



Premier 290 Grand Entertainer

Boat Test #1341

Performance party room on the water.

Ok, I admit it. I was a little skeptical this past summer at the Evinrude dealer meeting when I boarded the Premier 290 Grand Entertainer with Twin Evinrude G2 E-Tec 300 HP engines. I mean, com'on, 600 hp on a pontoon? I can see 600hp in a Baja or a Sunsation, but on a pontoon, really? What do you need it for? Pontoons are for entertaining, enjoyment and taking the kids tubing. All I know is that when I got back to the dock from my test ride is that the first thing I asked myself was 'Why don't all pontoons have twins?' and 'Shouldn't the 300 HP E-Tec G2 be on every 'toon?'

On the water, she topped out at 53.4 mph at 5,900 rpms and the whole shot is comparable to that of NASA's space shuttles that literally ripped passengers out of their seats. We were on plane in 1.9 seconds and reached 20 mph in 2.5 seconds and 30 mph in 4.1 seconds. Top speed was reached in less than 10 seconds according to the GPS. Ideal cruising speed is going to be around 25-28 mph (2,900-3,200rpms). With the G2's the mid-range acceleration was exceptional and not what you would expect or have seen before from any motor.

If you think the open water handling was impressive, you should have seen this beauty around the docks. Equipped with the optional 360 joy stick docking control, docking became an art form and something

a beauty. Parallel parking? No problem. High winds? No problem. With the twist of the joy stick, the 290 turned on a dime and handled better in the marina than most if not all of the other boats. You should have seen the faces on the skippers of the 40 something feet boats when we docked the pontoon in a space that wasn't meant for a boat of this size and magnitude.

After taking the 290 for a lake test, you would think the best is over and there is nothing else to look forward to. That is definitely not the case with this boat. It has about everything that you could imagine and some features you would not expect to find on a pontoon from the Flexsteel plush seating, lighted cup holders, LED lighting and a blueprint with a well laid out and thought out bar for entertaining your closest friends.

Starting with the seating arrangement, the 290 has a large lounge on the starboard side of the bow and two plush reclining captain chairs with a cocktail table to the port side. Mid-ship on the starboard side is the helm station. Aft, or where the party is, is the entertainment bar with solid counter tops, refrigerator, electric sink, stainless steel drawers, four deluxe bar stools, bottle holder and a cabana top overhead with recessed lighting. No expense has been spared and no detail has been missed. There is even a bottle opener mounted on the side of the bar.

I would have liked to have seen a larger swim platform area at the stern, but it is understandable why they didn't. They needed the room for the bar. However, Premier made accessing the water almost too easy with a 3-step stair system built into the hull and a telescoping 3-step ladder for additional assistance.

I may have been a skeptic before my test, but now I am a true believer more than ever. This is one boat that stands up to its name. She has been not only developed to entertain your guest, but to be one of the fastest and water sports minded boats on the water. She is no doubt a head turner and will be one of if not the best looking boat on the water that will command the stares of everyone she passes.

By Captain Chris Kourtakis

SPECIFICATIONS

LOA:	29' 5" / 8.96 m
Beam:	8' 6" / 2.59 m
Passengers:	15-18
Tube Diameter	25"
Dry weight	3,500 lbs / 1,590 kgs
Max HP	600 HP
Fuel Capacity	47 gals / 178 L

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