



Pastiche front seating from 2009



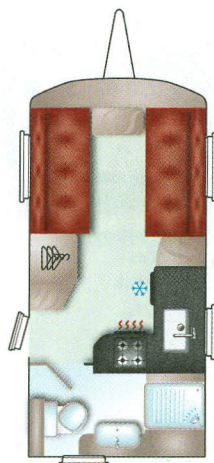
Rear view of a 2007 Hurricane

YOUR

Coachman Pastiche 470/2 v
Elddis Crusader Hurricane

VIEWS

Rod Shuttleworth analyses member feedback on a pair of upmarket two-berths



Coachman Pastiche 470/2 floorplan

The footprint of a caravan is determined more than anything else by the number of beds it contains.

Eliminating berths for sleeping humans naturally provides more space elsewhere – in kitchens or washrooms, for example – while reducing the overall length and (theoretically) weight of the caravan.

This month our members cast a critical eye on a brace of upmarket two-berths, the Coachman Pastiche 470/2 and Elddis Crusader Hurricane. Both underwent major revamps for 2012, but our survey mainly focuses on the pre-2012 versions.

LIVING ACCOMMODATION

The post-2012 Elddis Crusader Hurricane (we'll refer to it as 'Crusader' for simplicity from now on) features a novel 'J'-shaped seating area. The couple of members who brought this new version to the party were impressed with this layout, but the model under our microscope came with the more common arrangement of a pair of inward-facing settees, as did the Coachman Pastiche.

Both models were appreciated for their long, comfy cushions as well as the small fold-out tables which several owners found more than adequate for two people, bringing out the big table only when entertaining guests.

Both scored over 90% for the practicality of their layout in daytime use as well as for their curtains and blinds. Overall ventilation was another 90%+ in both cases, but the Pastiche was rated as significantly the better preventer of draughts, scoring 86.7% to the Crusader's 66.7%. The Crusader also scored a middling 73.3% for cold-weather insulation, no match for its rival's 86.3%. While both impressed for their lighting and flexible dining options, the Pastiche cemented its win in this category by significantly out-gunning the Crusader in the important storage space stakes.

KITCHEN

While the seating and dining arrangements may be all but identical, our contenders take different approaches to the kitchen layout, Elddis opting for a split-facility set-up while Coachman went

for an L-shape. Both are sensibly located over the axle, with one owner pointing out that the Pastiche's 'L' places the heavy cooker directly on the centre axis – clever.

Both layouts won friends for their ample elbow-room and generous worktop space, though the Pastiche offers a little more counter-top close to the hob.

On the other hand, the location of the microwave (an addition to both caravans in later models) was a little high for all but the tallest of owners in both camps, making the wearing of hot leftovers a distinct possibility.

The Crusader seems to have marginally the better sink and oven according to our members, but the Pastiche stole its lunch in virtually every other kitchen-related category – including layout, storage, workspace, refrigerator and hob (though owners of both models would have appreciated at least one electric ring to save on gas when plugged in). We were told the Pastiche's L-shape arrangement "just works", while the last word in this section goes to another happy Coachman owner: "Move over Jamie Oliver, anything is possible in here!"

TECHNICAL

RATINGS



	Coachman (2009)	Elddis (2009)
Internal length	16ft 5in (5m)	15ft 3in (4.65m)
Overall length	22ft 3in (6.78m)	21ft (6.39m)
Width	7ft 5in (2.26m)	7ft 6in (2.29m)
Headroom	6ft 5in (1.96m)	6ft 3in (1.91m)
MRO	1,282kg (25.2cwt)	1,208kg (23.7cwt)
MTPLM	1,440kg (28.3cwt)	1,450kg (28.5cwt)
Berths	2	2
New (ex wks) price	£15,370	£15,695
Caravan Club insurance quote	£171.52 (2008 model, sum insured £8,500)*	£188.38 (2008 model, sum insured £9,500)*

Above figures from manufacturers' literature

AVERAGE USED PRICES

Year	Coachman	Elddis
2008	£7,038	£7,424
2009	£8,088	£8,775
2010	£8,988	£9,800

OWNER PROFILE	Coachman	Elddis	Avg
Age	65	65	65
Driving experience yrs	47	46	47
Towing experience yrs	29	26	28
Mileage	6,928	7,919	7,424
No. of contributors	35	15	Total 50

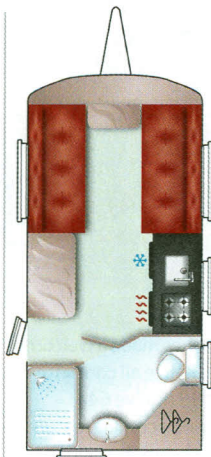
* Standard 5Cs market value cover based on four years' no claims discount. £100 excess, £500 contents cover and a 10% discount for a tilt activated or corner steady sensor alarm. Subject to terms and conditions and Insurers' acceptance of the Risk. The Caravan Club Ltd is Authorised and Regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Call 01342 336610 for further details and to obtain a quote.

Info: coachman.co.uk • elddis.co.uk

SLEEPING

The Crusader scored a rare win for the practicality of its night-time layout, managing 90.5% to the Pastiche's 82.9%, though both seating areas convert to either two singles or one large double bed.

While both were generally considered comfortable and spacious, ("better than in our bedroom at home" said one very satisfied Pastiche owner), some owners in both camps were frustrated about conversion from living/dining room to bedroom. The Crusader's bed slats in particular were criticised for a tendency to jam in, or fall out of, their runners – one enterprising owner had solved the problem by placing a 1/2in plastic strip along the side of the runner to keep them in place.



Elddis Crusader Hurricane floorplan



A 2009 vintage 535/4 from the Pastiche range



A 2007 Crusader Hurricane

WASHROOM

Perhaps the biggest beneficiary of the space freed up by having only two beds is the washroom, hence the stellar 90%+ scored by both caravans in this category.

Both facilities are at the back, and while the Crusader's seems a little larger on paper, both won praise for their spaciousness. Each caravan scored 95% for floor area and headroom but the Pastiche once again edged ahead, this time for the operation of the cassette toilet and in-washroom cabinet/locker space.

There were isolated complaints in the Crusader camp concerning a lack of shower-tray support and a small basin, while some Pastiche owners could also do with a larger basin, frosted glass in the window and a more usefully-placed mirror. But these are mere quibbles in the face of such high scores.

SERVICES

Despite some respectable scores, owners of both caravans were quick to point out a few flaws in the plumbing and electrics.

The Pastiche lost points for not having an "on" light for the immersion heater, "flimsy" 13A sockets (though there are apparently plenty of them) and a "poorly-designed" water-pump inlet. The Crusader's pump was described as "unpredictable", though the consequent spirty hot taps may be down to a particular pump and/or heater in that particular caravan.

The Pastiche's victory (again) in this section is largely down to the space heater with scores of 84.3% and 90.2% for heat output and reliability to the Crusader's 71.1% and 68.9%.

ON THE ROAD

Theoretically, the reduction in size allowed by having only two berths should bring about a comparable reduction in weight. But high-end caravans demand high-end fittings and these alone can add several hundred pounds (lbs), so both these babies carry MRO (Mass in Running Order) weights in excess of

1,200kg with MTPLM (Maximum Technically Permissible Laden Mass) readings of 1,440kg to 1,450kg.

The majority of towcars in the survey were of a size and type to cope easily with such weights, so stability scores of 97.1% (Pastiche) and 93.3% (Crusader) are hardly surprising. The Pastiche lead the way again though with 94.3% and 94.1% for brakes and suspension (damping) to the Crusader's 82.2% and 84.4%.

QUALITY AND RELIABILITY

Most Pastiche owners were delighted with the solidity of their caravans, epithets like "dependable", "high standards" and "excellent build quality" tripping gaily off their tongues. One or two begged to differ, and there was a fairly substantial list of reported faults (including a gas regulator failure, disintegrating tyres and some water leaks), but an overall quality and reliability score of 90%+ suggests the majority of owners were more than satisfied.

Things were a little less rosy over in the Crusader's corner with some disappointed owners and less-than-perfect scores such as 68.9% for the plastic mouldings and 77.8% for the doors, windows and roof-lights. Even the Crusader's 81% for the quality of its body exterior, walls, roof and paintwork was no match for the Pastiche's 90.5%. The Crusader's list of faults included water ingress and damp, loose fittings and trim, and self-detaching cabinets. ■

VERDICT

If you're shopping for a good, used two-berth, either of these caravans is a potential winner thanks to acres of living space, upmarket features, a workable kitchen and spacious washroom. But the Coachman Pastiche's L-shaped kitchen, excellent heating, ventilation and insulation, as well as impressive build quality delight the majority of its owners and give it top place on this month's podium.