

# PCS BOAT REVIEW

BY CAPTAIN HORACE BARGE

BIG BOAT,  
BIG POWER



## Specifications

Hull length: 52'1"  
Beam: 17'9"  
Draft: 4'11"  
Deadrise: 16°  
Displacement: 55,950 lb  
Fuel: 1,400 gal  
Water: 200 gal  
Cabin Headroom: 6'11"  
Berths: 6-8

## CABO YACHTS 52 EXPRESS

**T**he Cabo 52 Express is definitely in a class by itself. I had a long walk down the dock to the 52, and I couldn't believe this yacht just kept getting bigger and bigger as I approached. Once on board, I met Captain Dennis, and he was itching to show me this new boat.

From the onset it was obvious that this 52 had been set up for West Coast fishing in a big way. Waist-high bow rails made for easy access to the bow, and the bow pulpit was the perfect place for casting to fish. I was a bit perplexed at the absence of a bow bait tank until Dennis came forward and opened the anchor locker. Inside was a flush-mounted bait tank capable of carrying enough mackerel for a day of firing at marlin. Positioned on either side of the bait tank were two flush-mount rod holders, which further added to the illusion of no bait tank.

Back in the cockpit, I noticed that the 75-gallon transom bait tank appeared to have been enlarged, providing enough room for bait to circle. Teak decks offered sure and comfortable footing, whether shod or not. There are two large fish boxes both port and starboard, complete with cold plates and macerator pumps. A bait prep center includes a large insulated icebox with optional cold plates and a

sink and cutting board. Tackle storage drawers, below, are lockable to secure those secret jigs.

Up two steps, the helm deck is quite the place to entertain from. Teak decking continues, along with an L-shaped lounge with removable table and rod storage underneath. A Palm Beach-style helm provides excellent visibility of the electronics and the water. Another nice touch was the optional teak helm pod that adds even more class. For a climate-controlled atmosphere in any weather, the helm deck can be enclosed with Eisenglass on all four sides. One of the interesting options of this particular yacht was the overhead rod storage. Located in the hardtop was a power-actuated door, which revealed enough rod storage for several large trolling outfits. Directly aft was another that stored the inflatable.

Access to the engine room was from the cockpit, and once inside I couldn't believe the amount of headroom – an enormous seven feet to be exact. Like every Cabo I have been on, everything was very well labeled, and the wiring was a work of art. Two MAN V-12s had plenty of room on all sides for servicing, and the 21-kW generator should provide enough power to light a small city. There



Salon features a custom built-in TV and all the other comforts of home.



The bow pulpit, with waist-high rails, is the perfect spot to cast on a fish.

was enough room to mount a toolbox on the outboard port side atop a custom rack above the air conditioning units. The oil change system was very easy to access, and it was plumbed to the mains, generator, and transmissions, making easy work of the required fluid changes.

Stepping down into the salon revealed an inviting settee large enough to stretch out on with the television remote control. Just to starboard of the entry is the day head – for quick access should the need arise. Entertainment systems on boats nowadays are absolutely amazing, and this Express had been outfitted with everything. The large flat-screen could display television, cockpit cameras, and all of the navigational electronics (if you could figure out which button on the remote control to push).

To starboard, the galley was equipped with Sub Zero refrigerator and freezer drawers. Galley storage is immense, with not only the above and below storage cabinets, but also a “black hole” located under the teak and holly sole. There’s a four-burner ceramic cooktop and a double stainless steel sink cut in to the Corian counter top.

Staterooms are forward of the salon, with guest stateroom (with two bunks, dresser, and custom wall-mounted mirror) located to port. Best part about this location is you are first in line for the coffee. The forward or master stateroom features an island double bed with storage underneath, and the custom built-in television with optional satellite hook-up will ensure you never miss another game. A plenty-large master head has a vanity, Corian countertops, and a walk-in shower with seat.

Captain Dennis fired up the mains and kicked us off the dock into a stiff 25-knot breeze. We started up in the tower and soon retreated to the comforts of the helm deck below. I couldn’t wait to see how this express was going to handle once we got outside the breakwater and into open water. As soon as we cleared the breakwater, engines were kicked up to cruise at 1,750 rpm. The Cabo 52 Express absolutely ate up the four- to six-footers with ease, and the only time we took any spray was once when we were coming up on plane and hit a solid six-footer sideways. Being this low to please see **CABO 52 EXPRESS** on page 104



Palm Beach-style helm provides excellent visibility of electronics and water.



Spotting tuna from the tower is a breeze in your new '52.



Two MAN V-12s with plenty of room on all sides for servicing.



Master stateroom features island double bed with plenty of storage underneath.

#### **CABO 52 EXPRESS** from page 95 |

the water, I was very impressed with the ride, as the rocking was kept to a minimum.

Our cruise speed was 28 knots, and we were burning a mere 80 gallons per hour. Throttles were then pushed to the pins, and we were soon skipping around at a near 40 knots. Even in this weather, the ride was incredibly smooth and dry. A hard overturn at speed produced no spray, and the huge MANs didn't miss a beat. I couldn't help but talk them into backing down up swell (especially since I knew I didn't have to rinse the boat upon return). We were able to make a solid seven knots in reverse – up swell – with minimal water intrusion into the cockpit.

In keeping with the NASA-type electronics package, Captain Dennis pulled out a remote control and said, "Check this out." We both went out to the cockpit, and I was handed a remote control with a lanyard to go around your neck. I began pushing the buttons and the boat responded to my commands. I immediately had visions of single-handing marlin aboard a 52-footer with ease.

The Cabo 52 Express is ready for any adventure, be it local or long. Stan Miller Yachts is the proud dealer for Cabo Yachts on the West Coast and can be found in Long Beach, Newport Beach, and San Diego. They can be reached toll free at (877) 648-6716 to schedule a test ride. ■

