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**HAINES SIGNATURE 580BRX FUN RUNNER YAMAHAS RIVIERA 72 FLYBRIDGE
DIRK HARTOG ADVENTURE MALIBU POWERS UP SUMMER FISHING FAVOURITES**

SWEET DREAMER

Luxury cruiser builder Riviera takes the flybridge sports motor yacht concept to another level with its new 72.





Having slept a night aboard the new Riviera 72 Sports Motor Yacht in the name of research, before a blissful sunrise dash along the NSW coast from God's country to the Garden of Eden, I can earnestly report that the for'ard mattress is a trifle too firm for my liking.

Honestly, that's the level of finicky pickiness required to find fault in Riviera's otherwise peerless – and near flawless – flagship.

In every other regard, the VIP stateroom pampers like a first-class lounge. And in every other way, the vessel impresses with its performance and sophistication, as world-class motoryacht amenity meets sportscruiser agility.

Essentially, the 72-footer is the stretched-limo version of the Riviera 68 SMY launched at Sydney's 2017 boat show. Along with an extra 4sqm of cockpit space, it gets a 2000lt upgrade in fuel tankage and larger MAN diesels, however the two models are virtually identical from the engineroom bulkhead forward.

Of the 18 sales secured in the months since debut, the split is 60-40 in the 72's favour, despite a price variance of around \$630,000. Several have gone to NZ, one to Spain and onwards to Malta via Africa's northern tip, and even the test boat headed to Fort Lauderdale upon completion of its local demo duties.

BUILT FOR TWO

Apparently, most owners are couples who run the boat themselves, having progressed from other Rivs or crossed the motoryacht divide in search of a 'real boat' that can cruise home waters then spend winter in the Whitsundays or the South Pacific, for example.

the vessel impresses with its performance and sophistication



Above: A perfect dawn on the morning of our review heralded wonderful things to come

Right: The Riviera 72's expansive flybridge.



Right: Elegant, spacious living in the palatial saloon.

Below: Full-beam master stateroom decked out in the Classic layout.

I defy anyone not to see palm trees in their future – such is the cruising capability

As I opined in my review of the 68, I defy anyone not to see palm trees in their future – such is the cruising capability and liveability.

In conceiving the blueprints, Riviera commissioned world-leading superyacht architect Frank Mulder, while also consulting seasoned owners on interior matters. The latter teased out motoryacht attributes like a pantograph door leading to walk-around sidedecks, a foredeck that transforms into entertainment central, mezzanine dining and a gourmet galley.

Against any measure, the 72's layout offers superior onboard living to a conventional enclosed flybridge. Bridge clearance is akin to two-and-a-half storeys and the beam of 6m is carried well aft, allowing a huge saloon and up to four cabins on the accommodation deck – perfect for those with a tribe of kids and grandchildren.

Classic and Grand Presidential options are offered for the full-beam master suite with king

bed. The Classic has an en suite to starboard, while the Presidential places it in the starboard fore quarter and adds a private sitting area with breakfast table.

The port guest cabin features twin singles that can form a double as the inboard bed slides across at the touch of a button. My VIP stateroom had the walk-around queen-size bed, private en suite and locker. There's an additional pull-out double mattress incorporated in the flybridge's sofa.

HEAVENLY HELM

With its twin leather seats and centreline wheel, the helm station is a sight to behold. Skippers have three 22in Garmin Glass Cockpit screens and MAN gauges overhead. Riviera's clever CZone digital system places electrical management at your fingertips, both for switching and problem-solving.

Back on deck, the mezzanine offers covered seating and eating for 10, with subdued mood





lighting available in a rainbow of colours and, I admit, a steady supply of ice-cold beers. Drop-leaf tables are fed by the nearby cockpit barbecue and aft-placed galley, plus there's a bar table and stools facing the hopper window.

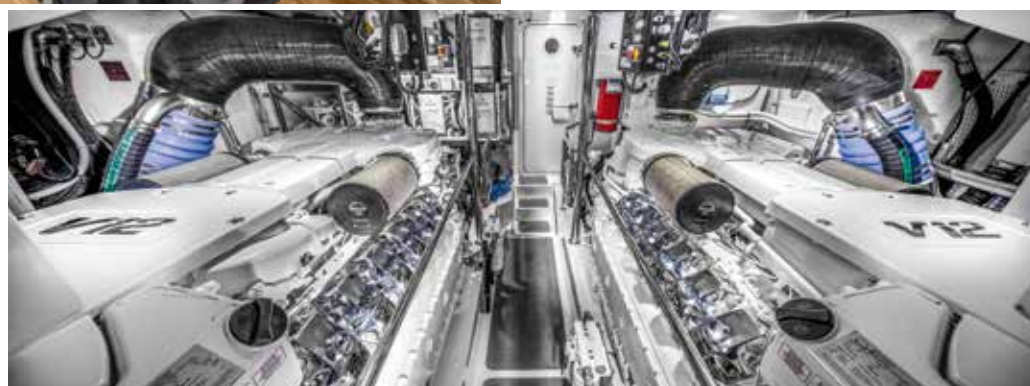
To port is a stairwell descending past a washer-dryer cabinet to a day head with shower. The adjacent crewcab has a single berth, beneath which is a workbench, although owner drivers may use this space for fishing, watersports or dive gear.



Top: Flybridge mezzanine adds another level for luxurious entertaining.

Above: The skipper has full management at their fingertips.

Right: The gleaming all-white engine room.



From here, you can directly enter the beast's heart, plus there's a hatch incorporated in the cockpit wetbar. The 1900hp MANs are a sight to behold in their gleaming all-white environs, connecting to vee-drives and oil-lubricated Seatorque bearing units.

ELEGANT ENGINEERING

Upon starting the big V12s in the hush of pre-dawn, prior to our delivery voyage, I began to fully appreciate how elegantly refined the engineering is. It's scarcely audible from the bridge, with running speeds producing just 60dB.

The inherent torque is phenomenal – more than 6200Nm per side – yet with the progressive hydraulic thrusters you can delicately control close-quarters manoeuvring with a light twist of the joystick.

An idle speed of 700rpm brings 8.2 knots (15.2km/h) – giving a 3000-mile cruising range from the 9000lt tanks. Once you plant the throttles, though, it's like dumping the clutch on a supercar. In fact, with a clear runway, the 72 nearly blows your mind with its ability to pop up on the plane and accelerate.

Turbos kick in early and you're doing 20 knots (37km/h) after 10 seconds, and 30 knots (55.6km/h) in less than 20 seconds ... except speed perception in the bridge is totally diminished.

Wide-open rpm is 2350 for 35 knots (64.8km/h) and 680lt/h, while the sweet spot is around 1700rpm for 22 knots (40.7km/h), consuming 350lt/h in total. The lesser-powered 68, by comparison, achieved 22 knots at 1850rpm for a fuel burn of 345lt/h and 31 knots (57.5km/h) at maximum revs.

That additional four feet of running surface is particularly handy if you're carrying weight aft, such as a jetski on the boarding platform,



That additional four feet of running surface is particularly handy

although most buyers will generally set the auto-tab function and let the Humphree Interceptors optimise the angle for maximum speed and efficiency.

Mulder's tank-tested hull naturally runs quite level, and it tracks superbly thanks to oversized rudders. With a finer entry than some smaller Rivs, there's no slapping, just slicing, and no slowing or slewing through high-speed turns. Its helm remains beautifully light.

NO ROCK 'N' ROLL

The test boat sported a Seakeeper gyro, which operated during our time offshore, although stability is excellent, regardless of speed.

As the inky pall of night gave way to a crisp sunrise, casting a golden glow over the whale highway stretching before us, it was impossible not to feel the pure joy of being aboard. Throttles set to 24 knots (44.5km/h), and bow pointed towards the distant hills of Newcastle, we quickly left beautiful Port Stephens in our wake and settled into the gentle cadence of offshore life.

Time slows, as you feel like you're travelling at 10 knots, yet it passes all too quickly. Before

I knew it, I was dismounting on a city wharf with pillow tucked under my arm and a heavy heart.

I reckon buyers will sleep easy, knowing that this dreamboat's \$5.2 million price tag (as tested) is genuinely indicative of the construction quality and technological excellence. It had instantly become a firm favourite.

And on that point, if you wanted to make the innerspring mattress softer to suit your personal comfort level, they can add a double layer of latex ... [CM](#)

RIVIERA 72 SPORTS MOTOR YACHT	
Length:	23.68m overall
Hull length:	22.02m
Beam:	6m
Maximum draft:	1.95m
Dry weight:	54,595kg
Fuel capacity:	9000lt
Water:	850lt
Engines (as tested):	2x 1900hp MAN V12
Base price:	\$4.63 million
Price (as tested):	\$5.19 million
More information: Riviera Australia, tel (07) 5502 5555, web: riviera.com.au	