

Hanse 348

The Hanse 348 promises excellent performance under sail with ease of handling, even single-handed. Peter Poland puts it to the test



Hanse

After the Berlin Wall crumbled in late 1989, Hanse Yachts' founder Michael Schmidt was quick off the mark and searched for a boatbuilding property on the former East Germany's coastline. He realised there'd be manufacturing opportunities for those who got in ahead of the crowds.

Hanse's first GRP production yacht was launched in 1993. Compared to the start-up dates of other production boatbuilders—Beneteau 1963, Jeanneau 1964, Westerly 1963 and Nicholson 1962—Hanse was much later on the scene. But after giving its major European competitors a 30 years head start, Hanse is now a market leader. Schmidt later retired to set up YYachts in 2016, specialising in 20-30m carbon fibre yachts.

Schmidt's eye for a bargain helped him get into yacht production in double quick

time. Instead of designing an all-new model and going through the costly process of producing moulds, he purchased the mould tools of an attractive Scandinavian cruiser-racer called the Aphrodite 29. Being a racing man at heart, he went for this pretty and sporty yacht rather than a more sedate cruiser. And thanks to the renamed Hanse 291's performance, looks and extremely competitive price it sold in large numbers.

The revamped 1995 Hanse 292, with a transverse aft double cabin, six berths and aft heads, continued to sell while Schmidt worked on another set of second-hand moulds. The Finngulf 33 was a sleek Scandinavian and the re-branded Hanse 331 was a logical follow on to the top selling 291/292 models.

Schmidt now took the next step and invested time and money in the first 'all Hanse' design. He selected successful

German designers Judel/Vroljik and in 1999 introduced the all-new Hanse 371. Designs were now wider and boasted broader sterns so the 371 offered spacious accommodation as well as good all-weather performance. It was an elegant yacht and set the ongoing Hanse trend of fitting self-tacking jib systems.

Top sellers

Built in large numbers from 1999 to 2005, a well-maintained Hanse 371 still has much to offer. There are 37ft race-boats that are faster, or slower cruising yachts that pack in more space, but the 371's combination of easy handling, speed and comfortable accommodation makes it a happy balance for cruising sailors who appreciate the best of both worlds.

When I asked Hanse's Thorsten Will which were the top sellers, he replied: "In the old days the 370 and 400 (2006

BELOW With a self-tacking jib, the 348 could easily be sailed by one person
RIGHT The bathing platform is a focal point and a very popular option. The decking option is available as synthetic or real teak



Hanse



‘The yacht’s speed and directional stability combined with its balanced rudder blade make steering it a positive pleasure’

you fancy liveaboard sailing on a bigger yacht, you could follow the example of Australians Wayne and Barbie Williams. They show how Hanse has succeeded in bringing big boat voyaging within the reach of many.

Planning to sail from Europe back to Australia via the Mediterranean, Caribbean and Pacific, the couple told me they “flew to Hanse’s factory in Greifswald and looked over 18 575’s under construction. The visit confirmed our choice and we ordered our 575.”

Hanse’s 2023 current range includes the 315, 348, 388, 410, which is launching soon, 418, 460, 510, 548 and 588. Three of the recent models, the 410, 460 – which won the 2022 European Yacht of the Year Award – and 510 are designed by the French Berret-Racoupeau office.

All share the range’s low centre of gravity L-shaped bulbed keels, which are available as a deep or shallow draught option, wide waterlines for space and stability, sleek looks and a self-tacking jib. They all sell and sail well.

Award winner

The Hanse 315, the 2016 European Yacht of the Year Award winner, and Hanse 348 are the smallest yachts in Hanse’s current range of cruisers.

The 348 I tested had the shallower L-shaped keel option, with a draught of 1.55m, as opposed to the deeper L-shaped keel’s draught of 1.95m. Other optional extras included the upgraded Yanmar 3YM30AE engine with a folding prop

instead of the smaller standard 21hp engine with a fixed prop and an in-mast furling system for the mainsail.

The 348 is a direct development of the 2012 Hanse 345 but with an L-shaped deep keel, taller rig and hull windows, and at first sight looked extremely elegant. Its vertical stem, near upright transom, sleek, low coachroof and balanced fractional rig combine to make a good-looking cruising yacht. Its long waterline length of 9.55m compared to 10.4m overall length also promises excellent boat speed.

Clambering aboard via the optional gate in the guardrails was easy and my first impressions of the roomy cockpit were equally favourable. The cockpit table option, with teak sides lowered, gave easy access aft and its stainless steel grab rails and foot brace promised good security for the crew in a blow. The compass and instruments are mounted on the table’s aft end giving the helmsman a clear view.

The optional ‘hinge-down’ bathing/boarding platform aft with teak decking and folding ladder was easily accessed →

models) were the most popular and built when the market was growing every year.” Around that time the 2012 Hanse 575 was also a successful model, with 172 boats sold. UK agents Inspiration Marine, meanwhile, has just taken an order for the 162nd of the current Hanse 588 model.

Describing the evolution of Judel/Vrolijk’s later designs, naval architect Torsten Conradi, said: “With its ongoing success and growing sales, Hanse needed to develop its philosophy towards a ‘yachting lifestyle trendsetter’. So the designs became more modern, and more spacious with the interior moving more towards a modern loft style. Good looks were always a must; combined with better sailing performance than comparable boats on the market.”

Hanses generally feature in the fleet during most editions of the annual Atlantic Rally for Cruisers (ARC), and if

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Peter Poland

Peter K Poland crossed the Atlantic in a 7.6m (25ft) Wind Elf in 1968 and later spent 30 years as co-owner of Hunter Boats. He is now a

freelance journalist and has written extensively for marine publications, including *Practical Boat Owner*



A gennaker or smaller crossover sail can increase boat speed on close fetches and broad reaches when the self-tacking jib is furled away

Hanse

thanks to the space between the two wheels. It was also clear that the helm would be able to control sheets, halyards and reef lines from their position behind the wheels. So I was keen to get going.

As we left under engine, it was immediately obvious that Hanse's specially designed semi-balanced rudder blade gave smooth, effortless control; under sail, the rudder gave equally precise control. According to the instruments, the engine pushed the 348 along at 3.7 knots at 1,500rpm, 4.6 knots at 2,000rpm, 5.6 knots at 2,500rpm and 6.5 knots at 3,000rpm.

Once we were clear of the channel, making sail was a one-man job. The mainsail rolled out from within the mast and the self-tacking jib unfurled from its roller. The halyards, reef lines and sheets lead aft via rope clutches to two primary Lewmar 40 self-tailing winches so the helm can tack and tweak the sheets without leaving the twin wheels. The mainsail operates on the 'German' system with a sheet leading to each side of the cockpit. There are also shallow lockers at the aft end of the cockpit to accommodate halyard, sheet and reef line tails.

Under sail, the balanced rudder and Jefa steering system continued to give light and easy control. The true wind speed varied between 12 and 15 knots and I was curious to see how our 348's performance with its in-mast furling mainsail compared with Hanse's and Judel/Vrolijk's velocity prediction programme (VPP) based on 14 knots true wind.

RIGHT Galley area with standard satin varnished mahogany woodwork finish. Plenty of locker space, double access to the large refrigerator and clever extension to the worktop stowed vertically behind the cooker. The worktop is in standard black quartz



ABOVE Composite upgrades to the steering wheels are among the options



ABOVE Neat GRP mouldings cover the halyards, reef lines and sheets on their way to clutches on the cockpit coamings and self-tailing Lewmar 40 winches

Peter Poland

At an optimum upwind angle of 41° to the true wind, the VPP gives a boat speed of 6.3 knots. At 42° to the true wind, our test boat sailed at 5.9-6 knots in slightly less wind under the furling mainsail (2.5m² smaller than the standard mainsail) with vertical battens. At 90° the VPP shows a boat speed of 7.8 knots under spinnaker. Under just a furling 35.5m² main and 23.0m² self-tacking jib, our test boat at 71° to the true wind clocked up 6.7 knots. If we'd had a larger 48.9m² crossover headsail or an even larger 81.6m² gennaker, we could have added a knot or two more.

Smooth performance

So Hanse's claim that 'this yacht sets benchmarks in transforming the energy of the wind into sailing speed with utmost efficiency' rings true.

Sailing upwind, tacking and sheeting in the self-tacker from the helm positions was simple. From 1989 Hunter also fitted self-tacking jibs to their cruisers. To compensate for the twist in a self-tacking jib on a broad reach and when sailing in light winds, we also invented a sail we called a scooper. This was similar to the Hanse 348's crossover sail that can be set at around 67° to the true wind and also increases off the wind speed after the self-tacking jib has been furled. The far larger gennaker does a similar job but is not as close winded. Our test boat had neither a crossover nor a gennaker; so we could not experiment with either of these interesting sails.

Optional Lewmar 40 self-tailers handle the 348's crossover or gennaker sheets. These are sited on stainless steel 'bridges' ahead of the standard Lewmar 40 self-tailers and rope clutches that control standard halyards, reef lines and main and jib sheets. Mouldings cover these various lines where they run along the coachroof.

Backing up her excellent performance under engine or sail, the Hanse 348 also has spacious and comfortable accommodation for a 34-footer.

The standard layout offers a single aft double cabin to starboard (berth 2m long by 1.5m width at shoulders) with the addition of a shower cubicle in the heads



ABOVE Spacious forward double cabin with French Oak furniture finish option

Hanse



Hanse

The spacious saloon with the French oak furniture finish option. The galley is to starboard and chart table to port

compartment to port. This also gives interior access to a deep cockpit locker to port—also accessible from the cockpit—with space for sails, fenders and a deflated dinghy. Alternatively, twin aft double cabins are offered as an extra option, albeit with a smaller heads compartment, no separate shower area and a smaller port cockpit locker.


Good specification

To starboard, the L-shaped galley has twin sinks, a 130lt refrigerator with access from above and below, and a two-burner cooker with oven. The stove also has a clever covering board that increases the food preparation area and then slots down neatly behind the cooker. There are several nicely finished storage lockers situated under the deck and elsewhere. Unusually in a modern 34-footer, there's also a fixed chart table with storage to port and an instrument panel and lockers outboard.

The saloon has comfortable settees to port and starboard. With end cushions removed, these make single berths (1.58m x 0.6m to port, 1.9m x 0.64m to starboard). There's also an option to convert one settee into a double berth. The saloon table has a clever drawer for bottle storage, and there's stowage under the settees as well as in many overhead lockers above the backrests and hull windows.

In common with other Hanses, the 348 offers several options on the interior joinery finish; mahogany is standard, with Canadian chestnut, French oak or teak as options. Upholstery comes in Monte Carlo cream as standard with other colour options available as extras, and five colours of Porto Fino leather. The standard floorboards are acacia, with light oak, Noce Nero and classic teak stripes available to those happy to pay more.

The forecabin has a double berth (1.86m long by 1.70m wide at the shoulders) and a large locker and hanging locker to port and starboard aft of the berth. There are also overnight stowage shelves above the head of the double berth. Hanse also includes USB charging sockets at the base of reading light pillars—a sensible touch in this era of mobile phones.

Both internally and externally the Hanse 348 is a well-thought-out fast cruiser, offering spacious and well-finished accommodation. The twin wheels with easily accessible sheets, halyards and reef lines enable the helm to control and steer the yacht in most wind conditions. The yacht's speed and directional stability combined with its balanced rudder blade make steering it a positive pleasure. It's little wonder that Hanse has already built over 300 of the Hanse 348 since 2018. 



Hanse 348 specifications

LOA	10.4m/34ft 1in
LWL	9.55m/31ft 4in
Beam	3.5m/11ft 6in
Max draught	1.95m/6ft 5in
Displacement	6.56 tonnes /14,662lb
Ballast ratio	36.51%
Shallow draught	1.55m/5ft 1in
Disp S/D	6.70 tonnes/14,771lb
Displacement/length ratio	201.6
SA/Displacement ratio	17.5
CE Certification	A-4, B-8
Comfort ratio	25.86
Standard engine	Yanmar 21hp saildrive
Fuel	160lt/35gal
Water	210lt/46gal
Builder	Hanse
Price	Standard boat ex works Germany, £174,695, including VAT. Price inc. delivery to the Hamble, antifouling, launching, rigging and extra options as on test boat. £253,148, including VAT.
UK Agent:	Inspiration Marine, www.inspirationmarine.co.uk