



THE REIGN IN SPAIN

Benimar Perseo 710CC on 2.8JTD Fiat Ducato 18 Al-Ko

Dave Hurrell puts a leading Iberian through its paces

Spanish manufacturer Benimar has found fame in the UK with a range of overcab coachbuilt 'vans boasting nigh-on thirty floor plans across three ranges (Anthus, Europe and Top) and two base vehicles (Fiat Ducato and Mercedes Sprinter). Something for everyone then? Well no, not quite. In spite of offering a cut down aerodynamic overcab section on some models (branded Aereo), Benimar lacked that stalwart of the European scene, a genuine low profile motorhome range. All this changed with the recent introduction of the Perseo, which offers low-profile bodywork sitting on either platform cab or Al-Ko rear chassis. This makes the Perseo range some 280mm (11in) lower than its overcab brethren. The choice provides models in the six to seven metre class, with the 710CC tested here coming in at 7.15 metres (23ft 5.5in) and sitting on an Al-Ko rear chassis.

BENIMAR BODY

Externally, the bodywork exudes a chunky charm that speaks of substance rather than out-and-out cutting edge style. Closer inspection reveals many of the features expected of an upmarket, modern motorhome, with the GRP-clad sandwich sides enclosed by a strong, moulded GRP roof and front and rear panels - that should help keep the weather at bay for many years. Down below, equally strong alloy skirts help finish the lower flanks with aplomb, and tough, practical steps



The Benimar's caravan door is on the UK nearside, and features two-point locking, a window and an inner storage pocket



Lower bodywork includes steps that make the climb into the cab easier.

radio/CD player with a sensible rotary volume/function control. Cab air-conditioning is included too, something that'll be welcome, not just in a July south of France, but during our often-humid summers as well.

POINTING THE PERSEO

Fire up the big common-rail motor, snick the easy-to-use dash-mounted gearlever into first and you can begin any journey safe in the knowledge that the big Fiat will cope with just about anything that physical geography can throw at it. Turbocharger, intercooler, common-rail; all these technical bits and bobs work together to ensure that this lusty engine delivers not only big power but big torque too - as my old dad used to say: 'boy, it pulls like a train!' Being able to sail uphill and down dale with ease make for a relaxing drive - excellent brakes, steering and suspension add to the experience.

This Fiat, however, had one last trick up its Italian sleeve. Most Fiat Ducatos have a very high top gear, which should be great for relaxed motorway cruising - and it is (as long as the motorhome it's pulling isn't too big). This Ducato had the optional lower ratio top gear, rarely seen, but very welcome in this seven-plus metre 'van. With larger models like this you often find yourself seesawing between fourth and fifth gears on fast roads, as the slightest incline requires changing down at speeds lower than 60mph.

That old idea that a high top gear brings improved fuel economy is not always true with a modern, high-revving turbo-diesel engine. That most wonderful of inventions, the turbocharger (fitted to most modern diesel engines), uses the otherwise wasted power of exhaust gasses to drive a small turbine, which in turn drives a vane compressor. This compressor forces more air into the engine, improving combustion efficiency



and boosting power. Optimum revs are the key here, and, if the engine is turning too slowly, optimum efficiency will not be achieved. So, the idea of dropping into top gear at 40mph to save fuel is not only 'old hat' but potentially misguided. Change into fifth at 40mph and put your foot down; lots of fuel will be pumped into the engine alright, but the turbo won't be spinning fast enough to force enough air in for that efficient combustion to take place. Result: much less power, no better fuel economy, and an unhappy engine.

Here we find a lower ratio top gear, which results in higher revs at given road speeds, and

should make for a happier more fuel-efficient engine, able to deliver the power asked of it at the right time.

From my point of view it transforms the driving experience, removing the annoyance of constant gearchanges on faster roads - as the engine pulls happily from 50mph in fifth gear.

So, tons of good news with only a smidge of bad. Cab seats that are too high in the Ducato is the old 'chestnut' among experienced motorcaravanners - and drivers can find themselves stooping to see under the sun visor while passengers' feet fail to reach the floor. This is a common feature of all Sevel-built base



Looking back from the cab: the L-shaped kitchen is behind the dinette, and the fixed bed occupies the rear right-hand corner. The washroom's curved silver tambour door is to the left of the bed.

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Looking towards the front of the Perseo, we see the forward lounge - half dinette on the right, and inward-facing two-seater settee on the left. Note the high-level lockers all round.



Ducato cab provides lots of kit but no airbags or ABS.



Two belted travel seats in the rear mean safe travel for four people.

grace the cab doors, making the climb into the front seats easier. Graphics remain the same for this 2005 model with just a subtle change from red to yellow with some grey thrown in to key in with the skirts. Benimar has a strong relationship with UK importer's RDH Motorhomes and one benefit of this is UK handing of the body and internal layout. The caravan entrance door is (unlike the majority of Continental imports) on the British nearside, and the interior is a mirror image of those produced for mainland Europe's customers.

IBERIAN INTERIOR

The interior layout holds no surprises for aficionados of current Continental motorhome design. Swivel cab seats set the scene for an offside half dinette followed by an L-shaped kitchen, with wardrobe and rear corner washroom following behind. On the nearside, an

inward-facing sofa gives way to the caravan door with a large fridge/freezer next. The rear corner is occupied by an expected permanent double bed. The whole interior looks very smart with two-tone blue upholstery in corded material and stylish solid-as-a-rock furniture. Big splashes of silver - in the form of tambour doors, pelmets and handles - complete a cool effect that's modern but not too hard on the eye.

If you're in the market for this kind of layout you'll find there's plenty on offer, but what sets the Perseo apart is the perceived quality of the furniture, and the thought that - at closer inspection - appears to have gone into the design.

FIAT FUNCTIONS

It's our old friend the Fiat Ducato hauling this lot along the tarmac - aided and abetted by an Al-Ko rear chassis. As a partnership, these terrific twins

of the motorhome world do the job expected of them very well indeed. The Fiat front end provides (in this case) oodles of turbo-diesel power in the shape of a 2.8-litre Sofim-produced engine that kicks out a useful 127 horses. These are capable of propelling the Perseo to the legal limit with ease. Behind the cab, the grafted-on Al-Ko rear chassis provides a low floor and torsion bar suspension for improved ride. Big, wide-opening doors provide access to a cab that - while it's not exactly up to the minute design-wise - provides all the comforts expected of the modern automotive home.

Once you've got over the shock that there's no airbag or ABS, you start to appreciate all the important kit that the Fiat cab does give you. Electric windows and mirrors, central locking of the cab doors, multi-adjustable driver's seat and adjustable steering column, and a super

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vehicles (Fiat Ducato, Peugeot Boxer and Citroen Relay), so make sure you try before you buy with a good test drive. In the rear, the forward-facing half-dinette seat earns its keep providing two, three-point seat belts and allowing a total of four people to travel safely in this four-berth 'van.

TAPAS TIME

Swivel cab seats, a half dinette and a sofa opposite; this has recently become one of the most popular lounge/diner layouts in Continental

produced motorhomes. This versatile space does many things well, including providing the aforementioned travel seats and making the cab do duty as part of the living space. Once pitched, you can quickly swivel those seats and create lounging and eating space for up to six people.

The table is free-standing, and heavy, so remains in place, making a generous surface to serve drinks and nibbles for guests. It's also perfect for games or just sitting and reading with a drink. As with most layouts of this type, out-

and-out lounging is best reserved for the fixed bed at the rear where you can snooze or read with your feet up. Come lunch or dinnertime, the table features a fold-up leaf to increase table length and bring it nearer to the side sofa. Good dining for four is the result - an ideal solution in this four-berth 'van. The only downside here is that the rear floor is a few centimetres lower than the cab, and the swivelled driver's seat comes a bit high to the table. In spite of this I found I could eat here in comfort: larger folks may have more difficulty.



The big cutlery drawer has plenty of room for utensils too.



This capacious, pull-out larder brings domestic levels of convenience to the Perseo's galley.

◁ *The L-shaped kitchen's got the lot, including a full-sized cooker.*



The twin sliding-door kitchen cupboard knocks the stuffing out of aircraft style kitchen lockers.

◁ *Superb Thetford fridge/freezer is flanked by pull-out storage units.*



Six can be accommodated for entertaining in the lounge/diner. Swivel cab seats make the most of available space.

A TV locker above, and concealed pelmet lighting, complete a scene that sees the Benimar's lounge fit for an extended tapas session - just make sure the sherry's very, very, dry!

PERSEO PAELLA

Almost as night follows day, an L-shaped kitchen will back up a half dinette - this layout almost demands it. An anathema to us Brits can be the average Continental motorhome kitchen.

Some, who detest cooking, might actually be pleased by a galley equipped with a two-ring hob and precious little else, and that's what you find in many imported models.

But Benimar's designers obviously eat out as rarely as I do - as they've designed a kitchen for cooks. Centre stage is taken by a (good as the one at home) slot-in cooker. A hinged glass lid reveals four burners, while below is a full-sized grill and separate oven, all with electronic ignition. Above this is a powerful extractor hood - complete with twin halogen downlighters to let you see what's cooking.

There's no drainer attached to the stainless steel sink but this frees up a good chunk of work surface, giving plenty of room for prep and serving. Opposite is a magnificent Thetford fridge/freezer.

Offering over 140 litres of chilling and freezing space, this unit goes one better than the competition by providing controls for manual or automatic energy selection. Pressing a single button several times scrolls through the options of 12V, mains power, gas or automatic operation. When set to auto, the fridge simply searches for an available energy source and connects to it.

Pretty good so far, but this kitchen's not finished yet. In a dedicated locker above the fridge lurks a mains operated microwave oven - just perfect for heating your luxury ready meal, and equally good for defrosting some of the large quantity of frozen food you're able to stow in the big freezer. It must be said that this unit is mounted high up and motorcaravanners of reduced stature may have trouble using it. Nevertheless, it's fitted as standard by Benimar and is a useful addition to the gas cooker, bearing in mind that its use is confined to those times when mains hook-up is connected.

Kitchen storage is another star, with a cutlery drawer big enough to take not just knives and forks but also all your utensils too. Below this is a capacious pull-out storage unit with an adjustable system of shelves and racks that'll take tins, bottles and dry goods with ease. Opposite, there's more in the shape of two more pull-out storage units to the left of the fridge. Wire racks make these ideal for cans and packets. Above the work surface is an excellent shelved cupboard with twin, silver tambour doors that works as good as it looks. Once pitched, these sideways-sliding doors can be left open if desired and are very easy to live with - so much better than the



The dining experience is compromised only by the high stance of the swivelled driver's seat. Notice the neat wine bottle holder.



A stainless steel basin set into a strong and spacious countertop sets the scene for a high quality washroom. The shower compartment is the star of the show.



A powerful roof fan will keep steam at bay in the washroom.

top-hinged aircraft-style lockers seen in many motorhome kitchens. Here you're not constantly dodging those upward-lifting doors every time you need the tea bags or sugar.

One of the best motorhome kitchens I've used, this one gives the cook everything they could desire except a draining board, all in a package that not only looks good but exhibits rock-solid build quality too.

BENIMAR BUBBLES

As half dinettes and L-shaped kitchens go together, so do longitudinal fixed beds and washrooms. The layout of rear fixed double berth with long, relatively narrow washroom alongside is repeated in the majority of imported fixed bed motorhomes. You'll be spoilt for choice if you're thinking of one, and although they might all look much the same there are important things to

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consider before making that wallet-thumping buying decision.

The balance between the width of the washroom and the width of the bed (as together they take up the full width of the rear of the 'van) is crucial if you're to have enough room to use the 'plumbing' and still have a wide enough bed to get a good night's sleep.

Benimar has struck a good balance between bed width and washroom space, also fitting a sliding tambour door to the washroom - another space saving idea. Layout in the little room is conventional for a 'van of this size, with vanity washbasin unit inside the door followed by a Thetford swivel-bowl, electric flush toilet. The rest of the space is occupied by a large, separate shower cubicle. Again, good quality equipment sets the tone, with a stainless steel basin set into a strong countertop that has plenty of space to stand cosmetics containers.

The shower cubicle is huge and superb, with a semi-circular front, and twin, rigid, sliding doors. Showering in here is pure pleasure, with loads of room, a super shower mixer tap, and enough fiddled shelves to store a month's supply of soap and gel. Washroom storage is good too, with a high-level twin-door cupboard with fiddled shelves for cosmetics, and an under-basin unit that'll hold larger items such as spare loo rolls.

Thoughtful touches include a translucent blind to the clear window that lets light in when closed, a super large mirror with funky halogen light above, and that most sensible addition in a separate shower washroom, a powerful roof-mounted extractor fan. I've seen many washrooms in 'vans at all price points with little or no high-level ventilation - and this powerful Omnivent unit demonstrates Benimar's commitment to thought and detail. They fit (as standard) the kit to make their 'vans work effectively out in the real motorcaravanning world.

The one and only downside to this otherwise wonderful washroom is a slight lack of floor space in front of the toilet and it seems the inclusion of



Up front, the transverse berth made in the lounge could be described as a compact double or generous single.

that oh-so-generous shower compartment is to blame. Here, it's 'quarts into pint pots' all that. I know one thing, I'd be in that super shower every morning if the Perseo were mine.

BENIMAR BEDS

Ah, the luxury of a fixed bed, something I love. True, it robs space that could give you a proper lounge in a motorhome of this length, but it will be the main reason for purchase. The Perseo's permanent berth is a good 'un with that all-important dimension, the length, coming in at a 'tall friendly' 1.95m (6ft 5in).

Longer 'vans normally give you a more generous fixed berth length-wise but it's always a good idea to take your tape measure with you when shopping for that dream motorhome. You

will probably spend one third of the time in your motorhome in bed, so try all beds before you buy and make sure your expected good night's sleep doesn't turn into a rude awakening. Comfort, too, is vital for those golden slumbers and we found this bed is up there with the best. That aforementioned sliding washroom door gives more space - and thus less of a cut-off corner at the foot of the bed.

The thick mattress, resting on a well constructed sprung-stave alloy frame, ensured a wonderful night's rest for both of us during the test.

There's also plenty of room for the inner sleeper to get out without disturbing their partner, so nocturnal 'visits', and getting up to put the kettle on first thing, are easy for both.





The inward-facing sofa base provides yet more stowage. To the right is the leisure battery, neatly installed in its own lidded box.



Ever with an eye for practical detail, Benimar has fitted a gas strut stay on the external locker door.

◁ *The long and comfortable fixed double bed provided an excellent night's sleep.*

Up front, the lounge/diner converts into a very useful transverse berth. A sprung-stave base slides from under the side sofa to meet the forward-facing seat base and the edge of the lowered dining table. Seat base and back cushions drop into place (along with one narrow infill) to create a long (2.06m, 6ft 9in), but not so wide, berth. At 1.2m (3ft 11in) it cannot technically be considered a full double, but should serve, and at this size makes a very generous single.

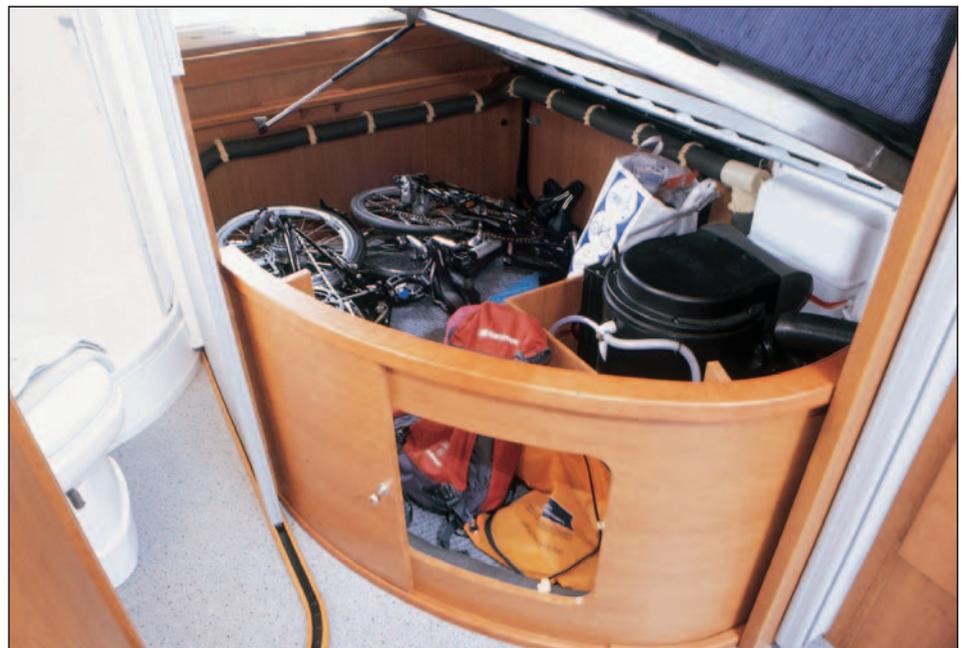
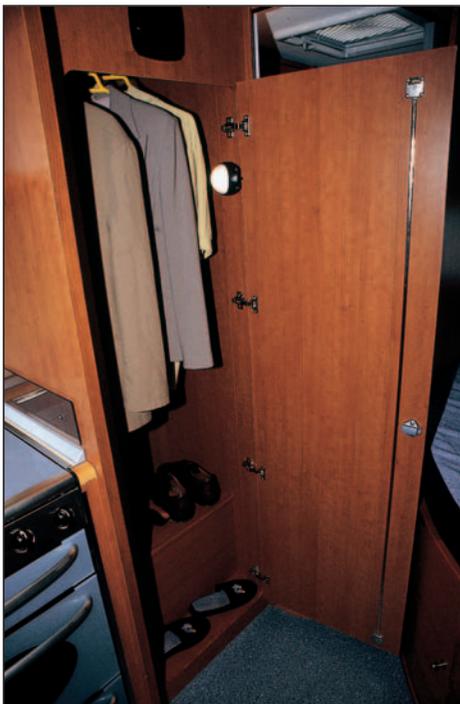
Unfortunately, on the test 'van one of the table legs fouled part of the boxing-in of the step twist cab and living area floor - making it difficult to erect the bed successfully. However, RDH Motorhomes is aware of the problem and busy solving it as I write.

It seemed to me that a modification to the design of the dining table or bed frame was the answer - something that should be quite simple to achieve.

Remember, travel seats for four are fitted so this bed could be perfect for the occasional trip with friends or relatives - and a family of four could probably travel in comfort as all the other appointments are more than up to the task of looking after them well.

SPANISH STORAGE

The Perseo's storage solutions are centred around the cavernous space beneath the rear



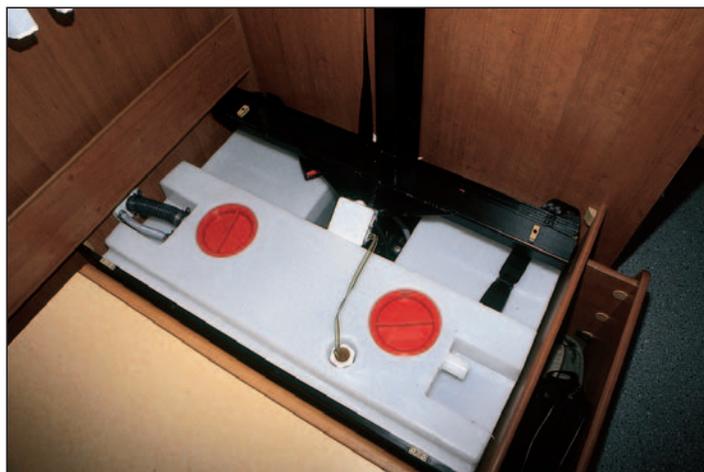
Lift the bed base to reveal copious amounts of storage for bulky kit.

◁ *The wardrobe has a generous hanging length and automatic illumination.*

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New for 2005, the easy-to-use control panel incorporates circuit breakers and fuses.

Although unimpressive to look at, the electric waste water valve will save you hours of grovelling under the 'van. ▷



105 litres of fresh water is stored in a frost-free position under the forward-facing dinette seat.



This outside gas point will power the barbecue, and there's also an exterior shower for hosing down sandy feet (or children, or dogs).

fixed bed. This locker is huge and has access both from outside (through a hatch) and inside (via the bed base, which hinges up on gas struts to provide good access). There's also a neat, curved sliding door fitted to the end of the bed that gives another way in, and demonstrates - yet again - Benimar's attention to detail. Here is the place to stow all those bulky items that wouldn't fit in anywhere else (including chairs and tables). On the test, this locker easily swallowed two folding bikes - leaving plenty of room to spare for a host of other kit.

Benimar has had the good sense to fit a gas strut to the outside access door making it a joy to use. With no fiddly hold-up latches to come loose, this door is never gonna fall down unexpectedly. (This, of course, would always be when your bounce was directly underneath it!)

Externally accessed storage is a boon, as you can get at all your outdoor kit without dragging it through the interior.

Inside, there's a full complement of overhead lockers - four over the lounge and five above the rear bed. These all have positive-locking catches and are lower than many, making access easier. They are also shelved to make the most of their interior space. The inward-facing sofa base provides yet more space for bulky items, albeit with access only through its top.

On the offside, and sandwiched between the kitchen and washroom, the wardrobe is of generous proportions with an excellent hanging height and automatic illumination.

All in all, the storage solutions are excellent,

with the kind of thoughtful design that pervades many aspects of this 'van and makes it a pleasure to live with.

SERVICE FROM SPAIN

The hub of the Perseo's service sector is a control panel that's new for 2005. The digital display is surrounded by an oval of buttons - push any one to see information about a particular function displayed. Battery condition, fresh and waste water levels, inside and outside air temperature, and clock, all these are included. A further button turns the 12 V supply on and off. Closer inspection reveals other features you may not expect to find fitted as standard.

Output from a roof-mounted solar panel is monitored; push another button and the display tells you just how much free electricity you're getting. Two other buttons control the opening and closing of the waste tank dump-valve, which is electrically operated. (Excuse me while I run round and round in small circles, cheering at the thought of completely grovel-free waste water emptying.) Benimar obviously thinks enough of its customers to ensure they need not lie down in the mud every two days or so just to drain their waste water!

Heating and hot water is taken care of by the familiar Truma Combi unit, with gas-fired blown-air to all areas, including the washroom. The water heating section of this unit has (as standard) the mains electric element that's such a boon when on hook-up - silent in operation and helping to conserve gas.

The fresh water tank is inboard mounted and 105 litres big. Its position under the forward-facing dinette seat should protect it from frost and allow three-season camping, while its capacity should enable the use of that super shower to become a regular activity.

The lighting scheme is well thought out and capable of effective shadow chasing after dark. Fluorescent ceiling fittings are partnered with concealed pelmet lighting in lounge and rear bedroom. The kitchen benefits from two halogen downlighters in addition to the two mounted in the cooker hood.

The washroom just has the aforementioned twin-lamp halogen fitting above the mirror but this was found to give an excellent light. My only addition to the lighting scheme here would be a fitting in the shower - as things could get a bit dim in there, especially when it's steamy.

The lighting scheme is finished off by a downlighter inside the caravan door and an awning light outside.

Main living area ventilation is taken care of effectively by a second Omnivent electric fan above the rear bed and a Midi Heki rooflight above the kitchen. I would have liked to have seen a big Heki rooflight above the lounge area too - as this could become a bit dark, especially during the dull days us Brits are used to.

Cassette blinds with flyscreens populate all the caravan windows, while decor drapes and net curtains continue the Continental style in the lounge and rear bedroom.

The cab is enclosed by full-length curtains.

These did a reasonable job of keeping light at bay but I would still consider the purchase of external insulated screens to enhance this; after all, screens have the added bonus of helping to keep the 'van warm during the cooler months and cooler during the summer.

One other good feature is a concertina room divider that closes off the rear bedroom and washroom area. This is obviously very useful for privacy when more than two are living aboard, but is also a boon when getting changed during the day - as it removes the need to draw all the blinds and curtains.

Look inside the wardrobe and you'll find a brace-style handle, neatly clipped in place. Old hands will know that it's used to operate the mechanism of a pair of rear steadies - yet another standard item. The caravan door gets a mention here as well, as it's of the higher quality two-point locking type, complete with window and built-in storage pocket.

External to the door there was no fold-out step and entry simply took advantage of an inner step to get you up to floor level. This was fine for us, but the height of that first step may cause some to consider the fitting of an external unit to make getting aboard less of a climb.

During hot weather there's nothing finer than staying outside to enjoy summer days and balmy nights. The Perseo takes a lot of its services outside too - with a gas point for your barbecue or outdoor kitchen, and a hot and cold shower. Another flap lifts to reveal mains, 12V and TV aerial sockets. With the Perseo, that outdoor lifestyle just got better.

THE KING OF SPAIN?

The Perseo range has put Benimar on the motorhome map big time when it comes to low-profile fixed bed 'vans. If you're looking for such a motorhome, you'll be spoilt for choice - with many manufacturers vying for your bucks in the seven-metre class.



Go through your list of wants on the accessories front and you may discover that the Benimar already has them. You may love shopping for all those interesting bits and bobs at the shows - as do I - but think how much better it is for accessories to be fitted at the manufacturing stage. With the Perseo 710CC you take delivery of an extremely well equipped product that's ready to go, and fully capable of keeping you comfortable no matter where you are.

Build quality and attention to detail shine like a beacon. Furniture and fittings are superb, and details (like slide-out storage units in the kitchen, and the gas strut on the outside locker door) tell

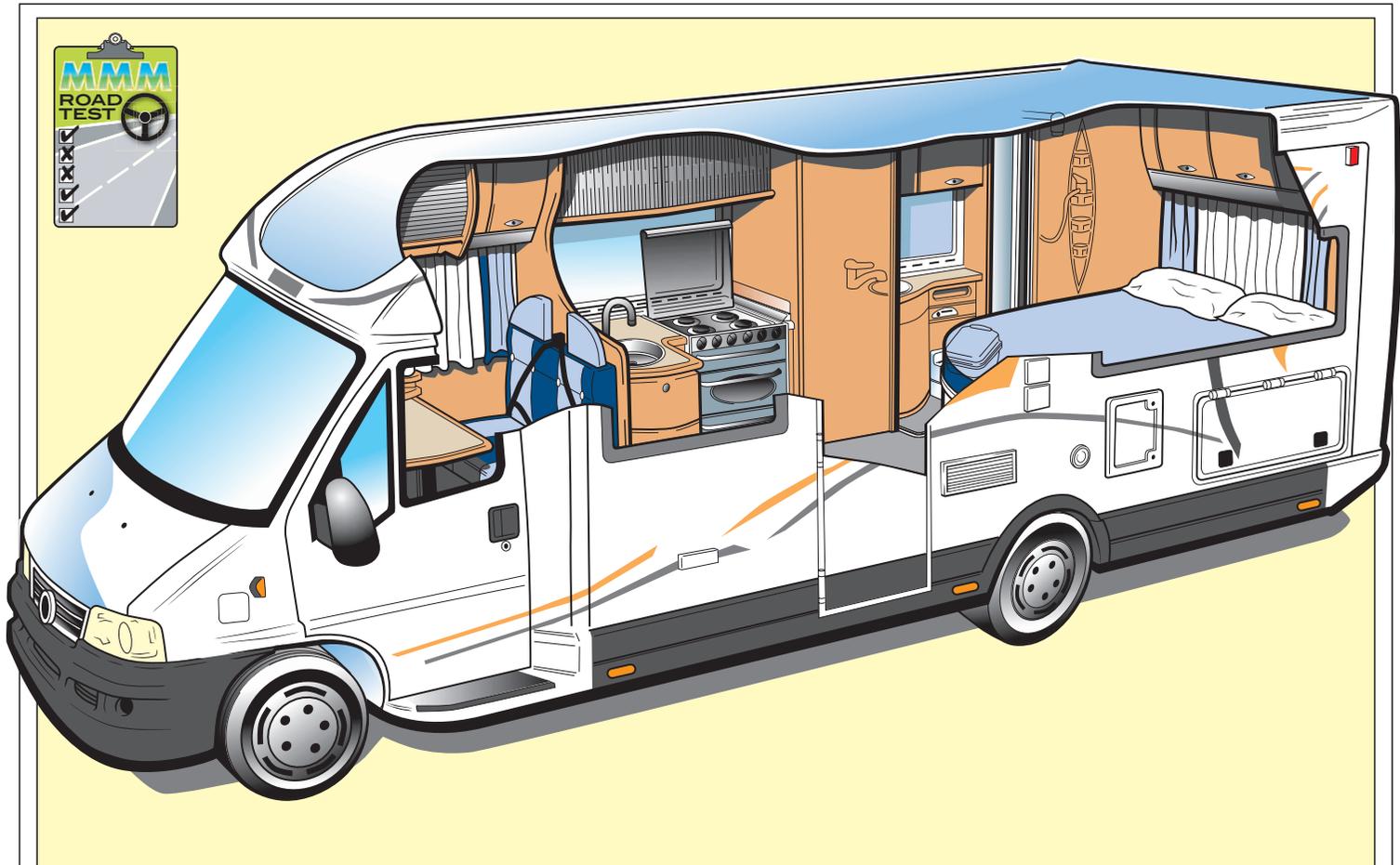
a tale of consideration for the end user in a product that works well.

Downsides are few: I'd like a big Heki rooflight over the lounge and would look to retrofitting (or the options list) for that. In the final analysis, it's just washroom floor space and swivel cab seat height that blot an otherwise copperplate copybook.

If you've a yen for an upmarket low profile take a good look at the Perseo, but look at the competition first. I think you'll find the Perseo provides far more features than many, in a well-designed package that should be a pleasure to live with. □



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MMM SUMMARY

I LIKED

- Seat belts for four
- Well thought out lighting scheme
- Terrific kitchen with full cooker
- Excellent range of storage solutions
- Long and comfortable fixed bed
- Spacious shower
- Easy to use radio/CD player
- Solar panel (as standard)
- Electrically operated waste water dump valve
- Excellent ventilation with two extractor fans and cooker

hood

- External shower, gas point, and mains, 12V and TV sockets
- Lower ratio top gear (5th)

I WOULD HAVE LIKED

- ABS & airbags
- An external step
- A big Heki rooflight above the lounge

I DISLIKED

- Limited washroom floor space
- Height of swivel cab seat in relation to dining table

Perseo 710 CC

SPECIFICATION

THE VEHICLE

- **Base vehicle and engine type:** Fiat Ducato chassis cab with Al-Ko extended chassis. 2.8-litre turbocharged and intercooled common-rail diesel engine
- **Output:** 93.5 kW (127bhp) @ 3,600rpm
- **Max torque:** 300Nm (221.2lb ft) @ 1,800rpm
- **Gearbox and drive:** Five-speed manual gearbox, front-wheel drive, dash-mounted gearlever
- **Brakes:** Servo-assisted, dual circuit, discs all round
- **Steering:** Power-assisted rack and pinion
- **Suspension:** Front: MacPherson strut type with coil springs and integral dampers. Rear: torsion bar springing and telescopic dampers
- **Tyres fitted:** Michelin XC Camping 215/75 R16C
- **Spare wheel position:** In cradle under rear
- **Fuel tank capacity/type of fuel:** 80 litres (17.6 gallons) diesel
- **Instruments:** Speedo, tachometer, coolant temperature, fuel level. LCD panel displaying trip and total mileage, clock, service indicator
- **Warning lamps:** High coolant temperature, immobiliser function, handbrake on/brake pad wear indicator, engine fault, alternator charge, low oil pressure, diesel pre-heat, low fuel level
- **Windscreen wiper controls:** Two speeds plus intermittent and flick wipe, screen wash. Pull up for screen wash and three wipes, one forward for flick wipe, one back for intermittent, two back for slow speed, three back for fast speed
- **Immobiliser/alarm:** Ignition key operated immobiliser. No alarm fitted
- **Other features:** Electrically adjustable mirrors, electric cab windows, cab air-conditioning, 12V socket, single CD player/radio, twin cab door pockets, lockable glove compartment, seats upholstered to match the caravan, flip-up map and document holder

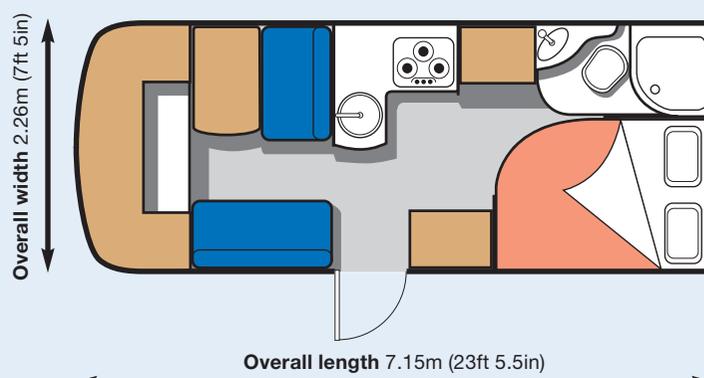


PERFORMANCE AND ECONOMY

- Achieved 30-50mph acceleration time: 10 seconds (3rd gear)
- Fuel consumption during test: 26.9 mpg overall

THE CARAVAN

- **Body type and construction:** Sandwich construction low profile coachbuilt with GRP clad sidewalls. Moulded GRP roof, nose and rear panels. Alloy skirts
- **Insulation:** Sides 40mm, roof 40mm, floor 60mm
- **Conversion NCC badged as EN1646 compliant:** No
- **Warranty:** Two years base vehicle and caravan, three years water ingress
- **Number of keys required:** Two, one for base vehicle, one for caravan
- **Windows and doors:** All caravan windows top-hinged double-glazed acrylic. Caravan door with sliding double-glazed acrylic window, storage pocket and two-point burstproof key-operated lock
- **Additional ventilation:** Midi Heki rooflight above kitchen, Omnivent three-speed electric roof fans in washroom and above rear bed
- **Blinds/curtains:** Cassette blinds and flyscreens to all caravan windows, translucent blind in washroom, nets and décor drapes to windows in lounge and rear bedroom, full-length curtains enclose cab area
- **230V AC system:** Mains hook-up with RCD & MCBs feeding leisure battery charger, water heater, fridge, microwave and three 13A mains sockets (one in lounge, one in kitchen, one in TV locker)
- **12V DC system:** Leisure battery feeds blown-air heater, water pump, lighting, cooker ignition, extractor fans, waste tank dump valve, two 12V sockets (one in kitchen, one in TV locker). Control panel incorporates fuses and push-button controls for caravan and vehicle battery condition, internal and external air temperature, clock, electric waste dump valve operation, waste and fresh water capacities in litres, solar panel output
- **Capacity of caravan battery:** 100 amp hr
- **Lighting:** Concealed fluorescent pelmet lighting in lounge and rear bedroom, ceiling-mounted single-tube fluorescent fittings (two above lounge, one above kitchen, one above rear bed), four halogen downlighters in kitchen, twin halogen stalk-light in washroom, single halogen downlighter inside caravan door, awning light, automatic illumination in wardrobe
- **Cooking facilities:** Smev full-sized slot-in cooker, having four-burner gas hob with hinged glass lid, separate grill and oven, all with electronic ignition
- **Extractor fan/cooker hood:** Single-speed cooker hood incorporating twin halogen downlighters
- **Refrigerator:** Thetford (Norcold) N145ADR three-way with separate freezer compartment and selectable auto/manual operation, capacity 141 litres
- **Sink and drainer:** Round bowl stainless steel sink, with mixer tap, no drainer
- **Water system:** Inboard mounted fresh water tank and pressurised water system feeding kitchen sink, washroom basin, shower mixer, water heater, toilet flush and external shower point
- **Water heater:** Truma Combi C3400, gas/mains electric operation storage water heater, capacity 12 litres (2.64 gallons)
- **Fresh water tank:** Inboard mounted in base of forward-facing dinette seat, capacity 105 litres (23.08 gallons)
- Fresh water level gauge: On control panel, push button to read contents in litres
- **Waste water tank:** Under floor, capacity 98 litres (21.55 gallons)
- **Waste water level gauge:** On control panel, push button to read contents in litres
- **Space heating:** Truma Combi C3400 blown-air gas-only operation, outlets in living area and washroom
- **Gas locker:** Externally accessed and vented, fixed regulator, capacity two 13kg cylinders
- **Washroom:** Offside rear location, vanity basin with mixer tap, electric flush swivel-bowl cassette toilet, separate shower cubicle (twin rigid sliding doors, mixer tap/showerhead/riser rail, soap dish, seven shelves and single-outlet shower tray), single-door cupboard below basin, two-door cupboard above with fiddled shelves, wall mirror
- **Seating:** Two swivelling cab seats, double forward-facing seat, inward-facing two-seat sofa
- **Table(s)/storage:** One free-standing table with hinged leaf, no dedicated storage
- **Berths:** Three/four: Two in rear-located fixed double, one/two in transverse berth in lounge/diner
- **Rear restraints:** Two three-point inertia reel seatbelts to forward-facing dinette seat
- **Wardrobe:** Offside located, single door. One side-to-side hanging rail
- **Flooring:** Terrazzo-effect vinyl to caravan, rubber matting to cab
- **Additional features:** TV locker in lounge, bottle storage above dining table, three slide-out larder units to kitchen, concertina room divider separates rear bedroom, mains-operated microwave oven, rear stereo speakers, external gas point, external shower, external mains/12V/TV aerial sockets, Status omni-directional TV aerial with amplifier, solar panel on roof, electrically-operated waste water dump valve, rear steadies



DIMENSIONS

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

- **Overall length:** 7.15m (23ft 5.5in)*
- **Overall width (excluding mirrors):** 2.26m (7ft 5in)
- **Overall width (including mirrors):** 2.47m (8ft 1in)
- **Overall height:** 2.74m (9ft 0in)*
- **Length of wheelbase:** 4.02m (13ft 2in)
- **Length of rear overhang:** As measured from centre of rear wheels, 2.18m (7ft 2in) - 54.22 per cent of wheelbase
- **Turning circle (kerb to kerb):** 15.2m (49ft 10.5in)
- **Driver's maximum leg length:** 1.0m (3ft 3.5in)
- **Step-up height to caravan:** Step one 400mm (1ft 4in), step two 190mm (7.5in)
- **Door aperture:** 1.85m x 505mm (6ft 1in x 1ft 8in)
- **Interior length from dash:** 5.66m (18ft 7in)
- **Interior length behind cab:** 4.72m (15ft 6in)
- **Interior width at waist height:** 2.15m (7ft 0.5in)
- **Interior height:** To ceiling: 2.03m (6ft 8in) max
- **Work surface height:** 970mm (3ft 2in)
- **Table dimensions:** 940 L x 585mm W x 740mm H (3ft 1in x 1ft 11in x 2ft 5in), a lift-up leaf extends table length by 330mm (1ft 1in)
- **Bed dimensions:**
 - Fixed double:
 - Mattress length: 1.95m (6ft 5in)
 - Mattress width: 1.3m (4ft 3in)
 - Mattress depth: 140mm (5.5in)
 - Front transverse berth:
 - Mattress length: 2.06m (6ft 9in)
 - Mattress width: 1.2m (3ft 11in)
 - Mattress depth: 140mm (5.5in)
- **Washroom:** 1.92m H x 780mm W x 1.7m D (6ft 3.5in x 2ft 6.5in x 5ft 7in)
- **Wardrobe:** 585 W x 510mm D, hanging height 1.385m (1ft 11in x 1ft 8in x 4ft 6.5in)
- **Gas locker:** 700mm H x 550mm W x 550mm D (2ft 3.5in x 1ft 9.5in x 1ft 9.5in)
- **Gas locker door aperture:** 560mm H x 405mm W (1ft 10in x 1ft 4in)
- **Max authorised weight:** 3500kg*
- **Unladen mass:** 3040kg*
- **Load capacity:** 460kg*

PRICE (all prices include VAT)

- **Standard model as tested:** £44,450 (on the road)

OPTIONAL EXTRAS

- **Base vehicle options:** ABS antilock brakes with ASR (Anti Slip Regulator) (£669), passenger airbag (£331)
- **Caravan options:** air-conditioning (£1367), Alde wet central heating system (alternative to Truma) (£1284), extra socket (£97), safe (£223), bike racks from (£228), Heki 3 rooflight (£485), navigation system (£803), navigation system with rear view camera (£1975), generator (£2533), insulated and heated waste water tank (£389), flat-screen TV (£1295), extra leisure battery (£96), towbar (£490), external electric step (£242), roll-out awning (from £425)

SUPPLIED BY

Benimar Perseo 710CC kindly supplied for evaluation by: RDH Motorhomes, 2 Castle View, Lilac Grove, Beeston, Nottingham. NG9 1PF (tel: 08707 585050; web site: www.rdh.co.uk)

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