



# Better Together

THE NEW KROGEN 50 OPEN BLENDS CONTEMPORARY COMFORTS WITH THE FEATURES OF A WELL-DESIGNED BLUEWATER TRAWLER.  
BY CAPT. JOHN WOOLDRIDGE PHOTOS BY BILLY BLACK

From my vantage point on the comfortable settee in the pilothouse, I glanced aft and watched as Vice President of Kadey-Krogen Yachts, Larry Polster, and his wife, Janet Baer, moved apart and together again in the spacious amidships galley, finding the desired bottle in the wine cooler, assembling the cheese and crackers on a platter, never once getting in each other's way. Even though they had owned this Krogen 50 Open for only a few months, they were obviously at home in an interior designed to accentuate homelike comforts. The fading evening light bathed the interior with a soft glow, warming the cherrywood and the plush seating in the spacious, modern salon just aft of the galley. Hidebound traditionalists would find it hard to believe that this was a trawler interior.

Fans of long-distance cruising—those who prize vessels designed to navigate open water comfortably and efficiently—know Kadey-Krogen Yachts. The company has been building trawlers since 1977, and its first bluewater cruiser, the Krogen 42, earned a reputation as a classic voyaging platform. The design concepts that made that 42 so successful have been reinvested in every subsequent model.

The Krogen 42, and later the Krogen 48 North Sea, came from the drawing board of the late James S. Krogen. He was a naval architect and designer by trade, a man who took his inspiration from commercial fishing vessels, most notably shrimp boats, which were designed to be safe, all-weather platforms at sea. Even today, the company's cruising yachts feature a commercial-style, full-displacement hull shape with a full-length keel and a signature wineglass transom for optimal handling in following seas. This company's yachts also have reliable diesel power and well-protected running gear that James Krogen considered ideal for maximum range. Like the original Krogen 42, all Kadey-Krogens built today have a 3,000-nautical-mile cruising range. That includes the



An electric lift is a creative stowage solution in the galley; the Polsters chose their galley appliances based on what they have at home; an optional electric partition separates the salon from the pilothouse and reduces light and distractions when the skipper is running at night.

Krogen 50 Open, the builder's newest model.

"Part of the concept for the Krogen 50 Open was to attract a new kind of customer with contemporary styling," said Larry. "This boat is not meant to replace any of the models in our raised pilothouse line of trawler yachts, but it offers an open interior layout that appeals to some owners who want a less traditional arrangement." Larry and Janet were so enthusiastic about the new style that they bought Hull No. 1 and named it *Together*. And they outfitted their new passagemaker with the gear and features every serious distance cruiser wants.

The couple bought their first Krogen—a 42—in 1999 at a TrawlerFest. After five years and 3,500 nautical miles under the keel, they sold it, but were in the market for a new boat for distance cruising in 2017. They could have selected one of the company's traditional raised pilothouse models, but they were both enthusiastic about the new Krogen 50 Open, partly because it better reflects their cruising lifestyle—they're based in Chesapeake Bay and regularly explore the waters there, although they hope to cruise the Bahamas in the future. They also like the contemporary layout of this model.

At first glance, the new 50 Open shares the design DNA made popular in Kadey-Krogen's line of raised pilothouse trawler yachts, with a high bow to handle big waves, a Portuguese bridge to add protection from boarding seas and an upswept sheer that promotes drainage aft. Because the portion of the deckhouse housing the salon and galley is carried out to the port hull side, the starboard walkway, with its high bulwarks and stainless steel handrails, is the way to move most safely from the teak-planked aft deck to the foredeck. To board the boat, you can use a transom gate, two cockpit side gates or two side gates on the raised decks just outside the pilothouse doors. This arrangement allows you to board or disembark from a wide variety of dock heights and slip layouts.

When you step through the sliding bulkhead door aft, you immediately notice the difference between this design and that traditional layout. The interior of the deckhouse is open from the salon to the



pilothouse, creating an appealing sense of spaciousness. The salon and galley are on the same level, and there's only one step up to the pilothouse deck. And whether you're sitting in the salon or working in the galley, the sightlines are dramatic. "The Open concept illuminates the interior so much more," Janet said. "And these salon windows are larger all around, so we get excellent visibility underway, and better views when we're at anchor."

While a teak interior is available, the selection of cherry—used for solid doors, valances and the custom fold-out table in the salon—adds a bright, modern feel to *Together*. I particularly liked the cherry-and-spruce sole planking, which gives a contemporary twist to traditional teak-and-holly trawler yacht floors. The optional Ultraleather coverings on the settee and loose chairs work well visually with the cherry, and are very comfortable.

Galley appliances bring the convenience of home out to sea. Finished with stainless steel, they include premium brands such as a Sub-Zero refrigerator/freezer, Perlick wine refrigerator, plus a microwave/convection oven and a Wolf propane range with oven. There are several other appliances worth considering, including a





*There's nothing quite like a nighttime passage. The Polsters—and surely many future 50 Open owners—will enjoy many such nights thanks to a range near 6,000 miles.*



Standing headroom, exceptional ventilation, a salty workbench and beefy handrails in the engine room define the 50 as a long-distance cruiser.

dishwasher and trash compactor, although the trade-off is less storage under the standard Corian countertops. (*Together*, by the way, has Cambria countertops.)

Owners contemplating overnight voyages may wince at the idea of the Open concept, but Kadey-Krogen created an excellent option for them: A solid bulkhead panel can be installed on an electric lift; it rises up to insulate the pilothouse deck from stray light and reflections. The panel in no way affects the comfortable raised L-shaped settee in the pilothouse, which converts to an off-watch berth for overnight passages.

The pilothouse has port and starboard waterproof doors for quick access to the side and forward decks, outstanding visibility through approximately 270 degrees, and the necessary handholds everywhere you would want or need them for moving safely about in a seaway. A custom cherry wheel is on centerline, with a footrest below and room for two helm chairs. In addition to controls in the pilothouse and on the flybridge, *Together* has wing stations port and starboard, complete with binnacles, thruster controls and start/stop panels.

To starboard, interior stairs lead up to the flybridge through a stout stormproof hatch. The upper helm is slightly offset to starboard, giving the owner a decent view for docking alongside. The U-shaped settee with table to port is generously sized for a small crowd, and there's an optional summer kitchen located aft—it can be equipped with a SeaStar barbecue grill, Frigibar freezer, Isotherm refrigerator and sink. The summer kitchen is on *Together's* flybridge, as are several other desirable options, including a hard-

top and a Steelhead Marine hydraulic davit.

At some point, you will wonder (as I did) whether the raised salon sole adds livability belowdecks, and the answer is a resounding yes. A quarter-spiral stairway leads down to a landing, which has a desk and locker storage for a GE washer/dryer. The standard layout features a guest stateroom forward with en suite head, as well as an amidships master stateroom with an island queen berth, loads of hanging locker and drawer storage and a spacious en suite head. An optional three-stateroom layout is available, with two cabins sharing a head, and with the master forward with a private head en suite.

Four oversized Man Ship stainless steel opening ports (three in the three-cabin layout) add light and natural ventilation amidships as warranted, and there is a waterproof door with a viewing port in the aft bulkhead leading into the engine room. Overhead clearance in the engine room is impressive, as is the space around the single diesel engine. No question, there's more than enough room for twin engines here (offered as an option), yet even with two diesels, you won't have to compromise access to the standard 12-kilowatt Northern Lights genset for routine checks or occasional maintenance. *Together* is equipped with options most voyagers want, including a hydraulic get-home drive on the main shaft, an ESI fuel-polishing system (arguably the best money an owner will spend), a hydraulic package to drive stabilizers, 15-horsepower thrusters (both from ABT) and the Maxwell windlass on the foredeck.

I joined Janet and Larry on board after the Miami International Boat Show to make an afternoon run up to Ft. Lauderdale. They gra-



LOA: 52'9"  
BEAM: 17'5"  
DRAFT: 5'4"  
DISPL.: 68,000 lb.  
FUEL: 1,240 gal.  
WATER: 400 gal.  
TEST POWER: 1/230-hp John Deere  
6068AFM85  
OPT. POWER: 2/125-hp John Deere  
4045TFM85  
BASE PRICE: \$1,549,000

The interior is a departure for this builder, but the 50 Open maintains the ship-like lines that make this brand instantly recognizable at sea.

ciously invited me to spend the night prior, and made the guest cabin forward available. Two of the four large drawers set into the base of the island queen berth swallowed up my duffel and backpack with ease. I luxuriated in a long, hot shower, thanks to the large fresh-water tankage on the 50 Open, then turned in for a sound night's sleep. Morning light flooding in the opening portlights on both sides and the two overhead hatches woke me early, although I could have closed the integral screens if I had wanted to catch a few more winks.

We departed Miami by way of Government Cut on an afternoon when the winds were blowing 16 to 20 knots and gusting higher out of the east. An ebbing tide created 6-foot standing waves in the cut as we made our way for the outer channel marker; the boat just muscled its way out into more open water. After four hours of running—with 3- and 4-foot waves on the beam and the port stern quarter—we transited Port Everglades inlet and made landfall in Ft. Lauderdale. All three of us made the trip in the pilothouse and, courtesy of the ABT Trac digital stabilizers and the effective sound/vibration insulation in the engine room, we arrived relaxed and enthusiastic about the journey.

After I left Larry and Janet, they made their way back to their home port of Annapolis, where they'll spend the warm months cruising the Chesapeake Bay, and beyond. They've been aboard their new Krogen 50 Open long enough now that *Together* is the only way they want to go. □

**Kadey-Krogen Yachts, 772-286-0171; kadeykrogen.com**



RPM	KNOTS	GPH	RANGE	dB(A)
1000	5.7	1.1	5,782	59
1500	7.5	3.0	2,790	61
2000	8.9	8.4	1,182	65
2300	9.7	12.0	902	67

**TEST CONDITIONS:** Temperature: 84°F; seas: 3' to 4'; load: 1,000 gal. fuel, 300 gal. water, 3 persons. Speeds are two-way averages measured w/Garmin multifunction displays. GPH estimates taken via John Deere engine display. Range is based on 90% of advertised fuel capacity. Sound levels measured at the helm. 65 dB(A) is the level of normal conversation.