

BEST *of the* YEAR

Each February we pick our Best of the Year winners, trying to identify the game-changing boats, electronics, engines and gear that will make our lives on the water better, safer, cleaner or simply more fun. Sometimes our choices are on the cutting edge of new technology, sometimes they represent a new take on an old favorite, occasionally they recognize the spirit of individual courage and adventure. In any event, the choices are all ours, and they're all made in the spirit of celebrating the best of what's out there. — *By The Editors*



REDEFINED TRADITION

GRAND BANKS 41

For several decades, the Grand Banks 42 was an iconic boat; it almost defined the genre of a high-quality, salty-looking, seaworthy trawler. It was more than a boat; it was built and revered as a little ship. So when Grand Banks stopped making the 42, it not only had a hole in its lineup, it also had a very large reputation to protect. Enter

the new Grand Banks Heritage 41EU, a 42 on steroids.

With the 41's Zeus drives, joystick docking and a slippery hull, Grand Banks managed to reinvent a cruising classic. On the 41, you can still cruise at a leisurely and fuel-saving 8 knots if you want, but you can also wind up the twin 425 hp Cummins diesels to a top speed of 23 knots. The new 41 still has the elegant looks

and fit and finish that are Grand Banks trademarks, but it also has Zeus maneuverability for turning at speed and docking easily. Indeed, driving the boat at 18 or 20 knots or so is much like driving a sports car, something that could never have been said about the old 42. This is the first resin-infused, fully cored Grand Banks, making the boat lighter but without surrendering any

of the brand's legendary strength and integrity. The boat also has a finer entry than the 42, with a modified deep-V hull but with a three-quarter keel to protect the running gear. It has the Skyhook system for position-keeping, whether you're waiting for a bridge to open or for the fuel dock to clear out. The new 41 has indeed redefined the Grand Banks tradition.

GARY JOHN NORMAN