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# New Boat Preview: Grand Soleil 52 Performance

A modern evolution of a Grand Soleil icon, redesigned for sailors who want true offshore comfort and serious performance.

By Cruising World Staff | November 20, 2025



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Courtesy Grand Soleil/Cantiere del Pardo

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Making its global debut, the new Grand Soleil 52 Performance brings a celebrated nameplate back into the spotlight, this time reimagined with modern performance engineering, refined Italian design, and the versatility to cruise fast or race hard. Naval architect Matteo Polli and Nauta Design have reshaped this 55-foot hull into a balanced, powerful, and luxurious performance cruiser available in two personalities: an easy-to-manage Performance configuration or an upgraded Race setup built with competitive sailors in mind. With three cabins, race-worthy sail plans, and a deck optimized for real offshore miles, the Grand Soleil 52 Performance delivers a compelling blend of speed, comfort, and craftsmanship.

## Design & Layout



Courtesy Grand Soleil/Cantiere del Pardo

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The Grand Soleil 52 Performance is built for owners who want a true dual-purpose yacht: fast enough for the ORC/IRC racecourse, capable enough for long passagemaking, and elegant enough to feel like a luxury home afloat. Polli's hull lines carry volume aft for stability and power, while a tall rig and generous sail area give the 52 its punch in lighter air. Nauta's deck design keeps sailhandling efficient and unobtrusive, leaving a clean cockpit where guests can relax even while under sail.

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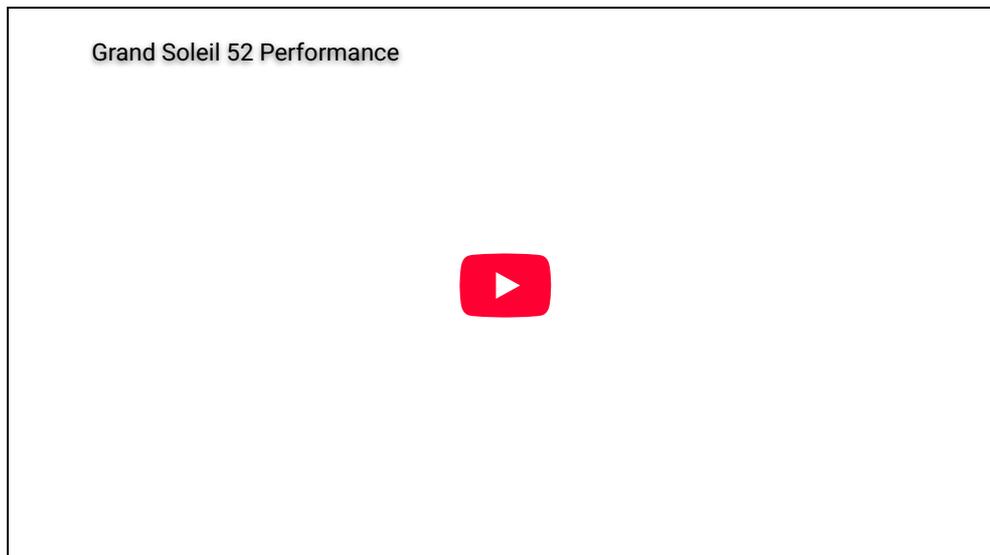
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The interior maintains the warm, minimalist Italian look that has defined Grand Soleil in recent generations. The C-shaped galley, forward-facing chart area, and expansive dinette create a welcoming social hub. Three private cabins, each with its own dedicated head and separate shower, give cruising families or race crews genuine liveaboard comfort. Owners can select from oak, gray oak, or teak finishes, all paired with contrasting floorboards that echo the brand's luxury aesthetic.

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## Video

Get a first look of the Grand Soleil 52 Performance with this video highlighting its craftsmanship and sailing characteristics:



## Construction & Systems

Cantiere del Pardo builds the 52 Performance entirely in sandwich construction using lightweight woods, marine plywood, and PVC foam cores. Bulkheads are composite and structurally bonded, increasing rigidity without adding unnecessary weight. The rig is set aft of the main bulkhead to fine-tune the center of effort and improve balance under sail.



*Courtesy Grand Soleil/Cantiere del Pardo*

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Systems are equally well thought-out. A 24-volt electrical backbone reduces cable size and increases efficiency. Four stainless steel water tanks totaling 600 liters (159 gallons) sit amidships for ideal weight distribution, while a 350-liter (92-gallon) diesel tank provides long-range motoring autonomy. A Volvo Penta 75 hp saildrive is standard, with an 80 hp Yanmar available. Bow and stern thrusters with brushless motors simplify docking without adding noise.

## **Performance & Handling**

The 52's calling card is versatility. In Performance trim, the boat features four aft winches, a fixed-point mainsheet, and a standard self-tacking jib, creating an easy-to-handle, efficient package for short-handed cruising or family sailing. A carbon bowsprit comes standard and accommodates furling Code sails for downwind power.



*Courtesy Grand Soleil/Cantiere del Pardo*

The Race version turns up the heat. Sailors get six winches, longitudinal jib tracks, a recessed traveler with electric controls, textile lifelines, and a bowsprit extended by 90 centimeters. Pair all that with the optional carbon mast and boom, and the 52 transforms into a competitive offshore racer with pedigree, building on Grand Soleil's recent dominance in ORC regattas.

Two keel options further refine performance. The standard 2.90 m (9.6 ft) T-keel suits most cruising and club racing, while optimized foils and a 2.70 m (8.1 ft) Race keel improve righting moment for competitive sailors. A 2.30 m (7.7 ft) shoal option is available for sailing in thin-water regions.

## **Interior Living & Cruising Comfort**

*Courtesy Grand Soleil/Cantiere del Pardo*

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Below deck, the Grand Soleil 52 delivers more space than expected for a performance cruiser. Three cabins and three heads create a private, well-organized layout. The forward master suite includes a large berth, a private head, and a dedicated shower. Aft, the VIP cabin can be arranged with a double or twins, while the port guest cabin features its own double.

*Courtesy Grand Soleil/Cantiere del Pardo*

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The galley is designed for real offshore cooking with deep storage, wide counters, and three fridge/freezers totaling 172 liters of space. Ventilation and light flow easily through the many opening hatches and hull windows, while integrated air-conditioning can be individually controlled in each living zone.

*Courtesy Grand Soleil/Cantiere del Pardo*

## Grand Soleil 52 Performance Specs (Race variations in parentheses)

<b>Length overall:</b>	17.05 m / 55.11 ft
<b>Hull length:</b>	16.20 m / 53.2 ft
<b>Beam:</b>	5.15 m / 16.11 ft
<b>Draft (standard):</b>	2.90 m / 9.6 ft
<b>Draft (optional):</b>	2.30 m / 7.7 ft or 2.70 m / 8.1 ft (Race)
<b>Displacement:</b>	16,500 kg / 36,376 lb
<b>Engine:</b>	Volvo Penta 75 hp saildrive (Yanmar 80 hp opt.)
<b>Water capacity:</b>	600 L / 159 gal
<b>Fuel capacity:</b>	350 L / 92 gal
<b>Berths:</b>	6-8
<b>Interior layout:</b>	3 cabins / 3 heads

<b>Naval architecture:</b>	Matteo Polli
<b>Exterior/interior design &amp; layout:</b>	Nauta Design
<b>Builder:</b>	Cantiere del Pardo

## A Legend Reborn

*Courtesy Grand Soleil/Cantiere del Pardo*

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The original Grand Soleil 52, penned by German Frers in 1987, quickly earned a reputation as one of the shipyard's most timeless designs. Nearly 60 were built, and today many still sail actively offshore. The new 52 Performance pays homage to that classic with its understated lines, deep navy accents, and balanced proportions—but beneath the familiar silhouette lies thoroughly modern engineering. Lighter materials, safer deck ergonomics, and Polli's performance-oriented hull bring the spirit of the original into the 21st century.

### **Performance or Race? Owners Now Choose Both Personalities**

Grand Soleil recognizes that sailors are increasingly demanding yachts that can do more than one thing well. The 52's two configurations share the same hull but differ significantly in how they're optimized. Performance owners get simpler sailhandling and a clean, family-friendly cockpit, while Race sailors can dial up the horsepower with carbon spars, traveler

controls, more winches, and a longer bowsprit. The keel options also allow owners to fine-tune their sailing style: shoal for adventure cruising, deep for podium chasers.

## **Systems for Real-World Cruising**

Long-term cruisers will appreciate how carefully Cantiere del Pardo has balanced performance with autonomy. Four baffled stainless steel water tanks sit low in the hull. The large diesel tank supports long motoring legs and extended time away from marinas. The 24-volt electrical system improves efficiency and expands battery runtime. Even the air-conditioning, managed by three separate control zones, was configured with real cruising comfort in mind. These thoughtful choices allow the 52 to support extended passages without sacrificing speed or style.

## **About the Builder: Cantiere del Pardo**

Founded in 1973, Cantiere del Pardo has become one of Italy's most respected builders of high-quality sailing yachts, recognized for craftsmanship, engineering excellence, and timeless design. The yard's Grand Soleil line blends competitive performance with Mediterranean luxury, and recent collaborations with top architects like Matteo Polli and Nauta Design have elevated the brand's reputation for innovation. With thousands of yachts launched over five decades, Cantiere del Pardo continues to refine its philosophy: elegant boats that sail exceptionally well and stand the test of time.

## **Editor's First Take**

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*Courtesy Grand Soleil/Cantiere del Pardo*

The new 52 Performance feels like the Grand Soleil many sailors have been waiting for: a boat with real pedigree, unmistakable style, and a modern hull that promises both speed and kindness offshore. The layout is smart, the cockpit is clean, and the build quality looks every bit like what we've come to expect from Cantiere del Pardo. What struck me most was how well the two personalities (Performance and Race) are integrated into one platform. It's a boat you could cruise comfortably across an ocean, then tighten up the rig and go race on Saturday. The 52 isn't just a revival of a classic name, it's one of the most well-founded performance cruisers making its debut this year. —CW

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