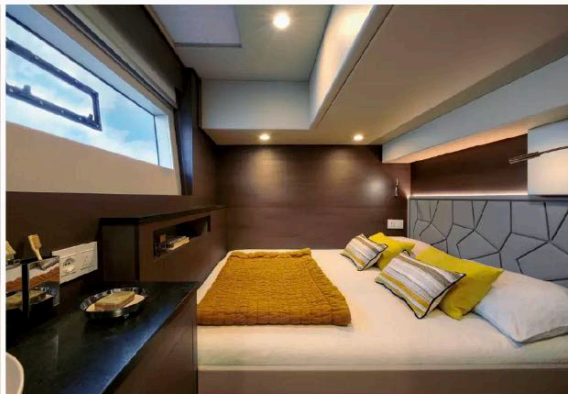
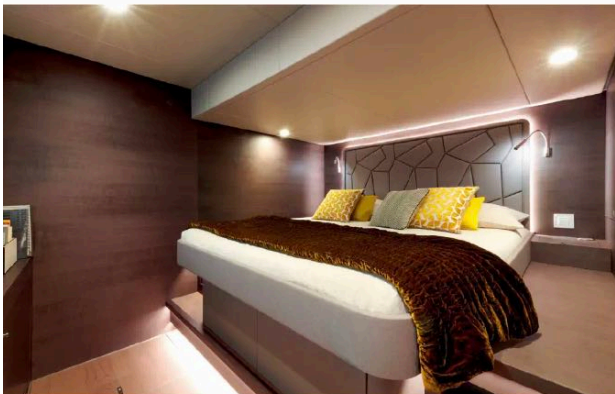
The test boat has five ensuite cabins – a pair of doubles and a single in the starboard hull, accessed via two staircases, and a twin and a double in the port hull, accessed by one staircase. That makes things feel so evenly distributed that it's not immediately clear which of the two forwardmost cabins is earmarked for the owner, but you can of course tailor the layout to suit your needs. This Open variant does lack the option of the closed model's superyacht-style private owner's upper deck suite but even here, you can ramp up the owner's luxury by extending the starboard

cabin beneath the bridge deck and stealing a chunk of space from the port double. If you do that, you do have to sacrifice that sunken bow lounge and forward saloon door to help generate the extra volume required but with superb forward views through a raised window section that runs the entire width of the cabin, it remains a very tempting option for owners in pursuit of extra space, separation and exclusivity.

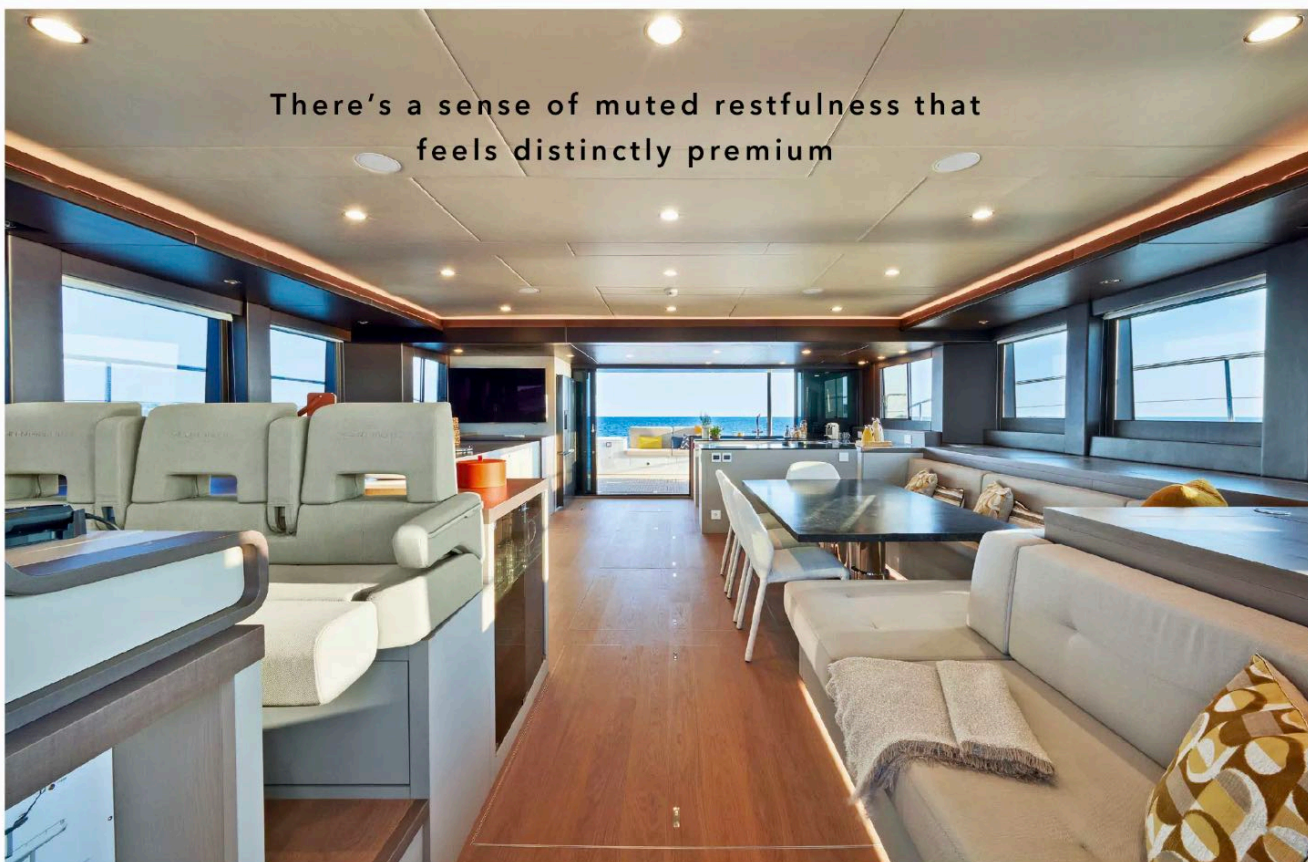
Either way, the style and fit-out here is very attractive. Though it errs toward the classier, more understated side in terms of

the fabrics, there's a sense of muted restfulness down here that feels distinctly premium. As the external aesthetic suggests, the headroom is also excellent throughout and the light and views are good too, thanks to deep panoramic windows in every cabin and bathroom. As regards the more memorable features, the 'peep-show' showers in the port hull are particularly good fun, as they enable you to chat to your partner in line of sight while they shower. Now if they could just add another glass panel so you could conduct the chat from bed, that really would be something.

Back down on the main deck, right at the apex of it all, the 500ft² internal saloon is another very generous space. And just as the sliding windows do a good job of opening it up to the external side benches, so the aft galley interacts very naturally with the cockpit seating. Ahead of this, a large L-shaped dinette is big enough for eight people and thanks to a high-low table, it's easily converted into a casual TV lounge or a large day bed. On the other side of the broad central walkway, huge storage cabinets run fore and aft and while some people might prefer to see this space used for an alternative form of seating, these cabinets (like the port dinette) are also designed to help ramp up the volume in the cabins down below.



LEFT: The two transverse forward doubles face out through long, deep hull windows



There's a sense of muted restfulness that feels distinctly premium

SILENT AND SUSTAINABLE

Silent has been very careful to maximise the potential of the sun's power. There's a full-scale hardtop above that enormous upper deck, plus an additional roof section above the bow lounge, which means plenty of space for a 17kWp solar array, enabling you to generate in excess of 100kWh per day. The fact that Silent is so careful about placement also helps minimise potential obstruction of the sun and there's a 150kW generator on the test boat too so you can keep the battery banks topped up whatever the weather. As regards propulsion, while you can spec anything from as little as a pair of 50kW e-motors, we have the range-topping 340kW versions here, so they're paired with twin 17-unit lithium-ion battery banks totalling 286kWh.

We start off cruising gently, as you tend to with an electric boat, enjoying the torque, the silence, the soft ride, the absence of fumes and the fact that, save for some gentle movement in response to the morning swells, there's no vibration here at all. It's a delightful way to go boating and, with a combined total of 10-18kW of energy disappearing from our battery banks at 3-5 knots (about the same amount as you might expect to replace by means of the 62's solar array), you really could cruise all day without a break – and without diminishing your battery banks in the slightest. But of course, that isn't what most of us do. We cruise for an hour or two at a slightly quicker pace, anchor up for an hour or two; have lunch here; do some paddleboarding there. And that's why Silent suggests that in a typical holiday region on ▶

ABOVE: The 500sqft saloon ties the external zones together by means of sliding side windows, an aft galley and a forward door



LEFT: There's an ensuite twin cabin at the aft end of the port hull MIDDLE: Each cabin comes with a private bathroom with separate shower RIGHT: The test boat also features a fifth (single) cabin in the starboard hull



The simple self-sufficiency of the Silent Yachts approach is hard to fault



Future models will apparently have the option of updated 348kWh battery banks

the average sunny day, the solar panels alone will generate enough power to handle your propulsion systems, as well as all your household and navigational appliances. And if you want to commit to longer passages at greater pace when imperfect weather is reducing your solar generation, the diesel generator can be used as a back-up to preserve or replace the power in your battery banks. In short, if you enjoy the idea of mixed recreation, quiet fume-free cruising and silent overnight anchorages, the reliable, straightforward self-sufficiency of the Silent Yachts approach is very tough to fault.

VERDICT

The Silent 62 Open is a prettier boat than the closed variant and, if you tend to favour warm-weather cruising regions, it's a more practical one too. Between the side deck alcoves, the aft cockpit, the bow lounge and the subtly zoned sections of the upper deck, there must be eight or nine places to pick from for a quiet drink – and that's before you even investigate the sheltered day spaces of the internal saloon. Clearly then, with more than 2,500ft² of usable deck space allied to a level of quality that says very positive things about its Italian production facility, this boat fully validates its “compact superyacht”

claims. Given Silent's CV, not to mention its trans-oceanic passage with the original 64, its ocean-crossing claims are also

entirely credible. But while for many people, the idea of a kite sail, bladder tanks and low-speed energy management might make that element of the package one of principle rather than reality, that in no way detracts from what this boat represents. Because while a great many electric solutions continue to feel like test platforms for early adopters, who have to adapt their lifestyle to suit the boat, the Silent 62 is a very real and practical solution for everyday boaters right now. It enables you to enjoy a mixed diet of day boating and cruising adventure, free from the need for shoreside support and safe in the knowledge that, should you want to operate in silence for extended trips, without recourse to your generator, then that is eminently achievable.

CONTACT: www.silent-yachts.com



STEERING
The commercial-style steering lever will be replaced by a wheel on future models

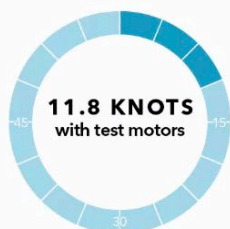
BOW DOOR
The central door is great for seamanship duties, as well as guest access

ENERGY DATA
This screen gives you a real-time readout of energy being used and generated

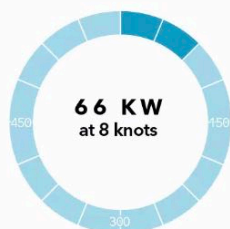
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TOP SPEED



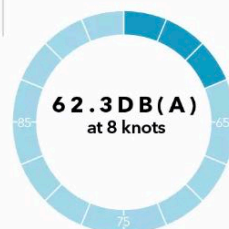
CONSUMPTION



RANGE



NOISE



PRICE



SPECIFICATIONS

LOA: 62ft 0in (18.88m)
BEAM: 29ft 6in (8.99m)
DRAFT: 3ft 9in (0.93m)
DISPLACEMENT: 39,000kg
FUEL CAPACITY: 1,000-2,200L
WATER CAPACITY: 900-2,200L
ENGINES: twin 50-340kW e-motors
RCD: A12

COSTS & OPTIONS

FROM €3.5M ex VAT. Test boat includes the following:
 Fifth cabin in starboard hull, Bow lounge and forward door, Hydraulic 500kg stern platform, 340kW e-motors

PERFORMANCE

TEST ENGINES: 340kW e-motors on straight shafts with 286kWh battery banks

	250	300	350	400	450	500	550	600	650
		ECO					FAST		MAX
RPM	250	300	350	400	450	500	550	600	650
Knots	4.2	5.0	6.0	6.5	7.2	7.7	8.5	9.5	10.0
Combined kW	5	10	16	25	37	53	69	89	117
kW per mile	1.19	2.00	2.67	3.85	5.14	6.88	8.12	9.37	11.7
Range (no gen)	240	143	107	74	56	42	35	31	24
Range (gen)	5,163	2,816	1,926	1,336	931	664	510	381	296

FIGURES extrapolated from Silent test results. They are based on the test boat's 286kWh battery bank and assume that the Solar PV is running the hotel load. Figures allow for 20% fuel reserve on the basis of 2,000L capacity and assume no solar gain captured. One continuous non-stop journey.