

ADRIA POLARIS SL



Words & pictures
by Dave Hurrell



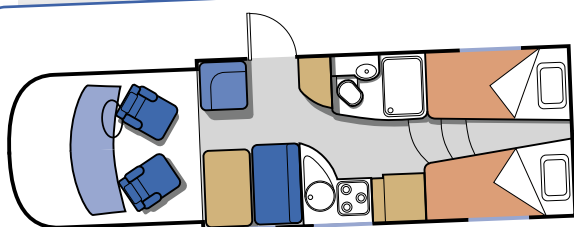
SINGLES SEEN

Two brand-new fixed single bed low profiles, from Slovenia and England, offer style and specification choices



I talk to as many motorcaravanners as I can on my travels to shows and campsites - of late discovering an increasing desire for fixed single beds. Converters and dealers too, tell me that 'vans so equipped are increasingly, flying off the shelves. Getting away from kicking, snoring partners is maybe one reason for this, but easy access, and versatility are others. Anyone who - sleeping in a double

bed - has climbed over their partner to get to the 'tinkle station' in the middle of the night might wish for singles, while folks with limited mobility could find them essential. Versatility is an issue too, as single beds make sharing the 'van with family and friends far easier: you could get better value for money, with increased use - maybe even sharing the cost of purchase with them. So it was, that I was very glad to get the opportunity to have good look at two brand-new models - both sporting that essential pair of singles.



LAYOUT PLAN

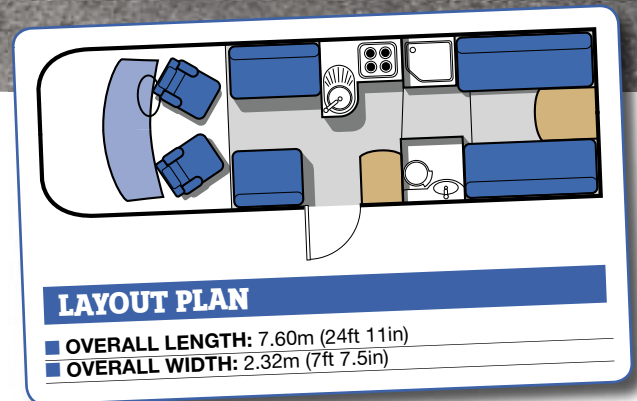
- **OVERALL LENGTH:** 7.49m (24ft 7in)
- **OVERALL WIDTH:** 2.30m (7ft 6.5in)



1 Merc Sprinter cab offers car-like piloting, but it's still more of a truck than its rival

2 Fiat cab is familiar, and here, very well equipped as standard

AUTO-TRAIL SAVANNAH



Hailing from Slovenia (Adria Polaris), and good old Grimsby in Lincolnshire (Auto-Trail Savannah), these 'vans are different in more than just nationality.

Sure, they both offer those essential individual sleeping spaces, but arrange them in ways that offer different, but potentially important features.

So, we get front lounges, centre kitchens and rear-located bedrooms, in motorcaravans sitting firmly in the seven-and-a-half-metre (overall length) class.

External looks are, in part, dictated by the base vehicles that haul the living spaces along. The Polaris' Mercedes Sprinter blends well with the swept-back lid of the low profile overcab, while Savannah's low-line overcab chunk sits smartly, but imposingly on this 'van's Fiat Ducato coachwork. That's not to say it makes the Auto-Trail look ugly - far from it



- substantial and classic is the result to my eye, and yes, I'm very much a fan of Auto-Trail exteriors. Polaris could easily take the best-looking Adria yet crown, such is its sleek character - multi-hued grey colouring looks classy, enhanced here by optional chrome front grille and driving lights. The Savannah hits back with metallic silver embellishments that are part of the - extra cost - Platinum Pack.

Inside, the Savannah is every inch an Auto-trail - the firm's 'woody' styling relieved by charcoal-coloured locker inserts and worktop. Soft furnishings are neutral, but good-looking: I'd liven things up a bit with some bright cushions and bed linen, were the Savannah mine. Step into the Polaris and you're met with interior style that makes a real impression. Semi-matte and piano finish dark wood looks superb partnered with white locker doors and very light-coloured, half leather upholstery: you may feel nervous sat in the lounge with your glass of red. I had no wine, but thought the high gloss piano finish on the table an easy-to-scratch accident just waiting to happen. So, although the Polaris is the flashier, both these motorhomes have aesthetic appeal in spades. But form is nothing without function...



ADRIA POLARIS SL



I LIKED

- Good looks
- Mercedes base with Al-Ko rear chassis
- Super-stylish interior
- Rear seatbelts
- Sensible cooker
- Big fridge/freezer
- Kitchen drawers
- Big, easy-to-access beds
- Garage

I WOULD HAVE LIKED

- All LED lighting
- A more hardwearing surface on the table
- 3.0-litre engine and auto gearbox

I DISLIKED

- Black washbasin
- High options prices

3 Front Euro lounge gives way to an L-shaped amidships kitchen

4 Piano-finish wood and white trim look superb

5 Polaris lounge will seat five

MOTIVE POWER

Chassis on these two vehicles could not be more different - sophisticated, with rear-wheel drive for the Polaris, basic with front-wheel motivation on the Savannah.

It's a while now, since Al-Ko introduced a rear chassis for the Merc Sprinter, but this was my first chance to get to grips with an example - its rarity on motorhomes due in part, no doubt, to higher cost. This is because the amount of engineering under the rear is considerable - trailing-arm independent suspension and the other gear required to transmit drive to the rear wheels. Polaris ain't a cheap motorcaravan, and this chassis is probably helping to make it so.

Savannah, meanwhile, goes for Fiat's cheapest frame option on the Ducato - its standard chassis (rather than the Fiat camper specific, or indeed, Al-Ko version) rides on good ol' cart springs on its rear end's rigid axle.

Motors are both four-cylinder jobs, and within a couple of hundred cubic centimetres of each other size wise. Both are also mated to six-speed gearboxes with dash-mounted levers for selecting ratios.

Cabs are not quite chalk and cheese, but quite different in character - the Polaris' Merc allows you to achieve a very car-like driving position, but still feels more of a truck than the Savannah's Ducato cockpit. Plastics in the Merc are superior to its rival, but I still found some ill-fitting parts and sharp edges that I did not expect in this icon of transportation. Standard Fiat seats in the Savannah, while Polaris sports a pair captain's pews that proved to be a tad wide and flat, even for my ample second set of cheeks.

Safety and comfort-wise, Savannah owners will be pleased to find, as standard, two airbags, cruise control and air-conditioning, while those with desires for the same in their Polaris will have to pay extra. The SE pack of accessories (included as standard) fitted to the Savannah, which gives you the cab air and cruise, also provides a reversing camera (colour). Polaris lists this feature as a £740 option. Those Polaris extras - the cruise control and passenger airbag are priced at an interesting £629 and £729 respectively: my eyes are watering and my wallet has gone into hiding!

Finally, carriers of lots of bits and bobs will pleased to discover that both cabs include lots of trays, bins and lockers - of course, you need plenty of space these days for the herd of warning triangles, flock of reflective vests, first aid kit and spare bulb set that we're all required to carry.

ON THE ROAD

Savannah first, and this 'van's standard Fiat chassis and 130bhp engine performed in a very predictable manner. The latest Ducato cab is supremely comfy for me - and very much a familiar friend, such is its ubiquity. The 130 horsepower motor and six-speed gearbox are also well known - here, performing excellently with good acceleration and equally good handling. This example even managed to reverse with good manners (transmission problems have led to vibration and/or damage) leading me to think that vibe-busting gearbox mods may have been carried out. In the rear, conversion noise was acceptably muted, taking into consideration the Ducato's standard chassis' firm ride. As usual, brakes and steering were super - the whole makes even long journeys a pleasure.

Driving the Polaris I was in new territory. I've driven the Sprinter several times before, but never an example equipped with the Al-Ko rear

chassis. For those that don't know, the standard Sprinter is endowed with rather soft suspension (some like its comfort, some find it over-bouncy). Loose locker contents and sleeping policemen have always been a recipe for smashed crocks in the Merc, while enthusiastic driving could make you feel the need to lean into corners! Funnily enough, fitting an Al-Ko rear chassis to Fiat's Ducato softens the suspension somewhat: with the Sprinter, the opposite is the case. It's fair to say that the Al-Ko set up transforms the Sprinter, so the Polaris handling and ride quality is pretty much perfect for the quite bulky motorhome body that this vehicle is carrying. With 129 horses on tap, performance proved pretty good too, with only a rather notchy gearchange marring the experience. Of course, the Polaris ain't cheap: were I paying for one, I'd shell out more cash for the superb 190 horsepower V6 motor with auto gearbox.

LOUNGE AND DINE

Swivelling cab seats help complete lounges that are archetypes in these 'vans' countries of origin. Polaris sports the classic Euro lounge setup of half-dinette with side seat - an ever-present, wall-hung table providing an eating surface. The Polaris lounge will seat five and allow them to dine too - thanks, in part, to a slide-out table extension. Crucially - given the three/four berth design - this also offers two belted rear travel seats. In the Savannah, the lounge provides the pair of sofas much loved by us Brits - here in a rather compact fashion with unequal-length seating. Savannah mealtimes see a freestanding table emerge from its own locker to stand between the sofas. There's also a small, round, dog-leg-mounted, table - ideal for drinks and the odd light lunch. This lounge is a five-seater too, but no more than four can get around the main dining table. Finally, remember there are no rear seatbelts in the Savannah - its third berth will be for visitors.

COOK'S QUARTERS

It's a step down from the lounge into the Polaris galley, where you discover a piece of equipment that's untypical of the average Continental motorhome's kitchen. Sure, there's the expected big fridge/freezer - here in sexy and imposing black - and a little work surface, but no afterthought, dangerous high-level oven. Instead Adria has opted for Spinflo's neat little Triplex stove. This half-height unit presents the cook with three hob burners (one, a high speed device), plus a grill/oven unit below that should be fine for cooking even quite ambitious motorhome meals.

Savannah goes one better. Its kitchen too, has the big two-door cooler, but plays cooker one-upmanship with a full-sized slot-in that provides three gas burners, a mains electric hotplate and a separate grill and oven. There's a microwave in here as well, and Savannah's sink has a separate drainer with drop-in cutting board covers.

Over in the Polaris, Corian-style worktop looks very upmarket. There are plenty of drawers in the Polaris galley, while Savannah lacks even a cutlery drawer - it does, however, provide a cutlery/utensil tray inside its big, curved-door cupboard. There's a small slide-out larder thing next door.

These two kitchens are neck-and-neck, as the Savannah's big cooker is stacked against way superior storage provision in the Polaris. It has to be said though, that I'd be happy to boil, fry, roast and bake in either of these two.

AUTO-TRAIL SAVANNAH

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- I LIKED**
- Good looks
 - SE Pack as standard
 - Small-but-comfy lounge
 - Freestanding table
 - Full-sized cooker
 - Big fridge/freezer
 - Semi en suite ablutions
 - Separate shower
 - All LED lighting
- I WOULD HAVE LIKED**
- An Al-Ko rear chassis
 - Longer beds
 - More headroom in the bedroom/washroom
- I DISLIKED**
- Lack of space in toilet room with door closed (see text)

6 Savannah interior is traditionally woody

7 The kitchen leads aft, to a separate bedroom

8 Twin-sofa lounge is a Brit classic

On Test Adria Polaris SL & Auto-Trail Frontier Savannah



BATHING SPACE

Washing facilities could not be more different. The Polaris presents an offside douching department that incorporates loo, basin and shower, Savannah splits its ablutions - toilet/washbasin room on the nearside, shower compartment opposite.

The Polaris' little room is a good example of the type. Its wetroom floor incorporates a semi-separate shower compartment (with

its own plumbing and rigid semi-circular rigid door) that also houses a chunky central heating radiator - a taster of interesting things to come in the life support section. Dark wood, a superb, big and sensible cupboard and a black, clean-it-every-time-you-use-it, washbasin complete a good-looking space that should be good to use, as long as you're not too large of frame. Oh yes, and the loo is a Thetford C250 - the swivel-bowl one with

the cassette on wheels: bog-dump operatives with bad backs can give a little cheer.

Savannah's facilities form an en-suite to the bedroom thanks to the fact that the dual-purpose toilet room door swings across to shut off the front end. This leaves the toilet

9 All occupants can dine thanks to a slide-out table extension

10 Kitchen features sensible cooker and lots of drawers

HEAD-TO-HEAD DATA

PRICES (note: all prices are quoted with VAT @ 15 per cent)

- From: £68,099 OTR
- As tested: £80,998 OTR

BASICS

- Berths: 3/4
- Three-point belted seats: 4 (incl. driver)
- Warranty: Base vehicle and conversion 3 years, water ingress 6 years
- Badged as NCC EN1646 compliant: Yes
- Construction: Alloy clad sandwich construction coachbuilt with GRP/ABS mouldings
- Length: 7.49m (24ft 7in)*
- Width: 2.30m (7ft 6.5in)*
- Height: 2.74m (9ft 0in)*
- Wheelbase: 4.07m (13ft 4in)
- Rear overhang: 2.36m (7ft 9in)
- Maximum authorised weight: 3880kg
- Payload: 764kg (after the vehicle in working order)

THE VEHICLE

- Chassis: Mercedes-Benz Sprinter Al-Ko chassis cab
- Engine: 2.1-litre TD producing 129bhp
- Transmission: Six-speed manual gearbox, rear-wheel drive
- Brakes: Servo-assisted discs all round
- Suspension: Front: Independent on transverse leaf spring. Rear: Independent with trailing arms
- Features: Aguti captain's seats, driver and passenger airbags, adjustable steering column, air-conditioning, remote central locking, radio/CD player, multi-function steering wheel, lockable glove box, door and dash-top bins, cruise control, front fog lights

INSIDE

- Layout: Swivelling cab seats ahead of half-dinette with side seat, nearside L-shaped kitchen, offside washroom, rear fixed single beds above garage

- Insulation: Floor 31mm, walls 41mm, roof 31mm
- Interior height: Kitchen area 2.03m (6ft 8in); lounge 1.87m (6ft 1.5in)

KITCHEN

- Sink: D-shaped deep stainless steel bowl, swan-neck mixer tap, no drainer
- Cooker: Spinflo Triplex half-height stove, three-burner hob under hinged glass lid, grill/oven, all with electronic ignition
- Fridge: Thetford N150 three-way fridge/freezer with SES (Smart Energy Selection). Capacity 149 litres

WASHROOM

- Toilet: Thetford C250 Electric-flush with wheeled cassette
- Basin: Inset plastic vanity unit with swan-neck mixer tap
- Shower: Semi-separate stepped area enclosed by semi-circular and bi-fold rigid screen, mixer tap, riser rail/head

BEDS

- Lounge single
- Length: 2.10m (6ft 10.5in)
- Width: 600mm (1ft 11.5in)
- Rear singles
- Nearside
- Length: 1.97m (6ft 5.5in)
- Width: 850mm (2ft 9.5in) max
- Offside
- Length: 1.90m (6ft 3in)
- Width: 850mm (2ft 9.5in) max
- Centre child's bed
- Length: 1.40m (4ft 7in)
- Width: Adds approx 300mm (1ft 0in) to total width at head of beds

EQUIPMENT

- Fresh water tank: Inboard 110 litres (24 gallons)
- Waste water tank: Underslung, heated 85 litres (18.7 gallons)
- Space and water heating: Alde wet system

ADRIA POLARIS SL

- with radiators and underfloor warming
- Leisure battery: 85 amp hr
- Gas: 2 x 11kg cylinders
- Lighting: Halogen downlighter to lounge, kitchen and washroom, adjustable reading lights to bedroom, LED pin-lights to lounge, kitchen and bedroom, twin filament lights to garage, awning light
- Sockets: 230V: 4 (2 in lounge, 1 in kitchen, 1 in bedroom) 12V: 3 (2 in lounge, 1 in bedroom)

OPTIONAL EXTRAS

Fitted to test vehicle

- Base: As part of Comfort Pack 2 - Passenger airbag, chromed radiator grille (£1690), cruise control (£629), air-conditioning (£2890), front fog lamps (£420), 3880kg chassis upgrade (£1740), multi-function steering wheel (£750)
- Conversion: As part of Comfort Pack 2 - rear corner steadies, alarm, additional leisure battery, fire extinguisher, waste water drain hose (£1690), Comfort Pack 1 - swivelling captain's seats in matching cloth, 150-litre fridge/freezer, TV bracket, carpets, panoramic and Remitop rooflights, garage shelving, double gas locker, bed covers and pillows (£4490), child's bed in rear (£290)

Other options available

- Base: Alloy wheels (£900), 163bhp engine upgrade (£1000), 190bhp upgrade (£3000), swivelling captain's seats in matching cloth (£1900), passenger airbag (£729), automatic gearbox (£2370), rear view camera (£740), cab seats in matching fabric (£1900), towbar (£1150), rear air suspension (£3780), alarm (£700), satnav/DVD player (£4500), xenon headlamps (£1490), front mudflaps (£135)
- Conversion: Carpets (£499), rear corner steadies (£250), full leather upholstery (£1290), additional leisure battery (£216), fire extinguisher (£48), TV bracket (£99), 110-litre fresh water tank (£120)

E&OE



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room open to the bedroom, along with the rigid-doored shower compartment. There's now plenty of room to use the toilet and basin, and this is a good thing, as with the toilet room door closed, I found bending over the basin caused my head to hit the shelf above,

11 Dining for four in the lounge

12 Galley better than its rival with a full-sized cooker

while my rear made unwelcome contact with the door handle. Auto-Trail has seen fit to attach a plastic panel to cover the gap at the hinge side of the door created when the door is closed across the aisle. I assume this is a 'modesty' panel to prevent peeping toms in the lounge - err, peeping. Seemed pretty daft to me, but anyway, it was already trying to pull away from its fixing screws.

It's a step up from the lounge so headroom

in the shower compartment is limited. In fact, this limitation tells a tale of a motorcaravan that's not suitable for folks over six feet tall - headroom in the whole of the rear is just six feet one inch. Finally, the loo matches that found in the Polaris - Savannah owners should be able to leave the Ralalex at home too.

Savannah wins the bathroom bash - more versatile, with more space and a proper separate shower.

HEAD-TO-HEAD DATA

PRICES (note: all prices are quoted with VAT @ 15 per cent)

- From: £51,836 OTR
- As tested: £53,334 OTR

BASICS (*manufacturer's figures)

- Berths: 3
- Three-point belted seats: 2 (including driver)
- Warranty: Base vehicle and conversion 3 years
- Badged as NCC EN1646 compliant: Yes
- Construction: GRP clad sandwich construction coachbuilt with ABS/GRP mouldings
- Length: 7.60m (24ft 11in)*
- Width: 2.32m (7ft 7.5in)*
- Height: 3.03m (9ft 11in)*
- Wheelbase: 4.00m (13ft 1.5in)
- Rear overhang: 2.08m (6ft 10in)
- Maximum authorised weight: 4000kg
- Payload: 465kg (after allowance for weight of driver, 90 per cent fuel, fresh water, gas)

THE VEHICLE

- Chassis: Fiat Ducato standard chassis cab
- Engine: 2.3-litre turbo-diesel producing 130bhp
- Transmission: Six-speed manual gearbox, front-wheel drive
- Brakes: Servo-assisted discs all round with ABS
- Suspension: Front: independent on coil springs. Rear: rigid axle on leaf springs
- Features: Remote central locking (extended to caravan door), auto-retract external step, electric windows and mirrors, door bins, trip computer, central storage locker, cab air-conditioning, cruise control, reversing camera, driver and passenger airbags, adjustable steering column

LAYOUT

Swivelling cab seats ahead of twin (unequal) sofa lounge, L-shaped kitchen, offside shower

compartment, nearside toilet/washbasin room. Twin fixed single beds in rear

- Insulation: Floor 44mm, walls 40mm, roof 44mm
- Interior height: Lounge/kitchen: 1.99m (6ft 6.5in). bedroom/washroom: 1.86m (6ft 1in)

KITCHEN

- Sink: Circular stainless steel bowl with drainer, drop-in cutting board covers, mixer tap
- Cooker: Spinflo slot-in stove with three hob gas burners, one electric hotplate, separate grill and oven, all with electronic ignition. Daewoo 700W microwave oven
- Fridge: Thetford N150 fridge/freezer, three-way with SES (Smart Energy Selection). Capacity 149 litres

WASHROOM

- Toilet: Thetford C250 swivel-bowl electric-flush, with wheeled cassette
- Basin: Oval plastic vanity unit with chromed mixer tap
- Shower: Separate compartment opens into bedroom, with rigid bi-fold door, single outlet tray, mixer tap/riser/head, overhead clothes drying rail

BEDS

- Lounge single
 - Length: 2.06m (6ft 9in)
 - Width: At head: 1.22m (4ft 0in). At foot: 900mm (2ft 11.5in)
- Nearside fixed single
 - Length: 1.80m (5ft 11in)
 - Width: 740mm (2ft 5in)
- Offside fixed single
 - Length: 1.88m (6ft 2in)
 - Width: 740mm (2ft 5in)

EQUIPMENT

- Fresh water tank: Underslung 100 litres (22 gallons)
- Waste water tank: Underslung 55 litres (12.1 gallons)

AUTO-TRAIL FRONTIER SAVANNAH

- Water and space heating: Truma Combi boiler with blown-air, gas-mains operation
- Leisure battery: 110 amp hr
- Gas: 2 x 13kg cylinders
- Lighting: All LED. 2 reading lamps in lounge, 2 at bed heads, strips in lounge, kitchen, bedroom, shower and toilet room. Mood lighting throughout interior, including over lockers, under edge of kitchen worktop, inside splashguard
- Sockets: 230V: 4 (1 in lounge, 2 in kitchen, 1 in bedroom). 12V: 1 (in bedroom)

OPTIONAL EXTRAS

Fitted to test vehicle

- Base: None
- Conversion: Platinum Pack: Metallic silver paint, Graphite-coloured high-level locker doors, SE edition umbrella (£599). Media Pack: 15-inch drop-down TV monitor, multi-channel digital TV/radio receiver, radio/CD/DVD player, colour reversing camera (£899)
- Other options available
 - Base: 157bhp engine upgrade (£1771), ComfortMatic automatic gearbox - only available with 157bhp engine upgrade (£1328)
 - Conversion: None

E&OE



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13 A super set of steps leads to generous single beds

14 Integrated washroom includes a semi-separate shower

15 A proper garage gives Polaris an edge



BEDTIME

Lounge sleeping spaces first - a subject, here, tinged with irony. Savannah's transverse lounge bed is easy to make (just pull the sofa bases together and drop in the backrests), generously sized as a single and very comfy. Polaris offers a typical half-dinette-based single bed that's more difficult to make (lower the table, pull out a section from beneath the side seat and use infills) and narrower. The irony is that it's the Polaris that has the extra seatbelts, the Savannah has none.

And so, we come to these 'vans' *raison d'être* - the single beds. The only thing that the two bedrooms have in common - apart from the obvious - is nifty lifting bed-heads. These allow your sybaritic pleasures to be had in greater comfort: although the average Sybarite may have thought reading and slurping tea far too mundane - bring on a well-oiled slave, toting peeled grapes and an amphora of mead!

In the bedrooms, it is size that matters, and the Polaris scores. Its single beds are longer than its rival's (nearside 6ft 5.5in, offside 6ft 3in), Savannah provides beds of 5ft 11in and 6ft 2in respectively. It has to be said that the average couple will probably find the Savannah fine, but taller users will have to rule it out. Polaris also offers an (optional) kid's bed inset in the middle, that also creates a more spacious sleeping space for a couple. Unlike Savannah, the Polaris beds are raised, but approached by proper stair-style steps that are very easy to use. Savannah singles are separated by the wardrobe, and remain so in all situations. However, they are both at normal just-jump-in height. Both 'vans' single beds proved super-comfy.

STORE ROOM

Bedroom arrangements and stowage space go hand-in-hand - providing another crucial feature that will affect the buying decision.

Starting at the rear, we find a big locker in the Savannah's rump: two doors and loads of room mean it's big enough for loads of outdoor kit - even a pair of folding bikes. There are two doors let into the side of the Polaris' rear too, but these lead to a full-blown garage (the reason why the single beds here are raised) - fans of full-sized bikes or even the odd scooter take note. Payloads are interesting - the test Polaris sported a generous 764kg, but this was with the (3880kg MAW) optional chassis upgrade. Without, carrying capacity comes down to a measlier 380kg. Savannah rides on a 4000kg MAW chassis as standard, with a 465kg payload that's realistic in a 'van that cannot carry a heavy motorcycle inside.

The most important part of the storage story out of the way, we move inside to discover lots of provision in both 'vans. Plenty of overhead lockers are joined by under-beds and under-seats space in both - the two wardrobes in the Polaris, and handy stack of (soft-closing) drawers below the Savannah's hanging-space are, the respective internal storage stars in each.

LIFE SUPPORT

Talking of stars, it's the Polaris' Alde wet central heating system that shines - giving hot water and keeping you snug all year - its radiators providing near-silent, and even warmth throughout. Remember though, that these systems can have a prodigious thirst for gas. The Savannah takes the more conventional route, its Truma combi boiler provides space heating via blown-air (and warmed H₂O), running on gas and mains electricity. The fresh water tank in the Polaris also gives

potential for all-year use - inboard, it'll stay snug. Savannah's fresh tank is underslung, making the 'van more suitable for three-season camping.

Lighting in the Savannah is all LED, a technology that Auto-Trail has been quick to grasp. There's some funky stuff here too, with mood lighting above all the lockers and LED strips under the kitchen worktop (which shines into the adjacent cupboard) and in the edge of the cooker's splashguard. Think in terms of saving 70 per cent power when compared to conventional (incandescent) light bulbs. Even so, Auto-Trail still fits a high quality (Elecso) 110 amp hr leisure battery, making the Polaris' 85 amp hr example look a bit mean. This fact becomes even more important when you realise that just about all the lighting (apart from some LED effects illumination) is power-sapping incandescent.

It's worth noting that quite a lot of the items fitted to the Polaris come from the options list, while the Savannah - with its standard SE Pack - already has them fitted. Two airbags, cab air, reversing camera, TV and digital tuner, fridge/freezer, awning - all are standard. Polaris adds very considerably (well over £12K) to its price via the extras menu.

CONCLUSION

Normally seen as a solid manufacturer of value-for-money products - the Polaris marks an upmarket departure for Adria, not seen since the firm started producing A-class motorhomes. Everything about the Polaris is in top-of-the-tree territory. Mercedes' Sprinter, complete with Al-Ko rear end performs extremely well, but crucially, has the potential to really shine with the quite superb - optional - 3.0-litre engine and smooth auto gearbox. Rear-wheel drive is welcome too, as it improves traction and is perfect for towing. Inside, stylish furniture, half-leather and good kit - including Alde Wet heating - impress, and will impress, your motorhoming friends. The reason-to-buy single beds are good too, with easy access and that - needed-by-many - proper garage beneath. Downsides appear to be few, but one big one could be the price. This is very much the case in the options list, where amounts of money demanded for some extras are eye-watering.

Savannah held few surprises for me - Fiat's Ducato and Auto-Trail's tried and tested approach works very well here, while value for money seems very good. A very British motorcaravan, Savannah will work very well for two people as long as they're not too tall.

And my favourite? Well, I loved the Polaris for its talents, but balked at the price. As I'm just five-foot-ten tall, the Savannah ticked just about all my boxes, although I would miss the Polaris' proper garage - motorised two-wheeled transport looming increasingly large in my aspirations. ■

AUTO-TRAIL SAVANNAH



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16 Like its rival, the beds have lifting heads

17 A big locker in the rear, but it's no garage

18 A semi-en suite is created by swinging the toilet room door across the aisle



VEHICLES LOANED FOR EVALUATION BY:

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 web site: www.adria-mobil.com)

Auto-Trail Frontier Savannah
Chelston Motorhomes,
 Chelston Business Park, Wellington,
 Somerset TA21 9JE (tel: 01823 662075;
 web site: www.chelstononline.co.uk)