

review

Marex 375

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Riding high



Marex is a Norwegian company with a 45-year boatbuilding heritage and numerous international design and excellence awards, including European Power Boat of the Year in 2009, 2013 and 2017.



Developed from the 370 Aft Cabin Cruiser, European Powerboat of the Year 2009, the Marex 375 was introduced in 2016 to universal acclaim. Nominated for European Power Boat of the year in 2016 and receiving a Highly Commended award, it earned positive reviews from the European boating press and quickly became a strong seller.

This Marex 375 is the first of its kind in New Zealand, chosen, says Richard Wardenburg, who with wife Suzy owns Hybrid Boats, because they felt it would fit the New Zealand boating lifestyle to a tee.

“The Scandinavians understand all-seasons boating. The 375 combines a flexible, user-friendly internal layout and versatile outdoor spaces for year-round use, with the looks and performance to turn heads.”

The Wardenburgs fell in love with the Nordic style and precision of the Marex brand the first time they came across it a few years ago at a prestigious European

Boat Show. At subsequent shows, they made a point of familiarising themselves with several Marex models and introduced themselves to the company’s principals.

The upshot is that Hybrid Boats is now the New Zealand distributor of Marex pleasure craft.

Marex has production facilities in its native Norway, but also a modern 20,000m² plant in Lithuania where the 375 is built. Build quality is excellent, including fittings and fixtures. The boat is stylish and packed with clever design features, but nothing is gimmicky, superfluous or flash. Inside and out, the Marex 375 comes across as an elegant, nicely-integrated design.

Part of this vessel’s appeal is its size: at 12.05m, it actually fits a 12m berth and, with its twin engines and a Sidepower bowthruster, is not at all intimidating at docking time.

Although this is a modest-sized vessel, the way it has been packaged makes the most of the space that’s available. Starting with the cockpit, there’s a nice separation between inside and outside zones, demarcated by the cockpit’s low teak railing.

RIGHT Stylish and spacious with an open feel, the saloon is light and bright.

BELOW Below decks: two cabins and the bathroom.



Inside the rail, the outside space is set up for comfort, with a Sunbrella macrosuede-upholstered settee wrapping around an offset, rotating teak table with folding leaves and a nice flow into saloon. The seats lift without the need to remove the squabs, which is smart, and there's ample storage in the seat bases. The cockpit's relatively high gunwales make it a pet- and child-friendly space.

The cockpit table also drops down to create a double berth. A sliding concertina-style canvas roof opens the cockpit to sky and provides shade and shelter when pulled closed. In inclement weather, you can completely enclose the cockpit with sliding curtains, a two-minute job, effectively turning it into another

cabin which the vessel's diesel heater will keep warm in winter.

Outside the rail, the wide boarding platform is ideal for water activities, including fishing. The teak topped locker against the transom provides seating, a step up to the side deck and a home for the deckwash.

There's dedicated fender stowage (and cleats for hanging fenders) under the swim platform and side decks and two spring-line cleats down each side of the vessel, as well as the usual cleats fore and aft. The Wardenburgs added a Manta bait station and removable dinghy davits to the swim platform, which has a pullout boarding ladder between the fender lockers.

The foredeck is also meant to be utilised. Access is easy via





ABOVE The double cabin iforward may or may not be chosen as the master.

the side-decks, also at night with toe-rail lighting illuminating the way, and on a sunny day, removable cushions turn it into a relaxation zone. In keeping the vessel's other high-quality fittings, the anchor and chain are both stainless-steel. There are also stainless-steel rubbing strips, and classy teak capping on the toe-rails.

Step over the cockpit threshold into the light, bright saloon and the teak theme continues. Teak is used not only for the cockpit sole, swim platform, side decks, steps and aft locker, but also on the saloon sole. The saloon layout almost mirrors the cockpit's, with wrap-around seating addressing a teak folding-leaf table with clever pullout seats to accommodate extra guests at meal times.

The galley runs most of the length of the saloon between the triple-fold rear doors and the helm seat. It's well-appointed with a two-element induction hob, microwave/convection oven (gas hob and oven are standard), a twin sink, 28-litre under-bench drawer-freezer, a 130-litre 12V fridge tucked under the helm seat and plenty of soft-close drawers. There's more storage under the seats, while the



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LEFT Plenty of scope for socialising in the cockpit.

RIGHT The Marex 375 has a great mix of indoor and outdoor spaces.

Again, accommodation is generous for a boat of this size, with styling and décor that maximises the impression of space. Through the sliding companionway door and down the stairs, there's a single head with a separate shower box and a good-sized vanity. The fold-away counter over the toilet is clever.

The bow cabin with its island berth may or may not be used as the master cabin, depending on your preference. Like the rest of the boat, it's light and bright, with an overhead hatch and side windows. Curtains, including for the hatch, provide privacy and there's a fair amount of storage in hanging lockers and drawers.

The alternative is the roomy mid-cabin under the saloon, which offers the larger bed and even a sofa. Arranged across the beam of the boat, the bed is large and comfortable, but set at floor level to provide enough headroom. Storage is generous, with a separate drawer and locker-filled dressing room, and decent light and ventilation via side windows and ports.

Marex has accommodated a pair of Volvo Penta D4 300hp engines under the cockpit sole, all the way aft, powering the boat through v-drives to a top speed of 30-plus knots. This leaves space under the sole for a decent lazarette.

Cruising at 20 knots, the fuel burn is 35 litres per engine, rising to 40 litres at 22 knots. At cruising speed, the Marex 375 feels very relaxed. Vision through the raked windscreen is good

covers over the sink and hob double the useable counter space. The fuel tank is located under the saloon, accessed through an inspection hatch in the teak sole, so owners can check the sender unit. The vessel's water tank is under the bed in the forward cabin; battery banks live under the mid-cabin bed along the boat's centreline. For this 375, the Wardenburgs have opted for extra house batteries and optional solar panels on the cabin roof.

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The Marex 375 is an attractive and nicely executed compact cruiser that's stylish and fast.



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and three wipers with integrated washers deal with any spray, not that we got a drop on the 'screens on such a flat-calm day.

The helm position is welcoming and comfortable. The ergonomics are excellent with all the important controls falling easily to hand. This vessel is well-equipped, so the console has to accommodate quite a bit of hardware, but it doesn't look overcrowded.

A 16-inch Raymarine Hybrid Touch MFD dominates, but the rest of the gauges and controls are arranged around it. A single row of rocker switches takes care of the usual functions, including wipers, washers, pumps, horn and more. There is a pair of analogue/digital tachometers, controls for the bowthruster, spotlight and autopilot either side of the leather-clad, rake-adjustable wheel, and a Fusion stereo head unit and Raymarine VHF radio underneath.

The digital throttle-and-shift, engine on-off buttons and Zipwake trim-tab controls are located in front of the armrest on the starboard side, with various gauges and indicators above and beneath it. The armrest lifts to reveal a handy odds-and-ends bin.

Zipwake interceptor trim tabs are automatic, calibrated for every knot of speed, which takes the guesswork out of adjusting the boat's trim. The transition onto the plane is seamless with minimal bow lift, and the

tabs ensure the hull attitude is optimum at any speed for maximum comfort and economy.

I particularly liked the way you can helm the boat standing up. Slide the roof panel back and you can stick your head through for a wind-in-the-hair experience. The helm seat's fold-up bolster offers good support.

It was a warm, sunny afternoon in Auckland, so I appreciated the ventilation provided by sliding side windows and the open roof when sitting down to drive. Like the cockpit roof, the saloon's is manually operated for simplicity and durability, but it's manufactured from moulded fibreglass rather than fabric, and the sliding window opens wide enough to step from the helm onto the side deck – useful when berthing the boat shorthanded.

UNIVERSAL APPEAL

The Marex 375 is an attractive and nicely executed compact cruiser that's stylish and fast. Build quality and engineering details set it apart from the usual run of production boats in this class and it's clean-lined Nordic styling has universal appeal. Best of all, it's extremely user-friendly thanks to good design and clever execution.

This 375 might be the first Marex in New Zealand, but I doubt it will be the last. **BNZ**



Marex 375

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HIGHLIGHTS

Fits a 12m berth

Versatile layout
suitable for
all-seasons boating

Nordic styling
has universal appeal

SPECIFICATIONS

loa 12.05m
beam 3.55m
draft approx 1.05m
weight 7,700kg light
construction GRP
cabins 2 doubles, plus cockpit double
bathrooms 1
engines 2 x Volvo Penta D4 300hp
fuel 680 litres
water 340 litres
hotwater tank 60 litres
holding tank 170 litres
cruising speed 20-25 knots
max speed 30 knots

WATCH IT

