

# Grand Banks 46 Classic: A Grand Design

Grand Banks' 46 Classic is sized right and built right.



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It may seem that Grand Banks owners are required to use the word "Grand" in their boat names; however, it is really just a matter of personal choice.

Names like Baby Grand, with its allusions to finely tuned and polished instruments; A Grand Design, a more strident statement of how the owner feels about his boat's characteristics; and Grand Finale, indicating the skipper has finally reached the pinnacle of boat ownership; are names attached to a handful of the Grand Banks cruising the waters of Puget Sound.

While many manufacturers are busy designing next year's model, Grand Banks is steadily crafting its vessels and adding improvements as needed, without being conscious of any particular calendar or model year.

Grand Banks refers to construction details shared by sisterships not by model years, but by hull numbers. While the Grand Banks 46 is a relatively new model, in the "Grand" scheme of things, the design we look at this month earns the designation of "Classic" — just like its 36- and 42-foot stablemates.

In production since 1987, the 46 can only be considered a "new" Grand Banks trawler yacht when compared to the 36 (introduced in 1964) and the 42 (introduced in 1965).

### **A Step Between**

The 46 Classic was originally designed to bridge the gap between the successful and long-lived 42 and the larger 49, which was introduced in 1980. Having developed a reputation for rugged reliability and thrifty fuel usage, owners of the 42 were looking for a step-up boat — one that had everything they already loved about their 42, only more.

While the 36 and 42 were admittedly boxy, traditional-looking yachts, and were unusual compared to the rest of the market, the extra length makes the 46 appear better proportioned — and its practical layout and low fuel use won over many buyers.

Rising fuel prices certainly didn't hurt this boat's popularity either, as boaters looked for more economical options for their boating hobby. The most common power choice for these boats was twin 375 hp Caterpillar diesels.

Unlike many trawler-style yachts, the Grand Banks are built on a semi-displacement hull with hard chines and very flat aft sections. Unlike true displacement hulls, which must always displace an amount of water equal to their weight, the Grand Banks 46 hull is capable of achieving speeds above its theoretical hull speed (planing), while still being as economical as

a true displacement trawler at hull speeds.

Additionally, the flatter aft sections provide high initial stability, which is especially noticeable in marinas or rough anchorages, but is also very advantageous in rough seas.

## **Bigger and Better**

The small diesels originally offered by Grand Banks in its various models were capable of not much more than the displacement hull speed of the boat. By the 1980s, boaters were asking for the option of faster cruising speeds — and Grand Banks listened, offering larger engine packages for more speed.

Dependable and fuel-efficient at displacement speeds, the Caterpillar 375s are capable of cruising at speeds around 14 knots, and can achieve a top speed of around 18 knots. Throttle back to a more leisurely 9 knots, and fuel consumption drops to a miserly 6 to 7 gallons per hour.

Stepping aboard any Grand Banks yacht is a joy for lovers of natural wood joinerwork. While exterior teak is restricted to cap rails and decks, the cabin inside glows with warm wood. Teak and holly sole and teak cabinetry is of the highest caliber, and has furniture-quality finish and craftsmanship.

With more than 200 Grand Banks 46 Classics built, and with two basic layouts offered during the years of production, the builder has had the opportunity to perfect its interior construction. Additionally, the 46 Classic has been joined by a wide-body aft cabin Motoryacht version, and a Europa version, both built on the same hull and sharing its predictable performance traits.

The interior offers abundant stowage in lockers and drawers, and Old World-style craftsmanship is mated to modern day products — including

designer touches like Corian counters, on later models. The warm glow of natural wood is tempered and accentuated by white surfaces and headliners — and large windows allow plenty of natural light and a view around the entire boat.

Visibility from the lower helm is excellent, and there is plenty of space for electronics and charts.

Noise levels at the lower helm are low, allowing normal conversation at cruise speeds. Doors to port and starboard allow easy access to sidedecks.

Opposite the helm, to port, is the galley, with an L-shaped configuration that became a very popular option in later models. An L-shaped settee, abaft the helm seat with a facing settee, allows for entertaining large groups.

The master stateroom is aft. Dual berths are standard — with a single to port and a double to starboard. A walk-around queen-size berth is a popular option, providing even more storage space and a corner vanity.

Guests will stay in the forward stateroom, which offers a V-berth. A full head with a separate stall shower is included here — and while storage is not as plentiful as in the master stateroom, there is still more than enough storage for the occasional guest's belongings, and it rivals the storage space available in many master staterooms on other boats.

In the optional three-stateroom layout, a third stateroom is to port, with a double berth against the hull side.

Grand Banks are such a common sight at most marinas that it is easy to overlook the consistent quality that has gone into the brand for nearly 40 years.

A Grand Design indeed.

## Grand Banks 46 Classic Specifications

<b>Length</b>	47'1"
<b>Beam</b>	14'9"
<b>Draft</b>	4'5"
<b>Weight</b>	39,000 pounds
<b>Fuel capacity</b>	600 gallons
<b>Water capacity</b>	290 gallons
<b>Standard power</b>	Twin diesels from 135 hp
<b>Typical used boat price</b>	\$330,000 to \$775,000

### For More Information

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