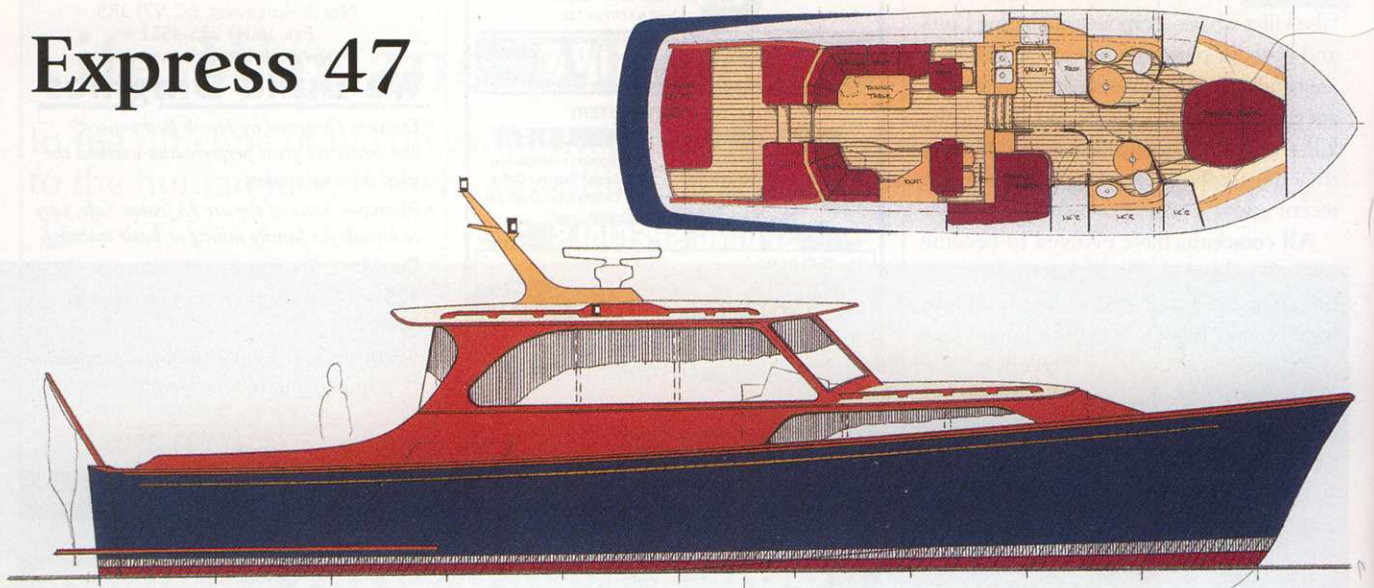


Express 47



This handsome cruiser was designed by Gabriola Island naval architect Tad Roberts for Philbrooks Boatyard in Sidney, which is currently negotiating with a buyer. She's based on Roberts' successful lobster boat hull designs—seaworthy, semi-displacement hulls that make efficient coastal cruising yachts or weekend "picnic boats."

To adapt this East Coast concept to West Coast requirements, Roberts has improved visibility from the helm by adding a raised pilothouse, and incorporated a dinghy garage under a sunpad in the cockpit that accommodates a 9' RIB. The transom opens at the touch of a button, and a folding davit swings out to launch the dinghy.

According to Roberts, all-around visibility from the helm is a particularly desirable for West Coast cruising, yet difficult to reconcile with a two stateroom arrangement in sizes under 50'. Opting for a double deck arrangement (with accommodations beneath the pilothouse sole) will typically result in a tall, ungainly look.

Some East Coast designers avoid the double deck problem by shifting the wheelhouse aft and positioning the sleeping quarters forward under an elongated trunk cabin. However, this approach—the nautical equivalent of a split-level ranch home—tends to result in relatively small, confined living spaces. As well, when the boat trims bow up at transitional planing speeds, the view from an aft helm station often suffers.

To resolve these problems, Roberts has located the raised pilothouse further forward, allowing it to extend over the foot of the berth in the guest stateroom—an area

where only minimal clearance is required. To brighten the interior, there are large windows on both sides of the trunk cabin, and the galley itself is open to the pilothouse area. And thanks to its slimmer-than-average hull, the Express 47 should maintain a more uniform trim angle across a wide range of speeds than the average modern powerboat. To reduce trim changes associated with varying fuel load, tanks are located beneath the raised pilothouse near the boat's overall centre of gravity. The twin 660 hp Caterpillar diesels are mounted aft using V-drives. Top projected speed is a very respectable 35kts with cruising speeds in the 30-kt range.

Like many boats designed for rough water comfort, the Express 47 features a sharp entry, and a warped V-hull with a relatively steep deadrise angle of 23° amidships that transitions to 15° at the transom. Broad horizontal flats at each chine add planing surface and minimize rolling at low speeds. The propellers are located in shallow tunnels or pockets—allowing large, efficient wheels to fit with just

3'8" overall draft. The Express 47 lacks a flying bridge, in part because the added weight and windage would impact performance. Roberts also notes how an increasing awareness of the dangers of sun exposure are driving folks to demand hard tops and biminis on their flying bridges—a trend he deplores from an aesthetic point of view.

Engine placement dictates the basic interior layout with identical raised seats port and starboard built around the engine boxes. There's a pass-through counter to the galley just forward of the port side seat. Both staterooms feature double berths, hanging lockers, and ensuite heads.

For a lightweight structure, Roberts has specified all-cored construction. Bottom, topsides, stringers, bulkheads, deck, and deckhouse are all laminated over Core Cell foam—an approach that produces durable, lightweight boats with exceptional impact resistance.

For information contact TR Design, PO Box 33, Gabriola Island, 250-247-9315.

—Gerry Kidd

EXPRESS 47

LOA	47'10"
LWL	43'9"
Beam	14'8"
Draft	3'8"
Displ (1/2 load)	36,000 lbs
Fuel	500 gals (US)
Water	200 gals (US)

Built by

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