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# Sailing

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# Boat Test Hanse 505

# Effortless elegance

Combining speed and beauty, this new German-built cruiser has the fit and finish to turn heads





As if the sailing business isn't challenging enough, many builders feel obligated to keep one eye over their shoulder as they try to figure out the future. They agonize over the right mix of tradition and technology, the balance between aesthetics and function, struggling to produce boats for today's discriminating sailors while respecting the pedigree of previous models. German builder Hanse Yachts has shed this burden by building boats that look the future square in the eye. And judging by Hanse's ever-increasing worldwide market share, it's a vision that many sailors appreciate. The Judel/Vrolijk designed 505 is Hanse's latest midrange, modern cruiser, and we had the opportunity to sail it after the recent Strictly Sail Miami boat show.

Plumb bowed, high sided with a near flush deck and a flat sheerline, the 505 is the epitome of Euro-style, big boat sleek. If you have any taste for modern design you can't deny that it's a great-looking boat. The 505 replaces the successful 495<sup>+</sup> model but it's patterned, particularly in the uncluttered deck layout complete with sunning areas, after the larger 575. A powerful sloop rig with double swept spreaders and an air draft of 72 feet 6 inches, the 505 carries more than 1,300 square feet of sail and still manages to include an easy-to-handle, self-tacking jib. It's beamy at 15 feet 7 inches, and it carries

the beam well aft but the long waterline balances the proportions rather nicely.

We had one of those ideal Florida February days for our test sail, too nice really, with sunny skies and a steady 10- to 12-knot easterly wind. We could have used a few dark clouds and 15 more knots of breeze to really put the 505 through its paces. The turquoise shallows of Biscayne Bay were shimmering as we hauled up the main with the electric winch in the cockpit and unfurled the headsail. We settled in on a close reach and, after a bit of trim, had the boat sailing flat and fast at near 7 knots.

#### On deck

The 505's cockpit is comfortable and well engineered. In a trend that began with multihulls, it's on one level, so there's no step, sill or bridgedeck between the companionway and cockpit sole. A clever drop-down stowaway companionway door can be quickly deployed when the conditions get rough. Speaking of the companionway, the decks to either side are free of winches and rope clutches. By leading all the sail control lines back to the coaming just forward of each helm station there's room for two water-protected stowage scoops for phones and personal items. The seats and backs are sculpted for lower back support and the large table has a 12-volt fridge in the center, so there's no need to go below for a cold beer.

The sail controls are routed from the base of the mast to the helm stations mostly under deck—it's an incredibly clean layout. Two





- 1** The pulpit has a teak step for mooring bow-to and there is an attachment point for an A-sail or code zero on the bow roller. The headsail furler is also integrated into the stemhead fitting.
- 2** Hanse offers many unique options, including clever storage solutions such as this dedicated wine storage.
- 3** A drop-down stowaway companionway door can be quickly deployed, and the decks to either side are free of winches and rope clutches. Two large aft lazarettes can swallow docklines and a life raft.
- 4** Hanse's signature transom design features a fold-down door that becomes a wide, easy-to-access swim platform.

# Hanse 505

LOA 50'6"

LWL 44'5"

Beam 15'7"

Draft 6'6" (optional), Draft 6'9" (standard)

Displ. 30,900 lbs.

Ballast 9,820 lbs. (optional), 8,830 lbs. (standard)

Sail Area 1,390 sq. ft.



**Hanse Yachts US**  
29 Towbridge Cr. Rowley, MA 01969  
978-903-0380  
[www.hanseyachts.com](http://www.hanseyachts.com)

Base Boat Price

**\$381,000**

electric primary winches do all the heavy lifting and the only disadvantage is that you must clear the winch, pop the clutch and reload the winch with a different control line when making adjustments. However, it makes a lot more sense to do this from the helm than from the aft end of the coachroof. The low deck profile translates into great sight lines from either helm. There are two large aft lazarettes, one makes an ideal life raft compartment. And in what is now a Hanse signature design feature, the fold-down transom becomes a wide, easy-access swim platform.

## The details

The boat cut through the slight chop without so much as moistening the lovely teak decks as I made my way forward. I would have liked a longer handrail along the coachroof, but the fastener-free teak provides excellent nonskid. Also, there are no lines to stumble on. The 505 felt solid in the water, and not just because of its 30,900 pounds of displacement. The construction is first rate. The hull is solid laminate below the waterline and balsa cored in the topsides and on deck, a very sensible way to maximize strength and minimize weight. Vinylester resin is used throughout lamination schedule. A robust fiberglass grid in the hull provides the structural muscle that supports the rig loads and the backing for Hanse's T-Speed cast iron keel that is externally fastened with stainless steel bolts. The standard draft is 6 feet 9 inches while the shoal draft is just 3 inches shorter.

The 10 opening hatches are mounted flush to the deck, lending a sense of elegance and eliminating toe stubbers. Deep channels ensure proper drainage. I like the bulwark, which ranges from 3 to just under 6 inches and extends a feeling of security along the deck edge. Up forward, the pulpit has a teak step for those times when you moor bow-to, and there is an attachment point for an asymmetrical sail or code zero on the bow roller. The headsail furler is also integrated into the stemhead fitting. Our test boat was fitted with a huge sail locker forward, a great feature that housed not only sails but also fenders and mooring lines. On some models this space is another cabin.

The slightly fractionally rigged spar is keel stepped and the chainplates are integral to the bulwark, a clever design that will



eliminate the worry of crevice corrosion years down the line. The self-tacking headsail includes a forward track that allows for very tight sheeting angles. Inboard genoa tracks are optional for the larger 105% headsail. The mainsheet is led to two stand-up deck blocks in a bridle arrangement near the center point of the boom. This loads the boom up and a traveler might be a better option, even if it has to be well forward. The compromise of course is to keep the cockpit and companionway area uncluttered.

### Down below

The Hanse 505 is available with several different interior plans, and the moment I dropped below I was struck by the high level of fit and finish, and the stylish design innovation. This is definitely not your Mom's old boat. Five cabin plans are offered. Owner's versions include an elegant double cabin forward with a head and shower in separate compartments. Owners also have an array of finish options, including wood (mahogany, oak, cherry), 30 different upholstery fabrics and even choices for the galley countertops.

The galley lines the port side and includes drawer-style refrigeration with an optional large freezer drawer. A four-burner stove and oven, double sinks and a microwave are standard. Oh yes, there's also a dishwasher and built-in espresso machine. The wine cooler is optional, however. Cooking in a side galley can be a challenge, especially on port tack but the 505 has more than adequate fiddles and also, it's a boat that's meant to be sailed on its lines. An advantage of this arrangement is that the cook is not isolated in any way.

The saloon is masterful. There's an L-shaped settee to starboard, it's actually more of a couch with a large table that comfortably seats more people than you should ever have on a boat. There are lockers above and below and the aura is of a chic Berlin apartment. I was surprised how much light the hull ports let in and coupled with the overhead hatches the saloon is bathed in natural light. The optional retractable television emerges from the centerline console.

The owner's version includes an island berth forward with bureaus to port and starboard. The aft cabins are also generously sized doubles with hanging lockers and ample storage on overhead shelves. I really like the optional utility room tucked away to port.



The elegantly finished interior is bright and airy thanks to abundant hatches and opening portlights, top. The dedicated navigation station has plenty of storage and room for paper charts, above.

Not only is the washing machine hidden away here, but it's also an excellent spot for a workbench. It can be fitted with a bunk as well so that it doubles as an extra private cabin.

A 72-horsepower Volvo diesel is the standard power plant, accessed from behind the companionway and also through hatches in the aft cabins. It provides plenty of punch, and the fuel capacity is 79 gallons. The transmission is a saildrive instead of a shaft and although this seems to be a big boat for this arrangement, saildrives, with their horizontally positioned props, are very efficient. The standard prop is a three-blade fixed model, but I'd opt for an optional feathering or folding alternative. Freshwater capacity is 166 gallons but a watermaker is almost essential, especially to keep the dishwasher and washing machine happy.

### Under sail

Back on the bay, the breeze was holding steady as we eased the 505 off onto a broad

reach. I learned that our test boat had just arrived in Florida, fresh from an Atlantic crossing that began near the factory in Greifswald on the Baltic Sea. The boat participated in the ARC rally from the Canary Islands to St. Lucia, and then made its way north to Florida, an 8,000-mile test sail. I was impressed, it still looked new.

We brought the boat back up on the wind, noting that we were able to sail effectively at less than 40 degrees apparent. And as advertised, tacking was a piece of cake, a matter of turning the wheel. Falling off again, we executed a jibe with good mainsail control. After each maneuver I was impressed with the 505's quick acceleration. It's a most rewarding boat to sail.

I have no doubt that the 505 will be a very successful model for progressive Hanse Yachts. It is a world-class yacht that caters to owner input but is built with production efficiencies and top-quality materials. The future of sailing is here and at a very attractive price.