

FACT FILE
 Sabreline 42 HT
 Express
 LOA: 47ft 4in
 (14.43m)
 PRICE: £433,039
 TOP SPEED:
 30.1 knots
 POWER: twin
 440hp Yanmars



**MOTOR
BOATS TESTED**

Sabreline 42 HT Express

This hefty but handsome US-built hardtop offers comfort, space and some devil below decks...

REPORT BY MARK TURLEY

Optimism can be a good thing when it comes to the weather. But in our inconsistent climate, a boat with a wheelhouse of sorts is always welcome, especially when it comes in as handsome a package as this Sabre. The American yard is perhaps better known for finely finished yachts than powerboats, but with two smaller Express hardtops along the same lines launched last year – a neat, open-plan 34 and a single-cabined 38 – things could be

changing. This firm is clearly intent on putting together a range that offers owners that element of protection, along with a fitout that is as practical as it is comfortable.

Design and build

This model may be called a 42, but that is unlikely to fool the marina berthing master when he comes to take a look. Even without getting his tape measure out, he'll notice that there is the odd few feet of overhang to charge for. Include

the teak bathing platform and bow roller extension for the anchor, and the boat's length overall (LOA) is in excess of 47ft (14.3m).

The 42 is substantial to say the least, from the hefty lay-up weights through to the overall quality of the fitout and the practical, generously proportioned layout. In US terms, the hull shape is that of Downeaster Lobster boat, but with bells on – the propellers here run in tunnels to keep the engines low and prop efficiency as tight as possible. This side of the Atlantic we would view the hull as a medium-to-deep vee, but with plenty of flare to the bows after the forward sections have bounced past the not inconsiderable chine. Don't be deceived by the stately looks; this is a full-on planing hull as there is no keel to push up hull drag.

This is a roomy boat; not so much when it comes to providing multiple en suites, perhaps, but in elbow room and the general level of comfort. Indeed, the two sleeping cabins have to share the same toilet compartment, but then this is typically generous and runs to a separate shower cubicle.

The galley may look on the small side, but it is actually quite sufficient for preparing usual on-board fare, and shares the same open-plan space as the inviting saloon area. This, just like the

“Don't be deceived by the stately looks – this is a full-on planing hull”

rest of the boat, is smartly clad in satin-finished teak and recalls Sabre's quality, traditional sailing yachts. You'll find fiddles to flat surfaces, louvered doors and plenty of useful nooks and crannies along the way.

The real space, however, is up top, shared between the raised, open-backed wheelhouse with its convivial dinette as well as its super-luxury (and expensive) Stidd helm seats, and the

✓✓✓✓✓
 Handsomely designed and big on quality

lower, open cockpit area. This, while being left uncluttered, still benefits from a run of decent, aft-facing seating.

Exterior

The great thing about this hardtop design is that even when you are enjoying the protection afforded by the full head-height wheelhouse, you still have a great all-round view, thanks to the

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deep window-line. And when it starts to heat up and you need a breeze, then there are opening sections in all three main parts of the screen – plus a couple of overhead hatches. The latter are a bit small, and we don't see why some larger ones could not be fitted, which would allow crew to enjoy more sunshine. And when the weather turns nasty, the rear portion of the wheelhouse can be fully battened down.

The overhang-protected dinette sports an attractively inlaid table, while the wet bar benefits from a seat tucked in the corner, ensuring the bar steward can take his ease between preparing rounds... More comfort is provided by the two main gas-suspension Stidd helm seats, which can be swivelled and dropped to form what is essentially a conservatory-style area.

Back aft and a couple of steps down, the open cockpit area has been left as clear as possible, ideal for when taking a dip or fishing. That said, there is still space enough for more seating, again tucked out of the wind behind the bulkhead to the upper cockpit. Meanwhile the wide, teak-finished cockpit coamings provide another ideal perch for leaning, taking in the view and chatting. This all contributes to the 'party feel' of this purposeful-looking boat.

The sidedecks (accessed by decent steps and well-placed grabrails) are good and wide, and bordered by teak-topped gunwales and solid guardrails. Right forward, the anchor handling facilities are excellent,



The smart satin-finished teak runs throughout the boat, a nod to the Sabre yard's traditional yachts

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SABRELINE 42 HT



The forecabin boasts plenty of storage, while the midships one doubles as a day cabin. Just the single toilet compartment, but it has a separate shower stall

but while the cleats are a useful size, an extra pair midships would not go amiss; after all there is nearly 50ft of boat here. Stowage is excellent, with loads of lined locker space plus a formidable lazaret area.



Great to use with space and detail where it is needed

Accommodation

The saloon area here manages to be cosy and spacious at the same time, and the dinette feels more snug than formal, its meticulously finished teak joinery wrapping you up in its warm glow as well as providing wide-ranging stowage. There

are plenty of opening ports and hatches, too, which prevent 'cosy' becoming 'stuffy'. The en suite galley is on the small side, but fine for prepping al fresco meals; there's a decent-sized fridge, combination microwave/oven and a hob which is now integrated flush into the work surface rather than standing proud as on our test boat. Overall stowage is fine, but it does seem rather a waste not to be able to use the abundant bilge space beneath the smart teak and holly sole effectively. That said, there are numerous hatches in it, so if you're a handy DIY type, you could easily fit some bespoke bins for bulkier items.

The main cabin lies forward, and again there is that feeling you have found your way onto a

yacht rather than a powerboat – you are surrounded by a wood-clad hull, and lockers and fiddles. The good-sized island berth has adequate sitting room over it and there is a door through to the toilet to make it en suite, even if it does mean sharing with the second cabin amidships. Plenty of wood trim lifts the toilet compartment, which benefits from an electric toilet and a decent-sized separate shower cubicle.

The midships cabin is snug and the fixed portion of the berth makes for an L-shaped seat; ideal for keeping out the way and finishing that novel. Stowage is more limited than in the forward cabin, but nevertheless given the same amount of detailed attention.



Warm and inviting with plenty of practical touches

Engine options and access

Our test boat had the smallest engine option available – a pair of 440hp Yanmars – but for 'smallest' please read 'standard', because this amount of horsepower is perfectly adequate, although you can spec a pair of Cummins QSC 8.3M 540hp units. The only likely advantage is that you can raise your fast cruising and maintain 30 knots rather than having this as a top-end speed. Nice, but by no means essential.

Access to the huge machinery space is via a hefty hinged hatch in the wheelhouse sole, where the 5ft (1.52m) of headroom is a pleasant surprise. The standard of engineering is high, with everything – from seacocks to wiring – clearly marked, while all service points are easily accessible. Our only misgiving was that the bulkheads were light on insulation, confirmed when we took noise readings of over 80dB(A).

The firm assures us, though, that it has installed better insulation on subsequent boats, reducing noise levels.



All the options are beefy enough and access is excellent

Performance and handling

The view from the helm is all you want it to be; the windows are large and serviced by a decent bank of wipers, and of course you can adjust

those formidable seats to fit just about every size and shape. The console, though, is pretty plain, and it would have been nicer if the twin lever throttles and gearshifts weren't so far away. Electronics can be fitted across the moulded pod in front of the skipper; nicely positioned, perhaps, but rather obtrusive.

When under way, you feel the weight of boat under you, and although our test day proved pretty flat, this well-balanced hull is unlikely to be pushed about by stroppy seas. In addition, the tabs give the hull a useful range of trim.

Our top speed touched just on 30 knots, when the boat felt like it was running on rails – so much so, in fact, that although it responds immediately to the wheel, any big turns are quite laboured. Wind the throttle levers back 10% and she takes on an easy romp of 27 knots, but there is plenty more

to rein in without the boat losing its rhythm. This is a hull that allows the skipper to set a pace of a mile per gallon.



Easy over the water and easy at the helm, too

Specification and value

UK agent Sea Ventures reports plenty of interest in this well-found marque, and has good reason to expect plenty more once the 38 appears over here. That vessel shares the similar handsome countenance and layout to this 42, but is expected to come out at around £100k less. That's a good thing, because this 42 is undeniably pricey.

But you get what you pay for: solid quality and great specs, with wow-factor items like a decent-sized generator and reverse-cycle air conditioning as standard. Don't skimp on that cool coloured hull, though – clearly that is all part of the attraction – and a teak-laid cockpit is surely another must.



Quality throughout, but it does come at a price

Verdict

The beauty of this boat is certainly more than skin deep, not just in terms of its overall sturdiness and finish, but in how it is designed and built for ease and comfort. This vessel manages to marry the safe, sound and practical with plenty of warmth and style – but quality like this doesn't come cheap, of course.

8/10

MBM rating



Sabreliner 42 HT Express technical data

specifications

BUILD	GRP
RCD	B
LENGTH OVERALL	47ft 4in (14.43m)
HULL LENGTH	42ft 3in (12.88m)
BEAM	14ft 4in (4.37m)
DRAUGHT	3ft 8in (1.11m)
AIR DRAUGHT	13ft 3in (4.04m)
DISPLACEMENT	13.0 tonnes

key dimensions

FUEL CAPACITY	372gal (1686lt)
WATER CAPACITY	132gal (600lt)
WIDTH OF SIDE DECKS	15in (38cm)
HEADROOM IN SALOON	6ft 5in (1.96m)
FORE CABIN BERTH	6ft 5in x 4ft 7in
MIDSHIPS CABIN BERTH	6ft 4in x 4ft 0in

performance

Engines	twin Yanmar 6LY3A-STP diesels					
Configuration	6cyl, 5.2lt, 440hp at 3300rpm					
Conditions	wind Wly Force 3, sea calm/slight					
Load	fuel 75%, water 50%, crew 4					
Rpm	knots	gph	lph	mpg	range	noise*
2000	13.2	10	45	1.32	396	78
2500	19.1	17	77	1.12	336	81
2800	23.3	22	100	1.06	318	83
3100	27.0	31	141	0.87	261	84
3400	30.1	43	195	0.70	210	84

Range figures are in miles and include a 20% margin. *Noise figures were taken in dB(A) and were recorded in wheelhouse.

prices

STANDARD BOAT	inc VAT
With twin 440hp Yanmars	£433,039
BOW THRUSTER	£4648
AC/HEATING	£STD
COLOURED HULL	£2858
TEAK WHEELHOUSE SOLE	£6870
ELECTRIC WINDLASS	£STD
TRIM TABS	£STD
12.5kW GENERATOR	£STD
ELECTRONICS	£POA
COMMISSIONING & ANTIPOUL	£STD
BOAT AS TESTED	£453,350

ENQUIRIES Sea Ventures, Lymington Yacht Haven, Lymington, Hants SO41 3QD. Tel: 01590 672472, www.sabreyachts.com

the rivals



EASTBAY 43 SX
From £432,700
Another US Downeaster and another quality builder – Grand Banks in fact – but in very much the same bracket as the Sabreliner.
Tel: 01932 243722, www.boatshowrooms.com



DALE CLASSIC 45
From £679,150
Larger and more exotic looking in a clean, retro-style – and at the high end on cost – but make this shopping trip an excuse to check one out.
Tel: 01646 600380, www.dalanelson.co.uk



APREAMARE 45
From £401,000
From the quirky-but-high-quality Italian range, the 45 offers an open cockpit or cruise-friendly hardtop plus various interior styles.
Tel: 01590 673312, www.berthongroup.com



The deep window-line affords a panoramic vista



Standing room: cavernous machinery space



You get the best of both worlds here – sheltered seating, and what a great view. More lovely wood, too