

The Shady Side of Boating

SureShade inventor Ron Russikoff explains how easy it is to bring shade on-board.



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LB: What is a SureShade boat top and what are its advantages?

Russikoff: SureShades are patented telescoping sunshade systems that easily extend or retract canvas to provide shade in a boat's aft, bow or both. Boaters can choose when they want shade and our self-supported systems don't require poles that may get in the way. We have products for every boat size, with automated or manual options.

LB: We understand the new RTX SureShade is designed for boats under 27 feet and is easily installed as a DIY project. Where is it mounted?

Russikoff: The RTX Pull-out Shade is our most versatile shade system — it can be mounted in a variety of ways. With specialized mounting clamps, the RTX can be installed on a T-top, tower, arch or hardtop. We provide everything needed for installation.

LB: What is included in the kit?

Russikoff: The RTX kit includes: Our telescoping framework; Sunbrella canvas; specialized mounting clamps; hardware for your specific application; templates for appropriate placement; and of course, complete installation instructions. Each kit is customized for your boat size and type of installation.

LB: Why did you choose Sunbrella as your exclusive marine fabric?

Russikoff: Sunbrella was selected for its durability, wide variety of color choices and its 50+ UPF rating for sun protection.

LB: What tools are needed for installation?

Russikoff: To install a SureShade system, you will need a tape measure, a drill motor and bit, an adjustable wrench, Allen wrenches, a Phillips screwdriver and marine sealant. Installation takes two to three hours depending on skill level and the type of boat.

LB: How do you go about ordering the RTX and what specifications are needed?

Russikoff: The RTX can be ordered directly from us (on SURESHADE.COM) or through a local boat dealer. We need details such as boat make, model, size and type of overhead structure. We will also need to know any special placement considerations (like rod holders) and the width and length for

the shade. We supply a document that helps identify the right location for the shade and how to confirm dimensional specs.

LB: Is the SureShade durable enough to use while underway?

Russikoff: Our shades withstand wind speeds up to 55 mph while extended in the aft. We recommend retracting a forward bow shade when cruising.

LB: How far can the SureShade be extended and how wide is it?

Russikoff: The RTX shade extends 4.5 feet, which provides sufficient coverage for smaller boats. The maximum width is 78 inches.



LB: How does SureShade add to the value of the boat and the boating experience?

Russikoff: We believe that improved sun protection is essential for boat safety and a more comfortable boating experience. Our shades allow more time on-board even on the hottest days. Because our shade systems are permanently installed, they definitely add value to your boat.

LB: About how much does the SureShade RTX kit cost?

Russikoff: Our RTX shade kit starts at \$1,700.

LB: What type of customer service can a SureShade owner expect?

Russikoff: We pride ourselves on providing unprecedented customer service at every stage of a project. We offer a 3-year warranty on framework components from date of sale to original purchaser and a 1-year warranty on the canvas fabrication. All of our shade systems are proudly manufactured in America. ★



ELIZABETH ALTICK specializes in recreational marine, cultural and human-interest subjects. She was formerly executive editor of a recreational boating magazine.