



## SWIFT GROUP

The wide-ranging Swift offerings for the 2015 model year get a lift from the manufacturer's timber-free SMART bodyshells and facelifted cabs

SWIFT GROUP RECENTLY unveiled its 2015 motorhome portfolio, and fans of the Hull manufacturer won't be disappointed, thanks to a raft of improvements that will please motorcaravanners on every budget.

The most significant change is the introduction of **Rio**, a brace of compact coachbuilts that slot between the company's **Escape** and **Esprit/Bessacarr** line-ups. But there are significant updates and upgrades to other popular ranges, too.

Escape is Swift's budget, and top-selling, brand; it will feature five models for 2015. The upmarket Esprit and Bessacarr line-ups each get eight models for the coming season.

Next are the **Bolero** range of low-profile coachbuilts, featuring six layouts for 2015, and Swift's flagship, five-model **Kon-Tiki**.

In addition, Swift will produce seven models in its **Autocruise** van conversions range.

### WHAT'S CHANGED

Swift top brass described market conditions as 'challenging' but, despite this, 2014 was a successful year for its motorhomes. To build on this momentum, the company has modified all its ranges for 2015, all of which will receive the facelifted Fiat Ducato/Peugeot Boxer cabs. All



**AUTOCRUISE RHYTHM** These smart new interiors will feature in all Autocruise models

coachbuilt models will be assembled using Swift's SMART timber-free bodyshell construction, which employs polyurethane to reduce the likelihood of water ingress.

Other range-wide improvements include new cab captain's chairs, the adoption of a new 'Aralie Sen' wood finish and new soft furnishing schemes, plus refreshed graphics for the exteriors. Swift also looked at the driving experience of its vehicles, and has introduced positive catches and soft-closing rubber sections to lockers and drawers, as well as a quieter oven, to reduce road noise.



### AUTOCRUISE

Swift Group's popular van conversions get new cabs and improvements for 2015. The **Jazz** has been discontinued, but a new four-berth will join the line-up in February so the model count

stays at seven. Prices will rise by 4.3%, taking the price of the **Rhythm Compact** from £40,860 to £42,616.

The most significant change is the updated Peugeot Boxer base vehicle, which will be used for all Autocruises (the first build will be on the new Fiat Ducato, with Boxers coming through in late November/early December). New sleek metallic silver fronts boast matching bumpers. LED daytime running lights and bold new graphics complete the external look.

The new cabs boast a redesigned dashboard, a gearshift indicator and other kit. The look is more automotive and ups the 'wow' factor.

The Boxer variants are also specified with silver trim, and continue with the central locking box under the dashboard, where the Fiat Ducato has bottle and cupholders. Bluetooth and USB connectivity comes as standard. In common with its stablemates, the Autocruise vans get new captain's chairs for the cabs featuring integrated headrests, wider backrests and better side support.

The living quarters benefit from Swift Group-wide improvements. The cabinetwork is finished in the mid-toned Aralie Sen woodgrain, with contrasting gloss oak-effect inlays. This is picked up by the two-tone grey and black soft furnishings scheme, which looks sharp and contemporary. Ambient lighting is better controlled, thanks to dimmable LED spotlights under the lockers, which now have chrome push-button catches.

Elsewhere, kitchen drawers and cupboards have smart white facings, and sinks get a new tap. The travelling seat backrests benefit from a redesign to make them more comfortable and match the new cab seats.

All Autocruise models are European type approved and the Tracker Retrieve tracking system is standard kit. Further reassurance is provided by a three-year bodyshell warranty.

The optional Comfort Pack adds cab air-con, cruise control, reversing sensors, a microwave, wood-and-silver dashboard kit and 15in or 16in alloy wheels, depending on model.

As with the current Autocruise range, an automatic transmission is available as an option. You must order a Fiat base instead of a Peugeot Boxer.

The top-selling **Rhythm** and **Accent** layouts are unchanged, as is the **Forté**. The sporty **Carrera 4** gets the new cab.

The **Alto** has been extended to 6.36m from 6m, allowing the washroom to be in the centre, behind the front seat. The rear fixed bed now folds for better access and a drawer unit has been fitted to the side of the bed.

The new **Chorus** arrives in February 2015. It will be 6.36m long, with a front dinette, centre shower and rear bed. The short wheelbase rear-corner-kitchen **Jazz** has been discontinued.



### BOLERO

Swift Group's shuffling of its 2015 motorhome pack has led to the discarding of the luxury low-profile Bessacarr 500



**BOLERO** Black Edition trim provides a classy new look, outside and inside

**1986** The year Swift Motorhomes was launched. Since then, the firm has grown to include Bessacarr (1997) and Autocruise (2007)



**ESCAPE** The budget line-up gets brilliant white sidewalls and redesigned interiors

This clears the way for the popular Bolero to stand out even more, especially now it has been repackaged with eye-catching Black Edition trim.

The 2015 Bolero range has grown to six models – all four-berths – with the addition of the fixed-twin-beds, end-washroom **714SB**; it also has a front dinette. Elsewhere you'll find the **682FB** (fixed rear double bed); **684FB** (fixed double bed); **712SB** (fixed twin bed and end washroom); **722FB** (fixed double bed, end washroom); and the **724FB** (fixed double, end-washroom).

All models are built on 2.3-litre, six-speed Fiat Ducato base vehicles teamed with Al-Ko chassis. Two models are powered by 130bhp engines; the other four take the more powerful 150bhp variant.

A raft of interior and exterior changes have been made to the new-season Boleros. A black front bumper, silver front grille, LED daytime running lights and new 16in alloy wheels combine well with the facelifted Fiat Ducato. Inside, grey and black soft furnishings feature silver accents and look classy. Alde's wet central heating and water heating system benefits from a new circulation

"A raft of interior and exterior changes have been made to the new-season Boleros"



pump, and Truma's Crash Sensor Mono regulator allows the heating system to be used while on the road. The Winter Pack (fresh- and waste-water tank heaters, drain insulation and fridge vent covers) is fitted as standard; all Boleros achieve the Grade 3 insulation as standard, so they are genuine four-season motorhomes.

With prices rising by just 3.3% for 2015, these goodies look like great value for money. Black Edition status boosted Kon-Tiki sales by 67% last year. We're interested to see whether it does the same for the Bolero.



### ESCAPE

Changes to the Escape for the 2014 season were minimal, incorporating routine Swift Group spec bumps. That's all altered for 2015, when the double

whammy of a facelifted Fiat cab and the introduction of timber-free SMART bodyshell construction to all Swift coachbuilts has permitted a root-and-branch rethink.

Swift claims the Escape has been re-energised for 2015 by the adoption of specification based on last season's Esprit and Bessacarr 400 coachbuilts.

The deletion of the 662 leaves the 2015 range with five models: four high-lines and one low-line – the four-berth **664**, which has a fixed bed and front dinette. The **624** is a five-berth with end kitchen, while the four-berth **644** and six-berth **686** feature a rear lounge. Finally, the six-berth **696** has rear bunk beds.

The exterior makeover across the range includes a brilliant white finish replacing the previous anthracite, plus new graphics. Inside, the new Aralie Sen woodwork has been introduced and, following dealer feedback, lockers now benefit from push-button catches. The Comfort



Pack has been extended to offer a Status 550 directional aerial.

The kitchen overhead lockers are deeper to cater for an optional microwave oven, and there's higher-specification lighting. Chrome plug sockets and new-style taps help the range transcend its budget status. All fixed-bed Escape models continue to sport Duvalay Duvalite mattresses, which are exclusive to Swift.

All Escape models are powered by the Fiat Ducato 2.3-litre 130bhp engine, with a six-speed manual gearbox. Escape prices will increase by 6% for 2015, taking the 624's price from £35,730 to £37,874.



**ESPRIT/BESSACARR**

The Esprit range of mid-market coachbuilts was launched in 2014 to replace Swift's once-popular Sundance, which was losing sales to rivals. To buck this trend, Swift made the new range available at a lower price than Sundance, a move facilitated by using a less expensive bodyshell. To attract buyers, the Esprit's specification was enhanced to exceed those of the Sundance.

The strategy worked: Esprit sales during 2014 were 35% higher than the Sundance managed in 2013. The new Fiat cab and the SMART bodyshell gave Swift an opportunity to improve the product further. So it has rebuilt the 2015 Esprit and sister Bessacarr range, with the same eight models, from the chassis up.

There are small changes to the line-up. Out go the rear fixed-bed **444** and the rear lounge **464**, to be replaced by two new layouts – the front-dinette, four-berth **424** and rear island-bed, four-berth **494**. The four-berth, rear-garage **484** receives a significant modification.

Joining the line-up are three two-berth models (the end-kitchen **412**, the rear-washroom **442** and the rear-lounge **462**), the four-berth, fixed-bed **454**, and the six-berth **496**, with a rear lounge and front dinette.

The 2015 'vans get a streamlined bodyshell, new overcab pods with a roof window and a curved GRP rear panel. Overall body width has been increased, and the height reduced, to create a sleeker look. The high-line roof models (424, 462 and 496) get a new lower curved roofline (due, in the case of the 424 and 496, to the drop-down bed). Darkened windows,



**KON-TIKI** Improvements to Swift's flagship line-up continue for the 2015 season

new graphics and new front marker lights complete the external look. Bessacarr models feature a higher specification (see panel below).

Both Esprit and Bessacarr models are powered by the Fiat Ducato 2.3-litre 130bhp engine. Automatic transmission is a cost option.

In a change to nomenclature, the final digit of each model number denotes the number of belted travel

seats. Esprit 2015 prices will start at £42,289; 2014's starting price was £38,885. Bessacarr 2015 prices, meanwhile, will top out at £50,495, for the six-berth 496.



**KON-TIKI**

Swift's flagship, tag-axle motorhome range sold out when its Black Edition styling was unveiled last season. Extra

**MUST-SEE NEW 'VAN**

**BESSACARR 494**



Bessacarr models for 2015 get a new streamlined bodyshell, overcab pods with an opening roof window and a curved GRP rear panel. Their green house-style colour features on the side of the 'van, and in the Bessacarr logo mounted in the radiator grille.

Like other Swift Group ranges, Bessacarr gets mid-toned Aralie Sen cabinetwork, and gloss smoked oak inlays in the overhead locker doors

add a touch of refinement.

Soft furnishings feature a dark-brown woven fabric with muted cream strip in the backrest. This cream cue is picked up in the curtains and scatter cushions.

Bessacarr models benefit from a higher specification than sister range Esprit, including walnut trim to the dash, cab mirror covers, Omnivent, reversing camera and wind-out awning.

**Bessacarr has the same models as sister range Esprit, but its spec is a couple of rungs higher on the ladder of touring luxury. CAD images show how the 494 will look**

production was allocated to meet the demand, and two new single-axle models were added mid-season to broaden Kon-Tiki's appeal further.

The Black Edition package of tasty upgrades made the already desirable Kon-Tiki even more tempting: in came a 100W solar panel, Duvalay mattresses and external shower and barbecue points. For 2015, the improvements continue, with the new Fiat Ducato cab, timber-free SMART bodyshell construction and Swift Group-wide spec bumps added to the mix. There are other benefits, too, including a DAB radio and smart new 16in alloy wheels.

There are no model deletions for this year, so the Kon-Tiki range stays the same. It features the low-line, island bed **625**; the low-line, rear fixed-single-bed **635**; and the high-line, rear lounge **649**. Two low-line models offer high-line options: the island-bed **669** and the garage bed **679**. All offer four berths as standard, except the six-berth 649.

The three tag-axle 'vans (649, 669 and 679) are built on the 5000kg Al-Ko chassis. The two single-axle models ride on 4250kg Al-Ko chassis. All have double floors to take tanks, plumbing and storage.

With two leisure batteries, a solar panel and Grade 3 insulation, all Kon-Tikis are genuine four-season motorhomes that can go off-grid. Prices will increase by only 2% for 2015, adding £1300 to the 625's 2014 price of £64,995, for example.



#### RIO

It was the all-new Rio range that grabbed the headlines at Swift Group's launch event. The two compact coachbuilts were developed to meet the needs of motorcaravanners looking to downsize into smaller motorhomes with lower running costs. Although a coachbuilt motorhome, it is the same width as a panel van, so will appeal to those looking for a smaller footprint.

But the stand-out feature of the new Rio is its rear tailgate,

**“The all-new Rio range grabbed the headlines at Swift Group's launch event”**

which opens to offer panoramic views from the rear. These can be enjoyed al fresco under the tailgate, which doubles as a sun shade or rain shelter. Swift says the Rio has been inspired by Continental motorhomes – fans will note its similarity to the Bürstner Brevio and Hymer Compact.

Rear lounges are a feature of both new Rios: the two-berth **320** and the four-berth **340**. The latter has the added benefit of a front dinette and an electronically operated drop-down bed in the rear lounge; the Rio 340 is just one of several 2015 Swift motorhomes to feature them.

Both Rio models are based on the facelifted Fiat Ducato with a 2.3-litre 130bhp engine, paired with a special

Fiat low-line chassis. The 340's front dinette features two belted travelling seats; it can be made into a sociable lounge by rotating the front seats. The shorter 320 has no dinette and only two belted travel seats.

The Rio's rear lounge features parallel seating which converts easily into a double bed, via slats that slide out from the seat box frame. A rooflight and two side windows take care of illumination, with backup from LED lights running along the top edges of the overhead lockers.

Both Swift Rio models are certified to Grade 3 insulation standard, and carry Truma Combi 4 space and water heating. Rio prices will start between £44,000-45,000, making them very

## MUST-SEE NEW 'VAN

### SWIFT RIO 340



Of all the motorhomes on show at Swift's preseason launch, it was the pair of new Rio 'vans that most caught our eye. The two-berth 320 and the four-berth 340 feature a raising rear tailgate, the likes of which hasn't previously been seen on a British-made coachbuilt.

The rear tailgate is built from a fabricated steel frame with GRP skin and has a large window; lights in its inner panel become ceiling lights when the tailgate is raised to allow night-time loading and unloading, as well as

for adding ambience to low-light al fresco situations. In a significant contrast to German 'vans, Swift has added a retractable rear step to make entering and exiting easier.

Both 'vans feature rear-lounges, but the 340 also gets a front dinette and drop-down bed, adding two berths. The bed can be fully lowered, for easy access, or used in a halfway-down position, so two people can sleep in the lounge seats below. This fixed bed has a Duvalay Duvalite mattress – a Swift exclusive.

**The rear tailgate can be lifted to shelter al fresco diners from the sun or rain. This unusual feature has never been seen on British-made motorhomes**