

#54

go!

FOOD YOUR BREKKIE IS BEGGING FOR AN EGGING

APRIL-MAY 2023 | ISSUE 54

Drive & Camp

Flower Season

It's upon us, so get ready

Waterworks in the Waterberg

Fun times await at
Lethabong Lodge

Magoebaskloof

Camp between
artillery and nobility

DRIVEN

MAHINDRA SCORPIO-N
Sharp as a stinger

CARAVAN TEST

NEW TONGA
Short, sweet
and clever



**Caravan Show
2023**

We report back

CERES KAROO Ever heard of Katbakkies and Peerboomskloof?
CAMP BOFFIN Is wheelchair-friendly actually good enough?
4X4 PROF The rules of flying a drone responsibly and legally



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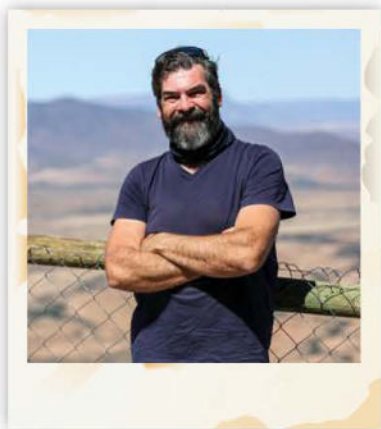


To your health

Recently, I came across a news article about a Finnish study that found that being out in nature can help counter a range of health issues, including anxiety, asthma, depression, high blood pressure and insomnia.

Look, I realise I'm preaching to the choir here, because all of us know all too well that time in the outdoors is not only good for the spirit, but also for the body. However, what caught my eye in the article is that the research goes so far as to say that time in nature can also reduce the need for medication to treat a range of health conditions.

It is therefore not only a case of prevention, but clearly also one of cure. The researchers from the Department of Health Security at the Finnish Institute of Health and Welfare say that the more often people spent time in nature, the less they needed to use psychotropic, antihypertensive and asthma



It is, however, not only the people in Helsinki who hold this belief. Their research is supported by scientists in Japan who have reached a similar finding and by the smart minds at Harvard, who claim that just 30 minutes in nature can lower your blood pressure by up to 10%.

Isn't this fantastic and encouraging news? To get confirmation that this way of life, one we all value so highly, not only recharges your emotional batteries, but is also good for your physical wellbeing.

However, there is a condition for these health benefits... you must experience nature and not just see it. That's what makes the difference, according to the guys in the know.

So, it does you little good to look at it through the window. No, you must go outside, spend a while there, take it all in and appreciate it anew every time. That's when it makes a difference.

But we already know that, don't we?



The more often people spent time in nature, the less they needed to use psychotropic, antihypertensive and asthma medications



medications – regardless of their socio-economic status.

The researchers interviewed around 6 000 people in large cities in Finland to learn more about the matter and although the focus was mainly on green spaces, such as parks in large cities, it appears that even in such a narrow scenario, frequent visits to such spaces are linked to a 36% lower risk of using blood-pressure medication, 33% lower risk of using mental-health medication and 26% lower risk of medicine for asthma.

Spice up your next braai with more than 100 ideas and recipes. ***Fireside Food 2023*** is on sale now!

Schalk

EDITOR

schalk.jonker@media24.com



Contents

#55 | April-May 2023



TRAIL GUIDE 70



JOURNEY 38



WEEKEND BREAK 64

4

EVERY MONTH

3 EDITOR'S LETTER

6 INBOX

11 FREEZE FRAME

34 NEWS

74 MY WHEELS

80 DRIVING IMPRESSION

84 CARAVAN TEST

88 CAMP BOFFIN

92 4x4 PROFESSOR

96 GEAR

100 CAMP FOOD

113 CROSSWORD

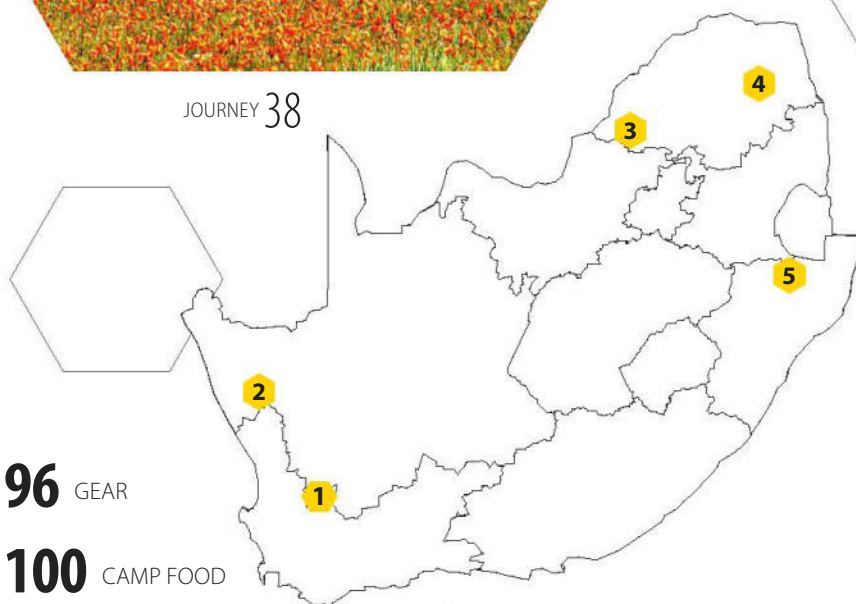
114 KIDS' CORNER

116 MIC'S MEMOS

118 NEELS' RALLY TENT

120 COLUMN

122 ...AND FINALLY



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MEDIA24

go! Drive & Camp April-May 2023 | 5

5

REEL & WHEEL 78

DESTINATION 52

CARAVAN SHOW 12

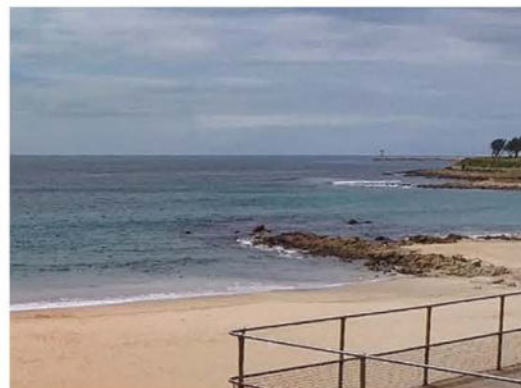
#54 COVER PHOTO – CYRIL KLOPPER

“There are no dangerous predators that'll get you in the Goegap Nature Reserve outside Springbok. It is therefore quite safe to egress your vehicle and take pictures of the flowers – provided you don't block the road for other motorists. But as you can see here, traffic jams aren't a thing on Daisy Lane.”

Settings Canon EOS 5D mk1; f/10; 1/1000 sec;
40mm; ISO-1000



We love hearing what's on your mind! Write to us at drivecamp@gomag.co.za and please remember to include your full address and contact details. *Drive & Camp* reserves the right to edit and shorten letters – and publish them in the magazine, on the website and elsewhere.



Auld lang syne

Every year towards the end of January we head to De Bakke Santos in Mossel Bay. Most of us are pensioners and long-term campers – and those who don't camp, stay in the rondavels.

It's our annual holiday with old acquaintances. This year has been our fourth year in a row at De Bakke Santos – some friends have been coming here for a long time and for others it's their first time. We have already booked three months for the same time next year, in fact. If you don't get in immediately, there is a good chance that you will lose 'your' spot. Some people stay up to four months,

others a month, and then there is always a spot open for nomads just needing an overnight stay. The other day there were visitors who had booked for a week, but ended up staying for a month, because you feel like you don't want to go home.

We even have a camp commandant, Kobus Klynhans. He's from Gansbaai and comes camping here for two months every year. On Saturdays, those who want to, get together for a braai in the road in front of his caravan.

Our camping friends come from literally every province in the country. Not even the fuel price stops us.

If you wonder why we choose De Bakke

Santos, the answer is easy: we still like bodyboarding in the early morning in the waves, right on your doorstep; and you have direct access to two Blue Flag beaches. In addition, security at the resort is tight and everyone feels safe.

The weather usually cooperates at this time of the year – we often bask in glorious sunshine while it rains elsewhere in the country. And then you never get tired of the Mossel Bay area either.

We plan to also visit Yellow Sands, Sitrusoewer and Berg River this year.

ALMERO AND INA BEKKER
Ugie

WINNING LETTER



Almero and Ina wins a cooler bag worth R220. 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 coldrink 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. winkel.weg.co.za



Easter Show!

14 to 16 April 2023



**The all New
Okto Casita
637kg!!
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SWIFT

Bush Lapa
offroad caravans

NAYELA
CC

EDGE-OUT

2-SHELF DELUXE CUPBOARD



R1 110⁰⁰

3-SHELF DELUXE CUPBOARD



R1 070⁰⁰

4-SHELF DELUXE CUPBOARD



R1 700⁰⁰

KITCHEN CABINET DELUXE



R1 350⁰⁰

Bio Sanitary
Fluid 1l



R100⁰⁰ each

Bio Sanitary
Rinse 1l



Bio Fresh
2-in-1
R230⁰⁰

Bio Sanitary
Fluid Refill



R80⁰⁰ each

Bio Sanitary
Rinse Refill



Porta potti bag



R320⁰⁰

PORTA POTTI 20L



10L ALSO AVAILABLE

R1 299⁰⁰

DELUXE ROOFTOP TENT

1.4m x 2.4m

R15 999⁰⁰



FOLD-UP SPADE



R110⁰⁰

DEAD BLOW HAMMER



- PVC
- Steelshot-filled head gives extra force to hammer & eliminates rebound
- Diamond texture non-slip handle grip
- 13kg

R140⁰⁰

DISH WASH STAND



R1 620⁰⁰

Complete with basins and dry rack

SELF-INFLATING MATTRESSES



R880⁰⁰

R1 250⁰⁰

STRETCHERS



Deluxe Standard: 190cm x 65cm x 40cm
R1 185⁰⁰

Deluxe Large: 210cm x 75cm x 47cm
R1 350⁰⁰

FOLDING TABLES



Square 80cm x 80cm x 74cm R770⁰⁰
4FT 120cm x 60cm x 74cm R920⁰⁰
6FT 180cm x 74cm x 74cm R1080⁰⁰

FOLDING ALUMINIUM STOOL/TABLE



R225⁰⁰

SL-1



Max weight: 100kg
R220⁰⁰

Available in green, grey & blue

SL-2



Max weight: 100kg
R880⁰⁰

SLX-2



Max weight: 100kg
R1 100⁰⁰

BIG BOY



Max weight: 100kg
R830⁰⁰

ALSO AVAILABLE AT:

NB: PRICES WILL VARY BETWEEN STORES



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SENIOR GAZEBO



3m x 2.8m x 2.3m
R2 970⁰⁰

SENIOR GAZEBO OPTIONAL EXTRAS



DINING SHELTER



3m x 3.5m x 2.5m
R7 000⁰⁰

ROOFTOP PRO TENT



1.4m x 2.4m
R19 490⁰⁰

ROOF TOP TENTS



1.2m x 2.4m **R12 910⁰⁰**
1.4m x 2.4m **R14 980⁰⁰**
1.6m x 2.4m **R15 790⁰⁰**
2m x 2.4m **R18 360⁰⁰**

BUNDU CANOPY



2.7m x 3m
R1 540⁰⁰

Optional side wall

FAMILY TRAILER TENT



*Trailer not included

Board size: 200cm x 140cm
Floor size: 220cm x 400cm
R23 620⁰⁰

SENIOR SAFARI DELUXE BOW

- > 3.0m x 3.0m x 2.2m
- > 320gsm RIPSTOP SAFARI CANVAS
- > 540gsm HEAVY DUTY GROUND SHEET
- > 8.5mm ELECTROPLATED HIGH TENSILE SPRING STEEL FRAME
- > HEAT VENT IN ROOF WITH INSIDE CLOSURE
- > 3 WINDOWS WITH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE WINDOW CLOSURES

R6 720⁰⁰



*Can accommodate all senior bow tent extensions

SENIOR BAOBAB EXT



R6 380⁰⁰

SENIOR DELUXE EXT



R8 090⁰⁰

EXTENSION SOLD SEPARATELY. BOW TENTS NOT INCLUDED

DOUBLE BOW EXT



R5 730⁰⁰

JUNIOR SAHARA



4.5m x 2.9m x 2.5m
R9 670⁰⁰

SAHARA DELUXE



6m x 2.9m x 2.5m
R12 860⁰⁰

SAFARI BOW TENTS

TRAVELLER SAFARI BOW
2.1m x 2.1m x 1.5m
R3 370⁰⁰
RANGER SAFARI BOW
2.1m x 2.1m x 1.8m
R3 800⁰⁰
JUNIOR SAFARI BOW
2.5m x 2.5m x 1.9m
R5 910⁰⁰

WANDERER BOW



JUNIOR WANDERER BOW
2.5m x 2.5m x 1.9m
R4 320⁰⁰
SENIOR WANDERER BOW
3.0m x 3.0m x 2.2m
R5 120⁰⁰

ALSO AVAILABLE AT:
NB: PRICES WILL VARY BETWEEN STORES

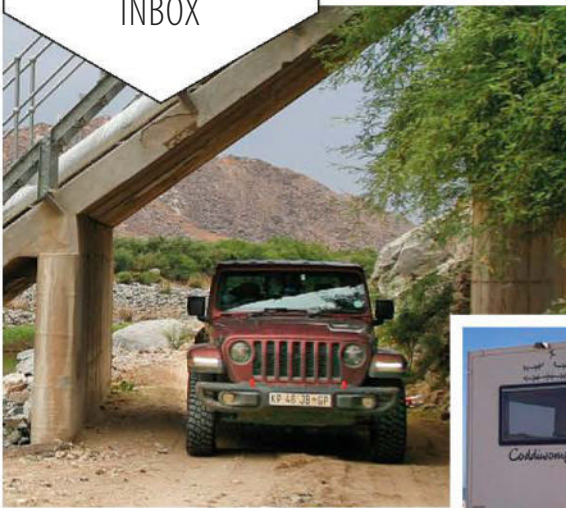


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How high can we go?

We would like to tackle the route from the eye to the mouth of the Orange River that you describe in the December 2022-January 2023 issue.

My Iveco 4x4 motorhome is about 3,5 m high. Are there any overhangs that might be a problem?

By the way, our motorhome's previous owner named him 'Coddwomple'. It's quite appropriate, because it means purposefully camping towards a vague destination!

ROLFF VAN DER LINDEN
Robertson



None of the passes on the route have low overhangs, so there shouldn't be a problem. Keep your eyes open at the Henkries pump station (S28.901770 E18.167199) – it's part of the Namaqua 4x4 Eco Route. See the photo above of a Jeep Gladiator under the pipeline. The Jeep has a height of 1,9 m. Judging by photos of other people who have been through here – also with an Iveco 4x4 – you just have to be careful. – Ed



COMMENT OF THE MONTH!

On Facebook we asked: "If you could be at any holiday destination right now, where would it be?" It's no surprise that the Kruger National Park is a favourite – and Henry Austin agrees.

"We are now touring the Western Cape, but my heart longs for the Kruger."



Back at the start?

On page 84 of the February-March issue, you refer to the Enduro suspension system now used on the Tourer caravan models.

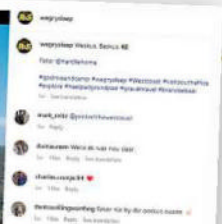
In principle, this looks to me like the exact same system that was used on my Sprite Sport more than 40 years ago. After several trials with suspension over the years, the circle is probably now complete... and the old tried and tested idea is back.

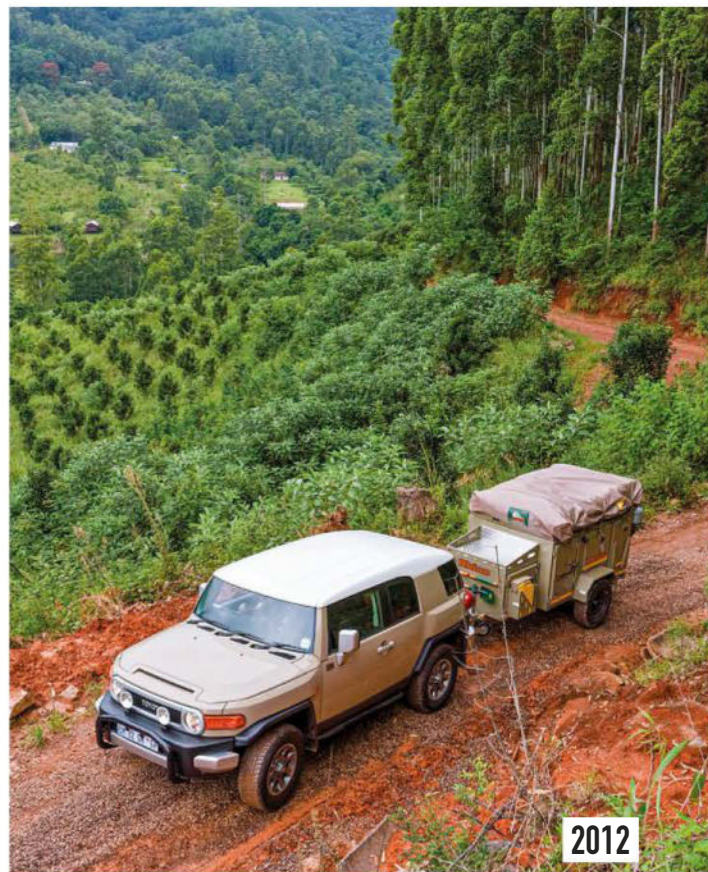
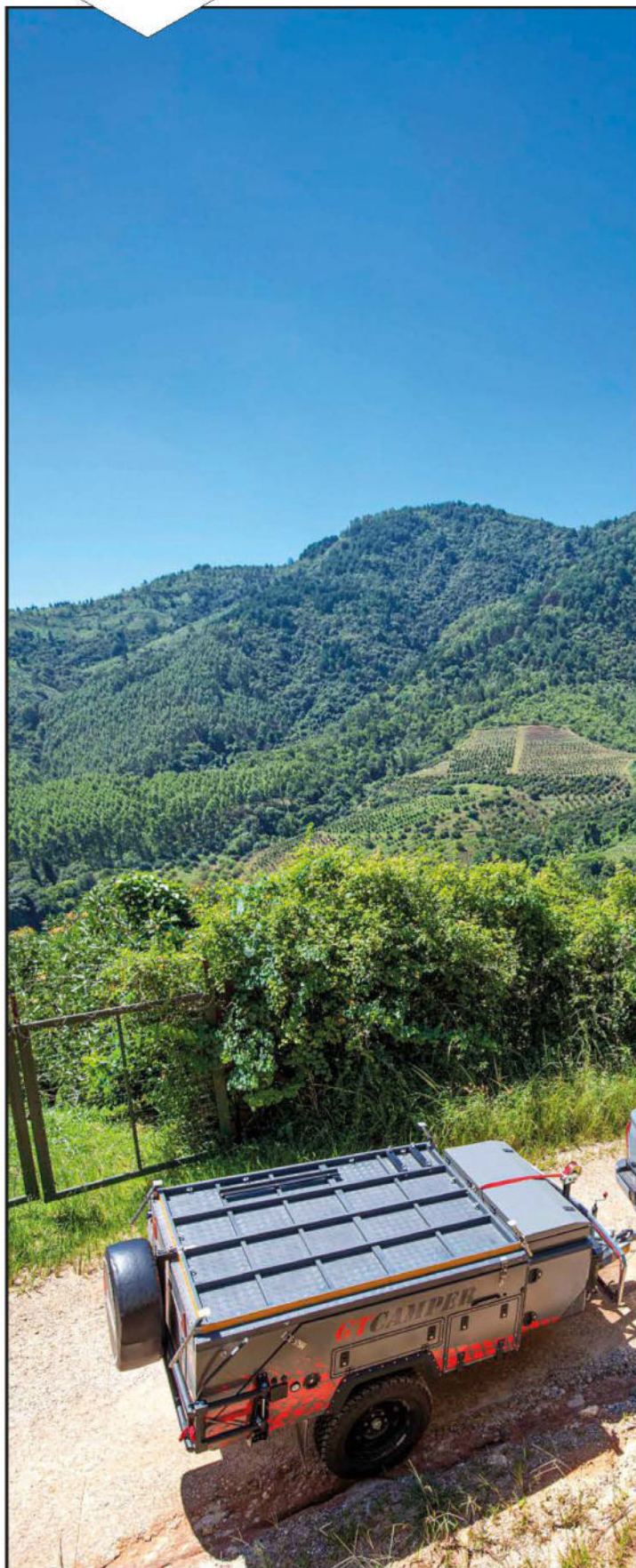
We'll just have to see if the craftsmanship and materials can hold a candle to the 1981 model.

JOHAN AND ELMARE VAN STADEN
Parow 🇳🇷



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





2012

2023

AND WE'RE BACK! It's been 11 years since we drove this very same mountain road. Back then we stayed at Magoebaskloof Gateway and this time we camped at The Herb Cottage. The road is fine when it's sunny, but when it's coming down in buckets – as it did in 2012, and again when we decamped at The Herb Cottage – you'll need four-wheel drive. (Read more on page 52.)

PHOTOS LEON BOTHA

Let's get caravanning!

The annual Caravan Show at the Gallagher Conference Centre in Midrand has become almost synonymous with the introduction of new caravans. Have a look at what we encountered there.



CUB LITE



OVERLANDER BUNK

STEALTH

Stealth has expanded its range of seven models by a further three, and two of them are now the manufacturer's smallest models.

The Cub is light enough for drivers with a regular driving license. Two variants are available: the Cub Lite (GVM 600 kg, with an option to increase to 750 kg) and the Cub X-Country (GVM 750 kg with an option to increase to 1 100 kg). Remember, for any weight above 750 kg, you need a towing licence. Both models are intended for couples, but the Lite is for tar and the X-Country for gravel.

Both have the same hull and interior layout. The door is in the left panel at the rear, and that is also the side of the roof that lifts to give height next to the bed.

In such a small caravan, you don't expect a separate benches, but Stealth has managed the seemingly impossible. The foot of the bed lifts up to the roof, which then gives you access to a bench on the left and right against each panel. It's a smart use of space – and without scrambling the bedding.

You even have the option to ask for a second double bed. If so, the pop-up



roof is replaced with a special roof you could describe as a roof-top tent with a solid section on top of the Cub. Like with a roof-top tent, you climb up to your bed using a ladder, with the original bed then underneath you.

The Lite has 13" wheels and the X-Country 14" wheels. The latter also gets mud flaps and a sink. The power system also differs: the Lite has a 220 V power system and the X-Country includes 12/220 V with an 8 A charger and 50 Ah battery. Both have a 50 l water tank.

Stealth's off-road caravan, the



CUB X-COUNTRY

Overlander 634, now has a variant: the Overlander 574, which is also known as the Overlander Bunk.

The Bunk is 1 361 mm shorter than the 634. In the Bunk, the nose cone falls away, and the fridge/freezer that fits in it now goes in a cupboard in the front of the hull. The loose gas burner also sits on the Bunk's fridge/freezer sliding rack.

The Bunk has two bunk beds against the right panel.

Prices Cub Lite R215 000; Cub X-Country R275 000; Overlander Bunk R575 000

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OKTO

Okto, manufacturer of a variety of road caravans and gravel roaders, has now expanded its offer with its smallest model. It is also the first of their models that is aimed at those with a normal driving licence. This class has a gross vehicle mass of 750 kg, but without brakes the towing vehicle must have a tare weight of at least 1 500 kg. The Okto Casita comes braked, which means the towing vehicle's tare only needs to be 750 kg – light enough for some of the lightest cars on the market.

A further bonus is that the Casita sleeps three. The island bed is arranged at the front, and with the door on the right rear, the fridge is against the opposite panel as you enter. A dinette to the right of the door folds flat to create a bed for a third person. On both sides of the 'aisle', there are cupboards with worktops.

The Casita has no fewer than five windows – one in each panel and two on the right side. This means you can see right through it while towing. It has a fixed roof and the outdoor kitchen – a cupboard with shelves and a worktop – is just to the left of the door. A dining set is included.

It has 13" wheels, and a 220 V power system (without a battery). A microwave comes standard, but not the tent and spare wheel.

When it comes to the Castello model introduced last year,



buyers now have a second choice. The original model is intended for two people and has a built-in bathroom, but the Castello 5 now, as the name suggests, sleeps five. The bathroom – built into the rear – makes room for the extra beds: a double bed with a fold-out single bed above it. The double bed can also be folded up if you want to use it as a bench.

The original Cabana model comes with 14" wheels and fits in a standard garage. A new variant, the Cabana II, now gets larger 15" wheels.

Prices Casita R349 000; Castello 5 R529 900; Cabana II R382 900

Contact 011 792 1456 or 021 852 8215

info@oktocaravans.co.za

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- Only B License required
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3 Brug St., Triangle Farm, Bellville 7530

TONGA



MOBI XL



MOBI LODGE

Mobi Lodge has expanded its offer of two models with a third. Until now, buyers could choose between the Mobi Lodge Continental and the Mobi X. The Mobi XL fits neatly between the two.

The Mobi XL is similar to the Mobi X, but is a metre longer, 220 mm wider and 150 mm higher. While the Mobi X had space for a roof-top tent to create extra sleeping space, the XL's roof now lifts so you can stand. There are two doors across from each other by the

nose, and the queen-size bed is at the back – with enough open space under the bed for a cassette toilet.

Two people can comfortably stand between the two doors next to each other. Opposite the bed are two single benches with a loose table top that rests in between.

The entire rear section extends to create a total interior volume of 1 540 ℓ. Both sides have cupboards with solid doors, and there is space for the fridge/freezer

on the kitchen side.

The XL has a larger water tank (214 ℓ) than the X and is also equipped with a gas-electric geyser. The X has an in-line geyser.

A shower tent of 2,3 x 2,2 m that pitches on the right side

comes standard with a rally tent that spans over the outdoor kitchen. The kitchen has a stove and cutlery.

Price R488 000

Contact 013 246 1327

marius@mobilodge.com

mobilodge.com



DUO X

INVADER

The Duo X, Invader's latest model, is an upgraded version of the standard Duo. In our previous issue, we reviewed the new model, but its dimensions and prices were not yet known. Here's how the Duo and Duo X differ:

Length 4,15 m and 4,25 m

Width 1,8 m and 1,85 m

Height 1,8 m and 1,85 m

Height (set up) Both 2,85 m

Tare weight 860 kg and 910 kg

GVM Both 1 500 kg

Price R327 000 and R385 000

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OVERLANDER 634
FULL OFF ROAD

X-COUNTRY 594
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BERTH AND 592
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OVERLANDER
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WITH DOUBLE
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CUB LIGHT

CUB
X-COUNTRY

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Natal Caravans & Marine (est. 1960)
Newcastle LeisureWorld
CARA-CAMP

Loftus Caravan City
Middelburg Caravans

**Silver Lakes
Caravans**

CONQUEROR

Conqueror has improved its Courage, and the geyser – in the nose cone – and water pump are now standard equipment.

The two cupboards on the right have inner shelves, and there is another shelf above the ammo boxes that pull out on a drawer at the back.

Some of the standard items include a 90 l water tank and sliding frame for an 80 l fridge/freezer. The power system and a 96 Ah battery is also included, as well as four ammo boxes, a water pump and gas geyser (5 l/min.).

There are at least 15 optional extras you can choose from – including bedding (R2 389), an L-shaped awning (R6 203), tent (R31 412), shower tent (R1 751) and solar-panel system with a 250 A regulator (R16 845).

Price R194 067

Contact 016 349 6533

info@conqueror.co.za conqueror.co.za



COURAGE



NALEDI

The Naledi was a newcomer at this year's show, and also marked the first entry into the caravan world for its manufacturer, Rider Automotive Components.

The Naledi is modelled on a teardrop-shaped caravan but comes with unexpected luxuries, like the enormous window in each side panel that follows the panel's exterior shape. They are 1 m high and 1,8 m long, and a 600 mm door opens in the middle section. The 4 mm glass is tempered.

The windows are a smart way to create a sense of space inside. When you want privacy, simply pull down the blinds.

The mattress is made of high-density foam and is 10 cm thick.

The chassis is made of stainless steel, while the hull consists of a 25mm insulated layer with aluminium skins on the outside, finished with a scratch-resistant polyurethane layer.

The kitchen at the back is typical teardrop. There's a microwave oven, kitchenware, pots and pans, an induction and gas stove, and a 220 V kettle. The 55 l National Luna fridge/freezer fits in the nose cone.

The water tank is 60 l and it has a 12/220 V power system that includes a 120 W solar panel. The charger and solar panel system are both Victron. The battery is the lithium-ion type and 100 Ah.

This Naledi gets 14" wheels and is unbraked, but it's built strong enough for off-roading.

Price R259 000

Contact 083 778 5555 or 083 778 5577

andre@naledicampers.com

naledicampers.com



NALEDI

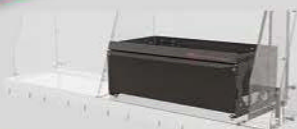
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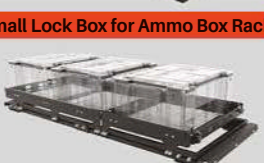
Small Lock Box for Ammo Box Rack



Large Lock Box for Ammo Box Rack



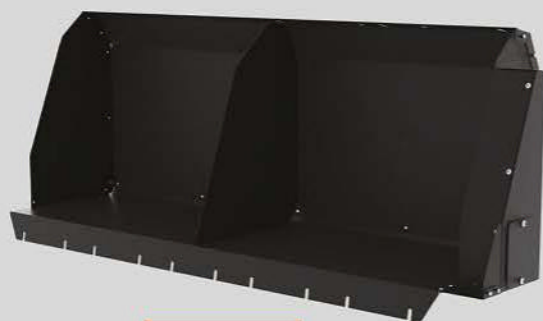
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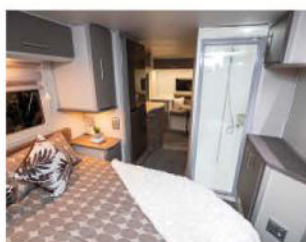
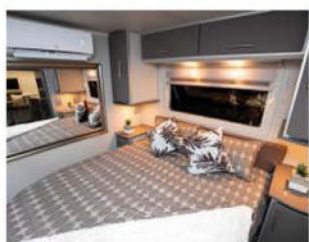
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CARAVAN SHOW



AIRSTREAM



AIRFLIGHT

GREY

Grey has added a second model called the Airstream. It's 400 mm shorter than the existing model, the Airflight, and you have the option of ordering your caravan with a single or double axle (the Airflight only comes with a double axle).

In terms of layout, the Airstream is vastly different from the Airflight. The door is on the left at the front (not at the right rear), which means the island bed is now at the back (not the front). The newcomer's bed is transverse while the Airflight's runs along the length.

The lounge area is by the door as you get in, with the toilet and shower cubicle to the left as you look toward the back of the caravan. The two doors don't open straight into the common space, but are kind of back to back. The shower's glass door faces the side of the bed, meaning it's even more private.

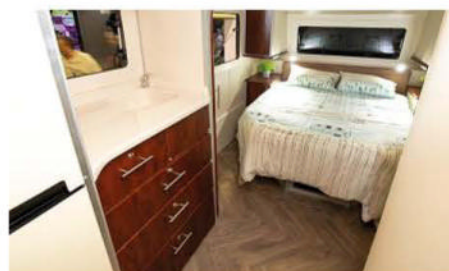
The Airflight's chassis rating has been increased from 2,5 t to 3 t. Grey also does away with the supplied windows and replaces, among other things, the 1 200 x 600 mm double-insulated window with its own window of 1 200 x 800 mm that's 5 mm thick. The dishwasher makes room for four drawers.

Prices Airstream R715 000 (single axle) and R725 000 (double axle); Airflight R725 000

Contact 016 362 0189

info@greycaravans.co.za

greycaravans.co.za



TUFF CATS

The first inside sleeper from Tuff Cats is now available – the bed forms part of the interior and doesn't flatten or slide out of the hull.

With the two existing Mbada models you have a choice of either just a pull-out bed or a pull-out bed plus a fold-out bed, but in the new Mbada Nova there is only an inner bed (more or less queen size).

A few adjustments include a lower outdoor kitchen so that it can fit under the bed.

Standard items include the 120 l water tank, 5 l gas geyser, 105 Ah deep-cycle battery, Victron power system with a 25 A charger, 360° awning, crockery, a two-burner gas stove, shower tent and inside basin.

Price R442 615

Contact 083 609 6947

jaco@tuffcats.co.za tuffcats.co.za



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VAGABOND

Vagabond has consolidated its offering over the last year or two with one model, the Rogue, but to meet the overseas demand, production has been outsourced to Profibre, a company that focuses on fibreglass products for leading manufacturers. (About half of the Rogue units are exported to countries including Australia and England, with the rest sold locally.)

The Rogue's fibreglass molds were also updated, offering the chance to make other changes. Where previously only fibreglass was used for the cupboards, now some are aluminium. Some of the shelves are also larger.

The microwave oven makes way for the 16-piece crockery set.

The inside is more spacious and

200 mm longer – the mattress is 2,05 x 1,5 m.

The window's hinges have been replaced with 'memory hinges' – so you can open the window to any angle and it stays in place.

The Rogue includes the following equipment: a 270° awning, tarpaulin, 50 l fridge/freezer, 16-piece crockery set, 60 l water tank, queen-size bed, stove, mosquito nets in front of the doors and windows, and blinds for privacy.

The list of more than 15 options includes a shower tent (R2 500) and 1 000 W inverter (R5 195).

Price R259 000

Contact 074 601 0271

✉ explore@vagabondsa.co.za

🌐 vagabondsa.co.za



ADVENTURE XTREME

The Samurai is the first of Adventure Xtreme's caravans with an interior bathroom.

The door is at the back, with the bathroom across from you against the opposite panel as you get in. The bathroom has a chest-high sliding door in the front with the basin and loo in the first section, and the separate shower cubicle next to it. The cubicle has a canvas flap that zips up to keep the water inside.

The bed is in the front section, and the side of the headboard slides out like a drawer.

Standard items include a Dometic cassette toilet, gas stove, air-conditioner, drinks cupboard, a Victron electrical system (with a 200 Ah lithium battery) with a solar-panel system, geyser (gas-electric), a water pump and rims.

Price R495 000

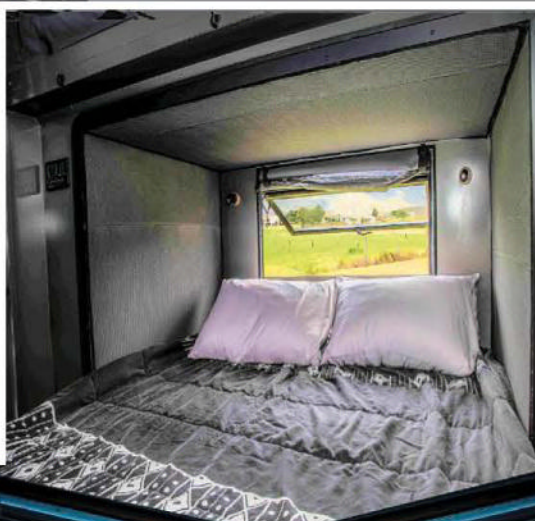
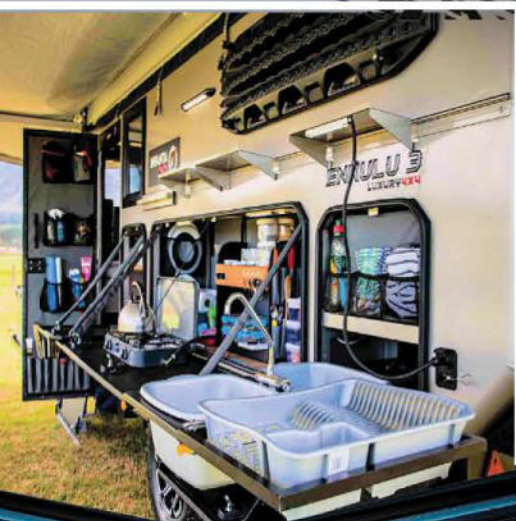
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NG'OMBE



GHARI



ELXV

Elite Luxury Offroad Vehicles is a new manufacturer that showcased its Spoor and Ghari models last year.

Ng'Ombe, the flagship that sleeps up to five people, has been added this year. The queen-size island bed is to the left as you enter the door with a small 'living room' to the right that includes a worktop, cupboards and a basin. Next to that are the separate shower and toilet cubicle on the right with three bunk beds opposite it. Next to that is the 230 l standing fridge.

There is a fridge/freezer (90 l) and a two-burner gas stove in the outside kitchen, but the microwave oven (23 l) is optional.

The Victron system includes a 3 000 W inverter, DC-DC charger and MPPT-50 V-45 A solar-panel regulator with four solar panels (total 1 300 W). The two lithium-iron-phosphate batteries are 200 Ah.

Buyers have a new option with the Ghari

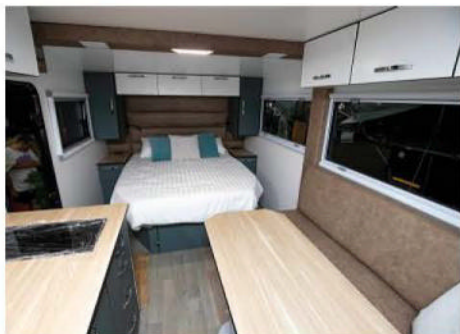


4.7 model. The fridge on the right in the door moves to the opposite panel, leaving room for a bathroom. The wetroom in the back therefore becomes a bathroom with two cubicles: the toilet and basin in one, with the shower on its own.

Prices Ng'Ombe R1 000 000;
Ghari 4.7 R275 000

Contact 084 550 2820 or 082 444 2850

info@elxv.co.za elxv.co.za



NAYELA

Nayela's new Sahara X is built with a view to possible exports to Australia, but it is also available locally.

It is largely identical to the Okapi, but there are some changes: the two rubber axles are replaced with independent suspension, and this includes two shock absorbers and a coil spring per wheel. The spare wheel rack at the back is standard (it is optional in the Okapi).

The four interior cupboard doors that open into the rear of the outdoor kitchen are replaced with two larger doors. The Sahara X also gets an extra box above the two new doors. Instead of the loose plastic step, the Sahara X gets a Thule step that pulls out from the side of the chassis. The Sahara X also gets a small nose cone that is good for tools and a gas cylinder on each side.

Two small cupboards have been added just above the wheels on the side where the bed slides out.

Price R740 000

Contact 058 863 1027 info@nayela.co.za nayela.co.za



SAHARA X

ECHO

Echo's Chobe model is available for two or four, and each is available in a Legend or Tec variant. But if you're looking for a simpler version, the brand-new Chobe Urban is the one.

What sets the Urban apart is that you can tow it with a B driver's license. In addition, the Urban weighs 750 kg and comes without brakes, while the other models have a GVM of 1 500 kg. It has a new chassis and the wheels are also smaller (14"). And where its brothers are thoroughbred off-roaders, the Urban is made for gravel.

The Urban's bed opens over the nose cone and there is an additional single bed next to the right panel. You even have the choice to install a hanging bed (1,5 x 0,6 m) above the single bed if two children are coming along.

The Urban has a basic 12/220 V power system with a 74 Ah battery and a Victron charger (10 A).

Crockery for six plus the 270° awning comes standard. Some of the optional extras include a 20 ℓ microwave oven, two-burner gas stove, 3 kg gas cylinder and 20 ℓ water tank.

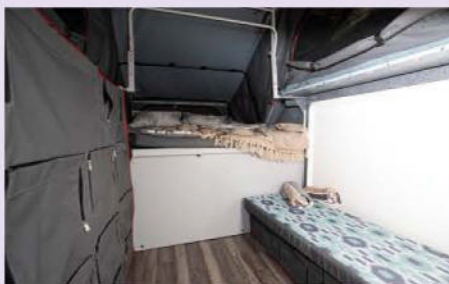
Price R189 000

Contact 012 345 3333 or 021 910 3737

echoacc@echo4x4.co.za echo4x4.co.za



CHOBÉ URBAN



RISE

CASCADE

The Rise is the fourth and latest Cascade model, but at a quick glance you could easily mistake it for the Roam. From the outside, the two are identical, even in terms of dimensions.

It's the layout inside that differs. The glassware cupboard in the Roam is directly to the left of the door, and there is also a worktop with a microwave underneath. In the Rise, this entire corner makes room for a two-seater bench and a separate table. The glassware cupboard moves to the opposite side, while the microwave is in the cupboard in front of you.

The Rise gets a double bed instead of the queen-size in the Roam. Both are island beds.

Equipment including the air-conditioner, bathroom with separate shower and toilet, 30 ℓ geyser, 110 ℓ water tank, the outdoor kitchen with an induction plate, 12 V interior and exterior lights come standard on both models.

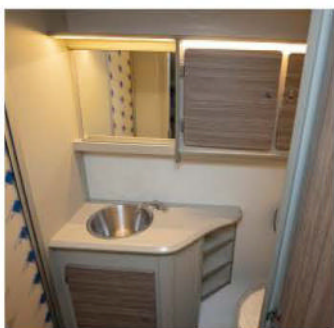
Price R495 000

Contact 082 926 0377/8

info@cascadeleisure.co.za

cascadeleisure.co.za





LEEFEK

Leefek introduced the Purple series of the Penta and Exclusive last year, and this year they've added a new Classique. Depending on the equipment, the variants are henceforth known as the Grey (basic), Blue or Purple (fully equipped).

The new Classique is more spacious than the previous model and comes standard with Enduro independent suspension. The outdoor kitchen is also a new addition and includes a single-burner Snappy Chef gas stove.

The standard island bed now becomes a crosswise island bed, with the headboard

against the left panel. The Perspex windows are replaced with glass and the floor-to-ceiling height is 50mm higher.

Some of the standard equipment includes two deep-cycle batteries, a 3 kVA inverter, 30 l Kwikot geyser, cassette toilet, 60 l water tank, 20 l microwave and 157 l refrigerator. The bathroom is similar to the previous model, but the water system has been upgraded with constant pressure in the pipes.

Price R549 900 (Grey model)

Contact 080 001 4802 of 012 797 7300

info@leefek.co.za

leefek.co.za

OUTBOUND

Outbound is another newcomer that showed up last year. This year, they came to show two new variants on their Cyclone model. To differentiate between the different versions, the initial Cyclone model is now called the Cyclone DB (for double bed), while the others are called the SB (single bed) and FB (folding bed).

The DB and SB's door is at the back of the hull, but instead of the double bed, the SB gets two single beds next to each other. The foot of each bed – about 55 cm – lifts to make room for a dinette.

The FB is quite different from the other two: the door is on the front in the left panel, and the

roof lifts at the front and not at the back.

To the left as you get in is a spacious worktop with the double bed to the right. The bed's headboard does fold out, but for this you have to go outside and walk around to the back. Here, the doors – top, bottom and sides – swing away from the hull to form a partial capsule similar to the fold-out beds of Conqueror's UEV range. This means an extension of 700 mm outside the hull.

Price Cyclone SB R253 000;

Cyclone FB R295 900

Contact 011 974 5595

admin@kemptoncaravans.co.za

kemptoncaravans.co.za



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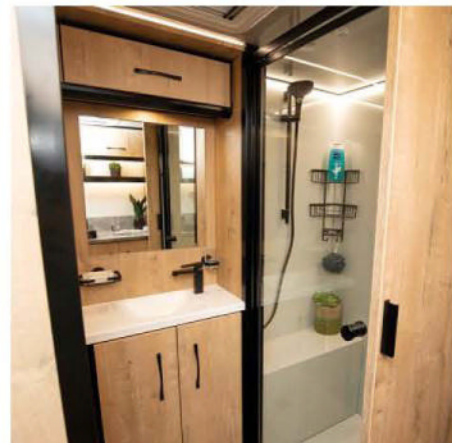
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DESTINATION

Destination has tweaked its Wish model and brought out an additional model, which means the new Magic is now a second option if you're looking for a single-axle caravan.

The hull is 700 mm longer – to make room for a bench (as you climb in, right across from the door). The microwave oven moves outside and gets its own

cupboard to the left of the door. Instead of the Wish's double bed, the Magic gets a queen-size bed. (The bathroom in the rear section does not change.)

The Journey model's bathroom has also been changed. The shower and toilet are no longer in separate rooms, and the bathroom now has a sliding door in front. Even though there

is now only one entrance for both facilities, the shower still has its own door. It now opens in the room and not in the aisle. Together with the bathroom cupboard, basin (which used to be part of the shower), mirror and toilet next to it, you have a very luxurious bathroom.

Equipment including the microwave oven, fridge/freezer,

air conditioner, 120 ℓ fibreglass water tank, 30 ℓ electric geyser, induction stove, 100 Ah deep cycle battery and 15 A Victron charger come standard on both models.

Prices Magic R590 000; Journey R680 000

Contact 016 366 1630/1

sales@destinationcaravans.co.za destinationcaravans.co.za



BUKSIE TRAILERS

Buksie Trailers is a newcomer to the show. Their Weekender model is light enough to tow with a regular B license.

The trailer has a tare weight of 420 kg and tips the scales at 600 kg fully equipped – this then includes equipment including the awning, fridge/freezer, 15" mags, battery, gas stove, microwave oven, two jerry cans and the nose cone.

The chassis is made of steel that gets a rubberised, and the hull's steel frame is clad with aluminium.

The nose cone has space for a 40-60 ℓ fridge/freezer and the kitchen cupboards – with space for, among other things, a microwave oven – are built into the rear. The worktop is made of stainless steel.

The Weekender is an off-roader to the core and you can add brakes. This then pushes the GVM up to 1 600 kg.

Price R128 000 (basic) to R204 000 (fully equipped)

Contact 083 560 7581

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QUANTUM

Quantum has a solid offering when it comes to stylish road caravans. You get to choose from no less than eight models, one of which – the Comfort Country – was launched last year as its first gravel roader.

Its outdoor kitchen has since been adapted and you are spoiled with loads more kitchen cupboards and space on the outside. The gas stove, which was previously pulled out from the bottom of the hull on a flat drawer, now is a separate unit, and the stove, a two-plate Snappy Chef, now gets its own shelf to the left of the worktop. It's a loose unit that fits in the cupboard next to it when you're done. The same cupboard also now has enough space for the microwave oven.

Because the Country is



COMFORT COUNTRY

around 150mm higher with its 16" wheels (the rest of the range has 14" wheels), the sink is now installed lower.

As with the Carnival model, a separate stair with a handrail comes standard.

Price R545 000

Contact 011 914 1106

quantumleisure.co.za



MICROPOD XL

UNIPOD

Unipod has launched its own version of a teardrop-shaped caravan: the MicroPod XL, which is aimed at couples. The door is at the back, where you have

standing space in front of the bed as you get in, because the roof lifts above the back door like a clam shell – a feature in some UniPod's models. The bed is queen size with a 125 mm mattress.

When it comes to GVM, you have a choice of 750 kg (for a E licence) or 1 150 kg (towing licence). The MicroPod is low enough to fit in a garage.

For such a small caravan, the outdoor kitchen is surprisingly large. Almost the entire left side contains cupboards, with more than enough worktops. The plates, cups, cutlery and glasses are neatly and firmly packed in cut-out sponges in a drawer.

Some of the standard equipment includes a 360° awning, 1 m slider for the fridge/freezer, several 12 V lights, 100 Ah deep cycle battery and 14" wheels (spare wheel included).

Price R224 900

Contact 072 192 2845 sales@unipod.co.za unipod.co.za

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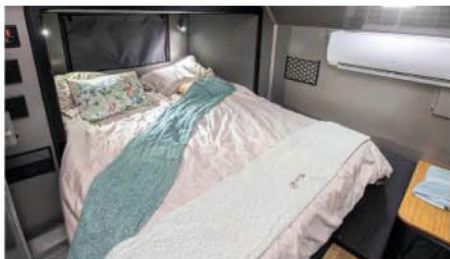


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CARAVAN SHOW



INFANTA

Infanta has revamped its Enkulu 3 model. Where it previously had a fixed roof, you now get a pop-up that lifts with actuators. The door also moves from the back to the front, and where the bed used to be inside against the nose cone, it is now at the back – it's queen size and partially slides out.

The dinette with its two leather benches are where you get in – it can be folded

down to make a bed for two more people. The wet room remains the same and is still in the middle of the caravan.

The air-conditioner that previously fit in the nose cone is now mounted at the rear.

The 120 l water tank comes standard, as do the two sinks, 105 Ah battery, 12 V water pump (with plumbing), a high-pressure 13,5 l geyser that works with

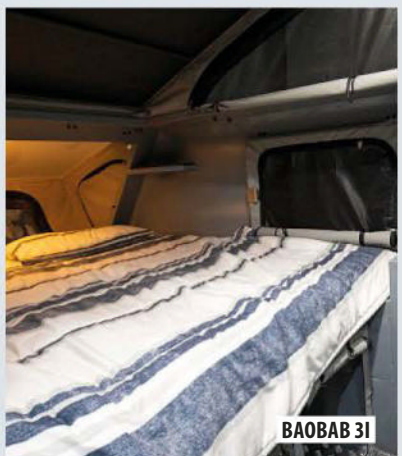
power or gas, a two-burner gas stove and the Projecta power system.

The wet room with its basin, shower and electric flush cassette toilet is extra (R28 175), as is the air-conditioner (R15 525) and 19 l microwave oven (R3 910).

Price R546 250

Contact 028 512 3663

info@infanta4x4.co.za infanta4x4.co.za



BUSH LAPA

Bush Lapa's Baobab 3 now has two variants. Where the Baobab 3 has a fold-out bed with a single bed inside, it is now replaced by a queen-size bed.

The Baobab 3 is now available as a Baobab 3i or a 3is. The 3i's power panel is installed across from the door against the panel in front of you, while the one in the 3is slides into the door. That's because the 3is has an extra door across from the existing one that gives you access to a shower tent.

Both models are exactly the same size (4,89 x 1,97 x 2,15 m) and their dry weight is also the same: 1 190 kg. The same applies to the GVM (1 800 kg), ground clearance (350 mm) and floor-to-roof height (2 000 mm).

Standard equipment (on both) includes the 270° awning, 15" wheels, a heavy-duty jockey wheel, two jerry cans, a crockery set for six, 14 l gas-electric geyser and 150 l stainless-steel water tank.

Price Baobab 3i R494 500; Baobab 3is R506 000

Contact 021 870 1277

bushlapa.com

BORDER X

Border X has come up with one of the most versatile off-road caravans: the new Outpost fits between the Expedition and Extreme, and depending on the configuration you choose, sleeps up to five people.

The interior bathroom is next to the door in the back of the hull. The middle section of the caravan has cupboards on both sides of the aisle, and the main bed is by the nose.

If you're considering the version for three people, a dinette is added in the back, which then folds down as the third bed, or you can choose to have a single bed above the central cupboard. This way the entire bathroom is preserved. In the model for four people, you lose the internal shower to make room for two bunk beds, and if you're looking to sleep five, you lose the entire bathroom to make room for two bunk beds and an extra bed above the middle inner wardrobes.

Standard equipment in the basic Outpost includes two water tanks (total 135 l), a gas geyser, two-burner gas stove, Victron charger and the inside shower with its basin.

Price R499 900 (sleeps two)

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OUTPOST



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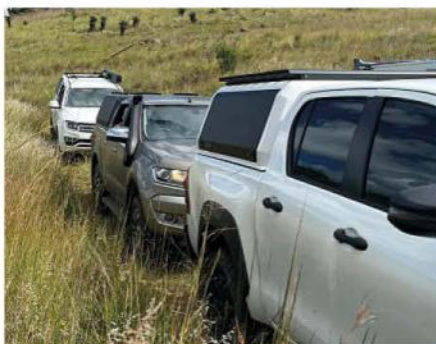
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Canopy upgrade for Wild Accessories

Outdoor equipment manufacturer Wild Accessories is not a company that rests on its laurels. In 2021, it revamped its range of bush-ready bakkie canopies, and it has now further strengthened and improved them.

Shortly before the COVID-19 pandemic, Wild Accessories had to move to a larger factory – still in Silverton, Pretoria – to keep up with its growing production line. According to owner Christiaan du Toit, his company strives to deliver flawless products, and each update is a step closer to this goal.

This is why Christiaan and his team decided to do away with the usual plastic hinges you find on so many canopies and off-road trailers. Wild Accessories now has new hinges consisting of a stainless-steel pin and ultra-durable high-density polyethylene (HDPE).



In addition to the stronger hinges, the latest canopies also get roof bars of aluminium extrusion – this is an advanced manufacturing technique in which aluminium is forced through a casting to form a specific shape.

Christiaan says his team has also redesigned the system that creates positive pressure inside the canopy to keep dust out – it is now also waterproof.

Wild Accessories has kept the changes made in 2021 because customers are satisfied with them, but has acquired a new fibre-laser that cuts metal more accurately. A Wild Accessories canopy can handle up to 400 kg on its roof, and as a rule, you don't need to drill any new holes in your vehicle's load bin to fit the canopy. It's also easy to remove using only basic tools.

The canopies are powder coated in five standard colours: black, two shades of white and two shades of grey. However, if you want to colour code the canopy to your bakkie's body paint, Wild Accessories can help you out as well.

Contact 012 771 7940

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Electric Sprinter



Mercedes-Benz is systematically releasing electric versions of all its vehicles, and including the Sprinter panel van, or eSprinter.

Vehicle builders who use the Sprinter as a base for custom motorhomes may be scratching their heads over this decision because battery power isn't associated with long-distance touring.

But Mercedes-Benz says it has tested its eSprinter according to the WLTP cycle, a method in which a vehicle is driven at four speeds ranging from a snail's pace to high speed – while repeatedly braking and accelerating – to simulate everyday driving conditions. In this test, the eSprinter achieved a range of 400-500 km before the battery had to be recharged.

The vehicle will be launched in Europe this year and is expected to come to South Africa in early 2024. Fuel-powered Sprinters will still be available for those who aren't quite ready to go all-electric.

The eSprinter is powered by a 113 kWh lithium-iron-phosphate battery that sends power to a 150 kW electromagnetic motor that, in turn, sends 400 Nm of torque to the rear wheels through a special rear axle. The electric motor weighs a mere 130 kg and is, according to Mercedes, highly efficient. In optimal conditions, it takes an average of 42 minutes to recharge the battery from 10% to 80% with a 115 kW fast charger that pushes 400 V at 300 A to the eSprinter.

High five, Jimny!

The Suzuki Jimny will be getting two extra doors soon. The five-door Jimny measures 360mm longer than its two-door counterpart, with the wheelbase 340mm longer.

The approach, crossover and departure angles are 36°, 24° and 50° respectively, while the two-door version's corresponding figures are 37°, 28° and 48°. Both versions get Suzuki's AllGrip part-time four-wheel drive system and the 1,5 l petrol engine is married to either a five-speed manual or four-speed automatic gearbox.

Suzuki says its five-door Jimny has a larger boot. Larger is, however, a relative term as a Jimny is not exactly known for its roomy luggage space. Those who remove the rear seats will have an easier time of transporting dogs and loading camping gear though.



Velar goes green-ish

Luxury vehicle manufacturer Range Rover's Velar P400e has just been updated with a larger touchscreen and leather-free seat upholstery made by Danish textile manufacturer Kvadrat. The upholstery is apparently a kind of animal-friendly wool that offers unparalleled luxury to occupants.

The cabin is quieter than before thanks to noise-cancelling speakers, and PM2.5 filters purify the air for

your comfort. A larger 19,2 kWh lithium-ion battery allows you to drive 64 km before having to switch to the 3 l straight six-cylinder internal combustion engine. Charging the smallish battery from flat to 80% with a 50 kW fast charger takes about 30 minutes, and if you plug it into a 7 kW charger at home, it should take around two and a half hours to get the battery back up to a 100%.



Honda Quest back for more

Honda Quest, the challenging team-building competition, returns to South Africa this year. Participating teams will face sand, rocks, mud and dirt roads as they compete on Honda Africa Twin adventure motorcycles.

Entries (with a motivation why you should be selected) open on 1 April 2023 and close two weeks after that. A panel will select 200 candidates who must prove their driving skills to the selectors from June to August. A total of 30 semi-finalists will be selected and tested on, among other things, their field knowledge, general knowledge, mechanical aptitude and geographical evaluations.

Finally, 14 adventure riders will compete in the Honda Quest True Adventure 2023 – and the winning duo will ride away with the very same Honda CRF1100 Africa Twin motorcycles they competed on.

Contact [facebook.com/HondaWingSA](https://www.facebook.com/HondaWingSA) [honda.co.za/motorcycles](https://www.honda.co.za/motorcycles)

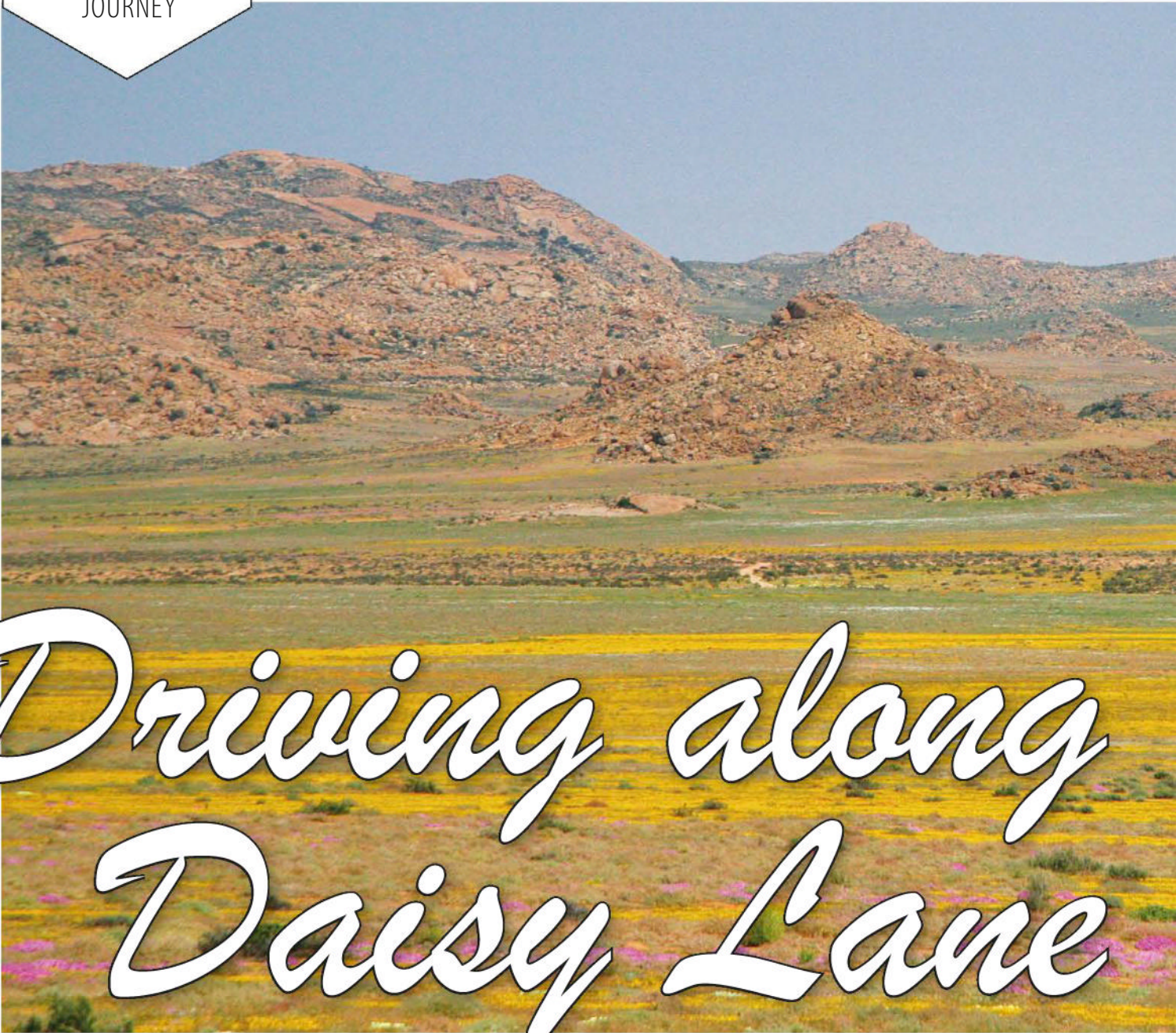


Amarok's prices released

The Volkswagen Amarok double cab is now available at dealers nationwide and the prices are as follows:

• Amarok 2.0 TDI 110 kW five-speed manual	R599 000
• Amarok 2.0 TDI 125 kW six-speed manual	R650 500
• Amarok 2.0 TDI 125 kW 4MOTION six-speed manual	R721 500
• Amarok Life 2.0 TDI 125 kW six-speed manual	R683 500
• Amarok Life 2.0 TDI 125 kW 4MOTION six-speed manual	R738 000
• Amarok Life 2.0 TDI 125 kW 4MOTION six-speed auto	R760 000
• Amarok Life 2.0 BiTDI 154 kW 4MOTION 10-speed auto	R825 500
• Amarok Style 2.0 BiTDI 154 kW 4MOTION 10-speed auto	R900 000
• Amarok Style 2.0 BiTDI 154 kW 4MOTION 10-speed auto (Comfort)	R919 500
• Amarok Style 3.0 TDI V6 184 kW 4MOTION 10-speed auto	R966 000
• Amarok Style 3.0 TDI V6 184 kW 4MOTION 10-speed auto (Comfort)	R985 500
• Amarok PanAmericana 2.0 BiTDI 154 kW 4MOTION 10-speed auto	R987 000
• Amarok PanAmericana 2.0 BiTDI 154 kW 4MOTION 10-speed auto (Comfort)	R1 017 000
• Amarok PanAmericana 3.0 TDI V6 184 kW 4MOTION 10-speed auto	R1 053 000
• Amarok PanAmericana 3.0 TDI V6 184 kW 4MOTION 10-speed auto (Comfort)	R1 083 000
• Amarok Aventura 3.0 TDI V6 184 kW 4MOTION 10-speed auto	R1 105 000

The single-cab Amarok will be launched next month – its prices were not yet released at the time of going to print.



Driving along Daisy Lane

Namaqualand's flower season occurs from July to October – peaking in late August to early September – so you'd better hurry if you want to book a camping spot for this year's spectacle. Join us on a leisurely drive from Kakamas to Nieuwoudtville in search of the perfect floral show.

Words and pictures **Cyril Kloppe**

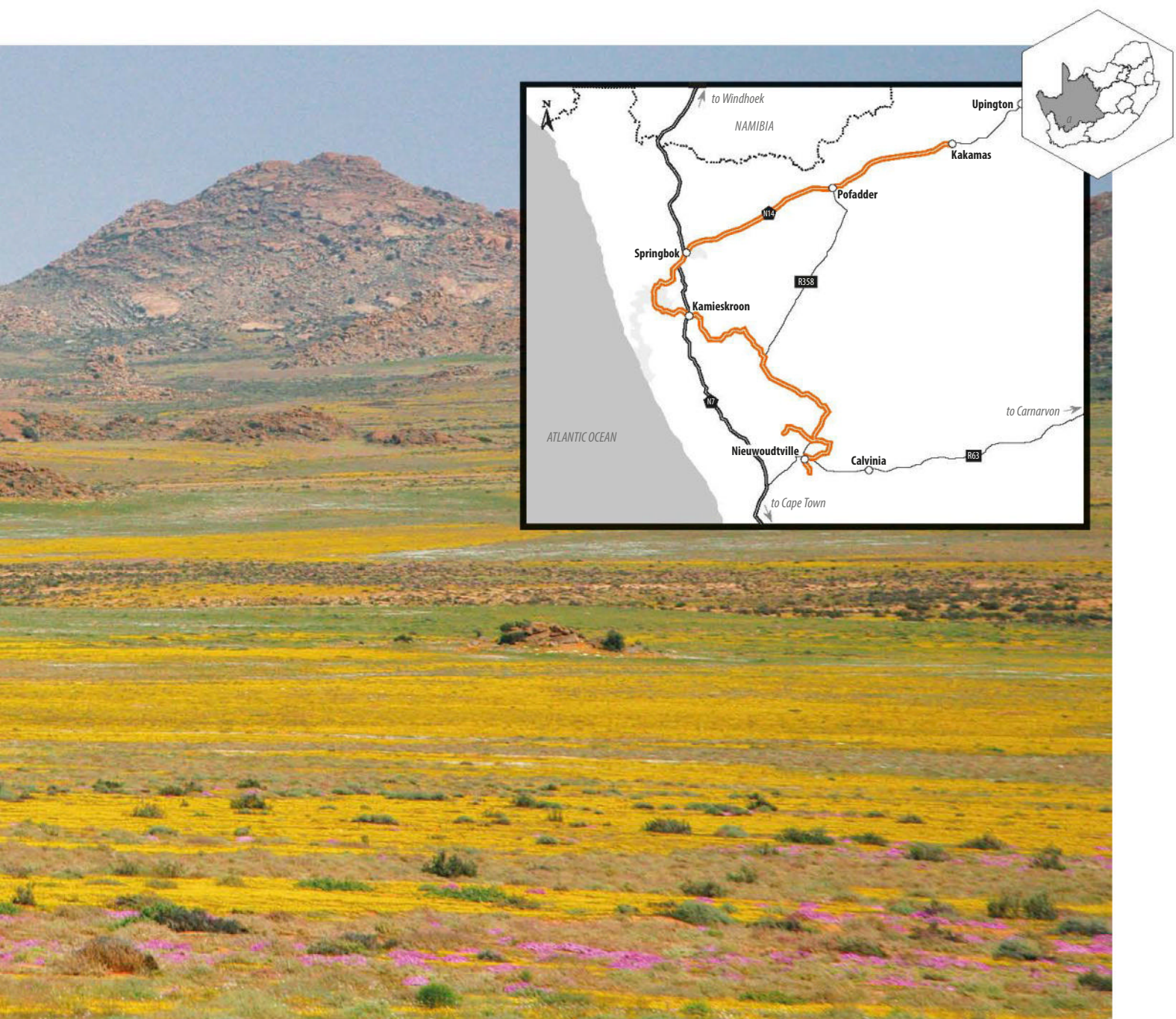
The N14 barrels headlong through the Green Kalahari, barely changing its heading. Quiver trees hold vigil on pale yellow grasslands while hot tar hums under your rig's tyres as you cross ephemeral rivers. Signs stating their peculiar names flash by: Hartbees, Yas se Laagte, Kaboep... Snow white daisies rise out of the red sand, as if they're grateful for the recent rains.

YESTERDAY YOU DROVE nearly 900 km from Gauteng to Kakamas in the Northern Cape. It was quite a trek and no wonder you decided to check in at the Kakamas Hotel rather than pitch your tent.

We'll definitely be camping on this trip, but that comfy hotel room allowed you to charge your camera's batteries (and your own) and format its memory cards in preparation for what is to come. The

hotel's restaurant served slow-roasted lamb tails (R69 per serving), a Karoo delicacy known as skaapstertjies that probably wrought havoc with your cholesterol, but so be it, they were delicious and you're on holiday.

And now we're on our way to Namaqualand. The first town after Kakamas is Pofadder where the wildflowers on the side of the road are



increasing in number. It's time to dig out your wildflower guide book because you're itching to know what species they are.

The petals of one specimen are golden yellow with black spots in a ring near the centre. Your guide book identifies it as *Gazania lichtensteinii*, or botterblom (butter flower) in the common vernacular. Next to it is a type of succulent; it has pale yellow flowers with delicate strands for petals. You flip through your book until you find it: *Malephora crassa*, or golden fingers. The common names are adorable!

As we approach Springbok you notice green and gold stinkskaapbos, meaning stinky sheep bush (or *Tripteris oppositifolia*) while maiden's quiver trees (*Aloe ramosissima*) shyly peek over ridges as we pass by.

On the outskirts of the Northern Cape's largest town we turn left onto the R355 regional road and follow the signs to the Goegab Nature Reserve. We wrote about the reserve's 4x4 trail in last year's October-November issue, so we won't go over it again. Instead we'll summarise as follows: after paying R300 per vehicle and R30 per occupant, you get to drive up to five circular trails varying from dead easy (the Ribbokkop route) to mildly challenging (the Bloumyn route). You'll need four-wheel drive if you want to see the entire reserve, or a diff locker and good ground clearance at the very least, and it is unlikely that your vehicle will get scratched, but the Bloumyn route might bend your bakkie's side steps if you kept them fitted.

After exploring Goegab thoroughly – it requires several hours – it's time to set up camp for the night. Leave Goegab Nature Reserve as you entered it and make your way to the Springbok town centre. There are a couple of supermarkets if you need to restock on provisions.

Continue along Springbok's main thoroughfare called Voortrekker Road until you reach a large sign outside of town for Namastat Lodge & Caravan Park – you can't miss it.

Namastat has 25 stands, one ablution block, and half a dozen self-catering chalets. There are patches of grass but you'll likely camp on hard sand in the shadow of a karee tree. Each stand has electricity (regular domestic sockets), tap water and a built-up braai.

GOOD MORNING! Today we join the N7 highway and stay on it for exactly 8 km until we reach a turn-off marked as Hondeklipbaai and Soebatsfontein. The coordinates are S29.76767 E17.83499 if you're unsure.

A gravel road now leads us first to the Nantes Pass followed by the Messelpad Pass. Near the summit of the latter pass, at an altitude of 400 m, you'll see a lay-by on the side of the road. Here are its coordinates: S29.89931 E17.66145.

Below you, on the banks of a dry Buffels River, are the remains of an old jail. A twin track leads down to it, but the trail is severely eroded and too challenging for most SUVs. You can, however, walk the 500 m to the ruin.

The prison dates back to 1869 when it held convict labourers, and these convicts were used to build the passes that brought you here. Locals tell of a German overseer who was so feared by the labourers that they wouldn't dare to defy him. One day the stern overseer's spouse arrived

at Hondeklipbaai by ship. A runner was sent ahead to announce the surprise visit. The German – who had since taken a Nama mistress – drew his revolver and put a bullet in his own head. As the dead man slowly toppled from his horse, the convicts fled into the surrounding veld. It is said that those who weren't recaptured, eventually settled in the nearby town of Soebatsfontein.

We couldn't confirm whether this story is true or not, but it is delightful to listen when locals share this yarn laced with their typical Namaqua humour.

The next mountain pass is the Wildeperdehoek Pass with its dramatic views over an immense coastal plain. Pay attention to the innumerable spots in the veld, each measuring approximately 20 meters across. Locals call these spots *heuweltjies* (or *kraaltjies*), and they are the aftermath of termite activity that occurred between 4 000 and 30 000 years ago. A termite species called *Microhodotermes viator* built huge mounds and by doing

so changed the pH level in the soil. The mounds have since weathered away, but where they once stood, different plant varieties grow within the circles than in the surrounding veld.

At the bottom of Wildeperdehoek Pass is a junction for Soebatsfontein, Koiingnaas and Hondeklipbaai – we're taking the road to Soebatsfontein.

Once in Soebatsfontein you can ask the locals where the western entrance to the Namaqua National Park is, but there are road signs directing you to it.

The gate is often left unattended, even during flower season, and you're free to let yourself in – just remember to draw the gate closed behind you. We are now driving through the highest section of the park called the Roof of the Namaqualand and before long we're surrounded by a field of cheerful orange daisies!

This is the Skilpad section of the national park and it is a Mecca for flower photographers. Its fame is due in no small part to Colla Swart (born in 1930)



and her Canadian friend, Freeman Patterson. The duo hosted photography workshops in Colla's hometown of Kamieskroon during the eighties, and they soon became known around the world.

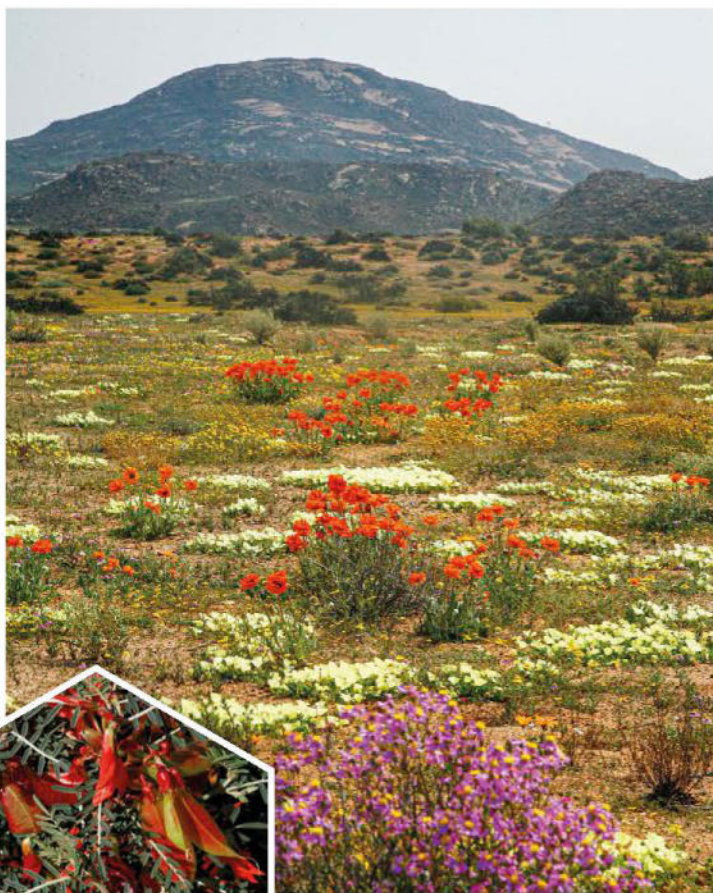
Tannie Colla no longer lives in Kamieskroon, however, and the last we heard she moved to Piketberg where she lives with her son and daughter-in-law. Freeman returned to Canada in the late eighties where he continues to be a celebrated photographer.

Out of the big three flower destinations; Goegab, Skilpad and Nieuwoudtville (we're still heading towards the latter), Skilpad was the least impressive during our visit. It remains a bucket list destination, though, and is by no means a waste of time.

Stop at reception and belatedly obtain your permit – R50 per person during our visit. We now leave the park by the main gate and make our way to Kamieskroon.

Here you'll find two camping options: the first is at the back of the Kamieskroon Hotel on the outskirts of town and the other is Verbe Caravan Park within the town itself. Verbe is the more popular of the two and during our visit it was chock full of motorhomes, caravans and off-road trailers sporting number plates from across the country.

On this trip we're going to skip Kamieskroon's campsites and make our way to Leliefontein and Gamoep – the



LESSERTIA FRUTESCENS
CANCER BUSH



“ It's time to dig out your wildflower guide book because you're itching to know what species they are ”



BACK HOME. What does a camper bakkie (above) and a tortoise (left) have in common? They both carry their house on their back. Goegap Nature Reserve is a remarkable place with stunning vistas around every corner.



You won't find casual tourists making TikTok videos and taking frivolous selfies here. Only true enthusiasts know about this hidden gem



turn-off to these towns is near the hotel.

The gravel road crawls up the Kamieshoogte Pass and offers a striking view of the Crown of Kamieskroon – a twisty rock that resembles a soft serve ice cream atop a conical mountain.

Follow the gravel road over the aptly named Draaiklip Pass onto the village of Leliefontein. Despite the promising name, there aren't many flowers here and so we continue on to the Groenkloof Pass and eventually join the R355 regional road. Turn right at the Platbakkies Guest Farm and follow the broad gravel road for 33 km until it ends in the R358 regional road. Look for a road sign and follow its directions to Kliprand.

Kliprand is a picturesque hamlet in a kloof. Whitewashed houses are dotted throughout the shallow valley which is covered in seasonal wildflowers. You won't find casual tourists making TikTok videos and taking frivolous selfies here. Only true enthusiasts know about this hidden gem. You may get a knowing wink from a passer-by and perhaps a tip-off on where to take the perfect picture.

Be on the lookout for cancer bush (*Lessertia frutescens*), in bloom from June to December, of which Kliprand has many. This remarkable plant has several medicinal uses. The Khoisan people use it to treat wounds and fevers. Trek Boers used it to soothe stomach cramps and period pains. More recently experiments were done using the plant as a possible cure for cancer – hence the name – with promising results. Trials are also being conducted to test its efficacy as an immunity booster against tuberculosis and HIV/Aids.

Eight kilometres outside Kliprand we turn left, back on the R355, heading toward Loeriesfontein. The R355 eventually terminates in the tarred R357 where we turn right toward Nieuwoudtville.

We are now in a region called the Knersvlakte. According to local lore the name is derived from the crunching sound

of ox wagon wheels on the quarts-covered plains. A lovely mental picture.

Drive over Koopmanskloof se Hoogte, a minor pass, until you reach the signage for Kuboesberg Game Farm (\$31.24356 E19.20119), our destination for the day. The dirt road closely follows a river and after 19 km we'll reach the gate to the farm.

Carl van Heerden and Rose-Mare Venter are our hosts for the evening, and the couple will pull out all the stops to make your stay a memorable one. At the main lodge you'll find a big-screen TV, WiFi, pool table, pizza oven and a shop where you can buy sweets such as fudge and date balls (R25 per packet), and many more things besides.

Despite the excellent company and entertainment options, we opt for the quiet of Kudu Camp deep within the folds of the Bokkeveld Mountains. Here is a neat face-brick structure with a shower, flushing toilet, basin with a vanity and an outdoor kitchen. Hot water is provided by a wood-fired boiler.

When the embers in the fire pit begin to dwindle, look up and regard the multitude of stars. Tonight we'll sleep like a log.

FAREWELLS ARE SELDOM CHEERFUL

and it feels particularly sad when Carl and Rose-Mare sees you off. But we've got places to go and things to see. Return to the R357 but this time we head away from Nieuwoudtville towards a place called Karooboom Kolk. After just 2 km on the R357 we turn left at a sign for Gannabos Quiver Tree Forest on the Rondekop road.

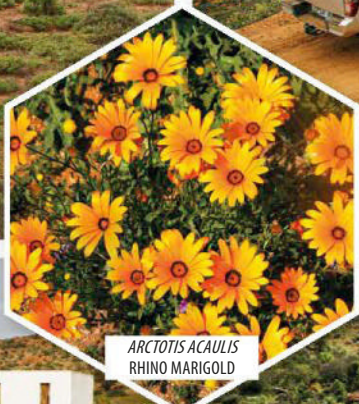
There are many places in both South Africa and Namibia that claim to have the largest or densest quiver tree forest, but Gannabos' forest is quite remarkable. The quiver trees (*Aloidendron dichotomum*) are so abundant here that they almost appear to have been planted by Sappi for future harvesting.

Continue along the Rondekop road, over the Hantamsrivier Pass and around two low mountains called Brandkop and





COUNTRY ROADS. We love gravel roads because they lead to great places; like quirky Soebatsfontein (above), the impressive Wildeperdehoek Pass (below) and picturesque Kliprand (bottom left) where whitewashed houses are dotted throughout fields of gold.



ARCTOTIS ACAULIS
RHINO MARIGOLD



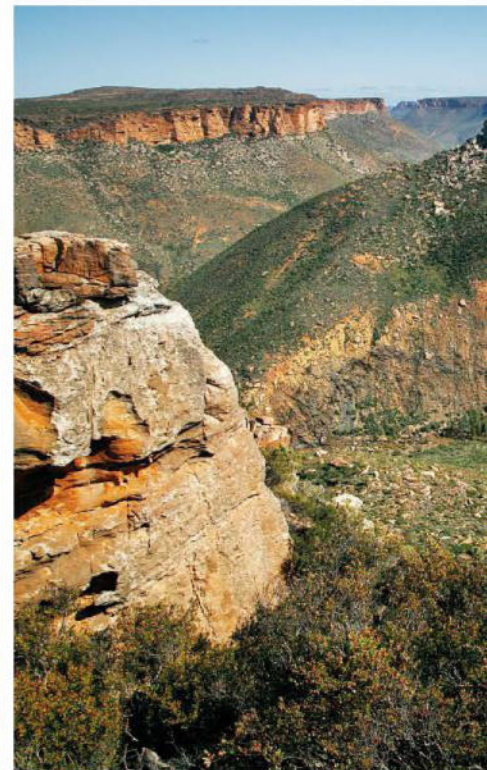
“

You can barely see the soil below the vast field of gold. If you crouch down and brush the daisies aside you'll discover purple felicias (*Felicia australis*) and snowy witeendekos (white duck food, or *Cotula nudicaulis*) competing against the deluge of *Asteracea*

”







Klipkoppies. We are now approaching Nieuwoudtville, but before we reach the town centre we pay a visit to the municipal wildflower reserve.

It's is time to pull out your guide book again because you'll be referencing it until the pages turn dog-eared. The reserve's low-lying part is covered in jackal daisies (*Osteospermum pinnatum*) that resemble freshly fallen snow. But look closer, there are also white Namaqualand daisies (*Dimorphotheca sinuata*) and ox-eye daisies (*Dimorphotheca nudicaulis*) sprinkled in the mix.

The prettiest flowers, in our opinion, grow on the rocky ridges in the upper parts of the reserve. Here you'll find the brightly coloured bontviooltjies (*Lachenalia mutabilis*) with their bulbils

ranging in colour from violet, yellow to red, all on the same pedicel. You'll also find the endemic rooikatstert (*Bulbinella latifolia* var. *doleritica*) which can be mistaken for the more common geelkatstert. Your guide book explains that the *doleritica* variant has a reddish stem and typically a reddish flower as well, caused by the red doleritic clay of the Bokkeveld Plateau near Nieuwoudtville.

And look at that! *Trachyandra falcata*, or veldkool, is an edible plant and therefore a special find if you're a forager. Be careful not to tread on that red cup-and-saucer (*Androcymbium latifolium*)!

It is easy to lose track of time in the wildflower reserve, but there're lots more to see around town. Drive down the

town's main road, Voortrekker Street, and be sure to buy freshly grilled askoek with cheese and apricot jam filling. The main road's name changes to Oorlogskloof Road on the outskirts of town which leads to Clanwilliam, although we're not going that far.

Roughly 12 km outside Nieuwoudtville we come to the Matjiesfontein farm stall. There are many people here, the parking lot is bursting at the seams and yet a driver manages to squeeze his bus full of tourists in here as well. You can sit down for tripe and coffee (R60 per plate during our visit), but if the heaving mass of tourists is too much to handle, we advise you to grab a permit (R25) and head out to the flowers.

Matjiesfontein has, without a doubt,





LACHENALIA MUTABILIS
BONTVIOOLTJIE

ENDINGS. The route ends on a high note in Nieuwoudtville. Here you'll see masses of flowers and the Oorlogskloof Canyon (top middle). Do take a walk among the flowers, but try not to tread on them and spoil the spectacle for others.



the most flowers in Nieuwoudtville. You can barely see the soil below the vast field of gold. If you crouch down and brush the daisies aside you'll discover purple felicias (*Felicia australis*) and snowy witeendekos (white duck food, or *Cotula nudicaulis*) competing against the deluge of *Asteracea*.

Bakkies with open canopies are parked together, their occupants lifting out picnic baskets and setting up tables among the flowers. Girls pose for pictures. Everyone is happy.

Our final destination for this tour lies farther down the road. The Oorlogskloof road forks 7 km after Matjiesfontein. We're taking the road to the right, the Moedverloor road. After 2 km

you'll encounter the entrance to Papkuilsfontein Guest Farm.

The flowers on this farm aren't as overwhelming as that of Matjiesfontein. Instead, the flowers seem more natural, growing mainly on the centre-divide of twin track roads and on ploughed fields. Fynbos such as wagon trees (*Protea nitida*) en sugarbush (*Protea repens*) adorn the campsite.

Take one last drive along Papkuilsfontein's 4x4 trail to the edge of the Oorlogskloof Canyon. After this final thrill we return to the campsite to settle in. Each stand has its own private bathroom with an outside kitchen.

Have a look at the pictures you took earlier while your campfire crackles cheerily. Are you sure you identified



I also want to go!

Can I travel solo? Yes, even the back roads are fairly busy (given their remoteness) this time of year because people come from afar.

How long? The route as we describe it here is 900 km in length and requires at least three days to experience just a bit of the Namaqualand.

What type of vehicle? The roads are quite good, but occasionally, like at Goegab, you'll need to engage four-wheel drive.

How much fuel? The longest distance between fuel stops is 300 km (Kamieskroon to Nieuwoudtville) so there's no need to bring jerry cans.

Can my dog join me? Goegap Nature Reserve and Namaqualand National Park unfortunately don't allow pets.

What emergency equipment? Always a tyre repair kit, and maybe a tow rope and jumper leads.

May I ride my motorcycle? Indeed! Namaqua National Park will allow touring motorcycles such as a GS, but not scramblers and quads.



that plant correctly? Didn't you perhaps confuse a kleinganskos (*Cotula barbata*) with a kleinperdekaroo (*Oedera genistifolia*). They look nearly identical, after all...

But does it really matter in the end? Beautiful is beautiful no matter how you labelled it. You've just spent three days in a vast garden, after all.

A neighbour walks past your campsite and randomly mentions that he saw

KUBOESBERG. A journalist sits in his camping chair contemplating the ways to convince his editor that he can't come in to the office on Monday. The assignment among the lovely flowers requires a few more days.

koekemakranka (*Gethyllis campanulata*) near the Hantam Botanical Gardens earlier today. You've never seen one of those! You'll simply have to stay another day or perhaps return next year. So many jewels await you in the Namaqualand.



DROSANTHEMUM LATIPETALUM
KAROODOUVYGIE

BOOK SMARTS

You probably noticed that we used two naming conventions when referring to a flower: the common vernacular and the botanical name. One isn't superior to the other and they both serve important purposes. Vernacular names are often in Afrikaans because the first European explorers and migrant farmers were Dutch – and the Dutch names were later taken into Afrikaans. There are, however, also vernacular names in English and Zulu, to use just two examples, although you'll have a hard time finding these in the Namaqualand. Every vernacular name carries with it a cultural component. It may suggest what the plant was used for or what it reminded its name giver of. Common names can be imprecise, though, because there are more than one type of magrietjie, lily and umdubu.

As adorable and informative as vernacular names may be, botanists also have to rely on scientific names to accurately identify a species. The first part of a botanical name is traditionally taken from Greek. It is the name of the genus to which the plant belongs and it serves much the same purpose as a person's surname. The second part of a botanical name is typically Latin and it is equal to a person's given name. And like given names, there can be two of these to



signify a variant of a known species.

Let's use *Bulbinella latifolia* var. *doleritica* as an example. *Bulbinella* is the genus, or 'surname', *latifolia* is particular to the species, or 'given name', and *doleritica* is the variant, or 'second name'. The common vernacular, Rooikatstert, would be equal to a nickname. In human terms it could be expressed as Smith, Richard William, with the nickname being Dick, or Bill.

Since there are nearly 20 000 distinct species of flowers in South Africa, nobody can be expected to identify them all – few

actual botanists could manage such a feat.

A good guide book like the ones shown on the adjacent page will go a long way to teach you how to distinguish between the 10 main flower families, for example daisies, ericas and orchids.

It also helps to know that certain flowering plants will only grow in certain regions. You'll never be stuck telling creeping sage (*Salvia repens*) and wild sage (*Salvia disermas*) apart because they won't grow in each other's respective provinces.

So, if you were wondering if we at *Drive*



Where we stayed

Kakamas Hotel

Contact 054 431 0976

book@kakamashotel.co.za

kakamashotel.co.za

Cost R1 005 pppn (breakfast included)

Namastat Caravan Park

Contact 027 718 1832

book@namastatlodge.co.za

namastatlodge.co.za

Cost R250 per stand (2 persons) and R50 thereafter

Kuboesberg Game Farm

Contact 087 808 8854

carl@telkomsa.net

nieuwoudtville.com/kuboesberg

Cost R185 pppn

Papkuilsfontein Guest Farm (pictured here)

Contact 072 555 1416

info@papkuilsfontein.com

papkuilsfontein.com

Cost R200 pppn

& Camp were some kind of plant geniuses, we're not! Here are some of the books that made us sound so clever.

Namaqualand: a succulent desert by R Cowling and S Pierce, Fernwood Press

It's a sizable coffee table book that won't fit in your bakkie's cubby hole. It also won't help much to identify a wildflower. What it does offer is plenty of knowledge pertaining to the region, the first European botanists and the legacy of the Nama people.

Nieuwoudville, Bokkeveld plateau & Hantam by JC Manning and P Goldblatt,

Botanical Society of South Africa

This guide book is no longer in print, and it is worth its weight in gold if you can track down a copy. It has a sharp focus on the type of flowering plants found around Nieuwoudtville. Although it doesn't contain each and every Namaqua flowering plant, it does a good job of getting you started.

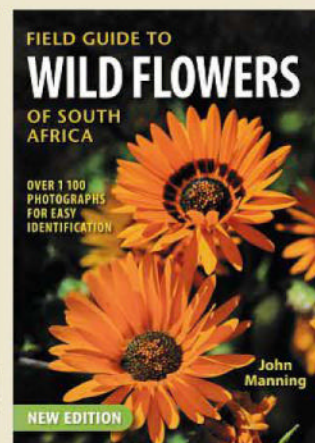
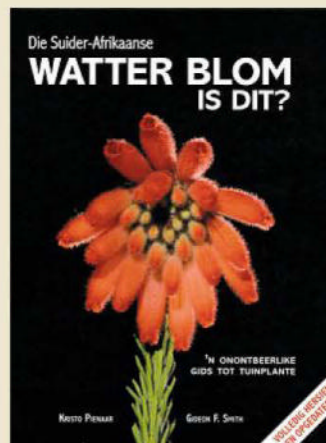
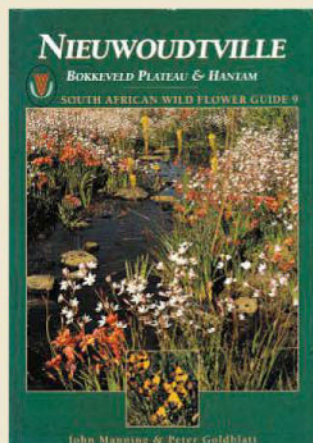
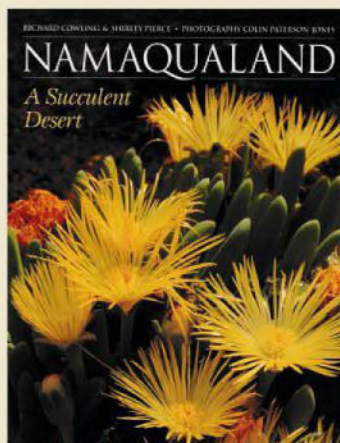
Watter blom is dit? by K Pienaar and GF Smith, Penguin Random House

You know it's a good flower guide if Kristo Pienaar's name is on the cover! This is another huge coffee table book, but if you purchased bulbs and seeds and plan to raise

your own piece of Namaqualand in your suburban garden, then this book is essential reading. We have an Afrikaans copy, but it's also available in English under the title *What flower is that?*

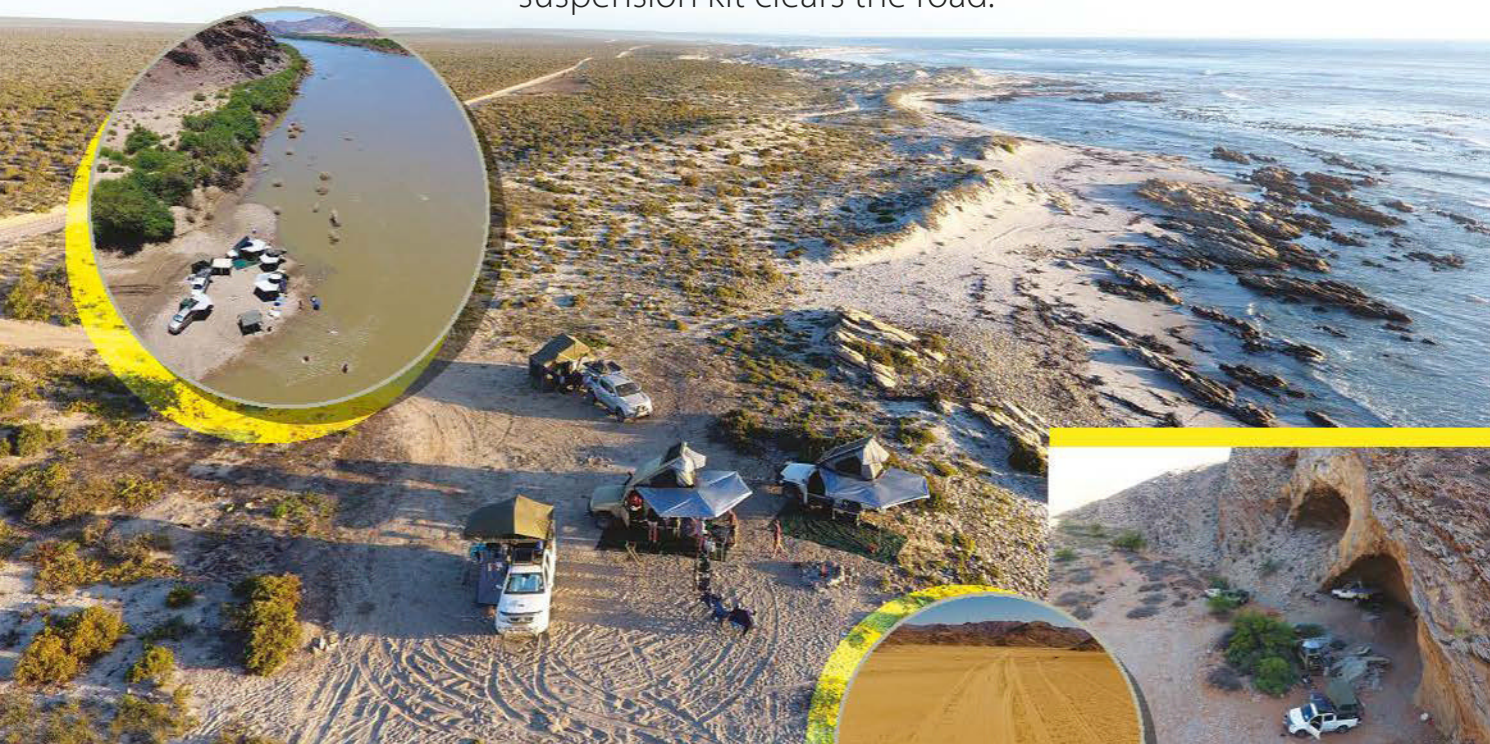
Field guide to wild flowers of South Africa by JC Manning, Struik Publishers

Like Doc Pienaar, John Manning is one of the most referenced and respected research botanists in South Africa. In this guide book John doesn't focus on Namaqualand alone – he specialises in iris and hyacinth families – but you can use it to identify wildflowers across the country.



RAW 4x4 NAMAKWA ECO TRAIL

Wherever you're going, whatever you're towing, a RAW 4x4 suspension kit clears the road.



This past December, father and son Shaun and Calvin Hutton took on The Namakwa Eco Trail with friends... and RAW 4x4 power.

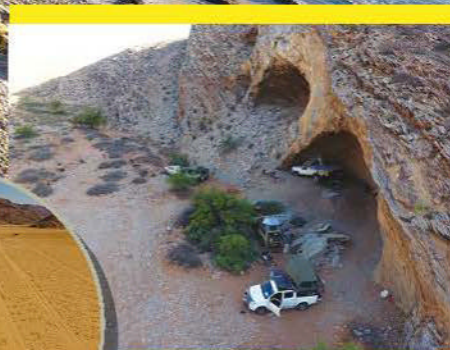
South Africa's longest continuous 4x4 route is 600km of tough-going Northern Cape track along the Orange River from Pella to Alexander Bay. But with RAW 4x4 suspension solutions installed, their Toyota "Troopy" Land Cruiser 78 Series, Toyota Hilux Vigo and Nissan Navara D23 (towing a camper trailer) ate up the trip, through gravel, rock, sand, dongas and river crossings, steep slopes and crazy bends.

"All the vehicles did marvellously, not one puncture or mechanical failure. The Navara, Hilux and Troopy were all sporting new RAW 4x4 suspension kits, and what a way to really test them out and see for ourselves how they handle. The Navara towing the camper trailer for the first time did superbly, especially considering it was surrounded by Toyotas. It wasn't all plain sailing; lots of bush cutting, some technical driving and soft sand made it quite exciting. The riverbed drive down to Kamgab was definitely a highlight. The real advantage was on gravel corrugations, where the RAW 4x4 suspension is so forgiving and comfortable. There is no



'wallowing' or bottoming out over big washouts or bumps. The added ground clearance 'even with the vehicles loaded also instils real confidence when the going gets tough,' says Calvin.

With car worries banished, the Huttons explored Charlie's Pass, The Growcery Camp in Vioolsdrift, and Bakkrans Cave in the Richtersveld. They camped and swam along the Orange River, and drove over soft sand at the coast to reach the beautiful beach spot at Waterval and the Highlanders campsite in Klawer. Evenings were for stargazing and swapping stories as they kicked back with a potjie and a cold one. The 4x4 vehicles would be waiting, ready to go in the morning.



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RAW 4x4 is here to get your 4x4 vehicle ready for the backroads. Our kits and products can increase ground clearance, improve departure and arrival angles, and give you more comfort and control. They'll also help you to safely carry aftermarket accessories and extra load. We supply shock absorbers, coil springs, leaf springs, bush kits, U-bolts, pins, shackles, panhard rods, torsion bars, steering dampers and more. Check out our kits and products on raw4x4.co.za and kitbuilder.raw4x4.co.za

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Terms and Conditions:

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- Only purchases made during the promotion period will qualify.
- The free gift will be awarded upon fitment.
- Images are for illustrative purposes and actual prize may vary.



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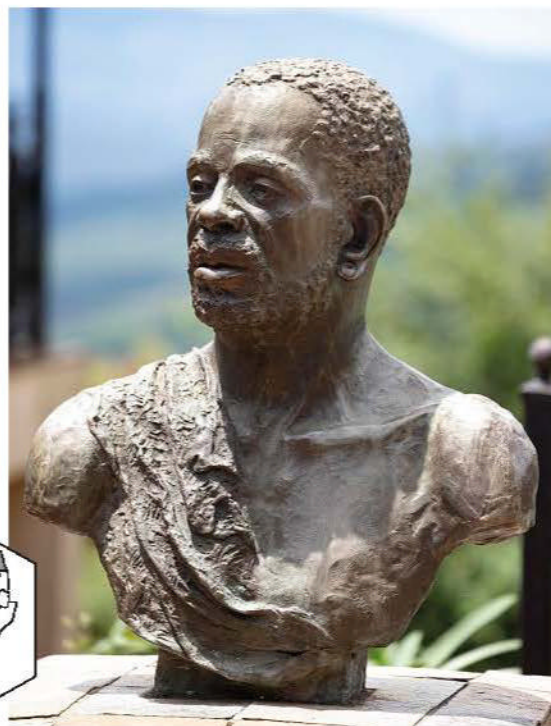
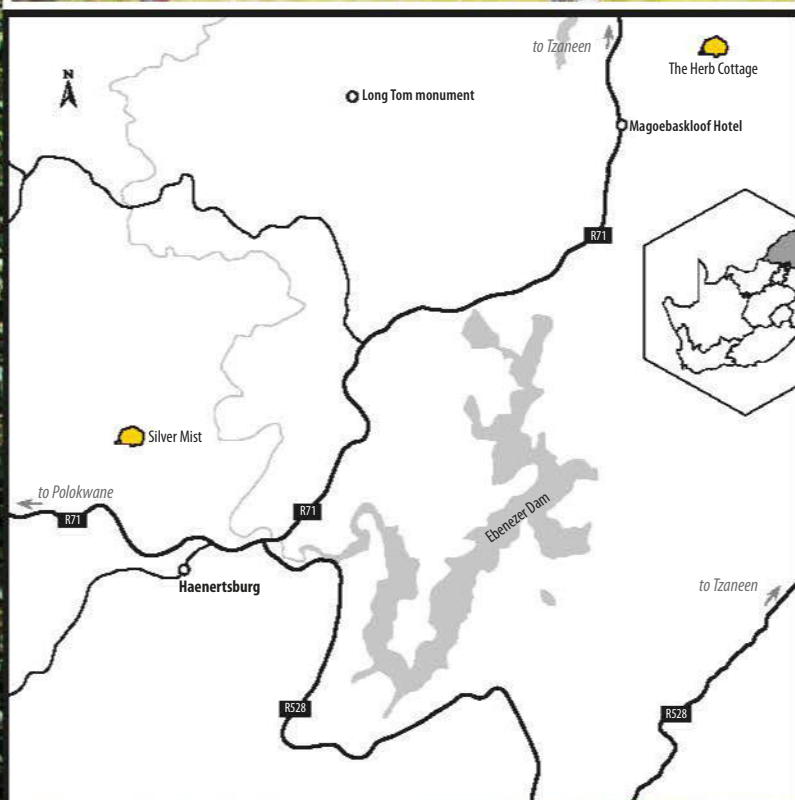
**RAW
4x4**

Camp among chiefs and cannons

People usually shoot through Magoebaskloof on their way to the Kruger and other campsites in the Lowveld. Next time, hit the road a day or two early and set up camp on these spots.

Words and photos **Leon Botha**





Magoebaskloof is one of the gateways from the Highveld to the Lowveld, and the famous Magoebaskloof Pass is on the R71 between Haenertsburg and Tzaneen, with a descent of around 620 m in 5,5 km.

When you look at the beauty of the landscape around you, it's fair to expect equally special campsites. We set up camp at two campsites in the area and found out that Magoebas is also more than just a name: it's a story of a century-old murder – and the destruction of iconic cannons.

A bust in front of the Magoebaskloof hotel today reminds us of the origin of the name, and a few shards of a phenomenal artillery weapon is all that remains in Haenertsburg.

Makgoba's legacy

We visited Magoebaskloof Getaway more than 10 years ago, and the Magoebaskloof Mountain Lodge in 2019. On his trip to the latter, colleague Cyril Klopper told how the bust of Chief Mampoko Makgoba – after whom the area was named – was unveiled a second time after it had previously gone missing. Fortunately, the Makgoba bust is still at the hotel to this day. The valley behind it, formed by the Politsi River, can surely also be called the Makgobaskloof.

The story of Makgoba's last days has different versions depending on your source*. One thing is certain: Chief Makgoba was upset because the Boer republic wanted to tax him and his people, and there was a threat of resettlement. This was, of course, against the will of the chief and his people



– and a war broke out between Chief Makgoba and the Boers.

Somewhere along the line the chief was apparently arrested and imprisoned, but he managed to escape and vowed that no white person would ever take him prisoner again. These would be prophetic words.

In these dense forests and inhospitable territory, it wouldn't be easy to capture Makgoba – plus his followers were apparently armed with old elephant guns as well as bows and arrows. But in 1895, general Piet Joubert and his men drew a line in the sand: up to 1 000 Boers and 3 000 Swazi and Shangaan warriors – some believe it could be as many as 6 000 – managed to defeat Chief Makgoba's forces in the dense bush.

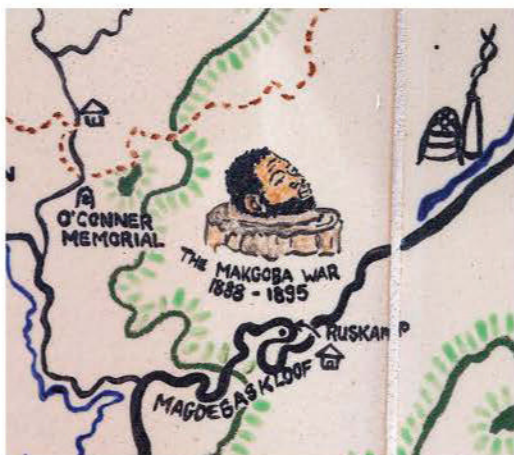
Depending on which story you choose to believe, the invading forces found two

of Makgoba's wives. The women were apparently tortured until one relented and revealed Chief Makgoba's hiding place. Others believe the men followed one of the chief's wives, who fell behind her companions due to an injured foot, all the way to the chief's hideout. Either way, Chief Makgoba had been found.

He defiantly fought back and shot a Swazi warrior with his double-barrelled elephant gun. The second round would not fire, and as the chief reloaded, he was killed. Some claim the Swazi warriors surrounded him and their leader challenged Chief Makgoba to a duel... The end result was the same. As proof to general Piet Joubert, Chief Makgoba was beheaded and his head carried up the slopes to Joubertsfontein, a fortified camp that stood just beyond where the present-day hotel now stands.

Haenertsburg is 10 km from the hotel. Back then, this town with its 300 inhabitants was apparently the seat of the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek for one day. But even more interesting is that this is also the place where two Long Tom cannons met their end, a few years after the death of Chief Makgoba.

The Boers used four French-built 155 mm Creusot 'Long Tom' siege guns against the British during the Anglo-Boer War. But it immediately became apparent that this was not a sustainable plan because they only had 8 000 shells. At one stage, the cannons were deployed in four forts around Pretoria, but not a single shot was fired there. They were indeed used elsewhere in places such as Ladysmith, Mahikeng and Kimberley. It must have been quite something to move those cannons, because the barrels



COME AND SEE. Prof Louis Changuion (right) recovered the remains of the French artillery pieces now on display at the Long Tom monument (below) where you can also see depictions of Chief Makgoba, both beheaded and armed with his elephant gun.



each weighed 2,5 t and measured 4,2 m – and then you had the undercarriage and platform, weighing 3 t and 5,2 t respectively. Now factor in more than 40 kg per shell, and you can imagine what it required to transport the lot.

With the Berg-en-Dal battle outside Belfast – the final one of the war – all four Long Toms were used together for the first time, but it was also the last time. Two of them were later destroyed near Komatipoort and Lydenburg, and the other two close to Haenertsburg. Remains of the last one that was destroyed can be seen at the Long Tom outdoor monument in Haenertsburg. This is thanks to professor Louis Changuion, a resident of the town who located some

of the pieces with a metal detector on Rondebult (also known as Feeskop), about 8 km outside the town along the R71.

We were lucky enough to run into Louis at the Inni-Berg Coffee Shop, barely a minute's walk from the monument. Louis recounted how he even went diving in the nearby Letaba River to see if he could locate remains of the other Long Tom, but he reckons the British probably took it back to England as the spoils of war. What Louis did find, in England, was the tip of the last Long Tom that had been sawn off and in possession of the Royal Artillery in Woolwich. That's why this particular Long Tom was called 'The Jew'. The tip was returned to South Africa and is now part of a museum exhibit.

Louis says he was a young man when the Long Tom Pass between Lydenburg and Sabie was tarred and named – and this piqued his interest in the cannons. Louis would later write the book *Silence of the Guns*.

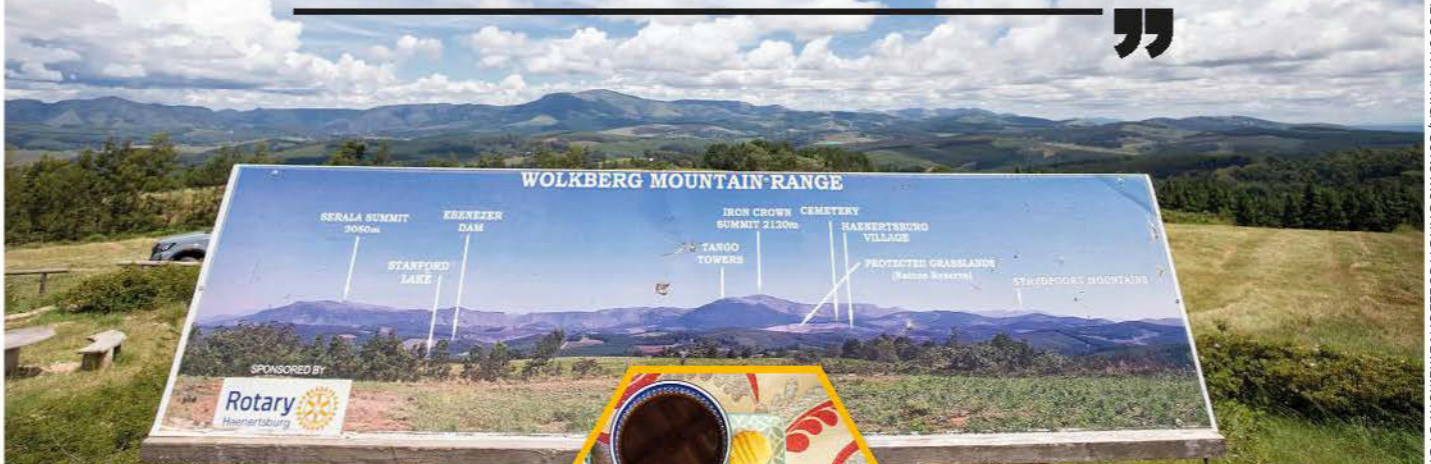
According to him, Chief Makgoba was respected by everyone in the area. Even in his report to the government, general Joubert admitted that a brave warrior had been killed on that day.

Whether you make a quick stop at Haenertsburg on your way to your campsite or visit the Long Tom monument on the Long Tom pass, do pull over at Inni-Berg and see for yourself why you should not miss out on their omelette breakfast (R59).

“

What Louis did find, in England, was the tip of the last Long Tom that had been sawn off...

”



SILVER MIST

Saddle up!

Magoebaskloof and Haenertsburg are also known as 'the land of the silver mist'.

The turn-off to the campsite of the same name, Silver Mist, is 2,3 km from the town (in the direction of Polokwane).

The tar road eventually ascends the mountain through a eucalyptus forest. The turn-off is on a blind bend – it's pretty much a hairpin bend before a dirt road takes you down the mountain. The road is quite steep, and even if its condition isn't too bad, you're not going to manage the return trip with a front-wheel drive vehicle, especially if your caravan is on the large side. There is also a bump or two where a road caravan's coupler could potentially catch if the towbar is too close to the road.

To your right, you see the bare trunks of a plantation of sky-high pine trees, and barely a kilometre later, the dirt road turns right to lead you to the campsite.

The large square building on the left that looks a bit like a school hall is actually an equestrian arena. That's right, show horses are bred here and you'll see a few of these graceful animals in the open paddocks next to the arena.

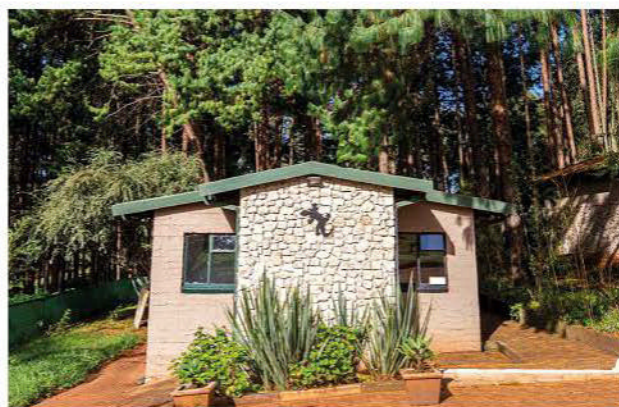
Directly after the paddocks, you turn left at a large steel gate. The road is still steep, but at least now it's paved. About two thirds down the road – about 80 m – there's an equestrian ring to the left of the road. Across the road are the campsite's ablution facilities. At the front is a kitchen with facilities including a microwave oven, electric four-plate stove, freestanding fridge, kettle and sinks. The wall boasts two large black and white photos of horses.

The entrance for the men and women bathrooms is at the other end. You'll find a neat tiled room with basins, mirrors on the walls and private shower cubicles. Behind each door is a built-in bench and hooks, and a shower curtains keeps the rest dry.

The campsite itself is an elongated lawn in front of you, divided by terraces lengthwise. At the first pitches in front of you hangs a large brass bell with the place's name affixed onto pillars.

There are some permanent tents on the upper terrace to the left and on some of the lower stands. The two highest terraces





MAKES SENSE. The kitchen and bathrooms are in the same building near the campsite entrance. The kitchen is at the front and access to the toilets is through the rear...



“

There are some permanent tents on the upper terrace to the left and on some of the lower stands

”



“

You would have to search
far and wide for a better lawn
than the one at Silver Mist

”





Briefly | Silver Mist



Campsite Several unmarked stands on terraces. There is a lovely lawn, but no shade.

Ablution facilities Basic facilities that include an equipped kitchen. It's a short walk from the stands – up a steep hill.

Price Depending on the season and day of the week, R380-R450 pn per stand for up to four. On long weekends and school holidays, you have to stay a minimum of two nights.

Arrival and departure 14:00 (or earlier if you arrange it) and 10:30.

Contact 063 117 26 29

info@silvermisterresort.co.za

silvermisterresort.co.za

Nearest town? Haenertsburg, 3,4 km.

Road conditions The last kilometre is a steep dirt road where you'll struggle in a front-wheel drive vehicle towing a caravan.

GPS S23.926168 E29.928763

Drive & Camp says It's not every day that you can camp at a stud farm, but the campsite itself is basic and better suited as an overnight stop – unless you want to use it as a base to explore the area.

are narrow with a few stands on each, but if someone has already set up camp here, you won't get past. The entrance to the terrain is on the far left, and if you're looking for a larger open spot, the lower few stands are usually perfect. There are more than enough short lamp posts here – we counted 16. They're the easiest way to mark where to park. Each pole has a power box at the bottom (regular domestic sockets), but you'll see some of the boxes are coming loose.

You would have to search far and wide for a better lawn than the one at Silver Mist. But if you want some shade, you'll have to bring your own because there's no shade on the grass here.

Some of the stands have a built-up braai, but you need to supply your own grid and equipment.



ORWELLIAN?

Everyone is equal on Animal Farm, but some are more equal...

Guests are important, but this is, after all, a working farm and not a petting zoo.



Gertrude is a tame ostrich that plays yard chicken as she grazes on the lawn. In the late afternoon, the sheep are herded to the pen and the horses come back from the pasture. First you hear them gallop from a distance on the driveway, and then when the horses seem to be playfully chasing each other, Gertrude quickly steps aside. The stables are next to the arena.

Upon our arrival, a foal had just been born. The little tyke started to find his feet shakily in one of the camps while the mother proudly watched over her baby.

If you want to get a better idea of the extent of the farm, walk down past the chalets. There are some dams here where you can throw in a line for black bass – just remember, the catch-and-release rule applies here.



THE HERB COTTAGE 4x4 heaven

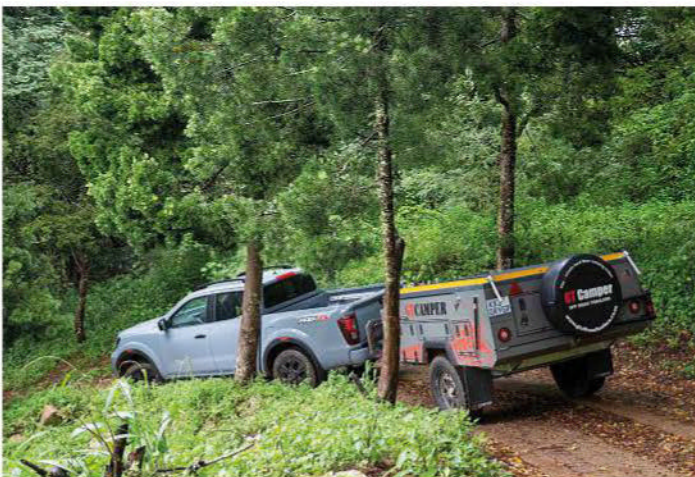
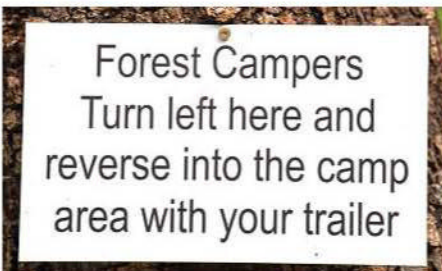
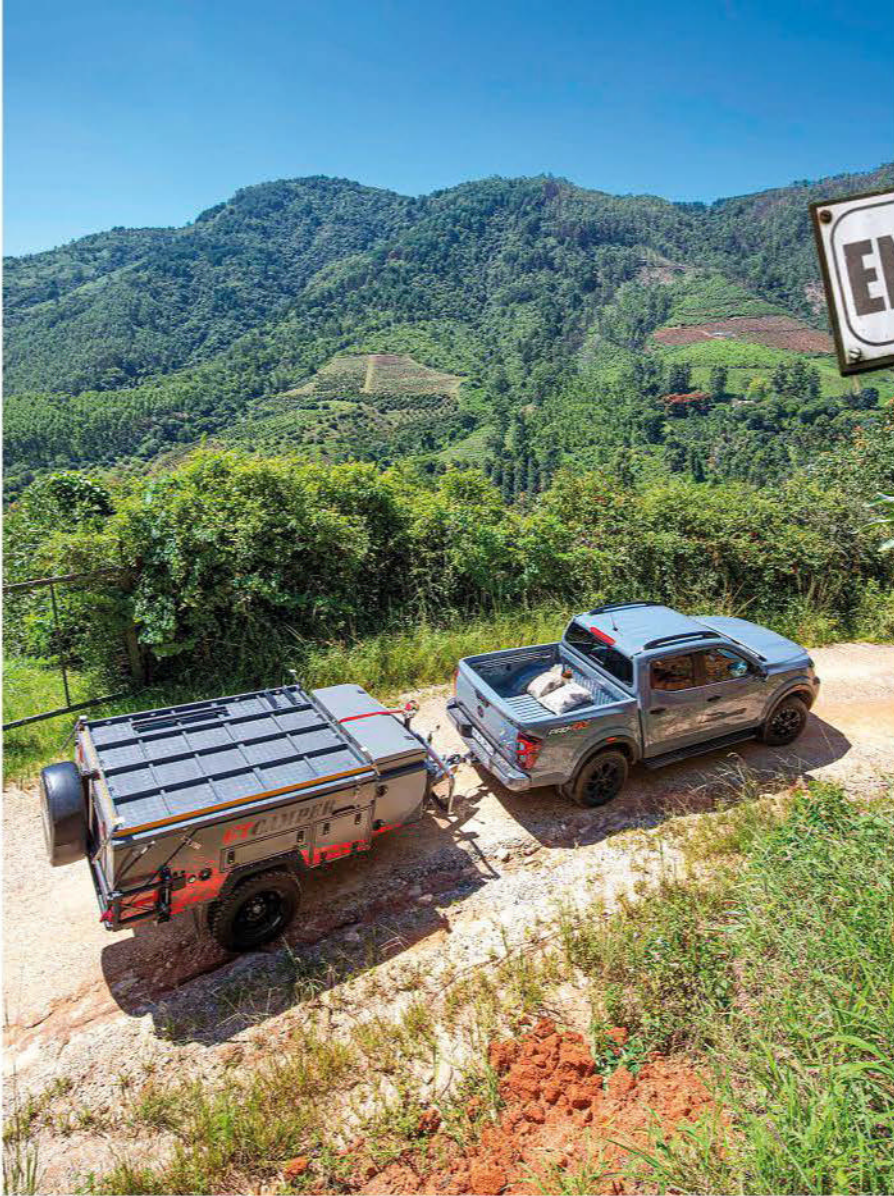
The turn-off to The Herb Cottage sits on one of the last sharp bends of the pass. From here, the dirt road descends steeply. (And, coincidentally, it's the same turn-off for Magoebaskloof Getaway.)

You're soon driving through avocado orchards, but you won't have the luxury of gazing around you – you'll have to focus on the steep dirt path. To get to The Herb Cottage's Forest Camp, you need a 4x4: you won't need it on the descent, but you won't be able to master the slope during rainy weather on your return. Just over a kilometre later, you start to climb the opposite slope, after which you drive through the farm gate. Now macadamia groves appear and then avos again – some of the trees' branches grow up to and even over the road, and any caravan wider than your towing vehicle will feel it. About 200 m later, you drive over a shallow stream. They've packed rocks under the water to form a driving surface.

Barely 100 m along is a T-junction. Keep left to the campsite; within 100 m the steep dirt path through the forest becomes a concrete twin-track with sharp turns, and later there are some paved sections. In front of you and against an Outeniqua yellowwood to the left of the road is a warning sign: "Engage 4x4 now". The Forest Camp is 100 m up the slope.

But first there is one last 'obstacle': here, in the middle of the forest, you have to open two gates on your right to drive into the campsite – and your aim will have to be spot on if you're towing, it's a very sharp turn. There's a sign on the left against another tree with instructions to take a sharp left up a steep side road and then reverse through the gate. (When leaving, stick to the far right and then turn left right at the end – that way you'll get through the gates without the need for a 10-point turn.)

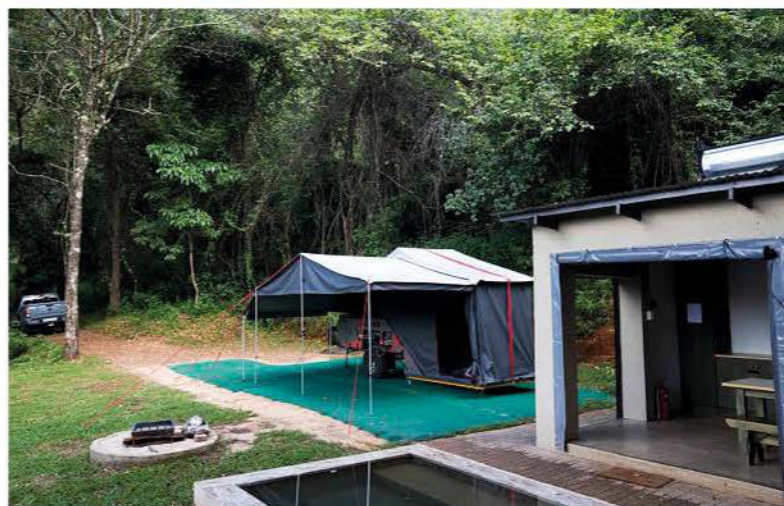
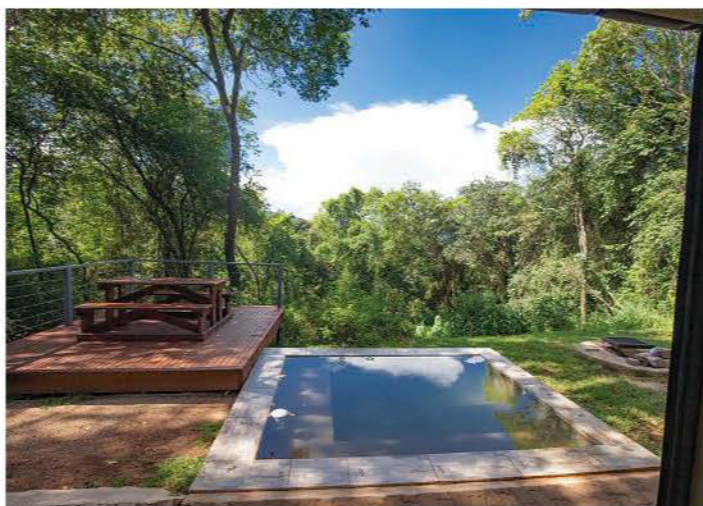
A few months ago we described the Jackalberry campsite in Marloth Park as one of the best in the country, but now we need to add a caveat: the Forest Camp is a worthy



INSTRUCTIONS. Take a moment to read the signage before you enter the campsite. It will save you a world of frustration.



From here, you can see the edges of the opposite gorge. One caravan with its rally tent fits comfortably.



competitor, but only those driving 4x4 vehicles can enjoy it.

The stand is a level spot with dense forest all around. From here, you can see the edges of the opposite gorge. One caravan with its rally tent will fit comfortably.

It is an exclusive campsite that's beyond compare. There's a woven ground sheet already set up for you, which means you simply park your caravan on the one side and pitch the awning over the rest.

The adjacent kitchen and bathroom facilities are superb. The kitchen has a large entrance next to the stand and at

the front of the building. (Canvas panels can zipped up if you want to keep the bad weather out.) A power point (a double plug) is at the nearest door in case you want to plug in your caravan. There are lots of cupboards on the left wall with enough work space, while the sink is on the opposite side. In the middle is an indoor braai where a free bag of braai wood awaits. Not something you find in just any old campsite.

Mosquitoes rejoice when there are visitors – so a can of insect repellent is next to the indoor braai for good reason.

In the middle of the room is a table

with two benches that would seat six people comfortably. Opposite the front kitchen door is a deck with its own table and benches, with a plunge pool right next to it. The braai is also next to it and a round concrete surface on which a loose grid with legs fit.

The toilet is in its own room around the corner, and on the far side – still under the roof – is an open-air shower with no shower curtain or glass door. So, you gaze upon nature while taking a shower. If you want to bath, a paved path leads only a few meters into the forest to an open-air bath.



SAME SAME. The two stands are nearly identical. Coral Tree (left) has a larger separate bathroom, while Forest (right) has a combined bathroom and kitchen.



Forest Camp isn't the only campsite; Coral Tree Camp is 200 m further on. It was built eight years ago (six years before Forest) and has similar facilities. This one has enough room for up to two caravans and you camp on grass.

At Coral Tree Camp, the bathroom building is off on the side, but here too there is an open section facing nature.

If you want to experience even more nature on foot, there are many marked forest paths. (Consult the map

posted in the kitchen to see where.)

This is a special place to camp, and if you want to take gifts back home, there's even a shop for this very purpose. Ask The Herb Cottage's Elsbeth Humphreys to open it up for you. She also makes the most beautiful glass jewellery you have seen, and there are macadamias nuts and other macadamia related products (butter and the like). They also sell their own honey – the beehives are just beyond the campsite.

Briefly | The Herb Cottage



Campsite Two secluded and private campsites in a forest with enough space for up to four, or small group of friends of up to six. Only accessible with a 4x4 and an off-road caravan.

Ablution facilities Your own luxury facilities in the open.

Price R300 pppn for the first two campers, then R200 pp.

Arrival and departure 14:00 and 10:00.

Contact 082 335 6803

bookings@theherbcottage.co.za

theherbcottage.co.za

Nearest town? Haenertsburg, 18 km.

Road conditions The last 3,1 km is a steep dirt road on mountain slopes, and only intended for 4x4 vehicles.

GPS S23.878988 E30.007519

Drive & Camp says This is one of the best 4x4 camping spots in the country – one you're likely to return to again and again.



Calling all water babies!

There's a game farm in the foothills of the Waterberg mountains with a water playground that will keep your brood busy for days.

Words and photos **Helenus Kruger**

The many water slides peek out from above the Bushveld trees from the moment you enter Lethabong Lodge. Water slides aren't unusual, of course, but when you stop at your stand next to the water park and are able to view it in its full glory, you realise that this is a playground with a difference – and heaven on earth for kids. They can play to their heart's content from 09:00 to 18:00 every day.

The water park is approximately 75 x 50 m in size and houses all kinds of aquatic games and other delights. The most exciting are probably the three

slides on top of the small building that also houses the first-aid room. Two of the body slides are open, while the other is a tube body slide. All three spit you out into a large pool with varying depth: it's deeper where you land, while the rest of the pool is barely half a metre deep and is therefore suitable for smaller children.

Next to these body slides, but much lower, are two squared slides that are wide enough to ride on a tube (find them on the opposite side of the park). Next to those is a lower, shorter slide for the little ones. And when you're done sliding, you can quickly take a shower: on the

shallower end are two buckets that tip over as soon as they fill up.

Other than the pool with the slides, there are two more swimming pools where things are a bit calmer: one for toddlers and a bigger and deeper one for those who can swim. The larger pool has four built-in cement loungers on which you can relax with only your head above the water.

Between the pool with the slides and the swimming pools are a clump of trees with benches where parents can chill out as they watch over their little ones. Joseph Nobela and Lovious Sekwakwa,



two trained lifeguards, are on duty all day long to keep an eye out and ensure everyone's safety.

The canal that runs around the park has a slow flow, and you can take a leisurely tube ride here. A bunch of brightly coloured green, yellow, red and blue shade net and canopies give shade and lend the park a carnival feel.

Other play areas in the camp include a giant jumping pillow, a foofie slide, jungle gyms and pedal cars. The games room sits between block A's stands and the water park – here you can play table tennis, pool and foosball.

Day visitors are welcome, but they allow only 80 visitors a day, and groups are limited to 10 people. There's a large braai area near the main building for day visitors, and they're welcome to visit the camp store too.



LETHABONG'S 20 STANDS are divided into two blocks, A and B, which lie on either side of the water park. Each block has 10 stands, each with its own bathroom and kitchenette.

The layout of the ablution facilities differ according to the block you're in: block A has five small buildings with two bathrooms each. They are back to back, which means you and your neighbour

share a building. In block B you also have your own bathroom, but not on your stand. The 10 numbered bathrooms, which are larger than block A's, are in two buildings adjacent to the stands on opposite sides of the water park.

The bathrooms are tiled and have a glass shower cubicle, basin, mirror, hooks and a loo. The kitchenettes are at the bathroom's entrance.



SAFETY FIRST. Joseph Nobela and Lovious Sekwakwa (insert) will keep an eye on your kids while you look after the braai. A garden chess set will keep introspective kids busy while the rest yell their little heads off!



Block A's kitchen is tiny and really just a washing-up area. At block B there is more space and you have a small worktop with shelves below it. The bathrooms are cleaned daily and your dishes are washed.

The stands are on average 10 x 10 m in size and are level with grass, a braai and a power box (blue and domestic sockets). You share a bin and tap. There aren't a lot of trees and most stands have no shade.

A group of nyalas and blesbuck graze in the camp and even saunter past your stand. There's a feeding post a short distance from the campsite, in the south-west corner. Approach it slowly and you should be able to get pretty close to them.

The nyalas don't mind people and will just quietly walk away if you get too close. The blesbuck are more of a curious bunch and will walk up to you to check you out. But don't think you're going to



Abercrombie & Fitch

AWAY



the new fragrances for men and women



get close to the springboks – this little group doesn't trust easily and will dart away quickly if you move closer.

Lethabong's trained safari guides take guests on a game drive in the morning and late afternoon (R250 pp). You'll see giraffes, kudus, impalas, springboks, hippos and zebras, among others. You will also see a bunch of exotic wildlife including golden wildebeest, white and black springbok, and white blesbuck.

You may tackle the routes in the game camp on foot or on your bike, but you not in your own vehicle.

The camp store sells wood, fire lighters, ice, soft drinks, sweets and a small selection of groceries (think dishwashing liquid, insect repellent and toothpaste). On the takeaway menu are burgers, chips, and toasted sandwiches. And you can satisfy your sweet tooth with candyfloss, slushies and ice cream.

Briefly | Lethabong Lodge



Campsite 20 stands on grass with little shade.

Ablution facilities Your own bathroom with a kitchenette where you can wash dishes.

Price R500 pn per stand for four; thereafter R250 pp (maximum six per stand). During the week and at weekends, you need to stay for at least two nights, but on long weekends only bookings for three nights or more are accepted.

Arrival and departure 14:00 and 10:00.

Nearest town Thabazimbi, 30 km.

Road conditions Tar, but the final 8 km is a dirt road that can be in bad condition at times. Contact them in advance to check.

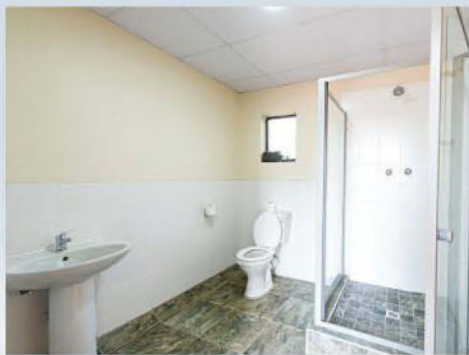
Contact 066 262 7720

bookings@lethabonglodge.co.za

lethabonglodge.co.za

GPS S24.693435 E27.502999

Drive & Camp says Remember to pack sunscreen and a hat – you will need them in the fierce Bushveld sun.



FUN IN THE SUN. The terrain is kept immaculate by staff members who seem to almost obsess about neatness. Not that it's a bad thing.



GEARED UP READY TO GO

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Over the hills and far away

Our route starts in the tiny village of Op-die-Berg in the Koue Bokkeveld. Fill up at the co-op – the pumps are open all week, but they close in the late afternoon – before heading north on the R303 regional road.

Barely 500 m outside Op-die-Berg, you'll encounter a road sign that directs you to the right on the 'Swartrug afd road' and the Ceres Karoo. Take it. The blacktop passes numerous orchards including those of Boplaas where the Afrikaner poets Boerneef and Carl

Boplaas grew up, and where the Van der Merwe family still farms today. The tar comes to an end after 17 km and it turns to gravel. Don't carry on but turn left onto the P2244 minor road leading to the Ceres Karoo.

It's a lovely gravel road past fruit trees on the right and irrigation dams on the left. After about 2 km on this road, you drive over a short mountain pass called the Klein Cederberg Pass, and then, 7 km later, you reach a single-lane bridge over the intermittent Riet River. To the right of the bridge are sand dunes with visible

tracks, perhaps it's a 4x4 playground for the area's young folk.

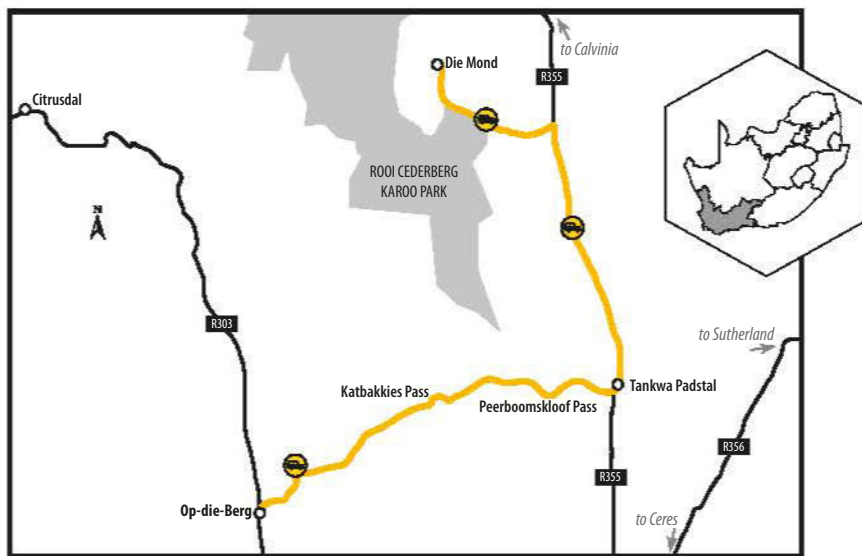
Shortly beyond the Riet River, the gravel road switches to tar – this is the Katbakkies Pass, which winds its way up the Skurweberg in front of you.

It's a fairly steep mountain pass with a gradient of 1:4 (for every four metres you move forward, you rise by one metre). It may not sound particularly steep, but vehicles with small-capacity engines will have to downshift to low gears to master the incline.

Pull over at one of the two lookout

Take a trip through the poetic Cederberg, cross two beautiful mountain passes over the pragmatic Skurweberg and end in the artsy Ceres Karoo.

Words and photos **Cyril Klopper**



UPS AND DOWNS. The Katbakkies Pass (main image) offers a view of the dunes of the Riet River below you and the impressive peak of Sneeuukop on the horizon. And what is it with bullet holes in road signs (right) in rural areas?



points at the top of Katbakkies Pass and take a moment to look back at the landscape you've left behind. Note especially the highest peak in the west; it is Sneeuukop, a 2 069 m tall spire that dominates the horizon.

Katbakkies Pass, originally a livestock driving route, was tarred in 1999 and you summit at 1 190 m above sea level. The origin of the name is unclear, but the literal translation is cat bowls.

Leopards abound on the Skurweberg, an offshoot of the Cederberg, but the chances of you running into one are

lower than your chances of seeing snow here – the latter is something that is not unheard of in the district.

It's not long before the tarred mountain pass turns back into gravel that takes you up and down through various hollows on a plateau. There are numerous spots to pull over, including the ruins of an old farmstead (S32.88049 E19.66055). It is a popular campsite for adventure motorcyclists because the ruin's stone walls somewhat protect you from icy nights. Signs of campfires are visible here and there.

The road continues past typical Cederberg sandstone formations to the summit of the Peerboomskloof Pass (1 121 m above sea level) where the road is tarred again.

This mountain pass also has a viewpoint from where you can gaze at the vast plains of the Ceres Karoo – a striking view. At the foot of the pass lies Skitterykloof's picnic spot. It is a popular stopover for the Karoo's so-called 'karretjiemense' (cart people) and their donkeys. We've also seen overland trucks encamped here in the past, as

“

It's actually a remnant of an art installation that was once on display at AfricaBurn...

”



Need to know



Maximum number of vehicles? It's a public road.

Do I get a map? No, but the road is marked on maps.

Will I scratch my vehicle? Highly unlikely.

Should I take a compressor? Only if you're worried about getting a flat tyre.

Can I braai along the way? Yes, there are quite a few picnic spots along the way.

Can I turn around halfway? Indeed.

Is there cellphone signal? Mostly not, but there is WiFi at the Tankwa farm stall and Die Mond guest farm.

Best time to go? All year round, but it's blisteringly hot in February.

Can my family join me? Yes, definitely.

And my dog? Ask Die Mond in advance whether your pet will be welcome.

A day trip or the whole weekend? At least a weekend because there's a lot to do and see.

How long does it take? The route takes about two hours if you don't stop to stretch your legs.

Are there ablution facilities? Op-die-Berg's petrol station has toilets, there are pit toilets at the foot of the Peerboom Pass and good facilities at both the Tankwa farm stall and Die Mond.

Directions You can take the route from Ceres if you drive over Prince Alfred's Hamlet to Op-die-Berg, or vice versa if you start in Calvinia.

Contact 📧 hlange@breede.co.za (Tankwa Padstal) ☎ 023 044 0079 (Die Mond, WhatsApp only)

Costs The route costs you nothing aside from fuel and at Die Mond we paid R150 pppn to camp.





STRANGE LANDS. At the Peerboomkloof Pass you catch your first glimpse of the Karoo (middle) after which we make our way to the Tankwa Padstal (above and far left) with its art installations before ending the trip at Die Mond where we pitch our tent on grass under willows next to a river flowing through a desert.



well as dusty adventure bikers.

The road dead ends in the R355 regional road, the longest uninterrupted dirt road in South Africa (208 km). Yes, the gravel road between Loeriesfontein and Kakamas may be the longest dirt road at 289 km, but it is intersected at one point by another dirt road, which therefore gives the honour of the longest uninterrupted dirt road to the R355 – an admittedly pedantic distinction.

The R355 is our country's own Camino pilgrimage route, and walkers and cyclists regularly traverse the 208 km between Calvinia in the north and Karoo Poort near Ceres in the south. Once a year you also see many a hatchback stranded next to the road with flat tyres. These are the vehicles of city slickers

heading to the annual AfricaBurn festival – an alternative lifestyle event in the vein of the Burning Man festival in America.

Turn left onto the R355 and follow the road for 2 km until you see the wreck of a crashed UFO. It's actually a remnant of an art installation that was once on display at AfricaBurn and it marks the turn-off to the Tankwa Padstal.

This farm stall sells everything from sweets to fireworks, and next door is a bar where you can quench your thirst with a cold beverage of some kind. You still have 50 km of dirt road and five farm gates lying ahead...

After you've had a good look at the farm stall, and maybe cooled off in the dam's cool water, it's time to get back onto the dirt road heading north. Thirty

kilometres past the farm stall you will find a half-buried tractor tyre with the name Die Mond painted on it. Turn left here. We reported on this Karoo oasis in the June-July 2021 edition of *Drive & Camp* and it's a great place to end our route. Plan to stay here for a few days because there is still lots to see and do in the area. You can, for example, get stuck in the Tankwa Padstal's pub and listen to local gossip, visit the site of the AfricaBurn festival on the Stonehenge Private Reserve (an artistic hangout where everyone has to wear a tie or hat during sundowners), and do visit the nearby Tankwa Karoo National Park. You could spend an entire month in this corner of the Karoo, and you won't have discovered even half of its treasures. ●



Destination unknown... till the next campsite

Coming from Brazil, these Randburg residents find camping with a caravan to be a completely new adventure. And now the **Da Silva** family's Ford Everest must keep the wheels turning from one campsite to the next.

For Rodrigo and Melissa da Silva camping consisted of pitching their tent because caravanning in Brazil is uncommon. Up to 2010 they lived in São Paulo, the largest city in the country. Thereafter Rodrigo pursued a job opportunity in South Africa and the Da Silva family arrived just before the 2010 Soccer World Cup.

Their first local camping experience was obviously with their tent, and they visited the Forever Resort in Bela-Bela. Rodrigo was intrigued by all the caravans around them and decided to investigate caravanning a bit more.

Rodrigo's Brazilian drivers' licence was converted to a local one although he had

to complete the practical side to prove his skill. This left him with a code B licence, a licence that allows you to only tow small trailers, as you well know. The EB licence was next, and Rodrigo completed his theory and practical test.

Towing became a reality and the Da Silva's decided to first hire a caravan and see if this is really what they wanted. Before you could say "first-time caravan camping", they were geared up with a proper towing combination of their own.

Today the Da Silva family – including their kids Sofia (9) and Marcelo (3) – have already done a couple of thousand kilometres in their Everest on their way to the next campsite.

“Being a camping enthusiast since my youth in Brazil, I was blown away when I moved to South Africa and experienced camping here with my little tent I brought along. Seeing so many caravans at a campsite was a real surprise for me as I was not used to that in my home country. I started dreaming about owning my own caravan one day. It was a long journey from buying the Ford Everest in 2017, getting my EB license and finally in 2020 my dream came true: we bought a 2016 Sprite Splash. It had enough space for our family of four, an outside kitchen and more importantly, it fit my budget.

Excited, I started planning many trips



WHEELS. Little Marcelo and big sister Sofia love caravanning as much as their parents. They'll have to vitalise caravanning in Brazil if they ever return there.



to explore the country and set a goal of going camping once a month. Our very first trip was in November 2020, from Johannesburg to Skukuza in the Kruger National Park. This included an overnight stay along the way. It was a bit of a 'tense' drive given my lack of experience in towing, the caravan load was poorly distributed and a few other challenges. Nonetheless, we made it safely there and back, with many lessons learned about my towing combination.

Two years and 20 camping trips later, we'd done about 9 000 km with our Everest XLT 2.2 – the 4x2 automatic model. The car made towing a breeze after the many improvements made for the towing combination. This included

a stabiliser and rear-view camera, among others. I also had to order a custom-made towing hitch to adjust its height and connect the stabiliser, which was not possible with the original one. Another accessory required was the caravan's electrical cable adapter. The caravan's LED taillights drain very little current from the Everest, which in turn thinks the lights are faulty. I got an adapter from Ford that solved the problem.

The Everest is still going strong after 105 000 km on the clock with unforgettable stories to tell. In the beginning I was a bit frustrated with its performance through the hills in the White River area. So, I decided to remap

the engine control unit – the so-called ECU. Although the manufacturer claims 132 kW of power and 420 Nm torque, when measured on the dynamometer, it was delivering only 84 kW and 324 Nm. The remapping improved the power by 35% and the torque by 26%, with the new figures being 113 kW and 407 Nm. It made a huge difference to my towing experience and despite still struggling at times, I'm satisfied overall. Yes, it would be great to have even more power, especially for those steep hills when there are slow trucks ahead, but for most of the time the Everest does what it needs to.

It is a solid car that never gives any headaches. Believe it or not, the tyres, the brake pads and wiper blades are still the

original factory-fitted ones.

Regarding the fuel consumption, the Everest on its own, travelling on the highway with two adults, two children and all the luggage – thus not towing – consumes just under 8 l/100 km, which I find pretty decent. While towing, it becomes a bit thirsty though, presenting an average of 12,5 l/100 km: 56% higher than on its own. The daily commute figures sit just over 9 l/100 km depending on how much traffic I get and the way I choose to drive.

When we started travelling with our caravan back in 2020, we planned to find the best resort to keep visiting over and over. But after a few trips we realised there is so much to explore in beautiful South Africa that we decided to never repeat a destination. Occasionally we go back, but our motto is to never repeat no matter how good it was. There is a camping spot very close to our hearts though: Ruah Park, not far from Pretoria. We visited during our third camping trip and stayed for a few days over the festive season. Being quiet and peaceful, we really loved it and we plan to go back sometime. Otherwise, as a good Brazilian family, we love the coastal region, which we visit at least once a year during the school holidays. We usually camp around the Durban area, always stopping at the



What about your wheels?

Send us an email at drivecamp@gomag.co.za and tell us about your ride.



filling station in Harrismith for a quick breakfast picnic.

We've camped on the coast twice now and every time we go, we take the time to visit other resorts to plan our next trip.

Camping for us is the moment when we can switch off from our busy lives, the moment the children can freely run through the campgrounds and not sit in front of the screens. The environment is normally very relaxing, having our drinks around the fire and braaing our picanha steak – this is a cut of meat originating in Brazil, like rump steak.

For us, the joy starts with the trip planning: from selecting the destination to the shopping list and caravan loading to mention a few, we enjoy the process in its entirety. We also involve the children as much as we can so they can experience our joy too. Marcelo is always busy with the tools trying to 'fix' the caravan. Whereas Sofia makes sure not to forget her swimming accessories and card games.

Over time we developed the philosophy that less is more, so we just carry what is strictly necessary for our comfort while camping. I must thank Melissa for being very supportive from the beginning and encouraging me with all my crazy ideas.

For 2023 we already have three trips booked to destinations we haven't been to before, of course! ● ”



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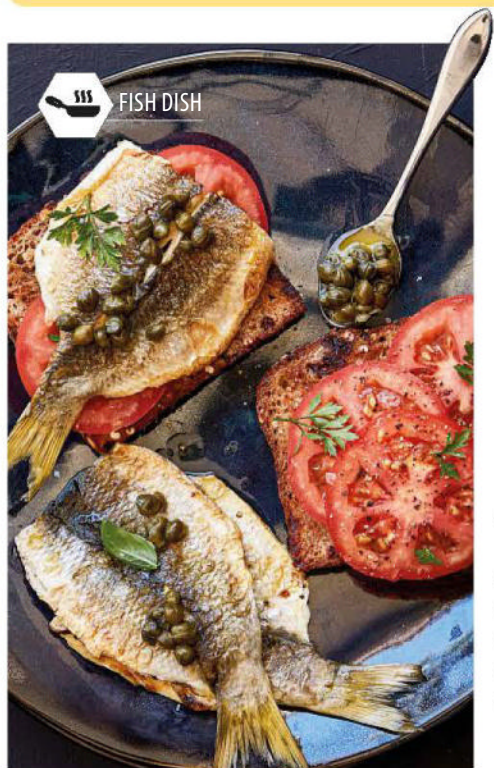
A hat-trick at Bivane

The Bivane Dam attracts three types of campers: those who like fishing, those who like camping... and those who like both.

BIVANE DAM FRESH WATER AT ITS BEST

The Bivane Dam lies roughly in the middle of an imaginary large triangle that connects the towns of Vryheid, Pongola and Piet Retief. It is one of the

newest* dams in the country and one of the few that have been completed after 2000. The river of the same name flows through here, and there's a lovely campsite on the southern bank – barely 250 m before the water rushes over



BUTTERFLIED MACKEREL ON TOAST Finger-licking good

Small game fish, scraped clean and minus their entrails, are delicious when cooked whole over the coals – as they are with a little salt, toast, ripe tomatoes and some caper butter. If you want, you can even serve them with a fried egg. You can also remove the bones ahead of time if you like: carefully butterfly the fish and pan-fry them in a little oil as below. I find mackerel, sardines and elf to be equally delicious.

Ingredients

(serves 4)

- 8 small game fish (1 or 2 per serving, depending on size)
- 2 tablespoons good olive oil for pan-frying
- ¼ cup butter
- 1 tablespoon capers
- 2 red and ripe tomatoes, sliced
- 4 slices health bread, toasted

Here's how

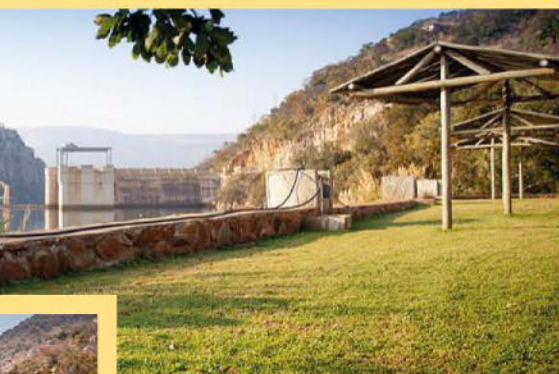
1 Carefully butterfly the cleaned fish. First cut off the head behind the gills. Start at the belly section and then remove the bones by cutting in the direction of the spine, as close to the bone as possible. Carefully remove the bones in one piece once the meat is basically cut loose on both sides, and taper off at the tail. Finally, cut off any of the hard fins with a pair of sharp kitchen scissors.

2 Press the skin side of the fish dry. Heat the oil in a pan and fry the skin side first until the skin is crispy and the meat is almost cooked. Quickly flip it over and remove from the heat. (It only takes a few minutes.)

3 Melt the butter in the same pan and fry the capers until crispy.

4 Lightly season the tomato slices with salt and pepper, and serve the warm toast, sweet tomato, and crisp fish with a generous scoop of caper seeds and butter.

Drive & Camp says A squeeze of fresh lemon juice won't go amiss.



the 72 m high dam wall.

Of course, fishing is at the top of the to-do list, but this is also one of those campsites where you can simply relax peacefully in nature. If you want to see the dam wall up close, ask manager Dawie Cronjé, who's been involved with the Bivane Dam since 2006.

As you drive into the campsite, the stands are laid out directly in front of you under shade trees. A lower terrace that's approximately 5 m wide separates you and the water.

There are 16 stands to choose from, all with the same facilities: a blue caravan socket, a built-up braai area with its own grid, and a tap. Everyone



Briefly | Bivane Dam



Fish Black bass, tilapia, carp, barbel, yellow fish and fresh-water mackerel.

Campsite 16 stands on a lawn with plenty of shade trees – each has a braai area, power and water. There are also four separate bush camps.

Ablution facilities One building plus a scullery, washing machine and tumble dryer.

Price Depending on the specific season and day of the week, R250-R600 pn per stand for the first four (after that R50-R100 pppn). A maximum of seven are allowed per stand, and you must book for at least two nights.

Arrival and departure No fixed times, but during peak times 14:00 and 10:00. If your stand is available, you may check in earlier – and you can stay until noon on the day of your departure.

Contact 078 802 3329 or 083 283 8291
 info@bivanedam.co.za info@bivanedam.co.za (Office hours are weekdays 09:00-17:00.)

Nearest town Vryheid, 50 km.

Road conditions The last 18 km is dirt road, but it is passable for a road caravan.

GPS S27.519815 E31.052335

Drive & Camp says The official record for a black bass from the dam is 4,8 kg, while the unofficial record stands at 5,2 kg.

uses the neat lawn to camp on.

The bathrooms closest to the first stand are separate but communal



facilities with a scullery on the outside. There's also a washing machine you may use for free and you need R35 worth of tokens for the dryer.

If you want to camp more self-sufficiently, there are also four bush camps which are a little more rugged.

The shop is about 50 m behind you, on the left as you drive in. In addition to the typical fare, the resort staff make sure fresh products (braai packs and eggs) are available during peak times.

The shallow pool for the little ones is opposite the shop and the regular pool is closer to the stands on the left.

You might hook a sturdy black bass swim around, but there are also tilapia, carp, barbel, yellowfish and mackerel. Do give the outlet under the dam wall a go. (The catch-and-release rule applies to black bass and yellowfish.)

The last 18 km is dirt road, but nothing that will stop you from towing a road caravan. The first 12 km of it is outside the dam's grounds, with a nice 6 km gravel road that takes you to the campsite.

* According to a list of dams on Wikipedia.

A hook with a bite

Nobody wants to struggle with a blunt hook – and even less so with a rusty one. A razor-sharp hook to pull out one fish after another is what you need.

The Kamatsu series of hooks fit the bill. They're as sharp as can be, because they are chemically 'sharpened'. What's more, the barb is rust resistant. Remember, some lures have a high salt concentration, which could cause cheaper hooks to rust.

The Kamatsu Weighted Offset hook is aimed at black bass anglers and boasts a decent gap between the barb and shaft.

The bait therefore easily gives in when a bass gets hold of it – which, of course, ups your chances of catching it.

These hooks also have a weight on their belly section. The weight can be in the middle or closer to both ends of the hook, which gives the bait a different swimming motion. (The three types are available in five different sizes and weights.)

Price From R43 for three.

Contact Available in fishing shops nationwide – also in Namibia.

catches@4adrenalin.co.za

adrenalinfishing.co.za



FISHING GEAR



N is for next level

The new Mahindra Scorpio is here, now with an N added to its name. We took it for a drive through the Great Karoo to get a feel for it.

Words and photos **Cyril Kloppe**

MAHINDRA SCORPIO-N



It is interesting to witness a brand name grow in popularity. When Mahindra entered South Africa back in 1996 it wasn't accompanied with a huge fanfare, although a few of us did take a chance on the then unknown Mahindra Bolero.

Today, however, Mahindra is highly regarded by South Africans and it is currently one of the fastest growing car brands in South Africa. The manufacturer is particularly excited about its latest Scorpio SUV, which now has an added N to the model name. The N stands for the nth degree – originally a mathematical term indicating something is elevated to a higher level. An apt description of the new Mahindra Scorpio-N.

What do we have here?

The Scorpio-N is completely new, including the chassis, suspension and bodywork.

There are four trim levels: the base model Z4 (R465 000); two mid-range models, the Z8 with rear-wheel drive (R510 000) and the Z8 with four-wheel drive (R560 000); and the Z8L flagship model that costs R590 000 and is the one you see here.

Only one engine is currently available in South Africa: an updated 2.2 l mHawk turbodiesel that kicks out 128 kW and 400 Nm – other markets also get a 2 l mStallion petrol engine. Incidentally, the outgoing Scorpio will continue to be sold in India as the Scorpio Classic, alongside the Scorpio-N.

Mahindra says it is the first manufacturer to score five stars with a bakkie-based SUV in the Global NCAP crash test.

We attended the launch of the Scorpio-N and immediately thereafter took it for a drive through the Karoo to thoroughly test it – with five occupants and all our camping gear.

Interior

Before we departed, we first had to remove the rear bench to make room for our huge pile of luggage. This task requires an 11 mm wrench to undo four bolts and it takes about five minutes. The bench can be lifted out by one person, but it's easier with a helping hand.

Mahindra doesn't provide figures for the luggage volume without the third row of seats, but we were able to load three two-man tents, bedding, braai equipment, five folding chairs and a table, our personal belongings, a 60l cooler box, 40l water and a watermelon without obstructing our view through the rear window. It would not have been possible to load this much camping stuff had the sixth and seventh seats been kept in place.

The Scorpio-N is definitely a luxury ride

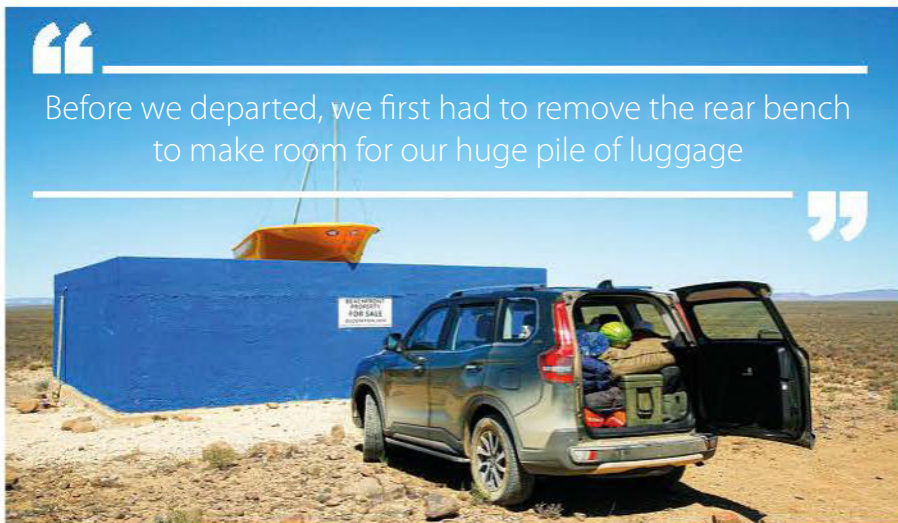


SPACE INVADER. Make no mistake, there's plenty of room with the rear bench flipped forward (left). It's just that there's even more room when you remove it completely (right). It takes about five minutes to do using basic tools.

“

Before we departed, we first had to remove the rear bench to make room for our huge pile of luggage

”



with plenty of cool gadgets. The leather seats and trim look great and the use of somewhat cheaper materials on the instrument panel and doors didn't detract from the grandeur.

The software on the 8" touchscreen responds quickly and connects easily with your mobile phone, the Sony sound system with 12 speakers sounds good and all the switches are in logical locations. Well, all but one button...

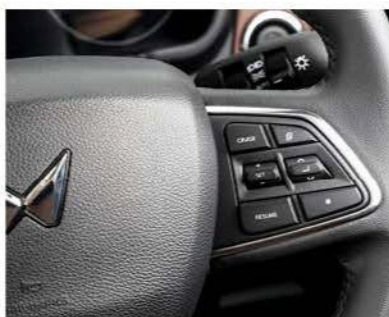
Watch out for the 4x4 touch-sensitive switch that your travel partner can easily activate without either of you noticing. This happened during the launch when a journalist complained that his Scorpio-N wouldn't go

faster than 120 km/h and only later discovered that he was driving in 4x4 on a highway! It happened to us too, and again when we picked up the Scorpio-N from the car wash at the end of our test drive. So, do be careful with that button as it's awkwardly close to your front passenger's dangling hand.

Our three travelling companions in the middle row (two adults and a teenager) had no complaints, although the middle seat is firm and is intended for a child rather than an adult. They had their own air-conditioning and USB port. There's also a 12 V socket at the very back for plugging in a portable fridge or the like.



GREEN. The engine automatically stops and starts to save fuel at traffic lights. You engage four-wheel drive with a touch-sensitive switch near the armrest (below right) and a wayward handbag can potentially set it off.



What's the drive like?

The 2.2 l mHawk turbodiesel pulls strong and we never worried about overtaking slower traffic. The Scorpio-N has three electronic driving modes called Zip, Zap and Zoom, which are suitable for slow-flowing traffic, normal use and high speed respectively. While we could feel slight differences, we quickly lost interest. In our opinion, the Scorpio-N is not the type of vehicle that requires driving modes and it's simpler to leave the engine management system to do its own thing.

We were chuffed to bits with the automatic transmission – it changes gears without you hearing or feeling it, and the engine is also near silent, especially when idling. In fact, a petrol attendant double-checked

when we asked for diesel.

Mahindra's 4XPLO four-wheel drive system has four offroad modes labelled Mud, Sand, Terrain and Normal. The differences between these modes are more noticeable and we especially relied on sand mode to get us through a tricky patch on a Karoo farm.

The Scorpio-N also has a mechanically braked differential lock – similar to Jeep's BLD (brake lock differential) – on the rear axle that automatically locks when sensors detect one wheel spinning faster than the other, but this feature only works when four-wheel drive is engaged, as is expected.

The spare wheel that hangs under the bodywork in the chassis, as with a bakkie, may lead to problems. It's relatively low and if

you tackle a serious 4x4 obstacle course, you could damage the tyre. The combination of the ladder frame chassis, fixed rear axle and five-link independent front suspension – with a so-called Watts linkage – is, however, a good one that provides a comfortable drive on both dirt and blacktop.

The competitors

Mahindra goes up against the big three: the Toyota Fortuner, Isuzu mu-X and the Ford Everest. Mahindra focuses on competitive offers and so we're going to focus on rivals that are priced closest to the Scorpio-N.

The strongest competition in terms of price is Chery's 8 Pro Executive that costs R574 900 and also offers a host of gadgets and luxuries.



SPECIFICATIONS

Model	Scorpio-N Z8L
Engine	2.2 l four-cylinder turbodiesel
Power	128,6 kW @ 3 500 rpm
Torque	400 Nm @ 1 750 rpm
Transmission	Six-speed automatic
Drive	Part-time four-wheel with back diff locker
Ground clearance	187 mm
Tank	57 l
Fuel consumption	9 l/100 km (tested)
Standard tyres	255/60R18
Tare weight	2 670 kg
Measurements	4 661 (l) x 1 915 (w) x 1 857 mm (h)
Towing capacity	Unknown
Safety rating	★★★★★ (G NCAP 2022)
Warranty	Five years/150 000 km
Service plan	Five years/100 000 km
PRICE	R590 000



Haval's H9, China's other reasonably priced SUV, could also have been a competitor, but this model has been discontinued, at least for the time being.

Another contender is the Mitsubishi Pajero Sport at R774 990. We've been singing Mitsubishi's praises for a long time, but for some strange reason most South Africans just don't want to buy this brand, although there are indeed passionate Mitsubishi fans who will take you on if you dare to malign their favourite brand.

Finally, we have the Isuzu mu-X with its cheapest variant costing R806 400. We're not even looking at the Toyota Fortuner and Everest here because their prices differ too much from the Scorpio-N.

Conclusion

The Scorpio-N's bodywork is longer and wider than the outgoing model, but its roofline and ground clearance is also slightly lower. Its proportions now seem more in line with its competitors. As mentioned, the engine and gearbox impressed us, and we didn't mind spending hours in the pleasant cabin.

We think Mahindra has succeeded in offering a premium feel for a relatively low price. Although R590 000 is certainly not small change, you get a lot of bang for your buck.

In terms of reputation, Mahindra isn't fighting a newcomer stigma like BAIC and Chery has to. Mahindra has burrowed into the hearts of many South Africans and the Scorpio-N is definitely a winner.



FROM THE COMPETITORS
Popular seven-seater SUVs that don't cost a fortune



R574 900

Chery 8 Pro Executive

Watch out Mahindra, you've worked hard for your reputation, but the Chinese may beat you to the punch.



R774 990

Mitsubishi Pajero Sport 4x4

A good SUV that deserves more love. If only Mitsubishi could successfully market its products...



R806 400

Isuzu mu-X LS 4x4

We like the Mu-X a lot, but the Scorpio-N offers the same (and more) for so much less money.

Tonga steps up a gear

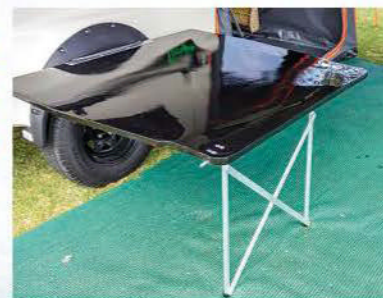
The Tonga has had a revamp and now boasts the kind of kitchen we've not seen before.

Words and photos **Leon Botha**

Because the Tonga is a small camper trailer intended for a couple, you could mistake it for a typical teardrop trailer. It is everything but. Teardrops usually have two doors on either side with the kitchen at the back. But the Tonga only has one door – at the back – and the kitchen is at the front and on the left, plus some of it is in a detached unit...

We checked out the first Tonga model in 2019 – and back then we were already impressed. The new version has been refined and improved significantly, although you can still recognise the lines.

These days, you can choose between a braked and an unbraked Tonga. For this article, we towed the latter to a campsite.



Setting up

Because our test model wasn't equipped with brakes, a chock on both sides of the wheels comes in handy to prevent the trailer from rolling forward or backward while you set up camp. It's less of a problem if, like us, you're given a lovely, lush lawn – then you can just quickly hop out to put a stone in front of the wheel. Now lower all four of the corner steadies – simple square tubes with feet that you lower and then tighten in place.

Just like its predecessor, the batwing awning fits into a rectangular box on top of the roof, but the original awning has been replaced with a 270° version. The box's lid is also no longer loose and swings open so that the awning can unfold. That's where you start once you have levelled the trailer. The awning swings open from the front, pivoting on the left rear corner. Four beams, each with a support pole at the end that's anchored with a rope, keep the awning nice and tight. The beams are at a good 192 cm height above the ground – high enough to not get in the way.

The rear panel of the Tonga is one large door that swings upward. As with the previous



MAKE SPACE. The portico tent serves as a dressing room but you can use it for whatever you want. You can, for example, place a stretcher bed in here to convert the Tonga into a three sleeper.



model, the side tent folds out from the inside of the door once it is fully open. But in the new model, you must first remove a loose panel so that the tent can unfold. This panel then hooks into the hull above the left wheel and has feet that fold out to form your camping table – certainly one of the largest camping tables on the market. When you hook it into the panel, it measures 110 cm from the hull.

Where the previous side tent used fibreglass slats, the new

Tonga comes with a built-in pole frame. This neatly tightens the canvas and the tent threads up against the hull on both sides – with a strip of Velcro that keeps the lower section in its place. The resulting 1,8 x 1,9 m room is your dressing room in which you can comfortably stand upright, because the roof is 1,96 m high. It's nice and spacious – we could easily fit an extra camp table in here, but nothing stops you from having a stretcher in here for another bed.



TONGA

Now for the bedroom

The inside of the Tonga is an open floor space in which a mattress measuring 201 x 130 cm unfolds. This is so that you can use the space for your luggage while towing. It's big enough for chunky camp chairs, camp kitchen tables to your portable braai and even crates of provisions.

Once you've folded out the mattress, the interior turns into one big bed up to the door. You therefore have direct access to your bed from the tent – and don't need steps or a ladder. The top of the mattress is 66 cm higher than the dressing room floor, which means you can

comfortably sit on the foot of the bed to put on your shoes.

Just like the previous model, the Tonga has a 220 V power point on the top right of the frame with room for a three-prong socket, two two-prong sockets and two USB ports. The two switches above it are for the lights in the roof at the head of the bed and a light in the dressing room. This, of course, only works if you plug the trailer into a 220 V power supply, but there is also room for a battery bank: under the mattress is a box for a battery that you can otherwise use for extra camping gear and tools.

There are several cupboards to



the left and right of the bed for all your clothes, and roughly in the middle up against the roof are two larger ones with a canvas door each. Even though these cupboards are more to the side, you need to remember them if you suddenly sit up in bed.

A convenience you don't immediately notice is the narrow storage spaces on either side of the foot of the bed, but

the 'bed cupboard' steal the limelight. Next to the headboard is an enormous panel as wide as the bed. Here you can place items including a fan, magazines or binoculars.

Both side panels have three built-in windows – another inherited Tonga characteristic. Although they don't have blinds, they're tinted and help give the trailer its modern look.

What comes standard?

The basic Tonga has a roof rack, shelves inside, a mattress, camp table, built-in 30 l cooler box, space for a 12 V battery and a spare wheel.

The mobile kitchen is optional and costs R10 000, while the tent under the back door costs you R12 000. The 270° awning with its container is R15 000, the sliding frame for a fridge/freezer R3 800 and the 40 l water tank is R3 000.



Drive & Camp says

You need a vehicle with a tare weight of at least 1 500 kg to tow the unbraked Tonga, and if so, you may tow it with a normal driving licence.

At an extra R7 500 for a braked axle, the GVM is now 900 kg – then the towing vehicle's tare must be 900 kg or more, and you'll need an EB licence.





Dinner plans

The lid for the built-in 40 l water tank is at the back in the left panel and the tap near the chassis below – it works with gravity. There's a cupboard to the left of the wheel on this side with a sliding frame inside. It can fit a fridge/freezer of up to 75 l (depending on the brand).

The nose cone has a drainage area and is designed in such a way that you can use it as a cooler box.

Tonga's 'mobile kitchen' is really a bright idea: it's a detachable cart with a worktop of 100 x 60 cm on top and two shelves for groceries below. It also has two sliding frames with an ammo box on each, and on the lower open shelf there is room for pans and the like. In the model we tested, a dining set fits in the

upper ammo box and a small single-burner gas stove in the lower one. An aluminium frame goes at the end – it fits a collapsible bowl for doing the dishes.

You can park this whole unit wherever you want, because it's mounted on wheels. You can also lift the upper section from the undercarriage, which then leaves you with a flat cart with which to transport bags of fire wood, pool toys or whatever needs moving but are too cumbersome to carry in your arms.

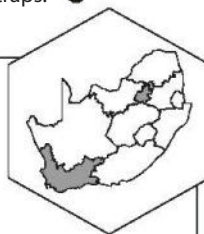
This unit weighs 35 kg and can easily be lifted by two people to get it back in the Tonga. You then take out the undercarriage, put it on top of the kitchen and tie everything down to the floor using straps.

SPECIFICATIONS

Manufacturer	Tojem
Model	Tonga
Sleeps	Two
Dimensions	4,2 x 1,92 x 2 m (with rally tent)
Tare weight	550 kg / 560 kg
Load capacity	200 kg / 340 kg
GVM	750 kg / 900 kg (braked)
Axle	1,6 t
Wheel size	15"
Chassis	Galvanised
Hull	Fibreglass
Price	R184 000 / R191 500

DEALER NETWORK Head office in Cape Town, and available from Tonga itself, Cara-Camp Caravan & Outdoor (021 852 8215) and Pretoria Caravans & Outdoor (012 329 2259).

CONTACT 021 945 2142 • sales@tongasa.com • tongasa.com



R184 000

TONGA

GVM 750 kg

FROM THE COMPETITORS

Small trailers with a rear door that sleeps two, with a GVM of 750 kg



R206 844

ALOE PERI PERI

With a 1 t rubber axle, 14" wheels and an aluminium hull.



R165 000

SHERPA TINY LITE

With a 900 kg rubber axle, 13" wheels and a fibreglass hull.



R220 000

BUSHPOD LITE

With a 1,5 t rubber axle, 14" wheels and an aluminium hull.
(Standard prices)

Drive & Camp borrowed the Tonga from the manufacturer

How friendly is wheelchair-friendly?

He has been in a wheelchair for 35 years – and has been camping in all that time. We asked **Jurie Venter** from Groblersdal about what works and what doesn't when it comes to wheelchair-friendly campsites.

Compiled by **Leon Botha** Photos **Jurie Venter**

In 1988, at the young age of 29, Jurie Venter was shot in his back during an armed robbery. This left him paralysed from the navel down. Ever since, he's been using a wheelchair to get around.

Before his injury, Jurie wasn't into camping and usually stayed in holiday accommodation, but he decided in the year of the

shooting to buy his first caravan and start camping. Jurie tows his own caravan and has first-hand experience where resorts fall short when it comes to wheelchair-friendly facilities.

Over to Jurie:

A man with a plan

"I wanted to prove that someone in a wheelchair can still enjoy life and go camping

– with certain adjustments, of course. I bought my first caravan, a Sprite Musketeer, from a dealership in Pretoria. They widened the door for me to make it wheelchair accessible and fitted a ramp. I was happy with the conversion, but on the way home to what was then Pietersburg, the Musketeer's one wheel came off, on the same side where they modified

the door. Unfortunately, the damage was extensive, and the caravan was written off before I could even go camping! Not a good start.

That's when I decided against modifications to any future caravan. I then bought a Sprite Major but replaced it in 1992 with a Wilk Emerald. This was, of course, when I was still young and more agile in





FORGET ME NOT. Jurie Venter (above) won't quit just because life dealt him a bad hand. He appreciates it when resorts help him out with thoughtful planning, though, and is more than willing to share his advice for setting up wheelchair-friendly facilities.

my wheelchair. Back then I was able to get myself in and out of a caravan without difficulty.

As my wife and I grew older, we also became less flexible and had to look at other options to continue camping. At the time, the Wilk was the most spacious and I built myself a custom wheelchair. It worked with a winch that pulled me up a ramp and into the caravan. It made our lives a lot easier... for about seven years.

But you keep on getting older, and to complicate matters further, my wife had to undergo shoulder surgery.

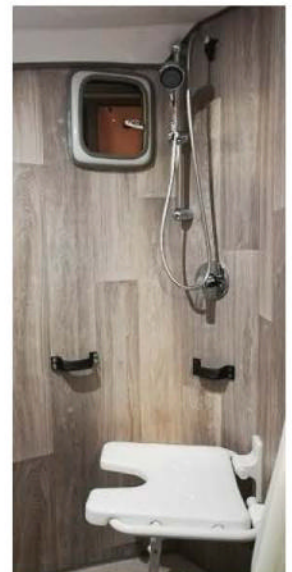
That's why it was time to look for a caravan that was wheelchair friendly in every respect. I found what I needed at Mobi Lodge in Middelburg, and under the guidance of owner Marius Ras, my new Mobi Lodge is completely wheelchair friendly. Instead of a step at the door, I get into the caravan with the help of a lift – the door has also been widened. The bathroom is slightly modified, and I can use

the facilities without anyone's assistance. For example, the toilet was moved to the opposite side and the bathroom entryway was made larger. The actual door was replaced with a shower curtain. The fixed shower head was replaced with a handheld shower, and a shower bench was installed. I hitch the caravan myself and manoeuvre it with a powered caravan mover.

I am now completely independent of resort facilities, but it doesn't mean I don't use these facilities.

A day in the life...

Are you sure? When I want to book a spot at a resort, I always call ahead to find out about wheelchair facilities. They often claim that they are equipped for people like me; and that they have hosted disabled people before. But when I start asking about specific amenities, things are not so clear anymore. For example, if you ask about stairs, they say there's only one step... and that people in wheelchairs





THE LITTLE THINGS. You may think your facilities are wheelchair friendly but you can never know the restrictions of a disabled person until you experience it yourself. Let the experts design your bathroom facilities.

should be fine. Able-bodied people don't understand to what extent someone is restricted. When I was still young, I would see these deficiencies as a challenge and still visit a resort. **Another obstacle** When someone like me arrives at a "wheelchair-friendly" resort, there are often steps right at reception! I could manage these issues in my younger years, but

I must now ask my significant other to check us in. **That's not all** When you arrive at our stand you may find it is on a slope, there may be grass or soil – or even sand, which makes it difficult for a wheelchair user. Stone chip aggregate is near impossible. Paved stands are always preferable and a paved path from your stand to the bathrooms is a godsend.

Sometimes the power points are placed so high you can't reach them in your chair. Weesgrus Holiday Resort in Modimolle is a good example of a campsite that is truly wheelchair friendly. **To the bathroom** When it comes to bathrooms, there are often steps here as well, right at the entrance! Inside, you'll find regular toilets, and although the

shower cubicle is often spacious, there is a regular-sized door... with a step. **Mirror without a face** Mirrors are usually placed at eye level of a standing person. This is obviously too high for wheelchair users. The space below a basin also needs to be open, otherwise you can't roll in under the basin and you have to park your wheelchair sideways.



These resorts get it right

Jurie was asked to advise the resort owners of Bosfontein and Dinokeng Camp & Leisure, but here is a list of places where he has camped that have proper wheelchair facilities.

- Weesgerus
- Mbizi
- Dube
- Dinokeng Resort
- Dinokeng Camp & Leisure
- Bosfontein
- Sondela
- Merry Pebbles
- Bass Lake
- Some of the camps in the Kruger and other SANPark campsites
- Weltevrede, but more suited to the elderly
- Same applies to TO Strand





The following resorts even have a hoist at the pool that lowers someone in a wheelchair into the water:

- ATKV Klein-Kariba
- ATKV Drakensville
- ATKV Goudini Spa
- ATKV Buffelspoort
- Weesgerus
- Forever Warmbaths



Almost right I sometimes find bathrooms specifically for wheelchair users, but then there are still deficiencies. The handles or rails are not always in the correct position or there are no benches for you to sit on. Even shower heads are sometimes fixed in position above your head, while a disabled person would prefer a handheld shower head on a hose.

It will do I often look for a bathroom with a tub, shower, toilet and basin. It doesn't have to be exclusively for the use of the disabled; a family-type bathroom works fairly well.

My plea to resort owners is to not set up disabled facilities inside the men's or women's section of an ablution block. Mobility impaired people are often dependent on their partners, and it is unfair to expect my wife to accompany me to the male facilities.

Neutral terrain The room itself must be open plan, so without

any walls or partitions that restrict your movement.

Who hasn't been standing in the shower only to be suddenly hit by a spray of scalding hot water – not unusual with gas geysers. Disabled people cannot simply duck out of the way like everyone else can. There must also be a bench or fixed chair on which you can sit. Preferably a tile-width bench behind the bath – this helps you slide into the bathtub.

Hold on! Handles are another issue. For those of us in wheelchairs, horizontally positioned rails work best. You sometimes see vertical handles, but these are intended for people who can walk – such as the elderly – so they can pull themselves up. Resorts consider this 'disabled friendly'; but it does not work for those of us in wheelchairs. This is also why a ramp is preferable to steps: it is not only suitable for wheelchairs, but everyone can use it.

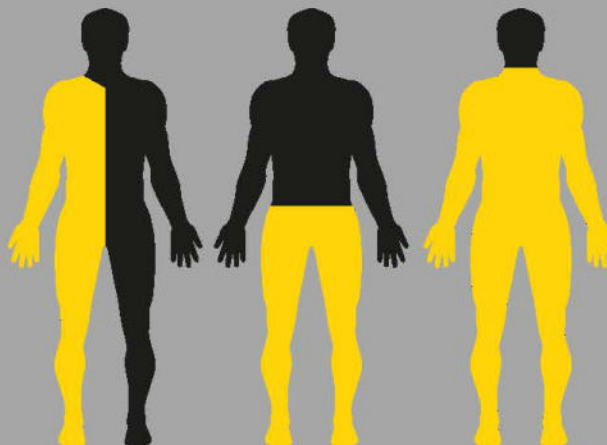
Types of paralysis

Monoplegic Someone with paralysis in one part of the body – typically one limb.

Hemiplegic Paralysis in the arm and leg on the same side.

Paraplegic Paralysis below the hips that usually involves both legs.

Quadriplegic Someone who is paralysed from the neck down. These are typically all four limbs and the torso.



Game of drones

Off-roading and action photos go together like a beer and a braai – and what better than a drone to capture the perfect shot? Especially because it allows you to shoot the scene from above. Take note, though: there are strict regulations regarding the use of a drone.

Words **Cyril Kloppe**

Your rig takes you to delightful places, and when you get up onto your vehicle's roof rack with your camera, you get dramatic photos from an unusual angle. You could, however, have taken even better pics if your camera had been, say, 40 m above the ground – something a drone 'might' allow you to do... (More on this later.) An aerial photo of your off-roader in the Namib, a secret campsite next to a river or your convoy through the Doodsakker is sure to get likes

and shares on social media.

In South Africa, you may use a drone without a pilot's license or without registering the craft – a nice concession – but unlicensed users with unregistered drones face strict legislation. Drone-friendly countries such as Indonesia, Iceland and Switzerland also allow you to use a drone without a license or registering the drone with a civil aviation authority, but there you enjoy significantly more privileges than on local soil.

So be warned: Not everyone

likes your drone, least of all nature conservation, the authorities and your neighbour. Pay attention to the following if you want to take photos and videos with your drone without any trouble.

The South African Civil Aviation Authority (or the CAA) distinguishes between three types of radio-controlled aircraft: model aircraft (for hobbyists), toy aircraft (for children) and RPAS (remotely piloted aircraft systems), which is the CAA's designation for drones.

As mentioned, you don't need a license to fly a regular drone, unless you are using it for commercial gains – more on this later. However, you must obey the CAA's regulations if you don't want the authorities to seize your drone. You can also be fined up to R50 000 and even jailed for up to 10 years if you break the regulations below. Here are the 15 commandments for unlicensed drone enthusiasts – mind you, unlicensed!

1 No drone may fly closer than 50 m to a person or group of



PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES AND SUPPLIED

people without the consent of those people. The use of a drone in a caravan park or holiday resort is therefore totally out.

2 You may not use a drone on private property without the permission of the landowner. Most paid 4x4 trails and remote campsites prohibit drones outright, regardless of whether you have a pilot's license or not.

3 No drone may fly closer than 50 m to a public road. However, generous landowners may give permission if you want to fly over their private roads.

4 No drone may fly closer than 50 m to any structure (such as a house or office block) without the permission of the owner.

5 You may not use a drone within a controlled, restricted or prohibited airspace. Visit the website suasnews.com/dronesafetymap.html to see where these prohibited zones are – they are the yellow and red areas as shown on the maps overleaf. While you're online, join the Facebook group [Drones South Africa](#) to chat with experienced drone pilots.

6 This brings us to the next point: a drone may not be flown within 10 km of an airfield, landing strip or airport.

7 You may not use a drone near a manned aircraft – not even when the aircraft is switched off on a salt pan without a demarcated landing strip. (We must reiterate here the regulations apply to unlicensed drone users.)

8 Your drone may not fly closer than 10 km to a power station (including hydro-, solar- or wind-power facilities), a prison, border post, harbour, police station, crime scene, military property or any key national assets. Together with the ban near airports, this means that there's almost nowhere near cities or large town where you can legally practice with your drone. Almost the entire Gauteng province is under controlled airspace and

Gautengers have to drive to, for example, Hammanskraal, Middelburg, the Vaal Dam or Carltonville for the nearest unregulated airspace.

Capetonians and Durbanites are better off with unregulated airspace less than 20 km outside the city, provided you stay away from nature reserves.

9 You may not fly any aircraft – manned or unmanned – below 2 500 feet (762 m) above nature reserves, national parks and world heritage sites. And because the flying height of drones is strictly limited – see the next regulation – you may not fly your drone in these conservation areas at all.

10 Your drone may not fly higher than 150 feet (45 m) in unregulated airspace. Some sources claim 120 m, but this is incorrect. Your drone must remain below 45 m, even in parts of the Karoo far away from air corridors where there's no risk of hitting a commercial jet.

11 Your drone may not fly higher than the highest obstacle within 300 m of you. So, if you're in the middle of a salt pan like Verneukpan, where your bakkie's roof rack is the highest obstacle within several kilometers around you, your drone may not even go up to 45 m, but only as high as your bakkie's roof rack.



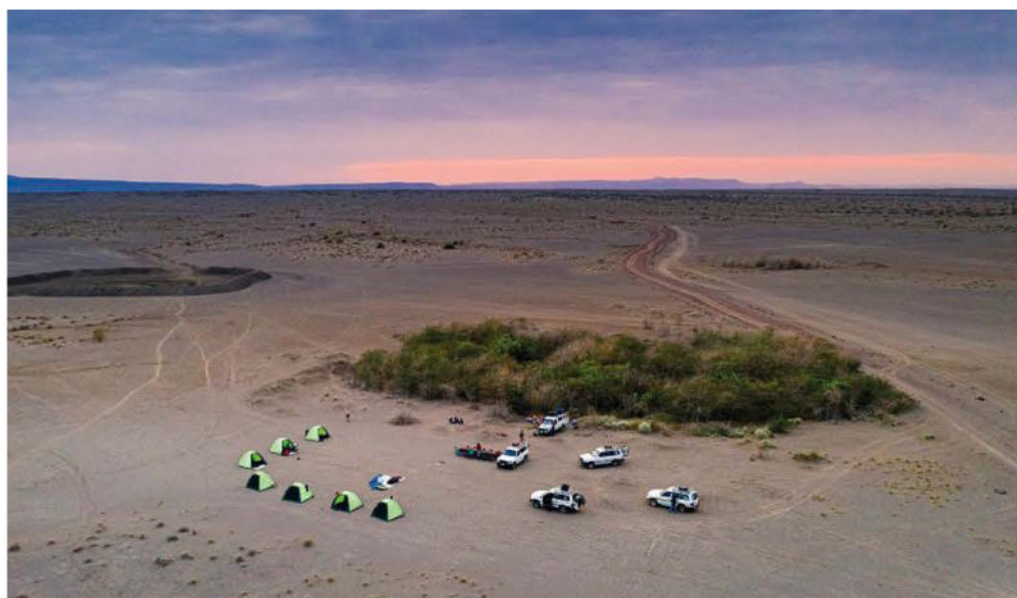
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So be warned: not everyone likes your drone, least of all nature conservation, the authorities and your neighbour

”



EYE IN THE SKY. You too can snap amazing pictures like these, but only if you follow the rules. And the rules may ironically prevent you from sharing your magnificent pictures online unless you obtain a drone pilot license.



It's ironic that you'll have to climb onto your roof rack with your camera to be allowed to be higher than your drone.

12 Your drone must always remain within sight and never be more than 500 m away from you. If, however, you own a tiny drone, like the DJI Mini series, it may not be farther away from you than you can see it; this distance will therefore be considerably smaller than 500 m. Drones with a range of several kilometres currently means absolutely nothing in South Africa.

13 You may only fly in good

weather conditions that allow you to keep the drone within sight. If your drone has navigation lights, you must be able to see them flashing at all times.

14 It is illegal to transport or drop something with an unlicensed drone. You may therefore not use your drone to take your fishing rod's hook and bait out to deeper water – and certainly not use it to pull your catch out of the water.

15 And finally: your drone may not weigh more than 7 kg or have an impact energy of more than 15 kJ.



What about nature conservation?

We sometimes hear SANParks confiscate visitors' drones, even if it's stored in its case without the owner's intention of flying inside the park. SANParks feel much the same way about drones as firearms: they have no problem with you owning one; you're just not allowed to bring it into the park. Fair enough.

SANParks has indeed arrested people

who use their drones inside a reserve. Here follows a media release issued by SANParks back in 2018.

“South African National Parks (SANParks) would like to remind the public that flying of unmanned aerial vehicles which are commonly known as drones is not permitted in any National Park irrespective of what the purpose may be.

This practice is prohibited in terms of NEMA Protected Areas Act which states that it is illegal to fly below 2 500 feet above the highest point of any national park,

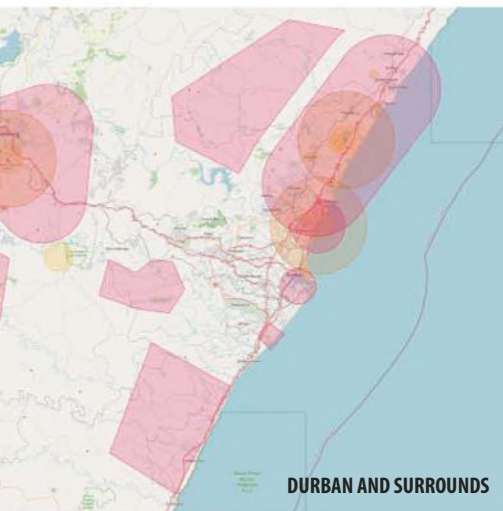
with any aircraft/drone without the express permission of the Management Authority of the particular National Park, i.e. SANParks; and therefore they are legislated protected areas with restricted airspace, which make them no-fly zone for all unauthorised aircraft systems.

In a joint operation recently, South African Police Service and the Park's Protection Services arrested a day visitor for illegally alighting out of a vehicle and flying a drone in the Kruger National Park. We would like to warn such people and other drone users that should they be found flying them in the Park at any time, they will be arrested on the spot and their equipment will be confiscated, said William Mabasa, the Kruger's head of communication.

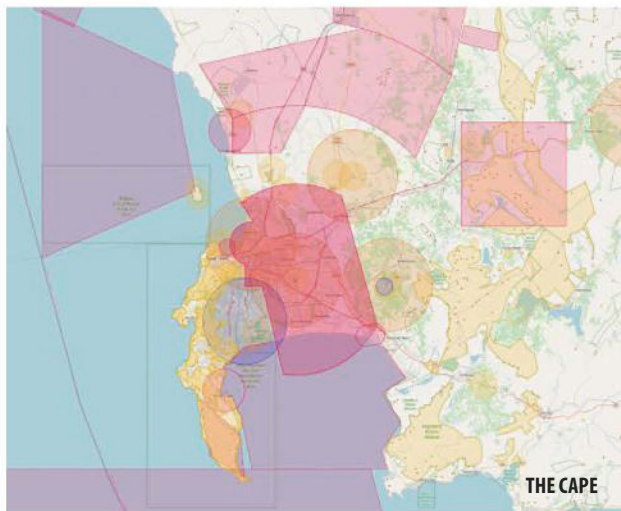
Not only is this a contravention of the NEMA Protected Areas Act, but there are also restrictions in terms of the aerial filming rights and therefore an infringement of SANParks's filming/photography policy.

Flying such aircraft illegally in the park can negatively impact on the wellbeing





DURBAN AND SURROUNDS



THE CAPE

These may sound like draconian rules, and they are indeed strict – as far as we know some of the strictest in the world – but it's to stop idiots from making a nuisance of themselves. Who wants to awaken to the buzz of a drone hovering over your campsite on a Sunday morning? Not us!

A lesser-known issue with the CAA's regulations is the sentence that reads: "The RPAS may only

be used for an individual's personal and private purposes where there is no commercial outcome, interest or gain." In other words, technically speaking you may not share your drone's footage on, for example, YouTube, Facebook or even WhatsApp without a license as these platforms are commercial

NO FLY. The adjacent maps show where you may not fly your drone (yellow and red zones). More than half of Gauteng is off limits to the regular Joe.

entities that use your posts for financial gain, even if you yourself don't get a single cent out of it. You may not even donate your drone footage to someone for free because they may use it for financial gain, and then *you* are breaking the law.

A drone license – it's called

an RPL – is also not easily obtainable. You must receive training at an CAA accredited training centre, you must be proficient in level 4 English (fluent enough for commercial airlines), know the correct radio procedures and pass a medical examination.

The license will cost you between R15 000 and R30 000 and it's valid for one year before you have to renew it.

And then the RPL itself is worth nothing if you don't also have an ROC (or an RPAS Operator's Certificate).

And even if you have the RPL and ROC documents, most of the above regulations will still apply to you, including the ban on drones in a nature reserve. But there are concessions... more on this later.

If you feel that the regulations are too harsh, you can email the CAA with a request to relax the rules at rpasinbox@caa.co.za – or thank them if you feel the regulations are spot on.

of animals as well as the experience of other visitors; to such an extent that it can end up disturbing and stalking animals. We would like to thank the guests who reported the recent incident to the nearest section ranger. We encourage all law-abiding citizens to continue to report such incidents to the Emergency Call Centre numbers so that these people can be caught in the act, concluded Mabasa. ☎ 013 735 4064, 013 735 0197 and 076 801 9679



SANParks, as well as other nature conservation agencies such as Cape Nature, might consider a permit for the use of a drone if you have a valid licence. And even then it must be for research or conservation purposes. It makes sense to us... 🐘





Table manners

Your folding chair is sorted, next up is the indispensable camping table – whether you're at your favourite holiday resort or deep in the bush.

We look at 12 great tables for a campsite. You can sit down at eight of them, while the final four are specialised workstations.

They say the oldest form of theatre is the dinner table. We bring you a dozen to choose from for your campsite.

Words and photos **Cyril Kloppe**r

GET YOURS HERE

tentco.co.za outdoorwarehouse.co.za falksontents.co.za frontrunneroutfitters.com capeunionmart.co.za campandclimb.co.za

Prices were correct at press time, but they sometimes change quickly. Always visit a supplier's website to get the latest prices.



AFRITRAIL CAMP TABLE

Table for two

With a height of 60 cm, Afritrail's camping table is the lowest to the ground on these pages – a dining table measures around 70-76 cm high. However, it is a great height when you're seated in a camping chair. The top is made of MDF (medium density fibreboard) and the table has an aluminium frame with legs of mild steel. A nice feature is that the legs are U-shaped and therefore won't sink into sand. This little table for two weighs a mere 2,75 kg.

Counter height 60 cm

Work surface 70 x 50 cm

Price R600 at Cape Union Mart.



TENTCO SQUARE TABLE

Solid gold

Tentco's table is sturdy thanks to the folding legs that lock into place – it won't easily get knocked over. The top is made of HDPE plastic (high-density polyethylene) and the legs have been powder coated against rust. The top is 74 cm high – similar to your dining room table at home – and easily wipes clean. We like the green colour because it doesn't reflect as much blinding sunlight as a white or aluminium slab.

Counter height 74 cm

Work surface 80 x 80 cm

Price R770 at Tentco.



OZTRAIL 70 SLATTED TABLE

Featherweight

This table is made mainly of aluminium, with only the hinges and feet being plastic. Oztrail says its table can handle up to 30 kg, but it's a delicate thing that feels like it will collapse if you lean on it. The slats roll up and the legs fold like those of a gazebo. In its bag (supplied) its dimensions are 70 x 34 x 6 cm so you can squeeze it into small spaces. It weighs just 3 kg and is particularly suitable when storage space and weight are important considerations.

Counter height 70 cm

Work surface 70 x 70 cm

Price R1 195 at Camp & Climb.



KAUFMANN FOLDUP TABLE

Cross-legged

This table also has slats, but they don't roll up. The table is made of aluminium and it's good and sturdy when set up. Kaufman says it can handle up to 40 kg, but it feels strong enough to survive the rigours of camping life. The crossed legs that fold down is an old design, but it works well. Bring a tablecloth, because the sound of tin cups on an aluminium top is like nails on a chalkboard.

Counter height 70 cm

Work surface 70 x 90 cm

Price R750 at Camp & Climb.



FALKSON FOLDING TABLE

Long Tom

Six people can be seated – three on each side – and its polyethylene top and steel legs are certainly sturdy enough for you to not be too cautious as you chop away. It folds down to 93 x 72 x 8 cm and you carry it by a strap as if it's a suitcase (the table weighs 13,5 kg). It's good for food prep and to sit down for dinner, and we suspect it will provide many years of service.

Counter height 76 cm**Work surface** 186 x 72 cm**Price** R795 at Falkson.

FRONT RUNNER UNDER RACK TABLE

Sleek by design

The table's top and legs are made of aluminium and the frame of steel –the frame and legs have been treated with a durable black powder coating. The top is covered with PVDF (or polyvinyl difluoride), a durable plastic that is resistant to acid and other chemicals. PVDF is used, for example, in restaurants and hospitals because it is so hygienic. The table slides under your Front Runner Slimline II roof rack and weighs 11,2 kg. It's expensive, yes, but consider it the Lamborghini of camping tables.

Counter height 75 cm**Work surface** 113 x 75 cm**Price** R3 015 at Front Runner.

TENTCO 4 FOOT TABLE

Tough as nails

The name has nothing to do with the number of feet, but rather indicates its height – it's also available in six feet (or 180 cm). This is similar to Falkson's table above, but the top is made of HDPE plastic and the legs have been powder coated to prevent rust. Its folded dimensions are 60 x 60 x 8 cm and it's also carried as if it's a suitcase (10 kg). At *Drive & Camp*, we don't usually assign a product as the 'winner', but we certainly rate this table highly.

Counter height 74 cm**Work surface** 120 x 60 cm**Price** R895 at Camp & Climb.

PEAKFORM 1,8 M FOLDING TABLE

Family ties

After the Falkson table, which is 5 cm longer, this is the longest table on these pages and offers seating for six. Its top is HDPE and the legs are powder coated, like Tentco's tables. It weighs 13,6 kg and wipes clean relatively easily. However, the table we were looking at had a dirty spot that wouldn't come off with a wet cloth, though dishwashing soap did the trick. The bench in the photo costs R1 000 extra per bench, and these also fold up.

Counter height 74 cm**Work surface** 181 x 74 cm**Price** R1 300 at Outdoor Warehouse.



TENTCO PREP TABLE
Chef's pride

Its legs are braced at the bottom by a cross bar, a feature that prevents it from sinking into soft sand. Below the counter are two hanging compartments in which you can store pots, pans and cutlery. The flaps zip up to keep dust out. It is exclusively a work table where you prep and cook and isn't suitable for sitting down for meals due to these compartments. It's a good investment if you're camping in one place for a long time or cooking for a crowd.

Counter height 69 cm
Work surface 120 x 47 cm
Price R1 195 at Camp & Climb



NATURAL INSTINCTS CAMP KITCHEN
Cooking with gas

This is more of a food preparation station than a table. This model has six surfaces: a cooking area with a wind shield for your gas stove, a 58 x 40 cm (71 cm high) worktop, two compartments that can be zipped shut, an open shelf under the cooking area for dirty dishes, and finally, a smaller shelf next to the cooking screen for items such as oil, spices and a glass of wine. This is a must for any serious cook.

Counter height 71 cm
Work surface 58 x 40 cm
Price R2 200 at Outdoor Warehouse.



OZTRAIL CAMP KITCHEN
Next level

The Aussies go a few steps further with this one. Its worktop is 80 x 51 cm in size and hidden under the worktop's slats is a built-in sink – there are also four compartments that can be zipped up. If you remove the cooking screen, you have a large workplace of 116 x 51 cm. The top is 81 cm high – higher than a typical dining room table and closer to a kitchen counter top. So, you don't have to lean forward when cooking. Packed up, it's surprisingly small and weighs only 11,5 kg.

Counter height 81 cm
Work surface 80 x 51 cm
Price R3 250 at Camp & Climb.



NATURAL INSTINCTS KITCHEN STAND
Master chef

This table has a pole for a lantern, a sink, spice racks, refuse bag and hooks for things like washcloths, spoons and spatulas. The work surface is 70 x 50 cm, although the entire table including the sink is 100 cm long. If you spot one of these as well as a prep table and a regular table under a rally tent, you know these are people who are staying for the long haul, and they're serious about cooking.

Counter height 77 cm
Work surface 70 x 50 cm
Price R1 900 at Outdoor Warehouse. 📞



By the dozen!

Eggs aren't only breakfast food.

Recipes and styling **Johané Neilson** Photos **Ed O'Riley**

BOBOTIE MINCE ONE-PAN DISH

Cheat sheet

This easy dish has all the flavours of a classic bobotie without the hassle of mastering a golden brown egg custard layer over the campfire.

Ingredients

(serves 6)

- 3 slices of white bread, crumbed
- ¼ cup milk
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon crushed fresh garlic
- 2 tablespoons bobotie masala
- 2 tablespoons each chutney and apricot jam
- 1 tablespoon vinegar
- 2 tablespoons golden sultanas
- 500 g minced meat
- 6 eggs
- If you're feeling generous, ½ cup toasted almonds, chopped

Here's how

1 Soak the bread in the milk for a few minutes and then mash finely with a fork.

2 Fry the onion in the oil until glossy. Stir in the garlic, masala, chutney and apricot jam and heat through. Now stir in the mince, sultanas and soaked breadcrumbs, as well as half a cup of water and mix well.

3 Gently simmer for about 20 minutes or until cooked – with the lid on. Stir occasionally to make sure it doesn't catch. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

4 Now carefully break the eggs into the mince mixture (keep in mind the number of people who will be eating and space the eggs so that they are easy to dish up), turn the heat down, place the lid back on and simmer for 5-8 minutes or until the eggs are cooked. Sprinkle over the almonds if using and serve immediately.

Drive & Camp says Extra chutney, slices of fresh banana, yellow rice, tomato and onion salad and coconut are all delicious side dishes. Hot rotis are a great alternative to the rice.

BOEREWORS AND EGG ROLL

Double the meat

Serve this all-you-can-eat boerewors roll hot or cold as a starter with a scoop of Mrs Balls.

Ingredients

(serves 6 as a snack)

- ½ cup finely chopped mushrooms
- ½ cup finely chopped pepper cubes, any colour
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- About 500g boerewors, casing removed
- 5-6 soft-boiled eggs, peeled
- 200 g streaky bacon strips
- chutney for serving

Here's how

1 Stir-fry the mushrooms and pepper in the olive oil until cooked, allow to cool slightly. Add crumbled feta cheese and a sprinkling of chopped herbs if you like, but there is no need for additional seasoning as the boerewors already has lots of flavour.

2 Arrange the bacon strips next to each other on a clean work surface to form a rectangle.

Spread half of the boerewors meat over the middle third of it. Next, sprinkle over half of the cooked pepper mixture. Make a slight groove in the middle and arrange the eggs along this line. Now sprinkle the rest of the pepper mixture over the eggs and carefully add the rest of the boerewors meat in a single layer on top, pressing and shaping as you go. To ensure a nice roll with meat right around the eggs, now is your chance to use your judgment with the placement of all the filling ingredients before rolling.

3 Now roll it all up so the eggs are neatly in the middle of the meat, with the bacon on the outside.

4 Braai slowly over moderate coals, or quickly in a cast-iron pan over the coals until the sausage is just cooked and still juicy, and the bacon nicely golden brown. Allow to cool slightly and serve in slices.

Drive & Camp says These cooked slices are also great as fillings for bread rolls, almost like burger patties. Remember to add a dash of vinegar to the water in which the eggs are boiling, this helps with the shelling.



BACON AND EGG RICE As easy as 1, 2, 3

Leftover rice from last night's potjie is perfect for this light meal. Feel free to replace the bacon with shredded leftover braai meat or bite-sized pieces of boerewors if you like.

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 1 tablespoon oil
- 200g bacon, diced
- ½ onion or 4 spring onions, chopped
- ½ teaspoon chopped garlic
- 1 small packet (250g) mixed frozen vegetables
- 3 cups cooked rice, (make sure it's not overcooked) cold
- 6 eggs, beaten
- soy sauce, to taste, for serving

Here's how

- 1 Fry** the bacon in the oil until crispy. Stir in the onion and garlic and fry for a few more minutes until the onion is glossy.
- 2 Stir** the rice and vegetables into the pan and stir until heated through and well mixed.
- 3 Move** the seasoned rice to the side of the pan with an egg spatula, add the eggs to the open part of the pan and allow it to fry slowly. Scramble the eggs occasionally with the spatula until just about cooked, then quickly mix through the rice. Remove from the heat and serve with the soy sauce. You can add salt and pepper to taste if the cooked rice is not already sufficiently salted.

Drive & Camp says This simple dish should appeal to the whole family.



CHICKEN AND EGG CURRY Which came first?

This is my simplified version of a quick chicken bryani.

Ingredients (serves 6)

- 12 boneless chicken thighs, each halved
- 2 tablespoons plain yoghurt
- 2 teaspoons of mild curry powder, or even better, a curry paste
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 4 tablespoons oil
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 teaspoon turmeric
- 1 teaspoon chopped garlic
- 2 large potatoes, cut into small cubes
- 500 ml chicken stock
- 1 cup basmati rice, half cooked and drained
- 1 tin (400g) lentils, drained
- 6 fried eggs for serving

Here's how

- 1 Mix** the raw chicken with the yoghurt, curry powder and lemon juice. Allow to marinate in the

fridge for 30 minutes.

- 2 Fry** the onion in a spoonful or two of oil until glossy. Stir in the turmeric, garlic and potatoes and stir-fry for another minute. Add the stock, put the lid on and simmer for 5-10 minutes or until the potatoes are almost soft.

- 3 Sear** the chicken in a griddle pan until nicely roasted on all sides. It gives a delicious flavour but you can, of course, also use a normal pan or thread the pieces of chicken on skewers and braai over the coals. Once the chicken is almost cooked, season with salt and pepper and add to the pan together with the lentils and rice.

- 4 Mix** everything together so the rice is drenched in the curry sauce and now simmer uncovered for a final 5-10 minutes or until the rice and chicken are cooked through and most of the liquid has been absorbed or evaporated. Serve with a fried egg topping each portion and enjoy while it's hot.

Drive & Camp says An alternative to the fried eggs would be to mix boiled egg quarters into the dish before serving, you decide.

STUFFED FRENCH TOAST

Cheesy treat

I find one-day-old, ordinary store-bought white bread makes the best French toast because it really soaks up the egg custard, but a soft bread roll will also work. Adjust the amounts below depending on what's in your camp pantry.

Ingredients

(serves 4)

- 4 soft bread rolls
- 8 slices processed cheddar cheese
- 4 slices salami or your favourite ham
- softened butter for spreading
- 2 eggs
- 2 tablespoons milk
- oil for shallow frying

Here's how

1 Slice open the rolls, spread with butter and fill each roll with two slices of cheese and a slice of salami. Close the buns and press down to seal.

2 Beat the eggs and milk and season with salt and pepper. Pour it into a shallow bowl and dip, if space allows, all four buns simultaneously in the egg mixture. Let them sit in it for a while to absorb enough of the egg.

3 Heat the oil in a pan to medium heat, place all four dipped rolls plus any extra egg and fry them slowly until golden brown and cooked on both sides.

Drive & Camp says The buns are especially tasty with a scoop of whole-grain mustard or tomato relish.



BANANA FRITTERS

Sweet snacking

With only five ingredients, this winning recipe makes for a delicious breakfast or afternoon snacks when hunger strikes!

Ingredients

(makes about 12 fritters)

- 3 medium bananas
- 3 large eggs
- 5 heaped tablespoons self-raising flour
- oil for shallow frying
- blueberries or chocolate chips (optional)

Here's how

1 Mash the bananas using a fork.

2 Using the same fork, whisk the eggs into the bananas until well mixed.

3 Stir in the self-raising flour until a thick batter forms. Use your judgement, depending on the size of the bananas you may need a little less or a little more flour. You can also add a pinch of salt or a teaspoonful of vanilla essence.

4 Heat a layer of oil in a pan and scoop spoonfuls of batter into the oil to form the fritters. Keep the heat moderate so the batter has time to bake before it turns too dark. Just before you flip the fritters, press three or four blueberries or chocolate chips onto the half-baked fritters, quickly turn and fry until the underside is also nicely golden brown. Serve with honey or syrup.

Drive & Camp says The bananas don't have to be overripe to make this treat. 🍌

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Drive & Camp

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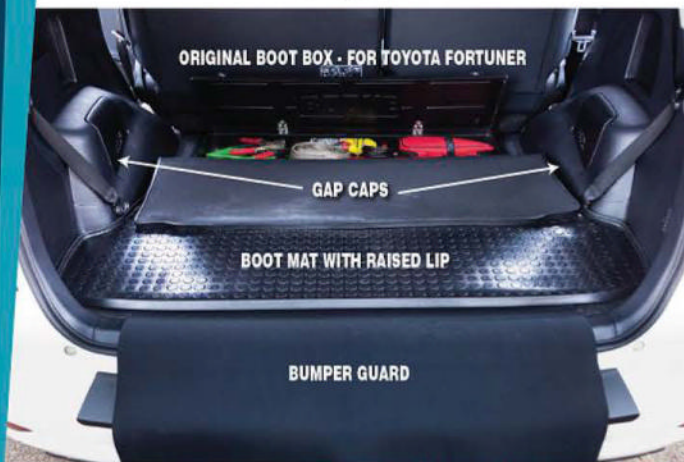
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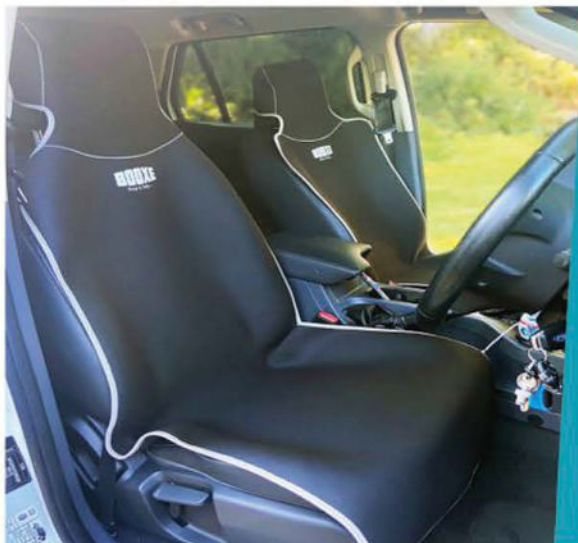


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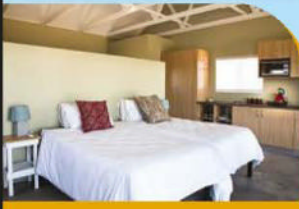
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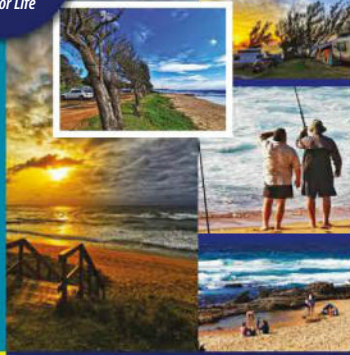
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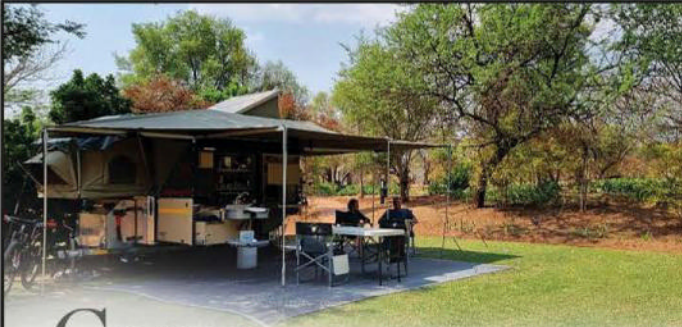
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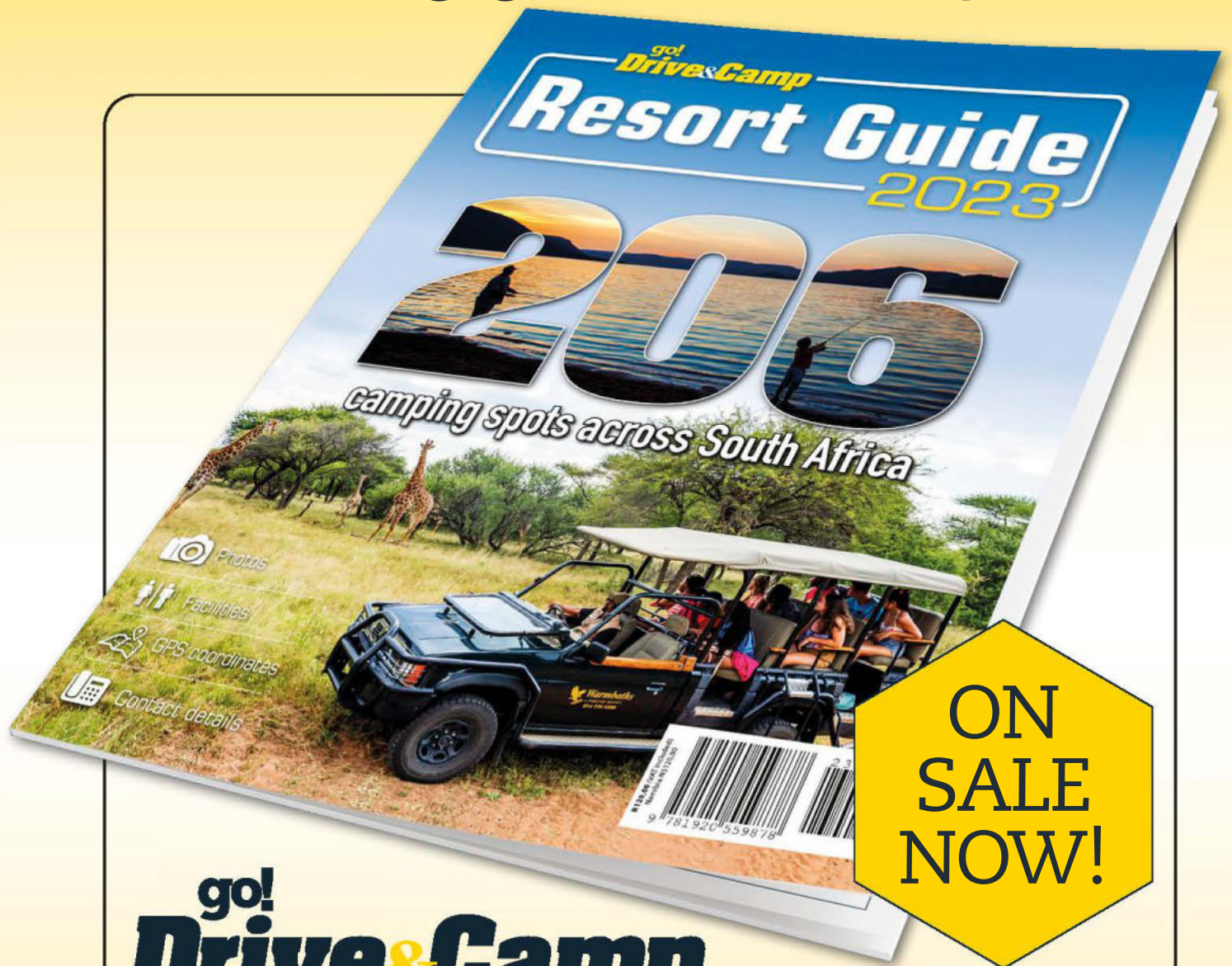
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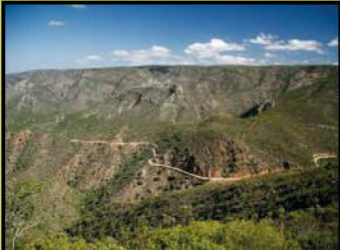
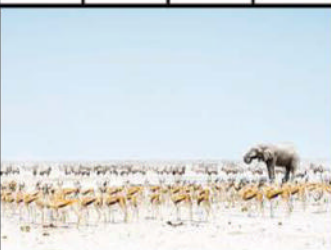
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CROSSWORD

Wessel Bester from Worcester has won a cooler bag worth R220 for his correct entry in our December 2022-January 2023 issue. You can also win. Complete this crossword puzzle and e-mail a picture to drivecamp@gomag.co.za. It's also at <https://bit.ly/3YuBHeP>. Last month's solution is on p 108.

				Pass close to Ladismith		District office (abbr)		Abysmal	Erects (a tent)		Kloof in the Eastern Cape				
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					Courier										
Oxygen				Snake		Not off			Title	Soft leather					
Pismire				Skill		Trims				Snare					
			Designate								National park in Namibia				
Menace							Female horse								
								Carpet							
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Waterhole in Etosha	Mature	Gape		Bredie	Thus			Clung							
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						Compact disc (abbr)									
Saturday and Sunday		Grimace						Los Angeles (abbr)			Comfort				
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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

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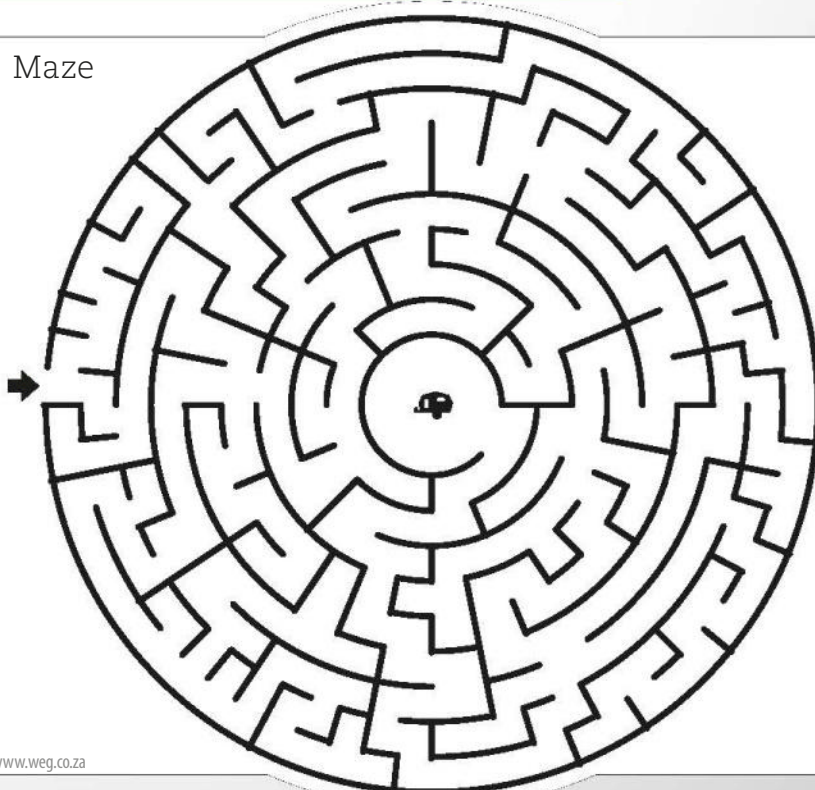
AMERICAN PRESIDENTS

Barack Obama	Richard Nixon	Woodrow Wilson
George W Bush	Lyndon B Johnson	Warren G Harding
Bill Clinton	John F Kennedy	Theodore Roosevelt
Ronald Reagan	Harry S Truman	William McKinley
Jimmy Carter	Herbert Hoover	Grover Cleveland
Gerald Ford	Calvin Coolidge	Benjamin Harrison

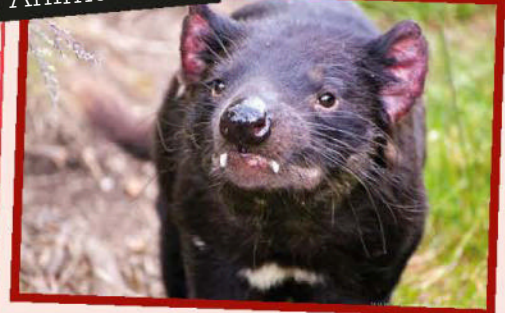
Spot the differences



Maze



Animal facts



TASMANIAN DEVILS *SARCOPHILUS HARRISII*

- They live in Tasmania, an island just south of Australia. It's the only place where they are found in the wild, having a lifespan of up to five years.
- Tasmanian devils are the largest carnivorous marsupials in the world, growing up to 78cm.
- They survive on small prey and frequently feast on already dead animals, called carrion.
- They have sharp teeth and strong, muscular jaws that can deliver one of the most powerful bites of any mammal on earth.
- Being nocturnal animals, they spend their days alone in hollow logs, caves or burrows.
- Emerging at night to feed, they eat everything—including hair, organs, and the bones of their food.

Best of the best?

Is the Toyota Land Cruiser 70 series the best overlanding and off-road touring vehicle? **Mic van Zyl** weighs in on the question.

A reader recently asked me my thoughts on the Land Cruiser 79 double cab and specifically if I thought that it was the best overlanding vehicle compared to other similar vehicles. The answer to the question is, of course, not as simple as a 'yes' or 'no'.

Few could argue the ability of the 70 series Land Cruiser – or any Land Cruiser for that matter. An exceptionally tough vehicle with a tried and tested platform. It has evolved over the years to become the vehicle of choice for customers and fleets operating in the harshest of conditions on just about every continent. Applications include mining, military, aid, peacekeeping, farming, forestry – you name it, it can do it. This fact, in my opinion, is the reason that this vehicle hasn't changed significantly for more than half a century.

If I was tasked with taking a standard vehicle off the showroom floor from Cape Town to Cairo by road, I would be hard pressed to choose anything other than the LC 79. You can be pretty sure that the trip would be successful and, what's more, should you have any mechanical maladies along the way, you would find help pretty easily in deepest darkest Africa. I have owned the wagon version of the 70 series for almost four years now and I can attest to the above.

As a company we travel overland extensively throughout Southern Africa and our touring includes long distances on the open road, bad gravel roads, sand dunes, rocky mountain passes, river crossings, mud driving – something of everything really. There are very few vehicles that excel in all these conditions.

The Land Cruiser 300 series is one such vehicle. The 70 series is, however, not. There are many compromises that must be tolerated if you intend using the LC 79 as an overlanding vehicle.

Long-distance open-road driving was

never near the top of the list of attributes the engineers who designed the LC 79 paid attention to. It is shaped like a brick and the gearing is very short.

Travelling at the national speed limit is a noisy and very expensive affair. The solid live axle up front does its best to keep you going in the right direction on bad roads, but it requires an elevated amount of focus while driving compared to an independent front suspension vehicle. The noise levels also contribute to long distance fatigue for the driver, which is a safety issue.

If you are doing all of this on the stock suspension, your body will complain before long. As a daily driver in the city when not on tour, the manual transmission and slow getaway from traffic lights is constantly painful.

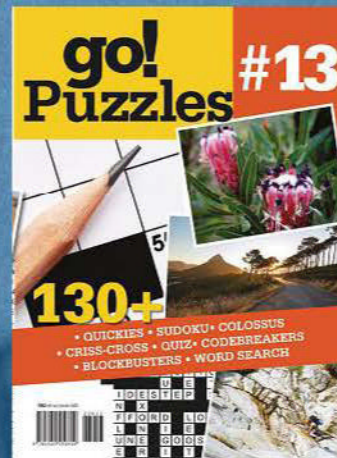
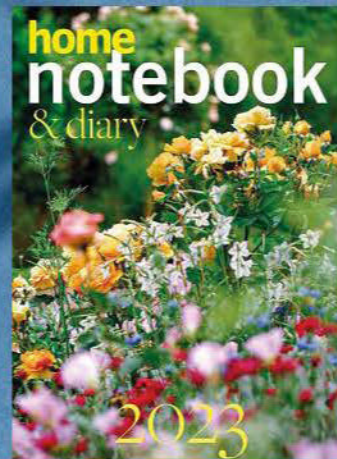
Once you leave the tar roads, however, and select 4x4 high or low range, the 70 series comes into its own. The short gearing is near perfect when off-road in both high and low range. The V8 turbo diesel engine hardly breaks a sweat no matter what you ask of it.

As with most diesel 4x4 vehicles, tall, steep sand dunes remain a challenge though. It is my opinion that if you can live with the cost and the effort to get to your off-road destination and you do not need to use it as a daily driver in the city, the 70 series is near the top of the list of ideal off-road vehicles.

For the money however, I have recently taken a serious look at the current Hilux. I need to make a vehicle change in September this year. I'll provide more feedback on that in due course.



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How nice is nice?

How relevant is a star grading system? Neels van Heerden wonders whether it still considers consumer needs at all.

Recently, a post on a social media platform caught my attention in which a leading South African hotelier said the current star grading system for hotels has become irrelevant.

He believes references by fellow travellers carry far more weight than a certificate on a wall behind a reception desk.

He also believes tourists are better equipped to evaluate hotels than a grading officer who ticks boxes off on a form. His hotel group's own research indicates that guests increasingly rely on comments and photos on websites.

According to Tripadvisor's 'Path to Purchase' report, 33% of their guests looked around on travel websites before making a reservation, and 74% read the comments on Tripadvisor to decide where they wanted to book.

The hotelier substantiates his opinion about the star grading by referring to certain 'obtuse' requirements. For example, four- and five-star hotels are obliged to provide services such as round-the-clock room service, disposable slippers and gowns, and a telephone in the room, to name a few. Why should there be room service day and night when research shows that 99% of guests are not in their hotel room between 10:00 and 16:00? And why the phone in the room if guests have their own cell phone?

Every hotel should instead have a smartphone app available that allows guests to order food and drink, and view other offers. The hotelier opined that the biggest gap in the current grading system is that it cannot measure the guest experience – much less evaluate the innovation or uniqueness of the hotel.

The ultimate question is whether guests will recommend your hotel. The

true test is how guests perceive the combination of the quality of the facilities and the associated experience.

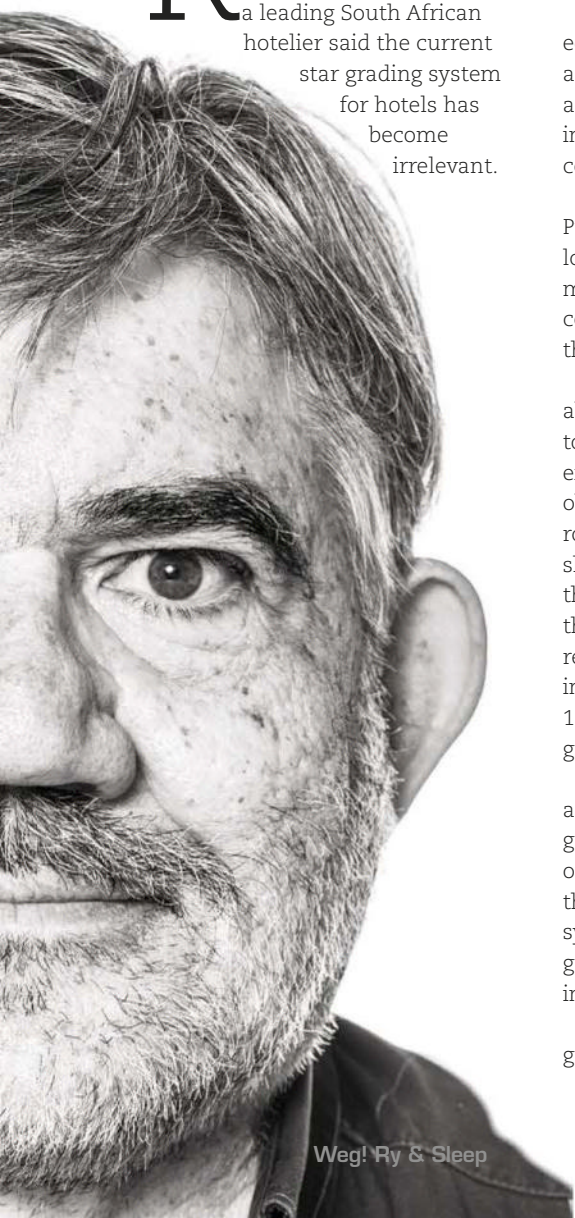
My involvement with the rating of campsites ended a few years ago when I questioned the opinion of an administrative officer at the Tourism Grading Council.

A few years later, I came across the current setup regarding the grading of campsites. There is a long list of grading officers who evaluate campsites, but I do wonder how many of them have actual camping experience...

The grading criteria are set up in such a way that they simply list the availability of certain physical elements. Is the list based on recent research into campers' needs? I don't think so.

Nowadays campsites can also earn an award – ranging from pet-friendly to holistic well-being. A more in-depth understanding of the nature and extent of campers' needs, how a grading system can meet those needs, the mechanism and credibility of the tourism council's grading system, and incorporating referrals by fellow campers on the many social camping sites is a whole other story best left for another day.

I am especially amazed at how campers react when someone asks whether a campsite is 'nice'. Because what is 'nice'? No grading system can measure 'nice' and consumer opinions are so diverse. What is 'nice' for me, isn't necessarily 'nice' for you?



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Growing pains

It sometimes takes perseverance to camp, especially if it is your first time and the weather gods don't play along, says **Helena Hattingh**.

The start of the December holidays had me helping my fiancé Frikkie Le Grange pack his Ford Figo to the roof. We were young and enthusiastic about our first camping trip alone, without the comforts of my parents' off-road camper and its luxuries like a stove and fridge.

We were practically bubbling with excitement when we left that morning. These few days of camping alone required much planning. We had already purchased a tent, but that was the extent of our list. So we'd gone on a shopping spree to buy the other essential items, things like a fancy new folding table and a gas stove.

The car's interior was boiling hot – Frikkie had strict rules about when to use the air-conditioning. But I kept quiet, since the car "struggled too much" on the hills of the R712 as we approached the eastern section of the Golden Gate National Park.

I rolled down the window and could smell the freedom as I watched the grass rippling in the wind. Frikkie smiled at me as my eyes swept over the landscape. I was hoping to see a gazelle pricking its ears at the sound of the car – a welcome, one might say. But the wildlife didn't show up in the summer heat.

ONCE AT THE CAMPSITE, we decided on a stand in a hollow under a large willow tree, which would offer some protection from the scorching heat. Decent shade is the golden rule for good summer camping, right?

We pitched the tent and calmly unpacked all our new camping gear. After a long day's driving, we were aching for a good cup of coffee. Frikkie

removed our brand-new gas stove from its box and tried the trigger so the flame would ignite, but alas...

After a few more tries, I moved closer to see if I could lend a hand. Frikkie gestured clumsily, and it looked to me as though the gas canister didn't attach securely. In our struggles, gas started leaking onto the side of the stove – and the next moment we saw flames!

We glanced at each other in panic and then Frikkie plucked the stove off our brand new table. Like a fearless street racer careening toward a cliff, he set it down on the ground out in the open and quickly retreated. I was still frozen, waiting for a bang that never came.

We approached cautiously and realised the flame had burned out without touching the gas canister itself. Frikkie distrustfully moved it to a safe distance from our tent. We wanted to keep all our limbs and eyebrows intact. We wouldn't take any more chances with the gas.

Resting sadly on our camp chairs, we lamented our culinary options now that we no longer had the luxury of a gas stove. Frikkie comforted me by reminding me that all was not lost; we were going to have a braai, after all. And a braai was, after all, most important part of camping.

Later that afternoon, the sun was still high in the clear sky, and we decided to explore one of the hiking trails for the remainder of the afternoon. We were young and fit... well, more or less fit... and we reckoned the hiking trail wouldn't take that long.

Much later, when we got back to our tent, I realised we'd made a mistake. Clouds had gathered and thunder rumbled in the sky. We quickly stacked

the wood and lit the fire as time was of the essence. But just when the coals looked ready for the chops, the dark clouds opened and hail hit us like rockets. We dived for cover and listened to the rain and hail as the willow's branches beat furiously against our tent.

“

My flight response kicked in and I beat my personal best back to the kitchen, clutching the electric frying pan

”

OUR STOMACH'S GROWLS were audible above the sounds of thunder. I suddenly remembered I had spotted the communal kitchen – we could cook the chops there! By this time the sky was pitch dark, and Frikkie and I stumbled through the rain to the kitchen. We were soaking wet when we got there.

But I suddenly realised our electric frying pan was still in the back of the Figo. I offered to fetch it.

At the kitchen door, I hesitated for a second: the scene awaiting me looked like a horror movie: every two seconds lightning illuminated the scene. Running back to Frikkie's car, a loud clap of thunder very close to me had me stopping in my tracks.

A shiver ran down my spine. If I hadn't been dripping wet, I would probably have

felt every hair on my body standing up. This was where the zombies were going to rush at me from the bushes, I thought. My flight response kicked in and I beat my personal best back to the kitchen, clutching the big electric frying pan.

We almost cheered when the meat hit the pan. Impatiently, we waited for the meat to start sizzling, but that didn't happen. That last loud clap must have knocked out the electricity. We trotted back to the tent, heads down and stomachs growling.

I took a sharp breath when we arrived at the tent and watched in confusion as a stream of water strongly reminiscent of the Vaal River rushed underneath the bottom of our shelter. Obviously, we had pitched the tent exactly where the entire campsite's water collected when it rained. The tent looked like a ship on a stormy sea – if it weren't for the tent pegs, it would have already embarked on its maiden voyage. The shady hollow under the willow tree was clearly not the best place to pitch a tent.

Inside it felt as though we were going to sleep on a waterbed. Frikkie pointed to a tiny tear in the tent floor where the water was coming in like a tiny fountain. We hadn't even known about the tear, but it was now the entry point for buckets of water on our tent floor.

We strategized for a minute or two: we had to prevent more water from getting in. Soon enough, Frikkie headed outside, looking for a rock. He found one that would work and tried feeling his way under the tent with one hand while I tried to explain from the inside where the tear was so he can position the rock properly.

And just like that, Frikkie and I got an unplanned masterclass in communication – it took a lot of patience to get the rock in the right spot. Eventually, our plan kind of worked and the rock helped stop the water from bubbling in.

Back in the semi-dry tent, we decided to make the best of a bad situation. For dinner, we sacrificed the biltong that was supposed to go into the next day's potjie, along with other snacks that helped quell the hunger pangs.

We laughed. Because day two of our first independent camp could only improve, right?



...AND FINALLY

Roadtrip attractions

There are a number of curiosities you happen upon when road tripping through South Africa – think of the shoe house near Ohrigstad, the biggest koeksister in Orania, and the giant teapot at the Rose Café in faraway Kakamas. Below are four more you can visit. How many do you know of?

THE FLOWER POST BOX

In the Northern Cape town of Calvinia, you'll find a 6 m tall mailbox with a circumference of 9 m and a volume of 43,6132 m²<sub><sup>sic></sub>. It is a working post box and you can indeed post a letter there. But you don't need a ladder to reach the slot, there is a smaller slot at a more manageable height. The post box was originally a water tower the local chamber of commerce turned into a tourist attraction. It's in Hope Street... not far from Calvinia's post office.
GPS S31.47528 E19.77184
Times Always open.
Admission Free.



Have you spotted anything whacky 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

THE GIANT PINEAPPLE

A pineapple that towers 17 m over its surroundings – yes, we're referring to the one in Bathurst in the Eastern Cape. The world's largest pineapple has a concrete and steel structure in the middle surrounded by a fibreglass shell. It was funded and set up in the 90s by 16 of the district's pineapple farmers led by Barrie Purdon, a descendant of Charles Purdon, the man who sowed the first pineapple seed in the Eastern Cape. Inside the pineapple, which stands three storeys high, is a shop and museum dedicated to this tropical fruit.

GPS S33.50740 E26.84720

Times All week, 09:00 to 17:00.

Admission On request.



ROOIBERG CHAIR

The Rooiberg wine estate near Robertson in the Western Cape doesn't claim its chair to be the largest in the world, but the "largest red chair in Africa". The chair was unveiled in 2013 as a marketing gimmick, but it does symbolise the winemaker's hospitality and invitation to "pull up a chair". The chair is 9 m high and its seat is at 4,5 m. There's a stepladder behind the chair so you can climb up and enjoy a glass of Red Chair pinotage while enjoying the view from up high. (We hear 2021 is a good vintage.)

GPS S33.50740 E26.84720

Times All week 09:00 to 17:30.

Admission Free.



OLD JOE

When you drive between eNtokozweni (Machadodorp) and Nelspruit on the R539 tarred road, you'll notice this cheerful rock at the foot of the Patatanek Pass. When the first road through Schoemanskloof was built in 1927, workers teased their foreman Joe Barabas that the 2,5 m tall rock looked just like him – and promptly painted his likeness on it. The rock gets a new face every few years when artists or school kids are invited to change Old Joe's appearance. The theme is often determined by a newsworthy national event or person.

GPS S25.42015 E30.48824

Times Always open.

Admission Free. 🍌





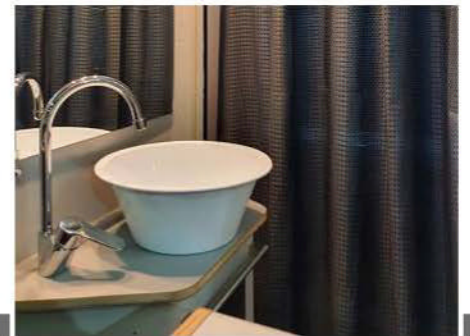
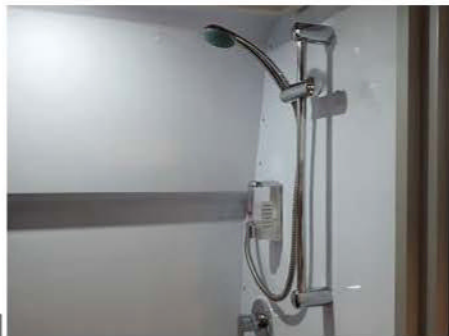
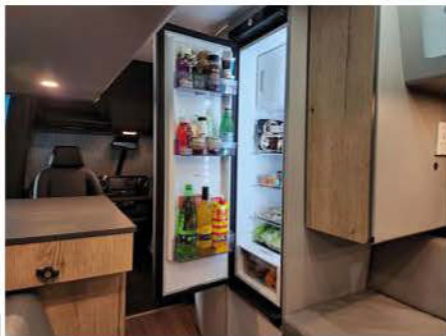
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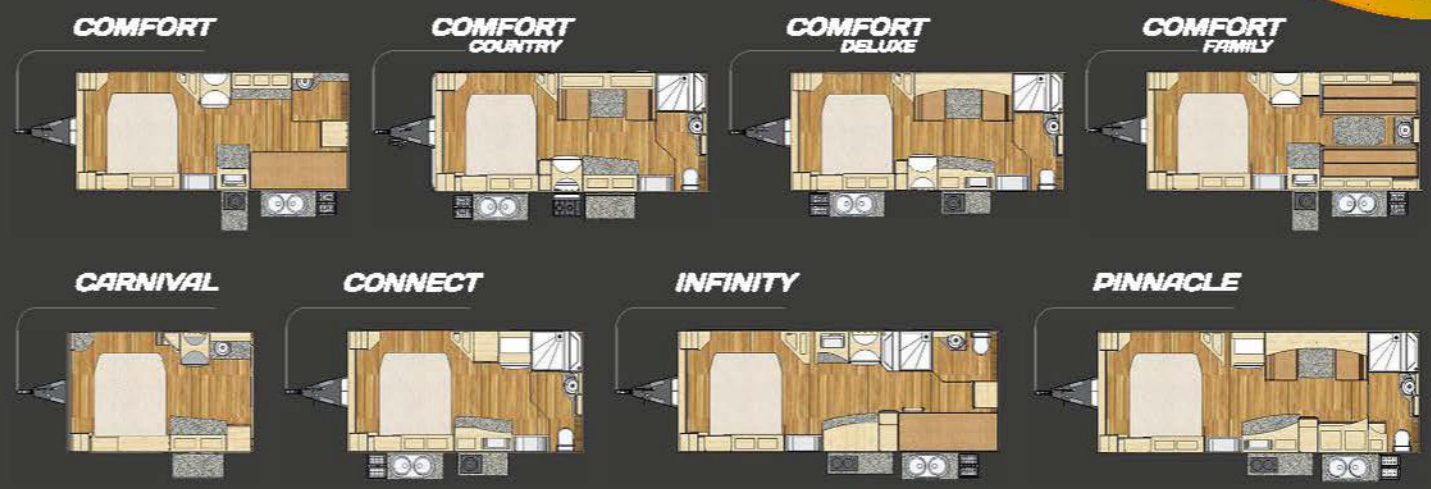
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