

AVANTI

4085 EXPRESS



Shedding its Bayliner name is a fast cruiser which is more accurately aimed at the European market than your average American offering. We took it for a test in some rough seas.



If the Avanti name rings a bell, that is because it used to be a product range from American boatbuilders Bayliner. Now, it seems, it is a marque in its own right, with the giant corporation being subdivided into a number of smaller companies based on existing model ranges, each with its own separate identity even if its line-up hails from the same design and production facilities as before.

The largest model in the Avanti range of fast cruisers, the 4085 Express, was first seen in the UK at the London Boat Show in January. It is substantially more European in design than its predecessors, with a less open-plan interior and a better-looking hull, at last doing away with the moulded-in beak of an extended anchor platform.

Bearing in mind the demands of the American market, it is no surprise to find petrol installations dominating the list of engine options, but it was with a pair of 370hp Cummins diesels providing the power that we put this 40-footer through its paces,

Midships cabin

With its two-seater settee and full headroom, the aft sleeping area doubles as a day-cabin. Whilst it does not open fully onto the main saloon, it augments the seating available there, acting

as a sociable adjunct.

The berth, tucked out of sight behind the bulkhead, measures a good and roomy 6ft 10in (2.14m) long by 4ft 8in (1.42m) wide. Clothes storage is provided by a number of eye-height cupboards and a moderate-sized hanging locker, plus a void beneath the

settee base which is just painted-out rather than lined. A side port opens into the cockpit.

A fabric blind can be pulled across to give some measure of privacy at night, but it is pretty puny and, with nothing to hold it in place at the bottom, it does not come up to expectations.

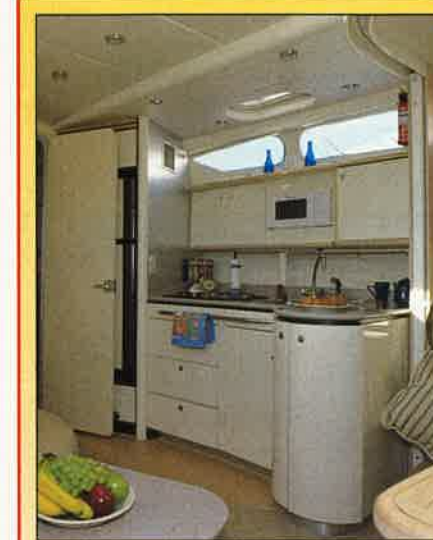


Toilet compartment

The boat's single WC is en-suite to the forecabin, but there is also access from the saloon.

The compartment is a good size and has a separate circular shower cubicle, although the basin set in the Avonite work surface is on the small side. Our test boat had an electric toilet plumbed through to a holding tank.

Stowage is good, although we were unimpressed by the rather sharp and tight handles on the cupboard doors. An extractor is fitted, but why are the sizable portlights transparent rather than opaque?



Galley

Opposite the dinette, the galley has a dog-leg shaped Avonite worktop, with a useful array of drawers and cupboards over, under and outboard.

Standard equipment includes a sink, a large fridge/freezer and a microwave, though not a combination one. Our test boat, which was fitted with the optional generator, had a three-ring electric hob.

The largest cupboard, smack opposite the settee, can be fitted with a television and video if required.

on a rollercoaster of a day out of the UK dealers' base in Poole.

Design & layout

The design philosophy we have come to expect on American boats of this type is that of keeping bulkheads to a minimum, which maximises the interior space available during the day but at the expense of the privacy that would be afforded by separate cabins. On the 4085, the designers have compromised by incorporating a completely separate forecabin but leaving the midships one with its useful sofa partially open to the saloon area.

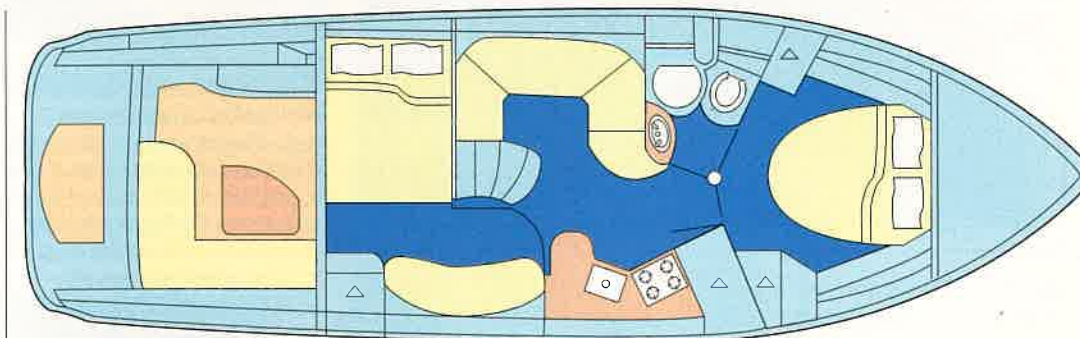
Interior fit-out is more typically American, with laminate-finished joinery and little by way of overt woodwork. This is functional but to our mind a little dull, especially when you have 40ft of it. Out-of-sight areas are all well finished, with no sharp shards of GRP, and painted-out or lined.

Up on deck, the cockpit is well proportioned, allowing a full crew to sit around the dinette but still with sufficient room further forward for most of them to join the skipper around the helm when underway. A fully integrated bathing platform lends itself to easy boarding and watersports.

The deck and coaming lines keep the boat looking fairly low and clean-cut, with the screen blending in well between the long foredeck and the raked radar hoop.

With the drivetrain running through a vee-drive gearbox, the engines are installed neatly to the rear of the boat, which is good for weight distribution as well as being less intrusive to the accommodation.

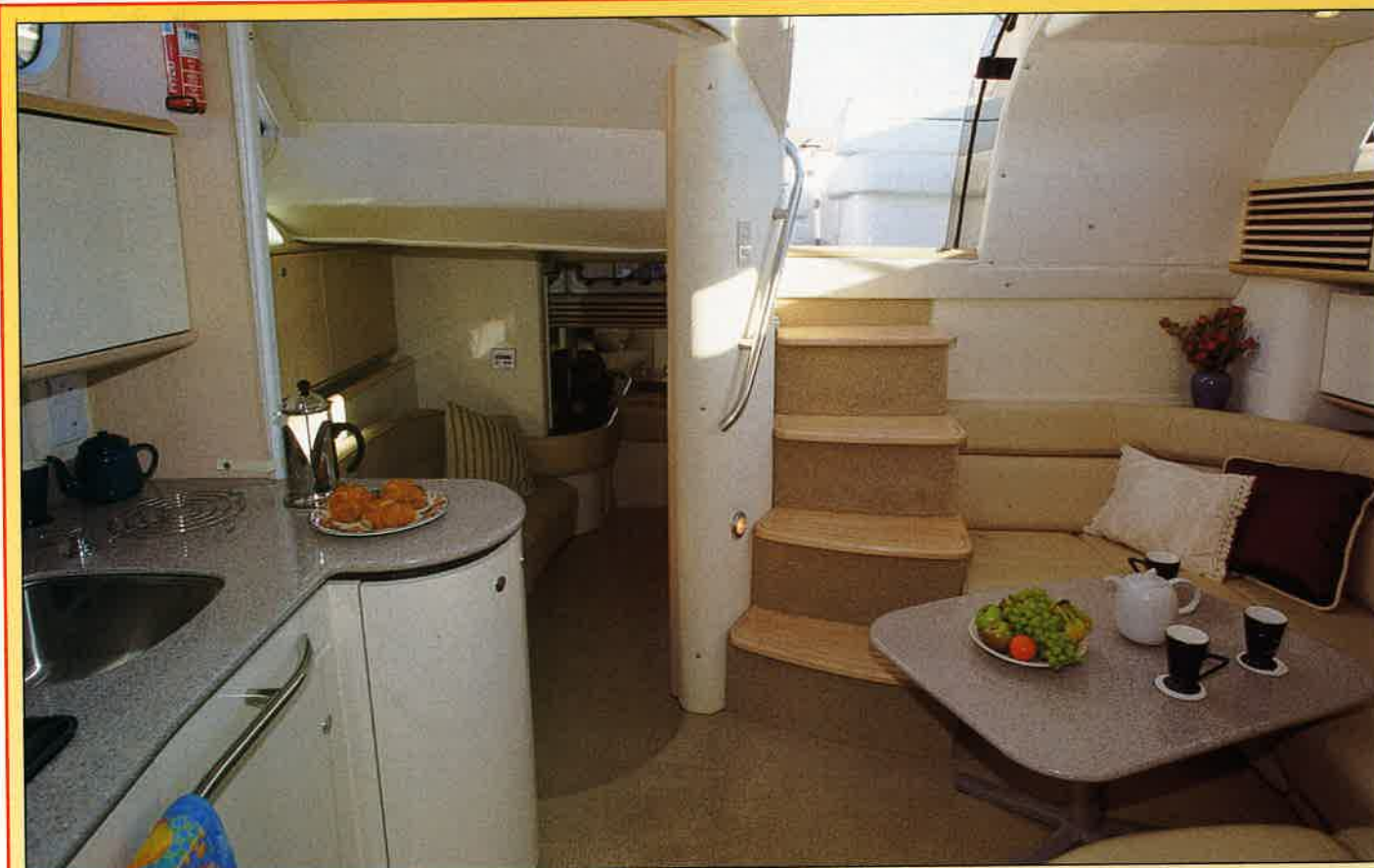
Underwater, the 4085's lines



are medium-to-deep vee, with a deadrise of 16° at the transom, honing up to 20° amidships. The angle of the shafts means there is no need for tunnels, and the hull bottom is left clear except for three pairs of sprayrails. The chine is toed-in, and a knuckle in the topside keeps spray at bay.

Handling & performance

The area around Poole Harbour can usually be relied upon to provide some sort of sea, be it a long swell from the south-west building as it runs into shallower



Saloon

A wide set of wood-treaded stairs lead down through a large sliding hatch from the cockpit to the

accommodation, accompanied by a sturdy handrail to one side.

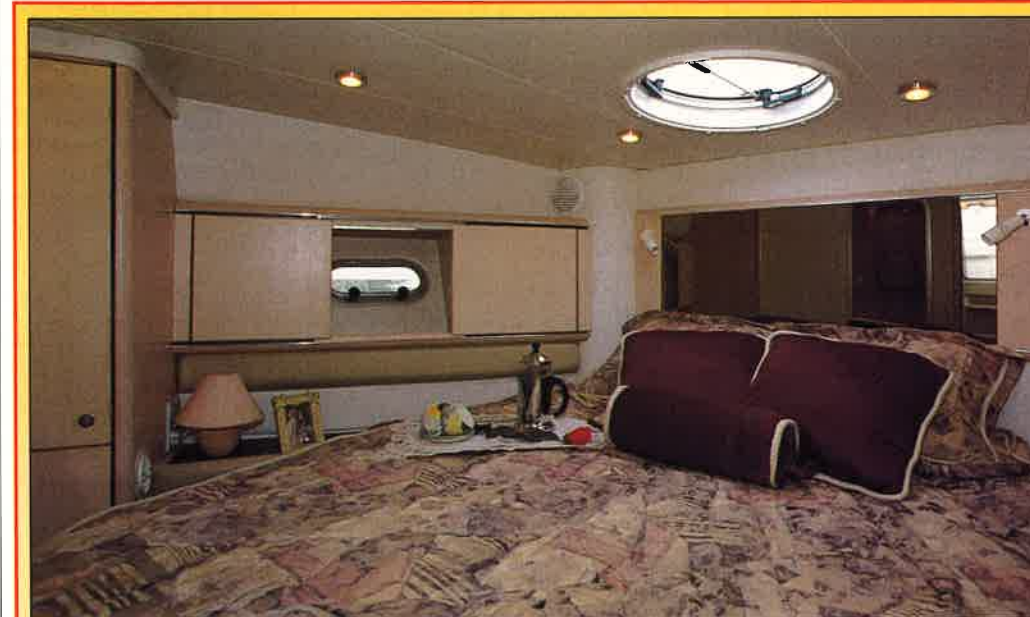
Headroom in the saloon is a full 6ft 10in (2.14m), and with the coachroof sides being pretty well vertical the feeling of

spaciousness runs right outboard, even with two tiers of lockers incorporated above the dinette to port.

The seating is wide and comfortable, being upholstered in

a leatherette-type material, although the free-standing Avonite-topped table is a little small for serious dining.

Some of the seat lockers are lined, others just painted-out.



Forward cabin

There is still plenty of headroom carried forward into the master cabin, and lots of room generally,

although the television cupboard seems to encroach unnecessarily on the available clothes storage.

There is still a good variety of lockers, as well as a set of drawers located in the foot of the 6ft 6in x 5ft 0in (1.98m x 1.52m) berth.

Cockpit

The aft part of the cockpit is dominated by a U-shaped settee and table to starboard.

The table, which is thoughtfully moulded not just with fiddles but

with glass-holders as well, can be dropped to turn the seating into a sunbed. The space beneath the seats is open rather than being enclosed with lockers.

Opposite is a wet-bar arrangement complete with an icemaker and sink,



plus cupboard space.

The further seating opposite the helm position is just what you need, allowing many of the crew to sit up front for a better view of what is going on, or, with one end tilted back across the forward bulkhead,

acting as a sunlounger.

The canopy is good and high when erected, allowing unimpeded movement around the cockpit when in situ, but it is less obvious how it could be rolled and stowed easily.

waters, or the usual mush around headlands such as Old Harry. On the day of our test it was a southwesterly swell augmented by a stiff Force 4-5 southeasterly wind, pushing up some steep waves over Hook Sands and across the approaches, which offered some interesting seas through which to try the Avanti.

Running into the weather at around 25 knots, the hull proved most adequate, giving a comfortable ride and taking the confused and sometimes sizable waves without hesitation. Turns through them and across them produced some spray, but were accomplished in confident style.

The steering is light, always requiring only one hand, and the throttles smooth to operate, which allows the revs to be set exactly as needed.

When we pulled back the throttles to give what can sometimes be an awkward hump speed of 15 knots or so, the hull kept level to maintain a comfortable ride. There was no sign of the common problem whereby the reduction in the speed of encounter with the waves is painfully offset by the extra pounding due to excessive trim.

Driving with the bulk of the seas astern was just as easy, if at

Helm

The double helm seat, with its good high back and padded armrest for the driver, is a comfortable affair and can be adjusted electrically. Indeed the whole console area works well, with tab and wiper controls running up to the throttles on the right of the adjustable wheel, and the gearshift on the other side.

Engine instrumentation is spread across an angled fascia on the other side of a bank of ready-use switches, and there is a useful flat non-slip chart area here as well.

The standard inventory of

electronics is pretty basic by today's standards, comprising just a depth-sounder, a compass and VHF. However there is plenty of room to fit both big and small navigation heads, and we like the way the good-sized spare area of console for this purpose is slightly angled towards the skipper, but without isolating the co-driver.

Our test boat's wraparound screen was anodised, and provided good protection. As with most American boats, it was fitted with opening quarter-lights. Two wipers clear the major part of the screen, and visibility is unobscured by the frame.



times rather wetter. This surprising phenomenon took the more complacent among us by surprise just after we had taken off our jackets!

Generally the boat took what was a fair old pounding in good fashion, giving a solid ride. There were few squeaks or groans from below, and everything remained in situ.

Our radar gun measured a top speed of just over 30 knots. Given the horsepower on tap, this is not hugely impressive, but it is probably the speed at which the 4085 feels comfortable. A setting of 2400rpm will give you the easiest cruising, at 24 knots with unobtrusive noise levels.

Conclusions

We enjoyed our excursion in the boat. The helm position works well and we came away well satisfied with how the hull handled the awkward conditions, even if one or two of us repaired ashore rather wetter than we set out.

If you are prepared to rub along with the American-style fit-out, and the flimsy way the aft cabin is separated from the saloon, the Avanti is a lot of boat for the money. Its exterior styling, interior robustness, layout and engineering are all well up to scratch, and there is plenty of useful design detail both in the cockpit and down below, making for an easy liveaboard existence.

Decks

All deck areas, including the side decks and the flat, easily negotiated coachroof, benefit from a good moulded cross-hatch non-slip finish.

The side decks are 9in (23cm) wide. Guardrails do not extend right the way back to the break of the cockpit, but handrails are provided on each side of the radar arch and there are well placed grabrails outboard of the screen, thereby offering a sure handhold even with the canopy in place.

A large foredeck hatch opens on a spring support to reveal a vertical windlass set down in a well, with a rope stowage compartment to one side and a separate chain locker.



Mooring hardware comprises 12in (30cm) bar cleats forward, midships and aft, all angled outboard so as to save you from stubbing your toes.

Bathing platform

Being some 4ft deep, the bathing platform is big enough to take a personal watercraft, and it extends to the full beam of the boat, making it the obvious place to board.

The deck locker here is supplemented by a 'boot' within the transom, which houses the battery switches, fuel cut-offs and shorepower hook-up, with space left over for some if not all of the vessel's complement of fenders.

The chunky transom door is fashioned with a bin locker on its inboard side, which is handy for stowing the stern lines.



Engine room

A large part of the cockpit sole lifts as one unit, on an electric-powered ram actuated from the helm position, to reveal the engine installation, on our test boat a pair of 370hp Cummins diesels.

You can jump down onto a small platform between the engines to carry out basic service checks; another panel can be lifted clear if work is required on the outboard side of the starboard engine.

On the whole access is not bad, the main drawback being the way the exhaust trunking tends to hide the oil filter on the port engine and the fuel filter on the starboard one. The fuel/water separators on the forward bulkhead and the raw-water strainers located centrally are much easier to inspect.

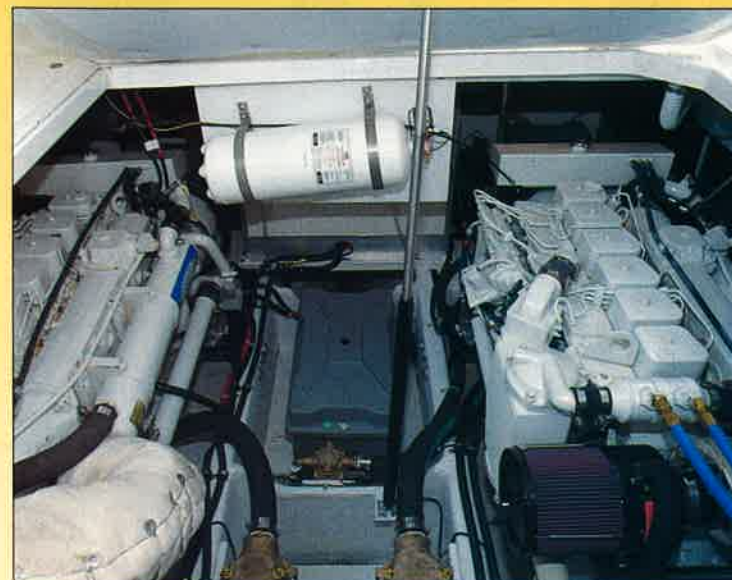
The vee-drive arrangement means the shaft logs are beneath the engine sumps and tight to get at, but at least they are of the mechanical bellows type which

require the least maintenance.

With the optional genset located towards the rear of the compartment, there is only just enough space to squeeze around it to service it, or to get at the engine belts and pumps. One of the battery boxes

is also located here, which must make removing them awkward.

The installation is tidy, with lines and cables run clear of your footfall and other potential damage. The bilge is served by two submersible pumps but no manual back-up.



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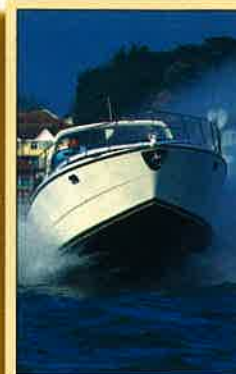
PERFORMANCE & CONSUMPTION							SOUND LEVELS dB(A)		
rpm	knots [#]	gph [†]	lph [†]	mpg [†]	range [*]	trim	saloon	helm	cockpit
1600	10.0	5.7	26	1.75	384	2.5	70	76	80
1800	13.9	7.8	36	1.78	391	4.0	71	77	81
2000	15.5	10.1	46	1.53	336	5.0	72	78	82
2200	20.5	13.2	60	1.55	341	4.5	74	79	83
2400	24.4	15.8	72	1.54	339	4.5	76	80	83
2600	26.5	20.2	92	1.31	288	4.5	77	81	84
2800	30.0	25.3	115	1.18	260	4.0	78	82	85
3000	31.5	31.9	145	0.98	215	4.0	78	82	85

[#] measured by radar gun. [†] calculated from engine manufacturers' figures. ^{*} allows 20% margin.

ACCELERATION ~ 0-20 knots, 12.5sec

CONDITIONS ~ wind southerly Force 4-5, sea moderate

LOAD ~ fuel 50%, water 50%, crew 3



BUILD

glass-reinforced plastic

DIMENSIONS

LOA

42ft 0in (12.80m)

BEAM

13ft 5in (4.09m)

DRAUGHT

3ft 5in (4.09m)

AIR DRAUGHT

10ft 6in (3.20m)

DISPLACEMENT

9.0 tonnes

FUEL CAPACITY

275gal (1250lt)

WATER CAPACITY

64gal (292lt)

ENGINES

twin 370hp Cummins diesels
370hp at 3000rpm

PRICE

from £117,000 ex VAT with petrol engines; £144,675 as standard with 370hp diesels; £163,023 with extras as tested

SUPPLIERS

Poole Aquatic Boat Sales, Salterns Marina, Salterns Way, Lilliput, Poole, Dorset BH17 8JR. Tel: 01202 701707.

BUILDERS

Avanti Boats, PO Box 9029, Everett, Washington 98206, USA. Tel: (1) 360 435 5571.