

LOCAL REVIEW

**Whitehaven Harbour Classic 40**

# METAMORPHOSIS

*Yesteryear's practical design gets a modern transformation as Whitehaven take the humble Lobster Boat and turn it into a sophisticated and elegant cruiser.*

WORDS AND PICS **James Dumergue**



The original incarnation of this style of boat was for hauling lobster traps onboard — the twin-engined IPS version was made to haul arse and wash lobster rolls down with a glass of bubbles from the cockpit. It was built to handle the challenging north Atlantic seas, and much like the original sports cars of yesteryear, it was constructed with handling capabilities in mind. Being kitted out for luxury and comfort weren't boxes that required ticking on the build spec.

Sports cars went through a transformation, deviating from the single-minded focus that saw the emergence of slightly more substantial and infinitely more comfortable versions. These sports cars, made for covering greater distances in much greater comfort, garnered the Grand Tourer appellation, or 'GT' for short.

Lobster boats also changed in size and performance and evolved into the more genteel

Picnic Boats or Downeaster styles as they are known in the USA. Brisbane-based naval architect, Misha Merzliakov, known for his superyacht designs, was tasked with elevating this tried and tested platform from New Zealand designer Bill Upfold. He has intricately woven together style, premium comfort, and luxurious finishes to create the Harbour Classic 40.

#### PRACTICAL MEETS LUXURIOUS

Retaining critical characteristics of the design heritage and complementing the design lines with an attentive fusion of function and elegance, Whitehaven Motor Yachts have seamlessly transformed the retro-styling into a premium GT of the Sea.

The proud sheerline sweeps aft from a high flared bow and beautifully rolls into a low freeboard with curved hips completing the



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pleasing flowing lines. Aesthetically influenced by the necessity to easily haul traps over the sides, the design inadvertently incorporates some of the most pleasing curves that mimic the shapes of marine animals and inspire boundless roaming in a swift, fluid package.

Typically, I prefer to focus on the personality of a boat, and how it functions and benefits the user from the way it is designed. Still, in the case of the Harbour Classic 40, it's hard to look beyond the aesthetics without pausing to admire. It is a stunning looking vessel, very timeless, and has universal appeal as if it has used the Golden Ratio to determine the pleasing dimensional relationships. It also appears to draw inspiration from the Art Deco period with recognisable shapes and features on the wooden fashion

plates and the Spitfire-like exhaust styling of the air intakes. The subtle curves and proportions achieve a timeless charm with a distinct contemporary crispness.

It truly is a beautiful design with flowing lines and svelte colours. To borrow a line from car advertising from the early '60s, it is “trim, taut and terrific”. At 40 feet, it feels as agile as a sports cruiser and sure-footed like a sports yacht, with luxury refinements that make it the Gran Turismo of the sea.

Being far more comfortable than your average sports cruiser and packing the ability to take significant strides along the coast, this boat is here to fill the void of individuality and uniqueness that a production boat buyer can sometimes find themselves in.

#### LEFT TO RIGHT

The sides are still low enough to haul lobster traps over; Thanks to an upgrade from Misha Merzliakov, the Harbour Classic 40 has little in common with its predecessors



empty waves with feathering peaks closer to shore showed that the swell is reasonable at 1.5 metres. The opposing wind to swell cleaned up the surface sufficiently to run at speed, and combined with the Zip Wake (Dynamic Trim Control System), the HC40 did an exceptional job of maintaining a good ride, even at top speed, which averages around 28 knots.

The running attitude, the quick out-of-the-blocks sensation, and the balanced feel on the plane are the sum of the equilibrium built into this boat. Rather than positioning the engines under the cockpit sole, Whitehaven have maintained the stable yet supple ride by placing the heavy machinery under the saloon, as per the original hull design by Bill Upfold. By running

the longest possible jack shafts to the IPS drives, little in the way of changes are needed to accommodate the different drive system from the single-engine version introduced last year.

For their first IPS incarnation in the Whitehaven range, the result is commendable. The twin D4 IPS 400 engines produce 300hp each and have no trouble propelling the boat to high speed without draining the tanks. At 28 knots, the engines consumed a combined total of 110 litres per hour, which is little compared to similar-sized vessels.

Fast, manoeuvrable and manageable, it makes for easy end of day outings, daytrips, and long weekend escapes — badges of honour that this boat will wear with pride.



**STANDING UP TO THE TEST**

This boat is definitely one to buy for its looks, but it is particularly well suited to any boat owner that's second-guessed a decision to head out for the day due to the effort involved in preparing and returning. This boat dispels any second-guessing and encourages spontaneity.

Enjoying the freedom this boat enables, our Friday afternoon escape out the Gold Coast Seaway for a couple of hours demonstrated what this boat was built to do. The sea state at this time of year has us heading north along South Stradbroke Island. The openings of clouds were allowing the late Autumn light to cast colours from the same palette as the subtly understated hull and topsides. The beautiful afternoon light, the roll from the ocean swell, and the curvaceous hull lines melded into the surrounding seascape.

An easterly swell was hitting us on the beam, a westerly wind blew at approximately 10 knots, and our tanks were about a quarter full. The

**CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE** Placement of the engines keeps the ride stable; The upgrade brought the looks; Want some shade out here? Extend the hidden awning; The twin engines have enough power to get up and boogie



## Sea Trials



Light winds, calm sea, 25 per cent fuel and water and three people on board.

RPM	LOAD PERCENTAGE	SPEED (KT)	FUEL BURN (LPH)
800	23	4.2	2.6
1000	32	6.2	5.4
1200	44	7.1	9.4
1400	60	7.6	13.8
1600	70	8.25	19.8
1800	74	8.9	26
2000	78	9.9	36
2200	76	11.9	46
2400	79	14	54
2600	80	16.3	60
2800	74	18	68
3000	75	20.3	80
3200	82	23.5	90
3400	83	25.3	96
3600	99	28	110

\* Sea-trial data supplied by the author.



**CLOCKWISE FROM BELOW** A simple layout is suited to daytripping; Top-of-the-line electronics make piloting that bit easier; A tall guardrail expands around the foredeck



### COMFORT ON THE SEAS

The cockpit has been optioned with the shorter hardtop. The entire area can be covered by the Sureshade, an extendable electric awning concealed flush into the hardtop, which is a big tick for sun protection with absolutely no assembly required. Just hold the button and extend the coverage as far as you need.

Set to port is a corner seat for three to four people with a table that can accommodate more by adding moveable seating or lowering for a sun-lounging set-up. The hopper window opens the saloon out to the cockpit with handy refrigeration and freezer units below.

Inside, opulence is dialed down to sophisticated leathers on the headlining, supple leathers on the seating, and textured leather highlights of the helm seat.

The formula is a simple tried and trusted layout that is particularly suited to daytripping and entertaining with contingencies. The focus is on indoor/outdoor living with ease and

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acknowledgment that a change of mind is always on the cards. On a day boat, the galley is often lightly used — rather than have it as a barrier between indoor/outdoor interaction, it has been positioned down from the helm. This simplifies the saloon layout, creating a fluid flow between the entertaining spaces. Providing a good support act for entertaining, this galley can turn it up with size and usability. There’s a two-burner electric cooktop which is hidden by the flush bench lid that lifts and holds on a gas strut. No bench space is lost when you fill in the sink, too. Air conditioning, a dishwasher drawer, a convection microwave, and an upright domestic-style fridge-freezer meet the needs of the entertainer nicely.

Catering to the escape artist who is reluctant to return home, the HC40 has the gear required to stay out and not come home for a few days. Water storage is 450 litres, which is a little above average for this size and plenty for a few days of living aboard. Generous volume has been donated to the bathroom space, motivated by the desire for more convenience and practicality for both entertaining in comfort and catering to longer stays. Extra floor space in front of the vanity creates a convenient area to don the swimmers or change clothes for dining ashore, in comfortable privacy. This arrangement also affords the shower cubicle more space — enough for a full pirouette if you’ve got the balance. I like the concept of this bathroom because, in

**CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE**

Located downstairs, the galley is still easily accessible; For privacy, the main berth has doors; The bathroom is a little roomier than is usual for boats of this size



real boat usage, it will be utilised a lot more than the forward cabin, so in my view, it is the right choice to give it the extra real estate.

The flexibility of the space down below allows for flexibility of plans. If you have some extra bodies on board, there is extra sleeping space by way of the double berth under the forward part of the saloon and helm. A full-sized cosy spot amidships is accessible aft of the galley and will allow for very comfortable sleeping for kids or adults.

After feedback from customers, Whitehaven have made the main berth fully private, and doors can be closed off to the cabin if needed. To open it up, one door opens forward and then other aft.

The forward opening door ensures access to the fridge is not inhibited when open. There's not much need for the doors considering it's suited to the couple's market, but it's nice to have the option when more bodies do stay overnight.

The helm has a good view from the double seat, sightlines to the galley, and through the transom gate aft. The dash is laid out well. It differs from the single-engine version we last reviewed with the inclusion of a joystick and dual throttle controls. By combining the Volvo Penta IPS with Garmin Electronics, you get an easy-to-operate and intuitive glass bridge system that allows the navigation and engine monitoring to be integrated into the multifunction display.



**Facts & Figures**  
WHITEHAVEN HARBOUR  
CLASSIC 40

**PRICED AS TESTED**  
\$1,006,000

**OPTIONS FITTED**

Upgraded Garmin navigation and electronics suite, Sureshade ATF electric retractable awning, teak laid to cockpit, upgraded cockpit seating, electric sunroof, electric-opening side window, Vitrifrigo icemaker, fridge and freezer drawers, premium leather upgrade, Sandstone Bronze painted hull, Victron 3kVA inverter, CZone control system, Fusion sound system, upgraded house batteries, autostart genset

**PRICED FROM**  
\$749,000

**GENERAL**

**MATERIAL** Fibreglass/GRP  
**TYPE** Monohull  
**LENGTH** 12.9m (42ft 4in)  
**BEAM** 3.9m (12ft 9in)  
**DRAFT** 0.9m (2ft 11in)  
**DISPLACEMENT** 8600kg

**CAPACITIES**

**PEOPLE** 12 (day), 4-6 (night)  
**FUEL** 1000L  
**WATER** 450L

**ENGINE**

**MAKE/MODEL** Twin Volvo Penta D4 300 IPS  
**TYPE** Inline four-cylinder turbo diesel, 301hp (224kW) each  
**DISPLACEMENT** 3.7L

**MANUFACTURED BY**

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You've also got easy-to-control digital switching thanks to the independent CZone control, and intuitive automatic trim control — welcoming this boat to people with little or no experience. The intuitive operation is easy to master and will quickly become familiar, especially with training from the team at Whitehaven, which is provided to all customers.

### SLEEK AND SOPHISTICATED

If beauty is in the eye of the beholder, this design will entrance many who cast their eyes over it. The curves, colours and design exude a sleek and anti-traditional elegance that symbolises wealth and sophistication. Summer afternoons, long weekends and coastal escapes aboard will be well blended with staying ashore at hotels and dropping the pick in secluded anchorages. Whitehaven has created a vessel that is made for couples, escape artists and people who enjoy hitting the salty road for their natural therapy. 🌊

**TOP TO BOTTOM** Drop the table down for a spot to lounge in the sun; Entertaining is the main focus of this interior

