

Practical
Motorhome

BIG

GROUP TEST

Elevating-roof T5 campers

Elevating roof campers offer all the basics you'll need for a camping holiday, in a machine no bigger than a decent-sized people carrier. What you lose in interior space, compared to a coachbuilt, you gain in on-road performance and manoeuvrability, thanks to a highly rigid body structure, and dinky proportions. You can limbo-dance under car park height barriers, then park without occupying two bays. And it should fit in your garage at home. So who buys them? Couples whose kids have stopped camping, or who are struggling with the size of a large coachbuilt as they grow older, may choose to downscale to an MPV-sized vehicle.

Campers are also popular with young, first-time buyers, and those who use them as a day vehicle or for business. A handful of British manufacturers remain committed to building some of the finest campers in Europe, and we look at how three of the best match up to the latest from Auto-Sleepers.

The Lucky, Matrix and Trooper have skimmed the original roof off and replaced it with a strengthening frame, but this considerably increases the usable standing space, with the Matrix winning out on this front. Thanks to its two-by-two seating arrangement and rear elevating roof, you can walk the full length of the vehicle.

If a true four-berth camper for eating and lounging, and movement to, from and through the 'van when it is parked up, is most important to you – for example, if you have a couple of kids and you plan to use the 'van for extended breaks away – then you'll really welcome the Matrix's practical twin sliding doors, its rear entry and exit, and the fact there's standing room which runs the full length of the 'van.

SUMMARY Middlesex Motorcaravans may be small, but it clearly convert its 'vans with a lot of love and attention, and the quality of finish in here puts some larger converters to shame.