

FIRST LOOK

Lunar Delta RI

Lunar's new Delta RI has taken the tourer world by storm, winning *Practical Caravan's* coveted Tourer of the Year Award for 2016. **Andrew Jenkinson** finds out why it did



Together with the large rooflight, the deep lounge windows allow in plenty of daylight

For an upmarket, twin-axle tourer, the lounge seats are short, which may make meals for more than four a bit cosy

Sumptuous upholstery and an attractive colour scheme make the Delta lounge feel especially welcoming

Price £26,199
Berths 4
MiRO 1550kg
Payload 160kg
MTPLM 1710kg
Awning 1090cm

THE DELTA RANGE has been around since 1980 and, in its 36 years, it has offered luxury and low weights. Known by many as a well-specified range, the Lunar Delta line-up for 2016 may just include its best model to date: the RI.

Lunar has rather cleverly taken a layout that originated in the world of motorhomes, featuring an end island bed and a full-width washroom amidships, and improved upon it.

Coachman took the plunge and introduced it in the VIP 545/4 and Laser 650/4, which

made their debuts at February's NEC show. Showgoers liked them and the Coachman models sold well, but there were drawbacks. The washroom felt tight for space and there were two entrances from there to the rear bedroom, to access either side of the lengthways island bed, the foot of which extended right to the washroom bulkhead. This made the layout feel claustrophobic.

Lunar has stepped into the breach by coming up with a twist for the floorplan, which was an ideal addition to its Delta range. Lunar enlarged the washroom and turned the island bed through 90°, transforming it into a transverse double, which permits a single entrance to the bedroom. To complete the layout, the bed was made

retractable, to allow access around its foot. These tweaks make the Delta RI a very desirable luxury tourer.

Pitch and set-up

The Delta RI is built on an Al-Ko twin-axle chassis, which comes with heavy-duty steadies, the ATC trailer-control system and an AKS stabiliser. The Delta range also receives Al-Ko's automatic brake adjuster, a spare wheel and an underslung carrier. Attractive alloys and decals complete the exterior design of this smart tourer.

A wet locker is also part of this luxury package and for those who like to cook outside a barbecue point is standard spec, as is an exterior mains socket.

The front and rear panels are full-height moulded ABS units.

The chrome-effect grabhandles can be backlit in the evening. The Delta has an external showerhead, pipe and connector, which are ideal for washing off the dog!

Lunar fits a 40-litre fresh-water tank with automatic changeover – when the onboard tank empties, the water system draws on an exterior source. A Wastemaster grey-water carrier is provided as standard kit.

The Delta has the latest Status digital TV/radio aerial, while the large gas locker is easy to access.

Lounge

If we have any niggles, then we may as well get them out of the way first. There's a slight one in the lounge. This is a four-berth, right? Yes, but the van will more than likely be used by a couple



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT LEDs are used throughout the Delta to provide a wide variety of lighting options. The attractive front panel, decals and alloys set it apart from the rest of the Lunar line-up. The digital control panel is directly above the glazed, one-piece entrance door



The galley has generous amounts of storage and workspace, as well as a separate oven and grill, three gas burners and an electric hotplate



The island bed is a breeze to retract in the morning and extend for bedtime using Lunar's 'easy action' day/night mode

than by a family. The lounge is a little on the short side; four adults will find it a tad cosy, though not a tight squeeze. We reckon an L-shaped lounge would work better here. Perhaps that could be offered as an option for 2017.

Otherwise, the lounge is comfortable. We like the sumptuous upholstery and colour. The deep front windows allow in plenty of natural light. This is bolstered by the Maxi Sky-View rooflight, which has been enlarged for the 2016 model year to a whopping 1.5m x 0.6m and works better than before.

Good overhead lockers and excellent night-time illumination are other features of the lounge, while the central chest of drawers and mains

socket plus the alarm sensor are situated here, too.

Front access flaps in the seat bases allow bedding to be retrieved without disturbing the seat cushions. The freestanding table is lightweight, while a slide-out section of the chest of drawers serves as a coffee table.

Kitchen

The Delta's kitchen is well-equipped and practical. It sports a Thetford Aspire 2 oven, a dual-fuel hob and stainless-steel sink with a clip-on drainboard. The worktop is generous but, for those who want more, a fold-up extension flap is provided.

Only one mains socket is fitted here, as is the switch for the top-notch kitchen lighting, including that built into the surround of the gloss-finish

overhead lockers. They look great and, with the LEDs on, they're stunning.

Ample storage space in the galley is freed up because the 180-litre fridge/freezer is across the gangway. Above it is an easy-to-access 800W microwave.

Beds

One of the Delta RI's two comfortable doubles is the island bed at the rear. Lunar's designers cleverly opted for a transverse bed measuring 1.83m x 1.34m. For less than £30 extra, it can be lengthened with an optional 0.10m extension for the supportive air-pocket mattress, making it 1.93m (6ft 4in) long.

Either way, its 'easy action' day/night mode simplifies retracting it for the day and extending it at bedtime.

The lounge, meanwhile, can be converted into a good-sized, 2.11m x 1.51m, double bed using conventional pull-out slats.

Washroom

Once you've passed through the main living area, you reach the washroom, and it's here you realise what a great design this is. Lunar has added bags of floor space and storage by fine-tuning the layout to have one door between the bedroom and washroom rather than two. The result is a washroom that feels much bigger.

The domestic-style shower cubicle is a good size, while the handbasin and the cupboard supporting it are centred widthways. Just above the basin is a large mirror. On the nearside is the electric-flush toilet. >>



The washroom has one entrance to the bedroom, which creates more floor space. The specification includes a handbasin, toilet and mirror



The separate shower cubicle is close to domestic size, while nearby on the offside wall are a mirrored cupboard and a heated towel rail



The grabhandles have LED courtesy lights behind them to make finding them at night simple RIGHT The alloy wheels get Al-Ko Secure locks

As you enter the bedroom, you'll see a mirror on the left that folds out to reveal extra storage – a welcome touch. Good natural and artificial lighting, and plenty of ventilation round out the room.

Storage

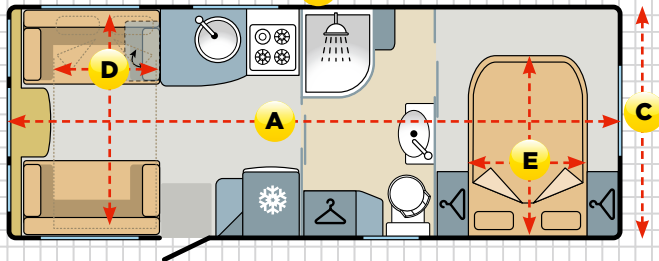
The Delta RI offers a huge amount of storage, especially if used by two – even with four, though, you won't go far wrong. The lounge has deep overhead lockers while the kitchen has

large cupboards with drawers. Opposite is a corner cupboard with shelves above; a glass-fronted drinks cabinet would have been the icing on the cake.

The washroom has excellent storage, from its cupboards to a small wardrobe. Towards the rear, two nearside wardrobes flank the island bed's headboard. Overhead lockers and an enormous expanse under the bed offer more storage than most couples will need. Still, better too much than not enough!

Lunar Delta RI

Price £26,199 **Berths** 4 **MiRO** 1550kg **Payload** 160kg
MTPLM 1710kg **Awning** 1090cm **Contact** Lunar Caravans Ltd,
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Tel 01772 337 628 **Web** www.lunarcaravans.com



Measurements

- A** Interior length 6.16m **B** Shipping length 7.89m
- C** Overall width 2.33m **D** Front double bed 2.11m x 1.51m
- E** Island bed 1.83m x 1.34m

INSURANCE QUOTE £31.26/mo
 Quote based on van and equipment at value of £28,000
 ■ Contents cover £500 ■ 4+ years NCD ■ £100 excess
 ■ Al-Ko Secure wheel locks, ATC trailer control and Phantom Tracker fitted, alarm with tilt sensor discounts
 ■ Subject to Ts&Cs and insurer's acceptance of risk
 ■ 6% added for instalments, equivalent to 13.8% APR

Web www.caravanclub.co.uk/caravaninsure **Tel** 01342 488 312

Or try these alternatives

 Coachman Laser 650 Price £26,645 This was the first tourer with this motorhome layout. It boasts solid build but the washroom is less spacious.	 Swift Conqueror 650 Price £27,695 The Conqueror was launched at the October NEC show. Spec includes a solar panel but no on-board water tank.	 Sterling Elite 650 Price £27,695 The interior is contemporary. Otherwise, this is the same as the Conqueror in kit and layout.
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VERDICT

★★★★★

The Delta RI really works. It's got good spec, storage and a spacious end bedroom. The washroom and large side kitchen work well. It's no wonder that this luxury tourer won its class and the overall honours in our Tourer of the Year. Despite its size, it is lightweight with a 1550kg MiRO. This is a tourer that's going to prove a top seller at the high end of the market in 2016.



Good

The variety and provision of storage options are both generous. The washroom and end bedroom are the stand-out features. Lighting is excellent throughout this spacious van.



Bad

The front lounge may become a little tight with four diners. Pity there's no cocktail cabinet