

### Various changes / upgrades / improvements to a Beneteau 323

I had a Beneteau 23'5" "First 235" that I absolutely loved. I turned away sailing club (SOS) members who moved up in boat size and wanted to sell me their old boat. I said, "No, thanks", I was totally satisfied with what I had.... until I saw the 323 at a boat show five years ago. I looked at it at the Annapolis show every year, and repeatedly I went to Annapolis Yacht Sales (AYS) who are located at the marina on the same creek I'm on in Eastport/Annapolis. Literally, I drooled over the 323 but never saw that I could afford it on my retirement pay. That changed, and I jumped on it and bought the one AYS had on the lot in August 2006. Reviews on the 323 say that because of the wide beam, it's better sailed more upright, and I'd agree with that. That also makes it more comfortable for non-sailor guests. You didn't say if you've ever been on one or not. I liked A) can stand up in the vee cabin with the hatch closed; B) Lots of hatches for salon light and air C) the standard 12 volt refrigeration; D) the pivoting steering wheel. Now they use a 36" wheel. Used to be 32". E) THE HEAD. The first weekend I had it at a marina, ladies who looked over boat said, "That's not a head- that's a bathroom!".

In as much as it's a good boat at the start, I find in the 30 months I've had it, I've made- or have the parts for- 54 changes/upgrades/additions to the boat:

/// AC - battery charger remote monitor panel added to nav station (\$40.00?)

AC - inverter - #2 cables to batteries, #14 to ckt breaker & 15 amp ckt breaker

AC - inverter added - Xantrex 1000 watt

AC - inverter remote monitor panel added to nav station

AC outlet inside salon table

AC panel - changed from 6 to 8-breakers model

/// AC panel - moved doubled-up AC outlet cable to a 2nd circuit breaker

ACDC panels - wired circuit breaker panel back-lights (and the nav station light) to their own circuit breaker

added a one/both ceiling switch to forward overhead salon lights (343 have this)

added a one/both ceiling switch to galley overhead lights (343s have this)

added cigarette lighter/power outlet to salon cabinet on the side by the port, next to nav station.

added conduit from ckt brk pnl to lazarette for data cables (battery charger and inverter)

added fishing rod holders

added hanger hook (an eye strap) in head under winch bolts

Added eye strap to cabin-side of dodger deck-mount bracket to allow another place to hang clothes hangers.

added pressurized anchor-washdown system

/// added shroud cleat to tie off flag halyard

Added second flag halyard and cleat on port side.

Added OEM cleat to port side of boom, like the starboard one.

added three overhead switches for three mast lights

added fold-out teak cockpit table

/// added two OEM mid-ship deck cleats for spring lines

anchor - CQR 35

anchor - Danforth 16 pound

anchor - Fortress FX16

anchor chain - 62 feet 5/16 HT

anchor line - 35 feet 9/16 three strand

anchor line - 50 feet 5/8 three strand

/// anchor locker pad eye (on shelf) for securing bitter end of anchor rode

anchor windlass -

anchor windlass - #2 cable

anchor windlass - switch on steering pedestal

anchor windlass outlet in sidewall of anchor locker for handheld control

/// installed a second anchor locker overboard drain on the port side- about a fifteen inches above the original one.

battery - third battery-battery box

battery - third battery - number 6 charging cable

battery - third battery 1/0 cables and OEM on-off battery switch  
BBQ - propane Magma deluxe  
bimini added in Sea Grass Green. I'm working on the dodger(frame is mounted)  
/// cabin sole – used Forstner bit to make finger hole in each floor panel.  
cabin sole - two coats of poly varnish  
changed main traveler lines from gray to red and green  
changed helm pedestal drink holder to one to accept can coolies  
chart plotter – added Raymarine C80  
/// DC panel - cabled both the VHF and the stereo to one common circuit breaker.  
DC panel - removed deck and running light from individual circuit breakers; in effect, put all three mast lights onto one breaker.  
Added OEM cleat to front of mast for spinnaker sock tie-off.  
lifelines changed to add gates to both sides of bow  
line stopper added- double - starboard  
line stopper added - triple - starboard  
nav station - light over mirror added  
nav station – 18 x 24-inch mirror added to bulkhead on wall to head.  
plumbing - change commode to household size  
plumbing - water tank redone to add valves to winterize and check water level.  
///raw water intake - engine- added tee and shutoff valve with hose bib to winterize, and use engine as bilge pump  
topping lift routed to cockpit and stopper  
/// winch handle pocket added in cockpit- now there is one port and starboard  
/// Added vent to upper, aft-side, of galley sink cabinet to vent compressor heat.  
/// Added two horizontal battens to convert the shelf behind the shower seat to a secure shelf.  
/// Added a batten to the shelf UNDER the shower seat to make that a secure storage shelf.  
/// Added finger holes to panel in aft end of quarter bunk. There is a lot of storage around the fuel tank.  
Routed out a lid to allow access to storage UNDER the shelf by the port at the aft of the quarter cabin.  
I found some four-inch long coat hooks that can be mounted to the head&1/4 cabin side of the stair handrail. I unscrewed the handrail upper brackets, put the bolt back in through the hook and re-bolted.

The three-hash-marked items I suggest you do. The mid-ships cleats should be added since there is a fairlead opening in the toe rail at the widest beam. Used at the dock for spring lines, but more importantly are needed because my sailing club does a lot of raftups. Beneteau has a web site to buy the OEM parts that they use at the factory. Some of these changes were made because I plan on taking it to Florida/Dry Tortugas and the Caribbean eventually. The factory shore powered battery charger has outputs for three batteries, but the boat comes with two batteries. The 323 is Lloyd's rated Class B, which is to say up to 13-foot seas; Some changes (inverter in particular, and cabin-top line stoppers) were made because a friend used his discount (saved A LOT of money). My dealer here in Annapolis gives you a “new-boat” discount card at West Marine and another at Fawcett's, a local chandlery. They are good for 30 days from first use, and you get a nice discount on those items you need to set the boat up to the way you want it. Other thoughts:::: AYS would supply the canvas work at \$2200 for the bimini, \$5200 for the dodger, and filler panel. I opted to do my own since I have a Sailrite sewing machine, which has paid for itself. I wanted a couple of things done differently- mostly to have the bimini lower than the other people would make it and provision for side curtains. Taller biminies let in more rain.... I couldn't believe they want over 400 for upgraded upholstery, which as it turned out is only the 4 cushions in the salon! The vee berth and quarter berths do not come upholstered, just a basic mattress finish like on your mattresses at home. Again I'm making covers for them myself. I made cockpit cushions also. ... I don't care for the wind/speed/pilot instruments blocking the line of sight if you sit while steering. Sometime, somehow, I'll lower them, but that's low on my priority list. I moved one of the cockpit fold-up seats to the stern rail to sit on and get a better view when at the helm. You'll need a longer support post. The anchor-locker shelf for the windlass is a solid fiberglass layup that is a little over one inch thick.

I guess that's all that comes to mind. I've rambled on, but decided to save this and maybe add to it in case someone else wants some 323 advice. I could probably give you more, but you'd probably think I was getting a commission! I'd say buy the boat! Any other questions? Ron, Jan 04-2009