



Who should buy it: This model could easily fit in the water-sports segment because of the wake quality and driving features, yet it has operating ease for those who prefer the familiarity of a stern-drive.

CHAPARRAL Sunesta 224 Xtreme Wide Tech

■ LENGTH OVERALL: 22'4" ■ BEAM: 8'6" ■ DRY WEIGHT: 4,300 LB. ■ FUEL CAPACITY: 50 GAL.
 ■ MAXIMUM HP: 300 ■ MSRP (TEST BOAT W/ VOLVO PENTA 5.7 GI DP): \$68,427



What we think:

Time to create a new category of boat. Forget the line being blurred between bowriders and deck boats in 2008; the all-new Sunesta 224 Xtreme has a ball field all to itself. Called a Wide Tech design, the deck has a cool pickle-fork look that expands seating in the bow and is mimicked along the molded-in platform at the other end. But underneath is a free-riding V-hull — not the tri-hull found on most deck boats. The wakes at 18 mph told us the running surface had been specially crafted. One of our testers, a die-hard wakeboarder, called it perhaps the best riding wake he'd seen behind a stern-drive.

Every detail, big and small, makes the Sunesta 224 Xtreme one of a kind. The shape of the bow and stern is also seen in the tower, the three-piece windshield

and the vents. The Xtreme in the name is not just an optional package designation either. It directed the overall design to attract active water-sports participants. Our test boat had PerfectPass speed control in the middle of a tight three-piece gauge cluster lined with distinctive square bezels, trim tabs and a ballast switch to shape the wakes. The solid tower is tricked out with four big speakers, spreader lights and racks for eight boards.

We had this boat away from the dock longer than any other during our test, spending extra time on the transom lounge and taking notes on the little touches like the magnetic latches and automotive-style stops on the compartment hatches. But the boldest note reads: "The kind of boat that makes everyone love the boating experience." — R.S.

Full Test Reports

- Peruse our first-hand performance report.
- Find out where to buy.
- Compare with other tricked-out runabouts.

Go to boatinglife.com/bbg08 and select Chaparral Sunesta 224 Xtreme for detailed information.

Also consider . . .



Sunesta 224 Wide Tech
LENGTH: 22'4" BEAM: 8'6" MAX HP: 320
 Save about \$15,000 from the Xtreme version price and replace the PerfectPass system with a Garmin GPS unit.



Sunesta 244 Xtreme Wide Tech
LENGTH: 24'4" BEAM: 8'6" MAX HP: 320
 The 244 has a layout similar to the 224, but it's stretched out proportionally and adds more fuel and passenger capacities.



- MerCruiser 5.7, Bravo 3 – \$69,441

PHOTOS: (FROM TOP) TOM KING; COURTESY CHAPARRAL (2)