

“This Pedro arrives at a ‘drive-away’ price that will appeal to first-timers”

MOTOR
BOATS TESTED

Pedro Marin 30

A stylish study in steel, this inland-loving, ready-to-go Marin is awash with old-school nautical character

REPORT BY MARK TURLEY

FACTFILE
Pedro Marin 30
MADE IN: The Netherlands
LOA: 29ft 10in (9.10m)
PRICE: £119,950
TOP SPEED: 7 knots

When it comes to boats, talk steel, and more often than not you're talking Dutch. Pedro, one of The Netherlands' most prolific yards, is no exception. The firm produces an impressive range of aft cabin steel boats, but also offers a number of models which reflect more traditional hull shapes.

The Marin, at 30ft (9.1m) overall, is the smallest in the inland/coastal range, and the design takes on the bluff bow of those old Vlet barges. This is a

shrewd move, as it means you are not paying for pointy bits where there is no need – and it does give the boat a dollop of extra character. Pedro also cleverly packages the boat so it is available at what is essentially a ‘drive-away’ price: it arrives loaded with the likes of heating and a bow-thruster, which will clearly appeal to those getting afloat for the first time. To give the Marin the MBM once-over, we spent a day on the Broads getting fully acquainted, where, in typical and time-honoured fashion, it was rainy, but quiet, and really rather enjoyable.

Design and build

Let's be honest: we were doubly keen to get aboard the Pedro, as the yard has been without a UK agent for several years, and we had lost track how the firm was faring against its competition in terms of quality and fitout. However, Jim Cole Marine, slap bang in the Broads' boating epicentre of Brundall, now has the agency, and the firm is pleased with how the boats are being received. Indeed, Pedro has invested heavily in new manufacturing plant of late, which has pushed up quality, and kept pricing keen. >>



Light and airy, with a good sense of space, this Pedro impresses. Note the 'split-level' arrangement, where the forward vee-berth is linked to the saloon area

The design and build follows pretty conventional criteria on both counts. It sports a steel hull and superstructure, the former formed of 5mm plate, while the well-finished upper works are fabricated out of slightly thinner (4mm) material. All surfaces are nicely turned and even tucked-away areas we found to be tidily finished.

The hull bottom is double-chined, and finishes at the centreline. A hefty run of keel starts out as soon as the bluff stem hits the waterline, and continues right aft to support the stern tube and rudder.

To ensure that the hull length is packing in as much as possible, the bathing platform is kept down to just 8in (20cm) – enough to perch on – and is neatly integrated into the underwater lines rather than simply an overhang.

A boat primed for inland cruising – where there is quite a bit of lock work – needs safe-to-negotiate sidedecks, and the Marin's 14in offerings are just the job, while the solid guardrails mean you can lean against them and just know they won't give.

The wide deck area forward also means there are no awkward space-hogging angles built into the berths directly below, but if you are expecting two-cabin accommodation, then you are in for some disappointment. Although there is a separate aft cabin, the forward berth is actually part of the main saloon area. Putting in a separate cabin here, of course, would mean compromising the space afforded to the lower dinette, as along

with the berth, you'll obviously need standing space too, plus the bulkhead structure.

In this instance, though, you get the benefit of an upper saloon plus the dinette, which lies just across the way from the galley, while the fore berth is tucked cosily away under the foredeck.

Back up on deck, the raised aft deck and helm

dinette. This can seat four, and if required can drop to form a further occasional double. There is stowage in the drawers and lockers here, but this is the only spot where we found a few rough edges to the woodwork, in a tucked away locker.

The galley worktop is dominated by a combined hob and sink unit, while under and outboard is a

good array of different sized lockers, although when the covers to the hob and sink are hinged open, they make getting

to the cupboards behind them rather awkward. Below the worktop there's a fridge, but if you want the oven option, this has to be set within the void, under the foreberth. Perhaps this suggests a certain amount of improvising by the yard.

The second good-sized table in the saloon and the 'just-so' window line means a spiffing view when seated. In fact, light and ventilation is excellent throughout, with plenty of small yet useful opening ports that complement Marin's good-natured nautical looks.

Across from the dinette, which has comfortable deep seating with stowage beneath, the accompanying sideboard also boasts a useful amount of storage with deep, lined lockers. We were pleased to find the worktops here, as elsewhere, finished off with small but effective fiddles, as even on inland waters, if there's any slight movement then objects will start to slide.

The toilet compartment is on the way to the aft cabin, the head itself tucked under the stairway up to the aft deck. There is plenty of locker space and the functional Formica is given a lift by some

teak trim. When using the shower, it is a matter of curtaining yourself in.

The head height both here and in the aft cabin is slightly compromised by the fact that the hull bottom has begun to shelve upwards on its way to the transom, and in fact both their cabin soles are on the slant. It's really not a big deal – unless you have taken one nightcap too many – and there is still plenty of standing room in the aft cabin.

Tucked up in the port quarter and running athwartships is an adequate-sized double, although it does feel a bit squeezed-in, and could benefit from a couple of reading lights (available as an optional extra). Clothes storage is generous and there is even a space for a dressing table!

The void beneath the berth accommodates the holding tank as well as giving access to the steering gear, while as a bonus, Pedro

fabricates a weed-hatch into the hull. This allows the propeller to be cleared if it gets choked with vegetative matter.

Exterior

Boarding is easy: the sidedecks are a simple step up from the pontoon through apertures in the sturdy, stainless guardrails. Handrails set along the coachroof make things even easier. If you're



Storage and ventilation is good, but this berth does feel a little squeezed in

planning much stern-to mooring, then you might want to specify a teak extension to the small shelf of a bathing platform; the ladder up to the aft deck is there in any case.

All deck areas are finished with non-slip paint and the generous foredeck – as well as providing plenty of uncluttered working area – is home to the gas locker, along with a separate one for the chain. The ground tackle is handled by a sizeable, manual windlass, with the anchor itself snugged up under the bow. Other mooring hardware is by way of 9in bollards to each corner of the hull and bar cleats, to take springs, on the gunwales.

Back aft, a couple of steps lead up to the rear raised deck area, with its simple-but-effective canopy arrangement. Even on our late winter sortie, this proved snug enough for a day out, as when the back is battened down, the residual heat from the saloon kept it pleasantly balmy.

In more clement weather, you can remove or roll-up the panels here to let the summer breezes blow through, while if you need to cut the air draught for bridges, the aluminium supporting frame is light and easy to lower.

The windscreen is also engineered to hinge down readily, as is the light mast on the coachroof. This all contributes to the



“Light and ventilation are great throughout, with plenty of small but useful ports”

can be well battened down thanks to the standard canopy. There's room here for a number of different seating options – fixed or loose – depending upon requirements.

Interestingly, the builder is also offers the no-cost option of an inner helm position to supplement the outer one.

Accommodation

From the aft deck, it's down the run of easy-to-negotiate steps to the open-plan saloon. This runs right through to the bows, with its thwartships double bunk area that averages out at a good 6ft 6in across. Headroom here is rather limited, but it is nice and private, out of sight as it is from the saloon surround of windows. The void beneath the bunk base is sizeable, but most of it falls directly on to the hull sides. Line it, and you will gain useful extra storage.

Working aft, over to starboard, you reach the lower

✓✓✓✓✓
Pug-nosed bow gives character. Plenty of space, too



Practicality is a feature of this Pedro's layout. We were impressed that the galley area offers plenty of storage, and fiddled edges on the table are a welcome touch

BOAT REPORT

PEDRO MARIN 30



Roomy foredeck: note the windlass, too



Neatly stowed gangplank and boathook

Marin's measly air draught of just 8ft 6in (2.45m).

Like most Dutch builders, Pedro does not try to second-guess what seating arrangement customers might want on the aft deck, and leaves it clear unless instructed otherwise. Indeed, often people prefer a free-standing table and chairs, although this type of kit will gobble up the limited amount of outside stowage – always a problem on this type of craft. However, to get the skipper settled, a moulded, double helm seat is listed

under the options at around £500, and you may also want to consider a couple of sets of fender holders.

✓✓✓✓✓
Practical deck areas, but limited stowage

Engine options and access

The Marin is a heavy displacement boat, so once you have got up to hull speed, it makes no sense to keep heaping on the horsepower. The standard naturally aspirated 86hp Sabre Perkins seems a sensible choice as it dishes out a generous amount of grunt and impressively long service intervals, at 500 hours. This is a useful plus on displacement boats, which, let's face it, do tend to rack up the hours.

Access is through a number of lifting panels in the saloon, with one main panel leading straight on to the raw-water strainer, dipstick and header tank. The primary fuel filter lies slightly further aft, but again is easy to check and get to. However,

we were perplexed to find that the water tank (ahead of the engine) has been positioned so snugly that it makes access to the belts and other service items unnecessarily tight. This is odd when there is plenty of alternative space in the compartment to accommodate it. The builder says that there is a further panel that can be removed to facilitate improved access, but is looking to improve matters further.

Otherwise, the installation is tidy and we were pleased to find tread plates either side of the engine. These will keep your feet out the bilge as you work or kneel

outboard to get at the auxiliaries, like the calorifier and diesel heater unit.

✓✓✓✓✓
Good unit; tidy engineering; odd water tank location

Performance and handling

Although our test day was cold and wet, the aft deck helm felt warm and friendly with the canopy in place. So cosy, in fact, that we didn't lament the lack of an inside helm arrangement. Indeed, you might ask yourself if you'll ever really need the inner helm position, regardless of whether you cruise inland or push gently along the coast. It will inevitably seize valuable space from the saloon.

We were pleased to find that it is easy to adjust the pace of your cruising. This boat's skipper will be able to fine-tune the speed rather than reining back and finding his speed dwindling to nothing. That's a boon, because then he'll have time to take in the stunning view afforded up here. However, when the time comes to plug on a bit, then a relatively lazy 1800rpm – with minimum noise down below – pushes the hull over the seven-knot mark. And there's still power in hand.

The hefty run of keel ensures good straight-line stability, and any minor adjustments of the helm give a steady but immediate response. If you

want to execute a nice, tight turn, then a judicious kick on the throttle will combine with the large rudder to turn seven tonnes of steel around in barely more than the boat's own length. Impressive. Another bonus is the fact that you do not have to justify opting for a bow-thruster, because this is all fitted as part of the standard spec.

The helm itself is straightforward, if a touch minimalist, with a practical vertical wheel and a basic array of switches and gauges. An angled area allows you to add a few smaller electronic devices,

but the boat does not come with anything as standard, not even a Bidata. A rudder indicator might also be handy.

✓✓✓✓✓
Plenty of power and it does just what you tell it

Specification and value

Our rivals panel typically show a 'from' cost, so remember that when comparing those prices to this Marin. There's a great deal of pricey kit, like the bow-thruster and heating, included in the Pedro's standard price, and as such there is a true good value element here, even if Pedro does fall a little short of the super-fastidious joinery pursued by other yards. We also liked the fact that you can opt for an inside helm position and pay nothing more. Even if you don't really need one, it's still nice to be asked...

You may note – and wince at – the two grand cost of delivery to the UK. This is a result of the fact that many owners, having bought a boat so eminently suited to European waterways, often prefer the boat to be commissioned ex-yard. This

lets Pedro purchasers explore abroad before returning to the UK. And why not – it's a jolly good idea!

✓✓✓✓✓
Well packaged; an emphasis on value over pretension

Verdict

One might criticise the Marin for being a bit tight on space here and there, but remember its LOA does not actually make it to the 30ft mark. This boat is all about combining the best features of a larger vessel – like decent, safe sidedecks – with a cottage-sized interior. Add that to an all-in price tag, and it's a truly useful package.

MBM rating ✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓ 8/10

Pedro Marin 30 technical data

specifications

| | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| BUILD | Steel |
| RCD | C |
| LENGTH OVERALL | 29ft 10in (9.10m) |
| HULL LENGTH | 29ft 10in (9.10m) |
| BEAM | 11ft 2in (3.40m) |
| DRAUGHT | 3ft 0in (0.90m) |
| AIR DRAUGHT | 8ft 6in (2.45m) |
| DISPLACEMENT | 7.0 tonnes |
| FUEL CAPACITY | 85 gal (390lt) |
| WATER CAPACITY | 50gal (225lt) |

key dimensions

| | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| WIDTH OF SIDE DECKS | 14in (36cm) |
| HEADROOM IN SALOON | 6ft 3in (1.91m) |
| FORE BERTH | 6ft 6in x 4ft 0in |



performance

| | |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| AFT CABIN BERTH | 6ft 6in x 4ft 4in |
| Engines | single Perkins Sabre M92B diesel |
| Configuration | 4cyl, 4.4lt, 86hp at 2400rpm |
| Conditions | wind E'ly, Force 2, sea calm |
| Load | fuel 60%, water 0%, crew two |

| rpm | knots | gph | lph | mpg | range | noise* |
|------|-------|-----|-----|------|-------|--------|
| 1000 | 5.0 | 0.7 | 3 | 7.14 | 485 | 70 |
| 1500 | 6.6 | 1.3 | 6 | 5.08 | 345 | 75 |
| 2000 | 7.5 | 2.2 | 10 | 3.41 | 232 | 78 |
| 2400 | 8.2 | 4.0 | 18 | 2.05 | 139 | 81 |

Range figures are in miles based on standard fuel tanks and include a 20% margin. Noise readings are in dB(A) and were taken in the saloon.



You'll find easy access to the basics here

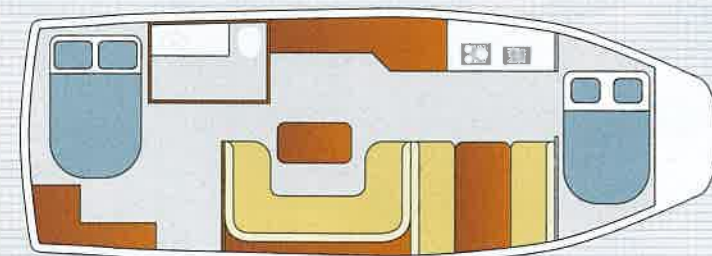


The bluff but business-like bow is distinctive

prices

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----------|
| STANDARD BOAT | inc VAT |
| With single 86hp Perkins Sabre M92B | £119,950 |
| BOW THRUSTER | £STD |
| HEATING | £STD |
| WINDLASS (manual) | £STD |
| COLOURED HULL | £1169 |
| SHORE POWER | £STD |
| UK DELIVERY | £2115 |
| COMMISSIONING & ANTIFOUL | £STD |

BOAT AS TESTED £123,239



ENQUIRIES J R Cole
Marine Services Ltd.
Tel: 01603 716555.
www.jrcmarine.co.uk

the rivals



AQUANAUT DRIFTER 950
From £133,200
Another Dutch steel model with a traditional feel, but this time without a bluff bow. And like the Marin 30, there is just the one separate cabin.
Tel: 01628 773177,
www.thamesboatsales.co.uk



SUCCES CLASSIC 10.50
From £124,500
More Dutch steel, and slightly larger than our featured Pedro, this model can be specified with a separate forward cabin.
Tel: 01189 403211,
www.valwygattmarine.co.uk



HAINES 320 AC
From £138,970
GRP rather than the traditional steel, this impressive vessel packs in loads: two cabins, and both of them en suite.
Tel: 01628 773177,
www.thamesboatsales.co.uk