

Island Packet 349 Designer Comments

The new Island Packet 349 is the latest in almost 40 years of continual evolution of Island Packet designs focused on safety, seakeeping, performance, ease of handling, cruising comfort, build quality and value. Fundamental to the 349 is the proprietary Full Foil Keel hull design, offering an unrivaled combination of safety and stability, moderate draft, passage making performance, and a worry free integral keel and hull structure. These attributes have been proven time and again in all conditions ranging from solo circumnavigations to race winning offshore performance, continuously proving this feature's unique benefits.

The 349 is designed with a Solent style sloop rig with roller furling standard for both the main and jib. The jib's standard Hoyt Boom offers two important advantages. First, the Hoyt Boom acts like a vang for the jib, adding power by keeping leach tension constant on all points of sail, and second, the single jib sheet means tacking is as simple as putting the helm down and coming about without touching a line. The Solent design allows a (optional) reacher just forward of the jib for added performance off the wind or in light conditions. The reacher can also be fitted with roller furling if desired. The Solent rig has proven to be versatile, easy to use and well liked.

On deck, the 349 offers all the practical features from stem to stern that have come to define an Island Packet, along with some evolutionary upgrades. The integral bow platform is fitted with our patented anchor roller that keeps the ground tackle ready for immediate use and securely stowed when the anchor is retrieved. Raised cap rails on side decks and full-length cabin top handrails add security underway. Cockpit seats are ergonomically designed for seating comfort and long enough for a nap or sleeping under the stars, and side steps on the stern platform facilitate access to the cockpit. The stern platform is molded integrally with the hull and as such is always available for immediate use, an important safety feature in a number of scenarios. A pocket swim ladder is fitted below the platform for boarding from the water.

The 349's interior offers two comfortable and well separated staterooms. The forward stateroom features private access to the head compartment, a dressing seat, hanging locker and a Pullman berth with storage underneath and an aft step to allow access with two occupants. The head compartment features a vanity, push button electric head, and a shower area with integrally molded seat. The saloon continues use of Island Packet's trademark retractable dining table allowing for either a dining or open social area. The port settee pulls out to make a double berth, and the starboard settee includes a center table for navigation use or, by dropping it down, a full-length cushion. The galley is convenient to both the saloon and cockpit and features an electric refrigerator and freezer box, solid surface counters, and convenient storage areas. Ample light and ventilation is provided by numerous opening ports, overhead hatches and fixed ports in the hull.

The 349 should meet the requirements of those looking for a vacation or weekend retreat or setting off for distant shores. Almost four decades of experience and continual improvement based on advancing technologies and owner feedback have placed these fine yachts in a class by themselves.

Bob Johnson, N.A.