



Trademark Oyster wraparound saloon windows and triple stern portlights let light flood into the saloon (far left) and owner's aft cabin (left)

Oyster 495

LOA 16.1m 52ft 8in **Hull length** 15.15m 49ft 7in **LWL** 14.27m 46ft 8in **Beam** 4.77m 15ft 8in
Draught standard keel 2.28m 7ft 5in, shoal keel 1.83m 6ft 0in **Displacement** 21,000kg 46,300lb
Price ex VAT £975,000 www.oysteryachts.com

This 495 is the first all-new sub 50ft Oyster model in 16 years and is one of the most important new models for the revitalised company since CEO Richard Hadida took the helm in 2018. It follows the successful 565 that first hit the water two years ago, of which 17 have already been sold.

A huge effort has gone into developing the 495, including input from Oyster's founder Richard Matthews, with the aim of refining the boat as much as possible, as well as making the best use of space.

It's instantly recognisable as part of Oyster's G6 family and retains a well-proportioned elegance – something that's not easily achieved

when scaling a concept down to a smaller size. The 495's styling includes many features which have already become a trademark of Oyster's larger models, such as the flush foredeck, wrap-around deck saloon windows and triple seascape windows in the aft owner's cabin — all sure to make the yacht stand out.

A hefty lightship displacement of 21 tonnes means the 495 will retain much of the big boat feel of its stablemates, even in heavy weather. Humphreys Yacht Design has drawn a powerful high stability hull, with maximum beam carried well aft, twin rudders and a characteristically long waterline. It's a shape that promises relaxed and comfortable passagemaking at high average

speeds and low angles of heel, even upwind.

Oyster seems to recognise that for many owners ease of handling is a key reason for buying a smaller boat. The push-button sail handling systems from the larger models have therefore been retained. The electric mainsail furling is operated from the helm stations, while electric winches are standard, and the headsail furler can be upgraded to electric. A conventional fully-battened mainsail is offered as an option, as are bow and stern thrusters.

There's more light in the galley and chart table areas than previous models thanks to the deck saloon windows having been extended further aft. The galley is in the traditional Oyster position,

The new 495 is part of Oyster's G6 family and shares many of the features of its larger siblings

at the side of the centre cockpit, and offers plenty of worktop and stowage in a configuration that should suit use at sea.

Excellent owners' cabins are also a key element of Oyster's DNA and this is an area that has clearly been prioritised for this model. The broad stern sections that help give the boat form stability and sail carrying ability produce an immense amount of space. As a result, this part of the boat has a level of volume, comfort, stowage and style that's rarely seen on a 50-footer.

Forward of the full-width saloon are a small Pullman-style cabin to starboard and a modest sized guest double forward. These share a heads

compartment with a separate shower stall.

A high level of standard equipment includes Czone digital switching, allowing all lighting and equipment to be controlled from MFDs at both helm stations and the navigation station. There's also internal and external mood lighting.

It's clear that this will be a very different boat compared to existing sub-50ft Oysters – there have been enormous advances in yacht design and fit out during that time. The Oyster 475, launched in the mid-2010s was a great boat, even though it was a stretched version of the Oyster 46 that originally dates from 2005.

However, the 495 is demonstrably a very much larger vessel – waterline length and beam are

190cm and 35cm larger than those of the 475. Indeed they even exceed the measurements of the Oyster 545. The payoff for the extra volume arguably comes in the comparatively high displacement and price.

Oyster is clearly betting heavily on strong demand after what Hadida describes as an "exceptional" year, particularly for the relatively new 565 and 595 models. The 495 will therefore be built at a newly-acquired dedicated facility at Hythe, where the Empress flying boats were once built on the banks of Southampton Water.

A number of orders have already been taken for the 495 and the first boat is scheduled to be afloat in 2022. ■

