



## X-Yachts Xc 47

Rethinking every detail focused on performance and comfort, the X-Yachts Xc 47 takes the bluewater cruiser to a new level.

BY ADAM COVE

A 20- to 30-knot northerly wind and temps hovering around 39°F on the edge of the Baltic Sea in November are not generally considered prime sailing conditions. But bundled underneath my four layers and winter hat, I couldn't stop smiling.

We'd left the slip in Haderslev, Denmark, in hull No. 1 of X-Yachts' Xc 47, and already—after spending a few days at the X-Yachts factory and talking with the people who'd designed and built this boat—I was excited to sail her. Billed as “the ultimate cruiser,” the Xc 47 is phenomenal—innovative, comfortable, elegant, and fast on and off the wind, pointing

like a race boat. She is built to be sailed around the world but still delivers on an afternoon cruise; I'd even be concerned to have her as a competitor on the racecourse.

Her DNA harkens to her predecessors, the Xc 45 and Xc 50, but the design brief for the Xc 47 was far more ambitious: to create the best cruiser ever built. This meant dedication to performance while maintaining comfortable seagoing characteristics, creating more volume and comfort below, and rethinking every detail. In fact, this boat incorporates features I have yet to see on another boat and focus on performance is evident throughout—in one example, more than 200 design hours to perfect its rudder shape, alone.

During the hour or so it took to travel to open water, our passage through the tight channels was nearly silent. Hull No. 1 is the first boat in the world to be outfitted with Oceanvolt's brand new and Overall DAME Award-winning HighPower ServoProp 25, thanks to X-Yachts' development partnership with Oceanvolt. While electric propulsion is an option, the Oceanvolt arrangement, combined with the 11kw Fischer-Panda 48V DC generator, was such a beautifully engineered solution, allowing for kilowatts of energy generation while underway, that it would be tough not to tick the option box.

The system incorporates a variable pitch propeller that automatically optimizes thrust and regeneration. This maximizes the effectiveness of the eight-battery lithium bank, which has enough power to propel the Xc 47 20 nautical miles at 6.5 knots (and to a top speed of 8 knots). Beyond that, the generator stretches the range to 550 nautical miles at the same speed, based on the diesel tank size of 79 gallons. An upgraded lithium engine bank is available to extend the range.

Whether hybrid propulsion or diesel, X-Yachts' obsession with noise reduction means this is an exceptionally quiet boat. The engine room is fully contained within sandwich panels comprised of a rubber core between two wood faces. Following is another layer of rubber, a layer of rockwool, and then specialized aluminum panels shaped to control noise and reverberation. An additional muffler is added for a diesel engine exhaust, and the generator includes a gas/water separator to route the water discharge below the waterline.

A closer look below deck reveals rubber bumpers between all floorboards in the cabin sole. With wood faces and foam core, these floorboards provide a soundproof barrier for the equipment beneath. Even the ceiling panels, mounted with a strong Velcro for quick access above, have an integrated layer of foam for noise reduction.

Under sail with a reefed main and blade on the keel-stepped, aluminum John Mast spar, the most important contributor to quiet was the boat's stiffness. The Xc 47 is solid. X-Yachts uses a galvanized steel grid system deep

*Sleek and powerful, the X-Yachts Xc 47 takes bluewater cruising to a new level of performance.*

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*Clockwise from top left: Fresh thinking abounds in the Xc 47, including the elegant system that runs lines and halyards aft with an opening "hatch" allowing full access to the sheaves and genoa car, and the all-weather ventilation above the nav station and galley. With the jib car hatch closed, all is clean and clear.*

in their boats; its low profile helps maximize cabin space. The rig and keel load directly into this structure. This translates into performance: Higher rig load capacities mean bigger sails, which are balanced by the ability to support a 40% keel weight (ballast) ratio. The backstay is also extremely effective because the boat is super stiff.

The crew benefits from the quiet the rigid structure enables, as well as from the more comfortable motion the low center of gravity provides—and let's not forget boatspeed.

Our boat had a furling boom by Danish company FurlerBoom. Though I prefer a more traditional arrangement with slab reefing, this solution made sense for this boat, and its clear and easy operation didn't compromise the Elvstrøm sail shape.

As we beat towards Brandsø in waters fairly protected but subject to rambunctious currents, the Xc 47 felt perfectly at home in the conditions. I felt a slight weather

helm on the wood-rimmed Carbonautica wheels—perfect, because it means the boat talks to the driver. As we conversed upwind, the merest corrections kept us on course. The chop was no match for the way she sliced through the water. The breeze was hovering around the high 20s, a gust would hit 30, and then a lull would bring a more subdued 25 knots. With 7.5-8 knots of boatspeed, the Xc 47 easily stayed on her feet, tacking through 70 degrees and carving upwind at an apparent wind angle of 20 degrees. This is far from your average bluewater boat and pure exhilaration to sail.

Multiple helm positions mean all-day comfort, from sitting on the edge of the cockpit to using the lift-up angled foot platforms. The primary and dedicated main-sheet winches are easily accessible from this same spot, along with dedicated clutches for each sheet and halyard and a line organizer just below.

Under-deck lines and halyards are pretty standard

these days, but the Xc 47's push to innovate extends even here. A clever system leads each control line from the mast base through turning blocks and into separate low-friction stainless tubes incorporated into the sleek design of the semi-decksalon windows. The forward turning blocks—which are really more like stacked sheaves with an exceptionally low-profile—are accessible via a molded hatch that quickly flips open to also allow access to the ends of the jib tracks. It's the cleanest, smartest, most elegant system I have seen to bring sail controls aft and keep the deck clear.

The helms, too, push into new territory. The wheel is incorporated into an inboard, L-shaped extension of the coaming that forms an ergonomic backrest for sitting facing forward in the cockpit seats. Molded into it just inboard is a taller instrument pedestal that holds Raymarine Axiom MFDs as well as throttle, thruster, and associated boat handling gear.

A generous lazarette provides liferaft storage with a gas spring lifting support for easy removal (with alternate on-deck stowage under lifting transom seat). An innovative davit system, available as an option, launches the dinghy by opening the transom door.

As we turned off the wind, the breeze had already begun to drop to the low 20s, and we eased the main from the traveler car on the carbon-reinforced coachroof. The Xc 47 shifted gears into double-digit speeds. Perhaps in warmer weather or a race we would have popped the kite, but we were all quite pleased with 10- to 12-knot boatspeeds with just a main and furling blade.

A quick note about the foredeck: The anchor roller and sprit were specifically designed to accommodate different style anchors, fitting for world cruising. A large sail locker sits aft of the chain locker, and in addition to hanging rods for sheets, it safely houses the motor portion of the windlass and a ladder and handrail for docking bow-to.

*Understated Danish minimalism belies the abundance of thoughtful details throughout the bright, well-ventilated salon, above. Note the raised galley floor and the stylish beam bisecting the salon windows; this beam incorporates the low-friction, stainless tubes that carry lines and halyards aft.*





*Chilly at the helm of the Xc 47 in Denmark, top. The boat's highly balanced, slight weather helm provided excellent feel. The cockpit emphasizes practical ergonomics and comfort, with innovative helm pedestals, bottom.*

A watertight bulkhead is aft of the anchor compartment and sail locker.

The same attention to detail on deck is found below. With inspiration from the archetypal Danish home, the X-Yachts team focused on simplicity, natural light, open space, and ventilation. A full-scale, heeling interior mock-up of the Xc 47 helped builders and designers refine every aspect of the layout, and the design's Danish

minimalism belies the thoughtfulness and complexity throughout. Handholds are in abundance, including the comfortable milled grooves on the inside of all the wooden fiddles. Well-finished joinery with smooth edges adorns the spacious cabin; storage is plentiful, with gas springs on all the overhead cabinet doors.

Even with the cloud cover, the cabin felt bright. The boat has 16 flush hatches oriented to open in multiple directions for maximum air flow. A special ventilation system aft of the salon windows uses the principles of a dorade to provide fresh air to the cabin in even the worst conditions. For those warmer days, hull No. 1 is outfitted with air conditioning, complete with a ducted wine chiller. The engine batteries can be used to operate this

system at night for a full silent mode.

The recessed floor in the main salon creates an open feel, while the raised floor in the galley allows for lovely views as well as immediate, easy access to batteries, tanks, pumps, and filters beneath the panels. No furniture needs to be moved for maintenance or even swapping out tanks (which are suspended from the steel sub-structure). This also keeps weight in the boat low and centered—per-

formance again. In another modern approach, just one through-hull fitting is used with a manifold to supply the generator, air conditioning, and watermaker.

The galley is built for passages, with a wraparound design, expansive cold storage, and an electric gimbaled stove. Small features like the flip-around fiddles that provide a place to brush crumbs ease small tasks during a passage.

The forward-facing nav station to starboard has a clean look but maintains a complete control center behind easy-to-open panels with ample storage for charts and other instruments. The seat is removable and doubles as an extra seat at the salon table or a table for the built-in, extremely comfortable couch (which is slightly lower than the other furniture providing an at-home feel). The expanding salon table rotates and lowers to turn into a large bed, while a two-part hinged reclining backrest assists in more relaxed lounging.

The forward owner's cabin boasts a 6-foot, 10-inch-long bed, the largest X-Yachts has ever made, with extensive storage. Hatches overhead provide clear views of the sails (and stars). Even in the ensuite head and shower, the details stand out; the door frame is a continuous one-piece ring frame, beautiful and extremely strong.

While a workshop is an option for the starboard aft berth, this build had twin aft cabins. A flexible design lets separate bunks merge into single bunk with large storage underneath and cleverly hidden electrical plugs to charge up the crew's devices. The cockpit seats open for additional ventilation and secondary ingress in these cabins. An optional washer/dryer was in the aft starboard cabin. Access to the steering system and generator was also easy from these spaces.

Similar to the aft cabins, a single step down leads into the shared aft head. This forms a natural basin for water drainage, even while heeled, and a true wet locker in the outboard face of this head shares that same drainage.

As we rounded Årø, we proceeded through a skinny passage that led us back to the Haderslev Fjord. Despite the tight angle to the wind and the narrow channel, we continued under sail as the breeze dropped, and the Xc 47 was agile and performed just as well in the light air and close quarters as in heavy air. With the late-season sunset creeping in, we motored the last few miles to the dock. The Side-Power bow and stern thrusters (with a variable speed option) made docking effortless.

We plugged in two shorepower cords to charge engine batteries and run house loads; it takes 8 to 10 hours for a full engine battery bank charge. When at sea, or with just a single shorepower cord, A DC-to-DC converter draws on the engine bank to charge the house bank. This converter handles most loads, and the house batteries help with the spike loads. For times when the Xc 47 may sit on anchor, solar panels on the cabintop charge the 24-volt house bank.

By design, the engine bank acts like large house bank



**LOA/LWL** 49'11"/43'2"  
**Beam** 15'0"  
**Draft** 7'7" (std), 6'7" (shallow)  
**Air Draft** 75'6" (not including Windex)  
**Ballast** 12,103 lbs  
**Displacement** (light) 32,849 lbs  
**Sail Area** 1,328 sq ft upwind, 2,669 sq ft downwind  
**Engine** 80 HP diesel or 25kW electric  
**Designer** X-Yachts  
**Builder** X-Yachts, www.x-yachts.com  
**Price Sail-Away (diesel)** \$865,200  
**(electric option)** \$1.2 million  
(prices based on Euro exchange rate at press time)

when offshore, keeping the battery bank sizes reasonable. And with the variable pitch propeller, the amount of power generation can be intentionally limited. So, in a long-distance situation, instead of cycling through periods of higher generation, the system can be adjusted to produce, say, 300w or 500w maximum. The hybrid boat weighs about 220 pounds more than the diesel version. With all that weight low, there is no noticeable difference in sailing performance, but the hybrid system clearly carries distinct advantages for passagemaking.

During my tour of the X-Yachts factory, I was invited to see all aspects of the build process. Each Xc 47 is built to order, and each is rigged and tested in a thorough, five-day process before leaving. The hull is built with an epoxy resin and cored with foam via an infusion process. In an approach that deviates from production builders, X-Yachts does not gelcoat any portion of the hull below the waterline. This means they can fully inspect the hull (due to its translucent nature) after molding, which includes two days of baking in an oven to ensure a full cure and a beautifully straight hull. X-Yachts applies barrier coats and bottom paint to the smooth bottom.

The keel—a cast iron foil bolted to lead bulb—is fully encapsulated in fiberglass and epoxy resin and cured at 149°F for a full day in a precision mold. It creates an impressively smooth keel shape that rivals some of the best fairing work I have seen.

Going back to the drawing board with this boat's systems layouts to focus on efficiency and accessibility, emphasizing performance in every aspect, and melding style and comfort with functionality and build quality needed for safe, successful, fun bluewater passagemaking, X-Yachts has made the case that with the Xc 47, it has built the ultimate performance luxury cruiser. *AL*