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Bering Yachts



REVIEW : BERING YACHTS 55' STEEL TRAWLER

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Bering Yachts 55' Steel Trawler **Lower the Waterline and Raise the Curtains...**

...a New Steel Star is Born!

Review by Judy Waldman

YachtForums associate writer Judy Waldman flies to France for a sea trial of a little boat making big waves in the knot-so-fast community. Bering Yachts is quietly filling an industry overlooked niche for a go anywhere, fear-knot boat ready to do battle with wind, waves or even reefs.

Bering Yachts may best be described as a worldly trawler in more ways than one. MILA, Bering Yachts' latest launch, was custom ordered by her new owner from Russia after having seen the Bering 55 Hull # 1 in North Carolina. MILA was in Antibes France since being shipped from China in time for display at the Cannes International Boat Show. MILA's transom reads Road Harbour BVI. Alexey Mikhaylov, the American founder of Bering Yachts, was aboard in Antibes for this YachtForums review.

Alexey's beginnings in shipbuilding started in Russia in his twenties when he and a partner in the shipbuilding business rebuilt an abandoned 136' crew ship. The intrigue and subsequent success of this rebuild and resale project left its mark. Alexey moved to North Carolina in the 1990s and established a successful company exporting poultry to Russia and China. As his business grew and he began thinking of early retirement, Alexey initiated his search for a passagemaking trawler for world exploration. Alexey had been impressed with a popular steel trawler advertising steel as the safest material for hedging bets against things that go bump in the night, or in the ocean. After extensive research and brand comparison, Alexey concluded that this material was "Steel The Best." Coupled with his reflections on the sense of accomplishment and the fun he had on his ship rebuild project in Russia, Alexey decided to embark on a second career – building affordable steel trawlers drawing on his shipbuilding partner still in Russia, his experience from 10 years of successfully doing business in China, and his love of boats.



The Bering 55 prototype, Hull # 1, was bought by a US client who had previously built a 65' steel trawler and subsequently downsized. The owners saw the Bering while still in China and had her shipped to the US. While Hull # 1 was built as a spec boat, Hull # 2 was ordered by a European client who flew to the US outfit yard in NC where Hull # 1 was going through commissioning and realized an opportunity to have his dream yacht built just as he wanted. And there began the drawings for MILA. Built in the "Trawler Delta" at the Poly Marine Yard with Class A CE certification, the Bering 55 sat right on her lines at launching. Designed for the ability to take on any ocean, and a rating with no limits to weather, MILA's curved hull with hard chines, combined with 60 ton displacement, gives her the stability that sets her solid.



In spite of Bering's forge ahead or trudge through anything look, MILA actually glides through the water. Hefty is a more appropriate

description than salty; nonetheless, the typical trawlersque features include Portuguese bridge, reverse rake pilothouse windows, and high bulwarks. The Bering usually comes with stainless steel 3" oval rails and steel decks with non-skid, however Bering Yachts pride themselves on their willingness to customize, and installing teak caprails and teak decks for this owner was an easy request to accommodate - and they do add a touch of elegance even if somewhat negating the "low maintenance" goal of the Bering philosophy.



Full walkaround side decks make line-handling a snap, but more importantly, the Bering 55' has deep, 44" bulwarks; the commercial standard for passenger vessels, adding safety to its intended cruising grounds.



Accessed from easy to manage stairs from the aft deck or from the pilothouse, the upper deck provides spacious areas for entertaining and for manning the helm while enjoying the environs. The helm offers excellent visibility for anchoring, wending through tight marinas, or docking. The wheel is comfortably positioned for hand steering and perfect for foot steering when hands are busy with essential functions such as holding cans, soda of course. Smartly but simply tailored seating for 7 or 8 is around the dining table with storage beneath. A built-in cooler is at the end of the seating.



The full array of electronics includes the Glendenning throttle control with electronic press button fine-tuning (active, sync, warm, or troll), Cummins display, Furuno color screen, radar, gps, Simrad autopilot, depth sounder, compass, Icom radio, Alpine stereo speakers, and the control for the Buel dual trumpet horns. The Cummins, Furuno, and emergency stops are in a box that pivots to fold down for sleep mode. The maneuvering “cheats” are SidePower bow and stern thruster controls.



The hinged radar arch houses two radars; an M5 KVH TracVision and TracPhone, along with lights and more speakers. Stairs at the radar arch are long and lighted and assist in the safety of moving around the deck at night, as well as giving the extra lift for reaching storage cabinets built into the mast. Deck lights include mast and forward flood, forward and aft remote search, deck, stair and flybridge overhead and courtesy lighting, of course the nav and anchor lights, and the now “must have” underwater display.



The open aftdeck area is for lounging, sun pads or an optional cooking center. It is large enough to accommodate a 17' dinghy, or a 3.6 Zodiac with a Suzuki 40hp, 4-stroke outboard placed horizontally and lifted by a Steelhead ES-1500 davit. The high rails on the upper deck artistically provide a safety barrier.



Two Freeman watertight hatches open to the locker storing the chain of supply for two Muir windlasses. Tapered stainless stanchions support teak handrails line the perimeter of the Bering 55.



The foredeck offers prime-time viewing in calm seas. The beneath seat stowage can be accessed from either the foredeck or from the storage doors in the Portuguese bridge and also conceals the escape hatches from the master stateroom.



The ease of movement around the Bering is aided by the full walkaround side decks that feature a full upperdeck overhang from amidship to aft. The sidedecks are surprisingly ample for a 55' boat and provide unimpeded access for line and fender handling. If things get fishy on deck, a built-in sink is located to port on the aft deck.



The aft deck offers seating for 9 for alfresco dining at the hi-lo table with grill and sink conveniently nearby. The aft deck also houses storage cabinet, port and starboard Lofrans winches, Glendenning Cablemaster, and access to the lazarette and aft watertight engine room entry.



Entry to the salon from the aft deck through the Diamond Sea Glaze watertight door leads to a surprise of contrasts. While the exterior of the Bering announces rugged, tough traditional trawler, the interior presents a sleek, contemporary look of modernity. MILA's owner didn't want the traditional all wood look, so he specified teak veneer for the lower half of the walls with white vinyl covering for the upper; teak trim and accents complement the wood/white look while the bamboo soles add to the contemporary/traditional

blending.



The salon has barrel chairs to port that are form-fitted to the cabinetry with the end and center tables forming a contiguous piece of built-in furniture. Good use of space is made from the hinged lids on each of the three tables. MILA's owner used this space for bottle storage: 13, 19, & 13 – 45 bottles safely stowed and easily accessible. To starboard is an L-shaped settee seating 7 or 8 with underseating storage. The hi-lo dining table is teak with marble inset. Forward is the 52" LED flatscreen TV, sound system, and bookshelves.



There are 5 large boxed windows, 5/8" laminated tempered glass, providing near panoramic visibility and good natural lighting. The lighting options are impressive and offer different moods and functions, not only in the salon, but throughout all of the cabins. There is mood lighting above, rope lights at the kickboards, LED courtesy and overhead lights, plus 5 wall lamps. The 220 and 24v can be

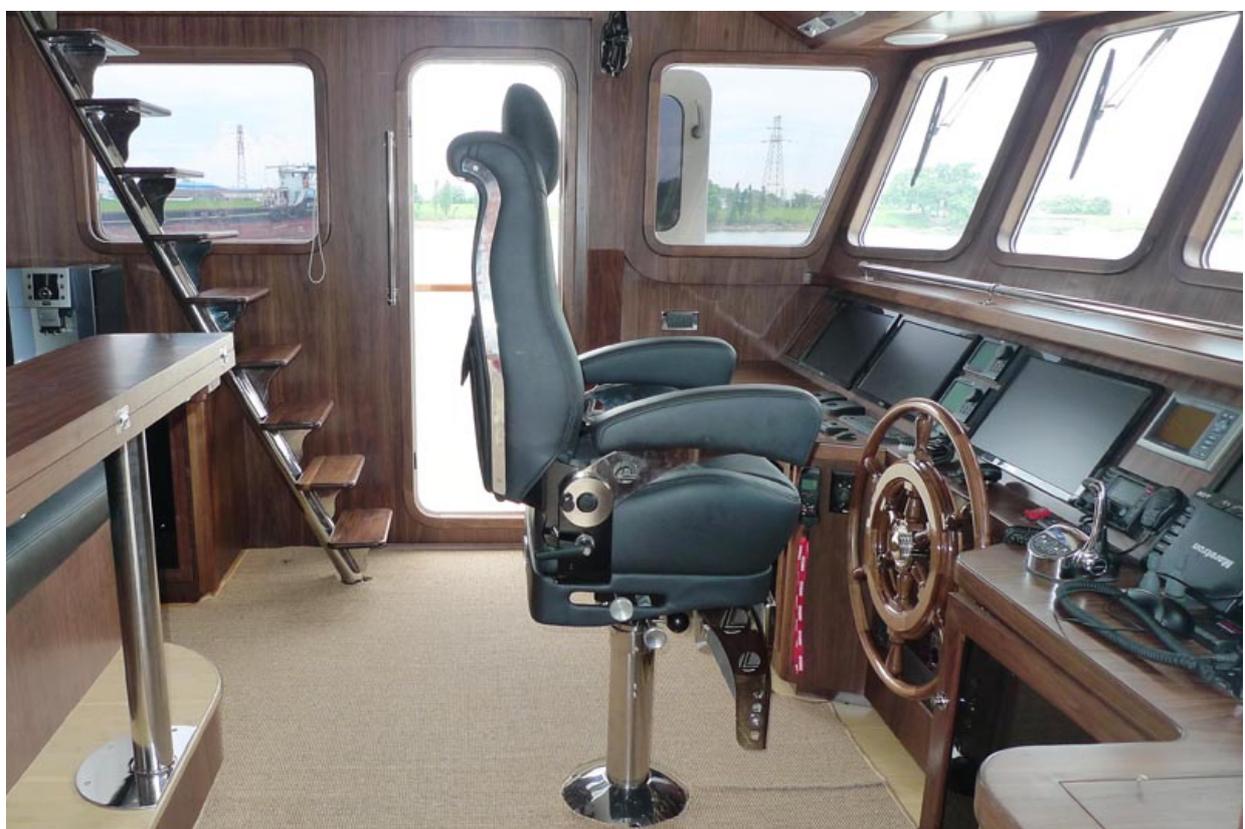
varied for energy saving yet warm and bright functions. The openness and contemporary flow is accented by the artistry of the stainless rails going up 3 stairs to the galley. The high gloss varnished teak contributes to the yachty look.



On the portside, concealed behind cabinetry, is a full size Miele washer/dryer. Next forward are the 2 residential capacity Fisher & Paykel refrigerators with freezers. The galley is a bright and happy place to perform the culinary duties. The bamboo sole and white headliner continue the feeling of lightness and openness. Teak cabinetry and granite countertops are aesthetically pleasant and practical. The cooking center is on the starboard side; facing aft, the chef can interact with family or guests using the prep and serving counter or is within easy reach of serving the pilothouse when facing forward. Generous requisites of gourmeting at sea include Fisher & Paykel full size dishwasher drawers, Broan trash compactor, Whirlpool convection micro, 4 burner cooktop with fiddles, a large deep stainless steel sink. and numerous cabinets and cupboards. With good prep areas, easy maneuverability, and flexible lighting including mood, pin, and 7 spots, the cook will feel comfortable performing the gastronomic mission in any sea.



No steps required going from the galley to the pilothouse making it an easy grab for snacks. Making good use of space behind the staircase going to the flybridge is a storage cabinet for bottle storage, 25 wine bottles safely cached. The wine refrigerator is at the pilothouse settee. Excellent visibility is enhanced by the 5 large front windows and the 4 side windows in addition to the port and starboard watertight Dutch entry doors with windows, as well as the open view to the salon aft. The Lebroc fully adjustable helmseat is at the command center with electronics in easy reach at arm level or on the display above. Just as the Bering was built to take any sea, the electronics were selected to insure getting "there" with all the modern aids available and in duplicate or triplicate, day or night.



The displays include 5 Dell monitor screens, two of which are 20" screens for the Furuno MFDBB, a black box computer that displays radar, gps, camera (aft deck and mast), and depth. There is a backup system with the same functions on the Furuno MFD8. Other

monitoring includes FLIR night vision, Simrad AIS system, VesselView Smartcraft, Victron Battery Monitor (2), Onan display, Fireboy monitor, bilge pump panel with 10 bilge pump lights and manual switches. The Maretron DSM250 monitors engine room temps, shaft seal temp, tank levels (8), smoke sensors and high water sensors.



The navigation equipment includes Simrad autopilot (2), Simrad wireless remote, Furuno NavNet 3D, Furuno Radar (2) Icom M504 (2), Icom SSB (2), KVH Satcom (2). The controls include the Cummins suite and the Glendenning controls which include a remote control for the engine, as well as SidePower bow and stern thrusters, AutoAnchor (2), and watermaker controls.



The controls for the Cummins 65hp wing engine are in a “tuck-away box” with a hinged lid so as not to take up real estate at the helm for a presumably never to be used piece of equipment. And then there’s the polished wooden ships wheel as a nice backup or when one is inclined to practice old-fashioned seamanship.



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