

FEELING YACHTS' LIFT KEEL - THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

Why do some of the most experienced yachtsmen from globe girdling world cruisers to club weekend sailors insist on lift keel yachts when at boat shows, its fin keel yachts that top the order book often consigning the new yacht to crowded wallet draining marinas? **Experience.**

Can your yacht take you to where you want to go? Feeling Yachts' fin keel range fit the bill for going from deep water harbour to deep water marina in non tidal waters with deep water close to the shore. However where tides, shallow waters, interesting creeks, estuaries or canals figure in the cruising itinerary, Lift Keel yachts offer outstanding benefits to the cruising sailor.



Every yacht is a compromise and the same is true for the keel configuration. The long, straight, deep keel that is the preferred choice for crossing oceans is not nearly so appropriate for harbours, marinas, and close manoeuvring. The deep fin keel that will fly you up wind and to the front of the race fleet will restrict you from fascinating cruising grounds, giving you access to some rivers at only the top of the tide and make busy expensive marinas the likely

alternative. Whilst there are compromise configurations including bilge keels, shallow draft or stub keels that can occasionally sail well, sometimes with wings and /or centreboards, the **best of both worlds** is surely a true lift keel offering superb up wind performance and yet all the flexibility of shallow draft and grounding capability.

However Lift Keel designs vary considerably from swing keels to stub keels with wings on them that theoretically, if you can find a flat surface to precariously dry onto, provide the Lift Keel benefits. There are also dagger boards that work well until they come into contact with the bottom!

Kirié, builders of Feeling Lift Keel yachts are world leaders in Lift Keel yachts built in GRP and their industry leading experience shows itself in their Lift Keel design. Feeling Yachts are not built on a production line and thus each yacht is built differently in the mould depending on whether it is a Lift Keel or Fin Keel Yacht.



This allows the hull to accommodate a massive grounding plate that is flush or nearly so with the glass fibre hull and allows the keel to drop through it rather like a centreboard in a dinghy. Either side of the



grounding plate are two small grounding winglets that give stability to the yacht when grounded with the additional stability and support of the rudders.

Lift Keel Advantages – eg Feeling 44, 8'6" keel down, 2'6" keel up

- Ability to ground out at low tide opening up cheaper moorings, quiet get away from it all anchorages, and easy mid season scrubs.



- Access rivers, creeks and harbours at a much wider range of tides and access the shallower, often less busy and cheaper harbours rather than the crowded, expensive marinas.
- Moor close in, tucked in for shelter and a peaceful night rather than the rock and roll of a deep water less sheltered anchorage



- Get over the sill, a feature of many tidal marinas from Guernsey to Granville, much sooner than a fin keel yacht that has to anchor off waiting for the tide.

- No risk of running aground and getting stuck either bouncing on your side in the waves or drying out at 30 degrees, with a lift keel you can pull up the keel and sail away or ground out flat.
- The refined aerofoil Feeling Lift Keel gives a yacht a deeper keel going up wind than the fin keel giving superb sailing performance. The Lift Keel Feeling 44 came second (equal first on points) in the Cruiser Class of this year's IT Regatta to a fin keel Grand Soleil 46 in force 5 – 6 conditions gusting 8.



- Feeling Lift Keel yachts are heavier because they have more ballast in the hull than at the bottom of a fin keel consequently making them as stiff but steadier and more stable than their often flighty fin keel sisters.
- Open up the inland waterways of the continent when you pull up the keel and drop the mast, getting to the Mediterranean through the Canal du Midi or the Seine / Rhone couldn't be more enjoyable.
- Two rudders that also give stability when grounding out give excellent control when the yacht is heeled as when one comes out of the water, the other is digging in deeper.
- Minimal impact on the interior, simply the loss of some saloon table stowage, but there is still wine stowage, Feeling yachts are after all French!



Typical questions and answers regarding Lift Keel yachts

- Are Lift Keel yachts more expensive? **Yes they are a little but this can be soon cost justified by savings on expensive marina and mooring charges and higher second hand values.**
- Does the narrowness of lift keels provide less down wind longitudinal stability than the deep water long keels provide? **Yes, to an extent in a similar way to fin keels, but the grounding winglets, and a long stub in some cases does improve this.**
- Does the lift keel "slop" in the keel box down wind or at anchor? **This is fairly rare and easily resolved.**
- Does the extra weight make them a little slower in light airs? **Yes, a little, but they are still fast sailing boats – ask the owners!**
- With the keel up, do Lift Keel yachts lie to the wind rather than the tide when anchored or moored? **Yes, but this is true of many craft including most modern motor yachts and is simply one other consideration when mooring.**
- Can the keel can get stuck up due say to a stone getting lodged in the case? **In theory, yes, there is however easy water tight access to the keel box above the water line from the interior of the yacht that would easily allow the use of a batten to dislodge the item. However, the chance of a stone resisting the winched or hydraulic downhaul is unlikely. The worst-case scenario is to either sail on a reach or lower point of sail to a port or to motor with the keel up. The huge amount of ballast in the hull would not impact safety in this scenario at all.**
- Is the vanishing angle reduced and is the stability curve poorer due to the fact that the ballast is in the hull and not in or on the bottom of a fin keel? **Yes, a little, for example, in the case of the Feeling 36, the vanishing angle is at 124 degrees versus the fin keel version at 132 degrees, on the Feeling 44 the Lift Keel vanishing angle is 112 degrees compared with the fin keel versions vanishing angle of 123 degrees. Both yachts however are CE Category A in both versions, and are designed for and are entirely capable of ocean sailing. Though it has to be said that the benefits of Lift Keels are centred on coastal cruising, Alubat's aluminium Ovni yachts that are renowned for their Ocean crossing prowess have similar or lower vanishing angles and whilst this is a consideration, Life Boats were for years designed with all their ballast in the hull just like Feelings.**

So there are very clear benefits to Lift Keel yachts particularly for coastal cruising in tidal or shallow waters. Lift Keel yachts provide **the best of both worlds** rather than a compromise that is a master of none. **With Lift Keel yachts, you can really get to where you want to go.**



**FEELING YACHTS, WORLD LEADERS
IN LIFT KEEL YACHTS BUILT IN GRP**

FEELING YACHTS LTD
THE SHIPYARD
LYMINGTON
SO41 3YL

TEL: 44 (0) 1590 647421
FAX: 44 (0) 1590 647446
MOB: 44 (0)7711 232366
E: FEELINGYACHTS@BERTHON.CO.UK

WWW.FEELINGYACHTS.COM