



POWERBOAT TEST

Whitehaven Harbour Classic 40

DREAMS REALISED

Ben Keys and Tim van Duyl shared duties reviewing the Harbour Classic 40 and both came away impressed by the change of pace from Whitehaven.

STORY **Ben Keys, Tim van Duyl** PHOTOS **Matt Williams, Supplied**



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT The stylish HC40 will turn heads, even in the world's most discerning harbours; Elegant lines conceal a surprisingly spacious interior; Whitehaven have created a versatile vessel that works as a weekend escape, as well as a sufficiently comfortable cruiser

Along the way, there is a tactile smorgasbord of luxury trim, including antelope leather wall panels, baby ostrich-embossed deckhead, distressed leather dash, quilted Italian leather upholstery and limed-walnut cabinetry.

The result is refined, yet casual and it ensures this vessel will draw curious guests inside but, more importantly, encourage them to relax and get comfortable amid undeniable opulence.

Now, if all this sounds like a bit much, the accompanying photos should lay to rest any doubts about the visual delights of this Whitehaven.

The fact is, the muted colours and complementary textures work exceedingly well together and more impressively, balance the peacock blue dash panel which mirrors the hull.

The latter points to another source of inspiration for this exciting new vessel – classic sports cars of yesteryear – and will undoubtedly find fans among the HC 40's target market who may well have a luxury car or two in their garage.

“The timeless swept-back cabin and graceful silhouette evokes images of iconic Maine lobster boats.”



It takes something special to stop traffic on the dock of a crowded boat show.

Thousands of visitors are set loose among hundreds of nautical niceties from the industry's big names, while vessels bob up and down as though gently jostling for attention.

Yet 'show-stopper' falls short as a description for Whitehaven Motor Yachts' immaculate Harbour Classic 40.

Amid an ocean of white fibreglass at the recent Sanctuary Cove International Boat Show, this new boat's cobalt blue hull stood out like a gleaming sapphire – and if the paintjob alone didn't 'wow' showgoers, the classic lines and fine details sure did.

The timeless swept-back cabin and graceful silhouette evokes images of iconic Maine lobster boats – characteristic workboats born of proven design for uncompromising conditions.

But this contemporary picnic boat is absolutely modern beneath the skin. This clever blend of the old and the new is due in no small part to designer Misha Merzliakov, who's considerable experience designing superyachts has produced a unique take on the dayboat platform.

Sitting in the tranquil cabin of Tonic while SCIBS pre-show preparations frantically unfolded around us, Misha told Trade-a-Boat his design brief from Whitehaven boss Bruce Scott was to create a classic cruiser picnic boat – a watercraft that was both timeless and unique.

“For me the first step of this process was research, because I hadn't done a classic cruiser before,” Misha said.

“So a great deal of research went into where this boat would fit into the market. This included questions like who our competitors were, and what we were trying to achieve.

“Part of that answer was to develop a European influence on the exterior because, for this genre of boat which overlaps into trawlers, it can often be a very distinctive American style.

“For a good period of time up until the 1950s, these boats were the 'utes of the sea' for lobstermen and fishermen, so researching that period gave me an understanding of what they used to do, and that's why we ended up with this blend of materials.

“It was a means of bringing a bit of history back, but in a modern way.”

TEXTURAL DELIGHT

The blend of materials Misha refers to is grandly displayed throughout the Harbour Classic, from the textured rear lounge with its Bentley-style cushion straps, to the Italian linen on the master bed up forward.



BIG BOAT THINKING

The hull design for the Harbour Classic came from the pen of Kiwi yacht designer Bill Upfold who released a limited run of Espresso dayboats, before Whitehaven bought the moulds and had them shipped to its Taiwan yard.

This gave Misha and the Whitehaven engineers some boundaries to work within as the Harbour Classic 40 began to take shape.

For the designer, this meant bringing his superyacht influence to bear, but within an 11-metre package and for the Australian market.

The resulting interior layout will surprise many who step into the open cabin where a lack of bulkheads and doors form a space that genuinely feels larger than its waterline length.

The only real compromise – if you could call it that – is the lack of doors separating the beds from the living areas.

But as the classification of dayboat or picnic boat might suggest, this is a vessel best suited to shorter voyages with just one or two couples on board.

A privacy screen is fitted and doors are an option, but Whitehaven wanted to fully demonstrate how much space is made available with these conventional barriers removed on its debut boat. And the effect is astonishing.

TAKE THE WHEEL

Beside the stainless-framed starboard door, a hopper window links the aft cockpit with the saloon for a seamless social flow.



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE Every detail has been considered to create functional, comfortable living spaces; The sports-car-like helm; A carbon fibre roof extension creates an open outdoor experience, due to its lack of additional support structures



“Natural light floods into this space through large windows and an electric sunroof overhead, quilted leather lounge”

Synthetic teak and holly is used as a low-maintenance saloon flooring solution and subtly connects to both the teak in the cockpit and the walnut interior.

Natural light floods into this space through large windows and an electric sunroof overhead, before settling across the quilted leather lounge.

Opposite the seating area, a 32-inch TV screen is concealed in a roof hatch until required and the bar cabinet is within easy reach at cocktail hour.

At the wheel of the Harbour Classic, the skipper is treated to an uncluttered dash, with a Garmin nav screen and Cummins VesselView monitoring set into the hull-matched panel.

Automotive-style gauges and air vents reinforce the sports car vibe in combination with the three-spoked wheel. This high-performance

theme is echoed by the carbon-fibre finished fascia below.

To the left of the wheel, three small screens provide some hint toward the wealth of technology invested in this boat.

CZone control and monitoring, Seakeeper gyro and Zipwake interceptors paint a picture of a thoughtfully-conceived debut vessel from Whitehaven that is ready for anything – each system plays its part to ensure the HC 40 is as comfortable as it possibly can be.

OUTDOOR STYLE

Harbour Classic owners will likely spend much of their time watching the world pass by from the aft cockpit of this vessel, so considerable energy has been devoted to the amenity of this space.



The rear bulkhead comprises a vast servery space on top of two deep refrigerator drawers. Guests will never be left wanting for a cold drink, and this whole section can be lifted for engine room access.

A vast L-shaped lounge offers plenty of seating down aft, paired with a smart-looking teak table that lifts up, down and across to suit both meal times and cocktail hour.

Most importantly, this entire cockpit nestles beneath the shade of a hardtop extension – a vital inclusion for any Australian vessel.

A shorter roof with an electric bimini extension is also available, but Whitehaven has chosen to showcase the full version on its debut

vessel, including carbon stringers to reduce weight and add strength.

HARBOUR LIVING

Stepping through the main cabin brings you past another seating area – this one with a gloss teak table – and then down three floating stairs to the galley and accommodation level.

It's at this point you really begin to appreciate how much designer Misha and Whitehaven have managed to fit into a 13-metre hull.

The galley has everything you could desire, whether you're whipping up canapes for a sunset cruise or preparing meals on a weekend away.

There's a wide Corian sink, two-burner electric

hob, full-sized fridge/freezer, microwave and even a dishwasher drawer, all complemented by generous storage.

Opposite is the dayhead/bathroom, again with room to spare, elegant fitout and a full-sized shower – this is no poky little afterthought.

Accommodation is designed around the idea that the Harbour Classic 40 will most likely be enjoyed by an owner-couple and for short duration trips.

That said, this Whitehaven offers supremely relaxing lodgings if you do choose to stay out overnight.

The forward master cabin has an island queen bed tucked into the bow, complete with an

overhead hatch for light and ventilation.

By not adding a doorway, the sense of space onboard is enhanced, but a privacy screen can quickly be hung across the gap as desired.

The same thinking applies to the double/daybed beneath the stairs. Yes, it is open to the galley, but if occupied by children or someone stretching out with a book, then this hardly

matters. And if the owners choose to overnight with another couple – well, they're all good friends anyway...

NEW CLASSIC

The decision by Whitehaven to move away from its proven formula of glossy white sportsboats should be applauded when this is the result.

The Harbour Classic 40 meant venturing into new territory for the company, but by linking this new boat to nautical tradition via its timeless hull shape, they were off to a strong start.

Misha Merzliakov's interior brings superyacht thinking within reach of the recreational market. This clever vessel and its time-proven lines will undoubtedly prove popular with buyers seeking something unique in the sub-40ft market.

Rumour has it that a 47-footer and even a 54-foot version of the Harbour Classic are also in the works, so expect to see plenty more of that vibrant paint gleaming on graceful Whitehaven hulls in the future.

SEDUCTIVELY SMOOTH

Before we extend the superlatives to describe the ride and performance of the Harbour Classic, understand we only trialled her in smooth river conditions. The fine entry of the hull begged us to take her to the Gold Coast seaway for a run into the incoming tide but alas, it was not to be.

Our time with the vessel was short and had to be choreographed around her debut at SCIBS.



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE A second bed for guests, kids or a couple of canine compadres; The bathroom is spacious and considered; The doorless master suite flows through from the kitchen with a natural, open feeling



Ben Keys had time aboard with Misha before the show, and Tim had two blissful post-show hours on the Coomera River to assess the hulls' seaworthiness and capture performance data.

We found the combination of upgraded QSB550 Cummins and Twindisc Quickshift gearbox a great partnership. Either off the plane or on the water, the hull felt secure. It progressed onto the plane smoothly with a short burst of throttle up to 2,750 rpm, before settling nicely around 2,200 rpm.

It should be noted that this vessel came with an optional Seakeeper3 stabiliser, the largest DC-powered stabiliser and a popular fit in hulls around this size. It will have played a part in the planted feel our testing gave us and from previous testing of Seakeeper equipped vessels,

is a good option for anyone planning off-shore destinations.

Harmonics felt best around 2,300rpm, high in the rev-range and near her best fast-cruise of 12.5 knots at 2,500rpm. At 2,300rpm we saw an averaged speed of 16.75 knots consuming 54 litres per hour to give a theoretical range of 280 nautical miles while still leaving ten per cent of the 1,000 litre fuel tank in reserve.

Should you need to go further, at 1,000 rpm, more than one nautical mile per litre is a possibility however you will be travelling at a sedate though eminently comfortable seven knots. Again, allowing for a ten per cent reserve, this pace gives you around 900 miles of range suggesting proper coastal cruising around our eastern seaboard is a possibility.

Facts & Figures

WHITEHAVEN HC40

PRICED FROM

\$869,000

PRICED AS TESTED

\$1,198,000 (introductory price)

OPTIONS FITTED

Engine upgrade, Seakeeper stabiliser, TwinDisc upgrade, CZone, Onan generator upgrade, underwater lights, hardtop extension, aft control station, refrigeration upgrade, teak to cockpit, electric sunroof, Garmin nav package and more.

GENERAL

MATERIAL GRP
TYPE Monohull dayboat
LENGTH 12.9m (LOA)
BEAM 3.9m
DRAFT 0.9m
WEIGHT 8.1t (dry)

CAPACITIES

PEOPLE 4 (night)
FUEL 1000L
WATER 450L
HOLDING TANK 151L

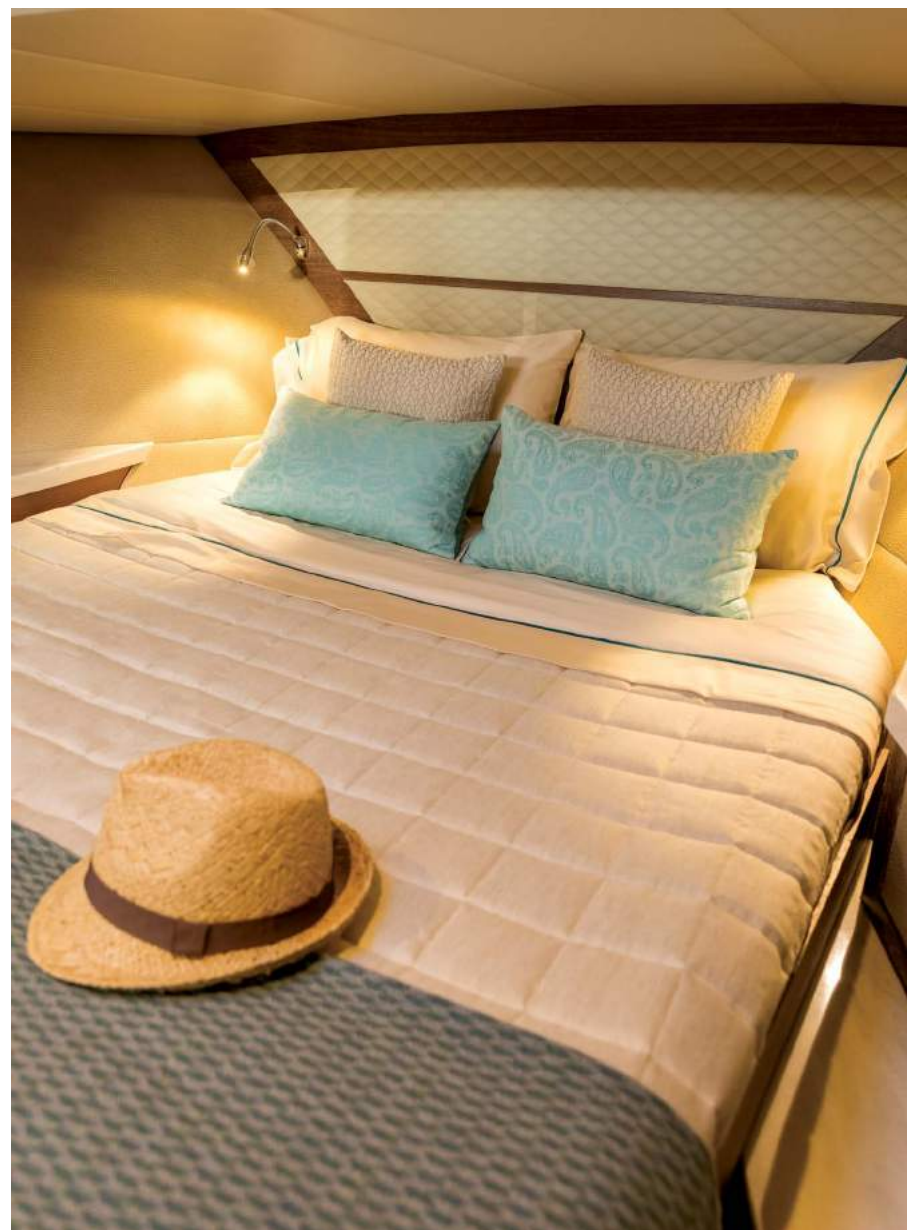
ENGINE

MAKE/MODEL 1x Cummins QSB 6.7 550 diesel
TYPE Shaftdrive diesel with ZF gearbox
DISPLACEMENT 6.7L
WEIGHT 658kg

SUPPLIED BY

Whitehaven Motor Yachts
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CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE Misha Merzliakov takes a holistic approach that sees him design everything from the boat's external lines all the way down to the pillows; A striking profile up river from Sanctuary Cove; The engine is accessed by way of a clever dual-opening cockpit sole



CHARISMATIC CUMMINS

Upgraded from the standard 480 horsepower Volvo Penta, under the cockpit sole lives one of the most highly regarded powerplants in the 6.7 litre Cummins. For the Harbour Classic it came in its highest tune, producing up to 542 horsepower and a mammoth 1,250 foot-pounds of torque.

The big engine is an evolution of the B-series that Cummins first launched as a 5.5 litre in 1989. It's also used in a number of land-based vehicles and it is known for its reliability and ease of service in all applications. It provides the torque to get moving without fuss and power to push the hull up to an effortless 24 knots.

Power is driven through a Twin Disc Quickshift transmission and onto a 26.5-inch diameter, 24-inch pitch, three-blade propeller. Engaging drive is smooth through the electronic binnacle but the highlight of the control system is undoubtedly the optional Twin Disc Express Joystick System (EJS). Through a chic steel rotary knob, it manages the upgraded hydraulic thrusters, rudder and propeller to maneuver the

Sea Trials



Whitehaven Harbour Classic 40. Average of two runs up and down Coomera River with five people on board plus 350 litres fuel and 250 litres water.

RPM	SPEED (kts)	ECONOMY (L/h)	RANGE (nm)
600 (idle)	3.65	1.4	2352
1000	5.4	5.25	945
1250	7	8.95	720
1500	8.25	15	500
1750	8.75	23	347
2000	9.25	34	248
2250	12.5	47.5	239
2500	16.75	54.5	280
3200 (WOT)	23.5	105	203

*Data supplied by the Author.
The range is calculated leaving ten per cent fuel in reserve



“Whitehaven wants owners to be able to jump onto this boat after work for a quick sunset tour.”



LEFT On the lookout for prettier boats, they're still searching
ABOVE Clean lines from every angle

boat exactly as the driver wants. Should you want to turn the boat on its length, just rotate the knob. Should you want to dock sideways, simply hold it the direction you want to head. In the tight confines of the post-SCIBS marina, it staged an impressive performance and should be an option considered by less experienced owners. So too should the second station tucked neatly into a locker to the port side of the cockpit.

Another excellent option becomes available with the EJS system in place; Express Positioning System. This is a twin-antenna GPS locking system that holds the vessel in place. In testing, it felt like the system had an accuracy down to a mere half-metre, making it fantastic when securing fenders outside your marina berth.

All of these clever inclusions work together to ensure the Harbour Classic 40 is remarkably comfortable, but more importantly, easy to use and accessible.

Whitehaven wants owners to be able to jump onto this boat after work for a quick sunset tour and spend their time relaxing on the water, not fussing about on the dock or in the engine compartment.

VALUE STATEMENT

Starting from as little as \$869,000 (subject to exchange rate), the Harbour Classic 40 is well priced. In the case of our test boat, however, expect replacement value to be over \$1.2-million, a considerable amount for a 40-foot vessel.


The price difference is mainly down to the extensive options list, the bulk coming from the upgraded powerplant, control systems and Seakeeper. Perhaps buyers downsizing from a large motor yacht may be comfortable living without them, but these options are great for less experienced users.

The stunning colour scheme seen here adds an extra \$43,000 to the price-tag, by no means a cheap cosmetic addition, but after seeing this painted hull up close we simply couldn't go without. But this hull deserves a bold colour like Tonic's peacock blue, perhaps burnt orange or rose.

THE WRAP

As a statement vessel, the Harbour Classic 40 is sensational. Strong, flowing lines ooze purpose without overstating performance or masking her designer's intended result: a newclassic.

Perhaps the price will be a sticking point for some, but for others it will help create an air of exclusivity and, in our opinion, it is more than justified when you factor in how much the upgraded control systems aid ease-of-use, or how the optional paint enhances finer details of the design.

This is a boat for proud owners, those that appreciate the lifestyle projected by such a vessel and don't mind turning a few heads or having others fawn over every minute detail that constitutes this breathtaking package. 



CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT The colour-matched dash is a real treat; The only thing more spectacular than the HC40 is the places it'll take you; This could be you, think about it



About the authors



TIM VAN DUYL

Tim has skippered Trade-a-Boat since early 2014, missing only one issue of the 60-odd he has put his name to. Before his time overseeing the masthead, he worked on the client side, marketing a popular trailerboat brand in his native New Zealand.

Although not formally a student of design, he enjoys learning and conversing about

the art of balancing form and function, plus the technology that goes into both the final product and the build of vessels of all sizes.

When not cultivating his pirate beard behind the screen of his trusty laptop, he dedicates his spare time to seeing the remote regions of Australia with family and can often be found staring longingly out to sea from a high vantage point.

BEN KEYS

Ben Keys used to be paid to write, and went sailing for fun. Then he got paid to sail and writing took a backseat. These days he just does whatever the editors tell him to do (not a bad option as this is usually involves a luxury yacht test).

Before joining the Trade-a-Boat crew, Ben learned to sail by racing his 21-footer on Perth's Swan River. Years later, this modest beginning would somehow land him a job

crewing multi-million-dollar superyachts around the world.

On returning to Australia, this experience proved an ideal background for lending a hand at Trade-a-Boat magazine (although a journalism degree probably didn't hurt either).

What he loves most about this role is opening readers' eyes to the possibilities of launching oceangoing adventures in their own boat and the fact you don't need the biggest, most expensive vessel — just a will to explore.

