

Boston Whaler 285 Conquest (2019-)

Brief Summary

The trend for using fishing boats for cruising is nowhere better illustrated than with the Boston Whaler Conquest lineup and this 285 Conquest model. We found her to be well equipped with an array of amenities, and she accommodates overnights just as easily as she does a day of fishing. Because she's built for bluewater work, one will find safety and a solid feel in the way she handles the seas. She also has a couple of layout options.

Price

Base Price\$201723.00

Prices, features, designs, and equipment are subject to change. Please see your local dealer or visit the builder's website for the latest information available on this boat model.

Key Features

- Fusion stereo with AM/FM with CD player, iPod controls, waterproof speakers
- Mid double berth
- Cockpit prep center with sink and storage
- Covered telescoping stainless steel swim ladder with grab rail
- Cockpit floodlight, dome light and 4 rod holders
- Wood grain galley cabinetry
- VacuFlush head with 6.5 gal. holding tank
- Insulated livewell with light, raw water fill and blue interior
- Convertible port seat/lounge
- 2 in-deck fishboxes with drain and pump-out

Test Results

RPM	MPH	Knots	GPH	MPG	NMPG	STAT. MILE	NM	dBa
570	3.1	2.7	0.9	3.44	3	620	539	68
1000	4.9	4.2	1.9	2.55	2.22	459	400	67

RPM	MPH	Knots	GPH	MPG	NMPG	STAT. MILE	NM	dBa
1500	6.8	5.9	3.15	2.14	1.86	386	335	71
2000	8.4	7.3	4.65	1.8	1.56	323	281	72
2500	10.2	8.9	7.65	1.33	1.16	240	209	78
3000	12.8	11.1	11.45	1.11	0.97	200	174	79
3500	17.4	15.1	14.8	1.18	1.02	212	184	80
4000	25.7	22.3	17.15	1.5	1.3	270	235	82
4500	30.7	26.7	21.3	1.44	1.25	259	226	84
5000	35	30.4	27.1	1.29	1.12	232	202	87
5500	39	33.9	34.3	1.14	0.99	205	178	86
6000	43.8	38	47.05	0.93	0.81	167	146	87

[View the test results in metric units](#)

BostonWhaler_285Conquest_chart.jpg

Specifications

Length Overall	27' 10" / 8.51 m
BEAM	9' 6" 2.90 m
Dry Weight	7,300 lbs. 3,311 kg
Tested Weight	9,590 lbs. 4,350 kg

Draft	20" .50 m
Draft Up	
Draft Down	
Air Draft	
Deadrise/Transom	20 deg.
Max Headroom	N/A
Bridge Clearance	9' 4" 2.84 m (max)
Weight Capacity	
Person Capacity	
Fuel Capacity	200 gal. 757 L
Water Capacity	30 gal. 113.5 L
Length on Trailer	
Height on Trailer	
Trailer Weight	
Total Weight	9,590 lbs. 4,350 kg
Aft Deck	
Salon Inside Width	

Salon Fore & Aft	
Salon Height	
Salon Volume	
Galley Volume	
Master SR Width	
Master SR fore & Aft	
Master SR Overhead	
Master SR Volume	
Eng. Room Volume	

Acceleration Times & Conditions

Time to Plane	3.8 sec.
0 to 20	
Ratio	N/A
Props	N/A
Load	2 persons, 1/2 fuel, no water, gear 50 lbs
Climate	71 deg., 78% humid.; wind: 5-10 mph; seas: swells

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By Captain Steve

Mission Statement

The mission of the 285 Conquest is to combine a well-built boat with an offshore pedigree with the features that can handle a gathering of friends for cocktails or two couples or a small family on overnights. This continues a long-standing trend towards using fishing boats for cruising due to their sea-keeping abilities, dry ride, and protection from the elements.

Boston Whaler 285 Conquest

Our test boat was powered by twin 225-hp Mercury Verado 4-strokes. Mercury 250-hp Verados are optional (\$3,957). Note the Downeast-style side windows.

Distinguishing Features

Some of the key unusual features of the 285 Conquest include:

- **Choose the Layout.** Our test 285 Conquest featured a cockpit sink with the availability of an optional cockpit refrigerator (\$1,416) which when combined really bring the cruising capabilities of this boat to light. One can also add a cockpit table (\$1,812) and port and starboard fold-out bench seats (\$1,573 each) to add to the seating provided by the aft fold-out bench seat.

- **Choose the Cabin Style.** The helm deck can be outfitted with sloping Downeast-style side windows as on our test boat, or have windows that go all the way to the hardtop (\$3,054). A third option is to go with a fully-enclosed helm deck including an aft bulkhead with door.
- **Clever Passenger Seating.** On the port side of the helm deck there are booth-style seats facing forward and aft. A filler cushion turns the seats into a lounge, as one typically sees on most express boats, and the aft seat back will slide forward to form an aft-facing seat with a pull-out foot rest.

Boston Whaler 285 Conquest

The standard flip-up transom bench seat stows and deploys easily. Notice the beefy stainless steel hardware. Picture one of these to port and starboard as options for entertaining.

- **Fully Foam-Cored Hull and Deck Bond.** Boston Whaler mates the hull and deck with an expandable foam that bonds the two components together not just at the hull-deck joint around the perimeter of the vessel, but all over its deck surface. It's an unusual process, and one that the boater can see in our Boston Whaler factory tour video. [\(See construction video.\)](#)
- **Level Flotation.** The USCG only requires boats 20' and under to float level when swamped. Those over 20' don't have to float at all under such conditions. Boston Whaler doesn't agree. The 285 Conquest not only floats if swamped, but Boston Whaler assures us that she'll float level as well.
- **28" (71.1 cm) Cockpit Depth.** ABYC standards call for 24" (60.9 cm) of protection above a weather deck. Boston Whaler takes it a little further and adds another 4" (10 cm) of security.
- **A Division of Brunswick.** The Brunswick Corp. is the largest single company in the marine business and owns over a dozen boat brands and makes both outboard and sterndrive engines as well. Boston Whaler is a leading Brunswick brand and as such has an infrastructure, business practices, and engineering departments that are more sophisticated than what one finds with many builders.

Boston Whaler 285 Conquest

Boston Whaler has packed a lot of boat into 27'10" (8.51 m) and with her standard hardtop she will be able to take owners virtually anywhere they want to go.

Performance and Handling

The Boston Whaler 285 Conquest has a length overall of 27'10" (8.51 m), a beam of 9'6" (2.9 m) and a hull draft of 20" (.50 m). With a hull weight of 7,300 lbs. (3,311 kgs.), half fuel, two people and test power we had a test weight of 9,590 lbs. (4,349 kg). With a pair of 225-hp Mercury Verado 4-strokes powering our 285 Conquest we reached a top speed at 6000 rpm bringing us to 43.8 mph. At that speed we had a fuel burn of 47.05 gph for a range of 167 miles.

Cruising Speed.

Best cruise came in at 4000 rpm and 25.7 mph. Here her fuel burn was 17.15 gph which gave us a range of 270 statute miles. The 285 Conquest had an average time to plane of 3.8 seconds; we reached 20 mph in 5.3 seconds and accelerated through 30 mph in 8.8 seconds.

Maneuvering

Upon acceleration the 285 Conquest exhibits a 16-degree bow rise which keeps the horizon in clear view. In a hard over turn there is only a 10-degree roll which both the operator and passengers will find comfortable. When taking power off, the 285 Conquest will settle back into the water stern first and then the bow will come down shortly after. Remember, because there is a hardtop on the 285 Conquest the turn to starboard will produce no loss of visibility, but turns to port will bring the hardtop down into one's line of sight so be sure to clear the area first.

Boston Whaler 285 Conquest

One can see how the hard chines are carried far forward to form spray rails that work effectively at low-speed or when plowing through offshore waves.

Power Choices

I found the 285 Conquest to be responsive to the helm both at cruise speed and at minimal speeds. Her hard chines gave her good stability and since they are carried so far forward to the bow, spray was kept low and thrown wide providing a dry ride. I found she also had excellent response to the throttle with the 225-hp Verados, so unless the boater really needs to add more speed to their 285, I think they'll be happy with these engines over the optional 250 Verados (\$3,957).

Boston Whaler 285 Conquest

In a hard over turn there is only a 10-degree roll which both the captain and the passengers will find comfortable.

Features Walkthrough

Bow.

At the bow, our 285 Conquest was equipped with the standard electric windlass and there's an option for swapping out the anchor line for an all-chain rode (\$775). To the sides, 8" (20.3 cm) cleats are mounted well outside the toe rails eliminating the need for chafing gear or chocks. Our test boat was equipped with the standard bow rail, and a split bow rail (\$207) is offered as an option.

Boston Whaler 285 Conquest

The galvanized anchor, stainless steel bow pulpit and electric windlass are all standard on the 285 Conquest.

Boston Whaler 285 Conquest

The top of the trunk cabin is all nonskid and our test boat was not equipped with the optional sun lounge pad (\$1,773) that converts the entire area into a sunning space.

Professional Windshield Treatment

Not being a big fan of isinglass, I really appreciate the standard hardtop with windshields that run up fully to integrate with the hardtop, much as one would see on a sport coupe design. Visibility is outstanding with narrow window mullions and at the top forward center is an electrically actuated windshield vent that does a remarkable job of scooping air into the helm deck. Windshield wipers with integral washers are standard.

Boston Whaler 285 Conquest

The dual windshields run all the way up to the hardtop. In the center of the hardtop is an electrically actuated vent.

Side Decks

Transitioning to the cockpit is safe thanks to the 15 ½" (39.4 cm) space between the rails and the cabin sides as well as the grab handles running along the hardtop, the aft ladder supports, and a step leading to the cockpit. Water, however, will not have such an easy trip into the cockpit as the side deck is molded to channel water that comes over the bow right back over the side just ahead of the midship cleat.

Boston Whaler 285 Conquest

The side decks are easy to transition thanks to the high side rails, handrail running along the hardtop, and ladder supports at the aft end of the hardtop.

Boston Whaler 285 Conquest

Water coming over the bow gets channeled down the side decks and then overboard before reaching the cockpit.

Fishing Cockpit

The wide-open cockpit measures 54 sq. ft. (5 sq. m) and can be configured for cruising or fishing. The fishing amenities start with the standard transom mounted insulated livewell. The acrylic lid is gasketed all the way around. There were optional electrical connections under the gunwales for the downriggers (\$652) and at the bottom of the rod storage racks are toe rails to give you a little more security when fighting fish.

Fishboxes/Storage.

There are two sizable insulated fishboxes to either side of the cockpit, both with hatches that are Divinycell cored for lightweight, gasketed all the way around and supported by gas-assist struts. To either side of the cockpit, there's the option of having fold-down trolling seats (\$952 ea), and the hardtop is set up for mounting the optional radial outriggers (\$2,718).

Boston Whaler 285 Conquest

The cockpit is large enough to accommodate either fishing or cruising; optional seating makes it a great gathering area.

Cruising Cockpit

Safety is, of course, a concern for Boston Whaler and the bolsters surrounding the cockpit start out at 21 ½" (54.6 cm) and top out at 28" (71.1 cm). All the way aft is a standard flip-out bench seat that I found easy to deploy. There are options for adding two more of the same bench seats to both the port and starboard bulwarks (\$1,573 ea) which will turn the entire cockpit into a comfortable gathering area. The owner can also add a cockpit table with Flexiteek top for cockpit dining (\$1,812). Forward is a sink with pullout sprayer and Corian countertop. There's a conveniently located grab handle and storage is underneath, which can be optioned out for a cockpit refrigerator (\$1,416). If

a little more shade in the cockpit is desired, then simply add the optional retractable cockpit sunshade (\$4,976) that manually extends and retracts from the back of the hardtop.

Boston Whaler 285 Conquest

In the center of the cockpit deck is a mechanical room housing the ship's batteries, pumps for the bilge, livewell, and wash downs, as well as the optional 7 kW generator (\$14,984).

Boston Whaler 285 Conquest

The storage compartment below the sink can be swapped out for a cockpit refrigerator (\$1,416). Notice the convenient step leading to the side decks.

Boston Whaler 285 Conquest

The sunshade manually retracts and extends from the aft end of the hardtop.

Transom

The starboard side transom boarding gate is up 9" (22.9 cm) from the main deck and leads to a modest swim platform with a recessed three-step reboarding ladder and stainless grab handle. A standard transom shower is plumbed to a 30-gallon (113.6 L) freshwater tank.

Boston Whaler 285 Conquest

This flip-out bench seat makes a comfortable spot to hang out in and around the cockpit.

Boston Whaler 285 Conquest

The port quarter insulated livewell is standard and can be used as a cooler if the boater decides to not use the 285 Conquest for fishing.

Boston Whaler 285 Conquest

Just abaft the transom is a convenient platform to stand on while servicing the engines.

Boston Whaler 285 Conquest

Here's a gathering point for some optional features. The optional cruising package (\$1,712) includes dockside hook-up to the water system. The optional entertainment package (\$2,021) includes a 19" (48.3 cm) flatscreen in the cabin with this cable TV input. We also have 12V DC receptacles for the electric downrigger reels (\$652).

Port Helm Deck Seating

Stepping up to the helm deck, to the port side is an improvement over the regular lounge seating that is usually seen on express cruisers. Here we have booth-style seating that can accommodate a filler cushion to convert into a lounge. Additionally, the aft seat has a seatback on a slide that allows it to convert to an aft-facing seat with a pull-out step just below. This not only makes a welcome addition to the cockpit seating but can also serve as a place to watch the lines, or for that matter, the wake shrinking in the distance. In the "clever innovation" category, Boston Whaler has also created an optional table (\$1,751) that will deploy between the opposing seats and stows neatly out of the way in the port side bulwarks.

Boston Whaler 285 Conquest

The aft-facing seat at the helm deck features a pull-out footrest. Notice the track to slide the seatback fore and aft.

Boston Whaler 285 Conquest

With a filler cushion between the seats, it creates the usual lounge configuration seen on many express cruisers.

Helm

I think Boston Whaler designers really had their act together when they created this comfortable pedestal mounted helm seat. It's heavily padded, vented at the back, swivels and slides, has cast flip-up armrests and a flip-up bolster. The main battery switches and breaker panel are located just underneath.

Instrument Panel.

The helm is straightforward thanks to the complete lack of gauges due to the SmartCraft VesselView display. Our test boat was fitted with the optional autopilot (\$7,463) and 14"

widescreen display. The stainless steel wheel is mounted to a tilt base, which I found extraordinarily comfortable in the full up position, like on a large convertible. To the right, I was happy to see that Mercury's digital throttle and shift system (DTS) was mounted on the horizontal and it offers a wide range of options such as single lever control and troll mode. All switches are waterproof and lighted when activated and our test boat was also fitted with the optional bow thruster (\$7,019).

Tabs and Enclosures.

Trim tabs are standard but I never found the need to use them. This helm deck is offered in three configurations: First is the standard configuration that includes the open side windows that are reminiscent of a more Downeast design; Second you can get full glass up to the hardtop on the sides (\$2,491), and third is the pilothouse design

with an aft bulkhead and door.

~~Boston Whaler 285 Conquest~~

I was very happy with this helm layout and with the VesselView display to the left, there is no need for gauges. Notice the wheel in the full up position which is much like on a convertible sportfish.

Cabin

As we move down below, immediately to port is a modest galley with the usual amenities of microwave, single burner stove, sink and refrigerator. The single burner stove is actually part of an optional cruising package that also includes a dockside hook-up to the water system, and a water heater (\$1,712). Natural light comes in through hullside port lights and an overhead skylight. The ship's electrical panel is located right next to the microwave.

~~Boston Whaler 285 Conquest~~

The single burner stove is part of the optional cruising package (\$1,712).

Mid-Berth

Just aft is a mid-berth measuring 4' x 6' (1.22 m x 1.8 m) with a variable geometry overhead running from 1'9" (.53 m) to 2'5" (.74 m) and topping out at 4' (1.22 m) at the entry. There's a leather headboard with storage just behind. Our test boat was fitted with the optional cabin comfort package (\$2,778) that includes a comforter, sheets, pillowcases and a privacy curtain.

Clever Settee

Forward is a U-shaped settee with rod storage overhead and the rod holders flip-out of the way when not in use, which conveniently protects one's noggin. In the center of the settee is a dinette table with an extended leaf. In the collapsed position the leaf support doubles as a stainless grab handle. This entire area converts to a berth quite easily by lowering the table, extending the table, and sliding the cushions towards the center. On the aft bulkhead are flip-down garment hooks.

Boston Whaler 285 Conquest

Flip-up rod holders are convenient for storing rods.

Boston Whaler 285 Conquest

By lowering the table and sliding the two cushions to either side towards the center, the forward dining area is quickly transformed into a V-berth.

To starboard is a wet head that while modest, was roomy enough to serve its purpose. It's completely fiberglass lined with plenty of storage and Boston Whaler went with a VacuFlush toilet as standard. On the aft bulkhead is a hatch leading to the backside of the helm console for service and installations.

Boston Whaler 285 Conquest

Below the glass shelf is a sizable storage compartment, and the hatch above is a service access point for the helm console.

Pricing for the 285 Conquest

The Boston Whaler 285 Conquest has a base price of \$201,723 which includes the pair of 225-hp Mercury Verado 4-strokes. If the boater wants to go full-out for entertaining and cruising, then they can expect to add options that will bring the total up to around \$260,000. Most of us may end up somewhere in between.

Observations

Considering how well built this boat is, her inherent safety factors, and the outstanding sea-keeping ability of the 285 Conquest, we think this vessel deserves serious consideration by anyone looking for a cruising or fishing boat in this size range – if only to use as a benchmark. I cannot help but add that Boston Whalers are not only famous for their capacity to resist sinking, but for their longevity as well. While some of this is undoubtedly due to the high-caliber maintenance of the owners, the brand's build attributes must also be due some credit as well. As long as one doesn't find themselves entering the 2' syndrome (where the boat the boater needs is 2' bigger than the one they have) this may very well be the last boat they will ever own.