

Windy 40 Maestro

We test the most important Windy ever launched

REPORT BY CARL RICHARDSON



View exclusive footage of the Windy 40 Maestro on test at mbmclub.com



"The boat Windy fans have been waiting for"

PHOTOS: WILLIAM PAYNE

The brief...



Windy's 37 Grand Mistral is a good boat but it's getting on a bit and with everyone from Bénéteau to Nord West muscling in on the 40ft sports cruiser market, Windy had to fight back with a great boat. And it has. **Carl**

LOA: 39ft 1in (11.91m)

PRICE: from £373,781

TOP SPEED: 43 knots

BUILDERS: Windy boats www.windyuk.eu

ENQUIRIES Tel: 01590 673312

Windy's new 40ft hardtop cruiser has the lot. It looks every bit as gorgeous as its big sister the 44. It is the biggest, most luxurious 40ft Windy to date and yet it still powers past 40 knots in about the same time it takes most boats to engage drive. Importantly this boat also remembers to include those fun, owner-friendly features that help make the modern hardtop sports cruiser such a fantastic vessel. It's got the hull-side windows, skylights and a big canvas sunroof for the cockpit. It has also done well with what it has left out – such as the

annoying tender garage, preferring lots of cockpit seating and easy engine access instead.

But there is a problem. You see Windy, in keeping with its tradition, has allocated a particular name of wind to this boat. In the past we have had such striking monikers as Tornado and Mistral to complement a boat's racy character. This time we have... Maestro. Now, if you live in Scandinavia, as Windy does, this may not seem an issue but readers in the UK may associate the name with the Austin car that made the Allegro look good, a car so bad its (only) USP was giving fuel information in the strangled tones of a female Dalek. So for

reasons of taste and respect to a damn fine boat we will simply refer to this new Windy as the 40. Let us move on.

Design & build

When considering a Windy, facts and figures might not immediately come to the fore. These are boats of pedigree, style and emotion. You don't look at a Windy and consider whether its beam is X amount less than some other boat's, any more than you would look at a Van Gogh and muse over how much the paint set him back. In truth you might not want to think about

the cost of a Windy at all, as it will usually prove to be more expensive than the boat you are comparing it against. But it is worth engaging the logical side of your brain here, because there are a lot of facts to be impressed by.

The 40 is much, much bigger than the 37 Grand Mistral, the cockpit and cabins are simply on another level, yet the price is only around 15% more. Similarly, it's worth considering Windy's focus on performance, not because it delivers one of the fastest, most exhilarating rides in this market (which it does) but because it's one of the most efficient 40ft cruisers on the market. At 30 knots, about the speed that most

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boats are running out of puff, this one is actually at its most frugal, hitting close to 1.8mpg. Only the similarly sized Nord West 370 can match it for efficiency, running a pair of D4-300s.

With the growing demand for more accommodation and style, Windy has had to change its cruising and design culture. Its recent model launches are noticeably taller and wider but this 40 still looks spectacularly sharp, from a distance or close up. Designed by the in-house team that came up with the 44 Chinook, it was always going to look good. The taller topsides allow for a seductively sleek roofline that is every bit as just as good as a Princess V but it avoids any cut in headroom inside the cockpit, as with Sessa's equally rakish 38. Viewed from side-on, it is made up almost entirely of glass, with only the thinnest of GRP frames arcing above, a factor that really delivers on visibility.

Up close the lines of the boat and the way the design flows from bow to stern is equally enthralling. This is precision marine engineering from Windy. The seamless flow of the deck moulding to the hardtop and the vast sunroof system are just two examples of the sophistication on offer.

In the cockpit, the decision to go against the trend for a sunpad and tender garage pays the kind of dividends BP used to enjoy. Engine access is very easy and the seating is wide, deep and very social. However, when underway there is a problem for those sat right aft, with spray coming in over the transom. When we pointed this out, Windy said it would rectify this so-called 'station wagon' effect.

A suggestion that the 40's cockpit is intended to be the main social hub is confirmed the moment you step below decks. One of the very few issues with this boat is that while the saloon offers plenty of floor space and light, it's very short on seating. Clearly Windy wants you up top, so we suggest you opt in diesel heating for those chilly evenings sat in the cockpit. We might even encourage Windy to make it standard spec, just for the sake of ease.

If the saloon seating is a disappointment, the level of detail and finish is not. Windy has introduced a contemporary Maple finish to its cabinetry, which is in-tune with sportscruiser culture. The finish across the entire boat is top notch whether in terms of the aesthetic or the functional, and the 40 is adorned with more rails than Clapham Junction. Note to other designers: grabrails do not ruin a boat's lines. Gas struts are fitted to most locker lids too and stainless steel drains can be found inside the lined deck lockers.

Beneath the surface Windy is pushing ahead with vacuum infusion build technology, with only the 40's three-piece hardtop hand laid. The production team estimate a 30% weight saving for its new build processes a reduction in the resins and materials used, which translates into greater efficiency for the boat.

DINETTE



GALLEY



TOILET COMPARTMENT

SALOON



Interiors

Light and bright but tight on seating

There is no getting away from the fact that the **saloon** seating is inadequate. There is too much form and not enough function, but you do get plenty of space in the main cabin area, so moving around is easy. However, we like the fab hanging locker right by the entranceway steps so you can stow your jackets away before bed. The **galley** is similarly practical. The countertop is fiddled, though no other surface or locker is below decks, and there is some useful workspace left over from the sink and draining area. Windy has delivered lots of smaller lockers for specific items rather than one big cupboard, and this far more practical set-up keeps your crockery snug. The large skylight and run of hull-side windows to starboard feed light into the saloon, and the portside windows do a similar job for the **toilet** and separate shower **compartment**. There is no en-suite access on the boat, so it isn't clear whether the smart forward cabin or the cosy mid is the natural master. The **mid cabin** can't touch the Bénéteau Monte Carlo 42's for size but it is luxuriously fitted out with timber and very well upholstered with a huge double berth. However, just the one porthole and limited stowage might make you turn to the **forward cabin**. Here there is plentiful stowage and light, although the overhead hatch looks a bit basic in such luxurious surroundings.

"The new maple wood is in tune with the sportscruiser culture"

FORWARD CABIN



FORWARD CABIN



MID CABIN





Performance & handling

The 40's good efficiency might be even farther from your mind than your cruising companions as you power up through the rev range. Frankly this boat feels pedestrian at anything below 30 knots, and tops out at a very manageable 43 knots fitted with Volvo's 370hp D6 engines running on DP sterndrives. So how good is this hull? It's an old adage that the slower a boat feels the better it is, in which case the 40 is bloody good. The Windy design team, headed up by Kai Hovde, has

produced a more intuitive and capable deep-vee hull than they managed on the 44. Yes, it still bangs a bit on the shoulder of the chine but every modern boat does – it's the price you pay for more beam and interior volume. If the MBM Cruising Club is anything to go by, the speed of choice for sportscruiser owners is somewhere around 25 knots. At this rate the Windy 40 is so relaxed, so utterly in control of the sea that you really can sit back and enjoy the ride. And chances are you will be seated as the driving position is excellent with perfect visibility forward and down the boat's flanks.

If you do stand or lean in the bolster position it all works fine too, but it just feels so natural to sit behind the wheel of this boat. While you are sitting around you might like to play with the leg trim, which will alter the boat's personality. Trim the legs out to +2 and you get a cushioned cruiser, bring them in to -2 and the legs grip and tug the boat through any turn you care to take on. In fact, so good is the 40's grip through the water that it is probably the only boat we know of where you might choose to trim out the legs on the turn just to make life easier.

From the helm

Class-leading driving position

This is another fantastic helm position from Windy. Only Beneteau can claim to offer anywhere near as much space and support for those at the helm. A huge run of angled dash can take whatever size screen you care to splash out on and it comes with two useful cubby holes, one with a 12V socket. In front of the skipper, excellent paired instruments make it easy to check the engines' health but it is the helm seating that really excels. Designed for three adults but capable of seating a family of four, the new upholstery really looks the part. And the separate helm seat has four-way adjustment, making the 40 the best boat in its class for a seated driving position.



"A huge run of angled dash"



COCKPIT

Exteriors

Seating and sunroof shine on test

Windy tell us that the 40's cockpit isn't as big as the 44's but we really can't see where you lose anything. Opened up by the vast, one-touch electric sunroof, the typically Scandinavian layout maxes on

seating and dining area. If sitting upright isn't for you fear not, the fold-out table will drop to make up a huge sunpad, the infill cushion stowing away in its own locker. We are sorry to see the old natural teak table go but Windy's ethical build policy means it is trying to avoid the use of teak across its range, instead using a laminate finish for the table and wet-bar top. It's the same story with the decking,

teak is still available but Windy is pushing a new molasses baked maple instead. It has been tested for three years and seems to stand up well, although it isn't as grippy as teak underfoot. The deep bathing platform is big enough to sit a tender on chocks, and you can access either side deck with lots of intuitively placed grabrails. The battery switches are similarly well positioned by the transom gate,

and a further systems panel is located under the helm. **Stowage** is well catered for. A deep, lazarette-type locker lies under the cockpit sole and there are self-draining lockers under the cockpit seating. There is a dedicated liferaft position and across the transom you'll find a deep locker, easily big enough to take an outboard to starboard and a central fender rack.



STOWAGE



FORWARD VIEW

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Specification & value

In pure Windy terms the 40 does well on value. It's streaks ahead of the 37 and if you don't need a third cabin it's actually a better boat than the 44, which costs a whopping £140k more. But if you're simply looking for a new 40ft cruiser, the 40's £370k price tag for a D4-powered boat means you will be able to buy pretty much any other boat in this class and save a few bob. Those who simply want a big cruiser will definitely be left wanting as the saloon and forward cabin are both small. But on design, build, cockpit space, handling, stowage and the helm the Windy 40 is worth its price tag all day long.



Technical data

KEY DIMENSIONS

BUILD	GRP
RCD	CAT B
LENGTH OVERALL	39ft 11in (11.91m)
HULL LENGTH (MBM estimate)	35ft 0in (10.66m)
BEAM	12ft 11in (3.68m)
DRAUGHT	3ft 2in (0.96m)
DISPLACEMENT (light)	7.6 tonnes
FUEL CAPACITY	175gal (800lt)
WATER CAPACITY	47gal (215lt)
WIDTH OF SIDE DECKS	8in (20cm)
HEADROOM IN SALOON	6ft 4in (1.93m)

PERFORMANCE

ENGINES	Volvo Penta D6-370 DP
CONFIGURATION	6cyl, 5.5lt, 370hp @3500 rpm
CONDITIONS	wind stbly force 3, sea state moderate
LOAD	fuel 50% water 0% crew 5

RPM	KNOTS	LPH	GPH	MPG	dB(A)
2100	19.8	52	11.4	1.71	72
2300	24.1	64	14.0	1.72	73
2500	27.2	70	15.4	1.76	73
2700	30.5	78	17.2	1.77	74
2900	33.5	90	19.8	1.69	74
3100	37.0	106	23.3	1.58	75
3300	39.6	122	26.8	1.47	76
3500	43.4	158	34.7	1.25	76

Range figures quoted above are in miles based on standard fuel tanks and include a 20% margin. GPH & MPG refer to imperial gallons. These figures may vary due to weather conditions, air, water, engine temperature, crew numbers, hull fouling, fuel quality and other issues. Noise readings in dB(A) were taken in the saloon.

PRICES

STANDARD BOAT	Inc VAT
with twin 300hp Volvo Penta D4	£373781
with twin 370hp Volvo Penta D6	£395387
DELIVERY & COMMISSIONING	STD
JOYSTICK CONTROL	£18193
TEAK / MAPLE COCKPIT DECK	£5811
DIESEL HEATING	£3334

BOAT AS TESTED £413,458



Enginebay

The hatch raises quickly, operated by a switch near the helm, and a stainless steel ladder takes you down to large clear area of treadplate from where accessing the engines is easy. IPS is an option for the 40 and Windy is also threatening to offer the 435hp D6s on stern drives, a fascinating prospect for any wannabe 50-knot racers. But a more interesting option is the 300hp D4 installation. We reckon these would still deliver close to 40 knots while simultaneously slashing £20,000 off the price and opening up an already spacious engine bay.

THE VERDICT

This is the boat Windy fans have been waiting for. It's cool, it's capable and it goes like stink. But will this be the boat other sportscruiser fans will buy? That will come down to the twin hurdles of price and interior space. Sat behind the helm of the 40 you might well ride them with ease.



Meet the family



BIGGER

44 Chinook from £541,407

LOA 44ft 5in (13.54m)
A very beautiful boat but all the extra money really buys is a third cabin.
Tested MBM Aug 08



SMALLER

37 Grand Mistral from £306,675

LOA 35ft 11in (10.68m)
A real trooper for Windy, very capable and a fab used-boat buy, but with the 40 out there you just wouldn't. **Tested MBM June 05**

The rivals



NORD WEST 370 From £309,025

If good build quality rocks your world then the 370 won't disappoint, but its conservative finish has less sparkle than the Windy 40.
www.nordwest.se



PRINCESS V45 From £406,080

The Windy's price forces it to compete with bigger boats like this award winning V. Loads more on board space and great handling.
www.princessyachts.com