Best Boats of 2006

We pick the year's 10 standout models

The Rinker Captiva 246 has made a big splash with a fresh design, tons of space and a killer price.

COURTESY RINKER

Drive nearly 200 boats over the course of a few months and the logical question from envious onlookers is, "How do you remember one from another?" But good boats are like ice cream flavors — you don't mistake any of them for all the rest. A few boats, like the 10 on the following pages, left an unforgettable taste for our editors. Next logical question: Why? The answers to that one, as you can see, are as varied as the boats themselves.

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Rinker Captiva 246

Rinker has been an annual mainstay in our value categories, which almost worked against the company for 2006. To prevent redundancy we looked for reasons *not* to include the new Captiva 246. The evidence we considered went something like this: 26 feet with a molded-in platform, 5,000 muscular pounds, 50-plus mph and a retail price of about $39K – which likely means a street price a few thousand lower than that. Hardly reasons to snub the boat.

We tested boats that were slower, smaller and far less creative in overall appearance, and yet they cost $10,000 to $15,000 more. We could not ignore those types of numbers, nor the completely new look of this midrange bowrider. Rinker spent hundreds of thousands of dollars to create the 246, and is not looking to recoup their investment in the first year of production. It doesn't take an editor to recognize how all of the above spells a f-a-n-t-a-s-t-i-c buy.

BEST BOWRIDER VALUE



Take a Virtual Tour
boatinglife.com/rinkercaptiva246

BEST OF ALL > Look at the capacities – 12 passengers, more than 2,000 pounds and 75 gallons of fuel – and then check the $39,000 retail price.



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