

MARLOW 53E

MEASURING UP BY THE NUMBERS.

STORY & PHOTOS BY CAPT. TOM SERIO

A sea trial is more than just doing a walkthrough of the vessel and going for a ride. There are numbers involved and a few computations to help get the details across. If you pay attention to the figures, they can help create the big picture. And that leads us to the Marlow Yachts 53E. It's all about the numbers — in more ways than one.

First, it's a 3 ½ hour drive from my abode on Florida's east coast to Marlow's facility on the west coast in Palmetto,

Florida. I'm in the car by 5 a.m. to make the appointed photo shoot and sea trial time. This is important to note as I'm not sure I would drive that far for many other yachts, but I know the brand and do think they are worth the effort.

This is not the first 53E offered by Marlow Yachts (the first launched in 2016), but actually hull No. 25 — a testament to the style, operation and determination by David Marlow to build his next yacht better than the previous one.

START HERE

The 53E is a “pocket yacht,” offering amenities found on larger yachts but in a package suitable for an owner/operator (O/O).

Upper and lower helm stations, full walk-around decks, twin aft staircases to the swim platform, side boarding gates and port/starboard deck doors makes access for line handling or provisioning an easy task.

On the aft deck, there’s a cushioned transom bench with a fiberglass table, suitable for casual cocktails or alfresco dining. The flybridge deck extends all the way aft to fully cover the dining area. An eight-step molded staircase reaches the flybridge deck. Twin aft doors to the salon are split and can completely open to blend the areas. Side deck doors block the wind and assist in environmentally controlling the aft deck area if Bimini curtains are installed, which helps to extend the cruising season.



INNER BEAUTY

Inside, there’s plenty of space to gather friends or stretch out and relax. To starboard is an L-shaped, built-in sofa with Ultraleather that’s incredibly soft (standard fabrics or even Sunbrella home interior fabrics can be opted). The port side has a straight, built-in sofa. The forward buffet houses a Samsung 46-inch flat-screen TV, discreetly hidden by sliding tambour doors.

Marlow incorporated rich teak wood finishes for the walls, coffee table and cabinets, along with teak and holly flooring and Ultraleather furniture and ceiling panels. Area rugs can be added as you desire.

Up a few steps is the galley/dinette/lower helm area. This is well-situated for the O/O, keeping the captain and chef in close proximity to each other, as well as to family and guests.

Smartly designed, the U-shaped galley has seemingly an acre of counterspace, four under-counter Subzero fridge/freezer drawers, a Fisher & Paykel dishwasher, a Kenyon two-burner cooktop, a GE microwave oven, a Franke stainless sink and all the drawers and cabinets you need.

Forward to port is a U-shaped dinette with teak table. The location is key as it’s under the forward windows — the perfect setting for morning coffee — and it’s next to the lower helm, keeping everyone close by.

On extended cruises, operating the 53E from the lower helm is a bonus. It’s fully functional and loaded with Garmin electronics, including twin 16-inch multifunction displays, VHF, autopilot, radar, sounder, wind sensor, CCTV system, Lewmar bow/stern thrusters and more.



An overhead console contains rocker switches, system indicator lights, Naiad Roll Stabilizer controller and more.

FLY HIGH

Another area that feels bigger than it should is the flybridge deck. The extended deck allows for multiple options without feeling cramped. The centerline helm has twin Stidd chairs, dual Garmin 16-inch multifunction displays in a compact console (to maintain sight lines when seated) and the standard array of electronics.

Situated underneath the hardtop are a starboard side L-shaped settee with diagonal fiberglass table and a bench settee to port. With non-skid decks throughout and no deck teak (but it can be opted), this is a low-maintenance exterior.

Enjoy meals with the food prep station that includes a grill, sink, fridge and ice maker.

If carrying water toys, there’s room for a dinghy or jet skis on the deck. If not, put out a few lounge chairs for sunbathing.

Even though, technically, this is an open bridge, the 53E has an integrated forward windshield structure built into the hardtop and house. With three windshields that wrap around, the fixed structure eliminates windage at the helm, improves sound and keeps the operator protected from the elements. Open sides that can be fitted with Bimini curtains allow for air to flow and guests to enjoy the outdoors.

Other spots to enjoy the outdoors are on the foredeck, complete with twin bench seats in front of the Portuguese bridge, along the covered side decks and at the aft deck table.



COMFORT ABOUNDS

Inside and down the starboard side staircase is access to the three staterooms. Forward in the peak is the VIP with center queen berth, featuring drawer storage, a locker, shelves and an overhead hatch. Marlow carries the teak and Ultraleather finishes down into the staterooms, adding to the overall character of the yacht. An ensuite head has a separate shower stall and a large, rectangular opening porthole for a cool breeze. Overhead bunks are an option. There’s also a guest stateroom with twin berths, a locker, storage and porthole.

Midship is the full-beam master stateroom. With the king berth laid out athwartship, there’s easy access around the bed and around the room. A multitude of dresser drawers, several lockers and shelving offer ample storage. A large ensuite head runs along the port side with pocket doors (a great space saver), a drop-down mirror and a separate shower stall.

Marlow designed an access way to the engine room from within. Behind one door is a laundry room with separate washer and dryer. From there, a watertight bulkhead door offers access to the engine room without having to go outside.

RUN LIKE A DEERE

It may be a bit of a surprise but it’s not the first time Marlow has used John Deere engines in its yachts. Basically, the reasons for these six-cylinder powerplants is the recognized name that instills ruggedness, a simpler engine to operate and maintain, and a lower overall RPM.

Our speed trial with the John Deere 6135SFM 750-hp engines yielded a 22.6-knot top-speed at



MARLOW 53E

» SPECIFICATIONS

LOA: 61'
Beam: 17'3"
Draft: 4'6"
Fuel Capacity: 1,200 gals.
Water Capacity: 300 gals.
Power: 2 x John Deere 6135SFM 750-hp diesel engines
Standard Engines: 6.7 Cummins QSB 480-hp
Base Price:
Contact dealer
MARLOWYACHTS.COM

» DEALER

Marlow Marine Sales, Inc.
MARLOWMARINE.COM



The enclosed forward helm, which is perfect for those snotty days when you have to be at the upper helm for improved visibility, like running an inlet.

Access to the engine room through the master and laundry room.

Good engine economy at the low end and good speed at WOT.

Eye-level AC/DC panel.



Needs more counterspace at the flybridge food prep station.

Needs an extended outward grabrail in the stateroom staircase to eliminate the need of switching hands to the other side.

wide open, burning 71 gph combined at 2250 RPM (382 nm range). Cruising at 16.3 knots at 1800 RPM burned 44.3 gph (442 nm range). A leisurely jaunt at 9.7 knots consumed 13.8 gph (837 nm range). A 1,600 nm range can be had at 7.6 knots.

If you study the numbers and make your own calculations, you’ll see the Marlow 53E really does measure up. ★