



Haines Hunter 600R Savage Seas (March 2009)

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The R series is the latest boat range from Haines Hunter combining low-profile sporty spice with maximum fishability. John Willis runs an astute eye over adventurer Charlie Micallef's version of his new Haines Hunter 600R

"Savage Seas is the result of six months of careful planning and construction to produce the perfect boat for Charlie's Savage Seas Adventures"

This is the story of a boat that is truly built for savage seas. The iconic Australian Haines Hunter legend lives on with an alliance formed with fishing and diving guru, Charlie Micallef, and his new Ferrari red hull 600R he calls *Savage Seas*.

Charlie has built a reputation as an awarded free diver and angler with a well-proven record of accomplishment for producing the goods with his DVD production, media appearances and fishing/boating tuition. The all-new Haines Hunter 600R fills Charlie's prerequisites for a fast, smooth riding package that will tame the savage seas while achieving great stability for his filming exploits.

The result is simply stunning. This beautiful boat shows the Haines Hunter dedication to practical research and development, as well as their skills in the moulding and production process. Its presentation is outstanding with an overall fit up, and choice of components truly matched to the premium product.

I am happy to declare my hand - I spent many years offshore in an early Haines Hunter 635L and have total admiration for the brand. The most recent releases certainly uphold the Haines Hunter tradition of quality.

TIME-HONOURED DESIGN

The hull design is timeless. A big, deep 21-degree PDV (Performance Deadrise Vee) combines with three running strakes and a reverse chine. Combined, they are the formula for the legend. Handlaid hulls of woven roving matt and reinforced fibreglass, massive underfloor support structure including poured expandafoam and world-leading manufacturing processes all combine to give a safe, strong, high-quality product.

Presentation is one thing but comfortable, seagoing ability is another. There is no substitute for hull weight when being pitched in a big sea or cutting across the top of that spine-splintering chop. The 600R's hull weight of 1150kg certainly produces the desired level of confidence.

The 600R has a very sporty low-profile deck that is eminently fishable and incorporates a small cabin area. The bunks are not big but would certainly provide for the kids to snooze or for a more elderly nanny nap. While the cabin is not lined, it is deep and inviting and provides room under the bunk for the Porta-Potti. Charlie stores all of his dive and safety gear under the bunks.

I have always liked the vast amount of storage provided by the designers at Haines Hunter. There are compartments in all the usual places such as under the bunks, large cabin and cockpit sidepockets, underfloor killtank (capable of taking two small yellowfin), enclosed battery compartment and rear livebait tank.

THE BUSINESS END

I really like the practicality of the fold-down, dual rear seat. The lounge cavity also provides disguised access to the bilge. For the angler, the transom is best described as a well laid out workstation! The large livebait tank is plumbed with an optional deckwash, and the removable Haines Hunter baitboard has a flip-up cutting surface and storage.

Cockpit workspace is huge! If there is one thing that I look for in an offshore-style boat it is deep combing height and footholds under the sidepockets. The 600R supplies both of these prerequisites.

The moulded boarding area on the port side of the transom is most suited to Charlie's diving adventures. It also allows easy boarding while on the trailer or some more active watersports such as skiing or doughnutting.

The sporty, low-profile deck also provides a well laid out helm, dash and forward bulkhead. It is comfortable for driving in a standing or seated position, as well as providing enclosed protection from rough offshore conditions. There is centre access to the cabin, and the passenger side has a large waterproof glovebox, grab handle and cupholder.

HIGH-SPEED ELECTRONICS

The Haines Hunter designers combine many features into the multi-layered dashboard. It is attractive and functional, allowing room for a vast array of instruments such as Charlie's personal choice of the Lowrance LCX 112c, 12in colour sounder/GPS/chartplotter with broadband. This unit is easy to read and operate even at high speeds. I was pleased to have great vision on the screen even though I was wearing polarising sunglasses. The electronics package is enhanced with a GME GR9000 CD/AM/FM/MP3 player with two 8in flush-mount speakers, Lowrance LVR-250 VHF and Navman MCB7270 27MHz radio.

All Haines Hunter boats inclusive and above the 585R feature a unique Digital Switching System (DSS) as standard. DSS offers advantages including maintenance-free waterproof keypads, optional remote, no fuses, electronic circuit protection and control of all of the instrumentation including cabin, courtesy, navigation and spot lighting, bilge control, fuel sensor and even switching for the Stress Free electric anchor winch.

Seastar hydraulic steering, Lenco trim tabs, a stainless steel/leather combination steering wheel, cigarette lighter and a full set of three multifunction digital gauges with fuel computer further enhance the package.

I cannot speak highly enough of the big Yamaha 200hp DOHC fuel injected four-stroke engine. It has proven itself in the harshest commercial

environments while combining economy with the highest levels of environmental and operator friendly benefits. All 600Rs are fitted with a 210lt fuel tank giving extended offshore range.

Helm and passenger seating is provided by beautifully upholstered wraparound bucket seats with fibreglass storage boxes under short pedestals. While the seats are very traditional and functional, I personally feel that some of the more recent innovations in seat combinations may be more appropriate. The helm also features very welcome moulded footrests.

From the bow back the all-new *Savage Seas* is visually stunning, yet eminently practical. It has a very strong, single-piece 32mm bowrail and a moulded bowsprit for the plough anchor. Charlie's options include a Stress Free anchor winch with freefall, housed in a well-designed hatch. The winch is also accessible through another large hatch in the cabin for maintenance.

The factory fitted stainless steel rocket launcher has rubber inserts to minimise damage to those valuable fishing rods. It also supports the dual work lights and bimini canopy with front and side clears. The stainless steel ensemble is completed with four rodholders in the gunwales, a full-width grabrail above the safety glass windscreen as well as passenger and boarding grabrails and fold-down ladder.

FLEXIBLE OPTIONS

Savage Seas is the result of six months of careful planning and construction to produce the perfect boat for Charlie's *Savage Seas Adventures*. Features such as a removable dive door pay tribute to the flexibility of the factory which offers a huge range of options for every customer to feel they have an individually tailored boating package. Charlie chose a Mackay full-roller, drive-on tandem trailer to complete the combination. Every step of the construction from the factory to the fitout at Port Phillip Boating Centre has been recorded for an upcoming DVD.

Charlie's quest for discovering new and exciting fishing and diving adventures regularly takes him into the unpredictable Bass Strait through the world renowned Port Phillip Heads. Only one day before my test, he was caught in a 30-knot wind shift that saw him skeltering back to port at a comfortable 45kmh. The boat lives up to its legendary rough-water performance and handling, and is superbly fitted to encompass real safety at sea.

For the record the Haines Hunter 600R/Yamaha 200 combination planed at 18kmh and 3600rpm, hit the power spike at 4200rpm for a great cruising speed of 49kmh, and recorded 71kmh at WOT of 5600rpm.

In Charlie's words, "What is fitted will be used!" while exploring new fishing grounds farther seaward for future productions. With a package price just under \$100,000 and a seven-year structural warranty the fully equipped, Australian made, Haines Hunter *Savage Seas*< 600R is set to extend "the Legend" for many years to come by truly providing the anglers dream!

WHAT WE LIKED

- Large, deep cockpit
- Great rough-water boat
- Exceptionally good choice of options and fitout
- Quiet, dependable, fuel-efficient power
- Superb mouldings

NOT SO MUCH

- Helm and passenger seats could do better
- No flush-mount engine controls
- Burley bucket is difficult to access

HAINES HUNTER 600R SAVAGE SEAS
HOW MUCH?
Price as tested: \$97,000
Options fitted: Mackay trailer, Yamaha outboard, Lowrance LCX 112c sounder/GPS/chartplotter, GME GR9000 CD/AM/FM/ MP3 player with speakers, Lowrance LVR-250 VHF radio, Navman 27MHz radio, Stress Free electric anchor winch, plumbed livebait tank with deckwash, twin batteries, burley bucket, removeable dive door, boarding ladder, rocket launcher, bimini package, and cutting board
GENERAL
Material: GRP
Type: Monohull deep-vee
Length overall: 6.35m
Beam: 2.40m
Weight: 1150kg
Deadrise: 21°
CAPACITIES
Fuel: 210lt
Rec. max. HP: 230
ENGINE
Make/model: Yamaha 200hp outboard
Type: DOHC fuel injected four-stroke petrol
Rated HP: 200
Displacement: 3352cc

Weight: 265kg

Gearbox ratio: 15:30 (2.00)

Propeller: 19in stainless steel

SUPPLIED BY:

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