



Rachel Scholes

Pocket rocket

Mobilvetta packs plenty of Italian flair into its most compact motorhome



MOBILVETTA KEA KOMPAKT 55

Price from: £79,995 • Berths: 4 • Travel seats: 4
Length: 6.39m • Gross weight: 3,500kg

Motorhome supplied by: Marquis Motorhomes [W marquisleisure.co.uk](http://www.marquisleisure.co.uk)



It's a massive front lounge for the size, with sofas that convert into two extra travel seats

It's my first trip out in a Mobilvetta motorhome. And the Kea Kompakt is the perfect one for me. Narrow and not too long, just the way I like it.

Mobilvetta is a firm that is more known for its premium offerings here in the UK. That includes the K-Yacht models, but this model is a more entry-level option. It still has the company's black decals, here much blockier than in the other ranges. However, it works well with the stark white body and black cab.

Judicious use of black trim on the bumpers and grille give it a distinctive look up front. And I like the way the Mobilvetta badge on the bumper complements the Fiat cheese grater grille well.

Flush windows give it a more premium look. And the black framed locker doors add to the overall scheme. Its bold look gives it more presence than a smaller motorhome usually has.

FLIPPING BRILLIANT

What's interesting to note here is that the door is on the UK side, which means the continental layout has been flipped for the UK market.

So, stepping inside it's a fairly conventional set-up. There's a big front lounge with twin inward-facing sofas, what we call face-to-face, commonly. The kitchen is central and then the washroom is across the back.

The rise of this layout has been brought about by the addition of drop-down beds to low-profiles. This basically provided the much-needed fixed bed without having to sacrifice living space or extend the length of the vehicle. The Europeans have really run with this layout, with more offerings than ever before, as well as British-built options.

But, because that layout has been flipped to suit the door being on the UK side, that makes it pretty unusual.

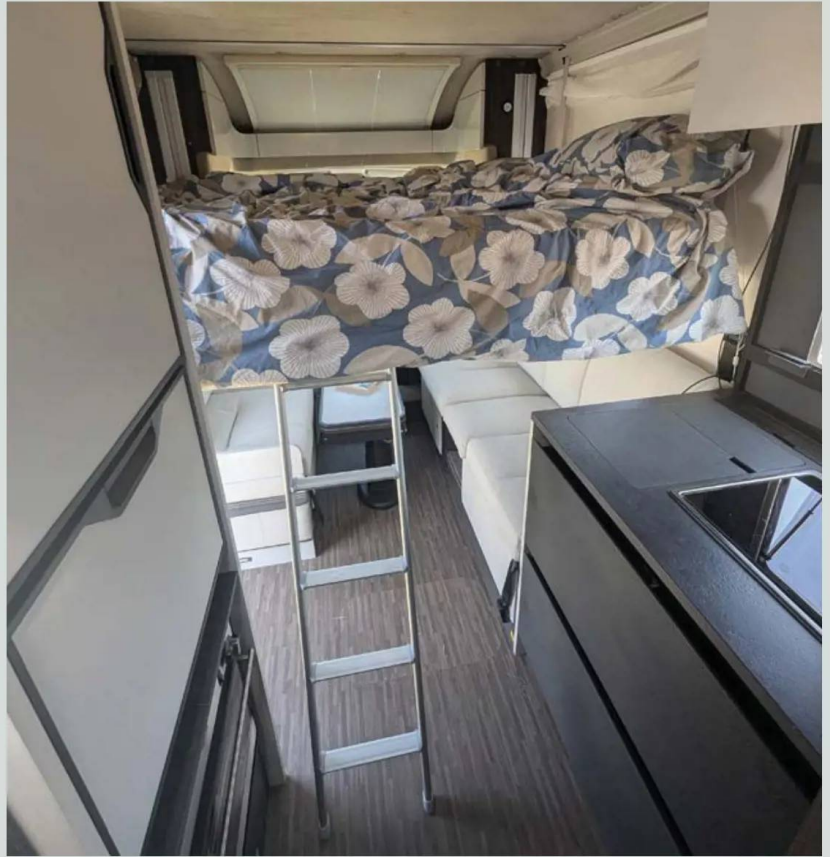
DRIVING

When I picked up the 'van, the first impression was of space, but I was even more impressed by the way it drives. Thanks to that long-wheelbase and wide-track chassis, it handles really well. Bumpy, twisty roads were no problem at all. The cab layout is OK, but we all know I prefer the way the Ford drives, the seating position and the cab environment. That said, I relaxed into driving this vehicle really easily. The seats are a little higher on Fiat Ducato and sister models so if you are slightly shorter than me (5ft 3in), check out the driving position first.

The one downside to the drive is the drop-down bed that creaks ominously when on corners and over bumps. While there is a little chattering from the rear, the first thing I would ask the dealer to sort out is the fixing points for the side cab blinds. This noise was annoying and constant while driving.



The garage has doors at either end



With the drop-down bed set at half height, you could make the lounge into extra berths

LOUNGE FOR TWO OR MORE

Up front there is a long sofa opposite the door with a shorter sofa opposite. The cab seats swivel around to face these. There are on a higher level than the sofas, but there is a step here to rest your feet. But the likelihood is that, as this is a two-berth, you'll probably use the cab seats – with armrests – feet up on the sofas watching the TV from the point by the door.

The main seats themselves are actually quite comfy, not too high, not too deep and a decent-height backrest.

The small coffee table, which can be set electrically at any height, slides fore and aft – two handles underneath secure it in place. A third handle allows the tabletop to swivel by 90 degrees. You then simply unfold it to make a bigger dining table.

These sofas also make into travel seats. Remove the middle cushions

and their wood supports, pivot the backrest support from against the wall and slot in the headrests.

What's great with both of these is that they have a raised floor section in front of each, meaning good foot support to passengers.

The only downside to this lounge area is the storage as the under-seat space is taken up by water tanks, electrics and the boiler. There are two lockers in the overcab that I used for books and a small Lego set, but that's about it. There's no lockers under the bed, but this allows the bed to come down to almost seat height, so that's OK.

BED COMES SECOND

That drop-down bed is electric. It lowers at the press of a button, a very discreet button. This small black switch is located above the kitchen and does not look anything like a bed switch. The big silver switch above the door is actually for

the table. So, for the lowest bed point, make sure the table is below the level of the seats and then simply press the button. I flipped the backrests on the sofa down, and you could remove them for a slightly lower sleeping platform.

Sleeping wise, it's a decent size for two, but I'm a sleep turner and the creak that made itself known while driving was also there during the night when I twisted. I'd also think about a mattress topper here.

The only other thing to mention is the windows as they are smack bang in the middle of the place you'd lean against to sit up in bed.

You can set the bed at half-height and use the ladder. This is if you want to make up the lounge seats into a bed below.

The lounge bed is a good size. Just drop the table into the gap between the sofas. Two cushions fill in the gap here but there's an extra wood section with legs that secure into ►



ADVANTAGES

- Amazingly spacious inside for the size of the vehicle
- Brilliant to drive
- Great interior access to garage
- Oodles of wardrobe space
- Big fridge
- Low oven
- Low entry step

DISADVANTAGES

- On-road rattles and creaks from the bed and blinds
- Lounge storage could be better
- Microfibre ceiling in shower needs covering



A compact kitchen, but it has good storage

the seat base section nearest the kitchen and a third infill cushion. It will need a mattress topper or kids that sleep through anything. If you're not going to use this bed, leave all this stuff at home and use the space in the garage for outdoor furniture, bbqs or much more interesting stuff.

COOK'S QUARTERS

In terms of cooking in a European model, this 'van has plenty of facilities because it's been properly specified for the UK market.

The main kitchen unit contains two large drawers, with sink and hob above. The sink, a rectangular modern shape, is moulded into the worktop and has a split lid in the same worktop material. The tap then folds up out of the sink.

The hob has a glass lid, two burners and the premium cast-iron pan supports.

Because of the location of these, the top drawer is big but shallow.

And the second drawer down is deeper but goes less far back. Plus, there's no cutlery tray – although one from Ikea (other homewares shops are available) will probably do but measure the drawer first.

There is also a handy recess at the back of the sink, perfect for sponges and washing-up liquid, etc.

Above is a big locker. It has a divider in the middle and holds the solar regulator and the TV aerial. There's no shelves here, which is no bad thing as the overhead locker is quite high. If there was a shelf, I'd find it impossible to use.

Behind this is the fridge/freezer – a good-size compressor model with a drawer freezer section at the bottom and plenty of space in the main fridge. This Thetford unit allows you to set the freezer temperature below from off (under 20 degrees) or three settings to minus 18. There's a night mode for quiet operation, too, which is

important here as the fridge is so close to the beds.

The oven is below this. It's a grill, too, and is a sensible height for most.

IT'S ALL OUT BACK

As befitting a layout of this type, the washroom is pretty spacious. Step up and the door that's held in place with a Velcro strap while driving slides over at a slight angle to maximise the space.

The shower is on the left, wardrobe straight ahead and toilet and basin on the right.

The basin is a smart moulded unit in a similar grey to the one in the kitchen. It's deep, too. And the adjacent worktop is very useful.

Whereby storage is low elsewhere in the 'van, the same can't be said for this space. The cupboard under the basin is good with two shelves for toiletries, toilet rolls and more as well as the toilet roll holder. The mirror-fronted overhead locker has



The toilet has plenty of space and is not too high



The step up in the shower restricts footroom



Storage pockets in the doorway need to be baggier



Raised floors for travel seats are brilliant

a small lip (I'd like this to be slightly deeper) and is tall enough for deodorants, etc.

The toilet is a swivel unit, with an electric flush button behind. The only issue here is that the toilet roll holder is fixed to the back of the under-basin cupboard door. It's a big door for access, but could be a little bit of a squeeze to open if you are already on the toilet. So, open the door before you sit down.

The shower is a good size, but part of it goes over the wheelarch, making the tray quite small. I wouldn't suggest standing on this raised section but it does make a good rest when washing feet.

The suede fabric lining across the entire roof of the 'van has not been fully covered in the shower area, so the damp might affect this.

KIT AND CABOODLE

The garage has a door on each side and a door from the washroom.

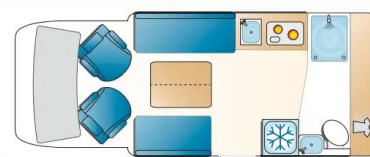
The door on the driver's side is tall, but I can still access the topmost lock. This provides access to a full-height space; a shelf can lift to allow you to store tall items.

There are tie-down points in each corner and a light runs the length of the space just below the interior access door. You can operate this from either the passenger-side door or by reaching in from the door to the washroom. **MMM**

THE **MMM** VERDICT

Genuinely, I wasn't expecting to like this 'van. It's a Fiat, which can have a harsh ride, and it's not really my choice of interior. However, it drives really well and is just right in many of its aspects. I'd ask the dealer to see what can be done about the bed and I'd get those cab blinds sorted. I'd also get the correct tyre pressure worked out to help smooth out some of those minor rattles.

FACTS AND FIGURES



PRICE

From: £79,995 As tested: £76,995 (registered demonstrator)

BASICS

Berths: 4 Travel seats: 4
 Warranty: Two-year base vehicle and habitation, 10 years water ingress
 Type Approval: Full GB Approval

DIMENSIONS

Length: 6.39m Width: 2.15m Height: 2.85m
 Gross vehicle weight: 3,500kg
 Payload: 612kg

BASE VEHICLE

Type: Fiat Ducato chassis cab
 Engine: 2.2-litre, 140hp, eight-speed automatic

KITCHEN

Cooker: Two burner hob, oven/grill
 Fridge: Thetford 150-litre compressor

BEDS

Drop-down double: 1.88m x 1.38m (6ft 2in x 4ft 6in)
 Lounge double: 2.04m x 1.00m-1.50m (6ft 8in x 3ft 3in-4ft 11in)

ESSENTIALS

Fresh water: 120 litres
 Waste water: 90 litres
 Space/water heating: Truma Combi 6D, diesel blown air
 Gas: 1 x 6kg Leisure battery: 2 x AGM 100Ah

OPTIONS

Fitted to test vehicle: None fitted

THE ALTERNATIVES

Chausson X550 Exclusive £76,790
 Pilote Atlas A650D £75,200

INSURANCE

T 0800 975 1307
 W shieldtotalinsurance.co.uk

For quote details: motorhome.ma/QuoteInfo



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