



LOW PROFILE LIVING

Elddis Autostratus RG on 2.8TD Peugeot Boxer Al-Ko

Dave Hurrell takes to the road in a rear garage motorhome from the Explorer Group

Launched at this year's NEC show, the new three-model Autostratus range has a 7.3m (24ft) low profile body. All models have a front lounge and central kitchen, with the rear end of the accommodation being changed to create the RB (rear bathroom), FB (fixed bed) and RG (rear garage) models. The fact that the range is aimed squarely at the two-berth 'luxury' touring sector is confirmed by the lack of any provision for rear seat passengers - although two of the range (FB and RG) provide four sleeping berths.

Keeping a low profile

The new Autostratus presents itself well as a modern low profile motorhome. The almost inevitable Sevel front end is - in this case - provided by Peugeot in chassis cab form. Elddis then take a hacksaw to the chassis and chop it off behind the cab. The chassis is then replaced with a new one made by chassis extension wizards, Al-Ko. A longer wheelbase and lowered, independent, rear suspension combine to help create a motorhome with better handling, a more comfortable ride and less rear overhang. Meanwhile, up top, a sandwich construction GRP-clad body is grafted on to create genuine low profile looks and credentials. The looks are constrained by the method of construction - but flat 'sandwich' sides are relieved by the peaked overcab and deeply moulded but unremarkable rear

panel. The body is adorned with the usual stripes and swirly graphics and topped off with a set of alloy roof rails and ladder. These rails sit on a roof that is set lower than the overcab section in front of it - thus creating a potential sheltered home for modern motorcaravan paraphernalia such as solar panel and satellite dish.

Boxer power

One of the best reasons for using a Sevel-built chassis cab as a base for your motorhome is the engine. This range of vehicles has some of the best turbo-diesels around and the leader of the pack is the - almost class-leading - 2.8 HDI fitted here. Transversely mounted and driving the front wheels through a five-speed gearbox (with that famously slick dash-mounted gearchange) this big diesel is packed with the latest technology. A turbocharger and intercooler help boost the power to 128bhp, with common-rail electronically-controlled fuel injection helping to improve fuel economy and reduce emissions.

Step right in

The blade-style electric cassette step slides out to meet you as you enter through the caravan door, which is located around a third of the way down

ELDDIS AUTOSTRATUS RG ON 2.8TD PEUGEOT BOXER AL-KO



Looking forward from the fixed bed above the garage. The washroom (mirrored external wall) is on the nearside with the kitchen opposite. The lounge - with swivelled cab seats - is beyond.

the nearside. A couple of internal steps and you find yourself standing in the front-located lounge area. A feeling of comfort and relaxation pervades - very traditional and yet modern at the same time. The Burberry-check style upholstery and burgundy curtains, partnered with light maple-finished woodwork and chrome fittings, are an inspired choice that create a feeling of light and space along with the kind of coziness that British motorcaravanners need when away on that wet week in November. The twin inward-facing sofas in the lounge sit ahead of the kitchen on the offside and the wardrobe and washroom on the nearside. Across the back is the garage with transverse double bed above. Sleeping accommodation is provided by this bed, and another made from the lounge sofas (should you need to put up guests for the night).

The open road

Getting into the cab is easy as the dash-mounted gearstick and right-hand handbrake leave the floor conveniently clear of obstacles. Above, Elddis have cut away the cab roof - so you find yourself sitting in the driver's seat with neither bumped head nor bruised shins. The modern Peugeot Boxer cab is a pretty good place to be these days. Elddis reupholster the seats to match the lounge and fit removable carpet. Big heavy cab doors and a 'keep on trucking' driving position are the only features that really let you know you're behind the wheel of a commercial vehicle. Everything else gets pretty close to the standards of a modern car. Central locking, electric windows and mirrors, adjustable steering column, all these are here (with things like airbags, anti-lock brakes and air-conditioning on the options list). Cubbyholes abound and the twin door pockets and lockable glovebox take on a new life - as they become part of welcome, extra motorhome storage and not just a home for 'white van man's' flask, sandwiches and copy of the tabloid press' finest.

Car-like the cab may be, but the size of this 'van is not. At well over seven metres long and wearing a wide body profile, this Autostratus requires a deal of care to drive, especially if you're used to a Mondeo. Cab ergonomics mean that setting the driver's seat squab to achieve the lowest driving position will be the norm (with my medium five-foot-eleven frame a testament to this). I still don't understand why more seat adjustment is not available - and my partner Suzanne always moans that the non-height-adjustable passenger seat is far too high. If I were buying I would look carefully at aftermarket seat replacements to see if the situation could be improved. Indeed, quite a few Continental manufacturers junk the standard offering for something more sophisticated. I wonder if these fare better in the area of adjustment - definitely worth a look. In spite of this, I find I can get comfortable behind the wheel. Here, the added bonus of variable lumbar support meant a journey of 250 miles could be tackled without neck (or back) ache becoming a problem.

Power aplenty is required to propel the modern motorhome in a fashion that is non-stressful for both you and the traffic behind. Power aplenty is what you get here, and, in spite of having only eighty miles on the clock, this engine revved freely and pulled superbly well. At the end of the test and having covered ten times the mileage, power delivery was noticeably smoother and more responsive. Brakes, steering and gearchange are particularly good, with all-round discs bringing the substantial weight of the Autostratus to a progressive halt. The power-assisted steering (which offers plenty of 'feel') teamed up with the latest incarnation of the legendary dash-mounted gearchange to give spadesful of driver satisfaction. Rapid progress could be made on A-roads, mainly in fourth gear, and motorway cruising at the legal limit was simply effortless - once I got used to the idea that fifth gear was best used at speeds over 60 mph.

Aerodynamics are much improved over some more bulky luton-type coachbuilts and this could have positive consequences for fuel consumption too. Handling was pretty good for a motorhome of this size. The softer rear suspension of the Al-Ko chassis combined with the rear overhang to produce mild but noticeable oversteer on twisting roads, and when changing lanes on motorways at speed. This tendency to be tail happy is something I would want to test with some weight in the garage before I made a purchase - especially if I planned to carry something heavy back there, such as a scooter.

The view to the rear is not good with no rear windows. The - still in place - internal mirror is only useful for checking your make-up. One good bit of kit is the Backminder reversing aid. This uses rear bumper-mounted sensors to detect obstacles and beeps at you with increasing urgency as you near them. Don't be fooled though, as under certain circumstances it will give false readings, detecting the slope of a hill or ramp as an obstacle or ignoring a high level hazard. A partner to see you back is still the best thing. I would definitely fit a good rear-view camera, as it has the twin benefit of becoming an on-road rear-view mirror as well. The only other annoying aspect of this particular Peugeot was the presence of door mirrors that were not wide enough to give a good view down each side.

Once pitched on the Camping and Caravanning Club site at Devizes, I knocked on the door of a fellow motorcaravanner and asked to measure his mirrors. He was fascinated - and happy to oblige! Each one measured some 125mm wider than the ones fitted to the Elddis (this was on a brand new narrow-bodied Auto-Trail Tracker!). I hope this is a pre-production glitch and future examples will have wider mirrors fitted.

Lounging around

Light floods in from the Heki II rooflight above, and twin inward-facing sofas are a simple but effective recipe for lounging success. These are upholstered in a soft Burberry-style check with contrasting piping - easy on the eye and



Looking back from the cab, the caravan entrance door is beyond the small sofa on the nearside while the large, offside, sofa abuts the kitchen.



Comfy, spacious, twin-sofa lounge has generous feet-up lounging for one.



Opposite, there's less room. Here, top model, Suzanne, shows us the sofa she doesn't normally use!

generating a genuine feeling of luxury. Swivel the cab seats and the lounge opens up to provide even more seating for guests. Couples will probably stick to the sofas for maximum comfort as the driver and passenger pews have limited reclining potential (particularly on the driver's side where the seatback soon comes up against the steering wheel). The only drawback with this salon is that one sofa is shorter than the other. On the nearside, the caravan door position means this seat is less than four feet long - while its partner is a full six feet. I'll leave you to fight over who gets full feet-up lounging! A great lounge then, and just right for us British foul-weather motorhomers.

The fitted kitchen

Elddis have sensibly provided a spacious fitted kitchen complete with a great range of practical, capable appliances. A straightforward unit runs from the end of the offside sofa and abuts the garage at the rear. It has a slight protuberance at the front end, but not enough to let it be called L-shaped. Appliances are good quality and I particularly liked the stainless steel sink with its deep drainer - if you're not quite level on site, many shallower units will see you chasing washing-up water with a cloth before it spills.

Cooking is courtesy of a Spinflo four-burner hob and full-sized grill/oven unit, all with push-button ignition, which worked superbly well. Even the grill was good, producing excellent toast and far too many crumpets - it's not the crumpets that are bad for you, it's all that butter you put on 'em!

Above, inside a tambour-door locker, is a microwave oven. This mains-operated appliance worked very efficiently and is a useful addition, especially if you are in the habit of using mains hook-up. Shame then that it was mounted up so high, the turntable being over five feet from the floor. It may sound daft, but the generous storage space in this 'van would let you carry one of those plastic caravan steps - a handy leg-up to make using the microwave safer and more convenient.

The main kitchen unit has some worktop space at either end and the twin, hinged glass lids that cover the sink and hob can be used as additional surfaces. Elddis say they're designed to be used as cutting boards too, but you'd never find me blunting my precious kitchen knives on them, though they are good for cutting bread and making sandwiches.

So a great kitchen then? Well no, not quite. The 86-litre Dometic Powerfridge (I'm beginning to think this manufacturer is having an identity crisis as this latest model fridge still announced itself as an Electrolux) is a wheel arch model and seemed particularly shallow. A daftly designed salad crisper attaches to the door and, with its disobedient floppy lid, convinced me further that the fridge was too small for a luxury touring motorhome like this. Aside from the expected overhead lockers, the rest of the kitchen storage is woefully inadequate - at least for the amount of food and batterie-de-cuisine we like to travel with.

The search for showroom appeal ('ooh look, it's got a slide-out larder

ELDDIS AUTOSTRATUS RG ON 2.8TD PEUGEOT BOXER AL-KO



The 'fashionable' slide-out larder unit has helped to 'divide and conquer' kitchen storage options. Hiding within is 'the world's smallest cutlery drawer' mark two!

unit') has divided the main kitchen unit storage into two narrow spaces either side of the fridge. The slide-out is a useful storage solution but including one at the cost of a decent cupboard (the only other cupboard is a narrow affair twixt fridge and cooker) and, more importantly, a decent cutlery drawer, is plain daft. A small drawer does emerge from inside the top of the slide-out larder unit, but you have to open the larder every time you need so much as a teaspoon. The last Autostratus I tested had something I described as 'the world's smallest cutlery drawer': here it is again. This is, then, a luxury kitchen with great appliances. Unfortunately, it's also a case of 'fur coat and almost no drawers'!

Lounge diner

Dining is taken care of by a free-standing table positioned between the two sofas. A simple but effective solution sees the lightweight, folding table emerge from a dedicated locker in the front end of the main kitchen unit.



Dining is simple and comfortable with the table between the sofas. The end of the kitchen unit is easy to use as a buffet.



Stainless steel hob and sink have hinged glass lids that can double as cutting boards. Above the cooker, the microwave zapped food to perfection and it was possible to see this happening from a short ladder!

Comfortable, informal dining is fine for up to four people and, if you have visitors, seven could sit and enjoy drinks and nibbles using the swivelled cab seats. The only gripe here is with table storage, as the catch on the locker failed to line up with its striker plate, resulting in the table emerging after the first bendy stretch of road. Also, the runners within, on which the table slid, were devoid of any protective padding - causing scratches to appear on top and bottom edges of the table after only two or three uses.

Carpet-lined slots, rather than the plastic channel used here, would seem to be a solution.

Bedding down for the night

The vast majority of garage-equipped motorhomes have a double bed 'on the garage roof', and this creates a dilemma for the modern motorhome designer. Less is more, as they say: in this case more headroom above the bed means less in the garage below and vice versa. You want to design a



Excellent table storage was marred by a faulty catch, and the table came out to play after a few minutes on the road.



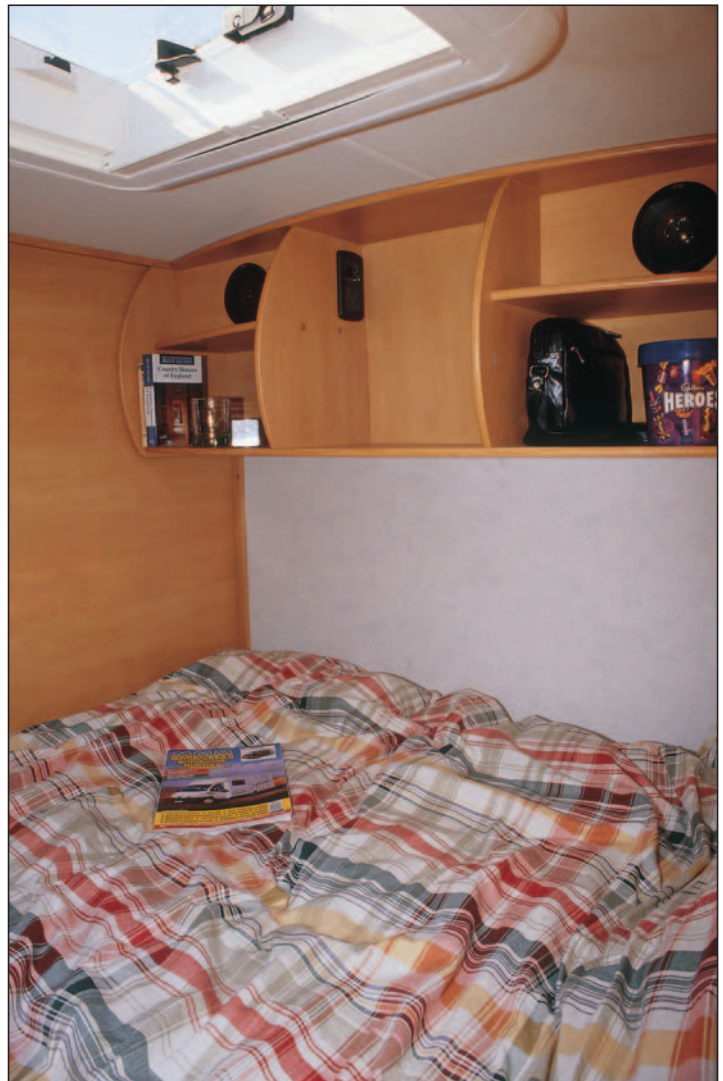
▲ Open the garage door, unload your bike, then press and hold a button to lower the bed...

▼ ...to its sleep-friendly position with less of a climb up and loads of headroom.



'van with enough headroom above the bed so it doesn't become a stifling claustrophobic space in summer and yet still have enough height in the garage for bikes or a scooter. The answer? Make the bed go up and down! This really is a clever solution to the problem and worked very well during the test. Travelling with the bed in its raised position (where you could just sleep at a pinch), you arrive on site, unload your tall items (usually bikes or a scooter), and press a button just inside the garage door. The bed, which is supported at all four corners on motorized screw-jack units, glides slowly and almost silently downwards, reducing headroom in the garage but equally increasing it above the bed inside. Of course, if you travel without anything tall you can leave the bed in the down position when you'll still have a substantial under-bed locker for all your other bulky clobber.

Meanwhile, inside, a large comfy double bed awaits at a convenient height, both from a headroom and access point of view. Reached by sensibly designed permanent steps, this bed is big, with a thick mattress resting on sprung staves. A comfortable night's rest is assured, bearing in mind you need a degree of agility to get in and out - especially if yours is



The foot-of-the-bed shelf unit has stereo speakers, useful shelves and a pre-wired TV slot.



Lounge bed makes up in the time-honoured fashion. Slide the sofa bases together and drop in the cushions. Flat and comfy, but narrow at the foot.

the inside berth. Plus points here include a Heki rooflight above (it's great to gaze up at the blue sky first thing in the morning) and a foot-of-the-bed unit containing stereo speakers, shelves for night-time necessities and a pre-wired TV slot (great for nocturnal viewing). The need for the close-fitting bed unit to rise and fall has precluded the presence of windows. The inclusion of a pelmet and curtains at the head of the bed, where no window exists, had me puzzled. Maybe you could paint one on?

In the lounge, a more familiar mechanism creates a second double. Just slide the two sofa bases together (courtesy of sprung-slat-equipped alloy frames), remove the shaped armrests to the cab, and drop in the seatback cushions to form a flat comfy bed. The only drawback here is that the resulting berth is L-shaped, owing to one sofa being longer than the other. The actual sleeping width is limited by the length of the smaller sofa and this is less than four feet.

Nevertheless, good design on Elddis' part has produced comfortable lounge furniture with cushions that - unlike many other 'vans - make a flat comfortable bed.

ELDDIS AUTOSTRATUS RG ON 2.8TD PEUGEOT BOXER AL-KO



Washroom

Opposite the kitchen and sandwiched between the wardrobe and the garage, the washroom is equipped with everything but a separate shower. The entrance door is locked by the same type of push-button latch as the rest of the cabinets. Unfortunately, the central latch was not fitted with a striker plate on the frame and not only did it not latch properly, but considerable strain and damage was taking place after just a few days use.

A Thetford swivel-bowl loo dominates the bright white interior. This one has both electric flush and separate flush tank, which has the advantage of reducing fresh water consumption and allowing use of an additive to help

keep the bowl clean and banish nasty niffs. Fiddled shelves abound - there is even one above the obscured, opening window - but cupboards do not. The vanity-style washbasin is a good size and is equipped with a domestic-style swivel mixer tap. This also doubles as the showerhead - the top pulls out on a trailing hose to engage in the shower riser adjacent to the door.

The only cupboard in here is below the basin: it has twin doors, no shelves and is of limited use anyway as the returning showerhead lowers its hose to the interior - where it dangles, taking up most of the useful space. The doors are of the bendy (pull it or shove it and see) type. The only other locker in here is mounted at ceiling height. Strangely bulbous in shape, its



Bright white washroom is dominated by fiddled shelves and daft, designer inspired, duckboard.

The 'can you guess what it is?' towel locker looks like a redundant motorcycle pannier. ▶





▲ Lift-up skirt hatches reveal a semi-double floor, adding to the already generous externally-accessed storage. With the permanent bed in the raised position there's enough room in the garage below for bikes. ►



Offside sofa has a sensible sectioned off area for the water heater and other equipment, plus a good-sized storage compartment.

Bases lift on gas struts to get at the contents of under-sofa storage, but front access doors would make things so much easier.

door opens vertically on two thin chains - one of which was already broken - and it had me stumped. I consulted the Elddis oracle and was told that it's a towel locker. I don't know who designed it but they obviously have a wicked sense of humour, or very strangely shaped towels!

The floor follows the 'wet room' principle with a deep one-outlet tray. The tray contains another showroom-appeal fitting - a varnished wooden duckboard. Elddis may be proud of this 'designer' feature, but most sensible motorhomers will change it for a piece of feet-friendly carpet after about five minutes. This is nothing like those sensible, fitted plastic grid floors you find in some other motorhomes. It's so *Changing Rooms* I was surprised it wasn't made of MDF!

Uncomfortable to stand on, slippery when wet, it was already scratching the high gloss surface of the shower tray beneath after less than a week's use. All those in favour, say aye. Right, chuck it out pronto.

Showering in here will probably be an occasional activity as mopping everything down afterwards will be a chore. Nevertheless, Elddis have made things a bit easier by installing a rigid shower screen that folds out to cover the door, thus obviating the need for the inevitable clingy shower curtain that can become a complete pain when showering in a confined space.

Cupboard love

Ah, the joys of plentiful storage. Actually, I should be saying the pitfalls of plentiful storage. The Autostratus RG gives you oceans of capacity to fully accessorize your motorhome - but beware. The payload is 500-plus kilograms and although this is over half a ton, some of it is used up by what is euphemistically called 'essential habitation equipment'. This can even include the front seat passenger, but I suppose if they cook they qualify as essential equipment! Nevertheless, it is always a good idea to get your motorhome weighed at your local public weighbridge before adding too many goodies: overloading is dangerous and penalties are steep. Also, if you are planning to carry a scooter (or similar heavy items) in the garage, then check the maximum allowable loading of the garage (and the rear axle) with the manufacturer.

The garage is, of course, the star - and with its 'electric bed' above is also supremely versatile. Access doors are provided on both sides: one large, for the loading of scooters or bikes, and one smaller, allowing retrieval of items that may be out of reach. Both doors are sensibly side-hinged, although they had no mechanism to hold them open - just a couple of flimsy webbing check-straps. These straps stopped them opening fully and started me swearing loudly when I was trying to load two bikes on a windy day! The interior is lit, heated, and has a hardwearing alloy chequer-plate floor with tie-down rings and a matching scooter ramp.

Towards the front of the 'van, hatches in the skirts lift up to reveal a kind of semi-double floor. Side-located compartments (one of which houses the leisure battery on a slide-out tray) are linked across the vehicle by a narrow storage space that could accommodate flat items such as folding chairs and tables. This space comes under the heading 'must try harder' and it looks very lacklustre - with its black-painted plywood construction. (Compare it to Continental imports with proper double floors.)

Internally, storage is courtesy of the usual range of aircraft-style overhead lockers and a large wardrobe with auto-illumination. Both sofas have storage beneath and the bases lift up on gas-struts to aid access. I would have liked to see front access doors on these spaces as you always end up doing a deal of cushion shifting before you can get at stuff from above.

The home service

The main appliances in any modern motorhome tend to be similar and this is no exception. Heating and hot water are dealt with by Truma with an Ultrastore gas/electric water heater and the excellent Trumatic convector unit with mains operation and blown-air for interior heating. This is one of my favourite heaters as it gives you the choice of virtually silent convection heating from the central unit - great for keeping the chill off at night. At other times you can use the blown-air to heat all areas, including the washroom and garage. The water system is pressurised and uses semi-rigid plumbing, although during the test we experienced consistently bad drainage from

ELDDIS AUTOSTRATUS RG ON 2.8TD PEUGEOT BOXER AL-KO



Located under the offside rear, the drain hoses and taps (for fresh and waste water tanks) are extremely awkward to reach and operate.



Hot-air ducting running under the 'van – not a great idea, I would have said.



These halogen reading lamps helped make the lounge look great!

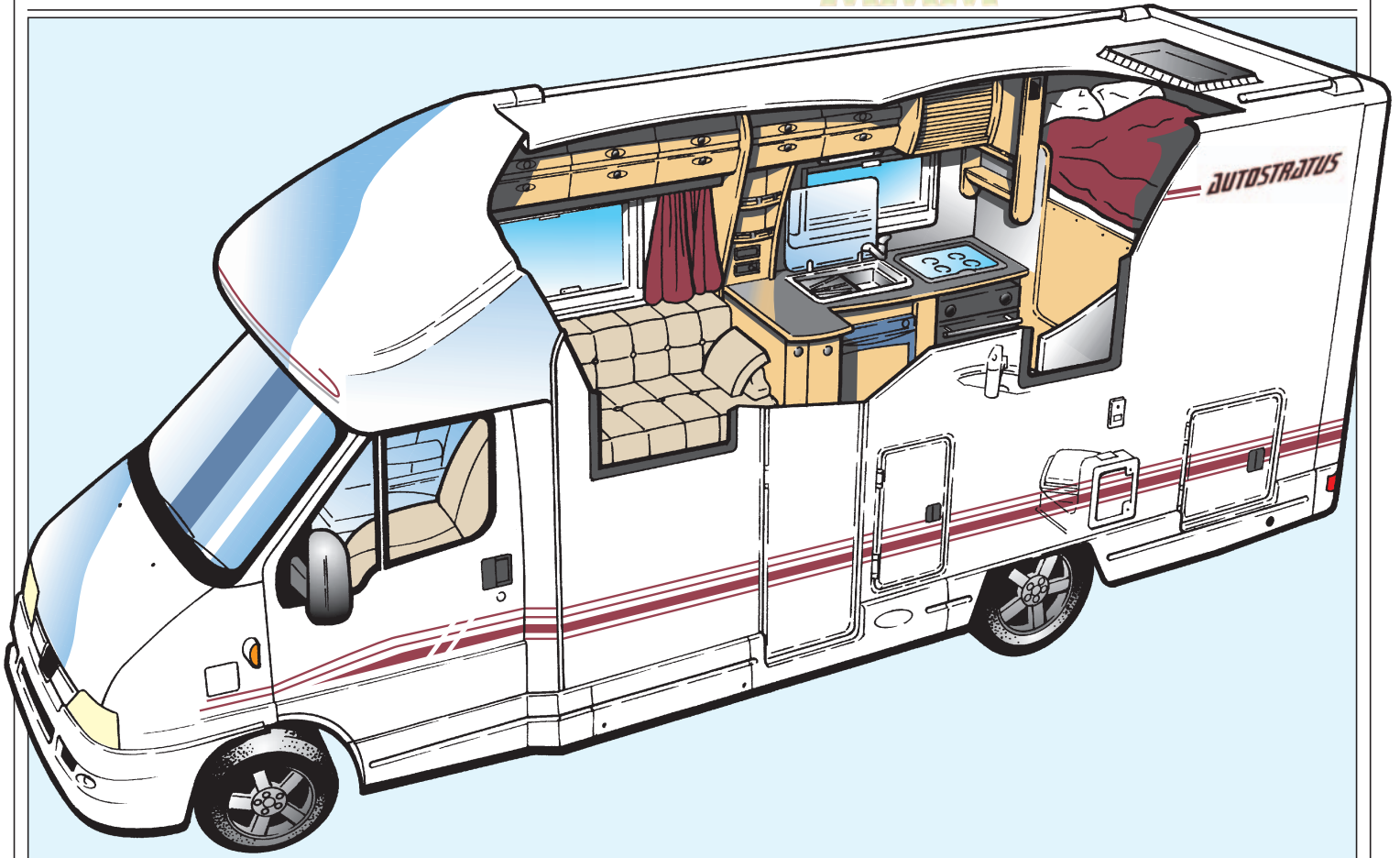
both kitchen and washroom sinks.

On first inspection I thought the fresh water tank was located within the aforementioned double floor and it took some considerable grovelling underneath to discover it was not. I think Elddis have missed a chance here, with the opportunity to enclose the tanks and winterize the 'van. An inboard water tank and a waste tank enclosed within this area would have seen them keeping up with a lot of the foreign - and some of the British - competition. When many of us use our 'vans almost all the year round these days, what's the point of being snug and warm inside while the cold outside

is allowed to render the plumbing useless?

Now it's time for my other pet hate - the dreaded waste tank drain. Where is it? Buried under the back behind the offside rear wheel. What is it? Yep it's our old enemy, the lump of small-bore hose with a drum-tap stuck in the end, held up with a spring clip. Call me stupid (yes alright, not all at once) but I really do not want to have to put on boiler suit, hard hat and goggles just to drain the waste tank. I was also somewhat dismayed to discover some of the blown-air heating duct was routed under the vehicle. Common sense tells you that precious heat will be lost as the





I liked

- Super versatile garage with clever electric bed
- Top quality kitchen appliances
- Excellent heating system
- Large comfy fixed double bed
- Spacious comfortable lounge
- Super range of top-notch lighting

I would have liked

- Inboard water tank
- Waste tank enclosed within double floor
- Easy to use waste tank draining system
- Faster draining sinks
- More sensible kitchen storage

- A cutlery drawer
- A bigger fridge
- A louder alarm siren
- Front access to under-sofa storage

I disliked

- Poorly constructed bathroom door catch
- Insecure table storage locker
- Daft towel locker in washroom
- Silly duckboard on washroom floor
- Non-functioning fresh water gauge
- Blown-air duct running under the vehicle



ducting is exposed to the cold.

Inside, things are much better - with an easy-to-read and use LCD control panel that tells you all you need to know (although this one was a liar as it kept telling me the fresh water was full even when it was empty) including internal and external temperature.

Lighting is exceptionally good with halogen spots and fluorescents throughout and a simple (but clever) system to secondary switch them from the door - great for getting home in the dark.

Last - and most definitely least - is the fitted motorhome intruder alarm. Great idea you may think. This one has various features including the familiar, blinking, red PIR detector to let you know you're being watched. A remote keypad is provided to arm this fearsome burglar-deterrent and protect your pride and joy. Testing proved hilarious - as the system, once triggered, managed to make a noise not unlike a toy police car wrapped in

a duvet! I lifted the offside sofa base to discover the smallest, quietest siren I've ever heard (or seen). Let's hope production models have something with a bit more grunt!

Clear blue sky, or clouded judgment?

The Autostratus RG has a lot to recommend it. Interior design and layout are spot on as long as you don't need to carry rear passengers. Comfortable and stylish with full long-term touring-for-two qualifications, its major let downs are compromised kitchen storage and limited winter camping capabilities.

All other faults come under the umbrella of design engineering and quality control. Comfy lounges and proper kitchens are the two things that British manufacturers do best. Both are here, so if you're looking for this type of 'van put the RG on your list and take a look. Just make sure it's a close one. □



ELDDIS AUTOSTRATUS RG ON 2.8TD PEUGEOT BOXER AL-KO

SPECIFICATION

The vehicle

Base vehicle and engine type: Peugeot Boxer 350 chassis cab with Al-Ko rear chassis conversion. 2.8-litre common-rail turbocharged intercooled four-cylinder diesel engine

Output: 94kW (127bhp) @ 3600rpm

Max torque: 300Nm (221lb ft) @ 1800rpm

Compression ratio: 18:1

Gearbox and drive: Five-speed manual, front-wheel drive

Brakes: All-round self-adjusting discs with dual circuit and servo assistance

Steering: Power-assisted rack and pinion

Suspension: Front - independent MacPherson strut type, with coil springs and integral telescopic dampers. Rear - Al-Ko trailing-link torsion bars and telescopic dampers

Tyres fitted: Michelin XC Camping 215/75 R16C

Spare wheel position: Underslung in cradle to the rear of chassis

Fuel tank capacity/type of fuel: 80 litres (17.6 gallons), diesel

Instruments: Speedo, rev counter, fuel level, coolant temp, LCD panel with trip / total mileage and digital clock

Warning lamps: High coolant temp, brake warning, check engine, alternator charge, low oil pressure, diesel preheater, fuel low, headlamps main beam, sidelights / dipped beam, rear fog lamp, water in fuel filter, indicators

Windscreen wiper controls: Stalk-mounted, two speeds plus intermittent, flick and wash/wipe

Immobiliser/alarm: Electronic engine immobiliser, ignition key activated. No vehicle alarm fitted

Other features: Key operated central locking, one-touch electric windows, electric mirrors, 12V socket, map / document holder, lockable glovebox, Backminder reversing aid, headlamps adjustable from cab, Blaupunkt single CD/radio with four speakers, removable cab carpet, adjustable steering column, adjustable upper seatbelt mountings, alloy wheels

Performance and economy

Achieved 30-50mph acceleration time: 11 seconds (3rd gear)

Fuel consumption: 24.2 mpg (11.7 litres /100km) overall

The caravan

Body type and construction: GRP-skinned sandwich construction with GRP skirts, rear panel, roof and overcab sections

Insulation: Total thickness: sides 24mm, roof 22mm, floor 24mm

Conversion NCC badged as EN1646 compliant: No

Warranty: Three years base vehicle (60,000 miles), three years caravan (extendable to five years), five years water ingress

Number of keys required: Six. Cab doors / ignition, caravan door, skirt lockers, garage, water filler, gas locker / toilet service hatch

Windows and doors: Acrylic double-glazed flush-fitting. Top-hinged: one in lounge, one in kitchen, one obscured in bathroom. Sliding: one in lounge. One-piece caravan door with full-sized roller flyscreen and window

Additional ventilation: Two Heki II push-up rooflights, one in lounge, one above fixed rear bed. Push-up roof vent in washroom.

Blinds/curtains: Blinds and flyscreens to all windows, lined curtains in lounge area

230V AC system: Mains hook-up with RCD and MCBs. Four 13amp sockets, two in kitchen, one in TV locker above cab, one in TV shelf above fixed rear bed. Mains connection to fridge, water heater, blown-air heater and caravan battery charger

12V DC system: Single caravan battery feeds DC circuits via fuse box and LCD control panel which has controls for water pump, interior lights, porch light. Display shows voltage of vehicle or caravan battery, contents of fresh water tank, and internal and external air temperatures. Flashing symbol and audible warning indicates waste tank full

Capacity of caravan battery: 120 amp hr

Lighting: Two circular fluorescent and four adjustable halogen lamps in lounge. One circular and one linear fluorescent and two halogen downlighters in kitchen. Two halogen downlighters above fixed bed. One circular fluorescent and one halogen downlighter in washroom. Mood lights built into the perimeter of both Heki rooflights. Exterior porch light, garage lighting

Cooking facilities: Spinflo Midi combination oven and grill unit and four-burner hob with hinged glass lid. All with push-button ignition. Explorer mains-operated 550W microwave oven

Extractor fan / cooker hood: Omnivent three-speed roof-mounted extractor fan in kitchen area

Refrigerator: Dometic RM6291 three-way Powerfridge with full-width freezer compartment. Capacity 86 litres

Sink and drainer: Stainless steel sink and drainer with fitted washing-up bowl and hinged glass lid

Water system: Underfloor freshwater tank and Whale Smartflow diaphragm pump. Pressurised hot and cold water to mixer tap in kitchen and basin tap / pull-out showerhead in washroom

Water heater: Truma Ultrastore gas / electric, capacity 10 litres

Fresh water tank: Underslung 115 litres (25.4 gallons)

Fresh water level gauge: On control panel, selectable, reads 0 to 100 per cent

Waste water tank: Underslung 63 litres (13.9 gallons)

Waste water level gauge: Visual display on control panel and audible warning to indicate tank full

Space heating: Gas-fired Truma Trumatic convector with selectable 500W, 1000W & 2000W mains electric operation. Unit incorporates blown-air heating to lounge, washroom and garage

Gas locker: Externally accessed, metal lined and vented. Room for two 7kg cylinders

Washroom: Walk-in washroom, fixed corner basin with mixer tap / pull-out showerhead and twin-door cupboard below, integral shower tray with wooden duckboard insert, Thetford swivel-bowl electric flush toilet with built-in flushing water tank, six fiddled shelves and two mirrors, toilet roll holder, towel ring and tooth glass, shower riser rail, folding shower screen, overhead towel locker

Seating: Twin inward-facing sofas and swivelled cab seats in lounge area

Table(s)/storage: Free-standing table for use in lounge area. Storage in dedicated locker to forward end of main kitchen unit

Berths: Four, two in rear fixed double bed, two in lounge double made from two sofas

Rear restraints: None fitted

Wardrobe: Side-to-side hanging rail, auto illumination, heater below gives airing opportunity

Flooring: Removable carpet over vinyl

Additional features: Caravan intruder alarm, Status directable TV aerial, smoke alarm, rear garage with electrically-operated height adjustable bed above semi-double floor with access via skirt lockers, electric step with auto retract, rear stereo speakers, rear steadies

Dimensions

(* denotes figure supplied by base vehicle manufacturer or converter)

Overall length: 7.35m (24ft 1in)*

Overall width (excl mirrors): 2.29m (7ft 6in)

Overall width (incl mirrors): 2.5m (8ft 2in)

Overall height: 2.85m (9ft 4in)*

Length of wheelbase: 4.2m (13ft 10in)

Length of rear overhang: 2.2m (7ft 3in) 47.6 per cent of wheelbase

Turning circle (kerb to kerb): 13.7m (44ft 11in)

Driver's max leg length: 950mm (37.5in)

Step up height to caravan: Three steps up to floor level, 305mm then 230mm then 230mm (12in, 9in, 9in)

Door aperture: 1.88m (6ft 2in) x 485mm (1ft 7in)

Interior length from dash: 5.8m (19ft 1in)

Interior length behind cab: 4.9m (16ft 1in)

Interior width at waist height: 2.2m (7ft 2in)

Interior height: 1.97m (6ft 5in)*

Work surface height: 955mm (3ft 1in)

Table dimensions: 865mm x 560mm (2ft 10in x 1ft 10in) height 685mm (2ft 3in)

Bed dimensions:

Rear fixed double bed

mattress length: 2.13m (7ft 0in)

mattress width: 1.37m (4ft 6in)

mattress depth: 150mm (6in)

Lounge double bed

mattress length: 2.21m (7ft 3in)

mattress width: sleeping area 1.14m (3ft 9in) min, 1.83m (6ft 0in) max (see text)

mattress depth: 150mm (6in)

Shower compartment: 1090mm x 800mm x height 1940mm (43in x 31in x H 78in)

Wardrobe: 635mm x 660mm x hanging height 1190mm (25in x 26in x H 47in)

Gas locker: 305mm x 535mm x H 670mm (12in x 21in x H 26.5in)

Gas locker door aperture: 585mm x 380mm (23in x 15in)

Max authorized weight: 3850kg*

Unladen mass: 3255kg*

Load capacity: 595kg*

Price (all prices include VAT)

Standard model (as tested): £41,995

On the road charges: £955

Optional extras

Base vehicle options: List not available at time of writing

Caravan options: List not available at time of writing

Elddis Autostratus RG kindly supplied for evaluation by:

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(tel: 01207 699000; fax: 01207 699001;

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