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REVIEWS

Delphia 47: Modern Comfort from Eastern Europe

This Polish import is designed to be quick, comfortable, and easy to sail. **BY BILL SPRINGER**

THE SKY WAS OVERCAST, THE BREEZE was a steady 10 knots, and the gun-metal-gray seas were flat during my test sail of the Delphia 47. But unlike the countless boat tests I've conducted in similar conditions off Annapolis, Maryland, or Newport, Rhode Island, this one was a bit different: We were sailing on the Baltic Sea, off the Polish city of Gdansk.

Poland may not be the first country that comes to mind when you think of those with sailboat-building traditions, and Delphia Yachts may not be a household name in the States, though the Delphia 33 was chosen as CW's Import Boat of the Year in 2008. But as I learned recently during a fact-finding/boat-testing trip in Poland, Delphia has a modern, high-volume production facility, and these Polish-built boats may just give the more well-known brands here in the United States a run for their money.

I say this after spending the better part of a day aboard the Delphia 47. Even before we left the dock, I liked what I saw. Its low coach roof, nearly

plumb stem, sugar-scoop stern, and full teak deck produce a pleasing modern look. The cockpit layout is both utilitarian, due to copious storage lockers, and comfortable, thanks to seats that are more than 6 feet long and seatbacks that are tall enough to provide good back support. The dual wheels, walk-through transom, and decent-sized swim step made it easy to board the boat from the stern. Other on-deck features that I liked included the solid, oversized mooring cleats and chocks, the sturdy and attractive metal toerail, the wide side decks, and the fact that the fiberglass finish, even in hidden areas like the anchor well and storage lockers, was really well done. This attention to detail proved to be indicative of the overall construction quality of the boat.

Down below, the fit of the joinery—furniture, solid wood doors, and trim—was excellent, and the finish of the varnished mahogany woodwork, the light-colored headliner, and the ample natural light from the fixed and opening ports combined to create a bright and airy living space. The only aspect of the interior layout that's a bit of a departure from layouts on most American production boats is the "Euro-style" galley that runs opposite the saloon settee to port. It's fitted out with Corian countertops, a four-burner gimballed stove, and stain-

LOA	47' 6"	(14.48 m.)
LWL	46' 2"	(14.07 m.)
Beam	14' 8"	(4.48 m.)
Draft	7' 6"/6' 4"	(2.30/1.80 m.)
Sail Area (100%)	1,011 sq. ft.	(94 sq. m.)
Ballast	9,920 lb.	(4,500 kg.)
Displacement	29,321 lb.	(13,300 kg.)
Ballast/D	.33	
D/L	133	
SA/D	17.01	
Water	129 gal.	(490 l.)
Fuel	66 gal.	(250 l.)
Holding	50 gal.	(189 l.)
Mast Height	66' 2"	(20.17 m.)
Engine	53-hp. Volvo Penta	
Designer	Andrzej Skrzat/Schnaase Interior Design	
Price (sailaway)	\$375,000	

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less-steel sinks, and it may have a bit more stowage and counter space than an "American-style" L-shaped galley at the base of the companionway stairs. But it requires a bench seat to be situated at the saloon table near the centerline of the boat. This means that there's only one sea berth in the saloon, and it limits the brace points for cooks in the galley a bit. That said, the saloon is a warm and comfortable space in which I'd have no trouble hanging out on a rainy afternoon on the hook or while off watch on an offshore passage. I also appreciated the conventional, forward-facing nav station. It has a good-sized chart table, ample stowage space for

nav tools, and a comfortable seat.

I tested the three-cabin/three-head version (a five-cabin/four-head layout is also available), and I was particularly impressed with the forward cabin. It had good headroom, copious storage lockers, excellent ventilation through a large opening hatch and multiple opening ports, and a well-proportioned en-suite head and separate shower stall. The bunk is plenty wide enough for two at the head, but it does taper to a point at the foot. The berths in the aft cabins are larger than the forward cabin's bunk, but since each aft cabin has an attached head, there's not too much storage room. The head on the starboard side opens up to the saloon and will be the one that gets used while under way.

I couldn't help but smile as we motored out of the marina, which was forested with a multitude of masts. While much of the one-time Communist country is landlocked, it's obvious that the Poles sure do love to sail.

Getting the in-mast-furling main and the roller-furling jib set couldn't have been easier. I settled in behind the leeward wheel, and soon we were cutting a clean wake and gurgling along at more than 6.5 knots upwind. Not too shabby in 10 knots of breeze. The helm was well balanced and didn't require lots of steering to keep the boat in the groove. Unlike some dual-helm



DOWN TO THE DETAILS

1 Visibility is excellent from the dual helms and good-size cockpit. The wide side decks are easy to navigate.

2 The bright and airy saloon has a stylish European look.

3 The master cabin forward has good head room, a comfortable bunk, and plenty of storage.

4 Two cooks can work easily in the linear galley, along the port side of the saloon.

Visit cruisingworld.com/1012delphia47 to see more photos of this boat.

boats that can feel stiff due to the extra friction of the second station, the steering on the 47 was butter smooth. The sight lines from either wheel and the overall functionality of the helm stations were excellent.

I also liked the way the sheets and other control lines lead back to the cockpit. Each end of the double-ended mainsheet system leads to a self-tailing winch close to the helm. Add to the equation the self-tacking jib that can also be easily trimmed by the skipper, and it doesn't get any more singlehander-friendly than that. Off the breeze, the nonoverlapping jib provides a little less power than a bigger genoa, but boat speed still hovered around 7 knots, and I'm in no hurry to trade the utter ease of the self-tacker for the necessary winch grinding

needed to fly a bigger sail.

If we'd the time, I could've kept sailing across the Baltic to Sweden, but eventually we had to roll the sails up, turn on the engine, and make our way back to the marina. Engine noise was at acceptable levels both in the cockpit and down below; boat speed topped out at 7.8 knots at 2,700 rpm. The boat spun on a dime and maneuvered well.

The Delphia 47 makes a good case for the fact that a boat need not be radical to be successful. The boatbuilders at Delphia seem to believe that most folks are just looking for an honest, comfortable, attractive, well-built boat that performs well. And that's exactly what they built.

Bill Springer, CW's senior editor, directs the magazine's Boat of the Year program.

DELPHIA

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» DELPHIA 47

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