

Sterling Europa 390

► PRICE £12,360 ► www.swiftleisure.co.uk



AT A GLANCE: A swish Europa that adheres to traditional two-berth, end-kitchen layout but puts on the style

TEST AND PHOTOGRAPHY PHIL STEPHENS

TOWMATCH C



NEVER has a traditional two-berth end kitchen caravan looked so swish. Outside, it's one of the neatest, most compact yet untraditional little tourers seen yet. It screams progression and shouts from its Heki rooflights that it refuses to be labelled just another "traditional two-berth caravan".

Climb into the Europa 390 and you'll see why. Pale furniture with Ebony (a dark chocolate shade) trim dominates the interior. For so long our minds have been conditioned to familiar wood grain interiors that are much of a muchness. But this is so utterly different - and unique to the Sterling range.

Sterling didn't leave it at woodwork. The work surfaces are like nothing that's gone before. And they're hard to describe. A texture and grain like patio York stone, possibly, and a colour approaching slate but still brownish in tone will unfortunately have to do. Shame, then, that the upholstery to my eyes fails to continue this contemporary adventure being just to err... normal. I'll admit that in the *Which Caravan* team I'm in the minority of one but, hey, I'm the one with the pen here.

We already know that for such a small tourer the kitchen is a practical marvel. The microwave housing is well integrated. There's a granite-effect sink, and cabinet space that has real-life usage potential in both upper and lower zones. The bulk of kitchen storage duty belongs to the oddly-shaped unit by the entrance door. Odd, maybe, but it adds visual interest as well as making the most of the

► LAYOUT IN A NUTSHELL

- Just 3.83m of interior length
- Rear kitchen alongside nearside washroom
- Low central nearside fridge unit
- Long front lounge settees



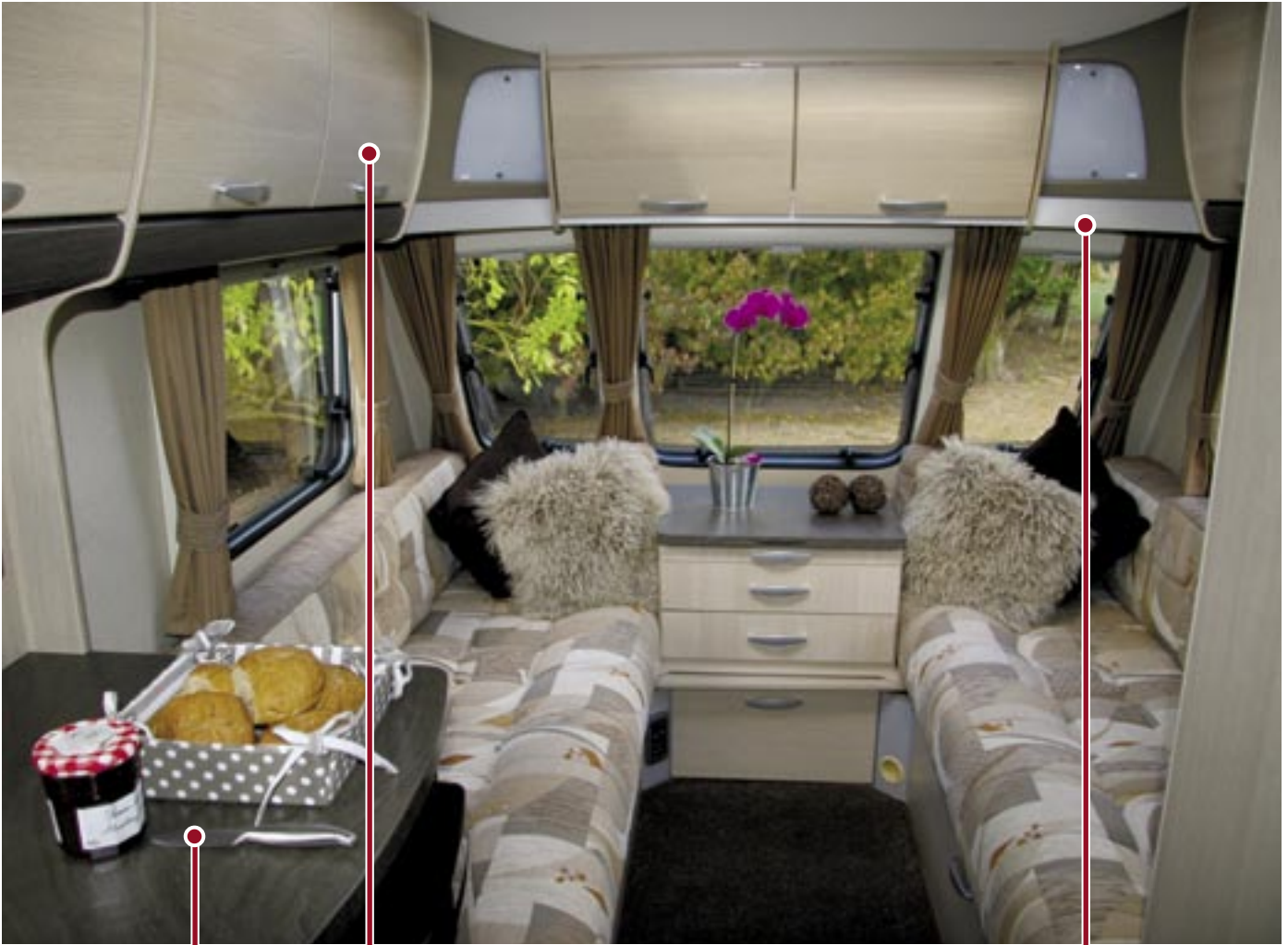
available room in this tight corner. It has two levels and great depth for bulky items.

In something this length you're only ever going to get a unitary washroom. But Sterling's approach to what, after all, is an incredibly difficult space to engineer satisfactorily is very satisfactory indeed. This tiny 390 partitions the shower using the ingenious sink and mirror unit that swings out to solidly screen the loo.

A glance outside at the Europa's length has you pondering just how Swift managed to cram in all this. It may be small but the 390 still has a lot of conventional layout features. In the centre you'll find a low unit that houses the fridge and offers additional kitchen worktop above. Moving forward from the working end, the lounge's full-length settees seem to look longer than they are, effectively giving the little tourer the illusion of greater space than it has. ■



The shower area is surprisingly large



The top of the fridge gives you useful additional kitchen space



Good-sized head-height lockers but not all have shelves half-way



The kitchen cupboard configuration is excellently designed



Large mains-powered corner lights with spotlights under the lockers

► FOR & AGAINST

PROS:

- A traditional two berth translated into 2010
- Great kit but still light enough for most

CONS:

- Some will find it too small

► SPECIFICATION

Axes: 1
Berths: 2
MRO: 1026kg
MTPLM: 1200kg
Overall length: 5.52m
Width: 2.23m
Headroom: 1.95m



The curve on the right side of the kitchen creates clever use of cupboard space

► OUR VERDICT

The Europa 390 lacks the L-shaped kitchen size and generous dimensions of the very impressive Stellar from Lunar. It does, however, complete its packaging tricks with much aplomb. For example, it has less space overall than the Stellar, yet it packs in a washroom with much more ability than the minuscule one in the Stellar.

We love this Sterling because it's bold enough to turn away from predictable and sometimes plain boring interior décor and cabinetry themes, and try something different.

And that's what the Europa is all about: different - and refreshingly so. It's a two-berth that's truly trendy.