Nick Harding tests the winner of the Folding Caravan category in the Club's Leisure Trailer Awards.

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COMMENTS

Congratulations to the Pennine team on their success.

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caravan. And unlike in a folding camper, the kitchen here is already set up. There’s no lugging of units into position as part of the set-up procedure.

As for storage, well such a design precludes overhead lockers. But, as well as the aforementioned shelving, there’s space under the bed, while the settee that contains the mains charger and water boiler is otherwise free for luggage.

**LIVING AND SLEEPING**

If anything, it’s the lounge that loses out here. The seating area is fairly tight but with the help of scatter and bolster cushions it shouldn’t be too hard to get comfy. Because of its location, though, you need to be particularly well organised during meal preparation, especially as the single-leg table is most likely to be up at this point in time. It can be swivelled slightly and the ensemble also comes with a separate tripod for use outside. Like the kitchen, the bed is ready and waiting to be used, and that one-piece mattress provides a sound night’s sleep. I certainly found the mattress comfortable enough, although the memory foam upgrade option, at £249, could be very tempting. There’s a bit of a headboard so sitting up in bed is feasible. Only the £199 bedding set of sheets and extra cushions in my test model differentiates it from the basic offering.

Under the mattress, it’s solid board rather than the open slats preferred by most caravan manufacturers these days, although this is probably a throwback to Pennine’s folding camper pedigree. I found the main light on the washroom bulkhead by the bed sufficient for reading and there’s low-level LED ambient lighting too. Even so, if this were my Artemis, I think I’d be investing in a plug-in reading light – especially in the lounge.

There’s an external shower fitting the offside, ideal for washing down muddy footwear etc.

**KITCHEN**

A four-ring hob is generous, although you’ll have to remember to bring your own means of ignition. I have already touched on the ample work surface but there is also a separate grill and oven, sink with drainer and large cutlery drawer. Time will tell, but the separate inset panel for the hob controls looks like it might prove tricky to keep clean.

Storage provision is pretty generous, however. There’s decent low-level locker space and open shelving at the right-hand side of the kitchen unit also includes what looks suspiciously like a wine rack!

For those who prefer to do their cooking al fresco, there are exterior gas and mains sockets towards the rear of the nearside. If it starts to get cooler, you’ll certainly feel the benefit of the mains blown-air heater facing the lounge.

**WASHROOM**

This is more a ‘toilet room’, really, as there’s no shower nor handbasin. Its location next to the bed means even the Thetford bench toilet is likely to be concerned with emergencies only.

My only suggestion is a full-width hanging rail could actually add to the stability here as well as enhance flexibility by providing space to hang wet coats, towels etc.

Don’t forget, there’s an external shower fitting on the offside, ideal for washing down muddy footwear etc.

**LIGHTING AND ELECTRICS**

Thank goodness for Caravan Club Magazine tests. As a result of our feedback, all future Artemises (Artemis?) will have individually-switched lights. In any case, I was rather impressed by the touch-operated low-level LED lighting.

The unit is actually well sorted for both lighting and electrical sockets, 12V and 230V, and there’s a very bright LED awning light over the door. There’s also pre-wiring and a socket for ATV aerial.

**VERDICT**

It’s not cheap but – so far – it’s unique. Downsizing is a big theme in caravan ownership at the moment. Folks opt for smaller, lighter towcars that, in turn, means outfits that are more economical to tow and own. All this plays right into the hands of Pennine’s Artemis.

Aiming for targets beyond its market-leading folding camper niche is a very brave move by Pennine.

Getting the Artemis so right first time around is a massive credit to this highly-regarded British manufacturer.

If you want a folding caravan with a fixed bed, Artemis is it.