

Triton 21 TrX (2018-)

Brief Summary

The Triton 21 TrX Elite is a performance bass boat, from top to bottom. She was powered by a new Mercury 250 Pro XS 4.6-liter V-8 outboard. A discerning angler with a long list of well-considered fishing feature requirements should be pleased with what Triton delivers.

Price

Base Price \$64695.00

Prices, features, designs, and equipment are subject to change. Please see your local dealer or visit the builder's website for the latest information available on this boat model.

Key Features

- Built-in LED bow navigation lights
- Built-In ice chest
- "Stay-Full" livewell overflow system
- Two hi-capacity rear insulated livewell with insulated lids
- One-bike seat and Power Pro-Pole
- Centric II pedestal seat with mesh suspension
- Built-in fish measuring board with tool holder
- Oversized rod lockers
- Lowrance HDS 7 Carbon

Test Results

RPM	MPH	Knots	GPH	MPG	NMPG	STAT. MILE	NM	dBa
600	3.7	3.2	0.8	4.6	4	196	170.1	N/A
1000	3.9	3.4	1.5	2.6	2.3	110	95.6	N/A
1500	5.6	4.9	2.4	2.3	2	99	85.8	N/A

RPM	MPH	Knots	GPH	MPG	NMPG	STAT. MILE	NM	dBa
2000	7.5	6.5	4.3	1.7	1.5	74	64.2	N/A
2500	8.5	7.4	6.3	1.3	1.2	57	49.6	N/A
3000	21.8	19	6.2	3.5	3.1	149	129.3	N/A
3500	29.4	25.6	7.5	3.9	3.4	166	144.2	N/A
4000	37.9	33	9.6	3.9	3.4	167	145.2	N/A
4500	45	39.1	13.4	3.4	2.9	142	123.5	N/A
5000	51	44.3	16	3.2	2.8	135	117.2	N/A
5500	62.6	54.4	19.1	3.3	2.8	139	120.6	N/A
6000	71.4	62.1	23.3	3.1	2.7	130	112.7	N/A
6200	73.7	64.1	24.5	3	2.6	127	110.6	N/A

[View the test results in metric units](#)

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Specifications

Length Overall	21' / 6.40 m
BEAM	95" 2.41
Dry Weight	1,840 lbs. 835 kg
Tested Weight	2,812 lbs. 1,276 kg

Draft	N/A
Draft Up	
Draft Down	
Air Draft	
Deadrise/Transom	N/A
Max Headroom	open
Bridge Clearance	N/A
Weight Capacity	
Person Capacity	
Fuel Capacity	47 gal. 177 L
Water Capacity	44.5 gal. 168 L
Length on Trailer	
Height on Trailer	
Trailer Weight	
Total Weight	2,812 lbs. 1,276 kg
Aft Deck	
Salon Inside Width	

Salon Fore & Aft	
Salon Height	
Salon Volume	
Galley Volume	
Master SR Width	
Master SR fore & Aft	
Master SR Overhead	
Master SR Volume	
Eng. Room Volume	

Acceleration Times & Conditions

Time to Plane	N/A
0 to 20	
Ratio	N/A
Props	24” Fury
Load	1 person, full fuel, no water
Climate	74 deg., 64 humid; wind: 15-20 mph; seas: chop

Triton 21 TrX running

Traxxas 21 TrX running

Tournament bass fisherman demand performance and the Triton 21 TrX Elite delivers that with a 250-hp Mercury Pro XS V-8 on the transom.

Overview

Anyone who likes to fish knows the Triton brand and the reasons for that go beyond the metallic paint job. These boats come in at a high level of fit-and-finish, and it's evident when we got close that Triton pays attention to the details. We didn't actually cast a line, but the hull finish *did* gleam in the sun.

The boat has a full fishing package with twin consoles for the passenger as well as driver comfort. She was rigged with Power Pole shallow-water anchors aft, ample in-deck storage, and a stereo system to crank the tunes. But we were more tuned into the Mercury 250 Pro XS outboard, which emitted a spirited burble (more on that later) that really amped up the excitement. The carpeted decks felt good underfoot (as did the Hot-Foot pedal-style throttle control), and the helm layout gave us the confidence to put the hammer down and take her on a screaming run across the lake.

Triton 21 TrX fishing platform

The Triton 21 TrX is a wide-open fishing platform with a 21' (6.40 m) LOA and a beam of 7'11" (2.41 m).

Major Features

- Mercury 250 Pro XS 4.6L V-8 outboard with Torque Master gearcase
- Two livewells equipped with a Stay Full Livewell Overflow system featuring multiple pumps
- Adjustable upholstered and suspended driver and passenger seats
- Pro-style trolling motor rigging with six-gauge wire and recessed foot control
- Rod racks for a dozen 8' (2.43 m) outfits
- Choice of 10 color schemes

Triton 21 TrX running

The Triton 21 TrX is fitted out with loads of amenities for the bass angler.

Power – Mercury Pro XS 250

We tested the Triton 21 TrX Elite with the Mercury 250 Pro XS outboard. This is the latest generation of Mercury outboard, a naturally aspirated 4.6-liter V-8 that used its large displacement designed specifically for bass boats.

Triton 21 TrX outboard

The Mercury 250 Pro XS features a 4.6-liter V-8 powerhead, 20" shaft, and Torque Master gearcase.

Typically, bass boat owners want fast hole shot times and high top speeds. That's quite an order because props that will maximize speed will usually hurt hole-shot times and vice versa. Mercury's solution was to create the largest displacement outboard in class, tune it from 200-hp to 300-hp, then optimize its spark timing with a transient spark sequence to generate short bursts at close intervals. Mercury says that this can increase torque from 5 to 10% and gives the engine significant punch at 4500 rpm.

At the top end, the Pro XS is rated to turn an extra 200 rpm up to 6200 rpm. Our test engine had a 20" shaft and the hub is shorter, and has lower water pick-ups and fewer of them to reduce drag. This gearcase and hub are designed to run with the hull barely skimming the water for max speed.

Innovative Engine Design

The 4.6-Liter V-8 250 Pro XS weighs only 505 lbs. (229 kg). This is a substantial improvement in its power-to-weight ratio. The 4.6-liter double-overhead-cam design, with four valves per cylinder, combines with an enlarged intake to deliver plenty of air and fuel when it's needed.

Triton 21 TrX cam design

The double-overhead-cam design has four valves per cylinder. The chains are self-tensioning. The valves don't need shims, which saves on scheduled maintenance bills.

Electronic Controls Dial It In

These outboards have their air-fuel-spark combination carefully controlled by a computer brain that is quicker and more consistent at tuning the mix than any throttle jockey. For example, when accelerating, Mercury employs what is known as transient spark which has calibrated spark timing to improve torque. Mercury says this increases torque from 5 to 7%.

The engine controls also have the ability to break out of set parameters, and Mercury has tuned the engine so that there's always punchy acceleration available up to cruising rpms as high as 4500.

Advanced Range Optimization

The flipside of that coin is efficiency. When the helmsman leaves the throttle alone for a long run the engine controls modify fuel, air, and spark timing to deliver more efficient performance. This is called Advanced Range Optimization, and it means the engine is running leaner while giving the crew no noticeable deficiency of power. The system works in conjunction with the optional Active Trim feature, Mercury's proprietary automatic engine trim system, which tunes the trim for optimal efficiency.

Triton 21 TrX running

For long runs, Advanced Range Optimization on the Mercury 250 Pro XS detects the throttle has been set to a steady state, and tunes the fuel-air mixture and the spark to dial up the efficient operation.

Active Trim

While expert drivers may sneer at the idea of Active Trim, it has been shown to work in our testing, and can even offer something to those who may think their feel for boat trim is more effective than that of a computer. It lets the operator tweak the rig, in order to find just the right balance and control when running at high speed when very little of the boat is actually in the water.

F1000 Pro XS running

The Mercury 250 Pro XS can be fitted with Active Trim to tune the engine trim automatically, but still lets the operator fine-tune trim at high speeds.

The Fuel Injection System

The new engine uses a DOHC architecture with 32 valves that are operated by self-tensioning chains. Two intake valves charge each cylinder, with the injector for each cylinder positioned between them in the intake manifold.

We asked Mercury's techs why the injection design was chosen, rather than a direct in the cylinder injector. They answered, "A port fuel injection (PFI) system has many advantages, chief among those being simplicity, reliability, and cost," said Brian Meyer, category manager for 75+ hp outboards for Mercury Marine. "Direct injection (DI) systems certainly can improve fuel economy and performance of an engine. However, Mercury has chosen to address the performance needs of our customers by optimizing the displacement and efficiency of our PFI engine, while also employing our Advanced Range Optimization (ARO) technology. We believe that the ARO system yields comparable improvements in fuel economy to a DI fuel system at a significantly lower cost."

F1000 Pro XS fuel injection

This detail shows Mercury's port fuel injection, which places the injector, indicated by the green arrow, between the valve stems on the intake ports. Mercury says that this design has proven to be reliable and cost-effective.

Damping Vibration

The Pro XS has fitted with what Mercury calls the Conventional MidSection (CMS). Mercury engineers determined the vectors of vibrational force on the new V8 are athwartships. They then designed the mounts to offset that vibration at suitable angles. They were engineered to be firmer, rather than just softer to damp any vibration, we are told.

Unusual Exhaust System

The exhaust manifold is in the V of the engine, not on the outside. Exhaust is routed down the centerline, in the middle of the V, then splits in two where it enters separate mufflers in the leg and finally down to the exhaust in the hub. This allowed Mercury to keep the cowl width slimmer so that the outboard could be installed on 26" (.66 m) centers – 2.5" (.06 m) less than its primary competitor.

When at idle, a relief valve opens on the rear of the outboard body.

Triton 24 TrX exhaust manifold

The exhaust manifold is on the centerline, the top is indicated by the blue arrow, located between the two banks of cylinders that make up the "V" of the V-8 configuration.

Torque and Power

The outboard we tested had the 20" (.51 m) shaft length and the optional Torque Master gearcase, which has a 1.75:1 ratio and is designed to provide greater acceleration and speed from the hole shot to cruising at the upper end of the rpm range. The Torque Master is identifiable by the forward hydrodynamic plate, located just above the side water pickups.

Triton 24 TrX torque master

This lower plate, indicated by the orange arrow, is the indicator that the outboard has the Torque Master gearcase, which is best described as a semi-surfacing application with a 1.75:1 gear ratio for boats that run in the 70 mph range. Note that there are only three water pick-ups on the side to reduce drag. Others are on the nose of the torpedo.

Bring on the Rumble

The Mercury 250 Pro XS has a very specific clientele with specific expectations, and so the engine is modified from other Mercury 4.6L V-8 outboards to have its own distinctive throaty rumble. This audio extra comes standard and should not be confused with the optional "Sport Exhaust" which is available on some of the other models.

Top Cowl Service Door

Perhaps one of the more noteworthy features of this new outboard line is the watertight hatch in the top of the cowl to provide access to the dipstick as well as the oil fill. There's a decal outlining service requirements along with a QR code to allow a smartphone to link to additional service information.

Easy-Off Cowl

Under the top cowl service door, there's a handle that lifts with a red button. Lifting that handle releases the latches all around the cowl, so it can be lifted off easily.

Triton 21 TrX watertight

A watertight hatch in the cowl opens with a simple press to reveal the oil dipstick and fill. There's a red button that releases the handle to remove the cowl.

Triton 21 TrX handle

The handle pops up, providing something to grip while also releasing the latches all around the base of the cowl.

Triton 21 TrX handle

Using the handle, simply lift the cowl free.

Triton 21 TrX cowl

From the underside of the cowl, the handle, shown with the green arrow, is connected via cables to the latches, shown with yellow arrows, which secure the cowl to the engine.

Triton 21 TrX cowl latches

This image shows the cowl latches, as well as the cabling that controls them, and the seals that keep the noise in and the moisture out.

Ease of Maintenance

Once the cowl is removed, many service points are apparent. The oil filter is easy to spot near the fuse box on the port side. The spark plugs are arrayed in neat columns aft and the fuel filter is handy there as well, on the starboard side.

Triton 21 TrX

Arrows point to the handy oil filter and fuse box.

“Idle Charge” Battery Management

The alternator on the Pro XS 250 4.6L V-8 engine has a maximum output of 85 amps at WOT, and Mercury tells us that it produces the highest net amps in its class. At idle the alternator provides 20 amps for the boat.

Triton 21 TrX alternator

The alternator, located atop the engine and indicated by a green arrow, provides 85 amps of charging power.

Simply put, the Idle Charge management system detects when the batteries drop below acceptable levels due to increased power draw. Today's boats have more electrical and electronic devices on board than ever before, and they all require a flow of juice to keep operating properly.

If 20 amps aren't enough to bring the batteries up to snuff, the system automatically eases the idle up to 725 rpm to deliver 30 net amps. While the engine is revving slightly higher, it's still at a speed where it's able to shift.

Performance

The Triton 21 TrX Elite has a LOA of 21' (6.40 m) and a beam of 95" (2.41 m). With a dry weight of 1,840 lbs. (835 kg), full fuel, no water, and one person on board, we had a test weight of 2,812 lbs. (1,276 kg).

Triton 21 TrX running

Here's the Triton 21 TrX making the most of the engine control system, which constantly dials in the outboard to optimize the use of horsepower of the Mercury 250 Pro XS.

WOT Speed. With a Mercury 250 Pro XS turning a 24" Fury prop, the Triton 21 TrX on our test had a top speed of 73.7 mph (118.6 kph), burning 24.5 gallons per hour (gph) or 92.73 liters per hour (lph).

Best cruise for the Triton 21 TrX is 29.4 mph (47.3 kph) at 3500 rpm with a fuel burn of 7.5 gph. At that speed, the Triton 21 TrX gets 3.9 miles per gallon (mpg) or 1.66 kilometers per liter (kpl), giving the boat a cruising range of 166 statute miles (267.15 kilometers) with a ten-percent fuel reserve.

Hole Shot. Time from 0 to 20 mph was 4.8 seconds. Time from 0 to 30 mph was 7.4 seconds. As noted above, a boat can be propped to max WOT speed or hole-shot times, but not both. Mercury's solution was to use a 24" Fury prop, a reasonable compromise for this application, in our opinion. Certainly, we would not have wanted to be going much faster, as conditions were a bit choppy with winds 15 to 20 mph. All test runs were conducted across the wind.

Triton 21 TrX transient spark

The idea behind the electronic control of the Transient Spark system is to give the Mercury 250 Pro XS 5% to 7% more torque for better hole shots on the Triton 21 TrX, thanks to calibrated spark timing.

Handling

Bass boats deliver extreme straight-line performance and they're not built to dig into sharply banked turns. That said, if an angler wants to get to the fishing spot before anyone else in the tournament, this is the way to do it. Just point the bow and go. Minding the inevitable chine walk that manifests at speed takes a bit of

practice, and it's also a very good idea to throttle back if conditions get beyond the driver's skills to handle it.

But on a flat-calm lake with miles of open water laid out before the boat, who can resist pressing that hot-foot throttle to deck for a while? Still, it's important to remember that at high speeds it does not take much for things to go wrong with any boat.

Boat Inspection

Triton 21 TrX running

The Triton 21 TrX throws a bit of water on turns, as our cameraman discovered, but she runs clean in a straight line.

Construction

The Triton 21 TrX Elite is all-composite construction that Triton says provides upright and level flotation if the boat is swamped. There is no wood in any Triton boats, instead, the company uses Tri-Core composite construction. Tri-Core, a high-tech, super-strong polyurethane core material used in high performance aircraft, can never rot, bonds chemically with fiberglass, and is unaffected by climate changes. In addition, structural tests show Tri-Core to be lighter than wood, yet stronger than most wood/fiberglass laminates, according to the builder.

Unibody. Triton hulls are laid up by hand and have what the company calls “unibody” construction. The stringers are molded outside the boat then chemically bonded to the hull. After the boat has been foamed, including in the stringer cavities, the deck is chemically bonded to the hull, thus created the “unibody.”

The hull is rigged with automatic bilge pumps and built-in LED navigation lights in the bow. The stern light is removable to get it out of the way for the task at hand. Wiring is all protected by circuit breakers, and cockpit courtesy lighting makes it easy to get around safe in dawn's early light. The consoles have tinted Plexiglas windshields and there's an available option to make the passenger console removable.

Triton 21 TrX locker space

Locker space means anglers will never get caught without the gear they need.

Steps to bow and stern casting decks are covered in non-skid. Grab handles are placed intelligently to ensure passenger comfort at high speeds (and this boat will be hitting some high speeds) as well as for boarding. The outboard is mounted on a custom, adjustable jackplate.

Triton 21 TrX jack plate

A jackplate lets the dedicated angler tune another dimension of the outboard for optimal running in shallow waters.

Bow

The Triton 21 TrX Elite is a bass boat and as such this will be the best seat in the house when she's not racing for the fishing grounds. There are two pedestal positions available for the forward fishing seat, and a choice of no fewer than five Minn Kota and two Motorguide trolling motors, and there's a sunken foot-pedal remote. There's also a wide range of optional fishfinders from Lowrance, Garmin, and Humminbird that can be mounted to the bow (as well as on the console).

Triton 21 TrX bow

The Triton 21 TrX has a bow built for an angler with a pedestal seat, trolling motor, fishfinder, and straps to retain rods.

Triton 21 TrX foot pedal

The recessed foot-pedal trolling-motor control and Lowrance HDS fishfinder make the most of fishing time on the Triton 21 TrX.

There are three in-deck storage boxes on the deck, and the center and port lockers include rod racks ready to take on more than a dozen 8' outfits each. We would set up one to carry rods and use the others to stow tackle boxes and gear. The step down into the cockpit flips up to reveal a built-in cooler to keep drinks cold and lunch at the ready.

Triton 21 TrX lockers

Three cavernous lockers in the foredeck stow plenty of gear, including room for a lot of rigged rods.

Cockpit

A pair of comfortable helm and passenger seats wait abaft a pair of consoles, suspended and adjustable and available with brightly contrasting upholstery finished in a diamond pattern. A removable storage box can serve as a passenger footrest and there's more storage in the console between the seats. This console does double duty as a step to the aft casting deck and also has cup holders in its leading edge.

Triton 21 TrX cockpit

The sporty cockpit has grab handles for passenger safety at speed, as required by ABYC standards. Storage comes easily for all of the odds and ends that anglers use, particularly in a space to outboard of the passenger footwell, where cubbies and fiddled spaces make it easy to keep track of gear, pliers, and other rigging tools, sunscreen, cell phones, and the like.

Triton 21 TrX storage bins

Storage bins let the passenger keep track of odds and ends. Note the grab handle that falls easily to hand.

Helm

The helm of our Triton 21 TrX test boat had a nicely set up instrument cluster with analog gauges showing all of the details we want at a glance: speedometer, tachometer, voltmeter, and fuel, trim and water pressure gauges flank a large touchscreen Lowrance HDS multifunction display. Rocker switches are positioned below on oval-shaped panels set into the helm dash.

Triton 21 TrX gauges

Analog gauges let the driver track data points at a glance, while a big Lowrance HDS multifunction display brings plenty of fishfinder and charting power.

We would not mind seeing the single-lever Mercury control placed a little further forward, but Triton's Hot Foot Throttle seems popular to many, and can be custom-fitted to suit the driving position of the buyer.

Triton 21 TrX pedal

It's the owner's boat! Position the Hot Foot Throttle pedal to suit the driver's leg length.

Aft Casting Deck

Behind the passenger seat is dedicated storage for a long-handled fishing net. The stern casting deck has dedicated in-deck storage for Plano tackle boxes in outboard lockers, which flank a pair of livewells inboard to port and starboard of centerline. There's a seat pedestal here as well and the carpet is all edge-finished to the same high grade as the rest of the deck, with careful attention paid to hatch openings and covering of the hatches themselves.

Triton 21 TrX aft deck

The aft casting deck has a pedestal seat and a pair of livewells flanked by tackle storage lockers.

Triton 21 TrX fishing net

Stow a long-handled fishing net out of the way behind the passenger seat until it's needed.

Triton 21 TrX non-skid pads

Rubberized non-skid pads are placed in the boat's stern quarters to aid boarding.

Observations

The Triton 21 TrX is built by White River Marine Group (formerly called Tracker Marine), which is the boat building division of Bass Pro Shops. That says a lot about the brand, the boat, and its features. Over the

years, Bass Pro Shops, the mothership, has accumulated the many of the best bass brands, including Ranger, Nitro and, of course, Tracker, where it all started.

In terms of units, White River Marine is the largest builder of recreational boats in the world. Financially, it is probably one the soundest builders in the world, in an industry that is known for companies going out of business when the economy turns south. Warranties on boats built by companies that are out of business are pretty much worthless. It is something to consider.

Because the folks at White River Marine have been in the boat business so long, they understand good boat building. They know what works and what doesn't, what is safe and what is not. All of their boats, no matter what the brand, are well built and meet all of the appropriate standards. What differentiates them are their features, methods of construction, size and weight, hull shape, material, styling, equipment installed as standard, details, and their price point.