

## PANAMA P12

If you're looking for a camper that can ferry the whole family about during the week, the new P12 might be the answer, says Peter Baber

The Panama campervan range that Marquis Leisure took on relatively recently is produced in Peñíscola, in eastern Spain.

As a new company, Panama can do things rather differently, and one of the first things you'll notice about the P12 is that it is based on the Ford Tourneo Custom, rather than the Transit.

This means Panama can offer the option of having seven seats, making it easy to adapt for day-to-day use.

Our test model, which had five seats, also came with Ford's great new cab, which boasts a central cabinet containing drinks holders and USB and USB-C ports, which you can shut away neatly with a tambour door.

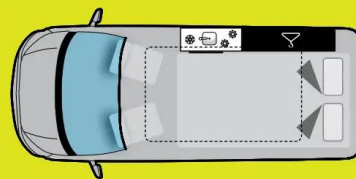
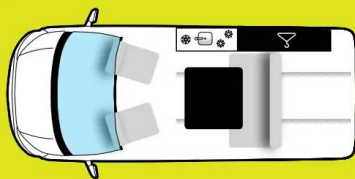
There is a huge infotainment screen, and we particularly liked the slightly square steering wheel, reminiscent of early-generation games consoles.

Another pleasing sight is that the driver's seat can be swivelled right around with no obstructions. The cab seats and the three belted seats in the rear lounge surround a table that clips on and has four legs – it can be put in different positions or used outside.

This area is well lit at night, thanks to dimmable lights in the panel below the roofbed. You also get even more USBs, to the left of the bench seat and on the right of the bench next to the Webasto diesel heater control panel above the side kitchen unit. Here you will find a 12V socket and a mains socket – the latter handily inverted.

Unlike its lengthier sibling, the P57 (which is 5.44m long), there is only cold water in the small kitchen sink, and you only get a two-burner hob (powered by a 2.8kg bottle). But they do have separate glass covers, so you

**Price** £59,995  
**Sleeps** 4 **Belts** 5 (option for 7)  
**Base vehicle** Ford Tourneo Custom  
**Engine** 2.2-litre, 140bhp  
**Length/width/height** 5.04/2.28/2.06m (16'5"/7'5"/6'8")  
**MTPLM** 3175kg  
**MiRO** 2558kg  
**Payload** 617kg  
**Water (fresh/waste)** 50/32 litres  
**Leisure battery** 90Ah  
**Gas** 1 x 2.8kg



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could put one down without obstructing the other, to maximise the worktop.

There is no striplight, but ample light comes from the LEDs that are located underneath the roof bed.

There's no washroom, but one of the cupboards is big enough to hold a Porta Potti (included in the overall price).

The rock and roll bed is very simple to manoeuvre, thanks to the red lever that is easy to spot against the charcoal seat covers. The headrests fit snugly into the holes designed to meet them, but a single mattress comes over the lot, so you never

have to put up with uncomfortable gaps. This bed can also become a daybed, because the backrest can be positioned at different angles as required.

The roof bed can be accessed via a ladder. Unfortunately, this is stowed in the only hanging wardrobe in the 'van. But we were glad to see that the roof fastens with solid metal brackets, rather than buckles, even if they were slightly fiddly to manipulate at first.

In contrast, the cloth panel you can use to seal off the roof bed area is easy to fasten from either side.

up close



Ford's great new cab provides a huge infotainment screen



LEFT Three belted travel seats, and there's the option for two more

RIGHT Clever design touches include inverted mains socket



RIGHT There's no washroom, but you can store a Porta Potti in one of the cupboards







**1** Sturdy clip-on table has four legs and can be used outside as well

**2** Work surface is slightly limited in the kitchen, but storage is good

**3** Wrap-around mesh window offers plenty of ventilation



Once you are up there, you will find a comfortable bed, with a sprung and slatted base, that is over 2m long, with a wraparound mesh window at the front and a smaller one down the side.

You also get a swan-neck reading light with a USB at its base. The roof bed has a weight limit of 175kg, so could potentially accommodate two adults.

The bench seat slides forward, providing a generous amount of space for storing larger items while you're on the move.

This camper has no drawer under the bench, which means you should also

have additional room for accommodating really long items, such as surfboards.

While part of the wardrobe is taken up with the ladder, you still get some space for hanging clothes, and there's more wardrobe space further back that will generally be behind the rear seat.

As for kitchen storage, besides the 42-litre fridge, there is a small locker and a cutlery drawer in the cupboard that also houses the Porta Potti below another shelf. There are two handy cubbyholes here, too. If you're a keen cook, you might find the limited storage

space in the kitchen slightly inconvenient. But if that's the case, we would suggest leaving the Porta Potti at home, to give you some useful extra space.

### PRACTICAL CAMPERVAN SAYS...

We'd prefer to have slightly more kitchen storage space, but if you're looking for a vehicle that can transport your large family during the week and work as a campervan at the weekend, the P12 is a strong contender. It's at a great price, and the features that matter in a camper (such as the roofbed clasps) are well made.

★★★★☆



Comfortable rock and roll bed is easily manoeuvred



The side unit features a number of tambour-door cupboards



Some of the wardrobe space is taken up by the ladder



Slide the bench seat forward to store longer items such as surfboards