

Lunar Clubman SE

► PRICE £17,895 ► www.lunarcaravans.com



AT A GLANCE: A wonderfully cosy fixed-bed, full-width rear washroom layout with Alde central heating and the ATC stability control system

TEST VAL CHAPMAN | PHOTOGRAPHY JOHN CHAPMAN

TOWMATCH D



LUNAR'S Clubman range has long been renowned for its high-specification, luxury appeal. The new generation of Clubman models takes those long-running ideals to new heights.

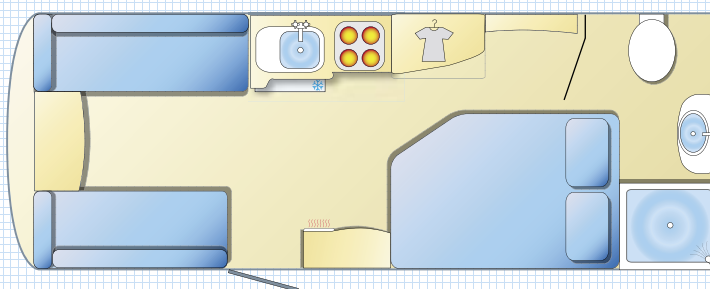
Most importantly, Alde central heating appears for the first time on a single axle. And the specification includes the AL-KO ATC stability control system to give you enhanced security on the road.

Lunar manufactures in the north of England so this test presented an opportunity for us to take the SE to a spectacular-vista site just 40 minutes' tow from the factory near Preston. A former farm, Bay View Holiday Park sits on a patchwork of undulating fields that reach down to the marshes fringing the north side of Morecambe Bay. In the distance, the mountains of the Lake District give us a superb backcloth for our view of a luxury fixed-bed caravan...

If you're looking for lounge luxury which you'd be hard pushed to rival at your house, you'll find it here. If you're looking for fixed-bed luxury with a dressing area alongside it and a spacious full-width end shower and dressing room therein, you've found that, too. Get the picture? It's a caravan for cosiness, for the perfect entertaining-friends ambiance. For real luxury touring.

► LAYOUT IN A NUTSHELL

- Fixed bed on the nearside
- Full-width rear washroom
- Offside kitchen



Peel off the luxury look and the hefty list of spec for a minute and you have a basically proven nearside-fixed-bed layout that we see (given a twist or tweak or two) in many manufacturers' ranges. The character of this caravan is a clever combination of fabrics, weaves and textures combining to create a really special environment. Colours play their part of course. The significant shade here is a subtle pale turquoise. It appears in four square scatter cushions and two more oblong small bolster shaped cushions. Each has bands of fawn and brown, edged with pale gold-colour threads. It's that quantity and quality of cushions that make the lounge look so house-like. Sink into its comfort and you realise that the cushions have a purpose

that's much more than looking gorgeous. Would you buy a caravan just because its arrangement of six cushions create a wonderful lounge? Sounds a shade trivial - but we all know caravan choice is heavily influenced by fabrics, and this one will win many purchasers. The base upholstery fabric relies on textures to create its leaf and swirl pattern. There's just enough pattern here to appeal to people who prefer traditional looks - and not enough leaf shapes to put off those who like a starker, plainer look.

The curtains are of a chenille-type fabric in a brown that keys superbly with the whole tone - and also links interior décor to exterior styling. The 2010 Clubman graphics employ a bronze-ish shade plus a metallic grey, in three



All you need is here in an end washroom



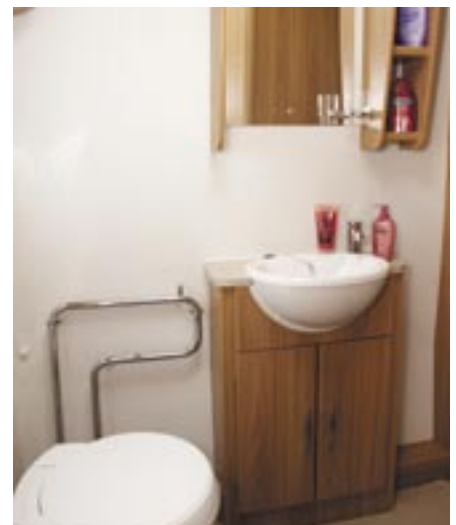
The bed cushions and cover are by Jonic Bedding



Upholstery of great style in light-reflecting fabrics creates a splendid lounge



This cabinet provides extra kitchen surface



The Alde system gives you a heated towel rail

distinct angular lines that climb diagonally along the caravan's sides. The rear gets the bronze metallic hue, too, in the form of a U-shaped line that follows the contours of the panel, outlining it in a distinctive manner that will draw stares of admiration as you tow.

There is of course much more than the SE's glamorous looks and road-stability factor of the ATC to woo you. There is practicality in spades-full. You have television and power points at the front central chest of drawers and at the nearside cabinet. You have a mains socket to the left of the kitchen in the perfect place for a kettle and a further mains socket by the mirror alongside the bed – the perfect place for a hairdryer.

At first glance you could be forgiven for thinking the kitchen is short of storage space. There's a slim cupboard between the (smart grey-fronted) Thetford fridge and pale bronze shade-fronted oven and grill. Surface space is limited here – although there is enough for you to notice the cream fine-grain granite looks for all surfaces that distinguish this year's Lunars. Both surface and limited cupboard space questions are answered, though, when you turn around and look at the dresser-style unit opposite. Here you have a good-sized cutlery drawer plus two large cupboards. Above is a fitted drinks cabinet with more bronze interest,

this time in the pane-effect bowed doors.

The bedroom is superbly comfortable: A deep mattress with a minimal corridor cut-off, and a lovely large window plus a large roof light to let in plenty of daylight.

Lunar has managed to fit the end washroom layout into just 5.79m of body by angling the offside quarter of the little room so that it protrudes slightly forward into the bedroom, giving more space in the washroom area – and you won't miss it in the bedroom. It doesn't feel or look cramped and, if anything, gives the bed area an enhanced cosy appeal because it makes it feel more enclosed.

The domestic-style hot-water-based Alde heating system gives you the benefit of a heated towel rail in the washroom. The Alde system is programmable both for space and water heating on a 24-hour timer. Alde systems take longer than Truma systems to warm your caravan – and a little forward planning ensures you're always warm when you need to be. Once the caravan is up to temperature, it stays warm, because the radiators run around the edges of the caravan under the furniture, warming the entire caravan.

Refinements include LED lighting – there are four spotlights in the lounge, two more over the bed, two circular lights giving plenty

of kitchen illumination and also two more circular LED light units set into each of the two roof-mounted lights. So, plenty of light, plenty of space in the centre of the caravan, plenty of sumptuous comfort both at day and night times – and spec that includes an alarm as well as that all-important ATC stability control system. Anything else plentiful? Yes – that's storage. Under the bed, of course, you could stow your entire caravanning equipment if you wished to do so, though it wouldn't be wise as it's behind the axle. There are four head lockers over the bed, four more over the lounge, plus four drawers under the wardrobe. The wardrobe, though, doesn't quite give you as much hanging space as would first appear. That's because its front is angled to allow for a corridor between it and the bed, so hanging width is restricted in the tapered end. ■

Photography location:

Bay View Holiday Park, Bolton-le-Sands, Carnforth, Lancashire LA5 8ES
Tel : 01524 732854
Web: www.holgates.co.uk/bay-view

Bed covering, bolster cushions and throw

by Jonic Bedding, Morecambe, Lancashire;
Tel: 01524 844106 Web: www.jonic-uk.co.uk



Six cushions ensure lounge comfort that's simply sumptuous



Even the microwave oven is stylish, with black and silver-effect door



The bedroom feels well separated from the living area



Spotlights: every caravan has them but these are simpler than most

► FOR & AGAINST

PROS:

- Alde heating
- ATC stability control system
- Superbly practical layout, beautifully appointed

CONS:

- The lounge settees are short so this area won't make you two single beds

► SPECIFICATION

- Axles:** 1
- Berths:** 4
- MRO:** 1299kg
- MTPLM:** 1490kg
- Width:** 2.28m
- Overall length:** 7.32m
- Headroom:** 1.96m



The SE looks and feels a luxury caravan from every angle

► OUR VERDICT

In short, the fixed-bed, full-width rear washroom SE is a luxury caravan for discerning caravanners. Loaded with important spec - that's the Alde and the ATC - and luxuriously furnished with some of the most stunning fabric combinations in the 2010 crops of caravans, the SE gives you a lot for your money. And the advantage of increased cupboard space that the Alde heating system gives you, because it's tucked away under the bed, is the storage icing on the cake.