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# GRAND SOLEIL 65 LC

SEA TRIALS



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# GRAND SOLEIL 65 LC

SEA TRIAL FOR AN OUT-OF-THE-  
ORDINARY SAILBOAT

by Luca D'Ambrosio

The brand-new Grand Soleil 65 LC is one of the most anticipated sailing yachts of the year. Anticipated not only because it carries the name of a profoundly important shipyard, but also because this vessel is the result of the work of an immensely talented team, led by a sailing giant: Franco Corazza.

The project was clear: to create a maxi-yacht capable of offering great volumes and excellent performance, a mission that Matteo Polli, Nauta Design, and Marco Lostuzzi, as you will read in the following lines, successfully completed, achieving a true masterpiece.



## GRAND SOLEIL 65 LC SEA TRIAL

It's not a promising day that greets us in Palma de Mallorca: it's raining, the sky is dark, and a very light breeze blows, making it feel more like in Milan than Palma... I resign myself and put on my raincoat while, one by one, colleagues from other magazines also arrive.

The cockpit of the Grand Soleil 65 LC is simply huge. The almost six meters of beam are all visible, and besides comfortably accommodating the 12 people on board today, they give this sailing boat an appearance that manages to be both powerful and elegant at the same time.

The boat is in "heavy cruising" setup today. In addition to the multitude of people on board, we must also add a full fuel tank, the water tank at 80%, the rigid-hull tender, the outboard motor, and a heavy galley. In short, we have four extra tons on board, so we will test the boat as it will actually sail during its summer cruises.



We cast off the moorings, in the rain, and leave the harbor under motor power. The Grand Soleil 65 LC has a cruising speed of over 9 knots, which it reaches at 2,200 RPM, consuming only 14 liters of fuel per hour. These are impressive numbers for a vessel of nearly 22 meters, which, in addition to having very low emissions, also allows for great engine range.

While it's still raining, with only 5/6 knots of true wind, we hoist the mainsail, unfurl the genoa, and switch off the engine. The Grand Soleil 65 LC tilts slightly and, regardless of its weight and the very weak wind, sets off. It glides on the water with great lightness while, quite rapidly, it builds its apparent wind and accelerates without ever stopping. Close-hauled, we consistently sail above the true wind speed, reaching around 30 degrees apparent, hitting a peak speed of 7.5 knots with only 6 knots of true wind!

Unexpected performance for a cruising sailboat. I look aft and sense the reason—the wake of the Grand Soleil 65 LC is clean, and the wetted surface, at this slight heel angle, is truly reduced. This hull produces no resistance; drag is really kept to a minimum.



As we sail away from Palma and reach a sunlit portion of the sea, we find a couple of extra knots of true wind, which the boat immediately picks up and converts into speed. The heel increases, and again with only 8/9 knots true wind, the Grand Soleil 65 LC manages to surprise me, consistently sailing above 9 knots close-hauled, with peaks nearing 10.

This sailboat glides on the water with impressive ease, reaching speeds between 9 and 10 knots. The waterline length increases, and the boat rests on a sort of hull curve, which enhances stability by increasing the righting moment. Consequently, even at these speeds, sailing is always done with a modest heel angle and great comfort, the ideal recipe for covering many miles with little effort.

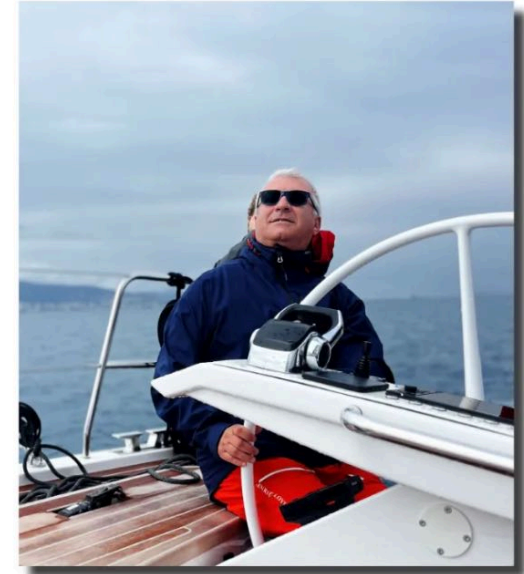
At the helm, you feel everything; small, measured movements allow you to keep the Grand Soleil 65 LC on course without losing speed. Steering this sailboat is a great pleasure.

We tack to head back, and given the speed, we send the gennaker ashore, which, equipped with a furler, is managed very easily. Once again, the boat accelerates, and in no time, at 90 degrees to the apparent wind, we're back at 10 knots.

What's still astonishing is the simplicity of handling; the rudder blade is deep and instills great tranquility.

I deliberately try to exaggerate the corrections, and instantly and proportionally, the bow follows the command, adjusting the course, disregarding the pressure exerted by the gennaker and the slightly too tight mainsail. If we were in a car, I'd say the steering is precise and direct, like that of a grand tourer.

The true wind increases a bit more, blowing at about 10/11 knots. I tighten up to 60/70 degrees to the apparent wind, and the Grand Soleil 65 LC kicks



into a higher gear, consistently sailing above 11 knots. Then, thanks to a gust, we touch nearly 12 knots, while this marvelous sailboat sails in an almost calm sea, just dotted with the first hints of whitecaps from the wind.

What a boat, folks, what a boat...



"Grand Soleil 65 LC shifts into gear plus, constantly sailing above 11 knots"

## THE INTERIOR OF THE NEW GRAND SOLEIL 65 LC

After reluctantly handing over the helm, I descend below deck while my colleagues continue to seek new speed records. Silence reigns in the dinette, not a creak or a groan; the craftsmanship of this boat, which has already sailed several thousand miles, is nearly perfect, an undeniable sign of the shipyard's great attention to the production process.

The layout of the Grand Soleil 65 LC is slightly different from the Performance version. The saloon is raised compared to the cabins, offering a 270-degree view towards the outside. The galley is located amidships, a solution that, together with the living area, creates a single, spacious open space.

The two aft cabins are very spacious, with ample standing room and dedicated facilities with separate shower cubicles. The Master Cabin is a true apartment, dedicated to the owner. Featuring a hallway and ensuite facilities, this cabin boasts a king-size central bed, accessible from both sides.



The common denominator of the interiors is the maximum utilization of space. Nauta Design has done an excellent job, both in terms of dimensions and ergonomics, giving the impression of being on a boat of much larger proportions.

The woods, leathers, and finishes are all top-notch, even where one might not expect it. The craftsmanship of the new Grand Soleil 65 LC firmly places this sailing yacht in the high/ultra-high-end segment of the market.





"Essences, leathers and finishes are at the highest levels."



## EXTERIORS AND SAIL PLAN

It is Nauta Design that has masterfully drawn the lines of this Grand Soleil 65 LC where both the side view and the deck are sublimely beautiful. The semi-raised saloon, the element that characterizes this boat, on one hand gives it a decidedly luxurious and streamlined appearance, while on the other hand outlines the contours of the cockpit seats, raising their backrests and making them very comfortable. This is the relaxation area, a versatile zone where one can sit, dine under a shade cloth, lounge for sunbathing, or simply relax, using the two chaise longues placed on either side of the descent to the lower deck.

Aft, we find the area dedicated to navigation where, from the two columns of the two wheels, all maneuvers can be electrically managed. An ideal configuration for sailing with a reduced crew and for comfortable cruising, especially considering the position of all winches which are easily accessible from here.

From stern to bow, there's no change in level, walking on the very wide side-decks that, even in the most complicated situations, remain decidedly safe. The open-type pulpit and the adequately sized bowsprit also

allow less agile individuals to set up a gennaker without risks or contortions, making it a boat truly designed to enjoy sailing without needing to engage a professional crew.

The sail plan is important but manageable, adequately divided between the large mainsail and a true genoa which, depending on the needs, can also be replaced by a self-tacking jib that, when set, allows a single person to manage the entire sailing navigation.



### TECHNICAL SPECS

LH	20,10 m
LOA	21,6 m
MAX BEAM 5.95 M (19.52 FT)	5,95
DISPLACEMENT	27,5 t
BALLAST	7,2 t
DRAFT	3,50 m
WATER TANK CAPACITY	840 l
FUEL TANK CAPACITY	825 l
ENGINES	170 Hp
SAIL PLAN	278 m <sup>2</sup>
PROJECT	Matteo Polli / Cantiere del Pardo
EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR DESIGN	Nauta Design
NAVAL ARCHITECTURE	Matteo Polli
CONSTRUCTION	Cantiere del Pardo

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