

Botnia Targa 32

It's safe, it's practical and it goes like a rocket.
Welcome to the weird and wonderful world of the
Targa, now with added luxury

REPORT BY MARK TURLEY

BOAT REPORT
BOTNIA TARGA 32

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Targa 32 in
action



PHOTOS: WILLIAM PAYNE

The brief...



All good things must come to an end, but when I heard that Botnia was to withdraw its superb Targa 31, I felt a sense of deep personal loss.

Moreover, the fear is that by trying to make a great boat better, you either lose the original character or blow the budget. I should have had more faith. **Mark**

LOA: 35ft 4in (10.78m)

PRICE: from £221,000

TOP SPEED: 36 knots

BUILDERS: Botnia Targa

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Targas may not be the sleekest, most handsome boats in the world, but to know them is to love them. Aside from the tough build and super-safe decks, there is the performance and sea-kindliness – it almost makes the boat's uniquely boxy looks a point of honour. These belt and braces facts aside, no one we've ever met has knocked the cosiness of the teak-clad wheelhouses

complete with an exceptional view out. Another slightly more peculiar trait is the onboard aroma that a Targa seems to produce.

Scent is, apparently, one of the strongest elements at work when we choose a partner. This one mixes the richness of a walk-in humidifier with the woody fragrance of Swedish sauna into a sort of catnip for men, but not necessarily women. The fairer sex has, if the rumours are to be believed, not always been

enamoured by some of the Targa traits, such as the 31's slide-out toilet which, as any Targa 27 owner will tell you, is pure luxury compared to their outside loo.

Later and larger Targas have sought to deliver more luxury, though, and the 32 continues this theme with more interior space and comfort. So, ladies, the good news is that you can now use the toilet without having to first build it. The bad news is that the plaintive

but plausible arguments you have used as to why the man in your life can't have the boat he wants are no longer valid.

Design and build

The new deep-vee hull is longer than the 31's with the same angled transom as that seen on the Targa 42/44. The real win for on-board space, though, is its extra beam, which allows

the wheelhouse to breathe out while still delivering the usual enormous Targa walkaround decks. These are protected by deep gunwales and chunky wood-topped rails, with access either side through breaks in the guardrails or over the easily negotiated bathing platform.

Sharp-eyed Targa spotters will notice that the new hull's transom has a wide user-friendly double gate and that there

is more attention to the seating in and around this aft cockpit area. The seat lockers on either quarter are more generous and there is a neat drop-down section to the bench that runs across the rear of the wheelhouse. Topping off the back of the wheelhouse is Targa's adrenalinal central, otherwise known as the outside helm position. The 2+1 seat arrangement might look a tad exposed, but once you're installed you feel well protected behind the solid coamings.

The actual look of the superstructure has been given a facelift, with several softening nips and tucks; its sides cant in ever so slightly and while the window line still gives a great view out, it has had its sharp corners knocked off. To non-Targa aficionados these details are pretty minor, but the overall effect gives a cleaner, smarter, more contemporary look – adding some pleasing aesthetics but without losing the practical benefits.

Inside the wheelhouse, configuration follows the traditional Targa layout, with sliding doors either side and an L-shaped dinette to port. But because of the extra width, there is now a full double co-pilot seat by the port hand door, the seat back flipping over to make the L of seating behind into a more sociable U-shape.

Ahead of the co-pilot seat, tucked under the teak console area beneath the screen, is the galley unit with a two-burner gas hob and sensibly sized sink. Beneath these is a double stack of all-wood drawers and cupboards, and just so there is absolutely no chance of running out of storage, the same treatment is given to the seat plinth.

The one thing you do end up rather light on is countertop, the only surface to hand being the closed hatch to the fore cabin. However, mind where you pour the soup as the hatch lid incorporates a series of tidily built-in compartments for charts, pencils and miscellaneous bits and pieces.

In just the same way as its predecessor, the 32 has two cabins. But rather than the almost straight drop down from the wheelhouse and limited standing room, the new model abandons the 31's abseil access and is far more spacious, with masses of headroom. The extra space is down to a larger bulkier coachroof that pushes into the forward cockpit. On deck the only real side effect is that you have to make do with moulded seating on three sides rather than the 31's four.

The aft cabin enjoys an even more luxurious makeover. A double berth to one side of the well – formed by the dinette above – is joined by a single to starboard. With decent sitting headroom above both berths, the single could be used as a settee, giving the aft cabin a master feel. Arguably the biggest improvement is to the toilet compartment. Sure, it still has to be accessed via the aft cabin, making it inconvenient for sharing couples. But it is now a decent size and smartly turned out with an electric toilet as standard.



CURVACEOUS CABINETRY



FORWARD CABIN



IMPROVED HEADS



AFT CABIN



THREE BERTHS AFT

Interior

Small changes,
big difference

Mouldings and linings make more of an appearance on the 32 than the 31, but the yard has stuck to traditional and very warm teak joinery for the bulk of the fitout.

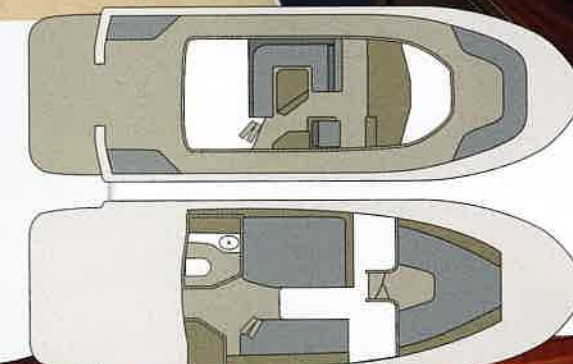


WHEELHOUSE

Shock, horror... it has even worked in a good few curves to the cabinetry, softening the on-board aesthetics. It's worth noting that aside from the style all this hard-wearing timber delivers, it makes for a solid, sound-absorbing ride too.

The galley is out of sight until wanted and you can't believe the number of drawers, cupboards and assorted cubby-holes they incorporate here and around the wheelhouse. A good-sized fridge is housed beneath the helm seat and there

is a neat drinks locker behind. Stowage in the two cabins is less impressive and Targa seems to have realised this a little too late, with two hastily cut lockers in the forward cabin. Ultimately, you now have two cabins you will want to spend time in and, while the aft cabin toilet is still an issue, overall it is a far more crew-friendly interior.



GALLEY



FRIDGE



WHEELHOUSE SALOON



"Once you open the throttles, it clips along so effortlessly"

Performance & handling

Targa's ability to deliver mind-bogglingly good hulls is the stuff of legend and, like all good legends, it comes with a hint of mystery. The deep vee, sterndriven hull looks pretty orthodox, while the superstructure with all its top-hamper should make even the most conservative of hulls a little tender and sensitive, especially if you add three people's bodyweight up at the outer helm to the equation. But, of course, it doesn't and this new hull shares all the great attributes that Targa-savvy folk know and love.

First off, it planes so easily and once you open the throttles, it clips along so effortlessly that the only way of knowing whether you are doing 30 knots and not 20 is to a glance at the GPS. For that matter, you might not even know that you are indeed launching the boat over the waves; we certainly didn't. OK, it wasn't particularly rough during our trials, but there was a steady metre-plus sea running with

some underlying rollers to look out for. While plenty of 30ft craft could cut a dash through such conditions, the enthusiasm to maintain 30 knots or so would fade fairly quickly. On the Targa 32, the overriding feeling was to push on and take this lumpy head sea flat-out at 36 knots. At this speed our six-tonne two-cabin cruiser performed as if enjoying a flat, calm sea. The handling is always precise and predictable and if you really want to up the comfort levels, just helm from the whisper-quiet wheelhouse, where the view out remains excellent.

If we haven't got you excited enough, just remember this: the boat we sea-trialled had a pair of 260hp D4 units, but the standard set-up is more likely to run to 300hp D4s. Not enough? Then how about a pair of D6s at 400hp apiece delivering in the realms of 45 knots? Given Volvo's recommended continuous rating of 3100rpm, that gives you a nice, sensible 40 knot cruising speed for your nice, sensible Targa.

Exterior

Totally protected sidedecks make the 32 the ultimate walkaround

Extending the forward coachroof has reduced the forward cockpit in size, but it is still a great spot with plenty of seating. An optional teak table stows in one of the cavernous seat lockers. Lots of practical Targa features come as standard, with vast and easy-to-use 16in sidedecks, loads of handholds and plentiful stowage, including the wine-rack type fender slots under the outside helm. In the aft cockpit, the side lockers double as seats along with a flip-up bench.



AFT COCKPIT SEAT



FORWARD COCKPIT

From the helm

Outside for fun, inside for calm

In just the same way as its predecessor, the 31, the 32 comes with an outside helm position as well as a wheelhouse one. The latter is so well protected and the visibility so unimpeded that it is easy to use this on all but the sunniest days. But that would be a mistake because up top is where you really get to understand and enjoy the full-fat Targa experience. It might appear a bit of a perch, but you're actually sat well down in the boat with the bulk of the wheelhouse in front and solid coamings to the sides. The console area on the 32 has been increased over the 31's, but the helm and two-person passenger-seat arrangement is the same, as is the stainless radar arch and mast. Our

only slight criticism is that the steering wheel is a bit upright and an adjustable one would be preferable. However, when it comes to the interior helm, it is not just the wheel that can be angled but half the dash, so that the key throttle, trim tab and wiper controls all drop to hand if you are seated, or can be flipped more upright once the skipper wants to stand. Both helms have room for all the usual electronics and larger items can either be bracket mounted or, if desired, an extra tie of teak console can be added to the interior console.



INTERIOR



EXTERIOR

Specification & value

Targas might not be cheap but it is easy to see where your money goes: solid hull, solid fitout, solid engineering, solid, solid, solid... and well-finished too, with loads of practical details. The initial fear that the 32 would be priced way over what you would have paid previously for the 31 has been allayed; helped to some degree by aggressive pricing from Targa's UK dealer Wessex Marine in Poole. That said, you're still looking at the thick end of £250k as the starting price for a twin-engined example and to this you need to add several items that one might consider as being standard – shorepower and charger, windlass and a bow thruster. The list moves into downright picky territory, then with gas struts for the engine hatches and the topside ports in the midships cabin. Back on the plus side, the standard inventory includes warm air blowers for the windscreen, the electric toilet, trim tabs and Targa's signature remote spotlight fixed to the wheelhouse top.

Technical data

KEY DIMENSIONS

BUILD	GRP
RCD	B
LENGTH OVERALL	35ft 4in (10.78m)
HULL LENGTH	32ft 2in (9.82m)
BEAM	11ft 1in (3.37m)
DRAUGHT	2ft 10in (0.85m)
DISPLACEMENT	6300kgs
FUEL CAPACITY	178gal (800lt)
WATER CAPACITY	26gal (120lt)
WIDTH OF SIDE DECKS	16in (40cm)
HEADROOM IN SALOON	6ft 6in (1.98m)
FORECABIN BERTHS	6ft 8in x 2ft 4in (2.03 x 0.71m)
MID CABIN BERTH	6ft 8in x 4ft 6in (2.03 x 1.37m)

PERFORMANCE

Engines	twin Volvo D4-260 diesels
Configuration	4cyl, 3.7t, 260hp at 3500rpm
conditions	wind W Force 3/4, sea slight
Load	fuel 75%, water 50%, crew 2

RPM	KNOTS	GPH	LPH	MPG	RANGE	NOISE
2300	20.2	7.5	34	2.69	380	70
2500	23.4	9.7	44	2.41	340	71
3000	29.5	15.0	68	1.97	277	73
3200	32.6	17.8	81	1.83	258	73
3500	36.4	22.9	104	1.56	224	74

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 wheelhouse

PRICES

STANDARD BOAT	inc VAT
with twin Volvo D4-260s	£245,390
BOW THRUSTER	£6,700
HEATING	£3,575
ELECTRIC WINDLASS	£5,270
SHOREPOWER & CHARGER	£2,230
COCKPIT TEAK & SEATING	£2,390
DELIVERY & COMMISSIONING	£5,630

BOAT AS TESTED £274,600

Base price includes shipping to UK and commissioning.

Engine bay

The yard's standard of engineering has never been in doubt, but now they have upped the ante again while ensuring everything around the boat and in the engine bay is accessible. The engines, in this instance a pair of Volvo D4-260s, are tucked below two manageable-sized hatches in the rear cockpit. At first glance they look hidden by the transom's sloping counter, but once down in the compartment service points can be readily got at and most of it has sound insulation. As well as the various twin engine options, a single D6-400 is also offered, maximising on engine bay space as well as ownership economy.



THE VERDICT

Worth the wait? Definitely. Sharper, smarter and more accommodating than the 31, this new 32 takes Targa's 30ft offering into full luxury cruiser mode for the first time. And as an open-water performer, when it comes to speed, sea-kindliness and comfort, it sets the benchmark.



Meet the family



BIGGER

Targa 35 Price from £317,200

LOA 38ft 6in (11.76m)

More elbow room, with the same two-cabin layout as the 32. Access to the head is via the aft cabin. Extended flybridge version is available.



SMALLER

Targa 27.1 Price from £134,130

LOA 29ft 2in (8.90m)

One cabin, but tighter wheelhouse layout. Redesign allows the head to be accessed from the wheelhouse rather than the cockpit.

The rivals



Minor Offshore 31 from £192,000

LOA 31ft 10in (9.73m)

Plusher walkaround wheelhouse model. Two cabins but no outside helm position. Wheelhouse opens up thanks to a large sunroof.



Paragon 31 from £215,000

LOA 32ft 6in (9.91m)

Wheelhouse design doesn't come more exciting than this. Two cabins, the forward one also houses the galley.