



Rob McCabe is impressed with a Lunar tourer that could work as a two, three, four or five-berth!

Caravan designers deserve a lot more credit than they receive – especially considering the space constraints with which they have to work.

Take the new five-berth Lexon 580 from Lunar as an example: within an internal length of less than 19ft, it offers a traditional parallel-sofa front lounge, fully-equipped central kitchen, a living room/bedroom with two fixed bunks and an end washroom with separate sealed shower cubicle. Phew! Too good to be true? Only one way to find out.

#### CONSTRUCTION

I've been impressed by the way recent Lunars have been put together and presented... and I still am. This Lexon is beautifully made, inside and out, with crisp, precise panel joins, perfectly-weighted blinds and flyscreens and immaculate finishing.



Kitchen has excellent work space, aided by an extension

The full-height front and rear panels give the exterior a solid feel, as do the one-piece, thick-gauge aluminium sidewalls.

Inside, all the lockers open and close silently and confidently; the doors themselves feature glossy cream highlights that look great. As is commonplace now,

the overhead lockers in the kitchen are completely cream-coloured.

The free-standing table is, by itself, an impressive piece of engineering: it manages to be both super-sturdy and lightweight, and has strong metal feet that are offset for that touch of *je ne sais quoi*.





The front lounge is short – but very sweet

### TOWABILITY

If you're using up all or most of the Lexon's 1,455kg MTPLM – as a family of five may well do – you'll need the kind of heft and pulling power that something like a Land Rover Freelander 2 or one of the bigger Mercedes estates can offer. All being well with the match, it'll be a comfortable cruise. A hitch stabiliser and Al-Ko's ATC electronic traction control system are both standard.

### USABILITY

Surely the Lunar designers couldn't have done much more to make your life on board the Lexon easier.

The front chest extends quickly and securely to give you a decent-sized table, but should you need the free-standing table, it's stored close at hand. Kitchen work surface

is already generous, but you have a big, solid extension to give you even more.

Meanwhile, the bedlockers in the lounge and bedroom are accessible by wide-opening hatches (lifting the bases is a one-handed job and they self-support easily) and offer excellent storage space. There are eight overhead lockers, six drawers, three big cupboards, some shelving and a big, deep wardrobe. The carpeting is sectioned off into easily lifted portions – by now I think you get the picture.

The lounge, bedroom and washroom all benefit from sunroofs. The one in the lounge is a long, thin Skyview panel that does open, but not very wide – it's not as nice to have as the traditional Heki, which opens up to let the sky into your caravan on a fine summer morning.

## TECHNICAL

RATINGS	
CONSTRUCTION	8
TOWABILITY	8
USABILITY	8
LIVING & SLEEPING	8
KITCHEN	8
WASHROOM	8
LIGHTING & ELECTRICS	8
VERDICT	8

RRP	£20,524 OTR
Overall length	24ft (7.33m)
Overall width	7ft 8in (2.33m)
Internal length	18ft 11in (5.77m)
Max internal height	6ft 5in (1.96m)
MRO	1,271kg (25.02cwt)
MTPLM	1,455kg (28.64cwt)
User payload	184kg (3.62cwt)
Berths	5
NCC approved	yes
Caravan Club insurance	£325.39*

Figures from manufacturer's literature. \*Standard 5Cs new-for-old cover based on four years' no claims discount (not protected), £100 voluntary excess, value of £20,000 and £500 contents cover, with 10% tilt alarm discount and 10% ATC discount. Subject to terms and conditions and Insurer's acceptance of the Risk. The Caravan Club Ltd is Authorised and Regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Call 01342 336610 for further details.

“Surely the Lunar designers couldn't have done much more to make life on board easier”

The excellent layout offers masses of flexibility, being equally worthy of consideration as a three- or four-berth tourer as well as a full-house five-berther. I wonder if anyone might see the attraction of using the



The rear bunks have plenty of shoulder room



Comfortable dinette single



**Above: tapered wash basin is very classy**

**Above right: boutique hotel-room ambience**



two lower-level beds as semi-permanent singles, transforming the 580 into a de facto en-suite two-berther?

### LIVING AND SLEEPING

The Lexon's lounge may be short, but it's very, very sweet. It ticks all the right boxes, with four great corners to drop into – aided by big, fat bolsters and cushions. And a big hurrah for the substantial wooden edge of the sofa next to the entrance door that makes it so much more welcoming.

The upholstery itself is supportive without feeling overly firm, and it transforms into an excellent, quickly made-up double bed.

Only you can decide if the lounge is attractive or not. My opinion is that the combination of grey with largely red cushions and curtains is outstanding.

I'm a couple of grammes too heavy to try out top bunks these days, but I can certainly vouch for the bottom one – I'd be perfectly happy to spend the night here, thanks to a good-quality mattress and decent, adult-sized shoulder room.

Both bunk occupants are very well looked after, benefiting from a powerful reading lamp, a window with blind and flyscreen and a privacy curtain. The only thing missing is a little shelf for

overnight stowage of mobile phone/water bottle/watch.

Even the occupant of the single bed that makes up in the side dinette opposite has a proper privacy curtain. In day mode, the backrests of the single seats are secured in place by popper studs – another entry for the lengthy list of simple-but-effective touches on board this caravan.

The entire room closes off from the rest of the caravan, courtesy of a pull-out concertina blind. This too is welcome, although those in the lounge wishing to use the facilities after lights out will have to negotiate their way past it.

### KITCHEN

User-friendliness is the order of the day here, too. The aforementioned extension sits unobtrusively against the worktop sidewall by the lounge, while a full-width row of LEDs ensures that the entire kitchen area is well-lit. Two of the quartet of lamps that surround the sunroof also help here.

All the cooking bases are covered: a hob with three gas burners and an electric hotplate, a separate oven and grill and a built-in microwave mean your options for family meals are pretty much unlimited. Storage in the kitchen is acceptable rather

than outstanding; the shelves in the overhead lockers are removable if you're short of homes for taller items.

### WASHROOM

The ambience in here is very much boutique-hotel-room, thanks to the rather lovely-looking tapered wash basin that sits on its pedestal like an art exhibit, suitably illuminated by the lighting that extends either side of the mirror on the wall behind it.

The fully-lined shower is spacious and practical, with a big, fat shower head and plenty of room to store shampoo and gel. Featuring an opaque window and a fully-opening sunroof, it enjoys a sunny disposition during the day.

It's maybe a bit too small to be classed as a dressing room: that's where the concertina blind that closes off the rear quarters comes in very useful.

### LIGHTING AND ELECTRICS

The Lexon puts in a brilliant performance here. Literally – if you count each strip of ambient lighting as a single light source, there are 21 on board, almost half of which see service in the lounge area alone.

The two cuboid wall lights in the front corners are novel, with flush-fitting lamps in the top and bottom that provide subtle but usable illumination in the evening.

The kitchen is commendably well catered for as is the bedroom/rear lounge, courtesy of a powerful, multi-directional reading light for each bunk, a bank of LEDs on the ceiling and another reading lamp for the dinette/single bed.

A tug on the washroom's pull cord turns night into day, bringing the shower lamp, mirror surround lighting and ceiling LEDs into play. The result is one of the most impressively lit of all caravan washrooms.

With five mains sockets (plus a weatherproofed one outside), all the options are covered. There are three TV viewing locations, including one in the bedroom, which is a fantastic facility in a 21st-century family caravan.

The floor-level socket just outside the washroom door is perfect for hair straightening duties – another example of outstanding user-friendliness. The push-button controls for all the electrics and the Alde central heating/hot water are grouped together above the entrance door.

### VERDICT

A great, versatile family layout that packs an immense amount of comfort, practicality and equipment on to a single axle. This Lexon is certainly one to watch.

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