



# Making a point

CANDY EVANS and IAIN GEDDES take it in turns to enjoy the new Bailey Unicorn Almeria at Hertford Club Site

We were the first people (Bailey employees excepted) to try the Unicorn Almeria, just a couple of weeks after its first showing to the public.

Although it's new in the Alu-Tech form, the layout of this four-berth, fixed-bed unit will be familiar to owners of the Pegasus 524 or Senator Indiana and in the Almeria it comes in a top-of-the-range package.

The Unicorn accounted for three-quarters of the £15 million of orders Bailey took at the International Caravan and Motorhome Show in October 2010, so the caravan had much to live up to.



The Almeria has a large fixed bed at the rear with a couple of reading lights and fixings on the wall to

allow you to mount the 16inch flat-screen TV with DVD player that's included as standard in all Unicorn models. The TV point is just one of three spread throughout the caravan that's linked to the aerial and allowed us to receive digital channels through the TV's in-built Freeview receiver, though we'd have benefitted from a signal strength detector to find the right direction to point the aerial.

The kitchen area is well fitted out. The front of the large fridge-freezer matches the kitchen units and the eye-level cupboards have opaque glass fronts, giving the whole area an integrated look that's smart and visually divides the kitchen from the living and sleeping areas of the caravan.

The microwave is sensibly positioned opposite the rest of the kitchen with a work surface beneath.

You won't find an electric hot-plate on the hob, but there are four gas burners and the oven has a separate grill above it.



The Almeria has a front chest of drawers fitted as standard – again a distinctive feature of the Unicorn range because it's an optional extra in Olympus and Pegasus caravans. The top transforms into a good-size table, with space for a couple to eat meals



without needing the freestanding table, though it's easily accessible if required.

The front sofas are comfortable, with shaped cushions at both ends and distinctive scatter cushions. The individual slide-out sections under each seat make it straightforward to make up the double bed at night or they can be pulled out to give a luxurious footrest during the day.

On the storage front, the Evans family tends to transport all its kit in several small crates and the Almeria is the first caravan we've tried in which the crates will slot in easily without any unpacking. That says a lot about the size of the eye-level cupboards in this unit.

Having tested several caravans with end washrooms recently, the corner washroom in the Almeria inevitably feels quite small, though this compromise means the rest of the 'van is more spacious.

Bailey has put a baby butler's-style sink in the main part of the caravan, opposite the fixed bed, with a smart double-sided shaving mirror above. As a result, there's plenty of room to use the sink and it's only the shower and toilet area that's restricted. The small laundry bin next to the sink is also a neat touch.

The Alde wet heating system allows a heated towel rail to be fitted in the washroom, but because it's at a low level we found our towels rested on the toilet seat, which wasn't ideal.



As a result, we feel the washroom is adequate, but probably suited to those who will only use it occasionally and are happy to use on-site facilities.



The Unicorn is the third range of Bailey caravans to be released that uses the Alu-Tech construction method, but the Unicorn looks slightly less distinctive than the Pegasus and Olympus models because its front gas

locker cover is white rather than black.

Nevertheless, it still has a small locker at the front – sufficient for a couple of gas bottles and a folding winding handle for the steadies – and two smaller lockers accessed from the sides of the 'van.

You also get the LED lights on the grab-handles at the front, meaning it's still distinctively a Bailey Alu-Tech caravan on the road at night.

The exterior graphics are bold – with a couple of unicorn wings on the rear panel – and the caravan towed well behind our Kia Sorento towcar.

## at a glance

### Bailey Unicorn Almeria

Price as tested £18,890 (including VAT at 20%)

Length x width x height 7.25m x 2.28m x 2.63m

Berths Four

Maximum Technically Permissible Laden Mass 1,597kg

Mass in running order 1,441kg

User payload 156kg

Manufacturer Bailey

Tel 0117 305 2939

Web bailey-caravans.co.uk

### Verdict:

A worthy successor to Bailey's traditionally-built top-of-the-range caravans.