

Eastern Boats 248 Islander (2021-)

Brief Summary

The Downeast design is executed nicely on the 248 Islander with a pleasurable comfort level. It's a good combination of workboat and pleasure craft that has a lot of appeal.

Price

Base Price

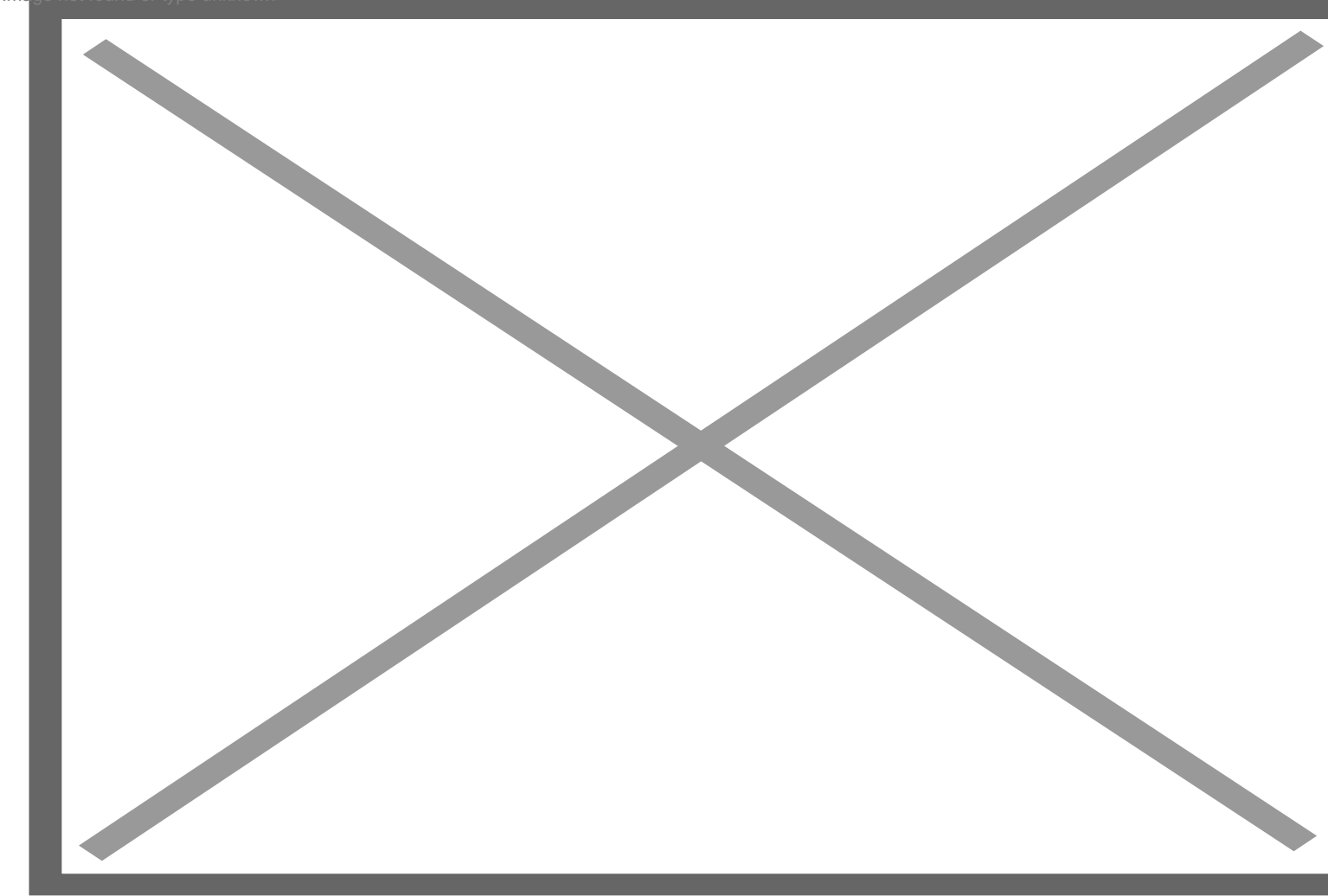
Test Results

RPM	MPH	Knots	GPH	MPG	NMPG	STAT. MILE	NM	dBa
600	2.9	2.5	0.5	5.8	5	470	408.5	59
1000	4.2	3.7	0.7	6	5.2	486	422.6	59.3
1500	6	5.2	1.2	5	4.3	405	352.2	62.4
2000	7.6	6.6	1.8	4.2	3.7	342	297.4	66.2
2500	9	7.8	3	3.1	2.7	247	214.9	74
3000	12.4	10.7	4	3.1	2.7	250	217.5	74.5
3500	17.3	15	5.5	3.2	2.8	257	223.6	79.1
4000	22	19.1	7.1	3.1	2.7	250	217.8	78.6
4500	27.2	23.7	9	3	2.6	245	212.9	79.9
5000	31.8	27.7	10.2	3.1	2.7	254	220.7	81.1
5500	36.6	31.8	14.3	2.6	2.2	207	180	84

RPM	MPH	Knots	GPH	MPG	NMPG	STAT. MILE	NM	dBa
5700	39.8	34.6	16.6	2.4	2.1	194	168.9	82.9

[View the test results in metric units](#)

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Specifications

Length Overall	24' 7.32 m
BEAM	8'6" 2.59 m
Dry Weight	3,500 lbs. 1,587.57 kg

Tested Weight	4,163 lbs. 1,888.30 kg
Draft	15" 38.1 cm
Draft Up	
Draft Down	
Air Draft	
Deadrise/Transom	
Max Headroom	
Bridge Clearance	
Weight Capacity	
Person Capacity	
Fuel Capacity	90 gallons 340.68 L
Water Capacity	
Length on Trailer	
Height on Trailer	
Trailer Weight	
Total Weight	4,163 lbs. 1,888.30 kg
Aft Deck	

Salon Inside Width	
Salon Fore & Aft	
Salon Height	
Salon Volume	
Galley Volume	
Master SR Width	
Master SR fore & Aft	
Master SR Overhead	
Master SR Volume	
Eng. Room Volume	

Acceleration Times & Conditions

Time to Plane	4.3 seconds
0 to 20	
Ratio	
Props	17 x 14.25 x 3 Reliance
Load	2 persons; 45% fuel; no water; 50 lbs. gear
Climate	65 deg.; winds: 5-10; seas: <1

Eastern Boats 248 Islander: A Gentleman's Lobster Boat?

By Capt. Steve

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The Eastern Boats 248 Islander is a boat built to workboat standards for strength, but with the personal touches that make it an ideal coastal cruiser and weekender.

Eastern Boats is a company that started out making commercial boats and then morphed into making its designs for the general public. When a company does something like that, you still get the strength of build,

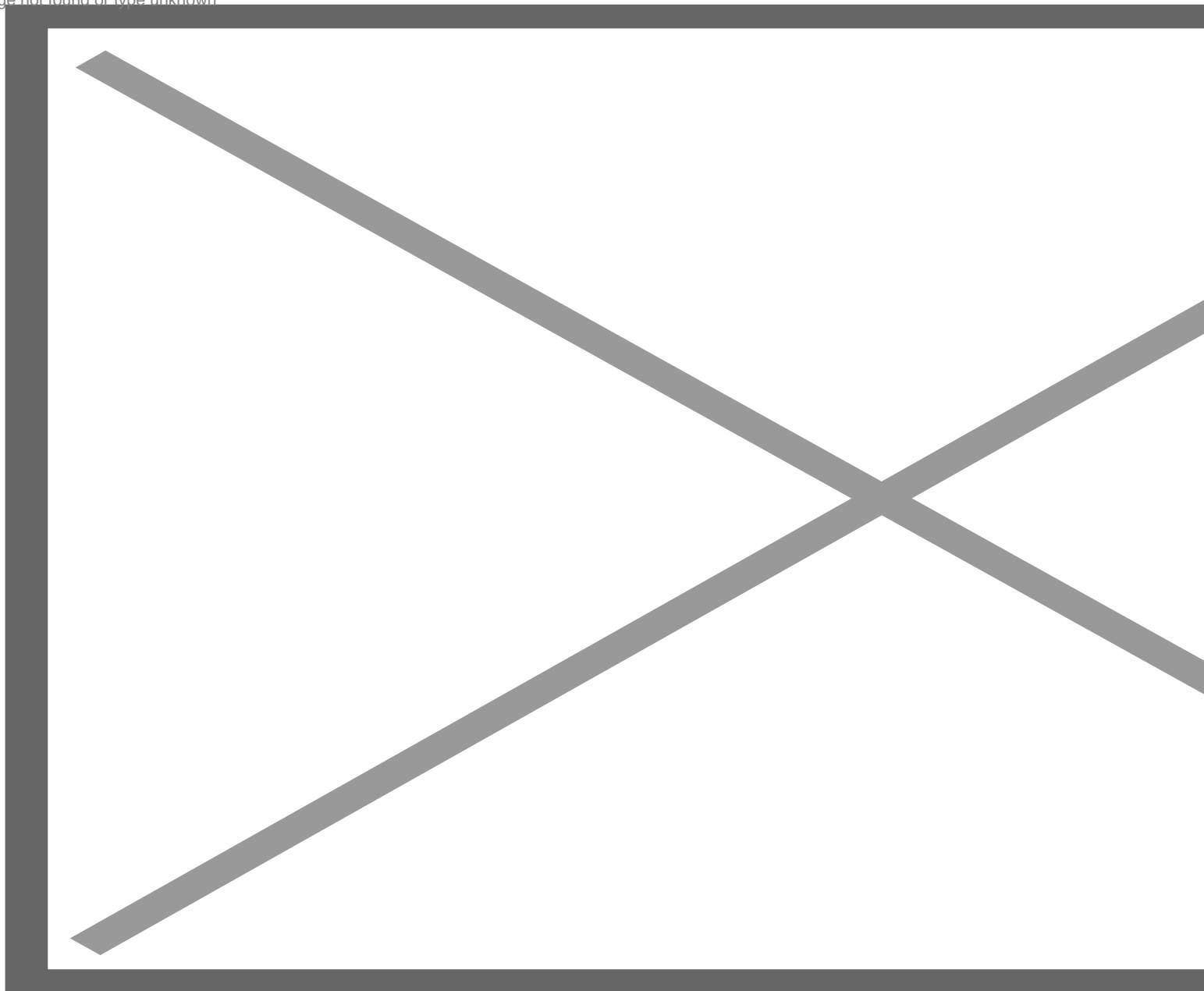
the quality, the lines and the handling characteristics carried over into the recreational market. It's a win/win, and mostly for the customer. Commercial boats must withstand a higher level of punishment brought on by near-daily use and hard work on the water. So, when we see a situation such as this, we tend to take a little more of a forensic look at the end result.

With the 248 Islander, my first glance revealed that it still has that workboat utilitarian look to it. That is to say, we don't have the Teak and Holly sole, we don't have the finished teak caprail, items along those lines. Certainly, you can get them but then the question becomes why would you? With its workboat character still intact, this is an easy to maintain boat, and to my eye, that's what's so appealing about it.

Now it's important to note that I've been on a lot of boats, and there oftentimes seems to be a compromise between having functionality on the deck or space, not both. But the 248 Islander seems to present a nice balance between the two.

Main Deck Features

The main deck consists of a bench seat across the transom plus opposing seating just ahead and to port that accommodates a cooler underneath. The 248 Islander is also available with an open layout to accommodate deck chairs. With this layout, the seats are molded in and they're in the form of modules so customers can replace any or all with any kind of a change desired. Choose from L-seating in the front, delete the back seat... just let them know and it's done. Naturally, there's storage underneath each seat and one of the things I might add would be some grab rails along the sides, and Eastern again would be happy to accommodate. There's a removable pedestal table just ahead of the transom bench seat. The opposing seating just ahead makes for an intimate gathering onboard.

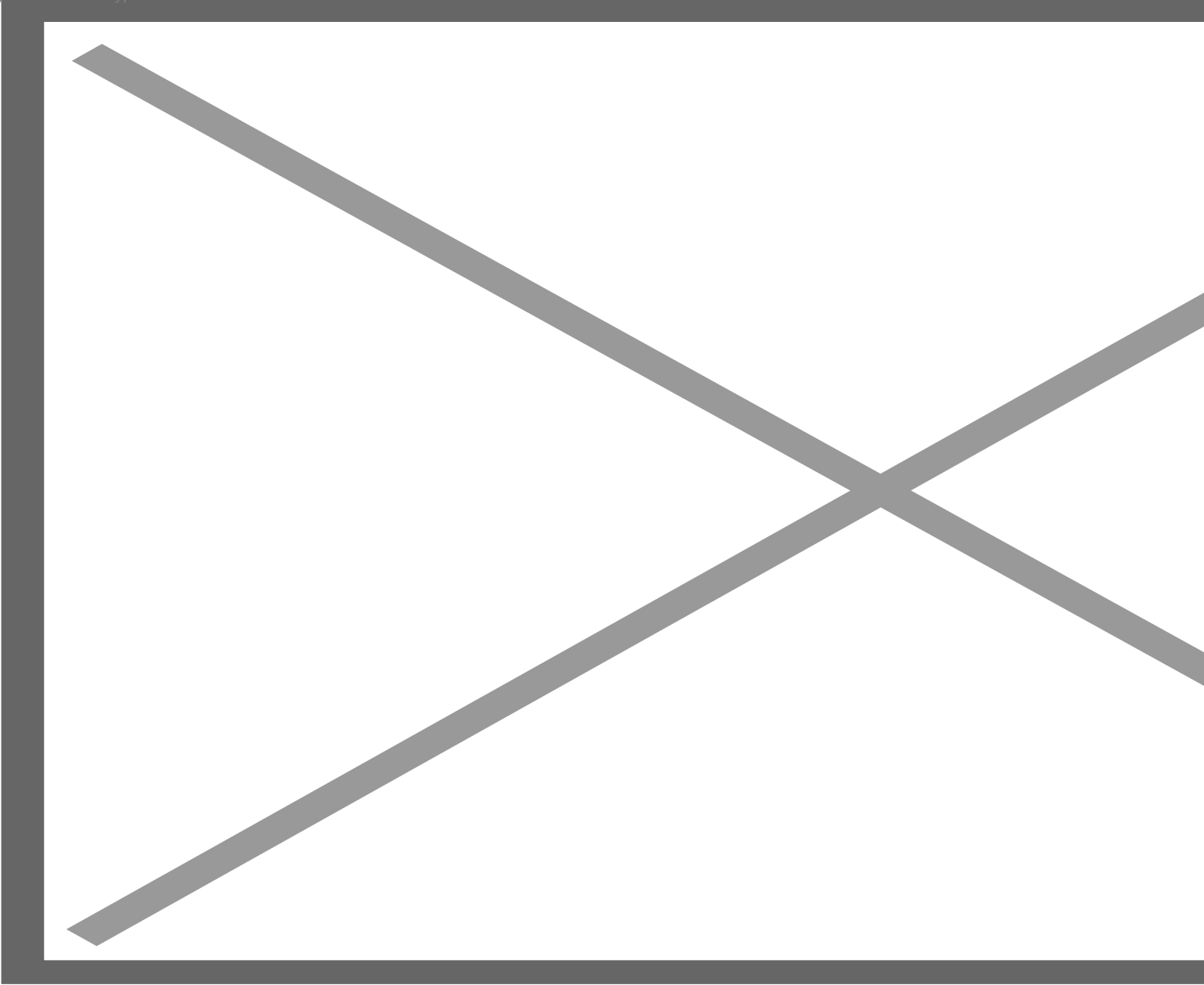


The cockpit has opposing seating that can be swapped out for other arrangements, or even left off completely. The deck is all fiberglass with non-skid for zero maintenance short of a hosing off.

Another nod to the utilitarian quality of this former workboat design is a fuel filter, a priming bulb and the battery switch positioned in the bulwarks under the starboard caprail. All are easily accessible and unapologetically out in the open. It's certainly not in the way of anything but, the point being, there's now no requirement to dig way down into a hole somewhere just to change the fuel filter. In the center of the cockpit deck is a hatch held open by a gas strut with plenty of storage inside. The little pull-up knob was a

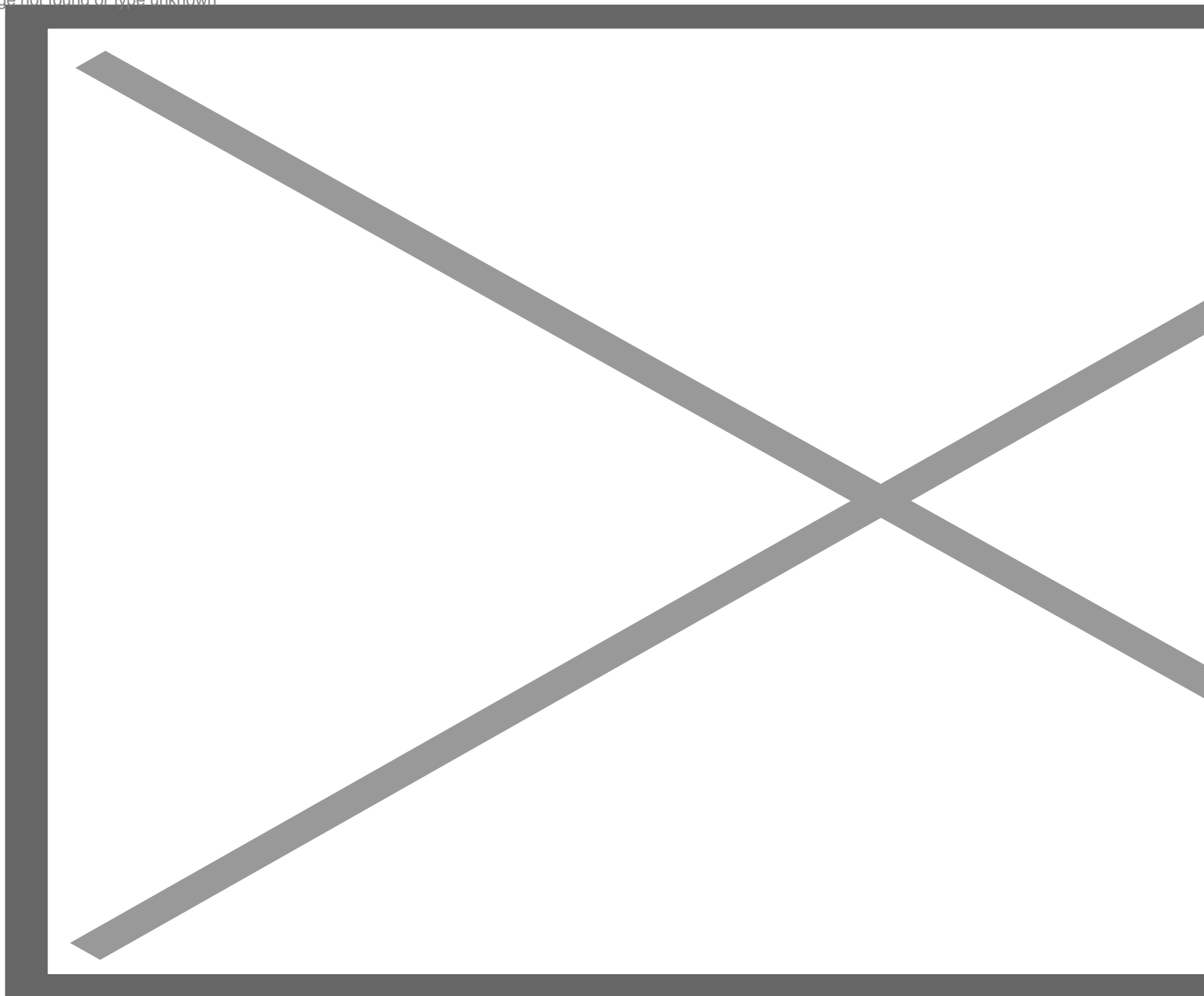
bit difficult to use, so a switchover to a lift and lock latch, or even a turn and lock, would be appropriate.

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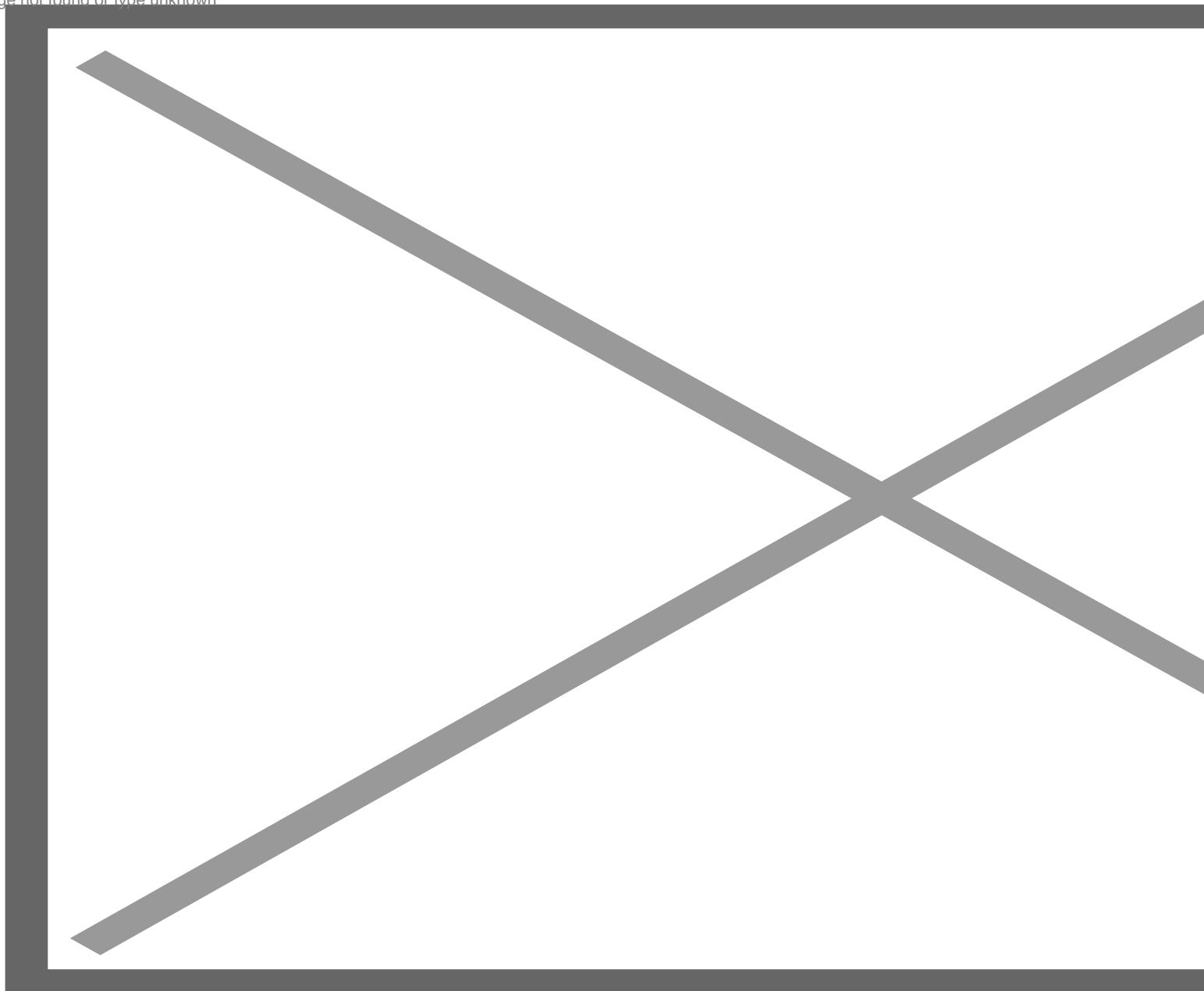
Maintenance doesn't get any easier with the fuel filter right out in the open. Alongside are the priming bulb and the battery switch.

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For safety, there's 28" (71.12 cm) of cockpit depth, and there's excellent drainage going overboard rather than into the bilge.

Ahead and to port, there's a bit of a galley-up arrangement with a solid surface counter. There are raised teak fiddles, a stainless-steel single basin sink and refrigeration underneath. The open counter can remain as a serving area or opt for either an electric or propane grill.



To port is a modest galley with a refrigerator below. The helm seat easily becomes part of the cockpit seating and notice how the seat base makes an ideal footrest.

Power to the People

Just to the port hand side of the forward seat, there's a 30-amp shore power connection. What is it connected to? In the case of this layout, it's a dual-voltage refrigerator and a battery charger along with some 110-V outlets located around the boat. And of course, the big item that we could get, but is not on

our test boat, is air conditioning and heat.

Under the Hardtop

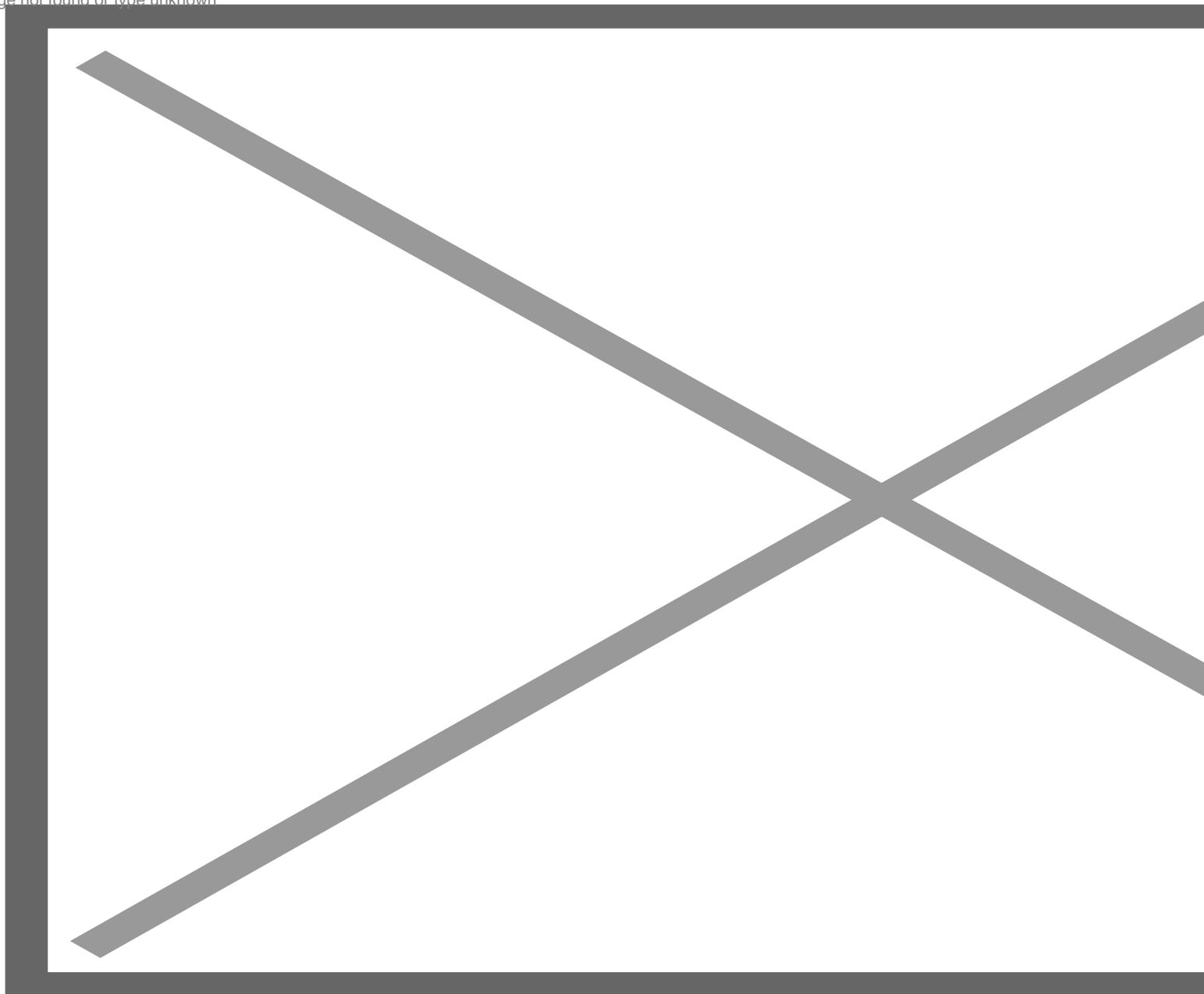
Continuing with the pilothouse area, we start with the helm seat that swivels around to join the seating just behind. It's also on a slider, includes a flip armrest and it's amounted to an 18" (45.72 cm) platform acting as a footrest. Underneath this platform is open storage. The hardtop is 6'7" (2.01 m) off the deck, and while this area also maintains a little bit of the practical and easy to maintain features, there are still some nice touches of nautical flair by way of teak trim.

But what is most noticeable is the ventilation capabilities. The two side windows open, as well as the two forward windows that open up all the way to the horizontal. So too can we close all these windows, plus there's a standard enclosure that goes all the way across the back creating a distinct comfort level in the shoulder seasons. It should also be stated that the ease of use continues with these windows in that they're all manually opening. No button pushing... no electrically actuated... nothing to fail.

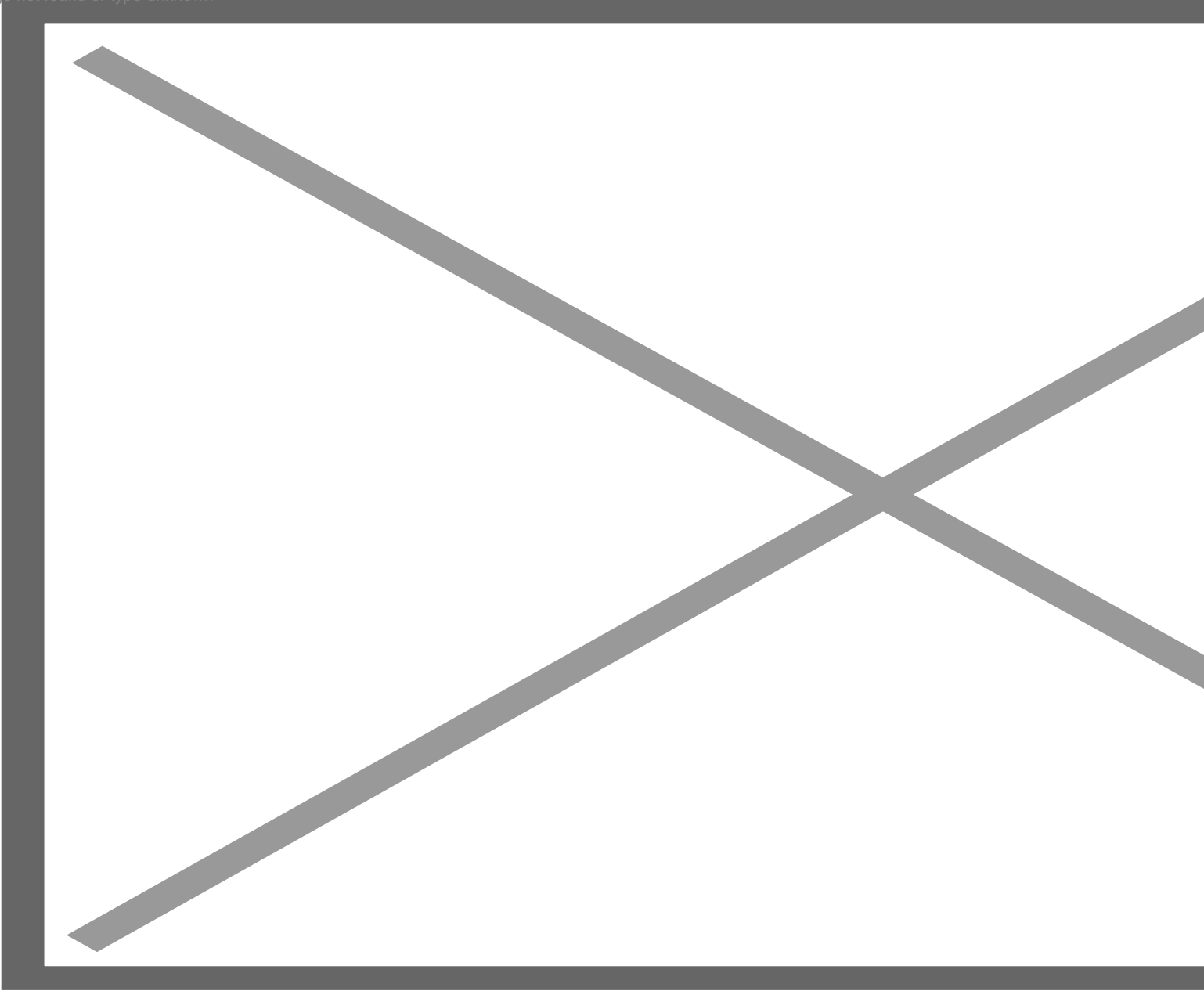
The Helm

The helm is starboard side-mounted and presents a clean and uncluttered look to it. There's room for a 9" (22.86 cm) display in the center. Electrical switching is to the left-hand side. There are only two gauges... a tach and fuel. Bow thruster and trim tab controls are up ahead along with the windlass control and the throttle and shift binnacle is over to the right-hand side. The steering wheel is mounted on the vertical and it has a steering nob that's going to come in handy, and the wheel drives hydraulic steering.

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Eastern Boats went with a remarkably uncluttered helm for the 248 Islander.

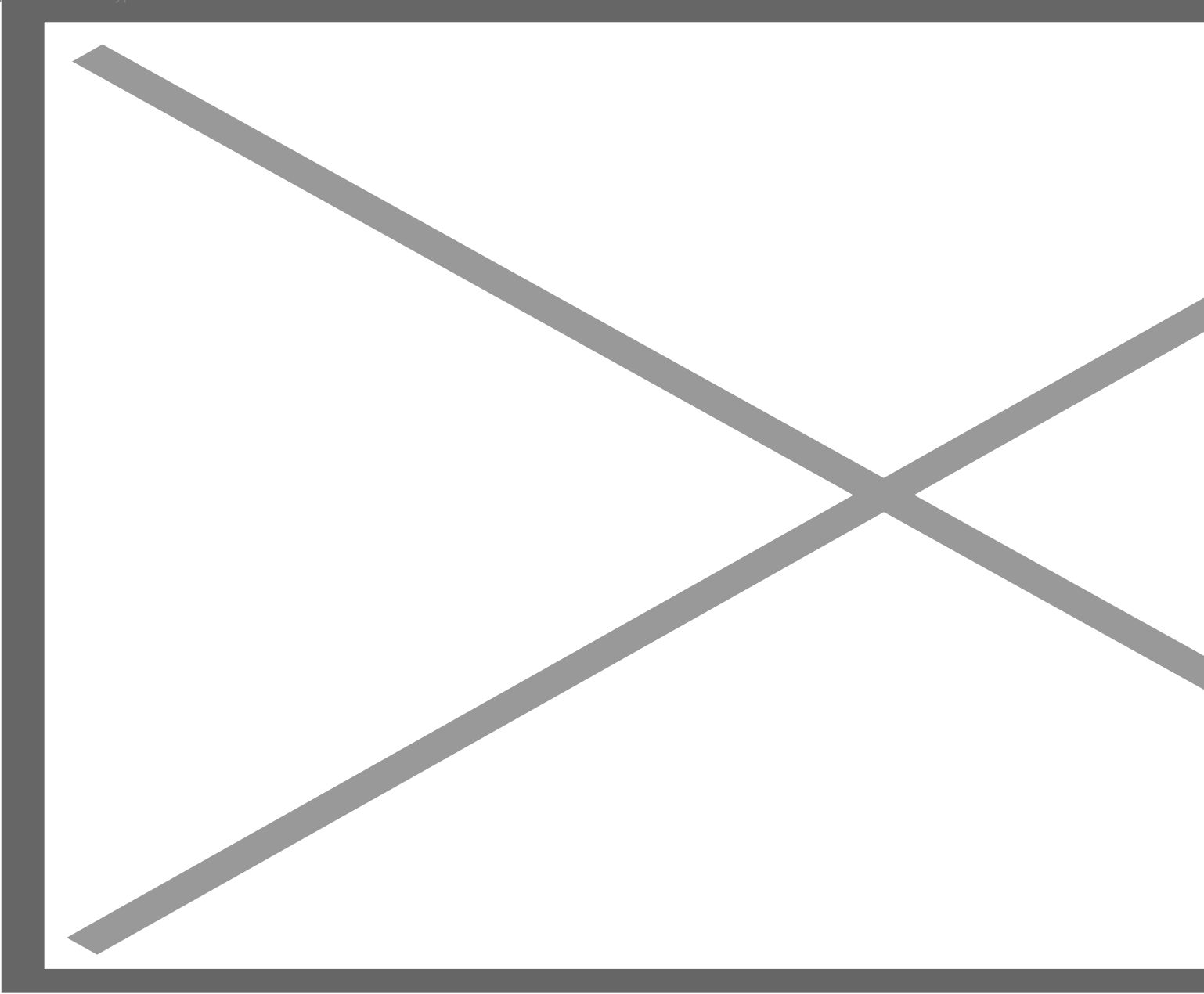


Having a side window right at the helm not only adds to the 248 Islander's comfort level, but it also puts a midship cleat within easy reach of the operator.

There's a molded-in footrest with teak treads and below, at deck level, are two hinges that allow the whole console to tip back with the release of two latches. This makes for easy access for electronics installation and certainly any maintenance. I already mentioned that there are opening side windows, but this starboard one also allows for easy access to a midship cleat facilitating short or single-handed tie-ups. To port, the observer gets a 33" (83.82 cm) wide seat with a flip-down footrest. A trash receptacle is just underneath

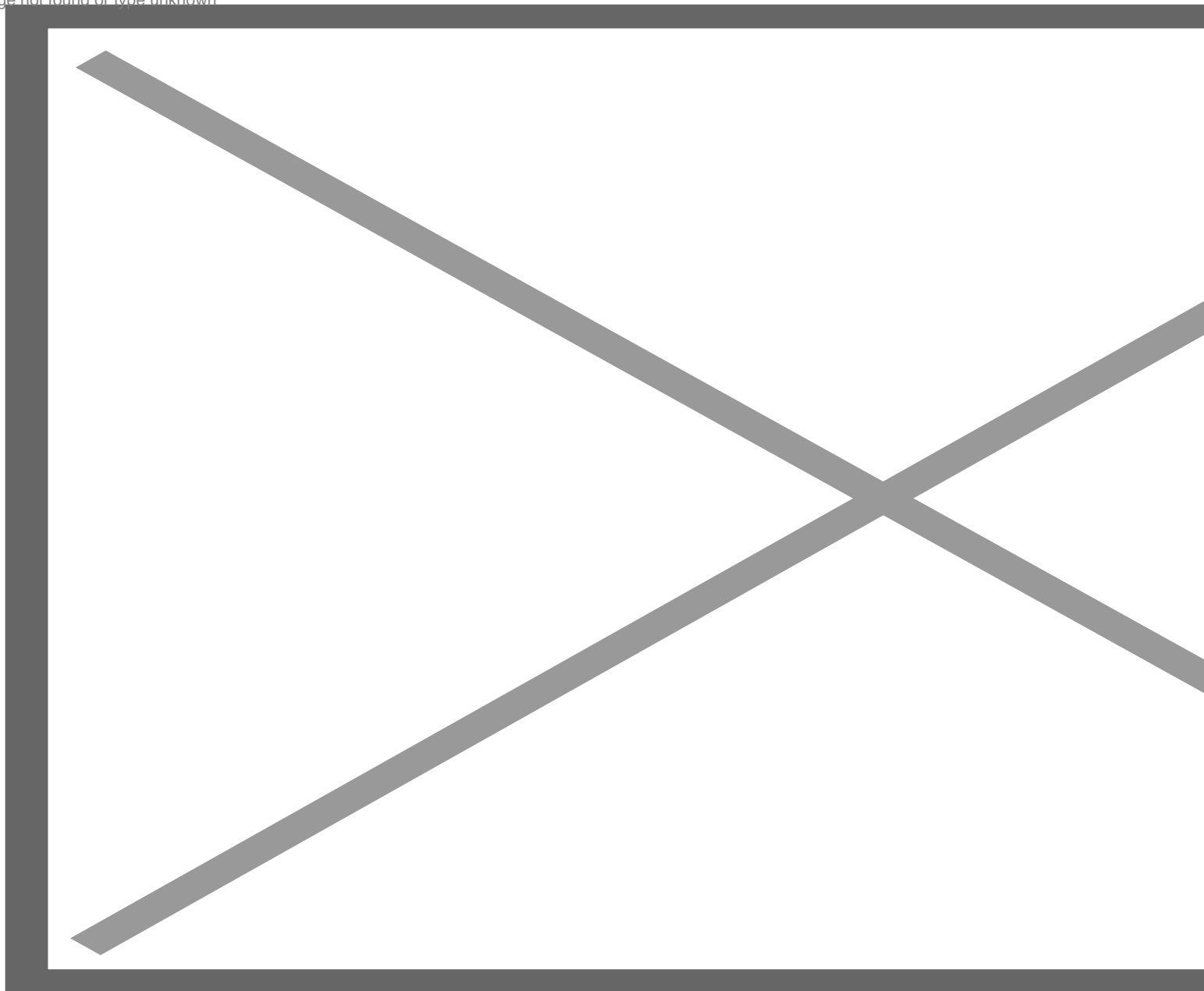
and accessed from the side.

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The helm is uncluttered with only two gauges and a multi-function display. The forward windshields open fully to the horizontal to maximize airflow. It's also great for night operations by reducing all glare.

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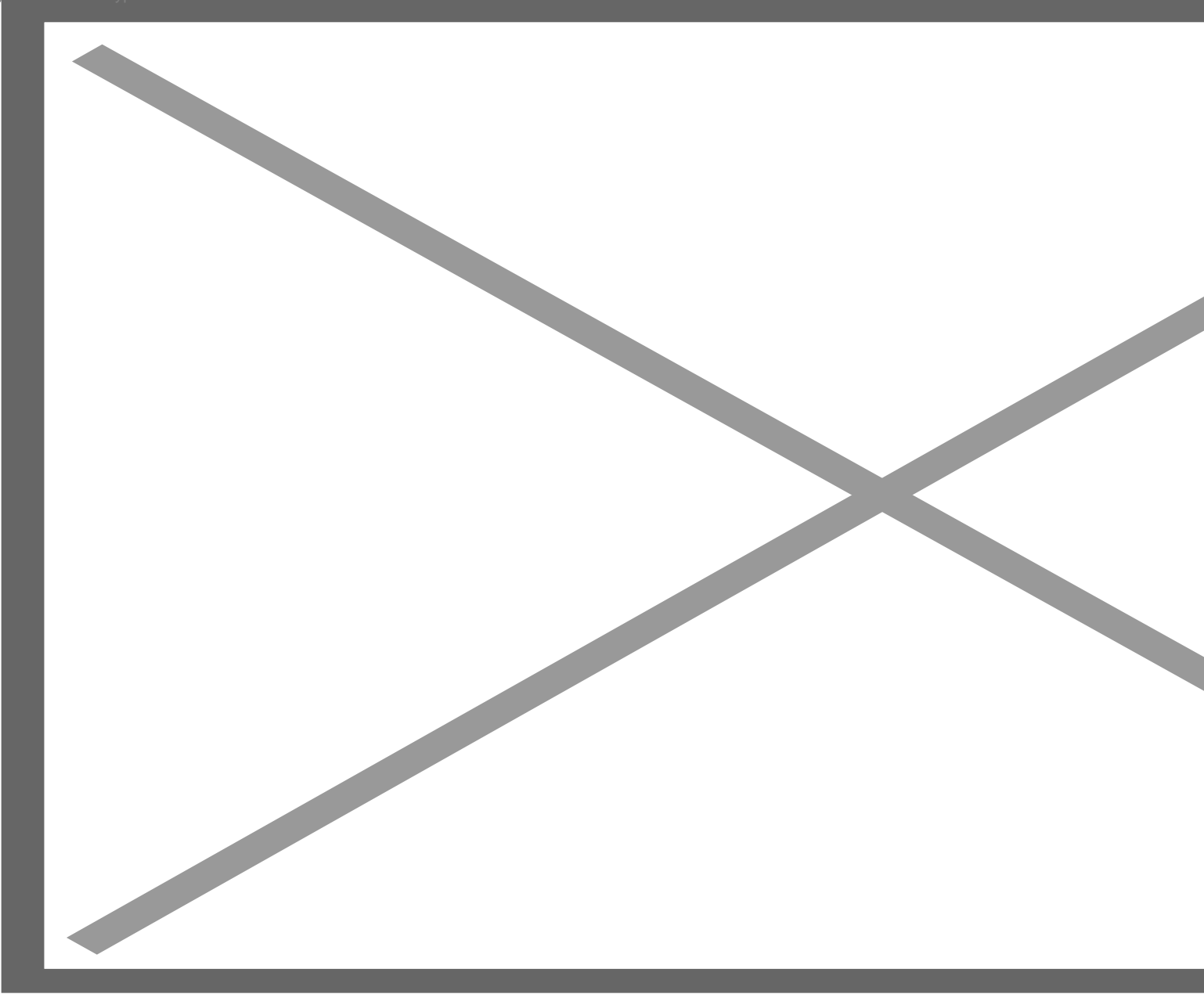
The entire console opens up for easy installation and maintenance.

Bow

The bow area is strictly for line and anchor handling and as such, the side decks are 12" (30.48 cm) wide. The rails come up 20" (50.8 cm) and they maintain that height all the way up to the inclining foredeck. For safety, there are teak grab rails both low and high. Fully forward, there are two 10" (25.4 cm) cleats that flank a Lewmar Pro Fish windlass. The anchor is resting on a roller mounted on top of the deck. Because

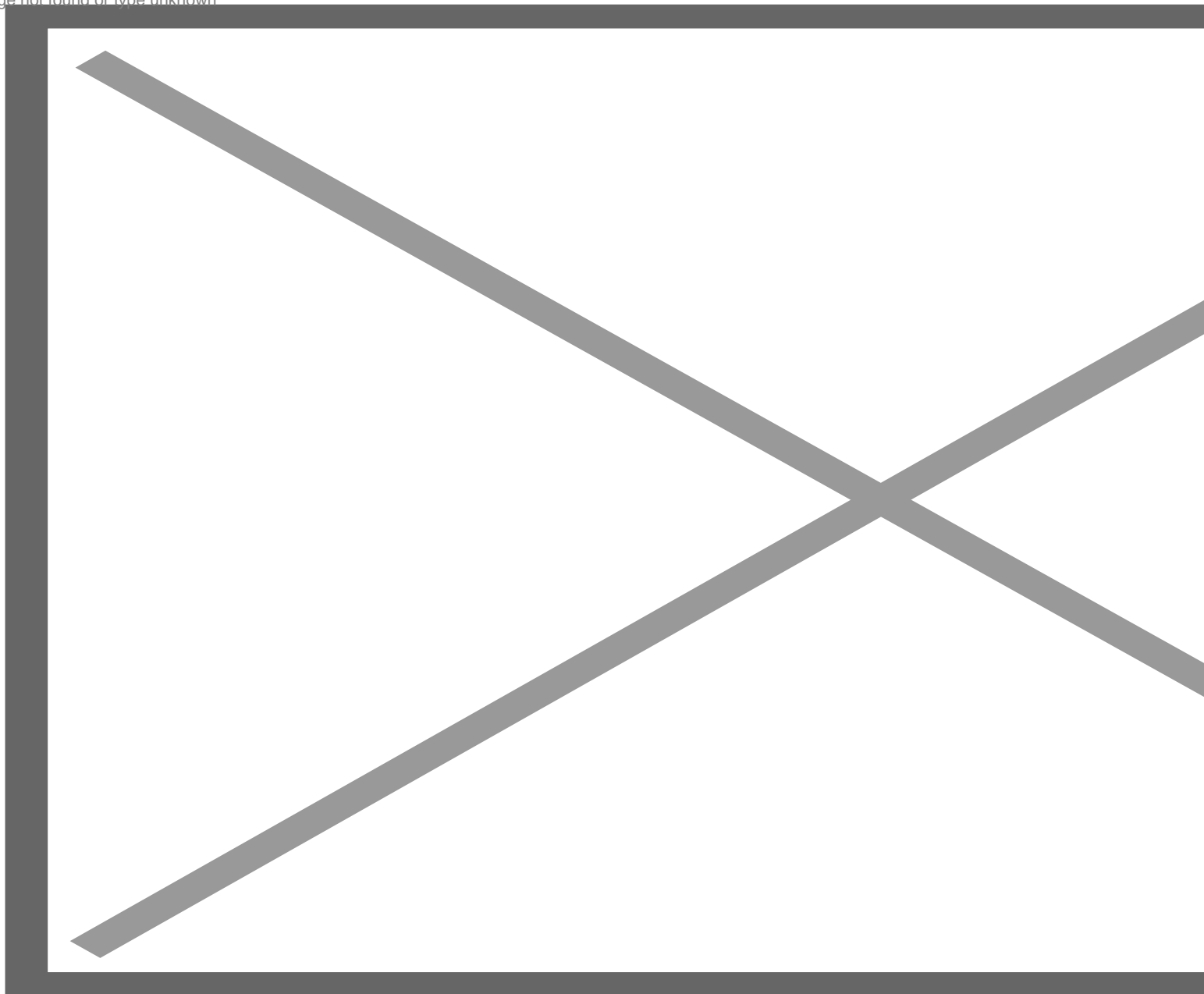
this was originally a workboat design, there's a collision bulkhead behind the rode storage.

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The ground tackle consists of a windlass and an anchor roller mounted atop the foredeck. The bow has a gentle sweep upward, making the 248 Islander more seaworthy.

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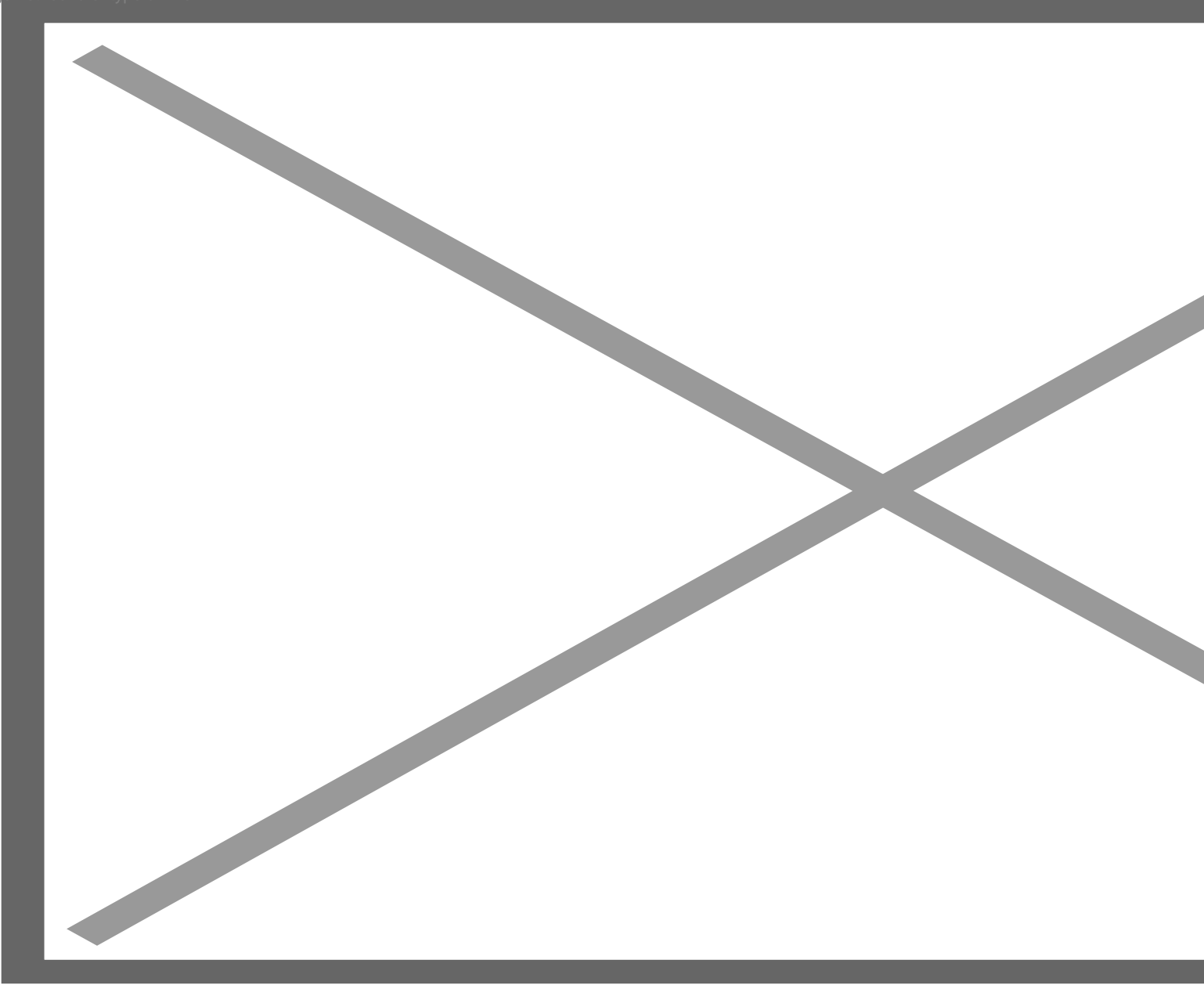
Teak grabrails belie that this was once a workboat design. The sidedecks are narrow but only used for accessing the ground tackle, so we'd rather have the interior space they provide.

Cabin

The 248 Islander also serves as a functional weekender, and as such, there's a comfortable cabin for the overnights. A bi-fold door opens up and leads us to the cabin area. There's V-style seating and a filler cushion will convert it into a berth 80" (203.2 cm) long by 80" (203.2 cm) wide at the stern, tapering to 17" (

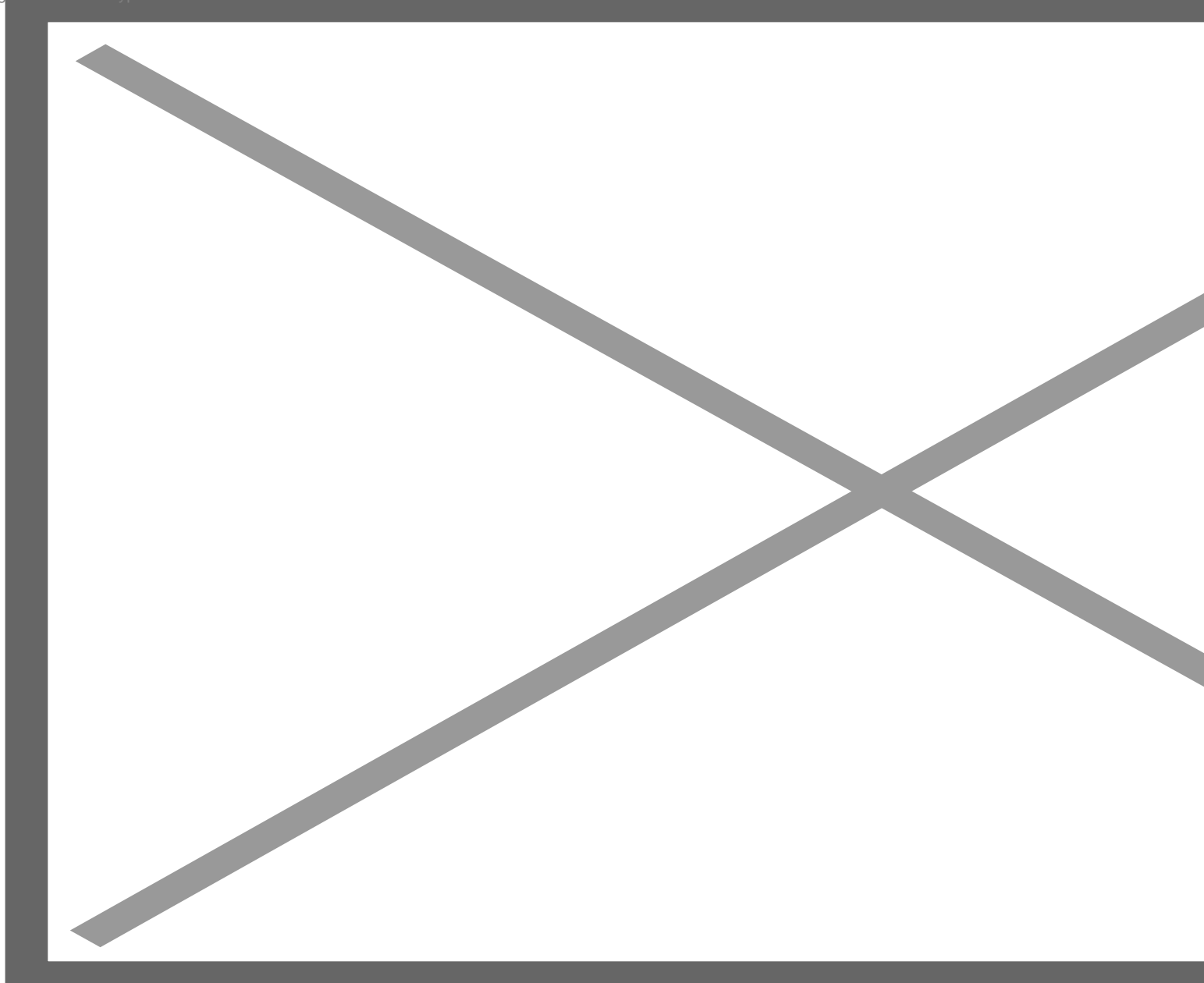
43.18 cm) fully forward. Headroom is 58" (147.32 cm) with 39" (99.06 cm) over the berth. There's a hanging locker to port with shelf space above surrounded by a teak railing. There's a battery switch at the forward end of the seating for the bow thruster. There's a marine toilet that we can get as a porta-potty or a ceramic toilet. Shelves to both sides of the berth are trimmed in teak and there's plenty of ventilation from opening portlights and an overhead hatch.

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The cabin features V-style seating. Shelves to the sides are fronted with teak. The forward hatch leads to the rode locker. The battery switch is for the bow thruster.

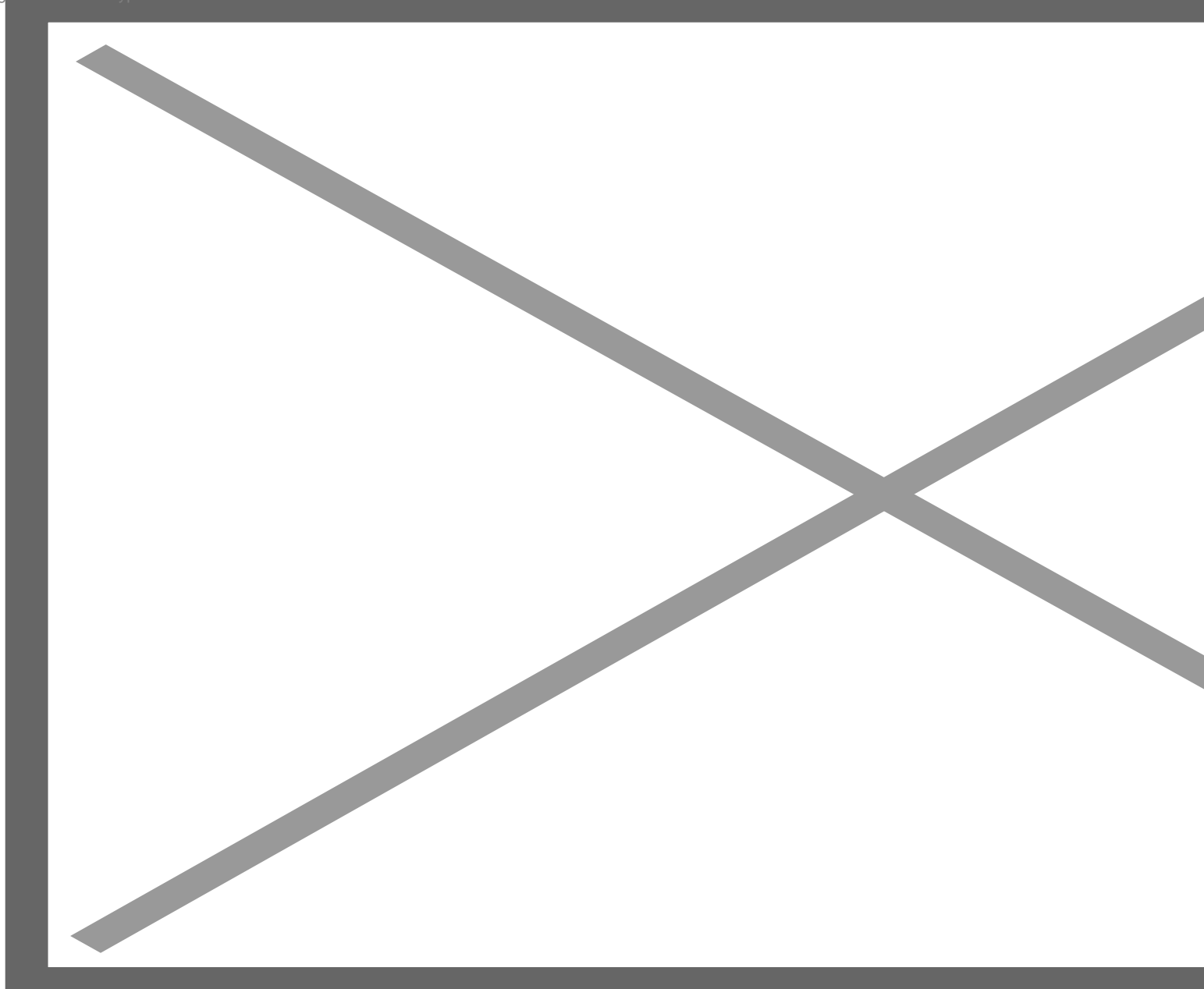
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A filler cushion is all it takes to convert the comfortable seating into a functional berth.

Power and Performance

At the stern, there's a 28" (71.12 cm) deep swim platform with a reboarding ladder to the port side. The engine is a 150-hp Yamaha four-stroke. Eastern will supply any brand and of course options to go higher than 150. But... this boat isn't really about getting it into a higher speed. It's a Downeast design, so it's more comfortable with a 150. With a larger engine, the boat is going to be trying to oppose the seas rather than accommodate them. And it does that quite well.



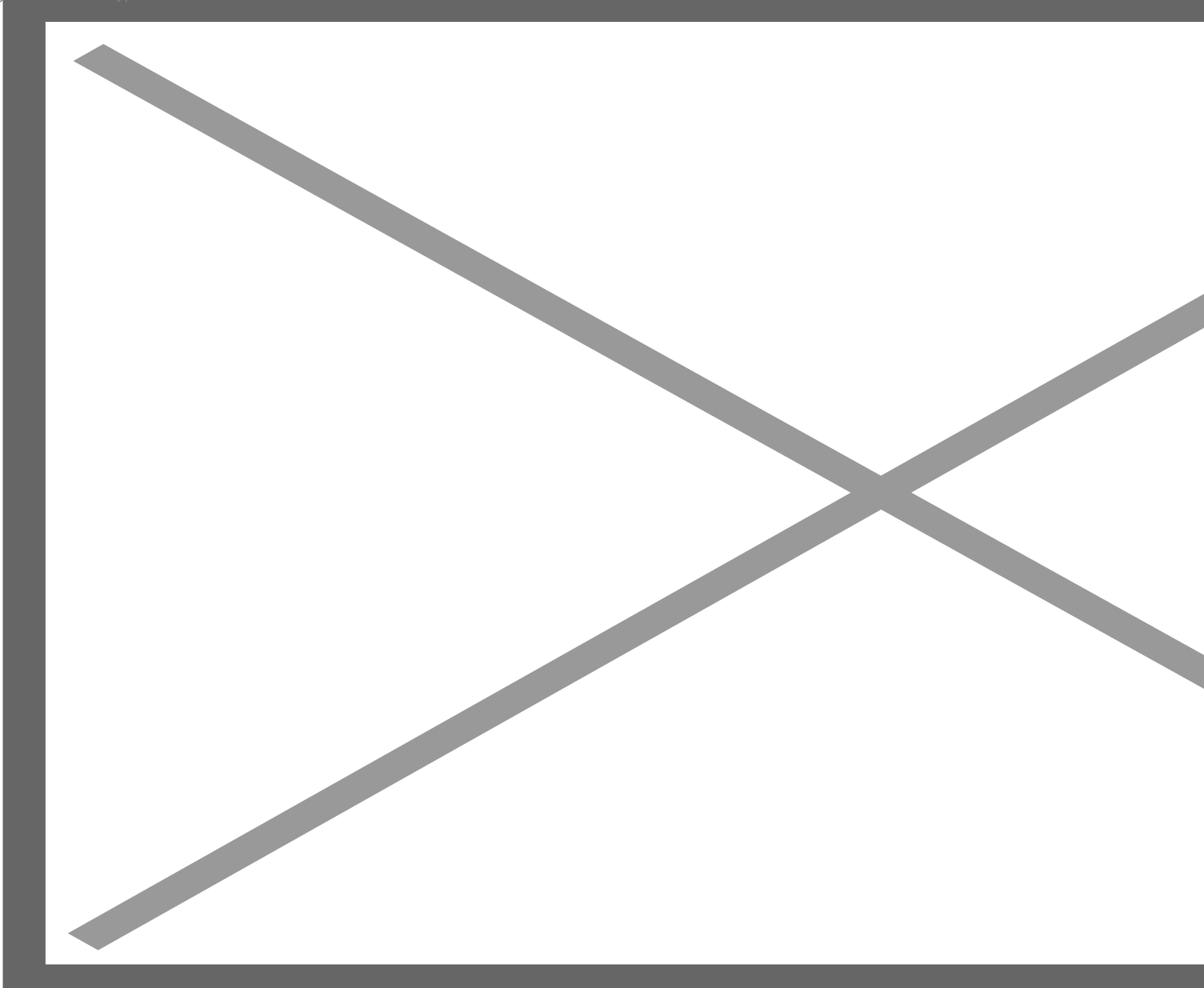
The 248 Islander is fitted with a standard 150-hp Yamaha. Eastern Boats will install larger engines, but we don't recommend it. This size seems to hit a sweet spot of handling and performance.

With that engine turning at 17x14 ¼ three-bladed Reliance prop and spun up to 5700 RPM, our speed topped out at 39.8 MPH. Best economic cruise was measured at 3500 RPM and 17.3 MPH. At that speed, the 5.5 GPH fuel burn translated into 3.2 mpg and a range of 257 statute miles, all while still holding back a 10% reserve of the boat's 90-gallon (340.69 L) total fuel capacity. With the throttle pinned, she came up on plane in an average of 4.3 seconds and she'll stay planed down to 11.4 MPH.

Handling

This boat is a flat-out absolute joy to drive. She's not a speed demon and slowing down to sedate cruising really improves things. Yes, she'll go almost 40 MPH but that's not what this boat was intended for. Drop her into the high teens/low 20s and cruising takes on a whole new meaning. Turns are sedate but make yourself aware that hard turns to port will completely block visibility as the hardtop drops down into the line of sight. Not a big deal, but clear the turn before initiating.

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Just a few shots of up-trim on the outboard is all it takes to get the 248 Islander into her ideal running attitude that has the aft half of the hull in the water.

Back at the dock, if the wheel is turned hard over, forward will turn the boat while reverse will pull the stern in the direction you want without turning the whole boat. It's basically a short and gentle side maneuver and a touch of the powerful bow thruster has her walking right over to the dock. Now I said "just a touch of thruster." It's powerful, so more is too much.

Options to Consider and Pricing

The Eastern Boats 248 Islander has a base price of \$100,400.

- Wiring for dual batteries & switch
- V-berth filler cushion
- Electric windshield wiper, port side
- Additional rod holders, drink and rod combo, pair
- Anchor windlass, includes anchor, rope, and chain
- Shore power w/ battery charger, cord not included
- Marine head w/ macerator & pumpout
- Bow thruster, bottom paint around
- Color match outboard bracket to hull
- 8,000 BTU air conditioner
- Composite handrail upgrade
- 3 step bracket mounted folding ladder
- 3 step slide-in ladder

Observations

This was one of those boats that I just didn't want to leave at the end of the day, and that doesn't happen often. I am a fan of the Downeast design and here it's executed nicely with a pleasurable comfort level. It's a good combination of workboat and pleasure craft that has a lot of appeal. I think it's summed up well in the test and review video with the term "gentleman's lobster boat." I couldn't have said it better myself.