

SPECIAL 2021 **BOAT BUYERS EDITION** POWERED BY **VOLVO PENTA**

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BOATING[®]

WORLD'S LARGEST POWERBOAT MAGAZINE

56

CERTIFIED
NEW BOAT
TESTS



**5 YEARS OF
FORWARD
DRIVE!**



P.
158

2,000+

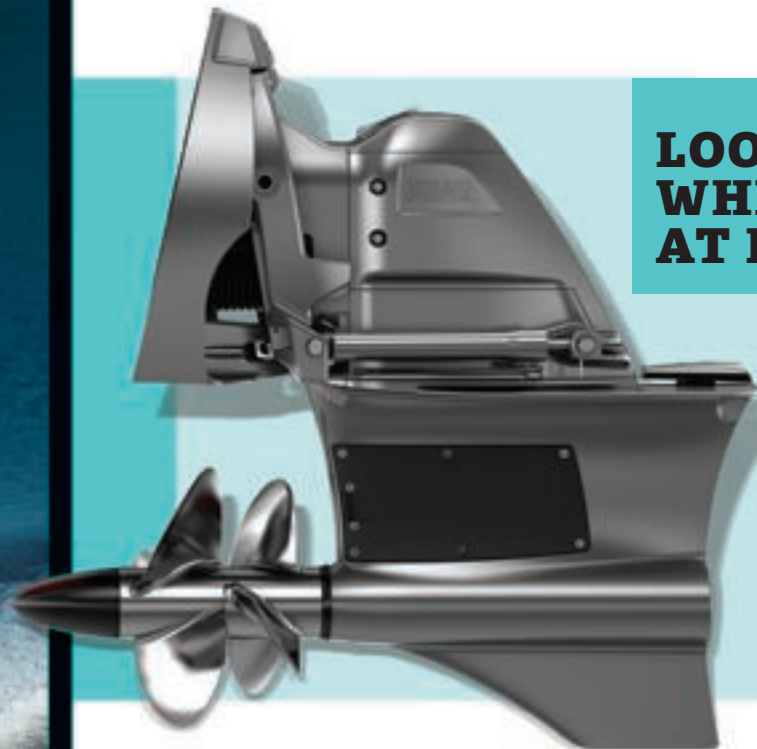
CERTIFIED BOAT TESTS
AT BOATINGMAG.COM

THE PRICES, SPECS AND PERFORMANCE
STATS COMPARISON SHOPPERS DEMAND

LOOKING FORWARD WHILE LOOKING BACK AT FIVE GREAT YEARS

Five years ago, if you wanted to wakesurf, you had to be "all in" and invest in a watersports-specific boat with the props tucked safely under the hull. Traditional sterndrives and outboards made many boaters uneasy to surf directly behind the transom. Then Volvo Penta introduced its Forward Drive and changed the game.

Volvo Penta drew on its revolutionary IPS technology to change the sterndrive, moving its Duoprop system forward, away from surfers. The result is a sterndrive with the props tucked safely under the boat, allowing traditional runabout builders to build surfable family boats. Read the full story on page 158.



C

BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS

CERTIFIED TEST RESULTS

Boating's Certified Boat Tests include performance data recorded by our editors during real time on the water. We ran these boats.

S

BOATING
BUYERS
SPOTLIGHT

BUYERS SPOTLIGHT

A Buyers Spotlight provides insights regarding a particular boat, without discussion of on-water performance. We have not yet run these boats.



WATCH VIDEOS OF OUR BOAT TESTS WHILE YOU READ!

Watch our editorial experts walk through the boats to highlight some of their most important and outstanding features, as well as get a quick rundown of each boat's performance data, at boatingmag.com.

FEATURES

30 RUNABOUT

This style of boat can do it all, in many shapes and sizes, and with every kind of power. Check out these 17 great bowriders.

58 WATERSPORTS

Surf? Ski? Wakeboard? These 11 boats are designed to maximize your enjoyment on the water for watersports.

86 PONTOON

Pontoons let you bring your living room on the water, and they can get up and go too. We tested 22 that both entertain and perform.

128 FISHING

Anglers are very particular about their boats, whether they chase bass, billfish or everything in between. These 16 fishing-boat models are best-in-class.

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ON THE COVER

Ride the endless wave behind the new Malibu M220, a beautifully constructed boat with all the amenities needed to sculpt the wake. Photo by Tom King

*LIFE ON THE WATER HAS
SO MUCH TO OFFER.*



THRILLS AT THE END OF A TOWROPE.

TRIUMPH AT THE END OF A FISHING LINE.



LAZY WEEKENDS AT ANCHOR.



DRAMATIC SUNSETS OFF THE BOW.



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43LE SET YOUR COURSE

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LUXURY SPORT IN MOTION



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EVOLUTION OF THE WAKE BOAT

We have a powerful tool behind the evolution of our boats - you. The evolution of our designs is not just a result of changes in style. Our engineers listen to customer feedback with purpose and redesign based on your changing needs. We have always built good surf boats, but your input has helped us change and improve thoughtfully throughout the years. Surfing is in our DNA. You are the catalyst to unleash our best features.

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Kevin Falvey
 DEPUTY EDITOR Pete McDonald
 ELECTRONICS AND WEST COAST EDITOR Jim Hendricks
 MANAGING EDITOR Sue Whittney
 WATERSPORTS DIRECTOR Garrett Cortese
 ART DIRECTOR Ryan Swanson
 STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER Jon Whittle
 SENIOR COPY EDITOR Nicole Paskowsky
 EDITOR-AT-LARGE, FISHING AND MARINE GROUPS Randy Vance
 CONTRIBUTORS Gary Bogdon, Chris Caswell, Dean Travis Clarke, Steve Griffin, Michael "Mick" Haddock, Jeff Hemmel, Tom King, Craig Kotilinek, Lois Parsshley, Charles Plueddeman, Rick Shackleton, John Tiger Jr., Capt. John Page Williams

ILLUSTRATORS Tim Bower
 PRODUCTION DIRECTOR Kelly Weekley
 PRODUCTION MANAGER / ARTIST Pete Coffin

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT / MANAGING DIRECTOR
 Glenn Sandridge
 407-571-4747; glenn.sandridge@bonniercorp.com

PUBLISHER / BRAND MANAGER
 John McEver
 407-571-4682; john.moever@bonniercorp.com

DIRECTOR OF BRAND STRATEGY
 Rhonda Mock
 407-571-4696; rhonda.mock@bonniercorp.com

MARKETPLACE / ACCOUNT MANAGER
 Brian Luke
 407-571-4788; brian.luke@bonniercorp.com

DIRECTOR, DIGITAL STRATEGY
 Mike Staley
 407-571-4803; mike.staley@bonniercorp.com

SALES ASSISTANT
 Keith Coville
 407-756-8965; keith.coville@bonniercorp.com

BONNIER MEDIA

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR Shawn Bean
 EDITORIAL DIRECTOR, BOATING AND WATERSPORTS GROUP Kevin Falvey
 CREATIVE DIRECTOR Dave Weaver
 EDITORIAL OPERATIONS DIRECTOR Stephanie Pancratz
 COPY CHIEF Cindy Martin
 MARKETING MANAGER Christopher Cole
 DIGITAL CONTENT DIRECTOR Mark MacKenzie
 DIGITAL CONTENT STRATEGIST Jackie Fry
 DIGITAL CONTENT PRODUCTION AND PRESENTATION DIRECTOR Michellina Jones
 DIGITAL PRODUCER Brian Daugherty

BONNIER

EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN Dr. Jens Mueffelmann
 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER David Ritchie
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 SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, DIGITAL OPERATIONS David Butler
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 VICE PRESIDENT, FINANCE, BUSINESS OPERATIONS Tara Bisciello
 VICE PRESIDENT, FINANCIAL REPORTING AND ANALYSIS Kamman Chow
 VICE PRESIDENT, ENTERPRISE SOLUTIONS Shawn Macey
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 GENERAL COUNSEL Jeremy Thompson



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INNOVATION AWARD WINNER

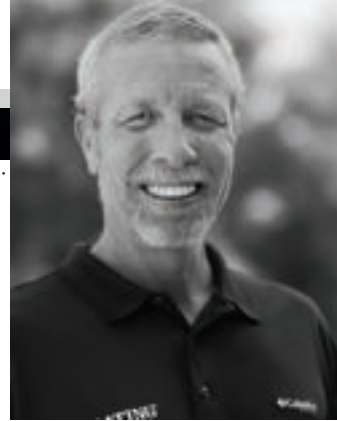
The *Sylvan L-3 DLZ Bar* is the first of its kind in the industry. With a rear double lounge that transforms into a convenient rear LED-lit bar with four bar stools, Sylvan Marine has the versatility you are looking for in a pontoon. Whether it's a family water sport fun, a party with friend at the sandbar or casting a line toward the catch of the day, Sylvan has floorplans that are perfect for you.



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WELCOME TO THE WATER

Boaters are the cool kids.

As our deadline approached, I spoke to a successful boat dealer, a gentleman I've known for many years, who opined that the boom in boat sales would continue for at least another year. I happen to agree with that opinion.

Many of the people buying the boats that have caused marine sales to skyrocket in the past nine months happen to be new boaters. These are folks whose vacations have been canceled, whose social time with friends and family has been curtailed, and who are feeling cooped up. Certainly, there are avid, longtime boaters buying boats. But it is these new folks who are driving the sales records. It is because the pool of nonboaters is much larger than the pool of experienced boaters that roots the belief in a sustained buying frenzy.

If you count yourself among these new boaters, welcome to the water! You'll find that *Boating's* annual Boat Buyers Guide—while written by experienced boaters for experienced boaters—will prove invaluable to you too. On these pages lies the information you need to compare dozens of boats in a variety of categories. Which pontoon is faster than the other?

Which tow boat under 22 feet seats the most crew? (Hint: "Passengers" passively ride buses; your crew takes an active part in your boating fun.) Which fishing boat comes with room for a larger fish finder? What about fuel economy and towability? Will it fit in my garage on its trailer? The answers to these buying questions and more are yours for the reading. Take advantage of it, and you will boat-shop with greater confidence.

I'll offer a word of advice before closing: Shop for your dealer too. A good dealer—one that's reliable and straightforward, and has the ability to service the boat, its engines and accessories—can really change the complexion of boat ownership for the better, believe me.

So, again I say: Welcome to the water!

Kevin Falvey, Editor-in-Chief
 editor@boatingmag.com

Many of the people buying the boats that have caused boat sales to skyrocket in the past nine months happen to be new boaters.



FORWARD, HO!

Volvo Penta Forward Drive turns five! Could anyone have imagined that wakesurfing would become so popular that it would drive the development of a new marine drive system? Learn more about Forward Drive on page 158.

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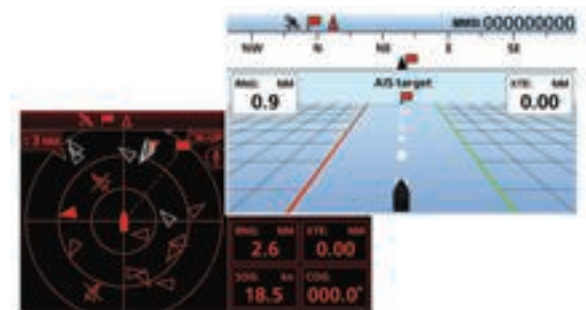


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 **PURSUIT**



M-SERIES

THE ALL-NEW M220

The M-Series officially has a new addition. The M220 may be just under 23 feet, but it doesn't sacrifice anything on the luxury, performance and innovative features of its bigger brother, the top-of-the-line M240. One look at the M220 and you'll instantly recognize its bold M-Series profile, with a high freeboard that allows for more passengers (which means more fun), more ballast, more storage and a larger on-water presence than your average 22 foot towboat.

And because this new M is all Malibu, wakeboard wakes are crisp, clean and perfectly formed and surf waves are better than ever in nearly any conditions thanks to the M-Line Hull.



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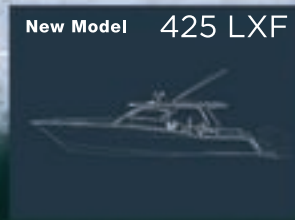
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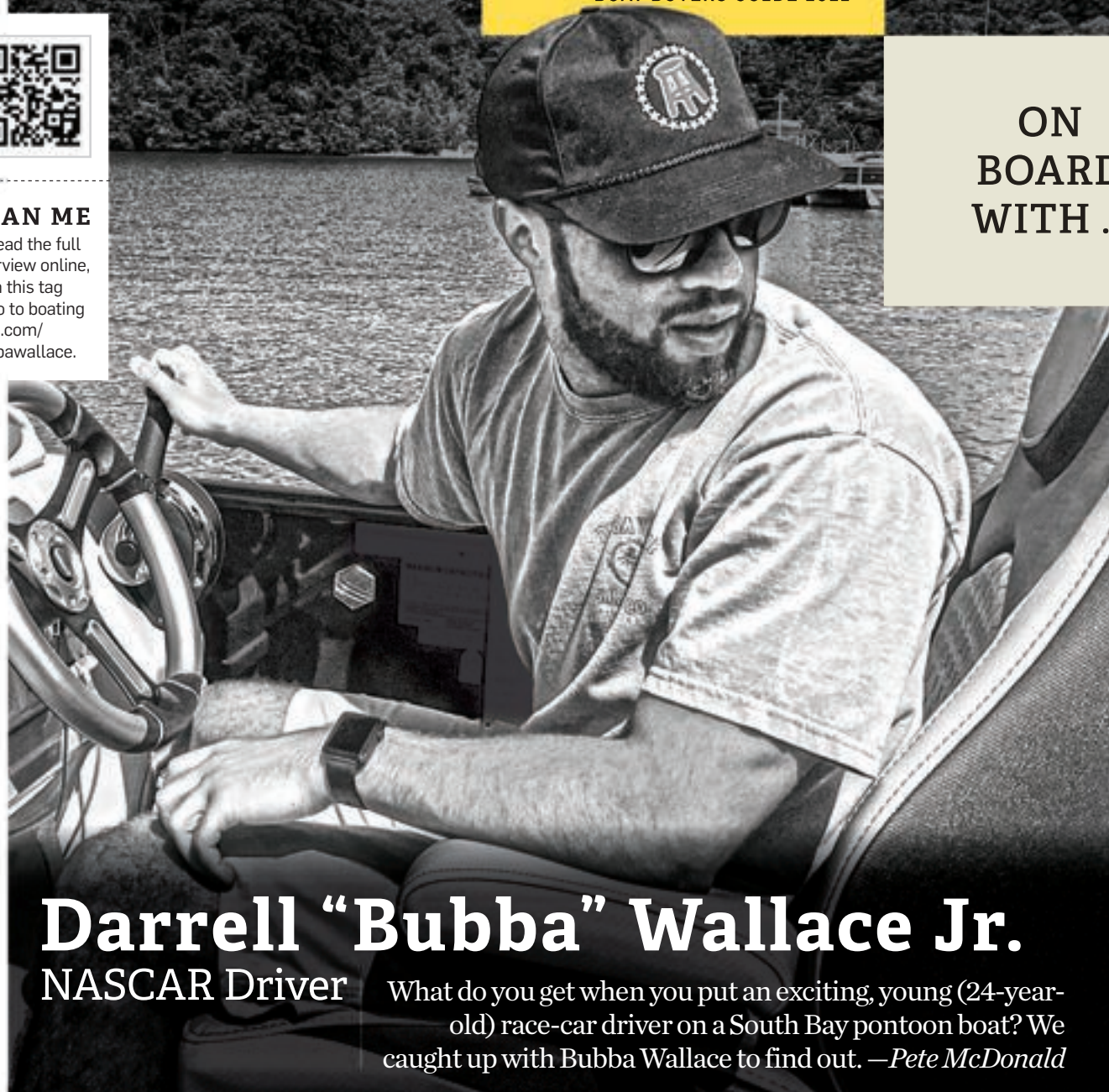
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SCAN ME

To read the full interview online, scan this tag or go to boatingmag.com/bubbawallace.

ON
BOARD
WITH ...



Darrell "Bubba" Wallace Jr. NASCAR Driver

What do you get when you put an exciting, young (24-year-old) race-car driver on a South Bay pontoon boat? We caught up with Bubba Wallace to find out. —*Pete McDonald*

Did you grow up boating in North Carolina?

No. The only time I ever went on a boat was when I visited my uncle in Mobile, Alabama. I remember riding his Jet Skis.

How did you wind up with a pontoon boat?

South Bay is a partner of my racing team. I'd never had any desire to live by the water or own a boat, and then I went out on the lake [where I now live], and we found a rope swing in a cove where lots of boats raft-up for the day. It was really cool.

When did you start racing?

I started racing go-karts when I was 9. I just kept going and racing in every circuit as I got older and better, and now I'm with Richard Petty in the Cup Series.

How does driving a 'toon compare to your race car?

You go from 200 mph to 34 mph, so it's a nice stress reliever. The first time I took it out, I cruised around all day at 20 mph, and it was so relaxing.



TRAILER SPRING COMMISSIONING

It's time to get the boat ready for launch. Did you get your trailer ready too? Let's see how well you've paid attention to all of our tips and advice in past issues and on boatingmag.com, and whether you can make the grade. —John Tiger

1. To ensure your trailer tires are road-ready, you should:
 - A. Refill the tires with helium.
 - B. Check tires for excessive tread wear.
 - C. Buy whitewalls.
 - D. Check tire sidewalls for weather checking and rot.
 - E. B and D
 - F. None of the above

2. You should check your trailer's bunks or rollers as follows:
 - A. Get brighter-colored outdoor carpet to cover the bunks.
 - B. Put Rhino Liner on the bunk wood.
 - C. Ensure the bunk wood is not rotten.
 - D. Ensure the rollers rotate freely and are not excessively loose.
 - E. C and D
 - F. None of the above

3. Before trailering your boat to the ramp, it's important to check the coupling/hitch attachment. These checks should include:
 - A. Be sure you've inserted the hitch pin and clip into the correct hole in the hitch-receiver tube.
 - B. Check the coupler latch to ensure it closes properly over the hitch ball.
 - C. Ensure the coupler is locked to the ball with a securing pin or lock.
 - D. A and B
 - E. All of the above

4. Your trailer lights flash intermittently as you drive. What's the problem?
 - A. Nothing, that's normal.
 - B. The wiring harness is chafed and only getting intermittent contact.
 - C. The white ground wire is not connected to the trailer frame, so the only "ground" is through the coupler/hitch-ball connection.
 - D. B and C
 - E. All of the above

5. As you hook up to your trailer, you notice the coupler won't latch properly on the hitch ball. What could be the problem?
 - A. The ball is the wrong size for the coupler.
 - B. The coupler latch is damaged.
 - C. There's dirt or other debris up inside the coupler.
 - D. All of the above
 - E. None of the above

6. You leave the house for the water and hear a screeching sound from the trailer. What's a likely cause?
 - A. The boat fell off and is dragging on the ground.
 - B. The trailer brakes are frozen in place and dragging on the wheel drums.
 - C. The boat propeller is turning in the wind as you tow.
 - D. Bystanders are squealing in delight at the sight of your boat.
 - E. None of the above

ANSWERS

- | | |
|-------|-------------------|
| 1. E. | 5. D. |
| 2. E. | 6. B. The trailer |
| 3. E. | brakes are the |
| 4. D. | most likely |
| | culprit. |

CAPTAIN'S TESTS ONLINE

Test your knowledge of boating with more Captain's Tests at boatingmag.com/captains-test.

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Volvo Penta is a company with a vision. They call it "easy boating," and the goal is to eliminate hassles so you can spend more quality time on your boat with your family and friends.

It starts with reliable performance.

Volvo Penta's current lineup of sterndrives uses modern all-aluminum, high-performance General Motors engine blocks. They are built to the highest automotive quality standards, and with freshwater closed-loop cooling, they will give you years of dependable service in salt or fresh water. Volvo Penta is so confident about the reliability of its modern sterndrives that it offers five years of factory protection.

When it comes to maintenance, Volvo Penta's sterndrives are designed with all



Simple pleasures: Volvo Penta makes boating easy with refined technology, evidenced by innovations such as joystick control, Forward Drive and more that allow you to focus on family and friends.

service points conveniently located on the front of the engine for easy accessibility.

And, of course, stern drives give you a generous clean transom for swimming, fishing, sunbathing or tow sports, and a clear view so you can have an overall safer experience.

LITTLE THINGS MEAN A LOT

It is not just about big advances. Volvo Penta also pays attention to the little details that add up to a better boating experience. These features include the exclusive Easy Drain function, which lets you drain the raw water without hauling the boat out of the water.

Or Volvo Penta's exclusive joystick docking and Glass Cockpit touchscreen

display system.

Or Volvo Penta Speed Control, which automatically adjusts the throttle to maintain constant speed during load changes so the operator can concentrate on having fun.

Or the Easy Connect smartphone app that lets you keep tabs on the boat and its systems from your armchair at home.

Not to mention the new Silent Shift clutch that eliminates the annoying clunk when shifting in and out of gear.

FORWARD-LOOKING

In 2015, Volvo Penta rocked the boating industry with its revolutionary Forward Drive, with forward-facing dual contra-rotating props that pull the boat through the water rather than pushing it.

Forward Drive was an immediate hit, especially for the popular sport of wakesurfing. With Forward Drive, boatbuilders are able to design flexible all-around multipurpose boats that can be optimized to make that perfect wave for wakesurfing, but are also perfect for swimming, fishing, diving, cruising and picnicking with family and friends.

Currently, 13 American boat companies offer Forward Drive on over 50 models of new boats. One of them is Avalon, which introduced the first-ever pontoon boat model with Forward Drive last year.



Most people who grew up around boats got their first taste of life on the water aboard a runabout. They are to boating what butter is to bread. Today's runabouts range from boats you can fit in your garage to boats that can fit a football team on board, but they all carry the same basic mission: to provide some zest and sportiness to the captain at the helm while including enough creature comforts to keep the family happy on the water. As you flip through the pages of our *Boat Buyers Guide*, you're sure to find one that meets the needs of your crew.

RUNABOUT



**STARCRAFT
SVX 190 OB**

A sweet ride with a lot of interior space for its size, making it a great choice for the family boat.

PHOTO: TOM KING

2021

BOATING

BOAT BUYERS GUIDE



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YAMAHA SUPERJET

2021
BOATING
BOAT BUYERS
GUIDE

C

**BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS**



Price: \$9,499 (starting)

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Stable enough to succeed on day one without sacrificing on torque throughout the rpm range. It offers the best of both worlds.
- ▶ L-Mode limits throttle, great for those learning or returning to stand-up riding.
- ▶ Gas gauge prevents tow-ins.

SEE THE VIDEO

To watch our video review of the SuperJet, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/yamahasuperjet.



SPECS: LOA: 7'11.7" BEAM: 2'5" DRY WEIGHT: 375 lb. SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY: 1/176 lb. STOWAGE CAPACITY: NA FUEL CAPACITY: 5 gal.
HOW WE TESTED: ENGINE: Four-stroke, 3-cylinder TR-1 Yamaha marine engine PUMP/IMPELLER: 3-blade stainless steel GEAR RATIO: 1.00:1 FUEL LOAD: 5 gal. CREW WEIGHT: 180 lb.

PWC

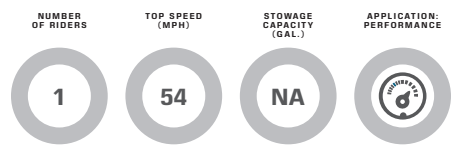
The iconic Yamaha SuperJet still impresses. You may remember the original SuperJet. It was all torque and performance—and for the average rider, all falls. Thirty years later, Yamaha has introduced the all-new SuperJet, mercifully presenting it with more stability than ever before. And with these changes, the SuperJet is officially available to the recreational market without a race license.

Further flattening the learning curve, the new SuperJet incorporates L-Mode, which governs the engine's performance to 85 percent. Together with the much

more stable hull, the learning mode gives beginners a surprisingly stable platform to grow their skills. The most noticeable improvement was in corner stability, with even novice riders able to crank tight turns within an hour, at both slow and medium speeds. This is something you would previously have had to spend at least a summer and several hundred falls mastering on the original SuperJet.

None of this is to say the new SuperJet isn't responsive. With a three-position adjustable hand pole, racing-style handlebars, and a lightweight and compact design that's only slightly larger than the legendary two-stroke, the 2021 SuperJet is built for thrills. We topped out at around 47 mph in a choppy bay before throwing in the towel. With a top speed of 54, the SuperJet has more than enough high-end performance for anyone we know.

Taking advantage of proven Yamaha technology at use in plenty of other equipment, the SuperJet taps the three-cylinder, four-stroke TR-1 engine for a torquey, responsive ride that (again, mercifully) only requires regular unleaded



YAMAHA
Kennesaw, Georgia; 800-962-7926; yamahawaverunners.com

fuel. Feeding the TR-1 is a 5-gallon gas tank that allows for plenty of fun on the water without frequent fill-ups. And while it may sound like a given to riders not familiar with the stand-up world, Yamaha incorporated a gas gauge with a high-vis low-fuel warning light to eliminate the guesswork and inevitable tow-ins associated with the old-school stand-ups.

Overall, the new SuperJet provides everything you hope for in a new or rediscovered sport: a fun challenge without the frustration. Add to the value proposition a reasonable price tag, well-thought-out design and execution, and a minimalist graphics package that pops on the water, and you've got a lot of reasons to like this new PWC.



PHOTOS: COURTESY YAMAHA

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SEA-DOO RXP-X 300

2021
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C

**BOATING
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TEST
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Price: \$15,799

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ TR-3 hull offers precise, lean-in handling, and shark-gill design improves full-speed sweeping turns, with better rough-water hookup.
- ▶ Ergolock-R system includes adjustable saddle, tacky surface material, low-profile handlebars and double-angle foot wedges.
- ▶ Enhanced onboard experience through addition of more storage capacity, integrated LinQ accessory system, and optional 100-watt Bluetooth sound system.

SPECS: LOA: 10'10.6" **BEAM:** 4'1.2" **DRY WEIGHT:** 780 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 1 (standard); 2 (optional)/400 lb. **STOWAGE CAPACITY:** 40.6 gal. **FUEL CAPACITY:** 18.5 gal.
HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINE:** 300 hp Rotax 1,630cc 1630 ACE-300 **PUMP/IMPELLER:** 161 mm high-pressure/stainless steel **GEAR RATIO:** NA **FUEL LOAD:** 15 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 155 lb.

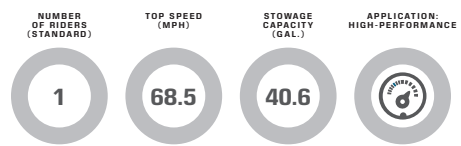
PWC

Reimagining a bestselling, high-performance model is a tricky task for any personal watercraft manufacturer. Nevertheless, that's just what Sea-Doo has done with the RXP-X 300 for 2021, tweaking everything from the running surface to the craft's renowned ergonomics. The result is a craft that's at once quite familiar and yet a completely new experience from top to bottom.

Arguably already one of the most aggressive handling models on the market, the new T3-R hull has clearly benefited from Sea-Doo's pro-racing

experience. It maintains the highly intuitive, lean-in style of its predecessor, relying on a sharp keel and soft outer chines that allow the boat to easily roll into the most aggressive of turns. A new feature, in our opinion, improves the overall experience for race and nonrace types alike. Dubbed shark gills, they add a series of narrow, slanted grooves to a secondary chine that, by breaking up the surface tension and introducing air, gives the craft a slightly more forgiving feel in certain scenarios. Specifically, it eliminates the sometimes surprising bite the hull could have in sweeping full-speed turns and results in a more predictable—arguably even more thrilling—solo ride for riders of all experience levels.

Yes, solo ride. Once a two-seater, the '21 RXP-X 300 now comes from the factory as a single-passenger craft, with even deeper knee wells, a grippy seat texture, and an adjustable saddle bolster that can be quickly repositioned up to 5 inches fore or aft. Along with canted footwells, the latter addition to Sea-Doo's Ergolock-R system truly locks the driver in place as



SEA-DOO
Valcourt, Quebec; 888-272-9222; sea-doo.com

well as tailors the saddle to taller or shorter body types. A passenger seat is available as an option, and quickly and securely latches into position for recreational riding. Likewise, the previous telescoping steering neck has also been moved to the options list, replaced by a low-profile, cast-aluminum fixed steering system for even greater leverage.

Combined, the various modifications and hull and deck construction material trim a significant 67 pounds off the most recent RXP-X design. Add the carryover 300 hp Rotax 1630 ACE engine boosted with a supercharger and intercooler, and the result is a lightning-quick zero-to-60 mph time of 3.6 seconds and a top speed of 68.5 mph.



PHOTOS: COURTESY SEA-DOO

HIGH
POINTS

- ▶ Top-end, acceleration, and cornering are all world-class.
- ▶ Hop on the GP1800R and you'll soon be riding like a pro thanks to Auto Trim.
- ▶ RiDE and TDE let you reverse, decelerate and maneuver at slow speeds without prior experience.

SEE THE
VIDEO

To watch our video review of the GP1800R SVHO, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/yamaha-gp1800rsvho.

YAMAHA
GP1800R SVHO

Price: \$14,749

SPECS: LOA: 11'0" BEAM: 4'0" DRY WEIGHT: 772 lb. SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY: 3/530 lb. STOWAGE CAPACITY: 28.4 gal. FUEL CAPACITY: 18.5 gal.

HOW WE TESTED: ENGINE: Four-stroke, 4-cylinder supercharged Yamaha SVHO marine engine PUMP/IMPELLER: 3-blade stainless steel GEAR RATIO: 1.00:1 FUEL LOAD: 7 gal. CREW WEIGHT: 180 lb.

PWC

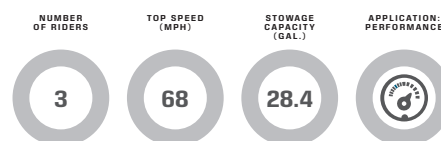
You may have heard of the Yamaha GP series of WaveRunners thanks to the fact that they've won just about every major competition there is to win in the high-speed world of personal-watercraft racing. The GP1800R SVHO is cut from the same cloth. With plenty of creature comforts, this should prove a well-rounded member of the WaveRunner fleet that's as comfortable as it is fast.

With the same 1.8L SVHO marine engine that has claimed so many checkered flags, the GP1800R SVHO is a rocket ship. Add to that a redesigned hull with an

ultralight deck and an upgraded jet pump, and you may have to bring an extra pair of shorts. With an effortless top speed of 68 mph, there's no denying the GP1800R SVHO has the top-end covered, but consider the fact that the ride at just under 70 is buttery-smooth, and you start to understand all the design and development that Yamaha's team put into the running surface of the GP.

But performance is about a lot more than just top speed and hookup; you also need a healthy dose of ergonomics and engineering to really get the PWC to dig into turns. The GP has that in spades, with a narrower saddle that allows even smaller riders to tuck their inside knee in, and wider, self-draining footwells that let the rider brace better with their outer foot. Four different tilt positions put the handlebars at the perfect height whether standing or seated, and the Auto Trim function—one of our favorite features—keeps the GP1800R SVHO at a perfect running attitude whether you're cranking through a turn, or hammering out of the hole and disappearing across the water.

Not neglecting modern amenities, the GP is equipped with the 4.3-inch Connex display, which houses all your engine data and main functionality, with intuitive menus and a bright display. TDE slow-speed maneuvering lets you dock with total confidence, and the RiDE system decelerates or reverses the GP. There's even a No Wake function that keeps the PWC at the perfect speed to give your thumb a break until you can open the GP back up. RAM accessory mounts, three spacious stowage compartments and an available factory-installed audio system round out the GP's amenities. There are too many comfort and convenience features to list here, which gives you an idea of why the GP1800R is so much more than a racing PWC.



YAMAHA
Kennesaw, Georgia; 800-962-7926; yamahawaverunners.com

YAMAHA VX LIMITED HO

2021
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**BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS**



Price: \$13,549 (starting)

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Great blend of luxury and performance.
- ▶ Handling at speed or idle proves top-notch, thanks to the RiDE and TDE systems.
- ▶ New 4.3-inch Connex LCD screen features easy-to-use tactile buttons and is easy to read in bright sun.

SEE THE VIDEO

To watch our video review of the VX Limited HO, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/yamaha/vxlimitedho.



PWC

SPECS: LOA: 11'0" BEAM: 4'0" DRY WEIGHT: 794 lb. SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY: 3/530 lb. STOWAGE CAPACITY: 30.1 gal. FUEL CAPACITY: 18.5 gal.
HOW WE TESTED: ENGINE: Four-stroke, 4-cylinder, 1.8L Yamaha High Output marine engine PUMP/IMPELLER: 3-blade stainless steel GEAR RATIO: 1.00:1 FUEL LOAD: 11 gal. CREW WEIGHT: 180 lb.

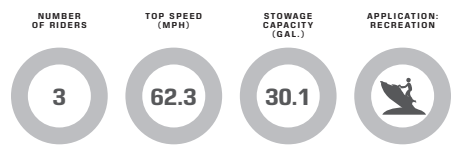
The Yamaha WaveRunner VX Limited HO is the flagship of the most popular personal watercraft series in the history of recreational boating, and for good reason. This well-rounded machine borrows from some of Yamaha's most popular WaveRunner models for a mix of luxury, performance and value that will appeal to a variety of buyers.

When it comes to performance, the VX Limited HO takes its cues from the closed-course-proven GP series. The same running surface that has earned the GP series so many trophies gives the VX Limited

HO the handling, hookup and top speed of a much more expensive PWC. Powered by Yamaha's well-proven 1.8-liter High Output engine, the VX delivers gobs of torque goodness on the low end without sacrificing top-end speed. Improved ergonomics, including a narrower seat with wider, self-draining foot beds, let the rider hug the craft better and dig into turns with more authority than ever before.

The handlebars have everything conveniently within finger reach, including RiDE for decelerating and reversing, No Wake for a constant speed without having to hold your thumb on the throttle in speed-restricted areas, and TDE for constant steering at and around docks, marinas and other confined, low-speed areas. This trinity of user-friendly tech puts the VX Limited HO operator in confident control, even if it's their first time out of the gates on a PWC.

The Connex 4.3-inch LCD screen with a shaded brow houses the VX's passcode, engine data, trip info, and three different customizable speed settings. And we love that the whole system is controlled with



YAMAHA
Kennesaw, Georgia; 800-962-7926; yamahawaverunners.com

tactile buttons that are easy to operate in bright, motion-filled marine conditions.

The Yamaha WaveRunner VX Limited HO package comes equipped for fun, with a color-matched towable and other accessories to get started with watersports right away. A spacious bow stowage compartment has a dedicated spot for Yamaha's accessory cooler bag, a glove box complete with USB, a 12-volt outlet, LED lighting, and a phone holder easily accessible at midship, and dry stowage under the rear seat completes the package. For 2020, there are in-dash mounts for accessories, and for the ultimate on-water fun, upgrade the VX to include a factory-installed audio system with two marine-grade 4.5-inch speakers and built-in amplifiers.



PHOTOS: COURTESY YAMAHA

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STARCRAFT SVX 190 OB

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Price: \$45,751

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Tops out at 48 mph, and really gets up on the flat pad with lively action.
- ▶ Retail price point well under \$50,000 gives this Starcraft great value.
- ▶ Stainless telescoping ladders bow and stern make beaching and watersports easy.

SEE THE VIDEO

To see our video review of the SVX 190 OB, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/starcraftsvx190ob.



RUNABOUT

SPECS: LOA: 18'11" BEAM: 8'6" DRAFT: 1'7" DRY WEIGHT: 2,378 lb. SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY: 12/2,375 lb. FUEL CAPACITY: 44 gal.
HOW WE TESTED: ENGINE: Yamaha F150 four-stroke 150 hp DRIVE/PROP: Outboard/13 3/4" x 19" Reliance 3-blade stainless steel GEAR RATIO: 2.00:1 FUEL LOAD: 20 gal. CREW WEIGHT: 250 lb.

Starcraft stands as one of the world's best entry-level boatbuilders, and the SVX 190 shows precisely why. It's just a great value, with performance and features that belie its price. With max-rated power (a Yamaha F150), it scoots from a dead stop to 30 mph in 6.7 seconds and tops out at 48 mph. At that speed, the Yamaha was buzzing the 19-inch-pitch Reliance stainless-steel prop at 5,800 rpm—just right. It's quiet too; at best cruise speed, our sound meter showed just 82.5 decibels. That cruise speed was 3,500 rpm and 23.2 mph, where the rig drank 5.9

gph, translating to 3.9 mpg. That's a 134.5-mile range from its 44-gallon tank, with 10 percent in reserve. Numbers are one thing; feel is another, and the Starcraft just felt alive. With the trim out and running free, it chattered satisfyingly over the lake chop and carved sweeping turns like a slalom skier. BayStar hydraulic steering makes the carving easy and smooth. The hull shows three distinct sponsons at the bow that fold into a single V-hull with a flat pad at the stern. The result is spirited speed, a calm ride even in the chop, and the ability to carry a load without losing much speed.

The layout is boxy, and those boxes fit plenty of crew and gear. At the bow, you can board via a stainless-steel telescoping ladder, and step on the super-comfy EVA traction matting. Two facing loungers provide a cozy bow conversation pit. A full-framed windshield surrounds the cockpit, with standard helm and co-pilot buckets with flip-up bolsters. The dash layout features electronic analog instruments to monitor the Yamaha, with an optional Humminbird Helix 5 display. A

rpm	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION		
	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level	
1000	3.9	4.5	1.3	3.0	3.5	102.9	118.4	0	54	
1500	5.8	6.7	1.7	3.4	3.9	116.3	133.8	0	62	
2000	6.6	7.7	3.2	2.1	2.4	71.0	81.8	1	65	
2500	12.6	14.6	4.0	3.2	3.6	108.1	124.4	2	72	
3000	17.4	20.1	5.4	3.2	3.7	110.3	127.0	2	78	
3500	20.2	23.2	5.9	3.4	3.9	116.9	134.5	2	77	
4000	23.9	27.6	9.0	2.7	3.1	91.0	104.7	1	78	
4500	27.9	32.2	11.0	2.5	2.9	86.9	100.0	1	80	
5000	31.3	36.1	14.0	2.2	2.6	76.5	88.1	1	82	
5500	34.8	40.1	18.8	1.9	2.1	63.3	72.9	1	82	
6000	38.1	43.8	23.3	1.7	2.0	58.4	67.2	1	87	
6200	39.0	44.9	24.8	1.6	1.8	53.8	61.9	1	88	

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

STARCRRAFT MARINE
New Paris, Indiana; 866-772-4538; starcraftmarine.com



JL Audio Bluetooth streaming sound system is standard. Just behind, an L-shaped lounge provides a second gathering place.

Abaft, twin platforms layered with more EVA matting surround the outboard, with another stainless-steel ladder for boarding access. There's copious in-floor ski storage along with underseat storage. For those who want some angling with their family fun, an optional fishing package adds two fishing seats, a trolling motor plug, rod storage clips, and a livewell in the bow.

PHOTOS: TOM KING

HIGH
POINTS

- ▶ Tall windshield keeps passengers from becoming windblown.
- ▶ Stowage hatches have soft gaskets that resist water and eliminate rattles.
- ▶ Bow and stern platforms are covered with a soft EVA traction mat.

SEE THE
VIDEO

To see our video review of the SVX 210 OB, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/starcraftsvx210ob.

STARCRAFT
SVX 210 OB

Price: \$44,640 (with base power)

SPECS: LOA: 20'9" BEAM: 8'6" DRAFT: 3'0" DRY WEIGHT: 2,685 lb. SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY: 14/1,875 lb. FUEL CAPACITY: 60 gal.

HOW WE TESTED: ENGINE: Yamaha F200 DRIVE/PROP: Outboard/Yamaha Reliance 17" x 14.25" 3-blade stainless steel GEAR RATIO: 1.86:1 FUEL LOAD: 45 gal. CREW WEIGHT: 190 lb.

This new Starcraft deck-boat model features dual consoles and a full windshield that greatly enhances passenger comfort, especially in cooler climates where that wind protection can extend the season in spring and fall. Both consoles are part of a one-piece fiberglass liner that also forms bench seat bases and is designed to maximize interior room. Inwales are thin and smooth, with no stowage, but there is stowage space in the port and helm consoles, plus a ski locker and underseat stowage. There's also a small glove box in the port console, which

is also topped by a small sink.

Seating consists of loungers in the bow with backrests at the consoles, a pair of bucket seats with flip-up bottom bolsters at the helm and to port, and an L-shaped lounge stretching from amidships to the stern. The cockpit deck is molded with a texture that looks like leather and offers good traction. We like the long stainless-steel grab rails around the bow seating area, and the long, covered bow boarding ladder will make it easier to disembark and reboard at the beach. The aft platform is a generous 3 feet, 10 inches deep, with plenty of room to mount an optional ski tow, as well as for another wet-gear locker.

The helm features tilt steering, and analog instruments with snazzy chrome bezels. A Simrad multifunction display is offered as an option. The standard JL Audio system features four speakers and Bluetooth connectivity. You can dress up this boat with optional LED-lighted drink holders and docking lights, and add bow filler cushions to expand the lounging space, along with a soft-touch EVA

snap-in mat to cover the cockpit deck. There is also an available fishing package that adds two fishing seats and a livewell.

This outboard-powered model is equipped with BayStar easy-to-turn hydraulic steering. With 14 degrees of deadrise at the transom, this boat can skim smartly over flat water, and a Yamaha F200 pushed us to an invigorating 47.6 mph. The boat was stable and steady in a stiff lake chop, on the type of day that we were happy to tuck in behind a tall windshield.

rpm	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level
1000	4.69	5.40	1.00	4.69	5.40	253	292	0	67
1500	5.39	6.20	1.30	4.14	4.77	224	258	4	67
2000	6.17	7.10	2.10	2.94	3.38	159	183	5	68
2500	7.65	8.80	3.40	2.25	2.59	121	140	7	73
3000	17.81	20.50	3.90	4.57	5.26	247	284	5	81
3500	20.86	24.00	5.20	4.01	4.62	217	249	4	82
4000	24.77	28.50	6.80	3.64	4.19	197	226	4	81
4500	30.50	35.10	8.70	3.51	4.03	189	218	4	83
5000	33.46	38.50	11.60	2.88	3.32	156	179	4	84
5500	34.76	40.00	15.90	2.19	2.52	118	136	4	87
6000	40.06	46.10	19.70	2.03	2.34	110	126	4	90
6200	41.36	47.60	20.10	2.06	2.37	111	128	4	90

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

STARCRAFT MARINE
New Paris, Indiana; 866-772-4538; starcraftmarine.com

YAMAHA 212XD

2021
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RESULTS**



Price: \$68,999

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Large anchor locker also hides a bow boarding ladder for convenience during beach-landing adventures.
- ▶ Surf mat's teak and holly sole covers look and feel great underfoot, thwart stains, and are removable for easy maintenance.

SEE THE VIDEO

To watch our video review of the 212XD, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/yamaha212xd.



RUNABOUT

SPECS: LOA: 21'3" **BEAM:** 8'6" **DRAFT (MAX):** 1'7" **DRY WEIGHT:** 3,761 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 10/2,100 lb. **FUEL CAPACITY:** 50 gal.
HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINES:** Twin Yamaha 1.8L High Output engines **DRIVE/PROPS:** Jet pumps **GEAR RATIO:** 1.00:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 40 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 400 lb.

Want to surf but don't have \$150,000 around to get in a fancy inboard wake bruiser? Yamaha's gotcha covered with the 212XD Wake Series.

With ballast tanks for 1,100 pounds, plus the ability to set and select rider profiles to give the perfect hole shot and top speed, everything is in place for a great ride on a wake- or surfboard.

The Connex screen has mapping for navigation, and engine, audio and rider controls are ready for command with a tap of the screen or a jog of the joystick on the

helm. Ballast tanks can be filled individually for the ideal balance. Seating inside for 10 means each rider has a big audience.

Drive technology makes docking easy with its paddle controls on the wheel. Touch the Connex screen to activate it, and the paddles control throttle and shift while hands remain in control of direction with the wheel. Go ahead, dock like a pro—back in to turn the amplified stereo toward the dock and rock the day.

The wakeboard tower and Bimini are standard, and so is the surf-mat sole cover that snaps out for cleaning. Comfort seating abounds with surrounding lounges in the cockpit, and dual buckets for skipper and mate, and a transom walkway gives access to Yamaha's famous tiered water-front transom lounge.

The cockpit is deep and so is the bow seating area, relaxing parents with its kid-keeping depth. Even the bow seats are secure with grab rails and dual jump seats for a most exciting front-facing ride.

The 212XD is the top tier of the 21-foot jets, but the value-entry models, like the SX210, start as low as \$43,399, including

rpm	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level
2000	4.6	5.3	2.1	2.2	2.5	98.7	113.6	0	71
2500	5.0	5.8	2.4	2.1	2.4	94.5	108.8	0	72
3000	5.9	6.8	3.6	1.6	1.9	73.9	85.0	1	78
3500	6.3	7.2	4.5	1.4	1.6	62.6	72.0	4	80
4000	7.0	8.1	5.7	1.2	1.4	55.6	63.9	4	85
4500	8.3	9.5	7.4	1.1	1.3	50.2	57.8	7	87
5000	16.4	18.9	9.7	1.7	1.9	76.2	87.7	7	87
5500	23.9	27.5	11.2	2.1	2.5	96.0	110.5	5	86
6000	29.6	34.1	13.8	2.1	2.5	96.6	111.2	4	90
6500	33.4	38.4	16.2	2.1	2.4	92.7	106.7	4	94
7000	38.0	43.7	20.8	1.8	2.1	82.2	94.5	4	97
7400	43.3	49.8	24.6	1.8	2.0	79.2	91.1	4	100

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

YAMAHA
Kennesaw, Georgia; 800-962-7926; yamahaboats.com

a color-matched trailer. For salt water, a galvanized option is offered.

Yamaha makes its boats easy to operate and maintain, giving ample room in the bilge for easy oil changes. Battery access is also generous, with on/off switches conveniently located. At the end of the day, connect a hose to each engine flushing port, and flush the salt away in minutes.

Yamaha engineers design everything from keel to bow eye, making your dealer the only guy you need to visit for routine service and warranty repairs.



PHOTOS: COURTESY YAMAHA

ALL ABOUT THE RIDE

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REGULATOR
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MONTEREY 215 SS

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HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Durable, glossy finish is protected from blisters and print-through by careful lamination.
- ▶ Upholstery is hand-sewn and manufactured in Monterey's plant using UV- and mildew-resistant vinyl.
- ▶ Available in outboard or sterndrive configurations.

C

BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS



Price: \$63,672 (starting)

SEE THE VIDEO

To watch our video review of the 215 SS, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/monterey215ss.



RUNABOUT

SPECS: LOA: 21'8" **BEAM:** 8'4" **DRAFT (MAX):** 1'4" (engine up) **DRY WEIGHT:** 3,500 lb. **WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 1,980 lb. **FUEL CAPACITY:** 36 gal.

HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINE:** Mercury FourStroke 200 hp **DRIVE/PROPS:** Outboard/Mercury Enertia 19" 3-blade stainless steel **GEAR RATIO:** 1.85:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 30 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 400 lb.

Monterey's 215 SS might just become the builder's No. 1 seller. It deserves to be thanks to its smart faceted styling, solid construction, and exciting performance with Mercury outboard power.

Usually, 200 hp in a near-22-foot boat is relatively modest, but Merc's new and efficient V-6 engine offers the torque to get on plane in 3.5 seconds, and made 30 mph in 8.8 seconds. Our top speed of 49.3 mph was held below the 50 mph mark, in our opinion, due to the high heat and humidity of the day. Its performance matched

the fast look.

Coastal boaters are now opting for outboards due to their easy flush-and-stow maintenance. It takes only a few minutes to connect a dock hose and wash away the salt. In addition, the engine's full tilt range is forgiving when it comes to sneaking across shallow flats.

For sterndrive fans, the 215 still owns the waterways in most inland regions. It's popular for its wide-open transom and clear view of the water, which is unobstructed by an outboard but offers a similar deck plan in the bow and cockpit.

Either way, the design team has always managed to give Monterey boats a strong European look with a hint of Italian flair. In addition to its faceted look, carefully laid stripes and thunderbolts in the gelcoat give the 215 a sporty finish that remains on the luxury side of performance.

Inside, firm multidensity foam mimics the comfort of a BMW, and won't bottom out in rough water or hard use. Monterey builds 90 percent of its parts in its factory, and if they didn't build it, it took life on the CAD systems under that factory's

rpm	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level
1000	3.3	3.8	1.0	3.3	3.8	107.0	123.1	1	60
1500	4.8	5.5	1.8	2.7	3.1	86.0	99.0	1	58
2000	6.3	7.3	2.9	2.2	2.5	70.9	81.6	1	67
2500	11.7	13.5	3.7	3.2	3.6	102.7	118.2	1	70
3000	17.4	20.0	4.4	3.9	4.5	128.0	147.3	1	80
3500	24.1	27.8	6.3	3.8	4.4	124.0	142.7	1	79
4000	29.6	34.1	8.0	3.7	4.3	119.8	137.9	1	80
4500	32.2	37.0	9.8	3.3	3.8	106.3	122.3	1	86
5000	38.4	44.2	12.6	3.0	3.5	98.7	113.5	1	86
5500	42.8	49.3	16.3	2.6	3.0	85.2	98.0	1	87

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

MONTEREY BOATS

Williston, Florida; 352-528-2628; montereyboats.com



roof. All this brings the look and ride of the 215 together in solid excitement, but it does something else too. Monterey owners expect a lifetime of fun from their boat, and repair parts, including color-matched seat cushions and special hardware, will be available for years after the purchase.

The two-tone surf mat on our test boat gave the vessel a rich teak-and-holly look that also added cool comfort underfoot.

Monterey's style is trendsetting, with many standard color options and a look that inspires boater envy.

PHOTOS: COURTESY MONTEREY BOATS

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YAMAHA 255XD

2021
BOATING
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GUIDE

C

**BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS**



Price: \$93,899

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Yamaha's exclusive jet-pump cleanout access means ingested grass can be cleared without the rider getting in the water.
- ▶ Yamaha's ownership of every boat component ensures simpler warranty response, with no finger pointing to component-makers.

SEE THE VIDEO

To watch our video review of the 255XD, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/yamaha255xd.



RUNABOUT

SPECS: LOA: 24'6" **BEAM:** 8'6" **DRAFT (MAX):** 1'7" **DRY WEIGHT:** 4,740 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 12/2,350 lb. **FUEL CAPACITY:** 70 gal.
HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINES:** Twin 1.8L supercharged SVHO **DRIVE/PROPS:** Jet-pump impeller **GEAR RATIO:** 1.00:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 60 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 400 lb.

Yamaha is stepping up to the big-boat aficionados and building jet-powered craft to 27 feet. The 255XD Wake Series is the pinnacle of its new 25-footers, and it's feature-rich with Drive technology, a Connex touchscreen, speed control and wakesurfing capabilities.

Let's start with the head-snapping power from dual 1.8L SVHO supercharged powerplants. Together, they crank 500 hp, nestled in a wide-open bilge area that makes maintenance such as oil changes easy. A flushing port on the transom means it only takes a minute to protect

your engine from salt water. Jet boats are growing in popularity due to the internalized drive system that allows swimming off the platform without risk of injuries from sharp props.

Yamaha countered the tracking deficiencies in most jets by adding what it calls an articulated keel to each jet nozzle. It serves as a small rudder that locks the boat on track in turns and prevents the boat from skidding out from the force of a wakeboard rider. The result is a true towed-sports vessel but with a twist: You can wakesurf behind it.

Ballast—1,600 pounds of it—has been added in three tanks, and engine nozzles are toed inward to improve the wake. An automated surf gate further tunes the riding surface.

Engine controls are digital, and many are accessed through the Connex screen. From here, you can activate the surf gate, fill the ballast tanks, set acceleration and select top-speed rider profiles, which are among the many options easily managed in this intuitive screen. Activate the Drive system, which gives the skipper

rpm	SPEED				EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
	knots	mph	gph	mpg	naut. stat.	n. mi.	s. mi.	range	angle	sound level
2000	3.9	4.5	1.6	2.4	2.8	165.0	189.8	71	0	
2500	5.4	6.2	2.3	2.3	2.7	158.1	182.0	77	0	
3000	6.3	7.3	3.8	1.7	1.9	112.7	129.7	82	1	
3500	7.1	8.2	5.5	1.3	1.5	87.5	100.6	86	2	
4000	7.7	8.9	7.6	1.0	1.2	68.7	79.0	82	4	
4500	10.3	11.8	10.2	1.0	1.2	67.9	78.1	87	5	
5000	19.3	22.2	13.3	1.5	1.7	97.9	112.7	87	5	
5500	28.2	32.4	18.0	1.6	1.8	105.6	121.5	89	4	
6000	34.0	39.1	21.7	1.6	1.8	105.7	121.6	92	3	
6500	38.1	43.9	27.0	1.4	1.6	95.4	109.8	93	2	
7000	44.1	50.7	36.5	1.2	1.4	81.5	93.8	95	2	
7400	47.2	54.3	38.8	1.2	1.4	82.1	94.5	98	2	

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

YAMAHA
Kennesaw, Georgia; 800-962-7926; yamahaboats.com

dual paddles on the wheel for easy control of throttle and shift. In docking maneuvers, it gives up to 3,000 rpm engine speed for safe docking and lets the skipper adjust course, direction and speed without taking his hand off the wheel.

The technology of the 255XD is impressive, and it's wrapped in comfort. Bow seating is deep, and two forward-facing jump seats give an exhilarating view of the water. The cockpit is spacious, with generous storage to keep it organized even with a big crew of surfers.



PHOTOS: COURTESY YAMAHA

uncomfortable

/ən-'kəm(p)(f)-tər-bəl / • [uhn-kuhmf-tuh-buhl]

adjective

Having to explain why your boat still rolls.



"HONEY... WE'RE ROLLING"



SEAKEEPER
STABILIZATION

CHAPARRAL 300 OSX

2021
BOATING
BOAT BUYERS
GUIDE

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Interior design defies convention and maximizes versatility.
- ▶ Well-appointed cabin includes double berth for overnighting; air conditioning is available.
- ▶ Motorized Vista View lounge expands aft seating opportunities and lifts up for bilge access.
- ▶ Expansive helm console offers room for twin MFDs.
- ▶ Twin Yamaha 300 hp outboards offer beaucoup power.
- ▶ A 140-quart cooler under the forward seating holds plenty of ice and provisions.

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BOATING
BUYERS
SPOTLIGHT



Price: \$259,345 (with twin Yamaha F300s)

SPECS: LOA: 30'6" **BEAM:** 9'6" **DRAFT (MAX):** 2'10" **DRY WEIGHT:** 8,900 lb. (with power) **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** Yacht Certified **FUEL CAPACITY:** 170 gal.
AVAILABLE POWER: Twin 300 hp Yamaha F300 outboards

RUNABOUT

Chaparral's 300 OSX exudes luxury while defying convention, with a delightfully unique layout for entertaining and cruising. An ultra-wide central command console includes twin standard Simrad NSS9 Evo3 multifunction displays and accessory panels. The deluxe wheel, binnacle, and optional joystick control for twin Yamaha F300 outboards are set into a rich padded dash and protected by a full-width windshield. The deep-V hull is designed to handle with precision and slice smoothly through rough seas.

The double-wide captain's chair is

complemented by a single co-pilot seat to starboard. Both offer flip-up bolsters and armrests. When not needed for piloting, the seat base cleverly pivots to starboard to serve as cockpit seating. The Vista View lounge is also innovative; it can change from seating to lounge to sun pad with the push of a button. Add a table for snacks and drinks. You might consider the optional wet bar abaft the helm chairs, but this negates the ability to rotate the seats.

A starboard transom gate offers easy access to the walk-across swim platform and outboards, and the starboard-side door permits safe boarding. To access bilge rigging, the Vista View base hinges upward on a motorized strut.

The portside walkway leads to the bow, where you'll find an inviting lounge for two or more guests. It features an angled backrest and fold-down armrests. Add optional filler cushions to create a sun pad.

Back on the helm deck, slide open the starboard-side pocket door and step down to a surprisingly roomy cabin replete with a fiberglass liner, wood cabinetry, teak flooring, portlight, vanity, sink, freshwater



CHAPARRAL BOATS
Nashville, Georgia; 229-686-7481; chaparralboats.com

faucet, and a flushing marine privy that cleverly slides into a cabinet and out of view when not in use. A cozy forward berth will accommodate two adults for overnighting.

The 300 OSX's hardtop melds seamlessly with the sleek lines of the boat, and incorporates a sunroof and telescoping Sure-Shade to protect and cool guests on sunny, sultry days. It also features overhead LED lighting to illuminate the interior at night. To set the mood, the 300 OSX comes standard with a six-speaker, SiriusXM-ready audio system with Bluetooth connectivity.



PHOTOS: COURTESY CHAPARRAL BOATS

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FORMULA 310 BOWRIDER

2021
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**BOATING
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TEST
RESULTS**



HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Standard VacuFlush head will save water over a standard flushing head.
- ▶ Hardtop's soft center panel slides open manually.
- ▶ Fit and finish are impeccable, as is the attention to detail; for example, the robust 8.5-inch cleats.

SEE THE VIDEO

To watch our video review of the 310 Bowrider, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/formula310bowrider.



Price: \$456,840

RUNABOUT

SPECS: LOA: 31'0" **BEAM:** 9'6" **DRAFT:** 3'1" **DRY WEIGHT:** 9,875 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** Yacht Certified **FUEL CAPACITY:** 130 gal.
HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINES:** Twin Ilmor 6.2-liter 430 hp **DRIVE/PROPS:** Ilmor One-Drive sterndrive/Mercury Bravo dual 28" pitch stainless steel **GEAR RATIO:** 2.18:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 65 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 400 lb.

Formula updated its largest bowrider model with a new optional hardtop that really enhances this wide-beam dayboat's versatility and style. We tested the sterndrive version of the 310 Bowrider—it's also offered with outboard power—on a brilliant day that highlighted the hardtop option. A \$34,580 upgrade, the fiberglass hardtop covers the main cockpit area and incorporates a skylight, four speakers and lights. For additional coverage over the aft lounge area, consider the optional power SureShade retractable sunshade (\$10,690).

Most owners will use this boat for lounging and entertaining, and the 310 Bowrider is set in that regard. The boat is equipped with two cockpit tables, and a wet bar to port with a covered sink and space below for a 30-quart cooler or a pull-out Isotherm refrigerator (\$2,340). There's also built-in cooler below one of the bow seat cushions. The head compartment to port has 4 feet, 6 inches of headroom and, if desired, can be equipped with a shower.

Bow lounges have backrests against the consoles, and the center cushions lift out to create forward-facing seats. The aft cockpit features a settee to starboard, and a sun pad with pivoting backrest over the engine hatch. The rear portion of the sun pad lifts to reveal a dunnage box accessible from the 30-inch-deep swim platform. The helm features a double-wide seat with a backrest that can be pivoted to face aft for socializing. A Raymarine Axiom Pro 9 S chart plotter dominates the dash, with space for a smaller engine-specific multifunction display to its right. The helm is equipped with a wireless charging pad

SPEED				EFFICIENCY				OPERATION		
rpm	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	level	sound
1000	5.65	6.50	3.00	1.88	2.17	220	254	0	73	
1500	7.73	8.90	5.00	1.55	1.78	181	208	3	74	
2000	9.47	10.90	9.00	1.05	1.21	123	142	6	81	
2500	15.82	18.20	13.30	1.19	1.37	139	160	8	82	
3000	23.72	27.30	15.80	1.50	1.73	176	202	5	81	
3500	31.37	36.10	20.70	1.52	1.74	177	204	4	85	
4000	36.76	42.30	26.40	1.39	1.60	163	187	3	86	
4500	41.19	47.40	33.20	1.24	1.43	145	167	3	86	
5000	47.19	54.30	48.00	0.98	1.13	115	132	3	89	
5300	49.75	57.25	60.40	0.82	0.95	96	111	3	91	

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

FORMULA BOATS
Decatur, Indiana; 800-736-7685; formulaboats.com

and one of the many USB ports sprinkled around the boat.

Twin 430 hp Ilmor 6.2 MV8 Ocean Performance Series engines mated the to Ilmor One-Drive system powered our boat. This was our first experience with the Ilmor One-Touch Pro joystick system (\$30,395), and it proved itself when docking in gusting crosswinds. The progressive throttle control ramps up thrust in a linear fashion, and the hydraulic-shifting drives are smooth and quiet. The 22-degree hull slices through chop and banks confidently in turns like, well, like a Formula.



PHOTOS: TOM KING, COURTESY FORMULA BOATS (HELM)

HIGH
POINTS

- ▶ Fountain's SC Series looks as fast as the boat runs. Choose from five head-turning graphic packages and custom interiors.
- ▶ Storage cubbies atop the helm and in the hardtop are perfect for small items.
- ▶ Excellent access to helm-station wiring.

SEE THE
VIDEO

To watch our video review of the 34 SC, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/fountain34sc.

FOUNTAIN
34 SC

Price: \$441,650 (as tested)

SPECS: LOA: 34'2" BEAM: 9'6" DRAFT: 2'5" DRY WEIGHT: 13,500 lb. SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY: Yacht Certified FUEL CAPACITY: 418 gal.

HOW WE TESTED: ENGINES: Twin Mercury Verado 400 DRIVE/PROP: Outboard/Mercury Revolution 4 14.63" x 19" 4-blade stainless steel GEAR RATIO: 1.75:1 FUEL LOAD: 140 gal. CREW WEIGHT: 430 lb.

The Fountain 34 SC represents the evolution of the center-console, from its fishing-machine origins to a high-performance dayboat. This boat offers legendary Fountain performance presented with the latest materials and construction techniques. The result is a dayboat that can handle nasty chop, blaze to speeds over 60 mph, and look great doing it.

This boat rides a classic Fountain hull form: the Positive Lift double-step running surface, with a pad aft and a notched transom to set back the motors. High-density composite core forms the stringer

grid and transom. The hull, liner and deck are bonded, tabbed and through-bolted. This boat feels solid as a rock on the water, albeit a fast rock.

The helm features a double high-back seat with armrests and individual flip-up bolsters, which are shaped to form a cushioned leaning post when raised. The flat dash is covered in real carbon fiber, and our test boat featured dual 16-inch Garmin GPSMap 8616 multifunction displays, plus a Mercury VesselView 502 display. The tilt wheel is to port, with the controls on the center of the helm. The console houses a head compartment with entry to starboard, outfitted with a porcelain flushing head and freshwater sink.

Tri-color upholstery with a quilted-diamond pattern covers all of the seating surfaces. There's room for the entire posse on this Fountain, with a three-wide seat at the transom, the two-wide mezzanine, an extravagant contoured lounge forward of the console, and wraparound seating in the bow. The sole, transom and bow platforms and gunwales are covered in soft MarineMat material, in a pattern that

matches the upholstery. There's stowage in the sole, below the bow and aft seats, and in pull-out drawers in the console.

Our test boat raced to 64.8 mph with a pair of Mercury Verado 400 outboards on the transom, sliced through Biscayne Bay chop, and handled with predictable confidence. For more speed, you could option all the way up to triple Mercury Racing 450R outboards, a rig that Fountain says can get you to 86 mph. This is a center-console built for comfort and speed.

rpm	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level
1000	5.13	5.90	2.40	2.14	2.46	481	553	0	76
1500	7.47	8.60	4.00	1.87	2.15	420	484	1	81
2000	8.52	9.80	7.40	1.15	1.32	259	298	2	87
2500	10.25	11.80	12.30	0.83	0.96	188	216	4	87
3000	16.60	19.10	14.10	1.18	1.35	265	305	2	91
3500	23.81	27.40	17.60	1.35	1.56	304	350	1	93
4000	29.28	33.70	23.00	1.27	1.47	286	330	1	94
4500	31.28	36.00	23.80	1.31	1.51	296	340	1	95
5000	37.28	42.90	30.50	1.22	1.41	275	316	1	96
5500	44.32	51.00	38.10	1.16	1.34	262	301	1	96
5900	47.19	54.30	50.30	0.94	1.08	211	243	1	98
6500	51.36	59.10	74.30	0.69	0.80	156	179	1	100
6730	54.31	64.80	78.50	0.69	0.80	156	179	1	104

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

ICONIC MARINE GROUP/FOUNTAIN POWERBOATS
Washington, North Carolina; 252-975-2000; fountainpowerboats.com

AVIARA AV36 OUTBOARD

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**BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS**



Price: \$443,460 (base with twin 400 hp Verados and Joystick Piloting)

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Standard CoolFeel vinyl upholstery ensures seating comfort on the hottest days.
- ▶ Pneumatic bar stools are cool and unique; the wet bar features a pull-out cooler, sink and wine-bottle storage, plus room for two grills and two refrigerators.
- ▶ Outboard or sterndrive power, each with standard joystick, delivers high performance and freedom of choice.
- ▶ AV36's styling, attention to detail and full-boat gel-color coordination truly set it apart from other boats.

RUNABOUT

SPECS: LOA: 36'8" **BEAM:** 10'10" **DRAFT:** 2'7" (drives up) **DRY WEIGHT:** 14,550 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** Yacht Certified **FUEL CAPACITY:** 214 gal.
HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINES:** Triple Mercury Verado 300 **DRIVE/PROP:** Outboard/14 1/4" x 20"-19"-20" 3-blade stainless steel **GEAR RATIO:** 1.76:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 130 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 300 lb.

Twin 400 hp Mercury Verado outboards with Joystick Piloting serve as the base power for the sleek, sophisticated Aviara AV36. You can upgrade to triple 300 hp outboards with a joystick, or choose to power it with twin 380, 430 or 483 hp Ilmor One Drive stern-drives with One Touch joystick control. When you choose Aviara, you're choosing luxury, performance and your choice of propulsion.

Powered by triple 300 hp Mercury Verado outboards, our test boat blasted to a top speed of over 55 mph and attained

plane readily, without enough bow rise to limit visibility, in just 7 seconds. This boat handled rough wakes and waves well, and delivered nimble handling too. It proved itself a thoroughbred boat.

While its performance proved great, the Aviara AV36 also embodies luxury, innovation and an air of exclusivity that few other boats can claim. The sleek angularity of the AV36's lines captivate the eye. Step aboard and the visual theme continues as fittings, fixtures, cushions, and even the design cut into the attractive surface covering the cockpit sole all echo this geometric theme.

Look closer, and details include the expansive transom lounge that not only hides stowage underneath, but also conceals an innovative surprise: three bar stools that pop up to create instant seating. And where might the stereo speakers for the premium Klipsch audio system hide? Right behind the geometrically consistent brushed-aluminum grates, that's where. Beauty truly goes beyond skin deep aboard the AV36.

Belowdecks, the swank cabin provides overnight amenities with a full functioning head, TV and wide berth. Our tester

rpm	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level
1000	5.6	6.4	4.0	1.4	1.6	238.9	274.9	0	76
1500	7.7	8.9	6.3	1.2	1.4	207.5	238.8	1	79
2000	9.0	10.4	9.5	1.0	1.1	161.8	186.2	3	83
2500	13.3	15.3	12.0	1.1	1.3	188.5	216.9	5	84
3000	18.1	20.8	16.0	1.1	1.3	192.2	221.1	5	86
3500	24.9	28.6	25.6	1.0	1.1	165.1	190.0	6	90
4000	30.2	34.8	30.8	1.0	1.1	167.3	192.5	5	89
4500	35.4	40.7	37.2	1.0	1.1	161.7	186.1	4	91
5000	39.6	45.6	56.1	0.7	0.8	120.2	138.4	4	92
5800	49.3	56.7	68.8	0.7	0.8	121.8	140.2	4	94

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

AVIARA BOATS
Vonore, Tennessee; 423-884-2121; aviaraboats.com

boasted air conditioning, a generator and microwave. The berth converts into seating, perfect when hosting a crowd, and the cabin serves as a comfort station for guests.

At the helm, the AV36 proves ultra-modern and ultra-chic. A clean trio of screens places control of ship's systems and accessories at your fingertips. Aft of the helm resides a standard bar with sink and wine-bottle stowage, but the optional gourmet bar offers two refrigerators and one or even two grills, with the option of a built-in cooler. Aviara: the boats aboard which attention to detail matters most.



PHOTOS: COURTESY AVIARA BOATS

JEANNEAU LEADER 12.5

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Available with Yamaha Helm Master EX full-maneuverability system with autopilot and joystick.
- ▶ Color-matched hardtop, hull sides and helm console.
- ▶ Fusion Audio system with multizone control above- and belowdecks.

SEE THE VIDEO

To see our video review of the Leader 12.5, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/jeanneau-leader12.5.



Price: **\$403,180** (starting)

SPECS: LOA: 40'3" **BEAM:** 11'9" **DRAFT (MAX):** 2'8" **DRY WEIGHT:** 17,999 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 12/8,531 lb. **FUEL CAPACITY:** 304 gal.

HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINES:** Triple Yamaha F300 V-6 four-stroke **DRIVE/PROPS:** Outboard/15½" x 17" 3-blade stainless steel **GEAR RATIO:** 1.75:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 150 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 450 lb.

Jeanneau's newest swift, stylish performance cruiser, the Leader 12.5, is a collaboration between noted designers Michael Peters and Patrice Sarrazin, and Jeanneau's Design Team.

Triple Yamaha 300 hp outboards push the boat to 50 mph, and it's stable and tight in turns. The Leader 12.5 is available with a Seakeeper stabilizing gyro, genset and bow thruster. In addition, Yamaha offers the exclusive Helm Master EX full-maneuverability system with autopilot and joystick steering.

Cockpit seating includes wraparound

lounge seating and a cocktail table. An entertainment island separates the helm deck from the cockpit and provides a refrigerator, sink, grill, and you can opt for a second refrigerator or an ice maker. A TV drops down from the hardtop, and that durable structure is supported by handsome stainless-steel struts. Cool the cockpit by deploying the retractable shade. Sturdy bow rails offer safe passage to the windlass and the triple bow lounge.

The Jeanneau's Design Team always impresses most with its capability to demand and get maximum utility from every square inch of space. In that vein, the boatbuilder has added a portside fold-down veranda that extends 3 feet outward over the water at the touch of a button. Additionally, Jeanneau has provided a starboard boarding door to the cockpit and kept the transom entry as another option.

In the cabin below, we found a wide, deep forward V-berth that converts from a dinette area with a hardwood table. Drop it down and shift the cushions to make for a comfortable night's sleep. To make it

even more comfortable and cozy, the two berths can be joined into one. Because the 12.5's propulsion is outboard instead of inboard, there's a spacious aft cabin with a double and single berth. Sidelights keep it cheery, as does the recessed lighting overhead. A galley to port complements the one on deck, and the head compartment provides a sink, head and—behind an acrylic door—a shower.

Comfort, speed and room for a crew to spread out were Jeanneau's goals with the Leader 12.5, and it didn't miss the mark.

	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
	rpm	knots	mph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level
1000	5.0	5.8	4.3	1.2	1.3	320.7	369.0	1	62
1500	6.6	7.6	6.3	1.0	1.2	286.8	330.1	3	69
2000	8.1	9.4	10.5	0.8	0.9	211.7	243.6	5	73
2500	8.7	10.1	16.3	0.5	0.6	146.6	168.7	6	77
3000	9.1	10.5	21.2	0.4	0.5	117.2	134.9	6	77
3500	12.7	14.6	28.7	0.4	0.5	120.9	139.2	4	85
4000	25.5	29.4	36.0	0.7	0.8	194.2	223.4	2	84
4500	32.5	37.4	46.9	0.7	0.8	189.6	218.2	2	86
5000	36.7	42.3	56.0	0.7	0.8	179.4	206.4	2	86
5500	40.0	46.0	66.1	0.6	0.7	165.5	190.4	1	89
6000	43.7	50.3	78.5	0.6	0.6	152.2	175.1	1	91

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

JEANNEAU

Annapolis, Maryland; 410-280-9400; jeanneauamerica.com

CRUISERS YACHTS

42 GLS

2021

BOATING

**BOAT BUYERS
GUIDE**

S

**BOATING
BUYERS
SPOTLIGHT**



Price: \$928,340 (base with triple 400 hp outboards)

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Beach doors fold out and down to create a spacious platform for easy boarding and swimming.
- ▶ Comfortable overnighting for four people belowdecks, with a full head and shower.
- ▶ Deep-V dual-strake 21-degree hull is soft-riding and dry.
- ▶ Construction is solid and long-lasting, with no wood used in the hull, and a combination of fiberglass infusion and hand layup for maximum strength and durability.

SPECS: LOA: 42'0" **BEAM:** 13'0" **DRAFT (MAX):** 3'7" **DRY WEIGHT:** 27,000 lb. (with power) **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** Yacht Certified **FUEL CAPACITY:** 403 gal.
AVAILABLE POWER: Triple outboards to 450 hp total

RUNABOUT

Largest in the adventurous GLS series from Cruisers, the new 42 GLS clearly shouts “fun on the water.” Certainly, the most visible features are the twin fold-down beach doors that create a spacious swim and lounge platform aft, complete with rear-facing seating. Swim ladders are on each side, and a shower is hidden for rinse-offs.

The cantilevered hardtop, with large sliding fiberglass sunroof, provides full sun protection, and an optional powered Makefast awning slides from the hardtop to cool the transom beach as well.



The cockpit is unique, with a dinette to starboard that wraps around a custom wood table, while the galley opposite is equipped for entertaining with a grill, fridge drawer, ice maker, sink and storage. Twin bar stools with a counter are thoughtful touches for entertaining.

The skipper enjoys a fully adjustable double bench seat behind a twin all-glass Simrad navigation cluster, with push-button accessory switches and a Mercury joystick for easy maneuvering. Power for the 42 GLS comes from a choice of triple 350 to 450 hp Mercury Verado outboards and, with the midsize 400s, it tops out at 52 mph.

The forward cockpit, separated by a gas-assisted opening windshield panel and a lower air-dam door to protect the cockpit from wind, is another full entertainment area. The U-shaped bow seating showcases a table that converts into a sun pad, Rockford Fosgate speakers with volume controls, and multiple cup holders. The settee also transforms into forward-facing seats with an elbow rest. A hidden anchor locker conceals a Genius anchor



CRUISERS YACHTS
Oconto, Wisconsin; 800-743-3478, cruisersyachts.com

windlass, which can be controlled by foot buttons or from the helm.

The cabin is reached through a sliding door with built-in screen, and features a spacious private stateroom with a custom berth, reading lights, and inclined backrests for watching the TV. In the main cabin, a convertible U-shaped dinette becomes a full berth, and both areas enjoy great stowage. The head compartment features a sink, electric toilet and stand-up shower, plus more storage.

PHOTOS: COURTESY CRUISERS YACHTS

2021 ZS232
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TIARA SPORT 43 LE

2021
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**BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS**



Price: \$1,092,900

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ All-Sport Module provides upright or reclined seating, towage, a food-prep center and a variety of views.
- ▶ Seal off the helm deck for climate control, or open it to enlarge the cockpit.
- ▶ Fantastic water access via the terrace.

SEE THE VIDEO

To watch our video review of the 43 LE, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/tiara-sport43le



RUNABOUT

SPECS: LOA: 43'6" **BEAM:** 13'0" **DRAFT:** 3'5" (motors down) **DRY WEIGHT:** 22,100 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** Yacht Certified **FUEL CAPACITY:** 400 gal.

HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINES:** Triple Mercury Racing 450R **DRIVE/PROP:** Outboard/Revolution 4 XP 14.6" x 18" x 19" x 18" 4-blade stainless steel **GEAR RATIO:** 1.60:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 400 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 450 lb.

Just because a boat can carry a large crew doesn't mean they want to be together all the time. Another permutation is using areas of the boat in different ways, depending upon the needs of the moment. Tiara Sport's 43 LE is a high-performing, luxury express dayboat-cum-weekender sport model that allows for all these circumstances.

For example, the aft cockpit's port side folds down, creating the terrace, which is great for water access and works in concert with the aft platforms that extend beyond the triple outboards and offer access to the

cockpit from both sides of the transom. But the terrace, when deployed, also physically enlarges the mingling space, not to mention provides an aesthetic reminiscent of an infinity-edge pool.

Then there's the All-Sport Module (ASM), which would be disserved if termed simply as a rotating seat. This fixture hides copious stowage beneath the luxuriously upholstered seats, boasting multiple textures and one of three accent colors from which you can choose. Flip out the footrests to create recliners. The aft side is a solid surface counter. Flip this top open, and there's a grill inside. This entire aft section opens up to massive stowage, effectively creating a fender-and-gear-swallowing lazarette.

Oh, yes—the ASM rotates to face the seats toward the open terrace, or completely around for a view of the wake. Put the teak table in place and enjoy a meal with a view. Aft-facing seats at the cockpit's forward end add to the sociability, and the hardtop's extending sunshade provides coverage.

On the safely reached bow, there's a reclining sun lounge with drink holders. Under the hardtop, privatize the helm deck

rpm	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level
1000	5.1	5.9	4.8	1.1	1.2	384.5	442.5	0	60
2000	9.4	10.8	15.2	0.6	0.7	222.3	255.8	2	70
3000	14.7	16.9	29.0	0.5	0.6	182.3	209.8	4	75
4000	23.6	27.2	44.6	0.5	0.6	190.8	219.6	6	79
4500	28.2	32.4	53.0	0.5	0.6	191.2	220.1	6	83
5000	34.7	39.9	69.2	0.5	0.6	180.4	207.6	5	84
5500	41.2	47.4	88.0	0.5	0.5	168.5	193.9	5	86
6000	47.2	54.3	118.4	0.4	0.5	143.5	165.1	4	87
6300	50.7	58.4	135.2	0.4	0.4	135.1	155.5	4	87

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

TIARA SPORT
Holland, Michigan; 616-392-7163; tiarasport.com

with the optional doors. Or leave them open, spin the double-wide helm benches aft, and join the cockpit conversation. Belowdecks, the bright cabin offers overnight accommodations in forward and aft berths, and a lovely head with a shower stall.

Our tester sported three Mercury Racing 450R outboards—you can also choose Yamaha power—that propelled us to 58 mph. At speed, the 43 LE proved nimble and fun to run. Dockside, in a wicked current, we proved the worth of the Joystick Piloting system.

Need a boat to impress, excite and entertain that offers overnight comfort and privacy? Sea-trial the Tiara Sport 43 LE.



PHOTOS: COURTESY TIARA SPORT

REGAL 42 FXO

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Massive lazarette storage with shelves is a welcome rarity in today's market.
- ▶ Seakeeper gyro stabilizer comes standard to smooth choppy water.
- ▶ Option to choose either a galley or a second head belowdecks is a great one.

SEE THE VIDEO

To watch our video review of the 42 FXO, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/regal42fxo.



Price: \$1,008,920 (well-equipped)

SPECS: LOA: 42'0" **BEAM:** 13'0" **DRAFT (MAX):** 2'9" **DRY WEIGHT:** 26,650 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** Yacht Certified **FUEL CAPACITY:** 456 gal.

HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINES:** Triple Yamaha 425 hp XTO **DRIVE/PROPS:** Outboard/Yamaha XTO OS 16 1/2" x 18" **GEAR RATIO:** 1.79:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 180 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 1,000 lb.

RUNABOUT

The 42 FXO proves that in half a century of boatbuilding, Regal has gone from building boating fun to luxury boating fun. And it's been quick to seize on the growing popularity of the new large outboards to propel that fun.

Our test boat had three of Yamaha's massive 425 hp V-8 XTO outboards with integrated electric steering, electronic throttle and shift, and Yamaha's new Helm Master system with joystick and autopilot. The two large Garmins on the main helm and two above all speak to the Yamaha engines displaying all available

engine information. Garmin displays are bright enough to be read in full sun.

The helm station has a wide and adjustable seat with flip-up bolsters to clear the way for stand-up driving. Seated driving is comfortable, though a bit of a reach to the wheel. But on boats like the 42 FXO, autopilot will serve to keep the skipper's hands in his lap anyway. We found the joystick position ideal for seated control.

Regal does a tasteful professional decor job aboard the 42 FXO. Ours sported a bleached beach wood on the main deck in keeping with the summery feel of the brightly sunlit area. The galley had refrigeration, a microwave and a sink. A fold-down TV dropped from the ceiling and was viewable from the salon dinette, which could seat at least six comfortably.

A large atrium opens above the stairs to the living quarters below. Choosing between the forward V-berth and the aft stateroom as captain's quarters is a tough call. The aft cabin has twin bunks that slide together to create a larger berth. Both staterooms offer privacy via sliding doors, though the forward stateroom

provides private entry to the head and shower. A common entry in the galley area is for the rest of the crew. You can opt for a galley here—a nice complement to the one topside—or choose a second head.

In sunny weather, the flybridge offers superior seating, a fantastic view, and refreshments from an electric refrigerator. The foredeck has a large sun pad that converts to forward-facing seating surrounded by a stainless-steel deck rail.

Regal missed nothing in bringing outboard power to luxury cruising.

PHOTOS: COURTESY REGAL BOATS



rpm	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level
175	4.2	4.9	5.7	0.7	0.9	266.2	306.3	0	71
1500	6.3	7.3	8.2	0.8	0.9	278.5	320.5	0	74
2000	8.0	9.3	12.9	0.6	0.7	224.3	258.1	0	80
2500	9.0	10.3	19.5	0.5	0.5	165.2	190.2	1	80
3000	10.1	11.6	29.0	0.3	0.4	125.1	144.0	2	79
3500	16.0	18.5	37.8	0.4	0.5	152.7	175.7	4	80
4000	24.9	28.6	45.1	0.6	0.6	198.4	228.3	3	82
4500	28.5	32.8	59.8	0.5	0.5	171.6	197.5	3	85
5000	35.2	40.6	74.5	0.5	0.5	170.3	195.9	3	85
5500	40.2	46.3	93.5	0.4	0.5	154.7	178.1	2	84
5800	42.9	49.4	111.5	0.4	0.4	138.5	159.3	2	85

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

REGAL BOATS
Orlando, Florida; 800-US-REGAL; regalboats.com



SIGN LANGUAGE

Understanding the numbers and symbols on electronic paper-style navigational charts.

There's an old saying you used to hear that states: "It's not where you're going, it's how you get there." With the speed and accuracy of today's chart plotters, it seems like the "how" part of boating has never been easier.

But don't let the ease of use of today's navigation technology lull you into a false sense of security. At the very least, before you head out on a cruise where you will be relying on charting software, you should know how to read a chart. Let's take a look at some of the basic symbols and numbers on charts and what they all mean.

For the sake of simplicity, I'm going to focus on the official symbols found on the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's paper charts. Navigation companies scan these to appear on your plotter's display as raster charts. For the more dynamic vector charts, some of the symbols, and the chart itself, might appear differently depending on the software provider. (See "Same Place, Different Views.")

TRUE VS. MAGNETIC NORTH

Perhaps the easiest thing to identify—and misuse—on every paper chart is the compass rose. It will typically display with an outer and inner ring. The outer ring will have a star at the top

indicating true north, which is geographic north. However, the inner circle indicates magnetic north, the direction to the magnetic pole. The direction your electronic nav unit indicates is compass north, which is based on computing for local magnetic variation and the boat's heading. (Aren't you glad you no longer have to do this manually?) The direction that your boat's compass—which every boat should have—points is not the same because offsets for deviation (affected

by heading) and variation (affected by location) need to be manually accounted for. On the chart, magnetic north will have a smaller arrow pointing slightly off-kilter to the star that indicates true north. A boat's compass might never match that of the compass rose.

SOUNDINGS On your charts, you'll see numbers aligned along a contour line that indicate the depth. It is important to know whether those numbers are measured in feet, fathoms or meters (1 fathom equals 6 feet), but that will be noted on the chart. In coastal waters, these depth measurements are for the mean low water (called mean lower low water on the West Coast), or the average depth recorded on the lowest tides over a 19-day period. So, the depth might be higher or lower than the printed number, depending on time and tide. In shallow areas, repeatedly check your sounder. In coastal and shoreline areas, some of the numbers might have dotted circles around them. These indicate rocks or other possible submerged hazards.

DISTANCE AND SCALE All fixed raster charts are drawn according to scale. Coastal charts are typically drawn in a 1-to-20,000 to 1-to-80,000 scale to show more detail. Navigable inland waterways, including the Great Lakes and major rivers, use statute miles, while coastal and offshore charts use nautical miles. A nautical mile is equal to one minute of latitude, which simplifies navigation computations. For comparison, 1 nautical mile equals 1.15 statute miles.

AIDS TO NAVIGATION On raster charts, you'll see the simplified symbols found on NOAA paper charts. (Paper charts also can have black and white line drawings to show nav aids.) For example, a floating green or red buoy will appear as a parallelogram in that color. A fixed major lateral beacon will be a vertical red or green rectangle. (A minor buoy would be a skinnier rectangle.) For a complete reference on the symbols on nautical charts, download NOAA's free PDF US Chart No. 1 at nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/publications/us-chart-1.html.



SAME PLACE, DIFFERENT VIEWS

Vector charts are digitally layered so they can be customized to the user's preferences. They are more dynamic onscreen, and don't exactly match the paper charts, as do raster versions. Depending on which software you're using, the image on your screen can look vastly different from the raster chart or one another. Take these three images of the Peace River near Punta Gorda, Florida, grabbed by Editor-at-Large Randy Vance. One is a screenshot of a raster chart (left), another is a vector chart from Navionics (center), and the third is a vector chart from C-Map (right).

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With a sustained focus on both technology and comfort, watersports boats continue to offer buyers the on-water fun they're famous for, in packages designed to suit all varieties of users and budgets. Whether you're looking for an easy-to-tow 20-footer or need the big-lake capabilities of 26 feet, rest assured there is a boat in this category for you, not to mention your family and friends. More than ever, today's watersports boats are capable of delivering wakes and waves that can be customized to suit riders of any skill level, which just means more fun for all.

**CENTURION
Ri245** With its ability to carry 16 people, watersports boats like this Centurion let you thrill a crowd.

WATERSPORTS



PHOTO: GARRETT CORTESE

2021

BOATING

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MOOMBA MONDO

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**BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS**



Price: \$68,700 (starting)

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Multisport crossover capabilities, with customizable wakes and waves.
- ▶ Deep, spacious interior that offers a variety of seating configurations.
- ▶ High-tech features like AutoWake come standard.

SEE THE VIDEO

To watch our video review of the Mondo, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/moomba-mondo.



SPECS: LOA: 20'0" **BEAM:** 8'6" **DRAFT:** 2'2" **DRY WEIGHT:** 4,000 lb. **BALLAST:** 3,700 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 13/2,000 lb. **FUEL CAPACITY:** 39 gal.
HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINE:** Indmar Raptor 400 350 hp **DRIVE/PROP:** V-drive/OJ 15.5" x 16.5" **GEAR RATIO:** 1.76:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 15 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 315 lb.

WATERSPORTS

Don't let the smaller size of the Moomba Mondo fool you, this all-new 20-footer boasts 3,700 pounds of ballast, which would be impressive for a 23-foot boat. That ballast load means the Mondo has both bark and bite, making it one of the more versatile 20-footers in the market—a true multisport crossover machine. The wakeboarding wakes and wakesurfing waves combine a good amount of volume with a user-friendly shape (i.e., great for the whole family, including the little ones just learning), but the Mondo's smaller size means you can

even slalom ski recreationally behind it. With room for 13, anybody on board can ride whatever board (or ski) they'd like—further setting the Mondo apart.

The Mondo continues that separation in the interior with a smart, well-thought-out design that doesn't add extra costs to the consumer. For example, the cup holders, phone holders and USB charging ports are spread conveniently throughout the cockpit, the bow is deep and spacious, and comes standard with a removable filler cushion in the walkway, the nonskid GatorStep flooring extends from the bow to the walk-through transom and all the way to the swim platform, and even the corners of the seatbacks are rounded and padded for added comfort.

The helm is one of the most impressive aspects of the Mondo. It's simple yet functional, and stylishly designed. There's a wireless charging pad for your phone, ergonomically designed armrest next to the throttle, easy-to-see intuitive controls, and an optional 7-inch touchscreen display. From the touchscreen, much of the Mondo's functions are easily controlled,

rpm	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level
1000	3.5	4.0	1.2	2.9	3.3	101.7	117.0	1	74
1500	5.2	6.0	2.1	2.5	2.9	87.1	100.3	3	75
2000	7.0	8.0	3.8	1.8	2.1	64.2	73.9	6	78
2500	8.7	10.0	6.1	1.4	1.6	50.0	57.5	9	86
3000	19.1	22.0	7.5	2.5	2.9	89.5	103.0	9	87
3500	21.7	25.0	10.1	2.2	2.5	75.5	86.9	5	87
4000	26.1	30.0	12.4	2.1	2.4	73.8	84.9	3	87
4500	29.5	34.0	15.7	1.9	2.2	66.1	76.0	3	90
5000	33.9	39.0	21.6	1.6	1.8	55.1	63.4	3	91
5400	39.1	45.0	27.8	1.4	1.6	49.4	56.8	2	94

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

MOOMBA BOATS

Maryville, Tennessee; 865-953-9924; moomba.com

including AutoWake, which automatically detects the boat's riding attitude and makes adjustments as needed to keep the wake or wave at the optimal shape per the rider's settings. The Fusion head unit is also conveniently placed beneath the touchscreen, so adjusting the tunes is easy.

Overall, the Mondo has elevated our rising opinion of what 20-foot watersports boats are capable of—in everything from comfort to performance. It's one of the more well-designed boats we've seen in its class.



NEW
MODEL



NC 795 SERIES 2 HAS ARRIVED

The traditional V-shape hull provides stability and excellent performance. The bow is higher allowing for more volume inside. Now available with a 250 HP outboard engine, the new NC 795 Series 2 is ready for all adventures and comes equipped with an optional roof rack. jeanneau.com.



NC 695
Series 2



NC 795
Series 2



NC 895



NC 1095



NC 1095 FLY



MALIBU M220

C

BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS



Price: \$138,667 (starting)

2021
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BOAT BUYERS
GUIDE

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Power Wedge III easily and quickly customizes the shape of the wakes.
- ▶ Standard G5 tower folds lower for improved clearance.
- ▶ Dual touch-screen Command Center at the helm offers intuitive control on all surf functions.

SEE THE VIDEO

To see our video review of the M220, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/malibum220.



SPECS: LOA: 23'0" BEAM: 8'6" DRAFT (MAX): 2'8" DRY WEIGHT: 5,400 lb. BALLAST: 5,160 lb. (with Power Wedge III deployed) SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY: 15/2,115 lb. FUEL CAPACITY: 79 gal.
HOW WE TESTED: ENGINE: Malibu Monsoon M6Di DRIVE/PROP: V-drive/Acme 1773 17" x 14" 4-blade nibral GEAR RATIO: 2.00:1 FUEL LOAD: 45 gal. CREW WEIGHT: 360 lb.

WATERSPORTS

Malibu's 22-foot-5-inch M220 is a new iteration of last year's M240, benefiting from the same innovative hull design and features introduced on that flagship model, but in a more compact size and affordable price point.

The M-Line hull is the deepest Malibu offers, with increased freeboard to accommodate more passengers, more ballast and increased stowage, and deliver a more secure ride, particularly in rough water. A shovel-nose bow increases the size of its bow cockpit. The main cockpit seating consists of a lengthy wraparound lounge,

but includes several innovations focused on passengers taking in the action in the boat's wake. To each side, a single cushion can be raised to serve as an aft-facing backrest. The Malibu Multi-View bench on the centerline functions like its name implies. In its normal position, it's part of that social cockpit layout, but slide the bench forward on integrated tracks and pivot the backrest over, and it forms an aft-facing stadium seat. Or flip the backrest over to reveal a built-in table with cup holders.

All this attention focused aft is for a reason. The M220 builds impressive wakes for wakeboarding and wakesurfing. In addition to a 15-passenger capacity, a foursome of rigid tanks is built into the hull and capable of holding over 3,500 pounds of water ballast, filled (or drained) in surprisingly quick fashion by Malibu's electric-fill pumps. The transom-mounted Power Wedge III hydrofoil pulls the stern deeper into the water, mimicking an additional 1,500 pounds of weight. For surf junkies, Malibu's vertical Surf Gate plates pivot outward from aft transom corners when activated, disrupting water flow to

rpm	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level
1000	5.1	5.9	1.3	3.9	4.5	280.4	322.7	0	64
1500	6.5	7.5	2.4	2.7	3.1	193.1	222.2	2	68
2000	7.5	8.6	3.7	2.0	2.3	143.6	165.3	5	72
2500	8.3	9.6	6.1	1.4	1.6	97.2	111.9	7	77
3000	16.2	18.6	8.3	1.9	2.2	138.5	159.3	8	81
3500	19.9	22.9	10.3	1.9	2.2	137.4	158.1	7	83
4000	23.9	27.5	12.3	1.9	2.2	138.1	159.0	6	84
4500	26.9	30.9	14.7	1.8	2.1	129.9	149.5	5	86
5000	29.5	33.9	18.0	1.6	1.9	116.4	133.9	4	87
5500	32.0	36.8	22.2	1.4	1.7	102.4	117.9	4	89
5600	32.6	37.5	23.7	1.4	1.6	97.8	112.5	4	91

MOST ECONOMIC CRUISING SPEED

MALIBU BOATS

Loudon, Tennessee; 865-458-5478; malibuboats.com

build and shape mega-wakes on a surfer's preferred side. With the wearable Surf Band, riders can control everything on their own, from the Power Wedge position to switching sides on the Surf Gate.

All that wake-boosting weight requires significant horsepower to get the boat up and out of the hole. Our test boat was equipped with Malibu's Monsoon M6Di, a 430 hp direct-injection powerplant that, along with an assist from the Power Wedge, easily pushed the boat onto plane and up to 38 mph.



MOOMBA MOJO

2021
BOATING
BOAT BUYERS
GUIDE

C
BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Crisp, clean, easy-to-ride wakes out of the box with 4,000 pounds of ballast.
- ▶ In-floor trash can and sandal storage compartment.
- ▶ Wireless charging pad on the dash for your phone.

SEE THE VIDEO

To watch our video review of the Mojo, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/moomba-mojo.



Price: \$78,640 (starting)

SPECS: LOA: 23'0" **BEAM:** 8'6" **DRAFT:** 2'4" **DRY WEIGHT:** 4,800 lb. **BALLAST:** 4,000 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 17/2,500 lb. **FUEL CAPACITY:** 70 gal.

HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINE:** Indmar Raptor 400 350 hp **DRIVE/PROP:** V-drive/OJ 15.5" x 16.5" **GEAR RATIO:** 1.76:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 11 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 315 lb.

WATERSPORTS

Hitting the Goldilocks size in the middle of the Moomba fleet, the redesigned Mojo is not too big to tow or difficult to maneuver, nor is it too small to bring a few extra friends. At 23 feet, the Mojo's footprint is in the sweet spot in boat size to create a crisp, clean wake and wave. By default, the shape of the wake is comfortable with a smooth transition, making it user-friendly at all levels. It can also be customized and programmed thanks to easy-to-control surf tabs mounted to the transom, which help keep things consistent for an ideal learning environment.

The strategically designed interior of the Mojo maximizes comfort and functionality without adding any extra cost to the consumer. This is evident in the thoughtful distribution of the cup holders, phone holders and USB charging ports, the nonskid GatorStep throughout the floor and transom walk-through, and the wide array of seating configurations. The fit and finish are exceptional for its class, giving Moomba a step up on the competition.

The Mojo's helm is simple yet sophisticated. All of the standard operational controls are available at a glance and intuitive. Everything from the optional 7-inch touchscreen display, high-tech features such as AutoWake that come standard, and the built-in armrest next to the throttle were thoughtfully designed with comfort and usability in mind. Even a less-experienced driver can sit at the helm and feel comfortable with the controls—which is not an easy feat considering the technology at hand.

AutoWake is built-in technology that measures the pitch, roll and yaw of

the boat's riding attitude. The sensors automatically add or drain ballast as needed to help keep your wakes and waves exactly how you want—basically removing any head-scratching for the captain. It's a great feature on a boat at this price.

Overall, the Mojo is a versatile boat that's packed full of value for the whole family. Sitting comfortably at the intersection between form and function, this boat does everything well. It's both comfortable as well as capable of satisfying a variety of riders—young or old, brand-new or well-advanced.

rpm	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level
1000	4.3	5.0	1.2	3.6	4.2	228.1	262.5	1	73
1500	6.1	7.0	2.0	3.0	3.5	191.6	220.5	2	77
2000	7.8	9.0	3.7	2.1	2.4	133.2	153.2	5	82
2500	11.3	13.0	5.7	2.0	2.3	124.9	143.7	8	83
3000	16.5	19.0	7.5	2.2	2.5	138.7	159.6	9	83
3500	21.7	25.0	9.5	2.3	2.6	144.1	165.8	6	85
4000	26.1	30.0	12.0	2.2	2.5	136.9	157.5	4	89
4500	29.5	34.0	16.0	1.8	2.1	116.3	133.9	4	93
5000	33.0	38.0	23.2	1.4	1.6	89.7	103.2	3	95
5400	35.6	41.0	28.2	1.3	1.5	79.6	91.6	3	95

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

MOOMBA BOATS
Maryville, Tennessee; 865-953-9924; moomba.com

PHOTOS: COURTESY MOOMBA BOATS



SUPREME ZS232

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TEST
RESULTS

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HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Unique sheerline gives the ZS232 a distinct, bold look that stands out on the water.
- ▶ Sliding bench seat and pop-in backrests allow passengers to watch the action.
- ▶ Roswell F-Series tower complements the boat's lines while providing headroom.



Price: \$118,588 (as tested)

SEE THE VIDEO

To watch our video review of the ZS232, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/supremezs232.



WATERSPORTS

SPECS: LOA: 23'2" BEAM: 8'6" DRAFT: 3'0" DRY WEIGHT: 5,450 lb. BALLAST: 4,600 lb. SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY: 14/1,897 lb. FUEL CAPACITY: 81 gal.
HOW WE TESTED: ENGINE: GM Marine L96 409 hp DRIVE/PROP: V-drive/Acme 2829 16" x 15" GEAR RATIO: 1.72:1 FUEL LOAD: 35 gal. CREW WEIGHT: 555 lb.

Not just Supreme's flagship model, the ZS232 also rates as its boldest. In fact, it may just be the most unique-looking tow boat on the water. The sheerline tapers where the deck meets the hull, giving the ZS an aggressive look—and also the appearance of a “Z” on the port side and an “S” to starboard, hence the name.

Bold looks aside, the ZS232 is built on what Supreme calls its Tapered-V Hull, which tapers toward the transom, allowing the rear to sink into the water easier, thereby displacing more water for better wakes and waves upon which to ride. With

eight separate ballast zones that can carry a combined 4,600 pounds, the ZS232 can be loaded down to help create wakes for all levels of riding. The QuickSurf plates mounted to the transom are easily deployed from the touchscreen at the helm and instantly shape the wake into a clean, powerful wave.

Like the boat itself, the helm of the ZS232 is unlike any other tow boat. Analog gauges that display miles per hour and rpm are mounted right of the steering wheel, keeping this critical info easy for the captain to read in a traditional format. Centered above the steering wheel is an easy-to-use 7-inch touchscreen with menus for speed control, ballast, surf settings, media and rider profiles/presets. If you find the magic combination of ballast and surf settings you prefer, you can save them there and access them at any point in the future with just the touch of a button.

With its higher freeboard and deeper seating, the ZS232 features comfortable wraparound seating throughout the cabin, and the boat is rated for 14 passengers. Storage abounds underneath each seat,

SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION		sound	
rpm	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	level	
1000	0.0	5.8	1.3	3.9	4.5	282.6	325.2	0	68	
1500	0.0	7.5	2.1	3.1	3.6	226.2	260.4	1	67	
2000	7.6	8.8	3.8	2.0	2.3	146.7	168.8	3	73	
2500	10.9	12.5	5.9	1.8	2.1	134.2	154.4	5	76	
3000	16.5	19.0	8.0	2.1	2.4	150.5	173.1	7	79	
3500	21.6	24.9	9.7	2.2	2.6	162.6	187.1	4	80	
4000	25.2	29.0	12.5	2.0	2.3	147.0	169.1	4	83	
4500	28.2	32.5	15.3	1.8	2.1	134.6	154.9	3	86	
5000	31.3	36.0	19.4	1.6	1.9	117.6	135.3	2	88	
5500	33.9	39.0	28.8	1.2	1.4	85.8	98.7	1	90	
5500	33.9	39.0	28.8	1.2	1.4	85.8	98.7	1	90	

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

SUPREME BOATS
Merced, California; 209-384-0255; supremetowboats.com

but we especially like the self-draining storage lockers at the transom, which are great for storing wet life jackets or ropes when you're done riding so you don't have to bring them in the boat.

Unweighted, the ZS232 hit a top speed of 39 mph. Above the engine compartment, the ZS232 features the biggest sun pad in the Supreme line, great for lounging when you're at the sandbar or relaxing in the middle of the lake. For serious surfers on a budget, the ZS232 is a boat you must consider.



Avalon Luxury Pontoon Boats

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A WORK OF ART FOR EVERY BUDGET



Our gallery of beautiful High Quality Pontoon boats are available as Masterpieces like the Excalibur Luxury High performance model.



And also as new works of art as this affordable, Avalon quality VLS model that starts with a motor at under \$20,000.



MASTERCRAFT XT23

2021
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BOATING
BUYERS
SPOTLIGHT



Price: \$113,995 (starting from)

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ With 2,600 pounds of ballast and the award-winning GEN2 Surf System, the XT23 delivers a near-endless amount of adjustable surf waves and wakeboard wakes for every type of rider.
- ▶ Available with base ZFT2 Tower or upgraded ZFT4 Tower.
- ▶ Enjoy Deckadence custom flooring, tons of storage, and flip-up transom seats that are sure to be everyone's favorite spot.
- ▶ Equipped with 7-inch screen and available with Advanced Audio Package.

SPECS: LOA: 23'4" **BEAM:** 8'6" **DRAFT (MAX):** 2'6" **DRY WEIGHT:** 5,000 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 16/2,265 lb. **FUEL CAPACITY:** 55 gal.
AVAILABLE POWER: Single ILMOR Marine V-drive inboards to 430 hp

The XT23 is a surf star, also packing the premium wakeboard-boat performance and features you need for nonstop fun. Keep the waves custom and the party going with the award-winning GEN2 Surf System and a powerful 2,600 pounds of ballast. On board, enjoy amenities aplenty. Let's delve into the details.

The GEN2 Surf System is appreciated by both experienced enthusiasts and beginners. Easy-to-use presets like "Surf Left" or "Surf Right," and the newly upgraded touchscreen make it easy to provide a quality watersports experience. Experienced

riders benefit from the more than 1,600 subtleties of size and shape the system helps craft. Whether you are tournament- or entry-level, you'll appreciate the GEN2 Surf System.

Underfoot, Deckadence custom flooring provides killer looks, great traction and long life. Overhead, the base ZFT2 Tower will prove durable, comes with spinning board racks for convenience, and easily folds down. All around, your crew is immersed in hi-fi audio sounds from the included 7-inch screen and the available Advanced Audio Package.

The XT23's seating features upholstery that's as beautiful to look at as it is comfortable to sit on. Many owners opt for the CoolFeel vinyl upgrade, which stays 30 percent cooler in hot sun. Also notable, MasterCraft makes the upholstery for its boats in-house, using mildew-, UV- and stain-resistant materials. The aft bench is a convertible affair. In one position, your crew faces forward. Flip it, and they face aft, capturing the action behind the boat.

Rated for a full crew of 16, the XT23 boasts storage capacity to match. With



MASTERCRAFT BOAT COMPANY
Vonore, Tennessee; 423-884-2221; mastercraft.com

dedicated space for a cooler under the cockpit seating, and easy access to flip-open storage compartments accessible from the swim step to the bow lounge, there's 112 cubic feet of room for all your gear.

Whether you choose the base model 380 hp ILMOR 6.0L MPI, with its 407 foot-pounds of peak torque, or upgrade to more powerful engines, MasterCraft's XT23 is ready to carry you on the wakesurfing, wakeboarding and water-skiing adventures you crave.



PHOTOS: COURTESY, MASTERCRAFT BOATS

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Corsa 23U



C-Class 23UC

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COMFORT | CONVENIENCE | PERFORMANCE | CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

SUPRA SL 450

2021
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**BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS**



Price: \$144,800 (starting)

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Wake and wave feature a long, forgiving transition.
- ▶ Functional and convertible rear-facing seating from bow to stern.
- ▶ Dual stern thrusters for precise maneuverability at slow speeds.

SEE THE VIDEO

To watch our video review of the SL 450, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/suprasl450.



WATERSPORTS

SPECS: LOA: 23'5" **BEAM:** 8'6" **DRAFT:** 2'4" **DRY WEIGHT:** 5,600 lb. **BALLAST:** 3,500 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 17/2,500 lb. **FUEL CAPACITY:** 73 gal.
HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINE:** Indmar Raptor 450 410 hp **DRIVE/PROP:** V-drive/Acme 3591 16" x 13.9" **GEAR RATIO:** 1.76:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 24 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 340 lb.

With more options and features than ever before, the redesigned Supra SL is a premier watersports tow boat designed to provide all 17 riders on board, no matter their skill level, a fun day on the water. First off, Supra didn't compromise in any way when it designed the wake and wave of the SL. Featuring 3,500 pounds of subfloor ballast, the riding surface can be completely programmed and customized, and is capable of everything from an easy-to-ride, beginner wake, all the way up to a pro-level wake where

the sheer volume of water could power a small village.

Moving into the interior of the SL, we couldn't find a single thing to complain about. Everything was purposely designed and meticulously crafted, from the Chill Tech Vinyl (preventing even black vinyl from getting hot in the sun) and the FxONE Power Tower that folds with the push of a button, to the in-floor storage compartments and the Gator-Step nonskid flooring from the bow to the swim platform. Supra's designers even removed reasons for anyone to ever have to get up out of their seat by keeping everything within reach, including an in-sole cooler, phone holders, cup holders and USB charging ports.

At the helm, the captain will find a feature-rich dash setup that is both ergonomic and user-friendly. Two of the three touchscreen displays in Supra's Vision Control System put the controls at your fingertips without you having to scroll and search for basic operational information. Between Supra's patented AutoWake system and its preprogrammed

SPEED				EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
rpm	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level
1000	4.7	5.4	1.2	3.9	4.5	256.9	295.7	0	69
1500	6.1	7.0	2.2	2.8	3.2	181.7	209.0	1	73
2000	7.3	8.4	3.9	1.9	2.2	123.0	141.5	3	72
2500	8.4	9.7	6.5	1.3	1.5	85.2	98.0	5	79
3000	12.3	14.1	9.2	1.3	1.5	87.5	100.7	8	82
3500	19.9	22.9	10.8	1.8	2.1	121.1	139.3	8	85
4000	24.4	28.1	12.9	1.9	2.2	124.4	143.1	5	89
4500	27.7	31.9	17.7	1.6	1.8	102.9	118.4	4	92
5000	30.4	35.0	24.6	1.2	1.4	81.2	93.5	3	93
5500	33.0	38.0	33.7	1.0	1.1	64.4	74.1	3	96
5600	33.0	38.0	33.7	1.0	1.1	64.4	74.1	3	96

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

SUPRA BOATS
Maryville, Tennessee; 865-983-9924; supraboats.com



rider profiles, you can be confident that the wake and wave shapes will stay consistent for the rider, even if passengers change seats during their set. We also loved the all-new heated captain's chair featuring power controls, integrated software, and heated back and seat cushions. And a must-have feature for 2021: the dual stern thrusters controlled by twisting the knob of the throttle. No matter your prior experience, it's hard not to feel comfortable and confident sitting at the helm.

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When it's time to move up to a better pontoon, there's no better choice than a luxury-minded Starcraft. With an unmatched heritage of quality and craftsmanship, Starcraft pontoons continually set the standard for better experiences on the water. It takes a heritage of pride and excellence to build best-in-class pontoons year after year. So from our family to yours, welcome aboard.

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MASTERCRAFT NXT24

2021

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HIGH POINTS

- ▶ **More room!** With 158 cubic feet of storage under flip-open compartments within the seats and room for a crew of 16 on top of the seats. Invite everybody.
- ▶ **More control!** The award-winning GEN2 Surf System and optional Dock-Star Handling System ensure that whether you are out creating thrills on the water or maneuvering in tight quarters, this technology has you covered.
- ▶ **More thrills!** Infinite waves and wakes mean fun for all levels of riders.

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BOATING
BUYERS
SPOTLIGHT



Price: \$83,995 (starting from)

SPECS: LOA: 23'4" **BEAM:** 8'6" **DRAFT (MAX):** 2'5" **DRY WEIGHT:** 5,000 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 16/2,250 lb. **FUEL CAPACITY:** 65 gal.
AVAILABLE POWER: Single ILMOR Marine V-drive inboard to 430 hp

WATERSPORTS

Whether you're new to wakesurfing or just looking for more room at a price that won't break the bank, the room-for-16 NXT24 is a great way to start your MasterCraft experience.

Sit in the sculpted, high-quality captain's chair and power up the easy-to-use touchscreen with its five-button interface. The NXT24 is equipped with MasterCraft's award-winning GEN2 Surf System, which allows you to create custom profiles for the friends and family who ride with you, and generate more sizes and shapes of wakes and waves than

even the most discerning enthusiast could demand. Whether your riders are big or small, aggressive and experienced, or tentative and just learning, creating a wake or surf wave to suit them is in your command. And the NXT24 allows you to do all this in a simple and intuitive manner. Optionally, you can add the Dock-Star Handling package, a game-changing system that takes most of the stress out of docking the boat in challenging conditions like wind, current or tight spaces.

True wake-sports enthusiasts will note that the NXT24 displaces 5,000 pounds and carries 2,600 pounds of additional ballast—and can carry that full ballast at up to 22 mph. So, whether you're seeking a wake with gentle transitions or powerful, lippy waves, or anything in between, the NXT24 lets you deliver the goods—and then some. The standard ZFT2 Tower is built to last, easily folds, and can be fitted with a Bimini top with surf sleeves that provides shade for the cockpit. Base power is ILMOR Marine's 380 hp 6.0L MPI.

Crew comfort starts in the spacious bow lounge, made possible by the NXT24's



MASTERCRAFT BOAT COMPANY
Vonore, Tennessee; 423-884-2221; mastercraft.com

pickle-fork hull design. Order the optional cushion for playpen seating. Aft, the U-shaped seating can easily accommodate a large crew and, as in the bow, the upholstery looks as good as it feels. Storage below the seating is massive and easily accessed thanks to seats that flip open on sturdy hinges.

From the black anodized accents throughout to the innumerable subtleties of crafting the wake and wave shapes, MasterCraft attended to all of the details when creating the NXT24.





FORMULA

The New Hardtop Formula 310 Bowrider –

Everything You Need for Your *TIME OUT* on the Water!



Celebrating
65 Years!



CHOOSE YOUR TIME OUT IN THE NEWLY-DESIGNED 310 BR, loaded with great ideas for carefree fun! Truly beautiful with an aggressive yet pleasing profile, the full fiberglass hardtop entertains with a retractable sunroof and four 6½" marine-grade speakers, all set off with blue LED lighting for night cruising or entertaining at the dock. And if it's full sun protection you desire, you can add the electrically operated, infinitely-adjustable SureShade ATF sun shade.

Reconfigured for longer days on the water, the cockpit expands the space and possibilities, from twin command seats with backrests that move individually fore and aft to the U-shaped lounge with stowable tables that invites spur-of-the-moment entertaining and easily converts to a large sunpad. The extended portside lounge and aft-facing sunpad with dual-position backrests offer endless seating and sunning positions. Roomy wraparound bow seating with table converts for eating or lowers for sunning.

The dash is a handsome blend of Liquid Black panels, sturdy composite molded construction and precision-stitched upholstery with digital instrumentation and display options that put you in control. The molded wetbar with integrated sink and Corian® countertops plays right along, and as usual, the highest number of polished drink holders and dual USB charging ports are within easy reach.

Always noted for sleek styling and excellent performance, Formula establishes another winner in the 310 BR.

*It's everything you need –
the Formula Hardtop 310 Bowrider!*



AXIS A24

2021
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**BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS**



Price: \$102,502 (starting)

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ New audio system provides better sound coverage throughout the boat.
- ▶ New trash bin conveniently located in the walk-through.
- ▶ Transom seat easily slides to become rear-facing bench, allowing passengers to watch the action.

SEE THE VIDEO

To watch our video review of the A24, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/axisa24.



SPECS: LOA: 24'5" **BEAM:** 8'6" **DRAFT:** 2'8" **DRY WEIGHT:** 5,250 lb. **BALLAST:** 5,320 lb. (with Power Wedge deployed) **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 18/2,538 lb. **FUEL CAPACITY:** 76 gal.
HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINE:** Monsoon M5Di **DRIVE/PROP:** V-drive/nibrat **GEAR RATIO:** 2.00:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 38 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 300 lb.

WATERSPORTS

Following updates to the A22 and A20 the last two years, Axis has now redesigned and updated its flagship boat, the A24. Long known in wakeboarding and wakesurfing circles as offering some of the best wakes and waves for the price, the A24 has improved upon its hull design for a smoother ride in rougher water. Add to that an additional 4 inches of freeboard from the previous design, and crew now have a more comfortable and drier ride.

The higher freeboard and new design cues give the A24 a sleeker look that still maintains the bold, aggressive lines for

which Axis is known. New customization options provide buyers more ways to make the A24 their own, while design accents such as billeted aluminum in the dash and cabin areas add to the upgraded look. Another advantage of the increased freeboard is additional storage. The A24 features some of the deepest storage we've seen in the wakeboat class. The main portside seat in the cockpit features a new vertical hinge, providing easier access to the optional Engel soft cooler that fits beneath. Up front, the lines of the bow have been scaled back, adding to the sleek look while retaining plenty of room for friends to ride comfortably facing forward or aft.

The bread and butter of the A24 are the wakes and waves, thanks to the technology mounted at the transom via Malibu's Surf Gate and the Power Wedge III. For 2021, the Power Wedge III now has more positions it can be set at, allowing for even greater control over the size and shape of wakeboarding wakes and wakesurfing waves. Press a button to activate Surf Gate, and riders can instantly ride endless waves on either side of the boat. Start

rpm	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level
1000	3.7	4.3	1.1	3.4	3.9	232.3	267.4	0	61
1500	5.2	6.0	1.8	2.9	3.3	198.1	228.0	0	65
2000	7.0	8.0	3.2	2.2	2.5	148.6	171.0	2	71
2500	8.7	10.0	5.3	1.6	1.9	112.1	129.1	4	77
3000	12.3	14.2	7.8	1.6	1.8	108.2	124.5	5	80
3500	16.2	18.7	9.7	1.7	1.9	114.6	131.9	4	78
4000	19.3	22.2	12.5	1.5	1.8	105.6	121.5	2	81
4500	22.0	25.3	15.9	1.4	1.6	94.6	108.8	2	82
5000	27.4	31.5	17.2	1.6	1.8	108.9	125.3	2	84
5500	29.8	34.3	23.7	1.3	1.4	86.0	99.0	2	90
5600	29.8	34.3	23.7	1.3	1.4	86.0	99.0	2	90

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

AXIS WAKE RESEARCH
Loudon, Tennessee; 865-458-5478; axiswake.com

the Power Wedge at position 1 for a longer wave with a more mellow face. Bump it toward position 6, and it gets shorter and steeper. For added convenience, riders can use the Surf Band—a wearable device that allows control of boat speed, Power Wedge position, Surf Gate (for easy transfers) and tower speaker volume.

Our A24 test model was equipped with the M5Di engine from Monsoon, which had plenty of torque for getting on plane while filled with ballast, but was still economical—burning around 6 gph at wakesurf speeds.



HIGH
POINTS

- ▶ Dual-touchscreen Command Center controls boat functions, wake and surf settings, music and navigation.
- ▶ Electric eMLS fast-fill ballast speeds up fill/drain time by 150 percent.
- ▶ G5 watersports tower does it all and lowers for clearance.

SEE THE
VIDEO

To watch our video review of the 24 MXZ, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/malibu24mxz.

MALIBU
WAKESETTER 24 MXZ

Price: \$152,408 (starting)

SPECS: LOA: 24'5" BEAM: 8'6" DRAFT (MAX): 2'8" DRY WEIGHT: 6,000 lb. BALLAST: 4,885 lb. (with Power Wedge III deployed) SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY: 17/2,397 lb. FUEL CAPACITY: 82 gal.
HOW WE TESTED: ENGINE: Malibu Monsoon M6Di DRIVE/PROP: V-drive/Acme 3077 17" x 15.5" 4-blade nibral GEAR RATIO: 2.00:1 FUEL LOAD: 45 gal. CREW WEIGHT: 335 lb.

With a 24-foot-5-inch length overall, wide pickle-fork bow, and the ability to produce truly massive wakes, the Wakesetter 24 MXZ has proven to be one of Malibu's most popular models. A new and improved version debuts for 2021, offering more interior luxury, more of the latest tech, and yes, more wake-boosting potential.

Start with the latter. Malibu's Wake Plus hull sits deeper in the water at board-riding speeds, naturally boosting wake size. Add 3,385 pounds of water ballast, spread between Malibu's Quad Hard

Tanks, and that wake grows dramatically. The Power Wedge III hydrofoil mimics yet another 1,500 pounds of weight, and depending on the selected angle, shapes that wake face from steep to mellow. For surf duties, Malibu's Surf Gate, a set of transom-mounted vertical tabs, pivots outward to disrupt water flow coming off the hull sides, and instantly forms an ideally shaped wave on either side.

An all-new interior layout emphasizes comfort and roominess while never forgetting the show taking place aft. The bow cockpit is the most spacious to be found in the entire Malibu line. At 4 feet long and nearly 6 feet wide, use it as one big playpen, or lean against the forward-facing backrests, fold down the armrests and stretch out. Equally plush seating wraps the entire perimeter of the main cockpit. Seats pivot up on articulating hinges to access the storage below. Port-side storage extends all the way under the console for large items. Aft-facing backrests are provided against the built-in cooler locker to starboard, as well as a lift-up seat base to port. Expand

the viewing potential with the optional Malibu Multi-View Wake Bench; it slides forward, pivots its backrest from forward-facing to aft, or flips that backrest horizontal to reveal a built-in table with cup holders.

Our test boat's 430 hp direct-injection Malibu Monsoon M6Di popped riders atop the water with ease even when fully loaded, assisted by the Power Wedge III to limit bow rise. That engine also proved relatively economical, consuming only about 6 gph at surf speeds.

rpm	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level
1000	4.9	5.6	1.4	3.5	4.0	256.5	295.2	0	66
1500	6.6	7.6	2.3	2.9	3.3	211.9	243.9	2	68
2000	7.6	8.8	3.7	2.1	2.4	152.5	175.5	4	73
2500	9.1	10.5	5.8	1.6	1.8	116.1	133.6	7	77
3000	12.5	14.4	8.5	1.5	1.7	108.6	125.0	8	80
3500	19.1	22.0	10.7	1.8	2.1	131.9	151.7	7	85
4000	23.5	27.0	12.3	1.9	2.2	140.8	162.0	5	87
4500	26.5	30.5	15.2	1.7	2.0	128.7	148.1	4	88
5000	29.1	33.5	17.8	1.6	1.9	120.7	138.9	4	89
5500	32.1	36.9	24.1	1.3	1.5	98.2	113.0	3	90
5600	32.2	37.1	24.0	1.3	1.5	99.1	114.1	4	90

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

MALIBU BOATS

Loudon, Tennessee; 865-458-5478; malibuboats.com

CENTURION

Ri245

2021
BOATING
BOAT BUYERS
GUIDE

C

**BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS**



Price: \$225,291 (as tested)

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ QuickLaunch gets the Ri245 on plane with minimal bow rise, even under a full load.
- ▶ Custom matching cooler fits in a storage compartment in the cabin floor.
- ▶ Customizable seating allows several passengers to comfortably face backward.

SEE THE VIDEO

To watch our video review of the Ri245, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/centurionri245.



WATERSPORTS

SPECS: LOA: 24'6" **BEAM:** 8'6" **DRAFT:** 3'0" **DRY WEIGHT:** 5,700 lb. **BALLAST:** 5,650 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 16/2,400 lb. **FUEL CAPACITY:** 89 gal.
HOW WE TESTED: ENGINE: GM Marine Z26 450 hp **DRIVE/PROP:** V-drive/Acme 2829 16" x 15" **GEAR RATIO:** 1.72:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 89 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 555 lb.

For 2021, Centurion released two all-new boats. The Ri245 is the sibling to the Ri265, but it packs all the same features and technology as the new flagship model in a slightly smaller frame.

The Ri245 is new from the bottom up, separating it from the pre-existing Ri models (the 237 and 257). The running surface is redesigned but still built upon Centurion's acclaimed Opti-V hull, featuring 20 degrees of deadrise that not only helps it displace more water for bigger wakes and waves, but also improves the ride in choppy waters. To complement the running-surface

tweaks, Centurion also updated the transom-mounted surf-wave systems—the QuickSurf Pro tabs and Stinger Wake Plate—to further improve the wakes and waves for all types of riders.

The Ri245 interior boasts an all-new finished design with enhanced stitching patterns, billet-aluminum accents throughout, and LED-lighted Centurion badges that can be adjusted via the touchscreens at the helm. While there is room for 16 on board, the Ri245 also boasts a whopping 5,650 pounds of ballast, which ensures a lot of water displacement for shaping up clean and consistent wakes and waves. The waves are world-class, but thanks to the multitude of adjustments that can be made via the surf systems, they can be customized to accommodate any riding level.

The Roswell Drop Zone power tower is standard with the Ri245 and can be outfitted with the Wet Sounds Warrior speaker package, where each tower enclosure houses two Rev 10 speakers and one 8-inch mid. Zone control allows for audio levels to be customized in the boat, ensuring everybody on board enjoys the tunes.

SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION		
rpm	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level
1000	0.0	5.4	1.1	4.3	4.9	341.7	393.2	0	63
1500	0.0	7.0	1.8	3.4	3.9	270.7	311.5	1	66
2000	7.9	9.1	3.6	2.2	2.5	175.9	202.5	2	73
2500	9.6	11.1	5.5	1.8	2.0	140.5	161.7	4	77
3000	13.7	15.8	8.0	1.7	2.0	137.5	158.2	5	81
3500	20.2	23.2	10.2	2.0	2.3	158.3	182.2	6	82
4000	23.6	27.2	12.6	1.9	2.2	150.3	172.9	3	84
4500	27.5	31.7	16.2	1.7	2.0	136.2	156.7	2	87
5000	30.2	34.8	21.3	1.4	1.6	113.7	130.9	3	88
5500	32.8	37.7	30.0	1.1	1.3	87.5	100.7	3	93
5600	32.8	37.7	30.0	1.1	1.3	87.5	100.7	3	93

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

CENTURION BOATS
Merced, California; 209-384-0255; centurionboats.com

At the helm, the captain is treated to dual 12-inch touchscreens, which are easy to read in any lighting condition and intuitive to use. Ballast, speed control, surf settings, media and more are all easily accessed from the screen on the right, while the left highlights speed, rpm and other vitals. What we were especially impressed with is the system's integrated fuel-flow data. Captains can now easily monitor how much fuel they're burning and get range estimates—a great tool when you're out for extended periods or on larger bodies of water.





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CENTURION

Ri265

2021
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**BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS**



Price: \$241,582 (as tested)

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Cabin can be equipped with two sliding benches.
- ▶ Fuel-flow data at the helm is something we wish every other manufacturer would provide.
- ▶ Thanks to QuickLaunch, bow rise on the Ri265 is minimal, and the boat gets on plane easily.

SEE THE VIDEO

To watch our video review of the Ri265, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/centurionri265.



WATERSPORTS

SPECS: LOA: 26'6" **BEAM:** 8'6" **DRAFT:** 3'0" **DRY WEIGHT:** 6,400 lb. **BALLAST:** 5,850 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 18/2,700 lb. **FUEL CAPACITY:** 92 gal.
HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINE:** GM Marine Z26 450 hp **DRIVE/PROP:** V-drive/Acme 2829 16" x 15" **GEAR RATIO:** 1.72:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 92 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 665 lb.

While some might say bigger isn't always better, it's likely they haven't been in Centurion's newest flagship model, the Ri265. At 26 feet, 6 inches, it's not only Centurion's biggest boat ever, it's also one of the biggest V-drive tow boats on the market.

Built on Centurion's acclaimed Opti-V hull, which features 20 degrees of deadrise, the Ri265 has been optimized for creating some of the biggest wakes and waves. With seven ballast positions throughout the boat, capable of holding a combined 5,850 pounds, the Ri265 can displace serious

amounts of water. Add in the transom-mounted QuickSurf Pro plates, which have also been tweaked to complement the new running surface, along with the Stinger Wake Plate in the center, and the wakes and waves can be fine-tuned and adjusted in seemingly infinite ways.

All of the Ri265's wake-shaping tech is easily controlled via Centurion's new side-by-side 12-inch touchscreen displays. Simply fill ballast where needed or preferred, engage the surf system, and off you go. Of course, everything else can be controlled with a couple of finger taps as well, but what is most notable about the new displays is the info never before seen in tow boats: fuel flow and range data. Tap the menu and the Ri265's fuel economy is displayed in real time, including range estimates. For big-lake boaters, this is an invaluable tool.

With room for 18, everybody can come along and enjoy the endless waves, and do so with ample space throughout the cabin. Seating is customizable and comfortable, and all of it is hinged for easier access to storage areas underneath. For upgraded

SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION		
rpm	knots	mph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level	
1000	4.2	5.3	1.1	4.2	4.8	346.7	398.9	0	64
1500	6.1	7.5	2.2	3.0	3.4	245.3	282.3	0	65
2000	7.6	8.8	3.9	2.0	2.3	162.4	186.8	2	72
2500	8.5	9.8	6.4	1.3	1.5	110.2	126.8	4	76
3000	11.4	13.1	8.9	1.3	1.5	105.9	121.9	5	80
3500	16.6	19.1	11.5	1.4	1.7	119.5	137.5	7	83
4000	22.2	25.6	13.5	1.6	1.9	136.4	157.0	4	84
4500	26.5	30.5	16.8	1.6	1.8	130.6	150.3	3	87
5000	29.5	34.0	22.0	1.3	1.5	111.2	128.0	3	88
5500	32.2	37.0	30.0	1.1	1.2	88.7	102.1	3	95
5500	32.2	37.0	30.0	1.1	1.2	88.7	102.1	3	95

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

CENTURION BOATS
Merced, California; 209-384-0255; centurionboats.com

lounging, Centurion has added pop-up backrests to the sun-pad area over the engine compartment—a nice, luxurious touch for this big boat.

The lines of the new Ri265 are bold but not overly aggressive—the boat looks beautiful both on the trailer and in the water. Roswell's Drop Zone auto tower complements the boat seamlessly, and the Wet Sounds Warrior speaker package, featuring two tower-mounted boxes—each housing two Rev 10 speakers and an 8-inch mid—is something you have to hear to believe.





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BOAT DOCTOR

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BOAT BUYERS GUIDE 2021

Q&A

By
Michael "Mick"
Hannock



HUB BUB Outboard propeller hubs protect the drivetrain and need regular inspection. The one shown is DIY replaceable.

BOAT DOCTOR /// Q&A • WHAT TO LOOK FOR • BOAT DOC SPECIAL

FISHING LINE ON PROP

Q:

I discovered fishing line wrapped around my sterndrive prop shaft when I removed the propeller last fall. Will it be all right?

Andrew Gallagher
Revere, Massachusetts

A:

Maybe. The best thing to do is pressure-test the seals. Fishing line can cut the seals, causing loss of lubrication and then corrosion.

PHOTOS: (FROM TOP) COURTESY WEST MARINE, JIM HENDRICKS



QUICK FUNNELS Whether it's topping off engine oil or transmission lube, or adding fuel stabilizer, there is a regular need for a funnel aboard a DIY boater's craft. If your funnel falls overboard, cut the corner off a plastic bag—short enough so that it's relatively stiff—and snip off the tip. Or cut the bottom out of a plastic jug or water bottle, clean the insides, and pour away. —Kevin Falvey

BEST GREASE?

Q: Is there a best grease for all-around use aboard my boat?

Marc Ballisto
Chicago

A: No. Different greases perform better for different purposes. For instance, a high-temperature engine lube can be great—on an engine. But it will be a mess if you lube your snaps and zippers with it. With lubricants, it pays to be specific. Check with each product's maker for the type of grease to use.



PUMP CYCLING

Q: Hi Mick, I have a two-year-old Crownline 24XS outboard, and water keeps entering the bilge while running. The dealer has checked and found nothing. The boat is kept on a lift. Any ideas? Thanks.

Charlie Krikorian
Punta Gorda, Florida

A: First, checking with the dealer was smart. Also, ask the manufacturer because it sees more boats than the dealer.

Next, make sure water is not coming in via the hull-to-deck joint. This is where the hull and deck meet, and is covered on the outside by the rub rail. Look inside through a bow locker, bilge locker, engine box or wherever there is access, and you should see some “squeeze out,” indicating sealant between the hull and deck. If possible, examine these areas with a flashlight while underway. As water climbs the hull, if it hits the rub rail and gets past the unsealed joint, you will see it coming in. A bead of caulk around the underside of the rub rail may help if this is the case.

Third, make sure your bilge pump is simply not cycling the same water over and over. Sometimes, the length of hose between the pump and discharge fitting is so long that the bilge drains, the float switch drops, and then the water in the hose goes back to the bilge, where it makes the switch float again. Rinse and repeat. The answer is to relocate the switch and tolerate a little water in the bilge.

STAIR AND LADDER HANDRAILS

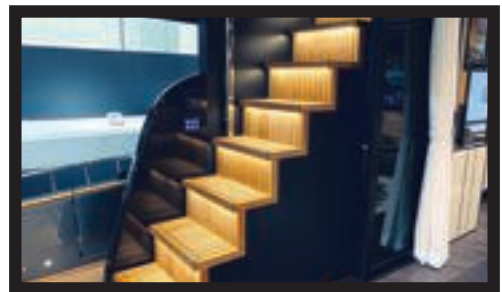
The picture shows the cockpit stairs leading to the flying bridge aboard a large yacht. There is a handrail on the inboard side, per American Boat and Yacht Council standards. According to ABYC H-41, such handholds are required on “weather decks” (areas exposed to weather where crew walk or stand); to assist crew using companionways, ladders and stairways; and in exterior seating

areas used when the vessel is underway. In addition, any grab rail must meet a minimum height requirement of 24 inches above the deck. On a boat with only handholds, “the maximum spacing between handholds must not exceed 4 feet.” A handhold should also be within reach of any boarding ladders.

The rail on the

NAUTICAL NO-NO

outboard side of the steps measured just less than 4 feet from either the top or bottom of this set of steps, meaning the installation likely complies with ABYC standards. Still, we think this instance serves to prove that standards are minimum requirements—not guarantees of safety. Boaters and boatbuilders should adhere to available standards and use them



as a foundation rather than an end goal to be met and forgotten.

Few will disagree that using the steps shown in any kind of active seaway will prove uncomfortable, if

not dangerous. It is for this reason that, though they appear to be compliant with standards, we are calling the lack of a banister or railing a nautical no-no.
—Kevin Falvey

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PAINT CONFUSION

Q: Hi Mick, can you explain the differences between bottom paints, and how do I know which one to use? I will be putting my boat in salt water, and it will be used only on weekends. Is the paint chalky like it used to be years ago? Thanks for your time.

Charlotte Govoni
Fairless Hills, Pennsylvania

A: Anti-fouling paints are markedly different than in the past. But one thing remains the same: Local knowledge of what works in a specific location is the best way to choose. So, determine whether you seek multiseason protection or not, and whether you want to use a more environmentally friendly formula or not. These two considerations can be acted upon without experience and help narrow the field before you get into effectiveness.

Once you have determined single season or multiseason and made a stand on your environmental position, seek the recommendation of other boaters in your specific bay, river or marina for what paints they use that meet your criteria. If you lack contacts, reach out to fishing and yacht clubs, or simply walk the docks; boaters are generally glad to offer their opinions. A trusted retailer can also help, as can the paint-company manufacturers at a boat show.

ADD OR SUBTRACT?

Q: Should I continue to add fuel stabilizer to my fuel tank, even following winter storage? It's my second season with the boat (a Rinker), and I am not an expert at many things yet.

Todd Alston
Sioux City, Iowa

A: If you fuel up with an ethanol-blend gasoline, then yes, I recommend adding stabilizer at every fill-up. Welcome to the boating lifestyle!



Q: SNAPPED

While trying to put my cockpit cover on my Cobalt during the late fall, I noticed it was very tight. I ended up pulling some snaps. Can I fix this?

Maria Goncalves
Concord, New Hampshire

A: Covers shrink with age and also with temperature. Sometimes, it's easier to bring canvas into a heated building and then take it outside to put on the boat. I have even used (cautiously) a heat gun for this purpose of slight expansion. Also, so-called "snap extenders" are widely available and can add an inch or more to make an old cover fit again.

Repairing your pulled snaps is relatively straightforward when using a snap kit from

retailers such as Defender, Jamestown Distributors or West Marine. Often you'll need to relocate the pulled snap on the canvas by a couple of inches if too much material was lost while pulling it out. That also means relocating the snap on the boat, which can also be readily installed with a drill, a screwdriver and some sealant. A trick is to use a snap extender (described previously) to make a relocated canvas snap connect to an existing boat snap.

GAS VERSUS DIESEL

Q: I have a 1988 Sea Ray 270 Sundancer with twin 4.3 Mercs that I'm going to repower in a couple of years. Do you know if anyone has done a repower from gas to diesel? I'm interested in going to diesel to get away from the alcohol in our fuel. I'm looking forward to seeing the pros and cons of this change in a future issue of boating.

John George
Brandon, Canada

A: Mr. George, while individual installations will vary, here is a general comparison chart.

PROS FOR DIESEL:

1. No problems associated

with ethanol and storage.

2. A torquier engine will swing a larger prop and offer more control, especially in rough water and while docking.

3. Since a diesel offers more torque, a small-horsepower engine can be used; often a straight-six or even a pair of fours can replace a pair of V-8s and deliver performance comparable to the big-block gas engine.

4. Less chance of explosion, fire and carbon-monoxide danger (though, these are not eliminated).

5. Increased range and better fuel economy of maybe 30 percent. Keep in mind, diesel fuel often costs more than gasoline—currently,

about 20 percent—which negates some of this economy when considered as an operating cost.

CONS FOR DIESEL:

1. More expensive purchase price. Expect to pay easily up to twice as much for comparable diesel engines versus gas (horsepower ratings will be different because of torque ratings). You'll need new drives because your old drives won't stand up to the torque. You will likely need to modify your engine box to deliver more ventilation because diesels need more air.

2. Noisier.

3. More expensive to service and repair.



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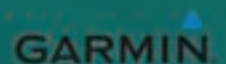
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WAX? COMPOUND?

Q: Are wax and rubbing compound the same thing, and which is safe for gelcoat? I am a new boater and want to rehab my new “girl.”

Rick Beatto
Summerlin, Florida

A: Wax creates shine, and its glossy coating can also offer protection from the sun. Compound is an abrasive that removes oxidation and restores color. In between those two extremes is a variety of multipurpose products (cleaner wax, color restorer, etc.). Seek out a knowledgeable boater, marine dealer or detailer for advice before proceeding.

BANG, BANG, BANG!

Q: Hey Mick, I need your help once again. A couple of years ago, you helped me with getting struts for hatches on a 19-foot Cobalt, and it worked out great!

My problem now is with my 22-foot Voyager Fish and Cruise Tri-Toon. It was damaged at the dock during a storm. The side panel and rub rail are



damaged. Voyager is out of business, and local boat shops can't help repair the damage. What can I do?

Gary Grattan
Smyrna, Tennessee

A: Finding parts for a defunct boat company is usually a dead end. If boat dealers for other brands can't help, I suggest seeking out a metal-fabrication shop. (HVAC companies often have these capabilities.) The side panels are simply sheet metal of a certain gauge.

KOKATAT DIRT BAG

As much as I like to be in the water when I'm out on the water, a good boat bag is essential gear for me. So, when I had the opportunity to test out the Kokatat Dirt Bag, I loaded it up and headed for the docks. The Dirt Bag is designed for stand-up paddlers and kayakers, but it works well as a boat bag

too. For one, it has separate storage segments for your shoes and small items, to keep everything dry and organized. So, I could keep my flip-flops and boat shoes separate from the change of clothes I brought to throw on later, as well as the foul-weather gear I always bring just in case. Plus, it has a breathable mesh zip top to keep your gear from getting too funky inside.

The bag measures 30-by-15-by-13 inches and has a 90-liter capacity. It's

WE
TEST
STUFF



made of waterproof 210D ripstop nylon, with a sturdy ballistic nylon bottom that's coated with a polyester liner. My two favorite features are the 48-inch-diameter changing mat you can pull out to stand on while on a wet deck, and the carrying strap that can be adjusted to shoulder straps so you can use it like a backpack. I also like that it folds into a small carrying pouch, so it's easy to store when not in use. \$95; kokatat.com

—Pete McDonald

An experienced metalworker could surely source raw material, cut it to size, and screw rivets or weld them as needed. You may then need to see a paint shop. Try auto-body places—they paint metal all the time. A graphics place or sign shop can replicate the graphics. Your rub rail, similarly, was not made by the boatbuilder, so a competent auto-body shop or metalworker should see you through.

IMPELLER ACCESS

Q: I own a 2007 Yamaha 210 jet boat used in fresh water. There are two impeller access points on the back deck with large 6-inch-diameter rubber-locking plugs. But these seize in place every year. They just cannot be removed by hand at the end of the season. Is there a tool or technique I could use to remove the plugs?

Mark Dieterle
Groton, Connecticut

A: I asked Yamaha, and here is the company's prompt reply:

Depending on the environment where the boat is stored and operated, it is possible that, over time, the seal on Yamaha's proprietary pump clean-out ports can swell and delaminate. This can make the clean-out plug difficult to be adjusted. For these cases, Yamaha offers a rebuild kit for the clean-out plug.

During routine service, owners are advised to clean the aluminum tube where the clean-out plug locks into. A wire brush on a handle (think barbecue grill) is a great tool for cleaning any corrosion or growth that may accumulate. Afterward, we recommend applying Yamalube multipurpose grease to the seal via a paintbrush to keep the seal lubricated. It is also advised to leave out the clean-out plugs until the boat is used.

ASK THE DOCTOR

Send questions to Mick with your name and address to: boatdr@boatingmag.com or The Boat Doctor, *Boating*, 480 N. Orlando Ave., Suite 236, Winter Park, FL 32789.

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Gimme Six Extended Protection promotion applies to new Suzuki Outboard Motors from 25 to 350 HP in inventory which are sold and delivered to buyer between 01/01/21 and 03/31/21 in accordance with the promotion by a Participating Authorized Suzuki Marine dealer in the continental US and Alaska to a purchasing customer who resides in the continental US or Alaska. The Gimme Six Promotion is available for pleasure use only, and is not redeemable for cash. Instant Savings applies to qualifying purchases of select Suzuki Outboard Motors made between 01/01/21 and 03/31/21. For list of designated models, see participating Dealer or visit www.suzukimarine.com. Instant Savings must be applied against the agreed-upon selling price of the outboard motor and reflected in the bill of sale. There are no model substitutions, benefit substitutions, rain checks, or extensions. Suzuki reserves the right to change or cancel these promotions at any time without notice or obligation. * Financing offers available through Synchrony Retail Finance. As low as 5.99% APR financing for 60 months on new and unregistered Suzuki Outboard Motors. Subject to credit approval. Not all buyers will qualify. Approval, and any rates and terms provided, are based on creditworthiness. \$19.99/month per \$1,000 financed for 60 months is based on 5.99% APR. Hypothetical figures used in calculation; your actual monthly payment may differ based on financing terms, credit tier qualification, accessories or other factors such as down payment and fees. Offer effective on new, unregistered Suzuki Outboard Motors purchased from a participating authorized Suzuki dealer between 01/01/21 and 03/31/21. "Gimme Six", the Suzuki "S" and model names are Suzuki trademarks or ©. Don't drink and drive. Always wear a USCG-approved life jacket and read your owner's manual. © 2021 Suzuki Motor of America, Inc.

Perhaps no other style of boat has soared more in popularity over the past decade than the pontoon. The once-humble family floater is now a full-on luxury craft, replete with all the fit, finish and amenities you'd find on a high-end fiberglass cruiser. Pontoons have come a long way in the performance category too, with some capable of winning the local poker run. Whether you want to bring aboard your closest friends and family members for an all-day cruise, enjoy a round of watersports, or try to catch your limit, there's a pontoon covered here for you.



PONTOON

PHOTO: TOM KING

2021

BOATING

BOAT BUYERS GUIDE

BARLETTA CORSA 23U

A sporty pontoon with a long list of desirable features, including luxurious and comfortable seating for your crew.

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MANITOU

21 AURORA LE VP

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**BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS**



Price: \$45,041

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Manitou V-Toon delivers a smooth ride and sharp handling, carving neatly with a slight inside lean that keeps everyone on board comfortable.
- ▶ Aurora LE is proof that buying a new pontoon does not have to be a mind-boggling exercise. What you need comes standard. What you might want can be ordered by checking one box.
- ▶ Limiting options keeps manufacturing costs down, so Manitou can build in more value, with features like a standard Garmin MFD on the dash.

SPECS: LOA: 22'4" **BEAM:** 8'6" **DRAFT:** NA **DRY WEIGHT:** 2,485 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 11/1,695 lb. **FUEL CAPACITY:** 43 gal.
HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINE:** Mercury 115 Pro XS **DRIVE/PROP:** Outboard/Mercury Enertia 15.3" x 14" 3-blade stainless steel **GEAR RATIO:** 2.07:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 30 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 400 lb.

PONTOON

Manitou seeks to make pontoon buying easier with its new Aurora LE line by adding more standard features and grouping the most popular options in a single Limited Package. Choose a tube configuration, a color and an outboard with your desired horsepower, and you'll be done. Our test boat featured the patented triple-tube Manitou V-Toon VP chassis, with 23-inch-diameter outboard tubes and a 27-inch center tube. The bottom of the center tube, which is also fitted with lifting strakes, is 5.25 inches lower than the outboard tubes. The premise is

that the boat can heel over on the inner tube in a turn and handle like a V-bottom monohull. On the water, the V-Toon effect is subtle but effective. Our test boat carved neatly on smooth water, with a slight inside lean that's more comfortable for passengers. The VP chassis comes with SeaStar hydraulic steering.

The Aurora LE is offered only with the RF interior—we told you this was easy—with fore and aft L-shaped lounges. The aft lounges have angled backrests. All of the furniture features higher-quality vinyl and upgraded foam padding for 2021, with more color contrast. Manitou has also added drink holders throughout the boat. There's stowage below each seat and within the molded fiberglass helm console. The aft deck is 34 inches deep, and a stainless-steel boarding ladder with grab-handle side rails is standard, as is a ski pylon.

The Limited Package (\$2,925) includes Luna Silver woven vinyl flooring, a dinette table, LED courtesy lights, LED docking and navigation lighting, a two-tone side graphic, midback helm and co-captain chairs with armrests, and a deluxe

rpm	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION		
	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level	
1000	3.39	3.90	0.60	5.65	6.50	219	252	0	59	
1500	4.78	5.50	1.00	4.78	5.50	185	213	0	62	
2000	6.17	7.10	1.30	4.75	5.46	184	211	1	65	
2500	6.86	7.90	1.80	3.81	4.39	148	170	3	70	
3000	9.99	11.50	2.40	4.16	4.79	161	185	5	70	
3500	13.38	15.40	3.10	4.32	4.97	167	192	3	73	
4000	15.64	18.00	4.50	3.48	4.00	135	155	3	75	
4500	18.60	21.40	6.00	3.10	3.57	120	138	3	74	
5000	21.38	24.60	7.10	3.01	3.46	117	134	3	77	
5500	23.98	27.60	8.60	2.79	3.21	108	124	3	82	
6000	26.76	30.80	11.10	2.41	2.77	93	107	3	83	

MOST ECONOMIC CRUISING SPEED

MANITOU INC.
Lansing, Michigan; manitoupontoonboats.com

steering wheel. There are three color and four accent-color choices. Manitou powder-coats the rails matte black.

We were delighted to find a 7-inch Garmin multifunction display had replaced standard instruments on the dash of a pontoon in this price range. Our boat was powered by a Mercury 115 Pro XS outboard, a quiet and fuel-efficient partner on the water, with enough power to move this boat smartly to a top speed of 30 mph with a light load. Boating should always be this easy.



PHOTOS: COURTESY MANITOU INC.



Legendary performance. Unsurpassed value.



269 DC

RAISING THE BAR

The new 269 DC is the perfect combination of engineering form, function and performance. It has all the style and comfort of a dual console, plus it can be equipped for any activity you enjoy on the water. The 269 DC delivers a smooth and dry ride attributed to the Z-Plane Deep V Hull and ample deck space suited for family comfort and convenience. Stingray has raised the bar in the crossover market with the 269 DC by delivering exceptional value and quality. Comfortable seating throughout the boat, a well-equipped optional cockpit galley, plenty of storage space, a large step-down head compartment and the deep cockpit will make your trips to your favorite destination effortless.

STINGRAYBOATS.COM



STINGRAY
Boats

BENNINGTON 22SVSR

2021
BOATING
BOAT BUYERS
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C

**BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS**



Price: \$34,992

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Long fore and aft decks facilitate boarding.
- ▶ Locking stowage offered in the helm console.
- ▶ Premium upholstery and seat construction.
- ▶ Central fuel tank keeps the boat balanced.

SEE THE VIDEO

To watch our video review of the 22SVSR, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/bennington22svsr.



PONTOON

SPECS: LOA: 22'11" **BEAM:** 8'6" **DRAFT:** 2'7" **DRY WEIGHT:** 2,928 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 12/1,730 lb. **FUEL CAPACITY:** 32 gal.

HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINE:** Mercury 115 FourStroke **DRIVE/PROP:** Outboard/Mercury Spitfire 13.8" x 13" 4-blade aluminum **GEAR RATIO:** 2.07:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 25 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 190 lb.

Value is the mission of the Bennington SV line, with boats that start at \$17,110. New for 2021 is this 22-foot-11-inch 22SVSR. Nicely equipped for well under \$40,000, this triple-tube boat is assembled with many of the same premium materials and features found across the Bennington line, including cool-touch Simtex vinyl upholstery, quarter-inch-thick cross members, and through-bolted deck fasteners. Rotomolded plastic seat bases are drained and vented to fight mildew, and they feature channels that allow water to easily drain

off of the deck.

Bennington makes the SV purchase process simple by including the features most buyers want as standard equipment, thereby eliminating a mind-boggling long list of options. There are three color choices—red, blue and black—and three interior layouts; our test boat had L-shaped bench seats fore and aft, and Pure Comfort reclining high-back seats at the helm and companion positions. A pair of portable armrests with drink holders is standard. The helm features analog instruments, and there is no multifunction-display option, but you can order a 3.5-inch Garmin Striker 4 fish finder (\$239). The 22SVSR is equipped with a Kicker audio system with four speakers. You may want to order the optional ski-tow bar (\$565).

Our test boat featured the 25-inch round triple-tube Sport Performance System upgrade (\$4,611), which includes lifting strakes on the center pontoon, performance foils inside the outer pontoons, an underdeck wave shield and SeaStar hydraulic steering. This package bumps max horsepower to 200, but

rpm	SPEED				EFFICIENCY				OPERATION		
	knots	mph	gph	mpg	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	level	sound
1000	4.08	4.70	0.60	6.81	7.83	196	226	0	53		
1500	4.61	5.30	0.90	5.12	5.89	147	170	1	56		
2000	6.00	6.90	1.20	5.00	5.75	144	166	1	61		
2500	7.73	8.90	1.80	4.30	4.94	124	142	2	64		
3000	11.04	12.70	2.20	5.02	5.77	144	166	2	70		
3500	13.21	15.20	2.90	4.55	5.24	131	151	2	72		
4000	16.51	19.00	3.90	4.23	4.87	122	140	2	73		
4500	19.94	22.95	5.50	3.63	4.17	104	120	2	74		
5000	22.46	25.85	6.60	3.40	3.92	98	113	2	76		
5500	25.46	29.30	8.20	3.11	3.57	89	103	2	80		
6000	27.63	31.80	10.50	2.63	3.03	76	87	2	83		
6150	28.20	32.45	11.20	2.52	2.90	73	83	2	84		

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

BENNINGTON MARINE

Elkhart, Indiana; 888-906-2628; benningtonmarine.com

we were satisfied with the performance offered by a Mercury 115 FourStroke, which will cruise quietly along at 20 mph while sipping fuel. You might consider more power if towing a heavy tube is on your boating agenda. Bennington places the fuel tank forward within the center tube for better weight distribution, which enhances handling. The fuel fill is at the transom, so it's accessible when the dock is port or starboard. Despite its price point, Bennington has not cut corners on its SV line.



PHOTOS: TOM KING

HIGH
POINTS

- ▶ Standard Level 2 Performance Package includes a trio of 25-inch pontoons, new lifting strake design, and full aluminum skin on the deck's underside and in-floor stowage locker.
- ▶ Standard Fusion Bluetooth stereo with four speakers.

SEE THE
VIDEO

To watch our video review of the Sunliner 230 Sport, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/harris-sunliner230sport.



HARRIS

SUNLINER 230 SPORT



Price: \$78,929 (with Mercury 300 Verado, Level 2 Performance Package)

SPECS: LOA: 23'5" BEAM: 8'6" DRAFT (MAX): 1'9" DRY WEIGHT: 3,098 lb. SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY: 11/2,372 lb. FUEL CAPACITY: 37 gal.

HOW WE TESTED: ENGINE: Mercury 300 Verado DRIVE/PROP: Outboard/Mercury Enertia Eco 16" x 17" 3-blade stainless steel GEAR RATIO: 1.85:1 FUEL LOAD: 37 gal. CREW WEIGHT: 425 lb.

A new addition to the Harris Sunliner family for 2021, the 230 Sport maintains an affordable price point while bringing in a higher level of trim and increasingly powerful horsepower options.

The exterior features a redesigned fence profile, highlighted by a sleek taper aft and, on our test boat, optional black rails. Step aboard and you'll also find an upgraded interior, with pillow-top furniture covered in new soft-touch vinyl and lumbar recesses backed with diamond-pattern stitching accents. Harris adds a pair of cup holders, along with dual USB

ports to top off electronics, placed within each cutaway. Below, roto-molded seat bases include guttered stowage for gear. Harris covered these rot-free seat bases in vinyl for a more upscale feel.

Amidships, we found a pair of reclining helm chairs, upgraded on our test boat to seats with more-supportive high backs. The centerpiece, however, is Harris' popular SL lounge aft, redesigned for 2021 to include three possible configurations: a couch with aft sun pad, aft-facing recliner or, for those who want to soak up the sun, a new over-6-foot-long flat sun bed. In all three configurations, the port side of the couch remains a back-to-back seat with an armrest and cup holder. Stowage is found below all portions of the lounge. The aft-facing portion of the port seat hides an insulated cooler below and adjacent audio controls, easily within reach when hanging out at the sandbar.

The helm has likewise been upgraded for '21. An inwardly curved base adds a few more inches of legroom for comfort. On the dash, standard 5-inch gauges can be switched out for a Simrad GO9, like on our

test boat. Both choices are offset to be easily viewed without interference from the steering wheel. The convenient dash tray is a great spot to throw your phone. It has a USB port and 12-volt outlets, with the option to add a wireless charger. A max-horsepower Mercury 300 Verado pushed the 230 Sport onto plane in a scant 2.9 seconds, reaching 30 mph in only 5.9 before topping out at over 48 mph. Handling was equally impressive, with the 230 Sport carving aggressively through all of our cornering maneuvers.

SPEED				EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
rpm	knots	mph	gph	naut.	stat.	n. mi.	s. mi.	angle	sound level
				mpg	mpg	range	range		
1000	4.2	4.8	1.3	3.2	3.7	106.8	123.0	0	61
1500	5.5	6.3	2.0	2.7	3.2	91.2	104.9	1	60
2000	7.1	8.2	3.0	2.4	2.7	79.1	91.0	2	62
2500	12.1	13.9	3.5	3.5	4.0	114.9	132.2	1	65
3000	18.0	20.7	5.2	3.5	4.0	115.2	132.6	1	68
3500	22.8	26.2	7.2	3.2	3.6	105.3	121.2	1	73
4000	26.9	31.0	9.5	2.8	3.3	94.4	108.7	1	73
4500	31.2	35.9	11.8	2.6	3.0	88.0	101.3	1	74
5000	34.8	40.1	14.0	2.5	2.9	82.9	95.4	1	75
5500	38.5	44.3	18.8	2.0	2.4	68.2	78.5	0	75
6000	42.1	48.4	23.5	1.8	2.1	59.6	68.6	0	75

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

HARRIS BOATS
Fort Wayne, Indiana; 260-432-4555; harrisboats.com

STARCRAFT EXS-3Q

2021
BOATING
BOAT BUYERS
GUIDE

C

**BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS**



Price: \$51,850

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Spirited performance combines with a low price.
- ▶ Forward-facing bow lounges with aft L-shaped swing-back lounge.
- ▶ Niceties include hydraulic steering, black perimeter railings, Bimini top and extended aft deck.

SEE THE VIDEO

To watch our video review of the EXS-3Q, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/starcraftexs3q.



SPECS: LOA: 23'8" **BEAM:** 8'6" **DRY WEIGHT:** 2,380 lb. **DRAFT:** 1'8" **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 12/2,550 lb. **FUEL CAPACITY:** 60 gal.

HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINE:** Mercury 200 V-6 FourStroke 200 hp **DRIVE/PROP:** Outboard/Mercury Mirage Plus 15" x 15" 3-blade stainless steel **GEAR RATIO:** 1.85:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 25 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 250 lb.

PONTOON

In today's world, the Starcraft EXS-3Q is really an entry-to-midlevel pontoon, with some extra oomph from the optional Mercury FourStroke 200 to add some zoom. This Starcraft has a little something for everyone. For the performance and economy buff, it zips to 30 mph in just 5.7 seconds and tops out at 42 mph. At a cruise speed of 15.4 mph, which is perfect for party cruising, people-watching or a late afternoon beverage jaunt, it sips fuel at just 3 gph. That's over 5 mpg, with a resulting range of 276 miles from the 60-gallon fuel tank, using 90 percent

capacity. Yes, long weekends on a tankful are part of what the EXS-3Q is all about.

Fit and finish are one of the EXS's strong suits. The standard HMX PR25 performance package includes three 25-inch-diameter tubes with lifting strakes strategically designed and welded to the insides of the outer tubes and both sides of the center tube. These strakes provide lift for speed and efficiency, along with a drier, more stable ride and less banking in tight turns. The logs are all secured to Starcraft's heavy hat-channel underdeck structure.

Topside, the soft-touch upholstery proved supple and impressed us during our test. The seating feels nice to the touch and comfortable when seated or while lying down to relax. Your guests will be impressed. Roto-cast plastic seat bases provide good storage underneath; the speakers installed therein are protected with covers and wire loops, a nice Starcraft touch that is usually seen only on higher-priced craft. Up front, twin facing lounges provide a nice conversation pit. The pilot's console is clean

SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION		
rpm	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level
1000	4.3	4.9	0.9	4.7	5.4	255.5	294.0	1	61
1500	6.2	7.1	1.6	3.9	4.4	208.2	239.6	1	63
2000	7.9	9.1	2.4	3.3	3.8	176.9	203.6	2	66
2500	13.3	15.4	3.0	4.4	5.1	240.1	276.3	2	69
3000	17.0	19.6	4.2	4.1	4.7	219.0	252.0	1	75
3500	20.6	23.8	5.7	3.6	4.2	195.5	225.0	1	78
4000	24.0	27.6	7.6	3.2	3.6	170.4	196.1	2	78
4500	26.7	30.7	9.5	2.8	3.2	151.6	174.5	2	79
5000	30.1	34.6	11.1	2.7	3.1	146.3	168.3	1	83
5500	33.3	38.4	16.7	2.0	2.3	107.8	124.0	1	85
6000	36.3	41.8	18.5	2.0	2.3	105.9	121.9	1	89

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

STARCRAFT MARINE
New Paris, Indiana; 866-772-4538; starcraftmarine.com



and uncluttered, but has the requisite instruments to adequately monitor the Mercury outboard. The cushy captain's chair swivels and slides, with thick padding to keep the pilot comfy on long, hot days. In the stern, the L-shaped party pit with a swing-back convertible backrest gives plenty of room for gatherings, with an easy view of the stern watersports activities. For that, there's an extended aft deck with optional ski-tow pole. In-floor storage amidships gives room to stow the boards and skis.

PHOTOS: TOM KING



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SYLVAN MIRAGE X3 CLZ

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**BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS**



Price: \$59,769

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Black trim and rails create a stealthy and sleek look.
- ▶ Extended aft deck makes the X3 CLZ a competent watersports hauler.
- ▶ Bimini top with anodized frame keeps the blistering sun off the crew.

SEE THE VIDEO

To see our video review of the Mirage X3 CLZ, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/sylvan/miragex3clz.



SPECS: LOA: 23'8" **BEAM:** 8'6" **DRAFT:** NA **DRY WEIGHT:** 2,380 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 12/2,550 lb. **FUEL CAPACITY:** 60 gal.
HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINE:** Yamaha F250 four-stroke 250 hp **DRIVE/PROP:** Outboard/15 1/2" x 13" Saltwater Series II 3-blade stainless steel **GEAR RATIO:** 1.75:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 60 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 250 lb.

PONTOON

Sylvan's Mirage X3 CLZ is a true value-package pontoon boat. Even with 250 hp Yamaha outboard power, it sells for under \$60,000, and there's a lot of performance features packed into its 24-foot length overall. The F250 Yamaha pushed the boat easily across the water to a near-46 mph top speed, more than enough to provide excitement for your crew or to outrun the rain back to home port. With that much oomph, it's easy to see why the Mirage can rip from a dead stop to 30 mph in a cat-quick 5 seconds flat. It can be pretty quiet at lower speeds; at a sedate 16 mph,

we recorded a sound level from the wind and the outboard at a whisper-quiet 74 decibels—low enough to hear the stereo and converse with friends aboard. It's fuel-friendly too; at 16 mph, it sips 3 gph, calculating to 5.5 mpg. That translates to huge range from the 60-gallon tank—nearly 300 miles. Of course, even the more likely cruising speed of 25.4 mph produces better than 3 mpg. As long as the Mirage X3 CLZ is throttled reasonably, the fill-ups will be few and far between. With three 25-inch-diameter tubes, the Mirage X3 CLZ handles confidently, and turns are flat. It's long enough to span lake chop and boat wakes without wallowing or falling between the crests.

With so much space in the stern of this pontoon boat, the interior is oriented toward the bow. Up front, there's a pair of two-person facing loungers covered in soft-touch vinyl, mounted to roto-cast plastic seat bases with built-in drains. A Jensen Bluetooth streaming stereo provides the tunes. An 8-foot-long folding Bimini top is standard. The wide pilot's console features full instrumentation,

SPEED				EFFICIENCY				OPERATION			
rpm	knots	mph	gph	mpg	mpg	naut. range	stat. range	n. mi.	s. mi.	angle	sound level
1000	3.9	4.5	1.4	2.8	3.2	150.8	173.6	1	59		
1500	6.1	7.0	1.9	3.2	3.7	172.9	198.9	1	68		
2000	7.1	8.2	2.2	3.2	3.7	174.9	201.3	2	70		
2500	14.4	16.6	3.0	4.8	5.5	258.9	297.9	2	74		
3000	18.0	20.7	5.2	3.5	4.0	186.8	215.0	1	75		
3500	22.1	25.4	7.7	2.9	3.3	154.8	178.1	2	77		
4000	25.0	28.8	9.6	2.6	3.0	140.5	161.7	2	81		
4500	27.9	32.1	11.8	2.4	2.7	127.7	146.9	1	82		
5000	31.2	35.9	15.2	2.1	2.4	110.8	127.5	1	84		
5400	34.9	40.2	19.0	1.8	2.1	99.3	114.3	1	88		
6000	36.9	42.5	22.1	1.7	1.9	90.1	103.7	1	90		
6200	39.5	45.4	24.8	1.6	1.8	51.4	59.1	1	92		

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

SYLVAN MARINE
New Paris, Indiana; 574-831-2950; sylvanmarine.com

along with SeaStar Solutions hydraulic steering. Docking lights are standard. The captain's helm seat swivels and slides to accommodate the pilot and has retractable armrests. To the port side, a midship gathering pit features a removable snack table placed in the crook of an L-shaped lounge with flip-up backrest; when positioned forward, it makes for a cozy and soft watersports-watching platform. Aft, the extended watersports deck features a ski tow and stainless-steel, four-step boarding ladder.



PHOTOS: TOM KING

EFFORTLESS STEERING



JOYSTICK CONTROL SYSTEM

Optimus 360 gives your boat a whole new dimension of control. By developing the joystick function to be intuitive, Optimus 360 allows you to move your boat not only forward and back, but also sideways, by pushing the joystick to the left, or to the right, and even, rotate on a dime, all with a simple twist of the joystick.

STARCRAFT CX 23 DL BAR

2021
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**BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS**



Price: \$80,861 (as tested)

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Four-person bar complete with bar stools makes the CX 23 everyone's party platform.
- ▶ As-tested price of under \$81,000 proves this boat is a great value.
- ▶ Optional Kicker Bluetooth sound system offers plenty of punch for sand-bar parties.

SEE THE VIDEO

To see our video review of the CX 23 DL Bar, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/starcraft-cx23dlbar.



SPECS: LOA: 23'10" **BEAM:** 8'6" **DRAFT:** 2'0" **DRY WEIGHT:** 2,100 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 12/2,320 lb. **FUEL CAPACITY:** 60 gal.

HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINE:** Yamaha F250 four-stroke 250 hp **DRIVE/PROP:** Outboard/15 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 15" Saltwater Series II 3-blade stainless steel **GEAR RATIO:** 1.75:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 20 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 250 lb.

PONTOON

After Starcraft introduced the DL Bar last year and listened to customer feedback, it improved the model in user-friendly ways. There's a new starboard-side galley with a built-in storage locker, and the bar stools have a better storage rack along the starboard-side. There are six new lighted cup holders, nonskid footrests underneath, and the bar is easier to convert. Convert into what? When you don't want to sit and sip, you can pull a couple of levers, store the bar stools, and convert the bar into a huge (64-by-64-inch) aft lounge, complete

with an extended deck and stainless-steel perimeter safety railing. A stainless boarding ladder and ski tow help to make this a full-on watersports platform.

Performance-wise, the DL Bar features the HMX performance package, which is three 25-inch tubes complete with lifting strakes on the outsides of the outer tubes, and both sides of the center tube. These provide great lift and a dry ride, with solid cornering. Top speed with the top-rated Yamaha F250 outboard power was 45 mph at 6,200 rpm; while that's no slouch, even more impressive was the rocket ride from dead idle to 30 mph—5.6 seconds made it a ripper. The DL Bar is fitted with a 60-gallon tank, which provides a 212.3-mile range at a best cruise speed of 23.2 mph and 3,500 rpm. There it's burning 5.9 gph and nearly 4 mpg. It's a party cruiser for sure; even the throaty 250 on the transom was quiet at cruising speed (77 decibels means normal conversation is possible).

Starcraft makes black painted tubes and side rails a dress-up option that really heightens the look. Ours also had the

rpm	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION		
	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level	
1000	3.9	4.5	1.3	3.0	3.5	162.4	186.9	0	54	
1500	5.8	6.7	1.7	3.4	3.9	183.6	211.2	0	62	
2000	6.6	7.7	3.2	2.1	2.4	112.2	129.1	1	65	
2500	12.6	14.6	4.0	3.2	3.6	170.7	196.4	2	72	
3000	17.4	20.1	5.4	3.2	3.7	174.2	200.5	2	78	
3500	20.2	23.2	5.9	3.4	3.9	184.5	212.3	2	77	
4000	23.9	27.6	9.0	2.7	3.1	143.6	165.3	1	78	
4500	27.9	32.2	11.0	2.5	2.9	137.1	157.8	1	80	
5000	31.3	36.1	14.0	2.2	2.6	120.8	139.1	1	82	
5500	34.8	40.1	18.8	1.9	2.1	100.0	115.0	1	82	
6000	38.1	43.8	22.3	1.7	2.0	92.2	106.1	1	87	
6200	39.0	44.9	24.8	1.6	1.8	85.0	97.8	1	88	

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

STARCRAFT MARINE LLC
New Paris, Indiana; 866-772-4538; starcraftmarine.com

optional in-floor storage and raised pilot's console. The bow features twin facing loungers with wraparound soft-touch vinyl, hinged to roto-cast plastic seat bases underneath. The stereo speakers are installed with speaker and wire protectors, so stowed gear won't damage them. The pilot's helm chair faces a full-wrap console with windscreen and a complete gauge set with a GPS speedometer. Concealed mood lighting surrounds the deck. The aft conversation pit is a plush L-shaped lounge with a removable snack table.



PHOTOS: TOM KING

TAHOE

2485 LTZ QUAD LOUNGE

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HIGH POINTS

- ▶ New Deco 4 smooth-look perimeter multipanel wall skins grant this pontoon a sleeker look and help make cleanup easier.
- ▶ New ergonomic Smart 80 touchscreen dash provides the captain with all the information he could want about the Mercury outboard at a touch, and it's easy to navigate.
- ▶ Blue Ice interior lighting package creates a silky mood for evening cruises.



Price: \$56,985

SPECS: LOA: 24'6" **BEAM:** 8'6" **DRAFT:** 1'6" **DRY WEIGHT:** 2,800 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 12/2,580 lb. **FUEL CAPACITY:** 38 gal.
HOW WE TESTED: ENGINE: Mercury FourStroke 150 hp **DRIVE/PROP:** Outboard/Mercury Enertia 15" x 15" 3-blade stainless steel **GEAR RATIO:** 1.92:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 22 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 250 lb.

PONTOON

Tahoe's 2485 LTZ Quad Lounge shows off Tahoe quality and features at a bargain price. It bristles with higher-end construction, materials and amenities, yet the as-tested price is just \$54,012 with a Mercury 150 Four-Stroke outboard. With that compact and fuel-miserly engine, the 25-foot Tahoe hit a top speed of 38 mph at 5,400 rpm, accelerated from zero to 30 mph in 7.6 seconds, and recorded a best cruise speed of 17 mph at 3,000 rpm, where the Mercury sipped 87-octane regular fuel at 3.6 gph (4.7 mpg). At that pace,

normal room-level conversations were easy—the engine and hull noise level recorded was a whisper-quiet 72.5 decibels. Range from the 38-gallon tank is just over 161 miles while leaving 10 percent in reserve.

Despite the great price, Tahoe doesn't skimp on construction. The optional triple 25-inch Sport performance pontoons are mated to the deck with heavy-duty, double-bolted hat-channel crossbeams. An aluminum underdeck Wave Shield helps improve airflow and efficiency. The deck is 3/4-inch PTP marine flooring that has a lifetime warranty, with optional in-floor storage. A 3-inch-tall perimeter rub rail caps the deck, with a black rubber insert to cushion docking. Our test boat featured the valuable in-floor storage option. Tahoe seat frames are all aluminum, which gives excellent storage room underneath, along with ventilation to minimize moisture. A 10-year bow-to-stern warranty and lifetime hull-and-floor warranty are standard.

The LTZ features a full-surround bow seating arrangement with tri-tone

Matrix 50 premium-cushioned vinyl. A removable bow seat connects the twin facing loungers; it's removable for beaching or docking access through the bow door. The captain's console is positioned forward, making the bow conversation pit best suited for two. A removable snack table fits neatly between. Aft, twin facing loungers create a larger gathering area for up to four. Behind the aft perimeter fencing is an extended deck with a storage canister center-mounted in front of the Mercury outboard. The installed optional ski-tow bar is a must-have.

PHOTOS: TOM KING



SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION		
rpm	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level
1000	4.0	4.6	0.8	4.9	5.7	169.0	194.5	0	60
1500	5.4	6.3	1.3	4.2	4.8	142.9	164.4	0	65
2000	7.4	8.6	2.0	3.7	4.3	127.0	146.2	1	67
2500	11.3	13.0	2.8	4.0	4.6	138.0	158.8	2	68
3000	14.8	17.0	3.6	4.1	4.7	140.3	161.5	2	73
3500	18.4	21.2	4.9	3.8	4.3	128.6	148.0	2	77
4000	21.7	25.0	6.8	3.2	3.7	109.3	125.7	2	78
4500	25.3	29.1	9.1	2.8	3.2	95.0	109.4	3	84
5000	29.1	33.5	12.0	2.4	2.8	82.8	95.3	3	90
5400	32.9	37.9	14.5	2.3	2.6	77.6	89.3	3	90

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

TAHOE PONTOON BOATS
Alma, Michigan; 800-334-2913; tahoe pontoons.com

BENNINGTON 23LTSB

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Price: \$90,977

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Power Bimini top raises and lowers at the touch of a button.
- ▶ RGB lighting, optional aft grill, and aft-fired speakers make the 23 a party platform.
- ▶ Step-down U-Lounge hull-and-deck layout that provides enhanced captain visibility.

SEE THE VIDEO

To watch our video review of the 23LTSB, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/bennington23ltsb.



SPECS: LOA: 24'7" **BEAM:** 8'6" **DRAFT:** NA **DRY WEIGHT:** 3,520 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 12/2,600 lb. **FUEL CAPACITY:** 58 gal.

HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINE:** Yamaha four-stroke 250 hp VMax SHO **DRIVE/PROP:** Outboard/Yamaha Saltwater Series II 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 13" 3-blade stainless steel **GEAR RATIO:** 1.75:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 50 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 250 lb.

PONTOON

For 2021, Bennington Marine offers the big hit from last year—the drop-center bowrider innovation featuring Vantage-Point Captain's View and the step-down U-Lounge layout—available in a lower-priced model, the new 23LTSB. At \$90,977, versus \$140,000 for the 24R luxury model, the new Bennington will attract more buyers.

This rig, equipped with a Yamaha 250 VMax SHO, rolled up a 43 mph top-end speed with zero-to-30 mph sprints in 5.3 seconds—faster than most hot-rod bass boats. Best cruise for fuel mileage is just

under 19 mph and 3,000 rpm, where the brutish yet refined SHO sipped 5.4 gph, calculating to 3.5 mpg; this means nearly 182 miles on its 58-gallon tank with 10 percent of the fuel in reserve.

Thanks to the drop-bow section, piloting the 23LTSB gives the feeling of a much smaller craft when at speed; and thanks to the integrated V-hull center tube, it handles nimbly like a runabout. The outer tubes are 23 inches in diameter, with three center storage compartments in the V-hull center tube.

Inside, the 23LTSB's step-down bowrider differs from the 24R with a single step down versus two for the larger, more expensive 24R, and there are none of those handy side view ports (open railings), but it still has tapered-down top bow rails for easier visibility while docking. That cozy bowrider section features two facing loungers with a filler section in the center; this can be removed for access through the bow door.

The upholstery is true pillow-top vinyl, luxurious in both looks and feel with horizontal diamond-pressed patterning offset with contrasting stripes. The bow deck is

SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION		
rpm	knots	mph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level	
1000	4.2	4.9	1.3	3.2	3.7	169.2	194.7	1 60	
1500	6.0	7.0	2.2	2.7	3.2	143.3	164.9	1 66	
2000	8.0	9.2	3.0	2.7	3.1	138.3	159.2	2 69	
2500	12.3	14.2	4.2	2.9	3.4	152.8	175.9	2 70	
3000	16.3	18.8	5.4	3.0	3.5	157.9	181.7	2 73	
3500	20.6	23.7	7.8	2.6	3.0	137.5	158.3	2 74	
4000	23.9	27.5	9.9	2.4	2.8	125.8	144.7	2 77	
4500	27.4	31.5	12.7	2.2	2.5	112.5	129.5	2 79	
5000	30.0	34.6	14.1	2.1	2.5	111.1	127.9	2 81	
5500	33.4	38.5	17.9	1.9	2.1	97.4	112.1	2 85	
6000	35.2	40.5	20.1	1.7	2.0	91.3	105.0	2 90	
6100	37.3	43.0	23.2	0.5	0.6	26.6	30.6	2 92	

BENNINGTON MARINE
Elkhart, Indiana; 888-906-2628; benningtonmarine.com

spacious, allowing for easy boarding and debarking to beach or dock.

The pilot's console features full Yamaha instrumentation, along with tilt-helm Sea-Star hydraulic steering and a Rockford Fosgate sound system with Kicker Blue Ice illuminated speakers. The captain's swivel helm seat is a high-back luxury throne.

Astern, the 23LTSB features a three-quarter-width Swingback lounge platform with stainless-steel safety perimeter railing. An additional stereo head control unit is strategically placed there for the aft riders.



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BENNINGTON 23LSB

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Price: \$80,409

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Refined colors and upholstery feature multi-density foam and precision stitching.
- ▶ Molded seat bases feature a lip around the opening, a drain and an air vent.
- ▶ Curved aluminum boarding ladder offers safe access to the water.

SEE THE VIDEO

To see our video review of the 23LSB, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/bennington23lsb.



PONTOON

SPECS: LOA: 24'9" **BEAM:** 8'6" **DRAFT:** 2'7" **DRY WEIGHT:** 3,064 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 12/1,730 **FUEL CAPACITY:** 32 gal.
HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINE:** Mercury 200 FourStroke **DRIVE/PROP:** Outboard/Mercury Enertia 15.3" x 14" 3-blade stainless steel **GEAR RATIO:** 1.85:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 19 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 190 lb.

The "L" designator for this new Bennington series stands for luxury, and the first impression is made by the new horizontal diamond press treatment on the upholstery, executed on our test boat in a graphite color, with Rosa Red accents in Simtex, a vinyl material that has a slight texture that keeps it cool to the touch. Side panels in Rosa Red and Smokey Granite contrast perfectly with the optional Blackout Luxe Edition (\$3,594; black finish on the rails, deck trim and skirt, Bimini frame and boarding ladder). You may prefer a

different color, but we found this look to be really handsome.

In typical Bennington fashion, there is clever design behind the luxury. For example, the toe kick below the seat bases creates a few extra inches of deck space. With the lumbar pocket in the bench seats, an open space between the seatback and bottom cushion enhances comfort. It is easier to lift the bottom to reach stowage, and it provides an in-wale for drink holders, fast-charge USB ports, speakers and small sundries.

This layout features curved L-seats forward, another L-seat to port, and the 6-foot-4-inch-wide Swingback aft lounge, which has a pivoting backrest plus adjustable lounge cushions that can be set in five different positions. An optional stainless-steel aft keeper rail (\$880) makes it legal and safe to sit on the lounge facing aft while underway. Adjacent to the lounge, our boat had an optional remote (\$420) for the upgraded Rockford-Fosgate PMX-2 audio system (\$330). At the helm, an optional Simrad GO7 multifunction display (\$1,644) replaced the standard

rpm	SPEED				EFFICIENCY				OPERATION		
	knots	mph	gph	mpg	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	level	sound
1000	3.65	4.20	1.00	3.65	4.20	105	121	1	59		
1500	5.21	6.00	1.50	3.48	4.00	100	115	2	64		
2000	7.21	8.30	2.20	3.28	3.77	94	109	3	65		
2500	10.78	12.40	2.70	3.99	4.59	115	132	3	69		
3000	14.60	16.80	3.50	4.17	4.80	120	138	3	73		
3500	18.51	21.30	5.20	3.56	4.10	103	118	3	72		
4000	21.72	25.00	6.50	3.34	3.85	96	111	3	74		
4500	25.55	29.40	8.50	3.01	3.46	87	100	4	77		
5000	28.42	32.70	10.20	2.79	3.21	80	92	4	82		
5500	32.50	37.40	14.50	2.24	2.58	65	74	4	86		
5850	34.15	39.30	16.50	2.07	2.38	60	69	4	87		

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

BENNINGTON MARINE
Elkhart, Indiana; 888-906-2628; benningtonmarine.com

analog gauge package.

The optional Sport Performance System Plus (SPS+) package (\$7,663) includes three 25-inch tubes, with lifting strakes on the center tube and performance foils inboard on the outer tubes; combined with SeaStar power steering, it bumps the horsepower rating to 250. Bennington says its new strake design provides more lift, and we were impressed with this boat's smooth ride and handling. It can carve turns like a sporty runabout.



PHOTOS: TOM KING

BARLETTA CORSA 23U

2021

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HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Loads of legroom at the helm console.
- ▶ Generous stowage and battery access below the aft lounge.
- ▶ Extended aft deck is more than 4 feet deep.
- ▶ Slide-out water bowls for man's best friend.

SEE THE VIDEO

To watch our video review of the Corsa 23U, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/barlettacorsa23u.



Price: \$88,725 (as tested)

SPECS: LOA: 25'0" BEAM: 8'6" DRAFT: 1'0" to 1'3" DRY WEIGHT: 3,640 lb. SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY: 13/1,781 lb. FUEL CAPACITY: 48 gal.

HOW WE TESTED: ENGINE: Mercury 200 FourStroke DRIVE/PROP: Outboard/Mercury Enertia 15.3" x 14" 3-blade stainless steel GEAR RATIO: 1.85:1 FUEL LOAD: 30 gal. CREW WEIGHT: 190 lb.



PONTOON

Corsa is the name chosen for a new line of pontoons from Barletta, intended to be a more-sporty alternative to its flagship L Series line. Corsa has more contrasting color in the interior and the side panels than the L Series, and more shape to the rails. The new Corsa line, including the Corsa 23U we tested, also comes with a long list of desirable standard features that set this boat apart from the fleet in the midrange pontoon market. For example, a one-piece fiberglass elevated helm station is standard, which looks great and enhances visibility from the wheel.

It's also deeply cut away below the wheel and delivered outstanding legroom for our tall boat tester. A premium six-speaker Hertz audio system, which cranked loud and clear on test day, is standard, as are a Lowrance Hook-5 sonar/chart plotter, stout stainless-steel tow bar, flip-up cleats, LED docking lights, and a wireless phone charger. Like we said: desirable standards.

A 10-foot power Bimini top is another nice standard feature, and it covers much of the main deck area, including the new seating module to port across from the helm. Its pivoting backrest can adjust to be a forward-facing co-captain seat, or an aft-facing or forward-facing lounge. This module merges with the large Barletta Ultra Lounge, with its pivoting backrest and adjustable aft bottom cushions, which can be raised as lounging support. Forward seating is on a pair of facing settees with lounging backrests and armrests at the consoles. The inwale area is left open, which creates space for drink holders, USB ports and stashing small items. The aft side of the console top port can be opened as a table, or it can hold an

optional canvas changing room.

Our triple-pontoon model featured 26-inch tubes with center-tube lifting strakes and a full-skin underbelly, a 48-gallon fuel tank, 6-foot lighted ski locker in the center tube, and hydraulic steering. The chassis features double I-beam cross members on 24-inch centers, along with the Barletta Vibration Isolation Pads, which are thin rubber pads between the I-beams and the plywood deck that effectively damped vibration from the engine and the water during our test.

PHOTOS: TOM KING



rpm	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level
1000	3.82	4.40	1.00	3.82	4.40	165	190	0	57
1500	5.39	6.20	1.60	3.37	3.88	145	167	1	63
2000	5.82	6.70	2.40	2.43	2.79	105	121	3	66
2500	11.30	13.00	2.60	4.34	5.00	188	216	2	70
3000	15.12	17.40	4.00	3.78	4.35	163	188	2	74
3500	17.99	20.70	5.60	3.21	3.70	139	160	2	71
4000	22.07	25.40	7.40	2.98	3.43	129	148	2	75
4500	25.11	28.90	9.20	2.73	3.14	118	136	2	76
5000	28.07	32.30	10.20	2.75	3.17	119	137	2	78
5500	31.37	36.10	14.90	2.11	2.42	91	105	2	79
5800	33.72	38.80	17.00	1.98	2.28	86	99	2	82

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

BARLETTA BOATS
Bristol, Indiana; 574-825-8900, barlettapontoonboats.com

BARLETTA C24UE

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Price: \$82,000

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Vinyl upholstery is super-soft.
- ▶ Standard rails permit aft lounge use while underway.
- ▶ Long list of standard equipment includes a power sun top.
- ▶ Big stowage and great battery access.

SEE THE VIDEO

To watch our video review of the C24UE, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/barlettac24ue.



PONTOON

SPECS: LOA: 25'2" **BEAM:** 8'6" **DRAFT:** NA **DRY WEIGHT:** 3,124 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 13/2,644 lb. **FUEL CAPACITY:** 34 gal.

HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINE:** Yamaha F200 **DRIVE/PROP:** Outboard/Yamaha Reliance 15" x 14 1/2" 3-blade stainless steel **GEAR RATIO:** 1.86:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 13 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 190 lb.

The new Barletta C-Class pontoons hit the waterways in 2021 with solid construction and a raft of standard features, all at a reasonably low price point. Set up for an owner who plans to host a crowd of guests, the C24UE model we tested came equipped with the Ultimate Entertainer (UE) layout, which places a bench seat with pivoting backrest to port at the side-entry gate. Right behind that is a console with a marblelike top and a pair of bar seats. Guests perched on the bench seat have the choice of facing forward or facing the bar. Aft is the four-way Barletta

Ultra Lounge with pivoting backrest. This layout leaves a generous passageway to port to the rear platform, and room to stow a large cooler on the deck. Forward seating consists of a pair of richly upholstered facing bench seats with lounging backrests and armrests at the consoles.

Barletta makes ordering easier by grouping popular options into packages. Our test boat was equipped for saltwater use with the Coastal Edition Package (aluminum framed captain's seat, saltwater anodes, sealed lifting strakes and rinse kit) and the new Blackout Package (black rails, rub rail and skirting, plus a black Bimini top). That 10-foot power Bimini is a surprising standard feature at this price level. Our boat also had an optional front power Bimini for full shade coverage. The Tri-Toon Package includes three 25-inch tubes with inboard and outboard single-stage strakes on the center tube, and a full belly skin, 34-gallon fuel tank, hydraulic steering, in-floor storage and a tow bar. A premium Hertz audio system with Bluetooth and six speakers is standard.

Rated for up to 200 hp, the triple-tube

rpm	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level
1000	3.91	4.50	1.00	3.91	4.50	120	138	0	57
1500	4.78	5.50	1.30	3.68	4.23	112	129	0	67
2000	6.56	7.55	2.10	3.12	3.60	96	110	3	67
2500	11.12	12.80	3.40	3.27	3.76	100	115	3	69
3000	14.34	16.50	3.90	3.68	4.23	112	129	2	71
3500	17.64	20.30	5.20	3.39	3.90	104	119	2	77
4000	20.94	24.10	6.80	3.08	3.54	94	108	2	76
4500	24.24	27.90	8.70	2.79	3.21	85	98	2	78
5000	29.28	33.70	11.60	2.52	2.91	77	89	2	79
5500	32.85	37.80	15.90	2.07	2.38	63	73	2	80
5900	34.85	40.10	19.70	1.77	2.04	54	62	2	81

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

BARLETTA BOATS
Bristol, Indiana; 574-825-8900; barlettapontoonboats.com

C-Class models have single I-beam cross members topped with the effective rubber Barletta Vibration Isolation Pads that serve to insulate the deck—and passengers—from engine vibration. In standard Barletta fashion, the helm features exceptional legroom plus a tilt wheel, features we appreciated during our time running this 'toon. The analog display is augmented by a standard Lowrance Hook-5 fish finder/plotter. This pontoon does not look or feel like the entry-level model in any builder's line.



PHOTOS: TOM KING



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HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Roto-molded seat bases are rot-free and vented to thwart mildew. A raised lowest rail improves deck drainage.
- ▶ Charging ports feature both a USB-C and a quick-charge USB 3.0.
- ▶ Angled rails protect the painted sides from fender rash.

SEE THE VIDEO

To watch our video review of the 24LXSBA, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/bennington24lxbsa.



Price: \$119,311

SPECS: LOA: 25'9" **BEAM:** 8'6" **DRAFT:** 2'7" **DRY WEIGHT:** 3,238 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 13/1,387 lb. **FUEL CAPACITY:** 50 gal.
HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINE:** Suzuki DF300B **DRIVE/PROP:** Outboard/Dual-prop Suzuki 15.5" x 21" 3-blade stainless steel **GEAR RATIO:** 2.29:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 12 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 190 lb.

PONTOON

The new Bennington LX Series takes luxury up a notch from the L Series models. Start with the classy fiberglass Voyager helm console, with stowage access in a side door and through the bow seat backrest, a locking glove box with USB and Aux ports, zebrawood accents on the dash and the tilting wheel, bright trim on the analog gauge package that includes an hour meter, and a windscreen. Our test boat replaced the gauges with a Simrad G07 multifunction display (\$3,349) integrated with Suzuki digital rigging. The captain and first mate get reclining

high-back seats with armrests. All the seats feature the LX Sport interior with three colors and neat contrasting piping in Simtex, a lightly textured vinyl material that stays cool in the sun. A pair of curved chaise-style lounge seats forward have vinyl-covered Duraframe bases. The Swingback aft lounge is standard, but our boat had the optional four-way Swingback Plus lounge (\$744), which on the LX includes a portside pod with drink holders and an optional remote audio control (\$437). For tunes at the sandbar, there are two aft-facing speakers in the Swingback base. Each of the Kicker speakers on the boat sports an LED backlight, and Bennington has worked with Kicker to incorporate heavier speaker magnets for added volume without distortion. The tubular sport arch is standard on this model, and can be rigged with board racks and two Kicker can speakers at an extra cost. The ESP Performance Package underpins this boat with a pair of 25-inch outboard tubes and the patented 32-inch elliptical middle tube, updated this

rpm	SPEED				EFFICIENCY				OPERATION		
	knots	mph	gph	mpg	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level	
1000	4.08	4.70	1.10	3.71	4.27	167	192	0	59		
1500	5.74	6.60	2.00	2.87	3.30	129	149	1	65		
2000	7.65	8.80	2.80	2.73	3.14	123	141	3	70		
2500	13.30	15.30	4.30	3.09	3.56	139	160	4	71		
3000	18.25	21.00	5.60	3.26	3.75	147	169	3	72		
3500	22.16	25.50	7.60	2.92	3.36	131	151	3	77		
4000	27.03	31.10	9.80	2.76	3.17	124	143	3	79		
4500	31.72	36.50	14.50	2.19	2.52	98	113	3	81		
5000	36.24	41.70	19.10	1.90	2.18	85	98	3	84		
5500	39.19	45.10	24.10	1.63	1.87	73	84	3	87		
6000	42.23	48.60	28.50	1.48	1.71	67	77	3	89		

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

BENNINGTON MARINE
Elkhart, Indiana; 888-906-2628; benningtonmarine.com



year with new strakes intended to provide more lift, higher top speed and a smoother ride. The ESP bottom incorporates a center fuel tank for better weight distribution, with heavier 25-inch shaft outboards. The Suzuki DF300B motor is a nice match for this boat; we found the added blade area and the dual counter-rotating propellers do a good job steering the boat in reverse. This boat is no slouch in forward either, nudging up to 50 mph, with a smooth ride over a stiff lake chop and precise handling.

PHOTOS: TOM KING

HIGH
POINTS

- ▶ Level 2 Performance Package pairs 25-inch outer pontoons with a 25-inch center tube, along with performance lifting strakes, below-deck aluminum skin and a ski-tow bar.
- ▶ Standards include a Bimini top, multiple USB ports and reclining helm seats.

SEE THE
VIDEO

To watch our video review of the Cruiser 250, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/harris cruiser250.

HARRIS
CRUISER 250

Price: \$45,236 (with Mercury 150, Level 2 Performance Package)

SPECS: LOA: 25'10" BEAM: 8'6" DRAFT (MAX): 1'9" DRY WEIGHT: 3,088 lb. SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY: 15/2,658 lb. FUEL CAPACITY: 37 gal.

HOW WE TESTED: ENGINE: Single Mercury 150 XL EFI FourStroke DRIVE/PROP: Mercury Enertia 15.3" x 14" 3-blade stainless steel GEAR RATIO: 1.92:1 FUEL LOAD: 37 gal. CREW WEIGHT: 425 lb.

Cruiser models may be the entry point into the Harris Boats lineup, but don't expect lesser construction from this builder just to reach the price point. Quality build details include full-length M-brackets to resist flex, a sturdy mix of extruded aluminum C- and Z-channel cross members for deck support, and tried-and-true tongue-and-groove marine plywood decking that's built to last. Three-inch deep aluminum rub rails protect the deck edges and wrap over corners. Marine-grade wiring includes plastic grommets and conduit for protection, as

well as water-resistant Deutsch connectors.

Cruiser series pontoons feature all-new furniture for 2021, with bases fabricated from color-matched, roto-molded composite, and seat cushions covered in soft-touch vinyl. Parallel bow couches span 5 feet, 8 inches to starboard and 4 feet, 6 inches to port, the latter backing up to a wheelchair-friendly 2-foot-10-inch-wide side gate. Aft, another pair of 5-foot couches feature aft-facing seatbacks. Bolsters below the thigh add comfort and security. Items stored below are protected from rain and spray by gutters, with drains to funnel away water. At the stern, rails sweep to the deck in fast-back fashion, revealing a vinyl-covered aft enclosure with integrated speakers and an upgraded four-step, stainless-steel telescoping ladder, perfect for hanging out in the cove.

The helm is the same fiberglass console you'll find on the more upscale Sunliner, with an inwardly curved base for added legroom and stowage below. The captain has a great view of the water while underway. For navigation and monitoring, our test boat featured the upgraded Simrad

GO7 display on the dash, offset so as not to be blocked from the captain's vision by the tilt wheel. A 12-volt outlet and dual USB ports sit above a padded tray with a drain, which is a great spot for a phone. Choose the optional wireless charger and eliminate pesky cords.

Our test boat featured Harris' Level 2 Performance Package and a Mercury 150 FourStroke outboard, a combination that produced an almost instantaneous plane and a 34.4 mph top speed. Handling was precise and predictable, and just right for the target audience.



rpm	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level
1000	3.6	4.2	0.8	4.6	5.3	115.0	132.3	0	51
1500	5.4	6.2	1.2	4.5	5.2	113.1	130.2	0	60
2000	7.5	8.6	1.9	3.9	4.5	99.1	114.1	1	60
2500	11.1	12.8	2.8	4.0	4.6	100.1	115.2	0	63
3000	14.6	16.8	3.5	4.2	4.8	105.1	121.0	0	65
3500	17.5	20.1	5.2	3.4	3.9	84.6	97.4	0	74
4000	20.9	24.1	7.1	2.9	3.4	74.3	85.5	0	73
4500	24.4	28.1	9.2	2.7	3.1	66.9	77.0	0	75
5000	27.4	31.5	11.6	2.4	2.7	59.5	68.4	1	75
5400	29.9	34.4	14.7	2.0	2.3	51.2	59.0	1	75

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

HARRIS BOATS
Fort Wayne, Indiana; 260-432-4555; harrisboats.com

MISTY HARBOR VIAGGIO DIAMANTE 26S

2021
BOATING
BOAT BUYERS
GUIDE

C

**BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS**



Price: \$99,084

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Exclusive 3-inch extruded top-rail design creates a unique appearance.
- ▶ LCI premium furniture is luxurious but durable.
- ▶ Triple 25-inch tubes with lifting strakes offer a steady ride.

SEE THE VIDEO

To watch our video review of the Viaggio Diamante 26S, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/mistyharborviaggiodiamante26s.



PONTOON

SPECS: LOA: 26'0" BEAM: 8'6" DRAFT: NA DRY WEIGHT: 3,495 lb. SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY: 12/2,600 lb. FUEL CAPACITY: 56 gal.
HOW WE TESTED: ENGINE: Mercury Verado FourStroke 250 hp DRIVE/PROP: Outboard/Mercury Enertia 14 1/2" x 17" 3-blade stainless steel GEAR RATIO: 1.85:1 FUEL LOAD: 56 gal. CREW WEIGHT: 400 lb.

For 2021, Misty Harbor Boats introduces the Viaggio line of luxury performance pontoons, aiming at the higher end of the market but keeping the price competitive. If the Diamante 26S is any example, the company will do well. Our test boat impressed with performance, fit and finish, build quality, and several innovative and thoughtful touches.

The Mercury Verado 250 powered the Diamante to a 42 mph top speed, and accelerated to 30 mph from an in-gear idle in just under 8 seconds. Fuel-wise, best cruise was at 3,500 rpm, with a speed of

19 mph. Fuel burn was 6.3 gph and 3 mpg, so with the 56-gallon center-mounted tank, range is 150 miles. Sound level is a low 72 decibels at that speed, so conversations can be had at normal voice levels. Handling was flat and cornering sharp, even with the wheel cranked over hard and cutting through afternoon chop and large boat wakes. That performance is enabled by triple 25-inch tubes with lifting strakes (one each on the insides of the outer tubes, and also one on each side of the center tube).

Topside, the bow is fitted with two curved, forward-facing, extra-long loungers and a removable snack table mounted on the centerline. This is a huge forward section, easily handling up to six friends without crowding. Upholstery is a tri-color camel, white and gray affair atop sturdy roto-cast bases with dual-hinged bottom cushions.

The driver's console is sleek and laid-back, with storage underneath (lots of it because the wiring is neat, tidy and tucked away). The dash features a Veethree 5-inch multiple-gauge cluster and Simrad

SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION				
rpm	knots	mph	gph	mpg	mpg	naut. range	stat. range	n. mi.	s. mi.	angle	sound level
1000	3.7	4.3	1.3	2.9	3.3	144.9	166.7	0	59		
1500	5.2	6.0	2.0	2.6	3.0	131.4	151.2	1	64		
2000	7.2	8.3	3.0	2.4	2.8	120.4	138.6	1	66		
2500	9.6	11.1	3.8	2.5	2.9	127.4	146.6	2	69		
3000	12.8	14.7	4.9	2.6	3.0	131.7	151.6	2	71		
3500	16.3	18.8	6.3	2.6	3.0	130.7	150.4	1	73		
4000	18.7	21.5	8.8	2.1	2.4	107.0	123.1	2	80		
4500	21.1	24.3	10.9	1.9	2.2	97.6	112.4	3	81		
5000	25.4	29.2	12.5	2.0	2.3	102.3	117.7	3	90		
5500	28.9	33.3	17.2	1.7	1.9	84.8	97.6	2	86		
6000	36.8	42.3	22.7	1.6	1.9	81.6	93.9	2	85.7		

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

MISTY HARBOR BOATS
Bristol, Indiana; 574-622-0490; mistyharborboats.com

digital GPS, chart and engine-monitoring system, center-mounted and easy to master. The captain's chair is supportive yet cushy, and swivels with fore-aft slide adjustability for the driver.

Aft, a reversible swing-back lounge offers forward or aft-facing seating and sunbathing, with a stainless-steel perimeter safety railing to keep everyone safe when underway. A Rockford Fosgate PMX-2 receiver sound-system upgrade with amp and speaker package provides more than adequate tunes.



PHOTOS: TOM KING



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AVALON

CATALINA 2585 PLATINUM QUAD LOUNGE

2021

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C

BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS



Price: \$83,062

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Low-profile, futuristic driver's console looks like it belongs in a sleek SUV.
- ▶ Sculpted admiral chairs for the pilot and first mate offer outstanding comfort and a commanding feel.
- ▶ Matrix Ultrafine vinyl upgrade on our test boat features a subtle two-tone patterned look that's soft and durable.
- ▶ Mercury Verado provides more than enough low-end punch for watersports and a deck load of friends.

SPECS: LOA: 26'6" BEAM: 8'6" DRAFT: 1'6" DRY WEIGHT: 3,100 lb. SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY: 12/2,580 lb. FUEL CAPACITY: 58 gal.

HOW WE TESTED: ENGINE: Mercury Verado FourStroke 250 hp DRIVE/PROP: Outboard/Mercury Enertia 14.5" x 17" 3-blade stainless steel GEAR RATIO: 1.75:1 FUEL LOAD: 43 gal. CREW WEIGHT: 250 lb.

PONTOON

Avalon brings a lot to the party. The Catalina 2585 Platinum Quad Lounge does its job maintaining that mantel with a big Mercury Verado 250. With that much power, the 3,100-pound 27-footer scoots from a dead idle to 30 mph in under 6 seconds, and tops out at 47 mph. If you're more into a sedate cruise, the Catalina likes it best at 13 mph, where the Verado turns 2,500 rpm and sips fuel at just 3.2 gph, reaching 4.2 mpg. At that speed, the 58-gallon tank allows for a 218-mile range with 10 percent of the fuel left to get home.

New this year are the perimeter walls, smooth on the outside, with no ribbing or visible rails. They're sleek and make the boat easy to clean. The optional Waveglider triple 27-inch pontoons are mated to the deck with heavy-duty, double-bolted hat-channel crossbeams, with an aluminum underdeck Wave Shield to improve airflow and efficiency. The deck is 3/4-inch PTP marine flooring that has a lifetime warranty, with optional in-floor storage. A 3-inch-tall perimeter rub rail caps the deck, with a black rubber insert to cushion docking.

Seat frames are all-aluminum, which gives excellent storage room underneath, along with ventilation to minimize moisture. In the bow, twin facing loungers are outfitted with new Matrix 50 Ultrafine Touch vinyl, with detailed embossing on the center cushions, a tri-tone color match, and a smooth surface on the outer skins. The result is a modern, clean look that's well-executed. The pilot and co-pilot chairs use a combination of sleek framework and two-tone smooth and embossed vinyl; a departure from the seating on most pontoons, they look thin but are actually supportive

SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION		
rpm	knots	mph	gph	mpg	mpg	n. mi.	s. mi.	angle	sound level
1000	3.7	4.3	1.0	3.7	4.3	195.1	224.5	0	53
1500	5.7	6.6	1.7	3.4	3.9	176.1	202.7	1	60
2000	7.1	8.2	2.5	2.8	3.3	147.9	170.2	2	61
2500	11.6	13.4	3.2	3.6	4.2	189.2	217.8	2	64
3000	15.9	18.3	4.6	3.4	4.0	180.0	207.1	2	68
3500	16.6	19.1	5.5	3.0	3.5	157.5	181.3	2	70
4000	20.8	23.9	8.2	2.5	2.9	132.2	152.1	3	73
4500	23.6	27.2	10.4	2.3	2.6	118.6	136.5	2	75
5000	31.2	35.9	12.7	2.5	2.8	128.0	147.4	2	76
5500	37.3	42.9	18.8	2.0	2.3	103.5	119.1	2	79
6000	40.8	47.0	23.1	1.8	2.0	92.3	106.2	2	85

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

AVALON PONTOON BOATS

Alma, Michigan; 800-334-2913; avalonpontoons.com



and comfortable. The Ensign 2 console features full instrumentation with a Humminbird 5 CV graph and Gold Plus Fusion sound system, including a five-channel amp and six Fusion XS lighted speakers. SeaStar hydraulic tilt steering keeps the big Verado 250 in line. A Bimini top with heavy-duty black aluminum frame and quick-release mounts comes standard, as does Deco built-in docking lights. A 10-year bow-to-stern warranty and a lifetime hull-and-floor warranty keep the worries away while you enjoy outings on the Catalina.

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BENNINGTON 24RTFBA BOWRIDER

2021
BOATING
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GUIDE

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Bowrider design improves forward visibility.
- ▶ Understated luxury in colors and upholstery.
- ▶ Bow seatback tops flip open to dry stowage for small items reachable from in the boat or on the dock.
- ▶ Standard sport arch and LED docking lights.

SEE THE VIDEO

To see our video review of the 24RTFBA, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/bennington24rtfba.



Price: \$130,825

SPECS: LOA: 26'6.5" **BEAM:** 8'6" **DRAFT:** 2'7" **DRY WEIGHT:** 3,753 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 15/2,060 lb. **FUEL CAPACITY:** 58 gal.

HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINE:** Yamaha F300 **DRIVE/PROP:** Outboard/Yamaha Salt Water Series II 15.75" x 15" 3-blade stainless steel **GEAR RATIO:** 1.75:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 44 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 400 lb.

PONTOON

C

BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS

You step down to step up aboard the Bennington 24RTFBA Bowrider. The recessed forward seating area is made possible by the Integrated V-Hull Performance Package, which replaces a traditional center tube with a V-bottom hull between 23-inch-diameter outboard tubes. That center hull mates directly to the underside of the deck. Cut away the deck, and you have space for a molded fiberglass footwell for a step-down U-shaped lounge that's about a foot lower than the main deck. The primary benefit is to enhance visibility forward—passenger

heads don't block the captain's view, and you get a better look when approaching a dock because the rails and sides slope down slightly. Bennington View Ports—open gaps between the top rail and the seatback—further enhance forward visibility. During our session, we found this design really improved sightlines forward, and while it adds some weight, the boat handled well and rode admirably in a stiff chop.

The R Series is the sporty line from Bennington, so it figures that a tubular sport arch is standard, but our test boat had the optional power-folding cladded arch with Kicker speakers (\$14,551) that incorporates the sun top. The U-shaped forward seating has lounge backrests with adjustable headrests. Lumbar pockets—open spaces between the seatback and bottom cushion—enhance comfort and provide recesses for drink holders, fast-charge USB ports and speakers. Helm and companion seats are high-back recliners. The Fastback rear seating wraps around aft to a center gate, with lounging backrests facing aft. Pillow-top

rpm	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION		
	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level	
1000	4.17	4.80	1.20	3.48	4.00	181	209	0	59	
1500	6.08	7.00	1.90	3.20	3.68	167	192	0	63	
2000	7.65	8.80	3.20	2.39	2.75	125	144	1	68	
2500	13.73	15.80	4.60	2.98	3.43	156	179	1	74	
3000	15.64	18.00	5.60	2.79	3.21	146	168	1	75	
3500	20.16	23.20	7.60	2.65	3.05	138	159	1	73	
4000	23.55	27.10	10.20	2.31	2.66	121	139	1	76	
4500	27.20	31.30	13.40	2.03	2.34	106	122	1	79	
5000	27.63	31.80	15.50	1.78	2.05	93	107	1	82	
5500	29.98	34.50	18.20	1.65	1.90	86	99	1	83	
6000	34.50	39.70	24.00	1.44	1.65	75	86	1	84	
6100	35.63	41.00	25.90	1.38	1.58	72	83	1	85	

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

BENNINGTON MARINE

Elkhart, Indiana; 888-906-2628; benningtonmarine.com

diamond-stitch upholstery is standard. The optional fiberglass port console (\$1,889) adjacent to the port entry swings open on new gas struts to provide added stowage that's not under a seat, so nobody has to get up.

At the helm, an optional Simrad GO7 multifunction display (\$1,644) replaced the standard analog gauge package, and the optional leather-wrapped Corvina wheel (\$467) is a luxurious touch. A Yamaha digital control and SeaStar power steering are also perfectly suited to this luxe pontoon.





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**BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS**



Price: \$194,183

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Go fast but do it well. The Manitou V-Toon system is stable at speed and carves like a Ginsu. The added lift boosts performance and economy at cruising speed.
- ▶ New packages group popular options and keep the menu short, so ordering is easier.
- ▶ Joystick Piloting is a worthy upgrade that makes docking so much easier on a pontoon, especially in a crosswind.

SPECS: LOA: 26'8" **BEAM:** 8'6" **DRAFT:** NA **DRY WEIGHT:** 4,160 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 13/1,775 lb. **FUEL CAPACITY:** 90 gal.

HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINES:** Twin Mercury Verado 300 **DRIVE/PROPS:** Outboard/Mercury Revolution 4 14⁷/₁₆" x 23" 4-blade stainless steel **GEAR RATIO:** 1.75:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 75 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 400 lb.

PONTOON

A top speed of 60 mph is a benchmark for performance pontoon boats—go 60 and you are running with the big dogs. One way to get there is aboard a properly equipped version of the new Manitou LX series. Our test boat, a 25 LX RXF with twin Mercury Verado 300 outboards, ran 62 mph on glass-calm water. That's clipping right along.

For 2021, the Manitou LX series replaces both the Legacy and X-Plode series in the Manitou fleet with a single platform that seeks to combine the luxury of the Legacy with the extreme

performance of the X-Plode models. Available in 23-, 25- and 27-foot lengths, most LX models have a fiberglass rear section that replaces the traditional rails and side panels, and all ride on the Sport Handling Package (SHP) chassis. The SHP is the highest performance version of the patented triple-tube Manitou V-Toon system, with 25-inch-diameter outer tubes and a 27-inch center tube, all fitted with dual lifting strakes. To handle high-speed wave impacts, the SHP tubes have reinforced Barracuda nose cones, and this chassis comes with SeaStar power steering. The bottom of the center tube is 5.25 inches lower than the outboard tubes so that, in a turn, the boat can heel over on the inner tube like a V-bottom monohull.

New this year, Manitou has grouped popular options into packages. Our test boat had the all-inclusive Platinum Package (\$21,719), which includes Silver Luna woven flooring, color-matched fiberglass, a sport tower with Bimini, center-tube ski locker, and LED interior and exterior lighting. Other notable options on this boat include premium JL Audio

SPEED				EFFICIENCY				OPERATION		
rpm	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	level	sound
1000	5.65	6.50	2.90	1.95	2.24	158	182	0	67	
1500	8.26	9.50	4.80	1.72	1.98	139	160	2	70	
2000	15.03	17.30	7.00	2.15	2.47	174	200	4	76	
2500	20.33	23.40	9.00	2.26	2.60	183	211	3	80	
3000	24.59	28.30	11.60	2.12	2.44	172	198	3	83	
3500	30.33	34.90	15.80	1.92	2.21	155	179	3	85	
4000	34.93	40.20	21.30	1.64	1.89	133	153	3	85	
4500	39.71	45.70	29.20	1.36	1.57	110	127	3	86	
5000	44.84	51.60	38.50	1.16	1.34	94	109	3	88	
5500	49.62	57.10	45.60	1.09	1.25	88	101	3	90	
6000	54.05	62.20	47.10	1.15	1.32	93	107	3	90	

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

MANITOU INC.
Lansing, Michigan; manitoupontoonboats.com

(\$2,744) plus JL Audio can speakers on the tower (\$2,550), a bow filler bench (\$769), a Garmin Virb camera (\$1,213) and Joystick Piloting (\$16,250). It's fun to see 60 on the Garmin multifunction display, but equally impressive is the fact that this boat will cruise at 40 mph; and at just 4,000 rpm, the big Mercs are whisper-quiet. That's the real performance advantage of a fast pontoon like the Manitou LX—the ability to cover a long distance quickly while handling like a dream along the way.



HIGH
POINTS

- ▶ Distinctive fiberglass bow module and seat bases.
- ▶ No more fishing around for seat adjustment levers.
- ▶ AquaTread deck is easier to clean than woven vinyl.
- ▶ Offered with optional privacy curtain, flip-up table or stowage chest.

SEE THE
VIDEO

To see our video review of the Savannah 250 SLS, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/crest-savannah250sls.

CREST
SAVANNAH 250 SLS

Price: \$137,538

SPECS: LOA: 26'9" BEAM: 8'6" DRAFT: 1'6" DRY WEIGHT: 4,426 lb. SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY: NA/2,790 lb. FUEL CAPACITY: 85 gal.

HOW WE TESTED: ENGINE: Mercury Verado 350 DRIVE/PROP: Outboard/Mercury Enertia 14.5" x 17" 3-blade stainless steel GEAR RATIO: 1.75:1 FUEL LOAD: 43 gal. CREW WEIGHT: 190 lb.

Asculpted fiberglass bow module and fiberglass seat bases distinguish the new Savannah series, now the flagship of the Crest pontoon line. And worthy of a flagship, this boat is both attractive and loaded with standard features. The forward seat bases are incorporated into the bow modules, each with a lounging backrest at the console. The smooth seat bases blend nicely with the helm console and look a little more upscale than the typical molded plastic or vinyl-covered bases we see on pontoons. Note how the flowing lines of the bow module

are repeated in the side rails, a nice detail.

The helm console elevates the captain's seat and is trimmed with billet aluminum. On our boat, a set of Mercury SmartCraft gauges are presented to the left, with a standard 9-inch Garmin multifunction display to the right. A wireless phone charger is located in a glove box below the Mercury DTS throttle, and behind that is a refrigerated cup holder for the captain. The standard Klipsch audio system includes two subwoofers, eight speakers, two amps and Bluetooth connectivity.

A fiberglass base also supports the rear seating. An L-shaped lounge with a power backrest at the stern can be adjusted to a fore- or aft-facing seat, or folded flat into a full sun pad. As an option, our boat was powder-coated in graphite (\$507) on the aluminum ski-tow bar to match the graphite deck trim and rails (\$830). The optional cladded aluminum arch (\$20,769) includes RBG LED lighting and two additional Klipsch can speakers.

The triple-tube Crest CP3 Performance chassis features a 26-inch center tube and

25-inch outer tubes, with lifting strakes on the center tube and inboard on the outer tubes, heavy-duty nose cones and an aluminum underskin, plus dual batteries and an onboard charger. SeaStar power steering is standard, as is a center-tube ski locker. A generous 82-gallon fuel tank (\$384) is an upgrade from the standard 52-gallon tank, and a good match for the 350 hp Mercury Verado on our test boat. This hull ran true and steady all the way up to 50 mph in our performance trial. A flagship indeed.

	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
	rpm	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle
1000	3.82	4.40	1.10	3.48	4.00	257	295	0	63
1500	5.65	6.50	1.90	2.97	3.42	219	252	0	66
2000	7.56	8.70	2.80	2.70	3.11	199	229	2	65
2500	8.43	9.70	4.40	1.92	2.20	141	163	3	71
3000	13.82	15.90	6.50	2.13	2.45	157	181	2	70
3500	16.51	19.00	9.50	1.74	2.00	128	148	2	72
4000	18.60	21.40	11.30	1.65	1.89	121	140	2	79
4500	28.42	32.70	14.10	2.02	2.32	149	171	2	81
5000	34.32	39.50	18.20	1.89	2.17	139	160	2	80
5500	38.32	44.10	23.10	1.66	1.91	122	141	2	82
6000	41.02	47.20	24.10	1.70	1.96	126	145	2	84
6200	43.45	50.00	30.00	1.45	1.67	107	123	2	84

CREST PONTOONS

Owosso, Michigan; 989-725-5188; crestpontoonboats.com

PLAYCRAFT INFINITY 2700

2021
BOATING
BOAT BUYERS
GUIDE

C

**BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS**



Price: \$119,900

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Single-engine economy, with a top speed approaching nearly 55 mph.
- ▶ Bright Petty blue-and-white finish with black accents enhances the performance with a sporty look.

SEE THE VIDEO

To see our video review of the Infinity 2700, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/playcraftinfinity2700.



PONTOON

SPECS: LOA: 27'5" BEAM: 8'6" DRAFT: NA DRY WEIGHT: 2,750 lb. SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY: 15/3,000 lb. FUEL CAPACITY: 50 gal.
HOW WE TESTED: ENGINE: Mercury 400 Verado FourStroke 400 hp DRIVE/PROP: Outboard/Mercury Enertia 14.7" x 16" 3-blade stainless steel GEAR RATIO: 1.75:1 FUEL LOAD: 50 gal. CREW WEIGHT: 425 lb.

While this PlayCraft represents a midprice package at just under \$120,000, it's a full-zoot custom rig with enough power and speed to satisfy, and features and benefits to keep owners and fun-seekers occupied. Underneath, 0.09-inch-thick, 24-inch-diameter triple pontoons are fitted with skin guards on the nose keels for worry-free beaching. Foam flotation fills each pontoon for safety and noise deadening. Underdeck, all-aluminum cross members are fitted 16 inches on center and covered with aluminum spray-shield panels. Extruded side-deck bumpers and

cast corner protectors are standard fare. CCA seven-ply wood decking that features a lifetime warranty is attached with corrosion-resistant fasteners.

A color-matched Bimini top is standard, as is a Wet Sounds stereo with four RGB-lit speakers and a remote. Infinity woven-vinyl flooring covers the deck. The furniture layout is spacious for parties yet still gives plenty of lounge room for riding and relaxing. Two bow and two stern sofas hinged to roto-cast bases also boast plenty of storage underneath. A removable snack table is also standard. Movable drink holders can be placed anywhere they're convenient. The fiberglass pilot's console features a Lexan windshield, tilt helm and full complement of instruments, along with an optional 5-inch Simrad multifunction/chart-plotter package. The captain's helm chair is fit for a CEO, with adjustments for height and legroom, and it reclines and has movable armrests. Docking, courtesy and running lights are standard. On our test rig, RGB mood lighting was installed topside, along the rub rail and underwater. An optional wakeboard tower plus tow pylon were powder-coated in

SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION			
rpm	knots	mph	gph	mpg	mpg	naut. range	stat. range	n. mi.	s. mi.	level
1000	4.2	4.8	1.3	3.2	3.7	144.4	166.2	1	68	
1500	5.8	6.7	2.0	2.9	3.3	130.0	149.6	1	69	
2000	8.1	9.4	3.1	2.6	3.0	117.9	135.7	1	69	
2500	12.8	14.8	4.2	3.1	3.5	137.3	158.0	2	73	
3000	16.4	18.9	5.0	3.3	3.8	147.8	170.1	2	77	
3500	20.1	23.2	7.4	2.7	3.1	122.3	140.8	3	77	
4000	24.0	27.6	9.9	2.4	2.8	109.0	125.5	3	78	
4500	28.3	32.6	13.1	2.2	2.5	97.2	111.8	3	78	
5000	33.6	38.7	15.7	2.1	2.5	96.4	110.9	3	80	
5500	36.9	42.5	20.4	1.8	2.1	81.4	93.6	3	81	
6000	41.5	47.7	25.2	1.6	1.9	74.0	85.2	3	84	
6500	45.3	52.2	30.9	1.5	1.7	66.0	75.9	3	86	
6700	46.9	54.0	32.2	1.5	1.7	6.3	75.4	3	88	

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

PLAYCRAFT BOATS
Richland, Missouri; 573-765-3265; playcraftboats.com

blue to complement the paint scheme.

The Verado power is exceptionally quiet, allowing for even-toned conversation at 40-plus mph speeds. It pulls like a freight train—zero to 30 mph in a cat-quick 5.1 seconds—and the straked pontoon tubes plane at a slow 14 mph and 2,200 rpm.

PlayCraft's rigs are unique, with performance and style that are unmistakable among other pontoons. That is naturally so because each PlayCraft is custom-built, styled and rigged to suit the owner.



PHOTOS: CARY BOGDON

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BARLETTA L25UCA

2021
BOATING
BOAT BUYERS
GUIDE

C

**BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS**



HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Anchor locker on a pontoon—brilliant!
- ▶ Excellent battery access below the aft lounge.
- ▶ Top off the tank while standing thanks to a raised fuel-fill neck.
- ▶ See-through gate and slide-out pet bowls for man's best friend.

SEE THE VIDEO

To watch our video review of the L25UCA, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/barlettal25uca.



PONTOON

SPECS: LOA: 27'6" **BEAM:** 8'6" **DRAFT:** NA **DRY WEIGHT:** 4,520 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 12/2,800 lb. **FUEL CAPACITY:** 48 gal.
HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINE:** Mercury Racing 450R **DRIVE/PROP:** Outboard/Mercury Eternia 14.2" x 18" 3-blade stainless steel **GEAR RATIO:** 1.60:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 13 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 190 lb.

The L Series is the flagship of the Barletta line of pontoon boats, and this L25UCA is a flagship with all of the extras. The "A" in the model code stands for arch, a billet aluminum structure rated to tow 1,500 pounds that incorporates a 10-foot sun top, four speakers and a light bar, and you can raise or lower this fine arch at the touch of a button.

This triple-tube model has a chassis designed to support a lot of weight and a load of horsepower. The 26-inch tubes feature dual-stage lifting strakes, which Barletta says reduce drag and help to guide

the boat through turns, plus internally reinforced nose cones add durability in rough water or at high speeds, and "wave tamers" knock down spray from the outboard tubes. Heavy-duty double I-beam cross members are installed on 16-inch centers. As a result of on-water testing, we can state that the rubber Barletta Vibration Isolation Pads between the I-beams and each M-bracket effectively isolate the plywood deck from engine vibration. This robust construction enables engine options up to the muscular Mercury Racing 450R on our test boat, which delivered 57 mph at wide-open throttle.

Within the deck is a lighted ski locker, a cooler stowage compartment and, at the bow entry gate, an anchor locker that will also hold a pair of large fenders. Convenience features include USB ports at each seat, a wireless phone charger, a flip-up table within the port console, and a stainless-steel tow bar with integrated fender baskets. The aft Ultra Lounge can be configured for fore or aft seating and lounging. The raised fiberglass helm console offers great legroom and holds a standard

rpm	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level
1000	4.17	4.80	1.70	2.45	2.82	106	122	0	59
1500	6.52	7.50	3.10	2.10	2.42	91	105	0	54
2000	8.52	9.80	4.60	1.85	2.13	80	92	3	65
2500	14.34	16.50	6.30	2.28	2.62	98	113	4	68
3000	17.12	19.70	7.90	2.17	2.49	94	108	3	71
3500	21.72	25.00	11.50	1.89	2.17	82	94	3	74
4000	25.20	29.00	12.60	2.00	2.30	86	99	3	79
4500	31.11	35.80	16.30	1.91	2.20	82	95	3	80
5000	36.50	42.00	22.40	1.63	1.88	70	81	3	83
5500	42.93	49.40	31.00	1.38	1.59	60	69	3	84
6000	46.49	53.50	40.00	1.16	1.34	50	58	3	85
6400	49.53	57.00	45.00	1.10	1.27	48	55	3	85

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

BARLETTA BOATS
Bristol, Indiana; 574-825-8900; barlettapontoonboats.com

Simrad G07 multifunction display. New this year is a 1,500-watt Hertz audio system that includes six speakers (plus four in the arch) and a subwoofer.

Dogs are frequent shipmates, and this L25UCA features pet bowls that slide out from the console base. The new Doggie DockView see-through panel in the bow and portside gates lets Fido keep watch. It also improves the captain's view when docking and is color-matched when seen from outside. Clever features and loads of luxury define this pontoon from Barletta.





LEADER 6.5

LEADER 7.5

LEADER 9.0

NEW
LEADER 10.5
Series 2

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LEADER 12.5



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SUNCHASER ECLIPSE 25 SSB

2021
BOATING
BOAT BUYERS
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**BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS**



Price: \$60,738 (with base power)

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Covering the speaker backs protects against water and damage.
- ▶ Portside console hides the pop-up changing room or a portable head, and doubles as a tabletop with drink holders.
- ▶ Ski tow is extra-stout.

SEE THE VIDEO

To watch our video review of the Eclipse 25 SSB, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/sunchaser/eclipse25ssb.



SPECS: LOA: 27'8" **BEAM:** 8'6" **DRAFT:** 2'0" **DRY WEIGHT:** 3,445 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 15/2,115 lb. **FUEL CAPACITY:** 60 gal.

HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINE:** Mercury 250 FourStroke **DRIVE/PROP:** Outboard/Mercury Enertia Eco 16" x 17" 3-blade stainless steel **GEAR RATIO:** 1.75:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 45 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 190 lb.

PONTOON

The new Eclipse 25 is the top-of-the-line model in the SunChaser series for 2021, a pontoon stretching more than 27 feet in length and loaded with features. The Eclipse name for this series is apt because blacked-out rails and deck trim—all the rage on pontoons right now—are standard. Our boat also had optional black-painted tubes and a black ski-tow rig to complete the “eclipse” effect. The triple-tube X-Treme PR25 Performance Package features three 25-inch-diameter tubes and heavy-duty cross members to boost the max-horsepower rating to 300 with a

25-inch outboard. SunChaser’s X-Treme performance strakes on the center tube and inside the inboard tubes provide lift to boost speed and fuel economy, and this chassis includes a drag-reducing underbelly skin, 60-gallon fuel tank, ski pylon and SeaStar hydraulic steering. A ski locker within the center tube is an option. We topped 46 mph with a Mercury 250 Four-Stroke outboard on the transom and found the handling to be razor-sharp.

Our test boat had the SSB interior layout with facing swing-back seats behind the helm. Each can be configured to face fore or aft, and the aft seatback can swing flat to form a sun lounge with the other seat. There’s a bench seat with an aft-facing angled seatback to port and a pair of wrap-around loungers in the bow. All seat bases are color-matched, roto-molded plastic, and the deck is covered in durable woven vinyl. Both fore and aft decks are expansive and will ease boarding in any docking situation. A canvas changing room opens from an enclosure abaft the port lounge.

This model features a standard Executive Helm, which raises the seat

rpm	SPEED				EFFICIENCY				OPERATION		
	knots	mph	gph	mpg	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	level	sound
1000	4.26	4.90	1.20	3.55	4.08	192	221	0	60		
1500	6.52	7.50	2.10	3.10	3.57	168	193	1	61		
2000	8.26	9.50	3.10	2.66	3.06	144	165	3	68		
2500	14.51	16.70	4.00	3.63	4.18	196	225	2	72		
3000	18.60	21.40	5.70	3.26	3.75	176	203	1	70		
3500	23.29	26.80	7.80	2.99	3.44	161	186	1	73		
4000	26.94	31.00	10.20	2.64	3.04	143	164	1	75		
4500	31.46	36.20	13.60	2.31	2.66	125	144	1	75		
5000	33.98	39.10	15.50	2.19	2.52	118	136	1	77		
5500	38.15	43.90	22.40	1.70	1.96	92	106	1	78		
5700	40.49	46.60	23.10	1.75	2.02	95	109	1	80		

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

SUNCHASER BOATS

New Paris, Indiana; 866-719-7873; sunchaserboats.com

about 3.5 inches off the deck to improve sightlines forward. The molded fiberglass helm console presents analog gauges to the right, with a space for the optional Simrad multifunction display on center above the tilt steering wheel. The control for a JL Audio system is high and to the left. The captain sits on a high-back seat with armrests behind a low-profile wind-screen. An inboard door provides access to stowage within the console. The new Eclipse is stylish, well-equipped and a great performer.





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A compact powerhouse, the A20 leverages all the same wake innovations as the big boats to create clean, powerful wakes and waves you will love. More value, performance and style than ever before. A breeze to trailer and garage, the A20 is as nimble getting to the water as it is on it.



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PLAYCRAFT POWERTOON X-TREME 3000

2021
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C

**BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS**



Price: \$239,000

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Near-80 mph top-end speed.
- ▶ Powder-coated tubes, rails and tower look great and resist corrosion.
- ▶ Mercury Racing 450R Four-Stroke tunable exhaust can run quietly and stately, or loud and brash.

SEE THE VIDEO

To watch our video review of the Powertoon X-Treme 3000, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/playcraftxtreme3000.



SPECS: LOA: 30'0" **BEAM:** 10'0" **DRAFT:** 1'2" **DRY WEIGHT:** 2,950 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 15/3,000 lb. **FUEL CAPACITY:** 100 gal.
HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINES:** Twin Mercury 450R Pro FourStroke 450 hp **DRIVE/PROPS:** Outboard/Mercury Bravo FS 15 1/2" x 26" 4-blade stainless steel **GEAR RATIO:** 1.60:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 85 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 550 lb.

PONTOON

Jim Dorris, founder of PlayCraft pontoons, is also the founder of performance pontoon boating and the first to race them at the famous Lake of the Ozarks Shootout. Today, Jim, son Joe and grandkids maintain the decades-old legacy. PlayCraft's creations are still at the top of this now-popular genre, posting record speeds at the LOTO Shootout. A 77.6 mph top speed, a 4-second hole shot to 30 mph, and racing graphics and colors demoralize all comers.

The PlayCraft's most economical cruising speed gave the ship a 177-mile

play between gas stops with its 50-gallon tank, with 10 gallons to spare.

Handling was nimble for a big 10-foot beam, and the 30-footer seemed eager to make turns as tight as we were brave enough to command. All this is thanks to the tri-toon's design, engineered for lift, speed and cornering with a 36-inch-wide center pod flanked by 26-by-24-inch outer pods, all equipped with lifting strakes to plane the boat and heel it inward on turns. And on Lake of the Ozarks' famous washboard, the 30-foot length spans even the most persistent rollers, so rough-water comfort is quite good.

The PlayCraft's rigging was all business, from the Bob's Machine Shop hydraulic jack plates, to the Mercury Racing 450 hp engines with power steering and the lab-finished Bravo FS four-blade propellers.

Cruising and ripping aside, this Powertoon's really at home hosting friends and family. The lime-green, Audi-gray and jet-black color scheme really draws eyes; close-up inspection shows it's well-done. The RGB rainbow mood lighting follows the sound beats, and is carried

SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION			
rpm	knots	mph	gph	mpg	mpg	naut. n. mi.	stat. s. mi.	range	angle	sound level
1000	6.0	7.0	3.9	1.5	1.8	139.4	160.4	0	69	
1500	9.3	10.8	7.1	1.3	1.5	118.4	136.3	1	70	
2000	16.9	19.4	10.1	1.7	1.9	150.2	172.9	1	74	
2500	22.5	25.9	13.2	1.7	2.0	153.5	176.6	1	74	
3000	29.4	33.9	21.2	1.4	1.6	124.9	143.7	2	75	
3500	37.8	43.5	27.9	1.4	1.6	121.8	140.2	1	80	
4000	44.7	51.5	41.1	1.1	1.3	97.9	112.7	2	82	
4500	49.3	56.7	65.8	0.7	0.9	67.4	77.6	3	83	
5000	57.7	66.5	69.8	0.8	1.0	74.5	85.7	3	86	
5500	62.1	71.5	77.8	0.8	0.9	71.8	82.7	2	89	
6000	67.4	77.6	98.6	0.7	0.8	61.6	70.8	1	92	

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

PLAYCRAFT BOATS
Richland, Missouri; 573-765-3265; playcraftboats.com

through the interior and overboard in the underdeck and underwater lights. The interior is plush as well as functional. Reboarding access combines a folding ladder with PlayCraft's patented steps built into the center tube. The driver's console features a full flight of instruments trimmed in matching lime-green bezels. As expected, the lounge space is huge.

PlayCraft's legacy in performance pontooning is secure, and Dorris' leadership is successfully grooming the company's younger generations to enhance it.



PHOTOS: GARY BOGDON

ROSWELL. MARINE AUDIO

EXPERIENCE A JOURNEY FILLED WITH MOMENTS
WHERE TIME STANDS STILL IN A PLACE
WHERE IMAGINATION MEETS SOUND.



At the core of Roswell's DNA lies a vision that began with a deep appreciation for moments on the water, driving innovation without compromise to ensure the smiles created by our products never stop.

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ELECTRONIC ENGINE SHUT-OFF SWITCHES

An engine shut-off lanyard can save your life. That is, if you use it—and most boaters don't. Even those who do generally only use it at the helm, and there are many other locations from which one can end up in the drink. Perhaps most at risk is the angler fishing solo. —*Steve Griffin*

A lifesaving option is a wireless engine cutoff device. Wearable fobs or “tags” communicate with a hub or host unit that sounds an alarm and shuts down the engine should the skipper fall overboard. A crewmember overboard fob

to the MOB and even alert others, such as the ACR Overboard Location Alert System (OLAS) Guardian. And more are on the way.

Here's what to look for in available wireless engine cutoff switches.

TIP

Most wireless engine cutoff switches allow you to leave the lanyard-activated switch that came with your boat in place and functional. Several states require its use if present; don't knock it—it'll shut down the boat if you're thrown from the helm, but not from the boat.

is programmed to trigger just the alarm. Until then, anyone wearing a fob can move freely about the boat, without the short-leash hassle of a lanyard.

There's a range of systems available, from the electromechanical Autotether Marine cutoff device, to the wireless electrical Fell MOB+, to those that also log location through Bluetooth to guide you back

▶ **QUICK RECOVERY** The Fell and ACR systems deactivate the engine shutdown in six or five seconds, respectively, so that the motor can be restarted to effect a rescue.

STICK IT!

Most wireless engine cutoff switches feature a hub permanently mounted in a hole in the dash, console or other surface. Autotether Marine attaches with Velcro. Permanent mounting is elegant, but Velcro means you can move your unit from boat to boat, including a rental.



▶ POD AND PEOPLE

Autotether and Fell MOB+ can each monitor up to four fobs; the ACR OLAS Guardian can handle up to six Android- or eight iOS-linked tabs, and up to 15 with an extender.

▶ THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT

The ACR OLAS works in conjunction with smartphone and tablet apps, providing onscreen direction to the MOB's signal fob. (Autotether is self-contained.)

▶ DESIGNATED DRIVER

Fobs can be programmed for operator (with cutoff and alarm) or passenger (alarm only) modes.

▶ DRAG-ALONG PROTECTION

Fobs are triggered by distance or water immersion; an overboard and rigging-tangled boater effects an alarm and, if designated as an operator, engine cutoff.

▶ MERC-MINDED?

Mercury Marine has the 1st Mate system in the works, which will

integrate into Merc-powered boats. We saw the stylish wearable during recent boat tests.

▶ BIG BOAT?

Electronic cutoff switches are activated by distance from the module, and your boat may be longer than that. This problem is solved with an extender, such as that offered by ACR for boats 40 to 80 feet long.

SOURCES/PRICES

AUTOTETHER MARINE
autotether.com; \$235, driver/passenger sensor \$90.25

FELL MARINE MOB+
fellmarine.com; base pack \$199.99, fobs/tags \$19.99-\$39.99

ACR OLAS GUARDIAN
acrartex.com; base \$249.95, tag \$79.95



PHOTOS: (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) COURTESY FELL MARINE, COURTESY MERCURY MARINE, COURTESY WEST MARINE

LIFE JACKETS & SEAT BELTS SAVE LIVES

CAPT Danny Hearn always wears his Seat Belt.

While boating, he wears his Coast Guard Approved light-weight Inflatable Life Jacket

But, just like seat belts, life jackets only save lives when they're worn!



Produced under a grant from the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund, administered by the U.S. Coast Guard.

Of 2018 drowning victims, 84% were reported as not wearing a life jacket.

Source: U.S. Coast Guard 2018 Recreational Boating Statistics Report

OPTIMIZE YOUR FORWARD DRIVE BOAT FOR WAKESURFING

Here are several ways to make boats powered by Volvo Penta's Forward Drive surf even better.

Boats powered with Volvo Penta's Forward Drive are already well-equipped for all your favorite watersports activities—even more so if paired with the Volvo Penta Watersports Control helm screens. With the forward-facing propellers, activities like wakesurfing, wakeboarding, tubing and even just swimming are much safer.

N

Not to mention, there are performance advantages across the board. That being said, it takes more than just a Forward Drive unit to create a great wakesurfing wake. Here are some tips and suggestions to help you optimize your Forward Drive boat for endless fun on the endless waves.

BALLAST If your boat is equipped with built-in ballast tanks, the rule of thumb is to fill them all the way up for wakesurfing. Beyond that, adding more ballast always helps. Consider adding

an aftermarket ballast bag to the rear of the boat, or find two smaller bags—one for port and one for starboard. With wakesurfing, the goal is to create a wave with plenty of push to keep riders in the pocket with little to no effort. That means displacing as much water as possible, whether through ballast bags or extra friends on board (or both).

If the bigger ballast

bags take up too much space for your liking, there are other options. Consider smaller, portable bags like Tidal Wake's Water Weights. Each bag holds up to 50 pounds of water and is easily tucked away under seats. Or take a look at items from LeadWake. LeadWake bags take up much less space than water, but keep in mind the added

WEIGH IT DOWN

Additional ballast will displace more water and help serve up bigger waves.



PHOTOS: (FROM TOP) TOM KING, COURTESY TIDAL WAKE, COURTESY MISSION

weight if you're towing for a long distance or plan on doing lots of cruising while on the water. Of course, never exceed your boat's capacity rating.

WAKESURF SHAPER

If your boat is not equipped with a wakesurf tab, such as Malibu's Surf Gate pictured



on this Chaparral, adding a wakesurf shaper is a must. There are several brands to choose from, including Mission, Tidal Wake,

Ronix, Roswell and more. All easily attach and detach to the side of the boat you're not surfing on. By displacing the flow of the water away from the boat's

hull, these shapers help peak up the wakesurf wave on the opposite side. Moving the shaper forward or aft below the waterline will affect the wave, so try a few positions and compare the results.

SURF TABS You can really add to your boat's wakesurfing prowess by adding aftermarket surf tabs to the transom of boats with Forward Drive. Wake Worx is the most recognized brand, creating systems already offered in boats such as Regal, Monterey, Bryant and Four Winns, but others are available as well.

TRIM TECHNIQUES

Adjusting your drive's trim can affect your boat's wakesurf wave. There is no magical position because a wave's characteristics can vary widely from one boat to another based on running surface, onboard load, water conditions and more. The general rule is to trim up and force the stern of the boat deeper into the water. From

WITH THIS 22-FOOT REGAL LS2 SURF, we achieved great wakesurfing waves with the onboard ballast filled 100 percent, Regal's surf-system tabs engaged, the drive trimmed up 3 degrees, and the speed between 10.5 and 11 mph.

there, play with the trim to see what helps give it the most size and push while keeping the wave's face as clean (no prop wash) as possible.

SURFING SPEED Generally speaking, optimal wakesurf speeds are somewhere between 10 and 12 mph. Again, this will vary depending on boat model, ballast and water conditions, as well as the rider's board type and riding preferences. As with trim, you should adjust the speed incrementally until the wave is as big and clean as possible. If you're too slow, the wave will not have enough push, and you'll notice lots of prop wash; too fast, and the wave will shrink down.

—Garrett Cortese



STICK IT

A wakesurf shaper placed on the side of your boat is an easy, hassle-free way to make bigger, cleaner waves.



THE WORLD'S FIRST SELF-DOCKING BOAT

Volvo Penta takes a step toward full autonomy at sea.

The sun glinted off the water in Gothenburg, Sweden, as Volvo Penta's self-docking yacht backed slowly toward a waiting crowd.

T

The lustrous leather steering wheel spun all on its own. Nervous sailors leaned over from the decks of the neighboring Volvo Ocean 65 boats as the 68-foot yacht approached the narrow slot. This stopover of the around-the-world sailboat race was the unveiling of a long-awaited system in modern boating—full autonomy.

While autopilot has been available in boats for ages, Volvo's new docking system moves beyond that. It's a big step toward true

self-driving boats. While cars can be expected to primarily move forward down a road, autonomy in boats is more complex because they have to be able to move in multiple directions. What's more, for a boat, the road is moving. The yacht uses the joystick-controlled Volvo Penta Inboard Performance System (IPS), which was first sold in 2006. The company later introduced the Dynamic Positioning System, which uses individual drives to automatically preserve a boat's heading and position, even during strong winds or tides. The self-docking yacht incorporates both of these systems into an onboard electronic vessel control system,

which maneuvers the steering according to the boat's actual position.

When the boat arrives in a predefined "catch zone," it alerts the captain that it's ready to activate the self-docking function. Once initiated, the boat relies on GPS to move close to the berth, and waits for the captain to enable the final stage, which utilizes both GPS and local sensors on both the boat and in the berth to define the docking space. The boat can then automatically safely guide itself to shore.

"Docking is one of the most challenging

SENSORED!
Sensors both on the boat and in the slip combine with GPS to define the boat's docking space.

BACK IT UP
Volvo is bringing self-docking technology to boats, similar to self-parking cars.

boat-handling maneuvers," says Björn Ingemanson, president of Volvo Penta, who explains that the company hopes to make the process easier and safer.

The self-driving prototype was developed in just a matter of months. "This was an expected next step from Volvo Penta," says Johan Inden, chief technology officer at Volvo Penta, but it was also a change in strategy. "We're throwing ourselves out there with future ideas," he says. Inden sees many potential future applications of autonomy, from autopilots docking larger ships on the commercial side to improving boater safety in dangerous conditions.

Volvo Penta anticipates the technology will be available by 2020. Volvo aims to develop the system so that it can be retrofitted to boats already rigged with an



IPS system. But Volvo doesn't plan on stopping there. Anders Thornin, manager of product planning for electronics at Volvo Penta, forecasts a boat capable of completely driving itself from point A to point B is less than five years away. "We've shown the technical capacity in a specific situation, but we will continue to learn more about what else we can do," he says.

Back in Sweden, the yacht's engines purred through a crosswind as it crept toward a dock with no help from human hands. The captain did look alarmed when an oblivious PWC rider roared directly behind the yacht, but it wasn't even a close call. Eventually, the system will include anti-collision alerts too. Watching as the yacht eased the final feet into the berth with a gentle sway, Inden said: "Someday soon, you'll be able to call for your boat and have it come pick you up. Fifteen years ago, technology was the hurdle. Now we're only constrained by imagination." —Lois Parshley



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A fishing boat is more than just waterborne transport fitted with rod holders, insulated wells, lots of storage and, perhaps, a hull designed for taming choppy water. Fishing boats are time machines. As author Norman Maclean observed, with one, you can “experience eternity compressed into a moment. No one can tell what a spot of time is until suddenly the whole world is a fish and the fish is gone.”

Use this guide to select your next fishing boat.



FISHING



BOSTON WHALER 280 VANTAGE
An unsinkable boat, with a V-hull, self-bailing cockpit, and the capability to carry anglers to adventure.

PHOTO: COURTESY BOSTON WHALER

2021

BOATING

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PRINCECRAFT SPORT 172 MAX

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BUYERS
SPOTLIGHT



Price: \$28,499 (base)

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ MAX value comes in the form of completely equipped boats offered at an attractive, all-inclusive price.
- ▶ Standard trailer is galvanized, a typically costly upgrade. It's just another example of how Princecraft MAX boats make buying easier.
- ▶ Check out the aft folding seats, with excellent execution.
- ▶ Double-plated marine-grade aluminum.

SPECS: LOA: 17'5" BEAM: 7'7" DRAFT (MAX): 2'6" DRY WEIGHT: 1,327 lb. SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY: 7/1,549 lb. FUEL CAPACITY: 24 gal. AVAILABLE POWER: Single Mercury outboard to 115 hp

Boating is one of the most fun things to do, but buying a boat sometimes proves stressful and fraught with indecision. New boaters, in particular, likely feel this anxiety. Princecraft's new MAX series boats strive to serve as salve for the stress.

"The MAX concept offers a unique look and a lot of features," says Rodier Grondin, Princecraft president. "It is pretty simple: You don't need to take long to pick the options because the boat is already loaded with interesting standard features."

We'd agree with Grondin's assessment. The Sport 172 MAX comes standard with

features that other boatbuilders either offer a la carte or relegate to the aftermarket. These include folding canvas that connects to the windshield, bow cushions, a ski pylon, 160-watt Jensen stereo, stainless-steel ladder, livewell and more.

In fact, after choosing either a 90 or 115 hp Mercury outboard (*Boating's* Certified Boat Tests can help you select the best horsepower for your needs), there are just nine other options to choose from, most of which are fishing accoutrements such as fish finders, trolling motors and downrigger mounts, and anglers generally know what they want in advance anyway.

Princecraft builds the Sport 172 MAX tough, utilizing 5052-H36 marine-grade aluminum for the hull's reverse-chine design. The hull is double-plated from the bow to amidships, enhancing protection from rocks, logs or floating debris. It's painted in durable, glossy urethane paint, and rigging tubes make it easier to service and install systems and accessories.

The layout proves great as well. We like the aft flip-up seats, which provide comfort for your crew while cruising, but also



PRINCECRAFT BOATS
Princeville, Canada; 800-395-8858; princecraft.com

fold down to create a casting platform and, further, conceal a livewell for fishing. At the helm, no-feedback steering and a tilt wheel offer confident control, while the sliding captain's seat offers comfort. With a 90 hp Mercury outboard, we expect excellent performance and economy, though the extra speed and thrills provided by upgrading to 115 hp are enticing.

With the Sport 172 MAX—and other MAX series boats—Princecraft delivers an easy way to confidently buy a boat that is equipped right.



PHOTOS: COURTESY PRINCECRAFT BOATS

Tahoe

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ALUMACRAFT COMPETITOR 185 FSX

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**BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS**



Price: \$41,187 (as tested with Shoreland'r trailer)

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Fish-and-ski model that does not compromise fishability. For instance, its 22-gallon livewell proved as large as that aboard a 34-foot center-console we tested.
- ▶ Lots of locking stowage aboard this boat, whether for your rods or your gear.
- ▶ Jump seats that fit our tester's 6-foot-tall frame. They will not torture your passengers, and fold away when not needed.
- ▶ Rock-solid construction with a double-bottom hull provides confidence and durability.

SPECS: LOA: 18'8" **BEAM:** 7'11" **DRAFT:** NA **DRY WEIGHT:** 1,500 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 6/1,600 lb. **FUEL CAPACITY:** 34 gal.
HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINE:** Mercury Pro XS 150 **DRIVE/PROP:** Outboard/Mercury Enertia 14" x 19" 3-blade stainless steel **GEAR RATIO:** 2.08:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 16 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 400 lb.

FISHING

Boating with family requires some flexibility, and that's the goal of the new Alumacraft Competitor 185 FSX. This aluminum crossover model retains all of the angling features of the popular Competitor line, and adds extras designed to make the boat more comfortable and versatile on days when fishing is not the top priority.

Start at the aft casting deck, where a reinforced socket for an optional ski tow pylon (\$366) is in place for those days when watersports fun is on the agenda. That pylon can be conveniently stowed in

a dedicated space in the starboard inwale locker. Soft foam mats on the aft deck corners will prove easy on the knees of your crew when reboarding the boat. The FSX package also includes a pair of handy jump seats that flip up from the aft platform. These boast 21-inch-high backrests and enough legroom for real comfort. To accommodate the jump seats, the FSX has a new 22-gallon dual-access livewell with a smaller center lid and a larger cover under the starboard seat. Finally, the Competitor 185 FSX comes with on-the-go rod racks to starboard, and updated upholstery with added color and attractive contrast stitching. Consider adding the comfort of optional bow deck cushions (\$606) and console backrest cushions (\$155), and you'll be set for lounging at the sandbar while enjoying tunes from the standard Infinity audio system.

The FSX features do not diminish this boat's angling prowess. The dual consoles are topped with a full windshield for outstanding weather protection. There's an 18-gallon livewell in the bow deck, locking rod stowage under the walk-through,

rpm	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION		
	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level	
1000	3.82	4.40	0.80	4.78	5.50	146	168	3	65	
1500	5.39	6.20	1.40	3.85	4.43	118	136	5	70	
2000	6.52	7.50	2.30	2.83	3.26	87	100	7	71	
2500	10.60	12.20	3.00	3.53	4.07	108	124	8	76	
3000	18.25	21.00	3.30	5.53	6.36	169	195	4	81	
3500	23.29	26.80	4.70	4.96	5.70	152	174	3	84	
4000	27.03	31.10	6.50	4.16	4.78	127	146	3	87	
4500	30.24	34.80	8.10	3.73	4.30	114	131	3	88	
5000	34.59	39.80	10.90	3.17	3.65	97	112	3	89	
5500	37.80	43.50	14.50	2.61	3.00	80	92	2	90	
5900	43.45	50.00	14.40	3.02	3.47	92	106	2	93	

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

ALUMACRAFT BOATS
St. Peter, Minnesota; 507-931-1050; alumacraft.com

a 13-gallon insulated cooler compartment to port, and four tackle drawers. The optional digital dash (\$2,001) replaces analog gauges with a Lowrance Elite 7 display, and the bow is pre-wired for electronics. The Alumacraft 2XB design adds a second plate of aluminum within the one-piece hull for added strength, durability and a solid, quiet ride. The extruded aluminum gunwales support the Alumacraft System, accessories for which include rod holders and tool pouches. This boat is ready to fish—and ski—in style.



PHOTOS: COURTESY ALUMACRAFT BOATS

HIGH
POINTS

- ▶ Wide, spacious fore and aft decks make for a platform that won't crowd an angler and partner.
- ▶ Heavy-duty Marine Town stainless locks and hinges, plus extra-thick seals, ensure hatches and lids close watertight and don't rattle.

SEE THE
VIDEO

To watch our video review of the Cougar FTD, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/basscatcougarftd.



Price: \$87,850

SPECS: LOA: 20'4" **BEAM:** 7'10" **DRAFT:** 1'2" **DRY WEIGHT:** 1,805 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** NA **FUEL CAPACITY:** 52 gal.

HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINE:** Mercury 250 Pro XS FourStroke 250 hp **DRIVE/PROP:** Outboard/Mercury Fury 14" x 24" 3-blade stainless steel **GEAR RATIO:** 1.75:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 15 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 400 lb.

BASS CAT
COUGAR FTD

The Bass Cat Cougar FTD is engineered and built to handle all the heft and torque from the latest four-stroke performance powerplants. Our test rig combined a near-80 mph top speed with tight, predictable and smooth handling in our choppy test waters. It's efficient too; we clicked off 4.7 mpg at a best cruise speed of 33 mph at 3,500 rpm, giving a fishing range of 220 miles.

The Cougar is also available in the Hybrid 203 version, which engages the venerable Champion 203 running surface, and now boasts Bass Cat's latest construction

and materials while maintaining a solid reverence for the Champion's V-bottom and reverse-chine shape. Rock-solid on the water, it generated 73 mph in our tests, with a gentle ride and steady steering at speed.

Both models are fast, but also designed to fish hard. A wide foredeck—FTD stands for Full Tournament Deck—enables anglers to stand shoulder to shoulder when fishing between docks or in timber. A padded deck keeps them comfortable, as does the custom trolling-motor pedal pocket and dual leaning seat sockets. Rod lockers are dry and padded, and keep rods secure. LED lights come on in compartments when the hatches open. Livewells are triangular and deep instead of broad and shallow, which stops sloshing that can injure the fish.

The FTD is tastefully flashy too. The gelcoat is glossy, with brilliant metal-flake and crisp color accents. Both Cougars are 100 percent fiberglass, with an 18-layer factory-built fiberglass transom bonded together with the stringer-box grid in a vacuum process that produces a rigid hull that stops oscillation. The rot-proof hull

and structural grid add strength and performance, and reduce weight.

The Cougar's piping and tubing were true and plumb; its tinned-copper wiring harness was properly loomed and supported all the way to each terminal or component. Custom touches abound too, such as undercompartment lighting activated by stainless-steel lid switches, and illuminated Lucite gunwale grab bars, and a custom-molded console fitted with all standard instruments and plenty of space for a multifunction display.

SPEED				EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
rpm	knots	mph	gph	naut.	stat.	n. mi.	s. mi.	angle	sound level
				mpg	mpg	range	range		
1000	4.5	5.2	1.5	3.0	3.5	141.0	162.2	1	68
1500	6.1	7.0	2.7	2.3	2.6	105.4	121.3	4	73
2000	6.9	7.9	4.5	1.5	1.8	71.4	82.2	6	73
2500	17.4	20.0	4.4	3.9	4.5	184.9	212.7	2	83
3000	23.8	27.4	5.8	4.1	4.7	192.1	221.1	1	84
3500	28.7	33.0	7.1	4.0	4.6	189.0	217.5	2	85
4000	33.7	38.8	9.5	3.5	4.1	166.1	191.1	2	87
4500	39.1	45.1	11.1	3.5	4.1	165.1	189.9	2	89
5000	45.2	52.0	11.9	3.8	4.4	177.7	204.5	2	95
5500	56.9	65.5	16.0	3.6	4.1	166.5	191.6	1	98
6000	65.9	75.8	22.4	2.9	3.4	137.6	158.4	0	104
6150	67.7	77.9	23.9	2.8	3.3	132.6	152.5	0	106

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

BASS CAT BOATS
Midway, Arkansas; 870-481-5135; basscat.com

SKEETER ZXR21

2021
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**BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS**



Price: \$62,495

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Standard Minn Kota Ultrex MDI iPilot Link 112 trolling motor.
- ▶ Easy, predictable handling all the way through 70 mph.
- ▶ Standard foot throttle and 12-inch manual jack plate enhance performance and control.
- ▶ Aluminum fore and aft casting decks add rigidity while lightening the hull.
- ▶ Deploying the standard Power-Pole Pro Series on the transom lets you quickly hold position in shallow water without dropping anchor.

SPECS: LOA: 21'4" **BEAM:** 8'1" **DRAFT:** 1'5" **DRY WEIGHT:** 2,275 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 5/737 lb. **FUEL CAPACITY:** 48 gal.

HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINE:** Yamaha 250 VMax SHO four-stroke 250 hp **DRIVE/PROP:** Outboard/Yamaha T-II VMax SHO 15-¹/₂" x 25" 3-blade stainless steel **GEAR RATIO:** 1.75:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 48 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 400 lb.

FISHING

Skeeter's ZXR21 offers serious anglers a packaged bass boat that looks, performs and is rigged like a custom boat. It is a serious fishing machine that's designed and hand-built to last for many years of rough-water running and hard angling. Sure, it's fast and sleek, but more important, it's a spacious tournament-ready fishing platform.

With Yamaha's VMax SHO 250 bolted to a 12-inch manual Slidemaster jack plate—a hydraulic option is available—we recorded a solid 70 mph top speed at just over 6,100 rpm. On the way there, the Skeeter hull took on boat wakes and midday lake slop easily,

giving sure-footed handling. Those who cruise will find its best efficiency is just over 27 mph at 3,000 rpm, where a 170-mile range can be had from the 48-gallon tank, leaving 10 percent in reserve.

Skeeter bonds the transom and stringer grid system together to the hull, with the deck cap bonded and bolted to the hull perimeter. Hull and deck finish are typical Skeeter fare, with crisp tape lines and a metal-flake gelcoat with a brilliant shine.

The construction is proven over time and proved solid in our tests. Fore and aft casting decks are all-aluminum, lightening the hull and adding rigidity. They're additionally supported by adjustable struts beneath. The foredeck is Skeeter's Team Advantage deck layout, with padding under the carpet, center rod storage, twin day boxes, and two trays capable of holding six Flambeau 5007-size boxes each. Also on deck is the Minn Kota Ultrex MDI iPilot Link 112 trolling motor, giving anglers autopilot control of position.

The cockpit is wide with depth (21 inches from deck cap to floor), fitted with pilot and passenger seats that are cushy but hold firm. The pilot's console is a sleek fiberglass pod

rpm	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level
1000	4.9	5.6	1.6	3.1	3.6	135.6	156.1	2	65
1500	6.1	7.0	2.8	2.2	2.5	93.8	108.0	4	67
2000	7.0	8.1	4.6	1.5	1.8	65.7	75.6	7	71
2500	9.6	11.1	6.5	1.5	1.7	64.1	73.8	7	78
3000	23.8	27.4	7.0	3.4	3.9	146.9	169.1	2	82
3500	27.0	31.1	10.2	2.6	3.0	114.5	131.7	2	83
4000	35.4	40.8	13.5	2.6	3.0	113.3	130.4	1	83
4500	41.6	47.9	17.2	2.4	2.8	104.5	120.3	0	85
5000	48.6	55.9	20.9	2.3	2.7	100.4	115.5	0	86
5500	53.9	62.1	23.0	2.3	2.7	99.5	114.6	0	89
6000	59.0	68.0	23.4	2.5	2.9	109.0	125.4	0	93
6150	61.0	70.2	23.9	2.6	2.9	110.2	126.8	0	95

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

SKEETER PERFORMANCE FISHING BOATS
Kilgore, Texas; 903-984-0541; skeeterboats.com

fitted with a flared Lexan windscreens, standard Humminbird Helix 12 (with Helix 9 at the bow), thick-rim steering wheel, Pro Trim steering-column-mounted trim switch, hydraulic steering and standard foot throttle.

The passenger sits next to a built-in rod organizer. There's ample room between the pilot and co-pilot seats, and a wider step in between allows easier access to the aft deck. A carpeted step up to the foredeck features built-in tool holders and an anodized aluminum fish-measuring board. The transom features a standard Power-Pole Pro Series.



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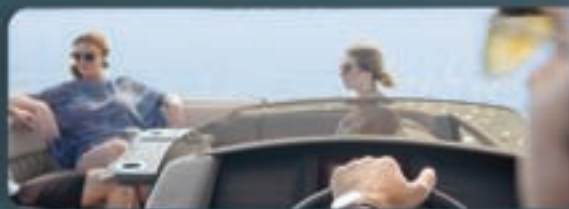
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PATENT PENDING



Vantage-Point™ Captain's View

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- ☑ Easy to drive with increased forward visibility in all driving conditions, including docking & picking up fallen skiers
- ☑ Similar to stadiums, the driver can easily see & communicate with passengers

U-Lounge™

- ☑ Versatile conversation-friendly step-down bow seating with the ultimate in comfort and "near water" rider experience
- ☑ Sport interior with comfortable taller lounge backs with adjustable headrests
- ☑ Large recessed lumbar pockets with USB ports for quick & secure storage
- ☑ Integrated bench-back storage accessible from in & outside the boat



View-Ports™ in the Bow Rails

- ☑ Increased port & starboard visibility for the captain & bow passengers
- ☑ Well placed grab handle for dock hands when docking
- ☑ Enjoyable "near water" rider experience
- ☑ Comfortable sandbar conversations



REGULATOR 24XO

2021
BOATING
BOAT BUYERS
GUIDE

C

**BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS**



Price: \$126,995 (with test power)

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Sophisticated hybrid hull handles both shallow water and nasty seas with confidence and control.
- ▶ Rod storage available under the gunwales, and in the T-top and leaning-post rocket launchers, plus lockable racks are under the bow casting platform that accept rods up 9 feet, 6 inches long.
- ▶ Cushioned seat with fold-down back under the stern platform, with good access to neatly arranged wiring, plumbing, and pumps under it.

SPECS: LOA: 24'4" **BEAM:** 8'5" **DRAFT:** 1'4" **DRY WEIGHT:** 5,250 lb. (with engine) **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 8/1,979 lb. **FUEL CAPACITY:** 86 gal.
HOW WE TESTED: ENGINE: 300 hp Yamaha **DRIVE/PROP:** Outboard/15.25" x 18" Saltwater Series II 3-blade **GEAR RATIO:** 1.75:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 65 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 400 lb.

FISHING

“Go anywhere, do everything” is the mantra for Regulator’s XO cross-over boats. The newest 24XO offers a graceful Carolina sheerline over a shallow-running, Lou Codega-designed, 17-degree bottom that sharpens forward into a wave-cleaving, flared bow that can accept coastal assignments on reasonable days. Even with Regulator’s robust construction, the 24XO is light enough to tow behind a compact pickup truck.

Fishing comes first, of course. With an optional Minn Kota Ulterra and iPilot system, the 24XO can masquerade as a

freshwater bass boat one morning, work an eelgrass bed for speckled trout and redfish the next, drift for flounder the third, and jig an offshore wreck for stripers or black sea bass the fourth. Lockable racks port and starboard in the bow deck hold fly rods to 9 feet, 6 inches; horizontal racks under padded gunwales each hold two spinning/plug rods to 7 feet, 3 inches. There’s tackle storage in the helm’s leaning post, plus a four-rod rocket launcher. Another launcher is optional for the T-top. The stern deck holds a livewell to starboard (a portside one is optional) and has plenty of casting room.

In the afternoon, mount the 24XO’s optional watersports tow bar, or snap in the cushions, put the bow on the beach, and roll out the bow and stern sunshades that hide under the hardtop to create a shaded porch with restroom in the console. Seating includes two lounges in the bow platform, space for two in front of the console (with a cooler beneath), and another for two in the stern platform.

The 24XO will pay back handsomely to anyone willing to learn all it can do

rpm	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level
1000	4.5	5.2	1.1	4.1	4.7	318.0	365.8	0	71
1500	6.2	7.1	2.1	2.9	3.4	227.4	261.6	1	77
2000	7.3	8.4	3.3	2.2	2.5	171.2	197.0	4	80
2500	8.3	9.5	5.8	1.4	1.6	110.2	126.8	6	88
3000	11.0	12.7	7.8	1.4	1.6	109.5	126.0	6	88
3500	20.6	23.7	8.6	2.4	2.8	185.4	213.3	4	93
4000	28.2	32.4	11.4	2.5	2.8	191.2	220.0	3	93
4500	32.8	37.7	15.3	2.1	2.5	165.7	190.7	2	92
5000	36.8	42.3	18.7	2.0	2.3	152.1	175.1	2	93
5500	40.3	46.4	24.2	1.7	1.9	129.0	148.4	2	93
5900	42.9	49.4	26.1	1.6	1.9	127.3	146.5	2	97

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

REGULATOR MARINE
Edenton, North Carolina; 252-482-3837; regulatormarine.com



in different sea conditions. That means watching how the hull’s shape reacts to the wave it meets, then using the throttle, power trim, trim tabs and hydraulic jack plate appropriately. With Yamaha’s well-proven F300 on the jack plate, the 24XO tops out close to 50 mph, but it is happy at speeds from the low 20s to the mid-30s, a wide range for adapting to whatever conditions a day on the water brings. We were particularly impressed with the super-sweet spot at 3,700 rpm (29.8 mph, with a 9.2 gph fuel burn).

PHOTOS: COURTESY REGULATOR MARINE

HIGH
POINTS

- ▶ Raw-water washdown is handy for cleaning the deck after the catch.
- ▶ Cruise control assists in maintaining trolling speed.
- ▶ Jet pumps give the boat its shallow draft, ideal for fishing around shallow bays.
- ▶ Two livewells.

SEE THE
VIDEO

To see our video review of the 255 FSH Sport E, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/yamaha255fshsporte.



Price: \$79,499 (starting)

SPECS: LOA: 24'6" BEAM: 8'6" DRAFT (MAX): 1'10" DRY WEIGHT: 4,835 lb. SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY: 12/2,700 lb. FUEL CAPACITY: 111 gal.

HOW WE TESTED: ENGINES: Twin Yamaha 1.8L supercharged SVHO DRIVE/PROPS: Jet-pump impeller GEAR RATIO: 1.00:1 FUEL LOAD: 40 gal. CREW WEIGHT: 250 lb.

YAMAHA
255 FSH SPORT E

There's a new player in the center-console fishing-boat business, and the boatbuilder has brought something unique to the water. Yamaha's 255 FSH Sport E has dual supercharged SVHO engines that generate over 500 hp, and they do it without taking up the transom with motors.

The design gives anglers an open casting deck with no obstructions, making it easy to cast and to bring fish aboard. There are two livewells on board. One is forward and has a clear front wall and an acrylic top. Its powerful pump keeps plenty

of bait alive, and you'll have a hard time turning the kids' attention to fishing with so much action in the baitwell. There's an aft baitwell holding 30 gallons of water too.

We found a spot for 25 fishing rods on board, including rocket launchers in the hardtop, undergunwale rod holders, and gunwale rod holders for trolling. More rods can be stored on the console's side rod holder, and a slot in the hardtop accommodates the rods' tips.

Forward seating and a cocktail table can convert from dual lounges to a full sun pad by dropping the table to seating level and adding cushions. Stow the cushions away, and the foredeck becomes a casting platform. There's an option for a bow-mounted trolling motor for boat positioning too. Also adding fishability is the 12-inch Simrad GO display that has sonar and GPS. Cruise control assists in maintaining trolling speeds without having to keep a hand on the throttle.

The FSH is sporty to drive thanks to its massive horsepower, but it also boasts a 225-mile fishing range thanks to its 111-gallon fuel capacity.

But the FSH is more than a fishing boat. It's built with the recreational boater in mind. The aft deck is equipped with a stowable bench seat to complement the forward seating. There's a dual-station leaning post and flip-up bolsters. A tow pylon assists in wakeboarding, and massive storage in the deck locker and under the helm provides space to stow boards.

Add the carry-on cooler nested below the helm seat and everything needed for a full day of adventure on the water is in place.

rpm	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level
2000	4.4	5.1	2.0	2.2	2.6	221.4	254.7	0	70
2500	5.4	6.2	2.9	1.9	2.1	185.6	213.6	1	76
3000	6.6	7.6	4.2	1.6	1.8	157.1	180.8	3	81
3500	7.4	8.5	5.9	1.3	1.4	125.1	143.9	5	83
4000	9.4	10.8	7.9	1.2	1.4	118.7	136.6	7	86
4500	21.7	25.0	11.1	2.0	2.3	195.5	225.0	2	88
5000	28.6	32.9	15.2	1.9	2.2	187.9	216.2	1	91
5500	32.5	37.4	18.8	1.7	2.0	172.7	198.7	1	93
6000	35.9	41.3	22.7	1.6	1.8	157.9	181.8	1	98
6500	39.7	45.7	28.7	1.4	1.6	138.2	159.1	1	99
7000	43.3	49.8	35.3	1.2	1.4	122.5	140.9	1	97
7400	46.9	54.0	39.9	1.2	1.4	117.5	135.2	1	98

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

YAMAHA
Kennesaw, Georgia; 800-962-7926; yamahaboats.com

EVERGLADES 235CC

2021
BOATING
BOAT BUYERS
GUIDE

S

BOATING
BUYERS
SPOTLIGHT



Price: \$129,899 (base)

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Fiberglass hardtop is on a powder-coated frame, and includes LED lighting, spreader lights, electronics box and four rod holders, plus life-jacket storage. The sliding windshield is patented by Everglades.
- ▶ Sounds come from a premium Fusion 770 with Bluetooth, plus JL speakers, amps and a subwoofer.
- ▶ Unsinkable hull adds security, wiring is high-grade tinned copper, and the inner liner is fully finished. The hull carries a lifetime warranty.

SPECS: LOA: 25'0" (with engine); 24'0" (without engine) **BEAM:** 8'6" **DRAFT (MAX):** 1'3" (hull only); 2'6" (engine down) **DRY WEIGHT:** 5,600 lb. (with power) **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** Yacht Certified **FUEL CAPACITY:** 105 gal. **AVAILABLE POWER:** Single Yamaha 300 hp

Everglades calls its new 235cc an “entry-level” center-console. Not to contradict the boatbuilder, but this fishing/family boat is far beyond the usual stripped starter offering.

Check out the helm seats. Everglades has patented the clever swivel helm seat that turns the dual forward-facing seats into mezzanine seating that overlooks the cockpit while still giving the skipper a comfortable leaning post and ample standing room. Either way, the seats have folding armrests and flip-down footrests.



Powered by a 300 hp Yamaha Helm Master EX outboard, the 235cc tops out at nearly 46 mph—fast enough for distant fishing grounds and to tow kids on water toys, and plenty to get you home quickly if the weather turns. Drop back to 38 mph, and you get a 202-mile range.

The no-glare dashboard is ready for a single or pair of large-display Garmin GPS/chart plotters, sounder and VHF with AIS. Helm Master controls and Bocatech finish the dash.

Everyone is going to have something to love. Fishermen will appreciate the Everglades angler touches, with a rigging station, tackle-tray stowage, tool/leader storage and four rod holders. Tucked in the transom is a 17-gallon circulating livewell on one side, with an insulated cooler opposite. Undercoaming rod racks keep the cockpit clear, while both divers and anglers will use the standard fold-in utility door in the port hull side.

Families, on the other hand, will welcome the surprisingly spacious head compartment with a portable potty. Up



EVERGLADES BOATS
Edgewater, Florida; 386-416-0083; evergladesboats.com

front, the console has contoured seating plus another insulated cooler, and the wraparound seats flip into lounges. In the cockpit, retractable full-transom seating folds down.

The 235cc is unsinkable, with a lifetime hull warranty and no wood used in the hull construction. Strength is added by closed-cell foam, and the hull is protected by premium vinylester gelcoat.

If this is a “starter” boat, the 235cc raises the bar for all builders on layout, equipment and construction.

PHOTOS: COURTESY EVERGLADES BOATS/TOM KING



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GRADY-WHITE FREEDOM 275

2021

BOATING

**BOAT BUYERS
GUIDE**

S

**BOATING
BUYERS
SPOTLIGHT**



Price: \$177,500 (with twin Yamaha F150 outboards)

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Perfect blend of angling amenities and dayboat features makes this a great all-around family boat for coastal waters.
- ▶ Anchor-locker hatch is covered in nonskid and features a through-hull chute for easier anchor deployment.
- ▶ Helm with hardtop features plenty of space for the biggest displays, and is an ideal location for the optional Yamaha Helm Master EX joystick.

SPECS: LOA: 26'11" **BEAM:** 8'6" **DRAFT (MAX):** 1'8" **DRY WEIGHT:** 4,972 lb. (without power) **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** Yacht Certified **FUEL CAPACITY:** 184 gal.
AVAILABLE POWER: Twin outboards to 400 hp total

FISHING

Grady-White calls its Freedom 275 the “ultimate transformer” because it supports a variety of family fun. It is a Grady, so fishing looms large, and features for the angler include a 29-gallon livewell and two fish/ice boxes, one 165 quarts in the transom and another 96 quarts below the starboard bow seat. The aft cockpit seat folds up to make room for angling action, and to provide access to the livewell—topped with a cutting board for bait prep—and the aft fish box.

But this boat is designed to be an all-around dayboat, and the Freedom 275's

bow area features forward-facing settees, with room for six at the table. Angled backrests against the consoles make for comfortable reclining. A companion seat at the port console is standard, with an aft-facing electromechanically extendable lounge seat. The port console houses a head with a locking hatch, composite cherry and holly sole, and electric-flush commode. Rod racks in the head compartment extend below the portside bow seat.

At the helm is an upgraded Command Elite seat, a deluxe horizontally and vertically adjustable chair. Or upgrade to a plush cushioned bench seat with flip-up bolster, and the optional deluxe wet bar featuring a Corian countertop, sink, fire-extinguisher holder, three storage drawers and a trash compartment. An optional refrigerator can replace the drawers.

Overhead is the standard hardtop, on its painted aluminum frame. It features a storage net, two speakers, LED spreader lights, four tri-colored (red, blue and white) LED recessed lights, four side-mounted rod holders, a radar flat and outrigger plates. For more sun protection,



GRADY-WHITE BOATS
Greenville, North Carolina; 252-752-2111; gradywhite.com

deploy the optional SureShade retractable shade with Sunbrella canvas. If water-sports are on the agenda, Grady offers an optional ski pylon that fully recesses into the transom when stored. The integrated swim ladder with transom door eases reboarding. Power options include twin Yamaha F150 or F200 outboards, available with the suite of Yamaha Helm Master EX features, including joystick control. The Grady SeaV2 hull gives the Freedom 275 a ride that is always soft, dry and stable.



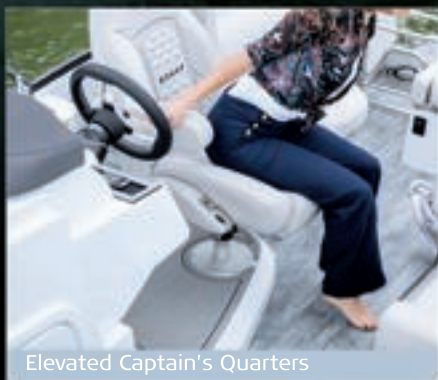


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PURSUIT S268 SPORT

2021
BOATING
BOAT BUYERS
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C

**BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS**



Price: \$163,655 (base); \$196,171 (as tested)

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Most in-sole boxes and scuppers drain into a centerline bilge tunnel so that water exits through the transom, which helps keep things clean and dry belowdecks.
- ▶ Foldaway transom seat raises the backrest, providing more comfortable support for passengers while underway.
- ▶ Extended platforms outboard of the engines, when combined with a handrail, allow for safer, easier boarding and engine service.

SPECS: LOA: 27'4" **BEAM:** 8'9" **DRAFT (MAX):** 2'10" **DRY WEIGHT:** 6,770 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** Yacht Certified **FUEL CAPACITY:** 139 gal.
HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINES:** Twin 200 hp Yamaha **DRIVE/PROPS:** Outboard/Yamaha Saltwater Series II 14 1/4" x 18" 3-blade stainless steel **GEAR RATIO:** 1.86:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 139 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 650 lb.

FISHING

Thanks to the use of advanced design and construction techniques, CAD and new materials, the new Pursuit S268 Sport, which replaces the C 260, makes the argument that bigger is better. It boasts a bigger cockpit, bigger helm, 3 inches of additional cockpit width, and 7 more inches of internal volume (living space) fore and aft. Also, Pursuit added 18 more inches of deck extension on each side of the outboards, letting you board from a dock more securely. Changing a prop is much easier too.

Bow seating with an optional pivoting backrests and insulated storage underneath

provides places to lounge facing forward. Our test boat came fitted with a powder-coated console frame and standard molded hardtop with optional safety-glass windows.

The S268 Sport's roll moment in a beam sea is relatively short and smooth. Anglers will particularly appreciate that it rolls quietly, with hardly any wave-slapping noise. Also, fish boxes have a diaphragm pump rather than a macerator for fewer clogs. Speaking of fishing, Yamaha's new Helm Master EX system makes a fishing day more productive, easier and less tiring.

Pursuit ensures unsurpassed strength from its proprietary resin-infusion system for the fiberglass stringer system, plus a molded-in knee at the transom spreads torque and thrust from the engines throughout the length of the boat. In addition, as earthlings, we appreciate that the construction processes used vastly diminishes the volatile organic compounds (pollution) that fiberglass boatbuilding has long contributed to substantially. At the same time, it makes for a more consistent, higher-quality structural system by eliminating air pockets and thick spots.

rpm	SPEED				EFFICIENCY				OPERATION		
	knots	mph	gph	mpg	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	level	
1000	4.39	5.05	1.60	2.74	3.16	343	395	1	70		
1500	5.95	6.85	2.80	2.13	2.45	266	306	2	71		
2000	6.95	8.00	4.90	1.42	1.63	177	204	4	74		
2500	8.78	10.10	7.30	1.20	1.38	150	173	6	76		
3000	14.43	16.60	10.20	1.41	1.63	177	204	5	79		
3500	20.86	24.00	10.00	2.09	2.40	261	300	3	80		
4000	27.03	31.10	14.00	1.93	2.22	241	278	3	82		
4500	32.76	37.70	20.00	1.64	1.89	205	236	3	86		
5000	37.02	42.60	28.00	1.32	1.52	165	190	3	89		
5500	40.75	46.90	36.00	1.13	1.30	142	163	2	94		
5900	42.80	49.25	39.00	1.10	1.26	137	158	2	96		

MOST ECONOMIC CRUISING SPEED

PURSUIT BOATS
Fort Pierce, Florida; 772-465-6006; pursuitboats.com

The in-console head provides welcome amenities, such as a porcelain toilet, freshwater sink and acceptable headroom.

We like that advanced designs and construction combine with a lower power rating to make the Pursuit more economical to run, though without any significant give-away in top-end speed to the competition. And we appreciate a vessel with zero performance idiosyncrasies; it keeps the captain and crew safer in turns and sudden changes in speed. When it comes to boats, nothing beats predictable.



PHOTOS: COURTESY PURSUIT BOATS



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WARRANTY

shakespeare-marine.com

PICTURED:
Sportsman – 302 Open Center Console

STINGRAY 269DC

2021
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**BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS**



HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Fusion Audio system rocks the boat and offers control via the head unit or multifunction display.
- ▶ Hardtop underside and helm station are colored to match the hull.
- ▶ Excellent service access via this boat's wide-open bilge hatch.

SEE THE VIDEO

To watch our video review of the 269DC, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/stingray269dc.



Price: \$147,456 (with twin Yamaha 200 hp outboards)

SPECS: LOA: 27'11" **BEAM:** 8'6" **DRAFT (MAX):** 1'6" **DRY WEIGHT:** 6,400 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** Yacht Certified **FUEL CAPACITY:** 135 gal.
HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINES:** Twin Yamaha 200 hp **DRIVE/PROPS:** Outboard/Reliance 18" pitch 3-blade stainless steel **GEAR RATIO:** 1.86:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 70 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 550 lb.

FISHING

For decades, Stingray has been building family runabouts and deckboats with fun fishing features, but with the introduction of its new 269DC, the boatbuilder adds to its repertoire and sets a course toward fishing.

Sure, all the accoutrements of a fun rec boat are in the 269DC. The style, after all, is a saltwater-hardened bowrider with the comfort of forward seats, posh interior cockpit seating and a walk-through windshield. Dual-console versatility is the primary asset that has driven the category's growth over the past five years, and

we are glad to see Stingray in it.

The seating is firm, with multidensity foam, durable rot-proof stitching, and stainless-steel hinges and hardware. The portside passenger seatback hinges fore or aft to create a sun lounge or back-to-back seats ideal for watching tube and board riders over the transom. The boat has an optional tow pylon for that.

Aft seating on the transom is wide enough for two and forms a conversation cockpit, which is useful while the quiet twin Yamaha 200s propel the boat forward at up to 50 mph. The hull's sharp deadrise cleaves wakes and created a smooth test ride for our team.

Lifting that aft seat reveals the spacious bilge area with unfettered access to fuel filters, pumps, seacocks, and the four batteries (two starter batteries and two house batteries) that are standard in this boat.

For fishermen, there's a deep 25-gallon livewell with a powerful pump that keeps the tank topped off and the bait safe in rough water. A fish box on the floor is ready to stow the catch, and then chill it while the crew chills on their way home.

SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION		
rpm	knots	mph	gph	mpg	mpg	naut. range	stat. range	n. mi. angle	s. mi. level
1000	6.0	6.9	1.8	3.3	3.8	401.8	462.4	0	67
1500	7.1	8.2	2.7	2.6	3.0	320.7	369.0	0	70
2000	8.5	9.8	5.1	1.7	1.9	202.9	233.5	3	75
2500	12.7	14.6	6.8	1.9	2.1	226.7	260.9	5	80
3000	18.6	21.5	8.8	2.1	2.4	257.4	296.2	4	83
3500	24.3	28.0	11.3	2.2	2.5	261.6	301.1	3	86
4000	29.2	33.6	13.3	2.2	2.5	266.7	306.9	3	87
4500	31.7	36.5	17.6	1.8	2.1	219.0	252.0	2	87
5000	37.4	43.0	23.3	1.6	1.8	194.8	224.2	1	90
5500	42.2	48.6	35.0	1.2	1.4	146.6	168.7	1	92
5800	43.4	49.9	39.0	1.1	1.3	135.1	155.5	1	94

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

STINGRAY BOATS
Hartsville, South Carolina; 843-383-4507; stingrayboats.com

That trip can be easy-peasy if they opt for the Yamaha Helm Master EX system with full maneuverability package, which includes autopilot and joystick steering. This integrated system uses hydraulics-free electric steering and electronic throttle and shift, and puts AP controls, both on the AP panel and the joystick, to set and hold course. Or just tap a fish point to hold station over your favorite grouper hole.

The 269DC is Stingray's first entrée to serious saltwater anglers, and the builder hit the nail on the head with it.



PHOTOS: COURTESY STINGRAY BOATS

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BOSTON WHALER

280 VANTAGE

2021
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BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS



Price: \$279,179 (with twin black 300 Verados and JPO)

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Integrated hardtop looks sleek and adds the functional purposes of providing shade, rain protection, and storage for fishing rods.
- ▶ Interior features of this boat reflect careful thinking about how families will use the boat.
- ▶ Portside dive door with stowable ladder serves to provide both convenience and safety.
- ▶ Bow compartment offers both an anchor with windlass and a telescoping ladder for beaching.

SPECS: LOA: 29'1" **BEAM:** 9'6" **DRAFT:** 1'9" **DRY WEIGHT:** 6,700 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** 12/3,911 lb. **FUEL CAPACITY:** 185 gal.

HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINES:** Twin 300 hp Mercury Verado V-8 **DRIVE/PROPS:** Outboards/Twin Mercury Eco EnerTia 16" x 20" 3-blade stainless steel **GEAR RATIOS:** 1.85:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 116 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 540 lb.

FISHING

Boston Whaler's new 280 Vantage takes dual-console family boats to new heights. Tech features that packed our tester included twin 300 hp Mercury Verado V-8s, joystick control, twin 12-inch Raymarine displays, VHF, AIS and radar, all integrated. Family features included a summer galley, electric head with holding tank, bunk in the starboard console, and tow points for water toys. The integrated hardtop offered shade and protection from rain.

Our test boat was owned by a family that keeps it busy. They love the forward

cockpit for boat rides, easy anchoring, and dropping the bow ladder at a sandbar. The port console's head pleases the husband. "People love it," he said. Even the owner's linebacker-size boating friend found he could use the 280 Vantage's head. "We love the three-way port lounge and use it a lot. Ditto the fold-down stern seat. We can stash two Yeti soft-side coolers under it." They optioned-up their boat's starboard utility center to the summer kitchen, replacing the sink with a grill.

"The portside cockpit swim door is a big success," he continued. "Our boys don't like being around the engines' propellers, even tilted up, so the side door is perfect."

There's plenty of power for towing and cruising, even with a couple of families, coolers, food and ice aboard. Merc's 300 Verados are silky-smooth torque monsters. With its 22-degree V-running bottom and sharp forefoot, our tester loped through 2- to 3-foot chop at 30 to 37 mph, with a top speed faster than most people will ever need (55.6 mph). The hardtop offers storage and rigging options for rod holders and

SPEED				EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
rpm	knots	mph	gph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level
1000	5.2	6.0	2.7	1.9	2.2	321.5	370.0	0	65
1500	7.1	8.2	5.5	1.3	1.5	215.7	248.2	1	71
2000	8.4	9.7	7.8	1.1	1.2	179.9	207.1	3	78
2500	10.9	12.6	10.3	1.1	1.2	177.0	203.7	5	82
3000	15.8	18.2	13.5	1.2	1.3	195.1	224.5	5	84
3500	25.9	29.8	18.3	1.4	1.6	235.6	271.1	6	85
4000	32.5	37.4	23.8	1.4	1.6	227.4	261.6	2	87
4500	37.2	42.8	34.1	1.1	1.3	181.6	209.0	2	88
5000	42.5	48.9	43.4	1.0	1.1	163.0	187.6	2	89
5500	47.2	54.3	48.0	1.0	1.1	163.7	188.4	2	90
5900	48.3	55.6	50.0	1.0	1.1	160.9	185.1	2	92

MOST ECONOMIC CRUISING SPEED

BOSTON WHALER
Edgewater, Florida; 877-294-5645; bostonwhaler.com

trolling lines. With the transom seat folded up and the bow cockpit cleared, there's space for multiple anglers to bottomfish, jig and cast lures to breaking fish while the skipper watches sonar and chart details.

Whaler's new 280 Vantage is a thoroughly 21st-century vessel, built with heirloom quality to serve families on active day cruises. Like all Boston Whalers, it's unsinkable and full of safety features. Access to fuel, wiring and plumbing systems for maintenance exhibits the Whaler design team's attention to details.



SCOUT 330 LXF

2021
BOATING
BOAT BUYERS
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**BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS**

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Scout's 330 LXF receives high marks for combining classic styling with advanced construction and innovation.
- ▶ Double berth inside the center console enables overnight trips.
- ▶ Loungers on the forward console and the bow invite guests to kick back and relax.
- ▶ Integrated full-height windshield protects the helm area from wind blast while underway.
- ▶ Transom platform is easy to traverse from side to side.



Price: \$414,602 (with twin Yamaha 425 XTos and Helm Master)

SPECS: LOA: 32'9" BEAM: 10'4" DRAFT (MAX): 2'3" DRY WEIGHT: 9,545 lb. (without power) SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY: Yacht Certified FUEL CAPACITY: 265 gal.
HOW WE TESTED: ENGINES: Twin 425 hp Yamaha 425 XTO DRIVE/PROPS: Outboard/Yamaha XTO Offshore 16 1/8" x 23" 3-blade stainless steel GEAR RATIO: 1.79:1 FUEL LOAD: 130 gal. CREW WEIGHT: 400 lb.

FISHING

The Scout 330 LXF brings a high level of luxury to the field of saltwater center-console fishing machines. Posh amenities such as twin high-back helm seats, comfy forward loungers, a retractable bow dining table, and a lounge on the forward console will delight cruising guests.

There's also Scout's undeniable reputation for style reflected in a gracefully sweeping sheer, Carolina-style bow flare, and classic tumblehome of the stern quarters—elements that will capture the attention of envious onlookers. Twin Yamaha 425 XTO outboards vault the 330

LXF to plane in 5 seconds, and from zero to 30 mph in 8.2 seconds. The 330 LXF tops out at over 66 mph.

You can expect precise, confident cornering at speed. The double-stepped hull lifts with little bow rise during hole shot, and knifes smoothly through rough seas while maintaining a near-level trim angle. Epoxy-infusion construction results in optimized weight and strength, and delivers a solid feel and long-term durability.

A hardtop integrates with the full-height tempered-glass windshield, side windows and the center console. An optional retractable rocket launcher holds five rods on the aft edge of the hardtop and tilts down electrically to allow deployment of a motorized sunshade.

A Yamaha CL7 display monitors the outboards and interfaces with the Yamaha Helm Master joystick system. A workstation abaft the helm seating can be equipped with either a grill or a mini fridge. It includes raw- and freshwater washdown spigots, as well as three tackle drawers. A Yeti Tundra 65 slides out from underneath.

The transom bulkhead includes six rod holders, a 21-gallon covered livewell in the port quarter, and a flip-out transom bench. Twin insulated 132-quart in-sole fish lockers bracket the aft deck. A transom gate in the starboard quarter offers access to the swim platform, and a beefy inward-opening door is built into the port side of the spacious cockpit.

The 330 LXF's step-down center-console interior offers 6 feet, 3 inches of headroom, an electric-flush marine toilet, and a 6-foot-long berth for two adults.

	SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION	
	rpm	knots	mph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level
1000	5.39	6.20	4.00	1.35	1.55	321	370	0	68
1500	7.39	8.50	5.90	1.25	1.44	299	344	0	72
2000	8.34	9.60	9.40	0.89	1.02	212	244	1	76
2500	10.60	12.20	15.70	0.68	0.78	161	185	2	82
3000	19.38	22.30	18.20	1.06	1.23	254	292	3	85
3500	28.85	33.20	22.20	1.30	1.50	310	357	3	87
4000	34.24	39.40	28.90	1.18	1.36	283	325	2	88
4500	40.06	46.10	37.10	1.08	1.24	258	296	2	92
5000	45.01	51.80	46.20	0.97	1.12	232	267	1	95
5500	50.75	58.40	58.90	0.86	0.99	205	236	1	97
6100	57.70	66.40	76.60	0.75	0.87	180	207	1	102

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

SCOUT BOATS
Summerville, South Carolina; 843-821-0068; scoutboats.com

PHOTOS: COURTESY SCOUT BOATS



COBIA

330 DUAL CONSOLE

2021

BOATING

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**BOATING
BUYERS
SPOTLIGHT**



Price: \$302,350 (with test power)

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Starboard dive door comes with a telescoping ladder for easy reboarding and keeps swimmers away from the engine props.
- ▶ The 54.5 square feet of cockpit space ensures crew has plenty of room to fish or lounge.
- ▶ Standard bow boarding ladder is a great feature for beaching at the local sandbar.
- ▶ Nine-piece cushion filler set converts the bow area into a cozy conversation pit or a full tanning bed.

SPECS: LOA: 33'6" **BEAM:** 10'9" **DRAFT (MAX):** 2'3" **DRY WEIGHT:** 9,981 lb. (with test power) **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** Yacht Certified **FUEL CAPACITY:** 275 gal. **AVAILABLE POWER:** Twin Yamaha outboards to 850 hp total

FISHING

The new Cobia 330 Dual Console meets all the check points that a serious angler looks for in a boat. But these days that's not always enough. Want your hardcore fishing boat to have enough amenities to entertain the crew when the lines are in? The 330 has you covered there too.

Let's start with the fishy features. The 330 has a wide-open cockpit with 54.5 square feet of space, which is ample room for working a trolling spread or fighting a fish after the hookup. There's a bait-prep station behind the port console seating

and a 28-gallon livewell in the transom with a clear acrylic lid. Both the 70-gallon in-sole fish box to port and the 45-gallon one to starboard are insulated with optional macerators to handle your catch. You can upgrade the outriggers for the T-top.

When it's time to entertain, the 330 sports a plethora of standard family-friendly amenities. A nine-piece filler set turns the bow area into either a lounge with wraparound seating and an electrically actuated bow table, or a full-on sun pad. The main cockpit features a working galley abaft the helm to starboard, with a standard fridge and sink, and the option to add a grill. Flip-out jump seats behind the galley in the transom and along the port gunwale can convert the cockpit from a fish-fighting arena to a conversation pit. The portside console hides a head with a standard electric pump-out toilet.

The standard power package for the 330 DC is a pair of Yamaha F300s that provide plenty of muscle to get this boat up and running. However, upgrading to twin V-8 5.6L 425 XTO Offshore outboards will push the boat over 60 mph,



COBIA BOATS
Fort Pierce, Florida; 772-460-5258; cobiaboats.com

according to test data provided by Cobia. In the same test data, the boat enjoyed its best fuel economy at 3,500 rpm, with a recorded speed of 32.3 mph while burning 21.5 gph for a 1.5 mpg rate. Those are good numbers for a boat capable of running far and wide to find the fish.

So, whether it's a full day of fishing or a day of relaxing you're after, the 330's vacuum-infused construction and offshore-ready hull—with a 21-degree transom deadrise—ensure a smooth ride whether running inside or outside the inlet.



PHOTOS: COURTESY, COBIA BOATS

VIAGGIO

BY MISTY HARBOR



MEET DIAMANTE

At Misty Harbor we've been **building pontoon boats for over 30 years** and for 2021 underwent a **complete redesign** from the deck up. The look of our boats was so **drastically improved** that we felt the new line needed its own name. After having incorporated **bold angled lines** throughout, the design resembling a "V" shape, we were please to name the new line Viaggio!

VIAGGIO by Misty Harbor
[vee-ah-G-oh] (verb), the Italian word for Journey or Voyage

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GRADY-WHITE FREEDOM 335

2021
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HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Freedom 335 is completely self-bailing; all the fish boxes, sinks and decks drain overboard by force of gravity.
- ▶ Recessed freshwater shower on the transom can be used for cleaning reels, or for a quick rinse-off after watersports.
- ▶ Cushioned cabin/changing room is separate from the head compartment, and both can be air-conditioned.
- ▶ Beat the heat—a power-retractable SureShade extends to cover the entire aft cockpit with a Sunbrella canvas.

S
BOATING
BUYERS
SPOTLIGHT



Price: \$762,500 (with twin 425 hp Yamaha XTO Offshore outboards and Helm Master EX)

SPECS: LOA: 33'6" **BEAM:** 11'7" **DRAFT (MAX):** 2'2" **DRY WEIGHT:** 13,090 lb. (without power) **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** Yacht Certified **FUEL CAPACITY:** 293 gal.
AVAILABLE POWER: Triple outboards to 900 hp total

FISHING

Designed to be a do-it-all dayboat, Grady-White's Freedom 335 is a wide-beam dual console bred for the coastal environment. From fishing to watersports, to cruising to rafting up, this 33-foot-6-inch boat is ready for action.

The basic layout features a spacious bow seating area and an open cockpit with convertible seating that stows away to clear the deck for fishing. Angling amenities include a 230-quart insulated fish box below the starboard bow seat, a 166-quart insulated box at the transom and, also in the transom, a 32-gallon lighted livewell,

plus four rod holders and six horizontal rod racks. Grady-White's overboard-draining boxes and cockpit, plus both pressurized raw-water and freshwater washdowns, ensure that cleanup is easy.

If angling is not your thing, those fish boxes make dandy coolers. For entertaining, a wet bar abaft the helm seat features a refrigerator, sink, grill, storage drawers and trash bin. The double-wide helm seat is electromechanically adjustable. A polished stainless-steel wheel graces the helm below a dash panel large enough for 15-inch multifunctional displays and more.

Use of the space within the consoles is a real highlight. To port is a compact cabin, with a slide-out berth, stowage, and room for a quick change of clothes. Inside the starboard console is a spacious head compartment with stand-up headroom, plus a shower, sink, storage drawers and bulk storage. Both console areas have beautiful cherry accents, and cherry and holly soles, and both can be air-conditioned.

The standard hardtop is supported by a painted aluminum frame. It covers the



GRADY-WHITE BOATS
Greenville, North Carolina; 252-752-2111; gradywhite.com

helm and companion areas, and incorporates grab rails, a storage net, LED spreader lights, tri-colored (red, blue and white) LED recessed lights, two hatches, four side-mounted rod holders, and outrigger plates.

The Grady-White SeaV2 hull offers a solid, smooth ride, with 20 degrees of deadrise. Power options include Yamaha outboards up to a triple F300 package, and Helm Master EX full-mobility joystick control comes standard. Our only question is: What can't you do aboard a Grady-White Freedom 335?



PHOTOS: COURTESY GRADY-WHITE BOATS

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NORTHCOAST 315 HT

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Price: **\$293,942** (with twin Yamaha F250s)

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ The 316-gallon fuel tank gives this boat a possible range of 500 miles, according to NorthCoast.
- ▶ Boat comes standard with both a 26-gallon and 19-gallon livewell built into the full transom, so you can keep baits separated.
- ▶ Boat can sleep four people belowdecks and has a full head.
- ▶ Combines classic New England styling with modern construction and amenities.

SPECS: LOA: 35'0" **BEAM:** 10'2" **DRAFT (MAX):** 1'9" **DRY WEIGHT:** 12,212 lb. (with power) **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** Yacht Certified **FUEL CAPACITY:** 316 gal.
AVAILABLE POWER: Twin outboards to 600 hp total

NorthCoast's 315 HT is the builder's flagship cabin model, a boat that combines traditional New England style with modern build techniques and amenities. It has a pure New England profile, with a fully enclosed helm and a large cockpit. The 315 HT can sleep four people belowdecks and is versatile enough to take out for a coastal cruise or an offshore fishing expedition.

The 315 HT comes standard with a pair of 250 hp Yamahas, but it is rated for up to twin 300s on the transom. NorthCoast's provided numbers with the max

horsepower show a top speed of 59 mph. At its optimum cruising speed of 31 mph, it reportedly burns 18.5 gph. With its 316-gallon fuel tank, the boat can handle long runs between ports before needing a refill.

The 315 HT is made to handle sporty New England offshore conditions, with a true deep-V hull that tapers to 23 degrees of deadrise at the transom. For fishing, it features two insulated 58-gallon fish boxes—with macerators—built into the cockpit sole. The full transom holds two livewells; one is 26 gallons and the other 19 gallons. Each cockpit gunwale sports two stainless-steel rod holders and a cup holder. The hardtop features an additional six rod holders. There's also an inboard-swinging tuna door in the port gunwale. A cockpit tackle station opens to reveal slots that can hold up to six tackle trays. A raw-water washdown system and a freshwater one come standard.

But there's more to the 315 HT than just fishing. A cockpit grill and pull-out refrigerator come standard, so the food-and-beverage part of entertaining is covered. Two aft-facing cockpit jump seats



NORTHCOAST BOATS
Bristol, Rhode Island; 888-802-2132; northcoastboats.com

combine with a 60-inch foldout transom bench so the crew can rest comfortably at anchor or while underway. In addition to overnighting capabilities, there's a separate head with an electric-flush toilet with a 29-gallon tank, as well as a vanity and a shower nozzle.

All of these amenities, along with the 315 HT's reported 500-mile cruising range (under the right conditions), make for a boat that lets you follow the bite up and down the coast, and you can also get plenty of rest and relaxation on the way.



PHOTOS: COURTESY, NORTHCOAST BOATS



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INVINCIBLE 39 OPEN FISHERMAN

2021
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**BOATING
CERTIFIED
TEST
RESULTS**



Price: \$633,325

HIGH POINTS

- ▶ Dual lounge on the front of the console was comfortably contoured.
- ▶ Hardtop and structure are rock-solid, and supports are integrated into the console.

SEE THE VIDEO

To watch our video review of the 39 Open Fisherman, scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/bbg21/invincible39openfisherman.



FISHING

SPECS: LOA: 39'2" **BEAM:** 11'0" **DRAFT (MAX):** NA **DRY WEIGHT:** 12,000 lb. **SEAT/WEIGHT CAPACITY:** Yacht Certified **FUEL CAPACITY:** 550 gal.
HOW WE TESTED: **ENGINES:** Triple Mercury Verado 400 hp **DRIVE/PROPS:** Outboard/Revolution 4 21" 4-blade stainless steel **GEAR RATIO:** 1.75:1 **FUEL LOAD:** 100 gal. **CREW WEIGHT:** 400 lb.

The Invincible 39 Open Fisherman rides like it's machined from billet aluminum, corners like a Formula race car, and fishes like an osprey.

Two livewells are fed by three 2,000 gph pumps, an 80-gallon in-deck livewell and a 75-gallon transom. Four fish boxes collect the catch, and tackle centers on the leaning post hold everything you'll need. We lost count of rod holders—there were more than a dozen on the center console, and rod-tip holes in the hardtop accommodated them. There were way more than a dozen on the gunwales, plus two rocket

launchers in the hardtop, undergunwale hangers, and an option for a tuna-stick rack in the center console. At the helm, two 18-inch Garmin displays boast chirp sonar and chart plotting.

Cockpit space is expansive thanks to the ideal positioning of the leaning post and the broad 11-foot beam. Jump seats on each side of the transom livewell, a dual lounge on the console's front, and the triple-wide helm seat (Llebroc seats are optional) ensure seven anglers can be comfortably seated.

Getting to the fishing grounds is easy with the 1,200 hp provided from three 400 Mercury Verado outboards. And with over 500 gallons of fuel, the boat provides plenty of range.

Conveniences come from small things, such as a fiddle rail on the helm for keeping gear in place, or multiple cellphone charge points on the dash, and rope and hose stowage in the gunwales.

Long-term ownership involves maintenance and updating, and the 39 was designed for the long-term owner. In the head compartment, a hatch grants access

SPEED			EFFICIENCY				OPERATION		
rpm	knots	mph	naut. mpg	stat. mpg	n. mi. range	s. mi. range	angle	sound level	
1000	6.5	7.5	3.8	1.7	2.0	833.5	959.2	0	69
1500	8.7	10.0	6.9	1.3	1.4	612.1	704.3	2	71
2000	11.8	13.6	12.9	0.9	1.1	445.2	512.4	4	75
2500	17.9	20.6	17.3	1.0	1.2	502.9	578.7	2	82
3000	22.1	25.4	23.6	0.9	1.1	454.5	523.1	3	83
3500	29.2	33.6	27.7	1.1	1.2	512.3	589.5	2	84
4000	36.0	41.4	34.3	1.0	1.2	509.7	586.6	2	86
4500	41.7	48.0	43.1	1.0	1.1	470.3	541.3	1	87
5000	49.4	56.8	52.8	0.9	1.1	454.3	522.8	1	89
5500	56.2	64.7	68.1	0.8	1.0	401.2	461.7	0	89
6000	57.2	65.8	69.2	0.6	0.7	311.5	358.5	0	92
6300	65.2	75.0	106.0	0.6	0.7	298.8	343.9	0	93

MOST ECONOMICAL CRUISING SPEED

INVINCIBLE BOATS
Opa-locka, Florida; 305-685-2704; invincibleboats.com

to fuse blocks, the NMEA 2000 network line, and all the electronics, their connections and wiring. Circuit breakers are located below each circuit's switch on the dash.

The bilge access is equally organized and generous. Fuel filters, bilge pumps, seacocks and a sea chest are in plain sight.

The 39 Open Fisherman is easy to fish, steady on the water, and quick to the fishing grounds. Holy cow! What else would you need?








PHOTOS: COURTESY INVINCIBLE BOATS

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BOATING[®]

By Kevin Falvey

VOLVO PENTA'S NEW DIESEL ENGINES AND DRIVES

Upgrading reliability and connectivity, and lowering the cost of ownership.

Leveraging manufacturing expertise and command of technology, Volvo Penta debuts several new marine propulsion systems, including an upgraded D4 and D6 diesel engine, a new DPI sterndrive, an upgraded IPS drive, and a new generation of its Electronic Vessel Control (EVC) system,

single 320 hp D4-320 DPI sterndrive, powering a Jeanneau Prestige 460 with twin D6 IPS 650s onto plane, or spinning a Galeon 430 HTC powered by twin 480 hp D6 straight-shaft inboards in close-quarters maneuvers.

THE ENGINES Volvo Penta builds the 3.7-liter D4 (150 to 320 hp) and the 5.4-liter D6 (300 to 480 hp) diesel engines for marine duty, rather than marinizing truck engines. Both offer the long-heralded Volvo Penta advantage of existing as part of a complete propulsion system from key switch to prop, whether utilized in inboard, sterndrive, water-jet or IPS variants. This makes for one-stop shopping when a boat owner needs parts and service.



SCAN ME

Scan this tag or visit boatingmag.com/volvoauto for info about Volvo Penta's assisted maneuvering.

all of which may change the way boaters discuss and compare marine power. These new marine propulsion systems tout cost-of-ownership advantages, and Volvo Penta goes beyond materials selection, revealing detailed manufacturing techniques to engender confidence in long-lasting reliability.

To prove these points, Volvo Penta flew me, along with a corps of other marine journalists, to its Krossholmen, Sweden, test center and proving grounds, on the shores of the Kattegat, an arm of the North Sea near the Danish Straits. There, I ran the new engines and drives in a variety of craft, with the engineers who designed them at my side and at my disposal. I came away impressed, whether throttling hard into the chop from the helm of a Sargo 28 powered by a

The engines are said to burn between 1 and 7 percent less fuel than their antecedent generation and cost some 10 percent less to own. When asked just how Volvo Penta achieved these milestones, the engineering team answered directly and with copious examples. To wit, the common rail fuel-injection system now features higher pressure—2,000 bar, which is 25 percent higher than the previous 1,600 bar. Controlled by a new engine management

system, this enables more precise calibration and control of injection parameters, so the engines run even smoother and are more fuel-efficient. While other details—such as a fuel filter with a sensor, and a new a diamond-like carbon (DLC) coating on the piston pin that reduces friction and increases durability—proved cool, I was really wowed by some insight into the actual manufacturing environment. Utilizing practices such as pressurized assembly spaces to eliminate dust and grit in the air ensures the mating internal surfaces of moving parts start off with the best chance for long-term reliability. I mean, a boater shouldn't underestimate the deleterious effects of an errant mote or shaving at 2,800 rpm—suffice to say, so-called “clean manufacturing” methods offer concrete merits. And the new boost/charge air system, with its larger supercharger and smoother handoff between supercharger and turbo, resulted



The newest generation of Volvo Penta's Electronic Vessel Control (EVC), EVC2 offers faster computing and improved diagnostics, as well as a sleek, gray look for the joystick and control box.

PHOTOS: COURTESY VOLVO PENTA



EASY BOAT OWNERSHIP

With the IPS 10 coupled to a D6 engine, gear oil can be changed from inside the boat.

in torque I could feel from the helm of the test boats.

Cost of ownership? Again, Volvo Penta engineering cites real items that a boater can relate to. For instance, the oil-change interval now stands at two years, compared to the prior standard of one year. Furthermore, a new gas-oil separator spins at 7,000 rpm to obviate the need for a replaceable crankcase oil filter. Examples such as these and more don't live in isolation; they achieve the stated goals in concert with the clean-build process, the materials selection, and improvements in engine control and monitoring offered by the latest generation of EVC.

EVC The new EVC serves as the electronic backbone that controls and integrates the propulsion system into the whole boat. In line with Volvo Penta's "easy boating" mantra, this generation of EVC helps boaters perform a variety of seemingly disparate functions,

from docking the boat with the joystick to ensuring the engines are running properly with a new feature called On Board Maintenance Assistant. This informs owners of service dates, and keeps track of past servicing and diagnostic information with a real-time clock.

EVC also prefigures the boat for imminently anticipated future services, such as remote diagnostics and worldwide up-loading of upgrades. Stay tuned.

The benefits EVC extends to sterndrive owners tie in with the reduced cost of ownership and maintenance, Volvo Penta promises.

NEW DPI DRIVE Steer-by-wire is now standard on both single and twin installations of the new DPI drive—eliminating the need for hydraulic fluid at the helm and making available EVC features such as Low Speed (trolling, no-wake zones, etc.) and Dynamic Positioning System (DPS) to a wider range of applications. Yeah man,

sterndrive boats can now be steered with a system similar to those found in high-end cars.

A new hydraulic clutch (so, some hydraulics do remain) replaces the cone clutch. Together with electric steering, joystick docking functionality is improved. It also enables DPS to be introduced for boats with twin sterndrives, which automatically maintains a boat's heading and position, even in strong currents or wind, conditions that tested true for me at Kroscholmen. This makes it ideal when preparing to dock, holding position for certain fishing applications, waiting on a bridge opening, and more.

There are new prop seals, fewer consumable service parts and, like the engines, longer service intervals, all of which bolster the claim of easier boating with less cost of ownership.

IPS 10 The IPS drive series designation is 10, but will generally be marketed as IPS 600 or 650 when mated with a D6 engine

of 440 or 480 hp. This latest iteration of IPS is manufactured using new tooling, even closer tolerances than before, and a work-hardened shell. Notably, Volvo Penta installs both pressure and temperature sensors on the gear-oil filters, to provide better monitoring and service. Additionally, gear oil can now be changed from inside the

The squared-off tips of Volvo Penta propellers inhibit cavitation.

boat, which saves boat owners money because they don't have to schedule a short haul. New prop-shaft seals, like those on the DPI sterndrive, better protect the gears.

Volvo Penta's latest offerings proved innovative, with tangible results supporting the stated benefits. They deserve close consideration from boat buyers.

TOUGH!

A new prop-shaft seal, input-bearing carrier, upper shaft and bearings are now more durable.



By Kevin Falvey

FIVE YEARS OF FORWARD DRIVE

For boaters who want to wakesurf.

Few things in recreational boating lit up social media the way images of Volvo Penta's Forward Drive did when it was first introduced five years ago. (Actually, images of Forward Drive still draw loads of comments.) Forward-facing propellers are like the Kardashians of recreational boating, garnering commentary from far and wide.

"What happens when you hit the bottom?" "Oh, that will be in the shop a lot!" "What's the point?"

Of course, five years later, we know that Forward Drive has proven itself reliable. Thousands of units have been installed, and more than 50 models of boats currently offer with this innovative system. What the internet pundits got right was to question the reason for the creation of such a unique marine propulsion system in the first place. So, just what was the impetus for the creation of Volvo Penta's Forward Drive?

"Forward Drive started as napkin scratches. We noted the clear trend in popularity of wakesurfing boats and wanted to participate," says Jens Bering, vice president

of marine sales for Volvo Penta of the Americas.

For those who may not know, wakesurfing has exploded in popularity. It is an easy-to-do, low-impact watersport that both young and old, and athletic and nonathletic crew can enjoy. It also happens just 6 or 8 feet off the transom, so guests aboard can gab with whoever is surfing, making it more social than skiing or wakeboarding. But that proximity means any boat with exposed propellers—i.e., an outboard or sterndrive—is potentially dangerous to surf behind, which relegated wakesurfing to inboard-powered boats. At least, it did until Volvo Penta capitalized on a gap in the marketplace using its own engineering expertise and legacy.

"We wanted to put our own spin on wakesurfing," said Bering during an episode of *Boating* Roundtable, on *Boating's* YouTube channel. "Using technology we are really good at—Duoprop and

FORWARD THINKERS

Forward-facing, contra-rotating propeller sets are not new to Volvo Penta.

IPS (Volvo Penta's forward-facing, dual-prop inboard propulsion system)—that's where our minds went in creating a more versatile solution." By turning the drive forward like its IPS drives, Volvo Penta eliminated the safety objection to surfing behind a stern-drive-powered boat and opened up the world of wakesurfing to bowrider boats—and thus, a wider variety of boaters.

Inboard watersports boats are good at what they do. If one is looking for competition-level wakesurfing waves of the largest size that pack the absolute most power, and looking for the most control over the shape of those waves, then an inboard tow boat is the way to go. But for boaters who like to wakesurf but also need a boat with other qualities, Forward Drive can prove more versatile. For

instance, a bowrider with Forward Drive and a ballast system can create and shape waves that are fine for many boaters; though, again, perhaps not to the specs of true experts. But the runabout-boat type typically offers a softer-riding, deeper-V hull; higher speed and efficiency for the same power; and a drive that kicks up if it strikes something, or that can be trimmed up for better efficiency or to reduce draft. Also, a bowrider's deeper hull allows fitting an enclosed head that can make long days on larger bodies of water more comfortable. Forward Drive allows boaters of a more generalist bent than hardcore watersports enthusiasts to enjoy wakesurfing as one part of an overall boating program. Forward Drive is not so much for wakesurfers as much as it's for boaters who want to wakesurf.

Many thousands of boaters running more than 50 models of boats seem to agree. Happy fifth anniversary, Forward Drive!



SCAN ME

See the *Boating* Roundtable episode in which the full interview appears: <https://youtu.be/CwC2c9mURvA7>.

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BELT AND SUSPENDERS

When towing a boat, it's best to double up.

I'm not usually a belt-and-suspenders kind of guy. I figure, why double up? One or the other will usually do the trick, and I've been known to occasionally go without them altogether—which helps explain why I'm a father of five. But a recent file added to the “Learn from Chuck's Mistakes” folder has convinced me to always double up on security when towing a boat.

There was a hint of conspiracy in his voice when my good friend Chuck Larson called on that fateful fall day.

“I'm gonna buy that Sea Nymph from Tim, but I need your help when I pick it up,” Chuck said, speaking in a half-whisper from what I guessed was his garage.

I already knew about the 14-foot Sea Nymph Backtroller, which Spellman's Marine owner Tim Doberstein had been trying to sell for the estate of the late Buster Knutson; it's a nice aluminum fishing boat, which I also knew Chuck didn't really need. So, he must have swung a deal with Tim.

“There's no trailer with the Sea Nymph, so I'm going to borrow one from Tim just to get it home. I need you to help unload it,” Chuck said, now

in a full whisper. “I'm going to put it under the *blue tarp*.”

Now this was all making sense. Chuck keeps certain items, those things he doesn't really want to explain to his wife, under a very large blue tarp in the back corner of his property—things like snowmobiles and engine blocks and a Ford 8N tractor. Chuck started with a modest tarp, and as the collection grew, he simply invested in larger tarps. Chuck thinks his wife has never looked under the tarp. She just sees the blue tarp off in the distance. It's the perfect camouflage.

Of course, passage from the road to the blue tarp could be observed

if his wife were home, and Chuck figured he had a 30-minute window to complete the mission. I arrived at Spellman's just as Chuck dropped the trailer onto his hitch ball.

“I just got a text... She's at the store,” Chuck said. “Let's roll!”

One block east of Spellman's, New York Avenue intersects Algoma Boulevard at about a 30-degree angle, which makes for a poor sightline to the south. Anxiously waiting at the stop sign, I could see Chuck start to go and then hesitate, waiting for traffic, before he finally gunned it and raced across the intersection. Chuck, his truck and the trailer crossed Algoma Boulevard, but they left the Sea Nymph behind. I slammed on my imaginary brakes as the little boat crashed to the pavement.

You would think that two grown men infused with adrenaline could just pick up a Sea Nymph and set it back on the trailer. But we couldn't budge the boat, and the trailer winch was no help because the cast-aluminum bow eye was fractured, which is why the boat had slid right off the bunks. The belt, as it were, failed. And Chuck had not bothered with the suspenders—he didn't take steps to secure the boat with transom tie-downs.

Eventually, Tim drove his fork lift right down the street and set the boat back onto the trailer. The gathered crowd cheered and posted to social media. The newspaper photographer got his photo. Fleet Farm does not sell a blue tarp big enough for this cover-up. And so, we took the boat to my place. And placed it under my blue tarp.

You would think that two grown men infused with adrenaline could just pick up a Sea Nymph and set it back on the trailer.

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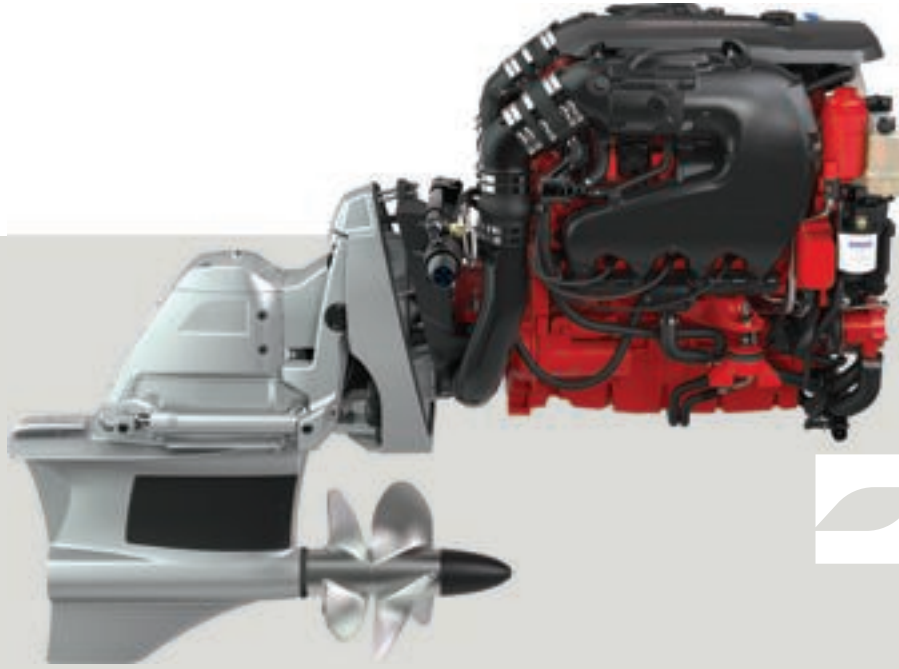
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