



The MMM long-term Ixeo time it585 at the Woodlands Caravan site in Sheringham, Norfolk

IXEO AND THE ATTWOODS

The beauty of motorhomes is the freedom they offer their owners to make spur-of-the-moment decisions to get up and go

Words & pictures by Daniel Attwood



And so it was that, with hours before the start of a long weekend, the Attwood clan – my wife, our twins and I – decided to take MMM's long-term Bürstner Ixeo Time it585 on our maiden motorhome holiday.

Being virgins to the motorhome way of life meant we faced a steep learning curve. But full credit to Bürstner's designers, as we found everything in the Ixeo was easy to locate and simple to use. This included the electric step, which the twins discovered could be silently retracted just as daddy was attempting to step out of the motorhome carrying the washing up.

The best surprise was the Ixeo's kitchen and its three-burner gas hob, which was as powerful as one could hope for, bringing water to the boil in surprisingly quick time for the adults' morning caffeine fix.

The Ixeo's rear layout is excellent: there's storage for all the food, drink and cutlery for a

family of four and, crucially, enough room to use it all. The bathroom is a great size, although little used on this trip, and the large upright cupboard – enough for all our clothes, boots, shoes and coats – is the icing on the cake.

The picture was not so rosy up front. While there is easily seating for six, the ridiculously oversized table is so large it is more a hindrance than a help. It is a permanent fixture, so remains stubbornly in the way blocking every attempted move. We were continually sliding it on its runners every time we wanted to pass by. God help you if you need to get to the cabin while someone is seated at the table.

This Ixeo is not a four-berth, but that didn't stop us. Bürstner offers an option to allow the lower seats to be converted into another double bed, but our test vehicle did not have this, which is good in a way as it would have meant an even larger table.

The upper bed was simplicity itself – pull it down throw on a sheet, duvet and pillows and job done.

As for creating a bed for the twin terrors:



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AT A GLANCE

- PRICE FROM: £42,630
- BERTHS: 2 (optional 4)
- ECONOMY: 26.1mpg

1 Despite two rear seat belts, we felt only one was safe for a child seat





Long term test update



each evening we managed to create a unique combination of cushion layouts into something resembling an L-shaped bed, which the twins thought was great fun.

There were some disappointments though. For example, the radio intermittently cut out and pulling the cab window screen connectors is already forcing the windscreen flashing off.

The electric hook up also tripped on the second night. I blamed my wife's hair dryer, while she simply blamed me. But this wasn't an issue as the fridge ran faultlessly on gas and using the lights and water pump hardly impacted on the leisure battery's remaining charge.

Travelling to the site – the Woodlands Caravan Site near Sheringham on the Norfolk coast – presented its own challenge. While the Ixeo has four belted seats, I was uncomfortable using the inner rear belt to fasten a child's seat to.

I haven't found a coachbuilt motorhome that comes with Isofix points, which connect child seats into the vehicle's chassis via the seat frame.

So, in the Ixeo, one child seat was fastened using the outer rear belt and was stable as it was prevented from rocking by the outer wall,

but this was not the case for the inner seat. Therefore twin one travelled in the Ixeo, while twin two travelled in a car with mummy.

Having use of a car was a bonus when on site, although the site was impressive – even to us who have only preconceptions with which to compare. The playground was safe, large and well equipped; the washrooms were immaculate, warm (underfloor heating) and never crowded and even the onsite bar's evening entertainment was a laugh.

Many of the pitches were on a slope, making blocks essential, but all had electric hook up and were within a few yards of water. The pitches, which were allocated on a pick-your-own basis, were large and – for an extra charge – awnings can be used.

This Ixeo doesn't have an awning, so we took a gazebo, which proved ideal until the wind started to pick up. At this point I decided it would be a good idea to peg it down. So off I went to the on-site shop and asked if they sold tent pegs. "On the bottom shelf," I was directed. There I stood blank-faced staring at women's toiletries wondering why tent pegs would be among packets of Lil-Lets.

Then it dawned: "Tent pegs not Tampax," I laughed as I left empty handed. ■

1 The table is too big and cannot be removed

2 The design of the rear kitchen is perfect

3 How to turn a two-berth into a four berth

4 The flashing is already coming away from the windscreen

5 The site's playground was large, safe and well equipped

VEHICLE DATA

- **Type:** Low profile coachbuilt
- **Price:** £42,630 OTR
- **As tested:** £47,742
- **Basics:** Fiat Ducato camper chassis cab
- **Berths:** 2 (optional 4)
- **Three-point belted seats:** 4 (inc driver)
- **Warranty:** 3 years base vehicle, 2 years conversion, 5 years water ingress
- **Construction:** Aluminium clad sandwich construction with GRP/plastic moulding and aluminium side skirts
- **Dimensions (manufacturer's figures):** Length: 5.99m (19ft 8in); width: 2.30m (7ft 6.5in); height: 2.75m (8ft 9.5in); wheelbase: 3.80m (12ft 5.5in); rear overhang: 1.25m (4ft 1in); gross vehicle weight: 3,500kg; payload: 695kg (after allowance for weight of driver and 90 per cent fuel, fresh water and gas)
- **Insulation:** Floor 50mm, walls 38mm, roof 50mm
- **Interior height:** 2.0m (6ft 7in) max to 1.74m (5ft 8.5in)
- **Engine:** 2.3-litre 130bhp turbo diesel
- **Transmission:** 6-speed manual gearbox, front wheel drive
- **Fuel consumption:** 26.1mpg
- **Suspension:** Front: independent coil-sprung struts. Rear: leaf springs on rigid axle
- **Brakes:** Discs all round with ABS

