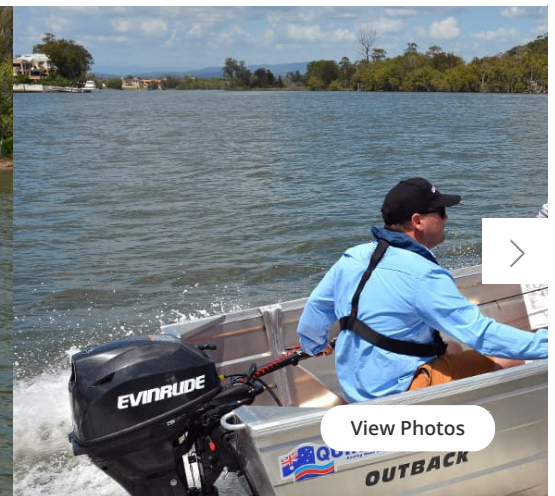




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REVIEW

December 29, 2017



## Quintrex 350 Outback Explorer Review

An entry-level Quintrex Outback Explorer for budget boating and fishing

Heavy duty car-topper or budget trailerboat package? Both we reckon. Strictly speaking the new Quintrex 350 Outback Explorer is a little on the heavy side for car-topping, but with the right roof-rack/boat-loader set-up there is no doubt you could heft this sturdy little boat up top onto the roof of your car or SUV. With or without a trailer, the new Quinnie 350 Outback Explorer is a terrific new fishing tinny, tender or canal runner.

### OVERVIEW

Quintrex has upgraded its Explorer range of bass-and-barra style punts with three new sizes with more space, more freeboard and incorporating the new Quintrex F-Series forked bow shape.

The new additions bring the total number of Quintrex Explorer models to a neat dozen. The boats now range from the baby 250 lightweight Explorer car topper to the deluxe outfitted 440 Explorer Trophy bass, barra and bream chaser.

The new Outback models come in 3.5m, 3.7m, and 3.9m lengths. They have

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Big, wide, foam-filled seat thwarts

Good all-round performance with Evinrude

**Not so much!**

Needs noise-dampening in anchor well

All three Outback Explorers come with a traditional twin-thwart interior layout with an anchor shelf tucked under the foredeck.

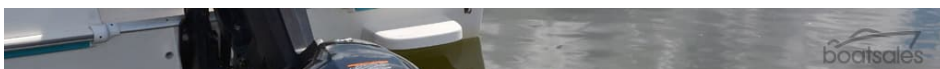
The boats can be readily customised thanks to the large range of options on offer. The most desirable option will unquestionably be the low carpeted floor between the seat thwarts, but customers can also rig the boats with things like full side rails, fuel and battery racks, an overhead bimini top, hull paint and vinyl hull wrapping, as well as extruded side decks, pedestal seats and a side console helm layout in the 390 model.

Having already tested the flagship [390 Outback Explorer](#) rigged with a heap of optional extras, this week we are checking out a bog-standard 350 model, coupled with an Evinrude 15hp four-stroke outboard. This is budget boating at its very best! You can trailer the boat or car-topper it no problems.

## PRICE AND EQUIPMENT

If you were to decide that car-topping is the way to go, Surf Coast Marine on the Gold Coast had boat-and-engine packages priced from \$5490. Included is an Evinrude 15hp short shaft (15in) four-stroke outboard with manual-start and tiller-steering, along with an inshore safety gear pack and 12 month's boat registration.

Add a single-axle, unbraked galvanised steel Quintrex trailer and the price rises to \$7290 with registrations.


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Standard features within the boat itself includes bow and stern carry handles, a double towing eye for attaching a safety chain in addition to the winch strap/cable, welded, reinforced rowlock blocks, a V-shaped internal transom structure with diagonal support brace, the aforementioned oversized bench seat-thwarts (380mm wide), and a total of seven internal cross-ribs, four of which rise up to the gunwale from the internal chines.

## DESIGN AND LAYOUT

The seat-thwarts are solidly welded in place between the four vertical ribs to stiffen the hull and to provide structural support and rigidity.

Noise dampening foam strips have been applied to the backs of the cross-ribs to suppress squeaks and rattles for a quieter, more peaceful ride.



Built into the forward seat thwart you'll find a handy glove-box for stowing the car keys, cell phones, etc. The box also incorporates two flip-out drink holders.

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need to lay down a rubber mat or a strip of carpet, as this is not included with the standard boat pack.

Between the forward seat-thwart and the anchor shelf there is additional space for safety gear and a tackle box or two.

The two seat-thwarts are separated by a broad centre cockpit fishing area with high freeboard thanks to topsides which are 80mm taller when compared with the standard Explorer. The raised sides add weight to the boat, but also make it feel safer in choppy water.

As with all basic alloy tinnies, it is not easy to move about the interior of the Outback Explorer due to the ribs which stretch across the floor, and the angle of the alloy bottom sheet as it rises up to meet the chines. Rather than put up with this inconvenience, we would recommend spending a few hundred dollars extra to fit the boat with the optional carpeted, plywood floor.



Other worthwhile options include a fuel tank rack, a transducer bracket, and full-length bow to stern side rails. The latter will allow you to fit a clamp-on fish finder/GPS and any number of rail-mount rod holders.

## CONSTRUCTION

Quintrex has plenty of purpose designed car-topper boats within its expansive boat range (including the Wanderers we tested some months back), so the company opted for a heavier duty construction for its Outback Explorer models.

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The thwarts are also wider and deeper than you will find in most car-toppers, and filled with enough foam for the hulls to achieve a Basic Flotation standard.

Given the above standard of construction, the two larger Outback Explorers are probably a bit too big and heavy for car-topping. However, at 81kg, the smaller, more compact 350 model could be a car-topper proposition, especially if you invest in a boat-loader-style roof rack which does most of the heavy lifting for you.

You might also consider keeping the 350 Outback Explorer on a trailer for the most part, and then car-topping it for those occasional trips to remote, far-flung fishing destinations with poor quality access roads that are unsuited to trailering.

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During our test of the Outback Explorer we found it was easy to forget that it is only 3.5m long, as the high topsides and ample beam make it feel bigger, more capable. Underway the boat is also stable, easy to drive, comfortable (considering its diminutive size) and well balanced.

With regard to power, the 350 Outback Explorer is rated for short shaft outboard engines between 8hp and 15hp, and for a maximum engine weight of 58kg.

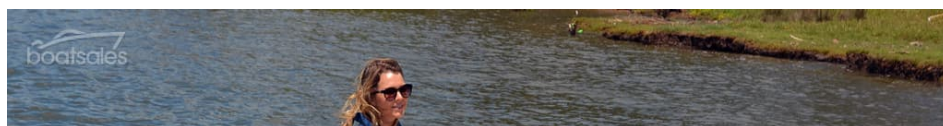
We'd recommend opting for the maximum power engine as the test boat easily handled the weight and thrust of the 15hp Evinrude four-stroke mounted on the boat's sturdily built, and reinforced transom.



The tiller-operated, twist-grip throttle Evinrude 15hp was easy to use and delivered strong, consistent power from idle through to a wide-open throttle top speed of 21.1 knots — which is ample for applications ranging from tender through to backwater car-topper fishing rig.

## VERDICT

The 350 Outback Explorer is another great new tinny from Quintrex. If you're looking for a heavy-duty car topper, low-maintenance tender, or a budget trailerboat fishing package, consider adding this ripper new rig to your short list.

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For fishing we'd add the optional floor and side rails, but it is otherwise good to go. The boat is well-mannered on the water, safe, stable and spacious. It's a practical, good fun little boat, and one that is sure to provide years of trouble-free service.

### RATINGS

Overall rating: 4.66/5.0

Mechanical/equipment: 4.5/5.0

Packaging and practicality: 4.9/5.0

On the water performance: 4.7/5.0

Value for money: 4.7/5.0

X-factor: 4.5/5.0

### Specifications: Quintrex 350 Outback Explorer

Price as tested: \$7290 including Evinrude 15hp four-stroke short shaft (15in) outboard with manual start and tiller-steering, single axle Quintrex alloy unbraked trailer, 12 months QLD boat and trailer registrations and an inshore safety gear pack.

Priced from: \$5490. As above but with no trailer.

Hull length: 3.58m

Beam: 1.53m

Depth: 760mm

Hull weight: 81kg

Weight on trailer: Approx 300kg

Bottom & transom alloy: 1.6mm

Topsides alloy: 1.6mm

Maximum power: 15hp

Maximum engine weight: 58kg

Maximum load: 418kg

Engine as tested: Evinrude 15hp four-stroke outboard

Fuel capacity: Portables

Flotation standard: Basic

Maximum persons: Four

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