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DUFOUR 382 GRAND LARGE

A well-proportioned and speedy couple's boat

by Zuzana Prochazka

There's always a temptation to buy big when looking at sailboats. However, just about everyone I know—myself included—wonders at some point if a smaller boat wouldn't have been easier to manage, both physically and financially. That is why it's good to see a "couple's boat" under 40ft that provides not only a good turn of speed but comfortable accommodations as well.

Dufour, builder of uniquely styled yachts up to 56ft, drew on its experience with three previous under-40 models when it created its 382 Grand Large. The result is a boat that does just about everything two to four people could want in less length.

DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION

The hull of the Dufour 382 Grand Large is hand-laid in polyester with an ISO/NPG outer layer to resist blistering. The deck is constructed using a dry layup in a mold with a PVC core that is then resin injected to better control the fiber and resin placement, making for a stiff, light structure. As an added benefit, the

injection process creates a smooth lower surface, which in turn allows Dufour to forego the use of any kind of liners.

An integral grid distributes loads from the rig and the L-shaped keel (available in drafts of 6ft 4in or 5ft 4in), which also has a bulb and hefty stainless steel backing plates. A powerful, semi-elliptical high-aspect rudder is mounted on a stainless stock and is filled with closed-cell foam. It is also positioned somewhat forward where it will remain immersed and maintain a good grip even at a pronounced angle of heel. A teak toerail on deck provides extra security when making your way forward from the cockpit.

The 9/10s fractional rig has a deck-stepped Z-Spar mast and twin aft-swept spreaders. A tall mast is an option and brings the total sail area of the Dacron Elvstrom mainsail to 409ft², with full battens as another option. Our test boat had a 95-percent self-tacking jib on a Facnor furler with a slightly curved track just ahead of the mast. However, a majority of buyers apparently choose the optional 333ft² 110-percent overlapping genoa, which will boost performance in light air,

but isn't as easy to singlehand as a self-tacker. There are two backstays, and the chainplates are outboard, leaving plenty of room on the side decks to move forward and aft quickly.

An integrated stainless steel/composite bowsprit is yet another option and a good idea to keep ground tackle from dinging the hull when anchoring. It also moves the attachment point for an asymmetrical well forward and away from the jib furler. Without the fixed bowsprit, the standard choice is a traditional bow roller, slightly offset to port. Our test boat had a Lofrans X2 electric windlass, but with dicey weather moving in, we did not take time out to anchor.

ON DECK

The slightly reversed cantilevered transom drops down to form a swim platform. Because this opens up the entire aft end of the boat, it's easy to board from the dock or a dinghy. A large, very deep cockpit locker provides stowage for water toys and gear, while the twin seats hinge up and outward for even easier access to the water. A step up brings you to the twin wheels, which come standard. On our test boat, a Raymarine chartplotter and instruments were at either wheel with engine controls to starboard.

A large drop-leaf table bisects the cockpit with Lewmar primary winches on the coaming just ahead of the helms. Two more winches manage halyards and reefing lines at the companionway, and the



For video of the Dufour 382 Grand Large, visit sailmagazine.com/videos

mainsheet is on a track just ahead of the dodger track. Fixed ports on the forward cockpit bulkhead bring light into the cabin below or provide backrests for those lounging on the full-length bench seats.

The cockpit has teak slats for good footing, but the fiberglass decks are topped with a good molded-in anti-skid, which anyone who has ever had to maintain teak decks, will appreciate. The only other sign of exterior teak is the grab rails on the cabintop, which in my view, is a win. As is the case on all low-profile production boats that want to retain their sleek lines, the double lifelines are lower than ideal.

ACCOMMODATIONS

The GL 382 offers six different interior layout options, some of which differ only slightly. Basic choices include two or three cabins, one or two heads, a smaller or larger nav station, and the choice of an L-shaped or in-line galley. This modularity helps Dufour satisfy tastes on both sides of the Atlantic, with U.S. couples most likely leaning toward a two-cabin interior with a traditional L-shaped galley to starboard and a single head to port with a large shower stall. Note that while this layout opens up the saloon nicely, it forces you to go with a smaller nav station to port. The larger nav desk to starboard is only available if you elect for a straight-line Mediterranean-style galley.

Our test boat had the L-shaped galley with twin sinks (one large and one small) on centerline, a top-loading Isotherm fridge and fiddles formed into the Corian countertops all around. The two-burner Eno stove also had a Corian cover to add countertop space when the cooker is not in use.

The Details: There are no less than six layouts belowdecks to choose from



The drop-leaf saloon table folds out to connect the two settees on either side, providing ample dining space for six crew. The table has a padded and radiused aft end to cushion any collisions, and a small cubby with a tray in the middle that captures loose items like an opener to help with the wine bottles that may also be stored within.

A double door opens down the middle to reveal the master suite forward with a V-berth bunk and lockers on either side. In the two-cabin model guest accommodations are aft to starboard, leaving a large lazarette to port behind the shower stall. It's great stowage that will swallow up lines, fenders and all sorts of cruising gear.

The finish on our test boat was real Maobi wood with a white headliner and a Maobi laminate cabin sole. A lighter-colored oak finish is also available. Because it is a Dufour, there is always a wine cellar regardless of the size of the model, and the GL 382 has its wine rack below the floorboards at the foot of the companionway. There are numerous fixed ports, four opening ports and four opening hatches, so air and light flow easily.

UNDER SAIL

Our test sail was on Chesapeake Bay in the kind of fluky wind conditions that precede a thunderstorm. With the initial breeze at 10 knots, we swung around to a broad reach at a 110 degree apparent wind angle and slid along at 5.6 knots. When we hardened up, the wind came up as well, and we managed 6.4 knots in 15 knots of apparent breezes at 60 degrees. As we pinched up to 30 degrees, the speed dropped a bit to 5.8 knots, but the wind also dipped to 12. Tacking was easy as the bow sliced through the light chop, and the boat was well balanced with its tall rig and self-tacking jib. There wasn't really much to do but enjoy, exactly as it should be aboard this kind of a boat.

Specifications



LOA 36ft 10in **LWL** 32ft 5in **BEAM** 12ft 7in
DRAFT 5ft 4in (shoal); 6ft 4in (deep)
DISPLACEMENT 15,292lb (shoal); 15,081lb (deep)
BALLAST 4,299lb (shoal); 4,078lb (deep)
SAIL AREA 665ft² (95% self-tacking jib and tall mast)
AIR DRAFT 54ft 1in (standard); 56ft 4in (tall)
FUEL/WATER (GAL) 53/100
ENGINE Volvo Penta 30hp with saildrive
BALLAST RATIO 27 **SA/D RATIO** 18 **D/L RATIO** 198
DESIGNER Felci Yacht Design
BUILDER Dufour Yachts, La Rochelle, France, dufour-yachts.com
U.S. DISTRIBUTOR Dufour Yachts USA, 352-871-0362
PRICE \$245,000 (as tested)

UNDER POWER

A 30hp Volvo Penta diesel is standard, but our test boat was equipped with an optional 40hp engine. With wide-open throttle at 3,100 rpm, we motored at 7.8 knots. A more fuel-efficient cruising speed would be around 7.2 knots and 2,600 rpm. The GL 382 carries 53 gallons of fuel and 100 gallons of water with both tanks in the aft cabin, or cabins below the bunks.

CONCLUSION

Our test boat was outfitted with a few extras, including the tall mast, deeper keel, larger engine, an electric windlass, a rigid boomvang and a full-batten main that was brand-new and felt crisp as a potato chip when we folded it. Delivered to the U.S. East Coast, this particular iteration came in at \$245,000, but a basic GL 382 starts at \$189,000 with oodles of opportunity for each couple to make it their own. ♦

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