



LAVEZZI 40

We usually test boats that are new to the market this time we test the Lavezzi 40 that has been around since late 2002. In the last seven years 230 have been built by Fountaine Pajot and continuous product development has occurred that makes the Lavezzi as popular now as she was when first launched.





he Lavezzi has had a minor makeover in the last year with new Sycamore wood finish, new interior gel coat colour, detail changes to the saloon and cabins and now the new flat top mainsail, to improve performance in lighter winds.

The Lavezzi has proved as popular in charter fleets as it has for private owners as it is a good looking design that provides adequate accommodation for two or three couples in an easily handled boat that sails quite well.

We wanted to revisit this popular boat as a number of our readers have asked us to test it, my neighbour recently chartered one and his whole family loved it and I wanted to find out why.

Construction

The Lavezzi was the first of their range to be developed for resin infusion. In this process all of the dry materials, the various layers of fiberglass matting and the foam are carefully laid into place, then everything is vacuum bagged down and the resin infused through the vacuum. This ensures a precise % of

resin to material is achieved maximizing the strength of the structure and saving any excess weight. The boat is laid up with a variety of multi axial

fibres with closed cell foam used above the waterline in all flat panel areas. Production uses vinylester resin which is much more resistant to osmosis than its isophthalic resin predecessor.

All bulkheads are composite and much work has been done to lighten the structure without compromising on safety and strength. There are built in buoyancy compartments forward and aft; two either side of the engine compartments. The

low aspect ratio keels are slotted into a reinforced box and secured with sealant so that if they strike anything substantial they will be sacrificial ultimately pulling out of the box in which they sit without damaging the hull.

The construction is similar to other boats in the range and is tried, tested and reliable. All manufacture is supervised by Bureau Veritas, the Lavezzi is CE marked and approved to Category A for up to 10 people. The hull and deck structure is guaranteed for 5 years by Fountaine Pajot and there is a 1 year warranty on all other equipment, though the engine warranty may be extended for an additional fee through the engine manufacturer.

The engines have their own compartment accessed from the aft deck area in each hull. Whilst this puts engine weight toward the stern, this is compensated by concentrating all other weight toward the centre of the boat.

Layout

The Lavezzi is available with two interior layout options, a four cabin Charter version

and a three cabin owners version. In both the port hull stays the same with a central toilet and shower compartment with double cabins at the ends of the boat. In the charter version this layout is duplicated in the

starboard hull. In the owners version the aft double berth remains but a spacious toilet and shower compartment is set in the bow leaving room for additional stowage, a lounge and desk area, midships.

Whilst there is not the volume of say the Nautitech 40 or the Lagoon 420, the light wood and plenty of natural light gives a spacious and comfortable feel to the area. The aft double cabins are generous, the berths are over 1.6m wide and 2m long,



The view forward in the owners hull

though seemed larger, there is plenty of open shelving stowage and a good hanging area with stowage for bags and heavier items in the storage area under the front of the berths.

The aft cabins feels light and spacious with easy access to the berth and there is good ventilation. A criticism is that the forward cabins are small as can be seen from the picture of them, this is due to the narrowing of the hull forward which is necessary for performance. It is what it is, as a single it is great, as a double it is cosy!

The starboard forward area is dedicated to a large toilet and shower compartment. This is well ventilated, light and airy. The toilet is sited at the entrance to the compartment, so just forward of the mast base so is well aft and therefore should be comfortable to use at sea.

To port the toilet shower compartment, which is duplicated in the charter/four cabin version in the starboard hull, is adequate and is again light and airy.

The hulls and the cabins feel private, spacious and the light sycamore wood finish has a quality feel to its lacquered finish.



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One of the forward cabins (only in the port hull in the owners version)



Spacious and well appointed aft cabins (this one in the port hull)



Toilet shower compartment



Good sized aft facing galley

Whilst the joinery is straightforward all of it is well executed and the side linings, light fittings and moulded trims give a stylish feel to the boat.

Three steps from the hull lead up to the saloon which is spacious and the headroom surprisingly generous as the Lavezzi does not look at all bulky. The saloon seating is comfortable for six and there is room for two further chairs if required to seat eight. The galley is to port and faces aft. It is well laid out with a double sink, the triple burner hob and separate oven and grill are fine and fed by two self draining gas lockers in the cockpit. There is sufficient stowage for pots, pans, food and consumables. The test boat had a 130l front opening fridge though there is an option for a top opening fridge and freezer in the same location which would be kinder on the battery consumption. There are two 270 litre fresh water tanks feeding the galley and the toilet/shower compartments and a 30 litre hot water tank which should be larger.

To starboard is the navigation area which is small for this size of boat. It is adequate for laptop or chartplotter navigation but any chartwork, such as entering harbour well have to be done from the saloon table. There is an easily opened panel for the siting of instruments. Access to electrics is excellent and all wires are well marked up and the owners' information pack was good.

The cockpit is accessed through a sliding door and is one step down from the cockpit. It is spacious and easy to move around with a saloon table and comfortable seating area to port this works well being adjacent to the galley with it serving worktop bridging these two key areas. There is the option of a canvas bimini with a fiberglass central piece to allow one to walk across it to attend to the mainsail.

The helm position is to starboard with a comfortable double seat. There is a large instrument console and a small windshield

to protect the helmsman. The view from here is excellent and all four corners can be seen and engine controls are close to hand for in port manoeuvring.

With the layout of the cockpit one tends to walk aft, along the back beam to the rear of the cockpit and then forward up the slightly curved side decks to the foredeck. There are plenty of handholds along the way including the 'eye lid' around the saloon windows which is intended to be used as a handhold. The non slip deck finish is good and one feels confident when moving around it at sea.

There is plenty of stowage onboard. The cockpit lockers and gas bottle lockers are all sensibly sized. There is a very good anchor locker with 1000W electric windlass (can also be used for the main halyard), forward of the mast which also gives access to the polypropylene water tanks.

Davits that can carry a hard bottom dinghy are provided as standard as is an external liferaft stowage. There are plenty of cleats on deck and the position of them means that they could be used for sea anchors or drogues if required.

The anchor is stowed at the forward end of the bridgedeck and is provided with a bridle. The stowage looks man enough and provided owners use the bridle well should be a reliable means of anchoring without damaging the hull. A crew member forward when recovering the anchor will be important to ensure the skipper does not drive over the chain.



View into the saloon area showing the sliding door arrangement.



Good looking saloon



Cockpit seating area



Very clean foredeck area with large central deck locker that houses the anchor windlass and lots of stowage

Performance under Power

The Lavezzi is fitted with 2 Volvo 20HP engines as standard driving through 2 bladed propellers. An upgrade to twin 30 HP is available as are folding propellers and there is an option to fit Yanmar if required. However the standard package is very effective as the table below shows:

RPM	Single - speed	Twin - speed
1000	3.4 knts	3.7 knts
1500	4.3 knts	5.4 knts
2000	5.8 knts	7.0 knts
2400	7.2 knts	7.6 knts
2800	7.6 knts	9.4 knts

Trial was done in flat water, slack tide and speed measured by GPS



The engine is in a self contained compartment is adequate and well laid out. The seal around the engine hatch needs to be good!

The engine power was smoothly delivered and the engine controls are close to hand. The performance was as one would expect.

With the engines so far aft (and therefore behind the rudder) the helmsman must have control of the helm when going astern, if not then the propwash over the rudder will firmly kick the helm to one side, doing this too many times will not be good for your steering system!

The Lavezzi comfortably turned within her own length and was straightforward and vice free when manoeuvring in the confines of a marina on a windy day. Visibility from the helm position is excellent, all four 'corners' are visible.

The engines are sited in their own compartment separate from the accommodation. Access is excellent from the aft steps. The author could stand astride the engine quite easily and access to all area for maintenance and servicing was possible. The engine compartment has sufficient space for watermakers, tool kits, heating units etc in this area whilst still having good access. There is a 100 amp hour battery for each engine and a further 200 amp hour for domestic use sited in the starboard engine compartment.

There is some sound insulation between the engine compartment and the aft cabin. It is

certainly adequate but I suspect that, with good access, most owners will self install more insulation which will improve this further. Two 100 litre fuel tanks are in the cockpit with access to the fuel filters from a cockpit locker, this could be better.

Performance under sail

We sailed the Lavezzi in strong winds out of Portsmouth and into the Solent. The conditions enabled a good test of the boat particularly through waves as there was wind against tide. We sailed two handed but regrettably my colleague had a bad back so was better on the helm and I did the work!

Firstly the Lavezzi is very easy to handle with all controls close to the helm position. The mainsail is fully battened with good batten cars that have been developed by Fountaine Pajot. We sailed the first of the flat top mainsails, it also has plenty of roach but this is easily controlled with the mainsheet and winch system. The mainsail is well developed and has a nice shape to it. As with most standard production boats one has to work quite hard to close the leech to develop the full power of the sail but when we got there she sailed well.



The flat top mainsail enables the roach to be carried higher up the sail increasing area and improving lighter wind performance, the increase in sail area is probably 10% so worth having.

The roller furling genoa is of moderate size just overlapping the mast. It has a reasonably high cut foot to enable the helms person to have good visibility beneath it. The mast is a standard double spreader rig with diamonds to keep it straight, a forestay and two shrouds. Very simple but it has worked on FP boats for years.

The boat was easy to tack without having to back the jib. We let a foot off the mainsheet when tacking to help her around. She quickly accelerated after the tack and was fairly easy to sail on the wind. The Lavezzi has quite sensitive steering having adopted a system similar to the Mahe with vectran line linking the wheel to the two rudders. It is sensitive and responsive and much better than hydraulics.

The helm position is comfortable and all controls are at hand. The instruments supplied are Furuno which seem fine, it is possible to specify, at additional cost other brands.

The Lavezzi sailed quite well. There was plenty of wind to test her and she was stiff, steady and fun to sail. never enough wind to get the boat going but she comfortably made half wind speed on all points of sailing. We did not use the gennaker as the chop would have knocked the wind out of it but this would have been useful in smoother water and lifted performance. The additional area of the flat top mainsail will make a big difference in light winds and is worth the additional Eur1078.

Performance (knots):

This was recorded by GPS across the tide where we could and in winds of 19 – 20kts true. We had one reef in the mainsail and full genoa.

- Main headsail 3 rolls 1 reef Close hauled 7.3kts
- Main 1 reef headsail 3 rolls very fine reach (40%) : Slower and therefore a compromise at 7.6kts
- Main 1 reef headsail 3 rolls fine reach (76%): 8.8kts
- Main and headsail reach (90%) : 8.4kts
- Main and headsail broad reach (120%) : 7.9 kts
- Main and headsail run (150%): 7.7kts

We completed a series of six tacks and the average of them all was a tack to tack of 85 degrees.

From this we would conclude that the polar diagram for the boat seems realistic. With the engines, batteries, davits and any dinghy sited well aft the boat has broad sterns to ensure the weight can be carried. Owners will need to pay attention to where heavy weights are stowed to keep the boat well trimmed and save sinking the sterns and slowing performance.

Conclusion

The Lavezzi is a well developed yacht that has improved with age. The fine tuning done over the years has improved a good product that has proved popular with charter companies and private owners.



Note the flat top mainsail is now used.

There is a lot to commend it; engineering, sailing performance, ease of handling, finishing, style and comfort. When required her performance under power is good. The Lavezzi has stood up well in the

secondhand market and is popular among long distance cruisers as she has a comfortable motion, space for two couples in comfort and is easily handled. The forward cabins are really large singles and the boat could do with more stowage and I would have liked to see a better navigation table. These negatives aside she was fun to test, is still popular seven year after the first one was launched and there are 230 others out there sailing. In a related article you will see how much fun a family two week charter for six in the Caribbean went and how popular the boat proved to be for that family. They loved it and that was more a test of the boat than I was able to do in my time on board.

Comparable boats:

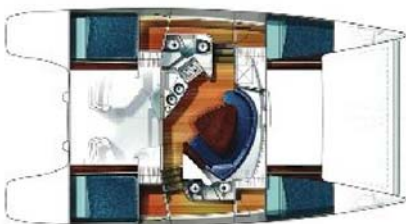
Nautitech 40 EUR 270,000 ex VAT

Lagoon 400 (due out next year) – EUR 250,000 ex VAT

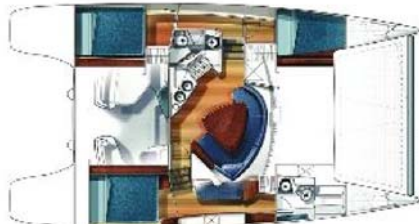
Fusion 40 complete boat EUR 330,00 to similar equipment specification

Freydis 39 with mini keels – EUR 316.054 ex VAT, with daggerboards and sport specification - EUR 373,746 ex VAT

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Four Cabin Version - Four cabin and two toilet/shower compartments



Owner Version – three cabin with starboard hull dedicated to the owner

Liked

- Easy to handle and enjoyable to sail
- Good performance under power
- Great owners hull.
- Boat felt light and airy throughout
- Good engineering

Did not like

- Lack of stowage (some dealers have used various closed and empty spaces to improve this)
- Chart table too small for a cruising boat
- Forward cabins only a large single not really a double

Lavezzi 40 Specifications:

Length	11.90m
Beam	6.5m
Draft	1.15m
Displacement	8500kg
Sail area:	
Genoa	35m ²
Mainsail	60m ²
Engines	2 x 20HP (standard but test boat had 2 x 30HP)
Tank capacities:	
Water	2 x 265l
Fuel	1 x 250l
Category	Cat A for 8 people
Designers:	Joubert/Nivelt and Olivier Flahault Design
Price	Owner version and 4 cabin, 2 toilet versions are now both priced at Eur 225,000 ex VAT



More details from:

www.fountaine-pajot.com

The UK agent: Mi Cats www.multihull.co.uk



The Lavezzi is a good looking boat and has been well developed by Fountaine Pajot, its owners and the dealers who sell them