

## Fountaine Pajot 43' "Belize" 43 vs PDQ 42' "Antares"

As always there are always lots of choices when a designer designs, a builder builds and an owner chooses his Catamaran.

One article that has proven helpful is one we call "GoodCat/BadCat". It's not really about a Bad cat, just about features that make one boat less desirable for a voyaging couple than another. This piece was put together as a result of interviews with designers, builders, delivery captains and end users-as well as based on our own experiences sailing catamarans on many different oceans of the world. You may want to take a look at: [www.bayacht.com/goodbad.htm](http://www.bayacht.com/goodbad.htm)



PDQ Antares

The rest of this paper is simply a comparison based on my own view after selling 100's of boats successfully... Bay Yacht Agency has consistently been Fountaine Pajots #1 North American dealer...



Fountaine Pajot Belize

### ***The Designer Builder team.***

To Learn more about Fountaine Pajot and see all of the models, please visit:

[www.bayacht.com/fpvisit.htm](http://www.bayacht.com/fpvisit.htm)

**Fountaine Pajot** uses an experienced, name designer for each of the boats they build, but then they also have their own in-house engineers that supervise the construction. (Joubert-Nivelt designed the hull and structural components and O.Flahault did the interior.)

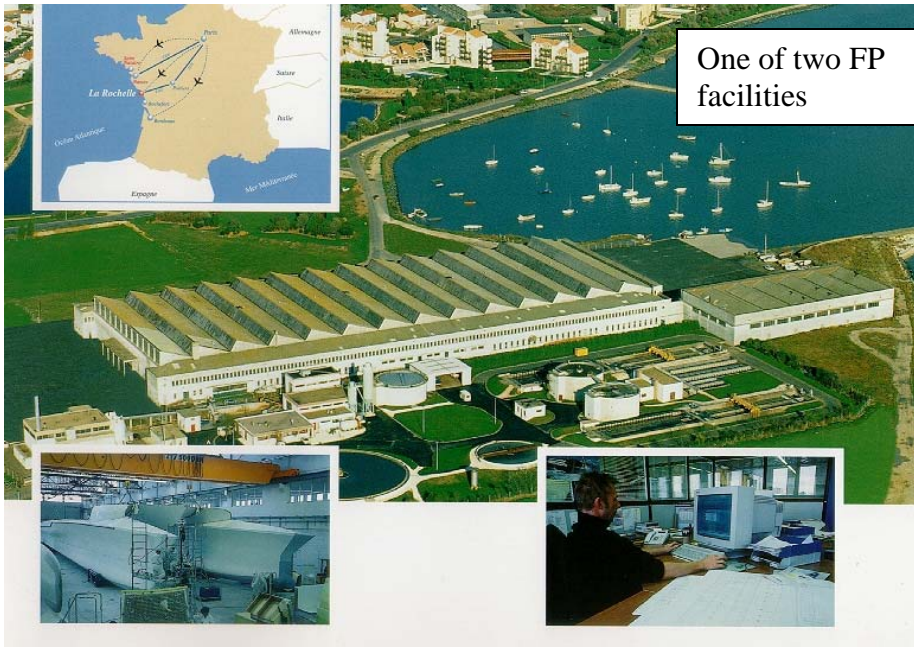
As the largest builder of Catamarans in the world, they can spread the costs of these overseers over many units so you don't pay more, and problems are eliminated from the get go. **PDQ** is designed by the PDQ design team.

**Fountaine Pajot** builds to strict ISO 9001 standards. These stringent standards assure that once the design is set, each boat adheres to a very strict quality standard from start to finish. **PDQ** doesn't list any building standards, just that they have an Ocean A CE certificate. Virtually every catamaran in this size made has this—it offers no assurance of quality control.

**Fountaine Pajot** uses moderate high tech construction. ...that is, they use modern materials and vacuum bag the lay-up in the hulls to give a very high glass to resin ratio for superior ..



PDQ Factory



strength, but with still some give so you don't crack a hull when you bounce off a piling inadvertently. **PDQ** seems to use a similar technique, but with no mention of the **quality control standards like ISO 9001**.

**Some design philosophical differences...**

Fountaine Pajot, being the largest builder in the world also gets more feedback from owners delivery captains and charterers. We have long

recognized that the days of keeping a boat simple and light are long gone. Today's voyaging couples wants to bring everything along with them, including the kitchen sink. **So the one, over riding consideration is to design the boat with the load carrying capacity that todays cruisers consider essential.** So let's compare what each boat has and how it gets used: (For tankage, I'm using the Antares sizes)

	<b>Fountaine Pajot-Belize</b>	<b>PDQ-Antares</b>
MF stated load carrying	<b>9600#</b>	<b>5000 #</b>
Extra equipment: Gen & AC, and other luxury equipment, extra sails, etc.	1200	1200
Consumables: Galley gear, bedding, tools & spare parts, etc.	400	400
Anchors and ground tackle, incl chain	700	700
Water tank 150gal * 8.3#	1245	1245
Fuel tank 100Gal*9.24#	924	924
Holding and hot water tank 42	378	378
4 people	600	600
Supplies and clothes	400	400
	5847	5847
Load reserve	3753	<b>Overloaded!</b>

I'm sure that you can think of even more equipment. Please review GoodCat/BadCat—**there is nothing so devastating to a catamaran than to be overloaded.** It acts like a long keel monohull. Sluggish, difficult to maneuver and tack; there's a loss of bridge deck clearance which means wave slapping can become so annoying that one can't even sleep when off watch (reported frequently by our delivery captains on boats without sufficient bridge deck clearance—see GoodCat/BadCat).

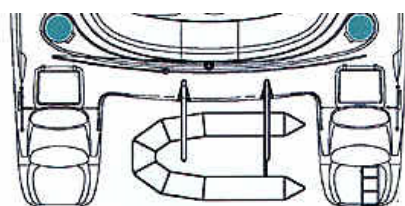
Now, being overloaded is bad enough, but what happens when you combine less than remarkable load carrying with insufficient sail area... Take a look:

Fontaine Pajot weighs in at 15,232 pounds and carries 1000 sq. ft of working sail. That means you have **147 sq ft of sail per ton**

PDQ Antares weighs in at 22,500 pounds and carries 864 sq. ft of working sail. That means that you **only have 98.4 sq ft/ton.** (and more, much more drag results from extra wetted surface when overloaded.)

**A catamaran needs lots of power sail area/pound, and good load carrying capability** so it doesn't submerge the hulls further than designed which drastically increases wetted surface (by the cube) and **greatly reduces performance and the easy handling characteristics that you so enjoyed when the boat was tried out new and light!**

### ***The engine dilemma...***



Oh, and what about the engines being inside the hulls on the Antares... They say they need to keep the weight forward for balance and to **keep the sterns from being submerged.** They do! Take a look at how narrow those sterns are (Top, compared to the Belize, bottom—look at the

drawings or pictures). The sterns are easily suppressed by any weight aft (including guests in the cockpit) this definitely adversely affects performance—**dragging your stern is like dragging a bucket behind the boat**—try it sometime; the results are dramatic. In addition, all of the people we talk to who have experience on catamarans, clearly indicate that they want the engines in their own compartment, outside of the

accommodations. The Antares places the engine under the berths with a conventional drive shaft like they used in the olden days on boats 20, 30, 40 and more years ago.

### **Why engines should be outside the accommodations like they are on the Fontaine Pajot...**

1. The noise and smells are once removed.
2. **Spilled oil or leaking oil does not go into the main bilge, making a mess and stinking.**
3. You don't need to tear up someone's bed to get to the engines and they don't have to sleep over a smelly, noisy diesel engine. The mess and any oily rags or tools can be kept out of the interior!
4. The engine compartment is a separate, sealed compartment. You could literally rip off the sail drive and you would not take on a significant amount of water—you could easily sail to a repair facility (or use the other engine).
5. In Fontaine Pajots case, they took additional advantage of the increased space and buoyancy aft by intergrading a large equipment locker on each inboard side of the engine compartment. You can stand in the engine room for easy access, and you don't have to install the watermaker, generator, dive compressor, etc. under berths—**they can be neatly arranged in a dedicated equipment locker.**
6. The saildrive configuration offers another advantage. The engine sits directly atop the sealed sail drive unit, literally floating on a rubber seal. **You will never get a quieter ride than with this** arrangement. The shaft and engine coupling are self aligning and never need checking. The seal

between the engine and lower units is permanently sealed and never leaks or weeps. **Just one more thing that you don't have to worry about.**



### **A last word on narrow hulls, without sufficient load carrying.**

More on narrow hulls... Well, if you've read GCBC by now, you know that one way to tell a boat that has minimum load carrying is by looking at the accommodations. On any boat over about 38' the berth forward should fit in the hull (because there is enough volume) and you shouldn't have to put them over the bridge deck! **BONUS: These fuller bow sections give more buoyancy forward making it less likely the boat will "trip" in big seas.**

## ***The Bimini...***

Why don't most catamarans use a solid bimini? There's one important reason. Most catamarans follow the sun and are often in areas where there is a possibility (even though it might be remote) of **needing to prepare for a hurricane**. Our solid, welded pipe frame biminis have a walking platform on top, but the canvas comes off to reduce windage in storm conditions. You can take that advantage to the bank. **BONUS: They look less bulky and obtrusive and give you multiple hand holds plus a ladder at the back.**

### **Travelers on the bimini—No....**

...because invariably at one time or another **a traveler line will get fouled** and you can bet it won't be in times of nice weather. Who wants to go up on the Bimini with the boat thrashing about while someone is trying to luff the main while this gets sorted out—by who? You? Aaghhh!

## ***Where should your galley be?***

Finally, the up-galley vs down galley decision... To some extent, this is a personal decision. PDQ says that everyone who comes to see their down galley, chooses it? Is this because that's what they show and sell?

I can tell you, in the old days, 12 and more years ago, that's what was out there. As soon as up-galleys started showing up on the scene, within the first year over 75% of owners chose the up-galley and eventually all did. So much so, **that virtually all of the other manufacturers stopped offering the down galley**. Does it make sense that if this is such a good idea that all the other manufacturers are no longer offering this configuration? (And don't give me that charter boat argument—more than 60% of all Fountaine Pajots go to private owners!)

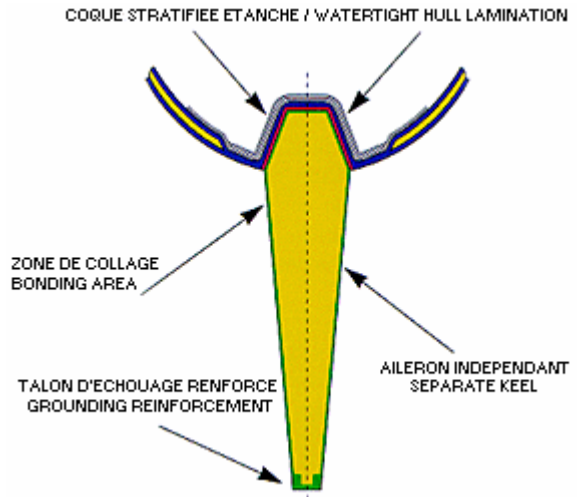


### ***Other important differences.***

**Anchor system:** The Belize has a garage in the forward end of the bridge deck, well back from the bows. There is ample room for chain as well as rope tails and misc. gear in this locker and the windlass is located and protected here. A unique bridle system leads back to this locker and is **deployed**

from the safety of the deck just in front of the mast. All of this keeps the weight further back in the hull and reduces pitching. It also keeps you back on the safety of the deck when handling the anchor under adverse conditions or at night. **BONUS: You don't have the walking beam breaking up the net—it's just used for lounging! (We provide a net cover and cushions to make this a favorite hang out area for up to 6 or 7 people!)**

**The famous break away keel!** We already talked about that the entire engine could be ripped off the boat, without incurring serious water incursion (doesn't mean you should go out and try this!). Now, another unique feature. We all know that the keel on a catamaran only serves for lateral resistance, not for ballast (see GCBC) so, if you should be so unfortunate as to strike a submerged object or even a reef, you can literally rip off the break away keel with no water intrusion into the boat! You see the foam filled keel is a separate mold, glued into the recess in the hull. The boat will still sit on the keels when dried out, but this is a real safety plus!



### In Summary...

PDQ sells factory direct because they're a small builder and they do not have the economy of scale. It wouldn't take much to go wrong to have their financial picture take a turn for the worse. Fountaine Pajot is a substantial company, with a full, world wide dealer support team.

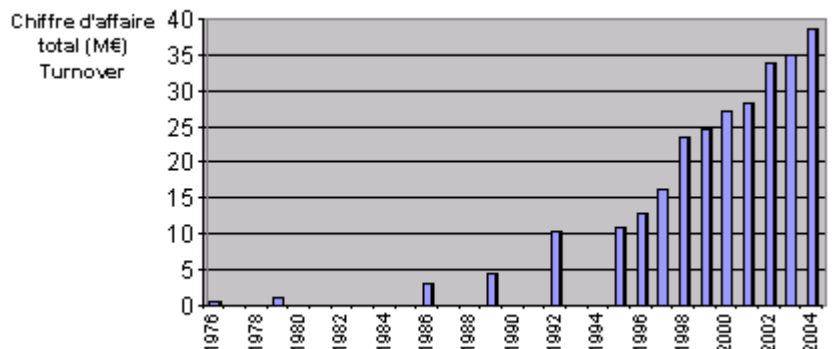


Both companies offer well built boats. Both offer a great owner's wing configuration, but only one offers the quality assurance of building to ISO9001 standards (certificate, left). Only one offers the kind of load carrying that denotes a true Ocean voyager and the proven resale and investment value that comes from a stable, world-wide builder with experience.

**Fountaine Pajot, Better, and growing...** Bay Yacht Agency is #1 in providing information and client satisfaction. In fact, we guarantee it—see our service and best price guarantee: [www.bayacht.com/service.htm](http://www.bayacht.com/service.htm)

This information just represents the opinion of the author. Every effort was made to make fair representations and the information used was taken directly off the PDQ, Antares web site. Bay Yacht Agency and it's affiliates take no responsibility for inaccuracies, or the use made of this information and urge the reader to check out the facts for themselves.

**For more details, please contact us at 410-263-2311 or visit these links:**  
[www.bayacht.com/fpvisit.htm](http://www.bayacht.com/fpvisit.htm) Fountaine Pajot link



<http://www.bayacht.com/aaa/fp/fp42/fp43.htm> Visit the Belize 43 and slide show

<http://www.bayacht.com/goodbad.htm> A must read for anyone considering a serious, voyaging catamaran—no matter whose.