



# the cat with impeccable manners

The new Lagoon 39 has a big act to follow from the very successful 380 that sold a staggering 700 hulls, but its user friendly features should win plenty of new devotees, reports KEVIN GREEN.

Running with a Code 0 or cruising chute is an ideal point of sail for most catamarans including the Lagoon 39. *Photo Lagoon*



Lagoon is synonymous with comfortable high-volume cruising catamarans which it builds very efficiently in its Bordeaux yard in north-west France. During a visit there I watched in awe as the Boeing-style production system of a mobile assembly lines moved each boat along for teams of workers to complete system installations. The Lagoon 39 is the latest model from this production line and showcases well the high technology adopted by the world's largest recreational catamaran builder.

Amenities are high on the list for buyers of Lagoons and the 39 is no exception with a versatile interior offering four layouts, a redesigned sail plan compared to the 380 and a remodelled exterior that nicely blunts the rather harsh look usually found on this brand.

These boats are built to appeal to a wide audience but new sailors are a key market my host for the day Frederic Signat explained.

"Around 30% of our clients are new to sailing so our boats must be easy to handle and of course simple to sail," said Frederic.

Boarding the 39, via the transom steps brings you to the sheltered aft deck, an area that is surrounded by bench space, making it a cosy spot under the hardtop bimini and scuppers prevent flooding. Along the transom a functional arrangement of davits with dinghy is roofed by a substantial solar panel with liferaft rack as well – demonstrating very good cruising credentials.

Integrated bulkhead steps gives easy access from the aft deck to the helm station which elevates the steerer

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below left: The sheltered aft cockpit allows easy galley access while bulkhead steps lead you safely to the helmstation. *Photo Lagoon*

below: The Lagoon 39 is a cruising cat with a functional deck layout and comfortable, versatile interior. *Photo Lagoon*



enough to see across both bows, and all around in fact. A double seat means command needn't be a lonely occupation and a canvas roof with clear plastic protects you from the worst of the weather.

The sail controls are simply but effectively laid out. The running rigging arrangement is particularly low friction thanks to the mast being so far aft, allowing halyards to come directly down it then onto blocks nicely located right beside the Harken 40.2ST winch, which handles the mainsheet as well; with

it's trackline also near, on top of the hardtop bimini. A second H40 beside the steering wheel controls the primaries which makes for a fairly simple and effective layout that worked well for me at sea. For the optional Code 0, a third set of winches lie at deck level. The helm console instrumentation is also well laid out with Raymarine plotter, i70 wind instruments and autopilot easily read; alongside the Quick windlass chain counter and twin throttles.

Stepping through the sliding door from the cockpit reveals the benefits of

Lagoon's upright coachroof, as the area is very spacious (2m headroom) for a 39 footer with galley facing aft, navigation station forward and the dinette can seat a family easily around its rectangular table (which is interchangeable with the large cockpit table). Regular collaborator Nauta Design has created a saloon with plenty of locker space, soft close drawers and overhead cupboards. The finish is described as 'grey alpi oak with vertical grain' and the floor is marine ply, laminated with darker oak.

The spacious navigation station uses the forward portside corner space well, giving the skipper bulkheads for electronics and a full size chart table. Behind, the L-shaped galley is demarked by the chromed mast compression post which adjoins it and is a good handhold in a seaway. Equipment includes a double stainless sink, sunk into the composite worktops – which have rather shallow wooden fiddles – and a three burner Eno stove-oven with optional microwave beside it. The front opening 130L fridge should cope with most of the perishables and food is served through the window to the cockpit diners.

Comfort and safety are the features strongly to the fore on the Lagoon 39 as can be seen from the aft deck with weather protection all round.



#### VERSATILE ACCOMMODATION

Versatility is what makes this boat attractive when it comes to accommodation as there are four versions – ranging from the standard two cabins with ensembles to the charter version with four cabins – and in between is a three cabin; our review boat.

The starboard owner's suite is entered by sliding a door the ensures total privacy from the rest of the boat but those large trademark Lagoon portlights

creates plenty of natural light when the area is enclosed to avoid stuffiness; and there's large opening hatches along the hull as well. The escape hatch has a breakable window with accompanying hammer, though I'd prefer a resealable unit so that when inverted it could be closed to increase the hull buoyancy plus it's good for ventilation when at anchor. Looking aft the owner's athwartships bed takes up the entire aft section so is spacious with plenty headroom. The couch beside it adjoins the vanity-desk with wardrobe alongside

above from left: Mast halyards are nicely near the winches and all other helm sail controls. Photo Kevin Green

Flat decks and the tall saloon offer plenty of support when moving forward. Photo Kevin Green

The helm station inspires confidence as it's nicely elevated to give clear views. Photo Kevin Green



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above from left: The aft owner's bed is one of the largest I've seen in this size of boat, though some more surrounding shelf space would be welcome. *Photo Lagoon*

A chart table is always welcome so the Lagoon's navigation station wins favour with me and there's sufficient bulkhead room for electronics. *Photo Kevin Green*

The owner's berth is large with seating, desk space and enough volume to avoid stuffiness when the hull door is closed. *Photo Lagoon*

Spacious, with a table that can be moved the Lagoon 39 showcases designers Nauta's skills well. *Photo Lagoon*

Commendable features in the galley include the locker space, deep double sinks and the optional microwave is handily placed. *Photo Lagoon*

below: A practical cruising setup – trickle charge the batteries from the solar panels while the davits remain accessible. *Photo Kevin Green*

far right: The upright cabin top can be a steep climb so some stairs would be welcome; note the self-tacking headsail that worked well during my sail test. *Photo Kevin Green*



just before the bathroom. A spacious ablutions has a separate shower with manual head as standard. There's also a large hatch giving access to the forepeak here as well.

Moving over to the portside guest hull the two double cabins share the central bathroom, with the aft berth the largest and it comes with a useful bedside cabinet and surrounding shelf space. Up forward the deep hull allows the narrow berth to retain comfort; thanks to its headroom and hatches.

#### RIG AND DECK

The Lagoon 39's flat topsides allow easy movement for crew with wide side decks thanks to the chainplates being on the gunwales and the swept back shrouds ensuring clear air as you move forward supported by the tall cabin top handrail which is a welcome safety grip (not so welcome however is its imposing height when climbing atop it to douse the mainsail, so like competitor Outremer, I'd fit some steps). As you'd

expect on a voluminous cruising cat like this 39, deck locker space is plentiful and the gas strutted lids are welcome. The anchor arrangement is fully

exposed on its bulkhead that leads the rode to the bows; a simple setup which suits me, just keep the kids aft when operating the 1000W Quick windlass. There's also a second bow roller.

For the rig on this new model, Lagoon have chosen to fit a Selden for the first time. Compared to the 380, the new 39 has the mast further aft to move the centre of effort nearer to the mini keels, which also enlarges the foretriangle allowing those bigger light wind sails. Our review boat came with a cutter rig: a Code 0 with plenty of clearance on its bowsprit from the inner genoa which had had a sufficiently large J-triangle to allowing it to run on a self-tacking track.

Compared to previous sail plans the mainsail is smaller so for more power a square top main (about 12% larger) can be fitted instead of the standard battened version.

#### HULL

For the shape of the new 39 and 52 regular Lagoon designer Marc Van Peteghem (from design house VPLP) sought input from the world of the motor car by engaging Patrick le Quément (former director of Design and Quality of Renault) who collaborated on the exterior. The result is Lagoon's typically blunt lines have been somewhat softened in the plumb bows where the gunwales have been angled in a diamond cut. Another change to the very upright coachroof has been the creation of an overhang above the windows, both giving welcome shade

and improving the aesthetics. Structure has had to be added as well to the roof with a grid of stringers to support the new mast position aft. Also, a thick black bootline has been added to the disguise the height of the towering topsides. The hull design has incorporated fine chines now which lends the topsides

a slightly less imposing overall feel. Construction is fairly traditional with infused GRP outside a balsa core above the waterline and solid GRP beneath; all neatly finished off with an unblemished gel coat. The bridge deck and topsides are constructed using vacuum bagged and infusion, a process Lagoon are long

term experts at. The bridge deck has a wing-shaped underside to smooth the effect of waves and clearance should be sufficient to minimise wave slap on a bumpy beat, the curse of most catamarans.

Hull access to the two 21hp saildrive engines is good, with enough free space around each for servicing, while gas struts keep the deck hatch remain open. There's a 10 Ah start battery per engine plus two 140Ah house batteries located nicely low down under the aft port cabin bunk: and to run all those whitegoods an optional Fischer Panda generator can be housed in a foredeck locker.

#### Another change to the very upright coachroof has been the creation of an overhang above the windows, both giving welcome shade and improving the aesthetics



#### ON THE WATER

Motoring out on a calm sea the twin Yanmars' revved to 3900 for a maximum speed of 8.4kts as Frederic and I prepared to set sail. The semi-flybridge design will give the novice skipper plenty of confidence – something many catamaran designs simply don't consider enough – as you can see all around from the comfy helm while the cable steering responded easily to my bidding. Setting sail is actually a simple one-person job: heading into the freshening breeze I ran some turns on the optional electric H40.2 winch and guided the mainsail up past the lazy jacks before locking the halyard then mainsheet off in the jammer as we turned onto a reach. With the





above from left: There's separate shower space and sufficient hatch space to ensure good ventilation on the Lagoon 39. *Photo Lagoon*  
 The exposed anchor arrangement is simply laid out but should be effective with capstan as well. *Photo Kevin Green*  
 The blunt angles have been softened on this latest Lagoon which improves the overall aesthetics. *Photo Kevin Green*  
 below: The rig is further back in the 39 so there's more space forward and plenty of deck space all around. *Photo Lagoon*

Lagoon 39 gathering pace I then unlocked the genoa furler line and pulled the sheet to unwind it; and we were off.

The starboardside helmstation has a comfy double seat with foot rest giving good views forward when seated, especially on port tack but on starboard the roach of the fully battened sail tended to obscure things when beating. Bringing the wind onto the beam, an ideal point of sail for this type of high volume catamaran, I noted 7.1kts on the Raymarine GPS as the wind gusted to 21kts. Hardening up I turned into a tack, again a solo job as the self-tacking genoa takes care of itself as does the mainsail of course, allowing the hulls to track around on their new heading with little complaint. Easily done on a flat sea of

above from left:  
 Hull access to the service points of the 21hp saildrives is available once the marine ply locker base is removed. *Photo Kevin Green*  
 Swim access is fairly basic with portside ladder but adequate on the Lagoon 39. *Photo Kevin Green*  
 The cutter rig is ideal for all cruising conditions while the exposed anchor arrangement is simply laid out. *Photo Kevin Green*  
 below: Essential on all cats, the escape hatches on the Lagoon are breakable in an emergency. *Photo Kevin Green*



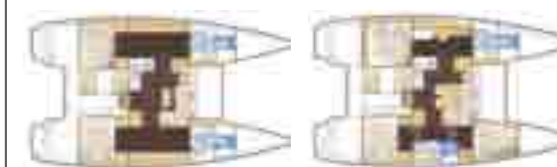
course, with more speed needed if it's choppy. Similarly going onto a broad reach then into a gybe went without dramas as the sizable Harken winch easily dealt with the sheeting as I stood holding the stainless steering wheel.

With the breeze softening I asked Frederic to unfurl the Code 0 and sheet-in using the deck located winches while I furled the genoa. The larger sail pulled strongly in the 19.5kts of pressure, allowing us to point as high as 70° where I noted the 7.9kts boat speed, a healthy number for this kind of boat.

Handling under power also showed the impeccable manners of the Lagoon 39, thanks to that good helm position and of course the use of the twin motors which easily spun the hulls within their own length, which also allowed the boat to track backwards without fuss; inspiring plenty of confidence for those tight berthing manoeuvres where the windage caused by this type of boat can scare the unwary.

Overall, it's hard not to like the Lagoon 39 as everything works well so this boat should inspire plenty of devotees who want to enjoy a simple, user-friendly catamaran.

## specifications



Price	\$588,000 base boat
Length overall	11.74m / 38' 6"
Length waterline	11.53m / 37'10"
Beam overall	6.79m
Mast height over water	18.40m
Draft	1.27m
Displacement Empty	11,190kg
Displacement Light (EEC)	11,670kg
Displacement Max (EEC)	15,750kg

### SAILS:

Full batten main	38m <sup>2</sup>
Mainsail square top (opt.)	44m <sup>2</sup>
Genoa Self tacking/ furling	32m <sup>2</sup>
Code 0 (option)	68m <sup>2</sup>

Water	300L
Fuel	2 x 200L
Engines	2 x 21hp
Design	Marc Van Peteghem & Vincent Lauriot Prévost (VPLP)
Exterior design	VPLP / Patrick le Quément
Interior design	Nauta Design

EC Certification A: 10 ; B: 12 ; C: 16 ; D: 20  
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