

ILIAD 50 Powercat

Written by Multihull Solutions



The team from ILIAD have taken the desire to explore and boosted the lifestyle element with comfortable apartment styled living, robust systems and effortless manageability.

The ILIAD 50 is the model that introduced us to large volume customisable catamarans when it launched last year. Developed by a team, that has commissioned and maintained a staggering number of multihulls over the past 25 years, ILIAD is a marque that was born from a combination of market requests and professional experience, to meet the demands of boat owners who want it all in a format that feels like home wherever you go.

Boat Shows have invariably been a great source of market feedback. What buyers ask for aren't always what manufacturers have built or can offer at a reasonable cost change. Customising options are common questions, and for manufacturers, it's hard to keep costs competitive once you start straying from the full production format. A lack of flexibility can find some boat buyers meandering down the one-off custom road, with unforeseen forks ahead both in approach to problem-solving during the build and the costs that invariably blow out.

The people behind ILIAD Catamarans gathered all the feedback over a long period and saw an opportunity. They set out to design long-range cruising catamarans that could explore customisation with owners yet remain competitive on price with production multihulls. To do this, they looked for a boat building facility that could deliver quality. They found an experienced yard in China that had been building long-range explorer vessels for a well-known brand in the USA. After two years of R&D, they then made and launched a prototype in 2017. The prototype provided valuable data for implementation into the final design. Building started on the first ILIAD 50 in 2018, and it debuted to wide acclaim and an immediate sale at the Sanctuary Cove Boat Show in 2019.



Appealing to a wide range of buyers, the ILIAD's are capturing the attention of boaters moving away from power monohulls looking for more space and more stability in a manageable size and to people who hail from sailing backgrounds; many of whom have explored beyond the horizon.

Today we're on hull number three of the ILIAD '50s, and number four is sea-trialling in preparation to ship to the Sydney based owner early next year. Hull number five is coming out of the mould and will be Queensland based. Novembers Sanctuary Cove Boating Festival produced two more sales of this model and one sale of a 60 footer which will make its debut in May at the Sanctuary Cove International Boat Show. ILIAD has been capturing the attention of boat buyers because of what you get for the length in terms of livability, plus it's got an enviable range to explore further.

For a multihull to fare well as a bluewater boat, it needs a decent bridge deck clearance. The ILIAD 50 offers an impressive 850mm bridge-deck clearance and a distribution of buoyancy that is longitudinally balanced. The buoyancy of the hull design enables a softer ride and a faster, improved range of speed in varied conditions.



A high bridge deck results in a high freeboard, benefitting not only the internal spaces of the hulls but also the deck space. Even with the voluminous interior on the main deck, the side decks are surprisingly expansive at 650mm. Solid railings run all the way forward, wrap around the bow pulpit seat and continue across the foredeck to the other side. At 750mm high, it creates a safer environment at sea and could be easily secured further for young or furry crew members.

Delivered to Australia to be shown at the Sanctuary Cove Boating Festival, this latest ILIAD 50 demonstrates a few examples of their customisable approach to building. The starboard forward bow, fitted with a single crew cabin, fully air-conditioned with a toilet and basin.

At the other end is a new tender platform option, it demonstrates the two-pronged approach to their thinking. For reliability, the platform chosen keeps all of the critical gear dry throughout the entire range of deployment. Mounted high above the water along the transom are two hydraulic electric arms that can lift the platform well above the bridge deck clearance and lower to 350mm below the surface. The platform gives more choice for a tender too, the weight can take up to a maximum of 450kg, but due to its unique deployment method, the space between the hulls is not the length limit. The whole platform moves out, aft and beyond each hull allowing you to put a much longer tender on than the physical width of the platform.



In the power plant department, ILIAD has acknowledged that boat buyers want choice not only in engine size but also the manufacturer so they'll work with you implementing your preference. This model has twin Yanmar 440hp engines. They drive straight shafts and give a comfortable cruise speed of around 17kts.

On this model, the 440hp engines running at 1000rpm consume about 8 litres an hour (combined) for a speed just shy of 6kts. Leaving 10% in reserve this gives a range of around 2000nm. You could spend months exploring archipelagos without thinking about civilisation if your laid back approach to life includes the speed of the journey.

At a comfortable cruise speed of 17kts, the engines combined are burning around 120 lph, with a top speed of 21-22kts if you need that extra pace. What's surprising when you're outside underway, is that there is not a great deal of noise coming from the engine rooms even at cruise speed. They're well insulated for sound, almost indiscernible inside with the doors closed or up forward on the flybridge, a real bonus for long passages.

On the flybridge under the shade of the hardtop, the view is spectacular, golden early light is reflecting off the Gold Coast skyline. It's early morning, but I am picturing this is an end of the day meeting point for sundowners. The L-shaped bar at the top of the stairs has an icemaker, bar fridge sink and a barbecue, all you need for up top self-sufficiency.



There's some flexibility with the layout on the flybridge. Still, the casual low coffee table that expands out and upwards for dining supplied by a handy drawer fridge is a great and popular choice.

Aft of this area is the flexible space for the new owner to determine its function. With the installed tender platform, this area could be used for water toys storage, for sun loungers or install a davit and add another tender.

Back on the main deck, an expansive covered open cockpit has everything on hand for comfortable living, a great spot to dine, relax and connect. The dining table faces forward and invites interaction and connection with inside.

A new option installed is the way the rear bulkhead that separates the indoor spaces. In comparison, other ILIAD's have had the doors that fold back on themselves in a bifold fashion, these doors, (manufactured to exacting standards in Brisbane (and sent up to the factory,) work on separate tracks and slide back beside each other. An advantage gained is access to the void below the stairs to the fly. You gain more storage and the all-important cockpit drawer fridge for independent jurisdiction over cold ones in the cockpit.

On the port side, windows that slide outboard and connects the bar to the galley. A simple extension of the bar towards the sink connects the two. It works well as a servery and plate return as it does as a bar lean.



ILIAD has created an internal space that is unusually open space for explorers. The view spills in from all directions to the main deck that is shared by the galley, dining, saloon and lower helm.

Subtle changes to the galley dynamic now have the dishwasher just above bench height directly outboard of the sinks making for an easy rinse and stack. Grab rails on the edge of the bench, soft closing Blum drawers and cupboards are a nice upgrade on this model too.

Directly opposite a comfortable dinette and full-size upright fridge and freezer has been chosen for extended cruising supplies. This table, when folded back, adds a grab rail for moving through the boat underway and subtly conceals two additional seats that wrap around the table post when stored.

Throughout the interior, the head height is 2m. As you step up to the saloon/lounge, so does the head height maintaining the 2-metre head height. By raising the saloon, the sightlines to the water have dropped for good viewing from a seated position. The lower helm chair rotates to be part of the action and below the free-standing coffee table, is extra seating on two custom ottomans. The centre window of the saloon opens out and up allowing a sizable entry point for fresh air and natural ventilation.



Built for couples to handle themselves easily means it deserves accommodations that make it a home. Descending into the owner's hull, amidships ILIAD has delivered a cabin that is over 8.5m long—inviting you in with views and light filling the space from multiple long panoramic hull windows. A very decent lounge leads aft to the queen berth that has room either side to get in and out of the island bed. Forward the ample desk conceals a vanity and opposite some serious hanging lockers for those who want to bring it all with them. The bathroom is over 2.5m long and features a linen cupboard right where you need it, loads of storage for a clutter-free existence and a huge shower cubicle with views of the surroundings.

Over on the starboard side, there are two ensuite cabins both with double berths. The aft cabin's berth runs athwartships it has options to be configured with twin berths running fore and aft and an optional Pullman bunk for three berths when the kids are on board. The ensuite to this has dual entrances and acts as the day head.



Moving forward past the washer/dryer is the second guest cabin, it features a double berth and like all the other berths lifts on gas struts for storage of large bags and even suitcases underneath. Storage is impressive; it has its private ensuite, the size and the views are equally impressive.

ILIAD Catamarans set out to create long-range open space catamarans that offer buyers the flexibility to choose and build the catamaran to suit each owner's style of boating. There's a lot of thinking that has gone into producing a wide range of satisfaction for boat buyers. There seems to be a lot more scope to what is possible too. At the recent Sanctuary Cove Boating Festival, new ideas have entered the realm of possibility with new buyers exploring their wish lists.



The ILIAD 50 offers modern, stylish living to the long-range cruiser market. This model has introduced us to on water apartment living, boasting impressive internal volume combined with expansive alfresco options applied to a long-range platform, making modern, comfortable living possible almost anywhere.