

REVIEWED**ARVOR 215 AS****ARVOR 215 AS**

LENGTH: 6.36m
LOA (INCLUDING PLATFORM): 6.88m
BEAM: 2.54m
DRAFT: 0.75m
HULL WEIGHT: 1650kg
FUEL TANK: 90 Litres
ENGINE: .. Cummins QSD turbodiesel 115hp
PRICE: From \$103,000
 Contact: Collins Marine (02) 93195222;
arvor.com.au

LEFT: Arvors have become a common sight around Australia's ports – the 215 AS is set to do the same.

FRENCH CONNECTION

European and locally built Arvors enjoy a healthy following in Australia. As **Scott Thomas** reports the latest model looks to continue the trend.

THE 215 AS is the latest addition to the Arvor family, fitting somewhere between the Arvor 20 And 230 AS. The 215 AS model is from Arvor's European factory, while its smaller cousin the 20 hails from Nowra, on the NSW South Coast. The remainder of larger boats in the range are also built in Europe.

Typical of European design, this boat comes standard with a few simple, yet practical designs, for hassle free fishing and boating. Such as the asymmetrical cabin design. Sporting size 12 shoes and walking towards the bow won't be a problem here. Arvor has shifted the cabin's placement towards its portside. This neat feature allows ample space on the starboard side for walking towards the bow. It does appear odd at first, looking at an off-centre cabin, but the practicality sure outweighs a little peculiarity. And it doesn't affect the balance or ride of the boat. This asymmetrical cabin feature gives the Arvor its "AS" tag.

Arvor markets its boats with five selling points: Diesel, shaft-drive, self-draining cockpit, walk-around bow, and lockable cabin. All these attributes make for a decent cruising boat, but the 215AS has a few more features for keen fishos or cruisers who want more versatility from their boat.

Inside the cabin and sitting on one of the two fold-down seats, I notice there's better than average visibility. On Sydney Harbour, where we ran this boat, that's a necessary safety feature. There's also two small opening windows and a sunroof for light and ventilation. The lockable cabin features a reasonable sized bunk for two people – along with a sink, fresh water, gas stove and a chemical toilet.

The helm comes standard with compass, electric switch panel, engine instrumentation, fuel level gauge, VHF radio, and a 12-volt plug, and the nearby steering is hydraulic.

Again, the cabin layout, like its overall positioning, is cleverly pieced together for maximum space in what is a relatively confined area. It's a cabin comfortable enough for brief overnight stint while fishing, or to escape from bad weather.

Fishing friendly

This isn't everyone's idea of a serious sport-fishing boat, and it's not meant to be. What it does offer is a fuel efficient and versatile fishing platform with a commercial feel. The rear fishing area holds plenty of room for three or four fishos. The shaft-drives engine cover, which protrudes above deck eats into some fishing space, but is situated back towards the cabin and mostly out of the way.

The 215AS come standard with plenty of fishing friendly features. The livebait tank at the rear features a clear "aquarium" window for viewing your livebait's condition. There are rod holders for horizontal and vertical storage, handy built-in tackle trays for lures, hooks and rigs, and a cutting board. There's also plenty more under-floor storage for lifejackets and safety gear. The self draining cockpit also features folding timber seats and a walk-through transom door. Interestingly, this boat also comes with "side rollers", which I assume are for hauling up lobster and crab traps? Again, this exemplifies the commercial design of the Arvors.

Don't let the industrial appearance affect your ideas of performance. I was surprised by the Arvor's overall sportiness and rough water capability. This model comes standard with a Cummins MerCruiser diesel 115hp, four-cylinder common rail electric injection system. This QSD 2.0 L shaft-drive diesel is a surprisingly smooth motor. WOT was about 23 knots at about 3000rpm, with an ideal cruising speed of 16 knots at about 2500rpm.

Under the engine hatch are two bilge pumps and plenty of space for servicing.

Sydney Harbour was unreliably flat so we made a run through the Heads. It wasn't much rougher, but provided some idea of the Arvor's capability and ride in choppy seas. For the short time we had, the 215 AS gave a good account of itself, kept us dry, and delivered a comfortable, stable ride. It mightn't be everyone's choice for a serious offshore fishing boat, however, for those who want a little style and European flair the Arvor definitely fits the bill. 