



Hey there

The latest Clipper motor yacht to hit our shores presents a traditionally handsome profile and a luxurious, spacious interior ideally suited to family or two-couple cruising.

Words John Eichelshelm Photos Will Calver

Phil Gilbert has done well with the range of Chinese-built Clipper motoryachts he imports and commissions. The latest, the Clipper Cordova 48 *Georgie Girl*, is the ninth Clipper he has sold in New Zealand.

This particular model was originally intended as a stock and demonstration boat for himself and his partner Glenda Giddy, so it incorporates a number of layout changes and non-standard features that reflect Phil's life-long Kiwi cruising background.

But it seems the personal touches struck a chord because the boat was snapped up as soon as it landed and is now on its way to a new owner in Marsden

At a glance > lsa x beam 15.66m x 4.6m > engines 2 x Yanmar electronic 380hp diesels > cruise speed 9-12 knots; max speed 18 knots > price as tested \$1.26 million

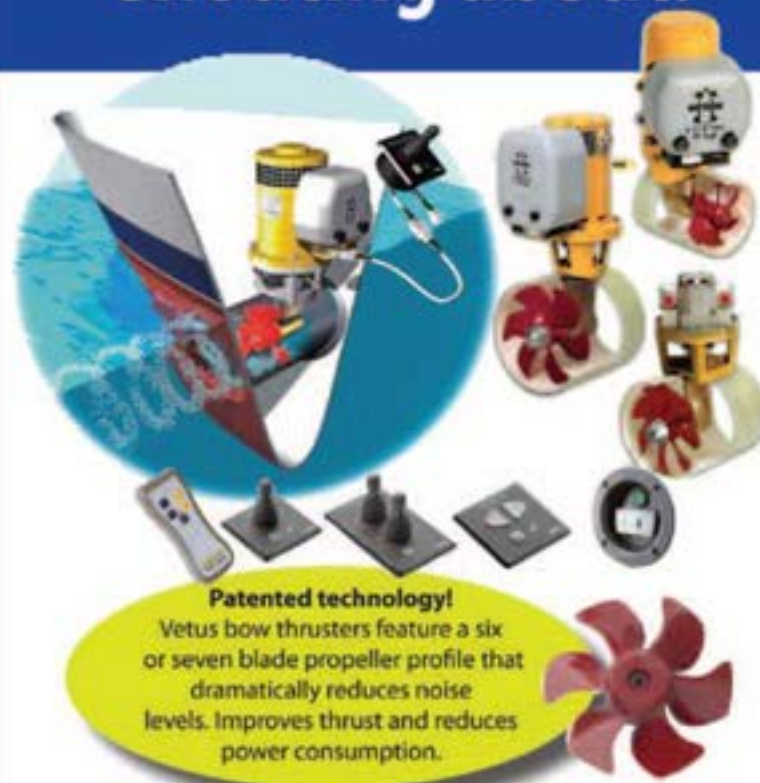


Cove, Northland. *Georgie Girl* is quite an imposing boat. She's relatively tall and her traditional looks and stepped sheer follow the popular trawler model. She has the beam to allow a generous saloon while maintaining fully-functional walk-around side decks with high, teak-capped bulwarks and stainless steel railings all-round.

When we reviewed the boat on a stormy day out of Gulf Harbour, clears had yet to be fitted to the flybridge, but the upper deck is vast and its layout is very user-friendly. The well-equipped flybridge helm is great in summer and the clears should ensure it stays cosy and dry when the weather is less pleasing.

Test conditions > Hauraki Gulf, 20-knots NE, 1.5m easterly swell.

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CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: The saloon features acres of timber but big windows flood it with light; Views all round from the saloon table; The master cabin is well appointed; Bathrooms (R) are luxurious; Cabinetry is solid wood (L); Large domestic spec galley

Solid construction

The Clipper 48 is constructed from solid GRP, including the deckhouse, and foam core for the flybridge. There's a solid keel and the hand-laid fibreglass looks and feels extremely robust overall. She's no lightweight, with a dry displacement of around 19 tonnes, but the semi-displacement hull form isn't meant for speed and the weight gives *Georgie Girl* a reassuringly ship-like feel in a seaway.

As befits a traditionally-styled motoryacht, there's plenty of timber in evidence inside and out. Teak has been used for the swimstep, cockpit sole, side-decks and coamings. Inside, floors are teak and holly although the new owner intends fitting carpets in the saloon. The interior cabinetry and trim is afromosia, an African teak that will gradually lighten with age but unlike the more common Asian-grown teak, it won't discolour with exposure to sunlight.

The overall effect of all that timber is luxurious in a traditional, woody kind of way, but it's never oppressive thanks to large windows and light-coloured ceiling panels with inset Cantalupi lighting. The woodwork throughout the boat is beautifully finished with little touches like moulded fiddles on the edges of the cabinetry and rounded

corners. All the cabinet doors are solid timber, not veneered.

Comfortable living

Phil has altered the saloon layout to improve the flow through it. He's dispensed with an end cabinet, wrapping the settee around the table on the port side instead, and modified the bench settee along the starboard side, which also converts to a useful three-quarter double berth.

The saloon's sliding side windows and massive polished stainless steel sliding door let in plenty of light, even when closed. The impressive door and nicely-engineered sliding hatch above the flybridge stairs are made in Taiwan by Aritex, who supply the superyacht trade. The saloon door is in three sections and can be secured open in different positions. It's a shame about the spot-welds on the flybridge hatch, visible from below when the hatch is closed, but it looks great from above and it's certainly a practical design.

The boat's main helm is below. It's nicely-appointed with comfortable contoured helm seats which complement the ultra-leather upholstery of the settees. Afromosia is again used, this time for the dash and console which houses all

the usual controls, gauges and two 12-inch Furuno Navnet 3D displays. There's a bowthruster for close quarters manoeuvring, a massive teak wheel and Yanmar electronic controls that fall nicely to hand. In typical trawler style, there's a three-window front screen and a sliding sea door giving access to the 400mm-wide side deck.

This is a galley forward layout with the full-size galley taking up perhaps a third of the deckhouse space. *Georgie Girl* is an all-electric boat, with battery banks in the lazarette to match, and is equipped primarily with domestic appliances and fittings, including tapware. Advance Trident fitted the 240V inverter in New Zealand and there are 240V outlets everywhere, as well as two shore power connection points for convenience. Tracvision satellite TV and a Fusion entertainment system is built-in, awaiting a TV of the owner's choice.

A feature of the galley is its wide Corian countertop with a serving counter facing aft. In this boat, Phil has made subtle changes to the counters, repositioned and reduced the size of the overhead cabinets for better vision through the side windows and swapped the positions of sink and cooktop. The new layout works well.

A Smeg microwave-convection oven

takes care of cooking duties, along with the Smeg induction hob, and there's an extractor over the hob to deal with cooking smells. The Isotherm under-bench stainless steel fridge-freezer is one of the few marine appliances, complemented by fridge/freezer/icemakers in the cockpit and on the flybridge.

Georgie Girl has a two-cabin, two-bathroom layout below decks. This is ideal for two couples, or even families, allowing the owners their own ensuite bathroom. The guest cabin has rather ingenious

The Clipper happily pushed through boisterous seas



single berths that push together to create a double berth with a mattress infill for comfort.

Cabins and bathrooms are well-appointed, although there was no screen on the ceiling hatch in the master cabin forward. The bathrooms and cabins use mirrors to good effect and both bathrooms have separate shower boxes with solid teak grates.

In the companionway leading to the sleeping cabins, a series of hatches give easy access to ship's systems such as pumps, tanks and the like, making it clear that Clipper has given some thought to access for service and maintenance.

Re-jigged engine room

This attention to engineering matters is very evident in the engine room. Access is exclusively through the saloon sole, as Phil has done away with a second access point through the companionway stairs in favour of better noise suppression.

A ladder leads down to what is a very spacious machinery room which also houses the Onan 11kVA genset and much more. The Yanmars are easy to move around and there's also good access to the

tanks. Phil had the factory re-jig the engine room, splitting the tankage for better weight distribution. Fuel tanks are now forward, with water tanks amidships.

Entertainment centre

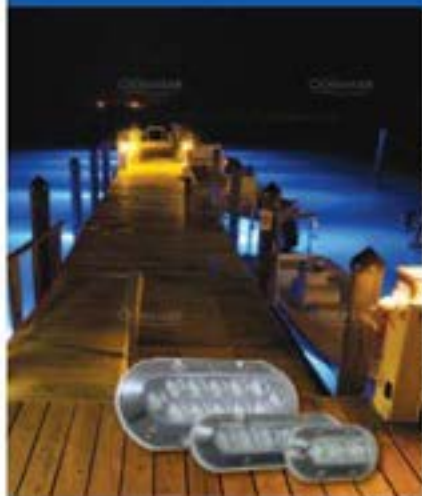
The massive upper deck with its fibreglass bimini top is the boat's natural entertainment zone. Stairs from the cockpit are easy to negotiate and the hatch closes the zones off from one another if desired. The double helm seat and moulded seating with removable squabs create a versatile lounging area. The helm seat drops down to the same level as the settees surrounding the table, its reversible backrest converting it into a comfortable two-person lounger.

There's a fully-featured helm station, plus a sink, electric barbecue and large fridge/freezer/icemaker on the flybridge. Wingdecks offer protection to the walk-around decks below and extra space above. An ADV davit deploys the 3.2m Aquapro tender, which sits on a cradle aft. Phil has shifted the bulwark doors aft to the lowest part of the boat to make getting on and off easier, especially for more mature visitors. This also means you

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can step on and off the tender when launching or retrieving it without having to clamber over the bulwark.

The boat's 4m x 3m cockpit is wider than it is deep and fully enclosed. It's large enough to sit out on it and enjoy a drink, or a bit of fishing.

If fishing and diving are on the agenda, the wide swim platform does the business. Removable stainless steel staples provide security and support the bait board, there's a custom bait tank built into the swim platform and a boarding ladder.

The lazarette is especially roomy since the engines are forward under the saloon. Battery banks (house, start, genset and thruster), inverter, pumps and steering gear are housed there, with everything neatly routed and labelled.

Double chine

We had the luxury of a bit of snotty weather for this review which allowed the Clipper 48 to impress with its solid sea-keeping and safe handling.

Into the wind and waves, progress from inside the cabin was serene although we were thankful for three wipers at times, one for each window. *Georgie Girl* is quiet under way and there was no banging or crashing. Her relatively plumb, convex "Lidgard-style" bow provides plenty of lift explains Phil, meaning we could push along happily at nine knots – or 14, only with more spray – although adjusting the trim made a big

Performance data

Speed and fuel as tested*

Furuno Navnet 3D; fuel burn per engine; noise level, helm (door closed)

RPM	speed (knots)	fuel (lph)	noise (dB)
700	6	N/a	70
2000	9.5	26.5	72
2150	10.3	28	74
2300	11.0	35	74
2500	12.2	41	76
2650	13.5	48	78
2900	15.3	55	78
3250 (WOT)	17.5	76	80

*10% wind and tide. Max rpm 3400.

difference to the amount of white water.

Canadian naval architect Trevor Bolt drew the Clipper 48's hull as a semi-displacement cruiser with a double-chine configuration, something first developed by Ed Monk Sr. The double chine design has two main advantages for a semi-displacement vessel: it allows the boat to have a wider planing surface with the stability of a displacement cruiser at around 12 knots and under, while creating a second narrower running surface with hard chines when coming onto the plane for cruising above 14 knots.

Bolt worked with Ed Monk's son, Ed Monk Junior, to obtain the optimum displacement and cruising performance for this hull.

"Hull speed for this boat is 9.7-10.2 knots and there's no need for a lot of horsepower to achieve displacement speeds, so you could get by with much smaller engines," explains Phil. "But the extra horsepower and her hull design allow

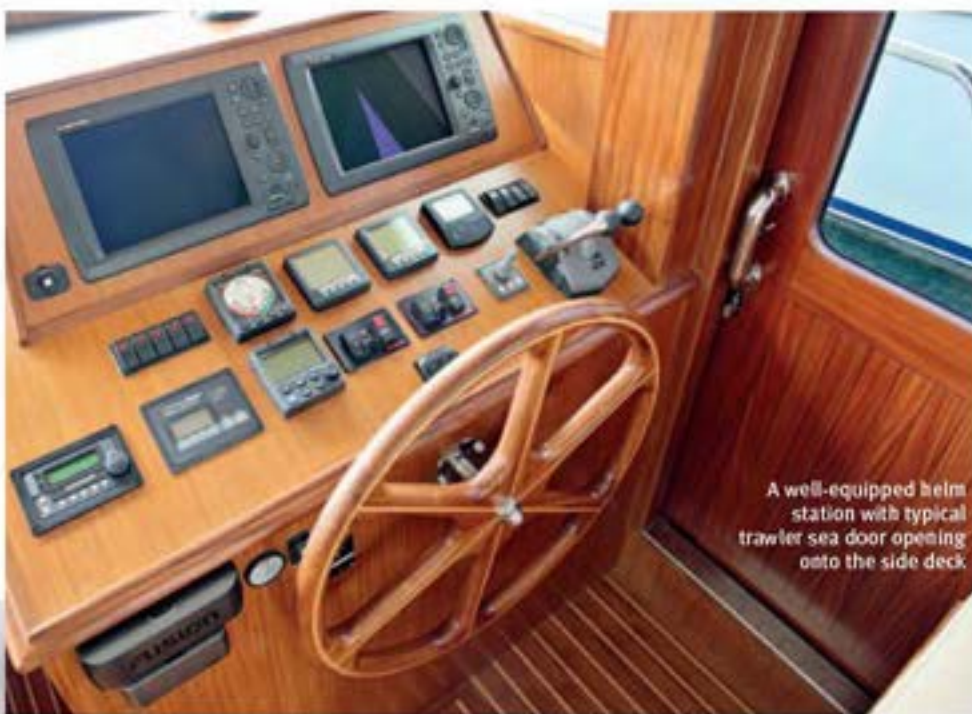
"This attention to engineering matters is very evident in the engine room."





Phil Gilbert at the upper deck helm station which offers excellent all-round vision

"The overall effect of all that timber is luxurious in a traditional, woody kind of way."



A well-equipped helm station with typical trawler sea door opening onto the side deck.

the hull to go faster than that." However, the extra speed comes at a cost, reflected in the fuel burn figures. As Phil points out, if you really want to go 20-knots, you're better off with a planing launch.

The boat is stable in the turns thanks to two hard chines that control any rolling, while weight down low under the waterline helps promote stability and also keeps the boat quiet at anchor. It doesn't roll or swing around on a mooring, as we found when we anchored up in the lee of Tiri for lunch. I can report that the genset is amazingly quiet (56dB at the saloon table) and that the convection oven works a treat.

The ride home with the wind and sea on the stern quarter was even more comfortable than the trip over. At first I struggled to keep the boat running straight, surfing downhill at 14 knots with the wind and a big swell behind us, but it was simply a matter of getting used to it and anticipating with the helm. After a few minutes of yawing around, I got the hang of it and *Georgie Girl* tracked straight and true.

In flatter water, we achieved a top speed of 18 knots at 3250rpm, but the boat was most fuel efficient at 9-10 knots which is a very pleasant speed at which to get around, and most people will cruise at 12-15 knots. =

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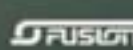
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Clipper Cordova 48

Technical

PROS

- Solidly-built and well-finished
- High-spec interior
- Traditional looks
- Semi-displacement hull form combines fuel economy and speed
- Easy to manage.

CONS

- Open flybridge (but clears to come)
- Styling may be too traditional for some
- Modest cockpit
- Semi-displacement hull form slightly less efficient (8%) than full displacement hull at displacement speeds and less efficient than a planing hull at planing speeds.



OUR VERDICT

The Clipper Cordova 48 is a lot of boat. She's solidly-built and well-engineered with quality equipment and fittings inside and out, and she performs and handles well. She will reward the patient boater with excellent economy at displacement speeds, while offering the luxury of more speed on tap if required.

This model is luxuriously appointed inside with traditional trawler looks that will appeal to many boaters, but especially older customers who Phil believes are a natural fit for the Clipper range.

The Clipper 48 is quite manageable for a couple, perfect for a weekend get-away or a few days with friends and family, but it's also fine for day-trips with a boat-full - there's plenty of room.

Clipper Cordova 48 Flybridge Trawler

> **loa** 15.66m (51' 4") > **beam** 4.6m (15' 1") > **draft** approx 1100mm (3' 7") > **weight** approx 18,000kg > **engines** 2 x Yanmar electronic 350hp > two Hung Shi four-blade propellers > **fuel** 2300 litres > **water** 1400 litres > **cruising speed** 9-15 knots > **max speed** 18 knots > **price as reviewed** \$1.28 million
 > **designers/builder** Clipper Motor Yachts www.clippermotoryachts.com > **boat supplied by** Gilbert Marine phil@gilbertmarine.co.nz 09 426 5895

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