



Grand Banks 70 Aleutian CP

QUALITY AND RELIABILITY CREATE ANOTHER WINNER

BY TOM THOMPSON

THE APPEAL OF THE NEW GRAND BANKS 70 ALEUTIAN CP goes beyond its classic wooden boat look. The spacious layout and a long list of standard features raise the bar for bluewater cruisers. The company's latest flagship is the largest, fastest and most luxurious of its Aleutian Series, and passage-making now has a new standard for exceptional quality.

The 70 Aleutian CP is a departure from the traditional Grand Banks design. The company's foray into the raised pilothouse configuration began three years ago with the introduction of its first Aleutian Series boat, the 64. A raised pilothouse allows for more interior space. With a multilevel maindeck, sleeping cabins can be

placed forward in the hull and under the raised part, leaving the stern free for other uses.

In the case of the 70 Aleutian CP, not only is there a covered aft deck leading from the saloon, but the boat has a spacious cockpit that can be used as a jumping-off point for water-sports or just for relaxing and soak-

ing up the sun.

A GOOD RUN

Along with its appearance, a number of other features on the 70 Aleutian CP are noteworthy, particularly the powerplant. The boat we tested was hull number one. It had just completed its first long-distance passage from Seabrook, Texas, across the Gulf of Mexico and around the Florida Peninsula to Ft. Lauderdale.

Starting out, the pair of Caterpillar C30s, rated at 1,550 hp each, was able to drive the fully loaded boat to a top speed of 28 knots. Running at a con-

servative 10-knot cruising speed, they each burned 20 gallons per hour. With 2,625 gallons of tank capacity, you can go a long way between stops at the fuel dock.

The day we were on the 70 Aleutian CP was not pretty. Seas were running about 3 to 5 feet, but the Tom Fexas-designed hull took them in stride. Its distinctive flared bow kept spray to a minimum. The ride was smooth, even with the Naiad stabilizers turned off. Steering response was quick and positive. Pushing the throttles forward from mid-range speeds, you could feel a quick, solid and unhesitating increase in acceleration. This is a very steady and very fast boat.

CLEVER, LIGHTWEIGHT

To conserve weight, Grand Banks built most of the interior furnishings using honeycombed laminate panel construction. You'd never know it, looking at the elegant wood paneling and cabinetry throughout the boat.

The saloon has sofa seating along the port and forward sides as well as a pair of movable chairs to starboard. The focal point is a 42-inch plasma-screen TV that appears from a cabinet at the push of a remote control button. The sliding doors to the aft deck were electrically operated. Although an option, it's one that you might consider a necessity when you're trying to move around in heavy seas or with an armload of gear.

The 70 Aleutian CP's pilothouse deck contains the galley and dining area, along with the helm and a large

An Inside Look



TESTER'S OPINION: "The quality of the construction and components is what you would expect from Grand Banks; however, the layout and innovative features are what set the 70 Aleutian CP apart from the crowd. The Aleutian Series represents a bold new direction for the company and I think they've accomplished it with exceptional style."



CLOCKWISE, FROM THE TOP — Command the Grand Banks 70 Aleutian CP from an attractive helm station complete with all the latest navigation equipment. The interior that awaits you is stunning; Grand Banks sets aside a portion of the cost for customizable fabrics and materials. The saloon features elegant wood paneling and a 42-inch plasma-screen TV, while the master stateroom, with its king-size berth and vanity, provides a comfortable escape.

Neil Rabinowitz photos

Grand Banks 70 Aleutian CP

SPECIFICATIONS

LOA (w/swim platform)	75 ft.
Beam	19 ft., 10 in.
Draft	5 ft., 6 in.
Weight (dry)	117,000 lbs.
Fuel capacity	2,625 gals.
Water capacity	350 gals.
Base price (w/2 x C18 1,000 hp engines)	\$2,741,400
Price as tested (w/2 x C30 and full electronics package)	\$2,950,000

PERFORMANCE SPECS

Top speed	28 knots
MPG @ 1,650 rpm cruise	33
Range @ 17 knot cruise	669 nautical miles
Sound level @ cruise	72 dB

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Chilled-water air conditioning, two battery chargers, 21.5 kw Onan generator, crew's quarters, ice-maker, windlass, Stidd helm seats, bow thruster, dishwasher, trash compactor, microwave oven, electric range and oven, refrigerator/freezer.

OPTIONAL FEATURES

Power-operated saloon doors, convertible third stateroom, second generator, hardtop, teak decking, electrically raised cabinets in galley.

CONSTRUCTION

Hull is solid fiberglass to chine. Closed-cell foam coring used on upper portions as well as decking.

COMPANY PROFILE

Years in business	48
Number of employees	1,300
Boat lines	Eastbay, Heritage and Aleutian Series

BUILDER

Grand Banks Yachts Ltd., Seattle, WA; (800) 809-0909; www.granbanks.com

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Delta Marine Service, Sidney, B.C.; (250) 248-8772; www.grandyachts.com

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chart table. The boat we were testing was fitted with a pair of computers that handled navigation and systems monitoring chores. The instrument panel had two 17-inch color monitors along with a host of other electronics and space to spare. Visibility was excellent whether standing at the wheel or sitting in the Stidd helm seat.

A clever feature improved sightlines astern when maneuvering in tight quarters: A section of over-counter galley storage cabinets could be raised about 15 inches at the touch of a button. The galley itself is U-shaped and features residential-size appliances including a dishwasher and trash compactor as standard.

FLOATING HOTEL

The standard configuration for the lower deck of the 70 Aleutian CP has three staterooms forward that are accessed via a stairwell off the pilot-house. A full-beam master suite is situated amidships and features a king-size berth, bureaus along each side, a vanity and an impressively large walk-in closet.

The head compartment has a large stall shower, while the guest stateroom is in the bow and has a queen-size pedestal berth accessible on both sides. Its head also serves as the day head, with doors opening to the cabin and companionway.

The third stateroom on most boats typically ends up being used as a large storage locker. This is not so on the 70 Aleutian CP. The third stateroom is one of the best features about the lower deck. When not being used as a sleeping space, its queen-size berth folds into a settee, and a countertop folds up from a bulkhead to create a desk. An optional set of three sliding panels disappears into a pocket to enlarge the room by incorporating the companionway. The third stateroom also has an en suite head.

Optional, amidships crew quarters have a private entrance from the port side deck as well as a head.

The interior look of the 70 Aleutian CP is customizable. A portion of the cost is devoted to designer options for fabrics, upholstery and accessories. There are also options for furniture layout, galley appliances and items such as entertainment electronics.

The 70 Aleutian CP's flybridge has a standard canvas top and a molded fiberglass electronics arch, but it can be fitted with an optional fiberglass hardtop and side enclosures. A pair of Stidd seats is at the helm, and there is an L-shaped settee with tables along each side. A 1,000-pound-capacity electro-hydraulic davit is standard. ♡

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STEP INTO MY OFFICE — The third stateroom on board the 70 Aleutian features a nice surprise. When not in use by overnight guests, the queen-size berth folds into a settee, while a nearby countertop folds up to create a desk.