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Sabreline 47

*A fast trawler with
plenty of performance
and liveaboard comfort*

— by Jeff Holland

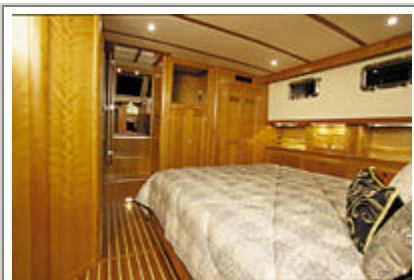


Sabre Yachts of Casco, Maine, were famous for their venerable line of cruising sailboats long before they began building classic motor cruisers in 1989. That's when they came out with the Sabreline 36 Aft Cabin cruiser. In 1996, they

introduced the first 47, and since then, it's become one of the most popular "Down East" style motoryachts on the market.

I recently had the chance to play with hull number 32, freshly delivered from Newport in time for the Annapolis Powerboat Show. The delivery crew had come through some rough weather, but though the dark blue hull was covered with salt spray, they were fresh and eager to take me out for a test drive.

You can board from the swim platform to the generously sized cockpit, where two large hatches provide access to a cavernous lazarette. Then you step up along the wide side decks to the door opening onto the inside steering station. The teak-and-holly soles in the main saloon highlight the American cherry woodwork. There's a large settee wrapped around a beautifully inlaid, adjustable table, across from an entertainment center hidden behind a cabinet. There's a sit-down chart table forward, with a good amount of desktop space to spread out.



The aft cabin has plenty of room for the island queen sized berth. Beautifully finished cherry cabinetry and the teak-and-holly soles provide plenty of traditional appeal.

The inside helm to starboard with a bench seat would be a crowd for two, but more than enough space for one. There's good visibility through the three big square panes of the windshield, and a big square window directly aft of the helm lets you see over the aft cabin top for any traffic catching up to you.

The teak helm console has a low profile, with room for a laptop or flush-mounted displays, and the black-rimmed analog gauges look neat against the black dash. Controlling the twin 435 hp Yanmar diesels from here is a breeze, with twin Hynautic shift and throttle controls. Access to the engine room is through a hatch in the sole.

It's two steps down through an arched bi-fold door to the aft cabin, which is nicely appointed with cherry paneling and cabinetry. There's a small desk in one corner along with a built-in bureau, another expanse of built-in drawers and cabinets along the starboard side and even on the forward bulkhead, not to mention underneath the full-sized island berth set at centerline with the headboard aft. There's a large cedar-lined hanging locker behind beautifully detailed curve-topped, louvered doors. The enclosed head has a separate shower stall, all trimmed in teak. The blue tiled sole matches the granite countertop of the vanity.

This boat was built with the "galley-down" layout, and while the galley is three steps down from the saloon, it's not separated by bulkheads, and the windshield directly above provides plenty of light and headroom. It's a standard U-configuration, with a good expanse of the ubiquitous faux-marble countertop, with side-by-side refrigerator/freezer units underneath, double-bowl stainless-steel sink, three-burner gas range with a stainless-steel hood above and a stainless-faced microwave below. There's plenty of storage in deep drawers and cupboards, a deep dead storage space underneath the sole. Another nice touch is the cupboard with beautiful glass-face doors on one bulkhead. An optional "galley-up" version has the galley occupying the corner of the saloon opposite the control station, and a small stateroom filling in where the galley is located on this one.

The door to the second head is just across the passageway. This has a separate teak-trimmed shower stall with a seat that's so large, I'm sitting in here with my laptop typing away with

plenty of elbowroom to spare.

The forward cabin has a Sabre sailboat look to it, with a traditional V-berth and plenty of storage underneath and in hanging lockers on either side. "That's part of our heritage," says, Bentley Collins, Sabre Yachts' marketing manager, and one of the nicest people in the boating industry. "Our interiors look like a traditional sailing yacht, because the same craftsmen who build our sailboats are building these powerboats, side-by-side in the same shop."

Another hallmark of the Sabreline fleet is the ease of maintenance topsides. "If somebody wants to put a lot of teak outside, we can do it," Bentley says. "We can install teak decks, teak toe rails, for people who want to do that or pay to have it done." But most owners prefer a minimal amount of teak trim to have to keep looking good.

With the belowdecks tour complete, I made my way topside to the expansive flybridge, where's plenty of room for entertaining, with an L-shaped settee and a removable table.

Saberline 47 Specifications	
Hull Length:	47' 6"
Waterline:	42' 7"
Beam:	15' 0"
Displacement:	40,000 lbs
Deadrise amidships:	20 degrees
Deadrise at transom:	14 degrees
Standard power:	twin 465 hp Yanmars
Fuel capacity:	605 gallons
Cruise speed:	21 knots
Base price: (with twin Yanmar 465 hp 6CX GTE diesels)	\$715,000
Saberline PO Box 134 South Casco, ME 04077 207-655-3831 www.sabreyachts.com	
Saberline 47 Dealers Oxford Boatyard Yacht Sales Oxford, MD 21654 410-226-0100	

I took the helm as we slipped out of Back Creek and out onto the Chesapeake Bay at the mouth of the Severn River. It was a calm, early autumn day like we get here after the cold front that the delivery crew had to run through. I was impressed with the Yanmars' quiet acceleration. We were protected by a Bimini top and clear plastic enclosures, but still, the visibility from the starboard side helm station was quite good, fore and aft. We easily reached the boat's listed top speed of about 23 knots. Standard fuel burn at the fast cruising speed of 20 knots is about 35 gallons per hour, according to factory tests.

For a relatively big boat, it handled quite easily, and I was impressed by its keen tracking ability. "Originally, that boat was built with underwater exhaust and a large skeg that went all the way fore and aft, which made it a displacement trawler," Bentley explains. "Now it's simply a deep-V bottom, with 20 degrees deadrise amidships and 14 degrees at the transom. There are a lot of people who say that the skeg helps you stick to the water, but I believe it gets in the way. It certainly slowed us down. We gained a knot and a half when we blocked the skeg off in the mold. There's enough bite with the deadrise angle and the spray rails under the chines.