

# Whitehaven Harbour Classic 40





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# Harboured *ambitions*

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Whitehaven's Harbour Classic 40 is a boat of many colours, combining retro styling with modern construction, and superyacht thinking with dayboat practicality. The result, finds **Mark Beretta**, is something that feels a little special.

## AT A GLANCE

12.9m

Overall length

3.9m

Beam

9.34t

Displacement

26kn

Maximum speed

Sometimes, great design comes from a seed of an idea that evolves and develops over several years, and sometimes it arrives in a hurry through a flash of inspiration and a series of fortuitous events. Occasionally, it lands through a combination of the two, and the Harbour Classic 40 from Whitehaven Motor Yachts is, perhaps, a classic example.

The concept of the Harbour Classic was born in the mind of Whitehaven's owner, Bruce Scott, more than 15 years ago, but it was a chance encounter with Australian naval architect and superyacht designer Misha Merzliakov at the Sanctuary Cove Boat Show that drove the idea to reality. The result draws both on Whitehaven's bespoke approach and Merzliakov's custom superyacht experience to create an intriguing blend of retro and modern, of smaller boat package with a larger boat feel, and of leisure boat practicality with luxury touches.

It all began when Scott was out on the water

with his wife and friends, and they started talking about the classic vessels of yesteryear. The ladies pointed out that the drive for modern looks and features had trampled over the romance of styling and the classic European look. From that, the challenge was set. His wife and friends told Scott he needed to build the ultimate classic harbour boat – something that captured the look and feel of svelte and curved Italian craft that could be found gliding across the Mediterranean or Lake Garda.

The project remained mostly in Scott's mind, until he found an enthusiastic designer in Merzliakov. In fact, Merzliakov just happened to walk onto the Whitehaven stand at the Sanctuary Cove show just as Scott was pondering redesigning the roof of one of the

**Below:** Drawing on the fine entry and long graceful sheerline of Maine lobster boats, Whitehaven has created a versatile luxury dayboat with timeless appeal.





**Left:** Deep and spacious, the aft cockpit is a highlight. A hopper window opens up the floorplan; the extended hardtop is an option but almost a must for Australia.

yard's larger boats, and the two got talking. This serendipitous partnership has produced impressive results, with Merzliakov able to dig into his extensive box of tricks from his many years working with superyachts, and the fruit of their collaboration is evident in the Harbour Classic and its evolutionary design.

The Harbour Classic certainly lives up to its name, with stylish lines, polished wooden features, quilted leather upholstery, and more than a hint of that quintessential 1950s feel. There is, however, a lot more to this yacht than meets the eye, and nods to Merzliakov's superyacht influence can be found in details, styling and accessories. Indeed, this 'custom superyacht' approach fits perfectly with Whitehaven's own ethos.

Whitehaven prides itself on a design process that actively seeks owner input from the very beginning of each build. It is, as Scott explains, a pretty simple philosophy – experienced owners know exactly what they want in a new boat but are often faced with a compromise, being forced to decide between a handful of standard options. By teaming up with owners and understanding how they want to use their boat, Whitehaven can draw up a list of specific features, with the whole team then working to create a design that delivers the dream. It's an appealing offering.

So how have these elements come together in the Harbour Classic? The exterior lines are certainly eye-catching. A sensibly raised bow

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drifts smoothly down to a lower gunwale line at the stern to create a pleasing, well-proportioned aesthetic that is redolent of the classic styling of old American-style lobster boats. The holistic exterior design extends to the mast, which has been carefully crafted to match the lines precisely, and Merzliakov also has stayed true to the retro ethos with the choice of hull colours, with options such as Peacock, Dirty Olive, Copper, Limoncello, and Blue.

The Harbour Classic has two roof options, one short – creating a sportier profile – which features an awning that can be attached for extra shade on the aft deck, and an optional extended hardtop that provides more permanent aft shading. The longer roofline could prove a popular choice for protection against Australia's harsh sun, and there is no significant impact on interior light thanks to an electric sunroof over the cockpit. The bright interior also benefits from a full-height aft door, and a lift-up window – design features that combine to create a real indoor-outdoor feel.

From the moment you step aboard, this boat feels a little special. Limed-walnut timber, quilted leather backrests, Bentley-style cushion straps and discreet strip lighting give the impression of being on a much larger boat, and this is enhanced by an open plan layout that reduces bulkheads and eliminates cabin doors. The cockpit leads seamlessly to the interior seating area, which in turn flows down into the galley and the accommodation on the lower level. There is sleeping space for four below decks, divided between – on the test model – two single beds, and a forward master suite. It's a layout that really works.

The interior finishes – such as the antelope leather used for the wall panels and the ostrich leather featured on the deckhead – are a striking departure from the materials one would expect to find on similar size boats from more production-orientated builders, and serve to reinforce the feeling of bespoke. The beauty of the interior, however, is that while it is gorgeously styled, the whole feel is welcoming and comfortable. The danger with fine finishes is that you can feel like you are in showroom where everything is too nice to sit on, but Merzliakov deliberately chose the materials to be practical, with the leathers and woods selected for their durability as much as for their aesthetic. As a result they invite you not so much to stand back and admire from a distance but to kick back and put your feet up.

Interior options are extensive, but the bar



**Above:** Limed walnut timber finishes, quilted leather backrests and finely crafted joinery are just some of the sublime superyacht styling cues distilled by top designer Misha Merzliakov.

**Left:** Retro auto feel translates well to the well laid-out helm station and three spoke wheel with woodgrain trim.

and mirrored glass rack concealed behind two limed-walnut panels in the main cabin is a popular choice. There are other luxury features too, including a drop-down 32-inch television in the saloon, just behind the helm, which can be viewed from the rear lounge and table – the perfect spot to enjoy the summer sunset over a frosty beer, while not missing a wicket from the MCG Test.

Further, although Whitehaven touts the Harbour Classic as a dayboat it is certainly not ill-equipped. The galley – located on the lower level – is decked out with a Smeg two-element cooktop, a Devanti dishwasher, Isotherm upright refrigerator-freezer, a microwave oven, and a decent sized Vitrofrigo ice maker. The sound system comes from Fusion, who Merzliakov believes has one of the best audio offerings currently on the market.

This is the smallest project Merzliakov has

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after dark.

undertaken and his concept was to create a light and open feel that allowed for maximum social flow. He has certainly made the most of the Harbour Classic's 40-foot length, creating a layout that allows for extensive entertaining backed up with a suitably sized fridge and good storage capacity.

He has also focused a lot on lighting, employing the latest technology – an influence from his superyacht experience, perhaps – to make it a key feature of the Harbour Classic's

charm. Much of the LED lighting is concealed to take away the direct glare of downlights while creating a pleasing ambience, and it's fair to say the boat takes on a different character after dark. Merzliakov says his aim was to ensure those on board could enjoy more of what's around them on the water at night, with clever, soft lighting design allowing, for example, shoreside city lights and their reflection on the water to take centre stage.

While the design may borrow styling cues from more classic cruisers, the build method is very definitely up to date, featuring carbon construction that combines strength and rigidity with low weight. Interestingly, the hull design wasn't a start-from-scratch project for the team at Whitehaven – the moulds actually came from New Zealand, where Bill Upfold had previously used them to build the Espresso 40 many years ago. It gave Whitehaven a proven hull upon which to base this new model.

Cruising in the Harbour Classic is a soul-soothing experience. It glides through the chop and swells, thanks both to that proven hull design and to the Seakeeper 3 gyro stabiliser system which smooths out the roll and provides a much steadier ride. The single engine option – which uses a Cummins 550 diesel driving a three-bladed prop – cruises comfortably at a respectable 22 knots and offers a top speed of 26 knots, while the 1,000-litre fuel capacity delivers a range of



**Left:** A few steps from the saloon a well-appointed galley and head to port means all amenities are easily accessed.

285 nautical miles at 18 knots. A twin engine version is also available.

So is the Harbour Classic 40 a dayboat, a tender for a superyacht, or perhaps a second boat? The answer, in fact, is yes to all – its size affords it considerable versatility. There are, currently, 18 builders around the world producing this style of boat, but Whitehaven will be the only Australian company among them. It believes building for the Australian market gives its product an advantage, especially for owners who want to customise their vessel. With an entry price of AU\$869,000 for the base Harbour Classic 40, it is clearly a market that Whitehaven believes has potential, and indeed there are already 47-foot and 54-foot versions planned for the future. That original seed of an idea, it seems, continues to grow. [O](http://whitehavenmotoryachts.com.au)

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[SPECIFICATIONS](#) ↻

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# Whitehaven Harbour Classic 40



1

## PROFILE VIEW

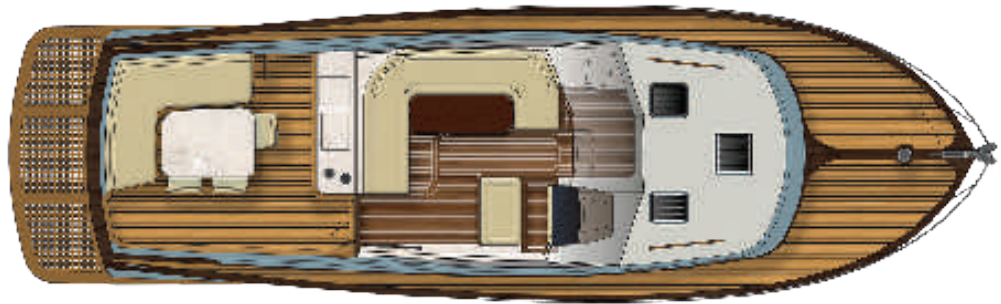
Elegant lines, evolved from a tradition of working boats, also point to hull integrity and dependability.



2

## MAIN DECK

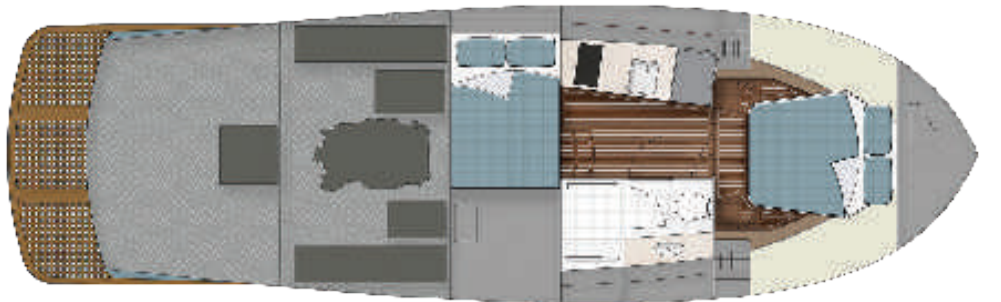
The extended hardtop shades a perfect convivial space in the cockpit, which opens up into the saloon via a stylish hopper window. Finish, fit-out and furnishings all are of a luxe standard rarely seen in this category.



3

## LOWER DECK

Optimum use of available space enables a functional galley with a full suite of appliances. Berth layout is a very reasonable compromise; a master cabin in the bow, two singles or a double aft.



## SPECIFICATIONS

Builder	Hsing Hang Marine Ho.	Propellers	Single 3 blade from Hung Shen
Model	Harbour Classic 40	Speed (max)	26 knots
Country of build	Taiwan	Speed (cruise)	22 knots
Hull designer	Bill Upfold	Fuel capacity	1,000 litres
Naval architect	Hsing Hang Marine / Oceanic Yacht Design	Range	285 nm at cruise speed 18 knots
Exterior & interior design	Misha Merzliakov	Freshwater capacity	450 litres
Owner's project manager	Ryan Hanson	Blackwater capacity	151 litres
Year of build	2019	Greywater capacity	40 litres
LOA – length overall	12.90 metres	Generators (main)	Onan
LWL – waterline length	10.90 metres	Gen-set size	4KVA
Beam	3.90 metres	Bow and stern thruster	Twindisc hydraulic
Draft	0.88 metres	Anchoring systems	Plough Anchor
Displacement – fully laden	9.34 tonnes (excl. gyro)	Navigation electronics	Garmin
Classification	Built to CE Category B	Underwater lights	2 x Seablaze 3 White
Hull construction	FRP	Entertainment systems	Drop down 32" TV from saloon roof
Superstructure	FRP & carbon fibre	Owner	Forward double bed, toilet with separate shower
Engines	Single Cummins QSB6.7	Guest berths	Midship double bed
Output	550hp	Maximum people on board	11 pax
Drive train	Shaft	Paint	Axalta Cromax Centari 6000 Basecoat with Awlgrip Awlcraft 2000 Clearcoat
Gear box	Twindisc Quickshift with EJS, EC300 single lever control with two joystick stations	Price	AU\$1,198M

**26kn**

Speed (max)

**22kn**

Speed (cruise)

**1,000 L**

Fuel capacity

**285 nm**

Range (at 18 knots)

**AU\$1.198m**

Price