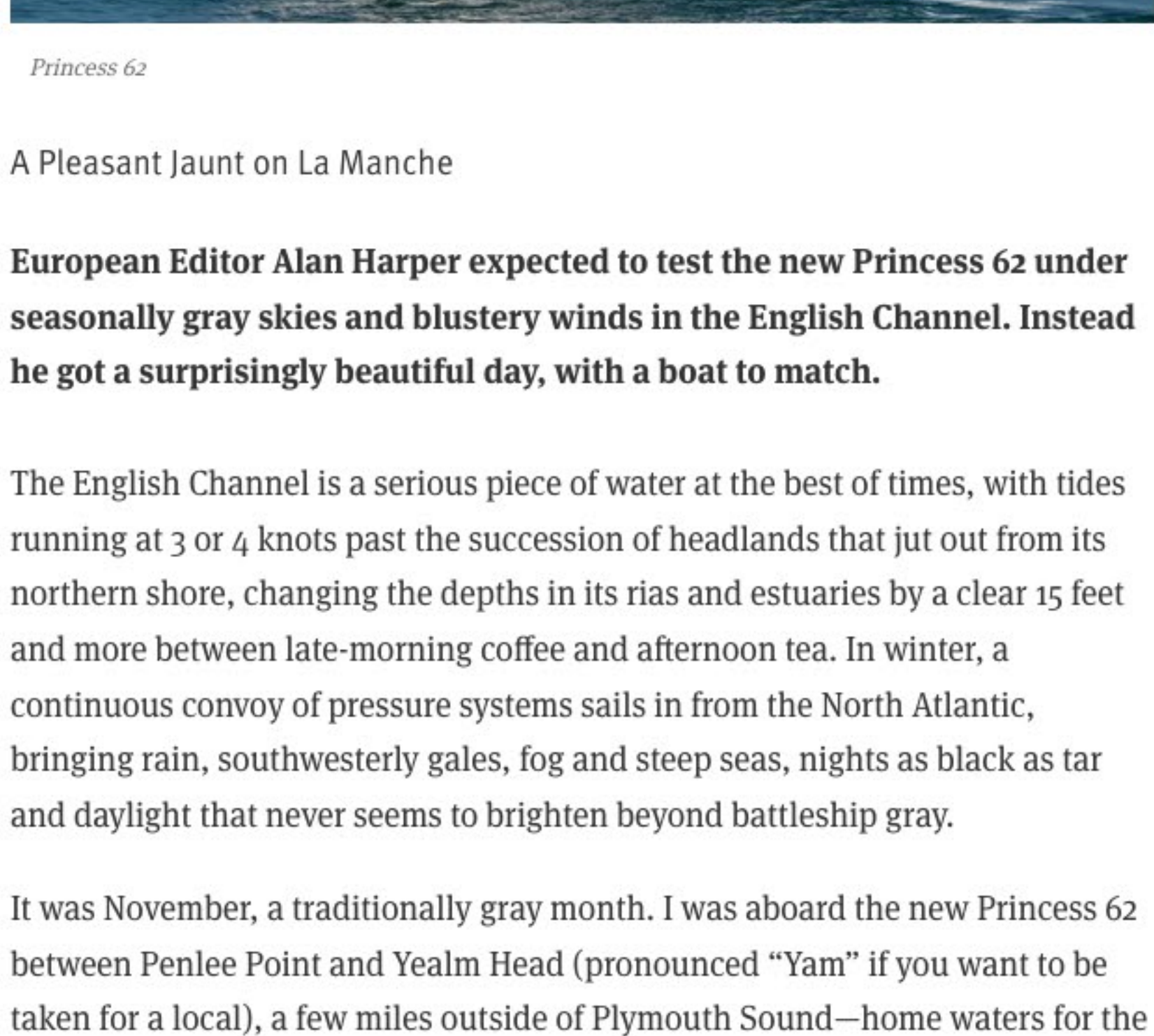


Tested: Princess 62

We were surprised when we got to test the Princess 62 on a sunny day (a rarity in England). But the surprises didn't end there.

ALAN HARPER • UPDATED: FEB 12, 2018 • ORIGINAL: FEB 9, 2018



Princess 62

A Pleasant Jaunt on La Manche

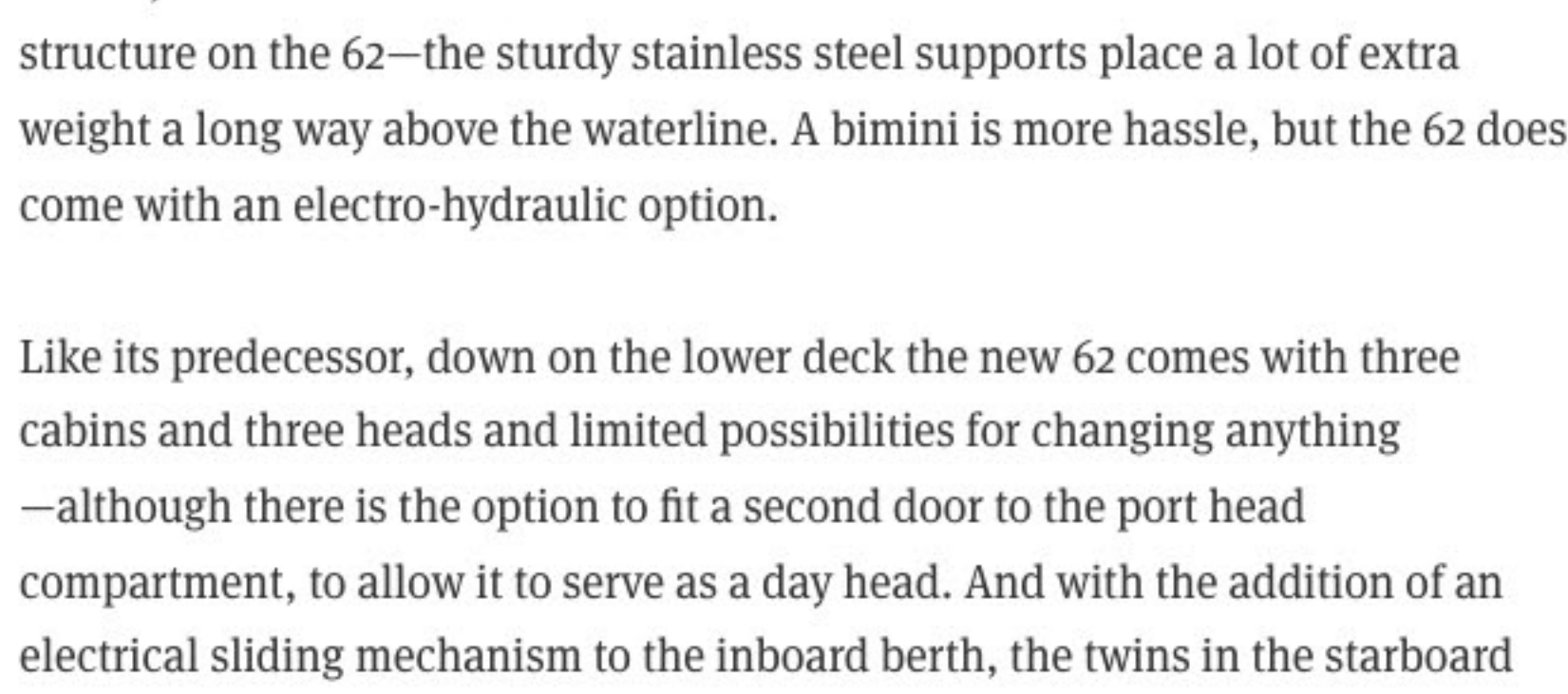
European Editor Alan Harper expected to test the new Princess 62 under seasonally gray skies and blustery winds in the English Channel. Instead he got a surprisingly beautiful day, with a boat to match.

The English Channel is a serious piece of water at the best of times, with tides running at 3 or 4 knots past the succession of headlands that jut out from its northern shore, changing the depths in its rias and estuaries by a clear 15 feet and more between late-morning coffee and afternoon tea. In winter, a continuous convoy of pressure systems sails in from the North Atlantic, bringing rain, southwesterly gales, fog and steep seas, nights as black as tar and daylight that never seems to brighten beyond battleship gray.

It was November, a traditionally gray month. I was aboard the new Princess 62 between Penlee Point and Yealm Head (pronounced “Yam” if you want to be taken for a local), a few miles outside of Plymouth Sound—home waters for the shipyard, which has built some excellent sea boats in its time. And yet the sea was calm, the sun shone, and the wind was no more than a zephyr. I keep my boat just a few miles up the coast from here. Trust me, it’s never like this.

Gallery: Princess 62

Have a closer look at the Princess 62 in the gallery below:

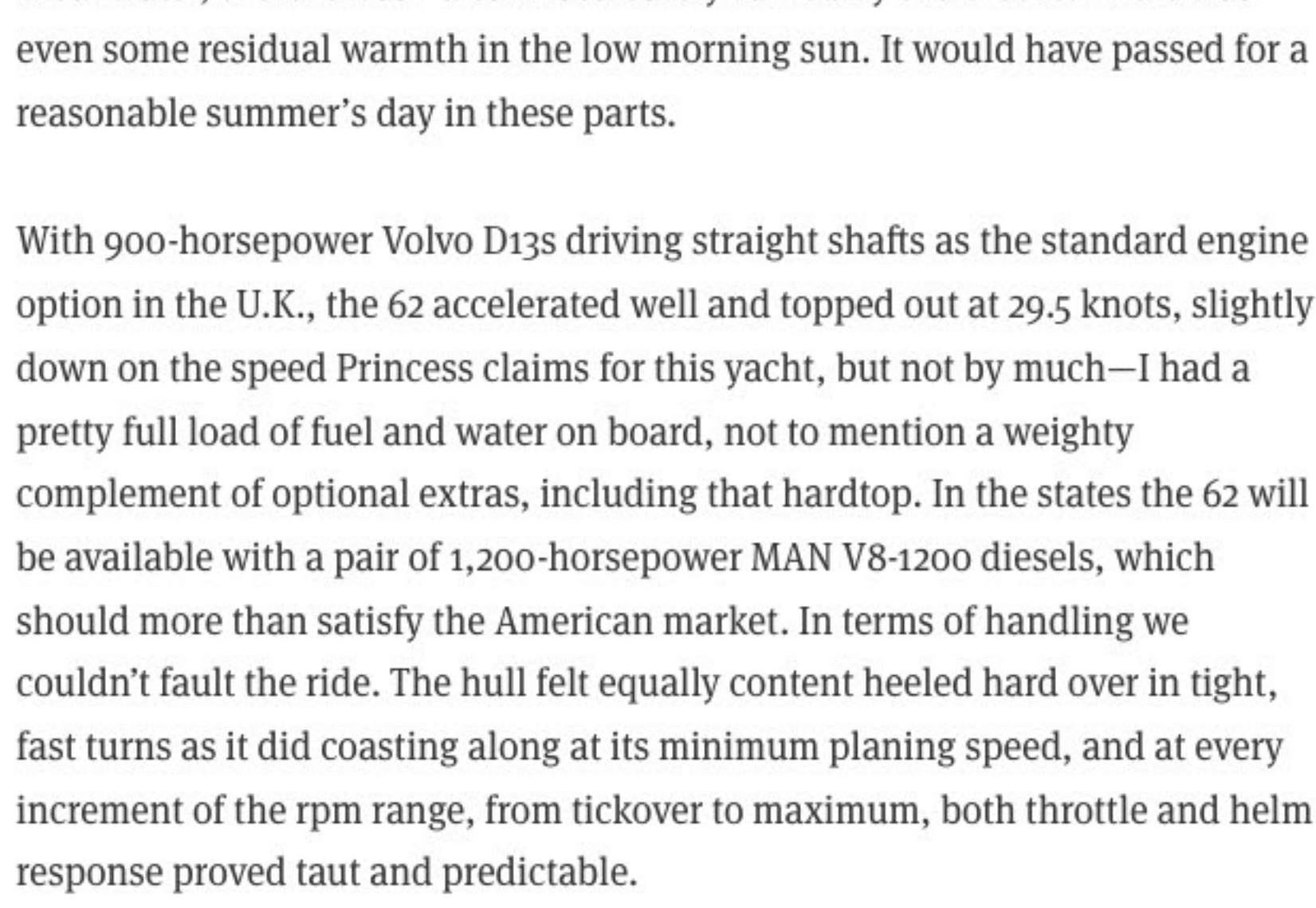


Nearly 3 feet longer, several inches wider and quite a lot taller than the Princess 60, its predecessor, the Plymouth shipyard’s latest flybridge model also features much more glass in both hull and superstructure to emphasize the increase in interior space. It has an excellent new seating area on the foredeck, and a completely redesigned salon with an aft galley arrangement that places the chef as close as can be to the three dining tables: inside, out in the cockpit, and up on the flybridge.

I inspected two versions of this attractive and spacious new yacht, the first with an all-white exterior and a bimini, and the second with a distinguished midnight-blue paint job on the hull and a fixed hardtop. Hardtops are great, of course, but even when constructed with carbon reinforcement—as is the structure on the 62—the sturdy stainless steel supports place a lot of extra weight a long way above the waterline. A bimini is more hassle, but the 62 does come with an electro-hydraulic option.

Like its predecessor, down on the lower deck the new 62 comes with three cabins and three heads and limited possibilities for changing anything—although there is the option to fit a second door to the port head compartment, to allow it to serve as a day head. And with the addition of an electrical sliding mechanism to the inboard berth, the twins in the starboard cabin can be converted into a double. You can also have a small twin-berth crew cabin fitted in the stern.

There are plenty of opportunities to customize the look of the interior, however. Walnut and two different oak finishes are offered for the veneers, varnished in either satin or gloss, while the flooring can be either walnut or light oak. If you prefer carpet to hardwood underfoot, there are six shades to choose from. Opt for the Allure style package and Princess’s Design Studio Collection includes various upgrades to the upholstery, teak detailing, paint finishes on the flybridge moldings, and exterior lighting.



A wall of glass bathes the salon’s U-shaped settee in light.

It’s not hard to find rival boats in this 60-foot-plus class, many of which have four cabins, at least as an option, but one glance below on the 62 and you’ll appreciate Princess’s thinking. The master lies amidships with a voluminous chest of drawers under one huge hull window and a breakfast dinette below the other, and an exceptional head compartment on the port side. The VIP in the bow has a head that feels even bigger, a berth that is measurably longer, and while it can only boast the one hanging locker it is not short on stowage space. Like the master it also benefits from big, bright hull windows.

The twin berth is the least well off for floor space, but is far from an afterthought, with nearly 7 feet of headroom near the door reducing to a still-respectable 6 feet 2 inches between the berths. One of these is narrower than the other—just 23 inches compared with 28 inches on the other side—but they’re both 6 feet 3 inches long, and so suitable for most adults.

I was still slightly skeptical of our benign and unseasonal weather conditions, but as the yacht nosed its way past Plymouth’s massive, mile-long Victorian breakwater, there it was—a calm sea barely ruffled by the breeze. There was even some residual warmth in the low morning sun. It would have passed for a reasonable summer’s day in these parts.

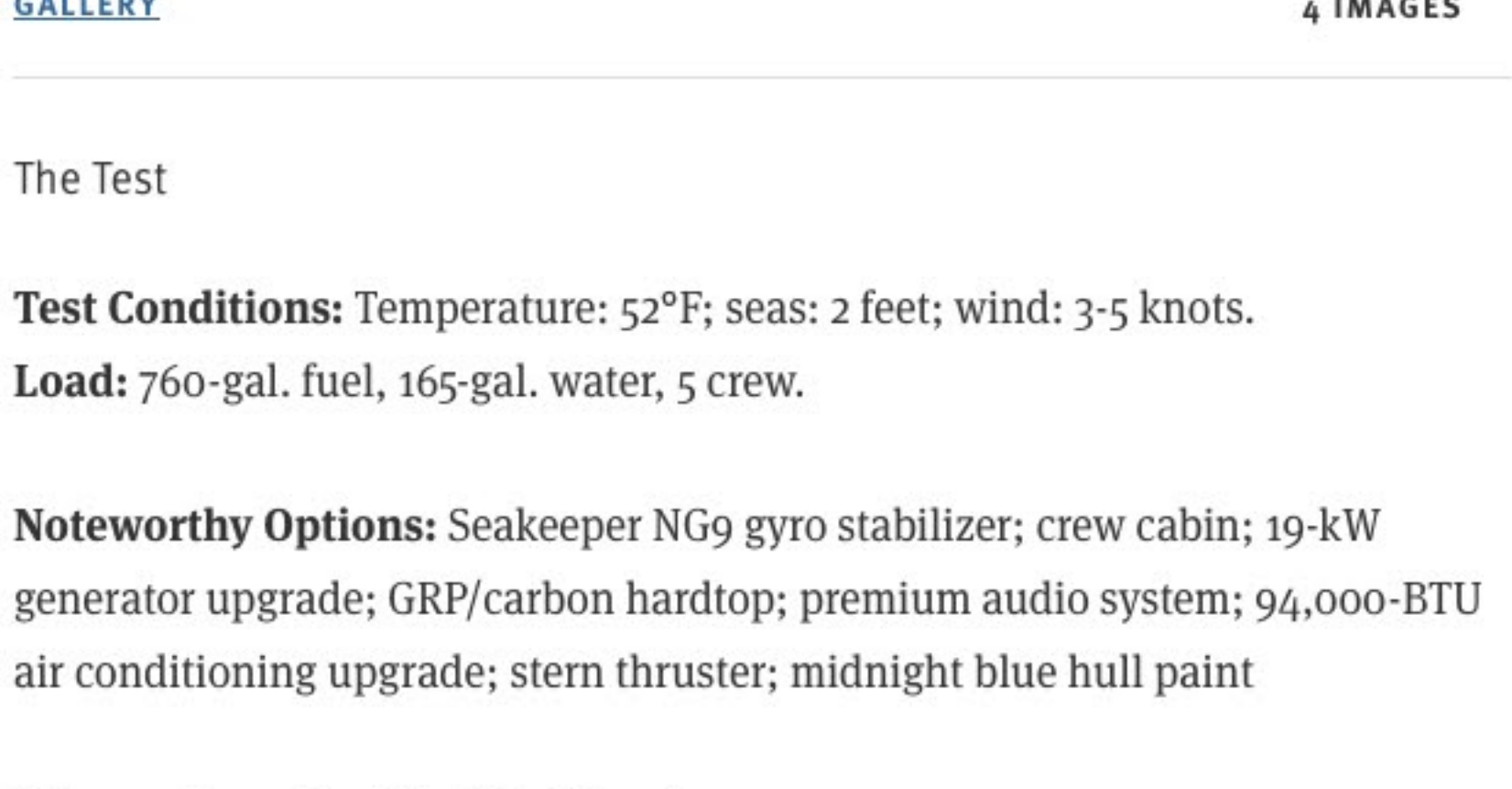
With 900-horsepower Volvo D13s driving straight shafts as the standard engine option in the U.K., the 62 accelerated well and topped out at 29.5 knots, slightly down on the speed Princess claims for this yacht, but not by much—I had a pretty full load of fuel and water on board, not to mention a weighty complement of optional extras, including that hardtop. In the states the 62 will be available with a pair of 1,200-horsepower MAN V8-1200 diesels, which should more than satisfy the American market. In terms of handling we couldn’t fault the ride. The hull felt equally content heeled hard over in tight, fast turns as it did coasting along at its minimum planing speed, and at every increment of the rpm range, from tickover to maximum, both throttle and helm response proved taut and predictable.



In this configuration, the aft galley is a lesson in modern design done right.

Along with naval architects Olesinski Ltd. in Cowes, which has designed all Princess hulls since 1980—including the game-changing Princess 45, and a personal favorite of mine, the Princess 360, which during several thousand miles of cruising I came to appreciate as a simply stupendous sea boat for its size—the shipyard has been working in recent years to develop yachts that are economical at a wide range of cruising speeds, rather than optimized for a narrow power band. Longitudinal trim is the key, of course, since in most conventional planing designs, easing back on the throttles to save fuel results in the stern squatting down, and efficiency falling off a cliff. Most of us at one time or another have found ourselves going faster than we wanted to simply because the boat felt happier at a higher speed.

Our modern enthusiasm for adding weight aft—heavy stabilizers mounted in the engine room, bulky tenders on the aft platform, hefty hydraulic passerelles built into the transom—doesn’t exactly help. So Olesinski has been working to build efficiency into the hull shape, as seen in the last couple of feet at the stern of the Princess 62, where the buttock lines outboard of the prop tunnels hook down slightly. This provides extra lift at the back, like a trim tab, and in the case of the 62 means that at all planing speeds, from 16 knots to WOT, the boat feels comfortable and longitudinally stable. There is no “hump.” We measured trim from zero at tickover to five degrees flat out, with a broad sweet spot of 4.5 degrees between 1750 rpm and 2250 rpm. And we didn’t touch the trim tabs.



Lying amidships, the master has stowage to spare with its chest of drawers.

In a perfect world, we would have had wind speeds and sea conditions more typical of the time of year. A capable motoryacht like the Princess 62, latest in a line that includes many notable sea boats, deserves to be given the chance to show what she can do. But it was not to be. I was out there in perfect weather, tempting fate, like an idiot, by wishing otherwise. I’ll almost certainly be paying for that next summer.

Princess 62 Layout Diagrams



[GALLERY](#)

4 IMAGES

The Test

Test Conditions: Temperature: 52°F; seas: 2 feet; wind: 3-5 knots.

Load: 760-gal. fuel, 165-gal. water, 5 crew.

Noteworthy Options: Seakeeper NG9 gyro stabilizer; crew cabin; 19-kW generator upgrade; GRP/carbon hardtop; premium audio system; 94,000-BTU air conditioning upgrade; stern thruster; midnight blue hull paint

Princess 62 — Final Boat Test Numbers:

RPM	KNOTS	GPH	RANGE	dB(A)
600	6.6	2.3	2317	59
1000	9.7	9.5	824	64
1500	12.9	30.9	337	66
2000	22.7	59.7	307	69
2360	29.5	87.4	273	73

Speeds are two-way averages measured w/GPS. GPH taken via Volvo display. Range is 90% of advertised fuel capacity. Sound levels measured at the lower helm. 65 dB(A) is the level of normal conversation.

Specifications:

LOA: 63’5”

Beam: 16’6”

Draft: 4’10”

Displ.: 64,595 lb. (dry)

Fuel: 898 gal.

Water: 195 gal.

Standard Power: 2/900-hp Volvo D13-900

U.S. Standard Power: 2/1,200-hp MAN V8-1200 diesels

Propellers: 31” x 35” NiBrAl 5-blade

Transmission: ZF 335A 1.964:1