

GO FISH

Sport fishing boat, Bertram 540, comes with added advantages which will make fishing easier and more enjoyable

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► **SIT HIGH ON YOUR FIGHTING CHAIR, FEEL THE BREEZE IN YOUR HAIR AND FISH FOR OYSTERS, CLAMS, MUSSELS AND CRABS ON-BOARD BERTRAM 540.** A reincarnation of the legendary 1981 Bertram 54, the little sport-fishing boat will create new waves on the Indian coastline. It has all its sleek lines and curves in the right places.

Among many others, a striking new feature in the boat is the forward wrap around window that provides breathtaking views of the surrounding waters and allows for an incredible amount of natural light to come through the interior of the yacht. Bertram boats haven't had forward windows since 1983.

The new Bertram has a slight concave curve to the stem, while the old Bertram was ruler-straight. The aft has a graceful swoop down to the cockpit which reminds one of a late Rybovich design or a Dave Martin sweep rather than the old Bertram.

INSIDE OUT

The cockpit has a rod holder which can accommodate 25 fishing rods, a transom fish box, live bait wells and standard mezzanine seating with freezers. There is room to mount a fighting chair, and room behind it for a mate to steer the boat while the angler is hooked-up and fighting. The new 540 has a nice flying bridge overhang that provides shade for those sitting on the mezzanine. John Rybovich had figured this out a long time ago and it is clear that Bertram's designers, Gianni and Paola Zuccon, did their homework before they set down to design the boat.

“Because of the windows, natural light streams inside the large and open main salon and there is actually a view ahead”

The salon definitely doesn't match that of a typical sport fish boat. First, because of the windows, natural light streams inside the large and open main salon and there is actually a view ahead. In the late 1970s and early 80s, owners used to simply cover up the forward windows with blinds, curtains or masks on the outside of the windshields to stop the sun from turning the interiors into an oven. Eventually, builders simply took the next obvious step and did away with troublesome windshields (they often leaked or cracked and were somewhat vulnerable to serious green water). It was also a cheaper option. Inside, they installed cabinets and a place for a television. It has been so for the last 25 years or so on every major sport fishing boat or convertible, until now.

Two 16,000 BTU air conditioners are able to keep the temperature cool. There are open areas in the length of the overhead

that disperse the cooled air evenly across the whole room. The galley has moved now from the forward position and shifted to the aft end of the salon. This arrangement has a lot of advantages. Firstly, it made the forward windows possible since the galley was originally in that place. This opened up and brightened what was once a dark cave of a salon. Secondly, it allows whoever has galley duty to be a part of the action by staying near the cockpit which is inarguably the work center of any fishing machine.

Although the 'galley aft' concept is very innovative, it could do with some changes. First, the switch for retracting the aft window is outside the galley, just inside the salon door. So, you have to go all the way around the counter to get to it. Secondly, there is an elevated counter on top of the main galley counter. It serves no real purpose. It's better to add two to three deck mounted stools to turn that counter into an additional eating area for those quick snacks.

The galley features two large refrigerated drawers and four freezer drawers. There is plenty of room to stand behind them when pulled out to the full open position. The stove is recessed into the counter to port and it has the standard removable cover to add counter space when not cooking.

Stereo sound systems are integrated into the bridge, salon and cockpit with iPod connection for quality sound and easy control from any location on the boat. Additional amenities such as LED lighting, 12 and 110 volt outlets and extra cup holders are also available.

The accommodation is comfortable and has just the right touch of luxury. On the port side are two guest berths laid out in an 'L' pattern. Next to starboard is the master stateroom. It features a queen sized island berth. It also features a large built-in window that is also duplicated in the guest





cabin opposite. It's such a large part of the décor that you can't help but notice that it's not just another small port light. It's actually multiple panes of thick glass that are moulded into the hull.

UP AND ABOUT

Moving up to the flybridge, it has a commanding view of the roaring sea. Bertram 540 has again scored over her competitors by giving the bridge deck the best possible layout. The helm console is at a comfortable distance from the captain to allow him to see and respond from the cockpit clearly. In front of the console is a U-shaped seating arrangement that will make a perfect gathering spot while heading out to the fishing grounds, and a great bragging spot on the way back. There is plenty of room plus counter space for food and wine. Icemakers are also installed here.

ENGINEERING POWER

By giving the boat forward windows, Bertram also has the advantage of an optional lower helm station. The boat accommodates it to the port forward section of the salon at the cost of removing the settee. Some cruising families will love that feature when the weather turns foul.

When Bertram tasked its design engineers with revamping the original 54 model, it was apprehensive about touching its riding hull. However, while the deep-V hull design rode well, it was also a bit unstable at anchor or when trolling. There was room for improvement in this old design since it was three decades old. The changes are subtle enough, adding deadrise to the stern to increase performance, as well as the inclusion of a modified tunnel over the propellers. These two changes gave the boat an added advantage, but also a lower draft than

otherwise. Twelve-inch chines were added to give the boat more stability while trolling and at rest, as well as some added flat running surface to improve speed and knock down the spray of water.

With no bow thrusters or joysticks, you're reminded that this isn't an entry level yacht. However, there is plenty of torque in the five bladed propellers, so low speed maneuvering is not a problem.

In case anybody is wondering why we need to redo an already proven success story like the 54, Bertram insists that it will go a long way towards satisfying the needs of hard-core fishermen, as well as casual fishermen who are looking for an easy cruising platform.

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BERTRAM 540 SPECIFICATIONS

** Specifications subject to change*

LOA:	57' 1"	17.4m
Hull Length	54' 2"	16.5m
Beam	17' 10"	5.43m
Draft	5' 5"	1.65m
Displacement	83,737 lbs	38.0ton
Fuel Capacity	1,524 US Gal	5,769 liters
Fresh Water Capacity	225 US Gal	850 liters

** Please note that the following engine is the most commonly installed engine on the B540.*

Opt Engine	Twin CAT C-32 1676hp
Opt Engine Cruise	35 kts
Opt Engine Top Speed	39 kts
Opt Engine	Twin MAN V-12 CR 1224hp
Opt Engine Cruise	29 kts
Opt Engine Top Speed	33.5 kts
Opt Engine	Twin MAN V-12 CR 1360hp
Opt Engine Cruise	29 kts
Opt Engine Top Speed	34 kts