SUN ODYSSEY 52.2

Through this sloop, built at their yard in Les Herbiers, Jeanneau have demonstrated that, alongside a wide range of products destined for the most eclectic of clients, they can also build larger sailing boats and incorporate key phrases in their specifications such as elegant lines, optimization of life on board and performance. An ambitious programme, but one that they have risen to admirably.

Words by Patrick Mouton. Photos by Guillaume Plisson



Above: Twin steering wheels and a well-equipped instrument panel promote ease of handling. Electric winches would be worth considering, especially for trimming the fully-battened mainsail

Presented in a pre-production guise at the 1995 Paris Boat Show, then as a production model at the Cannes and Genoa shows the following year, the Sun Odyssey 52.2 turned out to be one of the big attractions at last December's Paris Show. It was a stark change to see her under the hard light of an exhibition hall, having sailed her in the late Mediterranean summer. Once again, Bruce Farr's magic pencil has created a hull which, in spite of its relatively wide beam, has flowing lines coupled with a long, but totally integrated coachroof.

The main cockpit is vast and welcoming, and leads into a secondary helmsman's cockpit, housing the two leather-bound steering wheels, and stretching down to a large, stepped transom/bathing platform equipped with a bathing ladder which is stored neatly under a lifting step.

With Category 2 safety equipment, the Sun



Odyssey 52.2 is well-equipped to cope with testing weather conditions. And, her ease of handling means that the same preparation is involved whether one is going for a simple picnic in the Porquerolles, or on a fast non-stop relaxed passage towards the blue creeks of Gozo or Malta.

Aft of the bow, one finds a deep anchor-locker equipped with an electric windlass, just forward of a large bow compartment designed to house the sail wardrobe, mooring lines, fenders and toys. The deck is flat without being unaesthetic, allowing easy movement, especially around the mast. The sidedecks are surprisingly wide and not at all cluttered. The genoa tracks lie snugly against the coachroof. In fact, the sidedecks' width would easily accommodate the storage of a couple of sailboards. Surrounded by an easily collapsible dodger, the main hatch is also wide. Nothing has been spared as far as fittings are concerned – distinctively noticeable in the robust solid teak handrails or the steps, also in teak and rounded so as to ease ascending and descending the companionway, especially when the boat is heeled over.

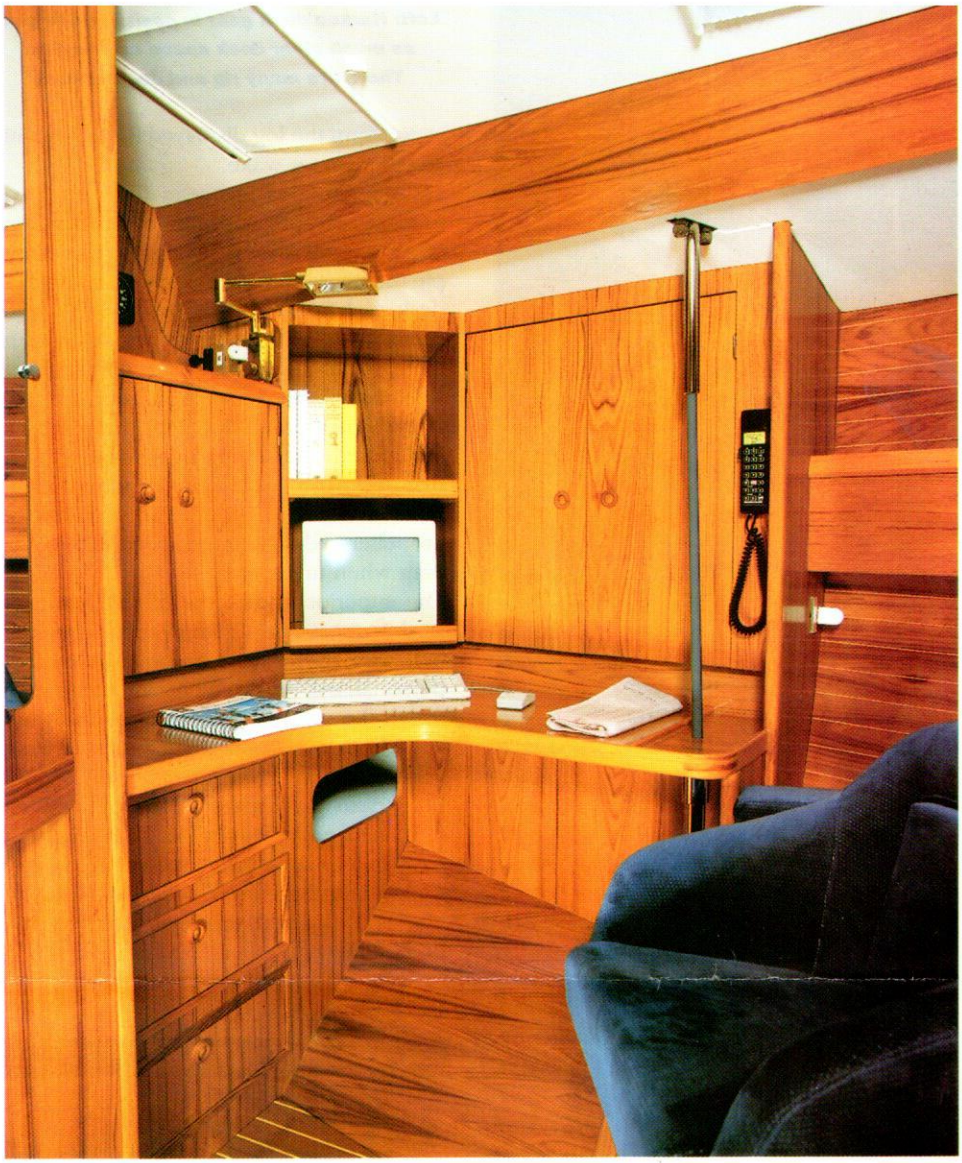
Above: Light pouring in from the saloon's ample port lights and deck hatches, further enhances the spacious feel created by Jeanneau's in-house design team. Seating 10 comfortably, the dining area to port is served by a U-shaped galley to starboard

Opposite, above: Situated forward, the owner's en-suite cabin has ample storage space and is complete with a private desk/study area. Opposite, below: Two more doubles, aft – each also having an en-suite bathroom – complete the accommodation layout

The particularly spacious cockpit is fitted with a folding table, allowing eight people to dine or have cocktails in the sun.

The boat tested was also equipped with a powerful generator, easily accessible from under the cockpit floor. At the business end of the cockpit, features include the twin steering wheels, a compass on either side, in addition to the extensively-equipped instrument panel. Under one of the dished helmsman's seats are situated the two gas tanks, the liferaft being housed in one of the lockers in the main cockpit. On the transom/bathing platform, a simple pressurised freshwater shower is installed for rinsing-off after diving or swimming.

Available with just the two-spreader sloop rig, the Sun Odyssey 52.2 is fully equipped featuring twin backstays, cap shrouds and four sets of lowers on a narrow shroud base which support the mast – an option for a taller mast is available. All the deck gear is by Harken, the halyards all coming back to the main hatch, easing the setting of sails. The boat is fitted with manual winches, which don't really pose much of a problem, although an electric winch would have been





welcomed to finish trimming the fully-battened mainsail.

Auxiliary power aboard the Sun Odyssey 52.2 comes from an 80hp Yanmar diesel with a 400-litre fuel tank. The engine space is accessible from under the companionway steps, as well as laterally from each side in the aft cabins.

Down below, one is immediately struck by the immensity of natural light. A total of 14 portholes and 13 deck hatches contribute to the very light and airy ambience created. All of this light allows the high quality of the blond teak wood finish to be seen. A further light-enhancing factor is the contrasting white deckhead.

The model tested was fitted with a large owner's cabin forward complete with ample storage space, a double bed and a desk with a recess to accommodate a portable computer. A bathroom completes the forward layout. Further aft is the main saloon. On one side is a U-shaped settee surrounding a fold-

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ing table, allowing eight people to sit in comfort. On the opposite side is the galley, consisting of two sinks, an oven, a four-ring hob, a microwave oven, a fridge, a deep freeze and a dish washer which, if so desired, can be replaced with a washing machine. Hot and cold fresh water is delivered under pressure, and the boat's fresh water capacity is 1000 litres. Everything has been thought of with comfort in mind. Air-conditioning and heating – depending on the season and the latitude – CD player, thick cushions and carefully-positioned lighting to facilitate comfortable evening reading.

The navigation station is surprisingly large with significant storage space all around. On the vertical surface beside the navigation table is an electrical panel which, when opened up, gives access to all the circuitry which is easily distinguishable – a great plus when it comes to maintenance.

The two aft cabins are in the classic style with a double bed, hanging locker and heads each side. On this version of the 52.2, the layout was intended for three couples to live and sail aboard in complete comfort and safety.



Left: Harken deck gear is positioned to give as much clear deck space as possible. There are many rig and deck options



Above: The Bruce Farr-designed hull combines racy, flowing lines with a comfort factor which leaves little room for improvement

On the test day, the mistral, that had moved in the previous night, had almost vanished by midday. Less than 10 knots welcomed us once we ventured out into the Bay of Hyeres. These typical coastal Mediterranean conditions allowed us to assess the boat's performance in spite of its eagerness to venture further offshore.

The engine controls are set into the cockpit side, adjacent to the starboard steering position. At 1000rpm, we raced in and out of the buoys at the entrance to the port to see just how easily the boat manoeuvred – she tacks in her own length. Beware of the throttle control, which was surprisingly sensitive, and also of the poor visibility from the steering position due to the dodger, which should have been dismounted for these delicate manoeuvres.

Once out into the bay, hoisting the headsail and mainsail were mere child's play. Several tacks and gybes along with some sailing on all points of sail, demonstrated the boat's ability in the prevalent light airs in spite of her 15-tonne displacement. The hull's fairness and the long waterline length were responsible for her good light-air performance. In spite of the light airs, the tacks were easy and the boat quickly accelerated up to full speed once again through the wind. Without doubt, in stronger breezes and rougher seas she must elegantly demonstrate her true power and potential. Three hours later, there was absolutely no wind left, and it was time for us to return and test how well the boat handled under power. The sound-proofing and anti-vibration measures were more than adequate – except of course at the highest throttle settings. The boat moved well returning 5 knots at 2000rpm, 6.5 knots at 2500rpm and 7 knots at 3000rpm. In case of real necessity, at 3600rpm the log displayed 8.2 knots with a very pleasant wake.

Last but not least, Jeanneau allows the boat to be significantly customised with a system of six different 'Packs' available. For example the 'Executive Pack' allows for an office desk to be installed in the owner's state room. The 'Prestige Pack' includes a completely teak-laid deck along with stainless steel deck fittings and the option for teak in each bathroom. The 'Performance Pack' includes the taller mast, previously mentioned, high-tech sails, an oversized Harken headsail furler, and a Max-Prop propeller to deliver more speed and reduce drag when under sail.

The superior know-how of the Jeanneau yard is thoroughly demonstrated throughout, with an aesthetic and ultra liveable-in personalised boat which can completely match the particular needs of each owner, both from a boat-handling point of view, and the quality of life spent aboard.

To seriously compete in the over-50-feet (15.2m) quality yacht market, Jeanneau have had to adopt this kind of philosophy. And, when the current order book for the boat is considered, this goal seems to have been achieved. ❑

SUN ODYSSEY 52.2

LOA	15.39m (50ft 6in)
LWL	12.7m (41ft 8in)
Beam	4.85m (15ft 11in)
Draught	1.8m (5ft 11in)
Displacement	15 tonnes
Ballast	5.6 tonnes
Mainsail area	42m²
Genoa area	79m²
Engines	Yanmar 78hp or 88hp marine diesel
Fuel	400 litres
Water	1000 litres
Design	Jeanneau Design Team
Naval Architect	Bruce Farr & Associates
Builder	Jeanneau Newco 85505 Les Herbiers France Tel:+33 25164 2020 Fax:+33 25167 3765

