

Practical

HOT NEW 'VANS FOR 2016

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October 2015

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Auto Campers Day Van
in Kersey, Suffolk

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10>

AUTO CAMPERS

Day Van

Need a fun daily drive and capable tourer? You can have both with the Day Van. **Niall Hampton** checks out this versatile camper

☎ **Price** From £25,500 OTR (£39,090 as tested) ☎ **Sleeps** 4 ☎ **Belts** 6
 ☎ **Base vehicle** Ford Tourneo Custom ☎ **Engine** 2.2-litre turbodiesel, 125bhp
 ☎ **L/W/H** 4.97/2.08/2.1m (16'4"/6'10"/6'9") ☎ **MTPLM** 3000kg ☎ **Payload** 540kg
 ☎ **Water** (fresh/waste) 12/12 litres ☎ **Leisure battery** 75Ah ☎ **Gas** N/A

Roy Wood Transits in Berkshire has enjoyed a 45-year association with Ford's iconic range of vans, which celebrate its 50th anniversary this year (see September issue, p122). And its latest campervan conversion, the Auto Campers Day Van, is every

bit as adaptable as the vehicle on which it is based. Featuring modular furniture that can be reconfigured on the fly by the user, the Day Van is both super-capable daily drive and genuine multi-purpose camper.

Campers with modular furniture are no strangers to the market, of course,

but what makes the Day Van stand out is its Ford Transit Custom underpinnings, or more accurately the Ford Tourneo Custom, the people-carrier version of the Transit. Regular readers will know we're big fans of this base vehicle. It's great to drive – more car than commercial vehicle, with an ergonomic and comfortable cabin – but perhaps best of all, it's very well equipped for the money and the factory-fitted options retail for real-world prices. This results in a campervan that's affordable for more potential buyers, and we think there's much to applaud about that.

Auto-Campers also offers a Leisure Van, which sports a fixed rear kitchen and storage unit along both sides of the vehicle (see June 2014 issue, page 110). The Day Van is a different beast, though, and can be configured from the floor up by the buyer. Six rear travel seats can be specified, formed from a single and double seat, in two rows, making eight in total. These seats can then be detached from their factory-fitted floor mounts and removed to create a large luggage space – or you can rearrange them into the layout on test here.

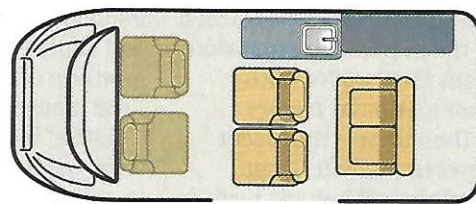
This configuration sees two single seats sited behind the front seats, and one of

the double seats behind them, to make a total of six belted seats. The space saved is used to deploy a kitchen unit and storage units along the offside wall, so the Day Van now follows the classic campervan layout. These modular units are self-contained and secure via bolts to the floor, so they'll be perfectly robust and safe during transit.

So away from its campervan duties, you can use the Day Van for transporting bulky furniture, as a support vehicle for outdoor pursuits or as a family runaround for shopping trips and the school run. (Auto Campers offers a 'buy back' for any seats you decide not to use.)

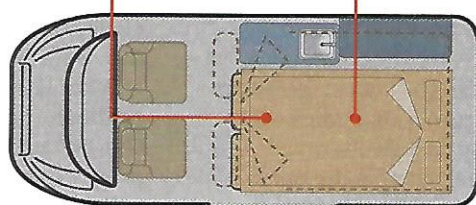
Our test 'van sported Trend trim with a 125ps engine and an elevating roof to increase the interior standing height (low-line and high-line roof heights are also available). There are sliding doors on both sides, plus a tailgate, to permit easy loading and to bring the indoors outdoors. The vehicle has a pleasing design, with contemporary styling cues including swept-back light clusters.

A lounge is formed in the row behind the driver, by adding an occasional table to a receiver in the floor. ☎



Roof bed:
2m x 1.2m

Lower bed:
1.84m x 1.16m



Contact Roy Wood Transits, 429 Reading Road, Winnersh, Berkshire RG41 5HU Tel 01189 790 202
Web www.auto-campers.co.uk

WHAT MOTORHOME? Elevating-roof camper



TAKE IT OUTDOORS

You'll need some protection from the sun (or the rain) if you take the Day Van to a festival. How about this optional canopy awning?



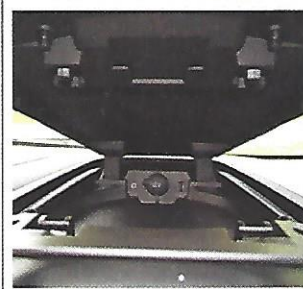
CASSETTE AWNING

It costs £500 and winds out easily from its housing, via a collapsible pole. You can also add an awning on the other side of the 'van



DRIVES LIKE A CAR

Car-like dashboard features this neatly arranged central console. The arrangement includes a CD player and auxiliary audio input



OPEN WIDE, NOW

The top of the dashboard opens up to reveal 12V and USB connections and space to store a phone, a sat nav and their untidy wires



BRIGHT AND AIRY LOUNGE

With optional swivelling cab seats and the table in situ you have a fine place to relax. The sliding doors open on both sides of the vehicle

CARAVANGUARD
INSURANCE
QUOTE
£242.50*



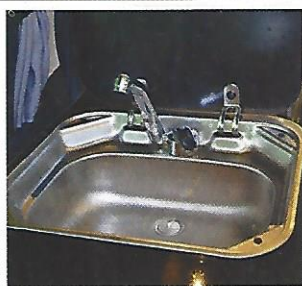
NEATLY TUCKED AWAY

The camping stove is kept secure in a drawer in the side of the kitchen unit when not in use. The drawer below it is the fridge



LET'S COOK

The camping stove has a small gas cylinder beneath it and can be used on top of the kitchen unit or on the exterior shelf extension



ABLUTIONS/WASHING UP

The built-in sink has a fold-down tap and a lid to extend usable work top. Fresh and waste water tanks each have a 12-litre capacity



GETTING POWER

You get a mains and a 12V socket located behind the cab passenger seat, so they're handy to use when the table is in place

| ★ 'VAN REVIEW |

Swivelling front seats, a cost option fitted to our test 'van, helped make the most of this area, which, with the side doors opened, is certainly an agreeable place to be.

The optional roof bed was also fitted, making four berths in total. The lower double bed configuration depends on which storage units are fitted to the offside; choose between a transverse or longitudinal orientation.

Specify some choice added extras, though, and the Day Van's capabilities go well beyond the limitations of its name. Our well-specced version included a driver's swivelling seat (£400), roof bed and lights (£500), primary bed system (£800), longitudinal bed extension (£200), kitchen module including exterior shelf (£1800), lower utility unit with tambour doors (£800), top utility unit with tambour doors (£800), Dometic toilet (£100) and Webasto heating (£1000). A suite of extras like this makes the Day Van viable for more than a long weekend at a festival, and it was easily up for the job of pootling around Suffolk for this issue's cover story (see p26).

Other extras fitted to our test vehicle included alloy wheels (£600), colour-coded body details (£600), 240V hook-up and charger (£400), tailgate bike rack and struts (£300), 2.6m cassette awning (£500) and multi-rail for awning fixture (£200). ☉



GETTING SOME AIR

The pop-up roof has a flyscreen on either side with zipped covers to keep out cool night air and bright morning light



STORAGE OPTION

The kitchen module, which includes an exterior flip-up shelf, is an £1800 option (work tops have now been changed to metallic black)



KEEPING SAFE

The pop-top carries a CO2 alarm and smoke alarm. Handles help to pull the top closed and straps keep the folded material in place



WILLING SUSPENSION

Our test 'van had the primary bed system plus optional longitudinal bed extension. The latter is supported by a strap and kitchen unit handle

PRACTICAL MOTORHOME SAYS...

Fun, flexible and futureproof, the Auto Campers Day Van is much more than its name suggests. You get a superb base vehicle and conversion for well under £40,000 – even with some must-have options added – and the modular furniture means you're not tied to one layout. This is a genuine go-anywhere camper as well as a fabulous daily drive.



THE FUNDAMENTALS

The 12-litre fresh and waste water tanks, plus optional Porta Potti, stash neatly away beneath the sink and behind a tambour door



STORAGE SPACE

Keep things neat and tidy behind the tambour doors of the optional upper and lower utility units, which cost £800 each



VIEW FROM BEHIND

The back door opens up to give access under the bed. The alloy bed crossbeams will be replaced with an extruded alloy section