

YACHTING LIFE

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**LARGS
REGATTA
WEEK
REPORT**

**NOVEL
SEA
KAYAK
RACE AT
CUMBRAE**

**ON TEST:
VARIANTA 37**

**BUSIEST EVER
SCOTLAND'S
BOAT SHOW**

**DINGHY
FAMILY
SAILING
WEEKS**



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Entry Level Cruisers, A Credit To Hanse Boat Building Skills

THE VARIANTA 37 is the Hanse Group's entry level cruiser; a no frills, simple boat which offers a good sailing performance with the minimum of financial outlay. It is designed for those who want their boat more as a utility vehicle than a status symbol to be admired, bumbled and polished. And it is selling well in Europe, writes *Yachting Life* boat test editor *Andi Robertson*.

There is a definite appeal to the corporate market and to those who are perhaps looking at second-hand who suddenly realise they can have something reasonably big, nice looking, simple modern and functional for the same money. To be fair it is more of a niche than a volume seller. Hanse's economies of scale mean they can do it and do it well. It means they can bring new customers to the marque and hopefully they will then stay for the span of their boat buying lifetime.

It is going well with corporate clients who really just want a robust, easily handled boat they can use for staff, usually for their staff sailing club, and not a corporate jolly machine, but also for the Services, for example the Army are replacing a Hallberg Rassy, I believe, with a realisation that few end up appreciating a premium brand.

It's a boat, it sails, we sleep and eat on it: That's the maxim, I suppose, for the Varianta. And to use that hideous cliché I hate, it does do exactly what it says on the tin.....

The basic package is indeed

basic. You'd want the Cruising Pack to get you going, that includes the extra opening hatches, battery pack upgrade, shore power supply, hot and

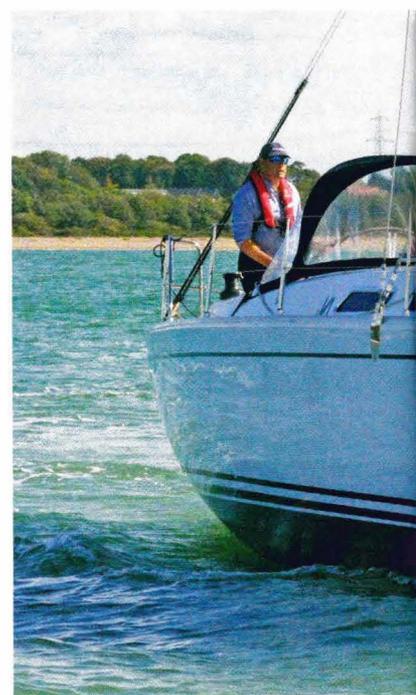
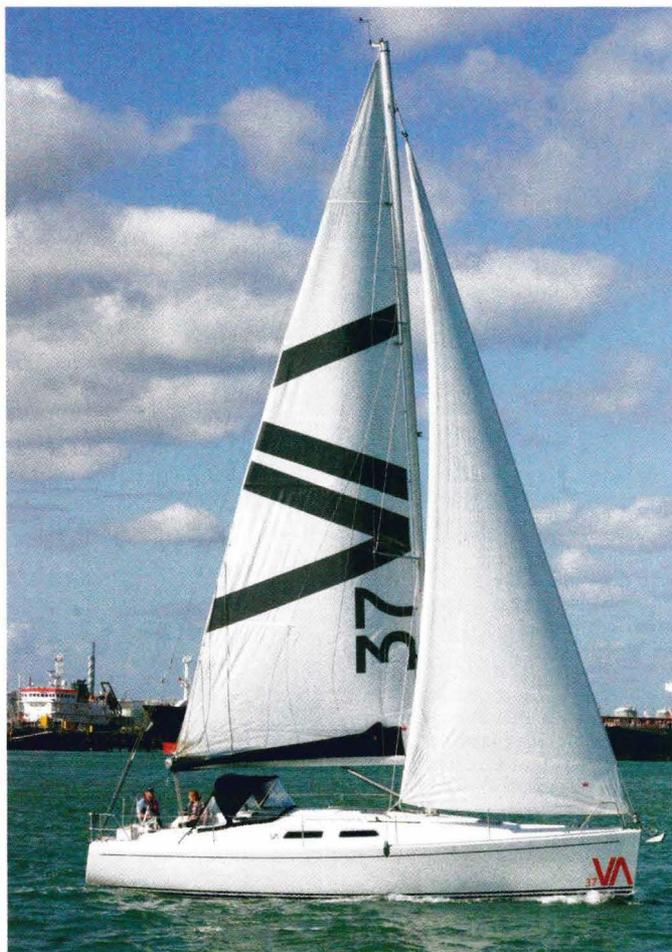
cold water including the shower in the heads. That's £4,528.

Basic, basic price for the boat is £88,345 inc VAT, but

realistically you are probably in the high nineties on the water, which is good for a 38 footer. The equivalent Bavaria is £92,000 ex VAT.

It is a nice looking boat with simple, even lines. It is a little slab sided but the proportions look good, indeed better than many more expensive yachts. With small alloy edged coachroof windows and a pleasing, unobtrusive deckline it has definite echoes of the Scandinavian classics.

If anything, it could do with an uplift in the hull graphics – a distinctive cove line or something. Too many people are still probably asking 'what is it?' Cockpit, deck space and general layout are really good. It may be knocking on the budget end of the market but nothing has been overlooked. It is a Judel/



YACHTING LIFE BOAT TEST

Vrolijk design and they don't do things by halves. And the vast experience of Hanse is evident in the layout and execution.

The working spaces are good and everything works. There are no obvious corners cut, but to be fair it is very much a blank canvas; a clean sheet of paper to build on progressively. But then at least that is your prerogative to go at your own speed and you are not buying the fluff you don't need or won't use.

It is a big enough boat too. 37ft 9in LOA with a generous 12ft 3in beam (11.55m x 3.75m). There are two keel options – 5ft 2in and 6ft 4in (1.6 and 1.9m). The rig is substantial and there is no shortage of sail power, standard white sails totalling 77sq.m with a 105% overlapping jib.

Space is excellent in the



Miles Stratton, heading Inspiration Marine's Scottish office based in Kip Marina, stresses the view that the Varianta 37 offers a creditable alternative to many used boats on the market, particularly with the 'cruising' version tested, powered by the optional 30hp Volvo Saildrive diesel inboard.



cockpit which is deep and safe. The mainsheet anchors to the cockpit base on a single point. That is slightly obtrusive but less so than a track and of course you can undo it and move it aside for when you are stopped.

There are two wheel sizes, you'd want the big one and live

with the extra metre you have to climb round to come on board. It gives much better vision. The transom has a neat step and is tidy and inoffensive.

Sailing was a pleasant surprise.

The Varianta 37 sails well enough. It needs a bit of breeze to move but it tracks well, is



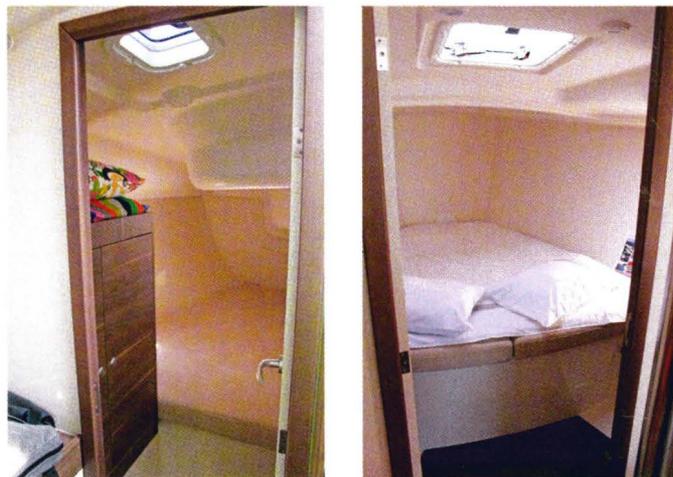
light and responsive on the helm and did everything that you want of it. It offers a good, safe helming position. The angles are just about right to run the mainsheet to the windward primary winch to get a bit of extra control and purchase for those who want that, but really you set the boat up, let it settle and sail to it. Upwind it was efficient enough with a good, easy balance.

Off the wind there is certainly a desire for a cruising chute or an easily handled gennaker just to get the boat moving a little quicker and more efficiently. Otherwise it is perfectly tame and acceptable, you just get a feel you'd like to hurry it along a bit.

In the main saloon the table is large and accommodating. You'd use it for nav prep and general admin as the fold down table/cupboard door solution is surely for occasional use. I'd like to have seen a simple fiddle on both.

Access to the bilges and keelbolts is good and all of the electronics are run through easily accessible tunnelling so that new wires can be run in. There is great storage. The saloon berths are long, comfortable and well appointed. It is very much 'live out your bag' which most people do anyway on short cruises.

The three cabin option is standard leaving the port, aft cabin as an open stowage space. Or simply buy a mattress and a cupboard and it becomes four cabins.



it is spacious, comfortable and well appointed.

The forecabin area offers plenty of headroom at over 2m, so there is good space to get dressed in. The slab sides do lend themselves to further storage in the same style as in the main cabin, with tubing and textile shelving. It is low cost and simple.

The linear galley is excellent with a big, proper fridge, gimballed cooker, loads of cupboards and stowage of all types. It is a proper, working galley with good facilities. The white finish is complemented nicely by walnut.

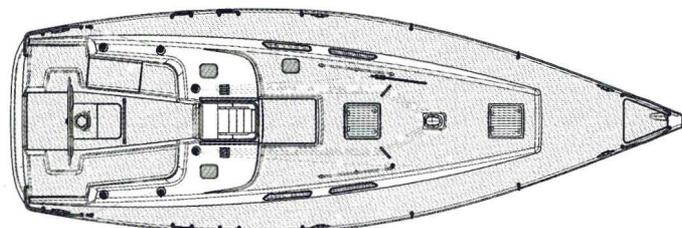
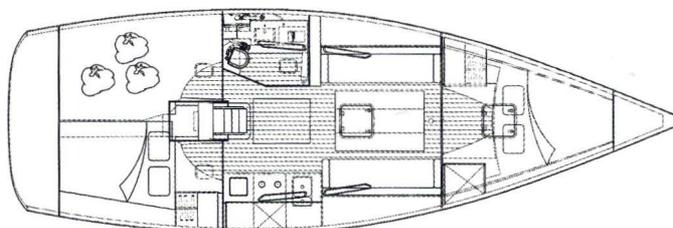
I'd imagine it logical that the Varianta buyer will be the type who will eat on board more often than ashore – forgive the broad generalisation – but it is very much a functional boat to be used to the maximum. The aft cabins are big and there is easy access through the starboard side back to the transom wells. Engine access is second to none with the whole companionway stairs moving easily, complemented by side and rear access through the aft cabin panels.

The roomy heads have great headroom with ample swinging room, a good shower and locker space. If you used the port aft cabin as a cabin, you'd probably sling the really wet stuff in here temporarily. I really liked the Varianta 37. I think it would benefit from a more ready and obvious association with Hanse. It is built lock, stock and barrel in the Hanse facility and is just Varianta badged. As such it is a boat which will grow with the new owner and, I am sure, hold its value.

The main saloon is spacious with a good wide area at the base of the steps. It is simple and basically fitted out. The saloon sides have these fabric stowage units on metal poles which work well. You can keep

anything there from medium sized bags to small plastic boxes. It's a good solution.

The starboard aft cabin needs the optional cockpit port window or it would be positively dark, but otherwise



TECHNICAL DATA

Hull
LOA 11,55 m | 37'9"
LWL 10,05 m | 33'0"
Beam 3,75 m | 12'3"

Draft
Standard 1,95 m | 6'4"
Option 1,60 m | 5'2"

Displacement 6,90 t

Ballast 2.300 kg

Engine & Capacities
Volvo D1-20 20hp also 30hp

Rig
I 14,73 m
J 4,15 m
P 14,00 m
E 5,15 m

Main sail 42,00 m2
Genoa 33,00 m2 (105%)
Gennaker 140,00 m2 (opt.)
Total sail area 77,00 m2

Fresh water 295 L
Fuel Tank 155 L

CE Certificate A (ocean)

Design judel/ vrolijk & co.