



# All mod cons for life in the fast lane

**Vehicle:** Fiat Ducato alias Trakka Torino  
**Price:** from \$89,995  
**Available from:** Motorhomes Qld, Nicklin Way, Sunshine Coast or Trakka in Sydney.

By MURRAY HUBBARD

**A**FTER a week in Trakka's Torino motor home there's only one thing to say about retirement: bring it on.

This is four stars on wheels with just about all the comforts of home. Motorhomes are all about compromise – the provision of everyday needs fitted into a confined space.

While you explore this great country, your living area, kitchen, ensuite, bedroom and patio follow you around.

How well those areas are designed and built dictates ease of travelling and living on wheels.

The Torino is based on a Fiat Ducato van. Trakka spent 12 months developing a conversion that is well thought out and beautifully executed; this is not so much about living with a vehicle, but living in it.

The Torino is on the cusp between a traditional campervan and a motor home.

What sets it apart as a motor home is that it has a toilet, shower and vanity on board, so it's suitable for that trip around Australia or week-ends away.

Our test vehicle also had all the creature comforts that the extra length of the Ducato allows, without eating into living space: 14-inch LCD TV with built-in DVD player, microwave, and airconditioning. Trakka's interior planning includes the small things that make life liveable on the road, external power available or not.

The Ducato has full-height standing room of 1.85m and is fully insulated, keeping the inside warm on cold nights.

Trakka uses a 20-litre hot water tank that uses engine heat exchange and 240 volts.

Even the morning after a day's driving, hot water is available for that quick shower or for washing breakfast dishes.

There's an 80-litre fresh water tank plus a similar-size grey water tank for storing shower and dishwashing water until it can be correctly discharged.

The microwave and airconditioning run only on 240 volts, so a powered site in a van park is needed for these luxuries.

At the heart of the on-board power for refrigerator, electric side step, external and internal lighting, water pump, cooking extractor fan and TV are two auxiliary batteries that are charged via an automatic 17-amp charger when the vehicle is running.

If the vehicle battery should fail, the auxiliary batteries have an emergency connection to start the Fiat.

The high-tech systems are shown on a master control panel.

The best part is that it all happens automatically and requires only daily monitoring. If the batteries are low you need to take the vehicle for a run.

The Torino sits easily at 110km/h on the highway and is a delight to drive, remarkably more car-like than you would expect from a high-roof van.

Cooking is facilitated by a three-burner gas top with a 4kg gas bottle stored in an external compartment.

A inviting four-seater L-shape lounge dominates the interior and converts to a good-sized

double bed.

Both driver and passenger seats swivel around and provide legroom in bed for those who are on the taller side.

Attached to the wardrobe is a support

for a multi-position dining table that slides in behind the kitchen cupboards.

Outside it's more of the same.

There's a large, easy to wind-out awning attached to the roof, while camping chairs, table and serving bench store at the back of the vehicle.

As we found out, if it rains the Torino is not a bad place to sit it out. "Cup of coffee dear?"

"Yes thanks, and while you're at it it can

you put on *Days of our Lives*?"

"OK, I might have a beer."

After several days cruising the southern coast of NSW we also found out that the Torino was more than

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→  
just another motor home. At 5.6m it can be legally, and relatively easily, parked in towns and cities.

It fits between the smaller VW T5-based camper vans at 5.3m, and the Mercedes Sprinter motor homes that are more than 7.1m long.

Vehicle length is a compromise in this type of vehicle.

While the VW can double as a daily driver, it lacks some of the creature comforts of the Fiat, that is at the shorter end of the motor home market.

The Mercedes on the other hand has even more comfort but its length makes it purely a motor home.

The Torino comes at a base price of \$89,995 for the manual version and \$99,995 for the auto.

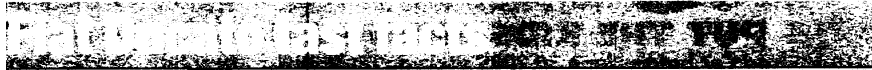
Options on our test vehicle included: 240-volt split system aircon at \$3250; TV amplified antenna \$750; 14-inch flatscreen TV and DVD \$1595; upgraded stereo system at \$350 and satellite navigation system at \$1995.



Four-seater L-shape lounge converts to a good-sized double bed. Seats swivel and provide extra leg room in bed. A dining table slides in behind the kitchen cupboards.



# Park it, put your feet up, turn on the telly, open a can . . . roll on retirement



- 2.8-litre Turbo Diesel putting out 94kW at 3600rpm and 300Nm of torque at 1800rpm
- Five-speed manual transmission or optional auto
- ABS brakes, power mirrors, windows. CD
- Driver and passenger airbags
- Adjustable steering
- Remote central locking Auto headlight off
- 80-litre fuel tank
- Three-year, 180,000km warranty



Trakka Torino roaming home has your living area, kitchen, ensuite, bedroom and patio all on wheels. Plus there's TV, microwave, and airconditioning.