

GRAND BANKS 44EU

Future Perfect In the new 44EU, Grand Banks Yachts has redefined a classic *By John Wooldridge*

Making the transition from a semi-displacement to a modified deep-V planing hull, the Grand Banks 44 Heritage EU is an entirely new yacht that isn't afraid to acknowledge the influence of the past. That's all to the good, because from the keel up, the 44EU is an evolution that remains true to the mission and spirit of the original 42 Europa.

In fact, approaching the GB 44EU from the stern quarter, you'd swear you were looking at a GB 42 Europa. You see the same bridge overhangs protecting the broad, teak-planked aft cockpit and the wide, well-protected side decks. And there's the same sense of balance and proportion between the deckhouse with its large windows and the low-profile trunk cabin on the well-laid-out foredeck that has made this design a modern-day classic. But as you move forward you notice that there's also quite a bit of flare to the bow, and the rake of the stern is decidedly less vertical—sure signs that changes have been made with increased speed and a drier ride in mind.

Like all the GB42s that came before it, the 44EU has a solid fiberglass hull, Sparkman & Stephens designed and tested, with a near-full-length keel that is relentlessly comfortable in a chop and very protective of the running gear. This new design, however, also includes prop pockets to help lower engine placement for increased stability and minimize draft for those who want to explore the skinnier waters of the Bahamas, the ICW and Chesapeake Bay.

GRAND INDEED: From its bridge overhang to its large windows and low-profile trunk cabin, this evolution remains true to the Grand Banks tradition.

RPM	KNOTS	dB(A) HELM	GPH
900	7.4	64	4.0
1200	8.9	72	10.0
1500	10.1	73	16.0
1800	13.4	76	24.0
2100	18.1	77	30.0
2400	22.3	79	40.0
2550	24.0	82	44.0

Speeds, in knots, were measured with GPS off Sanibel, Fla. in 1-foot seas with 1/2 fuel, 1/2 water, no black water and five people on board. Air temperature was 86 degrees, with 8-knot winds. Average water depth was more than 10 feet.



LOA: 49'11"
LWL: 44'1"
Beam: 15'3"
Draft: 4'0"
Transom Deadrise: 17.7 degrees
Displ.: 48,670 lb
Fuel: 600 gal
Water: 260 gal
Black Water: 72 gal
Naval Architect: Sparkman & Stephens
Exterior Styling: Grand Banks Yachts
Interior Design: Design Unlimited (UK), Grand Banks Yachts
Engines as Tested: 2x 903 hp CAT C9 diesels
Transmission: Twin Disc
Gear Reduction: 2.53:1
Props: 31" x 34.5", 5-blade, Easter, N.bral
Generator: 1x 7kW Onan
Steering: Hydraulic
Engine Controls: Morse
Base Price (w/CAT C9s): \$818,900

A tour of the engineroom, with access from the cockpit through a hatch beneath the lifting flying bridge stairs, is a study in careful engineering. Groco Safety Seacocks on raw water inlets are standard inside an engine compartment defined by watertight bulkheads. The compartment is very well insulated, as evidenced by sound levels taken during our test, with a good deal of the engine and generator noise attenuated by custom exhaust systems with underwater outlets.

Seating on the flying bridge includes a top-of-the-line Stidd Admiral fronting the centerline helm, with room to starboard for an optional second Stidd. A bench seat to port serves equally well for navigator or interested guests, but most guests will undoubtedly choose to relax at the dinette abaft the helm and opposite the wet bar.

Grand Banks tapped Design Unlimited (UK) to bring style and luxury to an interior that is spacious, thanks to the wider beam of the 44EU. Many subtle changes have been made without sacrificing the functional, comfortable galley-up layout. The standard layout includes a large master stateroom forward with private head compartment, plus a starboard guest stateroom that can be configured as an office for those who want to segregate business from the pleasures of cruising.

The new 44 Europa is a fitting successor to a design that has provided cruising comfort to countless families since its introduction in 1965. □

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