

AUTOCRUISE

Alto

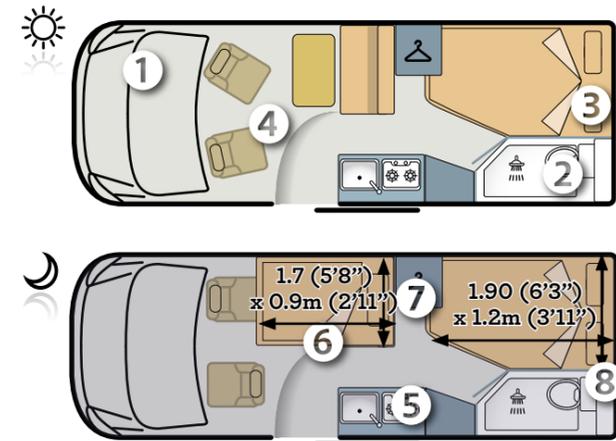
Britain's leading volume converter has shoehorned a traditional coachbuilt layout into a panel van. We find out if it works

☛Price from £39,095 OTR ☛Sleeps Three ☛Belts Four ☛Base vehicle Peugeot Boxer LWB ☛Engine 2.2-litre turbodiesel 120bhp ☛L/W/H 6m/2.05m/2.55m (19'8"/6'9"/8'5") ☛MTPLM 3500kg ☛Payload 594kg ☛Water (fresh)/(waste) 66/50 litres ☛Battery 110Ah ☛Gas 2 x 7kg

Autocruise has made a concerted push to become Britain's leading van converter with its 2010 line-up, growing its steel high top Boxer range to six models and continuing with the elevating roof Pulse on the Fiat Scudo. The all new Alto, with its longitudinal double bed,

wowed us the most: it's a classic coachbuilt layout - that is, fixed rear corner bed with washroom alongside, kitchen amidships and half dinette up front.

The increased internal space in the latest generation Boxer makes such a layout possible within the confines of the manufacturer's steel van walls. At 1.9 x 1.2m (6'3" x 3'11"), the



double bed is a decent offering, and the corner cutaway is a thoughtful balance between access to the washroom and sleeping comfort. Two longitudinal mattresses make for a comfortable bed, although in the pre-production test model, the cutaway mattress doesn't yet fit its base. An aluminium-framed, slatted

bed base, which attaches to the nearside sofa box, hinges through 90 degrees and a robust single catch fixes it upright in transit. This allows for walk-through access to the rear doors when the bed's not in use, and maximises storage: a couple of bikes can secure to the bed base in transit, and the sofa itself becomes a storage tray. As a double bed, the only discomfort is that the windows in the rear van doors means there's no backboard.

The washroom alongside the bed is rather narrow - the wheelarch prevents the toilet swivelling, and occupants may find themselves battling with a clinging shower curtain - but again, it's eminently useable.

Amidships there's a 72-litre Waeco fridge at torso height above a half-height wardrobe on the driver side, and the kitchenette on the nearside. Up front, the layout replicates the existing Pace floorplan of half-dinette, which converts into a single bed. With cab seats swivelled, the forward facing passenger seats convert into a decent single bed.

Practical Motorhome says...

The longitudinal rear bed is an innovation that brings a much-loved coachbuilt layout to a van conversion without enormous compromise. This is a real feat of ergonomic engineering from Autocruise



Autocruise Motorhomes, Dunswell Road, Cottingham, East Yorkshire HU16 4JX
Web www.autocruise.co.uk Tel 01482 847 332



1 CLEVER BOXER CABIN
All Altos have silver metallic paintwork and colour-coded bumpers. The £1175 Comfort Pack buys cab air con, cruise control and reverse sensors



2 NARROW WASHROOM
The tip-up basin is a neat space saver in the compact corner washroom. The mould for the wheelarch prevents the toilet swivelling, though



3 ACCESS AND STORAGE
The hinged longitudinal rear bed allows access to the rear doors, and creates space to store bikes in transit. The sofa becomes a storage 'shelf'



4 HALF-DINETTE LAYOUT
The half-dinette up front is identical to that found in the existing Autocruise Pace. LED lights stud the step down from lounge to kitchen



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£268.75*

EASY TO MAKE UP BED
The rear bed base lowers onto two hinged leg supports to make up the double on site. A vanity mirror above the kitchen worksurface can be viewed from the foot of the bed



5 COMPLETE KITCHEN
The kitchen galley is surprisingly spacious. The spark ignition two-burner hob and grill has dedicated downlighters overhead



6 SINGLE BED MAKES THREE
The half-dinette and swivel cab seat converts into a third sleeping berth, which is 0.9m (5'8") at its widest, and 0.54m (1'9") at its foot



7 ELEVATED FRIDGE FREEZER
The 72-litre Waeco compressor fridge/freezer sits above the wardrobe so it doesn't eat into the bed's overall length



8 CASSETTE ACCESS
Access to the toilet cassette is through the rear doors, reducing the need for cut-outs in the 'van's steel walls and giving a tidier overall look

*FOR INSURANCE QUOTES TERMS AND CONDITIONS SEE PAGE 146

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