



The Plateau

Ascend to the Top

story by Charles Renny, photography by DHS Communications

The latest in a series of van motorhomes from Pleasure-Way Industries is the Plateau. Based on the new Dodge Sprinter, which in turn is built by the Mercedes-Benz arm of Daimler-Chrysler, Pleasure-Way has added its own distinctive touch of craftsmanship. You know this is true because Mercedes doesn't let just anyone mess about with "their" van.

When Pleasure-Way invited me to look at the prototype of their newest van conversion, I was a bit skeptical. Automotive prototypes I have driven in the past always came with excuses about why things didn't work and how the fit and finish weren't up to production standards. That's not what "prototype" means to Pleasure-Way. In theirs, everything worked. If there was a flaw in the fit and finish, I couldn't find it – and I've had practice looking.

As conversions go, the Plateau is a bit narrower than most (it is European in design after all). You notice, kind of, but the maple cabinets keep the interior feeling light and spacious. And it makes up for less width by having more useable space behind the front seats.

The list of standard items reads like a luxury hotel room. Items we take for granted, such as interior and exterior showers, and a flush toilet. Detectors for propane, carbon monoxide and smoke are standard, as are a fridge, stove and microwave.

In fact, so much is standard on the Plateau that the option list is quite short. You can upgrade the entertainment system to a DVD/LCD theatre package, add a propane powered Onan generator and roof air, or get a coffee maker and an awning.

Getting in and out of the Plateau is easy, but a bit different than most conversions. Up front, the doors open wide and there is enough space behind the wheel to find a comfortable driving position, as long as you like a more up right seating position than commercial vehicles and Class A motor homes tend to use. Around the side, the door slides open and you can step right in without hunching over. You can come out the same way. Try that with a conventional van!





**COVER-TITE
ROOFING LTD.**

MOST REFERRED...MOST PREFERRED...

Residential...Commercial...Industrial...

www.covertiteroofing.com

306-222-6302

SASKATOON INN

HOTEL AND CONFERENCE CENTRE

LIFE
IS FUN
EAT
IT UP

botanica



SPRING

in your

spirit

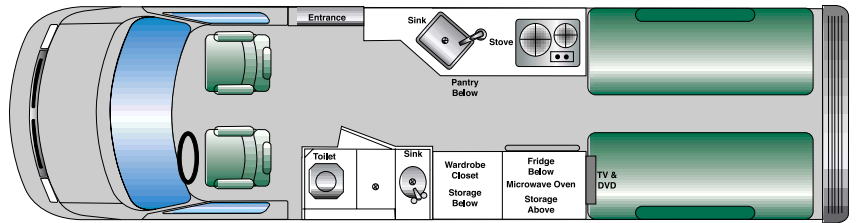
èspirita
salon & spa

hair . body . skin . nails

978.7298

varsity common - 8th street & cumberland

My next step was to take this tall, flat walled conversion out on the road. I figured that with a 2.7 litre turbo diesel it would be a touch sluggish getting up to road speed. Wrong! Due to a fat and nearly flat torque curve, acceleration was brisk and I had no trouble on freeway onramps getting up to speed. In fact, the problem was that the Plateau felt very comfortable running between 100 and 130 kph. Good advice would be to use the cruise control on the open road.



The next concern with many conversions is handling. Two different cultures come into play on this issue. First off, the suspension engineers have to design a system that can handle and control a large range of weights. They have done this. The Plateau goes down the highway with little bounce, jounce or rebound (a fancy way of saying well-controlled and smooth). Pleasure-Way engineers have done their part by keeping the added mass of the conversion to a minimum and as low in the chassis as possible, and accessibility to all components is still first class.

The end result is much better than you would ever imagine. Part of my time behind the wheel was spent in a 30 to 50 kph side wind. As you would expect, there was a tendency to move about. I had to keep a few degrees of steering in, just to stay in my lane. What I didn't expect was that when wind came off a passing semi, I didn't feel like I was going to slam into the next lane or that the vehicle

would fall over. I couldn't relax totally, but it was certainly a confidence builder for driving in poor weather.

Pleasure-Way has an agreement with Mercedes not to change any mechanical component or to make changes from the back of the front seats forward. In return, Mercedes provides a three year limited warranty (up to seven year on some power train components). Add in Pleasure-Way's own three year

limited warranty on the conversion, and you have a new Plateau in van motorhomes. 🍀

MY TRAVEL



**Providing travel services
for hunters and fishermen
to eco-adventure destinations**

My Travel Sinfonia is one of Saskatchewan's oldest and most reputable agencies.

We have been helping outdoorsmen get to the fishing or hunting lodge of their choice for more than 45 years.

My Travel Sinfonia has negotiated special airfares through Northwest Airlines and Air Canada as low as \$267.00 USD that offer unique advantages to hunters and fishermen.

Just one call does it all, we look after all of your air travel, car rental and hotel accommodations.

Ask us about our "Outfitter Incentive Program."

Saskatoon -/M/ Karen Gruza

1 877 721 4044

Email - karen.gruza@mytravel.ca

Regina -/M/ Jane Maler

1 800 727 2804

Email - jane.maler@mytravel.ca

North Battleford -/M/ Cathy Northcott

1 800 667 7293

Email - cathy.northcott@mytravel.ca

Call one of your **MY TRAVEL** "Outfitter Specialists"