

MOTOR BOATS TESTED

Nordhavn 40

FACT FILE
Nordhavn 40
LOA: 39ft 9in
(12.10m)
PRICE: From
£293,780

Last year we were thoroughly taken with the ocean-hopping Nordhavn 47. Could its 40ft cousin offer the same freedom in a smaller package?

REPORT BY MARK TURLEY

If you intend to venture far and wide, even the best-equipped motorboats have one major drawback over their sail-toting compatriots: fuel. Limited range and the availability of fuel mean that motorboats haven't got carte blanche about where their wanderings take them, not least in the 40-foot bracket. The American Nordhavn range is one of the real exceptions to the rule, and in fact a model much like this one completed a 25,000-mile circumnavigation last year. So what's your excuse now?

Design & Build

In some senses the Nordhavn yard only builds one boat. In the overall bearing and no-nonsense construction, coupled with a ship-shape, perhaps rather conservative fitout, it is designed around the needs of long-term habitués. All models, including the 40, have ranges well in excess of 2000 miles on standard tanks, and are firmly hunkered down into displacement mode,

utilising a single, commercially rated main engine with a smaller 'wing' engine fitted as an option. The hull is big on volume and bellies out amidships to accommodate the machinery space, plus around four tonnes of fuel. This keeps a good deal of the weighty stuff down as low as possible to help stability and also gives generous headroom through the accommodation, including the engine room.

As extra protection for the wheelhouse and walk around deck area, a hefty run of bulwark shuts off the forward deck. As well as being a great place to keep a lookout in fine weather, the 'Portuguese bridge' arrangement allows safe, easy access up to the raised aft deck, and to the optional flybridge.

The two cabin accommodation is accessed via the saloon, with a double forward and a twin bunk cabin amidships. With just 40 feet to play with neither are going to be huge, but they manage to lean

towards 'cosy' without being cramped or falling down on stowage.

Sensibly, the layout has not tried to get in en suites; the single toilet compartment, across from the midships cabin, is a good size, complete with separate shower.

Design & build

No messin' exterior combined with comfortable interior



Accommodation

Home-from-home on the water has to involve just the right mix of nautical practicality and domestic convenience. Additionally everything, especially the joinery, needs to be solid enough to withstand constant use while looking smart.

The galley – an integral part of the saloon – has this mix in spades with plenty of work surface (granite is used as standard) and domestic sized appliances (including a fridge and separate freezer) worked into an area seemingly no larger than a cloakroom back at home. A nice nautical touch to all this, apart from the fact that most surfaces have fiddles on, are the portholes.

With plenty of electrical goods on board the likelihood is that a gen set is going to be required off the options list, although the hob is gas unless specified otherwise.

The seating around the saloon is ranged over port and starboard – split by the wide door to the cockpit – and this means the crew can get a bit more space to themselves when they want, while on the other hand it all still makes for one large entertaining area.

A central companionway leads down to the sleeping cabins, while a second walkway makes the shorter hop up to the wheelhouse and with a bit of care, not too much light should spill up from the saloon to upset the watch keeper's night vision. Also helping, is the fact that the windows here are raked forward to reduce unwanted reflections, a common feature of commercial craft. Indeed, the wheelhouse boasts all the practical traits associated with a craft destined to spend much of its time at sea. The crew's creature comforts are catered for, by way of a bunk length settee and table – great for watching the world go by under any circumstances. Look-out and navigation duties are provided for with a deep, steeply raked instrument console, sensibly finished in anti-glare grey, that runs full width. Traditional chartwork is not forgotten with a flip-up table to port as well as shelves for pilot guides and almanacs, plus a host of other stowage lockers and cubbyholes.

Back down the other companionway, the two cabins share the one toilet compartment but this is of a good size. There is loads of counter and storage space and the separate shower compartment has enough elbowroom for getting a good lather-up. A holding tank is fitted as standard.

The master cabin forward is attractively finished in wood 'ceilings' – the nautical term for cladding on the ship's sides – with traditional portholes, complete with storm scuttles. Not scrimping on space, this is a generous double with simply loads of clothes storage, plus a dressing table.

“It's evident where the money goes, both in substance and the work involved”





From the granite work surface to the domestic sized appliances, the Nordhavn's galley and saloon form a genuine home-from-home on the water

The midships cabin fares less well on the stowage stakes, especially if the washer/dryer option is stipulated, as this gets tucked in here. That said, every inch of space is utilised somehow and you still get a good hanging locker, a small seat and a few drawers. The bunks are comfortable although headroom is limited.

Nordhavn is big on ventilation and these forward areas are helped by dorade box vents on the weather deck, ensuring you still get plenty of air

Accommodation

Masses of stowage, solid yet smart fitout and workable layout



without having to open a port. A secure door leads through the aft bulkhead to the engine room, but don't be put off getting your head down – all you'll hear is a hum.

Exterior

Despite its high freeboard, hopping on and off the 40 couldn't be easier, with tight fitting doors from the cockpit on either side making the pontoon an easy step away. A further transom door opens onto the hull's integral bathing platform, and although not huge, allows a further point of entry as well as somewhere to take a dip from. An option for a more expansive bolt-on platform is available, if required.

The cockpit's buttress-like coaming, at 42in (1.07m), is just that bit higher than the norm and makes you feel completely secure, while to house the shoreside cable and gas bottles a couple of seat lockers are worked into it. Underfoot is a sizeable lazarette – accessed via a decent sized,

gas strut supported hatch - and although some space is taken up with the batteries and boxed-in steering gear, there is still loads of room for fenders and other bits of kit.

Access forward from this point is really through the saloon and out through the wheelhouse doors, but for cleaning activities while in port there are walkways down either side past the saloon windows, which also means that these are set in and protected by the hull sides.

The door betwixt cockpit/saloon and the wheelhouse is split like a stable door, making it just right for leaning out of with a cuppa as well as providing plenty of ventilation. When the weather gets serious it can be easily fastened.

The sidedecks off the wheelhouse benefit from the same deep coamings as the cockpit while

running athwartships the forward bastion of the 'Portuguese bridge' forms a protected walkway across the boat. A door in this leads through to the foredeck and to save the hassle of nipping back to get fenders and lines, a couple of sizeable lockers have been let into the substantial moulding. Indeed the mooring hardware is as uncompromising as everything else, with 15in (38cm) stag cleats amidships, as well as forward and aft, while to cap it all check out the dual anchor sternhead fitting; beware any supertanker that gets hit by a Nordhavn!

Steps from wheelhouse level lead up to the deck area atop the saloon, and up again, to the optional flybridge. Cumbersome and costly, this is a bit of something and nothing, as there is only room for a couple of seats, plus the helm console, of course. This being the case, perhaps it might be an idea to look into integrating an outer helm on the aft deck, as long as it did not encroach on

Exterior

All great, but slightly tightish cockpit and optional flybridge



the space destined for a dinghy. To launch and recover a tender, a mast and derrick affair is part of the standard hardware and runs up in conjunction with the exhaust stack.

Engine Options & Access

On this type of vessel, the engine has to be suited to continuous running, and that means days, not simply hours, at a time, and low stress levels are a must, to reduce the likelihood of mechanical trouble on passage. As a result, the builder has no qualms in deeming a practically bomb-proof, easy revving 105hp Luger 6cyl diesel as the standard fit. An optional 27hp Yanmar wing engine provides the braces to the Luger's otherwise sturdy, strapping belt.

Given the no-nonsense fuel filtering systems and keel cooling arrangement – which obviates raw water strainer blockages – the propulsion arrangement has been made as problem free as you'll find. Across from the wing engine installation over to port, there is space for a generator set.

Good access, allowing full-on checks, servicing and maintenance to be carried out, is the other side of the coin when it comes to self-reliance and there can be few easier engine rooms to get into than a Nordhavn's. The 40 is no exception with a watertight, secure door from the midships cabin, and with just-on five feet of headroom it is easy to move around once you're in. The same high standard of finish is found here as elsewhere, with every surface lined with loaded insulation before being panelled in perforated aluminium. We also liked the no-nonsense sight-gauges on the fuel tanks, so much more



Deep, solid coamings everywhere



It's a sociable bridge, but is anyone looking where we're going?

reassuring than the often-wayward helm console ones, especially on long passages where fuel usage has to be monitored with eagle eyes.

Engine options & access

Walk-in engine room and good access to machinery



In addition to the main door access, the saloon incorporates an inspection hatch allowing the skipper to take a peak without disturbing the off-watch asleep in the midships cabin.

Performance & Handling

The boat we tried had a TRAC stabiliser system fitted – which involves fins coming out from the hull – plus the wing engine arrangement, and although both of these add to the hull's overall resistance we still managed to push along at over eight knots flat out. In theory, as the engine is rated down there is no reason why this speed can't be maintained for lengthy periods but if you want economy you need to

come back to the 1600/1800rpm mark, which still gives a useful seven knots or so and 3mpg. A quick bit of maths and, sure enough, three tonnes of fuel will take you a couple of thousand miles. And quietly too, as 67dB(A) in the wheelhouse means you have to check the log to see it's not just the gen that is running.

As to the 40's sea-keeping capabilities, our sortie out in the Solent clearly wasn't going to tell us much except that she tracks well and answers the helm in good order, plus once you get used to her easy rolling gait (without the stabilisers being bought into play), it truly feels like a life on the ocean waves. And in terms of being competent passage-makers, it is testimony enough that these boats have covered literally thousands of miles, and not always in ideal conditions.

Visibility out from the wheelhouse is excellent and it is all part of the Nordhavn's appeal to be able to stroll about freely from one side of the pilothouse to the other. As to manoeuvring, her 20 odd tonnes is a lot more responsive than you

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The optional flybridge is more upper helm than a major entertaining area



The forecabin is awash with liveboard storage and shows off the well-executed joinery

Inside the impressive Portuguese bridge



Split seating, plus a mass of windows, make for great views from every angle



The snug midships cabin



Separate shower stall

BOAT REPORT

NORDHAVN 40

might expect and under rudder alone she turns in just over her own length. Getting the helm hard over is eased by the Hynautic steering working for you, plus the wheel is equipped with a 'spinner' to really wind it on.

Interestingly, there seems little prop-wash when nudging back and forth, which can

otherwise help or hinder depending upon the circumstances. Hence it's not so important which side you berth, especially with the optional 8hp hydraulic bow-thruster giving you a hand.

Performance & handling

Life in the slow lane for sure, but a great way to do it



Specification & Value

The pound is working nicely in our favour against the dollar at the moment and even though it is necessary to get tucked into the options list – adding around £100,000 to the base price – you get quite a bit of boat for your money. That said, it has to be remembered that when compared to twin engined craft flaunting plenty of horsepower, this builder is not having to splash out in this costly direction.

However, the 'as tested price' quoted covers everything you might consider for serious cruising, including the security of that second engine, 'active' stabilisers and a hefty electronics package. It is quite evident where the money goes, both in terms of substance and the quality

of the work involved; the ethos of the marque being to build boats for the long term, not just long distance. And this shows wherever you go aboard.



Specification & value

Frankly, you get what you pay for



Verdict

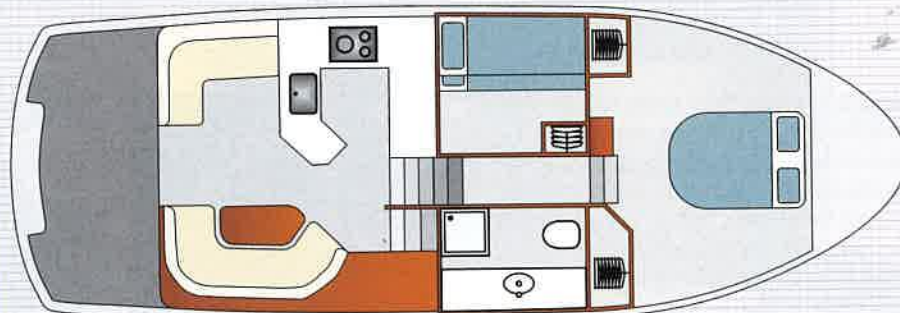
The notion of a long-distance cruiser conjures up a boat of a certain size. Indeed Nordhavns run up to nigh on 90 feet, and scaling down an idea or design will not necessarily work, as often everything gets a bit pinched and performance is hampered. Happily, this 40 footer doesn't suffer from this problem and offers the adventurous couple, supported by stopover family and friends, a comfortable, proven way to explore off the beaten track.

8/10

MBM rating



Nordhavn 40 technical data



specifications

BUILD	GRP
RCD	Category A
LENGTH OVERALL	39ft 9in (12.10m)
HULL LENGTH	39ft 2in (11.95m)
BEAM	14ft 6in (4.40m)
DRAUGHT	4ft 9in (1.40m)
DISPLACEMENT (full load)	22.7 tonnes
FUEL CAPACITY	766gal (3483lt)
WATER CAPACITY	183gal (833lt)

key dimensions

WIDTH OF SIDEDECKS	24in (60cm)
HEADROOM IN SALOON	6ft 7in (2.01m)
FORECABIN BERTH	6ft 8in x 5ft 0in (2.03 x 1.52m)
MIDSHIPS CABIN	6ft 6in x 2ft 5in (1.98 x 0.74m)

performance

Engines	single Luger LP668D diesel					
Configuration	6cyl, 105hp at 2200rpm					
conditions	wing NE'ly Force 3, sea slight					
Load	fuel 20%, water 20%, crew 4					

Rpm	knots	gph	lph	mpg	range	noise
1400	6.3	1.5	7	4.20	2575	62
1600	6.8	2.1	10	3.24	1986	64
1800	7.6	2.9	13	2.62	1777	67
2000	8.0	3.2	15	2.50	1533	68
2250	8.5	3.6	17	2.36	1447	70

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 are in dB(A) and were taken recorded in the wheelhouse.



prices

STANDARD BOAT	inc VAT
With Luger 105hp diesel	£282,390
FLYBRIDGE	£11,390
BOW-THRUSTER	£5170
HEATING/AIR CON	£10,400
WING ENGINE (27hp Yanmar)	£11,900
TRAC STABILISERS	£24,500
GENERATOR 5.5KW	£10,070
SHIPPING AND COMMISSIONING	£12,700

BOAT AS TESTED £400,700

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