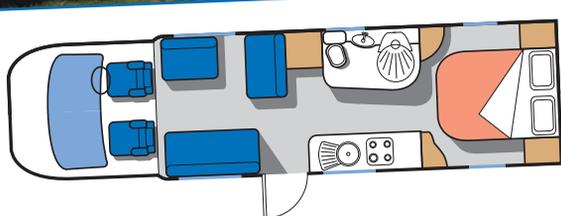


BESSACARR E769



ISLAND LIFE



LAYOUT PLAN

■ **OVERALL LENGTH:** 8.67m (28ft 5.5in)*
 ■ **OVERALL WIDTH:** 2.35m (7ft 8.5in)*

Cutting edge and convenient, island bed layouts are all the rage this season. A pair of big bedroom-equipped Brits do battle



Increasingly, motorhomes can resemble home. Sophisticated radiator-equipped central heating systems, entertainment centres with DVD and MP3 capability and enormous fridges with dedicated space for your chilled Chablis are just a few of the exciting, domestic-style features to be found in 2007 models.

Enter the island bed layout. Somewhat

of a misnomer, this feature actually refers to a double bed with access on three sides: I guess 'peninsular bed' sounds less sexy! Aside from very easy bed access, the other big advantage of these designs is the fact that separate bedrooms are created - this last tranche of domesticity, potentially completing the ultimate 'home-from-motorhome.'

Downsides? The biggest disadvantage is, in fact, big and easy to spot: it is size. With longitudinal double beds in the rear and

- 1 The latest Fiat cab is very comfortable - Bessacarr adds radio/DVD player and reversing camera with drop-down screen
- 2 The optional 157 horsepower engine gave the Roadstar masses of extra appeal



Words & pictures by Dave Hurrell



LUNAR ROADSTAR 800



almost everything else forward, these 'vans are very long: campsite to campsite travel only will most probably be the norm, and I'd consider some form of additional transport almost essential.

This design, of course, offers the kind of accommodation found in many big American RVs, but in comparison to these appear more modest, especially in the areas of body width and (potentially) a more parsimonious thirst for fuel.

Why would you buy one? Well, long, or full-time touring, would seem to be their métier.

Me? I'd be tempted to adorn mine with a Smart car and trailer for local exploration and shopping, although I've had a secret desire to tow a classic Midget ever since I left the MG Owners' Club and waved farewell to my beloved sports car. Layouts in both these generous motorhomes are very similar, with overcab double beds, front-end lounges, centre kitchens and washrooms and the - reason-to-buy - bedroom bringing up the rear. Overt differences between the two are size and chassis. The Bessacarr is 700mm longer (8.67m) than the Lunar (7.97m) and rides on a tag axle Al-Ko chassis. The Lunar is Al-Ko-equipped too, but with a single axle at the rear.

MOTIVE POWER

A marriage made in Sevel, both motorhomes' low-riding Al-Ko chassis are grafted on to the latest Ducato. No longer do they have to cut, grind and weld the Fiat frame to fit the new rear end; these days, Fiat supplies the Ducato ready to accept new nether regions. It's now a 'bolt on' job and this has advantages including the

fact that the Fiat's comprehensive rust-inhibiting paint job remains intact. The Al-Ko rear chassis offers many advantages, one of which is independent rear suspension that's better than the standard rear frame's 'cart' springs.

As motivated as a Ducato-based motorhome can be, both Bessacarr and Lunar were fitted with the range-topping 160 Multijet motor. This is standard on the Bessie, but Lunar will ask you for another £1705 for the upgrade from the standard 130 Multijet. Both

units benefit from a brand-new six-speed gearbox with a 'motorway cruising' high top gear that should help give reasonable fuel consumption figures.

The new Fiat cab is a world away from the old model. Externally, its quirky looks get the thumbs-up from me - now I've got used to them. I reckon it looks stylish and cutting edge. One thing's for certain, it seems to suit being a motorhome very well indeed, as both Bessacarr and Lunar looked very attractive





BESSACARR E769

I LIKED

- Powerful engine
- Six-speed gearbox
- Standard cab air
- Four belted seats
- Big fridge
- Plenty of worktop
- Good storage and payload

I WOULD HAVE LIKED

- A longer double bed
- Better lighting in luton

I DISLIKED

- The shower's daft duckboard
- The Truma heater in the kitchen's biggest cupboard

- faired-in awnings adding to their sleek lines. Inside, the cab offers an excellent driving position and a driver's airbag as standard, although only Lunar offers the passenger the same protection - the options list and two hundred quid will see an airbag fitted on the nearside of the cab. Storage is a standout feature with door pockets and compartments aplenty - there's even a lockable laptop-sized box in the centre. Heating and ventilation too is much improved, while the Bessie has the luxury of engine-driven heat in the living

area and (for when the weather warms up) cab air-conditioning, all fitted as standard. So new are these models that both test vehicles were prototypes - the Bessacarr displaying this fact more overtly by being built on a left-hand drive chassis.

ROAD MANNERS

As multi-berth overcab coachbuilds you might expect that these two would provide safe, belted travel seats for all who can live aboard: sadly, you'd be wrong. I've sat in 'vans at shows and listened to showgoers as they tour motorhomes looking at the lounge, kitchen, washroom and counting the number of beds to accommodate the family. Many are surprised and not a little shocked when it's pointed out that this 'van or that does not provide enough seatbelts for all.

The Lunar 800 is a six-berth motorhome with a total of only two (driver and front-seat passenger) seatbelts. Meanwhile, the Bessacarr does better; it offers five berths and four belts thanks to forward-facing travel seats in the lounge. Lunar fans who wish to carry passengers in the rear need not despair however, as the soon-to-be-introduced Roadstar 800 HD variant will have a half-dinette front end with two belted seats in place of the twin-sofa lounge.

If, at the end of this test report, you fancy seeing a Lunar 800 on your drive, it would be a good idea to make sure it has the 160 Multijet motor under its bonnet. These are big motorhomes with aerodynamics similar to the average garden shed and they need plenty of power to propel them convincingly. This will be especially true when they're fully loaded. With 157 (160 Multijet) horses under the hood the driving experience is sublime. A low level of noise in the cab is a bonus, but the standout features of this engine are massive reserves of torque and an almost complete absence of turbo lag. Happy to pull from around 40mph in fifth gear, this motor makes off-motorway driving very enjoyable as less gearstick 'stirring' is needed. On fast motorway runs the high top (sixth) gear allows cruising at relatively low revolutions - again, the motor's big torque makes this effortless. That gearchange is very good too - the examples of the new six-speed box fitted to the 160 motor I've tested so far have all had a lighter, more positive action than those bolted to the 130. The reason for this escapes me; it could be coincidence, but I



3 Two big sofas and swivelling cab seats offer lounging aplenty

4 Forward of the rear bedroom, the amidships kitchen and washroom stand either side of the aisle

5 The freestanding table is easy to use and just right for two

6 A full cooker and lots of work surface help make a capable kitchen

guess only time will tell.

Chassis performance was equally impressive and, while the tag axle rear of the Bessacarr made it feel as if it was on rails, the Lunar also handled in confidence-inspiring fashion. On-road conversion noise was generally acceptable in both 'vans, although the roof vent above the Lunar's overcab bed produced far too much wind noise at speed. Methinks changing this 'standard' type vent to the more aerodynamic Mini Heki could cure this problem.

LOUNGE AND DINE

Silver trim inside both 'vans provides a touch of modernity, although it's the light wood and café-crème leather-trimmed upholstery in the Bessacarr that gives it a 'designer' edge. All this beige and cream, though, makes the Bessie almost devoid of colour - the Lunar's warm red cushions making for a more cosy ambience.

Swivelling cab seats in both turn to help make lounges, while cutaway cabs improve headroom once the overcab bed base is out of the way. In the Bessacarr this rises easily on gas struts, but the Lunar is not so good - its sliding loose bed base is awkward and heavy. Sociable seating for seven in the Bessie and six in the Lunar make both lounges good to use. Watching TV here will be OK in the Lunar as there's a flat-screen-only locker fitted, although sited just to the rear of the caravan entrance, it could be a touch far away from the lounge seating. There's no such problem in the Bessacarr, as there's no TV locker fitted at all! Bessie owners, it seems, all watch TV in bed, as it's in the rear boudoir you'll find provision to mount a goggle box. That said, you get a reversing camera with small drop-down colour monitor in the cab that's also wired to accept signals from the standard-fit aerial, the in-cab DVD player and included Freeview digibox.

Bessie and Lunar mealtimes are served by free-standing tables set up between sofas and both are supported on lightweight legs to provide a good eating surface for two that's just about OK for four people. Table stowage provision is the big issue here and in both 'vans it's found wanting. The Bessacarr has its table stowed flat under the double bed to the rear and is a bit of a backbreaker to extract and replace. In the Lunar, the table is stashed on the offside in one of the bedroom's twin wardrobes. Although Lunar plans to modify the adjacent pelmet to allow the wardrobe door to open more fully, the table was awkward to extract and replace. It seems to me that dedicated table stowage places might have been designed-in upfront, as both stowage solutions here smack of 'afterthought engineering.'

COOK'S QUARTERS

The full-sized, domestic-style slot-in cooker with three gas burners, one electric hotplate, grill and oven are a perennial feature of British motorhomes and both Bessie and Lunar galleys include them. The ability to easily cook a full roast in both 'vans is a bonus, but

LUNAR ROADSTAR 800

I LIKED

- Six-speed gearbox
- Good handling
- Comfy ambience
- En-suite washroom
- Long double bed
- The price

I WOULD HAVE LIKED

- 160 Multijet engine as standard
- More kitchen worktop
- A bigger fridge

I DISLIKED

- Lack of rear seatbelts
- Low headroom in bedroom and toilet room



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10



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- 7 Plenty of lounging space, but only two seatbelts in this six-berth 'van
- 8 Twin sofas dominate the front end with the galley next in line
- 9 Mealtimes offer good dining for two
- 10 The kitchen is well-equipped but lacks working surface

On Test Bessacarr E769 & Lunar Roadstar 800

chilled and frozen food storage move up a gear in the Bessacarr as it offers the joys of the biggest fridge around - Thetford's 180-litre cook-magnet. Although there's no separate freezer featured, it has a good-sized internal compartment and importantly, dedicated storage for bottles, which means white wine will live a happy (if short) life in here. This cutting edge machine leaves the Lunar's fridge frustrated; it's a Thetford too, but its 96 litres of space pales when pitted against its big brother in the Bessie.

Overall the Bessacarr's kitchen wins the race, with plenty of worktop, good amounts of storage and a standard-fit, good quality microwave. The only disconcerting thing here is the fact that the biggest cupboard actually houses the Truma Combi heater. Just when you think you've discovered kitchen storage nirvana, you find there's a big chunk of unwelcome plumbing 'squatting' in the galley.

The Lunar does fight back with a better sink/drainage than the Bessie's drainerless (with removable plastic drainer) item, but a lack of worktop and a decidedly downmarket (also standard-fit) microwave let the side down.

BATHING SPACE

The approach to providing washing, showering and toilet provision is very different in these motorhomes.

The Bessacarr goes the expected route, with an entirely conventional facility that includes a separate shower compartment.

Bang up to date, the Lunar offers semi-suite facilities - again with a separate shower.

Familiar to enthusiasts of the marque, Bessie bathing space is best described as bijou but capable. A good-sized vanity basin has enough surface for cosmetics and storage above and below, in cupboards and on shelves. The ubiquitous Thetford loo has electric flushing fed from a built-in tank that allows the use of bowl-cleaning additives - a model more familiar to trailer caravanners. A mirror to the left is a welcome feature



The washroom is familiar and bijou, but capable



The island bed is very comfortable but not over long

HEAD-TO-HEAD DATA

BESSACARR E769

PRICE

- **From:** £58,495 OTR.
- **As tested:** £58,495 OTR

BASICS (*manufacturer's figures)

- **Berths:** 5
- **Three-point belted seats:** 4 (including driver)
- **Warranty:** Three years base vehicle and conversion
- **Badged as NCC EN1646 compliant:** Yes
- **Construction:** Alloy-clad sandwich construction overcab coachbuilt
- **Length:** 8.67m (28ft 5.5in)*
- **Width:** 2.35m (7ft 8.5in)*
- **Height:** 3.05m (10ft 0in)*
- **Wheelbase:** 4.60m (15ft 1in)
- **Rear overhang:** 2.20m (7ft 2.5in)
- **Maximum authorised weight:** 5000kg*
- **Payload:** 835kg* (After the vehicle in working order, driver (75kg), gas, fresh water and fuel tanks at 90 per cent of capacity)

THE VEHICLE

Fiat Ducato tag-axle Al-Ko chassis cab

- **Engine:** 3.0-litre turbo-diesel producing 157bhp
- **Transmission:** Six-speed manual gearbox, front-wheel drive
- **Brakes:** Discs all round
- **Suspension:** Independent all round
- **Features:** ABS, EBD, remote central-locking, electric windows and mirrors, cab air-conditioning, driver's airbag, radio/CD/MP3/DVD player, height-adjustable seats

INSIDE

- **Layout:** Overcab bed, swivel cab seats ahead of twin-sofa lounge, centre kitchen and washroom, rear bedroom with longitudinal island bed
- **Insulation:** Floor 46mm, walls 32mm, roof 34mm
- **Interior height:** 1.98m (6ft 6in)

KITCHEN

- **Sink:** Circular stainless steel unit with removable drainer and inset cutting board
- **Cooker:** Stoves New Home DF500 with three gas burners, one mains electric hotplate, grill and oven, all with electronic ignition. Sharp R247 800W touch-control microwave
- **Fridge:** Thetford N180 manual energy selection. Capacity 180 litres

WASHROOM

- **Toilet:** Thetford swivel-bowl electric flush cassette with integrated flushing water tank
- **Basin:** Oval vanity unit with single lever mixer tap
- **Shower:** Separate circular compartment with rigid screen. Mixer tap/showerhead/riser rail, semi-seat, two shelves

BEDS

- **Luton double**
- **Length:** 1.91m (6ft 3in)
- **Width:** 1.37m (4ft 6in)
- **Headroom:** 610mm (2ft 0in)
- **Lounge single**
- **Length:** 1.78m (5ft 10in)
- **Width:** 660mm (2ft 2in)
- **Rear fixed double**
- **Length:** 1.88m (6ft 2in)
- **Width:** 1.35m (4ft 5in)

EQUIPMENT

- **Fresh water:** Inboard. 125 litres (27.5 gallons)
- **Waste water:** Underslung. 100 litres (22 gallons)
- **Water heater:** Truma Combi EH boiler, gas/mains operation
- **Space heater:** Truma Combi EH, blown-air, gas/mains operation
- **Leisure battery:** 110 amp hr
- **Gas:** Capacity two 13kg cylinders
- **Lighting:** Halogen downlighters - two in lounge, one inside caravan door, four in kitchen, three in washroom, four in rear bedroom; halogen spots - four in lounge, two in bedroom; fluorescent lamp in overcab bed, auto-illumination in wardrobes, awning light, twin eyeball spots in cab
- **Sockets:** 230V: 4 (in lounge, kitchen, rear bedroom, TV station), 12V: 2 (in cab, TV station)

OPTIONAL EXTRAS

Fitted to test vehicle

- **Base:** None
- **Conversion:** None
- **Other options**
- **Base:** Detachable towbar (£395)
- **Conversion:** Roof-mounted air-conditioning (£1,195)

E&OE



The double bed is long, but headroom in here is limited

HEAD-TO-HEAD DATA

LUNAR ROADSTAR 800

PRICE

- From: £48,285 OTR.
- As tested: £49,990 OTR

BASICS (*manufacturer's figures)

- Berths: 6
- Three-point belted seats: 2 (including driver)
- Warranty: Three years base vehicle and conversion
- Badged as NCC EN1646 compliant: Yes
- Construction: GRP-clad sandwich construction overcab coachbuilt
- Length: 7.97m (26ft 2in)*
- Width: 2.38m (7ft 9.5in)*
- Height: 2.95m (9ft 8in)*
- Wheelbase: 4.69m (15ft 4.5in)
- Rear overhang: 2.43m (7ft 11.5in)
- Maximum authorised weight: 4250kg*
- Payload: 750kg* (After the vehicle in working order, driver (75kg) and fuel at 90 per cent of capacity)

THE VEHICLE

Fiat Ducato Al-Ko chassis cab

- Engine: 3.0-litre turbo-diesel producing 157bhp
- Transmission: Six-speed manual gearbox, front-wheel drive
- Brakes: Discs all round
- Suspension: Independent all round
- Features: Electric windows and mirrors, key-operated central-locking, driver's airbag, ABS, single radio/CD player, height-adjustable seats

INSIDE

- Layout: Overcab bed, swivel cab seats ahead of twin-sofa lounge, centre kitchen, rear bedroom with longitudinal island bed and semi-en-suite washroom facilities
- Insulation: Floor 25mm, walls 25mm, roof 38mm
- Interior height: Main living area 1.98m (6ft 6in); bedroom/washroom 1.80m (5ft 11in) max

KITCHEN

- Sink: Stainless steel unit with separate drainer and hinged glass lid, single lever mixer tap
- Cooker: Spinflo Caprice with three gas burners, one electric hotplate, grill and oven, electronic ignition. Manual control microwave with variable power setting and timer
- Fridge: Thetford C11, manual energy selection. Capacity 96 litres

WASHROOM

- Toilet: Thetford swivel-bowl electric flush cassette with integrated flushing water tank
- Basin: Kidney-shaped vanity basin with single lever mixer tap
- Shower: Separate circular compartment with rigid screen. Mixer tap/showerhead/riser rail, three shelves

BEDS

- Luton double
 - Length: 2.06m (6ft 9in)
 - Width: 1.40m (4ft 7in)
 - Headroom: 590mm (1ft 11in)
- Lounge double
 - Length: 2.15m (7ft 0.5in)
 - Width: 1.23m (4ft 0.5in)
- Rear fixed double
 - Length: 1.99m (6ft 6.5in)
 - Width: 1.36m (4ft 5.5in)

EQUIPMENT

- Fresh water: Inboard. 100 litres (22 gallons)
- Waste water: Underslung. 73 litres (16 gallons)
- Water heater: Truma Ultrastore boiler, gas/mains operation
- Space heater: Truma Trumatic convector with blown-air, gas/mains operation
- Leisure battery: 110 amp hr
- Gas: Capacity two 13kg cylinders
- Lighting: Circular ceiling-mounted halogen lights - one in luton, one in lounge, one in kitchen, one in bedroom, one in toilet room. Adjustable spotlamps - four in lounge, two in bedroom. Halogen downlighters - one in kitchen, two in washroom. Filament lamp in shower, awning light, internal caravan step light, light in underbed locker, three multi-LED lamps in front of luton
- Sockets: 230V: 3 (in kitchen, TV locker, bedroom), 12V: 3 (in cab, TV locker, bedroom)

OPTIONAL EXTRAS

Fitted to test vehicle

- Base: 160 Multijet engine (£1705)
- Conversion: None

Other options

- Base: Air-conditioning (£950), cruise control (£250), passenger airbag (£200)
- Conversion: Air-conditioning (£1645), cab blinds (£390)

E&OE

as it gives a full-length view. The separate shower is drum-like, with a strong rigid door, semi-seat for easy foot washing and shelves for gel. Only the daft, easy-to-tip wooden duckboard that's been a feature of these showers for years annoyed me as always. It's time Bessacarr (and the rest of the Swift Group) junked this worthless wobbler for a better design made of impervious materials. Seriously though, amongst the motorhome washrooms of the world, this Bessie's is pretty good.

The Lunar's semi-en-suite approach to ablutions sees a toilet room on the nearside and a separate - and equally circular - shower opposite in the bedroom. Normal operations see the toilet room (which contains the washbasin) used in the conventional manner, but if its door is opened and swung across, it locates (on magnetic catches) across the entrance to the bedroom, enclosing the area as an en-suite. This system can work very well especially as bedroom now becomes dressing room too. Downsides include the fact that the shower (with attendant steam and splashes) opens directly into the bed area. Meanwhile, the toilet room's raised (from the living area) floor creates very limited headroom. These days and due, it seems, to some kind of 'shrinkage' I'm only about five-foot-ten, but my head scraped the ceiling-mounted light fitting as I stood at the basin. In fairness Lunar plans to move the offending light. However, that still leaves quite a low ceiling, and one that may lose it a few customers.

BED TIME

The top banana, the big cheese, the USP (unique selling point) and the reason to buy, or not to buy, is the 'island' double bed in the rear. With both of these 'vans, comfort is never in doubt as they include thick mattresses riding on sprung stave bases. Winning and losing this pyjama game is, as it happens, all down to dimensions.

Although the Bessie's bed sports a



At the foot of the bed, shower and toilet room create an en-suite

11

BESSACARR E769



11 With a short single bed made downstairs there's plenty of room to access the excellent overcab double bed

12 A good chunk of storage space under the bed includes difficult-to-get-at table stowage

13 Across the rear, a big locker runs under the bedroom



12



13



somewhat wobbly plastic moulding to its plinth, it looks good, providing comfy headboard, night tables and reading lights. However, it's only six-foot two inches long to the Lunar's six-foot-six. This is important, especially as the ends of the beds are radiused to ease passage around them and as you move towards the edges the length is reduced.

Headroom in the Bessie's bedroom is fine at six-foot six inches, but in the Lunar that figure's reduced to five-foot eleven inches. It's an unfortunate irony that the 'van with the longest bed has the least headroom!

The Lunar has cubbyholes either side, at the head of its bed as a convenient parking place for night time necessities, while the Bessacarr offers almost-as-useful night tables.

In the Bessacarr lounge, the offside sofa makes just a single berth that's only five-foot 10 inches long, and more a kid's bed than anything else. Upstairs, the luton double is brilliant - Bessacarr's latest design is neatly executed and spacious, although I'd like to see more than the single vertical strip light that lurks within.

The Lunar lounge makes a full-sized double by the simple action of pulling sofas together and dropping in backrests. The resultant bed is long, flat and comfy, but with it in place (and as with many other motorhomes) use of the luton access ladder is denied. The luton double berth is a victim of its base's primitive design. The previously mentioned loose-and-heavy base board is awkward to drag around to complete and stow this berth, while the steel access ladder's rungs are far from foot-friendly. This bed's redeeming feature is the presence of a transverse shelf/storage box, perfect for glass of water and bedtime reading.

STORE ROOM

As both these 'vans potentially lend themselves to long-term touring, plenty of storage and good payload will be essential. Payload, of course, can be a thorny issue as it's often difficult to calculate in 'real world' terms. This is due to the fact that different manufacturers quote it in different ways. The Bessacarr sits on a five-tonne chassis and offers an excellent 835kg payload that's quoted *after* the weight of driver, fuel, fresh water and gas are taken into consideration. The Lunar provides a still good, 750-kilo figure from its 4250kg chassis, but only after the weight of driver and fuel: fill up with water, add gas cylinders and that figure will be reduced by up to 150kg straight away.

That said, both 'vans have - in context - good carrying capacity. Even so, I'd visit my local public weighbridge with either. Here you can check the weight of your 'van fully loaded; then you'll know just how much wine you can safely load on your way home from France!

Overhead lockers aside, internal storage is good with under-bed and under-sofa space available in both. His and hers wardrobes stand either side of both beds and the Bessacarr's are better. Compromised on both sides by intrusion of the previously mentioned head-of-the-bed cubbys, the Lunar's wardrobes lack internal space. Thanks to their low Al-Ko chassis, both these motorhomes feature double floor construction that creates storage room beneath your feet. External hatches give access to a big underfloor space under the Bessie's lounge, while at the rear there's a big through-locker that falls short of being a garage, but is spacious none-the-less. The Lunar has a big

rear locker too, and just about the whole of its underfloor is up for grabs - you could carry enough folding outdoor furniture under here for all on a club rally!

LIFE SUPPORT

As expected, kit levels are very good indeed - neither 'van is short of good quality lighting and upmarket pleated blinds feature in both. Bessie features a brace of big Heki rooflights (in lounge and bedroom), the Lunar only has one in the bedroom, but it could really do with same in the lounge, as it's a bit dark. This situation is made worse by the caravan windows - sporting a dark tint. They look 'cool' from outside but create an undesirably dark interior.

Tanks are good sized and fresh water is housed within both double floor cavities and protected from frost. Heating and hot water runs on both gas and mains electricity - the Bessacarr via Truma's Combi EH unit, the Lunar from a combination of Ultrastore boiler and Truma convector with blown-air.

CONCLUSION

Although both these motorhomes are multi-berth affairs, I'd guess that their primary function will be to provide ultimate touring comfort for two.

In spite of this, the fact that the Lunar Roadstar 800 offers six berths and only two seatbelts makes little sense. This 'van would be far better off built as a low-line model - the lounge offering a bed for visitors, or for couples who like to sleep separately. The Bessacarr E769 makes a far better job: with its rear seatbelts and excellent luton berth, its eminently qualified as a full-blown four-berth with lounge left intact at night. Access to its conventional (and always available) washroom will suit family use better too.

Size could be an issue, as the smaller Lunar did feel a touch more agile on the road. Funnily enough, you'll not want to be too tall if you desire to own either of these motorhomes, but for different reasons. The Bessacarr's bed is a tad short, while the Lunar's bedroom ceiling height is equally diminutive. As usual, make sure you try, and try again, before you buy.

Finally, we come to price. Equip your Lunar with the superb 160 Multijet engine and it'll set you back almost £50k. The Bessacarr is so equipped and also fitted with just about everything else you could desire as standard for £58,495. If there's only going to be the two of you on board, the Lunar's eight-and-a-half grand smaller price is an attractive prospect - according to my research it's just about enough to pay for that Smart car and trailer! ■

LUNAR ROADSTAR 800



14

14 The lounge bed is flat and comfy but denies the luton bed its ladder



15

15 External hatches lead to the under-bed storage and extensive double floor cavity



16

16 Like the Bessacarr, the Lunar's under-bed storage is plentiful



VEHICLES LOANED FOR EVALUATION BY:

Bessacarr E769: Bessacarr Motorhomes, Dunswell Road, Cottingham, East Yorkshire HU16 4JX (tel: 01482 847332; web site: www.bessacarrmotorhomes.co.uk)
Lunar Roadstar 800: Lunar Caravans, Sherdley Road, Lostock Hall, Preston, Lancashire PR5 5JF (tel: 01772 337628; web site: www.lunarcaravans.com)