



# Beyond the Outer Reef

## OUTER REEF 63

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*There is certainly something about the name Outer Reef - it is somewhat symbolic - a place that few people can go and a place that requires a special vessel to reach this mystical destination. Whatever the reason for choosing the name Outer Reef, it certainly works.*



The name and reputation had preceded our boarding the first Outer Reef 63 imported into Australia. These majestic, traditional styled trawler hull cruisers have a well earned international reputation for long range cruising and I was curious to see how the Outer Reef compared to other big name players such as Marlow, Grand Banks, Selene and the like.

It was a picture postcard day as we left the dock – just a gentle breeze fluttered the sales flags around the marina. The Outer Reef 63 was immaculately presented – her gleaming stainless brightwork and brilliant white planked hull sparkled in the mid morning sun despite the fact that she had not long been offloaded in Newcastle for the trip south to Pittwater.

She was moored in a close-quartered berth

and I thought, well, we are going to have some fun getting out of here. How wrong I was – as the lines were cast free, the remote controlled American bow and stern thrusters gently eased us away from the pontoon before the twin C9 503hp Caterpillar diesels were engaged as we entered the marina fairway.

We'd boarded by the moulded teak swim platform and the extended lower aft deck



using the starboard transom door to gain entry. My first impression was that this was a sturdy, well built small ship but I pondered the wisdom of the aft lower deck, other than to give this long range cruiser additional waterline. The Outer Reef 63 is cast from the same hull as their 58 footer.

Let me digress for a moment. Outer Reef motor yachts range from 58 to 115 feet in length and some clever hull design work allows the company to use the same hull for its 58 and 63 range, another hull for its 65 series which ranges from 60 - 70 feet, yet another hull design for its 73 - 86 range while the 105 and 115 foot cruisers are cast from another hull. There are some sound building principles for this which allows for economies of scale throughout the range.

So back to the Outer Reef 63. There is certainly something about the name Outer Reef - it is somewhat symbolic - a place that few people can go and a place that

requires a special vessel to reach this mystical destination. Whatever the reason for choosing the name Outer Reef, it certainly works.

Once aboard this long range cruiser, be prepared to be impressed by the build quality and exceptional standard of fitout. The lower cockpit provides access to a spacious lazarette as well as the engine room and plant room. The plant room houses air conditioners, pumps, batteries, inverters and chargers as well as a fuel tank. A watertight door with inspection porthole leads to the engine room. Rubber safety flooring with lift out panels has been installed in the companionway between the two Caterpillar engines.

Two Northern Lights gensets are situated in the aft section of the engine room and the room is protected by a Fireboy suppression system. The engine room offers full head height and a touch of clever design has

allowed for portholes to provide additional ventilation to an already vented engine room. There is a forward watertight hatch which leads to an alcove and entry to the master cabin.

Back on deck, the cockpit is fully covered by the flybridge overhang and a transom lounge and rectangular table provide a comfortable outdoor relaxation area. Wing doors seal off the weather decks and provide protection from the wind and spray.

Going forward around the decks is assisted by wide semi-covered decks coated with non slip decking. Gates off the weather decks allow boarding options while a traditional Portuguese deck separates the bow from the walk around decks. The bow has a fabric lounge and an open flat deck.

Particularly impressive was the anchoring system. It has an extremely heavy duty dual anchor setup - one a 75lb stainless steel







anchor and the other, a heavier 110lb plough. Both anchors are equipped with more than 100 metres of chain and both systems are powered by a twin gypsy Maxwell 3500 winch with deck level controls. Add two deep lockers and fresh and salt water washdown – this is a very good system which gives enormous security when anchoring. Another impressive point is the stylish stainless steel bow guard.

The saloon, galley and pilothouse occupy the main upper deck. The saloon entry is through double doors with moulded timber frames. The interior furnishings are teak however mahogany, maple and oak are available. Soft cream carpet has been laid on the saloon floor and the use of free standing furniture and fixed lounges emphasise the stability and capability of this small ship.

Traditional touches such as pull-down blinds and wall mounted lamps give a warm traditional ambience to the internal living

area while an overhead timber grab rail further emphasises the true purpose of this cruiser. Enhancements include timber ceiling frames, a Bose surround sound system and large flatscreen plasma television and two cocktail cabinets.

The galley is up a level. Teak and holly flooring has been used here as well as in the pilothouse. The galley is beautifully appointed with granite benchtops and an LG suite of stainless steel appliances including dishwasher, two door fridge/freezer with ice dispenser, stainless steel microwave and oven as well as a four ring induction hot plate and exhaust.

To aid in food preparation, there is a large stainless steel sink with cutting board cover and extendable faucet. A pull out pantry, overhead cabinets, concealed rubbish bin and copious drawers and cupboards provide all the storage options needed on a cruise.

Fully forward is the pilothouse complete with watch bunk to port and a moulded table with an inlaid compass. A comfortable Stidd pedestal armchair takes centre line position in front of a stylish timber cruising wheel complete with the Outer Reef insignia. There is plenty of bench space for charts and the pilothouse can be rigged for red running with overhead night lights. Pantograph doors on either side of the pilothouse provide exit points to the weather decks while an impressive starboard side internal timber staircase with decorative timber balustrading provides access to the flybridge.

The dash affords a traditional layout and has all controls and instruments necessary to operate this long distance cruiser including bow and stern thrusters, Caterpillar LED engine diagnostic screens, Trac stabiliser controller (the Outer Reef 63 is fitted with a Trac fin stabiliser system with adds to the vessel's stability), RayMarine twin E120

chartplotters, tri-data instruments, auto pilot and interfaced 48 nautical mile open scan radar. In addition, there is an autopilot, FireBoy system over-ride, tank watch, Ritchie compass and a high water alarm LED monitor above the helm.

A curved stairwell to port leads to the accommodation deck. The timber stairwell opens to an internal foyer where an LG washer and separate dryer are concealed in the companionway cupboards. A useful sized linen cupboard has been positioned on the opposite side of the internal foyer. Carpet has been used throughout the accommodation deck to add warmth and contrast with the dark stained bulkheads and joinery works.

A small ante room opens to the master cabin - a full beam aft suite with a king size bed set athwartships from the portside. Oriental styled sliding blinds conceal the cabin portholes while a semi-circular ceiling tray with concealed snake lighting adds to the cabin's appeal.

There are bedside tables with useful storage, a starboard side walk-in wardrobe and ensuite. There is a second walk-in wardrobe situated in the aft bulkhead and a door opens to an alcove which leads to the engine room. There are copious shelves and drawers in the aft cabin bulkhead.

Enhancements include downlighting, flush mounted speakers and an NEC flatscreen

plasma housed in a moulded frame on the ensuite bulkhead. The ensuite is particularly impressive. The interior designers have used marble as the vanity benchtop while the large shower stall has a seamless glass door. The shower has a tiled floor with decorative frieze while the ensuite flooring is teak and holly. A Tecma twin rinse toilet and large mirror doors complete an otherwise impressive fitout.

Going forward from the stairwell, there is a port cabin with twin upper and lower bunks complete with adjustable reading lamps, book storage and large storage locker. Twin portholes provide plenty of natural ventilation. Opposite is the main bathroom with a two way entry from the





companionway and the forward guest cabin. It is almost identical in fitout to the master ensuite with teak and holly flooring, marble vanity, separate shower and toilet.

The forward guest cabin features an island queen bed with side steps and storage in the bed base. There are two hanging wardrobes, entertainment system and overhead hatch. The cabin features superbly crafted joinery with decorative curves and timber frames.

While the pilothouse is indeed the command centre of the ship, on beautiful cruising days, the skipper and guests will naturally gravitate to the flybridge. There are two access points - from the pilothouse and also a step ladder from the aft cockpit with a protection hatch over both access points.

The flybridge is protected by a moulded hardtop with raked targa supports and stainless steel columns. The targa supports a host of instrumentation including open scan

radar and twin TracVision domes for satellite communication. The bridge deck is spread over two levels - the aft deck verandah houses a tender and 1200lb davit crane as well as a built-in stainless steel barbeque with grill riddle and rotisserie. The barbeque, an impressive unit, is meant for true entertaining rather than a token decorative model as seen on some cruisers. The aft deck can be illuminated at night by twin spotlights moulded into the hardtop.

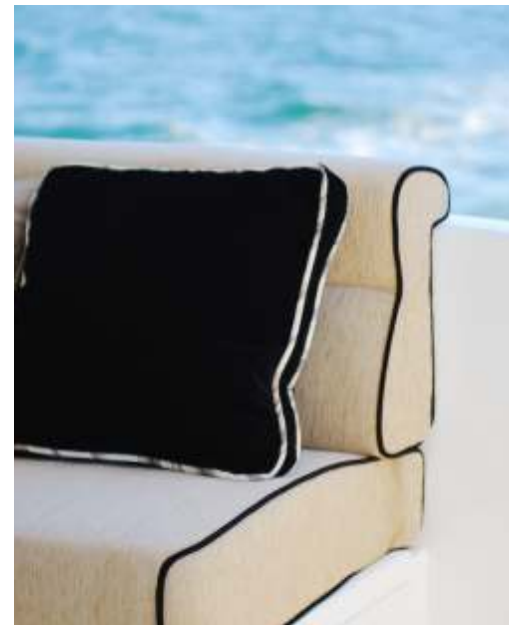
The upper deck accommodates the helm, a centreline command position, again with a comfortable Stidd armchair. All necessary instrumentation and electronics have been included in a comprehensive dash layout including a single Raymarine E120 chartplotter. Aft of the helm and to starboard is a utility cabinet complete with stainless steel sink, U Line fridge freezer and ice maker while to port there is an L shaped lounge and moulded table.

There are lots of examples of build quality on this Taiwanese built long distance cruiser. Teak grates have been used in all lockers to ensure condensation and moisture don't spoil the contents. All decks are self draining and are all finished with a non-slip coating. There is an extensive range of equipment including desalinator, twin generators and useful 12 and 16kVa output, four fuel tanks with transfer system, AGM batteries (although not standard) and air conditioning with separate climate control in all cabins.

Hull stiffness is achieved with the use of longitudinal stringers and transversals that are cored with closed-cell foam and then hand laid with fibreglass. The hull has a protected keel and Outer Reef offer a five year warranty on their hulls which speaks volumes for their build quality.

At the wheel of this well credentialed cruiser, the world is your oyster and anywhere





beyond the outer reefs is possible in complete safety and with absolute confidence, this small ship will get you there and back with ease.

The Outer Reef 63 carries around 4000 litres of fuel and at seven knots, has a range of 2900 nautical miles with a 10 percent reserve.

The semi-displacement hull will deliver speeds from 6 - 16 knots and I have to say that the Outer Reef 63 is one of the quietest cruisers I've had the pleasure to review. It is almost like being on a yacht as the sound levels emanating from the engine room are so minute, one would almost swear we were under sail.

The Outer Reef 63 handles well and the Trac stabilisers are a definite bonus and surprisingly, are a standard feature.

With the arrival of the Outer Reef 63, those

aspiring to long distance cruising or simply wishing to invest in a lifestyle cruiser have another well credentialed vessel from which to choose and if the final selection is the Outer Reef, I could fully understand the reasons for that decision.

This is a true blue water cruiser, economically powered with a substantial range that makes ocean crossing and circumnavigation possible. She is equipped with the latest technology and communications and life aboard is good. There is no doubt, it is worth going to the Outer Reef and beyond.

<b>SPECIFICATIONS</b>	<u>LOA</u>	63ft 1" (19.41 metres)
	<u>LWL</u>	57ft 11" (17.82 metres)
	<u>Beam</u>	17ft 2" (5.28 metres)
	<u>Draft</u>	4ft 10" (1.49 metres)
	<u>Displacement</u>	73,000lbs (33,241kg)
	<u>Fuel capacity</u>	1000 US gals (4000 litres)
	<u>Fresh water</u>	300 US gals (1200 litres) + desalinator
	<u>Holding tank</u>	100 US gals (400 litres)
	<u>Power generation</u>	Twin Northern Lights gensets (16kVA and 12kVA)
	<u>Accommodation</u>	3 cabins (6+ people)
	<u>Engines</u>	Twin Caterpillar C9 Acert 503hp turbo diesels with ZF transmissions and four blade props
	<u>Cruising speed</u>	6 - 14 knots
<u>Maximum speed</u>	16 knots	
<u>Warranty</u>	Five years on hull	
<u>Priced from</u>	US\$1.84 million +15.5%	
<u>Price as tested</u>	US\$2.17 million + 15.5%	
Test boats supplied by Outer Reef Yachts, The Quays Marina, Church Point, New South Wales 02 9997 7333   <a href="http://www.outerreefyachts.com">www.outerreefyachts.com</a>		