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RIVIERA 545 SUV

Packed with amenities that include a full-beam master stateroom, the latest SUV model from Down Under is on U.S. shores.



A WELCOME ADDITION TO Riviera's line of sporty yet rugged cruisers, the 545 SUV features all the hallmarks of the Australian builder's SUV line, including a large cockpit and abundant amenities, all packaged into a convenient single level. The versatility of boats in the SUV line — models can be set up for serious fishing, cruising, day excursions and entertaining — makes them popular. Based on the same platform as its

sister model, the 525 SUV, the Riviera 545 SUV provides a cabin layout many buyers will prefer, including a full-beam master stateroom.

In order to catch up with the 545 SUV before it landed in the U.S. for boat show season, I made the journey to the Sydney International Boat Show. Cruising under the Sydney Harbour Bridge and past the opera house is exhilarating, something

From the space-age helm back to the fully equipped galley, the main cabin is open, well lit and airy thanks to twin sun roofs. Settees face fore and aft in the cockpit, where a second joystick resides for docking. An optional sunpad turns the bow into a cozy spot for cocktails or stargazing. The master stateroom stretches across the beam and includes a settee and multiple drawers and lockers.

everyone should experience. Sydney is a boating city thanks to miles — well, kilometers — of harbor shoreline that wind back into river-like inlets from downtown to the suburbs. Much of the harbor is lined with waterfront homes, many with docks or moorings.

TO THE TEST

During our sea trial we traversed Sydney Harbour and dealt with the bustling ferry traffic, and then we escaped through "The Heads," which are sheer sandstone cliffs that rise spectacularly from the Tasman Sea. Once outside we headed 20 miles north where the rocky coastline opens at the entrance to the Hawkesbury River.

Riviera yachts are designed to handle the open waters that surround Australia. Their solid hand-laid fiberglass hull includes a watertight collision bulkhead forward and a vinylester outer layer. Closed-cell foam coring is used in the decks and the cabin top to reduce weight aloft. They are also rich with features and accommodations that make cruising safe, comfortable and fun.

PERFORMANCE

The Riviera 545 SUV delivers both speed and agile performance. During reciprocal runs inside Sydney Harbour with the optional twin IPS950 package — 725 hp Volvo Penta D11 diesels — the boat's speed topped out at 33.6 knots. At a fast cruise of 28 knots at 78 percent load, the fuel burn was 55.7 gph, or 0.5 mpg, resulting in a range of 417 nautical miles (with a 10 percent reserve). Slowing to 19 knots lowered consumption to 31.7 gph and increased range to 496 n.m. These are respectable numbers, especially for a boat that is almost 58 feet long overall.

Taking sharp high-speed turns underway is always a lot of fun, and the Riviera 545 SUV gently leaned into these turns with very little speed loss. It achieved clean acceleration when it returned to center. Dockside handling was uneventful on test day, as it should be, with an IPS joystick at the helm. A wing station in the cockpit allows the operator to see the port side and back to the



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SPECS

- LOA 57 ft., 9 in.
- Beam 16 ft., 5 in.
- Draft 3 ft., 8 in.
- Dry Weight 52,657 lbs.
- Fuel 925 gal.
- Water 211 gal.
- Power (as tested) Twin Volvo Penta IPS950-D11 diesels, 725 hp
- Price \$1,622,600 (base)

swim platform.

Twin Recaro helm seats, with the driver to center, are stylish, comfortable and provide easy access to the wheel, throttles, joystick and instruments, which include twin Garmin MFDs and a CZone fly-by-wire electrical system. My visibility was good while seated, and though the twin side mullions are thick, the position of the helm forward allowed me to see past them. The helm seats are raised on a platform that decreases standing headroom at the wheel to 6 feet, and the coach top slightly impedes vision. Operators who like to stand while driving won't find this ideal, especially if they are tall, but a step off the helm platform reveals 6 feet, 8

inches of headroom at the salon table.

I tend to stand while docking and found that by standing adjacent the helm at the top of the cabin stairs I could easily reach the joystick and enjoyed good visibility fore and aft and had plenty of headroom. There is also a wing station I would likely use.

CABIN ARRANGEMENT

Aft of the helm to port is salon seating and a flip-top table. The table must be opened to access the helm platform, which limits the use of that table underway. Overhead are twin electric sunroofs that provide light and air, and both side windows can be opened. To





Keeping everything needed to operate the boat close at hand — twin Volvo Penta Glass Cockpit MFDs from Garmin, engine display, engine throttles, joystick and more — the helm pod is modern, practical and cool as heck.

starboard is a long settee that converts to a table. The bottom section pulls out to become an ottoman or a backless chair that can be pulled over to the table on the other side. The aft cushion then lifts, and a small wood table flips out. I really like this setup, because it provides a lot of functionality and the table can be used for entertainment or light dining, or as a computer table.

Aft in the salon is a well-appointed galley. Here, Riviera uses drawers extensively both inside the galley and across the aisle to starboard where a wide serving counter hovers above. The drawers can be configured in different ways, which typically include refrigerators, freezers and a dishwasher. A deep stainless sink, a two-burner Kenyon electric cooktop, a microwave/convection oven, plenty of storage and windows that open aft into the cockpit round out the accoutrements. The galley location is conveniently adjacent to both the cockpit aft and the salon forward.

TAKE IT OUTSIDE

A stainless and tinted glass slider leads to the cockpit a few steps down, which has aft-facing seating and a folding teak table with stainless cup- and bottle holders in

the center. A top-loading freezer is between the seating and the galley. Another seat faces forward from the transom, next to an optional windowed livewell.

To starboard a flip-top counter reveals twin electric barbecue grills and a sink; an ice-maker is below. Twin wide stainless gates lead to a swim platform that can be set up as a dinghy lift and has a freshwater shower, a swim ladder and yacht rails.

Sidedecks, well protected by stainless grabrails and stanchions, lead forward to a large sunpad complete with drink holders. Bow lockers provide storage and access to controls and washdowns for the Muir windlass.

ACCOMMODATIONS

I made my way below to the sleeping quarters. To port is a twin-bunk cabin and forward is a VIP with a queen berth, cedar-lined hanging lockers and direct access to a head that also opens to the corridor. This cabin door conveniently recesses into the wall for better access. Aft, near the entrance to the master stateroom, is a laundry station that conceals a full-sized washer and dryer.

Stretching across the full beam, the master stateroom features plenty of

drawers to port and a nice settee for reading or relaxing to starboard. The settee runs along a hull window that includes an opening porthole. Headroom is 6 feet, 4 inches at the entrance but loses as much as 3 inches with steps and ceiling changes in the cabin. Large cedar-lined hanging lockers and a well-appointed head with a shower that includes a bench and a convenient shelf are forward to port. The full-beam master is an attractive highlight of the boat. It differentiates this model from much of the competition and will please owners looking for a large, comfortable cabin to enjoy. 🍷

DETAILS

Standard Equipment

Twin Volvo Penta IPS800-D11 625 hp diesels, CZone digital switching, Volvo glass cockpit MFDs, cockpit wing station w/IPS joystick, cocktail cabinet w/room for glassware and bottles, Cummins Onan EQD 13.5 kw/50 Hz genset, two-burner cooktop, drawer refrigerator/freezer, convection/microwave and more.

Optional Equipment

Twin Volvo Penta IPS950-D11 725 hp diesels, hydraulic lifter on swim platform for dinghy launch/retrieval, livewell, gyro stabilizer, bow double sunpad, teak cockpit sole and more.

Builder

Riviera, Queensland, Australia;
rivieraaustralia.com

West Coast Dealers

Van Isle Marina Yacht Sales, Sidney, B.C.;
(250) 656-1138; vanislemarina.com

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