

Landau 29 Continental

Although it doffs its hat to tradition, this versatile cruiser has a radical hull and myriad modern design details. Is it the best of both worlds?

REPORT BY CARL RICHARDSON



Having been amongst those dishing out the accolades to the innovative and brilliantly usable Landau 20, we've been looking forward to testing the company's 29-footer for some time.

But although it has appeared at several boat shows over the past few years, it has been undergoing a continual process of development, so we've been holding out for the production-ready version.

The 29 Continental retains the original key elements of the design, but the radical hull shape has been tweaked, the accommodation revised and extra horsepower added.

The boat already had individuality and true inland-to-offshore versatility. Is it now the finished article?

DESIGN & BUILD

To the casual bystander, the Landau might appear to be the archetypal

enclosed-wheelhouse pilot boat. And, at base level, we suppose it is. But there is much more going on here than meets the eye.

Look closer and you will see that this is in fact a very modern interpretation of a classic design. So while it retains the basic profile and practicality of a traditional pilot boat, it has a fresh slant that will appeal to those who appreciate contemporary styling as well.

The classic overhang to the wheelhouse contrasts with the large tinted windows and wraparound forward screen, which are set off by smaller ports along the coachroof. The topsides retain an orthodox low freeboard, but also encapsulate a subtle whaleback sheer.

The superstructure does well to conceal what is going on below the waterline, but the hull design is more radical still. A fine entry at the prow flattens out amidships, at which

point the tunnelled sections that start quite well forward have developed into what might be described as the sponsons of a trimaran.

Further aft, the flattened central section drops to a small skeg, from which the propeller shaft runs. This allows better hydrodynamics thanks to a scalloped section above.

What does all this offer, that a good old round-bilge semi-displacement form can't?

Well, firstly it should improve low-speed stability, with less roll.

Secondly, it should reduce the amount of wash kicked up. At river and estuary speeds, by the time the Landau's bow wave has travelled the length of the tunnels it is so diluted as to be almost irrelevant. That's a major bonus for those with restricted waters to negotiate before they can get to the open stuff.

As a bonus, the sponsons will allow the boat to dry out safely, which gives you a wider



above The helm station is one of the areas that have benefits from design tweaks. There is space for two people, and a chart area on the console.

choice of moorings as well as assisting in matters of maintenance.

Underlying this design is a solid lay-up. Two large longitudinal stringers run the entire boat's length, flanking the inboard edge of the tunnels and acting as the base for the saloon's fit-out. Made of GRP honeycomb, they save weight while affording the same strength as glassed-in balsa.

Despite the unusual hull shape, the volume of the accommodation is fairly impressive. The one-cabin, four berth layout offers plenty of space, feeling slightly pinched only around the forward stairwell.



The hull shape is unusual, but there's a point to it all.

ACCOMMODATION

Working within such an awkward hull shape, and with the further constraint of walkaround decks, cannot have made life easy for the interior designers. However the accommodation seems to have emerged largely unscathed, and not noticeably lacking in width.

The styling has a practical ethos, with silk finishes to the cherry woodwork rather than anything too glossy, and a teak and holly sole.

It might lack the slickness of rivals from high-volume boatbuilders, but should suit its target audience well.

Accessed via a full-height doorway from the cockpit, the wheelhouse/saloon enjoys plenty of light and space. The depth and size of the windows offer a superb view out, as well as plenty of ventilation.

Four or five people can fit around the U-shaped dinette, with its properly fiddled table, which converts into an occasional double berth. The entire port side is given over to a long counter with lockers of various shapes and sizes spread out underneath. Forward of this is a galley that comes with a diesel or gas hob, a stainless steel basin, a refrigerator, a microwave oven and all the workspace you could want.

The redesigned helm console is a big improvement on the original. Neatly laid-out, it provides a chart area and allocated space for electronics. The steering wheel and throttle are located to starboard leaving space for a second posterior on the helmsman's bench.

The main cabin forward has vee-berths which can be converted into a double, although the infill has to be cut off diagonally because the cabin door opens inwards. No fewer than four ports and an overhead hatch

allow light and air free rein, while a huge, double-door locker across the bow provides all the stowage the cabin could possibly need.

The WC is accessed off the stairwell that leads down to the cabin. Both the entrance and the compartment itself are on the tight side, but there is a comfortable amount of room for using either the toilet or the shower, and the finish includes a teak shower tray and a cherry vanity unit.

Strangely for a boat so considerate of function, there's a conspicuous lack of grabrails throughout the interior. At least these shouldn't be too difficult to fit at a later stage.



Good cruising facilities wrapped up in a conservative character.

EXTERIOR

The 10in-wide decks, solid guardrails and generous gunwale ensure that access around this boat is easy. With a non-slip surface throughout, this is also a very safe boat, and one that should keep even the most ambitious child secure; the only note of caution is sounded by the transom gate, which is chunky enough but opens outwards when not locked in place.

• four berths • single 125hp or 240hp shaftdrive diesel • 21 knots • from £102,811

On the foredeck, there's a large anchor locker and the option of an electric windlass. The guardrails here are also particularly protective and burly.

The cockpit is wide and uncluttered, except for a small but neat stainless steel and teak bench mounted on the back of the wheelhouse and a shallow moulded bench across the transom.

The latter offers some useful storage space, and there's a large hatch to a lazaret whose floor shape perfectly shows off the scalloped-out section above the prop.

Finishing off the aft end of the wheelhouse roof is a stainless steel gantry which provides a base for radar and GPS antennae. This can



Safe and spacious decks, with plenty of stowage space.

be supplied with a hinged fixing plate to reduce the boat's air draught if required.

ENGINE OPTIONS & ACCESS

A single Yanmar turbo diesel provides the power, and you can choose between a 125hp or 240hp unit to suit your intended use.

Our test boat came with the more potent option, sitting snugly in an enginebay located under the saloon sole. Access is via a solid, stepped hatch that sits quite heavily shut but becomes lighter as it opens up on a gas strut.

The hull shape puts lateral space at a premium, but with the batteries mounted under the helm seat there remains a good deal of room forward of the block for ancillary equipment.

Most work will have to be carried out from saloon level. Access to the raw-water strainer and the main engine service points is easy, but the pre-filter is a trickier proposition, being tucked away at the far side of the compartment.

The finish of the bay is tidy enough, and most of it is lined with a black insulation membrane. The exception is the underside of the hatch, where there is very little clearance, allowing a certain amount of noise to escape.

The fuel tank, aft of the compartment, is easily accessed from the lazaret. It is slightly smaller than the cruising-friendly water tank.



A basic but acceptable installation, albeit with width restrictions.

below The dinette table has a fiddled edge, like the sideboard which blends into galley worktop.



above There is storage space aplenty in seat-bases and the lazaret, but the wide cockpit is uncluttered.



above Both side decks are wide and safe, and the engineroom hatch is supported by a gas strut.

PERFORMANCE & HANDLING

An immensely versatile hull means that the 29's performance is a story of two contrasting personalities.

For inland and estuary work, its stability and low-speed handling are excellent. The boat tracks straight and true, with no inclination to follow an inebriated course as many planing hulls do.

The low wash produced at speeds of 7-8 knots suggest effortless hydrodynamics which should keep other river users and your pocket equally happy. At close quarters, though, the single shaft and rudder provide little in the way of direction when going astern, making the £2575 bow-thrusters a must rather than an option.

At sea, with the 240hp Yanmar installed, our test boat proved capable of a fair turn of speed, and we recorded 21.5 knots at 3350rpm. However, we felt the boat was happiest at around 15-16 knots, for fuel

economy and a far more civilised noise level.

Coming up onto the plane at a relatively pedestrian 12 knots suggests good balance.

Although the glorious stretch of Cornish coastline off which we tested the 29 Continental could muster nothing much in the way of a chop, we suspect that the hull is as good for the rough as for the smooth.

We were cautioned to apply plenty of tab when running fast, but this has more to do with the way that visibility is limited by the low helm seat rather than any shortcomings of the hull. By raising the bench-style seat a few inches, and making it adjustable, the builders would greatly improve the helmsman's lot, allowing him to make best use of the excellent one-piece windscreen and overall visibility.

Into a head sea, the hull is happier running with no tab at all, enjoying a smooth passage over the waves. With the waves on the beam or behind you, the ride is completely stable, as is the turn-in.

Even under full helm, the boat resists any heel. It's quite a wide turning circle, but that's a price most will be happy to pay.



Stunning stability and poise, with just enough power to please.

SPECIFICATION & VALUE

The boat's standard specification is impressive indeed. The inclusion of trim tabs, a holding tank, shorepower connections, water heating, self-parking wipers and a DSC VHF set is



praiseworthy, and that of a colour chartplotter is a rarity indeed.

And opting for the diesel-powered Wallas hob for the galley, at a premium of only £512, brings the added bonus of providing warm-air heating.

There are a few anomalies, such as antifouling, an electric windlass and fenders not being provided as standard, but overall the balance is in the buyer's favour.

With these added, plus a bow-thruster, the price comes to £114,254 inc VAT. There being only one propeller, fitting a ropecutter will be a further consideration for many buyers, at £546.

By comparison Seaward's handsome 29 starts at £132,338, and Hardy's cavernous Commander 32 enters the fray at £155,153, albeit both with twin engines.

Perhaps the closest competition comes from the pretty Nimbus 280 Coupé. With a better level of accommodation packed into a slightly shorter hull, it starts off at a frugal £98,296

with a single 150hp engine, whereas the Landau comes in at £102,811 with just 125hp.

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A very impressive inventory, and pricing to undercut most rivals.

Verdict

As the proud owners of some respected sailing yacht brands, Select Yachts are well aware of the requirements of boaters switching from sail to power, and have high hopes or cornering some of this very lucrative market with the Landau 29.

Its attractive wheelhouse shape and no-nonsense interior is sure to attract the attention of these buyers, without resorting to the clichéd retro styling cues favoured by many of the more traditional builders.

Some might question the need for such a non-conformist hull design, but the benefits speak for themselves: low wash, stability, sea keeping and the ability to dry out.

As a bonus, the breadth of the standard specification makes the starting price of just over £100,000 look tempting. With so much established competition around, it needs to be.

MBM RATING 7/10



Landau 29 Continental technical data



specifications

LENGTH OVERALL	29ft 5in (8.98m)
BEAM	9ft 6in (2.90m)
DRAUGHT	2ft 1in (0.89m)
AIR DRAUGHT	7ft 9in (2.38m)
DISPLACEMENT	2.8 tonnes
FUEL CAPACITY	57gal (260lt)
WATER CAPACITY	63gal (285lt)

key dimensions

WIDTH OF SIDE DECKS	0ft 10in
HEADROOM IN WHEELHOUSE	6ft 3in
HEADROOM IN FORWARD CABIN	6ft 1in
FORWARD CABIN BERTH	7ft 6in x 6ft 7in or two bunks of 2ft 2in x 6ft 7in

performance

engines single Yanmar 4LHAM STP 240hp diesel.

configuration 4cyl, 3.45lt, 240hp at 3300rpm.

conditions wind westerly Force 3, sea state slight.

load fuel 100%, water 100% crew 2.

rpm	knots	gph	lph	mpg	range	noise
1500	7.6	2	9	3.8	173	74
2500	12.6	3.4	15	3.7	169	78
2800	14.7	4.3	20	3.4	155	79
3000	16.6	6	27	2.8	128	81
3200	18.4	8.5	39	2.16	100	83
3350	21.5	10	45	2.15	100	84

Range figures above are in miles, with 20% margin. Noise figures are in dB(A), recorded in the saloon.

prices

STANDARD BOAT	inc VAT
with 125hp Yanmar diesel	£102,811
with 240hp Yanmar diesel	£108,478
LAUNCH & COMMISSIONING	standard
DELIVERY	POA
ANTIFOULING	£782
FENDERS	£206
ELECTRIC WINDLASS	£2,213
BOW-THRUSTER	£2,575
SHOREPOWER	standard
ELECTRONICS PACK (VHF, chartplotter, depth-sounder)	standard
BOAT AS TESTED	£114,254

ENQUIRIES Select Yachts, Rock, Wadebridge, Cornwall PL27 6NT. Tel: 01208 862666. www.selectyachts.co.uk

the rivals



NIMBUS 280 COUPÉ
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A very attractive, usable cruiser with plenty of interior style and a dependable semi-displacement hull.
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