

# Best of both worlds

“Winnebago’s Iluka is an interesting contrast to the plethora of European-built motorhomes currently available in NZ”



Images by Malcolm Street

From the front, the Iluka is quite an impressive-looking motorhome

## Malcolm Street takes a look at the new Iluka from Winnebago

If there's a name that has come to be synonymous with the motorhome industry, then it has to be Winnebago. Those not in the know tend to use it as a generic for all motorhomes but the more knowledgeable know that Winnebago is one of the largest US RV manufacturers.

The manufacturer (part of the Apollo group) in Australia builds motorhomes and caravans under the Winnebago name but that is about as far as it goes, the only connection being the name. There is little US design influence, which is why a Winnebago model like the Iluka has a mostly Australian look about it and an Iveco Daily cab chassis underneath, rather than a US orientated power plant.

Imported into New Zealand by Blenheim-based DeLuxe Group, Winnebago offers a range of layouts and the Iluka, named after a coastal town in New South Wales in case you are wondering, is one of the latest designs. The Iveco Daily is used for good reason. Not only does it come with the three-litre 125kw/430Nm turbo diesel coupled to Iveco's eight-speed automatic gearbox but it also has rated 5200kg GVM. The tare mass of 3900kg gives an excellent payload of 1300kg. Still, on weight, the Iveco does have a GCM of 8700kg, which gives it a very good towing capacity.

### BODY CONSTRUCTION

Measuring 7900mm in length, the Iluka is a C-class unit, that is, has a Luton peak. Body construction is all fibreglass—composite sandwich for the walls and mouldings for the front and rear. Double glazed, acrylic awning-style Mobicool windows are fitted all round, and the entry door is a Dometic security type with the egg timer shaped glass insert. It's not shown in the photos but a Kiwisat automatic aerial is supplied as standard. Other external features include the awning, gas bayonet connection, and external shower.

Apart from the nearside gas cylinder bin and toilet cassette, there are two storage bins—a smaller one mid-offside and tunnel storage across the rear. A little surprisingly, given the payload capacity, it's not as large as the 'garages' seen on some European motorhomes but certainly has enough capacity for all the camping essentials. ▶▶



Up front, the lounge/dining area will seat four to six people without too much trouble

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The L-shaped kitchen offers all the expected facilities



An induction type hob is something new but gas burners are more familiar



Rear bedroom area has plenty of cupboard space and window area



Rear tunnel storage is accessible from both sides

### STEPPING ABOARD

Electric steps to the Iluka's interior are a handy feature given the height of the habitation door off the ground, and, once inside, the island bed layout is revealed. In good old Euro truck fashion, the cab seats swivel around and mesh in neatly with the side-facing lounges behind the driver's cab. Located mid-station is the kitchen area, leaving the rear area for a split bathroom and rear bedroom. A beige/white/light brown colour scheme, along with a large window area, makes for a bright and breezy interior. Colour options are available for upholstery and bench and table tops.

### LOUNGING

Starting at the front, the lounge can seat six people around the table without too much of a problem. Mounted on a sturdy pole, the table is offset to the right

just to make getting past it is easy. It's fitted on an every-which-way mounting to make sliding it around easy, but it does sit slightly away from the nearside seat.

Above the cab seats, the 2200mm x 1350mm Luton bed has a reasonable ceiling height. For some reason, Winnebago, unlike just about everyone else in the motorhome industry, fits a fixed bed instead of one that can be lifted out of the way when not wanted. That does cramp the front area a bit as well as presenting the risk of head contact when sitting down or standing up.

### KITCHEN FACILITIES

Taking a hint from the Euros, the L-shaped kitchen neatly incorporates a round stainless steel and a Thetford hybrid hob, which combines an induction heater and two gas burners. Under the bench, in addition to the Spinflo grill, is a drawer, a wire basket pantry, and a roller shutter door cupboard. In the air space above are two overhead lockers.

Facing the kitchen bench is a multifunction cabinet built around the Dometic 190-litre fridge, with an LG microwave oven above. In addition, it's a mounting panel for the BMAPRO battery management panel, Truma hot water heater switch, main 230-volt ACB, Fusion radio, and flat-screen TV. There is also a waist-high cabinet in the doorway with some handy shelf and drawer/cupboard space. The 230-volt double power point

### Specifications

<b>Vehicle make/model</b>	Winnebago Iluka
<b>Engine</b>	3L turbo diesel
<b>Transmission</b>	8-speed AMT
<b>Berths</b>	4
<b>Approx. overall length</b>	7900mm
<b>Approx. overall width</b>	2450mm
<b>Tanks</b>	150L fresh 100L grey
<b>Gas</b>	2 x 9kg
<b>GVM</b>	5200kg
<b>Price (as reviewed)</b>	\$000,000

is handy for charging portable devices but a 12-volt/5-volt USB socket would also be useful.

### WASHROOM

Split bathrooms seem to be something of a trend in motorhomes, and I reckon they are a nice little space economiser as this one is. Looking stylish is the curved door nearside shower cubicle with a 'tiled' finish and some clever interior lighting. On the opposite side, the toilet cubicle comes with a Dometic cassette loo, a vanity washbasin, and several cupboards. It can be closed off with a roller shutter door, which does minimise the hinged door opening space.

### REAR BEDROOM

All round windows and a big roof hatch make the bedroom area seem to be a whole lot bigger than it really is, which is good because the 1850mm x 1530mm island bed does take up a fair

The Iluka is well up there in terms of the specifications and features that it offers

bit of space. There is walking space all round and the bedhead is nicely fitted out with overhead lockers, wardrobes, and bedside cabinets. Of note are the pillow side compartments at the base of the wardrobes and the flat-screen TV mounted outside the bathroom cubicle.

## FREEDOM CAMPING

The Iluka has been up spec'd a bit by DeLuxe Group, so it comes with a 150-litre fresh water tank, two 100AH deep cycle batteries, 150-watt of solar power for extended camping, sans mains power. On the entertainment front, the Kiwisat automatic satellite dish will be a handy provision. One of my favourite radio systems, a Fusion, is fitted with both external and internal speakers. For device charging, USB sockets are located in the bedroom, bathroom, and lounge

## ON THE ROAD

Being heavier and larger than its Italian stablemate, the Fiat Ducato, the Iveco is quite a stable driving platform. Slightly more truck like, it's still an easy motorhome to drive. Certainly, the eight-speed automatic gearbox is a smooth performer and very responsive in tandem with the single turbo diesel engine. Anyone who wants a bit more grunt, will have to order the twin turbo 150kW (205hp) engine.

## VERDICT

Winnebago's Iluka is an interesting contrast to the plethora of European-built motorhomes currently available in New Zealand. It's slightly less sophisticated but, generally speaking, offers more interior space in a heavier vehicle and is certainly well up there in terms of the specifications and features that it offers. Not a bad prospect for two people who are considering long-term touring and even better if they are considering occasional travelling guests. ■

**For more information, contact DeLuxe Group Limited on 03 578 3310 or visit [deluxegroup.co.nz](http://deluxegroup.co.nz).**



- Spacious interior
- Good load capacity
- Kitchen layout
- Bathroom facilities



- Fixed bed above driver's cab
- External bin capacity
- Offset dinette table



The rounded shower cubicle looks quite classy



The fridge/microwave cabinet is next to the control panel electrics, TV mounting, and Fusion radio



Bathroom roller shutter doors are a great idea that doesn't require extra door opening space



Driving the Iveco Daily is quite easy, despite the size of the vehicle



Two gas cylinders are supplied as standard



Offside bin handy for wet items such as hoses