





# The Cool Cat

US boating giant Marine Max put years of charter operation and feedback into the design of the Aquila brand of catamarans. On a sunny cruise in Hong Kong, the Aquila 36 shows its practical, no-nonsense brand of good times

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STORY BY RYAN SWIFT

One interesting option for getting out on the water for the day or even an overnight trip with friends and family is the Aquila 36 catamaran; a boat focused on fun, not frills.

Built at Sino Eagle Shipyard in Hangzhou, China, the Aquila brand of catamarans aims for simplicity and practicality. Sino Eagle uses the latest techniques in fibreglass production, while the design is by J&J Yacht Design, which has a long history of designing sailboats and small powerboats. The first Aquila boats were commissioned by US boating giant Marine Max for its charter guests. The result of this tripartite collaboration is a yacht that is well made, sensible and efficient.

You may not find exquisite finishes on the Aquila 36, but you will find drink holders, fridge units, plenty of storage and grab rails in all the right places. The many years of design and charter experience that are



**TECHNICAL  
SPECIFICATIONS:  
AQUILA 36**

**LENGTH OVERALL**  
10.96M

**HULL LENGTH**  
9.94M

**BEAM**  
4.45M

**DRAUGHT (OUTBOARDS UP)**  
60CM

**DISPLACEMENT (FULLY  
LOADED)**  
8,800KG

**CE CERTIFICATION**  
B:8; C:18; D:26

**CABINS**  
2

**HEADS**  
2

**SHOWERS**  
3

**ENGINES**  
2X300HP V8 MERCURY  
OUTBOARDS

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the pedigree of this yacht add up to a boat that is great for everyone and first-time boat buyer/operators in particular.

Our test boat was powered by twin Mercury 300HP outboard engines, but buyers can choose between 300 and 400-horsepower outboards. At full throttle, we topped out at around 30 knots, but a better speed is cruising at 18 to 20 knots. At that speed, the 36 consumed about 120 litres of fuel per hour from its twin 675-litre tanks, yielding an approximate range of about 225 nautical miles, more than enough for Hong Kong day cruising, or even overnight cruising between Thai or Philippine islands.

On our test day, we had light but steady breezes and minor chop, which the 36 handled with aplomb. The hulls were designed to minimise slamming in waves, and the boat did a good job cushioning the ride. There is also a fixed foiling blade that connects both hulls at amidships, which adds lift while underway, increasing efficiency and reducing fuel consumption.

Large, tinted windows and thin mullions mean the pilot has an exceptional, nearly 360-degree view of the sea. This, combined with the optional joystick controls, makes docking, anchoring and manoeuvring very easy. You get the sense that an operator could



**Clockwise from above:**

The aft swim ladder folds down between the outboards; the single, open space on the main deck is well served and comfortable for up to a dozen people; the Aquila 36 cruises most comfortably at 20 knots, helped by a hydrofoil between the hulls





master handling the boat in a matter of minutes. The helm station displays are easy to read, and everything is at your fingertips.

The half-metre draught of the Aquila 36 means that it is possible to beach it in the right conditions or to get close enough to the beach for people to jump in and wade to shore. There is an option to have a davit system aft in case a tender is desired.

The bow area offers generous seating, and the aft deck is an extension of the main deck. Guests can clamber back and forth with no restriction. The aft deck has a hidden swim ladder.

Down below, there is accommodation suited for overnighting for up to four people.

Aquila says the 36 can carry up to 26 passengers on board. That might be a bit crowded, but it is not hard to imagine a dozen or more people having a great day on the water with this yacht.

Buyers can choose between full-height windows or half-height windows. On the full window option, the mechanism for opening and closing the windows impacts access to the bow, which can be cumbersome. But it's a relatively small concern on a yacht that ticks a lot of boxes for people who just want a lot of fun.

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