

POWERBOAT TEST

Riviera 52 Enclosed Flybridge

SEAFARING SIREN

Offering comfort and security on the big blue sea, this enclosed flybridge cruiser is a flexible option for oceanic wanderers.

STORY **John Willis** PHOTOS **Supplied**



Mankind has long strived for freedom ever since Adam and Eve left the Garden of Eden. But it's taken Riviera Australia's boats to finally provide us with the path to nautical nirvana, offering up delicious temptations like this 52 Enclosed Flybridge. Just one taste of this scrumptious apple and you'll be obsessed by her delicious fruit. Take a ride and you'll be struck with the obsession to lay a course for distant seafaring horizons forever...

Truly, this is one flybridge cruiser that makes you feel comfortable, secure and welcome from your first impression to your ultimate destination. She has gorgeous lines and a bewitching allure that is simply dripping with natural beauty and needs no cosmetic bling. Make no mistake – this exciting temptress is forged from a long seafaring heritage that will carry you and your precious cargo across the seven seas to your own personal paradise.

From a basic conception level, it's funny how one person's stature can have so much influence on a product. Riviera boss Rodney Longhurst isn't just a larger-than-life character who continues to lead the company toward ever-expanding worldwide success. He's also a very tall character who has demanded greater headroom in all the latest designs, creating an even more spacious and comfortable feel to the all-new 52.

CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT

Luxury lifestyle cruiser; A social flybridge keeps the skipper in play; Cutting smooth lines in a silky sea.



For myself, this 52 leads Riviera into another era in their long history of premium cruisers with our demo boat combining the higher, more spacious interior feel with soft finishes and light palettes, rather than the traditional rich, high-gloss internal decor. While I love the traditional feel of dark woodgrain – as does a very large proportion of the market – Riviera has achieved a beautiful combination of open Euro panache whilst maintaining, if not improving its record for exquisite finishes.

The 52 Enclosed Flybridge is one of the most liveable cruisers that I have stepped aboard. It has a beautiful layout with terrific flow, glorious lines, great power and exceptional handling that will suit both the social inshore cruising and hardened seafaring markets. Riviera says: "The future is now," and you will surely be blessed if your future includes a 52 Enclosed Flybridge.

The 52 Enclosed Flybridge is Riviera's response to extensive customer liaison demonstrating how

this company puts client desires and needs front and centre as its primary element. The resulting boat combines perfectly tuned power, easy movement throughout the cockpit, galley and saloon; an extended flybridge up top, and finally, a well-conceived three stateroom, two ensuite layout.

There is no question as to the seakeeping ability of the well refined, offshore-proven Riviera hull design and construction techniques. This model sports Volvo Penta's proven D11-IPS950 system with twin D11 turbo diesel engines and IPS20 pod-drives (2 x 533kW/725hp), including joysticks located at both upper and lower helms for exceptionally easy maneuverability. The Volvo Penta IPS system offers extremely impressive fuel economy throughout the rev range combined with a feel of confident performance, quiet operation, and creates more internal space for mid mounted accommodation.

She's actually quite true to her model

Facts & Figures

RIVIERA 52 ENCLOSED
FLYBRIDGE

PRICED FROM
\$1.826 million

GENERAL

GENERAL Enclosed flybridge
cruiser

MATERIAL GRP

TYPE Planing monohull

LENGTH: 17.6 metres

BEAM: 5.01m

WEIGHT: 26,322kg (dry)

CAPACITIES

PEOPLE 6 (Night)

FUEL 3500L

WATER 750L

ENGINE

MAKE/MODEL Volvo Penta D11-
IPS950 with twin D11 turbo diesel
engines and IPS20 pod-drives

TYPE In-line 6-cylinder 10.8L

common-rail diesel; twin-entry

turbo, with supercharger.

RATED HP 2 x 533kW/725hp

DISPLACEMENT 2 x 10.8L

PROPELLER Duoprop Pod

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designations with an overall length of 56'8" including bowsprit and rear platform and a true hull length of 53'. She's a beamy five metres wide (16'5") giving enormous volume to the solid hull weighing in at more than 26 tonnes dry.

Yet the gutsy D11s combined with the efficiencies and bite of the IPS forward-facing counter-rotating drives provide exhilarating performance up to a ripping 32.7 knots at 2560rpm (WOT) using a combined 287 litres per hour. This equals a lengthy 357 nautical mile range from the 3500 litre fuel tank with 10% reserve.

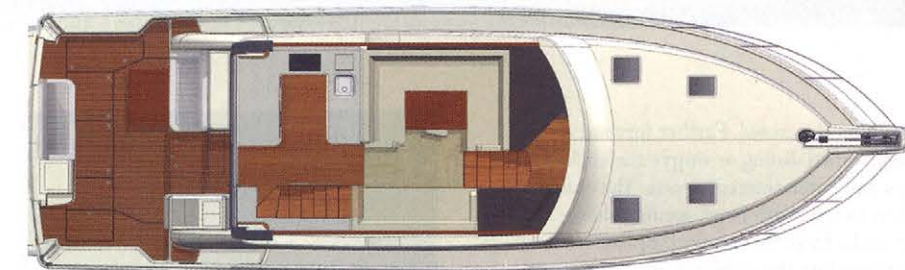
Slowing down a little to maximize efficiency she produces the fast cruise speed of 27.1 knots at a torquey 2300rpm, saving around 60 litres per hour which is considerable, but there's nothing quite like the fun of the wind in your hair with

the throttles down. There's the hoon in me again, but this really is a fun boat to drive!

For extended cruising and intercontinental island hopping you may wish to slow right down to a sensible 7 knots where your range increases to a very acceptable 1002 nautical miles at an almost idling 900rpm. This is the realm for the high seas or relaxed cruising, while still making good headway.

STEP ABOARD

The Riviera 52 Enclosed Flybridge is a very welcoming boat. She has a large transom platform that sets the stage for aquatic antics, while also providing terrific boarding access from a tender. There are hinged rear doors either side leading up to a teak lined cockpit with fixed upholstered seating and a large storage bin in the fibreglass



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT Guests will enjoy the social aft cockpit, but keen fishos can option it up for offshore adventures; Commanding flybridge helm offers a wealth of ship's data to hand; The saloon presents sheltered dining options or just a spot to chill at anchor; This floor-plan shows the transom lounge and optional teak flooring.

storage module at the rear. This layout is optional, so if you're more fishing-oriented and prefer a full walk-up transom, there is plenty of room, even enough for a game chair or tackle station with just less than 10 square metres of useable deck space. There's engine room/drive access below, well-proportioned fish boxes and a handy deck shower. Plus, that upper joystick and lower controls will certainly assist the skipper if the crew are caught fighting a rampaging pelagic.

The large sliding saloon door is slightly starboard of centre allowing a three seater rear facing lounge to port with a large top loading freezer box moulded behind. The lounge is a terrific position to while away the hours comfortably watching the world go by, or perhaps waiting in anticipation for the outrigger to pop and the big game reels to scream.

Above this a large stainless framed window swings open from the galley, creating an almost café style aura. There is an optional interchangeable mezzanine table that can be converted to a daybed, providing a very versatile alfresco entertaining area. Adding to all of this on the starboard side we find a compact wet bar complete with an electric BBQ/grill, icemaker, sink, hot and cold taps, rubbish bin and storage.

Riviera says, "The rear bulkhead of the 52 Enclosed Flybridge includes a sliding door and awning window made of tinted, tempered glass in highly polished stainless steel frames. Opened, they create a powerful sense of light and space between the cockpit and interior."



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT

Yacht chefs have it easy in this well-equipped galley; Master stateroom is set to port in this layout; Twin guest beds push the overnight capacity to six; Both ensuites are roomy with a stylish modern fitout.

television on a swivel mount for easy viewing for any angle. This combines with a Yamaha AV receiver and separate BlueRay player, plus Supercube 2000 subwoofer and five flush mounted speakers.

ACCOMMODATING ALL

Riviera has achieved an excellent accommodation plan with its standard layout, (but other options are available). The master stateroom in this case is located along the port side, with a queen-sized bed, matched with a similar offering in the forward VIP, which gains an island-bed layout. To starboard is a smaller twin single cabin.

This area is serviced by a large ensuite for the master and a second bathroom which does double service as ensuite and day head for the other cabins.

Riviera again excels in premium finishes

throughout. The superb cabinetry is satin oak with teak trims, matched beautifully with beige linen feature panel and leatherette upholstery, plus soft ceiling liners and bedheads. This is further complemented by a terrific combination of plush carpet in the staterooms and light coloured flooring in high traffic areas.

There is a multitude of cabinet/wardrobe and drawer options throughout, a television in every room and of course, the yacht is fully air conditioned. The master stateroom and twin guest quarters all feature long viewing windows with portholes for that breath of fresh air.

The ensuites provide large individual showers with plenty of room around the heads, functional vanities with good make-up lighting, and they contain the same beautiful benchtop surfaces as the galley. There's even a Miele front loader washer/dryer in the disguised hallway cabinets.



ENTERTAINER'S SALOON

In keeping with modern trends and customer feedback, the galley is immediately to port as you enter the saloon. The stairwell to the flybridge is to starboard over the top of some handy cabinetry that incorporates extra refrigeration and storage.

The U-shaped galley is an entertainer's delight and being centralised between the internal and external living areas becomes a real social focus for the boat, but the layout still flows freely.

The galley features an attractive solid surface bench top, two-burner induction cooktop with pop-up fiddles to secure pots, a large convection/microwave oven with an optional dishwasher drawer within handy reach of the stainless steel sink, and there's a bench infill that doubles as a cutting board. The functional galley features a large amount of convenient bench space and cabinetry/drawer storage for long range cruising

or entertaining the crowd. Further forward is the lounge/formal dining or simply the enclosed relaxation and entertainment centre. The entire saloon is enhanced with large opening side windows and a huge two-section windscreen forward expanding the ambience, ventilation and lure.

There's a huge bone leather C-shaped lounge complete with a convertible coffee table that expands to a full size diner. Immediately opposite is another three seater lounge. The middle seat base can cleverly slide out as an ottoman and form additional seating around the main dining area whilst a further table lifts out from the lounge to form a smaller dinette if required. These features are deceptively simple, but very functional.

There is disguised cabinetry under the windscreen containing a pop-up 40-inch LED



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FLYBRIDGE STYLE

The enclosed flybridge is the icing on the cake for this nautical beauty. Curvaceous lines of the sweeping hull are accentuated by the superb cabin, flybridge and hardtop mouldings, while tinted windows form luscious infills and stainless trims enhance the sheerline.

Enclosed flybridges are practical in all marine environments, except perhaps during dark nights when salt spray dries on the windows, but skippers can always rely on GPS and radar in this case. Nevertheless, the clear, tempered glass windcreens on this 52 include large washer wipers to maximise vision, plus big opening side windows for welcome cross-ventilation.

The extended flybridge on the 52 Enclosed forms a solid awning over the cockpit mezzanine and this area can be left open, or closed at the rear with the flexibility of the strata glass clears.

This large flybridge can easily host its own party with twin Slimline Pompanette helm chairs that offer fully adjustable arm and foot rests, a forward lounge opposite the helm and an L-shaped dinette with storage underneath. The rear dinette meets a good-sized table on a fixed pedestal, while opposite is a wet bar complete with hot/cold sink, bin, storage and fridge.



This rear section features attractive bright stainless steel retaining railings that will comfort in their security, especially when the kids are on board, and the staircase enters the flybridge via a lockable hatch in the starboard floor. I enjoyed

the ride on this 52 so much I chose to extend my journey right back up the seaway to the Riviera facility at Coomera instead of being dropped off at a more convenient Runaway Bay. The layout and comfort levels simply promote great times.



TOP The interior flybridge stairs are clad in satin oak with teak highlights. **ABOVE** Zippered clears make the flybridge an appealing alfresco dining option.

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“There’s nothing quite like the wind in your hair with the throttles down.”



TOP Admirable range comes via 3500L of fuel, so extended offshore missions are no problem.
ABOVE Twin Volvo Penta D11s are matched to IPS20 pod-drives in the well-appointed engine space.

The flybridge helm of the 52 Enclosed was optioned with an electronics package including three Garmin 16-inch 7616 GPSMap multi-function screens with integrated radar GPS and GRID controller. It has Volvo AutoPilot, plus the innovative Volvo Glass Cockpit navigation system that integrates seamlessly with the intuitive CZone digital switching technology for monitoring and controlling systems. There’s also a chain counter (anchor), compass, switch panel for horn and lights, electronic engine control with twin binnacle controls, joystick docking control, spotlight control panel, trim tab controls, demisters and VHF radio. Overhead, she’s even got an electric sunroof.

To keep all of those systems running efficiently Riviera has included a 21.5kW/60Hz generator that can keep all of the refrigeration, lighting and air conditioning units powered up while you enjoy that distant secluded mooring. There’s even air conditioning in the flybridge.

All Volvo Penta systems, engines, drives and electronics are further covered by an industry-leading limited five year warranty to complement Riviera’s standard structural warranty. Now that is confidence from experience.

The Riviera 52 Enclosed Flybridge is an eminently livable and enticing package that will certainly satisfy any seafarer, plus their crew, family and friends. She has many faces, a comforting demeanor and a terrific attitude. But best of all, the promise of good times to come. 