

#58

FOOD 6 SAUCY RECIPES FOR SUMMER HOLIDAYS

DECEMBER 2023 - JANUARY 2024 | ISSUE 58

go!

Drive & Camp

Drakensberg

800+ jolly Jimnys have a jol in Clarens

South Coast holidays

Serene resorts among the bustle



The Boland

Shout it from
Noah's mountain

CARAVAN TEST

**NAYELA'S OKAPI X
FLEXES ITS MUSCLES**

NEW WHEELS

**SIXTH-GEN MITSUBISHI
TRITON COMING SOON****NEWS** 10 new camp spots across SA | **GEAR** 18 budget-friendly presents for Christmas**TOW TEST** Ford Ranger: all brawn *and* brains! | **2023** We look back on a contentious yearR110,00 (including VAT)
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Here's to new friends

I find myself a tad envious of Mic after reading his column for this issue. He's comfortably positioned at his usual spot in the back of the magazine, and I suggest you read his piece first then circle back here, as I don't want to jump the gun.

And no, my envy doesn't stem from the fact that he's turned a hobby into a career. One could level the same charge at the Drive & Camp team... and many have. Nor is it because Mic and co have kitted out a Suzuki Jimny with every 4x4 gadget imaginable and embarked on an overland



trek to Zambia, leaving me feeling a shade of green. By the way, Mic took the Jimny on that journey to test if it could stand up to the task as a serious overland vehicle. You can find his impressions on pg 116 – that is if you haven't read it already.

What has me quietly muttering "lucky devil" is his account of the camaraderie

around the campfire in the Luangwa Valley, where they pitched their tents. How they shared the day's adventures and what was special to them.

I'm envious because I've sat around such campfires, too. In places like the Bushveld, the Wild Coast, the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands, the Namib Desert, a cattle farm in northern Namibia and recently at the Bull Run in Vanwyksvlei. I long

for those campfire gatherings. When Mic writes about how quickly strangers on a tour become friends – and about the guy who came to that realisation on that evening – it reminds me of a time I also toured Lesotho with a group.

You know how it goes, everyone meets up somewhat sheepishly on the first night (though I always feel like the shyest one), but soon enough you find someone you click with. And before you know it, just a few nights later, you're sitting around a fire chatting like old buddies.

To me, the best part of such a tour is realising how we're all essentially the same. Whether it's around a table at the restaurant at the top of Sani Pass or in a bar near Katse Dam, there are no lawyers, estate agents, police officers, mining magnates or journalists. Everyone is simply a traveller, there for the same reason: in pursuit of happiness, as Mic's new acquaintance can attest.

If your heart is set on Namibia, Botswana or the Northern Cape for your next happiness quest, I have good news. This year's second edition of *Routes that Rock* has just hit the shelves, brimming with all the information you need to explore this part of the continent.

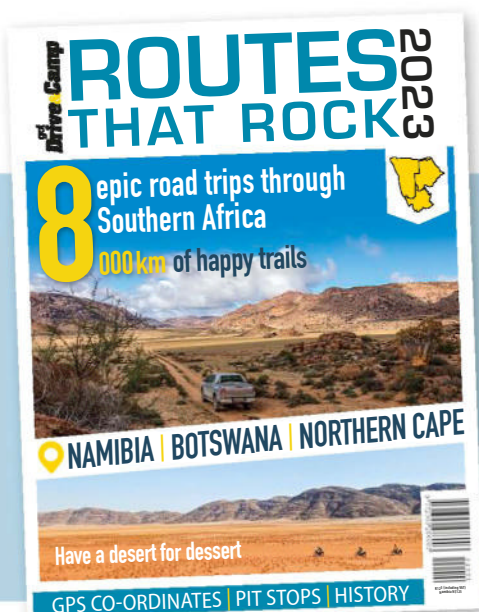
The editorial team and a select group of seasoned travel writers, under Cyril's stewardship, have outdone themselves and compiled eight epic journeys (spanning over 8 000 km) to make your planning that much easier. Pick it up and start getting your ducks in a row. The horizon is calling!

Safe travels.

Schalk

EDITOR

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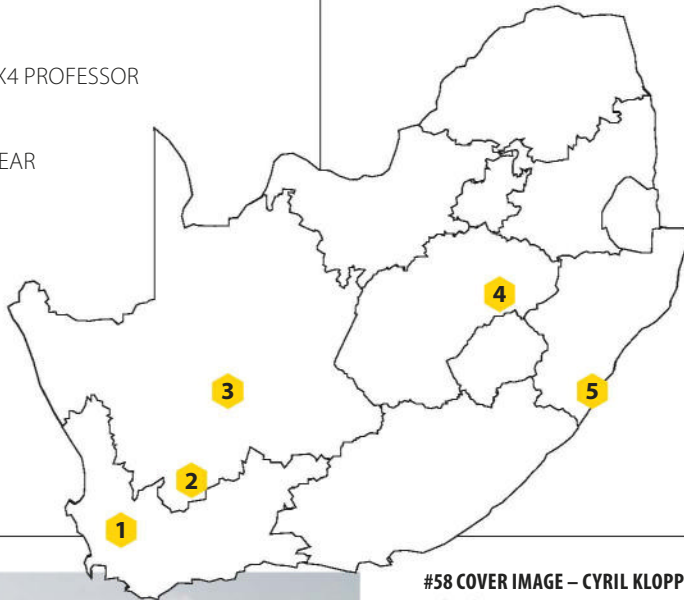
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#58 COVER IMAGE – CYRIL KLOPPER

“During the 2023 Suzuki Jimny Gathering a group of enthusiasts headed up the northern slopes of the Drakensberg. At the three-day event there was always a ‘Fun Official’ on hand to check if everyone was happy and whether things were going to plan. Here the group takes a break on the 4x4 trail and a Fun Official asks if he could get anyone a bottle of water or a cooldrink.”

Camera settings Canon EOS 5D; f18;
1/400 sec; 24 mm focal length; ISO-400

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4 SHELF DELUXE

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- > HARD TOP
- > 2 X ZIP CLOSURE DOORS
- > SHELVES ZIP OPEN TO CONVERT THE CUPBOARD FROM SHELVEING TO HANGING SPACE
- > COMPLETE IN CARRY BAG

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Far from done

I'm reclining here, flipping through the latest *Drive & Camp* – marvelling at all the fancy caravans: are all these luxuries in the bush really necessary? Absolutely!

This backroad-grandma might be a tad old-fashioned and believes that the fewer things that can rattle, the lower your chances of trouble. After my husband, Koos, passed away in 2004, I exchanged our Jurgens Penta for a brand-new Conqueror Commander. My son Woudter and I looked at various off-road caravan options, but I wanted something I could handle and set up on my own. I'm a shortish grandma and at 71, I still manage fine.

Over the past 19 years, I've only had one mishap. The jockey wheel shook loose on the Wildeperdehoek Pass in Namaqualand, and the light coupling



also came off. Fortunately, I heard it when it dropped, and the farmer's co-op folk in Garies were thankfully able to assist. If newly built caravans are made to last – like mine – you're going to be able to tackle great distances. Just give your caravan a bit of love. Mine still has its original National Luna fridge/freezer.

And remember, the Waterberg has beautiful backroads and camping spots.

SOPHIA POTGIETER
Modimolle



BRIEF



Sophia wins a cooler bag worth R485. Whether you're a camper, fisherman, or sports fan next to a cricket pitch, this cooler bag has room for a lunch box and a 1,5 l cooldrink bottle. The lid also has space for a coffee flask. The interior is lined with PVC, which makes it easy to keep the bag clean and hygienic. The bag has a short strap that reaches over the top and attaches with a Velcro strip, as well as a longer shoulder strap if you're going to carry it over longer distances. It's an ideal picnic accessory or a padkos bag for a road trip. campcover.co.za



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Grace, for sure

I nearly sold my drone, a DJI Spark, a few weeks back. We're moving from Vanderbijlpark to Somerset West and need to clear out quite a bit. I've been storing the drone for a while as I've felt too unsure to fly it, fearing I might damage it. But I've decided to keep it and use it for photos and videos.

The time came to drive down to Somerset West – coincidentally, the same weekend as the Jimny gathering in Clarens*. I would have loved to attend as I also own a Jimny, but for this trip, I was using my Duster.

On the N1 near Matjiesfontein, we were almost overwhelmed by the floral splendour and looked for a turn-off spot to take some pictures and videos. I put the Spark on the Duster's roof and launched it.

I didn't intend it to fly far; it was just for a few photos and a video. I tried to fly in a circle but struggled against the wind which had picked up suddenly. I tried to bring it closer but got confused with the control buttons.

At the age of 74, one's reactions aren't as quick anymore.

The Spark flew higher and I struggled to bring it back, and by now I wasn't sure which way is front or back. Meanwhile, the Spark was heading down the road. With trembling fingers, I pushed and pulled at the controls, realising I no longer knew what I was doing. The Spark got smaller until I couldn't see it anymore. I realised I was going to lose it. I ran after it for a bit, but the Spark vanished – and then I saw the remote control had also lost contact.

Out here in the Karoo with all the flowers and bushes, it would be impossible to find the Spark again, and I made peace with that as I walked back to the car. I decided to keep the remote control on, holding it outside the window as we drove slowly. The red light on the remote staid on, but suddenly it switched to green... and then back to red. Either we'd driven too far or the drone's battery ran out.

I couldn't do a U-turn so had to reverse. The Duster's reverse sensors started screaming, of course, because they spotted our trailer behind us.

In the meantime, a group of workers approached, gesturing at something. I got out with the remote and the green light comes to life. They pointed to the veld, but there was a high fence I couldn't get over.

"Can you see it?" I asked them, but then, as I approached, I heard the hum of the drone. It was a miracle; the Spark was hovering half a metre above the ground, on the other side of the fence. That battery was about to give up the ghost any minute now. Carefully, I flew the drone back over the fence and landed it on the road.

What a relief! I call it grace.

BAREND WINTER
Vanderbijlpark

** Do read our comprehensive report about the Jimny gathering on page 50. – Ed*





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TONGA



And the winner...

Congratulations to Daisy Visser of Kempton Park who is the lucky winner of the prize in our October-November 2023 issue for a National Luna 72 Legacy Smart fridge/freezer worth R16 600!

The Vissers are feeling thoroughly spoiled, as they've always carried a separate fridge specially for their meat. Daisy says she initially wasn't a camper, but things changed 13, 14 years ago when she met her husband, Johan. "Johan just said we're going camping... are you coming along or staying behind?"

And so Daisy's camping life started and they found a spot at Dube near Brits.

It started with a Jurgens Lite, a trailer with a rooftop tent. They later acquired a Jurgens Rascal, and a few months ago,



invested in a Gypsy Romany.

"We bought a National Luna ice machine two years ago, and there is nothing better. And now, with our new fridge, we are in seventh heaven! Thank you so very much. I'm on the brink of retirement, and then we're going to camp even more. We happen to be on our way to Dube again."



Follow @wegrysleep on Instagram and tag your photos with #wegrysleep, and we might repost them on our stream or feature them here.

COMMENTARY OF THE MONTH!



We asked on Facebook what you would pack in a cooler box if you could only choose three items. Ice, brandy and Coke were at the top of the list, but here are a few more.

Alta Dusse Coke, chocolate and lip balm.

Marthie van Breda Dry white wine, ice and a packet of potato chips.

Marie Maritz Meat, water and margarine.

Lynette Morgan Three bottles of red wine.

Suzette Lambrechts A flask of coffee, a lunch box full of tasty meatball sandwiches with Melrose cheese and a bag full of Lindt chocolate.



Photo: Instagram. "A good start to the day." @dust_and_diesel_overlanding

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A celebration of new campsites

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, quite a few new campsites have popped into existence. We've already written about a number of these resorts, but here are another 10 that we've come to know about.

Zebra Bush Camp

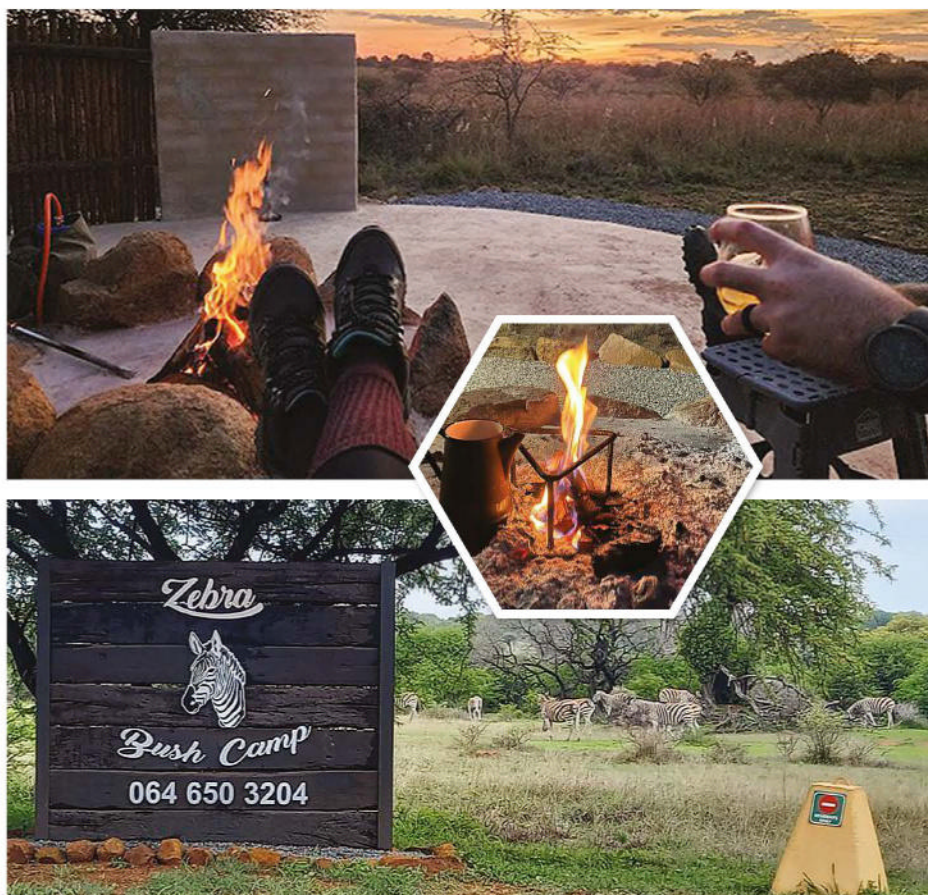
The Zebra Bush Camp is located in Dinokeng, just down the road from the Jabula and Kyleu campsites on Kaallaagte Road. Owners Natanya Bushey and her partner Bryan Booyse established Zebra in 2022.

The idea from the start was to set up a bush camp with a few stands, explains Natanya. They bought the land (21 hectares) in 2021, and it was just bush. What counts in this piece of land's favour is that it falls within the Big Five area of Dinokeng.

Campers have two choices: you can opt for one of three stands in a space enclosed by an electric fence, or you can pitch your tent outside the fenced area and share nature with the wildlife.

The entrance to the fenced area is 250 metres from where you turn off from the Kaallaagte gravel road. A swimming pool is to the left after the gate, and the building in front of you is a kiosk.

There's a good 20 metres between you and your fellow campers in the bush, and as noise is not tolerated here, you won't even know they're around. Each of the three stands is along the fence, which means the wildlife comes close, but you remain on the safe side. The layout of the stands varies, but the facilities are the same: you have your own bathroom with a shower, basin and toilet (the dishwashing facilities are also here). A gas geyser ensures hot water, and the lights run off a small solar panel. So, there's



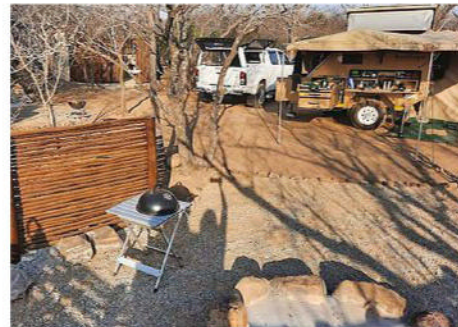
no 220V power here, but there are USB sockets if you want to charge your phone or torch during the day.

Each stand has a fire pit with a shield to one side, but the middle stand also boasts a rooftop tent on stilts with space for two.

The two stands outside the fence have similar facilities to the other three.

There's a shower, basin and toilet, but since you're now in nature, the "rooms" don't have a roof. They are, however, screened on the sides for privacy. There's no electricity here, and your water is heated in a donkey boiler.

Both have a fire pit perfect for socialising.



The plan is to build a hot tub at each of the enclosed stands.

The arrival and departure times are 14:00 and 11:00 respectively, and basic items such as wood (R25), ice (R15) and soft drinks (R15) are available.

Price R150 pn for the stand (this rate is waived for four or more people) and R220 pppn for both the fenced and open stands. R600 pn for the use of the rooftop tent. Up to six per stand are allowed – no children under 12 years or pets.

Contact 064 650 3204 or 082 500 8873

info@zebrabushcamp.co.za

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Mpofu Bush Camp

The Mpofu Bush Camp must be one of Dinokeng's best-kept secrets. The campsite was completed shortly after the pandemic but wasn't really open to the public at the time.

What makes Mpofu special is its location. It's tucked away in a corner in the central-southern part of Dinokeng, about 300 metres from the boundary fences. This means there are fewer people moving around, and you can prepare for a wildlife spectacle. Elephants are rare, but the rest of the Big Five are plentiful. Corné Pretorius, the manager of Mpofu, tells of a camper who recently asked what to do about going to the toilet from his tent because there was a lion next to the campsite. Corné says guests receive a safety talk at the campsite when they arrive, and wandering around is a no-go. There are signs reminding you not to stray too far.

Thus, the wildlife is one of the big pluses of the camp, but you're lucky if you get a place, because only 10 people are allowed at any one time.



The permanent structures form the hub of the camp. This includes a boma with a screen where a group can socialise. Behind the boma is a bathroom with two open showers – a donkey boiler provides the hot water. There's also a kitchen tent for guests.

Depending on which stand you choose, the amount of shade varies, but each one comes with a standalone braai and a movable fire pan. There's no power; the idea is to camp self-sufficiently.

The waterhole is on the western side of the main camp. Since it's the only drinking spot in the immediate vicinity, animals regularly make an appearance. Large herds of wildebeest, for example, are a common sight.

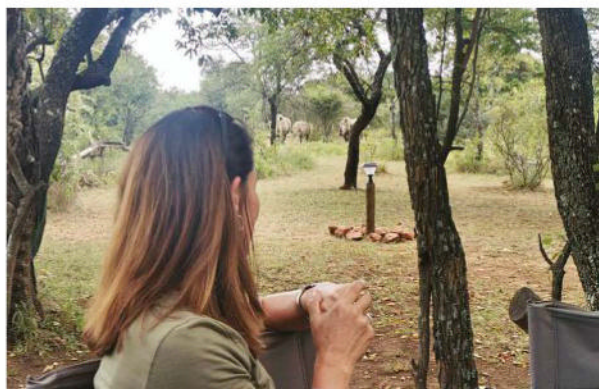
Price A base rate of R500 pn for up to four people; one additional guest allowed at R190 pn (no children under 12 years). Book for a minimum of 2 nights.

Contact ☎ 084 552 7602

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📍 Africa Wilderness Bush Camps - Mpofu Bush Camp

📍 GPS S25.430816 E28.354770





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Hartbees Bush Camp

The Hartbees Bush Camp in the eastern part of Dinokeng is one of the camps within the reserve to consider if you prefer having a fence around you.

The campsite was completely renovated in March this year after Valdetta van der Watt and Coenie du Plessis took over. They added two new stands and fitted private bathrooms to two of the stands.

The fenced area comprises four hectares. The two stands at the top are a good choice for two families who want to camp next to each other. The stands are paved and also have a shade net over

them with a boma that both can use. They also share a bathroom. The middle two stands, numbers 11 and 12, are on either side of the newly built bathroom building. Each has a built-in braai place and you get a concrete slab. Your private bathroom comes with a shower, basin and toilet.

The lower stands, of which numbers 4 and 8 share a bathroom, are intended for tents. Stands 3, 5, 6, and 7 are closer to the eastern side of the camp, each with paving, a shade net and a standalone braai. Stands 9 and 10 are the newest – here you get your stand on grass in the open and near shade trees. Number 10 is

alongside the fence and boasts a private braai place and boma.

All the stands have a power point (standard domestic socket) and a tap, and the braais have grids.

They offer game drives at R380 pp. These are usually early morning or late afternoon and last about three hours. For R450 pp, you can walk among the Big Five with two guides.

Price R450 pp for stands with their own bathrooms; otherwise R380.

Contact 📞 079 380 3601

✉️ hartbeesboskamp@gmail.com

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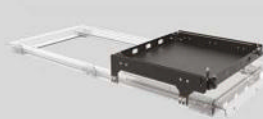
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Olive-Tree

The Olive-Tree campsite is brand new and provides a unique experience you're unlikely to encounter at just any campsite. It's located 35 km outside Cullinan, on the Blue Gates farm where the owners raise Nguni cattle. Guests could previously relax on the farm at the Dikgomo Cottages, but Olive-Tree now allow campers.

Olive-Tree is approximately 130 m from the Dikgomo accommodation, a 33 x 33 m plot of land that is enclosed by a 1,2 m high fence. It must be one of the largest stands in the country! The fence is there to keep your pets – large and small – inside.

The campsite is for up to four adults and four children, and only one reservation is accepted at a time. Pierre Steyn, the manager, explains that they looked at options for budget-friendly accommodation, but at the same time wanted to offer guests an opportunity closer to nature. A campsite was thus a logical choice. And because they only allow one reservation, it's intimate, and you socialise with your own people.

As for amenities, it compares to other bush camps. The bathroom building is simple yet stylish and practical. The building is roofed, and the wall panels are made of thin wooden slats. The shower, basin and toilet are in one room, with the kitchen next door. Here it's still under a roof but open on two sides – and there is a sink for washing dishes, and on the worktop next door is a two-burner gas stove.

The campsite has 220 V electricity – it is supplied from the farmhouse and is not affected by load shedding. The power point accepts a standard domestic plug, but you may not draw more than 1,2 kW of power. Hot water is supplied by a solar geyser.

You can set up camp wherever you want. In the middle of the campsite is a large tree, and underneath it are four concrete benches in a circle with a fire pit in the middle.

You're allowed to walk around on the farm, and if you have excess energy you want to burn off, you can tackle the Dairy hiking trail. It's about a half-hour's walk and there's a good chance you'll see Ngunis.

The last 3 km to Olive-Tree is on a gravel road, but it's accessible by a standard vehicle and road caravan.

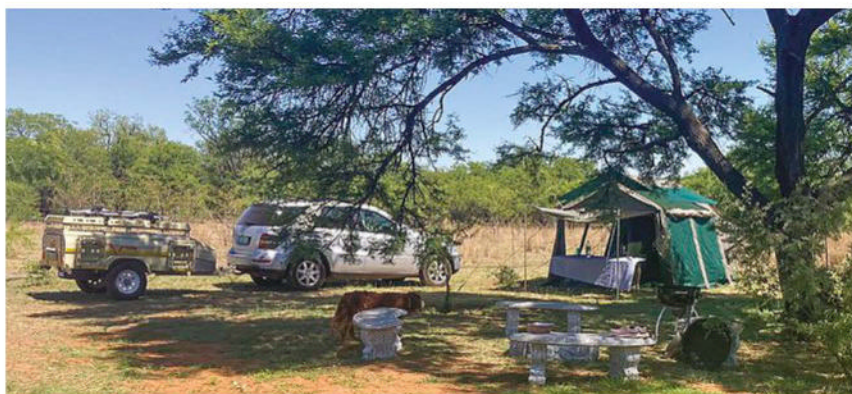
Price R495 pn for the campsite.

Contact 083 417 8937

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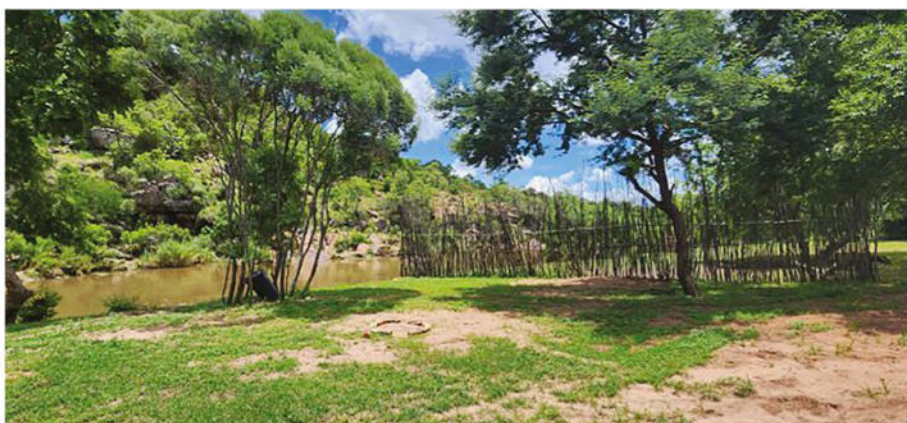
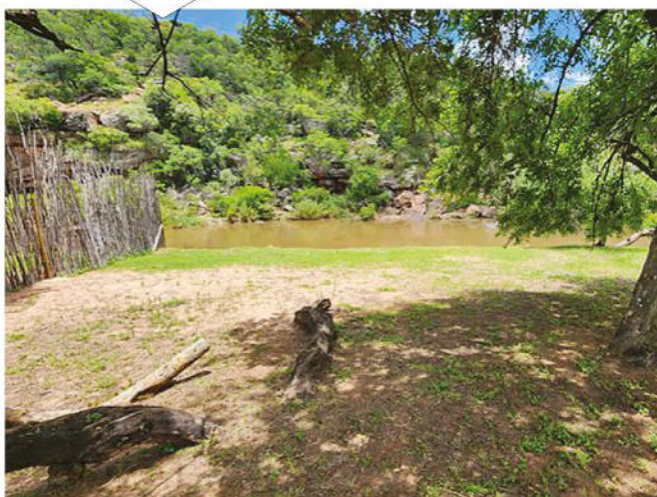
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Angels Valley

Angels Valley's first campsites were built three years ago, with more following a year later, and the owner Louw Alberts is busy with yet more additions.

Angels Valley spans 53 hectares and borders the Wilge River for 3 km, which flows through here. The border between Mpumalanga and Gauteng is also the western border of the farm. The farm lies on the Mpumalanga side, with Bronkhorstspuit being the nearest town.

The last 20 km to this destination is a dirt road. Louw mentions that the area is more suited for campers with tents or an off-road trailer, and your vehicle should have a reasonable ground

clearance. The river is a major focus point for campers, and you can expect to catch carp, yellowfish, catfish and bass. (A strict catch-and-release rule applies.)

There's no check-in at an office; instead, signs guide you in the right direction everywhere.

The "oldest" campsites, Rocky Mountain, are 180 m from the river, and one of the five stands has its own fishing spot by the water. Each stand has a built-up braai that includes a grid.

The newer stands, Silver Sands, consist of two camps next to each other and is adjacent to the river. Next to these are another three stands, Rustic River, which are also along the river.

The ablution block consists of four rooms – one with a bath and the other three with showers, and there is a basin and toilet in each of the four. A gas geyser provides hot water.

The two newest stands, Eagles Nest, are still under construction. They will have their own bathrooms with two showers and two toilets.

There is no electricity at any of the stands; each stand has a tap; and Louw is in the process of installing WiFi.

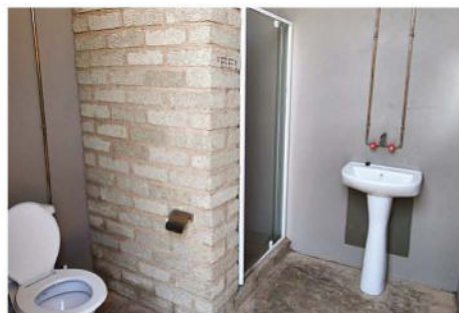
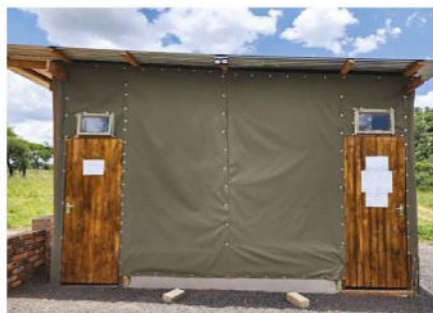
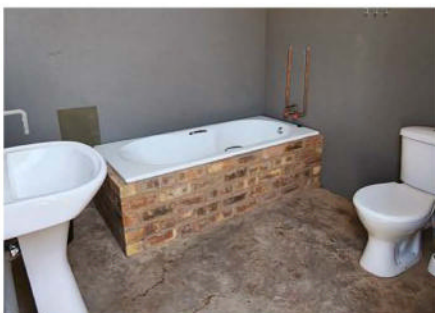
Price R240 or R300 pn per stand for two.

Contact 063 501 3532

info@angelsvalley.co.za

angelsvalley.co.za

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A LIGHT FOOT CREATES A STRONG GRIP.

A lead foot is fun at the track, but you're never going to max out your red line on the trail. In fact, slower is usually better. We won't delve into lore about tortoises and hares, but there's a reason that story rings true. Truth is, off-roading is probably the most fun you can have at 8kmph. Putting pressure on the gas can create wheel spin on unstable surfaces (which are most of the surfaces we are concerned with). Wheel spin destroys the ground and creates ruts. You're literally digging yourself a hole.



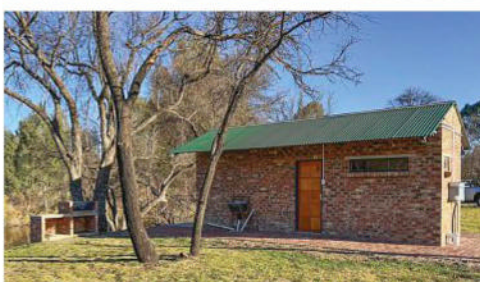
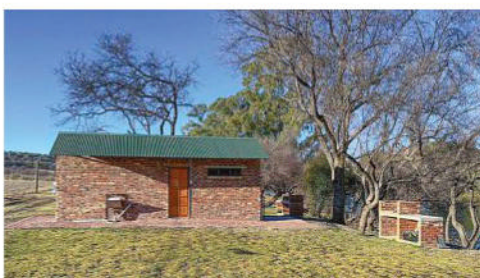
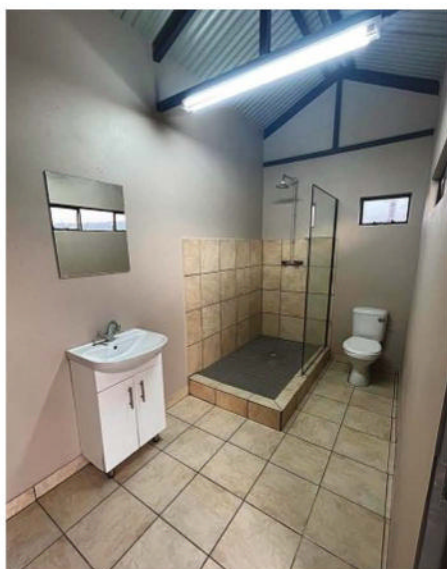
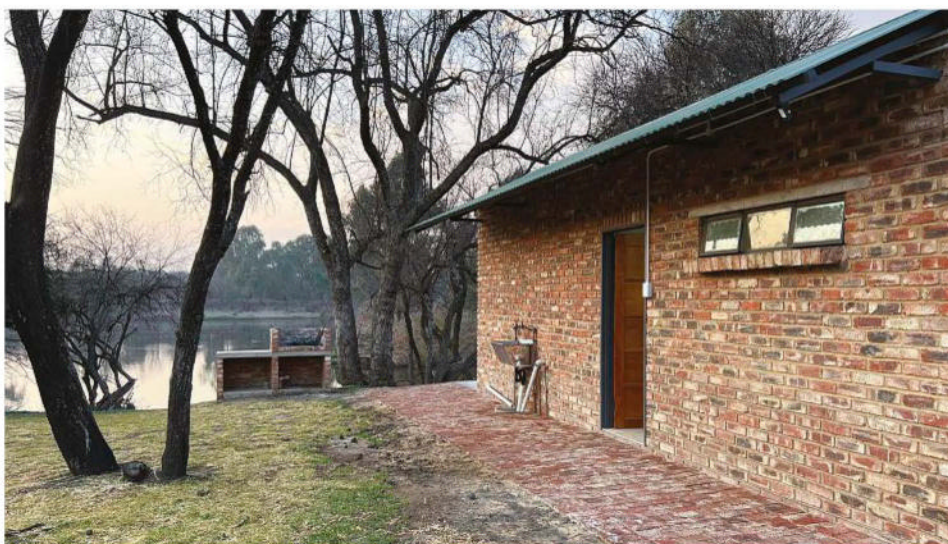
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Maseplaas

The Maseplaas River Camp is a new campsite along the Vaal River. It is on the North West side of the river, 7,5 km from Parys on the R500 towards Fochville.

The first two of seven planned stands are newly completed, and if things go according to plan, the next two will be well underway by the time you read this. The intention is to have all seven finished by the end of 2024.

The stands are neatly arranged on the riverbank, with each pair of stands separated in the middle by an elongated building with a pitched roof. This structure houses two bathrooms. So, yes, each stand has its own facilities.

Each bathroom includes a cupboard with a basin on top, and a mirror against the wall. The shower section is in one corner, separated by a large glass panel from the toilet. However, the shower trough extends beyond the glass panel, giving a more open shower experience. The extra high ceiling contributes to the modern feel.

Outside the building, there is a stainless-steel sink – a gas geyser ensures hot water is available.

The stands measure 10 x 12 m and your caravan is parked on a lawn. You can choose between a standard domestic socket or the Fredlin type for your caravan's power plug. Your stand's built-up braai is on the river side and comes with its own grid.

Don't be surprised if a cow, sheep or goat drops by for a visit; the owner Jan Lubbe is a farmer. However, this unfortunately means that pets are not allowed.

The last 850 m to the campsite is a dirt road right up to the river. Campers receive a remote control for the gate – the keys to your bathroom are also attached to it.

Price R750 p.n. per stand for up to six people.

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Mattanu

Around Kimberley, camping spots are as rare as hen's teeth, and although the private game reserve Mattanu set up its campsites two years ago, not everyone is aware of this.

Mattanu opened its doors to the public in 2006 as an ecotourism destination. It is the only reserve in the country where you can view the breeding programmes of animals such as sable antelopes, buffalo, red, golden and black wildebeest, golden gnu, black impala, tsessebe and Livingstone's eland on the same grounds.

Aside from the luxurious accommodation at the lodge, there are five campsites nestled in the cool shade of camelthorn trees with red Kalahari sand underfoot. Each comes equipped with an electrical point (domestic plug), tap, light and a fire pit. You also get your own braai with a grid, and a complimentary bag of camelthorn wood is provided.

The communal facilities are grouped together in a square and include a plunge pool, bathrooms (two showers and toilets each for men and women), a braai area and a kitchen. The braai sites are next to a canopy with tables and benches on a concrete floor, and adjacent to this is an open sand area with a fire pit at its centre. The neighbouring kitchen has a fridge, microwave and kettle.

There's a watering hole a stone's throw from the square where you can watch animals like kudu, impala and eland come to drink. Animals also sometimes wander through the camp itself.

You're not allowed to drive around the reserve, but game drives are offered at



R595 pp (R675 if you opt for a quad bike).

The camping section is about half a kilometre from the main buildings, and if you fancy a break from braaiing, meals are available at the lodge.

Pets are not permitted at Mattanu, and a nature walk is at your own risk.

Price R745 per campsite pn for four people; thereafter R105 pp (half price for children under 12; free if under six).

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Blou Porselein

Where in the country can you camp, wake up in the morning and pick out a few fresh eggs from a nest for breakfast? Blou Porselein is such a place, but there are a host of other reasons to camp here.

The campsite is on Botmansdrif farm, 15 km outside Riebeeck-Kasteel, where the Visser family farm with alfalfa, wheat and cattle, among other things. The Berg River borders the farm for 5 km.

Theresa Visser says one of her sons, Bartho, is an avid rower, and a bunch of canoeing enthusiasts were looking for overnight spots along the river.

They established a 40 x 40 m lawn, and planted indigenous trees including

monkey thorn, paperbark thorn, karee and ash. The calf pens were converted into a bathroom with gas geysers, four shower cubicles, three toilets, three basins and a dishwashing sink.

The stands are unmarked; you pitch on the lawn wherever it suits you best. There are no electrical points on the lawn, but you may use the ones at the bathrooms. Or if necessary, you can run an extension cord. There are loose braai drums you can pull closer once you've settled in.

The fishing spot is 100 m away, and there are a number of hiking trails and mountain bike tracks on the farm where Bartho's sister, Zanlie, lends a hand.

While you are on a working farm, do

take the opportunity to experience it first-hand. Depending on the season, you can watch the fields being worked or harvested, and you might even get a chance to ride along on a tractor with Theresa's husband, Carel. For a rand or three per egg, Eckart – the third sibling – will show you the ropes while you pick fresh eggs from the chicken coop yourself.

The last 5 km is a good gravel road accessible to any vehicle and caravan.

Price R150 pppn and R80 for children. No pets allowed.

Contact 082 378 7595

theresa@swartlandmail.co.za

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A Touch of Plaas

A mere 14 km outside Ladismith in the Klein Karoo, you can pitch your tent in a tranquil farm setting with a view of Towerkop. A Touch of Plaas is the creation of Rina and Kotie Smit.

The couple are seasoned campers and not too long ago returned from Mozambique where they were missionaries in the north of the country. For the first two years, they managed with a two-man tent, and for 16 years their kitchen was under a tree.

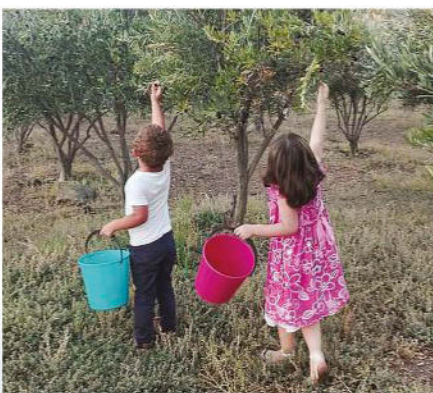
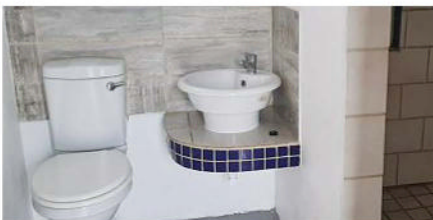
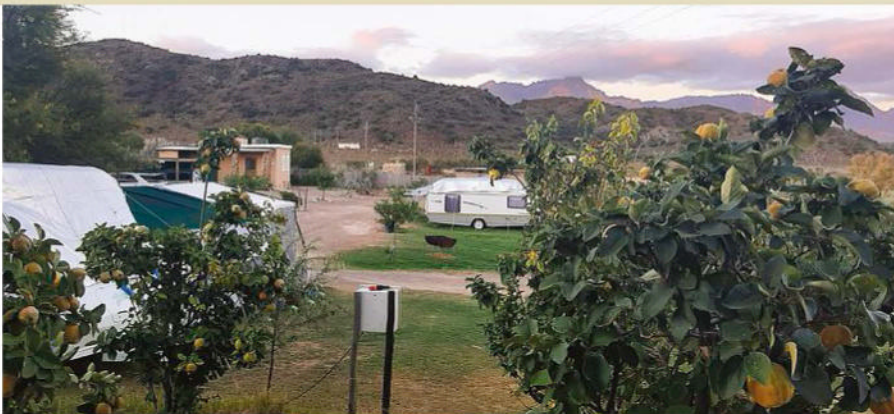
A Touch of Plaas is on the farm Ou Skool, which farms olives, pomegranates and quinces, and campers can help out during the harvest time. This is usually around April, but towards the end of the year – in November and December – there is an abundance of fruit in the wider area including peaches, grapes, pears, plums, watermelon and cantaloupe.

The campsite consists of two flanks with three stands on each. You pitch on grass, and the trees will need a few more years of growth before you can rely on their shade. Each stand has an electrical point (domestic socket), and you get a loose braai drum for making a fire. There's a communal fire pit if you want to socialise with other campers.

Campers who stay longer, apart from paying for their stay, pay extra for the electricity they use.

Each of the flanks has its own ablution block housing three bathroom units, so you have your own private bathroom with a shower, basin and toilet. (Both bathrooms have outside dishwashing facilities.) A gas geyser ensures hot water.

Rina says farm products – fresh bread, jam, and a cheese or olive platter – are available on request. Pets are allowed



provided you arrange beforehand, as there are pet lambs and chickens on the farm.

The campsite is 600 m from the tar road and accessible for a standard vehicle and caravan.

Price R90 pppn (R30 for children under 12 years). Weekly and family packages are available.

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Mooiuitsig

If you don't know who Hientjie, Jan Koeries, Eep, Ant Saar, Gallie Blikbek and Rooi Mien are, then you haven't been to Mooiuitsig yet. This campsite belongs to Rudie and Marijke Kleynhans, and each stand share a nickname belonging to Kleynhans family members.

The stands are a new addition to the 80-hectare farm just outside Jongensfontein where the couple farm with sheep and Geraldton Wax, a type of Australian fynbos. The six stands are at least 70 m apart on an open piece of land near clusters of milkwood trees.

From here, you can see the Indian Ocean about 1,6 km away. Two of the stands, Rooi Mien and Gallie Blikbek,

have a caravan that you rent along with the stand; for the other four, you bring your own camping gear.

Although the stands are private and sufficiently distant, two share an ablution block. Each accommodates two bathroom units that are specifically assigned to a stand. The bathroom units are quite spacious with a basin, toilet and an open shower sectioned off by a wall. The hot water is supplied by a gas geyser.

Each ablution block has a communal dishwashing area under a roof. The lights operate on solar power – there is no 220 V for campers – although there are USB sockets in the bathrooms where you can charge your phone.

You camp partially under a milkwood

tree on grass with a built-up braai (without a grid) and an adjacent concrete table-and-bench set. You also have a tap at your stand, and if you need ice, knock on Marijke's door. A 2 kg bag costs R20, but she says each cube weighs 42 g, and you only need three cubes to fill a glass!

The final 500 m to the stands is a gravel road which is fine for a sedan and caravan. Pets are allowed provided you arrange in advance.

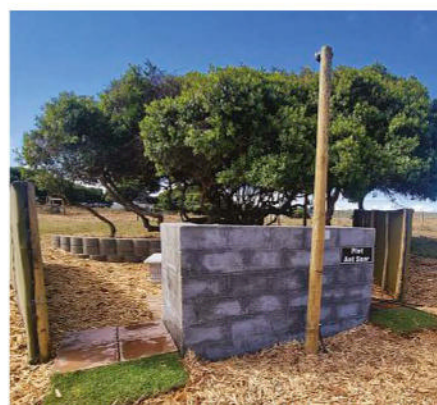
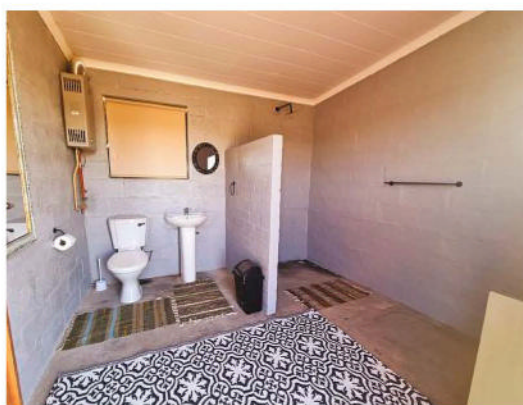
Price R500 per night per stand for the first four people; thereafter R80 pp.

Contact 082 521 0193

📧 mooiuitsigplaas@gmail.com

📍 Mooiuitsig Vakansie Akkommodasie - Jongensfontein

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Isuzu drives support for SA women's hockey

The South African women's hockey team is currently on a tour through South Africa, visiting schools and coaching young players. Isuzu Motors South Africa announced during this tour that they will be an official sponsor of the women's hockey team.

Ziphindiwe Ngcobo, Marketing Executive of Isuzu Motors South Africa, says the manufacturer is thrilled to support the national women's hockey team on their journey to the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris. "Their dedication

and core values of passion, pride, unity and resilience align closely with Isuzu's own ethos, and we believe this partnership will not only boost the team's performance but also inspire aspiring female athletes across the country."

Erin Christie, co-captain of the team, expressed their gratitude for Isuzu's support. "We are honoured to have Isuzu as our partner as we embark on this journey to the next Olympic Games. We want to inspire young sportswomen and the generations who will follow in our footsteps."



JAC of all trades



JAC Motors South Africa has just released its prices for the T9 bakkie. There are four models to choose from:

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| • The T9 2.0L CTi 4x2 Super Lux | R579 900 |
| • The T9 2.0L CTi 4x4 Lux | R599 900 |
| • The flagship T9 2.0L CTi 4x4 Super Lux | R649 900 |

The T9 prices include a five year/100 000 km warranty, a five year/100 000 km service plan and 24-hour roadside assistance. Service intervals are every 10 000 km. JAC Motors has been expanding its presence in South Africa since April 2017 and has established a network of more than 70 dealers across the country. [jacmotors.co.za](https://www.jacmotors.co.za)

Four million engines and counting at Struandale

Ford South Africa was established in 1923, and 41 years later, Henry Ford's son, also named Henry, inaugurated the Struandale Engine Plant. Now in its 59th year, Struandale has announced the production of four million engines. Engine number 4 000 000 is a 2.0 Bi-Turbo which will be sent to Ford's Silverton assembly plant outside Pretoria to be installed in a Ranger.

"The Struandale Engine Plant has been instrumental in Ford's development and growth over the past 59 years, particularly for our export operations. The four million total engine production, along with the 300 000 2.0L Single Turbo and Bi-Turbo diesel engines assembled to date, are remarkable achievements," says Ockert Berry, VP Operations, Ford South Africa.





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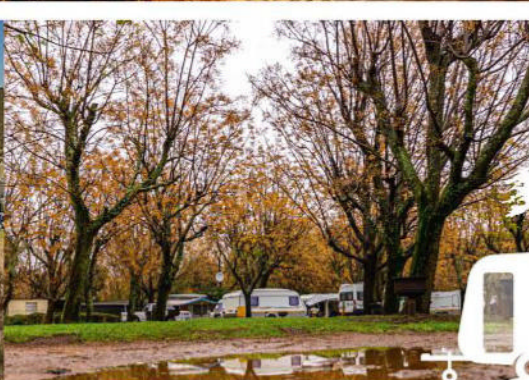
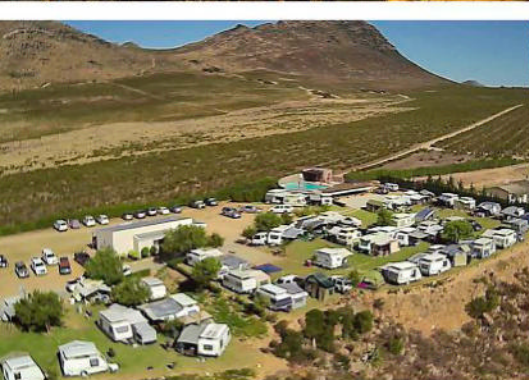
The SACA camping experience is for young and old alike. Come and experience the privileges that SACA offers you. You will not only have a better camping experience, but you can also share in the advantages that membership offers you. SACA members enjoy discount at certain resorts, discount on purchases as well as discount on vehicle purchases. We also experience higher levels of safety by camping in groups. The stories we all share makes for lasting memories.

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You do not need a fancy caravan; your tent is sufficient to enjoy the SACA camping experience. Your caravan or equipment provider can sell you all the equipment you may need or want, but the experience and best use of your equipment you will get through regular camping with friends and family.

SACA is divided into areas and regions throughout South Africa. Events are arranged in a safe and friendly environment. We extend an invitation to all who want to enjoy a SACA camping experience, to contact us at sawa_admin@sawa.org.za. You will be directed to the region closest to you.

If you want to see more about our rallies, our camp program, or just want to read about our camping activities, please visit our website at www.sawa.org.za.



Follow the camp program at www.sawa.org.za

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The latest Triton was introduced in July 2023 and sales kicked off in September in Thailand, where the bakkie is manufactured. Mitsubishi Motors South Africa has indicated they expect their first shipment of Tritons to arrive sometime in the first half of 2024.

It feels like just the other day when the previous Triton landed on our shores, and indeed it's only been six years. We attended its media launch on 23 January 2017, its facelift happened in 2019, and now it's being replaced



The sixth samurai

The sixth-generation Mitsubishi Triton is due to arrive soon, and Cyril Klopper is looking forward to it.

by a yet another generation. The folks at Mitsubishi sure are in a hurry...

The latest Triton employs a new ladder frame chassis composed of high-tensile steel, which according to Mitsubishi, has a 65% larger cross-sectional area that reduces flex and improves torsional stiffness by 40% and 60% respectively.

Also new is a 2,4 ℓ diesel engine – code named the 4N15 – and it's enhanced by either a single or a twin turbo, depending on the model. You also have the choice between a six-speed automatic and a six-speed manual transmission. Both transmissions use shift-by-wire technology, meaning there is no mechanical link between the gear lever and the gearbox; it all happens electronically.

Mitsubishi decided to retain its current Super Select II system used in the outgoing Triton. This four-wheel-drive system employs a centre limited-slip differential that directs 40% of engine power to the front wheels and 60% to the rear wheels.

A new off-road feature is the active yaw control that makes sharp turns on dirt roads safer. There are also other electronic aids including adaptive cruise control, collision-avoidance radar, blind-spot sensors, lane keeping, and cross traffic alert sensors.

The suspension is also new, with double wishbones for the front axles and lighter leaf springs at the rear with beefier shock absorbers.

Aside from all the mechanical components, the biggest change is, of course, its exterior appearance. The grille looks significantly



TRADESMEN. The load bed of the outgoing Triton was high above the ground and shallow. It appears the new Triton will have a more practical load bed (above).

different from the previous Triton and its face strongly reminds us of the JAC T9, but we trust the resemblance is purely coincidental. The front is characterised by a strip of LED daytime

Jimmy

5-door



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running lights that complete the three-part main lights, as well as two spotlights. The horizontally segmented grille is underlined by a broad skid plate.

From the side, the angular wheel arches are striking and the bodywork's character lines look as though they've been chiselled from the metal.

The interior has undergone a few changes too. The infotainment screen is new, but it doesn't look particularly modern. It has technology that would have impressed us five years ago, but now simply equal that of other manufacturers.

We like the vivid colour screen in the instrument cluster, but the rev counter and speedometer are old-school analogue – we do approve – it's just a surprising decision given that other manufacturers are going digital.

"I know that current as well as new fans will show an overwhelming interest in our all-new Triton bakkie, which will strengthen Mitsubishi Motors South Africa's lifestyle appeal," says Jeffrey Allison, General Manager of Marketing at MMSA.

“

Tough and reliable, the all-new Triton will make customers want to go on any adventure

”

"The all-new Triton has been completely reimagined under the design concept we call 'Beast Mode,' which is both audacious and daring," adds Seiji Watanabe, division general manager of design. "While expressing the toughness and power expected of a pickup truck, the all-new Triton also combines agility with the brand's robust design to create an imposing look. Tough and reliable, the all-new Triton will make customers want to go on any adventure."

The Triton also won the Good Design Award in October 2023, which is organised by the Japanese Institute of Design.

From the competitors

Smart brand-new double-cab bakkies



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Quiet down

The KwaZulu-Natal South Coast is a favourite among campers, which means that – especially this time of year – the campsites are bustling and packed to the brim. Never fear, though, if that is your idea of torture, there are quieter options available. We take a look at two of them.

Words and photos **Leon Botha**



Stretching from Durban to the Eastern Cape border, the coastline extends over just over 150 km, with campsites practically strung together like sardines.

Over the years, we've visited around 20 of them. One such a campsite was Prairie Park in Anerley, which has since changed ownership and is now known as Anerley Garden Park. Here you camp at an elevated position in a tropical garden, and the Blue Flag Southport beach is just a five-minute drive away. Another 5 km later you arrive at Lalanathi, where you set up camp a scant 100 m from the beach. This may well be one of the quietest beaches along this stretch of coastline. It's time to unwind.

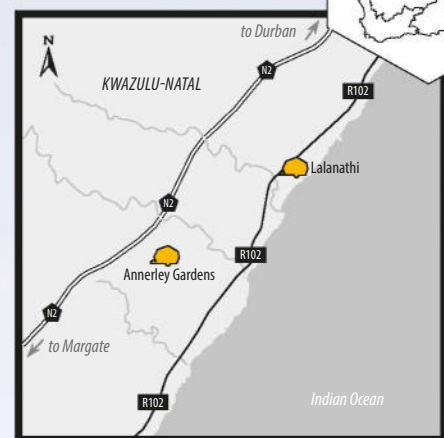
ANERLEY GARDEN PARK **A hillside haven**

Anerley Garden Park has two entrance gates. When you show up for the first

time, you enter through the first gate. This is after a steep hill between houses until you reach the resort's electric gate on your right. Immediately after the gate on the right is the office. For subsequent visits, you'll use the second gate, which is closer to the stands as well as the road to the beach.

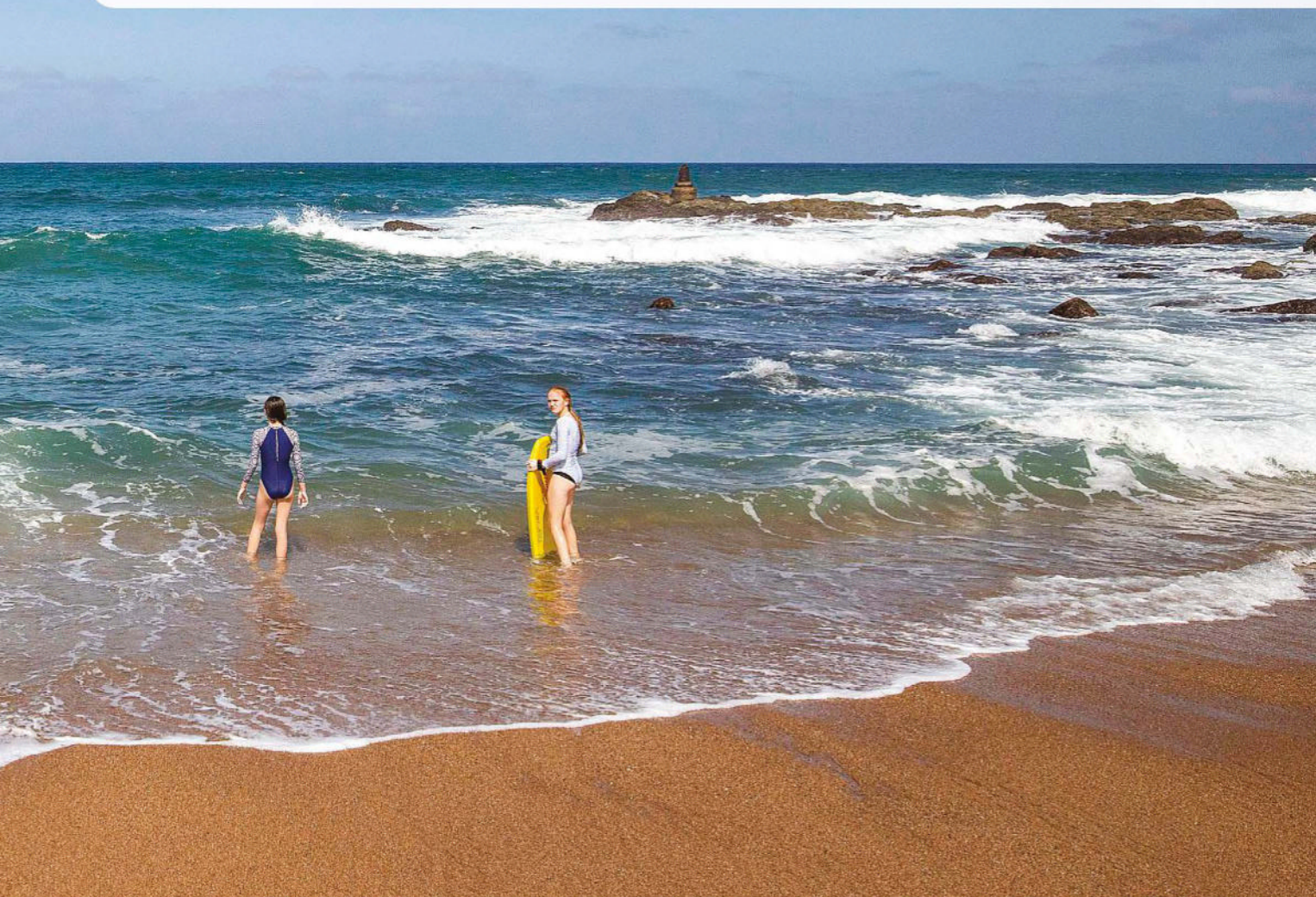
From the first gate, you get a good lay of the land. Your eyes are drawn along the road and houses towards the swimming pool, situated 180 m from the office and to your right. It's actually a small and a large pool connected in the middle. It's fenced in, and there's paving all around with a covered socialising area alongside it. There are a few palm trees a good three storeys high – a taste of what's to come in the campsite itself.

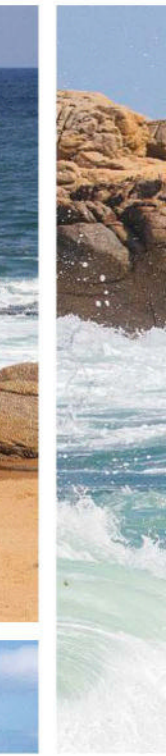
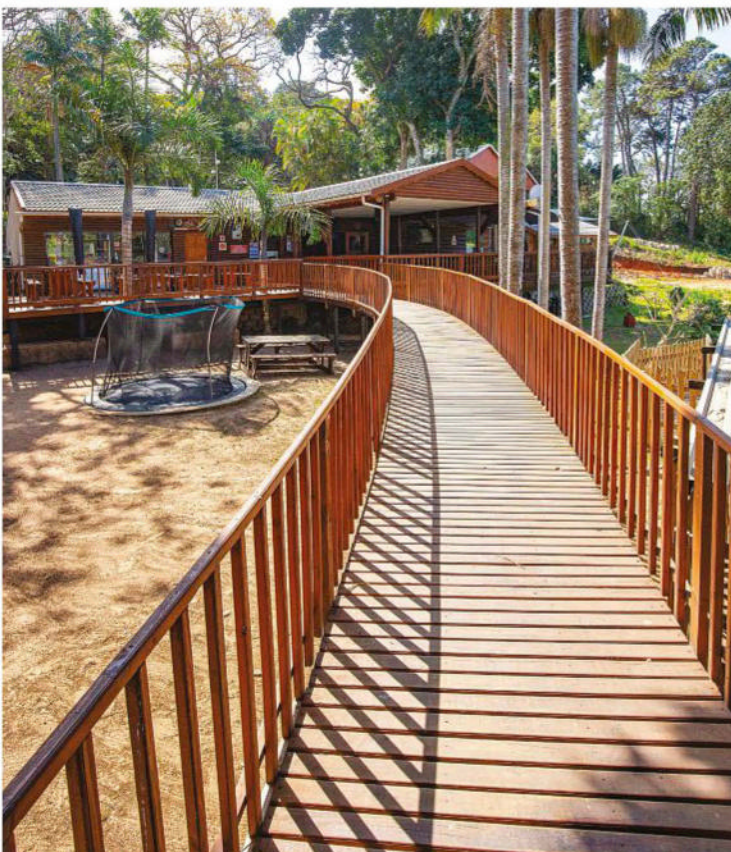
Adjacent is the heart of the resort: a gigantic wooden deck complete with a bar, restaurant, children's play area and even a shop for essentials. It's more



of a kiosk, really, but it saved us a trip to the shops as we could buy a washcloth and dishwashing liquid there.

A neat, elevated walkway links the road to this social hub. Owner Vossie Vorster explains it was part of the renovations since he bought the place three years ago.







SIGNALS. Southport Beach has blue-flag status and you can swim between two boulder outcroppings. The life guards also planted flags so that bathers can see exactly where it is safe to swim. The do, however, keep vigil on those who stray out of the safe zones and get into trouble.

When we arrived on Friday, Vossie reminded us of happy hour from 18:00 to 19:00 when drinks are half-price. Karaoke is also on offer, but by 23:00 everything has to quiet down.

The first stands start barely 50 m behind the restaurant, but interestingly, no campers are set up on this terrace. The second gate is now sharply to your left and operates with the same code as the lower gate. We were advised to pick stand 16 or 18, which are on the next terrace and where the ablution block is also located.

Aaron Ngwenya met us at the stand and promptly offered to help us set up. Our stand didn't have a braai, but Aaron brought us one with a grid. He promised to bring us a bin and also help dig a trench for rainwater. But he first headed back to the bathrooms where he was busy spraying down the stoep.

We were there for a long weekend, and were the only campers checking in on the Friday. It turns out the few campers already settled in were long-termers. Across from us was a young couple and their tent. They came over to welcome us once we'd settled in.

It was just after 18:00 and our braai fire was just getting going when Billy Ray Cyrus's "Achy Breaky Heart" started playing in the bar. Thankfully it wasn't

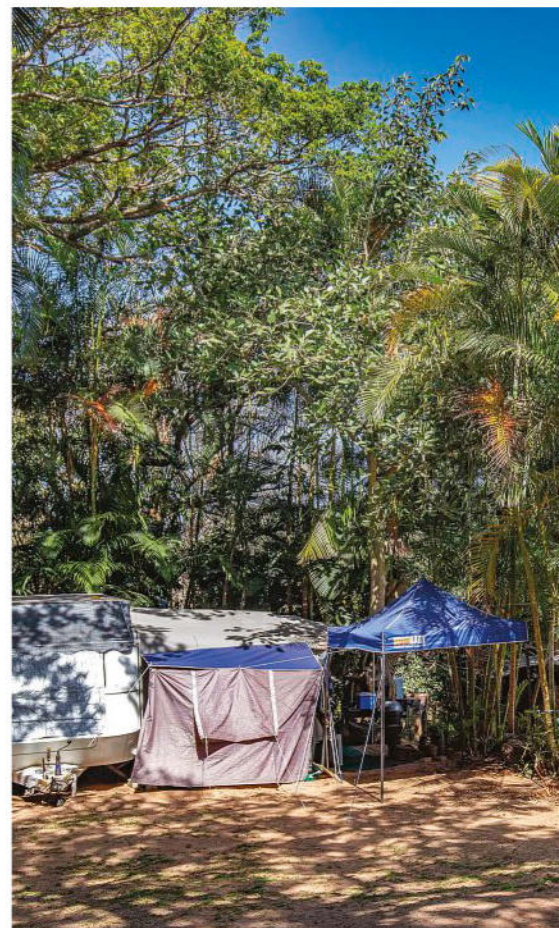
too noisy and the music was audible until later in the night when everyone finally settled down.

The first stands are opposite the pool but they're small and intended more for tents. These will soon be converted into parking spaces. The stands on the lower terrace are huge, and thanks to lush vegetation, the surface is mostly sand. But the farthest ones have neat new wooden cabins; some of the other stands are also earmarked to get theirs.

We saw a built-in braai at one of the first stands on the upper terrace, but otherwise, it's not a given. You do have a power point (a regular domestic socket) – the box is at the front by the road passing your stand. Atop the power box is a light.

The stands opposite the bathrooms have some grass, but elsewhere sand is your destiny. The few stands with grass are in the open, while others are more private with lush vegetation providing a screen.

You can tell the ablution block is old, but everything is clean and neat. From the lower stands, you have to climb a bunch of steps, but it's much more accessible on the upper section. The women's entrance is at the farthest point and the men's closer to the middle stands.



ROOMY AND RELAXING. Anerley Gardens has a leafy campsite where birds chatter happily in tall trees from dawn to dusk. The stands are well appointed and large enough to accommodate even the most space-hungry camping setups. You never have to worry about a neighbour infringing upon your stand.

The washing machines and tumble dryers are under cover on the other side (by the steps) – for tokens, you’ll need to pop by the bar. It costs R40 for the tumble dryer and R30 for the washing machine. Here you’ll also find a double sink for dishes.

The bathrooms are clearly well maintained because when you open the door, the air is fresh. On the men’s side, there are two basins on one side and three on the other. The stainless-steel finish makes you think of a school bathroom. There’s a worktop next to the basins along with mirrors.

Inside your shower cubicle is a bench and a shower curtain to keep things dry on the other side.

A visit to Southport Beach is a must – it’s 2,3 km back along your trail from the campsite. It’s a noteworthy beach; a sign explains why it has blue-flag status: the seawater is clean for swimming, there are lifeguards, the toilets are clean, and security personnel are on duty.

According to a map, the blue-flag boundary stretches from directly across the car park to the rock outcrop on the north side – a good 100 m. The

lifeguards’ flags are between the two rocky sections on the lovely swimming beach of about 45 m.

If you don’t like the waves, there’s a tidal pool across the car park.

One side forms its own beach where you can introduce toddlers to seawater. Dogs aren’t allowed, neither are fires or camping – and you must keep your clothes on, warns the sign. Lifeguards are on duty from 07:00 to 17:00.





Briefly | Anerly Garden Park



Campsite 15 spacious stands on two terraces with lots of shade and not much grass. There's WiFi near the bar.

Ablution facilities Old, neat and clean. Laundry facilities available.

Price Depending on the season, R300-R500 p/n for four; thereafter R150-R180 pppn (children R50-R100). Maximum of eight per stand.

Arrival and departure No fixed times.

Contact ☎ 039 681 6010

✉ admin@anerleygardenparkresort.co.za

✉ anerleygardenparkresort.co.za

Nearest town Port Shepstone, 10 km.

Road conditions Tar to the resort.
GPS S30.669085 E30.493042

Drive & Camp says If you want to escape the hustle and bustle of busy South Coast resorts during peak times, Anerley Gardens is the place for you.

LALANATHI

A lawn with a view

It's our first visit to Lalanathi, which means "come sleep over by us" in Zulu. Location-wise, Lalanathi is the complete opposite of Anerley Garden Park. Here, the sea's rumble replaces all the loeries you heard in the treetops of Anerley Garden Park. Although there's a low terrace or two, the resort is mostly on one level and a stone's throw from the beach. It genuinely feels as though you're camping in someone's garden.

Just like Anerley Garden Park, Lalanathi is quiet. It appears that many campers stay longer than just a holiday. The campers across from us – an older couple and their son – were only there for a week before heading back to the Midlands.

With more than 40 stands available, a spot is assigned to us in advance. Access is controlled by an electronic gate. Upon registering at the office – a massive wooden building to the right of the road – it feels as though you're standing in front of a school tuck shop. You don't enter the building but are helped through a hatch. Bryan Langston assisted us with the paperwork, jotting down two numbers on the invoice. The first was the gate code, the other was for the combination lock on a smaller gate that gives you beach access.

The first stands start immediately to the left of the road, and the abundant vegetation almost forms cages around you. If the wind picks up from the sea, you're relatively exposed here, but

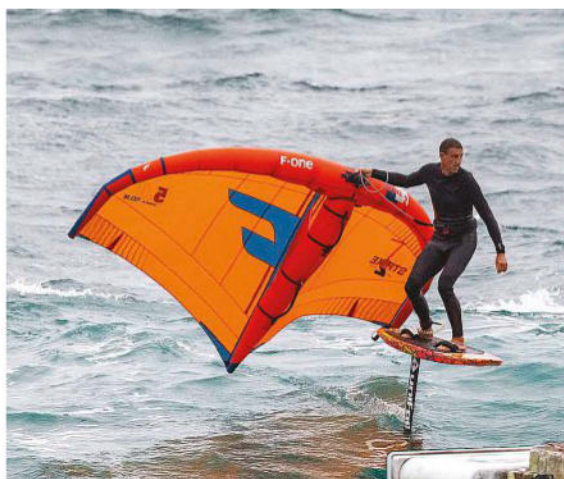




further into the resort, you're well-sheltered. It seems as if the lawn extends throughout the resort, and your power point is a regular domestic socket. As you enter the resort, the gate to the beach is on your right.

About 40 m from the office, the road veers slightly to the left, and that's where you'll see the swimming pool to your right. It's fenced, but clearly the pool is not Lalanathi's main attraction. It's small – about 2 x 5 m – but a blessing in the summer months. Next to it is a gigantic shade tree with a modest play park beneath it, consisting of two swings, a seesaw, and a small tower of stacked tyres. Next up are the trampoline and beach volleyball court.

You're now approximately in the centre of the resort. The next structure is more of a canopy with a few benches and tables inside and some braai drums at the end. This is your Plan B if you haven't brought your own braai – we saw only one built-in braai at a stand.



ASIDE. The beach is right next to Lalanathi and there's no sign of the heaving masses competing for space. It is, however, not a great swimming beach. For that you need to walk a bit farther down the beach to where lifeguards put up safety flags.



The buildings across from the road are the bathrooms. The entrances for men and women are on two sides; in front of each door are several dishwashing sinks. This means you can come to do dishes at any time as there's plenty of space for everyone. The bathrooms themselves are simple. The two basins on the men's side are right by the door – things can get busy here if you and a few other campers arrive at the same time to shave.

The shower cubicles are further inside and are similar to those at Anerley Garden Park in terms of the bench and shower curtain. However, the doors open outward for a reason: as you step inside and close the door, you can barely fit crosswise. An accidental benefit is that you can easily reach your towel after showering. A notice on the shower



cubicle door reminds you that gas geysers are used, and you should turn on the hot tap first.

The laundry room is in the room between the two sides, and the machines operate with tokens that cost R20 each.

From the bathrooms, the resort has a slight slope where more stands lie under and close to the most magnificent shade trees. Here and there, a terrace has been levelled and create a kind of stage from where you look down on the rest of the resort. There's a smaller ablution block at the farthest end of the resort, but it doesn't look as though people set up camp here.

The peaceful beach is definitely one of Lalanathi's strong points. A neat path has been cleared through the bushes – just past the gate you have to cross the railway line, but it's almost overgrown

and clearly not in use anymore. The distance from the gate to the beach is barely 100 m, and that's also where you'll encounter the resort's most famous landmark.

The bow of a canoe protrudes from the bushes as you walk onto the beach, bearing the resort's name. Naturally, it also serves as a landmark when you're looking for the path back from the beach to the resort.

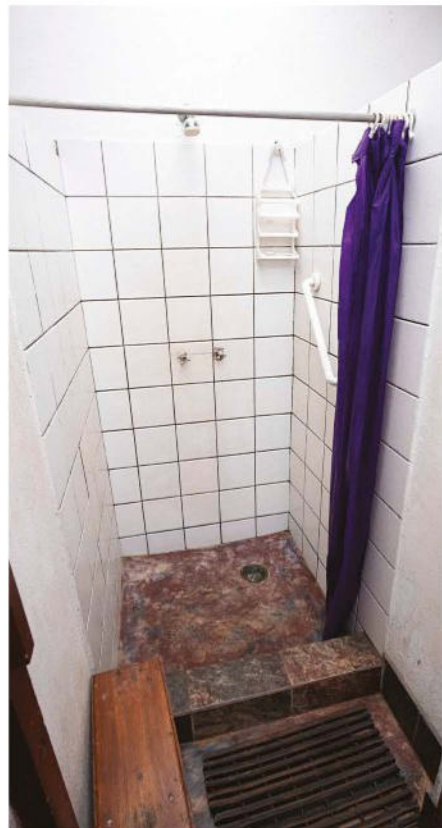
This isn't really a swimming beach – although there are open sandy areas, there are also many rocks. We bumped into a few people walking their dogs on the beach early in the morning and a fisherman braving the wind, but otherwise, not much will disturb you.

If you do want to cool off in the “warm” sea, make an excursion and walk down the beach for a kilometre to where the Koshwana River flows into the ocean.



You're now opposite the Banana Beach Resort; during our visit, there were lifeguard flags on the beach and a few people in the waves. Our neighbours reckoned you should take an early morning stroll on the beach to see dolphins, and we also spotted several whales in the distance.





ESSENTIALS. The main ablution facility is located roughly in the centre of the resort. The building is divided between two genders.

“

The distance from the gate to the beach is barely 100 m, and that's also where you'll encounter the resort's most famous landmark

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Briefly | Lalanathi



Campsite 42 level stands primarily on grass with plenty of shade. Some of the pitches catch wind, but others are well sheltered. WiFi is available at the office.

Ablution facilities Old and simple. One main building that includes a laundry room and another small bathroom at the farthest point of the resort.

Price Various rate options ranging from R120 pppn for pensioners out of season to R900 for four during the December holiday plus R200 pp for the next two.

Arrival and departure 09:00 and 14:00.

Contact ☎ 039 684 5372 of
084 876 5298 📧 lalanathi@telkomsa.net
📧 lalanathi.caravanparks.co.za

Nearest town Hibberdene, 10 km.

Road condition Tar to the resort.

GPS S30.652668 E30.521419

Drive & Camp says Dogs are welcome for an additional fee, but no cats are allowed.

A Jimmy *jamboree*

Nearly 800 Suzuki Jimnys rolled into Clarens in the Free State this September 2023. We joined the convoy to see what such a gathering looks like.

Words and photos by **Cyril Kloppe**

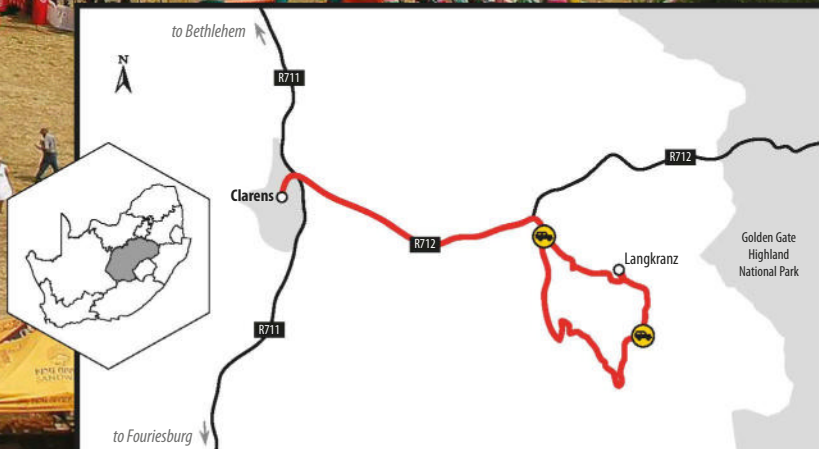
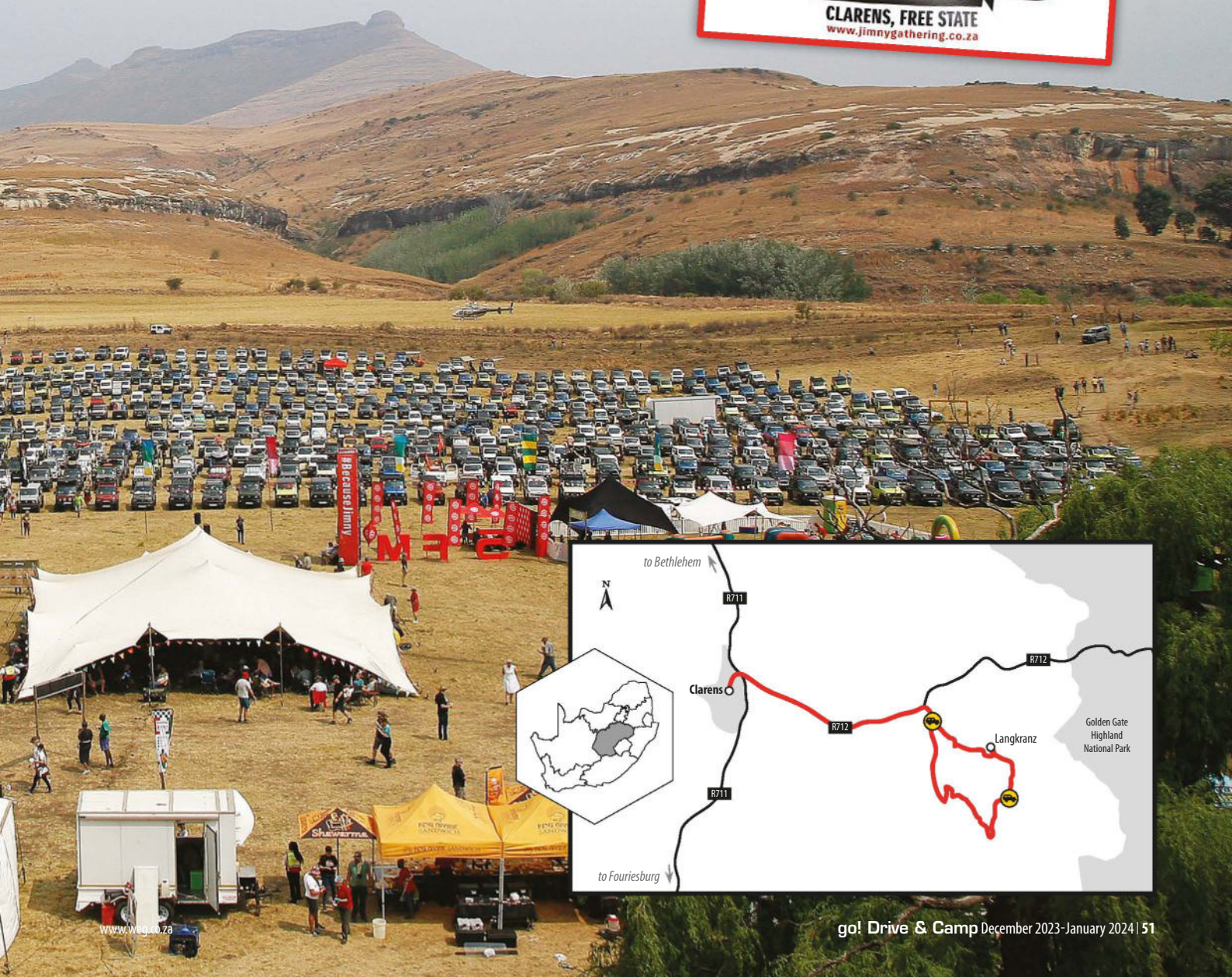


5 fm's radio presenter announces through a public address system that everyone should head to their vehicles in preparation for the main event. Jimny owners, young and old, jog among rows of vehicles. Occasionally, someone pauses, and scan uncertainly where they had parked.

It's not just the owners' ages that vary, but also that of the vehicles. The oldest Jimny in attendance – a military variant of a 1973 model LJ20 – is proudly parked front and centre. The latest Jimny – a brand new five-door model – stands a few Jimnys away from its progenitor.

The number plates on the masses of Suzukis indicate that all nine provinces are represented at the gathering. Those from Cape Town probably had the longest drive, over 1 300 km to get here, but eyes widen at the rumour of someone who apparently drove all the way from Windhoek in an SJ – more on those model names later.

Hundreds of Jimny owners sit waiting behind the wheels of their little rigs. The DJ hands his microphone





CAR PROUD. The gathering was originally going to be held in 2020 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Jimny. Unfortunately COVID put paid to those plans. Better late than never!



to a *Guinness World Records* adjudicator. This Englishman, dressed in a crisp cobalt blue jacket and matching tie, addresses the parade in received pronunciation: "On the count of three. One, two, three..."

The excitement, however, had already begun a few days earlier when those from the Western, Eastern, and Northern Capes left their homes. The first rendezvous for Western Cape Jimnys was the Shell Ultra City at Three Sisters. The petrol attendants asked in surprise: "We've seen many of these little cars today; are you holding a rally nearby?"

Our target for the day was the Gariep

Forever resort, where an icy wind swept over the surface of the water. The Eastern Cape attendants joined the Western Cape in the campsite, and fires were lit, vehicles compared, and the Capetonians socialised until late into the night.

There were only 470 km of driving left for the next day, so there was no need to get up at the crack of dawn. A popular breakfast topic was the merits of a rooftop tent versus a ground tent. One group of Jimny owners insisted that a roof rack was essential for jerry cans and ammo boxes, while the opposing side didn't want to sacrifice the internal packing space for a folded ground tent.

A third faction waxed lyrical about how well they had slept in their compact teardrop caravan the previous night.

The N1 highway through the Free State traversed a flat landscape with low ridges far apart. Occasionally, a Jimny with a 1,3 l engine overtook a 1 100 cc SJ, but then a stronger 1,5 l Jimny zipped past both of its cousins. The latter is the only type of Jimny that can maintain 120 km/h (and not much faster); the rest of us seldom, if ever, reach that speed... Of course, the thin air around the Drakensberg didn't help either. The Suzukis' little engines felt asthmatic, especially the SJ owners who felt as

“

Suzuki's marketing people said they were embarrassed about the waiting list that was still long five years after its launch...

”



STAY GOLDEN. There were signs of recent fires on the 4x4 trail (below) which is why drivers were asked to engage low range and prevent slippage. The beer tent (below left) was a favourite hangout where participants socialised with like-minded people.



though they were hauling a load of lead.

Free Staters, KwaZulu-Natalians, and Gautengers had the shortest distance to Clarens and their vehicles and tents were already set up at the Langkranz farm while Jimny enthusiasts from the other provinces slowly trickled in.

After all the tent pegs were hammered in, groups of fans wandered around to ogle one another's vehicles. Santos Kahn from the Ballito Jimny club called us over: "Come have a drink and I'll show you my camping setup!" Santos' Jimny had a rooftop tent that opened rearwards; hence, the tent served as a canopy over the Jimny's rear door. Comfortable

camping furniture was set up on ground sheets, and the camp kitchen had every conceivable gadget to make life easier. "I don't know why people think a Jimny is too small to take camping. Just look at all the unnecessary stuff I've brought along," he laughed.

All four generations of the Jimny could be seen. The newest one – the so-called "Gen 4", or fourth generation – represented probably half of the vehicles at the gathering. This model had exceeded Suzuki's boldest expectations in sales. Suzuki's marketing people said they were embarrassed about the waiting list that was still long five years after its

launch, but they admitted it was a nice problem to have.

The Gen 4's predecessor, the third generation, was the first Suzuki to be marketed in South Africa under the name "Jimny", and these were also well represented at the gathering. Their owners are teasingly referred to as the "cheap skates" since many had bought their Jimny for financial reasons rather than to follow a trend.

The second-generation Jimny, better known as the SJ (or Samurai), was less common at the gathering, but their owners are fanatical about their vehicles. There's a joke that goes: "How do you





JIMMY GATHERING



know the person in front of you in line is an SJ owner? He'll tell you!" Some SJ owners refuse to call their vehicles "Gen 2" or even a Jimny. Their cars are known as SJ, period! Samurai is an acceptable moniker, provided that a particular SJ is indeed that specific model.

The first generation "Jimny" (we use the collective name, accurate or not) was also there – two of them: a 1975 model LJ50 and an older LJ20 (1973) mentioned in the introduction to this story.

The rarest vehicle at the rally was, however, a "Coily" known officially as the JB32 model. It was an experimental vehicle based on the SJ's bodywork, but with coil springs (hence the name) as opposed to the SJ's leaf springs and the same 1,3 l engine that would later power the third generation Jimny. The specific Coily at the gathering also had a higher roof – the so-called "Coily high-roof" – which made it particularly coveted among those in the know.

After the enthusiasts had perused each other's vehicles, it was time to light the fire. Because of the severe drought in the Free State, people were asked not to start their own braai fires. With the communal bonfire, anyone could dig out coals to braai on braai drums while firefighters kept a vigil.

Deep in a pitch-black poplar forest, young people swayed quietly back and forth. It would have looked ominous if not for their glowing headphones revealing that they were attending a silent disco. Three DJs played music, and the headphones shone red, blue, or green depending on who you were listening to. The green DJ's set proved the most popular and every now and then, someone would break the silence by shouting: "Sweet Caroline. Pa, pa, pa!"

A large group of Jimnys gathered the next morning at the Langkranz 4x4 trail. The trail leader warned us about the risk of fire: "Ladies and gentlemen, I know a Jimny doesn't get stuck, but there are many of us, and flying stones can create sparks. Please engage four-wheel drive and low range to prevent us from setting the farm ablaze."

The world around the Golden Gate Highlands National Park is beautiful, even in winter when the dry grass is golden yellow. After the playtime, everyone went





BELOVED. Some Jimnys were pampered during the event, like this one pictured on the left that slept under its own gazebo. Others were put through their paces on the 4x4 track (opposite). However the cars were treated, they were clearly adored by their owners.



back to their tents to make brunch. The smell of bacon and eggs wafted through the campsite.

Langkranz lies 10 km east of Clarens, and Jimnys endlessly commuted back and forth between the campsite and the town. Among Jimny owners, there is a habit to flash lights whenever they encounter each other on the road. This tradition originated with Land Rover owners – where, unfortunately, it is dying out – and Jimny owners have embraced this manner of greeting as their own.

On the short stretch between Langkranz and Clarens, Jimnys constantly flashed their lights. Sometimes one flash, sometimes three short ones or two long ones. The code's meaning is strictly kept

secret by Jimny owners, and heaven help you if you don't flash back. In towns, Jimny owners will often use a hand gesture for greeting, as the flashing code confuses outsiders in ordinary cars. In Clarens, a car guard asked: "Do you people all know each other?" the reply would often be: "No, but we're like family."

Clarens's town centre was invaded by Jimny fans, as everyone was here to attend the Safari Town music festival. The festivities started early with groups like Black Heidi and Qadasi & Maqhinga. A free minibus service shuttled Jimny owners who wanted to visit the beer tent, between the farm and the town. There was therefore no reason to drive under the influence.

Claire Johnston from Mango Groove showed that she still has what it takes after all these years, and the audience sang along loudly while bouncing to the rhythm of "Hometalk". Spoegwolf and Goodluck closed the concert on a high note before we returned to Langkranz to watch the Rugby World Cup on TV. Not even Ireland's victory over the Springboks could dampen the mood.

The third day of the gathering was what most participants had been looking forward to. Hundreds of Jimnys left the campsite and barely drove a 100 m to the roaming Safari Town alongside the camp, where music was once again being played – by Soul Man & Blues Machine, Steven

Umculo, and Pedro Barbosa.

Jimnys also poured of Clarens and other guest farms. A few participants found out that Hisanori Matsushima, the man who designed the latest Jimny, was attending the event and begged him to autograph their vehicles. Matsushima-san instantly achieved rock star status.

Comedian Schalk Bezuidenhout was in top form, and everyone enjoyed his Jimny jokes, as Schalk is himself a Jimny owner. He knew his audience well, and the “Gen 4 latecomers”, “Jimny cheap skates” and “SJ fanatics” all had a laugh at each other’s expense.

Altogether 796 Jimnys were parked in row after row. These were not even all the Jimnys in the vicinity, as there were still some in the campsite and many in town who chose not to participate in the main event. Indeed, if all the nearby Jimnys that had opted out had been here, there might have been a cool thousand.

However, this stubbornness is appropriate because, although all Jimny owners share something unique, you definitely can’t accuse them of having a herd mentality. It was actually a miracle

that this gathering happened at all.

At two o’clock, the big moment arrived when 5fm’s radio presenter sent everyone to their Jimnys. Guinness’ dapper adjudicator counted to three, and 787 out of 796 pairs of headlights were simultaneously turned on. And so, a new world record was set for the most vehicles turning their lights on at the same time (within 5 seconds of each other). The previous record was 250 vehicles, and they were not even of the same brand.

After the successful record attempt, enthusiasts from afar celebrated in the beer tent, while those from the Free State, Gauteng, and KZN headed home. The next morning, the rest of us would tackle the long road home. Fortunately, those of us from the Eastern and Western Cape would be going downhill, and the small engines gradually grew stronger with the denser atmosphere nearer to the coast.

It was an open question when the next nationwide Jimny gathering would be held; Suzuki South Africa said its official participation was probably over for now, but at the gathering, participants were heard eagerly planning the next one. 🍷





LIGHTS ON! Before the record was set, crowds hid from the mid-day heat under two large bedouin tents while musicians and comedians provided entertainment (bottom, middle).



Our journey and camping

Suzuki South Africa invited Cyril to attend the gathering with his own Jimny – a 2010 model that is showing its age (like its owner), but still works 100% (unlike its owner). Suzuki South Africa paid for Cyril's fuel, accommodation and meals. However, the beer tent was at his own expense.

Other participants paid R750 per person for three days of camping and live music. There were also glamping

options ranging from R3 500 per person to R10 000 for a couple – for three days of luxury tent accommodation and special access to the music festival.

Drive & Camp expresses its deepest sympathies to the families of Sharon de Villiers and Carl Koen, participants at the gathering, who passed away due to carbon monoxide poisoning from a gas stove in their tent. – Ed

“

...although all Jimny owners share something unique, you definitely can't accuse them of having a herd mentality

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On Noah's mountain



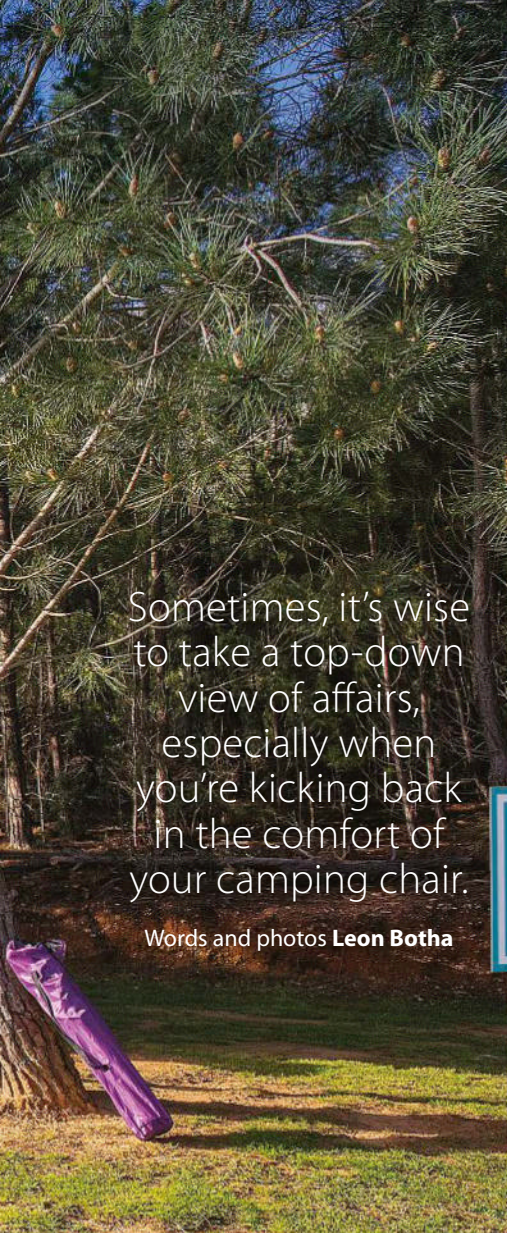
The world around Ceres and Tulbagh in the Western Cape shares one thing: mountains that soar into the sky. And where there are mountains, people want to ascend them.

If you're up for the challenge of a steep dirt road at the base of the Witzenberg, do consider Noah's campsite near Wolseley, almost halfway between Ceres and Tulbagh. Besides the steep climb, there are a few other essential bits to note: there is no electricity, and you must take all your rubbish back home with you. A minimum rate applies, making it worth it for groups. So, invite a bunch of friends and family along.

In exchange, you get to choose between four private stands with five-star facilities. And your bonus is the most beautiful view over the valley.

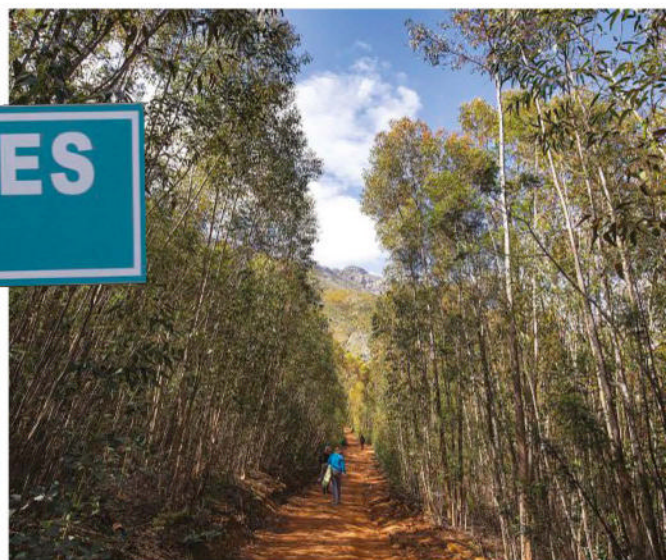
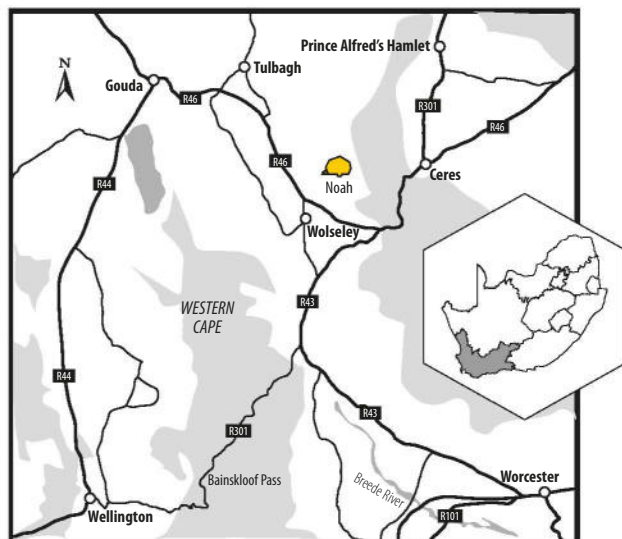
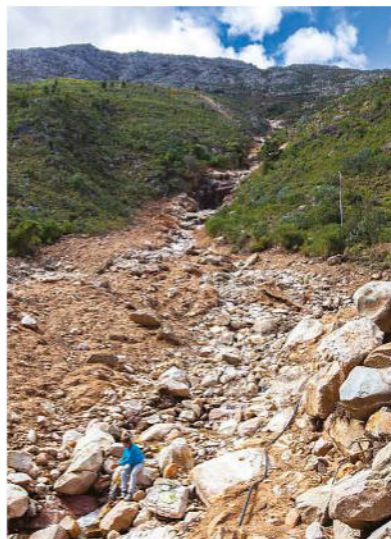
AWAY FROM IT ALL. You need all the right camping gear to visit the Noah campsite. Your vehicle must be able to handle rough roads and steep inclines. Your reward for achieving these requirements is a magnificent campsite that you can share with family and friends.





Sometimes, it's wise to take a top-down view of affairs, especially when you're kicking back in the comfort of your camping chair.

Words and photos **Leon Botha**



THE ROAD UP

The dirt road starts where you turn off the R46 between Wolseley and Tulbagh. The Fynbos campsite is almost immediately on your left, and just over 3 km later, you'll find yourself at the electric gate of the Boontjiesrivier farm. Enter the code you received with your paperwork, and owner Ralf Härle will meet you 200 m along, across from the farmhouse, on his quad bike. Then he leads the way up the mountain to your stand. Don't be surprised if a horse or two approach unbothered and greet you like friendly dogs. Storm has been hand-reared, and it's clear you're not the first campers he has welcomed.

When you book, they make it clear that you can only reach your stand with a high-clearance vehicle – a four-wheel drive is even better. A Mazda CX-5, part of our group, barely made it, but don't even think you'll get here with a front-wheel-

drive car while towing a trailer.

Ralf recently had to rebuild parts of the road after stormwater left wide erosion trenches. In fact, you can see the bare strips against the mountainsides as soon as you turn off the tar road. This is where the road bends sharply – with a reasonably long towing combination, we only just managed. Anything longer than our Ranger and Enkulu 3 combo would be challenging.

Now the steepest uphill lies ahead. Fortunately, it's a straight dirt road around 200 m and in good condition. Be sure to maintain decent momentum after the hairpin bend so you can make the next turn where the road swings back towards the campsite.

Although we had the convenience of four-wheel drive, we wanted to see if one could manage here while towing something heavy without using the diff lock or 4x4. It's possible, but don't go

digging holes to prove a point. The worst is now behind you. The incline road eases, and the first stand is 700 m later on the right.

The layout of the stands vary, but the amenities are the same. Each has a lawn, pine trees (which don't obstruct the view), a jacuzzi and bathroom facilities.

The first and last stands are the most private: they're about 200 m apart and borders on no one. The two middle stands are back-to-back, but you don't sacrifice any privacy.

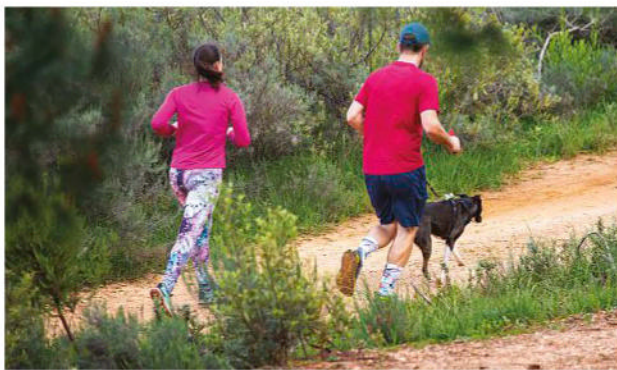
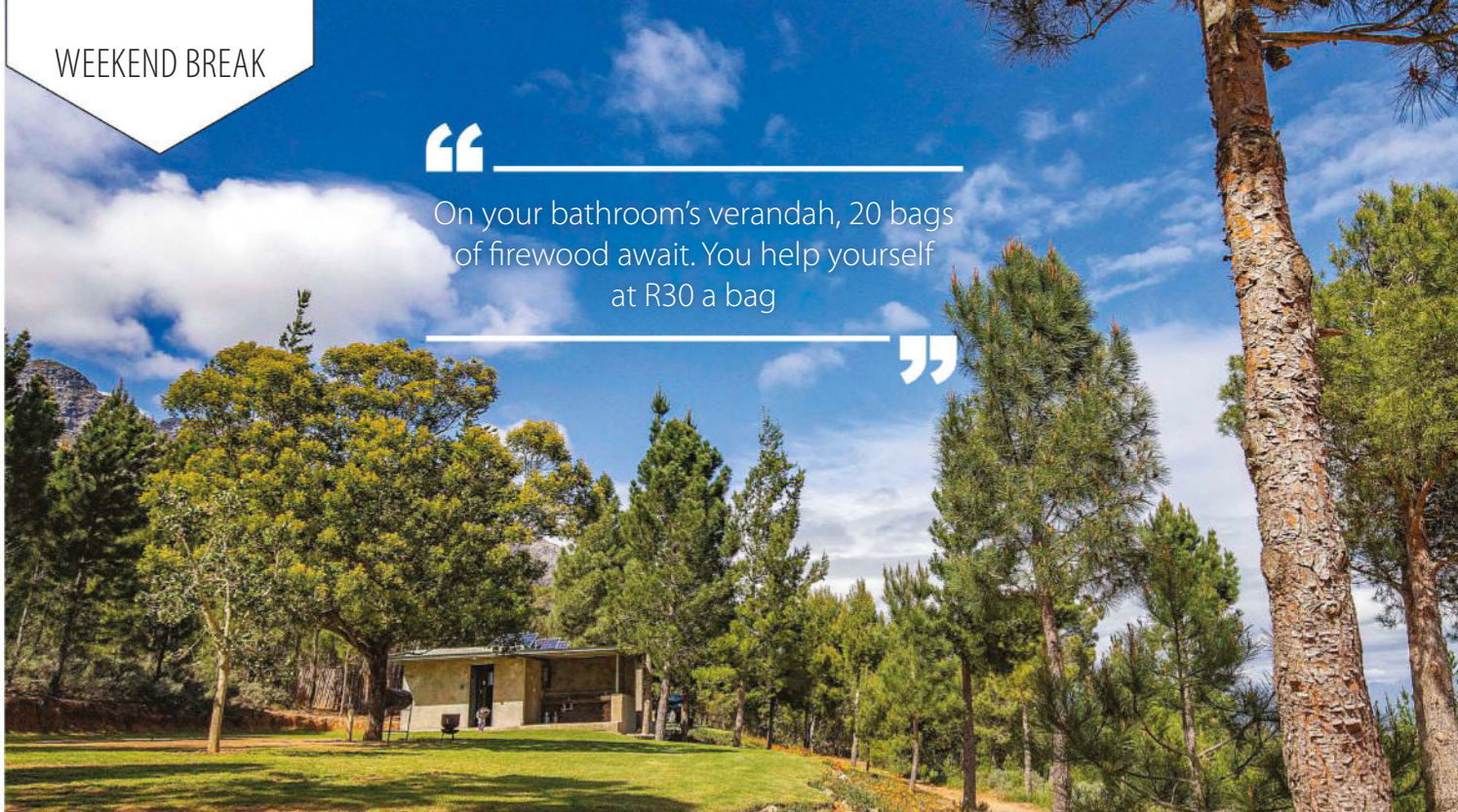
When you receive the last details via WhatsApp from Ralf's wife Ilze, you also get a few photos. These include the electric gate and a map showing hiking, mountain biking and 4x4 trails. Then there are photos of a lawn and the damage a braai on the ground can do to it, and you are asked to use a woven groundsheet under your tent's PVC floor.



“

On your bathroom's verandah, 20 bags of firewood await. You help yourself at R30 a bag

”



You are also not allowed to move the steel braai that's provided. By the way, you may not use your own braai but do remember to bring your grid.

On your bathroom's verandah, 20 bags of firewood await. You help yourself at R30 a bag. The wood is also used to heat the jacuzzi's water – it looks like a mini farm dam with a diameter of 2,4 m and is barely hip-deep (0,8 m). On one side there is a chimney in the water that's part of a metal 'oven' wherein you light a fire. As you stoke, the water is heated.

Your braai looks like the insides of an old geyser that's been set up on its side. It has a lid that can close over the braai area, plus racks on the side for your braai utensils and meat.

This same veranda boasts an enormous worktop where you could almost serve a bazaar. The basin's hot water comes from a gas geyser, one with a spare gas cylinder. Ralf has explained that the

CHOICES. You decide what you want to do at Noah. Will you pet the farm animals, spend the entire day in the jacuzzi or hike in the mountain? Or simply do nothing at all?





geyser also needs 12 V to work. This comes from a battery system that's connected to solar panels. This is so the rest of the bathroom lights can also work.

However, don't leave the lights on all night. You don't want to risk the geyser not working properly the next morning. It's simply a preventative measure – the power system along with the geyser worked very well.

The bathroom has its own door, and the toilet has its own cubicle inside that. At our stand, the basin was past the toilet door on the left, at the tip of the room. The layout and finishings are simple yet neat and stylish. Next to the basin, you have plenty of packing space on either side of the counter. There are even freshly cut flowers that you're allowed to take home as a souvenir.

The rest of the room is divided into the open shower and an open dressing cubicle next to it – separated by a large glass panel. It is wonderfully spacious

and there are more than enough rails for towels and such.

The shower works as well as any electrically heated one at home and you can finely adjust it to just the right temperature for you. Incidentally, the water at your site is pure mountain water – if you have the energy and the inclination, put on your hiking boots and go see where it comes from.

It would be a sin not to explore more of the surroundings. We've had enough driving and decide to walk to the waterfall as well.

Just before the last stand, a dirt road heads toward the mountain and eventually through a thicket of eucalyptus trees. Follow the road for 660 m and you're back at the stream you crossed earlier at the hairpin turn, only higher up. The waterfall is now to your left, but from here it's a steep climb, and the last few metres will require you to

Campsite Four private stands on grass against the hillside. Each can accommodate up to 10 people.

Ablution facilities Each stand has its own facilities. They are new, spacious and practical – one of Noah's big pluses.

Price R1 200 pn for the first four, thereafter R250 pppn (R125 for children aged 5-11; free for under fours and pets).

Arrival and departure 14:00 and 11:00.

Contact 076 847 7950
 ✉ noahfarmcampsite@gmail.com
 📍 Noah - Farm Campsite

Nearest town Wolseley, 7,7 km from the campsite.

Road condition The last 5,3 km to the campsite is a dirt road with very steep sections. Not meant for sedans or front-wheel-drive towing vehicles.

GPS S33.381468 E19.224009

Drive & Camp says Remember cash for the firewood.

scramble on all fours. A leisurely walk to the first water takes just 15 minutes.

While you wander around, keep an eye out for the poppy-flowered sundew (*Drosera cistiflora*). One of our friends who joined us on this camping trip noticed this interesting little plant just behind our site. It has a purple flower, and the green leaves of the plant have fine strands with what looks like water droplets on the tips. It's probably to trap its prey since this is a carnivorous plant. It's endemic and found only in the Western and Eastern Cape if the internet can be believed.

As for the name? The campsite is named after Ilze and Ralf's 12-year-old son. Noah is crazy about camping, Ilze informs us. He also had a camp with a bunch of animals in it, including rabbits, chickens, pigeons, guinea pigs, and chinchillas, but unfortunately the camp was a casualty of the recent floods.

A loop around old mountains



Sutherland is a charming town for snow and stargazers alike. However, if you've got ants in your pants, there are also six mountain passes and poorts. You won't want to miss the Ouberg Pass.

Words and photos **Cyril Kloppe**

Sutherland is known as South Africa's coldest town. Although it doesn't hold the record for the coldest temperature ever – that belongs to the Buffelsfontein farm in the Eastern Cape at -20 °C – the mercury in Sutherland regularly drops below -15 °C. Enough to make it on average the coldest town. Sutherland offers numerous accommodation choices from camping to hotel rooms because South Africans flock to this Karoo town to watch snow and stars. If you'd rather be driving around, tackle this loop that will take you over six official mountain passes.

The route starts in Sutherland's main road. Head north on the tarred Williston road (R354) and after 9 km you'll hit a fork in the road. Left goes to Calvinia and right

to Williston. Choose the latter.

The gravel starts a few metres after you've turned right and here you can deflate your tyres if that's what you normally do – better safe than sorry... The gravel road follows the Renoster River and crosses the waters repeatedly with low water bridges. During our visit, it had recently rained, and the river was flowing. After 17 km there's a turnoff to the left, ignore it and stay on the Williston road.

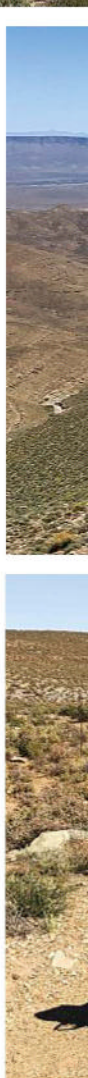
Exactly 36 km after the first fork there's another one, and this time we turn left, still on the Williston road, now called the P2268. This is the road that will take us over the first mountain pass. It's an official pass indicated on survey maps, but you wouldn't have guessed it if we hadn't told you. The coordinate of Die Draai se Hoogte is S31.92166 E20.83098, and as the

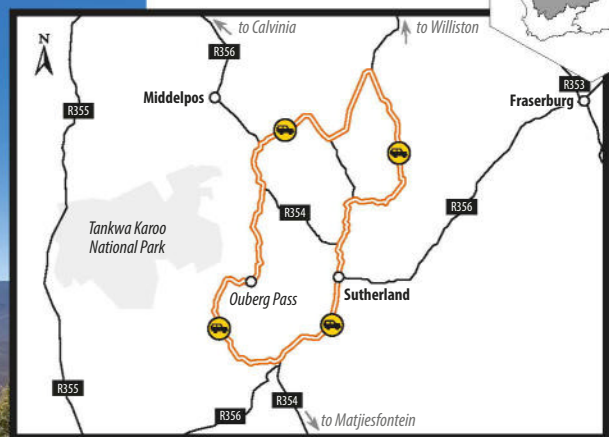
name implies, it's a bend, on a little bit of a height...

The P2268 ends 12 km after 'Die Draai' at a T-junction. Right leads to Williston, but we turn left onto the P0568 back in the direction of Sutherland. Before long you drive over a smaller mountain pass which you'll recognise as one – it's Snyderspoort at a height of 1 350 m above sea level and about 100 m higher than the Karoo plains around the poort.

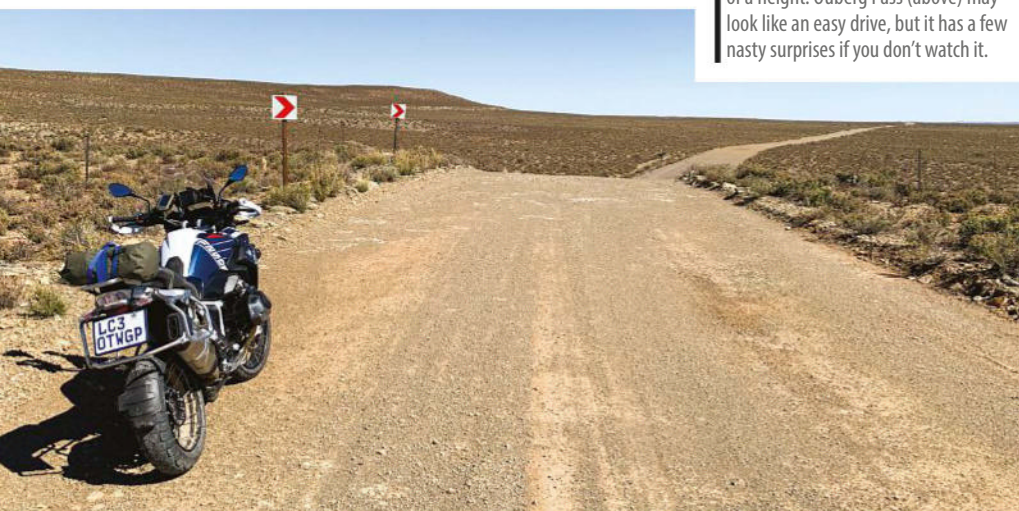
Directly after the poort, we cross the Renoster River again, this time with a bridge that was engulfed by a recent flood. A date on the bridge indicates it was built in 1958.

Across the bridge, a road sign directs us to the right towards Calvinia on the AP2270. If we continued straight, we'd end up back in Sutherland and we don't want





DON'T PASS IT UP. Die Draai se Hoogte (below) is literally a bend on a little bit of a height. Ouberg Pass (above) may look like an easy drive, but it has a few nasty surprises if you don't watch it.



that yet because there's still much to see.

About 18 km after the bridge, we drive through the Kariëga River with a low-water bridge, and across the river, a road sign gives you another opportunity to turn left to Sutherland, but we proceed on the Calvinia road.

Now comes the third mountain pass, the Kariëgaskophoogte with its peak at 1 317 m above sea level, thus lower than Snyderspoort, but if you stop at the top of Kariëgaskop, you're met with a striking view of a Karoo plain below you.

The Calvinia Pass takes you over a pretty bridge across the Fish River (no, not *that* Fish River), and eventually dead-ends into the R354 regional road where we turn left towards Sutherland. The R354 is badly corrugated. We have to endure the torture for 15 km until we encounter a road sign that directs us to the right toward the Bo-Visrivier. This dirt track is seldom driven and is overgrown with weeds in places. There were a few washouts repaired by a local farmer, but it's still impassable for an ordinary sedan. After the lovely Bo-Visrivier trail, you run into the Koringlandskloof road. The road sign is faded, but you can just about make out the name. Turn right and follow it for 17 km to the road sign for Ouberg Pass, the highlight of this excursion.

As you approach the pass, you can sense that you're high above sea level, but at the crest, you can't help but be surprised at just how high you find yourself. The summit of the pass sits at 1 403 m, but then you descend to an elevation of 500 m. That's a drop of 900 m in just 6 km!

An interesting aspect of the pass is that it doesn't always follow the contour lines of the mountain. In some sections, it appears as if the road builder was in a hurry to get down the mountain, and

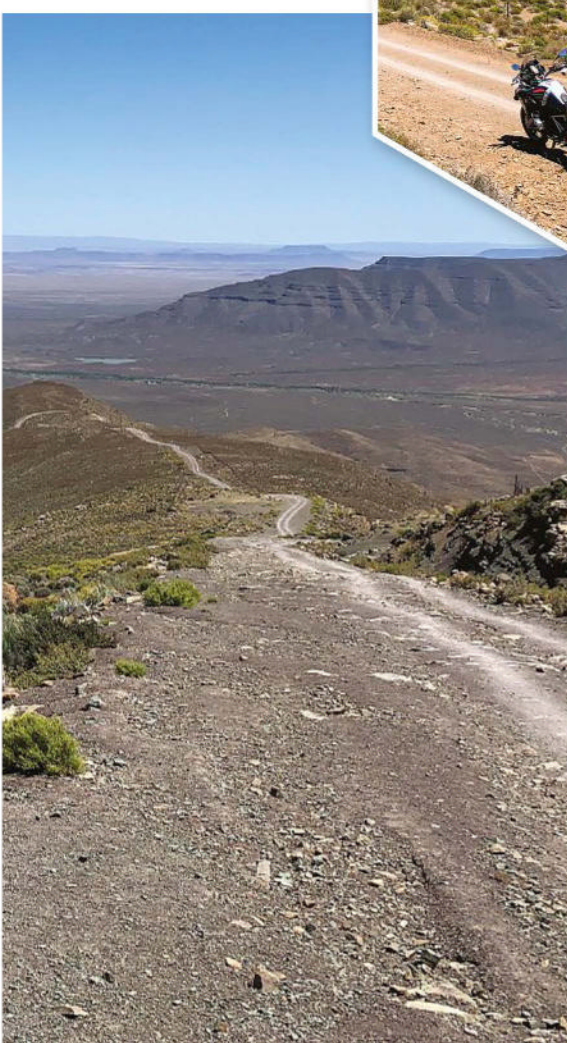


the road cuts straight down. As a result, rainwater also follows the road directly downhill, leading to significant erosion. The road surface is rocky and full of holes, and we advise you to engage low range, because if your brakes give out on this slope, it could turn ugly.

The same applies if you want to drive the route in the opposite direction; without low range, you might further deteriorate the bad surface with spinning wheels. Although the pass isn't as dramatic as Sani Pass on the Lesotho border, it's somewhat more challenging. The coordinate for the peak of Ouberg Pass is S32.40939 E20.35655.

By the way, there are four officially recognised passes named Ouberg in South Africa. Two are in the Western Cape (near Montagu and Vanrhynsdorp), one in the Eastern Cape (near Graaff-Reinet), and then this one. From Ouberg Pass, there's a 50 km gravel road ahead of us. It's somewhat monotonous, but only because Ouberg Pass is so impressive.

The most memorable obstacle after Ouberg Pass is the Tankwa River at S32.49589 E20.23657. Recent floods had swept away the concrete slab of the low-water bridge, and during our visit, there was just a big gap where the bridge used to be. The detour, presumably made by a local, crosses the river a bit farther upstream. The water is fairly shallow, but there are large stones that could damage



SLIPPERY WHEN WET. The bridge over the Renoster River (top) shows signs of being completely overwhelmed by a recent flood. It was presumably the same flood that washed away the low-water bridge across the Tankwa River, which now forces you to drive through the water (opposite page top).





a regular city sedan.

Eventually, the road comes to an end at the tarred R354 where we turn left back to Sutherland. Lastly, two mountain passes await: the Verlatenkloof and Rooikloof passes.

Verlatenkloof Pass has sweeping bends, but be cautious of rocks on the road. The local district council has tried everything to stabilise the cutting, but there are still rocks falls. During our visit, a rock the size of a minibar fridge lay on the road's verge, with smaller stones on the road itself.

Rooikloof Pass then brings us to the end of our jaunt. From its summit, you see Sutherland to the north. Tonight, you'll braai Karoo lamb and reflect on how striking Ouberg Pass is, and together we'll wonder why Die Draai se Hoogte is officially recognised as a mountain pass. 🏕️

“

Although the pass isn't as dramatic as Sani Pass on the Lesotho border, it's somewhat more challenging

”



What you need to know



Maximum number of vehicles? The route consists of public roads, so there's no limit. You sometimes drive right through farmsteads. Be polite and go slowly.

Will I get a map? No, bring your own 1:50 000 survey map or rely on your GPS.

Will my vehicle get scratched? No, because the bushes around here seldom grow taller than knee height.

Should I bring a compressor? If you let down the tyre pressure, you should ideally pump it back up before taking the tarred R354 back to Sutherland.

Can I have a braai halfway? Surprisingly, the answer is yes. There are a few pull-off points on Ouberg Pass where travellers have

previously camped and built stone corrals for fires. Whether it's legal, we don't know, but be responsible if you choose to braai and clean up after yourself.

Is there cellphone signal? Very little. Don't rely on it.

Best time of year to go? We believe spring, after the rains, is the best. The veld is in bloom, and it's neither too hot nor too cold.

Can I bring my family? Sutherland has good Internet for the kids. They might not think much of the Karoo, but otherwise, yes.

Just for the day or the weekend?

Sutherland is far from everything. Consider visiting for a whole week.

How long does it take? The route, as we describe it here, is 280 km long and takes at least five hours to drive.

Are there ablution facilities? No, only in town.

Directions The turn-off to Sutherland is where the road crosses with Matjiesfontein's turn-off and the N1 highway. It's the same if you're coming from Gauteng, unless you chose the back road through Victoria West, Loxton and Fraserburg.

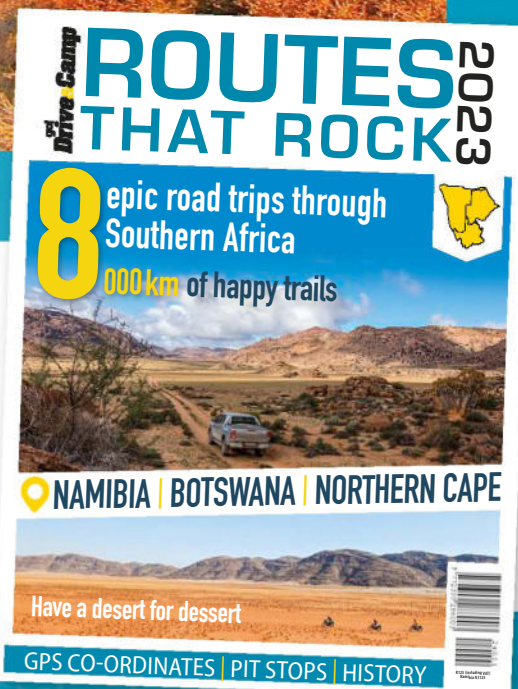
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Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!
Get Home Safe. Thank you for your Support

The Northern Cape roars (again)!

Once a year there's a collective clicking of seatbelts and a symphony of engines revving as a wave of adrenaline sweeps through the crowd. The *Drive & Camp Bull Run* is truly one of a kind, as seasoned participants and eager first-timers alike can attest at this year's gathering.

Photos Piet van Zyl

This year's Bull Run has once again shown that there is simply no other gathering quite like it in South Africa. Over the last weekend of the short school holiday, more than 600 participants, spectators and track officials descended on Vanwyksvlei to show off their old wheels and play in the dust.

As per tradition, the teams did not disappoint with their colourful themes and outfits, and just when you think "Now I've seen everything", the next team comes along and surpasses it.

Upon arrival on Thursday, all the cars were thoroughly checked to ensure they met the event's requirements (models older than 1985 and not worth more than R40 000) before old and new friends got together for a great time.

On Friday, approximately 140 cars started the rally one after the other on the area's dirt roads. There were several checkpoints where participants had to stop to participate in a specific activity. The Humansdorp team of Pierre and Simone du Plessis, the Flaurel team, finished first in this section.

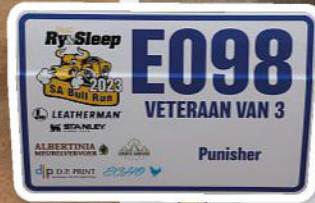
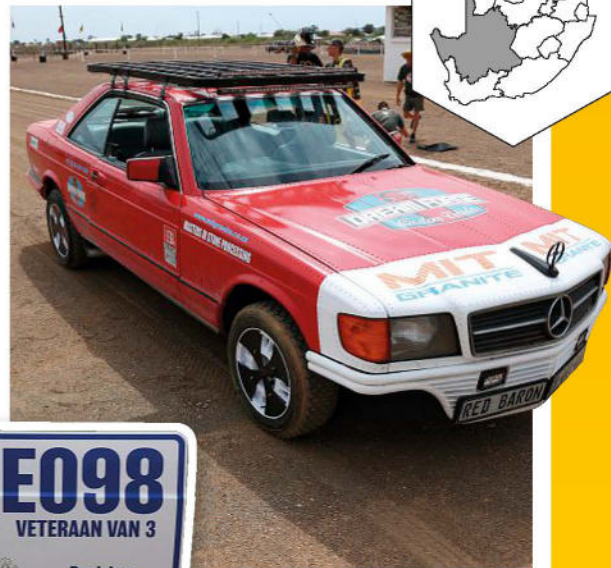
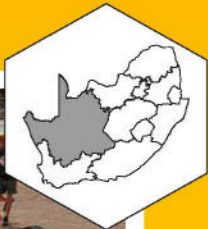
Saturday shifted the focus to the large dustpan outside the town. Here, participants had the opportunity to really play. And play they did in the various activities that allowed the petrol heads to demonstrate their mettle! When the dust finally settled, Tewis Labuschagne and Die Panslaners (or The Pan Pounders) from Port Elizabeth reigned supreme on the pan. You could hardly imagine a more fitting team name.

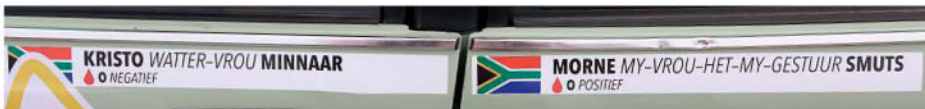
However, consistency is the keyword if you want to be crowned the overall Bull Run winner, and that is exactly what Corne Pienaar and his Mad Max team from Mossel Bay did to be named the winners of 2023. Corne and his team finished fourth in both the rally and on the pan, thus gathering enough points to walk away with top honours. Congratulations and well done!

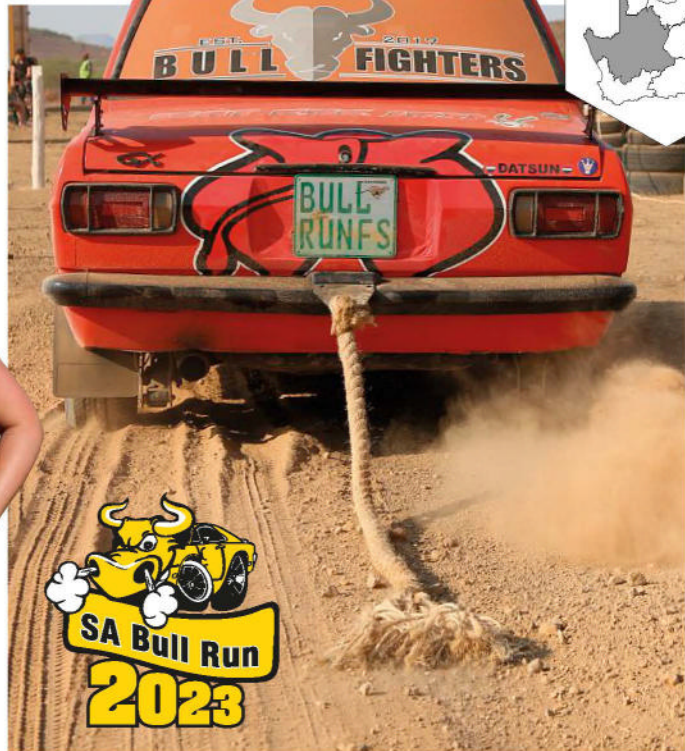
It was once again a Bull Run for the record books. We are grateful to everyone who ventured the long road to the Northern Cape to join in, to the people of Vanwyksvlei who welcome us so warmly and treat us so well every year, and then, of course, to our sponsors, Leatherman and Stanley, without whom this would not be possible.

See you there again next year!









TOIT LIKE A TOIGER... The rally happens on a Friday and at the check points participants have to spit springbok droppings and perform other fun activities.







ON A HORSE WITH A NAME. On day two a mass of participants congregate on the salt pan to show what they've got – and it's plenty!



ADVERTORIAL

Kilometres of fun at Meerendal

Meerendal is more than just a sought-after wine destination. With three cross-country running and walking routes, and at least three trails for mountain bikers, it's an adventure oasis for city dwellers looking to catch a breath of fresh air.

Come stretch your legs.

Over the past decade or so, the family-owned Meerendal Wine Estate has established itself as one of the most sought-after sports destinations in the province. Serious cyclists have tested their mettle here in the gruelling prologue of the Cape Epic bike race, but on weekends, it's filled with families enjoying the outdoors. Perhaps it's the winning recipe ... the estate offers walking, running, and cycling routes of various difficulty levels, and afterwards, friends and family can socialise at any of the eateries – Bossa, La Romantica, and COCOFAIR – or on the patio in front of the tasting room.

Cycling Routes

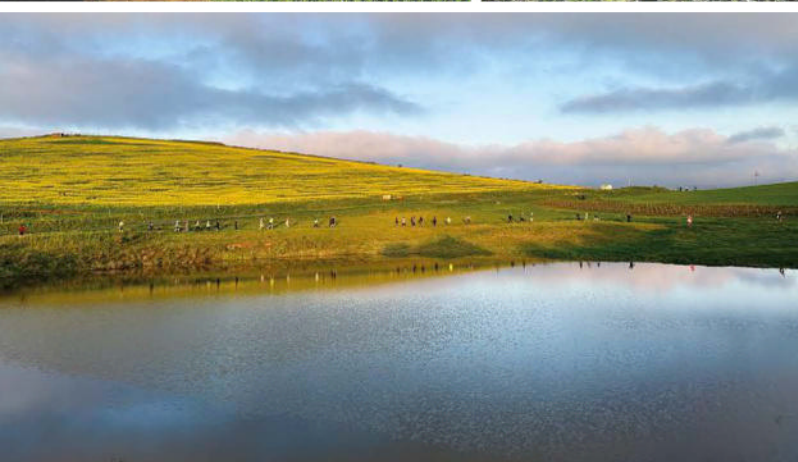
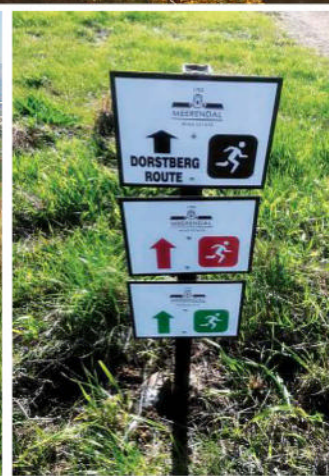
The estate is one of the most well-known and popular mountain biking terrains in the province. Sections like the Sauser Sprint, the Burry Stander, the Dorstberg loop, the Barti Bücher turns, the Esther Süß Berms, and the Mynskag together form three routes of 5 km (yellow), 12 km (red), and 18 km (blue). Another section – the Stairway to Heaven – is a big favourite. On a clear day, you can have a view all the way from Dorstberg to Robben Island. All routes start and end at the main gate. You can purchase a day pass at the gate or get an annual pass (at Meerendal or on the Tygerberg MTB Club's website).

Walking and Jogging Routes

Walkers and cross-country athletes share the same routes but do not share paths with cyclists. All routes go through dirt and field paths – no asphalt. There's an easy 5 km, a 7 km, and a challenging 9 km. The 9 km includes Dorstberg, the same hill that the long-distance hikers will tackle at the go! Festival of Hiking. On top of Dorstberg, there's a bench where you can enjoy your morning coffee from your Stanley flask. A few times a year, Meerendal hosts a moonlight walk of 5 km, and on weekends, there's also a popular Park Run. The Park Run is free, but for the other routes, you need a day permit or an annual pass.

For details about the mountain biking routes, visit <https://tygerbergmtb.co.za/trailheads/meerendal-wine-estate/>

For information about Meerendal Wine Estate, its wines, as well as its restaurants, visit <https://meerendal.co.za/>



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go! introduces the first hiking festival – where hikers can safely roam long distances in the fields. Start circling 16 to 18 February 2024 and come and walk with us!

WHEN

16 to 18 February 2024

WHERE

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5km,
12,5km
or a solid
25km.

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10 km,
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Farewell, big fella

BMW R 1250 GS

The new BMW R 1300 GS is en route, so we take the outgoing 1250 GS for one final ride.

Words and photos **Cyril Kloppe**

The new 1300 GS is already available in Europe, but South Africa has to wait a little longer. However, you can 'build' your own 1300 GS on BMW South Africa's website and then order it. The outgoing 1250 GS is still available at dealers, but its production has ceased. Like other vehicle manufacturers, BMW introduced a special edition of its popular GS in 2023: the Trophy. This version is named after an international competition loosely based on the former Camel Trophy. With the GS Trophy, participating countries send a team of adventure motorcyclists to a 'secret' destination every two years to compete in a series of challenges using GS motorcycles. Since 2008, there have been eight GS Trophy competitions, and, like the Springboks in the World Cup, South Africa's team holds the record for the most victories with four gold medals and two silver. England is in second place with one gold and two silver. Now that you know where the name comes from, it's time to hop on and go for a ride.

What's different?

The Trophy differs from the regular GS in terms of its colour scheme. The design of the decals is similar to the 40 Years GS model, but it's a metallic colour called Gravity Blue rather than yellow and black.

Other differences include cross-spoked wheels, protective grills over the radiators, enduro foot pegs, a ZF rear shock absorber, hand guards and a shorter windshield.

The 1250 GS is an evolution of the original 1200 GS and while there has been significant progress in terms of technology, it is essentially the same bike.

How does it ride?

We clocked up nearly 1 000 km over seven days, of which 200 km were in residential areas and the remaining 800 km on the N1 highway and the gravel roads around Sutherland in the Northern Cape – read more about this route on page 64.

Those who haven't ridden a big GS before will be surprised at how easily this beast handles. When you first get on, you might be worried about toppling over, but it's remarkably well balanced.

Riding through a neighbourhood is a breeze thanks to the upright and high seating position. The wide handlebar allows you to turn effortlessly, and the exhaust note is considerably quiet, although the sound is still pleasing. We enjoy riding modes such as Road mode which is perfect for commuting.



SMART BIKE. The Trophy comes with a pre-installed mount (below left) for a BMW-branded GPS which can be operated with a wheel next to the left grip (bottom right). The 'clocks' provide access to a lot of bike systems (below).





COMPETITORS

Adventure motorcycles with an engine capacity greater than 1200 cc



R349 999

KTM 1290 Super Adventure S

The boss of technical terrain and back roads.



R408 000

Ducati Multistrada V4 S

The boss of tarred mountain passes and the racetrack.



R412 700

Harley-Davidson Pan America 1250

The boss of long rides and coastal roads.



SPECIFICATIONS

Model tested	R 1200 GS Trophy
Engine	1 254 cc, 'flat' twin
Power	100 kW @ 7 750 rpm
Torque	143 Nm @ 6 250 rpm
Transmission	Six-speed, wet clutch
Wheel sizes	19 inch front and 17 inch rear
Weight	249 kg
Fuel consumption	5 l/100 km (tested)
Tank	20 l
Dimensions	2207 mm (l) x 952 mm (w)
Warranty	Five years/unlimited kilometres
PRICE	R322 900

On a highway you may want to try Dynamic or Dynamic Pro riding modes that stiffen the suspension and increases the throttle response. It's a fun riding mode if you want to play, but it's not so great for touring. Every little bump in the road that slightly rocks your body is often picked up by the throttle, and the engine surges in response.

On a dirt road, you can select Enduro or Enduro Pro and these riding modes lower the sensitivity of the throttle and prevent electronic aids like the ABS from intervening too much. Road and Enduro Pro are the two riding modes that we used the most often because they simply felt the best. Weirdly, our test motorcycle didn't have Rain mode as an option, not that we wanted that feeble riding mode anyway...

Aside from an oversensitive throttle in Dynamic riding modes, we've never been fond of the GS's gearbox. You sometimes struggle to engage neutral (yes, we know there's a trick to it!) and the gears often clunk loudly when they shift. There's even a saying that goes: "A BMW motorcycle gearbox is like a BMW car door. You *know* it's done!" meaning that the gearbox and door both clunk loudly when you use them.

As for fuel consumption, we were quite pleased. On the N1 highway, where we tried to hold back and maintain a speed of 120 km/h as much as possible, we managed to get 5,5 l/100 km, and on the Karoo's gravel roads where we rode between 60 and 80 km/h, the consumption was 4,7 l/100 km. (The average is therefore 5 l/100 km which



COMFORT. The fuel cap automatically unlocks when you turn the engine off, but only if the key is nearby. Both seats (opposite page) and the handlebar grips are heated, and the rear shock can be remotely adjusted to handle heavy panniers and/or a pillion.



gives you a realistic range of around 350 km if you only occasionally bomb down the road.)

Conclusion

The 1250 GS will still be available for a while as long as stocks last, but do you really want to buy a bike that has a replacement on the way? Unless you can drive the price way down, we'd rather wait for the new 1300 GS.

As far as its competitors are concerned,

a GS just can't beat a KTM on a dirt trail. The Ducati Multistrada V4 is a speed demon, the Triumph Tiger has more character, and Harley-Davidson's Pan America has its own thing going for it. What BMW gets right is that the GS is almost as good as its competitors in their respective strong suits – and this makes it a true dual purpose motorcycle that remains the benchmark against which other adventure motorcycles are measured. 🏆

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Happy New Year!**
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All tow-gether now

Towing with the new Ranger is a team effort: you handle the steering while the tin brain looks after the caravan.

Words and photos **Leon Botha**

Double-cab bakkies and towing go together like love and marriage. That's why Ford keeps its Ranger XLT range up to date with the latest technology.

Choose between four XLT models, divided into two groups: the single-turbo and the bi-turbo. Both are available in 4x2 or 4x4, and a tow bar is standard across the board – the same goes for sway control, the towing lights test, and a towing mode you select depending on the road.

Broadly speaking, the Ranger comes in four different versions:

a basic model, the XL, XLT and Wildtrak. We got behind the wheel of the XLT with a twin-turbo engine and 4x4 drive.

Setting the tow bar high

Ford has reached new heights, as we saw with the Everest Platinum in our previous issue. The same holds true for the Ranger.

In our test vehicle, the tow bar is supplied by Brink. It's similar to the one on the Everest: the removable type with a transverse pin. It has a load test index (the D value) of 16,87 kN, which is equivalent to 1 720 kg. The tow

bar's vertical weight limit is 225 kg, and together with the towing capacity of 3 500 kg that Ford attributes to the bakkie, you can tow to your heart's content. Interestingly, the numbers differ slightly when you look at the vehicle's engine plate. According to that, the gross combination mass is 6 500 kg and the gross vehicle mass 3 230 kg. So, if you load your bakkie with people and cargo until everything weighs 3 230 kg, your towing weight should theoretically not exceed 3 270 kg on a weighbridge.

The difference between the

3 500 kg and 3 270 kg is moot, since the tare weight of the bakkie has the final say when it comes to towing. The XLT's 2 284 kg is therefore the limit when looking at caravans with overrun brakes. It's still a hefty weight that includes some of the heaviest caravans on the market.

Although the XLT is the second most luxurious model, there are a few features that should be standard. In our test vehicle, the seats were manually adjustable, you have to adjust the angle of the lights yourself, and there are only two USB ports



FORD RANGER XLT 2.0 BIT (4x4, AUTOMATIC)

(USB-A and USB-C) for the front passengers. The guys in the back don't have their own USB socket. Fortunately, there is a wireless charging zone for your phone next to the two sockets.

The Ranger's computer, however, steals the spotlight. Not only is the entire instrument panel electronic, but the screen itself – in the centre console – is impressively large.

Now tow like a pro

The Ranger's computer is packed with towing software and involves much more than the standard sway control increasingly seen in new vehicles. To the left of the adjustment knob where you set the drive modes, there's another knob to input the expected road conditions. Here you have a choice between Normal, Eco, Slippery and Tow/Haul. A small icon of a caravan appears on the panel when you select the Tow/Haul option.

The Blind Spot Monitoring with Trailer Coverage option is available in all XLT models and is almost 100% similar to the version we saw in the Everest Platinum. This software is specifically designed for those of us who tow and significantly simplifies your life compared to the computers previously available in double-cab bakkies.

With this system, you can enter the precise details of your caravan into the computer. If the system isn't set to a specific caravan and you turn on the engine after plugging the caravan's light plug into the harness, you'll get a warning on the instrument panel that the blind spot and cross-traffic sensors are deactivated. The computer is thus aware of the caravan, but you'll have to manage without these electronic safety aids.

If you've already entered your caravan's details, the computer warns that only the cross-traffic sensors are now out of action. By the way, you can enter the details



of several caravans or trailers. This means the computer is capable of taking into account the caravan's blind spot, a luxury we're not yet accustomed to.

When you turn on the Ranger, the computer wants to know more about your towing situation. On the central panel's screen, you have, among other things, a choice to view the current "active" caravan's details,

but you can also enter the details of a different caravan. To reach the same details, you can simply click on the pickup icon on the centre console. This screen has two main categories: Controls and Settings. Under the former are four more options: Active Trailer, Connection Checklist, Trailer Light Check and Add Trailer. If you haven't entered your caravan's details yet, click on Add

Trailer. Here you enter the name, length and width of your caravan. If you now search under Active Trailer, this caravan's name will also be part of the list.

Just like in the Everest, the computer guides you through nine points to check when you hitch a caravan. This includes the harness plug and jockey wheel to the safety chain and the setting of the wing mirrors.

TOW TEST

“

Drive & Camp says

With no caravan, the Ranger gave a consumption of 10,3 ℓ/100 km over 134 km. That's more or less the same as when towing a caravan

”



The same applies to the Trailer Light Check, where you stand behind the bakkie while the Ranger turns on the lights in a sequence to check the caravan.

Under Settings, on the right side of the screen, you can turn off the caravan messages or the sway control. You can also check the towing details while driving on the panel in front of you. Choose the Menu button on the right side of the steering wheel, which calls up the Towing screen. Then you get three options: Trailer Information, Trailer Light Status and Towing Status.

The Ranger's fuel consumption and route distance with the caravan appear under Trailer Information. Under Trailer Light Status, you can see if everything is still fine, and the gradient of your vehicle is displayed under Towing Status.

Pieter Crous, our towing expert, weighs in:

“ I immediately liked the temperature gauge you see on the instrument panel because some new vehicles no longer have this. This one is entirely electronic, but the information is easy to read. The same goes for the large screen in front of the gearstick.

As for the ride itself, the suspension was impressive. With bakkies, you sometimes find the suspension is either too hard or soft, but the new Ranger strikes a good balance.

I've towed several times with this 10-speed gearbox, and it's simply wonderful. The computer chooses from a multitude of gears, but the gear changes



are so smooth you hardly notice. The engine has plenty of torque, and the bakkie tows a heavy caravan like this one effortlessly. I think it could easily handle a caravan weighing over 2 t without breaking a sweat. I largely attribute this to the smart thinking of the gearbox, making the Ranger a very comfortable towing vehicle. The engine never struggles, and the

towing is as easy as can be.

On steep hills, the vehicle accelerates without difficulty, but the ride is just as smooth on dirt roads. At 70 km/h, I also saw the sway control kick in. At one point, the road was sandy, and a warning appeared on the panel: 'Trailer sway control – reduce speed.' The computer kicked in, and I could feel it subtly but effectively correct the sway as I lifted my foot off the pedal – without interfering with my steering input. The Ranger is at home on a dirt road, and at no point did I feel unsafe. The lane assist works excellently and helps to ensure you don't cross the lane markings next to the vehicle. For turning, you need about three lanes.

I enjoy the new Ranger and have no complaints.

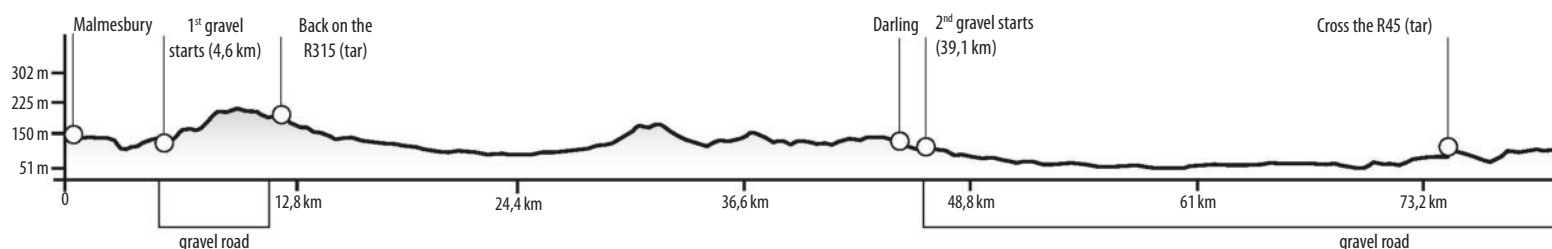
”

TOWING PROFILE

Elevation

Distance 128,4 km. Road Mostly dirt, plus highways, back roads and urban areas.

Total tow time 2 hours and 47 minutes. Weather 15 °C, partly cloudy, occasional rain, and an easterly wind of 8 km/h.





What we towed

Manufacturer Mobi Lodge

Model Continental

Year 2023

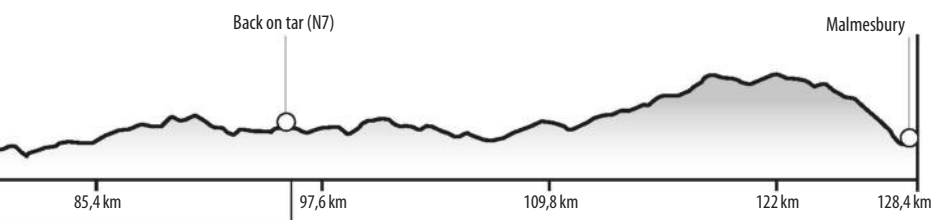
GVM 1 750 kg

Loaded axle weight during test 1 570 kg

Drive & Camp loaned the Mobi Lodge Continental from Cape Mobi Adventure in Malmesbury. ☎ 022 065 0987
✉ reghardt@capemobi.co.za
🌐 capemobi.co.za

SPECIFICATIONS

Model	XLT 2.0 BiT double cab 4x4 auto
Engine	Double turbodiesel
Power	154 kW @ 3 750 rpm
Torque	500 Nm @ 1 750-2 000 rpm
Transmission	10-speed automatic
Drive	Rear wheels or 4x4 with electronic rear diff lock
Tank	80 ℓ
Fuel consumption with caravan	10,1 ℓ/100 km (9,9 km/ℓ)
Reach with caravan	792 km
Tare weight	2 284 kg
Weight during test (nose weight of caravan included)	2 400 kg
GVM	3 230 kg
GCM	6 500 kg
Combination weight during	3 970 kg
Tow capacity	3 500 kg
Tow bar load test index	1 720 kg (D value 16,87 kN)
Maximum vertical weight of tow bar	225 kg
Is the towbar removable?	Yes, the hitch and the ball.
Is there room for a drop plate?	Yes.
PRICE	R833 800



From the competitors

Double-cab, 4x4, diesel, automatic and a towing capacity of 3 500 kg – in the same price range



R837 900

VW Amarok 2.0 BiTDI 4Motion Life

500 Nm



R842 900

Toyota Hilux 2.8 GD6 4x4 Raider

500 Nm



R822 500

Nissan Navara 2.5 DDTi Pro 4X 4x4

450 Nm



A different shade of adventure

NAYELA OKAPI X

Nayela has not only upgraded its Okapi in the last year or two; the new Okapi X takes it another step up.

Words and photos **Leon Botha**

The Nayela Okapi model already finds itself in esteemed company in the caravan world, but the Okapi X gives the model an additional boost. The standard model's 15-inch wheels are replaced by 16-inch versions, which necessarily means it stands a bit taller: the roof is 56 mm higher (2,15 m versus 2,094 m) with a ground clearance of 305 mm – that's 55 mm higher than the standard model.

Furthermore, the weight has been adjusted. Where the regular Okapi has a GVM of 1 750 kg, the Okapi X's is 1 900 kg. This weight determines the towing vehicle's weight, but the 150 kg difference has little impact on your typical towing vehicle for this type of caravan. Take, for example, the very basic Isuzu mu-X with a tare weight of 1 970 kg, or the cheapest Ford Ranger double cab



which is just over 2 tonnes.

The basic weight also differs: the standard model's tare weight (1 195 kg) is 400 kg lighter than that of the Okapi X, which tips the scales at 1 595 kg. So, you can load a touch more in the regular model: 555 kg compared with

the Okapi X's 305 kg.

The X is also longer, as the optional open rack at the back is standard. The standard caravan is 5,685 m and the Okapi X is 6,2 m long, a difference of 51,5 cm. The optional gas cylinder rack of the standard model that fits on the

A-frame is also standard on the Okapi X. These differences affect your pocket by R60 000, as the two models cost respectively R635 000 and R695 000, an amount that you get back doubly in value. Let's get into the X.



A fresh face

We tested the standard model in 2021, and the basic concept remains unchanged: the roof lifts electrically, and actuators lock the slide-out bed when it's retracted into the body. However, the previous control panel has been replaced with a modern version.

It's still in the door to the left, but now with a touchscreen that allows you to control equipment including the water pump, fridge, interior and exterior lights, 12 V power points, and the geyser, as well as to lift the roof and to lock the slide-out bed.

The touchscreen actually has different screens you can call up: one, for instance, is for the electric or gas adjustment of the geyser, another to adjust the roof and retract the bed's locks. On the screen, there's a realistic sketch



of the back of the Okapi X with two green arrows at the roof. One is to lift the roof, and the other to lower it. On the same picture, there's an arrow to the right of the body for the bed's electric locking mechanism.

Once you've pushed the bed back into the body, the outside of the bed locks with two handles – to help prevent the bed from sliding out while driving. Two telescopic arms beneath the bed retracted extend to press against the bed's framework. So, when



you set up and want to pull out the bed, you first have to release the two outer clips and then on the panel retract the telescopic arms. You simply press the button, and the actuators get to work.

You can stand next to the caravan in the door or take a seat on the step to access the panel so that you can lift the roof.

There's also other useful information on the screen, including the temperature, voltage reading, and the level of the water tank. Below the screen are three switches – for

the seating area and roof light, plus the blue light for the interior – and below that are three power sockets: a Hella, a cigarette lighter, and a USB port. The panel with all the circuit breakers and fuses sits behind the translucent door to the left of the touchscreen. This includes a earth leakage, air conditioner, geyser, 220 V, battery charger, and battery isolator circuit breakers.

The roof lifts 59 cm and the bed extends 85 cm from the body. Two loose and adjustable supports fit under the bed outside.

The Okapi X's spare wheel sits on the A-frame, while on the standard model it is on the chassis at the back. It's attached to an arm that swings to the side – it could hardly be easier to reach.

The two gas cylinders are located in front of the spare wheel on either side of the A-frame. The open rack at the back can carry up to 150 kg and the storage for the shovel is underneath it.





The galley

Just past the entry door are three more doors in the left panel forming part of the outdoor kitchen. The three-plate gas stove and sink flip out from the far-right cupboard, and then there are a number of narrow shelves in the hull – a great spot for spices, coffee or your peanut butter. The plates and dessert bowls fit in the bottom shelf.

Above that, above the wheels, are two cupboards on top of each other. The top one's door swings upwards, and the bottom one folds down to form a small worktop. Behind the top are three open shelves with the microwave oven on the right

above. The top cupboard also has three smaller open shelves – there's ample space for a pot or two. In the bottom right cupboard, there's room for all the mugs in cut-out sponge.

The backs of both cupboards are doors that you can open from the inside. At the top of both is a light and an 2,1 m LED strip against the hull.

There's another outside cupboard, on the other side between the bed and the A-frame. Aside from storage space, this is also where the crank for the corner steadies reside. It clips to the inside of the door, but unlike the model we previously tested, a hand axe now also fits here.



The interior

The freestanding fridge is to the right in the door, directly opposite the electrical control system. So, you can also easily access it from outside. To the left of the door, in the nose, a cosy nook has been set up with more than enough space for two. It's essentially a bench that follows the curvature of the nose, with two rounded windows behind it. They don't open or close, but there's a curtain for privacy. A narrow tabletop folds out from the opposite panel into the middle of the nook. It's a lovely spot to sit down for your morning coffee and rusk. Close to the tabletop is a 220 V and two USB sockets.

About half of the bed is inside the hull. On both sides of the end of the head are windows that can open – both have a fabric blind. Above you there's another a window. The roof over the section of the bed that slides out is just over two rulers high, and you can't really sit upright. On both sides of the bed are narrow shelves, and at the head end, a double shelf with reading lights and two USB sockets. Above you there's an LED strip as wide as the double bed.



On the door side of the bed are a few clothes racks with the dressing area on the other side. If you sit on the bed, you see yourself in the mirror; to the left of this is another 220 V socket (two and three pins). On the opposite corner is a large wardrobe with six shelves.

The toilet is in the back left corner, and there's a medicine cabinet behind the dressing area

From the competitors Caravans of similar material with a side slide-out bed



R575 000 **Freeline Campers Maverick** GVM 1 650 kg
Monocoque fibreglass



R588 000 **Mobi Lodge Continental** GVM 1 750 kg
Fibreglass steel-braced mono hull



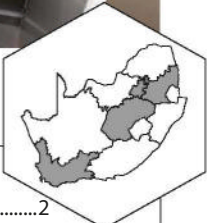
R813 907 **Overlander 500 Custom** GVM 2 000 kg
Glass-reinforced plastic.

Drive & Camp says

The Howling Moon awning as seen here on the test model costs an extra R33 000. It forms a roof of 2,6 m alongside the caravan and folds over the nose and tail.



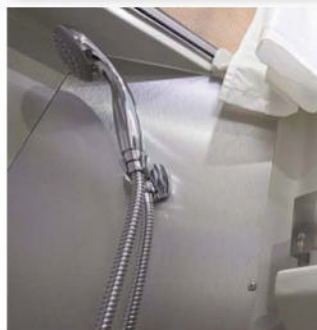
Drive & Camp loaned the Okapi X from the manufacturer.



plus a built-in laundry basket. And a mirror. The shower has its own cubicle in the corner to the right, which closes at the top with a shower curtain. It also has a light.

What can you add?

You have a choice of more than 20 optional extras. There's a variety of tent choices ranging from a full tent to different canvas awnings; movers; a 130 W solar panel; extra 80 ℓ water tank; a spare-wheel rack at the back; bicycle attachment point; storage for tent poles; an additional sink unit; a TV; bed in the nose and air-conditioning.



SPECIFICATIONS

Sleeps	2
Dimensions	6,2 x 1,998 x 2,15 m
Tare weight	1 595 kg
Load capacity	305 kg
GVM	1 900 kg
Axle	2 x 1,5 t rubber axles
Wheel size	16"
Chassis	Galvanised
Hull	Fibreglass unibody
Price	R695 000

DEALER NETWORK

The head office is in Reitz, Free State, plus six dealers: Nayela Pretoria, Loftus Caravan City (Randburg), Cara-Camp Caravan & Outdoor (Somerset West), Garden Route Camping & Caravans (Mossel Bay), Sunpark Camping & Leisure (Mbombela) and LA Sport 4WD Megastores (Gqeberha).

Contact 058 863 1027 or 072 480 4425 • sales@nayela.co.za
• nayela.co.za



2023 IN REVIEW

When we're not camping, we're on our way to a campsite. Here's our camping life at *Drive & Camp* by numbers over the past year.

Compiled by **Leon Botha** Illustrations **Dominic Wienand**

WORD FOR WORD



145 298

The total number of words in the past year's *Drive & Camp* magazines. This spans from issue #52 (December 2022-January 2023) to #57 (October-November 2023).

24 216 The average number of words per issue. There are six *Drive & Camp* issues per year.



That's how many minutes (one hour and 47 minutes) it would take to read a *Drive & Camp* at an average reading speed. (According to irisreading.com, adults read at a speed of 200-250 words per minute – our calculation is done with an average of 225 words per minute).

CARAVANS GALORE



The number of caravans we personally hitched and tested this year. These were the Bushwacka Evolution 3 (R536 354), Leefek Tourer SX Enduro (R497 109), Tonga (R184 000), Armadillo's XTR312 (R540 000), the Exclusive from GT Camper (R274 069) and the Invader Duo X (R408 000). Prices were valid for the specific issues.

44

That's how many new caravan models we collectively saw at the Caravan Show in Midrand and the kykNET Outdoor Expo in Malmesbury.

This included models from more than 30 existing manufacturers plus five brand-new manufacturers. In our news pages, we wrote about a further five new models. This means this year we brought 49 new models to your attention.



19

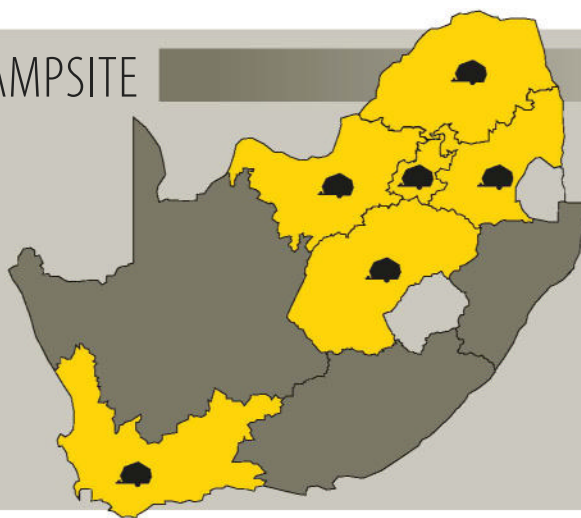
million The value of the new models at the two shows. This means the average price was R431 818. The cheapest was the Nomadik trailer (R80 000) and at R1 000 000 the ELXV Ng'Ombe was the most expensive.

FROM CAMPSITE TO CAMPSITE

18

The number of campsites (in six provinces) we personally visited and comprehensively reported on over the past year.

In 2023, we did not make it to the Northern Cape, Eastern Cape or KwaZulu-Natal, although we travel to the latter on p 40 of this issue. And will be heading to the other two shortly.



5 261

The kilometres you would have to drive if you did a circular route through the country visiting all 18 of these resorts. At an optimistic 12,5 l/100 km (when towing), such a journey would set you back R16 046 if you do the calculations at R24,40/l for diesel.

MORE IS MORE

5

The number of camping-related magazines that appeared under the *Drive & Camp* banner over the past year. This includes our annual *Resort Guide*, plus the first *Resort Guide* focusing on pet-friendly campsites, the *DIY Guide*, our second *Buyers' Guide* listing all the new caravans in the country, and our third *Fireside Food* edition with all its recipes for the campfire.

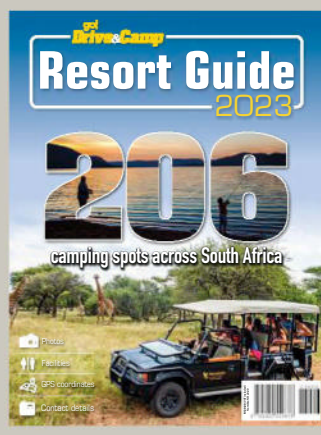


254

The caravan models in our *Buyers' Guide 2023*. These are caravans from 66 manufacturers that are built locally as production models. The total value of the caravans is R95 million and ranges from R61 000 to R950 000. The guide has 156 pages and includes more than 600 photos.

206

The number of resorts in our *Resort Guide 2023*. This includes campsites in all provinces with the Mazhou camp in the Mapungubwe National Park being the farthest north; McDougalls Bay in the west; Utshwayelo in Kosi Bay the farthest east; and L'Agulhas at the very southern tip.



155

The number of pet-friendly resorts across the country featured in our first special edition of the *Resort Guide*.

There are just over 300 such resorts in the country; we'll publish the rest of them in the 2024 edition.



19

The number of projects featured in our *DIY Guide 2023*.

This issue focuses for example on tips when buying a second-hand caravan; how to customise your tent; and campers' clever camping plans.



8

The sections in our *Fireside Food 2023* edition. This includes lamb, beef, chicken and pork, and then there's also breakfast, side dishes and sweets. The magazine contains more than 100 recipes.

Snakes: myths and misconceptions



Venturing into the wild on an overland trip, you're likely to encounter snakes. Here are 20 common misconceptions – and the facts – about these ancient creatures.

Words **Cyril Klopfer** Photos **Africa Snakebite Institute** and **Unsplash**

Since olden times, people have been spinning frightful yarns about snakes, something that doesn't sit right with Johan Marais from the African Snakebite Institute. He assures us that snakes are not malevolent creatures seeking to harm humans; they are actually timid and nervous animals that prefer flight over fight.

Busy holiday resorts are largely snake-free precisely because these animals are shy, but if you're wild camping in nature, you may come across what is considered by some to be the original enemy.

1 All snakes are venomous

There are 176 snake species in Southern Africa, of which only 20 are life-threatening and 30 are relatively dangerous. That leaves us with 126 species that you needn't worry about.

2 Snake venom can be sucked out of a bite

We can thank old cowboy movies for this myth. Nowadays, charlatans sell pumps designed to suck out snake venom, but this is ineffective as venom is immediately absorbed into your bloodstream.

Rabbits were subjected to snake bites in a 1962 experiment by JH Mason, and it was found that less than 1% of the venom could be extracted in this way. In fact, Johan says you could even increase the harm by cutting the bite area and sucking on it.

3 Snakes are aggressive

Snakes will avoid humans, but they will defend themselves if threatened. This includes rearing up to appear larger, hissing to intimidate, and some snakes like the Cape cobra and rinkhals may perform mock charges. Johan says a snake becomes aggressive only if it has repeatedly warned you and you still refuse to leave it alone.



4 Snakes chase people

You might have heard tales of snakes like the black mamba chasing humans. Johan and his team of researchers and snake catchers have handled hundreds of black mambas and not one has ever chased them. What does happen is that when a black mamba spots you, it immediately heads for the nearest bush or rock for cover, and sometimes that safe place will happen to be in your direction.

Some snake species have a nest, and if threatened, they will try to return home, even if it means having to slip between your legs.

5 Snakes jump from trees

No. What can happen, though, is that a snake might fall from a branch or roof beam if startled. When Johan's team is called to remove a snake from a suburban garden, it's always a struggle

because the last thing that snake wants is to leave the safety of its leafy tree.

6 There are always two of them

Snakes live solitary lives. Occasionally, two snakes may share a burrow – often different species so they don't compete for prey – but otherwise, they only pair up during mating season. Males will then fight for a female's attention.

7 Snakes have families

As we've already mentioned, snakes are loners. Females are better off, as males court them.

A female puff adder will, for example, release pheromones during mating season, attracting male puffers from far and wide. But the males depart as soon as she is sexually satisfied – and the males probably never see her nor their offspring again.

8 A snake takes revenge

There's a superstition that a snake will seek vengeance for the death of its "mate". We've debunked this already in myth seven, but the misconception might arise from the fact that if you kill one snake, you open up the territory for another to move in.

9 A baby snake's mother is always nearby

Most snakes lay eggs – with exceptions of certain pythons and the rinkhals that birth live. Egg-laying snakes do not incubate their eggs like birds do – again, there are exceptions, such as the spotted skaapsteker that may guard its eggs.

Snake eggs typically incubate themselves between 70 and 90 days, and indeed, you may encounter more than one baby snake in a mother's territory, but they quickly disperse to establish their own hunting grounds.

10 Baby snakes are more venomous

This misconception is common. The myth is that baby snakes can't yet control their venom glands, and if they bite, they inject all their venom into you, unlike an adult snake, which can "control" the dose.

The reality is that baby snakes

“...snakes are not malevolent creatures seeking to harm humans; they are actually timid and nervous animals...”

have less venom than adults. They also don't need nearly as much, as their prey is significantly smaller. Current research is underway to determine if babies' venom is less potent per volume than that of adult snakes.

11 Snakes are deaf

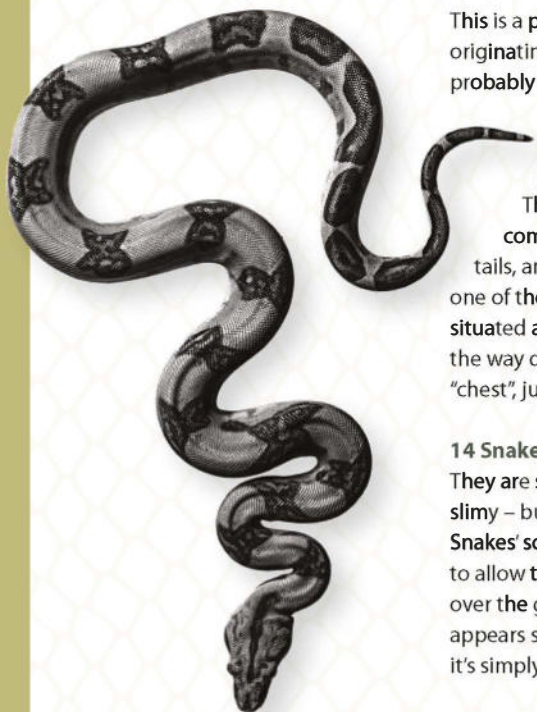
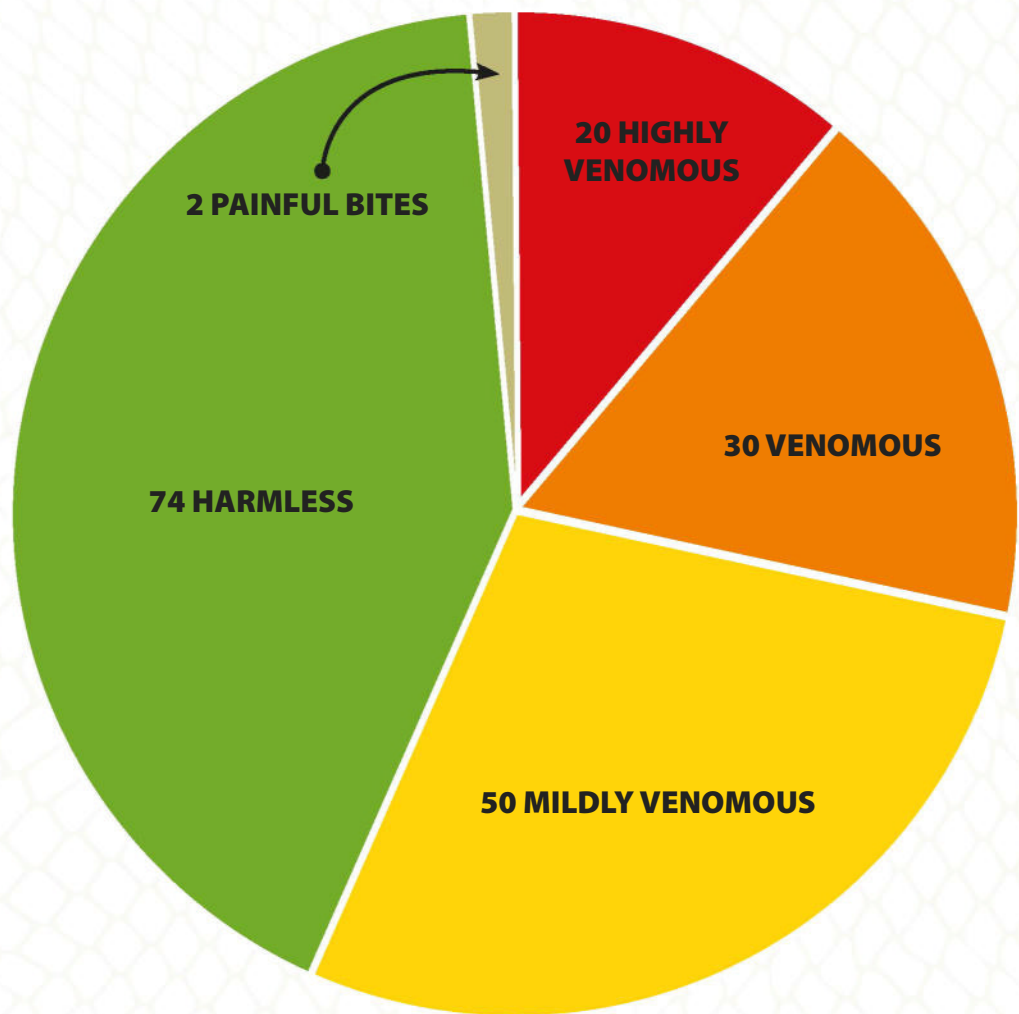
Just because you can't see their ears doesn't mean they can't hear you. Snakes have internal ears and can indeed hear sound – albeit not nearly as well as an animal with external ears. A snake relies more on vibrations felt through the ground.

12 Snakes are blind

Many people steadfastly believe that snakes have poor eyesight. However, some snakes have excellent vision, though often based on movement rather than colour and patterns, as we humans see the world.

For this reason, a snake will watch you attentively as you move but may search uncertainly for you once you stop. The vision of snake species that hunt underground – like mole snakes – is adapted for those conditions, and they can distinguish extremely well between light and darkness.

NUMBER OF VENOMOUS AND HARMLESS SNAKES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA



13 Its heart is in its tail

This is a popular misconception originating from Limpopo. It's probably because snakes, as

well as other reptiles, swing their tails when they feel threatened.

The truth is many animals communicate with their tails, and a snake is simply one of them. A snake's heart is situated approximately a third of the way down its body inside its "chest", just like the rest of us.

14 Snakes are slimy

They are smooth rather than slimy – but they can be slippery. Snakes' scales must be smooth to allow them to glide quickly over the ground. If a snake appears slimy or slippery to you, it's simply because the smooth

scales gleam in sunlight – a sign of a healthy snake.

15 The tongue is also poisonous

A snake uses its forked tongue to gather scent particles floating in the air. It then retracts its tongue into its mouth where the Jacobson's organ examines the particles.

As with a human nose, this enables the snake to locate the nearest food and water. The fork in the snake's tongue additionally gives it stereoscopic smell ability, so it knows in which direction its food is. There's not a single drop of venom in its tongue unless it has accidentally bitten itself.

16 Its jawbone gets dislocated to swallow large prey

This is not entirely untrue, but rather a misconception of what a snake's skull looks like. Unlike humans, a snake's lower and upper jaws are not interlocked. A snake's jaws drift widely apart and are connected by a ligament that enables the snake to swallow prey three times larger than its head.

17 Even its skeleton is poisonous

Some African traditions claim you must immediately burn a dead snake and crush its bones, because if someone accidentally steps on a rib, they could be poisoned. Venomous snakes store their venom in glands near their cheeks and nowhere else. What can happen is that if you step on a snake's skeleton and



Do your research

Before you head into the wild, it's wise to arm yourself with comprehensive knowledge about the bush. Visit africansnakebiteinstitute.com to acquire a proper snakebite first aid kit, attend courses, and purchase field guides and manuals. You can also download an app for your smartphone that will help you identify the snake that bit you so doctors can administer the correct antivenom.

Knowledge is power, and to remain willfully ignorant when you venture into the wild with your off-road rig is irresponsible.



a bone pierces through the skin of your foot, it may become infected by regular germs.

18 Puff adds bite the second passerby

The University of the Witwatersrand actually conducted a study on this – and found that puff adders that feel safe will never bite, even if you accidentally step on their tail. As long as they believe you don't see them, they won't react.

However, the students did find it's a whole different story if a puffie is basking in the sun. If you then step close to him, there's a strong possibility that he will strike, regardless of whether you are first, second or third in the line.

19 If a snake bites you, you must drink water before it can

Another popular African superstition is that it's a race to reach a river first and drink water. If the snake wins, it's curtains for you! Snake venom is not affected by drinking water, and it's better to remain calm and seek help at the nearest clinic rather than dash to the nearest stream.

20 Snakes never bite children or pregnant women

Snakes, as far as we know, cannot make such fine distinctions. And even if they could, they would still bite if they felt threatened, regardless of their target's gender, age or medical condition. According to statistics, about a quarter of patients admitted to hospitals for snake bites are children.



FACE THE FACTS. A boomslang (above) high up in a tree. Snakes don't jump or fly out of trees in southern Africa. The bones of a snake (left) are not venomous. However, some skeletons contain bacteria and diseases. Southern African pythons and spotted skaapstekers (below) are the only two snakes known to guard eggs.



'Tis the Season!

It's that time again for togetherness, summer holidays, and presents under the Christmas tree. We bring you 18 products – each costing less than R1 000.

Words **Cyril Klopper** Photos **Supplied**



BRANDO MEN'S WALLET

Take note

This wallet made of genuine leather is a great gift for the man in your life. This one is slim enough to not be too conspicuous in Dad's trouser pocket. Lined with khaki material, it boasts eight card slots and two compartments for bank notes. There's no coin pocket, otherwise it would be a purse. It also has a window slot for your driving licence or ID card. The wallet blocks RFID, which means nobody can scan the chip on Dad's credit card while it's in the wallet. Dimensions: 11 x 8,5 x 0,9 cm.

Price R699 at Outdoor Warehouse



BUSHNELL POWERVIEW 2 10X25 BINOCULARS

Game viewer

Good binoculars are never cheap, and this pair by Bushnell is probably the best you can get for R1 000. The magnification is 10x and the lens diameter 25 mm. The 10x25 combination is suitable for wildlife viewing, yet the binoculars are compact enough to fit in your car's cubby hole. The binoculars are 11,4 cm long and weigh only 255 g. The focus wheel turns accurately, and the rubber casing instills confidence that the binoculars won't easily slip from your hand and fall to the ground.

Price R999 at Cape Union Mart



CASIO ILLUMINATOR WATCH

Back to the Future

Watches that look like they come from the eighties are all the rage, and this old-school Casio is particularly popular among teenage boys. It's water-resistant up to 50 m, features a backlight, a 1/100 second stopwatch, both 24-hour and 12-hour formats, a countdown timer, multifunctional alarms that can be set for daily, weekly, or monthly reminders and it has a calendar. Casio asserts its timekeeping is accurate to 30 seconds a month, the CR2016 battery should last for seven years under normal use, and at 37 g it's relatively lightweight.

Price R799 at Outdoor Warehouse





DINNER SET BY TENTCO

Nuclear family

This dinner set is for a family of four and includes oval plates, side plates, soup bowls, coffee mugs and glasses. All items are made of ABS plastic and are packaged in a transparent plastic crate. The crate's dimensions are 52 x 40 x 23 cm. It's a great gift for a young couple who have recently started a family and now want to go camping. Or perhaps you want to preserve the vintage dinner set that came with your 1970's Jurgens 500B and use this more affordable set instead.

Price R660 at Tentco



FIRST ASCENT ADVENTURE HAT

Hats on!

This hat is made of stretchable material with a sun protection factor of 30 and can be worn by both men and women. It not only keeps your head cool in the summer, but also warm in the winter. It's lined with mesh and a sweat-absorbent inner band. You can roll it up without its brim losing shape, and the adjustable cord ensures that a strong wind won't make off with your hat. The material dries quickly, making the hat suitable for kayaking, fishing and other water-related activities.

Price R349 at Outdoor Warehouse



FOLDING RECLINER BY TENTCO

The throne of ease

You and your travel companion should consider treating yourselves to a comfortable chair, because you've worked hard and deserve this holiday. The chair has a built-in head pillow and is reclinable, so you can sit upright or lounge. It is made from Teslin material stretched over a steel frame. The dimensions are 110 cm long and 50 cm wide, and Tentco says it can carry a weight of up to 130 kg. The chair weighs 7 kg and its dimensions when folded are 94 x 65 x 4 cm.

Price R999 at Tentco



DOFIT ACTIVITY TRACKER

She's got game

And another watch, but this one is more popular among teenage girls, especially those who participate in sports. The watch does more than just tell the time – it can communicate with your daughter's smartphone and notify her of incoming calls or messages while her phone is on silent and stowed away in a school bag. It monitors heart rate, sleep patterns and steps. She can also set it to differentiate between running and walking steps, and use it for cycling. Its battery life is limited to seven days due to its advanced functions, but it comes with a USB cable.

Price R699 at Outdoor Warehouse



HIGHLANDER WATER BOTTLE

Sip in style

This bottle is made of stainless steel, and according to the manufacturer, it will keep your drink cool for up to 24 hours. It has a capacity of 500 ml and weighs 300 g when empty. Its dimensions are 19 x 7 x 7 cm and the lid has a carrying handle. The bottle comes in a variety of colours so everyone can identify which is theirs.

Price R289 at Camp & Climb

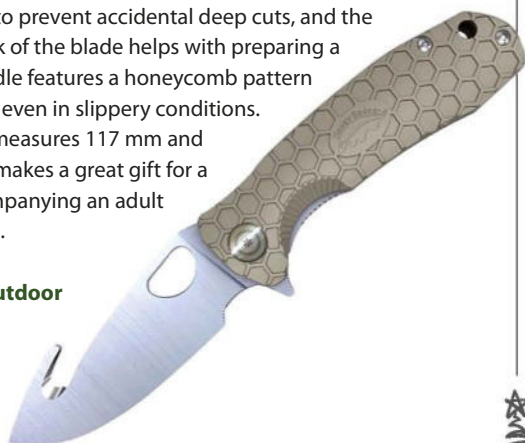


HONEY BADGER HOOK KNIFE

Slice of the wild

Honey Badger is a proudly South African company, and this knife is specifically designed for field dressing game. The blade is 92 mm long, 3 mm thick and made from 8Cr13MoV stainless steel. The blade is short enough to prevent accidental deep cuts, and the hook on the back of the blade helps with preparing a carcass. The handle features a honeycomb pattern for a secure grip, even in slippery conditions. When folded, it measures 117 mm and weighs 113 g. It makes a great gift for a youngster accompanying an adult on a hunting trip.

Price R799 at Outdoor Warehouse

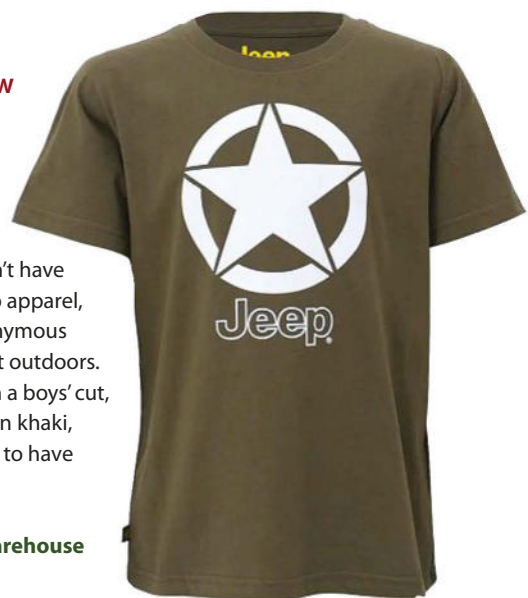


JEEP START T-SHIRT

You're in the army now

Children may not want to receive clothes for Christmas from their parents, but they tend to accept them from their grandparents. You also don't have to own a Jeep to wear Jeep apparel, because the brand is synonymous with holidays and the great outdoors. The T-shirt shown here is in a boys' cut, and we suggest you get it in khaki, as young lads always seem to have a thing for military wear.

Price R249 at Outdoor Warehouse



DUFFEL BAG BY TENTCO

Touring in style

Tentco is known for its tents and bags made from durable canvas material. The brand takes a pragmatic approach to camping gear, usually eschewing frills. However, this kit bag is on the luxurious side and it's smart enough for glamping. It has a spacious interior divided into two, as well as two outer pockets – one on the front with a zipper and one on the side that closes with rivets. It has carry straps and an adjustable shoulder strap. The dimensions are 52 x 25 x 29 cm.

Price R585 at Tentco

LEATHERMAN-STYLE PS
MULTITOOL**Mighty mite**

A pocket knife is handy, but a multitool has many more uses. This model is compact enough to use as a keychain. It features eight tools, including pliers, wire cutters, scissors, flat and Phillips screwdrivers, nail file and bottle opener. It's a fine little gadget and would make any kid happy. When folded, its dimensions are 15 x 20 x 9 mm, and it weighs 44,7 g. Remember, it's so small that you might forget about it when boarding a plane, and then customs will confiscate it!

Price R970 at Awesome Tools



LED LENSER POWERCASE

Light it up

Illuminate your adventures with this chic and utilitarian case. More than just a storage solution, this powercase acts as a wireless charger for your headlamp, keeping it ready for whenever you need it. Plus, it doubles as a power bank with a 5 000 mAh capacity and a USB-A port to recharge your phone. Together, the case and headlamp weigh 219 g, and it takes about three hours to fully recharge the power bank from absolutely dead.

Price R925 at Awesome Tools





PLAKKIE VICTORIA BAY FLIP-FLOPS

To the beach!

The South African shoemaker Veldskoen doesn't only craft leather shoes, they also produce flip-flops under the brand name Plakkie. All their flip-flops are named after South African beaches like Gonubie, Clifton, and Victoria Bay. The latter is famed for its waves and surfing contests, making these flip-flops a perfect gift for your daughter on your seaside holiday.

Price R279 at Outdoor Warehouse



WATER BOTTLE BY TENTCO
Hydration station

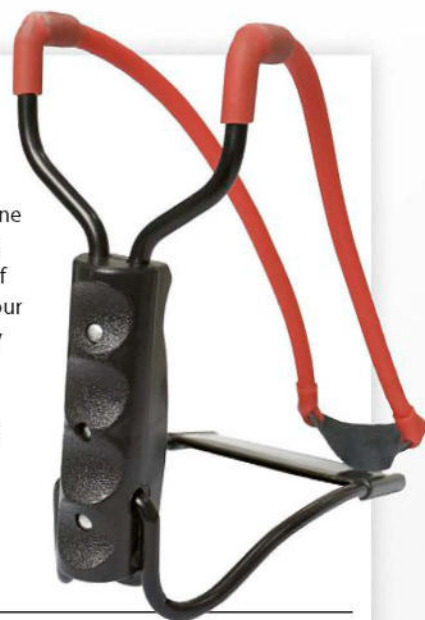
Whether you're trekking, fishing, kayaking or engaging in any physical endeavour, Tentco's water bottle is a must-have. Holding a generous 1 l and clothed in durable ripstop material, it's available in blue and green so you can distinguish your drink – just in case it contains more than just water.

Price R170 at Tentco

ON THE MARK SLINGSHOT
Boys will be boys

Not much can be said about one of the world's oldest weapons, other than you've missed out if you didn't fire a slingshot in your youth. It teaches responsibility and sharpens hand-eye coordination. Just remember, targeting the neighbour's dog would not only be cruel but could land you in trouble.

Price R299 at Outdoor Warehouse



VOLKANO DISNEY NIGHTLIGHT
AND SPEAKER

Lullabies and lights

Ease the little ones into the camping experience with this nightlight that doubles as a speaker. You can switch up the light colour or set it to pulse to the rhythm of the tunes, though that might not be the best way to drift off to sleep. It also picks up FM radio, or you can load up a micro-SD card with favourite bedtime tunes or stream from your phone via Bluetooth or USB. The battery life lasts for 7 hours.

Price R399 at Cape Union Mart

ZARTEK RX-8 TWO-WAY RADIOS

Over and out

These walkie-talkies strike a balance between affordability and technical prowess, making it ideal for kids' play or communication in a convoy with family and friends. With a maximum range of 10 km under perfect conditions (expect more like 3 km in real-world use), it's sufficient for vehicles travelling together. Each unit is lightweight at 150 g, compact (16 x 4 x 5,5 cm), and can fit in your shirt pocket. With 968 channels, they operate on three AA batteries.

Price R799 at Outdoor Warehouse



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Hop on the greasy train!



The secret of this feast lies in the
six delectable sauces.

Recipes and styling **Johané Neilson** Photos **Misha Jordaan/Gallo**

T-BONE STEAK WITH COWBOY BUTTER

Pinterest perfect

This flavoured butter – an internet sensation – is easy to make at home and delicious dotted onto perfectly grilled steak, fresh off the coals.

Ingredients

(serves 4)

- 2 large T-bone steaks
- A lick of oil
- Salt and black pepper to taste

FOR THE FLAVOURED BUTTER

- 6 tablespoons real butter
- Juice and grated zest of half a lemon (start with less rather than more)
- 2 teaspoons chopped fresh garlic
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- a pinch of red pepper
- ¼ teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon dried parsley (or, even better, use 2 teaspoons fresh parsley)
- 2 teaspoons chopped chives (or use very finely chopped white onion)
- A pinch of dried chilli flakes

Here's how

1 Mix all the butter ingredients together and place in an airtight container, ready to pack.

2 Before serving, gently melt the butter over low heat to take the edge off the garlic and onion so the flavours come together. I don't mind if it sets a little before being served.

3 Coat the steak with a drizzle of oil and season it with salt and pepper. Leave the steaks to marinate while you light the fire; the meat should not be fridge cold.

4 Braai the steak over flames until a golden crust forms on the outside – with a blushing interior (or however you like it).

5 Slice the meat off the bone and dip the strips into the decadent butter.

Drive & Camp says This garlic butter sauce is also delicious on a roosterkoek or drizzled over cooked vegetables. I add a chopped fresh red chilli for an extra kick.

BREAD WITH CAMEMBERT CENTRE

Soft at heart

A sachet of marinated sundried tomatoes is a two-in-one ingredient with flavour that punches above its weight! The soft, juicy tomatoes bestow that X-factor to the bread filling, while the vinaigrette marinade makes a delicious dipping sauce for the warm wedges. Perfect!

Ingredients

(makes 1 medium-sized bread)

- 600 g bought white-bread dough
- 12 slices of Parma or Black Forest ham
- 1 packet (240 g) sundried tomatoes in vinaigrette (the ones from Ina Paarman and Woolies are delicious)
- 1 camembert cheese (or 2 if the budget allows)
- 3 cherry tomatoes, halved
- A few sprigs of rosemary and chopped red onion

Here's how

1 Flatten the ball of bread dough slightly with

your hands. Arrange the ham in a circle, in a single layer with the ends just overlapping. Place the cheese on top along with some sundried tomato halves (about six). Fold the ham over the cheese and tomatoes and place that parcel on top of the flattened bread dough. Mold the bread dough over and around the ham-and-cheese parcel so it is roughly in the middle of your loaf.

2 Grease a flat-bottomed potjie well with oil, place the bread with the seam side down into it, and garnish the top of the bread with rosemary, a few more tomato halves, a sprinkle of red onion and, if you like, a few fresh tomatoes – for a variety in flavour. Replace the lid and allow rise for about 20 minutes while you get the coals ready.

3 Bake the bread on a stand over the coals for about 40 minutes or until cooked – remember a few coals for the lid. Serve warm in wedges with the rest of the sundried tomatoes and the vinaigrette sauce.

Drive & Camp says Remember to grease the lid too, just in case the bread doubles in size and your topping sticks to the lid.



PIGS IN BLANKETS

Sizzling sausages

Glossy, sweet, salty and spicy – to me, this treat tastes like Christmas!

Ingredients

(serves 6 as a starter)

- 3 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 3 tablespoons wholegrain mustard
- 3 tablespoons runny honey
- 1 pickled jalapeño chilli, finely chopped (optional)
- 12 fresh chipolata pork sausages
- 6 bacon strips, cut in half
- A few sprigs of rosemary

Here's how

1 Whisk together the

mustard, wholegrain mustard, honey and jalapeño.

2 Coat the sausages with half of the sauce and carefully wrap each one with half a strip of bacon. Secure with a skewer or rosemary sprig.

3 Braai the sausages gently until golden brown, glossy and cooked. Just before taking them off the grid, brush the rest of the sauce over for a final glaze. Serve as a snack or starter.

Drive & Camp says These delightful sausages also make fabulous Christmas burgers. Serve two glistening sausages on a brioche bun with slices of tomato, pickles and, if available, fresh lettuce.



GRILLED PUMPKIN WITH MILK CARAMEL SAUCE

A tin-ful idea!

This sauce is made in a flash and pairs well with anything from pumpkin fritters to pancakes filled with banana slices!

Ingredients

(serves 12 as a side dish)

- 1 small pumpkin, cut into 1 cm wedges, seeds removed
- 1 tablespoon olive oil

FOR THE SAUCE

- 1 tin (380 g) evaporated milk
- A cinnamon stick (or use a pinch of ground cinnamon)
- ¼ cup sugar (or to taste)
- 1 tablespoon cornflour
- 2 tablespoons water
- A pinch of sea salt flakes (Maldon is my favourite)

Here's how

1 Make the sauce Mix the

evaporated milk, cinnamon and sugar together in a small saucepan until the sugar has dissolved. Combine the cornflour and water to make a paste, whisk it into the sauce and cook the mixture for a few minutes until slightly thickened. Remove from the heat and stir in the salt.

2 Lightly brush the pumpkin all over with the oil.

3 Arrange the slices in a single layer in a hinged grid and braai over reasonably hot coals until nicely caramelised on the outside. Raise the grid if the pumpkin is not yet fully cooked, and braai over more moderate coals until ready.

4 Drizzle the cooked pumpkin with the sauce and serve immediately.

Drive & Camp says A sprinkle of extra cinnamon is, of course, not to be sneezed at.

WATERMELON SALAD WITH BALSAMIC DRIZZLE

Sweet and succulent symphony

This salad tastes like summer on a plate and is one of my favourite ways to spruce up a syrupy sweet watermelon.

Ingredients

(serves 6 as a side dish)

- ½ a small watermelon, peeled and cut into triangles or blocks
- 100 g feta cheese, cubed
- ¼ cup roasted pistachio nuts, roughly chopped
- ½ red onion, finely chopped
- A sprinkle of fresh mint leaves
- 1 head of cos or any other crisp leaf lettuce, torn into pieces
- 2 tablespoons balsamic glaze (Willow Creek Balsamic Glaze

is delicious)

Here's how

- 1 Arrange** all the ingredients except the nuts and glaze on a pretty plate.
- 2 Just** before serving, sprinkle over the nuts and consider a pinch of salt and black pepper.
- 3 Finally**, drizzle over the thick, luxurious balsamic glaze and serve the salad immediately.

Drive & Camp says It's easy to make your own balsamic glaze: reduce a cup of balsamic vinegar by half until it's nicely thickened. Allow to cool and pour into a bottle. For a sweeter taste, you can dissolve ¼ cup of brown sugar into the vinegar before reducing – and for extra flavour add a sprig of thyme and a pinch of salt.



CHOCOLATE 'FONDUE'

Dunking delight

I prefer dark chocolate for the fondue because all the dippables are usually on the sweet side, but naturally, you can use your favourite.

Ingredients

(makes about 350 ml)

- 3 slabs (80 g each) dark chocolate
- 1 tub (250 g) mascarpone
- ¼ cup cream or evaporated milk
- A generous pinch of sea salt flakes
- All the delightful dippers your heart desires – coconut cookies, strawberries and other fresh fruit slices, pretzels, marshmallows...

Here's how

- 1 Melt** the chocolate, mascarpone, cream and salt flakes together in a metal mixing bowl over a pot of boiling water. The mixing bowl should not

touch the water; it's the steam that will melt the chocolate. This is the easiest way to prevent the chocolate from accidentally overheating and becoming gritty. Of course, you can stir in a splash of liqueur or brandy as long as the little ones have their own pudding. A spoon of instant coffee or a cap of vanilla essence is also tasty.

2 Pour the chocolate fondue into a bowl or potjie (it helps if you need to re-melt the sauce), place it in the centre of all the delicious dippers, hand out sticks to everyone and tuck in.

Drive & Camp says Feel free to pour the chocolate into two pots – one for adults and one for kids. Adult dippers can include biscotti and more luxurious cookies and fruitcake, while kids usually prefer coconut biscuits and marshmallows. Individual cups of chocolate sauce are also an option. Leftovers? Drizzle it over ice cream.

go!
Drive&Camp

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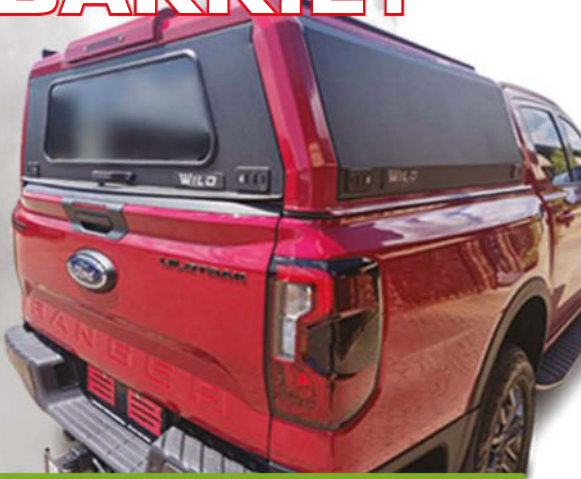
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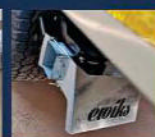
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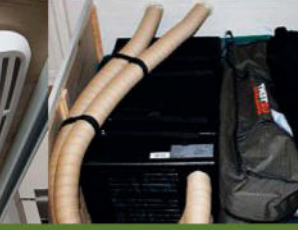
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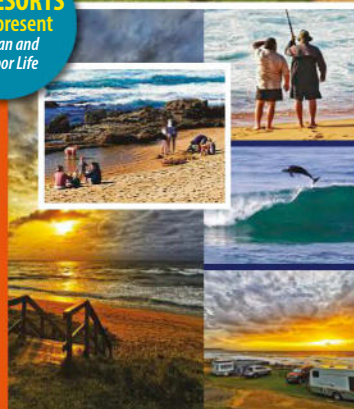
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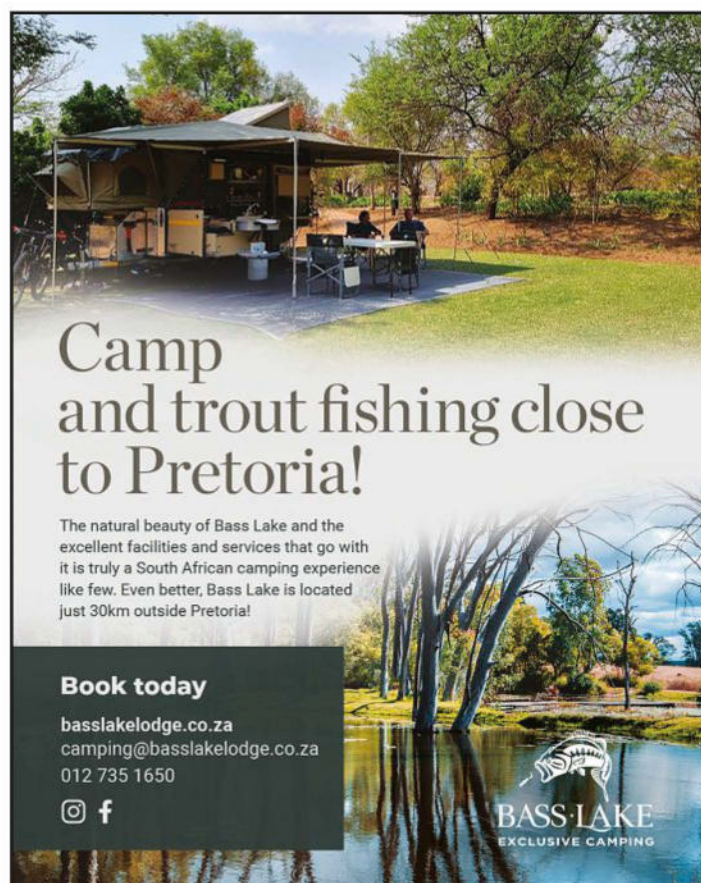
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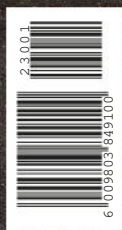
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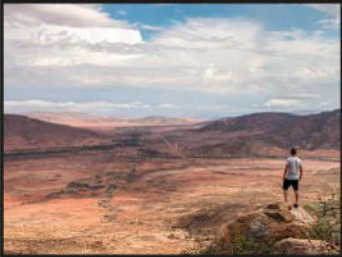
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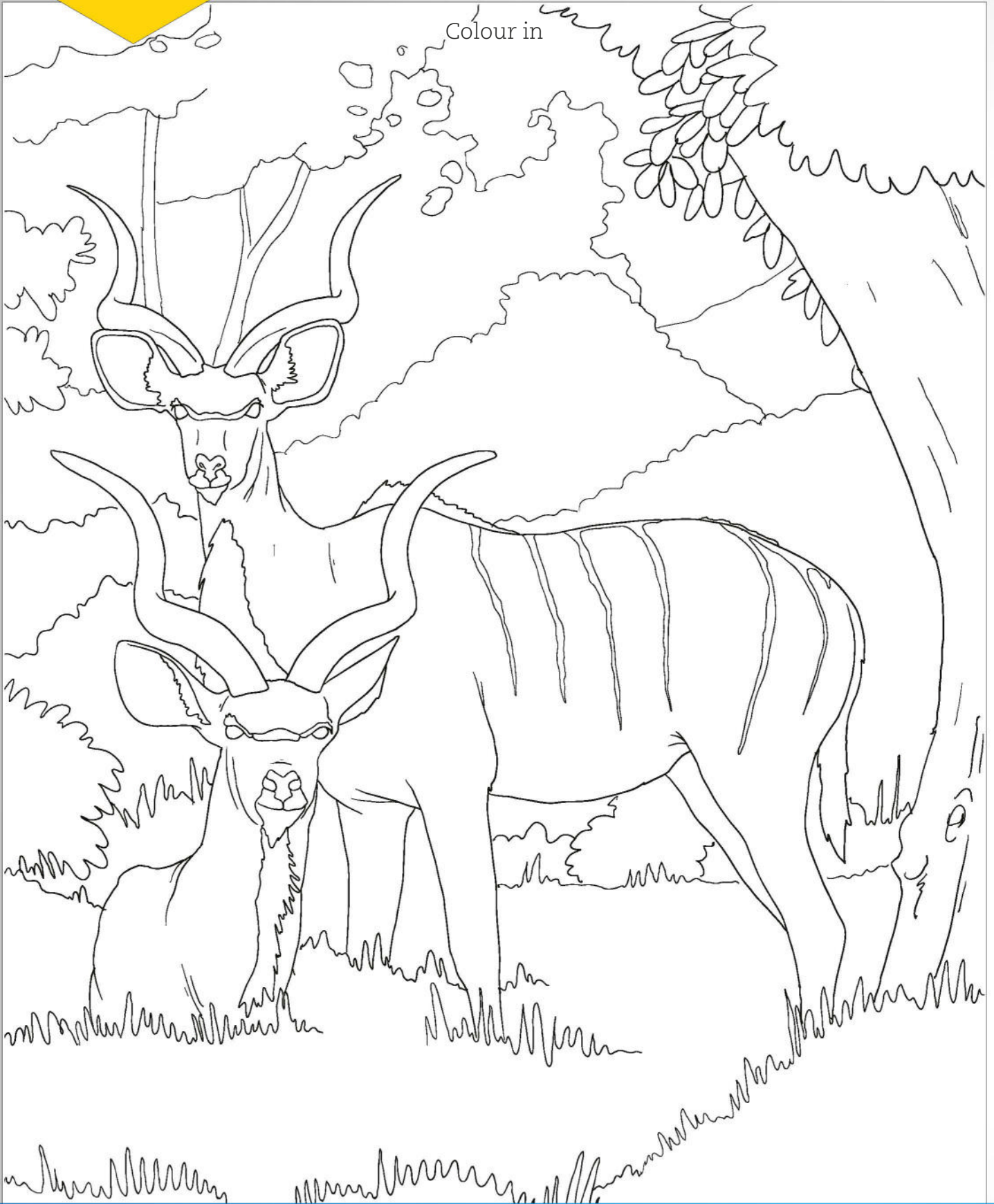
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Bruce Forbes Brown from Middelburg, Mpumalanga has won a cooler bag worth R220 for his correct entry in our August-September 2023 issue. Congrats, Bruce!

The previous issue's solution is on page 106.

				Pass outside Springbok	That is (Latin abbr)	Horri- fy Prejudice	Pismire	Campsite in the Cederberg				
				Dappled								
				Indaba								
								Division				
Cele- brated		Carpet		Gleamed		Prices			Line		Pungent	
Lunch		Legume							Energy source		Den	
						Exists		Entertain				
						Rule		Book material				
Less than 50% (3,4)								Insects that make a shrilling noise				
			Approve					Breakfast option			A thing	
			Prayer ending									
Slim cylinder		Fresh				Surrender			Catalogue number (abbr)		Sardonic	
		Captive										
						Old- fashioned						
Gloss				Wool source	Juice Brave	University head						
Dramatic outcome										VW bakkie		
				Wink (an eyelid)		Northern Cape (abbr)	Withhold		Long- tailed rodent		Grown-up	Farewell
						Dal segno (abbr.)					Anxiety	Parched
						Tan shade			Murky			
				Confront				Fertiliser				
				Chore								
River in KZN	A long time		Wolf down						Bank			Light touch
	Utilise								Feline			
						Belonging to me		Old French (abbr)			Jacket	
											Greek letter	
Coastal area							Evergreen trees				Personal assistant (abbr)	
						Garret			Depart			

Colour in



COLOUR IN

Get your crayons and colouring pencils out and bring life to this line drawing.

WORD SEARCH

Search for the hidden words in the list and tick them off as you find them.

SPOT THE DIFFERENCES

There are at least 10 differences between the two illustrations. See if you can find them all!

MAZE

Show the maze who's boss. Remember to first do it in pencil, just in case you make a mistake.

Word search

I I B K X E W L I J R Q K D A Q I F F B V L
X P P R K A Z D C H N P F L U U S E O Z B A
X D N T J B F E Z A O K T C Y F B T K S T I
Z R W Y S S F C A S T E R S E M E N Y A J L
N J A B J C U I Q Z G K U O S J H S U R K S
C H A D L E C L O S G E R G Z O G E T S L H
D K R G H J Y E D O M L Z I Q C N I G Z K E
V P A U U H K U D F R A X Y O S C C N I R N
D E W O T W E R L B P N Q I Q Y L M R P O R
M N E X I G M Z O U V A T H V M N V R N L I
A E U S A G K Q E E Z M E D J T L J N H A S
W L L R U B K R Y K N E E T H L I N G T N C
B O N G F C L K Z Z I Y W B X A X R C A D H
X P W A Y N E F E R R E I R A N U D O V M O
G E F G G Y E D W G T R L X U B B F G H A E
K H G I S P R M A N P T R S R A P Q T F R M
H E S T R I E C L O E T E E E I S B W L K A
O Y I S P Y O Z S X X P D W M P O N O Y S N
T N L U V O M A N Y O N G A N Y E Q X N C S
S S F N V X C N I S A I H X W X O N I D H H
O D M B F L D J E V Z A N H M X J C G O O A
M B C T T F X W N M P K Z E Y A O K H N E U
O S F U L H R O R C F A P S L E W F W F M N
K A Q R H G R Z W Y D W P W R L O Q D E A K
O V S P S E D N B Z V N E I O W I O Q R N E
E N W X M D A R I A N T O W N S E N D N E E
N A W A B I A N C A B U I T E N D A G S D L
A K C E Q W A Y D E V A N N I E K E R K O I
T A T J A N A S C H O E N M A K E R P O X N
M N G Q L A W R E N C E B R I T T A I N S G

SA OLYMPIC ATHLETES

Wayde van Niekerk	Shaun Keeling	Darian Townsend
Bianca Buitendag	Lawrence Brittain	Penelope Heyns
Ryk Neethling	Caster Semenya	Hestrie Cloete
Henri Schoeman	Lyndon Ferns	Hezekiel Sepeng
Luvo Manyonga	Roland Mark	Wayne Ferreira
Chad le Clos	Schoeman	Elana Meyer

Spot the differences



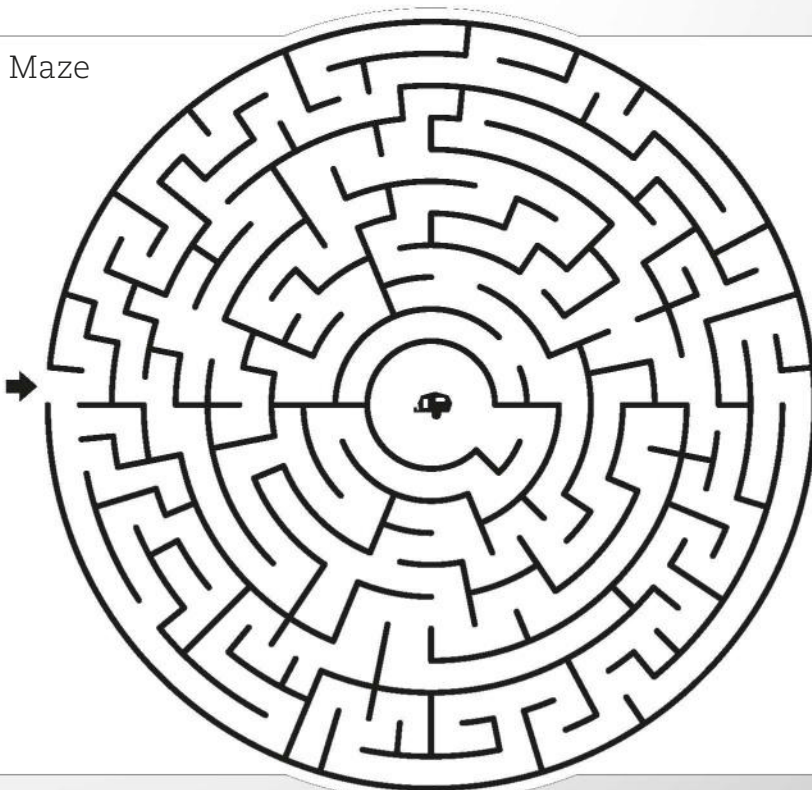
Insect facts



MONITOR LIZARDS (VARANUS)

- Monitor lizards are commonly found in Asia, Africa and parts of America, living on land and in trees
- They are made up from a variety of species, about 80, which includes the Komodo Dragon.
- Adults range from as little in length as 20 cm to over 3 m in the case of the Komodo Dragon.
- They are called super carnivores as they are known to eat anything from meat, fish eggs and fruit, depending on where they live.
- These lizards have an average lifespan of about 15 years in the wild and are known to live in groups.
- They have long necks and sharp powerful claws and are partially venomous.

Maze



Jimny knocks it out of the park

He has not had as much fun overlanding as he had in a little Suzuki Jimny, says **Mic van Zyl**.

On my recent trip to the North and South Luangwa national parks in Zambia with Ultimate Adventures, our early evening routine around the campfire just before supper entailed relating our highlight of the day to the tour group.

Our reflections were filled with all the wonders that Zambia and the Luangwa Valley had to offer. It was at one of these sessions late in the trip that an elderly gentleman travelling solo on the tour, rendered

a particularly profound reflection of not only that day, but the entire tour.

His words were quite philosophical and struck a chord with all of us. He said that he felt the purpose of our existence is ultimately the pursuit of happiness. This, of course, means many different things to different people. His reflection of his experience in the Luangwa Valley was riveting and left us in no doubt that, much like the rest of us, he was experiencing an elevated state of happiness as he sat around the wild campfire on the banks of the Luangwa River among a group of strangers that were becoming friends.

If you read my column in the previous issue, you'd know that we at Ironman 4x4 Africa purchased a Suzuki Jimny and turned it into what we believe to be a capable overlanding vehicle, albeit a small and compact one. Our build process culminated in the need to take the Jimny on a serious overlanding trip to answer the question: "Can a Suzuki Jimny indeed be used for serious overlanding?"

With the looming Luangwa Valley trip, I decided to forgo the certainty of my Land Cruiser 76 and take our Jimny on this trip instead. I had little doubt about the capability of the Jimny to do this trip. I did have some trepidation regarding my ability to keep up with the convoy, make it to the fuel stops spread out along our route as well as packing space in the Jimny for all my gear required to complete an 18-day cross-border tour in comfort and safety.

We kitted out our Jimny with our new Uberlite rooftop tent, a 270-degree awning, a fridge running off a lithium auxiliary battery and a custom storage deck in the rear of the vehicle among other items. We also fitted an uprated suspension kit and slightly bigger, off-road tyres.

The first part of the journey started in Johannesburg travelling up to Kazangula on the Botswana/Zambia border. I was joined on the trip by our camera man, Dirk Smit, travelling in our "Ironvan" Toyota Hilux double-cab bakkie. The Hilux carried extra fuel and water for me in case I ran short as well as my contribution of firewood that the Jimny could not accommodate. With careful planning and packing, I was able to take pretty much everything that I thought I would need for my trip. I had a comfortable camping chair, my favourite sleeping bag and pillow, and food, drinks and snacks in abundance. I also carried 15 litres of drinking water. Fresh produce and especially fruit was available in abundance along the way.

On the open road, the Jimny quite easily maintained national highway speed limits except up hills and when the October winds came from the wrong direction. Once in Zambia though, there was no issue keeping to the 100 km/h speed limit.

My other concern was the ability of the Jimny to get up to speed quickly enough to be able to safely overtake the hundreds of trucks on the main routes in Zambia. While the bigger tyres and increase frontal area of the vehicle caused by the roof rack and rooftop tent had a significant effect on speed and acceleration, I never felt at risk.

I was pleasantly surprised by the capabilities of the Jimny on this trip. I can honestly say that I've not had as much fun overlanding as I had in the little Jimny. It was comfortable and delivered beyond expectation. The Jimny certainly increased my sense of adventure and enjoyment on this trip and captured the essence of overlanding quite succinctly – echoing what my new friend had expressed around the campfire.



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The final hitch for Leefek?

Leefek's recent announcement of halting caravan manufacturing leaves **Neels van Heerden** pondering the implications for the local market.

In the previous issue of *Drive & Camp* I read that Leefek had announced the immediate cessation of all manufacturing activities. This is the company that took over well-known brands such as Jurgens, Gypsy, Sprite and Safari in 2021 after Jurgens CI and Jurgens Campworld were liquidated. A year later, Quantum Caravans bought the naming rights of these brands.

This is indeed sad news. However, the company stated in a press release that

it will continue to honour its warranty obligations on all sold and unsold products within the applicable warranty periods, because Leefek as a company will continue to exist. They will not, however, build new products because, according to the company, the local market has become unsustainable.

The press release raised quite a few eyebrows and compelled me to approach old friends who have been involved in the caravan industry for a long time, or still are, for their comments. Most of them could only shake their heads and smile wryly. "Leefek says harsh economic trading conditions are the main reason for the decision, but there are quite a few manufacturers who are currently doing good business," said a friend with insight into the industry. "I think manufacturers who were able to adapt quicker to changing consumer preferences and who heed consumer comments are proof that the difficult economic climate cannot be the sole excuse."

Yes, load shedding is a common bottleneck, but most of the modern caravan manufacturers have managed it through the judicious use of solar power and diesel generators. Leefek had big plans with its Enduro Tourer and Leefek Sprint, Swing and Splash ranges. It also added three new models to its Tourer range: the SP, SW and SX.

Why Leefek's ship has run aground, like Kennis caravans recently, leads to much speculation. There are allegations that Leefek disposed of brand new caravans online for less than the recommended retail price. This surely alienates you from your dealer network!

There are, however, light at the end of the tunnel. We wait with anticipation to see if Quantum's three new models within

the popular Sprite brand range will be successful – the Spin, Spiral and Space.

I also hear that there is a possibility of manufacturing custom models based on Gypsy and even Wilk caravans. In conversations with sales agents at a reputable dealer, I discovered that far-seeing dealers have been scheming since 2016 to be more self-sufficient.

They will certainly honour any Leefek warranties – as long as they receive payment for repair work. Owners of older caravans need not worry. Parts are either imported or manufactured locally.

“

There are allegations that Leefek disposed of brand new caravans online for less than the recommended retail price

”

The owner of Quantum Caravan World has declared his company will certainly cherish the traditional values of the well-known brands and they will definitely keep up when it comes to maintenance and repairs.

Market volatility, however, creates opportunities for every Tom, Dick and Harry to dabble in the caravan market. Teamwork is now needed to keep the caravan industry on its feet.

According to Quantum's owner, there is hope. "It is our desire to restore the well-known brands to their former glory and to join hands with dealers and caravan owners so the rich tradition of caravan camping can be built upon for many more years to come."



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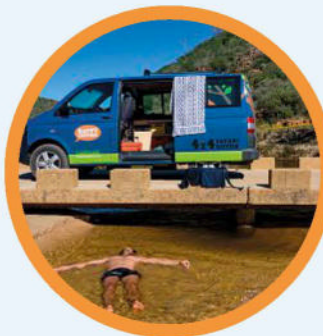
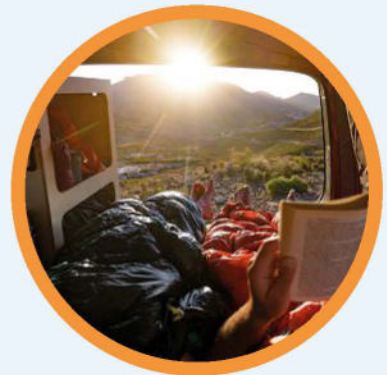
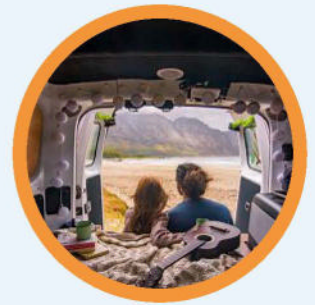
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The epic of Jeff

A spare wheel is an essential item, and it's a pity that a standard vehicle has room for only one. **Cyril Klopper** wishes he'd had at least three spares on a recent trip.

The Fates have always been kind to me when it comes to flat tyres. I've held a driver's licence for 30 years now, and in this time, I only had to break out the spare wheel three times. This might sound like a trivial achievement, but I frequently drive on back roads and 4x4 trails.

My luck, however, ran out in the Baviaanskloof where a stone cut the side-wall of my test vehicle's low-profile tyre.

The tyre repair agent in Patensie – the nearest sizeable town to the Baviaanskloof – patched the tyre without fuss and I was on my way again.

This fourth flat tyre had thrown off my average of one spare wheel per decade, but little did I know that more was to come...

It was a Saturday and the day after I had the tyre repaired in Patensie. I was on my way to a guest farm in the Great Karoo, which claimed to have an easy, yet picturesque 4x4 trail – a 2 out of 5 in terms of difficulty according to the guest farm's website. The young farmer had recently opened his farm to tourists, and his 4x4 trail was still brand new. To spare him the coming ignominy, I shall refer to him as Jeff in this column (not his real name).

Jeff was eagerly anticipating my arrival after I confessed earlier in the morning that I was actually a journalist wanting to write a story about his camping facilities and trail. Upon reaching the nearest Karoo town to Jeff's farm, I sent a WhatsApp message to say I was around the corner, as Jeff had requested, and he sent me a pin of where he would meet me.

With fresh lamb chops in my cooler box, I drove to the spot about 30 km outside of town, but Jeff was nowhere to be seen. Only a half-hour later did a large dust cloud roll in from the distance. A portly

Jeff got out of his Isuzu bakkie (Jeff looked 20 and his bakkie 40) and explained that he had actually wanted to come by quad, but it was giving him trouble.

In response to why he had considered a quad, Jeff admitted he was a bit apprehensive about the road we were about to take. The usual route to his campsite was underwater due to a river that had come down since the previous night, and we now had to cross his neighbour's farm on a track that was seldom used.

"Jeff, will my car make it? Look at these thin tyres," I asked worriedly, pointing at the wheels. The young farmer promised it would be no problem because in all the years since his father taught him how to drive, he'd never had a flat tyre around these parts.

Jeff led the way, and I followed in my flashy SUV with its low-profile tyres. Barely 5 km into the route, we had to stop because a large sweet-thorn blocked the twin-track. This trail had clearly not been driven in years, and large rocks prevented us from going around the bush. Jeff produced a saw and an axe from his bakkie, and we removed the bush.

The route was certainly tougher than a 2 out of 5, but Jeff explained we were still on his neighbour's farm. For the next hour, we cut back branches, chopped down bushes, and stacked rocks as the sun slowly set. I could see Jeff was getting impatient, as if he was in a hurry to finish. Dusk had fallen by the time we finally reached Jeff's farm from the rear.

"I'm going to have to leave you now because I don't want to drive back on the trail in the dark," announced Jeff. I asked if there were route markers because how would I know which way to go? Jeff insisted the road from here was easy to

follow, even though he had not yet added route markers. If I continued, he insisted, I would drive right into the campsite.

It sounded simple enough, and I bid my young host farewell, who in turn solemnly swore to braai sheep tails for breakfast the next morning – a Karoo delicacy.

The route was not as easy as he had made it out to be, and I drove around for an hour on various farm tracks that took me to a dam, up mountains and along a river, but there was no sign of a campsite – Tracks4Africa also knew nothing of Jeff's route. It was pitch-dark, and the downpour that had started half an hour earlier made it even harder to follow the road.

An alarm suddenly echoed through the cabin, and the tyre pressure gauge on the dashboard showed the pressure in the left rear tyre was dropping from 2,3, to 2,0, to 1,7 bar... Oh dear, it had to be a nasty cut for a tyre to lose pressure that quickly. I was currently descending a slope, and it was too risky to stop here, in the rain, to change tyres. Ten seconds later, the tyre was completely flat, and I had to drive on the rim until I reached level ground.

By the time my borrowed vehicle was roadworthy again, I was covered head to toe in mud. One glance at the white leather seats convinced me to camp here in the middle of the track. There was no way I could braai in this stormy weather, and I would have to go to bed hungry.

It was a Sunday and the dawn usually brings new hope, but it was bitterly cold outside my tent, and I had little inclination to get to work. In stead, I waited until the sun came out and baked my tent dry before I packed up my camping gear.

By eleven o'clock, I had eaten the lamb chops intended for last night's braai for

breakfast, had a cup of coffee. I zipped my tent into its bag, but there was still no sign of Jeff. I drove back on the GPS track to where he had left me the night before and decided to wait about half an hour before driving myself out.

After 13 minutes, Jeff appeared over a ridge. "Sorry I am late, sir. I had to fit a fresh battery to my quad before I could get it started," said Jeff with a puffy face and bloodshot eyes. It looked like he had a rough night.

I was somewhat annoyed and expressed my disappointment at not being able to find the campsite and that his 4x4 route – what I could see of it in the night – was not up to a standard that I could recommend to our readers. Jeff understood my frustration and offered to take me to his campsite anyway so I could at least see what it looked like. Unfortunately, Jeff's quad was acting up again, and we discovered that the new battery was missing. It must have fallen out somewhere along the way here.

Good grief! Jeff's luck was worse than mine! I invited Jeff to join me in my SUV so that we could cross his neighbour's farm, and then I'd drop him off at his house. We had barely left when the alarm sounded again. This time it was the right front tyre: 2,3 bar, 2,0, 1,7...

I didn't have another spare wheel, and Jeff offered to call friends who ran a tyre repair service in town. The trouble was that there was no cellphone reception, and the nearest hill was about two kilometres away. We would have to hike and climb; there was no other choice.

On top of the hill, I let my family know I would be late, and Jeff, wheezing heavily, called his friends to come help. I walked back to the car while Jeff caught his breath and made a second call. After another hour, our rescuers arrived. Curly and Dell (also not their real names) had searched everywhere in their workshop for 265/50R20 tyres and had miraculously found two old ones! One was so worn that the steel wires were beginning to show beneath the rubber. The other tyre was less worn, and hopefully, it would get me home.

The guys got to work, and I heard Curly and Jeff talking about how much they had enjoyed the previous night. "Geez, buddy,

Annie sure danced nicely at the clubhouse last night," remarked Curly.

"Yes, and if I hadn't downed so many of your shots, I could've danced nicely with her too," Jeff lamented.

Sound carries far on a Karoo plain, and I now knew why Jeff's eyes had been so bloodshot earlier. Perhaps it was my imagination, or did I overhear Dell slyly muttering about how they should milk "the guy" for every cent he had. After all, it was a Sunday, he was driving an expensive car with a Gauteng number plate, these tyres weren't cheap, and we were in the middle of

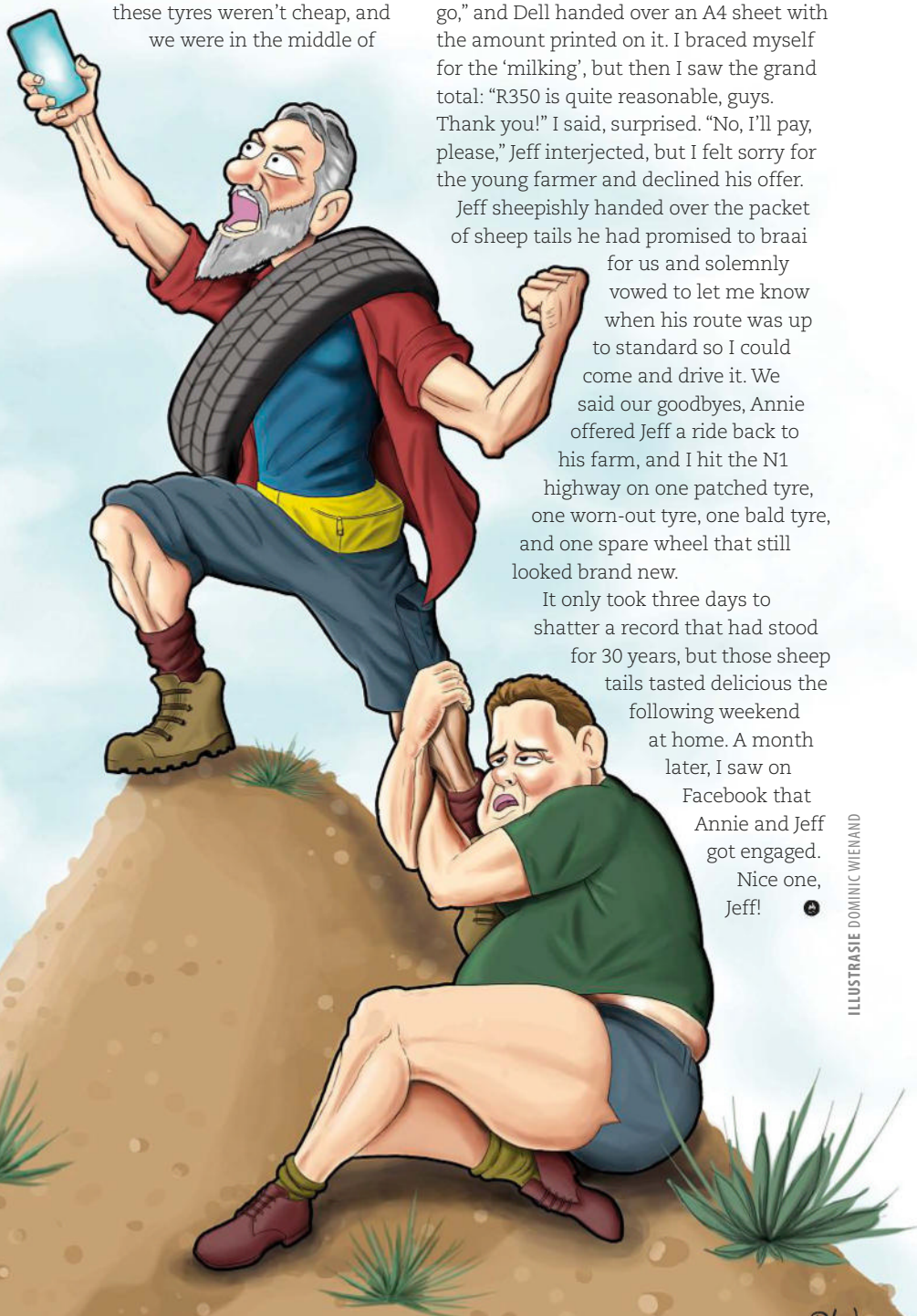
nowhere. In my mind's eye, I saw Curly smirk and nod in agreement. Jeff, however, angrily whispered back, but I couldn't make out what he said. The conversation ended immediately.

The drive over the neighbour's farm felt like an eternity. I went as slowly as possible, treating every stone as if it were a knife.

At the workshop, Jeff and Curly kept me company while Dell prepared the invoice – Annie turned up to find out why Jeff had left the party so early. "Here you go," and Dell handed over an A4 sheet with the amount printed on it. I braced myself for the 'milking', but then I saw the grand total: "R350 is quite reasonable, guys. Thank you!" I said, surprised. "No, I'll pay, please," Jeff interjected, but I felt sorry for the young farmer and declined his offer.

Jeff sheepishly handed over the packet of sheep tails he had promised to braai for us and solemnly vowed to let me know when his route was up to standard so I could come and drive it. We said our goodbyes, Annie offered Jeff a ride back to his farm, and I hit the N1 highway on one patched tyre, one worn-out tyre, one bald tyre, and one spare wheel that still looked brand new.

It only took three days to shatter a record that had stood for 30 years, but those sheep tails tasted delicious the following weekend at home. A month later, I saw on Facebook that Annie and Jeff got engaged. Nice one, Jeff!



...AND FINALLY

Four Ford fan faves

Ford South Africa recently identified four of its most iconic products built on home soil.

FORD CAPRI PERANA (1970)

The Capri Perana was famed for its domination in South Africa's Group 5 racing, especially during the 1970 season. Bobby Olthoff, with his Capri Perana V8, won 13 out of the 14 races that year.

The Capri Perana is unique in that it is the only factory-approved Capri ever equipped with a V8 engine. Here, the 5.0-litre "Windsor" V8 from a Mustang dealt knock-out

blows to the competition.

You could identify a Capri Perana V8 by its larger wheels, dual exhaust pipes, and distinctive body paint colours: Bright Yellow or Piri Piri Red. The Perana weighed a mere 1 100 kg, and its 210kW and 407Nm tore up the racetrack. And that's also why it was so popular with the regular man on the street. Basil Green Motors sold around 500 feisty Capri Peranas.



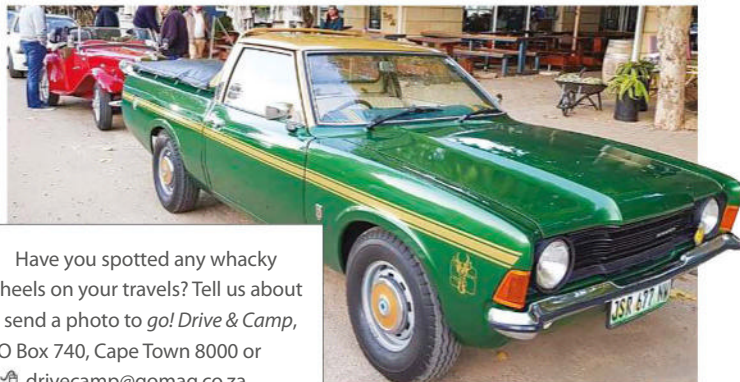
FORD CORTINA MARK 3 SPRINGBOK BAKKIE (1971)

Enthusiasts may recall that a few years after the Cortina bakkie was introduced, Ford launched a limited-edition Cortina bakkie and sedan known as the Springbok editions. These vehicles were painted green and gold in support of the Springbok team that toured New Zealand in 1976.

The bakkie – also known

as the "Bokkie bakkie" – was the more popular of the two and was built at Ford's Port Elizabeth plant (now Gqeberha). The bakkie in the photo below belongs to Brian Rademeyer who inherited it from his dad, Hugh.

If Ford wanted to curry favour with South Africans, they should paint a few Ranger bakkies green and gold in honour of the Boks' victory over the All Blacks in the 2023 Rugby World Cup.



Have you spotted any whacky wheels on your travels? Tell us about it and send a photo to go! Drive & Camp, PO Box 740, Cape Town 8000 or drivecamp@gomag.co.za

FORD CORTINA XR6 INTERCEPTOR (1981)

In celebration of its motorsport successes, the Ford Motor Company produced a 'Team Ford' version of its Cortina XR6 adorned with blue pin-stripes, but the most coveted Cortina was the XR6 Interceptor. This model boasted a louvre on the rear window, a small spoiler and four-spoke wheels.

The Interceptor's 3.0-litre V6 was equipped with a set

of triple down-draft 42 Weber carburettors and high-performance exhaust manifolds. One of the upgrades to the engine was a more aggressive camshaft. The result was a power output of 118kW, a boost over the standard 101kW "Essex" V6 engines.

If you saw one of these muscle cars in your rearview mirror, you moved over out of respect to let it pass, especially if it was the flying squad.



FORD SIERRA XR8 (1984)

The XR8 was developed for the racetrack, and so Ford had to build at least 200 production vehicles before it could enter the XR8 in Group 1 races. The 5 l V8 came from the Mustang and the gearbox was a Borg Warner five-speed manual. It pushed out 161 kW and 374 Nm, and the drive shafts h poppy-flowered sundew ad to be replaced with sturdier ones.

You could identify an XR8 by its

Ford racing pin-stripes and dual rear window spoilers. The grille was also larger to feed more air to the four-barrel Holly carburettor.

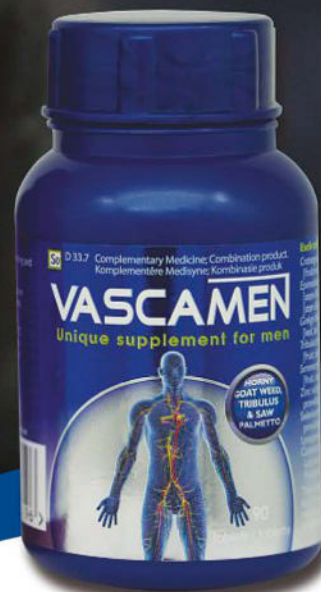
South Africa was the only country in the world to boast a V8 Sierra, and Willie Hepburn made sure the car was nicknamed "The Animal" during the WesBank Modifieds. The XR8's acceleration figure was 0-100 km/h in 6.95 seconds, and its top speed was measured at 231 km/h.



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