

Riviera 4700 Sports Yacht

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Words -

[David Lockwood](#)

Although it wasn't completely finished and to spec, David Lockwood secured a ride in Riviera's new 4700 SY. Here, he gives us the rundown of what to expect from this innovative cruiser

One of the great things about a boat show is that eager manufacturers and excited importers are keen to unveil their new boats to the world. Besides the free food and bootleg, the schmoozing and hobnobbing at the celebratory launches, the opportunity to be first to test drive the new craft often comes when the show is over.

So it was for Riviera's new 4700 Sport Yacht. The latest and largest addition to the boatbuilder's innovative new SY line up, the 4700 SY looked smart dressed in a navy-blue hull and with its well-proportioned lines. However, the boat was far from race ready – like a lot of craft it arrived post haste at the Sydney International Boat Show - and was there to reveal its aesthetic design and static appeal.

Not one to look a gift horse in the mouth, Trade-A-Boat took the 4700 SY #1 (a boat we first saw as a shell in the factory) for a burn right after the show. That ride came with the proviso that it wouldn't be treated as a boat test per se. So you won't find the usual highs and lows lists at the foot of this world-first test. Nor will you find much commentary from me on the performance. Clearly, there was work to do.

However, our first drive presented the unique opportunity to get a feel for the 4700 Sport Yacht – if not so much its handling, then certainly the philosophy behind the boat. And as I have said many times before, Riviera boats aren't short on static appeal, perhaps never more so than with this new 4700 SY, which is clearly inspired by the big European boating badges muscling their way into our marinas.

Jump aboard the latest sportsyachts from Europe and American and you will find level-deck entertaining and cruising spaces, big amenities centres, electric sunroofs, giant submersible

boarding platforms that double the boat's waterfront space, and often a garage concealing the latest trendy tender. Jump aboard Riviera's new 4700 Sport Yacht and you will find all this and a local spin to better cater for our unique boating way of life.

Unlike the 3600 SY, the first of Riviera's new Sport Yachts, the 4700 has better proportions and truly comely lines, giving the impression that it was designed from the ground up and not based on a pre-existing cruiser. And that is true.

Riviera says the 4700 SY is ground breaking and, it's true, it has never built a boat with such accoutrements before. The pillar-less stainless steel awning window is adopted from its 3600SY and 56 Enclosed Flybridge, the aft galley from the latter boat, and there is the expected Frank Mulder hull. But the layout is very much the work of concept design manager Neil McCabe.

"Our computer modelling systems are giving us greater opportunities to offer these (abovementioned) options," McCabe said. "Our goal with the 4700 SY was to create a fully specified boat while giving our customers the opportunity to tailor it to suit their individual needs and tastes."

Hence the choice of two or three-cabin layouts. In lieu of the third starboard-side cabin you can have a foyer with leather lounge and entertainment system. Think of it as a parents' retreat, somewhere to the party atmosphere, do business, or check the emails on the laptop integrated with the AV.

For the most part, however, the 4700 SY was very much designed for deck living. It's a moveable balcony, backyard party in waiting, and eager outdoor entertainer. The awning window is the nautical equivalent of French doors that open back onto a deck. And there's a big open-plan saloon that melds with the designer galley.

As with Riviera's newer, younger, brighter sportscruisers, the 4700 SY has a lot of sophistication befitting its six-figure price tag. Besides well-heeled high achievers, I'm betting the boat will tempt flybridge owners who are ready to retire on a single-level boat.

ENGINEERING FIRST

Thankfully, I can also report Riviera's continued engineering improvements. The engine room, with a moulder liner, is no longer an albatross or anchor, but a highlight. It's accessible through a portside hatch. Hull #1 was powered by upgraded, fully electronic, 715hp C12 Caterpillar diesel engines, with the 575hp C9s as the base motors. The Cats are linked to simple underwater exhaust systems with idle bypasses.

I noticed that the sea strainers, fuel filters with redundant filters, dipsticks and batteries were all easily accessible. The boat also had an 11kVA Onan in the engine room, but the Spartan appearance is due to the separate forward utility room harbouring the air-con units, hot water service, battery charger, inverter (so you can run the AV and fridges at night without the generator), with room left over for stores.

Riviera has in recent times brought its Italian, automated, varnishing equipment online. The finish in the 4700 SY is world class. No drips anywhere. The stainless work around that saloon bulkhead and lift-up awning window are other examples of the company's desire to

impress upon would-be buyers its new-found engineering nous.

Meanwhile, the lines of the 4700 SY are at once contemporary and purposeful, with the blunt stem suggesting a seaworthy cruiser that's not all froth and bubbles. And while this is very much the entertainer, it's also a family cruiser in which you can range up the coast with the rest of the Riviera flybridge gang.

TOUR OF DUTY

I came aboard via the submersible hydraulic boarding platform, upon which you can not only immerse the kiddies and create a safe wading pool but also dispatch a jetski or RIB. The supplied 3.1m Zodiac RIB (with optional 9.9hp outboard) is kept in the hydraulic aft garage.

The substantial lazarette, accessed under the cockpit lounge, has room to mount a dive compressor, additional long-range freezer space (I found an extra freezer in this boat's foyer), provisions, watertoys and things like crab trabs, an emergency anchor and posts for the optional (extended) Italian awning, which turns the cockpit into a shaded al fresco setting. As with most Rivas, this is a convertible in the sense that it can do a bit of everything.

Outdoor seating centres around the big timber dinette and transverse transom lounge which, with a couple of loose deck chairs (Riviera needs to offer a good branded chair) can seat eight under the awning. In a perfect world, the boat would have a reliable, retractable, electric awning. Deck amenities include a cockpit fridge and optional icemaker, standard-issue electric griddle, and a sink and food-prep centre. Storage exists in various lockers along with the battery-management panel.

The broad walkaround decks are a feature in themselves, granting safe access for mums, kids, and the crew to the obliging foredeck sunpad with drinkholders - a second lifestyle centre - traced by half bulwarks and a high bowrail. Grabrails are strategically placed too.

The other signature feature of the Sport Yacht line, the flip-up rear awning window, connects the indoors with the outdoor and vice versa.

That awning window, the surrounding picture windows with blinds, side opening windows, and electric sunroof (with manual override) let you quickly change the ambience in the saloon.

The galley up and aft is de rigueur on entertaining boats of this class - 60ft and above and you might put the galley back down below.

There were decent solid counters, plenty of pantry space and appliance storage, a recessed sink, and a spread of appliances including a recessed two-burner stove, microwave oven, dishwasher and extractor fan, plus air-con, of course, and natural ventilation via the opening side windows and sunroof.

The cocktail cabinet is forward and the Amtico mock-timber flooring is hard-wearing, practical, and easy to clean. But such is its connectivity with the outside world, with views from the surrounding glass, that the dining setting in the saloon fights for sway with the traditional outdoor setting!

I entertained the thought of summer lunches in air-conditioned comfort, mid-winter dinner

parties and quiet breakfasts with the papers and coffee. The seating includes a generous L-shaped leather lounge around a big dinette which, with those loose deck chairs, can seat eight for meals.

There's entertainment by way of the Bose Lifestyle system, which has indoor/outdoor zones and a 26-inch LCD television concealed in a cabinet. Underway, meanwhile, the views through the glass windows for captain and crew are engaging. Wipers with washers keep the windscreen clear.

Being a Frank Mulder hull with prop tunnels the boat travels flat, though this demo boat wasn't in optimum trim. The helm includes twin, high-backed, leather seats – the skipper's is electrically adjustable – and a big, low-glare, grey dash with room for a serious spread of electronics.

Boat #1 had twin electronic shifts, a bowthruster, Caterpillar control panels, autopilot and VHF radio, and a Raymarine E120 with CCTV including transom and engine room cameras. The 4700 SY also had the QL trim tabs, which are retractable vertical blades, in place of the usual large hydraulic vanes that probably create less drag.

STATELY STATEROOMS

We mentioned the optional two or standard three-cabin and two-head layout, but the way I see it, a 47-footer ought to be a three-cabin boat, even if that third cabin is used, as is so often the case, as a luggage/dressing room. At the foot of the stairs off the quasi foyer were the optional washer/dryer, spare freezer, and a convenient dayhead to starboard that doubles as a bathroom for guests.

Needless to say, Riviera makes a fuss of its bathrooms, which have improved plumbing so you can't flood the floor no matter how long you spend in the shower stalls. Both this bathroom and the owner's en suite have Vacuflush loos, solid counters, 'floating' glass sinks and, importantly, extractor fans and an opening hatch or portlight.

The portside cabin has what I consider the typical Euro layout, with full-sized, single, side-by-side beds – with infill to form a double – a communal bedside table, and a cedar-lined hanging locker. The starboard-side cabin has twin bunks and a hanging locker, while the master cabin in the bow boasts a queen-size island bed with innerspring mattress.

The designer soft-furnishing packages will please executives through to young families and, as touched on, the high-gloss joinery was first class. There are factory-optional entertainment kits for all the cabins and, another nice touch, the boat has just two levels: downstairs accommodation, with the indoor/outdoor living spaces and helm above.

CRUISING CHARIOT

Though we charged along Sydney Harbour and arced across the Heads, I can't comment on the drive. A lot of things weren't where they will be by now, from displacement to resulting trim. But with Mulder designing the running surfaces, Caterpillar engine options from twin C9 575hp models to the upgraded 715hp C12 motors, and a boat that weighs in as intended, the 4700 SY should travel sweetly. I'd be surprised and disappointed if it doesn't.

Close the doors, set the climate control and cruise in a capsule of clever design. With 2400lt of fuel and 750lt of water - the 151lt holding tank is on the small side - you can range places

and stay away for a week at a time. Or you can slink about at 8kts with the champagne in your guests' hands and just enjoy the stage.

Where the indoors begins and outdoors ends is hard to determine on Riviera's new 4700 SY. Open that awning window and sunroof and sashay across the Amtico flooring, collecting a canapé from the aft galley, to the teak cockpit.

Stay tuned.

RIVIERA 4700 SPORT YACHT
HOW MUCH?
Price as tested: The Riviera 4700 Sport Yacht, hull # 1, was selling for about \$1.2 million, with upgraded diesel motors and options
Options fitted: Engine upgrade, Raymarine electronics pack, underwater lights, painted hull, dishwasher, cockpit icemaker, washer/dryer combo and extra freezer, teak deck, stateroom entertainment, and more
Priced from: \$1.085 million with twin Caterpillar C9 575hp diesel engines
GENERAL
Materials: GRP hull and cored decks and hardtop
Type: Warped-plane monohull with half-prop tunnels and keel
Length overall: 16.69m including bowsprit and boarding platform
Hull length: 15.45m
Beam: 4.76m
Draft: 1.25m
Weight: 15,000kg dry with standard motors
CAPACITIES
Berths: 6
Fuel: 2400lt
Water: 750lt
Holding tank: 151lt

ENGINE
Make/model: Twin Cat C12s
Type: Fully electronic, inline, six-cylinder, four-stroke, diesel with common-rail fuel injection, turbocharging and aftercooling
Rated HP: 715hp at 2300rpm
Displacement: 12lt
Weight: 1174kg each
Gearboxes (make/ratio): Twin Disc or ZF
Props: Four-blade Nibral