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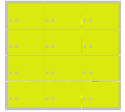
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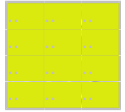
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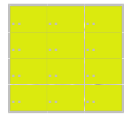


*of Mind*

RIVA'S BIG 88 FLORIDA SPORT YACHT  
TAPS THE SPIRIT OF ONE OF THE  
BUILDER'S CLASSIC RUNABOUTS.

*By Justin Ratcliffe*

The 88 Florida marks a return to large, open yachts designed for outdoor living on the water, achieved with Riva's inimitable sense of style.



## 'I'm a Riva addict.'

admitted Alberto Galassi, CEO of the Ferretti Group, during the presentation of the new 88-foot (26.8-meter) Florida in Monte Carlo. He's not the only one. Of all the iconic Italian yacht brands, Riva is likely the most addictive. From the Sixties to the present day, Riva yachts have captured the hearts and minds of the rich and famous, from Brigitte Bardot and Sophia Loren to Aristotle Onassis and Peter Sellers. Even Jeremy Clarkson described the Aquarama as "the most beautiful thing in the world"—praise indeed from the former BBC "Top Gear" presenter for something that doesn't even have wheels.

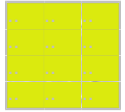
In this context, the 88 Florida marks a nostalgic return to 1952, when the very first 18-foot (5.5-meter) Riva Florida was launched.

The diminutive, but sporty open runabout was widely used for water skiing and was named after the Sunshine State because the Florida Panhandle was, and still is, closely associated with the sport. The boat developed into the Super Florida, which was 6 feet longer and powered by a V-8 engine for a top speed in excess of 37 knots. The monikers Miami and California were briefly considered for the boat, but in the end, Riva decided to stick with tradition. The only other similarity between the original Florida and her latest incarnation is that both are opens with an 8 in their overall length.

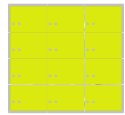
We have seen a decline in maxi open motorboats of late, arguably because in times of economic hardship they are too closely associated



Riva calls the interior styling 'vintage.' It is intended to be reminiscent of Riva models from the 1980s and '90s.



When the convertible hardtop is used to cover the forward seating area, the helm station is open to the elements.



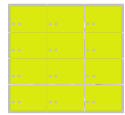
The carbon fiber hardtop, in action midway between its two positions, was also originally envisioned as a Bimini for the forward cockpit when at anchor.

with gas-guzzling, conspicuous consumption. Riva's decision to launch such a model is likely a sign that the markets are looking up, especially in the United States. The builder also knows that a powerful open boat is the purest expression of style and speed on the water, which is what the brand is all about.

Both her exterior and interior design are by Officina Italiana Design, an independent studio with the exclusive mandate to design Riva's entire range. The sleek, yet subtle profile and metallic moon gray livery is typical of Riva's sober elegance, but the 88 Florida is an

"open" with a difference thanks to a patented carbon fiber hardtop. In the automotive world, she would be called a spyder or a convertible. (Eat your heart out, Jeremy Clarkson.)

When not deployed in coupé mode to cover the helm station, the aerodynamic hardtop pivots forward on two arms using an electro-hydraulic drive system to nest atop the forward cockpit. For safety reasons, two switches must be pressed simultaneously to control the silky smooth movement. Sensors near the moving parts cut the power if obstructed by kiddies' fingers, and monitor the procedure. Riva says



## COUPÉ OR CONVERTIBLE?

Headed by founder and CEO Davide Cipriani, CentrostileDesign is an Italian firm that provides technical support for design development and prototyping in various fields of production, including the boatbuilding industry. Working with Ferretti's in-house engineers, Cipriani and his team were responsible for developing the 88 Florida's hardtop concept from the structural analysis to industrialization. (The electro-hydraulic actuating system was optimized by Besenzoni.)

"Riva came to us with the brief to create a hardtop system like the ones we know from the automotive sector, but which is still relatively unexplored in the yachting industry, especially on boats over 20 meters [65 feet]," Cipriani says. "Starting from this seemingly simple brief, the main challenge was to perfectly integrate the design and functionality into the elegant aesthetics that Riva is renowned for.

"We began by studying the shape of the roof so it would match the coaming of the forward cockpit and could be opened and closed in one fluid movement. This was easier said than done, not least because of the sheer size of the roof [more than 120 square feet], which dictated the use of carbon fiber, also for the supporting arms, for maximum strength and rigidity combined with minimum weight. Finite element analysis was also used to study the metal components of the drive system, which are made from special hardened stainless steel. Although highly complex, the result is a quick, silent and fluid mechanism for an accessory feature that is both elegant and functional." —J.R.

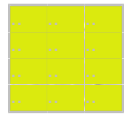


Veneers in the staterooms are light-colored, finished in a peach-skin tone called *manopesa* in Italian. Louis Vuitton-style leather straps and buckles decorate the headboard.

the hardtop can be used safely at high speed, but, as with convertible cars, it should be raised or lowered when the boat is at a standstill.

This is not the first convertible boat. Reversys Boat, Hi-Tech Marine and Vikal International have all developed smaller boats or superyacht tenders with convertible tops that function much like those on cars. But the Riva system neatly resolves the issue of where to stow the hardtop. Stefano de Vivo, chief commercial officer of Ferretti Group, says the 88 Florida is the only open convertible over 80 feet (24.3 meters) LOA on the market.

Officina Italiana Design co-founder Mauro Micheli originally thought about adding a hardtop to the Rivarama more than a decade ago, but only now, after considerable research and development in conjunction with hydraulics specialists Besenzoni and an engineering group called CentrostileDesign (see sidebar), is the concept being put into practice. Originally, the mechanism was to include an intermediate position to serve as a bimini top over the forward seating area. Considering the complex engineering involved, this function was eliminated. It will likely reappear as the technology evolves,



**ABOVE:** The transom garage can house a 13-foot tender and a PWC. **BELOW:** The twin guest cabin is bright and spacious, especially for an 88-footer.



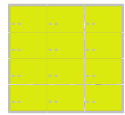
thanks to ongoing research.

"The hardtop is virtually invisible from the side and doesn't affect the overall open design of the yacht in the least," Micheli says. "It results from matching the technical development of materials and the engineering of the movement with stylistic research to enhance the personality of the yacht."

Like all opens, the 88 Florida is a boat designed for outdoor living on the water, with generous seating and lounging areas from bow to stern. The transom door folds up to reveal a garage that can house a tender of nearly 13 feet (4 meters) and a PWC. A Williams Turbojet 385 is available on request. For launching, the pantographic aft platform can be lowered 3 feet into the water, also providing a convenient aid to anyone swimming off the stern.

The lower-deck accommodations consist of four en suite cabins: three forward and the full-beam master suite abaft the galley and dinette. Two crew cabins with independent access are next to the engine room. The deliberately vintage interior styling recalls models from the late '80s and early '90s such as the Bahamas, the first Riva penned by Officina Italiana Design. The Louis Vuitton-style leather straps and buckles that decorate the Florida's headboards derive





from the 27-foot (8.2-meter) Riva Iseo. Light elm veneers with a satiny, peach-skin *manopescia* finish combine with the leather detailing and fabrics in warm shades of honey and ripe wheat, providing a chic, yet welcoming touch.

The standard engine configuration with a pair of 2,435-horsepower MTU diesels produces a top speed of 38.5 knots and a cruising speed of 34 knots. When *Yachts International* sea-trialed the yacht in Monte Carlo, in perfect conditions, the steering was light to the touch and the hull tracked obediently, even during high-speed

maneuvers. A more powerful engine package with two 2,639-horsepower MTU's pushes top speed to 40.5 knots with a 35-knot cruise.

Most big, open yachts today are not opens at all. Even the biggest, the Mangusta 165 (50 meters), cheats by having a flybridge. The 88 Florida marks a triumphant return to a concept that appeared to have had its day, with a measure of style and panache that only Riva can deliver. **Y**

**For more information:** 954-462-5527, [riva-yacht.com](http://riva-yacht.com)



### RIVA 88 FLORIDA

**LOA:** 88ft. (26.82m)  
**BEAM:** 20ft. 4in. (6.22m)  
**DRAFT:** 5ft. 10in. (1.79m)  
**DISPLACEMENT (full load):** 72 tons  
**CONSTRUCTION:** GRP

**ENGINES (standard):** 2 x 2,435-hp MTU 16V 2000 M93  
**ENGINES (optional):** 2 x 2,638-hp MTU 16V 2000 M94  
**FUEL:** 1,981 gal. (7,500L)  
**WATER:** 238 gal. (900L)  
**SPEED (max.):** 38.5 knots (40.5 knots with upgrade)

**SPEED (cruising):** 34 knots (35 knots with upgrade)  
**RANGE:** 340 nm at 34 knots (standard config)  
**GUEST CABINS:** 4  
**CREW CABINS:** 2  
**PRICE:** upon request

**SEE** the complete photo gallery and video of the Riva 88 Florida and find more yacht reviews like this one at [yachtsinternational.com](http://yachtsinternational.com)