

Grand Banks 70 Aleutian CP





Change is good.

by Tom Thompson

The classic look of a Grand Banks trawler has always been one of its most appealing features. Traditional wisdom dictates that when you have a good thing going, you don't make changes. So the company raised some eyebrows a few years ago with the introduction of its Aleutian Series. But I got a chance to see why change can be a good thing when I took a ride on the new 70 Aleutian CP.

Departing from the Grand Banks "look," this one is a raised pilothouse, which allows for more interior space. With a multi-level main deck, the staterooms can be placed forward under the higher portion, leaving the stern free for other uses. Not only does the 70 have a covered aft deck leading from the salon, it also features a spacious cockpit for soaking up the sun or maybe even wetting a fishing line.

The standard flybridge outfitting is a canvas top and a molded fiberglass electronics arch, but you can order an optional fiber-

glass hardtop and side enclosures. Seating includes a pair of Stidd chairs at the helm and an L-shaped sofa with a dining table along each side. The broad helm console has generous space so you can have duplicate electronic equipment arrays at both the upper and lower stations. A large translucent hatch on the starboard side of the helm opens to a stairway that takes you down to the pilothouse. If you prefer the scenic route, an open stairway next to the 1,000-pound-capacity electrohydraulic davit at the stern is available.

The pilothouse deck holds the galley and dining area to port, with the helm and a large chart table along the starboard side. The lower helm has a single Stidd captain's chair with a commanding view. To improve sightlines aft, a section of the over-counter galley storage cabinets can be raised about 15 inches at the touch of a button. On our test boat, a pair of computers that handled navigation and monitoring chores was connected to two 17-inch high bright computer

monitors on the instrument panel.

The galley on the 70 Aleutian CP is built around a U-shaped countertop and features a full array of residential-size appliances, including a dishwasher and trash compactor, as standard equipment. Just forward, the booth-style dining table shares an expansive outdoor view with the helm station.

The interior is customizable, with designer options for fabrics, upholstery and accessories, as well as for furniture layout and entertainment electronics. To conserve weight, Grand Banks built most of the interior furnishings using honeycombed laminate panel construction, but you'd never be able to tell by looking at the elegant paneling and cabinetry throughout the boat.

The salon of the 70 I was on had sofa seating along the port side and in the forward starboard corner, plus a pair of moveable chairs to starboard. They all seemed focused on one thing: a 42-inch plasma-screen TV in the aft port corner that magically rises out of a cabinet at the push of a button on your remote control.

I found another ingenious push-button surprise awaiting me aft to the cockpit. Although the electric sliding doors are an option, you might consider them a necessity when you're trying to move around in heavy seas or with an armload of gear.

The standard lower-deck configuration features three staterooms. Amidships, a full-beam master suite holds a king-size bed, bureaus along each side, a vanity, a cav-



ernous walk-in closet and an ensuite head. The guest stateroom is in the bow and has a queen-size pedestal berth. The day head here can be entered from the companionway as well.

On most boats, the third stateroom is the place where you toss gear to get it out of the way. On this boat, though, it's the best feature of the lower deck. The queen berth converts into a settee, and a countertop folds down from a bulkhead to create a desk. An optional set of three sliding panels can disappear into a pocket in a bulkhead to enlarge the space by incorporating the companionway. There's even a private head here. The 70 Aleutian CP also has an amidships crew quarters, just forward of the engine room, with space for two, a private entrance from the port-side deck and its own head.

The pair of Caterpillar C30 diesels rated at 1,550 hp each took the boat I tested to a top speed of 28 knots. The hull, designed by Tom Fexas, handled a 3- to 5-foot chop with no fuss at all, and the ride was smooth, even with the Naiad stabilizers turned off. For a 70-footer, steering response was quick and positive, with a solid and unhesitating response from the throttles.

The 70 Aleutian CP's quality and construction are what I expected from Grand Banks, but the layout is what really appealed to me. The Aleutian Series is a bold change for Grand Banks, and one that it has made with exceptional style. ↓

Specs

LOA	75'
Beam	19'10"
Draft	5'6"
Bridge clearance	16'3"
Weight	117,000 lbs.
Fuel capacity	2,625 gals.
Sleeps	8
Power as tested	T/Cat C30 diesels (1,550 hp each)
Price as tested (w/ full electronics)	\$2,950,000



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