

# LET'S CRUISE

CHAPARRAL'S NEW SIGNATURE 276  
FOCUSES ON THE CORE CONCEPT OF CRUISING



yachtphotography.com

**PERFORMANCE  
TESTED**

# » CHAPARRAL SIGNATURE 276



## SPECIFICATIONS

<b>Length</b>	28 ft., 10.5 in.
<b>Beam</b>	8 ft., 6 in.
<b>Capacity</b>	Yacht Certified
<b>Dry weight</b>	7,450 lbs.
<b>Fuel capacity</b>	87 gals.
<b>Maximum power</b>	425 hp
<b>Deadrise (@ transom)</b>	18°

There are two sides to every cruiser: the side for cruising and playing in the water and the side for enjoying the evening and sleeping aboard. Chaparral's new 276 strives to take advantage of every available inch of room to maximize topside enjoyment as well as comfort in the cabin.

Seating in the cockpit is roomy and comfortable, which is no surprise for a boat with an 8-foot, 6-inch beam. We especially like the doublewide helm seat, which has two bolsters that really get the view up and over the windshield railing. The seat also swivels 180 degrees to face the aft bench seat and create a nice little alfresco dining area. We also liked the aft bench seat that converts to an aft-facing chaise or sunpad.

Going aft and down through the walk-through transom you'll find a large integrated swim platform, which doubles as a boarding platform at the dock. The swim platform really ups the ability to enjoy

watersports, and it also has a foldaway ladder and an integrated ice chest with overboard drain.

There's plenty of storage for water toys, PFDs and other gear under the aft sunpad and portside lounge, which allows you to keep anything that gets wet or dirty up top and out of the cabin.

In the cabin you'll find headroom to accommodate your taller crewmembers. While it's still pretty tight quarters compared to anything on land, the cabin on the 276 is definitely up to the task of making room for a cruising family of four. The dinette doubles as a V-berth, and the mid-cabin berth provides plenty of room for two to sleep in comfort. The galley and enclosed head are both more than adequate to handle the needs of an extended adventure, and you can use options like the air-conditioning/heating unit and generator to increase the comfort level.

**By Go Boating Test Team**  
Chaparral decided to kick off its 41st year in business as a boat builder with a number of new models, including the brand-new Signature 276 cruiser. A well-designed cruiser offers you comfort, convenience, looks, style and performance, which adds up to a sum that is greater than its parts.

The whole idea of a trailerable cruiser like this is to marry the performance and style of a sportboat with the comfort and convenience of a cabin that goes way beyond what you would find with a typical cuddy. This allows you to enjoy a day out on the water cruising and playing with water toys like you would with a runabout — then at night you can drop the anchor or find a slip at a marina. The spacious cabin allows you to cook dinner and enjoy a movie before bed — then you wake up the next morning and you're already on your boat, ready for a new day of fun.

In essence, cruisers allow you to really get into the boating lifestyle while giving you a taste of what it's like to actually live aboard for a weekend or longer. Those who enjoy it often find themselves moving up to larger cruisers and eventually motoryachts — the bigger the boat the easier it is to spend more time on it.

The new 276 from Chaparral is on the smaller end of the outfit's cruiser lineup, but it is Chaparral's largest cruiser that still has the standard trailer-friendly 8-foot, 6-inch beam, which makes this a great boat to take to large lakes, reservoirs and coastal areas for extended adventures. In the cabin and in the cockpit you'll notice a number of innovative features that prove Chaparral is mindful of new trends while working to raise the bar at the same time.

In the cabin you'll find a convertible V-berth/dining area and a mid-cabin berth, bringing the sleeping capacity in the cabin to four people. Light maple wood cabinets abound in the cabin, and the galley comes fully equipped with a refrigerator, single-burner electric stove, sink and microwave. The enclosed head doubles as a shower, and inside you'll find a look that is more reminiscent of a large motoryacht than a small cruiser.

The cockpit is well planned with a number of creative seating combinations. The doublewide helm seat swivels 180 degrees to face the aft bench seat for a



**BUILT FOR PLEASURE** — Chaparral's Signature 276 cruiser makes the most of the available topside space. The doublewide helm seat swivels 180 degrees to face the aft bench seat — a table drops in between to make a cozy topside dining area. When drinks and snacks are in order, you'll be glad for the portside refreshment center, which has dedicated room for a cooler, a pressurized sink and plenty of counter space to prepare snacks. The aluminum radar arch with ski tow is a stylish option that pays huge dividends in terms of watersports action and high-class looks.

cozy topside dining area. And the backrest for the aft bench seat can be repositioned to create a huge aft-facing chaise or sunpad — Chaparral really works to maximize the utility of limited space.

### PERFORMANCE

Our test of the new 276 took place on Lake Castaic, which is about 50 miles northwest of Los Angeles at an elevation of 1,055 feet. We had a light load with two people aboard, no water and a quarter tank of fuel (about 22 gallons or 138 pounds). For power we had a 375 hp 8.1 Gi Volvo Penta with a dual-prop drive spinning a pair of stainless steel counter-rotating F4 props.

At full throttle we quickly spooled up to a top speed of 46.7 mph on our GPS. You can expect a range of about 101 miles at top speed, but we imagine most of you will pull back to a cruising speed of about 25 mph for an extended cruising range of about 170 miles. Acceleration was impressive with a time to plane of 4.8 seconds and a 0-to-30-mph time of 8.5 seconds — these are the kinds of numbers we're used to seeing on smaller sportboats.

In terms of handling the 276 definitely drives like the large boat it is. It certainly

isn't lacking in the fun department, but it takes a little more time in the turns than a smaller, lighter sportboat. Still, it has that trademark Chaparral handling with no slop in the wheel, predictable power delivery and confidence in hard-over turns.

The 276 comes standard with a set of trim tabs, but we didn't have any need to use them on our flat-water testing conditions. Still, we're glad to see they are there — you'll be thankful they are if you need to balance out an uneven load or calm things down over rough water.

### OVERALL

Chaparral's new Signature 276 is probably about as big as you can go without getting into something that requires you to hang a "wide load" sign off the back while towing on the highway. Even though Chaparral only had 8 feet, 6 inches of beam to work with, it still managed to fit in an impressive measure of all the things a cruiser needs to have. It's fun to drive, it has plenty of speed (and more if you go with more power) and its cabin is more than up to the task of extended weekend or vacation adventures.

Chaparral builds an upscale product, so you can expect that the 276 won't be the least expensive option out there. But if you're a stickler for fit-and-finish, durability and a boat that feels good in the water, you'll find that it's money well spent. **GO**

## PERFORMANCE & PRICING CHAPARRAL SIGNATURE 276

### PERFORMANCE

	MPH	RPM	MPG	RANGE	\$/MILE*	DBA
PEAK	46.7	5,000	1.29	101	1.69	92
CRUISE	24.8	3,000	2.14	167	1.02	81
TIME TO PLANE						4.8 seconds
0-30 MPH ACCELERATION						8.5 seconds

-Fuel consumption measured with Floscan digital fuel-flow meter; range based on 90% of total fuel capacity.

\*Assuming a fuel price of \$2.18/gallon

### POWER

TEST	8.1 Gi Volvo Penta
HP	375
PROP	F4 stainless steel
WOT LIMIT	4,600 rpm

STANDARD	350 MAG MPI MerCruiser
HP	300
PROP	3-blade stainless steel
WOT RANGE	4,800-5,200 rpm

Craft available with MerCruiser and Volvo Penta stern drives ranging from 280 to 425 hp

### LOAD

	PEOPLE	FUEL (GALS./LBS.)	MISC.
TEST	2	22/138	15 lbs.
TYPICAL	4-6	87/545	115 lbs.

### BASE PRICE

WITH TEST POWER	\$93,637*
WITH STANDARD POWER	\$85,110*

\*Price can vary depending on options and location — price does not include trailer

### FINANCING

\$729/month for 15 years\*

\*Assuming a final price of \$98,500 with a 15% down payment and a fixed interest rate of 6.5% — does not include sales tax

### FIVE NOTABLE OPTIONS

10,000 BTU air-conditioning/heating unit (\$3,817), six-disk CD changer (\$299), Garmin 172 GPC (\$1,261), aluminum radar arch w/ski tow (\$4,026), windlass w/200-foot line and 30-foot chain (\$1,846)

### FIVE NOTABLE STANDARDS

Enclosed fiberglass head (w/VacuFlush head and holding tank, shower, mirror and stainless steel rail), LCD TV (w/DVD/CD player, remote, surround sound, antenna and TV Coax to dockside), Sirius satellite-ready AM/FM CD stereo w/remote control and display, 50-foot shore-power cord, galley (w/sink, electric stove, microwave and refrigerator)

### BUILDER

Chaparral Boats, Inc., P.O. Drawer 928, Industrial Park Blvd., Nashville, GA 31639; (229) 686-7481; www.chaparralboats.com

Circle 4 on reader service card, page 80