

Windy 43 Typhoon

The name of this Norwegian express is no mistake—she's built to run hard, even in rough stuff

By Michael Verdon

In 1966, Hugo Vold, the founder of the Windy brand, set out to build motorboats that would be known for their quality and inherent seaworthiness. Since he also wanted a European sense of style, he used craftsmen who came from a long tradition of boatbuilding in Arendal, a small town on Norway's southern coast.



The 43 Typhoon is built to protect her owners in harsh conditions, but when the sun shines, she opens to the warmth.

Since then, Windy has collected a diehard following of owners in Scandinavia and the Med. Its line has matured from a handful of runabouts to high-end performance yachts, and it now includes the 43 Typhoon. The Typhoon is no dockside poseur; she's meant for running in big water, with a European Union Class B hull rating for waves up to 12 feet.

The first thing you notice about this express—apart from her sleek lines and classy profile—is her hardtop. She's designed for the temperamental climates of northern waters and for extending the boating season at both ends. The hardtop, then, runs about three-quarters of the way back along the cockpit, where it opens onto the transom. At first glance, this seems like an option that would not be popular in warm climes, even with the side-vent windows (91/2 by 24 inches) and cockpit air-conditioning vents. But, with the push of a button, the large, accordion-like midsection of Helly Hansen waterproof fabric retracts into the rear of the hardtop, turning it into an oversize sunroof. Suddenly, the hardtop is more like a sunshade than an enclosed porch. A traditional-looking open express model, with full access to the elements, is available.

The Typhoon 43 was a pleasure to drive and handled the 2- to 3-foot chop well. The captain and I could talk in normal tones as we powered out of harbor. The hardtop didn't slow the 43 as we charged up to a top speed of 45.3 knots, registering only 82 decibels at the helm. Pushed by a pair of powerful 23-by-30-inch four-blade Nibral props, the Typhoon needed elbow grease and plenty of room for hard turns. Combined with her 19,500-pound displacement, though, the big wheels gave the 43 a sense of power and control. Driving this express felt almost like being in a video game, thanks to the unobstructed view through the three-panel windshield (all panels have full-length wipers), smooth landings in the chop, and a noticeable lack of wind chatter and rattling you typically get with canvas enclosures.



The dinette, opposite the full-feature galley, has flawlessly crafted pearwood joinery and a teak-and-holly sole.

I wasn't that taken with the matching bucket seats at the helm. Though they're comfortable, I'd prefer a single double seat so you can spread out. The electronic controls on the 480 hp Volvo TAMD 75 diesels also take some getting used to—in my opinion, they function as designed but

glide too easily. My throttle hand kept inadvertently goosing them whenever we hit a wave, and the boat would just take off.

Gauges were laid out well in a stainless-steel mesh console, which looked like a stylish DNA molecule. The Bennett hydraulic trim tabs and monitor were in easy reach of the throttles. Ditto for the standard bowthruster and the controls for the Lewmar electric windlass.

The Windy 43 rides like a solid, oceangoing express; it would be legit to compare her to a Sunseeker or Formula. Part of the reason is her WinTec construction. The multiaxial fiberglass and Divinycell coring in the hull and topsides give the 43, according to Windy's engineers, twice the stiffness of a traditional laminate and a 20 percent weight savings over a similar boat laid up with chopped mat. The stringers and stiffeners are composite (no wood) for extra strength and weight savings. The Typhoon is CE-certified by the EU, as well as by the Registro Italiano Navale, for its ship-standards systems and construction.

The Typhoon has the same impeccable fit and finish. The cockpit sole was dressed up in the optional teak. Windy even laid teak into the bottom of its cavernous stowage locker, which is 2 feet, 8 inches deep. While that may not be the best floor surface for hot, damp climates, it certainly adds a sense of style to boats in northern regions, where teak is popular.

But again, the underlying sense is one of substance. The stainless-steel pedestal on the cockpit table is through-bolted and designed to handle 400 pounds (it converts to a sunpad); the beefy stainless handle on the transom door is megayacht-strong, and the oblong handrails leading from the transom are 5 inches in diameter.



In the galley, a Finnish-built Wallas stove pulls fuel directly from the main tank.

There's nothing chintzy about the cockpit, right down to the Whale emergency bilge pump, diamond-plate metal sole in the engine room (accessed via electric lifts that raise a portion of the cockpit sole) and triple stitching in the top-grade marine upholstery.

It has a people-friendly layout. The L-shape lounge, 3 feet, 6 inches wide at the front, runs back 7 feet, 2 inches. Depth is an ergonomic 21 inches. Athwartships, a cockpit wet bar has a hot-and-cold-water sink and fridge; a Jenn-Air gas grill is optional. Forward, the second lounge (3 feet, 10 inches by 5 feet, 3 inches) allows a second gathering up front. Headroom under the hardtop, by the way, is a generous 6 feet, 7 inches.

Working space in the engine room is also generous, with good access to the oil and fuel filters, and immediate access to the genset. Being Scandinavian, Windy maintains a strong loyalty to Volvo-Penta (Volvo TAMD 63s are optional). Either way, the mechanic will be able to reach them quickly through the oversize platform.

The sense of generous space extends into the cabin, which is unusually well lit. Most of that light is natural, streaming in through the wide Plexiglas cockpit door. Just down the steps, to port, is a large leather settee that serves as the main gathering point belowdecks. On most American-built express cruisers this size, this space would include a galley, head and portside aft cabin. On the 43 Typhoon, though, everything's to starboard, including the aft cabin. That's not necessarily a bad arrangement, since it moves the galley up to the starboard corner, out of the way of the crowd, but with good working space for the chef. The head, just abaft the galley, has doors from the saloon and aft cabin.

The galley is full-feature, with black Corian counters, a refrigerator, a microwave and a Finnish-built Wallas stove that works directly from the fuel tanks instead of from the generator or shore power. That freedom from other power sources makes it ideal for weekends on the hook in a secluded cove.

Fit and finish belowdecks are first-rate. The pearwood joinery was so flawless I didn't believe it was real wood—until I saw the joints behind the doors. Ditto for the teak-and-holly sole—flawless. The curved liquor cabinet is also a nice touch. As in the cockpit, the door handles and hardware below are heavy-duty; there's no sense of Windy skimping on the finer details.



Halogen lighting, a 20-inch overhead hatch and four large portholes keep the forward master bathed in light.

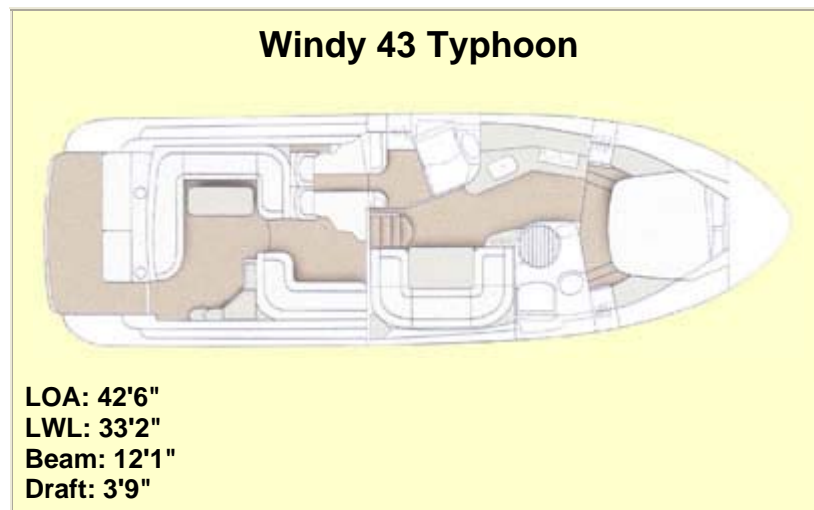
You see that in items like the semicircular Plexiglas shower "curtain" that slides around to keep things dry in the master head (which can only be accessed for privacy through the master stateroom), or VacuFlush toilet—or even the Corian countertops in both heads.

Given the Typhoon's focus on the saloon, the master cabin isn't massive, but the space is ample, as it is in the queen berth. The 20-inch overhead hatch and four portholes give it good natural light. Halogen lights make up the balance during nighttime hours. The cabin also has two hanging lockers and good cabinet space.

Space is decent in the after cabin that runs the length of the hull rather than athwartships. You can stand up at the foot of the double berth—and that's something you can't do on most aft-stateroom expresses. Turning the saloon lounge/table into a double berth lets this Windy sleep six comfortably. For weekend cruising, I'd keep the crew to four so it doesn't get too crowded.

But then, this boat is designed for a crowd. Even the swim platform and bow (with the Scandinavian-style open bow pulpit and oversize sunpad) areas invite use while you're at anchor. The 43 is an express for all conditions, one that'll get you to your destination—and back home safely—at a fuel-sipping 30-knot cruise. How else could Windy tempt fate with a name like Typhoon?

Contact: Glenn Marine, (631) 269-BOAT; www.windy.no. For more information, contact: (866) 922-4877; www.yachtingnet.com/yachting/productinfo.



LOA: 42'6"
LWL: 33'2"
Beam: 12'1"
Draft: 3'9"

Deadrise: 20 degrees
Displ.: 19,621 lb.
Fuel: 242 gal.
Water: 89 gal.
Gray Water: 33 gal.
Black Water: 45 gal.
Naval Architect: Hans Joergen Johnsen
Interior Design: Hans Joergen Johnsen/Windy
Engines as Tested: 2x 480 hp (crankshaft hp) Volvo TAMD 75s
Optional Power: Upon request
Transmission: ZF 302 IV
Gear Reduction (as tested): 1.48:1
Props: 23" x 30" 4-blade Nibral
Generator: 5kW Kohler
Steering: Sea Star hydraulic
Engine Controls: Volvo Penta EDC