



Home comforts on the go

A fully decked out campervan is a great way to travel, reports
JAEDENE HUDSON

Folks at camping areas are a friendly lot. Always happy to have a natter, offer you helpful tips and share their vast knowledge of some of the most fantastic places in the country.

But when you rock up to a camping area in a silver-coloured campervan with **TRAK 1** rego plates, it is like turning on a light to attract a moth. Throughout our trip up the east coast fellow campers could not help but come for a closer look. Many had no qualms about climbing aboard to have a peek inside our mobile home.

"I like your van" or "geez, that's a smart-looking van" were the most popular conversation starters.

TRAKKA'S Torino is based on Fiat's Ducato commercial van. It is powered by a 2.8-litre direct-injection turbo diesel engine which produces 94kW of power at 3600rpm and 300Nm of torque at 1800rpm.

TRAKKA is a company that specialises in designing, engineering and building recreation and special-purpose vehicles.

The van is great to drive. The high seating position provided an almost bird-like view of the traffic ahead.

Despite being a touch under 6m in length the van is easy to park, with two large (power) side mirrors and two smaller ones underneath to see the gutter.

Even with a heavy load, the Fiat has plenty of go and cruises comfortably on the freeway.

Fuel efficiency is not bad for the two-tonne camper, averaging a tick over 11L/100km. **TRAKKA** has decked out the Torino with everything — and more — that two people could need for a trip.

The bathroom has a shower, toilet, basin, storage compartments and a vent with a fan.

At the rear is a three-burner gas stove, overhead (ducted) fan and lights.

Plenty of bench space links the stove with the sink and both units are protected by glass tops. There are cupboards above for food and storage and under the sink are specially-designed drawers for utensils, crockery and pots and pans.

There is a condiments storage unit and a general cupboard for storage with a rubbish

bin and extra bench space on top. Tucked away behind is the top for the table, which screws on to an arm and can be manoeuvred around. The fridge is set in the wall, below a wall-mounted airconditioning unit (which got a workout during the 10 days of 30C heat we encountered).

The fridge easily stores a few days' worth of food and drinks and the small freezer is a usable size.

No matter where we were, the wind-up TV aerial, which can be moved around on its axis, produced a good picture.

The TV (an optional extra) has an internal DVD player and bolts on to a cupboard.

Only the microwave and airconditioning need full power.

The 180-degree swivel seats make moving from the cabin to the rear easy, although it took a few bumps on the head to remember to duck when moving from the rear as the whole back section is standing room.

The rear seats pull out to form the bed, which was relatively comfortable.

During the trip it was obvious **TRAKKA** had one thing in mind when designing the Torino — to make everything simple.

The Torino has an awning that extends out the side of the van, providing the perfect place to escape the searing sun (or rain). It took less than five minutes to either set it up or put it away, even with one person.

The only thing that is a little annoying is that a campervan is your only set of wheels, so if you go somewhere you have to pack everything up. But, it took us just 10 minutes to pack away the awning, aerial, cords, water pipe, chairs and fold-up table.

TRAKKA has considered other little things, too, such as the side step automatically retracting when the key was put in the ignition so you don't scrape it on the gutter or the warning ring that sounds if you forget to take the power cord out. The Torino has an indicator board in the van to show battery life (car and house) and water and waste levels.

With everything you need and so easy to use, the Torino has the luxury and space of a bigger campervan but without the larger exterior size. A campervan like this one costs between \$90,000 and \$100,000, depending on the accessories.

What would you travel around Australia in?
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Looking good: the TRAKKA Torino campervan in a picturesque location (left) and the roomy, well-equipped interior (above and below)

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