

Elddis Xplore 544

▶ PRICE £11,995 ▶ www.explorer-group.co.uk



AT A GLANCE: A new fixed bed model come into the Xplore range for 2010 - and with wow-factor style

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IF you notice our signpost at the top of this page you'll see that we describe this model as "brand new". Commonly, that's an over-used phrase that simply means "new". Not in this case, though, for the model really is new - and so is its branding.

Xplore, now under the Elddis brand, come into 2010 with a brand name that brings them up-market, allying this budget range with the more expensive ones that the company offers, with more specification. They all have two things in common, though. One is the Elddis high build quality. The other is something new: a six-year water ingress warranty, giving the ranges a simple statement of confidence in longevity.

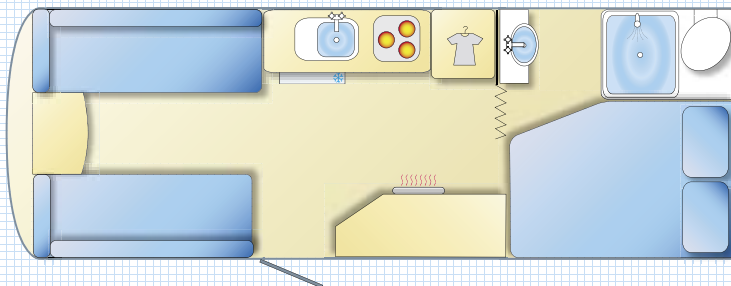
The Xplore 544 typifies the range in its new styling. But it's the layout that makes the news. It brings fixed-bed luxury into the range with the lowest prices.

Here's your guided tour from the door. Turn right and you see a generously-sized cabinet. That's your ideal television place. There's also room here to use the surface for kitchen work. That's important, as the surface space in the kitchen itself is seriously small.

Before you step into the bedroom, you'll notice this layout's major plus-point: plenty of space right in the centre of the caravan.

▶ LAYOUT IN A NUTSHELL

- ▶ Offside kitchen
- ▶ Fixed bed with toilet and shower alongside
- ▶ Long singles that make a double at the front



The bedroom gives you a sprung mattress. In the offside corner you'll find the loo, just forward of it is the shower. That's important, because the fact that you step through the shower towards the loo works far better than Elddis's similar-layout Odyssey 544, which has its loo forward of the shower area; you have to climb over it to get to the shower.

Kitchen storage amounts to very little outside the fridge but you have a cupboard in that superb sideboard opposite. With a surface of about a metre and a half in length, treat this as part of a two-sided galley kitchen and it becomes workable.

If you were giving marks out of 10 for the

new Xplore range's interior look, you'd want to give it 20. That's because its refreshing colour scheme and pattern makes it look like a caravan far above its under-£12,000 price-tag. Plain fawn seat bases make the caravan look larger than it is. And the seat backs have deep, rich, red-terracotta circles against the background of the seat-base fawn.

Spec extends to a Sony CD and radio unit with i-Pod and MP3 connectivity. Anything lacking? We'd go for the option of the Winterhoff hitch-head stabiliser in the interests of safety. We'd certainly recommend you go for the most important option of a spare wheel and carrier. ■



Useful corners shelves at the front make ideal places for books



Bold terracotta cushions and large circles on the seats add loads of style



You step through the shower to the toilet - a small but practical space



A beautiful bedroom with good-sized head-height lockers for storage

► FOR & AGAINST

PROS:

- A great caravan for the money
- Plenty of space in the centre of the layout

CONS:

- Spare wheel not standard
- Small kitchen

► SPECIFICATION

Axes: 4
Berths: 4
MRO: 1151kg
MTPLM: 1350kg
Width: 2.2m
Headroom: 1.91m



Long settees that make single beds as well as a double

► OUR VERDICT

If you associate fixed bed layouts with luxury you'd always be right. But to most, fixed bed equals rather more money than £12,000. The new Elddis Xplore 544 now gives us that luxury layout without the higher specification that puts up the price. It looks great, it feels great and, provided you budget for the spare wheel that's so essential, and think carefully about affording the hitch-head stabiliser also, you have a fantastic caravan here.