

# BOAT REPORT Bayliner

## Capri 192LS

*Will this American cuddy-cabin package attract first-time buyers away from renewed European competition?*

**T**he strengthening of the US dollar against the pound has encouraged British importers to offer more

European ranges for sale. So American boatbuilders Bayliner, usually renowned for the value for money they offer, no longer represent the most cost-effective options in the sportsboat field.

But they still have the resources, the marketing skills, the design know-how and the support back-up to compete strongly in the UK, against builders who have a smaller worldwide market share.

Bayliner get the basics right, and then tightly control their specification lists, adding just enough features to tempt customers but without overloading their craft. There may be a few compromises on account of mass production, but build quality is competent and prices are competitive.

An excellent example of the breed is the Capri 192, which comes with a choice of cockpit layouts, good performance and a trailer: a package designed to hook first-time buyers.

### Design & layout

The 192's styling is clean-cut and well presented, designed to put over a feel good factor. The impression is of a solid but sporting craft.

Its broad beam is carried a good way forwards, to maximise cabin space. The gunwales are fairly high, making for a secure cockpit, although the hull's contrast striping and graphics help to minimise the visual impact of this.

The balance between cabin and cockpit space favours the exterior, but still leaves enough room under

the foredeck for a basic cuddy, if nothing else a place to change clothes, throw equipment and house a portable toilet.

In the cockpit, you can choose the LS configuration (as on our test boat), with back-to-back seats folding flat to form sunbeds when required, or the SS layout, with swivelling helm seats and an aft bench. The former maximises seating capacity, whereas the latter offers the better helm station.

Almost the only other specification decision a buyer has to make comes in what Mercruiser powerplant to have in the enginebay. The base unit is the 135hp 3.0L, making the starting price of the boat £20,995 inc VAT. If

you want more power, you can have the 190hp 4.3L, the 210hp 4.3EFI or the 220hp 5.0L.

Our test boat had a 4.3EFI, the most expensive option and the one we would choose, for ease of use and reliable first-time starting.

### Performance & handling

With the EFI engine, the 192 Capri is more runabout than cuddy.

Push the well-placed throttle firmly forward and it responds instantly, rising onto the plane without hesitation. The Mercruiser continues to power you firmly onwards, with excellent low and mid-range pull to a very good top

speed of 44.5 knots at 4800rpm.

For more relaxed and economical cruising, 3000rpm shows 25 knots.

With such good delivery throughout its power range, the 192 is great fun to drive, and this feeling is enhanced by very responsive handling. The boat feels well balanced, and it responds quickly to input from the helm.

In tight turns it remains under control, and prop ventilation never gets out of hand. Even when you push hard, there is no indication of any slip-out.

The ride is equally good, with the hull coping very well in choppy water. Only a following sea betrays its length, but even then there is no danger of dipping the bow.



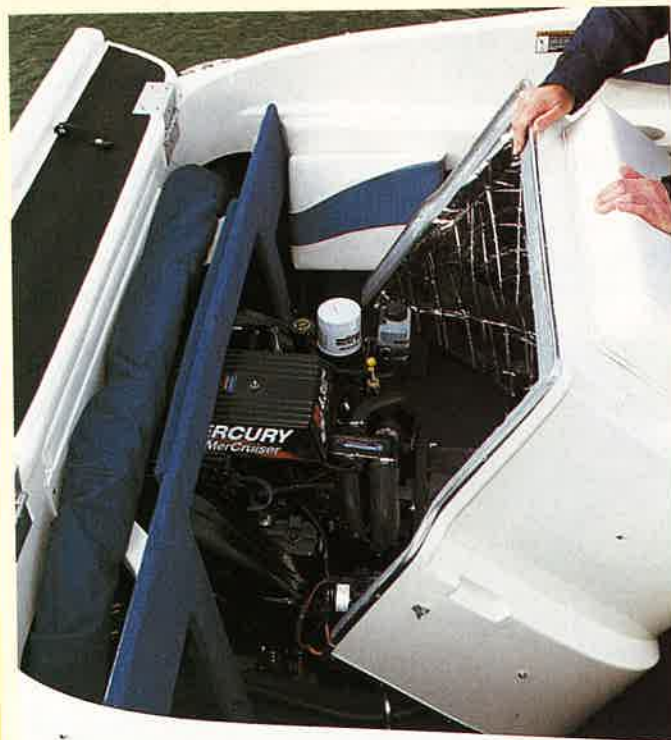


## Enginebay

Engine access is fiddly, as the enginebox cover fouls the aft-facing seats, leaving you with just one hand free for

day-to-day checks.

However, the cover removes easily if fuller maintenance work is needed, and there is access to the engine services from behind the dickey-seats.



## Bathing platform

The bathing platform is neatly integrated into the design. Although a little narrow, it is easily boarded either from a pontoon or, using the swing-down boarding ladder, from the water.

A grab-handle and ski tow-ring completes the specification.

## Cabin

As with all boats of this size, the cuddy cabin is for convenience rather than for extended stays on board. Even weekenders really requires good shoreside services, as there are no cooking facilities provided.

Headroom is limited, and the berth just long enough for the average-sized person, by virtue of extending well forward under the anchor locker. We think most owners will use the space for changing in and for stowage.

Shelving nearly all the way round the berth offers open stowage for smaller items, and there is an unlined locker underneath. The portable toilet is located under the centre cushion.

The deck hatch and doorway offer some natural daylight, and the colourways of the cabin lining make the best of this, although on our test boat the fitting of this looked a little hurried in places. The U-bolt, which goes through the bow for the mooring eye, will also tear the bottom of the berth's forward cushion.

A stereo/CD player is mounted out of harm's way on the underside of the console moulding.



## Cockpit

The cockpit is well sheltered by the screen and high gunwales. The helmsman and crew sit quite low in the boat, with plenty of grab-handles, making it a good bet for family use.

With the LS layout featured on our test boat, back-to-back seats offer compact space for four people, still leaving plenty of room for a wide walkway

through the boat, and fold down when required. There are also dickey-seats flanking the enginebox aft, and their bases can be repositioned flush with the pad on the engine cover to form another sunbed when the boat is stationary.

The forward seat-bases provide stowage to supplement the central bilge locker, which is not carpeted, and the open side lockers in the coamings. The spaces under

the dickey-seats offer convenient open stowage for warps and fenders, and the full-width cushion aft of the enginepad hinges up to allow stowage of the canopy which comes as standard.

Because of the compromises this layout makes, not least at the helm station, we would favour the more expensive SS option, with swivelling chairs forward and an aft bench seat.

## Helm

The console, on two levels, has the feel of a car dashboard. The builders have adopted a modular approach, with lots of curves and swoops joining up the pods that contain the instruments and switches.

A speedometer and rev-counter dominate the centre module, with the other gauges located in a logical manner. A digital depth-sounder and compass come as standard.

The LS model's back-to-back cockpit seating layout compromises the driving position, as there is no fore-or-aft adjustment and poor legroom, which also means that you cannot stand at the helm for close-quarters manoeuvring. The tilt-adjustable steering wheel partially alleviates this.

The throttle would benefit from an elbow pad, but is well placed for smooth control.



## Decks

Steps set into the console moulding give access through the hinged centre section of the screen to the bow.

Here, a roller and a bow locker help with anchoring, and keep the anchor and chain out of the cockpit. Bow rails offer a handhold.



## Bayliner Capri 192LS

### BUILD

glass-reinforced plastic

### RECREATIONAL CRAFT DIRECTIVE

Design Category C: Inshore (voyages in coastal waters and estuaries in wind up to Force 6)

### DIMENSIONS

#### LOA

19ft 4in (5.90m)

#### BEAM

7ft 11in (2.42m)

#### DRAUGHT

2ft 11in (0.89m)

#### DISPLACEMENT

2815lb (1277kg)

#### FUEL CAPACITY

29gal (132lt)

### ENGINE

210hp Mercruiser 4.3EFI petrol

### PRICE

£24,195 inc VAT as tested, including trailer

### SUPPLIERS

Windermere Aquatic, Windermere Quays, Glebe Road, Bowness on Windermere, Cumbria LA23 3HE. Tel: 01539 442121.

### BUILDERS

Bayliner, PO Box 9029, Everett, Washington 98206, USA.

## Conclusions

The Capri 192 goes and handles well, is competently packaged and would make an ideal craft for a family's maiden venture into sportsboating.

Bayliner make it easy to buy a boat like this. You walk into the showroom, pick your engine, choose your cockpit layout and write your cheque. A trailer is included in the price, so just a little gear bought from a chandler, will see you safely onto the water.

This might not suit the seasoned purchaser who wants to set about a specification list with a vengeance, but it certainly answers the needs of many a first-time buyer.

With the Mercruiser 4.3 EFI installed, the 192 will also appeal to experienced owners looking for some informal cabin space without having to sacrifice the out-and-out performance they are used to. There are some shortcomings, but that is inevitable when boats are built to a price. □

