



Astinor 1000LX

This Spanish 33-footer might be one of the smaller flybridge craft, but it has a big-boat feel. And it is built for the Atlantic rather than the Mediterranean. **REPORT BY CARL RICHARDSON**

Recent years have seen a marked increase in the popularity of pêche-promenade or sports-fisher style motorboats among British buyers.

French boatbuilders are partly responsible, but Spanish builders too have gained a reputation for producing solid, seaworthy craft, with a flavoursome mixture of practical design and comfortable fit-out.

One reason for this Anglo-Spanish concord could be that many of the Iberian yards are based on the Atlantic coast, rather than the Mediterranean. Naturally enough, their craft are designed to contend with the local, potentially lively conditions, which tends to

mean they suit the UK's climate rather well.

Astinor have been producing hardy little fishing boats for more than a decade, but their focus has widened with the times. They now tweak the upper-works of their models, which range from 23ft up to 42ft, to offer buyers a choice of Fishing or Luxury versions.

The business is still family owned, and they claim to focus on quality rather than quantity, but that doesn't stop them building more than 200 boats a year, so this is no bit-part player on the market.

Astinors are imported into the UK by Hamble-based Leisure Marine, and when they exhibited the 1000LX model (LX for 'luxury') at the 2001 Southampton Boat Show, we were impressed by its big-boat feel and solid interior joinery. So we decided to dig a little deeper.

DESIGN & LAYOUT

For a 33ft flybridge cruiser, the 1000LX carries its dimensions admirably.

In theory the low freeboard should emphasise its height, but in fact the 1000LX neither looks nor feels particularly top-heavy. Helped by the raised gunwale that hides some of its bulk, the superstructure looks almost sleek, with a sculpted aft section that curves smoothly into the cockpit, and a moulded radar arch.

The boat's perceived length is further aided by a bowsprit, and by the styling at the stern which flows down to the waterline rather **▶▶**

worth a look

FLYBRIDGE STAIRWELL

Lined with grabrails, a moulded teak-clad stairwell allows an effortless ascent to the flybridge.

SCUPPERS

GRP gratings cover large deck drains, keeping the side decks flush and neat.



WHEELHOUSE SCREEN

The one-piece windscreen offers an excellent view forward from the inside helm.





decks

The bathing platform extends fully outboard, and will be the usual boarding point. A heavy transom gate gives access into the cockpit.

Two large hatches in the cockpit sole give access to separate lazarets with plenty of storage space.

Forward, a fair-sized anchor locker is provided, and

the ground tackle is handled by an electric windlass which comes as standard.

Deckware consists of 9in (23cm) T-bar cleats at the bow and stern. No spring cleats are fitted, which is a legacy of Spanish mooring techniques, but these can easily be retrofitted.



flybridge helm The layout of the upper helm spreads the controls out along a wide console, although everything is well within reach of the helmsman. Plenty of room is left for fitting extra navigational equipment.

side decks 12in (30cm) wide and bordered by a 10in gunwale and a stainless steel guardrail, these offer a very safe working environment.



cockpit There is seating for four or five people and moulded, teak-faced pockets in the coaming.

than ending abruptly.

A small knuckle in the topsides and a silver rubbing strake also drop away aft, before continuing around the integral bathing platform.

Beneath the waterline, the major design feature of what is a fairly orthodox medium-vee hull is a three-quarter-length keel. As well as offering the obvious benefits of extra stability and some protection for the shaft and rudders, this also makes for an eerily level ride in tight turns.

There are three sprayrails, the uppermost one falling early to a chine flat.

When you move around on deck, the Astinor feels firm underfoot, and a closer inspection of the build quality confirms that impression. Constructed in the traditional way, with hand-laid woven roving and plenty of stiffeners and stringers, this is a strong and comparatively heavy vessel.

Arguably, the trade off is a slightly sparser fit-out than on other similar-sized sportscruisers. However, we suspect that most owners who like to use their boats come rain or shine will not consider this a defect.

The 1000LX oozes usability. The decks are a joy to walk along, 12in wide and with a solid 10in (26cm) of gunwale to protect you. Good-sized moulded steps, and grabrails were you need them, lead you safely to and from a cockpit that is both practical and accommodating.

In the LX version of the 1000, as tested, the interior accommodation is bigger than in the Fishing model. The saloon encroaches into the cockpit by around 2ft, and the flybridge (with no fishing rods to get in the way) has an overhang that means additional space

upstairs and extra shelter downstairs.

In its standard guise, the simply laid-out flybridge provides seating for two people plus a gripped section aft that would make a good sunpad. Additional seating can be fitted as an option.

Below decks, teak and white vinyl mix well with the deckhead's longitudinal teak strips to present a clean, traditional appearance. A teak and holly sole runs throughout an interior that boasts 6ft 2in (1.86m) headroom, and there is solid teak joinery everywhere you look. It all feels welcoming.

In the wheelhouse/saloon, there is comfortable seating and dining space for four adults, with the galley lying opposite.

Although the settee can be converted into an occasional berth, permanent sleeping accommodation is also for four, accessed down wide stairs forward that house the 12V/220V master switches and breakers. The port cabin is a curtained-off affair that makes good use of its dimensions, while the master cabin features a raised double berth and plentiful teak cabinetry.

POWER OPTIONS

The importers offer a choice of six turbo-diesel installations, evenly split between Volvo Penta and Yanmar.

The smallest option in each case is twin 200hp units, and the largest are 260hp Yanmars or 285hp Volvos. Given the small price differential between the two manufacturers, it is a matter of the buyer's personal choice as to which is taken up.

The boat we tested had a pair of 230hp Volvo Penta KAD43s.

HANDLING & PERFORMANCE

The KAD43s meant our test boat was no slouch, but more interesting was the handling, where the three-quarter-length keel really made its mark. The amazing solidity of the hull, even under tight turns, came as quite a surprise.

You accelerate away, with the Astinor feeling every bit the agile 30-footer and the Volvos responding

lazarets There is handy storage in two separate compartments under the cockpit sole.



accommodation

A teak sole which runs throughout the interior and plenty of solid joinery are set off by sharp white vinyl and glossy mouldings.

Good stowage is something of a

feature, with all manner of lockers and cabinets provided in each area.

Opposite the saloon settee, the well laid-out galley offers a two-burner hob, a fridge and a sink, plus

plenty of cupboard space.

Each sleeping cabin has its own reading light and opening porthole, and the single toilet/shower compartment is very usable.



saloon Workmanlike rather than luxurious, the saloon is a sociable space offering a great view out while underway.



galley When the hob is in use, workspace is at a premium.



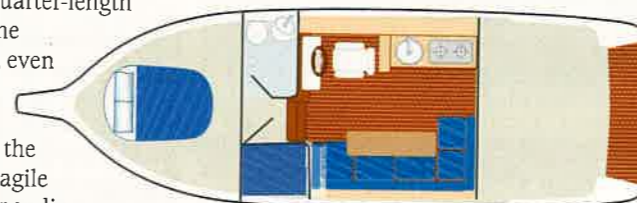
forward cabin Well appointed, with a good-sized double berth, this spacious cabin enjoys a wealth of cabinetry.



midships cabin A narrow double berth takes up the whole curtained-off area.



toilet/shower There is 6ft 1in of headroom, even with a teak shower tray.



27.7 knots, at 3800rpm. More usefully, a throttle setting of 3400rpm delivered a fast cruising speed of 24.7 knots, and a very laid back and comfortable 21 knots came at an economical 3000rpm.

Noise levels inside were about average, at 85-90dB(A). We think they could be lowered with the simple addition of restraining clips or magnets on some of the lockers.

From the inside helm position, your view is pretty much unimpeded given the one-piece screen forward, large side windows and a clear aspect aft. Although lacking in lateral bracing, the helm seat offers decent lumber support when you are seated and becomes a good leaning post when you stand up.

In less open waters, the Astinor will stay at a sedate 4-5 knots without obliging you to throttle back constantly.

quickly to the throttles. Then you put it into a turn and prepare for it to bank, only to find it stays perfectly upright! And yet, it still turns within a couple of boat lengths.

The glorious conditions of our test day offered little to examine the boat's seakeeping abilities, but what little chop we could find was dismissed without fuss and not once did we see evidence of spray making its way aboard. We would feel more than happy to undertake coastal passages and Channel crossings in such a sturdy vessel.

The top speed we measured was

Specifications & Verdict ▶▶

BOAT REPORT Astinor 1000LX • 33ft flybridge cruiser • from £107,512



specifications

BUILD	glass-reinforced plastic
RCD	design category C
LENGTH OVERALL	33ft 0in (10.00m)
BEAM	11ft 1in (3.35m)
DRAUGHT	2ft 4in (0.70m)
AIR DRAUGHT	10ft 4in (3.10m)
DISPLACEMENT	5.25 tonnes
FUEL CAPACITY	132gal (600lt)
WATER CAPACITY	44gal (200lt)
ENGINES	twin Volvo Penta KAD43 diesels, 6cyl, 3.5lt, 230hp at 3800rpm
BUILDERS	Embarcaciones Astinor, Ctra Nacional, 555km 0,333, Vilavella, Spain.
SUPPLIERS	Leisure Marine Ltd, Suite 24, Hamble Point Marina, School Lane, Hamble, Hampshire SO31 4NB.
PRICE	from £107,512 inc VAT; £109,862 as tested

engineroom

A hydraulic hatch in the saloon sole offers the only access to the enginebay. Getting in is a little tight, and once you are inside it does not get much bigger.

However, the finish and level of engineering are good. The battery banks sit in their own paddock at the front of the bay, where there is also ample room for additions such as a calorifier.

A separate service panel located above the port engine allows access to the fuel and oil filters, and the pre-filters and water filters are just about accessible at the rear of the compartment.

Getting to the oil dipstick on the starboard engine is tricky, but could be improved with addition of another access panel.

conclusions

LAYOUT

Although it is capable of looking after six adults, we see the Astinor as a great family boat. Two good cabins, a large toilet/shower compartment, safe decks, a great cockpit and a flybridge should cover most buyers' wish list, although the engine access is cramped. And you get a good inventory of standard equipment, but with the notable exception of hot water.

BUILD

The standard of engineering and the solid strengthening of the hull lets you know that this is a tough boat. The quality of the interior fit-out and joinery is good, not to mention thoughtful.

PERFORMANCE

This is a stable cruiser, and with three people on the flybridge it still feels poised and assured. Handling is intuitive and confident, and the boat stays almost upright even when cornering tightly.



test data

rpm	knots	gph	lph	mpg	range	noise
2500	13.1	9.5	43	1.36	145	85
2700	17.5	10.5	48	1.66	175	86
3000	21.0	12.0	55	2.00	211	88
3400	24.7	16.0	74	1.54	163	91
3800	27.7	28.0	106	0.99	104	92

range in miles, allows 20% margin.

noise in dB(A), in saloon with door closed.

conditions wind westerly Force 2, sea slight/calm.

load fuel 100%, water 50%, crew 3.

the rivals



RODMAN 1120

£121,963 inc VAT

Slightly larger at 37ft, this is another capable flybridge cruiser with great seakeeping qualities.

Tel: 01243 512454.

www.seasportmarine.co.uk



JEANNEAU PRESTIGE 32

£121,141 inc VAT

An intelligently designed boat with a larger saloon and separate galley, plus asymmetrical side decks.

Tel: 01932 226266.

www.waltonmarine.co.uk



BÉNÉTEAU ANTARES 10.80

£108,480 inc VAT

A French 36-footer offering comfortable cruising with a high specification.

Tel: 01248 363414.

www.beneteau.com

mbm verdict

Several times during our test we had to stop and remind ourselves that this is only a 33ft boat, with a price tag to match.

The 1000LX's big-boat feel can be put down partly to its stability, and partly to its simple but effective layout. Or is it that most boats under 37ft are open-cockpit sports cruisers, so you just presume that a flybridge boat must be bigger?

Either way, this is a great performer, ideal for UK boating. Just try not to invite the marina manager out for a blast, or he might try and put your mooring fees up!