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#### HIGHLIGHTS

- Timeless looks and styling
- New cockpit and interior design
- Nanni 200hp diesel engine



The cockpit is safe and sociable

**D**ave Cockwell knew exactly what he wanted to do to the Aquila 27 when he bought the moulds around 10 months ago. The Cornish yard are famous for the quality of their woodwork, so fitting out the cockpit and interior of this already pretty design with a sprinkling of Cockwell's magic should transform its appeal. The end result doesn't disappoint.

For a 27ft boat it feels very grown up and has the kind of detailing you'd expect to find on a boat twice the size. The woodwork is flawless, not only in its construction but also its ingenuity. The fiddled cutlery holder, for example, has a handle built in so it can be carted off the boat for a picnic on the beach. All

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the glass and crockery (handmade in Cornwall) is snugly held in place by dedicated fiddles, and the soft-close drawers glide home with an engineered sigh. The infill cushions for the convertible berth in the bow make up the backrests in the sofas when not in use, and the table in the cockpit is a beautiful chunk of wood with towering fiddles all the way round. Cockwell says he wants people to downsize to this boat as well as use it as a springboard to larger craft, so these big-boat features are an absolute must.

But the Duchy is also a boat that is built to be used and, with a bulletproof Nanni 200hp diesel beneath a cushion-clad engine box, it will happily chug along all day at 18 knots. On test we recorded a top speed of 23.2 knots and Cockwell reckons that without all the boat show gubbins on board we'd have hit 24 knots.

It may have a full-length keel and romp over waves without a hint of a slam or rattle but it's good fun in the turns too. That big keel digs in and the bow tracks round like it's on rails.

The helm is simple but effective with the rev counter and engine dials in the skipper's eye line and the chartplotter right in front of the wheel. Moving key controls like the windscreen wipers, horn and windlass control to the empty space below the plotter would be the only alteration I'd make. The yard plans to take advantage of the empty space in front of the navigator to fit a chart table or more storage. With that comes the real beauty of the Duchy 27; the fact that it's built by a custom yard so if you don't like something, it can easily be changed. **Jack Haines**

#### AT A GLANCE

**Length** 27ft (8.2m) **Beam** 9ft 2in (2.8m) **Top speed on trial** 23.2 knots (single Nanni 200hp) **Price from** £144,000 inc UK VAT **Contact** Duchy Motor Launches. Web: [www.duchymotorlaunches.co.uk](http://www.duchymotorlaunches.co.uk)



A string of detailed touches make the Duchy feel very grown up