

NEW BOAT: LEE BRAVO 78

Feast for the Senses

New Bravo brand builds on a strong Cheoy Lee heritage



This beautiful 78-foot motoryacht sports the Bravo brand on her wingboards, but there's no mistaking she's a Cheoy Lee at heart, benefiting from that builder's long history of supplying the marine market with quality products focused on the American buyer. In design, construction, finish and outfitting, the Bravo 78, part of a seven-model series of sport yachts from 65 feet to 95 feet, is a winner that is wholly appropriate to our way of boating.

The design—naval architecture by Mike Burvenich, with a Sylvia Bolton interior—pays homage to two earlier Florida designers, both of whom worked with Cheoy Lee over the years. The S-curve of the bow and the fine hull sections forward are reminiscent of yachts designed for the builder in the 1990s by Tom Fexas. The sweep of the sheer and chine, and the extended quarter-fender, can be found in Cheoy Lees designed by Jack Hargrave in the 1970s and

'80s. Burvenich has done a masterful job of combining these elements, along with adding his own, into a yacht that respects heritage while breaking new ground in styling and performance. It is a yacht that will look as good in 20 years as it does now.

The boat's cored construction is cutting edge, utilizing multi-axial E-glass reinforcement. The hull, deck and superstructure are built using resin-infusion to increase the strength-to-weight ratio, reducing both excess resin and the number and size of voids in the laminate. Cheoy Lee builds to classification society standards, and class certifications are available as options.

The Bravo 78 incorporates integral fuel, water and holding tanks, a feature that increases the capacity of the tanks and lowers the center of gravity. It's an ele-

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ment that's easy to design, but more difficult to execute properly. Cheoy Lee has embraced the concept from the beginning.

As Hargrave's VP in the 1980s, I remember sitting with Jack as we discussed the pros and cons of integral tankage with B. Y. Lo, one of three brothers who manage the family-owned shipyard. The pros were largely benefits to the yacht owner, the cons were mostly

work is sapele in a satin finish, but Cheoy Lee offers numerous other choices from a standard list of veneers. Marble is used for flooring and countertops with Corian and Avonite as counter alternatives. The galley is a delightful place both for preparation of meals, and with its raised dinette forward, for casual dining.

The Bravo 78 carries three guest staterooms below forward of her engine room. The bow stateroom—accessed



Bravo 78 has full side decks, providing safe and easy access to the entire length of the yacht for mooring, anchoring and cleaning.

The saloon, to right, features an open flow for entertaining.



potential construction pitfalls. As he did repeatedly on so many features that would result in a better, but not necessarily easier-to-build boat, B.Y. gave the go-ahead. It's an attitude, an eagerness to learn and improve—that was still apparent as B.Y. showed me around the Bravo. I'll be the first to admit that some of the early Cheoy Lees were less than perfect, but 30 years of striving has resulted in a yacht that is impressive by any standard.

The standard equipment lists bristles with premium selections. Caterpillar engines, Northern Lights gensets, Maxwell windlasses, Naiad stabilizers and bow thruster, and a Fireboy extinguisher system are just part of the specification. The engine room is clean, open and accessible, and the auxiliary systems are laid out in a logical, serviceable manner.

The interior is no less noteworthy. The standard wood-

by its own staircase—has a queen berth on centerline, raised high enough that it retains full width throughout its length, avoiding the mini-headboard sometimes found on such berths. The stateroom includes a head with shower, a hanging locker and drawers. Opening ports with screens provide ventilation, and an overhead hatch admits light and allows emergency escape.

The VIP stateroom shares a foyer with the master stateroom at the foot of a spiral staircase from the main deck. Both are full-beam spaces with port and starboard hanging lockers, settees and vanities, and each has four large, fixed, vertical ports.

The VIP has a queen berth on centerline and a single head with shower outboard, while the master stateroom has a king berth and a full-beam his-and-hers heads with a large central shower. A hidden watertight door opens from the master shower into the engine room,

stern crew quarters, which include a cabin with upper and lower berths, a head and mess. This arrangement provides emergency escape and access to a second stairway for both guests and crew.

In addition to the galley and dinette, the forward end of the deckhouse has a helm to starboard with a single captain's chair. There's also a day head and small locker for day guests' belongings adjacent to the spiral stairway link-

ondary access to the upper deck.

The upper deck has a centerline helm plus a companion seat forward and a RIB tender and hydraulic crane aft. Because this deck has been carried well aft to provide shade for the main aft deck below, there's lots of space between the helm and the tender. An attractive fiberglass hardtop covers the L-shaped dinette and the three-seat bar amidships, and a large



Specifications

LOA: 78' 3"
 Beam: 20' 2"
 Draft: 5' 5"
 Displacement: 138,800 lbs. full load
 Fuel/Water: 2,700/550 U.S. gals.
 Power: 2x Caterpillar 3412E, 1,400 hp each
 Top speed: 25 knots @ 2300 rpm
 Cruising speed: 20 knots @ 1800 rpm
 Range: 1,000 nm @ 12 knots (1300 rpm)

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With marble countertops, Grohe faucet and stainless GE Monogram appliances, the galley is a delightful place both for preparation of meals, and with its raised dinette forward, casual dining.

ing the flying bridge and accommodations below.

Aft of the galley are the dining room with a circular table for six, a small half-moon bar with two seats, and the spacious saloon with seating for nine at two curved settees and an easy chair. The saloon opens to the aft deck, where two cocktail tables mounted on diagonal rams flank the curved transom seat. This allows the tables to move both inboard and up, closing into a single higher table for alfresco dining. Twin stairways lead down to the integral swim platform, and a gently-sloped stair with sturdy stainless steel handrails provides a sec-

stainless steel Fire Magic grill anchors the corner of the open deck just forward of the tender.

The Bravo 78's length is right on the cusp, small enough to be cruised by a capable complement without crew, yet large enough to incorporate reasonably sized crew quarters for those owners who prefer to carry a captain and mate. She has a nice mix of interior and exterior guest areas, and the exterior spaces offer sun or shade to accommodate various locales. Finally, the yacht appeals to the aesthetic senses, both inside and out, and will retain her good looks for years to come. 🦄