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**GROOTE'S GREAT SAILFISH MALIBU JUST RIDE CROSSING THE TASMAN  
 FIBREGLASS CARE & REPAIR SEA-DOO FISH PRO SCUBA FOR KIDS**

Big Boat Review

# SIMPLY SUPERB

Whether entertaining at the dock or cruising the seven seas, the stunning Ocean Alexander 70e has few peers.

By John Willis



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At 71.5ft overall, the magnificent Ocean Alexander 70e doesn't officially warrant the title 'superyacht', but it certainly feels like one. It's opulent without being ostentatious, prim but not prissy, genteel but not boorish, graceful, elegant, refined and very accommodating. But then there's the quality of its construction, its advanced technology, supreme power and it also makes a damned fine seafarer.

While I'm brimming with superlatives, I'm more than happy to confess that experiencing this superb motoryacht was certainly the pinnacle of my boating career – the OA 70e is simply magnificent with a timeless appeal.

The 'e' in 70e stands for 'Evolution' and this consummate cruiser certainly is a milestone for this longstanding luxury motoryacht manufacturer. It's also the first model to be built at the company's new Merritt Island, Florida, USA facility, and it is the first time Ocean Alexander has adopted IPS pod-drive technology.

And in another first, OA has commissioned renowned UK-based superyacht designer Evan K Marshall to conceive the flow and finishes, creating an ultra-modern masterpiece that still manages to retain traditional nautical values.

From the outset, the 70e is jaw-droppingly beautiful. Her lines are smartly curvaceous with a truly elegant character, smart posture, superb complexion and uncompromising style, facilities and accessories.

### ENTERTAINER

This is an entertainer's boat with superb flow throughout. The expansive living and four stateroom/en suite plus crew accommodation, foredeck dinette and sunlounges, rear cockpit ensemble, and extended flybridge with open hardtop, plus the large watersports stage on the submersible rear platform cater to everything from large family and friends to an aquatic party for the whole entourage.

Yet it also has the capacity for intimacy – this big 70-footer can be enjoyed either single-handed or by a couple courtesy of its almost sprightly pod-driven low-speed manoeuvrability combined with vector stabilising fins, thruster and three-station joystick controls with position lock.

The teak-lined hydraulic stern platform could stage its own party and has plenty of capacity for a tender or PWC mount. Entering the rear deck, we find a magnificent entertainment or living



## the helm is uncluttered, simple to use and extremely hi-tech

space, complete with full rear lounge and fixed table offering superb comfort under the shade of the extended flybridge. There's also a small kitchenette just before you enter the saloon via the huge electronic alfresco-style rear door. I just loved the foot kick switch on the floor for easy access when you're carrying a tray of drinks.

Ocean Alexander has departed from the latest trend for rear galleys, instead choosing to extend the relaxing style from the outside with a magnificent saloon/lounge, with ivory linen seating on both sides combining with a drop-down Samsung 50in LED TV and entertainment equipment for a truly relaxing living space or cocktail lounge.

### VISUAL MASTERPIECE

Evan K Marshall certainly created a visual masterpiece that pleases all of the senses with

the inviting internal layout, trim and fittings. It's a splendid blend of exotic satin-finished wood panelling and cabinetry, incorporating both timber and lush carpeted flooring, head liners with recessed lighting and linen inserts, ebony leather helmsman's chair, stainless steel trims, faux marble benchtops and black structural accents. Visually, the only items I would tone down would be the rather Aegean synthetic marble benchtops and a couple of the quilt designs, however that is strictly to personal taste.

The galley is midway through the saloon and is truly a showpiece kitchen. It has full-sized appliances, French-style three-door fridge/freezer, electric hob and inverter oven/grill, microwave and a terrific island bench complete with a huge sink and breakfast bar, which is right in the centre of the action.

Opposite is the very easily traversed stairwell to the upper deck (there's another off the rear cockpit), while a side door leads out to the wide side decks – it features a superb stainless steel hatch and locking mechanism reminiscent of true seafaring weapons, but also assists with natural air flow throughout when the weather is too nice for the climate control.

All of this leads forward to the centrally mounted helm, with the more formal L-shaped dining lounge with folding table to the side. It's a great use of space and also makes for a very social dinette and comfortable seating area, while keeping the skipper company underway.

The helm is simply gorgeous. The vision is terrific, not only through the two super-sized windscreen panes, but right around the boat.

Modern instrumentation has given us the ability to reduce the dashboard size, but increase the response, instrumentation and reportability.

For instance, as OA's Australian representative Todd Holzapfel says: "The Octoplex system is like CZone on steroids." The Octoplex system not only provides a full overview of every operating function fitted to the craft, but also allows remote control from any mobile device, or as back-to-base systems for data analysis direct to technicians anywhere in the world. Plus there is a complete bank of circuit breakers for manual override, and full redundancy for all essential systems and components.

The helm also features twin Garmin 8422 24in multifunction displays for complete sonar, navigation, radar and systems analysis, as well as for monitoring remote cameras throughout the boat. You can even monitor the washer/dryer, dishwasher and cooktop. There are twin-lever engine shifts but, with the joystick and auto-pilot controls on the helm armrests for fingertip action, they are likely to remain untouched most of the time. Overall, the helm is uncluttered,



simple to use and extremely hi-tech. It's also very comfortable and beautifully presented.

While the accommodations exceed five-star, and while there are competitors who achieve similar levels of luxury and opulence, to me the 70e felt more like a home than a boat. The master full-beam stateroom features a huge island bed with dressing, chaise longue, table, full TV/entertainment system, mood lighting and a large cedar-lined walk-in wardrobe. The gloss walnut panelling, beige carpet, trim and cabinetry is simply superb and huge picture windows provide breathtaking views bathed in natural light. Its primary en suite follows Marshall's designer theme with twin-bowl vanity,

*The photos don't do it justice: Ocean Alexander's 70e is a stunning example of opulent interior combined with superior technology.*





## breath-taking views bathed in natural light

head, shower, tons of efficient storage, and huge, well-lit mirrors.

There is a concealed laundry in the hall near the staircase and twin-bunk cabins either side as you move forward, both with plenty of room, full-sized single beds, entertainment, air-conditioning, storage and total comfort. These two cabins are serviced by a lovely en suite at the bottom of the stairwell that also serves as a day head.

Up front is the VIP stateroom with a large island bed and its own array of cabinetry,



## IN THE FAMILY

Ocean Alexander was originally formed in 1978, when Alexander Chueh took ownership of Oceans Yachts and progressed with the release of the first 50ft Mk I, adding his first name to the brand in the process. Another generation has since ascended the throne and Alexander's son Johnny Chueh is now the company's youthful president.

A regular visitor to Australia, Johnny's life has been a mixture of eastern and western cultures, with his early years spent in Taiwan, followed by Sydney and eventually studying economics and psychology at the University of Chicago. He gained valuable real-world business experience with a Chicago-based company specialising in industrial strategy, but had

entertainment, lighting, climate control, ventilation, picture windows and its own beautiful en suite.

## UPSTAIRS

The extended flybridge is not only a superb place to travel in ideal surrounds, but it's also a huge living and entertainment area in its own right. There's a huge lounge area out back, as well as a full barbecue facility with refrigeration, icemaker and yet another servery/bar.

The upper helm almost mirrors the downstairs lounge and dashboard, but with twin Stidd deluxe helmsman's chairs for skipper and first mate. While the hardtop offers exceptionally good shade protection plus a set of soft awnings, this really is the place for fair-weather sailing and entertaining as the 70e does not offer full flybridge enclosures.

The lifestyle continues on the foredeck with yet another double-sided convertible dinette plus masses of sunlounges that promote prolonged relaxation. What a terrific spot for evening cocktails, and sun worshippers will love it. Access to the bow is terrific, with large side decks leading to the foredeck with ripper oval-section stainless steel grabrails all around. Up front is plenty of fender and rope storage, Maxwell windless and strong mooring equipment, with plenty of room to move.

to return to Taiwan when his father suffered a debilitating stroke in 1998.

"Within days, I was knee-deep in fibreglass, metal grinding and carpentry," he recalls, doing what he could to keep the company afloat. Those who know Johnny praise his vision, energy and management skill, driving the company to become the world's seventh-largest luxury-boat builder. Last year alone, OA built close to 20 yachts upwards of 70ft, including 14 of that length at the Merritt Island facility and Taiwan building 15 yachts of 85 to 120ft.

The Evolution series was due to Johnny's drive, as is the new 'R' for Revolution series that is currently enjoying huge success, with many more exciting products to follow.

Alexander Marine Australia is a wholly OA-owned subsidiary based at The Boat Works in Coomera, Qld, and proudly displays its own range of stock boats. (Hint – look out for the new 45 Divergence and 90R planned for Australia next year)

you can follow your  
wanderlust to wherever  
the mood takes you



Access to the engine room and crew quarters is via a water-tight transom doorway. The crew quarters are neat and compact, but I'd suggest that most seafarers won't need a crew and could use this space as a wet storage compartment and day head.

Our 70e was hull number 18 out of the USA. It's fitted with Volvo Penta IPS1200 Tier 3, 12.8lt, in-line six-cylinder, DI3, 900hp engines that provided very impressive performance up to around 27 knots (50km/h) WOT on a windy day running through the Gold Coast currents.

## WEIGHT CONSCIOUS

Weight is a primary criteria in the overall design and hence advanced fibreglass infused technology has seen the hull weight minimised to around 36 tonnes (estimated full load). That certainly reflects in the 70e's performance, but in no way seemed to detract from its ride. She's exceptionally surefooted – a direct result of the efficient hull and drive design assisted by Side Power Zero Speed stabilisers. It's also a very quiet boat.

The engine compartment is one of the neatest I've ever been in. It's tidy, roomy, easy to service and employs world-best standards of fitout, engineering and componentry. The inventory includes two Koehler 24kVa generators, a watermaker, electric/hydraulic systems for the Side Power stabilisers, Atlas shore-power

converter giving global cruising connectivity, air-conditioning, hot water, fuel polishing systems and much more.

As we begrudgingly motored back to the mooring at Marina Mirage, I thought to myself life is great at eight knots, but sometimes you just need to get there. The magnificent Ocean Alexander 70e delivers both the cruising lifestyle plus the freedom of the wind in your hair when the urge to get up and go overwhelms you. With the 70e you can follow your wanderlust to wherever the mood takes you and do it all in absolute supreme aquatic style. This is a truly magnificent craft and a credit to its designers and builders. 

| OCEAN ALEXANDER 70e  |   |
|--|---|
| Length overall:  | 21.79m  |
| Beam:  | 5.54m   |
| Hull weight (estimated dry load):  | 35,380 kg                                     |
| Fuel capacity:   | 3937lt  |
| Water capacity:  | 1136lt  |
| Power:   | Twin Volvo Penta IPS1200 Tier 3, 12.8lt 900hp |
| Base price:  | \$5,500,000                                   |
| Price as tested:   | \$5,980,000                                   |
| More information: Alexander Marine Australia, tel (07) 5618 0000, web: alexandermarineaustralia.com.au |   |