

Classic Lines

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■ The trade clippers of the 1800s and early 1900s were primarily built for speed and carriage of cargo on the tough spice, tea and silk routes between Asia, Europe and the Americas with little room for comfort. Because of their sea going capabilities, the clippers soon developed an enviable reputation on the high seas - a legacy that remains true of the name clipper, to this day.

Today's Clipper Cruisers are a far cry from the sail powered speedsters of a bygone era but as with the sailing clippers, the Clipper Europa Evolution Series cruisers have striking classic lines and an almost timeless grandeur.

We're aboard the latest Clipper 40 Europa on a calm Autumn afternoon, heading for open waters - the kind of bluewater cruising these beautiful cruisers are intended. Her semi-displacement hard chined hull cuts an almost perfect line through the calm waters of Moreton Bay, the entry line accentuated by the stylish flared bow.

To describe this cruiser as classic needs some explanation. By classic I mean a boat which has a timeless appeal - nothing on this style of cruiser will date - she will look as appealing in 20 years as she does today. Developed as an Evolution Series, these Clippers have had the benefit of continuing modifications over the past five years to fine tune an almost perfect design.

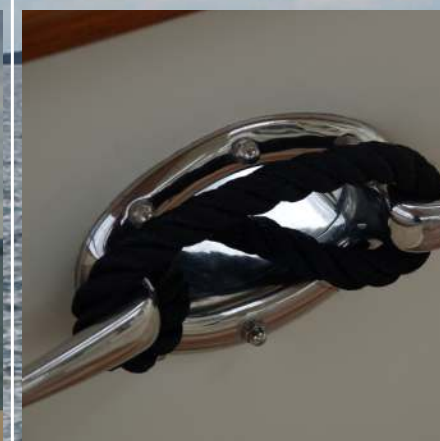
As timeless as the design might be, this cruiser is not without innovation and an exceptionally high level of appointments. The magnificent traditional full teak interior is beautifully complemented with a sophisticated level of mod cons including dual air-conditioning units, flat screen television, generator and one of the best bathrooms I have seen on a cruising vessel.

From the moment you step aboard the Clipper 40 Europa, the exceptional level of craftsmanship is obvious as is its easy living design. A teak duckboard with swim ladder is ideal for those summer days at your favourite anchorage and

the centrally located transom doors allow for twin lounges to be positioned either side of the door. The external cushions including the flybridge lounges have been covered in Sunbrella fabric for longevity and low maintenance.

The beautifully laid teak deck in the aft cockpit extends around the side deck to the steps leading to the bow. Highly polished teak capping rails add a certain level of class and finish to the cream topsides of the boat. Mounted on top of the handrails are stainless steel grab rails which extend around the transom and side rails to about mid ships. A large hatch in the aft cockpit floor opens to an enormous lazarette. The lazarette houses five sets of battery banks and an air-conditioning unit leaving an absolute mass of room for storage of safety gear or the installation of things like washer/dryer, water maker, dive gear and such like.

On our test boat, a large aft bimini had been fitted which extends back over the duckboard providing wonderful shelter





from the elements. I was extremely impressed with the innovative design of the bimini, which incorporates a tender cradle mounted above the bimini. The tender is accessible from the extended flybridge. The side decks are very user friendly and a starboard side access door located mid ships, is great for boarding from the marina or when rafted up. The deck area is also fully self draining.

The evolution of the Clipper Cruiser is obvious. One recent addition is an eutectic fridge freezer on the starboard side of the entry to the saloon. Another is the portside moulded flybridge stairwell with timber treads and storage locker, forming a sturdy base, both adding enormously to the livability of the boat.

Going forward, safety rails provide assistance while the foredeck is extremely safe with its sunken walkway leading to the bow sprit. The bow sprit is a cruising boaties delight. Twin anchor stables allow for two anchors to be carried while lockers either side of

the bow sprit provide storage for lines. A stainless steel samson post is mounted aft of the bow sprit behind the windlass while a saltwater deck wash has been concealed in the starboard side deck locker. Ground tackle includes a 40lb CQR and 50 metres of chain.

The flybridge is just made for onwater entertaining and because of the dual helm stations, the cruiser can be piloted from the flybridge. The flybridge is enormous by any standard and is fully enclosed with stainless steel safety rails. The Europa layout provides for side decks extending slightly forward of the targa arch, with its unique fold back design. The fold back design of the targa is particularly useful for getting under bridges. A TV aerial, anchor light and VHF aerial have been mounted atop the targa.

The tremendous beam of the flybridge allows for an L-shaped portside lounge while a starboard side longitudinal split lounge has a moulded drinks holder separating the lounges.

An ADC aft starboard side crane allows

the tender to be easily raised and lowered into the superbly engineered Southern Stainless cradle. A lockable hatch over the portside stairwell is another excellent safety feature.

The forward facing bimini, complete with quality clears makes the flybridge an all weather helm position. The windshield is angled forward and held in place with a stainless rail. The helm station is centrally positioned while the skipper's chair is impressive with its stainless steel frame, circular footrest and deep padded arms, all covered in Sunbrella fabric.

The flybridge helm has almost identical instrumentation to the lower helm with analogue Cummins' engine gauges, a Ritchie compass, Raymarine auto pilot, E80 Series GPS chartplotter, Muir electronic windlass control, spotlight toggle, bow thruster joy stick, Clarion sound system control and Morse electronic throttle control.

A rocker mounted switch panel is located on the skipper's port hand forward of the large stainless steel wheel. An Icom VHF repeater handset has also been installed on the flybridge helm.

The steering position on the flybridge is equally as comfortable as the lower helm. The wheel is an easy three and one half turns from lock to lock and the Morse electronic controls are comfortable and instantaneously responsive.

On the day of our review, the Clipper 40 Europa recorded a top speed of 10.5 knots at 2600 rpm while comfortable cruising speed was between 8.5 - 9.5 knots at 2000 - 2400 rpm. The gear changing on the Cummins 270 hp diesel was silky smooth and the noise level was impressively low. In fact, even at wide open throttle, the engine was exceptionally quiet - just a gentle humm and not a trace of vibration. These big Cummins' diesels are extremely economical at cruising speed giving the boat in excess of a 600 nautical mile range.

Most noticeable was its turning capabilities. I have been on other



trawler style cruisers which have taken a couple of football fields to complete a 360 degree turn. The Clipper 40 turns in a little over its own length and doesn't list from side to side which is often a trait of similar design vessels.

While the outdoor livability of the Clipper is impressive, the saloon and interior fitout is exceptional. Entry to the saloon is through a sliding GRP door with glass panel. The saloon itself is easy on the eye and the layout is extremely comfortable and versatile.

The dinette is located portside. A feature is the U-shaped lounge complete with large rectangular table which tilts and extends to provide easy access when seating. A starboard side lounge extends to make a three-quarter bed. There is storage space to burn on the Clipper as both lounges have multiple storage lockers or drawers.

A 150 litre 12V/240V fridge is located in a cabinet forward of the starboard side lounge and aft of the lower helm lounge. Mounted on top of the fridge

cabinet is a flat screen TV. The functional and well appointed galley is to port of the lower helm and is laid out in a U-style configuration. Benches are of cream Corian with large stainless steel sink, mixer tap and telescopic hose. A servery bar separates the galley from the dinette while overhead cabinets including a glass rack provide enormous storage possibilities. The preparation bench below the servery bar also features a top loading ice box or if you prefer, rubbish bin. The cooktop is a Westinghouse twin burner electric recessed for safety while below, a convection stainless steel microwave has been installed. The forward benchtops are slightly raised to accommodate two cutlery drawers with spacious cabinets below.

The entire floor area of the saloon and cabins is teak and holly although quality fawn thatched carpet has been laid over the floor to give a warm, comfortable ambience. The galley floor is however teak and holly.

The saloon is light and spacious due to

its length. All windows are sliders with screens and curtains while twin wall lamps add a nice homely touch. In terms of safety, grab rails have been positioned either side of the companionway on the padded cream vinyl ceiling while a starboard side sliding door allows access from the lower helm to the side decks. The side door is also great for ventilation when underway.

Front windows are fixed with three large glass panels between timber supports. Both port and starboard windows have wipers. The lower helm is functionally laid out with similar instrumentation to the flybridge.

The dash accommodates a Raymarine auto pilot, trim tabs and bow thruster joy stick on the portside while the starboard side of the dash is taken up with a Muir electronic windlass control and Morse throttle and integrated gear shift. Centrally positioned on the dash is a Raymarine E80 screen with compass above. Below the E80 screen is a panel accommodating rocker switches while analogue gauges for engine monitoring are forward of the teak and stainless wheel.

Controls for the Clarion sound system and Icom VHF radio have been installed on a panel above the companionway leading to the lower deck level, while a DC distribution board is located immediately above the helm station. The ship's electrical panels are located below the galley bench and the helm lounge. A slide out liquor cabinet is located in the helm lounge with ample bottle racking for a long cruise.

Three timber steps lead to the accommodation below decks. Each of the steps are storage lockers - the top step opening to reveal access to a manual bilge pump. The second step has a fire extinguisher fixed to the underneath side of the step while the lower step has been left for storage. The layout is functional giving complete privacy for the two cabins. The twin single cabin with entry immediately to port of the stairwell is spacious and well appointed. The upper and lower bunk configuration running the length of the ship are good sized singles with storage under the lower bunk.

The cabin has a full length mirror on the aft bulkhead wall while a large timber lined wardrobe has been installed on

the starboard side of the cabin entry.

Ventilation is excellent with twin portholes while the lower level air-conditioner is housed in a locker below the wardrobe for easy access. Down lights have been fitted to the cabin roof while adjustable reading lamps have been installed on the forward bulkhead for both upper and lower bunks.

The bathroom is to starboard of the companionway and is possibly one of the best I have seen on a 40ft cruiser. Featuring separate shower with folding doors, a teak floor and even a moulded seat in the starboard shower wall, this is a superbly functional bathroom. A vanity unit has been butted up against the side wall with a grey Corian benchtop, stainless steel vanity bowl and gold leaf mixer taps. The splash back is mirrored to create an impression of extra space.

Portholes in both the shower and vanity area provide necessary ventilation while the electric toilet, with three way operation is positioned forward of the entry to the bathroom. The bathroom is finished nicely with towel rails and fixed toothbrush holder.



The forward cabin, located in the bow of the cruiser is beautifully finished in rich Teak with an island queen sized bed with four deep storage drawers in the base.

Book racks have been built on either side of the cabin wall while teak wardrobes are positioned either side of the cabin entry. An overhead hatch with privacy curtain provides ventilation and light while portholes on either side of the bed offer additional breeze cross flow. Reading lamps are located on the timber forward bulkhead and two fashionably crafted doors provide access to the anchor well, if needed.

The cabin is nicely finished with curtains over the portholes and a feature of the Clipper is the soft furnishings and supplied linen which includes fitted sheets for all bunks.

Access to the engine room is by way of a hatch below the saloon floor. The engine room is surprisingly large and fully lit with stainless steel ladder providing access into the bay. The big Cummins diesel has been installed almost amid ships to give excellent weight distribution while fuel tanks are located either side with freshwater tanks forward of the fuel tanks. The 7kVa genset is positioned aft of the engine on the lazarette bulkhead.

A feature of the Clipper Cruisers is the standard fitout. Everything is supplied from quality black mooring lines, safety gear, full fire gear which includes four extinguishers and fire blanket, and all linen and soft furnishings. Even a bow thruster is standard.

I have left the biggest surprise to last and that is the price of this classic cruiser. Our test boat, complete with extras including teak decks, teak duckboard, flybridge clears and Morse electronic controls and powered by the supremely quiet Cummins diesel is just \$520,000 drive away. That represents incredible value for a boat with such a high level of fitout and sea going prowess.

Although Clipper Cruisers will fit up to twin 305hp Cummins' engines to this semi displacement hull, giving her a cruising speed of 17 knots, the standard engine configuration - a 220hp single engine diesel brings the price down to \$460,000. Clipper Cruisers are imported by Clipper Cruiser Sales, Raby Bay Brisbane. They are the exclusive Australasian dealers although agents have now been appointed in New Zealand.

There is no doubt, the Clipper 40 Europa, a sistership to the Clipper 34, 50 and new 60ft, is an exceptional cruiser designed to handle the rigors of coastal cruising or the more sedate smooth water boating. For whatever reason, if you are looking for a family sized, mid range cruiser, the Clipper 40 Europa is a cruiser in the classic mould, timeless styling and proven sea going capabilities. There are few better examples of a perfect boating package on the market today.



Specifications:

LOA	40ft 4" (12.41 metres)
Beam	13ft 4" (4.10 metres)
Draft	4 ft (1.23 metres)
Displacement	15 tonnes
Fuel capacity	1,360 litres
Fresh water	900 litres
Accommodation	5 + persons
Engine	Cummins 270 hp QSB diesel
Warranty	5 years structural hull plus one year limited warranty
Price as tested	\$520,000

Test boat supplied by Clipper Cruiser Sales, Raby Bay, Brisbane. Phone 07 3821 4579 www.clippercruisers.net