

# Voyager 1250 Conquest



Is it possible for a mono-hull lover to turn? Ian Macrae thinks this cat has a lot to offer the cruising boatie!

It seems the older we powerboaters get our need to get from Point A to Point B at 'full throttle' diminishes (I hope that's all that diminishes), but it's true. Because, while I still enjoy the adrenalin rush I get from a 70mph flight across the water from a boat like a 'Cigarette' at any opportunity, I really do enjoy the relaxed pleasure of a leisurely cruise up the coast (as long as I can still go fishing), the longer the better.

But there are other considerations, such as my wife Amanda, who (while she works on the water every day), still gets seasick. Thankfully, I've never suffered from the condition, but it's a consideration that rates highly if I want to go cruising once the kids leave the nest – I have two girls, so I am looking at buying the house on either side of the family home.

So, what's it to be, mono or multi? Obviously, the choice is determined by the buyer and their individual needs, but after spending time on board the new Voyager 1250 Conquest, I've become a 'swinging voter' – now I may have to buy two boats for my retirement.

Clearly, both monos and multis have their advantages. A mono-hull cruiser (of similar length) has more interior room, because of the volume in her hull, for larger staterooms and a bigger saloon and she'll lean comfortably into a turn at speed, but what about a cat's excellent straight-line ability in a short chop, or crossing ocean bars? My back's too old for banging and crashing all over the ocean. That air-cushioned ride a cat delivers sounds pretty good, especially if you have spent time battling the 25-knot south-east winds that



North Queensland and the Whitsundays dish up for much of the year as I have.

However, that's not a cat's only plus. What about their legendary stability when underway and at rest? Big cats don't roll in a sea and they ride quite flat, because the only things in the water are two thin pontoon keels, which slice effortlessly through chop and swell. So, for anyone prone to seasickness, a cat's ride should help ease your suffering. Cats are also great at anchor, because they sit rock solid, which in my case helps my wife go to sleep at night without that rocking sensation that does make her seasick.

But for mine, this boat's coup de grace is her cruising range; it's quite astounding. At six knots she burns only 0.8lt per nautical mile (both engines, not per engine), which, given her 1400lt fuel tank, equates to a range of around 1700 nautical miles. Obviously, sea conditions will have an effect on these figures, which were recorded in calm conditions at high tide on the Gold Coast Broadwater, but they do give a clear indication of this boat's ability.



If six knots is a little too slow for you, at eight knots she burns 1lt per nautical mile and can travel for 1400 nautical miles, or 750 nautical miles at 10 knots burning only 1.87lt per nautical mile. But for optimum performance, because this boat has twin semi displacement hulls, at 16.5 knots she uses only 2.6lt per nautical mile and can cruise for around 550 nautical miles. So, using these figures as a guide only, the Voyager 1250 Conquest could cruise from the Gold Coast to Sydney and back twice on one tank of fuel, although at 6 knots it would be a slow old trip. But, if you have the time...

The 1250 is also a completely new hull, not a re-jigged version of the 1270 Freedom and again, she's an excellent Paul Stanyon design. The Conquest is a big 42-footer with a massive 17' 4" beam (5.3m) and an enclosed flybridge that creates another usable storey to the Conquest. Her semi-displacement hulls incorporate fully protected props and rudders and extend well aft of the transom for greater aft buoyancy, which improves her overall ride.



Things have also been improved at the pointy end, or should I say ends, because the 1250 uses dual wave-breaker technology, which stiffens the tunnel and breaks up waves for a better ride in rough conditions.

Another usable area we normally don't pay much attention to is the foredeck. It's a 5.3m x 4m (21sq m) deck that's full surrounded by a high



bowrail, which extends all the way back to the aft cockpit. Wide walkways down each side of the cabin and well positioned grab rails mean that using this area would be a regular occurrence.

The aft cockpit is obviously quite wide and long enough to house a sizable table for alfresco dining. The transom boasts twin fold-down lounges, a big barbecue, storage lockers and a tap and sink unit at each side. The flybridge overhang acts as this cockpit's roof and the whole area can be sealed off from the elements with clears. But the Conquest gets another "tick in the box" for the flybridge stairs, these are wide, not too steep and lift open to expose yet another massive storage locker. Want more? Those extended aft pontoons also allow for a much longer swim platform than is normally found on a cat. It's fully enclosed by a high stainless steel rail and is the ideal spot to try your hand at fishing. There's even a cushioned seat across the back of the transom, so you can wait for a bite in comfort.

The main saloon is not as big as you'd find in a mono 42-footer, because of this cat's long foredeck, but don't get me wrong, it's not small either. Enter through the double saloon doors and to starboard is one of those now characteristic Voyager raised dining areas, which will seat six for dinner and offers excellent 360-degree views. The fully equipped galley extends along the port wall of the saloon and stairs to port and starboard lead down to the accommodation decks, one in each pontoon.

There are a couple of different layouts available, but this boat had the master suite with an island bed to port and a double bunk cabin to starboard. Aft of each cabin was a luxury ensuite, which also house access doors to the twin engine rooms.





Twin 190hp Yanmar diesels powered the 1250 and give her cruising speeds between 15-20 knots and a top speed of 23 knots at 3500rpm. But I reckon that 16.5 knot cruise will get me where I want to go fast enough and quick enough. That's Sydney to the Gold Coast with plenty left in the tank for emergencies.

There only one question left... mono or multi-hull? To be honest I haven't made up my mind yet as both vessels have their for and against. But I do know one thing and that's anyone who outlays the \$948,000 required to park one of these well designed, quality finished and great handling boats at the marina won't be disappointed.

Back out on deck and climb up the stairs to the flybridge. The helm is positioned centrally to the rear of this area. Visibility is excellent and guests sit forward of the skipper on a large U-shaped lounge. The bridge has all the trimmings, removable table carpets, bar fridge, drink holders and plenty of grab rails. There are sliding windows to port and starboard for cross-flow ventilation and two opening hatches in the forward wall of the flybridge for even more 'through' ventilation. There's a veranda aft of the helm position and clears fully enclose the rear of the bridge.

Underway and heading out through the Seaway, the 1250 cruised effortlessly at 18 knots and easily sliced through the small incoming swells on the day, riding on the cushion of air trapped in her tunnel. She tracked straight, even in a following sea, and turned extremely flat for a cat, which normally make you feel like they're trying to throw you overboard on the side opposite to the turn.

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#### Specifications: Voyager 1250

Configuration	Flybridge
Construction	Fibreglass
Length overall	13m
Length moulded	12.5m
Beam	5.3m
Draft	0.69m
Fuel capacity	1400lt
Water capacity	750lt
Sleeps	6-8
Headroom	2m
Engines	Twin 190hp Yanmar diesels

Further information: Voyager Catamarans  
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