

## Special Feature



# MULTIPLE CHOICE

Multihulls are enjoying record sales, especially power cats. As **Jeni Bone** discovers, they tick all the boxes for seasoned sailors and newcomers, charter operators and families; in fact, anyone with ambitions of coastal cruising, island-hopping or long-range exploration.

**D**espite constituting just 18 percent of global boat sales, according to Mark Elkington – Managing Director at Multihull Solutions and founder of the Iliad brand of power cats – multihulls have increased in popularity among all demographics, booking out production slots into 2023.

“At this moment in time, people are looking to boating so they can travel and spend quality time with family and friends. Multis offer unrivalled, comfortable space, which is ideal for a liveaboard boat and long-range cruising.

“They’re also perfect in terms of lifestyle features: wide beam, stability, two hulls and privacy. Owners can separate from their guests, and then there’s the noise insulation thanks to the foam core and separation from the other hull, which is 4 metres away.”

These attributes – and two decades of successful marketing through international boat shows – have contributed to full order books for the leading brands.

**Left:** The 25-metre *Great White* is a custom Sunreef 80 Power CAT owned by tennis star Rafael Nadal.

“Production on the Fountaine Pajot world-cruising models are booked out for many years. Our order books are full for Iliad and we can’t deliver an Iliad 60 for two years,” confirms Elkington.

#### Perfect platform

On the Sunshine Coast, Director of Noosa Marine Julian Griffiths has been building custom-designed multihulls since 1997. He and his team of five have built racing and cruising catamarans to designs by Grainger, Schionning, Farrier, Stuart Bloomfield, Roger Hill and Yacht Design Collective.

“The beauty of multihulls is their versatility,” says Griffiths. “They’re the perfect platform for any activity. Their appeal lies in their space, stability, speed and the shallow draft, meaning you can access shallow waterways and explore remote places.”

Since Griffiths’ early days as a builder, he has seen multihulls evolve. “In the 80s and 90s they were sleeker, with a lower profile to handle the wind at anchor. Now, because of new materials and techniques, multihulls are chunkier, more aggressive in shape, and you can have flybridge models without worrying about windage.



“Materials such as carbon fibre, and techniques like vacuum bagging and infusion, are particularly useful for stiffness and strength in multihulls where there are wide-cut, unsupported sections. Using modern materials, even slower performing multihulls are lighter and more efficient compared to most monohulls.”

Distinctly Australian features specified by owners include protected cockpits, vast social spaces and adequate natural ventilation. “Because of our harsh climate, you need an undercover cockpit. Australian boats emphasise full cross-flow ventilation and hatches that you can use even when it’s raining.

“Owners prefer everything on one level for entertaining, including the galley. They want the bridge deck for socialising with a dining space, barbecue, bar, ice-maker, sun pads, lounges and sun protection.

“They want ease of access to the tender and water toys, as well as heaps of storage. Drawing on products developed for the RV market, owners can now install compact washing machines for laundries on even the smallest vessels.”

#### French flair

In a crowded market, French brands are prominent. Indeed, the French are synonymous with multihulls. Entire towns such as La Rochelle, Canet-en-Roussillon, Marans and Lorient are dedicated to their production. But why the French flair for multihulls?

“They have been doing it longer than anyone else,” explains Elkington quite simply. “Fountaine Pajot was the first company globally to build a production multihull for the cruising market in 1974, and in 2020, have overtaken Lagoon as the highest-selling brand.

“They just got it right. Their boats have a specific market and are positioned as safe, comfortable, easily operated, value-for-money cruising boats. They tick a lot of boxes.”

From his perspective, Julian Griffiths notes the French look up to their yachtmen.

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**JULIAN GRIFFITHS**  
DIRECTOR  
NOOSA MARINE

They are like rockstars, hence the allure. As he explains, “There’s a lot of pride in their industry, and prestige attached to many brands,” says Griffiths. “Brands like Outremer and Marsaudon – which has rebranded its TS (Très Simples) range as ORC, Ocean Rider Catamarans – they are always innovating and taking designs to the next level.”



In production cats, innovation is occurring as a result of investment in R&D of composites and new techniques to make multihulls stronger, lighter, faster, longer range and more comfortable.

“Millions are invested in R&D and high-tech tooling,” says Elkington. “Vinylester resin gives hulls longevity and watertight integrity. Fountaine Pajot has a range of composite fabrics, known as triaxial fabrics, that deliver latitudinal and longitudinal strength and flexibility. Their cats are at the lighter end of the cruising market because of their investment in materials.

“Decks are another area they have perfected. Instead of traditional laid-up decks, they use injection moulding, so they are very light, stiff and strong.”

According to Elkington, the major trend in multihulls worldwide is an appetite for power cats. “This segment is going gangbusters for us. Many of our customers who bought sailing multihulls 10–15 years ago are transitioning to power cats. They offer the same benefits as a cruising sailing boat, but without the complication of sails, ropes and rigging. And the efficiency is the same fuel burn as their sailing boat at the same speed.”

Iliad is Elkington’s own creation, borne of 25 years working with customers on their wish lists. “Over the years, people have told us they want some level of customisation, but not a one-off build. They want a brand for that security, for service and support.

“They liked a lot about the brands on the market, but nothing ticked all the boxes. They wanted a power cat that’s beachable to undertake repairs, shaft drive and customisation at some level – interiors, galley set-up, beds – which you can’t do in a production boat. Fuel efficiency was important too. Cats can go three to four times further than a monohull motor yacht.”

Another significant feature that separates Iliad from many others is its seakeeping credentials. “A lot of boats look pretty and feel nice at a boat show, but as soon as they go offshore, there’s water all over the deck and you can’t sit on the bow in 10 knots of wind.

“A sailing cat is comfortable doing 8–9 knots along the coast, but when you’re pushing it into 15 knots, the design of the hull means water everywhere. Our first priority was to design a long-range cruiser that was a dry boat. One that owners could trust to take them to Fiji, across the Pacific, and up and down the coast.

**Left: Ample foredeck room invites relaxation on the Lagoon Sixty 7 power cat.**

“We designed a high freeboard (distance from waterline to deck) with a well-designed chine at waterline, capable of doing 8 knots to a fast cruise speed of 18 knots. We did a lot of work in that area to make sure it keeps a dry deck in normal cruising conditions.”

#### At speed

In mid-2020, commercial shipbuilder Dongara Marine – located 350 kilometres north of Perth at Port Denison – was approached to build a bespoke luxury power catamaran for a client who wanted high-speed transit between west-coast cruising grounds.

Working closely with the client and Southerly Designs, they developed a 25-metre liveaboard vessel tailored to specific requirements: comfortable cruising with family and friends; accommodation for ten in total; free-flowing indoor and outdoor dining and recreation spaces; transom platforms and a hydraulic swim platform between the hulls for easy access to and from the water for the full range of water toys.

The cat, known as *La Belle Cherie*, designed and built to AMSA NSCV survey requirements, features two guest cabins in each of the hulls with shared ensuite and an owner’s full-beam master suite located on the main deck. The hull is built from aluminium, while the superstructure uses a full carbon-fibre-reinforced main deck cabin and fully enclosed flybridge.

Waterjet propulsion was chosen to achieve high-speed performance, expected to top 40 knots, with an economical loaded cruise speed of approximately 30 knots and an optimised fuel capacity for long range and extended duration cruising. Waterjets mean the vessel’s draft is just over a metre, allowing *La Belle Cherie* to anchor close to the shore and explore shallow reefs and waterways in safety.

“This is an exciting project for us,” says Dongara Marine Managing Director, Rohan Warr. “We look forward to providing the client with a vessel that will be the source of great enjoyment and wonderful memories, as well as demonstrating how well our skills transfer to the custom motor yacht arena.”

“The catamaran platform has some obvious advantages. From an onboard enjoyment point of view, this includes the much greater deck area and volume than a monohull of comparable length, and the high transverse stability, which translates to virtually non-existent roll, especially when on anchor.”

The final word belongs to the doyen of multihulls, Roger Hill, who has been



designing them for 45 years and has seen several hundred of his designs come to life.

“All my designs are custom; every one of them a new challenge,” he says, speaking on board one of his designs, the 18.5-metre *Cation*.

Currently en route from Auckland to the Bay of Islands in the Coastal Classic Race, leaving TP52s in its wake, Hill continues: “*Cation* is a very fast, carbon-fibre cruising cat, racing along at great pace. We’re out the back, enjoying the sunshine taking in the scenery.”

And that’s the real attraction. “There are lots of good reasons to consider a catamaran, but speed, efficiency, stability and, most of all, living space are the compelling factors,” says Hill.

One of his current clients is a German who sailed his monohull yacht from Europe to the South Pacific and then realised he was in the wrong kind of boat to enjoy an extended sojourn in the tropics.

“He looked me up, and we’re working on a 17.5-metre catamaran for him. He’s going to go back and explore the Pacific for two or three years.”

Hill says he’s busier today than at any other time in his 45 years in business. “There are eight boats in build and around that number in the design phase. People can’t travel overseas, and they’ve always wanted a boat, so now’s the time – and a multihull suits everybody.”

It’s definitely a buyers’ market. [O](#)

**Above: The 110 Pajot Custom Eco Yacht catamaran is a combination of both new and coordinated concepts with simple and efficient hybrid propulsion, by electric motors and sails. With a team of talented professionals, including Marc Pajot, Nicholas Fauroux and Franck de Rivoyre, this new multihull is now looking for an appreciative owner.**

Over the following pages, *Ocean* takes a look at the popular sailing and power cats taking Australia and New Zealand by storm. [➔](#)





## Fountaine Pajot Samana 59

The perfect blend of space and intimacy to enchant the most discerning sailing enthusiast.

**F**ountaine Pajot's new Samana 59 sets a new benchmark for the luxury catamaran market and includes a 30-metre-square flybridge, the largest in its class. Inspired by the shipyard's flagship Alegria 67, the Samana 59 delivers astonishing space, performance and luxury in a more compact model, making her outstanding value for money.

Berret Racoupeau Yacht Design has created a cat that affords premium comfort at the helm for smooth and efficient sailing and a distinctive, contemporary design that features reverse bows and sleek, elongated windows.

### SPECIFICATIONS

|                    |                         |
|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Length (LOA)       | 18.21 metres            |
| Beam (BOA)         | 9.46 metres             |
| Displacement       | 25.5 tonnes             |
| Draft              | 1.4 metres              |
| Sail area          | 204 metres <sup>2</sup> |
| Engines            | 2 x 110 hp              |
| Number of cabins   | 4, 5 or 6               |
| Classification     | CE Category A           |
| Price (ex factory) | A\$2.9 million          |

The flybridge is an example of inspired design, with a helm station located front and centre, and easy winch operation on each side. The protected area also features a large U-shaped lounge and dining table, galley with fridge and plancha grill, plus two sunbathing beds aft.

A generous 27.5-metre-square cockpit incorporates three separate seating areas and a dining setting that can accommodate up to 12. Guests can enjoy direct access from the cockpit to the aft cabins, while a wide door integrates the alfresco area with the saloon. An additional relaxation area is located on the 10-metre-square foredeck that boasts a U-shaped lounge and modular sunbeds and makes it an idyllic spot.

Inside, the vast saloon makes clever use of its generous 32-metre-square area, and a range of layouts, including an epicurean galley up or down, is available. The dedicated bar offers wine cooler or freezer option, while the cocktail table to starboard can also be converted to an electric folding table.

The Samana 59 is available in a range of cabin configurations, including a stunning 17-metre-square Maestro (Owner) version. There is also the option for five- or six-cabin layouts to suit large families or charter operators, with each cabin enjoying generous dimensions and private ensembles.

[multihullsolutions.com.au](http://multihullsolutions.com.au)



## Excess 12

Easy to sail, with a performance hook and sporty looks

**T**he Excess line, from the world's biggest recreational yacht builder Group Beneteau, is based around customer feedback asking for a more involving sailing multihull experience.

The result is a boat that is attracting monohull converts who don't want to sacrifice the responsiveness of a single hull, but welcome the huge boost in saloon and cabin real estate a cat enjoys.

The Excess 12 design is based on the popular Lagoon 40, with vacuum infusion and balsa coring in both the deck and hull above the waterline. Built in three sections, it has the same bridge deck and inner-hull design under the waterline as the Lagoon 40.

However, the outer hull sections were reshaped by the specialists at VPLP to include two new chines that create more interior volume and a slightly different aesthetic overall. To enhance performance, bits of chunky internal cabinetry have been replaced with fabric garment bags, and cupboards with drawers.

The steering positions, often a problem on cats because you can't see the sails properly to trim them, are well-placed, out on each hull. The convertible bimini over the cockpit, which can be closed for shade or in bad weather, has a centre section that slides open to allow an unobstructed view of the mainsail.



The Excess 12 is available in three layouts: four cabins/four heads; four cabins/two heads; or three cabins/two heads. There are also two versions: Standard and Pulse. The Pulse is the performance option with a taller mast and more sail area. The mast in both configurations is positioned well aft to make the square-top main smaller and easier to handle for shorthanded crews.

By all accounts, the designers have succeeded in creating a lively, engaging boat that still offers all the desirable multihull traits.

[excess-catamarans.com](http://excess-catamarans.com)

### SPECIFICATIONS

|                  |                        |
|------------------|------------------------|
| Length (LOA)     | 11.74 metres           |
| Beam (BOA)       | 6.73 metres            |
| Displacement     | 10.3 tonnes            |
| Draft            | 1.35 metres            |
| Sail area        | 82 metres <sup>2</sup> |
| Engines          | 2 x 45 hp              |
| Number of cabins | 3 or 4                 |
| Classification   | CE Category A          |
| Price            | A\$845,000             |



## Iliad 70

An exciting option for power enthusiasts seeking a true, custom-built boat.

Iliad Catamarans continues to enjoy strong success with 11 models already sold since its 2019 launch. While the largest catamaran in the range – the Iliad 90 – is yet to be constructed, the Iliad 70 has served as an influential flagship, making its mark on the industry with its powerful performance, impressive range (in excess of 4,500 nautical miles), and complete comfort for extended voyages or circumnavigations.

Its bridge deck height of 1.25 metres at half load creates a dominant silhouette and excellent comfort in challenging conditions, while no compromises have been made to safety or performance.

The flybridge is truly impressive, seating 12 people in style in the luxurious lounge/dining area. The precinct features a full galley with refrigeration, separate bar fridge, BBQ/grill, ice-maker and more, creating the ultimate entertaining zone with views.

The Iliad 70 design offers an internal helm station on the mezzanine level in addition to the flybridge helm station, affording the skipper not only a bird's-eye ocean view but a day bed/lounge area, and easy access to all parts of the main deck systems and the galley for those long ocean passages. The Iliad 70 interior can be customised to suit the unique preferences and needs of each client with a range of layouts, designs and premium quality finishes.



Meanwhile, a comprehensive galley features the best of the Siemens appliance range, ample storage, deep oversized stainless-steel double sink, Corian benchtops, full-size refrigerator and freezer, and incredible 360-degree sea views.

In one of the many layout options available, the forward lounge area delivers the ambience

of a luxurious waterfront apartment with views from every angle and seamless access to the saloon and dining areas.

Another layout option offers a master suite on the main deck or a massive forward-facing lounge area with easy and safe access to the 70s foredecks through a well-engineered access door.

The Iliad 70 is one of few power cats in its size range that can be beached in case of emergency or for out-of-water servicing when navigating in remote areas.

A true custom-built boat that delivers outstanding performance, range and value.

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

### SPECIFICATIONS

|                      |                   |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| Length (LOA)         | 21.08 metres      |
| Beam (BOA)           | 9.15 metres       |
| Displacement         | 45 tonnes         |
| Draft                | 1.25 metres       |
| Engines              | 2 x Volvo D11 725 |
| Top speed            | 22.4 knots        |
| Range (at 4.1 knots) | 4,700 nm          |
| Number of cabins     | 5 plus 1 crew     |
| Base price           | NZ\$3.6 million   |



## Voodoo XF60

Designed for adventure in absolute comfort and luxury.

Voodoo Yachts, a branch of Pachoud Yachts, has released an evolution on the Pachoud Sport Cat – the Voodoo Xpedition Foiler.

The first model to receive the benefits of this new generation's developments is the 18-metre XF60.

This model offers a new three-cabin, three-bathroom layout in addition to the original four-cabin, two-bathroom. This three-cabin layout offers the same stunning full-beam master suite with spacious ensuite. A very generous VIP cabin to port features a queen berth, large picture window and ensuite.

### SPECIFICATIONS

|                  |                 |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Length (LOA)     | 18 metres       |
| Beam (BOA)       | 6.3 metres      |
| Draft            | 1.3 metres      |
| Top speed        | 45 knots        |
| Cruising speed   | 30–37 knots     |
| Range (at 30 kn) | 1,200 nm        |
| Number of cabins | 3 or 4          |
| Fuel capacity    | 10,000 litres   |
| Base price       | NZ\$3.6 million |

The third cabin is available in a range of configurations, and has another large bathroom across the hall. Each cabin is accessed from its own stairway.

A styling refresh has improved the aesthetics and functionality of the XF60 while keeping with the Voodoo ethos of classic lines, which are finely blended with contemporary styling.

Designed and comprehensively equipped for everything from casual cruising to serious adventure, the XF60 features a hydraulic submersible platform, watermaker, dive compressor, ice-maker, as well as ample rod and sports gear storage. A large cockpit and open plan main deck offer spacious and light living spaces.

The marque's proven performance has been further improved, with the XF60 able to cruise at 30 knots for more than 1,200 nautical miles. This is due to the latest, extremely efficient Voodoo hydrofoil and hull design, and is achieved with in-built tanks only.

The R&D has also been focused on seakeeping, with the XF60 offering a notably soft ride and excellent control in a wide variety of sea conditions.

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







## Privilège Signature 580

A true icon of the seas, this is a catamaran that will turn heads in any anchorage.

Every new Privilège is a joint venture between the shipyard and the owner. And this is no less true of their latest model, the Signature 580. A completely new design, Privilège's celebrated designer Marc Lombard has evolved the principles of his incredibly sought-after and revered 585 model, perfectly blending the latest cutting-edge technology with Privilège craftsmanship and quality. The result is an outstandingly capable yacht with no bounds to comfort, performance or the yachtsman's horizons.

The philosophy of collaboration connects customers with the team of Privilège craftspeople to create a unique blend of the client's ideas and the shipyard's extensive know-how. Rather than simply choosing fabric colours and wood finishes, the Privilège approach focuses on the creative magic that happens when a client sketches out their wishes for the Privilège experts, who find solutions from their experience and skills.

For those who delight in entertaining, the Privilège 580 can feature a spectacular forward lounge, accessed directly from the saloon, which coupled with the stunning flybridge lounge, offers unparalleled relaxing environments. For the intrepid explorers, whose ambitions lie in venturing to distant horizons no matter what the conditions may

### SPECIFICATIONS

|                            |                         |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Length (LOA)               | 18.65 metres            |
| Beam (BOA)                 | 9.18 metres             |
| Displacement               | 29 tonnes               |
| Draft                      | 1.75 metres             |
| Sail area                  | 213 metres <sup>2</sup> |
| Engines                    | 2 x 75 hp               |
| Number of cabins           | 4 or 5                  |
| Classification             | CE Category A           |
| Price (ex factory, ex tax) | €1.765 million          |



throw at them, the forward lounge can be configured into a protected storage area. With the strength and shorthanded line management systems inherent to the Privilège principles, owners will have every confidence to explore the most remote corners of the world.

Privilège are clearly not like other catamaran builders; they are not building by numbers on a relentless production line, instead creating an exclusive number of stunningly finished, incredibly strong tailored yachts with comfort, safety and performance ingrained in their DNA. [teamwindcraft.com/privilege](http://teamwindcraft.com/privilege)

## Silent 80

Silent yachts unveils new versions of its solar-electric catamaran flagship.

After recent successes in sales with four new yachts sold and eight in total under construction, Silent Yachts has announced new versions of its flagship *Silent 80*.

Silent Yachts founder and CEO Michael Köhler says, "People are looking for more and more adventure in yachting. The new versions of the *Silent 80* will enable owners to take an amazing number of toys, while providing extra features like larger windows, flush main deck and new layouts of the main saloon."

Space and light matter, and Silent Yachts has decided to take its largest and most spacious solar-powered catamaran even further.

The shipyard's designers raised the cockpit and saloon floor 35 centimetres (keeping the same headroom; the roof will be raised as well). This version is now standard for the classic *Silent 80* and the *Silent 80* Tri-Deck, which has added an extra level up top. The raised saloon floor also means there's a huge storage area for water toys under the deck.

The area (and toys) are all accessible from the top and the stern transom. The new optional version of the *Silent 80* and Tri-Deck is called the Loft version because, like on land, it refers to a large and adaptable open space.

The main deck is completely flush on a single level. Access to the tender garage on port side and to the storage compartment on the starboard side is easier due to the increased headroom with the update.

It's all in the customisation.

[silent-yachts.com](http://silent-yachts.com)



### SPECIFICATIONS

|                  |                        |
|------------------|------------------------|
| Length (LOA)     | 24.3 metres            |
| Beam (BOA)       | 10.92 metres           |
| Displacement     | 55 tonnes              |
| Draft            | 1.2 metres             |
| Engines          | solar-powered electric |
| Output           | 2 x 100kW to 2 x 250kW |
| Number of cabins | 4 plus 1 crew          |
| Classification   | CE Category A          |
| Base price       | €5.51 million          |

