

# Pizzazz Polish style!

One of the larger models to emerge from a dynamic and ever-expanding Polish yard, the Delphia 40 is an attractive modern yacht with traditional aesthetics, a sparkling performance and luxurious accommodation. **Duncan Kent** went on board to assess her credentials as an offshore cruiser.

**T**he Delphia yard was originally established in 1990 as Sportlake, building Sportina trailer sailers and small cruisers.

However, in 1999, following a complete re-vamp of its production facilities, it launched a completely new range of performance sailing cruisers and changed their name to Delphia Yachts. It's now grown into one of the largest boat builders in Poland, producing 29ft, 37ft and 40ft cruisers, as well as its smaller trailerable weekenders and lifting keelers, plus the Quicksilver and Arvor range of motor boats.

Delphia is a family owned company and its founders, brothers Piotr and Wojciech Kot are both involved in the day to day running of the business. Its main sailing yacht facility, just outside Olecko, is purpose built to accommodate the expanding range and is one of the most modern boat manufacturing facilities in Europe – producing over 2500 craft a year of all types and fast becoming one of the largest employers in this area with a workforce of more than 650 skilled craftsmen.

The elegant Delphia 40 is currently the largest yacht in the range and is classed as a serious offshore family cruiser. With a choice of 2, 3, or 4-cabin accommodation layouts the boat is intended to

provide a truly comfortable living environment for extended periods, as well as offering a more than competent sailing performance for the enthusiastic sailor.

We reviewed the 4-cabin model which, though primarily designed for charter use, still boasts a very spacious and well-appointed accommodation layout. The extra twin-bunked cabin takes the place of the large ensuite heads of the three-cabin version, with the second heads moved opposite, in place of the generous dressing area of the 3-cabin's Master Suite in the forward section. Otherwise the rest of the interior is identical in both models. In the 2-cabin model, the after cabin is much larger and they've created a deep cockpit locker. It also sports a large U-shaped galley to port, in place of the linear galley of the other models. The forecabin is identical to the 3-cabin boat.

Delphias are all built to Germanischer Lloyd's exacting quality standards. Conventionally laid up by hand they use solid polyester laminate below the waterline, with double thickness around the keel area. The topsides, deck and superstructure are made from an Airex foam-cored composite to reduce weight.

## Under sail

The Delphia 40 has fairly shallow

underwater sections and is moderately beamy, so her form stability is pretty good. Her fine bows pierce the waves without slamming, but still provide enough positive buoyancy to keep her from dipping her nose into the next oncoming wave. Unlike some modern performance orientated yachts with vertical stems, her forward sections have a slight overhang. That said, she also has a generous waterline and performs with alacrity on the water.

As you might expect, the deep fin keel model has extra bite, partly because she keeps her ballast way down low, where it should be. That allows her to carry a good deal of sail aloft, even in a blow, and coupled with the deep spade rudder means excellent handling. She turns sharply through a tack, accelerates back up to speed in a matter of seconds and rarely gives you anything other than a touch of positive feedback on the helm. In fact her rod steering is almost too light – I personally prefer a little more feel when beating, but off the wind she tracks on a dead straight course needing little or no rudder adjustment – even in a swell.

The day we sailed her was a comfortable, slightly unchallenging F4 easterly, and bitterly cold. Tugged up to the limit, beyond which we wouldn't actually be able to move about, we hoisted full sail and were soon hammering to windward at 6.8kn in 14kn of apparent wind, making effortless way through the short chop. Bearing off to a close reach, she picked up to 7.5kn through the water, her quickest point of sail being around 40°-42° off the wind. Beam reaching, she dropped off a little to 7.2kn and off the wind on a broad reach, made

5.4kn. I don't doubt the owner's insistence that she's good for nearly 9kn in a blow and that she needn't be reefed until the apparent wind reaches 20+kn.

She's also an easy boat to handle under sail, with everything close to hand for the shorthanded crew. The wheel is not so big that you have to climb on the seats to get past, which means a single-hander can easily hit the autopilot and walk forward to adjust the mainsheet on the coachroof winch. Her standard fully battened main provides a terrific sail shape and only requires the optional lazyjacks and zip bag to keep her tamed.

## Under power

Our test boat had the standard 40hp D2 Volvo diesel engine driving a 3-blade feathering propeller via a Saildrive unit, which gave her bags of grunt motoring ahead, but took just a few seconds to react when put astern for a crash stop. She spins around through 360° either way in her own length and her owner, Phil, soon proved her close-quarters form by backing her into a very tight mooring in the marina with ease. Getting her out in the first place did require the help of her bow thruster, but when the drying channel is only a half-metre wider than the boat herself, that's understandable. As with many modern cruisers, her topsides are a tad high to give her the headroom below, but she certainly wasn't getting blown about at low speeds like some do, so I personally wouldn't consider the bow thruster a 'must have'.

Options include an upgrade to a 55hp diesel, but I think 40hp is more than adequate. Both Volvos sport a 115A alternator; the Yanmars 60A. With the larger prop, we achieved a comfortable, quiet cruising speed of 6.5kn at 2000rpm. Maximum speed was 7.4kn. Her fuel tank is large and should give a cruising range under power of around 50 hours, or 300nm at 6kn.

Clockwise from left: The Delphia 40 cockpit is wide, spacious and comfortable both under way and in port; she's powerful and lively at sea, especially with her large overlapping genoa fully unfurled.





### Rig & sails

Her rig is a typically modern 7/8th fractional, which keeps the headsail manageable and enables the backstay to be tensioned to flatten out the mainsail when beating in heavy weather. The stout Sparcraft mast has an element of pre-bend set in and is supported via continuous cap and intermediate shrouds, with single aft lowers, all terminating on the same, well reinforced chainplate. Her twin spreaders are well raked to around 20° aft and the backstay is split some 3m above the deck to allow easy access aft. A rigid kicker is optional, as is the mechanical backstay tensioner.

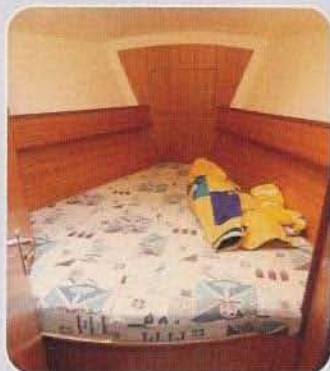
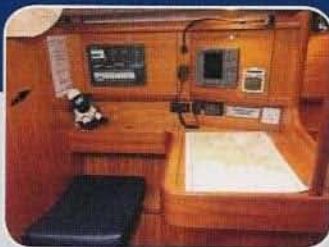
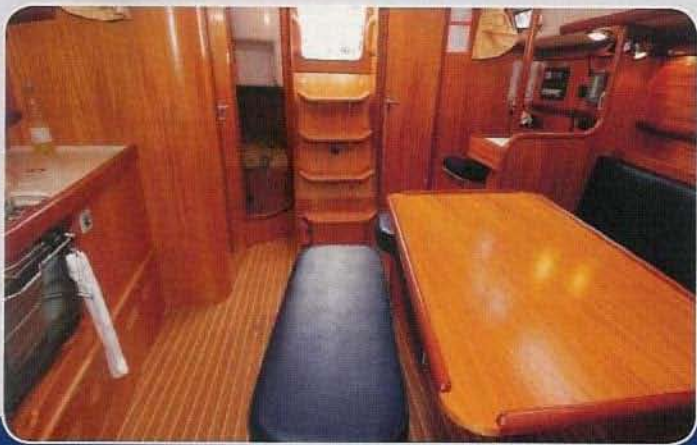
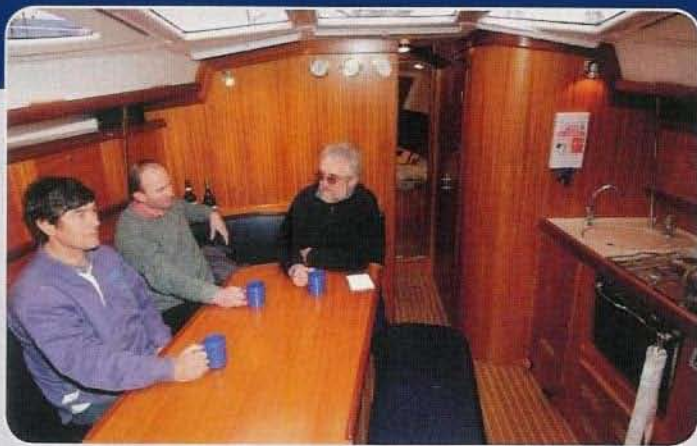
Standard sails comprise a fully battened mainsail with two single-line slab reefs led aft to a cockpit winch and a 145 per cent overlapping genoa on a furler. In-mast reefing is an option, as are lazyjacks and zip bag and a 100m<sup>2</sup> spinnaker with all the gear.

### Cockpit & decks

The Delphia's cockpit works well, because it's spacious and straightforward. Teak inlays on the seats, sole and boarding platform are standard and give her a more classy appearance, while the option for a full bimini and/or full cockpit tent might be popular for those who want to stretch the season. Deck gear is sturdy and well organised, with most sail controls leading through large banks of Lewmar clutches to a pair of Lewmar 30ST winches, though the genoa sheets, end up on a pair of chunky 48ST winches on the coamings beside the wheel. A full cutaway around the wheel makes going aft easy, without the need for fancy folding wheels etc, and the seating is angled for support and comfort under way and works particularly well in conjunction with the foot bar at the bottom of the optional cockpit table (with drinks cooler). There's a shallow locker each side with an integral, drained gas compartment and two cavernous full depth lockers aft. The helm seat drops down, rather than lifting out, creating a step aft to the wide boarding platform without the risk of losing it overboard.

The Delphia's side decks are slightly angled down, which helps you negotiate the windward side more easily when she's heeled, while the moulded non-slip is good, either wet or dry. Her »

# NEW BOAT TEST



Clockwise from left: plenty of seats with stowage; the dinette leaves clear access forward; room for six to eat in comfort; a proper navigation station and chart table; the linear galley is okay in port, but not ideal under way; she has good size berths in all the cabins.



## Owner

The owner of our test boat *Ventis Secundis* (With favourable winds) is Phil Carpenter, owner of Plymouth-based yacht charter company, West Country Cruising. Phil has been on the water since his childhood days when he enjoyed messing about in a 7ft clinker dinghy. A self-taught Laser sailor, Phil's first 'real' boat was a 24ft Tankard called *Half Pint*, which he sailed around Plymouth Sound. He progressed to a 29ft 6in Colvic Sailer that he kept at Burnham-on-Sea in Somerset, cruising up and down the Bristol Channel. Phil says: "In the last 20 years I've sailed a large variety of boats including Moodys, Island Packets, Westerlys, Bavarias, Dufours and Beneteaus, and since my business is yacht sales, charter, repairs and maintenance, I know a good boat when I see one and can recognise its ability to earn its keep. All that was confirmed when last year I visited the Delphia factory in Poland and saw first-hand the build quality and attention-to detail. Because of business commitments most of my sailing these days consists of daysailing around the Sound or jaunts across the Channel to France, so I wanted an easily handled boat with good accommodation whose outlay and running costs I could offset by chartering."



Clockwise from above: Deep chain locker with windlass; big wheel with cutaway seating; her stern platform is large and easily accessed; her high boom carries a fully battened mainsail in a lazybag; she has both shallow and full depth cockpit lockers for all the usual cruising clobber.

chainplates and genoa tracks are tucked well inboard, leaving the decks unobstructed.

The handholds on the raised saloon are at an easy height to grab when going forward, but ahead of the mast there is nothing at all.

The foredeck is spacious and uncluttered, making anchoring and spinnaker work pretty hassle-free. The Delphia's deep chain locker also houses the electric windlass on a plinth below deck level, so little protrudes to catch the bow man unawares, and the pulpit has a step for mooring bows-to.

## Saloon & galley

The modern trend is for bright and airy interiors and Delphia certainly follows this fashion by incorporating large forward and side portlights, as well as an opening hatch in her coachroof. The 3 or 4-cabin model has a dinette/linear galley popular on large charter yachts. They work well enough in port or at anchor, but using the galley at sea can prove trickier than an L- or U-shaped one where cooks can strap themselves in. Though not exactly massive, the galley is well equipped with a full size cooker,



## Specifications – Delphia 40

<b>LOA</b>	11.95m	39ft 2in
<b>LWL</b>	11.05m	36ft 3in
<b>Beam</b>	3.94m	12ft 10in
<b>Draught</b>	1.68m/2.18m	5ft 6in/7ft 2in
<b>(Shoal/Deep)</b>		
<b>Displacement</b>	8840kg/8250kg	19,448lb/18,150lb
<b>(Shoal/Deep)</b>		
<b>Ballast</b>	3350kg/2760kg	7370lb/6072lb
<b>(Shoal/Deep)</b>		
<b>Sail Area</b>	78.1m <sup>2</sup>	839ft <sup>2</sup>
<b>(Main &amp; genoa)</b>		
<b>Fuel</b>	210ltr	46gal
<b>Water</b>	350ltr	77gal
<b>Ballast ratio</b>	37.8 per cent	
<b>Displacement/LWL ratio</b>	185	
<b>STIX</b>	Shoal 50.7; deep 49.2	
<b>Angle of</b>	Shoal 131°; deep 132°	
<b>Vanishing Stability</b>		
<b>RCD Category</b>	A6/B8	
<b>Berths</b>	6 or 8	
<b>Engine/transmission</b>	40hp Volvo D2-40 or Yanmar 3JH4E/Saildrive	



**Designer** Andrzej Skrzat

**Builder** Delphia Yachts www.delphiayachts.com.pl

**UK agent** Fourwinds Marine Ltd 01489 482045 www.delphiayachts.co.uk

**Price** 3-cabin £102,531 inc delivery, commissioning & VAT. Inventory includes fully battened mainsail, single line reefing, rigid kicker, 145 per cent furling genoa, 40hp Volvo engine, Saildrive & fixed 2-blade propeller, fridge, hot water, holding tank, teak cockpit seats & sole, Raymarine ST60 Tridata log & depth, 3 batteries, shore power with 4 outlets, 40A battery charger.

**Popular options:** 2-cabin £1635, 4-cabin £4254, in-mast reefing £1500, backstay tensioner £436, lazyjacks & zip bag £849, spinnaker & gear £3303, shoal keel £1176, lead keel £2129, 55hp engine £2129, sprayhood £1330, 17kg Bruce anchor & 40m chain £429, heating £2800, hot water £1000.

### Insurance Price Guide Delphia 40

Value £102,000: £472.32 Premium, £300 Excess

Comprehensive insurance includes: £3,000,000 Third Party Indemnity and Legal Protection with all taxes paid. Cruising range: UK coastal and inland waters extended to include Continental waters Elbe to La Rochelle.

Premium is representative example of what it would cost assuming a maximum no claims bonus has been earned and that the mooring is acceptable to the underwriters.

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deep top-loading fridge with drain pump, and single round sink. It does lack worktop space, however, and needs a cooker cover for food preparation, unless you want to be permanently shifting stuff about to get in the fridge! On the 2-cabin boat the galley is a larger, U-shaped arrangement on the port side.

The saloon is nice and woody, without being gloomy, and headroom is over 2m (6ft 6in). There are also numerous sensibly placed handrails to grab when under way and plenty of stowage all round in closing lockers and bins.

The table is fixed and fairly basic, but at least it has fiddles all round. Two extra seats make it possible for six to eat together without a crush and gives further stowage inside.

### Navigation station

Her forward-facing chart table (700mm x 560mm) with seat is ideal for cruising and keeps the nav business clear of the living quarters. The electrical panel is good quality with gauges and LED indicators and hinges down for easy fault-finding and repairs. There's room for instruments on a hinged panel above and there's a neat tray for pens, dividers etc, but no bookshelf for pilot books and the like, which is disappointing. A locker in the pod and another in the seat are ideal for bosun's stores, flares etc.

### Heads

In the 4-cabin model we tested the heads are just big enough to shower in, although the forward one is a little more compact than the one aft. However, the 2/3-cabin boats

have a much larger ensuite head. Either way all have fully moulded, 'hose-down' liners making them easy to keep clean, if a little plasticky. Maybe a wooden locker door, rather than tinted Perspex would have helped to break up the acres of plastic. Strangely, only the aft heads is connected to a 45-litre stainless steel holding tank. Ventilation is via small opening ports and hatches, and, at 1.83m (6ft), headroom is good.

### Sleeping cabins

The 3 and 4-cabin models have two good size after cabins with generous 2.10m L x 1.52m W (6ft 10in x 5ft) double berths and 2.0m (6ft 6in) headroom. Each has floor space and clothes lockers with

an opening port and an overhead hatch for natural light and air. Clearance below the cockpit sole is enough not to make it claustrophobic. The 2-cabin boat has an even larger berth aft with an ensuite head/shower.

In the 4-cabin charter model the forecabin is obviously more compact. While there's little change to the 2.0m L x 1.50m W (6ft 6in x 5ft) vee berth size, the large dressing area of the 2/3-cabin master suite becomes a corridor, with the heads to starboard and a twin-bunked cabin opposite. The forecabin retains some of the dressing space and has a clothes locker, which, unlike the twin cabin, is much more basic and compact. ■

### Verdict

The Delphia 40 is sensibly designed and built to exacting standard. Her basic inventory is average, but even with the popular options she's good value. At sea she's a quick and positive performer with no obvious quirks or peculiarities and is easy to control even with a small crew.



#### For

- Well built
- Very spacious and comfortable
- Effortless fast sailing

#### Against

- Linear galley not good at sea
- Heads compact for 40-footer
- Steering a touch too light