

**2015**

# **THE MOTORHOME BASED TOURIST**



**A GROWING SECTOR  
ITS VALUE AND HOW  
TO ATTRACT IT TO  
YOUR AREA**

**Promoted By:**

**The Phoenix Motorhome Club Ireland**

**In Association With**

**Motorcaravanning Ireland**

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# 1

## *A SHORT HISTORY OF THE MOTORHOME BASED TOURIST*

The first really practical Motor Caravan in Britain (and the world) was built in 1906 by the Belsize Motor Co. on its new 40hp chassis, it provided a living room/bedroom, kitchen and washroom with W.C. The 21½-footer weighed 3¾ tons unladen and was equipped with an oil stove and 50 gallon water tank. It cost over £1.000 and could average 9mph.

By the 1950s, many motor companies recognised that consumers were demanding increased space in their vehicles and adapted coaches onto trucks for weekend excursions.

With increased engine power, a number of major coach producers which included Atlas, Volkswagen and Ford, led the way to modern motor caravan technology.

Nowadays, we can say that the motor caravan can offer maximum comfort, even luxury without limits, if one is willing to pay for it.

A CENSUS OF MOTOR CARAVANS CARRIED OUT IN 2006 BY THE EUROPEAN CARAVAN FEDERATION PRODUCED THE FOLLOWING STATISTICS:

In Europe, there are currently around 1,142,000 motor caravans that are used for touring, and there are more than 3.4 million people who use them.

At the top of the list are Germany (445,000 motor caravans), Italy (156,000), France (150,000), the Netherlands (125,000) and the United Kingdom (118,000). Austria, Denmark, Finland, Switzerland and Sweden are some of the other countries with a long tradition of Motorcaravanning.

## *THE EU VEHICLE CATEGORY OF THE MODERN MOTOR CARAVAN*

MOTOR CARAVANS ARE SPECIFICALLY DEFINED IN EU AND NATIONAL LEGISLATION AS:

*A SPECIAL PURPOSE M CATEGORY VEHICLE CONSTRUCTED TO INCLUDE LIVING ACCOMMODATION WHICH CONTAINS AT LEAST THE FOLLOWING EQUIPMENT: — SEATS AND TABLE — SLEEPING ACCOMMODATION WHICH MAY BE CONVERTED FROM THE SEATS — COOKING FACILITIES — STORAGE FACILITIES. THIS EQUIPMENT SHALL BE RIGIDLY FIXED TO THE LIVING COMPARTMENT; HOWEVER, THE TABLE MAY BE DESIGNED TO BE EASILY REMOVABLE.*

A CATEGORY M MOTOR VEHICLE IS DEFINED AS:

*A MOTOR VEHICLE WITH AT LEAST FOUR WHEELS DESIGNED AND CONSTRUCTED FOR THE CARRIAGE OF PASSENGERS.*

*MOTOR CARAVANS DESIGNED AND CONSTRUCTED FOR THE CARRIAGE OF PASSENGERS AND COMPRISING NO MORE THAN EIGHT SEATS IN ADDITION TO THE DRIVER'S SEAT ARE THUS REGARDED AS SUB-CATEGORY M1 WHICH PUTS THEM IN THE SAME CATEGORY AS CARS.*

ONCE TAXED, INSURED AND IN COMPLIANCE WITH ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATIONS MOTOR CARAVANS ARE ENTITLED TO THE SAME FREE CIRCULATION AND USE OF THE ROAD AND PUBLIC PARKING PLACES AS OTHER VEHICLES OF THE SAME CATEGORY.

### *THE MODERN SELF CONTAINED MOTORHOME*

THE MODERN SELF CONTAINED MOTORHOME IS DESIGNED TO OFFER ITS USERS THE FREEDOM TO TOUR INDEPENDENT OF TRADITIONAL CARAVAN AND CAMPING PARKS THROUGHOUT THE TWELVE MONTHS OF THE YEAR AND IN ALL CLIMATES.

IT IS NOT UNCOMMON TO SEE MOTORHOMES PARKED AND IN USE AT ALPINE SKI RESORTS IN MID-WINTER.

MODERN MOTORHOMES OFFER:

- ❖ HIGH LEVELS OF THERMAL INSULATION
- ❖ ON-BOARD LPG SUPPLIES
- ❖ HIGH OUTPUT SPACE AND WATER HEATING
- ❖ COOKING FACILITIES
- ❖ REFRIGERATION AND FREEZER FACILITIES
- ❖ SEPARATE ON-BOARD RETENTION TANKS FOR GREY AND BLACK WATER
- ❖ ON-BOARD FRESHWATER STORAGE TANKS
- ❖ ON-BOARD BATTERIES DEDICATED TO THE SUPPLY OF ENERGY REQUIRED TO RUN LIGHTING, SATELLITE AND TERRESTRIAL TV, RADIO, WATER PUMPING, HEATING AND OTHER ANCILLARY EQUIPMENT
- ❖ BATTERY RE-CHARGING IS VIA OUTPUTS FROM ENGINE ALTERNATOR, FUEL CELL TECHNOLOGY, PHOTOVOLTAIC (SOLAR) PANELS AND MAINS GRID HOOK-UP

## **DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS OF THE MOTORHOME BASED TOURIST**

Source document: Survey and Statistics on Motorcaravanning Habits

Published by: The Motorcaravanning Commission, F.I.C.C. (Fédération Internationale de Camping, Caravanning et Autocaravaning) 3rd of March 2012

### **LENGTH OF MOTORHOMES**

<b>LENGTH IN METERS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
<b>6 - 7 m</b>	<b>57%</b>
<b>7 - 8 m</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>6 m or less</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>8 - 9 m</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>9 m or more</b>	<b>2%</b>

**Note: 79% of all Motorhomes are in the length range 6 to 8 meters, 57% are between 6 to 7 meters**

### **HOW MANY DAYS PER YEAR DO MOTORCARAVANNERS TRAVEL**

<b>NUMBER OF DAYS PER YEAR</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
<b>15 days or less</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>15 to 30 days</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>30 to 45 days</b>	<b>29%</b>
<b>45 to 60 days</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>60 to 75 days</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>75 to 90 days</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>Others*</b>	<b>2%</b>

**Note: Others refer to motorhome users travelling more than 90 days per year, most of them pensioners or retired people.**

**Nearly 30% tour for between 30 & 45 days per year.**

**Over 50% tour for between 45 & 75 days**

## MAIN PROFESSIONS OR OCCUPATIONS OF MOTORCARAVANNERS

MAIN OCCUPATIONS	PERCENTAGE
Employee (services, banking, representative, Self-employed, entrepreneur, etc.	19%
Teaching, doctor, lawyer, engineer, etc.	20%
Retired, pensioner	26%
*Others	33%
	2%

**Note:** pensioners or retired people represent the largest group of motorcaravanners.

**\*Others,** it refers to professions or occupations not listed on the survey.

## AGE OF MOTORCARAVANNERS

AVERAGE AGE OF MOTORCARAVANNERS	PERCENTAGE
30 - 35	5%
35 - 40	7%
40 - 45	18%
45 - 50	24%
50 - 55	25%
55 - 65 or more	21%

**Note:** 88% of motorcaravanners are over 40 years of age with people over 50 accounting for 46% of all motorcaravanners.

## AVERAGE MONTHLY SALARY OF MOTORHOMERS

AVERAGE MONTHLY SALARY IN EUROS	PERCENTAGE
1,500 or less	2%
1,500 - 2,000	10%
2,000 - 3,000	46%
3,000 - 4,000	37%
4,000 - 5,000	3%
5,000 or more	2%

**Note:** the majority of motorcaravanners, 83% receive an income from €2,000 to a maximum €4,000 per month,

**42%** receive an income in excess of €3,000



## NUMBER OF VISITS PER WEEK MOTORCARAVANNERS MAKE TO A RESTAURANT

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF TIMES PER WEEK	PERCENTAGE
Once a week	29%
Twice a week	35%
Three times a week or more	17%
Occasionally	18%
Never	1%

**Note: 52% of all respondents visit a restaurant at least twice a week.**

## THE SPEND PER PERSON IN A RESTAURANT

AVERAGE EXPENSE PERSON IN A RESTAURANT	PERCENTAGE
€10 - €15	3%
€15 - €20	44%
€25 - €30	48%
€30 - €40	4%
€40 or more	1%

**Note: The average spend by 48% of motorcaravanners each time they visited a restaurant ranges from € 25 to €30 per person.**

**92% spend between €15 and €30 per person.**

**An average spend per motorhome of approximately €120 per week**

## SPEND PER PERSON ON DAILY SHOPPING, INCLUDING SOUVENIRS

DAILY SHOPPING AND SOUVENIRS	PERCENTAGE
€10 - €15	5%
€15 - €20	26%
€20 - €30	46%
€30 - €40	20%
€50 or more	3%

**Note: 46% spend between €20 and €30 per person**

**An average spend per motorhome of approximately €350 per week**

**In total, the average motorhome which tours Ireland is contributes approximately €2000 per month to the local economy of areas visited.**

## *THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS TO HOST COMMUNITIES*

DRAWING ON THE SURVEY RESULTS ON THE PRECEDING PAGES IT CAN BE EXPECTED THAT A COUPLE TOURING IRELAND FOR FOUR WEEKS WILL CONTRIBUTE OVER €2000 TO THE RETAIL ECONOMY OF 'MAIN STREET' IRELAND.

THE DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP TO WHICH MOST MOTORHOME OWNERS BELONG POSITIONS THEM IN ROLL OF INFLUENCERS.

A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE CAN BE EXPECTED TO TRANSLATE INTO RETURN VISITS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO FRIENDS AND RELATIVES THAT IRELAND IS A PLACE TO VISIT EITHER AS MOTORHOME BASED TOURISTS OR TRADITIONAL TOURISTS WHO CONTRIBUTE TO THE 'BED NIGHT' COUNT OF THE ACCOMMODATION SECTOR.

THE POWER OF THE INTERNET SHOULD NOT BE UNDERESTIMATED, THERE ARE MANY SPECIALIST MOTORHOME WEB SITES WHICH HOST FORUMS WHERE BOTH GOOD AND BAD EXPERIENCES ARE OPENLY SHARED AND DISCUSSED.

THE TYPICAL MOTORHOME BASED TOURIST MAY BE CATEGORISED AS THE TYPE OF PERSON WHO HAS THE INTEREST AND TIME TO LINGER AND EXPLORE AND IS OFTEN REFERRED TO AS CULTURALLY CURIOUS.

BEING PREDOMINANTLY RETIRED, A MEMBER OF THE PROFESSIONS OR SELF EMPLOYED, THOSE WHO TAKE THE TIME TO VISIT IRELAND ARE LIKELY TO DO SO FOR EXTENDED PERIODS, PROBABLY FOR FOUR WEEKS OR MORE.

BEING TOURISTS WITH SIGNIFICANT STORAGE SPACE THOSE WITH MOTORHOMES HAVE THE OPTION TO PURCHASE AND TRANSPORT HOME ITEMS WHICH MAY BE BULKY, SUCH AS GIFTS FOR UPCOMING SPECIAL OCCASIONS, SOUVENIR GIFTS AND OTHER MEMORABILIA INCLUDING PRODUCTS AND PRODUCE UNIQUE TO IRELAND.

## ***UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN 'CAMPING' AND 'PARKING'***

IN ADDITION TO PARKING, MOTOR CARAVANS LIKE ANY OTHER VEHICLE, CAN ALSO BE USED FOR CAMPING.

CAMPING MAY BE DEFINED AS TEMPORARILY OCCUPYING A SPACE BY PITCHING A TENT OR A CARAVAN, USING THE SPACE TO SET OUT FURNITURE AND COOKING APPARATUS AND ENGAGING IN OTHER EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES WHICH INDICATE THE SPACE IS BEING OCCUPIED FOR THE PURPOSE OF TEMPORARY HABITATION.

MOTOR CARAVANS ARE NORMALLY CONSIDERED TO BE PARKED (*STOPPED AND LEFT IN A PLACE FOR A PERIOD OF TIME*) IN THE SAME WAY AS IT IS PERMITTED FOR OTHER VEHICLES AND NOT ENGAGED IN CAMPING WHEN:

- ONLY THE WHEELS ARE MAKING CONTACT WITH THE ROAD (STABILISING LEGS OR OTHER EQUIPMENT HAVE NOT BEEN LOWERED). IN CERTAIN CASES, SUCH AS WHEN THE PARKING SPACE IS SITUATED ON A HILL, THE USE OF WHEEL CHOCKS MAY BE JUSTIFIED FOR SAFETY REASONS.
- IT DOES NOT OCCUPY MORE SPACE THAN WHEN IT IS CLOSED, MEANING THAT THERE ARE NO WINDOWS OPEN (WINDOWS THAT OPEN OUTWARDS AND WHICH OCCUPY SPACE BEYOND THE PERIMETER OF THE VEHICLE)
- THERE ARE NO CHAIRS, TABLES, AWNINGS, COOKING FACILITIES ETC. DEPLOYED
- THE VEHICLE CAN BE READILY DRIVEN AWAY

## *THE INFRASTRUCTURAL REQUIREMENTS TO SUPPORT THE MOTORHOME BASED TOURIST*

### **PARKING**

THE MODERN MOTORHOME, BEING A FULLY SELF CONTAINED VEHICLE, IS DESIGNED TO BE USED WITHOUT BEING DEPENDENT ON CAMPING FACILITIES OFFERED AT TRADITIONAL CARAVAN AND CAMPING PARKS.

THIS INDEPENDENCE MAKES THE VEHICLE IDEAL FOR EXTENDED TOURING WHERE IT IS NORMALLY THE PRIMARY AND ONLY MODE OF TRANSPORT FOR IT OCCUPANTS. IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT SO MANY OF THOSE WHO TOUR IN MOTORHOMES SEEK TO PARK OVERNIGHT IN A DESIGNATED PLACE WHICH IS IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO A TOWN OR VILLAGE CENTRE AND FROM WHERE AMENITIES SUCH AS RESTAURANTS, PUBS, SHOPS, ETC. ARE JUST A SHORT STROLL.

SUCH PARKING PLACES ARE COMMONLY REFERRED TO AS '*AIRES*' A WORD ADOPTED INTO COMMON USE IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE FROM THE FRENCH DESCRIPTION *AIRE STATIONNEMENT POUR*

*CAMPING-CARS* WHICH TRANSLATES AS 'PARKING AREAS FOR MOTOR CARAVANS' THE PARKING OR PITCHING OF TRAILER CARAVANS IS STRICTLY FORBIDDEN AT SUCH PLACES, AS IS ANY ACTIVITY WHICH IS DEFINED AS CAMPING (SEE PARAGRAPH 2 ON PREVIOUS PAGE).



PARKING PERIODS ARE COMMONLY LIMITED TO 48 HOURS ALTHOUGH IN SOME AREAS IT MAY BE RESTRICTED TO 24 HOURS OR EXTENDED TO 72 HOURS. SINCE THE MID 1980's A NETWORK OF OVER 20,000 SUCH PLACES HAS GROWN THROUGHOUT MAINLAND EUROPE WITH FRANCE LEADING THE WAY WHERE OVER 8,500 SUCH PLACES CURRENTLY EXIST.

## SERVICING

THE SERVICING OF MOTORHOMES, THAT IS THE REPLENISHMENT OF FRESH WATER SUPPLIES AND THE DISPOSAL OF GREY AND BLACK WATER IS PROVIDED FOR BY THE PROVISION OF AN '*AIRE DE SERVICE*' OR SERVICE AREA. SUCH FACILITIES COMMONLY PROVIDE

A 21mm (½ INCH) THREADED PUSH TAP WHICH FACILITATES THE CONNECTION OF THE MOTORCARAVANNERS OWN HOSE, THE SUPPLY MAY BE UNRESTRICTED OR METERED. IF METERED THE SUPPLY IS NORMALLY TEN MINUTES OF FLOW OR 100 LITRES FOR A TYPICAL CHARGE OF €2, PAID FOR BY TOKEN, CREDIT CARD OR CASH.

A DRIVER-OVER DRAIN, WHICH IS CONNECTED TO THE APPROPRIATE MUNICIPAL DRAINAGE SYSTEM, IS PROVIDED INTO WHICH THE CONTENTS OF THE ON-BOARD GREY WATER HOLDING TANK CAN BE RELEASED.

SEPARATELY AN ACCESS POINT TO THE MUNICIPAL FOUL SEWER IS PROVIDED INTO WHICH THE CONTENTS OF THE TOILET CASSETTE CAN BE DECANTED.

SUCH SERVICES ARE USUALLY CO-LOCATED WITH THE PARKING AREA. HOWEVER, TO REDUCE THE INSTALLATION COSTS THEY ARE SOMETIMES LOCATED AT ANOTHER PLACE WHERE MUNICIPAL WATER AND FOUL SEWER SERVICES ARE MORE READILY AVAILABLE.

THE DESIGN AND LAY-OUT FOR SERVICE AREAS BUILT BY LOCAL TRADES ARE DIVERSE IN DESIGN AND LAYOUT BUT ALL PROVIDE A SUPPLY OF FRESH WATER AND DISPOSAL FACILITIES FOR GREY AND BLACK WATER.

THERE ARE ALSO A NUMBER OF SUPPLIERS OF PREFABRICATED 'SERVICE BOLLARDS'





## MANAGING THE INFRASTRUCTURE

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT A PARKING AREA IS EFFECTIVELY MANAGED TO ENSURE IT REMAINS AS INTENDED AND DOES NOT DEGENERATE INTO AN UNAUTHORISED CAMPING AREA.

IT IS STRONGLY ADVISABLE THAT AN APPROPRIATE BYE-LAW IS DRAFTED AND PUT IN PLACE WHICH CLEARLY SETS OUT THE TYPE OF ACTIVITY WHICH IS NOT ACCEPTABLE AND THE MAXIMUM PERIOD FOR WHICH A VEHICLE MAY BE PARKED AT THE PLACE.



PARKING MAY BE PROVIDE FREE OF CHARGE OR FOR A FEE PER 24 HOURS  
COLLECTION OF THE FEE MAY BE BY LOCAL OFFICIAL OR PAY AND DISPLAY.  
THE FEE MAY RANGE UP TO ABOUT €12 PER 24 HOURS  
DEPENDENT ON LOCATION AND SEASON



IF ACCESS CONTROL IS REQUIRED TO ENSURE ONLY MOTORHOMES MAY USE THE PARKING PLACE OR TO AVOID THE NEED TO CHECK IF PEOPLE HAVE PAID AND DISPLAYED THE PROVISION OF RISING BOLLARDS OR BARRIER IS AN OPTION.

BARRIERS ARE COMMONLY CONTROLLED BY A PAY MACHINE WHICH INCLUDES A CARD READER TO FACILITATE COLLECTION OF FEES AND CONTROL ACCESS.



## ADDITIONAL MATERIAL MAY BE FOUND BY FOLLOWING THE LINKS BELOW

### [THE MOTORCARAVANNING IRELAND WEBSITE](#)

[A humorous look at doing the services at a service area](#)

[The F.I.C.C. Survey and Statistics on Motorcaravanning Habits](#)

[The European Motor-caravanning Handbook](#)

[The Motorhome Tourism Organisation](#)

Users need to register to see the full content of this comprehensive site, an option well worth taking.

[Vicarious Books - largest publisher of English language guidebooks for motorcaravanners](#)

### [Camping-car Infos](#)

One of the most comprehensive French websites for motorcaravanners listing over 18,000 motorhome parking places throughout Europe

### [La P.A.C.A.](#)

An organisation representing the interest of motorhome users which worked closely with relevant government departments to formulate an offering specific to motorhome based tourists in Spain.

### [Motorhome Facts](#)

One of the dominant English language websites with over:

100,346,000 hits since the site opened in 2003

Current statistics:

25,000,000 hits per month

90,000 members

127,000 threads

1,276,000 postings

Included are over 200 threads and over 2,200 postings in the Touring Ireland section.