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**TRAILERBOAT HEAVEN IN NSW MAKOCRAFT'S AFFORDABLE 445 CATS ABOARD
JETSKI HANDLING TIPS NEW SEAWIND 1170 SANCTUARY COVE SENSATIONS**

SPANISH STEPS

The De Antonio D50 from Spain is anything but plain, boasting a double-stepped, outboard-powered hull and a layout suited to both fiestas and siestas.



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Photography: Ocean
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As dusk descends, imagine switching on the spa lights

Top: The D50 Coupé's class-leading rear sunpad conceals the outboard well and tender lazarette.

Below: The bow is where the spa party will be held, or you can insert sunpad cushions.



I knew a guy, a late mate in fact, who invariably infused life with a Hawaiian shirt of colour. Who schooled us in the value of cocktails at sunset, sunrises in a spa, KFC on Christmas Eve, and travel to remote isles wearing only a sarong.

The De Antonio D50 Coupé would've been his kind of boat, as it was born to delight a crowd and dazzle with its handling abilities. In our test boat's case, orange crush cushions and distinctive dusty grey topsides accentuated its ample presence for those who like to be seen, if not heard.

Tall topsides, plumb bow, bold angles and sharp corners all further separate the super-sized dayboat from the flock of curved, conservative white boats

occupying nearby berths. Below the waterline is an equally modern deep-vee, double-stepped hull form.

Brilliantly hidden out of sight, meanwhile, are dual 600hp Mercury outboards, or up to four 400s if you're of American persuasion. The latter will motivate the 50-footer to over 50 knots (92.6 km/h), while the 600s are good for 43 knots (79.6 km/h) as you'll learn later.

Perhaps not surprisingly, De Antonio Yachts emanates from Spain – the nation famous for flamenco dancing, sangria and the party island of Ibiza. The company was founded 12 years ago in Barcelona and builds nine models from 28ft (8.5m) to the flagship D50. Perth-based BoatingCo is the Australian importer, while Alexander Marine handles the East Coast.

EASY ENTRY

Stepping aboard, the D50's Flexiteek-laid aft boarding platform is a high-low arrangement with concertina steps to starboard. A recessed swimladder takes over from there.

As with all De Antonios, the outboards are concealed beneath a vast padded sunlounge, which affords the major benefits of inboard engines – uninterrupted boarding platform and sound deadening – coupled with the efficiency, quietness, shallow draft and servicing advantages of outboards.



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The sizeable V12 powerheads have generous tilt room while also being mounted relatively wide apart to assist with low-speed agility. The hydraulic-lift sunpad also conceals a large lateral lazarette with a davit that can lift out a 2.2m fully inflated tender with Torqeedo outboard.

Wide, deep side decks invite you into the cockpit, with a carbonfibre siderail amidships providing a sporty support for your hand. Then it's onwards to the bow via the central, semi-enclosed pilothouse.

PARTY STARTER

In the test boat's case, a very cool reason to head forward is an optional 2.5m jacuzzi. As dusk

descends, imagine switching on the spa lights and partying late to the beats emanating from eight speakers located throughout the boat.

The same foredeck moulding doubles as a three-person sunpad when underway. The hardtop's forward overhang provides partial shade, supplemented by an awning slung on carbonfibre poles. There is also an aft-facing settee immediately forward.

The anchoring arrangement is elegantly concealed by a recessed track and finishes with a protruding sprit, on which the pick is stored and deployed. The test boat had 60m of chain residing in a generous locker.

ALL-WEATHER PROTECTION

The term 'Coupé' refers to the all-weather enclosure atop the D50's hull, distinguishing the model from its T-topped Open brethren. It can be closed off in inclement conditions or when running offshore, and cooled by air-conditioning.

Sunlight floods through an opening at the rear of the hardtop, or the gap can be enclosed with a sliding fabric cover. Further forward are deeply tinted sunroof windows fixed into black cross beams. Opening side windows afford cross-ventilation, although I'd rather have doors here for direct side-deck access.

The cockpit is an entertainer's delight, the dinette having twin drop-leaf pedestal tables to

accommodate six to eight dinner settings, utilising a C-shaped settee and ottomans that stow within the settee arms.

There's an adjacent outdoor galley to starboard, with electric barbecue, sink, 85lt under-bench fridge and storage cupboards. To port is a preparation bench and second fridge, with a walkway left between the two mouldings to access the helm.

HANDSOME HELM

The helm itself is set to starboard and faced by twin slide-adjustable pedestal seats with high backs and bolsters. There are two more bucket seats to port, beautifully stitched.

The all-black dash is attractively trimmed with carbonfibre. It looks sensational, especially with the integration of twin 12in Simrad NSX-12 multifunction displays. The layout places the throttles perfectly under your right hand and joystick under the left, book-ending the wheel.

Beneath the joystick binnacle is an optional Lewmar thruster control, so the two can be worked in tandem, while a Zipwake panel is close to the throttle binnacle.

DOWN BELOW

Heading below, your second step is onto the return arm of an L-shaped stone benchtop, wooden strip inserts preventing slippage and scuffing. Three more conventional timber steps lead you the rest of the way.

Multiple layout options are available, depending on preference. The test boat's V-berth cabin is enclosed and has a private shower to port and head compartment to starboard. Large topside windows come into their own here as there's no overhead hatch – something of a safety concern and a missed opportunity for ventilation. Mirrored locker doors help to amplify the light and spaciousness.

Enclosed by a sliding door, the day head is to starboard in the main atrium, featuring a separate hand basin and walk-in shower/toilet cubicle.

The mid cabin occupies the full beam, again with hull windows both sides. Having good sitting headroom, the space is devoted to a saloon lounge-cum-guest suite (the central table converts to a queen-sized, centreline island berth). On hot days and cool evenings, this where you and your guests would sit, sip a cocktail, watch



The D50 Coupé WON an international 'Best for Family' award



TV and enjoy the air-conditioning driven by a diesel generator.

OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE

The first thing you notice about the twin Merc 600s is how incredibly quiet they are, especially with the sunpad's sound insulation. Even at full cruise speed there's just 80dB of noise at the helm, and none of the vibration commonly found with diesel shaft and pod installations.

Spinning 24.5in pitch props, time to plane is a mere seven seconds. There's no turbo-lag, of course, and the two-speed gearboxes work

Top: Showing good use of space, the cupboard benchtop forms part of the companionway steps.

Above: The forward cabin has ample headroom and gains natural light from topside and cabin windows.

Above: With its efficient underwater sections and twin 600hp outboards, the De Antonio runs high and dry.


Below: The helm station not only looks great but scores points for ergonomic excellence.





I didn't get to experience the De Antonio in a cross swell but the broad beam and flat chines should help counter those flat and tall topsides.

The D50 Coupé won an international 'Best For Family' award last year thanks to this heady blend of performance, accommodation and entertainment excellence. Your friends will love it equally, and I defy anyone not to smile while driving.

De Antonio truly puts the fun in both 'funky' and 'function'. 

imperceptibly, other than when decelerating. Mercury's Active Trim system and the Zipwakes ensured a level ride throughout.

The D50's happy place ranges either side of 4000rpm for 25 to 30 knots (46 to 55.5km/h). At 23 knots (42.6km/h) the motors burn 180lt in total, rising to 250lt at 30 knots. Flat chat we saw 43 knots (79.6km/h) as the motors eventually hit their rev limit.

For a beamy, high-sided, 11.5-tonne 50-footer, the De Antonio could be thrown through impossibly tight turns, losing only a few knots. Those twin hull steps improve efficiency as the hull rides high and dry, leaving a runabout-like wake, while chop is cushioned by the finer forward sections leading back to a 23-degree transom deadrise.

Top right: The outboard well beneath the sunpad is where the magic happens, taking anything from twin 600 to four 400hp outboards while hiding them from sight.

Below: The D50 Coupé's performance and layout is well suited to harbour dayboat use.

| DE ANTONIO D50 COUPÉ | |
|--|--|
| LOA: | 14.9m |
| Beam: | 4.4m |
| Draft: | 0.7m |
| Displacement: | 11.5t |
| Fuel capacity: | 1500lt |
| Water capacity: | 450lt |
| Power (max): | 1600hp |
| Power (as tested): | 2 x 600hp Mercury V12 Verado outboards |
| Price as tested: | \$2.25M |
| More information: BoatingCo, tel (08) 6325 4070. Web: boatingco.com.au. Alexander Marine, tel (07) 3523 6430. Web: alexandermarineaust.com.au | |

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