



## Salona 45

A new performance cruiser from Croatia  
BY TOM DOVE

**T**he Salona 45 is a modern racer/cruiser. It's a new design from a new company—the first of this Croatian builder's line to enter the U.S. market.

### On deck

It's obvious that this plumb-bowed craft is firmly situated at the performance end of the design spectrum, especially when the deck-box stern seat is removed to expose an open transom and make space for a racing crew. My test boat had the optional dual wheels, plus a tall triple-spreader rig, a Spectra backstay, and a high sail area-

to-displacement ratio. Speed is the priority on this boat.

Racers, cruisers, and day-sailers will all appreciate the handy grabrails, deep diamond-pattern antiskid surfaces, a removable anchor fitting, and plenty of padeyes in the deck. The cockpit is comfortable on a cruise and uncluttered for efficient crew work while racing. J&J Design is known for designing fast, comfortable boats. While our test boat carried Victory sails from a Croatian loft, future boats will have U.S.-made sails. Serious racers will want to talk to their own sail-makers.

### Belowdecks

The Salona 45 has three different layouts suitable for racing, cruising, or charter service. Our test boat had the standard three-cabin configuration, with an offset queen-size berth forward and two matching cabins aft. There's an unusually large shower in the head, handy not only for keeping the crew smelling clean but also as a place to hang dripping foulies. The galley is efficient. The joinery is of good quality, and the white overhead and satin-varnished mahogany bulkheads and trim create a pleasant, livable, unobtrusive interior.



Sail area of over 1,000 square feet keeps the Salona moving in the lightest breeze (left). Accommodations are Euro-styled, with the galley on the port side (top right). The boat powers upwind (bottom right). Single and dual helms are available (below).



Like many European boats, the Salona has a stepover through the passageways between the cabins. This makes the bulkhead stronger and lends a nautical flavor to the doorways, but I dislike it. Maybe it's just me, but I'll trip over that bottom flange or rap my scalp on the overhead every time I go through.

The through-hulls are the usual European bronze type with silver-colored shutoffs, and all the drains carry legible tags to identify them. The wiring is similarly neat and well shielded (it runs atop the longitudinal stringers), but, conforming to European practice, the wires are not tinned. Salona makes the electrical panel, and it is clear and easy to use. Our test boat was set up for butane, but future U.S. models will have propane systems instead.

I appreciated the excellent access to the engine through its front panel. While the side access is only average, routine engine maintenance will be easy. There's plenty of soundproofing, but the noise level at cruising speed suggests there may be air leaks or other paths for sound to escape the compartment.

### Under way

A 2,800-rpm cruise setting yielded 6.5 knots of speed under power as we motored out of Oxford, Maryland, into the Choptank River. There had been little time to prep the test boat before I sailed it, so there

were some small glitches in the systems. The steering felt springy instead of positive and smooth; an adjustment will probably cure that. It is also possible that the engine could be quieted by seating some of the existing gaskets more firmly into place.

I also think that the prop we had for our test was not well matched to the engine. The engine seemed to have plenty of power but needed more torque to control stopping and backing effectively. It was difficult to hold the bow squarely into the wind when backing as it tended to fall away more than it should. The optional bow thruster neatly solved this problem at the marina.

In 8 knots of wind, the Salona accelerated smoothly to 4 knots and tacked through less than 90 degrees. The helmsman can easily trim the mainsheet and traveller, which is mounted directly in front of the helm, as well as the jibsheet, which run to coaming-mounted primaries. We set the spinnaker as the wind dropped, and the boat kept moving well. The hull was stiff, and a few hours of tweaking should make this boat really come alive; all the good basic sailing traits are there.

Stability comes from the standard 6-foot, 11-inch-draft narrow bulb keel. I sailed the standard version, but the optional 8-foot, 4-inch-draft racing keel should make the boat even stiffer. ♣

### CONCLUSION

The Salona 45 is a pretty boat with attractive accommodations, good speed potential, and substantial, neat construction. The builder is new and eager to please, and feedback to the factory from the knowledgeable American importer should rapidly improve the boat. It's a welcome addition to the field of mid-size racer/cruisers.

## » BOAT REVIEW: SALONA 45



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**PRICE:** \$360,928 (base, FOB Oxford, MD); sails and instruments not included

**BUILDER:** AD Boats, Solin, Croatia; www.adboats.hr

**U.S. IMPORTER:** Bollard Yachts, LLC, Oxford, MD; tel. 410-226-0390, www.bollardyachts.com

**DESIGNER:** J&J Design

**CONSTRUCTION:** Hull is built of fiberglass cloth and isophthalic resin and is cored with PVC foam above the waterline. Hull-to-deck joint is an inward facing flange glued and bolted through the teak toerail. Deck hardware mounting points are reinforced with plywood.

**PROS:** High performance potential, good-quality hardware, uncluttered deck and cockpit

**CONS:** Untinned wiring, engine noise, backing under power, steering feel

LOA	44'6"
LWL	40'6"
BEAM	13'9"
DRAFT	6'11" or 8'4"
DISPLACEMENT	22,046 lb
SAIL AREA	1,092 sq ft
POWER	54-hp Yanmar 4JH4 diesel
TANKAGE Fuel/water/waste	71/106/11 gal
ELECTRICAL	100-Ah start battery (1) 170-Ah service batteries (2) 60-amp alternator
DISPLACEMENT-LENGTH RATIO	148
SAIL AREA/DISPLACEMENT RATIO	20.2
BALLAST RATIO	34%

(alternative interior layout shown here)

