

# BOATING

## & SHIP'S SYSTEMS

### Viking 52 Open

Enjoy the Wide-Open Spaces

By Dean Travis Clarke

It's been a while since Viking introduced an express-style boat — and certainly never one quite this big. But as I get older and seek greater comfort, I've discovered that express layouts appeal to me more and more. There's no flybridge ladder to

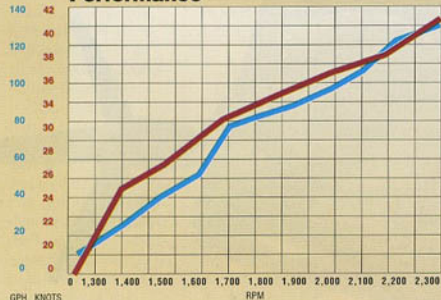
climb, you can reach the cockpit from the helm in a flash, and I don't have to separate my guests into cockpit and flybridge teams. And on the larger models like the 52 Open, the interior boasts just as much space and amenities as a convertible.

#### SPECIFICATIONS

LOA	56'11"
BEAM	17'3"
DRAFT	5'
WEIGHT	57,040 pounds
FUEL	1,200 gallons
WATER	200 gallons
MAX POWER	T 1,360 hp MAN diesels
BASE PRICE	\$1,509,000

Viking Yachts  
New Gretna, New Jersey  
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#### Performance



#### Performance

The first thing we encountered on our way out of Port Everglades on Florida's east coast was the 5-foot wake of a 65-foot Hatteras as she came down off plane to enter the inlet. We dropped back to about half-throttle and hit the wake without a drop of spray or the slightest jar — it was a nonevent.

The seas, just 1 to 3 feet out of the southeast, offered little challenge to the 52 Open — nor did a hard-over turn at 30 knots. With the tabs at zero, the power-assist steering allowed me to use a single finger to change course by 180 degrees in the space of just over two

ships, never once lost bottom lock.

The 52 backs down with total control at an amazing 8 knots and spins rapidly. When stopped and drifting beam to the seas, the 52 exhibited a medium roll moment (distance it rolls side to side) with very gentle transitions (roll direction change).

It also boasted a remarkably quiet ride at all speeds for an express design, where you don't have the benefit of the flybridge between you and the exhausts.

At trolling speed, the 52 produced an average wake, with subsurface turbulence from the props extending back to about the third wave and not enough surface white water to cover up the twin alleys.

#### Bridge

The entire starboard side of the bridge deck consists of a molded module containing a refrigerator, storage shelves and the Eskimo ice maker. Opposite to port, an L-shaped settee cradles those less enthusiastic guests who don't want to watch the action from the mezzanine. Under the settee, you'll find cavernous storage space to hide rods and gear.

I particularly liked the Murray Products helm



boat lengths. I might add that throughout it all, the Furuno sounder, with its transducer mounted amid-

and companion seats. With the centerline helm, the companion seats provide more than



enough room for passengers to get in and out without disturbing the helmsman. Speaking of the helm, the traditional Palm Beach-style pod with single-lever controls looks good and incorporates excellent ergonomic characteristics. Hidden behind a hatch over the helmsman's head, you'll find a pair of Miya Epoch electric teaser reels with a wireless remote control that allows the captain to operate them from the tuna tower.

I would like to see one very minor change made on the bridge: The painted trim around the lift-up covers on the expansive instrument consoles cuts off your visibility of the bottom half of the lower tier of instruments with the cover closed. It shouldn't be a problem to narrow that trim band.

Visibility everywhere else from the helm — all 360 degrees of it — couldn't be better. And I saw no hint of distortion when looking through the wind-shield corners.

### Engine Room

This deck doesn't lift on rams like you'd find on smaller express boats, so the headroom remains fixed. Generators and compressors lie along the aft bulkhead, while quieter machinery, such as filters and electrical equipment, lines the forward transverse bulkhead.

The engines mount on powder-coated steel beams supported by vacuum-bagged, foam-filled stringers. And while it's a bit of a squeeze to get out-board of the engines, you'll

find all routine-maintenance points easily accessible on centerline.

Viking coats everything with white Awlgrip — so the engine room gleams with the bright gloss of an operating theater. Cleanup couldn't be easier, and noticing any leaks will be a no-brainer.

Delta-T supplied the ventilation system that both brings air in (actually slightly pressurizing the compartment) for maximum engine efficiency, and exhausts air for cooling.



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The valves for the emergency crash pumps can be reached from the engine hatch without entering the compartment.

## Interior

Express hulls generally feel like they deliver less living space than convertibles do. The Viking 52 qualifies as an exception to that rule. As you head below, the L-shaped settee to port accommodates a triangular high-low table



that could easily sit five adults for dinner. The galley takes up the entire starboard salon bulkhead, providing every convenient appliance you'd find in a luxury home, including under-counter refrigerator and freezer drawers and a four-burner ceramic cooktop. Of course, in the same room, the chef and guests can all enjoy the huge plasma-screen TV and Bose home theater while preparing dinner.

Moving forward, a guest cabin with over/under singles shares the day head just aft with the salon. The master stateroom lies forward with an island double berth on centerline, plenty of storage and its own stand-up head and separate shower. And when I say plenty of storage, I mean that if you fill every storage spot on this 52, be prepared to repaint the waterline an inch or two higher.

You'll discover numer-

ous hatches in the cabin soles below, affording easy access to fittings, pumps, storage, valves and transducers.

## Cockpit

I love mezzanines. They provide lots more storage space and certainly make more comfortable seating than hard, fiberglass modules. On the 52, the mezzanine hides (from port to starboard) two freezer units, dry storage, an insulated drink box and a set of tackle drawers.

You'll find five hatches cross the aft half of the cockpit that contain a livewell, a huge fish box, an ice receiver for the Eskimo and lazarette access to steerage and plumbing. Another sizable fish box graces the transom on centerline. Under the gunwale and side walkway to port, you'll also find the washdown spigots and storage for gaffs, mops and other items. The shore-power cord and the oil-change outlet lie to starboard. As you'd expect, Viking provides a tuna door with a lift-up gate. But thankfully, it also mounts several steps with handholds on the outside of the transom below the waterline, so whether you fall in unexpectedly or intentionally take a dip, you'll be able to climb back out of the water.

Even with the mezzanine, this 148-square-foot

cockpit accommodates numerous anglers and crew without collisions. I also like how clean and uncluttered Viking built this arena — all of the storage compartments come with hidden latches, and the

rounded coamings remain comfortable to lean against even without pads.

## Design and Construction

As usual, Viking designs its boats in-house.

## BOAT OF INTEREST

### Chadwick 57

Is it a charter captain's luxury workboat or a millionaire's no-frills sport-fisherman?... Tough call. The Chadwick 57 comes with every feature and amenity you could want, and the fit and finish throughout is exacting and perfect. What the Chadwick doesn't have is tens of thousands of dollars of flashy frills.

Proprietor Jamie Chadwick, a third-generation boat-builder from Harker's Island, North Carolina, carries with him many generations of an almost indecipherable Southern dialect peculiar to that island alone. I found myself putting my hand to my ear and playing deaf so I could get him to repeat things a Yankee like myself couldn't begin to understand. But his boats I understand intimately. They transcend language, speaking for themselves in functional beauty with no rough edges.

## Performance

This Chadwick's owner runs his boat, the *Carnivore*, for charter out of Morehead City, North Carolina. He also plans to take a year's sabbatical with his wife and four children, consisting of extensive cruising throughout the Caribbean and both coasts of Central America. So sensibly, fuel efficiency and midrange throttle response rank higher than top-end speed for him. He chose twin 825 hp Detroit Series 60 diesels — smaller power than many private yachts of this size would use. Despite the relatively small horsepower, the Chadwick 57 lifted onto plane in just under six seconds.

In 2- to 4-foot seas, the *Carnivore* offered an incredibly stable ride in a beam sea. She drifted with a short roll moment with very gentle transitions.

Use tabs to drop the bow up-sea, and the Chadwick provides an extremely smooth, dry ride. Down-sea, I ran for about four minutes before I needed to make a minor wheel adjustment. At 30 knots, turn the wheel hard over, and the Chadwick 57 reverses course in an astonishing three boat lengths — and never falls off plane.

Hooked up to a baby bluefin, I discovered that the *Carnivore* backs down straight as an arrow at 6 knots and spins like a boat half her size. She also boasts one of the cleanest wakes at trolling speed I've ever seen. The moderate prop wash dissipates by the first wave back at 7 knots. Tiny flecks of surface white water mark the hull's passage.

## Flybridge

Without a doubt, the visibility from the helm constitutes the most significant attribute of this bridge. From the wheel, you can see 75 percent of both the foredeck

And, like other sister ships in the fleet, this 52 boasts a solid fiberglass bottom and end-grain balsa-cored topsides, decks and house. Viking also injects the fiberglass stringers with high-density foam.

Other than the obvious items such as engines, electronics and pumps, virtually every part of a Viking is manufactured in the company's 600,000-square-foot plant in New Jersey. Viking has always been populated

with progressive thinkers, from the Healey family on down the line. Viking was one of the first companies to utilize frameless windows in cabin sides, underwater exhausts, and dedicated tower and electronics com-

panies as Viking divisions. The company even heats its plant in winter with the wood scraps left from building boats in a furnace the company designed itself — that's Viking innovation personified.

and the cockpit. Instrument pods rise on rams, and the new Bausch American outlet in North Carolina did a superb job on the hardtop with recessed teaser reels.

A straight settee along the starboard side and an L-shaped one in front of the console provide plenty of seating. Of course, all the seats as well as the console hide copious storage.



### Engine Room

The *Camivore* has very tight engine-room access, and once inside, you'll find more room outboard of the power plants than you will above them. To maintain the sleek, low profile of the hull and house, the cabin sole leaves just enough room above the engines to pop off the coolant cap. So even average-size owners and crew will find only kneeling headroom within.

Chadwick employs numerous transverse bulkheads in his boats — a terrific strength and safety feature. One, with a heavy, soundproof door, encloses the aft end of the engine compartment, adding to the tight access. However, it makes a superb first line of defense against fire and water intrusion from other compartments, and it certainly attenuates the noise that so often rumbles through the passageway to the under-cockpit area.

### Interior

In addition to the owner's charter work, he has a close-knit family who also fishes and cruises with him regularly. This interior provides room for four children in over/under twin berths: two in the forward cabin and two more to starboard in the companionway. The master stateroom, with a queen berth to port, has its own head with shower, while the other berths all share a head. Each cabin provides loads of storage for both rods and personal gear. Additionally, Chadwick provides substantial stowage under the companionway stairs and in the brow.

The salon sports an L-shaped settee to port with the galley just forward. A dinette that seats three adults faces the galley, while a small built-in seat with a desk serves as a navigation/work station just aft.

### Cockpit

I have never seen a teak cockpit sole like this 57's: Rather than standard strip planking caulked with black Thiokol, this boat has sheets of teak with a custom compass-rose inlay centered on the sailfish pod stanchion. It's quite lovely and in the end, proved less expensive than the strip planks.

Modules under the forward bulkhead hide the Eskimo ice maker's collection bin with an access hatch on the front face, a rigging station, a deep freeze (that drops in rather than being integral for easy replacement) and an insulated drink box.

Hooks under the gunwale provide gaff and mop storage, while the five rod holders in each gunwale (with two more in the transom) assure a gargantuan trolling spread should you so choose.

Other Chadwick signature features include that oversize overhang, sure to please the cockpit denizens who desire shade, and fuel fills in the engine access with molded troughs to catch any minor overflow. I say minor because the fuel-level sight tubes are right next to the fills. How sensible is that?

### Design and Construction

True to the Carolina custom-boat genre, Chadwick cold-molds his boats' hulls and cores the cabinets and bulkheads with Tri-Cell. Unique, semicircular trim tabs fit flush inside the prop tunnels.

Not the lightest boat of its size, Jamie Chadwick claims, "I build these boats as strong as I can."

Overall, I found this particular Chadwick very handsome and elegant, but without the flash many owners have come to expect. Everything that you need on a well-equipped sport-fisherman is here and in exactly the right place.

— Dean Travis Clarke

## SPECIFICATIONS

LOA	56'8"
BEAM	17'4"
DRAFT	4'
WEIGHT	56,000 pounds
FUEL	1,000 gallons
WATER	190 gallons
POWER	T 825 hp Detroit 60 Series
BASE PRICE	On request

Chadwick Boatworks  
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