

MOTORBOAT & YACHTING

PRINCESS
V58 / ON
TEST

BRITAIN'S TOP NEW SUPERMODEL

Fast, fun and absolutely fabulous!





PRINCESS V58

Quite possibly the most stunning thing to come out of the Plymouth yard for a long time, the V58 Open lives up to its looks

Text: **Jack Haines** Photos: **Lester McCarthy**





The totally flat cockpit sole makes the entire area very easy and safe to move around in



The large glazed GRP sunroof slides back to bathe the cockpit in sunshine



All of this adds to the V58's fun in the sun ethos; you can just picture it in a cyan bay

Princess and Bernard Olesinski seem to be on a winning run at the moment. The S65, tested on these pages last month, is probably the sweetest looking sportsbridge on the market, and the new 75 – launching this very month at the London Boat Show – is going to be a beauty. Which brings me on to this, the V58 Open.

For me, the V58 Open stands out from an already handsome crowd. It's long and low and elegant but it's also arresting with proportions that are close to perfection.

Princess usually errs on the side of caution when it comes to design, preferring evolution over revolution, but the V58 treads an ideal line between aggression and elegance. This is a boat that draws you in with its appearance then charms the pants off you the moment you step on board. Sure, looks aren't everything but in the world of the 60ft sports cruiser they're a damned good place to start.

One reason why the Open looks so good is

because of just that – it's open. Princess hasn't had to increase the height of the roofline to accommodate cockpit doors, so the charcoal superstructure can sweep tightly over the cockpit and give the boat a far more hunkered down profile.

There is a deck

saloon version coming, and no doubt it will be popular, but for now we can focus on the party version, the sun-soaked version, the version that is a giant nod to sports cruisers of old.

Interestingly the split between sales of the smaller V48 Open and its deck saloon sibling have been split pretty much fifty-fifty, suggesting that the enclosed saloon version of these boats isn't going to have it all its own way on the sales sheet.

OPEN-AIR LIVING

On an open-backed sports cruiser of this size the cockpit is a single gigantic outdoor living area with the added convenience of a pneumatically sealed sliding roof (that is also

enormous) and inset with glazing so even if the weather's poor you still benefit from the natural light.

Part and parcel of this more traditional layout is of course the sunpad on the transom, which though well clear of the protection of the hardtop can be doused in shade thanks to an optional electric awning that glides out from within the coaming. Below the sunpad there is of course space for a tender garage, this one large enough to swallow a Williams 325, meaning you can keep the hi-lo platform clear or use it to stow additional water toys if you're happy to carry more weight at the stern.

All of this adds to the V58's fun in the sun ethos; you can just picture it anchored in a cyan bay with the tender swinging gently off the stern and the bathing platform submerged just below the surface of the gin-clear water, adorned with a couple of director's chairs.

PARTY PALACE

And the cockpit, wow! Once you step up from the bathing platform, the sole is completely flat all the way up to the companionway hatch.


This makes moving around so safe and easy, as does the large passageway between the table and the wet-bar, which avoids any sort of pinch point. And you are likely to have a fair few people on board because I reckon you could fit the full RCD complement of 14 passengers around the immense cockpit dinette at a single sitting. It might be a bit tight but the point stands, it's a fantastically spacious seating area opposite an equally expansive wet-bar that is kitted out with a good selection of storage cupboards and the usual goodies like a griddle, top-loading cool box, sink and £15,000 worth of (optional) 42in pop-up weatherproof TV. Yes, a pricey option, but a great way to transform the cockpit into an outdoor cinema on a balmy evening.

Forward and to port a curve of seating doubles up as place for crew to sit on passage and somewhere else to sunbathe beneath the open sunroof if the sunpad at the stern is occupied. The helm station opposite has two seats to cater for a navigator, who can control one of the pair of chartplotters, while the skipper concentrates on helming.

Not that helming the V58 takes much concentration; in fact it couldn't be much easier or more relaxing to get this boat galloping gamely over the crests. The engine options are simple, both D13s from Volvo Penta in either 900hp guise, as we had on test, or the detuned 800hp versions. Both are fine partners for the V58 with even the smaller

 Wet-bar is half galley, half entertainment system thanks to the 42in pop-up TV



 Plenty of seating around the dinette and the big teak table raises/lowers electronically



We had a decent sea running during the trial but the V58 brushed the waves away with ease

engines claimed to be good for around 35 knots flat out, maybe a touch more.

The 900s on our boat made mincemeat of getting the V58 out of the hole and into its 30-knot stride. We topped out at just over 36 knots, a strong performance when you consider that Sunseeker's Predator 57 ran out of puff on the same motors at 34 knots during our sea trial (MBY April 2015).

Princess has such a knack of producing beautifully balanced shaftdrive boats and the V58 handles as tidily as any of them. The helm is light and slick lock-to-lock so it's very easy to get the hull to change direction with the flick of a wrist.

We had a decent sea running during the trial and photoshoot but the V58 brushed the waves away with ease, though I did engage a bit of tab to keep the hull cutting cleanly through the crests. We were driving the boat far harder through the rough stuff for the sake of the camera than any owner is likely to do in these conditions, so the boat's refinement is all the more impressive.

As are noise levels, which remain well suppressed despite the open cockpit. No doubt the deck saloon version will be the more relaxing cruiser but the Open is properly smooth and I see nothing wrong with being able to hear the rush of the water off the transom and the odd throb from the exhausts.

The driving position is marvellous, mainly due to the perfect geometry between the seat, wheel and throttles that means you can sit right back in the chair with the wheel in one hand and the throttles comfortably beneath the other with an excellent view out at all times. The dash looks and feels classy and it's great to have so many little cubbies to chuck a phone or a pair of sunglasses.

CATERING FOR ALL

For such a cockpit-orientated boat, the interior doesn't feel like the poor relation in the slightest. It's spacious, well designed and beautifully finished, even by Princess's elevated standards. The galley is endowed with a full-height fridge-freezer and a handy return that not only means you can wedge yourself in when the boat is moving but also creates an ad hoc breakfast bar to serve the dinette opposite.

The dinette, though compact, does its job well enough, which is to cater for quick breakfasts and cosy nightcaps if the conditions don't suit living on deck.

Enter the full-beam master cabin and the first thing that strikes you is how low in the

hull this cabin is. This makes for plenty of headroom – on the port hand side of the cabin, at least – and genuine waterline views from the bed thanks to the pair of one-piece hull windows. The person sleeping on the starboard side of the bed will have to duck their head to get in but you can at least sit up comfortably and read before going to sleep.

The ensuite is a bit of a step up from the cabin floor but once in there the level of finish and detailing is sublime, plus there is a good amount of natural light and a separate shower cubicle with a solid door.

The guest bathroom forward, which is ensuite to the VIP

cabin and a short trip across the saloon from the bunk cabin, is given more space than that of the master and also acts as the day heads thanks to an access door straight from the saloon.

The VIP cabin is endowed with plenty of headroom and loads of natural light due to the long strip of glazing overhead and the elongated 'knife' window that Princess is rolling out across the range. As an optional extra you can have scissor-action berths in this cabin to add some versatility.

The third bunk bed cabin is ideally suited to kids, as the bunks are quite close to each other and the ladder up to the top bunk restricts access to the bottom one. That said, it does get a large window with two opening ports inset, its own flatscreen television and a hanging cupboard, so adults will be comfortable enough for a short stay.

VERDICT

This is an incredibly difficult boat to level any criticism at because for what it is – a big, powerful, sexy sportscruiser – it doesn't really put a foot wrong. The third cabin is a bit pokey, yes, but straws are being clutched at there. If you want a more spacious saloon that sits on the main deck with great views out and doors to shut out the cold and any evidence of the engines running then hold out for the deck saloon version – the Open is doing its own thing.



 The optional scissor-action berths add to the VIP cabin's versatility



Lower dinette is better for breakfast and quick snacks than for larger meals





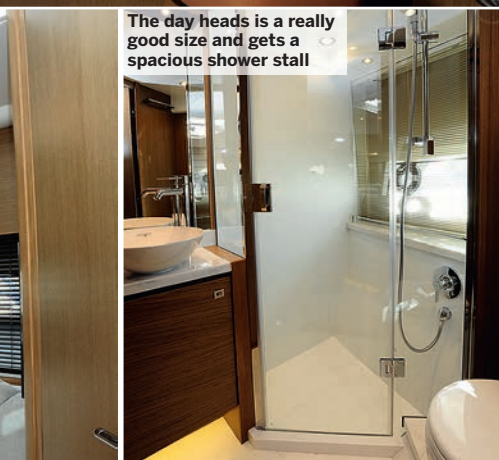
Master cabin is filled with light and has standing room next to the bed on the port side



Long strip of glazing in the foredeck makes for a very bright VIP cabin



Bunk bed cabin is ideally suited to kids but there is at least a large window and hanging locker



The day heads is a really good size and gets a spacious shower stall



Domestic fridge-freezer in the galley is good to see and storage is plentiful



A CLOSER LOOK WITH JACK HAINES

NEAT LOCKERS

These two storage compartments (the outboard one a chiller) are great for dumping kit into and storing drinks. The teak top adds some class and the inner lid makes for another handy spot for someone to perch.



DECENT DECKS

Shallow steps with thick treads lead the way up to the side decks, which both feel perfectly safe to navigate even when the boat is moving. Princess hasn't scrimped on the mooring gear, either.



THE LITTLE THINGS

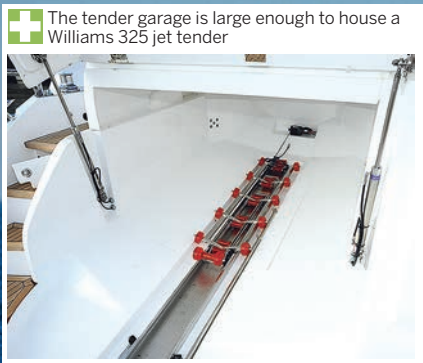
A place for everything and everything in its place in the galley. Seemingly simple to achieve but having all of the boat's crockery stored securely in one place is great to see and not something that all yards do.



ENGINE ROOM

It's quite a way down into the V58's engine room via a hatch in the cockpit sole but this means that once in there is plenty of space for the engines. Access to all sides of the engines is good, with the dip stick handles and fillers arranged either side of the central walkway. There is a huge amount of soundproofing and all pipes and cables are neatly clipped and labelled.





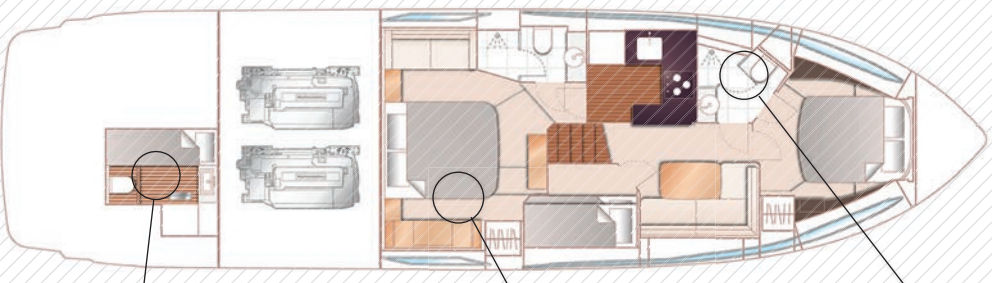
Dark moulding tricks the eye into lowering the V58's already sleek profile



THE DATA

LENGTH OVERALL 60ft 4in (18.4m)

BEAM 15ft 3in (4.7m)



Optional crew cabin is a £7,200 option and it's quite tight. Likely to be used as storage

Headroom is restricted on this side of the bed but fine at the foot of the berth and on the port side

The guest bathroom – shared by the VIP and the bunks – on the V58 Open is a really good size

- FUEL CAPACITY**
484 imp gal (2,200 litres)
- WATER CAPACITY**
110 imp gal (500 litres)
- DRAUGHT**
4ft 2in (1.27m)
- RCD CATEGORY**
B for 18 people
- DESIGNERS**
Bernard Olesinski & Princess Yachts
- DISPLACEMENT**
20.2 tonnes

You are getting the space of an 80ft monohull for the cost of a 60-footer

+ In good weather the large sunpads on the foredeck deliver plenty of extra lounging space



With the rise of the deck saloon sportscruiser and its best of both worlds configuration, it had looked like the days of the open-backed sportscruiser were numbered. But as sales of the V48 Open have shown, there is still plenty of life left in this more traditional style of sportscruiser. And though the deck saloon variant of the V58 will be more usable and a better year-round option if you plan to keep the boat on our shores, there is just something about the V58 Open that really gets under your skin.

It might be its unwavering focus on delivering a sociable main deck that wants

nothing more than to be packed with people enjoying themselves as the sun beats down. It could be the nostalgic sensation of helming a 60ft sportscruiser that actually feels like you are out on the water rather than insulated from it. Or it might just be that this is a Princess product that drips with finesse and practical ingenuity but also makes your heart skip a beat whenever you look at it. It has the want factor, not just because of how it hangs together but because it grabs your attention and refuses to let go. **MBY**

Contact See Princess website for dealers. Web: www.princessyachts.com

THE HELM VIEW



+ Always handy to have dedicated spots for mugs, phones and other bits and pieces

+ Dash layout is classy and clear and the seat/throttle/wheel geometry is spot on

+ Seats slide fore and aft and also bolster. Should be very easy for anyone to get comfortable at the helm

PERFORMANCE

TEST ENGINES Volvo Penta D13 900.

Twin 900hp @ 2,400rpm. 6-cylinder, 12.8 litre diesels

	ECO					FAST		MAX	
	1,000	1,200	1,400	1,600	1,800	2,000	2,200	2,400	2,400
Speed	9.9	11.5	14.7	19.0	24.0	28.5	32.1	35.3	35.3
LPH	38	74	110	149	192	239	289	334	334
GPH	8.4	16.3	24.2	32.7	42.3	52.6	63.6	73.5	73.5
MPG	1.18	0.71	0.61	0.58	0.57	0.54	0.50	0.48	0.48
Range	459	274	235	224	220	210	196	186	186

	ECO					FAST		MAX	
	75	78	78	80	83	84	85	85	85
Helm	75	78	78	80	83	84	85	85	85
Cockpit	74	77	79	82	82	86	85	87	87
Saloon	52	64	76	78	83	83	84	84	84

THE COSTS & OPTIONS

Price from £1.03m inc UK VAT

Price as tested £1.2m inc UK VAT

Crew cabin layout	£7,284
Scissor-action berths in VIP	£3,396
Telescopic passerelle	£16,512
Teak decks	£10,776
Electric cockpit awning	£11,784
17.5kW Onan generator	£11,328
Weatherproof cockpit TV	£15,996
58,000 BTU tropical air-con	£20,172
Two Raymarine e165 MFDs	£7,068

☐ = Options on test boat

Speed in knots. GPH & MPG figures use imperial gallons. Range in nautical miles and allows for 20% reserve. Calculated figures based on readings from onboard fuel gauges, your figures may vary considerably. All prices include UK VAT. 100% fuel, 75% water, 4 crew, minimal stores, 10°C air temp, F1 + calm for sea trials