

THE IDEA OF A YACHT WITH CLASSIC APPEAL AND MODERN TECHNOLOGY HAS BEEN DONE BEFORE, BUT FEW DO IT AS WELL AS THE MOODY 45 CLASSIC, WRITES MATTHEW HENRY.

IN THE
MOOD

SAM TINSON



The brassy tones of a Louis Armstrong trumpet solo waft through the summer air and ring out over Pittwater, as the Moody 45 Classic's stereo flicks to the jazzy ballad 'Le Vie En Rose'.

The iPod has been shuffling through an eclectic mix of modern rock and pop numbers all afternoon, but not until now has a song seemed so in tune with our surroundings. Almost instantaneously, all three of us onboard exchange glances – clearly we're sensing the same thing.

"It's like something out of *The Great Gatsby*," comments Bob Vinks from behind the helm, equally conscious of the time warp which seems to have descended on the boat.

A quick glance around the Moody 45's deck at the cream-coloured gelcoat, the gleaming stainless steel winches and old-style cowl dorade vents on the coachouse roof, and it's not too hard to imagine for a moment that we've been whisked back in time to the Roaring '20s on the waters of Newport, Rhode Island, in some scene from an F. Scott Fitzgerald novel. The 45 Classic's elegant lines and her oval porthole windows just about complete the picture – all that's missing are some waistcoats and straw boater hats for her crew.

I'm onboard with Bob Vinks and Greg Cockle from the Windcraft team for the first Australian review of the Moody 45 Classic, and with a variable 15-knot nor'easter blowing down the Pittwater it's the perfect chance to sample the company's brand new, but classically-inspired, offshore cruiser.

Soon Satchmo's raspy trumpet gives way to his rich, textured vocals: "Hold me close and hold me fast, the magic spell you cast, this is le vie en rose."

'Life in rose hues' is a pretty fair translation of the schmaltzy French lyric, and it's a nice summation of the Moody 45 Classic concept. Like its smaller 41-foot sibling in the Classic series, Moody's 45 looks back on a romantic yachting era through the lens of a modern yacht maker. The look might be vintage, but the Dixon-designed hull shape, GRP construction techniques and engineering systems are all right up to scratch with the high standards set by Germany's Hanse Group, which bought the Moody brand in 2007. Dixieland jazz played through an iPod digital audio system – it's the Moody Classic 45 in a nutshell.

Above deck, flowing lines and curves permeate the design. This is especially welcome in the cockpit



CLASSIC BEAUTY
The interior strikes a balance between traditional and contemporary flavours with glossy mahogany, white leather sofas and round porthole windows.

where the broad benchseats feature round, tapered backs – throw in some cushions and it'll be as comfy as an old Cadillac. The central table has two foldout leafs and can be removed completely, leaving just the stainless steel frame in place as a footrest for when she heels over.

Teak flooring comes standard in the cockpit, but the owner of our test boat – which happens to be the first Moody 45 Classic in Australia – has made what we think is a good choice by investing in the optional teak sidedecks for an all round traditional look and feel. The optional glass windshield is also a stylish addition to the cockpit with a functional twist, which you and your guests will certainly appreciate when sailing upwind in a seaway.

For the helmsman, each of the two helmwheels has its own rounded bucket seat with a good view forward

over the bow and within easy reach of the primary winches. With a self-tacking jib, mainsail in lazy jacks and electric power for push-button operation of the two aft winches, the 45 Classic is a breeze to sail short-handed or with a group of non-sailing friends. On the helm, it's a comfortable boat in your hands and with the standard sail package we easily clocked 6.8 knots in 15 knots of true, sailing at between 40- and 30-degree angles upwind. It feels more solid than it does sprightly, as you would expect from a genuine offshore cruiser of any era.

A canvas bimini is slung over the aft cockpit, which is locally made – "you can't trust the Europeans to build a quality biminin for local conditions,"

SAM TINSON



says Vinks. The same can't be said about the hull and deck, which is cut using Hanse's high precision five-axis milling machines, which eliminate any mismatches or play in the joints for a super snug fit. The yacht certainly feels rock solid with no signs of corner cutting from the German builder.

Above the deck is a Selden rig and North sails, which along with chromed self-tailing Lewmar winches ensure all the hardware is of a high quality.

Descending the companionway steps, the impression of classic charm continues with glossy, warm mahogany timber contrasted with white leather upholstery. For a brighter feel, Moody offers a choice of teak or American cherry interiors, but the standard mahogany will certainly appeal to the traditionalists.

There are two tables in the main saloon with comfortable seating for eight diners with space to spare. An LCD TV is neatly concealed behind the cane wicker rattan cabinet doors on the port side, next to which is the Phillipi electrical switchboard, VHF radio and optional Fusion digital audio system. Fusion has installed a remote control in the cockpit, right next to the helm, so the driver can shuffle through their music collection all day without leaving the wheel.

Forward of the main saloon, the



BUILDER	Hanse Group
DESIGNER	Dixon Yacht Design
INTERIOR	Design Unlimited
LOA	14.03m
LWL	12.20m
BEAM	4.20m
DISPLACEMENT	12.20 tonnes
DRAFT	2.20m (cruising) or 1.85m (optional)
BALLAST	3.35 tonnes
SAIL AREA	112m ²
MAST & BOOM	Selden
DECK GEAR	Lewmar
SAILS	North Sails
BERTHS	6
CABINS	3
ENGINE	Volvo D2-55 55hp
WATER CAPACITY	320 litres
FUEL CAPACITY	220 litres
CE CERTIFICATE	A (ocean)
BASE PRICE	\$499,000

V-berth master cabin has a big, bright skylight for sunshine and fresh air to stream in. To starboard is a combined head and shower with plenty of space to move around. The two guest berths (aft) share another combined head/shower on the port side, and have their own robe, bookshelf and reading light. The L-shaped galley has corian benchtops in stylish white, offering plenty of space to work, and a shelf for a microwave concealed in the cabinetry above the cooktop.

Sailing back down Pittwater after our test, we pass an Adams design heading north – a boxy, angular yacht which no doubt looked cutting edge in its day, but has dated horribly. It raises the discussion about the longevity of the 'classic' style of the Moody yacht, and the consensus onboard seems to be that the 45 Classic's timeless look will most likely be as appealing in 20 years as it is today.

For that reason alone, a 45 Classic seems like smart buying, and at \$499,000 it strikes you as a lot of boat for the price. But the true appeal of this classic beauty is perhaps more emotional than intellectual. As the great Satchmo put it, "Give your heart and soul to me, and life will always be, le vie en rose." ♪

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