

MAN OVERBOARD: MAKE SURE YOU'RE READY

SAIL

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**WAYS TO IMPROVE
YOUR BOAT**

HOW TO:

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your boat

Keep your
prop clean

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holding tank

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your cockpit

BOAT REVIEWS

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NEW BOATS



Morris Ocean Series 48 GT

The good just got even better *By Zuzana Prochaska*

There's an argument to be made for starting with a clean sheet of paper, but there's one just as compelling that says, if it works, don't even think of starting over, just refine. Morris Yachts has taken the latter route with the newly launched Morris Ocean Series 48 GT (Grande Touring) by taking an existing hull and then re-thinking the rig and the interior to leverage the good and make it even better.

CONSTRUCTION

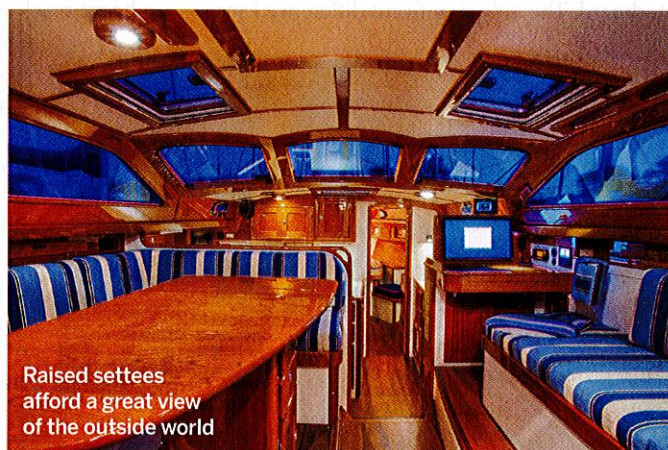
After consulting with owners, Morris decided to stick with the proven 48-foot hull by Chuck Paine and add a more powerful rig. The high-modulus carbon fiber mast from Offshore Spars gained over 6ft in height, adding over 100 square feet to the working sail area. A self-tacking jib was added, leaving room to put a Code Zero on a furler for downwind work. The combination is perfect for the shorthanded sailing that is done by most passage-making couples and will improve performance overall.

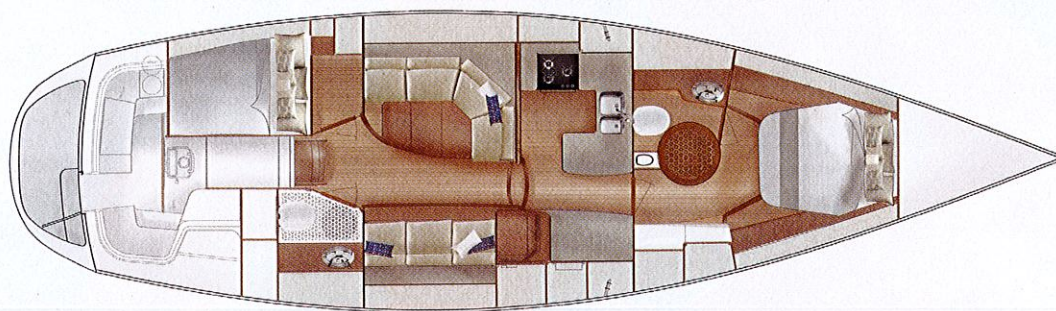
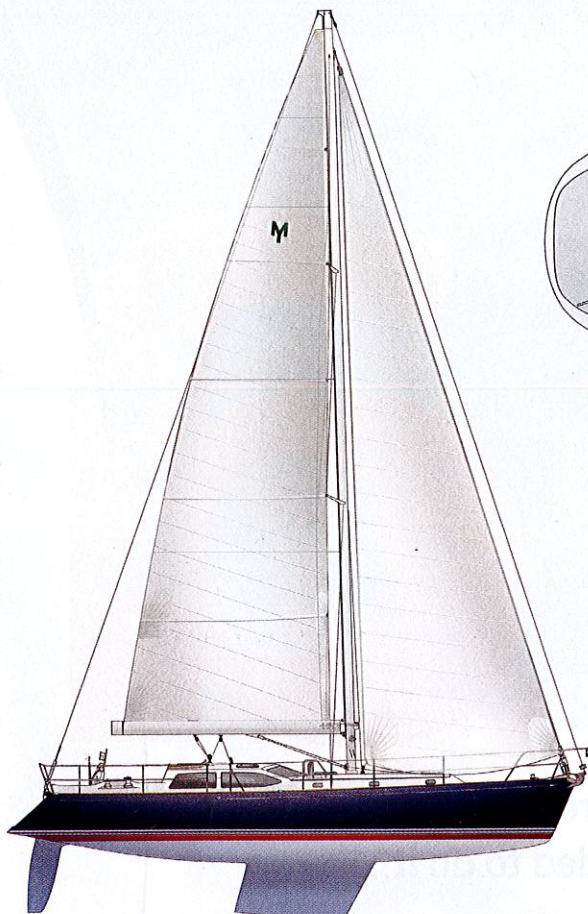
The 48 GT's quality touches continue with a vacuum-bagged foam core construction in both the hull and deck. Reinforcement includes composite longitudinal stringers and transverse keel floors and the structural bulkheads are of marine plywood. The hull-to-deck joint is bonded with 3M 5200, through-bolted on 8in centers and topped with a teak caprail. This is a strong boat that comes in at 32,000lb of displacement, so the larger rig will come in handy.

ON DECK

The changes on deck were mostly made in the T-shaped cockpit. A molded-in swim platform has been added with a pass-through to the cockpit, so no one has to swing a leg over the pushpit to board,

especially in a Med-moor situation. (Our test boat did not have this feature, because the owner wanted to retain what would have otherwise been the walk-through space for propane bottle storage.) The pushpit railing is indented in order to hold a BBQ perfectly.





Morris Ocean Series 48 GT

SPECIFICATIONS

LOA 48ft 9in LWL 42ft 10in BEAM 13ft 10in
 DRAFT 5ft 10in (shoal); 6ft 6in (std)
 DISPLACEMENT 32,000lb BALLAST 10,700lb (std)
 SAIL AREA 1,124ft²
 FUEL/WATER (GAL) 90/175
 ENGINE 75 hp Yanmar 4JH4-TCE with saildrive
 BALLAST RATIO 33% SA/D RATIO 18
 D/L RATIO 181

What do these ratios mean? Visit sailmagazine.com/ratios

DESIGNER Chuck Paine

BUILDER Morris Yachts, Trenton, ME, 207-276-5300,
morrisyachts.com

PRICE \$1.3 million (base); \$1.5 million (as tested)

Everything is at hand in the cockpit, including the Harken 70 electric primary winches, which can be controlled from both port and starboard. Four more Harken winches manage the main halyard, main sheet and reefing lines. All lines are run aft to Spinlock rope clutches.

A double bow roller, Lewmar windlass and a Shurflo saltwater wash down will make easy work of anchoring and getting underway. Electronics, including a radar/chartplotter, VHF and autopilot are by Raymarine, but a B&G

suite is an option.

Two of my favorite things were the open chocks at the bow and the midship, and stern cleats that make it easy to get a line on in a hurry. I also appreciated the tall lifelines befitting a true offshore boat.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Morris got down to the serious business of change in the interior, where things were completely re-designed. First is the entry at the companionway where the doors to the head and the aft cabin are angled so you no longer feel like you're entering via a tunnel. The non-skid on the steps is very aggressive for sure footing when it's wet outside, but you wouldn't want to kneel on it or you'd lose some skin.

Another major difference is that the saloon sole was raised 1in, which provided more space for larger tanks (90 gallons fuel and 175 of water). The settees were raised 3in, so now it is easy to see out through the large windows even when seated.

The galley, which Morris calls "full beam," is two steps down and has also been reconfigured. The sink now faces forward, and the entire space is almost completely contained, making for a safe place to prepare meals, even in a seaway. A Force 10 three-burner stove sits outboard to port, and refrigeration is by Sea-frost. Wine bottle storage is built into the steps. The old pilot berth across to starboard has been replaced with a "utility area," which can double as a pantry, extra storage, a bar or an additional food prep counter. Overall, it's a great galley in which it will be easy to cook underway. However, because it's forward of the saloon, it will make for a long trip to the cockpit with a bowl of steaming soup.

The master stateroom forward has also been modified, with larger seats around the queen island berth and a circular shower in the master head. The round shape means fewer elbow dings on sharp corners. It's a good use of space and adds an interesting aesthetic.

UNDER SAIL

We had a delightful test day for a boat like the 48 GT. The wind was piping up 18-22 knots, and the boat was in her element. We really didn't want to reef, so with all the canvas up, we charged away at 9.1 knots in 19.3 knots of apparent wind at a 40-degree angle. When we fell off to a beam reach, we hit 9.7 knots. Falling off even more gave us 7.7 knots at an 120-degree apparent wind.

The 48 GT comes with a Leisurefurl boom and a North Sails furling self-tacking jib. There's also room for a gennaker on a furler. Jib tracks for a larger genoa may be added, as was the case aboard our test boat, hull No. 1, which was set up to suit the individual needs of its owner.

The motion on an oceangoing vessel like the 48 GT is gentle and even, and although we had flat water with only a 1-2 foot chop, you could feel that this boat puts her shoulder into it and tracks regardless of the conditions. The poured-lead keel includes a bulb and is available in two drafts. The spade carbon-fiber rudder (on a carbon rudder post) dug in as we heeled, and the wake bubbled on behind us as if she was tempting us to try waterskiing.

UNDER POWER

The standard propulsion setup is a 75hp Yanmar turbo-diesel paired with a Flexofold three-blade propeller. On the flat water of Chesapeake Bay, we scooted along at 8.5 knots at 2,400 rpm as we headed back in: although that was the last thing I wanted to do on such a great sailing day.

CONCLUSION

There's a saying about tossing the baby out with the bathwater, and traditional wisdom says—don't. Morris Yachts has definitely shown an understanding of that adage by capitalizing on the best of an existing design, while at the same time making changes that reflect the way we sail today, thereby proving that good can be made even better. **S**