



Boat Review

Fountaine Pajot Lipari 41

BY TOM DOVE

Fountaine Pajot has been building catamarans for more than 30 years. Over that time, the company's boats have changed in evolutionary steps rather than quantum leaps, with hundreds of them being field-tested every day in charter fleets around the world. The new Lipari 41 is a further refinement of the simple, strong, spacious craft this builder has always produced.

CONSTRUCTION

The hull is built according to Fountaine Pajot's long-established method with a Divynell core above the waterline and solid laminate below. The stub keels are molded in as structural members and serve nicely as skids in shallow water. This simple, strong, shoal-draft design loses a bit of windward performance, but requires a lot less maintenance than a racier infusion process to lay up the cored deck.

The wiring is neat, labeled and untinned, in the European manner. The plumbing is also nicely installed with double clamps on the Marelon through-hull fittings. All the hardware is of good quality and properly sized for the job.

It's easy to reach all around the twin 20-horsepower Volvo diesels in the stern compartments for maintenance. There are no stern glands and therefore no leaks, but owners will need to keep a close eye on the sacrificial anodes of the alloy saildrive legs.

ON DECK

The deck layout is standard for catamarans, with plenty of space for lounging and handling lines or ground tackle. The targa top allows easy access to the big boom, so stowing the mainsail in

its stackpack is no problem. The helm seat is exposed, which means great visibility, but also full exposure to the sun.

The cockpit is set up for entertaining a crowd, so the Lipari 41 is certain to become party central in a raft-up. Two 6-foot long seats plus the battery box adjoin the big table and there is more seating to starboard. The entire cockpit is at the same level as the saloon, which expands the area even more and allows people to move easily between the galley and the cockpit.

Hatches allow easy access to large stowage areas throughout the cockpit and to the steering system. You can take an easy

With leather seats, cherry wood finish and expansive views, this may be Fountaine Pajot's prettiest saloon yet



→ VITAL STATISTICS

HEADROOM:

Port berth, fwd: 6ft 6in x 5ft 2in

Port berth, aft: 6ft 1in x 5ft 2in

Starboard berth
(master): 6ft 6in x 5ft 4in

→ SPECIFICATIONS

LOA: 39ft 2in

LWL: 38ft 10in

BEAM: 22ft 1in

DRAFT: 3ft 9in

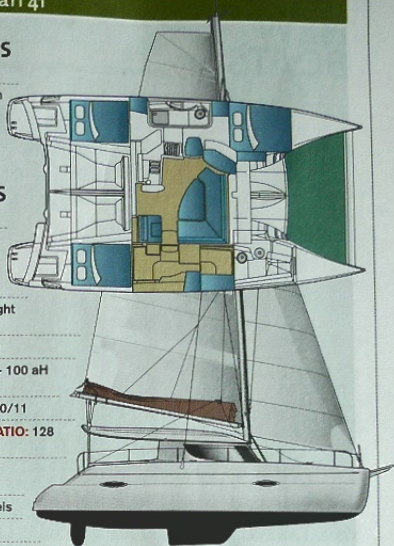
DISPLACEMENT: 15,200 lb light
ship, 20,503 lb max loadSAIL AREA: 882 ft² (100% FT)ELECTRICAL: 300 aH house + 100 aH
engine

FUEL/WATER/WASTE: 80/140/11

DISPLACEMENT/LENGTH RATIO: 128
(light ship), 172 (max load)SAIL AREA/DISPLACEMENT
RATIO: 19.1

POWER: 2 x 20hp Volvo diesels

DESIGNER: Joubert Nivellet

BUILDER: Fountaine Pajot,
Aigrefeuille, France, U.S. Sales:
Bay Yacht Agency, Annapolis, Maryland,
410-263-2311, fountaine-pajot.com

PRICE: \$358,495 as sailed includes freight, duty, pressure water, fridge, transom shower, sails, furling gear

step out of the transom to board the davit-mounted dinghy or go for a swim.

ACCOMMODATIONS

The interiors on Fountaine Pajot cats are increasingly refined every year. The joinery on the Lipari 41 is especially attractive, with a light cherry wood finish instead of the previous sycamore veneer. It also sports some nifty laminated woodwork, including a curved door leading into the starboard hull. I have sailed most of the new boats from this build and consider this the prettiest one yet.

There's a vast expanse of glass at eye level in the saloon, so you will be happy to stay inside in inclement weather, steering by autopilot on passage or enjoying views of the harbor at anchor. The nav station carries an authoritative air of command, while the galley and dining area are spacious, pleasant and efficient. The sleeping cabins are quiet, calm spaces. The functions of these disparate spaces fit well into a unified whole.

I sailed the Owner's version, with double forward and aft cabins in the port hull and a master suite occupying the entire starboard hull. The four-cabin charter version has starboard hull accommodations that mirror those to port. There's a minimalist, lightweight look to the cabin areas, with simple vinyl ceilings and open bins for stowage, and the master head compartment is so simple it seems almost stark.

UNDER SAIL

The Chesapeake was in a no-blow mood for over a week, but we finally found about 5 knots of breeze with irregular 30-degree shifts in Annapolis one day, so out we went. Thanks to a badly cut sail, the mainsail head

was hitting the backstay, so our test boat did not deliver optimum performance.

Mainsails on F-P boats are large and heavily roached and they carry full battens to support the leech, which sometimes makes them a chore to hoist and trim. The Lipari 41's redesigned, easy-to-handle sheet system is a big improvement over those on the company's earlier boats, but the main halyard still calls for windlass power. I like the way the sail controls on this model lead handily to the helm. It is easy to single-hand, once the sails are up.

The unique helm seat, molded into the hard targa top, is wonderful. It seats two, is up high for perfect visibility, has no "noggle knockers" overhead, and is very comfortable. The sheets fall to hand at a proper-size winch for easy trimming. This is the best catamaran helm I've seen...but you need to wear sunscreen and a hat to stay up here for long.

The boat sailed at 3 to 4 knots both to windward and reaching, and tacked reliably through 90 degrees. This is not bad, considering the flat conditions and mishapen mainsail. I'm sure a decent breeze will take it up to its 8 knot displacement speed quickly.

The wheel on the Lipari 41 is pleasant to

handle, with a light touch and quick response. No big cruising cat gives the same tactile feedback as a good monohull, but this one is closer to that ideal than most.

UNDER POWER

Setting the throttles at 2,500 rpm, we accelerated quickly to a bit over 8 knots. At low speed with both engines in forward gear, the Lipari 41 turns in 1½ boatlengths and pirouettes in its own space with one engine in reverse. This big boat easily fits into a tight space.

Saildrives are typically quiet so the sound level in the saloon during our cruise was a very reasonable 72 dBA, though little effort has been made to insulate the engine compartments. One attraction of a boat like the Lipari 41 is that it will quietly outrun a similar-sized trawler under power, yet can also sail and has more deck space.

CONCLUSION

The Lipari 41 is a fine example of a cruising catamaran that offers good speed, nice accommodations and lots of space. It could easily be a sailor's Ultimate Boat for living aboard or cruising into retirement. *AL*

Our Take

PROS:

Outstanding helm position and layout

Light, responsive steering

Bright, elegant, simple interior

Spacious saloon

Good sailing and motoring performance

CONS:

Big, heavy mainsail requires power to hoist

Interior may be too stark for some tastes

Steele keels hinder windward performance

No sun shade at the helm