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Nordhavn's N41 Takes Long-Range Cruising to the Next Level





FRESH TAKE ON A TRAWLER

NORDHAVN'S N41 IS JUST THE RIGHT BOAT FOR TWO SEASONED CRUISING COUPLES

By Gary Reich

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Hundreds of Nordhavn owners have ocean passages under their keels. For that reason, it's easy to argue that long-distance cruising is the mission of every Nordhavn built. That much is true for the Nordhavn 40, once the builder's smallest model. Back in 2001, when the boat was launched, the company took an off-the-factory-floor 40 with a single engine on a 172-day journey around the globe. The feat proved that a fiberglass production powerboat could cross oceans safely and gave the 40 superstar status as a boat that could go anywhere.

In 2018, after completing 69 hulls, Nordhavn put the 40 out to pasture. But the company wasn't giving up on the lower end of its lineup. Behind the scenes, a new but similarly sized model was in the works. Two years later, in late 2020, the new N41 splashed.

The company already has 30-plus sales for the N41, nearly half the entire production run of the 40. The 41's first owners—two experienced cruising couples from California—recently spoke with *Soundings* about the appeal of the salty passagemaker.

LANCE AND STEPHANIE LEUTHESSER, TAVIE

When Lance Leuthesser was a deck officer on a 300-foot Environmental Science Services Administration vessel in Seattle, Washington, during the Vietnam War, he gained an appreciation for ships. And while he'd always been charmed by boats and the sea, his time as a deck officer solidified a newfound love of rugged-looking vessels.

Lance and Stephanie, who today are in their 70s, went looking for their first boat in 2006. "Around that time, Lance came to me and said, 'You know you're getting old when the ship you were on is being decommissioned and they no longer make the C. Plath

sextant,'" says Stephanie. She then found a 1966 C. Plath sextant on eBay and gave it to Lance as a gift. "He then joked, 'Now we need a boat.' So, I said, 'Okay, let's do it.'"

A Nordhavn 40 caught the eye of Lance, who thought it looked just like a little ship. They bought the boat, named it *Star Plath*, then put 23,000 miles under the keel over 10 years.

"We cruised from Skagway, Alaska, down to Zihuatanejo, Mexico, with our dog Tavie," Stephanie says. They loved the cruising life, but eventually the long offshore trips began to take their toll. So they sold the boat and bought a place in Arizona.

When Tavie passed away, Nordhavn's Southwest sales rep James Leishman called to offer his condolences. "I heard Lance on the phone asking what's new, and James started telling him about the N41. I'm hearing this and saying, 'Let's buy it!'"

Today, the Leuthesser's own Hull No. 2 of the N41. *Tavie* is currently in California going through the last phases of commissioning work. "We decided we were too young to sit around and do nothing," says Stephanie. "This boat makes it manage-

able for us to cruise again. It feels more practical than our last boat and is something we can handle. We'll spend summers aboard once we get it up to Seattle."

The couple likes the contemporary lines of the N41, and Stephanie is smitten with the interior. The open floor plan means Lance can be at the helm while she's in the galley or in the salon with her quilting or cross-stitching. "We're not going to miss the fly-bridge on the 40, and I feel like we'll be more together when we're underway," she says.

A major difference between the 40 and the new N41 is the propulsion. The new boat has two engines, while the 40 had a single diesel and an auxiliary wing engine as backup. A lot of thought went into that decision, according to Leishman, who says the company discovered that many wing engines on old 40s had only 10 to 15 hours on them. "By providing two main engines on the

Nordhavn N41
LOA: 41'4"
Beam: 13'11"
Draft: 4'6"
Displ.: 43,300 lbs.
Fuel: 900 gals.
Water: 300 gals.
Power: (2) Beta Marine
74-hp diesels
Price: \$779,000



RANDY AND JERI FRANK, SEA HORSE

Randy Frank is no stranger to boating. From the time he started boating at the age of 10, he's owned at least a dozen boats. They include a 41-foot IOC sailboat, souped-up ski boats, fishing boats, custom high-performance powerboats, cabin cruisers and a 74-footer that has an interesting connection to a Nordhavn yard in China.



N41, there will be more clean water for the props, and the operator will find it easier to maneuver," he says.

Lance feels very comfortable with the twin-engine setup. "Docking the 40 could be challenging given how tall it was and only having a single engine," he says. "I feel so much more confident having two engines."

Remarkably, the two 74-hp Beta Marine diesels provide performance and efficiency that rival the single 107-hp John Deere engine that was in the late-model Nordhavn 40s. At 6.2 knots, the N41's engines burn only 1.66 gph of diesel, which, with the 900-gallon fuel tank, means a range of 3,383 nautical miles. By comparison, the 40 burned 1.8 gph at 6.03 knots, for a 3,079-nautical-mile range. Pull back only to 5.09 knots with the N41 and the range expands to 6,582 nautical miles. The N41's top speed is around 9 knots. To keep on her feet, the hull has a long, deep keel with 4,000 pounds of internal ballast and a pair of ABT 220 external stabilizer fins.

"We're not going to be jumping off to Hawaii or anything like that," Lance says, "but the efficiency is nice to have. The boat has a comfortable, stable ride that makes us confident of her capabilities."

The couple's cruising plans include traveling back to some of their favorite ports in Canada and Alaska. "Once Covid-19 is under control and the border opens up we'll head north and spend most of the summer just enjoying being on the boat," Lance says. "We couldn't be happier with our decision to buy the N41. It's a great little ship."



BOTTOM: DOUG HARLOW

"South Coast Marine, which built some of the larger Nordhavns, wanted to build an Italian-style, go-fast luxury motor yacht, so the Leishmans got together with Michael Peters and designed a 76-footer with twin 1,200-hp MAN diesels called *Lanzarote*," says Randy.

At the time he was talking to Nordhavn's Larry Geiselman. "I pulled up to Larry's office in one of my supercars and he asked me why I was looking at the Nordhavn brand," says Randy. "He knew I also had a 150-mph raceboat at the time. I had learned that *Lanzarote* was put into storage, unfinished, due to a downturn in the economy. We eventually struck a deal in 2016. Her name was *Veloce*, which is the Italian word for fast."

The couple owned the boat until August 2020, when they sold it. Shortly after, Randy called Geiselman to say he was interested in the N475. "He told me he had just gotten off a Zoom call with the owner of the first N41, who had to back out of the deal due to Covid-related finance issues," says Randy. "I quickly got on the internet, looked at it and said I'd send a check."

The N41 is quite a departure for a guy like Randy, who has an obsession with horsepower and speed, but he describes why the Nordhavn appealed to him and his wife, Jeri. "With our big boat, we always felt as if we needed another couple along to help handle it. We were looking for something just the two of us could handle. This is the perfect model for the way we want to go boating in the future."

Randy explains that cruises along the California coast are on the itinerary, as is exploring the Pacific Northwest. "We like the layout of the boat a lot," he says. "There's a second stateroom with two bunks so we can have people for short visits while we're cruising."

Like the Leuthessers, the Franks grew tired of flybridges, so the lack of one on the N41 was appealing. "The design of the N41 means I can be at the helm and out of the weather while my wife is in the galley or just relaxing in the salon, where I can enjoy her company. The master stateroom is cozy—just perfect—and the fit and finish on the whole boat is amazing."

That fit-and-finish is achieved by crafts-

men at a Turkish yard that Nordhavn tapped to build the N41. Unlike previous Nordhavns, this boat is designed as a production build. Leishman says that's not an obstacle to the 41's success. "The boat comes with almost everything standard," he says. "We haven't heard many objections. The folks who are buying this boat are sold on the layout, standard equipment, performance and lines. For them, the boat is perfect as is."

Both couples couldn't say enough about working with Nordhavn. "They're great," says Stephanie. "They feel like part of our family. They made sure everything was perfect for *Tavie's* delivery."

The Franks also praise Nordhavn's service. "The buying experience was as good as it gets," says Randy. "We can't wait to get *Sea Horse* out on her first adventure. We know she's up for the job." 📍

Clockwise from top left: Stephanie and Lance Leuthesser on their new N41; the salon is aft of a shippy-looking helm; Randy and Jeri Frank