



2022 BOAT OF THE YEAR

BEST CRUISING CATAMARAN (OVER 50 FEET)

Xquisite X5 Plus • Voyage 590
FP Samana 59 • Lagoon Sixty 5

Are they really all-around cruising sailboats, or are they luxurious and large party platforms that are best-suited for crewed charter vacations in tropical settings? That was once a fair question to ask of the builders knocking off long, tall, beamy vessels balanced on a pair of cabin-filled hulls. But no longer. Despite their respective girths and displacements, not to mention a wide variety of windspeeds and sea states, this quartet of full-size cats performed admirably across the board in this year's BOTY sea trials. Yes, they now truck along like good, honest sailboats. All that room is icing on the cake.

WINNER

XQUISITE YACHTS
Xquisite X5 Plus

There's much to like about this 53-foot South African-built cat. For judge Tim Murphy, the important details weren't necessarily the ones you could easily see, but rather the ones you couldn't. "What I was most struck by on our tour of the boat was actually the service side of the whole equation," he said. "There are 40,000 man-hours invested in this boat. And you can see it—those are solid hours of labor. One thing that was pointed out were two different marks on the heads of bolts showing they were torqued. And part of the Xquisite program is they spend two weeks with each owner, training them up with systems. All told, this is really one strong product."

VOYAGE YACHTS
Voyage 590

Destined almost exclusively for the charter trade, the judges believed the 590 would truly excel in that role (see page 62). But that didn't mean they did not consider it an innovative, exciting vessel on its total merits. "It's a 'techie' boat, and they're doing a lot of cool things with lithium batteries and 24-volt systems," judge Ed Sherman said. "In terms of systems integration, they're using high-end inverters to help out with things like variable-speed air-conditioning systems so they won't have to run generators for extended periods of times. It's pretty cool stuff. And under power, it's one of the quietest boats we tested. High marks all around!"

SPECS	X5 PLUS	VOYAGE	SAMANA	LAGOON
Length	53'0"	58'1"	61'6"	67'5"
Beam	26'2"	28'4"	31'0"	32'0"
Depth	4'4"	5'2"	5'4"	5'0"

FOUNTAIN PAJOT
Samana 59

In many respects, Fountaine Pajot was the pioneer in production cruising cats, and it's been fascinating to watch the company evolve. Tim Murphy has had a ringside seat for much of that decades-long evolution. "It's been interesting to watch their trajectory over the years," he said. "They started out as a very performance-oriented manufacturer. So, a lot of their thinking is about keeping weight out of their boats and creating cats that are going to perform well. Now they're more in a market that's moved in the direction of accommodation, and we've watched them transition in that direction. But speed and elegance remain important, as shown here."

LAGOON CATAMARANS
Sixty 5

The Lagoon Sixty 5 is another vessel that will find plenty of duty in the serious business of having fun: in other words, the charter business. And it would be hard to find a better vessel for doing precisely that. The focal point of the boat, on multiple levels, is the epic flybridge, a feature that Lagoon first explored on a big cat with the firm's 620 but which they have fully realized on this massive 67-footer. It utilizes a pair of steering stations, which are handy indeed given the beam of the yacht. The overhead Bimini sports a glass window for trimming the mainsail, a welcome and innovative addition. Sofas, wet bar, grill, fridge: Why would you ever go below?

“**3** I'd liken the Xquisite business model, which is exemplary, to the automotive sector for high-end cars, such as BMW and Mercedes.”
—Ed Sherman

Out of 4 of the big BOTY cats employ a flybridge, the once-quirky feature that is now mainstream.

