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Rapido 686F

Rob Ganley casts his eye over this stylish low-profile coachbuilt from the French luxury motorhome maker, with an all-new layout for 2019

For 2019, Rapido went big on lounges and beds in its 28-strong line-up of motorhomes, and the key new addition to its ranges was the introduction of the '86' layout.

Here, I've focused on the 686F. Rapido has long had its own unique designations for naming and numbering its motorhomes. In this case, the 6F indicates it's a low-profile coachbuilt and 86 describes a layout that features an XL island bed plus face-to-face modular seats in the lounge area. I'll have a closer look at what that means in layman's terms shortly.

You might not know it from

the grille, because Rapido replaces the Fiat logo with its own, but the 686F is based on the Ducato chassis cab with extra wide rear track. It comes with cab air conditioning but pretty much all other goodies – such as reversing camera, passenger airbag and cruise control – are part of the optional Select Pack. An opening cab roof is thrown in as standard though, and the reading spotlights in the cab are a chunky and stylish addition.

At 7.19m long, it's powered by the 2.3-litre 130bhp unit as standard. It can be specified on the 3,500kg 'light chassis' if driving licence entitlements

are a problem. Alternatively, if the 460kg payload on the light chassis is not enough, you can opt for a 4,400kg 'heavy chassis'.

Clever living quarters

The lounge features a layout that's very much in vogue in motorhomes built in mainland Europe: it features face-to-face sofas that convert to forward facing travel seats, either side of a central table.

This table is mounted on a telescopic leg, meaning the lounge doubles as an occasional single sleeping berth. The table top is also hinged and folds, to enable

easier access from the cab seats through the lounge area.

L-kitchen quarters

Rapido has gone for an L-shaped kitchen in the 686F, with a backlit splashback. The kitchen unit drawers come with central locking – to stop them flying open on the road – and feature new glossy white fronts, although I wonder how spotless they'll stay after years of use. The stainless steel sink is a sensible rectangular shape, and plenty deep enough to allow a kettle to fit beneath the tap. A kitchen roll holder and spice rack are neat additions.

The kitchen includes a hob



with three in-line gas burners, while the UK pack (more of this later) includes a 28-litre combined oven and grill. Across the galley, a 149-litre fridge freezer is sited next to the habitation entry door.

Super sleeping set up

A sliding wooden door separates the front living quarters from the rear bedroom. The 86 layout means this model comes with a central in-line 150cm-wide (or 4ft 9in in old money) island bed, which has a retractable frame to increase living space during the daytime when it's not in use. It's also electrically

height adjustable by 20cm, which impacts on headroom in the garage space underneath.

The bed has wardrobes on either side, which are a decent size for couples, and there's a sliding storage drawer underneath it for folding items.

The 686F also has the option of an electrically-operated drop-down double bed over the front lounge.

Split facilities

The shower and toilet are separated either side of the motorhome. On the UK nearside is the swivel-bowl cassette toilet, with a sliding tambour-style door for



privacy. There's a large circular washbasin and a vanity unit with a mirrored sliding door. Opposite, the sealed shower cubicle is roomy, and has a rigid bi-fold door.

Well equipped

The external garage space has opening doors on either side of the van, and its headroom is height adjustable beneath the rear double bed.

The UK pack includes Truma Combi dual-fuel heating, with CP Plus control panel and iNet, so you can manage these functions remotely using an app on your smartphone, via bluetooth and SMS. It also

At a glance

Prices from

£56,800

Berths Two + one

Travel seats Two

+ two

Length x width

x height 7.19m x

2.35m x 2.9m

Maximum

Authorised

Mass 3,500kg or

4,400kg

Length x width x

height 6.36m x

2.05m x 2.59

User payload

460kg or 1,360kg

For more info

rapido-motorhome.co.uk

- ▲ The 150cm-wide retractable rear bed is sumptuous
- ◀◀ The facing sofas in the front lounge convert to travel seats
- ◀ The toilet space is compact but well thought out

See more of Rapido's 2019 motorhomes in Rob's video at bit.ly/Rapido2019

includes essentials such as living area and cab carpet. The Select Pack buys you an entry door flyscreen, a cooker hood with LED lighting plus a few more goodies.

Verdict

The face-to-face lounge is an excellent and flexible use of space within a compact footprint, while Rapido's signature sumptuous styling make this a good looking motorhome inside and out. Great as a two or four berth, if you opt for the drop-down double bed, this is a versatile motorhome in manageable proportions. **✂**

