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REVIEW

SUNCAMPER CONQUEROR 3.0

COMBINING THE RUGGED ACCESSIBILITY OF A FOUR-WHEEL DRIVE WITH THE COMFORT OF A COMPACT MOTORHOME, THE NEW SUNCAMPER CONQUEROR 3.0 IS BUILT FOR OFF-ROAD ADVENTURE, WRITES MALCOLM STREET.

PICS MALCOLM STREET



A few years ago, Sydney based Suncamper introduced its specialist off-road motorhome, the Conqueror. Based on either a Toyota HiLux or a Ford Ranger, the motorhome created a great deal of interest. Suncamper hasn't been resting on its laurels since, with the introduction of the Conqueror 3.0, a purpose-designed off-grid camper.

Suncamper has pushed the boundaries with this latest iteration, using a Ford Ranger Super Duty base vehicle. It comes with some impressive statistics like a 154kW/600Nm V6 turbo-diesel engine, coupled to a 10-speed automatic gearbox. With permanent four-wheel drive, the Conqueror 3.0 is designed to handle rugged terrain, whilst maintaining comfort. A GVM of 4,500kg (3,800kg tare) with a matched 4,500kg towing capacity provides impressive payload (700kg) and pull. A benefit of the wider track of the Super Duty is that it expands the internal width considerably which makes a surprising difference inside.

Suncamper head honcho Cam Harrison and his team worked closely with Ford Australia to ensure that the factory electrics, including features like the 360-degree camera and radar sensors, worked seamlessly with the motorhome conversion. That's vital for safety, and on my test drive everything seemed to work as it should.

ON THE ROAD

Behind the wheel, the Ford Ranger Super Duty is very much the contemporary vehicle. Mounted in the centre of the dashboard is an intuitive 12in infotainment screen, easily pairable with a phone via Bluetooth. Old-school drivers will be pleased to know that the air-conditioner controls are still real knobs, mounted below the screen.

Once away from Sydney's traffic, the 3.0-litre V6 turbo-diesel engine responded well to the right foot. On hilly terrain around Windsor, the 10-speed automatic gearbox performed seamlessly, and there was never any hesitation shifting between gears.

STRUCTURE

For the base vehicle, Ford has done a fair bit of work to ensure that the Super Duty is a cut above the average ute in terms of both strength and load-carrying capacity. For instance, the ladder chassis uses a thicker, reinforced steel. The suspension arms are not folded steel but cast aluminium, and the rear differential is from a Ford Transit but upgraded, as are the drive shafts. I mention all this because these features are a good match for something like the Conqueror 3.0.

Suncamper has done its bit too. The timberless body includes a one-piece roof, insulated panels and aluminium and composite construction. Inside, double-locking internal cabinetry is a notable feature. Outside, the Conqueror features distinctive brush bar protection on the top, front and rear, a Fiamma F45 awning, exterior spot and utility lights, an outdoor shower and picnic table.



STORAGE CAPABILITY

Motorhomes of this size often have limited external storage capacity, but the Suncamper team has clearly been a bit creative with the Conqueror 3.0. There are storage bins on either side, plus two on the offside for essential utilities - the batteries and battery management system hardware in one, and the water tank fillers and outdoor shower in the other. The storage bins have enough capacity for essentials like power leads, water hoses and camping chairs. The toilet cassette hatch is hidden at the back in the nearside bin. On the opposite side, a second bin has both external and internal access.

INTERIOR COMFORTS

Because the Conqueror 3.0 sits higher than most motorhomes, there's a double electric step for climbing aboard. Anyone expecting the usual layout in a ute-based motorhome will get a surprise. There are a few hidden features but I'll get to those shortly. Conventionally though, there's a bed over the driver's cab. The offside lounge faces the kitchen, while the not-quite-full-width bathroom is across the rear. Teak-coloured cabinetry and strip lighting keep the interior bright, and large windows on both sides ensure there's plenty of natural light. Like most motorhomes of this style, there is only a small crawl-through to the front cab.



BED CHOICE

Most cabover motorhomes this size come with an east-west bed. However, Suncamper offers a choice of three configurations. The first, found in my review motorhome, is a north-south queen bed measuring 1.9m x 1.35m (6ft 3in x 4ft 5in). The second alternative is a north-south twin-single bed configuration (1.9m/6ft 3in x 0.8m/2ft 7in). The third option is a conventional east-west bed with a longer and wider profile (2.15m/7ft 1in x 1.5m/5ft). The bed lengths for the north-south arrangement are achieved by having a base that extends into the living area at night. It's a compromise that those who prefer a north-south bed layout might be happy to make.

Ceiling reading lights are located on either side and are positioned to suit the chosen bed arrangement. Similarly, storage cabinetry can be added depending on the bed configuration: down the sides for a north-south queen, in the middle for single beds, and at the bedhead for an east-west setup.



CATERING

The Conqueror 3.0 kitchen bench ticks quite a few boxes. On first glance, it looks like a simple fit-out. On the bench there are a Westinghouse induction hob and a square sink with a glass lid but no drainer. This does free up a reasonable amount of benchtop space. There's a generous amount of drawer and cupboard storage, plus, at the doorway end, a slide-out pantry with more benchtop space and two spacious shelves, which are accessible from inside and outside the motorhome. An option with this model is to replace the slide-out pantry with a 55-litre drinks fridge which, like the pantry, is accessible from both sides. Above the kitchen bench, the overhead lockers all have two shelves. Opposite is a 152-litre Thetford fridge.

The microwave is cleverly concealed on a slide-out cabinet at the end of the kitchen bench. And it's not just a microwave but griller and air fryer as well. What more can you want? A major benefit of this arrangement is that it's set at a user-friendly height. Other RV manufacturers take note; it can be done!



AMENITIES

Which brings us to the bathroom in the rear. It's a dry setup, with a shower cubicle in the offside corner and a Thetford cassette mid station. There's an option here too, either the traditional cassette toilet or a composting unit (Thetford Separation Toilet), which is fitted to this motorhome. There isn't a vanity cabinet as such but there's an Italian-designed fold-down wash basin in the shower cubicle and a two-shelf cupboard above the loo.

GETTING OFF GRID

In its base form, the Conqueror comes with 140 litres of fresh water and an 80-litre drinking water tank. The grey tank is just 43 litres. There's an impressive electrical setup, with a 600Ah lithium LiFePO4 battery, 850W of solar and a 3,000W inverter. Just in case that's not enough, all are upgradeable.

THE BOTTOM LINE

The Conqueror is an impressive motorhome and the Suncamper team has added some useful design features, which other manufacturers are sure to follow. Anyone familiar with the Suncamper's Conqueror range will know that it's not a budget motorhome. Indeed, my review model tipped the scales at just over \$300,000. However, the benefits are reflected in the price tag. It's designed as a go-anywhere motorhome with all the comforts, including the ability to stay off-grid for several days.

Supplied by
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SUNCAMPER CONQUEROR 3.0

SPECIFICATIONS

VEHICLE

MANUFACTURER Suncamper
MODEL Conqueror 3.0
BASE VEHICLE Ford Ranger Super Duty 4X4
TARE WEIGHT 3,800kg
GVM 4,500kg
LICENCE Car
PASSENGERS 2

MECHANICAL

ENGINE 3.0-litre V6 turbo diesel
POWER 154kW @ 3250rpm
TORQUE 600Nm @ 1750rpm
GEARBOX 10-speed automatic
BRAKES ABS disc

DIMENSIONS

EXTERNAL LENGTH 5.85m
EXTERNAL WIDTH 2.3m
EXTERNAL HEIGHT 3.35m
INTERNAL HEIGHT 1.95m
BED SIZE (NORTH SOUTH) 1.98m x 1.52m

EQUIPMENT

COOKTOP Westinghouse induction
FRIDGE Thetford 152L compressor
MICROWAVE OVEN Camec
LIGHTING 12V LED
BATTERIES 600Ah Victron Lithium
SOLAR PANELS 850W
INVERTER 5,000W
AIR CONDITIONER Houghton Belaire 2400E
TOILET Thetford Separation
SHOWER Separate cubicle
HOT WATER HEATER Autoterm diesel/240V
HEATER Autoterm diesel/240V
WATER TANK 140L
DRINKING WATER 80L
GREY TANK 43L
GAS CYLINDERS No

PRICE: \$301,500 (AS VIEWED)

OPTIONS

5,000W INVERTER
THETFORD COMPOSTING TOILET

