

Hanse 495



*The future is here in the new German-built Hanse 495—
more space, greater comfort, better sailing qualities and
a truly modern look*

Hanse Yachts of Germany has been exporting their modern cruisers to North America for nearly a decade. We have reviewed several of the models in the pages of *BWS* and have discovered that the designs tend to stir definite responses from sailors. When you climb aboard a new Hanse at a boat show and mingle with showgoers—often couples who are seeing the boats for the first time—you get a lot of spontaneous reactions.

Some couples take one look and say, *Nope, not traditional enough for us*, while others stop in their tracks and utter *Wow, this is the future*.

Both are right. The newest designs from Hanse are not at all traditional; instead, they reflect the future with as much pizzazz as boats from any builder in the world. The hulls have plumb bows and sawn-off sterns that

contain huge fold-down swim platforms. Under the water, the keels are often racy T-bulbs and the rudders deep, high aspect shapes you would expect on a grand prix racer. The tall rigs have large, full-battened mainsails, while the working headsails are small and self-tacking. The cockpits are huge, have twin wheels and are equipped with big drop-leaf tables. And often the sterns are wide open to the sea.

The Hanse 495 is not your granddad's cruising boat by any stretch. The new boat, like its sisters in the Hanse fleet, is an eye-catching statement of modernist form following modernist function.

SEA TRIALS

It was a flat, calm morning off Manchester, MA when I met up with Bump Wilcox, the local Hanse dealer, to take the 495 for a test sail. An

old Yankee, Bump assured me the fog would soon lift and a sea breeze would build. And so it did. By noon, we could see the harbor entrance and the surface of the water had a few ripples. We fired up the engine, dropped the mooring lines, switched on the bow thruster and pivoted the big sloop in its own length so we could motor down the narrow channel toward the sea.

As we cleared the harbor buoy and started to hoist the big mainsail, the ripples on the water were turning into waves as the sea breeze began to gain enthusiasm. The main has a double purchase, so the halyard is incredibly long, but it is a snap to raise the big, heavy sail. We got it up and drawing and soon had the small 100 percent jib rolled out and trimmed.

The North Shore is iron bound with rocky isles and reefs and coastal cliffs, so we had to pick our way



seaward carefully as we tacked into the still building breeze. The 495, trimmed for close-hauled sailing, tacked effortlessly and accelerated quickly after each tack, all without any sheet trimming. We were sailing at 42 degrees true and making 8.5 knots in 15 knots of true breeze, and she felt well settled, had no weather helm and the decks were mostly dry.

Within an hour, the sea breeze was now a proper wind of more than 25 knots, so we decided to spare the new boat and headed off onto a power reach for a mile or so, then jibed around and ran for home. On the reach, with the wind just aft of the beam, the 495 had no trouble sailing at 10 knots and hit 12 a couple of times in the puffs. And off the wind on a broad reach, she was able to sail at 9 and 10 without trouble.

The one hitch with self-tacking headsails lies in the position of the sheet cars on deck; the tack trims well inboard on both sides, so when you are reaching, the head of the sail tends to twist off and lose power. The result is that you have to sail at about 160 degrees from the true wind and jibe your way toward your



destination. For those who want to sail effectively downwind, you need to rig a lazy sheet to the jib that can be trimmed properly or you need to fly a reacher or code zero on a free flying roller forward.

We made it back in one piece and had a truly exhilarating sail. The Hanse 495 is a remarkably capable design that is easy to handle, has a pleasant motion in square chop and offers a fine turn of speed.

LIFE ABOARD

The Hanse 495's interior layouts make optimum use of the huge amount of volume the designers have allocated in the hull. The topsides are quite high, so the underside of the decks inside the boat are not an impediment to lockers and sight lines. The hull carries its volume quite far forward and aft, so there is plenty of room for large cabin and storage spaces. And the hull has

enough rocker under the water to make room below the floorboards for wine lockers and other storage areas.

The boat Bump and I sailed had the standard layout, with a large double berth in the owner's cabin forward and two large quarter cabins aft under the cockpit. The forward head arrangement puts the toilet and sink in a closet to port and the shower in its own closet to starboard, so both spaces can be used at the same time. Aft, there is a single head and shower that serves both aft cabins and that will be a good wet locker for foul weather gear when underway on a foul day.

The saloon and the fit and finish of the cabinetry are what give the interior its wow factor. The galley lies along the port side of the saloon and is equipped with, naturally, a roomy wine cooler, a two-drawer fridge-freezer, a dishwasher, a three-burner stove and oven, a microwave oven, and two large stainless steel sinks. The granite-colored Corian counters add an elegant touch.

The dinette to starboard is U-shaped and huge. Eight adults will fit around the table, so you can entertain handsomely. The bench amidships doubles as a wet bar and stor-

age area for wine and bar supplies. The table has drink holders built into it that will keep cups and glasses in place while underway.

The chart table on the starboard side is small for laying out large ChartKits, but well suited to the size of a laptop computer and smaller charts. Above it, a removable panel for electronics will be home to the chartplotter, radios, AIS and other navigation instruments.

Headroom throughout the boat is exceptional. The interior is full of light that flows through the large rectangular windows in the hull and the big windows that wrap around the cabin top. Plus, two large opening hatches overhead provide light and ventilation.

The boat we sailed had a light beech wood interior that was warm and attractive. The cabin soles were a very light-colored maple, which added to the interior's brightness and gave the boat a completely nontraditional ambience. The blue faux leather upholstery in the dinette was handsome and set off the woods nicely.

For a family of four or a couple cruising with friends, the interior works very well. And, the saloon is large enough for about 20 of your

friends to gather for sundowners. Add the huge cockpit into the mix and you could entertain 30, which is about as nontraditional a concept as you can get in an oceangoing cruising boat.

Hanse pioneered the "have it your way" process of personalizing your own boat through their online "configurator." Similar in concept to the way you can customize a new BMW, the website allows you to choose your own layout, keel configuration, rig size, hull colors, interior finishes and much more. Once you have your boat just the way you want it, the website passes the information on to the nearest dealer, who will then call you for a more in-depth discussion. Very smooth.

If you are looking for a cruising boat that will take you boldly into the future as well as safely and comfortably to sea, the purposeful and handsome new Hanse 495 is well suited for the job. ~

Hanse 495

LOA	50'6"
LOD	48'9"
LWL	44'5"
Beam	15'7"
Draft	7'8"
Draft (shoal)	6'6"
Displacement	30,900 lbs.
Ballast	8,830 lbs.
Sail area	1,390 sq. ft.
Mast height	72'6"
Engine	72 hp. Diesel
Fuel	75 gals.
Water	165 gals.
Designers	Judel/Vroljik

www.hanseyachts.com
www.usa.hanseyachts.com

