AUTO-SLEEPERS

Magazine

1998

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Practising what they preach

David and Julie Saunders are keen motorcaravanners. Every year they go abroad for a month. This year, armed with a copy of Hugh Johnson's 'World Atlas of Wine' they embarked upon a 3000 mile European wine tour, taking in the Rioja and Penedes regions of Spain over the Pyrenees, to the Roussillon and Corbières vineyards, then up to through the Côte du Rhone and Burgundy regions and on to Alsace and some of the German growers around Stuttgart, and back via Reims of course!

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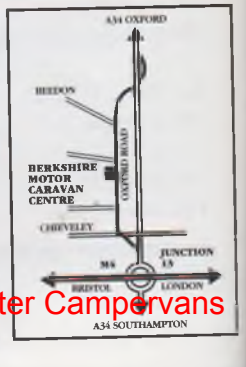

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FOREWORD

Welcome to the 1998 Auto-Sleeper Company Magazine. We hope you will find it informative and enjoyable to read. In this Magazine we not only look forward to the future but to the past; enabling you to read all about our company's extensive history.

This year we celebrate our 37th birthday. Looking back to 1961, the year in which Auto-Sleepers began, we were a small cottage industry producing a handful of vehicles a year. Even then, quality of build and attention to detail were of paramount importance, and it is upon this bedrock that we have grown to be the United Kingdom's largest manufacturer, exclusively producing motor caravans.

Each year we offer a new range of motor caravans and 1998 is no exception. Complementing our already extensive and most popular panel van and glass fibre monocoque coachbuilt range, is a new family of Auto-Sleepers. The Pescara, Pollensa and Ravenna, launched at the 1998 Earls Court Caravan and Outdoor Leisure Show are an entirely new concept, being manufactured in a stylish and eye-catching combination of Styrofoam and glass fibre. Featuring, also, a new design of furniture, this latest addition to the Auto-Sleepers family represents an exciting new range of vehicles, all of which are built to Auto-Sleepers traditional standards of quality and design. This new model range is, perhaps, the most significant we have launched since our traditional glass fibre coachbuilt family in 1981.

Worthy also of note are the awards we have won during the past year. We were honoured and indeed delighted to win the Caravan Club Design Award for motor caravans; the Medallion being the worthy winner, the Executive runner up. These have been added to our already extensive showcase that includes four Gold Medals in International Coachwork Competitions, seven Caravan Industry awards for motor caravans and, not least, the Motorcaravan Motorhome Monthly and Which Motorcaravan Award.

Closely allied to our Company is the Auto-Sleeper Owners' Club. By far the largest single make Club of its type in the United Kingdom, it continues to grow from strength to strength and the highlight of the year was undoubtedly the Club and Company Rally at the Three Counties Showground Malvern. You can read more of this action-packed weekend later on in the Magazine — and should you be an Auto-Sleeper owner who is not yet a member, we strongly recommend you join!

None of our success, however, would have been possible without the on-going support of the chassis manufacturers, our dealers and, not least, our own staff without whose unstinting support our achievements, and hopefully your enjoyment, would not have been possible.

Pollensa, one of three stunning new Peugeot coachbuilts for 1998

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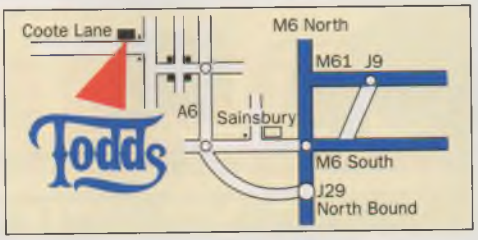

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NOT THE FIRST-YET ALWAYS FIRST!

Stuart Bladon gives a glimpse of the background to the Auto-Sleepers legend

Dust flew up from the archives as I delved into the history of Auto-Sleepers, because it started long ago. One of the most surprising revelations is that it was by no means the first manufacturer to realise the possibilities of turning a light van into a 'motorised caravan' — that's what they were called in the early days. There were already six conversions on eight vans in production as early as February 1960, the year in which the first few Auto-Sleepers were built.

Oh, the names that fell by the wayside: Airborne, Bluebird, Kenex, Calthorpe, Paralanian — all well established before Auto-Sleepers came on the scene, and all destined to fail, leaving the newcomer as the great survivor.

A 'phone call came in March 1961: several had been sold privately and had been so applauded that it had been decided to go into business producing the new motor caravan; would I like to see it?

On a fine spring day, in my little Triumph TR3A, I flew along that gorgeous road through the Cotswolds from Stow-on-the-Wold to see the new product for the magazine on which I then worked, *The Autocar*.

The new motor caravan was a refreshingly original design, and most impressively well built even in those early days. We wrote of the 'high quality of workmanship evident in its construction.' Early beginnings — and ways destined to continue.

Drawbacks with the early base vehicles were overcome when the Commer 15cwt was introduced. We had one for test later the same year — maximum speed 63mph, 0 to 50mph in 32.9sec, and price £914 — about the same as a family saloon such as the Morris Oxford.

A look to the future. The Auto-Sleeper VW Surf concept motor caravan at the 1996 Motor Show, National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham.

Our closing comment, that it 'offered the most practical solution to the needs of the motorised caravanner' was later adopted for some time in Auto-Sleepers' advertising.

The business thrived, and though the comment was made that "We've sold so many now we can no longer claim to know every purchaser personally," many of the buyers came back to show their satisfaction by buying again. Brand loyalty is a hallmark of the Auto-Sleepers success story, resulting from the unique combination of thoughtfulness in the design and the consistently high standards of materials and build quality.

These have been recognised in an unprecedented series of awards and accolades over the years. The great achievement was the 1980 introduction of the Bedford-based SV100 with a new concept of coach-built styling, designed by the late William Towns of Aston Martin Lagonda fame, and brilliantly executed in glass fibre. It paved the way for an elegant model based on the new Talbot chassis called the Talisman, which four times won the top motor caravan award at the Earls Court Show, presented by the Caravan Industry.

The awards have kept on being scooped up by Auto-Sleepers, with four gold medals from the international coachwork competition organised by IBCAM, more Caravan Industry awards, totalling seven at the last count, the prized Motor Caravan of the Year award, and two awards from motor caravan journals for the Ford Duetto in 1996. This year, an unusual addition to the bulging trophy cabinet was the motor caravan fuel economy award, organised by The Caravan Club. It was won by Graham Macbeth driving a Volkswagen Medallion.

An indication of the enthusiasm and pride of ownership shown by buyers of Auto-Sleepers is the thriving Auto-Sleepers Owners' Club, believed to be the largest club of its type in the UK.

New Auto-Sleepers products keep on turning up at caravan shows, each evolved after meticulous design care to make the best use of the space available, and last year brought new Mercedes-Benz models, the Montana and Medallion, and there is also a Medallion based on the new Volkswagen LT 35 chassis. I took one to France, and wherever it was parked it aroused tremendous interest and admiration, with frequent calls for a conducted tour inside.

Auto-Sleepers' success story, now nearing its 38th year, is one of survival in a field where dozens of competitors have failed. The key to it all is undoubtedly the endless quest for perfection. If the company were to adopt a motto, it would probably be: "If it isn't perfect, it's simply not good enough."

Early years: a Commer Auto-Sleeper at Bantham beach, South Devon, in 1969.

And a look at the past. An early Commer Auto-Sleeper, on permanent display at the National Motor Museum, Beaulieu.

A Bedford CF Auto Sleeper in the New Forest in 1972 – at the time quite the best van conversion on the market.

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An overview of the Auto-Sleepers plant; to the left the administrative offices, R&D Department and Stores — to the right the main production facility, Paint Shop and new vehicle storage area.

Auto-Sleeper production — a combination of technology and craftsmanship

AUTO-SLEEPERS

For over 37 years Auto-Sleepers has been producing motor caravans to the highest standards of quality. Unlike other manufacturers. they successfully combine technology with bespoke craftsmanship, for so long the hallmark of their illustrious name.

For 1998, Auto-Sleepers offer their most extensive model range to date; based on Ford, Mercedes-Benz, Peugeot and Volkswagen, there are 17 models from which to choose. Significant for 1998 is the introduction of the new Styrofoam coachbuilt range. How refreshing to see such stylish design and superb new furniture — coachbuilts for the Millennium no less!

The production cycle is best described by following a notional vehicle from delivery to Willersey by transporter to its emergence, several weeks later, as an Auto-Sleeper. Production starts well before this in the Research and Development Department, where months are spent in market research, considering new designs and evaluating new equipment. Artists' impressions are studied in detail and the arduous task of manufacturing moulds begins.

At all stages, close liaison takes place with the base vehicle manufacturers. For example, where roof apertures are cut out, it is imperative that the strength is reinstated by additional reinforcement, so that ultimately the vehicle shell remains within the torsional envelope. Auto-Sleepers' in-house Homologation Engineer ensures that each new model conforms to the appropriate Whole Vehicle Type Approval Legislation and other such criteria.

Before a new vehicle enters production, all aspects, bar none, are meticulously drawn and all prototype parts proved. Once all parts have been obtained — in itself a complex exercise — a number of prototype vehicles are manufactured for testing purposes and a variety of other roles. Some are used in systems analysis, ventilation checks and weight monitoring, others in training production personnel, in preparation of the new model entering production. The new model is accompanied by appropriate drawings and parts list — everything to ensure smooth phasing into production.

As the Company grows, so does the need for more professionally qualified staff. A long-term training programme ensures that their many skills and qualifications are updated, and that a broader base of employees are taught such skills and disciplines. To this end, Auto-Sleepers work closely with the local Technical College.

Many Production Foremen and Managers have passed both the Certificate and Diploma course of the Institute of Supervisory Management. With middle management on further courses — largely NVQ's relating to their own skills — a sound base of training is already in place from which to build for the future. The range of skills in the factory is astonishing: over 40 personnel hold City and Guilds or equivalent in carpentry, gas fitting. plumbing and electrical skills. Among these are CORGI (Council of Registered Gas Installers) fitters and NICEIC (National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contracting) approved electricians. Add vital skills such as upholstery, vehicle maintenance, and many more, and it's clear that the old adage "training pays" really applies at Auto-Sleepers.

Welding is carried out to the stringent demands of BS5782 in a bespoke booth using the latest equipment.

Production schedules ensure that all components are to hand once production begins. At weekly Production Mix Meetings staff from the Sales, Purchasing, and Production Departments sign off every vehicle specification. This ensures that vehicles are built to customers' needs and prevents queries from interrupting production flow.

Many items are sourced from abroad — windows from Luxembourg, cushions and carpets in Belgium, roof ventilators, blinds and flyscreens in Germany, taps from Holland. The base vehicles are manufactured in Germany, Belgium and Italy. Clearly, meticulous planning is vital.

A key document for each vehicle is the

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REVISITED

Preliminary discussions in R&D (above) take place months ahead of production.

Gas appliances (centre) are tested to twice their working pressure — readings are noted and retained.

An overview of the Metalwork Shop (right) — note the reinforcing hoops on the Ford Duetto, ensuring that torsional rigidity remains unaltered.

Build Standard Report, on which all aspects of the vehicle build are recorded and retained for a minimum of 12 years. Every action, serial number and safety-related operation is noted, even the type of crockery and the water filler key number, plus details of trims and paintwork. This enables Auto-Sleepers to offer exemplary service through the After Sales Department, providing parts even for obsolete vehicles.

Once all documentation is in place, panel vans pass to the Metalwork Shop where all vulnerable areas are protected. Apertures are marked using registered templates, regularly checked for wear and damage; all cut steelwork is treated with paint and a self-sealing membrane as directed by the base vehicle manufacturer.

In the Metalwork Shop seat belt brackery is fitted and bases for the seats are torqued to the floor, according to vehicle manufacturers' specification. All forward-facing seats are fitted with inertia-reel lap-and-diagonal seat belts, for which the supporting framework is robust and extremely well engineered, fabricated by welders, working to the strict standards of BS5782.

Once the vehicle is signed off by the Metalwork Shop Foreman — all vehicles are meticulously signed in and out of every section with very careful inspection for any damage — it then moves into the main factory.

At its next destination the floors, insulation, wiring looms and carpets are fitted, prior to the roof being lowered into position by electro-pneumatic lifting gear. This allows the roof to be lowered on to the vehicle with infinite precision, ensuring not only a perfect fit but a first class weatherproof seal using the latest high-performance polyurethane sealer.

Concurrently the coachbuilt models, in an adjacent bay, have their galvanised chassis extensions and rear corner steadies fitted, prior to the monocoque glass fibre coachwork being mounted. In an adjacent factory, windows, stainless steel roof racks and ladders are fitted before coachbuilt models reach their own assembly line. After meticulous checks for quality, build and specification, furniture units and other components are installed. Modular build is very much the norm at Willersey: shower modules are sealed most thoroughly inside and outside, prior to installation. Furniture units, seats and bed boxes are also manufactured as modules. I saw a Symphony kitchen unit — complete with cooker, oven, refrigerator and sink — being lifted into the vehicle with the utmost care. The furniture, all pre-polished, looked magnificent!

Teams of unit fitters, alongside CORGI Registered gas fitters, work in parallel to ensure all modules and components are correctly fitted. Auto-Sleepers test all gas and electrical appliances prior to fitting — a discipline that has proved to be most cost effective.

At the heart of the Paint Shop, and specially designed to take into account fitted furniture and glass fibre roofs, the spray booth's interior is controlled for temperature and humidity, allowing paint to be applied using the very latest technology. Operators wear full protective gear and breathing equipment. Well ahead of the game, Auto-Sleepers now use virtually solvent-free water-based paints, anticipating legislation due to be introduced in 1998. I was encouraged to note that key Paint Shop staff were on a Training Course in the use of

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The Paint Shop (top left) features a specially designed paint booth — water-based paints are now used throughout.

The electro-pneumatic lifting gear (top) allows roofs to be raised and lowered with the utmost precision and safety.

Overview of the assembly lines (above) — regular inspections ensure the factory is meticulously clean and tidy.

these materials with ICI at Slough. In a newly acquired adjacent factory, stripes are applied to the colour-impregnated GRP coachbuilt bodies. Any rectification work poses little problem since the calibrated scales of Auto-Sleepers' microfiche paint-mixing tables allow a perfect match.

The Paint Shop is but a short run from the finishing line, where our Auto-Sleeper is starting to take shape. Primarily this line is responsible for fitting soft furnishings, cab carpets, cab seats, curtains and cushions.

The hallmark of Auto-Sleepers is its hand-polished furniture — a team of eight are responsible for this important operation.

The second-fix electrics are fitted and tested to the demanding standards of the 16th Edition of the IEE Wiring Regulations, after which a full gas test is undertaken. Auto-Sleepers now use digital testing equipment, and wiring is predominately by loom. Gas systems are pressure-tested twice, once using a conventional water 'U' gauge and lastly, before the vehicle is signed off, by a sophisticated digital tester which records both the readings and the test date. Water systems are also pressure-tested — again digitally. At the time of my visit I noticed a gas flow meter under test — another new piece of equipment, demonstrating yet again that Auto-Sleepers do not shy away from the latest technology. Quite the reverse in fact.

Whereas I am sure most manufacturers would sign vehicles off this line, Auto Sleepers, as in so many other ways, are that little bit different. Adjacent to the finishing line are four bays into which all vehicles pass for assessment by the Quality Inspection Team. Headed by the Quality Assurance Manager, this team checks each and every vehicle meticulously — indeed these few words by no means demonstrate the depth by which the vehicle inspection takes place.

Inside, outside and underneath is but the minimum. Interestingly, I met up with the Quality Assurance Manager many times during my visit — checking build quality in the most unexpected places — encouraging indeed for any future Auto-Sleeper owner!

Little mention has been made of two other vital departments within the production system. The Trim Shop combines traditional skills with the latest technology. Traditional in applying quality velours and materials to panels, while using the latest spray equipment and non-toxic adhesives. Solvent-based adhesive is a thing of the past at Auto-Sleepers, who employ two types of adhesive application: one water-based and more effective with velours and certain specialist materials; the other a hot-melt glue dispenser for use in preparing trim panels.

A time-consuming but vital operation is the making of moulds — here a shower tray mould is given its finishing touches.

The Woodshop is full of tradition, but not sawdust — cleanliness matches that of the factory. My lasting memory is of the numerous templates stored above this department, each in its bespoke racking, each duly labelled and regularly audited for wear or damage.

At the end of the conversion process, after sign-off by the Quality Inspectors, vehicles are stored in the new vehicle compound, awaiting delivery by Transporter to Auto-Sleepers' extensive dealer network. No one is allowed to enter a vehicle in this compound without it being returned for inspection and clearance by the Quality Inspectors.

My annual visit to Auto-Sleepers is one I enjoy enormously. Each year I notice small but significant improvements, leaving a lasting impression of a Company well geared for the future and one whose product is as always a combination of traditional craftsmanship allied to the latest technology. The philosophy has served this Worcestershire Company well for 37 years — I see no reason why it should not continue to do so for many more to come.

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TRAINING FOR SUCCESS

Dealer Familiarisation Courses are conducted at Auto-Sleepers on an annual basis. John Wickersham, writer and broadcaster, joined the trainees.

No one can question the energy exerted by Auto-Sleepers to deliver high-quality motor caravans to discerning customers. Painstaking efforts are made to ensure that every product leaving the factory attains the highest standards of workmanship.

But this is only part of a manufacturer's efforts to meet the needs of customers. After-sales care is important too. There's servicing, repair work and the installation of accessories to take into account — and this is where dealers play a key role.

A wide range of components and appliances are fitted into a modern motor caravan, and keeping everything in safe and efficient working order calls on considerable expertise. Of necessity, a service engineer needs a wider knowledge about servicing procedure and repair strategies. No one is better placed to provide training courses than the manufacturer.

With this in mind, Dealer Workshop Staff Familiarisation Courses are now being conducted annually by Auto-Sleepers. What's more, the all-important dialogue needed between manufacturer and workshop staff will be enhanced even further by the launch of a Monthly After Sales and Service Bulletin.

The first of the current series of courses was held in mid-October 1997. Each session comprised a full day of instruction, supported by specially prepared literature on key topics. In total 42 Service Engineers attended the three sessions with representation from 20 dealers.

The day's focus was extraordinarily wide in its scope. Technical specialists from Electrolux, Carver and Cheltenham Laminating joined the team of Auto-Sleepers' own staff, to brief those present on their own specialist equipment. The presentation was prefaced by a tour of the factory which provided an insight into the manufacturing process. It also reaffirmed the meticulous attention to detail that is the hallmark of Auto-Sleepers' customers. Thereafter the day was spent in topic-by-topic presentations, during which time delegates were able to report on their own experiences in the after-sales field.

Total honesty underpinned the interchange of ideas. The quest for excellence is Auto Sleepers' avowed intention, but no one suggests that with such a multifarious array of assembled components that repairs are never needed. Moreover, appliances like a refrigerator or a space heater must be serviced periodically in accordance with their manufacturers' instructions. So it is at this point where a dealership with knowledgeable and skilful service engineers can advise and provide a service to owners.

It is recognised that in extreme cases, a badly damaged motor caravan might need returning to Auto-Sleepers' factory for specialist attention. But this is the exceptional situation. Nearly all normal repairs should be undertaken by dealerships and sharing Auto-Sleepers' expertise with dealer workshop staff ensures that excellence in Customer Care matches the standards achieved in manufacturing.

Accordingly, these Dealer Familiarisation Courses are conducted with all the professionalism that is associated with Auto-Sleepers' ideology. They exemplify the care and commitment that the Company extends to owners of a prestigious motor caravan.

Specialists advise on the maintenance of Electrolux refrigerators

Dealer staff provide feedback on the content of future courses

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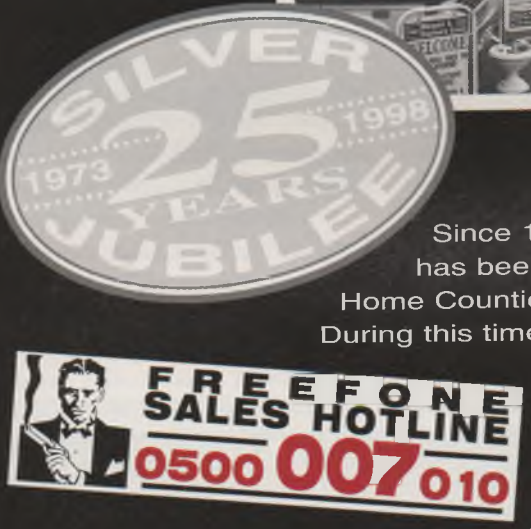

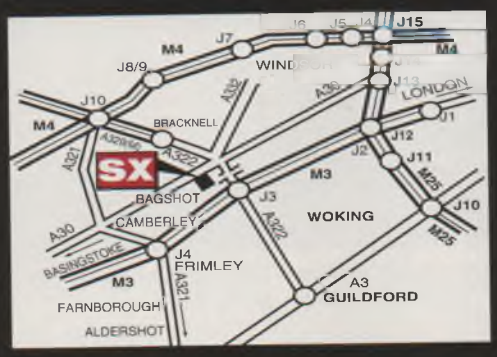

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AUTO-SLEEPERS FOR 98

Motor Caravan Magazine's Paul Carter reviews the 1998 range of Auto-Sleeper motor caravans.

It's no accident that Auto-Sleepers can count so many award-winning and top-selling models among their range of van conversions and coachbuilt motor caravans. 'A Company Committed to Excellence' are their watchwords, and this determination shows in the products from Willersey.

My efforts to describe individual models in the range for the coming year are seriously limited by the space available. To avoid any unnecessary repetition, here are some important features you should note when buying a motor caravan — all of which are standard in every Auto-Sleeper.

● Auto-Sleepers are members of the Motor Caravan Section of the Society of Motor Manufacturers & Traders, and of the National Caravan Council, Motor Caravan Sector.

● All Auto-Sleeper motor caravans featured on the following pages comply with the SMMT/NCC Habitation Code 201 for Motor Caravans.

● Auto-Sleepers are fully recognised by all the base vehicle manufacturers — Ford, Mercedes-Benz, Peugeot, Renault and Volkswagen — and all models comply with their respective engineering requirements.

● Auto-Sleepers are CORGI registered and fit gas appliances in accordance with BS 5482. All gas appliances have flame failure devices and each appliance its own isolator tap.

● Auto-Sleepers are NICIEC enrolled, and approved electricians ensure that the 230v systems comply with the 16th Edition of the Institution of Electrical Engineers Wiring Regulations. Wiring and appliances are protected by a residual current device and miniature circuit breakers.

● Auto-Sleepers represents the SMMT Motor Caravan Section at BSI in the UK, the European Federation, and CEN, which is the European committee for standardisation, and sets the European standards and influences European legislation related to motor caravans.

● Auto-Sleepers are represented on the National Caravan Council's Technical Committee, which looks at many safety aspects for the habitation of motor caravans.

● And do not forget that Auto-Sleepers have not only been producing motor caravans for over 37 years, but are the United Kingdom's largest manufacturer, exclusively producing motor caravans.

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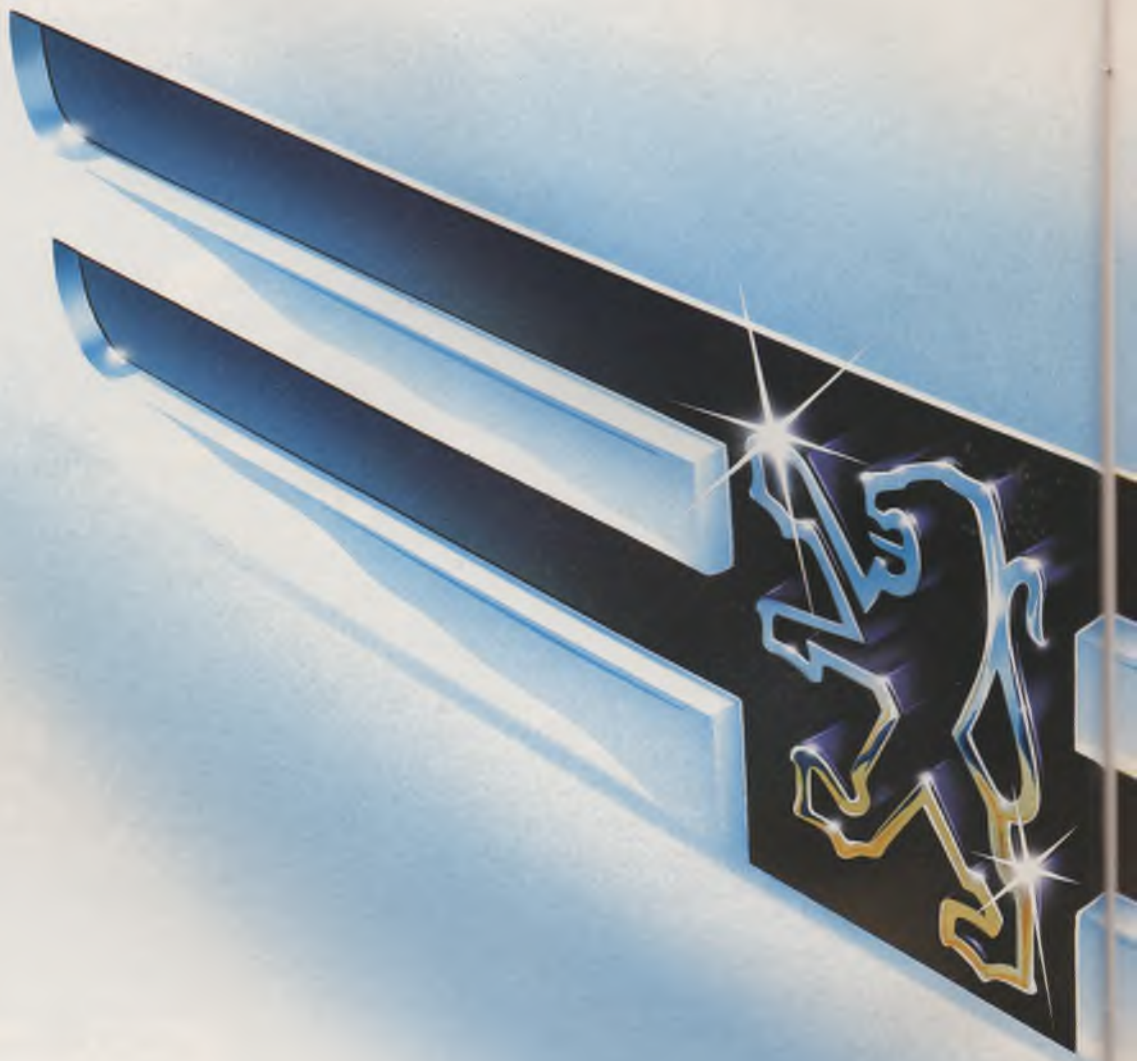
THE ONE DETAIL THAT MAKES ANY MOTOR CARAVAN SPECIAL.



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When you see what lies behind the Peugeot badge, you realise what an important detail it is. Here are just some of the Boxer's special features:

- Gear lever facia mounted, providing excellent legroom, and unobstructed access into rear.
- Height-adjustable driver and passenger seat belts.
- Anti-submarining driver's seat.
- Choice of unrivalled Peugeot diesel or petrol engine performance.
- Built-in safety, with rigid all-steel cab construction.
- Large wrap-around windows for excellent visibility.
- Low (50cm) step for easy access into cab.
- Stereo radio/cassette player.
- 6 year anti-corrosion warranty.
- 1 year manufacturer warranty.
- 1 year AA Peugeot Assistance for UK and continental Europe.
- Back-up of 400 dealers nationwide.

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No wonder more people specify the Peugeot Boxer as the basis of their Motor Caravan than any other. No wonder it's Number One.

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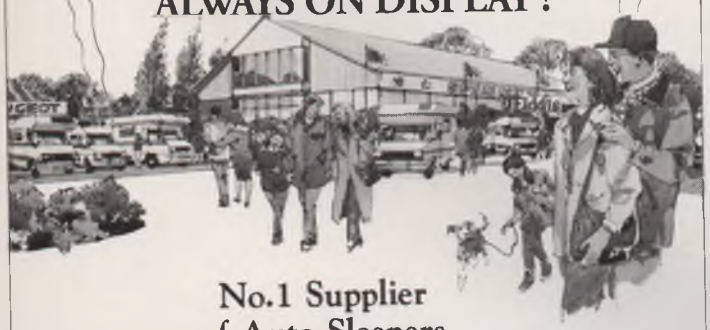

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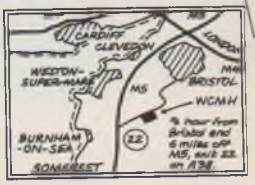

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PEUGEOTS

The Peugeot Boxer retains pride of place in the Auto-Sleeper line-up thanks to its well-planned and appointed cab, and not least the choice of engine and chassis options.

Build quality, mechanical reliability and a spacious, well-planned cab have all contributed to cementing the Boxer's leading position at Auto-Sleepers. Add flexibility of engine and chassis choice, and it's no wonder that the Boxer takes the lion's share.

Standard power unit for all Auto-Sleeper Boxers is Peugeot's 110bhp, two-litre petrol engine, mated to a five-speed gearbox. Other plus points are power steering, the stereo radio/cassette and digital clock. Diesel and Turbo-Diesel engines can now also be specified as options on all 1998 models.

The short-wheelbase Harmony, for example, can be specified with either the standard two-litre 110bhp petrol engine or optional 70bhp, 1.9-litre Diesel, or the livelier 92bhp 1.9TDI. There's even more choice with the mid-wheelbase Symphony, which is available with either the standard two-litre petrol engine or optional 1.9-litre Diesel, 1.9-litre TDi, 2.5-litre normally aspirated Diesel or 2.5TDi engine, the latter producing 103bhp.

With the luxury GRP coachbuilt Executive and Talisman there is the choice of the two-litre petrol engine or optional 1.9TD (92bhp), 2.5-litre normally-aspirated Diesel (85bhp) and 2.5-litre TDi engine producing 103bhp.

Boxer's dash-mounted five-speed gearshift is without doubt its most popular feature — light and positive in use and allowing unimpeded movement to and from the cab. Minor controls and switchgear fall easily to hand, while Boxer's clear instrumentation and excellent all-round vision combine to take the strain out of driving. Other plus-points for storage-hungry motor caravanners are Boxer's nearside glove-box, driver's door bin and underseat stowage areas.

Driver and passengers enjoy excellent ride comfort and road-holding from independent front suspension with MacPherson-type struts and anti-roll bar: at the back a rear tubular axle with semi-elliptic leaf springs and telescopic shock absorbers ensure smooth progress.

Brakes on all Peugeot Boxers are servo-assisted, with a split-circuit I-H-type system comprising front discs and rear self-adjusting drums, plus a load-sensitive proportioning valve. Depending on gross vehicle weight and engine type, front discs are either solid or ventilated.

Boxer's anti-corrosion body protection reflects the high standard of Peugeot's saloon car range. Some 70% of body weight features galvanised steel, with panel joints protected by a water-tight mastic bead and body sections designed to prevent the accumulation of dirt.

Rust-inhibiting primer protects exposed bodywork from the effects of stone chips, with extra protection from electrophoretic body treatment. Exposed underbody areas are sprayed with flexible PVC underseal and, as a final precaution, wax is pressure-injected in all box and underframe sections.

Peugeot's excellent after-sales service is backed up by AA Peugeot Assistance for the first 12 months after registration; this may be extended to include overseas cover. The scheme includes AA membership — Home Start, Relay and Relay Plus — and a 24-hour breakdown and parts supply service.

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HARMONY

The smallest Auto-Sleeper, Harmony combines luxury with a surprisingly spacious interior — what else would you expect of an Auto-Sleeper?

Harmony is the only Auto-Sleeper Peugeot built on the short-wheelbase Boxer 270S. Compact on the road, Harmony is surprisingly well equipped and is evidence, if needed, of Auto-Sleepers' experience in making the most practical use of available space.

There's more. Harmony led the field as the first swb high-top to accommodate a fully-fitted shower compartment, complete with Thetford Cassette toilet — now with its own water supply.

Auto-Sleepers enhance the Boxer's cab with velour-covered seats, cushioned arm- and headrests, and rear speakers for the stereo cassette radio. Safety and comfort for rear passengers derives from individual three-point inertia-reel safety belts and sliding windows.

Aft of the luxury cab, the lounge/dinette seating shows that unmistakable Auto-Sleeper flair for flexibility, allowing you to adapt the arrangement to suit the mood: both cab seats swivel to face their respective rear seats to make twin dinettes with individual tables. Easy-action runners in the rear seat bases ensure finger-tip control to set up a pair of relaxing settees, or a choice of two single beds or a double. Designed as a two-berth, Harmony can be specified with a double bed in the high-top in place of the overcab storage area.

The cook's domain boasts an easy-clean stainless steel two-burner hob/grill and matching sink drainer, both concealed beneath a pair of worktops which are heat-resistant and provide convenient work space. Storage for utensils, food etc — essential in any motor caravan — is provided in a variety of cuboards, drawers and roof lockers, improved for 1998 with radiused hardwood door profiles, plus the latest Electrolux tilt-tolerant 2cu.ft refrigerator with freezer compartment.

Windows in the kitchen and double-skinned high-top roof are top-hinged to maximise air through-flow. Side windows, with the exception of the washroom, come with the latest Seitz blinds and insect screens, uprated for strength and durability, plus lined curtains at all but the kitchen and washroom windows.

More storage is available in seat bases, plus a deep locker over the cab, and Harmony's generous wardrobe which also houses a sealed/vented gas locker accommodating a pair of 4.5kg cylinders.

Naturally, mains electricity is standard, including a pair of 230v outlets. Television users will appreciate the combined 12v power/coaxial cable socket. Lighting is mainly by 12v fluorescent units, but with one 230v fitting and a neat pair of flush-fitting 12v halogen spotlights.

For ultimate comfort and convenience, Harmony also boasts hot and cold water as well as temperature-controlled, blown-air heating.

The smallest Auto-Sleeper, perhaps; Harmony combines luxury with a surprisingly spacious interior — but what else would you expect of an Auto-Sleeper?

A Fully adjustable swivelling cab seats with armrests. **A&B** form a single bed or, with **A** swivelled, a twin dinette.
B Forms an inward facing seat.
C Thermostatically controlled heater.
D Two-burner grill/cooker with cupboard below.
E Stainless steel sink and drainer with tilt-tolerant refrigerator below and crockery cupboard above.
F Shower/toilet compartment.
G Wardrobe with gas storage below.
H Forward facing seat with **A** swivelled forms a twin dinette. **A&H** form a single bed.
I Table.
L Overcab locker.

Length 4826mm
Width Exc. mirrors 2108mm
Width Inc. mirrors 2375mm
Height 2667mm

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SYMPHONY

Sleek design and distinctive styling are merely first impressions — Symphony is a practical and spacious high-top with a well-chosen specification which is appreciated by the experienced motor caravanner.

Based on the medium-wheelbase Boxer, the Symphony has more of a 'coachbuilt' look than many of its contemporaries. Emphasising this are the Symphony's top-hinged windows in the kitchen and high-top, plus sliding windows in the dinette. The latter benefit from the latest Seitz blinds and insect screens, uprated for strength and durability, plus lined curtains.

Armchair cab seats with cushioned head restraints are adjustable for reach and rake, plus height adjustment for the driver. A detail safety feature is the recessed cab curtain track.

Rear seats can be rearranged easily to suit the mood: the cab passenger seat rotates to create a twin dinette using one of the two tables; alternatively, a more spacious lounge arrangement sees the second table placed between the settee and seat. Symphony's rear forward-facing seat has a metal base and is fitted with a three-point inertia-reel safety belt.

Roller-bearing track allows changes to be made with finger-tip control, especially welcome when converting the interior to and from its night-time role, when the choice is between a pair of singles or a large double bed, neither involving the cab seats. The Symphony can be supplied as a four-berth, the overcab locker being replaced by a double bed.

A Cab seat with armrests.
B Swivelling cab seat with armrests.
C Inward-facing bench seat converts to a longitudinal single bed or with **B** and **I** to a double.
D Thermostatically controlled heater.
E Two-burner/grill with oven below.
F Stainless steel sink and drainer with tilt-tolerant refrigerator below and crockery cupboard above.
G Shower/toilet compartment.
H Wardrobe with gas storage below.
I Forward facing seat converts to a longitudinal single bed.
J Tables.
K Side sliding door.
L Overcab locker or optional pull-out bed.

Length 5185mm
Width Exc. mirrors 2108mm
Width Inc. mirrors 2375mm
Height 2661mm

Kitchen facilities are well-planned, combining a two-burner hob/grill with an adjacent sink/drainer in matching stainless steel, both neatly inset and concealed beneath separate heat-resistant hinged worktops. An oven cooker plus the latest Electrolux tilt-tolerant refrigerator with freezer compartment complete Symphony's impressive inventory of appliances.

Cupboards, cutlery drawer and high-level lockers, with reprofiled hardwood door mouldings, provide ample storage, supplemented by handy wire trays beneath dinette seats. Bedding stores easily in the spacious overcab locker.

Both 230v mains and 12v electrics are standard, plus a second battery and split-charge device. Fluorescent lighting is both mains and 12v, with local illumination over the nearside dinette.

Carver's Rapide gas/230v boiler supplies hot water to mixers in the kitchen and washroom. Interior comfort is assured by Carver's P4 temperature-controlled, blown-air heater and high levels of insulation.

Symphony owners can dress for the occasion thanks to a generous wardrobe, the base of which houses a sealed/vented gas compartment with room for two 4.5kg cylinders.

Coachbuilt spaciousness and appointments are again reflected in Symphony's washroom where Thetford's electric-flush toilet, now with its own water supply, is located neatly beneath a removable handbasin. A loose-fitted carpet protects the shower tray — a nice touch common to all Auto-Sleeper showers. Storage for toiletries is provided in a mirror-fronted locker, matched to the washroom's mouldings.

Sleek design and distinctive styling are merely first impressions — Symphony is a practical and spacious high-top with a well-chosen specification which is appreciated by the experienced motor caravanner.

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PESCARA

Stuart Craig, Editor of Which Motorcaravan reviews the first of an exciting new generation of Auto-Sleepers.

Built using a different process to the GRP monocoque type construction so familiar to Auto-Sleeper coachbuilt owners, this "new" Styrofoam method allows Auto-Sleepers to continue their quest to produce value-for-money vehicles at competitive prices.

The biggest compliment I can pay the Pescara is that it is every inch an Auto-Sleeper, the new body shape sitting elegantly on Peugeot's medium-wheelbase Boxer.

The fully-carpeted cab with trimmed passenger and driver seats is decidedly spacious, thanks to a cut-away roof section leading into the overcab area and its double berth. An extra-large roof vent allows a copious amount of light and ventilation.

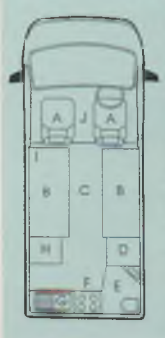
The lounge/dinette has interior-sprung settees, both of which are adjustable for relaxation. You can also dine around the large table mounted on a stainless steel pedestal leg. Base cushions can be moved with ease, giving access to the storage areas below. Both settees are available as single beds, or can be easily converted to a giant double.

Pescara's kitchen is well appointed with the latest mottled green Spinflo combination cooker with four-burner hob, a thermostatically controlled oven and grill — all featuring electronic ignition and flame failure. A matching sink/drainer sits below smartly recessed worktops and is served by a large mixer tap situated outside the bowl area to maximise sink space. A 70-litre Electrolux 4233S refrigerator completes the complement of appliances. The kitchen area is elevated to new areas of distinction by the green laminate used on all work surfaces and echoed by the dining table top.

Top-hinged panoramic windows are double glazed and have night blinds with insect screens, providing the best combination of ventilation and privacy. They can be used in combination with generous lined curtains for a cosier feel. On the subject of warmth, the Pescara boasts Carver's 3600STC gas space heater with electronic ignition. The 230 volt Fanmaster blown-air system may also be specified.

The luxurious washroom makes best use of available space and fittings include Thetford's new swivel bowl toilet, skilfully designed vanity unit served by mixer taps, and separate taps for the shower with its trigger-operated flow control. Ventilation comes from a large window and roof vent. Capacious fresh and waste water tanks allow long periods of use, and a large external locker has capacity for two 7kg cylinders.

Pescara shows tireless attention to detail and luxurious appointments in a vehicle using state-of-the-art construction techniques.



A Fully adjustable cab seats.
B Dinette converts to two longitudinal single beds or a double.
C Table.
D Wardrobe with thermostatically controlled heater.
E Shower/toilet compartment.
F Four-burner hob with cooker, grill and oven below.
G Sink and drainer with cupboard below and lockers above.
H Tilt-tolerant refrigerator with cocktail cabinet above.
I Gas storage.
J Overcab bed.

Length 5905mm
Width Exc. mirrors 2146mm
Width Inc. mirrors 2375mm
Height 2885mm

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POLLENSA

New methods of construction, but a combination of luxury and practicality in true Auto-Sleeper style. Stuart Craig, Editor of Which Motorcaravan reports.

A subtly changed interior distinguishes the intriguing Pollensa from its stablemate. The offside settee makes way for a twin dinette with seating facing both the front and rear. As would be expected, the forward-facing seat allows two to be seated in safety, each with their own inertia-reel lap-and-diagonal seat belt.

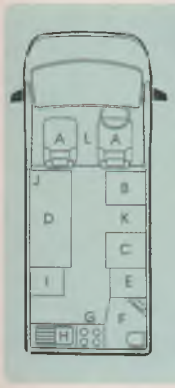
Smooth-contoured aerodynamic lines demonstrate the style and strength so typical of an Auto-Sleeper, and the bodywork looks every bit at home on the medium-wheelbase Peugeot Boxer.

Up front, the fully-carpeted cab, in which the seats are trimmed to match the rear cushions, is well appointed and the feeling of space here is enhanced by a huge glazed opening roof vent.

Aft of the cab, the Pollensa's layout features a full-length settee on the nearside and two separate seats on the offside. At night, two single beds can be quickly made by sliding the seat bases into the required position. Dining takes place around a table attached to the offside wall.

Radical furniture styling comprises convex aircraft-style lockers and curved cornices, all fashioned from real wood. There's a classy chevron pattern to the inset panels too. Blue/green soft furnishings with an abstract pattern and careful attention to detail all helps create the image of a thoroughly modern motorhome interior.

All-important storage space is available above the cab, in the roof lockers and below the seats. Smart clothes hang in the Pollensa's generous wardrobe.



A Fully adjustable cab seats.
B Rear-facing seat. B&C convert to form longitudinal single bed.
C Forward facing seat.
D Inward facing seat forms a longitudinal single bed. Alternatively, B,C&D combine to form a transverse double bed.
E Wardrobe with thermostatically controlled heater.
F Shower/toilet compartment.
G Four-burner hob with cooker, grill and oven below.
H Sink and drainer with cupboard below and lockers above.
I Tilt-tolerant refrigerator with cocktail cabinet above.
J Gas storage.
K Table.
L Overcab bed.

Length 5905mm
Width Exc. mirrors 2146mm
Width Inc. mirrors 2375mm
Height 2885mm

Panoramic, acrylic double-glazed windows offer generous light and a good outlook, and are equipped with blinds/fly-screens. Fully-lined curtains are also fitted to make the Pollensa more homely.

Throughout the Pollensa, work surfaces and table tops employ a stunning mottled green laminate to good effect, and this is best illustrated in the vehicle's lavish kitchen. Fitted appliances include a 70-litre Electrolux 4233S refrigerator, green Spinflo combination cooker with electronic ignition and flame failure to the thermostatically-controlled oven and four-burner hob/grill. Alongside is an elegant green sink/drainer designed to sit below worktops and offering maximum capacity under a large mixer tap.

A generous washroom makes good use of a high standard of fittings including a Thetford swivel bowl toilet, attractive vanity unit, mixer taps and a trigger-operated shower complete with its own set of taps.

For year-round motor caravanning comfort, there's a Carver 3600STC heater with electronic ignition and optional 230v Fanmaster system. Hot water comes via Carver's Rapide gas/230v water heater and is drawn from a 74-litre fresh tank draining into a 47.5-litre waste unit. An external locker has capacity to house two 7kg cylinders.

There is a unique blend of unashamed luxury and practicality in a vehicle designed to influence one of the most competitive areas of the new motorhome market.

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PEUGEOT

Class winner Caravan Club Design Awards 1997

EXECUTIVE

Overtly opulant? Yes, but Executive is equally practical for year-round motor caravanning.

The classic lines of Auto-Sleepers' GRP monocoque coach-built body have truly withstood the test of time. Allied to Peugeot's medium-wheelbase Boxer, the Executive features an overcab moulding which has been subtly contoured to make the most of overcab space. Another subtle change for 1998 is Executive's soft pastel green upper body colour.

Velour-covered seats with adjustable armrests and cushioned headrests provide comfort on the move for both passenger and driver, the latter enjoying the extra benefit of seat height adjustment, as well the usual movement fore and aft.

When the day's driving is done, Executive's spacious and well-planned dinette/lounge offers instant relaxation on a pair of interior-sprung settees with matching armrests and cushions. The kitchen, washroom and wardrobe are grouped at the back, making the very best use of interior space.

Panoramic windows are double-glazed acrylic and top-hinged to allow maximum airflow, as well as adding to the sense of interior spaciousness. Night blinds and insect screens, plus lined curtains, give that sense of cossetted comfort so special to Auto-Sleepers.

Executive's well-appointed kitchen centres around a Stoves thermostatically-controlled oven, four-burner hob/grill, all with electronic ignition and flame failure. The adjacent stainless steel sink/drainer has an inset chopping board. A major improvement for 1998 is the larger Electrolux RM4233 'wheelarch' refrigerator, with freezer compartment. Storage includes a sectioned cutlery drawer, plus roof lockers, more of which extend aircraft-style down the lounge, featuring new, reprofiled hardwood doors and cant rails. Also new is a larger cocktail cabinet.

Executive's spacious wardrobe has a top shelf, while larger items, e.g. bedding, can be conveniently stored over the cab. Carrying capacity is extended by a roof rack, reached by the rear extension ladder.

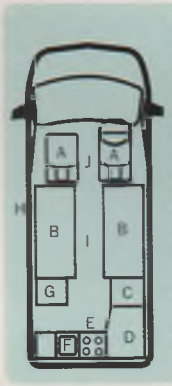
Settee bases have deep drawers operating smoothly on easy-glide runners, but are held shut by positive catches. Both settees are readily available as single beds, or can be easily combined into a giant double. In either case all exits, plus the washroom and wardrobe, are freely accessible. Executive can be ordered with two or four berths, the second double bed replacing the overcab storage area.

Points to appreciate when using Executive's sturdy main door are the inset step, grab handle and footwell light, plus an automotive-style anti-burst lock. Yet another pointer to Auto-Sleepers' unending attention to detail is the master switch for interior lights. Similarly, the spare wheel's wind-down mechanism provides convenient access.

The level of luxury is maintained in the washroom, which features a new blue/white colour co-ordinated decor. Fittings include Thetford's Cassette toilet, removable hand-basin, vanity unit and toiletries locker. The compartment's sense of spaciousness is enhanced by an opening window and roof-light, plus a large acrylic dressing mirror.

Carver's Rapide gas/230v water heater supplies hot water to mixers in the kitchen and toilet/shower compartment, while the latest Carver 3600STC heater with gas or 230v Fanmaster operation ensures constant levels of comfort. Gas supplies for all appliances are housed in an external locker, which accommodates up to two 7kg cylinders.

Executive successfully combines luxury with practicality — reason enough for its being a sought-after model among experienced motor caravanners.



A Fully adjustable cab seats with armrests.
B Dinette converts to two longitudinal single beds, or a large transverse double.
C Wardrobe with thermostatically controlled heater below.
D Shower/toilet compartment.
E Four-burner hob with cooker and grill below.
F Stainless steel sink and drainer with cupboard below.
G Tilt-tolerant refrigerator with cocktail cabinet above.
H Gas storage.
I Table.
J Cut-away cab with storage lockers or optional bed.

Length 5665mm
Width Exc. mirrors 2108mm
Width Inc. mirrors 2375mm
Height 2825mm

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TALISMAN

In keeping with the tradition of Auto-Sleeper coachbuilts, Talisman succeeds in combining luxury with practicality and comfort.

Smooth contours and wind-cheating lines effectively disguise the strength and resilience of Talisman's moulded GRP body, while at the same time complementing the medium-wheelbase Boxer's cab design.

Upholstery and soft furnishings are given a new, fresher look for 1998. Talisman's built-in safety features, however, remain unaltered. These include integral steel frames and three-point inertia-reel safety belts for the rear passenger seats, plus the reassuring anti-burst lock on Talisman's sturdy, close-fitting caravan door.

Cab seats benefit from adjustable armrests and cushioned headrests, as well as luxury velour upholstery to match the overall trim. Both seats can be adjusted for reach and rake, the driver's seat also adjusts for height.

Aft of the cab, four individual seats form twin dinettes. Alternatively, the offside seats can easily be converted into a full-length settee. When it's time to turn in, a pair of single beds can be made in seconds simply by sliding the seat bases into place and allowing their backrests to drop.

Panoramic windows on each side, top-hinged to maximise air-flow, invite you to enjoy the view, protected from flying pests by the fitted insect screens. Cassette blinds ensure privacy at night, covered by lined floral curtains to give that unmistakable Auto-Sleeper sense of comfort.

Located across the rear, Talisman's kitchen is lavishly appointed. Main appliances include a stainless steel sink and separate drainer, matching four-burner hob/grill and glass-fronted oven with electronic ignition. New for 1998 is a larger Electrolux RM4233 70-litre refrigerator with freezer compartment.

Essential storage space is available in overcab lockers, plus roof lockers and in seat bases. Look out for the new cabinetwork, which features reprofiled hardwood door mouldings and roof locker cant rails.

Talisman's spacious wardrobe will accommodate all the smart clothes you'll need, while any overspill is swallowed up in the generously-sized lockers.

Washroom decor for the coming year changes to a soft blue/white combination. On the practical front, the compartment is designed for comfortable use year round. Carver's Rapide, operating on gas or 230v mains, supplies hot water for handbasin and shower mixer controls. Ducted heating from the Carver 3600STC, also operating on gas or Fanmaster 230v mains, maintains comfort levels. Fittings include Thetford's Cassette toilet, with its own separate water supply, and a removable, fold-up handbasin.

In keeping with the tradition of Auto-Sleeper coachbuilts, Talisman succeeds in combining luxury with practicality for all-year motor caravanning in comfort.

A Fully adjustable cab seats.
B Rear facing seats.
C Forward facing seats, with **B** convert to longitudinal single beds, or transverse double.
D Wardrobe with thermostatically controlled heater below.
E Shower/toilet compartment.
F Four-burner hob with cooker and grill below.
G Stainless steel sink and drainer with cupboard below.
H Tilt-tolerant refrigerator with cocktail cabinet above.
I Gas storage.
J Tables.
K Cut-away cab with storage lockers or optional bed.
L Door with retractable step below.

Length 5665mm
Width Exc. mirrors 2108mm
Width Inc. mirrors 2375mm
Height 2825mm

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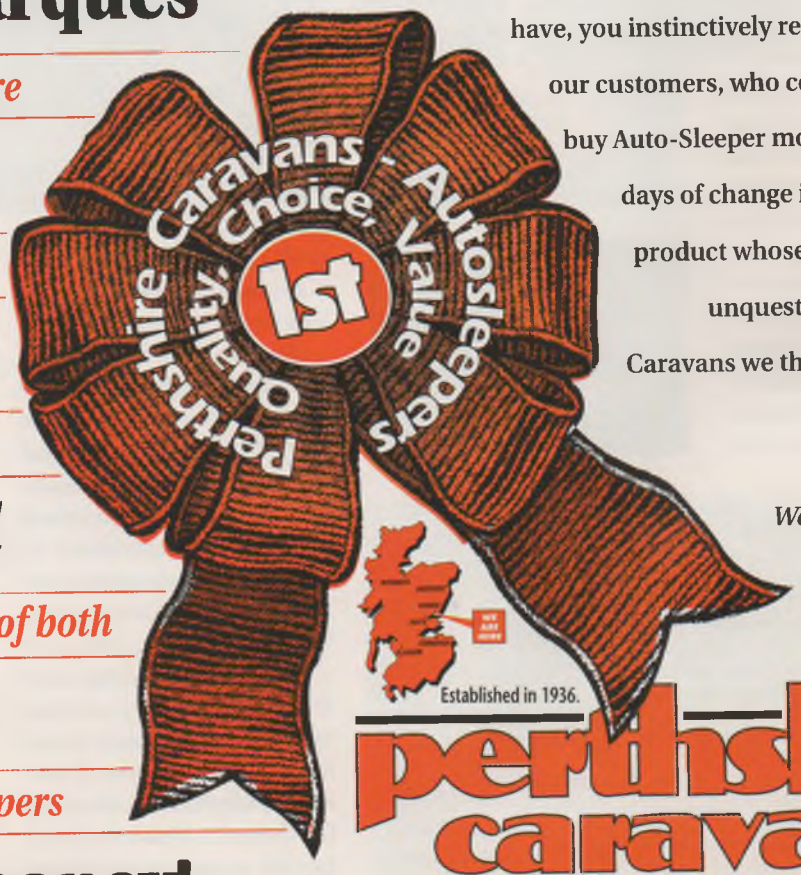

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FORDS

Loyalty to the Ford Transit remains at a high level with motor caravanners — and for many good reasons.

The latest, low-emissions power units — one petrol and two diesels — are available in the new range of Auto-Sleeper Fords for 1998. High-tops Flair and Duetto come as standard with the DOHC 115PS two-litre engine which produces an impressive 170Nm of torque at just 2700rpm. Ford's diesels are all 2.5 litre capacity, with the electronically-controlled turbo-diesel variants producing a hefty 85PS and 100PS. respectively (coachbuilt models only). The 85PS engine is available with an optional four-speed automatic transmission.

Ford's five-speed manual transmission is renowned for its lightness and precision, combining with responsive foot controls to give car-like driving and minimising driver fatigue. Equally, their A4LD four-speed auto gives smooth progress with virtually unnoticeable gear-changes.

Also standard on all Auto-Sleeper Fords is their variable-ratio power-assisted steering — again well proven and taking much of the effort out of driving, especially when parking etc.

The latest Transit cab comes with electric windows, tinted glass, facia-mounted cup holder, package tray, recirculating heater (not coach-built models) and a quartz clock. Cab seats have armrests (except Flair) and adjust for rake and reach. Detail touches from Ford are leather-effect gearshift and handbrake gaiters and fabric door trims with map pockets.

Externally, Transits boast twin-lens door mirrors with large anti-soiling heads, an engine noise insulation pack and, on Flair and Duetto, alloy wheels.

Entertainment on the move comes from Ford's new 4000T large-bezel radio cassette system.

Ford's Transit is also very security conscious, having door locks with shielded mechanisms, steering column lock and locking fuel cap.

Cab courtesy-lights include eyeball footwell lights, which are operated by the doors, together with an overhead console housing a map-reading light and two spotlights. All are governed by a 30-second delay switch. Tailgate models (Flair only) come as standard with rear wash/wipe and heated window element.

Ford's standard 12-month unlimited mileage warranty can be extended by taking out Extra Cover extended warranty plans, which include RAC membership for the duration of the plan.

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FLAIR

Flair is well named — it achieves levels of comfort and equipment for both everyday use and year-round touring.

Flair is the baby high-top among the Auto-Sleeper Fords. Base model is the long-running Transit Kombi in short-wheelbase form and, though only 15' 10¼" long, Flair is well named, for it manages to achieve levels of comfort and equipment for both everyday use and year-round touring.

Ford's Transit enjoys a well-earned, very loyal following and, over the years, has developed a cab environment in which the driver and passenger can feel at home. Comfortable, velour-covered seats with multi-directional adjustment combine with clear instruments and user-friendly controls to make driving a pleasure.

Standard fittings include Ford's latest large-bezel radio cassette, power steering, electric cab windows, engine immobiliser, plus a choice of petrol or turbo-diesel engines.

Flair's centre dinette/lounge can be reached in three ways: direct from the cab, via the nearside sliding door, or through the rear tailgate which has both demist and wash/wipe. Comfort is the top priority here, created by versatile seating which can be changed to suit a variety of occasions.

Immediately behind the driver's seat, a spacious settee faces a single, forward-facing seat which has a metal-frame base as anchorage for its three-point inertia-reel seat belt. The cab passenger seat rotates smoothly to face into the lounge, providing space in which to dine, relax or entertain.

Windows in the dinette/lounge come with the latest Seitz blinds and insect screens, which have been uprated for strength and durability. Four of the six windows open to provide maximum ventilation, supplemented if required by a pair of roof-lights, each with a night blind and insect screen.

At mealtimes, Flair's near-side rear kitchen is ideally placed and its base unit set at a comfortable working height. The Electrolux refrigerator is a good example, being located at waist height for ease of access. Main appliances are a stainless steel two-burner hob/grill and matching sink/drainer. When not in use, appliances are neatly tucked away beneath a pair of heat-resistant, hinged worktops.

Storage is available in numerous cupboards, drawers and overhead lockers, as well as seat bases.

In spite of its compact dimensions, Flair is also successful in having a very high level of equipment, including a Thetford cassette toilet. Clever design by Auto-Sleepers creates an enclosed 'dressing area' here by the simple provision of a sliding partition door. At night, two singles or a large double bed may be formed.

All-weather comfort and convenience are provided by the inclusion as standard of 230v mains electricity, hot water courtesy of Carver's Rapide gas/230v water heater, and interior warmth from the Carver 1600W blown-air gas heater.

High-top Flair is an established Auto-Sleeper model, and well deserves its popularity among seasoned motor caravanners, who cherish a vehicle they can use every day, and are not content to stop touring when the days begin to shorten.

A Fully adjustable swivelling cab seats.
B Inward facing bench seat converts with **A** to form a longitudinal single bed.
C Sliding privacy screen.
D Thermostatically controlled heater.
E Wardrobe with storage cupboard above.
F Toilet storage compartment with refrigerator above.
G Cabinet with mirror on front.
H Stainless steel sink and drainer with cupboard below and storage lockers above.
I Two-burner hob/grill with cupboard below
J Gas storage.
K Forward-facing seat, with **A** swivelled, forms a twin dinette. **A&K** form a longitudinal single bed. **B** extends to join with **K**, forming a transverse double.
L Side sliding door.
M Tables.
N Overcab storage or optional pull-out bed.

Length 4832mm
Width Exc. mirrors 2063mm
Width Inc. mirrors 2315mm
Height 2572mm

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DUETTO

Coachbuilt-style accommodation combined with car-like driveability create a luxury high-top that's ideal for everyday use and is always ready to head for the hills.

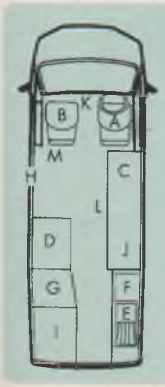
Ford's long-wheelbase Transit Kombi, with a choice of petrol or turbo-diesel engines, provides the motive power for this decidedly sleek and elegant member of the Auto-Sleeper high-top range. Automatic transmission is on the list of optional extras, but the standard specification speaks for itself. Electric cab windows, power steering and a four-speaker stereo radio cassette are just some of the star attractions.

For their part Auto-Sleepers put Ford's long-wheelbase chassis to full use in the creation of a spacious interior which sees a change to green/gold soft furnishings for the coming year. Comfortable lounge seating comprises a roomy settee on the offside, facing a 'designated' passenger seat which is built around a metal-frame base and fitted with a three-point inertia-reel seat belt. The extra armchair you always need comes as a result of the cab passenger seat swivel — a touch you'd expect from Auto-Sleepers.

The provision as standard of two tables, coupled with the versatile seating, means that the right accommodation can be arranged whether for dining, relaxing or entertaining fellow motor caravanners. Direct access from the cab goes without saying, but there's also the nearside sliding door or rear twin doors.

Duetto's offside rear kitchen also makes full use of the available space to provide a two burner hob/grill and sink/drainer in matching easy-clean stainless steel. Here, appliances extend to a built-in oven. A pair of hinged, heat-resistant worktops cover the hob and sink/drainer when not in use, and provide useful work space.

Storage centres around the Electrolux tilt-tolerant refrigerator with freezer compartment.



- **A** Fully adjustable cab seat.
- **B** Fully adjustable swivelling cab seat.
- **C** Inward facing bench seat which converts to a longitudinal single bed.
- **D** Forward facing seat which converts to a longitudinal single bed. Alternatively **C&D** combine to form a longitudinal double bed.
- **E** Stainless steel sink/drainer with refrigerator below and lockers above.
- **F** Two-burner grill/cooker with oven.
- **G** Wardrobe with locker above and gas storage below.
- **H** Side sliding door.
- **I** Shower/toilet compartment.
- **J** Thermostatically controlled heater.
- **K** Overcab storage lockers.
- **L** Table.
- **M** Table for twin dinette.

Length 5548mm
Width Exc. mirrors 2063mm
Width Inc. mirrors 2315mm
Height 2667mm

In addition, well-planned cupboards, drawers, shelves and lockers will easily accommodate a full touring inventory. More storage space is available in seat bases, which are fitted with drawers and wire baskets to ease loading and unloading. Auto-Sleepers even build a lockable 'safe' into the base of the cab passenger seat.

Sleeping accommodation for two is in a choice of singles or a double bed — both quick and easy to make up. A second bed in the high-top can be specified if additional accommodation is required.

Sensibly located at the rear, along with the wardrobe, Duetto's washroom features a shower unit, electric-flush Thetford Cassette toilet with its own water supply, removable handbasin and storage for toiletries. Hot water here and to the kitchen is supplied by the Carver Rapide 230v/gas water heater.

Windows aft of the cab benefit from new Seitz blinds and insect screens, improved for strength and durability. Lined curtains give that home-from-home touch. Well-planned lighting combines a 230v fitting with 12v fluorescent and new gold-finish halogen spots — you choose the lighting to match the mood. And Carver's new P4 blown air heater ensures year-round comfort.

Electrical supplies are a combination of 230v mains and 12v, including a Ford-fitted leisure battery conveniently located under the bonnet. As in all Auto-Sleepers, mains wiring is protected by an RCD and circuit-breaker fuses.

Duetto's coachbuilt-like accommodation combines well with the Transit's car-like driveability to create a luxury high-top that's ideal for everyday use, and yet ready to head for the hills at the turn of the key.

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AMETHYST

Attention to detail allied to luxury make the long-wheelbase Amethyst a model to which experienced motor caravanners aspire.

Without doubt, its sleek, aerodynamically-styled GRP monocoque body, the hallmark of Auto-Sleeper coachbuilt models, distinguishes Amethyst as being something special. Ford's long-wheelbase chassis cab, designed especially for motor caravan use, adds those sought-after properties of faultless road-holding and ride comfort.

Cab seats with armrests and cushioned headrests ensure a comfortable journey, while well-weighted power steering and a four-speaker stereo cassette radio are pointers to the luxury accommodation aft of the cab.

Amethyst's spacious dinette/lounge comprises a conventional dinette with front/rear-facing settees, plus a third settee facing inwards on the nearside. The forward facing settee is fitted with a pair of three-point inertia-reel seat belts as well as a high-backed, cushioned headrest. Dinette seating features interior-sprung foam cushions with a refreshingly new fabric for the coming year, as well as redesigned seat bases. Cabinetwork — always a hallmark of Auto-Sleeper pride — features newly profiled hardwood door mouldings.

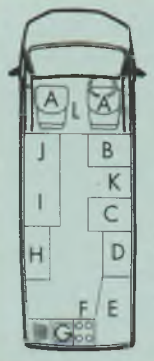
Panoramic windows flanking the lounge are top-hinged and fitted with blinds and insect screens, plus lined curtains for a more homely feel to the interior. This is enhanced by a combination of 230v mains and 12v lighting, TV aerial socket and no fewer than four mains socket outlets plus two 12v.

Sleeping accommodation is in a choice of two extra-wide single beds or by combining both a 'king-size' double. Whatever the choice, occupants have access to functional areas — wardrobe, washroom and kitchen, plus the nearside rear door. The latter is far and away the best door in any motor caravan, being close-fitting and sturdy, and fitted with an automotive-style anti-burst lock. An inset step is provided, as is a grab handle and footwell light.

The cook's domain is dominated by a Stoves thermostatically-controlled oven, four-burner hob and grill — all fitted with electronic ignition and flame failure. Space for utensils, cutlery and provisions comes in various forms of drawers, cupboards and lockers, both in the kitchen and lounge areas. New for the coming season is a larger Electrolux RM4233 'wheelarch' refrigerator with freezer compartment. More carrying capacity is provided by Amethyst's stainless steel roof rack which comes with a clip-on ladder extension, plus a rear 'boot' locker, ideal for wet-weather gear.

Colour co-ordinated in soft blue and white, Amethyst's washroom is both well-appointed and practical. Fittings include Thetford's Cassette toilet, plus easy-clean mouldings for the detachable handbasin and shower tray. Carver's Rapide 230v gas water heater takes care of hot supplies to the mixers in the kitchen and the washroom. Assured comfort for out-of-season touring is provided by Carver's 3600STC heater which features gas or 230v Fanmaster operation.

Amethyst's exterior gas locker takes up to a pair of 7kg cylinders, which can also be reached through a hatch from inside — evidence, if it were needed, of Auto-Sleepers' unremitting attention to detail. Such touches abound in the long-wheelbase Amethyst which, with its Ford motive power, adds up to a motor caravan to which experienced motor caravanners aspire.



A Fully adjustable cab seats with armrests.
B Two rearward facing seats with headrests.
C Two forward facing seats with headrests and inertia reel lap and diagonal seat belts. B&C convert to a longitudinal single bed.
D Wardrobe with thermostatically controlled heater and Fanmaster warm air fan below.
E Shower/toilet compartment.
F Four-burner hob with cooker, grill and oven below.
G Stainless steel sink and drainer with cupboards below and lockers above.
H Tilt-tolerant refrigerator with cocktail cabinet and storage cabinet above.
I Gas storage.
J Inward facing settee converts to a longitudinal single bed. Alternatively B,C&J combine to form a transverse double bed.
K Table.
L Cut-away cab with storage lockers or optional overcab bed.

Length 6150mm
Width Exc. mirrors 2195mm
Width Inc. mirrors 2470mm
Height 2770mm

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EXCELSIOR

Excelsior combines a popular layout with a favourite base vehicle, plus all the luxury features of an Auto-Sleeper — when it comes to competitors, there's really no contest.

The Excelsior offers motor caravanners a superb double bonus — Ford's long wheel-base Transit built to motor caravan specification, plus Auto-Sleepers' award-winning Executive layout. Actually, more than that, since Excelsior's extra length allows Auto-Sleepers to provide bigger beds and even more storage space.

Excelsior's coachbuilt body is yet another variation on Auto-Sleepers' GRP monocoque theme — tough yet gracefully aerodynamic in design. Up front, Ford's well-planned cab is transformed by upholstered seats with armrests and cushioned headrests, carpet and curtains on recessed track, and a cut-away roof dedicated to storage in two-berth guise, or with an optional double bed if four-berth requirements are specified at time of order.

Aft of the cab, Excelsior's roomy dinette/lounge comprises a pair of interior-sprung 6ft settees, on which driver and passenger can stretch out during a journey break. The newly chosen blue upholstery is most attractive.

At night, the settees are instantly available as single beds, or combine quickly and easily to create a 'king-size' double. With the functional areas sensibly grouped at the back, occupants have unimpeded access to the wardrobe, washroom and kitchen — not least the nearside rear exit door.

In common with all Auto-Sleepers, Excelsior's one-piece door is solidly built, precision fitting and equipped with an anti-burst automotive-style lock. Entry and exit are assisted by a grab-handle, an inset step and welcoming footwell light — more touches that show Auto-Sleepers' design experience and attention to detail.

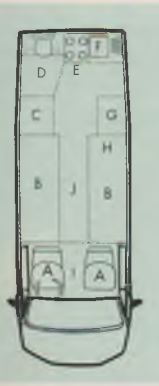
Excelsior's kitchen, at the back but still conveniently located with regard to the dinette, is equipped with a Stoves oven and four-burner hob/grill, all with electronic ignition and flame failure. Adjacent is an easy-care stainless steel sink and drainer, with inset hardwood chopping board.

Storage abounds in kitchen drawers, cupboards and roof lockers, plus a larger capacity Electrolux RM4233 'wheelarch' fridge with freezer compartment. Lockers with shelves extend aircraft-style over the lounge, where the seat bases, plus a full wardrobe and drawer unit swallow up vast amounts of whatever is needed on tour. Improvements to the cabinetwork for the coming year see the introduction of new hardwood door mouldings with softer radius profiles, adding to the already high quality of Auto-Sleeper furniture.

If that were not enough, Excelsior also has a rear 'boot' ideal for wet-weather gear, plus a stainless steel roof rack with clip-on ladder extension.

Excelsior's well-appointed shower compartment is located in the offside rear corner and, for the coming year, features a colour co-ordinated decor in soft blue and white. In keeping with its coachbuilt cousins, Excelsior's washroom fittings include a Thetford Cassette toilet with its own separate water supply, plus a detachable fold-away handbasin. Hot water to mixer taps here and in the kitchen is supplied by Carver's Rapide 230v mains or gas water heater. Carver are also responsible for keeping Excelsior's comfort levels high when off-season touring, thanks to their 3600STC heater which operates on gas or 230v Fanmaster, providing ducted warm air to outlets in the lounge and washroom.

Excelsior combines a very popular layout with an equally favourite base vehicle, and packs in all the luxury features expected of an Auto-Sleeper. When it comes to competitors, there's really no contest.



- **A** Fully adjustable cab seats with armrests.
- **B** Dinette converts into two longitudinal single beds or a large transverse double.
- **C** Wardrobe with thermostatically controlled heater and Fanmaster warm air fan heater below.
- **D** Shower/toilet compartment.
- **E** Four-burner hob/grill and oven below.
- **F** Stainless steel sink and drainer with cupboards below and lockers above.
- **G** Tilt-tolerant refrigerator with cocktail cabinet above.
- **H** Gas storage.
- **I** Cut-away cab with storage lockers or optional overcab bed.
- **J** Table.

Length 6150mm
Width Exc. mirrors 2195mm
Width Inc. mirrors 2470mm
Height 2770mm

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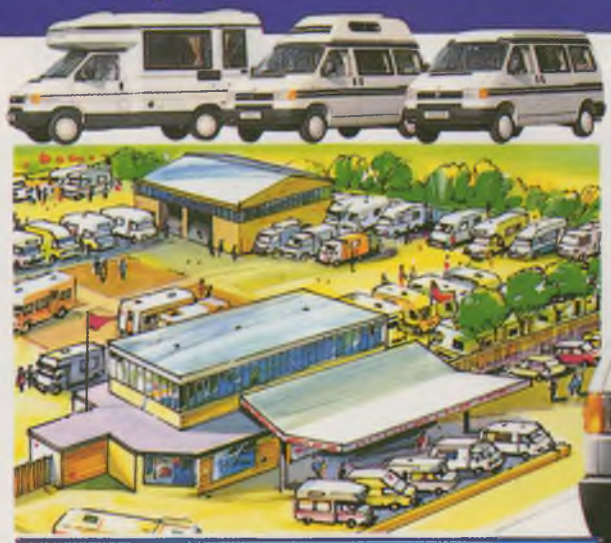

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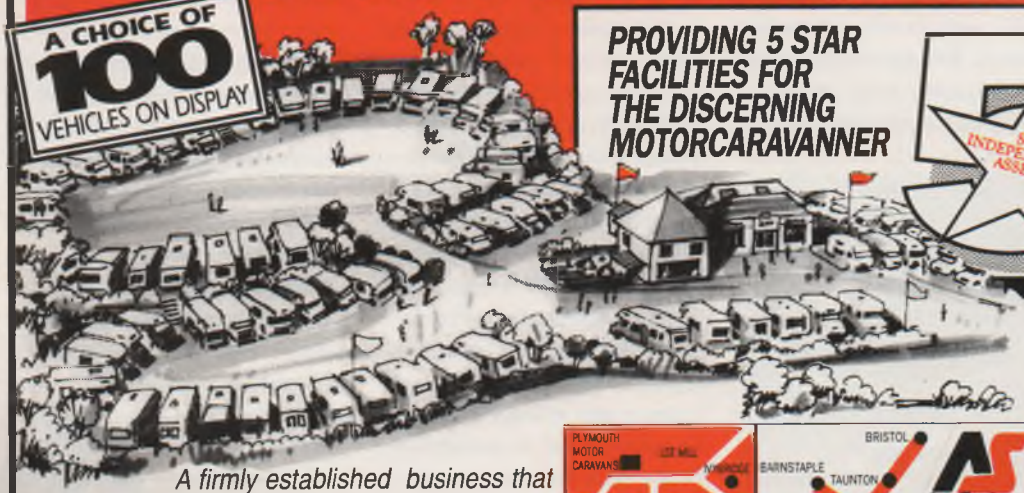

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LEGEND

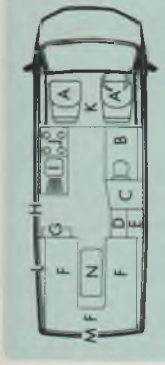
Legend's reputation is built on practicality, durability and reliability — luxury from Auto-Sleepers is the icing on the cake.

Stylish and aerodynamically sleek, Legend's exterior appeal hides a thoroughbred among motor caravans, in which practicality and good looks go hand in hand.

Central to Legend's appeal is its Transit base, which ideally complements Auto-Sleepers' gracefully designed GRP monocoque body. On the road, Legend owes much of its ride comfort and handling to Ford technology, which has been fine-tuned to the road-going needs of this coachbuilt motor caravan.

Matching Ford's expertise, Auto-Sleepers' experience creates in Legend a motor caravan of unashamed luxury for two people.

Almost half of the floor plan at the back is devoted to a spacious lounge/dinette with wrap-round seating, now with a fresh new upholstery design in pastel green. Opening double-glazed windows give panoramic views all round. 6ft settees here are instantly available as single beds, or the entire lounge converts quickly and easily into a 'king-size' double.



A Fully adjustable cab seats with armrests; passenger seat swivels.
B Shower compartment with pedestal toilet.
C Wardrobe with thermostatically controlled heater & Fanmaster warm air fan heater below.
D Large capacity tilt-tolerant refrigerator.
E Cocktail cabinet.
F Rear dinette converting to two large single beds or a double.
G Pull-out storage rack.
H Caravan door with retractable step below.
I Stainless steel sink and drainer with cupboards below and lockers above.
J Four-burner hob, grill and oven below, with extractor fan above.
K Cut-away cab with storage lockers.
L Gas storage.
M Locking rear boot.
N Table.

Length 6280mm
Width Exc. mirrors 2226mm
Width Inc. mirrors 2470mm
Height 2775mm

Conveniently close to the lounge, Legend's well-appointed kitchen unit lacks for nothing in terms of domesticity. Concealed beneath a pair of heat-resistant hinged worktops are a stainless steel sink/drainer with inset chopping board, plus a four-burner hob/grill, with an oven below — all with automatic ignition — and an extractor fan for the hob.

Generous storage is available in a variety of drawers, cupboards and lockers, of which there are more in the lounge. Add cavernous seat bases and an exterior roof rack and ladder, and it's clear that all eventualities are well covered.

Legend's washroom is both spacious, practical and well-appointed. Fittings extend to a Thetford pedestal toilet, detachable handbasin for ease of cleaning, vanity unit and large mirror. Ducted warm air from the Carver 3600STC gas/230v Fanmaster heater adds a touch of comfort for out-of-season touring. Carver also supply hot water to washroom and kitchen mixers courtesy of the latest Rapide gas/230v water heater.

Electrical supplies for power to the lights and various appliances are a combination of 230v mains and 12v. Legend's mains wiring and appliances are protected by an RCD and miniature circuit breakers, the 12v system being appropriately fused.

Gas supplies are housed in an exterior locker with capacity for up to two 7kg butane cylinders. At the rear, with its door being neatly incorporated within the bumper, is a most useful exterior locker which provides yet further valuable storage space.

The only legendary aspect of this Auto-Sleeper flagship is its name. In use it's down to earth, but with those unmistakable touches of Auto-Sleeper luxury — quite unashamed luxury, in fact. But its reputation among motor caravanners is built on practicality, durability and reliability — the luxury is just the icing on the cake.

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VOLKSWAGENS

For the greater part of Auto-Sleepers' 37 years in the business of producing high-quality motor caravans, Volkswagen, perhaps more than any other manufacturer, has formed the backbone of their success.

The latest front-wheel drive Transporter, supplied to Auto-Sleepers with a special motor caravan specification, has developed a very loyal following among motor caravanners, who appreciate its car-like handling and performance. Given the quality Auto-Sleeper treatment, the Transporter is ideally suited to a dual purpose role — everyday motoring and fully-equipped, highly mobile holiday home.

The Volkswagen Transporter's success starts with a well-planned cab environment — comfortable, supportive seats, clear instrumentation and excellent all-round vision — all helping to take the stress out of modern motoring. Add variable-ratio power steering and the confidence derived from all-round disc brakes — a load sensing valve prevents rear-wheel lock-up under braking — and it's no wonder the Volkswagen Transporter is in such demand.

Car-like ride and handling do not happen by accident or whim. In the Transporter's case, its sure-footedness derives from a revised compact front suspension aimed at eliminating intrusion into the cab. Front double wishbones combine with hydraulic shock absorbers to provide the sort of handling and ride you'd expect from a saloon car. Similar 'minimum intrusion' targets were set for the rear suspension, achieved by the use of diagonal trailing arms and installing the hydraulic shock absorbers under the floor.

Nothing stands still, and this applies as much in the motor industry as in life itself. For most Auto-Sleeper Volkswagens, the standard power unit is Volkswagen's four cylinder, two-litre petrol unit, producing 84bhp. No fewer than four alternatives feature on the list of optional extras, making the Volkswagen Transporter *the* most versatile in the Auto-Sleepers' line-up for 1998.

Optional engines start with the 1.9 litre, four-cylinder turbo-diesel; next comes the five-cylinder 2.4-litre normally-aspirated diesel; at the top of the diesel range, Volkswagen offer their 102bhp five-cylinder direct injection turbo-diesel power unit for perhaps the ultimate in diesel performance and economy. Volkswagen's alternative petrol engine is their five-cylinder 110bhp fuel-injection unit, which can also be ordered with a four-speed automatic transmission.

A more recent addition to the Volkswagen range is the new LT, leading to more success for Auto-Sleepers. At the 1997 Birmingham show, their LT-based Medallion was voted both class and overall winner in the Caravan Club's prestigious design awards. No mean achievement for a model which had only been introduced a few months earlier.

Like its little brother, the new LT benefits from a host of driver-friendly features plus, for the Medallion, VW's 2.5-litre direct-injection turbo-diesel engine, power-assisted steering and five-speed gearbox. Cab appointments include height-adjustable seat belts, multi-adjustable driver's seat with headrests and a stereo cassette radio.

Both the LT and Transporter come with Volkswagen's standard 12-month, unlimited mileage warranty, which can be extended at extra cost for an additional 12 or 24 months.

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TROOPER

Low-profile or solid-sided elevating roof, Trooper continues to command a leading place in the Auto-Sleeper Volkswagen range.

As a direct result of continous development at Auto-Sleepers, their unique elevating roof Trooper has now emerged as two distinct models, with the arrival of the Trooper Low Profile. This takes advantage of an aerodynamically designed fabric elevating roof to create an even sleeker, wind-cheating profile. Either roof is grafted so neatly on the VW Transporter base that it is virtually impossible to see where the one ends and the other begins.

Low-profile or standard Auto-Sleeper solid-sided roof, Trooper is the ideal combination of reliable daily transport and go-anywhere holiday accommodation. Trooper's cab is given the full Auto-Sleeper treatment, including fitted carpet and upholstered, adjustable seats with cushioned headrests. VW's short wheelbase Transporter Kombi, supplied to motor caravan specification, drives and handles like a car — though not all cars come as standard with power steering and stereo cassette radio, such as fitted to the Trooper.

Comfort and security for a couple of rear passengers is assured by Trooper's transverse settee, which is fitted with a pair of inertia-reel lap-and-diagonal safety belts, while sliding windows provide ventilation whether on the move or on site. For a snack during a journey break, Trooper's adjustable table can be positioned next to the cab passenger seat, which can be turned to face into the dinette. Trooper's main table fits in front of the settee, which is itself conveniently adjacent to the kitchen unit.

Making the best use of interior space, Trooper's main appliances and storage units extend down the offside from behind the driver's seat. Easy-clean stainless steel is the right choice for Trooper's two-burner hob/grill and sink/drainer. Both are concealed beneath hinged, heat-resistant worktops when not needed, leaving the interior clean and uncluttered.

Overnight stops are simplicity itself. Both roof designs are easy to operate — up or down — by first operating quick-release securing catches to provide generous standing headroom. Trooper's solid-sided roof can be locked in a choice of three positions: raised, with two side panels in the closed position; with opposing sides open, or with them in a 'ventilation' position. With either roof 'down', it's still possible to enjoy the comfort of the lounge, and use the kitchen facilities.

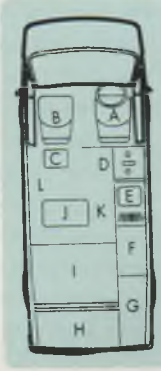
Trooper's settee is the key to comfortable sleeping accommodation for two, in a double bed which makes up very easily. A release catch allows the settee base to slide forward, its backrest then dropping level with the tailgate cushion. Reversing the operation to daytime seating is just as simple. An optional roof bed is available with the standard Trooper roof; with only two on board, this area doubles equally well as storage.

Privacy is assured by both window blinds and lined curtains. The blinds, with insect screens, are the latest from Seitz, with robust and durable fittings.

Generous provision is made for essential storage in a variety of cupboards and drawers, plus an Electrolux 230v/12v/gas refrigerator with freezer compartment. Additional larder storage is found in a top-loading locker adjacent to the drainer, where a pair of wire baskets facilitate loading or unloading. More storage is available in the settee's deep drawer unit, and in a concealed 'boot', with access through the tailgate, which also gives alternative access to Trooper's handy wardrobe. A locker below the wardrobe can accommodate up to two gas cylinders — 4.5kg and 2.75kg — in a sealed and externally vented compartment.

Also standard is mains electricity with RCD protection, supplying a 230v socket outlet, as well as the mains side of the refrigerator. Additional 12v appliances are supplied by the vehicle battery, which is monitored by a central control panel with a water-level gauge, fuses and isolator switches.

Trooper is the ideal combination of holiday accommodation and everyday runabout, with the carrying capacity to make you the envy of your friends and neighbours. And at the turn of the key, it's ready to take you wherever you want to go.



- **A** Adjustable cab seat.
- **B** Adjustable swivelling cab seat.
- **C** Offset dinette table.
- **D** Two-burner/grill cooker, with refrigerator below.
- **E** Sink with cupboards and drawers below.
- **F** Storage locker with removable baskets.
- **G** Dual access wardrobe with gas locker below.
- **H** Parcel shelf with storage below.
- **I** Dinette seat with drawer below.
- **H&I** Convert to double bed.
- **J** Table. Bed above **H**, **I&J** (not low profile).
- **K** Chemical toilet in special cup board.
- **L** Side sliding door.

Length 4705mm
Width Exc. mirrors 1940mm
Width Inc. mirrors 2190mm
Height 2100mm (std roof)
Height 1980mm (low profile)

www.vwT4camper.info - a useful website for owners and enthusiasts of VW T4 Transporter Campervans

TRIDENT

Trident combines everyday convenience with touring practicality and gives motor caravanners what they want, with the Auto-Sleeper quality they expect.

Volkswagen and Auto-Sleepers are, each in their own way, bywords for automotive excellence. Trident is one of the longest-standing examples of their co-operation. Like the Transporter Kombi, supplied to Auto-Sleepers in motor caravan specification, Trident developed over the years, reflecting customer needs in an ongoing process which results in improvements, year on year.

A car-like cab and driving characteristics are VW's main contribution to Trident's success, along with choices of fuel and power units, manual or, with some engines, automatic transmission — even syncro four-wheel drive.

Relaxed and confident driving are inspired by all-round independent suspension and disc brakes. The high driving position gives clear all-round vision from adjustable cab seats, comfortably reupholstered and with cushioned headrests.

Building on this refined power unit, Auto-Sleepers rely on tried and tested accommodation allied to fittings and appliances that motor caravanners want. Kitchen and main storage units are arranged down the offside, from behind the driver's seat to the rear wardrobe. A significant improvement forward of the wardrobe is the provision of an additional window, providing more daylight over the kitchen area.

Appliances are chosen for practicality and convenience: easy clean, stainless-steel two burner hob/grill and matching sink/drainer, plus an Electrolux refrigerator with freezer compartment operating on a choice of 230 volt,12 volt or gas. When not in use, appliances are neatly concealed beneath a pair of heat-resistant hinged worktops which, when closed, leave a clean, uncluttered interior.

Trident's kitchen offers a variety of storage, including a deep locker with a pair of wire baskets, easily removed for loading/unloading. A portable toilet is located in a floor-level locker.

More storage is provided in a deep overcab cupboard, while the roof cant rails have radiused profiles, are trimmed in leathercloth and have specially produced fluorescent lights.

Two extra passengers can be carried in comfort and safety on Trident's rear transverse settee, which is fitted with a pair of three-point inertia-reel seat belts. The original VW windows provide ventilation while on the move or at rest and are fitted with the latest Seitz blinds and insect screens, upgraded for strength and durability. Lined curtains add a touch of warmth, aided by well-placed 12v lighting. If extra ventilation is required, the top-hinged, double-glazed windows in the high-top are supplemented by a multi-position roof ventilator with night blind and insect screen.

Snacks or main meals can be taken at a choice of tables: the main dinette table locates in front of the settee for comfortable meals; for snacks, reverse the cab passenger seat and set up an occasional table. Both are conveniently placed in respect of the kitchen unit.

Night-time arrangements couldn't be simpler. Release a catch on the settee base, which slides forward allowing the backrest to drop into place to create a comfortable double bed. The settee base houses a large drawer.

Behind the settee, Trident's 'parcel shelf' and concealed 'boot' provide even more storage options, as well as alternative access to the wardrobe via the Transporter's tailgate. Located at floor level here, and vented to the outside, is Trident's gas storage compartment, housing up to one 4.5kg and one 2.75 kg Calor cylinders. A stainless steel roof rack, with optional access ladder, enlarges Trident's carrying capacity even further.

Mains electricity completes Trident's all-round specification, wired through a safety RCD to the refrigerator and 230v socket outlet. Trident's remaining electrical fittings are 12v, the supply sourced from the VW's on-board battery, which can be monitored by a console with switches and fuses, plus a fresh water level gauge.

High-top Trident combines everyday convenience with touring practicality. It gives motor caravanners what they want, with the Auto-Sleeper quality they expect.

- **A** Adjustable cab seat.
- **B** Adjustable swivelling cab seat.
- **C** Offset dinette table. Storage locker, chinaware and cup boards above.
- **D** Two-burner/grill cooker, with refrigerator below.
- **E** Sink with cupboards and drawers below.
- **F** Storage locker with removable baskets.
- **G** Dual access wardrobe with gas locker below.
- **H** Parcel shelf with storage below.
- **I** Dinette seat with drawer below.
- **H&I** Convert to double bed.
- **J** Table. Bed above **H, I&J.**
- **K** Chemical toilet in special cup board.
- **L** Side sliding door.
- **M** Stainless steel roof rack and optional ladder.

Length 4730mm
Width Exc. mirrors 1940mm
Width Inc. mirrors 2190mm
Height 2570mm

www.vwT4camper.info - a useful website for owners and enthusiasts of VW T4 Transporter Campervans

TOPAZ

The long-wheelbase Volkswagen Topaz offers 'coachbuilt' facilities in a high-top which can be used both for daily transport or as luxury holiday accommodation.

From its well-appointed cab to its full-width rear toilet/shower compartment, Topaz takes full advantage of Volkswagen's long-wheelbase chassis to provide a spacious, practical interior.

Soft furnishings for the coming season are a refreshing subtle green, featured on contoured cab seating and in the dinette/lounge. Cab seats are adjustable and fitted with cushioned headrests, and both can be reversed to face into the lounge to provide a variety of seating arrangements for dining, relaxing or entertaining.

Seating aft of the cab comprises an inward-facing settee and a single, forward-facing seat which has a metal-frame base and a three-point inertia-reel seat belt. The passenger seat may be swivelled to form an additional dinette.

Interior spaciousness is emphasised by generous headroom, a well-balanced decor and large windows aft of the cab, mainly original VW toughened glass and fitted with the latest Seitz blinds and flyscreens, reinforced for strength and durability. Lined curtains are also fitted to give that essential homely feeling to the interior. Windows in the high-top roof are acrylic double-glazed, top-hinged for maximum air-flow, and are also fitted with blinds and flyscreens.

Topaz makes full use of the LWB Transporter to provide split kitchen facilities aft of the lounge, so convenient at mealtimes. This arrangement also makes the best use of storage space.

Appliances for meal preparation are located on the nearside and comprise a two-burner hob/grill in stainless steel, with appropriate storage lockers above. Opposite is a matching base unit with a sink and drainer, plus more storage in high-level lockers and an Electrolux tilt-tolerant refrigerator with freezer compartment. Topaz would not be an Auto-Sleeper if the appliances were not neatly concealed beneath hinged, heat-resistant worktops which create a clean, uncluttered interior when closed.

A variety of drawers and cupboards in the kitchen base units provide additional storage, as well as overhead lockers. Seat bases, too, supplement this essential aspect of a well-designed motor caravan, offering drop-front access to one locker, and a drawer in another, making loading and unloading so much more convenient. A spacious locker over the cab will accommodate bedding, plus any overspill.

Topaz sleeps two as standard, although a four-berth option is available at time of order. As standard, beds are a choice between a pair of singles or a large double.

Both 230v mains and 12v fluorescent lighting keeps the interior bright, or can be adapted to suit the mood, with the aid of well-placed spotlights. An externally-flued blown-air heater with thermostatic control adds a welcome touch of comfort should the temperature fall.

Occupying a spacious area across the back, and partitioned by a cleverly-designed sliding door, Topaz's self-contained toilet/shower compartment, with fitted wardrobe, also provides 'en-suite' facilities that put some coachbuilt motor caravans in the shade, with additional access via the large tailgate. Fittings extend to Thetford's electric-flush cassette toilet and a removable, fold-down hand-basin, plus a toiletries locker.

In keeping with its luxury specification, Topaz features the latest Carver Rapide 230v/gas water heater, supplying both the kitchen and the washroom. Electrical supplies combine both 230v mains and 12v from a fitted leisure battery, which are connected to a split-charge device to ensure it is kept fully charged. Auto-Sleepers also fit a monitor panel for 12v appliances, with a fresh water tank level gauge.

Mains wiring is protected by a fitted RCD unit and miniature circuit breakers. Gas supplies are accommodated in a locker below the wardrobe, which will take a pair of 4.5 kg butane cylinders and is vented to the exterior.

Long-wheelbase Topaz extends the boundaries of high-top motor caravanning into the realms of the coachbuilt — while retaining that essential advantage of everyday transport.

A Fully adjustable swivelling cab seats.
B Side sliding door.
C Inward facing settee which converts to a longitudinal single bed using **A**.
D Forward facing seat which converts to a longitudinal single bed using **A**. Alternatively **A,C&D** combine to form a longitudinal double bed.
E Stainless steel sink and drainer with refrigerator below and lockers above.
F Two-burner grill/cooker and lockers above.
G Wardrobe with gas storage below
H Shower/toilet compartment.
I Thermostatically controlled heater.
J Offset dinette table.
K Table.

Length 5120mm
Width Exc. mirrors 1940mm
Width Inc. mirrors 2190mm
Height 2555mm

www.vwT4camper.info - a useful website for owners and enthusiasts of VW T4 Transporter Campervans

CLUBMAN

Appealing good looks and spacious, well-planned accommodation make the Clubman a 'must' for the serious motor caravanner.

Auto-Sleepers utilise Volkswagen's short-wheelbase Transporter chassis cab for their elegant Clubman — astonishing that such compact looks can hide such well-planned and spacious accommodation. Clubman's sleek GRP monocoque body is instantly recognisable as an Auto-Sleeper, styled to maximise interior space and to reflect the soft contours of the Volkswagen cab. The combination works perfectly, with the result that the Clubman is both handsome and luxuriously equipped.

Luxury starts in the cab, where Auto-Sleepers spare no expense in providing comfort to match the Volkswagen's car-like environment. Adjustable cab seats come as standard with cushioned headrests. Fitted carpet links the cab with the accommodation aft, and lined curtains run on recessed track.

In standard trim, the Clubman is designed for two, but a second double bed can be specified should the extra accommodation be required. Standard sleeping arrangements derive from a pair of settees — just right for a snooze, or for relaxing against their raked backrest cushions. At mealtimes, or when entertaining, you'll appreciate the Clubman's provision of two tables.

Whether your bedtime taste is for separate single beds or a giant double, the settees couldn't be easier to convert. For single beds, simply pull each settee out slightly to allow the backrest to drop into place, position the armrests and, with the addition of two cushions, the beds are complete. To make the double bed, simply pull the settees together.

Whatever your choice of beds, there's still unimpeded access to the wardrobe, washroom, kitchen, and the rear door. In keeping with Auto-Sleepers' high standards, the door is fitted with an automotive-style, anti-burst lock, inset step plus, of course, a footwell light. Auto-Sleepers certainly know how to make an entrance!

The Clubman's kitchen extends across the rear wall and is equipped with a stainless steel two-burner hob and grill, plus a matching sink/drainer. Clubman also benefits from an oven, conveniently located beneath the grill. The cooker and sink disappear beneath a pair of heat-resistant, hinged worktops when not required, leaving a neat, uncluttered kitchen area. The latest Electrolux tilt-tolerant 2cu.ft refrigerator with freezer compartment keeps food and drinks fresh, while the kitchen base unit and overhead lockers, with fitted chinawear for four, offer lots of alternative storage. Hanging space is provided in a generous wardrobe, while more is to hand in easy-slide seat-base drawers and wire baskets, plus lockers over the lounge.

New for 1998 is a one-piece overcab locker door, while the design of the furniture generally has been improved, if that's possible in an Auto-Sleeper, with the fitting of more gently-radiused hardwood door mouldings.

Clubman owners enjoy year-round motor caravanning, protected from the weather by the latest Carver 3600STC heater, with gas or 230v Fanmaster operation, supplying ducted warm air around the interior. Hot water to the kitchen and washroom is supplied by a Carver Rapide heater, also operating on gas or 230v electricity.

Gas supplies are housed in an exterior locker with space for up to two 7kg cylinders; electrical appliances, including both 230v mains and 12v socket outlets, are served by a choice of mains via the 230v hook-up and RCD protection, or from an on-board leisure battery with split-charge device and central control console.

The Clubman's rear corner washroom is both well-appointed and spacious, with new soft blue and white co-ordinated decor. Moulded, easy clean fittings include a shower tray with inset bound-edge carpet, removable handbasin and toiletries storage, plus a Thetford cassette toilet and a large dressing mirror.

Its appealing good looks and well-planned, spacious accommodation makes the Clubman a 'must' for the serious motor caravanner.

A Adjustable cab seats.
B Dinette converts to two longitudinal single beds or a transverse double.
C Tables.
D Wardrobe with thermostatically controlled heater and Fanmaster below.
E Shower/toilet compartment.
F Two-burner/grill cooker with oven below.
G Stainless steel sink and drainer with cupboard below.
H Refrigerator with freezer compartment and cocktail cabinet above.
I Cut-away cab with storage lockers.
J Gas storage.

Length 5320mm
Width Exc. mirrors 2170mm
Width Inc. mirrors 2420mm
Height 2770mm

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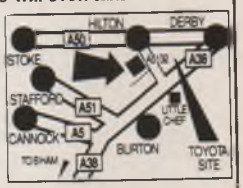

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MEDALLION

Auto-Sleeper's have combined all their years of experience in building luxury motor caravans in Medallion — and it shows.

Auto-Sleepers rose magnificently to the challenge set by the new Volkswagen LT, when they launched their all-new luxury coachbuilt just a year ago. Never content to stand still, Auto-Sleepers have developed this award-winning design even further, with improved interior lighting and a larger Electrolux RM 4233 'wheelarch' 70-litre refrigerator with freezer compartment.

The interior layout features the popular arrangement of twin seats on the nearside, facing a lengthways settee. It's an excellent choice — ask any Auto-Sleeper owner. Combined with a rear kitchen and corner toilet/shower compartment, Medallion makes the very best use of interior space.

Another master stroke of design, Medallion's versatile overcab area has proved to be a key attraction. Making full use of the cut-away cab roof, Auto-Sleepers cunningly provide the choice of overcab storage or an optional second double bed. The ingenious overcab bulkhead can be fixed vertically, with a hatch door opening on to cavernous storage; alternatively, the bulkhead can be used to bridge the overcab cut-out making provision for an optional double bed. Storage or double bed, the choice is yours.

Luxury combines with practicality in the Medallion's kitchen, where appliances extend to a Spinflo four-burner hob, grill and Stoves oven, all with electronic ignition and flame-failure. The matching sink and drainer comes with a hardwood chopping board.

The Medallion also caters for all storage requirements, in cupboards, drawers and overhead lockers. Hanging space is provided in a large wardrobe, with yet more storage space in the dinette/lounge, and in seat bases. Attention to detail is evident all around, but perhaps mostly in the easy-access settee base.

Interior storage is supplemented by a spacious exterior locker — bigger than its door suggests — plus a stainless steel roof rack and ladder. Rear corner steadies are fitted as standard.

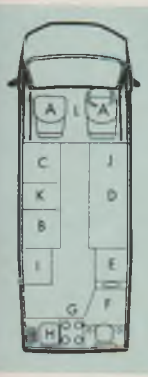
Sleeping arrangements comprise the popular Auto-Sleepers choice between a pair of wide single beds or a 'king-size' double, which takes up the entire lounge area but leaves the cab untouched. The smoothest of seat mechanisms ensures effortless bed-making. Occupants retain unimpeded access to the cab, kitchen, washroom and main exit door, itself the epitome of solid, precision-built construction.

Ease of use is the key to Medallion's success. The spare wheel is readily accessible, rear-seat belt buckles tuck away when not needed, while cab and rear speakers for the radio cassette make for entertaining journey breaks. Improvements to interior lighting bring additional spotlights, which are now switched in pairs.

Carver provide the comfort for out-of-season touring, in the form of their latest 3600STC heater with a choice of gas or 230v Fanmaster operation. Hot water to mixers in the kitchen and shower compartment is provided by the Rapide water heater, also operating on a choice of gas or 230v mains.

The Medallion's washroom offers space and the latest equipment, including Thetford's electric-flush toilet, plus a handbasin with its own taps and trigger-operated shower head. Towel rails and hooks for clothes are not overlooked in a washroom which is attractively co-ordinated in blue and white.

Auto-Sleepers have combined all their years of experience in building luxury motor caravans in Medallion — and it shows.



A Adjustable cab seats.
B Forward facing seat.
C Rear facing seat. B&C convert to form a longitudinal single bed.
D Inward facing seat forms a longitudinal single bed. B,C&D combine to form a transverse double bed.
E Wardrobe with thermostatically controlled heater and Fanmaster below.
F Shower/toilet compartment.
G Four-burner hob with cooker, grill and oven below.
H Stainless steel sink and drainer with cupboard below and lockers above.
I Tilt-tolerant refrigerator with cocktail cabinet above.
J Gas storage.
K Table.
L Cut-away cab with storage locker or optional bed.

Length 6155mm
Width Exc. mirrors 2230mm
Width Inc. mirrors 2670mm
Height 2890mm

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No motor caravan carries a bigger reputation.

A motor caravan with all the refinement and distinction you'd expect from Mercedes.

Just one glimpse of the aerodynamically flowing lines, the flared wheel arches and the ultra-modern interior confirms that this is a new benchmark in motor caravan design.

Based on the award-winning Vito, features include front wheel drive with rack and pinion power steering and independent suspension with disc brakes all round.

There is a choice of powerful two litre 130bhp petrol injection engine using the latest four valve per cylinder technology, or an economical and rugged 79bhp diesel. A five speed manual gearbox is fitted as standard, with the option of four speed automatic on the petrol model.

High efficiency halogen headlamps, foglamps, wipers with a large swept area, a safety steering column and safety cell construction all contribute to passenger protection which, in the design of the Vito, is paramount.

From the driving seat, it's so comfortable, spacious, refined and manoeuvrable that you'll think you're driving a Mercedes car.

Comprehensive instrumentation and warning lights provide all the information you need.

The dashboard mounted gearshift creates even more floorspace and a sliding door on either side provides superb accessibility.

Vito, quite exceptional for motor caravans. But then it is a Mercedes.

Mercedes-Benz

New Vito from Mercedes.

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MERCEDES BENZ

Sprinter and Vito — the dynamic duo from Germany's top motor manufacturer get the full Auto-Sleeper treatment.

Two quite distinctive models make up the 1998 range from Mercedes-Benz. Both the Sprinter and Vito are beautifully designed and engineered, and in the hands of Britain's leading motor caravan manufacturer, combine high quality with up-to-the-minute styling.

Behind the Sprinter launch was a massive £700-million investment by Mercedes-Benz covering the design, development and advanced manufacturing facilities for this exciting new range. Its good looks, aerodynamic styling and pedigree make Sprinter a base to which motor caravanners aspire. Add longevity, built-in safety features and economy of ownership, and it's clear that Sprinter has a lot to offer.

Power to the Sprinter's rear wheels comes from an all-new 120bhp 2.9-litre direct-injection turbo-diesel engine with five cylinders and intercooler for even greater efficiency. The standard transmission is a five-speed manual, with the option on this engine of a four-speed automatic. Power-assisted rack-and-pinion steering is another standard feature.

A comfortable ride combined with precise handling is assured by independent front suspension, including parabolic springs and front/rear anti-roll bars. Controlled braking derives from discs all round, plus the added reassurance of anti-lock braking. Rear-wheel drive coupled with the Sprinter's 'ASR' rear-wheel anti-slip system will be appreciated in off-road situations.

Four-way adjustable cab seats with headrests provide driver and passenger comfort, with the addition of height-adjustable seat belts and a multi-outlet heating and ventilation system. Instrumentation is clear and easy to interpret, while minor controls and switchgear all fall readily to hand. Access to and from the cab is unimpeded, with the floor-mounted gear lever positioned well forward and out of the way. Excellent forward vision is complemented by large cab door mirrors giving a clear view of the road behind.

The compact Mercedes-Benz Vito was introduced even more recently than the Sprinter. It's 15ft 6in body length combined with a transverse front engine driving the front wheels gives truly car-like driving and handling. Ride comfort is assured by all-round independent suspension.

Vito engines are a choice between a 79bhp normally-aspirated diesel and a powerful 130bhp petrol engine with four-valve technology, already proven on Mercedes-Benz cars. The petrol engine can also be specified with a four-speed automatic transmission.

Vito styling and engineering — as expected of Mercedes-Benz — are bang up to date, with flowing, wind-cheating lines and smartly flared wheel-arches. Safety is paramount, with such features as disc brakes all round, high-efficiency headlights and a safety steering column. Vito also features sliding doors on both nearside and offside.

Both Sprinter and Vito benefit from free first-year servicing, with major service intervals stretched to 27,000 miles. This, plus a computer-aided diagnostic system, means that owners spend more time touring than having the vehicle serviced. Standard Mercedes-Benz warranty period is 12 months, though the driveline warranty is extended a further 12 months and up to 125,000 miles. Mechanical breakdown cover up to five years is also available.

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MONTANA

The Montana's trendy good looks belie its pedigree, being both Auto-Sleeper and Mercedes-Benz.

Auto-Sleepers really pulled out all the stops in the design of their Vito-based Montana which, for the coming season, is available with either a stylish high-top or a low-line fabric elevating roof. Vito is the very latest compact base vehicle from Germany's premier automotive manufacturer, offering that ideal combination of holiday accommodation and everyday transport with car-like handling and ride comfort.

The Montana high-top's roof design, perfectly matched to the Vito's flowing, wind-cheating lines, offers generous interior headroom and storage. The high-top Montana is available in two-berth form only. Should additional accommodation be required, this is available in the Low Profile model. The fabric-sided elevating roof, when raised, allows a full-length mattress to be lowered, access to which is by a neat folding ladder. The Low Profile roof can be raised and lowered with ease — and even with the roof down, it's perfectly possible to prepare and enjoy a meal in comfort.

Compact at just 15ft 6in long, Montana succeeds in providing everything that today's motor caravanner demands, plus the space in which to relax in comfort.

Versatile seating — a hallmark of Auto-Sleepers — includes driver and passenger seat swivels, enabling separate dinettes to be created, using the two tables and individual rear seats. The latter have metal bases and are fitted with three-point inertia reel seat belts.

Behind the rear seat on the nearside, Montana's kitchen is equipped with a two-burner hob and grill, plus a sink and drainer — both in matching easy-clean stainless steel. Conveniently housed in a unit opposite is an Electrolux 2cu.ft refrigerator with freezer compartment, operating on a choice of 230v mains or gas, plus 12v when travelling. To supply the fridge, as well as Montana's numerous additional electrical appliances, a 230v mains hook-up with RCD is fitted, along with 12v supplies from an optional leisure battery. Gas supplies — up to two 4.5kg cylinders — are safely housed in a sealed compartment beneath the refrigerator, where a separate floor-level cupboard accommodates a portable toilet.

Excellent storage space centres around a large wardrobe with a locker above. The Montana's kitchen base unit also provides storage for food and utensils, while more bulky items can be stowed in rear seat bases. High-top Montana also benefits from a cavernous over-cab locker.

At night, the Vito's cab seats fold flat and combine with their respective rear seats to form a pair of comfortable single beds, up to 6ft 3in long (1.90m). Privacy is assured by lined curtains all round, plus blinds and insect screens for the rear double-glazed acrylic windows. Interior lighting is by recessed 12v fluorescent fittings, leaving no corner in the dark.

Whether in high-top or low-line forms, Montana is a stylish all-rounder, with options of blown-air heating and a battery charger to add to its already generous specification. Its trendy design, engineering pedigree and choice of roof styles make Montana that extra bit special.

- **A** Fully adjustable swivelling cab seats. **A&B** form a single bed or, with **A** swivelled, a twin dinette.
- **B** Front facing seat which converts to two longitudinal single beds.
- **C** Refrigerator with gas storage below and lockers above.
- **D** Wardrobe with chemical toilet below.
- **E** Stainless steel sink and drainer with cupboard below and lockers above.
- **F** Two-burner hob/grill with cupboard below.
- **G** Cab with storage locker above (high-top only).
- **H** Tables.
- **I** Side sliding doors.

Length 4735mm
Width Exc. mirrors 2030mm
Width Inc. mirrors 2220mm
Height 2550mm (high-top)
Height 1970mm (low profile)

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MEDALLION

Every inch an Auto-Sleeper, the Mercedes-Benz Medallion is even more sought after by the discerning motor caravanner.

Introduced only a year ago, the Mercedes-Benz Sprinter-based Medallion incorporates the very best of Auto-Sleepers' craftsmanship with that sought-after three-pointed star.

Its pedigree as a coachbuilt Auto-Sleeper is self-evident from the graceful, aerodynamic lines of the GRP monocoque body to the luxury and practicality of the interior. Here, the lounge/dinette features a new layout aft the cab which combines twin seats on the nearside with a settee on the offside. Plenty of space in which to dine, relax or entertain in style and comfort, and to enjoy music from the four-speaker stereo cassette radio.

Kitchen, washroom and wardrobe are sensibly grouped at the back, where the washroom occupies the offside rear corner and the kitchen extends across the remainder of the back wall. Appliances encompass a Spinflo four-burner hob, and Stoves grill and oven with electronic ignition and flame-failure, plus a matching sink and drainer with a hardwood chopping board. Adjacent to the nearside caravan door, another attractively designed base unit houses Medallion's larger Electrolux 'wheelarch' refrigerator which features three-way operation and a freezer compartment.

Storage abounds both in and above the kitchen base unit, and in the adjacent fridge housing. This is extended in aircraft-style roof lockers in the lounge, where seat bases will accommodate bulkier items. A generous wardrobe provides space for 'smart' clothes to hang.

More space for bulky items, e.g. bedding, is available in the Medallion's ingeniously designed overcab, where a single door opens on to a cavernous locker. The clever design comes with the facility to unclip the locker's front bulkhead, which then can be used to bridge the Sprinter's cut-away cab, creating the base for the overcab bed.

Medallion is also 'user-friendly' — for example the spare wheel is conveniently relocated under the floor at the back, where it's easily reached if needed. Other exterior features include a useful 'wet' locker on the nearside, more spacious than its access door suggests. Also standard is a stainless steel roof rack and ladder for equipment you don't want to store inside.

An essential part of the Medallion's specification is its GRP coachbuilt nearside door, a sturdy precision-fitting unit which comes with an automotive-style anti-burst lock, inset and slide-away step, grab handle and footwell lights. Interior lighting is through spotlights, both in the roof and on the underside of the pelmets.

Sleeping arrangements are a straight choice between a pair of single beds or a 'king-size' double which covers the entire lounge area, but doesn't need one single additional cushion. Whichever arrangement is in use, occupants retain free access to the cab and all facilities at the back, including the door.

Medallion's washroom fittings reflect its luxury status, with shower, electric-flush cassette toilet and a fixed handbasin. Hot water supplies here and in the kitchen are provided by the latest Carver Rapide 230v/gas water heater, while cold-weather comfort throughout is courtesy of the Carver 3600STC heater with gas or 230v Fanmaster operation, supplying ducted warm air around the interior. Important detail fittings in the washroom are twin towel rails and clothes hooks, and a generously sized acrylic mirror.

The Medallion is every inch an Auto-Sleeper, and that famous three-pointed star on the bonnet makes it all the more sought-after by today's discerning motor caravanner.

A Fully adjustable cab seats.
B Froward-facing seat.
C Rear facing seat. **B&C** convert to form a longitudinal single bed.
D Inward facing seat forms a longitudinal single bed. **B, C&D** combine to form a transverse double bed.
E Wardrobe with thermostatically controlled heater and Fanmaster below.
F Shower/toilet compartment.
G Four-burner hob with cooker grill and oven below.
H Stainless steel sink and drainer with cupboards below and lockers above.
I Tilt-tolerant refrigerator with cocktail cabinet above.
J Gas storage.
K Table.
L Cut-away cab with storage locker or optional bed.

Length 6155mm
Width Exc. mirrors 2230mm
Width Inc. mirrors 2670mm
Height 2890mm

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MEDALLION IN NORMANDY

The idea was to visit Giverny, former home of impressionist painter, Claude Monet; but Stuart Bladon found much more to explore in Normandy.

Chateau Beaumesnil was closed for lunch: how very inconsiderate! Oh well, if the French regard the hours from 12 to 2pm as sacrosanct, so could we. That's the advantage of being in an Auto-Sleeper — everything is with you. We found a lovely quiet setting by a field of poppies, and had our own lunch, returning at leisure to spend the afternoon wandering in the grounds and walking around the beautiful lake.

Our holiday turned out to be one of the best we have enjoyed in recent years, and by a strange chance the other one was in an Auto-Sleeper, too!

By way of a change we crossed the Channel using the new Stena high speed ferry, *Lynx*, from Newhaven to Dieppe. It proved a very efficient way to get to Normandy, avoiding the long-sea crossings from ports farther west. The big catamaran gives a very stable and comfortable ride, but there had been doubts about whether Medallion into *Lynx* would go.

"I think you've triggered the height alarm," said the loading officer at Newhaven as he checked the Medallion, confirming that all was well. It was only the aerial that had broken the beam. But we were always very aware that we needed 3 metres of height-clearance for safety. On one occasion we had to get a supermarket barrier — intended to keep lorries out — raised so that we could fill up at only £2 a gallon. This was one benefit of an exchange rate giving nearly 10 francs to the £1 while we were there. For the first time in many years we felt we were getting good value in France.

Dieppe proved a good starting point, and a pleasant, relaxed run of only 90 miles from our chosen first site. Camping Le Colombier, near Moyaux, north-east of Lisieux appealed so much that we booked in for several days, enjoying its quiet setting and large, heated swimming pool.

The Medallion is based on Volkswagen's LT 35 chassis with the excellent Audi-derived 2.5-litre direct injection diesel engine, with turbocharger and intercooler, driving the rear wheels through a five-speed gearbox. It's lively and untiring to drive, and doesn't seem to be struggling when cruising at around 65-70 mph. It can also put on a surprisingly good turn of acceleration when needed.

Power-assisted steering is responsive, and the advantage of rear-wheel drive is that the Volkswagen LT 35 has a very tight turning circle, making it much easier to manoeuvre in tight quarters. Also good is the provision of disc brakes both front and rear, with internal venting at the front. It does much for confidence to feel that you really can stop in a short distance whenever needed.

Over the next few days we enjoyed exploring the area between Caen and Rouen. After Beaumesnil came Chateau Vendeuvre's beautiful park and gardens. The owner has a great sense of humour, as we discovered in the Surprise Water Gardens.

Two luxury homes: the other one, in the background, is Chateau de Beaumesnil.

Worth the wait: fine lake and fountains at Beaumesnil.

Pause to admire the statue of a scantily clad lady, but watch out: suddenly a jet of water shoots from one of two strategic points on the statue. At other places, surprise jets of water squirt from birds, from the gutters of the little garden room, and from the mouths of the great tortoises. Children love it, and shrieks of laughter are heard as visitors get an unexpected shower. Vendeuvre is also well worth exploring inside.

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ABOVE: Tranquillity at Chateau de Canon.

CENTRE: Spacious and well-equipped site at Camping le Coiombier, near Lisieux; after the first couple of days we saved the cost of mains electricity.

RIGHT: In the magnificent floral park de la Colline aux oiseaux in the centre of Caen.

On the way back my wife, Jennetta, navigated the Medallion immaculately along minor roads which are much more interesting when you're just touring. Michelin's Sheet 231 is invaluable for exploring Normandy.

For a week we enjoyed touring the region, always finding something new and fascinating. At Falaise we wandered through the Avenue des Automats, depicting wonderful working models of people and animals in various scenes — a development of the moving miniatures we had seen at Vendeuvre.

High on any list of features which put this Auto-Sleeper ahead of other motor caravans are its big side windows. We appreciated them especially at Falaise. Parked high up and looking down on the river, we opened the windows to the horizontal and enjoyed a memorable view as well as a very welcome, refreshing breeze.

Our return to the site coincided with a concert of classical music, followed by free wine and snacks. That's the sort of bonus you might find at a good camp site. The owner also organised swimming competitions and a grand fireworks display to conclude Bastille Day celebrations. All these little extras, plus the lovely surroundings, helped make the £15 a night charge seem well justified.

Gradually we ticked off the list of places to visit, such as the magnificent Basilica at Lisieux and the beautiful walled gardens of Chateau Canon at Mézidon. They're all listed in the leaflet *Parks and Gardens of Normandy*, free from the French Government Tourist Office. Other pamphlets about the area can usually be picked up at camp site offices.

The main objective — Giverny, home of the famous impressionist painter Claude Monet — is down towards Paris. We were advised to be there early, so we moved to a new site, Domaine d'Inchelin near Mantes — chosen again because it boasted a swimming pool.

At 10.15 next morning the road past the Claude Monet museum and gardens was already busy with coaches. Admission of £3.50 each allowed us to explore Monet's cottage and then wander through the gardens to the beautiful lily lake, whose tricks of light and shade so fascinated and inspired him. But after the relative tranquillity of the less popular chateau visits, the crowds at Giverny were a bit of a contrast.

Next target was Chateau Gaillard at Les Andelys which, after a healthy walk, gives superb views over the Seine. Built in 1196 by Richard the Lionheart, King of England and Duke of Normandy, its worthy purpose was to bar the King of France's way to Rouen. Ah, those were the days, when the English told the French what to do!

There was much more to see, but with time running out we headed for Caen, little realising how much there is of interest there. The magnificent Memorial Museum, opened on the 50th anniversary of the Normandy landings, kept us enthralled for three hours, at the end of which we felt we would gladly go back another day and find much more to see.

Admission is free, but only to the main building. The descent into the historical labyrinth and captivating film-shows costs £8 each (free for war veterans). The split-screen film records activity in the run-up to the invasion, while the other half depicts life under German occupation, blissfully unaware of the storm about to break.

After such a long absence, it was a relief to get back to the Auto-Sleeper and find that it had not been broken into. The car park is patrolled and the vehicle had a self-arming security device, so it could not easily be stolen.

The nearby gardens of Colline aux Oiseaux readily mopped up another two hours, wandering about admiring the magnificent floral displays and the enormous rose garden.

After a long but superb day, we were a little late in the evening seeking a camp site; those along the coast seemed noisy and crowded. The answer is to head inland, where the choice is better and sites are less congested. We finished up sharing a huge field with only about 12 other tents and motor caravans. Facilities were basic, but that's the advantage of being in a fully-equipped luxury motor caravan — you can be entirely self-sufficient.

Light rain fell for the first time of our

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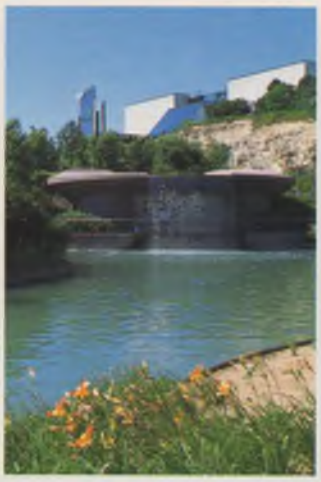

holiday, but we were snug and comfortable. The Medallion is an excellent compromise between compactness and ease of driving, yet providing ample space to move about the interior. All facilities are on board, including a very practical shower. Much of this versatility comes from the clever packaging, which makes plenty of storage space available. All our bedding, for example, stowed away in the spacious compartment over the cab.

The bed arrangements in the Medallion are the best we have come across. There's no rearranging of cushions and trying to fit everything together; just three seat units to be released and allowed to slide gently forward, turning into one of the largest beds I have ever measured — over 6ft wide and 6ft 5in long.

What does such an expedition cost, taking ten days to explore the finer parts of Normandy? Well, it's what you care to make it. We spent quite a lot on top-grade camp sites, because we enjoyed spacious ones with swimming pools. The cheapest we found was the unmanned, pay-and-display converted car park just outside Honfleur, the pretty seaside village beloved by so many artists, but now seething with tourists. We could have stayed in that attractive waterside site for any 24-hour period for only £3.

The Auto-Sleeper Medallion has full provision for plugging in mains power, of course; but if you are on tour each day, you don't need it. Interior lighting is unusually generous, with no fewer than four spotlamps each side, plus four more over the kitchen, two over the cooker and sink, and three in the shower compartment. Never before have I been able to read so easily in a motor caravan at night. The auxiliary battery supported all this without a flicker, saving the often quite high cost of on-site electricity.

We used hardly any motorways, so paid only £4 in tolls for the impressive new Normandy Bridge and adjoining short section of autoroute, and about £2 for the Pont de Brotonne on the way south. Progress on the ordinary roads was always more interesting and not much slower, as well as allowing stops to be made wherever we fancied.

ABOVE: Allow several hours for a fascinating tour of the war memorial museum at Caen — it's not to be missed.

The peaceful lily pond at Giverny, with its wonderful reflections, was an inspiration for Claude Monet.

ABOVE: By the water, and the old castle at Falaise, where the Avenue des Automats merits a visit.

LEFT: The beautiful walled gardens of Chartreuses are a special feature of Chateau de Canon.

CENTRE: The American garden of peace at the Caen war museum.

Overall fuel consumption was 27.2 mpg — an impressive figure for such a big vehicle, driven briskly, reflecting the efficiency of the engine as well as the smooth shape of the body. Wherever we stopped its sleek curves were frequently admired, contrasting with the rectangular, boxy shapes of other, mainly German, motor caravans. Jennetta became accomplished at giving conducted tours in capable French for people who showed interest.

Total distance from our home just north of London to Newhaven, all over Normandy and back, was only just over 1000 miles. By choosing the right places to buy fuel — usually, but not always supermarkets — diesel expenditure was only around £80.

The cost of the Newhaven-Dieppe Stena *Lynx* can be trimmed by avoiding peak times, which (for summer 1997) kept it within £200 standard return charge. What's that you say? A 6-metre limit for motor caravans on the Lynx? Well, the Medallion is only slightly over that, and I'm sure they won't fall out with you over a mere 155mm! I hope not, because this new fast ferry has opened up fresh possibilities for touring in Normandy. But the 2890mm height is the absolute limit.

Reflecting on the magnificent luxury which those Norman dukes built around them, I felt that we didn't do too badly, either, with all the comfort and convenience of our Medallion. And we had the advantage that we could take our luxuries with us wherever we went!

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John Page joined enthusiastic Auto-Sleeper owners at their annual Club & Company Rally, in Malvern

IN GOOD COMPANY

Whoever was responsible this year for the offering to the gods to guarantee good weather must have put a little water in the wine. A goodly measure of water came back as a reminder not to mess with the deities.

Fortunately, enough sunny periods allowed all outdoor events to continue and delight us all. Ironically, the first rally firework display attracted the heaviest downpour, so who said Zeus lacks humour?

Friday, midday, and the proceedings opened quietly, until we were in range of the nostalgic fairground organ, which few could claim to be too young to remember. Old friends and new parked in ranks that even a pilot at 20,000ft would recognize as an Auto-Sleeper gathering. A reassurance that Auto-Sleeper folk rally as they drive, in style.

Following the formal opening, the popular General Knowledge Quiz was lost again by those of us whose memory was mysteriously blunted by the fruitful grape, and won by others who kept to lemonade; or so they said. Credit to Neville Jelfs and Phil Bennett for a super mix of questions. Line-dancing was a pleasure for all those who love to dance but prefer to have someone point them in the right direction.

Saturday dawned humid and promising the odd shower. Nothing disturbed a continuous programme of entertainment from 10am to 11pm but, in the essence of this delightfully casual rally, with no compunction to do more than socialise with friends. The enormously popular Company Stores Shop amazed me with its extensive stock; recuperation from coffee or tea brought everything back to normal. Just in case we had forgotten which brand of motorhome had brought us all together — there they all were in a circle like pioneers defending against Red Indians. The new Medallion and Montana attracted the most attention and admiration.

The Eureka Jazz Band acquired a sinuous singer — complete with long flowing dress and loud hailer! Grown-up boys explained to their children the eternal magic of steam-driven machines; Travel of a different kind came from the hawks, falcons and owls flown so expertly by Simon and Alan of Abbey Falconry. The barn owl was new this year, and so perfectly formed to ghost noiselessly through the night.

Seminars on gas appliances by Carver and vehicle electrics by Auto-Sleeper technical staff were well attended by owners. The idea will almost certainly be repeated next year, with possibly an even more ambitious programme.

Anyone who thought Morris dancing was a male preserve was in for a shock when the Old Meg Morris Dancers twirled their skirts and banged their boots in time to the accordion. All agreed that the boys' fluttering hankies and clashing rolling pins might just lose out to these pretty girls, though I might have caught a glimpse of the Mystic One in the back row.

No disrespect to last year's Malvern Hills Brass Band, but the Stourport lot this year absolutely played their socks off to resounding applause. And, if that didn't get to your emotions then the New Zealand Maori Dancing had to — it was so obviously from the heart.

The rounders match — the company versus the club — was a hoot, with at least a dozen different interpretations of the rules; the most successful simply made them up as they ran.

Came the evening, dancing to the Benny Goodman style of "The Midnight Hour" band was the indoor choice, or hitching a ride in one of the tethered hot-air balloons the adventurous alternative. As the evening twilight deepened so the drama of the gas flames inside the balloons heightened. And finally, in the heaviest downpour of the day, the fireworks glittered; the hardy watchers dampened, but we all agreed this was the best yet.

On Sunday, the traditional Salvation Army service brought proceedings to a quiet close — goodbyes were exchanged and I drove home with memories of a weekend spent in good company.

LEFT: The new vehicle display and Company marquee formed the nucleus of the weekend's activities.

BELOW: The falconry display included, for the first time this year, Barney the Barn Owl.

CENTRE: The Stourport Brass and Silver Band — as evocative as ever, playing many old favourites.

FAR LEFT: Tethered hot-air balloon trips took place far into the evening.

LEFT: .... and so back home.

The 1998 Auto-Sleeper Owners Club and Company Rally will again be held at the Three Counties Showground, Malvern, from the 10th to the 12th July. Whilst this event is primarily for Club members, day visitors are welcome on Saturday, 11th July, when they will also be welcome to join the Auto-Sleeper Owners' Club.

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AUTO-SLEEPERBILITY

An Auto-Sleeper can give new freedom for the physically disabled, says Nick Harding.

I have met many physically disabled Auto-Sleeper owners and all agree: "We'd rather be in our Auto-Sleeper than at home." The reason? An Auto-Sleeper offers all the amenities of home, but closer at hand, plus the means to travel — in style.

Savings can be made if any of the users of your new Auto-Sleeper are registered physically disabled. Any adaptation — even wheelchair ramps — and the vehicle is zero-rated for VAT. Auto-Sleeper dealers should be able to offset such Motability allowances against finance repayments.

You can buy new or secondhand, safe in the knowledge that every Auto-Sleeper complies with the National Caravan Council Habitation Code for Motor Caravans. Auto-Sleepers convert on all leading base vehicles, to each manufacturer's standards. Most adapted Auto-Sleepers I've seen are high-tops, though any model could be altered to your needs.

Inside any Auto-Sleeper you'll find the means for virtually complete self-sufficiency. For example, the refrigerator could store medicines as well as keeping food cool. All have a cooker and many a hot water system. Your own shower and toilet can make all the difference. Auto-Sleepers' seats are among the easiest to convert to beds, and every new Auto-Sleeper has its own heating system. Finally, no car can compete on storage — special lockers of all shapes and sizes, plus a wardrobe, cope with everything from a wheelchair battery to walking sticks.

So contact Auto-Sleepers and take the road to freedom. They will be happy to put you in touch with a specialist local dealer.

Useful publications

Value Added Tax (VAT relief for people with disabilities) 1st August 1994, from HM Customs and Excise.

- *A brief guide to the Disability Discrimination Act, from Disability on the Agenda, Freepost, Bristol BS38 7DE.*
- *MMM Mobility, produced with the September 1997 edition of Motorcaravan Motorhome Monthly (Warners Group Publications Plc, The Maltings, West Street, Bourne, Lincolnshire PLIO 9PH).*
- *The Disabled Drivers' Association magazine Magic Carpet. ☎ 01508 489449.*
- *The Disabled Motorist is an annual publication from RADAR (The Royal Association Disability and Rehabilitation). ☎ 0171-250 3222.*

FRONT LINE

Auto-Sleepers work to put the case for motor caravans.

To owners, their motor caravans are a major investment as well as prized possessions. But to governments and Eurocrats they are a tiny fragment of the motor vehicle market. Making those people take notice is a constant challenge. In the front line is Auto-Sleepers, working with all the Industry to put the case for motor caravans.

Managing Director, Anthony Trevelyan, takes the lead as Chairman of the Society of Motor Manufacturers & Traders Motor Caravan Section and of the National Caravan Council's Motor Caravan Division. He is also Chairman of the Motor Caravan Industry Publicity Committee. Homologation Engineer, Denzil Brunning, serves on the European Caravan Federation Technical Committee, and on the 'Conseil Européene de Normalisation'. Engineering Manager, Steven Riley, sits on the NCC Technical Committee.

The EC is currently considering four major directives, including 'European Whole Vehicle Type Approval', under which a motor vehicle made in one EC country will be technically approved in another, introducing many complex rules for manufacturers.

A proposed End of Life Vehicle Directive, to encourage motor vehicle recycling, is a classic example of motor caravans being absorbed in a proposal which could easily have destroyed the industry across Europe. Anthony Trevelyan and Denzil Brunning worked with the SMMT, government and various European associations, explaining that motor caravans could not be included.

As a result, much of the directive will now be waived for motor caravans, but as Anthony Trevelyan points out, its intent will not be lost. 'We are very conscious of protecting the environment, but this directive could have endangered the Industry. We are continuing to examine ways in which we can move towards environmentally friendly methods of construction and use of materials as fast as we can.'

Five new European Standards relating to motor caravans are imminent — Ventilation, Gas Appliances, Habitation Design, 12v Electrical Systems and Payloads. When ratified, they will form part of the SMMT/NCC Code of Practice for the design of motor caravans.

The Industry is also dedicated to widening the appeal of motor caravans through the Motor Caravan Information Service. Advertising, attending major exhibitions like the Motor Show, running a press demonstration fleet, putting motor caravans on the Internet — all are part of the Information Service's year-round programme.

The Motor Caravan Forum comprises manufacturers, dealers, national clubs and editors of the specialist press, representing motor caravanners on issues affecting their leisure. In a campaign against the classification of motor caravans as commercial vehicles, letters were written to ministers and meetings held with officials, aimed at establishing a clear identity for motor caravans as leisure vehicles.

'This work takes up a great deal of time and resources,' says Anthony Trevelyan, 'but we are convinced it's a good investment for Auto-Sleepers' customers.'

www.vwT4camper.info - a useful website for owners and enthusiasts of VW T4 Transporter Campervans

▲ Deep into Poland — a Talisman at the Szczsawnica camp site.

▲ I'll take the high road and ...

▲ Where's the rally? Will anyone arrive?

▼ On reflection, it's a Duetto.

▲ At the end of every rainbow — a Trophy at Onich.

▲ Cyprus-the Legend of Aphrodite

▲ In deepest Spain with a Duetto.

▲ A Clubman at Skogafoss, south-west Iceland, close to the Arctic Circle.

▲ Ideal for mains hook-up, perhaps.

▲ In the shadow of Mount Fuji, a Clubman in Japan.

Thanks to members of the Auto-Sleeper Owners' Club for submitting the photographs on this page.

www.vwT4camper.info - a useful website for owners and enthusiasts of VW T4 Transporter Campervans

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Bromley Motor Caravans is a family business established 25 years and one of Auto-Sleepers longest established dealers. Our commitment to providing not only quantity of choice but also quality and real value for money goes back a long way. There's a lot to see at Bromley: including new models from Auto-Sleeper Europe's leading manufacturer at prices that are hard to beat, together with the finest selection of used Auto-Sleepers available anywhere, and up to 150 Motorhomes to choose from. We can offer you the best part exchange allowances - and our friendly staff offer professional advice on all aspects of choosing your Motorhome. For many years we've been recognised as Britain's leading specialist in vehicle conversion for the disabled. We also provide a Personal Export and Tax free Sales Service and a choice of finance packages to suit most needs. The purpose built supermarket accommodates a comprehensive range of accessories and spares, our specialist motorhome workshops are able to undertake any task. We also offer national delivery and a worldwide mail order service. Take a look at the map - you'll see we're just a few minutes from Junction 1a of the M25 and the new Dartford Bridge, easily accessible from the M1, M25, A1M and M11 and the entire motorway network. So, to guarantee your great deal and superb aftersales service, 'phone for our stock list and brochure or come and see us at Belvedere - we're open seven days a week.

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