

# Gunfleet 58

**Big, fast and elegant, the new Gunfleet 58 is a world cruiser that will get you across oceans in comfort and style**



**T**he afternoon didn't look promising for a sail trial when I met the Gunfleet crew at the marina in Stevensville, Maryland. The sky was a leaden gray and the surface of the Chesapeake Bay was a silver mirror that was only marred by a light drizzle.

The Gunfleet 58 was not hard to find in the marina. She had the tallest mast and the distinctive double headsails of her Solent rig. From the dock the new Tony Castro design looked imposing, with high topsides, a wide transom and huge vertical, tinted windows built into the hull. At first glance, I

knew this boat was all business and ready to go to sea.

## **ON DECK**

Once aboard, I was given a thorough tour of the boat from bow to stern, above decks and below. At 58 feet, the new Gunfleet is a large and commodious cruiser. Her teak decks are wide and everything is accessible and well thought out for sailing in all weathers.

Since the boat carries its beam well aft, the after deck is very wide and home to a huge lazarette. The cockpit has twin wheels with Lewmar Mamba steering that drives the semi-balanced, twin spade rudders. Each wheel was

fitted with a 12-inch B&G Zeus multi-function display so you can navigate and sail to your best polars from both sides of the boat. The cockpit has a huge folding teak table finished with a flawless varnish job. Six can dine at the table comfortably. With all lines led aft to the helms, the cockpit remains uncluttered as you are sailing. The cabin hatch lowers into a cavity behind the companionway stairs and can be rigged at fully open, half open when at sea and fully closed.

The raised deck saloon design provides a lot of headroom and light in the saloon but it also provides a degree of protection and comfort in the



cockpit, particularly with the dodger raised. Going forward from the center cockpit, the side decks are wide and unobstructed by the shrouds, which are mounted quite far inboard. The foredeck is spacious. The stainless steel stem-head fitting is massive and set up to carry two anchors at all times. The vertical axis windlass handles the chain that is stowed in a watertight chain locker. Just aft of the windlass is the forward sail locker, which is large enough for a rolled up Code Zero and a bagged up asymmetrical spinnaker.

The teak decks are glued in place instead of being screwed so leaks will not be a problem. The detailing in





the decking is of classic yacht quality with elaborate king planks and nicely joined deck planks. The deck hatches are flush with the decks and equipped with limber holes that drain away deck water. Stainless steel guardrails protect the air vent cowls that feed fresh air below decks. The cowls can be replaced with flush caps when the

boat is heading to sea.

The 58's rig stands 82 feet above the water and is set up with a slightly fractional fore triangle, discontinuous upper and lower shrouds and a hydraulic vang and backstay. The main is deployed with an in-mast furling system but an in-boom furling system and mast could be fitted as an option.

The boat has an advanced hydraulic system for running the headsails and mainsail furlers. These are operated with push buttons at the helms in the cockpit, with most of the controls placed on the starboard binnacle. This is a useful setup that allows one person to manage the sails from the cockpit. While the vang and furlers are fitted with remotely controlled hydraulics, the backstay has a manual hydraulic system that will prevent you from overpowering the rig and doing damage.

The new Gunfleet 58 has been designed and put together for serious offshore sailing. The on deck systems have all been thoroughly thought through to make passagemaking safe, efficient, fast and comfortable.

#### **DOWN BELOW**

The 58 is a raised deck saloon design with a center cockpit and a large master cabin aft. As you descend the companionway, you find yourself in a bright and airy saloon with ample overhead hatches, large saloon windows and those amazingly large vertical hull windows. The views through

these hull windows while seated anywhere in the saloon are remarkable.

The dinette is to port with a table that can fold out right across the saloon to include the starboard settee. With two portable chairs, you will be able to seat eight for dinner. The 58 has a proper chart table that is down one step to starboard. This will be the ship's office, nav station, communications hub and a great place to work.

The galley lies in the passageway leading aft to the master stateroom. This fully equipped galley has a five-burner stove and oven, twin stainless steel sinks, a microwave and a large, front loading refrigerator-freezer. The Corian counters have low bulwarks all around to stop drips. There are numerous lockers and drawers and plenty of space for stores and supplies. This is a fine seagoing kitchen that will be safe and easy to use while on passage, even when things get bumpy out there.

The master cabin aft deserves the

name. The walk around double berth is huge and easy to make and climb in and out of. To starboard, there is a full vanity with plenty of room for either make-up and fashion supplies or a laptop and office supplies. The head is huge and has a large separate shower stall. There is excellent access to the back of the engine compartment from the shower. The aft cabin is large even for a 58 footer, which is





due in part to the way the boat's beam has been carried well aft.

The engine room lies under the cockpit floor. This is a huge space with plenty of room for the 150-hp diesel, a fully enclosed generator, a watermaker and central air conditioning. Access to the engine room is via large doors on both sides and smaller doors aft. The boat's electrical center has been installed under the companionway steps where the Mastervolt charger, inverter and circuitry for shore and house power are all laid out logically and are easy to reach.

Going forward on the boat we sailed, we found a double cabin to port with single upper and lower berths and a large hanging locker. This could be the children's cabin or would work well as a crew cabin. The huge hanging locker has ample space for full sets of offshore quality foul weather gear.

The forward head is across the passageway and has its own separate shower stall. This head will be the boat's day head and will serve both the forward cabins.

The forward double cabin will be a fine guest cabin and has plenty of light

and ventilation. It will be very pleasant for those visiting to lie in bed and gaze out through the big vertical windows at the seascapes and harbor views.

The interior of the Gunfleet 58 was finished with bright oak paneling and trim, handsome fabrics and wall treatments and salty stainless steel trim, handrails and fixtures. The interior lighting is all LED and many circuits are dimmable so you can really adjust the ambience to the situation.

Any voyaging couple or family will find that the Gunfleet 58 will make an excellent floating home; one that has been set up with the rigors and requirements of long haul passage-making and living aboard in mind.

### SAILING AT LAST

As the afternoon wore on, the sky to the west had begun to lighten and showed signs of clearing. But, with no wind at the moment we decided to head out onto the Chesapeake Bay anyway and hope for some breeze. Using the bow thruster and engine, we got the boat off the dock easily, spun her around and were soon motoring out the channel with a sharp

eye on the depth sounder, which was reading seven feet. The 58 draws five feet, eight inches. Under the water she has a modern shoal draft cruising fin with a ballast bulb. Inside her keel is a centerboard that adds a lot of lift when sailing hard on the wind. While a design concept that was popular in the Fifties and Sixties, there is a lot of interest in the system among modern cruisers so Gunfleet has stepped up and made it a regular feature.

We inched our way into deeper water and then rolled out the main and genoa. Happily, the breeze was beginning to build so we were able to close reach out into the bay and then harden up to see what the boat was made of. With the wind now at 10 knots, we were able to sail with the genoa at about 32 degrees to the apparent wind. By cracking off a bit and easing the sheets, we got the boat up to seven knots in the moderate breeze.

As the afternoon breeze built, we rolled up the genoa and rolled out the Solent jib. This 100 percent foresail sheets inside the side stays and provides excellent sailing angles up wind.

We were able to get her to sail at about 28 degrees apparent and tacked the boat in well under 90 degrees of true wind angle. Sweet.

On the broad reach back to the marina, the wind continued to build so we rolled up the Solent and rolled out the genoa again. That was clearly the sail power the boat wanted and showed her pleasure by accelerating to 10 knots and then just stayed there as we raced for home.

The 58 is a fine sailing cruising boat that will put a smile on your face whether you are coastal cruising, sailing point to point events or heading out to cross an ocean.

#### **RICHARD MATTHEWS**

Gunfleet is Richard Matthews' second act. The English entrepreneur was the founder and mastermind behind Oyster Yachts, which he built into one of the world's premier brands of sailing and cruising yachts. Several years

ago, Matthews sold Oyster and signed a three-year non-compete agreement.

But he wasn't out of the game. With the passage of three years, Matthews found himself launching the Gunfleet brand right into the middle and depths of the great recession. Working with Tony Casto, he developed the Gunfleet 43, 58 and the soon to be built, Gunfleet 74.

There is no question that the new Gunfleets bear a family resemblance to Oysters since both companies offer high quality, center cockpit, passagemaking cruising boats. With the new brand, Matthews is working hard to build in more performance, more quality and more comfort.

The Gunfleet 58 is a shining example of just how far Matthews has come in that quest. For those looking for a high end, luxury cruising boat that will take you anywhere in the world, the new Gunfleet 58 should be on your short list. **BWS**



## **GUNFLEET 58**

<b>LOA</b>	<b>59'10"</b>
<b>LWL</b>	<b>53'8"</b>
<b>Beam</b>	<b>17'1"</b>
<b>Draft</b>	<b>5'8"/11'10"</b>
<b>Displ.</b>	<b>63,343 lbs.</b>
<b>Sail area</b>	<b>1,900 sq. ft.</b>
<b>Mast height</b>	<b>82'</b>
<b>Water</b>	<b>220 gals.</b>
<b>Fuel</b>	<b>330 gals.</b>

**Gunfleet Marine**  
**Ipswich, England**  
[www.gunfleetmarine.com](http://www.gunfleetmarine.com)

