



The Homestead

NEW

ON THE OUTSIDE

The Homestead from Cell is designed from the ground up to house the extended family while touring. At 8.5 metres (27.9ft) long, it's big enough to house the in-laws, too.

The Homestead features a smooth fibreglass body with chequer-plate skirts, smart decaling, a roll-out awning, external speakers, full-width tunnel boot and a picnic table. A slide-out kitchen complete with two-burner stove, sink and a Waeco fridge, combine to create a neat exterior package.

Mechanicals start with an I-beam frame and box section A-frame with an aluminium frame. Up front are twin 9kg gas bottles while a single battery is housed in the tunnel boot. There's a power front jack and stabilising legs. Suspension-wise, a tandem load-sharing suspension system is used, along with electric brakes, 14-inch alloy rims and 195R14C tyres.

Around the body there are a host of other features, including an external shower and several 240V and 12V plugs. Our review van was fitted with an optional rear camera system.

BIGGER THAN TEXAS

The Homestead's interior is huge with plenty of comfort and space for a family. At the front of the van to the left of the doorway is the main bedroom with a queen-size bed. Either side of the bed are wardrobes. One section of the end of the bed lifts up to provide a deep storage space; however, I found the struts were a tad light for the mattress's weight.

Across the foot of the bed is a section of wall cabinet that divides the bed from the main

living area. This unit houses a swivel panel with a TV on one side and a mirror on the other. A Jensen entertainment system is also fitted here. Curtains on either side of the cabinet slide to create privacy in the bedroom.

Down the driver's side of the van is a massive slide-out section that houses a lounge suite near the main bedroom and a club-style dinette towards the rear. This space is amazing and really opens up the inside of the van.

Opposite the slide-out is the kitchen, which features a range of appliances including a twin sink, microwave, two-door fridge and a three-burner cook top. There are a raft of cupboards and storage spaces, as well.

The ensuite room includes a screened shower cubicle, a Thetford toilet and vanity unit. This space is neat as well as practical.

Across the back of the van is the home office(!). On the passenger side of the wall are two bunks, while opposite on the lower level is a washing machine and desk. The third bunk is above the bench. A wardrobe between the bunks provides storage.

Standard features include ducted heating and cooling, curtains and blinds, carpet on the slide-out, timber trim and ply walls. Cell offers the standard appliance warranty with a two-year manufacturing warranty, plus a five-year water ingress warranty.

TOW VEHICLE

With an ATM of 3150kg and an on-the-ball weight of 220kg, you're easily into LandCruiser territory. At 8.5m long, the reversing camera is a good option to have, too. *Anthony Kilner* ADRV



MASTER CHEF And that's your secondary kitchen – for outside catering!

VERDICT

'Wow' is just one word to describe this van, inside and out. What a van to cater for a large number of people.

I spotted a few minor trim issues and the struts that hold the mattress up on the main bed aren't great.

With the ability to sleep up to nine people it will handle even the largest of families. The quality of build and appliances fitted, represents great value.

FAST FACTS

MANUFACTURER: Cell Caravans
MODEL: Shadow Cruiser, The Homestead
LENGTH: 8.50m
WIDTH: 2.29m
TRAVEL HEIGHT: 3.0m
BALL: 220kg
ATM: 3150kg
GTM: 2930kg
TARE: 2500kg
AXLE/AXLE: 3150kg

GO LARGE!

This US maker's idea of a family van resembles a small house in size...

EQUIPMENT: Extra large slide-out, indoor and outdoor kitchens, picnic table, full ensuite, external shower, Dometic ducted air conditioning and heating, Dometic electric awning, Dometic 185-litre fridge, Jensen integrated entertainment system, Suburban gas/elec HWS, Washing machine, Saturn Antenna, full LED lighting, two Kogan TVs, three bunks, Powder-coated I-beam and box steel chassis, aluminium frame, electric brakes, leaf spring suspension, electric jacking point and stabilising legs, 136l fresh water tank, 144l grey water tank, 144l black water tank, twin 9kg gas bottles and battery pack.

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