

*A small motor "Cat" gets its claws out*

# EXCITE CAT 810



The Excite Cat 810 has character and its behaviour is exemplary, even in rough seas...

**[S]**pecifications Designing a motor catamaran seaworthy enough to envisage semi-offshore cruising, with attractive lines, is an ambitious objective. Squeezing this project into hulls less than 7.5m long (reduction in Spanish VAT for this size) is even more of a challenge.

ned by rounded sections. The propeller tunnel begins where the shafts exit the hull and fixed flaps prolong the flow aft. Two small suspended rudders and a pair of four bladed props complete the mobile equipment. Excite Cat can be delivered with or without fins; our test version (flying bridge + 2 x 160 HP) was intended for occasional beaching on the Atlantic coast, so was fitted with them.

## CONCEPTION AND DESIGN

Excite Cat called on Philippe Subrero (in partnership with Xavier Fay for the interior) who had already scored a hit with the

## LINES AND PRESENTATION

Philippe Subrero confirms that he has a good eye for a line with this boat, as the styling exercise was



Throughout our test, this astonishing little catamaran's abilities appealed to us...



The Excite Cat 810 - everything that a big boat has: davits, a flying bridge, a comfortable interior...

## ON DECK

The bathing platform and opening 'gate' make for easy access aboard; a pair of telescopic davits (optional) simplify stowage of the dinghy (choosing a dynamic model with a sailing rig, as on our test boat, gives further possibilities at anchor, and allows you to keep in touch with the pleasures of sailing). The fishing rod supports fixed into the coaming underline one of this boat's vocations; for game fishing aficionados, fitting a 'fighting seat' would turn the Excite Cat into a very useful, mobile and easy-to-use fishing boat. Access to the flying bridge is via a good-quality metal ladder equipped with handrails and non-slip steps in teak. The ergonomic side decks lead to the sunbathing deck, where there are two lockers for mooring lines and fenders; the chain locker, bow roller and windlass are proof that the boat has been equipped seriously.

## ENGINES, TRANSMISSIONS

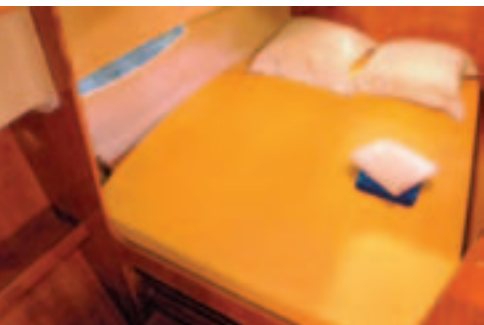
Engine accessibility is satisfactory; a small amount of dismantling is necessary to gain access to the gearboxes (under the saloon to port, under the galley to starboard

Lagoon Power 43. Under the travel-lift, the hulls revealed their vertical sides; the step is hollowed out from the bow, then runs about thirty cm below the waterline to the stern. The angle of the bow is pleasing to the eye and the entry is fine; the semi-triangular hull is soft-

risky in a catamaran this small. On the catway, Excite Cat is pleasant to look at and well-proportioned; the flying bridge is integrated into the overall line and can comfortably accommodate 3 persons. The slope of the cabin roof, the numerous glazed surfaces, the

oval portholes, the tubular stainless steel guard rail and the inclined stanchions all demonstrate the attention that has been paid to the aesthetics. The silhouette is very compact and gives a real 'cruiser' look to this lively little boat.

**EXCITE CAT WAS CREATED BY A GROUP OF ENTHUSIASTIC SPANISH INVESTORS AND HAS TARGETED THE APPARENTLY PROMISING MOTOR CATAMARAN SECTOR OF THE MARKET. ITS FIRST MODEL, THE 810, IS A SMALL BOAT ON PAPER BUT FEELS MUCH BIGGER!**



A

B

C

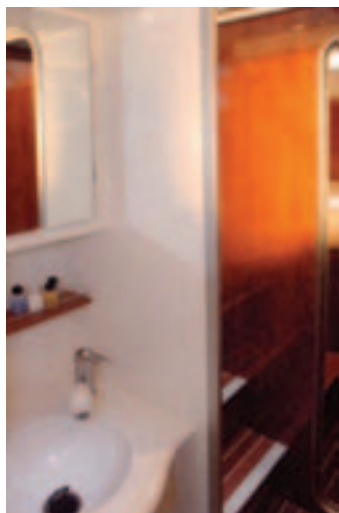
D

**A** : Amazing accommodation for a boat of this size... Two closed, spacious and independent cabins with a double bed and stowage space.

**B** : The heads are to starboard. They are comfortable and would be the envy of many bigger boats...

**C** : The interior steering position means you can go far and for a long time...in the warmth! An undeniable plus...

**D** : The builder has succeeded in integrating a comfortable, really welcoming saloon in this reduced space! The areas are well-separated, with a galley space, a dining area and the steering position...



On the pontoon, the Excite Cat is welcoming. It is a boat with small dimensions and a very flattering 'look'



on future models). The installation justifies the choice of V-drive transmission (gearboxes facing forward and angle transmissions on the shafts); ventilation is provided for by large diameter ducts and 'gills' in the side of the hulls and aft.

### ACCOMMODATION

Good quality joinery work; a small galley, a large fridge and a stowage unit face the pleasant saloon (which can be turned into a double berth) where the synthetic velvet (Alcantra) covered cushions add a warm, comfortable touch of colour. An intelligent steering position completes the nacelle accommodation: steering wheel in wood-stainless steel, instrument panel, well-positioned engine controls and a small chart table. The folding seat gives real support for the back and the footrest has been specially designed; this arrangement means that the boat can safely be driven hard in a rough sea. The companionway leads to two good private double cabins, which are light and well ventilated, plus a heads/shower...quite an achievement!

### SEA TEST

As the weather forecast predicted a cocktail of fronts and winds veering to the north-west, I contacted Fred Morvan (the French Excite Cat distributor) to confirm that the boat was really fit to go to sea in rough conditions. Fred confidently announced that this catamaran had already proved its capabilities over more than 100 miles in a force 7 on the way to the Grand Pavois! For this end of April, we had planned two days off Morbihan to test the cat in a real cruising situation. After lunch, we filled up in La Trinité sur Mer and got under way. We chatted on deck as we motored

down the river, but the chill in the air made us move before the spray did. Fred took his place on the flying bridge and I took the controls, with advice from Yves Bulord, an adventurer and good sailor from the days of the Lagoon 55 and 57, in the West Indies and the Pacific. He has had a few 'baptisms of fire' with the Excite Cat, notably a delivery to La Rochelle in a strong north-westerly, and the return trip in the same conditions! Yves said to me, "you'll see, it's like a 4 x 4, it reminds me of my Range Rover". I pushed the engine controls forward and was surprised at the kick in the back: from 12 to 17 knots, the acceleration was almost instantaneous and the chop combined with 25 knots of wind on the nose didn't have any effect. With 2 x 160HP Yanmars, the boat shot forward like a sports car and the bows cut through the blue water. The first impressions were good; the Excite Cat was really lively, but what about the overall balance of such a compact platform and its ability to jump off the waves? We set course for Belle Ile and maintained a 17 - 18 knot average across the Baie de Quiberon. The north-westerly was blowing at 30 knots over a short, foaming sea and there were no other boats on the water. The machine kicked energetically, but we 'opened up' in metre-high waves combined with small swells from different directions. The Excite Cat behaved magnificently, with well-flattened wakes; the general balance was perfect and inspired confidence, the bows and the central tunnel were working perfectly, we hadn't yet slammed into a wave and the landings were gentle. As we arrived at the Teignouse against the current, I closed the throttles a bit as the sea here can be huge. We attacked the fairly steep waves at 10 - 12 knots, choosing open trajectories so as to avoid frontal impacts and the boat handled mag-

nificently. At one point, I was just getting ready to go below to 'listen' to the boat's structure, Yves had taken the controls and as we chatted he let the boat hit a fairly vertical wave. The dive into the hole was impressive, but the hulls absorbed the shock - amazing! Time to calm down! Fred abandoned the flying bridge and after a few more minutes on this course, we were out of the quagmire and could get moving again! Le Palais (Belle Ile's main port), for a few photos then the desire to test the Excite downwind re-motivated us. Full speed ahead at 20 knots, we slid down the slope, heading SE. The sea in the channel to the north of Houat was impressive without being dangerous and as another test we motored as far as the entry to the Golfe de Morbihan with the sea on the beam (we planned to anchor at Port Blanc). Excite Cat showed yet another of its talents and confirmed that its dynamic balance is correct; it rolled very little, appeared to be 'stuck' to the water and showed no tendency to pitchpole diagonally - and I can assure you, it really was rough! After a good night's sleep, we set off again the next morning for La Trinité, with a short sea and the wind (15 knots) on the nose. We were all up on the flying bridge to savour the moment as we sailed out of the 'Golfe', then the 'Buissons de Méhaban' buoy was passed at 15 - 16 knots (a good planning speed) before a last run with the controls 'on the stops', at over 20 knots.

### CONCLUSIONS

Was it surprise at the size of the boat and its excellent handling? Whatever it was, this lively little boat won me over. Its seaworthiness and stability are surprising and the Excite Cat remains reassuring and fun even in rougher seas. Pronautique d'Auray's high build quality is obvious; the foam/glass/polyester sandwich stiffens the hull and contributes to performance, soundproofing and solidity. At 15 knots in a nasty sea, there was no creaking from the hull. The choice of engines on our test model gave lively and powerful performance and would be sufficient for all conditions, in my opinion. The 2 x 75HP version without the flying bridge is much cheaper and would be an excellent choice for someone who wanted to follow the Canal du Midi, before embarking on a trip around the Mediterranean.



There is another steering position on the flying bridge, as well as a comfortable three-seater settee.



The ladder giving access to the flying bridge is a bit steep... Be careful when descending in heavy seas!



There is a lot of stowage space on the foredeck, as well as a sunbathing or children's play area, at anchor...



With 2 x 160HP Yanmars, the boat shot forward like a sports car and the bows cut through the blue water. Pure pleasure...



A well-designed hull, which explains the Excite Cat's excellent performance.

## Technical specification

- > Builder : Excite Cat, Alicante, Spain
- > Architect: Philippe Subrero
- > Interior design : Xavier Fay
- > Overall length: 8.08m
- > Beam: 3.85m
- > Draft: 0.75m
- > Displacement: 4.4 t
- > Engines: 2X75HP - 2X160HP - 2X200HP - 2X240HP
- > Transmission: V-drive
- > Diesel: 2X215 l
- > Water: 100 l
- > CE homologation : B for 8 persons
- > Consumption: 2X24 l/h at 16-17 knots
- > Average range : 150 miles with 2X160HP
- > Max speed (test version) : 21 knots (23 knots without the fins)
- > Price: from 137,157 € to 153,800€, tax not included. (without options, according to version)
- > Price of flying bridge: 10 115 €
- > French distributor: le Comptoir du Catamaran

## EXCITE CAT 810



- > SEAWORTHINESS.
- > BUILD QUALITY.
- > REDUCED DIMENSIONS.



- > ENGINE SOUNDPROOFING COULD BE IMPROVED.
- > THE LADDER LEADING TO THE FLYING BRIDGE IS QUITE STEEP.
- > STEERING IS TOO LOW-GEARED.