

Riviera 505 SW

A STYLISH AND VERSATILE CRUISER WITH A UNIQUE MEZZANINE.



by Capt. Arnie Hammerman

THE RIVIERA 505 SUV is the fifth in the company's series of popular sedans derived from flybridge sportfish boats. SUVs eliminate the upper level, removing stairs and ladders to keep the driver conveniently in the salon with everyone else. The cockpits of SUVs are ideal for fishing but also great for entertaining or for relaxing close to the water. Many Riviera owners are focused on cruising, so design refinements have enhanced cruise-ability. In addition to livewells, SUV cockpits have barbeque grills, fridges, icemakers, sinks, seating and plenty of storage.

The new Riviera 505 SUV adds elements like twin transom doors that open fully to connect the large swim platform, which can be augmented with yacht rails and an optional lift system. The feature that I found I liked the most, and that really sets the 505 SUV apart from previous models and the competition, is the semi-enclosed raised mezzanine.





The perfect balance of indoors and out

"It feels like a porch," I found myself saying as I sat on the mezzanine of the new Riviera 505 SUV. I was there with Riviera's Owner and Chairman Rodney Longhurst and the company's Brand and Communications Director Stephen Milne. The 63.51-foot mezzanine, a few steps up from the cockpit, provides a cozy transitional space between the salon and the cockpit. The hardtop has electrically activated sun hatches above, windows and clears on the sides that can enclose the space but also allow for it to be opened to the air. As I sat comfortably on one of the twin upholstered lounges, I reminisced about my childhood home outside of Chicago, where I spent many warm summer nights sitting on our screened porch. That feeling of protection and enclosure — while being connected to the sights, sounds and open air of the outdoors — is special. Riviera nailed this feeling on the 505 SUV.

"We added additional elements to transition the boat closer to our Sport Yacht Series," says Milne. "The styling remains SUV, and the cockpit near the water level still works well for fishing; but additional cruising amenities like the mezzanine give our owners the best of both worlds."

The definition of spacious and airy

A pop-up window along with a stainless steel and glass slider connect the mezzanine to the galley and salon. The main deck is one level from the mezzanine all the way clear to the windshield. This creates a large, interconnected living area that I really liked. It could be opened throughout or separated into individual zones. Hand-varnished Walnut gives the interior a rich, contemporary look. The wood covers extensive drawers in the galley, and Cherry and Oak are also options. Solid counters host a Miele electric cooktop; a deep, stainless-steel sink; and a convection oven/microwave below. Drawers can be customized for versatility: Some are refrigerators, some are freezers and there's a dishwasher drawer option.

The salon is bright and open with multiple seating areas, an ottoman you can move around, a folding dining table and a flat-screen TV. A recessed varnished wood channel in the ceiling with a stainless grab rail looks great and demonstrates Riviera's understanding and concern for safe operation. Twin adjustable Recaro helm seats are comfortable, and they give the driver clear visibility. The helm provides easy access to all controls, including two Garmin 17-inch glass bridge multi-function displays. Personally, I would prefer if the IPS joystick was placed

adjacent to the throttles. A large sunroof overhead and opening side windows deliver ventilation when not running heat or air conditioning.

Speed with (assisted) balance

The Riviera SUV handled well while cruising in open water with 3 to 5-foot seas and winds 10 to 15 mph. The optional Volvo Penta D11 IPS 950s took us to a top speed of 39.4 mph. Maneuvering at 23 mph and 1950 rpm, the boat turned evenly in both directions in about three boat-lengths and maintained most speed through the turns. Performing these fast turns, I could not feel any effect from the optional Seakeeper9, but at slower speeds it was noticeable. Turning gradually through sloppy seas, the Seakeeper reduced our roll from 7 to only 3 degrees — and the difference was apparent.

The bow on the Riviera 505 SUV has been modified slightly from previous models to give it a bit more flare and to reconfigure the anchor placement. We still got some spray on the windshield when bucking the chop, but the increased flare helped some. The Riviera 505 SUV is a capable long-haul cruiser. A fast cruise of 28 mph burns 49 gallons per hour, providing a calculated range of 451 miles based on 90% of capacity.

A ship-type mentality

Below decks there are three cabins, including a full-beam master. The master spans the full 16-foot, 3-inch beam. It is brightened by large hull windows with opening portholes, and it hosts a queen island bed, a flatscreen TV, a lounge and multiple drawers. The master's foyer has a closet big enough to enter and a head with a separate shower. A Queen VIP forward and twin cabin round out the accommodations.

"We strive to be different and better," says Longhurst. "We listen carefully to our customers and use their feedback to make improvements. We're making continual refinements in quality, ease of access for maintenance and abundant storage. I tell our crews to focus on every detail of construction and build Riviervas with a ship-type mentality. The results speak for themselves."

My time spent aboard the Riviera 505 SUV showed me that Longhurst isn't just bragging. The level of finish and detail of execution is evident throughout the boat. This new model incorporates advancements that improve the cruising experience, such as the mezzanine, which kept drawing me back. As I sat in the semi-protection, watching our wake as we cruised toward the shoreline, I found myself wishing I could stay aboard a bit longer. ★



RIVIERA 505 SUV

» SPECIFICATIONS

LOA: 55' 10"

Beam: 16' 3"

Draft: 4' 5"

Weight: 54,013 lbs.

Fuel Capacity: 872 gals.

Water Capacity: 122 gals.

Power: Two Volvo Penta D8-IPS 800 at 600 hp

MSRP: \$1,409,500

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The unique mezzanine provides a seamless indoor/outdoor feel.

The full-beam master includes an ensuite head and walk-in wardrobe.



The IPS joystick could be placed more adjacent to the throttles.



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