

New Power

ALL ABOARD

European pleasurecraft builder Jeanneau packs a lot of features and innovation into its new Merry Fisher 795 Marlin.

The trawler walk-around design has been gaining wider popularity



Contemporary design often comes at the expense of function, but not with Jeanneau's Merry Fisher 795 Marlin, with its appealing 'trawler' style walk-around cabin. It features a deep-vee hull, creating an ideal fisher/cruiser that can also thrill the family with surprising zest for some speedy aquatic playtime. The boat possesses quite some aesthetic appeal and has terrific ergonomic practicality. The mouldings, design and layout are attention-grabbing and the chic finishes are typically European.

The trawler walk-around design has been gaining wider popularity as more and more people accept the visual appeal. It's almost a new-for-old (or perhaps old-for-new) design, with the upright cabin dating far back in a commercial fishing sense, yet totally modernised with Jeanneau's panache.

The design team has taken a giant leap forward by developing a 'big bow' concept on a soft-riding, deep-vee hull. Similar packages are often designed with buxom entry to support the weight of the forward cabin with its helm and passenger seats, V-berth, bow seating, walk-around deck and anchor winch, but this can create quite a hard ride into the slop. The Merry Fisher 795 Marlin has a steeper entry and deeper deadrise, providing a much smoother ride than we have come to expect from this style of boat. It also combines a very curvaceous sheerline with high freeboard, creating plenty of useable volume for creature comforts and other facilities.

Jumping aboard, I was immediately impressed with the stability. As we motored out through the river mouth, there was little effect from moving weight while the crew from Melbourne's 38 South Boat Sales shuffled around.

ZESTY PERFORMER

The real surprise came when I planted the throttle on the 175hp Mercury Verado and the boat jumped briskly to attention, running up to a zesty 29.3 knots (54km/h) at 6350rpm, where it still returned a thrifty 65.7l/hr at wide open throttle. Backing off to a more sensible general travelling speed of 22 knots (41km/h) at 5000rpm returned a pleasing fuel consumption of around 36l/hr.

The ride in the small chop was surprisingly soft and quiet and I have no hesitation in predicting that once the engine is run in, it will deliver 30-plus knots with a light load.

Words: John Willis
Photography:
Alison Kuitert



While this certainly isn't a dedicated ski boat, it's well-suited to some family watersports, with its very strong, resin-infused hull providing surprisingly nimble manoeuvrability without any bad habits.

While many would expect the 175hp Verado to be the minimum requirement on a 7m hull, I was more than satisfied with its performance and efficiency, with plenty of lift and get up and go. The hull is rated to a maximum of 200hp – however, given the considerable price hike, while more power would add to the fun factor, it might be considered an unnecessary extra by some.

The 795 Marlin is a very versatile performer. Its layout would be appealing to fishos, divers, family, commuters and cruisers alike and I can see my family and friends enjoying life from the bow seats, whether chasing the sun or with the wind in their hair.

Above: Visibility in the offset cabin is superb.

Below: Fold-down seats create space in the cockpit.



The walk-around decks and bow, along with the ability for full outboard tilt, enable permanent mooring. There's a handy walkway through the split bowrail over the bowsprit that provides safe entry from the front. For those in tight mooring and access situations, an optional bowthruster can be retro-fitted for around \$3000.

EASY ACCESS

The upright cabin is slightly offset for easy access to the bow and, while the standard boat has one side door, I really liked the optional twin access in our test boat.

Other cabin layouts include a large rear cabin entry, but this would eliminate the rear window, bench seat, storage and optional compressor fridge that were highlights of our test boat. There's even a small plug-in brekkie table in this configuration.

Visibility is tremendous and so is ventilation, with twin side doors, opening windows and a large sunroof. Twin upholstered, pedestal-mounted bolster seats provide a comfortable and versatile appointment for the skipper and first mate, whether seated or standing. Even the twin windscreen wipers are standard which, in my mind, is essential for an enclosed hardtop. The upright dashboard is very compact and efficient, with all instruments, binnacle engine controls, communications, accessories and switch gear easily to hand – an optional Simrad 12in multifunction package can be fitted, too. This one even had a booming Fusion sound system.

Access to the berth area is quite open, with a bunk suitable for a couple of average-size crew – or one big bear like me – along with a compact enclosed head with holding tank.

SPACE GALORE

The crew will really appreciate the spacious rear deck, with its high coamings adding safety, especially for young kids.

There is moulded seating behind the cabin, plus fold-down upholstered bench seats on the sides and transom. A plug-in table converts the active, open deck area into an entertainer quickly and easily. The premium trim quality throughout is typically European and, while perhaps minimalistic in style, is comfortable and practical.

Underfloor in the centre is a huge storage container with wetboxes either side.



The transom combines great looks with functionality. There's a walk-through from the large transom platforms that sets the stage for water play. In the middle is a moulded table with refreshment holders, incorporating a flip-up cutting board to allow full engine tilt. On the port side is a nice big livebait tank, which I'm thinking could also double as a wine cooler.

While I'm calling the 795 Marlin a trailerable package, it must be noted that its 2.8m beam places it under wide-load restrictions. Its dry weight is around 1750kg, plus engine (231kg), fuel (280lt plus optional 100lt) and water (100lt), making the total package weight around three tonnes – possibly more, depending on trailer, load and engine alternatives.

The Jeanneau Merry Fisher 795 is truly a package with the lot. It has the advantages of a true planing hull, with a tonne of versatile layout and design. Jeanneau has managed to combine bluewater credentials with appealing family values that fit well into our Australian boating lifestyle.

It will feel equally at home cruising our inland and estuary freshwater environments as it will entertaining the gang in a packed marina. And there's absolutely no reason why this highly capable and very adaptable package wouldn't be chasing big pelagics out on the continental shelf.

If you're looking for a truly versatile 8m boat for all occasions, this one is certainly worth a look. 

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JEANNEAU MERRY FISHER 795 MARLIN	
Length overall:	7.93m
Beam:	2.8m
Displacement (dry):	1750kg
Fuel capacity:	280lt
Water capacity:	100lt
Power:	175hp Mercury Verado
Base price:	\$109,900
As tested:	\$150,000
More information: 38 South Boat Sales, tel (03) 9772 8976. Web: 38southboatsales.com.au.	

Above: Practical features abound, including the split bowrail for easy and safe access.