

# Forget the looks, Arvor a good fishing platform

David Lockwood

Mention Arvor and Sydney boaters think of those jaunty cabin cruisers from Europe that have called our marinas, moorings and waterfronts home for the past 15 years or so. You can also hire and drive Arvors from operators like Sydney Harbour Escapes in Rose Bay. Cast the lines and chug along to the fish markets for a taste of cabin cruising.

For their many owners, these diesel shaft-drive cruisers represent affordable, reliable and frugal solutions to today's boating needs. Further testimony to their relevance comes from the fleet of Arvors serving as commuter craft at boat-only-accessible communit-

ies like those on the western shore of Pittwater. The Arvor's cabin and enclosed wheelhouse offer weather protection, while their spacious cockpit lets you partake in outdoor pursuits. Add a simple 12V bow thruster and you gain ease of docking, too. Now there's something else to consider: outboard power.

Now owned by Brunswick, Arvor has become the latest brand for the big multinational marine giant to swing its Mercury four-stroke outboard engines. Besides helping the corporation's bottom line, there are bona fide reasons that would-be Arvor owners should consider the outboard-engine alternative. The new-generation four-strokes offer more grunt, torque and better all round



Popular option: The Arvor is affordable, reliable and economical to run. Photos: David Lockwood

performance than outboards of yore. Four-stroke outboards are also amazingly quiet, virtually smoke-free and almost as economical to run as a diesel.

Furthermore, the new range of outboard-powered Arvors let you tilt the outboard leg and prop clear of the water and flush the engine's cooling system with a hose. This way you will derive even greater reliability and ease of maintenance than a shaft-drive with all that running gear living in the water. Enter the Arvor 675 from the new

outboard-driven Sportsfish range including the 605, 755, with a new 555 to come. These boats share a good dose of intellectual property with other established boat brands in the Brunswick stable. The result is a more substantial cabin cruiser than the original European craft, with greater design intellect, intricate mouldings, beefed up stainless-steel deck gear, and large capacity live well and catch tanks to meet angling demands.

The confronting part is the vertical cabin that defies airborne and

waterborne dynamics. It's a look we're unfamiliar with, but one contrived to compete with the outboard-powered cabin cruisers from Jeanneau and Beneteau. Beyond the facade, this Brunswick boat appears a more substantial build than those high-volume French boats in our opinion.

With a 2.54m beam, the 675 Sportsfish is trailerable with a permit. However, the first two Arvor Sportsfish boats sold here were destined for a life in the water. Such are the benefits of the

aforesaid tiltable outboard leg, self-draining deck and lock-up cabin. The 675 we tested was matched to a new four-cylinder 150hp Mercury outboard. Official performance data was consistent with our harbour tests, showing 22 knots cruise at 4300rpm for 28.9 litres per hour. With a range of 254nm or about 1.40 litres per km, this is an economical rig. Top speed is 32-33 knots.

Fishing features include bow-to-stern walkaround decks, rod holders and rod storage, a bait-prep station, large plumbed live well, in-floor fish-storage tanks with pump outs, underfloor holds for gear, raw-water wash down, dual batteries and bilge pumps. The cockpit has a terrific flip-out lounges and a removable lunch table for social boating. Add a Euro-style awning for shade. Yet the 675 Sportsfish is still very much a cabin cruiser. The local package included a windlass for push-button anchoring, curtains for privacy while swinging on the hook, a 12V

fridge, pressurised freshwater supply and portable butane stove. Costing \$84,150, the 675 needed just electronics and fishing tackle. Should you want to tow the 2.5-tonne rig, add \$11,000 for a dual-axle trailer.

Between The Heads, the beamy hull proved stable with deep freeboard and padded coamings to add to your fishing comfort. But it was as we headed seawards that the 675 Sportsfish held greatest promise.

There was spray flying, thankfully not in our direction, and the outboard was doing it easy. As the cabin is taken well forward, the cockpit maximises space. The ride is a tad choppy up front, yet with all that upright glass and the clean-running four-outboard it isn't stuffy.

If you can get past the looks this is an interesting fishing platform based on one of our favourite cabin cruisers with new-generation outboard power. More at arvor.com.au.

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## MAKING WAVES

**Marine reserve review:** The incumbent government is keeping its pre-election promise to facilitate an independent review of Commonwealth Marine Reserves. "It is important that an independent review based on science is undertaken which reconsiders zoning boundaries to restore community confidence," said Minister for the Environment, Greg Hunt. New management plans will be developed in consultation with local communities, including commercial, indigenous and recreational fishers. The review will be conducted by six panels including an Expert Scientific Panel chaired by Associate Professor Bob Beeton.

**Plastic not so fantastic:** While paddle boarding around the otherwise limpid waters of North Harbour last weekend, I saw fish everywhere but swimming amid a sea of plastic. I'm not talking about the usual suspects floating past on the tide. This was submerged plastic poking from the sand and half-buried plastic bags imitating jellyfish rotting away into microplastic pollution before your very eyes. Spring and Manly coves were rife with the stuff.

**Mooring minder moved on:** As an avid SMH reader and boat owner has received a message from a Sydney boatshed where his little yacht is

moored. The operator claims to have received an urgent letter from Roads and Maritime requiring that his boat, which apparently has heavy growth on the hull, cannot stay on the moorings in its present condition. The letter claims that RMS is conducting an audit and its policy is to remove poorly maintained boats from their moorings and tow them to their Blackwattle Bay depot to be held there at the owner's expense. While we bemoan the dreaded mooring minders, this is news to us and sounds like a ruse to reclaim the mooring and drum up business.

**No-wash worries:** A controversial proposal has been tabled to extend the existing no-wash zone in Pittwater. As we all know, the current downstream boundary is an imaginary line from Longnose to Stokes points. The proposal is to extend the go-slow zone from a line from Soldiers Point at the entrance to Coaster's Retreat across to Sand(y) or Observation point at Palm Beach. This would make it a painfully long run for the many powerboaters and mechanics testing boats from moorings and marinas back near Newport. Besides, when the wind is blowing, the whole of Pittwater is awash.

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