

*The Duchy didn't just prove capable in the white-capped profusion of confusion that was the churning sea conditions of our test – it positively revelled in them*



The helm is a pleasing mix of modern and traditional elements



The saloon opens up to the cockpit with the help of bi-fold doors



Another door by the helm for easy access to the side deck



## Duchy 35

To understand the Duchy 35, you need to understand its roots. It's built in Falmouth by Cockwells, a yard that specialises in hand-built one-off superyacht tenders and bespoke wooden sail boats and motor launches. About six years ago, Cockwells began producing the GRP Duchy 27 as a (relatively) low-cost boat that could be built 'on spec' rather than to order, although Dave Cockwell, managing director of the boatyard, has never yet completed one before it was sold.

With the 27 selling well, the time seemed right for a larger version, and Dave commissioned Andrew Wolstenholme, the man behind the Duchy 27, to turn his ideas into naval architectural reality. The 35 apes its smaller sibling perfectly, sporting the same graceful 'gentleman's motor launch' profile. It's no coincidence that from a distance, it could easily be mistaken for a wooden boat – the hull was originally created in wood as the plug from which the mould was taken.

platform and transom door or hop over the low-profile cockpit coaming via a neat step built into the topsides, and you enter a world of practical thinking. The cockpit is deep, large and simple, with a hockey stick of seating either side of the transom door, wrapping forward along the sides. A neat side door built into the starboard coaming allows an easy walkthrough to deeply bulwarked side decks and up on to an uncluttered

foredeck with stainless-steel bollards and a concealed anchor and winch.

Glass doors that open full width, folding against the cabin sides, seamlessly connect the cockpit to an equally simple deck saloon. No sunroof, no wet bar, no pop-up TV (although the hand-built nature and custom yard roots mean all of these things are almost certainly possible). There is deep, comfortable seating around a dinette opposite another

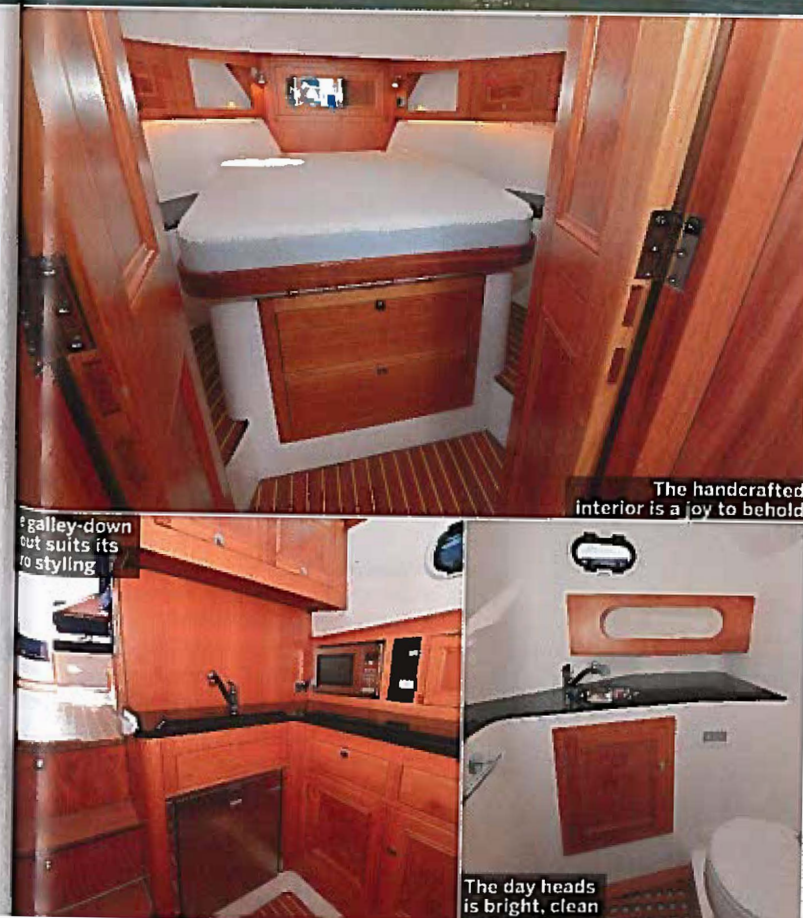
settee, and two double seats forward. Cunningly, the forward seats flip through 90° to join the saloon seating, and the aft-most backrest slides forward to create a sheltered double seat facing into the cockpit.

Further forward on the lower level, the layout is similarly straightforward with a galley opposite a capacious heads and a large forward cabin with a central double bed. The layout may be simple but don't confuse that with basic. The fit-out is exemplary, with plenty of solid oak (you can have whatever tree you like) and dovetailed joints when you open the drawers.

There's nothing basic about the helm either, where a sophisticated Empress Canbus system groups all the systems and switches into a Raymarine multifunction touchscreen. Everything from fuel levels to bilge pump status can be seen or activated here, although there is a full set of traditional dials for engine instrumentation. Personally I'd be inclined to spec wash/wipe switches



Fantastic form, but not at the expense



The handcrafted interior is a joy to behold

The galley-down out suits its styling

The day heads is bright, clean

and the horn button where they can be activated by touch rather than seeking out a graphic on a screen.

Two Nanni T4-270 turbo diesel engines sit beneath the forward end of the cockpit floor, linked to a drive system as uncomplicated as the rest of the boat – straight shafts. The hull is semi displacement which offers plenty of grip in close quarters, handy for the blustery conditions of our test with Gale Force winds promised. Putting the engines beneath the cockpit rather than the deck saloon keeps noise levels muted even at the boat's natural cruising gait of 20 knots (we saw a two-way average of 26 flat out, the yard have seen 28 in calmer conditions). But what stands out is not the speed (fast as it is for a semi displacement) or the muted noise levels – it's the seakeeping. With plenty of tab to keep the bow down and the sight lines up, there's enough spray to give those three wipers a serious workout, but the ride is rock solid. It didn't just prove capable in the

that was the churning conditions of our test, it positively revelled in them.

The Duchy 35, then, is a boater's boat. If you're looking for 'Manhattan loft' ambience or sleeping for six, this isn't the boat for you, and Dave Cockwell is perfectly happy with that. He's no more chasing sales volume than he is interior volume, setting his sights on three or four sales a year to the kind of experienced mariner that really gets this type of craft. But with this first boat sold just on the back of initial sketches and the second sold before the keel of the first touched the water, it already seems that he's not going to have to try too hard to find them. **Contact** Cockwells. Tel: 01326 377366. Web: [www.cockwells.co.uk](http://www.cockwells.co.uk)

### AT A GLANCE

**Length** 38ft 0in (11.48m)  
**Beam** 12ft 6in 3.77m  
**Engines** 2x Nanni T4 270  
**Top speed on trial** 26 knots  
**Price from** £390,000 inc VAT  
**Price as tested** £430,920 inc VAT