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CLUB MARINE

MERC MUSCLE MERCURY UNLEASHES ALL NEW V6 RANGE

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WILDERNESS ADVENTURE - FISHING ALASKA

Off the Trailer

JEANNEAU'S POCKET ROCKET

Jeanneau builds a compact and versatile performer that can tackle fishing, cruising and family fun days on the water.

By John Willis
Pics: Alison Kuitert/
John Willis

I'm **impressed** by just how much it has stacked into such a **compact, yet spacious** package





The design maximises the available space for the minimal 5.51m true hull length



Top and right: It might be compact, but there's plenty of room to enjoy quality time on the water in Jeanneau's 605 Merry Fisher.

International giant of the boating world Jeanneau has recently added a pocket rocket to its impressive fleet of sail and power boats. The all-new Jeanneau 605 Merry Fisher is the smallest in its power cruiser range and is targeted at the popular global trailerboat market. After spending some time on the new craft I have to say I'm impressed by just how much it has stacked into such a compact, yet spacious package.

We Australasians just love our 5.3-6m (17-20ft) trailerable boat packages. They are easily towed by larger family sedans as well as the popular mid-range SUVs and 4WDs, and also offer the ability to range from inshore and sweetwater to offshore destinations. In addition, Jeanneau has pushed the envelope for its 605 Merry Fisher, designing it to be ideal for mooring or stack storage. It will also make an ideal commuter, a small cruiser/overnighter and cosmopolitan entertainer – all in one.

You can be assured of integral strength from Jeanneau, which has used its infused fibreglass technology to build an aesthetically pleasing boat with swish Euro styling. Its infused construction results in maximum fibre strength-to-weight ratio, with International CE Quality Assurance.

This is an exceptionally efficient hull that jumps easily to plane with the strong, smooth and reliable power of the popular Yamaha 115hp four-stroke engine. These Euro 'pilothouse' designs were once the realm of shaft-driven inboards with tunnel hulls and often very flat deadrise. Yet I was surprised to find the Merry Fisher has a moderate deadrise hull, with a series of planing strakes and wide chines that have enormous lift, predictable tracking and sporty turning capabilities.

ROOM TO MOVE

The design maximises the available space for the minimal 18ft (5.51m) true hull length (without bowsprit/platform/pod etc) that combines with a wide 2.46m beam and a high freeboard to create tremendous volume. It aspires to be a competent seafaring craft, with its enclosed, walkaround cabin layout with the added bonus of a large cockpit.



It seems that the whole trailerboat world is morphing to trawler-style cabins with upright windscreens, and this includes many of the Merry Fisher models. Call me old school, but I still like the sleek looks of a sweeping windscreen, and this Jeanneau design maximises the cabin's internal efficiencies.



Jeanneau has cleverly used available space to ensure maximum usability for passengers.

Jeanneau has designed a beautiful hardtop that provides panoramic views and a fully lockable cabin. Its aesthetics are enhanced by the upward swept return to the rear of the roof line that creates a foil eliminating the opportunity for spray, or even residual rain and condensation, from dropping back onto the passengers in the cockpit. These sweeping lines combine with the luscious hull with its high, broad shoulders, definitive chines and a sweeping sheerline that dips elegantly to the bow.

MORE CRUISER THAN FISHER

While its name would suggest that the Merry Fisher is aimed at anglers, it's more a sports cruiser than a blood and guts battlewagon.

The cockpit features an L-shaped lounge with recessed grabhandles, a rear door to the transom platform and ladder, plus a plug-in table for entertaining. There are narrow walk-around sides leading forward, with the split bowrail extending to the rear of the cabin. Handrails are recessed into the roof for safety in transit, while up front we find a dealer-fitted Lone Star anchor winch plus a cabin hatch in the foredeck and another in the hardtop roof for ventilation.

The cabin has a one-piece windscreen with twin wipers and sliding side windows, plus fully lockable sliding rear doors. The interior is very light and airy, with clean, white gelcoat surfaces highlighted by neat timber trim and black window frames. The overall effect is very attractive, with a distinctly European flavour.

While the 605 Merry Fisher should really be considered a dayboat, it is also a compact overnighter or long weekender. Up front is a V-berth that is full-length on the driver's side, but shortened on the passenger side to facilitate the fibreglass seat module, which forms half the seating on the drop-down dinette. Jeanneau rates the berthing capacity as three to four, but I'd call it up to three average people.

NEAT DASH

Jeanneau has designed a very neat dashboard, with attractive diamond-cut styling, however it will be difficult to mount large multifunction screens. In my mind, this package doesn't need them, although many boaties nowadays seems unable to live without large-screen electronic toys. Our demonstration package had a customer-selected



It's a solid choice for a mobile family, or perhaps a harbourside mooring

Lowrance GPS/plotter/sounder unit that was more than adequate for me; however it does get a bit cluttered for older eyeballs when running split GPS and sounder combinations. The Raymarine Axiom 7 chartplotter is now standard equipment on package boats.

The dashboard also sports a small switch panel, compass, anchor winch control and circuit breaker, Yamaha digital engine gauges and Fusion sound system. The engine has key start and flush-mount controls, plus a sports steering wheel and simple mechanical steering. The helmsman gets a fully upholstered shell-style seat that tilts forward to allow access to a kitchenette module with twin upper recesses – one for a sink and I would put a portable gas burner in the other.


Options include a 20lt water tank with outlets and a porta potti. There is considerable storage in the cabinetry, side pockets and underfloor, plus a handy recess in front of the first mate for nick knacks, telephones and other small items.

ECONOMICAL

The boat lifts easily to the plane and cruises well at 20 knots (37km/h) at 4200rpm, at which speed she is only drinking around 20lt/h for economical boating. At this speed, you should expect a range of around 90nm (170km) from the 100lt fuel tank,

with 10 per cent reserve. The range is halved at a brisk 28.7 knots (53km/h) at Wide Open Throttle at 5900rpm with a light load.

The big shoulders and wide chines, plus the huge volume in the hull and construction method, do make for a bit of a hard and noisy ride in steep slop, as would be expected considering the Merry Fisher's nature and design brief.

The Jeanneau 605 Merry Fisher provides enormous facility for a boat of its size, price and economy. It's a solid choice for a mobile family, or perhaps a harbourside mooring. This pocket rocket turns heads with its sophisticated, stylish layout and entices with beautiful flowing curves, trim and finish. The Jeanneau 605 Merry Fisher is a little boat with a big future. 

JEANNEAU 605 MERRY FISHER	
Length:	5.79m
Beam:	2.46m
Weight (BMT):	approx 1750kg (dry)
Fuel capacity:	100lt
Water capacity:	20lt
Power:	Yamaha F115B, 4-cylinder four-stroke
Base price (BMT):	\$79,900
Price as tested:	\$86,900
More information: 38 South Boat Sales, tel (03) 9772 8976. Web: 38southboatsales.com.au.	