

# Off the Road

Explorers, Vans, and Life  
Off the Beaten Track

gestalten



# NEXT STOP...

*This bus was never intended to live on the road. While it is used on the occasional camping trip, it also acts as a permanent guest bedroom. Needing to meet the requirements of home living, every detail has been carefully thought out—each piece reflects a style unique to the 1960s. Going beyond looks, the customization work is of a quality equal to the craftsmanship that defined this bygone period.*

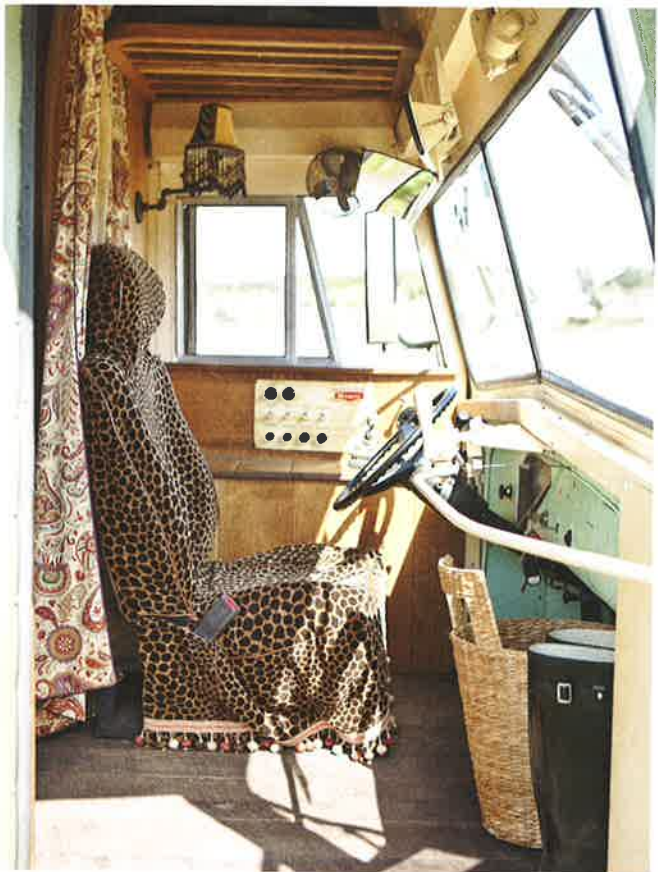




Old American buses have a charm that simply cannot be compared with that of their modern descendants. Since much of the automotive production lines of the 1950s were still reliant on the human hand, the vehicles of the era reflect that ingrained sense of care that only human touch can bestow. Of course, these vehicles were also built in accordance with a completely different concept of design. Detailed excesses, shapely curves, and an obsession with size seem to define the period. Today mass production has turned these characteristics on their head. Not only are most production lines governed by the impersonal calculations of machines, but bus design has also begun to bend to the overarching ethos of efficiency, which constantly undermines style for the sake of economic factors. Having all the grace of bricks with wheels, it's not hard to see why newer buses are hardly ever sought for conversions or customizations.

It was out of nostalgia for these old buses that a client of Will Winkelman of Winkelman Architecture, a company based in Portland, Maine, sought to enlist Will's expertise for a conversion project. The original vehicle was a 1959 Chevrolet Viking Short Bus, and the client had quite literally found it rusting away in a field. But the grass growing over the wheels and battered exterior were not enough to put off the ambitious pair. Through its dilapidated state they managed to see potential beauty, and the bus's timeless shape guaranteed it a thorough restoration. Understandably, Winkelman and his client had no desire to modify the old Short Bus, at least not in the sense of imparting it with the cold design features of the current era. Rather, they sought to return it to its former glory, deciding on a 1960s bohemian theme with a Moroccan twist.

A collage of paisley cushions and curtains, velvet sofa, and transparent beads, the interior speaks of hippies, The Beatles' Sgt. Pepper period, and tarot readings. But aside from the



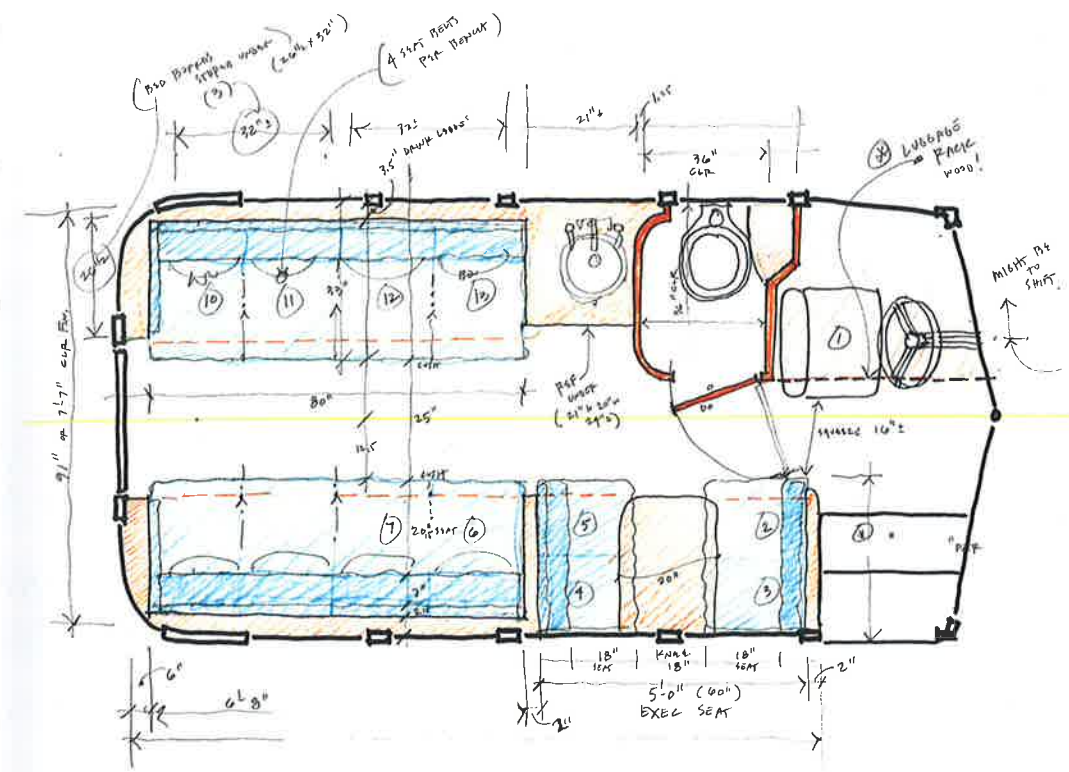
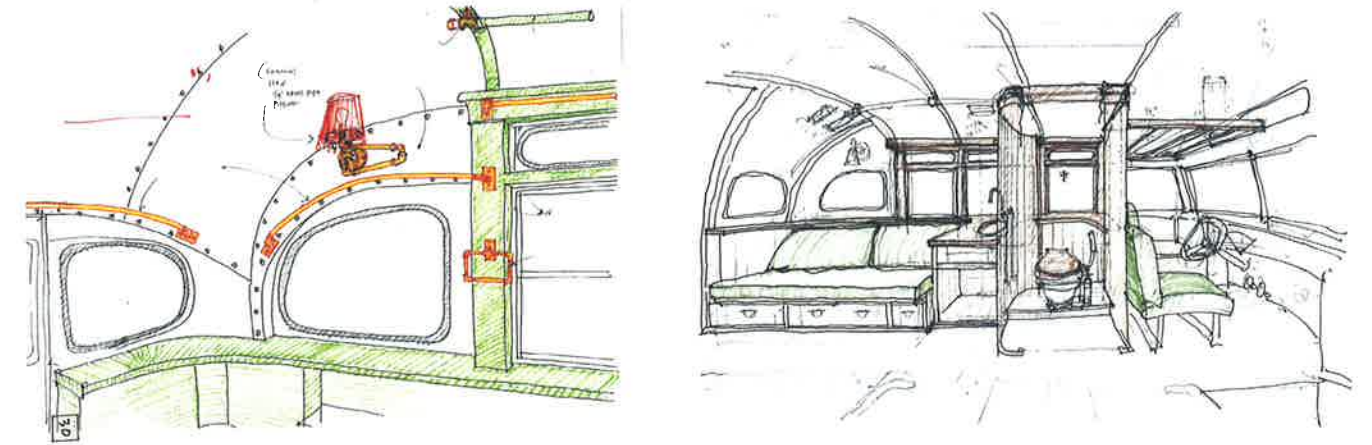
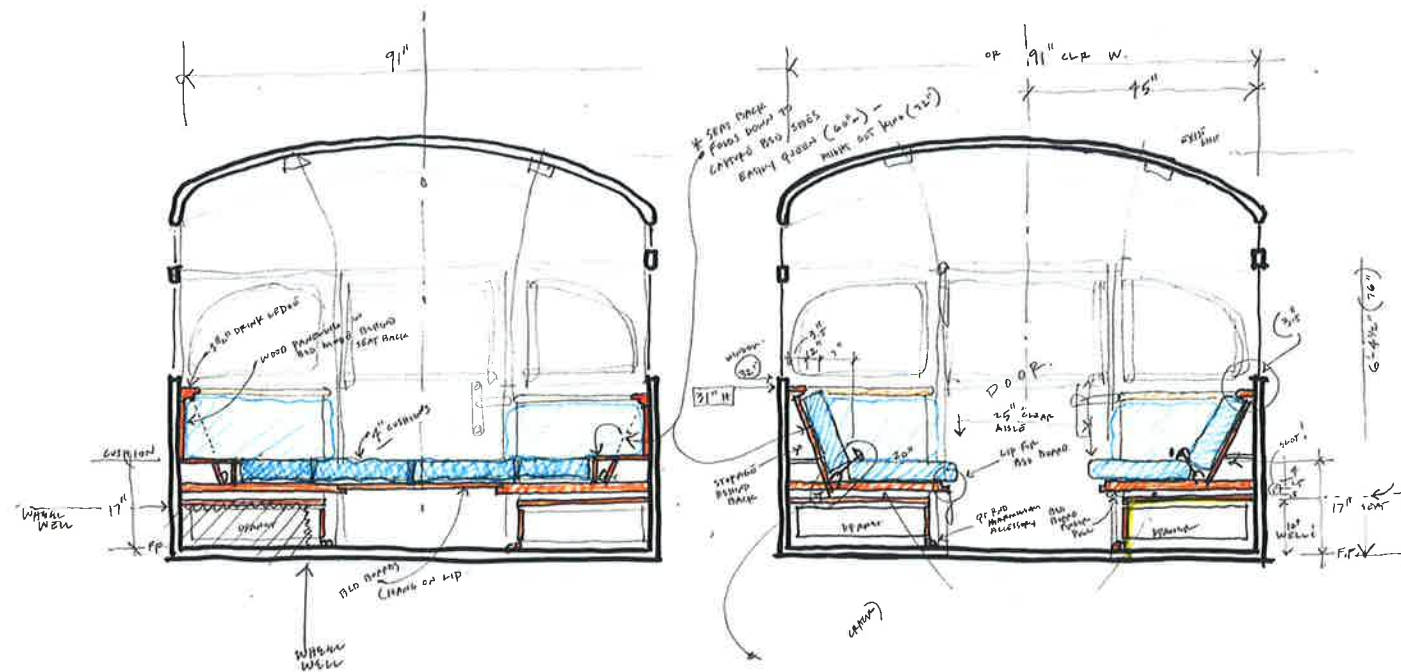
↗ 1959 Chevrolet Viking Short Bus  
→ Cozy bohemian interior with a Moroccan twist  
↓ The original speedometer



relaxed aesthetic, the bus also has a strong practicality. It is able to safely carry up to twelve people plus the driver, and the two couches in the back turn into two double beds, or, alternatively, they can be pushed together to make a queen. There is plumbing and electricity, enabling the addition of a toilet and sink, which are tucked in behind the driver's bay. Quarter-sawn white oak has been used to panel the interior, and its light shade contrasts nicely with the darker salvaged-pine floor. At night, the mobile home is bathed in resin-orange light—a shade that

seems to have been left back in the 1960s. In sum, this renovated Short Bus is a fine testament to times past. The details have been carefully considered and the shape of the original respected. It's almost as if one can feel the care and effort that went into the project.

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← Notes on how to unfold the two double beds.  
 ← The full layout including the toilet, kitchen sink, couch, and seating areas.  
 v v v Restoring from the ground up

