

Tristram 741 Offshore Sterndrive

BACK IN SEPTEMBER 2011 WE TESTED THE TRISTRAM 741 OFFSHORE, A MODEL THE HAMILTON BASED COMPANY HAD RELEASE LATE IN 2010. NOW WE SEE THE NEXT EVOLUTION OF THE 741 WITH THE RELEASE OF A WIDELY ANTICIPATED STERNDRIVE MODEL. FREDDY FOOTE CHECKS IT OUT.



New Favourite

BY FREDDY FOOTE

THE NEW TRISTRAM 741 OFFSHORE STERNDRIVE MODEL ON AUCKLAND HARBOUR.

If there is ever a boat brand you look forward to testing, it is always a Tristram. I'm not quite sure what it is, but Lance Fink at Tristram Marine always gets it right. When I tested the outboard version a few years ago, I summarised the boat by saying "In my opinion probably the best performing GRP hardtop of around 7.5m that I've tested – period! If there is a better boat out there, I haven't been on it." Upon reflection, pretty passionate words at the time. How was Lance going to wow me this time? Could he wow me again? I was about to find out. What made this test even more interesting was that as we put the boat in the water, Lance revealed to me that he hadn't actually been in his new model on the water yet, and he was

just as excited, as I was to see how it would go. According to Fink the 741 Offshore outboard version has been a phenomenal success for the company. So why develop the diesel sterndrive version? "Accessibility to fuel was one of the main reasons why we developed this model. There are a lot of people who do their boating around places such as the Coromandel Peninsula, where they can't access petrol on the water at wharves, but they can access diesel," says Fink. "Having the sterndrive option gives the boat more appeal to a wide market." The new 741 Offshore sterndrive is largely the same layout wise as it's outboard sibling, though obviously it has a new and redesigned stern section. Accurate in it's design and con-

struction, it has had its plugs cut on a CNC machine, as well as being drawn and designed using CAD software. The 741 Offshore Sterndrive is targeted at the offshore fishing market, where it boasts an excellent cockpit space for 5 to 6 anglers, live bait tank, and unbeatable rod and accessory storage. Above all, it has the same bluewater performance and exceptional design traits that are Tristram is renowned for.

Take Me Fishing

Fink's design philosophy to make the boat extremely fishing friendly is evident as soon as you step aboard. Aft, low profile walk-throughs are built into both transom corners, the port side sees a stainless boarding ladder flush mounted into the large full width euro style swim platform.

In the port corner, a live bait tank is built into the transom walkthrough, while an identical sized catch bin is located on the starboard side. A truly enormous bait station is positioned centre and when not in use is easily stored in the cavernous space under the port side passenger seating. A prominent feature of the 741 Offshore is the substantial cockpit. Thigh padding runs along the upper inside edge of the cockpit sides, and below you'll find recessed storage racks for rods, with additional shelf storage located below, and a gaff/boat hook holder below that – a really great and well designed feature that I love. While time constraints of our test day didn't let us do any serious fishing, we did test the stability of the boat at rest,

ABOVE: CAPTION



TOP: ROOF HATCHES PROVIDE EXTRA LIGHT INTO THE HELM AREA.

and with two 'fishing' in the cockpit, it clearly illustrates how roomy it is, and seeing 5-6 anglers fishing comfortably is definitely do-able.

A healthy sized underfloor storage locker is situated aft in the cockpit - large enough to store three dive bottles, and is accessed via either a larger locker or a smaller one slightly more aft towards the engine.

Tallon Elite receivers are located throughout the boat, which here are used as cup holders, or switched quickly for a

different attachment for whatever situation presents itself - another great feature, and gives the boat a clean flush finished look.

The seating arrangement comes in the very functional and traditional king/queen arrangement and not only provides ample and comfortable seating, but also copious storage underneath.

Get hungry during the day, the 741 is complete with a galley; the front passenger seat lifts forward to reveal the gas burner.

RIGHT: PLENTY OF ROOM TO FISH - WITH JUST TWO IT REALLY ILLUSTRATES JUST HOW LARGE THE COCKPIT IS.



LEFT: THE WIDE SWIM PLATFORM WILL HAVE WIDE APPEAL FOR NOT ONLY FISHING, BUT KIDS WILL LOVE TO SWIM OFF IT.

ABOVE: RECESSED ROD STORAGE IS A GREAT FEATURE.

BELOW LEFT: WARM AND COSY IN THE CABIN, A PORTA-POTTI IS UNDER THE FORWARD BUNK.

BELOW RIGHT: THE NEW VW TDI POWERPLANT.

Just behind that is the small sink unit, fed by the 100L fresh water tank. Opposite, under the helm seat is a fridge unit, with its pullout door opening inwards into the companionway, opposite that are twin slide out drawers for storage of other galley necessities.

On both sides of the 741 Offshore, the aft-facing passenger seats lift upwards and provide access to the cavernous storage space below. Gas struts are gone, just attach the cord to its hook hidden above near the roof and the seat stays up to allow access.

Above the helm area, two hatches line the roof of the hardtop, and are frosted - a nice feature as it allows light from above whilst providing some protection from the sun.

The overhead hatches also provide extra ventilation when cooking, as do the sliding windows on both sides. The internal roof section inside the helm is finished nicely with vinyl trim padding, giving a warm feel to the helm area and providing sound dampening of engine noise.

The large forward cabin can be fully sealed off and locked for privacy or security, by pulling the sliding door across. As you step down into the cabin, a large V-berth transforms into a large double berth with the insertion of a squab infill.

Further storage space comes in the form of side shelves that run the length of the cabin area. The forward squab lifts up and reveals the porta-potti.

Euro Power

This is the second 741 Offshore Stendrive diesel to hit the water, all so far have been powered with the Volkswagen Marine 265hp TDI Diesel with a Bravo 3 sterndrive.

When we tested the outboard version, it was powered by a Yamaha 250hp four-stroke outboard, though most have been hitting the water with 250hp Yamaha V8 outboards.

Making a comparison to the 250hp Yamaha four-stroke, it delivered 47.0mph at 5600rpm, swinging a 17" Saltwater Series propeller and consuming 92.5L/h.

A cruise speed of 32mph at 4000 rpm had the Yamaha 250 four-stroke using 44.5L/h.

A 741 Offshore with a 350hp Yamaha V8 outboard, will see the hull cruise comfortably at 31mph @ 4000rpm and use 41L/h of fuel.

Our sterndrive model, powered by the 265hp Volkswagen TDI diesel certainly didn't lack performance. With two of us onboard and a full load of fuel and water, it achieved 45mph @ 3800rpm and using 52Lph of diesel.

Cruise along at 34mph @ 3000rpm, and it uses 30Lph.

The overall performance of the TDI on the water was pretty phenomenal. Great acceleration and mid range torque, combined with the fine entry of the 741's hull, the whole package just popped up out of the water effortlessly.

One of the quietest diesel sterndrive's I've encountered, Lance





ABOVE: A SMALL FRIDGE IS LOCATED UNDER THE HELM SEATING.

ABOVE RIGHT: CAVERNOUS STORAGE UNDER THE SEATING.



and I were able to converse really easily at the helm without having to yell or shout. In fact I reckon it's quieter than some four-strokes I've encountered in the past.

Comfortable Drive

Behind the wheel, the seated position is fixed, but the seat can be adjusted to allow you to stand should you wish. I don't know why you would need to, as the high-seated position is perfect, and the ride is so good you'd never really need to stand.

The single helm seat mounted upon a starboard storage compartment and fridge unit has the skipper seated high with plenty of visibility forward – right through to the bow.

As with any new Tristram, the helm itself is ultra modern. Engine instruments were fitted above a large Raymarine multifunction display. Trim tab controls are within easy reach downwards to the left of the wheel, while the Fusion Stereo system was mounted up above in the centre. Side windows, combined with the overhead hatches, assist with airflow through the helm area.

Last time I tested the 741, conditions were glassy calm. Not this time around! A stiff breeze blowing 20-25 knots presented some choppy conditions. Perfect!

The 741 Offshore just ate it up, and could easily handle more if you were to throw it at it. One thing I noticed was how well balanced the boat was. Trim tabs were fitted, which I thought would be a must on a day like that combined with a big hardtop. But after half a morning of running up and down the harbour across all kinds of water, I didn't touch them once! After I was done with it, this particular 741 was off to be anti-fouled, and then was being driven to its new home in Whitianga. I was almost a wee bit jealous that I couldn't tag along for the delivery journey!

Overall a superb ride, in fact if you haven't experienced the ride I suggest you try and get yourself on a Tristram to experience it yourself.

I was very pleased to see how stable the 741 Offshore was at rest, throw some weight to one side and it will hardly budge. One word to summarise the new 741 Offshore sterndrive – awesome.

It has absolutely everything you need and more, combined with the VW diesel, it's a fantastic package. I may have found my new favourite boat.

TECHNICAL

Model:	Tristram 741 Offshore
Priced From:	\$
Price as Tested:	\$
Type:	GRP Hardtop
Construction:	GRP
LOA:	7.90m
Beam:	2.50m
Deadrise:	22 degree
Height on Trailer:	2.85m
Trailerable Weight:	2800kg
Engine Capacity:	265hp-420hp
Power:	Mercury Diesel 265hp TDI
Drive:	Bravo 3
Propeller:	
Power Options:	Sterndrive/outboard
Fuel Capacity:	270L
Water Capacity:	100L

Notable Standard Features:
Trim tabs, VHF Et aerial, porta-potti, stereo system, LED cockpit lights, galley Sink, gas burner, 100L freshwater tank, sliding cabin door.

Notable Options on Test Boat
Bait board, extended canopy

Boat Supplied and Manufactured by:
Tristram Marine Ph 07 849 5225
www.tristramboats.com

PERFORMANCE DATA

Engine speed	Boat speed	Fuel burn
rpm	mph	L/h
500	6.2	1.1
1000	7.5	2.3
1500	9.0	5.0
2000	15.0	15
2500	25.0	23
3000	34.0	30
3500	40.0	42
3800	45.0	52