

ELECTRIC BOATS

Fight the Fuel Battle

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY
SIMPLY TIM
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Al and Anne Hartley with son Nicholas enjoy quality time cruising around Lake Gaston on a 16-foot Duffy Catamaran.

How many times have you thought twice before going out on your boat this year because you dreaded facing the gas pump? Increasing fuel prices have made the old saw about a boat being a hole in the water into which you throw money a harsh reality instead of a joke. What if you could spend all day cruising in a powerboat for one dollar or less? Sound impossible? Not with

a modern electric boat.

Al Hartley, owner of Four Seasons Electric Boats located on Lake Gaston, has the solution to the gas pump blues. Al sells Duffy Electric Boats which do not require gas or oil, completely eliminating your boating dependency on big oil companies. The Duffy boats which range in length from 16 to 30-feet are a great alternative for powerboaters who spend a lot of



Enclosed cabins are great for off-season cruising in cooler weather as seen here on the Duffy 18 Classic.

time on the water, as well as for the novice boater. They are not designed for watersports or offshore fishing but rather for year-round aquatic relaxation. "There's nothing like it – sliding through the water making absolutely no noise, no smell, no maintenance, no nothing – just get in and go," says Al Hartley, whose aptly-named Four Seasons boats can be enjoyed year-round. "It's tranquil; it's serene; it's relaxing. It's all of the adjectives that tell you that life is easy."

Electric boats are especially practical for boaters who own waterfront homes. For instance, if you live on Lake Norman, you can take a large group of family and friends over to the Rusty Rudder for dinner while enjoying a peaceful ride and quiet conversation. There is no need to yell over the roar of an engine.

Duffy boats also function well at the coast. They are great for tooling around the sounds, inlets and Intracoastal Waterway (ICW). "Half of what I'm selling is heading down to the coast – Virginia Beach, Norfolk, Carolina Beach, Hilton Head Island, those kinds of places. They're made for saltwater," explains Al.

For environmentally conscience boaters, electric boats are a good alternative because they support clean water initiatives. There's no risk of polluting already fragile water supplies with petroleum products.

Tired of spending time and money servicing your boat when you could be out on the water? Electric boats made by Duffy require virtually no maintenance. "My personal boat is pushing 3,000 hours of service. It's three years old and it's had zero maintenance," says Al. "An out-board lasts about 1,500 hours. If it were an out-board it would be through its second life cycle as an engine and I've done nothing to it."

Still probably the biggest draw these days to electric boating remains the incredible cost of fuel. "I can run my 21-foot boat, take a dozen people with me and literally be out for 12 hours and use a dollar's worth of electricity. It'll go easily a hundred miles on a charge. It's pretty hard to beat," says Al. "I can't think of any [power] boat that'll do a hundred miles on a dollar."

To learn more about electric boats or to take a test ride in a new model from Four Seasons Electric Boats call Al Hartley at 866.586.2800 or log onto www.fourseasonsboats.com.

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