

**WALK  
THROUGH**

## **Vista RV Crossover camper**

# The best of many



**T**HE Crossover derives its name from the fact that it is not a caravan, not a camping trailer, and definitely not a tent. It takes the best features of caravans (solid cabin living and sleeping space) and camping trailers (nimbleness, compact size, lower weight) and blends them together in an innovative way. It is aimed at those who want to be able to take their accommodation anywhere that their vehicle can go, who are seeking quality workmanship, and a product that has evolved from more than

two decades of field testing, including a rolling chassis and suspension that met the demands of the Australian Army. This makes the Crossover a great performer on the freeway as well as on the toughest tracks.

Over the years I have accumulated a centre-pole heavyweight tent, a home-built flip-over camping trailer with leaf springs, a camping canopy for the small ute and a purpose-built off-road caravan. If the Crossover had been around, I might not have required all of those as it goes close to

covering the benefits they individually possess. Unless you have a Pinzgauer, the Crossover has more ground clearance than your four-wheel-drive has, is probably less than half the weight of your caravan, and is shorter in length and narrower. With a sophisticated independent suspension that permits as much as 330mm vertical travel, it handles rough terrain with ease, and doesn't throw the contents about. There's the bonus of the secure feeling provided by the solid walls, floor and roof. It's bulkier,

# worlds



scorpion-proof and doesn't fold up like a tent, but it has mod cons like a built-in radio/CD stereo and refrigerator, the efficiency of LED lighting, and fresh water from a tap over a sink. When the wind blows and the rain descends it is a decidedly better place to be than in a canvas-walled tent sitting on sodden ground.

Close inspection of the Crossover prompted me to ask where some of the parts had come from, as they were unfamiliar. Louie, the owner-manager, explained that

in early days they used parts from industry suppliers of RV spares, but there was frustration attached to that because too often the parts simply were not good enough. He now makes any component needed rather than be reliant on parts that don't meet the highest standards. In Vista RV's factory they do their own precision laser cutting of all the metal, plastics and timber components for the Crossover. This includes hinges, locker doors, latching systems, the special extruded rope track corner mould combination,

water tanks and windows. Apart from the coil springs, electrical components, some door catches and shock absorbers, all parts are made on site.

The Crossover sits on a hot-dipped galvanised chassis that is fabricated in-house. The chassis is supported by Vista RV's independent coil-based suspension and boasts 16-inch wheels on 12-inch modified for off-road electric brakes. Parallel bearings and 265/75 R16 tyres rated at 1550kg each ensure that the vehicle can competently ►



**Queen-size bed has a comfy innerspring mattress.**

▶ handle road shock and the unit's indicated 500kg payload.

Cabin construction materials include steel, fibreglass and timber. The white wall sections, fabricated in-house by Vista RV, have a laminated timber core sandwiched between fibreglass sheets that are easy to wipe clean. The walls have remarkable strength. Secured to the inside top of the walls is a folded steel member which is both the anchor point for the base of the elevating roof and a conduit for internal wiring. When the roof is lifted, the interior feels spacious and there is plenty of cross-breeze available through the screens in the pop-top sock. Because there are no internal gas appliances, venting of the cabin is not

required, and the one-piece custom entry door seals tightly with Vista RV's own compression locks.

Numerous cupboards, shelves and hide-away nooks offer lots of storage space inside the cabin, and it is pleasing to see that the wiring and plumbing have been carried out with more than usual care – they do not intrude into precious cupboard space, but are tucked well away. Unique European high-intensity LED lighting bubbles do a good job of placing light where it is needed and keeping electrical consumption to a minimum. Several large and smaller dust-sealed external lockers provide spaces for a generator, tools, and camping gear. Long items will slide in alongside the pull-out

**The Crossover's at home in rough terrain with its independent suspension.**



**Exterior roll-out kitchen (top). Inside the cabin is a number of cupboards and shelves for storage.**

kitchen. Demonstrating the hands-on experience of the design and build team, the storage wells for the jerry cans and gas bottles would defeat all potential fuel thieves except those carrying industrial metal-cutting equipment.

There will be some potential buyers who are not attracted to the Crossover, but this will be due to their inexperience. It seems the buyers seeking a Crossover are those who have had one or two other rigs and have learned that shortcuts can become problematic when the pressure is on, and they have learned enough to appreciate the attention to detail represented in the Crossover. A degree of customising is possible when ordering a Crossover, and Vista RV can call on their off-roading experience to advise clients. They openly admit that as new materials come on the scene further evolution is likely. Meantime, if you are seeking something in between a caravan and a tent, then the Vista RV Crossover is worth considering.

**Lloyd Junor**

## SPECIFICATIONS

**Manufacturer:** Vista RV  
**Model:** Crossover  
**Tare weight:** 1150kg  
**Brakes:** 12-inch off-road electric  
**Water:** 87-litre water tank standard  
**Priced from:** \$53,890  
**Contact:** Vista RV, 23C Jersey Road, Bayswater, Vic. (03) 9729 1234,