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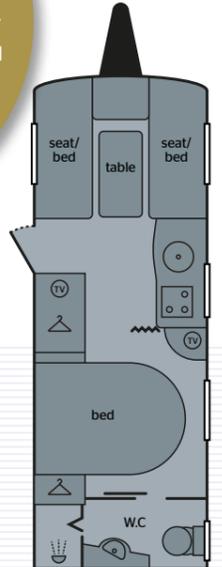
Sprite Major 4 SB

IAN HEWLETT tests the latest Sprite fixed bed caravan at Drayton Manor Club Site in Staffordshire

Living area:
In the living area the front drawers add a great deal of storage and we loved the pull-out extending table - big enough for two to eat inside without setting up the main table. We had the optional panoramic front sunroof, which adds much more light to the front. A couple of wall-mounted cupboards give plenty of additional storage and four LED spotlights create a pleasant atmosphere, as well as providing good illumination.

Kitchen:
The extending granite-effect worktop is a useful addition, as is the removable drainer, and the cutlery drawer and wire baskets help keep your kit where you put it. We would have preferred the built-in wire storage plate and cup racks to be over the cooking area, leaving the other cupboard for food stuffs away from the heat.
The cooker has a three-burner hob with grill and oven below while the Thetford 113-litre three-way fridge should be large enough for most requirements.

Washroom:
A sliding door is used to access the washroom, which is a reasonable size with a separate shower cubicle. A shower screen helps keep the water where you want it and the Ecocamel showerhead reduces water consumption. The small sink has the same stylish tap as the kitchen.



LET'S START with a little bit of history. The Sprite brand has been around for a long time, having been created by Sam Alper in 1949. In the 1980s the rights to the brand were bought by the Swift Group, now one of the largest caravan makers in the UK.

Sprites have always been great value and typically the lightest in Swift's portfolio, but they have never been so well equipped as they are now.

The latest addition to the brand certainly created a stir at the most recent Caravan, Camping and Motorhome Show. This is a four-berth caravan with a fixed transverse bed and rear full-width washroom.

The model my wife and I tested had the Diamond Pack that adds alloy wheels, a hitch stabiliser, wheel lock receiver, door flyscreen, microwave oven, radio/CD/MP3 player and - don't forget - two scatter cushions.

This is a spacious well-equipped caravan for the price, ideally suited for a couple, perhaps with occasional use for guests. It has a small living area, a good size washroom and sleeping area. If you like your bed to be always made up, this addresses many of the quandaries of smaller fixed bed layouts.

Externally the Sprite has an aerodynamic shape with one-piece front and rear mouldings giving it a clean, modern appearance. The wide front locker potentially takes two gas cylinders, depending on your car's allowable nose weight. The one-piece aluminium sidewall skin gives a clean appearance and reduces the risk of moisture ingress, as does Swift's SMART construction method. The back even has the ability to mount a bike rack, although we would not recommend this for stability reasons.

We thought the interior colour scheme was pleasing and won't look dated. The standard Berto chocolate-brown seating looks clean and calming and is practical for children to be climbing all over. The



Aralie SEN woodgrain-effect furniture contrasted well against the curtains, walls and seating and I especially liked the quality feel of the chrome cupboard and drawer catches. The flooring has an oak-effect covering and the removable beige edge-bound carpets are an added bonus. Roof vents are installed in the washroom, bedroom and kitchen areas and all windows and vents have flyscreens and blinds.

Heating and hot water are provided by the Truma Combi 6 system, with hot air being ducted around by a fan. The LCD Truma control panel above the door takes a bit of getting used to but was reasonably simple to operate. The main controller sits alongside and is pretty much self-explanatory.



At night:
One great selling point of this 'van is its transverse double bed. It allows easy access in and out of bed on both sides, accompanied by three drawers and six cupboards, including two with hanging space. There's a comfy Duvalite mattress and when it's not in use the bed can be shortened to allow easy access to the washroom.

at a glance

Price as tested	£16,205
Prices start at	£15,395
Club Care insurance	£210
Berths	Four
Length x width x height	7.48m x 2.23m x 2.65m
Mass in Running Order	1,241kg
Maximum Technically Permissible Laden Mass	1,397kg
User payload	156kg
BE licence required	No with suitable vehicle such as Hyundai i40 1.7 CRDi Blue drive Active 5dr
Manufacturer	Swift
Warranty	Three years parts and labour; six years body shell cover
Tel	01482 875740
Web	www.swiftgroup.co.uk

verdict
A spacious, well-equipped caravan at a keen price