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Benimar Primero

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**CAMPER WITH
A SHOWER**



WildAx Triton

Benimar

Primero 331

Compact size and a massive payload are just two of the pluses of this new entry-level Spaniard



FACT FILE

BASE VEHICLE Fiat Ducato

PRICE FROM £44,995

BERTHS 4

TRAVEL SEATS 4

LENGTH 5.99m

WIDTH 2.30m

HEIGHT 3.05m

GROSS WEIGHT 3,500kg
(option 3,650kg)

PAYLOAD 850kg

WITH so many motorhome ranges offering lookalike layouts, often centred around twin single beds or an island double, it's good to find a variation from the norm. Equally refreshing, here, is to find that overcab coachbuilds are not dead – the type still has its advantages and this maker from the Iberian peninsula offers them in both its established Mileo range and its new-for-2019 Primero line-up.

The quartet of Primeros, in fact, includes both low-profiles and overcabs, all based on a Fiat Ducato with 130bhp Multijet engine and all, crucially, measuring just 5.99m long. The overcab models are the 301 (with a transverse

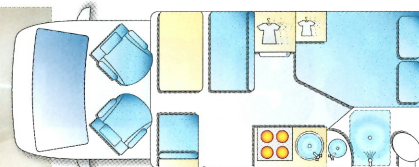
double bed at the back) and the 331 (with a French bed). Both layouts previously featured in the higher spec Mileo range.

You can easily tell the Primero from the Mileo by its unpainted, black front bumper and steel wheels with plastic trims (rather than alloys), as well as different graphics. Crucially, you still get a body that's 99% wood-free in its construction and insulated to the Grade III standard, while the vehicles are NCC approved and to a full UK specification (with the habitation door on our nearside). But, while a 2019 Mileo will set you back at least £50,995 (the same as last year), a brand-new Primero 331



starts at £44,995. And you don't have to worry about expensive packs inflating that figure – the only extra cost option here is the Comfort-Matic gearbox (priced at £2,100 including an upgrade to the 150bhp engine). A 3,650kg chassis is also available – at no extra charge – but, as the standard model has a whopping 850kg payload, we can't see the need. Even travelling four-up,





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 retailer (and Benimar importer), Marquis. Trigano has vowed to take 50% of the UK motorhome market.



this is one of those rare 3.5-tonne coachbuilds in which you'll not be worrying about overloading.

And, despite this Primero's diminutive length, you could consider using it as a four-berth on a regular basis. There are four travel seats, of course, thanks to the half-dinette-style lounge but it's the overcab bed that really makes a difference. Here's an instant, always-available double (which the brochure says is a mightily generous 2.05m by 1.55m) that comes with lighting, a roof vent and an opening window. And, when it's occupied, you haven't lost your lounge, so you can pop the kids up there – in

their own 'den' – and still relax down below.

When it comes to mum and dad's bedtime, the French bed (that's a lengthways double alongside a wall) positioned here at the offside rear is a decent size and, again, requires no bed-making. Claimed measurements this time are a more modest 1.90m by 1.36m but neither the overhanging (second) wardrobe at the foot, nor the usual tapering bed width, look as if they will compromise comfort.

Obviously, the Primero cannot match the fullness of the Mileo's specification, but neither is this a motorhome offering Soviet Gulag levels of luxury. There's no sat-nav or fitted microwave here,

but everything you really need is standard. On the base vehicle that includes driver and passenger airbags, air-conditioning, cruise control, ESP, electric mirrors and the wider rear axle of the Camper-spec chassis. Then, in the living area, you benefit from generous water tank capacities (120 litres fresh, 105 litres waste), framed windows, a TV aerial, 4kW gas/electric heating, dual-fuel hob and a combined oven/grill. Only the fridge capacity – 80 litres – seems a bit 'back to basics'. The glasses cabinet and concealed bottle rack behind the small inward-facing seat in the lounge are unexpected touches in an entry-level model.