



Specifications

Manufacturer . . . Airstream, 419 W. Pike St., Jackson Center, OH 45334; (513) 596-6111

Model tested . . . 36-foot Land Yacht

Chassis manufacturer . . . Chevrolet

Engine . . . 454-cid, V-8

Transmission . . . three-speed automatic

Axle ratio . . . 4.10:1

Tire size . . . 8R x 19.5 Michelin radials

Wheelbase . . . 208 inches

Brakes . . . front disc, rear drum

Suspension . . . rear Henschen CMA tag axle system with air bags

Cooling system . . . heavy duty

Fuel capacity . . . 80 gallons

Fuel consumption . . . 7.06 mpg (recorded at 60 mph, 3,000 feet elevation, predominantly flat highway, ambient temperature 80 degrees Fahrenheit)

Acceleration time . . . 0 to 60 mph in 44.14 seconds; 40 to 60 mph in 33.15 seconds

Exterior length . . . 36 feet

Exterior width . . . 8 feet

Exterior height . . . 10 feet 2 inches (with roof air)

Interior height . . . 6 feet 6 inches

GVWR . . . 17,000 pounds

Wet weight . . . 16,020 pounds

Payload . . . 980 pounds

Frame construction . . . tubular steel

Insulation . . . Styrofoam

Fresh water capacity . . . 80 gallons

Holding tank capacities . . . 43 gallons gray water; 45 gallons black water

Propane capacity . . . 125 pounds

Water system type . . . demand

Furnaces . . . 2 — 25,000-Btu unit in front, 16,000-Btu unit in rear

Air conditioners . . . (2) 13,500 Btus each

Refrigerator . . . Three-way AES, 8 cubic foot capacity

Toilet . . . freshwater

Generator . . . 6.5-kw Onan

Base suggested retail price . . . \$84,250

Price as tested . . . \$94,755

are being extended, but they are powered up as well. Other systems use springs to bring the jacks back into place. I found the RAM system to be easy to learn and to operate.

The exterior of the Land Yacht, although a departure from traditional Airstream styling, has a distinctive and attractive profile. In fact, the aerodynamic engineering of the Land Yacht is so unique that Airstream has applied for a patent on the motorhome to protect against other manufacturers copying the design.

The outer skin of the front and rear caps and the sidewalls of the coach consist of fiberglass that has been laminated to lauan, which gives the coach an exceptionally smooth finish. The sidewalls of the coach are skirted with polished aluminum — shades of the traditional Airstream styling. To further enhance the look of the elegant exterior, our test coach was outfitted with polished aluminum wheels.

What really gives the motorhome its character, however, is its front end, which includes an air dam that has been contoured to maximize airflow to the engine. The coach also has smoothly integrated bumpers, a 40-degree angled windshield, and flush halogen headlamps.

One of the exterior features I par-

ticularly enjoyed was the keyless door entry system. To unlock the coach, one enters a secret code into a five-button keypad located next to the entry door. The code, which can be changed by the owner, can also remotely unlock the driver's door and the storage compartments. Not only will this state-of-the-art system give the owner some bragging rights around the campfire, but it is also very functional.

It may seem a small item, but I also was impressed by the Land Yacht's entry door. Not only is it well fitted to the curvature of the motorhome, but it is extra wide, too. And the screen door isn't a flimsy plastic job; it is a heavy-gauge aluminum door that has been welded to give it added strength to endure the rigors of over-the-road travel.

Exterior storage is abundant and is highlighted by a huge storage compartment at the rear of the coach. This spacious compartment provides enough room for the owner to take along all of his or her fishing tackle, as well as a set of golf clubs. And the other compartments provide plenty of room for stowing "less essential" gear.

The Land Yacht is built on a tubular-steel frame that is welded to the Chevy chassis. The sidewall construc-

tion includes foam insulation that is custom-fitted between the cross members. On the exterior side, the walls are covered by the aforementioned prebonded, high-gloss fiberglass that has been laminated to lauan, which forms the exceptionally smooth outer skin. The sidewalls are completed by the addition of paneling on the interior walls.

The roof is similarly constructed, except that its outer skin consists of one-piece, skid-resistant fiberglass. Finally, the coach is completed by adding the custom-designed front and rear fiberglass caps.

The Land Yacht is an excellent motorhome, no matter how demanding your yardstick or what criteria you select — value, livability, or style. If the 36-footer is more motorhome than you need, you may want to consider the 33-foot model that was recently introduced. I'm happy to report that it retains almost everything that was special about the 36-foot Land Yacht I tested.

My conclusion after my outing in the Land Yacht is that it is one of the finest motorhomes I have tested in its price category. Add to that the innovation in design, the very functional floor plan, and all those extra touches, and I predict that Airstream has unveiled a true winner. 