

Sturiër Trawler 520 OC





FOTOGRAFIE GERT FOMMA



*Volharding's latest yacht, the **Sturiër Trawler 520 OC**, has come a long way since its fishing boat predecessors of yesteryear, reports **Dag Pike**. Interior photography by **Bugsy Gedlek***

The Volharding Stavoren shipyard is located in the small town of Stavoren at the northern end of the IJsselmeer in The Netherlands. In winter, when the cold wind blows in from the North Sea, this is a place where the frills of fashion do not have much meaning. It is an area of serious-minded fishermen who do not take chances with the sea, so it comes as little surprise that a yacht built at the Volharding yard is a serious craft, constructed to cope with adverse conditions.

Volharding has a long history of building steel vessels. It started back in 1918 building mainly fishing boats, and the gradual switch to yacht building began in 1950. Today, the yard's production is totally dedicated to yachts, and yet its fishing boat ancestry can still be seen in the designs. However, the hard ships of fishing boat life have been left far behind, as Volharding's yachts now come complete with luxurious interiors.

The name *Sturiër Trawler 520 OC* reflects its origins. This is a true trawler yacht, heavily constructed in steel but with the high finish that only Dutch yards seem to have perfected. In respect of the hull, this is a multi-chined displacement design



that sits well in the water, with the propellers sited in a safe and secure place within the depths of the hull.

The deck line rises at the bow to meet the near vertical, rounded stem, and the half-height bulwarks and the rails follow the sheer line ending in a slightly rounded transom, which has a narrow bathing platform at the waterline. Stainless steel has been widely used in any wear areas, so that corrosion possibilities have been eradicated. The hawse pipe and anchor stowage are in stainless steel, as are the mooring fittings, the water drains, the fender strip and the bulwark cappings.

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above the coaming. The pilothouse rises from this, its top extended slightly aft to give a sleek but purposeful line. Above is a powerful-looking mast, which supports the antennae and the navigation lights, and can be hauled down under hydraulic power when passing beneath low bridges.

Pads for fixing tender davits are mounted on the transom, in which a centre door gives access to the teak-decked bathing platform. The use of teak continues on the cockpit deck, where there are bench seats each side of the transom gate, and the rails around the cockpit are also capped with varnished teak.

A captain's chair is located forward on each side of the pilothouse. This is perfect for comfortable piloting and each has its



own footrest. On the port side, there is a chart table while to starboard there are all the required electronics. There is excellent all-round visibility from the helm, except that the wide windscreen frames do restrict the view forward a little.

A comfortable raised seating area behind the helm is ideal for guests. To supplement the electronics, a PC is built in under the settee and serves two screens, one at the helm and one opposite – this is an optional system which allows the latest electronic technology to be used.

The helm seats swivel round to face the settee making the pilothouse a good social

area in harbour, especially as a bar is built into the starboard sideboard. All the windows are double-glazed and the centre section of the windscreen can be opened for ventilation. Combined with the hatch in the roof and the rear door, there is plenty of fresh air on tap, but air-conditioning is an optional extra.

The emphasis down below is on a large, central saloon with cabins forward and aft. The master cabin is forward with a double bed, plenty of stowage and an en suite shower room. With no portholes in the hull, the natural light comes from above via a glass hatch and side ports in the

Main picture: a tan leather settee and chairs make for a pleasant dining environment in the saloon

Above right: the all-electric galley located to starboard of the saloon

Right: natural light enters the master cabin through a glass hatch above



REVIEW Sturiër Trawler 520 OC

coachroof. Even so, the cabin is on the dark side due to the teak panelling.

Aft of the saloon there are two twin-berthed cabins which extend under the pilothouse; both have ample headroom as they are set well down into the hull. These two cabins share a shower room located on the port side, which also serves as the day head.

Returning to the saloon, this has a similar settee to that in the pilothouse, but this time it is in a lighter tan leather rather than the blue leather used above. It surrounds a table large enough for dining, and two portable chairs allow the whole crew to be seated. A plasma screen TV is located above a bookcase to port, while the all-electric galley, which has Corian tops, is to starboard.

Teak panelling is used throughout the accommodation and both tables have decorative inlays. Together with the quality fabrics, there is a feeling of understated luxury without any extravagance.

It is possible to customize the Sturiër Trawler 520 OC considerably, both in terms of decoration and layout. One of the main options is to have the master cabin aft, which means raising the pilothouse. This adds to the accommodation area, but does not produce quite the same satisfying exterior style.

In the standard layout, there is a large lazarette below the cockpit. This houses the generator and other auxiliaries but it still leaves space for storage. Access to the lazarette is through a deck hatch, and a door below here gives access to the engine compartment. Unusually in a displacement yacht, the engines drive through V-drive gearboxes, an arrangement which allows the engines to be installed well aft and in turn enhances the accommodation space. There is also ladder access to the engine compartment from a separate cockpit hatch.

The engines are twin 165hp MAN diesels, modest power for this heavy 32.5-ton yacht. It is enough to push the yacht along at a maximum speed of 10.5 knots, with a comfortable speed of around nine knots. This gives a useful range of over 800 miles, so that you don't need to be continually looking for the fuel dock. Most of the auxiliary systems on board the Sturiër Trawler 520 OC, such as the anchor winch, the bow- and sternthrusters, the mast lowering system and the stabilizers, are operated by hydraulics. For this, a central hydraulic system is installed. It should be noted that some of these hydraulic systems are optional.



Leaving the berths with two thrusters is so simple, and getting back is just as easy and safe. The thrusters have enough power to handle the heavy boat and combined with the responsive engines there is full control.

Opening the throttles produces a good thrust and the trim changes as the bow

lifts in reply. With the engines aft, the noise levels are commendably low, allowing normal conversation at the helm. The boat has a muted response to the waves and the stabilizers are efficient at damping out any rolling motions. The steering is positive, and it only needs a light caress of the wheel to keep the yacht on course at any speed.

It is this combination of good control and modest motions which makes the Sturiër Trawler 520 OC a relaxing yacht. Everything happens at the slow pace of displacement yachting, yet the miles slip past in a satisfying way. Perhaps the satisfaction comes in part from the knowledge that it is not hurting your wallet. It is also reassuring to know you have a sound yacht beneath you which has been developed from experience and which will cope with conditions the sea can generate. At the same time, there is the contentment of having a yacht which is equally at home gracing a Mediterranean marina, or with a North Sea storm. Volharding has a 20-metre on the drawing board if this has anything like the styling quality of the Sturiër Trawler 520 OC it will be much sort after.

STURIER TRAWLER 520 OC

LOA
15.6m (52ft)
LWL
14.2m (46ft 6in)
Beam
4.60m (15ft 3in)
Draught
1.50m (5ft)
Displacement
32.5 tons
Engines
2 x 165hp MAN diesels

Fuel capacity
3500 litres
Water capacity
1500 litres
Thrusters
AMEQ
Stabilizers
Koopnautic
Electricity generation
Onan 7kW
Navigation electronics
Simrad and Raytheon

Galley equipment
Siemens
Design
In-house
Builder
Jachtwerf Volharding
Stavoren
Kooyweg 8
8715 EP Stavoren
The Netherlands
Tel: +31 (0)514 68 12 07
Fax: +31 (0)514 68 14 41

