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Bavaria 30 on test
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BOATS TESTED

Bavaria 30

Bavaria's idea to revamp its best-selling 29 was bold. For similar money the 30 sports a fixed sunpad and a great guest cabin, but was it worth the effort?

REPORT BY CARL RICHARDSON

There are two schools of thought. The laid-back approach – "If it ain't broke, don't fix it" – which could be code for resting on your laurels. And the other, perhaps more studious belief, buzzes to the tune of "a change is as good as a rest."

Bavaria clearly likes to buzz. Its 29 model was one of Europe's best selling sportscruisers. Loads

of people really liked the boat. So, obviously, they decided to change it.

Design & Build

Bavaria is such a great believer in the 'change equals a rest' theory, that on the new 30 they've laid on 6ft of very comfy sunpad for you to lie out on across the stern. The trouble is that this large

area of fixed loafing space sits right where there used to be seating. The Mediterranean market clearly has had its way here. It's a great brochure moment: the girls lying out aft as the chaps start at the helm, quite possibly smiling. The sun shines and the seas do their best to resemble a mirror and all is well. But for Northern Europeans like us, the thought of getting your significant

other to hang on for dear life to flat upholstery, while you hammer over the chop, seems a bit unwise, to say the least.

We think the seating that used to adorn the old 29 will be missed by many, but this revamp by J&J Design isn't all bad, far from it. For one thing the new deck layout hugely improves on boating practicalities, gaining you masses more deck stowage. It also looks very neat, and imitating a design favoured by larger sportscruisers, it pushes the remaining cockpit seating up to the single helm position, so every one gets to enjoy the ride.

Bavaria has also upped the ante on deck hardware and detail, the stainless steel that caps the wrap-around windscreen is a high-spec case

in point. Behind the scenes, cable runs in the forward cabin are far tidier on this boat than those seen on the 29 we tested last year. However, certain areas of wiring are still shoddy, such as the unnecessary scale model of Spaghetti Junction found behind a mid cabin locker, and the use of expanding foam to support furniture bases.

But let's get back to the positives. The new hull is the same reliable one that was used on the 29, but within it the below decks design is new. The remit was simple: make it bigger and better. They have certainly delivered.

Design & build

Minimal seating
could hurt sales



FACT FILE
Bavaria 30
LOA: 31ft 6in (9.6m)
PRICE: from
£95,996 (with a
single engine)
TOP SPEED:
35 knots (with
twin 190hp D3s)

Accommodation

The old 29 was the proud owner of what we reckon was the best mid cabin in its class. But if we were splitting hairs the main cabin itself was a bit of a tunnel, walled in by the galley's mahogany cabinetry and the toilet compartment. The 30's interior shows no sign of hitching up to the current modernist movement favoured by some builders, but it does feel incredibly spacious. Sticking to Bavaria's traditional boaty style, the 30 opens out at the foot of the stairwell creating a lighter, far more welcoming cabin. But that is during the day. At night the crippling shortage of light fittings is still a problem. The Bavaria 30 only has a few dimly lit spotlights dotted in the interior.



The long spread of seating that wraps inside the bow is good for a bit of comfy evening rest. And to turn this comfy seating into a good stretch of double berth the backrests simply pull away to make up the berth in-fills, which eliminates the problem of storing any additional cushioning. If you cruise as a couple you might not ever need to use them, as the separate guest mid cabin is such a great space there really is no need to kip anywhere else. A hatch just beyond the guest cabin's separate door provides some light and ventilation, plus there is another port. You also get a small sofa, loads of storage, and a new cabinet adding to the old hanging locker.

Storage across the boat is good. As well as the more basic voids under seats there is a useful hanging locker in the main cabin, plus eight eye-line cabinets around the seating area.

The galley also looks quite functional featuring that modern rarity, a fiddle, and plenty of locker space. The alcohol stove is not a favourite of mine

Accommodation

One of the best has become even better



but you get a microwave as well. Opposite is a comparatively small, but quite useable, toilet compartment. It is a bit bland in here but a teak shower tray adds colour.

The surround seating is stylish and comfortable



The toilet compartment is rather plain

Exterior

So you are down on seating in the cockpit, but you are most certainly up on stowage. Under the sunpad lies a deep well, split into four compartments. You can get all your fenders, lines and pretty much anything else you care to stow away in here. Once you've grabbed your lines and fenders you can get easily up onto the side decks via some scalloped-out steps. The flanks of the boat do push right aft though, covering up the bathing platform's sides and making access aboard trickier than it might be. The foredeck is a doddle to move around on with its gripped surface and sturdy, if slightly low, stanchion rails.

In the main cockpit the crescent seating will take four adults – just about. The standard wet bay comes with just a sink, but there is space for a fridge and grill to be optioned in. For those starry summer evenings the forward raked arch comes with two down-lighters and exterior speakers, and Bavaria's on-board touch pad system at the

helm comes with a volume control. If the weather turns it is worth knowing that Bavaria's importers, Ancasta, use a local Southampton trimmer to make canopies for its boats. At £3400 you pay for

Exterior

Sunpad design delivers hidden practicality



the privilege but it looks really well made and smart, delivering full standing headroom through the cockpit and breaking down to a bimini or spray hood.

“The 30 opens out at the foot of the stairwell creating a lighter, more welcoming cabin”

Engine options and access

Bavaria is still happy to fit an ultra economical single 310hp diesel in the 30, an option that will help push the boat's price down towards £100,000 inc VAT, and the speed up to something close to 40 knots. But I'm not going to talk about that any more because none of you will take my advice and order a single engine. You will prefer instead to opt for the slower and more expensive twin set up. Bavaria offers petrol engines but for most the 160hp or 190hp D3s (as we tested) will be the choice – red diesel or not.

With the electric hatch raised up, the engine bay is vast, deep and actually quite tidy. As ever with Bavaria there is zero insulation in here, but the deck wash has been applied with more care and the finish is all the better for it. The main

Engine options & access

Good engine line up and a big bay



problem with the bay is how to get in it. So deep is the bilge that many will not be able to stretch a leg down to the starboard engine. A ladder will resolve the issue.

Performance and handling

The old 29 was a very easy boat to use and enjoy. The hull may not have been the most dynamic and the outdrive leg trim only had a limited effect on the ride, but it had a balance and poise at sea that made for some leisurely but fun cruising. The new hull is no different, but the legs seem to be even more out of touch, and that is a problem.

At slower cruising speeds there is a lot of vibration and cavitation from the DuoProp drives, and the feedback at the helm can be akin to running over gravel. Put the boat over into a turn at 20 knots and the legs simply lose interest. However, the faster you go the better the ride quality gets. The D3s run well as we recorded a top speed of 35 knots, which is faster than the



Plenty of room for all your fenders under the sunpad, but boarding via the bathing platform is a bit tricky

Sessa and Jeanneau 30 we've already tested with the same engines. Either the new layout has altered the hull's balance or the legs are simply not set up right. I would suggest it is the latter. Volvo's DuoProp outdrives usually offer first-class grip and performance but these were not happy trimming out past -2. They really wanted to stay tucked right in between 20-25 knots, which

meant the hull couldn't lift out. Looking at our running shots and video footage you can see that the planing area is too far forward. Up past 30 knots the ride smoothed out, but that's not going to be much consolation in choppy conditions if you want to keep your vertebrae intact.

From the helm, the adjustable bolster seat allows you get into a great driving position close



A neat anchor locker keeps the hook out of sight



You'll need a ladder to get into the huge engine bay!



The galley looks a bit basic but the mid guest cabin benefits from a separate door, good headroom and a sofa

BOAT REPORT

BAVARIA 30

to the smart steering wheel and EDC throttles. The 8in plotter is set square in front of you. The new, and very flash, stainless steel screen provides little protection, but you will be more concerned by the roar coming from the uninsulated engine bay. This is a loud boat, the noisiest sports cruiser we have tested since, well, the last Bavaria we looked at. I suggest putting a call into 3M (other brands of insulation are available – but they aren't as good) and get the bay deadened.

Performance & handling

Outdrive adjustment needed but we know the hull works



Specification and value

Bavaria plays the same game as many boat builders, in that its basic price really means a basic boat. Fortunately, their base prices are also very low so the potentially knock down £95,000 inc VAT price for a single D6 310hp is still vaguely exciting even after the options list has been raided. As for the extras, it seems that what a boat builder offers with one hand it quite freely takes with the other. The BMB 30's UK spec includes an amazing line up of expensive kit thrown in: a bow thruster, trim tabs, holding tank and a tonneau cover. But then you need to factor in the £7500 Ancasta charges for delivery and commissioning.

Bavaria's biggest problem is its main rival. Jeanneau's Prestige 30 (tested January 2007) is similar on spec, comes with the same 190hp twin engines and a hardtop for around £115,000.

So here's a final little nudge towards buying a single engine boat. Bavaria's D6 comes with EVC controls as standard. On the D3s they work out at £2500 per throttle leg! And remember your

engines still operate from a cable, the electronic bit only runs down to a solenoid switch box. I'll ask the question again: are you sure you still want a twin?

Specification & value

Single engine gives fuel for thought



Verdict

A great all-round cruising package is put on hold by the boat's ride. If the leg positioning proves easy to put right (and we think it will be) the 30 will go on to be one of Bavaria's biggest sellers yet.

6/10

MBM rating



Bavaria 30 technical data



performance

Engines	twin Volvo Penta D3-190						
Configuration	5cyl 2.4lt 190hp @ 3000rpm						
conditions	wind westerly force 2 sea state calm						
Load	fuel 100% water 25% crew 1						
Rpm	knots	lph	gph	mpg	range	noise	
2800	20	30	7	2.85	280	85	
3000	23	35	8	2.87	282	86	
3300	28.2	48	11	2.54	252	85	
3500	30.5	55	12	2.54	252	86	
3800	33.2	66	15	2.20	218	86	
4000	35.2	76	17	2.07	204	91	

Range figures quoted above are in miles based on standard fuel tanks and include a 20% margin. GPH & MPG refer to imperial gallons. These figures may vary due to weather conditions, air, water, engine temperature, crew numbers, hull fouling, fuel quality and other issues. Noise readings in dB(A) and were taken in the saloon.

key dimensions

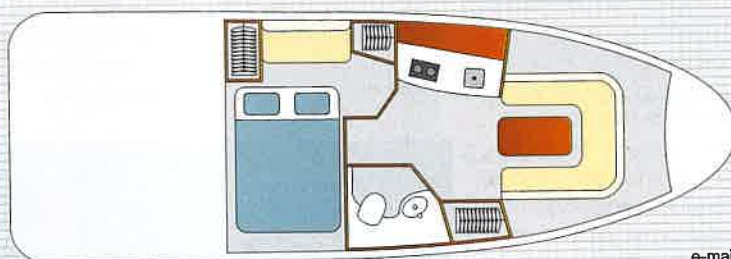
HEADROOM IN SALOON	6ft 2in
WIDTH OF SIDEDECKS	6in

specifications

BUILD	GRP
RCD	Category B
LENGTH OVERALL	31ft 6in (9.6m)
BEAM	9ft 8in (2.9m)
DRAUGHT (leg up)	2ft 2in (0.65m)
AIR DRAUGHT	9ft 1in (2.75m)
DISPLACEMENT	5.5 tonnes
FUEL CAPACITY	123gal (560lt)
WATER CAPACITY	24gal (110lt)
BERTH	4-6

prices

STANDARD BOAT	inc VAT
With single 310hp diesel	£95,996
With twin 190hp diesels	£109,290
COCKPIT FRIDGE	£692
CANOPY	£3900
BOW THRUSTER	£STD
TRIM TABS	£STD
EVC CONTROLS (per throttle)	£2808
BOAT AS TESTED	£129,949



ENQUIRIES Ancasta
Tel: 02380 450001
www.ancasta.co.uk
e-mail: bavaria@ancasta.co.uk

the rivals



JEANNEAU PRESTIGE 30

From £115,790 (D3-190hp)
Launched late last year, it offers an interesting, well worked interior and a hard top. Cockpit layout leaves questions but this is the boat Bavaria needs to beat.
www.jeanneau.com



SESSA C30

From £113,000 (D3-190hp)
The 2007 revamp has really lifted this big Italian cruiser. The cockpit oozes class. The interior is smaller but it has a cleaner, more modern finish.
Tel: 01932 571155
www.bateswharf.co.uk



SEALINE S/SC29

From £128,000 (D3-190hp)
Sealine's open 29 lives in the shadow of its annoyingly brilliant, if more expensive, hardtop sibling. Deceptively spacious and very practical.
Tel: 01562 749100
www.sealine.com