

Nord Star 31

This new entry from Finland is fun to drive and super safe to use all year long.

BY PETER A. JANSSEN



Well, you have to admit the new Nord Star 31 Patrol is not just another pretty face. It definitely is not a cookie-cutter boat, and it certainly doesn't look like every other vessel in your marina. But look again. There's a lot of personality in the Nord Star, plus lots of performance and creative use of space inside. Not to mention, it's built like a tank. If any of those things appeal to you — or you just want to make your boating season last a lot longer — then this Nord Star should be on your short list this fall.

After I spent some time on the Nord Star 31 a few weeks ago, I realized there's a lot going on in this boat. Most obviously, of course, are the looks. With its forward raked windshield (to reduce spray and glare); its long, almost straight sheer that's the length of the boat; its wide, deep walk-around decks with sturdy stainless rails; and its totally protected pilothouse, the Nord Star exudes a salty character true to its made-in-Finland bloodlines. With its single-diesel-engine economy, the Nord Star would qualify as a fast trawler or as one of the emerging genre of sport-utility boats.

That is, until you drive it. "You'll be surprised," says John Uljens as he hands me the wheel. Uljens is the president of Nord Star USA, who imports the Nord Star line (from 26 to 40 feet) from his offices in Branford, Connecticut. Indeed I was, not only by the boat's 36-knot top speed, but also by its superb all-around handling. Forget the trawler; the Nord Star 31 handles like a sport boat. And that's from the lower station. If you want the wind in your hair, drive from the flying bridge.

Inside, the Nord Star has two state-rooms (a master in the bow and a small one aft below); a galley; a table that's on a sole-to-ceiling pole in the salon (it locks in place all the way up to get out of the way); and a head with a shower. Three sturdy sliding doors make access to the side decks or cockpit easy. ♦



LOTS OF LIGHT. Sight lines are excellent.

SPECIFICATIONS

LOA: 32'8"
Beam: 10'3"
Draft: 3'
Disp.: 11,030 lbs.
Fuel: 108 gals.
Water: 42 gals.
Contact: Nord Star USA,
 nordstarusa.com
Base Price: \$356,000

PERFORMANCE

TEST POWER: (1) 370 hp Volvo Penta D6 diesel engine with DuoProps. Speeds measured by GPS in Long Island Sound off Guilford, Connecticut, in 1-foot seas with two people on board, half fuel and full water. Sound levels taken at the helm in dB-A.

RPM	KNOTS	DB-A
600	3.8	65
1,000	6.9	69
1,500	9.6	72
2,000	13.6	76
2,500	23.4	78
3,300	31.7	81
3,430	36.0	83

SUPER STURDY. The Nord Star is built to International Certification Institute Offshore B specifications — meaning, among other things, it is tested to withstand wave conditions of 13 feet and winds of 46 mph. All water on deck has to exit in three seconds. You'll be safe on this boat. And, with the enclosed pilothouse, you'll be comfortable no matter what's happening outside.

AND FUN. At 30 knots, I carved wheel-to-wheel turns in Long Island Sound and the Nord Star just dug in; it was fun. At lower speeds or around the dock, Volvo's DuoProps made maneuvering easy. Visibility from the helm is excellent; the helm and passenger chairs swivel around to face the settee so everyone is engaged in the conversation at the dock. And the boat is virtually carefree. At the end of the day, hose it down and walk away.