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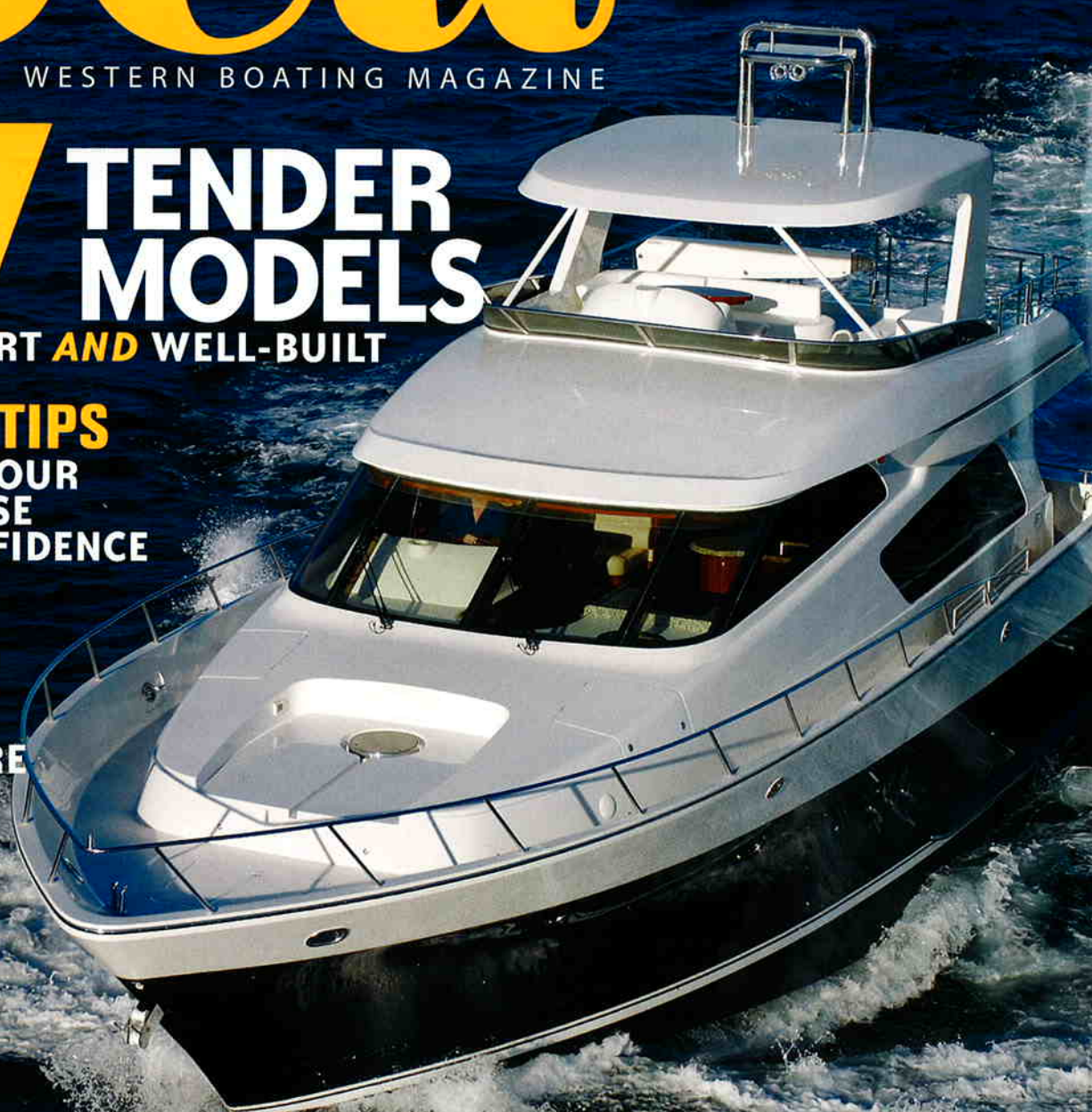
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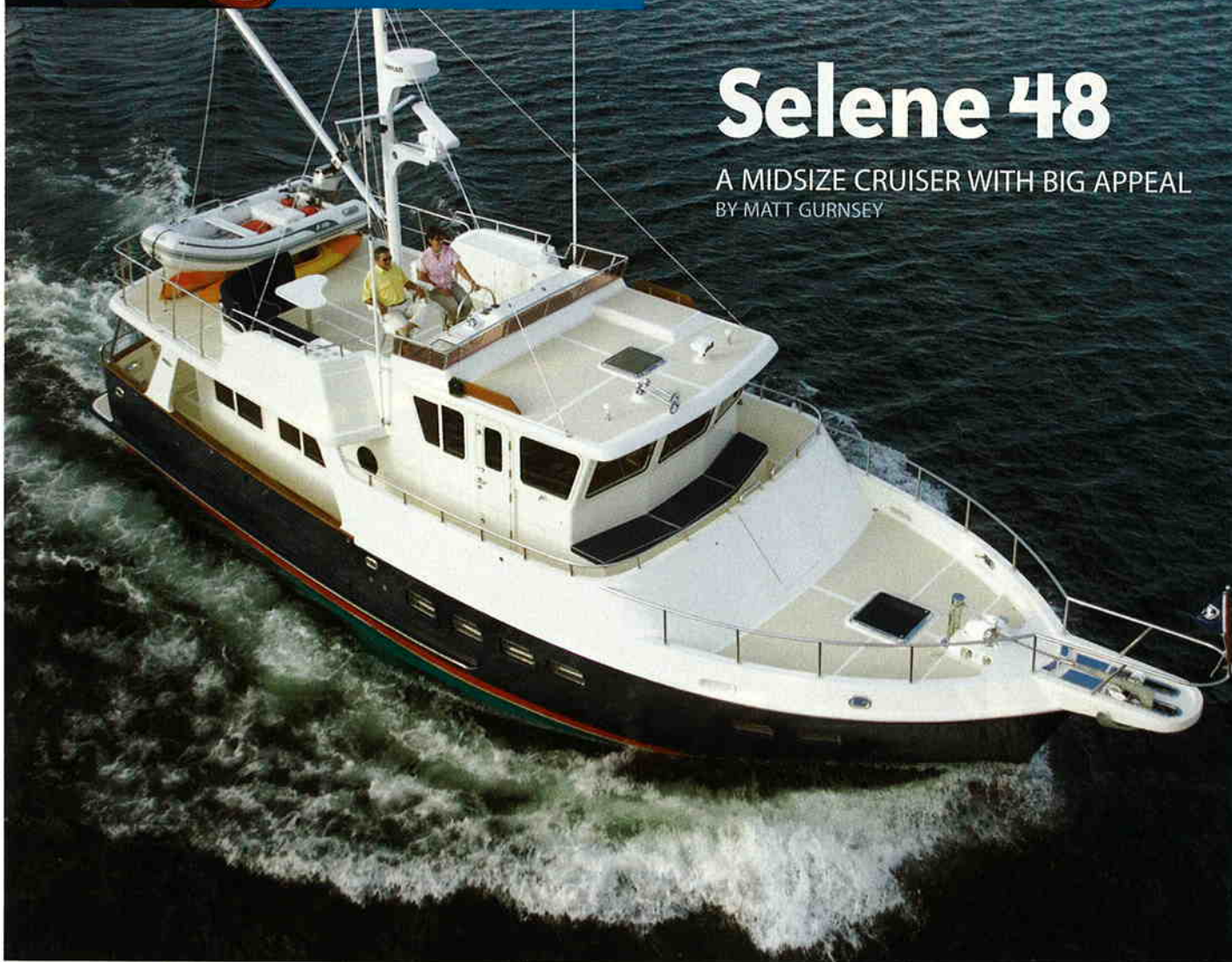
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**EXPLORING
ASTORIA**
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Selene 48

A MIDSIZE CRUISER WITH BIG APPEAL
BY MATT GURNSEY



I CAN PROBABLY COUNT ALL THE MANUFACTURERS of passage-making vessels on one hand. It's an exclusive group of builders, whose boats are renowned for their stability, strength and ability to sip fuel while traveling huge distances in comfort.

There are dozens of other manufacturers whose boats, when properly equipped, can also do long-distance cruising, but their models aren't designed to be this style of boat.

It has been interesting to watch the growth of Selene Yachts the last 10 years. The company has gone after the passage-making market, targeting its models to be long-range cruisers of the best kind. Its product line has expanded with models from 36 to 66 feet in production, and models more than 80 feet just on the horizon.

A DEEP-HULLED DELIGHT

Even while offering larger models to expand its market share and offer existing owners opportunities to "trade up," there has also been tremendous growth in the midsize models of 43, 47 and 48 feet. Early boats were built out of a common hull mold that could be dammed to provide the three hull sizes, but demand has dictated that separate molds be developed so that hulls could be produced faster, cutting down lead time on these popular vessels while still providing plenty of "cure" time for the fiberglass layup.

Hull construction is solid fiberglass from the keel to 1 foot above the waterline. Coring material above this point helps reduce weight slightly. Early hulls were hand laminated, but current models are vacuum bagged, which has produced a thinner, denser and stronger hull. Interior bulkheads are foam cored and laminated with a vacuum infusion process that provides precise control of resin ratios, again saving weight and adding strength.

It seems odd to talk about weight savings in a boat that weighs 74,000 pounds when it is offloaded from the cargo ship, but while these are not lightweight boats, they are not filled with "dead" weight for weight's sake. The boat is strongly built using modern construction techniques.

An Inside Look

Hull shape is full displacement. This style of hull is preferred by Ocean cruisers for its stability and ease of moving through the water. The after 20 percent of the hull flattens out to allow the vessel to achieve speeds above hull speed. The 48-footer's hull has been updated slightly for what Selene is calling its "Deep Hull" model. The draft is the same, but the hull shape has been extended aft to create an additional 18 inches of headroom in the engine room, and to allow longer fuel tanks that hold 1,300 gallons to be installed.

QUIET AND EFFICIENT

Fuel tanks, as well as water tanks, are constructed of fiberglass, and all the fuel lines are actually high-pressure hydraulic line with fittings at both ends. They are more than capable of handling the pressures at which fuel will flow through them, and easily replaced should the need ever arise.

The boat is powered by a single Cummins QFL 9.0 liter diesel that puts out 330 horsepower at 1800 rpm. You read that right — 1800 rpm. The engine turns slowly for longer life and less noise. In fact, readings at the engine room door at cruise are around 68 dB, and guests in the pilothouse were asked to be silent, because their conversations were being picked up by the meter.

The engine sits on a large, impressive-looking stainless steel mount that is bolted to the stringers. The engine installation is another area where Selene differs from other builders. Engines are extremely expensive for builders to buy, and they either invest capital or pay interest on the money to buy a boat's powerplant. This can also lead to boats being equipped with last year's engine model.

Instead, Selene installs the engine just weeks before the boat is shipped. This is achieved by designing the salon deck hatches over the engine itself, and the same-sized hatch in the cabin top. This gives additional room during construction for rigging the boat so workers won't stumble over the powerplant.

Another aspect of Selene Yachts is that the company owns its own boatyard. Based in Taiwan, the manufacturing facility is owned by designer Howard Chen and family and is locat-



Beautiful teak interiors create a warm atmosphere aboard the Selene 48. Many discriminating owners opt to select their décor finishes in person while visiting the company's Taiwan-based factory.

TESTER'S OPINION:
"A comfortable, well-built boat that has the features demanded by bluewater cruisers. Spending long periods of time on board would be a pleasure, whether at the dock or out in the open water."

ed in China about two hours from Hong Kong. Chen is not only the designer, but also owns the Selene company, and is partial owner of the dealerships on the West Coast, thus eliminating numerous layers of management and lowering production costs. It is not uncommon for a Selene to be hundreds of thousands of dollars less than competitors' boats.

ATTENTION TO DETAIL

The Chen family also owns companies that produce stainless steel flatware, so many of the stainless steel parts are custom fabricated and carry the Selene name and logo on them, including hawse pipes and doorsill panels. Each Selene also comes with a complete set of sil-

verware with the logo on it. The pieces are heavy and well crafted.

The silverware will be kept in drawers that are hardwood with dovetail joinery and teak faces. In fact, teak abounds throughout the interior. Cabinetry work is at the high level that owners expect, and the fit and finish is excellent.

Galley countertops are granite. One of the largest granite factories in the world is near the boatyard, and owners can pick their granite when they visit the plant to see their boat in production. Every buyer makes at least one trip to China to view his or her boat, and meet all the workers who are crafting the vessel. Many buyers make multiple trips to the plant during production.