

## Outdoors

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### Boat of the future is here

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As I sat in the canoe-kayak hybrid called a NuCanoe, "Doc" Lynn, from his own specious vessel, asked me to do something bizarre.

"Go ahead and sit on the side of it," said the demonstrator from "Unique Yaks" in Tampa.

We were probably in about 6 feet of water, having entered the bay via the sandy beach area north of the Crab Trap restaurant.

Sit on the side of it, huh?

"Really?" I asked.

"Yep," Lynn answered with confidence. "Go ahead."

Foreshadowing a tannin-stained bath, I flopped my legs off the side of this unusually wide kayak, and pulled my midsection forward. The NuCanoe dipped to the water, then stabilized. My legs dangled in the water.

Leaning forward, but stable, I felt like this was a feat just short of walking on water.

I was balanced and relaxed, in a position as comfortable as sinking into a La-Z-Boy recliner.

"Wow," I said. What else could I say?

I imagined myself in this position, flinging a top-water plug across the bay, and working the lure in one of the most unique positions possible.

Then, Lynn suggested I try something more outlandish.

Supposedly, you can stand up on this thing. I would be a good test. The first time I ever tried wind surfing, for example, I realized just how accustomed to dry land I was as my ankles were shaking like tarpon rocketing from the water.

Still, I stood to my feet, and it was hard to believe that I was standing on a vessel that could allow me to fish as though I were in a boat.

If there's a water vessel of the future, this is it.

Have you ever been in a canoe or kayak and been worried about the current around a pass sucking you out to sea? Or possibly being lost in a maze of mangroves when your arms already ache from paddling a long distance?

Well the NuCanoe can mount an electric motor that's capable of cruising up to eight knots. So much for getting pulled into the Gulf, or dreading getting lost and weary.

Also, the NuCanoe is so stable it provides a whole new level of comfort. It's wide enough that you can lean back in an ultra-comfortable chair and prop your feet on the sides. Fish and stretch.

Speaking of the seat, it's raised to the point that the NuCanoe can take 6 inches of water, and your back side will not get wet. Surely, some have forgotten to take out their wallet from their back pocket, then paddled, and by the end of the trip, ended up with drenched business cards and dollar bills. No? Just me, I guess.

But we all can agree that being dry is nice. The extra space also allows to take even a monstrous tarpon onboard. The sport box in the front, an option to the standard NuCanoe, has a ruler with which to measure fish. The NuCanoe has built in chords that naturally fit the box and keep it in place.

Many times, kayaks only have room for an ice chest in the back. It often can be a waist-straining event to attempt to turn around and toss a fish in the box or grab the bait.

The best part? No gas needed. Forget paying \$4 a gallon and burning off pollutants into our already fragile atmosphere. Get the exercise of paddling, and if that turns out to be too much exercise, consider investing in an electric motor.

Then what you have is a futuristic hybrid that could only be described as the stealthiest powerboat around.

Fish, beware.

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