

# Boat Report — Doral 250SE

Clever design solutions and enjoyable handling help this Canadian sportscruiser make its mark.





**A**lthough undoubtedly North American in style, Dorals have a different feel to them from other transatlantic imports. There are other influences apparent. Perhaps this is because they are made not simply in Canada but in French Canada.

The styling of their 250 model is firmly sporting. The sleek lines of its all-white hull and deck are set off by subtle striping and graphics, with a very tidy stern finishing it all off. The least successful part of the design is the forward-angled GRP radar arch, appearing too dominant from some viewpoints, but it is an optional extra; the stainless steel alternative version has less impact, although it is in danger of appearing an afterthought.

There is a familiar layout to

## Forward cabin

The main cabin area has a light and spacious feel for what is a fairly compact craft. Quality



fabrics and sculpted mouldings give it a pleasant contemporary ambience.

The dinette's sculpted table makes sitting space a little tight, but it is very stable thanks to its

twin-leg support. It drops to form the infill for the berth, and a generous berth it is too, measuring 6ft 3in (1.90m) by 4ft 2in (1.27m), partly thanks to the way the backrest cushions hinge up to give added room.

A deep shelf, supplemented by a shallower one at a higher level, runs behind the seat-backs, and the bases form one continuous carpeted locker, with four access points. At the starboard end of the seating is a hanging cupboard, and on the outside of this is a shelf unit behind a perspex door, housing a radio/cassette player.

In addition to the portholes, a combination of four deck lights and hatches ensure good natural light gets in, and there are sufficient spotlights around too.



## Galley

If you want the compact galley area to port to function as such, you have to pay above the boat's base price for the Platinum specification, because just about all the galley facilities are incorporated in this, including the stove, fridge, microwave and hot water system.

Assuming you stump up for these extras, you get a stainless steel sink with a mixer tap and a single-burner hob with a wooden chopping-board cover set into the work surface. In the base of this unit is the fridge, and a locker whose door has a slide-out towel-holder fitted to the back.

This storage space is supplemented by another locker to the left, and a double set at eye-level above.

The electrics panel is mounted behind a perspex door above the hob, with an open tray under it.



the accommodation, with a vee-berth/dinette forward, a galley to port, a WC to starboard and a midships cabin, the latter tucked away behind the steps down from what is a particularly sociable cockpit.

Interestingly, the 250SE is half the price of its sister the 300SE, with the same engine and a similar specification. That is not to say the bigger boat is overpriced, and it is a substantially larger craft, but it demonstrates the value that is offered by small sportscruisers.

We tested a 250 with, appropriately, 250hp, delivered by a single Mercruiser 5.7L petrol engine. This installation will probably suit most owners, though those wanting more rapid progress can opt for

## Helm

The helm position's double seat has fore-and-aft adjustment, though the flat profile of the base cushion means there is no side support. The wooden wheel tilts, and, with the adjustment of the seat and the footrest, it is easy to get comfortable.

When you prefer a standing position, the seat moves far enough back so as not to be digging into the back of your legs. When you are seated, the throttle falls nicely to hand and you can rest your elbow on the coaming for better control.

The dashboard displays the instrumentation



and controls in an orderly manner in four panels, and there is a generous blank panel to the left of the dash for any electronics an owner might wish to add.

A curved perspex cover

provided behind the seat is presumably for charts, although it is too remote from the helm and compass to be of full benefit. The screen offers decent weather protection.

## Decks



There being only residual side decks, access to the bow is through the opening centre section of the windscreen. Moulded steps to the left of the console help you get up and through.

The foredeck has a sunpad, with grabrails along each side although you would not want to be using it when underway. A bow roller and an anchor locker are the standard features forward.

Pop-up cleats help the clean, uncluttered overall appearance of the boat.



## Cockpit

Though the limited floorspace in the cockpit betrays the real length of the 250SE, the seating provision is that of a larger sportscruiser, thanks to some clever design.

The after section of the U-shaped aft settee slides backwards, overhanging the bathing platform, which, with the aid of infill cushions, increases both the seating and floor areas. Optional further infills can convert the whole area into a large sunbathing platform.

Linking the forward and aft sections of the cockpit, and helping to give a very sociable feel to the whole area, is a reclining settee to port, giving seating for two or an extra sunbathing option for one. Attention to design detail is shown by the provision of a recess for the arm of a sunbathing passenger, and a swing-out drinks-holder beside the companionway.

The cockpit table is an optional extra, as is an al-fresco galley unit with sink.



was good, and the boat kept up a good pace in the turns without any dramas, coming round smoothly.

Its slab sides means it is susceptible to crosswinds, but the trim tab adjustment is excellent, almost too responsive in fact.

This is a fairly heavy craft so it does not get airborne easily, and there was no heavy slamming during our test. In an increasingly choppy sea there was quite a bit of spray being thrown around, but the cockpit stayed dry.

## Conclusions

This Doral is a good all-round performer, and most enjoyable to use. It also has some innovative design features that

260hp, 300hp, 310hp or 385hp, giving a decidedly sporty edge to the hull's performance.

## Performance & handling

Our test boat was a bit slower onto the plane than expected, and we recorded a time of 5.5sec from standstill to 15 knots, with 25 knots achieved in just under 11 sec.

The highest speed we recorded on our radar gun was 37 knots, with the engine pulling 4800rpm. Dropping 1000rpm brings a more relaxed cruising pace of 27 knots, along with a most acceptable noise level of 78dB(A) in the cockpit.

The hull suggested that it is more than capable of dealing with the extra horsepower which can be specified, especially given the Bravo 3 drive.

We found the handling of the 250SE excellent, into a lively sea and when crossing wakes. Response to the steering wheel

## Toilet

Fully moulded, the toilet compartment to starboard has a decent amount of space, just about offering standing headroom for those of average stature.

The moulded sink incorporates a mixer tap with shower lead. A cupboard above it has a mirror door, and another below it has a toilet-roll holder mounted on the inside of the door so the paper does not get wet.

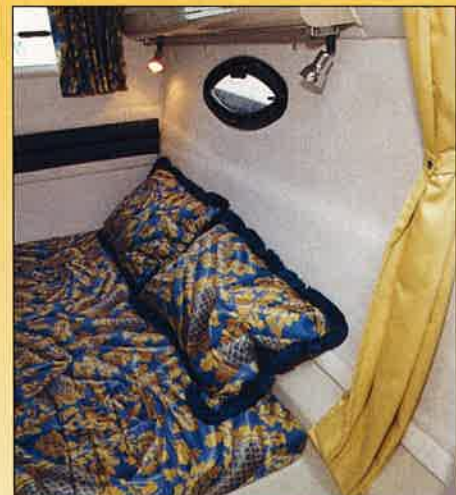
A shower curtain ensures water stays within the draining part of the compartment.



## Midships cabin

This midships cabin is no afterthought, being well fitted-out and secluded from the rest of the cabin by a curtain. Generous cushions make it a relaxing as well as a sleeping area, complete with fairly generous headroom for a berth of this nature.

The berth itself measures 6ft 1in (1.85m) by 4ft 2in (1.27m), and a large foot locker and a shelf take care of stowage. Plenty of daylight filters through the cabin's own portholes, and there are spotlights for use between dusk and dawn.







## Engineroom

There is a small hatch in the engine cover for quick visual inspections, but for a proper look the starboard and centre sections of the aft cockpit sole lift on gas struts, giving excellent access to what is a very tidy installation.

If any attention is necessary beyond the regular checks, there is room forward and on each side of the engine to get at things. The two batteries are mounted to port, the calorifier aft to starboard, and the greywater holding tank forward of this.

## Bathing platform

A small transom door to port leads from the cockpit to the bathing platform, which can be used only when the aft section of settee is not in its slide-back position.

Facilities here include a swing-down boarding ladder to starboard, concealed under a hatch, and a shower in a locker above. Two grab-bars, mounted on the transom at water and standing levels, make for secure boarding.

A larger locker in the centre of the transom contains the battery master switches, and also useful stowage for the shorepower lead.



will add to an owner's overall enjoyment of the craft, with good attention to detail.

Our main complaint would be that you can find yourself obliged to pay over the odds for extras: assuming you want the basic facilities in the galley, you have to

specify the Platinum package, at £2720 ex VAT, which also includes a battery charger/isolator, a VHF radio, a remote spotlight, cockpit carpeting, the foredeck sunpad, the dinette table, simulated wood-finish cabinets and

wooden companionway stairs, some of which you might prefer to do without.

However, the 250SE comes with a specification close to that of larger boats in the Doral range, with the styling and presence on the water to live up to it. □



## DORAL 250

### BUILD

glass-reinforced plastic

### RCD

build category C

### DIMENSIONS

#### LOA

25ft 4in (7.72m)

#### BEAM

8ft 6in (2.62m)

#### DRAUGHT

7ft 8in (2.34m)

with drive down;

3ft 5in (1.04m)

with drive up

### DISPLACEMENT

5570lb (2351kg)

### FUEL CAPACITY

69gal (315lt)

### WATER CAPACITY

25gal (114lt)

### ENGINES

single 250hp Mercruiser

5.7L/Bravo 3

### PRICE

from £36,765 ex VAT

### SUPPLIERS

Armada Yacht Services,  
Queen Anne's Battery,  
Plymouth, Devon PL4 0LP.  
Tel: 01752 672828.

### BUILDERS

Doral Boats,  
1991 3rd Avenue, Quebec  
G9T 2W6, Canada.

