

Sailing

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The Beauty of Sail

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October 2015

Boat Test Hanse 575

A modern thorough

This German cruiser, a result of fresh thinking along with expert design and construction, is ready for the open ocean



bred



Hanse thinks big. The German company, one of the world's premier production builders, currently produces five models larger than 40 feet, and its new flagship, the 675, is nearly 70 feet. A recent test of the 575 found a collage of modern design, fresh thinking and exhilarating performance.

Designed by the prolific firm of Judel/Vrolijk & Co., the Hanse 575 makes a vivid first impression. It's huge. And I am not just talking about LOA. It's big in every way, and like all modern designs the ends are plumb to maximize waterline. The freeboard is distinctively high and accentuated by a handsome near-flush deck. The generous beam is carried nearly all the way aft to an ingenious fold-down transom. It seems a bit formidable until you step aboard and realize that the sail controls, sightlines and systems are brilliantly designed for easy handling.

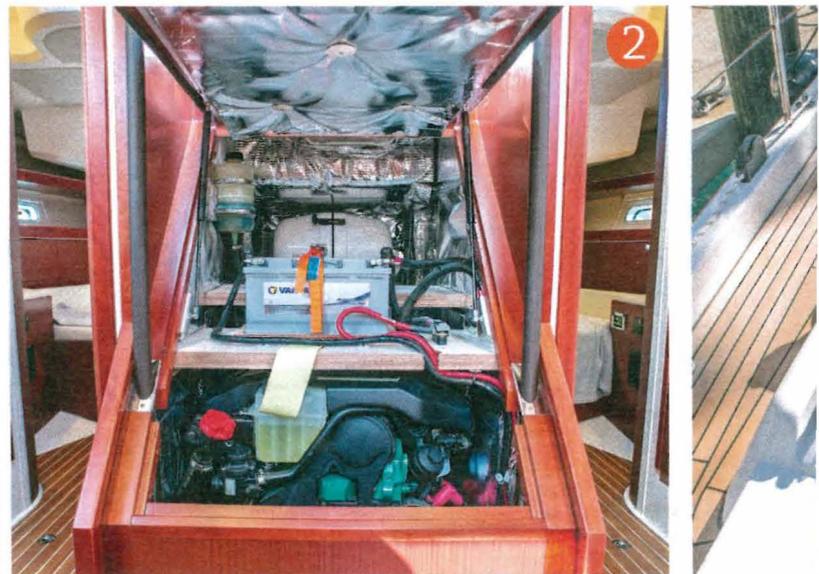
We had a breezy morning in Miami for the boat test and elected to take the boat out to sea instead of hovering in the protected waters of Biscayne Bay. I was immediately impressed with how the 575 powered through the considerable chop churned up in Government Cut. The 110-horsepower Volvo had no problem pushing the boat along at 8 knots at 2,300 rpm, and it was quiet and vibration free. Clear of the breakwalls we hoisted the main, unfurled the self-tacking jib and sped off on a tight reach. We were a bit overpowered in the 25-knot easterly and kicked up sheets of spray, but the 575 felt rock solid in the water.

The details

The 575 is built to Germanischer Lloyds SE standards for oceangoing yachts. The hull and deck are balsa cored with a mix of polyester and vinylester resins. The primary bulkheads are laminated to the deck as well as the hull and combine with a composite grid to provide structural integrity and overall rigidity. The keel, a T-bulb, is externally mounted with stainless fasteners. The standard draft is 9 feet 4 inches and a shoal 7-foot, 4-inch keel is an option.

The 575 cockpit is voluminous and very well designed. Twin composite wheels are widely spaced for steering from either the high or the low side and the walkway between provides unfettered access to the stern. Speaking of the stern, it hydraulically folds down to form a large swim platform and reveals a dinghy garage housed under the cockpit. It is specifically designed for a Williams Jet Drive RIB but will also accommodate other similarly sized RIBs. A folding fiberglass passerelle for Mediterranean mooring is standard. Twin teak tables with robust stainless bases are ideal for cockpit dining and offer leg support when heeled. The tables can also be retracted to form a giant sunbathing area. Clever waterproof storage boxes for cell phones, keys and sunglasses are on either side of the companionway and there are line lockers for tails at each helm station.

Each steering pedestal is equipped with a compass and an optional navigational system. The engine controls are to starboard. The view forward is quite impressive as the





- 1 The large cockpit features twin wheels and twin tables, which can be lowered to form a sunbathing area.
- 2 The access to the 110-horsepower Volvo engine, the generator and batteries is under the companionway steps.
- 3 Clean and efficient, the lines run aft under the deck from the mast collar to a bank of clutches forward of the winches.
- 4 A single anchor roller and a vertical windlass are standard, and there's a tack point for the asymmetrical sail on the anchor platform.
- 5 The hydraulically controlled transom folds down to form a large swim platform and open the dinghy garage, which is large enough to house a Williams Jet Drive or similarly sized RIB.

Hanse 575

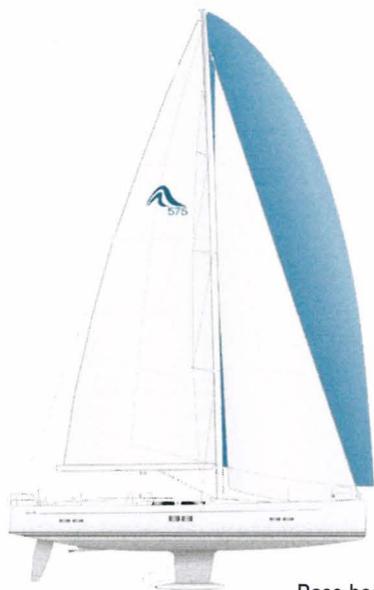
LOA 56'3"
LWL 49'8"
Beam 17'
Standard draft 9'4"
Shoal draft 7'4"
Ballast 13,007 lbs.
Displacement (standard) 42,990 lbs.
Displacement (shoal) 44,974 lbs.
Sail area 1,717 sq. ft.

Hanse Yachts USA

29 Towbridge Cr., Rowley, MA 01969

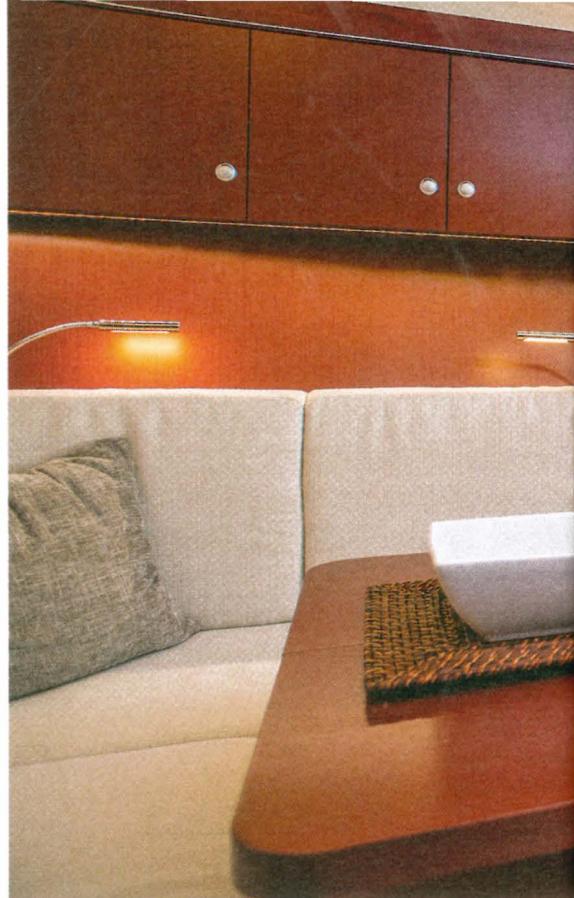
978-903-0380

www.hanseyachts.com



Base boat price

\$490,000



low-profile deck offers uncluttered sight-lines. While some cruisers prefer center-cockpit designs for various reasons, nothing beats the sensation of driving a large, aft cockpit thoroughbred in a fresh breeze. You can see everything—the sails, the deck, the horizon—you are not sequestered under the boom and guarded by a dodger.

The electric primary winches are just outboard of the helm stations and easily reached by the helmsperson. A bevy of lines that run aft under the deck from the mast collar are controlled through a bank of clutches forward of the winches. The design is clean and efficient but it takes a bit of sorting out at first. Once you have the lay of the lines, you realize that handling the 575 is simple. With a self-tacking jib, turning the boat is a matter of trimming main and turning the wheel. And with the main halyard and reefing lines led to the helm station, even reefing is a one-person operation with the electric winches doing all the heavy lifting.

The deck of our test boat was covered in teak which is not only beautiful but offers sure footing that fiberglass nonskid has trouble matching. Coupled with a molded bulwark and well-supported lifelines, the essentially flat deck is easy to navigate. A few additional handrails would be welcome however. A single anchor roller is standard along with a vertical windlass. There's a tack point for the asymmetrical sail on the anchor platform. All deck hatches are flush mounted.

The fractional triple-spreader rig has outboard chainplates, an interesting design feature that reduces the potential for eventual crevice corrosion. They also limit tight sheeting angles with standard genoas. However, the 575 is rigged for a self-tacking jib that sheets on a curved track and runs aft under deck. A short headsail track used when flying the 105% genoa is well inboard of the chainplates with a fair sheet lead. The standard full-batten mainsail includes lazy jacks and a lazy bag. The main, with more than 900 square feet of sail area, is the heart of the drive system. The mainsheet is mounted near the center of the boom and uses a triangular block arrangement in lieu of a traveler.

Down below

The 575 interior is all about versatility. Owners can choose woods, fabrics and one of six different layouts. The interior plans range from a five-cabin plus crew quarters arrangement, to a three-cabin plan with spacious owner's cabin forward, two doubles aft, three heads and showers and a deck accessed sail locker forward. This was the layout of the test boat.

All the plans have a similar saloon and galley arrangement, and the emphasis is on light, proportion and livability. Light is provided several ways, including through a choice of light wood finishes and also with numerous overhead opening hatches and

sidelights that also provide terrific ventilation. Combined with enough headroom to make an NBA player feel at home, there's a sense of spaciousness that's truly remarkable. (There is so much headroom that cabins have a stepladder tucked away for opening hatches.) Livability is off the charts when it comes to sailboat interiors with copious space that makes it feel more like a Berlin apartment than a boat.

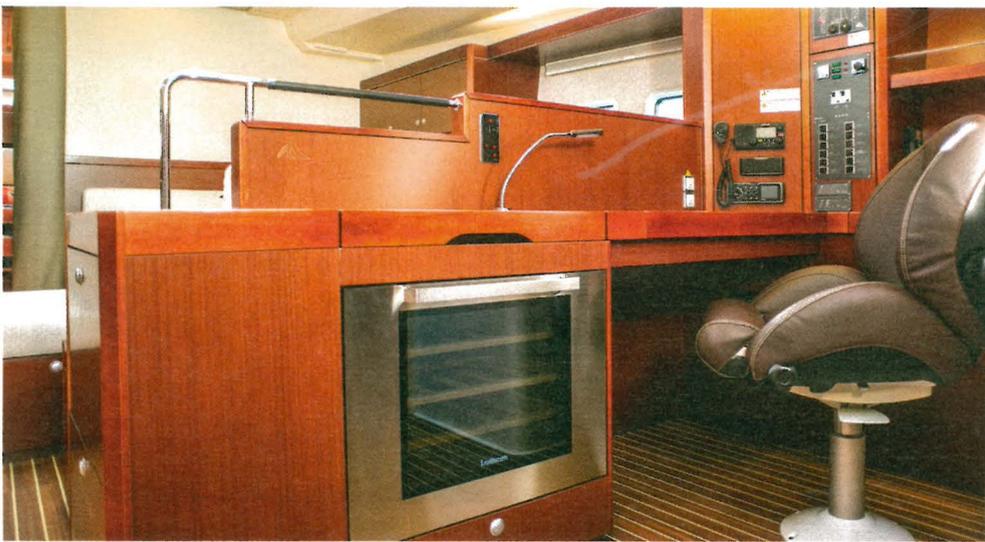
The longitudinal galley runs along the port side and includes a drawer style fridge and freezer, lots of counter space with substantial fiddles, storage lockers above and below, an optional dishwasher, flush-mounted microwave, wine cooler and a built-in cappuccino machine. At first glance it might seem challenging to cook on port tack, but there's a stand-up island that offers the cook hip support when heeling to starboard with extra work space on top. This island also conveniently houses the pop-up big screen television. And really, a boat like the 575 with a lot of beam stability is meant to be sailed flat, on its lines; excessive heel is a sure sign that it's time to reef.

The nav station is aft to starboard and Hanse calls it the office. It includes a large opening desk, several drawers and a comfy, well-supported swiveling chair. The electrical panels are outboard and there are areas for instrument repeaters and lockers for books and cruising guides. The saloon



includes a large table that drops to form yet another bunk. Eight can sit comfortably for dinner but only six can watch the movie afterward. The saloon and galley flow well together, allowing the cook to be part of the conversation while meals are prepared. One complaint is the lack of handholds.

The owner's cabin in the test boat was elegant with a centerline double berth and rich mahogany lockers above. There was a large hanging locker to starboard and a head and separate shower to port. The countertop washbasin was nice but I wonder how it will hold up in rough conditions. Electric heads are an option. The two aft cabins featured double berths, hanging lockers, shelves along the sides and en suite heads. The engine is accessed from behind the companionway and through the aft cabins.



Under sail

Back on the ocean we were blasting along at 8 knots but it was clearly time for a reef in the main. This operation was a snap as we eased the halyard, eased the sheet, tensioned the first reef outhaul and downhaul, and then the halyard. The lazy bag captured the extra sail and we flattened out and sped up to 9 knots. The advantages of a small, self-tacking headsail were obvious in 25 knots as we executed several quick tacks. After each tack, the 575 accelerated smartly. The steering was easy and balanced, it was a pleasure to sail. I wonder if finding the necessary horsepower in light air will be more challenging, especially off the wind. However, the large main should keep the boat moving and the addition of an asymmetrical spinnaker and code 0 will provide the amps for light air reaching.



The 575 feels rock solid in the water, kicking up sheets of spray in the 25-knot westerly, above, and the advantages of the self-tacking headsail are evident as the boat easily accelerates after each tack. Described as the office in the company's brochure, the navigation station includes a large opening desk, several drawers and a comfortable well-supported swiveling chair, above middle. The abundance of headroom and portholes up the 575's livability factor, and the multiple interior layouts offer owners a chance to create their perfect liveaboard home, top.

The Hanse 575 is a breakthrough. A couple or small family can safely and efficiently handle the easily managed sailplan, making the option of big boat cruising more realistic. The wide range of interior plans and emphasis on comfortable living spaces change the equation when it comes to living aboard, this is not a boat that requires sacrifice when moving aboard. Finally, Hanse has found a way to blend owner customization within the framework of production manufacturing. Take a look at the Hanse 575 and start dreaming big.