

NEW BOATS

Belize 66 Day Bridge

With improved social spaces and flybridge living comes an already popular, classically styled cruiser.



LOA: 69'3"
Beam: 17'11"
Displ.: 85,000 lbs.
Fuel: 1,188 gal.
Water: 185 gal.
Power: 2/1,000-hp
Volvo Penta D13 1350s
Cruise Speed: 23 knots
Top Speed: 30 knots



On the wall in my office is a magazine rack that proudly displays our previous covers. Staring down at me while I build out spreadsheets and log into conference calls, they remind me of past adventures and old friends. I'm pretty OCD about cycling our newest issue into the rack and moving oldest ones out ... except when it came time to relocate our April 2019 issue. I didn't have the heart to take it down. It was a pretty sharp cover: Bahamian clear water, the modern-yet-classic lines of the Belize 66 in the background. Okay, and yes, the model on the stand-up paddle board in the foreground didn't hurt.

A beautiful boat in a beautiful place—it's a powerful combo. When I learned that a flybridge version of the 66 was making its debut at the Ft. Lauderdale show, I felt trepidation. I've seen it far too many times: a pretty boat's aesthetics sacrificed for the convenience of a flybridge.

My fears, in this case, would be misplaced. As I fought my way past show-goers in a crowded Riviera booth (Belize is a Riviera brand) I breathed a sigh of relief: The 66 Day Bridge was every bit as visually pleasing as her sistership.

I found a like-minded colleague in *Passagemaker* magazine Editor-in-Chief Andrew Parkinson. I always appreciate getting another editor's perspective of a new model, so we toured the new-comer together. Maybe it's because we were on a steady boat-show diet of coffee and protein bars, but our first stop was the cockpit where we stared just a bit too long at the double grill (the Aussie way!) to port. Visions of cheeseburgers danced in our heads.

Once we got past the grill, we noticed that the boat on display

came equipped with an IPS joystick on both sides of the cockpit—something that will undoubtedly come in handy when docking.

Making our way into the salon I made note of the grippy quality in the floor; it was a feature I really liked in the prior 66. Riviera infuses micro-balloons in their resin to give you just the right amount of grip underfoot without feeling like sandpaper. It's a touch I hope other builders steal.

Andrew pointed out yet another practical design feature on our way to the flybridge. "One thing I'm noticing is the nice, generous-sized steps," he said. Indeed, you could fit your entire foot on each step, not a given on other boats of this size. "I'm also always worried when walking up to the bridge that I'm going to bang my head on something, but I'm not seeing any obstructions here. It's a nice easy entry."

My first reaction to the flybridge is that the space is deceptively large. From the dock the space looked like a sport bridge that could accommodate maybe a small family. Once on deck, we realized you could have 10-plus guests in this space, and they would all have a place to sit. A canvas enclosure was a surprising (you don't see much canvas on newer models in this genre) but nice touch.

Speaking of underway, the 66 comes powered by twin 1,000-hp Volvo Penta D13 IPS 1350s that should lend this (three or four stateroom equipped) cruiser a top end near 30 knots.

Filled with practical features and sporting the same stunning lines as her sistership, it took only a little imagination to picture Bahamian water appearing before the bow of the Day Bridge. I think it just might be time to update that cover on my wall. —Daniel Harding Jr.