

Twin test

What will win us over in a choice of twin-fixed-bed vans: weight or looks? We find out

COACHMAN Pastiche 565/4



Berths	4
Shipping length	7.46m
Width	2.32m
Overall height	2.69m
MIRO	1480kg
User payload	160kg
MTPLM	1640kg

Price
£21,145

LUNAR Clubman SB



Berths	4
Shipping length	7.36m
Width	2.28m
Overall height	2.65m
MIRO	1285kg
User payload	155kg
MTPLM	1440kg

Price
£20,395

THE FIXED TWIN single bed layout needs little introduction. In the space of a couple of seasons, it has taken off and is now available in all sectors of the market. It's ostensibly a layout for couples who are happy to trade a fixed double for unimpeded access to the washroom, but there's more to this floor plan than meets the eye.

It's also good for families with children who are too tall for bunk beds or who don't want to share with a sibling. Mum and Dad can take the front double while the kids each get a rear single bed.

Naturally, compromises are made. With two fixed-length beds to accommodate, the designers had to be flexible with the lounge,

kitchen and end washroom. And on single-axle vans like these, every centimetre counts.

The tourers on test are premium products. Lunar's Clubman is one to aspire to, offering sophistication without the weight penalty. The revamped Coachman Pastiche

range was one of this season's surprises, offering stylish exteriors and high-quality interiors.

Prices are competitive, but the Clubman weighs significantly less. Will that win it for the Lunar or is the Coachman's showroom appeal worth the extra towing cost?

Turn over for full reviews, our verdict and specifications »

OUR
BEST
BIT

COACHMAN Pastiche 565/4



Showroom » Twin test



The washroom sports home-from-home comforts, such as a curtain



Shower and vanity cubbies will hold all your lotions and potions



Workspace is at a premium in the kitchen, but fit and finish are excellent



Good

The excellent lounge and washroom make this a van to aspire to. Its distinctive exterior is complemented by an attractive interior and clever design.



Bad

The restricted kitchen and storage space and blown-air heating won't please everyone at this price. At 1640kg fully laden, it needs a hefty towcar.

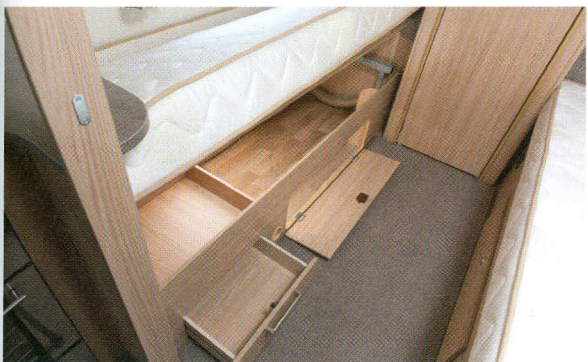
“Coachman's execution of the front sunroof takes it to the next level – this is wider and frames the view better”



Access to the gas locker is good, despite the hatch's size



The twin single beds are a good size and are well sprung



Under-bed storage is good, but the bed lid fouls the worktop



FROM TOP The control panel is over the door. An outdoor flap leads under a fixed bed



Among the home comforts in the Pastiche are nets with the bedroom curtains

COACHMAN

Pastiche 565/4

Pitch and set-up

8
10

The Pastiche 565/4 is built on an Al-Ko chassis with AKS hitch stabiliser, buttonless handbrake and the ATC anti-snaking system. The front locker isn't all that tall, but accessibility is good. The hatch is secured by locks at either end.

Bolts for the front steadies are easily accessed from the sides; cuts in the rear panel simplify finding the other pair. Hook-up and water connections are on the offside, and the drain outlets are further back.

The one-piece entrance door is held open by a magnet rather than a catch. The control panel is above the door, and the mains consumer unit is under the offside seat.

Lounge

9
10

It's difficult to dislike this area. Swift Group may have pioneered the front sunroof, but Coachman's execution takes it to the next level – this is wider (1.37m) and frames the view outside better. Consequently, light floods in, showing off the pleasing fabrics and upholstery well.

The seats are firm and comfy, but more than four adults will feel squeezed. The centre chest has three drawers and an elegant slide-out top. Other touches include speakers that face into the lounge, cassette blinds to all windows and LED corner spotlights. Two blown-air outlets and a mains socket complete the specification.

Kitchen

8
10

Space in this small galley has been used intelligently and equipment levels are high. The cooker has three gas burners, an electric hotplate, and a separate oven and grill. A digital-control Thetford fridge with separate freezer compartment sits under the sink, and a branded microwave is behind an overhead locker door.

As there's no dresser opposite the galley, worktop is limited. Lids to the cooker and the combined sink and drainer will help, and a dinner plate's width of worktop is to the right of the cooker.

An LED strip above the sink provides task lighting, and cooks will applaud the rooflight with its built-in extractor fan.

Washroom

9
10

Coachman washrooms seldom disappoint and this one is no exception. A domestic-style door, cord-operated light and a curtain add sophistication, while the deep basin and capacious vanity unit are very practical.

The sealed shower cubicle has a cubby for lotions and its own rooflight. The single-piece door is hinged to the left.

With 60cm between the basin and the entrance, there's enough space to dress, plus clothes hooks. A Thetford swivel toilet backs on to the offside wall, and the toilet roll holder is well within reach.

Beds

8
10

The nearside rear fixed bed measures a respectable 182.5cm x 73cm, the offside 187.5cm x 75cm, while their sprung mattresses provide firm support. An LED spotlight is above each headboard, and there's a TV mount and aerial point at the foot of the nearside bed. A mains socket on the nearside bed base, and a mirror on the wall above it, suggest this is the place to plug in a hairdryer. The gangway between the beds is 65cm.

In the lounge, adults will struggle to use the seat benches as single beds, but the double bed is 209cm long and made up in seconds by pulling a slatted frame across from the offside seat base.

Storage

8
10

The yawning spaces under the fixed beds can be loaded from the top or the front, and there's external access under the nearside bed. There is room for a mattress under the nearside lounge seat.

The lounge gets two overhead lockers on each side and corner cubbies flanking the sunroof. Six overhead lockers in the bedroom and a 59cm-wide wardrobe with two shelves underneath will easily hold a couple's holiday clothing. The washroom has seven cubbies, in addition to the vanity unit and a cupboard above the toilet.

Kitchen storage is restricted. There are only two lockers and a small cupboard under the sink.

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LUNAR Clubman SB

Lounge lockers will swallow plenty of kit. The stereo lives in the right-hand front locker

Upholstery is high quality and comfortable, although it may be understated for some tastes

The panel at the foot of the nearside seat won't let you dangle your legs off the end while watching TV



The radiator warms the washroom more evenly than blown-air heating



The sealed shower and one-piece door offer domestic-style comfort



The kitchen is narrow, but the worktop is deep INSET A night light is below the oven



Good

Buyers of the Clubman SB will get a lot of a caravan for not much weight. Lunar has packed plenty of mod cons into a package weighing under 1500kg.



Bad

There's little space to spare in the washroom between the toilet and shower. Compared to its rivals, the Clubman's classic lines look a tad old-fashioned.

"Both fixed beds are 1.86m long, the mattresses are firm and there's an LED spotlight over each headboard"



The gas locker is easily accessed and its capacity is excellent



The rear room has comfy beds and good overhead storage



Drawers add easy-to-use storage space to the wardrobe



Illuminated overhead kitchen lockers were new for 2012's SB

LUNAR Clubman SB

Pitch and set-up

8
10

Al-Ko underpinnings are the order of the day for the Clubman, which has a buttonless handbrake, AKS hitch stabiliser and the ATC anti-snaking system. A single lock opens the spacious gas locker.

The front steady bolts are easily reached from the sides; those at the rear have no guide tubes and force you to crouch to find them.

Connections for the electric hook-up and water are on the offside, and the services drain is further back, just rear of the axle.

Just inside, to the left of the two-piece door, you'll find the master switches. Below these are the controls for the Alde heating and hot water. The mains consumer unit is on the offside seat bench.

Lounge

7
10

Light-toned cabinetwork and upholstery lend the living space an airy feel, which is just as well, because there isn't a lot of space.

The centre chest has two drawers, a cubby and a slide-out top for cups of tea. Four adults will fit around the folding-leaf table at mealtimes, but they'd have to be on quite familiar terms. The seats are well sprung and comfortable, though, and the gangway is 65cm.

The windows and large rooflight will keep the area bright during the day, with LED and ceiling lights for the evening. The thick curtains are practical, not just decorative.

Kitchen

7
10

With just under 1m of open space across the middle of the caravan, the SB's galley feels very roomy. It's well equipped, too, with a dual-fuel hob married to a separate oven and grill. A digital-control Thetford fridge sits under the sink, and a microwave oven perches at head height, to the left of a run of illuminated cupboards.

The circular sink is 25cm deep and takes a clip-on drainer; a sink cover and cooker lid add to the limited worktop. There's a bit of extra space on the dresser top opposite, but not with a TV there.

Task lighting comes courtesy of an LED strip under the overhead lockers, supported by a window on the caravan wall and a rooflight.

Washroom

7
10

The washroom uses its width well, but it's not very deep – a couple of centimetres of body length have been saved here. Stand at the basin, turn through 90° and you'll find movement restricted.

Home-from-home comforts include a domestic-style door, laundry basket, cord-operated light and central heating radiator. A fully lined shower cubicle takes up the nearside corner. Natural light is plentiful, thanks to a rooflight and side window.

On the debit side, there are no clothes hooks, and the toilet roll holder is to the right and above the toilet – not very user-friendly.

Beds

8
10

Both fixed beds are 1.86m long, so all but the tallest adults will get a good night's sleep here. The mattresses are firm, the headboards are easy on the eye and there's an LED spotlight over each.

Up front, each lounge seat measures 1.5m, long enough for younger children to use them as single beds. The double bed measures a substantial 2.11m long, but the intrusion of the centre chest robs it of width. It makes up using pull-out slats, which run on a track so they won't come adrift.

Storage

8
10

As you'd expect, the SB will happily accommodate plenty of kit under each fixed bed. These spaces can be loaded from inside or out.

Six overhead lockers look down on the lounge, one of which loses space to the radio/CD/MP3 player. The nearside seat bench has enough room to stow bedding.

Kitchen storage space is at a premium, because the microwave robs some overhead locker space. Further down, there's a cupboard with a cutlery drawer and two shelves, while the dresser opposite has two deep shelves.

The caravan's wardrobe is mounted at the end of the nearside bed and sits atop three shelves and a cubby. Extra space for clothes is available in two overhead lockers on each side of the bedroom.

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Verdict

In a straightforward comparison of two aspirational tourers, it would be reasonable to expect that the lighter of the two, by a whopping 200kg, would take top honours, especially when it's £750 cheaper and has the desirable Alde wet central heating system.

But it's not as clear-cut as that. The vans on test play to the strengths of each brand. The Clubman's design tweaks for this season are accompanied by a year-on-year weight reduction of 45kg, reinforcing Lunar's credentials as the go-to brand for low weights.

The Pastiche 565/4, on the other hand, has a different appeal. Buyers prize the marque's bomb-proof build quality and comfortable interiors. Coachman caravans aren't known for their low weights; in fact, the average weight of the facelifted 2012

Pastiche range has increased by 0.5% on 2011 models.

The Coachman is heavier than the Lunar by some margin, and will require the likes of a small 4x4 to tow it. The higher towing costs won't suit all buyers, but if the Pastiche is used as a seasonal van,

Coachman Pastiche 565/4

Price £21,145 Berths 4 MIRO 1480kg User payload 160kg MTPLM 1640kg Awning size 1038cm

Practical Caravan
Winner

Standard equipment

Construction

Sidewalls Bonded aluminium sandwich, single-piece skin

Roof Bonded aluminium sandwich

Front panel Full-height, acrylic-capped ABS

Rear panel Full-height, acrylic-capped ABS

External equipment

Al-Ko chassis. AKS stabiliser. ATC trailer control system. Shock absorbers. Alloy wheels. Buttonless handbrake. Spare wheel and carrier. External gas/mains output. LED awning light. Awning warmer. Directional TV aerial. Satellite dish connection point. Single-piece entrance door with flyscreen

Heating

Truma Combi boiler with programmable timing system

Lounge

Flyscreens and blinds to all windows. Drop-in carpets. Sunroof. Heki rooflight. LED 'mood' and spotlights. Radio/CD/MP3 player

Kitchen

Thetford 107-litre digital-control fridge/freezer. Three-burner gas hob with electric hotplate. Separate oven and grill. Microwave. Omnivent

Washroom

Electric-flush Thetford C-260 swivel-bowl cassette toilet. Separate shower

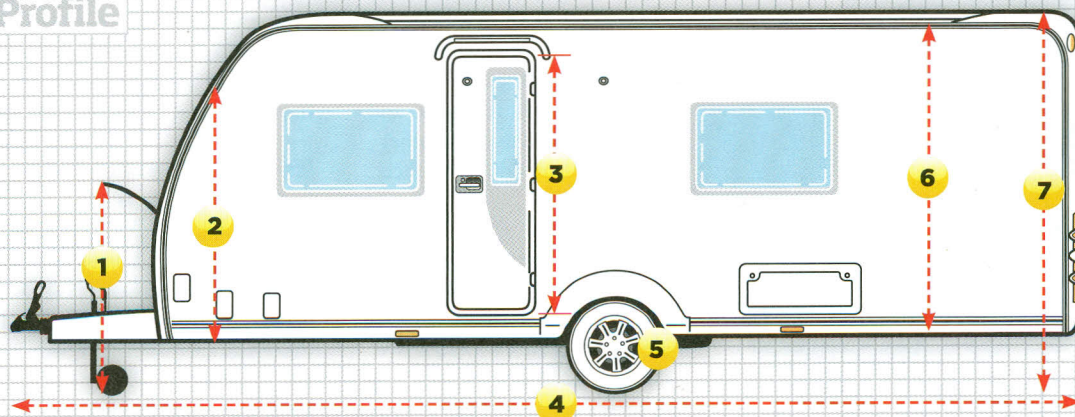
Security

CRIS number etched to all windows and chassis. Receiver for Al-Ko Secure wheel lock. Alarm

Warranty

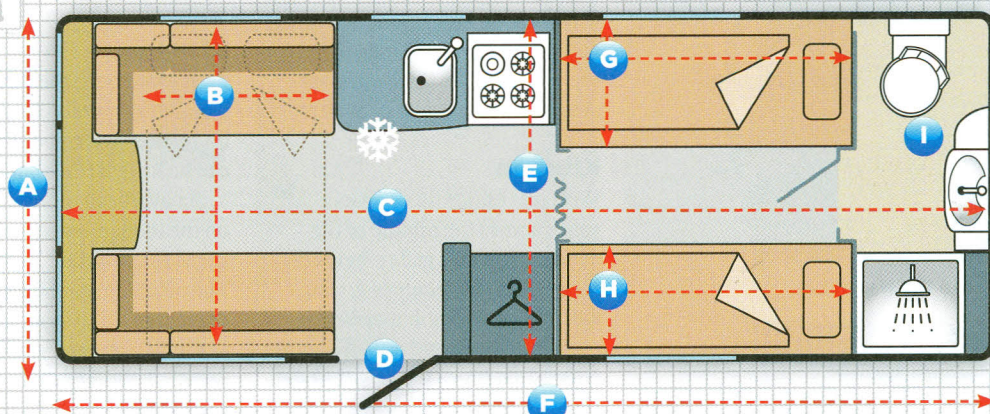
5 years parts.
6 years water ingress

Profile



- 1 Gas locker height 1.34m 2 Headroom at locker 1.8m 3 Door height 1.67m 4 Shipping length 7.46m
5 Tyres Size 195/70 R15 C Load index 104/102R Pressure 65psi 6 Interior height 1.92m 7 Overall height 2.69m

Plan



- A Overall width 2.32m B Front double bed 2.09m x 1.02m C Interior length 5.79m D Door width 0.55m
E Interior width 2.17m F Body length 6.47m G Rear beds Offside 1.88m x 0.75m H Nearside 1.83m x 0.73m
I Toilet legroom 0.7m

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Factory-fit options

Al-Ko Secure wheel lock (£250). DVD playback (£300). Soft furnishings change (£250). Wrap-around seating (No charge).

then this disadvantage diminishes. And it's certainly geared up for this kind of application, with super-pitch connections, external gas and power points and a blown-air outlet to the awning.

We'd love to be sensible and favour the van that weighs less,

and costs less to buy and tow, but in the metal the Coachman is a tourer you could fall in love with. If the fixed-twin-bed layout tops your shopping list and you want one of the best executions of it, you will have no regrets about investing in a Pastiche 565/4.

We say



Claudia Dowell says

Lunar has shaved 35kg off the SB's MTPLM, which widens the range of possible towcars. But it failed to extend the kitchen worktop



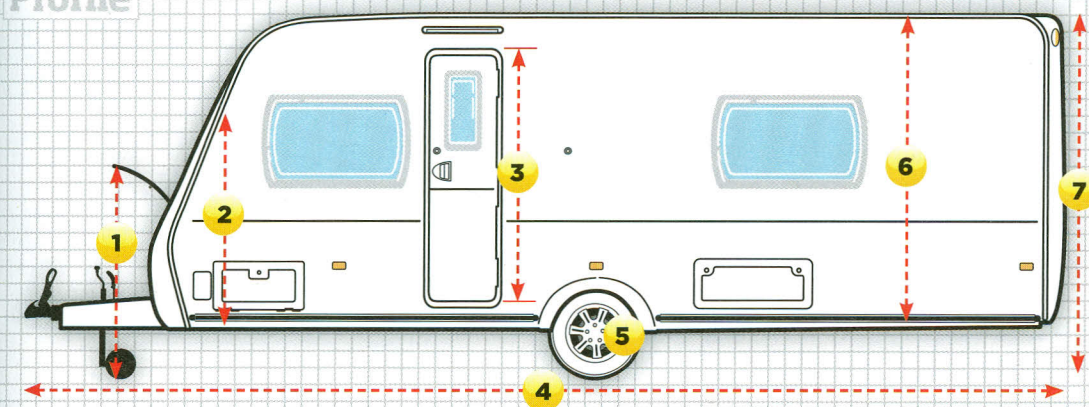
Nigel Donnelly says

Clubman is Lunar's best range, but leave the weights aside and, in a straight comparison, the Lunar's plain looks really count against it

Lunar Clubman SB

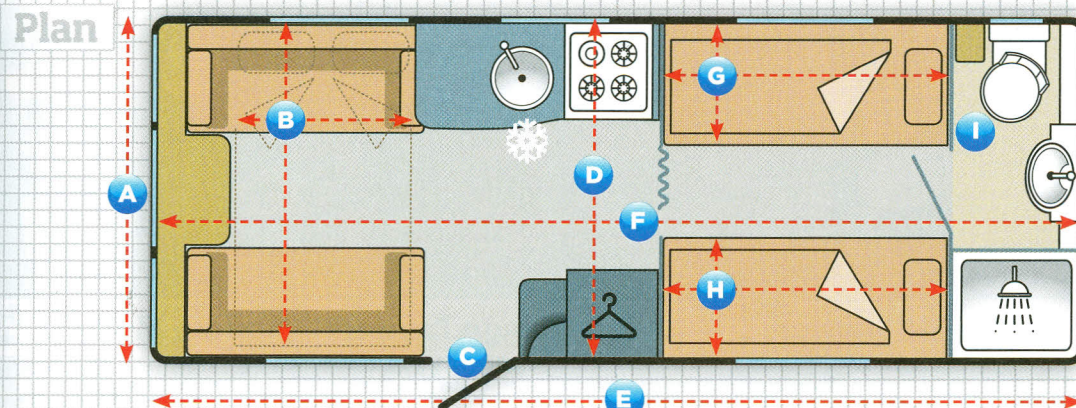
Price £20,395 Berths 4 MIRO 1285kg User payload 155kg MTPLM 1440kg Awning size 1005cm

Profile



- 1 Gas locker height 1.35m 2 Headroom at locker 1.86m 3 Door height 1.62m 4 Shipping length 7.36m
5 Tyres Size 185 R14 C Load index 104/102N Pressure 65psi 6 Interior height 1.94m 7 Overall height 2.65m

Plan



- A Overall width 2.28m B Front double bed 2.11m x 1.22m C Door width 0.51m D Interior width 2.17m
E Body length 6.3m F Interior length 5.78m G Rear beds Offside 1.87m x 0.78m H Nearside 1.87m x 0.78m
I Toilet legroom >80cm

Standard equipment

Construction

Sidewalls Bonded aluminium sandwich

Roof Bonded aluminium sandwich

Front panel GRP

Rear panel Full-height GRP,

External equipment

Al-Ko chassis. AKS stabiliser. ATC trailer control system. Shock absorbers. Alloy wheels. Buttonless handbrake. Spare wheel and carrier. External gas/mains output. Super-pitch connection with external shower point. Awning light. Omnidirectional aerial. Satellite dish connection point. Two-piece door with flyscreen

Heating

Alde combined wet central and water heating

Lounge

Flyscreens and blinds to all windows. Drop-in carpets. LED lighting and spotlights. Radio/CD/MP3 player

Kitchen

Thetford 112-litre electronic fridge. Three-burner gas hob with electric hotplate. Separate oven and grill. Microwave

Washroom

Electric-flush Thetford C-250 swivel-bowl toilet and wheeled waste tank. Separate shower. Domestic-style radiator

Security

CRIS number etched to all windows. Concealed security data chip. Al-Ko Secure wheel lock. Tracking system. Alarm. Smoke alarm

Warranty

3 years parts.
6 years water ingress

Factory-fit options

Wrap-around front seating (£119). Alternative fabric (£175). Leather upholstery (£1149). Extractor fan in lieu of kitchen rooflight (£169). 40-litre underslung water tank (£599).

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