

Gobbi 335 Review



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The terms 'Italian' or 'European' styling are used loosely to describe a plethora of imported sportsboats – most, ironically, hailing from the US. But never have I had the pleasure of experiencing a craft that could genuinely identify to those origins.

From Italian boat manufacturer Gobbi we now have in Australia a sportscruiser that is truly a delightful example of sleek sports styling, superb workmanship and impeccable attention to detail and finish.

The Gobbi 335 has already made an immense impression since its local debut at the Sanctuary Cove Boat Show last May. And if that public reaction is any indication, boat buyers see this \$327,000 sportscruiser as exceptional value. It is an extremely spacious boat, well appointed,

and it has a finish that's as good as we've seen from any import. Above all that it's a beautiful boat to drive, with performance and ride qualities that have no shortcomings.

Designed for the numerous ports, bays and coves that dot the sunny Mediterranean coastline, the Gobbi is a boat created to enjoy the sea and the outdoors ... and also provide intimate and luxurious facilities to stay aboard for a day or three. The external lines are exceptionally pleasing to the eye, and the layout complements the aesthetics. The cockpit is relatively conventional but there are aspects that set it apart from most other sportscruisers. I was particularly taken by the way the seating, including the forward passenger lounge, has been integrated into the flow of the cockpit mouldings.

Even better is the way the windscreen wraps around the cockpit and sweeps up into a nicely raked radar arch, and in doing so turns the cockpit and cabin mouldings back towards the cockpit to encompass moulded steps leading to the side decks. This provides a very easy and safe flow from the cockpit on to the side decks and forward to the bow. It's very smart, and very well done without noticeably limiting the cockpit space and facilities. The side decks, though not overly wide, have good non-slip and a nice high stainless railing to give plenty of security. It makes the generously cushioned foredeck an important part of the boat's daytime use.

As well, the splitting of the rails at the bow, and the inclusion of a step, make it possible to gain access to a jetty or another boat. There are the usual wet bar and cockpit refrigeration facilities, plenty of storage and seating for daytime entertaining, and a moulded boarding platform which incorporates storage racks for fenders and liferaft plus twin electric telescopic davit posts.

Perhaps the only area in which there could be an improvement is in the driver's console. The pedestal-mounted throttle/gear levers are fine if you stand to drive, but ease back in the two-seater helm lounge and they're a long way forward. Ideally the console should wrap around more to the side of the driver. Below deck, the finish and presentation of the saloon and the twin cabins sets the Italian boat apart from the American imports. I've previously raved about some of the vogue interiors we've seen in a number of the quality imports, and some locally-built boats, but the Gobbi interior is straight out of the pages of a homemaker magazine.

There's a welcoming warmth and a wonderfully luxurious feeling to this decor. The colours and quality of the soft furnishings to lounges, bedspreads, bulkheads and curtains are tastefully set off against a glossy burlwood timber lining to all the cupboards, drawers and galley fixtures. But what puts the finishing touches to this interior is the spaciousness, and there is no better example than the midship cabin. This is not the tight little cubbyhole that many of the US boats have to offer, but a delightful,

fully-enclosed cabin that has twin full-length single berths, a lounge, a vanity unit and wash basin. I can't recall seeing such a roomy midship cabin on anything under 11-metres in length.

The angled double berth in the bow doesn't afford the same privacy but makes up for that with generous size, ample storage space and an ambience that is most relaxing and inviting. Both the bathroom and the galley are positioned along the port side of the saloon, while to starboard is the wrap-around lounge and dining table; which converts to an extra double berth. With the forward berth screened off by a curtain, and the midship cabin being a lock-up, there is a reasonable amount of privacy to sleep up to six people.

Although the galley has limited bench space, it abounds with storage and other facilities, But then, as one of our visitors noted on the test, the galley is fabulous for daytime snacks... 'but let's be seen with this boat in the evenings and eat out at some waterfront restaurant!' Boasting a pair of 230hp TAD43 Volvo diesel DuoProp sterndrives, which is what I consider relatively small power, the Gobbi 335 produces exceptional sportsboat performance. With full fuel and water tanks, and six adults aboard, the test boat planed at just over 2000rpm and topped out at a brisk 37 knots at 4000rpm.

It is brisk, responds very smoothly to throttle changes, glides effortlessly onto the plane, and trims flat but light

which ensures the driver has a good view and an excellent feel. It cruises best around 3000rpm or a little more – 30 knots or so – and at this speed the ride is smooth and noise levels way down. Throughout the test I noted that no-one had any problems with conversation, wherever they chose to sit in the cockpit, and the ride over the late afternoon wind chop remained dry and pleasant.

Supplemented by the DuoProp drives, the Gobbi is exceptionally manoeuvrable, light but firm on the wheel, and responds nicely to sterndrive trim without overly reacting. It's a boat that is just so smooth and easy to drive that you don't want to relinquish the wheel to anyone! The Gobbi 335 has certainly added some excitement and class to the sportscruiser market. For \$327,000 you would expect a lot of boat, and the Gobbi delivers. Its finish and fitout is superb; the performance brilliant, and the inventory of standard inclusions and accessories is wonderful.

Story by David Toyer.

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