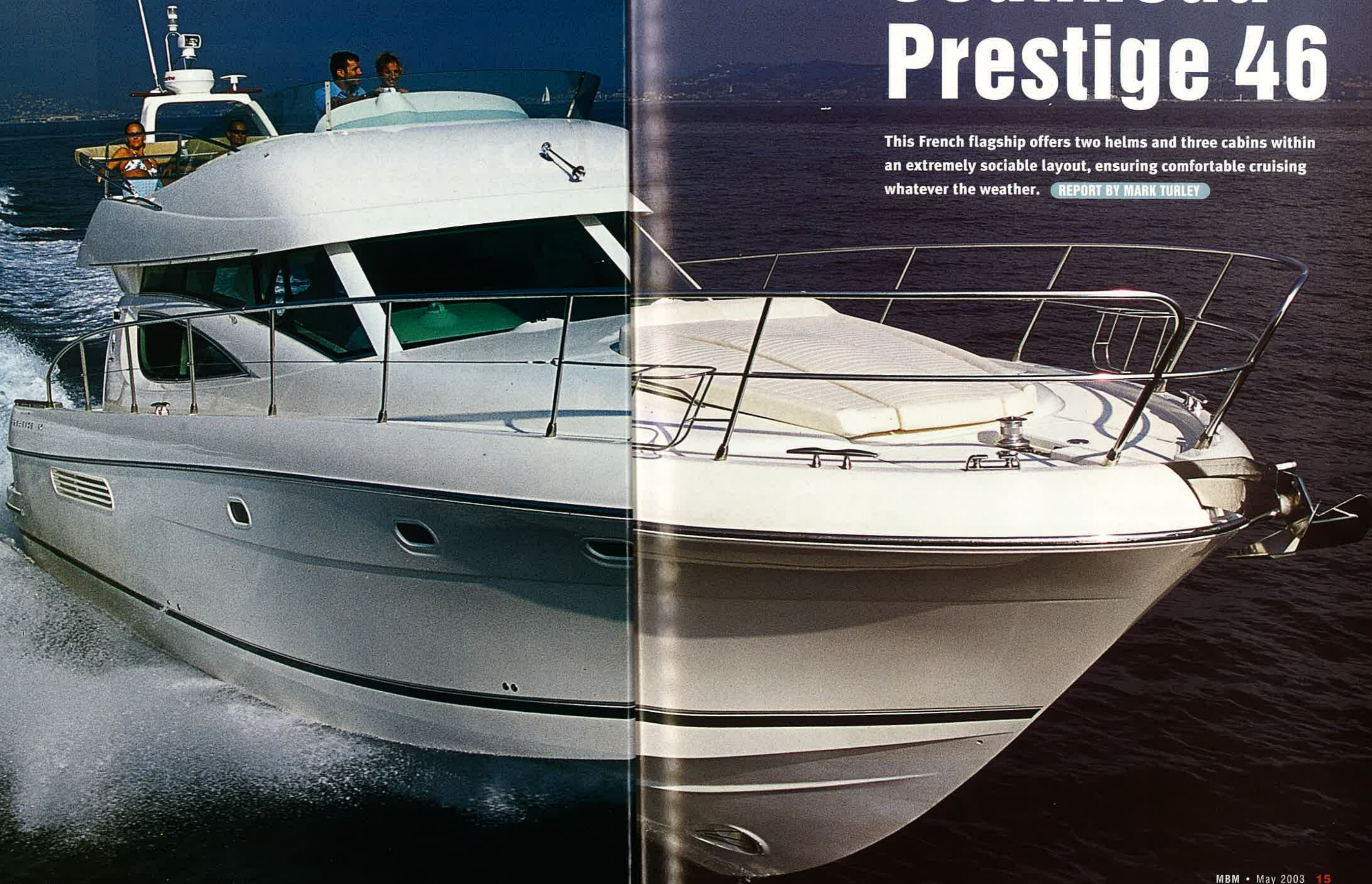


BOAT REPORT Jeanneau Prestige 46 • flybridge motor cruiser • medium-vee hull • two helm positions • three cabins • twin 480hp Volvo Penta diesels • 31 knots • £354,887

Jeanneau Prestige 46

This French flagship offers two helms and three cabins within an extremely sociable layout, ensuring comfortable cruising whatever the weather. **REPORT BY MARK TURLEY**



highlights



FORWARD DINETTE

The layout encourages the whole crew to gather close to the interior helm.

ASYMMETRIC DECKS

The port deck is wider than the starboard one, making it the preferred route to the foredeck.



Although still best known on the north side of La Manche for their sailing yachts, the huge French boatbuilders Jeanneau are making no bones about increasing their share of the motorboat market.

In addition to their sportier models and wheelhouse pêche-promenades, over the past few years they have developed an interesting line-up of flybridge boats, and recently launched the first of a new hardtop sports cruiser range.

We travelled to Marseille to try the new flagship of the breed, the flybridge Prestige 46, which combines three cabins with one of the most sociable interior helm arrangements we have seen.

DESIGN & LAYOUT

Jeanneau's in-house team of designers and naval architects sourced a certain amount of inspiration for the 46's styling and interior



interior helm Although not adjustable, the large double seat is comfortable, with a decent high back. The console layout works well, with the instrumentation kept close and easy to view. The only fly in the ointment is the limited space left for a plotter or radar ahead of the skipper, which will take only a small monitor. A handhold-cum-bookrest is provided in front of the co-pilot, and even a handy tray for bits and pieces.

from the Italian design office of Vittorio Garroni and Musio Sale. Together they have produced a truly spacious layout.

There are three good cabins, two of them en-suite, but what really catches the eye is the open-plan saloon. This boasts a roomy raised dinette opposite the lower helm, enabling the whole crew to sit up near the skipper.

This has in turn been achieved by locating the galley amidships, where it is dropped down a couple of steps, tucked away slightly but still central to the saloon.

The largely uninterrupted split windowline offers excellent visibility and also plenty of light, especially important given Jeanneau's predilection for dark joinery.

The exterior is also a little different from the norm, with subtle but helpful ideas much in evidence.

The cockpit's transom settee is banana-shaped. This makes it more sociable, as people sitting here are naturally turned towards one another. A hatch and door arrangement to starboard gives access to a crew cabin or utility area under the deck.

accommodation



master cabin The central berth is generous in the extreme, with a good feeling of space around it.

Usually on a boat of this size, the galley finds itself sitting up at saloon level, built over the top of one of the cabins below. The upshot is often intrusion into the helm and saloon areas, and also limited locker space, because the windowline would be ruined if the joinery was brought up above the countertop.

Here, by siting the galley further back, amidships, the designers have combined the best of all worlds, not least in making room for an easily accessible six-seater dinette across from the two-seater helm. The tabletop is neatly crafted to incorporate a couple of handholds.

The galley itself boasts excellent storage, as well as a strong specification. Our test boat was all-electric, but the standard fit-out includes a gas hob.

Just abaft is a two-seater settee, loose-fitted so that it

can be pulled across to join the sizeable after dinette. A sideboard adjacent to the single sliding patio door provides space for any entertainment centre an owner cares to specify, along with a useful array of drawers and cupboards.

The sleeping accommodation is no less roomy or inviting, with particular attention paid to size of the berths and the headroom over them.

The starboard cabin's double berth is a generous 6ft 4in (1.93m) long by 5ft (1.52m) wide, with a useful amount of readily accessible, lined storage space beneath, while the port guest cabin is set out with a pair of single berths, but has an infill to make these into a double when required. Both incorporate a hanging locker, as well as a limited amount of other stowage.



midships cabins The starboard cabin has a double berth. Across the way, the guest cabin is a twin.

As on several other Jeanneau models, the side decks are asymmetric. The port one is wider, measuring a full 12in (30cm), which makes walking to and fro that bit easier.

Like many boats built with half an eye on the Mediterranean, the flybridge suffers from low coamings. In fairness, these are topped off with three-tier railings, but they mean that the seating area, its table and the aft sunpad need to be ultra-low too.

The seating position at the helm is better, benefiting as it does from the extra height of the screen-topped console.

The hull is a medium vee, with a deadrise of 18° and a slightly flatter bottom than is now the norm for most comparable British boats. Some slight scalloping around the propellers is a concession to reducing the shaft angle.

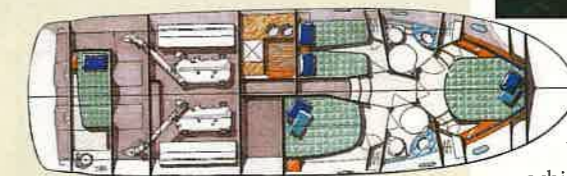
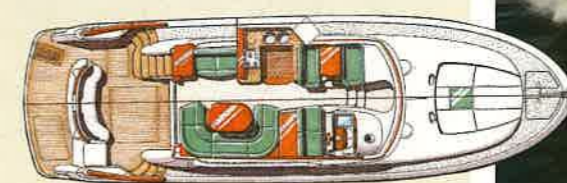
These indentations are not really deep enough to be called tunnels, but they do offer the same benefit: enabling the engines and therefore the sole to be mounted lower, to improve interior headroom. In the main saloon, and throughout most of the boat, this is no less than 6ft 8in (2.05m).



The master cabin forward boasts a large double, set at a comfortable height for clambering onto, bordered by deep upholstered shelving and a pair of small cupboards. Other stowage includes a hanging locker, enclosed shelves and deep drawers in the foot of the berth.

The toilet compartments, which are en-suite to the master and starboard cabins, are similar in that each has a circular shower stall, an electric loo, a Corian worktop and a useful measure of storage. They are not over large, but they are well appointed and enjoy good headroom.

A compartment, accessed via a hatch in the saloon sole just ahead of the engineroom, houses ancillaries such as pumps as well as providing useful storage.



POWER OPTIONS

Just two twin diesel engine options are offered, both based on Volvo Penta's 6cyl 7.28lt 74 block, which can be rated to 430hp or beefed up to 480hp.

Our test boat had the more potent units, and we would opt for these as a preference. You might not always want the 30-knot capability this gives the boat, but it is nice to have it there just for the fun of it. And with some summer fouling on top of a full cruising complement of six people and their gear, you might be thankful for that extra 100hp.

galley Good stowage provision includes a double hatch in the sole, and a rubbish bin set beside the steps. The rails on each side are to be increased in height so that they offer more of a handhold.



toilets Both en-suites benefit from circular shower enclosures to keep the rest of the compartment dry, and hinged lids over the loos.



saloon Comfortable seating and an extending table will cater readily for six people, or eight at a squeeze, helped by the loose-fitted settee to port. The split window-line offers a panoramic view.

PERFORMANCE & HANDLING

The South of France is clearly more appealing than cold, grey UK waters, but even so we were grateful that the boat's interior helm was so easy to use. It offers good comfortable seating, excellent visibility right round, and encourages everyone to conjugate near the driving position.

The screen is serviced by reasonably chunky wipers and, importantly, demisters,





exterior helm Seating three, the flybridge driving position is tucked behind a high console which gives a good degree of protection. It has a good arrangement of instrumentation and controls, and also manages to incorporate a couple of handy 'bits' trays and a small locker.

and there is a handy opening side window to give extra ventilation and keep the skipper in touch with any crew tending the mooring lines.

Our test boat achieved nigh on 31 knots flat-out, at just over the engines' rated 2600rpm, and for level headed cruising a comfortable 24 knots at 2200rpm. At the latter speed we were consuming just over a gallon per mile, which is good given the size of the boat.

We also took some commendable noise level readings: 76dB(A) at the relatively fast cruise setting and still no more than 78dB(A) with the engines at full throttle.

Handling at speed was positive and well-mannered, the boat responding smartly and easily to the helm. It kept in good lateral trim even when a large amount of helm was applied, pushing it through 180° in around three boat-lengths.

decks

Boarding via the bathing platform is simple, as it extends right out to the hull's full beam. Set within it is a dedicated locker for a liferaft.

All deck areas are safe and easy to move around, with platform, cockpit and easily climbed stairwells being finished in teak as standard.

The cockpit is a decent size, and well served by the arc of transom seating and other opportunist places to perch. Even the stair treads leading up to the flybridge and side decks can double as occasional seats.

The lazaret has two points of access: a large central hatch, which also lets onto a through-bulkhead hatch to the engineroom, and a smaller one to port, useful for grabbing fenders and the like.

Up top, the flybridge seating area and sunpad are served by a coolbox built into the seat moulding.



flybridge The coamings and seating are quite low, but are topped off with guardrails.

aft cockpit There is plenty of space here, and the wide treads of the steps to the flybridge and side decks can double as occasional seating.



engineroom



above Hatches in the saloon sole lift clear.

Access to the engine compartment is either from the lazaret, through a neat hatch in the bulkhead, or by simply lifting clear the centre portion of the saloon sole. The latter also involves removing a separate inner panel with loaded noise insulation.

A treadplate between the engines allows you to clamber about and get at all the usual checkpoints and service items. Just to ensure the protruding dipsticks



above The lazaret offers alternative access.

do not get an inadvertent kick, protective guards are positioned over them.

The two most important maintenance items, the primary fuel filters and raw-water strainers, are readily accessible on the aft bulkhead.

Overall, the installation appears first-class. The only issue we have is with the positioning of the batteries, below the treadplate, which makes them exceptionally

Driving into a short sea pushed up by a Force 4-5 offshore wind, there was the odd knock from the hull — a consequence of its medium-vee shape and sandwich construction, perhaps, but nothing that an easing of the throttles and a touch of tab could not mitigate.

When we turned downwind, or across the waves, the boat could be pushed up to flat-out again without a murmur.

For low-speed work, keeping both engines in gear at 600rpm gave a smidge under 6 knots, fine for close-quarters handling without too much nudging in and out of gear. Manoeuvrability off the two engines was predictable, and a bow thruster comes as standard.

Although this is not an overly heavy boat, there appears to be enough hull in the water to prevent it being blown around by the breeze.



foredeck Sensibly, the locker is split between one compartment for the anchor chain and another for warps.



aft bench The curved seat across the transom is sandwiched between the entrance to the crew cabin and a gate to the bathing platform.



deckware Stern cleats and their associated rope bins are tucked beneath hinged lids, in this case with the optional docking winch, while the adjacent coamings are topped with chunky wood handrails.

vulnerable to any excess water in the bilge.

Every effort has been made on the insulation front, with all surfaces sporting decent-quality soundproofing. The upshot is commendably low noise levels, especially bearing in mind the saloon sole is left as wood rather than carpeted.

TEST DATA

| rpm | knots | gph | lph | mpg | range | trim | noise |
|------|-------|------|-----|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1200 | 9.7 | 7.5 | 34 | 1.29 | 340 | — | 70 |
| 1600 | 14.2 | 15.0 | 68 | 0.95 | 251 | 2.5 | 73 |
| 2000 | 20.3 | 21.8 | 99 | 0.93 | 246 | 4.5 | 76 |
| 2200 | 24.0 | 26.2 | 119 | 0.92 | 243 | 4.5 | 76 |
| 2400 | 27.0 | 31.8 | 145 | 0.85 | 224 | 4.5 | 77 |
| 2650 | 30.8 | 43.0 | 196 | 0.72 | 190 | 4.0 | 78 |

range in miles, allows 20% margin.

noise in dB(A), in saloon.

conditions wind northerly Force 4, sea slight.

load fuel 75%, water 50%, crew 4.

specifications

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| BUILD | glass reinforced plastic |
| RCD | design category B |
| LENGTH OVERALL | 47ft 5in (14.46m) |
| HULL LENGTH | 46ft 7in (14.22m) |
| BEAM | 14ft 1in (4.30m) |
| DRAUGHT | 3ft 11in (1.20m) |
| AIR DRAUGHT | 14ft 5in (4.40m) |
| DISPLACEMENT | 12.5 tonnes |
| FUEL CAPACITY | 337gal (1530lt) |
| WATER CAPACITY | 125gal (570lt) |
| ENGINES | twin Volvo Penta TAMD75 EDCs 6cyl, 7.28lt diesels 480hp at 2600rpm |
| BUILDERS | Chantiers Jeanneau, BP529, 85505 Les Herbiers, France. Tel: +33 2 51 64 20 20. www.jeanneau.com |
| SUPPLIERS | no central UK distributor, but a variety of dealers |
| PRICE | from £318,445 inc VAT; £354,887 including generator, trim tabs, bow-thruster, holding tank, electronic navigation package & UK delivery |

the rivals



BÉNÉTEAU ANTARES 13.80

£237,308 inc VAT

Slightly smaller and tighter on space, but still with three cabins, an open plan saloon and plenty of neat ideas. Tel: 01248 352775. www.beneteau.com



SEALINE T47

£365,429 inc VAT

A cleverly raised cockpit makes room for the good-sized third cabin aft, and the flybridge layout is sociable. Tel: 01562 749100. www.sealine.com



ASTONDOA AS46

£344,022 inc VAT

You get three good en-suite cabins, but the raised galley opposite the helm will not be to everyone's taste. Tel: 01202 701707. www.astondoaasa.com

conclusions

LAYOUT

The spacious saloon is innovative and works well on several fronts, with an excellent helm and a good workable galley, as well as leaving enough space for three good cabins.

Outside, there is much the same attention to design, with thoughtful details. The only shortcoming is the low coaming and seating arrangement on the flybridge.

BUILD

Jeanneau are production boatbuilders, and this shows in some of their fabrication techniques, with some base mouldings and jigsaw clip-and-fit joinery used where it is hidden from view.

This is not really a criticism; it is just the way they do things in order to keep costs down, while still maintaining a good level of engineering and finish.

PERFORMANCE

A well-mannered hull has a good turn of speed, and easily achieves 24-knot cruising. And this boat has two good helm positions, the only niggle concerning the limited space left for a plotter.



MBM's verdict

The Prestige 46 is one of the choicest three-cabin boats of its size, not least because it boasts such a roomy and well laid-out saloon.

We were also impressed by the designers' attention to detail, not simply in the way they have incorporated neat useful ideas but also in the thought given to providing ample headroom and comfortable seating.

Add a competent hull, matching performance and a keen price, and it all adds up to a highly competitive package in what is a pretty busy sector of the market.