

ON THE HUNT

THE OCEAN 63 HAS A SMART DESIGN WITH
SIZABLE VOLUME AND A SLIPPERY HULL. BY KEVIN KOENIG

PHOTOS BY ONNE VAN DER WAL



It was a GREAT misfortune

that the day I got aboard the Hunt Ocean 63, there was a bluebird sky with flat-calm seas off Bristol, Rhode Island. ¶ The first thing you need to know about this boat is that her bottom is penned by Ray Hunt Design. C. Raymond Hunt, of course, invented the deep-V hull, which carries its wave-slicing deadrise all the way aft. Military and pilot boats use the deep-V design, and it is famed for its ability to slice and dice the rough stuff as if it were pond water. The Hunt Ocean 63 has a deadrise of 20 degrees at the transom, with quite a pedigree going on below the waterline. ¶ The only lumps I could run the yacht through were her own wakes

after churning up a mini maelstrom doing hard-over turns in two boat lengths at 20 knots. The hull did, however, fire right through those wakes without so much as a bump. So I'd project that if a prospective owner were to handle her on a rougher day, he'd be happy with the results. ¶ The top speed I saw was 31 knots. We cruised at 27 knots, where her range is 390 nautical miles. Hunt says that at a slow cruise of 10 knots, she has a range of 1,000 nautical miles, about the distance between Greenwich, Connecticut (where this particular boat, *Defiance*, will live), and Jacksonville, Florida. Standard power is twin 1,000 hp Volvo Penta IPS1350s.

Steering is smooth and agile. Carving S-turns through the water, I felt more like I was wheeling a 30-foot center-console than a motoryacht that displaces a cool 78,000 pounds dry. ¶ But the spirit of the Hunt Ocean 63 is not simply summed up by her performance. The boat exudes a certain character, both timeless and livable. It's akin to the love you can feel in a home built from the foundation by its owners. Seemingly everything aboard is overbuilt. That's particularly true of the stainless-steel pieces, from the hinges on the watertight door to starboard of the lower helm, to the Muir windlass, to the cleats and rails. It all looks and feels

A MECHANICAL CATHEDRAL

The engine room on the Ocean 63 feels like it belongs on an 80-foot vessel. There is 6 feet, 6 inches of headroom and full walk-around access to both Volvo Pentas. Access to the 25 kW Northern Lights generator is also as good as it gets. Gleaming stainless-steel handrails add an extra level of safety.



69'6"
LENGTH
OVERALL
—
18'
MAXIMUM
BEAM

Ocean 63's wide beam—18 feet, to be exact—allows her a tremendous amount of interior volume for her class.



Because the yacht has an 18-foot beam, the salon can include dining and sitting areas, as well as pass-through space to the helm..

1,150 GAL.
FUEL
CAPACITY
—
300 GAL.
FRESHWATER
CAPACITY



ALL PHOTOS COURTESY HUNT YACHTS

PURE GENIUS

C. Raymond Hunt was nicknamed “the Archimedes of New England” for his boat designs, despite having never formally studied naval architecture. His schooling ended after two years at Phillips Andover, yet he would go on to become an Olympic sailor and the designer of some of the most iconic yachts ever penned. Indeed, he invented the deep-V hull seen on pilot boats, military craft and many recreational boats today. After World War II, he joined forces with sailor Ted Hood, who went on to create Little Harbor Yachts (which the Hinckley Company ultimately bought). Hunt continued to design boats for the rest of his life, remaining a colorful and respected figure in yachting circles until his death in 1978.

chunky, solid and safe. And the welding is nearly flawless. ¶ The main deck on the Hunt Ocean 63 is all one level, making it easy to maneuver in a seaway, as well as more comfortable for boaters who are getting on in years. Overhead handrails run the length of the space. They’re a safety feature that I always love to see. ¶ The lower helm is forward and to starboard, and is uncluttered. Twin Stidd helm chairs face twin Garmin screens and Side-Power thruster controls. The windshield rises electrically to let breezes into the salon, heightening the immense feeling of space on the main deck as the yacht takes full advantage of its burly 18-foot beam. A forward-facing settee is opposite the helm to port. This is an optimal place to keep the captain company, particularly in a rousing seaway—trust me, on any boat, you’re going to want to be facing forward when it starts to blow. ¶ The other main entertainment area is the flybridge (though the Hunt

Ocean 63 also comes in an express-cruiser version). *Defiance* has an upper helm with twin Stidd chairs. A third is optional. Controls for the Humphree Interceptor trim tabs are within easy reach of the captain’s seat. Seakeeper gyrostabilizers are an option, though *Defiance* doesn’t have them because of weight considerations. The after end of the flybridge on *Defiance* is dominated by a barbecue setup that serves an L-shaped settee with a fixed dining table. A standard hardtop provides cover from the sun for nearly the entire area. ¶ Down below, the galley is to port opposite a breakfast nook that, through the use of a creative sliding partition, can convert into a guest stateroom, with the starboard-side day head making it en suite. The forepeak VIP makes good use of the boat’s beam, which

carries well forward. It’s so roomy, I initially thought I was in the master, which is actually located amidships abaft the washer and dryer. The master also benefits from the yacht’s beam and is notable for its stowage. I counted nine full-size drawers to port.

The woodwork throughout the vessel is well-done but really shines on the accommodations level, where beautifully grained woods sit as snug as could be against one another. ¶ The Hunt Ocean 63 is a boat designed by boaters, for boaters—particularly those looking to do long stays aboard. In my notes, I wrote, “You could stay here for a month.” With the interior volume, attention to detail, and slick and seaworthy hull, I have no doubt that you really could. ♡

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