

GRADY-WHITE FREEDOM 255 (2015-)



Brief Summary



The Grady-White Freedom 255.

Believe it or not, some people want a family runabout, but not one that looks "Euro-styled". Hey, it takes all kinds! Grady-White has the perfect answer: the salty-looking Freedom 255. It's a dual console with a lot of room in the cockpit for cruising with friends. And, since it is from Grady-White, if one wants to fish from it now and then, they can do it with ease.

Key Features

- Anchor locker
- 80 quart port bow storage area
- 165-quart insulated bow box, storage area
- Lockable enclosed head area with bulk storage
- Flush mount electronics area
- 60 sq. ft. cockpit
- 135-gal. fuel capacity
- Helm seating with optional electromechanically operated seat
- Wet bar with sink, storage and optional refrigerator
- Integrated outboard mounting area with swim platform and ladder

Specifications

LENGTH OVERALL	24' 9" / 7.55 m
BEAM	8' 6" 2.59 m
DRY WEIGHT	4,744 lbs. 2,152 kg
DRAFT	20" 0.51 m
DEADRISE/TRANSOM	20 degrees (SeaV2® progression)
MAX HEADROOM	open
BRIDGE CLEARANCE	7' 10" 2.39 m
FUEL CAPACITY	135 gal. 511 L
WATER CAPACITY	20 gal. 75.7 L

Engine Options

TESTED ENGINE	Currently no test numbers
STD. POWER	2 x 150-hp Yamaha F150
OPT. POWER	1x 200-hp Yamaha F200 1 x 300-hp Yamaha F300

Captain's Report



This Grady-White Freedom 255 is not just for avid anglers, but rather for a family who likes to be out on the water in a well-round boat and who have some exploring to do.

There are a lot of traditional boaters who prefer the salty look of a rugged sportfisher to that of a typical sportboat produced by one of the traditional runabout builders. These folks feel more comfortable in a boat that looks like it was born and bred for saltwater, rather than one built for small inland lakes and rivers. Fishing boats just look more nautical to a lot of people and so they prefer them even though they use them exactly the same way many people use a conventional runabout like, say, a Sea Ray.



The outboard well on the Freedom 255 is remarkably large which means you could actually work a fish there if you had to. Note that the transom door opens out which allows more room in the cockpit.

Grady-White discovered this phenomenon decades ago and always had a couple of boats in its line that fit the bill as family dual consoles, but were never overtly marketed as such. It was Grady-White's little secret. Salesmen for competitive brands would snicker at these models because they weren't quite fishy enough, but in fact they were always good sellers because there are a lot of people out there who wanted the fishboat look, and the sea-keeping abilities of a Grady-White, without all of the fishing paraphernalia and added expense. Historically, Midwesterners are not particularly fond of center consoles, so Grady-White's dealers are concentrated on the U.S. saltwater coastlines, and that's where Grady-White found these customers who didn't want a conventional runabout with Euro styling. The more Grady-White marketed its boats as rugged offshore fishermen, the more these non-fishing cruising folks liked the boat.



The transom seat easily folds down and stows away. The optional livewell is in the port quarter. There is a cutting board abaft the transom seat.

The Mission

A number of years ago Grady-White created the Freedom line of boats that were based on the same hulls as the Tournament Series. They were designed for general family cruising activities and as good all-around utility boats for nearly anything.



There is plenty of room between the rim of the wheel and the front of the seat, when moved back, to permit comfortable standing at the helm. The throttle pedestal is relatively horizontal which is a good thing. A chartplotter goes to the right of the wheel if you need one.

The Grady-White Freedom 255 DC is intended to be a versatile, trailerable boat that can operate in the kind of choppy conditions one often finds in bigger bodies of water such as Pamlico Sound, the Chesapeake, Tampa Bay, Long Island Sound, and even in the ocean on the right kind of day. And the fact that G-W boats have a good reputation as being seaworthy offshore makes the Freedom series all the more compelling for the target customer.

Major Features

The major feature of the Freedom 255 is its SeaV2® hull designed by C. Raymond Hunt and Associates and its distinctive sheer line. This is a styling and design characteristic that Grady-White has had for years and it has always set them apart from most everything else on the water in its class.



The bow seating is most comfortable for two people reclining. An optional bow table is available as is the anchor windlass.

A little Carolina bow flare helps keep any boat dry, even this 25-footer. Standard features on the boat include a portable head in a compartment in the port console, stainless steel thru-hull fittings, a freshwater shower, hydraulic trim tabs with indicator and retractor, hydraulic tilt steering, gunwale bolsters, a 165-quart ice/fish box starboard and an 80-quart dry storage port. The Freedom 255 also has "Basic Flotation" which means if the boat is swamped some part of it will float.

Options to Consider

If it were our family runabout we would go for the optional deluxe wet bar, bow table, cockpit step, upgraded marine head, refrigerator, sun platform insert, canvas package and a ski pylon -- and a colored hull! Not that we are tired of the famous Grady-White creamy-colored hull that has been around for 50 years, but we'd just like some color because we think it makes any boat look better.



Deluxe companion seat configuration w/electromechanically extendable lounge seat. Note the corner door in the console which makes it easier to enter this small space.

Power and Performance

Grady-White's basic engine package for this boat comes with twin 150's. The builder has been a partner of Yamaha since the days when Ham Hamberger barnstormed around the country lining up builders for Yamaha in the early 1980s. Grady-White was one of the first to sign on and is in a large measure responsible for helping Yamaha build its hegemony among saltwater boaters. The company offers twin 150s or 200s or a single 300- take your pick.



The optional deluxe wet bar comes with a Corian countertop, drink holders, sink, storage drawer & trash compartment.

According to Grady's own testing stated on their website, powered by a 300-hp Yamaha outboard with a total load of 6,912 lbs. (3,242.8 kgs.), including boat, engine, crew, water, fuel and gear, the boat had a WOT of 43.5 mph at 6100 rpm. It states that the best cruise was at 4000 rpm, 25.1 mph and 2.37 mpg.

Pros and Cons

First the Cons.

The Freedom line still has one foot firmly planted in fishing, and the other dangling somewhere over the side with its toe only slightly in the water. While Grady-White does offer a ski pylon as optional equipment, that is about as far as it goes to accommodate the skiing, wake boarding and tubing boaters. Further, Grady-White knows that scuba diving is best done from boats, yet we find no scuba racks on the options list, nor does its swim platform with four-step ladder lend itself to a person loaded with scuba gear climbing back aboard. There is no side-opening door on the options list.



The swooping, broken sheer line of the Freedom 255 has been a signature styling element of Grady-White through the years, and it is as beautiful today as 30 years ago, to our eye.

What is on the options list are fishy things, like a 26-gallon livewell, macerator, and outrigger kit. That makes sense because that is Grady-White's heritage, but as everyone knows fishing isn't exactly the hottest ticket in boating these days.

Now for the Pros.

Grady-White is one of the best-run companies in the business and it has a sterling reputation for integrity. Second, the Freedom 255 has a Sea V2 hull design which is comfortable and strong. The boat was designed to go offshore and be driven by anglers who want to get to the canyons as fast as possible. Thirdly, because Grady-White uses "best practices" in its construction, the systems installations are among the best in the industry.



An optional electric refrigerator means that you can keep beverages and snack chilled while entertaining. The cockpit is 27" (68.5 cm) deep.

We like the company's decision to introduce colors into its hulls. That together with the other options, such as refrigerator and an electric helm seat, give some sizzle to what is otherwise a fairly staid boat. Grady-White also believes in keeping its boats as simple as possible. It has never been big on gimcracks because in the saltwater environment complicated things easily go wrong. Because the Freedom 255 is an outboard boat and not a sterndrive like most sportboats on the market, there are fewer thru-hulls in the bottom of the boat and therefore less chance for gremlins to cause mischief.

Designed for Americans.

Like most all Grady-Whites, the Freedom 255 was designed for Americans - that means it was intended for big men to stand and sit at the helm, get through the walkthrough to the bow, and sit on the other seats in the boat. The only exception to this is the headroom, a bit tight in the console head, but manageable.



When underway in rough weather the walkthrough windshield closes to keep captain and passengers comfortable.

Holding Relative Value.

Grady-White has long been one of the most prestigious brands in this size and type. Even though in the last few years more companies have gained a foothold on the hallowed ground at the top of the reputation mountain, staying there is not easy. T

Typically strong brands like Grady-White hold their value better, which means while you paid more to buy the boat, you should also get more for it when you sell, provided the brand didn't slide off the hill in the meantime. Finally, on the subject of re-sale value, Grady-White has long had a policy of selling its boats to all dealers for the same price no matter how many units they order. That means that people who buy from a large volume dealer will be paying about the same as those buying from a

small volume dealer. This policy is virtually unique in the boating industry and prevents a wide discrepancy in used boat prices as there often is with other brands.



Note how far forward the stagnation line is. As a result, the Freedom 255 is sure-footed in all conditions at speed.