

Bailey
Olympus 504
£14,495

Bailey Olympus 504

Olympus brings Alu-Tech construction to the mid-range market. Andrew Ditton has an exclusive sneak preview of a hot new flexible layout

Price	£14,495
Berths	4 (optional 5)
MIRO	1224kg
MTPLM	1440kg
Body length	5.68m
Shipping length	7.25m
Body width	2.19m
Contact	Bailey Caravans
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EXTERIOR

Bailey could not have asked for a more harsh first winter to put its pioneering Alu-Tech construction through the mill. A November of continuous rain was followed by one of the longest cold snaps that anyone under 40 can remember. Some

idiot (myself) even took an Alu-Tech van to Switzerland where exterior temperatures of -15°C were seen off without the need to use gas for heating! In short, Alu-Tech construction works, and Bailey stamps a 10-year warranty on it to prove it. Just be aware of additional servicing costs like re-torquing body panel fixings.

Olympus boasts a body width of 7ft 2in, which should raise a cheer among those who fancy the Pegasus but find it too wide. Retained are the removable inboard water tank, AKS hitch, AL-KO Secure Receiver, shock absorbers, and ATC electronic stability system. But you'll search in vain for a barbecue point, exterior socket, and AL-KO Secure Lozenge, the latter being a £190 cost option.



The 504 is narrower than a Pegasus

Office, dining area, teenagers' den, book corner... use the rear dinette as you wish



INTERIOR

Whisper it quietly, but the double dinette layout is making a comeback. In addition to the traditional centre washroom layout of the 525, a new end washroom version is available in the form of the 504. You will see that Bailey has achieved this by simply turning the fixed bed of the 534 into a dinette area.

Despite its narrower width, the combination of clean lines and well-chosen lighter

colours give the Olympus a bright yet comfortable feel. Our test model was clothed in Andorra upholstery, which is a £255 cost option. Essentially a four-berth model, an optional bunk bed fitting extends this tourer's capacity to five people. As such, the front chest of drawers also remains on the options list, its omission allowing five people to sit around the rather diminutive dining table come mealtimes.

NEW CARAVANS



No mirror here, but you can spy on the neighbours!



Ultra-smart worktop tops off compact but adequate kitchen area

Ideal for

Solo caravanners, couples, or families requiring the flexibility of two living areas coupled with a full end washroom

Four people would no doubt choose to dine at the rear dinette and keep the front clear for lounging. Me, I would keep the front area made up as a bed and use the rear dinette as an office. Versatility is the name of the game with this layout.

Of course, the downside of all that daytime space is the fact that there is a lot of dancing with tables and shuffling of cushions to be done come bed time. All five of the forward seat base cushions need to be turned around at the front dinette to eradicate knee-rolls. At the rear it is the table that makes up the bed base, the bed itself narrowing to a mere 2ft 6in at its foot. OK for a couple, but not really ideal for kids and teenagers.

Cooking up a meal for five in the compact galley may be a challenge, but the removable draining board does at least free up some workspace until washing-up time. Lighting could be better here. The mini-Heki does a superb job by day, but the LED chain could do with a little help at night.

Washroom is on the narrow side but does the job pretty well. Over the washbasin is a slim window, so as a result the

mirror is nowhere near the sink. Great for being nosy, not so great for shaving.

Storage space is great for a couple, but capacity would struggle as the body count increases, plus no drop-down fronts to the seat bases.

Putting the chest unit and fifth-berth on the options list allows for savings in cost and weight. This also makes the Olympus 504 one of the most versatile caravans on the market today. It looks like Bailey may have yet another success on their hands.

We like

Grade 3 thermal insulation, 10-year integrity warranty, versatile layout, great towing characteristics, snug interior

We dislike

Small main dining table, lighting to kitchen could be improved, no spotlights to rear lounge, no front access to seat lockers



Magazine rack and key hooks near the door are delightful

Our verdict

EXTERIOR 8/10

Hello Alu-Tech and its fantastic insulation properties, but goodbye barbecue point and exterior mains socket.

LOUNGING 8/10

Front sofas are 5ft 8in long, and come with a couple of additional bolster cushions.

DINING 8/10

Rear dinette is the default choice at mealtimes thanks to its fixed table. Front table is too small for five diners.

SLEEPING 7/10

Making up the beds is a cushion-shuffling job. Rear bed tapers to just 2ft 6in. Quite comfortable though.

KITCHEN 8/10

Huge sink, spacious four-burner hob, and very well-planned storage. Manual ignition to fridge.

STORAGE 7/10

Adequate for four but you'd struggle with the maximum capacity of five. No drop-down fronts to seat bases.

WASHROOM 8/10

A bit narrow and the mirror's in the wrong place, but the 'spy' window is ideal for admiring the view.

BUILD QUALITY 8/10

Our prototype model was in need of a few tweaks here and there, but inherent quality was generally of a high level.

PRACTICALITY 7/10

Ideal for a couple who might leave the front bed made up. Feels the squeeze with three or more bodies.

VALUE FOR MONEY 8/10

Super value as befits a Bailey, but competition is very stiff in this sector of the market.



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