

Riviera 43 Open Flybridge

Innovation and technology at work

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There can be no disputing the fact that it has been a tough year for Riviera - once Australia's largest luxury boat manufacturer. It was just a few weeks prior to the 2009 Sanctuary Cove International Boat Show and at the height of the worldwide economic meltdown that

Riviera were placed in administration. Many thought the once iconic brand with a handsome national and international reputation was headed for the corporate scrap heap.

However, 12 months later and while the

company is still in the final stages of administration, there are many positive signs rising from the Riviera phoenix. In a positive and confidence boosting move, the Riviera's financiers have now withdrawn the company from sale and Riviera is once again gathering momentum. Its long term future



looks much brighter than it did less than a year ago.

Driving Riviera's resurgence is the company's investment in a new range of models headed by the impressive mid range 43 Open Flybridge which makes its world debut at the 2010 Sanctuary Cove International Boat Show.

The twin cabin, twin bathroom flybridge convertible embraces much of the latest technology available and in keeping with the search for greater economy and a greener footprint, Riviera have powered this new generation cruiser with the impressive Volvo IPS 600 drives, which deliver power, performance and economy. The new flared hull was designed in collaboration with Volvo to ensure its suitability for IPS and in another departure from the norm, this model is not offered with a shaft drive option.

Versatility will surely be the key to the appeal of the 43 Open Flybridge. Riviera have cleverly addressed the, less than popular, flybridge ladder by designing a new styled stairway which features teak treads and an ergonomically designed vertical rise which makes navigating these stairs much easier

than a convention ladder. They have introduced the all new C-zone digital control system which allows a number of pre-programmed energy and operation settings to be instantly activated by a selection dial.

These settings are infinitely programmable however some of the pre-programmed settings include modes for day cruising, day entertaining, night cruising and night entertaining as well as a 'dock unattended' mode. This is much easier and more manageable than turning on a host of switches, pumps, lights, blowers and air conditioning units and it is energy efficient.

Although Riviera has not attempted to provide a three cabin configuration, the twin cabin, twin bathroom layout and convertible options in the saloon and flybridge mean this 43 footer can easily sleep nine people in comfort. While it is highly unlikely that most prospective owners would want to sleep so many on a 43 foot vessel, this demonstrates the flexibility and versatility of this new model.

In terms of accommodation, another departure from recent trends is the use of a

full beam aft cabin as other than the master cabin. This massive area, with full head height on entry, offers as standard configuration, a double bed athwartships and a horizontal starboard side single berth. The double bed is mounted on tracks and can be separated to make two singles and in turn, these can be positioned away from the aft bulkhead for extra access.

This innovative approach to family accommodation, combined with the large fixed portlights and twin opening portholes together with neutral soft furnishings, delivers a light, airy cabin with plenty of storage options. These include a timber lined hanging wardrobe, drawer chest and shelving alongside the bunks.

The forward master cabin, by contrast, is of conventional layout with an island double, and aft portside ensuite and good storage options by way of under bed drawers, pigeon lockers with mirror doors and twin hanging lockers.

The ensuite is similar in layout to the starboard side main bathroom with an overhead hatch, separate roomy shower with glass screens, mirrors on the vanity



cabinet doors, bench mounted vanity, vacuflush toilet and timber floor.

Most impressive was the use of new season fabrics on the bulkheads with no sharp edges - just nice curves. Carpet throughout the accommodation deck also adds to the overall appeal. Alcantara, an extremely versatile and long wearing synthetic fabric similar to leather has been used on much of the upholstery, some bulkheads and headliners.

In keeping with the low maintenance and studio styling, the saloon adopts a totally new perspective with a lower level forward galley, amtico rosewood flooring, removable lounge chairs, pop up television and an alfresco window which, when open, draws the large cockpit area and the saloon together as a seamless entertaining and living area.

Riviera certainly haven't abandoned luxury fitouts - there is an attractive liquor cabinet on entry, complete with a bar fridge/ice maker combo, a supremely comfortable lounge to starboard and an extendable dining table.



As previously mentioned, the table can be lowered to convert to a sizeable double if extra bedding is required.

The large leaf style side windows are fixed and fitted with quality roller blinds for privacy and glare protection. There are some nice little extras such as an electrically controlled storage locker in the saloon ceiling, storage space in the twin removable lounge chairs and a massive under floor storage area below the galley. This massive galley storage area comes complete with storage bins and a secondary level of bins which can also be accessed from the aft cabin.

The galley is an interesting concept. While hardly a sunken galley, it is none-the-less, on a lower level which provides for a single angled horizontal benchtop finished in Corian.

Riviera have long been renowned for the quality of their galleys and the 43's galley is no exception. Standard livery includes a dishwasher, complete crockery and cutlery settings housed in specially designed pull out drawers, fridge and freezer drawers, spice racks, twin ring ceramic cooktop with

riddle rails and overhead extractor, microwave and a slide out rubbish bin of reasonable capacity.

Opposite the galley is a concealed storage compartment which houses the saloon's sound system and also provides a multitude of storage for videos as well as an iPod unit.

The saloon is finished in a light cherrywood with a gloss finish and the darker rosewood flooring and soft cream upholstery create a bright, modern studio effect.

Underway, with the beautifully finished and impressive polished stainless steel and glass saloon sliding doors closed, engine noise is minimal and conversations can be enjoyed. Seating levels are also very good and excellent vision is maintained even when underway. The cruiser is fully air conditioned and all air vents and ducts are concealed due to a new design criteria.

The 43 can easily fulfill the role of a traditional flybridge convertible because of its spacious self draining cockpit, recessed toe holds in the side coamings for the avid fisherman and a large teak swim platform for water sports.

There are also many standard amenities in the all teak cockpit. A cabinet below the stairway accommodates a complete fresh and salt water deck wash system while a sink and fridge box are also accommodated in the stairway base.

Opposite is an aft facing lounge - no doubt a flow on from the larger Riviera flybridge models. I particularly liked the well concealed tackle drawers under this lounge. The transom accommodates as standard, a live bait tank with an optional barbeque unit. This is made possible by a touch more ingenuity which allows the transom door coaming to fold down rather than up.

There is storage galore in the cockpit with twin removable kill tanks moulded into the deck housing and spacious lockers in the side coamings.

Access to the engine room is through a deck hatch while complete access is provided by activating an electrically operated ram which raises the entire cockpit deck to reveal the imposing twin IPS 600 power plant and an impressive and spacious engine bay, complete with a SeaFire safety system.

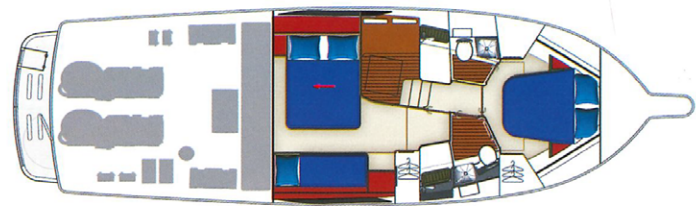
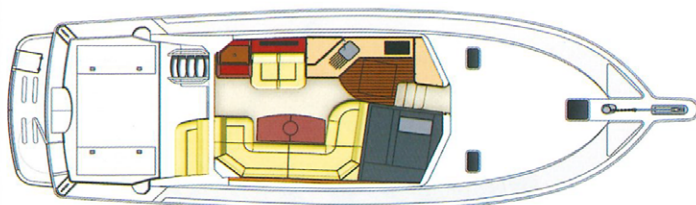


Riviera certainly haven't shirked on battery power. There are twin battery banks for each motor as well as the Cummins Onan 11.5 kVa genset and two large house batteries for DC power.

The same ease of access applies to the side decks. A single step on either side of the cockpit leads to the easily navigated side decks. Correctly positioned hand rails allow assisted passage to the bow. A Muir winch powers the anchoring system and twin deck lockers accommodate a chain locker and anchor wash outlet.

To create additional living area in the saloon, the 43 has only one helm station, located on the flybridge. The open flybridge configuration, while complete with quality clears, forward lounge, dinette, sink and bar amenities, offers much versatility. The hardtop is mounted on stainless steel supports and a new design concept removes the need to have any supports in the line of vision.

A conventional aft starboard side helm is beautifully configured with an innovative storage compartment, ideal for charts and the like, concealed forward of the dash. Two



superbly comfortable Pompanette pilot chairs, complete with footrests, are supplied for the skipper and mate. The dash is finished in a metallic carbon fibre and standard equipment consists of Volvo LED engine monitoring systems, the IPS joystick control, C-Zone digital control, Raymarine VHF, twin Raymarine E120 wide touch screen GPS with integrated radar, autopilot and Volvo's electronic throttle controls.

Under power, the 43 Open responds almost instantly. There is a some nose lift as the power is transferred to the forward facing drives and with a small correction on the Bennet trim tabs, the flybridge cruiser is quickly into stride, cutting an impressive line as the three quarter length strakes, reverse chines and fine forefoot work seamlessly to deliver an impressive speed range from eight to 29.5 knots at full noise. The steering through the adjustable stainless steel wheel is finger tip control and instantly responsive.

In terms of economy, at eight knots cruising the 43 Open has a total fuel burn of just 24 litres per hour. She is on the plane at a touch

over 12 knots using just 74 litres per hour at 2300rpm. At a comfortable planing hull cruising speed of 22 knots, full consumption increases to 116 litres per hour at 3050rpm.

Given the 43 Open's fuel capacity of 1800 litres with a 10 percent reserve, the new cruiser can comfortably deliver between 350 and 500 nautical mile range, depending on speed.

The 43 Open Flybridge tips the tape at 47 feet 5 inches and a 15 foot beam makes it a big volume cruiser for its class.

With an impressive array of latest technology and an innovative approach to internal design and fitout, the ten's of thousands of man hours involved in the development of this new generation cruiser will surely pay dividends.

As the first of the build, hull number one delivered in all aspects of liveability and performance.

SPECIFICATIONS

LOA	47ft 5" (14.46 metres)
Hull length	44ft 8" (13.61 metres)
Beam	15ft (4.57 metres)
Draft	3ft 11" (1.20 metres)
Displacement	32,100lbs (14,500kg)
Hull construction	Hand laid moulded fibreglass
Fuel capacity	1800 litres
Fresh water	460 litres
Holding tank	151 litres
Power generation	Cummins Onan 11.5kVa
Accommodation	2 cabins (5 + people)
Engines	Twin Volvo IPS600 turbo diesels
Cruising speed	8 - 24 knots
Top speed	29.5 knots
Range	350 - 500 nautical miles
Warranty	Five years structural hull
Base price	\$812,809
Price as tested	\$951,130

Test boats supplied by Riviera,
50 Waterway Drive, Coomera, Queensland
07 5502 5555
www.riviera.com.au