OFF COURSE
Darrick Robbins, *Reinders*

Donzi

There are certain names that seem to capture the essence of their product, names that carry a certain cache. When you hear the names Ferrari, Lamborghini, Cobra, Viper, Ducati they bring to mind a certain image. The speed, the edginess, the feel of immense cars, rockets on wheels, pavement burning symbols of absolute luxury consumption. Donzi is one of those symbols, but there are no wheels to be found here. A Donzi is a boat, one of the fastest, meanest, most expensive, and flat out awesome boats you will find.

Established in 1964, Donzi Marine was born in North Miami, Florida. Off-shore racing was the cauldron that produced the famed boats that bear the name Donzi. Don Aronow founded the company, not because he wanted to make money (although he did), but because he wanted to race and win. Looking at the 43-foot monster in the photo here, it is hard to believe that Don and his friend Jim Wynne began with a comparatively small 16-foot speedster. Emphasizing performance and handling, they created boats that would perform and look good doing it. It didn't hurt that the Donzi look was distinctive, with the deep V hull and the barrel back. Don and Jim had succeeded in producing a beautiful boat that could fly, and Don's nick name seemed like a good name for the company: Donzi.

Now 44 years later Donzi is one of the coolest names out there – and the boats are unbelievable. Hollywood has found the company, using their boats in films like the new "Miami

Vice," "CSI Miami," and the "Amazing Race All Stars." There is a lot of flash, but is there any substance? Knowing that you all have a holiday bonus squirreled away from last year, let me introduce you to one model – the 43ZR. At 43 feet the ZR can handle anything that Lake Michigan can throw at it, but it may not fit in your driveway. At 13,000 pounds it doesn't exactly move around easily out of the water, but in the water, now that is a different story. Twin Mercruiser engines push it around at 1075 HP each – yes that's right 2150 HP total (unless you prefer triple 700 HP engines, which are available too). Think that will plant you in your seat? This rocket will do zero to 76 miles per hour in 20 seconds, and a top speed of around 110 mph. Not quite what that ungoverned cart your mechanic uses can generate, but respectable none the less.

How about construction? The hull is lightweight Kevlar (the same material that is used for bullet proof vests) and fiberglass, all under clear-coat. The gauges, which are a bit of art in and of themselves, are made by Livorsi Marine, a local company found here in Gray's Lake. They shine whether in gold, silver, or whatever metallic color matches the custom paint scheme of the boat.

Dinner can be had in the galley. There is a bathroom and shower if you get grubby when you hit that gull at 110 mph, although it will help if you are short. There is only 60" of headroom to be found. The stereo is a Sony with Sirius satellite radio, CD player, and six speakers. Save your pennies during the week though – when you visit the marine gas station the tank will hold 314 gallons. Funny, there is no mention of fuel economy in the specifications. I guess the filling process is surpassed only by the rapidity with which the engines will use it. But don't be deceived, Donzi contends that this can be a family boat too. Who knew? Certainly your wife will agree to this little purchase, which brings to mind the important question. "How much does that thing cost?" This little boat has a suggested list price of $425,000, but keep in mind you can always negotiate to save a buck or two. As one reviewer said it, "for a 43-footer with triple engines this (price) is reasonable." So call the bank, save your bowling money, sell those old golf clubs, and get out on the water – Donzi will take you there in a hurry. Oh, and if you end up with one of these, then I definitely want a ride!!

(All of the information for this article was obtained at the Donzi website www.donzimarine.com, in case you need a boat a little smaller than 43 feet.) **-OC**