

CHAUSSON FLASH 22



CI S-LINE 670 FAMILY



# UPSTAIRS DOWNSTAIRS

Continental low profiles have drop-down beds and alternative layouts, but which works best for families?

Words and pictures by Andrew and Rona Bromley



Cramping a quart into a pint pot (making a reasonably-priced, reasonably-sized family motorhome) has always tested manufacturers' ingenuity.

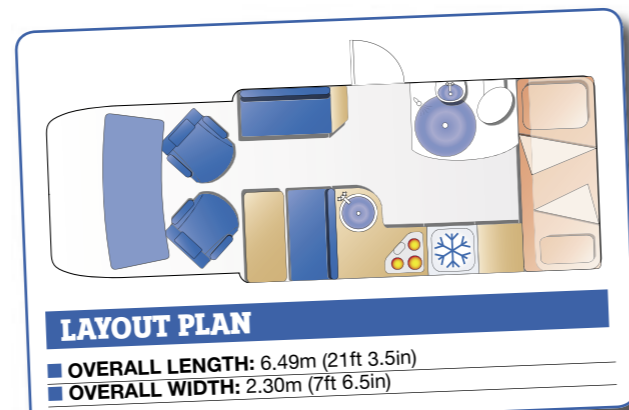
Not long ago, Bürstner developed drop-down beds that utilised space above the lounge within a semi-low profile coachbuilt. Since then, many Continental converters have adopted this

design, and there's now a good choice available.

Here we test rivals from Chausson of France and Ci of Italy – different base vehicles and different styles and layouts, but both brands belonging to the giant Trigano Group. Trigano companies are managed locally, but benefit enormously from mass-purchase opportunities resulting from membership of this empire. Despite exchange rate difficulties, both still strive to supply affordable motorhomes in this country.

How will these two shape up for a family of four on a budget, and wanting a reasonably-sized 'van for multi-interest holidays?

Ci's S-Line 670 comes on the newly-updated Fiat Ducato, its outline, emphasised by swirling decals, hints at the interior layout. It's not your typical low-profile: there's quite a hump, but it's further aft than usual, with a



sharp and elegant brow and a rooflight above the Ci emblem. As expected, the caravan door is on our offside and rather 'budget' in quality, lacking window, flyscreen or central locking. Grey bumpers and skirts, and blue decals give the S-Line an understated appearance, but that bodywork is strongly faced with GRP. Below the surface, plastic replaces wood for the upper structure. So confident is Ci of the construction's efficacy,

the 2012 model-year boasts an impressive 10-year water-ingress warranty.

Chausson has chosen Ford's Transit as a base. Slightly shorter than its rival, and slightly taller, it's not obvious, externally, that there's an upper bed. The cab is metallic silver, with flat grey only on front corner bumpers. Silver decals integrate well with the body and there's a swooping low-profile overcab. At the rear, two small windows, one above the other, suggest the interior layout. Access is via another offside-located door – again a fairly basic type, lacking window or central locking, but with a flyscreen. Chausson has chosen another sturdy top coat for the body's sandwich construction – GRP – and the Flash is claimed to have an 'anti-hail' roof.

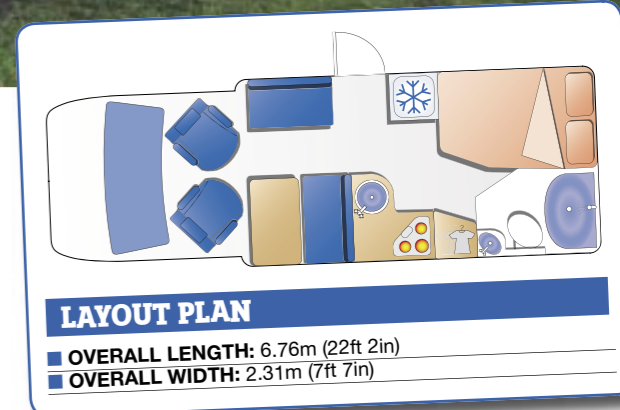
Inside the Flash are swivelling cab seats, a half-dinette, with two forward-facing travel seats and table on the nearside, an inward-facing settee on the offside, and a low-ish (just over six feet) ceiling. Opposite the door is the L-shaped kitchen, then the fridge tower

and wardrobe (the ceiling here is much higher). On the offside is the washroom, with a nicely rounded corner, and across the rear, twin bunks. Upholstery, in dark blue, white and gold stripes provides instant nostalgia! The removable carpets are beige (over plank-effect vinyl), but grey in the cab. Woodwork is medium brown, kitchen cupboard fronts in cream and surfaces beige speckle. Overhead lockers throughout, have most unusual concave doors, which are surprisingly practical.

The S-Line also has swivelling cab seats and a half-dinette, travel seats and side-facing settee with another slightly low lounge ceiling. Its kitchen is again L-shaped, but with the fridge opposite on the offside. Instead of bunks, a French double bed fills the offside rear, with washroom adjacent on the nearside. The other main difference is in ambience. With dark walnut-style woodwork, Luna upholstery in oatmeal abstract, cupboard and fridge doors in glossy cream, marble-effect surfaces and pale grey vinyl floor (carpets are optional), it's very modern – contrasty – and very different from the Flash.

**MOTIVE POWER**

The S-Line has Fiat's recently updated, charcoal-coloured fascia and Euro 5 compliant motor. A diesel particulate filter cleans engine emissions, and better fuel economy



is claimed. The 2.3-litre engine still produces 130bhp, though an upgrade to 150bhp is available at a price. The upgraded 3.0-litre Euro 5 engine (up from 157bhp to 177bhp) isn't currently on offer. The big news is that from 2012, both 150 and 130bhp engines can be had with the Comfort-Matic automated gearbox, previously reserved just for the 3.0-litre.

The Flash still had a Euro 4 compliant motor, but updating to Euro 5 is imminent. Standard output from the 2.2-litre engine is 115bhp, but our test vehicle had the 140bhp upgrade, which costs £913. Currently, there's no automatic gearbox option. The manual 'box, like Fiat's, has six gears.

Both 'vans have special, wide-track rear axles, produced specifically for motorhomes and



1 Lower seats result in a much improved driving position in the Chausson

2 The Ci offers Euro 5 compliance, but manually-adjustable mirrors



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3 The Flash places fridge/freezer and high-set oven opposite the washroom  
4 Nostalgic upholstery and concave locker doors provide interior style notes  
5 The table boasts an adjustable extension, but it's heavier than its rival's

intended to enhance handling and road-holding. The Fiat cabin is comfortable, with multi-adjustable seats, a dash-mounted gearlever falling easily to hand and clear instruments. The huge door mirrors are excellent. To my chagrin, I found these were manually adjustable. This is a really retrograde step (or am I just spoilt?). Remote adjustment is an optional extra – coming with a pack that includes cab air-conditioning. In compensation, there's a Clarion replacement radio/CD player, plus cruise control and twin airbags.

The Transit's driving position is usually compromised by higher than normal seats (especially with swivels fitted), and has a non-adjustable steering wheel. However, the Flash has lower seat boxes, but the seats are still adjustable and have swivels. Result – a really comfortable driving position, and the best I've experienced on a modern Tranny. Everything – gearlever, steering wheel and handbrake – is (for tall me) ergonomically correct, due to this modification. Mirrors (remotely adjustable) are smaller than Fiat's and, despite long arms, didn't give good rearward vision: with no interior view aft, I'd want a rear-view camera. Also, instruments are small and difficult to see, especially the trip computer, which is greatly inferior to Fiat's. Included in the Silver Pack on the test vehicle, the Flash had air-conditioning, a good radio/CD player (with steering wheel-mounted controls), plus fog lights and silver cab. We'd expect most purchasers to specify the Silver Pack.

Both motorhomes have two forward-facing travel seats with three-point belts in the half-dinette. Chausson's offside settee also converts to a rearward-facing travel seat, but with only a lap strap, it's not recommended.

**ROAD MANNERS**

So far, I've only driven brand-new Euro 5 Fiats, so can't say how they'll perform when loosened-up. To me, there's little discernible difference from the older version, which combined lusty performance and reasonable economy. If, as claimed, fuel consumption is improved, so much the better. The S-Line drove nicely, handled as well as ever, had quite smooth suspension and, though there was

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**WE LIKED**

- Ford base vehicle
- Quiet ride
- Improved driving position
- Simple, manual operation of drop-down bed
- Large rear bunks/garage arrangement
- Good kitchen storage
- TV location and cupboard

**WE WOULD HAVE LIKED**

- More mains sockets
- Sink with integral drainer
- Reading lights and better lighting all round

**I DISLIKED**

- Lack of spare wheel
- Thin, stiff, easily creased curtain material
- Toilet too high
- Heavy and clumsy table

**CI S-LINE 670 FAMILY**

**WE LIKED**

- Latest base vehicle and driving experience
- Good French bed with only gradual cutaway at side
- Spacious washroom
- Simple manual operation of drop-down bed
- 10-year warranty against water ingress

**WE WOULD HAVE LIKED**

- Sink with integral drainer
- Stay, to support raised fixed bed base
- Privacy curtains/screens for the beds
- TV point for rear bed
- Reading lights for lounge area
- More mains sockets

**WE DISLIKED**

- Lack of spare wheel
- Cubby in the kitchen work-surface will become full of bits and water
- Lack of standard-fit electrically-adjustable door mirrors

some noise from 'muttering' internal fittings, this aspect was acceptable.

Flash had the 140bhp motor but, having clocked so few miles, it was sluggish and I couldn't be sure it wasn't 115bhp. From experience, when run-in it'll be a stormer, with ample reserves of power for the well-chosen gear ratios. Supple suspension also provided a comfortable ride. And although there were some quiet creaks from the over-cab moulding, the rest of the interior was whisper-quiet, even over poor road surfaces.

Both these vehicles should give a high degree of driver satisfaction. Both will go indecently quickly if pushed and both have brakes and suspension to cope with performance.

**LOUNGE AND DINE**

These motorhomes are firmly in the Continental camp, where the most comfortable seats are in the cab: lazy, British feet-up lounging isn't feasible. Instead, both lounges offer seating (inward and forward-facing) with some backrest moulding and good access to a big table attached to the wall. Both tables have extensions, so driver's seat and side settee occupants can reach them. Chausson's extension swivels, so is more adjustable than Ci's, which pulls out into a fixed position. However, Ci's table is lighter weight and, when bed making, the supporting leg kneels. This is far simpler than struggling to pull apart Chausson's heavy pole-style leg. The Ci's cab seats are up a step, unlike Chausson's, so legs may dangle somewhat.

In each, five adults could sit round the table – six at a pinch. In neither did we find the low ceiling a problem, but lighting proved inadequate for reading: even though there are ceiling lights and LED strips under the top lockers in both, there are no reading spots.

The Ci's TV aerial and 12V socket are high above the cab in a side cubby, so you might expect a cricked neck when goggling. The Chausson has its TV bracket concealed under a rising armrest/table for the side settee, but the sockets are inside at the base of this cupboard: long arms are required.

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6 Very different to the Flash, the S-Line offers a French bed aft  
7 The S-Line boasts a very modern interior  
8 There's a step up into the cab, so the swivelled seats come higher to the lounge



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CI S-LINE 670 FAMILY



HEAD-TO-HEAD DATA

CHAUSSON FLASH 22

PRICE

- From: £38,747 OTR
- As tested: £41,416 OTR

BASICS

- Berths: 5/6
- Three-point belted seats: 4 (incl driver)
- Warranty: Base vehicle and conversion 3 years, water ingress 5 years
- Badged as NCC EN1646 compliant: No
- Construction: GRP clad sandwich coachbuilt with GRP/ABS mouldings
- Size: Length 6.49m (21ft 3.5in), width: 2.30m (7ft 6.5in) height: 2.89m (9ft 6in)
- Wheelbase: 3.80m (12ft 5.5in)
- Rear overhang: 1.60m (5ft 3in)
- Gross vehicle weight: 3,500kg
- Payload: 558kg (after allowance for driver @ 75kg, 100 per cent fresh water, full gas cylinder, 90 per cent fuel)
- Insulation: Floor 62mm, walls & roof 38mm
- Interior height: 2.11m (6ft 11in) max, 1.86m (6ft 1in) in lounge

THE VEHICLE

- Chassis: Ford Transit chassis cab with wide-track rear axle
- Engine: 2.2-litre 140bhp turbo-diesel
- Transmission: 6-speed manual gearbox, front-wheel drive
- Brakes: Servo-assisted discs all round
- Suspension: Front: independent on coil springs. Rear: rigid axle on leaf springs
- Features: Driver and passenger airbags, cruise control, radio/CD player, steering wheel-mounted radio controls, electric windows and mirrors, remote central locking (cab only), cab air-conditioning, trip computer, dash-top storage. No spare wheel

KITCHEN

- Sink: Stainless steel bowl with plastic drainer insert, mixer tap & glass lid
- Cooker: Smev three-burner hob with manual ignition, combi oven/grill
- Fridge: Thetford three-way fridge/freezer, manual energy selection, capacity 164 litres

WASHROOM

- Toilet: Thetford C250 swivel-bowl, wheeled cassette
- Basin: Fixed moulded plastic bowl with work-top and towel rail below, tap doubles as shower mixer/head
- Shower: Integral cubicle with translucent sliding screen, riser bar with shower attachment, twin-drain wet-room floor

BEDS

- Lounge drop-down double
  - Size: Length 1.93 metres (6ft 4in), width: 1.42 metres (4ft 8in), headroom: 675mm (2ft 2.5in)
- Dinette single
  - Size: Length 2.00m (6ft 7in), width: 1.10m (3ft 7.5in) max, headroom: 720mm (2ft 4.5in) max, with drop-down bed lowered
- Rear bunks
  - Size: Length 2.13m (7ft 0in), width: 920mm (3ft 0in) max, headroom: Top: 685mm (2ft 3in), bottom: 840mm (2ft 9in)

EQUIPMENT

- Fresh water: Inboard, 127 litres (28 gallons)
- Waste water: Underslung, 106 litres (23 gallons)
- Water heater: Truma boiler, gas-only
- Space Heater: Eberspächer with blown-air, diesel-only operation
- Leisure battery: 95 amp hr
- Gas: 2 x 11kg cylinders
- Lighting: 2 halogen lamps (overcab), LED strips (dinette), 4 halogen lamps (underside of drop-down bed), 1 LED strip (above drop-down bed), bulkhead lamps (bunks), 2 halogen lamps (above washbasin), bulkhead lamps (kitchen), LED cluster (between kitchen and bunks)
- Sockets: 230V: 2 (kitchen, TV). 12V: 2 (TV locker)

OPTIONAL EXTRAS

- Fitted to test vehicle: Silver Pack – cab air-con, fog lights, coloured grille, radio/CD (£1,756), 140bhp engine upgrade (£913)
- Other options: ESP (£445), rear steadies (£145), external shower (£97)

COOK'S QUARTERS

With Continental motorhome kitchens, one expects more minimalist facilities: the domestic-sized cooker is a British phenomenon. Here, kitchen layouts are similar, with the main L-shaped unit backing onto the dinette's seat. Each has a round stainless steel sink – regrettably, without drainer. The Flash sink has a natty striped glass lid, which the S-Line omits. Each has a Smev three-burner, hob with manual ignition and glass lid, and reasonable work-top space. Because they cater for the British market, each has a combi oven/grill – the S-Line's is set low (perhaps a little too low), below the cutlery drawer, whereas the Flash sites its oven high (perhaps a little too high), above the fridge tower. There's good storage in each galley, with an overhead locker (shelved in the Flash, unshelved in the S-Line), big cutlery drawer and low-level storage too. The S-Line has another locker and a small work-surface above the fridge. Lighting isn't brilliant for either, while each has a socket beneath an overhead cupboard.

There are differences with fridges: a 141-litre manual energy selection Thetford for the Flash; a Dometic 160-litre auto energy selection model in the S-Line. In the main work-top, the S-Line has a small cubby, which will assuredly fill with grotty bits and water. Flash sensibly omits this, so Rona's vote would be for the Flash kitchen. But this detail aside, either would be satisfactory.

BATHING SPACE

A drawback of some French bed-based designs is that the washroom is confined to a narrow slot alongside the bed. However, Ci has designed the S-Line's washroom cleverly so there's plenty of space. You enter via a wooden door (with towel-rail on the back), and the white oval washbasin sits in a surface to the right and under a large mirror illuminated by twin halogen lights. The cupboard below, has a toilet-roll holder inside its door and beyond there's a big unshelved locker above the toilet. The clear window above the loo, fortunately, has a blind and it's translucent, rather than opaque. At the rear is a separate, plastic-

lined shower cubicle with bi-fold door. Around its skylight there's a useful drop-down metal rail, for a towel perhaps, or wet clothes. There's a swivelling shower head bracket (no riser-bar) and three useful shelves. There's just one drain, but it's correctly positioned at the front. Overall, this is as good a washroom as we've seen on this layout.

Chausson's washroom lies aft of the caravan door, behind a tambour door. There's an integral circular shower – with curved screen – and two drain holes. As the plastic tray forms the washroom floor, it'll probably need a protective mat. The grey plastic washbasin faces the door, with towel rail beneath, soap dish and a surface alongside. The washbasin tap doubles as the shower head and the hose only just reached the shower riser-bar, which didn't adjust properly. More work is required here. With mirrors behind and to the side, and halogen lights multiplied in reflection, the effect is very bright. There's a rooflight above and a translucent window behind the loo. The Flash, like its rival, has a Thetford C250 swivel toilet, and it's a bit high for comfort. There's a storage cupboard, robe hooks and second towel rail in here, but we felt Ci's washroom was the better.

BEDTIME

The most important feature of these motorhomes is the drop-down sleeping accommodation. These beds are sometimes electrically operated – fine so long as they work, useless gizmos when they fail. I'm

9 Good storage provision and removable drainer in the Flash's kitchen

10 An integral shower in the Flash's washroom – the loo proved rather high for comfort

11 The Flash's drop-down bed is the larger

12 The S-Line has a rather low-set oven, and a big fridge/freezer

13 Well designed for space, the S-Line ablutions include a separate shower

14 The S-Line's drop-down bed can be lowered halfway and utilises a clever ladder

HEAD-TO-HEAD DATA

CI S-LINE 670 FAMILY

PRICE

- From: £42,980 OTR
- As tested: £44,480 OTR

BASICS

- Berths: 5/6
- Three-point belted seats: 4 (inc driver)
- Warranty: Base vehicle and conversion 3 years, water ingress 10 years
- Badged as NCC EN1646 compliant: No
- Construction: GRP clad sandwich coachbuilt, GRP/plastic mouldings
- Size: Length 6.76m (22ft 2in), width: 2.31m (7ft 7in), height: 2.80m (9ft 2in)
- Wheelbase: 3.80m (12ft 5.5in)
- Rear overhang: 2.00m (6ft 7in)
- Gross vehicle weight: 3,650kg
- Payload: 610kg (after allowance for driver @ 75kg, 90 per cent water, fuel, gas)
- Insulation: Floor 75mm, walls & roof 31mm
- Interior height: 1.99m (6ft 6.5in) max, 1.87m (6ft 1.5in) in lounge

THE VEHICLE

- Chassis: Fiat Ducato camper chassis cab
- Engine: 2.3-litre 130bhp Euro 5 turbo-diesel
- Transmission: 6-speed manual gearbox, front-wheel drive
- Brakes: Servo-assisted discs all round
- Suspension: Front: independent on coil springs. Rear: rigid axle on leaf springs
- Features: Driver and passenger airbags, remote central locking, cruise control, electric windows, Clarion radio/CD player, trip computer, manually adjusted mirrors. No spare wheel

KITCHEN

- Sink: Large circular stainless steel bowl with mixer tap, no lid or drainer
- Cooker: Smev 3-burner hob, manual ignition, glass lid. Thetford Duplex oven/grill
- Fridge: Dometic three-way with auto energy selection. Capacity 160 litres

WASHROOM

- Toilet: Thetford C250 swivel-bowl, wheeled cassette

- Basin: Fixed oval white plastic unit with mixer tap
- Shower: Separate cubicle with bi-fold translucent door, single-drain tray, shower head (no riser bar)

BEDS

- Lounge drop-down double
  - Size: Length 1.89m (6ft 2.5in), width: 1.40m (4ft 7in) max, headroom: 540mm (1ft 9.5in) with drop-down bed half lowered
- Dinette single
  - Size: Length 2.16m (7ft 1in), width: 1.21m (3ft 11.5in) max, headroom: 940mm (3ft 1in) with drop-down bed half lowered
- Rear fixed double
  - Size: Length 1.93m (6ft 4in) width: 1.25m (4ft 1in) max

EQUIPMENT

- Fresh water: Inboard, 105 litres (23 gallons)
- Waste water: Underslung, 50 litres (11 gallons)
- Water and space heater: Truma Combi boiler with blown-air, gas-only operation
- Leisure battery: 75 amp hr
- Gas: 1 x 13kg cylinder
- Lighting: LED strips below overhead lockers in kitchen and dinette, ceiling-mounted lamps in dinette and above rear bed, 2 adjustable reading lights above rear bed, 1 ceiling-mounted lamp serves drop-down bed, 1 LED ceiling-mounted lamp, 2 halogen spots, blue LED guide lights in washroom, blue LED guide lights to rear bed base and base of settee
- Sockets: 230V: 2 (kitchen, lounge). 12V: 1 (TV)

OPTIONAL EXTRAS

- Fitted to test vehicle: Family Pack - half-dinette with two rear travel seats, drop-down double bed (£1,500)
- Other optional extras available: Lux Pack – solar panel, reversing camera, bike rack, removable carpets (£1,195), Klima Pack Plus – cab air-con, electric mirrors (£1,140), auto gearbox – only with engine upgrade (£1,560), 150bhp engine upgrade (£1,500)



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15 The Flash's lounge bed is a fuff to make and not level

16 Roomy bunks are more practical for full-blown family use

17 The Flash has a separate water boiler – its interior is warmed by diesel power

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pleased to say these two are manually-operated, though a little muscle power is needed when raising them: surely there have to be some jobs left for the male of the species?

The Ci's bed can be lowered either half-way or fully, and has a cleverly designed ladder suitable for both positions. The idea of the 'halfway house' is so that some may retire, allowing others sufficient headroom to sit below... and whisper! In theory this is fine, and the cab seats can certainly be used, but settee seats can't, because the overhead lockers travel down with the bed. In practise, we doubt if this facility would be greatly used. The bed, meanwhile, tapers in width towards the caravan door, from 1.40 metres to 1.14 metres, and is 1.89 metres long. Once retracted, the bed doesn't have a catch to hold it, so it flexes somewhat when on the move.

The Chausson's drop-down bed is larger, at 1.93 metres x 1.42 metres, but has only one lowered position. Unlike Ci, Chausson supplies a belt and clip to secure the raised bed, and a curtain for privacy. It requires more of a manly shove to retract this one.

Both 'vans share the facility to make beds from the half-dinettes, should friends come to stay. Frankly, we'd rather they didn't! Chausson's is big (2.13 metres x 1.10 metres), but a pain to make: the table leg has to be pulled apart by brute force, wooden base flaps are extended, an infill cushion is needed and the finished bed isn't level. As the dinette over-head lockers lower with the upper bed, and there's only 370mm beneath them, you'd surely crack your head on awakening.

The Ci's dinette bed is no better, though almost as big, and the table component more easily converted. Loose bed-boards had rough edges and the extra infill cushions occupied most of the wardrobe. Our advice, for both motorhomes, would be to leave infill cushions at home and rely on the other beds instead.

The fixed permanent beds are good, each in their own way. The Flash has two bunks across the rear, each with window and bulkhead light, and the top bunk has a narrow shelf along the rear wall. They're long (2.13 metres), wide (tapering from 910mm to 790mm) and have good headroom. A curtain extends past the washroom, giving useful room for changing in privacy.

The S-Line's French bed is long (1.93m), with a gradual and modest cutaway. There are adjustable reading lights above the bedhead and plenty of headroom, but the rear-located window could make sitting up uncomfortable. We liked the low-set blue LED guide-lights in bedroom, lounge and washroom – great for nocturnal forays to the loo.

The S-Line's downside is the lack of privacy curtains or screens. For a couple who each like their own double bed, it's grand, but would most modern children like to share a double bed with their sibling? Two couples might manage, but the lack of privacy could grate somewhat.

Chausson's set-up seems more practical. If the extra bodies are children, they can bed-down in the bunks ('bags the top one!') behind the curtain, while parents relax in the lounge before retiring to the drop-down double. The bunks are perfectly big enough for adults too – adding versatility.

**STORE ROOM**

Continuing the practical theme, Chausson's bunk bed system converts to create a garage. This has two external doors – the offside larger

and bike-sized. And even with bottom bunk in situ, there's 380mm of vertical space. Raise the mattress and bed-base, and you've 1.30 metres of stowage height across the 'van – plenty for bikes and loads of equipment.

Additionally, the Flash has a large wardrobe, with shelves top and bottom and 1.09 metres of hanging drop. There's little space under the half-dinette seats, as the water tank occupies one, the Truma boiler the front of the side settee. However, there are four un-shelved overhead lockers under the drop-down bed and a deep open shelf in the overcab, with further side cubbies. Finally, next to the TV armrest, a typically French feature: a large wine cupboard, and it takes four bouteilles!

The S-Line's layout can't offer a garage, but there's a large underbed space (partly occupied by the Truma Combi heater), accessible from outside, or by raising half the slatted bed base and split mattress. Sadly, there's no supporting stay. The wardrobe is large, with cupboard below, and lacking a top shelf, it has a longer drop than its rival, (1.35 metres). However, if you stow the extra cushions for the dinette bed here, that's negated. The S-Line scores by providing capacious storage under the side-facing settee, and there are two high-level un-shelved lockers under the drop-down bed, with two more over the French bed – complemented by railed shelves above the bedhead. The overcab has a lipped shelf all round, with side cubbies, but it's less useful than the Flash's.

Both motorhomes offer good storage, commensurate with their excellent payloads of 572kg (Flash) and 610kg (S-Line). Though the S-Line's standard gross weight is 3,650kg, it can be down-plated to 3,500kg if that's your licence's limit. The Flash's layout gives it the greater, more versatile storage capacity than its rival.

**LIFE SUPPORT**

The S-Line has Truma's Combi 4, gas-only powered, water and space heater. The Flash has a Truma gas-only water boiler, but space heating is by diesel power – the unit underslung, so saving interior space. It's unfortunate neither has a mains electricity-powered facility, as this is so desirable when you're already paying for a hook-up. Both have large, inboard fresh water tanks: the Flash's has a huge 127-litre capacity, against the S-line's still very adequate 105 litres. Leisure batteries are quite small in both: 75 amp hr in the S-Line and 95 amp hr in the Flash. Two mains sockets in each may be considered insufficient, but more should be easy to fit. Both motorhomes have pre-fitted bike rack mounts, but regrettably, both lack spare wheels. Unwilling to travel without, but with no space beneath (underslung waste tanks are in the way), we'd have to store a spare in the garage (Flash) or under the French bed (S-Line).

**CONCLUSION**

Both these 'vans are priced very competitively, yet offer a great deal as compact tourers. The S-Line is the more expensive, but bear in mind that if you don't need the drop-down bed and rear travel seats you can have a version with just a twin-sofa lounge and save £1,500. We've reservations about two couples sharing a modestly-sized motorhome without more privacy. For a family with children, we consider the Flash more suitable, while the garage will be excellent for holiday clobber. ■

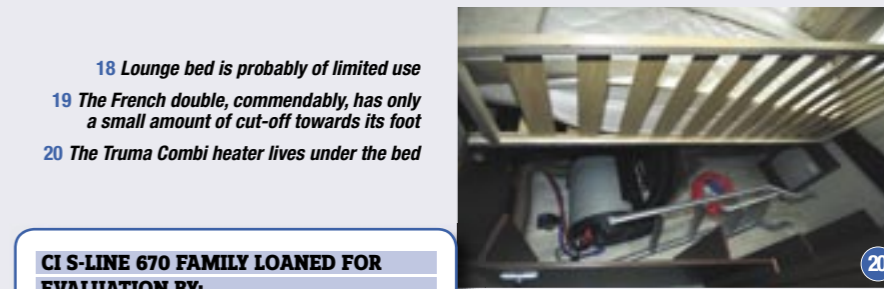
**CI S-LINE 670 FAMILY**



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18 Lounge bed is probably of limited use

19 The French double, commendably, has only a small amount of cut-off towards its foot

20 The Truma Combi heater lives under the bed

**CI S-LINE 670 FAMILY LOANED FOR EVALUATION BY:**

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