



Style is everything, it seems, but the latest Bavaria combines crisp, modern looks with an inspiring performance – at a price that makes her impossible to ignore. **Duncan Kent** reports.

**G**erman mass production boatbuilder, Bavaria, has recently joined forces with its own car manufacturer, BMW, for advice on providing a level of contemporary styling as yet unseen in this range of – usually – fairly mundane-looking yachts. This, combined with the expertise of the renowned Farr Design group, has resulted in a ‘big’ 32-footer with very modern looks, including a near plumb stem, wide scoopless transom, sleek coachroof and comparatively tall rig.

Starter cruising boats seem to begin at around the 31-32ft mark these days, which is considered the minimum size for a small, modern family. Boat owners favour a little more luxury than their forefathers, who would often squeeze five or six into a tiny 22-footer with 4ft headroom. Unthinkable luxuries of that era, such as ovens, fridges, showers etc, are now *de rigeur* in small cruisers – and the trendy-looking Bavaria 32 Cruiser has them all.

Overall, she looks fresh and stylish (although I’m not so enamoured with the rectangular portlights, which, to me, are rather reminiscent of the slits in a pillarbox), and she performs far more like a thoroughbred than her predecessors.

# The perfect package

PHOTOS NICK DAY



**Below**

**1 Saloon**

Headroom is mostly 1.8m (5ft 11in) and to port is a good sea berth measuring 2.00m L x 0.64m W that also provides seating for the aft-facing chart table. The starboard settee has a short return forward allowing 5-6 around the dining table, which contains two useful drawers and a bottle store.

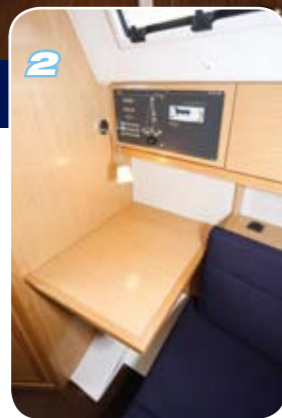
The look and feel of the new light oak furnishing is 'cheery minimalist', but the accommodation does provide much of what a small family would want when marina-hopping. The lack of lockers might make stowing enough gear for a week a little tricky, although there is talk of Bavaria adding more and there is plenty of bulk space under the settees.

**2 Nav station**

Unlike some new smallish cruisers, at least Bavaria has provided a small, albeit basic navigation area. The chart table is small and there's a dearth of stowage, but I think it fair to assume many will utilise the saloon table for passage planning in a boat of this size. The AC/DC electric panel is smart and adequate for the job, but there's no dedicated console for electronic displays.

**3 Galley**

The Corian-style worktop and stainless grab rail look great, until you realise there are no fiddles to stop everything rolling



off. There are, however, a large sink, spacious, fridge, 2-ring gimballed cooker/oven, two AC sockets and plenty of stowage within easy reach. A couple of extra lights would be useful, as would a shelf under the sink, but the sink and cooker covers increase the worktop area considerably.

**4 Heads**

Thanks to ample beam carried aft, the heads is roomy, bright and airy. Locker space is adequate, even though much of the possible cabinet space is taken up by a holding tank, and I particularly like the recessed oilskins compartment.

**5 Aft cabin**

Her generous beam allows a roomy, longitudinal double berth measuring 2.08m L x 1.80m W. There's a small dressing area, a seat and clothes stowage in a single tall locker with shelves and hanging space. Two portlights brighten it up and provide a through draught.

**6 Forecabin**

Unlike some 32-footers, there's a little more than just a berth forward, including a small dressing area with headroom and two clothes lockers and shelves above the 1.96m L x 1.74m W berth. There is some stowage underneath in handy drawers, but the forward space is occupied by the water tank.



1 & 2A

**ON DECK**

**1 Cockpit**

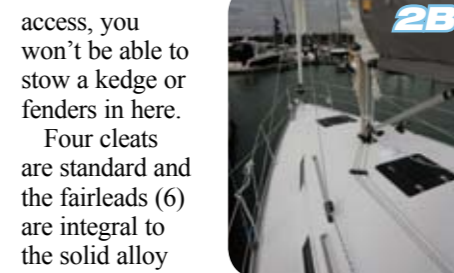
Her cockpit is quite sizeable for a 32ft boat, but not so big as to make her dangerous to move about in at sea. She has a single wheel that is not too large, but still almost touches the seating either side, which forces the helmsman to climb over the seating for access.

Her transom is near vertical, because she has a neat drop-down platform instead. Thankfully, Bavaria has scrapped the idea of powered platforms on its smaller boat range, because these had caused no end of trouble on its earlier models. One problem, cleverly overcome, has been the lack of a permanently fixed boarding ladder in the event of a MOB. Bavaria has provided an emergency ladder instead, which sits in a tube in the transom and can easily be deployed from the water.

The binnacle can house a chart plotter and other standard size displays, whilst providing a stout grab bar on top. A cockpit table is standard and one deep locker to port provides enough stowage for all the likely deck gear.

**2A-C Decks**

Access all round the decks is clear and safe with flush hatches and coachroof sheet tracks giving little to trip over and good handrails to grab going forward. Her foredeck is easy to work, too, and there's a plinth to mount a small windlass below deck level, but only the anchor chain will fit in the locker. Thanks to very restricted



access, you won't be able to stow a kedge or fenders in here. Four cleats are standard and the fairleads (6) are integral to the solid alloy toe rails. The moulded non-slip surface isn't the best, but is adequate.

**3A-C Rig and sails**

Her rig is a 7/8th Selden fractional with twin spreaders, twin backstays, discontinuous cap shrouds and aft lowers to a single chainplate each side. The deck gear layout is pretty straightforward on this boat, but the standard inventory a little more generous than on Bavaria's older models. You get three Lewmar self-tailing winches – two primaries (mounted too far forward for the helmsman to reach) and a single halyard winch. The mainsheet has no traveller and is mounted on the forward end of the cockpit table – probably the most

disappointing and 'family unfriendly' aspect of the rig design. The small (105 per cent) furling jib is sheeted on tracks mounted on the coachroof and might as well have been self-tacking for ease of handling. The standard mainsail is semi-battened and slab-reefed with no lazyjacks (£650 option). In-mast furling is £2,675 extra.



## Under way

### 1 Closehauled

She is light, responsive and quick on the water and is easy to take through tacks thanks to her small jib. She points well and has impressive sailing qualities until she becomes overpowered in gusts, when letting off the trackless mainsheet merely dumps the wind rather than enabling her to remain windward trimmed.

In the ideal conditions in which we tested her (F4-5), she was speedy and fun to sail, giving us 6.8-7kn at around 35° off the apparent wind and tacking through 88°. A helmsman's foot stop is needed, though.

### 2 Reaching

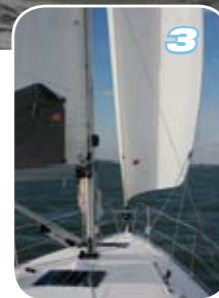
As expected, she sped up when freed off a little to around 45° off the wind, nudging the log to a constant 7.0-7.2kn. At 50° she fell into an easy groove, giving us an impressive 7.6kn. Apart from the position of the jib winches (you could always add spinnaker winches and use them), which

are too far forward for the helmsman to adjust, she is a delight to sail and would be an excellent family starter boat.

### 3 Downwind

The modern, popular, fractional rig with small jib makes a yacht much less hassle to sail to windward than many older cruising boats, which almost always had large, overlapping genoas that were a beast to deal with when tacking. The downside, though, is that you will need some extra sail power when running off the wind. Aft swept spreaders don't help much either as they prevent your setting the boom at right angles to the centreline. The only answer is a cruising chute, which is easier to handle than a spinnaker and will give you another couple of knots downwind.

We only had the standard sails on board, so the best we could manage was a not disgraceful 6.5kn on a broad reach – thanks mainly to the 'slipperiness' of her hull and the power of her large mainsail.



### 4 Under power

Motoring this light boat is not difficult and, although our boat had the optional 29hp engine, the standard 18hp would be adequate. Thanks to her slippery underwater shape and relatively low windage, she turns in her own length and goes astern without difficulty.

She cruised surprisingly quietly at 2,400rpm, giving us 6kn in flat water and a maximum of 7.7kn flat out at 3,400rpm with her fixed two-bladed prop.

Engine maintenance access is good.



## SPECIFICATIONS – Bavaria 32

LOA	9.99m	32ft 9in
LWL	9.75m	32ft 0in
Beam	3.42m	11ft 3in
Draught (shoal/deep)	1.50m/1.95m	4ft 11in/6ft 4in
Displacement	5,200kg	11,440lb
Ballast	1,300kg	2,860lb
Sail Area	50m <sup>2</sup>	535ft <sup>2</sup>
Fuel	150ltr	33gal
Water	150ltr	33gal
Berths	6	
Engine	18hp Volvo D1-20 Saildrive	
RCD category	A-Ocean	
Designer	Farr/BMW	
Builder	Bavaria Yachtbau GmbH www.bavaria-yachtbau.com	
UK main agent	Clipper Marine 023 8060 5060 www.clippermarine.co.uk	
Price	from £77,086 inc UK delivery and commissioning	



## Conclusions

I thoroughly enjoyed sailing this new style Bavaria. She is quick, easy to handle and safe without being stodgy. The Farr influence is noticeable when pushing her hard and she seems to slam less and exhibits less leeway than any of her predecessors.

Below, she is clean, bright and reasonably well equipped, but I'd prefer fewer sharp edges and some more deep fiddles on the horizontal surfaces.

## For

Well appointed below  
Easy to sail and quick  
Good deck/cockpit layout

## Against

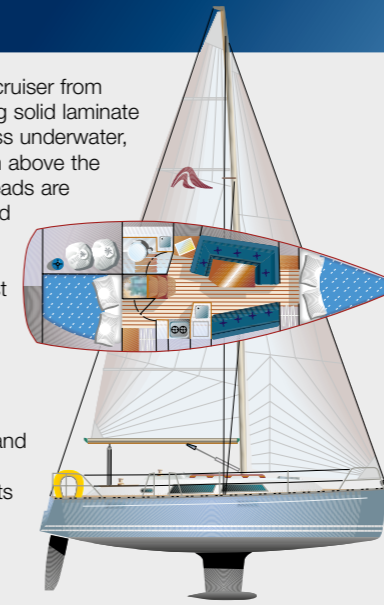
Too many sharp edges below  
Primary winches too far forward  
Slightly claustrophobic inboard berth aft

## Hanse 320

This keenly priced, compact cruiser from Germany is hand laid up using solid laminate with foam stringers for stiffness underwater, changing to a balsa sandwich above the waterline for lightness. Bulkheads are also laminated to both hull and deck for extra rigidity.

She is relatively shallow underwater with a bulbed cast iron fin keel and high aspect, semi-balanced rudder.

The Hanse 320 is sprightly, but well mannered and easy to handle by a light crew. Her accommodation is spacious and build and equipment quality above average. She represents very good value for money when her comprehensive standard inventory has been taken into account.

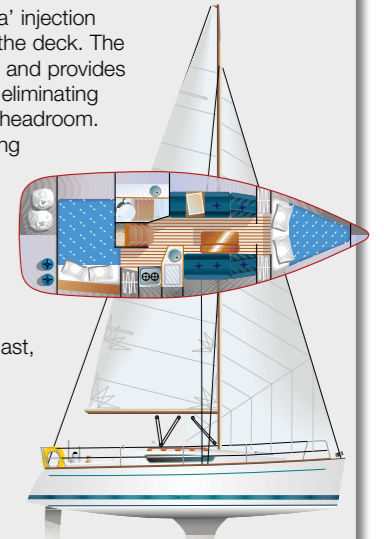


## Jeanneau Sun Odyssey 33i

The 'i' denotes Jeanneau's 'prisma' injection moulding process used to create the deck. The system creates minimal emissions and provides a smooth finish on the underside, eliminating the need for liners and increasing headroom.

She is designed for easy handling and is well balanced and light on the helm. As standard she has a semi-battened mainsail and furling genoa, but is also available with in-mast mainsail furling. A performance version is also available, which sports a deeper keel, taller keel-stepped mast, laminate sails, Dyneema running rigging and a mainsheet traveller.

An option for those wanting to sail in shallow waters is a lifting keel, which reduces her draught to 0.85m (2ft 9in) when raised.



## Beneteau Oceanis 31

The new 31 has a lower, sleeker profile than her predecessor with a more pronounced sheer, giving her an up to the minute look. Innovative features such as her all in one companionway hatch and easy access liferaft stowage are great for family sailing and her well planned decks and conservative sail plan make sailing her light-handed easy.

Below, she's comfortable and packs a lot of desirable gear in, but stowage would be an issue for long term cruising. Headroom is 1.83m/6ft in the saloon, thanks to her vacuum-infused coachroof and deck, and she has room for 6/8 at the table. The settees, at 1.95m and 1.75m long, offers one and a half sea berths.

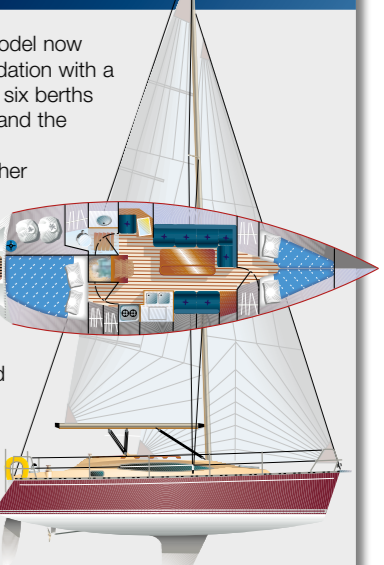


## Delphia 33.2

Recently upgraded, the 33.2 model now offers a more luxurious accommodation with a minimum of 1.83m/6ft headroom, six berths in two double cabins plus saloon and the option of a swing keel.

Delphias are built to Germanischer Lloyd standard and are laid up by hand using solid polyester laminate below the waterline, double thickness in the keel area. Topsides, deck and superstructure are made from Airex foam-cored sandwich for weight reduction and improved sound insulation.

Her fractional rig is easily to handle, yet she is stiff, well balanced and a sprightly performer under sail. She's also a doddle to manoeuvre under power.



	Hanse 320	Jeanneau S/O 33i	Oceanis 31	Delphia 33.2
LOA	9.63m/31ft 7in	9.96m/32ft 7in	9.66m/31ft 8in	9.95m/32ft 8in
Beam	3.30m/10ft 10in	3.34m/10.95	3.39m/11ft 2in	3.47m/11ft 5in
Draught shoal	1.40m/4ft 7in	1.45m/4ft 9in	1.30m/4ft 3in	0.77m-1.95m swing
Draught deep	1.75m/5ft 9in	1.90m/6ft 3in	1.80m/5ft 10in	1.85m/6ft 1in
Displacement	4,700kg/10,340lb	4,645kg/10,219lb	4,052kg/8,933lb	5,200kg/11,440lb
Sail Area	51.35m <sup>2</sup> /553ft <sup>2</sup>	51.5m <sup>2</sup> /554ft <sup>2</sup>	47.4m <sup>2</sup> /510ft <sup>2</sup>	50.30m <sup>2</sup> /540ft <sup>2</sup>
Water	260ltr/57gal	160ltr/35gal	130ltr/29gal	210ltr/46gal
Fuel	110ltr/24gal	140ltr/30gal	130ltr/29gal	85ltr/18gal
Engine	21hp Yanmar	21hp Yanmar	21hp Yanmar	28hp Volvo
Berths	4-6	4-6	4-6	5-6
RCD	A-Ocean	A-Ocean	B-Offshore	A-Ocean
Price (from)*	£82,814	£85,270	£77,380	£84,980
Contact	www.hanseyachts.com for your nearest dealer	www.jeanneau.com for your nearest dealer	www.beneteau.com for your nearest dealer	Witney Marine 023 8045 8084 www.witneymarine.com
ST tested?	ST135, Jul 08	Not as yet	ST144, Apr 09	ST128, Dec 07

\*Prices may vary due to exchange rate fluctuations, but include UK delivery and commissioning