

HORSIN' AROUND



FOUR WHEELS FOR FOUR LEGS

BY ADRIENNE LANG • PHOTOGRAPHY BY JIM SHARRATT

Preston Carter's "living quarters" don't fit the banal term. They don't have a cold concrete floor or a commode only suitable for those less than concerned about hygiene. Actually, Carter's living quarters are fit for a king and queen of rodeo.

"The way I look at it, it's my rolling condominium," joked Carter, a

Weatherford resident with business interests in commercial real estate and horses.

Carter's 4-Star horse trailer is anything but confining and dingy. Outfitted with decorative features designed by Outlaw Conversions, the spacious 7-foot-6-inch tall, 8-foot wide trailer has a retractable and slide-out wall that allows room for a queen-size bed and a place to stretch his chaps.

Kathleen Mehlschau, general manager for Wayne Hodges Trailer Sales, said this is Carter's fourth living quarters trailer bought at the Weatherford dealership and the second time he has picked this floor plan. Carter said he has his reasons for his continuing patronage.

"Their service is great," Carter said. "If I ever have a problem they take care of it."

Although Wayne Hodges lets customers choose from several options carried by Outlaw for the interior, Carter chose one already furnished. "I think Outlaw does the finest interior of any manufacturer," Carter said.

Included in his transportable masterpiece are detailed leather furniture, a foldout couch and a swivel chair of deep browns that all give the trailer a rustic Western feel. "It's like your own living room," Carter said.

Two hammered copper sinks are set in tan granite-looking countertops against a faux suede wall. The most stunning features, however, are the 20-plus cabinets and compartments, including a pantry and closet, made of dark hardwood with knot designs.

Mehlschau said the wood has been the most popular pick for interiors for about the last three years. "There's no light wood that has this character," she said.

The beauty of the trailer's adornments is easy to see, thanks to a light and airy interior with electric lights and seven windows. In addition, the trailer boasts two skylights, one above the shower. The shower itself is nothing to scoff at. Complete with tiered shelves, a high showerhead and walls, it

feels like an only slightly smaller shower at home. The porcelain toilet sits low, adjacent to a large mirror that opens into a medicine cabinet.

Connected to bathroom are the horses' living quarters. Carter said he likes the four stalls because he can haul more and it easily accommodates his racing and cutting horses.

When Carter isn't busy attending to his horses or shows, he has a surround-sound entertainment system to occupy his time. Complete with a satellite dish, the system also includes a built-in television, CD player and DVD player.



Carter also doesn't have to worry about spoiled food or cooking canned beans over a campfire—the trailer has a refrigerator and convection oven. Air conditioning takes the heat out of the kitchen and those hot Southern days.

But Outlaw Conversions didn't just think of the bigger necessities—smaller thoughtful touches are present, too. It's easy to overlook the magazine and towel racks or encased fire extinguisher, but they add comfort and practicality to life on the road. Although all of the built-in features are put in by Outlaw Conversions, Carter

has made sure to add his own touches to the place to make it his own ... or, rather, someone else has created the Western ambience in the horse trailer's living quarters.

"That's my girlfriend," Carter admitted. "She's the decorator."

On top of Outlaw's marble-decorated linoleum, Carter set a spotted cowhide rug that accentuates the furniture. Next to the swivel chair, magazines such as Quarter Horse Trailer lay atop a rawhide drum used as an end table. A picture of a multicolored saddle hangs next to the couch, adding color to the room.

To the right of the living room, steps lead to Carter's Native American-inspired queen-size bed with seven colorful pillows sitting neatly atop.

The most personal touches, however, are a tiny bone rug and food bowl adorned with small bones on the floor for the Carter's special companions—Oreo, a Vizsla, and Mr. Bob, a Shih Tzu.

A trailer like Carter's cost around \$110,000, Mehlschau said. Although most people buy trailers costing around \$50,000 or \$60,000, she said those who spend a lot of time traveling with their horses want bigger and nicer living quarters.

Carter said he just wanted space. "When I travel, I take my girlfriend, two dogs and horses," he said. "That requires a lot of space. I want to be able to sit up in bed. I don't want to be claustrophobic."

Last year, Carter traveled 20,000 miles, from Ruidoso, N.M., to race horses, to Oklahoma City, Nashville, Las Vegas and Memphis to show horses. He also goes on fishing trips to Padre. In all, he said, he averages about one trip a month.

Carter said he used to have houses in different areas, but his 4-Star trailer is working out better for him.

"It's my land yacht," he said. 🍎