

Lunar Clubman SI £18,795



Darker divider...

The room divider hidden in this channel beside the microwave is dark brown, rather than the usual creamy shade; we found the dark colour much more efficient at keeping out the light

By putting a fixed bed across, rather than down an end-washroom layout, Lunar's designers have opened up a whole trend in caravan sleeping

The Clubman SI has found a lot of fans over the last few years for its high spec in a short, lightweight body. Now, though, it gets a bedroom transformation that, we believe, is set to take its popularity to new heights.

The 2011 SI's bed runs transversely, from the offside – and there's enough space to walk alongside the foot of the bed to the washroom. The bed base is a lightweight aluminium frame constructed to a new design. When you start to raise it, only a little effort, with one hand is needed; robust gas-filled struts take the weight. But this is no ordinary fixed bed. Half of the base is cut away, so that the foot end stands on two legs. The other half is of more conventional caravan bed construction, giving you a storage area, with access from an exterior locker as well as from inside. You lose half the storage area compared with a full fixed bed – but we

Saving gas...

New for 2011 is a mains hotplate alongside three burners. That's important if you're going abroad, where you can't replace Calor gas cylinders; hotplates can save you lots of gas!

GET IN TOUCH

LUNAR CARAVANS

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Surface space is fine but the central cupboard is small



His-and-hers...

The forward wardrobe is larger than the one nearer to the washroom; would this lead to his-and-hers heated debates about whose clothes go where? One caravan-owning couple we met during our test told us there was no need for debate – the larger wardrobe was definitely designed for females!

Three TV points...

The SI gets three television points, one on the wall near this dresser, another near a television bracket in the bedroom and a third in the lounge; every angle's covered, then!

A bed on legs...

The bed base is cut away, in a unique design that creates more floor space but halves storage opportunities. Does that matter? We believe there's so much storage elsewhere that you won't miss it





Soft and subtle...

After dark the ambiance of this lounge is enhanced by soft and subtle lights around the roof light – but we discovered that they don't provide very much light

The finer points...

These little bolster cushions feature a small amount of fine embroidery on the ends – perhaps this little touch that you can hardly see typifies the finesse of this caravan

Extending easily...

When you want to extend the drawer-unit top to create a small table, you just pull out the lower section; no need to disturb what's already on the top

What's this space for?

Lunar has been putting a space under its central front drawer unit for some years now. What would you use it for? We'd suggest it's perfect for magazines and newspapers

Kitchen storage...

Apart from the fridge, food storage in the kitchen is limited to a small central cupboard – but that doesn't matter, because there is a large cupboard in the dresser opposite

A fixed drainer – and still plenty of surface space



Looking in through the window at the transverse bed!



Clips for glasses and bottles are behind those bronze-edged doors



The heated towel rail - part of the Alde system



The cupboard under the basin is large



The secluded end washroom - with shower door that's chunky and well made

TEST LOCATION

LITTLE ORCHARD CARAVAN PARK

Back lane, Weeton, Kirkham,
Lancashire PR4 3HN

Tel: 01253 836 658

Web: www.littleorchardcaravanpark.com

believe you won't miss it. That's because the SI has ample storage opportunities elsewhere.

The SI has plenty of equipment. Extractor fan (the new, clear sort which doesn't keep out daylight), loads of LED lights set in pencil-slim steel strips, speakers in the bedroom... There's exquisite embroidery on small bolster cushions which seem to draw together the entire colour scheme in fine detail. At upwards of £18,000 you expect this sort of quality and it's all here.

There are many more practical factors to bear in mind in the SI. Chief among them is the convenience of having a full end washroom and fixed bed on a single axle in less than 1500kg. Importantly, because the bed is set transversely, it makes less of an intrusion on the living area than would a longitudinal bed. So there's a more open aspect to the central area. And the pleated room divider disappears into a channel just behind the kitchen, neat and tidily.

Last year Lunar was the first manufacturer in Britain to put the Alde water-based central heating system into single-axle models; this year it's in more models. The benefit to the layout of having no heater unit creates, in the SI, space for a large cupboard in the dresser by the door. That means that, in total, kitchen storage space is transformed from very ordinary (there is only a slim cupboard in the kitchen itself) to very large, if you count the dresser cupboard as part of the kitchen.

The washroom has a sliding door – a great way of saving space. The shower is square, in the nearside corner. There's plenty of shelving and cupboard space – and a heated rail for drying your towels; that's an added benefit of the 24-hour programmable Alde central heating system.

So far so great, we'd say. Only one thing left to report to you: the SI's towing manners. Our journey to Little Orchard Caravan Park, half an hour from the Lunar factory, took us along some winding lanes and a stretch of M6 – ample variety in which to prove the balance and stability of the SI. Our test took place over two windy days, and these were conditions which you would expect to work the ATC trailer stability system quite hard. You don't know, of course, when it's activating. All you know is that when heavy lorries overtake you or you overtake them, the SI stays straight as a plumb line and the driver stays cool and unworried.

Go caravan says ...

Important kit like the ATC stability aid, and equipment that enhances your caravanning convenience, like 24-hour programmable central heating, are reasons in themselves to choose a particular caravan.

When you also find a transverse bed that gives you extra living space, and you still get a proper end washroom, you know you've found a special caravan.

And Lunar's invention of the cut-away bed base is a real star, in reducing weight without impinging too much on your storage space.

Lunar Clubman SI

Price: £18,795

Lengths: Body 5.79m Overall 7.32m

Width: 2.28m

Headroom: 1.96m

Weight: 1340kg (MRO) 1495kg (MTPLM)

