

## Electro Mariner

I know this is not a car review, but hey check this out especially if you a fisherman or just an avid boater. What we have here is a 25 foot Bayliner that has been rescued from the bottom of a lake and transformed into a full blown electric powered ocean going vessel.

This idea is the brain child of inventor Robert Ferran. I met Ferran at the San Diego International Auto Show this last December and after chatting with him and his son-in-law Craig Swanson I realized they were on to something. One look at their boat you could see the design was very simple and lacked miles and miles of wires and tons of batteries. Once you look into the hull you will see that they have used your standard deep cell lead acid batteries found in RV's and large boats. Not only does this make for reliable power source it also double as ballast.

If you into boating at all you know ballast is what keeps you upright and behind the batteries you will find an electric motor that produce 48 volts which is a very safe amount of electricity to have to deal with while in operation.

I was invited down to the Harbor Island to take the "Charge It" as it is named out for a test run. Now I have been on many boats and once you get to the dock you have an hour or two getting ready to sail out into the water (Unless you came down to the docks early to get all the maintenance out of the way). You have to fill the boats fuel tanks and depending on the size of the boat you could be in the hundreds of dollars to fill your pleasure cruiser, then you have to check out the engine compartment and make sure you have no fuel leaks and everything is ready to go. Well when I arrived at the Harbor we all got together chatted a little then walked down to the dock, found the "Charge It", removed the tie ropes, climbed on board, met the captain of the "Charge It", chatted a little, turned on the key, put it in reverse and backed out of the slip and headed out! That was it, no inspections no fear of fuel leaks just get aboard and go!

The next odd thing was there was no noise from the engine bay, sure you could hear the out drive and again that was it! We headed out to the San Diego Bay and hit the throttle and moved out at around 8 to 9 knots. Now if you an avid fisher person you might think that is a little slow, well maybe, but the "Charge It" was only outfitted with one electric motor so the top speed was restricted. Plans on the drawing board are for larger vessels and more power.

As we motored out an into San Diego Bay I felt would most people do this, calming, relaxing and then we sailed by a fuel dock and this massive black 50 foot yacht was fueling up with diesel, how did I know it was diesel? When the captain started his engines a billow of black soot covered the back of his yacht to the point you couldn't read the name on the back of the boat.

That is Electro Mariners dream, to remove that diesel smoke and all the fears of fuels away from boating.

We sailed around for an hour or two in the bay and then went back to the dock and I found out we had only used about 15 percent of the power. Another feature is the solar panels mounted on top of the roof area which alone will charge the batteries in a couple of days if needed, in fact all the time you out the

batteries are charging. One more thing, once at the dock and you're plugged into the harbor power source you will find it only takes pennies to charge up your boat. This boat is being designed and built in San Diego so keep your eyes out for Electro Mariner to make a big splash in boating; with no fuel costs a lot of boats will leave the harbor.

How much does one cost? Electro Mariner is still in the development stages, but they will have a variety of boats to choose from so stay tuned or go to their website [www.electromariner.com](http://www.electromariner.com) for a lot more information or you can call Craig Swanson at 858-509-4996.