



*Modern and sporty, Bavaria's Vision 46 is the first boat in a new line from the German builder. A Vision 42 was recently launched and a 50-footer is in the works.*

judges deemed the Vision 46 a winner, naming it the Best Full-Size Cruiser, 45 to 49 Feet, for 2013.

Before we get too carried away, though, it's also wise to note that the overall concept for the boat borrowed some of its elements from another European builder of large-scale production runs. This evokes a famous old quote from British writer Charles Caleb Colton: "Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery."

Like the French builders of Beneteaus, with their Oceanis and Sense lines, Bavaria now offers two distinct series of yachts: the Cruiser class and the Vision collection (a 42 was recently introduced, and a 50 is in the works). The Oceanis/Cruiser boats are updated but essentially traditional cruising yachts, while the Sense/Vision offerings are innovative, slightly hedonistic craft ideal for long-term living aboard (even parked at a dock) that put a heavy emphasis on big, inviting cockpits (outdoor living rooms, if you will). Both offer simplified optional docking systems that remove the trepidation from close-quarters maneuvering. The French call theirs the Dock & Go, while Bavaria has gone with the Bavaria Docking Control System. While the software, hardware and execution are actually quite different, the ultimate goal, in terms of practicality and marketing, is identical.

So, we can all agree there are similarities, no? But this is a review of the Vision 46, so let's move forward with some of the many features that make it unique.

We'll begin where we suspect the boutique British firm Design Unlimited, responsible for the boat's overall styling, accouterments and accommodations, started — with that roomy cockpit. Someone gave a lot of thought to the steering stations for the twin helms, which are set up so the driver can straddle the wheel to either side while enjoying a nice backrest, which has enough room for a partner to slide in and kick back as well. It's pretty cool.

So too is the versatile table/lounge to port, which is controlled by an electromagnetic lift so it can be raised and

## Sea for Two

**NEW BOATS:** *In design, layout and execution, the aggressively modern Bavaria Vision 46 may be the definitive "couple's cruiser."*

By Herb McCormick

GRAB YOUR SWEETIE AND LET'S GO sailing: Almost certainly, somewhere in Germany, in the corporate headquarters for Bavaria Yachts — or perhaps in one of the firm's two U.S. offices in Annapolis, Maryland, and Mystic, Connecticut — there is a lengthy, detailed mission statement for the company's new Vision 46 that delves into far more description and nuance than that simple invitation. But I respectfully submit that anything longer is a waste of breath. With this ambitious, clever and even sensuous 46-footer, it

seems clear Bavaria set out to conceive and deliver a boat that puts the needs and desires of a close and happy sailing couple at the forefront.

It was an interesting if somewhat esoteric goal. What's more remarkable about the Vision 46, however, is that they pretty much succeeded. When our Boat of the Year judging panel convenes each fall, they do their level best to reward those boats that best capture the — sorry, it's unavoidable — "vision" of their designers and builders. And our BOTY

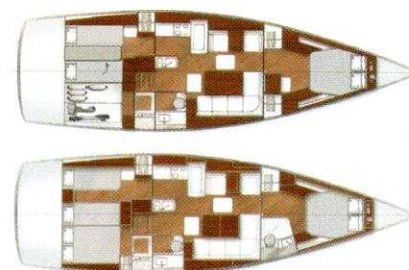




**Bavaria USA's Kenny Feld** demonstrates the versatile convertible cockpit table that can be unfolded and lowered to create a dedicated sun lounge in the "outdoor living room" (top). The aft cabin to port on our test boat had twin berths ideal for guests or kids (left). Other accommodation plans (upper right) are also available, including one with another double stateroom situated aft to starboard.



**In the galley**, the Vision 46's offset companionway opened up some interior room that the designers took full advantage of. There is plenty of counter space in the L-shaped arrangement, as well as a centralized sink. The most unusual feature, at far left, is a dedicated inset that on our test boat served as a coffee station. The same space could also be used for a beer tap.



## BAVARIA VISION 46

LOA	45' 10"	(13.99 M.)
LWL	42' 2"	(12.83 M.)
BEAM	13' 8"	(4.19 M.)
DRAFT (DEEP/SHOAL)	7' 0"/5' 7"	(2.14/1.70 M.)
SAIL AREA (100%)	1,259 SQ. FT.	(117.0 SQ. M.)
BALLAST	8,157 LB.	(3,700 KG.)
DISPLACEMENT	27,116 LB.	(12,300 KG.)
BALLAST/D	.30	
D/L	161	
SA/D	18.3	
WATER	153 GAL.	(580 L.)
FUEL	55 GAL.	(210 L.)
HOLDING	18.5 GAL.	(70 L.)
MAST HEIGHT	63' 5"	(19.33 M.)
ENGINE	55-HORSEPOWER VOLVO PENTA (W/ SAILDRIVE)	
DESIGNER	FARR YACHT DESIGN/DESIGN UNLIMITED	
PRICE	\$370,000	

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## SEA TRIAL

WIND SPEED	10 TO 12 KNOTS
SEA STATE	LIGHT CHOP
SAILING	
CLOSEHAULED	7.5 KNOTS
BEAM REACH	6.5 KNOTS
MOTORING	
2,000 RPM	6.7 KNOTS
2,600 RPM	8.3 KNOTS

lowered to different heights and can serve as a dining area or, with cushions inserted, a roomy sun deck. The drop-down transom expands the floor plan by adding a spacious swim platform, and the shower head can be affixed to a stainless-steel rail for luxurious outdoor showers. Sweet.

The automatic docking system could be the subject of its own article — a bow thruster, retractable stern thruster and joystick are all prominently involved — and our BOTY judges found it intuitive and straightforward. That said, were it my boat, I think I'd find other uses for the extra 25 grand it adds to the purchase price.

A big reason is that the boat, with a hull from Farr Yacht Design, is quite maneuverable and fun to sail. The jib sheets and mainsheets are both led aft and close at hand, so it's easy to single-hand. We're not huge fans of in-mast furling mains but a vertical batten eases the pain somewhat, and the boat is quite slippery. Our sea trial was conducted in 10 to 12 knots on Chesapeake Bay, and on nearly all points of sail, the 46-footer registered speeds from 6.5 to 7.5 knots. Not bad.

Down below, there are several layouts from which to choose, all of which include a big owner's stateroom forward; again, the emphasis is on a cozy couple.

For some reason the central saloon floor is raised, and I tripped over the step a half-dozen times, though that's probably my problem, and not an inherent design flaw. Another adjustable table in the saloon can be set to different heights and, with more cushions, even serve as a guest double berth. At the foot of the offset companionway there's a deep indentation that on our test boat was equipped with a coffee maker, though a beer tap could also be inserted. Genius!

On the Vision 46, it was one more smart idea on a boat filled with them.

*Herb McCormick is Cruising World's senior editor.*