

BY JOHN KERR

Bravo Bavaria

Bavaria 42



Given our knowledge of the reputation of Bavaria boats, built by a company dedicated to providing boats efficiently and effectively and creating a high-quality product at a fair price, we were keen to do a boat review on the new Bavaria 42, recently purchased by Heather and Stuart Cairnie in Port Dover.

It's rumoured that Bavaria's founder Winifred Hermann even did his own time and motion study to build better processes and techniques for his company. This boat is considered to be great value for the money and when we hear more about the investments in plant, equipment and technology while waiting at the dock for the wind to fill in, we understand why.

Our first look at the Bavaria 42 at the dock confirms those impressions. It has a high freeboard and it's a sturdy-looking boat, with a wide beam and beautiful finish. In spite of her delivery just the night before in messy conditions, she is amazingly clean. Lines on this boat are sleek and there's no doubt when you look at it that this is a cruising-class vessel. We were also immediately impressed by the detail and quality glasswork.

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We waited patiently for wind to come in and with just a few knots of breeze we headed out to chase what we could. The Volvo 555hp engine pushed the boat out of Port Dover Harbour easily and quietly at 7.5 knots.

While we did not have the conditions for a perfect test sail we got a good feel for the way the boat performs. An account of last night's delivery confirmed our impression that this boat was meant to cruise and perform. In wind conditions from 18 to 28 knots, according to its new owner, the boat reportedly tracked beautifully even under a double-reefed main and pleasantly surprised all on board, given the shoal draft hull configuration. It

cut through the waves easily and down below nothing shook loose during the passage – unique for a boat right out of the box.

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The Bavaria 42 main was easily hoisted on the Selden Car system which we liked a lot. We were also happy to note the absence of an in-mast furling system. Though popular and convenient, we aren't impressed by the various systems we've seen in action. They don't allow for a functional sail shape and design, just as important when cruising as when racing.

The visibility you have on this boat is impressive while the added benefit of twin helms provides comfortable steering positions no matter what the conditions.

One thing we noticed courtesy of Elvstrom Sobstad was the placement of the genoa ticklers, properly positioned and easy to see from any helm position.

Ticklers are typically retrofitted and never seem to be in the right place. This addition is a small detail but indicates the attention to the little things that, when added all together, make the Bavaria 42 a capable cruising yacht.

Looking at the boat you can sense its solid construction and robust design. The boat, like all Bavaria models, features Kevlar in the bow sections for increased impact resistance. Bavaria has used foam core in the hull and deck to reduce weight above the waterline. They rely on a flange joint system to join the deck and hull for additional strength and a fully integrated grid system is laminated to the hull for more strength.

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Bavaria offers a choice of bulb keels in either a 6'5" or a 5'5" bulbed fin.

The deck is well-designed and clean, boasting Rutgeron deck hardware and

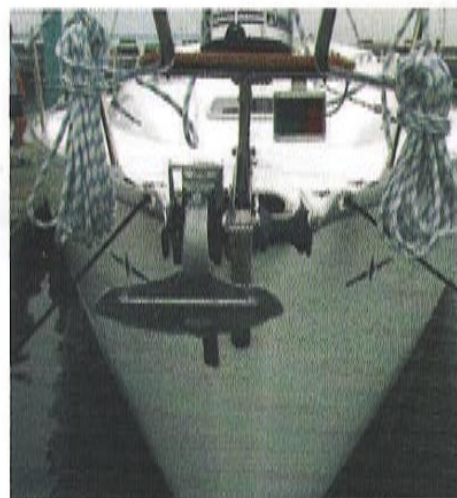
genoa cars. Lines lead back to the cockpit and allow for easy sailing and control. Standard Lewmar winches and hatches are adequate, but we'd like to see the addition of an electrical halyard winch – an easy upgrade that could be done here in Canada. What also struck us was the effective use of large skylights for a super bright cabin and numerous ports to allow cross ventilation. Standard roller blinds graced every skylight and there were curtains for the ports.

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Below decks were bright and the solid wood and mahogany interior finish complemented each other nicely. Headroom was a pleasure – between 6'4" and 6'7". Typical of what we call the new European standard were the well-fitting "crafted" doors and cabins. There were also numerous storage lockers. Three cabins provide ample berths and the boat features two large well-appointed heads, the aft one containing a shower.

The large and functional galley includes two 12-Volt fridges, a double sink, and gimballed propane stove. And the salon could easily seat six, making a three-couple-cruise a breeze.

A separate navigation station is neatly tucked in the main cabin with the flexibility to easily add further navigation instruments. A standard Raytheon Instrumentation package that includes their ST60 (speed/depth/and log) as well as the trusty old Windex comes standard. VHF at the navigation station and above deck is also included.



High freeboard

The Elvstrom sail selection included a full battened mainsail and 135% Furling jib. Furlex furling systems were on board (standard) and were effortless to use. The Bavaria uses a Selden line-controlled boom vang and a neat adjustable backstay to control a wonderful-looking fractional rig. This enables considerable rig control, letting you set a big mainsail – perfect for long easy reaching.

All in all this boat was a perfect pick for its new owners who will be cruising the Great Lakes for the next two years before heading for the Caribbean and then off to the Mediterranean.

After checking her out above and below and putting her through her paces, though the wind was less than cooperative, we can only say one thing about this boat: Bravo Bavaria. ■