

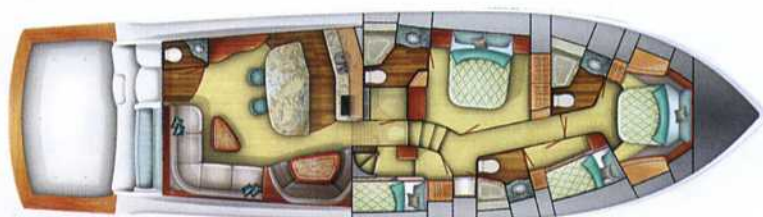
# Viking Yacht's 66 Convertible

advances the species. By Jay Coyle

**G**ood production builders like Viking Yachts usually follow an evolutionary path, massaging their products toward perfection. However, every now and then a new Viking design catches me by surprise. Such is the case with the 66 Convertible. Not only does she accelerate Darwin's time line at Viking, but she also advances the species.

In the 1990s many builders of production convertibles were distracted by the so-called Euro style and focused more on the type's capabilities as a cruising yacht than a fishing boat. Viking took a traditional path, recognizing that the appeal of a purposeful, seaworthy convertible did not need translation for those interested in performance cruising. You don't need a fishing rod and a bucket of bait to appreciate the 66's sweeping lines and her 40-plus-knot performance! Fishier folks will see even more in the 66.

I noticed her curves first. Tournament boats have come a long way from their traditional slab-sided past, and the compound curvature in the 66's house and bridge reflect the current fashion. The theme follows indoors as well, in the arrangement and the joinerwork. What I'm referring to is not the gratuitous use of odd shapes that are sometimes found in European designs. The intention is to soothe, not shock, the eye, and while it can be a slippery slope the 66 remains committed to her purpose.



Creative use of space nets four staterooms, four heads and a big salon.

**LOA:** 66'7"  
**LWL:** 61'5"  
**BEAM:** 19'1"  
**DRAFT:** 5'5"  
**DISPL.:** 102,875 lb.  
**FUEL:** 2,265 gal.  
**WATER:** 340 gal.  
**TRANSOM DEADRISE:** 11.4 degrees  
**TEST POWER:** 2 x 2,000 hp 16V MTU diesels  
**STANDARD POWER:** 2 x 1,550 hp 12V MAN diesels  
**BASE PRICE:** \$3,173,000

This vessel fits into Viking's lineup between the 64 and the 70, and her overall length was not arbitrarily chosen. It gave Viking's designers room to include several popular features in her layout. At the 66's business end there is a full-size tournament-grade cockpit with a fish/stowage box, a livewell, a freezer, a drink box and a tackle center. The mezzanine, a seating area set against the salon bulkhead and overlooking the cockpit, allows observers to watch the action without crowding the angler and mate. Her flybridge has a Palm Beach helm with electronic displays under glass. Fore-and-aft seating to port and starboard has adjustable backs for either a lounging mate or a cockpit observer. There is also seating forward of the console, as well as a refrigerated drink box, a full-size freezer and a spot to stick a life raft.

An air-actuated door leads from the cockpit to the open salon, with a galley and dinette forward. A day-head is sensibly positioned just inside the door. Belowdecks, the four-stateroom, four-head arrangement includes a step-down crew compartment amidships with upper and lower berths,



RPM	KNOTS	GPH	dB(A)
575	8.3	6	74
900	12.0	18	78
1200	16.3	46	80
1500	24.6	74	84
1800	31.8	108	86
2100	37.6	150	86
2355 (MAX)	41.8	204	91

**TEST CONDITIONS:**  
 Sea trials were conducted in 60 feet of water off Palm Beach, Florida, in two-foot seas and with winds from the east at 10 knots. Speeds were measured by GPS (averaged in two directions) with 60 percent fuel, full water, a tower and three people on board. Fuel consumption was calculated by the engine-monitoring system, and sound levels were measured at the helm.

TEMPTATION

FOR AN EXPANDED GALLERY OF VIKING 66 PHOTOS, VISIT [YACHTINGMAGAZINE.COM](http://YACHTINGMAGAZINE.COM).



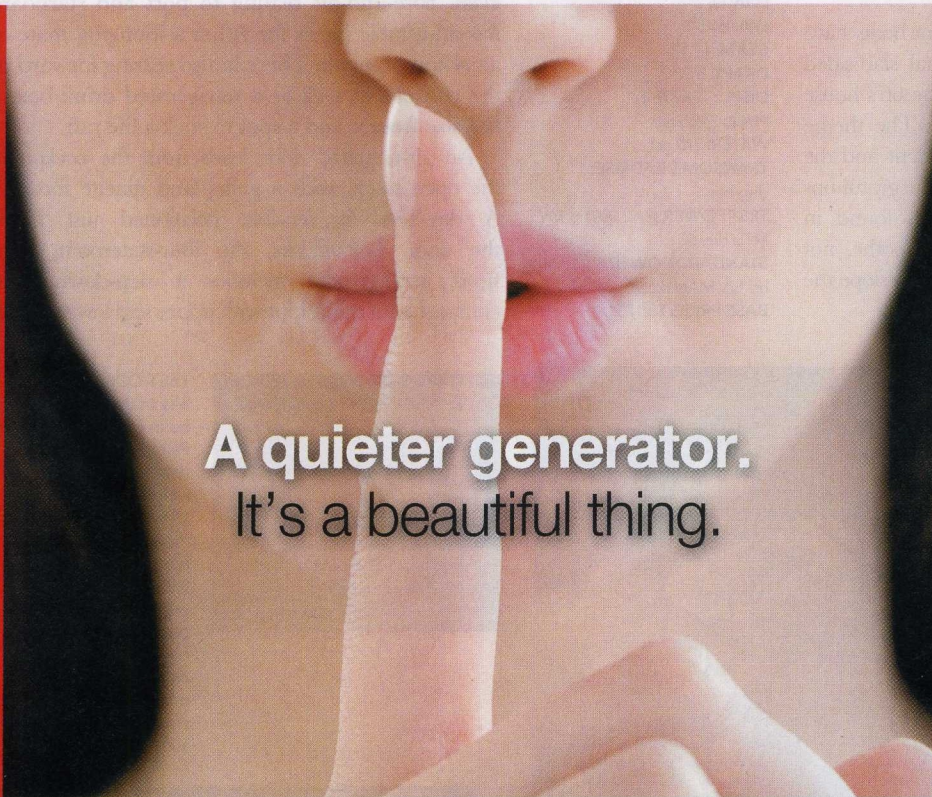
This Viking's luxury (salon, above; master, opposite) invites her owners to go cruising.

a head and direct access to the engine room and thus access to the cockpit. This lets the crew, owner and guests go about their business without stepping over each other. The master stateroom has an island king, the VIP forward an island queen and the

smaller guest stateroom upper and lower berths. The 66's interior is masterfully crafted in eye-pleasing and book-matched high-gloss teak, which is a pleasant upgrade from the reconstituted teak product that this boatbuilder has used in the past.

This yacht's resin-infused hull is balsa-cored and supported by foam-core fiberglass stringers, bulkheads and web frames. Topside, decks and superstructure are also cored with balsa. To further reduce weight, interior components, such as walking flats, doors and cabinetwork, are cored with either foam or honeycomb. This is a reflection of the builder's commitment to delivering speed *and* efficiency. Fuel is carried in three fiberglass tanks, and the transfer pump is managed remotely by the skipper at the helm. This yacht's fiberglass work and finish both inside and out is first-class. Even the bilge areas and machinery spaces are faired and painted with Awlgrip.

I caught up with Hull No. 1 at Viking's service center in Riviera Beach, Florida. After clearing nearby Lake Worth Inlet, we conducted our sea trial offshore in light easterly winds and two-foot seas. Her pair of 2,000-horsepower MTUs came up to maximum rpm with minimal fuss in about 30 seconds. I recorded a top speed of 41.8 knots (2,355 rpm), and the MTU electronics indicated a fuel burn of 204 gallons per hour.



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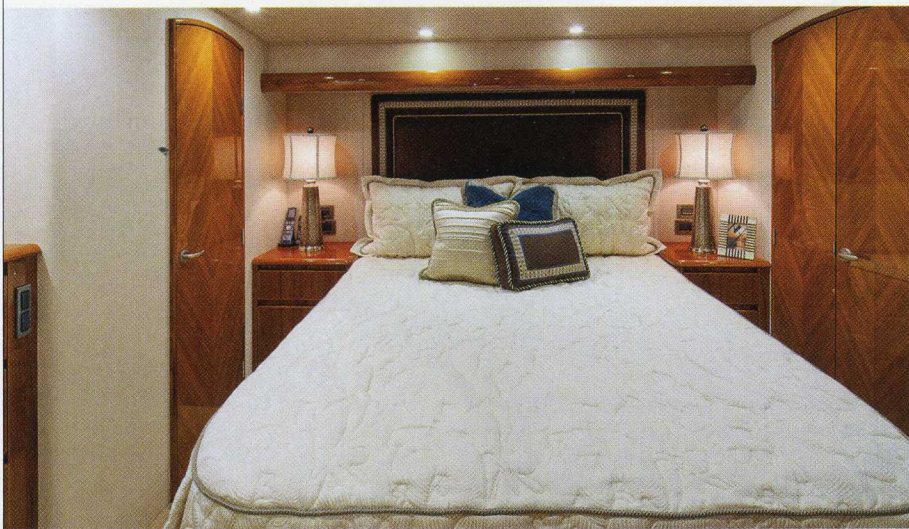
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Easing the power plants back to 2,100 rpm yielded a speed of 37.6 knots and a fuel burn of 150 gallons per hour.

Viking's designers have wisely chosen a modest deadrise for the after sections, with 11.4 degrees at the transom. This is a bit shallower than on smaller Vikings, but it makes complete sense. The stern of a boat this size should remain in contact with

the sea, and the decrease in deadrise aft translates into more lift and better efficiency.

At planing speeds, the 66 is far more responsive than you might expect for a boat of her size. Viking's "VIPER" (Viking Independent Programmable Electrohydraulic Rudder) steering system, as the name suggests, can be programmed to optimize individual rudder angle in

the trailing position (straight) and in turns where a boat's rudders cut a slightly different path due to their distance apart. The 66's horsepower, together with a bow thruster operated by buttons on those single-lever controls, allow her to effortlessly move about a fish or dock. When backing down, her three trim tabs retract automatically — nice!

Since the late 1980s Viking has focused on building tournament-level convertibles. While at first the company took inspiration and borrowed a few ideas from custom builders, Viking now deserves credit for its own design innovations. This builder achieved its success by fishing the circuit and paying attention to the details that make a boat and her crew winners. Yachts in this class require an investment. The 66's base price with 1,550-horsepower MANs is \$3,173,000. Hull No. 1's cost with MTU power, a custom tower, custom electronics and tournament outfitting tallied up to \$4,453,094. This may seem to be a premium, but it's competitive given what the 66 delivers. □

Viking Yachts, 609-296-6000; [vikingyachts.com](http://vikingyachts.com)

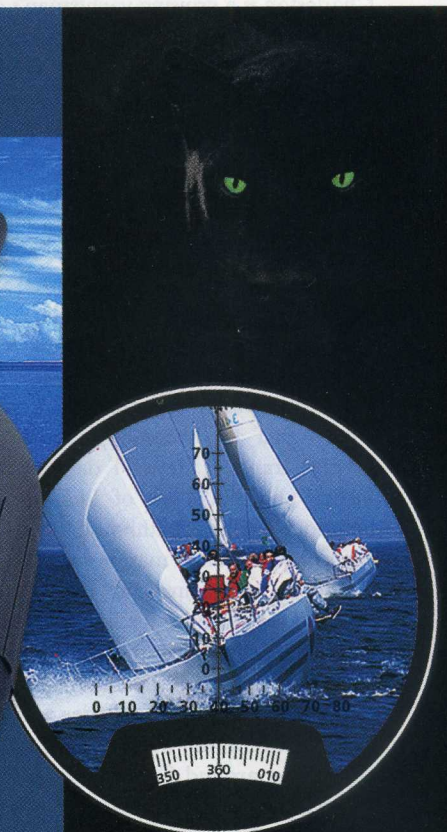
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