



GOOD TO GO

Hit the highway with Royal Flair's new Promenade.



We're inundated by choice in this modern age, and that's not always a good thing. Anyone who's bought a new caravan in recent times will remember all too well the sheer number of decisions the purchase most likely involved, from the floorplan to the specification of the appliances to the choice of interior fabrics.

Now don't get me wrong, for many seasoned caravanners this process is nothing short of being a sheer pleasure, but for those settling out in the caravan world – or those who just want to be done with the process so they can hit the road as soon as possible – wading through a weighty list of options can be time consuming at best, and at worst downright bewildering.

Melbourne-based manufacturer Royal Flair has acknowledged this with its latest creation, the Promenade, and while the family-owned and run company already boasts a large range of ready-to-customise caravans, the Promenade is pretty much a 'what you see is what you get' affair.

Sure, you still need to choose from a variety of floorplans and you can choose from a variety of interior decor

schemes, but that aside it's already got just about everything the average caravanner could ever want. As Bill Deralas, Royal Flair's managing director, says, "It's got a heap of stuff as standard, so you can hit the road and go."

Royal Flair dates all the way back to 1975, when Bill's father got the ball rolling. And with its range of models manufactured at its facility in the northern Melbourne suburb of Campbellfield, Royal Flair has been a mainstay of the caravan industry ever since. It's not a high volume manufacturer, but it prides itself on its commitment to rugged construction, attention to detail and simply delivering a personalised service – an area in which smaller concerns can have a real strength.

SOLID PERFORMANCE

Royal Flair has made a name for itself with its tough construction methods, and the Promenade is no different. Built on a 4in SupaGal chassis, the model has a one-piece galvanised floor and a meranti timber frame. Twin-leaf-springs with shock absorbers handle the bumps, while galvanised sheeting protects the fresh water tanks.



Left: The hassle-free Promenade has twin-leaf-spring suspension with shock absorbers and is built on a 4in SupaGal chassis.



Our 21ft (6.6m) review Promenade sleeps two and is a shower model, so comes with a hot water system. There's also a 2.2kg Lemaire washing machine.

Stepping through the mid nearside Camec triple-locker door, you're greeted by an open and exceptionally light-filled layout, with a plush four-seater dinette opposite you and the kitchen on your right.

There's no oven, but you do get a Spinflo four-burner cooktop (three gas, one electric) and grill, with a Swift rangehood and light overhead. Next to the cooktop is an angled sink/drainage with water filter and flick-mix tap, with a large cupboard below and a Sanyo microwave at head height. A full stainless

From top: Slimline venetians dress expansive windows; the LCD TV fits to an adjustable arm; hard wearing Laminex DiamondGloss is used for the benchtops. **Opposite:** The offside dinette will seat four adults.



steel splashback surrounds the kitchen, the top of which is bordered nicely with timber trim. Opposite the microwave is a sizeable 120L Dometic three-way fridge/freezer, and above that is more benchtop space and the DNA MP3/DVD/CD entertainment system, the latter's output being piped through speakers located in the bedroom and in the living area.

There is plenty of storage space here, with quality roll-out drawers, various cupboards and gas-strut overhead lockers – several feature a frosted leadlight-type facade, which may or may not push your buttons, likewise the classically styled clock mounted above the bed.

Speaking of pushing buttons, all the drawers and cupboard doors are secured with a quality pushbutton opening and locking system, and their easy-to-clean poly finish exterior is complemented nicely by veneered timber trim.

The dark marble-look benchtops



have been finished in a new material from Laminex called DiamondGloss, which is shiny but apparently harder wearing and more scratch resistant than previous finishes, and once again these are finished off with timber trim.

A concertina door separates the kitchen from the rear ensuite, and here you'll find just about everything you'll need on an extended trip. The full fibreglass shower module on the nearside features an opaque perspex screen door, a 12V fan/hatch and an interior light. The Thetford toilet sits on the offside and, along the rear of the van, there are lots of storage cupboards, vanity mirrors, a basin with flick-mix tap, a toiletries rack, and that nicely concealed washing machine.

YEAR-ROUND COMFORT

That leaves the bedroom at the front of the Promenade, with a sumptuous pillowtop innerspring island queen-size bed, hanging wardrobes and cupboards either side, and a large compartmentalised storage area underneath. The slat base is extendable, too, so you can fit a longer mattress if required.

The bedroom in particular is filled with natural light

courtesy of two double Galaxy windows on either side (with venetian blinds and timber pelmets), a third window across the front (with the same) and a Dometic hatch directly overhead.

Next to this hatch you'll find a pressure hatch to prevent the induction of dust when on the move, while at the foot of the bed on the nearside is a 17in LCD television on an extendable arm.

Lighting comes care of a mixture of round fluorescent and small halogen light fittings, while a single deep-cycle 100Ah battery with SmartCharger lends a hand to the 12/240V power system. There are single powerpoints either side of the bed, with another for the TV, two double powerpoints in the main living area, and a double in the bathroom.

One particularly nice standard feature is the Aircommand Cormorant reverse cycle air-conditioning system, which will certainly take the sting out of our northern summers or southern winters.

Outside the Promenade you'll find all the regular features: quick drop jacks, looped bumper bar with spare wheel, Winegard antenna, A&E

Royal Flair Caravans



Australia's No 1
Royal Flair Dealer

GRANT
TOURER
Designer Series
by Creative Caravans



Great Prices
& Top Deals

Check out Ian's prices before purchasing any of the above, you could save thousands!



www.iangrantscaravans.com.au

Princess Highway, Traralgon West VIC 3884

PH 0351 741 381

FAX 0351 748 987



Clockwise from above: There's a stainless steel splashback in the bathroom; the boot contains the SmartCharger and 100Ah battery; an A&E awning is standard.

awning, two external lights, illuminated grab handle and an external powerpoint.

On the drawbar you'll find twin 4.5kg gas bottles, a tap and a Breaksafe breakaway switch, with a gal-lined boot housing the battery and SmartCharger, while leaving room for plenty of other odds and ends. The padded pebbleguard will keep stone chips at bay.

A traditional aluminium cladding has been utilised, and the twin 2in heavy duty axles are fitted with classy 14in alloy wheels. Braking is handled by 10in electric brakes all round.

With a nameplate ATM of 2442kg and a Tare of 2042kg, we're pretty much in mid-size 4WD territory here – our tow vehicle on this particular test, a Ford F250, made light work of hauling the Promenade.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Royal Flair's concept of creating an 'off the rack' model to complement its other highly customisable offerings is a solid one, and in the Promenade it has created a classy caravan that's as welcoming as it is well built.

All the big features are there and at

a realistic price, too, meaning you can spend more time on the road and less time swamped by brochures and lists of options.

A quality feel is prevalent throughout the Promenade, and the living space is both inviting and packed with practical features. If you're a couple looking for a hassle-free van to keep you comfortable for weeks or months on the road, you would be well advised to inspect this offering from Royal Flair's latest.

Ian Grant's Caravans, Princess Highway, Traralgon West, Vic 3884, www.iangrantscaravans.com.au, (03) 5174 1381.

For more information, including your nearest dealer, contact Royal Flair, www.royalflair.com.au, (03) 9357 8118.



Royal Flair Promenade

External length 21ft (6.6m)
External width 7ft 9in (2.4m)
Nameplate ATM 2442kg
Nameplate Tare 2042kg
Towball weight 250kg
Chassis 4in SupaGal
Suspension (as shown) Leaf-spring with shock absorbers
Frame Meranti timber
Cooktop Spinflo four-burner
Fridge Dometic 120L three-way
Microwave Sanyo
Gas supply 2 x 4.5kg
Lighting 12V
Hot water Suburban 240V (shower models only)
Fresh water 2 x 95L
Price (as reviewed) \$55,990, (range starts at \$34,899)

liked

- The abundance of natural light
- The long list of standard features
- The open layout

I would have liked

- A little more space in the bathroom – bigger people will find the toilet somewhat cramped

floorplan

