

A HISTORY OF SAFARI MOTOR COACHES

The Monaco Years

SAFARI TREK 2002 - 2006

Here is another coach that continued production without a break from Safari Motorcoach Corporation to Monaco Coach, and it was an extremely important coach at that - the ubiquitous Trek.

First built for the 1992 model year in Harrisburg, Oregon, with the last coming off Monaco's Coburg, Oregon, line in 2008, the Trek never really strayed from its 'roots'. Its unique features never really changed. The chassis, etc., came and went but its coach part remained much the same since its inception. It was a large luxury coach in a small package.

The 2001 Trek, the last model year manufactured by SMC, is pictured above. This model was built on a Workhorse P32 chassis with a 454 CID gas or 6.5L GM diesel engine.



The 2001 Trek - the last model year made by SMC

2002 TREK

This 2002 Trek, the first model year produced by Monaco Coach, was built on the new wide track Workhorse chassis with independent front suspension, and it was powered by the Chevy 8.1L 340 HP Vortec gasoline engine. GVWR is 15,000 pounds so the power to weight ratio makes this a very nimble coach.

The coach body was the same as that of the SMC 2001 Trek with

a somewhat differing paint scheme. Inside the coach, the kitchen/galley area wraps around an L-shaped Genovese solid surface countertop stretching from the three burner range to the 8 cubic foot refrigerator. The twin sink sits halfway between them. The large bathroom spans the full width of the coach and includes a large wardrobe and shirt closet. The cabinetry is the traditional Safari alder finished to a golden cherry tint. All furnishings are of the usual high standards of Monaco coach. One change in the cockpit area is the 5.5" rearview monitor which Monaco favors over the traditional SMC Safari 'through the TV' rearview system.

A review by Becky and Rich Johnson in the February/March 2002 issue of *Safari Adventures* showed how much they enjoyed the coach with only one area of concern for them both, that being their inability to read all of the gauges whilst driving due to steering wheel design and general position of the instrument panel.

This model year Trek is supplemented by a Trek Sport coach. Essentially it is a low budget Trek. Its 50 amp electrical service is reduced to 30 amps. Single paned windows replace the double paned windows. Cabinets are a vinyl wrapped type and the dinette table has a laminate top. The pocket door between bathroom and kitchen is hollow core versus solid core. All furnishings are Flexsteel rather than Homestyle. Outside, the full paint is replaced by a lower painted skirt, 3M decal graphics and several other cheaper fittings. It is, however, still a Trek.



The 2002 Trek



The 2003 Trek

2003 TREK

A newly designed front cap shows off this model year's Trek by giving it a flatter profile and adding a few more inches of interior space. It has also gained three inches in external width. The instrument panel concerns in the previous Trek have been resolved with a newly designed and positioned dashboard in this one. Full exterior paint and vinyl graphics give the coach a completely new coach look with a selection of no fewer than eight colours, four with full body paint. A choice of cabinetry by way of alder, walnut or natural oak graces the interior together with a variety of décor packages.

Six floor plans, including the model 3011 with a driver's side slideout containing the entertainment center, stove, microwave and sinks, are offered. The same chassis as on the 2002 Trek is used and it includes the optional Ford V10. The sewer and water 'hook-up' systems have been centralized into an insulated compartment and there have been many other embellishments made to this model year Trek, showing that its transition from Safari Motorcoach Corporation to Monaco Coach is very successful.

In its May 2003 magazine, FMCA published a review of the 2810 model Trek by Lazelle Jones, a long time coach reviewer. The review was very objective and fair and only one real criticism was mentioned, that being the placement of the bed's control switch which should have been placed in a safer position. I especially enjoyed his description of the coach's performance on the road, which I will repeat here.

"I traveled for a week and covered 1,000 miles, and I experienced no driver fatigue. With the cruise control in operation, we sailed down the long Central Valley of California as though it were a Sunday drive. The powerful Vortec engine and four speed automatic transmission with overdrive handled the rural roads and mountain passes along the coastal route with ease. With its 178" wheelbase, the Trek took on tight hairpin turns and handled city traffic without a problem.

"Fuel economy was very respectable. I calculated it twice. The first time, which included city and highway travel, I reached a figure of 9.4 miles per gallon. The second, during which I drove steadily at 60 miles per hour, the figure was 10 MPG.

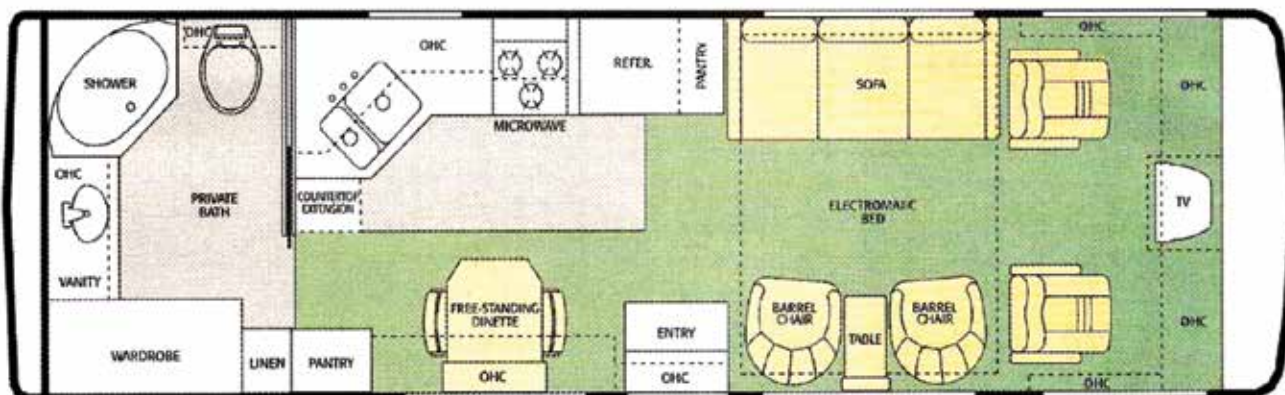
"I was in for a bit of a surprise after the coach was weighed and I later considered the figures. With full tanks of fuel (60 gallons) and fresh water (62 gallons), its weight totaled 16,040 pounds. Afterwards I discovered that approximately 300 pounds of bottled water had been left in two of the exterior cargo bays located between the entry door and the front wheel. So the coach's weight actually would have totaled 15,740 pounds instead. With a gross vehicle weight rating of 18,000 pounds, the Trek would thus have a payload of 2,260 pounds. This adjusted figure is reflected in the 'Specifications' section."

(I have shown the specifications below. Brian.)



Interior of 2003 Trek

SPECS



Floor plan depicts standard barrel chairs in living area. Euro recliner with ottoman is optional.

2004 TREK

No fewer than five lengths of this model year's coach were made - 26', 28', 29', 30' and 31'. The 29', 30' and 31' all come with either single or dual slideouts.

All were built on the Workhorse or Ford chassis. The Workhorse chassis used the GM 8.1L V8 EFI gasoline engine coupled to a 4-speed automatic transmission with overdrive on the 26' and 28' coaches and to the 5-speed automatic with overdrive on the 29', 30' and 31'. The Ford chassis used the 6.8L V10 EFI gasoline engine coupled to a 4-speed automatic transmission with overdrive. Both of these chassis are augmented by Monaco's SmartStructure which is attached to the chassis and onto which the coach is built.

The raised floor thus provided also gives a lot more below floor storage space. On the downside, the coach is now taller,

Manufacturer . . . Safari Division of Monaco Coach Corporation, 91320 Industrial Way, Coburg, OR 97408; (800) 634-0855; fax: (541) 681-8899; www.safarimotorcoaches.com

Model . . . 2003 Trek

Floor plan . . . 2810 Rear Bath

Chassis . . . Workhorse P Series

Engine . . . 8.1-liter Chevrolet Vortec; 340 horsepower @ 4,200 rpm

Transmission . . . 4L85E Hydraulic

Axle ratio . . . 4.63 to 1

Tires . . . Michelin XRV 225/70R 19.5 F

Wheelbase . . . 178 inches

Brakes . . . Hydraulic four-wheel antilock disc

Suspension . . . Front — wide track with auxiliary air springs, stabilizer bar, and Bilstein shocks; rear — parabolic taper multi-leaf with Bilstein shocks

Alternator . . . 145 amps

Batteries . . . chassis — (1) 12-volt deep-cycle; house — (4) 6-volt deep-cycle

Steering . . . Saginaw 708 14.1 power steering

Inverter . . . 1,500-watt

Electrical service . . . 50 amps

Auxiliary generator . . . 4-kilowatt Onan MicroLite; 5.5-kilowatt Onan Gold Marquis optional

Exterior length . . . 28 feet 10 inches

Exterior width . . . 100.5 inches

Interior height . . . 6 feet 6 inches throughout; 6 feet 3 inches under bed

Exterior height . . . 11 feet 8 inches

Gross combination weight rating (GCWR) . . . 21,000 pounds

Gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) . . . 18,000 pounds

Gross axle weight rating (GAWR) . . . front — 6,000 pounds; rear — 12,000 pounds

Wet weight as tested . . . (weighed with full water and fuel tanks, and 300 pounds of cargo in front bays) front axle — 5,700 pounds; rear axle — 10,300 pounds; total — 16,040 pounds

Payload . . . 2,260 pounds (adjusted for cargo)

Frame construction . . . tubular aluminum; laminated and vacu-bonded walls and floors; 9-layer roof with 3-inch I-beam aluminum frame in roof

Insulation . . . block foam in roof, walls, and floors; additional fiberglass insulation in roof

Fresh water capacity . . . 62 gallons

Holding tank capacities . . . gray water — 38 gallons; black water — 38 gallons

Fuel capacity . . . 60 gallons

Fuel requirements . . . unleaded gasoline

Propane capacity . . . 24 gallons

Water heater . . . 6-gallon LP-gas/electric with electronic ignition; 10-gallon LP gas/electric, optional

Water system . . . demand

Furnace . . . 31,000-Btu electronic ignition, forced air, ducted heat

Air conditioner . . . 13,500-Btu with ducted air and wall thermostat

Refrigerator . . . 8-cubic-foot with ice maker

Toilet . . . porcelain with sprayer

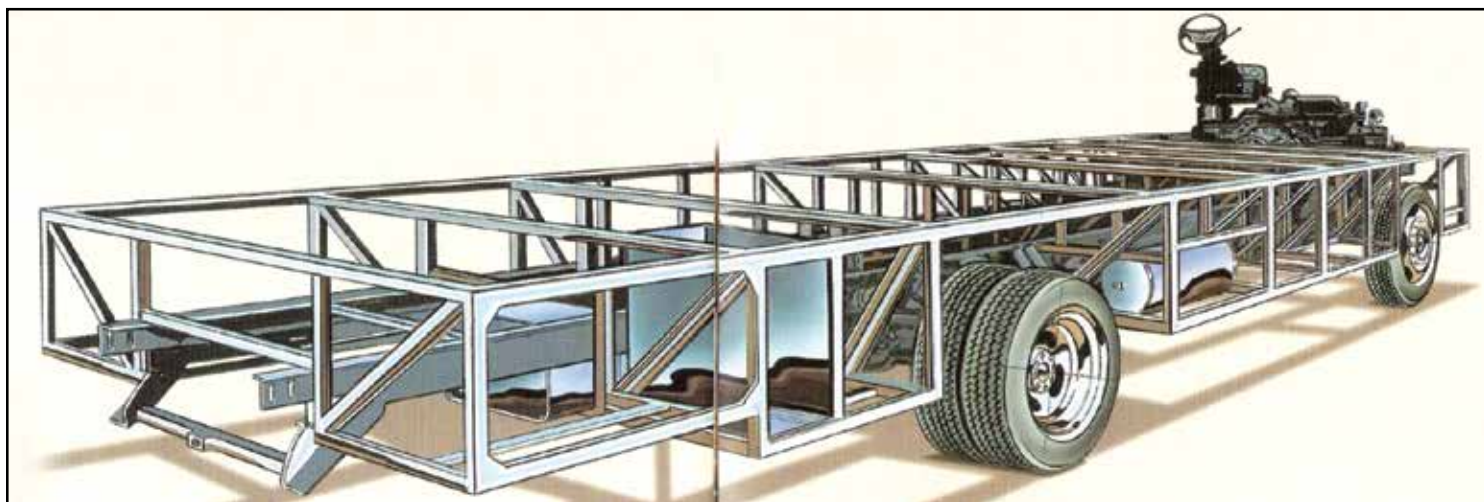
Warranty . . . chassis — 3 years, 36,000 miles; coach — 12-month, 24,000-mile basic limited warranty/5 years, 50,000 miles structural

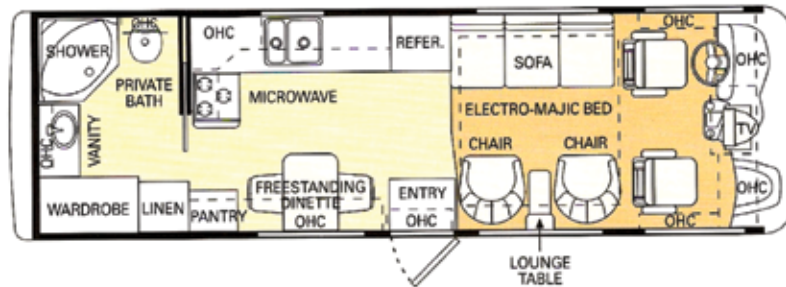
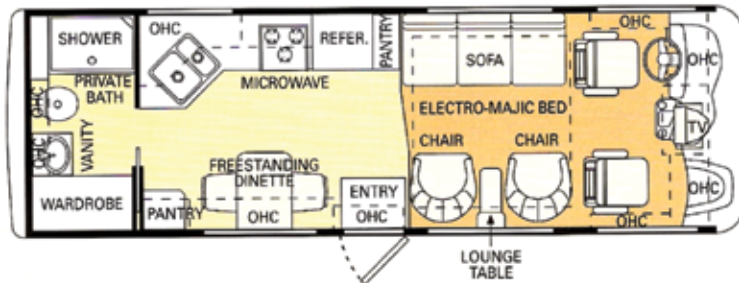
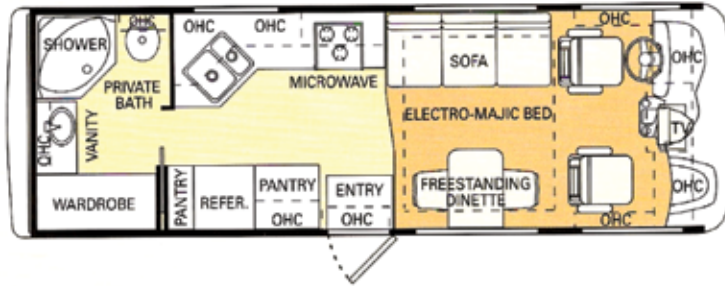
Base suggested retail price . . . \$97,328

Price as tested . . . \$115,531

11'6" with the Ford chassis, 11'10" with the Workhorse.

Four external colour schemes complimented the four internal décor packages which included a choice of natural maple, alder or regal cherry cabinetry.





Monaco Safari introduced the Outdoor Edition Package in this model year on a new floorplan, the 28RB2. They also reintroduced the 28RB. The big external changes in the Outdoor Edition were the brush guard over the radiator grill, the dark blue and grey full body paint and the large double door trunk at the rear. Inside, the décor is very different from the standard Trek. There are far too many differences to note here. I can only suggest that if you have the opportunity to look inside one, take it. I have shown here the only photos I have of this variant to the Trek stable.

Neither model has a slideout and the 28RB2 features a return



The rear storage compartment

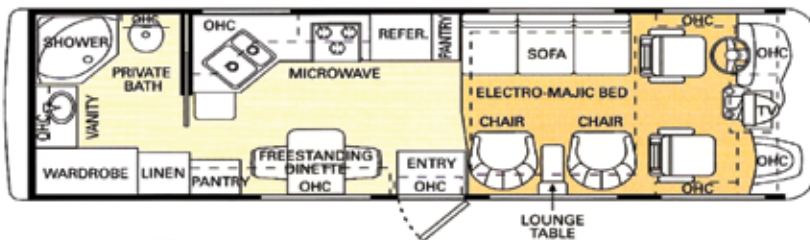
to the 'classic kitchen' with the L shaped galley. One other new floor plan, at least new to me, was the 30PBS. This has the bathroom at the front of the coach behind the driver's seat and a slideout which contains the entertainment center, stove, microwave and sink behind that. The Electro-Majic bed is at the very rear of the coach. Personally I don't like it, but I am sure others do!



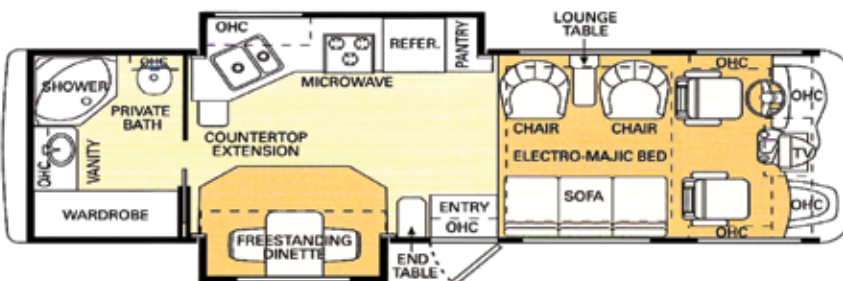


28RB TREK

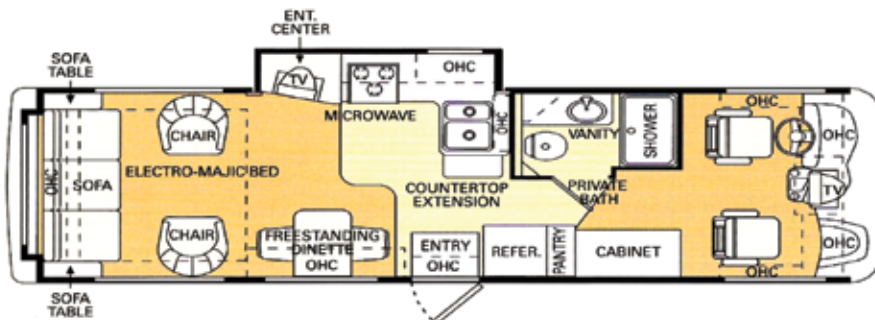
TILE CARPET FURNITURE



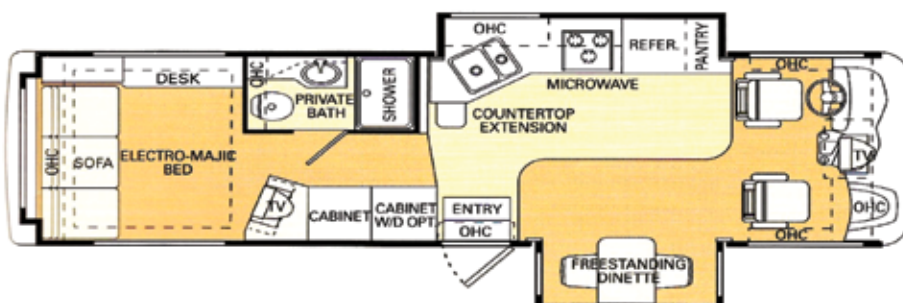
29RBD TREK



30PBS TREK



31SBD TREK





Riviera Sand



Spanish Trail



Windjammer

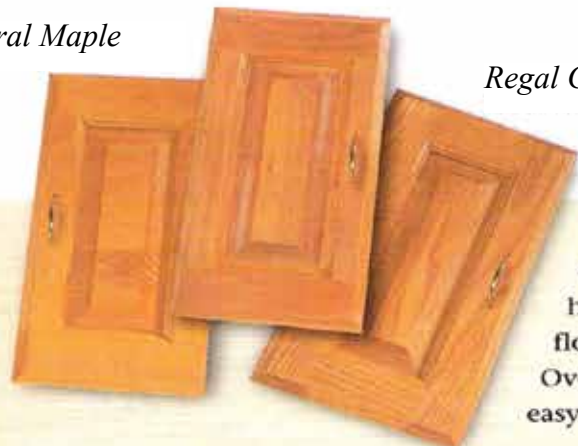


Fall River

Alder

Natural Maple

Regal Cherry



For a touch of luxury, the 2004 Trek features solid wood square raised panel cabinet doors with brass hardware. You'll also enjoy beautiful laminated plank flooring in the kitchen and bath (or optional ceramic tile). Overhead, there's a soft-touch padded vinyl ceiling that's easy to clean and won't trap smoke or cooking odors.

2005 TREK

The truss system built onto the chassis on which the coach is built was called SmartStructure on the 2004 Trek. This is changed on the 2005 model and is now called SmartStructure II. I do not know why it was changed after only one year but the 2005 Trek brochure says, "Integrity is stamped into the truss system instead of relying on the welds of the tubular structure (as in the 2004 Trek). This equates to 40% fewer welds and strategically located metal removal to reduce the overall chassis weight and to provide for greater carrying capacity."

The structures certainly look very different when one sees them side by side. Other changes to the exterior of the coach are new rear lights and side hinged underfloor storage bay doors that open out rather than up! A slideout battery tray is new this year as are the larger exterior mirrors which are power adjusted and heated. Floor plan options have been reduced to one each of 27', 28', 29', 30' and 31'. Slideouts appear on the 29', 30' and 31' models and the 30PBS front bath plan (the one I didn't like on the 2004 model) is still there so I guess I was wrong as it must have sold enough to remain for this year! Four external colour schemes compliment four interior ones. Alder cabinetry is standard, and autumn cherry and maple are optional. Every model year Monaco added many extras, some minor, others major, but



The 2005 Trek

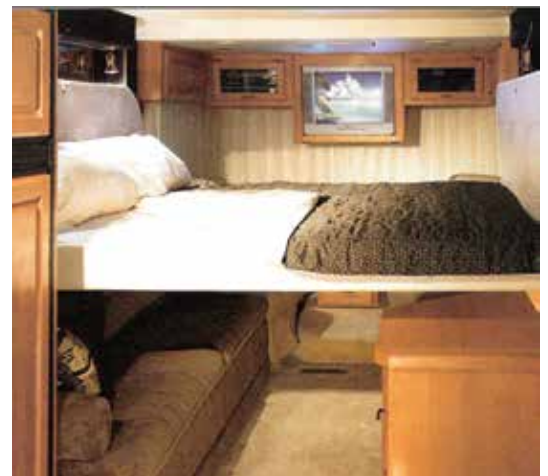
too many to list in this brief look at Monaco coaches. One other observation was the number of options on this year's Trek - sixty-one! Yes, sixty one!



Above left: Raise the Electro-Majic bed neatly out of sight during the day to reveal a roomy interior full of style and comfort.



Above right: You'll find plenty of room for your essentials in this vanity and medicine cabinet with adjustable shelves.



2005 Trek - Ready for bed!



2006 TREK

The first things I noticed when looking at a photo of this model year Trek were the outside mirrors! The 2005 did have taller mirrors but they were mounted in the same place as on the 2004 Trek. This year's Trek has the mirrors mounted on the front of the cap. They are also chrome. The roof has been changed from aluminum to fiberglass, one piece.

There are also changes to the Ford chassis, the 6.8L V10 now having three valves per cylinder with Electronic Fuel Injection, and it is coupled to a 5-speed TorqShift auto transmission with overdrive and tow/haul mode with a GVWR of 20,500 pounds. As well, there are two different Workhorse chassis, one that has a GVWR of 18,000 pounds and the other a GVWR of 20,700 pounds.

Three coach lengths were offered - 27', 28' and 29' - with floor plans that offer two slideouts.

2007 TREK

New for this year are the one piece windshield, new cargo bay latches and the dropping of the Ford chassis as an option. The Workhorse chassis with the 8.1L V-8 and 6-speed transmission is integrated with the SmartStructure II on which the coach continues to be built. A 'negative' new for this year is the replacing of the Trek icon Electro-Majic bed with one made by HappiJac! Why?

2008 TREK

The 2008 brochure shows just two floor plans, the 28RB2 and the 29RBD.

Three exterior colour schemes match three interior colour schemes with two choices of cabinetry, Newport Cherry and Champagne Select.

Production continues with the HappiJac bed until early 2008 when all production of this unmistakably unique motor home ceased. What a remarkable production run it was, from 1991 when the first Trek coach emerged from the SMC plant in Harrisburg, Oregon, built on the Izusu chassis. But by now people's needs have changed, and with only thirty-five 2008 models completed (which could make them collector models!) the story must end.

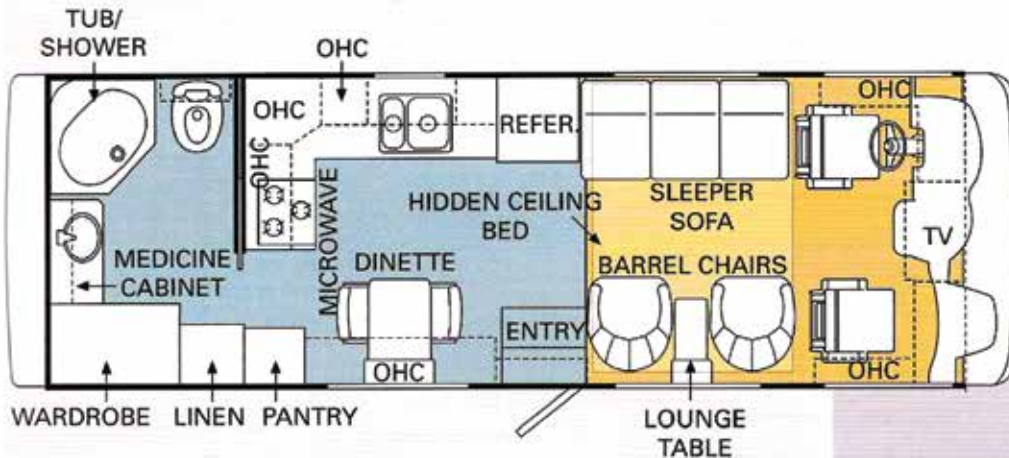
Goodbye, Trek.

My thanks to Gary Smith for information about Monaco Coach Treks and to FMCA for allowing the reproduction of part of their article.

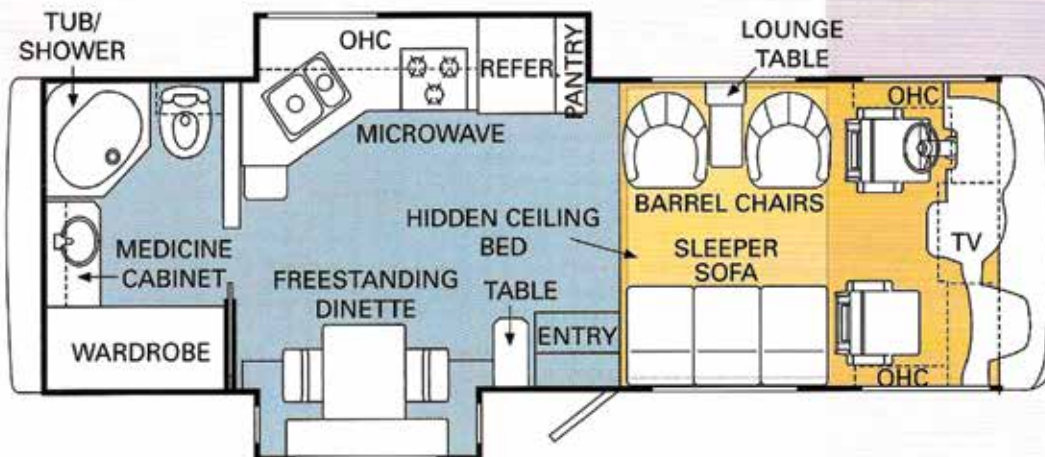


Nice dash layout. (I wonder what is in the cans?)

28RB2



29RBD





Copper Mine



Bentley



Key Largo



Goodbye, Trek.

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