

# Big test

## AUTO-SLEEPER M-STAR

This extraordinarily luxurious British-made two-berth campervan simply exudes class



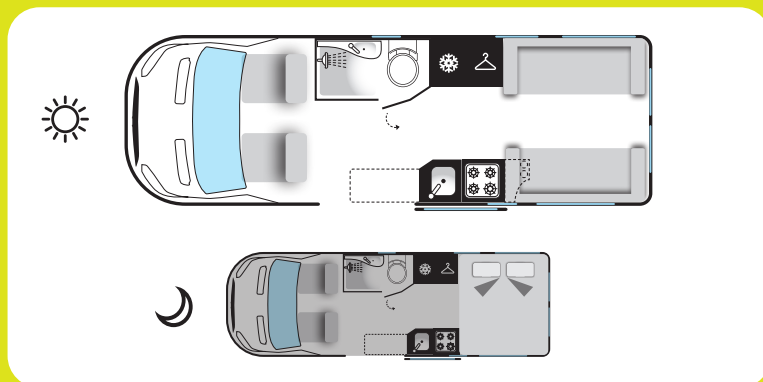
> Price From £125,250 > Sleeps 2 > Belts 2

> Base vehicle Mercedes Sprinter > Engine 2.0-litre, 163bhp

> Length/width/height 7.10/2.02/2.90m (23'3"/6'6"/9'5")

> MTPLM 3880kg > Payload 455kg > Water (fresh/waste) 70/77 litres

> Leisure battery 100Ah lithium > Gas 30-litre underslung tank



Contact Auto-Sleepers Address Orchard Works, Willersey, Nr Broadway, Worcestershire WR12 7QF Tel 01386 853 338 Web auto-sleepers.com

Auto-Sleepers has built a very strong reputation over the years for making luxurious, well-made motorhomes. But for the 2024 season the brand took a major step, releasing its most luxurious campervan ever – in fact, the most luxurious ever produced by a volume UK manufacturer. And it comes with a high-end price tag, too, at £125,250.

We took a prototype of the all-new M-Star away prior to the models hitting the production line.

How would we find the Mercedes Sprinter-based camper – would it live up to that substantial price tag?

### Exterior and cab

This is certainly a striking-looking motorhome – it cuts quite the stylish figure onsite with its dark-blue metallic paintwork (other colours are available). The Mercedes alloys look smart, too.

A Whale gas barbecue point is located on the nearside, towards the back.

Also on the nearside is the roll-out Thule Omnistor awning.

On the offside you'll find the toilet cassette locker – this location means you won't need to retrieve it through any awning. The electric hook-up point is also on this side of the 'van.

All the accommodation windows are flush-fit automotive-style, and tinted for additional privacy.

The accommodation door is on the UK nearside and there's a large electric step that slides out to help you enter.

Inside, the Mercedes cab looks fairly commercial vehicle, mainly owing to its grey colouring (1); but the smart Auto-Sleeper branding helps make the area feel more motorhome-like, and everything looks and feels high-quality.

The heated, swivelling leather seats are very comfortable, and the large touchscreen in the centre helps control the audio systems and is easy to use.

As you'd expect with a Mercedes base vehicle, there's a wealth of high-tech driving features, including Lane-keeping Assist, Active Brake Assist, Cruise Control and more. The production models also get an automatic gearbox.



## Lounging and dining



This two-berth motorhome has the very popular rear-lounge layout: it features two sofas in smart buttoned leather, although you can choose to have fabric furnishings if you'd prefer.

The sofas are very comfortable, with wide base cushions, and although the backrests are fairly thin, they are still supportive. The sofas also get a quartet of scatter cushions to make the lounge feel more stylish and homely (2).

The Mercedes Sprinter base vehicle is on the narrow side, at just 2.02m wide, and the large rear sofas feel fairly close together.

There's certainly enough room to squeeze through when one of you wants to leave the lounge, although you might end up bumping knees.

Our prototype model featured a fixing point for a small dining table, the top and leg for which are stowed in the wardrobe. It's not a huge table, but it should be large enough for two to dine.

The grey upholstery colour scheme and the fixed tinted windows do make it feel a touch dark inside here, but there's good illumination in the form of the Heki rooflight located up above, and this can also be opened.



LED spotlights feature in the ceiling, and attractive mood lighting runs across the top of the six overhead lockers in the lounge for evening ambience.

There are also four LED lights set on runners which, cleverly, can be moved along the rail to your ideal position (3).

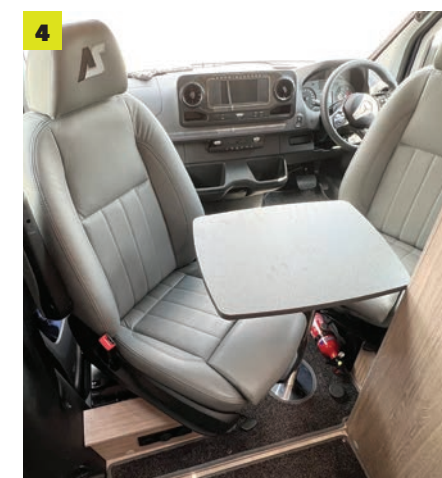
Pleasingly, there are proper curtains on each of the windows – they look great and feature smart tie-backs.

There's a big window on either side, both with concertina blinds. There are also two windows in the rear doors, with concertina blinds.

By those rear doors are USB-A and USB-C sockets, ideal for charging up your phone; you could then store the phone in the smart pockets on the rear doors. There are further USB sockets at the front end of the sofas.

Want some fresh air? The side windows don't open, but it's easy to throw open the rear doors from inside, allowing in the great outdoors.

If you'd prefer, you can swivel the cab seats (the driver's seat will only partly turn) and add the second small, single-leg table (4), which will come in very handy if you want to keep the rear lounge seating made up as a bed. ➔



## Kitchen



Large flap dramatically increases the amount of worktop in the kitchen

Full-size oven and grill is a nice inclusion in a van conversion

At first glance, the kitchen looks fairly small, with not much in the way of work surface – but then you notice the pair of flaps (one at either end of the galley) that simply lift up to create a substantial working area (5).

When the door is open, the flap that's nearest to it does take up around half of the doorway space, but there's still plenty of room to get about, and the worktop is accessible from outside if you want to put down a drink.

The design of the rear flap includes a pair of circular cut-outs, so if you're working in the kitchen, you can pop a drink here with less chance of it being spilled onto the leather sofa.

When the flap is folded back up, the cut-outs fit perfectly around a USB socket, so you still have access to charge your phone, whether the flap is up or down.



Cooking-wise, it's really great to see a Thetford dual-fuel hob with three gas rings and an electric plate in a van conversion. Above that is a smart Dometic extractor fan with useful built-in lighting.

A full oven and separate grill – again, great to see in a camper – sits below.

The black-enamel sink is deep, with a slot-in draining board to save space. Both the hob and the sink are fitted with an elegant glass cover.

Just opposite the main kitchen is a 157-litre Dometic Series-10 two-way opening fridge with separate freezer unit (6), and located above that is a Dometic plate-free microwave – that means no more rattling glass plate to worry about when you're on the move.

Finally, there's a tinted window behind the galley unit that is also fitted with a concertina blind.

## Sleeping



Rear bed is large and comfortable; two singles can also be created

This is a two-berth motorhome, so you can either have two single beds (they are 6'1" in length), or make up the sofas into a spacious double (7).

For the former, you simply need to remove the end bolster cushions, and the back rests too, if you want. This leaves a passageway down the centre of the beds for occupants to access the toilet at night if needed.

To make up the double bed, you just remove the backrests and bolster cushions, before flipping the base cushions around so the knee-roll sections are on the outer edges of the bed – you could also flip them over if you'd prefer.

Then simply pull across the slats and insert the backrest cushions in the middle; the result is a really good-sized and flat double bed.

## Washroom



The washroom is located on the offside, opposite the habitation door, with a small step up into it. It's not that big (8) and you might struggle to get dressed in here, but it's very well appointed.

A Thetford swivelling cassette toilet is on the right as you enter, and an Alde wet-central heating radiator is on the rear wall, to help keep the area warm.

Above that is a towel rail, and there's a transparent window by the toilet.

This large window is tinted, so you can't see in from outside, and it has a blind. Like other windows in this 'van, it doesn't open, so you'll need to be sure you're happy with that.

There's a toilet-roll holder to the left of the toilet, and handily, a built-in toilet brush just below that. Above the toilet is a small cupboard (9) with a pair of double

doors fitted with positive catches – it's not particularly large, but there should be room here for a few toiletries.

There's a small step down into the separate shower cubicle, which has one plughole and a bifold door, a good use of space in a fairly restricted area.

The oval handbasin is built into the shower cubicle – again, a clever use of space – but this does mean you'll need to step into the cubicle when brushing your teeth, risking damp feet.

Up above is a Heki rooflight (10) and pleasingly, because you don't always see this in washrooms, it has a blind.

On the washroom roof are a couple of well-placed LED lights to provide useful illumination.

On the rear of the washroom door is a hook to hang a robe or towels. ➔



## Storage



The M-Star has an MTPLM of 3880kg, meaning that you'll need a C1 licence to drive it, but the pay-off for this is the generous 455kg payload.

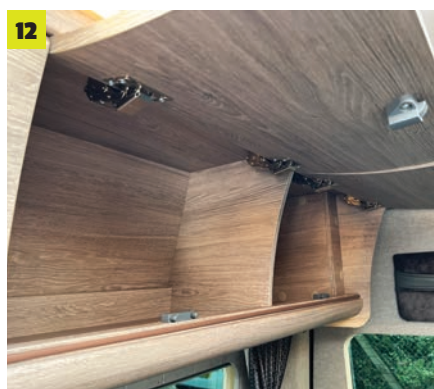
The 'van has been designed to offer lots of storage space, to help you make the most of that payload, too.

For starters, both seat bases have access flaps to the underseat storage.

The seats on the offside have partial access (11) – the boiler takes up some of the underseat area – but there's more room on the nearside. You can also access the area by lifting the sofa bases, which are on gas struts.

Six lockers have been placed around the roof of the rear lounge (12), all with positive catches. None of them has a shelf, although one has a cutlery rack.

The kitchen, meanwhile, has plenty of storage space beneath the worktop.



Below the hob is what looks like a drawer, but is actually a small locker, and below that is a larger locker with a cutlery tray that slides out. There's also a pan locker underneath the oven.

Up above the kitchen there are two lockers, one of which has some rather smart dedicated storage for glasses and wine bottles. There should be plenty of space to store food for two here, even on a longer tour, but if you get stuck, you could always employ one of the lockers close by in the lounge.

You'll need to go easy on packing toiletries in the washroom, though: aside from the small cabinet, there's not a huge amount of space. You do get a soap dish on the shower-riser, however, and there's a toothbrush mug on the wall.

Located alongside the fridge is a three-quarter-height wardrobe, which



has a hanging rail. It's a good depth, and it's lit, too, so you can easily see right to the back when needed.

The pair of tabletops and their legs are both stored in here.

Above the wardrobe is a double-size overhead locker, which should also prove very useful for stowing away lighter items that you're carrying with you.

On the rear double doors, there's a pair of smart pockets (13), which are perfect for storing your keys, phones or books. Further down, cargo nets on the inside of the rear doors are handy for accommodating lighter items, such as hoses or toilet chemicals.

The M-Star's cab is also absolutely brilliant for storage space, with plenty of sensibly placed cubbyholes and drinks holders available for everything that you could possibly need on the road.

## Equipment

Such is the high level of kit that you'll find in the M-Star, there's simply not enough space to list everything here – this motorhome is just packed with gadgets galore.

For starters, though, there's the Truma roof-mounted air conditioning (14); this works in tandem with the Alde wet heating system (something that you would normally never see in campervans) to provide the luxury of full climate control.

There are also a whopping six radiators, plus two fan-assisted units, dotted around the interior of the vehicle.

Alde's Flow constant-hot-water system will help to make those morning showers even more enjoyable.

The touchscreen control panel is in the lounge; it looks smart and provides information and control for lighting, gas, ambient temperature and more.



Truma roof-mounted air-con comes as standard

Pleasingly, loose-lay carpets have been fitted throughout the interior, including in the washroom.

But have you been wondering where the Avtex Smart HD TV with soundbar is? It's tucked away in a dedicated space at the foot of the offside sofa, ready to drop down whenever you want it (15).



Elsewhere in this cleverly designed vehicle, there's a fixed LPG gas tank, a 110W solar panel, a 100Ah lithium leisure battery, onboard tanks for fresh- and waste-water, Remis blinds on all of the cab windows... and the list goes on.

Overall, this really is a supremely well-specified van conversion.

## The last word



### Highs

- Mercedes base vehicle
- Fantastic level of kit
- Lots of storage space
- Brilliantly clever kitchen design

### Lows

- Space feels limited in some areas, particularly between the two sofas
- Flush-fit windows can't be opened

### Buy if...

You're looking for a luxurious campervan that has the fantastic-to-drive Mercedes Sprinter as a base, and you want the comfort and practicality of a spacious rear lounge. You'll also appreciate this model if you don't want to trawl through endless options lists to find the kit you want, or think you might need – everything simply comes as standard in the Auto-Sleeper M-Star.

### Verdict

Yes, this is a very expensive campervan, and it will be beyond the reach of many. But somehow, it feels like very good value. That's because Auto-Sleepers has clearly thought about what its customers will want and added the highest level of kit as standard – there's nothing here that feels superfluous.

The base vehicle is on the narrower side, but that width really pays dividends on the road. All in all, this is a hugely impressive model and a worthy winner of our 2024 Best Luxury Campervan award.



## TECHNICAL DATA

### BASE VEHICLE

**Chassis** Mercedes Sprinter  
**Engine** 2.0-litre, 163bhp  
**Power** TBC **Torque** TBC

**Transmission** Nine-speed automatic

**Features include** Reversing camera, Crosswind Assist, electric-closing assist side sliding door, heated driver and passenger seat, Lane-keeping Assist, Hill-Start Assist, Active Brake Assist, Headlight Assistant, cruise control, digital DAB radio multimedia system with touchscreen, multifunction steering wheel, height- and rake-adjustable steering wheel, alloy wheels, heated and electrically adjustable wing mirrors, electric parking brake, cab air conditioning

### CONVERSION

Choice of exterior colours, Truma roof-mounted air-con, Thule awning, 30-litre onboard LPG tank, 110W solar panel, 100Ah lithium battery, three opening rooflights, electrically operated side step, 70-litre fresh-water tank, 77-litre waste-water tank, external barbecue point, fixed windows

### LOUNGING AND DINING

Leather upholstery (fabric option available), two individual tabletops with single legs, swivelling cab seats, LED ceiling lights, two 12V tracks with four adjustable LED spots, Alde central heating, integrated slide-out Avtex Smart HD TV and soundbar, five dual USB-A and USB-C outlets

### KITCHEN

Thetford oven with separate grill, three gas burners and electric plate, Dometic extractor fan with spotlights, Dometic 157-litre 10-series fridge with removable icebox, Dometic inbuilt-plate microwave, work surface extension flaps

### SLEEPING

Rear double: 1.86 x 1.64m, or rear singles: 1.86 x 0.68m

### EQUIPMENT INCLUDES

Alde central heating with six radiators plus two fan-assisted radiators, Alde Flow hot-water system, Sargent EC700 electrical system with integrated DX320 charging and solar panel regulator, Truma roof-mounted air-conditioning unit, 110W solar panel, 100Ah lithium battery

## OR YOU COULD TRY...



**RP REBEL RWD**  
**From £125,000**

Mercedes-based van conversion with a rear lounge, and a side kitchen and washroom.



**WILDAX ALTAIR RL**  
**£99,995**

MAN-TGE-based and with a front dinette and rear lounge, the Altair has an all-electric habitation area.