

**BOAT  
AUSTRALIAN  
BOATING  
TEST**



*Riviera Marine  
have done it  
this time.  
They've  
produced a  
new cruiser  
that is such  
good value,  
there's no point  
waiting to talk  
it over with the  
bank manager.  
He's down  
there at the  
wharf already,  
organising his  
own!*



# RIVIERA 27 MINI MAXI

**Y**ou've got to give credit where it is due. Riviera's Bill Barry-Cotter has done it again. He's produced a brand new 27 foot cruiser that is destined to turn the boating market upside down.

He's accepted the challenge of the second-hand boat market, and produced a first rate mini-maxi that throws out the basic challenge: why buy an old, worn out timber or (early) GRP cruiser in the vital \$60,000-\$80,000 price range, when you can (now) buy a brand new, state-of-the-art GRP Riviera four berth cruiser with everything you need for a fabulous time on the water, for less than \$70,000?

That is not a misprint. The new Riviera 27 Express hardtop cruiser, fitted with a silky smooth Volvo V-8 270 hp sterndrive, actually costs just \$67,700!

What's the catch? There is none — in fact, the opposite is true. This is probably the best handling and most seaworthy Riv yet produced, and is certainly one of the most efficiently built.

Let's take a look at how it all comes together.

### Design

From the outset, Riviera had a number of specific goals to achieve with this new boat.

They wanted to bridge the gap between a family selling out of a largish trailer boat and moving up to a moored or berthed cruiser.

As well, they wanted to beat the classic dilemma so many boating families face when trying to decide whether it is better to buy a (possibly) bigger boat second-hand, or a (smaller) brand new model.

Barry-Cotter's Riviera Marine is Australia's largest boat builder, and renown throughout the boating industry (both here and overseas) as one of the most cost efficient builders in the land. He is absolutely unrelenting in his determination to reduce the labour component in the boat manufacturing

process.

"It's the only way we can ever hope to be competitive in a country where the market is as small as it is in Australia," he has repeatedly stated to his ever-growing team of contractors and staff.

The new Riviera 27 is unquestionably the best example yet of the Barry-Cotter boatbuilding philosophy at work.

Here is a super comfortable, four berth cruiser, having full standing headroom below, lock-up security and privacy, a completely separate shower and toilet compartment, big, roomy dinette for the whole family, a wide, flat self draining cockpit, all in a 30+ knot performance package that is put together in a record breaking 75-80 man hours!

The design is a beauty.

The boat is not a flybridge cruiser, although it shares the Riviera 27 Flybridge hull shape, but surprisingly, not its hull tooling.

The Express was designed from the outset as a single station cruiser, powered

**TBM  
RETRO  
BOAT TEST:**  
Unchanged,  
as first  
published,  
written and  
photographed  
by Peter  
Webster in  
1988