

review

**Marex 310  
Sun Cruiser**

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# HERE COMES



Peter and Judy only took delivery of their first launch – a new Marex 310 SC (Sun Cruiser) – the day before our review, but with Marex agents Richard and Suzy Wardenburg providing moral and logistical support, they clearly enjoyed getting to know her on a breezy, sunny day in November.

# THE SUN



**B**uilt in Lithuania by a Norwegian company, the Marex 310 SC has won numerous high-profile international awards. It's not hard to see why: this pocket-rocket packs so much quality, innovation and versatility into its stylish, easily handled 31-foot (9.46m) length, it constantly surprises.

Peter and Judy have changed up from a trailer boat, a 6m Buccaneer they bought new and have owned for more than 20 years. They can't believe how much more boat they get for a few extra metres of length.

This is their first launch, but by no means the first one they looked at. What drew them to the Marex initially was its wonderful openness – with its Sunbrella fabric sunroof panels slid back it feels like a convertible sports car. Even better, in this spec with the Volvo Penta D6 370hp engine option, it has sports car-like performance to match.

The 310 SC is a cockpit cruiser that can wear several different hats. As a day boat it easily accommodates a crowd – we had as many as 10 people onboard for our review and most of them were able to sit comfortably around the cockpit table – but with two roomy cabins, each with a good-sized double berth, plus the option of turning the cockpit table and lounge into another double berth, a weekend with friends or family is entirely feasible.

The cockpit – with its extensive wrap-around seating and a single transom door to port – is ideal for containing young children and animals. And while it is hardly fishing-oriented, the wide teak swim platform can be – especially if the deep transom lockers are used to store fishing and scuba gear, bait and/or the catch.

Peter will fit a stainless-steel u-shaped railing to the swim platform to accommodate a bait station or BBQ and to secure his inflatable dinghy. He's also found somewhere for his dive bottles under the cockpit seats, which offer lots of storage, and thinks he'll plumb one of the transom lockers as a live bait tank.



Partly because of the boat's modest size, the 310 SC has a very social layout. No-one is too far removed from anyone else, even working in the galley, which is located 'down' in the companionway. But there's privacy too, with frosted glass doors closing off the vessel's good-sized double cabins, and lounging space on the foredeck to get away from the crowd.

With the sunroofs slid back, what's left of the roof is like a targa top – a narrow arch of fibreglass straddling the boat behind the side windows. It's this ability to open the whole of the cockpit, helm, galley and companionway to the sky, flooding it with light, that gives the boat such a sense of space.

Unsurprisingly for a Scandinavian company,



**ABOVE** Accommodation on the lower deck is surprisingly spacious and nicely appointed, too.

**BELOW** The Volvo Penta's D6 370hp and duo-prop sternleg combination give sportboat-like performance.



**RIGHT** Exhilarating wind-in-the-hair performance and a smooth, quiet ride belies the Marex 310's modest size.

**BELOW** A fun day boat with overnighting capability, the 310 SC has an extremely social layout that works equally well for a couple, a family or a crowd.



Marex recognises the sun doesn't always shine, so buttoning up for inclement weather is quick and easy, the roof panels closing in seconds and the wraparound cockpit covers pulling out on tracks like curtains to swiftly enclose the cockpit.

When not in use these covers stow away neatly behind panels in the hardtop supports. With the roof closed and the side curtains deployed, the boat is completely weatherproof; diesel heating ensures it's comfortably warm in winter too.

An enormous lockable companionway door shuts off the lower deck, including the galley. It slides back into a bulkhead recess behind the helm console, with a lower section that drops back into the deck covering off the steps. It's cleverly done, providing security and privacy when required and light and air when the conditions are right to open it up.

Considering the boat's size, the galley is very workable. There's a large countertop, a single sink with a timber cover, an electric cooktop, under-bench convection microwave oven with galley lockers and drawer stowage under and over the bench.

The fridge is located under the teak floor just in front of the passenger seat, with the freezer in a drawer under the seat. An inverter and a bank of three house batteries, supplemented by solar roof panels, supply the boat's electrical needs.

Also a surprise are the cabins: bright and spacious with oversize windows and overhead hatches supplying natural light. They both have well-thought-out storage options. The master cabin in the bow has a double berth, offset to starboard, with storage under, an opening overhead hatch and a pair of portlights. Individual reading lights complement LED cabin lighting and Fusion stereo speakers.

The guest cabin's double berth extends athwartships under the upper deck, but the cabin doesn't feel pokey because, again, Marex has ensured there's plenty of light. Headroom is ample where it matters, with full standing headroom inside the cabin door to aid dressing and a seat to sit on when putting on your shoes.

Like the cabins, the bathroom is a really good size for a 31-foot boat. The vanity is large, there's ample space to comfortably





The Marex 310 SC is fun to throw around, very responsive and exhibits almost sportboat-like handling.



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use the head and shower water is contained by a tracked curtain. The moulded surfaces should be easy to clean as well.

Overall, the quality of the mouldings, woodwork and teak is sublime, while the engineering and detailing are exemplary for a boat in this price bracket. Take the cockpit lockers for instance: served by twin gas rams, you can open them without the need to remove seat cushions.

The same with the engine room hatch: you can check the main engine inspection points without having to remove the cockpit table, although this is necessary to fully access the engine room.

Although this was Peter and Judy's first day with their first 'big boat,' they exuded confidence. Peter clearly enjoyed the Marex's responsive and sporty handling and he seemed unfazed by her size relative to his old Buccaneer trailer boat.

A bow thruster and the Volvo Penta duo-prop sterndrive give good low speed control, making berthing a breeze. Operating a sternleg is hardly different from operating an outboard: Peter already understood about trimming the leg for best performance in the conditions, while factory-fitted Zipwake automatic trim tabs, represented locally by Advance Trident Ltd, keep the vessel level.

While performance is brisk, with 34 knots showing on the 12-inch Raymarine HybridTouch MFD into a fairly choppy head sea, the boat is nice and quiet underway, thanks to plenty of engine room sound insulation. Cruising at 28 knots we saw a fuel burn of 60 litres per hour.

The Marex 310 SC is fun to throw around, very responsive and exhibits almost sportboat-like handling. Peter certainly didn't



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**OPPOSITE** The detailing is really strong, including the teak and stainless work. The side curtains retract into the hardtop supports and solar panels are a factory option.

**LEFT** Plenty of room for a party in the cockpit and space for fishing, diving and watersports on the swim platform.

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## Punching well above its weight, this is a popular craft in Europe.

hesitate to give it plenty of throttle and throw the wheel over from one lock to the other, the boat going exactly where it was pointed.

With some tab applied and the leg tucked in a bit, the 310 punched through the chop, giving us a comfortable ride. It's reasonably dry as well, but wind on the beam did whip a bit of spray over the windscreen and into the cockpit. Luckily, shutting the roof takes only moments.

The helm seat has been raised slightly to better suit Peter, but the controls still fall nicely

to hand. Standing up to drive means putting your head up through the open roof into the slipstream, which is exhilarating, though the open roof panel sometimes contacted the back of my neck. Vision is good, seated or standing.

Peter and Judy ticked quite a few of the Marex option boxes, including the top-spec engine and the teak pack, adding a few extras like the bait table in New Zealand, but the boats come well-equipped from the factory. The 310 SC ships with a full boat cover, to keep dirt and bird droppings at bay, and is small enough for drystack storage, adding to its versatility.

Punching well above its weight, this is a popular craft in Europe. A baby brother to the Marex 375 introduced here last year, it is only the second Marex in New Zealand. With such clever packaging, spacious accommodation, sparkling performance and easy handling, it's an attractive proposition for anyone stepping up from a smaller boat or downsizing to something more manageable. It could soon be one Sun Cruiser among many. **BNZ**



### Marex 310 Sun Cruiser

PACKAGES FROM \$475,000

PRICE AS TESTED \$580,000

MANUFACTURED BY Marex Boats [www.marex.no](http://www.marex.no)

#### HIGHLIGHTS

Great packaging and a lovely open layout that's best with the sunroofs open

Generous accommodation for a boat of this size

Sharp performance and handling and a decent ride as well

#### SPECIFICATIONS

loa 9.46m  
beam 3.22m  
weight 4,500kg dry  
construction GRP  
engine 1 x Volvo Penta D6 370hp, duo-prop sternleg  
fuel 440 litres  
water 280 litres  
black water 150 litres  
grey water 200 litres  
cruising speed 26 knots  
max speed 35 knots

#### WATCH IT

