

review

Beneteau GT 32

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he Beneteau GT 32 is one such ‘crossover’ boat – a sports cruiser with twin outboards and overnighting capacity – she will have you zipping around coastal waters in no time.

The marque is more commonly associated with cruising yachts and larger, luxury powerboats, but the prolific French builder also produces several smaller ranges, including the Antares and Gran Turismo (GT) brands, represented in New Zealand by Family Boats. The GT 32, and her big sister the GT 36, offers the speed and handling of a smaller powerboat without the maintenance and berthage requirements that come with owning a launch.

The GT 32 is a comfortable weekender that can sleep up to four adults, but would be ideally suited to a family with one or two kids. Accommodation is down below in an enclosed cabin aft under the raised helm station, with a very large double berth running athwartships. The V-shaped seating around the angular table at

the forward end of the cabin also converts to a double, which can be shielded with a privacy curtain. There’s also a separate head and shower room, and plenty of storage, including an integrated 56-litre capacity fridge with a freezer tray. Ample headroom and through-hull windows mean you don’t feel closed in.

Up in the cockpit is the galley and a second ‘living area’. A two-burner gas cooktop and sink are mounted under a lifting glass lid behind the helm seat (to starboard), with a small fridge mounted below. To port is a large U-shaped seating area around a table with inset drink-holders. With the addition of clears around the cockpit, this would create an extra outdoor room, practical for use in all but the worst weather.

The helm station seats two in separate seats with footrests, and forward on the port side is an elevated double bench seat with a great view – the whole family can hang out and travel facing forwards when you’re underway.

There’s great visibility all round through the large windscreen



STEPPING UP

Demand for boats has gone crazy since the first Covid lockdown with people opting to make the most of being stuck down here. Among the most popular sellers are day boats/weekend cruisers – something to give the family a taste of the boating lifestyle.

BELOW Access to the foredeck is via a walkway on the port side of the saloon.

BOTTOM Can't fault the quality of the interior – and with those through-hull windows there's plenty of natural light down below.



THE GT 32 IS A COMFORTABLE WEEKENDER THAT CAN SLEEP UP TO FOUR ADULTS...

and side glazing. A windscreen panel opens on the port side to allow access through to the bow, where large squabs can be added to create an additional lounging area.

With the wide, squared-off bow at deck level the GT 32 could almost be described as 'snub-nosed'. There's no walkaround access to the bow – the full beam maximises interior space. Up on the bow is a very large chain locker, with the anchor mounted in a fairlead and a Lewmar winch – it can be operated remotely from the helm.

At the stern, a cockpit gate on the starboard side leads out onto the large boarding platform, where there is plenty of room to fish and swim despite the considerable size of the outboards. A barbecue can be mounted on a post on the port side of the platform, and across the transom the back of the sofa can be folded down to create large, flat upholstered area linking the cockpit with the boarding platform.

The overall look/feel is definitely European, with curvaceous lines in the hull shape and detailing. These contrast nicely with the dark, tinted glass of the through-hull windows. The styling is by Italy's Andreani Design, and the pale colour scheme makes the most of the available light to create an interior which feels light and roomy.

EFFICIENT HULL

The GT 32 utilises Beneteau's 'Air Step' hull form, designed to smoothly evacuate the water stream and reduce friction



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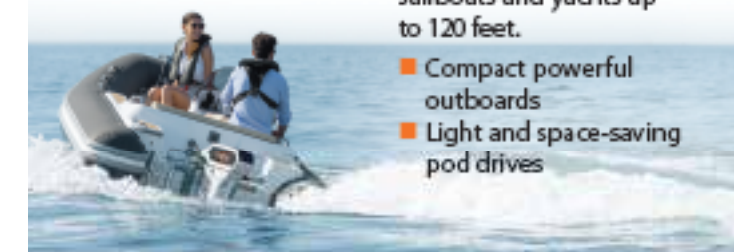
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LEFT A popular spot for sunbathing.

BELOW & RIGHT A nicely-styled cockpit with a built-in galley to whip up a few treats.

and drag, increasing speed and reducing energy consumption. Air is captured under the hull, creating a cushion-like effect, and runners to the rear increase stability.

A pair of 300hp, V6 four-stroke Yamaha outboards (4.2 litres) with digital electronic steering power the boat. The engines aren't physically linked with a tie-bar – instead, they are GPS-synched – the first installation of this type in New Zealand. Yamaha's Helm Master EX joystick steering can also be specified.

Ivan Raos of Family Boats says an advantage of outboards rather than a single inboard engine is that the engines can be tilted up out of the water when the boat is not being used, to reduce the impact of submersion in salt

water. Having the engines mounted on the stern also means more underfloor storage space in the cockpit.

This boat's fitted with a Zipwake automatic trim tab control system which constantly adjusts both roll and pitch, with the aim of maximising comfort and minimising fuel usage. The underwater 'interceptors' (rather than traditional trim tabs) keep the GT 32's ride extremely smooth and level, even through chop.

With this system, says Raos, "the boat basically drives itself." And he's not wrong: with the Zipwake on it's a pretty easy job being the driver, as the boat keeps itself on the straight and narrow, subtly compensating for any chop, without having to make much adjustment on the helm. In fact, when we're straight-lining in flat water, steering is a one-finger job and keeping watch is the helmsperson's main priority.



FLAT OUT, SHE'LL DO IN EXCESS OF 35 KNOTS: HAMMER DOWN, WE RECORD 37 KNOTS SOG, WITH THE BOAT GETTING UP TO SPEED SMOOTHLY AND RAPIDLY.



LEFT With the Zipwakes in control the main job is keeping your eyes peeled for slower boats.

BELOW Curvy lines, very stylish, cool interior – a fun boat for exploring beyond the horizon.

The boat's 5,377kg light displacement delivers a comfortable cruising speed of around 21 knots, with the specs indicating fuel usage of around 85 litres/hour for both engines. There are two 400-litre fuel tanks, which means at those speeds you could get around nine hours running between fills.

This provides a range of about 200 miles – more than enough for zapping around local waters or even out to the Barrier from Auckland. The engines run off separate tanks, so if there's a problem with one the other engine isn't affected.

The boat starts to plane at around 12 knots. Flat out, she'll do in excess of 35 knots: hammer down, we record 37 knots SOG, with the boat getting up to speed smoothly and rapidly. For our shoot, Raos flings the GT 32 around like a fizz boat into some tight turns

but she responds eagerly, eating up her own wake without too much bounce or spray. With the outboards going full-noise on the back the ride is, however, quite loud.

This is the second GT 32 in the country. The first arrived late last year and has made its home in Pauanui on the Coromandel. This one was displayed at the recent Hutchwilco Boat Show and sold almost immediately – there is now a year's waiting to get another one.

You can see why this kind of boat is popular: small enough for easy manoeuvring and a breeze to manage and maintain, yet she offers enough room for comfortable weekendng. The GT 32 offers a practical way to get into boating, or expand your horizons from a day boat, providing speed and performance and also a comfortable platform for family good times. **BNZ**



Beneteau GT 32

PRICE AS REVIEWED
\$463,000

MANUFACTURED BY
Beneteau
www.beneteau.com

HIGHLIGHTS

Easy handling,
much like a trailer boat,
but with space

Air-step hull
reduces drag
– she's pretty quick

The views
through those
massive windows
– superb

SPECIFICATIONS

loa 9.95 m
beam 3.32 m
light displacement 5,377kg
engines 2 x Yamaha F300 V6 4.2
litre 4-stroke outboards
fuel 2 x 400 litres
cruise speed 21 knots
max speed 37 knots

