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## DUFOUR GRAND LARGE 460

An amalgam of good ideas makes for a winner By Zuzana Prochazka

French builder Dufour has rolled out multiple models in recent years. One reason the company has been able to keep up this pace is its attention to owner feedback, which has helped designers identify exactly what people want. That Dufour has read the market and capitalized on the right synthesis of features and performance is clearly evident in the Grand Large 460.

### DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION

The hull of the GL 460 is hand-laminated solid fiberglass below the waterline and vacuum-bagged with a PVC foam core above. The single semi-elliptical rudder is filled with closed-cell foam and maintains a good grip on the water even when the boat is well heeled. The coach roof is low and affords good visibility forward from the twin helms. All hatches are flush.

A hard chine has been added to the newly designed hull to help keep her upright. The voluminous hull flows into deep sections forward that should also minimize slamming in a seaway. Like many new designs, the bow is blunt and the transom is snub, maximizing waterline length.

The 9/10s fractional rig has a tapered deck-stepped Z-Spar mast and twin aft-swept spreaders. A composite "delphinriere," or bowsprit, has been added and is comprised of a strong metal structure overlaid with fiberglass to make it blend with the hull. Not only does it keep the anchor tucked neatly beneath so no lines catch on it, it also makes an excellent attachment point for an optional Code 0 reaching sail.

### ON DECK

A boat has to function well under sail and at anchor, and Dufour has concentrated on improving the on-deck experience from both perspectives. When sailing, everything falls easily to hand, including the German-style mainsheet, which leads back to a pair of Lewmar primary winches near the twin wheels. Two more winches are located on the cabintop to handle halyards and other lines with the help of a battery of Spinlock rope clutches. This is a workable arrangement for both short-handed sailing and a racing crew.

A 12in Raymarine HybridTouch MFD is mounted on the aft end of the cockpit table and is visible from both helms. Engine

controls are on starboard only and are mounted inboard of the binnacle, which will be ideal for left-handed drivers, but will take some getting used to for the rest of us.

In addition to a drop-leaf centerline table that can hold an optional refrigerator, two other features stand out in the cockpit. The first is a portside bench that works well as a seat with foot bracing against the table underway, or as a sun pad with the aid of a flip-up section when you're on the hook. Second is the optional outdoor galley. With the electric transom down, it provides a place for the chef to stand and cook *en plein air* with the help of an Eno plancha grill, a sink and a cutting board. This feature was introduced on the GL 500 where it quickly captured many buyers' imaginations. No more heating up of the interior when cooking, and the chef is able to continue socializing while preparing meals. Since its introduction, this feature has been copied by a number of other manufacturers and very much reflects how sailors live aboard their boats these days.

### ACCOMMODATIONS

The GL 460 replaces a previous 45ft model and includes an interior refresh that was specifically designed to make it look and function more like her current larger siblings. The highlight is a split galley that separates the master stateroom forward from the saloon. To port

is a large single sink and a three-burner Eno stove, to starboard twin Isotherm refrigeration drawers and a cupboard that hides a pullout espresso coffeemaker. The separation allows two cooks to work simultaneously without getting in each other's way, though at sea there will be little to brace oneself against laterally while cooking or washing dishes.

With the galley forward, the saloon benefits from the maximum beam. To starboard, six can gather on the L-shaped settee and accompanying inboard twin bench seat. Two more can sit on the port-side sofa, which can be lifted up and reclined inboard to make it a few inches wider, transforming it into somewhat of a lounge. The versatile nav station is aft-facing with the seat formed by the end of the settee. However, the chart table can also be slid forward, making the station forward-facing. Additionally, it can be tilted, enabling the navigator to work on a level surface regardless of the heel angle.

The master stateroom forward is bright, benefiting from a large overhead hatch, deck portlights and hull windows. The island berth has two drawers below for good stowage, and the ensuite head is split with a large shower compartment to port, and a sink and toilet to starboard.

The three-cabin, two-head layout is the most similar to Dufour's popular larger models. However, a four-cabin, four-head version is also available, as is a "charter saloon," in which a more conventional straight-line galley is set to starboard.

The finish on our boat was Canadian oak-colored Maobi wood with a white

headliner, so everything looked light and contemporary. Aboard a Dufour, there is always a wine cellar regardless of the LOA, and the GL 460 has its wine rack below the floorboards at the foot of the companionway. The stowage options in the master cabin and throughout the galley and saloon are exceptional, which will be welcomed by long-term cruisers.

### UNDER SAIL

Sadly, we got skunked on our test sail on Chesapeake Bay. The wind just never materialized, although having sailed a number of prior models in the line, like the GL 500 and 560, I know how light and well-balanced Dufours are. For example, in 12 knots of breeze, the 40,000lb GL 560 sped along at 8.5 knots at a 40 degree apparent wind angle. By comparison, the GL 460 is 16,000lb lighter, so her performance should be at least comparable. Dufour kept the 460 boom low and accessible to the crew regardless of their height. I appreciated that when it came time to manage the mainsail back into its bag.

Like her sisters, I expect the GL 460 to point exceptionally well and come through snappy tacks. Hull #73 was equipped with cross-cut Dacron sails by Elvstrom and a Facnor furler for the headsail. The upwind sail area is 1,074ft<sup>2</sup>, so she has plenty of power, and the simplicity of the 95 percent self-tacking jib on a curved track means she can be singlehanded easily. Radial-cut laminated sails, an in-mast furling mainsail and a traditional overlapping 108 percent genoa are options.

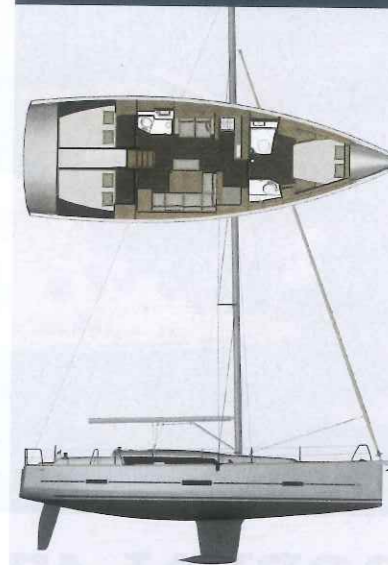
### UNDER POWER

Our test boat was equipped with the standard 54hp Volvo Penta diesel with saildrive. At wide-open throttle and 2,800

**The Details:** Looking forward, the galley lies between the saloon and master stateroom



### Specifications



LOA	46ft 6in
LWL	41ft 1in
BEAM	14ft 9in
DRAFT	7ft 3in (standard); 6ft 5in (shoal)
DISPLACEMENT	23,722lb
BALLAST	6,283lb
SAIL AREA	1,074ft <sup>2</sup>
FUEL/WATER (GAL)	66/140
ENGINE	Volvo Penta 54hp
BALLAST RATIO	27
SA/D RATIO	21
D/L RATIO	153
DESIGNER	Felci Yacht Design
BUILDER	Dufour Yachts, La Rochelle, France, dufour-yachts.com
U.S. DISTRIBUTOR	Dufour Yachts USA, 352-871-0362
PRICE	\$332,000 (sailaway)

rpm, we motored at 8.7 knots. We found an economical cruising speed of 8.0 knots at 2,200 rpm. An engine upgrade to 75hp is available. The GL 460 carries 66 gallons of fuel. There also is the choice of a jet bow thruster from Holland Marine or a more conventional drop-down style thruster from Side Power for those in search of a little more maneuverability.

### CONCLUSION

Our test boat was outfitted with a number of extras, including air conditioning, a genset, the outdoor galley and complete electronics. Add commissioning, bottom paint and delivery to the U.S. East Coast, and the as-tested price came to \$411,000. (The base price is just \$322,00.) That's a lot of boat for the money, especially given its outstanding build quality and innovative design. ♦

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