

BOAT REPORT

Gobbi 375SC

The layout is that of the typical modern sports cruiser, but the curves are bolder than most. Will this Italian job find favour among British buyers?



Gobbi are one of Italy's major builders of small to medium sportscruisers, although they also make a couple of sporty wheelhouse boats.

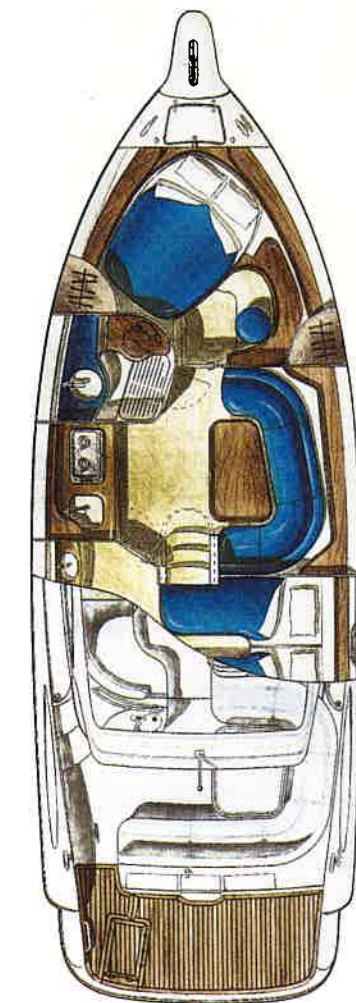
We plumped to try out their largest offering to date, the boldly styled outdrive-powered 38-footer.

Design & layout

The 375SC's hull is a medium-to-deep vee measuring 32ft 5in from stem to transom, the rest of its 38ft 4in overall length being down to the sizeable overhang of bathing platform and the dolphin-nosed anchor moulding that hides away the stemhead hardware.

Three sprayrails fade away on their run towards the outrives, which are slightly stepped into the transom. The sponson-like areas outboard of them provide extra lift and buoyancy just where these would otherwise be tailing off.

Both the topsides and superstructure incorporate some bold curves. The highly raked radar arch and screen ensure the boat



Bathing platform

The 4ft (1.22m) deep bathing platform is quite a chunky affair, but is fortunately broken up by the inset teak-faced ply decking.

It is quite easy to board when alongside, and in fact the side mouldings that you have to step over give it a more enclosed feel when you are moving about. A handhold is provided adjacent to the transom walk-through, but a few additional handrails would not go amiss.

A good-sized bathing ladder is hidden under the appropriate hatch, and a shower is also



provided. The electric passerelle fitted to our test boat is an optional extra, not usually deemed necessary for boats sold in the UK.

Two lockers are let into the

transom moulding. Both are useful, if not exactly cavernous, and have sufficient depth to take a few fenders as well as the likes of cleaning gear and spare warps.

Cockpit

The cockpit feels clean and uncluttered, and it is easy to move to and fro without bumping into projecting mouldings or seats.

The main settee area, aft, is roomy in the extreme. With the moulded table dropped, it makes for a sizeable sunpad with plenty to rest against. There is open storage under the rear portion, while the starboard locker space is reached through just a single hatch.

Behind one of the backrest cushions are the fuel cut-offs,



battery switches and the remote engineroom fire-extinguisher control.

The wet-bar opposite comes equipped with a fridge as standard, and a decent-sized cupboard. There is a reasonable amount of free countertop here, and we were pleased to find a handrail well placed in mid-



cockpit. Set in the adjacent coaming are a pair of manual bilge pumps.

The forward settee area is fashioned into a recliner, which is no bad idea. It nevertheless still allows two, perhaps three, people to join the skipper when underway. The quite high screen moulding makes it a



sheltered spot.

Further storage is found beneath the helm seat, which simply hinges up to give access.

It is a shame that the 375's standard inventory does not include the cockpit canopy package. This is quite well thought out, not least because it is really only the forward section that is bothersome when it comes to rigging the frame; the pronounced sweep of the radar arch supports the aft section.



Decks

A couple of moulded steps on the port side of the cockpit mean you do not have to clamber over the settee cushions to get up to side deck level. We also liked the fact that the outboard guardrail is on hand to give immediate support, as well as a rail running along the top part of the screen moulding.

The side decks themselves are little more than 7.5in (19cm) wide, but this becomes a problem only when you get further forward; you have to hop up onto the coachroof, and watch your step as you do so, not least because the effective crosshatch moulded non-slip has not been carried through to the area scalloped-out here for the sunpad cushions. That said, it was not as slippery as we had feared.

Just abaft of the anchor platform is a hatch that conceals the electric windlass and also the chain locker. Deck hardware is a little lacking, with just a pair of 9.5in (24cm) cleats right forward and a second set aft; there is nothing amidships for taking springs.



has a distinctive look as well as giving a good degree of shelter, but without crowding out the elements.

The layout is fairly standard for a sportscruiser of this type, with a good split between the cockpit and the roomy, bright and pleasingly unfussy interior.

In the cockpit you have just the right amount of space for six people to spend an enjoyable day motoring, lounging and eating

Helm

The helm position offers a pair of good-sized, supportive seats. Neither is adjustable, but this is not too much of a problem as they are set at a comfortable distance from the console and at a height that will suit most people.

Furthermore, the skipper's seat has a liftable squab so that there is more room to stand at the controls when manoeuvring, even if the mechanism which flips it up and pops it back in place is a bit crude.

The moulded return to the helmsman's right takes the throttles, outdrive controls and trim-tab rockers, all in a neat logical line. But what the builders have left out is a handy



'bits' tray, especially remiss because the rest of the console is curved and sloping.

Main engine instrumentation, set in a mock burr-walnut fascia, is clearly laid-out and helpfully includes a helm indicator. A Tridata log/sounder is included as

standard, and also an easily viewed wet-card compass. There is plenty of adjacent space to fit extra electronics.

Just the one pantograph wiper is fitted as standard, on the helmsman's side of the screen. A second one, we note, will cost you no less than £482!

Engineroom

A large, almost full-width hatch in the cockpit sole lifts on an electro-hydraulic ram to give access to the enginebay. This leaves just sufficient space to allow svelte crewmembers to squeeze past and get to the transom gate if necessary.

It is a simple hop down into the bay, although we would have preferred to find ourselves standing on a treadplate rather than a bearer and frames.

There was room to get between the twin Volvo Penta KAD44s fitted in our test boat,



as well as outboard of them. Day-to-day check points and service items are easy to get at, and there is also plenty of room at the forward end to get at the belts and pumps.

Also clear of obstructions are the primary fuel/water separators located forward,

adjacent to the fuel tank which extends across the front of the compartment. Right outboard are the batteries and calorifier.

On the whole we found the installation tidy, even if the only insulation is an area of plain foam attached to the underside of the hatch.

al-fresco, with seating for at least four around the helm and a good-sized dinette aft.

Down below there are two separate comfortable cabins, kept apart by a simply laid-out open-plan saloon which incorporates an adequate, if not over-generous, galley.

Engine options are variants on Volvo Penta's six-cylinder 3.6lit diesel. The most potent set-up,

which we tried, is a pair of KAD44P EDCs which produce 260hp apiece; the alternative option is twin 230hp 43Ps.

Performance & handling

The builders reckon that this boat is capable of something close to 38 knots with a pair of KAD44Ps. The top speed we measured was a couple of knots down on this, but

then the engines had clocked only a few hours, and probably had a little more to give.

All-in-all, then, this is a slippery boat, helped in part by the fact that it is not particularly heavy for its size, with the onus being on unclad mouldings for much of the fit-out.

However, speed is only good if a hull can handle it competently and comfortably. The 375 does both, without significantly stretching

itself or its occupants.

Sea conditions for our trials were much the same as you would find on any other day in Poole Bay, with a touch of underlying swell topped off with a shorter chop pushed up by a Force 3 going on 4. Motoring into this, you would not want to run flat-out for any length of time, but the boat was happy to blaze a trail without any significant rattles or pounding. You could settle into an economical 3000rpm for a cruising speed of 25 knots, while still leaving plenty of scope to wind things up, perhaps to 3400rpm giving a sound 30 knots.

At speed, the hull alters her angle of attack just the required amount on the power trim alone, although our test boat had trim-tabs fitted as an extra which meant you could trim for both efficiency and comfort. In fact, under most conditions, the trim could be left at -2 and forgotten.

When you put the helm over, the hull makes sharp but not too flighty progress through a turn, with a fair degree of heel but nothing that is going to cause anyone concern.

The driving position we found to be comfortable, although when boatbuilders go to the trouble of supplying a flip-up squab to the seat it is sensible to make it a proper perch rather than just a means of allowing the occupant to stand at the controls while manoeuvring.

Low-speed handling proved as steady as high-speed, the hull tracking nicely wherever we put the throttles. It was good to find some 'slack' revs when nudging in and out of gear, with both engines giving only 3.5 knots at their 600rpm tickover. This is a big boat for close-quarters handling on outdrives, but it gave us no problems.

Noise levels were fine around the helm area, at 76dB(A) when doing 25 knots, but back in the after part of the cockpit they started to push up over the 80dB(A) mark.

As to fuel consumption figures, the 375's relatively keen turn of speed ensures these are quite cheery reading, with 3000rpm giving 1.76mpg, although bear in mind that this is for a lightly loaded boat straight out of the wrapper.

Saloon

The bold curves that provide the key to the 375's exterior styling are much in evidence down below as well, with a fair portion of the interior fleshed out with GRP mouldings. These are in turn broken-up with quite large expanses of bird's-eye maple-style laminate by way of cupboard and locker doors.

Headroom in the saloon area is generous at 6ft 5in (1.96m), with a long run of window on each side,



over the good array of cupboards to starboard and the galley to port.

The U-shaped settee will seat six, but really only four for dining in comfort. Its table drops to form the infill for an

occasional extra berth. Loose-fitting hatches under the cushions let onto a useful amount of storage, which is painted out rather than lined. The main electrical panel is above the settee.

Midships cabin

The midships cabin is pleasant and unclaustrophobic, and quite light, not least due to the mirrors catching daylight from the port facing into the cockpit.

Just inside the door there is sufficient standing headroom for dressing and using the sink,

and over the twin berths there is plenty of headroom for sitting up while sipping your morning cuppa.

The berths themselves are 6ft 3in (1.91m) by 2ft 3in (0.69m), with the shelf above fiddled to stop books and glasses from giving their occupants a rude awakening.

The shallow, mirrored



cupboards behind the sink are supplemented by an unlined cupboard beneath it. The main clothes storage is in the hanging locker adjacent to the small, but quite handy, dressing seat.

On our test boat, a holding tank was fitted beneath the aft berth, while the forward berth had painted-out stowage accessed by a hinged hatch. A lifting panel between the two gives access to the bilge and seacocks.



Galley

The galley is not large, and with the covers off the sink and two-burner alcohol/electric hob there is not much free countertop for food preparation, so it is a matter of being organised.

Helping with this is the provision of plenty of well-conceived stowage outboard, along with a couple of decent-sized cupboards betwixt the inbuilt

microwave and the fridge.

The rather shallow sink is part and parcel of the moulding that makes up the worksurface. How all this GRP will stand up to the heat and hostility of the galley environment remains to be seen.

There is no extractor fitted, but a section of the window above does open.

A hatch in the sole gives access to the water pump, but to get at the bilge requires a screwdriver to lift the appropriate floor panels.



Forward cabin

Fitting a central berth in the forecabin would have cut down the available space no end, so to angle the 6ft 3in (1.91m) by 4ft 4in (1.32m) double to port makes good sense.

Of course, this means there is access from only one side, but this leaves quite a good amount of space for dressing, as well as for a vanity table



complete with a moulded stool. Storage is plentiful, with a good size and number of cupboards located outboard as well as a set of three drawers in the bunk-base. Our only slight qualm concerned the rather pinched depth of the two

corner hanging lockers, but then it is unlikely that you will be carrying ballgowns on board in any case. Beneath the mattress, towards the head of the berth, are two large painted-out lockers.

Toilet



The toilet compartment is not en-suite to the forward cabin, even if it is right next door.

It is a fully moulded affair, apart from a run of mirrors and a couple of items of joinery, one being a drop-down seat to cover the toilet. The only additional bit of colour comes by way of the marble-effect countertop.

There is plenty of room for washbags behind the mirrored doors, and in a locker built-in under the sink. If you are keen to keep splashes to a minimum, the shower tray can be curtained off.

Alas, there is no extractor, just an opening port.

Conclusions

On looks alone, the 375SC is a boat you are either going to love at first sight or shun completely. Its bold curves give it a hard countenance, contrasting with the sleekness and finesse which we have come to expect from Italian yards. But it is the fact that it wants to stand out that is likely to be part of its appeal.

The balance between cockpit and accommodation is well planned, as both are nicely proportioned in terms of roominess and ergonomics. That makes this an easy-to-use, exciting six-person dayboat, while also offering comfortable sleeping accommodation for four or occasionally six.

On the performance front, there is similar evenhandedness, with the hull offering steady, economical cruising but capable of being pushed harder for some more sport.

Our main misgiving is that it is noticeable just how much of the fit-out is moulded, where a little more trim would create a softer ambience. And how can wipers be listed as optional extras? This marks the Italians as fair-weather boaters in the extreme! □

Gobbi 375SC

PERFORMANCE & FUEL CONSUMPTION								sound levels dB(A)		
rpm	knots	gph†	lph†	mpg†	range*	trim	saloon	helm	cockpit	
2000	11.0	—	—	—	—	—	64	68	74	
2400	16.2	10.1	46	1.60	197	—	71	76	83	
2600	20.7	11.7	53	1.78	219	—	75	78	85	
3000	25.1	14.3	65	1.76	216	—	78	80	86	
3400	30.0	17.6	80	1.70	210	—	80	82	88	
3800	35.8	23.1	105	1.55	191	—	82	84	89	

† Measured by GPS. † Calculated from engine manufacturers' figures. * Allows 20% margin.

CONDITIONS wind southwesterly Force 3, sea slight
LOAD fuel 50%, water 0%, crew 2

Gobbi 375SC

- BUILD**
glass-reinforced plastic
- RCD**
Design Category B: Offshore (suitable for offshore voyages in wind up to Force 8)
- DIMENSIONS**
LOA
38ft 4in (11.70m)
HULL LENGTH
32ft 5in (9.87m)
BEAM
12ft 9in (3.86m)
DRAUGHT
3ft 2in (0.95m)
DISPLACEMENT
6.1 tons
FUEL CAPACITY
154gal (700lt)
WATER CAPACITY
53gal (240lt)

- ENGINES**
twin Volvo Penta KAD44P EDCs
6cyl 3.6lt diesels
260hp at 3800rpm

- PRICE**
from £126,438 inc VAT;
£131,060 as tested
(but excluding passerelle)

- SUPPLIERS**
Oceanique Ltd,
The Waterfront, Cobbs Quay,
Hamworthy, Poole, Dorset
BH15 4EL. Tel: 0700 7010 700.

- UK DISTRIBUTORS**
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