

**PERFORMANCE
TESTED**



HEAD TURNER

SEA RAY'S 250 SELECT EX BLENDS SPORTY HANDLING WITH LUXURIOUS AMENITIES

T By Go Boating Test Team
o say that Sea Ray's brush paints a rather broad stroke might seem like an insult to some, but to Sea Ray, this is a compliment.

The company's boats vary from 18 to 68 feet, including sportboats, sport cruisers, sport yachts and full-blown yachts. Producing boats in such a wide range seems daunting considering the massive difference in customer needs and the corresponding price points for boats at each end of this spectrum, yet the details of building a quality boat – whether large or small – isn't lost on Sea Ray.

Sea Ray's 250 Select EX is classified under its sportboat line, the 250 Select EX (for acronym fans, the 250 SEX) really blends a refined and luxurious quality matched with sporty performance.

This boat features many of the standard features you would expect to see in this price range — walk-through privacy

door, bolster-equipped bucket seats for the captain and passenger, an extended swim platform with a shower, snap-in carpet throughout, etc.

What sets the Sea Ray 250 Select EX apart, however, are its thoughtfully designed features and stylish lines. We immediately noticed the automotive-inspired styling in the cockpit. While the passenger-side console caught our eye with its stylish glove box (which houses an MP3 hookup), we learned that the whole front of the console actually opens to reveal a head compartment, which is conveniently placed and easy to access. The helm really carries through with the appearance of a luxury car — from the instrumentation with stainless buttons and switches to the steering wheel with buttons to operate the radio and SmartCraft modes.

All the talk of luxury shouldn't overshadow the fact that the 250 Select EX is a

solid performer. Powered by MerCruiser stern drives ranging from 300 to 375 hp, there's no doubt this 26-foot, 6-inch boat has enough oomph to satisfy the performance crowd.

For seating, the bow offers decent space for a few people, and the integrated armrests and nearby cupholders make it a comfortable fit. There's even more space at the stern on the L-shaped bench seat, with drainable storage compartments underneath. The refreshment center just behind the captain's chair offers a sink with a pressurized water system, two stainless steel cupholders (we counted 12 in total throughout the boat) and a Corian countertop; and our craft was equipped with the optional refrigerator.

The Water Sports Tower on the 250 Select EX is a little different from the usual stainless steel towers most common on sportboats. This one's actually a blend of fiberglass and aluminum — and aside from offering an

ABOUT THE BOAT:

» SEA RAY 250 SELECT EX



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ROOM FOR EVERYTHING — The deep freeboard and full 8-foot, 6-inch beam give the Sea Ray 250 Select EX an impressive amount of room for passengers and useful features. There's even room in the engine compartment for maintenance.

attachment point for the towline for board sports, it includes courtesy lights and features an integrated Bimini top.

The gull-wing-shaped sunpad at the stern is great for sunbathing, and it still provides easy access to the swim platform with a walk-through center section. To rinse off after taking a dip, the spacious integrated swim platform features a shower.

PERFORMANCE

Our test of the 250 Select EX featured the 375 hp MerCruiser 496 MAG Bravo III. She provided impressive performance overall, especially considering the 250 tips the scales at just over 5,000 pounds.

During testing, our Sea Ray 250 Select EX delivered a peak speed of almost 52 mph (specifically 51.9 mph) with the Corsa side exhaust open. Sea Ray says to expect a drop of about 1 mph in peak speed with the exhaust closed. Out of the hole, the Sea Ray took 8.5 seconds to get on plane, and the 0-30-mph time was right at 12 seconds.

At a cruising speed of 37.1 mph and an engine speed of 3,500 rpm, our test craft would cover 150 miles on its 75-gallon fuel tank; running at peak speed, however, the Sea Ray should cover about 105 miles of water.

SPECIFICATIONS

Length	26 ft., 6 in. (w/swim platform)
Beam	8 ft., 6 in.
Capacity	Yacht certified
Dry weight	5,031 lbs.
Fuel capacity	75 gals.
Maximum power	375 hp
Deadrise (@ transom)	21 degrees

As for its performance on the open water, we thought it handled the light chops we encountered with ease. Its turning prowess is sporty in nature, yet it's still very stable. In the corners it feels more like a smaller boat than a 26-footer. In every instance we encountered, the 250 was fun to operate and provided predictable handling.

OVERALL

The Sea Ray 250 Select EX is a boat that offers the best of both worlds – it's sport-minded in the handling department and luxurious in amenities, appearance and design. The joking remark about this being labeled the 250 SEX might work best if we add a Y to the end, because it really is a “sexy” boat for those looking to have their cake and eat it too. **GO**

PERFORMANCE & PRICING SEA RAY 250 SELECT EX

PERFORMANCE

	MPH	RPM	MPG	RANGE	\$/MILES	DBA
PEAK	51.9	4,700	1.55	105	97	
CRUISE	37.1	3,500	2.23	150	85	
TIME TO PLANE	8.5 seconds					
0-30 MPH ACCELERATION	12.0 seconds					

Fuel consumption measured with MerCruiser SmartCraft digital fuel-flow gauge; range based on 90% of total fuel capacity

TEST POWER

MOTOR 375 hp MerCruiser 496 MAG Bravo III

PROP SET 26 pitch 3-blade stainless steel

WOT Range 4,400-4,800 rpm

Craft available with 300 to 375 hp stern drives from MerCruiser

LOAD

	PEOPLE	FUEL (GALS./LBS.)	MISC.
TEST	2	75/470	15 lbs.
TYPICAL	6-7	75/470	120 lbs.

BASE PRICE

WITH TEST POWER \$67,475*

*Price can vary depending on options and location – price does not include trailer or freight

FINANCING

\$595/month for 15 years*

*Assuming a final price of \$73,500 with a 10% down payment and a fixed interest rate of 7.0% – does not include sales tax

FIVE NOTABLE OPTIONS

Canvas Bimini Top Package (includes front, side and aft curtains, cockpit cover w/tonneau, canvas storage bag - \$2,385), Watersports Tower (includes Bimini top, courtesy lights, anchor light - \$4,731), 12-volt refrigerator (\$946), bow table w/storage (\$208), six-disc CD changer (\$462)

FIVE NOTABLE STANDARDS

Bimini top w/boot, Snap-in cockpit carpet, Power-assisted tilt steering, Clarion stereo/CD player/satellite ready/MP3 plug-in, wet bar w/sink and faucet

BUILDER

Sea Ray Boats, 2600 Sea Ray Blvd., Knoxville, TN 37914; (800) SRBOATS; www.searay.com

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