



WORK OF ARTO

Niesmann + Bischoff Arto 69GL on 2.8TD Fiat

A striking A-class from the most prestigious brand within the Hymer empire, but priced to compete with many upmarket coachbuilts, would seem to have everything going for it. Peter Vaughan collected an Arto 69GL from Brownhills to see if the reality lived up to the high expectations

Niesmann + Bischoff have yet to acquire the high profile image in the UK that they enjoy in their homeland. Perhaps that's because the market here for their range topping (£100 000-plus) Clou-Liners is so small. In Germany, the Clou has an enviable position as the established king of the motorhome world, while the more modestly priced Flair is in competition with the top-of-the-line Hymer S-class and its ilk. The Arto is Niesmann's first foray into more affordable motorhomes, where ironically it comes head to head with the best sellers from parent company, Hymer. The giant Hymer group cannot be frightened of competition from within its own camp, though, as it also owns Laika, Burstner, LMC and Dethleffs who all tackle this £40 000 sector.

The Arto is now in its third year of production and has been offered in the UK from the start. The smaller 59S and 59B models offer dinette or bar lounge front seating areas within a 6.05m (19ft 10in) overall length, while the 69G has a longer body in order to incorporate a rear garage (with fixed bed above). It is the 69 that we test here in GL form, which replaces the conventional dinette with a more open-plan L-settee and swivel cab seats.

Modern Arto

The Arto is undoubtedly distinctive. Boxy, yes, but I have to say that I find it quite appealing. I think it's that absolutely huge windscreen that does it, giving the Niesmann a unique frontal appearance. The graphics, too, are

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Arto bonnet lifts up almost vertically to provide typical A-class slot for engine access.



Familiar Fiat fascia sits behind a much larger than usual windscreen, giving the Arto cab a fabulously spacious feel.



Rear garage is perfect for keeping a couple of bicycles clean and safe. External shower is situated here too.



Roll back the carpet to find trapdoor access to the auxiliary battery and charger. More hatches enable water tank cleaning.



Alongside the driver you'll find a useful bookcase for all your touring guides and MMMs, plus three cup holders!

suitably modern and the grey skirts visually lower what is quite a tall motorhome. The roof rails further add to height (and cost), but you'll need to fork out again for a rear ladder if they are to be practical as well as aesthetic. Don't worry, for the Arto's garage will surely swallow all you need to take with you in a much more accessible fashion.

Ah yes, the garage, the trendy motorhome feature of the new millennium. Actually the feature has been around for some years on Continental 'vans, but it's only just starting to catch on here, while in Europe every manufacturer is now in on the act. Only in monsters such as Niesmann's largest Clou-Liners is the garage actually for a car, while, more usually, it is designed to house a scooter, a couple of bicycles, inflatable boat, or any sports gear that might otherwise go on the roof rack or even in a trailer.

The Arto's heated garage is accessible only from the offside, where there's a large top-hinged door leading into an illuminated cavern measuring 1.98m (6ft 6in) by 1.02m (3ft 4in) at floor level (wider higher up) with a height of 1.18m (3ft 10.5in). Fittings to carry a motorbike or pedal cycles are optional and Brownhills kindly fitted cycle carrier mountings so that we could take Jo's new Peugeot bike with us on test. That still left plenty of room for walking boots, mains lead, rucksack, and all the wine we brought back from France. The garage is also home to the spare wheel (where it remains clean and safe from theft) and to the optional external shower. That seemed to be good thinking, as your mountain bike (or whatever) may well need hosing down before being stowed away.

Further forward along the offside you'll find the caravan door, which is, in fact, the only door. Now I expected this to be a bit of a pain, but actually never noticed it, except when leaving the vehicle and locking up (at which point having no other doors to check was a bonus). Like a number of other imports, the Arto's layout is unchanged for right-hand drive and, therefore, when you park in the street in the UK you do have to exercise some caution. In real use, however, I would suggest that this is of little relevance. Of more importance is that the one door does lead straight into the main seating area, right behind the cab - it's just where you want the door to be. It also has a flyscreen door (optional) and an electric step (standard) with a warning light on the dashboard (that is poorly positioned for the driver to see).

The nearside is home to the gas locker (capacity two 6/7kg cylinders), the fresh water filler, mains hook-up point and the cassette toilet servicing hatch. The walls are of sandwich construction, with an aluminium outer skin

which has a smart gloss finish, but the sides are not perfectly flat when viewed closely along the flanks. The side panels bend over at 45 degrees at their extremities to meet the rear and roof panels, and the metal fixing plates that attach the panels can be seen inside the high-level lockers. Here you will also see the conduit to hide all the electric cables - there's no spaghetti wiring in the Arto.

Lower down, the Arto shows a greater break with tradition in its double floor concept. This, however, is not a double floor for extra storage but an innovative use of space to position the weighty fresh and waste water tanks, along with the auxiliary battery and charger, under the living area in a heated and insulated cavity. Despite this clever thinking, the Arto's living area floor is just a 95mm (4in) step up from the cab floor, while the underseat lockers are left completely empty and the winterisation of the vehicle is not in any way impaired. Indeed, with the waste tank also benefiting from heating and insulation, the Arto has an advantage in this area.

Lift the removable carpets and you will find a number of trapdoors to give access to the battery, charger, and fresh and waste tanks (for cleaning and maintenance) as well as a small amount of storage space. Draining of the waste tank is via a large bore outlet aft of the nearside rear wheel, where a simple twist handle opens the valve.

One key serves all the Niesmann doors and lockers, with a further one each for the ignition and fuel cap.

Sybaritic seating

You expect superb cab seats in an A-class motorhome and the Arto does not disappoint. The FASP captain's chairs do not have height adjustable squabs but they are high-backed, supportively shaped and come with adjustable armrests. There's enough rearward adjustment for unusually tall drivers, while Jo (5ft 2in) was just able to get comfortable behind the wheel. Even after a long day at the wheel I still had no complaints and often opted to keep to the same seat, swivelled around, in the evening.

Those who have never driven an A-class might, initially, feel daunted by the prospect of a 2.25m (7ft 4.5in) wide vehicle with no cab doors, a driver's seat set over a foot inboard from the inside wall, and a dashboard that stretches almost three feet forward to the windscreen. Fear not, however, for the Arto has been designed with driving in mind. That vast windscreen not only stretches up almost to the roof, but down below the dashboard,



Looking forward through the gangway between the wardrobe and the bathroom to the front lounge with L-settee and swivel cab seats.

so the front corners can easily be judged. The side windows are deep too and the windscreen pillars are usefully narrow, with no curtains to create blind spots. The large exterior mirrors offer your only rearward vision, as the Arto has no interior mirror, and I'd have liked blind spot lenses (especially on the motorway). Generally, the Arto has exceptionally good all-round visibility for a vehicle of its class.

The standard Fiat fascia will be familiar to most of MMM's readers and, in this latest guise, features a rev counter amongst those bright blue dials. The glovebox now has a lock, but the Arto misses out on a clock as this is fitted by the rear view mirror in van and chassis cab versions rather than its previous position on the dashboard. The wood-effect dashboard trim was an optional extra fitted to our test vehicle, but the JVC radio/cassette (excellent cassette, lousy radio) is standard. If the vehicle were mine, I'd also have ordered extra speakers in the rear bedroom and a remote switch to turn off the music from there.

Alongside the passenger seat (over the gas locker) is a moulded panel that includes a cup holder and two non-slip recessed surfaces for maps. Next to the driver is a substantial bookcase that held all our guidebooks and campsite listings for nine days away. The driver also gets three cup holders, though I never found the need for more than one! The three sun visors are necessary, though, with such a large 'screen.

JTD on the way

I'm sorry to disappoint any readers who were expecting to read a test of the new JTD common-rail Fiat engine, which claims an extra 5bhp over this turbo-diesel version. Our test vehicle was one of the last of its kind and the prices quoted in our specification table reflect the introduction of the new motor.

The 2.8iTD Fiat has dominated the European motorhome market in its relatively short life, since taking over from the previous 2.5-litre turbo-diesel. It has plenty of torque to lug around a heavily loaded motorcaravan and was a perfectly adequate power unit for this Arto. We collected our test vehicle with just 83 miles recorded and so, understandably, the engine was tight and performance was down on what we would have expected. Around 1400 miles of testing later the Ducato motor was loosening up a little and both performance and economy were improving. The Arto would then cruise comfortably at 70mph and offered sufficient power to maintain a



Arto 69GL layout viewed from the cab area with the kitchen on the offside, lounge opposite, then bathroom and wardrobe and, finally, the bedroom.

respectable speed on the hills.

The Niesmann may appear to have the aerodynamics of a brick, but I doubt if it is as bad in this regard as most overcab coachbuilds, and, despite those tall flat sides, it behaved extremely well in all but the most severe crosswinds. Indeed, the Arto was pleasant to drive, never feeling unsteady or over-bodied. It cornered sure-footedly and always felt stable. Having enough power not to be a nuisance to other road users, while enjoying a fine driving position and good visibility, even enabled a relaxed drive into Paris on a Friday evening - not something I would relish in some motorcaravans.

The one downside of driving the Arto was engine noise, which needs better suppression. Unfortunately, this is a trait of some A-class models and Niesmann seem to accept the fact by offering additional insulation under the dashboard as an option - it ought to be standard. On a positive note, the engine noise is not joined by too much conversion noise, just an occasional rattle from the cooker's splashguard. The drop-down cab bed remained resolutely wobble and rattle-free, unlike many of its type.

The Arto 69 is built as standard on a 3.85-tonne Maxi chassis, which does have implications for recent new driving licence holders and for some Continental speed limits. It does, however, also allow a payload of 552kg, which could soon all be used if that garage is loaded too enthusiastically. If you intend to carry a motorbike, calculate all your weights carefully.

GL - greater luxury

In the old days of the Ford Cortina, 'GL' stood for Grande Luxe - a slightly better rep's car with a radio and a vinyl roof. Today, in the Niesmann Arto, it stands for Garage L-settee, the two distinguishing features of the model.

The garage we've already discussed, while the L-shaped settee replaces a conventional fore and aft dinette (and comes with swivels for both cab seats) for an additional £772. That's money well spent, for it opens out the living area, incorporating the cab into the lounge, and thus creating a far more spacious motorhome. We also applauded the choice of Florida upholstery, though this is no longer listed amongst the three cloth and two leather options.

The rest of the layout places the kitchen and wardrobe along the offside, to the rear of the caravan door, while the bathroom is behind the settee on the nearside. Then, of course, there's a fixed transverse double bed over the garage at the back.

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L-settee converts into double forward-facing seat for travel, but only one three-point belt is fitted (plus one lap belt).



L-settee proved very comfortable on site. Permanent table slides backwards and forwards.



Extension leaf of the table unfolded and room for two or three to dine in comfort.



Extension panel at forward end of table makes room for banquets, but cab seats are lower, so all diners sit at the settee.

We were travelling with three adults on board for this test and spent eight nights in France in some mostly mild, but very wet, weather.

Variable seating

An L-shaped settee looks very inviting on site but is not usually the ideal arrangement for travel, as it limits the number of forward-facing positions. Niesmann, like others, have therefore devised a way of splitting the side-facing portion of the seat to offer two forward-facing seats for motoring. These both have head restraints, as well as a steel-framed base, and the

seat next to the side wall has a wall-mounted three-point inertia reel belt. The inner seat has just a lap restraint. Whilst there are no steel upper seat belt supports to offer a danger to heads (as seen in a number of modern motorhomes), the fixed table must be a hazard for any passenger sitting wearing just a lap belt. Perhaps, therefore, this Arto is best viewed as a three person 'van.

That one rear traveller does enjoy a superb view out, thanks mainly to the deep windscreen - it's vastly better in this regard than most conventional coachbuilts.





Kitchen area is not huge and the specification is Continental in style. Practical stainless steel fittings and large fridge are pluses.

We kept the two extra cushions on the rear bed during the day and slotted them back to create the L-lounge each evening (we didn't bother at lunch stops, as there was still room for three at the table). The front seats swivelled round easily and we had plenty of room to relax on site.

For dining, the cab seats are a little too low, but there's room for three or four on the settee, and the table can be extended if required. Indeed, the island leg table is something of a work of German engineering. First of all it slides forwards and backwards to allow easy access to the seating, whilst locking in one of two positions for travel. Then it has a hinged leaf, which



increases its width at mealtimes, or gives the chef more room to work. The last aspect could easily be missed but, if you take the upholstered cover from the panel on the end of the settee (just behind the passenger seat) you'll find that this is a slot-in extension to increase the length of the table. We didn't need it for feeding three, but a fourth mouth on board would have made it necessary.

Incidentally, that upholstered cover on the table extension also includes a couple of useful storage pockets and there are two more such pockets on the wall just behind the cab - ideal for books or folded maps.

Continental kitchen

This is a motorhome kitchen in the Continental style - large fridge and well-planned storage, but no oven or grill. If you can live with that, then the Arto should not disappoint. The hob has three burners, but no push-button ignition, and we were surprised to find curtains at the kitchen window, even though these are protected by a splashguard. The sink is of stainless steel and has an integral draining board, while the fridge has 103 litres of capacity, a full-width freezer compartment, electronic ignition and automatic illumination. An automatic energy selection model is offered as an option.

On one side of the fridge is a tall, thin, slide-out unit that includes storage for bottles and tins. On the other side the lower cupboard includes a small waste bin and a vegetable rack. Alongside the cooker is a spice rack, and up above are two high-level lockers with adjustable/removable shelves. It all seemed well planned, within the limited space devoted to culinary matters, and Jo used the conveniently positioned and sturdy table for



Useful storage pockets feature at the end of the settee and on the wall.



Kitchen storage includes large cutlery drawer, vegetable basket, waste bin, and slide-out pantry for tins and bottles.



His 'n' hers wardrobes one above the other, with automatic illumination.

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With water tanks etc underfloor, the underseat lockers are usefully empty (apart from heater ducting).

further working space. And just because you have no oven or grill, doesn't mean you have to live on boil-in-the-bag dinners - guinea fowl and scorpion fish were both served on the Hotel Arto menu.

Storage

Alongside the kitchen is a full height unit with the Truma boiler at its base, then a large shelved cupboard, ideal for clothes as they benefit from warmth from the boiler, and then the TV cupboard with its roller shutter front at the top. Wiring for the TV socket and aerial is an extra, as is the slide-out turntable but, with both of these fitted, television viewing will be very comfortable from the luxury of those swivel cab seats.

Alongside the TV cabinet is the wardrobe, a huge floor-to-ceiling number



TV cupboard fittings (aerial point and turntable) are amongst the options that most buyers will want.

that has a mid-height removable shelf and a second hanging rail below. With the shelf in situ you effectively have two wardrobes (his 'n' hers), while with the shelf removed, even the most glamorous ball gowns can be accommodated.

The kitchen, cab and garage storage (all plentiful) we have already covered. That leaves six high-level cupboards in the rear bedroom, three larger high-level cupboards (with removable/adjustable shelves) over the settee, and the underseat lockers. As all the tanks and utilities are in the underfloor area, the underseat space is free for you to fill as you wish, so the Arto is certainly not short of stowage space. Remember too, that bedding for both the cab and rear beds can stay in situ day and night, so you need find no homes for duvets and pillows.



Drop-down cab bed has plenty of headroom thanks to flat roofline. Cab seats do not need to be moved before lowering bed.



Sliding partition shuts off the rear bedroom from the rest of the 'van. Small step aids access to bed.



Transverse rear bed (above the garage) viewed through one of the side windows.



Windscreen has massive roller shutter blind but (double-glazed) cab side windows only have thin curtains.

Bedtime

Bliss, no bed making. None, zilch, nothing. The rear bed involves all the effort of lifting the duvet and climbing in via a single well-placed step (beneath which you can keep a spare pair of shoes).

The cab bed requires you to undo two catches and pull it down. There's a short ladder, or you can just step up via the sofa, and again your duvet will already be awaiting you. The front seats can remain as they are, for this drop-down bed does not come as low as some. However, with a flat roof and fairly high body, there's still masses of headroom.

Both beds have 3in mattresses on slatted bases and, although that might sound thin, both proved extremely comfortable. An upgraded mattress is offered for the rear bed. The front bed has a single filament light at the nearside, while rear bed occupants must sleep the other way around to benefit from the offside reading lights. The rear bedroom would seem very dark without the optional side windows, but the combination of blown-air heater ducting all around the bed and a sliding partition to close off the bedroom from the rest of the 'van make for one very snug and inviting sleeping area.

The L-settee could offer a fifth person's bed if you had guests, simply by removing the backrest cushions.

Lighting is generous, with a good mix of filament lamps (which can be switched to light one or two bulbs) and swivel halogen spotlamps for reading. Even the cab area, often forgotten in A-class motorhomes, is equipped with two swivel reading lights.

Net and full curtains are fitted at the lounge and bedroom windows, along with blinds and flyscreens. The cab side windows are double-glazed but have only thin curtains to cover them (lined curtains would be preferable), while the windscreen is covered with a massive roller shutter blind that reminds you of the security blinds fitted to shop fronts.

Not so little room

The bathroom is generously proportioned and well thought out. There's lots of cupboard space, a swivel cassette loo, a huge mirror, good lighting, towel rail, coat hooks, a toilet roll holder, and a flyscreened roof vent. Pretty much everything you could think of then, including lots of room to shower and even two diagonally opposite drain holes for the shower tray (why, oh why, don't they all do that?).

When it comes to showering, the showerhead is separate from the large basin's mixer tap and the water supply can be turned off without losing your temperature setting. You do have to use a shower curtain, but you'll not get stuck to it, because there's room to move around in here. A great bathroom - and one that doesn't deserve the tag of 'the little room'.

Equipment and options

Through the text of this test, you'll have seen the word 'optional' turn up regularly, for German motorhomes are often like German cars with many features (flyscreen door, roof rack rails, TV turntable for example on this Arto) being options rather than standard equipment. There's nothing necessarily wrong in that, providing you budget for the options and know what you are getting as standard.

In the case of the Arto, you get a very well built and classy motorhome with a garage, clever underfloor utility area, and a powerful heating system. Even with a selection of extras, as fitted to our test vehicle, the Arto 69GL is still comparable with large British-built coachbuilts in terms of price. If you want them, however, you will also find factory-fitted features that British



Generously roomy bathroom has swivel loo, fixed washbasin, lots of storage and plenty of space to shower.

manufacturers rarely offer - external shower, external gas point, solar panels and so on.

Conclusions

My mother has seen a good number of test vehicles over the years and voted this as her all-time favourite. Jo, who normally prefers a much more compact motorhome, said that it was a 'van that she'd like us to own. Me? I've always been a fan of the Arto range and this 69GL has only confirmed my opinion that here is a great motorhome just waiting to find a wider British audience.



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I liked:

Striking exterior
Huge windscreen
Heated and illuminated garage
Spare wheel storage (in garage)
Double floor design
Heated/insulated tanks (fresh and waste)
Easy waste water draining
Masses of storage space
Captain's chairs
Good visibility for driver
Plenty of in-cab storage
Excellent handling and stability
Choice of upholstery (including leather)
Superb lounge incorporating cab
Sliding/folding/extendable table
Large fridge
Slide-out storage unit in kitchen
High-level lockers with adjustable/removable shelves
Fitted waste bin
Double wardrobe
Two instant double beds

Heater ducting all around rear bed
Generous lighting
Net and full curtains
Blind for windscreen
Double-glazed cab side windows
Large and well-planned bathroom
External shower
Anti-lock brakes as standard
Competitive pricing

I would have liked:

An owner's manual
Repositioned electric step warning light
Dashboard clock
Rear stereo speakers
More engine soundproofing
Second three-point belt in rear
Blind spot mirrors

I disliked:

Curtains so close to hob

SPECIFICATION

The vehicle

Base vehicle & engine type: Fiat Ducato 18 Maxi LWB chassis cowl; 2.8-litre direct-injection turbocharged four-cylinder diesel engine with catalytic converter (common-rail JTD engine fitted as standard to 2001 models)

Output: 90kW (122bhp) @ 3600 rpm [93kW (127bhp) on 2001 common-rail engine]

Max torque: 285Nm (210 lb ft) @ 1800 rpm [300Nm on 2001 common-rail engine]

Compression ratio: 19:1

Gearbox & drive: Five-speed manual gearbox, gearshift on dashboard, front-wheel drive

Brakes: Dual-circuit, direct-acting servo assistance, load sensitive proportioning valve on rear circuit, front self-adjusting discs, rear self-adjusting drums, ABS anti-lock braking system

Steering: Power-assisted rack and pinion, 3.65 turns lock to lock

Suspension: Front - independent MacPherson struts, offset coil springs, telescopic hydraulic dampers, and anti-roll bar. Rear - tubular rigid axle, leaf springs and telescopic dampers

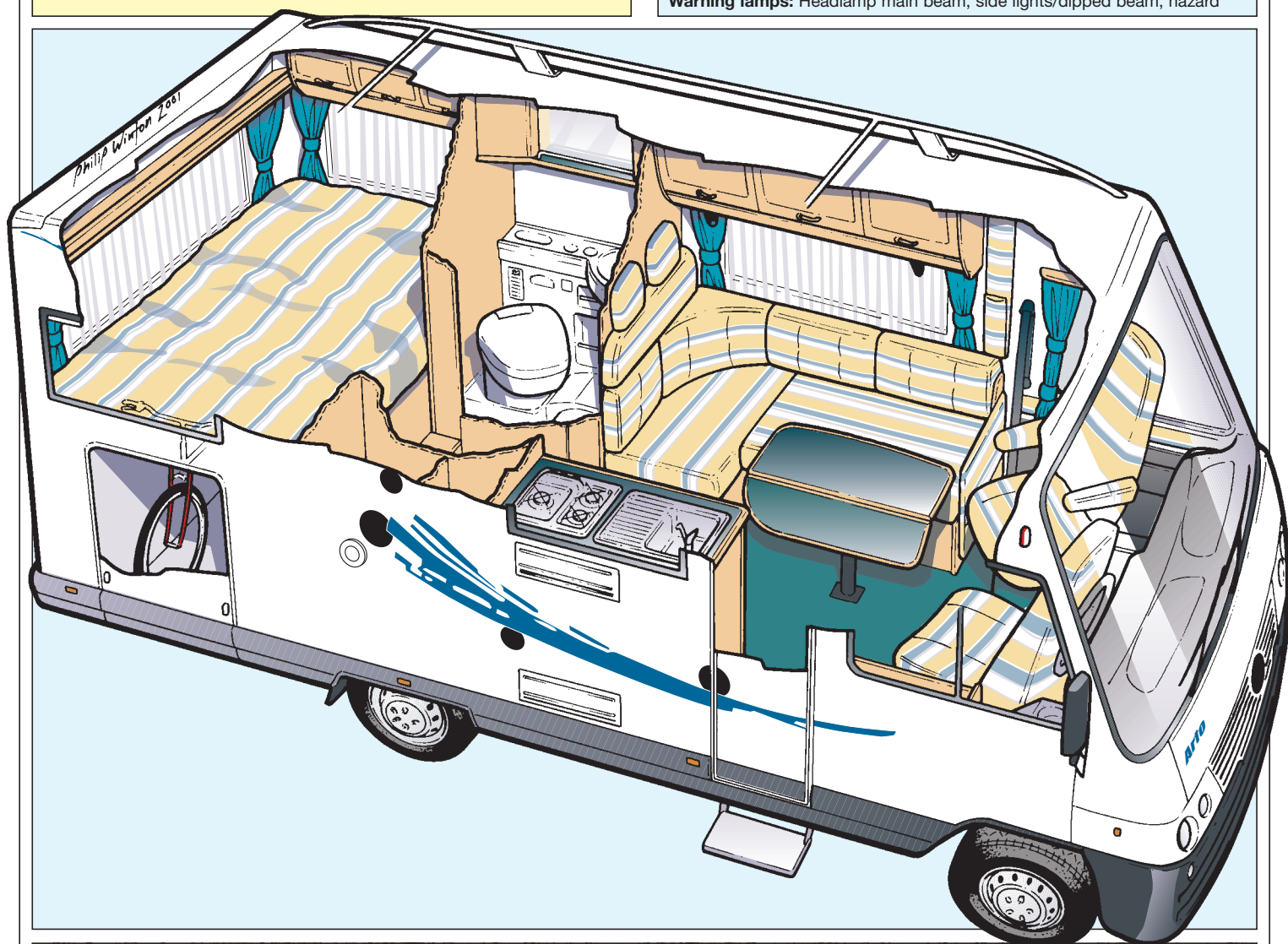
Tyres fitted: 215/75 R16 (Michelin XC Camping)

Spare wheel position: In garage, fixed upright to wall

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

Instruments: Fuel level, coolant temperature, speedometer with trip mileage recorder, rev counter

Warning lamps: Headlamp main beam, side lights/dipped beam, hazard



warning lights, indicators, handbrake/brake fluid level/brake pad wear, battery charge, oil pressure, coolant temperature, blocked air filter, water in fuel, low fuel level, step to caravan door extended

Windscreen wiper controls: Two speeds plus intermittent and flick wash, stalk control operation

Immobiliser/alarm: Electronic engine immobiliser automatically activated by ignition key; alarm not fitted

Other features: In-cab headlamp angle adjustment, lockable glovebox with pen and cup holders on inside of lid, two swivel captain's chairs with adjustable armrests, removable cab carpet, cab seats trimmed to match caravan upholstery, wood-effect trim on fascia, swivel spot lights in cab roof, JVC radio/cassette with removable fascia panel and two speakers, large sliding double-glazed cab windows, cup holders at either end of fascia, book case alongside driver's seat, triple sun visors, windscreen roller shutter blind

Performance & economy

Achieved 30 - 50mph acceleration time: 8.1 seconds (3rd gear)

Fuel consumption during test: Best 22.1mpg (12.8 litres/100km), worst 19.8mpg (14.3 litres/100km), overall 20.9mpg (13.5 litres/100km)

The caravan

Body type & construction: Sandwich construction with aluminium outer skin and vinyl inner skin, glass fibre front panel and bumpers, aluminium side skirts, aluminium roof rails

Insulation: 30mm Styrofoam sandwich construction walls and roof. Floor features moulded and heated utility compartment below living area floor

Conversion NCC approved: No

Warranty: 12 months on base vehicle and conversion

Number of keys required: Three - one for ignition, one for fuel filler, one for caravan door and exterior hatches

Windows & doors: Top-hinged double-glazed acrylic windows (two each side, one rear), glass double-glazed sliding cab windows; one-piece caravan door on offside with burstproof lock, inner flyscreen door and electric step

Additional ventilation: Three five-way flyscreened roof vents (over lounge, bathroom and rear bedroom)

Blinds/curtains: Unlined curtains at caravan side windows, roller shutter blind for windscreen, blinds and flyscreens plus net and full curtains at all caravan windows (except no net curtains at kitchen window)

230V AC system: Mains hook-up, RCD, battery charger, four unswitched 230V sockets (TV cabinet, behind driver's seat, kitchen, below settee)

12V DC system: Auxiliary battery in underfloor compartment, 12V sockets in kitchen and behind driver's seat

Capacity of caravan battery: 90 amp hr

Lighting: Single filament lamp for cab bed, two swivel spotlamps in cab, double filament lamp and two swivel halogen spotlamps for lounge, double filament lamp over kitchen, double filament lamp over rear gangway, twin halogen lights in bathroom, two swivel halogen reading lights in rear bedroom, single filament lamp in garage, automatic illumination in wardrobe and fridge

Cooking facilities: Cramer three-burner hob with glass lid and hinged splashguard

Extractor fan/cooker hood: Not fitted

Refrigerator: Electrolux RM4401 103-litre fridge with full-width two-star freezer compartment, gas/12V/230V operation, electronic ignition and internal illumination

Sink & drainer: Stainless steel sink with integral drainer, swivel mixer tap

Water system: Fresh and waste water tanks in heated and insulated underfloor utility compartment with access for cleaning via trapdoors in caravan floor; lockable external fresh water filler; gas-fired boiler; 12V self-priming water pump serving washbasin, sink, shower and external shower

Water heater: Trumatic C6002 gas-fired boiler

Fresh water tank: In heated and insulated underfloor compartment, 120 litres (26.4 gallons)

Fresh water level gauge: On control panel above caravan door, push button to read

Waste water tank: In heated and insulated underfloor compartment, 110 litres (24.2 gallons)

Waste water level gauge: On control panel above caravan door, push button to read

Space heating: Trumatic C6002 gas-fired combined boiler and space heater, 6.0kW output, blown-air throughout motorhome

Gas locker: Externally accessed lockable compartment with capacity for two 6/7kg cylinders

Shower compartment: Walk-in bathroom on nearside with Thetford cassette electric flush swivel toilet; fixed washbasin; mixer tap and separate shower hose; high and low-level storage lockers; waste bin; towel rail; twin towel hooks; shower curtain; twin shower drain holes; flyscreened roof vent; two halogen lights; toilet roll holder

Seating: Two swivel captain's chairs in cab. L-shaped settee converts to separate forward and inward-facing seats, thus offering two forward-facing seats for travel

Table(s)/storage: Permanent table with tabletop that slides and has folding extension, separate slot-in panel can be added to increase length

Berths: Sleeping accommodation for up to five adults (drop-down cab double, permanent rear double, settee could be used as single bed)

Rear restraints: One three-point and one lap only restraint fitted on forward-facing seat

Wardrobe: Floor-to-ceiling illuminated wardrobe with half-height removable shelf and second hanging rail

Flooring: Vinyl flooring throughout with four-section removable carpet (including cab)

Additional features: Marker lights and high-level rear brake light, electric step, flyscreen door, kitchen waste bin, slide-out vegetable rack, slide-out bottle and tin storage, spice rack, high-level lockers with adjustable/removable shelves, storage pockets on wall behind cab, storage pockets on forward end of settee, solid partition for rear bedroom, slatted bases for cab and rear beds, head restraints for rear forward-facing seats, TV locker with slide-out turntable

Dimensions

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

Overall length: 6.70m (22ft 0in)*

Overall width (excl mirrors): 2.25m (7ft 4.5in)*

Overall width (incl mirrors): 2.57m (8ft 5in)

Overall height: 2.90m (9ft 6in)*

Length of wheelbase: 3.70m (12ft 1.5in)*

Length of rear overhang: 2.18m (86in) - 58.9 per cent of wheelbase

Turning circle (kerb to kerb): 15.9m (52ft 2in)*

Driver's max leg length: 1130mm (44.5in)

Step-up height to caravan: 265mm (10.5in), then 280mm (11in), then 195mm (8in)

Door aperture: 1840mm x 490mm (6ft 0.5in x 1ft 7.5in)

Interior length from dash: 5.46m (17ft 11in)

Interior length behind cab: 4.70m (15ft 5in)

Interior width at waist height: 2.13m (7ft 0in)

Interior height: 1.97m (6ft 5.5in)

Work surface height: 0.92m (36in)

Table dimensions: 980mm (extends to 1290mm) x 425mm (extends to 500mm/625mm) x H 750mm (38.5in extending to 51in x 17in extending to 19.5in/24.5in X H 29.5in)

Bed dimensions:

(1) Cab bed mattress length: 1.87m (6ft 1.5in)
mattress width: 1.32m (4ft 4in)
mattress depth: 80mm (3in)
available headroom: 730mm (28.5in)

(2) Rear fixed bed mattress length: 2.06m (6ft 9in)
mattress width: 1.33m (4ft 4.5in)
mattress depth: 80mm (3in)

(3) Lounge single mattress length: 1.90m (6ft 3in)
mattress width: 0.63m (2ft 0.5in)
mattress depth: 110mm (4.5in)

Shower compartment: 1090mm x 950mm x H 1970mm (43in x 37.5in x 77.5in)

Wardrobe: 570mm x 525mm (22.5in x 20.5in), hanging height from top rail 830mm (32.5in) or 1720mm (67.5in) with shelf removed, hanging height from lower rail 810mm (32in)

Gas locker: 310mm x 640mm x H 640mm (12in x 25in x H 25in)

Gas locker door aperture: 575mm x 575mm (22.5in x 22.5in)

Max authorised weight: 3850kg

Unladen mass: 3298kg

Load capacity: 552kg (standard model)

Price (all prices include VAT)

Standard model: £40 569 (ex works)

As tested: £42 853 (ex works)

On the road charges: £1100 (includes UK mainland shipping and delivery, new vehicle registration fee, number plates, full fuel tank, 2 x 7kg gas cylinders and regulator, UK mains lead, 12 months Road Fund Licence)

Optional extras (starred items fitted to test vehicle)

Base vehicle options: Towbar (£583), electrically adjustable heated door mirrors (£271), cab air-conditioning (£1101), front fog lamps (£232), wood-effect dashboard trim (£232)*

Caravan options: Optional upholstery (from £148), leather upholstery (£2027), external shower (£162)*, external gas connection (£134), 4m awning (£557), shower tray floor mat (£43), 230V roof air-conditioning (£1298), roof rack rails (£96)*, remote control colour TV (£363), additional two windows for rear bedroom (£384)*, TV aerial wiring and power point (£87)*, kitchen extractor vent (£288), Heki sunroof (£715), rear ladder (£232), rear steady jacks (£181), insulating mat under dashboard (£154), Tropicana automatic energy selection fridge (£251), uprated mattress for rear bed (£189), L-shaped seating in place of conventional dinette (£772 - includes swivel cab seats)*, flyscreen door (£142)*, satellite navigation system (£2627), reversing camera (£826), satellite TV aerial (£1887), solar panels (£955), carpets (£205), slide-out TV turntable (£189)*, awning light (£96), carrier for two bikes in garage (£220)*

Niesmann + Bischoff Arto kindly supplied for evaluation by: Brownhills Motorcaravan & Leisure World, A1/A46 junction, Newark, Notts NG24 2EA.

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