

# Gallic Gals

Words by **Lawrence Schäffler** Photos by **Will Calver**

Two Auckland mates who've known each other since primary school have just bought near identical Jeanneau Sun Odyssey 519s – confirming that they share impeccable taste.



The flagship of Jeanneau's Sun Odyssey range, the 519 (LOA 15.75m), is an impressive vessel. Big, sleek, luxurious, comfortable, quick, well-built – what's not to like? And seeing the agility of these French twins, tacking nimbly around each other at close quarters, you sense that – for all their size and elegance – they also serve plenty of easy-to-handle fun.

Interestingly, both owners arrived at the Jeanneau decision after months of independent research, though one suspects a growing momentum of mutual influence played a role over the many pre-purchase dinners and discussions.

Still, among the features they both found attractive were value for money, the build quality (in particular the integrity of the grid laminated into the hull) and, of course, the aesthetics. The two families often sail together around the Hauraki Gulf, no doubt generating plenty of double-takes among passing boaties.

Another creation from the drawing board of Phillipe Briand – Jeanneau's long-time designer – the 519's overwhelming visual impact is about space. Certainly topsides with the massive cockpit and wide, generous decks, but more importantly, down below. And it all begins when you sweep down the gently-raked companionway 'stairs'.





“Big, comfortable  
and luxurious...”

There are multiple impressions: I was struck by the headroom – quite remarkable considering the low-profile coachroof – and by the saloon’s expansive beam. The crisp white surfaces, the leather upholstery, the warmth of the Alpi joinery and its rounded, hip-friendly coamings. The softness of the ambient light filtering through the blinds over the saloon’s portlights.

I particularly liked the recessed LED lighting. At floor level it’s hidden, up behind the joinery, creating a soft, subtle warmth in the saloon. The same lighting is used behind the panels around the windows, adding to the interior’s sense of sophistication. It’s hard to resist the offer of a whiskey-on-ice.

With her generous beam, nothing is ‘crowded’ and there is an easy flow throughout the vessel, and the space contributes to versatility. Jeanneau gives buyers plenty of options in the way each vessel is set up, and the 519 is available as a three-, four- or five-cabin yacht, with fewer/more bathrooms.

These two yachts – *Swan* and *White Wave* – are both three-cabin/two bathroom versions. The master cabin in the forepeak has its en suite, with the second bathroom (port midships) servicing the two identical aft cabins. And with that generous beam running all the way aft, these two cabins are massive – each home to a large double berth.





Attention to detail in abundance, and plenty of interesting, innovative features. The table can be adjusted in multiple ways to cater to the number of guests.

The forepeak hosts a rectangular island bed – very spacious – and, just aft of it on the starboard side, is a workstation/dressing table. It will comfortably accommodate a lap-top if you need to catch up on some work, but chances are it will be used for applying war-paint. The flip-open top has a large mirror and there's a handy light mounted alongside for detailed applications.

All boat designers strive to optimise storage space – and the team responsible for the 519 has excelled itself. What is particularly attractive about the forepeak's storage lockers is the positioning. Most are at eye-level – so they're easy to investigate and are much, much kinder to your back. You'll also like the sense of freedom in the en suite with its separate shower, vanity and toilet.

#### ENTERTAINING GUESTS

With a large fold-out table offset to port, the 519's well-suited to entertaining. It's surrounded by a long, U-shaped settee, and because the table unfolds/folds up in various ways – it's easy to adapt its size to the number of guests – smaller for more romantic, larger for more raucous.

The aft axis of the port settee seat is also the seat of the rear-facing nav station – and as modern production yachts go, this is one of the biggest nav stations I've seen in recent years. It's ideal for dinosaurs like me who like pottering around with paper charts.

On the starboard side of the saloon is a full-length settee divided by a drinks cabinet, complete with a pull-out drawer securely hosting bottles and glasses. The cabinet itself makes for a convenient side table.

Guests will be well-served by the 519's galley. Like everything on the vessel, it's spacious and stylish, but I particularly like its unusual configuration. It's T-shaped, with a central 'island' section containing twin sinks. This is a great solution for large-party catering: two or more chefs can work their magic in the galley at the same time. They'll have access to a separate fridge and freezer, a three-burner cooker and oven and, at eye-level, a microwave oven.





The overwhelming impression of the 519 is the space of her modern, stylish interior. Despite her size, she's set up for easy handling.



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## SAIL SET-UP

For all their common features, *White Wave* and *Swan* have one major difference: their mainsails.

*White Wave's* owner opted for 'simplicity' and conventional slab reefing. *Swan's* owner preferred easy handling and elected an in-mast furling system. The difference is most apparent when the two yachts are sailing side-by-side.

The fully-battened, slab-reefed main carries a better shape and the difference in upwind speed between the two boats is appreciable. But *Swan's* main is easier and faster to reef and stow, and the absence of the sail cover looks much neater and cleaner and creates less drag. *White Wave*, on the other hand, has a below-deck jib furler which accentuates the 519's clean foredeck – *Swan* has the standard furler.

You could flatten many beers debating which configuration is better, but I think that argument rather misses the point: owners want the freedom to select solutions that meet their preferences. Why not?

The mainsail aside, the 519s have identical sail controls – and the accent is on ease. The big Harken primary winches are very close to the helms and it's easy to tweak sails, particularly as they are electric winches.

A German main sheet system runs through a wide traveller mounted just forward of the dodger. This not only provides plenty of flexibility for adjusting the main sail's shape, but also keeps that spacious cockpit uncluttered and relatively free of sheets.

**"The only difference between the twins is the mainsail."**



Wide, open decks and sheets running back to the cockpit keep sail adjustments simple – particularly with electric primary winches.







### Auto Trimming

Jeanneau enthusiasts keen to make the 519 even easier to sail will be interested in the new Assisted Sail Trim (AST) option available on the model.

A collaborative initiative by Harken and Jeanneau, AST is an advanced system geared to making sailing easier for families, cruisers, shorthanded crews, solo sailors and those with limited mobility.

The system comprises three OEM packages using sensor-guided, push-button sail control:

The **Auto Tacking** base package adjusts the headsail for the new tack while you steer through the manoeuvre. Sensors detect wind speed and apparent wind for safety

**Auto Trim** complements Auto Tacking. Set the initial trim, press the button to engage Auto Trim and let the system handle sheeting. The system monitors apparent wind for perfect trim while you relax at the helm. An integrated heel control detects gusts and limits heel to your desired setting for maximum passenger comfort

**Sail Management** hoists and douses the main or genoa. Load sensors detect jams and allow the halyard to be eased for safe operation.

All functions, as well as push-button control over each winch, are operated from a cockpit display.

Harken Rewind winches or Captive Reel winches allow the system to both trim and ease without manual intervention. All packages feature full redundancy and manual backup in the event of power loss.

Says Davide Burrini, International OEM Sales Manager: "By centralising controls, integrating wind and equipment sensors, and allowing skippers to control all sheeting from the helm, this project has the potential to revolutionize cruising and shorthanded sailing."

At this stage AST is exclusive to the 519, though it will be rolled out to other models.

For more information download the AST brochure at [www.jeanneau.fr/brochure/assisted-sail-trim](http://www.jeanneau.fr/brochure/assisted-sail-trim) and view the video at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=i8qpUoFEHQE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i8qpUoFEHQE).



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The 519 is designed to appeal to sailors of all skill levels/ aspirations – and a major tool in this philosophy is the introduction of a small bowsprit, neatly integrated into the hull's lines. This is designed for light-air Code 0 sails or larger asymmetrical spinnakers. As an aside, the bowsprit also carries the anchor quite a bit further forward, avoiding the chance of it damaging the gelcoat during retrieval.

Another interesting move from Jeanneau is the introduction – on the 519 – of a single, adjustable centre backstay. The marque's smaller sisters all carry split backstays. I like this very much. On twin-wheel boats a split backstay often interferes with the helmsman's headroom – particularly if he/she's a lanky slab. The centre backstay not only eliminates this problem but also offers a convenient handhold for those stepping from the cockpit to the large, fold-down boarding platform.

The 519 is a superb vessel – well-designed for easy, comfortable cruising – and with her generous waterline and extended hard chine, she's more than capable of turning in 200-mile-a-day bluewater passages.

She's justifiably the flagship of the Sun Odyssey range. ☐

### Jeanneau Sun Odyssey 519

- **loa** 15.75m
- **beam** 4.69m
- **draft** 2.28m
- **displacement** 13,900kg
- **hull material** Fibreglass/GRP
- **sail area** 114m<sup>2</sup>
- **engine** Yanmar 75hp 55kW
- **fuel** 240 Litres
- **water** 615 Litres
- **cabins** 3/4/5
- **design** Philippe Briand/Jeanneau Design
- **packages from** \$600,000
- **boat supplied by** Orakei Marine

