

# TARGA

*There are perhaps many strong contenders to winning the Motorboat of the Year category for under 45-footers. There can, however, be only one first place, and this year's honours went to the Fairline Targa 38. But is she really as perfect in every way as International boating journalists believe? Dean Castle puts his bowl of strawberries and glass of Don Perignon briefly aside to see if the Targa 38 really is the ultimate in luxury.*

Words and pictures by Dean Castle



## *In the lap of luxury*



All craft are built for certain water conditions. Fairline based the Targa 38 to ride on waters very similar to those found in South Africa. This means the hull not only has to have the structural integrity to take you where the water gets rougher than you ever imagined, but she must be able to ride and handle just about anything that nature can throw at you.

## Conditions for test

The Targa 38 is the latest of Boating World's craft to reach South African shores, and she's currently moored in Cape Town. World famous backdrops such as Table Mountain and Clifton's Fourth Beach arguably came off second best when compared to the magnificent sights of the Targa 38.

This review occasioned right on our very own doorstep, Atlantic Ocean side, between the V&A Waterfront and Camps Bay. This way, I'd be sure to feel at home among the elite!

To set the scene a little clearer in your mind, a five-metre swell rolls past you. There's a slight hint of a chill in the air – albeit not particularly rough – but I suspect these are about the worst conditions you would ideally want to entertain aboard your very own Targa 38. I have no doubt she can handle much rougher conditions, but those day's aren't really what boats in this type of class are about.

## General impression

The Targa 38 is out and out one sexy craft. The swept-back radar arch gives the flowing lines a razor sharp finish, while the long panoramic windows add to the distinctive streamlined look. Her clean looks promise that she'll be every bit a sports cruiser, and the open top and elegant looks are just two examples of this.

From the shape of her lengthy hull and raised windows, I was hoping that her ride would be as smooth as her looks, while keeping me well protected from the elements. 



With dual throttle controls and bow thrusters, the 38-ft Targa is easily navigated into any mooring.



A plush, luxurious U-shaped cushioning at the stern as well as space for a removeable table, allows you to fully savour that open-air meal.

## Mooring

Measuring in at 38 foot, this Targa is by no means small. But this doesn't mean getting into your mooring need ever be a problem. Dual throttle controls let you rotate the craft 360 degrees while standing still, while the bow thruster can get you out of a spot of trouble, should it ever be needed.

A cover extending from in front of the windscreen, to the swim platform covers the cockpit from dew, rain or sunshine when not in use, while keeping the craft in a pristine, sparkling condition to allow an audience to simply stop and admire the Targa 38.

## Deck layout

You'd think that a craft just 38-foot in length, yet wins the 'up to 45-foot' category for motorboat of the year, would be somewhat hampered, and that it would be cramped and lacking in spaciousness. Not so – you just have to look at the pictures that accompany this article to see how beautifully designed she is.

Starting aft, the Targa 38 has a large swim platform that's big enough to have celebrity chef Gordon Ramsey personally sauté the prawns for your guests. The teak decking serves form as well as function and gives the craft that no expense-spared feel.

There's generous seating area to be found at the stern in the form of plush and luxurious U-shaped cushioning. A removable table can be inserted, when necessary, and lets you really enjoy an open-air meal. Situated just behind the skipper's chair is a food preparation table. This can also be swiftly removed to find an electronic braai grid and adjoining sink.

Moving forward, one finds extra seating for two alongside the skipper's chair. From this position you can feel and breathe only healthy ocean breezes as you lazily cruise along. There's a superb 360-degree view from this point, or alternatively stand and get an even better view, especially while mooring. A fabric canopy can easily and quickly



The luxurious saloon has enough headroom for a whole team of basketball players.



The Targa 38's cockpit area offer a 360° view of the surroundings and a fabric canopy can be erected to shelter you from the harsh sun.

be erected to fully enclose the cockpit area – should the sun's rays start to get too harsh.

Entering the saloon is when the luxury side of the Targa 38 really starts to take hold. With enough head room to accommodate even professional basketball players, with airy and natural colours used in the cushioning and ceiling, light coloured wood, comfy carpeting, soft lighting, and granite surfaces which sparkle like a thousands diamonds, you can rest assured this is a truly special place to be.

To the starboard side you'll find a galley with a two-plate stove, a built-in microwave, and a combination fridge/freezer. A chic stainless steel sink is cleverly set into the granite top. To the port side is a further dining area that can easily be converted into extra bed space – should you need it. A more-than-ample sized TV is strategically placed to watch Saturday Sport, should you feel the need to keep in touch with those rugby games while you're away.

Aft from this area leads one through to the stern cabin where you'll find two decent sized single beds. Although this is just forward from the mighty engines, the area is insulated well enough to give you a good, silent night's rest – even when well underway.



Whether you like to absorb the warmth through the skylight or simply just gaze at the night stars, it's all possible on the Targa 38.

The bow cabin is most certainly fit for a king, and I could easily see myself there for days at a time. The area is indeed spacious, and the skylight gives a feeling of warmth to the cabin during daylight hours – or lets you gaze at the stars before drifting off to sleep . . .

The comprehensive bathroom can be accessed en suite from the bow cabin, or via the second door in the saloon. The ample shower area can be fully enclosed by means of simply rotating the door around it to keep the water





Not only is she easy on the eyes, but the steering wheel can be turned with little effort, while the throttles sit comfortably in your hand.

from splashing everywhere. A foldout section of the counter, alongside more ultra-modern fittings, can be opened to access the heads.

## Motors and controls

This particular Targa 38 was fitted with twin Volvo Penta 300 HP Stern Diesels. Alternatively, you could opt for the 520 HP or 740 HP combinations.

Going against the current, the powerful engines had the craft running

at 23 knots at 2 400 rpm. This gives a gentle cruising speed and lets your passengers rest easy. That's not to say that higher speeds will send your guests running for safety, as even at her top speed of 34 knots with 3 350 rpm on the clock, the Targa cuts through the water cleanly and safely at all times, and bending your knees to handle bigger swells doesn't even enter the mind! The Volvo Penta's have been a trusted brand for many



Twin Volvo Penta 300 HP Stern Diesels had her running at 23 knots at 2 300 rpm.

years, and these 300 HP derivatives are a well-paired match for the Targa 38, giving a great balance between performance and efficiency.

The section of the deck above the engines, can be raised by flicking a switch on the control panel and gives you easy access should it be needed.

## Handling

I have a feeling that most Targa buyers will be bringing their own skipper along for the days she'll be required – and that's a pity, as you'll find she's really an absolute pleasure to handle.

Since the Targa is ostensibly designed to run perfectly on waters experienced around our South Africa coastline, and with a weight of 7 687 kg (dry, unladen), the hull rides just as I expected – predictably and perfectly.

A sharp angle of attack on the hull cuts through a following sea, while showing no sign of broaching as she rides bow up through the swell. Although she's 38 foot in length, she feels like an 18-footer when it comes to manoeuvrability at speed. She turns neatly into corners and doesn't put a foot wrong on the exit. There was a loss of just three knots from top speed when in a full-cock 360-degree turn, and any boater will know that this is little cause for concern. 



*“World famous backdrops such as Table Mountain and Clifton’s Fourth Beach arguably came off second best when compared to the magnificent sights of a Targa 38.”*





The luxurious Targa 38 promotes a very special kind of lifestyle and is a worthy winner of the title "Motorboat of the Year".

She rides through chop as though it didn't exist and really was an absolute pleasure to skipper! The dashboard may look intimidating at first, but after five minutes at the controls, you'll be looking like the experienced captain you always knew you were!

The steering wheel can be turned with little effort, while the throttles sit comfortably in your hand. Aside from the flip-up bolster found on the skipper's seat, a foldout step can be easily installed giving plenty of extra height to the skipper – should it be needed. This is just one of the clever

touches that places the Targa 38 a cut above the rest.

A colour GPS/chart plotter, complete with Rstar 125GPS antenna and a Smart Pilot S2G autopilot with ST6001 display, make planning your routes and staying to the safest areas the simplest of operations.

## Conclusion

Listing each and every feature and benefit to owning a Targa 38, would take many, many pages to describe.

Yes, the Targa 38 isn't the cheapest craft around. But she's actually not

expensive when you consider that you will be the most complete ship's captain on the water, getting more than your fair share in comparison to your Rands spent! Fairline has always been at the forefront of luxury by giving you a craft that offers far more than just something a little bit special. The Targa 38 fits in perfectly with the company's name and is genuinely a worthy winner of the title "Motorboat of the Year".

For more information contact Boating World on 082 881 2607, or email [info@boatingworld.co.za](mailto:info@boatingworld.co.za)



<b>At a glance</b>	
L.O.A.	39.1 ft/12.13 m
Beam	11.11 ft/3.64 m
Berths	4-6
Draught	3.4 ft/1.02 m (unloaded)
Dry weight	7 687 kg
Fuel capacity	636 litres
Water capacity	296 litres
Engine options:	2 x Volvo Penta Stern Diesel 520 HP – 7 40 HP