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# NORDHAVN 63

CAPABLE OF CROSSING OCEANS,  
COMFORTABLE CRUISING CLOSE TO HOME

**W**e've written about Nordhavn yachts before. We've published numerous sea trials and stories about Nordhavn owners who have taken their boats to far-flung places. As I write this, the first Nordhavn 120 is being delivered, cruising from Hong Kong to Vancouver, B.C., on its own bottom — a 6,000-mile shakedown cruise that should be complete about the time this issue lands in your mailbox.

Knowing what the vessels are capable of, we can only assume that our sea trial of the Nordhavn 63 was a bit of a letdown for the yacht, since we pitted it against the not-so-mean seas off Dana Point instead of miles of lonely ocean. It was not, however, a disappointment for us.

We left Dana Point Harbor and found 2- to 4-foot swells gently rolling through. Eric Leishman of Nordhavn Yachts Southwest put the 63 beam-to-the swells, at which point the yacht rolled with the motion of the ocean. Nothing that would ruin your day, but it would get a little old if you were drifting to catch some fish or just relaxing. Then Leishman activated the ABT-TRAC stabilization fins, and the roll pretty much ceased. Considering these boats are usually purchased to carry the owner a long way, some kind of stabilization is a great idea.

Given its 10-knot top speed, not much is going to happen suddenly on the boat, but we still warned everyone before making hard turns, which were easy and smooth in the 143,000-pound yacht. With the fins engaged, the horizon line stayed nice and level during turns; the 63 leaned out slightly without the fins, but it wasn't much. I was really looking for the lean and trying to create it. I doubt folks sitting in the salon would notice.

Starting our "speed" run at 1700

rpm yielded 7 knots, at which point the engine was burning 7 gph. A bump to 1900 rpm pushed the yacht to 8.3 knots and burned 8.3 gph. At 2000 rpm, which is a pretty good cruise setting, we were traveling 9 knots and burning 10 gph, while wide-open throttle, 2310 rpm, eked out a little more speed to put us at 9.4 knots but pushed the fuel burn to 16 gph. With 2,500 gallons of fuel on board, the 63's range is 2,500 n.m. at 8.3 knots — if you want to push it to the absolute limit. Even if you build in a 20 percent cushion (more than enough), range is still around 2,000 n.m.

We conducted the sea trial from the aft-situated pilothouse. People familiar with the N60 will recognize the 63 as its elongated, aft-pilothouse cousin. The only helm on the 63 is in the pilothouse, and it is an electronics lover's dream. Three 19-inch Green Marine glass displays take up most of the dash and provide near-countless combinations of charts, radar and video feeds. Engine and thruster controls are within easy reach of the dual captain's chairs (one is standard), as are system switches and an electrical panel. Overhead are displays for the autopilot, AIS and a NavNet 3D system; ICOM VHF and HF radios; and gauges for the main and wing engines and the rudder. It's pretty easy to stare. Large chart tables are to port and star-



board of the dash.

Aft of the helm is a J-shaped settee, with room for four, and a table, which has small storage cutouts in the base. Aft of that is the captain's quarters, which includes a head with a shower. Even though the pilothouse is aft, there was still room for an aft deck on that level, with a table and a bench seat that faces aft and has storage underneath. Our test boat's upper aft deck is covered by a custom canvas roof fitted over a latticework of expensive-looking stainless steel frames.

Helm visibility aft is blocked by the captain's quarters, but forward and side views are excellent thanks to windows around three sides of the pilothouse, and watertight doors on either side provide quick access to the



Knowing that owners are going to spend a lot of time aboard, Nordhavn created a luxurious, comfortable interior.

Running photo: Doug Harlow; Interiors: Lily Black

sidedecks. When it's time to dock the yacht, the lack of view aft won't matter, because there are two wing docking stations on the Portuguese bridge and another station on the aft deck.

## COME INSIDE

As nice as the pilothouse is, the main cabin is where folks are going to spend a lot of time during those long passages from one great destination to the next, and that's where Nordhavn was sure to maximize the comfort and luxury factor.

Stepping through the single door from the cockpit, you immediately notice the cherry paneling and cabinetry. Our test boat eschewed the high-gloss look for more of a satin finish, which seems to be appropriate for a





yacht that looks and feels luxurious but that doesn't need the flash and dash, especially when it's going places where it's bound to see few other vessels. The port side of the salon is different than in the first hull (which is pictured). Where a second settee is standard along the port side, creating a conversation area with its opposite, in hull #5, the owner opted to leave the settee out and create a counter-height cabinet that runs from the aft door to the galley counter. It houses a high-low TV and doubles the available storage. Doing that also gave the salon a more open feel. If you're going to be cruising as a couple 90 percent of the time, the choice makes sense. A couple of barrel chairs would be a good addition in this configuration. I doubt a boater with a family constantly aboard will choose to lose the second settee.

The starboard-side settee can seat four people easily, and the dual-base table actually opens in the middle, to allow access to the center seats.

#### TESTER'S OPINION:

**It's apparent on this and other Nordhavn models why high-end buyers like them: immaculate woodwork, tight joinery; elegant granite counters and soles; shining, robust stainless; and high-end appliances, to name a few.**

The people on the ends don't have to move to let people on the inside out. Windows take up most of the port and starboard bulkheads, so natural light pours into the salon.

Forward on the port side is the fully appointed galley. Thanks to overhead cabinets above the counter, the

U-shaped galley is open to the salon, so whoever is on cooking duty can take part in the festivities. And the cook has access to top-of-the-line appliances. GE and Sub Zero are standard, but our test boat has Dacor, Kitchen Air and Wolf badges adorning its machinery. The twin refrigerator comes with four freezer drawers, and it's all paneled in wood to match the rest of the boat. A granite countertop runs around three-fourths of the galley and is broken up only by the stovetop and a double sink.

Opposite the galley is a stairway to the aforementioned pilothouse. Wide wood steps with carpeting and a robust stainless steel railing make the staircase a sturdy, integral, stylish part of the yacht, not an afterthought.

Down two steps and past a utility closet is the master stateroom, to port. A raised queen berth is in the center of the room and runs athwartship. Storage is taken care of by a full-height double hanging locker, a second shorter locker, a built-in bureau/vanity unit and built-in nightstands with drawers on either side of the berth. While it's not huge, the master has full headroom for my 78-inch frame, and two port windows and a hatch let light in, so it doesn't feel confined. You actually step up into the head, which has a shower stall, a Tecma head, granite counters and lots of little drawers for storage.

Forward is the second stateroom. Four portholes and two hatches let in more light than you might expect in bow cabin. The island bed is surrounded by shelves and cabinets above and at bed height. There are even drawers in the foot of the bed. A hanging locker and a built-in bureau on the aft wall complete the storage, and a TV

## SPEC BOX

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 DRAFT 6 ft., 8 in.  
 DISPLACEMENT 143,000 lbs.  
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 ENGINE John Deere #6081AFM, 330 hp  
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 (206) 223-3624; nordhavn.com

hangs above the bureau.

A small, open office area is immediately aft of the forward cabin, and the second head is aft of that. For owners who would rather have a third stateroom than an office, the office can be eliminated, which would move the second head forward and turn the utility closet into a bunk room.

Outdoor dining or lounging on the main deck is easy and comfortable in the covered cockpit. Our test boat's cockpit has a built-in unit that includes a sink, a barbecue grill and a docking station. Tables and settees are left to the owner's discretion.

Nordhavns aren't typically beginner boats, especially the larger models. Leishman said the company has younger clients but that a majority of his owners are retired and have some money. It's apparent on this and other Nordhavn models why high-end buyers like them: immaculate woodwork, tight joinery; elegant granite counters and soles; shining, robust stainless; and high-end appliances, to name a few. Company designers know that Nordhavn yacht owners are going to spend a lot of time aboard, and they want to make that experience as pleasant as possible. 🐾