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Visitors to eastern Newfoundland encounter nearly 11,000 miles of coastal scenic beauty to explore, and may even spot a whale (see page 19).



Storage-friendly motorhomes make bringing along recreational toys and other bulky items easier than ever. Pg. 32

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## ON THE COVER

At 27 feet, 5 inches long, the luxury-appointed Dynamax Isata 4 Series 25FW is easy to maneuver on the road, or while backing in to campground spaces or parking areas (see test on page 40). Photo by Shawn Spence.



By Kristopher Bunker

# Like Minds

Camping can be a polarizing word among motorhome owners, and RVers in general. After all, campers sleep in tents and sleeping bags on the ground, while RVers slumber luxuriously in their own, comfortable beds. Campers don't have their own belongings or hot and cold running water at the ready, nor do they have access to residential comforts like refrigerators, climate control or LED TVs with Blu-ray players.

All of that may be true but, especially seeing as how June is National Camping Month, there's no better time to put aside such trivial differences to embrace the outdoor lifestyle we all love.

When it comes down to it, it's all about spending time in the great wide open, and reaping the benefits that our common wanderlust tendencies bring to the forefront.

What better way to enjoy, say, waterborne recreation, than to set up camp by the shores of the lake, gulf or ocean, with nothing but the lapping of the waves against the rocks to lull you to sleep? In the morning, you are just a few steps away from water's edge, the perfect place to launch your personal watercraft, kayak or stand-up paddleboard (SUP). What's an SUP, you ask? Well, apart from offering an ideal vantage point of said body of water (gliding over its surface like so many fish through the depths below), time spent on an SUP is a wonderful way to stay in shape, find inner peace and

to breathe in some fresh air. Turn to page 24 for a primer (and SUP buyers guide) on this highly enjoyable and rewarding activity that continues to gain in popularity as novice paddlers conquer the learning curve and line up for the rides of their lives.

Once you've mastered the art of stand-up paddle boarding (or you at least get the hang of it), you'll no doubt be enticed to purchase your own. But, where to store it?

Most every motorhome can accommodate some version of an SUP, considering they don't weigh too much and can fit in the rear aisle of the rig while en route. But, if you're looking for the ultimate in SUP (or kayak, or canoe, or folding chair, or any other bulky item) storage, we've gathered

some of the top motorhomes that live large and still have plenty of room for your gear. Check out "More in Store" on page 32 to find your next storage-friendly motorhome.

This month also features a look at one of the benefits of RVing that no doubt turns many tent campers green with envy: onboard plumbing; more specifically, the wastewater systems that allow us to avoid crowded, over-filled pit toilets in some campgrounds. Maintaining those systems starts with better living through chemistry: Adding the proper holding-tank deodorizers helps maintain the balance needed to properly break down solids, while keeping the associated odors at bay and smelling fresh. "Flush with Confidence" on page 46 features the specifics on some of the best holding-tank products available.

Camping and RVing have always gone hand in hand, and will continue to, so we should celebrate everybody who prefers to watch the sunrise from a camp chair, hot cup of coffee in hand, while the songs of a new summer day play softly in the background. **M**

“It's all about spending time in the great wide open, and reaping the benefits that our common wanderlust tendencies bring to the forefront.”

## Contributors | June



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Cal-Am Properties, Circle 103 on Reader Service Card

## Have you, or somebody you know, traded in a large, luxury motorhome for a more Spartan model that's easier to drive? If so, what factors led to that decision?

Those are the questions we asked in the March issue, and here are some of the responses we received.



### A Room with a View

We traded a 42-foot diesel pusher for a 30-foot gas coach. The pusher was great for snowbirding, but it was expensive to maintain and repair, hard to wash, difficult to store and imposing to drive. It didn't fit into National Park Service or U.S. Forest Service campgrounds, so instead of staying in peaceful forests, we had to camp outside the parks in sketchy campgrounds, usually located next to a junkyard or railroad tracks. So much for luxury! Also, [we feel that] diesel pushers are useless for dry camping; their residential fridges drain batteries in hours. Our new coach is perfect: it's compact but roomy, easy to drive and to store, and it doesn't have complex systems that can break. For us, it comes down to eating at a Formica (rather than a Corian) dining room table; either way,

your sandwich tastes the same, but the view from the Formica table is that of a stream running by your campsite.

**Darin Furry | Bend, Oregon**

### Lucky Leprechaun

After full-timing for six years, we downsized from a 2006 Itasca Horizon 40KD diesel pusher to a 2017 Coachmen Leprechaun 260DS Class C on a Ford E-450 chassis with a V-10 and six-speed transmission. We really like the Leprechaun's features and floorplan, and the local dealer has a great reputation for standing by its products.

We spent last summer in Maine for more than two months, and the motorhome's smaller size accommodated us fine, giving us plenty of livability. On the road, it handled the Appalachian Mountains with no problems as we towed our Subaru Forester on steep

grades using the transmission's tow mode, which acted like the engine brake we had in the diesel pusher. We were happy to find the Ford engine wasn't as noisy as we thought it would be — especially after driving a diesel pusher — and the ride was comparable to the diesel pusher as well.

**Jack Halpin | Patrick AFB, Florida**

### Oh, the Places You'll Go

We gave up the queen-sized walk-around bed in our 30-foot Class C for a corner double bed in a new 25-foot Class C. We found a floorplan with nearly as much storage as the 30-footer. We wanted a smaller rig to go places we haven't been able to fit in to. I am also hopeful that my wife will learn to drive this one.

**Al and Karen Knorr  
Longview, Washington**

## Featured Letter

### Lifestyle Choice

My wife and I have owned three Class A's in the past 25 years. We recently sold our 40-foot Class A with all the bells and whistles, and are looking for a smaller rig for three reasons.

First, there's the cost of maintenance and operation. Annual lube and oil change for the Class A was \$400-plus; on a Class C, I can do the service myself. The Class A got 8 mpg; a smaller rig can get up to 15 mpg.

Second, there's the cost of longer-term maintenance items — new tires for the Class A cost more than \$4,500, and new batteries were \$1,600.



And finally, a smaller rig fits our lifestyle. It's just the two of us — and our dogs — so we no longer need all the slides and roominess, or all the creature comforts. In a smaller rig, we'll be able to travel lighter and faster.

**Lyman and Micki Seamans | Kinderhook, New York**



### Daily Driver

When we retired and moved to Florida, we traded in our Class A for a Class B. Besides being easier to drive, we were able to sell our other car, and now use the Class B as our second vehicle when our car is in the shop. We also take more day trips now and don't have to worry about finding a bathroom!

**Dave and Pat Miller | Ocala, Florida**

### Pain in the Access

We had a 2004 38-foot Class A motorhome that we traded in for a 2017 Class C Thor Freedom Elite, and we've never been happier. I loved our Class A when it was parked, but driving it on busy highways was a white-knuckle ride. My wife refused to drive it. That said, my biggest pet peeve was that it only had one door, which was a problem when the lock broke and we couldn't get out. Plus, having to constantly climb over the doghouse was a real pain.

Downsizing to a Class C brought happiness back into our marriage. My wife can now share in the driving, and we go into any parking lot without any issues. It can be serviced at any Ford dealership without breaking the bank, and I can find the 16-inch tires at any Walmart or tire store. We have not complained about having less space because we use our motorhome to camp; we don't sit inside all day watching TV. The smaller size has given us the opportunity to get into more remote areas, and we still have all the comforts of home. Every person has to make up their own minds on what they want, but we have been camping for 40 years and found that bigger is not always better.

**Tom Kranauer | Parrish, Florida**



### That's a Wrap

For those owners who want to change their motorhome because they don't like the color, but don't want to pay for a new paint job (which can run \$40,000

or more), there's another option: wrapping. I have a 34-foot 2006 Four Winds Hurricane that I was happy with, but was ready to replace because I didn't like the exterior color. So I did my research and decided to wrap the motorhome. The product I used is made by 3M, and I only spent \$7,000. Take a look at the before and after photos.

**Denys D'Anjou | Via email**

### Question of the Month

Have you changed the color or exterior look (decals, mural, etc.) of your motorhome? If so, did you have it repainted, or did you opt for a wrap? What factors led to your decision?

Send your comments to:

MotorHome, 2750 Park View Court, Suite 240, Oxnard, CA 93036; or email letters@motorhomemagazine.com

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## There's No Place Like Home

Arizona's Montesa at Gold Canyon offers a true neighborhood feel with large residences and a place for your motorhome

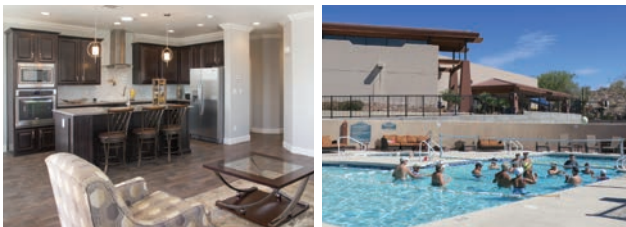
By Mary Zalmanek

Residents of Montesa at Gold Canyon, a Cal-Am Properties community west of Phoenix, Arizona, have plenty to keep them busy. During a full moon, they can enjoy happy hour atop a knoll while watching the sunset over the city and the moonrise over the Superstition Mountains. Earlier in the day, they may have participated in a pickleball tournament, crafted glass mosaics or burned off calories in an aqua cycle class. (Yes, that's a spin class in a swimming pool!) On special occasions, the activities director really cranks up the creativity with events like the St. Patrick's Day golf cart scavenger hunt.

For musical entertainment, residents have access to the Cal-Am Resorts Concert Series, which includes Gladys Knight, LeAnn Rimes and The Lovin' Spoonful in 2018.

When Linda and Gregg Nole were ready to relocate from California to Arizona, they wanted a 55-plus resort-style community with homes large enough to accommodate full-time living and a place to store their motorhome. After a six-month search, they found Montesa. Its latest designs offer manufactured homes from 1,000 to 1,800 square feet, RV pads and rooftop observation decks. The Noles found everything they wanted in a home, plus more than they imagined with the amenities, security and friendships found in the community.

For more information, call 877-355-0580, or visit [www.cal-am.com/communities/montesa-at-gold-canyon](http://www.cal-am.com/communities/montesa-at-gold-canyon)



Left: Five model homes highlight available features in each of the current floorplans. Montesa residents gather at the pool for activities including volleyball, water aerobics, aqua cycling and relaxing.



## T-Rex Tape

Every motorhome owner's toolbox should have some type of fabric tape for everyday repairs. Such tape is ideal for temporary fixes (and some that are a little more than temporary), and its uses are almost endless. ShurTech has rolled out T-Rex Tape, which is formulated with durable materials to hold longer and stronger than other brands, according to the company. T-Rex Tape is comprised of three layers: a UV-resistant polyethylene skin; an interwoven fabric scrim that provides strength while still being able to be torn by hand; and a double-thick adhesive designed to be effective even on rough and dirty surfaces. T-Rex Tape is available in gunmetal gray, black and white, in rolls that are nearly 2 inches wide and vary in lengths from 12 to 35 yards. MSRP ranges from \$5-\$15, depending on the size and color of the roll.

**ShurTech Brands | 440-937-7000, [www.shurtech.com](http://www.shurtech.com)**

## Silver Bullet Baggage

Looking to show off your Airstream affinity while the motorhome is at the RV resort? Airstream has joined forces with travel-goods manufacturer Traveler's Choice to offer a new line of licensed Airstream riveted luggage. Traveler's Choice Airstream Travelware is constructed of durable polycarbonate hardshell materials with a brushed-aluminum textured finish to match the classic Airstream style. Airstream's name and logo is prominent throughout. The lineup also includes features such as round aluminum corner guards; clear, hardshell cases that allow users to insert any high-resolution image for endless customization; comfortable top and side grip handles; 360-degree dual spinner wheels; additional zipper flaps; and interior tie-down straps. The luggage will be available through Airstream dealerships, on the web and at all Traveler's Choice retail channels. MSRP begins around \$300.

**Traveler's Choice | 800-237-0387, [www.travelerchoice.com](http://www.travelerchoice.com)**



## Need a Boost?

To help make sure you receive important (and not-so-important) phone calls, SureCall announces the Fusion2Go 3.0 RV, an in-vehicle cellphone signal booster designed specifically for RVs. Fusion2Go 3.0 RV boosts all North American carrier signals to provide users with reliable voice, text and 4G LTE data. Boosting the existing cellular signals using the Fusion2Go 3.0 RV helps to extend battery life for all devices by offering increased signal strength so the devices aren't wasting power while acquiring a signal, according to the company. The exterior high-gain omnidirectional antenna is designed to capture existing signals from all directions, and no cradle or docking station is required. The kit comes complete with the booster, exterior roof-mounted antenna, interior antenna, 40 feet of coaxial cable, a 12-volt DC power supply and a standard wall-outlet power supply. MSRP: \$449.99.

**SureCall | 888-365-6283, [www.surecall.com](http://www.surecall.com)**



## Wheel Clean

Meguiar's introduces its new Ultimate All Wheel Cleaner. Made with a powerful formula that offers deep cleaning, yet is gentle enough that it can be used on any wheel finish or type, the cleaner combines grime-attacking surfactants with active brake-dust dissolving agents to quickly loosen dirt, grime and brake dust — with little to no agitation — according to the company. The active gel formula is designed to cling to wheels and stay wetter longer, providing better cleaning action than traditional foaming wheel cleaners. After application, Ultimate All Wheel Cleaner turns brake dust purple and road grime brown as it gently loosens stubborn contaminants. The formula is said to be pH balanced and acid-free so that it will not harm wheels or painted brake components. Ultimate All Wheel Cleaner comes in a 24-ounce spray bottle and has an MSRP of \$9.99.

**Meguiar's | 800-347-5700, [www.meguiars.com](http://www.meguiars.com)**





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Photo: Morey Edelman

Estero, Florida

## Communing with Nature


In 1894, Dr. Cyrus R. Teed brought 200 followers of his new faith, "Koreshanity," from New York to Estero, Florida, to begin construction of a communal living settlement. Over the next 20 years, the commune built housing, gardens, workshops, an art center and even a power station for generating electricity.

Today, as part of Koreshan State Park, visitors can walk the town sites and learn the history. The Art Hall continues to have performances on many weekends, and also features a display that explains the Koreshans' belief system. The display, which was used to recruit commune members, depicts the Earth as a convex sphere with the entire universe inside of the sphere. Walking the grounds and gardens of this settlement further provides visitors with an understanding of this unique settlement. Many of the buildings have been beautifully restored along with the bridges and gardens.

The park is located on U.S. Highway 41, just south of Fort Myers. There are 42 RV sites with water and electric hookups in the park's campground (maximum RV length is 40 feet). From the campground it's a half-mile walk, following the Estero River, to the village.

**For more information**, call 239-992-0311 or visit [www.floridastateparks.org/park/koreshan](http://www.floridastateparks.org/park/koreshan) — *Morey Edelman*

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Lubbock, Texas

## Blowin' in the Wind

The American Windmill Museum in Lubbock, Texas, contains the world's largest collection of historic windmills in one place. There are more than 160 fully restored windmills spread out over 28 acres, and they demonstrate the history, function and importance of windmills for water collection in the American West.

More than 100 of these rare and historic windmills stand inside

the giant display room. Another 60 windmills are located on the grounds outside. In addition to the windmills, the museum has a massive mural on a 34-foot-tall wall that stretches 172 feet and highlights the history of windmills in west Texas.

We left the museum with a renewed appreciation for the ingenuity of early North Americans and the usefulness of these fascinating structures. Museum hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The museum is also open Sundays from June through August, from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.


**For more information**, call 806-747-8734 or go to <http://windmill.com> — *James Richardson* 



Photo: James Richardson

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# Pages From the Past

Retracing *MotorHome's* June issues over the years

**W**e often trumpet the forward-thinking mentality of *MotorHome* in this monthly look into the magazine's distinguished past. But, when you're faced with evidence such as "Evans' Heaven on Wheels" from the June 1971 issue, it's clear that *MotorHome* should be celebrated as a true pioneer in seeing beyond the horizon since its inception. "Picture a motorhome with a garage. Built in. What's more, picture that motorhome garage actually containing a car ... Now, picture that motorhome with an electric overhead bed that raises out of sight ... " Granted, the feature in question detailed an actual coach that was designed by Guy and Jeanie Evans, but *MotorHome Life* saw enough validity in such unique appointments as to showcase the vehicle when those innovations were rare.

The June '72 issue featured "Ask a Woman," a guest editorial in which a female reader details some improvements that could be made to motorhomes — in terms of design flaws rather than the expected, "Better décor and a larger kitchen." The fact that this is notable today may be an unfortunate sign of the times of that era, but bucking the social norm in terms of

progress has long been commonplace within this magazine's pages.

The oil crisis in 1979 led to a decade of reflection in the 1980s, and "Falling Oil Prices, Rising Hopes" in the June '86 issue included a quote that remains ahead of its time: "I think we can say ... that the price of gas never really became a significant factor in the average RVer's decision to buy. I think

the real factor has always been, and will continue to be availability." This declaration that RVing would continue to be a popular choice for outdoor enthusiasts contrasted conventional wisdom at the time.

The late 1990s would see what would come to be a momentous occasion for *MotorHome*. A small news item in June 1997 stated that *MotorHome's* parent company (then Affinity Group Inc.) was acquiring an outdoor retailer known as Camping World, in addition to its 26 retail centers and catalog operation. That small bit of forward-thinking led to what is today the most well-known destination for all things RV, with more than 140 retail stores and dealerships in 36 states as of press time.

At the turn of the century, *MotorHome* decided to further engage its audience with an in-depth look at DIY projects created by (and for) its readers. The column would include projects, or tips, that could be done in a short amount of time. Since its debut 18 years ago, Quick Tips remains one of the magazine's most popular items, and we are always on the lookout for the newest way to build a better mousetrap.

And finally, how's this for forward thinking: A search of June issues from the past reveals a number of features with ties to waterborne activities such as innertubing, canoeing and personal watercraft. "Ride a River" in 1981, "Trip Your Canoe And Motorhome Too!" in '82 and "Wet & Wild" in 2004 all championed how popular aquatic recreation activities could be further enhanced with a motorhome at the ready. For a more contemporary perspective, check out "Get Healthy — It's SUP to You!" on page 24. **M**







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# Newfoundland's Eastern Coast

With nearly 11,000 miles of shoreline, The Rock is a naturally gorgeous wonderland for exploring in a motorhome

By Bobbie Hasselbring

**T**he sign reads: "St. Vincent's Beach Where the Whales Come to Play." The wet, gleaming back of a 50-foot humpback suddenly appears just 10 feet from where the water meets the sand.

Excited visitors, cameras and phones in hand, scurry along, tracking the whale as it rises and falls in the shallow water. I rush toward the beach just as the cetacean's bumpy head and back crest the water, and it blows a jet of water and air with a whooshing sound. All around are tiny bubbles. The whale is bubble-net fishing — corralling tiny smelt-like capelin.

Another cetacean, slightly smaller, swims along the beach-line, showing its back, then its curved tail fluke. A third whale bobs a little farther down, swimming toward me, circling back to catch more fish. In the bay, a dozen whale waterspouts blow high into the air.

I reach the water's edge just as the big whale lifts its knobby head completely out of the water. It opens its vast mouth, displaying long black and white grooves under its jaw. It gulps a huge mouthful of water, then crashes with a torrent of spray, disappearing under the water. This really is where whales come to play.

We're in Newfoundland, the island portion of the Canadian province of Newfoundland and Labrador. At more than 42,000 square miles with nearly 11,000 miles of coastline, Newfoundland, affectionately called "The Rock," is the country's fourth-largest island. It's a wild, untamed land encompassing vast distances and surprises around every corner.

For an RVer, Newfoundland isn't easy to reach, yet many do — and it's worth the effort. You can take a Marine Atlantic ferry ([www.marineatlantic.ca/en](http://www.marineatlantic.ca/en)) from North Sydney, Nova Scotia, to Port aux Basques, in southwestern Newfoundland, or from North Sydney to Argentia, which is a 90-minute drive from the capital city of St. John's. We chose to fly into St. John's and rent an RV from Islander RV (<https://islanderrvs.com>). Because the island is the size of California, we couldn't see it all — or even a large part of it — in the week we allotted. We settled on exploring the island's eastern coast along the Avalon and Bonavista peninsulas and Twillingate Island, aka Iceberg Alley.

## Colorful St. John's

St. John's is a lively harbor town of 100,000 that's the provincial capital and its largest city. The walkable downtown is filled with historic buildings in a riot of reds, blues, pinks, yellows and oranges. The vibrant architecture may be a defense against gray, cloudy weather. St. John's residents



NEWFOUNDLAND'S  
EASTERN COAST

## Getting There ➔

Although the author chose to fly into Saint John's and rent a motorhome from Islander RV, visitors to Newfoundland have another option: take a ferry from North Sydney, Nova Scotia, to either Port aux Basques or Argentia, the latter of which is a 90-minute drive from St. John's.

happily boast their city is “the rainiest, foggiest, snowiest and windiest place in North America.” It certainly has variable weather. During our late-July visit, St. John’s treats us to sunshine, cool cloudy skies, misty fog and a few moments of driving rain.

The downtown’s two main streets are packed with one-of-a-kind shops and plenty of bars, cafés and coffee shops. We trundle down McMurdo’s Lane to the Duke of Duckworth, a popular bar/restaurant serving Irish fare and tasty fish and chips. (You might recognize it from the Netflix series “Republic of Doyle.”)

St. John’s is brimming with history. Signal Hill, a former military citadel built in the 17th century overlooking the city and harbor, defended the town through World War II. In 1901, Guglielmo Marconi received the first trans-Atlantic wireless signal here. We scramble up Cabot Tower for a sweeping view.

Twenty minutes from town, Cape Spear National Historic Site, the province’s oldest surviving lighthouse/keeper’s quarters, stands on a windswept coastline. We stroll the rolling hills dotted with wildflowers — bluebells, pink clover, purple iris, white Queen Anne’s lace, yellow buttercups — and, a short jaunt from the lighthouse, gaze at the Atlantic from North America’s easternmost point.

### Avalon’s Irish Loop

The next day, we pick up our motorhome and head south on Highway 3/10 to Cape Broyle. This is the Irish Loop, named for Newfoundland’s Irish immigrants.

We wend through hills populated with thick boreal forest and tiny fishing villages nestled around rocky coves and pint-sized harbors. Most of these small towns have fewer than a dozen homes with the occasional store, gallery or bed and breakfast.

Water is a major theme in Newfoundland. It’s surrounded by water and the boggy land is studded with rivers and ponds ranging from the size of a small car to dozens of



Above: On a sea kayak tour, Stan Cook Jr. shows paddlers Cape Broyle’s hidden treasures. Right: The sight of a humpback whale breaching is breathtaking. Below: Atlantic puffins at the Elliston Puffin Site provide visitors with up-close viewing.



acres. The water table is so high that telephone poles are supported by rock piles.

In Cape Broyle, we’re scheduled for a tour with Stan Cook Sea Kayak Adventures ([www.stancook.ca](http://www.stancook.ca)). After being outfitted with flotation devices and sea skirts, 16 of us scramble aboard double kayaks and follow Stan Jr. and two other guides into the harbor. Stan paddles along the shoreline, pointing out crabs, sea stars, waterfalls and sea caves. As we slip farther and farther toward the

Atlantic, the swells strengthen, and we ride up one side and down the other.

My arms are beginning to burn at the 4-mile mark when Stan shouts, “Whales!”

I spot first one spout, then another. A mother humpback and her calf are making their way up the harbor. We see a sleek black back; then another; and a tail fluke. My heart is pounding as we paddle toward the big creatures.

Just feet from our kayak, the mother surfaces, her back arching out



of the water. She sends up a massive water spray. The whale is so close I hear her breathe and then, she sings, a long melodious, magical note that rises and falls as she swims past.

Back in the motorhome, we pass La Manche Provincial Park. RV campgrounds are limited in Newfoundland. It's not unusual to see RVers "gravel pitting" on beaches or in parking lots at visitor centers. Provincial parks are a great choice. This one doesn't have hookups, but offers 82 forested, gravel-topped sites, a shower house and laundry right next to La Manche Pond.

We stop at the Colony of Avalon, the best-preserved early English Colonial site in North America and an active archaeology dig where visitors can work as archaeologists-for-a-day, or half-day. We tour the small museum and a reconstructed 17th century kitchen where we sample tasty pea soup and bread made over an open hearth.

Just down the road, the UNESCO

World Heritage Site Edge of Avalon Interpretive Centre boasts a fascinating exhibit about the oldest fossils of complex multicellular life found anywhere in the world. Scientists have discovered soft-bodied creatures without shells or bones that date back hundreds of millions of years on the exposed headlands of eastern Newfoundland.

Since there's summer light until 10 p.m., we cover plenty of territory. Highway 10 angles inland, winding through green hills, bogs and ponds. At St. Vincent's Beach, the vista opens to a 180-degree sea view and we spot whale spouts — two, four, eight, a dozen.

It's here we get up-close-and-personal with those whales along the beach. It's the second time we've encountered 150-ton creatures so close we can almost touch them.

We camp at White Pines Resort RV Park. At \$35 Canadian, this tidy park with partial hookups, gravel-

topped sites, a shower house and swimming pool is a bargain. We wake to warm weather and brilliant skies, and hop down the road to the Salmonier Nature Park, a free, walk-through wildlife rehabilitation center that showcases moose, mink, Newfoundland marten, owls, eagles and more. After yesterday's long drive, the accessible 1.6-mile boardwalk eases road kinks.

### **Bonavista Peninsula: Icebergs and Puffins**

Heading north, we merge onto Highway 1, a fast, well-maintained road loaded with RVs. About 12 miles outside Clarendville, the terrain changes from Avalon Peninsula's green boggy expanses to Bonavista's craggy, heavily treed mountains.

We turn onto Highway 230 and motor into Port Rexton, where we're treated to our first icebergs. Every year, Newfoundland sees several hundred icebergs from the Arctic.

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From far left: Cape Spear Lighthouse, built in 1836, is the oldest surviving lighthouse in the province. St. John's is famous for its brightly colored buildings.

May and June are iceberg months, but sometimes as late as July you'll find them floating like giant ships in bays and coves. A small crowd has gathered on the beach, cameras on hand, to capture the sight of two of these blue-green wonders.

We continue driving north on Highway 230 and then head northeast on Highway 238, a pockmarked bit of asphalt leading to Elliston, a great place to see puffins. We follow signs to Elliston Puffin Site, two giant rocks jutting into the ocean. We walk onto the first rock. Across a 50-foot expanse of water thousands of puffins have dug burrows into the second monolith's soft dirt.

We join a dozen others armed with binoculars and long lenses snapping photos of these funny little birds. Then, a single puffin flaps his short wings and lands just feet from us. He's joined by his posing and preening mate.

We stay at Elliston Municipal Park, a grassy spot across from the beach and puffin site. For \$20 per night, we snug into a large, back-in site with partial hookups, a picnic table and pounding surf that lulls us to sleep.

Peyton's Woods RV Park, near Twillingate, offers plenty of room for motorhomes.

With more than 3,000 people, the town of Bonavista is much larger than Avalon's fishing villages. We grab eggs and tasty fish cakes for breakfast and, under cool but sunny skies, wander the docks shooting photos of lobster boats.

At Cape Bonavista Lighthouse Provincial Historic Site, we tour the squat 1843 lighthouse/keeper's quarters. The waters and many inlets around Newfoundland are treacherous for mariners, and lighthouses save many vessels. Our guide tells us that until 1962, a 200-pound counterweight turned parabolic lights in the 18-foot tower.

### Twillingate: Lobster and More

We motor along Highway 1, passing miles of boreal forest, ponds, lakes and fishing villages. In Twillingate, we overnight at beautiful Peyton's Woods RV Park, with full- and partial-hookup sites, and wake to mild temperatures and brilliant skies.

Twillingate is famous for icebergs, but locals say: "It's July. There aren't supposed to be icebergs." Fortunately for us, there are several. And wherever 'bergs appear, so

do visitors. RVers, many in large motorhomes, ply the narrow, winding roads. Residents don't seem to mind as we park willy-nilly and scramble up rocks to see these Arctic wonders.

In the afternoon, we meet Crystal Anstey, owner of Experience Twillingate, for a beach "boil up." She has laid a fire on the sand, with a cooking grate. We stretch out on a quilt and relax while Crystal scoops seawater into a large cooking pot. "Ocean water has the perfect salinity for cooking," she tells us, pouring glistening black mussels into the water.

A few minutes later, the mussels are cooked, their orange flesh peeking from shells. Crystal dumps the steaming mussels onto a large tray and we eat them out of hand. They're delicious. Then she adds four huge lobsters to the pot and, when they're cooked, chops them into pieces. The hot lobster is served with a green salad and crispy French bread.

The lobster is uber-fresh and delicately sweet. As I savor this taste of Newfoundland, I gaze across the water and spot a whale cavorting just offshore. What could be more delicious? **M**

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

**Elliston Municipal Park**  
[www.rootcellars.ca/attractions/elliston-municipal-park](http://www.rootcellars.ca/attractions/elliston-municipal-park)

**La Manche Provincial Park**  
[www.tcii.gov.nl.ca/parks/p\\_lm](http://www.tcii.gov.nl.ca/parks/p_lm)

**Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism**  
 800-563-6353, [www.newfoundlandlabrador.com](http://www.newfoundlandlabrador.com)

**Peyton's Woods RV Park**  
 709-884-2000, [www.peytonswoods.com](http://www.peytonswoods.com)

**White Pines Resort RV Park**  
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# Get Healthy It's SUP to

A stand-up paddleboard is a great way to get in shape while enjoying the outdoors





# You!



**W**e've all heard of the "Freshman 15," the unfortunate weight gain that sometimes accompanies living out of college dorm refrigerators and eating cafeteria food. But you might be more familiar with the "Campground 10" — the extra pounds that result from living life on vacation for weeks, and even months, at a time. My first experience with this malady came in the winter of 2015, when we tried snowbirding in Florida for the first time. From fried plantains and 50-cent shrimp to sunset toasts on the Gulf, it felt like two glorious months of nothing but Saturdays. The problem came when I had to switch from shorts to jeans on the way home. It became immediately clear from the way my clothes fit (or didn't) that I was in trouble.

The problem wasn't just food — it was exercise. While many campgrounds provide fitness rooms, who wants to travel hundreds of miles to spend time indoors? Just walking or biking weren't going to do it. What I needed was a portable exercise machine that could give me a complete workout while still letting me enjoy the great outdoors. I got it all, and more, with a stand-up paddleboard (SUP).

Paddle boarding doesn't require any special skills, and it is one of the few sports that has proven equally popular among young and old alike. In fact, stand-up paddle boarding is the fastest growing watersport in the United States,

with more than 2.8 million participants. Best of all, stand-up paddle boarding isn't just aerobic exercise — it utilizes a range of muscles, providing a full-body workout. With so many campgrounds along the coasts, rivers and lakes, it is a great exercise option for RVers like me.

"Stand-up paddle boarding works the core. It's also a great way to sculpt your abs, shoulders, back and hips," says YMCA fitness trainer and certified paddleboard yoga instructor Rebecca Wojtach.

Wojtach, who leads SUP tours and teaches paddleboard yoga classes at the five-star Tides Inn and Spa in Irvington, Virginia, notes that the sport has the added advantage

of getting users outside, enjoying their physical environment in a way that isn't possible with most other forms of exercise. I agree; in my first year with my own SUP, I've seen everything from manatees to mountain waterfalls, all while burning calories, improving balance and toning muscles.

If that sounds better than sweating at the gym, here are some options to consider before adding an SUP to your motorhome's inventory.

## Hard Board or Inflatable?

For RVers, it all comes down to space. The typical paddleboard will be more than 10 feet in length, and there aren't a lot of dedicated storage spaces in a motorhome that can accommodate objects of that size. If, like many of us, you barely have room for your golf clubs and scuba gear, an inflatable SUP is a great choice. Look for one constructed of multi-layered cloth, drop-stitched with an outer shell of military-grade PVC. These inflatable boards are lighter than hard boards but are rugged enough to withstand collisions with rocks and hard surfaces. When

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Inflatables are lightweight enough to be transported around the campground in an SUP backpack.

properly inflated, they have comparable rigidity to a hard board and are generally less expensive. Their biggest advantage is ease of transport — an inflatable SUP, manual pump and two-piece paddle can fit inside a specially designed backpack and be worn while riding a bike.

If you travel with a toy hauler or have a towed vehicle with an empty roof rack, you might want to look at hard boards. The least expensive option in this category is plastic, which has the added advantage of “bomb proof” durability. You can even attach accessories like fishing rod holders or seats to the deck of a plastic SUP without compromising its structural integrity. On the negative side, these SUPs are heavy and can be unresponsive and hard to paddle. Another option is fiberglass. These boards have a foam core and are light, fast and maneuverable. The downside is that they cost more than plastic boards and are easily “dinged” by rocks, docks and pets. Strapping one tightly to a roof rack can even cause minor damage to the rails and deck. The third and most expensive option is carbon fiber.



These high-performance boards are used primarily for racing and touring, and are among the lightest and most rigid manufactured. (For a selection of motorhomes that do offer extra space for a stand-up paddleboard, turn to page 32.)

### Shapes and Sizes

In addition to board material, you have a variety of sizes and shapes to choose from. Most new paddlers will want to look for a touring/ cruising or all-around SUP ranging between 10 and 11½ feet. The touring/ cruising board is built for glide, with a V-shaped bow designed to cut through the water for better tracking and speed. All-around boards have a more rounded nose and wider body, providing stability for beginners and for bringing pets or small children along for the ride. Most all-around boards are even stable enough to be used for yoga, though there are also dedicated yoga boards available. These often have bottoms shaped specifically to support the user's balance, a soft top and “bumper” sides, and places to hook on exercise equipment or an anchor.

For experienced paddlers and competitive types, a race board is another option. Ranging between 12½ and 20

An all-around fiberglass board has enough volume to float a paddler and her pet.



Photos: Eric Eichemüller

### SUP MSRPs

Plastic stand-up paddleboards like the Lifetime Freestyle and Sea Quest 10 start at as little as \$349, while fiberglass boards range from an MSRP of \$700 to \$2,000. Inflatables, like the Ten Toes Weekender, pictured on the following page, start at about \$600.

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## Get Healthy — It's SUP to You!

feet in length, these boards have a long, narrow profile and pointed nose for excellent tracking ability at high speeds. They are also less stable and extremely responsive to paddler movement, requiring more skill, and are generally much more expensive than other types of boards.

If you'd like to take your SUP in the surf or on whitewater, look at wave boards. These are usually less than 10 feet long with a narrow nose and tail for quick turning. They are lightweight and low volume, meaning they will be less stable. They also don't track well over distance so they do not easily transition to touring/cruising.

After narrowing down the type of board you want, arrange to rent or demo boards from different manufacturers. Small differences in bottom shape, rails and fin configurations can make big differences on the water. Before you buy, also look closely at the volume or displacement and the suggested weight limits by asking for the specs or checking the manufacturer's website. For beginners, bigger is better —especially if you don't want to get wet.

### Getting on the Water

An SUP is considered a vessel by the U.S. Coast Guard unless operated in surf or a designated swimming area,



Inflating a board (here at a campground overlooking the Gulf of Mexico) takes about 10 minutes with a hand pump.

so in most states you are required to have a life jacket and signaling device, such as a whistle, on board. A personal flotation device (PFD) specifically designed for paddlers, like a self-inflating SUP belt-style life jacket, will provide the greatest flexibility of movement, but for those who have health issues or are not confident swimmers, a vest-style Type III PFD is a better choice. The majority of accidents occur when paddlers get separated from their boards, so experts recommend wearing a leash in addition to a life jacket, especially in rough water. For your first time, you might also want to sign up for a lesson or an SUP tour. While paddle boarding is not hard, an instructor can show you a few tricks to make balancing, turning, and stopping safer and easier. Then you'll be ready to banish the "Campground 10" forever.



It's a good idea to try out the board in calm, shallow water like this swimming area.

The greatest adventure  
is what lies ahead



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# Sea Eagle SUPs

If an inflatable board is the best fit for your RV lifestyle, Sea Eagle is the place to start. Known for its innovative boards as well as for its customer service, the company is one of the largest manufacturers of economically priced inflatables worldwide. Sea Eagle offers three series of SUPs, each tailored to specific situations and water conditions, to provide users with the highest performance at an affordable price.



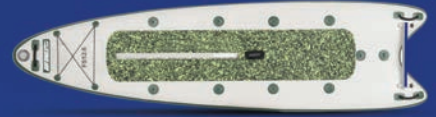
## LongBoard Series

An all-around or hybrid board, these inflatables allow users to sit, stand, surf, fish, tour and even perform yoga. Designed for stability, Sea Eagle LongBoards are 30 inches wide and 6 inches thick, providing plenty of flotation, and unlike many all-around boards, the Stand Up/Sit Down LongBoard has been updated with premium paddling performance in mind. A newly added 4-inch nose/entry rocker, followed by a slight continuous board rocker and 2-inch tail rocker add up to improved handling, and the full-length EVA foam Diamond Deck Pad provides traction and comfort. These qualities make the LongBoard perfect for surfing and extended touring. Available in 11-foot length for riders up to 200 pounds and 12½-foot length for riders up to 250 pounds.



## NeedleNose Series

These high-performance boards offer all the benefits of a rigid SUP with the convenience of an inflatable. The unique, patented design features a sharp, wave-piercing bow, allowing users to slice cleanly through rough water. The sleek touring shape, skeg (tapered stern) design and kick tail maximize tracking and handling and, best of all, each board in this series weighs less than 30 pounds. The touring models are available in 11-foot 6-inch, 12-foot 6-inch, and 14-foot lengths, with two leading side skegs and a removable rear fin, and all feature the same comfortable width and foam deck of the LongBoard Series. Sea Eagle also makes the 126 R, a racing model weighing in at only 23 pounds, with a narrower waist (26 inches) and a single fin for increased speed.



## The FishSUP

Sea Eagle's Fishing Inflatable SUP is unlike anything else on the market. Wide and stable, this board has all the benefits of an inflatable kayak while still providing the fun and versatility of an SUP. It features 14 D-ring attachment points for adding accessories and gear, and a removable rear motor mount that can handle up to a 55-pound thrust electric trolling motor. The nonskid EVA foam camo deck is great for standing or sitting, and the FishSUP even includes a built-in 36-inch fish ruler. This inflatable is rated for up to 350 pounds, so you can even bring along the family dog. The design is perfect for families who want a multiuse SUP that can be easily stowed in an RV's limited storage space.



All Sea Eagle inflatable SUPs are constructed of 1,000-denier reinforced drop-stitch material for improved rigidity and durability, and all come complete with a unique paddle pocket for stowing the paddle. Basic LongBoard and NeedleNose packages come complete with hull, paddle, removable skeg, hand pump, backpack, and repair kit, and current MSRPs start at \$699 for the LB11 and \$899 for the NN116. The basic FishSUP package includes hull, both SUP and sitting paddles, backpack, seat, storage box, backpack, hand and foot pumps, and repair kit for \$879.

Sea Eagle Boats, 800-748-8066, [www.seaeagle.com](http://www.seaeagle.com) M

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# MORE IN STORE

MOTORHOMES THAT HAVE EXTRA SPACE FOR STAND-UP PADDLEBOARDS, KAYAKS AND ALL YOUR OUTDOOR GEAR

**W**e've all got stuff. Lots of stuff. Some of us may even have too much. And, especially while spending time in a motorhome, that stuff can add up. It can not only affect the livability inside the motorhome — requiring gymnastics and as-yet-unheard-of yoga poses to navigate the aisles — but

it can also cause the motorhome to become overloaded, which can have disastrous consequences.

As a result, one of the decisions to make before hitting the road (along with where you're headed) is exactly how much of that stuff you should take with you. Space, of course, dictates our final decisions, as does the realistic occupant

and cargo carrying capacity (ROCCC). And, unless you're a minimalist, chances are you'll have to leave some of your favorite stuff behind.

While we would never recommend bringing along everything including the kitchen sink (a motorhome already has one of those, after all), there are many motorhomes that can accommodate quite a bit of stuff, from outdoor gear to recreational toys to tools and furniture. But, you don't need a 45-footer or a toy hauler to enjoy a floorplan with extra room to spare (though that may help). We have gathered a group of motorhomes here that have the capacity, space and storage to allow for all the extras you'll need to enjoy the trip. And now that you know stand-up paddleboards are a great way to enjoy the outdoors while exercising and burning some calories (as are canoes, kayaks, bicycles and the like), the motorhomes included here are a great starting point to enable you to begin your new hobby (or enjoy it more than ever) by seamlessly blending your favorite recreational pursuits — while at the same time staying within the weight limitations of a highly livable floorplan.

The Sunlight RV Van Two can easily be configured to allow for storage of bulky items in camp or on the road.







## COACH HOUSE PLATINUM II 241XL

With 10 different floorplans to choose from, the Platinum II 241XL from Coach House is sure to provide a configuration that works well for on-road performance, living and bulky-item storage. Buyers who opt for one of the rear twin-bed layouts (two beds that can become one larger bed for sleeping) should find more than enough room for storage in the rear aisle, while exterior storage compartments offer enough real estate for an inflatable kayak or SUP. Premium floor coverings, stainless-steel appliances and a Truma AquaGo continuous water heater are all standard, as are the 3.6-kW LP-gas MicroQuiet AC generator, Wi-Fi booster and power box awning. Driving conditions are improved with the power-assisted steering and in-dash GPS, while campsite rocking and rolling is reduced by the standard Equalizer stabilizer system. Coach House motorhomes are sold factory-direct for maximum value, come with full-body paint (with optional Premium upgrades available), and feature the upscale craftsmanship for which the manufacturer is known.



Chassis	Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 3500
Engine	3.0L turbodiesel
Fuel cap	26 gal
GVWR	11,030 lbs
Exterior length	25' 9"
Exterior width	8'
Exterior height with A/C	10' 8"
Wheelbase	170"
Freshwater cap	31 gal
Black-/gray-water cap	25 gal/ 28 gal
LP-gas cap	15 gal
Base MSRP	\$181,100

**Coach House**  
800-235-0984, [www.coachhouserv.com](http://www.coachhouserv.com)

## FLEETWOOD PACE ARROW LXE 38N

With exterior storage totaling 156 cubic feet — in addition to the 151 cubic feet of storage inside — Fleetwood's Pace Arrow LXE 38N offers plenty of room for bulky items without sacrificing on luxury. And seeing as how the 38N floorplan offers two bathrooms, convertible bunk beds and an adjustable king-size bed in the master — the crew you bring along will no doubt find that space necessary. Things inside will seem wide open thanks to the 84-inch soft-touch vinyl ceiling height throughout. The full-wall slide — one of three total slides on the 38N — makes aisle storage an easy affair. But livability is where the Pace Arrow really shines. A full bath serves the bunk area, while an en-suite full bathroom off the master runs the full width of the rear of the coach. A 43-inch LED TV in the living area is mounted above an electric fireplace, while the galley features an induction cooktop, pantry and residential refrigerator. The 38N is built on a Power Bridge chassis, which allows for what the company calls the industry's largest pass-through chassis storage.

Chassis	Freightliner XCM	Exterior height with A/C	12' 10"
Engine	Cummins ISB	Wheelbase	252"
Fuel cap	100 gal	Freshwater cap	100 gal
GVWR	33,000 lbs	Black-/gray-water cap	50 gal/ 75 gal
Exterior length	38' 7.5"	LP-gas cap	38.7 gal
Exterior width	8' 6"	Base MSRP	\$285,860

**Fleetwood RV**, 800-854-1344, [www.fleetwoodrv.com](http://www.fleetwoodrv.com)



## MORE IN STORE

### FOREST RIVER BERKSHIRE XLT 45A

By building the Berkshire XLT 45A on a Freightliner XCR raised-rail chassis, Forest River was able to include a relative surplus of basement cargo storage. All baggage doors are fully insulated, and owners with SUPs or kayaks — or any large, bulky items — can take their pick of one large bay with café-style doors that can accommodate a large slide-out tray, another bay right behind that which could house a tray of its own, and a third compartment that could easily swallow most outdoor gear. But, when the coach you're piloting is nearly 45 feet of luxury on wheels, storage is rarely an issue. The Berkshire XLT is Forest River's flagship motorhome, and the 45A bunkhouse is outfitted with top-shelf appointments. All countertops are polished solid-surface, the flooring is polished porcelain tile with accents and the appliances are all residential-grade. Two full bathrooms and a variety of configuration options make this a great motorhome for families and those who like to bring along guests. New for the model year is a Truma AquaGo continuous water heater, which makes the coach all-electric; however, one interesting wrinkle is that the manufacturer will include a compartment for a customer-supplied LP-gas cylinder to allow for campsite grilling. The Berkshire XLT also boasts a 15,000-pound towing capacity, should your SUP preferences evolve into that of an actual boat.



Chassis	Freightliner XCR	Exterior height with A/C	12' 11"
Engine	Cummins ISL	Wheelbase	294"
Fuel cap	150 gal	Freshwater cap	103 gal
GVWR	44,320 lbs	Black-/gray-water cap	42 gal/ 66 gal
Exterior length	44' 7"	LP-gas cap	N/A (all-electric)
Exterior width	8' 6"	Base MSRP	\$388,562

Forest River Inc., Berkshire XLT Division, 574-522-3963, [www.forestriverinc.com](http://www.forestriverinc.com)

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## JAYCO REDHAWK 29XK

After 50 years in the RV industry, Jayco continues to pride itself on customer service, offering peace of mind long after the initial purchase by including a two-year limited warranty on its vehicles. Plus, motorhomes like the Redhawk 29XK are equipped with the JRide Plus system, improving overall ride and handling even with additional cargo aboard by employing Hellwig helper springs, rubber isolation body mounts, Bilstein monotube shocks, jounce bumpers and stabilizer bars, combined with air brakes, computer-balanced driveshaft and rear air suspension. Inside, the Redhawk 29XK offers plenty of sleeping space for six to seven happy campers, including a walkaround queen bed in the rear. A large U-shaped dinette can easily accommodate the whole family, as can the surplus of counterspace and storage areas, while the linoleum flooring makes for easy cleanup or

stress-free SUP transport. When the party moves outside, a large 16-foot awning protects owners from the elements, while the heated holding tanks help with all-season enjoyment. The Redhawk also includes a standard backup camera integrated into a third rear brakelight for added convenience. Further highlights include a 7,500-pound tow rating, a one-piece fiberglass front cap and spacious pass-through storage.

Chassis	Ford E-450
Engine	6.8L V-10
Fuel cap	55 gal
GVWR	14,500 lbs
Exterior length	32' 6"
Exterior width	8' 4"
Exterior height with A/C	11' 6"
Wheelbase	223"
Freshwater cap	43.5 gal
Black-/gray-water cap	32 gal/ 41 gal
LP-gas cap	12 gal
Base MSRP	\$100,755

Jayco, 574-825-5861, [www.jayco.com](http://www.jayco.com)



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**LEISURE TRAVEL VANS UNITY ISLAND BED**

When you think motorhome storage, a compact luxury Class C without any slideouts may not immediately jump to mind. But when it comes to a balance between maneuverability, livability and innovative use of available space, Leisure Van’s Unity Island Bed is tough to beat. At just over 25 feet long, the Unity is easy to drive right up to the dock, and its 63 cubic feet of exterior storage — including the rear full pass-through compartment — has a decent amount of space for your bulky aquatic adventure items. The interior of the Unity is designed around the rear walkaround 54-by-74-inch bed, and the clever usage of the footprint (and curved doors) makes the rear of the motorhome feel like its own master retreat. The Unity also features a split dry bath, plenty of interior storage (including a pair of wardrobes in the bedroom) and upscale curved cabinetry. LED lighting, whole-coach water filtration, Corian countertops and the Truma AquaGo comfort plus water heater are much appreciated. Outside, frameless windows and Euro-inspired front and rear caps adorn the Mercedes-Benz Sprinter chassis, which also sports bi-xenon headlamps, collision prevention assist and a standard in-dash GPS system.



Chassis	Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 3500	Exterior height with A/C	10' 6"
Engine	3.0L V-6 turbodiesel	Wheelbase	170"
Fuel cap	26.4 gal	Freshwater cap	30 gal
GVWR	11,030 lbs	Black-/gray-water cap	29 gal/ 37 gal
Exterior length	25' 1"	LP-gas cap	15 gal
Exterior width	7' 10.5"	Base MSRP	\$125,060

**Leisure Travel Vans, 877-992-9906, [www.leisurevans.com](http://www.leisurevans.com)**





## NEWELL COACH 1642

With almost 500 square feet of living space, the quad slide, bath-and-a-half Newell Coach 1642 is a virtual penthouse on wheels. But its luxury doesn't mean it can't accommodate outdoor equipment: dual pass-through storage bays up front measuring 92 inches deep by 45 inches wide will be more than enough for your floatables. Each tray is controlled via a handy remote, allowing access from both sides of the coach. Inside, everything about this coach exudes luxury, from the limestone tile flooring to the underlit quartz countertops in the bathrooms to the premium leather furniture. Two TVs reside in the front salon area, while a 49-inch TV entertains in the bedroom area. Plus, there's a fourth TV on an articulating arm in the exterior storage bay. The galley features dual stacked pullout pantry cabinets for plenty of food storage, in addition to a Fisher & Paykel DishDrawer dishwasher, garbage disposal, Wolf-brand two-burner cooktop and GE Monogram refrigerator/freezer. And did we mention the stackable Whirlpool washer/dryer located amidships? All this on a motorhome with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of more than 63,000 pounds.

Chassis	Newell	Exterior height with A/C	13' 4"
Engine	Cummins ISX	Wheelbase	302"
Fuel cap	200 gal	Freshwater cap	143 gal
GVWR	63,300 lbs	Black-/gray-water cap	143 gal (combined)
Exterior length	45'	LP-gas cap	N/A (all-electric)
Exterior width	8' 6"	Base MSRP	\$2,005,610

**Newell Coach, 888-363-9355, [www.newellcoach.com](http://www.newellcoach.com)**



## PHOENIX CRUISER 2552

With factory-direct pricing and the ability to customize any of its nine floorplans, Phoenix Cruiser is a good choice for RVers who want to be more hands on in the design process. Phoenix says its motorhomes — like the 2552 — are more aerodynamic than other Class C's due to their low center of gravity, shorter profile, and curved fiberglass walls and roof. All that adds up to an enjoyable driving experience, even while the storage areas are stuffed to the gills with recreational equipment (staying within weight limitations). All-LED lighting illuminates the interior, and cabinets come in your choice of hickory or cherry hardwood. Most selections of interior appointments are your own, but the 2552 is standard with a U-shaped dinette and two 32-by-74-inch beds located just off of the large rear bathroom. Outside, a pullout storage tray is rated for 200 pounds of gear, while the rear cap also features a large side-to-side storage compartment for the shorepower cord and bulky items. And, for a more custom storage option, Phoenix can even attach a roof-mounted rack for your favorite toys.

Chassis	Ford E-450
Engine	6.8L V-10
Fuel cap	55 gal
GVWR	14,500 lbs
Exterior length	27' 10"
Exterior width	7' 9"
Exterior height with A/C	10'
Wheelbase	206"
Freshwater cap	45 gal
Black-/gray-water cap	35 gal/ 23 gal
LP-gas cap	10 gal
Base MSRP	\$116,970

**Phoenix Cruiser**

**877-754-8535, [www.phoenixusarv.com](http://www.phoenixusarv.com)**



**SUNLIGHT RV VAN TWO**

A division of Erwin Hymer Group North America, Sunlight RV manufactures the Sunlight Van Two Class B that has clearly been designed with access to adventure in mind. The fully equipped no-nonsense interior is thoughtfully laid out and features a rear dinette and bench seating that can convert to a single king-size sleeper or two twin beds. The galley features a 3.1-cubic-foot refrigerator, microwave and two-burner LP-gas stove, while the spacious bathroom with shower, toilet and foldaway sink is a great use of available space. The captain's chairs up front both swivel to turn the front of the Van Two into a dining area, which frees up the rear of the motorhome for storing kayaks, SUPs and the like. Optional EcoTrek lithium batteries and 200-watt solar panels enhance the Van Two's ability to perform off the grid, and climate control is via an 11,000-Btu roof-mounted A/C and an automatic LP-gas heating system. The Sunlight Van Two is available at Camping World locations nationwide.



Chassis	RAM ProMaster
Engine	3.6L V-6
Fuel cap	24 gal
GVWR	11,500 lbs
Exterior length	19' 6"
Exterior width	6' 7"
Exterior height with A/C	9' 5"
Wheelbase	159"
Freshwater cap	17.6 gal
Black-/gray-water cap	23.1 gal (combined)
LP-gas cap	6 gal
Base MSRP	\$68,835

**Sunlight RV**  
**844-745-4410, www.sunlightrv.com**



**WINNEBAGO TRAVATO 59K**

Versatility is what makes the Travato 59K a good choice for RVers who have cargo that may be a bit bulkier than the norm. The seating area located amidships leaves the aisle open for your SUP or kayak by day, and can transform into dual twin beds or a single large sleeper by night. But more than a modest space to lay your head (or canoe), the luxurious Travato is outfitted with standard premium features like Corian countertops, Truma Combi eco plus heating and 200-watt solar panels. The ultraleather captain's chairs turn around to expand the entertainment and dining opportunities in the front living area. A 24-inch LED TV and coach stereo system are also standard, as are the microwave convection oven, two-burner range top and powered patio awning with LED lighting. The bathroom is outfitted with a foot-flush toilet, flexible showerhead and fold-down sink. For more storage versatility, buyers can also opt to add a bike- or luggage rack to help haul additional recreational gear.

Chassis	RAM ProMaster	Exterior height with A/C	9' 4"
Engine	3.6L V-6	Wheelbase	159"
Fuel cap	24 gal	Freshwater cap	23 gal
GVWR	9,350 lbs	Black-/gray-water cap	13 gal/ 13 gal
Exterior length	21'	LP-gas cap	6 gal
Exterior width	6' 9"	Base MSRP	\$106,630

**Winnebago Industries, 641-585-3535, www.winnebagoind.com**



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# Isata 4 Series

Cues taken from Dynamax's big brother models transform a Class C motorhome into a nimble luxury machine with high-tech features **By Bob Livingston**

**W**hen you look at the model lineup at Dynamax, a builder that specializes in luxury motorhomes, you won't find conventional design. The company started its venture into RV manufacturing 21 years ago by mating a commercial, executive-class truck cab to a sleek body that really turned heads. My first encounter with a Dynamax was early on in the company's history, and during a 2,500-mile test journey, I made a lot of friends with guys who loved the boldness of the design, but many of the women were less than enamored, until they stepped inside.

At the time, it was hard to define whether this luxury motorhome qualified as a Class A — certainly the level expected of higher-line coaches — and the company was adamant that it wasn't a Class C. The experience made great happy hour conversations everywhere we stopped.

Fast-forward and the company

has branched out into building Class C motorhomes with the same level of luxury, and clearly there's no controversy on classification. The Isata 4 Series is as classic a Class C as one can get, especially since it's built on the venerable Ford E-450 cab and chassis, and the 25FW we tested meets all the criteria, only notched up with

Dynamax-style flair.

The floorplan elements are not unique to the industry, but after the Dynamax people pulled design cues from its big brother motorhome models, the aura changed dramatically. Here, form and function blend beautifully with the warmth of the décor and the feeling one gets that this Class C is top shelf.

At 27 feet 5 inches long, with some of that space allocated to the engine compartment and cockpit, there are some livability limitations, mostly in the seating configuration in the living room. Fortunately, some of the space constraints are mitigated by the optional swiveling cockpit

**ABOVE:** The Isata 4 Series is built on a Ford E-450 cab and chassis. Full-body paint and tasteful graphics enhance aesthetics.



**BELOW:** Compact galley requires advance meal preparation planning; flip-up counter increases counterspace. Huge bathroom is an unexpected feature. Shower is roomy, but narrow counter is on the small side.



seats. And optional booster cushions can be placed on the cockpit seats when facing the living area, which make the seating surface much more comfortable.

Since space utilization is paramount, the front section of the motorhome is shared by the dinette and opposing galley. The proprietary Dream Dinette, with thick cushions and quasi-wraparound bolsters, allows for couch-like habitation and a place for two occupants to watch the 32-inch LED TV nestled in the cabover bunk. When converted into a bed, the surface easily sleeps one adult or two kids.

In true Class C fashion, the cabover can sleep two on the 52-by-81-inch sectionalized mattress. There is 29 inches of headroom up there; cup-holders and a storage area are in place for users to stash a decent amount of items. When not in use, the mattress stacks to make more headroom in the cockpit for easier passage to and from the living area.

“Compact” is the operative word

describing the galley. It took some planning to prepare meals, but the front-mounted flip-up extension saved the day. Fitted under and on the rich-looking solid-surface countertop is an assortment of cabinets and drawers, a stainless-steel sink with a high-rise faucet and a three-burner cooktop with a folding glass top. One of the lower cabinets is huge, and allows access to the contents from the entryway and in front of the galley counter. And, believe it or not, there is even a trash chute built into the structure with a nicely concealed “plug.”

Above the counter are additional cabinets and the microwave convection oven. There’s no range hood, but the nearby MaxxAir power vent suffices, per code, for removing steam and smoke. The RV refrigerator and pantry are adjacent to the galley counter.

What makes the limited amount of floor space work is the full-wall slide on the driver’s side. Occupying this large slideout is the aforementioned dinette, the wardrobe closet

and queen bed — divided appropriately. And while the flooring is not unique, the choice of the plank pattern in shades of gray, brown and white, works visual wonders. At the confluence of the lower front and upper back sections of the floor is a sweeping S-shaped divider that gives the impression that the interior is bigger than it really is. It takes a little acclimation when walking to prevent a misstep due to the raised floor in back, but the learning curve is quick.

Serving as a practical divider between the dinette and rear bed is a gigantic wardrobe closet. Those who like to take along a lot of stuff will be in heaven. Hang-up clothes can be stored in compartmentalized areas that provide enough room for any clothes hog. The front section is lined with cedar and has a drawer below the closet floor. Typically, the front seat bolsters will be stored here. To make the deal even sweeter, a sensor-controlled light makes finding clothing in the dark a breeze.

From left to right: Controls for the optional hydraulic leveling system, power inverter and switches are mounted in the entryway. The touch screen, tied into the Precision-Plex control system, is within easy reach. The Command Center, solar-panel controls and stereo are mounted above the entry door.





Above, from left: Dream Dinette has thick cushions and bolsters for support when stretching out to watch the TV mounted at the end of the traditional cabover bunk. Swiveling cockpit seats help create conversation area in the front living area.

In keeping with a “bigger is better” design mantra, those who like to linger in the bathroom will relish the exceptional floor space. The roomy shower with an Oxygenics showerhead and flex curtain take center stage. While residential-quality fixtures complement the bathroom, the plastic toilet, albeit a large model, is incongruent with the status portrayed by this motorhome. There’s good storage space afforded in the bathroom, but the counter has limited room for essentials, although it’s rather long. Lingering in the shower, to take advantage of the pulsating showerhead, is supported by a Truma AquaGo instantaneous water heater, which encourages longer showers and time in front of the

stainless-steel sink. Another MaxxAir power vent, with rain sensor, takes out the steam and clears the air.

The bedroom is understated, but it works well without the overdose of froufrou items that can be superfluous to RV living. Space limitations at the foot of the bed require the use of a folding mattress, which is very comfortable. At 10 inches thick, the gel-infused memory foam mattress offers great support. Although the bed is tucked tightly into the confines of the slideout, there’s enough room for a small nightstand on one side and a longer version on the other. Across from the bed, on a rather barren wall,

**WHAT'S HOT** 👍

Huge bathroom with roomy shower, full-body paint, Precision-Plex control system, armless patio awning, suspension upgrade with Hellwig sway bar, Truma AquaGo water heater

**WHAT'S NOT** 👎

Small galley, 30-amp service, plastic toilet, wheel liners

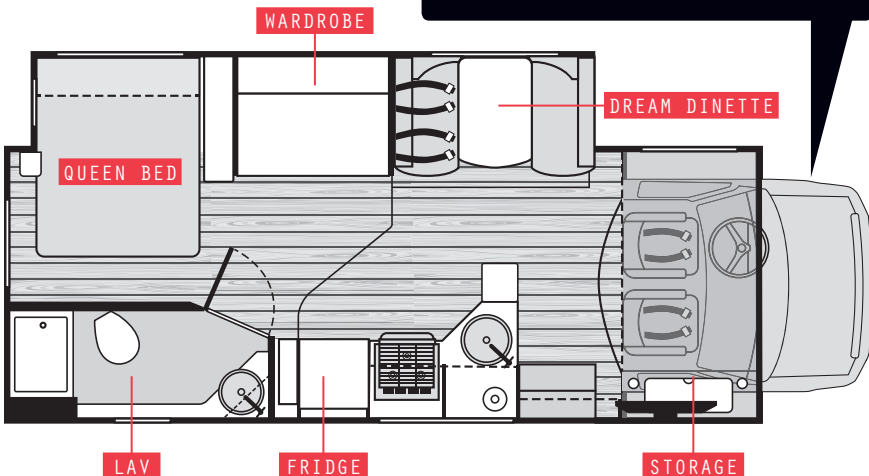


is a 32-inch LED TV. Even though the area is not fancy, strategically placed windows offer a more open feeling than expected. Privacy is afforded by pull-down roller shades used throughout the interior.

It’s easy to establish that the Isata Series 4 is earmarked for those who relish creature comforts, but Dynamax goes one step further by injecting enough electronic features to make any technoid happy. Beyond the Bluetooth-controlled entertainment system with zoned speaker controls is a multiplex wiring system that’s tied into a touch screen. The Precision-Plex system controls just about anything in the motorhome that’s connected to electrical power. From the screen, the user can control the lights, check tank levels, open and close the awning and slideout, operate the AC generator and turn on the water pump. Without going into infinite detail on all the abilities of this screen, let’s just say, “There’s not much left untouched.” The system also has the ability to monitor 120-volt AC amperage input and shed loads as needed to prevent overloading the circuits — a welcome addition since there’s only 30-amp service into the motorhome.

The Precision-Plex system is supported by an app that can be

**DYNAMAX ISATA 4 SERIES**



downloaded to an iOS or Android device and paired via a Master Controller. Once paired, the systems can be controlled by a handheld device within Bluetooth range — a feature that soon becomes one that occupants can't live without. Icing on the cake is the optional solar system comprised of two 100-watt panels and a 30-amp controller. The solar system is coupled to a pair of 12-volt AGM batteries and a 1,000-watt power inverter.

There is an expectation that outside storage would be somewhat limited in a Class C this size, but here the opposite is true. While the amount of space is not extraordinary, and will still require preplanning when sorting out what to take along, there's enough space for essentials, and pass-through areas to handle longer items that aren't too tall. Seamless Rotocast compartments are accessed via lateral doors fitted with heavy-duty adjustable latches.

Utility access is well thought out for easy hookups and to keep the hoses and cables organized. A narrow door opens down, exposing the city water hookup, black-tank flush, outdoor shower and a remote Precision-Plex monitor panel. A second access point within the main door offers a clever way to route the hoses. Interestingly, the hookups for cable/satellite TV and 30-amp power are outside of this compartment. There's also an access door for the LP-gas fill, and the dump valves are in a compartment that allows the hoses to be stored neatly.

Full-body paint and pleasant looking graphics tie the accessories and compartments together neatly, and the armless patio awning is a nice touch. Aluminum wheels, in lieu of the stainless-steel liners, would be a good option the company should consider for jazzing up the exterior aesthetics.

Fit and finish of the Isata reinforces the Dynamax reputation for building higher-end motorhomes targeted at discerning buyers. Construction follows proven techniques using aluminum framing and 1½-inch laminated side walls with block-foam insulation. Roof trusses and the floor



**Good Sam**

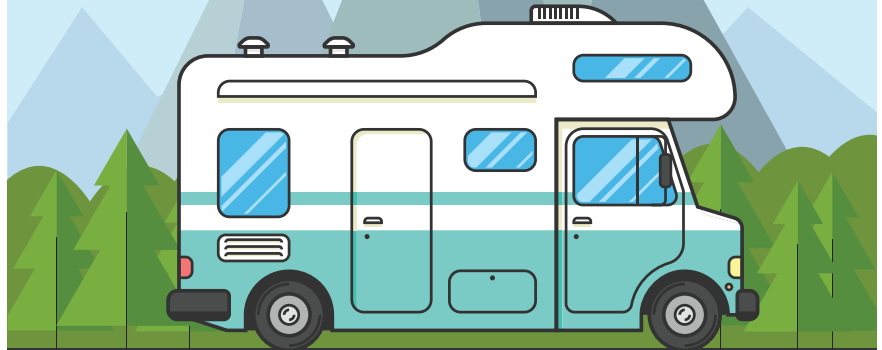
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†Processing fee of \$399 waived for refinance applications submitted by June 30, 2018. Official fees such as state title, state registration, FL doc stamp fee and/or UCC filing fees will apply.

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**TEST**

**DYNAMAX ISATA 4 SERIES**



Flush-mounted compartment door hides exterior TV, which can be viewed from the patio. Speakers are mounted in the side wall.

are framed in aluminum; the roof is capped with one-piece fiberglass. Gelcoat fiberglass walls have Azdel composite backing and the windows are dark tinted and frameless, which add to the modern look of the exterior. The test chassis was fitted with optional automatic, four-point hydraulic leveling jacks, which is a great investment in convenience and one that most owners will find indispensable.

Ride quality is certainly a product of workmanship, and interior noise on the road was kept to a minimum. This, in big part, is due to the proprietary DynaRide suspension upgrade that employs airless rubber shear springs to smooth out the bumps normally associated with the Ford E-450 chassis and improves handling characteristics. Additionally, the company uses a beefy Hellwig rear sway bar that helps reduce body roll in turns, especially when dips in the road exacerbate the conditions. Driving the Isata was a pleasurable experience, also attributable to the lively performance of the V-10 engine, which was relatively fuel-efficient, turning in a respectable 10.80 mpg under careful driving on open highways.

While the Isata 4 Series has a lot to live up to, given the legacy of the company's larger luxury motorhomes, the long list of standard features and pinpointed option choices put this Class C into a desirable category targeted at those who are willing to pay for upscale amenities but prefer to travel in a more nimble motorhome. **M**

**Dynamax**

888-295-7859, [www.dynamaxcorp.com](http://www.dynamaxcorp.com)

## Specifications

### Chassis

Model	Ford E-450
Engine	6.8-liter Triton V-10
SAE hp	305 @ 4,250 rpm
Torque	420 lb-ft @ 3,250 rpm
Transmission	6-speed automatic
Axle Ratio	4.56:1
Tires	LT215/85R16
Wheelbase	182"
Brakes	Disc
Suspension (F/R)	Coil/rubber shear with Hellwig sway bar
Fuel Capacity	55 gal
Fuel Economy	10.80 mpg
Warranty	3 years, 36,000 miles bumper-to-bumper; 5 years, 60,000 miles drivetrain

### Coach

Exterior Length	27' 5"
Exterior Width	8' 5"
Exterior Height with A/C	11' 6"
Interior Width	7' 6"
Interior Height	7' 0"
Construction	Aluminum side wall, roof and floor framing; laminated side walls, fiberglass roof, block-foam insulation
Freshwater Capacity	51 gal
Black-water Capacity	42 gal
Gray-water Capacity	42 gal
Water-heater Capacity	Truma AquaGo instantaneous
LP-gas Capacity	20.3 gal
Air Conditioner (1)	15,000 Btu
Furnace	35,000 Btu
Refrigerator	7.0 cubic-foot
Converter	60 amp
Inverter	1,000 watts
Batteries (1) 12-volt chassis, (2) 12-volt AGM house	
AC Generator	4.0 kW
MSRP	\$123,354
MSRP as Tested	\$129,800
Warranty	2 years/24,000 miles

### Wet Weight

(Water and water heater, fuel, LP-gas tanks full; no supplies or passengers)

Front Axle	3,880 lbs
Rear Axle	8,920 lbs
Total	12,800 lbs

### Chassis Ratings

GAWR, F/R	5,000/9,600 lbs
GVWR/GCWR	14,500/22,000 lbs
ROCCC	1,700 lbs (deduct weight of passengers for net cargo capacity)

GAWR	Gross Axle Weight Rating
GVWR	Gross Vehicle Weight Rating
GCWR	Gross Combination Weight Rating
ROCCC	Realistic Occupant And Cargo Carrying Capacity (Full Water, No Passengers)



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# Flush with

Today's holding tank

**W**ith every passing year, it seems the RV experience becomes more like residential living. Manufacturers are constantly striving to incorporate features that mimic the home, including high-end furnishings, stainless-steel appliances and upscale fixtures. But the one place that still detracts from the pleasures of life on the road is the black-water tank. At home, we simply flush the toilet and the deal is done — but in an RV, constant care and maintenance is required to keep everything working correctly and smelling fresh. Thankfully, the RV aftermarket understands that sewage isn't anyone's favorite subject, and is always inventing new products designed to make holding-tank maintenance as painless (and odorless) as possible. Today, there are literally dozens of products available, which can make choosing the right one for your needs somewhat of a challenge. Just remember

that, regardless of the many products on the market, they can still be broken down into two categories: The natural variety that uses friendly bacteria to break down and digest waste and tissue, and the chemical variety that may contain formaldehyde, dyes and perfumes to break down waste and control odor. From there, it's simply a matter of the delivery method: liquid, powder or premeasured drop-in (aka toss-in). There are even products designed to clean and deodorize the gray-water tank as well.

Because everyone has their own preferences, and most RV centers carry a comparatively limited product line (they can't stock everything, after all) we're presenting this guide to the most current holding tank products. Even here we can't cover every product each company makes, but a visit to any of these websites will guide you to a multitude of choices. Happy flushing!

## Advance Research Chemicals Products Inc.

### Oxy-Kem ▶

Looking for a sewer solution that's safe, environmentally friendly and offers deodorization properties for black- and gray-water tanks? Oxy-Kem claims its Holding Tank Treatment is scientifically proven to clean and deodorize tanks, sinks, drains and sensors up to five times better than chemical, enzyme and formaldehyde products. Available in a package with 12 drop-in Paks, Oxy-Kem is easy to use — you only need to drop one Pak down the toilet along with a gallon of water after dumping the black tank (additional Paks may be needed during periods of heavy usage). For gray tanks, tear open one Pak and pour half down



a sink and the other half down the shower drain, along with a quart of water (after dumping). Each drop-in Pak is designed to treat up to 60 gallons of water.

Advance Research Chemicals Products Inc. | 855-552-6789, <http://productsarc.com/products/oxy-kem-products>

## Camco

### RhinoFLEX

Camco's RhinoFLEX is said to knock the beast right out of your motorhome's holding tank with a Bacteria/Enzyme formula that digests waste and breaks down tissue for easy biodegradation. Featuring a fresh pine scent, RhinoFLEX harnesses the natural process by which nature digests waste, and only activates in its presence. The advanced formula also contains a buffering agent to prevent acid formation and septic odors. In addition, RhinoFLEX offers a long shelf life, is not temperature sensitive and is biodegradable. It's economical, too, as just 2 ounces treats 40 gallons. Available in drop-in and liquid forms, from 8 to 64 ounces.

# Confidence

products can make foul odors a thing of the past



## TST ▲

TST stands for “Toilet Stays Tidy.” OK, we made that up. The truth is, Camco’s TST RV toilet treatment products are said to break down waste and tissue and stop odors for up to seven days — and they don’t contain any formaldehyde. They’re 100 percent biodegradable and come in both original and Blue Enzyme versions in liquid and drop-ins. Plus, TST is also available in new Hibiscus Breeze, Lavender and Lemon scents. TST Grey Water Odor Control, meanwhile, removes grease buildup in the gray-water tank as well as sink and shower drain lines, leaving a fresh lemon scent. Other product(s): TST Drain Valve Lube with Coco Oil (16 ounces).

Camco Manufacturing Inc. | 800-334-2004, [www.camco.net](http://www.camco.net)

## Century Chemical

### Travel Jon ▶

Established in 1926, Century Chemical will actually be a century old in a few years — and has been manufacturing RV and marine holding-tank products for more than half that time. In addition, the company makes products for aviation, charter bus,



portable and residential septic use, so you could say these people know their way around a toilet — or at least what goes in one. Century Chemical’s Travel Jon Holding Tank Deodorizer/Cleaner has that deep-blue color we all know so well; it’s biodegradable and contains no formaldehyde. Travel Jon helps break down waste and tissue, and the highly concentrated formula (only 2 ounces per charge) contains detergent to help keep the holding tank clean. Other products: Travel Jon Blue Max toss-in packets, Travel Jon Waste Digester. Century Chemical Corp. | 800-348-3505, [www.centurychemical.com](http://www.centurychemical.com)

## Dometic

### 3 ‘N 1 Bowl Cleaner & Tank Treatment

Dometic manufactures nearly everything for the RV lifestyle, and a few years ago thought, why not get into wastewater? Wait ... that didn’t sound right. No, the company thought, why not offer our own line of holding-tank products? So it did. One of its more innovative solutions is its 3 ‘N 1 Bowl Cleaner & Tank Treatment which, as the name would imply, actually serves three purposes. Drop one of the handy 1.5-ounce packets into the toilet bowl and it quickly dissolves, releasing effervescent cleaning action and a fresh lavender scent. We know — that’s only two things. But then, you use a brush to clean the bowl, flush and the contents treat up to a 40-gallon holding tank.



## Premium Holding Tank Treatment ▲

When you want high-performance gasoline, do you get regular? No way ... you go straight for premium, right? With that in mind (sort of), Dometic offers its Premium Holding Tank Treatment, the company’s strongest chemical for reducing odors in an RV waste tank. Available in a variety of liquid and drop-in versions, Premium Holding Tank Treatment is formaldehyde-free and is said to work in the harshest (read: hottest) conditions for five to seven days. The product’s additives also break down waste and help tanks rinse cleaner during the draining process. Other products: Clean ‘N Green Holding Tank Treatment and Gray Water Tank Treatment.

Dometic Corp. | 800-544 4881, [www.dometic.com](http://www.dometic.com)

## Eco-Save

### Eco-Save Dry ▶

In nature, bacteria break down and digest waste without perfumes, dyes or detergents.



Noticing this, Eco-Save products created Eco-Save Dry, a bacteria/enzyme-based product that works in black- and gray-water holding tanks — and like Mother Nature, uses no perfume or surfactants. In fact, the company claims that the product actually enhances the digestion of waste in septic systems, so you may actually be helping the environment every time you dump the tanks. It's important to note that the environmentally safe, non-staining product does not actually clean the holding tanks, but it does reduce solids, controls odor and lubricates valves. It's inexpensive, too, as an 8-ounce jar treats 30-35 tanks of waste. Other products: Eco-Save Concentrate, Eco-Save Fragrance Enhanced, Eco-Save Original Formula (liquid).

Eco-Save | 800-950-9666, [www.eco-save.com](http://www.eco-save.com)

### Star brite

#### Instant Fresh Toilet Treatment ▶

If you can clean it, wash it, wax it, protect it or deodorize it, Star brite has it. The company opened its doors in 1973 with just one product: Star brite Auto Polish. From there, it did what any sensible company would do, and expanded its product line to include marine, aircraft, motorcycle, RV and other markets. Its aptly named Instant Fresh Toilet Treatment comes in Lemon Grove and Pine Forest scents, and was formulated to quickly break down waste, remove odors and lubricate valves. Formaldehyde-free, non-staining and biodegradable, a 32-ounce bottle of Instant Fresh treats 320 gallons. Other product(s): Star brite toilet bowl cleaner.

Star brite Inc. | 800-327-8583, [www.starbrite.com](http://www.starbrite.com)



Thetford. Likely standard equipment in your first new RV, Aqua-Kem liquefies waste and breaks down tissue fast to prevent clogs, while powerful detergents clean tank walls and drain lines. Aqua-Kem works around the clock in all weather conditions, and is now available in new Garden Mist scented toss-ins. Formaldehyde is one of Aqua-Kem's ingredients, but the company maintains it is biodegradable and environmentally safe when disposed of properly. Available in liquid, powder and toss-in forms in a variety of sizes.

### Eco-Smart, Eco-Smart Free & Clear

Effective and safe for the environment? That's smart. Eco-Smart, actually. Original Thetford Eco-Smart is a non-staining, green, formaldehyde-free formula that quickly breaks down and liquefies waste and toilet tissue — and provides odor control — while a detergent additive helps keep tanks clean. Eco-Smart Enzyme Formula is an orange, non-staining holding-tank additive with a natural enzymatic deodorizer. Eco-Smart Free & Clear, meanwhile, offers the same benefits as the above but is fragrance-, dye- and formaldehyde-free, and is 100 percent biodegradable. Eco-Smart products are available in liquid or toss-in form. Other products: Aqua-Kem DRI, Aqua-Kem Shotz, Aqua Foam, Campa-Chem Natural, Campa-Chem Original, Campa-Chem Shotz, Drain Valve Lubricant, Fresh Water Tank Sanitizer, Grey Water Odor Control, Level Gauge Cleaner, Tissue Digester, and Toilet Seal Lubricant and Conditioner.

Thetford Corp. | 800-543 1219, [www.thetford.com](http://www.thetford.com)



### Thetford

#### Aqua-Kem ▶

It sounds like a superhero from a parallel universe, but Thetford's Aqua-Kem is actually the No. 1 selling holding-tank deodorant of all time, according to



### Valterra Products

#### Odorlos ▶

When bacteria don't get what they want, they punish us by producing foul odors. But, when Odorlos is added to the holding tank, it provides these nasty little critters with a continuous supply of nitrates, the best alternative energy source to pure oxygen. So they're happy, and you're happy. Scent-free, formaldehyde-free and 100 percent biodegradable, all it takes is 1 ounce for every 10 gallons to prevent odors and to break down waste and tissue. The product is available in a variety of liquid forms, dry packets, a 6-pound tub of dry product and quick-dissolving drop-ins.



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Mercedes  
Class B



Since 1985, the Gerzeny family has been setting the pace in the downsized motorhome market, manufacturing luxury Coach House recreational vehicles at their family-run factory in Venice, Fla.

Fuel-efficient Coach House RVs, ranging from 23 feet to 27 feet, are available on either the Ford E-450 or Mercedes Sprinter chassis in a wide array of floor plans to fit your lifestyle.

At Coach House, our mission is simple: to build the best RVs in the industry. At the root of our quality is a patented one-piece shell, unique in the RV industry, that is less likely to leak, squeak or rattle over time.

Beyond the unique one-piece shell, here are some of the other factors that

make the downsized Platinum and Platinum II your best motorhome value:

- More standard features than any other motorhome in their class.
- Decorator interiors with solid-surface countertops, hand-crafted cabinets, brand-name appliances, LED lighting throughout, HDTV, and more.
- Choice of chassis: Ford E-450 (gas) or Mercedes Sprinter (diesel).
- Warranty service available nationwide for your peace of mind.
- High ratings for ride and safety.
- Coming soon — the new Platinum III, built on a diesel Ford Transit chassis.



**What makes the Coach House Platinum unique? It starts with our patented one-piece hand-laid molded fiberglass body, specifically designed for either the Mercedes or Ford chassis. The shell is reinforced with carbon fiber and the interior is lined with insulation (R-18). The result? "The quietest motorhome I've ever driven," according to FMCA's The RV Doctor.**



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Why be satisfied with some power when you can have Pure Power? Pure Power Blue and wintergreen scented Pure Power Green are chemical-free, bacterial-enzyme holding-tank treatments that perform in all temperature conditions. Powerful BioBlastPlus technology provides odor control in extreme temperature conditions and will keep holding tanks clean and fresh smelling. Pure Power liquefies all waste and toilet paper, and just 2 ounces treats 40-gallon black- or gray-water tanks. Also available in Bio-Pouch Toss-Ins. Other products: Pure Power Toilet Bowl Cleaner, Sensor Power Sensor Cleaner. Valterra Products | 818-898-1671, [www.valterra.com](http://www.valterra.com)

**Walex Products Co.**

**Bio-Pak, Porta-Pak ▼**

Walex may not be a household name, but the company specializes in waste management and odor control for portable sanitation, residential septic tanks, environmental applications (landfills/waste treatment facilities) and, of course, RVs. Its popular Bio-Pak product uses a natural enzyme formula that starts working immediately to control odor, break down solids and liquefy toilet paper. Packaged in a resealable slide zipper bag



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containing 10 drop-ins, the formaldehyde-free formula is available in Alpine Fresh and Tropical Breeze scents. Porta-Pak, meanwhile, offers similar benefits and is now available in two fragrances: Fresh Scent and Lavender Breeze. Other products: Bio-Active Holding Tank Treatment, Commando Black Holding Tank Cleaner.

**Elemonate ▶**

Most of us associate bad odors with the black tank, but a neglected gray-water system can create a funk all its own. Not to worry — Elemonate Grey Water Deodorizer contains the same odor control formula found in the company's Porta-Pak Holding Tank Deodorizer, plus special enzymes designed to deodorize and dissolve grease, and to break up fat and food particles in gray tanks, garbage disposals, dishwashers, sinks and shower drain

lines. Just drop the tablet into the sink or shower, turn on the water and watch it dissolve with a lemony-fresh scent. Packaged in individual portion-control bags of five inside a resealable slide-zipper bag.

Walex Products Co. | 800-338-3155, [www.walex.com](http://www.walex.com)



**Worldwide Monochem**

**T-5**

When it comes to handling foul odors, experience definitely counts — and Worldwide Monochem's name has been synonymous with holding-tank products for the RV, motor coach, aviation and marine industries for more than 55 years. So even if you haven't used it in your motorhome, you have likely been thankful for its presence in recirculating and portable toilets. The premeasured, 2.25-ounce, moisture-resistant foil packets are simple to use — just pour the contents of one packet into the toilet, and T-5 will immediately begin combating odor-causing bacteria. Other products: Dyna-Bact toss-ins, L-10 liquid toilet chemical, L-10 NF liquid toilet chemical, T-5 NF (non-formaldehyde), T-5 Squeeze & Pour liquid.

Worldwide Monochem | 512-267-5190, [www.satellite-environmental.com](http://www.satellite-environmental.com)



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# WINNEBAGO ATTRACTING RV NEWCOMERS

Winnebago is always rethinking its lineup to draw new people to RVing. In this history segment, we revisit groundbreaking classics of the '90s — and one creating buzz today.

## ► THE FOURTH DECADE: 1988 - 1997

**B**y Winnebago's 30th anniversary in 1988, the Flying W was one of America's most recognizable brands, thanks to best-sellers like the Winnebago Chieftain and Itasca Sunflyer series.

After the lean '80s, the '90s looked brighter. The Berlin wall had fallen, Nelson Mandela was released, and the public World Wide Web had burst on the scene. Suddenly a new optimism rippled through the economy.

Winnebago's lineup was ready. The Winnebago Warrior and Itasca Spirit Micro Mini, built on Toyota chassis, came to define affordable, fuel-efficient micro-mini motorhomes, racking up 60 percent of sales in the category. After a dizzying pace of invention, in 1992 Winnebago paused to celebrate two feats: the production of its 250,000th unit; and achieving

90 percent of its sales on models less than two years old.

No resting on laurels, though. In 1993, out came the Vectra, a bus-size motorhome comfortably furnished for extended time on the road; and in 1994, the new



The interior of a 1994 Chieftain.

wide-body Winnebago Minnie Winnie and Itasca Sundancer lines, offering a broad choice of floorplans.

Then, in 1995, Winnebago rolled out two models that are still cult classics: the 21-foot Rialta, a maneuverable, front-wheel drive Class B on a Volkswagen chassis; and the Luxor, an elegant

Itasca  
Sunflyer



# TODAY'S ADVENTURE VAN: THE REVEL



THE AWARD-WINNING REVEL IS ATTRACTING OUTDOOR ENTHUSIASTS TO RVing, JUST LIKE THE RIALTA DID IN 1995.

**B**uilt on a 4x4 Mercedes-Benz Sprinter chassis, this addition to Winnebago's "sweet fleet" of Class B's is built specifically for off-road trips.

The Revel's 3-liter turbo-diesel puts 325 lbs. of torque through an on-demand 4WD system, and has a versatile floorplan featuring:

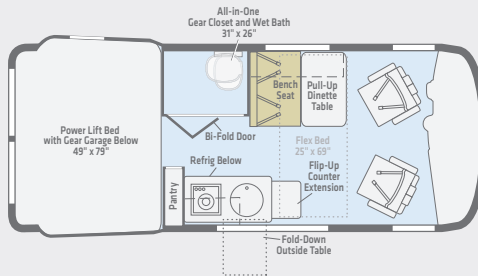
- Power-lift bed that elevates out of the way to create a 140 cu. ft. "gear garage"

- Power awning and roof rack for watercrafts and bikes
- All-in-one wet bath with cassette toilet removable for added storage
- Full galley with hot-water, sink induction cooktop, and compressor refrigerator
- 200-watt solar power system and available AC
- Aluminum cabinets with locking

latches for rough rides

- LED lights, multiple USB outlets and mobile device mounts

"Whether your passion is off-roading, fishing, or another outdoor activity," says Russ Garfin, Director of Product Management for Winnebago, "the Revel allows you to get to your location faster, stay 'off-the-grid' longer, and enjoy your time doing what you love."



## 2018 REVEL

EXTERIOR LENGTH:	19'5"
EXTERIOR WIDTH:	7'1"
EXTERIOR HEIGHT:	9'10"
INTERIOR HEIGHT:	6'3"
GVWR:	8,550 LBS.
SEATING CAPACITY:	4
MSRP STARTING AT:	\$134,799

top-of-the-line diesel pusher. These polar opposites expanded both ends of a growing RV fan base — something Winnebago would repeat in 2018 with two new award-winners: the Class A diesel Horizon and the new Class B Revel.

In 1996, Winnebago mourned the death of its founder and Chairman of the Board, John K. Hanson. He'd helped to shape a national pastime — and his legacy of innovation lives on at Winnebago today.

➔ **COMING UP IN JULY:** Roots of the Vista — an affordable Class A that's still going strong.



The Revel's lift bed and gear garage



Peter and Kathy Holcombe, who kayak North American rivers with daughter Abby, spent several weeks in the Revel. "In a small space, everything needs to serve more than one purpose," says Peter. "In the gear garage, you can fit bikes and smaller kayaks, then flip a switch and it transforms into a bedroom — kind of like a treehouse!" Kathy adds, "It's Peter's dream vehicle."

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# A WHALE OF A MOTORHOME

THE CHEVROLET CORVAIR ULTRA VAN EVOKES IMAGERY ASSOCIATED WITH THE MASSIVE AQUATIC MAMMALS, AND OWNERS OF THE RARE COACHES ARE HAPPY CAMPERS

*This article is one in our continuing series looking at motorhomes that have stood the test of time and can still make dreams come true. Each has earned the right to be called "the classic ride."*

The year 1960 ushered in an era of change in the United States. Upheaval was in the air, from John F. Kennedy's election to the dance explosion of Chubby Checker's "The Twist"—not to mention the naming of the air-cooled Corvair as Motor Trend's Car of the Year. It was this last development that captured the attention of aircraft designer Dave Petersen, who had been dreaming of building a new kind of motorhome. He envisioned a motorhome that would be light and nimble, and highly maneuverable, while providing its inhabitants a wide, unobstructed view. Chevrolet's new groundbreaking rear-mounted power package was exactly what Petersen needed to complete his vision. Four months later, his prototype Ultra Van (then called the Go Home) was born.

For its time, the Ultra Van was remarkable. The Class A

industry was still in its infancy, and most motorhomes were versions of a truck chassis with a "trailer" bolted to the top. The Ultra Van was different. Built like an aircraft, it had no frame or chassis. The rounded front and rear were constructed of a composite material, while the center section was a series of C-shaped ribs to which the aluminum skin was riveted. Cast-aluminum A-frames were mounted in the front wheel wells, doubling as a platform for wide bench-type seats. The engine was tucked under the large back bed, creating open space for a wet bath and a full galley. A unique under-floor design integrated the aluminum tanks into the structure, adding to its strength without substantially increasing weight. The result was a surprisingly roomy 22-foot-long, 8-foot-wide motorhome with more than 6 feet of headroom that could be powered by a minimal 80 hp. All of which would certainly qualify



The Hansens' 1969 Corvair Ultra Van looks right at home in front of this vintage motel sign in Amboy, California.

# The Classic Ride



A true blast from the past — a five-motorhome Ultra Van convoy (including Mini Mo and Whale) turned plenty of heads in the middle of the Arizona desert.

the Ultra Van as a classic ride — even if it didn't look suspiciously like a cartoon whale.

It's a distinction that modern-day owners embrace, referring to their motorhomes lovingly as "whales on wheels" and some even naming them after the marine mammal. It seems that to see an Ultra Van is to love one — at least for all the owners we have met. Carl Jones still remembers the first time he came across one on eBay.

"I said, 'Fran, you've got to take a look at this,'" he remembers.

She came over and looked closely at the screen. After a minute she said, "You know, it's so ugly that it's cute."

It was all the license he needed. Now they are the proud owners of Righteous Coach, a 1968 Ultra Van and the couple's first motorhome. That was seven years ago, and it took three years of what Carl refers to as "rehab" to bring the motorhome back to life.

"It has been rebuilt, re-floored, reupholstered and repainted," he says with a laugh.

It was a renovation made possible by the Corvair's popularity with collectors. Carl notes that, despite its age, several companies still manufacture or supply rebuilt parts for the



Clockwise, from top left: The original retro dash and between seats table on the Mellos' Mini Mo. The Ultra Van's galley as seen in the Jones' Righteous Coach. Chuck and Cyndie Hansen pose with their award-winning Corvair vehicles, including their motorhome, Whale. Lifting Whale's nifty rear door reveals a convenient place to store larger, bulky items.

engine and Powerglide transmission used in the Ultra Van. For Carl, the trick in taking on such a restoration was having the ability to do the work himself — a sentiment echoed by every owner I interviewed.

"When you buy an Ultra Van, you need to understand you'll be in for a lot of work," agrees Chuck Hansen, who purchased his 1969 motorhome, Whale, with wife Cyndie in 2007. "You

have to be adventurous ... and it helps to have a credit card."

In their case, the two were already self-proclaimed "Corvair nuts," but did not know much about RVs. When they picked theirs up, Chuck began by taking it apart until he found something that worked.

"I took it all apart," he says, only half-joking.

Updates included disc brakes, air

## THAR SHE BLOWS!

Only 330 Corvair-powered Ultra Vans were produced before production ended in 1969. A dozen or more are currently available on the used market, ranging in price from \$500 for a true project to \$22,000 for a turnkey motorhome. To learn more, check out the Ultra Van Motor Coach Club (UVMCC) website [www.corvair.org/chapters/UltraVan](http://www.corvair.org/chapters/UltraVan).

▶ Turkel, restored by Chris Brown and Molly Bacon to its better-than-original condition.



Photos: Jerry Mello, Carl Jones, Chuck Hansen

Photo: Molly Bacon



suspension and a 3-liter fuel-injected engine, rebuilt by a Corvair expert, that has twice the power of the stock counterpart. Cyndie, with the help of the couple's daughter, did the interior reupholstering, and Chuck replaced the flooring and the air conditioner. The original cabinets, stove and generator remain. The Hansens also added a few whimsical touches, like a colorful whale clock, to enhance their themed décor. Along with Cyndie's 1964 red Corvair, Whale frequently garners attention — and accolades — at Corvair shows.

The Hansens aren't alone. Molly Bacon and Chris Brown even got an award for Turkel, their 1968 Ultra Van, at a Volkswagen show. Invited because of Turkel's air-cooled engine, they were competing against 125 VW campers and modified Bugs, and didn't expect to be recognized. Instead, "we got the Host Club Choice Award," Molly says proudly.

It is no wonder. Turkel is a little like a time machine — one step inside and you are transported back to the early 1970s. A previous owner decorated the motorhome with a vintage gold color scheme and shag carpet, to which the couple added period-correct touches like an original lava lamp, a green glass 7-Up bottle, 1960s-era throw pillows and a 1970s camping cookbook. Everything is a blast from the past, right down to the melamine tableware.

Despite its vintage appearance, Turkel is definitely travel-worthy. Purchased in 2014 for less than \$5,000, it had a fresh rebuild on the air-cooled, 95-hp Corvair engine, and the generator and air conditioner have been replaced. For the latter, the couple chose a high-efficiency Coleman unit with a heat pump that could be powered by a lightweight 2.6-kW Kohler. Their power needs are minimal, as they chose to forego a microwave or a TV.

"Simple is better," Chris says, and Molly agrees. "We want to get away, leave some of the world behind."

Getting away is also at the top of the list for Ultra Van owners Jerry and Patty Mello. They bought Mini Mo, their

1968 motorhome, in 2009.

"I've had Corvairs since 1975, so I knew about the motorhomes, but I didn't really want one," says Jerry, who was instead looking for a vintage Corvair Rampside to restore.

The purchase of an Ultra Van was his wife's idea. She pointed out that a motorhome would be more comfortable and functional for travel, and they started their search, eventually purchasing one that was the victim of an aborted renovation. It had been sitting in storage for years, its interior totally gutted — headliner down, panels off, insulation removed — and its exterior in dire need of repair.

Jerry began by replacing all the wiring, adding a second alternator and separating electrical systems for automotive, RV and AC loads. He also added a dual-fuel generator, air conditioner with heat pump, power rack-and-pinion steering, and upgraded the brakes and the suspension. Then he tackled the exterior with the help of his brother, a former aviation metalsmith and body shop owner. They replaced "about half" of the aluminum skin, repaired the compound curves and repainted Mini Mo — a job Jerry estimates at about 500 work-hours.

"I've had every threaded fastener off this motorhome at least once," he says.

The result is more than just a "modern but retro" look — it is a fully functioning motorhome. Last year alone, Patty and Jerry spent 102 nights in Mini Mo on the road, traveling and attending rallies and shows. Because fewer than 80 of these motorhomes are still on the road, owners are on a first-name basis, and most are active in the Ultra Van Motor Coach Club, over which Jerry Mello presides, and Carl Jones calls "Ultra Vans and the crazy people who own them."

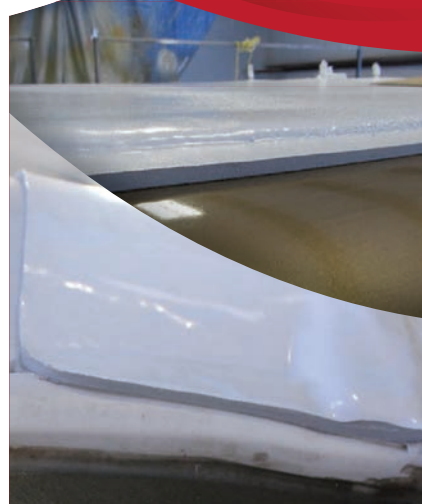
It might be true that you have to be just a little crazy to take on a 50-year-old motorhome, but it only takes one look at the Ultra Van to understand why these couples made that choice. With its Corvair heritage and its unique body, the "whale on wheels" is the ultimate classic ride. **M**

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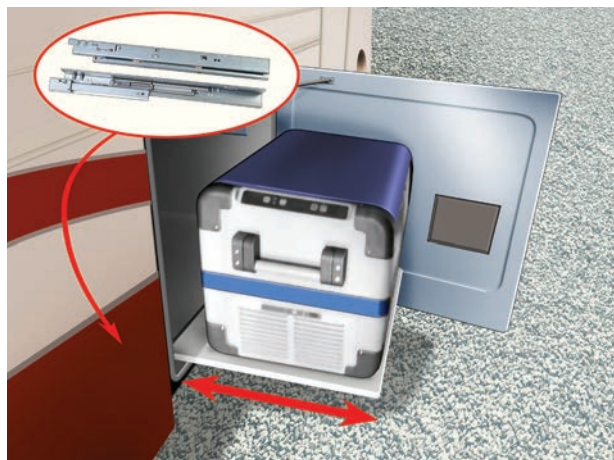
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## Cooler Tray

I wanted a slide-out tray for the Dometic cooler in my motorhome's basement storage, but could not find one that fit the 22-inch-deep by 32-inch-wide compartment. The closest thing I found was 24 inches deep, and it cost \$400. So, I found heavy-duty undermount drawer slides rated at 120 pounds from Knappe & Vogt, in the appropriate size for around \$50 on Amazon (part No. KV MuV+HD 22). I attached a tray I had on hand to the slides, and they work great! Plus, I got the whole assembly for a fraction of the cost.

**Mike Walsh | Salem, Oregon**



## No Shake, Rattle or Roll

We like to use glassware in our motorhome. After trying a few ideas to keep the glasses in the cabinets while on the road, I came up with this solution. I didn't have any luck finding 2-inch-wide foam to line the floor of the cabinet, so I decided to use two 1-inch pieces of foam and glued them together. After the foam was completely dry, I measured the shelf where I wanted the glasses to rest, and cut a piece of foam exactly to fit. I didn't want the foam to slide around. Once I had the size I wanted, I traced the top rims of the glasses, about an inch apart or so, and cut slits in the foam to keep the glasses in place. I found the best tool to cut the foam is a very sharp carpenter's knife. Once I glued the foam to the shelf, the glasses always stay in place.

**Bev Milligan | Hooper, Nebraska**

## Loop the Loop

Our motorhome doesn't have any towel bars in the bathroom. Instead, the manufacturer included hooks, which don't do a very good job of holding the towels in place. To help keep the towels off the floor, I sewed a loop of elastic onto the edge of each towel. The loops make it easy to hang the towels onto the hooks, and the towels have yet to fall off since I devised this solution.

**Judy Richter | Elkhart, Indiana**

## Command Control

With the proliferation of electronic devices to charge — including phones, tablets and computers — our charging cords were running amok in the motorhome. I tamed them with Command hooks placed inside cabinet doors. I loop the cables, then hang them on the hooks. It is easy to pull the cables out when needed, and also to neatly hang them back up when done.

My next issue was to conquer the ball caps we collect on our travels. I mounted the largest Command hooks I could find in another shallow cabinet, being sure to place them high enough to allow for the size of the cap hanging down. I simply hang the caps from the bottom, and they hang neatly and don't fall out when I open the door.

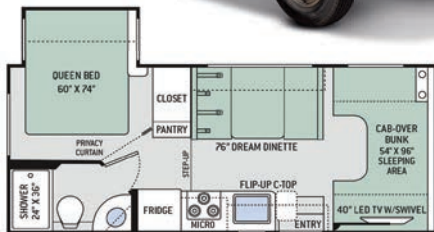
**Nanci Dixon | Sioux Falls, South Dakota**



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## Bait and Switch?

At wit's end after a repair cost more than \$4,000 above the shop's initial estimate — without their consent — a couple turned to Hot Line for help.



“ We purchased a 2002 Monaco Windsor in August 2016. On April 27, 2017, the warning light for the Cummins 350 ISC diesel engine flashed for a bit. I checked for water in the fuel at the first filter and didn't see any, but I did release some fuel. The engine would not start, so we had it towed to the local Cummins dealer in Ventura, California.

We left the motorhome for repairs. I checked back at the shop after a couple of hours and the tech said he found black granules in the first fuel filter. As a result, they replaced both fuel filters, but the coach still would not start. When I checked back on the following Tuesday, the tech and Amy, the service rep, said that the fuel pump would need to be replaced. Amy gave me an estimate of \$7,646.26 for the repair. Over the next few days and weeks I stopped by and saw that our rig was still in the shop stall. One time I found a tech working on it, and he showed me the black fuel he had blown back into a bucket. The fuel that was coming out of the diesel tank was clean. He thought that the fuel feed hose had deteriorated and collapsed, and he was replacing it at that time. Amy called me on April 23, 2017, and informed me of the change of cost of work done to the tune of \$11,969.25. We paid that amount to get our coach returned, even though we had not, at any time, been called with any changes to what was being repaired (or charged). We feel that the diagnosis of the problem was incorrect, even though they initially found the black granules in the first fuel filter.

**Ken and Ruth Olive | Ventura, California**

A shop estimate represents an educated guess as to what the impending repairs will cost (barring unforeseen circumstances). Obstacles often do occur that cause the cost of the repair to rise. However, it is the responsibility of the repair shop to keep the customers informed of such changes, in order to allow them to make a decision as to whether they should be made.

We didn't hear from Cummins for more than six months, but we kept trying. Our persistence finally paid off, as we received a letter directly from the Olives:

“ After [turning down the company's initial offer], we later received a call in December 2017 from a California Cummins representative. He went over our bill with us and offered a

\$2,500 discount, plus some service coupons. We accepted his offer.

— K. and R. O.

### Level With Me

“ Back in February 2016, the hydraulic leveling jack pump on my new 2016 American Coach Revolution went out. I took the motorhome to Paul Evert's RV to replace the pump. They did that, and the leveling jacks worked, but couldn't get the auto air dump valve to work, even after they had the coach twice to reprogram the jacks.


The air-dump valve still did not work.

I later took the coach to Valley Freightliner for routine maintenance work. While the motorhome was at Valley, I called and asked if they could check the air-dump valve. I also stated that it should be covered under the factory warranty. A week later I received a call from Valley Freightliner that my motorhome was fixed, and that the charge was \$559.98. At the time this took place, my coach and chassis were under factory warranty. I have sent REV Group [the umbrella corporation for American Coach] several requests for reimbursement of this repair, as this relates to a previous repair. The company has declined.

**Wayne Washburn**  
Stanwood, Washington

As the repairs were made while the motorhome was still under warranty, we agree that at least some amount of reimbursement was due. We soon heard back from REV Group.

We thank you for your letter regarding Mr. Washburn and his 2016 American Revolution. In a review of the repair history and the claims submitted, it is clear that the repairs to the levelers were performed during the warranty period. However, the time to repair is excessive. In a telephone conversation with Washburn, we agreed REV would reimburse him for one-half the total cost of the repair. Washburn thought this was fair, and we will send him a check in the amount of \$270.

**Barry Krueckeberg, Dispute Resolution Administrator, REV Recreation Group**  
Decatur, Indiana 

### Take Action Contact Hot Line for Help

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By Ken Freund

## Gas-Tank Filling Problem — Tip

I had the same problem (as in the March letter) with my 1995 Conquest Class C on a Ford chassis. I discovered that it varied from gas station to gas station. Then I figured out that if I parked at the pump with the front and far side lower than the filler tube, it would fill properly. A lot of the gas stations are not 100 percent level. I assumed that it was a vent tube problem, but could deal with it by circling the pump and coming in from a different side.

**Bruce Watson | Bloomington, Minnesota**



You know the saying about “assume.” Yes, I’ve experienced this a number of times when filling, and it wasn’t always apparent that there was a slight slope. Thanks for sharing your experience.

### Diesel Emissions Maintenance

We own a late-model coach with a Cummins diesel. It amazes me how many Cummins owners are told about adding the blue fluid (diesel exhaust fluid, or DEF) but nobody told them about the preventative maintenance (PM) services on diesel engines. There is an article from Heavy Duty Trucking about the filters for the diesel particulates, which is very interesting. It’s another [thing to consider before buying] a diesel coach with a Cummins engine; taking care of the diesel particulate filters.

**Stephen Calderwood | Boring, Oregon**

The online article you referenced, “What You Should Know About After Treatment System Maintenance,” at [www.truckinginfo.com](http://www.truckinginfo.com), is aimed at trucking fleet operators and assumes that the vehicles will reach high mileages typical of commercial trucking. As the author notes: “... diesel particulate filters, diesel oxidation catalysts, selective catalytic reduction systems and their associated hardware have proven pretty reliable over time.” The article goes on to state that the estimated safe diesel particulate filter cleaning interval is more than 350,000 to 400,000 miles for most trucks. The

vast majority of motorhomes do not rack up this kind of mileage, so this should not be of great concern to most typical owners. Adding DEF can be a nuisance, but the cost relative to the overall operating cost of the vehicle is not that significant, and makes a huge difference in reducing exhaust emissions and therefore cleaner air.

### Thermostat Mystery

**Q** We own a 2005 Fleetwood motorhome with two Coleman Mach 3 air conditioner units controlled by a single Coleman RV Comfort ZC digital thermostat. Two to three times a year, while running the units, our thermostat will make a popping noise and will instantly give a digital readout of “00.” This effectively shuts off any cooling, as it turns off the compressors. It does, however, allow the fans to continue running. If we are in the motorhome this is no big deal, as we can reset the thermostat by momentarily turning off the house batteries, but this could spell disaster for our dog in hot weather if we are away. When this first started happening, I contacted Coleman and got in touch with one of its engineers. The engineer said that although this problem is rare, it does happen from time to time on some

RVs. He told me that there is some sort of radio frequency interference (RFI) inside my RV, which is causing the thermostat to go into diagnostic mode. He kindly sent me the latest thermostat and radio noise choke filter, free of charge. When this did not help, I called him back. He told me the following items could be causing the interference: fluorescent tube lighting, TV antenna booster, bad inverter/charger and CB radio. I removed all the fluorescent tube lighting and replaced it with LED strips. I replaced the TV antenna booster with a KING Jack antenna and booster (I power down the booster when the RV is unattended). I eventually replaced the Xantrex Freedom SW inverter/charger (when it quit working) with a Magnum PSW inverter/charger. My CB radio is a non-issue, as it is only used while traveling. Another RV tech told me that any battery charger can emit a radio frequency, so he told me to disable my Magnum’s battery charger when it is not needed, which I have. Unfortunately, none of the above measures have solved my problem. I have been dealing with this issue for years. Can you help?

**Craig Post | Upland, California**

**A** What you describe is a known problem with this unit, and you’ve



pretty much exhausted most of the common fixes for this. You may be near a strong external source of RFI, which is beyond your control. Another possibility is that you have an intermittent faulty connection. I suggest checking all the connections and wiring to the air-conditioning units, circuit boards and thermostat as carefully as possible. Of course, make certain you have a good 12-volt DC power supply, and consider buying a desktop 12-volt DC power supply. Then, wire the system to that, instead of the coach power supply, and test it to see if it still happens. Next, I would consider replacing the control boards, one at a time. Buy one new board and replace one, but keep the old one. If it happens again, swap the second one and test it.

### LP-gas Line Flex

**Q** We own a 2008 Jayco Melbourne, which we really like. It has a propane stove in the slide and I wonder

if the process of opening and closing the slide puts any fatigue on the gas line. Do RV manufacturers take any preventative measures to prevent fatigue and avoid a rupture?

**Terry Chellis | Wooster, Ohio**

**A** RV LP-gas systems have flexible hoses wherever they must flex or bend. These are typically well-made and have a good track record of holding up. However, it doesn't hurt to inspect them from time to time. I suggest you add this inspection to your checklist, especially if the motorhome has been stored for a while.

### F-53 Ford Noise

**Q** In the March issue, you responded to a two-pronged question from Mark Schall ("Concerns on an F-53 Ford"), the second part of which had to do with a loud noise coming from the engine of his Ford V-10 6.8-liter on the F-53 chassis. We, too, are the owners

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## COACH & POWERTRAIN

of a Fleetwood Bounder 33C with that engine, though ours is on a 2013 chassis (2014 Bounder model year). We bought the unit used with 20,000 miles on it last summer. When going up a 10,000-foot elevation pass with about a 7 percent grade, we had the same issue Schall did. All of a sudden, a loud noise came from the engine (you can describe it as a whistling, or a jet taking off). It scared us, but we didn't lose power and no gauges were showing abnormal. We went over the hill and everything quieted down with no more problems. Upon returning home, I did some searching online and saw that others had the same issue. However, there seemed to be no solution found, but the word seemed to be that at high load the fan clutch kicks into overdrive, causing the noise. By the way, we did check that all the belts were tight when we returned. Last winter we went down to Arizona, and climbing the mountains I kept the speed and rpm down, and once I heard the engine start to act up, I slowed down before it started up again. In summary, if you could track down whether this is something that is "just the way it is" or if a fan clutch may be bad, there are a whole lot of people who have that issue that would love to know. Climbing a 10,000-foot pass with the doghouse cover off to see if it will do it again is not really a viable option.

**Nick Spence | Durango, Colorado**

**A** The noise describe as "a jet taking off" is almost certainly the mechanical fan coming on when the fan clutch engages or, as you describe it, "kicks into overdrive." Normally it freewheels until a temperature sensor causes the fan to engage, which usually occurs on long climbs and in hot weather. It's perfectly normal and, in fact, necessary to keep the engine cool enough for safe operation. The noise level also usually increases when climbing a grade due to downshifting, which raises engine speed.

### Rain Gutters

**Q** I just purchased a new Thor A.C.E. motorhome and was surprised

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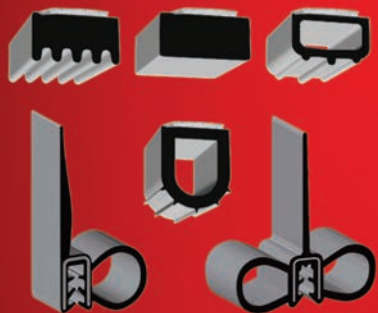
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While every effort is made to maintain accuracy and completeness, last-minute changes may occasionally result in omissions or errors.

to discover it had no rain gutters. I hate to think what the sides of my new motorhome will look like this summer with two air conditioners running. Any suggestions on what might work or a company that makes a rain gutter?

Charlie Bryant | Danville, Indiana

**A** There are several products available for this purpose. Camping World and other RV shops offer EZE RV Gutter kits. Trim-Lok also makes peel-and-stick PVC rain gutters in either black or white. There are also gutter extenders by Camco ([www.camco.net](http://www.camco.net)) that cause the water to drip away from the side wall. You can install them yourself or have a shop do it.

Quantum Physics

We purchased a new Thor Quantum Class C, and during the orientation no one could tell us where the water filter was located. Later, while checking the electrical connections in the bedroom, I opened the panel under the mattress and to my surprise there was the water filter tucked in among the electric connections! I used a large plastic trashcan liner to contain spills or leaks during the filter change. Be careful in there!

Dennis and Pat Repasi  
Seal Beach, California

Thanks for sharing your experience. It's always a good idea to fully familiarize yourself with the features of a new motorhome and read the owner's manual. Mounting the unit under a bed helps keep it away from freezing temperatures and protects it from physical impacts, such as may occur in a storage compartment. All you need to do is unplug the motorhome from shorepower (make sure the generator is not running and the inverter, if so equipped, is off) to eliminate shock hazards when servicing.

Sticking Slides

**Q** I own a 2003 Monaco Monarch. Since we bought it new we have had a problem with **(continued on page 72)**

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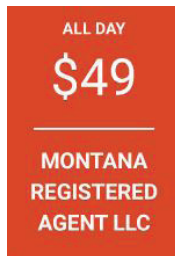
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(continued from page 69)



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the slides. They will not move if it is below freezing outside. Most of the time I can just start the engine and let it warm up and then the slides will work, but sometimes it is too cold and we have to disconnect the motors and push the slides in or wait to warm up. Seems to be a low voltage when the battery is cold. I have replaced the battery and that seemed to help, but the problem comes back. I have also added a trickle charger that feeds the chassis battery while we are plugged in, but still have the problem. Can you help me?

**Larry Diemer | Clarkston, Michigan**

**A** Slideout mechanisms require a lot of power, even in ideal conditions. Batteries lose a lot of their capacity in cold weather, which I believe is the reason your slides aren't working at low temperatures. The slide seals also become stiff and cause more resistance at low temperatures. The simple trickle charger may not be doing the batteries much good; it's best to use a "smart" maintenance charger, not a simple trickle charger. It's a good practice to let the engine run while operating slides because it raises the available voltage at the batteries and therefore to the slide mechanism motor. Thoroughly inspect the slide mechanisms and service them as needed. It may be that the wiring connections have become corroded or frayed, further reducing available power to the motor. It's also possible that the wiring is too light, which can create a voltage drop at the slide motor.

**Coach Current Draw — Comment**

Regarding Denver Isaacs' breaker problems detailed in the March issue, don't rule out fire ants ruining your breakers. I have replaced RV pedestal breakers, pressure switches and GFCI outdoor outlets thanks to these little creatures. Sometimes it is almost impossible to see the ants that have ruined your breaker. Apparently the electromagnetic field (EMF) from the power system attracts them.

**Harold Misch | Foley, Alabama**

Thanks for writing. I'm sure glad we don't have a problem with fire ants in my area! They are so destructive, it's incredible.

**Gas-Tank Filling Problem — Fix**

We have a Chevrolet 2006 Express 3500 that is used by Four Winds to build our Class C. I had the exact same problem (as in the March issue) with it not being able to fill all the way, and the worst was in cold weather in Texas. I finally looked underneath to see the filler hose extension from the side of the coach to the normal filler tube that goes into the tank. It was normal size, but had a kink where it bent to curve to the tank. That curved section had a metal piece with clamps on each end to connect the straight pieces of pipe. I found a company that made stiff gas hoses with the curve I needed, but it was too long, so I just cut out the correct section and now all is well. It does not take much of a kink to cause the flow to backup and trigger the sensors in the gas pump handle. Just look for a pipe that has a slight curve to it and can handle gasoline. It will fix the problem. Why didn't they use a metal pipe? Too much flex between the gas tank and the chassis of the motorhome?

**William Patterson**  
Pleasant Hill, California

Thanks for sharing your solution. There is considerable flexing between the frame and body, and as you surmised, a flexible joint is needed in the filler pipe and vent tube. Just as a safety reminder, a hose that is designed to carry fuel is required, as water hoses can melt and leak. **M**

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ANY SINGLE ITEM\*

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**44" x 22" DOUBLE BANK ROLLER CABINET**

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ITEM 64281 64134 64133 shown

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**EARTHQUAKE** Automotive **SUPER COUPON**

**1/2" HEAVY DUTY COMPOSITE PRO AIR IMPACT WRENCH**

950 TORQUE **BOLT BREAKAWAY**

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

**NOW \$89.99**

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• Weighs 5 lbs.

COMPARE TO **\$249.99** CHICAGO PNEUMATIC MODEL: CP7749

ITEM 62835

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**BADLAND** Battle Tested **SUPER COUPON**

**2500 LB. ELECTRIC WINCH WITH WIRELESS REMOTE CONTROL**

• Weighs 14.3 lbs.

• 11-1/8" L x 4-1/2" H

Voted Best Winches

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COMPARE TO **\$179.99** SUPERWINCH MODEL: 1125220 **SAVE \$130**

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

ITEM 61840/61297/63476/61258 shown

28983039

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**CENTRAL PNEUMATIC** Series 2 **SUPER COUPON**

**6 GALLON, 1.5 HP, 150 PSI PROFESSIONAL OIL-FREE AIR COMPRESSOR**

• Air delivery: 2.5 CFM @ 90 PSI 3.4 CFM @ 40 PSI

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

**NOW \$99.99**

~~\$124.99~~

COMPARE TO **\$169.99** DEWALT MODEL: DWFP55126 **SAVE \$70**

ITEM 62511/62894/62380/68149/67696 shown

28929680

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 9/8/18\*

**CENTRAL MACHINERY** Series 2 **SUPER COUPON**

**8", 5 SPEED BENCHTOP DRILL PRESS**

**NOW \$499.99**

~~\$679.99~~

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

COMPARE TO **\$102.99** BUFFALO BLACK MODEL: DPJL **SAVE \$53**

ITEM 62520/60238 shown

28949190

LIMIT 3 - Coupon valid through 9/8/18\*

**PITTSBURGH** Automotive **SUPER COUPON**

**ATV/LAWN MOWER LIFT**

- 300 lb. capacity
- Weighs 72.5 lbs.

**NOW \$199.99**

~~\$299.99~~

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

COMPARE TO **\$179.99** PROLIFT MODEL: P-5358B **SAVE \$100**

ITEM 60395/62325 62493/61523 shown

28954102

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 9/8/18\*

**COVER PRO** Series 2 **SUPER COUPON**

**10 FT. x 20 FT. PORTABLE CAR CANOPY**

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

**NOW \$999.99**

~~\$1299.99~~

COMPARE TO **\$205.99** SHELTER LOGIC MODEL: 28522 **SAVE \$106**

ITEM 63054/62858 shown

28955243

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 9/8/18\*

**HaulMaster** Series 2 **SUPER COUPON**

**18" x 12" MOVER'S DOLLY**

- 1000 lb. capacity

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

**NOW \$79.99**

~~\$109.99~~

COMPARE TO **\$16.43** BUFFALO TOOLS MODEL: HOFERDOLLY **SAVE \$10.99**

ITEM 61899/63095/63096 63098/63097/93888 shown

28966886

LIMIT 3 - Coupon valid through 9/8/18\*

**drillmaster** Series 2 **SUPER COUPON**

**4-1/2" ANGLE GRINDER**

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

**NOW \$99.99**

~~\$149.99~~

SAVE 61%

COMPARE TO **\$25.80** PERFORMAX MODEL: 2411-1 **SAVE \$74.19**

ITEM 69645/60625 shown

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**Bunker Hill Security** Series 2 **SUPER COUPON**

**60 LED SOLAR SECURITY LIGHT**

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

Includes 6V, 900 mAh NiCd battery pack.

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**GREENWOOD** Series 2 **SUPER COUPON**

**1-1/4 GALLON HOME AND GARDEN SPRAYER**

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

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COMPARE TO **\$187.1** ROUNDUP MODEL: 190315 **SAVE 51%**

ITEM 63124/63145/95692 shown

28972500

LIMIT 9 - Coupon valid through 9/8/18\*

**CENTECH** Series 2 **SUPER COUPON**

**2/10/50 AMP, 12 VOLT BATTERY CHARGER/ENGINE STARTER**

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

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COMPARE TO **\$69.99** SCHUMACHER ELECTRIC MODEL: SE-125D **SAVE \$70**

ITEM 60581/60653 shown

28973283

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 9/8/18\*

**drillmaster** Series 2 **SUPER COUPON**

**80 PIECE ROTARY TOOL KIT**

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

**NOW \$6.99**

~~\$9.99~~

COMPARE TO **\$24.81** PROFESSIONAL WOODWORKER MODEL: B68X10-Y **SAVE 71%**

ITEM 63292/63235/68986/97626 shown

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LIMIT 9 - Coupon valid through 9/8/18\*

**SUPER COUPON**

**7 FT. 4" x 9 FT. 6" ALL PURPOSE/WEATHER RESISTANT TARP**

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

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~~\$499.99~~

COMPARE TO **\$9.88** BLUE HAWK MODEL: B68X10-Y **SAVE 65%**

ITEM 69249/69115/69137/69129/69121/877 shown

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LIMIT 9 - Coupon valid through 9/8/18\*

**THUNDERBOLT MAGNOLIA** Series 2 **SUPER COUPON**

**100 WATT SOLAR PANEL KIT**

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

RENEWABLE ENERGY ANYWHERE

**2X MORE POWER**

**NOW \$149.99**

~~\$199.99~~

COMPARE TO **\$325.92** SUNFORCE MODEL: SF180 **SAVE \$175**

ITEM 64335 63585 shown

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LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 9/8/18\*

**PITTSBURGH** Series 2 **SUPER COUPON**

**40 PIECE, 3/8" DRIVE SAE AND METRIC SOCKET SET**

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

LIFETIME WARRANTY

**NOW \$399.99**

~~\$499.99~~

COMPARE TO **\$109.97** KOBALT MODEL: K9899 **SAVE \$80**

ITEM 63015/61328/47902/62843 shown

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LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 9/8/18\*

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## Got Kids?

Immersive experience programs at famous Orlando theme parks make for an even more unforgettable family trip

By Alan Rider

If you've got young kids or grandkids, there's a better-than-average chance that you've got a fanatic in your family. I mean that quite literally, especially when you stop to consider the dictionary definition of that word: "A person with an obsessive interest in, and enthusiasm for, something." It's a sentence that sounds like it was written with my son in mind.

You see, for many years my boy was borderline obsessed with his favorite movies, a big-time fan of all things Star Wars, Harry Potter and Pirates of the Caribbean. All of which, I have to admit, were nearly as much fun for us as they were for him.

So the last time we loaded up the motorhome and headed for Florida, I did a little advance planning because I wanted it to be an unforgettable trip. And that it was.

Now, if you've ever even thought of going to Orlando, a town which both Google and I consider to be the theme park capital of the world, you're probably well aware that said operations have expansive thematic worlds and attractions dedicated to these wildly popular film franchises. I mean the entire *raison d'être* of the forthcoming Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge at Disney's Hollywood Studios, The Wizarding World of Harry Potter at Universal Studios Florida and, of course, the Pirates of the Caribbean ride at Walt Disney World's Magic Kingdom is to allow fans to interact with at least the trappings of some of

their favorite fictional faves.

What you may not know, however, is that all three theme parks offer clued-in families a chance for an even more immersive experience. For example, on our first day in town we visited Disney's Hollywood Studios, where I managed to arrange for my young son Sky (short for Schuyler, not Skywalker) to participate in the Jedi Training Academy. Clad in the order's traditional brown robe, he got to engage in a light-saber duel with Darth Vader himself (he also managed to use The Force to throw the villain's stormtrooper bodyguards to the ground, white armor flailing, with a wave of his hand). Even I thought it was kind of neat.

This was only the beginning of

our deep-dive into these fantasy-made-flesh experiences, however. The following day was reserved for The Wizarding World of Harry Potter at Universal Studios Florida. Here, we signed up for a VIP tour that included a stop for a refreshing "butterbeer" before our visit to Ollivander's Wand Shop, where the wand-master himself helped Sky pick out the "right" magic wand for him (which I, of course, had to purchase; a transaction that only seemed fair, as even Harry didn't get his wand for free).

The next day we were off to Walt Disney World's Magic Kingdom to pursue the young-un's fascination with all things swashbuckling. Though the Pirates of the Caribbean ride itself has been around for decades, we were whisked into a secret Pirate's League lair, where a professional makeup artist transformed us into a devil-may-care pirate family ready to plunder the park for the rest of the day. It's a pirate's life for me, indeed!

In retrospect, the fact that we found ourselves hobnobbing with stormtroopers, wizards and pirates should come as no surprise because, when it comes right down to it, we were in places built on imagination. It also proves my oft-repeated point about what keeps us all out here: that you never know who you're going to run into along The Road Ahead. **M**

“It's a pirate's life for me, indeed!”



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