

A BOAT FOR EVERY DAY

The Marlow Yachts 53E shows how the builder continually improves on existing models.

story & photos TOM SERIO





Marlow Yachts has been around for two decades, but the Florida-based company takes a different approach to boatbuilding than many of its competitors. While countless builders churn out new model after new model every single year, David Marlow has always chosen to evolve the ideas that work best, at whatever pace suits the ideas themselves. That's why, from custom tenders to 100-footers, Marlow Yachts focuses on improving each model's quality, as opposed to the quantity of Marlows out there.

Take the Marlow Yachts 53E, which is intended to be a cruising boat for owner-operators who want to be on the water every day. Hull No. 1 of the Marlow 53 launched in 2016 and is now at Hull No. 25. According to Marlow, each yacht has been built better than the previous one.

A key ingredient on the 53E is access to everything, both in and around the yacht. Full walkaround decks make for easier line handling at the dock or when transiting a lock. Boarding is accomplished via twin aft staircases from the swim platform, and through side boarding gates. Provisioning the galley for long cruises can be done by way of port and starboard doors.

Visibility, too, is a key attribute of the 53E, given that owners

tend to want to cruise long distances, and their crew and guests want to be able to enjoy the scenery. The 53E's flybridge has a bench seat to port and an L-shaped settee near a fiberglass table to starboard. The centerline helm station has twin Stidd chairs. Drop in a few lounge chairs aft, and the space is ready for sunset cocktails. Forward, Marlow builds two bench seats into the Portuguese bridge.

Visibility is also good from the upper and lower helms. With full controls on the flybridge, including dual 16-inch Garmin multifunction displays, the skipper has a solid command center with no corner blind spots, thanks to the windshield's curved side panes.

As a semi-enclosed bridge model, the 53E integrates the windshield framing structure into the hardtop and house, creating a fixed protective windscreen that also supports the forward section of the hardtop. This design reduces windage while protecting the skipper. It's perfect for those less-than-ideal days when a high vantage point is needed, like when running an inlet. Owners can add side curtains as well as heat and air-conditioning units for all-year cruising. Marlow also makes available a console with a grill, sink, fridge and ice maker.

MARLOW 53E

LOA 61ft. **Beam** 17ft. 3in. **Draft** 4ft. 5in. **Displacement** 66,000 lbs. **Engines (std.)** 2 x 480-hp Cummins QSB 6.7
Engines (opt.) 2 x 750-hp John Deere 6135SFM **Construction** GRP **Fuel** 1,200 gal. **Water** 300 gal. **Info** marlowyachts.com



Rich teak veneer is used on the walls, coffee table and cabinets, along with teak and holly soles. Each yacht's woodwork can be harvested from a single tree, so grains match and natural resources are protected.

On the main deck, there's alfresco dining on the aft deck with a table and transom bench seat. The flybridge overhang protects this area from sun and rain. Twin doors to the salon are split (the left swings open, the right slides) and open to connect the areas. Side-deck doors block the wind.

Inside, the salon has an L-shaped, built-in Ultraleather sofa to starboard (standard fabrics or Sunbrella home interior fabrics can be used as well). Across from the sofa to port is a straight, built-in sofa. The buffet is forward and houses a 46-inch TV, hidden by sliding tambour doors.

Rich teak veneer is used on the walls, coffee table and cabinets, along with teak and holly soles. Each yacht's woodwork can be harvested from a single tree, so grains match and natural resources are protected. The overhead panels are Ultraleather.

Forward and up a few steps are the galley, dinette and lower helm area. Owner-operators will be in close proximity to each other, as well as to family and guests. The galley has four under-counter Sub-Zero fridge/freezer drawers, a dishwasher, a two-burner cooktop, a microwave and a stainless sink.

Forward and to port is a U-shaped dinette with a teak table. It's under the forward windows, creating a great setting for morning coffee or laying out a paper chart for some trip planning. (You still have paper charts, don't you?)

The lower helm is loaded with Garmin electronics, including twin 16-inch multifunction displays, a VHF radio, an autopilot, a radar, a sounder, a wind sensor, a CCTV system, and Lewmar bow and stern thrusters. An overhead console contains rocker switches, system indicator lights and a Naiad roll stabilizer controller. Visibility is good through the three windshield panels, to the sides and even aft, via a cutout in the galley's wall.

Down below are the three staterooms. Forward is the VIP with a centerline queen berth and an overhead hatch. The ensuite head has a separate shower stall and an opening port for a cool breeze. Overhead bunks are an option. There's also a guest stateroom with twin berths. The master is amidships with an athwartship king berth. An ensuite head runs along the port side with pocket doors and a separate shower stall. There's access from the master to the engine room and to a laundry room with a washer and dryer.

Our run with the 750-hp John Deere 6135SFM engines yielded a 22.6-knot top speed at WOT, burning 71 gph combined at 2250 rpm for a 382-nm range. Cruising at 16.3 knots and 1800 rpm burned 44.3 gph for a 442-nm range. A leisurely jaunt at 9.7 knots consumed 13.8 gph for an 837-nm range, and a 1,600-nm range can be had at 7.6 knots.

Those are the kinds of numbers that please many owner-operators, which is why Marlow continues to stick with what works. The Marlow 53E is built on the knowledge of all the cruisers who came before her. She's a further evolution of a model that was already strong from the start. ❁



The Marlow 53E comes with walkaround decks, a Portuguese bridge with built-in seating and an extended flybridge. All walking surfaces have nonskid coating. The engine room has full standing headroom and easy access for fluid checks and routine maintenance.

