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Ocean Alexander 90

THE BEST OF ASIAN CONSTRUCTION AND NORTH AMERICAN DESIGN AND ENGINEERING

BY ROGER McAFEE

OCEAN ALEXANDER YACHTS have been built in Taiwan since 1978 when Alex Chueh, Ocean's founder, met well-known marine designer Ed Monk Jr. at the designer's home on Bainbridge Island, Wash. After that meeting, the builder began developing a line of vessels combining the best of Asian construction with (arguably) the best in North American design and engineering, and our test 90-footer is an excellent example of what such a combination can produce.

The hull is solid fiberglass below the waterline with an end-grain balsa-cored superstructure. The hull from the waterline to the deck is closed-cell foam-cored. Ocean Alexander uses unidirectional carbon fiber as reinforcement in areas requiring extra strength, such as the crash bulkhead and hull stringers.

The Ocean Alexander design team also makes use of structural aluminum I-beams, a feature that brings high strength and stiffness without adding much weight. The corrosion-resistant aluminum beams are used in window mullions, the deckhouse sides, and as main floor and ceiling beams. The I-

beams tie into composite cross-beams and stringers to provide a strong, stiff, lightweight monolithic structure. Ocean Alexander is one of the industry leaders in the mating of aluminum and fiberglass.

Ocean Alexander hulls have been built with aft tunnels for more than two decades. These tunnels are designed so that the props are tucked up into the hull, which reduces the vessel's draft. They also allow for a more horizontal shaft angle, which improves driveline efficiency, reduces fuel consumption and increases speed. Hull tunnels allow the engines to be moved farther aft, creating more

living space in the beamiest part of the hull.

The interior woodwork on our test 90 is Sapele, a luxurious hardwood native to Africa, and the fit and finish is excellent throughout. Sapele (sometimes spelled Sapelli) is about 16 percent stronger and is less affected by water than red oak, making it an excellent choice for yacht interiors. The woodwork, combined with top-quality interior fittings and very comfortable soft furniture, gives the interior of the vessel the ambiance of an exclusive private club. Top that off with granite countertops throughout — even in the crew quarters — modern vanities in the head spaces and first-class hardware, and the 90 is second to none in its size and price range.

WELCOME ABOARD

Access to the vessel is via a pair of hull gates through port and

An Inside Look

starboard bulwarks or via twin spiral staircases off the large swim grid. Our test boat has solid bulwarks all around, with the oval stainless rail acting only as a handrail. This feature makes movement along the sidedecks safe and easy in all weather conditions. Teak deck covering provides good anti-slip footing even in the rain.

Ocean Alexander has listened to boaters who have been asking for a deckhouse cabin top that projects far enough aft to protect the entire aft deck from either the pelting rain of the Pacific Northwest or the broiling sun of the tropics. Rain coming off the deckhouse will dump onto the swim grid and not into the aft deck lounge.

Entry to the deckhouse is from the aft deck through a set of double glass doors to an aft lounge. The double doors and large windows in the deckhouse aft wall allow for plenty of natural light, even on dull days. Forward of the lounge is a formal dining area, complete with an eight-seat dining table. Forward of that is a gourmet galley, complete with granite countertops, a Sub-Zero refrigerator and freezer, a double stainless sink, a microwave/convection oven, a separate electric cooktop and oven, a wine cooler, and a separate instant hot water tap. Contract caterers and gourmet chefs will love this galley.

Forward of the galley, in the position usually occupied by a deckhouse helm station, Ocean Alexander designers placed a large U-shaped dinette for less-formal dining, with a complete pass through to the galley. This area is surrounded by window glass, keeping everything bright and cheerful.

ACCOMMODATIONS

The vessel's 22-foot beam is evident in the belowdecks living space, especially in the full-beam master stateroom, with its full-width double head, granite countertops and plenty of storage. This stateroom, complete with hull windows, a very comfortable king bed and high-performance audiovisual equipment, is better set up and finished than most five-star



TESTER'S OPINION

The Ocean Alexander 90 — a production vessel that is as well fitted out and finished as many custom builds — continues the tradition established by the builder more than three decades ago.



The interior of the Ocean Alexander 90 — full of Sapele wood, granite, top-quality fittings and soft, comfortable furniture — has the ambiance of an exclusive, private club.

hotel suites. Entry to the stateroom is through a set of elegantly finished double doors. The other two guest staterooms on the accommodation level are slightly smaller but equally well appointed and finished.

All three staterooms are entered off an elegant, well-finished lobby at the

foot of the spiral staircase down from the main deck level. This design element ties the accommodation space into the overall elegance of the rest of the vessel. In many large vessels, the accommodation space is often "hotel like" in appearance, with a single companionway feeding to individual

Ocean Alexander 90

SPECIFICATIONS

LOA	91 ft., 3 in.
Beam	22 ft.
Draft (max)	6 ft., 5 in.
Weight	209,000 lbs.
Fuel	3,000 gals.
Water	650 gals.
Holding	200 gals.
Engines	Twin MTU 10V2000, 1,600 hp
List Price	\$8,195,000 (base)

CONSTRUCTION

The hull is solid hand-laid fiberglass below the waterline and foam core on the hull sides. The superstructure is balsa-cored fiberglass. Structural aluminum I-beams are used in the floors, cabin sides, window mullions and overheads. High-strength areas are made of carbon-reinforced structure.

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Twin MTU 10V2000 engines; bow and stern thrusters; zero-speed ABT stabilizers; color-coded wiring; hydraulic 1,750-lb. yacht crane; engine room fire extinguisher system; air compressor in engine room; SeaTorque shaft system; 2 30-gal. domestic hot water tanks; aluminum fuel tanks w/sight gauges; Racor filter system; fuel-polishing system; fresh- and seawater washdowns on foredeck; fresh-water washdown and shower in cockpit; stainless steel exterior hardware; inlets for dockside phone, TV and water; heavy-duty AGM batteries for both house and engine; 4 kw inverter/charger; 53 kw generator; Octoplex NMEA 2000 electrical control system; 2 100 amp shore receptacles; Delta T engine room positive ventilation system; chilled-water air-conditioning system; dedicated engine room air conditioning; granite countertops throughout; Sub-Zero refrigerator/freezer; 27-in. Gaggenau electric cooktop; 27-in. Gaggenau oven range; 30-in. Jenn-Air over-the-range microwave/convection oven; double stainless sink; garbage disposal; trash compactor; drawer-type shelves in galley cabinets; dishwasher; and more.

OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT

See dealer for a complete list.

BUILDER

ALEXANDER MARINE LTD., Kaohsiung, Taiwan, and Shanghai; oceanalexander.com

WEST COAST DEALERS

Ocean Alexander Washington, Seattle; (206) 344-8566; oceanalexanderseattle.com
Ocean Alexander California, Newport Beach; (949) 515-7700; oceanalexander.com

staterooms. Not so with the 90. It's a brilliant touch.

The crew quarters are accessed both from the aft deck and through a watertight door off the swim step. The area is well finished with a microwave and a refrigerator, granite counters, wood paneling, and a large head with a vanity and a separate shower stall.

PERFORMANCE

The helm station on the 90 is located in the Skylounge, which is as well finished as the rest of the vessel. A large and comfortable L-shaped settee, three doors — port, starboard and aft — and two large opening windows in the aft lounge wall give the Skylounge an "outdoor" feeling without the weather problems associated with an open flybridge. The Skylounge is heated and air conditioned and would be as comfortable bashing north to Alaska as it would be poking around in Mexico or the Caribbean.

The dash has plenty of room for all the electronics necessary to operate a vessel this size, but it's not cluttered, and all instrumentation is easily and clearly visible from the helm seat. In other words, the helm design team has created a boat-like station rather than one that looks like it came from a 747.

Visibility from the helm is excellent. It is high enough and forward enough that the sight lines allow good visibility forward, without the large blind spot that can be created by the bow shadow, which on this vessel is so small it is insignificant. Visibility from the helm station is excellent all around, and handling the vessel from there presents no problem. In fact, the powered hydraulic helm chair allows a skipper, no matter how short or tall, to adjust the chair height to a comfortable sight level with the touch of a switch. This is a significant feature during long passages.

The twin 10-cylinder, common-rail MTU diesels, producing 1,600 hp a side, ran smoothly and quietly throughout our test. At 730 rpm, we made 6.5 knots and the noise level in the Skylounge, the vessel's control center, was 60 decibels with all three doors open. The noise level in the main salon, as

close to the engine room as possible on the main deck, was 62 decibels.

At 1000 rpm, our speed was 8.5 knots and the fuel burn was 7.8 gph. At 1500 rpm, we were making 11.8 knots and burning 36.2 gph. With the twin diesels spinning up to 2000 revs, we burned 86 gph and made 14.1 knots. Wide open, 2500 rpm, gave us 17.7 knots with a fuel burn of 146 gph.

We dropped the speed down to 10 knots, 1215 rpm, and the fuel burn was a total of 10.4 gph, excellent mileage for a 209,000-pound vessel. At all times during our test, the vessel responded well and smartly to the helm and exhibited no bad habits at any speed.

All speeds were measured by an independent GPS, and fuel-consumption figures came from the engines' onboard computers. Stabilizers and trim tabs were locked into neutral.

As our test proceeded, I noted the absence of fishing rod holders, a serious oversight for a Pacific Northwest vessel plying the best sportfishing waters in the world and equipped with a swim step that would be an excellent fishing platform. However, as part of our test I checked out the engine room and found, attached to the overhead in the ample walkway between the two engines, rods and rod holders. This placement makes good sense, since rods and reels will dry quickly after each use and stay in good repair much longer than if left outside.

The engine room space is well laid out, with plenty of room around all of the systems for service or repair, which one would expect on a vessel with a 22-foot beam.

The Ocean Alexander 90 — a production vessel that is as well fitted out and finished as many custom builds — continues the tradition established by the builder more than three decades ago. The design and engineering are excellent. At displacement speed, about 10 knots, this vessel is very economical to operate, making about 1 nautical mile per gallon. It handles well, and it is luxurious and very quiet throughout. If necessary, this vessel can easily be handled by an experienced couple in good weather. 🍀