

Grady-White 231 CE:

Angling Adventures Await

Grady-White's Coastal Explorers have always been a great option for people who like a good dose of open water attitude in a hybrid-style bay boat. But since they stopped building the 191 CE years ago, the series has offered just two choices starting at 25 and 28 feet. For 2024, however, there's a new option which stretches the tape to 22'7" and maintains an easily trailerable 8'6" beam: the 231 CE.

We spotted the 231 CE for the first time at the Miami International Boat Show, a place where it's exceptionally easy for most center console fishing boats to blend into the background. Not this one. Almost immediately after jumping aboard we spotted the first unexpected feature: the bowdeck fishbox is large

enough to crawl inside of. Literally (yes I did, and yes I was able to pull the hatch down all the way and close myself in). When the day of light and variable winds arrives and yellowfin tuna are crushing baits offshore, you'll have no problem zipping out there and then icing down multiple 70-pounders.

Speaking of zipping: with a single Yamaha F250 on the transom the 231 CE posts solid performance figures, including a cruise in the mid- to upper-30s at 4500 rpm and a fuel-sipping cruise in the upper 20s at 3500 rpm while getting over 3.5 mpg. With 70 gallons in the tank that means you have 220 miles of range accounting for a 10-percent fuel reserve. Top-end, meanwhile, comes darn close to breaking 50 mph.

Hull design holds true to Grady-White's standard, with the SeaV2 variable-degree deadrise. At the transom it tapers down to 16-degrees. Another thing that holds true to Grady-White form is a flawless fit and finish capped off by the same top-shelf pieces and parts you'll find on their larger offerings. The bowdeck seatbacks rise up electrically at the press of a button. Deck hardware is all 316-grade stainless-steel, and it isn't screwed down but is through-bolted. The livewell doesn't just hold 25 gallons, but is also lighted and has a full-column inlet so every bait in there gets a full blast of oxygenated water wherever it swims.

Another Grady-White trait that carries through to this model is their





■ To raise or lower the forward seating backrests all you have to do is press a button.

pendant for keeping an eye on the family comfort features along with the fishing features. On the 231 CE that includes touches like a 10-gallon freshwater system with a transom shower, a four-speaker Bluetooth stereo system, and blue LED courtesy lighting. On the fishing side of the equation the boat has four gunwale and three transom flush-mount rodholders, four rocket launchers on the T-top, four more vertical holders forward, the livewell and fishbox, and a huge forward casting deck. The aft casting deck needs a special call-out, too, because it incorporates the swinging seatbacks found on this boat's larger siblings. When the cruise is complete they swing aft and inboard, out of the way of anglers casting from the elevated deck

and allowing direct access to the swim platform and ladder.

What all these trademark Grady-White traits and features add up to is a boat that will surely enjoy one other advantage that this builder is well known for: class-leading resale value. While a Grady may carry a higher initial price tag than the average center console, the expenditure comes back to you when you resell the boat down the line. Grady-Whites are virtually always in demand, and you recoup a larger chunk of the boat's purchase price. Of course, we don't want to start talking about moving on from this boat so early in the game. Heck, you'll be enjoying it for many years before that sort of thing ever crosses your mind. But when it eventually does one thing is for sure: You'll be glad you got the Grady. Of course, you'll probably be thinking that from day one.

QUICK FACTS

LOA: 22'7"

Beam: 8'6"

Displacement: 3720 lbs.

Draft: 1'4"

Transom Deadrise: 16 deg

Fuel Capacity: 70 gal

Max Power: 250 hp

AREA DEALERS

Norfolk Marine, Norfolk, VA, (757)

895-7432 or norfolkmarine.com;

Taylor Marine, Milford, DE

(302) 251-2506 and Ocean

City, MD (443) 647-8265 or

taylormarinecenter.com;

Tristate Marine, Deale and

Annapolis, MD (410) 867-1447 or

tristatemarine.com