

MasterCraft XT23 (2020-)

Brief Summary

The middle sibling of the XT Series, the XT23 is big enough to handle a crowd in the cockpit and bow, but small enough to be nimble for towing wakeboards and slalom skiers in addition to surfers. With the GEN2 wake shaping option, she can carry up to 2,600 lbs. (1,179 kg) of ballast and MasterCraft lets owners choose from a base boat to one that’s fully loaded.

Price

Base Price\$105995.00

Key Features

- Horseshoe-shaped cockpit seating
- Available ballast up to 2,600 pounds (1,179.34 kg) with GEN2 wake-shaping system
- Choice of towers
- Ilmor Marine 6.0, fuel-injected inboard engine
- Conventional bow design
- Available custom-built trailer

Specifications

Length Overall	23' 4" 7.11 m
BEAM	102" 2.59 m
Dry Weight	5,000 lbs. 2,268 kg
Tested Weight	5,935 lbs. 2,692 kg
Draft	30" 0.76 m
Draft Up	

Draft Down	
Air Draft	
Deadrise/Transom	
Max Headroom	
Bridge Clearance	
Weight Capacity	2,265 lbs. 1,027 Kg
Person Capacity	16
Fuel Capacity	55 gal. 208 L
Water Capacity	
Length on Trailer	
Height on Trailer	
Trailer Weight	
Total Weight	5,935 lbs. 2,692 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	
0 to 20	
Ratio	
Props	
Load	
Climate	

By Capt. Martin Frobisher

running ground or type unknown

The XT23 is 23'4" (7.11 m) long with an 8'6" (2.59 m) beam and she's rated for up to 16 passengers.

Mission Statement

The middle sibling of the series, the XT23 is designed to be able to be a capable wakesports tow machine for surfing, boarding or skiing and have plenty of space for just hanging out on the water. Wraparound cockpit seating, a conventional bow and an aft sunlounge have space for at least a dozen people.

Features Inspection

top

The XT23 is designed with a premium placed on passenger space with wraparound seating in the cockpit and more space in the bow.

Performance

The Wakes. Part of MasterCraft's "Well-Equipped" package, the XT23 comes with the manufacturer's optional GEN2 Surf System that features trim-tab-style plates on the stern and a ballast system with a 2,600-pound (1,179.34-kg) capacity. The GEN2 system features side-to-side switching so riders can surf a wake on the port or starboard side of the stern. A touch screen at the helm controls the wakes and the list of wake options includes Surf Left Mellow and Steep, Sur Right Mellow and Steep and Wake Beginner. Basically, the steeper the wave, the faster the boat is going. Empty the ballast and raise the tabs and the MasterCraft says the XT23 still throws a low wake for slalom skiing. The ballast system consists of forward and aft hard tanks with a total capacity of 1,300 pounds (589.67 kg) plus two soft sacks that carry 650 pounds (294.84 kg) each on top of the aft tanks. They are accessible under hatches in the aft sunlounge. Three Jabsco 30-gpm (113.56-lpm) pumps make up MasterCraft's fast-fill system. Approximate filling time is four minutes.

wake shapers

MasterCraft is smart to use electrically powered plates from trim-tab manufacturer Lenco for its wake-shaping system. It eliminates the possibility of fluid leaks that come with a hydraulic system.

ballast

The soft ballast sacks add 650 lbs. (295 kg) of weight to each side and can be removed if the space is needed for storage.

wake controls

The upper screen on the right side of the dash and the buttons to the right control the wake size and shape.

port

Here, the system is set to make a taller, steeper wake to port.

starboard

For this wake, the system is set for mellow. Notice that it's lower and longer.

surfing found or type unknown

Surfers can start out on the smaller waves until they get comfortable and the system can adjust on the fly.

boarding found or type unknown

When it's time for some big air on a wakeboard, crank up the GEN2 system to make some launching platforms.

The Numbers. The XT23 measured 25'5" (7.48 m) long with a beam of 8'6" (2.59 m) and a draft of 30" (76.2 cm). Empty weight is listed at 5,000 lbs. (2,268 kgs). With 55 gallons (208 L) of fuel, three people and test equipment onboard, we had an estimated test weight of 5,935 lbs. (2,692 kg).

running found or type unknown

The XT23 has 25" (63.5 cm) of freeboard at the stern, 35" (88.9 cm) amidships and 34" (83.36 cm) at the bow, which should keep everyone dry when the boat is running in chop.

Speed and Range Our test boat was a 2019 model powered by an Ilmor Marine 5.7-liter inboard engine and V-drive transmission. For the model year 2020, MasterCraft will be powering the XT23 with Ilmor's new 430-hp 6.0-liter Ford-based fuel-injected engine. With a 14.75" x 15.75" (37.47 cm x 40.00 cm) nibral prop spinning on a shaft coming out of the 1.57:1 transmission, we hit a top speed of 42.1 mph at 5200 rpm. Best cruise came at 3000 rpm where the XT23 ran 21.7 mph and burned 6.9 gph, which translated to 3.1 mpg and a range of 156 miles. At 3500, the mpg number was the same. The top speed was 27.6 mph and the range was only two miles less. A typical wakesurfing speed is around 10 mph, and at 2000 rpm, the XT23 ran 9.2 mph and burned 2.6 mph, giving the boat a range of 130 miles and an endurance of 14.1 hours. That's a full day of riding. In acceleration tests, the XT23 planed in 2.9 seconds, ran through 20 mph in 4.5 seconds and through 30 in 7.3 seconds.

ilmor not found or type unknown

The Ilmor Marine 6.0 MPI VD 1.57 engine is now standard in the XT23.

running found or type unknown

Three strakes in the bottom on each side provide the lift to get the XT23's bow out of the water when the boat is up and running.

Handling and Docking. At the helm, we counted 3½ turns of the steering wheel from lock to lock. The XT23 felt agile and responsive. We started by carving wide, sweeping arcs and as we tightened the turns, we were impressed. The sharp bow entry cut through the light chop and our test boat cut through our photo boat's wakes with ease. The 12" (30.48 cm) rudder is a good fit for overall maneuverability.

running found or type unknown

The XT23 can make the traditional tight turns that we expect from an inboard-powered towboat or she will track through sweeping arcs as shown here.

Interior

The Bow. The XT Series is designed with a traditional narrow bow as opposed to the picklefork style MasterCraft uses on other models. The bow is most comfortably used with passengers facing forward, leaning against the backrests on the front of each console. The side bottom cushions are 4'2" (1.27 m) long and 1'6" wide (45.72 cm). A bolster does wrap all the way around of someone wants to sit in the center at the front and ride facing aft. There are grab handles, Klipsch stereo speakers and drink holders up front with dual USB ports. For storage, the port bottom cushion and backrest are hinged and lift on a gas strut while. The starboard seat has a smaller locker in the base. The center bottom cushion in the bow pulls aside to reveal clips for a Danforth-style anchor.

bow not found or type unknown

The bow is intended for two people to ride facing forward leaning aft against the backrests and a third can lean into the backrest in the forepeak.

bow port not found or type unknown

Each gunwale has a contoured aluminum grabail on the deck and a speaker in the cutout. Only the port side has two USB ports. MasterCraft should put them on the sides.

bow storage not found or type unknown

The entire port bow seat picks up easily to access board and ski storage that extends after under the cockpit lounge.

anchor not found or type unknown

Pull aside the forward-most cushion in the bow to access the anchor locker. Having the beverage holders down low reduces the likelihood of empty cans or bottles blowing around.

bow cleat not found or type unknown

A pull-up bow cleat is provided in case the family wants to drop anchor and catch some rays.

The Cockpit. Our test boat had a wraparound windshield that extended aft to the tower base and had an opening center section. A smoked acrylic air dam closes off the passageway below to keep air from blowing into the cockpit during early- or late-season surfing sessions. Underfoot there's soft DECKadence material covering the deck. The cockpit is essentially a single wraparound lounge that starts abaft the port console and extends to behind the driver's bucket seat. In the port console, our test boat had a glovebox, two beverage holders and a small foam-lined tray. Just below is a backrest so an observer can travel comfortably while keeping an eye on the action behind the boat. An angled grab handle is in the port

gunwale. Lounges and bolsters run the length of the cockpit on each side. Each aft corner has a contoured, rounded backrest to enhance the comfort of the passenger. A bench seat and angled backrest fill in the center seating.

windshield not found or type unknown

The center section of the windshield opens to provide easy passage between the bow and cockpit.

air dam not found or type unknown

MasterCraft took the extra step of making the air dam out of smoked acrylic etched with the logo instead of a blank piece of plastic.

port console not found or type unknown

In the port console, the glovebox has the traditional MasterCraft logo in the hatch, but we'd like to see it lock.

glovebox not found or type unknown

Inside, the glovebox is lined with soft material to cushion the ride for the contents. It also has USB ports and a courtesy light.

surfing not found or type unknown

Because surfing is as much a social experience as an athletic one, the cockpit is designed to easily accommodate double-digit passengers.

back rest not found or type unknown

The rounded backrests in the aft corner seats of the XT23's cockpit are among the most comfortable we've leaned up against.

aft bench not found or type unknown

The upholstery throughout the XT23's cockpit exhibited outstanding attention to detail from the stitching to the piping to the logo.

The Tower. For the XT23, buyers can choose among three different towers. According to the MasterCraft website, they select the ZFT 4 tower, a \$4,670 upgrade, 91.1 percent of the time. Our test boat had this tower, which includes a Bimini top and folds down manually. It has four board racks. Part of the Well-Equipped package are two Klipsch S80 tower speakers with billet cans.

tower not found or type unknown

The ZFT 4 Tower has a heavy-duty base and quick-release levers that make it easy to fold down when the boat needs to reduced its bridge clearance.

tower not found or type unknown

The tower has an integrated Bimini top and the owner can choose among several colors for the canvas.

towers found or type unknown

Klipsch speakers on the tower keep the music pumping for the surfers and board-riders.

board rack found or type unknown

Even the board racks on the tower have a heavy-duty look and feel.

Cockpit Storage. As mentioned when we described the bow storage, the port side lounge backrest and bottom cushion open to access a 12'6" (3.81 m) long compartment. There's also an under-deck locker in the traditional ski-boat position between the port and starboard consoles. In the aft end of the port lounge are the batteries and switches. The aft bench seat slides forward and has shallow storage underneath. To starboard, there's dedicated space for a carry-on 36-quart (34 L) Igloo coolers.

storage found or type unknown

The bottom cushions for the aft corner seats pull out while the larger side lounges open on gas struts. The design works best to make it easier to retrieve the contents, including the cooler to starboard.

port not found or type unknown

Notice the plastic base and drainage holes for the observer's seat base. There's no wood used in the construction of any MasterCraft.

batteries found or type unknown

The batteries, switches and circuit breakers are in convenient reach in the base of the port lounge seat.

trash not found or type unknown

The wastebasket is smart because surfers like to spend hours on the water and a \$100,000 boat shouldn't have a shopping bag tied to a grab handle.

The Helm. At the XT23's helm, the bucket seat has contoured supports on the bottom and backrest plus a foldup bolster. Outboard to starboard, the gunwale has a padded armrest abaft the shift-throttle lever.

Forward in the dash, instruments include a tachometer to port, a speedometer in the center a four-function cluster-style gauge to starboard. The steering wheel tilts and to port is a small storage shelf with the stereo and wake-control screens to starboard. Down low on the same side are a cell phone holder, USB plugs and the ignition. Three ski mirrors are available with the boat.

drivers seat found or type unknown

The driver's seat is designed to keep the captain comfortable for long days on the water.

drivers bolster found or type unknown

For shorter drivers or those who want to stand up while running in a no-wake zone, the bolster for the driver's seat folds up.

gunwale armrest found or type unknown

The gunwale has a padded shelf so the driver has a comfortable place to rest his/her throttling arm.

helm not found or type unknown

The XT23's helm is finished in soft black vinyl including eyebrows over the instruments and screens to help shade them.

helm not found or type unknown

A storage compartment alongside the steering wheel would be a good place to stash sunblock and other small items.

cell phone not found or type unknown

Because everyone has one, MasterCraft includes a cell-phone holder down low alongside the driver's foot so it's as protected as possible from spray.

mirror not found or type unknown

For states where a mirror is legally allowed to replace an observer, MasterCraft offers a choice of three mirrors that clamp to the windshield frame.

The Stern. Aft of the cockpit, there are sun pads on each side of a central walkway finished in DECKadence. The center opens up to reveal the Ilmor Marine engine, which will be a 6.0-liter engine on 2020 models. Outboard on each side are compartments for the soft ballast sacks. On the transom, there's a small step covered in the same decking material and down low is a traditional teak swim platform at water level.

aft sunlounge not found or type unknown

The aft sunlounge is wide enough for two adults to lay across or lengthwise with their feet hanging off the back.

stern walkway not found or type unknown

From the central walkway on the stern, there's a small step where a rider can sit down and put on his board.

stern not found or type unknown

The water-level swim platform is contoured to the XT23's stern and notice the built-in handrails on the trailing edge.

Pricing

Base Price

\$105,995

Well Equipped Package

\$119,995

Includes

- Ilmor 6.0 MPI with a 1.57:1 V-drive transmission
- ZFT4 tower with clamping board racks
- Klipsch S80 tower speakers with billet cans
- Klipsch stereo with 7" (17.78 cm) touchscreen
- GEN2 Surf System with side-to-side switching
- Tandem Axle trailer
- Bimini and mooring cover

trailer not found or type unknown

MasterCraft makes its trailers to ensure that they are matched to the boat to provide the best ride over the road.

Observations

MasterCraft says the XT23 and the other models in this series are designed to be versatile enough to tow surfers, boarders, and skiers. Based on our tests, the boat meets that mission and more. It handles and rides well and provides comfort for a crowd of passengers.

The base model is listed at more than \$100,000 but buyers have to pay extra for items such as the ZFT4 tower and the GEN2 Surf System, both of which the manufacturer says that more than 90 percent of buyers select. If that's the case, why not just include it in the standard-equipment list and adjust the price accordingly?