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# Marquis Lifestyle Black Edition 686

SIMON McGRATH enjoys the space in a six-berth motorhome at this year's National Feast of Lanterns at Houghton Hall in Norfolk

First impressions count and the striking good looks of the Marquis Lifestyle Black Edition, with its black cab and graphics, really turn heads.

I took the six-berth 686 to this year's National Feast of Lanterns at Houghton Hall and it certainly attracted attention. That's important to many people, but how would it fare inside, and as a motorhome to drive?

The Lifestyle range is a dealer special built by Swift using the company's SMART construction and sold by Marquis Motorhomes and Caravans (SMART Plus will be in 2016 models). It's built on the new Fiat Ducato base with a six-speed gearbox and feels responsive with the necessary oomph when needed.

The cab is spacious, has a good reversing camera and includes a fully integrated touch-screen console including Bluetooth and a new satnav system. The console is quite small but easy to use and I was glad to have it there.

One of the new features is a 60W solar panel on the roof as standard that will be 100W in 2016 models.

**At night:** There are three double beds - one above the cab, and two others made by converting the midway dining area and rear lounge. The over-cab bed has a good-sized window though if the midway bed has been fully made up, it is hard to access using the stepladder due to a lack of space to put the ladder on the floor. I found the midway bed a bit fiddly due to side extensions and wondered why I still had two cushions left once complete (at least it looked complete). I'd not want to make this bed up every night. The rear bed, however, was a doddle and very comfy.



**Living areas:** There are two, midway and at the rear, both with removable dining tables and LED lights. The midway section table was useful for extra cooking preparation space, and had a nice big window. My favourite feature though was the rear U-shaped living area. It was bright with the three windows plus rooflight, and is a great space for the children to play board games (if they still do) while the adults chill out in the dining area.



**Washroom:** I accept there will always be compromises but for a six-berth unit it's a bit too small for me, with its compact toilet area. However, it wins back points with a decent sized locker above the loo, good under-sink storage, a large mirror and Ecocamel shower hose and head, which uses less water, though you'd never know it when showering.

**Storage:** There's plenty but then I'd expect that for a six-berth unit. In the rear living area are decent-sized lockers, a shelf, and compartments beneath both side benches. Midway, there's a wardrobe that also gives access to the solar panel and aerial, with three more cupboards beneath. I missed having access to locker space from outside, but the 622 and 664 models have this. My main storage gripe was the lack of rubbish bin, which seems a bit of an omission for a van of this size and occupancy.

ON TEST

**Cooking:** The motorhome has a generous, workable kitchen. There's a handy surface extension, good size Dometic fridge with removable freezer box compartment and a three-burner Thetford cooker with oven/grill. There is also a removable drainage board (that I've missed in the last two motorhomes I've tested) plus a sink cover to boost work space. A streamline light above the sink initially looked too small yet was ideal.

## at a glance

**Price as tested** £46,495  
**Club Care insurance** £304  
**Base vehicle** Fiat Ducato  
**Engine as tested** 2.3-litre turbo diesel, 130bhp, six-speed manual gearbox  
**Emissions category** Euro 5

**Length x width x height** 6.92m x 2.51m x 2.94m

**Berths** Five travel and six sleeping

**Mass in Running Order** 3,027kg

**Maximum Authorised Mass** 3,650kg

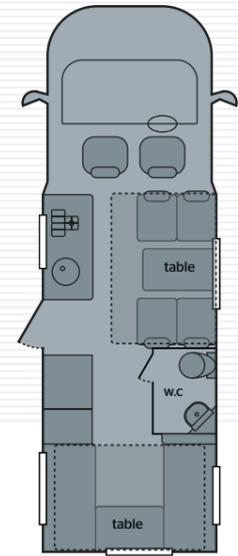
**C1 licence required** Yes

**User payload** 623kg

**Warranty** Three years base vehicle; ten years water ingress

**Supplier** Marquis Motorhomes and Caravans  
**Tel** 0800 026 7777

**Web** [www.marquisleisure.co.uk](http://www.marquisleisure.co.uk)



## verdict

A striking motorhome with great features and plenty of living space but the compromise is a small washroom.