

# POWER UP FOR FAST FUN

*The second model in Aquila's new Offshore series, the 47 Molokai propels the powercat brand into the world of big-game fishing yet can also be a high-speed day boat for family and friends.*

WORDS **DOMINIC SALANDER** PHOTOS **AQUILA**





*Designed by South African studio Peart Yacht Design, the 47 Molokai has a sporty look and two or four outboard engines*

**W**ith the 28 Molokai, Aquila showed its determination to tackle the world of fishing by producing a high-performance open catamaran. With the 47 Molokai, the world's leading powercat manufacturer has taken its Offshore series to new lengths, with the yacht's generous dimensions making it a remarkable entry into the world of big-game fishing.

Featuring an overall length of more than 49ft and a beam of 14ft 7in, the Molokai has been billed by Aquila as the 'Big Kakuna' and has a sleek, appealing profile. Unlike the 28, the 47 was designed by naval architect Chris Peart of Peart Yacht Design (PYD), the South Africa-based studio founded in 2020. While there are similarities with its little sistership, starting with the long hull porthole, the 47 is different in many ways.

For example, the bows are less vertical than on the 28, and the overall line is more tapered and sportier. An interesting detail is that the long hull portholes open onto the side decks, while other portholes have been added on the sides of the cabin.

#### OFFSHORE-INSPIRED HULLS

Another interesting feature of the 47 Molokai is the wide hulls for its class. Not only does this improve buoyancy and seaworthiness but it

also provides substantial interior volume. As a result, the tunnel is quite narrow, but relatively high, as the front of the nacelle is rather thin.

The hulls are supported by a large, inverted strake and a second strake that becomes a lively chine. The architect has also integrated two steps in the style of offshore hulls, a real plus for performance but also for fuel consumption.

The boat we tested in Florida boasted four 450hp Mercury Racing engines, which set the tone for its anticipated performance. However, the production version is offered with either four 400hp V10s or twin 600hp V12s, and even more unusual configurations on request. Lovers of big engines will be delighted.

Once at the helm, the power delivered puts a large smile on your face. Barely out of the harbour, it starts planing in just over five seconds, tops 20 knots in eight seconds, while cruising speed is reached at about 35 knots.

At this point, the catamaran is moving so well that you have almost no idea what speed it's going. Nothing moves, waves are swallowed with disconcerting ease, and the air cushion under the hull contributes to smooth sailing. Add to this the excellent protection provided by the windshield and side windows, and you're eager to put in the miles.

Encouraged by the good seakeeping, we push the throttle and the GPS



*The cockpit (left) can fit a table or a fighting seat, while the transom holds two livewells; the foredeck (right) has three sunpads and an aft-facing sofa*

goes wild: 40, 45, 50 knots and counting. In no time at all, we're up to 60 knots and still in total comfort. The craziest thing is that the test hull is not even fitted with the ideal propellers, so we're missing a few rpm.

As for the curves, they're swallowed up at high speed and with very little angle. If you want to play around a bit, you can desynchronise the trims between the port and starboard hulls to be more aggressive when cornering, but it's not necessary.

#### DESIGNED FOR DEEP-SEA FISHING

As well as enabling you to head offshore quickly, the 47 Molokai features a roomy, highly versatile deck layout. Its primary appeal as a fishing boat is reflected in the large cockpit, which can accommodate a full set of rod holders and even a fighting seat. There are also two good-sized livewells aft, thigh cushions and two lateral doors, very practical for reeling in your catch or just accessing the boat.

Another original feature is the transom, with a central door that leads to a long swim platform between the engines. This platform conceals a well-made swim ladder with handrails to help climb back on board.

Retractable bench seats can disappear into the transom and the floor conceals several lockers including two for technical access and two that can be used for storage or transformed into a livewell, as on our test model.

A forward bench seat allows a view of the fishing action or water sports. It also features two coolers under the seats and a large lure box behind the backrest. If required, this bench seat can be replaced by an external galley with a grill, two sinks and a refrigerator.

All in all, the cockpit boasts well over 20 rod holders and even, as an option, sockets for electric reels. On the rear of the hard top, a screen has been installed to act as a repeater for the fish finder or GPS. The model can even accommodate a tuna tower, which can be accessed via steps on the rear of the hard top.

#### CARBON CONSTRUCTION

Mostly made in infusion, the powercat features carbon bulkheads on the front and rear to save weight and increase rigidity. The hard top is also made of carbon, which makes it very solid and rigid. Build

*Fishing aside, the 47 Molokai is big enough to host families and friends; the hard top covers seven forward-facing chairs for navigation*



*The boat is dotted with dozens of rod holders (left); each side has a bulwark door (right), for accessing the boat or sea or hauling your catch*





In the cockpit, the central backrest in the main sofa (on left) can transform into a table, while two folding bench seats can be fitted aft to increase seating



The cabin can be accessed via a sliding door by the helm or from the port side



## DECKS & SPECS

<b>LOA</b> 15.06m (49ft 4in)	<b>Cabins</b> 1 for 2 guests
<b>Hull</b> 13.94m (45ft 8in)	<b>Fuel</b> 3,960 litres
<b>Waterline</b> 11.94m (39ft 2in)	<b>Water</b> 303 litres
<b>Beam</b> 4.44m (14ft 7in)	<b>Engine options</b>
<b>Draft (motors up-down)</b>	2 x 600hp Mercury V12;
0.65-1.11m (2ft 2in-3ft 8in)	4 x 400hp Mercury V10
<b>Displacement</b> 10.35 tonnes (light); 15.15 tonnes (laden)	<b>CE certification</b> B7, C:12, D:20

When it comes to energy management, Aquila has opted for a bank of lithium batteries with a total of 900 amp-hours. Avoiding the need for a generator, this solution offers enough power for a long day's cruise. Overall, the standard equipment is generous, and the catalogue of options is long enough to provide something for everyone, with the galley option allowing a couple to spend a few nights on board.

Combining the best of monohulls and multihulls, the powerful, seaworthy 47 Molokai is a real challenger in the club of 45ft-plus offshore fishing powercats, yet is versatile and comfortable enough to appeal to fun-loving groups focused on fast coastal cruising to enticing destinations. ⚓

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A central passageway (bottom) leads to a long bathing platform with ladder

quality and finish are of the highest order, as the GRP is well made, the woodwork well protected and the assemblies reliable.

Continuing forward through the wide, deep side decks, you discover two large fish boxes on each side. The passageways lead to the foredeck, where there are three sunpads on the cabin roof and a well-sheltered sun lounger in the bow, but no table. To make the most of the volume, storage space is provided under these seats, as well as under the solarium.

The nose of the boat features three lockers including two for the electric windlass and chain. The other includes a pressurised rinsing system and can be used as a storage locker reaching down to the bottom of the hull. It's a good space, but don't drop anything small in there as it may not be that easy to fish out!

### COMFORT ABOVE AND BELOW

Sheltered by the hard top and windshield, the central covered zone features rows of three and four individual seats, with the rear line of four set a little higher to allow for better views. All seats are equipped with footrests and have a leaning-post position.

The helm fits the image of the best fishing boats on the market, with a glovebox, switches, cupholders and a gloss-black front panel.

Depending on the options chosen, there are two or three large screens, all well integrated for a sleek, modern look. Despite my modest size, visibility at the helm was decent, but you can also use the floor riser, which makes things even easier, especially when manoeuvring.

It's not easy to design an open fishing boat based on two hulls, maintaining a low profile and include a real cabin, but that's exactly what Aquila did. The trick was to place the aft-facing double bed on the tunnel and use the hollows of the hulls for circulation on either side.

On the downside, to get from one side of the bed to the other, you must climb over the bed or use the two openings, one starboard of the helm and the other on the port side deck. The cabin has storage to starboard, while the port side has a bathroom just big enough to use the head and take a shower without too much contortion. There's a TV at the end of the bed.



Situated under the foredeck, the cabin includes an aft-facing double bed, skylights above, storage to starboard, a TV and a full head to port