

Introducing LA MANCELLE

Meet the French caravan brand that's just arrived for the first time in the UK



phot: © jm.mortier

Le Mans might be best known for the 24-hours of Le Mans endurance race but it's also the birthplace of La Mancelle caravans. Established by André Devaux in 1960, it's been a popular brand in Europe for decades – chances are, you might have spotted one pitched up if you've toured in France. Its workshop is still located in its home city and each caravan

is built by craftsmen who have a keen eye for detail and strive for perfection. And now they have reached our shores. Marquis recently announced it was importing four models that are completely new to the UK market – Fantasy 360 CL, Fantasy 440 CL, Liberty 440 PC and Liberty 490 SA. We headed to Marquis Surrey to take a look.

La Mancelle Fantasy 360 CL £27,995 plus £995 delivery



The wood-effect graphics on the exterior are so authentic, they fooled us until we got really close – combine this with the gentle curves and feature porthole-style windows and you've got classic retro appeal. We could see these caravans being particularly popular with those who like to think 'outside the box'. The Fantasy 360 CL perfectly demonstrates how to maximise space. It measures 5.53m in length and sleeps three with a fixed bed to the rear and a dinette/lounge that converts into a single bed (measuring 1.9m by 1.1m) making it a good choice for either a small family, occasional guests or an escape from a snoring partner! All being well though, the fixed bed with foam mattress measuring 1.9m by 1.4m offers plenty of space for a couple and this area can be separated from the rest of the caravan using the concertina-style divide.

There's a handy cubbyhole on one side of the bed, in which you'll find sockets for electrical gadgets, and of course you can stow them safely there when not in use. A feature panel with grey geometric pattern runs around two sides of the bed, a detail that's highly decorative. Lockers above the bed are flush fit with contrasting cream and light oak

La Mancelle Fantaisy 440 CL £29,995 plus £995 delivery

The four-berth Fantaisy 440 CL is a great choice for a small family with an extra 880mm in its length compared to the 360 CL. There's a fixed island bed and a dinette that converts into a double, too, which accounts for the extra length, and it's easy to make up the bed thanks to the pull-out steel mechanism and the cushions to create the 'mattress'.

As with the 360 CL, the rear double is elevated, with two shelves below the foot of the bed in which to store your night-time reading, perhaps. Lockers sit above the bedhead, with two slim wardrobes to each side ensuring that no one has more space than the other. Keep mobile phones and other small items in the cubbyholes which are located on either side of the bed, where you'll also find a USB/mains socket and there are reading lights above the bed

should you want to read another chapter while your partner dozes...

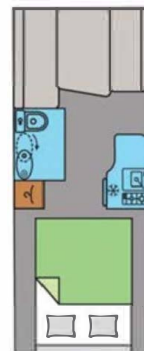
This is a really light, bright bedroom area with a window at the bedhead and three porthole-style windows which frame a beautiful view, allowing you to enjoy the scenery without leaving your bed. There's two handy coat hooks where we'd picture soft, fluffy robes hanging to pop on after taking your morning shower in the spa-like washroom.

You'll find the kitchen and washroom occupy the central area of the caravan and take on the same configuration as the 360CL.

Both of the Fantaisy models come with Al-Ko heavy duty corner steadies, external gas barbecue point, LED awning light, 100% low-energy LED lighting, Truma iNet X control panel and lots more.

fact file

- Berths 4
- Length Overall 6.41m
- Width 2.05m
- Height 2.58m
- Heating system Truma
- Weight MIRO 1,012kg MTPLM 1,420kg



cabinetry with soft-close catches and chrome handles. You can dine in the dinette area – it's compact but you can fit four, although it's more comfortable for two. You'll find three lockers here in the same style as the bedroom and, in addition to the large window, there's two porthole windows to keep this airy, light and bright.

The upholstery is made with fire-retardant Belgian fabric which is stylish and simple. You'll get two coordinating scatter cushions as part of the package. You won't find fussy curtains, instead it's Seitz blinds with flyscreens on all windows – Seitz is part of the Dometic group so you can be assured of the quality.

The kitchen is really modern with a Webasto Isotherm 85l fridge with freezer box – Webasto originally began making fridges for the marine industry but moved into the caravan and motorhome market more recently, although you might not have come across them in any British models as they tend to be built for slimmer kitchen units. It's silver and, for us, that's a nice touch.

Continuing the metallic theme, we've got the Thetford Argent stainless-steel sink with chrome-



effect kitchen tap that can be swivelled either towards the sink or away, depending on what you're doing. There's also a two-burner hob for cooking meals and, above it, a Dometic extractor hood with light and digital clock display.

Onto the washroom, and the swivel sink is an ingenious twist to provide more room – it's an oval shape and the shower features contrasting panels and a couple of spotlights casting a light glow when you're winding down after a long day. The chrome-finish fittings make this feel more like a domestic bathroom, stylish and understated.

fact file

- Berths 3
- Length Overall 5.53m
- Width 2.05m
- Height 2.58m
- Heating system Truma
- Weight MIRO 917kg MTPLM 1,420kg



TESTED | LA MANCELLE RANGE

La Mancelle Liberty 440 PC £37,995 plus £995 delivery



fact file

- Berths 4
- Length Overall 6.38m
- Width 2.25m
- Height 2.58m
- Heating system Alde
- Weight MIRO 1,258kg MTPLM 1,800kg



The Liberty range is a unique offering and looks unlike anything else you'll find on the market here in the UK. And that's why we love it. The exterior has been given the same treatment as the Fantaisy range with wood-effect graphics and the nose end is curved – a little like a horsebox shape, and once you step inside you'll be wowed by what you find there.

First up, we look at the Liberty 440 PC – it's got a fixed double at the rear and a dinette that converts into a double bed measuring 2.1m by 1.5m. And what a dinette it is! With wraparound horseshoe-shaped seating and a telescopic table that can be moved around to suit and, which also becomes part of the bed base, no space is wasted.

It's an ingenious design and the area is flooded with natural light due to the large

triangular window above the seating and two further side windows. It's extremely comfortable, a spot to sit, relax and watch the world go by. There's a handy curved shelf where you can keep items you might need easy access to when you're in the lounge.

And moving into the kitchen, there's a Thetford oven/grill with three-burner gas hob and hotplate with a branded glass splashback to the left for ease of cleaning. Above it, the Dometic extractor fan with light and digital clock display will keep the 'van free of condensation and minimise smells when you're cooking.

The Thetford T2152 compressor fridge with freezer compartment has a capacity of 150l, which is more than enough room

for at least a week's worth of supplies. Storage is in abundance here and all have soft-close hinges, which is good if you're a bit heavy handed (like us!).

Heading to the washroom now, which is at the rear of the caravan – it's adjacent to the bed and more like an en suite, with the shower and toilet in the far corner and the vanity unit with soft lighting and white oval basin. There's also additional storage for bottles of shampoo and the like in the form of a large under-sink cupboard and two shelves. It feels like the sort of place you'd be happy to get ready for a night out. Everything here is bright and luxurious, with all the thoughtful details you'd expect in a caravan of this class.



TESTED | LA MANCELLE RANGE

La Mancelle Liberty 490 SA £39,995 plus £995 delivery

Coming in at just short of £40,000, the Liberty 490 SA is the most premium of the La Mancelle range stocked by Marquis. This four-berth model has a fixed island bed and, as in the 440 PC, the dinette converts simply into a double bed using the tabletop as a bed base.

This layout differs from its sister model, however, as both the washroom and kitchen are amidships here and it's slightly longer, too (roughly 330mm) – both combined ensure that the bedroom area of the 490 SA feels extremely spacious creating a tranquil area to relax in while you're away, with lockers above and to the side of the bed. The mattress is a foam construction giving that all-important home-from-home feel that makes you sigh with happiness when your head hits the pillow at night. All four of the La Mancelle models have the cubbyholes – they are much larger than we've seen in most UK models and one of our favourite features showing how much thought has gone into the design – not just considering how it looks, but how it's lived in, too.

The sweeping horseshoe-shaped seating that's the trademark feature of the Liberty line-up is a pleasing arrangement of contrasting Belgian fabrics, here shown in the cream and teal colourway (you can discuss other options with your dealer) with two cushions included. There's a curved corner unit plus a locker above, and two plug sockets and two



USB ports, which means this area could become your own entertainment hub.

Wherever you choose to sit or stand in this caravan, you'll see evidence of master craftsmanship, from smooth edges to clean joints. Care has been taken to ensure nothing is out of place.

Thinking about making dinner? Enjoy using the kitchen with plenty of space for meal prep, including a worktop extension which features in this model only. The Argent stainless-steel sink is easy to keep clean and domestic in style, and the Thetford T2152 compressor 150l fridge with freezer compartment is perfect for storing ingredients for family meals (and



wine). The Thetford oven/grill with three burners and a hotplate completes the kitchen appliances. A microwave isn't part of the offering but that's not a deal-breaker for us as there is space to accommodate one.

And, when you're ready to wind down, why not head to the fully lined washroom to take a shower? There's plenty of space to store your lotions and potions – there's a cupboard above the Thetford swivel toilet and two little shelves plus chrome towel holder and soap dish holder. It feels spacious and the lighting is extremely flattering; something those of us getting a bit older will welcome!

fact file

- Berths 4
- Length Overall 6.71m
- Width 2.25m
- Height 2.58m
- Heating system Alde
- Weight MIRO 1,328kg MTPLM 1,800kg



ALL NEW
CARAVAN
RANGE



LAMANCELLE
CARAVANS



Fantasy

2 LAYOUTS



Liberty

2 LAYOUTS



TRADITIONAL VALUES MODERN STYLING

Marquis Leisure are pleased to introduce all-new and exclusive caravan ranges from La Mancelle. These high-end caravans, made with passion in their Le Mans facilities, perpetuate the idea of French craftsmanship with quality and outstanding finishes. This exciting brand dares and renews itself constantly to offer you innovation, style and comfort.

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