



# Welcome

# QUEST

George Hinton tests another affordable, durable addition to the Eddis stable



Vehicle supplied for test by: Sussex Caravan Centre, A24, London Road, Ashington, Pulborough, West Sussex RH20 3BT. Call 01903 893666.

Our thanks to Alderwood Ponds, Steyning, West Sussex (call 01903 816377) for use of location for photography.

**EXPLORER GROUP**, now trading exclusively under the Eddis brand, has established a winning formula with its Autoquest motor caravan range, so wisely only makes modest changes each year. However 2009/10 saw a major addition – this new 155 model – making eight layouts in total, offering from two to six berths.

### CONSTRUCTION AND LAYOUT

The 155 has a fixed bed and pretty much everything a couple could want in a motor caravan, including an amazingly modest price. Costs are controlled by building all models on a standard Peugeot Boxer chassis. However, there are little tweaks

including such things as ‘camping car’-spec tyres. Stronger than normal, these have stiffened sidewalls and feature special tread and lining compounds.

### ON THE ROAD

The 100bhp engine packs plenty of torque and the five well-spaced gears make the most of it, so even if you were to load to the maximum 3.5 tonnes, we would expect no performance complaints.

No problems reversing up steep gradients either, and the MWB chassis rides well. The company’s reputation for solid build quality remains intact, as the only rattle was despatched by wrapping the grill pan in a towel.

Were you minded to tow anything, the rear chassis extension is by Witter and designed to accept an optional 2000kg towing kit (£399).

There’s no rear window, but you will know by now that the Boxer’s heated, twin-lensed electric door mirrors are the best of any van. Although Eddis may be missing a trick by not offering a rear-view camera option, most dealers will be delighted to supply one.

### LIVING ABOARD

Our demo model had the £999 upgrade Luxe Pack which most dealers wisely order as a matter of course. It comprises the automatically retracting electric step, inner

flyscreen door, blown-air heat distribution and Heki 2 rooflight.

With an inset step behind the side entrance door, there are three easy steps up to the level interior floor, some 30in above ground level. The step’s switch is mounted low, just above floor level, and easily reached from outside.

Inside, to the left, are twin inwards-facing 4ft 5in settees, which, together with the twin swivelling cab seats, make a very pleasant lounge for up to six people. However, with no rear travelling seats, this is strictly a two-person model, the sofas not even convertible to a spare bed.

Attractive and practical soft furnishings are in a neutral combination of beiges and greys that look familiar from last year’s Compass range. Near-white silk-like vinyl wallpaper is well-matched to the shiny dark brown lined curtains, while the flooring is good-quality wood-strip-effect vinyl with a beige and brown loose carpet that always looked clean.

The 700mm (27½in) high free-standing table measures 620mm x 815mm

(24½in x 32in), with storage neatly provided in the thickness of the kitchen-bedroom partition. Solid hardwood-framed doors, made in-house, are a feature of the roof lockers, sprung hinges doing the job of positive locks. There’s a single shallow locker above the cab, with troughs each side panelled in upholstery cloth. Coupled with re-upholstered cab seats, this really unifies the cab with the rest of the interior.

The kitchen is midships on the offside, the wardrobe and heater opposite. The rear six feet form the permanent bedroom with en-suite handbasin and toilet/shower room in the nearside rear corner.

Heating is by Truma Ultraheat S3002 with piezo ignition and blown warm air, located below the wardrobe, the Ultrastore 10-litre boiler occupying half the offside settee base. Also located here are the Sargent Power Supply Unit and battery charger, with all the mains RCDs neatly accessible behind the drop-flap at the front of the locker, and the Whale Smartflo pump. The leisure battery (85Ah) has its own lockable external compartment just behind the cab, with secure mains hook-up inlet incorporated.

Both 45-litre water tanks are beneath the floor, qualifying for a Class B environmental rating – for temperate climates – but the Whale Autofill water system remains unique in motor caravans.

The gas locker (2 x 6/7kg cylinders), beautifully lined in brushed aluminium, intrudes only slightly on the front nearside sofa base. Both the comfortable spring-interior sofas have end bolsters and scatter cushions – again, hardly basic kit – with storage below accessed both through a front flap and by lifting the self-supporting slatted lid.

Ample for a couple, the wardrobe is 775mm (30½in) wide and 585mm (23in) deep with a 1145mm (45in) drop.

The living area’s optional Heki 2 rooflight replaces a 400mm rooflight. A fluorescent dome light high on the forward ceiling supplements the four spotlights for night illumination.

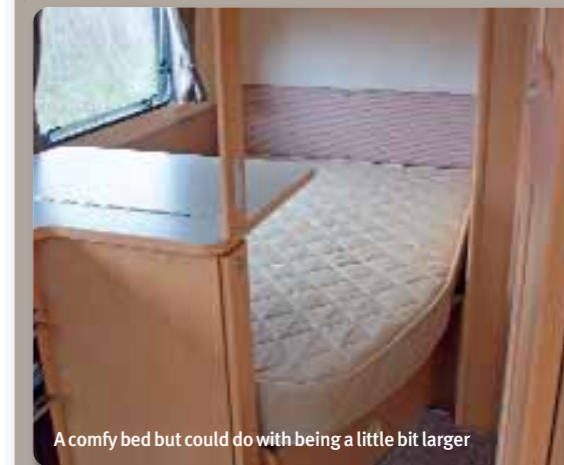
### KITCHEN

Three burners on the stainless steel hob are complemented by the separate Thetford Midi Prima Mk III oven/grill unit below, leaving space for a big pan locker beneath, where the gas valves are also located.

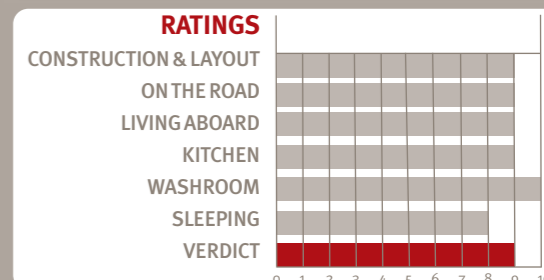
The rectangular linen-finish stainless steel sink with metal monobloc mixer tap comes with a matching grey plastic washing-up bowl and draining tray. Both sink and hob have ‘Chinchilla’ textured and toughened glass hinged flush covers that double as cutting/chopping boards. The fridge is a big 92-litre Dometic RM7360 with a full-width freezer compartment and no intrusive step. >>



Kitchen will suit most tastes



A comfy bed but could do with being a little bit larger



RRP/as tested	£33,790 OTR/£34,789 OTR
Base vehicle	Peugeot Boxer
Engine	2198cc DOHC Euro 4 turbodiesel
Power	100bhp (74kW) @ 3500rpm
Torque	187lb ft (250Nm) @ 1500rpm
Transmission	5-speed manual, front-wheel drive
Overall length	7.20m (23ft 7in)
Overall width	2.49m (8ft 10in) inc mirrors
Overall height	2.99m (9ft 10in)
Internal headroom	1.96m (6ft 5in)
Fuel/econ/tank	Diesel/est 23.3mpg/19.8gal (90 litres)
MRO (inc driver, 90% fuel, 100% water, 2 x 6kg gas cyls)	2850kg (56cwt)
MTPLM	3500kg (68.9cwt)
User payload	650kg (12.8cwt)
Berths	2
NCC approved	Yes

Club insurance: 0800 028 4809 • Info: elddis.co.uk



Above: pleasant lounge will accommodate up to six people

Right: shower delivers a stable temperature and pressure is good

For food storage there are two roof lockers plus a narrow cupboard in the space between fridge and cooker, with the world's narrowest cutlery drawer at the top. The partition wall between kitchen and bedroom drops down to make a huge work-surface addition (also handy for serving breakfast in bed!)

A 13A socket in the corner behind the sink is ideal for the kettle, while simple lighting – just one 8W tube above the sink – is surprisingly effective.

**WASHROOM**

With fixed-bed layouts, it is not uncommon to have a split en suite washroom, and this is the layout Elddis has adopted – the fixed 15in x 9in basin with fully-mirrored splashback is actually in the bedroom, tucked behind the wardrobe. It comes with a toothbrush mug in a chromed holder and there's a shelved cabinet beneath.

For privacy, the entire bedroom can be hidden behind a concertina screen that tucks into the wardrobe's side. The heated toilet/shower room is behind the basin in the nearside rear corner, behind a hardwood-framed, panelled door fitted with domestic-style lever handles. An opening window is supplemented by a small mushroom-type roof vent.

The shower tray has a single drain in the offside rear corner, but as the 155 tends to sit lowest at the nose, this is generally the wrong end, unless you have the vehicle heavily laden or deliberately sited to slope the other way. You step into this tray to use the rear-mounted Thetford C200

swivel toilet which, in usual Elddis style, has its own header tank, so you can use a flushing additive if desired. There's no locker in here, but a useful shelf has been provided high on the back wall above the loo.

The shower mixer tap gives a stable temperature and the pressure is good, delivered through a chrome handset on a matching riser rail with soapdish. There's also a moulded recess below with a plastic retaining bar, large enough to take regular shower gel/shampoo bottles. Other fittings are a high-set chrome towel ring and tissue holder, plus a full nylon shower curtain.

Lighting comes from a single 10W halogen downlighter set flush in the ceiling above the shower tray, with a child-friendly switch outside. A dome light on the ceiling near the basin outside also serves for general bedroom lighting.

**SLEEPING**

The 155 offers just one double bed, so it's a pity it's not a little nearer domestic size – surely a few inches could have been 'borrowed' from the front lounge?

However, what it lacks in space (mattress 6ft x 4ft 2in) it makes up for in comfort, being well-sprung on a strong, steel-framed slatted base that lifts easily sideways so you can access the vast, unobstructed storage area beneath.



A lockable external access hatch eases loading.

Windows have Dometic/Seitz top-hung blinds and flyscreens and full curtains, apart from in the kitchen and washroom. The cab is screened at night by lined curtains on concealed alloy track around the top of the screen and doors.

Should your night-time entertainment include watching TV, provision is made for one in the locker above the drop-down partition, where it can face back or front, complete with 230V and 12V power sockets and aerial socket. An external socket allows connection of your own aerial/satellite dish, or a Status aerial can be specified instead for £199. There's also a second mains socket for other equipment.

**VERDICT**

The Autoquest range is designed to appeal to those looking for a motor caravan that's easy to live in, but most importantly, affordable. It's not the most stylish thing on wheels, but last year's change to Polyplastic Profile 4.28 windows helps relieve the boxy appearance.

The long development period ensures its durability, and for most folk that's more important than added bits of plastic and snazzy paintjobs. You can also add just the options you need.

The fact that this particular model was snapped up within hours of going on retail display says it all. ■

