


Catalina 445 Live-aboard Cruiser



Catalina listens to what cruisers and customers want—the all-new and innovative 445 is the latest result

At first sight you know there is something different about the new Catalina 445. The design's topsides appear lower than her sister ships and the cabin top has a lower profile. The cockpit is large and has twin wheels and throughout the cabin the moldings are more angular, more modern than we have seen from Catalina before.

This is the next generation Catalina and it has been created to be a fine liveaboard home, a sweet sailing, offshore-quality boat and an excellent, long-term value for its owners.

BWS joined Catalina's V.P. Gerry Douglas, who designed the 445, aboard the new boat in Oakland, Calif., for a test spin on San Francisco Bay. The boat had just premiered at

the Strictly Sail Pacific boat show to a very warm reception from dealers and potential customers.

Gerry took the helm, we cast off the mooring lines and he then backed the new 445 out of the slip and turned for the channel. The new boat maneuvered easily and surely and had enough horsepower to cruise at 6 knots with only 1,800 rpm showing on the tachometer.

The boat was equipped with a roller furling headsail and an in-mast roller furling mainsail which make sailing the new boat a breeze. Unfortunately breeze was the missing element in our cruise of San Francisco Bay. But that didn't stop us. We tried the genoa for a while and then opted to roll it up and launch the new Screecher, which is a fairly flat cut reaching sail on its own free-flying

roller furling system.

The Screecher did the trick so we were able to reach away from the Oakland shore and out into the bay toward the Bay Bridge. It was a glorious spring Monday and we were slipping along nicely in the 80-degree sunshine.

THE DESIGN

The new 445 is an evolutionary design for Douglas and Catalina. The hull is finer and slipperier than its nearest Catalina cousin, the amazingly durable Catalina 42. The hull's design numbers tells us a lot about the parameters of the boat. The sail area-to-displacement ratio is 18.1, which is higher than most other production boats in this size range and indicates that the boat has been spec'd out and rigged for better than

average sailing ability and speed. (The SA/D is a measure of a design's "power to weight" ratio.)

The displacement-to-length ratio of 165 indicates that the 445 is fairly light but still in the middle range of boats in this size range. The DL offers a ratio that allows you to compare boats and predict their quickness and speed capabilities. The lower the ratio, the lighter the boat. By way of comparison, the Beneteau 43 has a DL of 126 (quite light) while the Tartan 43 has DL of 234 (moderate).

A design's ballast ratio shows you what percentage of the overall displacement is contained in the ballast and keel and thus how resistant it is to heeling. The ratio can range from 25 percent in traditional cruisers to nearly 50 percent in high tech racing machines. The 445's ballast ratio is quite high at 39 percent when compared to other boats in its class; this gives the boat a very solid feel beneath you and allows it to stand stiffly to the breeze when sailing upwind. It is worth noting that Catalina still uses lead in its keels and has not switched to cast iron.

We did not put the 445's numbers to the test during our sail on San Francisco Bay but we did discover that the new boat is slippery in a light breeze, and that it is both fun and easy to sail.

ON DECK

The cockpit and deck layouts are very well thought out with short-handed crews in mind. The primary sheet winches are large multi-speed winches and placed near the aft wheels in reach of the helmsman. The twin wheels are positioned to enable the helmsman to see forward from the neatly elevated seats port and starboard; the steering linkage between the wheels and rudder are smooth and offer a very good touch

at the helm.

The cockpit is large and roomy with a folding table that will seat six for a meal. There is a swiveling pod built into the aft end of the table for the chartplotter so you can see the screen from both sides of the boat.

Storage for sails, lines and gear has been provided in three good cockpit lockers, two aft and one under the starboard seat. The port cockpit seat is a "gull-wing" molding that flips up to reveal a large hatchway into the aft port cabin. This will be particularly useful when the cabin below is being used as a storage locker.

The running rigging is set up for cruising in all weather. The main-sheet traveler on the cabin top is fully adjustable so you can power up or de-power the sail as the wind gusts. The traveler control lines both run to jammers on the port side of the cockpit. The genoa sheet tracks on the side decks are extra long, which will permit you to trim a reefed genoa accurately by moving the cars forward or trim a small storm jib when the wind really picks up. Few production boats offer this detail.

With halyards and reefing lines led aft on the cabin top to winches on either side of the cockpit, you will be able to handle all sail trim tasks from the cockpit; and, with a dodger rigged, you can stay dry and out of the wind while doing so.

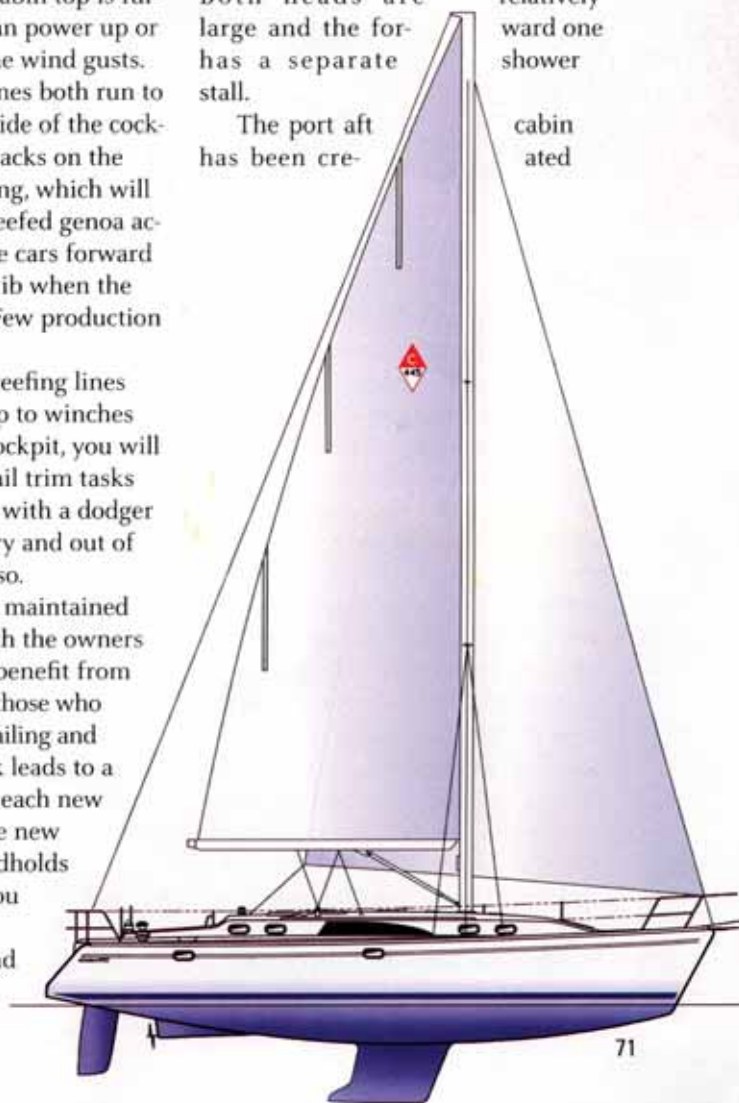
Catalina has always maintained close relationships with the owners of their boats so they benefit from a lot of feedback from those who are actually out there sailing and cruising. This feedback leads to a lot of useful details in each new design. On deck on the new 445, you will find handholds and rails just where you will need them when underway. You will find an anchor locker

forward that is equipped with a large electric windlass and ample room for anchors, rodes and a secondary anchor. And, you will note the 27-inch lifelines that add to safety and security while you are working on deck while sailing.

FLEXIBLE ACCOMMODATIONS

The 445 was designed for a couple who will be cruising on their own but will often have friends and family join them. The accommodation plan has been tailored to meet these specific needs with a large master cabin forward fitted out with a centerline double berth and its own head and a second double cabin aft to starboard with a second head. Both heads are relatively large and the forward one has a separate shower stall.

The port aft cabin has been created





as a flexible living space that can accommodate three different uses. Without the need for fancy tools, you can have either a double berth or upper and lower single berths. Or, if you do not have guests aboard, you can convert the cabin into a workshop and storeroom. *BWS* has not seen a production boat with such a flexible cabin and we think it is a great idea.

The saloon has the large galley to port. The twin sinks are nearly on the centerline so they will drain on both tacks; the front loading fridge faces aft so it doesn't disgorge its contents when the boat heels or rolls; the three-burner, gimballed stove has a cutting board top that you can use as a level surface even when the boat is heeled over or rolling; and, there are large storage lockers and rack space for all of the supplies, cutlery and dishes you will need.

The chart table to starboard has been designed to fit regular Chart-Kits on top and to neatly store a laptop computer inside. A pod at eye level can be designed to house a chartplotter. Radios and other instruments can be installed in the large cabinet outboard of the table. This is a very modern and attractive nav station that will appeal to experienced sailors who will appreciate the fact that it faces forward.

The dinette to port has a folding table that converts from a low coffee table to a large dining table that will seat five or six. The dinette can also be converted into double berth.

To starboard the split settee is long enough to be a sea berth and will be favored in heavy weather since it is right over the boat's center of gravity. A small table folds up in the middle of the settee, which will be useful for playing cards, holding

drinks or just for reading.

The décor and finish of the 445 is modern without being trendy. The furniture is teak veneer with solid teak corners and framing. The doors and drawer fronts are solid teak with hand joined handles and louvers and high quality stainless steel latches and hinges.

The floors, which are all on one level so you don't trip, are teak and holly patterned laminate that is both attractive and easy to keep clean. You can tell the 445 was designed and built by sailors for sailors because there are hand holds everywhere and fiddles on the tables and around the galley counter.

UNDER THE HOOD

The engineering and systems aboard the 445 are all well thought out and of high quality. The engine compartment under the companion-

