

LOA: 36'1"
BEAM: 16'8"
DRAFT: 2'6"
DISPL.: 17,800 lb.
FUEL: 316 gal.
WATER: 186 gal.
STANDARD POWER:
OPTIONAL POWER:
TEST POWER: 2/150-hp
Volvo Penta D3s
PRICE: Upon Request

One Hip Cat

THE FOUNTAINE PAJOT 37 INJECTS A HEALTHY DOSE OF ELEGANCE INTO A CATAMARAN, WHILE STILL RETAINING THE EFFICIENCY AND SEAKEEPING THAT YOU'VE COME TO EXPECT FROM A TWIN HULL.
BY KEVIN KOENIG



Test Notes

THE OPTION FOR three or four staterooms provides flexibility for owners looking to cruise solo or put the boat in charter.

FOUNTAINÉ Pajot offers 44- and 55-foot power cat models to quench the thirst for adventure and the cruising needs of owners of the 37.

AN OPTIONAL 1,000-watt windlass makes sense for the active cruiser.



Aboard power cats like the 37, social spaces are the name of the game, from the swim platform to the bow and the flying bridge.

Picture this. It's the end of the last day of the Ft. Lauderdale International Boat Show. The sun is sinking low in the west as a welcome breeze rattles through the palm trees lining Highway A1A. I'm sitting in the wide cockpit of the Fountaine Pajot 37, with Fountaine's unrepentantly elegant marketing director, Helene de Fontainieu, and a few others. As the clock strikes five, every boat at the show blows its horn at once. The noise is tremendous, and de Fontainieu retreats into the saloon. As the horns die down, she reappears, holding an icy bottle of champagne. As she fills my flute, she sighs and with a silky French accent says, "And that is that. Now, some champagne. And tomorrow, we go for a cruise!"

And what a cruise. We left the next morning. Cats have always held a special place in my heart because of their onboard space, but inherent initial stability is a close second. This 37 is no different. She sliced through the confused mishmash of wakes and swell in the Port Everglades Inlet with ease, never rolling or shuddering. And once we got into much smoother open water, she loped into an easy 18.5-knot cruise, burning a respectable 16.4 gallons an hour. Her twin 220-horsepower Volvo Penta D3s kicked us up to 22 knots at full speed. That's enough giddyup to get you home in a hurry, should bad weather show up unexpectedly. She also draws just 2 feet, 6 inches, which makes her a perfect Bahamas boat. Smallish—to some, maybe, in terms of LOA—but the onboard space is, in a sense, doubled, thanks to the cat design. She's stable enough to cruise through all but the nastiest stuff the Gulf Stream can whip up, and once you hit the islands, you don't have to worry about touching bottom. Not bad at all.

Another destination to consider, if you're all Bahama'd out (it can happen), is Mexico. If you were to keep this boat in Ft. Lauderdale, thanks to her leggy range—to the tune of 1,110 miles at 7 knots—you could, at least theoretically, take her to Cancun and back without refueling. (Fish tacos and margs instead of conch and Kalik it is!)

The Fountaine Pajot's Volvo Pentas are accessible through large hatches on either side of the cockpit. There are ladders that offer an ostensible path to the space, but you'd be better off simply stepping on the engines themselves, assuming they haven't been running. Three feet of headroom in the compartment is manageable, if not exactly voluminous. Access to the engines, fire equipment, and other systems is all very good.

And about that onboard space: There really is a lot, and I'm not just talking about in the relatively huge saloon, with galley aft and to port and a U-shaped dining settee to starboard. An indoor helm is an option here, though I don't think it's necessary. The only helm I'd need on this boat is up on the flying bridge, which can have an optional hardtop (popular in Florida, due to the heat) or bimini installed. There's a sunpad forward and ample seating aft.

Fountaine Pajot has also made good use of the boat's broad foredeck, where two large sun lounges beckon those in search of some privacy at the docks, or wind in their hair underway. A large stowage area forward of that is large enough to fit an adult-sized bicycle—not something you'll usually find on a 37-foot monohull.

The one traditional knock on cats is that the staterooms are small and narrow. Not so on the Fountaine Pajot 37. The starboard hull houses two guest staterooms plus a head, and I don't foresee any complaints



Note the sightlines around the saloon: Except for the port aft corner housing the galley, it's wall-to-wall windows on the world.

about the size. The port-side hull has a master that's bigger than you'd find on a lot of 37-foot monohulls. It has 6 feet, 6 inches of headroom and essentially spans the entire length of the hull, with a head forward. A four-cabin layout is also available, with two cabins in the portside hull—it's a utilitarian layout that obviously lends itself to chartering.

All this space is a major reason why Fountaine Pajot is seeing growth in the cat sector in emerging markets. (Although, as de Fontainieu proudly points out, Fountaine Pajot also recently sold one of these boats in Italy, that Mecca of design.) The boats offer an alternative and extremely usable entertainment platform, and the customers in those markets—South America, for example—tend to not be beholden to the monohull tradition. For Fountaine Pajot, that's a win-win.

But this 37 isn't all flash—she's also solidly built. The boat is infused with vinylester resins, and balsa coring above the waterline. There were no creaks or groans, even as we took those aforementioned seas from every angle imaginable. Seventeen different nautical designers worked on this boat's build, yet instead of a mishmash, the outcome is a boiling point. From her meticulous fit and finish to her intelligent layout, it's clear just by snooping around that a lot of thought went into this project. Fountaine Pajot turned out 150 catamarans last year alone, and it would appear that practice has made perfect. For the 37's part, the company had, the time of my sea trial, sold 27 of them. That's no small feat when you consider that this boat debuted at the 2015 Cannes show, and my sea trial was a mere two months later. But after familiarizing myself with this 37, it comes as no surprise. □

Fountaine Pajot, +33 0 546 37 70 40; www.fountaine-pajot.com



RPM	KNOTS	GPH	RANGE	dB(A)
1100	5.3	1.0	1,512	62
1500	7.0	1.8	1,110	62
2000	8.9	4.1	619	65
2500	11.0	7.7	408	71
3000	14.0	11.6	344	76
3500	18.5	16.4	322	76
4000	22.6	25.4	254	81

TEST CONDITIONS:

Air temperature: 84°F; humidity 70%; seas: 0-1'; load: 40 gal. fuel, 25 gal. water, 5 persons, 200 lb. gear. Speeds are two-way averages measured w/ GPS display. GPH estimates taken via Volvo Penta display. Range is based on 90% of advertised fuel capacity. Sound levels measured at the upper helm. 65 dB(A) is the level of normal conversation.