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Benimar

Primero 202

From this Spanish brand's new compact entry-level range comes a model with a drop-down bed



PRIMERO – along with Benivan (see page 33) – is the newest addition to Benimar's growing specifically built-for-UK line-up. Like the Mileo range, the Primero offers both low-profile and overcab body types and, similarly, all are based on the Fiat Ducato. Here, though, Benimar is tackling a particular niche – for six-metre, entry-level motorhomes.

Four layouts are available – the rear lounge 283 and this 202 are the low-profiles, while the rear transverse fixed bed 301 and French bed 331 are the overcab derivatives. All four, as with the more upmarket Mileos, are NCC-approved, insulated to Grade III standards, and built with

99% wood-free bodywork with XPS insulation, backed by a five-year water ingress warranty.

Unlike most imported motorhomes, these Spaniards also come with their habitation door on the UK side.

The Primero's lower cost – this 202 model is £46,995 – is signalled on the outside by a Fiat cab with an unpainted black bumper and steel wheels. But the specification is hardly back-to-basics, as that keen pricing includes driver and passenger airbags, ESP, cruise control, touchscreen radio and cab air-conditioning.

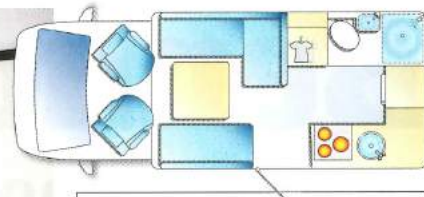
Under the bonnet, the 2.3-litre 130bhp Euro VI motor will be more than sufficient for



these compact vehicles and you won't have to examine the options list for long – the only factory-fitted extra is the Comfort-Matic gearbox, priced at £2,100. Importantly, the chassis has the wider, lower rear axle so handling should be considerably more surefooted than rivals on a standard Ducato.

Turning to the specifics of the Primero 202,





FACT FILE

BASE VEHICLE Fiat Ducato

PRICE FROM £46,995

BERTHS 4

TRAVEL SEATS 4

LENGTH 5.99m

WIDTH 2.30m

HEIGHT 2.89m

GROSS WEIGHT 3,500kg

PAYLOAD 900kg

BUY A BENIMAR FROM...

The Benimar brand is sold throughout the Marquis network, with its 12 outlets covering most of England – from Golden Cross (Sussex), Poole and Plymouth in the south to Preston and County Durham in the north.



In Scotland and Ireland Benimar motorhomes are sold through Marquis' partners – The Motorhome Company in Perthshire and Anchor Point Motorhomes in Co Tipperary.

The Benimar range imported by Marquis has specification and layouts that have been developed especially for the UK, including placing the habitation door on the British nearside.

WHO IS BENIMAR?

This Spanish maker developed a strong following here in the late 1990s and early 2000s based on great value for money, primarily with its Europe and Europe Top overcab coachbuilds. It then disappeared from the UK scene, before being reintroduced by Marquis in 2014, firstly with Mileo low-profiles on Fiat.



The Mileo range has grown to include a wider choice of layouts as well as overcab coachbuilds, while Tessoro low-profiles added Ford-based models to the line-up. New for 2019 are a more entry-level Primero range of coachbuilds on Fiat and a pair of Benivan van conversions, the latter actually built in the UK by Auto-Trail.

Benimar is owned by the French Trigano Group, which also encompasses manufacturers including Adria, Auto-Sleepers, Auto-Trail, Chausson, Mobilvetta, Randger and Roller Team, as well as major retailers (and Benimar importer), Marquis. Trigano has vowed to take 50% of the UK motorhome market.



here's a layout already proven in the Mileo range – and with a concept that has been successful for brands ranging from Bürstner to Roller Team. The simple premise is this: the 'van might be compact but the front lounge is anything but, while bed-making is kept simple by fitting a drop-down bed.

The lounge incorporates an offside L-shaped settee, a nearside sofa and swivel cab seats, all around a large fixed table. Above is an electrically operated bed, which can be lowered to multiple positions. As ever, the design works best as a two-berth but it is possible to convert

the seats into a second double bed underneath. The drop-down bed claims dimensions of 1.90m by 1.40m, while the second bed is said to be 2.10m by 1.20m.

Another important aspect of this layout is the galley, which again is bigger and better than you'd expect in a six-metre motorhome. Running aft of the habitation door, it is L-shaped with the fridge (a fairly modest 80-litre model) sitting under the wardrobe on the back wall. The main section of galley along the nearside offers plenty of worktop while, at the forward end, the cooker offers two gas burners, a mains hotplate and a

combined oven/grill. Storage capacity benefits from the lack of microwave.

In the offside corner, the Primero's washroom looks anything but budget, especially as it has a proper separate shower. Accessories such as towel rail and soap dispenser are provided and the loo is Thetford's latest swivel cassette model.

This good value 'van also comes with a Skyview overcab sunroof, reading lights with built-in USB ports, a generous 120-litre fresh water tank, mounting points for a bike rack, 4kW Combi gas/electric heating and a TV aerial. There's a huge payload, too.

benimar

2019

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Nick Harding, Renowned Motorhome Freelance Journalist



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