

Slide-out luxury

Mid to large-sized motorhomes are a bit on the rare side in the Australian motorhome scene, which makes the Fremantle a welcome addition to the Avida stable.

WORDS AND PICS MALCOLM STREET





With a body length of 9.7m (31ft 10in), the Fremantle is not a difficult drive

Being Australia's largest motorhome manufacturer does give Avida the advantage of having a good range of motorhomes in all shapes and sizes. At the heavy end of the range though, that is anything over 8.0m (26ft), there's a choice of just two motorhomes. The Isuzu NQR based Longreach which has been in the Avida stable for some years or the more recent Fremantle, a new model which has recently been introduced to the market.

BASE VEHICLE

Underpinning the Fremantle is an Iveco Daily 70C-21. My review motorhome was a Euro V variant, but all future Fremantles will be built on Euro VI models. The eagle-eyed might spot one of the differences – the older model Ivecos had a floor handbrake on the left-hand side of the driver's seat which was forever a problem with the swivelling seat but the newer E6 variants have the handbrake switch on the dashboard. Powering the Fremantle is

a 3.0 litre turbo diesel engine delivering a maximum power of 155kW and a healthily good torque of 470Nm through Iveco's smooth and silky eight-speed torque converter automatic gearbox. The previously optional twin-turbo engine is now an electronically controlled variable geometry turbo (eVGT). With a body length of 9.7m (31ft 10in), the Fremantle isn't a particularly small motorhome but it's not a difficult drive at all, once the length is kept



External storage for gas cylinders



Both the Fremantle slide-outs are on the offside



Underpinning the Fremantle is an Iveco Daily 70C-21



Behind the passenger cab door is a compartment that contains a front-loading washing machine.

“Both the Fremantle slide-outs are on the offside, the forward one has a U-shaped lounge and the rear, the bedhead of an east-west bed

in mind when overtaking or manoeuvring around. Having a GVM of 7200kg and a Tare Mass of 1846kg gives a decent payload of 1840kg but it also means that a Light Rigid truck licence is required, not that it's particularly difficult to obtain. Safety and comfort are always considerations in any vehicle these days and certainly, European-built trucks have come a long way over the past decade, especially when they come fitted with rear air bag suspension. I won't trouble you with all the multi-alphabet safety features but items like all-round ABS disc brakes, SRS airbags, adaptive cruise control and air suspension seats are all standard items.

REVIEW: AVIDA FREMANTLE

BODY MATTERS

Even though the Fremantle is a C-class motorhome, the luton peak doesn't look like an afterthought and fits fairly seamlessly into the rest of the bodywork. All Avida motorhomes are built the same way. A fully welded metal frame supports the entire body structure and that is a mixture of fibreglass composite for the walls, floor and roof and moulded fibreglass for the luton peak and rear wall fittings. To minimise the risk of water leaks, one-piece panels are used throughout. Aluminium extrusion is used to join the floor to the walls, high-density polystyrene is used for insulation and polyurethane is used for framing. Part of the body structure includes two offside slide-outs which are very much features of the Fremantle. The Dometic habitation door sits almost directly behind the passenger side of the cab and the windows are all NCE double-glazed acrylics.



Two offside slide-outs are very much features of the Fremantle



Slide Out Luxury



Thank you for the great vehicle, customer service and support and for helping show me how it can be done.

Danny, Valentine NSW



AVIDA Motorhomes & Caravans



Al fresco living is assured given the well-appointed nearside

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SPECIFICATIONS

VEHICLE

Manufacturer Avida
 Model Fremantle
 Base Vehicle Iveco Daily 70C210
 Tare weight 5354kg
 GVM 7200kg
 Payload 1846kg
 Licence Light Rigid
 Passengers 4

MECHANICAL

Engine 3.0 litre turbo diesel
 Power 155kW@3500rpm
 Torque 470Nm@1500rpm
 Gearbox 8 speed torque converter automatic
 Brakes ABS Disc

DIMENSIONS

External length 9.2m (30ft 2in)
 External width (incl awning) 2.49 (8ft 2in)
 External height 3.39m (11ft 1in)
 Internal height 2.02m (6ft 7in)

EQUIPMENT

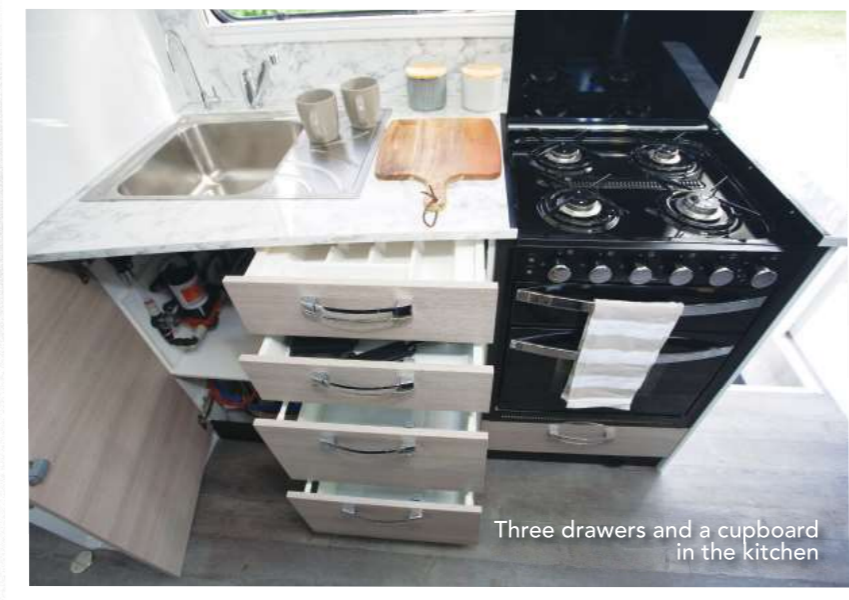
Cooktop Dometic 4 burner hob, grill and oven
 Fridge Dometic RUA8040X 224 litre,
 Microwave Oven Samsung
 Lighting 12V LED incl. mood lighting
 Batteries 3 x 120Ah lithium
 Solar panels 4 x 170W (680W)
 Air conditioner Dometic (x 2)
 Toilet Dometic cassette
 Shower Separate cubicle
 Hot water heater Suburban instantaneous
 Heater Webasto diesel
 Water tank 2 x 100 litre
 Grey tank 1 x 100 litre
 Gas cylinders 3 x 4.0kg
 Price from \$333,469 D/A NSW

ENQUIRIES

Avida
 W: <https://avidarv.com.au>



The slide-out fitted bedroom is a very roomy area



Three drawers and a cupboard in the kitchen

There are a considerable number of external storage bins around the Fremantle. Apart from those fitted into each slide-out, all are fitted around the lower areas of the motorhome. There's not as many empty spaces as first impressions might suggest, because the gas cylinders, batteries, electrical connections and generator all take a fair chunk of the bin area. One item of note behind the passenger cab door is a user-friendly height compartment that contains a front-loading washing machine. A little unusual but one that would otherwise take up space inside and for a washing machine, I don't think it matters

too much whether it's inside or outside.

There were a couple of body-related options fitted to my review Fremantle. One is for driving – the alloy bull bar which doesn't look like an afterthought and the other is the hydraulic stabiliser set up, which means when parking up, the motorhome can easily be levelled – either manually or by just pushing the auto button. A very handy feature I reckon.

Al fresco living is pretty much assured given the nearside area comes complete with an awning, entertainment unit fitted with a TV, Fusion speaker and a strut fitted table plus a second picnic table. It's all nicely appointed.

ELECTRICS

A look in the two nearside bins that contain the Fremantle electrics reveal quite a sophisticated setup. In the first bin are three 120Ah lithium batteries complete with master switch and in the second is what Avida aptly calls the Power Management Centre. That includes the main switches, solar panel regulators and individual fusing. In a novel approach, not always associated with the RV industry, the 12V fuses are all labelled and it's even easily possible to access the rear of the panel in order to trace out any system faults. In other locations are four 170W

solar panels (roof), a 3000W inverter and in an offside bin, an ONAN QG3600 3.6kW petrol-fired generator. Consequently, extended duration off-the-grid stays should not be a problem. The main electrical control panel for everything from the generator to the hydraulic levellers is located above the habitation door inside the motorhome.

TWIN SLIDE-OUTS

Anyone in the RV industry will certainly tell you that a slide-out in any caravan or motorhome will certainly add living space but having two adds even more. Both the Fremantle slide-outs are on the offside,

the forward one containing a U-shaped lounge and the rear, the bedhead of an east-west bed. Between the bedroom area in the rear and the lounge area up front, is a split bathroom. That leaves the front nearside wall area for an all-essential kitchen. Being a European-sourced truck, there's easy access to the front cab area and both cab seats swivel around. Above the cab is the luton bed, easily accessed via an aluminium ladder, otherwise, it's a good storage area. Just a little note here, when the front slide-out is closed, it's still possible to get to the bathroom area without too much difficulty.



A leather lounge in the dining slide-out

Glossy white, several shades of grey and black are the main interior colours. Whilst the general interior was generally well lit, either naturally or by the LED lighting, it seemed to me that the windows were on the small side, particularly in the bedroom. Mostly likely because, unlike the front area, there isn't a large roof hatch. One of the reasons being that one of the two Dometic roof air-conditioners sits where a hatch might be.

SPACIOUS BEDROOM

There's no doubt that the slide-out fitted bedroom is a very roomy area. Certainly, the island bed takes up a fair bit of space but there's

plenty of walk round room and the nearside cabinetry which comes with wardrobes, drawers and cupboards, both upper and lower has much to offer in terms of storage. Technologically speaking, the bedroom cabinet is well equipped. Not only does it have a flat screen TV but there's also a pop-up charging station built into the shelving which has 240V, USB and phone charging capability plus a Bluetooth speaker. To be found in one of the lower cupboards is a very useful item, a battery-powered Dyson vacuum cleaner. Around the bedhead itself, there are yet more cupboards plus some very handy shelf space on both sides.



Split bathroom with shower



There's enough room to have guests for happy hour



The bathroom is not cramped



Above the cab is the luton bed, easily accessed via an aluminium ladder



TV, charging station, battery-powered Dyson vacuum cleaner and plenty of cupboards and shelves

MID STATION FACILITIES

Like many a split bathroom setup, the Fremantle has a shower stall on one side and a toilet cubicle complete with a corner vanity cabinet on the other. It's all been designed so that when the toilet door is fully opened, it closes off the bedroom and bathroom areas. It's all very well appointed and neither the shower nor toilet area felt cramped at all.

FRONT KITCHEN

For a relatively large motorhome, the actual kitchen bench area is surprisingly small. There is enough bench

area to fit in a four-burner hob with grill and oven, alongside a stainless steel sink/drain. There's a nominal amount of benchtop space but a hinged extension that sits across the doorway can certainly be used – care required when entering or leaving. Fitted into the kitchen bench are three drawers and a cupboard. However, there is additional storage area in the form of two overhead lockers plus a three-door wire basket pantry, between the kitchen bench and the bathroom. It can certainly store a considerable amount of food items.

On the opposite side of the

“ With batteries, solar panels, inverter and generator, extended duration off-the-grid stays should not be a problem



Powering the Fremantle is a 3.0 litre turbo diesel engine

motorhome the Dometic 224 litre absorption fridge sits very neatly between the lounge/dining area and the bathroom cubicle. It's accessible from all sides. Instead of fitting the microwave oven above the fridge, Avida has opted for a much more user-friendly height in the cabinet behind the passenger seat. Above the microwave oven is the mounting point for the second TV and below is a very handy wine bottle cabinet.

LOUNGING AND DINING
Looking very snug in its own slide-out is the leather upholstered lounge. It's designed in an asymmetrical U-shape to fit around the table which makes it easy to get in and out from both sides. There are drawers under both seats, so much easier than scrabbling around under seat cushions. In conjunction with the swivelled front cab seats, there's enough room to have a few guests over for happy hour drinks!

THE BOTTOM LINE
There's much to be savoured about Avida's Fremantle. It certainly has plenty of interior space with both slide-outs open but at 9.2m (31ft 10in) long, it's not a difficult motorhome to drive at all. Designed mostly for two people, it does have the facility for an extra couple of passengers as well. It's a motorhome with a high level of appointment and one designed with a comfortable lifestyle on the road. 🚐

