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# YACHT Style

**ROSSINAVI 50M BEL'**  
**ALL-ALUMINIUM STUNNER**



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ROSSINAVI 50M BEL'



The Leopard 52 retains the brand's semi-raised helm station, which allows vision of much of the exterior, including below to the aft cockpit

A surprise reveal by Leopard Catamarans at last year's Cannes Yachting Festival, the all-new Leopard 52 replaces the 50 as the flagship of the brand's range of sailing catamarans, which like its powercats, are built in South Africa by Robertson and Caine.

The new model boasts a more powerful rig, a versatile layout targeted at both private owners and charter, and an optional hybrid diesel/electric propulsion that's seamless and easy to use. We were fortunate to visit the new model at both Cannes and the Annapolis Sailboat Show, where the 52-footer made its US debut and again generated significant interest.

For the Leopard 52, naval architects Simonis Voogd joined Robertson and Caine's design team to create refined stepped hulls with a narrow entry for increased agility and significant volume above the waterline to accommodate a sizeable interior. The rig has become more robust and there's a choice of standard diesel engines or twin hybrid pods for propulsion.

Because this model will serve both private owners and charter guests with The Moorings fleet, the design is somewhat modular for impressive layout versatility.

Key Leopard elements are still visible on this new model, starting with the raised helm on starboard where two electric winches and a set of jammers handle the lines. A bench seat for two and a choice of Garmin or Raymarine electronics make easy work of navigation.

Visibility is good forward and down the starboard side, and the driver can duck under the flybridge overhang to see the aft port corner. An enhanced coachroof lounge offers seating around a table, so guests can keep the helmsman company. This semi-flybridge configuration has all the social space but less windage of a full flybridge.

#### PERFORMANCE

Our test day served up gusty winds, pouring rain and plummeting temperatures, but the Leopard 52 was built to take these conditions and keep us somewhat warm and dry. This model likes a lot of wind,



The cockpit includes a barbecue (left) on the starboard side; the central lifting platform (right) is among many options on the Leopard 52

so at 18-22 knots of true breeze, we sailed 8.2-8.3 knots at 50 degrees apparent wind angle (AWA).

In 24-knot gusts, she pumped up to 9 knots of speed with the genoa and the square-top mainsail remaining unreefed. As we cracked off to 150 degrees AWA, the wind dipped to 14 knots, but we still held on to 7.3 knots of boat speed. The new rig is powerful with a taller mast, longer boom and 17 per cent more upwind sail area than on the Leopard 50. Ulman aramid sails are optional.

Standard power is provided by twin 57hp diesel engines that can be upgraded to 80hp versions. Our test boat was equipped with the Jool serial hybrid system. This includes a 1,600W solar array and a 24kW range-extending generator that powers a 27kWh lithium battery bank, which in turn drives twin 25kW electric pods below the waterline.

The system is designed to have the genset start automatically when the batteries reach 40 per cent without the need for operator interface. Hydro-regeneration under sail is possible at the touch of a button, but the large propellers induce drag, slowing the boat down. Although

touted to start at 5-6 knots, any measurable regeneration needs at least nine knots before it becomes meaningful.

It was a bit miserable when we sailed, but the Leopard 52 was self-assured, even with all the canvas up, and we had plenty of places to tuck in to warm up. In our estimation, it was the only boat to have been out for sea trials on that day.

#### ONBOARD COMFORT

As well as the solid helm set-up, Leopard signatures on the 52 include the brand's renowned forward cockpit that can be accessed by the side decks or the watertight, forward saloon door, which can also be used to cool down the boat quickly when open.

Forward of the door is a covered, sunken seating area, while there's plenty of space to lounge on the wide expanse of sunpads and the nets, plus there are floating 'stools' attached to the siderails in both forward corners.

At the other end, the aft cockpit offers a large dinette to port and an L-shaped sofa and a barbecue area to starboard. An optional



The aft coachroof (left) can fit up to 1,600W of solar panels; the wide transoms (right) offer seating by the sea



The cockpit has lift-up access to the port hull, an aft sofa with adjustable backrest, and a dinette that aligns with the interior dining area



The saloon has a table that can be folded and rotated when more space is needed, a navigation station to port and an open galley to starboard

hydraulic platform adds so much to the practical use as well as the enjoyment of the boat that it should be on the spec list.

Leopard is experimenting with a new layout that is becoming increasingly popular across the multihull universe. The highlight of this configuration is the integration of the interior and exterior with a dining arrangement that flows in a straight line from the saloon to the cockpit, creating a connected environment.

On the 52, two tables, a foldable one inside and a large one outside, create banquet-style dining along the port side, while foldable chairs and a bench sofa can be moved as needed. To create an opening large enough to make this indoor-outdoor connection work, the panels of the glass door stack and disappear on starboard, improving circulation and blending the two living spaces.

One thing that Leopard clings to – and for good reason – is a full navigation station tucked into the forward port corner of the saloon. It's dedicated to the business of running the ship and if electric propulsion is specified, it holds a repeater screen so the skipper can monitor the system from inside.

#### VERSATILE ACCOMMODATION

The Leopard 52 is available with three to six guest cabins plus a small optional crew cabin in the port forepeak.

For liveaboard owners, the three-stateroom configuration comes with a spacious master stateroom that takes up two thirds of the starboard hull and has its own interior stairway. A large, forward-facing bed, a vanity desk and an enormous bathroom forward create a lovely owner's retreat.

The master is joined in the starboard hull by an en-suite VIP cabin, which has a similarly large bed but facing the hull window, while the room also benefits from a skylight. The other layout option for the starboard hull is three en-suite cabins, with two cabins in place of the master.

There are fascinating options for the port hull, which can include a long aft cabin with its own exterior companionway to the aft cockpit and a smaller guest cabin forward. However, as pictured, there's an option for a forward utility room, which can act as a dedicated space for all kinds of tools, spares and sundries, with a washer/dryer available.



Photos show the port hull with the options of a large aft cabin with cockpit access (left) and a forward utility room (right)



The upper lounge has an L-shaped sofa, a table and a sunpad

There's also the option for up to three guest cabins in the port hull, while the space for the smaller aft cabin can also be used as an aft utility room.

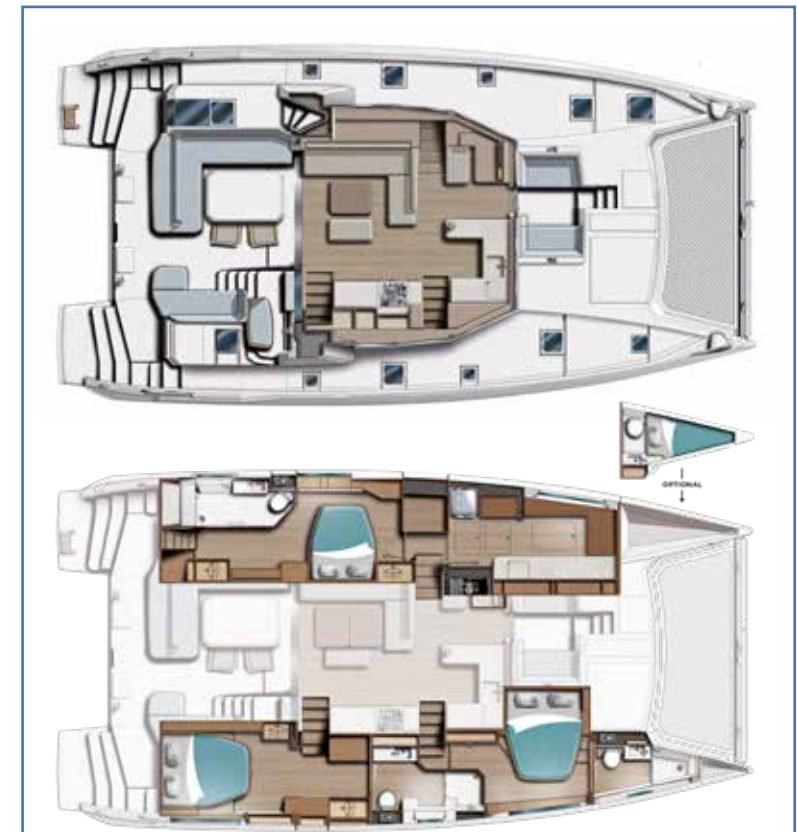
The layouts with four, five and six guest cabins are suitable for charter, where neither comfort nor privacy will be sacrificed.

Large wrap-around windows, soft indirect lighting, and neutral colour schemes allow sailors to live on the water just like they do at home. Additional comfort options include a dishwasher, a wine fridge and an induction cooktop to eliminate the need for propane.

Robertson and Caine has launched over 3,000 boats in its long history, so it has much expertise on which to draw. Leopard's new flagship is a big boat that's stable and tolerant of anything that even new charterers can serve up. However, with the new sail configuration, she's also surprisingly responsive and agile. Owners looking to do extensive cruising will appreciate that.

The Leopard 52 has been asked to do many things and manages them all well, which entitles her to be called the queen of versatility. Long may she reign. ✪

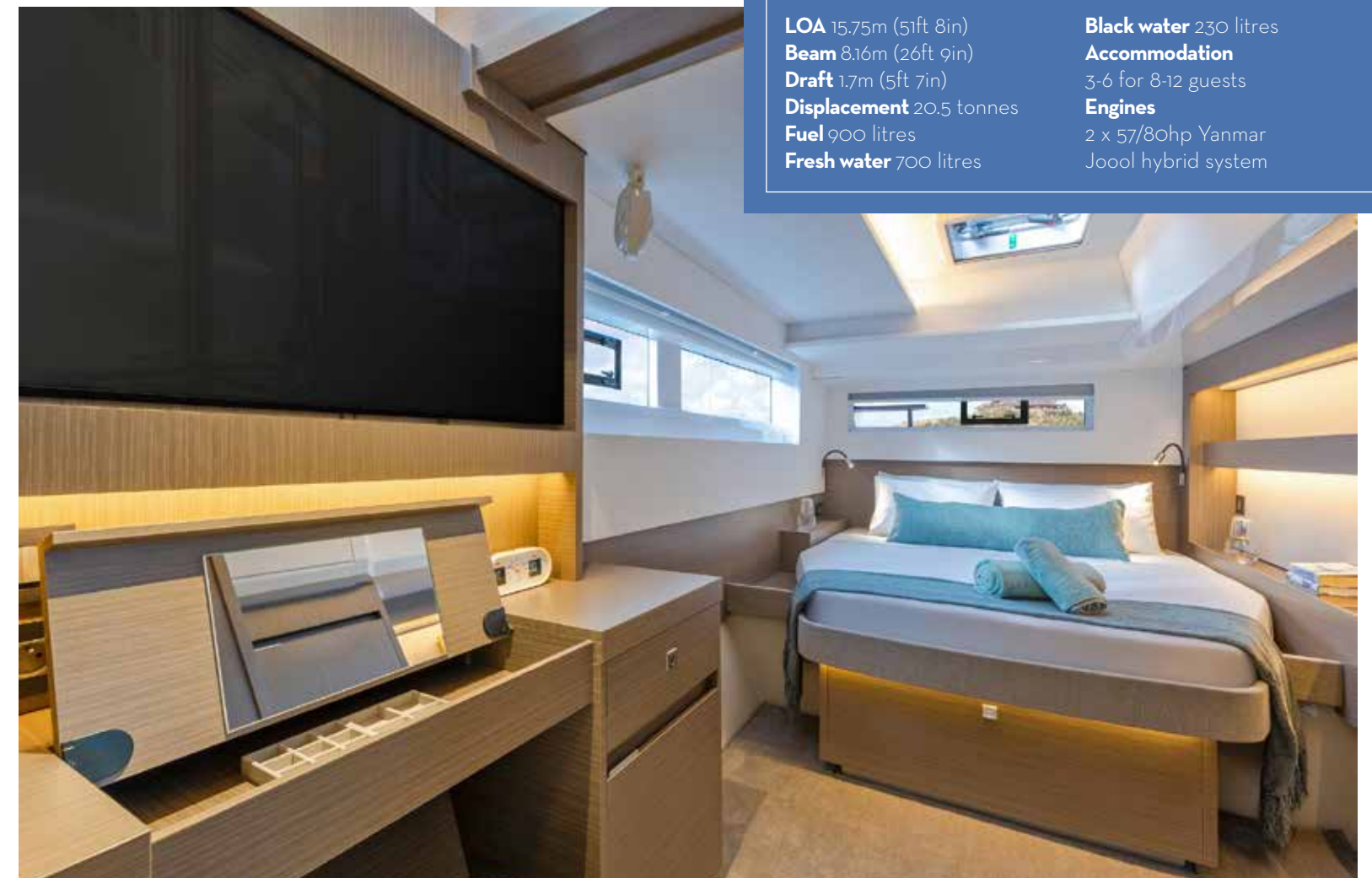
[leopardcatamarans.com](http://leopardcatamarans.com)



Note 1: The starboard hull is available with two or three cabins  
Note 2: The port hull is available with up to three cabins; utility rooms are available forward and/or aft

## DECKS & SPECS

<b>LOA</b> 15.75m (51ft 8in)	<b>Black water</b> 230 litres
<b>Beam</b> 8.16m (26ft 9in)	<b>Accommodation</b> 3-6 for 8-12 guests
<b>Draft</b> 1.7m (5ft 7in)	<b>Engines</b> 2 x 57/80hp Yanmar
<b>Displacement</b> 20.5 tonnes	Jooool hybrid system
<b>Fuel</b> 900 litres	
<b>Fresh water</b> 700 litres	



The starboard hull has the option of a master suite aft (pictured) with VIP suite forward, or three en-suite guest cabins