



A CRUISER'S CRUISER

Experience pays off when design meets functionality

Greg Sturgis has been cruising with his family for decades, racking up thousands of miles and hundreds of hours both underway and on the hook. His latest creation, the Out Islander 64 LRC (Long Range Cruiser) *Island Bird*, is a combination of artful design and common sense. His family's cruising style is one which demands a boat be easy to maintain, sea-worthy, maneuverable, and most important ready to go at all times.

Greg envisioned the 64 as an efficient long-range cruiser with the speed to outrun bad weather. He chose long-time friend Tom Fexas for the design and the Camargue Yacht Co. Ltd in Taiwan for construction. A long, shallow keel combined with prop pockets give it excellent directional stability, despite a draft of less than five feet. More dynamic stability was achieved by using vacuum bagged Core-Cell structural components above the water line.

"This is the last hull Tom designed," says Greg. "When we decided on the weight-savings topside, Tom suggested we

add some weight down low. There are 3,500 pounds of lead shot infused into the keel."

The 64 is built in three molds, the hull, deckhouse and deck, which gives this yacht a solid feel. Even the port and starboard cockpit lockers are molded from the beginning of construction rather than added on after the deck is laid. Thoughtful touches abound based on the Sturgis family's experiences cruising the islands. One of them—the ability to lock all compartments, including the lazarette hatches and engine room door with just one key—is a testament to experience. Another thoughtful touch is the bow and stern power receptacle configuration. "You never know how you're going to have to dock, so we put the power at both ends," Greg remarked.

Our tour started in the cockpit, which is a wide-open space designed specifically for recreation. Dive gear is stowed in the large lazarette, which also provides convenient access

By **ROBB HANRAHAN**



Purpose-built for owner-operators, the Out Islander 64 LRC provides a stable ride. Hull #2 will have an enclosed flybridge. Above, interior appointments rival a penthouse apartment, including wine chiller, hi-low expandable table and large windows to bring in light and provide stunning views from any seat in the saloon. A private staircase to the master stateroom is located to starboard next to the companionway leading up to the galley and helm level.

to the steering system. The roomy cockpit—equipped with outriggers—makes fishing while passage making easy. That’s something the Sturgis’ do on almost every trip. Two steps up to the aft deck; you’ll find a molded-in padded bench seat facing aft to watch fishing action. Over the years Greg’s two sons have made countless impressive catches, often providing dinner on long-range outings.

Greg wanted silence when on the hook, so he located a separate generator room aft of the engine room where two Northern Lights gensets—12 kW and 16 kW—are mounted in sound boxes. A watertight door leads to the engine room and forward of that are three side-by-side full beam FRP fuel tanks to help minimize noise intrusion. Greg says, “You can’t hear a thing in the master stateroom when we’re at anchor.”

Thoughtful touches are everywhere in the engine room, where there’s plenty of room to work on all sides of the twin Caterpillar C12s sitting on vibration dampening mounts. “We put two extra seals on the shaft in case the main one goes,” said Greg. “You don’t want to have to drop that shaft if you’re in the middle of a cruise. All you have to do is slide one of the spares down the

shaft into place and the repair is done.”

Greg’s wife, Mindy, designed the interior, just as she did for years when Greg was representing Offshore Yachts. *Island Bird’s* saloon is an impressive combination of teak, rich dark brown colors and modern entertainment electronics complete with disappearing big screen TV. The electrically controlled high-low table’s leaves can be spread and the barrel chairs moved in close to seat eight comfortably for dinner.

The galley-up design features full-size household appliances to port in a roomy area behind the helm station. A four-burner cook top with oven, full size refrigerator and trash compactor should make any chef feel at home. To starboard, a dinette converts to make up a pilot berth for those long, overnight journeys.

At the helm station, there is easy access to the business end of the electronics panel, which includes two large screen NavNet 3D units with Sirius weather overlay. There are five control stations aboard. In addition to the helm, there’s a station on the stern and three up top—one on the flybridge plus port and starboard wing controls to provide full line-of-sight for the captain when docking. Proportional thruster controls, which hold their throttle position



SPECIFICATIONS

LOA: 71' 33"

Beam: 19' 5"

Draft: 5' 3"

Displ.: 108,000 lbs (half load)

Fuel/Water: 1,860/400 U.S. gals.

Power: 2 x Caterpillar C12 @ 700 hp

Top/Cruise speed: 19/8 knots

Range: 2,241 nm @ 8 knots

CONTACT

Out Islander Yachts

Fort Lauderdale, FL

954-525-7637

outislanderyachts.com

Upper left, the full beam master stateroom has large closets, king-size walk around berth and a hidden storage area under the deck. Left, the galley-up design includes a convertible dinette for catnaps during long passages. Maintenance of the Cat C12's is made easy by plenty of headroom and convenient access to key components.

when let go, make single-handed docking a pleasure. Two Maxwell 3500 windlasses handle the ground tackle. Four separate lockers below separate chain from rode on both anchors.

The master stateroom is accessed via a private stairway from the starboard side of the saloon. A large shower and vanity area is hidden behind the king-size walk-around berth. The master has two large cedar-lined closets, including a walk-in, but it was what was underneath it that piqued my interest. "In the closet floor, you can see a hatch in the carpet," Greg said. "That leads to more storage, a hold roughly 19-by-18-by-5-feet, fully fiberglassed and dry."

From the helm, a starboard stairway leads down to the forward accommodations, which include a bunkroom with full-size washer and dryer units under the berths, a head with roomy shower and granite appointments and a VIP stateroom. All of the staterooms have at least two points of egress for safety.

"I wish Tom (Fexas) would have been here to see *Island Bird* completed," Greg said wistfully. The Out Islander 64 LRC is easy enough for a couple to operate but large enough for an entire family to enjoy extended cruising. Hull number two is out of the mold and ready for a new owner to choose an interior design. 