



# A LEOPARD WITH *new spots:* 42

By evolving a proven design, Leopard has modernised its sailing range without compromising too much in the way of seaworthiness, as can be seen here on the 42 model, reports **KEVIN GREEN.**





**TOP:** A varied sail plan on the Leopard 42 can include big top mainsail, genoa, jib and spinnaker – the latter necessary for those tropical cruises. *Image Leopard Catamarans*

**ABOVE LEFT:** The helm gives commanding views while having both power and sail controls conveniently placed for the short-handed sailor. *Image Kevin Green*

**ABOVE CENTRE:** The saloon top lounge in addition to cockpits fore and aft gives both privacy and variety on the Leopard 42. *Image Leopard Catamarans*

**ABOVE RIGHT:** Controls for the twin Yanmar 45hp engines, autopilot and a deep rope bag are useful features on the Leopard. *Image Kevin Green*

The cruising catamaran market is vibrant for many reasons and lifestyle is paramount, so builders are continually being asked to incorporate more into hulls that often are compromised by this demand. Understandable, because the old cliché of the customer being always right, does reach the ears of boardroom executives. However, at sea this philosophy can come undone, especially if you are a company such as Leopard who is a major supplier to the charter market where sailors come in the shapes of good, bad and the ugly. Leopard avoid these dangers by being fairly conservative, which has strong

**ABOVE:** A reasonably low sailplan helps stability, yet there still is space for a lounge on top of the saloon. *Image Kevin Green*

**LEFT:** The tall saloon bulkheads give space inside and support outside when going forward on the uncluttered decks. *Image Kevin Green*

be affordable if you don't option up too much. The other major plus from these numbers is a thorough test of ergonomics, so like all Leopards that I've sailed, everything is sensibly placed on the new 42: from the layout of the navigation controls to the versatile saloon that has to cope with a range of users such as a bluewater sailing couple to an eight person charter party.

### FUNCTIONAL SALOON

The Leopard 42 comes in three or four cabin versions with galley upstairs, and there can be four bathrooms, which is remarkable for a 42 footer. The new boat retains all the signature features of the South African brand, including the foredeck cockpit with access directly from the saloon. Other key features include a forward located L-shaped galley to starboard with a sizeable navigation station to port. The galley comes with a three burner gas stove, oven and microwave, alongside a deep sink which is surrounded by drawers and





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generous Corian worktop space. The L-shape is ideal for supporting the cook in a seaway, as well. Sensibly, drawer fridges are used to maximise cooling. Downstairs, there's a washer dryer. The 42 has space for other goodies such as a generator which can go in the bow locker to run the optional air conditioner and a water maker would be my other consideration for bluewater cruising with generous shower times in mind. Another good saloon feature is the adjustable dinette table which retracts to become a bed, using the lounge benches and cushions. Lying there, you can look skywards through a long skylight to view the mainsail; handy. The finish is cost-effective dark laminates. Storage is generous throughout the saloon with lockers in the nacelle, and sensibly, the substantial bank of four AGM house batteries which centres the weight.

### OWNER'S LAYOUT

Our review boat came with three cabin owner's layout, so the entire starboard hull is one dedicated apartment with double bed aft, vanity table centre and elongated bathroom forward. The semi-island

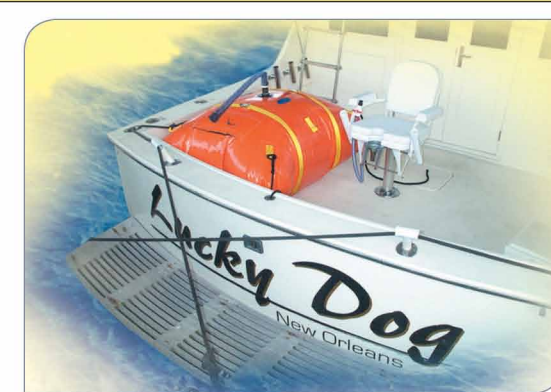


**ABOVE:** All sail controls run to the steering console which has enough space for trimmer and a steerer. *Image Kevin Green*

**INSET:** The chart plotter and other controls are neatly integrated into the bulkhead at the single steering console. *Image Kevin Green*

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The Leopard 42 showing its upgraded sail plan. Image Leopard Catamarans



The forward guest cabin in the aft port hull benefits from opening skylights and plenty headroom; note the moulded bathroom which is ensuite with similar arrangement for the aft cabin. Image Leopard Catamarans

The guest cabin in the stern is filled with light and great ventilation including aft opening hatches, while a spacious bed is also incorporated. Image Leopard Catamarans

Owner's facilities take up the entire starboard hull. Image Leopard Catamarans



The galley is equipped with deep sink, three burner hob, oven and a washing machine can be placed in the hull. Image Leopard Catamarans

The versatile saloon includes the table becoming a bed, generous headroom and the large galley is an improvement on the 40 model. Image Leopard Catamarans

The owner's bathroom is large, so enough space to include the washer-dryer as well. Image Leopard Catamarans

bed gives some side access, which is preferable for less agile owners who don't want to crawl about.

Those long hull windows give light and airiness is added with opening skylights and transom hatches. Storage is again plentiful with wardrobes and deep drawers. Underfoot, is hull access to seacocks and systems. Interestingly, despite its size escape hatches are not fitted, a question I put to dealer David Flynn who was my host for the day. "With our foredeck saloon door, this is our emergency exit."

On deck there's a single elevated starboard helm to give the skipper commanding views of the four hull quarters. Helm controls include a Raymarine chart plotter, autopilot and wind instruments plus power controls; all ideally placed for viewing and operation. Engines are twin Yanmar saildrives with hatch access near the transom. Here, the sturdy alloy steering crossbeam impinges over the engine, but a turn of the wheel gives access for servicing. Engine rooms come with water tight bulkheads, safely separating them from the living areas, while the bows also have crash bulkheads; which all go to give this fibreglass foam injected hull plenty buoyancy should major water ingress occur.

Ease-of-use is core to Leopard so there's no unpleasant surprises with the sail plan either. Sensibly,

the sail plan is kept low by avoiding a high flybridge design, but it means that guests on the topside lounge should watch their heads when underway. All lines lead neatly to two sets of substantial jammers with twin Lewmar 45 winches plus one for the mainsail. Control of the mainsail is via a double block system, rather than a track which means there's two sets of sheets to operate but it does give you extra control via jammers and the sheet winch. For eating-up the sea miles, the Performance Pack option has a squared topped mainsail and bowsprit-hung cruising chute; both were fitted to our review boat. Liveable deck space is a major feature of all Leopards' so the 42 has a large aft cockpit shaded under the saloon top, with bench seating both sides and the wide hull steps invite easy water access. Similarly, equally large side decks safely guide guests forward to the foredeck cockpit with its large twin sunbeds.

### MORETON BAY SAIL

Motoring from the Trailer Boat marina near Brisbane, the seaward views are of islands and a myriad of hues of blue reflecting the shallowness of Moreton Bay. One of Australia's main boating hubs, the area abounds with marinas and facilities, so with an international airport nearby, it's an ideal location for crew changes or wintering from the cold south.





**TOP:** Ample bridgedeck clearance and good water access on the Leopard 42. *Image Kevin Green*

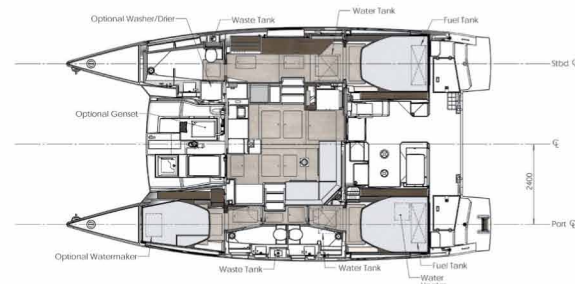
**ABOVE LEFT:** Conveniently placed in the saloon the powerboard is clearly marked between AC and DC. *Image Kevin Green*

**ABOVE CENTRE:** A strong steering bar and quadrant attachments are good features and the wheel is turned to move them for service access to the Yanmar engines. *Image Leopard Catamarans*

**ABOVE RIGHT:** The anchor system is safely enclosed yet effective when needed with substantial Lewmar windlass and anchor mounted beneath the nacelle. *Image Kevin Green*

Underway, the Leopard 42 had generous power, from the twin Yanmar 45hps with fixed propellers that sped us along to a maximum of 8.2kts at 2,950rpm before slowing to a more economical cruising speed of 7kts with the Yanmars turning at 2,500rpm and consuming about 10 litres per hour. Hoisting the mainsail was effortless, as my foot simply pressed the electric winch button and five minutes later the sail was set and I was unwinding the roller furler genoa. Then, a pleasing sound, the hiss of the bow wave followed as my colleague Wendy took the helm as we glided on a broad reach in the light 10kt wind, reaching a speed of 5.1kts. The Lewmar helm gave enough feel to make steering worthwhile, before we wound-in the mainsail to go closer to the wind, managing about 45° as the speed showed as 6.8kts. Ideally, cruising sailors would turn downwind and hoist the Code Zero, to enjoy the northward voyage to tropical Australia, something the new owners of this boat will do and they will be well cared for in the Leopard 42.

## LEOPARD 42 SPECIFICATIONS



Price	\$1,100,000 sail away
LOA	12.67m/ 41 ft 7in
Beam	7.04m/23ft 1in
Draft	1.40m/4ft 7in
Displacement	12,467kg
Bridgedeck clearance	0.75m light
<b>SAIL AREA</b>	
Mainsail	73m <sup>2</sup>
Genoa	50.4m <sup>2</sup>
Spinnaker	140m <sup>2</sup>
Code Zero	62.8m <sup>2</sup>
Fuel	600L
Water	660L
Engines	2 x 45hp Yanmar saildrive diesels, 3 bladed fixed propellers
Design	Leopard/Simonis-Voogd

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