

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe (2015-)

Brief Summary

Don't be misled by the "Sports Coupe" appellation: the Cruisers Yachts 540 displaces 42,000 lbs. (19,090 kgs.) which puts her firmly into the motoryacht category. Go below and discover an interior that ranks as one of the best in size, much less in class. Because she is powered by IPS drives her accommodations deck takes up fully two-thirds of her length. Everything about her seems over-sized -- she has high headroom (6'10"/2.01 m) in the salon, large beds, and a huge C-shaped settee on her aft deck opposite a nearly complete on-deck galley with grill. She is definitely for people used to the finer things in life.

Price

Base Price

Prices, features, designs, and equipment are subject to change. Please see your local dealer or visit the builder's website for the latest information available on this boat model.

Key Features

- Hull in Black, Blue, Mocha, White accent gel coat
- Interior wood colors in walnut
- Fiberglass integrated hardtop with power sunroof
- Companion helm captain seat with custom flip-up
- Digital depth finder
- Fly-by-Wire and joystick technology steering system
- Electric grill in cockpit
- Island queen berth in aft and forward staterooms
- Crescent-shaped dinette and sofa with double incliner

Test Results

RPM	MPH	Knots	GPH	MPG	NMPG	STAT. MILE	NM	dBa
600	4.5	3.9	1.2	3.91	3.4	1761	1531	65
1000	7.7	6.7	2.5	3.12	2.72	1405	1222	68

RPM	MPH	Knots	GPH	MPG	NMPG	STAT. MILE	NM	dBa
1250	9.3	8	5.3	1.75	1.52	785	683	73
1500	10.8	9.3	9	1.2	1.04	541	470	71
1750	11.8	10.3	13	0.91	0.79	408	355	72
2000	13.7	11.9	20.5	0.67	0.58	301	262	75
2250	19.4	16.8	24	0.81	0.7	363	315	75
2500	23.1	20	28.5	0.81	0.7	364	316	76
2750	27.6	24	34.5	0.8	0.69	359	312	78
3000	31.5	27.4	41	0.77	0.67	346	301	78
3250	34.8	30.3	52.5	0.66	0.58	298	256	79
3450	38	33	63	0.6	0.52	271	236	81
3621	41.4	36	65	0.64	0.55	287	249	82

[View the test results in metric units](#)

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Specifications

Length Overall	52' 3" / 15.9 m
BEAM	15' 6" 4.72 m
Dry Weight	42,000 lbs. 19,051 kg

Tested Weight	44,300 lbs. 20,094 kg
Draft	44" 1.12 m
Draft Up	
Draft Down	
Air Draft	
Deadrise/Transom	N/A
Max Headroom	6' 6" 1.98 m
Bridge Clearance	13' 1" 3.99 m
Weight Capacity	
Person Capacity	
Fuel Capacity	500 gal. 1,893 L
Water Capacity	150 gal. 568 L
Length on Trailer	
Height on Trailer	
Trailer Weight	
Total Weight	44,300 lbs. 20,094 kg
Aft Deck	

Salon Inside Width	
Salon Fore & Aft	
Salon Height	
Salon Volume	
Galley Volume	
Master SR Width	
Master SR fore & Aft	
Master SR Overhead	
Master SR Volume	
Eng. Room Volume	

Acceleration Times & Conditions

Time to Plane	5.4 sec.
0 to 20	
Ratio	N/A
Props	N/A
Load	2 persons, 2/3 fuel, no water, minimal gear
Climate	Climate 85 deg.; 56% humidity; wind: 5-10 mph; seas; light chop

By Captain Steve

Overview

The Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe was designed to be the ultimate express yacht built in class for genteel cruising and superior performance, both in terms of top speed and fuel economy at cruising speeds. The watchword for this boat is "comfort." That means high headroom, large beds, plush reclining seats and settees, and plenty of room in which a number of people can move around without being in each other's way. Finally, her builder wanted to create a entertaining venue where an owner could host a dozen or more guests and seat them all for dinner or cocktails. All of that is a tall order, but as we will see the Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe is a very special yacht.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

Note the room inside, the amount of open deck space both in the cabins in the salon/galley. This is, perhaps, the most important feature of the boat for most people. It is made possible because at 15'6" (4.72 m), she is the beamiest yacht in class and she has pod drives which gets the engine room aft leaving more space for accommodations.

Distinguishing Features

Triple IPS Power System.

With three

435-hp IPS drives, the 540 Sports Coupe has the most efficient system available in class -- yes, that means more efficient than two engines when it comes to total fuel burn. (See below.)

Walkthrough Windshield.

While this is something fairly common in smaller boats, the 540 Sports Coupe is the only boat that has it in class. Many people prefer it to access the bow rather than going forward on the "cat walk" side decks.

6'10" Headroom in Salon.

The boat looks huge below and one of the reasons is that it has such high headroom.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

Captain Steve looks at the arch in the header frame for the door to the day head. Just picture this squared off as one would see in most boats (and houses). This is a yacht not a bungalow.

Arched Door Frames Below.

Most boats in this class have squared-off door frames as used in most houses. The 540 has arched nautical-looking door frames. There is no comparison between the two.

Moveable Aft Deck Seating.

The 540 Sports Coupe has an attractive crescent-shaped bench seat at the transom which can be moved to join the port side settee to seat two more people at the aft deck table.

Two Full Galleys.

Many boats have a galley down to open up space on the main deck, but the 540 is so large the builder was able to install a full-galley on deck as well.

Seats Eight for Dinner in Two Locations.

Because of the sliding seat mentioned above and the sheer size of the space, eight people can be seated for dinner, both on deck and in the salon below.

Air Conditioning is Standard.

The 540 Sports Coupe comes with 32,000 BTUs of reverse-cycle air conditioning. People in northern latitudes can simply reverse the cycle and turn on the heat.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

The clever crescent-shaped bench seat when centered, allows passage up from the swim platform both port and starboard. This is a good configuration for cocktail parties or when running. Note the full-galley to starboard.

364 Miles Range at Best Cruise.

At 23.1 mph our test boat burned only 28.5 gph, giving her a range of 364 statute miles or 316 nautical miles.

Superior Fuel Economy at Best Cruise.

At 23.1 mph, the 540 Sports Coupe with triple engines burns only 28.5 gallons (108.3 L) per hour, giving her a .81 mpg. At 27.6 mph she got .80 mpg. This is the long suit of the IPS system.

Pod Drives for Efficiency.

The Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe is one of only two boats in class that uses pod drives.

Elegant Entertaining Venue

The fortunate owners of the 540 Sports Coupe will be able to host gatherings on the aft deck that range from civilized evenings of wine and champagne to rocking the docks with a gang of party animals. The seating is commodious and versatile. The boat's ample beam and layout permits good flow for cocktail parties.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

Captain Steve unlatches the aft seat and begins to slide it to port.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

With the seat to port a large, comfortable banquette is created. The table is seen here in cocktail party mode.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

In dining mode. Note that the table can handle 10" (25 cm) across from each other. Three or four fold up stools can be placed inboard when there is a crowd.

Versatile Seating.

When it is time to dine al fresco, the on-deck table can easily handle eight guests. The high-gloss cherry electric hi-low table is an attractive and versatile piece of furniture. It electrically moves into any of three positions: full height table, cocktail table height, or to make a sunning platform. It folds inward to create more room for moving around.

Cockpit Galley.

Opposite is the cockpit galley and it has it all: solid-surface counter top, sink with pressure water, an electric grill, refrigerator and an icemaker. These standard appliances are all stainless steel so they will be looking like new for a long time.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

No need to worry about going below for cooking. The cockpit has it all. The 26" (66 cm) cockpit TV is the only optional item in this shot. Alternatively, the kids can eat in one venue and the adults in another.

The Other Party Deck

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

Here the tables are set up in cocktail party mode. It's hard not to imagine entertaining in this salon. Cherry woodwork creates a warm, yachty feel. Six portlights bathe the interior in natural light. Both center seats of the sofa are recliners. The tables are versatile -- just tell the dealer what is needed.

The 540 Sports Coupe is so large that two groups of friends can be entertained or served dinner in two locations at the same time. Below there is a huge salon with seating for eight to ten people. It has a long J-shaped banquette with two stools opposite. To port is the below-decks galley.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

There is 6'10" (2.1 m) of headroom in the salon and galley. Note the classy soffit similar to what is seen in megayachts.

Six vertical portlights bathe the salon with light. Under foot is 44 oz. carpeting. The interior cabinets and bulkheads are all cherry with a matte finish. There is hardly a bit of fiberglass to be seen! This is what gives the 540 Sports Coupe her rich, classic yacht feel.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

The good captain points out the bowed overhead cabinets and the subtle air conditioning system that waft cool air from the overhead without resorting to ugly grills. These are details usually only seen on much larger motoryachts.

Lap of Luxury.

The crescent-shaped dinette sofa is standard with double incliners and Ultraleather upholstery. An optional sleeper sofa can be ordered instead of the incliners. Two stools are inboard of the table. A standard 20" LCD TV with Dolby Digital Surround Sound and 5-disc DVD player are standard in the salon.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

This is the optional pull-out drawer dishwasher. A trash compactor is also optional. An oven, coffeemaker and microwave are standard. The ceramic stovetop has two burners.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

The counter and back splash are Mystera, the double sink is stainless steel and the faucet is meant for real business. Inserts fit over the sinks for more counter space.

Galley.

The galley is to port. The sole there is Amtico synthetic cherry and maple which can be added to the salon sole as well instead of the carpet. The counters are solid-surface Mystera which is a synthetic solid product that is 4 times lighter than stone, easy to clean and is "Food Prep" rated by the National Sanitation Foundation. The cabinetry follows the cherry theme and Cruisers Yachts kept all of the grains aligned and colors matching as one would expect from a fine cabinet maker. Appliances in the galley include a coffeemaker, microwave (with convection oven), Nova Kool refrigerator/freezer and a two-burner electric cooktop. A couple of options include a dishwasher or a wine captain for chilling up to 17 bottles of wine. A trash compactor is optional. The stemware cabinet is lighted with a clear door to show crystal or colorful bottles of party juice.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

The 15'6" (4.72 m) beam is put to good use, allowing for lots of room in the galley while not impinging on the salon space.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

Captain Steve steps down to enter the full-beam master stateroom. Note the wood-inlaid companionway stairs.

Genteel Cruising Accommodations for Two Couples

When cruising a boat in this class typically it is done by two couples or a family. When two adult couples are cruising for, say, two weeks together, it's important that each couple have its privacy. Here the 540 Sports Coupe excels.

Privacy is a Good Thing.

The two cabins are separated by the salon and galley, as well as thick bulkheads and two solid doors. The forward stateroom's head is also the day head and a door from the salon has access. The forward stateroom, or VIP, has a double island bed with therapeutic foam mattress. There is 6'2" (1.9 m) of headroom. The door swings out to the salon to maximize deck space in the cabin.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

Each stateroom has an en suite head with separate shower stall.

The VIP head cabinetry has the same treatment as the galley with solid-surface counter tops and cherry cabinets. Cruisers Yachts uses tile on the sole in the heads and the separate shower has a door to enclose it so that two people can simultaneously prepare for the day.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

This version has two single berths in the forward cabin. We think this is the way to go because it is so versatile and has more usable deck space.

Optional Layout.

An optional layout for the forward stateroom features two single berths instead of the queen berth. We like this layout better than one bed as it is more versatile and better for families or a stag cruise. It also opens up the middle of the cabin, creating more deck space and makes a big forward cabin even bigger. Cruisers Yachts can make one of the beds wider than the other, if desired.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

The standard bed in the VIP stateroom is a double that is 6'6" (1.98 m) from head to foot. Note the storage cabinets above the portlights, providing much-needed space for small folded garments.

The Master Stateroom

The master stateroom is full beam (15'6"/4.72 m) and also has a walk around queen-sized island bed with therapeutic foam mattress. Headroom measured 6' 2" (1.9 m). To port is a cozy settee to relax and read a book, enjoy television, or use as a dressing bench. There are large aisles on three sides of the bed. Four large portlights allow the owner and partner to have a clear view outside. The head has an enclosed shower and premium fixtures. Counters are solid-surface Mystera with decorative tile backsplash and the cabinetry

is cherry.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

The décor of the master is modern but all of the wood warms up the space. Note the tasteful soffit over the head of the bed and the indirect, unobtrusive air conditioning venting.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

This is the sofa on the port side of the master stateroom. Note the rich materials and wood used in this tastefully executed interior.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

The Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe is a big yacht no matter how you look at her . This is the only yacht in class that has a walkthrough windshield.

Triple Diesels for Performance and Economy

One of the most unusual aspects of this boat is her triple 435-hp Volvo Penta diesel IPS600 propulsion system. While one may think that three engines simply means that the boat will burn one-third more fuel, in actuality, it's more efficient than others in class with just two engines. That is one reason the builder installed them. The other reason was to get the 540 Sports Coupe past the 40 mph barrier. (Volvo Penta calls this the IPS "600" instead of "435" because the system with the pod drives and forward-facing dual props has the performance of a 600-hp diesel, even though it is only 435-hp, when compared to inboard power. And 3 x 600-hp is 1800-hp.)

Designed Right.

The hull was designed from scratch specifically for the IPS drives. Volvo Penta engineers were involved along with the naval architectural firm of Donald Blount & Associates, one of the world's leading firms in high-speed recreational boats. This is an important pedigree and is one of the reasons the boat performs as it does. With three IPS 435-hp IPS600 engines, the 540 Sports Coupe has better performance and economy than most models her size and weight that have only two engines. So, by doing something a little out of the box, the engineers at Cruisers Yachts have come up with a huge express cruiser sport yacht with remarkable performance, both in terms of speed and fuel efficiency.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

We conducted speed trials on the Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe as well as to crank her and bank to see if we could find any bad habits.

The Test

With an empty weight of 42,000 lbs. (19,051 kg), 65% fuel, and two persons onboard, we had a test weight of 44,300 lbs. (20,094 kg). With three Volvo Penta 435-hp IPS600s powering our test boat, we reached a top speed of 41.4 mph at 3621 rpm. At that speed, we were burning 65 gph while getting .64 statute miles per gallon for a range of 287 statute miles.

Best cruise

came in at 2500 rpm and 23.1 mph where we had a 28.5 gph fuel burn and a range of 364 statute miles. Bump the revs up to 2750 and go 27.6 mph and only suffer a 5 mile penalty in range -- 359 statute miles instead of 364. That's probably where we would run her on a long leg in most conditions. This range is noteworthy for this class of boat. We had a quick time to plane of 5.4 seconds, reached 20 mph in 6.5 seconds, and accelerated through 30 mph in 10.9 seconds. This is almost sportboat performance in a large, heavy yacht, and is truly remarkable.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

The 540 Sports Coupe has a level running angle and gets lift from her hard chines and moderate deadrise stern sections.

Comparison With Twins.

The 540 Sports Coupe is only offered with triple Volvo Penta

435-hp IPS600s. When we compare the Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe with other boats in class, we discover that she has the highest WOT speed at 41.4 mph. Part of the reason is that she was lighter than some of the boats, but she was heavier than others. The Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe has 1305 total horsepower (3 x 435) which is from 105-hp to 495-hp less than the other boats we checked.

Best Cruise Fuel Economy.

Best cruise fuel economy is the IPS system's strong suit. At her best cruise she gets .81 miles per gallon. All of the boats we compared with twin engines got from .48 to .61 mpg in their best cruise. When we compared all of these boats at about 27.6 mph, the 540 Sports Coupe got .80 mpg and the others at about the same speed ranged from .48 to .57 mpg. These figures are for the total fuel consumption of each boat, not per engine.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

With the helm hard over, the 540 Sports Coupe leans about 10-degrees into the turns which is comfortable and safe.

Comparison With Other Models on the Market

Power Comparison.

There are not many 54' express hardtops or coupes on the market. When we compared them we were surprised to find that most still have inboard power. Only one other yacht in class has pod drives, and it is noteworthy that that builder also uses triple IPS engines, (and claims exactly the WOT speed we recorded on the 540 Sports Coupe.) When it comes to performance, the pods make all of the difference. One builder offers surfacing piercing drives -- which extend 5' beyond the swim platform -- as an option, so this boat could probably be the fastest in that configuration (and have the highest rooster tail).

Beam and Displacement Comparison.

At 15'6" (4.72 m), the 540 Sports Coupe has the greatest beam in class, and nearly 1' more than one boat . At 42,000 lbs. (19,051 kgs.), the 540 Sports Coupe is at the light end of the displacement scale, about the same displacement as two of the other boats we checked.

Accommodation Comparison.

When it comes to accommodations, three boats had two staterooms below and three had three small staterooms with two heads. Only one other boat had two large staterooms in a layout similar to the 540 Sports Coupe.

Galley Comparison.

Only one other boat we checked was promoting an on deck "entertainment center" plus a galley below. A second boat had room for an on-deck galley but normally uses it for other purposes. Three of the boats had no room on deck for even a partial galley and theirs were all below.

What Does All of This Mean?

First, it means that the Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe is one of the best performing boats in class. Second, it means that she was purpose-built for comfortable extended cruising for two couples in courtly style. Third, it means that she is one of the most versatile entertaining platforms in class.

On-Deck Inspection

Hydraulic Swim Platform.

For distance cruisers especially, a welcome option is the Nautical Structures hydraulic platform. A dinghy in a cradle can be kept on the platform and it is as easy as pushing a button to launch and recover. Submerge it just below the surface, and add a few deck chairs and guests will never want to leave. For parties, the swim platform is the best place to meet and greet, and tie up their tenders. While the party is full roar, it becomes a good overflow space for people to chat.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

The rumble seat with its rubber matted seat is a great staging area for anything that entails a wet bathing suit. Kids love to hang out here when at anchor, and so will mom and dad.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

Cruisers Yachts knows there is never enough storage on any boat, so it has utilized every bit in the transom with the four compartments shown above.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

The optional hydraulic swim platform can handle a 13' (3.96 m) tender which is more than adequate for this size vessel -- no launching and retrieval system is faster or easier.

The Foredeck.

Our test model had the optional chaise lounge on the foredeck. Fully forward, the 540 Sports Coupe has a standard Maxwell VWCLP 1200 windlass, plow anchor and 180' (54.9 m) of 3/8" chain that should suffice in up to 25' (7.6 m) of water.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

The foredeck features an optional sun pad/chaise lounge that is available in two colors, blue or taupe.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

At first glance, the one extra mullion required for the walkthrough window's frame seems like a distraction of forward vision. However, Captain Steve reports that after a few minutes of operation his eyes got used to it and forward visibility was fine.

At the Helm

Forward seating includes a companion lounge and two, wide seats at the helm for the captain and navigator. An optional electric helm seat goes up and down as well as fore and aft and we would recommend it. The 540 Sports Coupe's top has an electric sunroof that opens up enough to let lots of sun shine through, and a sun shade will mean the standard 32,000 BTU air conditioning system won't have to work so hard.

Visibility at the helm was pretty good, although the aft support and mullions for the walkthrough windshield do block some of the driver's vision. When I first saw it I was concerned, but after running the boat for 15 minutes my eyes got used to the extra mullion and it became a non-issue.

Instrument Panel.

The helm console is huge and well laid-out with the instruments all angled for clear view from the captain's seat. There is no standard instrumentation, so owners can specify exactly what is needed made by the brand wanted, or buy it in the after-market. In any case, there is plenty of real estate available.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

Cruisers Yachts consistently delivers the most ergonomic and well laid out helms we've seen.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

Captain Steve was caught here relaxing on the lounge seat to port on the bridge deck.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

Both the helm and companion seats have robust bolsters.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

There is room to slip between the engines sideways but outboard there is plenty of room. Captain Steve says it is easy to get to all fluid checks. Remember, with IPS pods all raw water intakes and exhaust are in the drive units not through sea cocks in the hull.

The Engine Room

People might think that triple Volvo Penta IPS600 engines in 15'6" (4.72 m) of beam would stuff the engine compartment, but there is room to get around and take good care of the power plant, generator, filters, sea strainers and batteries. Everything is labeled and the wiring is orderly. We found enough room to do a complete overhaul on any of the engines with this installation. The engine room is accessed through a hatch in the aft deck.

Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe

The Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe is not only a big boat but she is a versatile one. With the addition of some isinglass across her stern, we'd take her most anywhere.

Observations

It may take a bit of counterintuitive thinking to get acclimated to the concept of three engines, but if the price of the boat is competitive, what is the down side? The triple IPS system will offer significantly lower operating costs than larger twin inboard engines. Further, the boat can always be run with just the outboard twin engines at displacement speeds. And if one engine conks out, two are still left! We find that Cruisers Yachts' joinery work, glass work and general fit-and-finish are as good any on the market in class. When it comes to systems installation work, Cruisers Yachts is one of the best. There are not too many hardtop express cruisers in this size range on the market, so consumers can easily check them all out as we have. We think boaters will be surprised at the value in the Cruisers Yachts 540 Sports Coupe.