

# Beneteau Swift Trawler 47

Cleverly designed trawler built for long-distance cruising. *by Alan Wendt*

Over decades of boating, my wife and I have exchanged a closet full of nautical t-shirts and hats that were humorous in their day. “First Mate, Only Mate,” “Desperate Boat Wives,” “So Nauti,” “What Drain Plug?” — the list goes on. Social awareness has all but eliminated certain terms of endearment too. For example, we decided that “boat ballerina” was no longer proper for either one of us to describe tiptoeing along the narrow railing on express cruisers to secure bow lines or retrieve anchors. Upon second thought, it may have less to do with social enlightenment and more with body mass.



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OF BENETEAU



With the average age of boaters now 58 and increasing annually (age I mean, not weight), our tastes in cruiser design is more akin to the maturing of one's palette for fine wine. Hence the appeal of Beneteau's new Swift Trawler 47, with wide walkways forward, well-placed grabrails overhead, and expansive room onboard for grandkids or places of solitude from each other — the kind of space necessary after a heated exchange about a missed channel marker. Just kidding, dear!

For the happy couple who want that Great Loop experience or a two-week harbor-hopping escape with a slight detour to Georgian Bay, a trawler makes sense. Beneteau designed the hull for long-distance cruising at 8 knots, with two nautical miles per gallon and a range in excess of 1,000 miles. Need to outrun a squall? Crank up the twin diesels and you're on plane at 24.7 knots with a surprising range of 350 miles.

This is the French boatbuilder's fifth yacht in the Swift Trawler ensemble, and they're clearly adapting to North American boater's tastes with U.S. sales now representing 34 percent annually compared to just 10 percent six years ago.

Our test boat, hull No. 1, included an enclosed hardtop with sunroof, upper and lower helm, twin Cummins QSB 6.7L 425-hp diesels, a standard bow thruster and an optional stern thruster. A three stateroom/two head configuration below deck and sofa bed in the salon provides sleeping for eight. You'll be quite welcome in a blow-boat anchorage at night, as the 7.5kw Cummins Onan generator has a two-part exhaust/water discharge system to eliminate the sound of water tinkling overboard. Water is discharged below the waterline. When we were running with the generator on, I could barely detect a sound, even when sitting on the aft bench seat directly above the engine room. Beneteau's sound abatement is first class.

### *The cook's tour*

In listening to customers, Beneteau designers felt the best location for the galley is where everyone gathers communally over food. An open L-shaped galley with a very large worktop keeps the most demanding of nautical gourmets happy. A pair of Vitrigio double drawer refrigerator/freezer compartments, one with a built-in icemaker, along with recessed convection oven and two-burner ceramic stove mark the high-quality fittings onboard. On the upper deck, a summer kitchen includes a Kenyon electric grill and another mini-fridge.

There are ample drawers and storage cabinets around the galley and one very cleverly designed trash can that's divided for trash and recycling, which also features an automatically opening lid as the unit slides out.

Another tiny design feature — but one wives and wallets will applaud — is the latching mechanism leading to both heads and all cabin doors. The latch is that small metal bolt that sticks out when the door is open. At sea, where footing is not always sure and companionways are already on the narrow side, that protruding latch snags clothing. Beneteau commissioned a new lock set that keeps the latch flush with the door when open, and only deploys into the door strike when closed, completely securing the door. Another thoughtful piece of engineering is the flybridge ladder that easily slides forward when not in use, opening up more deck space.

### *Think entertaining*

Every season there are one or two boats in the marina that seem to be party central. If you're expecting the Swift Trawler 47 to offer the blue LED nightclub ambiance complete with a DJ-ready sound system, you are looking at the wrong boat. While the Fusion sound system is the latest vintage, the owners of this boat are more likely to entertain larger gatherings driven by the desire for stimulating conversation simply because they have the space.

Beneteau describes the atmosphere as "convivial" thanks to a long salon bench seat and oak table. A set of five sliding glass doors that all but disappear when open extends the indoor living space to the aft deck with its own bench seating. The salon table can be easily moved to the aft deck and, thanks to a rubber mat and substantial base, is very secure. Be sure to have your sales representative demonstrate the flexibility of this table as it opens in many ways to accommodate a variety of needs. The upper deck is equally engineered for large gatherings while docked or underway. With a center helm station with seating on both sides of the skipper, L-shaped bench seating shaded from the sun, plus the summer kitchen, this is the place to gather on warm days.

For those of us on the north side of 58, other welcome features include an optional hydraulic swim platform that easily accommodates a tender. Gone are the days of wrestling these inflatables to the upper deck through a winch. This freed-up space topsides is perfect for a couple of bicycles, two kayaks, or even a SUP.

A large starboard walkway from bow to stern inspires the feeling of safety while moving about during docking maneuvers. Access the helm from a midships doorway, complete with a screen door. A twin touch-screen Raymarine electronics package combines all required navigational instruments into an easy to see array. With a nearly 360-degree panoramic view, you'll always feel in control. We noticed no bow rise and a level horizon through about 12 knots of speed. Throttling up was smooth, and we quickly found the sweet spot for fuel efficiency using the Lenco trim tabs. Docking, thanks to thrusters, is child's play.

Overall, the Swift Trawler 47 has a contemporary look. Teak or matte oak keep the appearance light, and outdoor seating is designed to stand up to the sea. This is one area you may wish to accessorize to add color and attitude.

Below decks, the master suite has a step-up berth, and lots of storage space under the bed and in two hanging lockers. The ensuite head and shower are separated to provide maximum elbow room when getting dressed, complete with a full-length mirror. A guest stateroom abaft and to port has twin berths, while a guest stateroom to starboard offers a double berth for couples. Two more guests are accommodated in the main-deck salon, where the settee morphs into a berth and privacy is offered with two drawn curtains.

Price as tested is roughly \$988,000. There are certainly a few other amenities you may wish to add or maybe subtract. Eliminating the upper deck hardtop in favor of a Bimini, for example, is a possibility, or adding in the washer/dryer combo cleverly hidden along the staircase leading below deck.

For those ready to exit the express cruiser market or downsize from a yacht, the Swift Trawler 47 lets you explore in style, and continues the legacy of long-distance cruisers first launched by Beneteau in 2004. ★



## *Beneteau Swift Trawler 47*

### SPECIFICATIONS

LOA: 48'4"  
Beam: 14'6"  
Draft: 3'10"  
Fuel Capacity: 510 gals.  
Water Capacity: 169 gals.  
Power (as tested): T-Cummins QSB 6.7L 425-hp diesels  
Base Price (as tested): \$988,000

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### DEALERS

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