

Final Installment of “This Old Rialta”

Things have been really busy around here with the “Real Job” so I have not had time to write the last installment of “This Old Rialta”. So I am taking a break and doing the wrap up article.

The first step in the paint process was to remove everything on the outside of the motor home that would come off. All the windows, Doors, Roof AC, Roof Vent, all lights, fillers, plugs and all of the plastic skirt including the front and rear bumpers.



Then it was time to SAND! SAND! SAND! I hand sanded the body (The body and roof panels are aluminum) using an orbital sander and 150 grit paper. After all the paint was removed I filled all the dings and cut out the new openings for the exterior shower (we did not have that option on our 95) and the new water filler opening. I moved the city water connection to the same side as the fresh water tank filler. I found a hatch that contains both behind a lockable door. This was necessary to make room for the external shower. The shower compartment is a one piece molded plastic box with a lockable door. I painted the boxes and the doors to match the body. The entire body was then sanded with 300 grit paper in final prep for paint.



I pressure washed the area behind the grill while I had the front apart for paint. The AC condenser was packed with bug carcasses and dirt. And the areas behind the head lights had all sorts of nests and critter remnants. Since the paint on the cab was in good shape I only had to buff it out to get a like new finish back on it.



Then after a few more weeks of masking out, sanding, filling, priming, sanding, rubbing, wiping down, cussing.....Painting!



We arrive hereLooks like NEW!

While I had the windows removed I sanded them and painted their frames, repaired any missing parts or broken operators as well as replaced all the screens with new material. This extra bit of work really adds to the clean look of the new exterior. All we lack here are some stripes The original stripe sets are not available for the 1995 model anymore only the straight 2 part purple stripe for the front can be found. So I ordered enough to re-stripe the entire coach in just the single stripe. I also mounted some nice driving lights on the bumper. They fit perfect in the recess where the factory driving lights should go.



BEFORE

(This is the e-bay add photo I bought it from)



AFTER

(The dark blue on the skirt changes color in the sunlight)



After some deliberation I decided to move the overhead TV forward into the cab. This allows for a better viewing angle from the jump seats. LCD screens are best viewed straight on not from the side so by moving the monitor forward the picture is much clearer. I wanted some type of table to put my laptop on and to have a place to sit and watch TV and munch out. I picked up some recessed table mounts and the post that goes into them. I made 2 table tops from $\frac{3}{4}$ plywood, these are cut to fit behind the driver and passenger seats. I put laminate tops on the plywood and oak veneer on the edges and added the leg receptor to the bottom. I then cut a hole in the steel floor just behind the front seats offset to the outside of the coach. There is plenty of room in this area without getting into anything underneath the cab (like gas lines or tanks and such). Mounded the recessed table leg receptor in the hole (I put a lot of silicon around the receptor to seal out any water or fumes from the underside of the Motor home. This made a nice set of tables that can be stored in the area beside the jump seats when not needed.



Recessed table mount just behind front seats.



Every inch of the interior has been cleaned and refurbished. We removed all the seats and most of the interior trim to clean 11 years of dirt and gunk from places you can't even see. All the fabric including the ceiling was steam cleaned. We removed the fabric from the front seats and machine washed it using the hand wash setting on the washer. I added new padding to the seats and the head rests before putting the seat covers back on. The results were fantastic the upholstery looks like new again!

Well that just about completes this project. Still have to replace the timing belt and pulleys as well as the water pump. Replace the lower ball joints and buy new tires for the rear. I have a 13,500 BTU Carrier roof mount AC unit to replace the undersized Coleman unit that also needs to be installed. Then it will be ready to serve as my new mobile office and weekend getaway vehicle

**SEE YOU ON THE ROAD!
ROBERT**