

# Sky King

Leading the charge in enduring design and quality for 45 years, Hatteras introduces its Sky Lounge 80

BY JAY COYLE





**S**omehow it's not surprising that amid all the fuss and frenzy of the Ft. Lauderdale International Boat Show, the introduction of the Hatteras 80 Sky Lounge would still draw my attention. I have admired Hatteras since I cruised aboard one of its first products in the 1960s. The company is no Johnny-come-lately and it has remained a significant player in a fluid segment of the market. The 80 Sky Lounge is one of a new fleet of designs that has allowed Hatteras to maintain its perch.

Willis Slane launched the Hatteras brand with a 41-foot sportfisherman in 1960. She was built of a material that was new to yachts—"fiberglass"—and designed to level North Carolina's unforgiving inlets. Two years later Slane introduced the fiberglass 41 Double Cabin, the company's first motoryacht. For the next 30 years Hatteras dominated the American market with a series of memorable designs that many experts, including myself, considered American classics.

As pressure from foreign brands increased in the 1990s, few American production builders rose to the challenge. Inspired by a loyal customer base, however, Hatteras went back to the drawing board and developed a new series of competitive designs. These new Hatteras motoryachts offered American yachtsmen a premium American brand with more than a touch of European flair. The 80 is a further refinement of this theme and demonstrates that her builder intends to lead, not follow. Her look, while Euro-influenced, is reserved and sensible; she is clearly a Hatteras. Her shapely window design echoes the signature styling cue that is featured in both the builder's convertible and motoryacht lines. This consistency, and Hatteras' tendency toward evolution as opposed to revolution, should make her a sound investment, as gambling on trends in styling can be risky.

The 80's interior will also make sense to American yachtsmen. Her full-beam main cabin is not at all cramped and her saloon and formal dining area are arranged on a single level. Several steps up lead forward to a "country kitchen" arrangement with an open galley and an informal dining area. Below, owner and guest accommodations are forward of the machinery space. The full-beam owner's suite benefits from natural lighting provided by six hullside windows. The sleeping area is isolated from the machinery space bulkhead by a full-beam compartment that can be configured either as his/hers heads or a head and a walk-in closet. This is a smart arrangement, as it reduces the sound levels for owners at

rest. Three guest staterooms forward each have private heads. Crew's quarters are aft of the machinery space and accessible from the transom platform or the afterdeck.

A circular stairwell leads from the galley area above to the 250-square-foot enclosed bridge. This feature distinguishes the 80 Sky Lounge from her open-bridge sister introduced a year ago (YACHTING/Jan. '04). The pilothouse area has helm and companion seating as well as an observation lounge with a table. Aft, a second seating area has an entertainment center with a 32-inch pop-up, flat-screen TV and a wet bar fitted with a refrigerator and an ice maker. A power window in the aft bulkhead provides fresh air. An exterior seating area has a lounge with a table and a built-in grill. The boat deck, immediately aft, is equipped with a 1,500-pound capacity davit. Stairs lead from the boat deck to the afterdeck and a seating area suited for dining alfresco.

A watertight door separates the crew's quarters from the machinery space. If you are familiar with Hatteras, you will not be surprised to find what I believe to be the best wiring and systems design in the production boat market. This credit should not be discounted, for over the years it has added significantly to the longevity and resale value of Hatteras' products. In addition, unlike boats built to foreign standards, service personnel will have no problem sorting out systems for their design and installation follow ABYC (American Boat & Yacht Council) standards. (Hatteras in fact helped write the book.)

Hatteras' longevity is also a product of Slane's belief in stout fiberglass construction. At 44 years of age, the first Hatteras is still in service today. The days of overengineering in fiberglass boatbuilding are long gone, yet as boatbuilders go, Hatteras still favors conservative, proven methods. The 80's hull is solid fiberglass below the waterline. Foam coring is used in the topsides, decks and superstructure. A longitudinal foam-filled fiberglass stringer system and resin-infused, foam-cored structural bulkheads support the hull. When complete, exterior gelcoat surfaces are sanded and finished with Awlcraft 2000. A blister-resistant gelcoat below the waterline is prepped and painted with an ablative anti-fouling paint.

The 80's hull form was designed in-house and tank-tested before tooling was cut. She has a hard-chined, modified-V form with a shallow keel, a moderate entry and convex sections forward. Deadrise at the transom is an efficient 3 degrees. Her 50-inch, 7-blade propellers reside in deep pockets in the bottom resulting in a reasonable draft: 5 feet, 4 inches. With the standard 1,550 hp Caterpillar C30s, Hatteras' sea trial data indicates a maximum speed of 25 knots and a cruising speed of 22 knots. A max-

MAIN SALOON AND DINING ROOM FLOW INTO EACH OTHER FOR UNCLUTTERED COMFORT (BELOW, LEFT); THE OWNER'S SUITE BENEFITS FROM SIX HULLSIDE WINDOWS (RIGHT) AND FULL-BEAM WIDTH; THE SLEEPING AREA IS ISOLATED FROM THE MACHINERY SPACE BULKHEAD BY A FULL-BEAM COMPARTMENT.





THE AFTERDECK AWAITS EVENING COCKTAILS AND ALFRESCO DINING (ABOVE). STAIRS LEAD TO THE BOAT DECK AND SKY LOUNGE.

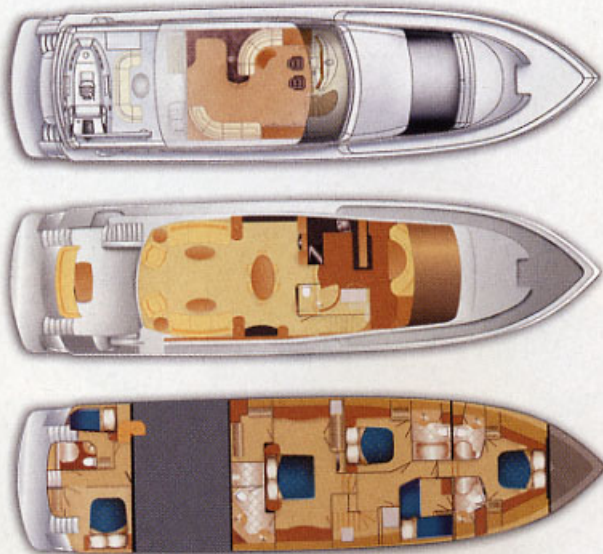
imum speed of 28 knots and a cruising speed of 25 knots are possible with the optional 2,000 hp MTU 16V-2000s.

Interior fit and finish was one area Hatteras sought improvement in their new designs. For years the cabinetwork had been finished with water-based coatings after installation in the boat. Today, 4x8 wood panels are pre-finished and delivered to the production floor with a protective plastic film. The panels are then computer cut, assembled into various interior compo-

nents and installed in the boat. This approach has minimized the amount of hand finishing required and has improved quality significantly. African mahogany is standard on the 80 in either a high-gloss or satin finish. Cherry, maple and anigre are available as an option.

While the 80 is technically a production boat, Hatteras takes a semi-custom approach with her interior design. Customers work directly with Hatteras' in-house interior design team to create a décor that suits them within a generous and standard soft goods allowance. Almost all of the 80's interior furnishings are made in-house, from throw pillows to window treatments. Marble or granite countertops are also included in the standard package as is a tableware allowance. Hatteras' goal is to deliver a boat cruise-ready.

While it might seem that the 80 has little in common with Hatteras' classic designs of the 1970s and 1980s, this is not the case. The philosophy with which Willis Slane launched the company is still evident in the quality of her design. While some sell speed and others price, Hatteras is fortunate as they sell this pedigree. Roughly 75 percent of Hatteras buyers are repeat customers and production for the 80 program is sold out through 2006. □  
 Contact: Hatteras Yachts; (252) 634-4895; [www.hatterasyachts.com](http://www.hatterasyachts.com).  
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<b>LOA:</b> 79'10"
<b>LWL:</b> 68'10"
<b>Beam:</b> 21'3"
<b>Draft:</b> 5'4"
<b>Displ:</b> 189,000 lb. (full load)
<b>Fuel:</b> 2,158 gal.
<b>Water:</b> 326 gal.
<b>Gray Water:</b> 252 gal.
<b>Black Water:</b> 388 gal.
<b>Naval Architect:</b> Hatteras Design Team
<b>Interior Designer:</b> Hatteras Design Team
<b>Engines:</b> 2x 1,550 hp Caterpillar C30 (standard); 2x 1,800 hp 16V-2000 MTU (optional); 2x 2,000 hp 16V-2,000 MTU (optional)
<b>Transmission:</b> Twin Disc
<b>Gear Reduction:</b> 5:1 (w/standard power)
<b>Props:</b> 50" x 85", 7-bl'd. (w/standard power)
<b>Generators:</b> 2x 27.5 kW Onan
<b>Steering:</b> Teleflex (power)
<b>Engine Controls:</b> Sturdy
<b>Price:</b> On Request