

BOATING

& SHIP'S SYSTEMS

ON THE DRAWING BOARD

Hatteras 68 Convertible

While out testing another boat recently, we happened to see a gorgeous sportfishing boat traveling inbound as we headed out to sea. The owner of our test boat commented how beautiful the lines were and that he'd never seen a boat like that before. He asked if I knew what it was. I had to laugh because it was a Hatteras.



Episodes like this just prove how far the company has come in recent years. Gone are the sharp corners on the cabin-side windows. In fact, about the only place you can describe as sharp

when referring to latter-day Hatteras fishing boats is the entry. Every other angle boasts a radius curve.

Hatteras has always enjoyed a reputation for building a truly excellent

heavy-sea vessel. The newest member of the fleet, the 68 Convertible, will be no exception. While the lines and aesthetics have changed, some design parameters have not. For example, the double-chine running surface remains to add strength and stiffness while angling spray down and away from the boat. One impressive attribute found on all Hatteras boats is the addition of prop tunnels that allow shallower shaft angles. This improves efficiency by directing propeller thrust more nearly parallel to the water's surface instead of at a downward angle. This makes the boat

LOA	68'6"
BEAM	21'6"
DRAFT	5'3"
WEIGHT	126,500 pounds
FUEL	2,100 gallons
WATER	415 gallons
MAX POWER	T2,000-hp MTUs
BASE PRICE	\$2,882,000

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run flatter with less drag and better head-sea ability. It also lets you squeak into shallow harbors and anchorages that you might not have been able to before.

To augment the new

premium vinylester resins to prevent osmotic blistering. But elsewhere, it employs vacuum-bagging, resin infusion and advanced composite construction for strong, light-

running surface, Hatteras also provides deeper gear reductions to turn larger props. Slower-turning propellers provide higher efficiencies, reduced vibration and increased fuel economy.

Hatteras hasn't changed the way it builds boats, favoring a solid, hand-laid fiberglass hull with

settee aft to port. The settee hides storage for another six rod/reel combos.

Though compact, the galley affords even the most discriminating chef every convenience. From undercounter refrigerator/freezer drawers providing more than 11 cubic feet of space to the multiple-burner cooktop, built-in coffee maker, microwave and Corian counters, this space works very well.

Belowdecks, you'll find the obligatory island queen-berth stateroom in the forepeak and a washer/dryer in the companionway. I particularly like the sliding curved door in the showers. But the truly creative feature is in the guest cabin. The twin berths have an insert to convert them to a really big king-size berth. Rampage's joinerwork, gloss finishes and teak-and-holly flooring lend that traditional yachting flair so commonly missing in many Euro-styled yachts today.

weight interior bulkheads and stringers.

Topside, decks and superstructure also consist of Divinycell core. In fact, that huge superstructure you see in the rendering consists of just one piece for maximum strength and integrity. And finally, unlike many competitors, Hatteras paints the hull, engine room and bilges with a hard, nonporous, high-gloss polyurethane finish that inhibits fading from ultraviolet degradation and makes cleaning infinitely easier. And speaking of the engine room, 68 buyers can choose any of four engine packages, from twin 1,550-hp Cats to 2,000-hp MTUs.

The centerline helm on the flybridge allows easy access to the companion seat to port. An unusual seating arrangement forward of the helm console easily sports enough room to accommodate the defensive front line of any NFL team, with room to spare.

A 192-square-foot cockpit offers plenty of work space for anglers and crew, while an ever-popular mezzanine level keeps the spectators happy and out of the

way. Of course, every fishing amenity you could want in a cockpit comes as standard equipment. In fact, cockpit helm controls, a livewell, a transom fish box, refrigeration in the in-deck fish boxes and an Eskimo ice maker constitute the only available options.

Belowdecks you get to choose between two layouts. The only difference between the two: four-cabin designs offer the port guest cabin with either over/under berths or side-by-side twins. A mirror-image twin cabin faces it across the companionway, while queen-berth staterooms fill the bow and midship ends of the living space.

Finally, a wide-open salon and galley area will please traditionalists with its C-shaped settee, armchairs and larger-than-average dinette.

Indeed, Hatteras has come a long way in refining aesthetics to meet modern tastes. But in sea-keeping ability, nothing has changed. Hatteras still provides a sense of security that you and your family can count on when things get nasty offshore.

—Dean Travis Clarke