

# SARGO 25

WORDS  
& PICTURES ALEX SMITH



*Can the newly named Sargo 25 live up to the reputation forged by the revered Minor Offshore stable? Alex Smith heads north to find out.*

**LENGTH:** 7.85m **POWER:** 225-300hp **PRICE:** From £114,000 **CONTACT:** [www.sargoboats.co.uk](http://www.sargoboats.co.uk) [www.marcomarine.co.uk](http://www.marcomarine.co.uk)

**W**hen I first stumbled across this boat on the pontoons at the Southampton Boat Show towards the end of last year, I was in a pretty bad mood. Having visited countless stands of oppressively formulaic 'new' boats, the homogenous re-purification of shape and style had begun to rankle. I felt distinctly jaded by it all and I was in dire need of something to shake me out of my malaise.

So the Minor Offshore 25 (as it was then known) came as a very welcome treat. Even tied up alongside and littered with cooling show visitors, it appeared to be something quite special. Little surprise then that when I was invited to test the rebranded boat on its home waters nine months later, I didn't need asking twice.

### The heritage of the Sargo 25

In order to understand Sargo's entry-level 25, it is useful to





It might be soft riding and refined, but it's also good fun to drive.



*The name has changed but the Sargo 25 remains a magnificent multitool of a boat.*

understand the boating pedigree of the nation in which it was conceived and built – because in a lot of ways, that heritage is unique. Finland's fractured terrain is cut through by nearly 200,000 lakes and littered with an endless scattering of islands. Viewed from the air, it is as much water as land, and the Finns take full advantage of that. They own almost four boats per household (more than any other nation in the world), and they use them not just for the odd day trip but as a regular part of their everyday lives. In short, their knowledge of boats and the level of competence they expect from their builders are unparalleled, so when a four-season boat emerges from a famous Finnish yard like Sarin, you know it needs to perform.

As expected, the moment you set eyes on it, the brooding gravity of the 25 is immediately striking. It might be built around the smallest of Sargo's five hulls, but even at a glance, the elevated guard rail, the thick, powerful rubbing strake and the prop inspection hatch suggest that this is designed to be a serious sea boat. That impression of workmanlike potency continues in the robust and well-proven Category B Offshore hull, in the fully enclosed pilot house and in the well-protected, single-level, walk-around side decks. Throw in five decades of commercial know-how, plus the kind of construction that sees this boat tipping the

scales at a hefty 3200kg, and there is no doubting the profound toughness either of the concept or of the build. However, it's when you inspect the finer details that you begin to realise that the 25 is about much more than just year-round resilience ...

### Prepare to be impressed

In the aft cockpit, a broad open deck is flanked on three sides by hinged wooden benches with neat containers for your lines, outboard cages for your fenders and some useful storage beneath the central bench. From this comfortable, fishing-friendly position, a pair of broad walkways frames the pilot house and runs forward, past proper embarkation points on both sides, to a neatly arranged foredeck with a secure seat, plenty of grab rails and a ubiquitous step-through ladder-equipped bow.

Step back into the pilot house through either of the lateral sliding doors and it is plain that the absence of an aft entry point is a major plus. It means that the entire rear section is able to house an unbroken six-man seating unit – and when you remove the table and lift a couple of hatches, this C-shaped space opens up to reveal a deep-set double berth. I appreciate how poky and claustrophobic a concealed bed might sound, but this extraordinary sleeping slot actually enjoys impressive natural light from a



The super-cool spotlights come as standard

*... it's when you inspect the finer details that you begin to realise that the 25 is about much more than just year-round resilience ...*

dedicated porthole, plus sensible headroom and a decent bit of shelving for your bedtime kit.

Climb back up to the helm console and the dash arrangement is equally clever. To port, a sink and mini stove are set beneath hatches in the chart table, while a fridge built into the base of the starboard seat means you basically have a pop-up galley whenever you need it. Better still, beneath the dash console and the foredeck,

the designers have managed to generate not just a private double berth but also a separate heads compartment. That means this 25-foot platform can seat eight people outside or six inside, as well as sleep four people in two separate cabins with the luxury of a private heads compartment – and all in an environment that still manages to feel very pleasant and open.

Only a couple of minor issues present themselves. Firstly, the

dash top on the port side is a flat, contour-free plateau, which means that if you put anything down (like my ill-fated spare camera), it's unlikely to remain in situ when you get underway. Secondly, when the 'non-slip' deck gets wet, the traction underfoot is not as effective as it could be. And thirdly, the position of the stove on the dash top, beneath a horizontal section of vinyl-covered pilothouse structure, is not ideal. These issues aside, however, there is no doubt that this is one of the most intelligent and versatile 25-foot designs you will ever see.

### Supersoft and refined

The fact that Sargo continue to use the same scale and calibre of soundproofing as they would on a shaft-driven boat means that their modern stern-driven craft are some of the quietest and most refined you will ever experience. At 3000rpm, a 27- or 28-knot cruise is extraordinarily civilised, enabling you to chat to everyone in the wheelhouse without raising your voice at all – and the softness of the ride is even more remarkable. The super-heavyweight build, reliable dynamics and high-class seats no doubt help, but whatever the reason might be, the 25 manages to exhibit a level of ride comfort as tranquil as any monohull I can remember.

Even the handling is thoroughly enjoyable, with a responsive (knob-equipped) wheel, plenty of reassuring heel in the turn and a genuine keenness to play. The standard 300-litre fuel tank will provide you with a range in excess

### THE MUST-HAVE 'EXPLORER' UPGRADE

The 25's standard equipment is very impressive. It includes the 12-inch chartplotter, multi-adjustable helm position, stainless steel keel band, windscreen wipers, demisters, 300-litre fuel tank, trim tabs, bow thruster, maintenance-free AGM batteries and rooftop spotlights. However, if you go for the optional Explorer package, things get even better. Available on the 25, 28 and 36, it buys you blinds rather than curtains, tinted windows, bespoke fabrics and glass inserts in the sliding roof to improve light in rainy conditions. Better still, it also offers much more modern and dynamic granite colourways, creating the look of an authentic Action Man machine rather than a harbour master's patrol boat. At around £6,000, it's top value – and definitely an option you should consider.

### SNAPSHOT *Onboard the Sargo 25*



The inboard spaces are deep, broad and safe



The use of side doors means space for a six-man aft dinette



The sink and stove emerge from beneath the chart table like a magic trick



A separate heads compartment on a four-berth 25-footer is a major plus.



The helm is pretty much faultless

The ride is wonderfully soft and steady



*If the 25 is as far as your money will stretch... it remains a high-quality, year-round, do-it-all boat that you could happily love for a lifetime.*

of 250 nautical miles, but that can easily be upgraded to a 400-litre version – and if you want a little more throttle response and an extra couple of knots, the D4 260 can also be upgraded to the D4 300.

Whichever option you choose, the helm is a fine place to be. The seat and the hinged steering barrel

combine to match just about any body shape you could imagine, and the tough, angled, glare-resistant screen with its heavy rooftop brow offers a very enjoyable warship-style vantage point. In truth, the rear part of the pilot house structure does block some of the view aft, but visibility from the helm remains uncommonly good – particularly as the roof and the two side doors offer a much more open experience than you might imagine.

## Verdict

The name may have changed but the Sargo 25 remains a magnificent multitool of a boat. It has two private double berths, a functional mini galley, sheltered communal seating for six, a proper aft cockpit for fishing and a hull that can take just about anything you care to throw at it. The fact that it is beautifully built, unstintingly equipped and likely to hold its value only adds to the formidable array of reasons why a Sargo is such a fine investment for the keen four-season boater.



The outboard fender racks make great sense

## SPECIFICATIONS

**LOA:** 7.85m  
**Beam:** 2.70m  
**Weight:** 3200kg  
**Transom deadrise:** 19 degrees  
**CE category:** B Offshore  
**Berths:** 2+2  
**Deck seats:** 8  
**Cabin seats:** 6  
**Fuel capacity:** 300 litres  
**Power options:** 225–300hp  
**Engine:** Volvo Penta D4 260

## PRICE

Price: From £114,000

## CONTACT

[www.sargoboats.fi](http://www.sargoboats.fi)  
[www.marcomarine.co.uk](http://www.marcomarine.co.uk)

## WHAT WE THOUGHT

### FOR

- Amazingly soft ride
- Refined and quiet underway
- Secure and spacious external areas
- Four-berth accommodation
- Dedicated heads compartment
- Tireless ingenuity in the use of space
- Four-season ability

### AGAINST

- Port side of helm needs dash-top grip mats
- Deck lacks a little traction when wet
- The Sargo 28 Explorer is only £41,300 more

1988