

Motoring Myles

Paul Myles' weekly look at what's hot

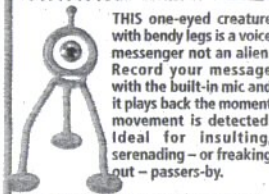
on the road

Gadgets & Stuff

JENNIFER KYTE picks the best of the new high-tech products

Say that again

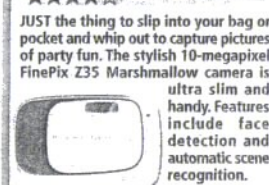
Echo Bot
www.trebox.com
★★★★★ **£7.95**



THIS one-eyed creature with bendy legs is a voice messenger not an alien. Record your message with the built-in mic and it plays back the moment movement is detected. Ideal for insulting, serenading – or freaking out – passers-by.

Tasty party pix

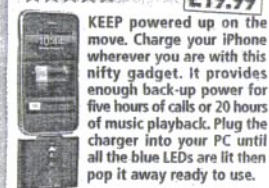
Fujifilm Z35 Marshmallow
www.comet.co.uk
★★★★★ **£129.97**



JUST the thing to slip into your bag or pocket and whip out to capture pictures of party fun. The stylish 10-megapixel FinePix Z35 Marshmallow camera is ultra slim and handy. Features include face detection and automatic scene recognition.

Power ranger

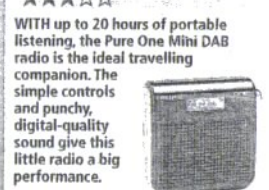
Portable iPhone charger
www.watthealthouse.com
★★★★★ **£19.99**



KEEP powered up on the move. Charge your iPhone wherever you are with this nifty gadget. It provides enough back-up power for five hours of calls or 20 hours of music playback. Plug the charger into your PC until all the blue LEDs are lit then pop it away ready to use.

Just fab for DAB

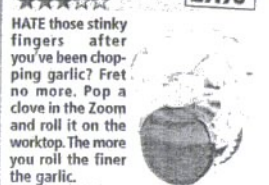
Pure One Mini
www.zamet.co.uk
★★★★★ **£39.08**



WITH up to 20 hours of portable listening, the Pure One Mini DAB radio is the ideal travelling companion. The simple controls and punchy, digital-quality sound give this little radio a big performance.

Clove the deal

Garlic Zoom
www.fibrew.com
★★★★★ **£7.95**



HATE those stinky fingers after you've been chopping garlic? Fret no more. Pop a clove in the Zoom and roll it on the worktop. The more you roll the finer the garlic.

ROAD AHEAD

NEW MOTORHOMES ARE A DREAM TO DRIVE

CARRYING a home on your back often used to mean the driver ended up feeling like a petrol-powered snail.

But the new generation of motorhomes have changed all that and, like the SEA Newlife 48 I tested, bring enjoyment back into the equation as well as providing truly huge living accommodation.

The Newlife is based on the superb Fiat Ducato 130 Multijet van and boasts all the power you could want for high-speed, high-mileage touring work.

The eager 2.3 turbo-diesel engine puts out 130bhp with, more importantly, 295ft-lbs of torque for pulling. Anyone who has ever driven a van will find virtually no performance difference with this well-balanced chassis.

The driver's instruments display a comprehensive range of information, including trip averages, range and fuel consumption although, even at the brightest setting, they are a bit difficult to read.

Even novices will soon find the



SPACE AGE: Accommodation is huge drive safe and dependable – high motorway speeds are no problem.

Yet the efficiencies of the modern Fiat motor mean that fuel consumption in a mix of motorway and city work comes out at 23mpg – impressive for such a big beast.

And big the 48 certainly is, boasting up to seven beds. The interior seating and bed platforms can be arranged in minutes

and still allow for four passengers to be strapped in the back during trips.

Creature comforts are also well catered for. A fridge using gas, mains or van electrics means all your foods keep chilled even on the move.

The rear-located loo and shower were space-saver items but big enough and well kitted out. Fabrics hark back to the 80s but, hey, aren't they back in vogue?

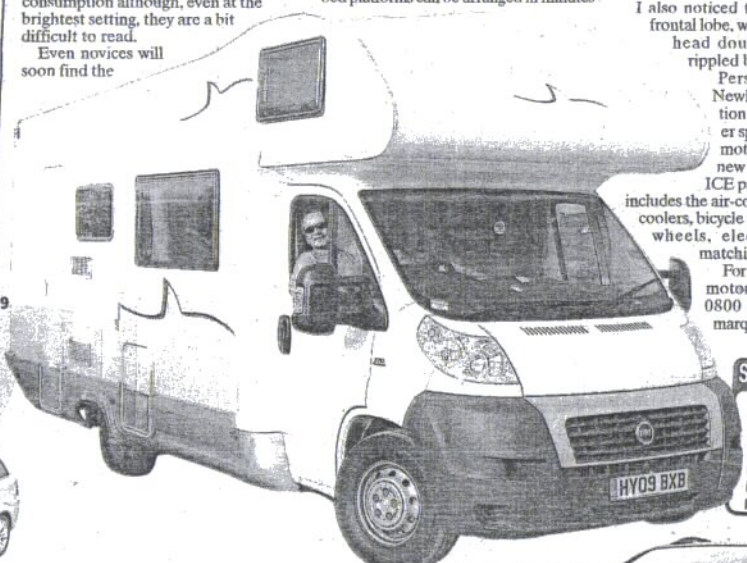
Gas-powered heating on our test van is augmented by a roof-mounted Dometic air-conditioning unit although this only operates on mains electricity and, with no air-con in the driver's cab, long trips in hot climes can be a bit sweaty.

And here's the point – at just £37,495 on the road, the 48 is a whole lot of motorhome for your money so there will be some cost corners cut. Examples include a flimsy fly screen on the main van door and a button on the air-con unit – both of which broke during the test.

I also noticed that the skin on the frontal lobe, which houses the overhead double bed, had been ripped by air blast alone.

Personally, I think the Newlife's main competition will come from higher-spec low-mileage used motorhomes. But buying new comes with the free ICE pack worth £2,500 and includes the air-con, beer keg and wine coolers, bicycle rack, oven/grill, alloy wheels, electric mirrors and matching seat covers.

For details on this or other motorhomes call free on 0800 026 7777 or www.marquismotorhomes.co.uk



SEA Newlife 48

Engine: 2.3 TDi
Power: 130bhp
Top Speed: 100mph
0-60mph: 16secs (approx)
Economy: 23mpg
Insurance: 12A
Price: £37,495

AUCTIONWATCH

Big deal on little runner

MORE buyers are seeking great buys at auction so we've teamed up with British Car Auctions to bring you the best deal spotted at one of their 21 auction houses throughout the country.

This week a Toyota Yaris Verso 1.3GLS VVTi five-door manual estate with 73,000 miles clocked sold at the Brighthouse sale rooms for £2,400, saving more than £1,000 on regular dealer forecourt prices.

To find your nearest BCA sale rooms call 0845 6006644 or go to www.britishcarauctions.co.uk

STAR BUY
LOTS of space but not lots of cash with this Vauxhall Zafira 1.9 CDTi five-door manual MPV on a 57 plate with just 14,986 miles recorded. It's £10,999 – saving £10k+ on new. Features include ABS, air-con, alloy wheels, CD, central locking and metallic paint. Visit www.motorpoint.co.uk or call 0845 4133000.



I'M COMPLETELY CAPTIVA-TED

IT IS a basic truth that anything with a name linked to the US should be big – yet the only imported Chevrolet that fills that brief is the Captiva 4x4.

But you'd be making a big mistake if you dismiss this as a Stateside gas-guzzler that will cost the equivalent of a Wall Street bank bonus and take your own personal oil well to run.

Because, despite being a full-sized family SUV, the special-edition Ikon Captiva hits the bank balance for just £16,995 despite boasting some £3,000

worth of extras thrown in totally free. And, thanks to a keen but frugal 2.0 turbo diesel engine, the running costs of a claimed 38mpg shouldn't give you many sleepless nights either.

Old worries about American build quality can also be put to bed with the Captiva, which is built in South Korea and is pleasantly solid and rattle-free.

While this large car feels tough, there is nothing hard about driving it as the steering and gearbox are both light and positive and the brakes reassuringly

powerful when you need to avoid that tractor that's trimming the hawthorn hedges.

Inside, the space is cavernous with plenty of storage holders and cubby holes. Standard kit includes air-con, electric windows, steering wheel controls plus styling add-ons like alloy wheels, privacy glass and chrome tailpipes. And, unlike some other cars I



could mention, don't be put off by those oversize hoops – the Captiva's suspension copes well with the thinner rubber.

A big solid workhorse from the big country that won't have your bank manager screaming for another bail-out.

Read Paul's columns online at our website www.people.co.uk