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Is the new F380 a
winner for Sealine?



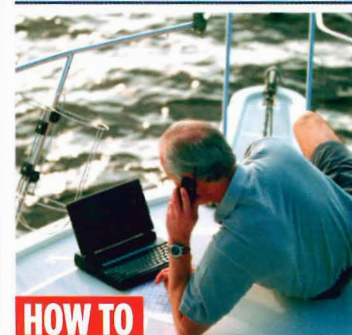
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Sealine F380

The start of a new chapter



THE LOWDOWN

Rising phoenix-like from the ashes, Sealine is reborn in Germany as part of the Hanse Group. This is the first Hanse-



launched Sealine, so how does it measure up? Nick Burnham heads for the Baltic Sea to find out.

SO GOOD

- Phenomenal space
- Clever layout
- Capable hull
- Great value

NO GOOD

- Interior 'wood' actually isn't (although it's an option)
- Needs a divider between engines and lazarette
- Slightly tight mid cabin

CONTACT

sealine.com

“We’re making Sealine a prestige brand!” It’s been the battlecry of every new CEO in beleaguered Sealine’s recent history, right up to the moment it finally went into administration. As one wag once commented, “The only thing we learn from history is that no one learns anything from history.” So I was overjoyed when Dr Jens Gerhardt, CEO of German based Hanse Group that bought the brand from the receivers, told me he saw Sealine as a mid-level marque. At last, someone who understands!

The Hanse Group is one of the top three sailboat producers in the world. It owns upmarket Moody, sporty Dehler, budget VA, and mid-market Hanse Yachts, and its 1300 employees turn out 600 boats a year. Dr Gerhardt has form then: he gets mass production and competitive pricing. Hanse also owns Fjord, an exclusive powerboat company.

Sealine, therefore, is the perfect fit, designed to do what Hanse Yachts does, give them high turnover, sensibly priced mid-range boats that will sell.

It’s ironic, therefore, that the brand new F380 is one of the best-built Sealines I’ve ever seen. Chopped strand spray layup of hulls is out; Hanse hand-lays for more accurate hull density control. Group synergy sees it using high-quality electrical systems, and even the fresh water plumbing is new, constructed of special piping that can expand to twice its normal thickness if it freezes. Hanse is bringing to bear all of its vast construction knowledge, not to mention economies of scale.

This is the first Sealine launched by Hanse. Based on the existing and well proven S380 sports cruiser hull, the F380 is slightly longer, 60cm having been added, and features a couple of

design tweaks. So the hull we’ve seen before, but the superstructure is brand new.

A traditional flybridge profile, there’s a large glassy deck saloon with deeply curved windscreens. Bulwarked 8in-wide side decks carve their way forward on both sides, while back aft a large cockpit features optional flip backrest seats. Engine access is via a hatch in the sole, and there’s

“It’s inside where this boat really impresses”

a massive storage area ahead of the engines, although a half bulkhead between the two would obviate the risk of anything finding its way back

towards spinning belts. The cockpit floor is teak-laid as standard, as is the bathing platform and proper flybridge stairs, the latter a Sealine innovation for smaller boats (it came about after the wife of Tom Murrant, original founder of Sealine, complained that bringing coffee up the ladder to the



PHOTOS: Nick Burnham



Chaise longue or sunpad next to helm



flybridge was impossible, why couldn't they have a staircase?) Up those flybridge stairs the overriding feeling is one of security; high sides giving the confidence-inspiring feeling that even up here you are in the boat, not on it.

Outside this is a practical, well laid out craft, but it's inside where this boat really impresses. Entered via two-piece doors, the saloon has a two-person settee opposite an L-shaped dinette. Further forward a couple of steps take you up to the double helm and a further couple of steps take you down to the galley, low enough to separate it from the saloon but without cutting it off completely. The overwhelming feeling is one of space – Sealine claims (believably) that the F380 has the largest interior volume of its class.

And it's not at the expense of storage because, in typical Sealine fashion, it's everywhere. It's under the saloon seats, there's a deep shelf behind the backrest, a large drawer under the helm

seat, both galley steps lift, and there are masses of lockers in the galley, most of them fiddled. And as if that weren't enough the port settee slides back to reveal a simply massive void beneath the saloon floor. If, like me, you've got a habit of putting things away safely and then forgetting where you put them this boat will be like the Bermuda Triangle.

Just ahead of the galley lies the day toilet and to starboard is the guest cabin, probably the only area that could be described as slightly compromised. Past a small lobby area for changing there are two beds that infill to create a double, but the headroom dips over them. If you're the owner you'll consider it a compromise worth making because the master cabin is massive. With the main bulkhead pushed right back there's a long lobby leading to a generous space at the foot of the island bed, and the whole cabin is lit by a run of overhead skylights during the day, and direct and concealed

lighting at night. Storage, as you'd expect, is everywhere. But the real treat is the en suite. It's huge, and best of all has a separate shower stall accessed through clear perspex doors. There's enough headroom to wear a top hat in the shower, as you do...

So, it looks good and is massive inside – it must be compromised out at sea then, right? Incredibly,

no. This amazing boat's litany of talent even extends offshore. Our test boat has the largest engine option, a pair of D6-330 sterndrive diesels that give more than 32 knots. D4 engines are the alternative. Cruising at 23 knots should be comfortable whatever the option then, with the D6 motors that equates to just 3000rpm. And there's a neat



Neat dark grey radar arch

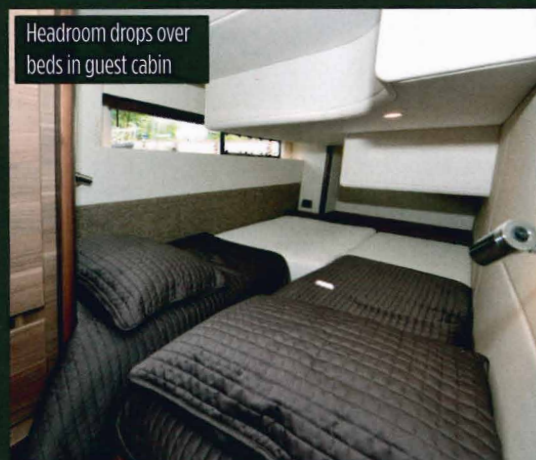
Boat test



Generous, well-lit saloon



Master cabin is particularly spacious



Headroom drops over beds in guest cabin



Galley separate to, but not cut off from, the saloon



Flybridge stairs a Sealine statement



Master en suite features separate shower stall



Bench seat at the helm



Flip backrests a worthwhile option



Storage absolutely everywhere



Even galley lids have a home

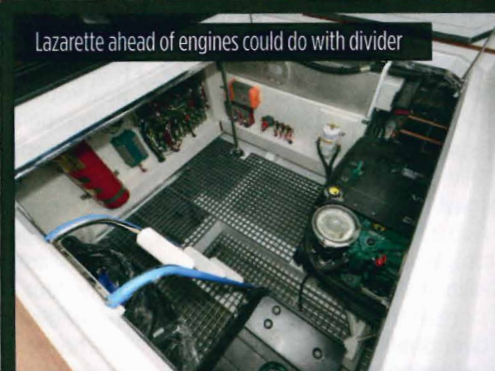


Cup holders between aft seats

IT'S IN THE DETAIL



Light switches have dimmers as standard – you don't get those on a half million pound Princess. And look at the saloon floor locker lid. It's not just a removable panel as it once would have been. Hanse has fitted it with proper hinges and a gas strut. It's this kind of thoughtful attention to detail that marks this out as a Hanse Sealine.




Lazarette ahead of engines could do with divider

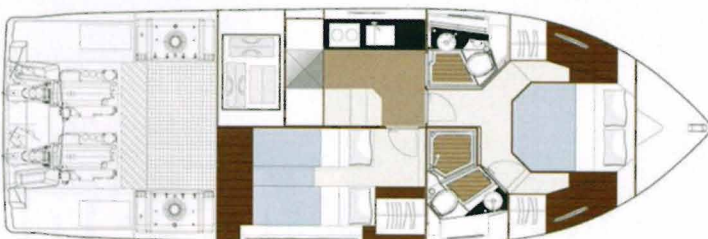


party trick. Wind the legs in and lower the tabs and you can pull the boat speed back to the low teens still planing.

Ride and handling? Good rather than exceptional, the F380 shoulders through a head sea calmly and competently rather than incisively. It's clearly a cruising boat, not a deep-vee racer. No one's told the steering that though: wind on a big handful of lock and the sterndrive configuration throws the boat into an impressively tight turn, leaning and cornering hard. You're probably not going to want to do this often, but it's nice to know that it can.

Big, stylish, roomy and capable offshore – there has to be a catch

surely? Well all that's left is the price, so let's cut to the chase. This boat starts at £273,000, VAT paid. Even with the bigger engines of our test boat it remains resolutely under £300,000. And that's not a French-style base price either – teak-laid cockpit, a holding tank, windscreen demist system, Avonite galley worktops and a wooden saloon floor are all standard. The only really essential option is the "Cruising package", which includes the aft canopy, bow thruster, trim tabs and flybridge cover and will set you back £14,000. Beyond that the sky is the limit, Sealine is offering a massive selection of options, so you can really make this boat your own. 



"Sealine and Hanse have created something genuinely exceptional here"

SPECS

Build	GRP
RCD	B
LOA	37ft 4in (11.40m)
Beam	12ft 4in (3.77m)
Fuel capacity	200gal (910lt)
Engines	Twin Volvo Penta D6-330 330hp diesels
Price	from £272,798 inc VAT

VERDICT

To call the F380 a return to form undersells this boat massively. Sealine and Hanse have created something genuinely exceptional here, and for once that even extends to the price tag.

9/10 