

# LAGOON 440 PRAISED AS ONE OF THE BEST CRUISING BOATS AVAILABLE

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With almost 300 440s built since its launch three years ago, the Lagoon 440 has proven to be one of the most popular cruising catamarans in the world – and one of the most innovative as well.

If you have ever sailed on a cruising catamaran, the first time may well have been aboard a charter cat in the Caribbean. There is no doubt, cruising cats have come to dominate the charter fleets and for good reason. Cats are easy to handle and amazingly spacious. A 40-foot cat has the living space of a 60-foot Monohull and has the added benefit that it does not heel. For novices and old salts alike, a cruising cat has a lot to offer.

Lagoon has become one of the world leaders in cruising cat design and construction, which is not surprising since the company, now based in Bordeaux, France, started life in nearby Nantes as a high-tech custom builder dedicated to building ultra-light, ultra-fast offshore racing machines.

JTA, as the company was then known, built winners of such French classics as the Route du Rhum, TransAt, and many more. One of their boats, christened Pierre 1 by its first skipper Florence Arthaud, became one of the fastest sailing craft of its time. It won the Route du Rhum, and then went on, under owner Steve Fossett and renamed Lakota, to break records for passage times all over the world.

In fact, Lakota was the model for the amazing trimarans that skipped over the waves in Kevin Costner's end-of-the-world epic film *Waterworld*.

Boats like Pierre 1 are technical marvels constructed of the lightest, strongest materials and under the tightest quality control since they are always sailing right to the edge of the technical envelope.

So it is not surprising that when the company branched out into building production cruising cats in the mid 1990s- the Lagoon 37 and 42 that were created specifically for the charter market – that it created boats that were technically advanced, incredibly durable and blue-water capable.

In 1995, after being taken over by Groupe Beneteau and linked with another Beneteau company CNB, also in Bordeaux, the Lagoon we know today was born and the amazing string successful cruising cats began to enter charter and cruising fleets around the world.

During the years between the first Lagoons and the merger with Beneteau, the builders at JTA had pioneered advanced production laminates that are then cured in 200-degree autoclaves was brought to production line procedures. And, today, advanced infusion techniques help to make the modern generation of boats incredibly strong, light and durable.

From the first Lagoon 37 to the upcoming Lagoon 62, which will be launched in the spring of 2009, the company has continued to innovate and to produce designs, building techniques and a corporate vision that brings to cruising boats all that went into the record breaking speeders of yesterday.

## The 440 tells a story

Since hull number one was launched in late 2003, the Lagoon 440 has come to exemplify all of the qualities of the Lagoon line of cruising cats. First of all it has been very successful, with more than 280 of them sailing around the world and more rolling off the line at the rate of a five a month.

You will find 440s in all of the major charter fleets. But, just as importantly, you will also find the boats cruising with private owners aboard in every favored cruising ground of the world. And, they are out there making safe, fast passages across all of the world's oceans. In fact, a Lagoon 440 won the multihull division of the 2007 Atlantic Rally for Cruisers on corrected time.

One of the myths that persists about cruising catamarans is that they are prone to flipping over- since they do not have ballast keels. As a matter of fact, cruising cats have proven to be remarkably stable and safe in ocean crossings. Every French-built cat you find in the Caribbean, South Pacific, Seychelles and beyond got there on its own bottom. And, in all the years modern cruising cats have been delivered around the world, not one has been inverted by bad weather.

The 440 is no different. The design is for a moderate displacement cruising cat that can stand up to the rigors of the sea, the wear and tear of charter or cruising, and remain a good value after years of ownership. Lagoon's approach to meeting these goals is to build solid by very innovative cruising cats in the tradition of their JTA heritage.

The 440, which marks the third generation of Lagoons, sports the company's unique flybridge design. By incorporating a raised helming position, where the wheel is on the centerline and all sheets run to a central position, Lagoon has improved visibility and convenience for those operating the boat while at the same time opened up the aft cockpit to make it a true lounging area.



While the aft cockpit is huge, it also flows dynamically into the interior space of the saloon so you have an indoor-outdoor living plan that is perfect for the tropics or summer sailing anywhere. In inclement weather, you are well protected by the fixed bimini over the cockpit and can, in fact, operate the boat under power from the saloon. This is perfect for those wanting to extend their cruising season.

The cockpit table fits inside the huge U-shaped dinette and will seat up to eight for a meal. It also fits inside the dinette in the saloon where the crew can gather together during cooler evenings.

The galley to starboard has an acre of counter space, twin stainless steel sinks and a three-burner propane range. The 440 comes standard with two fridge boxes and a third can be added to the cockpit.

Forward of the galley lies the navigation station where you will mount your electronics. With the autopilot controls, chartplotter, radar and redundant engine controls set up here, you will have a great position for handling the boat at night when rain or cool weather makes the raised cockpit uncomfortable.

In the owner's version of the 440, the master stateroom lies in the starboard hull. The island double berth is in the after sleeping cabin where there is also a lot of storage and hanging space for clothes. Just forward you have a seating area with its own flat screen TV and a small office where you can install a computer, communications equipment, a printer and even a scanner or copier. In the bow there is a full head with a separate shower, plus room to install a washer-dryer unit.

In the port hull, two guest cabins have been built in each, with its own head and shower side ports in the hull, you will always have plenty of natural light below decks and interior spaces will feel bright and airy. Once aboard you will notice the ample headroom in the salon and in the cabins of both hulls.

At 44 feet overall length and with a 25-foot beam, the 440 provides a lot of area for living, sailing and enjoying life- about the same size as a small studio apartment- but with a much better and more easily changed water view.

### **A true cruising platform**

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When you think of the cruising life, you think of tropical anchorages, white beaches, coral reefs and fun bistros ashore for evening entertainment. For that lifestyle the 440 is a perfect cruising platform since it offers shoal draft sailing that allows you to anchor in special anchorages. And on deck there is plenty of space to stow diving gear as well as water toys like kayaks, sailboards or kiteboards.

The water tanks aboard hold 240 gallons so you will always have plenty of fresh water for afternoon showers and for running a load of shorts through the washing machine. Add an optional watermaker and you will be completely self-sufficient for weeks on end.

The anchoring systems are simple and robust so you are able to set the hook with ease and will be able to move anchorages without breaking a sweat if the weather conditions change.

The sailing rig offers plenty of power for a cruising boat so the 440 will sail happily at 8 to 10 knots in a good breeze. From the vantage point at the raised cockpit or flying bridge, you will be able to see sail trim clearly and will have excellent visibility for navigating through coral waters or when docking in tight situations.

With twin 55-horsepower engines, the boat will motor at 8 knots at cruising revolutions. Since the boat carries 180 gallons of fuel, you will have a cruising range, at more moderate speeds, of a thousand miles or more.

During the evening, you will find that the 440 offers the space you want for inviting cruising friends over for sundowners or dinner. You can fit aboard for a party or you can seat eight for a dinner around the cockpit table.

When the day is done and you retreat to your cabin you will be amazed at the privacy and quite the layout of the 440 affords her owners and guests. The balsa-wood-cored hulls (above the water) provide both excellent strength to weight aspects for the whole boat and the insulating properties that keep the cabins both quiet and cool.

But cruising is not always palm trees and tropical lagoons and the 440 has been designed to meet the rigor of the sea and the realities of sailing and cruising in cooler and less hospitable waters. The sail plan can be reduced easily with roller furling and slab reefing. As noted, the boat can be handled from the nav station in the saloon. Add a simple heating system and the 440 could easily be a fine home away from home in the higher latitudes.

If you haven't already sailed a cruising cat, there are plenty of opportunities to do so. Specifically, to try out a Lagoon 440, you can make that happen through The Catamaran Company, Sunsail, or TMM Charters, which have charter bases around the world. You will be astounded at the space inside this 44-foot cruising boat and by how easy it is to sail and to cruise.



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