



Off the Trailer

Boat designers are becoming increasingly clever at fitting more into less, and this Arvor Weekender is a perfect case in point. This 7m Arvor Weekender can sleep five, but it also has a compact galley, a separate toilet, a good-sized self-draining cockpit, safe walk-around side-decks and a commendable foredeck with proper anchoring facilities – even a power winch!

Now it's true that if the five people on board aren't close friends before an overnight trip on the Arvor, they certainly will be afterwards, although the journey will be done in a fair degree of comfort, and the individuals concerned will undoubtedly have plenty of fun. For a couple, or a typical family with two or three youngsters, the accommodation is wonderful.

FISHING PEDIGREE

Until this model, Arvor had focussed its efforts on fishing-oriented craft – boats with a rugged design and construction with a modern take on a traditional style. While fishing was the *raison d'être* (or 'reason for being' – Arvor is a French brand, after all!), the boats still proved family-friendly, although with some lack of enthusiasm on occasion from those less inclined to wield a rod.

Peter Collins has been the Australian Arvor distributor since 1998; he's one of those valued professionals who takes the time to ask what a client is looking for before trying to sell them a boat. Peter says he's seen many a gentleman catch 'Arvor fever' at a boat show, only to show his wife one a few days later and get the red light.

To rectify this, Arvor decided to adapt its proven hull designs, producing the Weekender to better address the male-female balance with a very comfortable enclosed cabin, dinette, two-burner stove, sink, fridge, separate toilet and so on. And all this in a package that's still fantastic for fishing.

Arvor's fishing boats range from 20ft to 28ft, and with over 350 sold here through Collins Marine, it's pretty clear they've found wide acceptance in the Australian market. The Weekender shares a similarly seaworthy hull design, although the beam is carried further forward for more interior space.

Arvor boats are designed to handle the often rough conditions of the English Channel and the



A white motorboat with blue accents and buoys is on the water. A woman in a red life vest is sitting on the deck. The background shows a city skyline across the water.

Family man

French builder Arvor is renowned for its fish-fighting platforms, but now its new Weekender is turning heads in the family boat market.

By Graham Lloyd



The cabin area is well designed for use in weather both fair and foul. Good views all round, a comfy home-like feel and all the facilities you need.



North Sea. That makes them ideal for Australian conditions, too. The hull design features strong forward sections with plenty of buoyancy, plus a full keel with a skeg for protection. The amidships diesel engine is mounted low, lowering the boat's centre of gravity and further enhancing the brand's renowned performance in a seaway.

CLEVER LAYOUT

The boarding platform has a drop-down swim ladder and an integral bracket for an auxiliary outboard. Even better is the stowage neatly moulded into the back of the boat for fenders – two either side of a central walk-through into the



Right: Compact it may be, but the galley has it all and being able to see out through those large windows as you prepare meals and snacks is a treat for the chef.

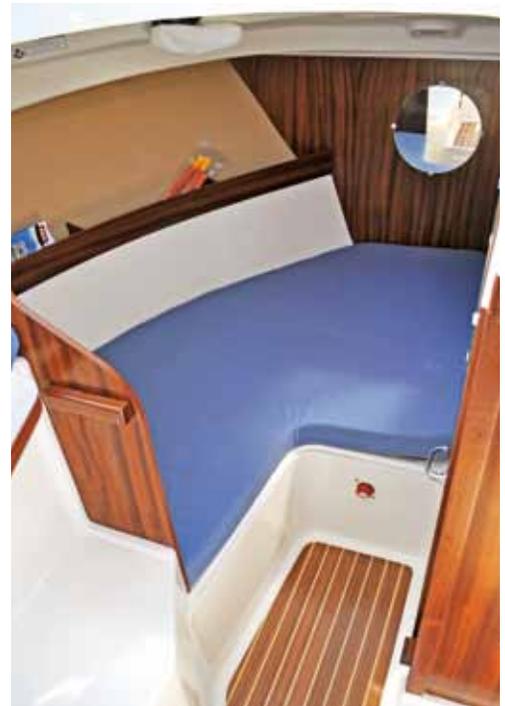
Far right: The berth in the forward cabin converts to a double with an extra cushion. Stowage areas are carpeted.

cockpit. A pull-out shower is housed in the side of the walkway, which can be closed with a drop-in panel when required.

Grabrails curve around each aft corner of the boat and have padded sections that act as backrests for the rear seats in the generously-sized cockpit. More seating is to port, with stowage below and in the starboard front corner is a step up to the wide side decks. Under the step is a storage locker that could hold a barbecue, which would neatly clamp to an aft rail.

The sole of the self-draining cockpit has imitation teak decking that looks good and is maintenance-free. A large hatch in the sole gives access to the fuel tank, transmission and other ancillaries, plus it has room for storage. A table mounts into a bracket in the floor. The rear seats can convert to a double-berth-sized sunlounge, and Peter says he can optionally provide a shade cover extending from the back of the cabin.

A sliding door in the cabin bulkhead affords easy access into the interior of the Weekender, where there's a dinette to port and a small galley to starboard. The dinette has L-shaped lounges around a table that lowers to form a base that, with an extra cushion, converts to a double berth. More storage is under the back seats and there's a hatch nearby that lifts for engine checks and maintenance.





The driving position is forward on the right and the back of the seat cunningly folds forward to reveal a plumbed sink. Aft of that is a slide-out marble-look work bench over a two-burner methyated-spirit stove, with a locker for kitchen goodies underneath. Aft again is the 12V fridge, with a small food preparation area above. The galley is compact, but it's entirely workable and makes excellent use of the available space.

Large windows bring lots of natural light into the cabin, with an overhead hatch and a sliding starboard window for ventilation. An angled central panel above the windscreen contains a standard-equipment VHF radio and an AM/FM/CD stereo.

The overall cabin layout works really well, with up to, say, four people able to sit around the dinette and keep the skipper company. Anyone could sit facing the skipper for easier conversation, or relax facing forward with legs stretched out along the side lounge to very comfortably watch the world go by. The area also means everyone has a great view whilst dining.

A step down leads into the forward cabin with a separate toilet compartment on the right. It has a portable loo, a basin with pressure water and a storage locker plus a porthole for light

through the day. Down the left side of the cabin is a three-quarter berth that converts to a double if required. There's also another single berth running back under the seating of the dinette. In front of the toilet compartment is a storage cabinet and a shelf down the port side would take smaller items. An overhead hatch brings in light and fresh air, whilst there's a mirror on the bow bulkhead. A balanced blending of carpet, fabric and woodwork makes the cabin quite welcoming, and it's also eminently practical and low maintenance – as is the whole boat.

PLEASING POWER

The engine is a Cummins CMD 150hp four-cylinder, turbocharged, common rail diesel that is surprisingly smooth and quiet. It operates a traditional straight-shaft drive through a hydraulic gearbox, with a 2:1 reduction ratio.

The helm station is neatly set out, with a handsome wood-rim wheel. A small, slightly recessed dash panel in front of the wheel houses an analogue tacho, with an inset multi-function digital display that cycles through read-outs for a wealth of engine management information. There's also an analogue fuel gauge plus a magnetic compass. To the right of the wheel is a bank

The high hull sides forward are indicative of a boat designed to handle offshore conditions and the clean running of the hull promises efficiency and economy.

*the Arvor
would not
be tiring on
long cruises*



The driving position is top-class and the inclusion of an electric anchor windlass and a bow thruster are welcome standard features.

of switches, and up a bit is the control for the standard bow thruster – that's impressive in this size of boat, and very useful, too.

To the left of the wheel are two more controls for happier boating – a set of rocker switches for

the standard trim tabs and a rotary switch for the electric anchor windlass. The anchor self-stows on the bow roller and can be seen from the driving seat, so it's a snap to lower or retrieve.

The helm seat is deceptive as it looks a bit small, but it's comfortable, with a very supportive and secure back. Neither the wheel nor seat is adjustable, but their relationship was close to being right for me. The throttle/shift control on the side panel was just a tad too far away, but anyone with marginally longer arms would find it perfect.

Visibility is excellent and the quarter frames in the screen are further aft than in most boats, so the view forward is panoramic. The steering is light (five turns lock-to-lock) and the trim tabs are effective without being sensitive. You don't have to use the tabs, but they do lower the bow a bit at higher speeds for a more comfortable view ahead and they're handy for balancing the boat laterally if required.

WORTHY PERFORMANCE

The Weekender was a pleasure to drive; I could idle along at 6kts (11km/h) or charge along at up

INTRODUCING THE ALL NEW

Arvor Weekender

7 metres of Comfort, Safety & Style.



NEW



DIESEL



SHAFT DRIVE



SELF DRAINING COCKPIT



WALK AROUND BOW



LOCKABLE CABIN



ENCLOSED WC



BERTHS

For more information or to arrange an inspection go to www.arvor.com.au or phone (02) 9319 5222

to just on 21kts (39km/h). The hull responded quickly to the wheel and could turn as tightly as I'd ever want – warn the crew before you try full lock at speed! The gearshift was very smooth, as was the ride of the boat through wakes and wash. We didn't have a chance to run outside, but the Arvor reputation and the feel of the boat during our run are clear indications of the Weekender's ability to take care of itself in rougher waters.

On longer cruises – when you're likely to want to move around a bit – you could stand to drive for a while, either in front of the seat (admittedly a tight fit) or standing in the centre of the cabin, where it's still easy to steer and operate the controls.

From a carefree 6.3kts (11.7km/h) at 1600rpm, the Cummins diesel lifted the hull on plane and ran on to 10.2kts (19km/h) at 2800rpm, whilst a very enjoyable cruise speed was found at 3200rpm and 13.4kts (25km/h). Top speed was 20.9kts (38.7km/h) at 4100rpm and even then noise levels in the cabin were low enough for normal conversation. Sound-reducing foam under the engine hatch and some fabric-covered panels on the cabin sides helped in that regard, and it means the Arvor would not be tiring on long cruises. Just the opposite, in fact – this is a boat on which you could cheerfully cruise all day, thanks

SPECIFICATIONS: ARVOR WEEKENDER

| | |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Hull length: | 6.96m |
| LOA: | 7.65m |
| Beam: | 2.78m |
| Draft: | 0.85m |
| Weight: | 2300kg |
| Sleeping capacity: | 5 persons |
| Fuel capacity: | 135lt |
| Water capacity: | 100lt |
| Power: | Cummins CMD (112kW/150hp) |
| Transmission: | Shaft drive, twin-disc Technodrive |
| Priced from: | \$115,000 (subject to exchange rate) |

PERFORMANCE:

| RPM | KNOTS |
|------|-----------------|
| 1600 | 6.3 (11.7km/h) |
| 2600 | 8.9 (16.5km/h) |
| 3200 | 13.4 (24.8km/h) |
| 3600 | 16.9 (31.3km/h) |
| 4100 | 20.9 (38.7km/h) |

For more information, tel: (02) 9319 5222 or visit: www.arvor.com.au.



Until this model, Arvor had focussed its efforts on fishing-oriented craft

to the economical diesel, the efficient hull and the comfy cabin.

The Weekender is priced at around \$115,000, depending on the exchange rate, and that's very good value for what's on offer. You'll need to factor in the price of an anti-foul if you're keeping the boat in the water, or alternatively, a trailer. With a beam of 2.78m, the Weekender would need a wide load permit and sign to tow, but lots of other boats this size do that without trouble.

Our review boat had been sold before it even hit the water. A couple loved the style and are planning to put it to good use with their family and grand-kids. Peter is expecting a number of current Arvor fishing boat owners to make the changeover to take advantage of the Weekender's more family-friendly layout. Arvor's catchphrase is 'Comfort, Safety, Style', and this boat delivers on all three counts.. 

The spacious cockpit is surrounded by good features – note the wide side decks, excellent fender storage, trim tabs underwater, auxiliary outboard bracket, drop-down swim ladder, centre walkway from the boarding platform (it has a drop-in fill panel) and lots of well-placed hand rails.