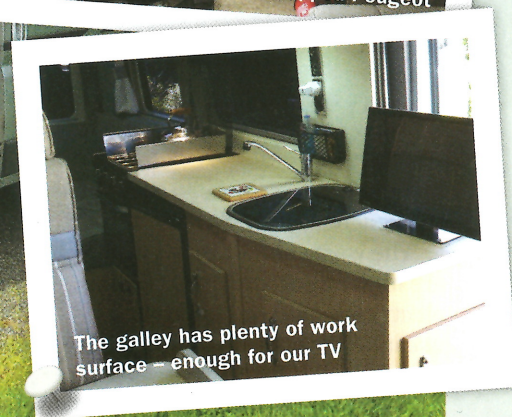




Owner report

Roger & Elizabeth Watts... put their factory-fresh campervan through its paces with a four-month European road trip

2017 Auto-Sleeper Fairford



We started our motorhome adventures with a 25-year-old VW T25 Devon conversion which, after 18 months, started to leak! We thought we knew what we wanted in respects of a new 'van, so bought a Auto-Sleeper Windrush with bunk beds, so we could take the grandchildren with us. This was wishful thinking as, in three years, this only happened once.

In 2016 we went to the NEC show just to have a look at an Auto-Sleeper Fairford, as it contained some of the features we now thought we required.

Sitting in the Fairford at the show and talking to a sales representative

we put our order in. The problem was we had already booked to go to Spain and Portugal four months later. Could they get a Fairford ready by then? Of course they could.

The 'van was ready five days before we sailed to Santander. We did manage to try it out for one night and found the sliding sink waste pipe came detached and the sink water drained into the shower tray. After a visit to the dealer, who made a temporary repair, we set off. We were concerned about taking a new 'van on what was a long trip, but all went well. Within six months we had covered over 6,000 miles on various trips.

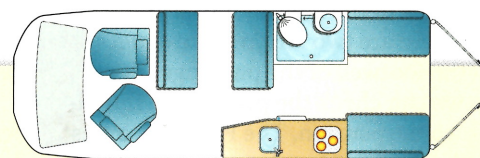
We wanted a van conversion with a half-dinette and a rear lounge area that could be made up into the bed that, with only the two of us, could be left made up. The Fairford fits the bill.

OUTSIDE

The Auto-Sleeper Fairford is 6.36m long, with a Peugeot Boxer Euro VI AdBlue engine and six-speed gearbox, alloy wheels, daytime running lights, awning, electric retractable step and external barbecue point.

The Fairford has Al-Ko Air Top suspension, which improves the ride ▶

Price from: £57,495 **Berths:** 4 **Travel seats:** 4
Base vehicle: Peugeot Boxer
Length: 6.36m **Gross weight:** 3,500kg





The half-dinette has a useful table

Why we bought it

It's modern with the cleanest diesel Euro VI engine. It has four travel seats, a half-dinette and a rear lounge/double bed that we leave made up

What we love

The half-dinette - we don't have to get a table out when we stop for coffee or lunch and, in the evening, we can lounge on the seats and watch the TV

How we would change it

A bit more room in the shower with a cupboard or somewhere to put toiletries, also a separate tap for the basin

When we buy our next 'van

We are happy with the Fairford and have no intention of changing it in the foreseeable future

quality. We're very happy with the way the Peugeot Boxer handles and drives.

The waste and fresh water tanks are underslung and protected by electrically heated blankets for use in the winter. The water-filling arrangements have improved since our last 'van. There is a Whale system fitted, which I like but now, alongside this, there is also an opening for a hosepipe so, no matter whether we use the Whale system or hosepipe, we can always fill our fresh water tank.

The LPG gas tank is also situated under the 'van and filled from the external point next to the driver's door. And, importantly for us, there is a spare wheel.

IN THE CAB

There's a DAB radio, two airbags and a standalone Garmin sat-nav that sits on the dashboard with an in-built reversing camera, which activates when reverse is engaged. The passenger seat swivels, but the driver's seat does not because it forms the back of the half-dinette seat.

There are two air pressure gauges in the footwell of the passenger door so we can check the pressure of the Al-Ko air suspension. The Fairford comes with a USB port and auxiliary cable

point but does not have a CD player and, annoyingly, the radio turns off after about 25 minutes when the engine is not running. The windscreen and side windows are fitted with concertina blinds. There is also Bluetooth connectivity for the phones.

LOUNGES

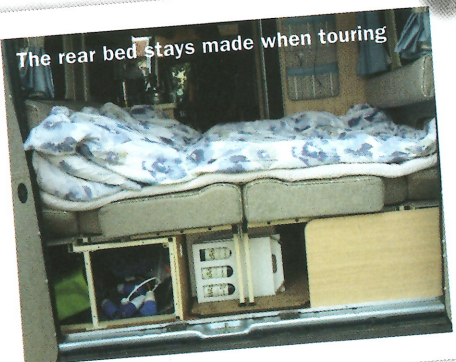
The best feature for us is the half-dinette. The driver's seat forms the backrest of the seat facing the fixed table while, on the other side, there are two travel seats with seatbelts. Whenever we stop, we can sit at the table without moving anything.

There is space under the left-hand seat where I store things like the TV, water equipment and an assortment of fittings for taps and the barbecue.

Underneath the two travel seats is the Sargent EC500 Power Control System and all the pipework for the water supply.

In the rear are the two facing sofas. They will just about cope with four adults and there are two occasional pedestal tables that can be placed between the seats for meals, etc.

But the big advantage for us is being able to make up the transverse double bed by bringing the two sofas



The rear bed stays made when touring

together and using the infill cushions to make a fairly flat bed. This we then cover with a Duvalay topper.

It's a bit tight on room both in width and length, but Elizabeth and I are both short. We don't have a problem, but if you are over six foot you would be rather cramped.

Under the left-hand sofa there is room to store our outdoor table (which rolls up), the silver screen, hook-up cable, ramps, windbreak and anything else I can fit in. I took the panel off this sofa so that, with the back doors open, I have easy access to the area. Also with the bed made up, it's a good place to store cases of wine!

There's no room under the right-hand sofa as the Truma Combi 6E heater and hot water boiler, which operates on gas or electric, lives here.

All the lights are LED and there >



The kitchen is equipped with everything a cook needs



The washroom is a bit cramped

FACTS AND FIGURES



PRICE

Price new today: £57,495
Price of similar aged 'van today: £46,950



BASICS

Berths: 4
Travel seats: 4
Length of ownership: 15 months
Annual mileage: 5,000



DIMENSIONS

Length: 6.36m (20ft 10in)
Width: 2.26m (7ft 5in)
Height: 2.64m (8ft 8in)
Gross vehicle weight: 3,500kg
Payload: 424kg



BASE VEHICLE

Type: Peugeot Boxer
Engine: 29.5mpg
Fuel economy: 2.2-litre turbo-diesel
150bhp Euro VI



BEDS

Rear double: 1.87m x 1.24m
(6ft 1½in x 4ft 1in). Front
double: 1.94m x 1.34m (6ft 4½in x
4ft 5in)



RUNNING COSTS

Base vehicle service cost:
Only oil change so far £156
Insurance: £380
Habitation service: Habitation and first
damp proof check free from the dealer
Nick Whale Motorhomes
Road tax: £245

OPTIONS

Accessories added: Bike rack

WHAT WENT WRONG

The sliding sink waste pipe came detached and was fixed under warranty

FURTHER READING

We reviewed the 2018 version in the August 2018 issue of MMM. Buy a digital copy of this issue at pocketmags.com/mmm

are reading lights at each end of the lounge seats for reading when in bed, as well as over the half-dinette's seats.

There are also centre lights, which are touch sensitive.

There are three-pin plug sockets and 12V ports throughout the 'van.

WASHROOM

The washroom is the smallest space in the 'van. The shower head doubles as the washbasin tap and the basin slides from left to right so you can get into the shower room and close the sliding tambour door. There is a rail on the offside wall, which forms a shelf for storing bathroom accessories.

Because we mainly use on-site facilities, we only really use the shower when at music festivals. There is the standard swivel loo, which as it's very close to the bed, is very useful for night-time manoeuvres.

KITCHEN CONFIDENTIAL

The kitchen area is a very generous space with a combined cooker, grill

and three-ring gas hob and plenty of workspace on top. A three-way fridge sits below the work surface together with cupboard space underneath the cooker for pots and pans.

Overhead there is a microwave, which is alongside two cupboards and the all-important whiskey and gin bottle holders with four cut glass wine glasses (supplied with the 'van).

There is ample cupboard space for clothes, books and games along each side of the 'van and a half-length 'wardrobe' underneath the work surface next to the sliding door, but this is a bit too short for hanging clothes, so we use it for shoes and to store a spare fresh water bottle.

The Fairford's a very good-looking van conversion with its black-tinted athermic windows.

It is fully loaded with winterised kit, awning, step and alloy wheels. Space is always a problem but, for two of us, it's just right!

We are taking the grandchildren away again and we now have a drive-away awning that fits onto the Fairford's awning. **MMM**

WANTED

Want to earn £250 for writing about your motorhome? Send up to 1,700 words • Info for 'Why we bought it', 'What we love', 'How we would change it', 'When we buy our next 'van' and details for our facts and figures panel • Ten or more photos, including one of yourself.

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