



OFF THE ROAD

Ultimate Xplor



TIME FOR THE ULTIMATE XPLORATION

When it comes to getting out in the bush and off the road the Ultimate Xplor may be perfect for you.

When a camper trailer manufacturer tosses you the keys to his latest model, the first one off the production line, and says to take it away for a few days and bring it back dirty then you know he has supreme faith in his product. With our mission confirmed we headed out with the new Ultimate Xplor and over the next few days covered several hundred kilometres around the South Coast of New South Wales. We toured some of the country's

prettiest coastline before heading out into the mountains over some rough forestry tracks and 4WD country.

It has been a couple of years since On the Road has reviewed an Ultimate Camper and over that time there has been a number of improvements to make it even more comfortable and better suited to extended free camping.

Ultimate Campers are built in Moruya on the NSW south coast and they have

a deserved reputation for their unique design, strong build and off road ability. Their yacht inspired fibreglass body sits atop a sturdy high tensile Duragal chassis on a trailing arm suspension with heavy-duty coil springs and adjustable Koni shock absorbers. Mounted on a Treg 360 degree coupling this setup provides 570mm of ground clearance and superb rough country maneuverability.

The new Xplor replaces the Elite as



an upmarket model but is a refinement in the range rather than a radical departure from the proven off roaders that have been around for the last two decades. The first thing to notice was the new colour scheme, which highlights the camper's aerodynamic lines. A lighter grey front panel more closely blends with the predominate white of the body and a new ochre blaze along the sides calls to mind the dry interior of our country that many Ultimates

will be exploring.

Also new in the Explor are a more efficient 110L compressor fridge freezer and dual 100AH AGM batteries. This combination kept our drinks and food cold over the three days we were on the road with charging from the vehicle. Other standard features include a full width front awning, a 25A DC-DC Charger and 16" brushed steel rims.

There are many options available in-

cluding solar charging and an external cooker for quick stops on the roadside.

The aerodynamic profile of the wedge-shaped body, along with a low 850kg tare weight, means that fuel economy is maximized which is important when long distances are involved. Out on the highway the camper travelled well and its well-balanced weight caused no problems. Electric brakes pulled us up quickly when needed. ▶



Queen-size bed offers plenty of comfort.

► By the time we got to our campsite at Pretty Beach on the first night it was getting towards sunset but the quick setup meant we were settled in around a fire before it got dark. The innovative design allows travellers to put in a full day on the road knowing that it's easy and fast to be ready for the night.

Once a routine is established, with two people, it takes less than five minutes to erect. (On my own I have found it takes only a few minutes longer). Because the

camper folds out to the driver's side it is important to leave about 3m of clear space on that side when parking.

With the stabilizer jacks in place, it is then simply a matter of undoing the lock-down clasps on the camper top and folding it out on gas struts to create the bed base. Next, enter the camper via the fold down steps and lift two sets of steel bows for the canvas roof and set some tension bars. Awnings can then be erected over the front and rear windows by sliding fibreglass

wands into slots in the lightweight material.

Individual single mattresses are then laid out on the bed base to make up a monster 2mx2m bed and with a doona laid out over the top it's time for sundowners. Packing up is just as quick but attention needs to be made to make sure the tent material is well inside the fibreglass shell when locking it down.

A kitchen bench along the kerb-side incorporates a two-burner gas stove, a preparation bench, a stainless steel sink



The Ultimate Xplor is easily towed on bushtracks.



The dinette and kitchen area is well appointed.

with hot water and the fridge freezer. Opposite is an L-shaped lounge with a removable table that converts the lounge into a diner. Even though the kitchen is adequate for meal preparation and there is good ventilation from the wide window over the bench, in dry weather most people would take advantage of their surroundings and cook outside, leaving the kitchen as a wet weather option or for making a quick cuppa.

Large zippered windows with screens all round the camper can be opened to allow light and air to stream inside or they can be closed down if the weather is inclement or for privacy at night. Overhead LED strip lights provide a bright working space inside and there are individual reading lamps at the bed. A Fusion CD/DVD player sends music to a pair of speakers and can also play videos on an optional screen.

At the front of the camper body is a nose cone with doors either side for easy

access to a monster 1340L storage space. It would easily store all the camping chairs and tables, cooking equipment and food needed for a couple of weeks on the road. The Xplor has an upgraded carrying capacity of 450kg - 100 more than the old model.

In the outside corners of the camper body are more sealed storage areas with the back two for general use and the front ones for gas bottles on the near side and a comprehensive electrics system on the driver side.

The second day of our trip took us into the mountains behind Moruya and down the steep decent into Bendethra Valley. Across the gravel trails the camper tracked happily behind us with no banging or lurching. Despite it being very dry along the track there was no evidence of dust under the seals of the camper top or into any of the outside storage bins.

This new model retains all the good features that make the Ultimate a popular



SPECIFICATIONS

Manufacturer: Ultimate Campers
Model: Xplor
Body Length: 3.6m
LOA: 4.25m
Width: 2m
Tare Weight: 850kg
Ball Weight: 45kg
ATM: 1300kg
Price from: \$49,950
Price as tested: \$52,535
Supplied by:
Ultimate Campers 39-41 Shelley Road,
Moruya NSW 2537
Ph (02) 4474 4410
Web: www.ultimatecampers.com.au

choice for travellers wanting to travel over rough corrugations of the outback and get into remote locations only accessible by four-wheel drive.

Our journey gave us an opportunity to see how the Xplor worked in the real world and it handled everything we threw at it without fuss. A standard package starts at \$49,950 but with the inclusion of a Fusion sound DVD/CD player and a hot water system the price as tested is \$52,535 which is good value for such a quality product with a proven off road record.

John Ford



The small size allows you to camp in remote places.