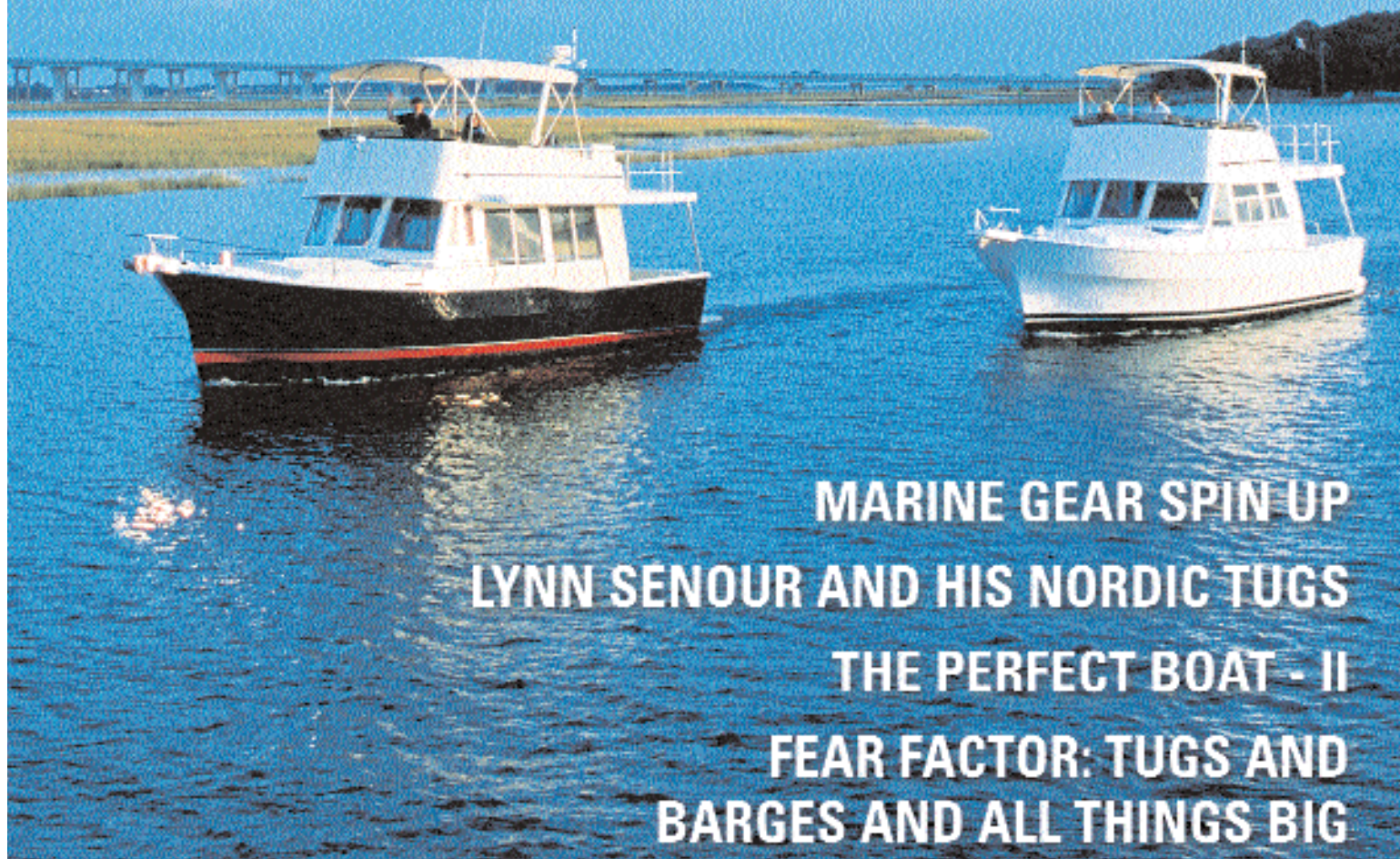


# PassageMaker<sup>®</sup>

THE TRAWLER & OCEAN MOTORBOAT MAGAZINE

## Speaking New Mainship 400 Volumes

Special Insert: **Boat Tour At A Glance<sup>™</sup>**



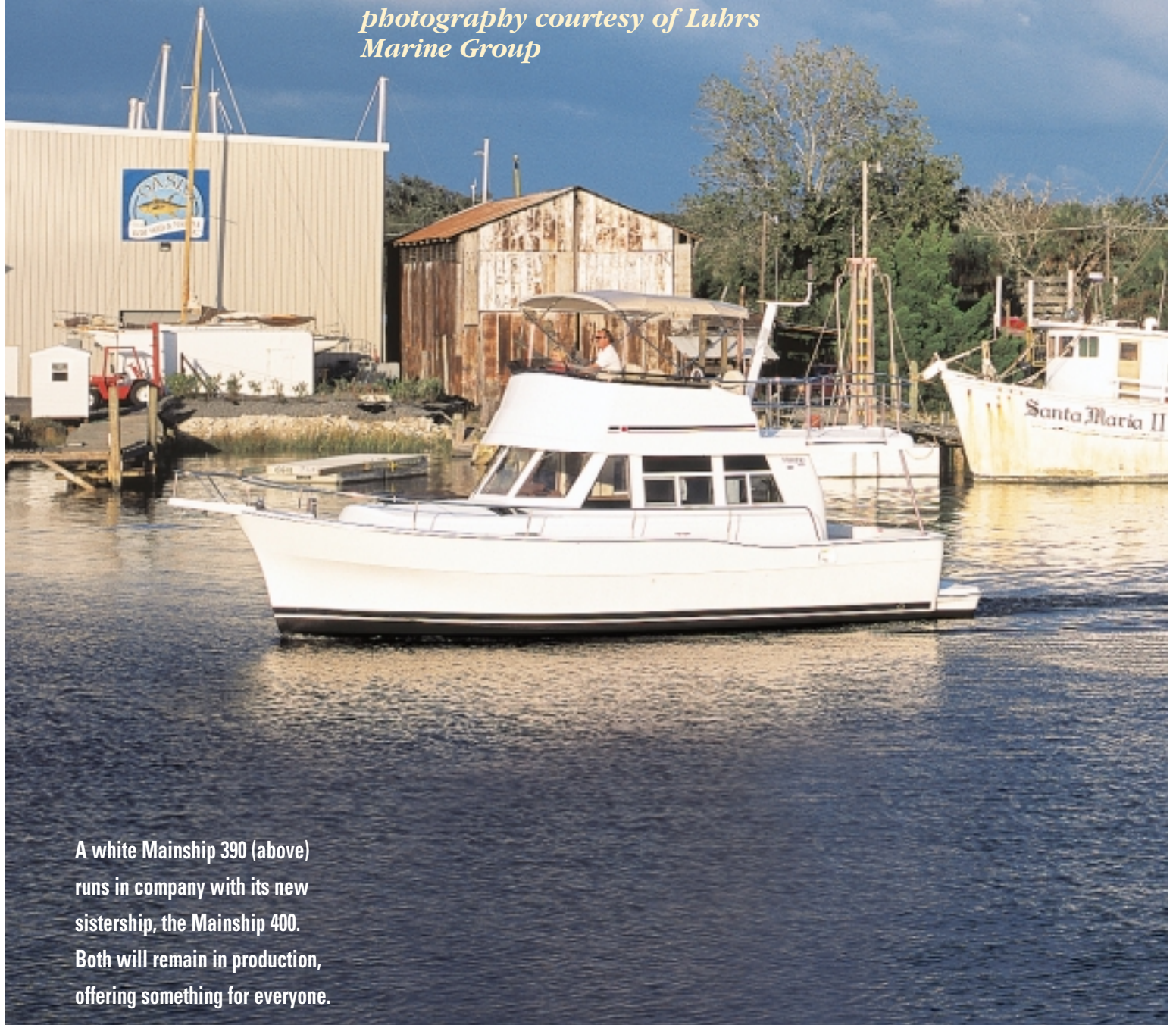
MARINE GEAR SPIN UP  
LYNN SENOUR AND HIS NORDIC TUGS  
THE PERFECT BOAT - II  
FEAR FACTOR: TUGS AND  
BARGES AND ALL THINGS BIG



# Speaking Volumes

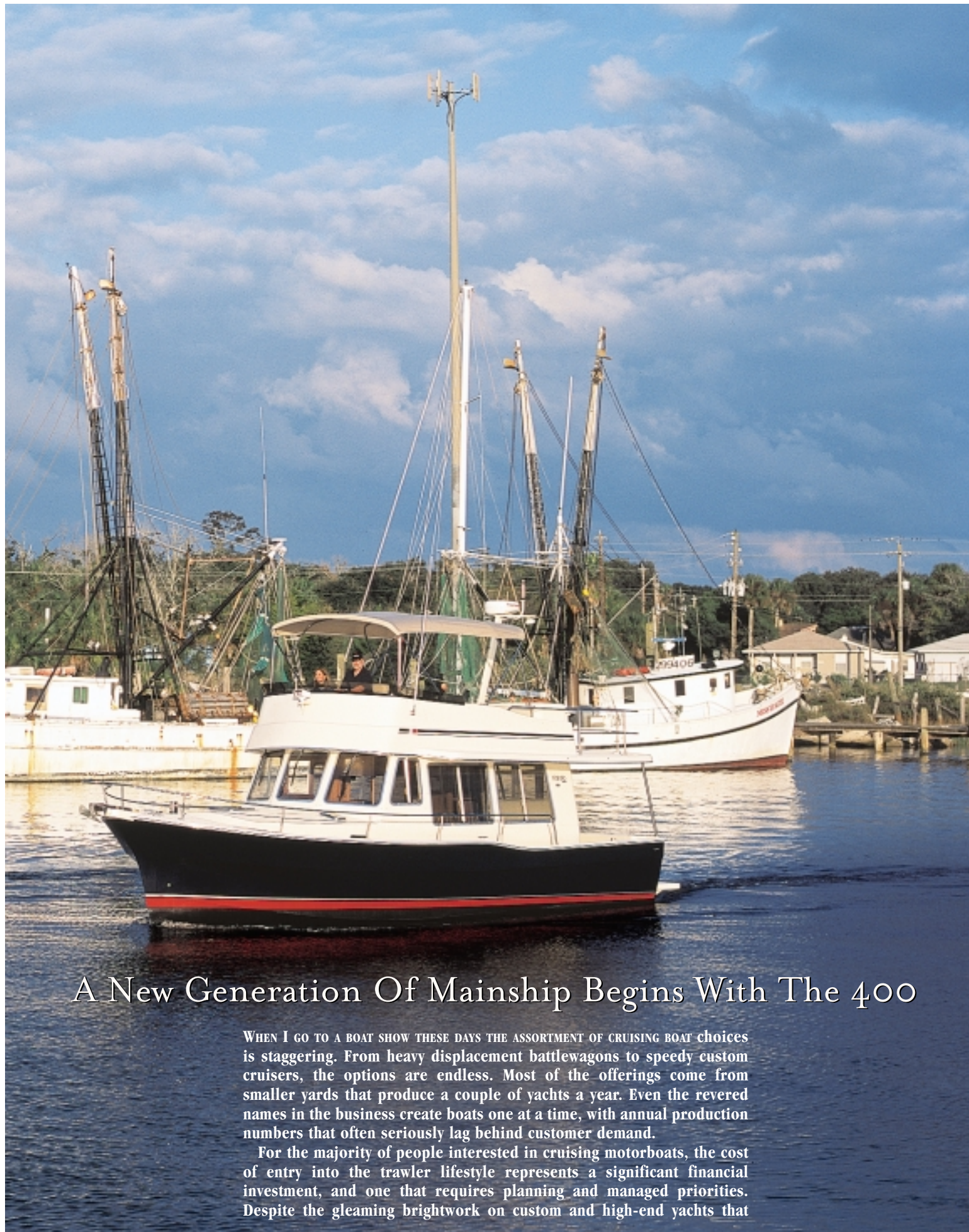
*by Bill Parlatore*

*photography courtesy of Lubrs  
Marine Group*



A white Mainship 390 (above)  
runs in company with its new  
sistership, the Mainship 400.  
Both will remain in production,  
offering something for everyone.



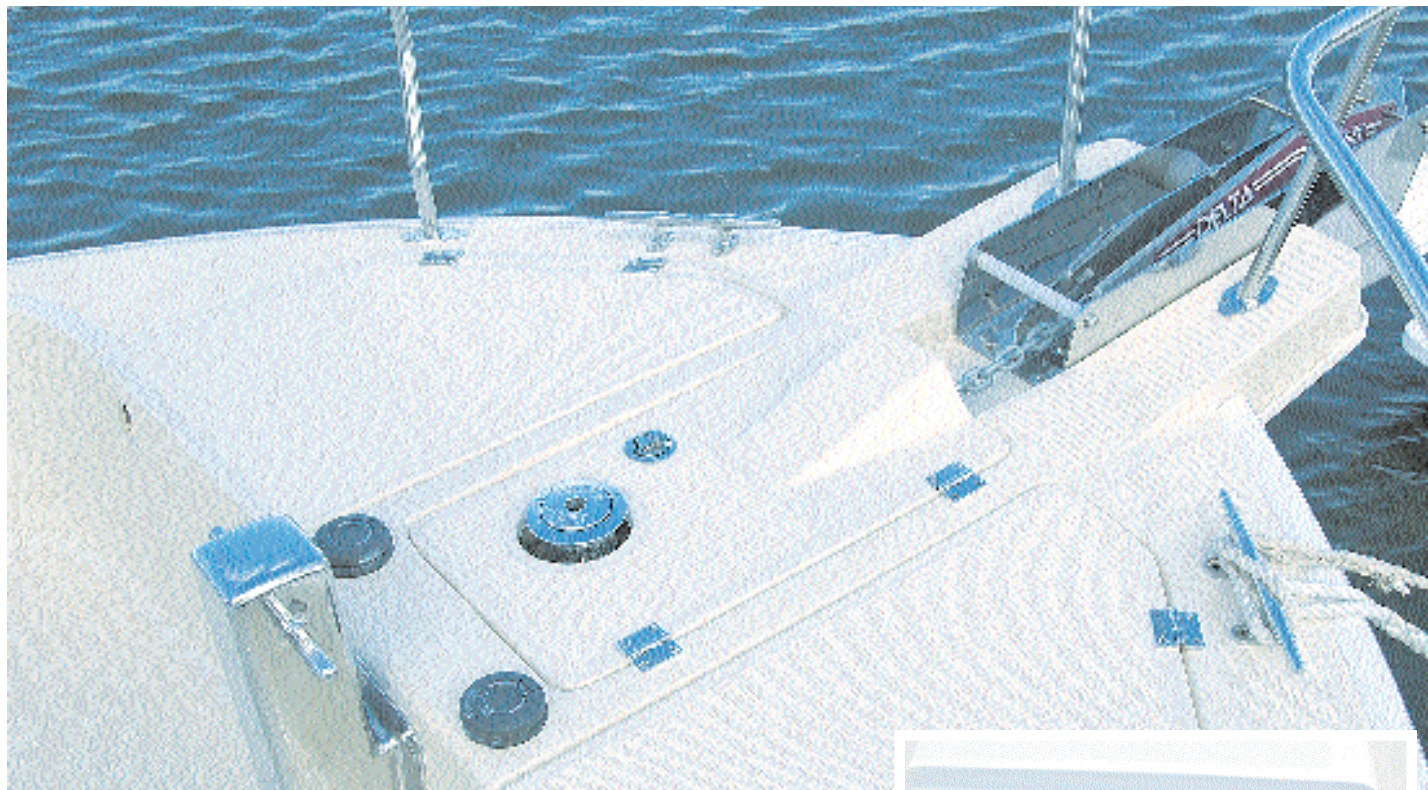


## A New Generation Of Mainship Begins With The 400

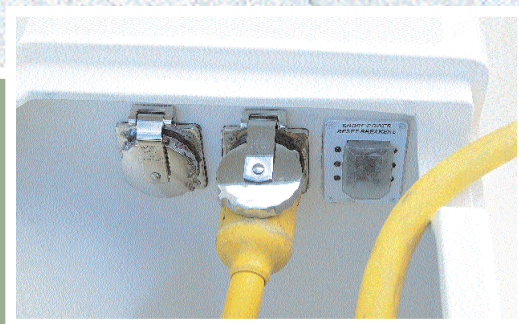
WHEN I GO TO A BOAT SHOW THESE DAYS THE ASSORTMENT OF CRUISING BOAT choices is staggering. From heavy displacement battlewagons to speedy custom cruisers, the options are endless. Most of the offerings come from smaller yards that produce a couple of yachts a year. Even the revered names in the business create boats one at a time, with annual production numbers that often seriously lag behind customer demand.

For the majority of people interested in cruising motorboats, the cost of entry into the trawler lifestyle represents a significant financial investment, and one that requires planning and managed priorities. Despite the gleaming brightwork on custom and high-end yachts that





**Redesigned foredeck (above) is full of nice features, and a good place to sit to feed the ducks. Sturdy Sampson post aids line handling; opening chain lockers give good access to rode and storage, with protected shorepower access in starboard locker (inset). Dual anchor rollers are cruiseworthy, and covered; draining windlass channel keeps deck clean.**



draw crowds and bring smiles, having the boat of one's dreams is ultimately less important than simply having a good boat. It is foolish pleasure indeed to hold off boating enjoyment because one hasn't quite got the budget for the ultimate.

Just how much boat does one really need to go cruising? We often talk about custom boat building, and its joys and satisfaction. However, and thankfully so, it is not the only option out there. For a huge portion of the trawler community, production builders satisfy our needs by manufacturing boats in quantities that offer good value. Boats that do everything we need them to do.

As we pass the milestone of seven years, I thought it appropriate to give you an update on the company that builds more boats in our niche than any other. And now with their newest trawler, the Mainship 400, they raise the bar on their next generation of cruising powerboats.

Mainship, the trawler-building company of employee-owned Luhrs Marine Group, has supplied some 3,000 cruising powerboats to the North American market since 1978. The boats are everywhere, and even older boats remain popular for owners who take this lifestyle seriously. With four active owners groups in the

U.S., Mainship is justly proud of its reputation for value and owner satisfaction—major reasons for continued success.

## **Luhrs Lesson 101**

A brief history puts it in perspective. The most popular model in Mainship history was the Mainship 34, often referred to as the Nantucket. (The Nantucket was actually only the double-cabin model, but the romantic-sounding name has become synonymous with all of the 34-foot Mainships.) Over 900 boats were built on the 34 hull during 1978–1988, with a total of 1,400 boats in 30-, 34-, 36- and 40-foot models.

In 1988, the company branched out with a European-looking boat line called the Mediterranean. It was a huge departure from more classic lines, but fast motoryachts were the name of the game in 1988. Unfortunately, things soon fell apart, with concurrent luxury tax, rising fuel prices and a generally sluggish economy.

Luhrs Marine Group closed the Marlboro, New Jersey, facility where the gas-guzzling Mediterraneans were built in May 1991, and later reopened the Mainship name and company at the same St. Augustine yard that builds the Luhrs sportfishing boats. Initially, the Florida





A lot to like on this transom (left). Off-center door allows entry even with stored dinghy on stern. Note CE-required pull-out steps on swim platform. Transom door is light but strong due to latest resin infusion technology. Note the large cockpit.

Covered side decks were added to the 400 after focus group discussion. Notice the overhead lighting (right), which also addresses a major customer wish.

Sturdy polished aluminum windows are a major upgrade for the new 400, and add a rugged look to the already popular Mainship trawler.

The new windows allow great visibility and are a definite improvement.

There is no intermediate stop on the helm door, although there are plenty of windows for fresh air under way.



MAINSHIP 400



What's not to like about this cockpit (left)! Molded stairs to the flybridge are now straight (with inside storage), for more room in the covered cockpit. Trifold door opens the full width of the saloon/galley for relaxed living aboard at anchor. Note the low-maintenance exterior, side decks, transom storage and engine room vents.





## MAINSHIP 400

A result of significant owner feedback, the flybridge on the Mainship 400 is all new. Note stainless steel hardware, molded forward-facing seats straddling the helm and long settee benches with angled backs for comfy lounging up top. The radar mast is hinged for bridges and covered slips. There is lots of storage around this flybridge.





Painted handrail on prototype (below) will be stainless steel on production boats. From this angle, one can easily see the great up/down usability of this layout, even carrying food and drink. Speaking of food, how about the optional flybridge "summer kitchen"? Standard storage cabinet is easily transformed into working kitchen (right), with Jenn-Air grill, fridge, sink and all one needs to feed a hungry crew. Nice, huh? And hose-down cleanable.



M A I N S H I P 4 0 0



Flybridge control station (left). Structure is hinged for complete servicing of electronics and controls. Visibility to run the boat is very good from here and will be a pleasure to use when cruising the many destinations this boat will safely go. Note the upgraded Faria gauges for the single Cat diesel and Raymarine electronics, Mainship's chosen family of marine navigation equipment.





The redesigned interior of the Mainship 400 (above) moves galley to starboard side. Note Corian counters, much-improved galley storage and standard complement of quality galley equipment. Flat-panel TV over sink also is standard, along with a good stereo system. Looking forward (below), one sees raised dinette, larger helm windows and bright cherry interior treatment.





facility created just three production boats (36 Express, 39 Express, 35 Sedan).

In 1993, the company added the Mainship 47 motoryacht to its lineup, although in many ways the Mainship line was competing with its sister company, Silverton, with similar designs and pricing. Seems the folks at Luhrs Marine Group weren't entirely sure what direction to go with the Mainship line.

## Back On Track

Lucky for us, Luhrs Mainship decided it was time to get back into the trawler business about the same time *PMM* was launched in 1996. With the graying of America, and a huge sailboat business that included older couples turning to the growing popularity of trawling, it was time. Given its previous great success in producing cruising boats at good price and value, Luhrs management saw a clear course to follow.

The first trawler-style boat of the new era was the 35-foot Mainship 350 Trawler. It stayed in production for two years (launched at the rate of one per week), before it was upgraded into the Mainship 390, with some interior and hardware changes resulting from owner feedback and production improvements.

Buyers of these boats still mostly come out of other powerboat lines, but include a fair number of sailors from the large production sailboat manufacturers, one of which is Luhrs' own Hunter sailboats. A strategic move of enormous proportions, Luhrs Mainship chose to stand by as high-end Hinckley, Alden and other premier-sailboat owners moved into Grand Banks or Eastbays, while it willingly ushered the larger universe of production boat-oriented owners into Mainship territory. It is manufacturing brilliance if one's interest is in bottom-line opportunity instead of yacht-club sizzle.

"I want pizza shop owners and gas station owners," Chip Shea, marketing director for Luhrs Marine Group, told me, "normal guys who just want to go for a boat ride and go off cruising.

"Most of our owners are unpretentious," he explained, "guys who own a business. They are fairly astute on how they spend their money and understand value. We find they run the daylights out of their boats, really cruise them, and don't need all the fancy stuff. That's who we're building these boats for."

The profile of the segment coming from sail also is remarkably consistent. Approaching the age of 60 or so, most couples don't want to get out of boating, but no longer want the maintenance or work of sailing. The Mainship dealer network is there to help in the transition.

"Whether it is the wife pressuring the husband

for more comfort," Chip continued, "or the man becoming concerned about his capabilities, that's when they roll over and get a trawler.

"They quickly find out it's so easy and economical—they're not spending a fortune on fuel—and they can still gunkhole and drop the hook. They get a propane stove and dual-voltage refrigerator with an inverter. And when they go to sleep at night, it's just like their sailboat except now they are on this big double berth with an inner spring mattress. They have a real shower and a hot-water heater that works, and TV and stereo.

"Life is great. And it didn't cost them a whole bunch of money."

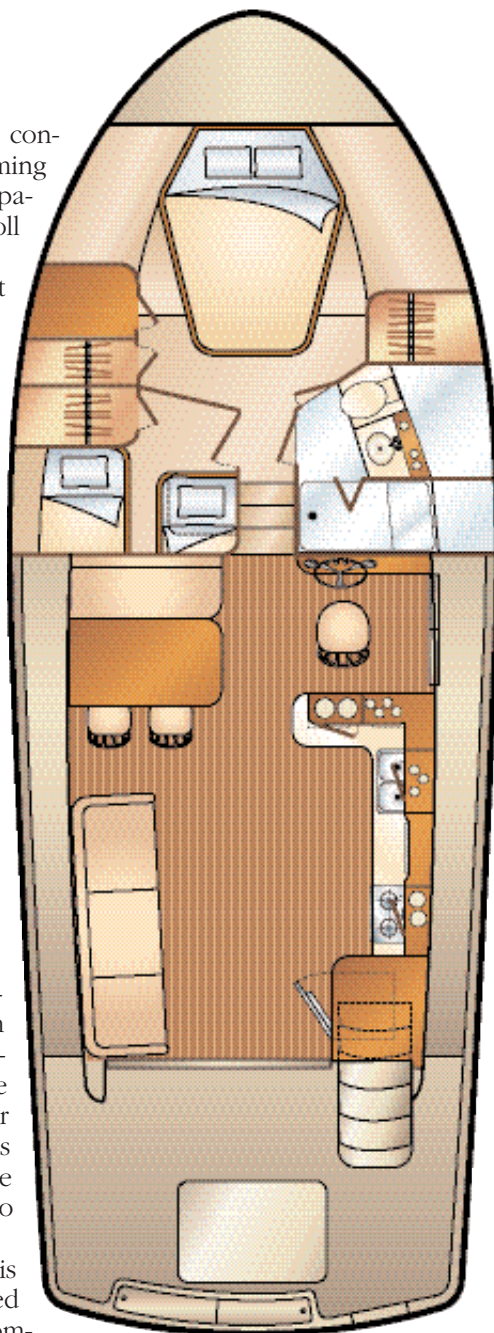
## What Do You Think?

Mainship currently follows two parallel paths in their boat lines: the down-east express cruiser (the Pilot series) and the trawler line. Eventually both lines will cover the middle range of motorboats from 30 to 50 feet.

The Mainship 350/390 is the most customer-involved boat to come out of the company. Producing hundreds of the model is an opportunity to get a wealth of customer feedback if a builder is listening. And Mainship listens intently.

Luhrs Marine Group is big on rendezvous events, where it regularly conducts focus groups and company managers walk the docks and go aboard owners' boats. There is no better way to obtain detailed opinions and experience from its customers. "Owners are not shy," Chip Shea explained. "They'll tell you they love this, they hate that, and we can start building a consensus about what the next boat has to be to make the satisfaction levels of these consumers go up."

It is precisely this information that led to the development of the new Mainship 400. The Mainship 350/390 had gone as far as it could go without major retooling, so it made sense to get things sorted out before making drastic changes.







**You won't notice unless it's pointed out, but the saloon sole was raised a full 6 inches in the new boat to add more height in the engine room. Two hinged hatches make for quick engine checks. Love all the space around the single, though twins are offered.**

While the new boat is a stand-alone model, it can be argued that it is so different, yet so similar that it is both a replacement and sistership to the current generation Mainship 390.

"The things that really work well on the older design are still there," Chip told me as we walked around the new 400. "Things that make this boat safer, easier to handle and more comfortable, are the things you can see and can wrap your arms around. The construction is still the same, the hull is basically the same, although longer."

According to Mainship, the new boat is actually easier to build. And it was designed from the outset to be easier to maintain, with changes in items such as polished aluminum windows instead of powder-coated window frames.

## The Issues Of Quality And Value

Single-engine boats represent over 70 percent of Mainship 390 production, so it's likely to be the same with the new 400. With a base price of about \$275,000 with a single Yanmar 370hp

diesel, the new Mainship 400 is a lot of boat for the money. And this is precisely the key to understanding this boat—and this company.

Many people directly equate the level of quality to how much something costs. A simple perception, but one that's not always true...or at least it isn't true in this case.

Compared to a custom one-off boat, the Mainship 400 is a steal. But let's look closer. A custom builder creates his own flooring, and crafts each cabin sole one piece at a time. The craftsman shaves a little here, a little there, tries it for size, then shaves some more. You know the routine: measure twice, cut once.

At Mainship, and any volume builder for that matter, a CNC router cuts flooring (pieces or entire sections) accurately and in quantity, over and over, controlled by a computer. It takes a fraction of the time that craftsman needs to complete the same task. Which is "better"?

Chip Shea says the Mainship formula is entirely about process. "The whole key is the process and it's driven by volume. If you can't get the volume, you can't do the process."

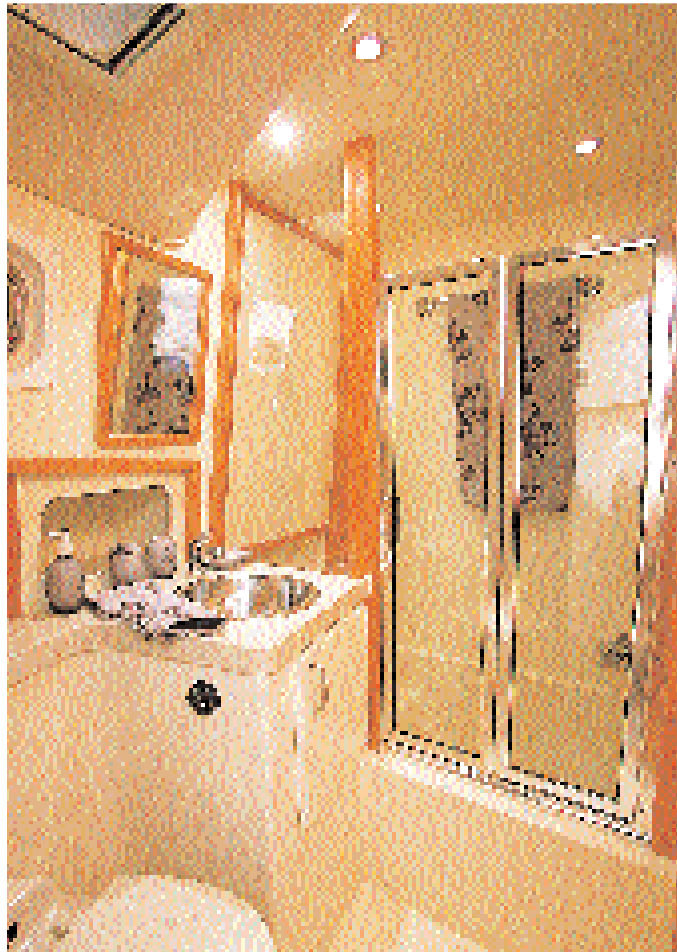
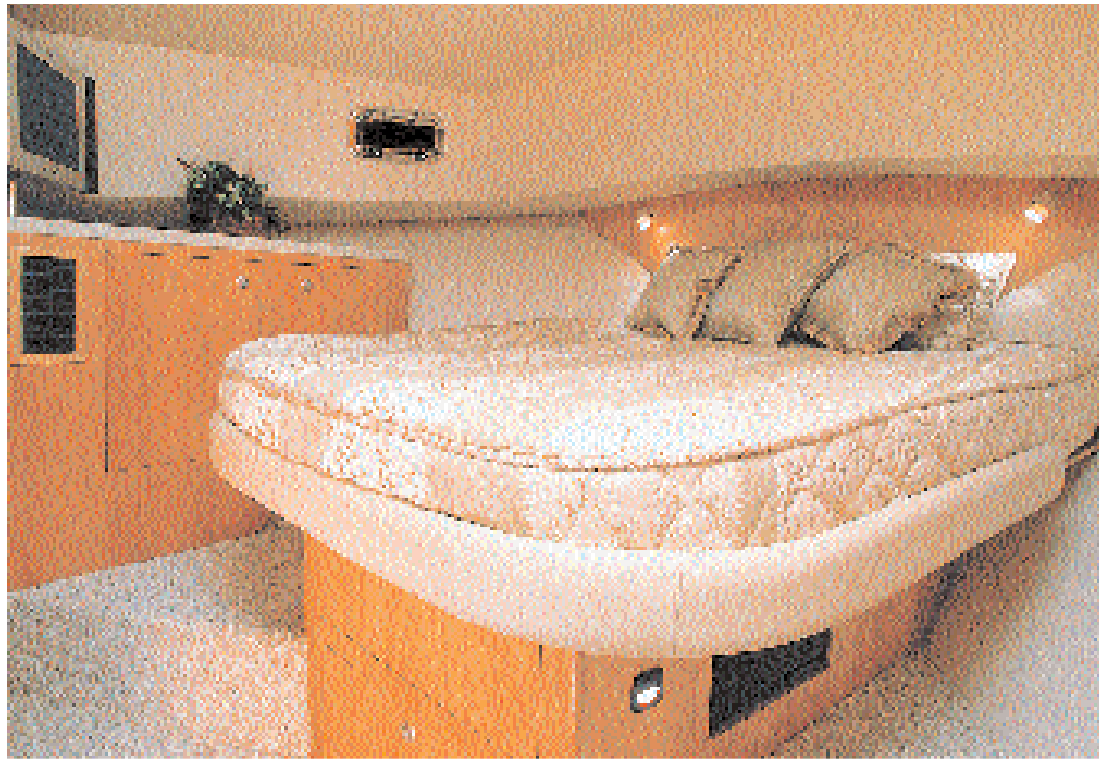
"Take stringers for example. When a custom builder puts in stringers, he has to go in and put the stringers in the boat and then he'll cut and shave and make sure they sit flush and everything's perfect before he'll start glassing them in.

"Our stringers are already pre-glassed before they see the boat. They are done in another building on a computer-controlled cutter. They are put in a jig and entirely pre-glassed before they get bonded into the boat. The time it takes to assemble the full stringer system in a boat is probably one-eighth the time a custom builder takes to do the same thing. The end result is the same, although I would contend the CAD system and CNC machine might produce a better part, certainly more consistently, than any craftsman."

Instead of men wiring one boat at a time, Mainship uses wiring harnesses that are made out of the boat and fully labeled. It is much more efficient.

There are endless examples of such comparisons to the custom boatbuilding process. Visualize the construction of bow rails. Most yards build one boat at a time, so at the appropriate time, workers fit rails and do spot welds right on the boat. Mainship uses CAD system-created jigs to allow all bow rails and handrails to be done in a weld shop under ideal conditions rather than workers fitting pieces while hanging off ladders. Such stainless steel work provides a consistency that is simply not possible in the custom process. Custom construction is certainly more expensive, but it is another example where it isn't necessarily better.





The original forward layout worked fine, but they tweaked more headroom over the master berth, fit a washer/dryer under the companionway stairs, put a tub in the shower and opened up the guest cabin.



## Discounts Speak Volumes

Another issue is sheer volume. Combined, the Luhrs Marine Group (Hunter sailboats, Mainship, Silverton and Luhrs sportfishing boats) operates six manufacturing facilities with over a million square feet of real estate. Collectively, these facilities produce several thousand boats a year.

So when it buys hatches, for instance, it chooses units that will fit several boats, and purchases a thousand of them per year. That's real buying power, especially when compared to a builder who buys one or two hatches at a time. There is no right or wrong in this, but it

does explain some of the value associated with Mainship's products.

Luhrs also is the largest Yanmar engine user in the country, so one can imagine the customer service and engineering support that comes with such clout. The same is true for fuel tanks and resin. Discounting just 3 cents a pound in resin can save a million dollars over the course of a year.

"Compare that to a builder who buys resin one drum at a time," Shea laughed. "We get it in tank loads every three days.

## Stay Within Reach

Efficiency in manufacturing: it's the way to succeed. Most boatbuilding involves one boat, painstakingly constructed over many months. Such passion and art is a cornerstone of the pride of boat ownership. But it's no secret that the hefty price of such construction puts it beyond the reach of most people.

"Also, and perhaps more importantly," Shea commented, "one might argue that custom boatbuilding is gross inefficiency when compared to a manufacturer that produces a boat at a rate of one per week, a boat that is perhaps 80 percent as good as the custom yacht, and has the same engine, washer/dryer, fiberglass/resin, toilet and other equipment—all bought at significant volume savings. That is value, especially for those who buy a boat to use, not to show off."

Mainship products are built to NMMA yacht certification and CE standards. What this means is that all federal requirements and pertinent ABYC standards, particularly those that deal with electrical systems, diesel and fuel systems, ventilation and navigation lighting, are followed. And the Mainship staff includes a resident naval architect and electrical and mechanical engineers to make it all work.

To meet the demands of a growing waterway lifestyle, we absolutely need volume production,

## SPECIFICATIONS

### *Mainship 400*

<b>LOA</b>	<b>41' 4"</b>
<b>Length on deck</b>	<b>36' 9"</b>
<b>Beam</b>	<b>14' 2"</b>
<b>Draft</b>	<b>3' 8"</b>
<b>Displacement</b>	<b>24,000 lb.</b>
<b>Headroom</b>	<b>6' 6"</b>
<b>Fuel</b>	<b>300 U.S. gallons</b>
<b>Water</b>	<b>130 U.S. gallons</b>
<b>Holding</b>	<b>47 U.S. gallons</b>



and Mainship is the big player in our world. And now that you understand some of the aspects of the manufacturing equation that differ from other builders, you can better understand a production boat like a Mainship when you see it among those custom trawler yachts at shows. You also see a company building the best boat it can in an environment that allows it to manufacture lots of them, efficiently. That is the key to good value.

## Go Aboard

The first of the second generation of Mainship trawlers, the Mainship 400 is the flagship of the builder's manufacturing approach and philosophy. As Jim Krueger, director of sales and marketing at Mainship, walked me through the first boat, he spoke of this new example of experienced evolution.

"We've come a long way from a company that just made a powerboat that goes slow."

Among other significant changes, the new boat takes full advantage of the latest resin infusion technology, and is stronger, lighter and cheaper to produce than all previous boats. What worked stayed, what did not was changed.

The standard model is a two-stateroom affair, with inside helm station, flybridge, wide side decks and covered aft cockpit. Several engine options exist, from the single Caterpillar 385hp diesel in the prototype to single or twin Yanmars. Top speed of the prototype is 14 knots.

The first Mainship 400 was done with a flag-blue hull and antique white topsides. It looks like other Mainship trawlers, except when one really looks at its many refinements. It is a very different boat and demands close inspection. I found it quite helpful to step aboard this new boat directly after being aboard a 350/390 trawler—the changes are more obvious, the improvements noteworthy.

Because of this evolution, I have an

interesting idea to better help you appreciate this boat. Rather than simply touring the new vessel, it's perhaps more useful to explain it in terms of the differences from the latest Mainship 390. The details of this comparison make for an interesting walk-through, especially if one can get aboard a new boat with list in hand.

So, in a departure from previous boat tours, we've designed a special insert as a handy aid to assist you when you go to the next boat show. Bring this aid along when you step aboard the 400 and see this boat from the perspective of what is new and why.


## A Sure Path

The new Mainship 400 is a nice boat that will make a lot of people happy. Its many features highlight comfort and livability, and the overall package is priced right. My complaints are hard to dwell on, as the first boat is a prototype built solely to explore the design.

For doing the Great Circle around the East Coast, exploring the Pacific Northwest and Alaska, or wintering in the Caribbean or Mexico, this boat will do the job admirably. The fact that it carries on a tradition of manufacturing efficiency brings it within range of many more people, and that is a very good thing. For a couple interested in trawling, it may be all the boat they need.

If you're in the market for a cruising boat, I suggest you check out the newest Mainship. The money you save could go a long way in paradise. It's all about value...and priorities.

Unless, of course, you'd rather stay at home, dreaming of a magic carpet ride that is forever beyond your reach. Your choice.

*For more information, contact Mainship Corporation for the name of the dealer nearest you at 800.578.0852, visit [www.mainship.com](http://www.mainship.com), or email [sales@mainship.com](mailto:sales@mainship.com).* 

*So, in a departure from previous boat tours, we've designed a special insert as a handy aid to assist you when you go to the next boat show.*





# MAINSHIP

## BOAT TOUR AT A GLANCE™ 400

*Rather than simply touring the new Mainship 400, it's perhaps more useful to explain it in terms of the differences from the latest Mainship 390. The details of this comparison make for an interesting walk-through, especially if one can get aboard a new boat with list in hand.*

*We've designed BOAT TOUR AT A GLANCE™ to assist you at the next boat show or when you visit a dealer. Bring it with you when you step aboard the 400 to see what's new and why.*

MAINSHIP 400	MAINSHIP 350/390	MAINSHIP 400	MAINSHIP 350/390
<b>HULL/TRANSOM</b>		<b>AFT COCKPIT (cont.)</b>	
Hull extended 36 inches, with traditional fiberglass swim platform; lighter transom door moved to starboard side. Deep transom storage lockers remain; protected aft shorepower connections	Swim platform bustle added to hull for improved performance; centerline transom door; good storage in transom lockers	One large lazarette hatch for easy access to genset (now allows sound shield); good access to steering gear and storage spaces	Two small hatches into lazarette spaces
Recessed stainless steel vents in side of hull	Perko vents in hull stand proud, are vulnerable	<b>FOREDECK</b>	
Fuel fills located on top of caprail	Fuel fills on side of hull	Outstanding design feature, with stainless steel Sampson post, dual anchor rollers; covered self-draining anchor chain/windlass channel; opening chain lockers; protected forward shorepower access	Stainless steel Sampson post added to latest 390 boats
<b>SIDE DECKS</b>		<b>FLYBRIDGE/BOAT DECK</b>	
Flat side decks are 12 inches wide; cleats off the deck for safe movement around boat	Side decks are multi-level due to fuel tank placement, with depression required for helm door	Boat deck extended 3 feet; more usable space; side deck overhead creates space for kayak storage	Curved stairway and railing use much of boat deck; minimal storage possibilities
316 stainless steel handrails and bow rail	Aluminum railings	Helm chair now flanked by two forward-facing molded seats; additional settees have angled backs for comfort; seating for 8 plus	Helm seating flanked by settees, awkward seating for crew looking forward
Diamond-shaped molded nonskid	Rolled on nonskid	"Summer Kitchen" option has electric Jenn-Air grill, refrigerator, sink, storage	
Wide overhead protection from enlarged boat deck; integral overhead lighting	Side decks lack overhead protection		
<b>AFT COCKPIT</b>			
Fiberglass stairs on aft cockpit are now straight, for great access from cockpit to flybridge, with good handrail; storage inside for mop, bucket and gear	Fiberglass curved stairway up to flybridge from aft cockpit		



MAINSHIP 400	MAINSHIP 350/390
<b>SALOON/GALLEY</b>	
Aluminum Bomar tri-fold door opens up full width of saloon to join covered aft cockpit	Single sliding door from aft cockpit
Dedicated eating dinette with movable chairs for flexible seating options; 360-degree visibility from raised dinette seating	Free-standing, high/low table at settee serves many purposes
Twice the storage space of old design; galley moved and reconfigured for better ergonomics; much improved visibility and opening window; Corian counters	Port-side galley design impacts visibility on port side; window size and shape limited by cabinetry; workable galley but needs more provision and utensil storage
Lighting a design priority; many lights in overhead and elsewhere	Small round lights offer minimal lighting at night, additional lights required
Soft "whisper wall" headliner is removable, offers sound deadening	Solid overhead with "fuzzy" covering
Polished windows and hatches used throughout; all are safety glass	Powder-coated aluminum windows and hatches
Matte cherry finish and bright interior	Teak finish
Flat-screen TV standard	
<b>ENGINE ROOM</b>	
Sole raised 6 inches for improved engine room space and equipment access	
Two hinged engine room hatches	Four individual hatches in saloon sole into engine room space
Wide steps installed into engine space	
<b>HELM</b>	
Compass moved closer to helm; hinged access to wiring and steering; opening helm door; upgraded Faria instrumentation; wipers with integral washers	Compass too far away from helm; good helm design; VDO gauges
Hatch under helm is access into separate machinery space	
Hinged stairs down to staterooms reveal Splendide 2000 combo washer/dryer	

MAINSHIP 400	MAINSHIP 350/390
<b>MASTER STATEROOM/HEAD</b>	
Overhead deck shape changed for increased headroom in berth; cedar-lined lockers; better lighting; sliding Oceanair hatch cover	Good basic design; overhead hatch with snap-on cover
Shower design changed to include tub; VacuFlush toilet system; low-maintenance finish	Low-maintenance head with separate shower
<b>GUEST STATEROOM</b>	
Increased room due to raised cabin sole; fold-down desk for office use	Infrequent guest use becomes storage room

## MAINSHIP 350/390 SPECIFICATIONS

LOA	39' 9"
Length On Deck	34' 9"
Beam	14' 2"
Draft	3' 8"
Displacement	22,000 lb.
Headroom	6' 6"
Fuel	300 U.S. gallons
Water	130 U.S. gallons
Holding	30 U.S. gallons

## MAINSHIP 400 SPECIFICATIONS

LOA	41' 4"
Length On Deck	36' 9"
Beam	14' 2"
Draft	3' 8"
Displacement	24,000 lb.
Headroom	6' 6"
Fuel	300 U.S. gallons
Water	130 U.S. gallons
Holding	47 U.S. gallons



Material is the copyright of PassageMaker Magazine, Inc., and cannot be reproduced in any form without written permission.