



VINTAGE VAN

Two TV reno stars transform a humble vintage caravan into a comfy and stylish holiday home

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There's nothing much more Australian than packing up the caravan and hitting the road for the holidays.

Relegated to the grey nomad for many years, caravanning has seen a return in popularity with young families, as a back-to-basics approach to life and a desire for the simple pleasures have taken hold again.

TV reno stars Michael and Candene Duffy wanted to enjoy the kinds of holidays they'd loved as kids with their

own family, and hit upon the idea of buying a vintage caravan.

With their combined skills, the couple teamed up with White Knight Paints to take a vintage Viscoun van from zero to hero.

Caravans are a great way to explore the beauty of our country and coastline, and can also provide an extra bedroom for in-laws or Airbnb guests when parked in the backyard.

Vintage vans can be picked up quite cheaply, often for less than \$5000, but

are usually in dire need of renovation, refurbishment and modernisation, which is where the White Knight range of specialty paints came in.

We were really happy to take up the challenge. We wanted to show as well that you don't need to pull everything out and start again, says Michael.

A lot of these older-style surfaces are really tough and a good choice for the job they do. So as long as it's all structurally sound, keep everything you can and use paint to refresh. ▶

PICTURES WHITE KNIGHT PAINTS

The Duffy family with the refurbished Vonnies the Van. LEFT Michael and Candene enjoy a meal with their kids.





Brass fixtures offset the shades of green.



White Knight Squirts Paint & Prime gives internal fixtures a new look.



After
Painting the surfaces in a soft green transforms the interior.

Natural vibe

Vonnie the Van had good bones but needed a lot of work to bring it back to its former glory.

The metal exterior was on the verge of rusting, the interior laminate cupboards and kitchen tops were straight out of the 60s, and the van needed some new furniture.

Michael and Carlene rolled up their sleeves and turned the entire renovation around in just a couple of weeks, using their home garage workshop and tools, White Knight Paints and a good measure of elbow grease.

First up, Carlene created a simple mood board, so they had a design and

colour vision to work towards. She took inspiration from the stunning coastal bushland around their family home in Queensland's lush Tallebudgera,

creating a palette of varying shades of green, offset by brass and gold fixtures. Wanting to create a soft, relaxed, natural vibe, Carlene opted for a muted green called Sussex and Crisp White as the hero colours.

Next, she sourced an old stool from an op-shop and some timber deckchairs for sitting by the campfire outside the van. White Knight Squirts Paint & Prime was used to give these and some of the internal fixtures a brand-new lease of life.



Before

Kitchen revamp

Meanwhile, Michael was hard at work on the interior, which was a shock of brown and beige laminate. All in structurally good shape, it desperately needed to be brought into this century.

He started by scrubbing down with White Knight Tile & Laminate cleaner, then applied White Knight Tile & Laminate Primer. After a quick sand, he added two coats of White Knight Laminate Paint.

The kitchen benches were finished with a layer of White Knight Bench Top Protective Coating, a hard-wearing, clear coating that delivers a tough layer over painted laminate benchtops, protecting them from heat, chemical cleaning products and stains.

Finally, after waiting for a tropical storm or two to pass, they sprayed the exterior with White Knight Rust Guard, tinted to the lovely Sussex green on the bottom half and contrasting Crisp White for the top to match the interior.

To start, Michael taped up any areas he didn't want painted, such as window frames. He prepped the surface by removing all rust and flaking paint with a light sand and a good clean.

He then used White Knight SL5 Etch Primer to seal the surface and White Knight Rust Guard Quick Dry for the important top coat. ▶



ABOVE Colour and styling bring the interior into the 21st century. BELOW Protective coating is applied to the laminate tops.



DIY TIP

Choose an old caravan with good bones. Check it for rot, water damage or weaknesses by tapping and pressing into walls, under the beds, inside cupboards and below the sink and shower.

After

Vonnie the Van's simple facelift highlights its cool vintage shape.

**Ready to go**

Despite the age of the caravan, the chassis was in good condition. Michael gave it a quick once-over with a wire brush to remove any loose materials.

He then primed it with White Knight Rust Guard Metal Primer and finished with Rust Guard Quick Dry.

'Because these vans are so old, renovating them is more rewarding than restoring a newer model. The vintage vans are such a cool shape, which makes the outcome better,' says Carlene.

'It's such a good solution for our endlessly busy lives, to have a caravan packed and ready. You just hook it up and go. It's affordable, convenient and you have comforts and a good-looking space. It's the future!' ♦

Before