

JOURNEY CAT 47LRC

FEATURES AND QUALITY THAT MAY MAKE EVERYONE A CAT PERSON

As settings for a sea trial go, this one was tough to beat: blue skies and a warming sun, the imposing Bay Bridge immediately forward, Alcatraz and downtown San Francisco just beyond that, and the iconic Golden Gate Bridge off in the slightly hazy distance. San Francisco Bay was creating quite the scenic backdrop for our test drive of the Journey Cat 47LRC (Long-Range Cat). It was one of those days that would have made Mark Twain recant his “the coldest winter I ever spent was the summer I spent in San Francisco” comment.

While it took us only about 20 minutes to get from the Bay Island Yachts dock to the bay itself, getting the 47LRC there took a bit longer. The idea for the boat — a fuel-efficient, long-range cruising cat that didn't appear boxy and square, and that came in at a lower price point than the custom cats that were available — was conceived in 2008. After a false start with one builder, a dual-continent search for another, and a boat-show and focus-group blitz with a detailed model, Michael Clausen, Neil Riley and the rest of the crew knew they had their boat. They selected Jet Tern Marine — known for its Selene Trawlers — as the builder, because they knew Selene built quality yachts that

did two of the things they wanted the Journey Cat to do: cruise long distances and do it efficiently. Tooling started in the early fall of 2010, and hull #1 arrived in the Bay Area in early June of this year.

INTERIOR

From the dock, the 47LRC's main cabin exhibits a low profile, but that doesn't translate to a super-low ceiling. I have to duck only slightly, which means there is about 6 feet, 4 inches of headroom — plenty for 95 percent of the population — and Bay Island's Craig Shipley tells me the headroom will be increased by 2 or 3 inches in subsequent boats.

The main cabin, which includes

a raised settee/dinette to starboard, a C-shaped galley to port and a centerline helm with chart tables to either side, takes advantage of the boat's 18-foot beam (minus the side decks) to pack a lot in and still feel roomy. Helping provide that feeling of roominess are the windows that encircle the cabin, letting in tons of natural light and eliminating any potential feelings of stuffiness. From almost everywhere in the cabin, you have a 360-degree view; the only exception is the aft port corner, which sacrifices its window for the spiral staircase heading to the flybridge. Intra flush-mount LED lights abound throughout the boat, 15 in the salon area alone, providing ambience and drawing less power than halogen lights.

At the helm is everything the captain needs for a safe journey, including engine controls and displays, a VHF radio and two Furuno NavNet 3D MDF-12 displays. The engine gauges and the lighted alarm displays are installed above the windshield, in the teak facing that wraps around



the cabin where the ceiling and bulkhead meet. Putting them there situates them just above eye level for most owners and keeps the dash from being too crowded. Aft and just to port of the captain's chair is a two-person bench seat that could make a nice chaise for one, and to starboard is another bench that can accommodate another person.

The galley, which is all the way aft to port, includes a Corian countertop, a double stainless sink, a three-burner stovetop with an oven, a microwave, a pantry, a refrigerator and a freezer. Its location makes it easy to serve food in the dinette or the cockpit and to the captain. It's even an easy walk up the stairs to the flybridge. Storage is found in several small drawers and cubbyholes, including one for glasses.

Throughout the cabin and the belowdecks accommodations is the rich look of teak, but to save weight, the builder used a 1/16-inch teak veneer over 3/4-inch corecell bulkheads. Elsewhere, the interior wood, mainly in the furniture, is honeycombed, while the sole in the cabin and the staterooms is teak-and-holly. The effect of the teak veneers and the honeycombed wood is desirable on two levels: It's pleasing to the eye and better for performance, as a lighter boat is an easier boat to propel.

Immediately to either side of the helm are the stairs, slightly steep, to the hulls. At the bottom of the starboard stairs, you'll find the master stateroom forward, the head immediately aft and the laundry/equipment room farther aft. Engine ac-

ABOVE An 18-foot beam means the Journey Cat 47LRC has abundant outdoor space on the foredeck, in the cockpit and on the flybridge. Inside, teak veneers give the salon, helm and staterooms a rich look and feel.

cess is through the laundry room. A raised queen bed is in the middle of the stateroom, and there is storage in drawers under the bed and in cabinets to either side and a wardrobe. The builder has done its best to alleviate any claustrophobic feelings in this important room. There is full headroom at the foot of the bed, and there are two hatches above it and a rectangular port light to let in natural light. The head, like its counterpart in the port hull, has an electric-flush toilet, a separate shower, opening port lights, a Corian vanity top with an integrated



sink and Imtra dome lights.

The stateroom in the port hull includes a double bed, a wardrobe and numerous cabinets and drawers for storage. A hatch above the bed and a port light help the dome and reading lights keep the room well-lit. The equipment room in the port hull, with access to the engine, can be converted to a berth with bunks if desired.

TESTER'S OPINION:

Given its social spaces, its two-stateroom, two-head arrangement, its flybridge, its ease of docking and its ability to cruise slow but go fast, what the Journey Cat 47LRC provides is versatility.

PERFORMANCE

Since it was a glorious day in San Francisco — not the case the following day, as wind, rain and cooler temperatures settled in — we conducted the sea trial from the flybridge helm, which contains redundancies cruisers like, such as a second VHF, full engine instrumentation and another Furuno NavNet display. The centerline helm has bench seats to either side, to provide company for the captain, and an L-shaped settee with a table aft. Ten people or more can be accommodated comfortably on the bridge.

The plan is for the 47LRC to be a family cruiser, capable of covering long distances in comfort, like a trawler. To that end, the boat has wave-piercing bows, like many passenger and cargo ferry cats, instead of planing hulls. That design produced a soft ride on San Francisco Bay's moderate seas and is likely to do the same in larger seas. We pulled hard-over turns at speed, almost 20 knots,

in both directions, and while engine noise increased slightly, the cat stayed level and smooth, piercing the waves as it was designed to do. When we stopped and positioned the cat beam to the waves, it really showed how it's different than a mono-hull boat. It rises and falls with the passing of the waves, like any other boat its size, but it doesn't carry any momentum into a roll in the other direction after the wave passes. The effect is less a roll than a lift-and-return-to-level.

The Bay Island Yachts crew had put the Journey Cat through its paces a few days before I tested it, and the numbers during our test were very close to theirs. At top speed, which was 19.4 knots, the engines were turning at 3800 rpm and burning 25 gph. Range at that speed is a modest 483 miles (with a 10 percent reserve), but when we slowed down to trawler speeds, that range almost tripled. At 9.1 knots, 2100 rpm, the engines were burning a total of 4.6 gph, giving the cat a range of about 1,230 miles. If you have a really long stretch you need to get through without taking on fuel, slow down to 7.1 knots and watch the boat's range stretch to just more than 1,500 miles. More realistically, cruising at 16 knots will yield about 628 miles, 13.5 knots will get you 650 miles and 10.6 knots will net about 755 miles. The boat had about one-third of its fuel and water capacity during the test.

At the dock, the cat shined. Since its twin engines are separated by a significant distance, they're able to provide the kind of docking performance that single-hull boaters get from pods and thrusters. We pulled a tight 360-degree turn in the narrow

➔ SPEC BOX

SPECIFICATIONS

LOA	47 ft., 5 in.	BEAM	18 ft.
DRAFT	3 ft., 6 in.	DISPLACEMENT (FULL)	37,500 lbs.
FUEL	680 gals.	WATER	145 gals.
ENGINES	Twin Cummins QSD2.8, 220 hp each		
PRICE W/STANDARD EQUIPMENT	\$889,000		

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Twin Yanmar 6YB 260 hp common-rail diesels (from hull #2 forward), engine controls at both stations, Reverso oil-changing system, Torrid 15-gal. water heater, Maxwell electric windlass, Tecma electric freshwater toilets, SeaStar hydraulic steering, 9 kw generator w/sound shield and muffler, transom shower and raw-water washdown, 3-burner stove w/oven, microwave, refrigerator, freezer and more.

OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT

Combo washer/dryer, underwater lighting, diesel heating system, air conditioning in salon, Steelhead WD600 dinghy crane, Raritan ice-maker, Spectra water-maker and more.

BUILDER

JET TERN MARINE, Taiwan (with manufacturing in China); selenetrawlers.com

WEST COAST DEALERS

SELENE SEATTLE; (206) 352-1168; seleneseatle.com
 BAY ISLAND YACHTS, Alameda, Calif.; (510) 814-0400; journeycatamarans.com
 WAYNE C. JONES YACHT & SHIP BROKERAGE, San Diego; (619) 890-4203; jonesyacht.com

runway, and then another 180 to get the starboard hull to the side-tie, using only the main engines. Parking in an appropriately sized slip won't be a problem, either.

Given its social spaces, its two-stateroom, two-head arrangement, its flybridge, its ease of docking and its ability to cruise slow like a trawler but go twice as fast, what the Journey Cat 47LRC provides is versatility. A cruising couple can run it, a family can stay comfortable and a large group can make a day of it. 🌟