

Magellano 43

Azimut's latest flybridge cruiser claims to be as good at going slow as it is going fast. Could this be the hybrid of the future? REPORT BY NICK BURNHAM

The brief...



Azimut's Magellano is a hybrid displacement cruiser that planes, or is that a planing boat that displaces? Either way, it's intended to be every bit as good going

slowly as it is at high speeds. With 50ft and 78ft models already launched, a new and far more accessible 43ft version is now on offer. We fly to Italy to test the very first example and find out whether it's the answer to the modern boater's prayers.

Nick

LOA: 44ft 9in (13.63m)

PRICE: from £428,836

TOP SPEED: 22 knots

BUILDERS: Azimut Benetti

ENQUIRIES

www.azimutyachts.com

There is an experienced boatowner in my local marina who takes his 50ft flybridge 30-knot cruiser to the Channel Islands quite regularly. The loss of red diesel and fuel rises haven't dampened his enthusiasm, but what has changed is his style of cruising. Whereas once he'd have left early, blasted across the Channel at 25 knots and be tied up in St Helier in time for lunch, now they set off at the same time, but set the throttles at a steady 10 knots, sit back and relax. The reduction in fuel burn is enormous apparently, but more than that, he reports that it's rather a pleasant way to travel. There's less stress on the boat and crew, they can cook lunch en route, move around the boat more comfortably, and enjoy being out at sea.

Of course displacement boatowners have been doing this for years with craft specifically designed for low speed work, but our flybridge owner isn't about to give up his planing boat. He still wants that ability to outrun bad weather or failing daylight, or simply get home faster, if he wishes. And he's not alone. Lots of people are cruising their planing boats at low speeds on longer trips now for much the same reasons. Figuring there's a market for a vessel designed specifically for this type of use, Azimut launched what it describes as a 'hybrid' boat. But instead of the hybrid element being about super-expensive and heavy duty battery banks, this one is simply a hull designed to be more comfortable than a full planing craft at low speeds while retaining a higher top end than a traditional displacement or even semi-displacement hull would achieve.

The Magellano 43 has an appearance as alternative as its hull profile. With its vertical stem and upright topsides that segue into high bulwarks for the wide decks, the hull is distinctive and decidedly different to your average flybridge cruiser. The superstructure, with its sharply raked windscreens under a heavy 'eyebrow' and full-length flybridge, doesn't shout 'trawler yacht' either. This boat occupies a middle ground that straddles both genres. Up top the boat eschews the usual goalpost radar arch for a single pillar that's almost funnel-like, the bathing platform is a separate moulding, and the hull sides are finished in a fabulous shimmering deep blue metallic finish that is painted on rather than moulded in. The whole effect makes it

look modern, alternative, quirky almost, and certainly far from unattractive.

On board things are a little more conventional, with an aft cockpit with L-shaped seating, deep wide side decks and a useful foredeck with a further seating area built into the cabin top ahead of a large sunbathing area. Moulded stairs lead to the flybridge which has a large dinette forward alongside the single helm, the rearward section being left completely open for sunbathing or perhaps a comfortable steamer chair. A large storage unit alongside the thick GRP mast separates the two areas and can be configured as a wet-bar.

Inside the radical thinking continues, the first area greeting you being the galley immediately

behind the saloon doors allowing easy catering on deck – perfect in a boat where the cooking is as likely to be done on passage as it is in port. Ahead of the galley an expansive dinette lives opposite the helm, but further forward at the lower level it gets interesting as Azimut has used the volume inherent in this kind of hull to squeeze a third cabin into the mix. The forward stateroom has a central double bed, plenty of stowage, and its own en suite, and the guest cabin and second toilet compartment are both a good size, the former featuring two single berths side-by-side. But Azimut has recognised that many owners use their third cabin as a large storage space, so this area features a single berth and masses of storage, or you can even delete the bed altogether and have all storage, transforming this into a utility room.

PHOTOS: Nick Burnham



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On deck

Wide decks create a 'little ship' feel

Low speed cruising allows more of the **deck space** to be used more of the time, so the Magellano 43 offers three distinct

outside living spaces – the aft cockpit, the flybridge, and the foredeck with its forward facing seat and large flat sunpad over the cabin top. Fantastic foot-wide heavily bulwarked **side decks** link the foredeck to the cockpit, making transition between the two an easy stroll rather than an awkward clamber, giving the boat a wonderful 'little ship' feel.



From the helm

Great visibility all round

At the lower helm the classy chrome and leather vertical wheel helps reinforce the 43's trawler yacht credentials. A heavy 'eyebrow' over the screen provides shade from the sun or shelter from the rain, and good visibility combines with the large comfortable helm seat to make low speed, long distance cruising a pleasure. Up on the flybridge visibility is even better, with the large access hatch directly behind the helm providing a good view of the bathing platform for stern-to-berthing.



Interiors

Cabin three can be set up as a utility room

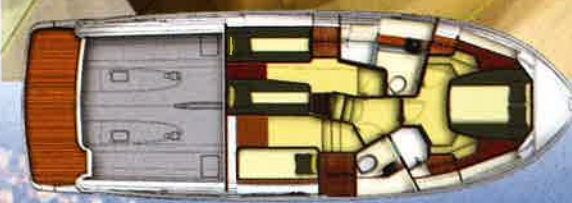
Azimut makes full use of the extra volume created by the forward section of the hybrid hull to create a **three-cabin layout** with a difference. Recognising that many owners use cabin three as a storage den, Azimut offers this cabin entirely devoid of berths, creating **tremendous storage** and an effective utility room. Alternatively you

can have the single berth and reduced storage of our test boat, with specially made folding storage compartments designed to fit on top of the berth for the best of both worlds.

At saloon level the **galley** is aft, catering equally effectively for internal or external dining, while a long sideboard creates yet more storage and incorporates a full height fridge/freezer at its aft end opposite the galley. Plenty of opening portholes, windows and hatches create **good ventilation**, helping to reduce dependency on the optional air conditioning.



"The hybrid hull is designed to work well throughout the speed range"

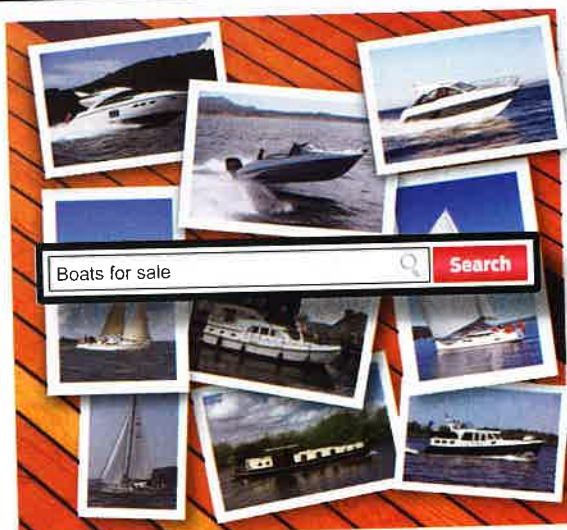


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Performance & handling

For all the Magellano's next generation styling, it's under the water that Azimut have rung in the big changes. The semi-displacement hull is intended to run well at low speeds, but also be able to push up and on to 20 knots.

An upright stem and deep forefoot is designed to cut through a head sea with ease. There is no keel, but much fuller forward hull sections push out to dampen the roll that afflicts planing hulls at low speeds. And it works, the boat feeling entirely natural at the 10-knot gait I set through the moderate chop

off the Italian Riviera. Faster than an equivalent displacement boat could manage, at this rate you could negotiate a serious day passage of around 100 miles comfortably in a day. The only issue is that this 10-knot speed only returns around 2mpg, no better than a typical planing cruiser would manage at the same speed. But the ride quality is far better.

The vee drive configuration pushes the engines back under the cockpit floor so interior noise levels are kept very low while the conventional shaftdrive profile beneath the hull gives great directional stability. It feels for all the world just like a proper displacement

boat. But a burst of throttle soon shows that its abilities stretch much further.

With the larger of the two Cummins diesel engine options fitted we top out at 22 knots, well beyond the reach of a displacement cruisers and it does it with far less bluster than your average semi-displacement model too. Dropping back to a 2500rpm cruise equates to a very comfortable 19 knots, albeit with more spray being shipped than a conventional planing boat would muster. At this speed though, fuel consumption is again less impressive, moving up to a very typical 0.8mpg.

Magellano 43 Hardtop

Exactly the same as the Magellano 43 flybridge but with a flush wheelhouse and an electrically retracting mast creating a 3.5m air draught to give inland waterway capabilities. Features include four huge skylights above the deck saloon, the forward two sliding open.



Specification & value

The Magellano wants to trailblaze, but to do so it needs to pull people away from conventional flybridge models. With the larger engines of our test boat (the 5% saving for smaller motors hardly seems worth it) the 43 works out at £438,623, putting it on a par with the current crop of fast 40ft cruisers. The Magellano's quality and standard of finish is easily up to the likes of Fairline and Princess too, so you're not losing out anywhere. What you do get is plenty of space on deck and that extra cabin. As for direct 'hybrid' rivals, there are few. The two-cabin Bénétteau Swift Trawler 44 is a useful tool for comparison, offering a similar cruising style for around £350,000.

Technical data

KEY DIMENSIONS

BUILD	GRP
RCD	B
LENGTH OVERALL	44ft 9in (13.63m)
HULL LENGTH	42ft 6in (12.96m)
BEAM	14ft 5in (4.39m)
DRAUGHT	3ft 11in (1.20m)
AIR DRAUGHT (including mast)	18ft 4in (5.60m)
(Hardtop version with mast retracted)	11ft 4in (3.45m)
DISPLACEMENT	13.6 tonnes
FUEL CAPACITY	370gal (1680lt)
WATER CAPACITY	132gal (600lt)
WIDTH OF SIDE DECKS	1ft (31cm)
HEADROOM IN CABIN	6ft 5in (1.95m)
FORECABIN BERTH	6ft 3in x 5ft 4in (1.91m x 1.63m)
MID CABIN BERTH	6ft 3in x 2ft 2in (1.91m x 0.66m)

PERFORMANCE

Engines	Cummins QSB 5.9-355HO V-drive
Configuration	6cyl 5.9lt, 355hp @ 2800rpm
conditions	NWly Force 4, sea slight to moderate
Load	0% water, 50% fuel, 5 crew

RPM	KNOTS	LPH	GPH	MPG	RANGE	NOISE
1000	7	9	2.0	3.5	592	63
1500	10	28	6.2	1.6	474	69
2000	12	70	15.4	0.8	237	74
2500	19	106	23.3	0.8	237	75
2800	22	132	29.0	0.8	237	77

Range figures quoted above are in miles based on standard fuel tanks and include a 20% margin. GPH & MPG refer to imperial gallons. These figures may vary due to weather conditions, air, water, engine temperature, crew numbers, hull fouling, fuel quality and other issues. Noise readings in dB(A) were taken in the saloon.

PRICES

STANDARD BOAT	Inc VAT
with twin Cummins QSB 5.9-355HO	£438,623
11KW GENERATOR	£13,451
AIR CONDITIONING	£22,567
BOW THRUSTER	£4776
TELESCOPIC PASSERELLE	£12,379

BOAT AS TESTED £491,796

*Boat as tested price may include alternative options



Enginebay

The V-drive engines are located aft under the cockpit floor giving the benefits of conventional shaftdrive with the space effectiveness and noise suppression of rearward mounted engines. Accessed by a large lifting cockpit sole panel, plus further panels at the aft end of the saloon, there is plenty of space to get in and around the twin Cummins diesel engines.

THE VERDICT

If your idea of fun is burning up the coast at 30 knots in a haze of spent hydrocarbons then this new Magellano is not for you. However, there is a new wave of boater more aligned with saving fuel for cost or conscience reasons who are taking their days afloat at a more relaxed gait, and it's this wave that the Magellano 43 is designed to ride. It looks the very essence of the modern motorboat and its 'hybrid' hull performs impressively whether running at 2 knots or 20. The only problem is it hasn't really delivered anything new in the fuel efficiency department. Ultimately, then, the Magellano 43 looks right and rides well, but it doesn't really answer any of the big fuel saving questions.

Meet the family



Magellano 50 from £860,907

LOA: 51ft 4in (15.64m)
Similar concept and styling to the 43 but with a unique forward cockpit area.



Magellano 76 from £3085,704

LOA: 80ft 0in (24.38m)
Follows the family profile but with huge four cabin accommodation, plus big crew quarters.

The rivals



Bénétteau Swift Trawler 44 from £329,382

LOA: 45ft 6in (13.86m)
More traditional trawler yacht styling combined with strong performance.



Jeanneau Voyage 42 from £308,961

Length Overall: 44ft 11in (13.69m)
Brand new radically styled boat but with a two-cabin layout.