

Prestige 450

An impressive master cabin on a 45-footer separates this boat from the competition

REPORT BY NICK BURNHAM

An interesting fact about the Prestige 450's predecessor, the Prestige 440, is that although it was offered in two and three cabin layouts, of the 220 sold, only 10 buyers chose the three-cabin layout, over 95% opting for the two-cabin version. With this in mind, when the time came to replace it, rather than inflicting the necessary compromises required to allow an either/or choice, Prestige ditched the three-cabin option altogether, and set about designing the ultimate two-cabin 45ft cruiser. The result, inspired greatly by the layout of its best selling 500, is unique in sub 50ft aft cockpit boats, as it has two entirely separate cabin areas, each accessed by its own individual stairwell.

Design & build

Apart from the unfashionable lip where the flybridge overhangs the windscreens, the 450

sports a sharp, modern design with large hull windows and plenty more mirrored glass to the superstructure topped off by a steeply angled arch. The gelcoat finish gives away the 450's Italian design routes – it's the same shade favoured by Azimut and Ferretti – and it looks suitably expensive, exactly as intended. Access is via two transom doors, the port one of which leads straight onto the optional hydraulic passerelle. Another hydraulic optional extra is the retracting bathing platform, which no self-respecting cruiser can be without these days (how did we ever manage in the past?). Mini bulwarks, high rails and further handrails make deck access forward an easy stroll, especially to starboard, the wider of the asymmetric side decks. So far so fairly conventional, but inside is

where it gets radical. The galley aft layout is something we're seeing more and more of, but it is still novel at this length. What is more

"The gelcoat finish looks suitably expensive"

unusual, though, is the stairwell just inside the doors that leads down to the owners' suite. There's a slight feeling of squeezing the proverbial quart into a pint pot down here, the ceiling and the floor are both stepped to shoe horn it all in, but the overriding sense is that Prestige has

got away with it. It is a proper full-beam master cabin with a transverse berth, big hull windows at both ends, and plenty of storage. The en suite toilet compartment is a good size and features a separate shower stall. Cleverly, Prestige has put the heads forward to port, while the forward cabin en suite/

The brief...

The next-generation Prestige range kicked off with two very impressive 50ft models, the 500 and 550, notable for some exciting thinking on master cabins. Now comes the same concept in a more affordable 45ft package. **Nick**

LOA: 45ft 9in (13.96m)

PRICE: from £427,722 inc VAT

TOP SPEED: 31 knots

BUILDERS: Prestige

ENQUIRIES www.Prestige-yachts.com



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On deck

Lack of forward facing flybridge seats

The lack of a lazarette is compensated for in part by a **huge boot in the transom** big enough to take a deflated 2.6m RIB. The optional hydraulic platform has a 230kg lift but costs as much as a speedboat. A ladder to the flybridge instead of moulded stairs is an unusual feature these days, although it does open the cockpit up.

Once up top, a **large L-shaped dinette** dominates the aft section of the low sided flybridge leaving the helmsman all alone at the front, unless someone wants to perch a cheek on the 'one plus half' helm seat or lounge on the massive sunbed alongside the helm, (fine at slow speeds in nice weather but less conducive to being able to sit comfortably facing forward on long passages).

Asymmetric side decks are a reasonable size, the starboard one in particular being a generous 10in wide, while a neat handrail fitted under the lip of the flybridge aids progress forward.

Another useful 'big boat' feature is the **option of a third IPS joystick** and bow thruster control in the starboard wing of the cockpit just aft of the saloon doors. Ideal for shorthanded stern-to-berthing but very unnerving if, as I was, you're stood on the foredeck pulling in fenders as the boat heads out of port at 5 knots only to glance back and find no one at either helm. The skipper was still on the aft deck, using the third joystick and looking through the saloon while enjoying a cheeky smoke.



day toilet is aft to starboard, putting two bulkheads between the cabins, so the feeling of privacy with which the separate stairwell engenders this cabin is not just illusory. It's a proper 'big boat' feature, and gives the 450 a fantastic unique selling point.

Above this cabin, the raised saloon is a step up forward from the galley, and those huge mirrored windows offer a great view out from the dinette to port or the settee tucked behind the twin helm opposite. Concealed lighting backs up the usual ceiling spots, large sliding window sections offer plenty of ventilation, and there's even the option of chilled water air conditioning, another feature normally associated with much larger craft. Further forward, stairs lead down to the guest accommodation consisting of a forecabin with a double berth that scissors into twin singles and an en suite with 'Jack and Jill' access from the lobby area.



Performance & handling

IPS is nothing new these days, but Prestige has a rather intriguing take on the installation. Rather than the engines being directly ahead of the pods as is usually the case, the 450 features jackshafts that allow the engines to be sited further forward in the boat, thus moving the centre of gravity correspondingly forward. Normally when we see modifications to engine positioning it's in a bid to maximise interior space. In this instance the reverse is true, here the repositioning of the engines, if anything, reduces cabin space. In an age where space sells and boat show appeal is all, this compromise toward seakeeping over accommodation is heartening.

The proof is, as ever, out on the water where the Prestige justifies its forward mounted engines with a superbly balanced ride that keeps the nose down and trim tab activity to a minimum. The forward sections of hull cleave the water away smoothly and spray is suppressed, while visibility remains excellent at all speeds and from either helm.

Steering is as light as we've come to expect from IPS but it's also positive. The boat was clearly set up from the start around this drive system (the only one offered). Unlike many IPS flies, steering response is pleasingly direct and the turning circle tight, while managing to avoid any excessive banking.

The IPS600 (435hp) engines of our test boat felt well judged, giving a 31-knot top end with a clean hull, minimal gear and five crew on board. IPS500 is also available, but my feeling is that these 370hp units may be a little light for a 45ft flybridge boat, and the cost saving of less than 5% isn't worth the gamble.

About the only fly in the ointment is some mild but incessant creaking from the interior joinery at high speed. While not excessive – most people won't even register it – along with the non self-parking wipers, it's a gentle reminder that Prestige isn't quite yet in the premier league to which it aspires.



Prestige 450S

If you like the 450 but have no need or desire for a flybridge, Prestige has just the boat for you. Identical from the saloon windows down, the 450S swaps the flybridge for a sleek low profile roof complete with sliding forward section that lifts and opens at the touch of a button. It's perfect for those that require less air draught or suffer from vertigo and will save you about £17,000 over the flybridge model.





Interiors

Separate master cabin is a winner

The **separate master cabin** dominates the 450's layout, but the really clever aspect is how well the rest of the accommodation fits around it. The galley squeezes in some high level lockers, a good sized domestic style fridge freezer and the **option**

of a **dishwasher**, although counter space is a little pinched.

Both toilet compartments are a good size with separate shower stalls and porcelain basins. The optional aft facing TV retracts neatly into the deckhead alongside the helm, presumably the full-beam cabin beneath the saloon precluded the ability to retract behind a settee.

Further 'big boat' features include a large locker at the base of the stairwell which will house a **plumbed in domestic washer/drier**, and chilled water air conditioning, quieter and more efficient than the normal piped cold air systems you'd expect to find fitted to a boat of this size.



From the helm

Superb visibility dominates

At the lower helm the **dark grey low glare console** looks classy, spoiled only by screwing a cheap car stereo into it. There is no space for charts but plenty for a single 12in navigation screen. **Visibility is superb**, not just forward but all around and aft, courtesy of those big windows and open tread ladder to the flybridge. A mirror tint on the side windows thankfully only extends to just aft of the helm before switching to clear to maximise night vision. **Huge pantograph wipers** easily deal with what little spray is flicked aboard, but you have to time switching them off accurately as bizarrely they stop dead rather than self-parking.



Specification & value

Prestige is marketing itself as a luxury brand, and a £445,878 price tag with the larger engine option reflects this (a Princess 42, 1ft shorter, 5in narrower and with the same engines on shafts is an almost identical at £447,000). However it's French, so be prepared to pay over £20,000 for the 'Elegance' package that includes the aft canopy. You'll pay even more for such exotic luxuries as a VHF radio, flybridge cover and trim tabs, although to be fair, IPS joystick control at both helms (a circa £15k option on many boats) comes as standard. With a decent spec, then, this is a half million pound boat. Not cheap, but turn it on its head: what else can you get with this level of cabin separation and total privacy for that amount of money?

Technical data

KEY DIMENSIONS

BUILD	GRP
RCD	B
LENGTH OVERALL	45ft 9in (13.98m)
HULL LENGTH	41ft 2in (12.56m)
BEAM	14ft 1in (4.3m)
DRAUGHT	3ft 7in (1.10m)
DISPLACEMENT	11 tonnes
FUEL CAPACITY	264gal (1200l)
WATER CAPACITY	114gal (520l)
WIDTH OF PORT SIDE DECK	8in (20cm)
WIDTH OF STARBOARD SIDE DECK	10in (25cm)
HEADROOM IN SALOON	6ft 5in (1.9m)
MASTER CABIN BERTH	6ft 6in x 4ft 8in (1.98 x 1.42m)
FORECABIN BERTHS	6ft 7in x 2ft 4in (2.02m x 0.70m)

PERFORMANCE

Engines	Volvo Penta IPS600 diesel pod drive
Configuration	6cyl, 5.5lt, 435hp @ 3500rpm
Conditions	Force 2/3 gusting 4, sea slight to moderate
Load	fuel 75%, water 0%, crew 5

RPM	KNOTS	LPH	GPH	MPG	RANGE	NOISE
600	4	31	0.7	5.7	1204	60
1500	9	23	5.1	1.8	380	63
2000	11	55	12.1	0.9	190	69
2500	15	89	19.6	0.8	169	75
3000	25	120	26.4	0.9	190	75
3540	31	169	37.2	0.8	169	78

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 Volvo Penta IPS600 435hp	£445,878
ELEGANCE PACKAGE	£21,276
HYDRAULIC PASSERELLE	£8098
FLYBRIDGE WET-BAR	£4440
TEAK COCKPIT TABLE	£3355
HYDRAULIC PLATFORM	£18,084
TIKW GENERATOR	£18,178
DISHWASHER	£1549
WASHER/DRYER	£1894
MED-SPEC AIR CONDITIONING	£27,965

BOAT AS TESTED £563,129*

*Boat as tested price may include alternative options



Enginebay

A small engine hatch that doesn't quite open to the vertical and a ladder with offset treads from a central spine make engine access a little challenging, and things don't improve much once you're down there. The engines are close together so the bolted-in-place ladder effectively bars any access aft. The generator is fitted forward against the cabin bulkhead aiding weight distribution.

THE VERDICT

Prestige is an aspirational and dynamic brand, backed by one of Europe's boatbuilding giants - Jeanneau. And it's that level of aspiration and backing that has allowed them to produce a boat that's as daring and avant-garde as this. While creaking interior woodwork and non self-parking wipers suggest Prestige needs to tweak its attention to detail, the big boat accommodation here offers something unique and genuinely appealing in the sub50ft market and backs up this brand's premier league pretensions

Meet the family



BIGGER

Prestige 500

Price from: £554,992 incl. VAT

LOA: 49ft 10in (15.2m)

Inspiration for the 450, packs the same separate owner's cabin entrance but adds a third cabin.



SMALLER

Prestige 400

Price from: £297,183 incl. VAT

LOA: 39ft 10in (12.15m)

Similar styling but more conventional layout with a shaftdrive set-up.

The rivals



Princess 42

Price from: £426,336 inc VAT

LOA: 44ft 3in (13.48m)

Lacks the big boat vibe but has big boat quality in spades.



Bavaria Virtess 420

Price from: £348,212 inc VAT

LOA: 44ft 7in (13.6m)

Stern drive configuration keeps base price down, but IPS is an option.