



## Big Boat Review

# Classic Clipper

Combining old-world style and charm with modern technology, the Clipper 36 has a lot to offer for those who like their time on the water to be comfortable and relaxing.

“Classically stylish” would be an apt description of Clipper’s Heritage 36.

Clipper has managed to maintain the original lines of the traditional flybridge cruiser that made its name in Australia in the ‘70s, while including many new features and creature comforts that modern buyers have come to expect.

Well-known Queensland boat builder, Darren Berry revived the Clipper series in 2002, with manufacturing taking place in China. Lately, there has been an increasing number of Chinese companies turning their hands to boat building, often with mixed results. But in the case of the Clipper range, Brett Thurley, from Clipper Motor Yachts, is keen to point out that the company charged with keeping the name alive has a long and solid history in the boat building game.

The newly-released Clipper 36 has been built primarily for the cruising couple, but lends itself to a larger crew if necessary, with extra berths courtesy of the retracting dining setting in the saloon. And for additional guests, there is a slide-out bunk under the aft lounge.

The saloon layout is conducive to short- or long-haul cruising, and its open-plan layout lends itself to socialising, whether you’re in the galley, at the helm, dining or just lazing on the lounge. All are able to converse in air-conditioned comfort with little in the way of physical barriers.

For a relatively small 36-footer, as far as offshore cruisers go, I have to say I was most impressed by the amount of stowage space available. In fact, it seemed that pretty much every available vertical space was filled with a hatch or drawer, which enhances the ability of any vessel to cater to the needs of its occupants, especially for those longer hauls.

## MASTER GALLEY

For the galley gourmets out there, you will certainly not feel out of place on this boat. The galley boasts quality Corian bench tops, which I’m told are soon to be replaced on future models with a product called Staron, a stone look-alike available in various colours and patterns. In the corner of the bench top, a flush-mounted



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lid accesses the waste bin, which can be lifted for cleaning. Handy receptacles these – when cooking, scraps are simply swiped across the bench top into the bin, rather than spreading them over the galley deck.

The refrigerator and microwave are handy for those moving fore and aft through the saloon and the electric cooktop is rebated into the long section of the bench.

By Rick Huckstepp



*Top: The open-plan saloon is roomy and the windows open for cross-flow ventilation.*

*Above: Galley includes electric cooktop, microwave and plenty of storage.*

*Right: Handy wine cabinet resides behind the helm seat.*

The saloon is open and airy, with large windows visible from every angle. If air-conditioning is not your style, four windows, fitted with insect screens, can be opened to admit the sea breeze.

Sauntering forward from the galley, the helm station is located next to a sliding door leading onto the starboard walkway, giving quick access to the outer decks rather than having to head aft via the saloon door. This can be handy for short-handed docking or when sorting out ground tackle.

The teak timberwork throughout this boat (and there is plenty of it) is of a high quality, both in sheen and joinery, making for a pin-neat overall finish.

The seating for the skipper is part of a module, which includes a flat-top table area at the rear, under which is a high stowage cabinet and wine cabinet that holds the full complement of bottles and glasses. The glassware is stowed securely and the sturdy metal roller racks provide good protection in the event of a rocky sea.

The chart table opposite the helm station has a gas strut-assisted lid and is also home to a flat screen television that is viewable from the dining suite and bench lounge aft.

## ROOM TO MOVE

Considering the superstructure is perched on a 36-foot hull, there is a lot of room for moving about in the saloon and working in the galley.

*Opposite: The Clipper 36 looks classic and poised on the water.*

*Opposite below: The central helm stations has plenty of room for electronics.*

*Right: Flat-screen TV is hidden under the chart table.*

*Below: Deep lazarette provides plenty of storage.*



Under the aft cockpit deck, which is necessarily compact to offer more saloon space, is a deep lazarette for additional gear storage. The electrical relay system may be serviced from here and house batteries are stored down one side under sturdy boxes, upon which additional gear can be stored. We found plenty of kit already crated up down here, with room for lots more. Should the hydraulic steering fail, manual rudder control is accessed here.

Moving around the outside of the boat is easy and safe due to a comfortably-wide outer deck, overshadowed by the bridge deck, while the addition of a separate fibreglass awning off the aft end offers further shelter from the sun.

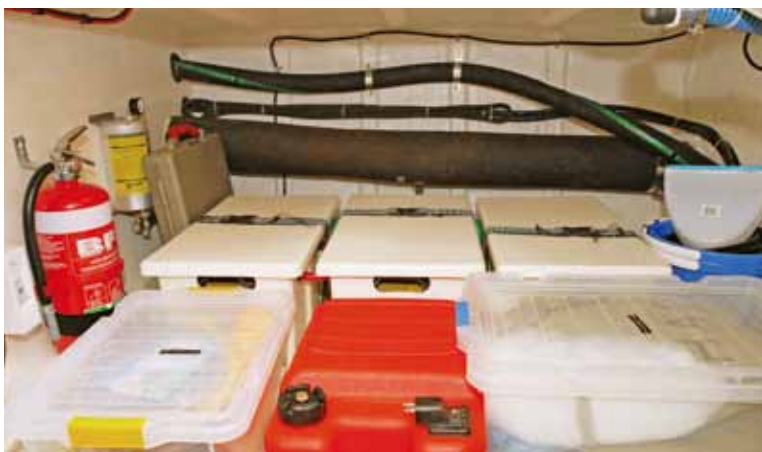


The forward deck is expansive and for those requiring some privacy, there is plenty of room to lay out a beach towel. The forward brow is recessed and the seat conceals more stowage, which would be handy for fenders to avoid cluttering the bow rails.

There is a tonne of room in the anchor well, which is cavernous, to say the least. Provided you could reach down into the depths to grab them, a swag of fenders could remain out of site here, also.

## UPSTAIRS

A climb of the rear ladder reveals the bridge, where the second helm is centrally-located and



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sheltered behind quality clears. From here, there is a good view of the bow and forequarters for docking and there are flanking walkways on both sides of the flybridge for additional standing or viewing room. This really opens this area up for entertaining and, while the test boat was fitted with a crane davit and a tender on the starboard corner, an optional bbq could be installed here for further socialising possibilities.

Another nice installation was the drawer-style stainless steel refrigerator in the helm console, that will have no trouble keeping up supplies to those topside. Weather permitting, this is a great entertaining area and seating for passengers





*Top right: Handy slide-out fridge on the flybridge.*

*Above: Wide walk-around decks provide safety and excellent access around the boat.*

*Above right: Fold-down targa has robust hinges.*



portside and aft of the helm chair features more stowage beneath the cushions.

The manufacturers have taken into account that some canal estates offer restricted access depending on tides, with low overhead bridges impeding passage for taller vessels, so the radar targa is a fold-down structure, with robust hinges for easy and reliable operation.



The Clipper 36 also has a large transom boarding platform, on which an inflatable boat can be stowed.

While there is plenty of utility built into this boat, crew comfort has not been forgotten. Down below, the teak show continues, with a lined companionway leading to the double berth forward. The mattress sits high to offer more drawer space in the module's aft end. The semi-walk-around bed is easily accessed by a step on each side.

This boat features a split bathroom setup, with the head proper, including a vanity basin, on one



side and the shower across the companionway. This is a good idea if you have a large crew on board.

A smart combination of polished teak and mirrors opens up these areas, creating the illusion of much more space than there actually is.

Access to the engine room is via a hatch next to the skipper, under the saloon carpet. The engines can be lifted out of here for major overhauls and the access hatch is quite large. Missing, though, is a good sturdy step ladder to gain safe access, but once inside there is plenty of room, with the single 230hp Cummins mid-deck boasting plenty of space for maintenance on all sides. Strainers are immediately underfoot when entering the engine room and the Onan generator, while situated at the rear, is still relatively accessible.


Under full throttle, the semi displacement-hulled 36 felt like it was teetering on coming on the plane, even though top speed was only about 11 knots (20.3km/h), but it could cruise all day at around 10 (18.5km/h), with a range of around 450nm (830km).

Manoeuvrability underway is excellent going forward and, rather unsurprisingly, slightly tardy going astern; you get that with a single screw. In a docking situation, though, a Vetus 75kgf bow thruster helps control the situation and docking in 15-knot winds during the test was easy.

For the couple or family who like to spend a lot of time on the water, the Clipper 36 provides all the comfort and amenity of a home away from home. It packs plenty of practicality into a



## *the Clipper 36 provides all the comfort and amenity of a home away from home*

relatively small hull, with plenty of internal space for socialising. It also ticks the box for affordability and value and as far as cruising in comfort and style goes, it certainly has a lot to offer for a boat in its size range. 

### SPECIFICATIONS: CLIPPER 36

Length overall:	10.97m
Beam:	4.04m
Maximum draft:	1.1m
Displacement:	10,000kg approx.
Freshwater:	600lt
Fuel:	1200lt
Holding tank:	130lt
Power:	QSB Cummins 230hp diesel
Price as tested:	\$570,030
Priced from:	\$495,000

For more information, contact Clipper Motor Yachts, tel (07) 3890 5000, or 0419 788 000. Web: [www.clippermotoryachts.com.au](http://www.clippermotoryachts.com.au).

*Above left: Teak-lined companionway leads to the roomy stateroom.*

*Above right: Full-width swim platform could take a tender.*