

Elddis Avanté Club 362



► PRICE £11,245 ► www.explorer-group.co.uk

AT A GLANCE: Popular end kitchen two-berth layout for a couple after small-caravan touring

TEST VAL CHAPMAN

TOWMATCH B



IT'S for couples who want ease of off-car manoeuvrability without the expense of a motor-mover. Couples who want to store their caravan in restricted garden spaces. Couples who prefer small-car, small-caravan touring. The tiny end kitchen two-berth is a rock-solid, reliably popular layout.

Factor in the desire for good build quality and equipment like microwaves and you're heading in the direction of the Elddis Avanté Club end kitchen two-berth.

Timeless classic

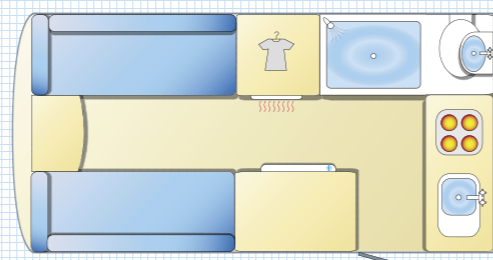
Elddis is well practiced in this sector - and it shows. The 2009 reincarnation of this theme is well-appointed and pleasing to the eye.

This may be a small caravan but the kitchen is surprisingly practical. It relies on the large cabinet top above the fridge for its work-surface as the kitchen top is almost entirely filled with the three-burner hob and sink. But don't imagine meal preparation would be a struggle here. And because the fridge is outside the main kitchen area you gain a huge cupboard under the sink.

In order to cram such an efficient caravan into only 3.70m of body length there have to be compromises. The washroom gives you the main one. In company with most caravans of this layout you get a space-saver tip-up sink. Disadvantage? Some think so - but just look at the large size of that sink. You

LAYOUT IN A NUTSHELL

- End kitchen
- Offside washroom
- Front lounge for two single beds or one double



also get a domestic-style green plastic glass-effect shelf above the sink, plus mirrored cabinets above it. There's also a mirror on the outside of the washroom - although don't try grooming here if someone's cooking, because it's directly beside the mirror-fronted grill, oven and hob.

Lounging space is excellent. Seating room for up to six, lounging-with-feet-up space for two - and you have the option of making this area into a massive double bed rather than the two singles. It's in this area that you notice the 362's defining features: its soft furnishings. Vaguely retro geometrics with rounded corners in fawn shades, edged with folk-weave would suit most tastes. Lovely chenille scatter cushions and plainest brown

curtains complete the classic look. Like the layout, the decor is timeless.

Carpeting is a two-piece Berber-ish fawn and you'll notice porthole-shaped lights at each of the front corners and a larger version of the same shape for a central light in the kitchen area. Strip lights in the kitchen are an unwelcome feature, though - they give a cold light and look cheap; a couple of spotlights over the kitchen would be more appealing.

All that you need is here - blown air, TV point and Status aerial, two mains sockets, one in that front TV area, the other at the fridge-top work surface, Sony CD/radio with large speakers... a nice, neat package for the couple who are drawn to this small, traditional, successful layout. ■



Just because it's small and lightweight, doesn't mean it lacks luxuries such as a microwave



Chenille scatter cushions and plain brown curtains complete the classic look of the soft furnishings



The fittings and the build are good quality, and there are domestic-style touches throughout the caravan



Porthole-shaped lights sit at each of the front corners, with a larger version in the kitchen area

FOR & AGAINST

PROS:

- Can be manoeuvred manually
- Quality fittings
- Good level of specification

CONS:

- Kitchen strip light looks cheap
- Tip-up basin not to everyone's liking

SPECIFICATION

Axles: 1
Berths: 2
MRO: 997kg
MTPLM: 1154kg
Width: 2.24m (7ft 4in)
Internal length: 3.73m (12ft 3in)
Overall height: 2.73m (8ft 11in)
Bed sizes: 1.83m x 0.71m (6ft x 2ft 3in); double: 2.07m x 1.37m (6ft 9in x 4ft 6in)



Kitchen area is surprisingly practical when you consider it's a small caravan

OUR VERDICT

Nothing new in the layout - every major manufacturer has churned out end kitchen two-berths down the years. So perhaps more than any other layout these ones rely on their looks and quality level to fight their corner in the sales ring. The 362 throws powerful punches on both counts. It's simply a lovely little caravan, classic, charming - and will sit safely behind smallish cars.