

PARDO 38

The Cannes Boat Show was bursting with new walkaround day boats; can the Pardo 38 stand out in an increasingly competitive sector?

WORDS Jack Haines

Within the context of the current boom in T-top deck boats Pardo was ahead of the curve. It had already launched its 43 and current flagship

50 and this year's Cannes Boat Show saw the debut of the smallest boat in the range, the 38.

Negotiating the chaotic show space on the way out to sea I was glad of the 38's compact size and the ease of control from the sterndrive joystick and Volvo Penta's silky throttles. With 740hp on tap from a pair of D6 370s the boat reacts obediently, and with such an open deck and great view from the helm it's a dream to guide through traffic. This is the middle of three diesel options, starting with twin ▶





The cockpit dinette converts into a spacious sunpad

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The 38's modern lines disguise its practical decks



The walkways are huge and flanked by hand rails



HELM The helm layout is sound but the shiny material scratches easily



300hp D4s and topped by twin 440hp D6s for a top speed of 45 knots – but the array of propulsion options is dizzying. The standard set up is twin 280hp V6 petrol sterndrives but you can also go the outboard route, starting with twin 300hp, then twin 350hp before finishing with triple 350hp for the real speed freaks.

The D6s we had on board provide a great balance, with near 40-knot performance, but thanks to a 1,000-litre fuel capacity the boat has the ability to cruise 250 miles at 25 knots with a 20% reserve. That 25-30 knot threshold is a real sweet spot for the 38, at this speed the motors are still a way off full load so they're reasonably hushed and don't disturb conversation but you are still covering ground at a good rate.

BEAUTY AND BRAUN

From behind the steering wheel Pardo has pulled off a remarkable trick of providing an openness that brings with it a great connection to the water and your surroundings but also feels well protected by the tall frameless windscreen and chunky hardtop. Those sitting or bolsting in the three forward-facing helm seats enjoy unruffled cruising behind the prominent screen, it's just a shame that the backrests on the forward end of the dinette don't flip the other way to provide more forward-facing seating with some shelter from the wetbar.

As the driver it's lovely to be slap bang in the middle of the boat with the clearest view of each corner. The black shiny dash moulding looks great from a distance but up close it already had some scratches on it. A matt gray finish is likely to keep glare down and be more resistant to scuffs. The adjustable steering wheel and throttles

are in just the right place to allow you to lean against the helm seat and pin yourself in when things get twisty. And they will, given what a joy the 38 is to handle, mainly due to the sheer amount of grip provided by those DuoPROP sterndrives. The sea was calm on test but the wake of other craft on sea trial ensured there were some bumps to negotiate along the way and the Pardo, with its firm grip on the water, light but communicative steering and ample power from the six-cylinder Volvos, handled them with ease. The boat doesn't travel through the waves with the slicing softness of an Axopar or a Cormate but it's so solidly built that you can carry speed through a chop safe in the knowledge that the boat can handle a few bangs and take care of its occupants.

We topped out at a perfectly respectable 38 knots, which given how comfortable and quiet the boat is at 30 knots gives you plenty of scope to adjust your cruising speed to the conditions or how much of a hurry you are in. The twin diesels suit the boat well but I've no doubt the instant punch of some petrol outboards will appeal to some, even if they may detract from the boat's handsome profile.

It is a really good looking thing, the 38. The reverse sheer of the elegant bow and muscular shoulder line give it real presence on the water and the detailing is superb. Pardo's sister brand is yacht manufacturer Grand Soleil and that knowledge of building high-end cruising sailing boats emerges in its practicality. The square fenders have storage points moulded into the bulwarks, thick recessed handrails line the cockpit before giving way to the tall, teak-topped bulwarks inset with pop-up cleats fringed by a neat strip of steel to stop spring lines rubbing the edging.

There is a version of the 38 available with a fixed sunpad at the stern but the configuration on our test boat would appear to be a far better solution because it can be both a dinette and a sunbathing area. An electric sunshade powers out from the aft end of the T-top to provide some shade during lunch.

All of the cooking and cooling facilities are within the wetbar on deck, leaving the lower deck dedicated to accommodation. For what is so clearly a boat with on-deck living in mind the interior is a pleasant surprise. A lot of people who buy this boat are unlikely to sleep on board for any length of time but that hasn't stopped Pardo from making the internal spaces bright, well proportioned and well finished. Headroom in the open plan forward cabin is fine for those of 6ft or more and even though



LEFT The wet room amidships has a sliding door to save some space
RIGHT The island berth is easy to get in and out of and has the headroom to sit up and read



Our test boat had diesel sterndrives but petrol inboards and outboards are on offer

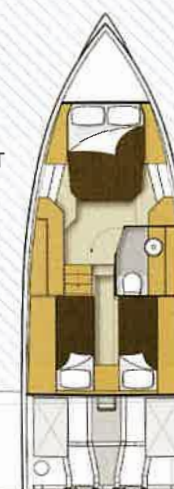
the deck head dips at the forward end it's still possible to sit up in bed where there are thoughtful touches like repeater light switches, charging ports and a bendy reading light.

The twin berths amidships have restricted headroom but they're fine for the odd night. There isn't a lot to complain about really, though some full-length hanging storage would be nice.

Considering what a young brand Pardo is it has done a sterling job with the 38. It's well built, has a simple but well executed layout and is smooth and powerful on the water. No doubt the nature of the boat will change with 1,050hp of outboards on the back but the litany of engine options allows the customer to tailor the boat to their cruising style. With the influx of boats of this style coming to market this one stands out as one of the best.

SPECIFICATIONS

- LOA 39ft 0in (11.9m)
- Beam 11ft 8in (3.6m)
- Displacement 7 tonnes (light)
- Fuel capacity 1,000 litres
- Water capacity 180 litres
- RCD Cat B for 12 people
- Price from €309,000 ex VAT
- Price as tested €450,850 ex VAT
- Contact Pardo Yachts; www.cantierdelpardo.com



PERFORMANCE

TEST ENGINES Twin Volvo Penta D6 370hp on sterndrives

	ECO					FAST	MAX
RPM	1,000	1,400	1,800	2,200	2,600	3,000	3,400
Speed	6.7	9.1	11.2	17.2	24	30.7	38.2
LPH	7.2	18	40	57	77	101	130
LPM	1.07	1.98	3.57	3.31	3.21	3.29	3.67
Range	744	405	224	241	249	243	192

Speed in knots. Range in nautical miles and allows for 20% reserve. Calculated figures based on real-time fuel gauges, your figures may vary considerably. All prices exclude VAT. 5 crew + minimal stores. 20°C air temperature, smooth sea, F1 for speed trials.