

JANUARY 2026

# SOUTHERN Boating® & Yachting





# A DAY AWAY

Explore your  
adventurous side  
with Grady-White's  
Express 340.

BY STEVE DAVIS



THE PROFILE STAYS TRUE TO THE GRADY-WHITE STYLE, BUT A LOT HAS CHANGED ON DECK FROM THE 330. IT'S OBVIOUS GRADY-WHITE FOUND A WAY TO STREAMLINE THE ENTIRE DESIGN.

"I love adventure," says Christian Carraway, senior product designer for Grady-White Boats. "My wife loves comfort. She loves the comforts of home, and this new model gives you everything. It may be a little smaller, but we have air conditioning, a flushable head, TV, all we need for her, for the kids, and for me...and I can take it places like this."

Carraway's "places like this" are the dunes of the North Carolina coast and taking me out on Grady-White's new Express 340 tugs at my adventurous soul as well. I've had lots of time with adventure boating, starting as a kid sailing a 16-foot daysailer along the dune-lined shores of Michigan's northwest coast and pulling it up on the beach each night. As I grow older, though, comfort plays more of a role when out on the water, and this new model unites modern conveniences with on-the-water performance and offshore capabilities. Carraway dubs his time on board with the family as "Grady" glamping. "It's that mesh between wanting to go new places and wanting to experience and see new things, but also to have the comforts of home," he says.

As we ply the Atlantic waters off Beaufort and explore the bight off Cape Lookout, the Express 340 shows it's a perfect fit for the family to spend a day along the beaches or head a little farther offshore for some fishing. That's what makes this new model so special. It's family friendly and able to satisfy the adventurer within, whether

out for day or for a weekend.

Redesigned from the highly acclaimed Express 330, the 340 takes all that was good and adds innovative and luxurious features on top of the soft and stable ride of Grady-White's exclusive SeaV<sup>2</sup> hull. The "continuously variable vee" hull designed in collaboration with Ray Hunt Design progressively sharpens the deadrise from the transom to the bow that builds buoyancy for lift, and the ample bow flare makes for a dry ride. "We end up with more like fifty-five degree-plus deadrise in the bow where you need it, but we still have more like twenty degrees at the transom for stability," says

Carraway. "You get the best of both worlds—the wave cutting, slicing vee in the front, and the less, more stable, especially at slower speeds, deadrise in the back. And then it transitions gradually from one to the other."

With that, the profile stays true to the Grady-White style, but a lot has changed on deck from the 330. I've always recognized the Grady models from its Erector Set-style structure for the hardtop. It was robust and strong and looked a bit overbuilt, but when I first eyed the 340, it was obvious Grady-White found a way to streamline the entire design. "We have two refined arch legs that come down on the back, and it just

gets rid of all that extra pipework that the older boats used to have," says Carraway. "It's an extra step of refinement, streamlining, and simplifying the profile without sacrificing any of the rigidity. These are, actually, stronger."

The new design is a big step up and coincides with the new windshield arrangement. "The big wraparound front piece of glass, which actually turns the corners, provides amazing visibility from in the helm, which was important for us, going from a centerline helm, which had amazing visibility, to an offset helm," adds Carraway. "We wanted to make sure we weren't sacrificing the captain's

**Clockwise from above:** The AV<sup>2</sup> hardtop keeps the Grady-White profile intact; a grill and fridge to port and the aft-facing seat add to a versatile cockpit.







perspective, which is why we took those two forward hardtop pillars, pulled them aft and tucked them inside the glass.” Standing in the salon, there is incredible visibility in every direction.

“You used to have to walk around the helm chair to get to either the helm seating or to get into the cabin,” explains Carraway. “Now, with it being offset, you can see there’s a straight line going from the cockpit through the helm down into the cabin. So whether you’ve got a couple of people on the boat or a dozen people on the boat, everybody’s got freedom and room to move amongst each other comfortably going into the cabin.”

Shifting the helm to starboard also created more space to port where a wraparound companion bench seat with electrically adjustable table creates a social area that not only includes the captain (with a helm seat that

swivels 90 degrees inward) but can also transform into a lounge pad with a filler cushion when the table is lowered. It’s a nice spot for an afternoon nap.

Speaking of which, inside the bight, tucked in the southeast corner, is a good anchorage spot for just said nap. If the sky is clear, the sun is shining, and the warmth keeps you late into the day, the anchorage is perfect for some glamping. Great views of the lighthouse, an awesome sunset (and sunrise), and expansive skies that sparkle with thousands of stars at night make for a peaceful getaway. The holding is great and assuming you stocked up, there’s no need to worry about the lack of grocery stores, bars, or restaurants. Sometimes the adventure is finding yourself surrounded by tranquility..

A new sliding door and a gradual open step stairway along with indirect lighting and a nightlight under the step to the V-berth make

**Top:** Forward seating with adjustable dinette transforms to a roomy V-berth. **Above:** The well-equipped galley.

it easy to find your way down into the cabin after a long day. You won’t have trouble sleeping on the memory foam topper cushions on both the forward V-berth and the aft double berth. Yep, plenty of room to spread out. A galley to port with microwave, glasstop stove, refrigerator, and plenty of cabinets as well as the ventilated head with shower to starboard, and the 24-inch flat screen

with the Helm Master EX with full maneuverability, the Express 340 has the power to run much farther offshore than we were today. Adventuring anglers can get out quickly with the 450s reaching 52 mph top speed, and with space for dual 19-inch displays you have all the navigation tools you’ll need. Chances are, with bait from the 30-gallon insulated livewell, we wouldn’t have had a problem filling the 166-quart insulated and lighted transom fish box. There’s also an 87-quart fish box, but I probably would have kept that one open as it has a crafty recessed faucet to use for washing hands and gear. If we

tackle utility boxes. The bolster is a real advantage as a leaning post so there’s no hopping up each time the rods tickle. The backrest folds down to reveal a Dekton countertop in the back and storage (particularly for wine bottles) in the cabinet behind with a teak top to hold phones and such between two cupholders.

One advantage to the full transom is the foldaway bench seat that, when down, is a huge bolster pad to soften leaning against the rail when fighting a catch, and there’s room for my feet underneath to prevent an awkward stance. The cleverly designed folding mechanism allows for the seat to completely fold

## A NEW SLIDING DOOR AND A GRADUAL OPEN STEP STAIRWAY ALONG WITH INDIRECT LIGHTING AND A NIGHTLIGHT UNDER THE STEP MAKE IT EASY TO FIND YOUR WAY DOWN INTO THE CABIN AFTER A LONG DAY.

TV and oak dinette in the V-berth, offer some of that homestyle comfort we all appreciate. “We also have an electric backrest in the vee that goes up and down so you can actually sit facing aft around the table,” says Carraway. Even the aft berth has backrests with plenty of headroom that create a cozy couch area for reading or just relaxing.

If we had gone out earlier in the morning, perhaps the fishing rods would have seen some action. As it was, they stayed tucked in their holders up in the hardtop. But with a choice between triple Yamaha 350s or twin Yamaha 450s

**Top:** The spacious aft double berth has memory foam topper cushions. **Above:** An enclosed “wet” head has a VacuFlush marine head and plenty of storage.

had gone for a swim, the transom washdown faucets would have done the trick. That’s part of the new design layout that makes the cockpit adaptable for entertaining or fishing. The full transom presents a big “fishing” boat feel and the dual side door arrangement means I can reel in my catch on either side. The same goes when docking or swimming.

The port aft facing mezzanine seat is great for watching the rods or keeping an eye on swimmers and is a puzzle box of sorts. The seat with bolster sits above a three-tiered cabinet—the middle pullout is a seat step/footrest while the others provide storage, including fishing

up and out above the transom for easy access to the mechanical space below the deck, which, I might add, includes an 8-kW generator that’ll keep the power on for up to 48 hours, including to the USB ports, wireless phone charger, and the electrically retractable SureShade for sun protection in the cockpit.

We didn’t run out to catch any fish this day, but enjoying a day on the water was all I needed. The Express 340 allowed me the fresh air and the freedom away from the hustle of life. It’s also nice to know that I could head to the helm, kick the motors in gear, and explore wherever my adventurous soul takes me. 🐟

## Specifications

**πLOA w/o Engines:** 33' 6"  
**Beam Amidships:** 11' 7"  
**Draft:** 27"  
**Power:** Twin Yamaha 450 hp/  
Triple Yamaha 350 hp

**Fuel/Water:** 340/40 gal.  
**Cruise/Top Speed:** 30/52 mph  
(twin 450s)  
**Range@Cruise:** 340 miles

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