

The Orana is an all-round boat: it will allow you to set off to discover the world comfortably and with confidence as a family!



ORANA 44

FOUNTAINÉ-PAJOT SURFS THE OCEAN CRUISING WAVE

AT FOUNTAINÉ PAJOT, THEY HAVE ALWAYS LIKED THIS NICHE IN THE MARKET – REASONABLY-SIZED BOATS WHICH CAN BOTH SHINE IN A CHARTER FLEET, AND AT THE SAME TIME APPEAL TO OWNERS LOOKING FOR AN OCEAN CRUISING BOAT...



The sunbathing area situated just aft of the steering position is very pleasant, both at sea and at anchor!

A FLATTERING RELATIONSHIP

In 1992, the La Rochelle-based builder brought out the Venezia 42, 126 examples of which were sold, to the delight of catamaran charter companies looking for a boat which was easy to handle and maintain. These qualities were very quickly understood by a number of offshore sailors, and Venezias can still be found today in the four corners of the world. To replace this best-seller, the builder offered the Belize 43 in 2000, which

could be distinguished from its predecessor by a more modern design, as well as the wish to offer clearly improved performance. Result: 174 examples were built...

By renewing its range of sailing catamarans, (Mahé 36 - Orana 44 - Salina 48 - Galathea 65), the builder's intention was to update its boats by perfecting the general ergonomics, both in the accommodation and the deck plan. And this is what we found attractive during the test we carried out on the Orana 44...



The deck plan is a success! The Orana can be handled singlehanded with no difficulty at all.

SILHOUETTE

On seeing the Orana 44 for the first time, the thought that comes into your mind is that this catamaran is part of the 'big boat' family, and would be capable of taking you wherever you want to go... The lines are pleasant, and the proportions are perfectly suited to the image of a reassuring, ocean-going catamaran. The sugar scoops are wide and welcoming; the rigid bimini is well integrated into the overall lines and there is once again the famous cabin top, the builder's indisputable signature. The straight bow and the freeboard height reinforce the impression of an imposing and robust boat, but without making it seem bulky. The only small thing we could criticise is the side of the sugar scoop, which makes the overall silhouette slightly more cumbersome when viewed from astern.

ARCHITECTURE AND CONSTRUCTION

You don't change a winning team... So very logically, the company called on the same pair of architects, Joubert/Nivel, as for the Venezia and the Belize. Their (very) great experience with multihulls has allowed them here to succeed in a challenge which is not as simple as all that: to offer a good

living space aboard, excellent headroom, a feeling of volume, without for all that having to put up with hulls which are too wide and a cabin roof which is too prominent!

Out of the water, the Orana reveals its classic underwater lines, which are tight enough to resist excessive pitching, and the slimness and high aspect ratio of the keels, which should give good results. The rudders, the saildrive legs and the twin-bladed propellers show a concern for reducing drag; overall, the wetted surface area and the general geometry should allow this 44-footer to sail well on all points of sailing.

As for the construction, the builder has perfectly mastered infusion techniques, which allows it to respect the environment, as well as offer a completely homogenous composite. This can be felt in the overall weight of the boat and its robustness...

LIFE ABOARD

Climbing aboard the Orana, we immediately felt perfectly comfortable. The volume, the available space, the ventilation and the light colours of the soft furnishings all combine to make



A top speed of 17.5 knots: this was the day's record!

life aboard very pleasant. Moreover, for our test, there were five adults and five children aboard... Everyone immediately found their place, in less time than it takes to write about it. The accommodation aboard our boat was classic: a charter version, equipped with four generous double cabins and four equally impressive bathrooms, each with a separate shower... Note that the starboard aft cabin (the one assigned to the captain) is particularly nice and offers a very impressive 'island' bed (an 'island' bed is one you can walk all around... A rather rare luxury on a 44-footer!). We also appreciated the sliding doors on the companionways, a real plus for preserving everyone's privacy.

There is plenty of space in the saloon: as you enter, the galley is to starboard: it offers good areas which allow you to cook both at sea and at anchor, even though it is not always easy to wedge yourself in comfortably in a big swell. And as the size of this saloon is impressive, you must above all avoid crossing it horizontally... The

refrigerator is the 'Piano' model, which can be found on all the boats in the Fontaine Pajot range. It has the advantages of both types of classic fridges: front-opening (easy to find a product and storage) and top-opening (excellent cold retention). The only criticism of the accommodation is that it lacks a bit of stowage space for those wishing to live aboard their Orana...

Aboard the Orana 44, you can easily invite friends to enjoy an aperitif or a festive meal: the area where you can welcome them is really pleasant, and 8 people can easily fit around the saloon table. The ventilation is very good, and during our test (in the West Indies) we were able to take full advantage of the interior areas.

But the most important area aboard a catamaran is the cockpit, the favourite place during a charter cruise or a sabbatical year spent following the trade winds... And here, look out for your eyes! The builder has done a good job, with several areas: around the table, (which is classic and comfortable), the practical and pleasant seat/sunbathing area opposite, an XXL-sized

The Orana is a big boat with an imposing freeboard height, but its lines remain pleasant.





Martinique, the Salines beach: and exceptional place for this test of the Orana 44...

steering position (see below) and a great sunbathing area behind this steering position! Why great? Quite simply because this is the area that everyone fought over during our test day... It is comfortable, fun, and perfect for those who suffer from seasickness, or enjoy fishing, but has just one fault: it can't take everyone at the same time!

DECK PLAN

We have dreamed about it for a long time and Fountaine Pajot have done it: all the control lines return to the steering position... An undeniable plus in terms of safety as well as comfort at sea, especially for a family crew. As a result, a normally-built skipper will be perfectly able to sail his boat singlehanded, without having to wake the whole family for the least manoeuvre. Hoisting the mainsail, unrolling the genoa, taking and gybing can be carried out without any problems and with disconcerting ease. The winches are well-positioned and well-sized, and in use everything works perfectly. Except that there is one manoeuvre which still involves a trip to the

mast foot: taking a reef! When the wind has suddenly freshened and the sea is rough, as you know, this is never very pleasant...

STEERING POSITION

True to its traditions, the La Rochelle-based company did not want to increase this catamaran's windage by adding a flybridge. But on a modern 44-footer, they had to offer a steering position worthy of offering good visibility, both ahead and astern. The solution offered by Fountaine Pajot is pertinent: a steering position with comfortable seating for three people, which is slightly raised with respect to the cockpit level. Two small steps allow easy access, and in rough seas, you can grab hold of the bimini support to pull yourself up. Once at the helm, the view forward and aft is excellent, and harbour manoeuvres present no problems. The various control lines fall perfectly to hand. The rigid bimini has a cut-out above the steering position to avoid you hitting your head when climbing up (thank-you, on behalf of tall people),

and above all to give a good view of the mainsail, which can then be trimmed with pleasure. But as everyone knows, you don't get anything for nothing, and in the West Indian sunshine, it gets very hot after several hours at the helm...

TEST AT SEA

We were lucky enough to be able to carry out this test in quite exceptional conditions... First of all, it took place in the West Indies, in Martinique, in exceptional weather and varied conditions: winds of from 15 to 20 knots, with gusts of 30. The sea was quite choppy in the channel between Martinique and Saint Lucia, and perfectly calm in the Le Marin bay and off the Salines beach. In short, ideal conditions to judge what this catamaran is really capable of. All the more as it is a charter catamaran in 'real' cruising condition, with full water tanks (2 x 275 litres), full diesel tanks (2 x 175 litres) and ten people aboard, so not far off its maximum laden displacement...

We discovered our Orana on a pontoon in the marina at Le Marin. It was a charter version, operated by Régis Guillemot Charter which had just returned from a cruise in the Grenadines. None of us aboard had yet sailed on this catamaran, however it only took us a few minutes to get used to the boat. It is easily accessible, the control lines are coherent and the deck plan is obvious... We left the pontoon and entered the channel which would take us off Saint Anne, where we could hoist the sails. Under power, the Orana showed itself to be easy

to handle and harbour manoeuvres presented no problems: from the steering position, the view is excellent, both forward and aft. We just had to be wary of the high freeboard when climbing aboard after casting off the mooring lines... With 2 x 30 hp, the Orana quickly reached its cruising speed in satisfying silence. With the new deck plan, just one person can easily hoist the mainsail, whilst keeping the catamaran head to wind. The winches are of the right size, and the manoeuvre only takes a few minutes, with no great effort. From the steering position,



There is room for eight people around the cockpit table- ideal for welcoming friends...

we unrolled the genoa and could at last stop the engines, to enjoy the Joubert-Nivelt designed hulls. This was the big surprise of the test: the Orana handles really well under sail. In the protected bay, on a perfectly flat sea, and with 15 knots of wind, the catamaran was quickly at 8 knots. With 20 knots of breeze, it remained at between 10 and 12 knots, with no need to play with the sail trim unduly. Don't forget that this boat was not new, its charter sails were already a good half season old and it was well laden... We can easily believe that with the new square-headed sails (CST) that the builder is preparing, the Orana will



A test in the warm West Indian seas: we took advantage of this to inspect the boat in minute detail...

A catamaran which makes you want to go cruising...



sail even faster...

But we were not there for the fun of it... We headed for the Saint Lucia channel to see what the Orana was like in rougher conditions... The sea was choppy with 2 to 2.5 metre waves, and above all unpleasant, as the waves were not regular - this is often the case in the channels in the West Indies. The wind freshened a touch, giving a good 20 knots and a few gusts at 25 - 28 knots. In these conditions, the Orana remained comfortable, sailing powerfully in the waves. It passed easily through the waves, with practically no impacts under the nacelle. At the helm, we had great fun surfing the swell or on

the contrary, sailing joyfully into the waves. If we had been reasonable, we would have taken a reef, but it was too good and we continued sailing in all directions. Tacks, gybes, close-hauled, broad reaching, we didn't stop. And the more the time passed, the more we grew used to the boat. We had fun helping, placing the bows in exactly the right place to set off on a wild surf. A good day's sailing... In these conditions, we appreciated the reassuring side of the boat, with its good volume forward which avoided any unpleasant surprises when surfing too optimistically.

There remains one point which we would like to test as soon as possible - how this catamaran behaves in winds of less than 10 knots.

CONCLUSION

The Orana is really easy to handle short-handed, pleasant in the perfect conditions of our test and comfortable and passed the test with flying colours. The proof? Aboard, we would have liked to continue to the Grenadines to enjoy it a little more. And then, as icing on the cake, we really had fun on the helm, managing a top speed of 17.5 knots in a wild surf...

THE MARKET COMPETITORS

MODEL	LAGOON 440	NAUTITECH 44	LÉOPARD 43	ANTARES 44I
Architect	VPLP	Mortain & Mavrikios	Simonis & Voogd	Antares Yachts
Builder	Lagoon	Nautitech	Robertson & Caine	AntaresYachts
Length in m	13.61	13.47	12.95	13.60
Beam in m	7.70	6.81	6.93	6.60
Weight in T	12.15	9.2	8.6	7.9
Sail area in m2	116	96	91	100 US \$
Price exc. VAT in €	331 000	348 780	NC	839 000

Thanks

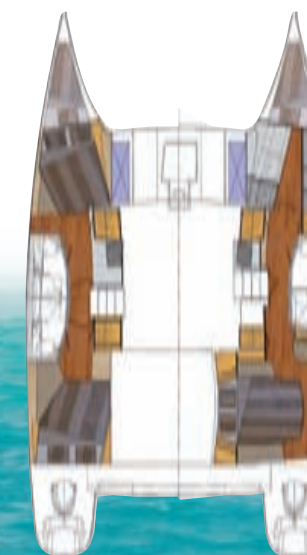
A big thank-you to Régis Guillemot Charter, who kindly put this Orana 44, (which had just returned from the Grenadines), at our disposal. A perfectly maintained boat, just like the whole fleet belonging to this charter company, based at Le Marin in Martinique.

THE PLUSSES

- Overall pleasure when cruising as a family
- Volumes and accommodation
- Deck plan

THE MINUSES

- Reefing at the mastfoot - the only control lines not led back to the cockpit.
- Lack of stowage space for living aboard.



The cabins are very pleasant, especially with the wood colours chosen by the builder.



The galley is classic, however it is hard to wedge yourself in comfortably whilst sailing...



Inside, we find the atmosphere dear to this builder: it is comfortable, practical and pleasant to live in.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Orana 44

- Builder: Fountaine-Pajot
- Architects: Joubert/Nivelt
- Overall length: 13.10 m
- Overall beam: 7.35 m
- Draft: 1.20 m
- Unladen displacement of standard boat: 9,769 kg
- Max. laden displacement: 13,776 kg
- Sail area:
 - Mainsail: 64 m2 / Genoa: 45.5 m2
- Engines: 2 x 30 hp
- Fresh water: 2 x 265 l
- Diesel: 400 l
- Price: 335,000 euros exc. VAT