

NEW BOATS

BOAT REVIEW: CATALINA 320 MKII

ACCOMMODATIONS

The cabin sole is made of a synthetic laminate that looks like wood but carries an exceptionally good antiskid surface. A one piece headliner runs the entire length of the boat. The solid-teak doors and trim glow in a beautiful varnish finish.

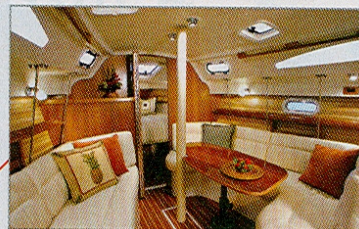
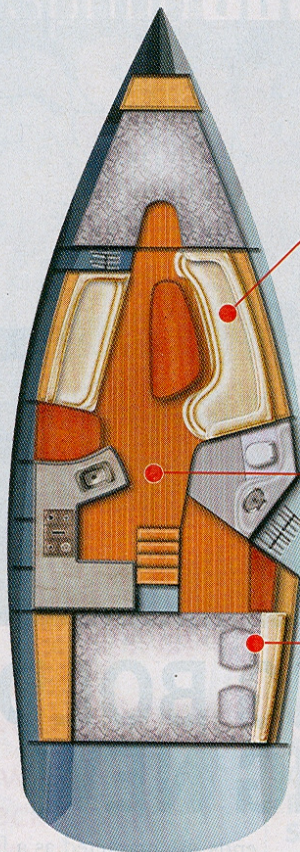
Catalina increased the V-berth length to 75 inches by slightly reducing the size of the anchor locker. As part of the redesign, a hanging locker was added in the forward cabin. The aft cabin has a large transverse berth. The new deck allows for more overhead clearance in the head compartment.

The builder now runs the A/C ducts under the headliner and also prewires the boat for a stereo system during construction, making it easy to add these features later without conspicuous changes. The company also rearranged the nav station and changed the small electrical panel to utilize automotive fuses on the circuits—a mixed value, I think.

The galley sports a big double sink, a handy dry-food locker, and a clever system for holding dishes with pins that Catalina calls “Clouds.” The countertop is Corian.

The interior grabrail layout could use improvement. The handholds in the saloon are too far outboard for some sailors, and only one side of the companionway has a rail.

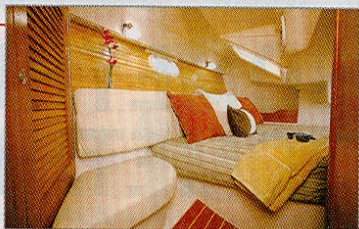
Over all, living spaces on the 320-2 are inviting, comfortable, and bright. The thoughtful choices of materials should make it easy to keep the boat that way.



Saloon headroom is excellent, and the seats are comfortable



The galley is bigger than seems possible on a 32-footer



The aft cabin boasts a large double bunk

VITAL STATISTICS

HEADROOM: Saloon 6'1", aft cabin 6', forward cabin 5'9" » **BUNKS:** Aft cabin 7' x 6', forward cabin 6'4" x 5'10" » **SETTEES:** Port 5' x 1'9", starboard 6' x 1'4", **COCKPIT SEATS:** 5'4" x 1'5"

SPECIFICATIONS:

PRICE: \$117,200 (base, FOB Largo, FL)

BUILDER: Catalina Yachts, Woodland Hills, CA; www.catalinayachts.com

DESIGNER: Gerry Douglas

LOA: 32'6" » **LWL:** 28'

BEAM: 11'9" » **DRAFT:** (std/shoal) 6'3"/4'4"

DISPLACEMENT: 11,700 lbs » **BALLAST:** 4,400 lbs

SAIL AREA: 521 sq ft

POWER: Yanmar 29-hp diesel

TANKAGE FUEL/WATER/WASTE: 19/51/22 gal

ELECTRICAL: (1)4D 225Ah (house), (1) 4D 225Ah (engine)

DISPLACEMENT-LENGTH RATIO: 238

SAIL AREA-DISPLACEMENT RATIO: 16.2

BALLAST-DISPLACEMENT RATIO: 38%

CERTIFICATION: CE Cat A (Ocean), NMMA



OUR TAKE

PROs:

- Attractive, spacious, low-maintenance interior
- Nice speed and handling in light air
- Very good maneuverability under power
- Good line-tail stowage

CONs:

- Clearance between wheel and helm seat too narrow for standing
- Needs better placement of saloon and companionway grabrails
- Noisier than average under power
- Full liner restricts access to inside surface of hull

CONCLUSION:

The Catalina 320-2 is a refined evolution of a boat that is already popular for its good sailing qualities, attractive lines, and good company support. These changes should lengthen its production life by many years.

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EDITED BY BILL SPRINGER

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CATALINA 320 MKII

BY TOM DOVE

» Catalina boats typically have long production runs, and Catalina is more likely to tweak and update a boat than to totally redesign it. After building 1,039 Catalina 320s since 1993, with few changes other than offering a shallower wing keel about halfway through the production run, the company decided it was time to bring this popular vessel solidly into the new century.

The Catalina 320-2 has the same hull, keel, rig, and sailplan as the original boat, so it can race in one-design fleets with its older sisters. The new glasswork gives it a family resemblance to the Catalina 309, which replaced another long-loved vessel, the Catalina 30.

CONSTRUCTION

Catalina builds hull, substructural grid, pan, and liner; there's a gap between the hull and the liner while the hull is in the mold. The full liner extends from the rail down, and the furniture is nonstructural. The company consistently installs neat wiring and plumbing in its boats, and the 320-2 is no exception. The three-cylinder Yanmar diesel engine lives

in a nicely insulated space and turns a standard drive shaft installed with a drip-less packing box.

Instead of building its own spars, Catalina has switched to Seldén spars for the Mark 2. There are no chainplates. Instead, the shrouds lead to ball-and-socket joints connected to tie rods in the hull.

DECK AND COCKPIT

This new 320 has an even wider cockpit and a nicely designed fiberglass table that will

give you a place to brace your feet in rough conditions. In fact, removing the table may make the cockpit dangerous for short sailors. There's space for an inflatable dinghy and a small outboard motor in the sail locker. The lazaret is quite large, and its opening provides access to the steering quadrant and the optional air-conditioning unit.

As an evolved design, the 320 has a number of thoughtful details, including line-tail bags and traveler and the control lines into the deck. While sitting on the helm seat to steer is comfortable, standing in the narrow space between the seat and the wheel soon becomes uncomfortable.

UNDER SAIL: We had 3-to-5-knot zephyrs for the test sail, and the 320-2 moved and tacked easily in the flat conditions. There's an active national organization (www.catalina320.org) and widespread one-design racing for the Catalina 320, so owners exchange information about their boats freely.

UNDER POWER: The 320-2 will turn in its own length when the skipper needs to dodge crab pots or pick up a mooring. It stops and backs positively, with the normal slight kick to port in reverse. There are no surprises or quirks, so close-quarters handling should be gracious.

The 80-dBA sound level at cruising speed is a bit high, and the noise may tire the crew on a long day of motoring through calms. The engine drives the boat to its 7-knot hull speed easily, but racers will want to swap the standard prop for a folding or feathering model to improve sailing performance.