

Benimar

Mileo 313

Looking for a family motorhome that's not too big to fit on the drive and won't bust your budget? The answer might be Spanish...



FAMILY-ORIENTATED motorhomes are often big, bulky vehicles. After all, if you want to holiday comfortably with four, or more, on board you need space. Traditionally,

the most kid-friendly motorhomes also have bunk beds – and they often come from a nation known for big families, Italy.

Here's a motorhome, however, that can sleep six but is just 5.95m long. Oh, and it's not Italian.

The Mileo 313 is one of five 3-Series Mileos – overcab coachbuilts which followed on from the success of their low-profile 2-Series cousins. There are layouts here that follow on unchanged from the 2-Series, simply adding the extra versatility of an overcab bed. But the 313 seen here is a uniquely overcab layout. Its format of a pullman dinette and rear transverse bunk beds is nothing new,

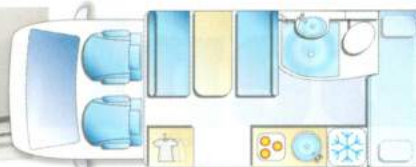
although finding this type of layout in a sub-six-metre overall length is highly unusual.

It's rare, too, to find a continental coachbuilt – Benimars herald from Spain – that has its habitation door on the UK nearside. That's an indication of the buying power of exclusive Benimar suppliers in the UK, Marquis Leisure.

Opposite the door is the dinette, while running rearwards from the entrance is the galley. Then there are bunk beds across the stern and a washroom sandwiched between the dinette and the bunks on the offside. Think of it as a more compact version of the Mileo 323.

The most unusual aspect of the design is that





WHO IS BENIMAR?

This Spanish brand developed **benimar** a strong following in Britain in the late 1990s and early 2000s based on great value for money (particularly with its Europe and Europe Top models). It then disappeared from the scene here, before being reintroduced by Marquis in 2014. The Mileo range came first, followed by an expanded choice of layouts, then overcab versions and finally the Tessoros on Ford.

Benimar is, today, owned by Trigano, which acquired retailers, Marquis (and its sister company, Auto-Sleepers), at the start of 2017. Other Trigano brands include Auto-Trail, Chausson, Mobilvetta and Roller Team.

FACT FILE

BASE VEHICLE	Fiat Ducato
PRICE FROM	£47,495
BERTHS	5/6
TRAVEL SEATS	5/6
LENGTH	5.95m
WIDTH	2.30m
HEIGHT	3.05m
GROSS WEIGHT	3,500kg/3,650kg
PAYLOAD	520kg/670kg

BUY A BENIMAR FROM...

The Benimar brand is exclusive to Marquis, with its 11 branches around England – from Golden Cross (Sussex), Poole and Plymouth in the south to Preston and County Durham in the north. The UK Benimar line-up has been developed hand-in-hand with Marquis and includes eight Mileo low-profiles, five Mileo overcab coachbuilts (all on Fiat) and five Ford Transit-based Tessoro low-profiles.



the dinette can be extended widthways – as can the table – so that you can fit in six for dining. There are extra cushions to do this and the extension of the rear-facing bench blocks off access through to the cab.

The basis of the 313 is much more predictable. While Benimar's Tessoro range is Ford Transit-based, all Mileos come on the ubiquitous Fiat Ducato. You do get the 150bhp engine as standard here, though – along with the option of the Comfort-Matic gearbox. A licence-friendly gross weight of 3,500kg is perfectly suited to the younger audience this motorhome is likely to

attract, but a 3,650kg option ups the payload (to 670kg) and allows the Mileo to be specified as a six-berth with six travelling seats.

The body might be a typically boxy overcab but it still has a GRP/PVC floor structure and 99% wood-free construction, as well as a stylish new rear bumper with LED tail-lights. The 16in black alloy wheels ensure that there's nothing of the 'entry-level' about the Benimar's appearance.

The spec is equally high-end inside the cab, where you'll find a DAB radio with touchscreen and sat-nav, cab air-conditioning, cruise control, ESP, Traction Plus and Hill Assist.

In the living area, this Spanish 'van is fully specified, too. The kitchen drawers have metal runners and a soft-closing system, the cooker comes with twin gas rings and a mains hotplate, while the oven/grill has electronic ignition. And the fact that there's a microwave as well shows just how far Marquis has gone in tuning the Mileo to UK tastes.

But the equipment level goes further, with features normally associated with more prestigious vehicles – items like the solar panel, external shower and barbecue points and the powerful Combi 6kW gas/electric heating.