

# Isis – a Lipari 41

**Karen Harper and Hamish Smith** traded up from a trailer-sailer to a large catamaran and are making the most of all that extra space.



Purchasing Isis, a Fountaine Pajot Lipari 41, has been a 10-year journey in the planning and final execution. We started to fear that we were going to join the “Gonna tribe!” We wanted to buy a boat that we felt happy to bluewater cruise but that could also be handled by one person. We hope to be living aboard for the next 15 or so years.

Initially, we had always intended to purchase a 12m monohull. The two main reasons for this were that we had only really experienced sailing on friends’ monohulls (we didn’t count sailing our Hobie cat on dams in the Burnett Region as sailing on full-blown multihulls!), and 12m seemed to be a good size that one person could manage should something happen to the other person.

Then, by pure chance, we happened to be invited onto a catamaran while on our trailer-sailer holidaying in the Whitsundays. We had always intended to be liveaboard sailors, so the appeal of a catamaran with the larger living areas, galley up, and stability won us both over.

So the search was then on for what style of catamaran would suit our needs. Over the next few years we would wander through various marinas and boat yards as the opportunities presented themselves, looking at different cats and getting a feel for what was around and for what price.

Eventually our key criteria boiled down to a number of simple items:

## 1. Helm up and comfy helm seat for two

Visibility looking forward and being able to see both bows without having to look either outside the boat along the side or through the saloon windows was a high priority. Having a helm seat that two people could comfortably sit beside each other for more than five minutes was important, or a helm seat that allows for being able to wrap up nice and snug on that chilly night sail when you are on watch all alone in the wee hours of the morning.

## 2. Galley Up

We have experienced sailing with both galley up and galley down and concluded that the galley-up style suited our mode of lifestyle. We’re not big TV watchers but rather prefer to have conversation at the end of the day with music playing in the background while the meal is being prepared. The galley works really well and the double sink with drainage is great. We have catered for seven people without a difficulty. Day to day for just the two of us it is fine. We have utilised all the handy storage but have kept two large lockers empty for provisions when we go cruising.

## 3. Ability to handle single-handed

We’ve been crew on boats simply because the boat was too large to be sailed by one person and decided this wasn’t for us. Isis isn’t too big and both of us have the ability (and strength when required) to sail her by ourselves should the need arise.

## 4. Safety

There were a number of safety items on the Lipari 41 that ticked all the boxes. Firstly all lines run back to the helm, minimising the need to go for’ard. Within the bows are fully sealed buoyancy tanks, should we ever be unfortunate enough to bump into something, and there is sufficient



Lipari 41 under sail.

LEFT: A happy Hamish and Karen.

bridgedeck clearance. The access from the stern is easy and walking around the boat feels very comfortable with large wide flat areas.

Other items that were on our desirable list included the angle of the main windows and their ability to not heat the boat too much in the tropics and general visibility from within the main saloon, ease of access to the engines and the ability to undertake work when required without having to be a contortionist.

One of the features that really caught our eye was the handrail built into the saloon roof that doubles as a rainwater catch if required. Because we intend to be as self-sufficient as possible when off cruising, this was a real big plus for us.

The production boats we looked at all had many similar features and all were good quality. However, we ended deciding between Lagoon and Fountaine Pajot with Leopard and Schionning being close behind.

## Lipari 41

We made the decision to purchase a Lipari 41 a year ago following the Sanctuary Cove International Boat Show. The buying process was easy and very helpful with the Australian



practical: my boat

brokers. Multihull Solutions, talking us through all our options and the best way to achieve the results we want. Unlike Australian-built boats, there was no communication or involvement in the factory part of the process. But once the boat arrived in Australia and the commissioning and extras fitted out, the communication and involvement were excellent.

We are now living aboard Isis and have condensed a huge house full of “stuff” onto the boat. We are still discovering little storage places! Karen works from home most of the time from the computer, so we have also managed to accommodate a home office.

Isis is the Maestro version, giving the whole starboard side to the owners — as you come down the steps from the saloon you turn right to our bunk, which is very spacious (roughly the size of a queen bed, and just long enough for Hamish who is 6ft 2”). With a large porthole and one behind, the ventilation is sufficient. Directly opposite the stairs in the office area, which is well utilised for our home office. Then there is a dressing area (not sure what else to call it) where storage consists of two large drawers under the bunk, two full-length hanging lockers and one cupboard. The head comes next, which has a full standing shower with screen. There is an electric head with holding tank. Little storage places throughout the bathroom area are also very handy. In the bow is our wet locker area, accessible through the bathroom or externally via deck flush porthole. The lower part of both bow lockers are crash bulkheads.

The port side has two double bunks, one fore and aft with a head and bathroom in the middle. The aft cabin we also use as the workshop because under the bunk is a large compartment accessible from above. We kept the head on this side manual

# The next generation woven sailcloth



## Superior UV Resistance Superior Shape Retention

To ensure we create the best sailcloth, we control the entire production process – from the fibre, right through to the weave and finish.

It's a commitment not so common these days, but one we believe is essential to create the very best sails that have the performance and longevity you need.

[www.contendersailcloth.com](http://www.contendersailcloth.com)

 **CONTENDER**<sup>®</sup>  
The sailcloth innovators

## practical: my boat

to encourage water conservation.

The engines are 30hp saildrive Volvos. While the boat came standard with 20hp, we opted to upscale because we'd had some bad experiences on under-powered cats when chartering.

On deck it is very easy to move around because the deck itself is wide and flat. Doing anything with the main is easy because you can stand on solid roof right back to the end of the main.

We added more than the factory option power because we installed a freezer as well as the standard piano-hinge fridge, and we are running the computer for home office. We got four 80W solar panels flush-mounted. We also installed a battery monitor which is very helpful working out our major consumers (we now have a love-hate relationship with the freezer). The house bank consists of 400 amhours with an additional battery for the starboard motor that is isolated. We will probably add a wind generator at some stage; at present in fine weather we can go for five days normal use and our batteries are down to 60 percent, so running engines every five days is currently a necessity.



The roomy interior.



### Sailing and anchoring

So far, Isis sails beautifully. We have not had extreme weather yet, just mainly light winds. Isis points well to about 30 degrees apparent. We are still sailing with the two standard sails: the main which is square-headed, giving better sail area with less height. Karen can pull the main 90 percent up before resorting to the winch for last 10 percent. The foresail is very easy to manage in roll up, does not catch anywhere and sets readily. We have not kept a real eye on boat speed, but in general I would say we sail at half the wind speed. In winds of about 15 knots, we are doing seven to eight knots.

Anchoring-wise, we have the standard plough and 50m of chain. We will add another anchor shortly and more chain prior to our cruising next month.

### Navigation

Because we need a computer on board for work we have set up all the navigation to run through this. We also have an iPad at the helm, which has proved very useful. We are running two programs at present to see which works best: iNavx on the phone and iPad. The charts are great value and accurate, but we are still struggling with plotting and exporting routes. On the computer (Apple Mac), we are using PolarNavy. It's a fantastic program but charts (from another source) are more expensive, though still cheaper than paper. I still have to get all the GPS, wind and depth data to feed into the computer; that is one of the next projects and will turn that program into a very useful tool. We trained the old-fashioned way and still also keep a paper chart on the table for wherever we are going and

Internationally recognised as the world's leading marine epoxy for over 40 years, WEST SYSTEM® is specifically formulated for marine construction and repairs requiring superior moisture resistance and high strength.

- resin & hardeners
- dispensing pumps
- powder modifiers
- additives & pigments
- application tools
- manufactured in Australia since 1989

**WEST SYSTEM®**  
Safe, Strong, Reliable

[www.westsystem.com.au](http://www.westsystem.com.au)



ATL Composites Pty Ltd  
T (+61) 7 5563 1222 F (+61) 7 5563 1585  
[info@atlcomposites.com](mailto:info@atlcomposites.com)

WEST SYSTEM is a registered trademark of WEST SYSTEM Inc.

regularly refer to it as well. The computer also doubles as TV with a simple USB device connected to the antennae, and we have 3TB of movies for all the rainy days somewhere. So nav, entertainment and workstation are very compact with a Mac mini computer (I have found Macs far more resilient to salt-air corrosion than other computers, and they are a tenth of the size), a mounted monitor at nav station and one external hard drive. We have a backup Mac mini kept on dry land and a laptop for emergency.

**What would we change?**

We have slightly altered the shackles to attach the main, because that process requires a bit of strength and the way it was set-up just made it harder. We will also add more clears to the cockpit area and sun protection/shade to saloon windows.

In summary, Isis is better than we had hoped, and we are looking forward to our next 15 or so years living on her and, when our bank balance gets a bit healthier, cruising the world!

ch

**cruisinghelmsman Hamish Smith and Karen Harper**



Hamish and Karen have just realised a 10-year dream and become liveaboards on their newly purchased Fountaine Pajot Lipari 41, Isis.

Due to a very slow real estate market and therefore no house sale, their plans for bluewater cruising are on hold for a while, and they will continue to work in Brisbane living onboard at Dockside (south Brisbane) and spending weekends and holidays out sailing.

**Topsail INSURANCE**

Topsail Insurance is an independent marine insurance specialist, passionate about Blue Water and Worldwide cruising insurance.

- Bespoke cruising ranges to suit your course
- First class policies and protection from leading Insurance companies
- Offshore sailing with just 2 experienced crew onboard
- Swift, knowledgeable and professional service

If you would like to obtain a quotation for your boat insurance please contact [enquiries@topsailinsurance.com](mailto:enquiries@topsailinsurance.com) [www.topsailinsurance.com](http://www.topsailinsurance.com)

**S U R V I V E**

**World's Smallest PLB**  
Shown actual size

When it's life or death, nothing rivals an ACR EPIRB or PLB for high quality, cutting-edge technology and reliability beyond question. Built to exacting standards, our products are made to survive – so you will, too.

**ResQLink™**  
Personal Locator Beacon

**GPS**  
GIVE CLEAR VIEW TO SKY

**ACR**  
COBHAM

[www.acrelectronics.com/ResQLink](http://www.acrelectronics.com/ResQLink)

ACR Electronics, Inc. is registered by UL to ISO 9001:2008