



Peter Vaughan

Two by two

Carthago's premium liners, including this unusual rear lounge model, get a gentle evolution for 2026...



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CARTHAGO LINER-FOR-TWO I 53

Price from: £163,310 • Berths: 2 • Travel seats: 2/4
Length: 7.83m • Gross weight: 4,500kg

Motorhome supplied by: Go European Motorhomes [W goeuropean.co.uk](https://www.go-european.co.uk)



A lounge worthy of a luxury yacht, or an apartment! The 40in TV slides away behind the settee at the press of a button

Launched in 2018, the Liner-for-two has consistently been one of Carthago's most popular models in the UK, thanks to its spacious rear lounge which is so appealing to British buyers – and is so rare in a sector dominated by single bed, end bedroom layouts.

For 2026, the model has had a facelift – quite literally, because it's the front of the motorhome that has been updated, inheriting the new look first seen on the Mercedes-based Chic E-line models a year ago. Described as the 'V-face design', there are now exclusive-to-Carthago full LED headlights, a hexagonal grille with a bold chrome 'C' at its heart and grey A-pillars that sweep right up to the roof.

With revised graphics and changes to the rear of the motorhome, Carthago describes the update as 'characteristic of its new branding', but inside the 'four room'

concept is true to the original design.

You can still choose from two body lengths and either Fiat Al-Ko or Iveco Daily chassis. Our test vehicle is the Ducato-based I 53, the more compact, single-rear-axle model, measuring 7.83m overall. Supplied by Go European, it has the typically Teutonic long list of options, making the £163k list price somewhat misleading – expect any Liner-for-two to be far closer to the £215,920 cost seen here.

TOP SCORE

At least the 180hp motor and eight-speed automatic transmission are standard, along with Al-Ko's low-frame chassis, and you sit in superb Aguti Roadliner captain's chairs with multiple adjustments. The view out has always been a strongpoint of the brand and the ski slope of a dashboard still leads the way in enhancing driver confidence, allowing you to place the vehicle

accurately in tight spaces. At least that's the case going forwards; when reversing, the twin lens bus mirrors are great, but a Dometic reversing screen placed down by the driver's right knee is far from ideal.

That seems especially odd when our 'van was equipped with Fiat's 10in multimedia system (£1,250) for Apple CarPlay, Android Auto, etc. Otherwise, Carthago has done a grand job of integrating the Ducato fascia into its new home, with an additional cup holder for the driver and, at last, the step retraction switch on the UK driver's side. The plastic steering wheel rim seems like an oversight at this price, though, especially as the digital instruments and automatic climate control are present. The handbrake is manual but not hard to access.

It is, perhaps, unfair to judge the performance of a vehicle that had barely any previous miles recorded but it seemed adequate, rather than



Sloping dashboard aids driver visibility



153-litre fridge and separate freezer



Pedelec system, with recess in the floor, allows bikes to be stowed in the garage

sparkling. An unladen weight of over 4.3 tonnes has to be remembered here and a 60mph cruise on the M6 Toll was comfortable and stable. Rattles only appeared on rough secondary roads – Carthago makes much of its Durafix screwed and mortised furniture.

Another brand trademark, of course, is the heated double floor, which here houses the large fresh and waste water tanks – 210 and 155 litres, respectively. There's storage, too, with deep top-hinged hatches on either side giving access to a basement locker (min height 31cm) across the width of the motorhome.

Larger items can go in the garage, which (like the storage hatches) is linked to the remote central locking. It has a width of 1.27m and headroom of 93cm (reducing to 58cm where the floor of the rear lounge intrudes). The weight limit here is 350kg. There's an external shower as well as power points and

straps to secure outdoor chairs to the back wall, but no spare wheel. The clever bit is the Pedelec system – a covered recess in the floor and a gas strut-assisted rising ceiling (taking the offside sofa with it), increasing the height to 1.36m and allowing cycles to be stowed.

The motorhome is described as having 'liner premium-class body construction', which entails a GRP roof and floor, no wood, RTM hard foam insulation, 38mm-thick walls and roof and a curved join from the sides to the top. A 10-year water ingress warranty gives piece of mind, while the Silverline exterior finish is a £3,690 option.

As standard, the Liner-for-two has a 4,500kg gross weight, here upped to 4,800kg in combination with Al-Ko pneumatic suspension and special alloy wheels (£8,010). With optional extras adding 285.5kg to the unladen weight, that leaves a payload of 486kg for the test vehicle.

ROOM 1

Inside, the biggest news is the new 10in touchscreen over the door to control and monitor batteries, water, etc. Carthago says it is 'entering the future of vehicle control' with this new digital system that can optionally be linked to an app. It's perhaps fairer to say that it has caught up...

Alongside the new display are the Alde and Mastervolt controls. Of course, at this level you expect the comfort of a warm water central heating system, powered by gas or 230V, but Carthago goes further with a heat exchanger, additional heating in the cab and the effect of a heated floor from coils in the double floor.

Meanwhile, the standard 150Ah lithium leisure battery had been upgraded on 'our' Liner-for-two with the Electrical Power Package Unlimited (£8,615) featuring three 100Ah lithium batteries and a 2.6kW Mastervolt inverter. ►



ADVANTAGES

- One of the best rear lounges
- Double rooflights over the seating
- Clever transformation of cab to bedroom
- Washroom incorporates wardrobe and rain shower
- Pedelec system in garage
- Vast array of interior lighting
- Superb kitchen storage
- Excellent driver visibility
- Central locking includes garage and double floor

DISADVANTAGES

- Still no Mercedes chassis option
- Costly extras push up the price
- Not easy to sit up in bed
- Bulky fixed table
- Reversing screen location



Where's the cab? Hidden away under those drop-down single beds

Aside from technological advances, though, the interior of the Liner-for-two remains much as before. There is no alternative to the Siena interior with Summer Chestnut furniture and contrasting high-gloss ivory elements. It all looks and feels very premium, with lots of chrome, too, but it would be nice to see a more contemporary option.

Fortunately, Carthago hasn't meddled with the concept, which it describes as having 'four rooms' – so, let's go room by room, starting with the star of the show, the generous rear lounge.

We all know – and many of us love – the U-shaped rear lounge, but this goes one better with C-shaped seating, wrapping around to face all four directions. You step up into this space (the step is illuminated, so you can't miss it) and, frankly, in the grey February weather of my test, I didn't want to leave...

Not only are the sofas extremely

comfy – and beautifully finished here in optional Pearl leather (£3,175) – but there are additional 'relax' headrests (£305) on the nearside for extra luxury as you face one of the three panoramic windows, feet up. And don't worry about nosey neighbours peering in – glazing starts at 1.94m off the ground!

If you're bored with the view, press a button and a 40in Alphantronics LED TV (£2,650) emerges from behind the offside sofa like something in a James Bond villain's lair. It is mated to a Teleco satellite dish (£3,285), as well as four speakers around the lounge and, if you're settling down with the popcorn for an epic blockbuster, the sofa adjacent to the kitchen extends and reclines electrically (£925) for the ultimate sybaritic sensation. Or you could just enjoy Ken Bruce on the separate Pioneer radio/CD player also fitted here.

Clearly, this is pretty much the

best of the best in motorhome lounges but perhaps my favourite feature of all is the second Heki rooflight above (£1,090). I'm not quite so keen on the bulky table (78cm square), which requires a bit of shuffling around to get to your favourite spot. And I wouldn't recommend the optional rear travel seats (£1,030), as passengers would be sitting way behind the rear axle and a long way from the cab. This is, after all, a Liner-for-two...

ROOM 2

The kitchen is the first thing you see on entering the motorhome and its curves and style certainly strike the right impression. The hob has cast-iron pan stands, the sink has a hose-style tap and a chopping board cover, and the worktop has a Corian lip to catch spillages (although the counter itself is not Corian). Top cupboards have substantial sprung hinges and the drawers (four of



Clever storage makes good use of space in the kitchen but coffee machine and oven are extra-cost options

them) have soft-closing mechanisms and electric central locking (with a warning light). Then there are the options (of course) – a sensibly located Thetford Duplex oven/grill (£915) and a not-so-convenient Krups capsule coffee machine on a high-level slide-out plinth (£280).

The most eye-catching element is the wave of gloss ivory that divides rooms one and two and beneath here there's more storage, cleverly sliding out to also reveal twin bins. At the forward end of the galley, another slide-out is at eye level and ideal for tinned foods, cereal packets, etc. Then, on the opposite side of the motorhome, is the fridge – a 153-litre Dometic unit with separate freezer and doors that open from either side.

ROOM 3

With a sliding partition to the front and the toilet door closing off the space to the rear, the washroom becomes the third room, occupying

the full width of the motorhome. As it also incorporates the wardrobe, it's a proper changing room, too, and the hanging space can be arranged as one full-height area or his 'n' hers zones, one atop the other.

Alongside, a curved plastic door completes a good-sized shower with twin drains and a corner shelf for shampoo, etc. It is strikingly lit in one corner (lighting is a big feature in the Liner-for-two) and has not only the usual showerhead on a riser bar but also an overhead rain shower set into the rooflight. Headroom is a generous 1.98m.

Only the plasticky washbasin lets down a premium toilet area with ceramic cassette loo and Hollywood-effect backlit mirrors. The upper storage cupboards have fiddle rails to keep toiletries secure and under the basin is a laundry basket.

Our test vehicle also had the unusual option of a 60-litre black tank (£2,940) into which the 13-litre

cassette's contents can be pumped. Of course, this gives much greater off-grid potential but you'd need to find suitable drive-over emptying facilities.

ROOM 4

With the blinds around the cab closed (all manually, including the windscreen) and the cab chairs' backrests tipped forward, you're ready to convert the cab into room four – the bedroom.

In a change worthy of the *Transformers* sci-fi series, twin beds glide glacially down from the ceiling – all you have to do is keep your finger on the down button for about 35 seconds. Then mini sliding doors hide the cab seats and dashboard and two substantial steps slide out from the nearside chest of drawers. Transformation complete, all automotive aspects are hidden and you'd not really know that you're in a motorhome! ►



Backlit mirrors add bling in the washroom



Two-level wardrobe alongside the shower



New control panel and ship's clocks



Double-floor storage across the full width

You'll certainly have no issues with sleeping comfort as the seven-zone cold foam mattresses sit on Carawinx springs. The beds are 1.88m and 1.96m long but actually feel slightly shorter as the angle of the windscreen at the head of the bed and walls at the foot reduce wiggle room. In fact, there's more space across the 'van – at shoulder level the conjoined berths are 2m across! Duvets can stay put when the beds are stowed but perhaps not pillows – I managed to blow a fuse!

Sitting up in bed would be easier

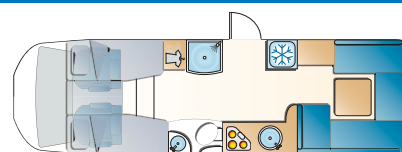
if you slept with heads to the rear but then you're not taking advantage of the extra width and getting in and out would be slightly less convenient. In any case, the second telly (24in for £1,225 in the Sleeping Area TV Package) is mounted on the toilet room wall.

Finally, while I loved the mood lighting throughout the Liner-for-two, the overhead lamps in the bedroom are rather startling when you've just opened your eyes – something more restful/dimmable would be appropriate here. **MMM**

THE **MMM** VERDICT

The Liner-for-two remains an unconventional A-class with huge appeal for those who can afford such a premium model. Its desirability focuses on that opulent rear lounge, which would be hard to beat. Living up to its name, couples could enjoy longer tours in real luxury – we just wish that Carthago would offer it with a Mercedes chassis and a more modern interior décor option.

FACTS AND FIGURES



PRICE

From: £163,310

As tested: £215,920

BASICS

Berths: 2 Travel seats: 2/4

Warranty: Two years on base vehicle and habitation, 10 years water ingress

Type Approval: Full GB Approval

DIMENSIONS

Length: 7.83m (25ft 8in)

Width: 2.34m (7ft 8in)

Height: 3.08m (10ft 1in)

Gross vehicle weight: 4,500kg (4,800kg option as tested)

Payload: 486kg (as tested)

BASE VEHICLE

Type: Fiat Ducato 40 Heavy Al-Ko

Engine: 2.2-litre, 180hp, Euro VI-E, front-wheel drive, eight-speed automatic gearbox

KITCHEN

Cooker: Can three-burner hob, optional Thetford Duplex oven/grill

Fridge: Dometic 153-litre with automatic energy selection

BEDS

Drop-down singles: Offside 1.88m x 0.75m (6ft 2in x 2ft 5½in), nearside 1.96m x 0.81m (6ft 5in x 2ft 8in)

ESSENTIALS

Fresh water: 210 litres (in double floor)

Waste water: 155 litres (in double floor)

Space/water heating: Alde Compact 3030 'wet' gas/electric central heating

Gas: 2 x 11kg

Leisure battery: 3 x 100Ah lithium (option)

OPTIONS

Fitted to test vehicle: Many, including Super Package (£5,215), Electrical Power Package (£8,615), 4,800kg upgrade (£8,010), Silverline exterior (£3,690)

THE ALTERNATIVES

Frankia F-Line 740 Plus

£135,600

INSURANCE

T 0800 975 1307

W shieldtotalinsurance.co.uk

For quote details: motorhome.ma/QuoteInfo



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