

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2010

MISTRAL-A CANOE BY ESQUIF

This blog entry will probably sound like an advertisement for a marine company and, I guess that's ok because I believe in promoting excellence. I drove to Lancaster, Pennsylvania yesterday to pick up my new canoe at Lancaster County Marine, Inc. That is the same outfit I purchased my Esquif Champlain Kevlar model canoe from, over a year ago. I arranged to have the Champlain shipped to Tennessee at time of purchase and never did get to meet the management and staff at Lancaster County Marine. They treated me professionally and courteously during the entire procedure from start to finish with the Champlain and the whole purchase was executed by phone. That was a great experience as well as a refreshing one. I'm a repeat customer with the procurement of the Mistral, the new freighter canoe I picked up yesterday. This purchase was extremely enjoyable and the visit with Dale Hartman and his staff (family) was a joy. I don't like to throw names around up here and I won't now. I'm sure Dale won't mind me putting his name on the blog. The store is a family run operation and it is impressive. I have never seen so many boats under roof in my life. New boats, old boats, kayaks, canoes, fishing boats and any kind of boat is on the property. If anyone out there would like to own a kayak; this is the place to call. Lancaster County Marine has more kayaks in stock than there are people in Pennsylvania. Don't believe me? Look below:

This is just a very few. Can't find what you want here? Check the next pile of kayaks:



Surely your kayak is in this stack of boats:



Still can't find what you're looking for? You sure are hard to please. Lets go up the stairway next to the ceiling. There are kayaks hanging between the floor joists on the ceiling. Yep. I kid you not. Check it out below:



Find what you want yet? Oh, come on now! Ok; lets check the other ceiling. Yep; more kayaks.



Bet you see what you want now! No? Man! Alright; come on over to where the new arrivals just came in. They're still wrapped up. You'll have to call Lancaster County Marine to ask them what they have. Surely you're kayak dream is in this pile of boats below. Look at em!!



Oh; I almost forgot. There's one more pile of kayaks still under wraps where we can look for your new boat. I keep forgetting about this stash of kayaks. Check it out!



Isn't that an amazing stock of kayaks? I mean no one has an inventory like that. They are all top brand name boats too. Sensational! The astonishing thing about it is that we're only looking at the kayaks. You should see the canoes. Good thing I don't have a lot of money because I would have returned to Tennessee dead broke. I'm broke now but, there's a difference between broke and dead broke. Check out these two fishing kayaks below. What a wonderful craft to fish out of! So tempting!



Ever see an antique canoe? Look below. It's all original and made by hand by real craftsmen from another era. What fine examples of workmanship! Look at the detail.



Look at the fit and finish on the canoe floor below:



How bout the bow trim. Wow!



How about that seat? Can't beat a real old time cane seat.



I was so impressed with the canoe above that I almost forgot to photograph the one below and, it ain't no slouch. Look at her:



Want something a bit more modern. How bout a Koru; an ultra limited hand crafted canoe. Below:



This is a very high quality canoe. Pricy? Lets say its under \$4000.00



Check out the interior of this baby. The Koru can be had at a nice savings. I know the number but I feel it's not my place to publicize sensitive information. Call Lancaster County Marine, Inc and talk to them. Great folks!

Check the wood on this Koru below:



Notice closely and you will see that all the slots in the screw heads are lined up. Mark of care and quality. Yep; its hand made by Old Town Canoe Company.



I was so into the tour that I almost forgot why I drove ten hours to get there. I bought a canoe. We finally got around to looking at it. The plastic was still wrapped around the boat and was sealed. This, I would leave in tact until I got it home. It wouldn't hurt a thing by transporting the boat with the plastic cover. The Mistral is made by a Canadian company named Esquif. They made my 16' kevlar Champlain model. This boat is made of twin tex, a new, light material that is tough as nails and super strong. Just what I need for Calderwood Lake and the boulder strewn shoreline. She's all black with white ash wood trim. Seats are cane and a very custom neck yoke adorns the center between the gunnels. It's 17.5' long and very wide. I can't wait to get it in the water.



There is so much more at this wonderful marine store; far more than I can put on this blog. I meant it when I said if you want to buy a boat of any kind; call Lancaster Marine. They are fair, professional, knowledgeable, courteous and caring. They're a family store too and, that counts for a lot in my book. Their address and information is below:

<http://www.lancastercountymarine.com/>

(717) 859-1121

(717) 626-1121

Route 272, Akron, Pa.

That's East of Lancaster where the Harley Davidson Plant is located.

As an added interest note; Dale sold a canoe to Harrison Ford some years back. I wonder if Ford made the Wookiee paddle the thing?

As I was driving down the Pennsylvania Turnpike on the way to Lancaster County Marine; I noticed the sky black with smoke. Check it out below:





Yet another case against cigarettes. I know they're at the bottom of this.



Wonder if he had his seat belt on? Wonder if he wishes he didn't if he did?



Eventually Douglas, I and the ol junk truck made it back and the Mistral was placed on her shelf in the habitat. There are tie off lines to be attached and some other things to accomplish before floating off into oblivion in her. She's a pretty thing for sure.



Here she is out of the plastic:



The yellow bags in the stern and bow are flotation bags. A few puffs of air blown into the plastic tubes on the bags will fill em up.



The floor has a unique look to it. There is balsa wood laminated between the twin tex layers for rigidity and flotation.



Notice how the twin tex appears to be woven. The next shot is of the outside of the canoe. It is a beautiful finish yet, appears and feels unfinished. These are modern times.



The above shot is a bit fuzzy. I had a problem focusing on that puppy. Makes me dizzy staring at the design up close.

That's about it for this blog entry. I told you it would sound like an advertisement. If it does; so be it. Lancaster County Marine deserves the kudos. I'll write a complete review on the Mistral canoe when I get to test it out and become familiar with her idiosyncrasies. That review will appear on two canoe sites. I'll post the links when I write the piece. That's about it for now. Stay warm and thanks so much for your interest in my activities.