

Beneteau Oceanis 38 (2014-)

Brief Summary

Beneteau's Oceanis 38 combines strong sailing performance and a roomy cockpit with three below decks accommodations choices, each intended for a different purpose ranging from daysailing to extended cruising. In addition, there is an array of other options to make the Oceanis 38 tailored to individual owners' preferences and provide more fun and utility.

Price

Base Price \$240000.00

Prices, features, designs, and equipment are subject to change. Please see your local dealer or visit the builder's website for the latest information available on this boat model.

Key Features

- Choice of 3 layout versions: Daysailer, Weekender, or Cruiser
- Daysailer layout version includes single room without partitions
- Choice of 2 or 3 cabins in the Weekender and Cruiser versions
- The interior layout and design is by Nauta Design
- The hull design is by Finot-Conq Architectes
- Furling genoa with UV protective strip and semi-full batten logo mainsail with slider
- Cockpit benches
- 2 Stainless steel steering wheel consoles
- Standard Alpi Mahogany or optional light oak laminated soles throughout interior
- Main salon cushions and mattress with foam density
- L-shaped salon bench seat

Specifications

Length Overall	37' 9" / 11.51 m
BEAM	13' 1" 3.99 m
Dry Weight	15,102 lbs. 6,850 kg

Tested Weight	
Draft	6' 9" 2.06 m
Draft Up	
Draft Down	
Air Draft	
Deadrise/Transom	N/A
Max Headroom	6' 6" 1.97 m (in galley)
Bridge Clearance	N/A
Weight Capacity	
Person Capacity	
Fuel Capacity	34 gal. 129 L
Water Capacity	87 gal. 329 L
Length on Trailer	
Height on Trailer	
Trailer Weight	
Total Weight	
Aft Deck	

Salon Inside Width	
Salon Fore & Aft	
Salon Height	
Salon Volume	
Galley Volume	
Master SR Width	
Master SR fore & Aft	
Master SR Overhead	
Master SR Volume	
Eng. Room Volume	

Acceleration Times & Conditions

Time to Plane	
0 to 20	
Ratio	
Props	
Load	
Climate	

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With three interior choices and numerous additional options, Beneteau's Oceanis 38 really can be built to a buyer's individual preferences, as this hull-side slogan suggests.

Mission of the Beneteau Oceanis 38

Beneteau's intentions for the Oceanis 38 are hard to peg. Is she a large daysailer -- the way most sailors use their boats most of the time? Or is she a weekender -- perfect for a couple or two for a short trip? Or, is the boat intended for longer excursions?

The short answer is, "Yes." Beneteau offers the Oceanis 38 in three versions: The "Daysailer" is well equipped above deck but sparsely so below, with few options. The "Cruiser" includes most enhancements as standard, while the "Weekender" falls between the two, open to customization to meet buyers' preferences.

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"Weekender" -- With two staterooms both with beds the same size, the owner and VIP guest couple will have similar accommodations.

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"Cruiser" -- This three-stateroom layout includes a full galley on the starboard side, and a u-shaped dinette to port, and amidships the head to starboard and an optional separate shower stall to port. With three cabins the boat is suitable for three couples, a family, or charter.

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"Daysailer" -- At the opposite end of layout choices, this version replaces the aft stateroom with storage or flexible space, eliminates the stall shower and abbreviates the galley. Her salon is designed for entertaining and plenty of bonhomie below after a sail or if it is raining.

Overview

To understand how Beneteau offers the three versions, think of them as three trim levels on an automobile. Not that they range from economy to luxury the way a car might, but Beneteau does offer varying accessories intended for the three distinctly different missions. There are also several features that can be installed or removed in minutes to further tailor the boat to the upcoming trip. For the automobile analogy, think of a convertible with an optional hardtop for cold winters.

The Difference Below Decks.

Most of those changes -- either between versions of the boat or day-to-day alterations -- happen below decks. The interior layout and design is by Nauta Design. Major choices here include a full galley versus just a sink and countertop; long settees both port and starboard versus a U-shaped dinette; and whether the boat includes one, two or three private sleeping cabins.

Forward Cabin.

The most noteworthy ephemeral change is whether the forward cabin remains open to the salon -- this 38-footer (11.58 m) with a completely open cabin and many sources of daylight feels incredibly spacious -- or if the forward cabin is closed off with a hard bulkhead and door for privacy.

Back to the automobile trim analogy, most of these choices are included with the Cruiser, available on the Weekender, and not possible on the Daysailer.

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Most above-deck amenities are available on all versions: Cruiser, Weekender or Daysailer.

Above deck

the opposite is true. The cockpit and deck arrangement is also by Nauta Design. By adding a few options, the Daysailer can be configured identically to the Cruiser for all but a very few options.

In all three versions, the Oceanis 38's large cockpit proves equally useful for daysailing or entertaining on the hook overnight. An interesting foldout transom makes for easy boarding from the dock, a convenient step into a dinghy for a night ashore, or an ideal snorkeling platform perched above far-away coral reefs.

Short-Handed Sailing.

The Oceanis 38 accommodates shorthanded sailing with jib winches aft, adjacent the dual helms, while the boat is equally well suited to a crowded cockpit with the mainsheet well out of the way atop an arch above the companionway. An optional self-tacking headsail makes either short-handed sailing or entertaining large parties aboard even easier.

The hull

, designed by Finot-Conq Architectes, carries her wide 13'1" beam all the way aft, which lets the boat sail with only minimal heel even in strong wind. Twin rudders ensure full control when she does heel, and two keel choices tailor her draft to local waters.

Above Deck

Coastal cruising, weekend overnights and daysailing are all nighttime variations of the same daytime activity -- enjoying the power of the wind and the lure of the sea. Understanding this, Beneteau configured the Oceanis 38 well for sailing in all versions.

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The huge cockpit and dual helms are the same on all versions. The mainsheet arch and fold-down transom are optional on all three versions as well as the cockpit center table.

Helm and Cockpit Seating.

Long seats down either side of the cockpit are separated by a permanently affixed folding table with storage within and handrails for safe passage in rough water. A removable folding table is another option here that leaves the cockpit sole completely unimpeded when not needed.

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The optional deluxe cockpit table includes handrails, storage within and two leaves to seat six comfortably.

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Each helm pedestal includes a compass and handrail as well as space for electronics.

Dual Helms.

The helmsperson sits on teak seats outboard of the helm or on twin bench seats that fold out of the way when using the full width of the stern swim and boarding platform.

Each helm also includes an additional handrail and compass as well as space for electronics. The downside to having two helms is that some might opt for duplicate port and starboard electronics. The upside is that today's networking of navigation and radar displays syncs port and starboard units or allows independent usage. Duplicated displays also provide redundancy if one fails.

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With each helm located far outboard and the mainsheet up on the arch, visibility is excellent alongside and across the bow.

Visibility is excellent

, and having two helms located far outboard becomes particularly convenient when maneuvering alongside a dock. Engine controls are located inboard on the port helm pedestal. Reaching the shift lever from behind the starboard wheel requires a half a step inboard, but not more than the required step outboard from a centerline helm to look over the side at a low floating dock.

Depending on interior cabin configuration, the cockpit also includes a huge storage locker accessed through the starboard cockpit seat, or a shallower locker here when the third sleeping cabin is below.

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Headsail winches close to dual helms make single-handed tacking quite easy.

Sail Handling.

The 103% genoa includes roller furling. Genoa winches are just a bit of a stretch forward from the helm, though definitely reachable. If the winches were mounted farther aft, however, they wouldn't be as comfortable when trimming the jib from the cockpit seat ahead of the helm -- an excellent compromise in our mind.

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Most of the tasks for the mainsail, from furling to trimming the sheet, are handled here on the port cabin top.

Four Sails.

The mainsail is furled within the mast or lowered and flaked between lazy jacks from the port-side cabin top. The mainsheet ends here as well, a few steps forward from the helm. An optional, removable inner forestay carries a staysail sheeted to a self-tacking track forward of the mast, so tacking to windward in tight quarters requires just a turn of the helm. An asymmetrical spinnaker rounds out the sail choices.

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Without the in-mast mainsail furling option, the sail instead lowers between lazy jacks and secures within a zippered integrated cover.

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Beneteau includes two handrails on each side of the mainsheet arch.

Mainsail Sheet Arch and Dodger.

The mainsail sheet arch frees the cockpit or cabin top from being divided by a mainsheet traveler. This allows unhindered movement within the cockpit and from cockpit to deck. Equally important, by having the boom over 7' (2.13 m) above the cockpit deck the boat's owner mitigates worries of crew injury in the event of an unexpected jibe. This means that less experienced guests or family can be put on the helm in most conditions without concern about potentially catastrophic results.

Beneteau thoughtfully provides two handrails on each side of the arch and another farther forward on the cabin top.

Cruisers will appreciate the arch as a stout place to secure the spray dodger, and the dodger's forward end is not hindered by a traveler across the front of the companionway.

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The stern feels secure thanks to three lifelines and two folding seats, as well the edge of the stern platform that is raised a bit above the cockpit sole.

Stern Boarding Platform/Teak Beach.

The wide transom opening is made secure by three stainless steel lifelines. The folding platform also extends a few inches above the cockpit sole, keeping loose items aboard.

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The swim ladder doubles as a handle for raising and lowering the stern platform.

The entire assembly lowers using the swim ladder as a handle, but this was much easier than it might seem. Anyone able to trim a sail in moderate wind can certainly handle this task.

Once lowered, this platform is the perfect height for boarding from most floating docks or dinghies, and it's ideal for swimming and sunbathing.

Note that solid wood on cockpit floor and swim platform pictured above are optional.

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Lowering the platform also lowers a folding step. A life raft hides inside this step, retrieved either up through a hatch in the cockpit sole or directly onto the stern platform by removing the folding step. This is an ideal location for emergency life raft deployment and boarding.

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Dual anchor rollers, the electric windlass and electric winches aft are among very few deck options not available on the Daysailer.

Performance

On our day aboard the Oceanis 38, the waters off St. Petersburg, Florida proved challenging. As is common here, winds were quite light and variable. In typically five knots of wind (when we were lucky), the boat did find the wind and sailed well, with good response from the helm, but we couldn't perform any meaningful performance evaluations.

Short-handed Sailing.

Winches mounted just forward of the split helms, a rig designed for a large main and smallish, self-furling jib, as well as lazy jacks or an in-mast furling mainsail, combine to make this Oceanis 38 easy to sail either with minimal crew, alone, or without affecting a cockpit full of guests.

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The 13'1" (3.99 m) beam carried well aft keeps her sailing upright in most conditions, and twin rudders ensure one is always deep in the water, no matter how far the boat heels.

Beneath the Waves.

While we couldn't verify it -- because our test occurred on a very light air day -- stability from the wide beam should keep the Oceanis 38 quite level even in a breeze. Twin rudders provide sure steering when the boat does heel. Beneteau offers a choice of 6'9" draft with the deep keel option or 5'3" draft with the shallow keel.

Docking.

Our test boat wasn't equipped with a bow thruster, nor the optional joystick controlled propulsion pod, but we didn't miss either. With twin rudders, putting the helm hard one way or the other and giving just a touch of reverse power swung the stern smartly in the desired direction, essentially eliminating the single-engine propeller side walk that most boats experience when placed in reverse.

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An asymmetrical spinnaker rounds out sail choices. Because the tack is affixed to the bow a spinnaker pole is not needed. While not as effective as a conventional spinnaker dead down wind, the object is easy-to-handle sails not an extra knot of boat speed.

Down Below

While the Daysailer and Cruiser can be similarly equipped on deck, much equipment below is standard on the Cruiser but eliminated on the Daysailer -- right down to interior lights. The weekender bridges the gap, offering most Cruiser amenities as options.

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This expanded cruising galley spans most of the length of the salon. A removable table and an L-shaped bench create the U-shaped dinette, and the removable privacy bulkhead separates the forward cabin from the salon.

Abbreviated Galley.

The Daysailer or Weekender galley includes a large countertop with a sink, a trash can in the cabinet beneath the sink, and open storage cubbies behind the countertop against the hull. The refrigerator beneath the countertop abaft the sink is an option.

A small settee fills the area forward of the galley but aft of the forward sleeping cabin, where the oven and forward cabinet are shown in the photo above taken aboard the Cruising version.

Full Galley.

The Cruising galley includes the identical sink and refrigerator. In place of the settee, though, the expanded galley includes a gimbaled two-burner propane stove with oven as well as another large storage cabinet with a countertop above, and more storage outboard.

In either configuration, a rectangular hull-side deadlight outboard of the stove (or outboard of the settee with the short galley), and a huge window above in the trunk gives the entire galley daylight and a view. A small opening portlight within the large window, as well as an overhead hatch, provide ventilation.

Expand the Galley Later.

The expanded galley stove and cabinetry can be added in place of the settee even years after the boat is built. Beneteau sells the module as a factory-built kit.

Transient Alterations

Removable Bulkhead.

A partial arch-shaped bulkhead is structural, but it leaves the forward cabin and salon open, creating a single, voluminous cabin. Note that the Blond Oak wood interior featured in the picture below is optional. Alpi Mahogany is the standard wood color on the entire Oceanis range.

This open layout also capitalizes on the tremendous daylight brought in through the four forward hull-side deadlights, two on each side of the bow, as well as the huge windows in the cabin sides and the pair of opening hatches overhead. The companionway hatch brings in more light from above.

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The salon table comes out in minutes, as does a square bench that fastens to the cabin sole to form the U-shaped dinette.

Beneteau Oceanis 38 wood interior

Pictured above is the interior of the Beneteau Oceanis 35, however, Alpi Mahogany is the standard wood color on the Oceanis 38 as well.

Storage cabinets above the settee can be added when the boat is built or even years afterward, thanks to Beneteau's modular building system and remarkable organization.

Forward Cabin

With the privacy bulkhead removed, the forward sleeping cabin is an open extension of the salon, creating a luxury efficiency that can be moored anywhere. It's hard to imagine a more casually romantic couple's cruising layout. The open arrangement works quite well when daysailing, too.

With the privacy bulkhead installed, the forward cabin is still spacious. Built-in wood hanging lockers can be added to the three versions (in place of the hanging luggage in the picture above).

Separated from the Salon.

When guests aboard dictate installation of the privacy bulkhead, the forward cabin is still spacious and includes small settees on either side of the boat. Large rectangular deadlights in the hull side near the bow and an opening hatch overhead bring in daylight, the view and air.

In Lieu of Hanging Lockers.

Choice of hanging one's own luggage or selecting the built-in hanging lockers option.

This two-cabin layout includes an athwartship berth aft to port, enormous storage aft to starboard and a separate stall shower between the companionway and the head.

The three-cabin layout (shown here -- two in the stern and one forward) relocates the optional stall shower across the boat, in lieu of the hanging locker (as shown here).

Aft Cabin Bulkhead Placement.

In what we suspect will be the most popular layout of the boat, the area beneath the cockpit is divided roughly two thirds into a very large sleeping cabin to port, and one third storage locker accessed through a typical cockpit locker hatch.

The other option back here, which cannot be altered once the boat is built, divides the same space into two equal cabins. Either or both can be finished by Beneteau with a typical fore-and-aft oriented quarter berth,

and the cockpit locker seat becomes much shallower in order to raise the overhead below.

Head and Shower Locations.

The other immutable change that happens concurrent with the division of the stern is the shower location. In the two-cabin layout the shower is just aft of the head to starboard.

With three cabins, the shower stall moves across to port, replacing the hanging locker.

Or, the hanging locker is kept in place, the shower is eliminated, leaving the head with a pull-around curtain and retractable shower curtain, making it a wet head.

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In the Daysailer and Weekender configurations, the area beneath the cockpit can also be left without furnishings, either subdivided equally amidships (shown here) or with the hard partition roughly a third of the way from the starboard hull side.

Or Leave it Unused.

Beneteau also offers an option to leave one or both stern cabins unfinished in both the Daysailer and Weekender configurations. Bed and seat platforms are built, but neither doors, shelves, lights, portlights, upholstery or cushions are installed. These areas become huge storage compartments, or platforms for sleeping bags in camping mode.

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The port aft cabin, shown here with a centerline bulkhead between it and an identical cabin to starboard, includes a traditional quarter berth. Wood hanging lockers are standard in the cabins (in place of the hanging luggage in the picture above).

Aft Cabin Choices.

Our test boat had the two-cabin layout with an athwartship bed that is somewhat larger than queen size. We had ample standing headroom just inside the doorway with more than adequate elbow room here for changing clothes as well as sitting headroom at the edge of the bed.

Berth Options.

The real difference between the two-cabin and three-cabin stern is as simply as this: With the two smaller aft cabins, guests crawl into bed across the head of the bed, and then turn 180 degrees to sleep, head toward the bow -- a typical quarter berth that's been around for many decades.

That 180 turn takes a bit of getting used to, but the fore-and-aft quarter berth is the most comfortable place

to sleep on most boats while underway in a seaway where typically the occupant is laying against the centerline bulkhead or the hull side.

If the single, larger aft cabin is chosen, guests still crawl into bed, but from the side, which is much more natural -- like a queen bed pushed against a bedroom wall.

In either aft cabin configuration, portlights open both to the deck and into the cockpit, providing cross-ventilation.

Head and Shower

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The head, in the same location through all interior configurations, includes another large cabin-side window and opening port light.

One Head Fits All.

The Oceanis 38 offers just one head in one location. In the Daysailer, it is a wet head, with pull-around curtains and a cold-water pull-out sink faucet. The Weekender might just add optional hot water or opt for a separate shower stall.

Aft Shower Stall.

Our test boat, with the two-cabin cruiser layout, featured a shower just abaft the head that's entered through its own door from the salon. The shower featured a seat with storage beneath, cubbies for soap, shampoo and the like, and an opening portlight.

With three cabins, the optional separate shower can move across the boat, eliminating the hanging locker.

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In the three-cabin layout, the shower can be moved across the boat (shown above). It's a bit smaller, but retains the seat and opening portlight of the two-cabin layout shower.

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Engine fuel filter, belts and seawater pump are all accessed beneath the companionway stairs. The air conditioner sea strainer and seawater pump (lower right) are also quite accessible.

Engine Access

Engine maintenance has been planned for, with access to belts and the seawater pump on the front of the engine as well as the fuel filter beneath the companionway.

A hatch in the shower accesses the side of the engine where we find the oil dipstick, cooling reservoir,

secondary fuel filter and seawater strainer. Hatches in the port aft cabin also access the engine and sail drive.

Beneteau Oceanis 38

Sailing quietly along on a big sea, the Oceanis 38 appears from a distance like one of her larger siblings.

Observations.

While it isn't uncommon for builders to offer an array of options to further tailor a boat to an owner's needs, Beneteau has really taken the concept well beyond what's common. Rather than a menu of options to select from, the Oceanis 38 can be built virtually a la carte -- through every "course." This means the Oceanis 38 can truly be fitted to the owner's intended use, rather than vice versa.

Lay-Away Plan.

While the ordering process might seem daunting -- which options can accompany which others, and what can or can't be added later -- Beneteau teaches dealers how to assist purchasers through the choices. The end result is the unique creation of each buyer. An added advantage is the ability for an owner to buy a basic model and then add to the boat later, perhaps when next year's bonus comes through. In this way the cost of the deluxe version of the Oceanis 38 can be spread across many years.