

#48

go!

CAMP FOOD YOUR WEEKEND MENU SORTED

APRIL-MAY 2022 | ISSUE 48

Drive & Camp

Drakensberg

The mountains are calling and you must go!



Mokala
arakele
apungubwe
Tour our gorgeous parks

God's Window
A road below the view

NEW WHEELS

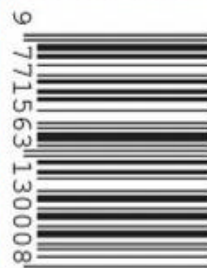
LAND CRUISER 79
70 not out!

CARAVAN TEST

MOBI LODGE CONTINENTAL
The future is here

PEUGEOT LANDTREK It's French, my china! | **TOYOTA HILUX LEGEND RS** Everyone keeps towing right | **CAMP BOFFIN** Your caravan is an asset | **4X4 PROFESSOR** Put that wooden plank to work | **JOIN US ON THE ROAD!** Introducing our new motorhome tour

GEAR HAVE PORTABLE BRAAI, WILL BRAAI NOW NOW - P92



R100,00 (including VAT)
Namibia N\$100,00

THE ALL-NEW COROLLA CROSS



CROSS BOUNDARIES

Introducing the all-new Corolla Cross.

Cross boundaries in Toyota's new SUV with class-leading luggage space, state of the art technology, the advanced Toyota Safety Sense package and superior ride comfort. Also available in Hybrid.

Cross boundaries in the all-new Corolla Cross.

Toyota SA @ToyotaSA

[TOYOTA.CO.ZA](https://toyota.co.za)



An astounding success

At this year's caravan show in Midrand, I once again realised how much it's possible to miss something. Although the show was cancelled in 2021, its absence felt much longer. Remember, the last show – in 2020 – was held a few weeks before we all had to look at the president's morose face as he said, "My fellow South Africans..."

This year, among the more than 20 000 camp enthusiasts who flocked through the doors over those three days, there was a clear desire to see what's going on in the market.

“

Many prophets of doom were prepared – seemed almost eager – to start writing obituaries, but this year's show proved them all wrong

”

And boy, did the caravan and camping-equipment manufacturers show off. Every new product was exhibited, and I was amazed at the quality and ingenuity that's so characteristic of our local manufacturers.

I also spoke to many of those manufacturers, and the good news for everyone for whom camping is close to the heart is that the industry is doing amazingly well, despite all the setbacks of the last two years.

The camping market is strong, and I'm not surprised – because of everyone's resilience. Many prophets of doom were prepared – seemed almost eager – to start writing obituaries, but this year's show proved them all wrong.

Leon was like a kid in a candy store and ran himself ragged to get to all the exciting new products on the market. His special report on the show starts on page 14.

And what joy to talk face-to-face with our readers again! It's so easy to disappear into our own little vacuums, and so I really needed to see you all again, to hear how it's going, and to talk about how things are going at

Drive & Camp – the magazine and its staff members.

I've said it before, several times, and I'm going to say it again: our sole purpose with this magazine is to equip you with the information to properly enjoy your camping and outdoor adventures. It is our honour and privilege.

HERE'S A FINAL REMINDER of our *Resort Guide* that's still on shelf for another few weeks. It will help you plan your camping trips for the rest of the year as it contains all the information you need for more than 80 campsites across South Africa.

We've divided them into four categories – family resorts, quieter sanctuaries, resorts where you camp near wildlife, and good spots for overnighting on your travels.

Safe travels!

Schalk

EDITOR

schalk.jonker@media24.com

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EDITORIAL TEAM

EDITOR SCHALK JONKER schalk.jonker@media24.com
JOURNALISTS CYRIL KLOPPER cyril.klopper@media24.com
 LEON BOTHA leon.botha@media24.com
DESIGNERS DOMINIC WIENAND dominic.wienand@media24.com
 OWEN WILLOUGHBY owen.willoughby@media24.com
PROOFREADER CARLA REDELINGHUYLS
COPY EDITOR ERIKA BORNMAN
FOOD EDITOR JOHANÉ NIELSON
MULTIMEDIA DESIREE HARTNEY desiree.hartney@media24.com

MEDIA24 CORPORATE

CEO: MEDIA24 ISHMET DAVIDSON
GM: MEDIA24 LIFESTYLE AND NEWS MINETTE FERREIRA

PUBLISHING TEAM: MEDIA24 LIFESTYLE

GM: MEDIA24 LIFESTYLE NERISA COETZEE
MEDIA24 LIFESTYLE CFO JAMEELAH CONWAY
PRODUCTION MANAGER EDWINA LYNERS
CIRCULATION MANAGER ARMAND KASSELMAN
armand.kasselman@onthedot.co.za
HEAD OF REPRO JACQUES DU PLOOY

SALES & SPONSORSHIPS

HEAD OF SPONSORSHIPS AND COMMERCIAL NIKKI RUTTIMANN
nikkir@media24.com
HEAD OF ADVERTISING DANIE NELL
danie.nell@media24.com 082 859 0542
KEY ACCOUNT MANAGER SHARLENE SMITH
sharlene.smith@media24.com 083 583 1604
KEY ACCOUNT MANAGER VERNETTE RAUTENBACH
vrautenb@media24.com 082 766 1705

MEDIA24 DIVERSE REVENUE LISE VAN BRED

lise.coetsee@media24.com
HEAD OF DIVERSE PROJECTS FRANCOIS MALAN
francois.malan@media24.com

CREATE STUDIO

CREATIVE DIRECTOR MICHAEL DE BEER
COMMERCIAL MANAGING EDITOR GERDA ENGELBRECHT
MARKETING MANAGER ANDILE NKOSI andile.nkosi@media24.com
COPY EDITOR: ADVERTS BRIGITTE BLANCKENBERG

SHOP QUERIES YUMNA TOFEY yumna.tofey@media24.com

CONTACT US

YUMNA TOFEY 021 406 2205 yumna.tofey@media24.com
CAPE TOWN
POSTAL ADDRESS go! Drive & Camp, PO Box 740, Cape Town 8000
STREET ADDRESS 19th Floor, Media24 Centre,
 40 Heerengracht Street, Cape Town 8001
JOHANNESBURG
POSTAL ADDRESS go! Drive & Camp, PO Box 785266, Sandton 2146
STREET ADDRESS 6 Kikuyu Street, Sunninghill 2191

SUBSCRIPTIONS, RENEWALS & INQUIRIES

087 353 1300 | +27 (0)21 065 0033 (international)
 Fax – 086 296 6681 | WhatsApp – 087 353 1333
 SMS “service” to 31069 | subs@media24.com



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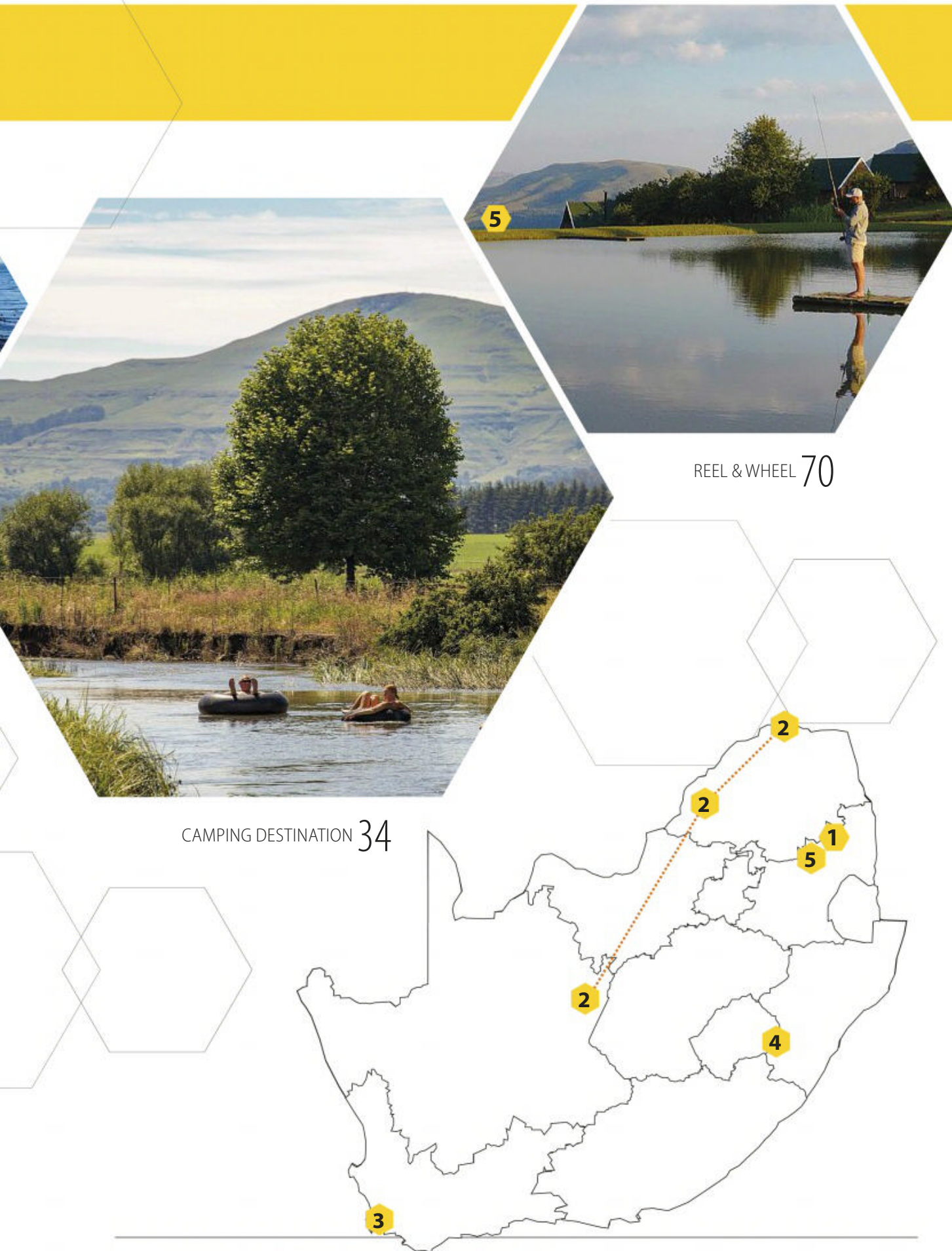
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MEDIA24

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#48 COVER PHOTO – LEON BOTHA

“In the Drakensberg you can set your clock to the afternoon showers during the summer months. We had to push through those last kilometres between Underberg and the Silverstream resort. That’s when this part of the world is at its greenest, the streams become rivers, and you have to resort to plan B for tonight’s braai.”

Camera settings Canon EOS 6D Mk. II;
f9; 1/4 000st of a second; 269 mm; ISO 1 600



ALUMINIUM TELESCOPIC POLES

BEST
PRICE

22/25 Extends to 2.3m
R110



SENIOR GAZEBO



3m x 2.8m x 2.3m
R2 660

OPTIONAL EXTRAS



Side wall solid

End wall solid

End wall with zip

Side wall with
windows

Shade net inner

Gazebo & snr bow connector

**HAS STOOD
THE TEST OF TIME**
Design that never gets old



FAMILY TRAILER TENT*

To fit 1.6m high trailer
R21 525



*Includes a removable add-on-room. Does not include the trailer.

WANDERER BOW RANGE

RANGER 2.1m x 2.1m x 1.8m
R3 560

JUNIOR WANDERER 2.5m x 2.5m x 1.9m
R4 150

SENIOR WANDERER 3m x 3m x 2.2 m
R4 715



OASIS LODGE TENTS

OASIS 2, Size: 7.2m x 4m x 2.8m
R33 335

OASIS 3, Size: 9.0m x 4m x 2.8m
R40 635

OASIS 4, Size: 10.8m x 4m x 2.8m
R48 995



NOW WITH
STAINLESS STEEL
FRAME

*Including a bathroom section

ROOFTOP TENTS

1.2 m x 2.4 m **R12 120**
1.4 m x 2.4 m **R13 430**
1.6 m x 2.4 m **R13 755**
2 m x 2.4 m **R15 995**

PROTENT
1.4 m **R17 485**



JUNIOR SAHARA

4.5m x 2.9m x 2.5m
R8 915



*Side walls & end wall available
Curved poles available

SAHARA DELUXE

6m x 2.9m x 2.5m
R12 025



*Side walls & end wall available
Curved poles available

BUNDU CANOPY

2.7m x 3m
R1 535



*Side walls available

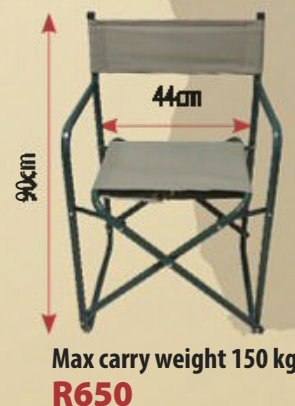
BACK!
OLD
CLASSIC

BUNDU CHAIR

Max carry
weight 150 kg
R630



DIRECTORS CHAIR



Max carry weight 150 kg
R650

BUNDU BASIN

15 Lt
R250



*Folds flat

ALSO AVAILABLE AT:

NB: PRICES WILL VARY BETWEEN STORES



VIEW OUR LIST OF AGENTS ON OUR WEBSITE

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TEL: +27 11 397 6451

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TRADE ENQUIRIES WELCOME

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270° AWNINGS



1.8m wide **R8 370**
2.5m wide **R10 499**

TENTCO AWNINGS



2.0m x 2.0m **R2 970**
2.5m x 2.0m **R3 240**

VEHICLE SHOWER CUBICLE

1m x 1m
R2 300
(Adjustable height)



Folds into PVC bag

PORTA POTTI

*Porta Potti bag available

10Lt
R1 030

20Lt
R1 190



*Toilet chemicals available

FOLDING TABLES



80cm x 80cm **R770**
120cm x 60cm **R770**
180cm x 74cm **R925**

Table & 2 benches **R1 730**

ALUMINIUM STORAGE CASES



30L **R1 190**
49L **R1 730**
94L **R2 590**

- Dust proof
- Waterproof
- Lightweight
- Lockable

FOLDING SHOVEL

R110



DEAD BLOW HAMMER

1.3kg **R135**

- PVC
- Steel shot-filled head give extra force to hammer & eliminates rebound
- Diamond texture non-slip handle grip



STAINLESS STEEL BRAAI GRIDS

from **R215**



*Braai tongs and braai grid brushes available

2, 3 & 4 SHELF CUPBOARDS

3 Shelf **R1 065**
4 Shelf **R1 695**



2 Shelf **R1 110**

KITCHEN UNIT

R1 350



DISH WASH STAND



Complete with basins and dry rack
R1 620

*Bag available

CLOTHES AIRER



105cm x 150cm
R750
Pack size:
83cm x 25cm x 15cm

CAPRIVI BOW TENTS



Caprivi 2
2.1m x 2.1m x 1.3
R920

Caprivi 3
3m x 3m x 1.8m
R1 890

TROLLEY BIG WHEEL

R1 730



SL 1 CHAIR

Max carry weight: 100kg
R220



*Available in green, grey and blue

FOLDING ALUMINIUM STOOL/TABLE

R210



SL-2



Max carry weight: 150kg
R880

DC 3 CHAIR



Max carry weight: 150kg
R565

CLASSIC CHAIR



R1 065
Max carry weight: 150kg

BIG BOY CHAIR



R820
Max carry weight: 150kg

ALSO AVAILABLE AT:

NB: PRICES WILL VARY BETWEEN STORES



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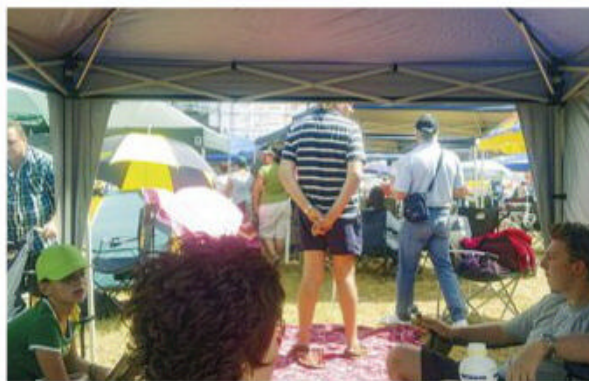


I'd like to share this ode to our gazebo. In 2007, we camped at Weesgerus, just outside Modimolle, but there was hardly any shade on our stand. So, we decided to look for a gazebo in town. After an exhaustive search, we found the last one in stock at the local co-op: a 3x3 m Bushtec with an aluminium frame.

At that time, we'd camp with a tent. Later, it would be a caravan, which we then sold when our youngest daughter Danika left home to study – at which time we returned to tents. Seeing as she recently completed her studies, we bought a caravan again – and the gazebo is still going strong.

This gazebo can tell a number of tales: in 2011, we attended the Innibosveld music festival and the gazebo provided welcome shade. On several coastal vacations, it worked like a charm on the beach, precisely because it's so easy to set up. And that aluminium frame won't rust.

In October 2015, we loaned the gazebo to my eldest daughter Shandr  and her husband, Wynand Botha, for their honeymoon – also by the sea. That's when



a gust of wind got hold of the gazebo and broke a section of the frame. Luckily, my father-in-law, James du Toit, managed to repair it, using his boiler-maker skills.

The canvas tore in a thunderstorm while we were camping at the Olifants River Lodge in December 2019. Luckily, the damage wasn't too bad, and we fixed it with duct tape.

The following year, we bought an extra gazebo – the dome type – but we've already sold it. The Bushtec, however, is still going strong.

We had heavy rain on a recent trip to Dinokeng, and Shandr 's tent leaked like a sieve. The gazebo came to our rescue again: even though the frame didn't fit over the tent, we used it as a fly sheet.

The bag shows its age and the canvas also doesn't look too great with all the duct tape, but there's nothing wrong with the frame.

I think it's time to have a new bag and canvas made that matches the colour scheme of our caravan's tent.

LEON PRINSLOO
Boksburg

WINNING
LETTER



Leon 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   cooldrink bottle. The lid also has space for a coffee flask. The interior is lined with PVC, which makes it easy to keep the bag clean and hygienic. The bag has a short strap that reaches over the top and attaches with a Velcro strip, as well as a longer shoulder strap if you're going to carry it over longer distances. It's an ideal picnic accessory or a padkos bag for a road trip. winkel.weg.co.za



Mobi Lodge



★★★★★

Beyond Comparison!

✓ Access Full Bathroom in Travel Mode ✓ Aerodynamic ✓ No Canvas Panels ✓ 360° Panoramic Views ✓ Full Offroad



Scan to watch the video



When the bug bites...

My husband Mike has always been a keen camper. Me... not so much. But, I was prepared to try. So, when our kids, Andrew and Amy, were two and four years old, we bought a bulky eight-person tent and everything else we needed. It was wonderful, but pitching camp tested our marriage and patience. We sold the tent shortly thereafter.

Through the years, we've tried many different camping setups: more tents, various caravans (from the 1980s to the 2016 Jurgens Xcape), as well as all the camping trailers, fitted with everything you need in every nook and cranny.

After 12 different options over 16 years,

we finally believe we have the best and easiest: a Land Rover Forward Control camper from the seventies. I'll admit it's not the most attractive rig and it's old – friends and family has given it a number of names: the Thing, It, the Ice-cream Van, and Rex – but it has everything we need. Our camp is set up within five minutes, and we have coffee on the boil, watching our friends put up tent poles and guy lines.

Should our kids (now 16 and 18) come along, we bring two dome tents.

I'm a typical "glamper"; I love all home comforts. Our amenities include a double bed, bedside table, a clothes drawer; a fridge/freezer, a cassette toilet, gas stove, outside shower, solar, plug points, and

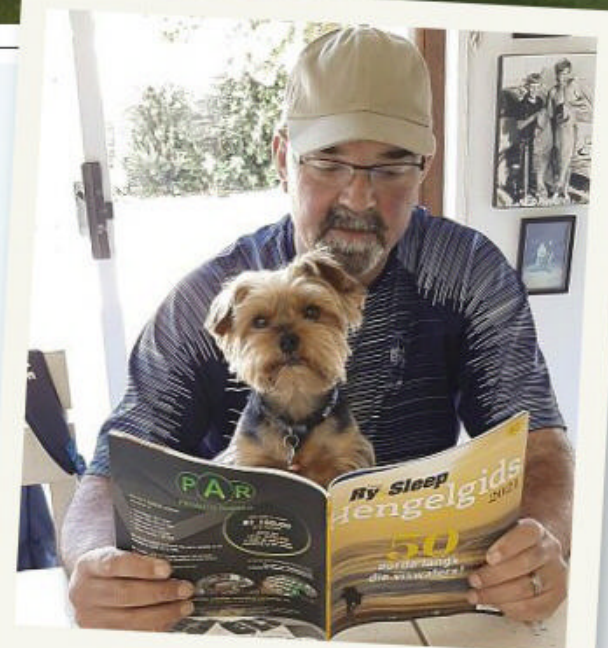
an electric blanket, to name but a few. We're totally off-grid and self-sufficient.

The Land Rover turns heads and sparks interest wherever we go. We leave it ready with all our camping needs, so we only need to pack food and clothes before we're off on our next adventure.

I went from not being keen on camping to now loving it. I love that we can go most places in our 4x4 van – we find the most amazing places to explore. We want to live life to the fullest and we don't want to miss out on any adventure – big or small. Our travels have taken us around gorgeous South Africa, Botswana, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Namibia... and we can't wait to discover more!

Camping takes you to more places than you can think of.

CHARMAINE AND MIKE BLYTH
Howick



UNRELATED NEWS. The Nels are from Paarl, and while on holiday in Struisbaai, they flipped through a few magazines on a windy day. Here Willie Nel sits with his Yorkshire terrier Ben, who "reads along". Hanlie Maré-Nel grabbed her phone and the pic went straight to the family album.

Loftus Caravan City Easter Show!

9 and 10 April 2022



Come and view 3 very exciting new models!

... the New Stealth Overlander off-road caravan, the Latest Luxury harsh road Swift Grande Adventure caravan and introducing the magnificence of the New Okto Castello. Also on show, the range of Okto, Bush Lapa, Stealth and Swift caravans. The very popular Edge-Out teardrop trailer.

Also visit our well stocked LeisureWorld shop. Snacks available, lucky draw for a SnoMaster ice machine and much more!

LeisureWorld

Loftus Caravan City

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OKTO
CARAVANS

STEALTH
CARAVANS

SWIFT

Bush Lapa
offroad caravans

NAYELA
CC

EDGE-OUT



911, what's your emergency?

We toured the West Coast for five weeks in September and October last year – as far south as Chapmans Peak outside Hout Bay, north to Strandfontein, and inland to the Cederberg.

As pensioners from Bloemfontein, we really enjoyed our West Coast tour and its endearing people. One Sunday afternoon, we followed a twin-track from just outside Dwarskersbos in the direction of Laaipek. We didn't even consider the possibility of getting stuck, because there were ordinary sedans on the road.

Later, the track turned sandy, and I started looking for places to turn around.

And then, we did get stuck. And this, of course, without any recovery equipment – not even a pump for the tyres should I want to deflate them.

I called a friend for help, but the phone just rang. At 18:57, I called the police in Laaipek and walked to the tar road where they picked me up, and, at 19:15, they recovered our vehicle with a kinetic rope.

Thank you to the police of Laaipek and the West Coast's selfless people for the support and kindness.

FRANS AND ANNATJIE STARBUCK
Bloemfontein



The mysterious case of a case

In your recent 4x4 Guide, there's an article about the Namaqua 4x4 Eco Trail. One story caught my attention: a young British soldier was killed by friendly fire after other soldiers fired at a koppie near Goodhouse.

My wife, Nicole, and I recently did this trail, and while camping at Ramansdrift, fairly close to Goodhouse, my wife climbed up the rocks above the campsite and found a very old .303 case.

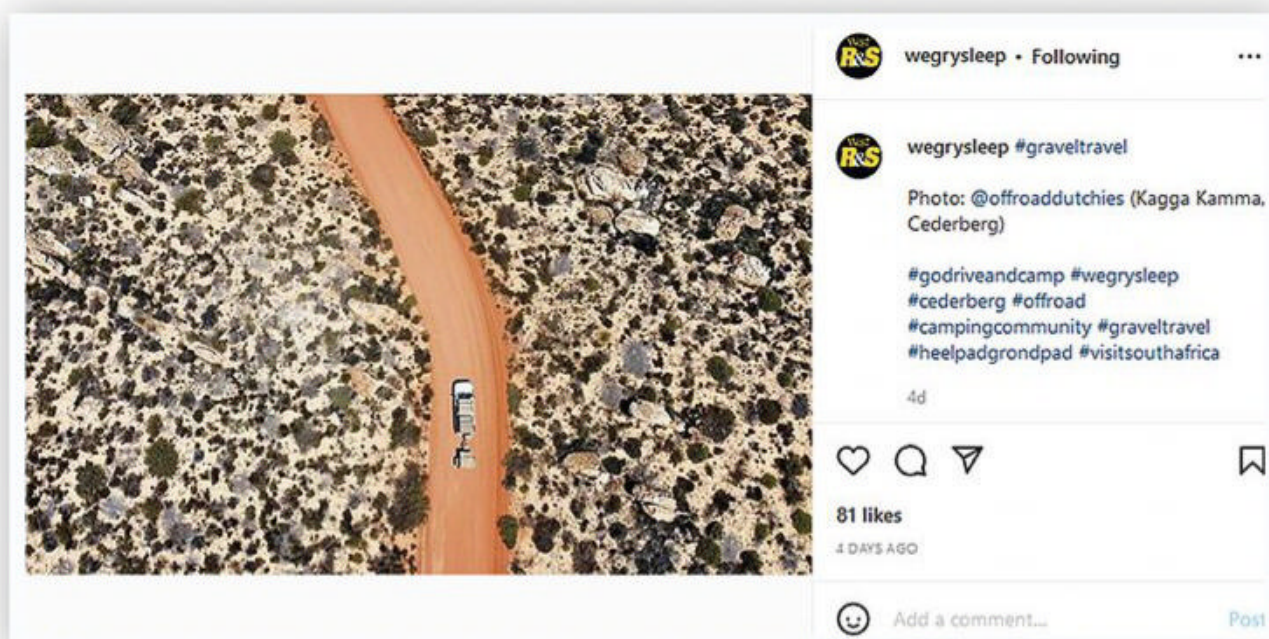
I found it very interesting that there would be a lone .303 case in the middle of nowhere, as it was clearly very old and a .303 was the standard issue military.

I did some reading and found the round was probably made by the Birmingham Munitions Company in England between 1892 and 1918, which would place it in the Boer War era (1899-1902).

I would be very interested to find out where the soldier had been shot. Could it be? Though, it's highly unlikely that we may have found the spent case from that fateful shot...

Apparently South African forces crossed at Ramansdrift on 12 January 1915 to invade South West Africa during World War 1. That's another possible explanation.

MATT DUBBER
Gqeberha



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CONTACT US:

Kempton Caravans, Gauteng
011 974 5595

Natal Caravans and Marine, KwaZulu-Natal
031 702 7291

Invader Pretoria, Gauteng
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HVR Auto, Namibia
+264 81 477 4644

Tygerberg Caravans, Western Cape
021 982 4670

Lynwood Trailers, Gauteng
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Website: www.invader.co.za

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Our cup runneth over

Last year, the Caravan Show had to be cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This year, it was back in full force... with 22 000 visitors.

The annual caravan show at the Gallagher Convention Centre in Midrand is an institution and the highlight on the industry's calendar, as you get to see all the latest models under one roof.

In addition to existing ranges, more than 20 new models were on display. Two new manufacturers also made their debut.

Here's a look at the very latest in the caravan market.

OUTBOUND CAMPERS

Outbound is a new manufacturer entering the market with a solid offering: there are three off-road camping trailers – Thunder, Breeze, and Blizzard – and two off-road caravans – Cyclone and Hurricane. The range is available at Kempton Caravans.

Initially, only the Thunder was imported from Australia, but these days all the caravans except the Thunder and Hurricane are manufactured locally. The Thunder has a metal hull, while the rest are made of aluminium – and all have a galvanised chassis.





- Only B License required
- Sleeps 2-4 people
- Fiberglass canopy & Body Panels

C A M P E R T R A I L E R



Contact details: 021 945 2142 (Office/Michelle)
admin@tongasa.com

www.tongasa.com

 Tonga Camping Trailer

3 Brug St., Triangle Farm, Bellville 7530

TONGA

CARAVAN SHOW



The lid of the Thunder and Blizzard opens over the A-frame to form the bed – with a tent unfolding over the top. The living area is, therefore, in the body where you get in.

With its 750 kg GVM, the Blizzard is aimed at campers with a normal driving licence, so it's slightly more modest in terms of comfort than the Thunder. The Blizzard has a basic kitchen with drawers and a gas stove. The Thunder is longer, with a sliding frame on either side of the door: on one side is a fridge/freezer and drawers, and on the other the sink and gas stove. The Thunder's GVM is 1 750 kg.

Both the Blizzard and Cyclone are prototypes, but unlike the Blizzard with its canvas tent, the Cyclone has fixed panels and a roof that lifts at the tail end.

It's a road caravan built for gravel roads, plus it's also light enough to tow with your regular driving licence. Furthermore, it's equipped with brakes, which means



you have an even greater choice of light vehicles with which you can tow it.

The kitchen in the left panel is enormous for a caravan of this size – there's a worktop and sliding frame for the stove and fridge. The extra-large entrance door is in the tail end, with the bed in the nose section.

The Breeze, with a GVM of 750 kg, is the smallest of the five and is basically just a trailer with a bed on top when you lift the lid. But it also has a decent kitchen similar to that of the Cyclone.

Prices Breeze R149 900; Blizzard R199 900; Cyclone R220 000; Thunder R329 000; Hurricane, on request

Contact 011 974 5595

kemptoncaravans.co.za

admin@kemptoncaravans.co.za



NAYELA

Nayela offers three more options on its Okapi model: a spare-wheel rack against the rear panel (R7 000) (and the steel rim is replaced by a mag rim), a shelf above the spare wheel (R10 000), and storage space for two gas cylinders on the A-frame (R9 200) – that includes the cylinders.

The Okapi is made of fibreglass and has a GVM of 1 750 kg.

Price R580 000

Contact 058 863 1027 nayela.co.za

info@nayela.co.za



COMFORT
THAT FOLLOWS YOU!

ALL NEW STEALTH OVERLANDER



DESCRIPTION OVERLANDER 634 ES

TARE MASS (GVM)	1250kg 1 800 Kg
AXLE RATING	2500 KG
HEIGHT	2385 mm
WIDTH	2021 mm
LENGTH	6350mm
PAYLOAD	550 kg
BERTHS	4
TYRES / AT	15" X 215
MUD FLAPS	YES
REFRIGERATOR	OPTIONAL
HOB-GAS	2 Burner
MICROWAVE OVEN	OPTIONAL
POWER	12/220v
CHARGING SYSTEM	Victron
BATTERY LITHIUM	120AH
WATER PUMP	W
KITCHEN SINK	YES
HAND BASIN	YES
SHOWER	YES
GEYSER	YES
PORTA POTTI	TOILET
WATER CAPACITY	120lt
GAS BOTTLE	YES
EXTERNAL AWNING	270 DEG
GRAVEL ROADPROTECTION BARS	YES

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VIEW OUR CURRENT RANGE

www.stealthcaravans.co.za

f StealthCaravans



PRETORIA
caravans
& OUTDOOR



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

Loftus Caravan City
Middelburg Caravans





batteries, and a gas/electric geyser.

ELXV also builds expedition vehicles on the chassis of an Iveco Daily 4x4 – these are called the U-Go series.

Prices Spoor R575 000; Ghari 3.7 R650 000; Ghari 4.2 R725 000; Ghari 4.7 R800 000

Contact 084 550 2820 info@elxv.co.za



ELXV

ELXV, or Elite Luxury Offroad Vehicles, is a new caravan manufacturer that's introduced some prototypes. The range is intended for couples and consists of three off-road caravans: the Ghari 3.7, 4.2, and 4.7, plus there's a double-axle gravel-road caravan, the Spoor.

All three Ghari models have a similar layout, with the fixed bed (queen size) in the nose and the bathroom in the rear. There's even a washing machine in the bathroom.

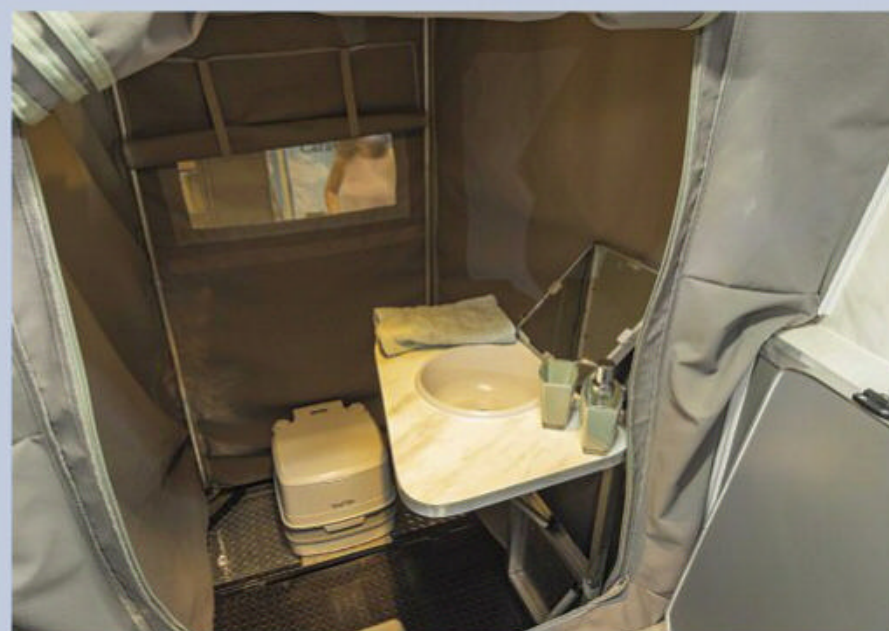
Equally unusual is the aluminium chassis: together with the independent suspension, the chassis weighs an astonishing 400 kg, 420 kg,

and 450 kg respectively. The panels are 25 mm thick and consist of fibreglass skins and a synthetic interior. The Spoor's chassis is made of galvanised steel instead of aluminium.

All three models have a pop-up roof that lifts electrically. The Spoor, on the other hand, has a fixed roof.

All three models have a fridge and stove on the inside and outside, and the Spoor has induction plates instead of the gas that's in the other models.

The entire range comes standard with an electrical system, converter, Anderson coupling to the towing vehicle, lithium iron phosphate



BADGER

The Badger Extreme's 2,5 t fixed axle with leaf springs now makes way for Al-Ko's independent 2 000 kg Enduro chassis.

Instead of the extra room (at R7 590) which opens from under the back door, buyers now also have the option of a shower cubicle (R8 500). Where the spare wheel used to swing sideways before you could open the back door, it now swings downwards.

This surface becomes the shower cubicle floor. The shower cubicle door is inside the caravan, and you step down onto the floor. There's also space for a cassette toilet and a shelf with a sunken basin.

The Extreme is made of fibreglass and has a GVM of 1 750 kg.

Price R330 000

Contact 082 490 1117

badgercaravans.co.za

katie@badgercaravans.co.za



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AFRISPOOR

Afrispoor has introduced two new caravans with a bed inside (so not the fold-out type): the Wildcat and the Caracal. These two models are almost identical in terms of equipment, but at 5,36 m, the Caracal is 56 cm longer.

From the outside, the size of the outdoor kitchen is the most obvious difference. The sliding frame with the fridge/freezer and basin sliding out on the left is the same, but the cupboards on the right are different. The Caracal has a lot more storage space in the outside cupboard above the worktop, and the worktop itself is also wider.

The beds are in the nose area, and the sizes also differ slightly. The Caracal's mattress is 100 mm narrower (1 620 mm), but at 2 140 mm, it's 40 mm longer.

Across from the entrance door there's a second door for the shower cubicle in the opposite panel. The poles for the shower cubicle are stitched into the canvas, so you don't have to struggle with loose poles.

As with Afrispoor's other models, these two also have pop-up roofs, but the drawers under the beds are new.

Both caravans are almost fully equipped and has an electrical system with its 105 Ah



AFRISPOOR
CARACAL

battery, a charger, Anderson plugs for the charging system while towing, the lights, and several 12 V and USB sockets. There's a 105 l water tank, a 12 V pump, a 90 National Luna fridge/freezer, a stainless-steel stove, three drawers for all the kitchen stuff, the gas geyser, and the shower cubicle. So, you can basically hitch your new caravan and go camping.

The hull is made of stainless steel and aluminium, and the chassis is galvanised steel. The 2 500 kg heavy-duty axle is equipped with brakes.

Prices Wildcat R469 000; Caracal R499 000

Contact 031 569 4323

✉ afrispoor.co.za

✉ admin@afrispoor.co.za



VAGABOND

Vagabond has done away with all its models except the Rogue, and this teardrop model has a unique feature: the mattress folds up to form a bench.

The mattress is queen-size and is made of high-density sponge. Its thickness is 200 mm and is also 20 cm longer than the previous ones in the Rogue.

The fibreglass sink in the kitchen has been replaced with one of stainless steel, and the microwave is now removable in case you want to use the space as storage.

The Rogue has a galvanised chassis, a fibreglass hull, and a GVM of 750 kg. The caravan is almost fully equipped, but items such as the geyser, solar panels, and converter are optional.

Price R189 000

Contact 087 150 2176 ✉ vagabondsa.co.za ✉ explore@vagabondsa.co.za



AFRISPOOR
WILDCAT

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39
Years

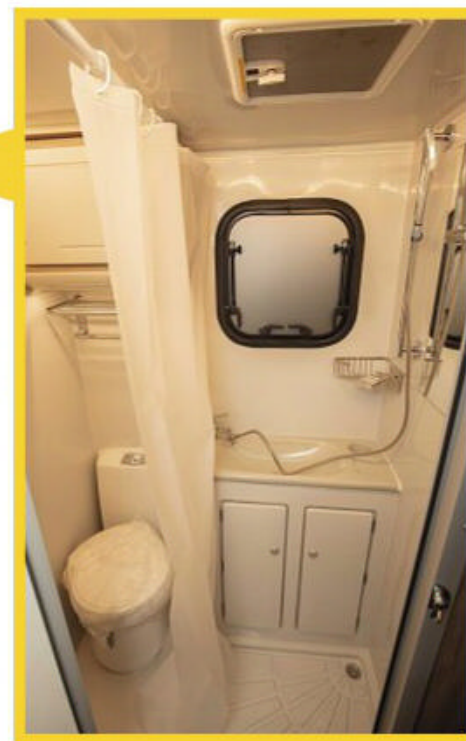


Eezi-Awn



Cussonia Park
3 Ridge Road, Laser Park
Honeydew, Roodeport
Tel: +27 11 794 6311
Fax: +27 11 794 6233
E-mail: eeziawn@icon.co.za
Website: eeziawn.com

CARAVAN SHOW



LEEFEK

The Jurgens Penta 138 and Jurgens Exclusive 158 now each get a Purple variant.

On the Penta Purple, the manual movers, automatic stabilisers, and electric pop-up roof are standard, and on the Exclusive Purple, you get automatic stabilisers, automatic movers, and air conditioning.

The standard Penta 138 has also changed. The outdoor kitchen, which previously folded out from above the left wheel, has now been extended. A section of the kitchen is still above the wheel, but instead of one worktop, there are two doors that open – one forming the worktop and the other folding

upwards. The extra cupboard in the kitchen is to the left of the door – this is where you pull out the sink and induction stove.

Other innovations are the aluminium step that folds out from under the door, and the electronic control panel in the door for the lights, converter, automatic stabilisers, electric

roof, water pump, geyser, battery, and water level. It also shows the temperature.

The Exclusive 158's outdoor kitchen has also had a second section added, but instead of the induction stove, you get a two-plate gas stove. The dining area is to the left as you get in, and the fridge sits in front of



OKTO CARAVANS

The Chateau is the flagship of Okto's seven models – and the only one with a fixed roof and double axle. Now the Costello model has made its debut as the eighth choice.

"There was a demand for a smaller version of the Chateau," says Woody Loftus, spokesperson of Okto.

The Costello, therefore, has a single axle (with 15" wheels instead of the Chateau's 14" ones), but the fixed roof remains. The Costello is 96 cm shorter than the Chateau.

It has the same bathroom as the Chateau, but in the Costello you have a choice between a 12 V or 220 V fridge.

The Costello's GVM is 1 650 kg – so 240 kg lighter than the Chateau.

Price R509 000

Contact oktocaravans.co.za





you against the opposite panel. The island bed is to the right in the rear, and the bathroom is in the middle to your left. It has a toilet, shower, and medicine cabinet – a shower curtain separates the toilet.

The Sprite Tourer range is Leefek's most popular caravan, and now buyers have another choice: the Tourer SX Enduro.

This is a gravel-road version of the Sprite Splash that's equipped with independent suspension. The Enduro, therefore, has a reinforced chassis with bullbars on the front corners and a metal plate on the A-frame (the Splash has a fibreglass cover). The cupboard doors inside are fitted with canvas, and the 220 V fridge makes room for a 12 V model and a 105 Ah battery. Its independent D-arm suspension is certified for 2 000 kg, while the SX model has a rubber axle (also 2 000 kg).

The Gypsey Impi's roof no longer lifts only at the back but like a normal pop-up roof parallel to the floor. The bed's mattress is also slightly wider at the headboard.

Prices Gypsey Impi R242 829

Jurgens Penta 138 – not known yet

Jurgens Penta Purple R635 882

Jurgens Exclusive 158 R767 102

Jurgens Exclusive Purple R836 204

Sprite Tourer SX Enduro R405 854

Contact ☎ 0800 014 802 🌐 leefek.co.za



TUFF CATS

Tuff Cats has enlarged the interior of its Shumba 4 model, and the variant is called the Shumba 4 Max.

The Shumba has two fold-out beds: one over the coupler and the other from the panel on the right. Just as with some caravans where the bed folds over the A-frame, there's a crossbar above the bed's opening under which

you have to crawl. In the Max model, this section has been redesigned so the space is open.

The Max's roof doesn't only lift on one side as on the standard Shuma, it lifts with the help of electric motors.

Price R416 859

Contact ☎ 083 609 6947

🌐 tuffcats.co.za

📧 jaco@tuffcats.co.za



ECHO4X4

Echo has introduced a brand-new version of its famous Kavango model. Called the Kavango KA2, the manufacturer has made several changes, such as making it 50 cm longer.

And, not only is the chassis lighter, but so is the hull – mainly thanks to the steel reinforcements in the fibreglass that are now made of aluminium.

The door is a good 100 mm wider, and just as with the previous model, there's another door across from the entrance door to the bathroom. But the slide-out shower makes room for a shower tent pitched next to the hull.

The roof lifts completely and no longer just on one side. This means, just as in the Shumba 4 Max (see p 23), there's no longer a crossbar over the fold-out bed, and there's also more open space leading to the bed.



ECHO
KAVANGO KA2



MAN CAVE ESSENTIALS

Man Cave has introduced a one-of-a-kind height-adjustable towbar. When towing different trailers with the same towing vehicle, this towbar makes it much easier as you don't have to use a drop plate.

The towbar was designed by mechanical engineer André Naumann. From the horizontal line, the ball can lift 80 mm and drop 93 mm. Plus, you don't need tools to adjust it; you simply move a cross pin. One

of the towbars' arms can also be swung around for an extra 100 mm.

The adjustable towbar fits on any removable towbar (50 mm square tubing) or one with the standard ball bolted onto a flange. It's made of stainless steel and T6 aluminium and has a rating of 3 500 kg.

Price R6 400

Contact 083 230 6131

📧 mobilodge.com 📧 sales@ mobilodge.com

Because the caravan is longer, the outside kitchen is also larger. The sliding frame with the fridge/freezer and basin still pulls out from the hull to the left of the door. Where the fridge/freezer used to stand crosswise, it's now parallel to the hull. The worktop that flattens to the right of the door is also much wider, which means there are more cupboards in the hull behind the worktop. There's

even space for a microwave.

The gas cylinders that were in the cupboard on the A-frame now move up to the A-frame itself and are similar to Echo's Kunene. The same goes for the two jerry cans that move to the rear of the caravan.

The previous sized Kavango is now called the Kavango HQ KA1, and has lost the swing-out bed over the A-frame. The area from which you climb



ECHO KAVANGO
HQ KA1



into the bed makes space for lots of cupboards with canvas doors. It also gets a shower like the KA2's.

Compared to the previous Kavango, the new model's GVM is 300 kg heavier (1 800 kg), while the HQ KA1 remains at 1 500 kg.

Prices Kavango HQ KA1 R455 950

Kavango KA2 R498 900

Contact 012 345 3333

echo4x4.co.za

echoacc@echo4x4.co.za



STEALTH CARAVANS

Stealth has expanded its range of six road and dirt-road caravans to include a seventh model.

The Overlander is the company's first off-road caravan. And at 1 250 kg, its tare weight is lighter than the X-Country 594, the Bush Lodge (1 280 kg each), and the X-Country 592 ES (1 380 kg). It has a GVM of 1 800 kg – the same as the Bush Lodge – and boasts a 2 500 kg axle.

In the rest of the models, the fridge is standard, but in the Overlander, it's an optional extra (like the microwave).

The Overlander comes with a 120 Ah lithium battery, compared to the 105 Ah battery in the other models. The water tank is also larger than that of the Bush Lodge – 120 l versus 100 l – and you have an option to double the tank's volume.

The shower and geyser are optional in the other models, but comes standard in the Overlander. The bathroom with the shower cubicle sits in the right rear corner, across from the door, with the bed in the nose area.



The Overlander's panels are 30 mm thick – 10 mm thicker than the other models – and the intermediate layer has a material with a lower density for better insulation.

Furthermore, the chassis has a gooseneck shape behind the coupler, which means it's easier to tow over awkward bumps.

Price R575 000

Contact stealthcaravans.co.za



QUANTUM LEISURE

Quantum has complemented its range of six models with two new ones: its first gravelroader, the Comfort Country, and its smallest one, the Carnival.

In terms of layout, the Country is similar to the company's Comfort Deluxe, with a few special touches. The Country's fridge and microwave, for

example, stand on rubber shock absorbers. Usually, a manufacturer will replace the cupboard doors of a gravelroader with canvas, but Jurie Pienaar, owner of Quantum, says the doors are strong enough.

Quantum builds its own chassis, and that's also the case with the Country, says Jurie. All models have a rubber axle, but

the Country gets independent D-arm suspension. The Country also has 16" wheels, compared to the 14" wheels on the others. Thanks to the suspension and tyres, the Country stands 100 mm higher off the ground.

Unlike the standard road models, the Country has a 12 V/220 V fridge (the rest get a 220 V fridge), there's a geyser that works with electricity and gas, and you get a gas stove instead of induction hobs. And unlike other gravelroaders, the Country has a solid roof and not the pop-up type.

The new Carnival is now Quantum's shortest model at 4,55 m. It doesn't have a nose cone, and instead of a side door, this model has a back door. It's also the cheapest model.

The brightly coloured interior finish is unique to the Carnival, and some of the shelves have large container bags that can zip shut.

The island bed is in the nose section, and the floor space between the bed and door is large enough for a Quantum bicycle rack with space for three bikes.

The Carnival's GVM is 1 400 kg and the Country's is 1 900 kg.

Prices Country R495 000

Carnival R315 000

Contact 📞 quantumleisure.co.za



BORDERX

BorderX has supplemented its two off-road caravans with a smaller off-road camping trailer, the Overlander. The idea is to offer a basic trailer to new campers who can then customise it according to their own needs, says Werner Pretorius, owner of BorderX.

The Overlander is made of steel, while the other two models have a stainless-steel chassis and synthetic panels.

The basic Overlander includes 15" wheels, a 1 600 kg braked axle, lights, and storage space for the gas cylinder. On the outside, the trailer is powder-coated, and the front and inside is rubberised.





Some of the extras include a sliding frame for ammo crates, a kitchen, rooftop tent, power system, fridge/freezer, water tank, and geyser.

The Overlander's GVM is 1 500 kg and has a fixed axle of 2 000 kg.

Price R69 000 (standard)

Contact 082 929 0824

[borderx.co.za](mailto:info@borderx.co.za)

info@borderx.co.za

DESTINATION

Destination is known for its luxurious road caravans, but they are all around 8 m long. That's sometimes an issue, as they don't fit onto a stand. But, says André van Helsdingen, with his new Wish model, he's found a solution to this "problem".

At 6,3m, not only is the Wish much shorter, it's now also the cheapest model in the series. Yet, buyers get the same quality as its lengthier brothers.

Another big difference is the double outside cupboard at the rear. Usually the air-con unit sits in the top one, but in the Wish, it moves down. That way, André gained a lot more space in the bathroom.

André also works in the



yacht industry, and the Wish is the first caravan in its range with a ceramic toilet like the ones you get on luxury deep-sea yachts. The biggest advantage is that the cassette sits outside the caravan, and the flushing action is electrical.

Because the Wish is shorter, the interior benches are gone but the bed and outdoor kitchen remain the same.

Price R475 000

Contact 082 446 5692

destinationcaravans.co.za

sales@destinationcaravans.co.za





Alu-Star comes to the party

Alu-Star is known for its aluminium trailers and horse carriers, but now the company has introduced its first full-fledged off-road camping trailer.

It took about two years to get from the first sketches and ideas to the construction of the prototype, says Reinard Stapelberg, co-owner of Alu-Star.

The XK6 Camper has a typical off-road trailer layout – think a nose cone on the A-frame, a kitchen on the left, and clothes compartments on the right – but there are some innovations, too.

Instead of a lid or two side doors, the front of the nose cone opens upwards. So, you get to everything easily and never have to dig around. This is also where the inline gas geyser and gas cylinder go, but there's plenty of room for items such as a small gas braai and more.

The kitchen is divided into two: the fridge/freezer pulls out from the cupboard on the left and the sliding frame with the collapsible plastic sink and drying rack under it. The worktop next to it opens towards you with shelves and drawers behind it in the hull. The two-plate gas stove stands loose on the worktop and is also stored in the cupboard. The power



panel with its 12 V and 220 V sockets, the screen for the deep-cycle battery, and water pump switch are to the right.

Somewhat unusual is the kitchen's extension. An upright shelf slides lengthwise out the back door and has its own worktop that folds down. It doubles the kitchen in an instant – there are more shelves behind it.

Next to the pull-out kitchen are three drawers with space for crates, camping chairs, and groundsheets. The spare wheel is mounted against the back door.

The doors on the right open into the living area of the rooftop tent and have three drawers with loose canvas bags. Next to that is an upright cupboard



with four shelves for your blankets, towels, and the like. The third cupboard is narrow and suitable for folding tables and solar panels.

The XK Camper comes fully equipped with, among other things, a fridge/freezer, geyser, and electrical system.

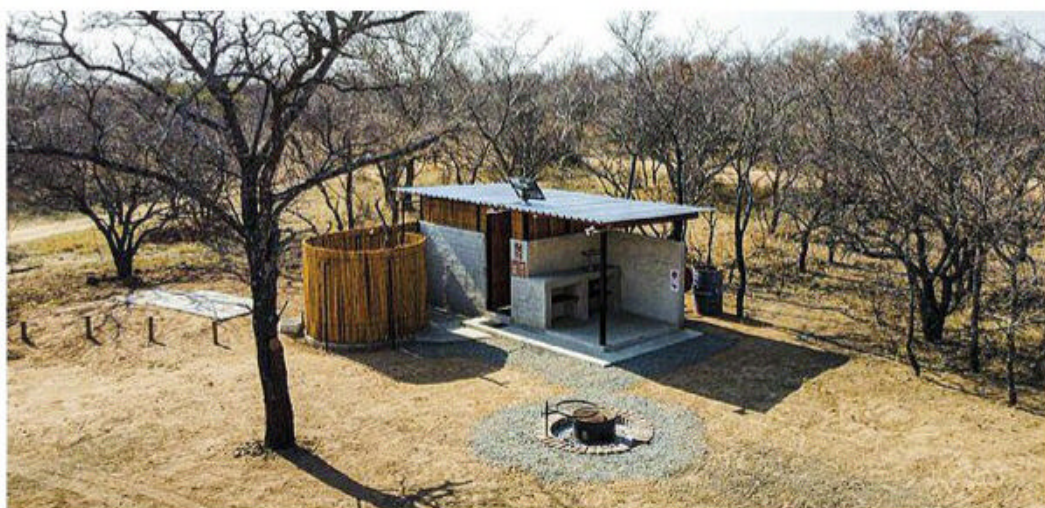
Like the rest of Alu-Star's trailers, the XK6 has double-walled aluminium panels – their winning recipe for the past 33 years. **The numbers** 3 685 (l) x 1 985 (w) x 1,9 m (h), 265/70 R16 tyres, tare weight 1 060 kg, load capacity 740 kg, GVM 1 800 kg.

Standard price R276 575 (fully equipped without rooftop tent and awning).

Contact 081 500 9650 multitrail.co.za
info@multitrail.co.za



Camping at Jabula



Jabula in the Dinokeng Reserve north of Pretoria is known for its luxury tented camp, but now this popular holiday resort has also added five separate bush camps.

While the luxury tents are fenced, there's no barrier between the campsites and nature. This means any of the Big 5 can unexpectedly walk through your campsite, although there's enough of a clearing around you so you won't be caught unawares.

Each of the five bush camps is a cleared spot in the natural vegetation and is set a good few hundred metres apart. Most of the stands have some shade.

The camps all have their own bathroom with a basin, toilet, and an indoor and outdoor shower. A gas geyser provides the hot water and a solar panel the light. There's also a fire pit and a dishwashing area, but no electricity.

Price R138-R207 pppn, depending on the season and day of the week (R70-R90 for children aged 6-12). Up to eight people per site (plus two vehicles and two caravans). This excludes Dinokeng's tariff and self-drive day permits.

Contact 078 948 6781

jabulabushcamp.co.za

info@jabulabushcamp.co.za

Jurgens Campworld becomes Leefek

Jurgens, Gypsey, Sprite, and Safari caravans will henceforth be manufactured by a new company, Leefek. This follows the liquidation of Jurgens Campworld. Tian Muller takes over the reins as managing director.

According to Ina Dreyer, spokesperson for Leefek, production has not been affected by the liquidation. "Currently, there are three months' worth of orders in the production line."

Gravel roaders are still the most popular, and Leefek has added a new model to its Tourer range. (Read more about this on p 23. – Ed) In addition to the Tourer, other new caravan models will be introduced soon.

In the past, some of the Jurgens dealers belonged to the manufacturer, but this is no longer the case. There are currently 13 accredited dealers:

- Silver Lakes Caravans, Pretoria
- Pro Quick Leisure, Pretoria
- Discovery Caravan & Outdoor, Pretoria
- Pretoria Caravans & Outdoor, Pretoria
- Kennis Caravans & Motorhomes, Roodepoort
- East Rand Caravan World, Boksburg
- Elite Auto Leisure, Vereeniging
- Middelburg Caravans, Middelburg
- Vrystaat Woonwaens, Bloemfontein
- Eastern Cape Caravans, Gqeberha
- Tuinroete Camping and Caravans, Mossel Bay
- Tygerberg Caravans, Cape Town
- Bushwackers, Windhoek



A new look for an old caravan park

A year after Chris Scorer bought the well-known Corian's Caravan Resort on the KZN coast, the campsite has undergone several changes.

Besides the new fence, a gravity-fed water system, a fresh coat of paint, and renovations to the rental home, it also has a new name: Characters Garden Park.

The games room is now next to the pool, which means all the entertainment is together, right near the resort's gate. And then three of the 60 stands each

boasts a permanent tent. They're called Rent-A-Tent – for those who don't own their own camping equipment but still want to enjoy a camping experience. These campers are spoilt with a double bed, plus their own braai area, kitchenware, lighting, chairs, and a table.

The rest of the stands have been left mostly unchanged. Chris says they want to keep the park as green as possible with plenty of grass and shade trees. Their motto, after all, is "Come back to nature".

Pets are allowed, there is storage for caravans, and there's a night watchman and access control. And, best of all: the beach is a mere two minutes' walk away.

Prices Depending on the season, R190 pppn (R100 for children between four and 16; R150-R190 for pensioners) up to R360 pppn (R160 for kids). Dogs cost R35 pd. Rent-A-Tent costs R580 to R1 180 per couple.

Contact 073 297 5876

charactersgardenpark.co.za

admin@charactersgardenpark



A shared vision



Loftus Caravan City has been doing business for the past 34 years, belonging to the Loftus family right from the start. But now, Nicole Ostrom has stepped in as a co-owner.

Nicole joined Loftus in 2010, looking after accounts, after which she took over the financial and administration management. Since then, she's also become involved in marketing and caravan imports, and among other

things also sees to the homologation of new caravans.

The three Loftus brothers, Woody, Neil, and Joel, along with their father, also Joel, started the business. Joel (senior) retired in 1994.

"Nicole shares our passion for the industry and camping lifestyle, as well as our focus on top customer service," says Woody. "She's very active behind the scenes and full of ideas."

Grenadier for Africa

The Ineos Grenadier, a vehicle inspired by the previous generation Land Rover Defender, is almost on its way to South Africa. Three prototypes were brought to Cape Town earlier this year and *Drive & Camp* had a look.

The vehicles are indeed strongly reminiscent of the old Land Rover Defender and boast higher-grade parts by, among others, Magna Steyr, ZF Friedrichshafen, Carraro, and Bosch. There are two engine options: a 3 ℓ petrol and a 3 ℓ diesel, both from BMW.

While it's too early to share our driving impression here – the vehicles were early prototypes – we can confirm the interior is much larger than that of the old Defender. All buttons and switches are waterproof and mud-resistant, so you can literally wash the interior using a garden hose. Outside, provision is made for all kinds

of equipment – it's clear the Grenadier is focussed on practicality rather than relying on good looks alone.

Ineos has received 75 000 orders from all over the world, thus far, including South Africa. Locally, the company has three official showrooms and workshops: in Johannesburg, with the SMH group, and in Durban and Cape Town, the SMG group. Other than that, there are also five BMW service centres in Polokwane, Mbombela, Bloemfontein, Gqberha, and George that have received training on the Grenadier.

The Ineos Grenadier is available as a five-seater station wagon and a two-seater workhorse. They're considering a double cab bakkie, but interest will guide whether it becomes a reality or not.

Prices start at R1 395 000 and customers who placed orders last year will start getting their vehicles from July 2022.



LandyFest 2022

Land Rover enthusiasts are once again gathering at Rust de Winter in Limpopo, about 90 km north of Pretoria for this year's LandyFest. The event will run from Friday, 29 April to Monday, 2 May.

The festival is mainly aimed at fans of the Land Rovers Series. There will be various competitions for these classic vehicles. The invitation, however, is not limited to Series fans and everyone from 4x4 enthusiasts, nature lovers to families are welcome to join.

Contact If you want to book a stall or sponsor the event, please contact the organisers, André Verster and Rocco Le Roux. ✉ andre@lrclassic.com
✉ rocco@lrclassic.com

Price Day visitors pay R150 and tickets are available via the plankton app on your smartphone. (When we went to print, only 2 000 tickets were available due to COVID-19 restrictions, but this may be increased should the measures be lifted.)



Many happy returns!

TOYOTA LAND CRUISER 79

Toyota recently celebrated the 70th anniversary of their off-road vehicles. The birthday present? A special version of the Land Cruiser 79, writes **Cyril Kloppe**.

Toyota's first motor vehicle was the Model AA, which left the factory in April 1936 – and a year later the company was founded. That means this motoring giant is 85 years old today.

It is, however, 71 years since Toyota's first off-road vehicle, the BJ, was launched. Toyota would have had a party to celebrate the big 70 at the end of last year, but COVID-19's Omicron variant put paid to that.

Toyota chose the Land Cruiser 79 to wear the 70th Anniversary crown, perhaps because the 70 series has 70 in its name, although the LC70 made its first appearance in 1984.

What do we have here?

The Toyota Land Cruiser 79 4.5D V8 70th Anniversary Edition – that's its official full name – is available in two colours: the classic sand and ivory white. When it comes to bodywork and mechanics, it's identical to the regular Land Cruiser 79 – which has, in fact, remained



almost unchanged since 1984 – but it has some special accessories unique to this version. These accessories include a bullbar already prepared to take a winch, and a black grille boasting Toyota in bold capital letters rather than the oval emblem.

There are special commemorative emblems on both front doors, and the name Toyota appears in italics with Land Cruiser below it in a vintage script on the left front quarter panel.

At the rear there's a steel bumper with a towbar, and the load bin is lined with a 3 mm rubber layer. Inside, the floor mats are embroidered with the model name, and there's a repeat of the commemorative emblem on the headrests.

Toyota says 62% of its Land Cruiser bakkies go to vehicle fleets, especially those from government agencies, mines, Eskom, and nature reserves. However, the 70th Anniversary is aimed at private individuals looking for something classy yet hardworking.

SPECIFICATIONS

Model	Land Cruiser 79 70 th Anniversary
Engine	4 461 cc-V8
Power	151 kW @ 3,400 rpm
Torque	430 Nm @ 1,200 rpm
Transmission	Five-speed manual
Ground clearance	235 mm
Tank	130 ℓ
Standard tyres	265/70R16
Tare weight	2 370 kg
Load capacity	920 kg
Max towing capacity	3 500 kg
Safety rating	★★★★★ (ANCAP 2016)
Warranty	3 years/100 000 km
Service plan	Optional
Price	R952 500



PLATINUM. Toyota has 70 years' experience in off-roading, so you can trust that they know what they're doing. You'll have to act fast if you want one of these 70th Anniversary Editions because they're going to sell out fast, just like the LC79 Namib did.

How does it compare, or does it?

It's a bit difficult to choose rivals for the Land Cruiser 79, because Nissan's Patrol bakkie isn't readily available as it's had too few buyers in South Africa, the Stellantis group *still* hasn't decided whether they're bringing the Jeep Gladiator here, and the Land Rover Defender bakkie is still in development. So, all that remains is the Mahindra PikUp.

At half the Cruiser's price, the Mahindra offers lower fuel consumption (7,9 ℓ/100 km versus 12 ℓ/100 km), cruise control, electrically adjustable wing mirrors, automatic windscreen wipers, parking sensors, and

a longer warranty period and service plan.

But the Land Cruiser 79 surpasses the Mahindra PikUp in other respects: its V8 engine generates 151 kW power and 430 Nm of torque compared to the PikUp's 103 kW and 320 Nm. The Cruiser's ground clearance is 25 mm more, its towing weight beats the Mahindra's by a full tonne, and its fuel tank is 50 ℓ larger.

But it's apples vs oranges because the Land Cruiser 79 is really in its own class, and the 70th Anniversary Edition is a collector's item that will surely pluck at the heartstrings of many a farmer and adventurer.



FROM THE COMPETITORS
Not your average bakkies



R473 000 **Mahindra Pikup S11 4x4 Karoo**

It's half the price of a Land Cruiser, but it offers more than just half.



± R1 600 000 **Nissan Patrol Pickup**

Nissan imports it only on special request, and its price is subject to the exchange rate.



Price unknown **Jeep Gladiator**

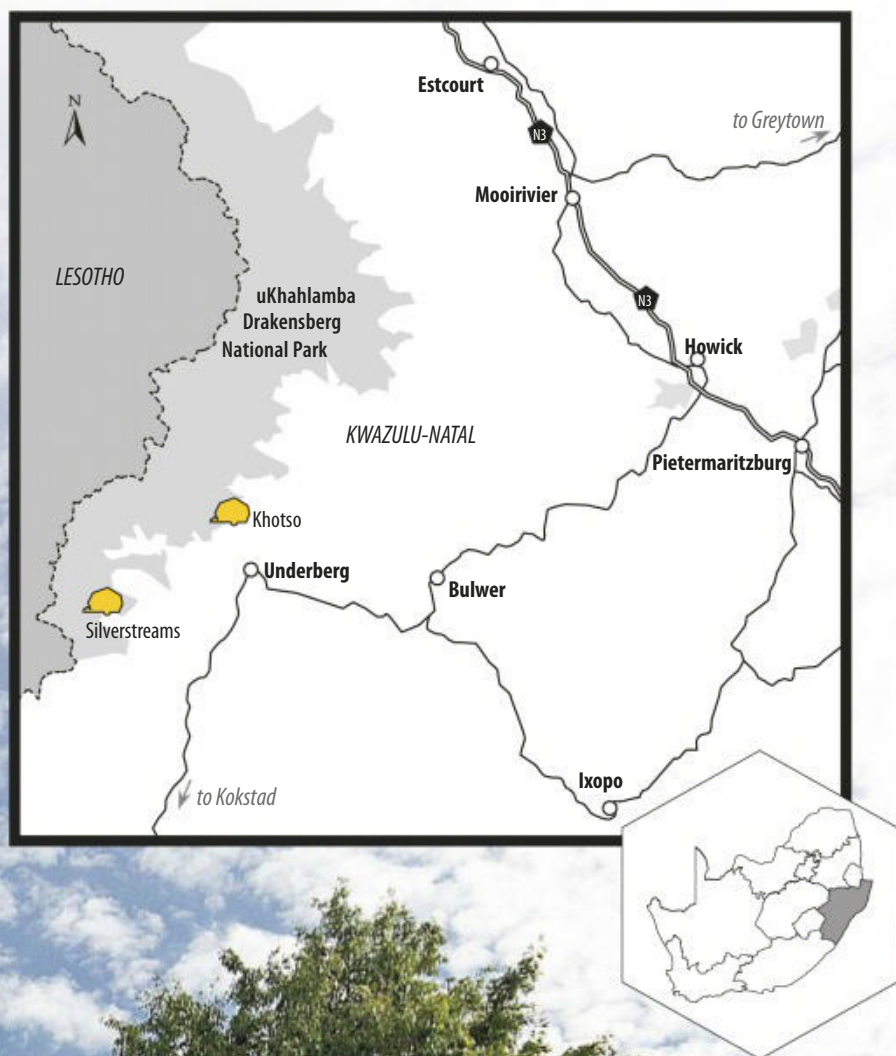
South African Jeep agents are still waiting for a memo from Stellantis that the Gladiator is coming.

Disappear in the *Drakensberg*

The Drakensberg area is the epitome of natural beauty.
Visit these two campsites where you will find true peace.

Words and photos **Leon Botha**





There are many reasons why the Drakensberg continues to astound. This mountain range stretches more than 1 000 km from north to south and forms various official borders – for Lesotho, KwaZulu-Natal, the Free State, and Mpumalanga, among others. Plus, you'll find Southern Africa's highest peak here.

The uKhahlamba-Drakensberg National Park in South Africa and the Sehlathebe in Lesotho are collectively known as the Maloti-Drakensberg Transfrontier Park, and it's a UNESCO World Heritage Site. There are not only endangered bird species here, but also a large concentration of San rock art.

Underberg is a bustling business centre close to the southern section of the park. A mere five-minute drive after leaving the town, you can set up camp at Khotso, where you will find a mixture of farm and mountain, with the emphasis on silence in nature. Around 30 km farther, the road ends at the Boesmansnek border post (in the heritage area), with the Silverstreams campsite right next door. The sky looks bluer and the mountains greener as you sit down to relax next to a mountain stream with its crystal-clear water.



SILVERSTREAMS

Answering the call of the mountains

When driving on the N3, turn off at Howick, and barely 100 km later, you get to Underberg, the last town you'll drive through. There are two ways to get from here to the 35-year-old Silverstreams campsite. The shortcut has the longest section of dirt road (32 km), while the opposite is true if you drive the longer route. In reality, it doesn't matter much which you choose, as both roads are passable when towing a caravan – the dirt road has only some rocky areas. If you take this road, there's a small stretch of tar a short distance from Silverstreams, across from the Bushman's Nek resort.

Shortly after passing through the entrance gate, the shop lies on your left, with the campsite a few hundred metres along on the right. Reception is at the campsite, but if you want to stop here first, you'll be able to turn around in the shop's parking lot with your towing combination.

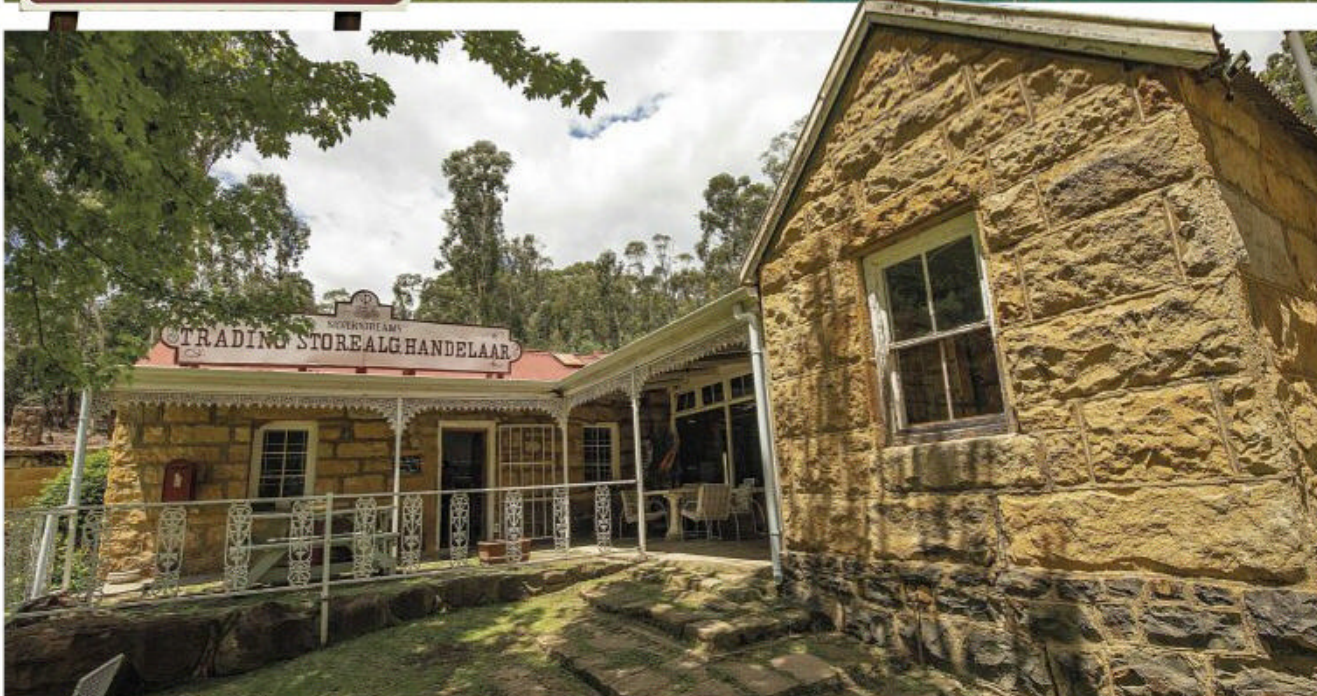
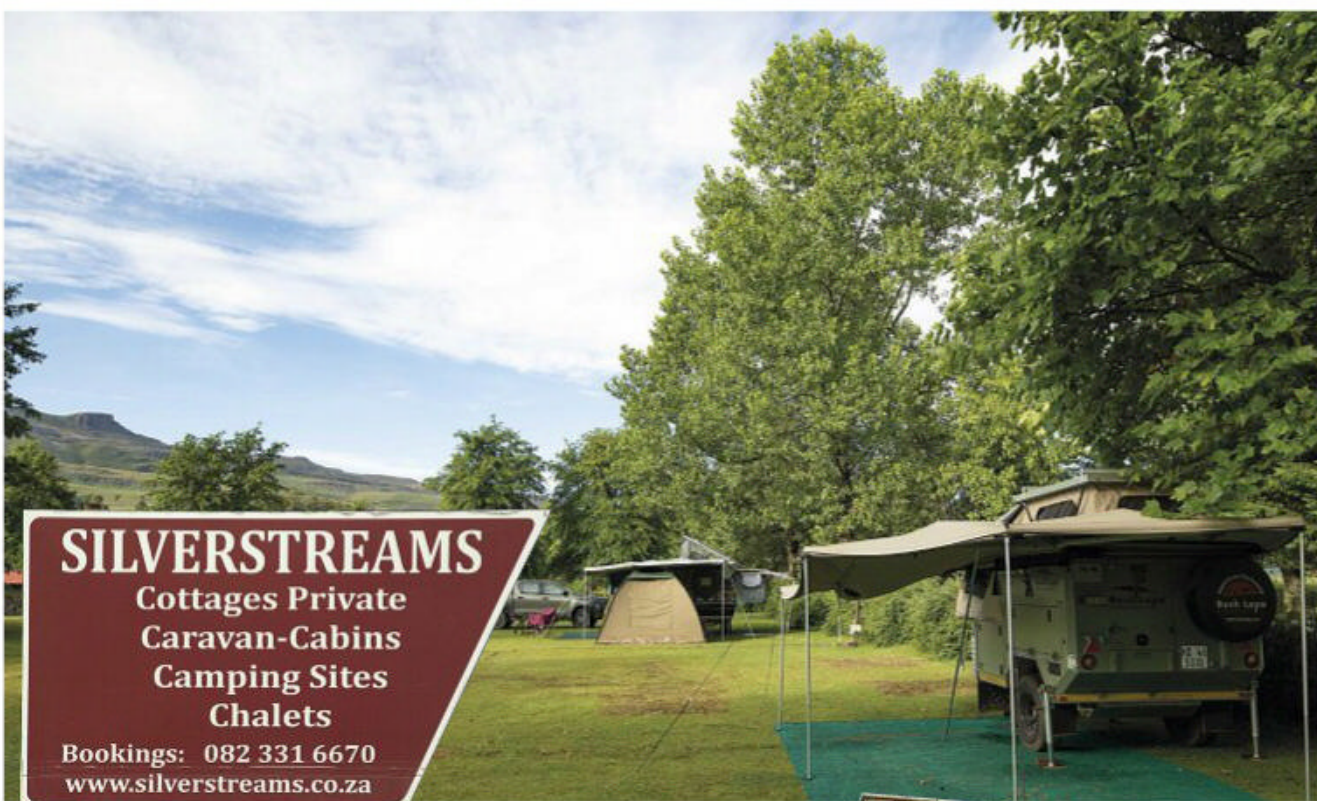
The shop, a neat sandstone building, has the basic necessities for sale. Think long-life milk, tinned food, instant coffee, and even headache powders and allergy medication, as well as wine and beer. It's open daily from 08:00 to 17:30.

To get to the campsite, drive over the single-lane concrete bridge over the Ngwangwane River. It's likely you'll see a number of flyfishers standing here, because the sparkling mountain water is just the place for brown trout – besides, fishing is for free when camping at Silverstreams. The owners prefer that you catch and release, but if it's big enough, you may keep it for supper.

As you drive across the bridge, show the kids the two ropes tied high in the trees to the right of the bridge – they'll be able to swing across the water later.

The campsite is laid out on the huge lawn on the right, and you turn right at the first turn-off to get to reception.

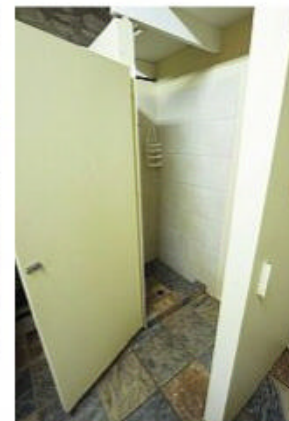
The stands are divided into four sections. Straight across from reception you'll find the first block of 12 stands – together, they're roughly the size of a quarter of a rugby field. Two rows of stands face each other, each with a number against a pole. The grass resembles that of a rugby



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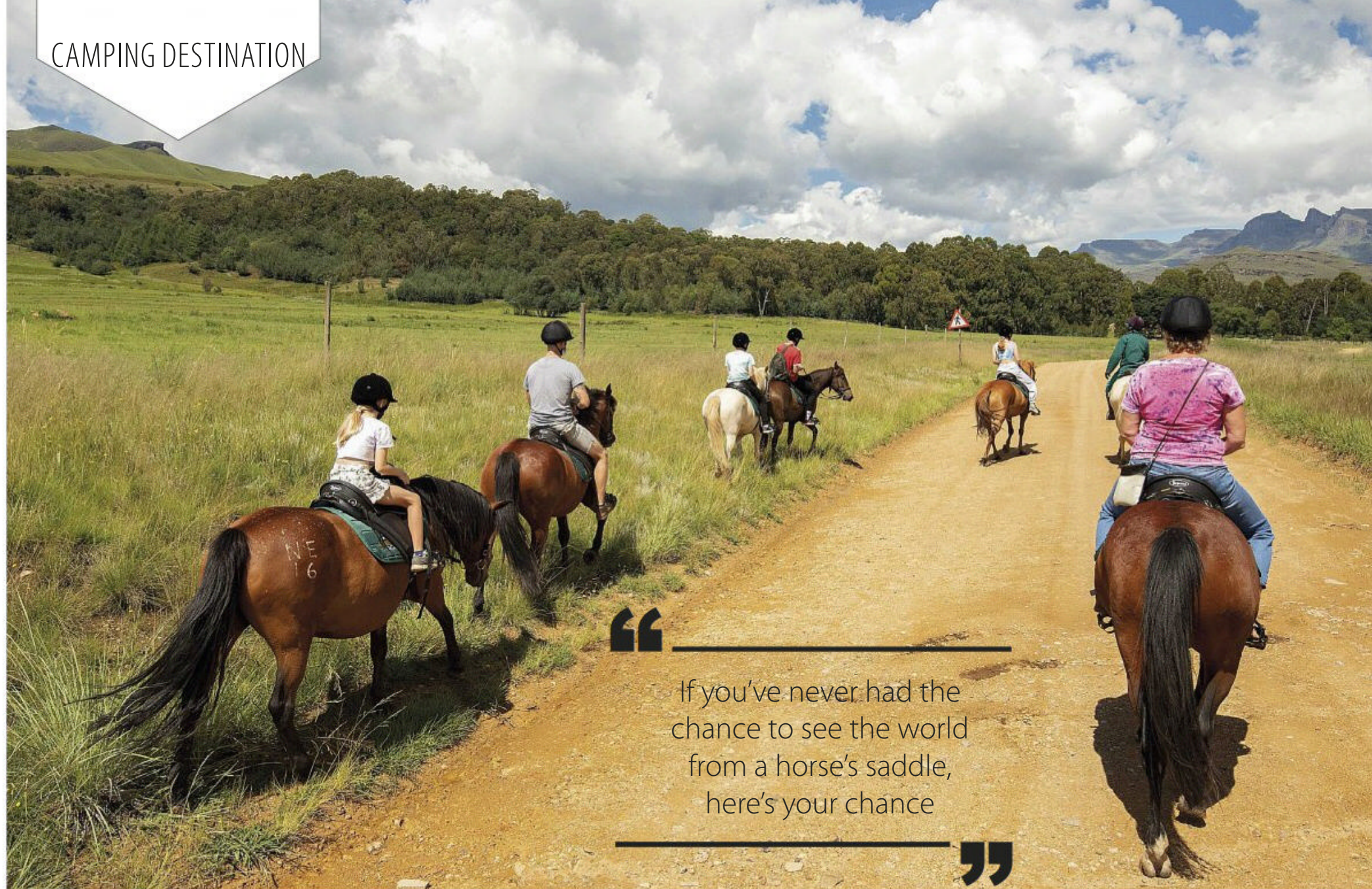
The shortcut has the longest section of dirt road (32 km), while the opposite is true if you drive the longer route

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WELL WATERED. The river and its waterfall offers welcome respite in the summer months. But, it's also the time of the year when you have to get used to afternoon showers.





pitch as well and there are many trees on the side – poplar, cypress, pine, and oak. A vague dark strip on the grass indicates your boundary, and your power point uses an ordinary domestic socket. There’s also a tap nearby if you want to send one of the kids to quickly fill the kettle. As with the rest of the stands, there’s no permanent braai spot on your stand, but as soon as you’ve settled in, a staff member will bring you a loose-standing one.

The bathroom building with its thatched roof is on the other side of reception, with the next group of stands on the left behind it. Stand 28 has a large

old poplar tree, but the rest are mostly exposed to the sun.

The third group of eight stands run along the river bank, with trees either in front of or behind you. The final two stands are next to the games room – and that’s roughly in the middle of all the stands.

The ablution facilities consist of two rooms each for women and men. When looking at the tiles, it’s clear two rooms were added to the original building. In the newer women’s facilities, there are two shower cubicles without space to put

your things, plus one that’s twice as big (with a dry side). The room next door also has shower cubicles.

The older section in the men’s side shows some cracks between the tiles and is in need of some attention.

There’s also a spacious single wheelchair-friendly bathroom with rails next to the toilet and an open shower, all on one level. And there’s a table with a baby bath for moms with little ones.

The dishwashing sink is underneath the open roof next to the bathrooms. There is also a washing machine and washing lines – a load is R40 and you pay at reception.



The games room has a table tennis and pool table – there's a payment of R10 for the use of the table tennis equipment and cues, plus a deposit of R50. Next to this room, there's a volleyball court marked on the grass, plus an inflatable pool and a jungle gym.

Do pack your mountain bike and hiking boots to fully enjoy the spectacular scenery. Or go for a horse ride – Pig & Pony are neighbours and offer rides for just about anyone, from

beginners to experienced riders. If you've never had the chance to see the world from a horse's saddle, here's your chance. They allow kids older than 11, and it's a leisurely walk on horseback back to Silverstreams, and you then keep going straight, past the campsite. To the right of the road is a sign indicating that you're now entering the Maloti-Drakensberg Park with the Boesmansnek border post to your right. The road stops here, but pedestrians have access.

SPLISH, SPLASH, AND CATCH. Hook a trout or swim with the kids. And if you bring your own tube, you can float past the campsite, cooldrink in hand.

Briefly | Silverstreams



Campsite 30 level stands on a huge lawn, but not much shade.

Ablution facilities Two rooms each for men and women in one building, plus a single bathroom for wheelchair users or mothers with small children. Some of the facilities are old and need attention.

Price Depending on the season, R350 or R500 pppn for the first four people, thereafter R50 pp (maximum six per stand). During the December holidays, the rate for river stands is R600 pn and you must book for a minimum of seven nights.

Arrival and departure 14:00 and 10:00.

Contact 082 331 6670 or 082 859 8619

silverstreams.co.za

info@silverstreams.co.za

Nearest town Underberg, 36,8 km.

Road condition Depending on which side you come from, the last 24,6 km or 32,4 km is a dirt road in fair condition. Your road caravan will make it if you take it easy. In the rainy season it can get muddy in places.

GPS S29.844433 E29.214952

Drive & Camp says Silverstreams allows two pets per site, and you can arrange to bring a third during the low season for R20 per day extra.

Although the border post is here, the actual Lesotho border is 8 km farther up the mountain.

Your horse now turns left at the border post and ambles to a wide waterfall in the Ngwangwane River with a fabulous open lawn right next to it.

Should horse riding not be for you, do visit the waterfall. It's just over 400 m from the campsite and well worth seeing. This is also where horse riders turn around.

The ride of just under 5 km takes about an hour. Pig & Pony offers three rides a day – at 09:30, 11:30, and 14:30, and it costs R170 pp. (An increase is expected.)

“

The stands are down the hill behind the house. You drive through an opening in a shrub hedge

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KHOTSO

Peace be with you

Khotso is back in the direction of Underberg, with the turn-off 3,7 km outside town just before the Mzimkhulu River. From here, the road leads back to the mountains to the Drakensberg Gardens resort. Khotso's gate is roughly 6 km to the right in the foothills of the Drakensberg.

A decent kilometre-long dirt road takes you up a final hill in this beautiful landscape. Maybe you'll be lucky enough to see the two horses in the camp on the left, each with a young foal. In the second camp on the right are more horses, and in a third, again on the left, some merino sheep. The office is in the house on the right with Khotso in mosaic. "Khotso" means peace, and you'll soon figure out, the name is absolutely spot on. For the time being, keep left with your tow combination until just past the house where there is ample parking.

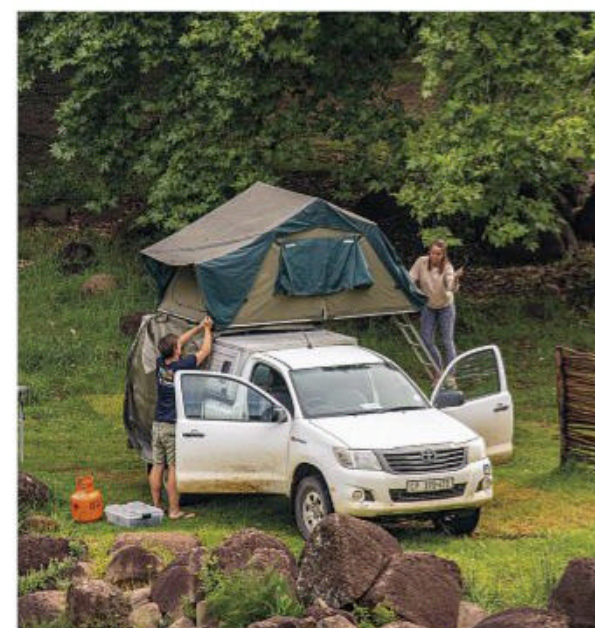
Khotso is not a typical camping resort and offers a variety of accommodation options that include rondavels, a large wooden house, and rooms – plus a camping area, of course.

The stands are down the hill behind the house. You drive through an opening in a shrub hedge. Three electric lanterns hang among the tree branches above a sign indicating the campsite. About 50 m along, there's a stream with a high grassy hill on other side. The first stands are to the left and right of the road near the fence under shade trees, but they are a bit tight for a caravan and rather meant for tents.

The first bathrooms are in the building to the left of the road and the kitchen in the building on the right. The next few stands are also surrounded by a shrub hedge; there's a power point and to the right is a large shade tree. They're fairly level and grassy.

The best stands are by the stream with a nice big lawn and a built-in braai area. Across from you is a metre-high waterfall that gets quite noisy at night.

Keep to the right of the kitchen; there's a small terrace that's perfect for a bakkie and rooftop tent, but keep going if you have a caravan and pick a spot on the open lawn that's on a slight slope to the river (that's also on your left). You can





PRETTY ON THE INSIDE. From the outside, Khotso's bathrooms and kitchen aren't all that impressive. But, once you step inside, you realise that someone took the time to design a rustic yet attractive space.

pitch camp anywhere, but if you want to braai, choose one close to a built-in braai. If yours doesn't have a grid, fetch one from behind the kitchen. These stands have a couple of power points (domestic sockets), but no shade.

The ablution facility is an excellent case study of how a smart layout can make the most with the bare minimum. Across from the lower stands is a big eucalyptus clump with smaller bamboo growth at its foot – and this is where the second bathroom is hidden – with four shower cubicles and two toilets at the end. In front of the shower cubicles is an open veranda with only a shower curtain between you and the outside. Inside, there's a shoulder-height panel that's open at the top. The showers are simple yet practical and clean – it's lovely to shower "in nature" this way. In front of the toilets are two enamel dishes on a wooden top that have been converted into sinks. Everyone can use these facilities – as is the case with the other bathroom and the kitchen – and the gas geyser ensures hot water.

Men and women also share the top facilities. The building with its cement finish looks subdued compared to the interior finishes, but it's wonderfully distinctive. Inside are two ceramic basins on a wooden top, complete with its original knots and curves. The mirrors are mounted inside an old double-framed window – with clips and all – and deserve a prize for originality. In the two smaller rooms next to the common area are two private bathrooms, each with a sliding door, that contain a toilet, shower, and basin.

The communal kitchen also deserves applause. It has a veranda with a roof over it with a hatch, each in two adjoining walls and two large windows in the other two. Don't be surprised if some of the yard chickens seek shelter on the veranda during an unexpected rainstorm.

There is also a table and bench on the veranda, and you don't even need to unpack your camp kitchen as everything is at your disposal – from pots and pans to cutlery, a gas stove, and a fridge. There's a sink for washing dishes here too. The kitchen light is also unique: a few light bulbs, each in a jam bottle. Next to this building is a built-in braai area (with a grid) and next to that is a fire pit.





Briefly | Khotso



Campsite The camp is informally laid out, but there is easily enough space for up to 12 families.

Ablution facilities Two buildings, one of which is more open and in nature. It's simple and practical and a big plus for the camp. There's a great communal kitchen, too.

Price R150 pppn. (R80 for kids.)

Arrival and departure No set times.

Contact 082 412 5540 info@khotso.co.za

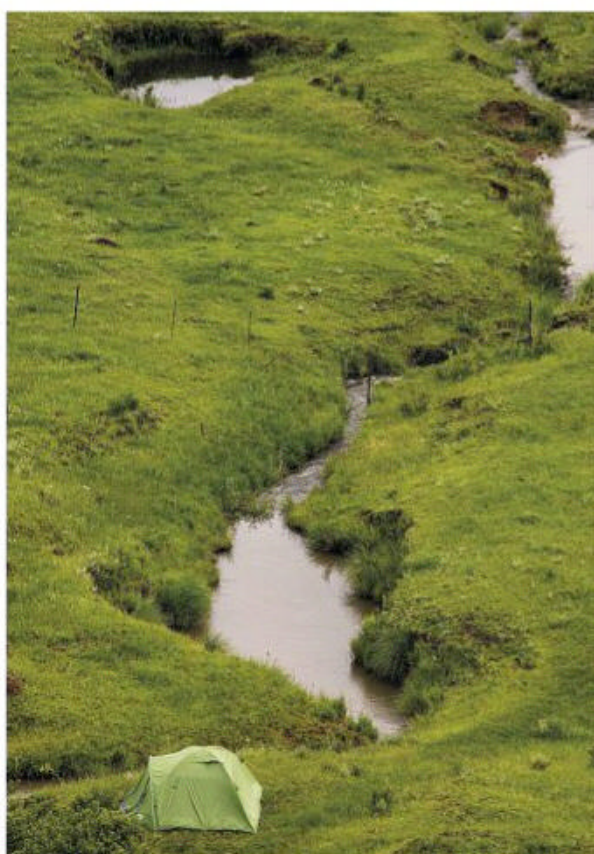
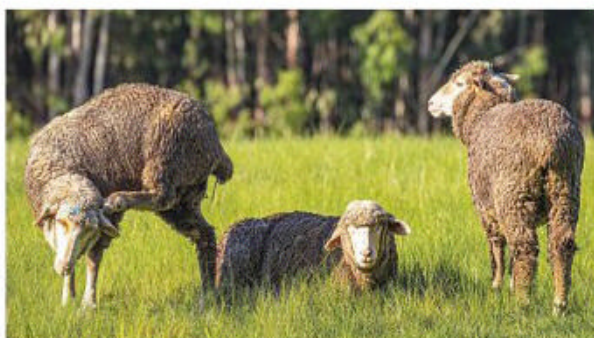
info@khotso.co.za

Nearest town Underberg, 10,4 km.

Road conditions The last kilometre is a nice dirt road.

GPS S29.746345 E29.427155

Drive & Camp says Pets are allowed, but you must arrange in advance to bring them along.



The best way to appreciate nature is to climb the hill across from the campsite. Take the wooden bridge over the stream and before you know it, you'll stand in awe of the view.

An even better idea is to walk up the mountain next to the stream all the way to the Blues Pool – it's roughly 1,5 km from reception, and the walk there and back takes about two hours.

You'll spot the first blue arrow for Blues Pool against a tree opposite where they saddle the horses. Walk past another camp with sheep – here we saw people counting sheep while an excited sheepdog helped herd another lot. The path eventually runs next to the stream, and now you gradually start walking uphill. It's not hectic at all, and even though you're mostly walking through grass, keep your eyes peeled for stretches of bramble bushes with those distinctive red and black berries – watch out for thorns! You'll come to a small

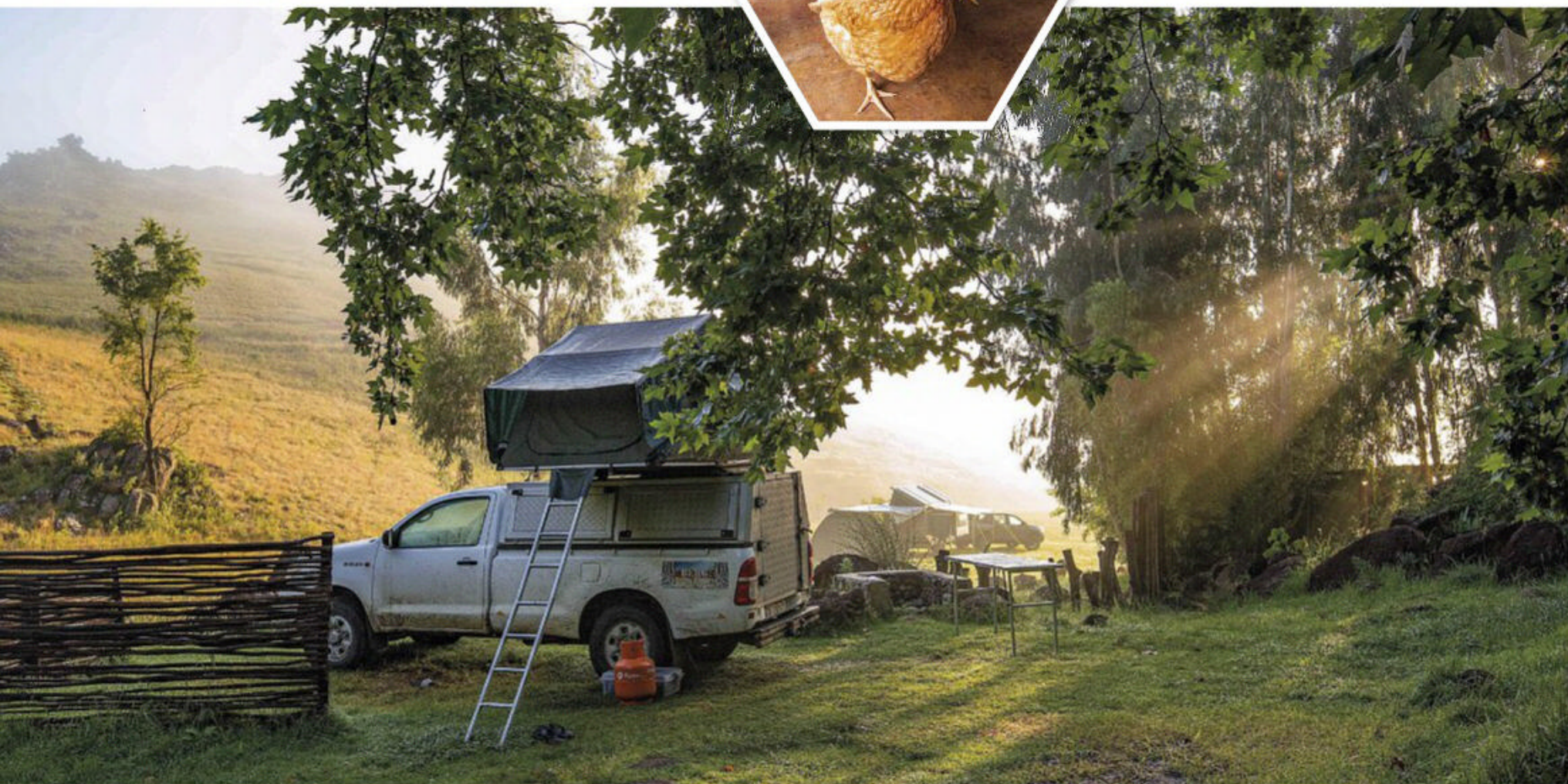
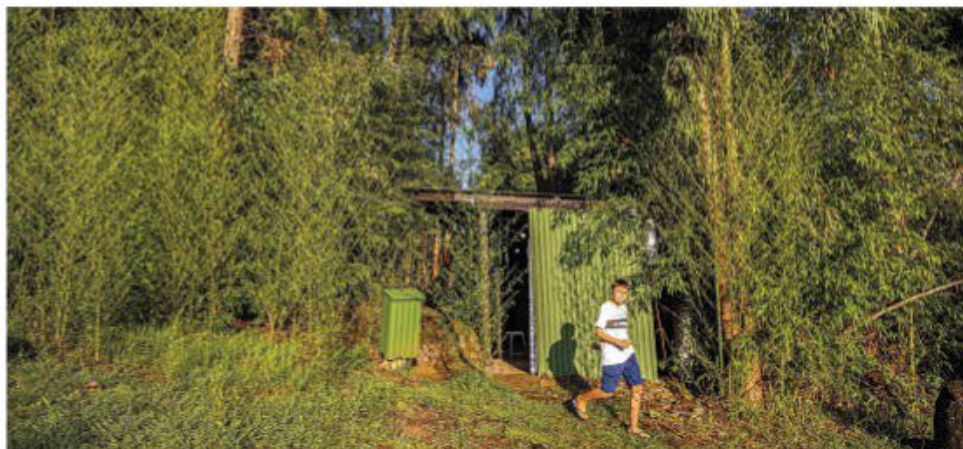
building with a corrugated-iron roof on the other side of the stream and the pool right ahead of you. Jump in and enjoy cooling down while breathing the freshest of air.

Keen for even more fun? Go tubing down the Mzimkhulu River with the kids (only during December holidays and over Easter). You'll need to drive back to the tar road and keep to the right for about a kilometre to where Khotso sets up a marquee tent next to the road. Here, you choose a tube that fits you and jump in. You'll float about 4 km back in the direction of Underberg and, depending on the current, it takes from half an hour to an hour and a half. They have life jackets for those who want it, but once you get comfy on your tube, the river is quite calm and you should be okay. Khotso's staff will pick you up at the end of the ride and take you back to the starting point. It costs R150 per ride – pay at reception.





ALL AROUND YOU. You're surrounded by the most spectacular natural beauty and domesticated animals like horses, sheep, and even curious chickens.



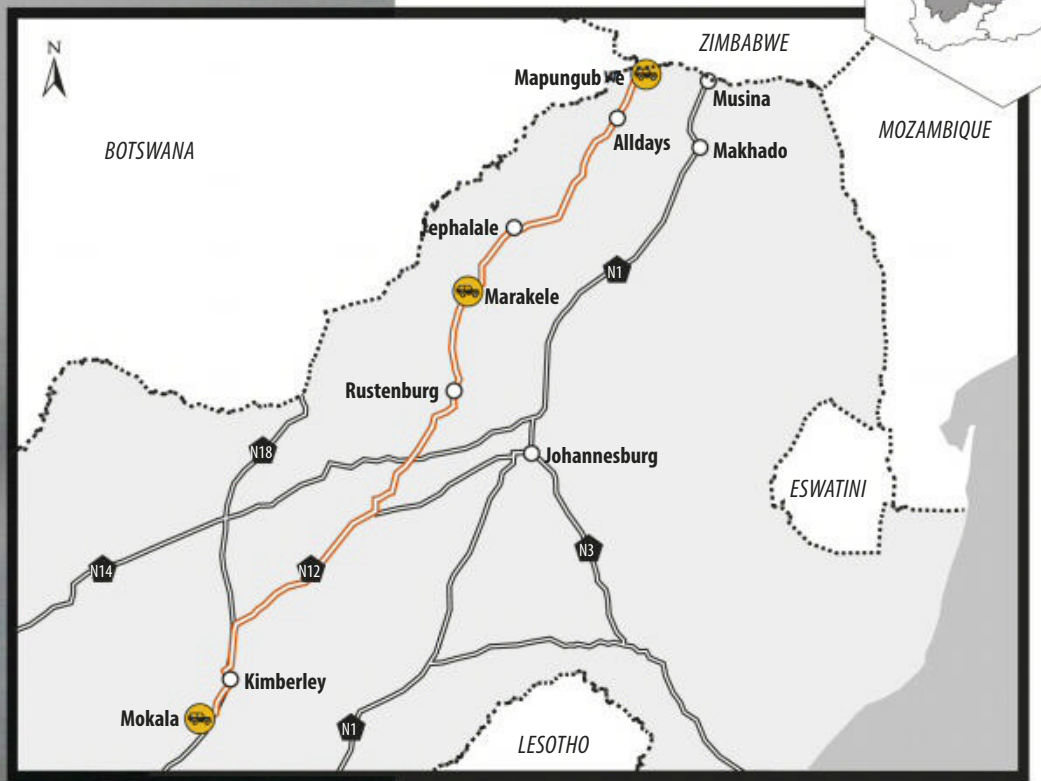
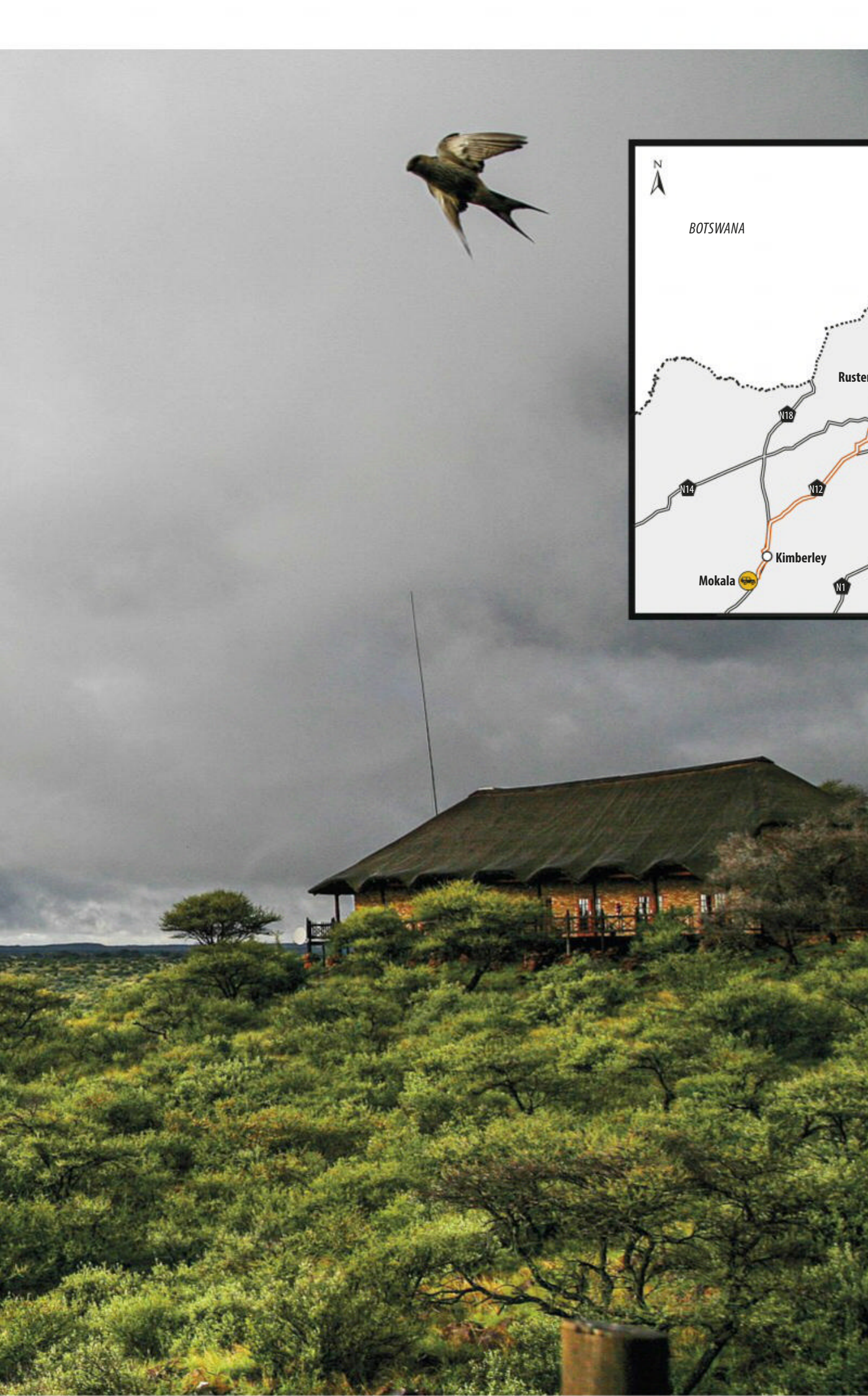


stands for more!



Join us as we visit three national parks with names starting with an M: Mokala, Marakele, and Mapungubwe. Coincidentally, you can draw a straight line that stretches across 900 km to link these three reserves. Hop in and let's go...

Words and photos **Cyril Kloppe**



MOKALA NATIONAL PARK The smell of rain...

It rained frequently during our visit to Mokala, with pools of sunlight invigorating the veld as the clouds dribbled fine droplets onto the grateful earth, releasing that earthy, woody scent called petrichor.

The area south of Kimberley seems lifeless, and the average motorist on the N12 highway spends more time tuning his car radio to OFM or Umhlobo's fickle signal between the rocky hills than looking at the veld. At the Mokala National Park, however, the veil lifts from your eyes and you see the scenery in an entirely different light.

Mokala is South Africa's youngest national park, and the name is derived from the Tswana word for a camel thorn tree. The newly built entrance gate (S29.06999 E24.49702) is located 50 km south of Kimberley.

When you sign in at reception, you'll receive a road map printed on glossy paper containing emergency numbers, GPS coordinates, and interesting snippets of information.

This morning, the trail starts at the Lilydale Rest Camp next to the Riet River in the northeast of the park. Drive through an electric gate and turn right at the sign for the Vaalbos Loop. It's a fine dirt road with only a slight median, and you could drive it in a Toyota Corolla. Before our visit, though, it was raining cats and dogs, and there were still some deep mud holes that would stop a sedan. The Vaalbos Loop is about 14 km long and meanders through a vast grass plain, dotted with tufts of

Each of these three national parks boasts 4x4 trails – some are ridiculously easy and you could master them in a normal two-wheel drive bakkie or SUV, while others require four-wheel drive and a bit more effort.

The route starts 50 km south of Kimberley in the Northern Cape, next

to the Riet River in the Mokala National Park, where the 4x4 roads are relatively tame. From there, we drive to the Marakele National Park, where the roads are a bit more challenging but aren't anything to worry about. Finally, we make our way through the bushveld to the Mapungubwe National Park. Here, there are a few 4x4 trails where you have to know your stuff.

4X4 DESTINATION

thorn trees. Porcupines and impalas graze here and there, while warthogs dig holes next to the road, tails in the air.

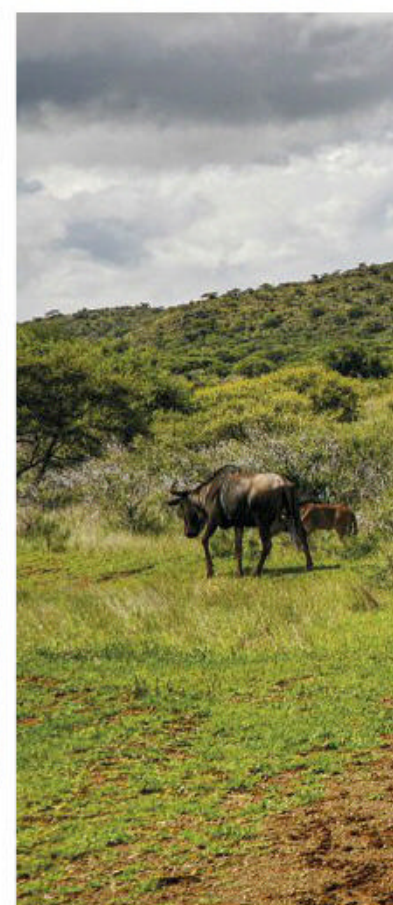
You'll see turn-offs to the Riet River, but access is strictly forbidden, unless you've booked one of the two fishing spots: De Krans and Kleinbek.

Join the main road that runs along the length of the park – it has a stone chip surface, making it drivable even in inclement weather. After only 3 km, you'll find a sign that sends you to the right on the Marakeng 4x4 route – don't worry, all the roads are clearly marked on the road map. This 3 km long twin-track is by no means challenging, but the tall median could damage low vehicles. The thorn trees grow with abandon here: there's blackthorn (*Senegalia mellifera*), yellow pomegranate or Karoo gold (*Rhigozum obovatum*) and camel thorn (*Vachellia erioloba*) everywhere you look. As far as animals are concerned, you'll probably see black and blue wildebeest, red hartebeest, and common tsessebe.

The Marakeng Loop ends in the main road, but here you turn left again on the Mallifera 4x4 route. As with the previous off-road route, a notice warns that the road is only intended for 4x4 vehicles, but it's once again relatively comfortable, as long as your vehicle has proper ground clearance. It's even more densely forested here than on the Marakeng loop, with umbrella thorn (*Vachellia tortilis*) filling the gaps between thorn trees. You often frighten an animal that hasn't seen or heard you arrive. Halfway along the 4,5 km twin-track, you'll find a trampled waterhole next to a farm dam where game comes to drink in the dry summer months.

The next interesting road is Knietjie Loop, named after the Lehmann love grass, or knietjie grass in Afrikaans (*Eragrostis lehmanniana*), that grows so lush here, but the road was unfortunately closed during our visit. There's also a turn-off to the Camel Thorn Tree House, one of a few romantic self-catering tree houses in the park, but access is for guests only.

Just about 2 km later on the main road we came across the Camel Thorn Loop, where we encountered rangers who were busy closing the entrance to this route with red-and-white barrier tape. They explained some roads, including Knietjie Loop, were flooded. The rangers checked out our vehicle, lifted the tape, and invited us to follow them on Camel



TWO BY TWO. Some twin tracks (above) do have a high median that might damage city sedans. Tree trunks conform to zebra bodies due to years of back rubs (middle) and during the rainy season you can expect serious mud (top and right).



WONDERFUL WORLD. The trees at Motswele campsite (top) offer plenty of shade while those who opt not to camp can experience beautiful views at Lilydale (below).



Thorn Loop. This 8 km route was indeed a mud bath, but we engaged four-wheel drive and hardly struggled. The rangers even allowed us to get out and take pictures of our vehicle splashing through the pools of mud. Unfortunately, SANParks doesn't have the manpower to stand guard at every turn-off to turn away sedans and allow only 4x4 vehicles through – never mind the time to recover tourists stuck in mud. Hence the temporary closure of certain roads for all vehicles during the rainy season.

Now you follow the 2,6 km Doornlaagte Loop – the thickets open slightly, and

you can see deeper into the veld. Join the main road and stop at the Stofdam bird sanctuary to see if you can catch a common scimitarbill or cisticola on camera. Next to the shelter is a relatively neat flushing loo with toilet paper and a basin.

Drive past Dries se Gat – a large waterhole where wildlife congregate in dry times and sociable weavers build huge nests – to the Mosu Lodge. Mosu is similar to the Lilydale Rest Camp – there's a swimming pool and reception building with a shop where you can buy souvenirs, braai packs, and basic provisions. The

self-catering chalets are close together, and with our visit they were all completely empty. Whereas Lilydale's cottages are always full...

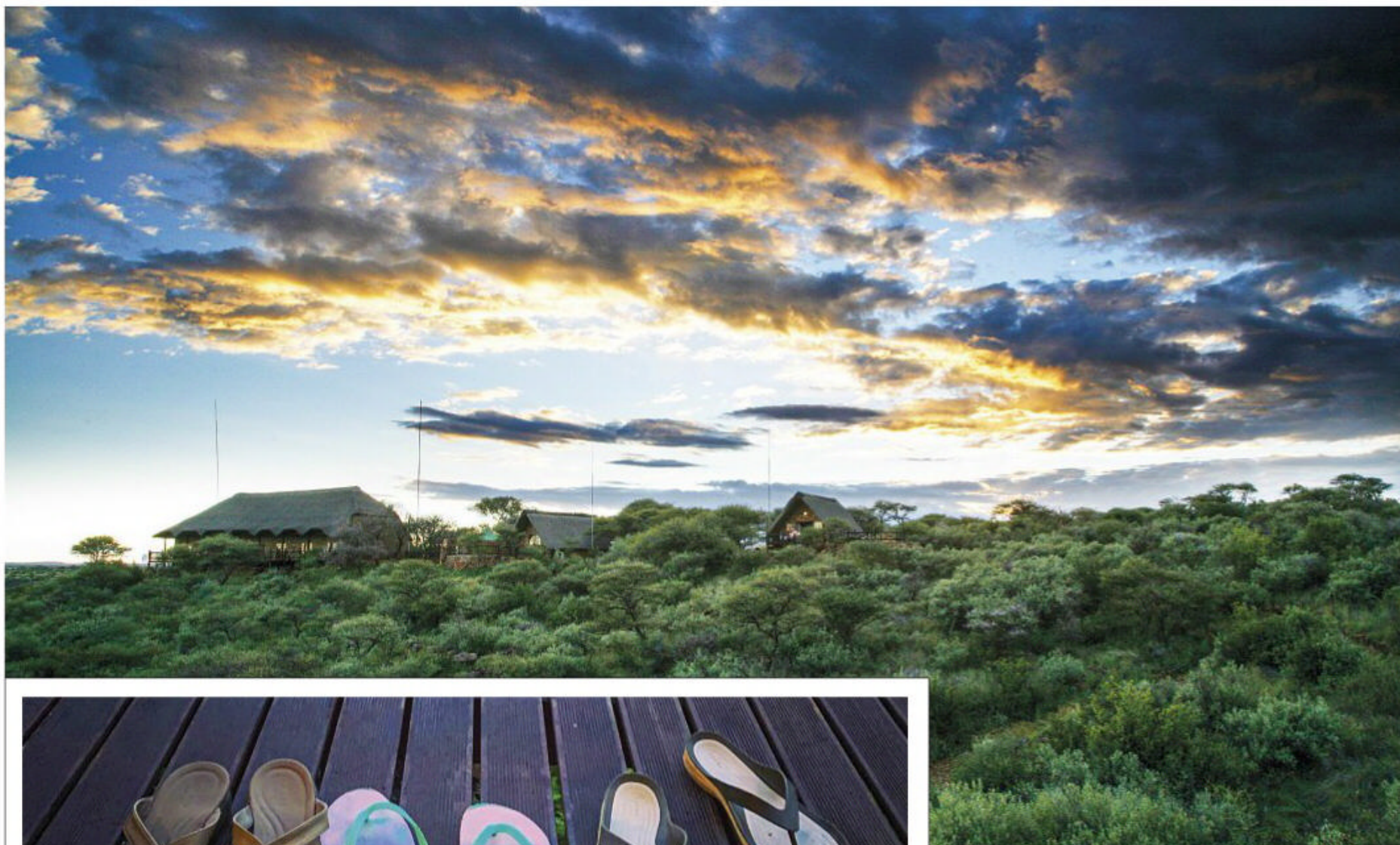
Now follow the Tsessebe Loop between dolerite hills to the Motswedi campsite. Here, you'll find three ablution blocks that serve six stands. Each ablution block is divided into two, and there are two kitchens, each with a two-plate gas stove and gas fridge/freezer. There's no

municipal power supply here; electricity is generated by solar panels.

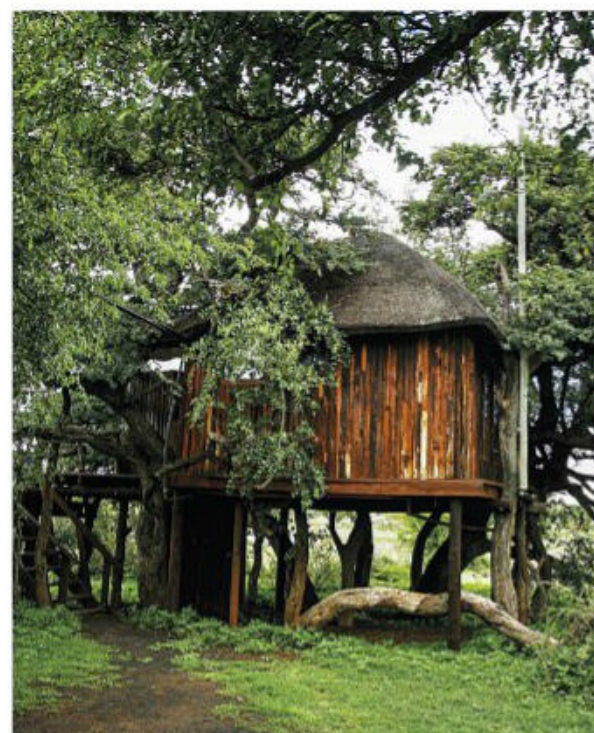
Take one last trip along the 13 km long Motopi Loop through beautiful rocky ridges on the western side of the park. It may feel somewhat overkill to drive every single road in the park, but on the Motopi trail we saw giraffes and sable antelopes. The latter is a stately species that only selects the best pastures – that's probably why they always look the picture of health. You've had

a proper introduction to the park now, and the sun is already getting low.

The roads in the Mokala National Park – which you may drive without special permission – are a total of 100 km and will keep you busy for at least six hours. They get a 1 – maybe a 2 – out of 5 rating on our difficulty scale, even when the roads are muddy, as with our visit. Light a fire for the last time before you travel north tomorrow morning to where bigger challenges await.



THE AIR UP THERE. Buildings with thatched roofs all have tall lightning rods, even the tree houses (below).



Where we stayed

Lilydale Rest Camp, Mokala National Park

This rest camp has four free-standing double-storey self-catering chalets, each sleeping five, and four single-storey townhouses (making a total of eight self-catering units next to one another) each sleeping two to three guests.

Each of the 12 self-catering units has a fully equipped kitchen, bathroom, 220 V power supply, air con, and a braai area next to a balcony with wooden furniture. You park your bakkie next to your house, but it's not

under cover. Cleaners arrive around 10:00 to make your bed, they also wipe the floor, provide toilet paper, and clean the braai area, but you wash your own dishes. There's a swimming pool and café at reception, plus a pool table, bar, and restaurant – the latter was closed during our visit due to the pandemic.

Price From R1 005 pn for two people (R145 for children under 13).

Contact 053 204 8300 (Lilydale)

tess.white@sanparks.org sanparks.org



MARAKELE NATIONAL PARK The green grass of home from home

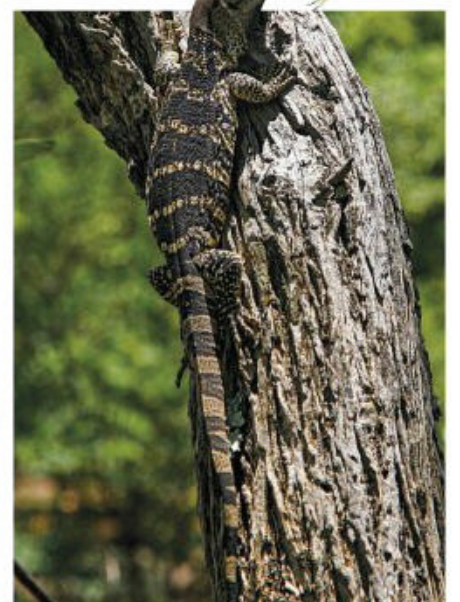
Before we get to the route between Mokala and Marakele, we'd like to just mention that the Marakele National Park may well be the highlight of your trip.

The low-lying parts are emerald in colour, but from above the earth looks olive and lime green. Sure, Mokala (where we've just been) and Mapungubwe (where we still need to go) have qualities that exceed Marakele, but overall, Marakele's scenery impressed us the most. Having said that, let's get going.

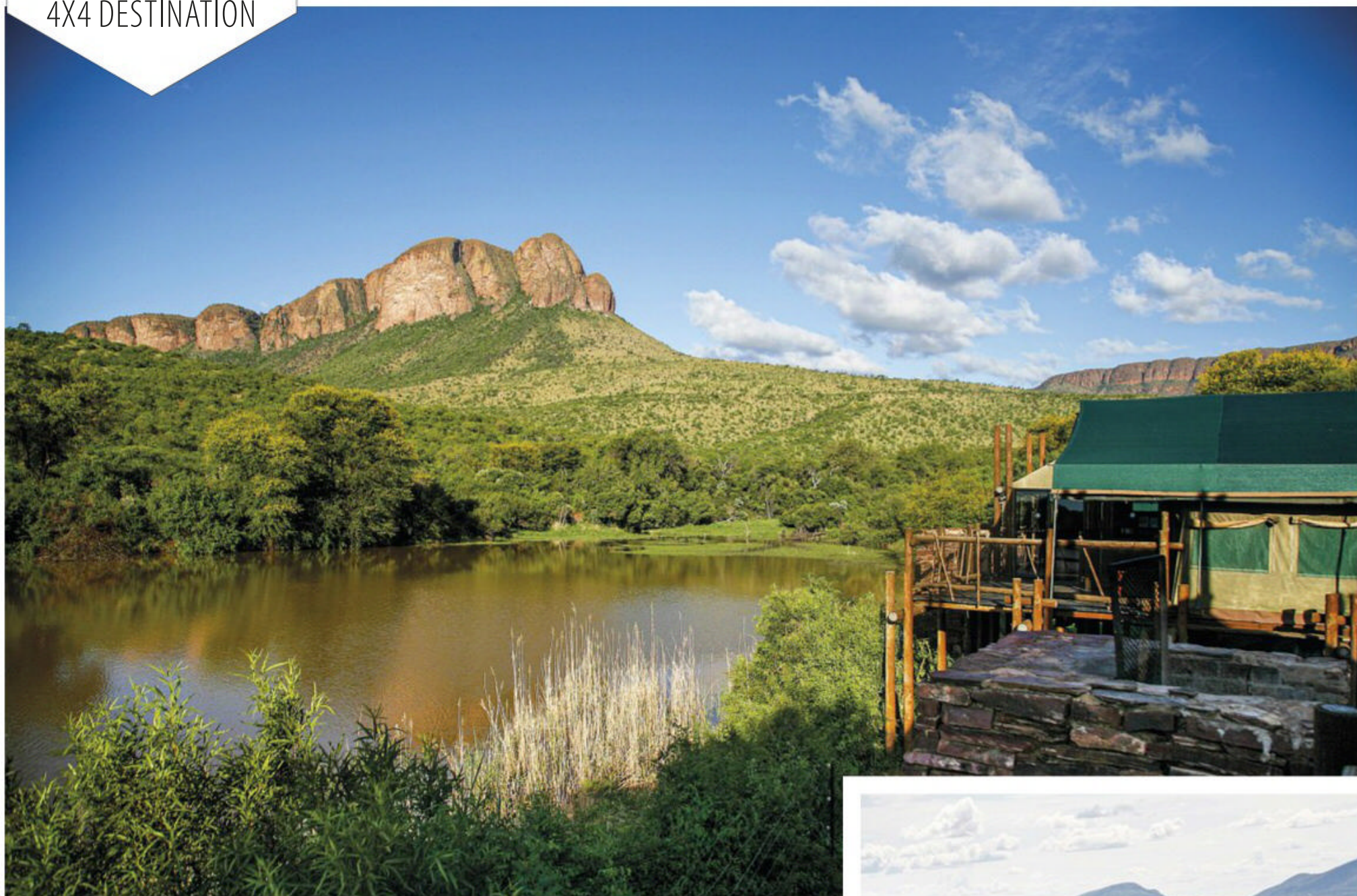
From Mokala, take the N12 motorway through Kimberley's busy streets and from the Northern Cape to the North West. Turn off at Klerksdorp and take the R30 regional road through Ventersdorp, Derby, behind Sun City through the Pilanesberg to Thabazimbi. It's a tarred road of around 700 km, and you'll reach Thabazimbi in the late afternoon. Get some provisions at the Thaba Mall, but just make sure to check in at Marakele before 18:00.

The park's gate is 12 km northeast of Thabazimbi, along Alma Road. When you sign in, you will receive a map indicating the routes in the park, with your permit stapled to it. Settle in at the Bontle Rest Camp or Tlopi Tented Camp, because tomorrow you're going to explore the park.

Marakele is divided into two by the Rooiberg-Hoopdal road, a provincial



GENESIS. There's an elevated valley (middle) that could easily pass for the Garden of Eden. It has reptiles in trees and wildlife that don't bat an eye as you drive past. Don't be fooled, though, this is wild country and the ellies will roll your car if you annoy them by getting too close.



regional road. The tamer section is to the left of the road, with game that won't eat you or roll your car. And this is where the Bontle Rest Camp is located in the bush.

We wrote about Bontle in January 2018 (see *Drive & Camp* # 06), and can report that the campsite hasn't deteriorated in any way. There are still 36 stands here with three neat ablution blocks and an angry ostrich male who wants to peck you when you take photos of him.

This is where our route begins inside the park: at Bontle Dam on the Tsungulu Loop. If you're towing an off-road trailer or caravan, leave it in the camp, as the park's narrow roads aren't suitable for caravans, especially in the mountain passes in the eastern part of Marakele (more on this later).

The road winds through typical bushveld, monitor lizards climb up tree trunks, and birds chirp merrily in the branches. The bird list you can download on the SANParks website shows 315 species, including various types of rollers, shrikes, and waxbills.

On the Tshungulu gravel road, you'll find a sign for the Vaalbos Loop and a warning that only 4x4 vehicles are

ROOM WITH A VIEW. The dome above Thlopi Dam resembles Sugarloaf Mountain in Rio and it is a great navigational aid for when you find yourself lost on the multitude of roads inside the park.

allowed. The road, however, isn't really challenging, and the surface looks the same as all the other dirt roads in the area.

Next in line is the Kudu trail, and then the Kgokong trail that leads to the Bollonoto bird sanctuary, where you're allowed to stop and get out of your vehicle. The trees on the way to the shelter have nameplates. Names such as donkey berry (*Grewia flavescens*), weeping wattle (*Peltophorum africanum*), and black monkey thorn (*Senegalia burkei*).

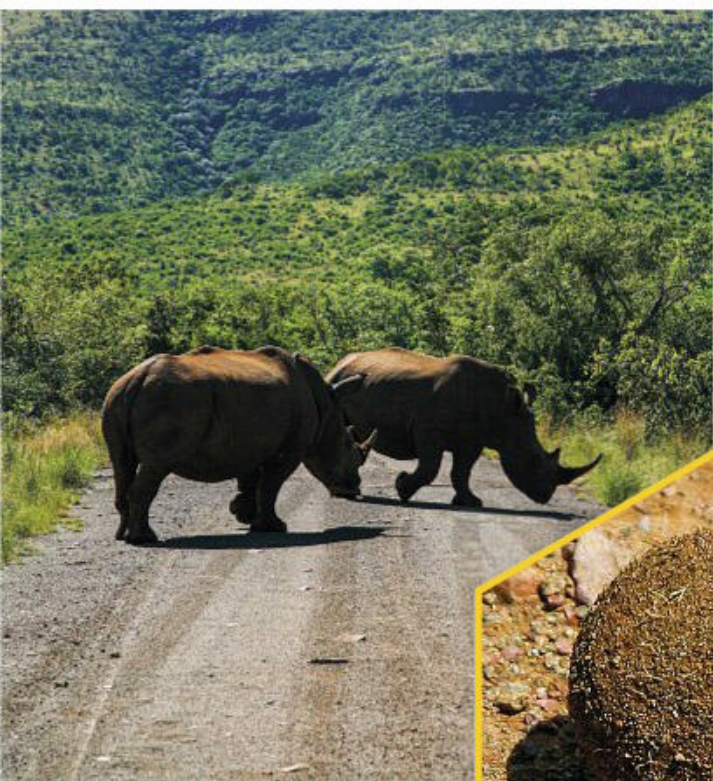
Join the park's main road – the Ndlopfu road – to an underpass under a regional road. On the other side of this is an electric gate. Press the button for it to open. You're now in the wild section of Marakele, and this is where you can meet all the members of the Big 5.

The rugged bushveld thins as you ascend the Waterberg, and the dirt road turns into a 15 km tarred road called the Lenong Route. This road starts at an altitude of 1 200 m and winds blissfully uphill into a hidden valley at an altitude



of 1 600 m. You'll be forgiven for thinking you've arrived at the Garden of Eden, and chances are good that you'll spot zebras and elephants here.

The Lenong Pass starts on the other side of the valley, and this is where it gets a bit more serious. The mountain road is particularly narrow – just wide enough for one vehicle – and the abyss on the passenger side is terrifying for those with a fear of heights. Vehicles heading uphill have priority to drive, and those coming down must reverse to where it's safe to pass each other. It's dangerous, and it will help if your travel companion gets out to indicate how close to the edge of the road your rig's tyres are.



LET'S DIVE! A huge culvert below the Hoopdal-Rooiberg road (above) joins the eastern and western sections of the park together. Be patient with dung beetles rolling their treasure along the trails, and also with travellers towing their caravans along the rougher parts within the park.



The Lenong Pass is about 5 km long and ends at an altitude of 2 050 m. Here, the veld opens, with cabbage trees (*Cussonia spicata*) and sugarbush (*Protea repens*) growing here and there on the grass-covered peak.

After enjoying a picnic – there are no braai facilities here – it's time to return down the same mountain pass. Now it's the driver's turn to look into the abyss. After about 10 km, there's a turn-off to the right for the Mbidi route. This dirt road descends straight down for 3 km and then suddenly veers left. At its 90° turn, there's a great 4x4 mountain trail, but you may only drive this one with special permission from the park manager and a park ranger will accompany you.

The Mbidi route ends at the Tlopi Dam. Tlopi's self-catering chalets are a popular place to spend the night and are often booked months in advance. Tonight, sit next to your fire and compare Mokala and Marakele while wondering what Mapungubwe holds in store...

Where we stayed

Tlopi Tented Camp, Marakele National Park

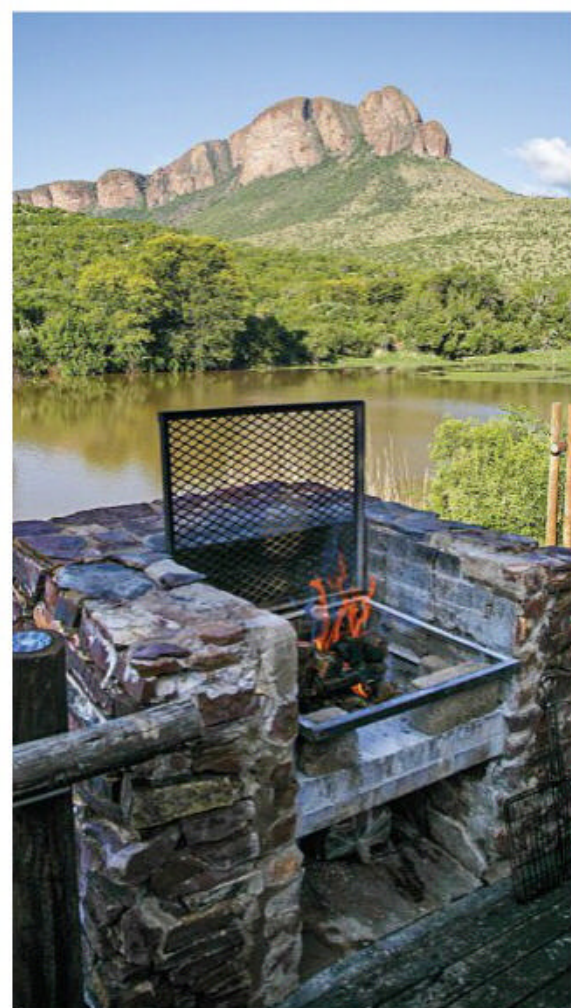
A holiday home at Tlopi consists of two tents on a wooden deck elevated high above the ground by stilts.

In the larger one of the two tents is a bedroom with two three-quarter beds, bedside tables, a clothes rack, and a large fan. Staff can also provide a third bed. Adjacent to the bedroom is a bathroom with a shower, toilet, and basin. In the second tent, there's a fully equipped kitchen with cooking and freezing facilities.

On the space between the kitchen and bedroom are armchairs and a braai. There are 10 of these houses and all have a view of a dam where elephants often come to drink. Your bed is made every morning, but you do the dishes.

Price From R1 540 pn for two (R145 for kids under 13).

Contact 014 777 6928 📧 reservations@sanparks.org
📍 sanparks.org





MAPUNGUBWE NATIONAL PARK Midas and his mopane cloak

A Grade 7 pupil would be able to tell you all about the Kingdom of Mapungubwe: how several tribes lived in stone structures and traded in gold. They'd also recount how the original inhabitants moved away in the 13th century due to a severe drought. That's where we're headed.

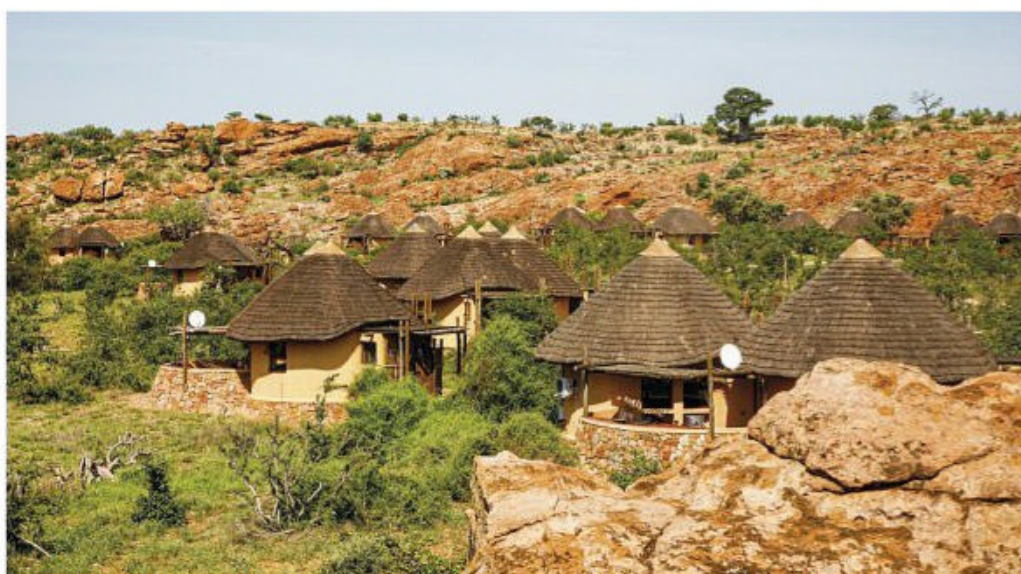
Leave Marakele at the main gate and turn left onto Alma Road. After 2 km,

you come to an intersection, where you turn left again in the direction of Hoopdal. This is the dirt road that runs over the big culvert that connects the west and east of Marakele. The road first leads to Lephalale – buy provisions here – and then it's Marken, Baltimore, and Alldays, before you reach Mapungubwe – a distance of 400 km.

At Lephalale, however, a local warned us that this route had deteriorated and is

in a very bad condition. We were advised to drive over Tom Burke and Maasstroom instead. The latter road was also a challenge, with more potholes than road.

Consider heading for Bela-Bela instead and taking the N1 to Musina. The R572 regional road will take you from there to Mapungubwe. It's 200 km longer than the direct routes through Tom Burke or Baltimore, but your tyres and shock absorbers will thank you for it.





GO BIG OR GO HOME. Everything seems oversized in Mapungubwe, from the trees to the animals. Do take a swim in the pool at Leokwe (far left) but rather get out when the elephants come for a drink and don't touch the horny lizards – they bite!

Sign in at the Mapungubwe National Park, where you'll receive a photocopied paper map. This map shows the routes through the park and also how to get to your overnight stay.

Settle in at your chosen accommodation, whether it's at Leokwe's rondavels, the Vhembe self-catering chalets, Tsungulu Lodge, Limpopo Forest Tented Camp, or the Mazhou campsite, and return to the main gate to drive the circular route through the park the next morning.

Look out for the M01 beacon as soon as you drive through the park gate. From here, a dirt road runs 2 km to a turn-off to the Dubbeldam 4x4 route. This loop is about 6 km long and doesn't really require

four-wheel drive. It's rocky in places, but two-wheel drive bakkies with a diff lock will be fine.

The 4x4 route eventually rejoins the main road, and barely 800 m later there's a turn-off to the Nungu waterhole. This trail is also marked as "4x4 only", but as with the Dubbeldam route, it's not that challenging.

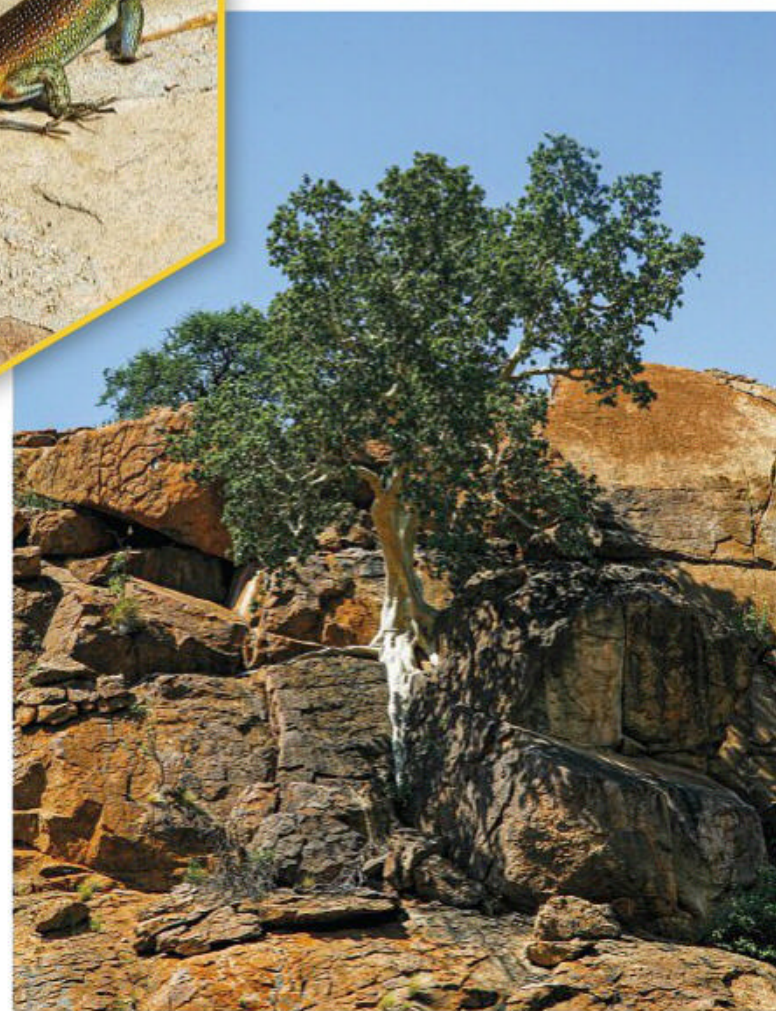
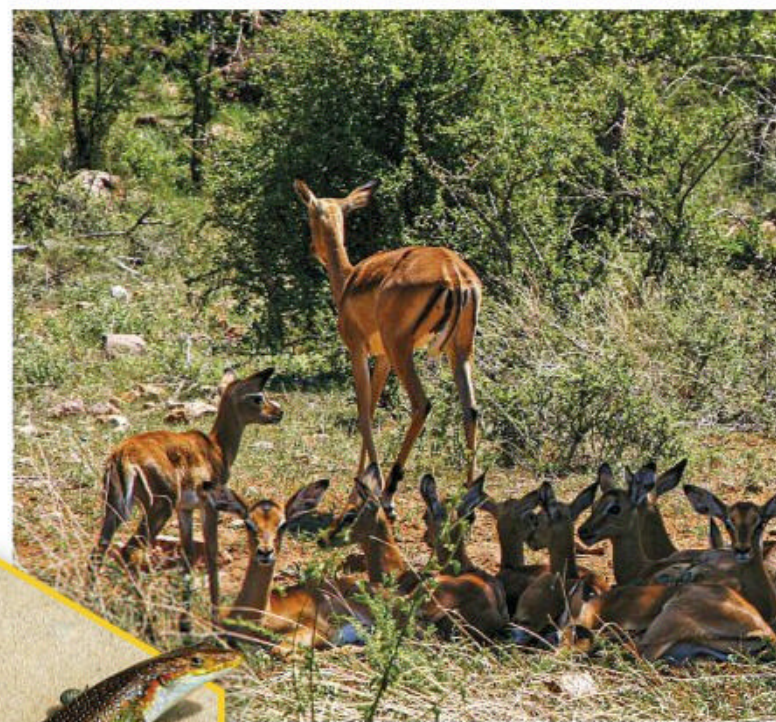
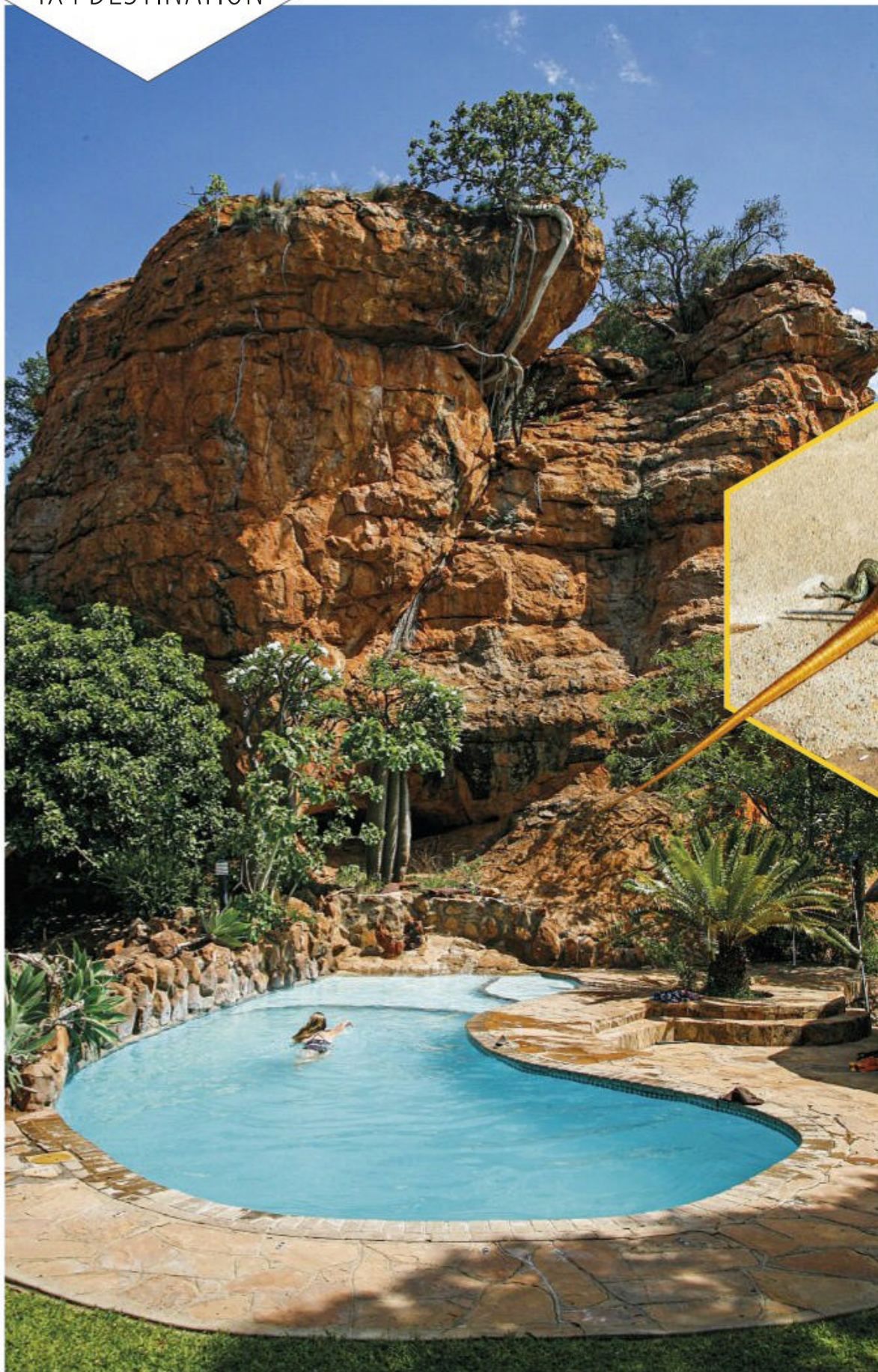
The main road now winds down through rocky ridges, past the turn-off to Leokwe's rondavels, and you'll notice the broad waters of the Limpopo River in the distance. Wild fig trees (*Ficus craterostoma*) cling to the rocky ridges, and elephants tear long strips off the bark

of baobab trees (*Adansonia digitata*) to supplement their diet.

Pull over at Treetop on the banks of the Limpopo River, because here you can get out of your vehicle and take a wooden walkway high up among large fever berry trees (*Croton megalobotrys*) to take a closer look at the river. Chances are good that you'll see elephants quenching their thirst.

About 2 km from here is the confluence of the Limpopo and Sashe rivers – the Sashe forms the border between Botswana and Zimbabwe; so this is where the three countries meet. Feel free to pull





ROCK N ROLL BABIES. Two adult impalas are always around to mind the creche (top middle) and wild figs grow out of rock like it's the most normal thing to do.

Where we stayed

Tshungulu Lodge, Mapungubwe National Park

The lodge consists of a large building and a smaller cottage. The cottage has a U-shaped floor plan.

Each of the two wings has bedrooms (one with a double bed and another with two single beds), each with air-con, its own bathroom, and dressing room. In the middle is a kitchen with an oven, stove, microwave, and other electrical appliances and cutlery.

The kitchen is open-plan with comfortable couches and a flat-screen TV with DStv – but the cheap package

with the channels nobody really watches. Forget the TV and rather sit on the covered veranda at night at a large dining table with seating for six.

Your vehicle sleeps in its own garage tonight, and your bed will be made for you late tomorrow morning while you cool off in a swimming pool at the foot of a real stone cliff.

Price From R1 600 p/n for two (R265 for kids under 13). There's also a conservation fee of R60 pppd (R30 for kids), but not if you have a Wild Card.

Contact 📞 015 534 7923 📧 tintswalo.mhlongo@sanparks.org 🌐 sanparks.org

over and get out, as this is one of only three spots in the park where you can do this, and visit the clean and neat ablution facilities. There's a SANParks tuck shop here, and you can buy soft drinks and chips. There are also braai spots under baobab trees if you want to cook an early lunch over the coals.

After everyone's refreshed and ready, drive along the Limpopo River on your left. Ilala palms (*Hyphaene coriacea*) grow on the shore, giving the impression that you're in the tropics. Stop at Zebra Pan near Poacher's Corner to see dozens of bird species frolicking in the water, and then drive past an old army bunker manned during the then border war.



The road now turns away from the Limpopo River, and before long you will find a road sign for the Khongoni 4x4 circular route. The first section of this route is concrete and winds down a beautiful mountain pass. At the foot of the pass, a 6,6 km twin-track makes its way through a hidden gorge. Although the Khongoni circular route is indicated as a 4x4 route, a two-wheel-drive vehicle with good ground clearance won't struggle.

The gorge has been overgrazed by large herds of impalas that stand quite tame on the side of the road to stare at you – it's as though lions, leopards, and other predators aren't a threat in this valley.

Return to the main road after completing the Khongoni route, then drive 3,5 km to an intersection with an M16 road sign. Turn left here for the Kanniedood 4x4 loop and the Mopane pans.

The 7 km long Kanniedood 4x4 loop does require four-wheel drive – we even had to engage low-range gears to prevent the wheels from spinning and damaging the road. The road surface is very rocky, and where it gets very sticky, SANParks has cast a concrete slab to protect the road.

After driving the Kanniedood route, turn off to the Mopane pans. As the name indicates, mopane trees (*Colophospermum*



mopane) flourish here, and you can't see very far into the veld. At the pan itself, there's mud and signs that vehicles recently got stuck here. It's strictly

forbidden to make new tracks through the veld and alight from your vehicle. If the mud during your visit looks too challenging, we encourage you to reverse back to where you can turn around.

This is pretty much the end of the game-viewing trail. All that's left to do is to return to the main route and drive across the Ngorongoro Plain – no, not the one in Tanzania – to the visitor centre and reception where you checked in.

Well done! You've visited three national parks starting with an M. Which one was your favourite: Mokala, Marakele, or Mapungubwe? Although you don't have to choose just one – they all offer something unique. And while it's fun to spend a day or two in each park and relaxing by your fire in the evening, it's just as much fun to hit the road and drive from one to the other. We live in an amazing country – don't let anyone tell you different! 🇿🇦

I also want to go!

Can I drive the route on my own? Yes, the roads are good and you should hardly, if ever, need to engage four-wheel drive.

How far is it? The route is 1 100 km long (excluding the drives in the parks) and lasts at least three days. We suggest you stay two or three nights in each park – if you prefer to camp you'll probably stay longer in one place.

What should I drive? Your vehicle must have good ground clearance, plus four-wheel drive and low-range gears for some of the 4x4 trails within the parks.

How much fuel do I need? There are numerous towns on your route. The

greatest distance between filling stations is 250 km – between Alldays and Musina, with game routes within Mapungubwe included – so you can leave your jerry cans at home.

May my dog tag along? No, SANParks does not allow pets.

What emergency equipment should I carry? Always a tyre-repair kit, and then a tow rope and jumper leads sometimes come in handy.

Can I ride a motorcycle here? No, the national parks have dangerous animals that will storm you or try to eat you.

Plea for the rhinos

It's common knowledge that Mokala, Marakele, and Mapungubwe all have white and black rhinos.

For the sake of their safety, we have not said here where we saw them – and yes, we know rhinos roam everywhere in a park, but we don't want to give poachers even the tiniest bit of information.

According to a 2015 census conducted by SANParks' scientific services, the rhino population is slowly increasing, despite ongoing poaching.

If you come across rhinos in one of these parks, there's usually a camouflaged ranger



lurking with a rifle in the tall grass. It's thanks to these committed protectors that our rhino numbers are slowly recovering. Thank you, guys!

Below the sill

Few sights beat the view from God's Window on the edge of the Drakensberg escarpment. They say that on a clear day you can see as far as Mozambique. But have you ever wondered where that dirt road directly below you at the base of the precipice leads? Here's where – and how to drive it.

Words and photos **Cyril Kloppe**

The route starts at the holiday town of Graskop at the upper edge of the Lowveld. Take Main Street – or the R533 regional road – out of town in the direction of the Kowyns Pass and Bushbuckridge. Kowyns Pass takes you through what is commonly referred to as an avalanche tunnel – the kind that has one side open and the roof supported by pillars. At the foot of the pass is a broad valley, which is, in fact, the shallow southern outlet of the Blydepoort Canyon – the Blyde River Canyon's less dramatic neighbour.

15 km outside Graskop, at the broad end of the canyon, is a turn-off to your

left (S24.94836 E30.94507). The turn-off isn't well marked, and the only signage is one by Sappi warning you not to start fires in the plantation. Here, you turn left onto a dirt road.

Our Tracks4Africa map labels the route the Watt Road. We asked the locals in Graskop about this route, but the name didn't ring any bells. They simply know it as one of hundreds of unnamed forestry roads in the area, and the single thing that sets it apart, is that it takes you to Mariepskop and the Klaserie waterfall – exactly where we're headed now.

It's a wide dirt road that roller-coasters up and down through plantations. Be on

your guard for logging trucks hauling out tree trunks and trike-tractors with huge mechanical jaws that carry these trunks from the plantation to the road.

About 7 km after the turn-off at the Sappi sign, stop and raise your eyes to the escarpment towering above you. High above is God's Window, and there may very well be a tourist looking down at you, wondering where you're heading. By the way, it's from that very cliff where Xi, the Bushman, threw the dastardly Coke bottle in the 1980 hit movie *The God's Must be Crazy*.

After another 7 km, you reach your first river crossing, the Maritsane River



“

You may come across sawn-off tree stumps that have rolled into the road. You can't always drive over them...

”

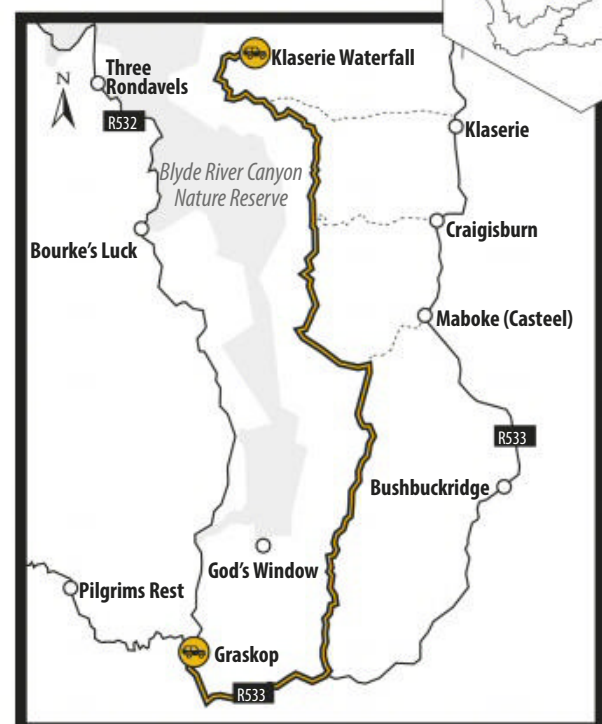


(S24.83880 E30.96126). There's no bridge here, so you feel your way through the water – don't worry, it's barely 20 cm deep. After the river, the road promptly forks; keep to the larger road on the left, and then it forks again, but this time you keep right – a GPS might help you not to get lost.

About 10 km after crossing the Maritsane, you will come to a village called Zoeknag, which is followed by

a dirt-road bridge over the Mohlomobe and Tswafeng rivers. The two rivers flow together here and become the Sand River. Incidentally, 60 km later, the Sand River joins the Sabie River, which flows into Mozambique and eventually empties into the sea as the Rio Incomati at Maputo.

After the confluence, take the first turn-off to the left and enter a forest that's even denser than the one you just emerged from. The road was muddy

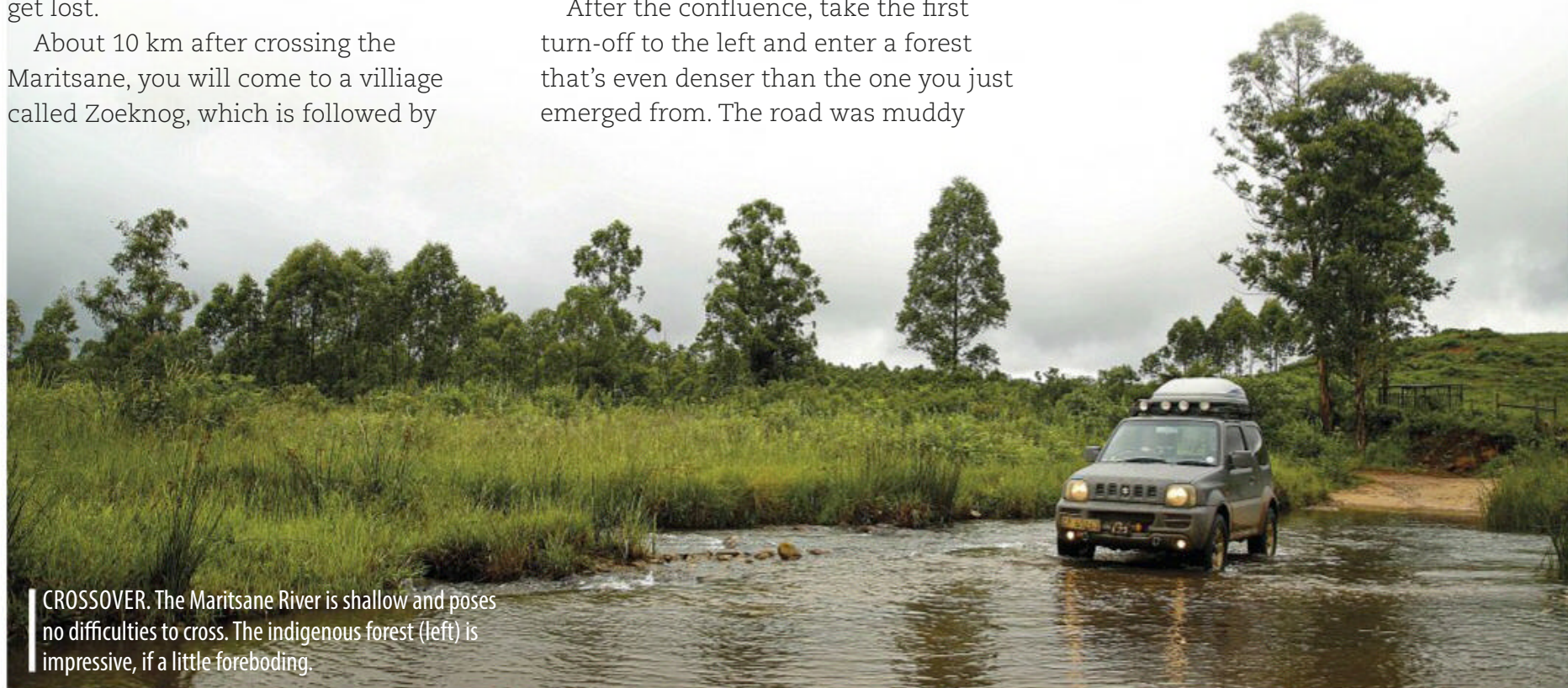


during our visit – just the way we like it! Despite four-wheel drive and low-range gears, we had to maintain momentum to prevent getting stuck in the ooze while also not driving so fast that we slid off the road and into the bushes.

Mud wrestling won't be your most enduring memory, however. You're going to encounter idyllic scenes where picturesque streams thread through wild jasmine and ash trees. One such stream almost convinced us to kick off our boots and go for a dip, or even just relax on a picnic blanket. There was no rubbish or any form of pollution to be seen!

You may come across sawn-off tree stumps that have rolled into the road. You can't always drive over them and then you have to look for a nice strong pole to use as a lever to clear the road.

The road eventually stops at



CROSSOVER. The Maritsane River is shallow and poses no difficulties to cross. The indigenous forest (left) is impressive, if a little foreboding.

TRAIL GUIDE

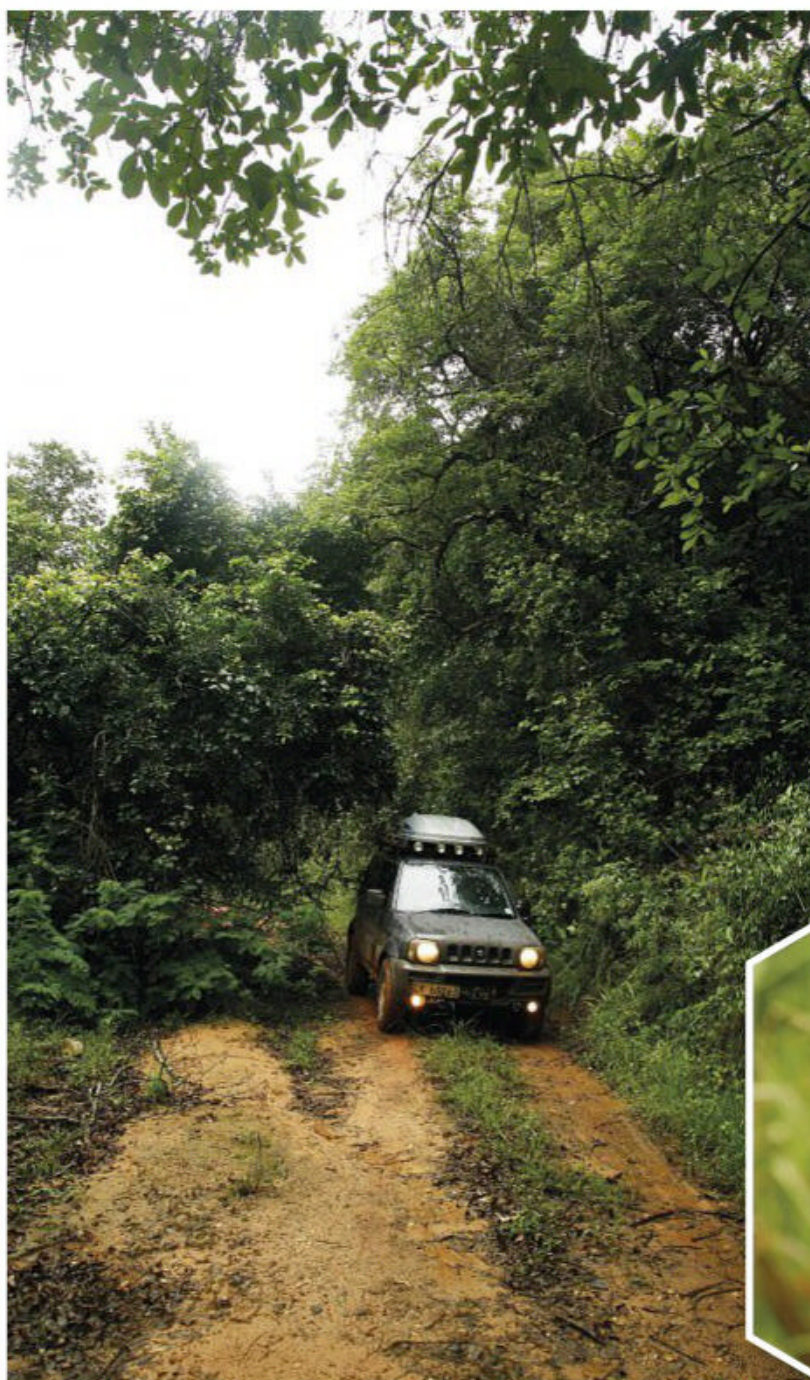
a T-junction. Turn left onto the Mariepskop Pass. The road to the right takes you to Klaserie and Hoedspruit.

The start of the Mariepskop Pass is a narrow dirt road that was washed away in places during our visit. About 7 km later is an entrance gate manned by a ranger. Pay the R30 for a permit to drive to the Klaserie waterfall and the summit. The ranger warned us we'd be disappointed – the cloud was low and we wouldn't see anything up there.

Mariepskop is the highest peak in the Blyde River Mountain at 1 947 m. It's named after the 19th-century MaPolana chief, Maripe, and the road to the top was built during the Cold War to serve as a radar station. The radar station was one of many in the old Transvaal that monitored the air for a possible air attack.

The ranger was spot on: barely 800 m past the gate where the road forks – the concrete road on the left leads to the top of the mountain and the one on the right takes you to the Klaserie waterfall – you could hardly see your hand in front of you.

The twin track to the waterfall runs through an indigenous forest and sections of plantation that look ominous yet impressive in the dim light. At the parking lot (S24.57298 E30.88474), we could hear the roar of the falling waters, but it was



What you need to know



Maximum number of vehicles Unlimited.

Do I get a map? No.

Will I scratch my vehicle? It's unlikely.

Do I need to take a compressor? No.

May I braai? No, the trail winds through plantations and indigenous forests, so starting fires is strictly forbidden.

Can I turn around halfway? Yes.

Is there cellphone signal? Sometimes, but most often not.

Best time to go? The waterfall runs in full force during December, but the roads are muddy – and not everyone likes that.

Can my family tag along? Yes, definitely.

And my dog? Yes, totally.

Can I go on my motorcycle? Yes, you'll often see motorcycles around here.

Just for the day or the weekend? A day trip is enough.

How long does it take? It's three hours from the Sappi sign to the start of Mariepskop Pass, and then an hour to the waterfall. One hour back downhill and another two hours back to Graskop via the Abel Erasmus Pass and Bourke's Luck. The latter is farther, yes, but it's torture to drive the shortcut through Bushbuckridge to Graskop, so set aside a day for this route.

Are there ablution facilities? No.

Directions Graskop is a small town at the foot of the Blydepoort ravine, about 15 km east of Pilgrims Rest in Mpumalanga.

Price Free – this is a public road.

GPS S24.94836 E30.94507 (turn-off) and S24.57144 E30.88396 (waterfall)

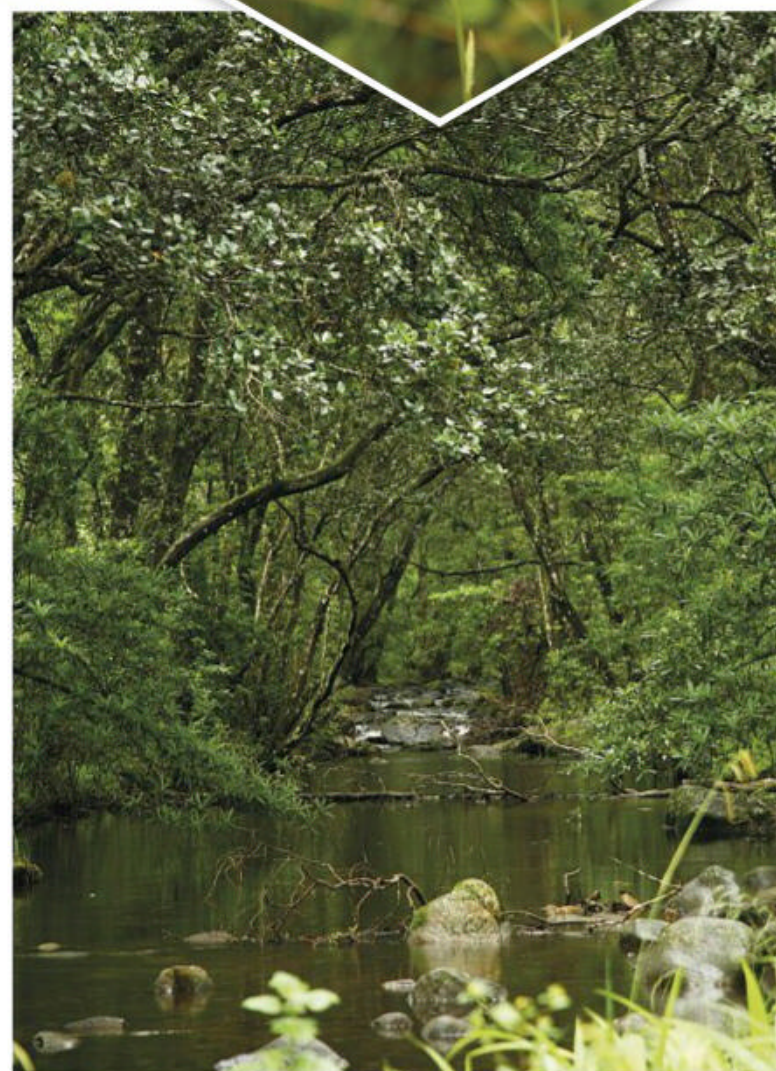




PHOTO ROMY ANTROBUS-WUTH, KRUGER2CANYONS.ORG

CURTAINS. The Klaserie Waterfall (above) is a sight to behold when it's in full flow. We didn't get to see it and the above picture was taken by Romy Antrobus-Wuth. The muddy roads (left) are a treat if you are into this kind of thing.

hidden behind an impenetrable veil.

In such circumstances, it's easy to think your mission to Mariepskop was a failure, but take comfort in the fact that it's the nature of the environment. In the winter

months, there's less mist but also less water, so the waterfall is mostly dry.

This route is ultimately more about that road at the foot of the Drakensberg escarpment that you spotted from

God's Window. It's about the beautiful indigenous forest, the pretty streams, the friendly foresters, and the defiant mud. And it's definitely a route than needs visiting.

Straight to the Point



Not even an hour from the southern suburbs in Cape Town, Miller's Point is one of the better municipal campsites close to home, says Kyle Kock.

“ We’ve been camping out of town as an extended family for a while, but for a recent weekend away, we decided to stay fairly close to home. Miller’s Point, just outside of Simons Town, proved to be a pleasant surprise. Myself, my partner, Stacey, and our boys, Kade and Kian, camped in our Mitsubishi L300 motorhome and were joined by my parents, Mark and Bonita, in their Hyundai H100 motorhome. My dad’s brothers also came along for the weekend. Uncle Vincent and aunt Tessa camps in a Volkswagen Microbus campervan, while uncle Hylton, his wife, Gail, and their daughter Maxine towed their Gypsy Caravette 4 with their Mitsubishi Outlander.

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE THERE?

The road that runs through Miller’s Point Caravan Park is laid out in a vague horseshoe, with grass-covered stands on either side of the road. The campsite is spread over two terraces, with a grassy slope that demarcates the rear stands of the lower terrace from the front stands of the upper terrace.

Those right in front of the water are the smallest but still big enough for the maximum amount of two towing combinations per stand. There are shade trees throughout, but most of them are situated on the upper terrace, so if you’re camping on the lower level then you need to make sure your gazebo and awning are up to scratch.

Two stands share an electricity post. Some of them have four domestic sockets with two blue Fredlin sockets on either side of the boxes, where others only have two. Pack an extension cord to be on the safe side. There are built braais scattered throughout the campsite, though you have to bring your own grid. You’re free to bring your own portable braai, too.

Because of the on-going struggle with baboons, Miller’s Point management

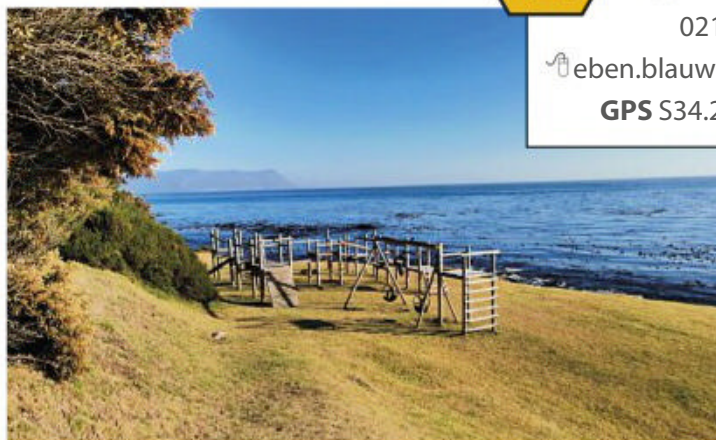


Contact

021 444 6948 or
021 444 3950

eben.blauw@capetown.gov.co.za

GPS S34.22857, E18.47008



have decided to keep the bins in a pen behind the ablution block, which is a bit of an annoyance when disposing of your waste. There are rangers armed with air rifles who patrol the campsite to separate primates and humans from one another.

AND THE ABLUTION FACILITIES?

Even though the single ablution block isn’t very modern, it doesn’t raise any red flags. The facilities are clean and maintained. It had received a fresh lick of paint just before our visit, and it seemed as though the inside was even retiled.

The men’s facilities are on the left, with four toilet stalls and two shower stalls. The latter has a wet and dry section, with a concrete bench for you to sit on while

getting dressed. It would be better if there was a shower curtain between them.

It’s kept clean throughout the day by diligent City of Cape Town staff. In the middle is a scullery with a large round bin, four sinks, and worktops for cleaning your dishes. The side on the right is reserved for the ladies.

WHAT ELSE IS THERE TO DO?

A set of stairs right across from the ablution block will lead your kids down to a wooden jungle gym, complete with swings, a slide, and wooden and tyre bridges. There, they can play for ages.

Just a little farther on, about 100 metres from the campsite, is a small beach, with a slipway for fishermen another 100 metres along. Miller’s Point tidal pool is slightly on from here, and, given that it’s quite far out of town, it’s likely to be quiet. Just above the beach is the Black Marlin restaurant with fresh seafood on the menu, if you’re not in the mood for making lunch over a fire.

WIN Kyle wins a **Camp Cover Camera bag** worth R400.

Check out the superb range of protective covers on their website:

campcover.co.za

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No sting in the tail here

He has spent well over a million kilometres behind the wheel of many a Mahindra, but **Nico Prinsloo** from Alberton says he's far from done.



“I bought my current towing vehicle, a **2020 Mahindra Scorpio S10 (4x4)** out of the box, and it still has relatively few kilometres on the clock today: 28 000 km. There's also no cause for complaint when it comes to fuel consumption. Recently, on a trip to KwaZulu-Natal and back, the worst we got was 16 ℓ/100 km, with 12 ℓ/100 km being the best. I tow **Double Trouble, a self-built double-axle caravan**. Empty, it weighs 1 460 kg, with a gross vehicle mass of 1 800 kg.

My first towing vehicle was a Toyota Corolla Avante 1600, with which I towed a Sprite Sport. **Koppisol was the first** campsite we visited. I towed a Jurgens Fleetline, but the list of caravans I've towed in my life so far is long. I own each caravan for just under a year – as soon as it's time to renew the licence disc, I sell it.

In the late nineties, I drove a Nissan Skyline 2.0 GL and towed a Sprite Sunway and a Jurgens Esprit, among others. A **Ford Sierra XR6 3.0** followed, and I remember

you couldn't skip a fuel station. If memory serves, its consumption was in the region of 20-25 ℓ/100 km!

A Ford Courier 3.0 V6 was next – the single cab – followed by a Volkswagen Kombi, whose 1 900 cc engine had been modified to 2 100 cc. **This engine didn't last**, and I replaced it with a 3.0 V6 Ford engine – the famous Daan Jacobs conversion.

I later towed my Sprite Major with a Toyota Venture Getaway, followed by two 2,4 ℓ model Toyota Condors – one was a TE

and the other a TX variant. During that time, I towed several Gypsy caravans and a Sprite Scenic. I added 450 000 km to the Condor TE, and 110 000 km to the TX.

In 2005, I bought **my first new vehicle:** a Mahindra Scorpio 2.6 GLX, and we camped with a Gypsy Regal Blue Series, among others. I paid R148 000 for the brand-new Scorpio, and I think I got R120 000 for it when I traded it in for the next vehicle: a 2006 Mahindra Scorpio PikUp 2.5TD – the 4x2 – also new.

This was **the only Mahindra I broke.** It had 830 000 km on the clock, and I had its ninth new set of tyres fitted on the Thursday night. The next day, we hitched our caravan to go camping at ATKV

Drakensville. Near Harrismith, I noticed the engine overheating, and then we crawled carefully to Drakensville. Our return trip was just as slow – and I made sure the radiator stayed full of water. The head gasket had unfortunately blown.

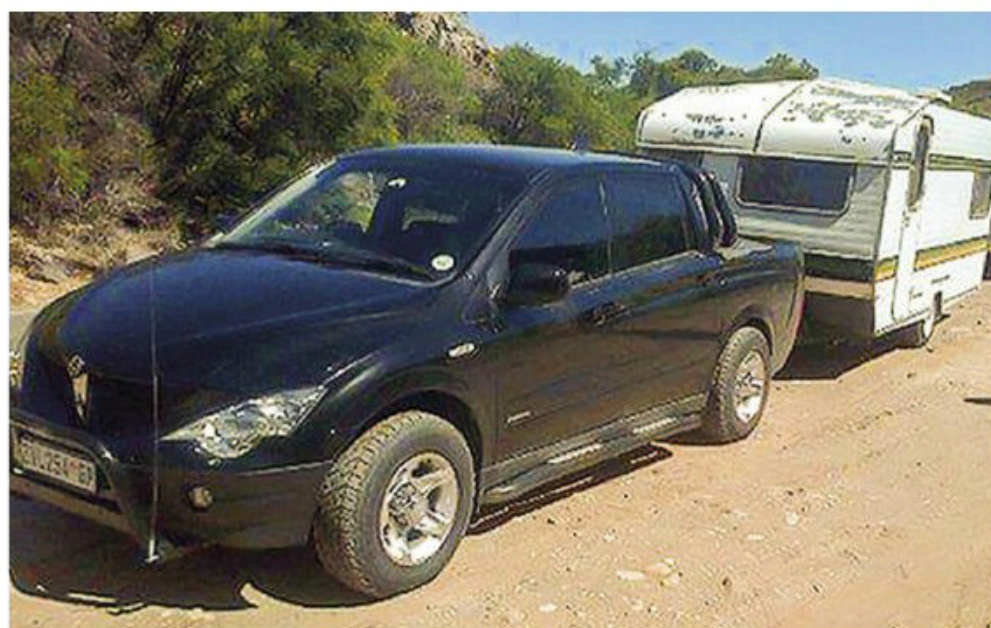
In 2011, I made my biggest mistake and bought a new Ssangyong Actyon Sports 2.0. Just before 100 000 km, it would constantly go into limp mode. I visited several dealers to try and find out what the issue was, but to no avail. Without the caravan, it would be fine, but once the caravan was hitched, it seemed the load made all the difference.

It was time for a Mahindra again, and in 2014, I bought another new one:

a **Mahindra XUV500 W6.** Two years later, I got the next one – the same model. I've visited Botswana several times with both these vehicles. The first gave me 90 000 km and the second 85 000 km, but I think **the front-wheel drive is a negative.**

Two years later, I bought the predecessor of my current bakkie: a new Mahindra Scorpio S10. Its combined consumption figure was 7,9 l/100 km while we – apart from all the usual commute – also went camping with the caravan once a month. With 147 000 km on its clock, it was time for my latest bakkie.

My reason for choosing Mahindra is simple: what you pay and what you get means one thing: value for money. ”





**COME AND
TOUR WITH
US!**

The long road (in your) home

If you love camping but you're not too keen on pitching camp and then packing everything up again, a motorhome might just be the answer.

Words and photos **Evan Naudé**

Long road trips are full of surprises – you never know exactly what the day will bring. Sure, you have your route planned and accommodation booked, but the time in between is often like a brand-new colouring book that only gets coloured in on the way.

When I got up this morning, for example, I would never have guessed that a llama would bite me because I told him his haircut looked like that of an Australian rugby player. And now I have a bruise on my back. I join Sam, my other half, as she laughs while documenting it on camera. It's moments like this that make a holiday unforgettable.

A WIDE LOOP

The llama is one of a collection of animals

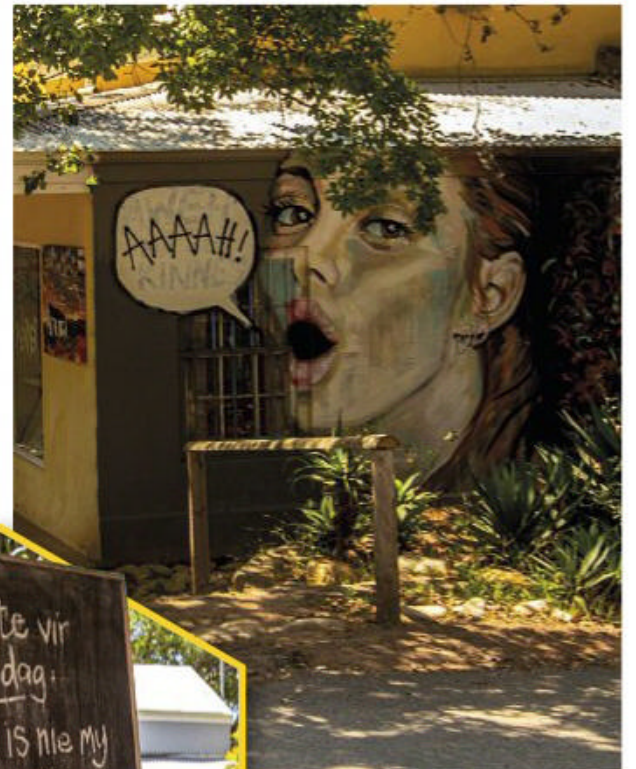
at the Fynbos Guest Farm's animal sanctuary outside Tulbagh. Sam cannot resist an alpaca or llama, so we simply had to stop. There are also zebras, donkeys, emus, springboks, and a host of other animals that we wanted to photograph before hitting the road again. Yesterday in Riebeek Kasteel, we tasted olives and browsed antique shops, before checking out bonsai and potted plants at the Riebeek Valley Garden Centre in Riebeek West. Today, we head into the Breede River Valley via Robertson, and then along the Kogmanskloof Pass to Montagu.

We set off from Atlantis on a 12-day loop that will take us through the Cape Winelands and Karoo to Addo in the Eastern Cape. Here, we'll turn west and drive through the Garden Route to the

Overberg, before experiencing a bit of wine country on the way home. It's a wide loop, which is why we keep the daily distances short so we can take it slow.

Sam and I have already been to many of the places on our route before, but this trip is a chance to properly explore known spots. Besides, we have a lot of time to wander around without worrying about a place to sleep every night, because we're in almost an entire flat on wheels.

That's also why we start in Atlantis: it's here where we get the keys to a Discoverer 4 motorhome at the Bobo Campers depot. As we get our first look at its interior, I realise the living area in the back that sleeps four, complete with a bathroom and kitchen, is indeed almost the same size as our flat in



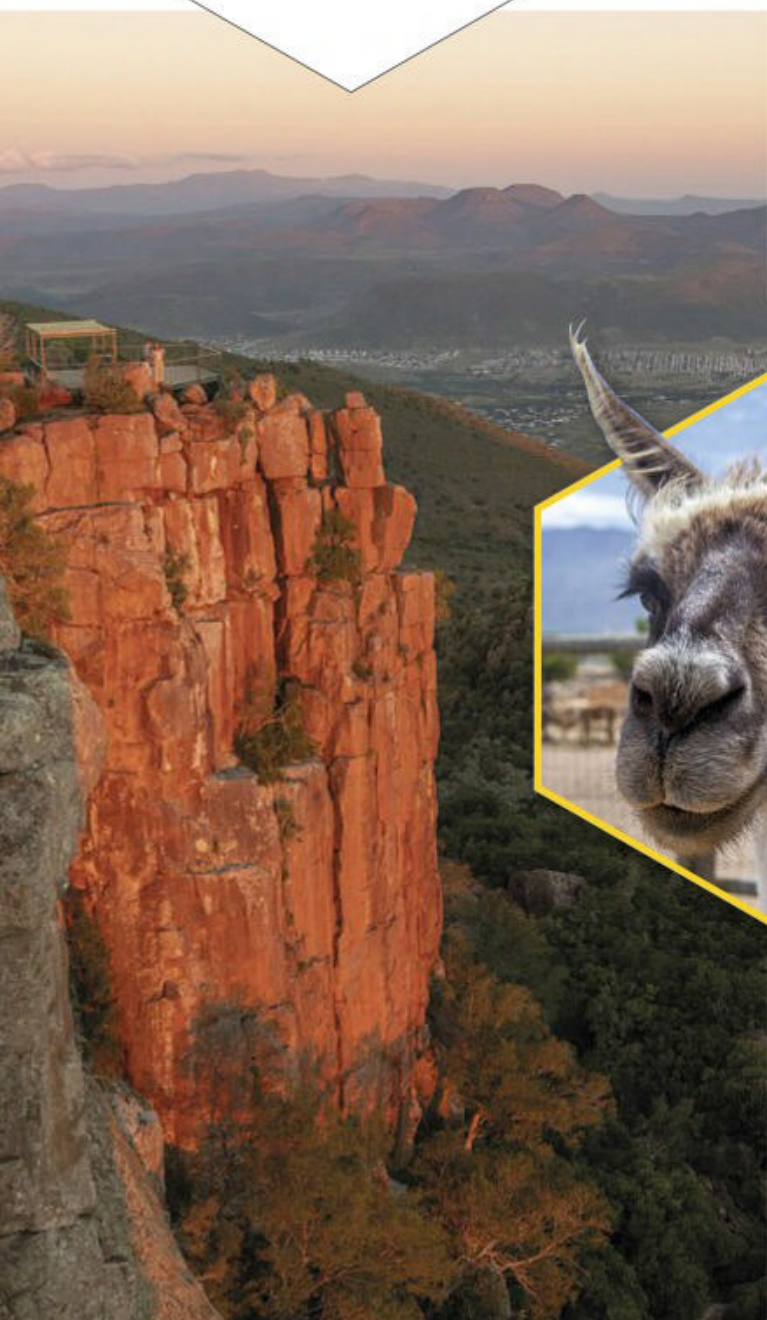
Tamboerskloof. “You joke, but it’s true!” exclaims Sam, as she busies herself at the wardrobe, unpacking our bags.

When we arrive at the first campsite of the tour, the second big advantage of touring with a motorhome is immediately obvious. I park, get out, and plug in the extension cord at our site’s caravan plug and, hey presto, our camp is set up! It’s the fastest I’ve ever gone from behind the wheel of my vehicle to my camping chair. “But really,” I say to Sam as she hands me a cold beer from the motorhome’s fridge, “our apartment isn’t that much bigger. The only difference is that our veranda now has a different view every day.”

IT’S RAINING IN THE KAROO!

In Montagu, we overnight at the Montagu Guano Cave resort, where there’s a cave with thousands of bats, and encounter an impressive collection of rabbits and chickens from all over the world (even another llama or two). This time I shut up about hairstyles...

At Barrydale, it’s too early for a milkshake, so we stick to coffee,



surrounded by the colourful collection of antiques at the Diesel & Crème eatery. Then, we stop at the House of Books for a while, where the owner, Anton de Villiers, shows us his collection of thousands of books. By the time we stop at Ronnie's Sex Shop for a cool drink and a pic, the motorhome's thermometer shows it is 35 °C outside. Near Ladismith, I show Sam where a witch slit the Towerkop mountain in two, and just before Oudtshoorn, I pull off to take some pics of a few ostriches. "When we were little and went on holiday, we always kept our eyes open for the first ostrich along the way," says Sam. "Nowadays, it feels as though my holiday only starts properly once I see one."

The next day, we drive to Prince Albert, barely 110 km from Oudtshoorn. The motorhome won't make it over the Swartberg Pass, but Meiringspoort is a beautiful alternative. I drive it at a snail's pace so I can gaze at the reddish brown cliffs that shoot up like skyscrapers both sides of the road. We follow the tar as it winds its way through the mountain. Once on the other side, I turn into Klaarstroom's short main road next to the N12 for the first time to look



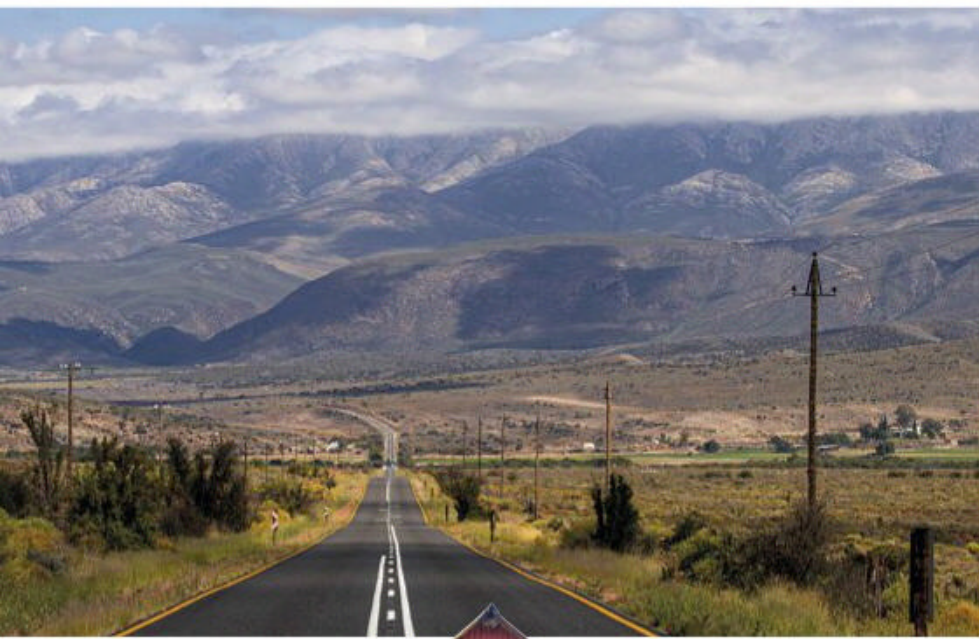
at the hamlet's historic buildings. This is where the then wool farmers from the Karoo were able to wash their cargo for the last time (Klaarstroom gets its name from clear river water) before taking it to market in Mossel Bay.

In Prince Albert, we wander up and down the main street and peek into art galleries and gift shops, before sitting down on the Swartberg Hotel's veranda to order G&Ts from a menu with descriptions we don't quite get. Mine has rosemary sprigs and orange peel and Sam's is bright orange. "Mmm, I'm not so sure about this one," she says, so I drink both.

At sunset, the sky around us turns pink, the smell of rain hangs in the sky, and a pile of dark clouds swells above us. Lightning flashes in the distance, and then a flurry of fat raindrops finally breaks the heat of the day. Could there be a better way to end a summer day in the Karoo than with rain?

SAY HELLO TO THE TUSKERS

The Karoo plains stretch wide between Prince Albert and Graaff-Reinet, our next destination. The next morning, we drive through Meiringspoort and De Rust again so we can get on the N9 to Willowmore. I'm going to show Sam the mohair shop



where I bought wool for her on a previous trip (I'm still waiting for that hat she promised me) and the statue of an angora ram next to the magistrate's office. After all, this is the heart of the mohair industry – the biggest feather in Willowmore's cap.

I see the Beervlei Dam full of water for the first time next to the N9. The road to Graaff-Reinet is quiet, and we only see another vehicle every now and then. I'm grateful, as it gives me the opportunity to take in the landscape on both sides of the road. After the recent rains, the Karoo is adorned in a lush green robe. The windmills turn in the wind, the farm dams are full, and the sheep's bellies bulge.

We end the day at the lookout point over the Valley of Desolation in the Kamdeboo National Park. While I take pics, Sam fries sausages on the gas stove in the kitchen. Back at the camp, plugging in the motorhome is again the only thing we have to do – and all we need to do is unplug it the next morning before we go for a drive through the park.

At our next destination, the Addo Elephant National Park, we spend two nights, so we have enough time to linger

among the tuskers. There's a fair amount of tar in the park, and on the gravel roads we drive slowly enough that their vibrations don't bother us. The extra height is a bonus for game viewing, but it's at the Spekboom shelter that we see the most beautiful elephants. There's a waterhole here, but apparently one of the ellies dug up the water pipe and now a whole herd is standing and drinking water within touching distance of the shelter's windows.

We say goodbye to Addo and get on the N2. We're driving down the Garden Route all the way to Mossel Bay. We overnight at the beautiful coastal camp at Storms River, and the next night we're at the equally beautiful Ebb & Flow camp in Wilderness. We know this area well, but we still visit some favourite farm stalls and the Tsitsikamma's Big Tree that we'd usually just drive on by. And then we make a detour to the hidden beaches of Robberg, on the other side of Plettenberg Bay.

I was a boy the last time I was in Still Bay and am amazed at how much the place has expanded. We check out the caravan park and see only one windswept camper, but at

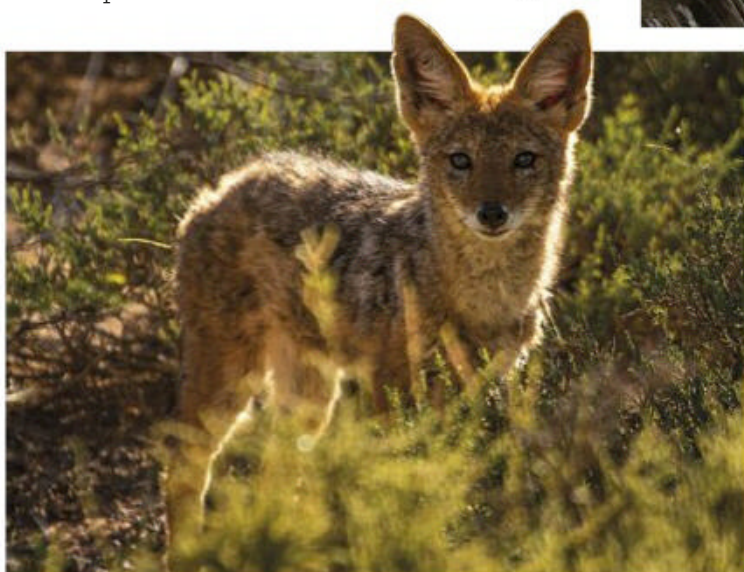
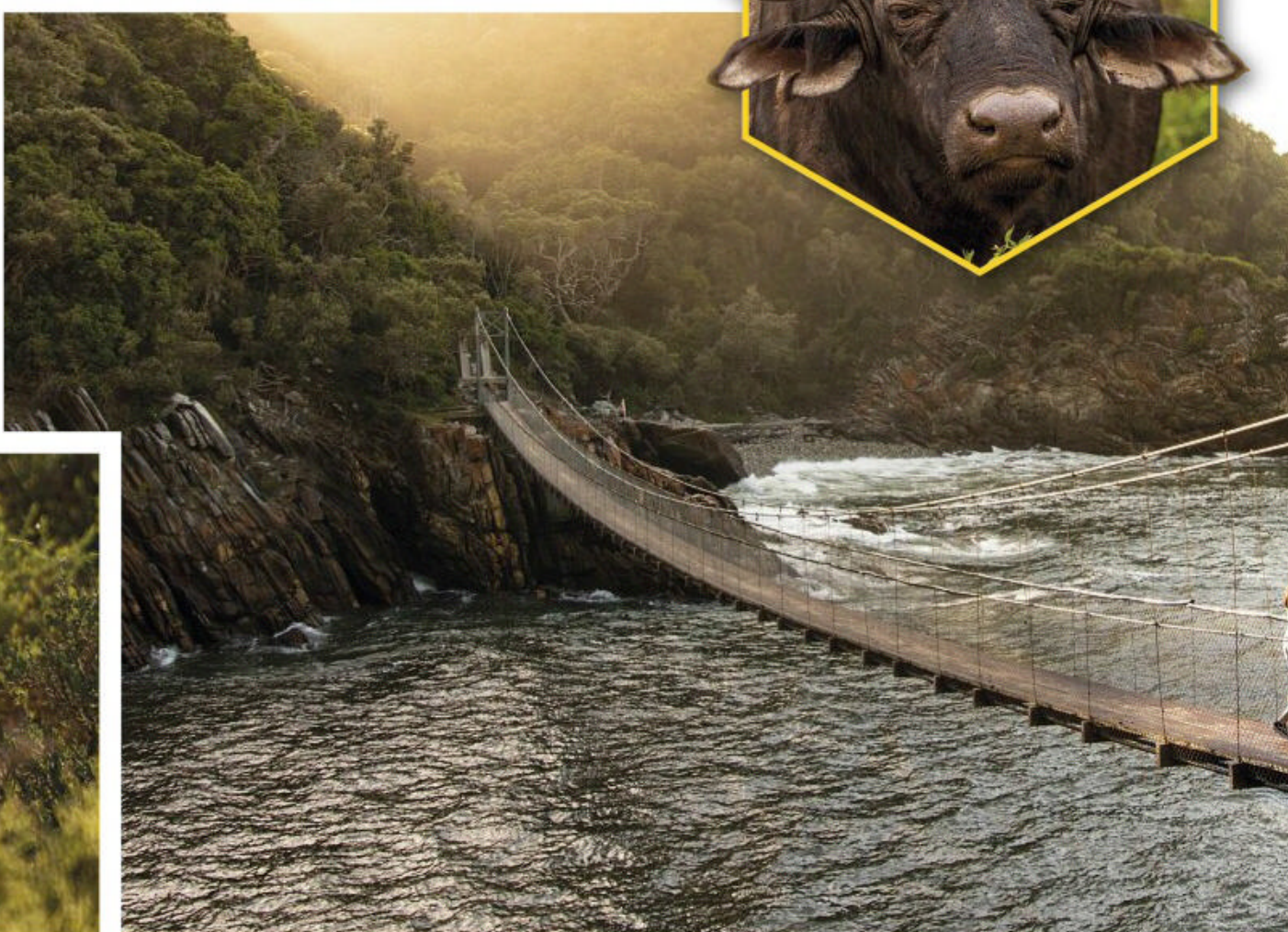
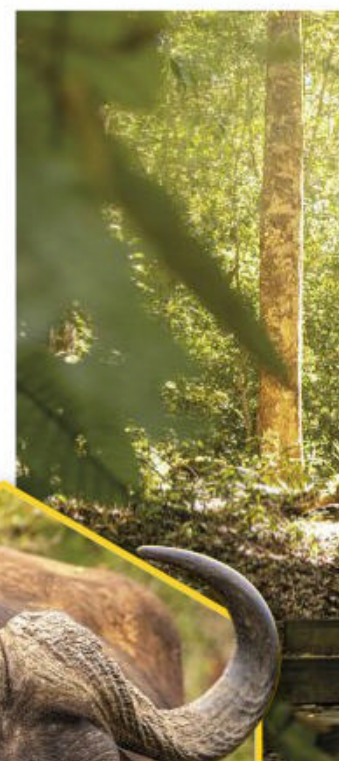


PROMOTION

Jongensfontein, it's packed. It's the middle of the week, outside of school holidays, but I can see why Jongensfontein is an old favourite for so many people. This neat campsite has a fantastic location, and you won't easily camp closer to the beach.

Our final destination is Greyton. We meander through the Overberg to get there – first through Bredasdorp to Cape Agulhas, and then past Napier and Caledon. "I forgot how cute Greyton actually is," Sam exclaims as we drive through the town in the afternoon. Sunbeams filter through the town's numerous trees, here and there someone walks with a dog, and the restaurant patrons are having jolly good fun.

I think of Sam's words again later, because I'd also forgotten how sweet our small towns are. And how beautiful it is to drive the roads on this route, how gorgeous it is when the Karoo gets rain, and how fun it is to discover new things in familiar places. Back in the Cape, on a fiercely hot summer day, I sit on the veranda with a G&T and long for all the views from my other apartment. The one on wheels 🚐



Come tour with us!

Do you dream of one day buying your own motorhome? Are you wondering if a motorhome could ever replace your faithful caravan? Or do you prefer glamping to camping? Now's your chance to grab a motorhome for a test drive!

Drive & Camp, in collaboration with Black Jackal, offers you the opportunity to experience this route described over 12 days. You get the keys to your own Discoverer 4 motorhome, and you drive the route yourself. You're free to drive at your own pace, stop for photos, and visit as many attractions along the way as you want, because you don't have to worry about

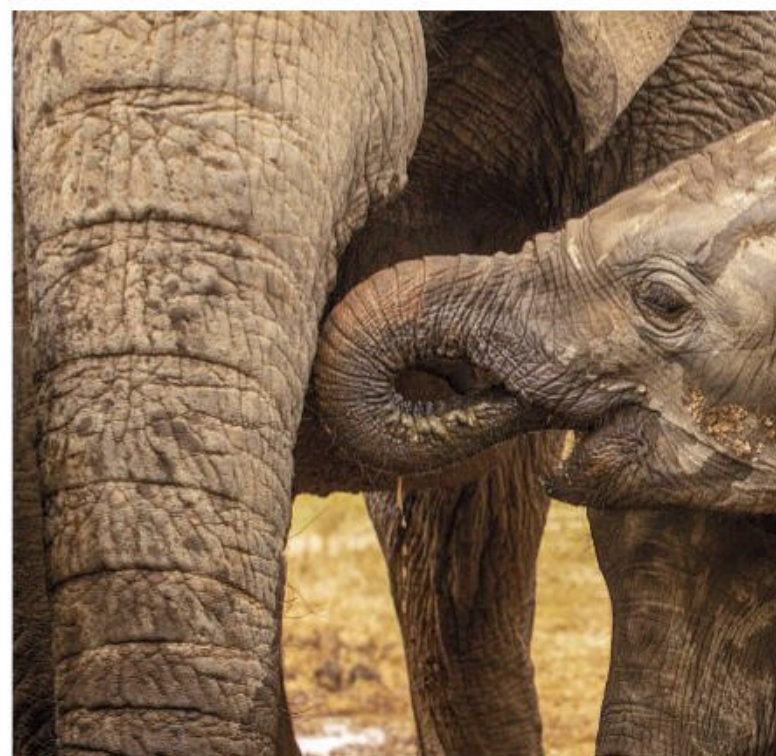
where you'll be sleeping. All accommodation costs are included, plus breakfast and dinner every day. Two hosts entertain you at each camp, light the campfire and tell you more about the area you're in.

Price R28 500 pp for the first two people, and half price for the third and fourth passenger. Your hosts entertain you in campsites in Tulbagh, Montagu, Oudtshoorn, Prince Albert, Graaff-Reinet, Addo, Storms River, Wilderness, Stilbaai, and Greyton.

Contact 📞 064 702 6006

✉️ bookings@blackjackaltravel

🌐 blackjackaltravel.com





Here's our motorhome

The Discoverer range of motorhomes is manufactured by Motorhome-World in Atlantis, and you can rent some of their latest models from Bobo Campers.

The Discoverer 4 we drove was built on the chassis of a 2.3 TDi Iveco S13 with an eight-speed automatic transmission. You sit higher and have to take your turns a tad wider, but otherwise the motorhomes drive as easily as a normal car. It even has cruise control and the diesel engine is very economical: over a distance of about 2 500 km, we got an average fuel consumption of 10,8 l/100 km.

On the outside, the Discoverer 4's pure white finish is impressively streamlined, and it's only when you take a closer look that you notice the plugs of the electrical connection, the 60 l water tank, and 70 l fuel tank. You'll also see storage space for two 5 l gas bottles for the stove and geyser, the toilet's cassette, and two large compartments for your camping chairs, table, braai equipment, and the like.

The Discoverer 4 can accommodate up to four people, which is why there are seat belts for

two passengers in the back seat. This seat, right behind the driver, has a table for eating, reading a book, or building a puzzle. At the very back of the motorhome are two more benches with a larger table in between – this is where you sit down for dinner. The tables of both seats fold flat so you have two beds – a double-bed size at the back and a smaller one in the front that's more suitable for children.

The 80 l refrigerator always stays on, thanks to two deep-cycle batteries in the back of the motorhome, while the geyser uses gas, or 220 V power. When the motorhomes are plugged into a 220 V coupling, you also have a microwave and air con at your disposal.

Furthermore, you don't have to worry about packing any cutlery, crockery, towels, or bedding, because everything is included when you rent from Bobo. You only bring your clothes and food. And don't forget to pop a bottle or two in the fridge – there's nothing quite as lovely as plugging in your motorhome and pouring a cocktail. Especially when you have a different view every night!



The call of the trout

If you love camping and trout fishing, boy, have we got good news for you...



KINGFISHER LODGE

FISH LIKE A KING

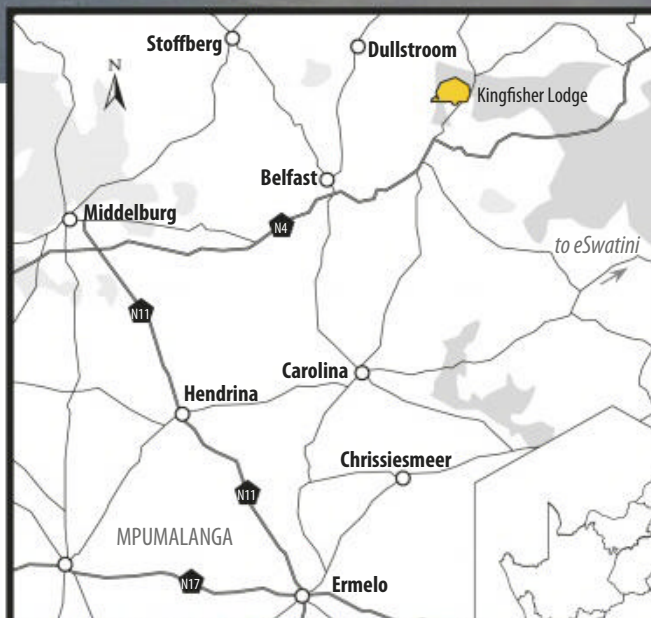
The Kingfisher Lodge is on the alternative N4 route between Machadodorp and Mbombela that runs through Schoemanskloof. The lodge added a campsite, and the owner, Gary Roberts, added a bathroom for every stand.

As you enter the grounds of the lodge, you'll spot some blesbok, sheep, donkeys, and mules. The four trout dams are on your left, with the pool close by. The two camping terraces are just in front of you and farther to the right. You get a welcome drink, and then it's time to unwind.

On one terrace are six wooden buildings, while the other terrace has nine in a row. These are the bathrooms. Each 9 x 15 m stand has grass. The bathroom of four stands on the first terrace are among some pine trees, while the rest are out in the open.

You have everything you need on your stand. There's a fixed braai (with grid) in front of your stand, and the rest of the facilities are at the bathroom. The bathroom has a patio with an outdoor sink for the dishes, plus a power point (ordinary domestic socket). Inside is a basin, toilet, and spacious shower cubicle with a gas geyser for hot water.

The lodge also has a restaurant, and when they confirm your booking via WhatsApp, the menu is included. (The codes you need for the two electric gates are also in the message.) The bar



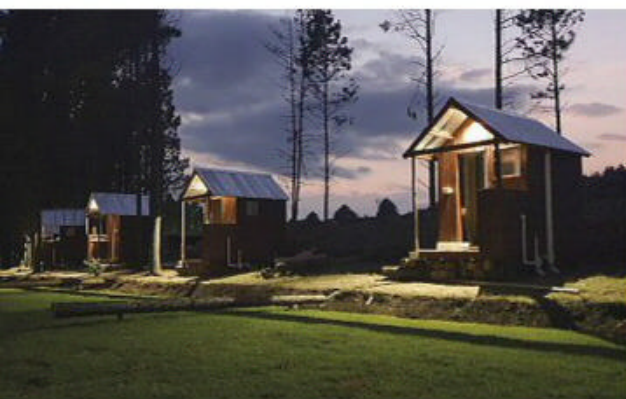
works on an honesty system, and the shop stocks the essentials – including fishing tackle and bait.

The Swartkoppiespruit runs through the 120-hectare grounds, and at the point farthest from the entrance is a 100 m waterfall – its top end is around 200 m from the last stands.

All four dams have trout, and you can expect to hook one that's between

500 g and 2,5 kg. There's a fee of R100 per day to fish, and it's not seasonal – come try your hand at any time of year. In winter, the catch-and-release rule applies, but in summer you have to keep what you catch (and pay R150/kg).

If you'd rather see whether the carp and kurper bite, head to the fifth dam on the left of the resort entrance. There you fish for free.



Briefly | Kingfisher Lodge



Fish Rainbow and brown trout.

Campsite 15 stands on two terraces with grass – four stands have shade trees.

Ablution facilities Your own bathroom at your stand.

Price R550 per stand for four; thereafter R50 pp (maximum six per stand).

Arrival and departure 11:00.

Contact 082 926 8773

thekingfisherlodge.co.za

info@thekingfisherlodge.co.za

Nearest town eNtokozeni (Machadodorp) and Waterval Boven, both 19 km.

Road condition The last 4,4 km is well-maintained dirt road.

GPS S25.568299 E30.345390

Drive & Camp says While there, you might be lucky and see the southern bald ibis.

FISHING GEAR

Clippers

Whatever fishing you do – fly, ocean, or fresh water – you'll end up in trouble without a trusty pair of clippers.

It's barely 95 mm in length, so Adrenalin's fishing clippers easily fit into one of your fishing jacket's pockets. This guy isn't scared of anything: its stainless-steel blades may only be 15 mm, but they're razor sharp. It's also sturdy and strong, and you can even cut the cable of your trace. You can, in fact, cut a cable with a breaking force of up to 60 pounds.

It even has a key ring, should you want to always have it on you.

Price R59.

Contact Available in fishing shops countrywide – also in Namibia.

catches@4adrenalin.co.za

adrenalinfishing.co.za



FISH DISH

BUTTERFLIED TROUT WITH CAJUN SPICES

The spice of life

Trout can be fried, steamed, poached, or smoked. It's delicious with fresh lemon juice or creamy herb butter, spicy black pepper, mustard seeds, and dill – and even intense umami-rich flavour combinations such as soy sauce with honey and wasabi. This easy Cajun spice rub adds colour and flavour to the fish when you braai it over the coals.

Ingredients

(serves 4)

- 1 butterflied trout of about 800 g (without the head)
- 4 tablespoons good olive oil
- a large pinch each Maldon sea salt and black pepper
- ½ teaspoon each cumin and coriander powder
- ⅓ teaspoon paprika
- a pinch chilli powder



- a pinch mustard powder
- ½ teaspoon light brown sugar
- a pinch dry mixed herbs
- a large lump butter mixed with chopped parsley
- lemon juice, to serve

Here's how

1 Rub oil all over the trout. Mix together

the salt, all the spices, sugar, and dried herbs, and sprinkle it over the fish. Press the mixture into the fish and allow to rest for a few minutes. Carefully place the fish in a clean folding grid that's been oiled so the skin doesn't stick.

2 Ensure the coals are hot and braai the fish – skin side first. The fish starts to cook within about 5 minutes and the skin will start to crisp. (The edges get a dull pink colour.)

3 Turn over the grid for at most a few minutes. Trout, just like salmon and good steak, is delicious if you serve it blushing pink. Remember, a butterflied trout is quite thin and cooks quickly.

4 Dot the fish with the herb butter and let it melt a little. Serve with lemon wedges and, if you like, a salsa of ripe avocado cubes, fresh tomatoes, chopped spring onions, and sweetcorn kernels.

Drive & Camp says When it comes to spices, a pinch is a pinch with some extra love.





PEUGEOT LANDTREK

The lion's share

There's definitely something French about the Peugeot Landtrek – it has many impressive traits... and, unfortunately, a number that disappoint.

Words and photos **Cyril Kloppe**

If, like me, you're old enough to remember the Peugeot 404 – especially the bakkie version – you may well agree that it was a lovely vehicle with a reputation for reliability and comfort.

Peugeot has a complicated history in South Africa, and Landtrek is the first bakkie of this French vehicle manufacturer in almost 40 years. We wrote in the previous issue of *Drive & Camp*

about its Chinese origins – there it's the Changan Kaicene F70.

That article was our first impression. In this issue, we drive it where we want, the way we want to.

Inside and out

The Landtrek is bigger than it appears in photos. It's indeed wider (1 963 mm) and higher (1 897 mm) than South Africa's

top-selling bakkies, the Toyota Hilux and Ford Ranger, though 24 mm shorter than the retiring Ford Ranger and 80 mm shorter than GWM's P-series, another competitor from China.

Its sturdy bodywork is reminiscent of the first-generation Volkswagen Amarok, and the grille follows the design of other modern Peugeots. The tarpaulin over the boot (standard

equipment) seals tightly, but it's not burglar-proof, and the load bin's tailgate allows in so much dust that it's actually better to drive on a dirt road without the cover if you don't want a layer of dust on your luggage.

Inside, the Peugeot Landtrek is sleek and more modern than most of its competitors. The 10-inch touchscreen uses four cameras in the bodywork to



But there are elements we really like. The storage space under the back seat for tools, for starters, and the programmable touchscreen whose look and colour you can change to your liking.

How does it drive?

We were enormously impressed by the 1,9 l engine. We had to take care with the accelerator pedal as the rear wheels spin easily if you step on it just a little

too much. That was particularly pronounced on the dirt roads where wheels sometimes spin unnecessarily. You get used to it, though, and we prefer too much torque rather than too little.

This small-capacity engine does have its shortcomings. At 100 km/h, the Landtrek doesn't inspire confidence that it will easily and safely overtake a slow lorry on a mountain pass.

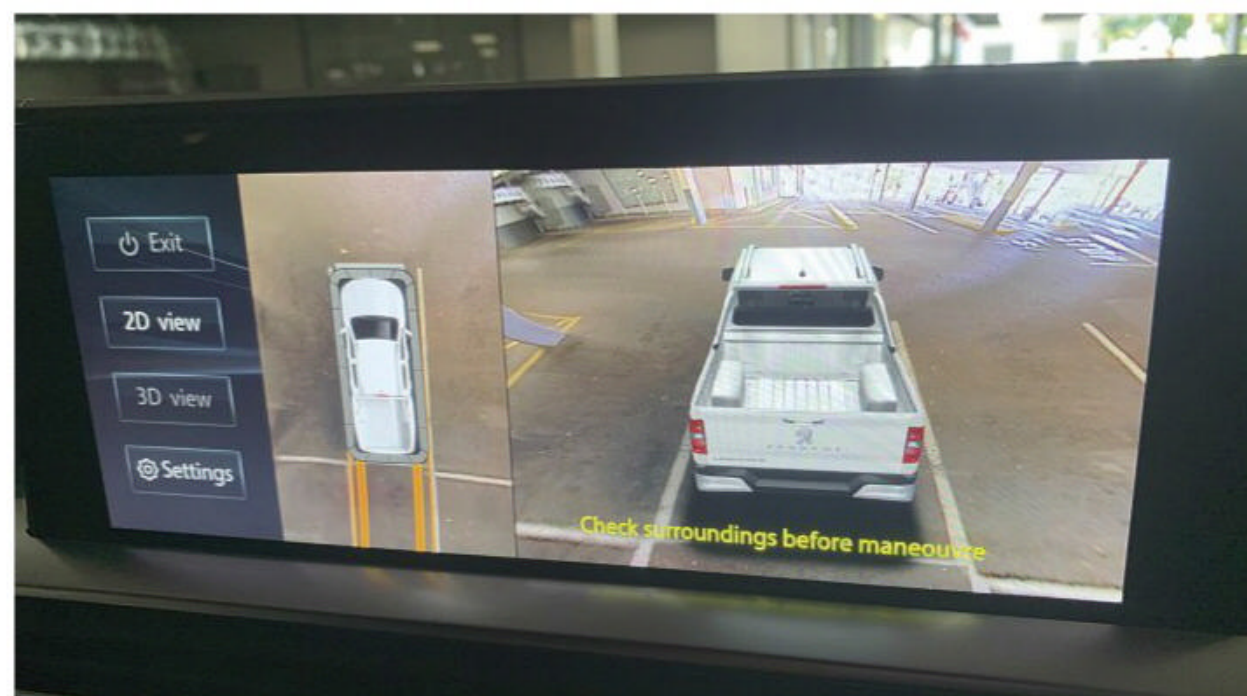
The suspension provides a comfortable ride and the view to

create a three-dimensional image – an element that's especially useful in a parking garage, but the image is slightly distorted and of dubious advantage when on technical 4x4 terrain.

The electrically adjustable leather seats are comfy, and the switches on the centre console are stylish. That shiny silver panel around the gear stick is a problem, however, as sometimes the reflected sunlight is so hectic, you have to block it with your hand. So keep your sunglasses within reach.

Then there are the French quirks. Like the starter button that sits to the left of the steering wheel rather than the right – and out of sight of the driver, too. You have to feel for it. Another strange phenomenon is the fuel light that goes on while you still have 130 km to go – we think it's a bit

early to start asking for diesel. And that odd plastic cover under the hood that hides almost all the mechanics. So you can't see how many pistons the engine has or whether it uses diesel or petrol. What's more, it doesn't even boast a Peugeot emblem!



OUCH! The panel around the gear stick reflects the sunlight (above), but the 3D image on the touchscreen (left) is useful when parking this big bakkie.



The Peugeot 404 bakkie, station wagon, and car were legends in their day, but the Landtrek is technologically light years ahead



the outside is good with almost no blind spots. The bonnet is really wide – it feels even bigger than a Ford Ranger – and you have to be pretty accurate to park inside the stripes of a parking space. That 3D image on the touchscreen really helps here.

The competitors

In terms of load capacity, the Peugeot Landtrek is the winner with 1 015 kg, compared to the Ranger's 913 kg, Hilux's 805 kg, and the GWM P Series' 650 kg.

The Landtrek and P-series both get a five-year/100 000 km guarantee, while the Ranger gives you one year less peace of mind and the Hilux is guaranteed

for only three years. The Hilux and Ranger can theoretically tow 3 500 kg, compared to the Landtrek's 3 000 kg and the P-Series' 2 250 kg.

The Ranger has a 10-speed automatic transmission, the P-Series an eight-speed, and the other two have six gears each. When it comes to power, the Ranger gives the knockout blow with 132 kW; the P-series itself is not too shabby at 120, and the Landtrek and Hilux each deliver 110 kW.

The Ranger is also the forerunner in terms of torque (420 Nm) over the 400 Nm of the P-Series and Hilux. The Landtrek comes in last with 350 Nm, but



in reality it certainly doesn't feel weak. The P-Series is the cheapest and the Ranger the most expensive – their prices differ by more than R100 000.

Conclusion

A passerby wanted to know if Peugeot's Landtrek was as good as the old 404 bakkie. He

maintained the 404 was the Mercedes-Benz of bakkies at the time. We were able to confirm that the Landtrek's ride quality is excellent, significantly better than, for example, the Mazda BT-50 we recently drove, and also better than a Toyota Hilux, but not quite as comfortable as a Volkswagen Amarok.





The Peugeot 404 bakkie, station wagon, and car were legends in their day, but the Landtrek is technologically light years ahead. We did, however, express doubt whether people in 40 years' time would feel the same nostalgia for the Landtrek as the 404. The man nodded his head in agreement.

The Peugeot Landtrek is a lovely vehicle, but the Ford Ranger and Toyota Hilux feel more "genuine" and the P-Series comes with a great price.

SPECIFICATIONS

Model	Landtrek 4Action 4x4 (automatic)
Engine	1 910 cc four-cylinder turbodiesel
Power	110 kW @ 4 000 rpm
Torque	350 Nm @ 1 800 rpm
Transmission	Six-speed automatic
Drive train	Part-time four-wheel drive with rear diff lock
Ground clearance	235 mm
Tank	80 ℓ
Fuel consumption	9 ℓ/100 km (tested)
Standard tyres	265/65R17
Tare weight	2 095 kg
Load capacity	1 015 kg
GVM	3 110 kg
Tow capacity	3 000 kg
Safety rating	Unknown
Warranty	5 years/100 000 km
Service plan	5 years/100 000 km
Price	R669 900



From the competitors
Double cabs with automatic transmission and four-wheel drive



R574 900 **GWM P-Series 4x4 LT**

It's a great bakkie, and judging by how many of them you see on the road these days, others agree.



R644 600 **Toyota Hilux 2.4 GD6 4x4 Raider**

The standard by which other bakkies are measured is still the top seller – we don't see that changing any time soon.



R687 300 **Ford Ranger 2.0 single turbo XLT 4x4**

This one leaves the others in the dust, especially the dual-turbo version, and is right behind the Hilux when it comes to sales.

Can, will, did

Nothing will stop the Hilux from towing a caravan – not pouring rain, not steep mountain passes, and not hectic muddy roads.

Words and photos **Leon Botha**

We did things a bit differently this time, and, for much longer. Instead of just a few hours behind the wheel, we embarked on a 10-day journey. We headed inland, detoured along the KwaZulu-Natal coastline, and then crossed the Drakensberg – all while towing a Tuff Cats Dindingwe – not a small caravan by any means.

Our family of four visited several campsites, spent many a long hour in the vehicle, and braved one rainstorm after the other. This all put the Hilux through its paces, and here's our report back.

Packing some power

Double-cab bakkies appear heavier than they actually are. You quickly realise this when you want to tow a caravan with a gross vehicle mass (GVM) of 2 000 kg. What this means is that the empty Hilux must weigh up to at least 2 000 kg – and of the almost 20 Hilux double-cab models, only a handful qualify. Our test vehicle was 2 029 kg. (By the way, only about 10 of the 200+ new caravans on the market have a GVM of 2 000 kg and above.)

Some models of the other popular bakkies – VW Amarok, Isuzu D-Max, Mazda BT-50,

and Nissan Navara – also have a small number in this weight group. It's only the Ford Ranger where the majority of its double cabs boast a tare weight of more than 2 000 kg.

Even though the towbar doesn't come standard, the Hilux is equipped with trailer sway control. The bakkie has a towing capacity of 3 500 kg, and with 500 Nm, there's not much that will keep you back on the open road.

It's a Bosal towbar, and judging by the weight on the sticker, the same one goes onto different Hilux models. The actual specifications regarding towing load and vertical weight

on the ball differ from model to model – the lowest limit is 2 500 kg for the 2,7 l petrol model (4x2), and it goes up to 3 500 kg for the 2,8 l diesel (4x4). Also, the nose weight varies from 100-140 kg.

The square tubing of the towbar, hidden behind the bodywork, is a solid 90 x 90 mm piece of steel. This beam attaches on both sides of the ladder frame chassis, with the removable arm in the middle. You don't need tools to remove this, as it is secured with pins.

The flange plate against which the ball is bolted has one set of holes. If you need to



TOYOTA HILUX 2.8 GD6 LEGEND RS (4X4, AUTOMATIC)



adjust the height further, there is room for a drop plate.

The electric roller shutter that fits over the load bin is a luxury that comes standard on the three Legend RS models. Its control buttons are above the rear lights.

Above each wheel arch is an LED that automatically illuminates the load bin for two minutes when the shutter moves. So, you won't have to fumble around in the looking for anything. (The lights in the load bin have their own switch – you can turn them on for up to 20 minutes at any time.)

Right to reverse

Just as with the previous Hilux generation – the D-4D we tested in early 2015 – the rear-view camera's lens sits to the left of the handle on the tailgate.

This means the towbar doesn't appear in the centre of the screen. At least the lens has moved closer by about 12 cm.

We're used to rear-view sensors that warn you when you reverse too close to something, and usually this alarm is turned on automatically. In the Hilux, you have a switch to the right of your knee where you can turn it on or off as you need it.

Because the computer doesn't register when you hitch anything, you don't have to deactivate the reverse alarm from time to time when reversing with the caravan. You can, of course, leave it switched on if you rely on those rear sensors.

The windows can be opened all the way down, and all have an automatic function – press the button quickly and the

What does the family think?

Here's how my wife, Donvé, and our two teenage sons, Finn and Louis, experienced the trip...

Louis (12) is short, and the handles on the door pillars (next to you and against the roof at each door) mean you easily get in and out of the bakkie – they actually come in very handy for kids. Fourteen-year-old Finn, again, is around six foot, but even with his long legs, there's plenty of room.

Donvé is also tall, and even with Finn behind her, they both had enough legroom.

Keeping things together while travelling isn't always easy. We kept having to look

for Louis's PPE mask wherever we stopped. There is, however, a great storage spot in the shelf behind the front seats. But even better, there's a fold-out hook – the perfect solution for the mask.

What the kids obviously noticed first was the absence of USB sockets for their phones. It was actually a bit of a blessing for us, to be honest, as they could look at the landscape around them. The front of the cabin has one socket.

On a long trip, the most important element is comfort. Donvé thinks the ride in the passenger seat was comfortable at all times – the same goes when you're in the driver's seat.



window winds down all the way.

At the front of the panel is a warning light that appears if one of the rear passengers isn't wearing a seat belt – it even shows who the culprit is.

Who's afraid of the big bad mud?

Not many people goes looking for mud and, fortunately, you

don't have to face it every day.

On the other side of Bergville, we had to plough through it, the penetrating rain turning the farm roads into one big sludge bath. Luckily, we'd already unhitched the caravan at our overnight stop, but we still wanted to go on a day trip. There's no way a sedan could have gotten through even the first puddle because the mud was

TOW TEST

a good 10 cm thick in places.

We maintained momentum in two-wheel drive – without disabling the traction control or engaging the diff lock – and you could feel how the tail sometimes wanted to give way. In some places we did have to switch to 4x4 drive – and you can do this while driving (provided you're going slower than 100 km/h), but not if the wheels were spinning.

Back on tar, the lane-assist function works almost too well. As you start moving across the middle line, the computer takes over and sends the Hilux back into its lane.

The same thing happens when you tow, and at 100 km/h, it can catch you slightly off-guard. As soon as the computer relinquishes control of the vehicle, you feel a slight sway from the caravan. Rather turn off this feature when towing.

We had to avoid potholes in

the road a few times on the back roads. This means you'd have to cross the middle line and you don't want to arm wrestle the assist each time.

You also have the option to use the engine in Eco or Power mode. Even when you tow in the default setting, the Eco light comes on every now and again to indicate the computer is satisfied with your performance.

Fuel figures

We expected the vehicle's fuel consumption in elevated regions to be different to the coast. Pretoria, for example, is more than a kilometre above sea level, and the air is obviously thinner, which must surely have an effect on combustion of the engine.

On the other hand and, because the air on the coast is denser, it does affect the drag factor – especially with the extra wind resistance towing gives.

SPECIFICATIONS

Model	Hilux DC 2.8 4x4 LGD RS automatic
Engine	Four-cylinder diesel
Power	150 kW @ 3 000-3 400 rpm
Torque	500 Nm @ 1 600-2 800 rpm
Transmission	Six-speed automatic
Drive train	Rear wheels or 4x4
Tank	80 l
Fuel consumption with caravan	14,5 l/100 km (6,9 km/l)
Reach with caravan	552 km
Tare weight (licence disk)	2 029 kg
GVM	2 910 kg
GCM	5 850 kg
Tow capacity	3 500 kg
Towbar's capacity	3 500 kg
Towbar's maximum vertical weight	140 kg
Is the towbar removable?	Yes, the arm and ball.
Room for a drop plate?	Yes
STANDARD PRICE	R891 200

What we towed

Manufacturer Tuff Cats
Model Dindingwe
Year model 2022
GVM 2 000 kg

Drive & Camp borrowed the new Tuff Cats Dindingwe from the manufacturer. Call Jaco Nel on 083 609 6947 for a closer look at the Dindingwe. [tuffcats.co.za](mailto:jaco@tuffcats.co.za)
jaco@tuffcats.co.za



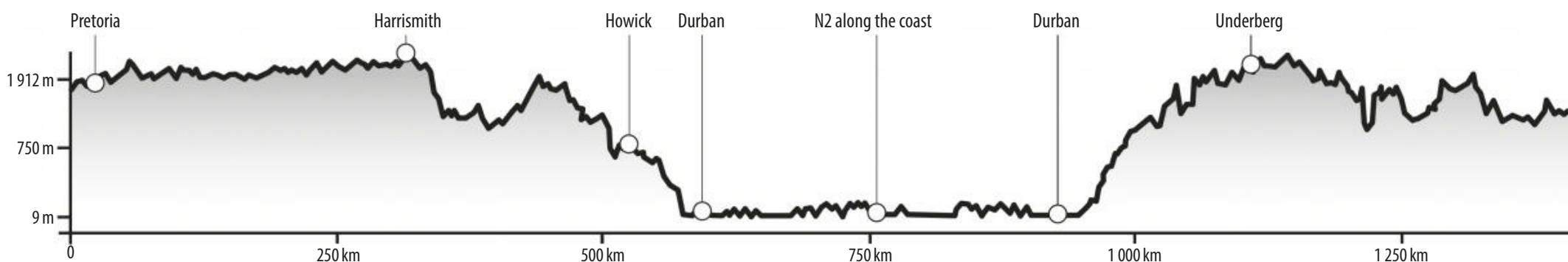
According to our calculations, however, the Hilux's diesel engine is equally happy, regardless of its height above sea level.

On our journey of 2 046 km with the caravan, we filled up seven times, getting an average of 14,5 l/100 km (6,9 km/l).

So, if you want to play it safe with the caravan, you'll easily drive 500 km on a fuel tank. Without the caravan, this number drops to 10,1 l/100 km (9,9 km/l) – a whole 40% more economical.

TOWING PROFILE

Elevation



“

Drive & Camp says

The manual recommends that you don't use cruise control when towing. This includes the Dynamic Radar feature.

”



From the competitors

Double cab, 4x4, diesel, automatic, and tare weight > 2 000 kg



R773 900

Nissan Navara 2.5 DDTi PRO-4X

450 Nm

Tare 2 023 kg and can tow 3 500 kg.



R815 200

Ford Ranger Wildtrak 2.0 BiT

500 Nm

Tare 2 195 kg and can tow 3 500 kg.

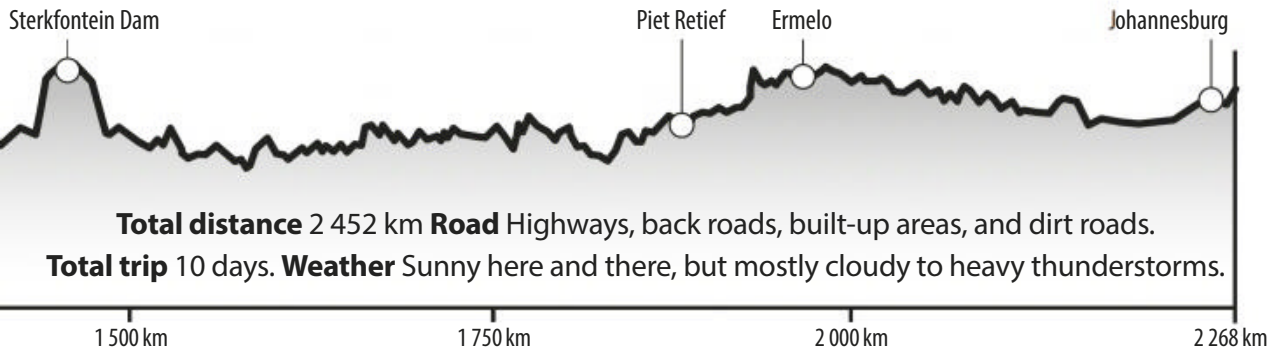


R1 034 700

VW Amarok 3.0 TDi 4Motion Extreme

580 Nm

Tare 2 053 kg and can tow 3 300 kg.



A not-so-humble abode



Mobi Lodge Continental

Thanks to its unique design, the Mobi Lodge offers you almost unparalleled comfort – as more than a thousand owners can attest to.

Words and photos **Leon Botha**



The Mobi Lodge was launched in early 2015 – at the time we described it as the “caravan of the future”. We don’t want to toot our own horn, but we were clearly prescient: the manufacturer can barely keep up with orders.

Previously, buyers could choose from four models – the Custom, Expedition, Deluxe, and the Ultimate – but now, owner Marius Ras has combined all four into one new model: the Continental.



What have we here?

It’s important that the jockey wheel of an off-road caravan is removable, as this is often what ploughs into the ground first when you hit a large bump. The one on the Mobi Lodge stays on but swings out of the way. There’s a handle by the clamp; pull that and the wheel swings counterclockwise parallel to the ground.

You need to get the corner steadies (they also swing out) ready before you set up. The Mobi Lodge comes with its own tools: a wrench, rubber mallet, screwdrivers, pliers, and the wheel nut wrench. They’re all stored in the upright cupboard at the nose – and this is also where you’ll find the inline gas geyser and its gas cylinder. On the A-frame, there’s a spirit level so you can see where and how much you have to lower or lift. By the way, the wire for the lights has a socket on both sides, which means you can remove it completely.



The sliding bed is also on the right. About half of this side panel pulls 1½ metres from the hull, like a large drawer. It's a sealed capsule, but remember to lower the fly sheet first – it's in a bag on the edge of the roof.

The bed pulls out easily enough, and you can do it on your own. Once it's out, the fly sheet stretches out with two elastics at its corners. To get the bed standing firmly, lower one leg on each side of the capsule and tighten it.

The three big sliding windows in the capsule are made of tempered glass. These allow you to always have fresh air and light on both sides of the bed as well as at the head.

The spare wheel plus the two jerry cans, a spade, and the outdoor air-con unit are attached to the back.



Dinner time

As with most off-road caravans, the outdoor kitchen occupies most of the left panel. The door where you enter is on the far left and the kitchen extends from here to the tail.

When lowered, the large door above the wheel turns into a flat worktop. On its left is the twin-plate gas stove with its glass top. The

rest of the worktop is covered by heavy-duty material on top of the fibreglass, and there's no edge for crumbs to gather.

The space behind the counter is one large cupboard lined in foam for all your kitchen utensils. That includes plates, bowls, cups, glasses, and cutlery – even the braai tongs have their own spot. There's also space for anything from a flat-bottomed kettle to cast-iron pots and



CARAVAN TEST

a chopping board. Nicely in the middle sits the power point with two sockets.

A strip of LEDs runs around the edge of the cupboard on the inside and illuminates the worktop properly.

Next to the worktop is the cupboard housing the microwave. Next to that, an upright door folds flat, but this surface sits lower because the double sink pulls out on its own sliding frame above it. But before you pull out the sinks, first unscrew the large plug in the flat door because the drain pipe of the sinks fits through it. Each basin also has a glass top – more work space when they're not in use. (Or leave the sinks in the hull and just use the door.) The upright cupboard to the right of this has three shelves for your groceries.

There are also eight pouches on the back of the entrance door for loose items such as lighters, matches, a torch, and clean dishcloths.



Your residence

The liquor cabinet is located in the door on the left and has room for four wine glasses and wine bottles.

This is where the Mobi Lodge differs from ordinary off-road caravans: the fridge/freezer isn't part of the outside kitchen but sits inside the caravan, across from the door. Its door is a glass panel with the power distribution box above it against the roof.

Inside, the Mobi Lodge is divided into two. The separate bathroom is on the left (in the nose) and the living space with the bed on the right. Not many off-road caravans can hold a candle when it comes to open space in both these areas.

There's a cupboard in the left of the bathroom, complete with a basin and medicine cabinet, with the toilet next to it. The shower sits in the corner to the right with a height-adjustable shower head. It has to be one of the most spacious showers in any caravan. There's a three-quarter-length mirror on the door you can use whether the door is open or shut, as it's attached to the outside of the door.

The open floor space on the right (2,2 x 1,1 m) is the heart of the Mobi Lodge. Looking to the right towards the rear, you've got the slide-out bed on the left, the full built-in cupboards in front of you, and on the right, a worktop that runs all the way to the back. The cupboards are 35 cm deep and include hanging space. There's a panoramic sliding window of 2,2 x 0,88 m above the worktop. Roughly in the middle of this, a table folds down where you can eat. You can even sit on the edge of the bed if you want to use it as a makeshift desk with your laptop.

The bed has a narrow space on both sides, with the one on the left narrower. Because the bed is in the capsule, its roof is slightly lower at 1,64 m, compared to the main section's 1,95 m. Each side of the bed has its own bedside table, USB sockets, and reading light. The windows by the bed have mesh and a canvas blind – the blind has a pole in the hem, allowing it to hang evenly and also roll up easily – smart!



SPECIFICATIONS

Manufacturer	Mobi Lodge
Model	Continental
Sleeps	Two
Size	5,6 x 2,1 x 2,5 m
Wheels	16"
Axle	2,5 t
Tare weight	1 370-1 480 kg
Load capacity	270-380 kg
GVM	1 750 kg
Chassis	Galvanised
Hull	Fibreglass
Standard price	R538 000

Dealer network Head office, factory, showroom, and service centre in Middelburg, Mpumalanga, plus a showroom and service centre each in Gauteng and the Western Cape.

Contact 083 230 6131 sales@mobilodge.com mobilodge.com

Drive & Camp says

The orange lights on the top and bottom corners of the Mobi Lodge work beautifully when towing at night. You can see exactly where the Mobi Lodge is behind you. All upcoming models will have a 150 ℓ fridge/freezer to replace the 133 ℓ one that fits in exactly the same space.



What comes standard?

Some of the items include the indoor table, fully equipped kitchen with gas stove, and 18 ℓ microwave. There's also a safe, ceramic basin in the bathroom, cassette toilet, adjustable shower head, geyser and 5 kg gas cylinder, 15 m extension cord and 20 m garden hose, 150 ℓ water tank, power system with 105 Ah battery, two jerry cans, bedding, and four chairs.

Extras include a flush cassette toilet (R9 800), a 12 V 133 ℓ upright fridge/freezer (R19 900), 12 000 BTU air con (R14 700), double basin with glass tops (R9 700), Quattro movers (R32 900), sling awning (R19 500), extra 105 Ah battery (R2 900), 15 A MPPT solar panel regulator (R2 900), and optional solar panels for 130-520 W. And another R3 800 upgrades the chassis to a GVM of 1 950 kg. 🚚



R538 000

**MOBI LODGE
CONTINENTAL**

GVM 1 750 kg

THE COMPETITORS

Fibreglass off-road caravans



R575 000

ECHO KUNENE

GVM 2 240 kg

Has two separate beds for a total of four. You need a proper towing vehicle to handle its GVM.



R580 000

NAYELA OKAPI

GVM 1 750 kg

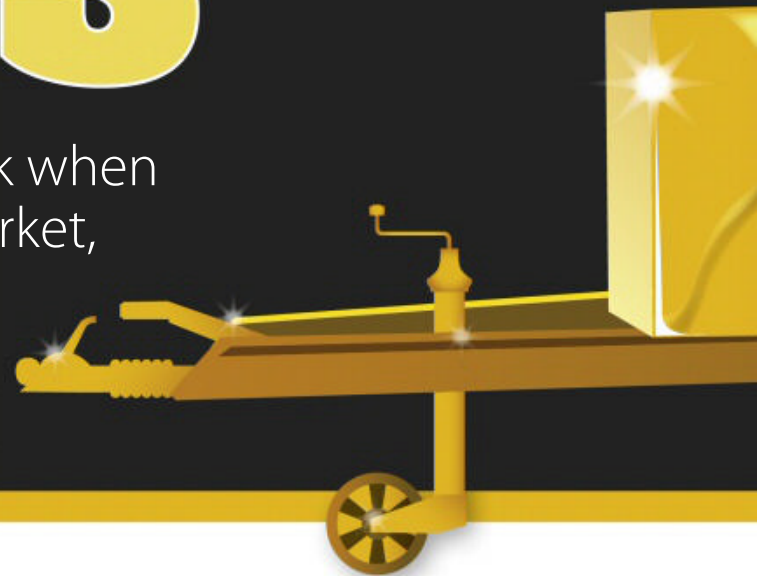
The epitome of modern design, a similar but smaller capsule bed, and also an indoor bathroom.

Drive & Camp borrowed the Mobi Lodge from the manufacturer.

The golden oldies

It's not that easy to get your money back when selling most vehicles. The caravan market, however, is an exception.

Words **Leon Botha** Illustrations **Dominic Wienand**



There are not many things in life whose value increase as they age. Sure, shares, real estate, and rare works of art do – possibly even a good wine – but certainly not your car. You won't be selling or trading in your car without losing a bunch of money. But what you paid for your caravan – new or used – you will probably see again on the day you sell it.

We take a look at the prices of new caravans 10 years ago and how they compare to their second-hand value today.

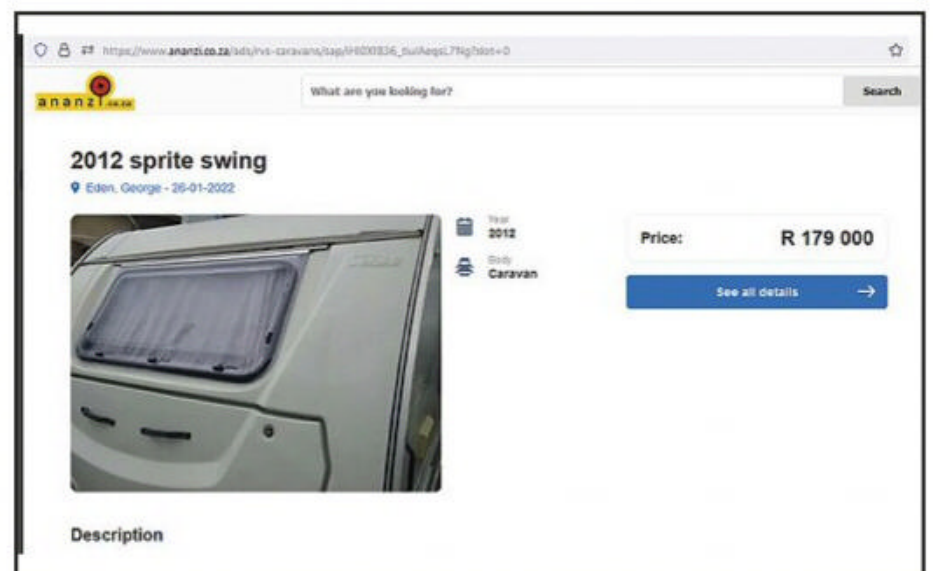
But first, let's go back to the car market. Take three 2012 models as an example: a Toyota Fortuner 3.0 D-4D (4x4, auto), Ford Ranger 3.2 XLT (4x4, auto, double cab), and a Suzuki Jimny 1.3. According to Peet David of Puma Auto Traders in Emalahleni, these three vehicles cost R455 300, R456 760, and R192 900 respectively. If you look at what is available online*, the second-hand prices today look like this: R279 963 for the

Fortuner, R236 900 for the Ford, and R158 233 for the Jimny. This means their value decreased by 39%, 48%, and 18% within 10 years respectively. (That's without taking into account inflation or interest rates.)

Depreciation of vehicles isn't uncommon, but if you look at the price of used caravans, these start looking more like an investment. Today, 10 years later, you pay 20% more for the used model than it cost new at the time. This is the case with 17 caravans we found online, including a Conqueror Commander (R190 682 in 2012 and now R260 000), Jurgens Explorer (R240 600 and R249 900), Sprite Tourer SP (R147 700 and R189 900), Jurgens Penta (R204 600 and R234 900), and a Skipper Model T (R43 800 and R59 900).

Of the 17, there was one that cost exactly the same and another that was 2% less.

The numbers are similar at caravan dealers. East Rand



Caravan World in Boksburg has an average of 85-100 used caravans on the floor, says co-owner Francois Swart.

Francois believes supply and demand play a significant role in the price of second-hand caravans. Take, for example, popular caravans such as the Sprite Swing or Sprite Tourer: a few years ago, the factory could not supply stock, but you would still get a customer who wanted one of them. The demand can push up the price.

Because there's no official book value for your used caravan as there is in the car industry, Francois relies on his judgment. A specific caravan has a value, and according to his own data, he determines the price, says Francois. You'll also have to pay attention to what caravans cost elsewhere. Of course, the general condition of the caravan plays a role – after all, every buyer is looking for a clean caravan.

If you look at some of the 2012 models on sale here, the purchase prices compare as follows:



SKERMGREP ANANZI.CO.ZA

Conqueror companion caravan

West Coast, Western Cape - 12-01-2022



Year
2012
Body
Caravan

Price: R 235 000

See all details →

“

There's no official book value for your used caravan as there is in the car industry

”

SKERMGREP LIFE-LEISURE-SA-SHOWROOM



2012 Conqueror Commander

Home / Store / Caravans - On & OFF-Road

R260 000.00

In stock

Add to Bag

Product Details

Ostrich wing awning

Hansen Geyser

2 x Extra Jacks

National Luna Fridge (split unit)

Standerton

Hi! How can we help you?

a Sensation Vee sells for R355 500 compared to the then new price of R235 000, an Echo 5 for R139 900 (was R75 800), Jurgens Fleetline R229 900 (R178 800), Sprite Swing R179 900 (R143 500), and Jurgens CampLite R49 900 (R31 450).

There are even cases where it's not only a specific second-hand model that's popular with buyers but even a specific colour, says Woody Loftus of Loftus Caravan City in Randburg. A caravan is your home-on-wheels, but compared to a vehicle, a caravan has much less wear and tear. You mainly look at a set of wheel

2012 Jurgens Safari Xplorer Type: Caravans

East Rand Caravans, Pre-owned **R 249 900**

Description

Xplore your wild side!!!
2012 Jurgens Safari Xplorer R249900 !!!
Call us now
Stefan: 064 380 6292
Toy: 071 894 2268
Theo: 083 6566 456



Send an Enquiry

First Name*

Last Name*

Phone Number*

Email*

Your Province*

Message

How did you hear about us?
☐ Printed or magazine advert

“

You need to own a second-hand caravan for at least five years if you want your money back

”

bearings – and possibly parts including the brakes, shock absorbers, and the coupler. A motor vehicle has expensive components that need to be maintained –the engine, clutch, and gearbox, for example.

This is what the prices look like of 2012 models that Woody sold recently: a Jurgens Penta R219 000 (new in 2012 at R204 600), Jurgens Classique R269 000 (R237 100), Jurgens Exclusive R295 000 (R269 200), Sprite Swing R174 900 (R143 500), and a Sprite Splash R189 000 (R164 000).

You need to own a second-hand caravan for at least five years if you want your money back, says Dirk Kleinhans of Silver Lakes Caravans in Pretoria. “Five years later, I can offer a customer more than what he paid for a caravan. But, of course, the customer has

to do their part – keep up with all the services and take good care of the caravan.” It’s also important where the caravan is stored: is it under cover, under a tarpaulin, or

a purpose-built storage – or out in the open?

But, not everyone camps with their caravan as often as others, and that’s something that can also have an effect on the wear and tear of a caravan and, ultimately, the price.

Dirk, for example, noticed that prices of second-hand caravans are less influenced by the brand, while it plays a greater role in the vehicle market. It is well known that certain brands have a better resale value.

Owners should have their

caravan serviced at least once a year, says Wesley Dempster of Tygerberg Caravans in Cape Town. This will typically include checking the chassis, wheel bearings, and brakes. If the caravan is stored in the shade, it’s wise to reseal the roof after 14-18 months. And if the caravan stands for a long time, do service it before your holiday.

On Wesley’s floor is a 2012 Jurgens Penta for R225 000, which at the time cost R204 600.

Jurgens penta 2012 caravans for sale

ans for sale

6 days ago
2012 jurgens fleetline for sale
Somerset West, Boland
R 212 500
2012
The jurgens fleetline is very fashionable, modern and sought after caravans available in this...
caravanparts.com

12 days ago
2012 jurgens penta for sale
Centurion, Gauteng
R 219 900
2012
4 berth jurgens penta full tent tent poles & ropes & basin & tap face basin & tap table fridge...
caravanparts.com

13 days ago
2012 jurgens penta
Northern Pretoria, Pretoria
R 234 900
2012
2012 jurgens penta
guntree.co.za

27 days ago
2012 jurgens penta
Meyerton, Meyerton
R 219 900
2012
2012 jurgens penta
myntra.co.za



TOY CARELSON (LEFT) sales manager and Stefan du Toit (right) sales consultant at East Rand Caravan World.

Jacqui Jordaan of Pretoria Caravans agrees about those first five years. "Even three years can be too soon to get your money back – all the more so if, for example, there's an outstanding loan as well."

They maintain their own database of second-hand values and those available elsewhere. The demand for certain caravans also differs, because just before winter, off-road trailers are more popular, while gravel roaders are becoming more and more sought-after. You could attribute this to the state of our country's roads, but, in the meantime, they're constantly looking for more second-hand stock.

As new caravans become more expensive, people are starting to look at second-hand models, says Echard Kuhn of Tuinroete Camping & Caravans in Mossel Bay. The condition of the caravan also plays a role, but don't forget about all those extras on the caravan – the movers, air conditioning, fridge, and additional tent. These all make it easier to sell the caravan later on.

Previously, there was a list of market-related prices available for Jurgens caravans, but these are

no longer kept up to date. Echard and his staff have built on this and he now has his own database. Last year, he sold a 2012 Jurgens Xplorer for R250 000, which was originally R240 600. It seems that older caravans perform even better: take, for example, a 2002 Sprite Swing that cost R67 700 and today is worth more than R90 000, says Echard.

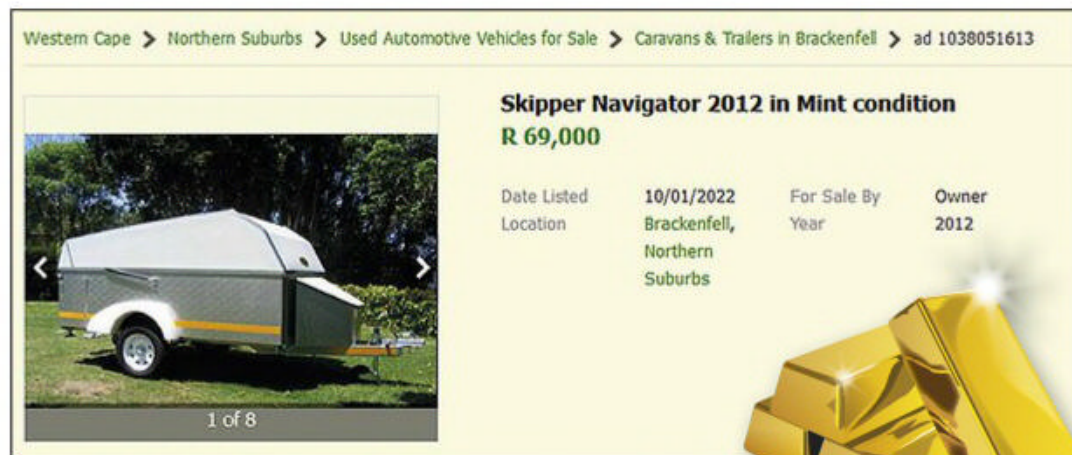
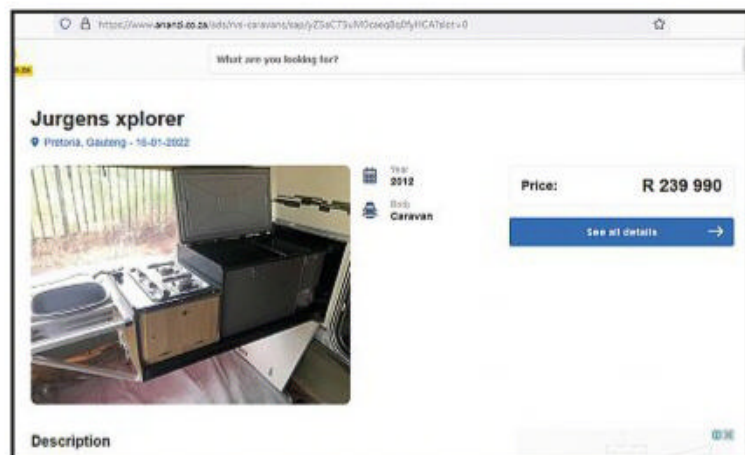
Although there's no official book value for second-hand caravans, an insurer such as CaraSure – which specialises in camping vehicles – has built up its own database, says Ian Lesar. This is after more than 20 years in the industry, and they plan to introduce a fixed insurance value for second-hand caravans in the near future. Ian says the value of a new caravan starts to increase more or less after the third year. And when that happens, it's continuous. Interestingly, caravan owners buy a different caravan on average every three to four years.

** We checked the prices of each model on [autotrader.co.za](https://www.autotrader.co.za), [cars.co.za](https://www.cars.co.za) and [webuycars.co.za](https://www.webuycars.co.za) – and calculated the average.*

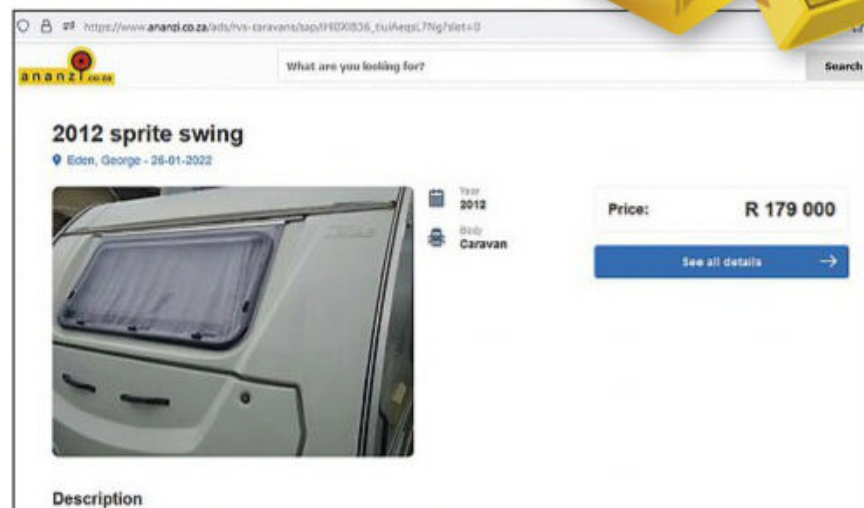
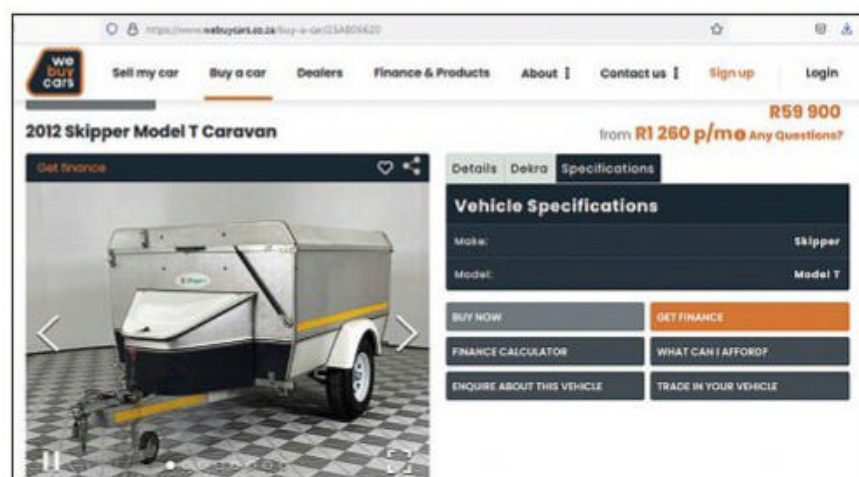


JACQUES LE ROUX of Tygerberg Caravans.

SKERMGREEP ANANZI.CO.ZA



SKERMGREEP WEBUYCARS.CO.ZA



SKERMGREEP GUMTREE.CO.ZA

SKERMGREEP ANANZI.CO.ZA

Let's get planking!

Who knew you could do so much with the humble wooden plank on the trail? Get ready for a workout.

Words and photos **Cyril Kloppe**

It's the professor's humble opinion that the basic plank is a criminally underrated tool. In this article, we mention a mere 12 uses for it. You could, of course, do a lot more. Viva the plank!

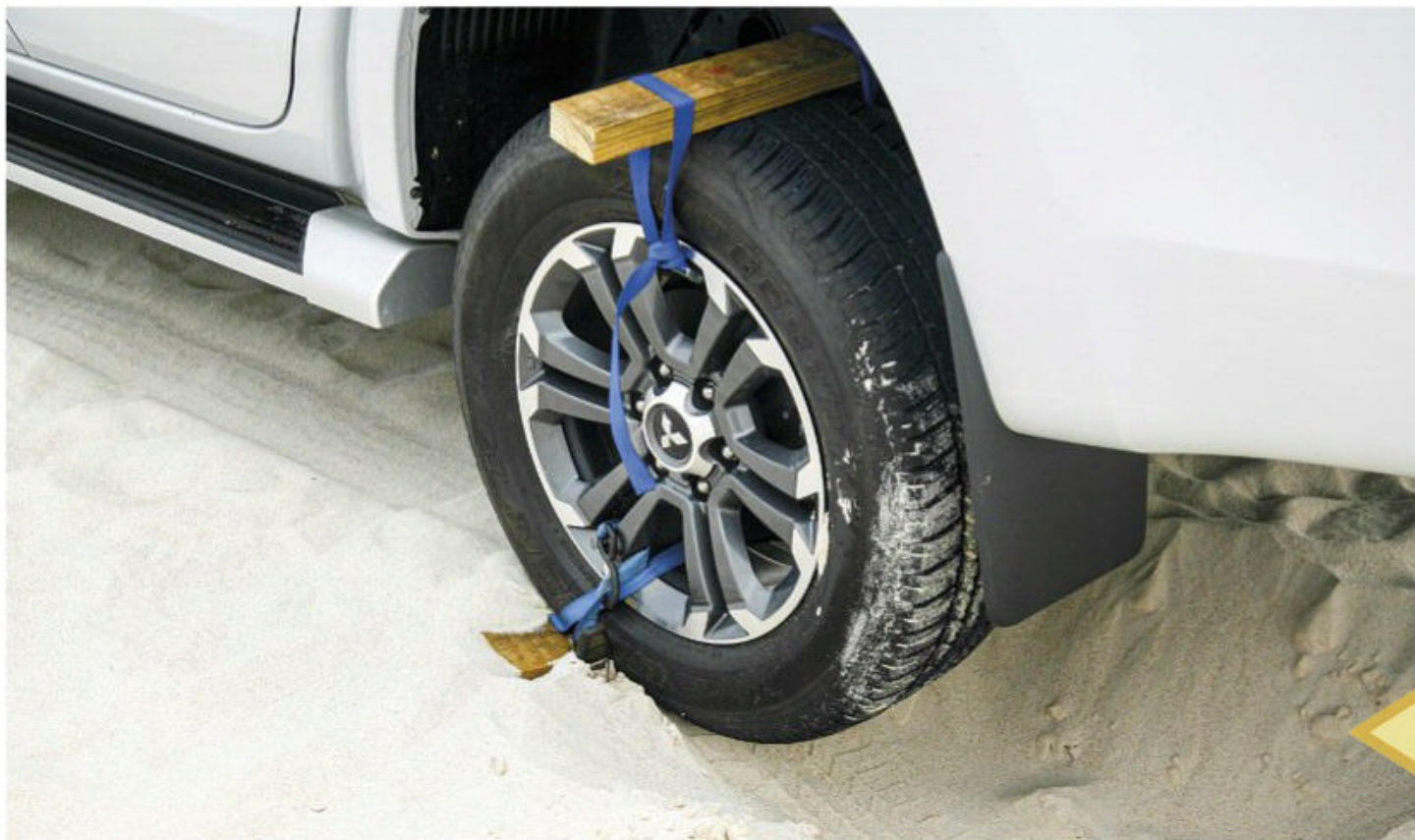
Ab rollout

Fancy recovery boards are based on ordinary wooden planks. Instead of spending R6 000 on a set of Maxtrax, you could simply chuck a piece of wood under a wheel for increased grip. Sure, properly engineered sandboards offer superior traction, but if you know how to use your plank correctly, you won't need anything else.



Bench press

The Achilles heel of a jack – be it the scissors, bottle, or high-lift kind – is sand and mud. You need a plank as a base to prevent the jack from sinking into the ground. If you use an airbag to lift your rig, you can place the wooden plank between the bag and your chassis to protect the bag against sharp metal.



Farmer's walk

The reason you deflate your tyres on sand is to lengthen the tread as opposed to widening it. But spreading weight over a wider area also helps, especially if you're not going to increase the rolling resistance. Tie two planks width-wise on a tyre so the wheel steps on top of the sand rather than dig through it.

Squats

Use your planks to fashion a makeshift chair so you can perch comfortably while loosening wheel nuts. You can claim with conviction that you always sit like this without having to admit that you actually forgot your camping chair at home. Beware though: This setup and a couple of drinks around the campfire don't go well together...



Step-ups

It's impossible to push the bead of a tyre off its rim using your bare hands. Place one end of your plank on the sidewall of the tyre and the other end on the ground. Drive up the plank with your rig and the weight will push the bead off the rim. Why would you do this? If the sidewall of your tubeless tyre has a cut, you'll have to fit a tube.

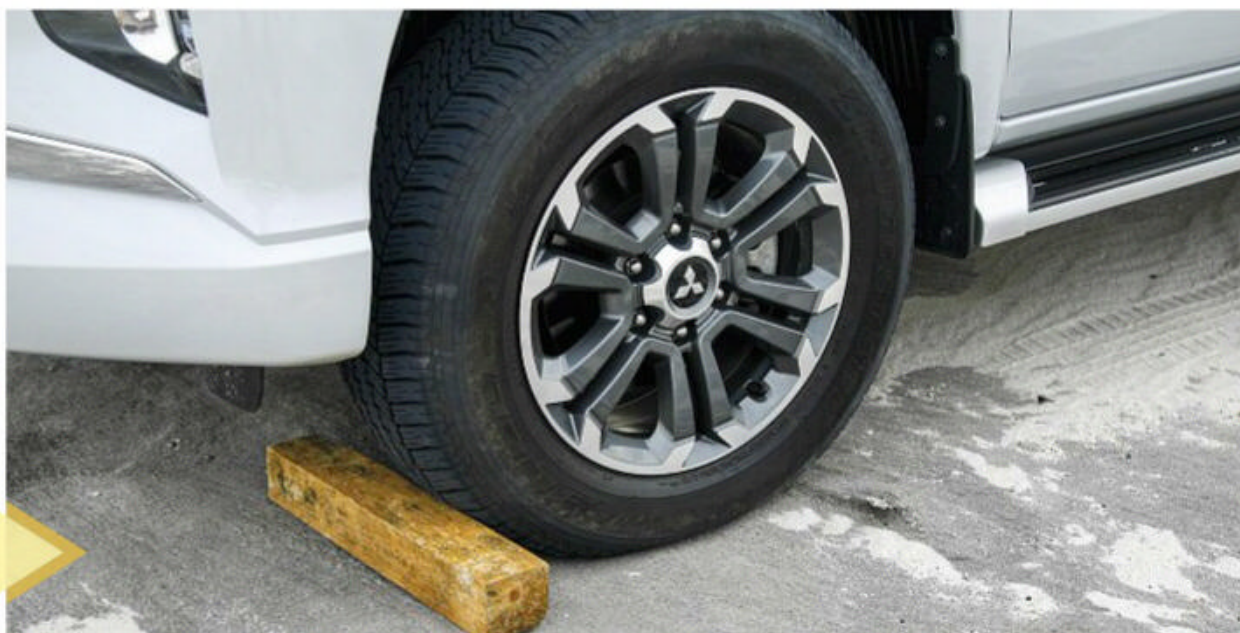


Chest flies

Did you forget your spade at home or did you rely on a cheap folding spade that's just snapped in half? Your plank comes to the rescue once again! Just remember to wear thick gloves so you don't get splinters in your hands. And just like a spade, you can use your plank to poke and move the hot coals of your campfire.

Deadlift

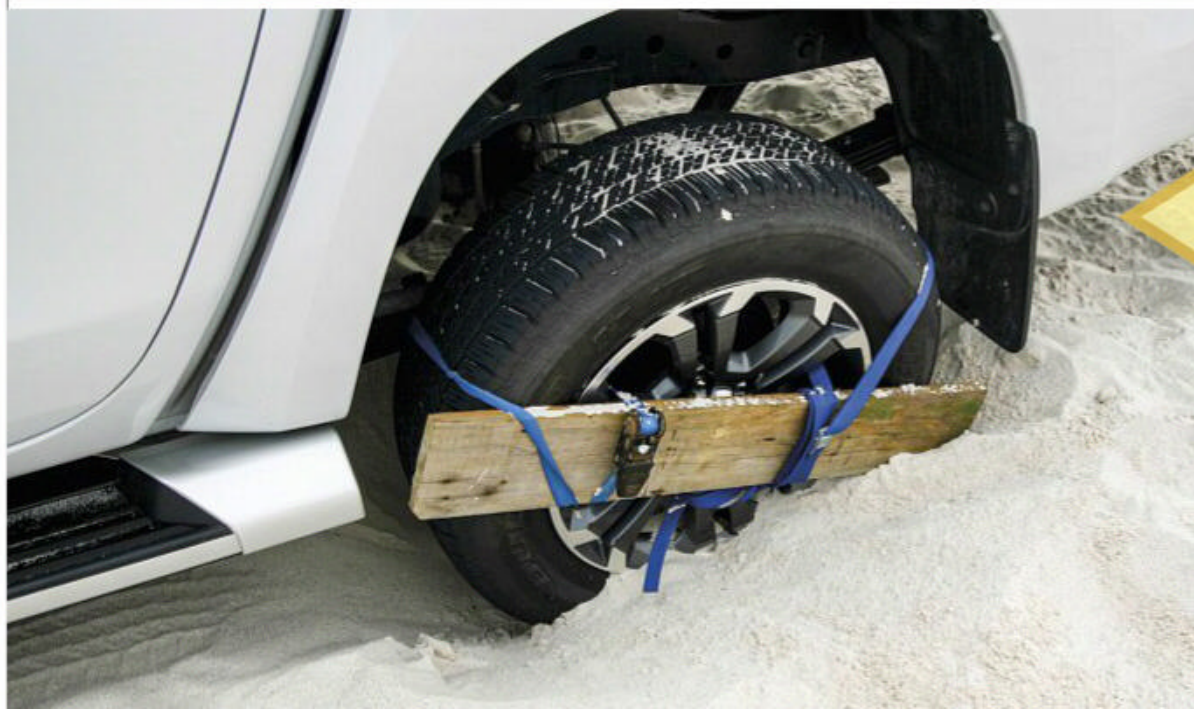
Relying on a handbrake to stop your vehicle from rolling off the jack is like cleaning a pistol and trusting it's safe because you removed the magazine. The devil loads a bullet into the barrel... Use a piece of wood as a chuck to make sure your rig remains absolutely stationary while you crawl underneath it to attend to the problem.



Lateral raises

A tyre tread filled with mud has no grip. Tie a plank that's slightly longer than the diameter of your tyre to the spokes of your wheel. The ends of the plank that stick out beyond the tyre will have your wheel "walk" out of the mud.

Remember: Should the plank come loose, it can damage the bodywork – so keep this as an absolute last resort.





Push-ups

If you're parked on a slope and you plan to sleep in your rooftop tent tonight, it won't matter how you angle your bakkie. You'll either roll to one side or your feet will be higher than your head, or vice versa. Stack your planks on top of each other and drive up onto them until your bakkie – and your roof tent – is level for a good night's rest

Leg extensions

An easy way to test if the brake lights of your vehicle or off-road trailer works is to step on the brake pedal and keep it there by wedging in your stalwart plank. With the plank there, you can walk to the back to see if the lights glow red. Just make sure you haven't wedged the plank against the accelerator pedal...

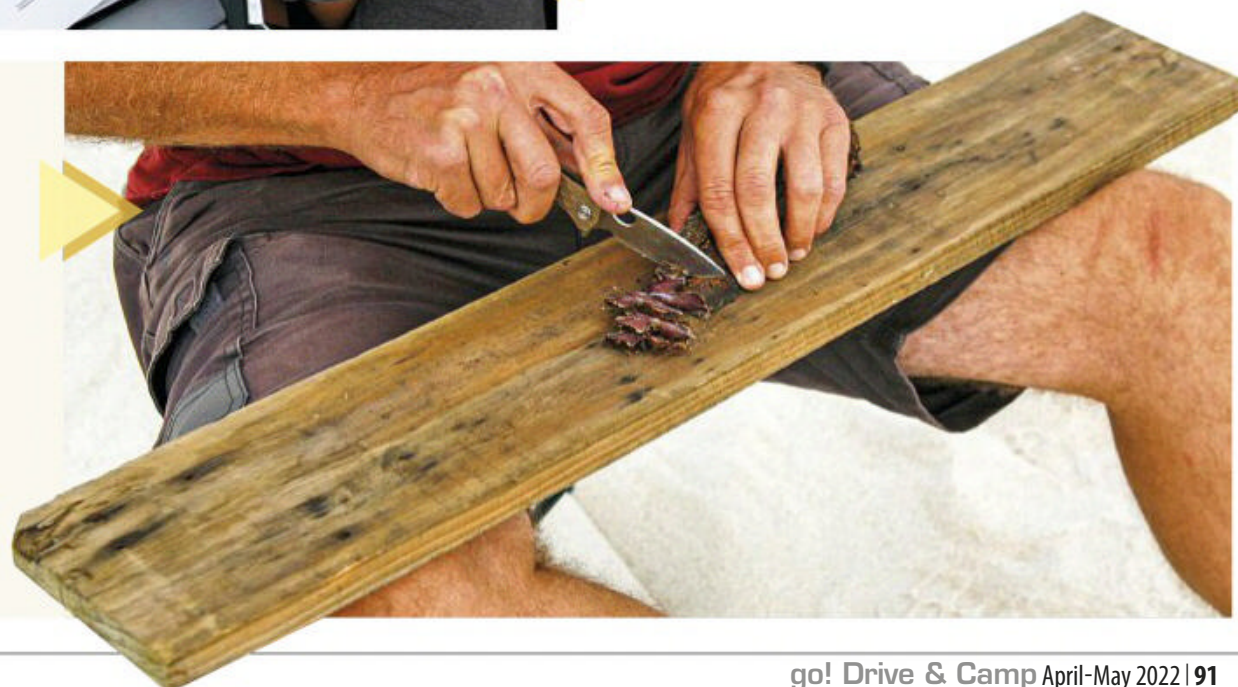


Pushdowns

There remains no better way to figure out a route than to spread open a paper map on a car's bonnet. The wind, however, doesn't play along and might blow it away. That's when your plank – and a coffee flask – help you hold it down so you can decide whether to drive to Kubu Island via Nata or Gweta.

Jackknife situps

You could use a tray, sure, but that wooden plank that helped you out of a pickle earlier today works just as well. Place the plank on your lap and cut lengths of rubber hose on it. Or slice some biltong. And if your shisanyama with pap and sheba is served in a floppy paper plate, well then it also works. Because men, apparently, don't have laps. 🍴



Bring and *braai*

What is a camp without a braai?

Here are 10 portable braais and two braai stands that fold up for easy packing.

Words and photos **Cyril Kloppe**

Resorts and formal campsites usually have built-in braai facilities, often with a tap and a light so you can check whether your meat is cooked. But sometimes, your campsite is more informal and you have to bring your own braai equipment and gadgets.

Our requirements for this list were that a braai should be able to fit into the boot of an average car, and that one

person has to be able to carry it on his or her own – even if it's back-breaking work. The order of the products on this list ranges from small to large in terms of the grid surface available. And, for the sake of clarity, we show you how many 600 g packs of boerewors (a common weight) fit onto the grid when laid out loosely.

Happy braaiing!



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FIRESIDE FOLDING CHARCOAL BRAAI

Sarmie size

This little guy folds up small (30 x 18 cm), and you store it in its own bag. The body is made of 430-grade stainless steel and it should last for at least a year before you burn a hole through it. It's adequate if you're looking for something to quickly make some boerie rolls for the kids.

Grid 300 x 300 mm

Braai surface 900 cm²

Weight 1,9 kg

Price R499 at Outdoor Warehouse



TECHNIPUNCH SAFARI BRAAI LITE

The braaimaster's briefcase

This braai folds up like a suitcase and has a handle, too. Its legs stand firm, and the grid has two rows of tracks so you can adjust the height. The side tables can be used for spices and utensils. The drum is made of 430-grade stainless steel and the grid is galvanised mild steel.

Grid 400 x 300 mm

Braai surface 1 200 cm²

Weight 4,5 kg

Price R799 at Outdoor Warehouse



EXPERT GRID MIDI

Disposable culture

This is the lightest and cheapest braai in this list. Yes, its skinny legs are not the sturdiest, but the grid has room for two rolls of sausage – though it's not height adjustable. It's suitable for those who go on holiday and want to discard the drum so their return trip is lighter.

Grid 475 x 295 mm

Braai surface 1 401 cm²

Weight 1,2 kg

Price R159 at Game



CAMP MASTER PORTABLE BRAAI

Bling-bling

It is similar to the Technipunch Safari Lite in that it folds up like a briefcase with a carry handle, Camp Master's portable braai also comes with its own bag and a one-year warranty. The drum is made of stainless steel, while the grid is chrome-plated. The grid can be set at two heights.

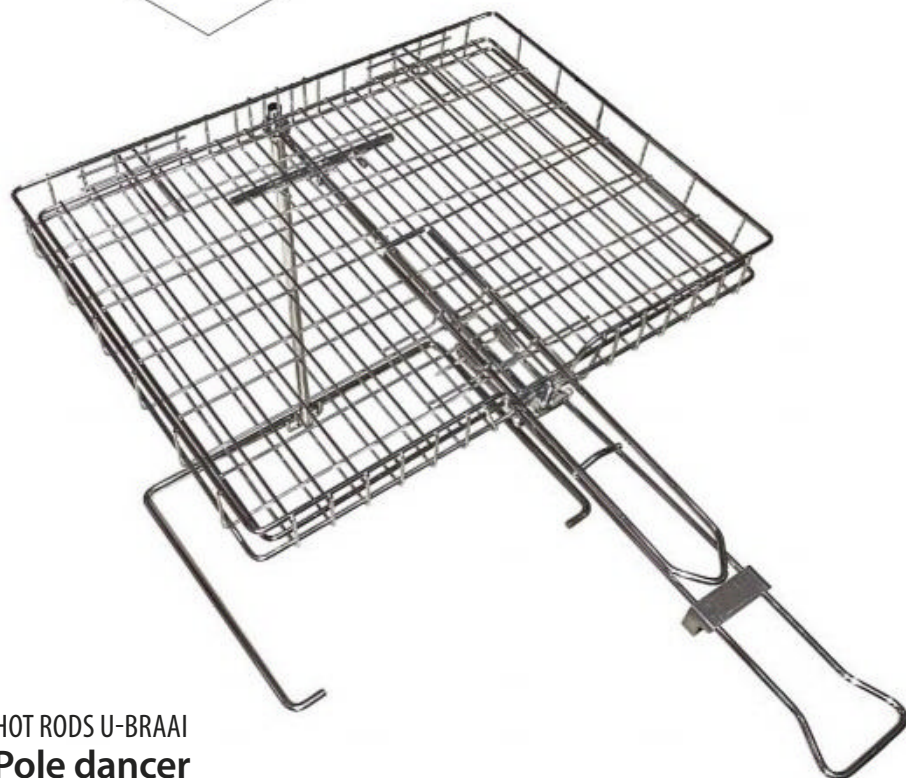
Grid 320 x 440 mm

Braai surface 1 408 cm²

Weight 5,6 kg

Price R699 at Makro





HOT RODS U-BRAAI Pole dancer

This folding grid is suspended on a single stand, and if you bump into it, the grid will drop onto the coals. Practice using it before laying out your chops and braaibroodjies as there's definitely a trick to using it. You can also hang the grid at an angle to braai ribs.

Grid 440 x 330 mm

Braai surface 1 452 cm²

Weight 2,5 kg

Price R1 249 at Safari Outdoor



MADKON AMMO BOX

Just add wood

Unlike most braai drums on these pages, you can braai with real wood (and flames!) in this braai by Madkon. The metal is 3CR12 stainless steel, which is 1,2 mm thick. And it's windproof, height-adjustable, and comes with its own cover. As you can tell from the name, it folds up and fits inside an ammo crate.

Grid 420 x 315 mm

Braai surface 1 491 cm²

Weight 8 kg

Price R3 699 at Outdoor Warehouse



LK'S SWING BRAAI GRID STAND

Flippin nice

The idea isn't that you swing your food back and forth over the coals like a circus act, but rather that you pull on a chain to flip the grid over. Raise it by standing its legs closer together or angle the grid to braai ribs. It's made of galvanised mild steel.

Grid 460 x 370 mm

Braai surface 1 702 cm²

Weight 6,4 kg

Price R769 at Safari Outdoor



METALIX 452

Counting pennies

This braai's grid is similar to the affordable Expert Grid Midi, but its grid height can be adjusted and it has room for three or even four packs of wors. It's slight of build and falls over easily if you bump into it, but the price is right, it weighs relatively little, and the grid has enough room to cook food for a larger family.

Grid 590 x 300 mm

Braai surface 1 770 cm²

Weight 4,5 kg

Price R290 at Builders





MADKON 600S

Overlander

The 600S model weighs 4 kg heavier than the Madkon Ammo Box version, but it has the same benefits: a grid that can be adjusted to three heights, windproof, sturdy, and you can make a proper fire inside. Despite its size, it only takes two seconds to set up and five seconds to pack it away again.

Grid 590 x 340 mm

Braai surface 2 006 cm²

Weight 12 kg

Price R4 399 at Outdoor Warehouse



TECHNIPUNCH USAPHO

Simplicity wins

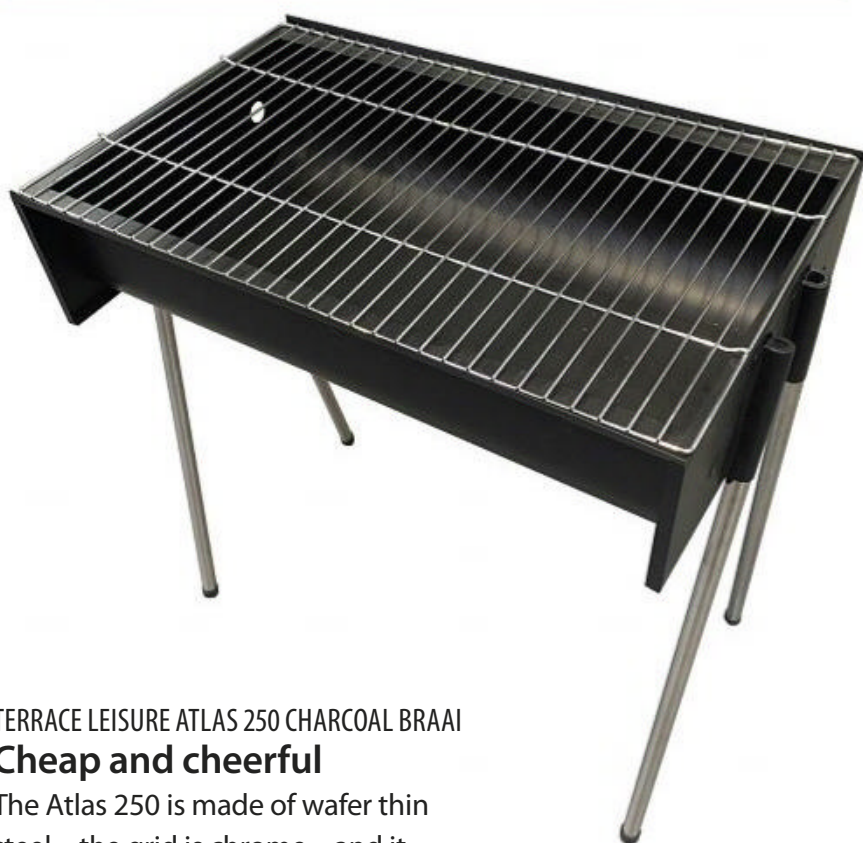
Made of 430-grade stainless steel – the grid is galvanised mild steel. It stands 650 mm tall, which means you don't have to bend over too far to turn the meat. The grid can be set at three heights, and there's a small table for spices and beverages.

Grid 360 x 570 mm

Braai surface 2 052 cm²

Weight 6 kg

Price R1 255 at takealot.com



TERRACE LEISURE ATLAS 250 CHARCOAL BRAAI

Cheap and cheerful

The Atlas 250 is made of wafer thin steel – the grid is chrome – and it won't last long enough to become a family heirloom. Its grid is not height-adjustable, and the legs will snap if you lean against it with your full weight. But it's big, cheap, and should survive a couple of holidays.

Grid 600 x 360 mm

Braai surface 2 160 cm²

Weight 4,5 kg

Price R379 at Makro



TECHNIPUNCH SAFARI BIG BOY

Head chef

This is a proper braai, and you could easily fit eight packs of wors, provided you a grid made that's big enough (it doesn't come with such a grid). It has a grid stand with three heights, two large fold-out tables, plus space for a rotisserie, potjie, and a rib stand. Serious braai masters, take note.

Grid 900 x 360 mm

Braai surface 3 240 cm²

Weight 15 kg

Price R2 499 at Outdoor Warehouse



It's the weekend, baby!

An easy menu for a chilled camping weekend.

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

CHICKEN AND CHEESE BRAAI BURGERS

Gourmet fast food

Lighting a fire that first night of camping is always fantastic. But pick something quick to braai for dinner so everyone can eat and then relax after the drive and all the unpacking.

Ingredients

(makes 8 burgers)

- 8 chicken breast fillets
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon braai spice (we used Six Gun Grill Seasoning)
- 8 slices cheddar cheese
- 100 g pancetta strips or black forest ham – you need enough to cover the cheese on each breast
- 8 roosterkoeke (we bought the ready-made ones from Checkers)
- a handful rocket leaves
- 2 large ripe tomatoes, sliced

Here's how

1 Butterfly each chicken fillet by making an incision in the middle with a sharp knife and then opening it up. It increases the surface area of the breast and covers more of the bread. Plus, it cooks faster.

2 Rub the breasts all over with the oil and spices and arrange them next to one another in a grid that folds shut. Braai over fairly hot coals until the cut edges colour. Turn the grid over, remove from the coals for now, and open it. Now put a slice of cheese on the cooked side of each chicken breast and cover the cheese with a pancetta strip. (Make sure the entire slice of cheese is covered.) Put the chicken back over the coals and braai the other side for a few minutes until the chicken is almost cooked through. Quickly turn the grid so that pancetta gets some colour and the cheese melts.

3 Braai the roosterkoeke quickly until the butter melts inside.

4 Build the chicken burgers by dividing the leaves and tomato between the hot roosterkoeke and then place a delicious chicken breast on top.

Drive & Camp says We used ready-made roosterkoeke for convenience, but feel free to make your own over the coals or buy fresh rolls at a farm stall on the way.



LASAGNE POTJIE

Saturday night treat

When we go camping, everyone asks for this potjie. If there are leftovers – not something that happens often – it's soon gobbled up the next day.

Ingredients

(makes 1 lasagne in a number six flat-bottomed potjie)

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 2 carrots, grated
- 1 kg minced meat
- 2 garlic cloves, finely crushed
- 1 tablespoon braai spice (we again used Six Gun Grill Seasoning)
- 1 tin (70 g) tomato paste (if you like a bit of a bite, choose one with chilli)
- 2 tins (400 g each) cherry tomatoes (or use the chopped tomato tins)
- 1 cup tomato chutney (we use the one from Woolworths)
- 250 g lasagne sheets

FOR THE BÉCHAMEL SAUCE

- ½ cup butter
- ¾ cup flour
- 1 ℓ milk
- 1 cup chicken or beef stock
- 900 g cheese, grated (it sounds extravagant, but you need at least 3 cups)

Here's how

1 Heat the oil and fry the onion and carrot until glossy. Add the mince and garlic and fry until well browned. Break the meat continuously with a spatula so that no lumps form.

2 Stir in the spices and tomato paste and fry for a few more minutes. Then add the tinned tomato and chutney and simmer the mixture while making the béchamel sauce.

3 Make the béchamel in a different saucepan. Melt the butter, whisk in the flour, and fry the roux for a few minutes. Now, gradually whisk in the milk and stock – this prevents lumps from forming. Simmer the sauce until it's nice and thick and you no longer taste raw flour. The stock flavours the sauce, but feel free to add salt and freshly ground pepper if you like.

4 Scoop three-quarters of the meat out of the potjie. Arrange a layer of pasta sheets on top of the meat remaining in the potjie and pour a layer of béchamel on top. Spoon another layer of meat on top, again followed by pasta and sauce, and then repeat the layers until all the ingredients are done, breaking the pasta sheets as needed to fit. Finish with a layer of béchamel and then sprinkle with the cheese. Place the lid on the potjie.

5 Now simmer the lasagna over medium-high coals for about an hour – remember to pack a few coals on the lid. Allow to stand for 10 minutes before calling everyone to dish up.

Drive & Camp says A sprinkle of fresh basil not only looks pretty, it also tastes delicious.



CLASSIC POTATO SALAD

Po-tay-to, po-tah-to

There are only a handful of ingredients, so the mayo makes the salad – choose one you really like.

Ingredients

(serves 4-6 as a side dish)

- 600 g medium-sized potatoes
- 1 cup creamy mayonnaise
- 1-2 tablespoons milk
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ½ teaspoon mixed dry herbs
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- a pinch sugar
- 6 gherkins, finely chopped
- ½ small red onion, finely chopped
- 4 hard-boiled eggs, peeled
- a sprinkle cayenne pepper

Here's how

1 Boil the potatoes in salted water until cooked. Drain and allow to cool until you can work with them with your hands. Then peel them and break into larger pieces.

2 Beat the mayonnaise with enough milk to make it runny. Season the mixture with the garlic and herbs, then add salt, pepper, and sugar to taste. Immediately pour the sauce over the warm potatoes.

3 Mix the gherkin and onion through the salad and spoon onto a pretty plate. Chop the eggs (or grate them) and arrange on top of the salad. Finally, add a sprinkle of cayenne pepper and serve.

Drive & Camp says Using thick mayo and diluting it covers the potatoes better and improves the flavour of the salad.

CREAMY SWEET POTATO SOUP

Cheat sheet...

This quick soup takes hardly any effort at all – just remember the stick blender when packing.

Ingredients

(serves 4-6)

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 1 large carrot, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, finely crushed
- 800 g sweet potatoes, peeled and diced (we used Kara Orange sweet potatoes)
- 750 ml chicken stock
- a generous pinch each nutmeg, ground cumin, and ground coriander
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- ½ cup cream or sour cream

Here's how

1 Heat the oil in a saucepan and fry the onion and carrot

until glossy. Stir in the garlic and diced sweet potatoes and fry everything together for a few more minutes until fragrant.

2 Add the stock and simmer until the vegetables are tender – about 30 minutes.

3 Blend the soup using a hand blender. If you don't have one, get it as smooth as possible with a potato masher.

4 Taste the soup and season with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Also decide if you like the soup's texture – you can dilute it with a little more stock, or simmer it a bit longer to get a thicker soup.

5 Serve the soup with a spoonful of cream or sour cream – add an extra sprinkle of pepper if you like.

Drive & Camp says To make things easier, make the soup at home and bring it frozen to camp. All you need to do now is defrost it and stir in the cream.





PORRIDGE WITH BUTTER-FRIED APPLES Good morning, sunshine!

My brother-in-law makes the best maize porridge. He stirs it slowly while adding more butter than is probably healthy, and then he adds milk little by little. I don't take as long and I add in vanilla essence. Then I serve it with butter-fried apples so I don't feel so guilty about the butter I spoon onto my porridge along with the fruit...

Ingredients

(serves 4)

- 2 cups boiling water
- 2 cups milk
- 1 cup maize flour
- sugar to taste
- ½ cup butter
- ½ teaspoon vanilla essence
- 4 small apples, core removed and sliced 5 mm thick
- 2 tablespoons sultanas
- cinnamon sugar or honey to taste

Here's how

1 Boil the water with 1 cup of milk added and gradually whisk in the maize flour, thus preventing the

porridge from being full of lumps. **2 Simmer** the porridge for 15 minutes or until it's cooked through and smooth – stir regularly with a wooden spoon to stop it from burning at the bottom. Once the porridge is thick, dilute it again with the rest of the milk and sweeten it lightly to taste. Simmer for a few more minutes before stirring in a large lump of butter, the vanilla essence, and a pinch of salt. Allow the porridge to stand for a while before serving so it firms up slightly again. **3 To** prepare the apples, melt the rest of the butter in a pan over medium heat until frothy and fry the slices until they are golden brown all over. Once caramelised to your liking, stir in the sultanas and sweeten with cinnamon sugar. **4 Stir** the porridge one last time, season with a pinch of salt and sugar, and serve. Drizzle each bowl with another lump of butter and serve the porridge with the apples, plus extra honey or cinnamon sugar to taste.

Drive & Camp says Pear or fried banana strips are great alternatives to apples.

BROWNIES Sweets for my sweet!

Bake these tempting brownies at home – just hide them well if you want them to last until Saturday night. They're extra yummy with braaied marshmallows.

Ingredients

(makes 9 squares)

- 1 large slab (150 g) milk chocolate with nuts, coarsely chopped
- ½ cup melted butter
- 2 eggs
- ½ cup light brown sugar
- ¾ cup self-raising flour, sifted

Here's how

1 Preheat the oven to 180 °C and line a 20 x 20 cm cake tin with baking paper.

2 Melt the chocolate and butter together and allow to

cool slightly. Whisk the eggs and sugar until thick and light (about 10 minutes with an electric beater) and then fold in the flour and cooled chocolate until just mixed. **3 Pour** the batter into the lined tin and bake for 25-30 minutes – you want the cake to still wobble slightly in the middle so it can recede as it cools and gives the brownies a sticky inside. If you bake it for too long, it becomes a terribly delicious block of cake. **4 Allow** to cool completely, cut into squares, and store the brownies in an airtight container.

Drive & Camp says If you use milk chocolate with nuts, you don't have to buy more nuts. If you prefer dark chocolate, stir in ⅓ cup of chopped nuts of your choice before it goes in the oven.



go! Drive & Camp

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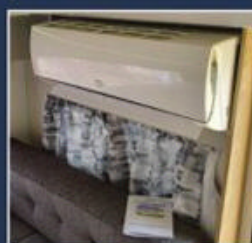
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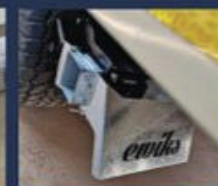
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Image 4 - Setback extended



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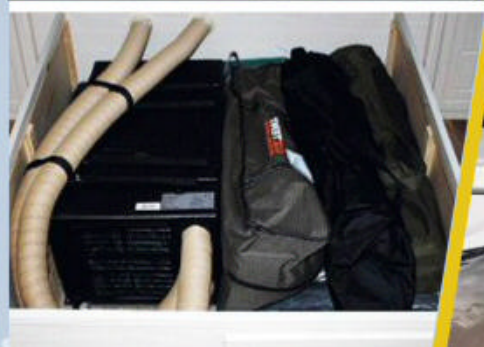
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- Model **HB-RT**
- Power System **AC 220-240 V/50 Hz**
- Rated Cooling Capacity **3500W**
- Rated Heating Capacity **3500W**
- Power Input (Cooling/Heating) **1300W/1100W**
- Refrigerant **R410a**
- Overall Dimensions (mm) **710 W x 253 H x 1035 L**
- Packaging Dimensions (mm) **760 W x 310 H x 1090 L**



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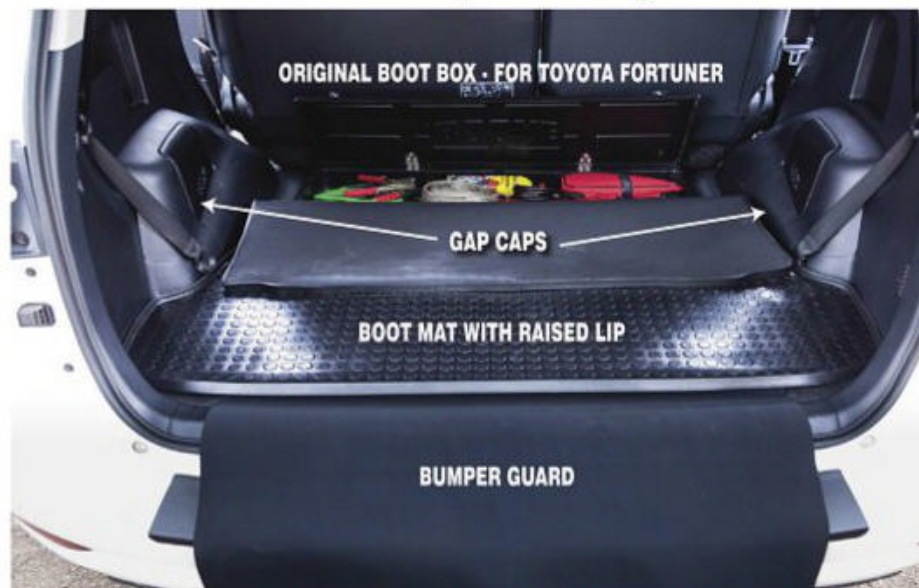


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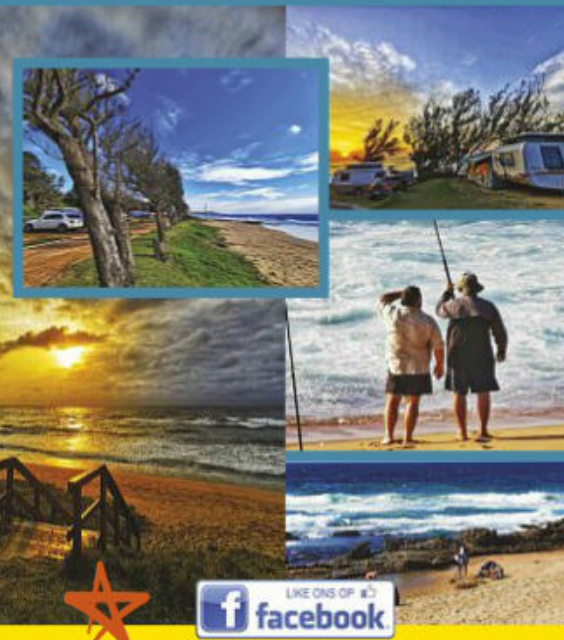


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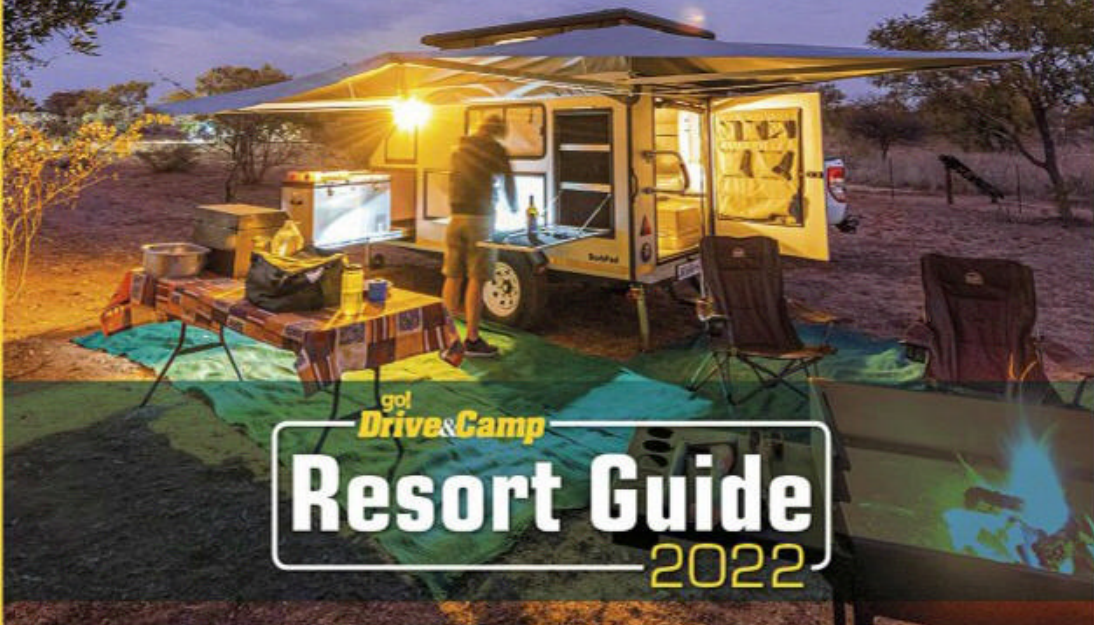
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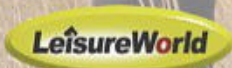
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MOTORHOME-WORLD



CROSSWORD

Ellen Botha from Rustenburg has won a **Van Loveren hamper** for her crossword entry in our February-March 2022 issue. You can win too. Complete this crossword puzzle and e-mail a picture to drivecamp@gomag.co.za. Or do it at <https://bit.ly/3pUPuiy>. Last month's solution is on p 104.

			Tall hooved mammal		Battering wind		Belonging to you (archaic)	Mythical deity		Remedy for a flat battery (6,6)			
			Legal						Ameri-cium (symbol)				
			Beam				Point out the way						
Speci-mens		Sticky substance				Target				Swindle	Shower		Deed
		Layer				Small sofa				Place of refuge			Dregs
				Catlike						Seed cover			
			Managed										
Exhibition (short)						Radon (symbol)		Oregon (abbr)					
Distant								Refund					
"Heavens"			Energy					Rear part of an aircraft		Irritate			
		Cerium (symbol)			In these times								
		Consume											
... the ante						Type of peaches				Pierce			
Study													
			Calcium (symbol)					Sort					
			Hurt					Attractive					
Meadow						Capable							
Stalks of grain						Male offspring				A Ford bakkie			
								Steradian (symbol)			Weight (diamond)		Combined
											Alerted		Narrate again
			... not, want not			Cobalt (symbol)		Informed					
			Perform			Coincide		Silicon (symbol)					
								Caught					
								Not you					
Camp in the Kruger National Park		Ditch	Epoch	Instrument		Resettle							
		Pale		Chest bone		Wonder							
								Go in					
								Island (abbr)					
Indian garment													
					Cyst (tech)			Anger				Lan-thanum (symbol)	
Allow							Neon or helium, eg				Lack-lustre		

COMPILED BY GERDA ENGELBRECHT

Win with Van Loveren wines

Tangled Tree recently expanded their eco-friendly range to a three-litre bag-in-a-box. This lovely range consist of a Chocolate Cabernet Sauvignon, Butterscotch Chardonnay, Spicy Shiraz, and Tropical Sauvignon Blanc.

The Tangled Tree range, with its lower carbon footprint, is not merely an embodiment

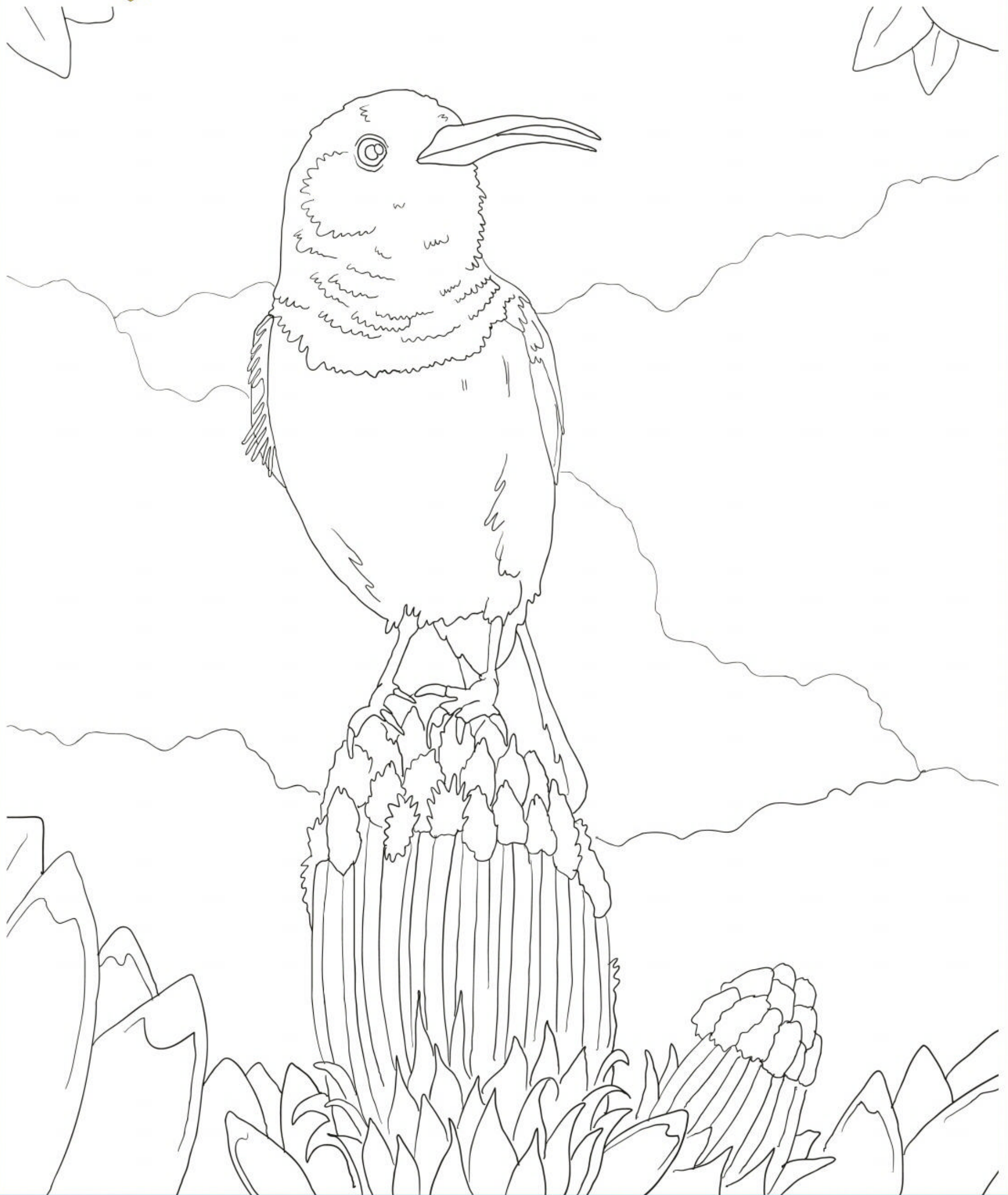
of Van Loveren's commitment to sustainable winemaking but also tells a story of love. Find out more at tangledtree.com.

Follow Tangled Tree wines on social media at @tangledtreewines (Facebook & Instagram).

Prize includes a mixed case of eight three-litre Tangled Tree wines.



Colour in



COLOUR IN

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

WORD SEARCH

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

SPOT THE DIFFERENCES

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

MAZE

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

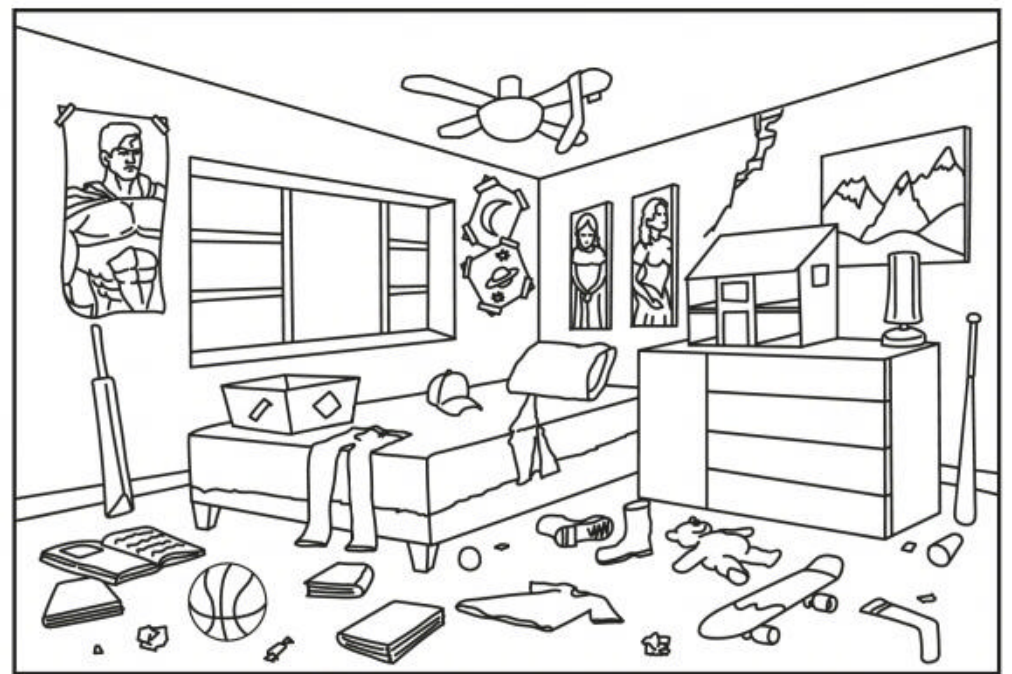
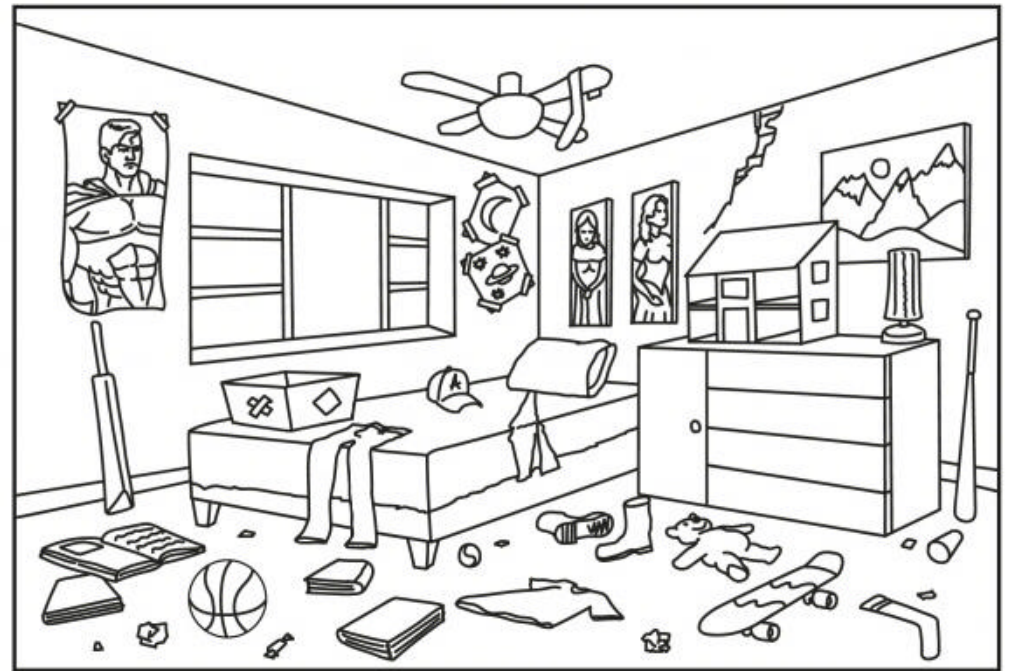
Word search

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

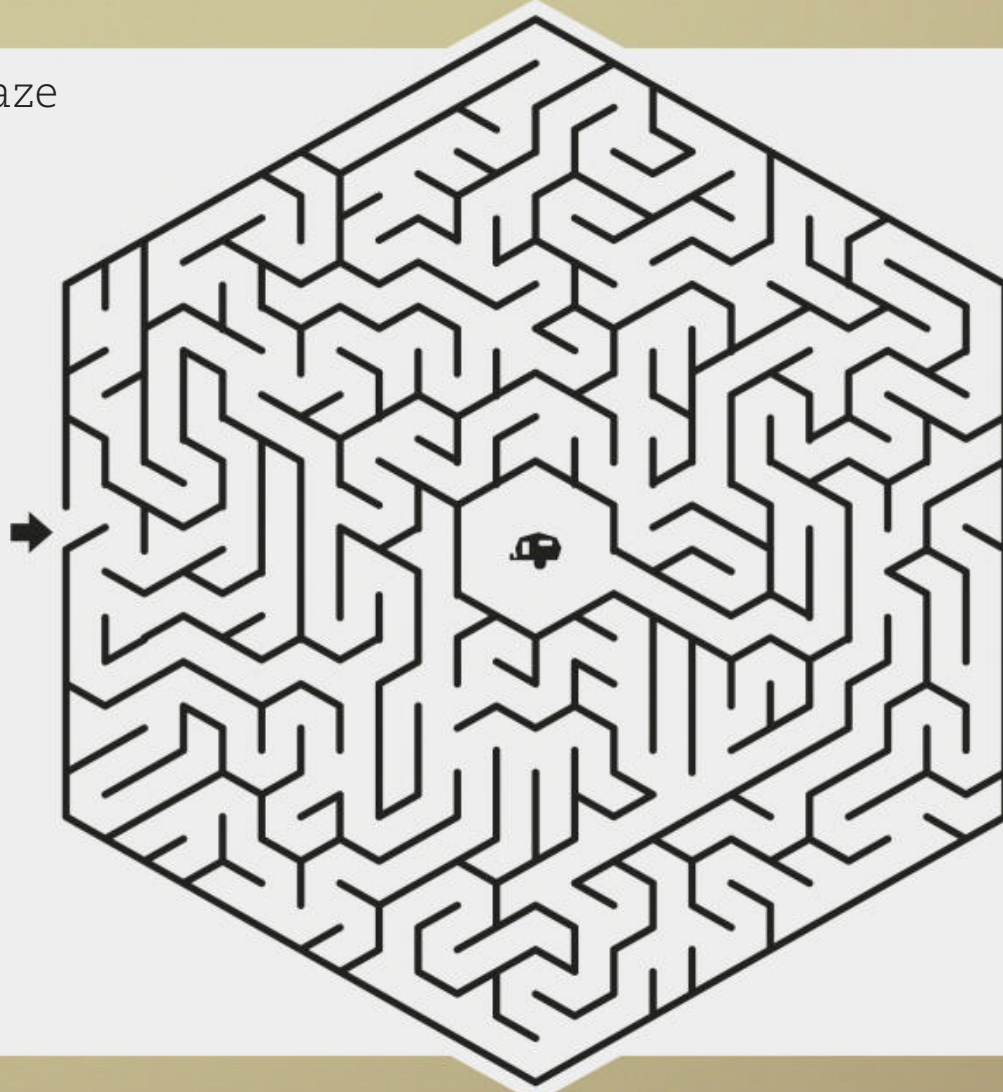
SPORTS ICONS

Tiger Woods	Carl Lewis	Rodger Federer
Steffi Graf	Lionel Messi	Diego Maradona
Muhammad Ali	Ayrton Senna	Nadia Comaneci
Usain Bolt	Pele	Jesse Owens
Michael Jordan	Michael Phelps	Billie Jean King
Serena Williams	Mia Hamm	Danica Patrick

Spot the differences



Maze



Animal facts



CHAMELEONS (CHAMAELEONIDAE)

- Chameleons love tropical climates, and some 59 of the 200 species can be found in Madagascar.
- They eat anything from insects to foliage, fruits, and even small birds.
- Their tongues are long and powerful and can reach up to twice the length of their bodies.
- They have the ability to move each of their eyes independently, giving them 360-degree vision.
- A chameleon has five toes on each foot, and coupled with a sharp nail on each toe, it helps them hold on to trees and its bark.
- Chameleons live for two to 10 years in captivity, but they can live longer in the wild.

Arrive alive

Witnessing countless transgressions – as well as an unbelievable number of potentially fatal chances taken by fellow road users – while driving over the festive season got him thinking about how this could be resolved, says **Mic van Zyl**.

There can be no denying that the Western Cape is one of the most beautiful places to visit in Southern Africa, if not the world, especially for people from Gauteng. This was the holiday destination for my family and I over the past December holiday.

Apart from the absolute beauty of the area, a stand-out feature of the Western Cape must be the driving habits of Capetonians. I am by no means inferring that it is bad. It's just different.

They seem to be less rushed. There is enough of a difference for it to be quite noticeable, especially for one who travels a lot around Southern Africa by road.

It was in no way unpleasant and contributed to our unwinding during our holiday – so much so that it took a day or two to catch up with the rest of the rat race once back in Gauteng.

What I did, however, find most unpleasant was our experience while driving to and from the Cape. The 2 800-odd kilometre return trip between Johannesburg and Cape Town highlighted several glaring issues with our road users.

During the 28 hours spent driving to and from our holiday, I witnessed behaviour that I can only describe as abhorrent and leaves me unsurprised by our excessive accident numbers, especially over the holiday seasons. These alarming statistics seem to have been around for as long as I can remember, going back to my childhood.

Another related feature of our holiday road accident fiasco is the numerous road-safety projects the authorities attempt every holiday to counter the unacceptable death toll, without any lasting success.

Policing is becoming more and more conspicuous by its absence. With this, the level of ill-discipline seems to be on the rise. My attention span for the entire drive down to the Cape and back up again was tested to near limit. It was not a pleasant experience, and I have vowed to not do this trip over the festive season ever again.

Witnessing countless transgressions as well as an unbelievable amount of potentially fatal chances taken by fellow road users got me thinking about how

this could be resolved. I've come to the conclusion that this is no easy task, and there is no quick and easy solution.

I agree that speed, especially excessive speed, is a major issue. Another would be drinking and driving. I cannot believe the number of vehicles with the driver and passengers all drinking alcohol and having a party in the car while speeding past me on a national highway. These issues are unacceptable and should be dealt with effectively and decisively.

A far deeper underlying issue is one of ill-discipline, bad road manners, and plain ignorance of the road laws and road signs. I used to be an impatient driver, mostly transgressing the speed laws. I, however, never disregarded solid white lines and blind hills, merely out of fear of losing my own life, never mind that of my passengers and fellow road users.

Since I became a husband and a father, things have changed drastically. As a matter of principle, I'm a very different driver, especially when my son Michael is in the car with me.

I do not want him to pick up any of the bad habits I used to have. I want him to learn from an early age that operating a motor vehicle on a public road, where your actions could potentially cause harm or even death to other people, carries an immense responsibility.

And herein lies the biggest problem that the authorities need to conquer to ensure better road usage: a lack of education. I believe that if we teach our children from their first year in school about road use, road laws, and the consequences of bad driving, we have a better chance of a long-term improvement in our bad road accident statistics.



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Do better, municipalities

Scrutinise the attitude of municipal authorities towards campsites, says **Neels van Heerden**.

Recent research by a professor at the University of Johannesburg (UJ) indicates that about 70% of municipal caravan parks in the Western Cape are located in either Cape Town, Saldanha Bay, Mossel Bay, Hessequa, the Cederberg, Cape Agulhas, the Berg River, or Overstrand.

The research paper quotes a director who is involved in the management of

municipal parks in one of these local authorities, and he says the main purpose of their parks isn't creation of income. Rather, it's done for the sake of jobs for the local community, as well as creating an indirect income through tourism.

Except for the ATKV Hartenbos, which has good occupation figures all year round. (The peak season for most of these resorts is over December and the Easter weekend.) Long-term campers – the so-called Swallows, who flee south to escape the winter cold – and travellers who overnight or attend festivals, supplement their income in off-peak times.

And it's especially this additional spending by visitors to businesses outside the caravan parks that makes it a no-brainer to maintain the standard of facilities in municipal resorts and modernise them regularly.

A major reason for subletting municipal resorts is to shift some of the risk while alleviating the cost burden on local authorities. The big advantage is that the local authority creates rental income, promotes job creation, and stimulates the economy of the town and its surrounding area.

There are, however, several examples of municipal authorities that don't have the faintest idea how to manage a caravan park as an income-generating asset. Unfortunately, there are also numerous examples of outsourced municipal resorts that cannot cope.

In the Makana Municipality and Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality, the UJ's research found, among other things, that structural defects in buildings, poor maintenance, problems with stormwater, corruption, maladministration, and fraud caused the caravan parks to fail.

An astonishing finding is that in most smaller towns there is no direct link between caravan park management and local tourism organisations.

There are seven caravan parks in the area near Saldanha Bay, but according to a municipal official, there is almost no communication with local tourism organisations. Such a communication channel must be in place so there can be a purposeful strategy to market resorts as destinations.

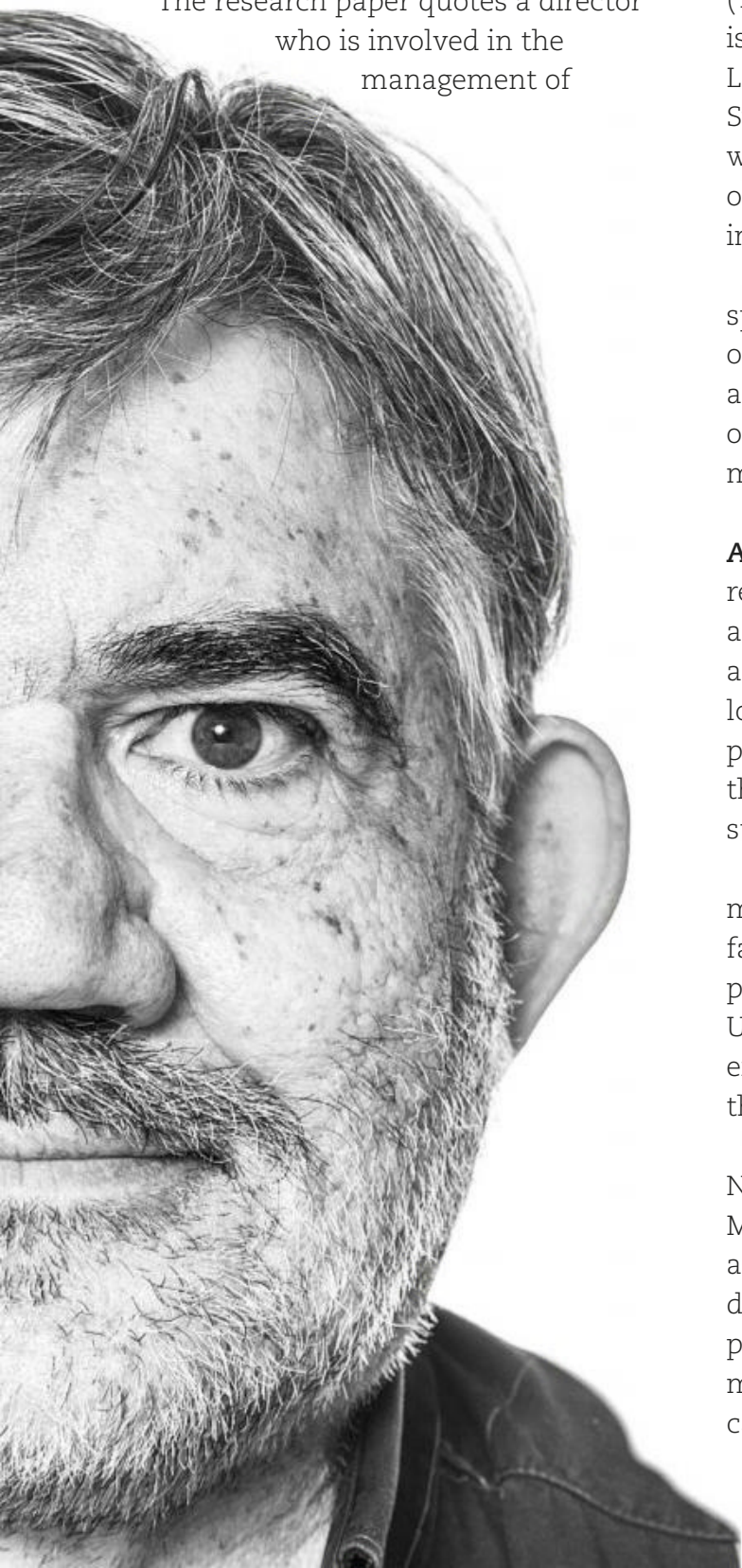
The Cederberg Municipality is mentioned as a local authority that has a sub-department that handles caravan parks and improves communication. One case where a local authority finally woke up is the Walter Sisulu municipality in the Eastern Cape, with its headquarters in Burgersdorp.

In December 2021, they began a tender process to refurbish and maintain the Aliwal North Spa. It makes sense that a municipal head office would rather outsource a resort that's difficult to manage, being more than 60 km away. Hopefully, this resort will be restored to its former glory.

La Mouette Caravan Park on the KwaZulu-Natal North Coast shut its gates somewhere around 2007, but apparently the Ilembe District municipality recently upgraded the resort for a huge tender amount. The facilities have been renewed and the park appeared to be rejuvenated.

A local resident tried to pop in this past December, but security staff turned them away. They report the place looks pretty dilapidated again. Now, why award a tender if everything is allowed to go to waste?

Camp activists all over South Africa must aim their magnifying glasses at the attitude of municipal authorities towards campsites.



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The fear of tents

The last time he spent a night in a tent, he was fearing for his life in the mountains on the border between Zimbabwe and Mozambique, says **Sean Hunter Christie**, who's in no hurry to do so again.

I have a fear of tents. There, I said it, and it is no small admission. For much of my life, I have projected an image of outdoorsy competence. I am not sure that I had much choice in the matter.

My father is a former infantryman, capable of rolling a sleeping bag up tighter than a geometric tortoise. On my mother's side, I'm directly descended from the Edenburg trekkers. I'm to the manner born, as they say, except that my track record tells a very different story.

Once, I was eaten alive by sand fleas on an Eastern Cape beach because I failed to put down a groundsheet. Another time, in Mpumalanga, a large red centipede stung my toe after I failed to shake out my shoes. Clearly, I'm more of a Papa Berenstain than a Bear Grylls, more qualified in "How not to" than the tying of knots.

This painful realisation truly hit home in 2010, high up in the Chimanimani mountains – the range on the border of Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

I had heard that scores of men were panning the mountain range's rivers for gold, and as a journalist with conservation leanings, I felt a duty to investigate. I asked a photographer friend to join me, and I should have known what we were in for when I saw how she intended to hike: with a 20 kg rucksack, a camera bag of equal weight,

and a tripod that could have held up the temple of Dagon.

The next thing that caused me a prick of concern was hearing from the guide we had hired – a former gold panner called Luke – that our destination was called Musanditera, meaning "don't follow me". This, Luke explained, is what panners had been telling their families ever since the great cyclone of 2006, which had killed many panners and an even greater number of would-be rescuers.

On this upbeat note, we made for the narrow passes after which the Chimanimani are named and which for centuries have served as trade routes between Zimbabwe and Mozambique. Except for the odd shoe sole and a few pairs of old shorts, we saw no sign of panners, and Luke reckoned that it had something to do with the fact that armed rangers had been attacking panners and stealing their clothes. We would find them all on the other side of the range, he thought, in Mozambique.

The border between the two countries is a barrier of rocky spears, grassed up to a point and then grey white like sharpened pumice. Weighed down by camera gear, we ascended through a ravine the panners called "Razor wire". It remains to this day one of the hardest things I have ever done.

At the top, I collapsed next to the path and removed my shoes, and in doing so, I effectively chose our campsite. Luke wasn't happy about it. He explained that the panners moved at night to avoid detection, and as the hump of land I'd chosen fell away sharply on the right and left, anyone coming that way would have no choice but to pass by the tent's entrance.

The panners, he now admitted, had been violently fighting with Mozambican rangers, too, and any panner who stumbled upon us would probably assume we were rangers and might feel inspired to torch our tent. At the very least, he thought we'd be robbed of our food, as the rangers had closed the mountain *mtsikas* (markets) and chased away the women who supplied them.

As the sun set, we observed streams of men climbing out of the nearby valleys, pickaxes slung over their shoulders. Soon, fires speckled the cliff faces. It was at this point that the photographer – a society maven with no camping experience – finally summoned the courage to ask if it might not be a good idea to relocate.

I had an egg boiling away on the Primus, however, and reassured her that all would be well. Luke said nothing, but chose not to join us in the tent and instead unrolled his sleeping mat behind a distant rock.

Around midnight, the photographer shook me awake. "Something's out



there," she whispered. I listened. "It's the wind," I said. "Somebody's whistling," she insisted. "It's the whistling of the wind," I said, and closed my eyes.

Minutes later, a torch beam probed our tent, and to quote Bill Burr, I have never been so effing scared in my entire life. We rustled our sleeping bags in alarm, and this caused several pairs of feet to drum away at speed. A short while later, the torch beam was back. Luke, from the safety of his rock, yelled out at the top of his lungs, and again we heard the drumming of feet.

Why had I chosen to pitch our tent across the smuggler's trail? Come to think of it, what were we doing in a tent at all, unable to observe our surroundings and with no way to escape quickly and soundlessly? I felt like a fish

in a basket as I searched in my backpack for a weapon, and produced a little yellow box cutter, the sort of thing that might fly out of a Christmas cracker.

At the same time and without warning, the photographer activated her headtorch. Very few things could possibly distract from the sort of situation we were in, but the sight of me on my knees holding the tiny blade in two sweaty hands was clearly one of those things, because the photographer laughed, and then I laughed, and we both laughed so hard and so long, we nearly collapsed the tent. There were no more surprises that night.

At 05:00, a delegation of panners arrived at our campsite, led by a man called Kudakwashe. Word of our

presence had spread, and throughout the valley, bands of panners were waiting in their caves for further information before descending to their works.

In chiShona, Kudakwashe described his terror at finding our tent in his path. He said he and his group had scattered, and after reforming some way down the hill, they had indeed discussed whether to attack the tent with their pickaxe handles. But then they heard maniacal laughter and became convinced that whoever stood in their way must have the protection of powerful muti. And so they had retreated. We all shared a good laugh, and Kudakwashe invited us to spend the day observing his syndicate's panning activities.

With the exception of the J&J booster jab I took last November, I haven't stepped inside a tent since.

...AND FINALLY



Restored to glory

It's tragic when a classic caravan is sent to the scrap yard. So, when you come across one from the sixties in a resort, you take a step closer and strike up a conversation with the owners, says **Josef Tolmay** from Three Rivers.

My wife, Johanna, and I were on our daily walk one day when an old Jurgens 500 caravan made its entry into the Gouritsmond Caravan Park. We both just stood there, admiring the work of art slowly driving past. Some days later, I finally gathered the courage to go and say hello to the owners, Gys and Adrie van Vuuren.

Everything spoke of neatness and precision. Gys literally swapped his reliable trailer for the shell of a 1966 Jurgens 500. Only the floor and chassis were original and in good condition. Gys is knowledgeable and practical enough to undertake this huge task himself, thus ensuring everything was perfect.

“

Gys even installed a power inverter in the cupboard should it be required

”

He sanded off the old weathered coat of paint on the outside and painted a new coat in his choice of colour. He removed all rust and wood rot and restored the damaged surfaces. Gys also had to replace two windows, and he was able to imitate it very professionally with aluminium.

Gys had the rally tent made by a tentmaker according to his needs. Adrie sewed the sides and fronts together with great care using her sewing machine. The inside of the caravan was completely empty, with the exception of the original cupboard. This gave them the opportunity to put their own stamp on the caravan.

Gys built a permanent bed – slightly larger than a double bed – on the right-hand side in the back. The larger bed slightly reduced the work surface, especially because it has a full-length fridge.

The space under the double bed is used for storage. Gys built a practical medicine cabinet above the worktop. When they camp, Adrie stores her crockery in the cupboard under the worktop. Then, when they're getting back on the road, she places the crockery in

containers which she then slides into the cupboard.

Gys built drawers into one section of the wardrobe for their groceries, and there's a dining area in the front left that can be converted into a single bed. Between the two benches of the dining area there's a fridge/freezer, and the front and sides of the rally tent, the tent pegs, and ropes are stored inside the spaces.

The poles go into a pipe that Gys bolted onto the chassis. Inside, LEDs provide light, and Gys even installed a power inverter in the cupboard should it be required.

The end result – which will henceforth be Gys and Adrie's home – reflects their exceptional requirements that will ensure togetherness. We salute these two beautiful people. 🏠



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