



ON THE MARK

TIARA GETS IT RIGHT WITH
ITS SLEEK, VERSATILE AND FUN F44.

BY KEVIN KOENIG



ALL IN THE FAMILY

As is customary at Tiara, the F44 Flybridge followed the 44 in the Coupe Series. They're essentially the same boat, except one has a flybridge. The formula for new-model rollouts has worked well for the boats' big sisters, the C53 and F53.

SMASHING A CHAMPAGNE BOTTLE on the bow of a boat to christen her for good luck is supposed to be a joyous, exciting and brief occasion. Emphasis on the word *brief*; more than once, I've seen a happy new owner or proud boat-company president gather a crowd, deliver a brief homily and then watch as some smiling woman grabs a champagne bottle, whacks it on the bow and ... *Bam!* ... But nothing happens. *Bam! Bam! Bam!* Again, nothing. You can feel the air let out of the crowd just a wee bit. It can start to get a little awkward. Those bottles of bubbly are thicker than you might think.

This was not the case at the recent Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show, where Tiara Yachts introduced its F44 Flybridge. All it took was one crack,

and champagne flew everywhere. The crowd went wild — well, engaged in a lot of polite clapping and maybe a whistle or two, anyway.

"I'll let you in on a little secret," Tiara's marketing director, David Glenn, told me shortly afterward. "See up there where she cracked the bottle on the bow? See that little metal nub?"

Sure enough, there was a small, steel stud just off the prow of the boat.

"I had the guys install that for her to bang the bottle on," he said, "just to create a little pressure point to make sure it cracked the first time."

That steel nub may seem like a small detail, but it's one that demonstrates the way Tiara works. The builder pays attention to the little things, and the big things tend to fall in line. Such is the case with the F44 Flybridge.

As a 45-foot-6-inch boat with a flybridge and hardtop up above, the F44's lines would have been easy to screw up. Nobody wants a floating shoe box. Yet the F44 is remarkably sleek-looking, particularly for a boat that, measured to the top of the standard Garmin radar unit, comes in just a fish fin short of 20 feet off the waterline. Tiara achieved this look with a clever up-top interplay of colors, dark and light, to break up and offset what otherwise might be ungainly lines. To my eye, the approach most certainly worked. See what I mean about the little things adding up to big things?

On the yacht's main-deck level, Tiara focused on keeping an open feel, fusing the hydraulic swim platform (with its sweet transom barbecue) with the cockpit and salon. The builder achieved this by installing large sliding doors between the salon and cockpit, and a double entranceway down to the swim platform.

But, of course, there's also the relatively spacious flybridge, which acts as a de facto second cockpit. It

RUN THE OPTION

The Tiara F44 Flybridge has several highly desirable options to help owners personalize their yacht. Some of the choices include interior styling and hull colors, which are becoming common enough in her size range, but owners can also add options focused on comfort and function, including a 16,000 Btu air-conditioning system for the flybridge, underwater LED lights, a 12-volt bow thruster to help swing the nose around in big wind or current, a remote-controlled all-chain windlass for effortless anchoring and a washer/dryer combo for keeping your clothes shipshape during that summer cruise.

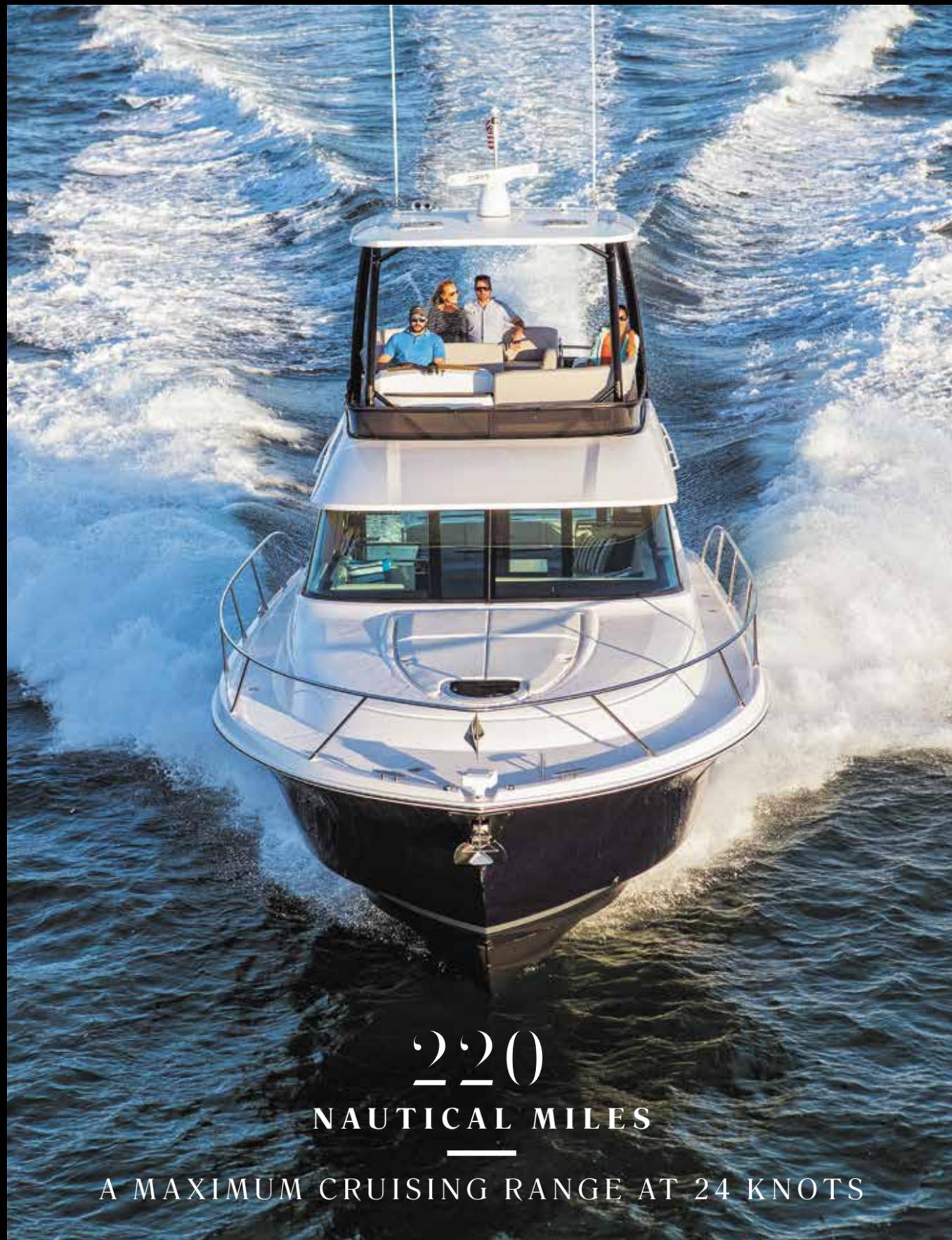


WELL-LAID PLAN

As is common for this class of boat, the layout for the Tiara F44 Flybridge is standard, with Tiara bringing its experience to bear by using every inch of space to its maximum capacity. Note the sun pad up front, adding the bow area as an entertainment space in addition to the swim platform, cockpit and flybridge (not to mention the salon). The yacht's setup is ideal for cruising with a family: Put the little kids up top, the adults aft, the teens diving off the swim platform and grandma up front catching some rays while chugging along through her latest book-club assignment. And everybody stays happy.



EXPERIENCE > TIARA F44 FLYBRIDGE > A boat that's defined by versatility and smart use of space.



220

NAUTICAL MILES

A MAXIMUM CRUISING RANGE AT 24 KNOTS

Check out how much room the four people on the flybridge have — it could easily fit a few more friends.

EXPERIENCE > TIARA F44 FLYBRIDGE

has a U-shaped dining settee aft, another L-shaped settee forward to port and twin helm seats. That helm gives the captain access to Tiara's much-lauded glass cockpit electronics system as well as to a Volvo Penta joystick used to control the boat while docking or running at speed.

In truth, I'm not usually a fan of wheeling a boat with a joystick at anything much faster than 8 knots. Call me crazy, but something about having a full-size wheel to grip inspires a bit more confidence as I'm skipping across the ocean blue in a boat displacing 32,500 pounds. However, this particular yacht was dialed in. Even as we glided across the warm, green waters of Miami's Biscayne Bay, at a completely respectable top speed of 29 knots, the joystick was as responsive as any wheel. Dialing the throttle back just a bit had us cruising at 24 knots with the standard 435 hp Volvo Penta IPS600s thrumming below us (Twin 550 hp Cummins QSB 5.7s are also available).

That's about the perfect speed for a boat of this size and type to cross the Gulf Stream en route to the Bahamas. Nothing too extreme, but not exactly slow either, just a nice and easy cruise to a nice and easy place. And that makes sense because this yacht strikes me as an ideal Bahamas boat for a couple, a small family or two couples who are used to traveling with each other. She draws a meager 4 feet, and with a forward en suite master plus a nearly equal-size amidships guest stateroom and day-head, the F44 Flybridge can accommodate four people while respecting everyone's privacy. Not to mention, the master's head has a shower with admirable shoulder and headroom (6 feet 5 inches) for a boat this size.

An interesting option for an owner thinking about taking this boat to less-balmy climes — say, cruising the Great Loop or making her a Great Lakes boat — is an indoor helm on the main level. To my taste, that would take up just a bit too much



LOA
45'6"
MAX
BEAM
14'11"

room in the well-lighted salon, but for yachtsmen who want to see more of America without having to go up and down the stairs to take the wheel, the indoor helm would be a sensible option.

Interior fabrics and color schemes are also options and, notably, Tiara can paint the F44 Flybridge's hull any color your heart desires, which, c'mon, that's a pretty cool thing to be able to do.

Through careful attention to detail and a strong focus on versatility, Tiara managed to get it right on the first crack with its F44 Flybridge. And I suspect for a lot of prospective owners, it might just be time to break out the champagne bottles. ♦

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WORK ON THE SIDE

The F44 Flybridge has wide side decks and sturdy handrails for safe, easy docking. These features also make it easier to walk around the boat, particularly while underway (and cruising slowly, of course).

SIZE UP

The Tiara F44 Flybridge's big sister, the F53, debuted at February's Miami International Boat Show. She too is a sleek flybridge yacht for boaters who seek to entertain and enjoy offshore cruising. The F53 has a Glass Cockpit at the helm as well as 725 hp Volvo Penta IPS950s. Her 4-foot-5-inch draft makes her skinny-water friendly, while a fuel capacity of 650 gallons means she can handle longer excursions without the need for nearby fuel docks. The F53 Flybridge will be the largest yacht in the company's flybridge range, as well as the largest in its current fleet.