

How To Choose The Perfect Van



*A guide to navigating the beginning stages
of vanlife and how to choose your perfect
van!*

By Bella Janssen



Introduction

Hello there! My name is Bella and I am a van lifer, adventure enthusiast, and travel junkie. Recently, I purchased my 2018 Mercedes-Benz Sprinter, a feat that required years of saving every penny, extensive research, and countless hours scouring the depths of Facebook marketplace.

During my own van-buying journey, I yearned for a comprehensive resource like the one I'm about to present to you in this eBook. With great excitement, I intend to share every ounce of knowledge I've gained about the art of selecting and purchasing a van.

My ultimate goal is to address any lingering questions you may have and transform your van-buying process into a thrilling and enjoyable endeavor. Let's embark on this adventure together, making your path to van life a little less stressful and a whole lot more fun!

Happy vanlifying friends!

About Me



I'm Bella, a free-spirited explorer with a knack for adventure! Currently, I'm in the midst of converting a 2018 Sprinter van, fueled by my passion for travel and the great outdoors.

But my journey doesn't stop there! As a freelance social media manager and virtual assistant, I empower brands to discover their distinct online voice. With a blend of creativity and strategy, I create engaging content that captivates audiences and sets brands apart from the competition!

When I'm not busy shaping digital narratives or working on my van, you'll find me rock climbing or with my nose in a good book! I currently reside in the serene prairielands of South Dakota, but my heart forever yearns for the West Coast.

I can't wait to share my journey and my unwavering passion for the outdoors, van life, and all things adventure!

Bella



01 My Vanlife Journey

In my experience, selecting the perfect van was undeniably the most challenging aspect of embarking on my van life journey. After meticulously weighing the pros and cons, enduring endless internet searches, and experiencing moments of indecisiveness that bordered on madness over the course of several months, I have gathered my reflections, perspectives, and ultimately, my ultimate choice, right here for you!



A BIT OF CONTEXT...

First, let me start with a little background. When it comes to mechanical skills, I must confess that I am not inclined whatsoever. The extent of my abilities in this realm is limited to basic tasks like checking my oil, refilling windshield wiper fluid, and changing a tire. Needless to say, when I embarked on the journey of researching vans, it quickly sent me into a state of confusion and bewilderment. Trying to decipher the plethora of information and determining what exactly constituted the "best van" was a daunting task. In fact, it wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that I was utterly clueless.

Another crucial factor was that I am 5'11" (okay, 6ft with shoes on), and had a concern about being able to stand up comfortably inside of a van. I also wanted the ability to sleep sideways...this was pretty much a non-negotiable for me. Though, as I dived deeper into my researching vans, endlessly reading blog posts and articles, these two seemingly simple desires began to feel like unattainable dreams.

It was becoming a bit of a mess and I easily got hung up on the minor details of my van search instead of truly looking for a van that could suit most of my needs. I was quite stressed and had made so many pros and cons lists that I could probably fill an entire library.

The most insane part is that once I saw my van on Facebook Marketplace, I knew. Something clicked in my brain and I knew that after all my researching, a Sprinter was going to be the best fit for me and my needs.



Finding My Sprinter Van

I never in my wildest dreams thought I would own a Sprinter, and yet one day this 2018 Sprinter popped up in Phoenix, AZ for \$24,900. Naturally skepticism crept in, and I couldn't help but question, "What's the catch?" It seemed too good to be true.

Despite my reservations, I decided to contact the dealer, reasoning that I had nothing to lose but a bit of my time. To my surprise, the dealer acknowledged that the van had been listed with the incorrect price. Whether it was a genuine mistake or a clever selling tactic, I couldn't ignore it.

However, unlike my previous experiences

with attempted van purchases that left me riddled with anxiety and doubt, something within me stirred with a sense of certainty. Deep down, I just knew that this was the van meant for me.

On that very same day, the CarFax report arrived. The van's history was cleaner than I had anticipated, having undergone regular servicing every 5,000 miles as it once served in Amazon's fleet. It exhibited minimal visible imperfections, and the engine appeared impeccably maintained.

At this point I just prayed and moved forward with the somewhat daunting process of buying a van.

My one concern was the cost of maintenance and getting it serviced, but after a bit of research, I came to the conclusion that I'll most likely be near major cities for most of my travels.

And because of Sprinter's reliability, I am not too afraid of breaking down. In the end, I am happy with my Sprinter and will probably buy another when that time comes!



What made me choose a Sprinter?

- ✓ Dimensions: the height of a high roof sprinter is 6'4 making it perfect for my 5'11 self. It also comes in a 144" WB, which I was looking for!
- ✓ Drivability: It is capable to take on mountain roads and long haul trips - which we definitely tested driving back to South Dakota. It was a diesel vehicle, which means it gets better gas mileage
- ✓ Resale Value: It has the highest resale value and once converted, It will allow me to make the most money when I sell it.

Okay! Now that you know who I am and have an understanding about my decision, lets get into the **good stuff!** I have found a lot of pros and cons lists on the internet and most of them were helpful...but not in the ways that I needed them to be. It was all technicality...but I needed practicality — which is exactly what I plan on doing here for you!

Conclusion

My vanlife journey has been a hectic, heartwarming, and tear ridden one. There have been major ups and major downs, but I would not trade this lifestyle for the world! As of now, my conversion is 75% of the way done and I am hoping to be on the road by January of 2024!



Want to get the entire eBook where I dive into the pros + cons of every van and the best way to find the PERFECT fit? Get it here!

[CHECK IT OUT!](#)

Thank you for reading! I hope you found this eBook helpful and many good wishes on your own #vanlife adventure!

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