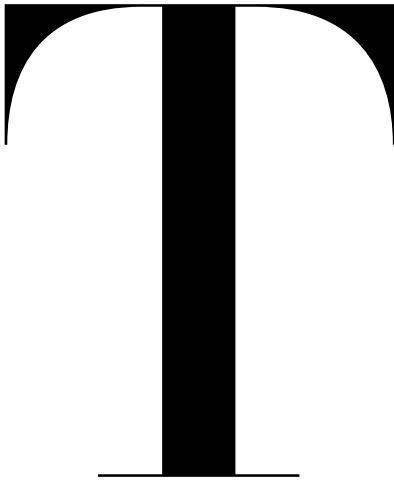




LOW IN PROFILE HIGH IN STYLE

Marquis 500 Sport Bridge

A few months ago Marquis Yachts introduced a sport bridge version of its well received Marquis 500. We took a scenic cruise onboard the yacht this winter and found out it is possible to combine looks and the conveniences of a flybridge on a 50-footer. Story Cecile Gauert Photos Marquis Yachts



A good ceiling height contributes to the open feel of a contemporary décor that shows great care to important details

The Marquis 500 Sport Coupe made its debut at the Yacht & Brokerage Show in Miami Beach in 2008. The European-styled yacht features streamlined lines with curves just where you'd want them to be, wide expanses of glass, a stylish interior and a sun roof, one of several similarities with a stylish roadster.

A flybridge, although it offers great benefits in terms of added outdoor space and the fun and practicality of an exterior helm station, very seldom enhances a yacht's profile. So we were curious to see how it would change the looks of the very attractive Marquis 500, winner of a 2008 Yachts Trophy for best interior design.

The Italian firm of Nuvolari & Lenard, well known in megayacht circles for such memorable vessels as the 269' *Alfa Nero* and the stylish aluminum sport yachts of Palmer Johnson, is an important part of the Marquis brand. The designers from Venice worked with Wisconsin-based Marquis Yachts, a division of the Genmar Group, from day one to develop a new line of boats with European looks and American practicality calculated to appeal to an international clientele. Dick Nocenti, director of marketing and communication for Marquis Yachts, says they designed the original Marquis 500 with the intent to later develop a sports bridge model. That probably helped in making the small flybridge seem right at home atop what still very much looks like the original sports coupe. To achieve this goal, however, the designers had to give the radar arch and the sides of the upper bridge a low profile; so when you stand, the sides of the flybridge reach just slightly above the knee and when you operate the boat from the outdoor helm, you do so from a seating position. It's ideal for bridge clearance. Cruising up and down the Intra-coastal Waterway along the U.S. East Coast with this vessel is not a problem.

The Marquis Sport Bridge has a couple of different layout options featuring one or two helm chairs, which in turn determine the position of a comfortable sunpad for two. The helm chair is a comfortable fit and is perfectly positioned to view the controls on the easy-to-read Raymarine navigation displays. The center piece of the well-designed helm is a great leather and steel wheel with Marquis branding. That's where another comparison with a stylish roadster comes in. Sitting here at the helm almost feels like sitting at the wheel of a sports car.

Marquis Yachts developed the hull of the Marquis 500 specifically for the Volvo Penta IPS. The pod-style propulsion has been lauded ever since it was introduced as a way to make



CRUISING ALONG THE INTRACOASTAL IS A COMFORTABLE PROPOSITION EVEN ON THE LOWER DECK, WITH MINIMAL NOISE COMING FROM THE ENGINE ROOM

boating accessible to nearly everyone. The electronic commands and pod-style propulsion make the yacht very responsive and maneuverable. As far as speed, not much has been lost with the addition of the sundeck. Marquis offers two different power options: triple IPS 500 or triple IPS 600, and they respectively allow, according to the manufacturer's own guidelines, a top speed of 31 to 35.5 knots—unfortunately wild winter weather did not allow us to put the Marquis 500 through its paces on the day we went out. We enjoyed a more stately speed that is both comfortable and relatively economical. At cruising speed (27 to 31.5 knots according to engine options), fuel consumption is about 53 gallons per hour.

Wide molded steps with secure railing lead back to a roomy cockpit. For dockside cocktails, the forward-facing sofa and table slide back several inches to expand the space further without disrupting the swim platform below. This interesting solution allows the Marquis to carry a PWC or a launch on its swim platform. A small but convenient wet bar, near the glass doors that lead into the salon, can serve as an outdoor galley with the addition of a grill.

It has been a bit of an obsession of late for European designers to blur the frontier between indoor and outdoor spaces. Here, the transition is well done if not invisible. One side of the door opens out and another folds in half to fully open the interior to the outdoors, leaving only a small step between the cockpit and the salon. Together with long windows, the large opening helps keep the main deck very bright, even with a dark Brazilian cherry sole. A good ceiling height contributes to a feeling of openness. The décor is contemporary and shows great care to important details. Two low-profile armchairs, built in the furniture department at Marquis Yachts, face a comfortable beige sofa with accent pillows. The centerpiece of this salon may well be the unusual coffee table, held in place by one original stainless steel foot. Articulated leaves, attractively finished in an impeccable high gloss varnish, open out to form a full-sized dining table that can also convert into an additional berth with the addition of filler cushions. Even the ceiling has received special attention with a two-tone design and attractive steel accents around LED lights. Rope lighting provides additional accent lighting, used here and there for effect.

The master cabin is located forward; the interior helm is identical in design to the one available on the Sport Coupe



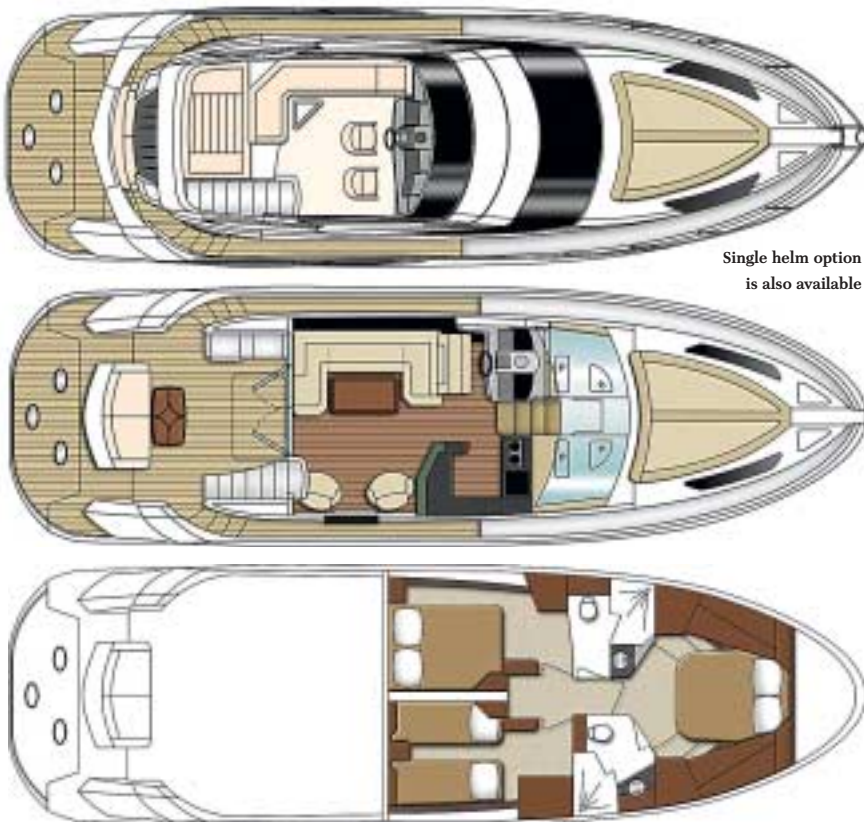
Marquis 500 Sport Bridge

LOA: 49'6"
 BEAM: 15'7"
 DRAFT: 3'10"
 BRIDGE CLEARANCE: 16'8"
 FUEL CAPACITY: 506 GAL.
 WATER CAPACITY: 160 GAL.
 ENGINES: TRIPLE IPS 500 OR
 TRIPLE IPS 600
 CONSTRUCTION: FIBERGLASS

WEIGHT: 46,300 LBS.
 CABIN HEADROOM: 6'6"
 SLEEPS: 8
 DESIGN & STYLING:
 NUVOLARI & LENARD
 BUILDER: MARQUIS YACHTS
 FOR MORE INFORMATION,
 VISIT MARQUISYACHTS.COM



Style and practicality meet again in the open galley, located on the starboard side. Stainless steel, Brazilian cherry and fashionable wood veneers provide the backdrop for the all-practical two-burner range, microwave/convection oven, and the refrigerator and freezer drawers. The interior helm, identical in design to the one available on the Sport Coupe, is located portside. Comfortable and adjustable bench seating provides excellent views forward and through side windows. An attractive steering wheel complements the easy-to-use IPS joystick control. Besides easy handling, one of the other advantages of compact pod-style drive systems is that they allow boat builders to play with added interior space. The Marquis 500's lower deck features three good-sized cabins and two bathrooms with showers. Marquis has chosen to position the master stateroom forward. It features a walkaround queen bed with ample storage below and ensuite marble bathroom with shower. A VIP, also with a queen bed, and a smaller cabin with twin beds, located right below the galley, complete the accommodations. Storage solutions abound and all the cabins have entertainment systems, including the now mandatory iDock station. Cruising along the Intracoastal is a comfortable proposition even on the lower deck, with minimal noise coming from the engine room. Frankly, though it is nice to know the Marquis 500 is capable of speed, it feels just as good taking a leisurely cruise to discover its numerous charms.



Single helm option is also available

Stainless steel, Brazilian cherry and fashionable wood veneers complement the all-practical appliances

