

Grand Banks Eastbay 39SX

BY PIERCE HOOVER

The new Eastbay 39SX is a result of the most ambitious new product development program Grand Banks has ever undertaken. The company, which celebrates its 50th anniversary this year, recently introduced new models in all its boat lines — Heritage East, Eastbay and Aleutian.

Each of these new offerings incorporates a host of updates, new thinking and design refinement, and each either replaces a previous model or fills a gap in a given model line. The 39 is in some ways a replacement for the Eastbay 38, but it is perhaps better described as a refinement of this highly successful model.

Like its predecessor, of which some 130 have been built over the past 12 years, the 39SX is a classically styled performance cruiser that is sized and configured for easy operation by a couple. A versatile layout creates excellent entertaining possibilities, but also pro-

vides true live-aboard capabilities. Though best suited for housing a crew of two in comfort, it can also accommodate guests or children on occasion.

Subtle exterior styling updates give the 39SX a contemporary flair without detracting from its Down East-style lines. Noteworthy details of the new deckhouse include curved glass windows in the rear corners and externally bedded, or "frameless," windows all around.

A teak toe rail and brightwork accents add to the upscale feel without creating undue maintenance liabilities, while substantial stainless-steel rails make moving along the wide side decks more secure. Nice touches in the cockpit include the hand-laid teak decking — a standard feature — the built-in icemaker and the integrated bench seat, which raises on gas struts to reveal a large storage locker.

Inside, it's all about the view. Passengers seated in the upper lounge area or on helm chairs forward will enjoy the full experience of being on the water without necessarily being exposed to the elements. On hull number one, the port companion chair was omitted to increase living space, and the helm chair was upgraded to a handsome Stridd design finished in ultra-leather.

By blending the rich teak joinery work, which has always been a Grand Banks hallmark, with



Like the original 38-footer it supercedes, the 39SX establishes Grand Banks as a leader in the mid-size performance cruiser market.

white bulkhead finishes, the interior maintains a classic, upscale feel yet is also brighter and in many ways more inviting than more traditional all-wood interiors. With three overhead hatches, six opening ports and a hinging forward windshield section, the cabin can also benefit from significant natural ventilation, and in mild weather owners could easily forgo the air conditioning. When needed, however, the twin Marine Air units provide ample cooling power, preventing the deckhouse from becoming a hothouse on scorching summer days.

The galley and a second dinette/lounge area are located forward and down but remain open to the deckhouse. This arrangement enhances the





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SPECIFICATIONS

LOA: 39'
Beam: 13' 2"
Draft: 2' 4"
Fuel Capacity: 352 gal.
Power: Twin 380- to 500-hp
Price Range: \$609,000 to \$680,000
Information: 800-809-0909
www.grandbanks.com

interior's overall sense of space while also creating a second and slightly more private area for entertaining or relaxing dockside without having to pull down shades all the way around.

A generously proportioned head with a separate shower enclosure sits against the helm bulkhead. It is a layout best-suited to a cruising couple, but intelligently arranged to allow for guests when the occasion demands.

An access hatch located centerline near the helm provides easy egress to the engine compartment via a short ladder. Most routine systems checks can be performed while standing in this hatch or sitting between the stringers. Plumbing and wiring seem well organized. Substantial Racor fuel filters are set against the forward bulkhead for easy access and all electrical systems are color-coded and numbered.

It was the original Eastbay 38 that launched the Grand Banks name into the performance cruiser category. The 39SX continues this tradition and then some. With engine options ranging up to twin 500 Yanmars, the boat will run well north of the 30-knot mark, and will hold 24 to 25 knots at an 80-percent throttle setting.

As with other Eastbay designs, the hull is a true deep-V in the C. Raymond Hunt tradition. With good lift characteristics and ample power, the boat comes on plane easily and delivers an exemplary rough water ride. With its crisp helm response, it is very much a driver's boat, but it is also a passenger's boat, offering relatively low noise levels for a performance cruiser, along with a smooth ride in tough seas.

In short, it is a joy to drive, and should provide an equally enjoyable experience for passengers. 