

#47

go!

FOOD AN OLIVE A DAY FOR A BETTER HOLIDAY

FEBRUARY-MARCH 2022 | ISSUE 47

Drive & Camp

The Boland

Camp, drive, and relax in the Winelands



Coast to coast

From east to west through deserts and snow

DESTINATION NATURE

Make mine a double

Botswana & Namibia

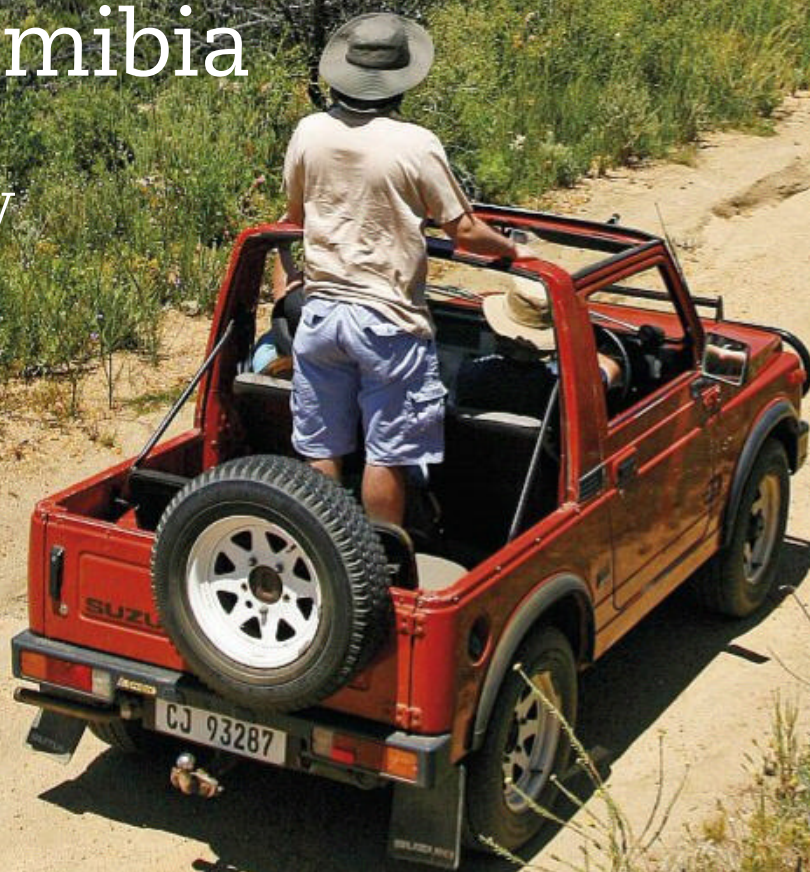
Readers camp like there's no tomorrow

NEW WHEELS

Four bakkies and a sci-fi minibus

4x4 PROFESSOR

Can cooking oil lube an engine?



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Namibia N\$90,00

GEAR EIGHT BOXES AND BAGS FOR YOUR ROOF RACK

THE ALL-NEW COROLLA CROSS



CROSS BOUNDARIES

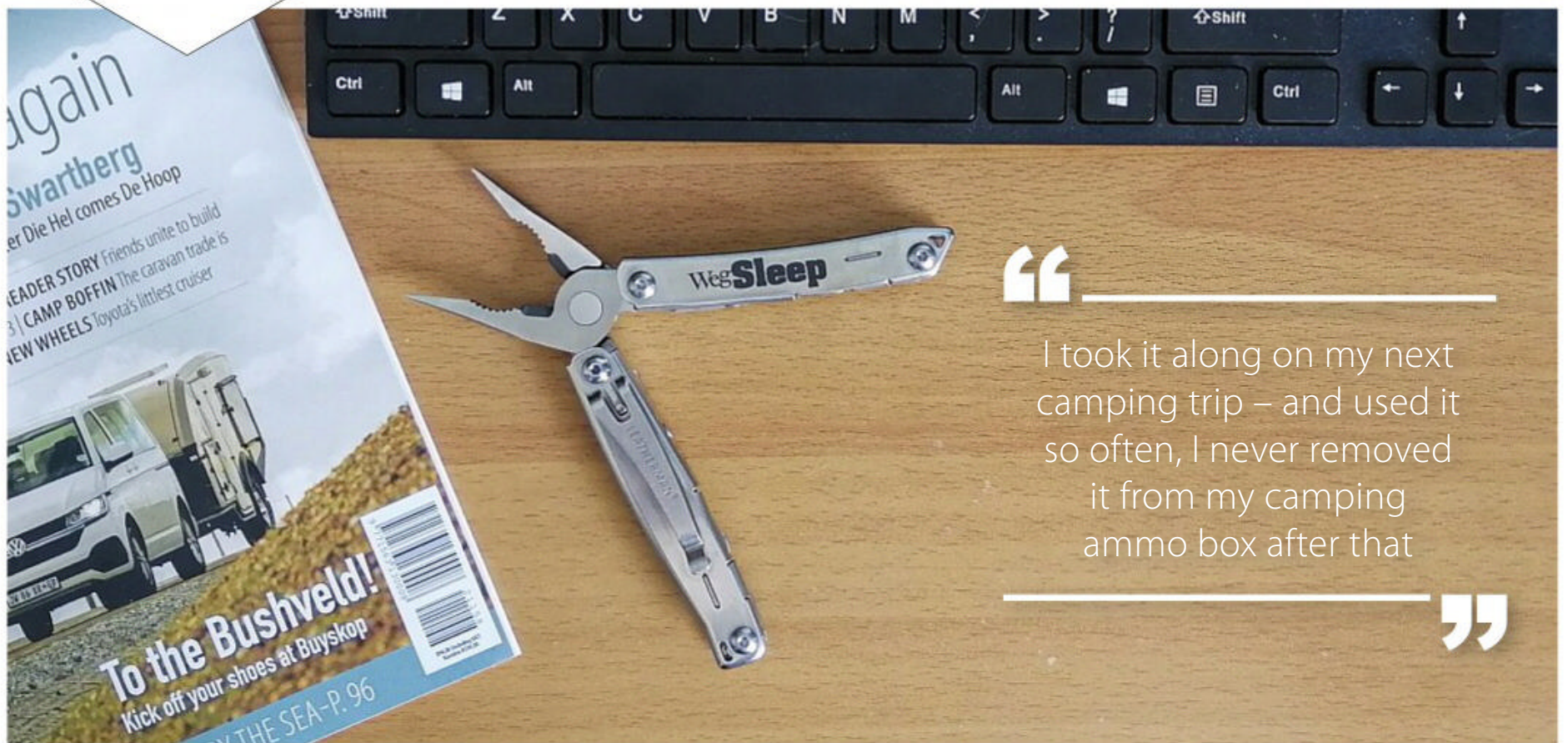
Introducing the all-new Corolla Cross.

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.

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“

I took it along on my next camping trip – and used it so often, I never removed it from my camping ammo box after that

”

Farewell my multi-tool

Toast Coetzer's ode to his yellow one-man tent on p 120 reminded me of that one item I always take along when we spend some time in nature. Something that's also worthy of an ode.

It's not our tent – we've probably replaced it three times already as our needs have changed. It's not my camping chair either, because I'm a big guy and my chairs have a habit of not making it to old age. I replace mine every year or three.

Ultimately, it comes down to one of two items: my braai tongs and my Leatherman. The former occupies a very special place in my heart. It's made of stainless steel, and I got it as a present from friends who even had my name engraved on it. I'm very precious about my tongs... as my WhatsApp profile picture will attest. And I'm loathe to use them because I want to keep them pristine. So they're not (yet) eligible for an ode.

But my multi-tool definitely deserves one. It was one of those things I never realised I needed. It was also a present. Zigi Ekron, former *WegSleep* editor, gave us all one of them when he accepted another position. I took it along on my next camping trip – and used it so often, I never removed it from my camping ammo box after that.

The story, unfortunately, has a sad ending, because a few years ago, thieves broke into our house, and my multi-tool, with all its sentimental value, was one of the items on their shopping list. I miss that Leatherman.

Let me know which of your camping gear deserves an ode. In fact, write that ode, send it to me, and we might publish it in our next issue.

THIS IS ALSO THE TIME of year when I remind you to keep your eyes peeled for our ever-popular *Resort Guide* that's currently for sale. As before, this magazine is the perfect guide to help

you plan your camping trips for the year, as we've compiled information on 89 campsites across the country. We sorted them into four categories: family resorts, quieter sanctuaries, resorts where you camp close to wildlife, and places that are good for overnight stops.

There's also good news for the youngsters – our *Activity Book* is still available. Dominic surpassed himself and compiled the best activity book to date with a multitude of colouring pages, word searches, find-the-difference images, and much more. Your kids and grandkids will love you for it.

Safe travels!

Schalk

EDITOR

schalk.jonker@media24.com

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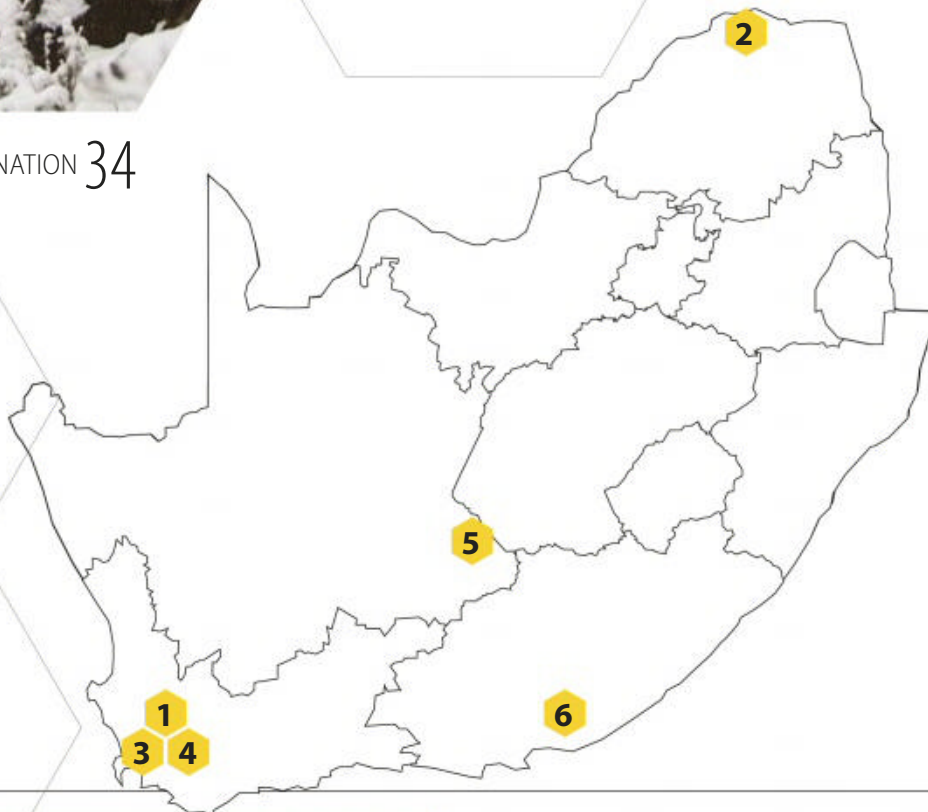
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4x4 DESTINATION 34



REEL & WHEEL 76



#47 MAIN COVER IMAGE – CYRIL KLOPPER

“ Few things compare to the joy of driving a topless vehicle through the Boland. The driver of the Suzuki SJ drove leisurely on this private road and it was, therefore, quite safe for his buddy to stand up and gaze at Simonsberg and the Hottentots Holland Mountains in the distance. ”

Camera settings Canon EOS 5D; f/8; 1/640 sec;
24 mm lens; ISO 500

ALUMINIUM TELESCOPIC POLES

BEST
PRICE

22/25 Extends to 2.4m
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

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



DOUBLE BOW EXTENSION



BOW
TENTS NOT
INCLUDED

To fit two 3m x 3m x 2.2m bow tents
R5 725

ROOF TOP 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



NOW WITH
STAINLESS STEEL
FRAME

*Side walls & end wall available

SAHARA DELUXE

6m x 2.9m x 2.5m
R12 025



*Side walls & end wall available

BUNDU CANOPY

2.7m x 3m
R1 535



*Side walls available

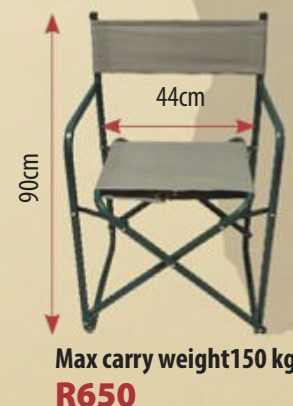
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6-LEGGED STEEL
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3m x 3m x 2.5m
R6 250

DIRECTORS CHAIR



Max carry weight 150 kg
R650

BUNDU BASIN

15 Lt
R250



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*Side walls available



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2.5m x 2.0m **R3 240**

1.4M ROOFTOP DELUXE



1.4m x 2.4m
R14 580

VEHICLE SHOWER CUBICLE

1m x 1m
R2 300
(Adjustable height)



Folds into PVC bag

FOLDING TABLES



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

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R1 730

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Complete with basins and dry rack
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from **R215**

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2 Shelf **R1 110**

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R1 350



EXTREME COOLERBOX

from **R1 890**



PORTA POTTI

10Lt **R1 030**
20Lt **R1 190**



CAPRIV BOW TENTS

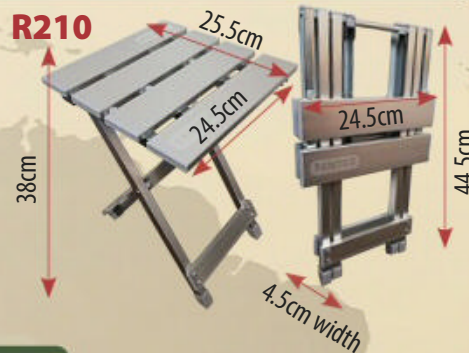


Caprivi 2
2.1m x 2.1m x 1.3
R920

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

FOLDING ALUMINIUM STOOL/TABLE

R210



TROLLEY BIG WHEEL

R1 730

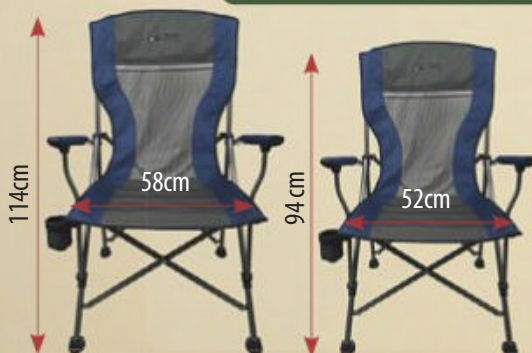


CLOTHES AIRER



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

SL-2 & SLX-2



Max carry weight:
150 kg
SL-2 **R880**
SLX-2 **R1 100**

DC3 CHAIR



Max carry weight:
150kg
R565

CLASSIC CHAIRS



R925
Max carry weight:
150kg

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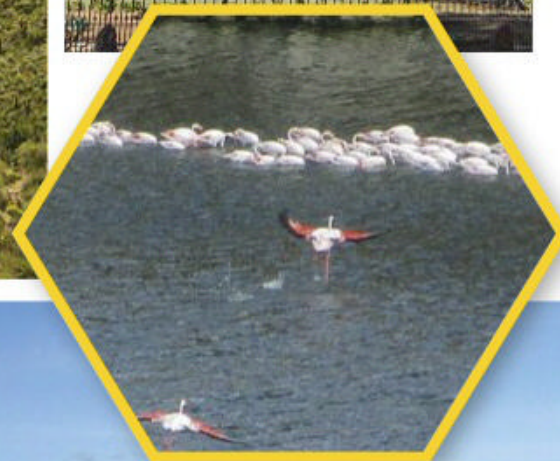
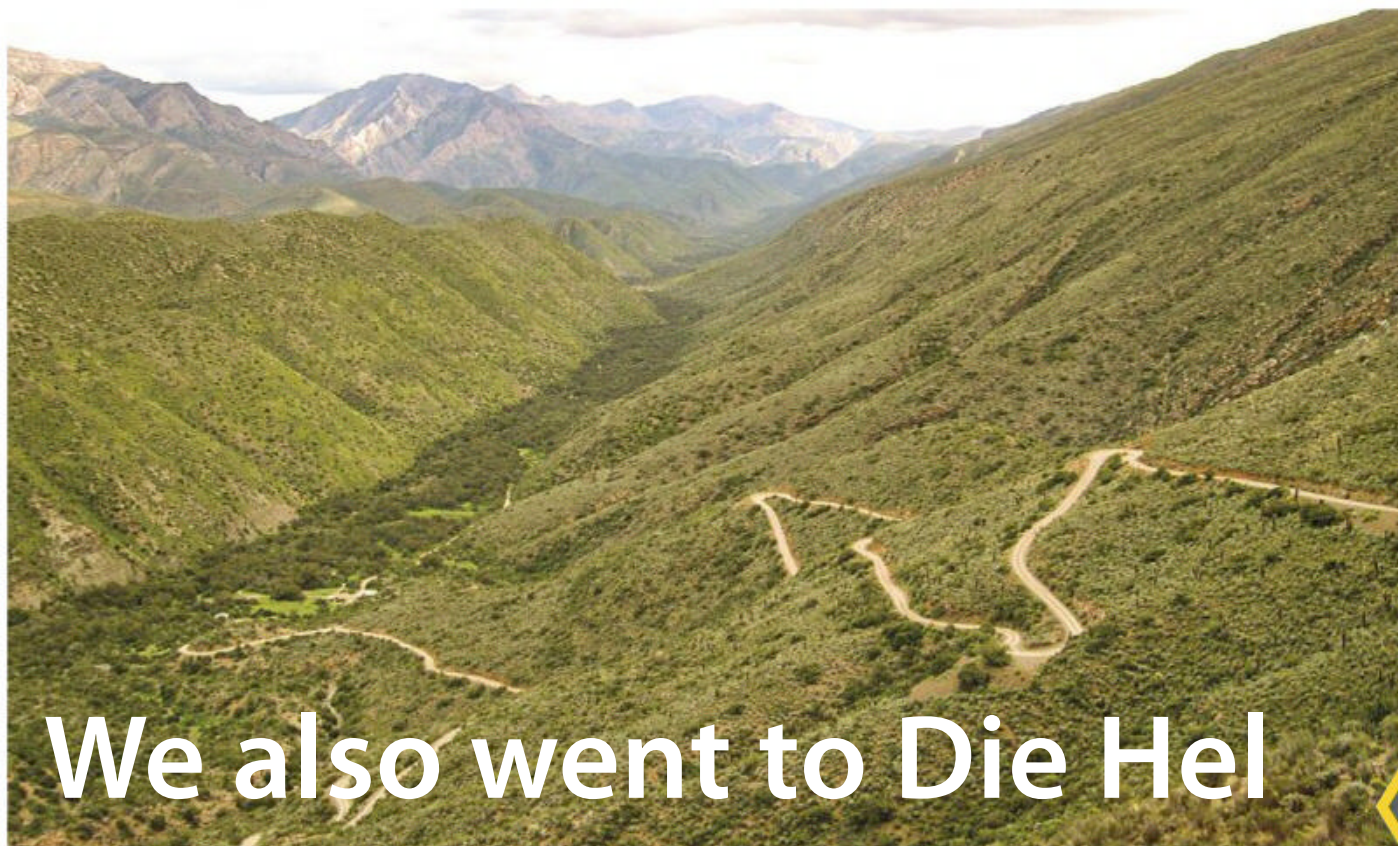
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We love hearing what's on your mind! Write to us at drivecamp@gomag.co.za and please remember to give your full address and contact details. *Drive & Camp* reserves the right to edit and shorten letters – and publish them in the magazine, on the website,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



I was intrigued to read the article, “From Die Hel to De Hoop”, by Cyril Klopper in the October-November 2021 issue. My wife, Sue, and I have enjoyed visits to Die Hel and De Hoop on a few occasions. An enjoyable way to visit the isolated valley is to cycle in from Prince Albert and then up and over into Die Hel – and you can also only cycle certain sections of the route.

Calitzdorp – mentioned on page 38 – has the impressive Dutch Reformed Church. In 1910, the original building was demolished and construction on the

new church began, using wood from the original church and stone brought via ox wagon. The organ was imported from Hamburg, Germany, and the church was inaugurated in April 1912.

Camping at De Hoop Nature Reserve, also mentioned, has been one of our favourite pastimes. Game in the Nature Reserve include bontebok, Cape mountain zebra and eland. De Hoop is also renowned for its resident and migratory birds, with over 260 species to be seen. Large flocks of flamingos can be viewed as they pass over the

lagoon. Their flight path, a “V” formation, conserves their energy. Each bird flies slightly above the one in front of it, resulting in a reduction of wind resistance and, even when they have landed in the lagoon, this formation is evident. We were fortunate to observe the flamingos as they glided, pirouetted, and skimmed across the still, dark waters of the lagoon, justifiably earning the term applied to a group of these colourful birds as a “flamboyance”.

MARTIN BRIGGS
Onrusrivier

WINNING
LETTER



Martin Briggs wins a cooler bag worth R220. Whether you're a camper, fisherman, or sports fan next to a cricket pitch, this cooler bag has room for a lunch box and a 1,5 l 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



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One river, many drifts

Referring to the article on Die Hel and De Hoop, I noticed something else: all the signposts of the drifts in Meiringspoort have the sign for a river next to their names and not a drift. So that means there are 26 different rivers in the poort!

The authorities made a similar mistake when they put up the sign for the Kredouw Pass next to Prince Albert. It actually read "Kareedouwpas". We lived in the town ourselves, and thanks to our neighbour Helena Marincowitz, the

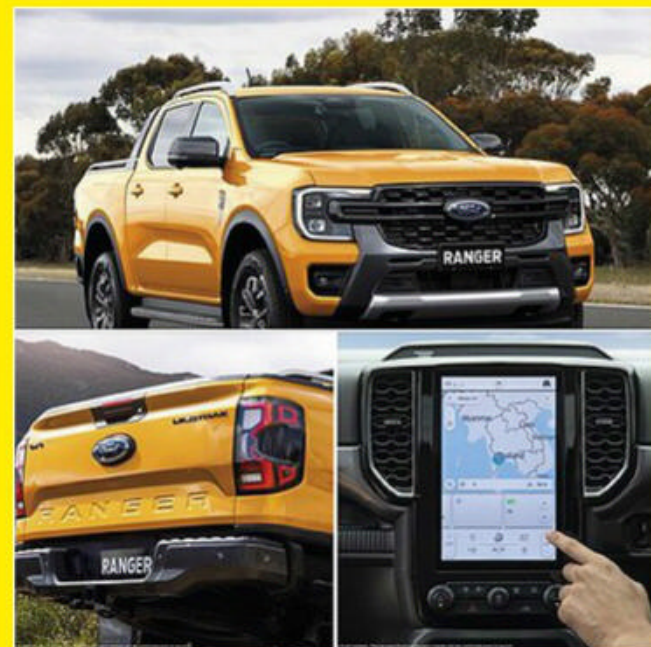
nameplate was changed – but only after a big struggle.

CLIVE GIBSON
Gqeberha

You hit the nail on the head with the drifts in Meiringspoort, but it will be difficult to convince the authorities to change all 26 signs! – Ed



COMMENT OF THE MONTH!



We asked readers on Facebook what they think of the new Ford Ranger. It appears that **Christo Thomson** is a fan.

"Great! I wonder how much the V6 model will cost; probably R1 million. Today's vehicles are no longer meant for the average Joe. We'll just look and drool. At university, we'd always say we're studying 'wysbegeerte' (philosophy) – in Afrikaans the word also suggests 'show and desire' if you translate it loosely. This was, of course, aimed at the girls on the beach. Nowadays, it's Ford showing off, with me coveting it." 🙌

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



Correction

In the December 2021-January 2022 issue, we incorrectly indicated the ground clearance of the Toyota Land Cruiser 300 to be 312 mm. The true figure is 235 mm. We also mentioned that the Land Rover Defender has a ground clearance of 218 mm. This is true, but it's at the lowest setting. The air suspension can lift the Defender up to 293 mm above the ground.





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Good enough to frame

It's unbelievably rewarding to capture an excellent photograph in nature. These three readers got that very, very right.

A place in the sun

Year after year, **Marinda Joubert** of Ventersburg watches the sunflowers as they come up and brighten – simply perfect for a photoshoot.

"I like taking pics of sunflowers in all their phases: from when the seeds germinate and then take shape again in the flower. My husband, Wikus, farms with sunflowers here between Ventersburg and Kroonstad. We plant by December and harvest in March and April."

Sunflowers lend themselves to photographs, especially if it's a field full of yellow flowers that fill the horizon. Marinda singled out a flower that tells you a lot more about the plant itself.

The obvious focus point occupies roughly the top half of the photo. As your eye jumps from one yellow leaf to the next around the centre of the flower, you pause on to the petal with the beetle. What's more, the beetle is nicely positioned in the twelve o'clock spot but with its body facing inwards. It may be a tiny detail, but it reinforces the focal point because it looks as though the beetle is making its way there. You feel it walking over the curved leaf while the sunflower leans slightly forwards.

That's when you notice the second section of the photo. The leaves under the flower take up about the same area as the focal point but serve as the negative space, which neatly balances the composition. But space is not just for balance; the pollen on the green leaves means more detail – something you wouldn't see if it weren't for the close-up.

If you now look upwards again, the sunflower in the background catches your eye. It stands neatly between two of the yellow leaves, and it feels as though it's a window through which you look at the flower's surroundings. You also see other flowers in the background, but they're out of focus and not distracting.

Something that may be distracting is the skewed horizon: it creates an imbalance. Some may say it makes the composition of the photo more dynamic, while others won't like it.



Canon PowerShot SX610 Hs



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Canon EOS 650D

Mooning around

Julian Harrison of Bellville prefers the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park, but this time, after not visiting the Kruger National Park for the past 32 years, he returned home with this comic photo.

"I took the photo of the three waterbuck mothers and their calves near the Letaba River in the Kruger National Park. When I looked at it again, I realised the juveniles look like grade nine boys trying to grow a beard, while the cows stand there – wide-eyed and watching."

Julian's photo is spot-on in terms of separate elements contributing to the overall composition. The three waterbuck on the left immediately catch your attention because it feels as if they're staring straight at you, but then your eye spontaneously jumps to the right towards the young ones showing you their backsides. The circle around each of their tails almost look like targets...

The two sets of three also enhance the photo without you thinking about it, but then you realise you only see two of the juvenile's heads, which serves as a slight disruption that gives the photo even more life.

The frame could be cropped from the top and from the right, because those areas don't contribute to the photo and would further improve the composition.

SEND YOUR PICTURES

and we might publish them here. We're not looking for traditional "prize winners", just regular pics that you love. Think of the type of pic you'd use as your Facebook cover photo; or something charming, such as kids warming their hands over a campfire. Whether the pic was taken with an expensive DSLR camera or a run-of-the-mill cellphone, if it's good enough for your family photo album, it's good enough for us. **PIET VAN RENSBURG** wins a *Drive & Camp* camera bag worth R650 with his photo – congratulations, Piet!

Send your photos and contact details to leon.botha@media24.com

The pride of the pride

It was during a family weekend getaway in the Kruger National Park that **Casper Aucamp of Rustenburg** was able to capture one of their most special moments on camera.

"Our family rented a Kombi for the weekend. When we encounter wild animals, the one with the best view gets the opportunity to capture them. It was early one morning on the S100 just outside Satara, and we were definitely the first people to find lions that day. We watched them on our own. Then, eventually, they decided to move on, but no other vehicles had arrived yet."

Considering the many contributions we get, wildlife photography is the most popular genre among readers. But simply taking a picture of an animal doesn't make it a good one. Action helps, of course – think of two giraffes fighting with their long necks, or an African wildcat stalking an unsuspecting bird.



Nikon D7500

But if you want your photo to be more of a work of art, clever composition is key. Then the image is complemented by various elements.

Casper's photo is a good example of this. He could

simply have captured only the cubs or just the females in the background.

But by retreating slightly and capturing the scene as a whole, you get a better picture. The cubs on the third line are

obviously the focal point, while the females on the upper third line are out of focus.

The females, therefore, don't distract your attention from the focal point but provide important context.



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3 Brug St., Triangle Farm, Bellville 7530

TONGA



The Sandveld is calling

If you like camping with family and friends, do add the name Sonwyserskop to your list. This campsite is located on the farm Keurbosch outside Piketberg and belongs to Kokkie and Jo-Anni Coetzee. They farm with grapes, citrus, and cattle, and the campsite is the latest addition to the farm.

The idea was to set up a campsite for the Coetzee family so they could host large gatherings. Then Kokkie and his family decided to open the facilities to the public.

The section of the farm where they laid out the 20 stands (with 10 domestic-socket power points) already had well-established trees, including wild olive and yellowwood trees.

They built four family bathrooms, plus a communal lapa with a fire pit in the middle. There are four built-up braai areas around the fire pit, but there are also free-standing braai drums, should you want to light a fire near your stand. You can buy wood from Jo-Anni if you don't have any.

Next to the campsite is a dam – and you can swim and fish (catch and release), there are swings and climbing ropes for the kids. Campers are welcome to walk or cycle on the farm, but you're not allowed to enter the veld with an off-road vehicle. During August and September, the colourful wildflowers are in bloom, and if you look closely, you may see a fish eagle or a black eagle soar above you.





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The turn-off is at Kapteinskloof, 22 km from Piketberg, or on the R399 to Velddrif. From there, it's 12 km of dirt road, but also pay attention to the peak in the distance: it's Sonwyserskop. Although the campsite is named after it, you can't see the peak itself from the campsite. The road isn't really suitable for road caravans, as it gets sandy close to the campsite and you have to drive over a shallow stream. It's, therefore, better to tow an off-road trailer or caravan with a vehicle that has decent ground clearance.

Price When you book, the entire campsite is reserved for you and your friends. It's R2 500 per night for up to 20 people; thereafter it's R100 pp, with a maximum of 50 people allowed.

Contact 066 526 3924 (WhatsApp only)

facebook.com/sonwyserskop

sonwyserskop@gmail.com



Cherry on top

Until recently, the Chinese company Chery was known for its humble and inexpensive vehicles that got the job done but didn't exactly take your breath away. That changed somewhat when the Chery Tiggo 4 Pro was released. Now, Chery's newfound image as an exciting vehicle manufacturer has been cemented even more by the striking Chery Omoda 5.

There isn't much information available about the Omoda 5 yet. What we do know is that it gets two 10,25-inch touchscreens inside, and it's designed to accept internal combustion engines, hybrid technology, or full electric propulsion.

"It's encouraging to know that the Omoda 5, just like every other new Chery, will be future-proof, and that we can support every type of customer's requirements, whether for powerful and economical petrol and diesel engines, or for quiet and comfortable electric or other propulsion systems," says Tony Liu, executive vice president of Chery South Africa.

The Chery Omoda 5 crossover vehicle is expected to land in South Africa at the end of the year.





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Big Fish expands

Big Fish Caravan and Camping outside Jeffreys Bay has added stands and upgraded the power points. In addition to the 38 stands, the owners have set up two private stands, each with its own bathroom, on the banks of the Gamtoos River. Both have a paved slab, braai area, and their own light. The power points have a domestic socket as well as a Fredlin socket. Domestic sockets have also been installed at some of the other stands that previously only had Fredlin points.

In the older section of the resort, 14 stands border the river. They're all nicely level and on grass. Each has a tap with municipal water, plus a built-up braai area (with a grid) and a light that has its own switch. Two separate ablution blocks service these stands – with a total of 14 family bathrooms between them, and each with a dishwashing sink on the side of the building. The bathrooms have a bath or shower and a toilet.



The playpark has two trampolines, swings, seesaws, and a jungle gym. You have a beautiful view of the river from the pool.

Should you want to fish from a boat, there's a great launch site just past the last stands, but remember, you need a fishing permit. The owners are in favour of the catch-and-release rule, but if you want to eat your catch tonight, that's fine.

Price Depending on the season, R350 pp or R550 pn per stand for up to two people and one vehicle. After that, it's R75 pp or R100 pp (maximum six people per stand). Depending on the season, two to 16 year olds or seven to 16 year olds camp for free. The two private stands are R550-R650 for the first two people.

Contact 079 202 5143
info@bigfishcaravan.co.za
bigfishcaravan.co.za

Volvograms

This Swedish vehicle manufacturer recently invested in the Israeli arms manufacturer Spectralics. The latter company has developed a digital film that it applies to the inside of a glass canopy of Israeli fighter jets. The film is called MLTC (it stands for multi-layered thin combiner) and displays a holographic target image to a fighter pilot and replaces the traditional heads-up display, or HUD. The technology is not yet perfect, but Spectralics has made enough progress to grab Volvo's attention.

Volvo is investigating the possibility of using MTLC technology in the windscreen of its cars, thus displaying holograms of stray animals and other dangers to the driver.

If the technology is indeed suitable for cars, it will still take several years before holograms appear in your vehicle, but this confirms Volvo's reputation as a frontrunner in vehicle-safety equipment.

Gap covers

The third row of seats in your Toyota Fortuner has its obvious advantages, but it does take up valuable luggage space. Fortunately, these seats are removable, but then you end up with open holes by the wheel arches on both sides.

Booxe has designed a set of lids to close these holes. The Booxe Gap Cap is made of plastic and fits all Fortuner models from 2016 and up. You don't have to drill any holes or screw in anything; you place the lid using only your hands.

Price A set of Gap Cap lids costs R795 – place your order online.

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As Nature intended

Tastes differ, sure, but it's safe to say Destination's new Nature model fits the average caravan owner like a glove, says **Leon Botha**.

With its Wonder, Journey, and Dream models, Destination Caravans has established itself as a premium manufacturer of luxury caravans in South Africa.

Thanks to their years of experience, Destination has now designed a caravan with a layout that suits every camper, says owner André van Helsdingen. He observed his clients' needs over a long period and used this feedback when designing the Nature.

There's another positive result to not customising the body of the standard Nature. It shortens the construction process with a streamlined production line. It further contributes to higher quality and a better price.

André sticks to his regular building materials, which means that the Nature's body also consists of fibreglass with a PVC interior layer.

While the other models have independent suspension, the Nature gets a dual axle with a combined capacity of 3,5 tonnes, leaf springs, and a shock absorber at each wheel.

André swims against the stream when it comes to air-conditioners. He says he prefers the regular domestic type over those designed specifically for caravans.

According to him, they're more efficient. Plus, it's easy to find replacement parts in any town.

Step inside

The door is in the left panel near the back. To the left of the door, three smaller exterior doors open that give you access to the microwave, shelves (for spices and other items), and the slide-out kitchen.

As you open the door, the removable tabletop is in front of you against the opposite panel with two benches on either side. It also folds flat to form an extra bed (1,9 x 1,2 m).

The bathroom, which takes up the entire width of the caravan, is to your right. It's completely separate from the living space with a door in the middle of the panel. On opening this door, the basin and mirror is right in front of you, the shower cubicle with its glass door sits on the left, and the flush cassette toilet is on the right in the opposite corner.

Now turn around and look towards the front. The benches are on your right, and there

are cupboards and drawers on the left with a worktop and a neat rail above it on which you can hang your wine glasses. Above it, against the roof, are two more cupboards, and to the right of these are two upright cupboards that extend from the floor to the roof. The left-hand side one is for groceries, with great storage space. The right-hand side one is for clothes: the shelves are built in at the top with hanging space underneath.

The upright fridge/freezer sits across the tall cupboards against the back of the nearest bench. The queen-sized island bed stands across from you with the headboard against the left panel. The "room" has the appearance of a luxury suite, with two full-length mirrors plus another that's three-quarters their length. The third cupboard, also from the floor to the roof, is to the right, next to one of the mirrors.

Two of the Nature's three windows are in this room – one towards the front and the other in the panel on the right. The third sits above the benches. On each side of the bed is a bedside table, and under the front window there's

DESTINATION NATURE



SPECIFICATIONS

Model	Nature
Sleeps	Four
Length	8 m
Width	2,45 m
Height	2,7 m
Wheels	15"
Tare weight	1 910 kg
Load capacity	290 kg
GVM	2 200 kg
Standard price	R600 000
Contact	082 446 5692 or 072 218 7063
.....	destinationcaravans.co.za sales@destinationcaravans.co.za



a long shelf with cupboards underneath, plus more cupboards above the window.

The air-con sits above the bed's headboard against the roof.

What comes standard?

The Nature comes fully equipped, but without movers (R68 000) and hydraulic self-levelling system (R78 000). The bathroom with a shower is included as well as a full tent, fridge/freezer, microwave, crockery and cutlery for six people, an outdoor kitchen with a sink and induction hob, a 15 A-Smart Victron battery charger with 100 Ah deep-cycle battery, the 12 000 BTU air conditioner, and a spare wheel.



R600 000 DESTINATION NATURE GVM 2 200 kg

FROM THE COMPETITORS

Road caravans with a double axle



R425 000 Gray GVM 2 500 kg

15" wheels, 7,8 m long with a fibreglass body.



R535 900 Okto Chateau GVM 1 890 kg

14" wheels, 7,84 m long with a fibreglass and aluminium body.



R462 000* Quantum Pinnacle GVM 1 950 kg

14" wheels and 7,35 m long. The body consists of a fibreglass outer layer, polystyrene insulation layer, and wood.

*At time of going to press, an increase was imminent

FORTUNE(R) FAVOURS THE BRAVE!



What to do when you want to buy a Toyota Fortuner, but circumstances beyond your control scupper your plans? You make like **Anneri Kemp** of Melkbosstrand and win one!

After winning the gruelling final round of the Toyota Fortuner Challenge, Anneri, Media24's entry for the competition, stopped dreaming of a second-hand Fortuner: as the winner, she drove away with a brand-new dream rig.

The Boeing pilot – a keen duathlon and triathlon competitor – says she wanted to buy a Fortuner, but when she and her husband Tinus found a second-hand one last year and made an offer, the dealer had just sold it to someone else. To make matters worse, Anneri heard two days

later that the company she worked for was closing its doors due to the economic consequences of the pandemic. Not only was she without an income for several months, but any plans to buy a Fortuner had to be abandoned.

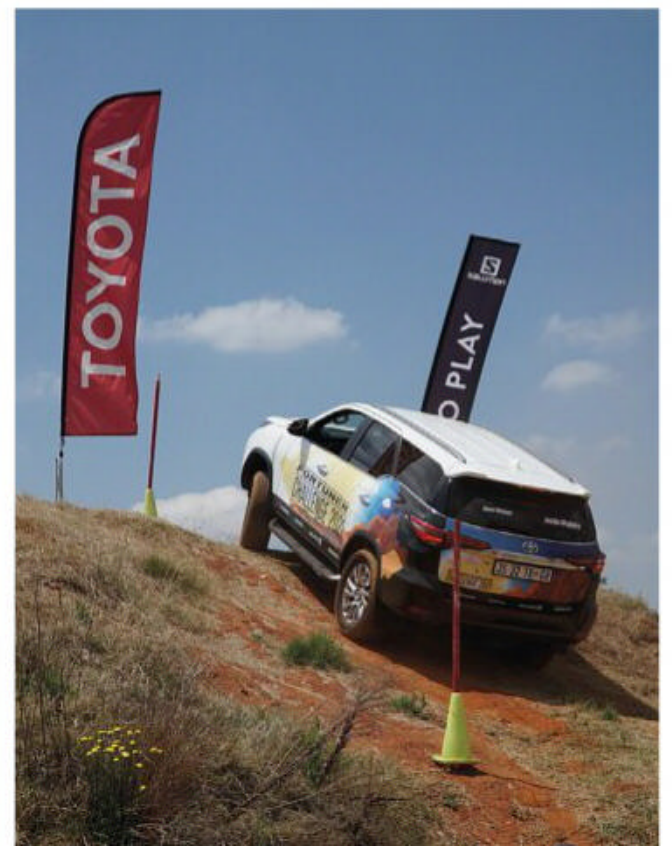
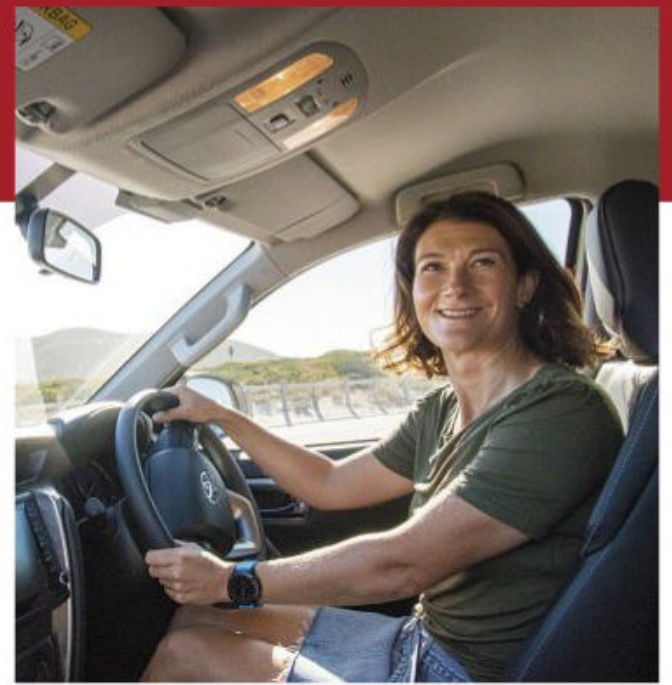
"One afternoon, I was sitting with Tinus while he was getting chemotherapy treatment for liver cancer, and I told him that if I couldn't buy a car, then I would have to win one. I searched online and came across the *Drive & Camp* entry form for the Toyota Fortuner Challenge. I couldn't believe it. It was definitely a sign

from above, and I immediately entered," says Anneri, who was later selected as a semi-finalist and then finally as Media24's finalist for the challenge.

The final round of the sixth annual Toyota Fortuner Challenge had participants from four media companies – Media24, SuperSport, the Independent Group, and Arena Media – gather at the Kloofzicht Lodge and Spa in Gauteng. Each finalist was partnered with a celebrity, and together the team faced a series of six challenges.

Anneri's teammate was Dakar Rally legend Giniel de Villiers, who knows a thing or two about Toyota. "I was so happy it was Giniel. I'm a motorsport fan and I had a feeling we would work well together as a team."

Anneri and Giniel indeed made for a formidable team and were crowned



winners at the end of an exhausting day. Anneri is also the first female winner in the history of the challenge.

"The final challenge – where we first had to overcome obstacles and then put together a complicated puzzle – was undoubtedly the most difficult. I'm not good with obstacles and neither is Giniel, and the competition was still wide

open, but fortunately we managed to make it up with the puzzle and won the challenge."

Anneri and Tinus are already planning their trips with her new Fortuner. "We love adventure and are dreaming of all the destinations and wonderful sights that lie ahead for us with this special vehicle," she says.



FORD RANGER

POWER RANGER

The new Ford Ranger has arrived, and it's not only good looking but muscled too, just like Mr South Africa, says **Cyril Kloppe**.

Ten years after the previous model landed on our shores, Ford introduced its new Ranger to the world at the end of last year. The latest model was developed in collaboration with Volkswagen, but it's a little bit more Ford than VW. If it's strongly reminiscent of the previous Ranger, that's because it

is indeed built on the same (improved) T6 platform with similar bodywork panels and dimensions.

Although the bakkie is on the same platform, it's pretty much all new, and only a few items remain the same as in the outgoing model. Let's take a closer look.

What do we have here?

Let's start with what fans are most looking forward to: the Ranger gets the 3.0 V6 Power Stroke turbodiesel from the American Ford F-150. This engine is estimated to deliver 186 kW and 597 Nm. Customers have long been asking for it, and Ford has paid attention.



From the competitors Bakkies that will have to watch out for the new Ranger



R728 200

Isuzu D-Max 300 LX 4x4

The D-Max isn't lazy; it just takes it easy so it can last longer.



R749 000

Nissan Navara 2.5 DDTi Pro-4X

The Navara is known for its abundance of torque and good looks.



R882 400

Toyota Hilux 2.8 GD6 4x4 Legend RS

With 150 kW, it occupies a lower tier on the podium than the Ranger and the Amarok.



The gearbox is Ford's own 10-speed automatic version. However, one or two readers on our Facebook page expressed their disappointment that Ford didn't choose German company ZF Friedrichshafen's 8HP gearbox. The Ranger will also have a manual transmission option.

In addition to the V6 engine, the Ranger retains the existing 2 l single turbodiesel and 2 l biturbodiesel engines. There's also good news for customers who prefer a petrol engine, because the 2.3 l EcoBoost engine – used in the Ford Focus RS – is the fourth option.

Ford's chief engineer, Ian Foston, also revealed that Ford is considering hybrid and electric propulsion systems for the Ranger, as European law requires it. The new Ranger is, therefore, ready for this environmentally friendly technology. We guess it's the same mild hybrid technology that was initially developed for the Ford Focus RS but that never saw the light of day because the RS was cancelled.

As we mentioned, the T6 platform is basically unchanged, though Ford moved the front wheels 50 mm forward and widened the track width by 50 mm. These changes improve the approach angle and make more room in the engine bay for the V6 and possible electric propulsion systems. The platform is now called the T6.2

Ford also moved the rear suspension dampers to the outside of the frame rails to provide a better ride.

"Our team was focussed on one goal – to make this Ranger the toughest and most capable we've ever created," says Graham Pearson, Ford Ranger's programme director. "They put it through one of the most comprehensive global test schedules to make sure it's Ford tough."

In terms of propulsion, buyers get to choose between a part-time four-wheel drive that can be engaged while moving, or an advanced all-wheel drive that stays on all the time (similar to Mitsubishi's SuperSelect system).

Ford has added some interesting elements, including a ruler on the tailgate. Carpenters can now measure planks here and even clamp them down. There's also a 12 V power point (180 W) in the load bin with which you can charge cordless power tools.

Because the track is 50 mm wider, Ford was able to enlarge the load bin so you can now use a forklift to load a standard pallet (800 x 1 210 mm) on the back, just like you can with a VW Amarok.

The load bin has a clever step on the outside – similar to the step of an Opel Corsa bakkie – to climb on the back. It's especially useful for shorter people who previously had to use the back wheel to get a leg up.

Inside are USB and USB-C sockets and a huge 12-inch touchscreen in the more expensive models – the less pricey models get a slightly smaller 10,1-inch screen. The clocks are also digital and the computer gets Ford's SYNC4 software that accepts voice commands and connects with the FordPass app on your smartphone. With this app you can switch on your Ranger, open and lock the doors, monitor the general status – and all this while sitting on your porch admiring your new bakkie. On top of that, your Ranger can use your home's WiFi to download firmware updates.

In the more expensive models, the touchscreen is connected to cameras in the bodywork so you can see all around you. You can use the touchscreen – and app – to turn on lights right around the Ranger, which is especially useful when camping.

Unfortunately, we couldn't compile a specification list for this article because the numbers and prices were not yet available at the time we went to print.

The new Ranger is built in Thailand and in South Africa's Silverton plant near Pretoria.

Much ado about mu-X



ISUZU mu-X

The second-generation Isuzu mu-X has just come ashore at Gqeberha – and it's bigger and safer than ever, says **Cyril Kloppe**.

The first mu-X was particularly popular in Australia, but back then, General Motors decided to sell the mu-X in South Africa as the Chevrolet Trailblazer. This was one of GM's less successful decisions, as the Trailblazer didn't do nearly as well here as the mu-X did in Australia. But that's all in the past, and now Isuzu's latest SUV has arrived.

What do we have here?

Not only does the latest Isuzu mu-X look different on the outside, but its cabin is also larger than before. This means Isuzu extended the mu-X's body by 25 mm to 4 850 mm.

Up front, the grille is larger and the spotlights in the bumper sit lower down. The wheel arches are no longer as prominent, and the side windows are longer (the C-pillar has been moved a bit to the back), so the rear passengers have a better view of what's outside. At the rear, the brake lights have a sharper appearance – that applies to the headlights, too. Isuzu calls it its arrow design.

Craig Uren, senior deputy president of sales and marketing at Isuzu South Africa, says the new mu-X is a huge step forward for the manufacturer. "The vehicle represents a shift in how customers will view vehicles in this segment in terms of ride quality, luxury, and technology. The new mu-X will not only attract more buyers in this segment, but will most likely also attract buyers from other segments."

The new mu-X scored five stars in an Australian NCAP crash test. Among other elements, Isuzu fitted an airbag between the driver and the front passenger – a world first – and the body has high-tensile steel in all the right places to protect occupants.

All mu-X models get Isuzu's 3 ℓ turbodiesel engine that delivers 450 Nm of torque at a low 1 600 revolutions, and the well-known six-speed automatic gearbox that's proved itself to be reliable.

There are four models: the 4x2 LS costs R693 800; the 4x4 LS is R771 600; the 4x2 LSE R763 300; and the flagship model, the 4x4 ONYX, will cost you R860 500.

On paper, the 4x4 LS appears to be the better choice, at least as far as we're concerned, because the flagship 4x4 ONYX has 20-inch alloys, which is a strange choice for an off-road vehicle. The ONYX does have the most safety equipment of the four, leather seats, and a nine-inch touchscreen on the centre console, while the 4x4 LS only has a seven-inch one – plus you sit on seats upholstered in fabric, and you don't have the benefit of a computer looking out for your safety.

The ONYX and LSE boast dual-zone climate control, eight speakers, and heated seats, while the lower models get standard air-conditioning and six speakers – and we suggest that you grip a flask of hot coffee between your legs if the seats are cold.

All models get a rear-view camera and Bluetooth with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto for your smartphone. The Isuzu mu-X is based on the latest D-Max, but in an unusual turn of events, the SUV version has arrived ahead of the bakkie.



BLACK ON WHITE. The interior is subdued (left) and the previous circular layout of buttons is replaced by a more traditional horizontal arrangement. We're holding thumbs for Isuzu that the mu-X will fare far better than the Chevrolet Trailblazer did.

SPECIFICATIONS

Model	mu-X 3.0 LS 4x4
Engine	2 999 cc four-cylinder turbodiesel
Power	140 kW @ 3 600 rpm
Torque	450 Nm @ 1 600 rpm
Gearbox	six-speed automatic
Ground clearance	235 mm
Tank	80 l
Standard tyres	255/65R17
Tare weight	2 050 kg
Load weight	691 kg
Tow weight	3 500 kg
Safety grading	★★★★★ (ANCAP 2020)
Warranty	five years/120 000 km
Service plan	five years/90 000 km
Price	R771 600



FROM THE COMPETITORS

Bakkie-based SUVs with automatic transmission



R684 995 Mitsubishi Pajero Sport 2.4 MIVEC 4x4 AT

Fairly priced compared to its competitors, and it's particularly capable in the bush.



R726 400 Ford Everest 3.2 TDCi XLT 4x4 AT

It's showing its age, but a new Ranger means a new Everest is on the way.



R798 000 Toyota Fortuner 2.8 GD6 4x4 AT

Even if a vehicle is better than a Fortuner, it will never be as good as a Fortuner.



Van on the moon

HYUNDAI STARIA

It looks like a Hot Wheels toy, or something from a sci-fi series. Hyundai shows it's not afraid to be original with this van, says **Cyril Klopper**.



Minibuses are not as popular as hatchbacks, bakkies, and SUVs, but that's all changing. Sales figures of minibuses have increased by 55% from 2020 to 2021, and experts reckon their popularity will continue to grow.

Hyundai's timing, therefore, couldn't be better. The Hyundai H1 van has become a bit long in the tooth, and consumers are ready for something new.

But are they ready for the Staria?

What do we have here?

The Hyundai Staria is available in three versions: the Executive, Elite, and Luxury – plus, a panel van and a five-seater multicab will be released later.

The first three mentioned, the passenger versions, have 2 to 11 seats, although the nine-seater layout is likely to be the most popular for practical





From the competitors

Fancy buses for large families



R1 186 757

Mercedes-Benz V250d BlueTec

The brand is associated with prosperity, but it's a fine family hauler too.



R1 230 100

Volkswagen Caravelle 2.0 Highline

Arguably the best way with which to visit the Kruger National Park.

reasons. The Executive and Elite focus on businesspeople, and that's why we discuss the Luxury model, as that's the model aimed at families.

The seats in the Staria's second row can turn around and face rearward, like those of the Volkswagen Caravelle and Mercedes-Benz V-Class. The rear windows have curtains, in case Grandpa wants a nap.

The tailgate lifts with the push of a button, as do the sliding doors, but naughty children can't open them while the vehicle is on the move.

Extra safety equipment include six airbags, sensors that monitor oncoming and passing traffic, blind-spot monitoring, and tyre-pressure sensors. There's even an alarm that goes off if you want to lock the Staria but forgot about Kevin in the back.

The Stario Luxury has two sunroofs – one for the front occupants and another for the rear passengers. The air conditioning's outlets are in the ceiling, and the rear passengers can control the airflow themselves. All passengers get USB sockets to charge their electronic devices, and the driver has access to an induction panel to wirelessly recharge a cellphone. The colours of the mood lighting can change – there are 10 shades – and a Bose sound system with 12 speakers encourages everyone to sing along to road trip tunes.

Cameras right around the bodywork show you what's going on outside and help you manoeuvre the van in busy parking garages. The side mirrors fold flat so that careless people don't bump into them.

All versions of the Hyundai Staria are powered by the same 2,2 l turbodiesel engine that delivers an impressive 430 Nm of torque at a low 1 500 rpm. The van is pulled along by the front wheels via an eight-speed automatic transmission, and fuel consumption is apparently around 8,7 l/100 km.

Prices range from R789 900 for the Staria R2,2 Executive to over a million bucks for the Luxury model shown here.



Sales figures of minibuses have increased by 55% from 2020 to 2021, and experts reckon their popularity will continue to grow



SPECIFICATIONS

Model	Staria R2.2 Luxury
Engine	2 199 cc four-cylinder turbodiesel
Power	130 kW @ 3 800 rpm
Torque	430 Nm @ 1 500 rpm
Transmission	eight-speed automatic
Seats	9
Tank	75 l
Standard tyres	235/35R18
Tare weight	2 285 kg
Load weight	835 kg
Tow weight	2 500 kg
Safety rating	Unknown
Warranty	7 years/150 000 km
Service plan	7 years/105 000 km
Price	R1 099 900



PEUGEOT LANDTREK

To new beginnings!

After a long absence, the Peugeot bakkie is back. This one, however, is in a completely different class than the iconic 404 bakkie of the seventies, says **Cyril Kloppe**.

Can you believe Peugeot is 212 years old? The company started off as a steel foundry in the French town of Sochaux, and its first vehicle dates back to 1889. The Peugeot family remained in charge until relatively recently, but the company is now part of the Stellantis group, which owns several car brands.

Like so many vehicle manufacturers, Stellantis forges ties with its competitors for it to be able to keep manufacturing costs low, and this is also what happened with the Peugeot Landtrek.

What do we have here?

The Peugeot Landtrek was developed in collaboration with the Chinese Changan

Group. China gets the Kaicene F70, and South America and Africa, the Peugeot Landtrek. It's essentially the same bakkie; the biggest difference being the badge.

The Landtrek is available in four-wheel and rear-wheel drive – the Allure 4x2 and 4Action 4x4 models, respectively, both have a rear diff lock.

The Landtrek is only available as a double cab, while China's Kaicene F70 adds a single and extended cabin option. Peugeot, however, decided against a workhorse and instead focusses on the lifestyle market.

The engine is a 1,9 l turbodiesel that delivers 110 kW of power and 350 Nm of torque, while a six-speed automatic gearbox sends the power to the wheels.

Inside, the Peugeot Landtrek boasts a 10-inch touchscreen in the centre console, and the 4Action model gets cameras in the body that show the image on this touchscreen so you can navigate through obstacles safely.

The ground clearance of 235 mm and a wading depth of 600 mm are decent and compare well with its competitors.

Safety equipment includes six front and rear passenger airbags, electronic stability control, trailer sway control, and sensors that warn you when you drift over a dividing line.

The rear seat can be reclined at a 23° angle for extra comfort, and you can even drop the backrest down if you want to transport valuables inside the cabin rather



From the competitors
... in the same price range as the
Peugeot Landtrek



R638 200 Toyota Hilux 2.4 GD6 4x4 Raider
You won't easily convince a Hilux owner to switch to a Peugeot.



R654 995 Mitsubishi Triton 2.4 4x4
Smaller companies like Mitsubishi must suffer each time another competitor arrives.



R682 000 Nissan Navara 2.5 DDTi LE 4x4
It was one of the first luxury bakkies but it's no longer king of the hill.

SPECIFICATIONS

Model	Landtrek 4Action
Engine	1 910 cc four-cylinder turbodiesel
Power	110 kW @ 4 000 rpm
Torque	350 Nm @ 1 800 rpm
Transmission	six-speed automatic
Ground clearance	235 mm
Tank	80 l
Standard tyres	265/65R17
Tare weight	2 095 kg
Load weight	1 015 kg
Tow weight	3 000 kg
Safety rating	Untested
Warranty	5 years/100 000 km
Service plan	5 years/100 000 km
Price	R669 900

than in the load bin (the backrests can carry a weight of 100 kg). Speaking of load bins, the Landtrek has a carrying capacity of 1 015 kg – this includes the driver and passengers – which once again compares well with its competitors. Peugeot South Africa apparently wants to sell between 100 and 150 pickups a month and increase its market share over time. This is a similar goal Mercedes-Benz set for its bakkie, but

the Peugeot Landtrek's price is mercifully significantly lower than the failed X-Class.

Although it is less pricey than the deceased Merc, the Landtrek is still quite expensive.

On the one hand, we regret that Peugeot didn't build a simple, hard-working farm bakkie like the 404 of yore, but we understand that the world has changed, and South Africans want luxury bakkies.

East, west, *South Africa's best*

France has the Eiffel Tower and Thailand lovely beaches. New York has Central Park and the Statue of Liberty, and Rome the Colosseum. But the best destinations in the world are right here in South Africa!

Words and photos **Danie Botha**





There's something wrong with this ocean. The water is supposed to be warm – more than 20 °C. It's August, after all, and this is the Indian Ocean.

But here in Port Edward, the water is freezing cold. It's starting to rain, and the wind's blowing with a vengeance. Our plan was to start our big journey from the East Coast to the West Coast with a lovely dip in the warm sea. We dip a tentative big toe, but that's as far as we get.

And so we check the weather forecast to see what awaits us on the journey from Port Edward to Lamberts Bay – all 1 700 km of it. The news is not good: it's cold and there may even be snow.

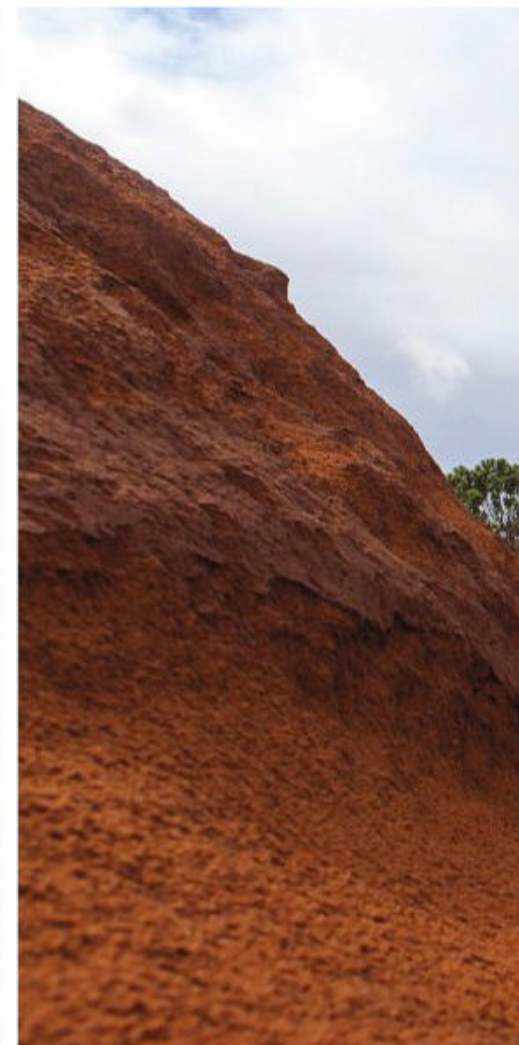
IT'S RAINING CATS AND DOGS when we leave the Wild Coast Sun in the morning and head northwest on the N2. Driving this road is unpleasant: cattle and goats wander over the road – sometimes stopping in it –

as if it were their pasture; and it seems drivers of cars, lorries, and minibus taxis don't care much about the rules of the road.

You just have to chill and take it slow. We're in no rush anyway, as we only have 400 km to drive to the historic town of Rhodes – an easy day in our Suzuki Jimny.

But first, a quick detour to look at the smallest desert in the world: the Red Desert Nature Reserve, roughly the size of two rugby fields.





AND THEY'RE OFF! The squeaky clean Jimny is ready for its journey from the Indian Ocean to the West Coast. But first, a stop at the smallest desert in the world outside Port Alfred (top middle). It takes only a few minutes to drive through it. On day one you drive from desert to ocean to snow in the Drakensberg.

There are two stories about its origin. The first is that excessive overgrazing by cattle in the 19th century caused the grass never to regrow here. But we prefer the other story... That this patch of land marks the place where an alien spaceship landed. Yes, that sounds a lot more realistic to us than a bunch of hungry cows.

At Kokstad, we refuel. The Jimny isn't overly thirsty, but its 40 ℓ tank gives us a range of about 350 km.

Then, we turn right onto a dirt road, towards Mount Fletcher. Far in the distance lie Lesotho's mountains, covered in pure white snow. We head for Naude's Nek Pass, slightly worried but also excited. Some biltong and a cup of strong coffee gives us courage again.

At the last turn-off on the way to Naude's Nek, the situation looks bleak: up high on the mountain slopes, where the mountain pass meanders through the southern slopes of the Drakensberg, there's no road. It's just snow.

But there's no turning back, and the Jimny pushes forward, ever upward. Luckily, it looks as though Naude's Nek played a trick on us, because even though the landscape is covered in snow,

the road is clear and the Jimny is making good time going up.

Then, just before we reach the summit, the road disappears. Right there where the precipices are highest, there's a layer of snow. The Jimny slips occasionally on the slick surface, but does surprisingly well. Being a featherweight in the 4x4 world helps a lot.

Finally, half in the dark, we crest the summit and arrive in Rhodes. It's cozy in the Walkerbouts Inn's Centre of the Universe bar. Owner Dave Walker tells us that if the snow gets worse, we may have to stay here a few days longer. Hopefully, there's enough to eat in Rhodes.

The next morning, the entire Rhodes lies covered in snow – it feels as though we're in the Swiss Alps.

NAUDE'S NEK PASS IS CLOSED. Covered in snow. In Rhodes, there's no electricity. But the road heading west, towards Barkly East, is still open.

The R396 dirt road winding through the mountain is muddy in places, but thankfully there isn't any snow. With four-wheel drive and at a timid pace, the Jimny trots briskly through the Witteberg.





They say

**Gerhard Horn
Team member with
a penchant for loud shirts**

"Life is too short to wear boring white T-shirts. And my special superhero shirt was perfect for the artistic Tankwa."

JUST CHILL. The dirt road to Rhodes is easy on the eye but not so good for the nerves – especially if you don't have any idea how deep the snow is going to be on Naude's Neck Pass. The friends found the back roads between Colesberg and Philipstown to be nice and quiet and the kilometres flew by.





PLAN B. Naude's Neck Pass was closed due to heavy snowfall and the friends had to make another plan. Luckily, the R396 between Rhodes and Barkley East was still open.

After Barkly East, we drive over the Kraai River Pass, past Aliwal North. Now, we're on the N1, dodging trucks as we head to Colesberg – and a welcome rest stop in the town.

Then, it's time to get onto the R369 toward Philipstown. We drive to the Rooipoort Guest Farm, a working sheep farm about 10 km outside the town.

After a few nights of restaurant food, it's time for a braai – we are, after all, on a sheep farm!

That experience of chilling around a fire in the Karoo is truly as great as when the Springboks beat the All Blacks. Even better.

After a fantastic farm breakfast the next morning, we opt for the road going past De Aar. The Jimny's ride quality is certainly not as smooth as that of a large SUV with air suspension, but it's a considerable improvement on that of the previous generation. And you can at least cruise comfortably through the arid Karoo at 120 km/h while the air-con keeps you cool.

It's lunchtime when we drive into Sutherland's main street. Sutherland is, of course, officially the coldest town in the country, with the mercury hovering far below freezing in winter.

Today isn't that cold, but the wind is unpleasant. A pit stop at the Boorgat restaurant becomes a matter of necessity, where a cup of strong coffee and a pizza are the perfect medicine.



“

The R396 dirt road winding
through the mountain
is muddy in places, but
thankfully there's no snow

”





They say

Deon Joubert
Manager at the Tankwa Tented Camp

"In the late afternoon,
when the sun is heading
towards the horizon,
I don a tie and aim
for the mountain...
a vantage point near

the camp where you
can look into the soul
of the Tankwa. The tie is
to honour time that has
already passed, and time
that has yet to come."



TAKE A SEAT. Sutherland's Boorgat Restaurant is a new attraction in town (top right). There are quite a few antique cars on display to keep petrolheads and hungry travellers alike happy.





Soon, we're on our way again. Dirt road, heading for the Ouberg Pass. The road winds past a few farmhouses, the Observatory... and then, completely unexpectedly, the horizon stretches out before us: the Tankwa Karoo. Vast and desolate. This is a moment taken in silence. A tonic for the soul.

THIS PASS WAS DEFINITELY not designed for a Corolla rental car. Initially, it's steep, the precipices high, and the rocks and ditches huge. But the Jimny doesn't allow passes like this to scare it.

They're its bread and butter actually. Before long, we reach the valley and then aim in the direction of the Tankwa Tented Camp. But first, the Tankwa Karoo National Park awaits.

What an incredible feeling to travel through this landscape. It's almost as if we're on another planet.

The tented camp is also unique. This oasis was once the bohemian base for AfrikaBurn, a festival where art reigns supreme over commercial considerations.

We arranged in advance with Deon Joubert from the camp to meet us on top of a mountain for a unique cocktail. He's sharply dressed and explains that the tie is a tribute to the time that has passed and to what awaits.

A sunset is just a sunset, right? Except not. On this mountain, surrounded by the vastness of the Tankwa, it's not something you can describe in words. But words aren't necessary, because you absorb it in silence, completely.

This is an experience you certainly won't get in Paris, Rome, or New York – not with all the money in the world. Later, the mountain's silence is exchanged for a cozy fire at the Tankwa Tented Camp's Unexplained Bar. And Deon's lamb potjie a fitting end to a day full of highlights.

As we drive away and the Tankwa Karoo disappears into the Jimny's rear-view mirror, we realise what a magical place it is and how easily it creeps into your heart. But the air is filled with excitement: it's a little more than 300 km to Lamberts Bay and the Atlantic Ocean.

“

The kilometres fly by as the Suzuki gallops towards the Atlantic Ocean. Like a horse heading for home

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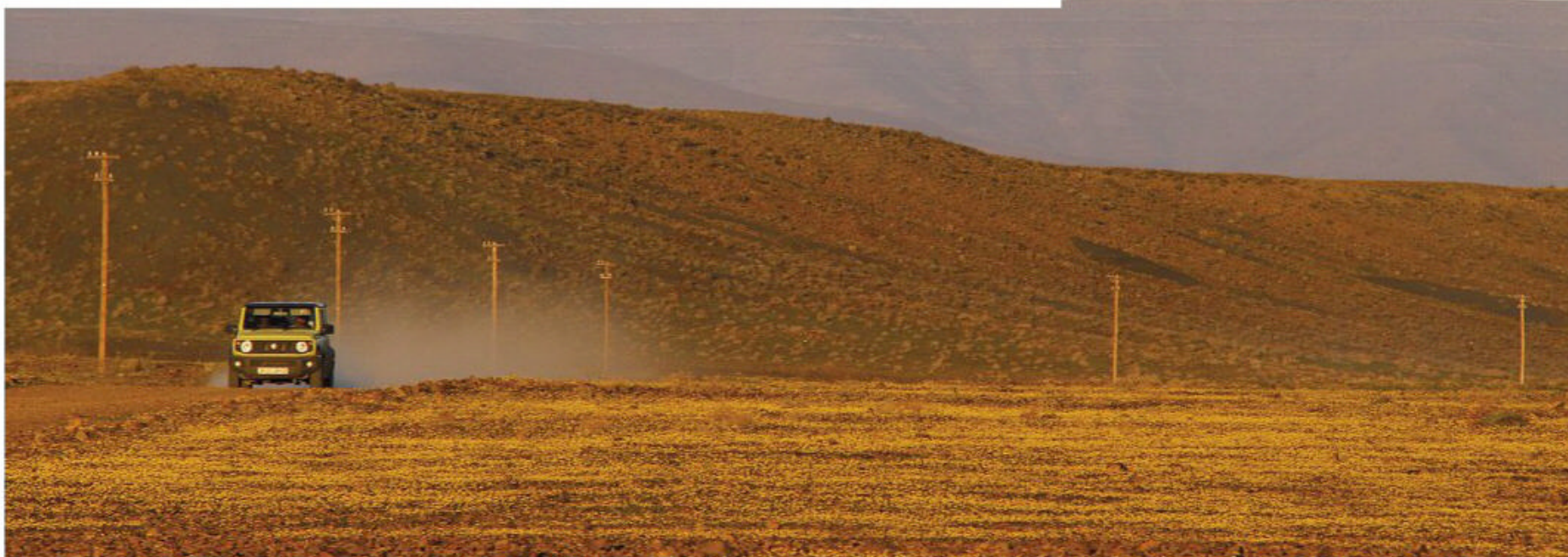
The end of our adventure is around the corner.

THE DIRT ROAD TO THE TANKWA farm stall is rough and tough in places, but we're rewarded with roosterkoek and delicious strong coffee for lunch.

Susan Lange, owner of the farm stall, is very proud of her intercom system: "Danie! Danie! Danie! Your table's food is ready! Danie!" And that's just one of the unique attractions of this charming stop. You'll find pretty much anything for sale here – from rusks and jams to new bikes.

Before long, we turn the Jimny's nose west, towards the sea. But first, we must cross the Cederberg. We take on the Katbakkies Pass, which starts next to the farm stall and takes you over the mountains of the Koue Bokkeveld and finally spits you out in the heart of the Cederberg.

The pass starts with a steep climb up the slopes of the Koue Bokkeveld mountain. It's tar, but it's not long before we end up behind two stately grey-haired women going barely 5 km/h in their SUV. Plus, they're driving in the middle of the road, so we can't overtake either.





“Attention! Bird watchers on board! May make frequent stops,” warns a bumper sticker. And indeed, they come to a complete stop to look at a feathered friend by the side of the road.

We require the patience of Job – it feels as if they’re thoroughly discussing every body part, eating habit, and colour of the bird. Eventually, we let them know of our presence with a gentle hoot. And they allow us to finally pass them.

The first 13 km of the road is called the Skitterykloof Pass. The name apparently comes from the unique colour of the soil when the skies open and water flows through the valley. The brown mud apparently looks exactly like a baby’s... erm, never mind.



HAIR ON YOUR TEETH. Ouberg Pass, between Sutherland and the Tankwa Karoo National Park, is not a Corolla or Polo’s friend – you need something with good ground clearance, and the more wheel traction the better. The gravel roads have a reputation for being tough on tyres. . .

I also want to go!

Can I drive it on my own? For sure! The route consists largely of tarred and good dirt roads with easy navigation if you have a map and a GPS with the latest software at hand.

How long is it? The route is 1 873 km – we did it fairly quickly in six days, but if you have enough time, two weeks is better. Then you can take in everything properly.

What should I drive? Preferably a four-wheel drive vehicle with a little extra ground clearance, but a two-wheel drive SUV that’s high off the ground will also do. You don’t need a hardcore 4x4 vehicle with a low-range gearbox and diff locks. Naude’s Nek Pass can be a challenge when it is raining or snowing, but if the

pass is snowy, you can get to Rhodes via other roads.

How much fuel should I take with me? If you’re driving a car with a small fuel tank, it’s a good idea to have 10 ℓ of fuel with you. Garages are plentiful on the route, but if you venture into the mountains in the Rhodes area, they become scarce.

What emergency equipment should I pack? Large stones can chew your tires badly – have a basic tyre-repair kit and a compressor.

May I tow? An off-road caravan will work well, yes. But a regular road caravan won’t do – in the mountains and in the Tankwa, you’d be picking up pieces of your caravan all the time.

Good resources We used a combination of Google Maps, a GPS with Tracks4Africa software, and a paper map for our route planning – and we didn’t once get lost.

Emergency numbers All South African emergency numbers are accessible on this route. The signal is good throughout, but in the mountains near Rhodes, you might struggle.

Covid stuff It’s easy to completely forget about the coronavirus on this route... the people in the small places don’t pay much attention to the measures.

But remember the usual things: disinfect and wash your hands as much as possible, and wear a mask when entering a room full of people.



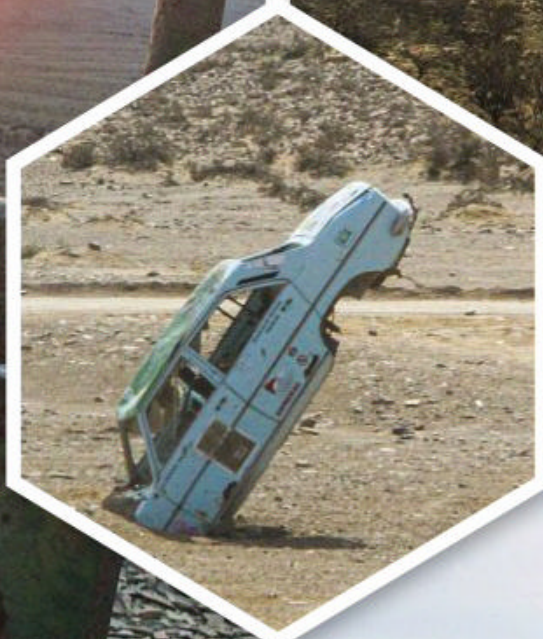
Next awaits the Katbakkies Pass. It's a beautiful dirt road pass, but the last section as you summit the mountain is tarred. A good thing as it's really steep.

If you want to drive up the steep pass with your grandmother's old Morris Minor, you may have to walk instead. Rumour has it that in the old days, before it was tarred, vehicles could only conquer this steep incline in reverse.

In the valley, the Jimny sidesteps a snake gliding across the road. It looks like it's on a mission – and making for a few birds yawning in a nearby bush. Another bird watcher.

The kilometres fly by as the Suzuki gallops towards the Atlantic Ocean. Like a horse that smells home. Op-Die-Berg, Citrusdal, Clanwilliam, Graafwater, and then, on the horizon: Lamberts Bay!

WHAT ON EARTH? Is this an actual flying saucer that made a slight detour and landed in the Tankwa Karoo? Why, yes it is! Okay, no, not really. The Tankwa farm stall erected this contraption. The Tankwa is a place that you don't only see but you also feel in your soul.



Our overnight stops

Wild Coast Sun, Port Edward

This imposing complex is a nice place to take in the pleasures of the concrete jungle before heading into the bundus. DStv, swimming pools, restaurants, luxury rooms, and the Indian Ocean that almost says hello right there on the veranda.

The giant water park provides hours of fun for the young team.

Price From R1 250 pppn.

Contact 📞 suninternational.com/wild-coast-sun

Walkerbouts Inn, Rhodes

You don't know what you're missing if you haven't spent an evening in the historic Rhodes and enjoyed a drink at the Centre of the Universe bar. Or devoured one of the restaurant's delicious pizzas.

You'll surely run into Dave Walker – he started the Inn almost 30 years ago. Dave knows Rhodes like the back of his hand and is also a real estate agent in town.

Price From R550 pp sharing.

Contact 📞 walkerbouts.co.za

Rooipoort Guest Farm, Philipstown

You don't always know what to expect when booking an overnight stop on a working sheep farm, but Rooipoort was a wonderful surprise. We asked our hostess, Kay Fourie, in advance for a few pieces of mutton to braai (when in Rome...). What we got was a feast of lamb chops, pofadders, leg of lamb, and salads. The guest farm is about 10 km outside Philipstown and a good overnight option.

Price From R250 pppn.

Contact 📞 083 277 4142

Tankwa Tented Camp

There are places where one stays that are nice – with a nice bed, nice food, and a nice shower. But these are not the places that would necessarily always stick in your memory.

The Tankwa Tented Camp is not such a place. Instead, it is one of those spots that talks to you, that you remember (for several reasons), and that you'll always crave.

There are the artworks that date from the time of AfrikaBurn, the Unexplained Bar, the people, the landscape... truly a special place.

You can camp here or stay in a luxury tent or chalet.

Price From R450 pppn.

Contact 📞 071 078 4400 (WhatsApp)

📧 tankwa.net



The Muisbosskerm outdoor restaurant is deserted during the day, and it's the perfect place to temperature test the cold Atlantic waters with one toe. It's soon clear we have no idea what cold water is.

But it was a long drive to get here, and we have to test. The toes disappear under the water... and then a brave foot follows. Eventually the water reaches our shivering knees.

THE ICY SEA makes you think for a moment and reflect on this wonderful country of ours. Our South Africa. It's not at all perfect, but do you really know your country? Do you know your people, your mountains and the beautiful landscapes of Rhodes?

Have you ever roasted a lamb pofadder on the coals? Have you seen the sun set over the Tankwa? Have you ever seen the

smallest desert in the world? Did you put all your toes in the Indian and Atlantic oceans inside of a week?

Before you buy that plane ticket to greener pastures, make sure that you've really experienced and absorbed South Africa properly. There's so much to do and see and experience in our South Africa.

Sigh. And so little time.

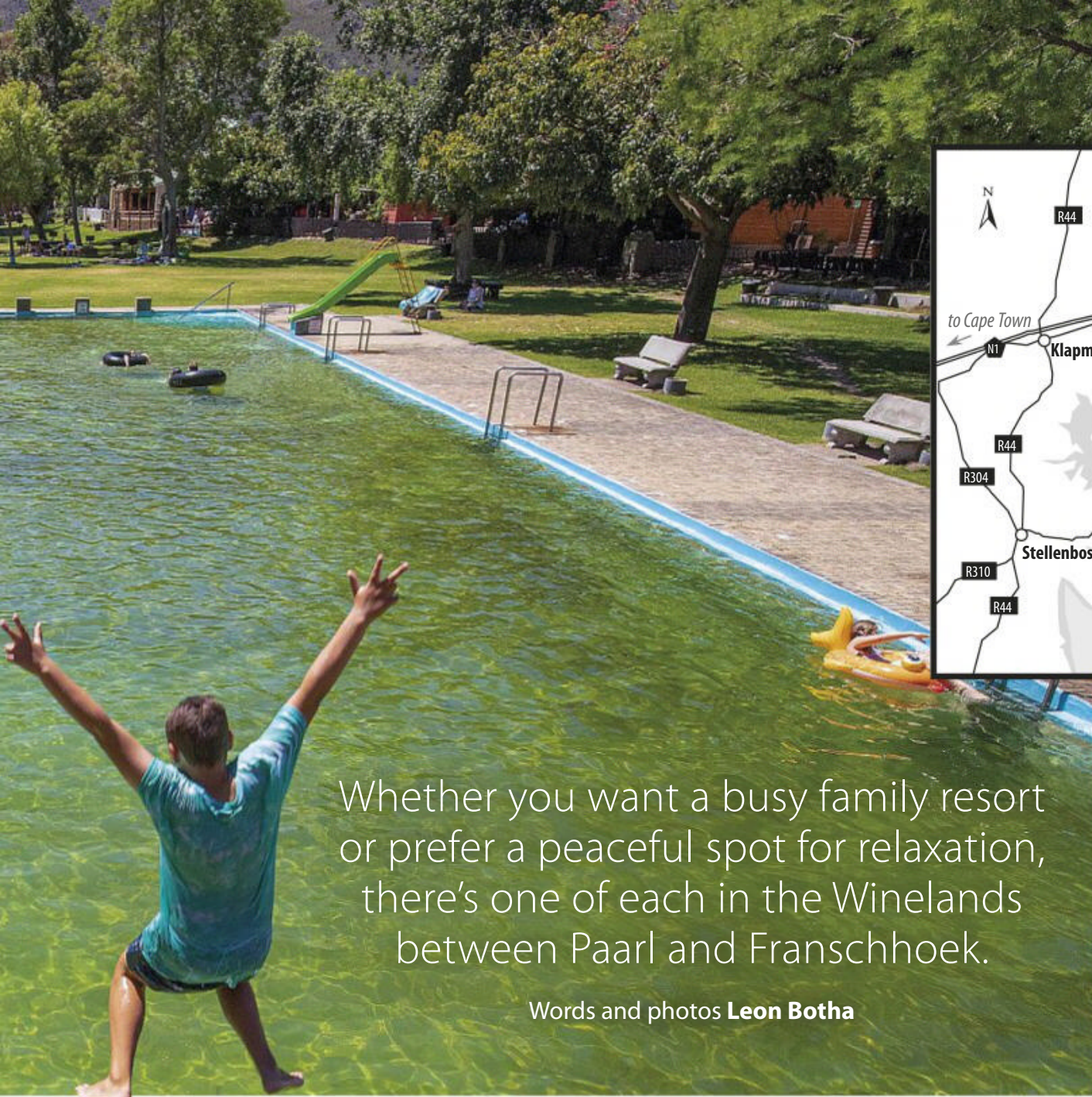




Winning

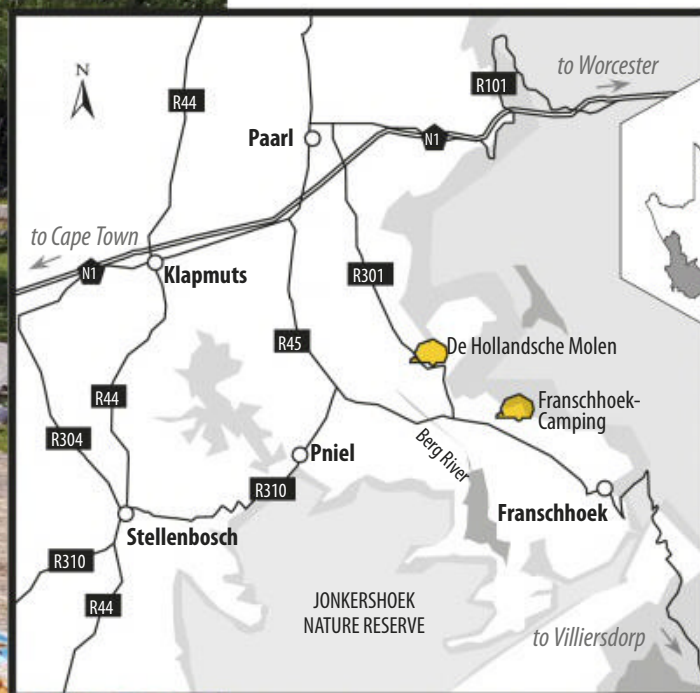
in the Winelands





Whether you want a busy family resort or prefer a peaceful spot for relaxation, there's one of each in the Winelands between Paarl and Franschhoek.

Words and photos **Leon Botha**



The mountains and vineyards make this a truly picturesque part of our country – it's quite surprising, really, that there isn't a greater variety of campsites in the area. You're barely an hour's drive from the Mother City, which means that for Capetonians, it's close enough for a weekend outing, while those coming from afar could easily chill out for longer while exploring the Cape.

De Hollandsche Molen and the Franschhoek campsites differ significantly in their offerings, but both make for a fabulous experience.

DE HOLLANDSCHE MOLEN Fun times

The moment you spot the multitudes of trampolines, huge swimming pools, and all the kids cycling up and down the campsite, you know this is a popular resort. You're in nature, and young and old are equally happy. Parents can relax and see the kids only when they come and ask for money for an ice cream.

At De Hollandsche Molen, there are plenty of trees, and you're practically camping under one continuous canopy. Apart from the welcome shade, it also serves as a natural buffer against the wind. Especially during summer to help counter the southeasterly wind.

The resort is ready for people towing: a sign indicates where to park with your towing combination while checking in at reception. There's a guard controlling access, but reception is in the building across the street. Inside, a team stands



CAMPING DESTINATION



ready to check you in and give you your access disc for the bathrooms.

This is where we saw how popular a resort can be. We booked on a regular weekend and got one of the last stands. Your stand is allocated in advance when you book, and you pay a deposit of R200 for the disc. (Don't worry if you don't have cash, there's an ATM in the shop next door.)

But the store is more than just a shop. They sell a little of everything, including takeaways. The bar is on the other side of the shop.

WiFi is available, and the signal extends to your stand. It's not free, though; prices start at R20 for 50 MB and go up to R150 for 1 GB.

The pools are on the right as you enter the campsite. One of them is just a tad smaller than an Olympic-sized swimming pool, and at the one end there are steps with several platforms at different heights above the water. So, small and tall can choose from which height they want to jump.

The deep side is 2,4 m and gradually decreases to 1,2 m at the other end, where a strong stream of water flows into the pool. There are another three swimming pools next to one another– the water first flows into them before it flows into the large pool. The pools next door also look more like ponds and are shallow enough for younger children to play in.

The Wemmershoek River – which is really just a shallow stream – runs along the edge of the resort, and some of that water is diverted to the swimming pools. So, you swim in clean mountain water, plus the pools are apparently cleaned every other week.

Surrounding the pools are the loveliest green lawns. Kids play ball sports, and people sit around socialising in groups.

Past the large swimming pool, the driveway bends to the right, where a fenced area awaits with four trampolines, a jungle gym, and a sand pit. The resort has put extra effort into making sure the young bunch don't hurt themselves. On the outskirts of the

“

At De Hollandsche Molen, there are plenty of trees, and you're practically camping under one continuous canopy

”

ON THE SIDE. You can judge a campsite by its ablution facilities, and De Hollandsche Molen doesn't shy away from scrutiny. The facilities are spotlessly clean and kept that way at all times.



playground is artificial grass, and between the trampolines there are rubber tiles, and then there's also protection over the springs of the trampoline. The play park's gate closes between 18:00 and 22:00, and you see kids waiting anxiously for the gate to open in the morning. During our visit, there was always someone supervising here.

From here, the campsite stretches lengthwise in front of you, and the road you came in on, Hadedra Drive, forms the border between the swimming pools and the campsite.

On the first corner are a few signs: to the right is Hadedra Drive and to the left

you're directed to Oros Man Crescent – and then there's also a sign warning against baboons. One of the two ablution blocks is here, with the other on the other end.

The 12 or so stands in Hadedra Drive are best if you want to be as close to the pools as possible, but this is also the busiest street in the resort. Just past the stands are homes for full-time residents, while the day visitors park across from the pools. Vehicles drive up and down here all day – plus it's a dirt road, so expect some dust clouds should someone drive a bit too fast.

The rest of the stands are in a few rows away from Hadedra, with the farthest

ones running down the fence between the two bathrooms. Next to the farthest bathrooms, marked Hagar and Helga, there are seven river stands, with the quieter stands to the left behind the first bathroom. This is also where the grass is most lush; elsewhere it's more sparse because of all the shade trees.

In front of your stand, a rubbish bin has been planted halfway into the ground so the wind doesn't blow it over. It also has your stand number painted on it. Everywhere there are truck rims on wheels that you can use as a braai, but we didn't spot any grids. Closer to the middle and on the one side, there are a few built-in braais with chimneys for

campers who want to socialise. It seems that all the stands have a tap nearby, and the same goes for power points (ordinary domestic sockets).

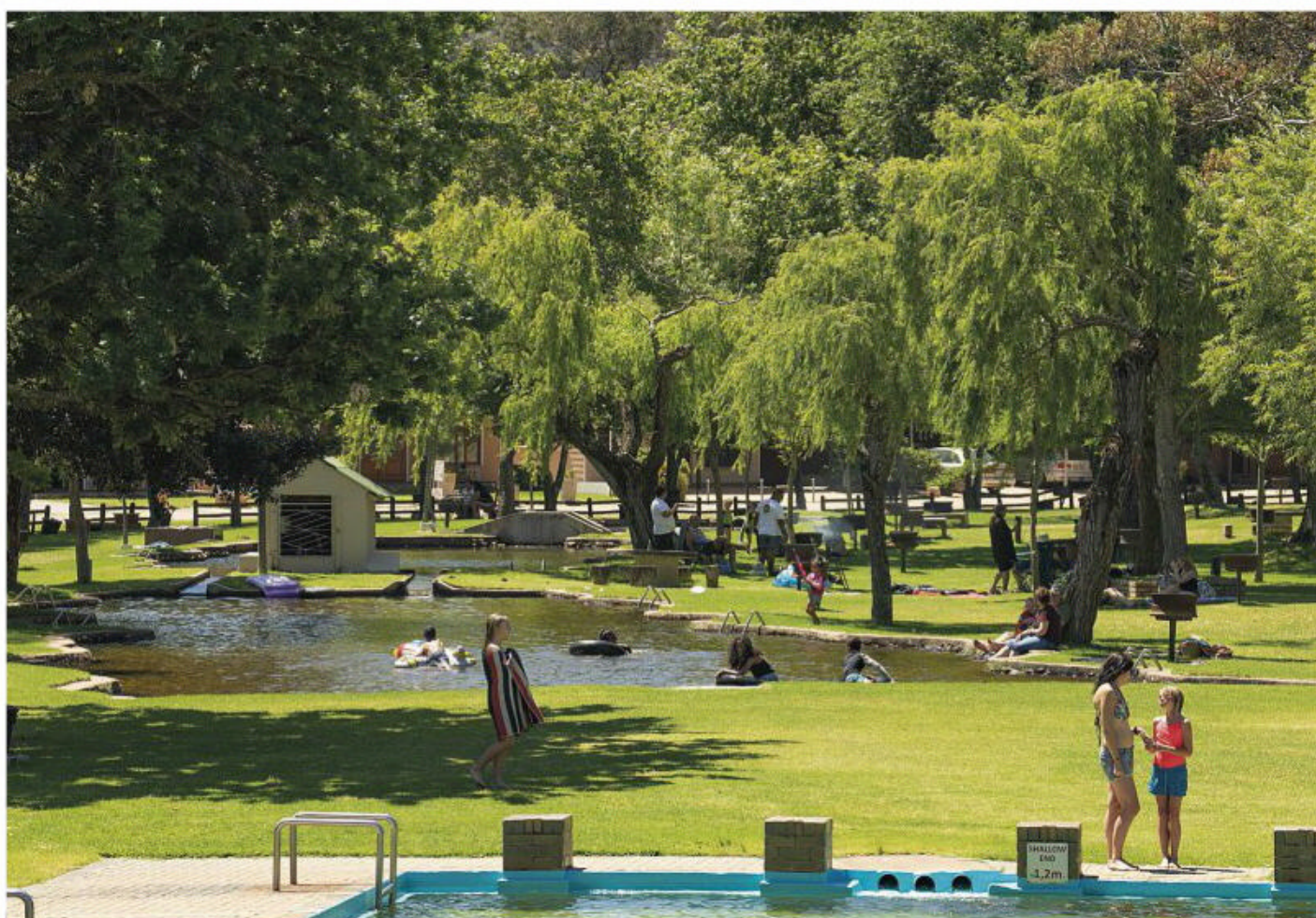
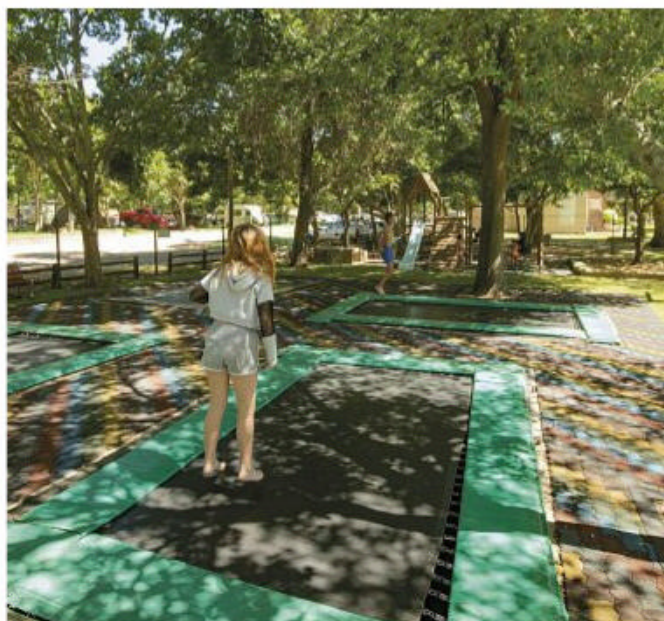
The first ablution block is called Popeye and Olive, and except for a few differences, they're pretty much the same. At both, you open the entrance gate with your disc. Between the men and women is a laundry room with the dishwashing sinks, tumble dryers, and washing machines (they operate with R5 coins).

There are marble countertops in the bathrooms, and all the shower cubicles are behind glass doors. Inside the cubicle is a pull-out bench, and there's also a small mirror so you can get each hair in its place.

In the far right at Popeye and Olive, there's a wheelchair-friendly bathroom. It's on the one side and not behind the entrance gate, but you still need a key to use it. The same goes for Hagar and Helga for the family facilities with two baths next to the laundry room.

Now's a good opportunity to visit Paarl Rock, as it's just around the corner, about 20 km away. The last 8,5 km is a dirt road that leads up the mountain –it's been washed away in places, but it didn't stop the Mini and VW Polo we saw parked in the parking lot. The largest of the granite boulders that tower over Paarl are known as the Bretagne and Gordon rocks. The bigger one is Bregagne, and you can climb it without any special equipment. From the car park, the summit is barely 400 m away, and the last three quarters of it you walk over an open piece of granite. Where it gets steep, there's a path with a chain railing. A trigometrical beacon marks the summit, and from here, it feels as if you can see into tomorrow. Table Mountain is clearly etched on the horizon, even though it's 54 km away, and to the left is the famous Simonsberg. De Hollandsche Molen is just a short distance away behind a hill, and the Franschhoek campsite is 6 km in the direction of Franschhoek.

Admission is R30 pp plus R30 for your vehicle and R40 for a map. (Also read this month's 'Trail guide' article on page 62 where we look at what you can expect on the trail. – Ed)





Briefly | De Hollandsche Molen



Campsite 61 stands with more than enough shade and electricity.

Ablution facilities Two neat blocks on either side of the stands.

Price Out of season, R180 pppn, and in season, R625 pn per stand (for members).

Arrival and departure 14:00 and 10:00 during peak times, but otherwise more flexible.

Contact 021 867 0904 dehollandschemolen.co.za camping@dehm.co.za

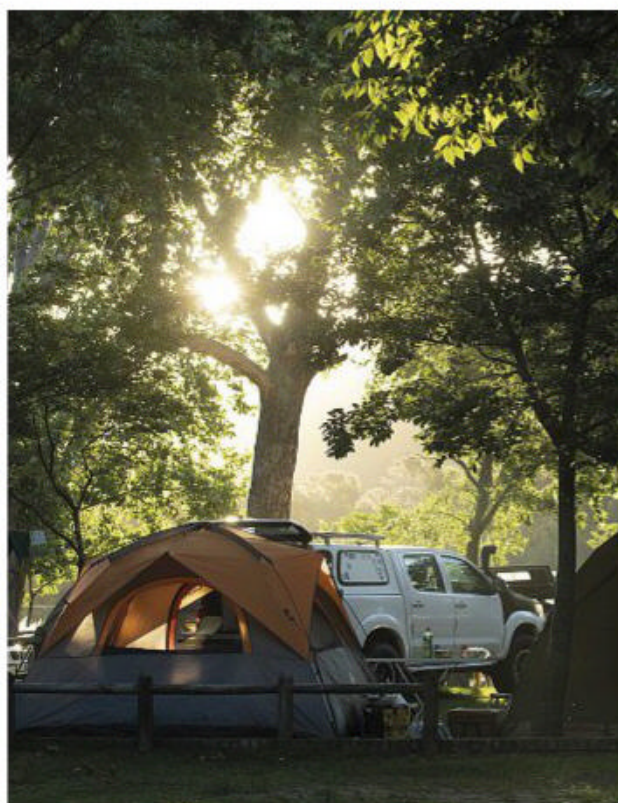
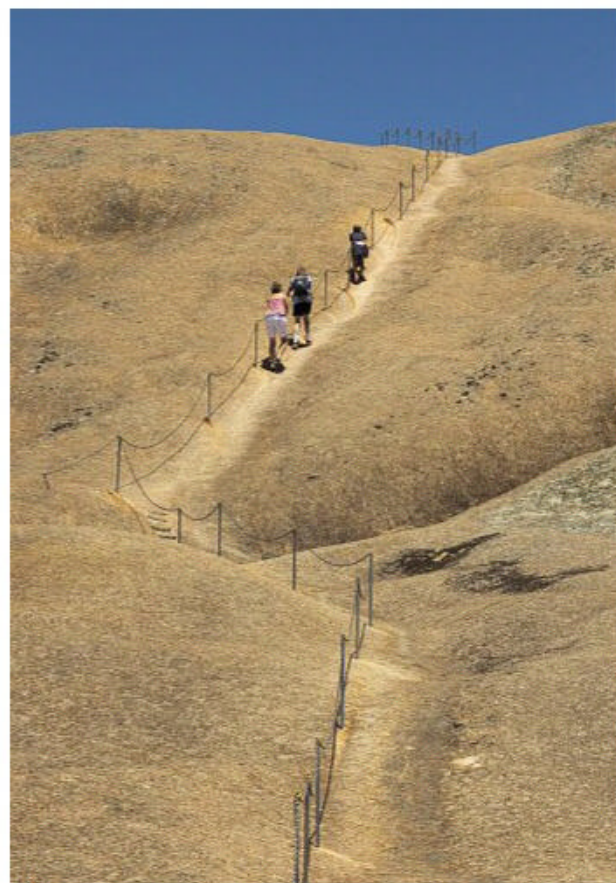
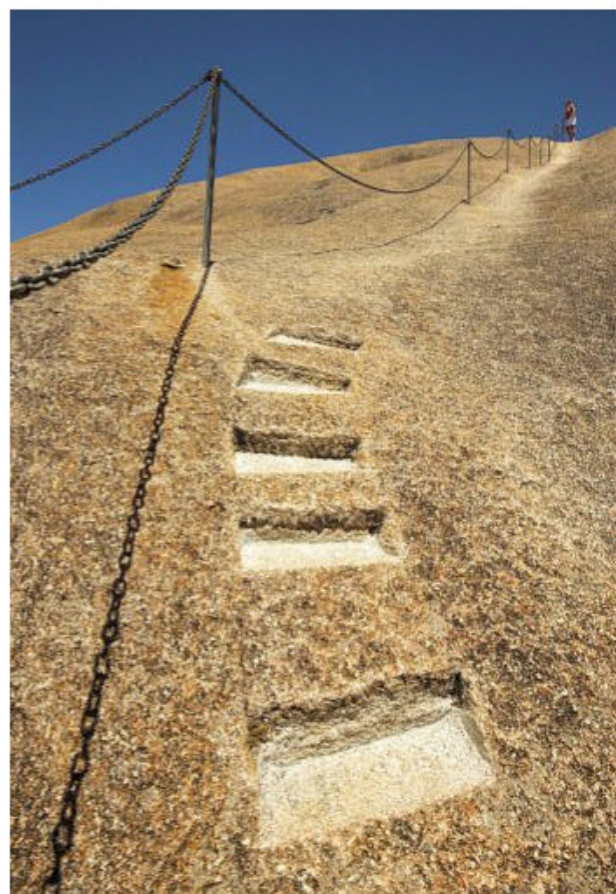
Nearest town Franschhoek, 10 km.

Road condition Tar to the resort.

GPS S33.859574 E19.039116

Drive & Camp says In the December holidays and over Easter, the resort's members get preference.

FOR EVERYONE. De Hollandsche Molen mainly caters for families and especially young ones who can't stay out of the water. But the campsite also has a quieter side where you can relax in the shade until everyone returns for dinner.



“

The campsite is laid out on two terraces on the slope. You have the most gorgeous view, with Simonsberg on the far right

”



FRANSCHHOEK CAMPING Elegance

Want to spend some more peaceful time in the area? Look no further than Franschhoek Camping. When you're coming from Paarl, it's barely 4 km before you enter Franschhoek's busy main street. The turn-off is easy to spot next to the gate of the Leopard's Leap Wine Estate. You're now in La Motte Station Street, and the neat dirt road runs 600 m to the campsite. Just in front of the gate, the train track has disappeared under the ground, but to the right is the nameplate of La Motte Station, as if another train might pass by. The station dates from a previous age – the sign says '14 miles to Paarl' and 'altitude 747 ft'.

Franschhoek Camping markets itself as a small boutique campsite and focusses on campers with motorhomes and

rooftop tents. This obviously means that a large and/or tall vehicle isn't a problem. The management also allows small caravans and camping trailers, but no tents or pets.

There's no office here, and all administrative arrangements are pre-arranged via WhatsApp. You'll be assigned a specific stand on booking.

You'd have to search high and low for a safer campsite. There are two electric gates you drive through, and the campsite is surrounded by an electric fence.

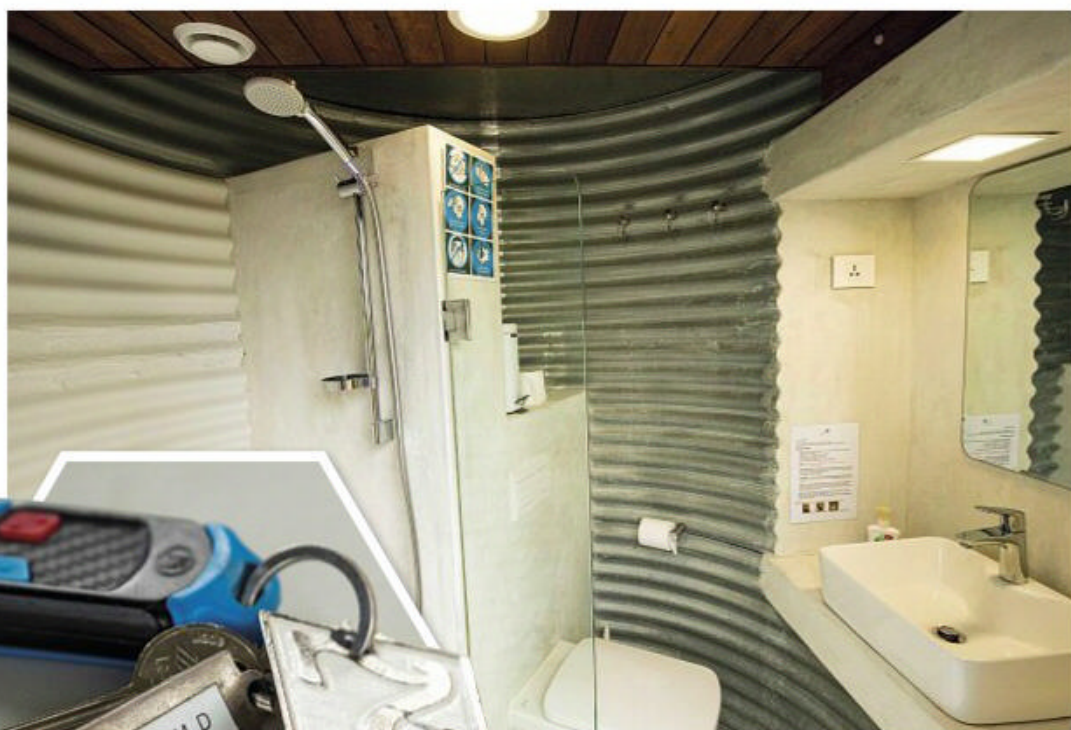
On arrival at the first gate, you need to let the office staff know and they open the gate. The same goes for the gate next to the campsite, 180 m along.

To get here, the dirt road slowly but surely begins to climb up against the koppie. The campsite is laid out on two terraces on the

slope. You have the most gorgeous view, with Simonsberg on the far right.

On each of the terraces are three and four pergolas next to which you camp. The stands are arranged side by side, but the owners have provided enough space. Between each stand there's some kind of partition, whether it's a garden, a bushy fence, a low wire fence, or a footpath. You're far enough away from the neighbours that you won't accidentally stumble over their guy ropes. So there's more than enough space on your stand for all your camping gear, including your towing vehicle.

The terraces are covered in grass, but on the upper terrace there are no shade trees. Luckily, you have the pergola and paving. The stand number is displayed on the power point (ordinary domestic socket) and under the pergola is a hip-height open



DIFFERENT. The Franschhoek resort isn't your average campsite. Management focusses on even the smallest detail and ensure that the place doesn't overflow with guests. They allow only a set number of campers per day and this guarantees peace and quiet.







WHAT IS A FARM WITHOUT CHICKENS? Poultry roam through the campsite, and they're almost oblivious to people. Cocky cockerels aren't shy to perch on your kitchen table, and hens will lay an egg on your bed if you leave the caravan door open.



wooden chest. Inside are two bundles of wood: the smaller basket is R50 and the larger bag of camelthorn wood is R100. (There are loose steel braais to use, but no grids.) The key to your bathroom and a remote control for the two gates are also in the chest. So, once you're inside, you can come and go as you please.

The garden looks as though it's been designed by a landscape architect – even the bougainvillea growing up a wooden trellis against each of your pergola's pillars looks stylised. The same goes for the garden around the footpaths that run from the upper terrace past the bathrooms to the lower terrace. Lavender neatly line the footpath, and there are also vygies, carnations, and even a handful of peach trees.

On the lower terrace, the vegetation and grass are more lush, and there are also some trees that look like white karee under which you can park your camping chair.

Opposite these stands is an open area on which you can fit a large motorhome, but there's no pergola. There are a few benches for your use.

The bathrooms are about as unique as the campsite itself. Between the two terraces are four bathrooms next to one another, which, at first glance, look like some futuristic abode on a distant planet. It's rather like windmill water tanks converted into bathrooms.

The layout is a surprise. The inside is divided in two, with the shower on one side and the toilet and basin on the other side. Between the shower and toilet is an upright glass panel that can swing so that the water from the shower doesn't get everything wet. Even though the bathroom may look cramped from the outside, you'd be hard pressed to find a bigger shower. The ceramic basin fits into a section that extends beyond the side of the 'tank'. This wet room is cleverly laid out and is very practical.

The bathrooms for the lower terrace is in a building with two rooms. The dishwashing sinks are on the outside, while the communal sink for the upper terrace is next to the bathrooms. There's a separate flushing area for cassette toilets.

The pool is just past the lower bathrooms, behind a small gate. The



Briefly | Franschhoek Camping



Campsite 10 level stands on two terraces and green grass. People with children camp on the upper terrace. The WiFi is free, and most sites have their own pergola.

Ablution facilities Your own. Modern and only a short distance from your stand. As there are only six bathrooms, and bookings are only accepted for six stands, unless you want to share amenities with friends, for example.

Price R450 pn for two adults, thereafter R100 pp (R50 for children six to 12 years; no children under six. You may stay up to seven days.

Arrival and departure After 14:00 and no later than 11:00.

Contact 082 959 5836

franschhoekcamping.co.za

heuvelsig@gmail.com

Nearest town Franschhoek, 4 km.

Road condition The last 800 m is a decent gravel road.

GPS S33.881296 E19.080619

Drive & Camp says Franschhoek Camping is aimed at couples and families with school-going children or older. Due to the limited stands and with Franschhoek just around the corner, it's popular, so book early.





owners call it an eco pool, and the water comes from a mountain stream. There's a wooden deck right around with sun loungers – the perfect spot to cool off in the summer.

The owner's dogs aren't the only ones who come to say hello. There are quite a few chickens that come to check you out, pecking all the way. They seem to be used to campers – it didn't take long for one of them to hop into the caravan and another found a spot on the outside kitchen's worktop. At sunset they disappear, but they're the first to let you know the day is breaking. It sounds as though that rooster is right next to your camp bed early in the morning.

Seeing as you're up early, you may as well go check out Franschhoek. If this is your first time, don't be overwhelmed by all the wineries and restaurants. Just walk up and down

the main street with all its interesting galleries and eateries, and you'll soon realise you'll need to return, as there's way too much to see in one day.

As you enter the town, the Dutch Reformed Church is to your left almost immediately. It doesn't have a steeple and boasts a thatched roof. What you need to know is that you can find free parking here, and if you happen to pass by on a Sunday, you can see how someone rings the church bell next to the sidewalk. From here, it's only a 700 m walk to where the street ends at the Huguenot Monument.

If you don't get caught up somewhere else, end your morning walk in the Franschhoek Village Market next to the church. They are usually open on Saturdays, but sometimes also on Sundays. It's a delightful farmer's market in the shade of big trees. Browse the crafts and spoil the kids with smartie pancakes (R25). 

OUR TOWING VEHICLE

With its standard towbar and trailer sway control, the Isuzu D-Max 300 LX 4x4 (automatic) is built for towing. On top of that, the rear-view camera comes standard. Plus, it has a towing capacity of 3 500 kg.

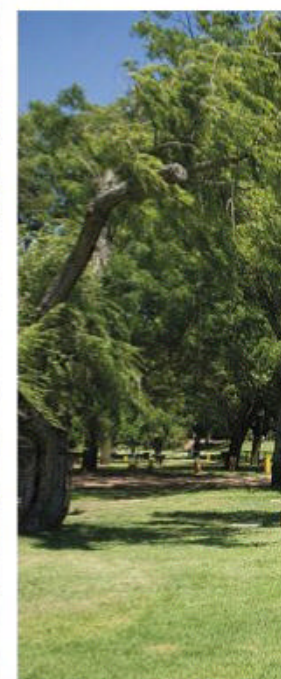
But, as we've pointed out before, legislation only allows you to tow a caravan with a gross vehicle mass of 2 095 kg (the tare weight of the Isuzu). Even so, you can still tow most of the caravans on the market with the Isuzu.

During our visit to Franschhoek Camping, we hitched a fully equipped Bush Lapa Miskruier (GVM 1 500 kg) and towed 229 km. Our route was there and back on the Old Cape Road Pass and then over the Helshoogte Pass to Stellenbosch. With two adults and two children in the bakkie, the consumption was a decent 12,5 ℓ/100 km – a figure not to complain about. Its 80 ℓ fuel tank should get you 640 km with a caravan.



SPECIFICATIONS

Model	Isuzu D-Max 300 LX 4x4 (automatic)
Engine	Four cylinder turbodiesel
Power	130 kW @ 3 600 rpm
Torque	380 Nm @ 1 800-2 800 rpm
Transmission	Six-speed automatic
Drive	Rear wheels or 4x4 with rear diff lock
Tank	80 ℓ
Fuel consumption with caravan	12,5 ℓ/100 km (8 km/ℓ)
Reach with caravan	640 km
Tare weight	2 095 kg
GVM	3 100 kg
GCM	6 000 kg
Towing capacity	3 500 kg
Is the towbar removable?	No, just the ball.
Is there space for a drop plate?	Yes
PRICE	R728 200



Still waters run deep

We invite you to spend a weekend next to the Berg River. It's just around the corner from Cape Town, and has everything you need for a wonderful time away with your family.

Words and photos **Schalk Jonker**

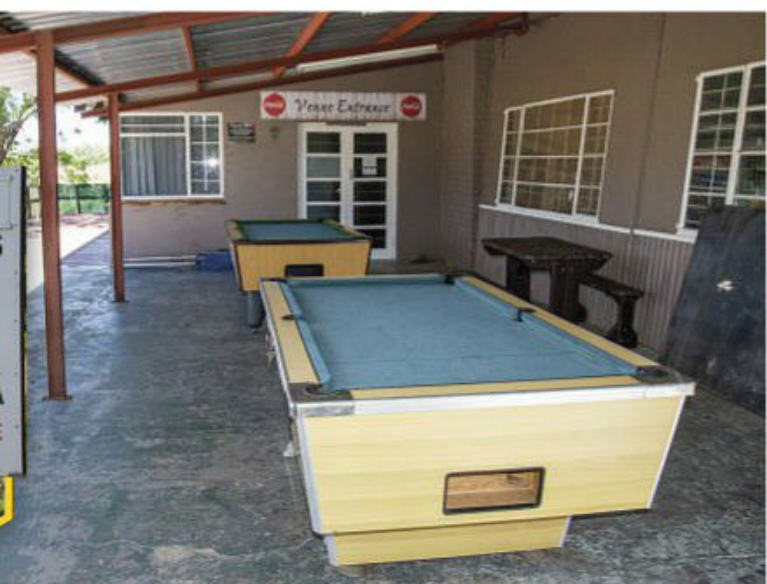
In the late 1960s, Danie Ochse, a farmer from the Eastern Cape, decided he had enough of Graaff Reinet's drought. He moved to the Western Cape and bought himself a piece of land next to the water in the hopes that he'd never have to worry about drought ever again.

Here, on the banks of the Berg River, Danie – and then his son George and later his grandson Chris – eventually developed a family resort that's one of the most popular campsites in the area and attracts thousands of visitors every year.

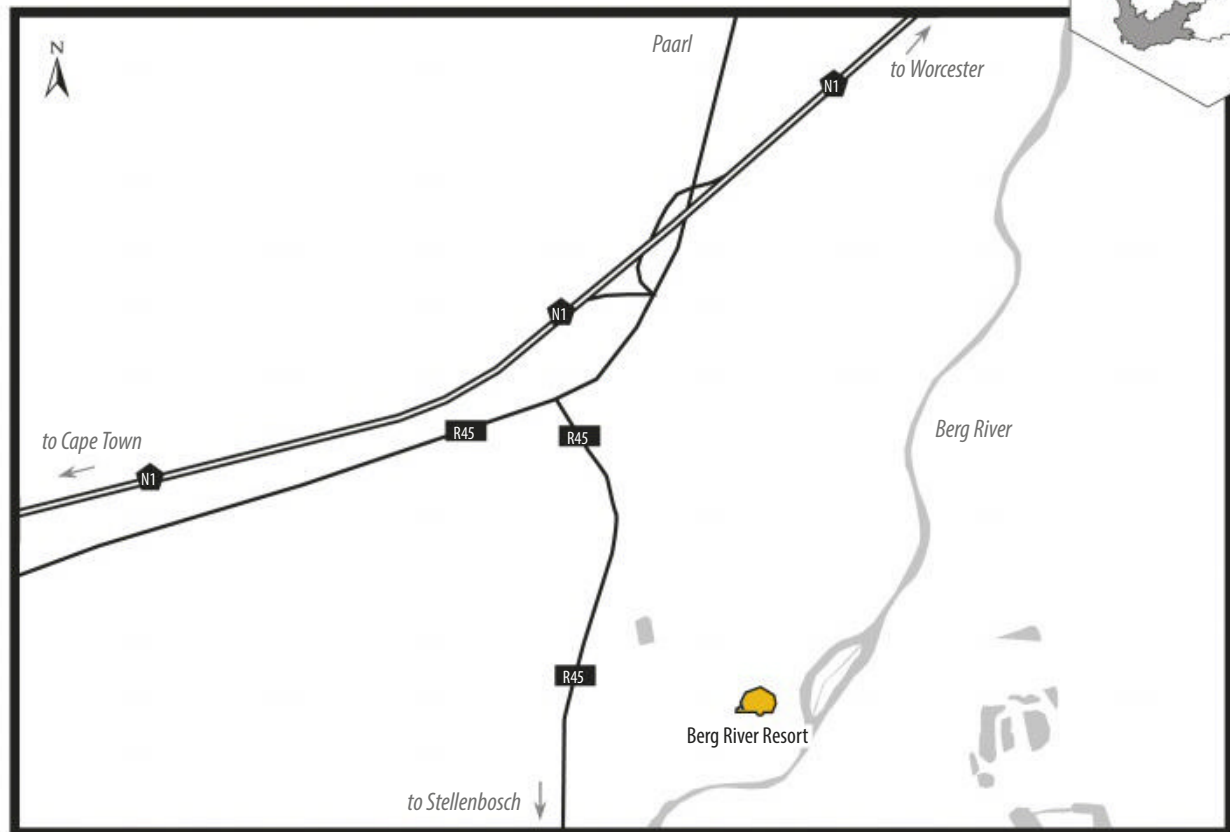
When you consider everything this resort has to offer for the entire family, it's easy to understand why it bursts at the seams, especially during peak season.

The kids will stay busy for hours, that's for sure. There's the swimming pool – close to being an Olympic size and at its





GET WET! The swimming pool at the Berg River Resort is nearly as large as the ones used in the Olympic Games, and it's a perfect counter to the Paarl Valley heat.



deepest it's a proper 3,5 m deep – a slide, playground, trampolines, a mini golf course, and tractor rides – not to mention the wide open spaces where they can play ball. The little ones have their own swimming pool, and on weekends and busy times, there's a lifeguard on duty.

Closer to reception, there's a number of farm animals, including boer goats, pigs, and chickens (plus a guinea fowl that thinks it's a chicken) where the young ones can take a closer look or even feed them.

Also at the pool complex are two pool tables, a shop with basic necessities – including wine, beer, and frozen meat – a small restaurant that sells takeaways, a bar where you can enjoy a refreshment while watching your favourite team on the TV, and even a spa if you feel like some pampering.

The river is, of course, a huge attraction, and you can swim here, search for crabs under the rocks, and fish. You might catch a carp, barber, or perch – so remember your fishing tackle. You can also rent a tube or canoe at the shop, but that's a popular activity so it's best to bring your own.

The Berg River Resort is popular with day visitors, but they have their own site and amenities and aren't allowed in the campsite or your ablution facilities. The resort focusses on couples and families and doesn't allow groups on weekends. There's a strict no-music policy music, so you don't have to worry that Justin Bieber, Taylor Swift, or Kenny Rogers will keep you awake.

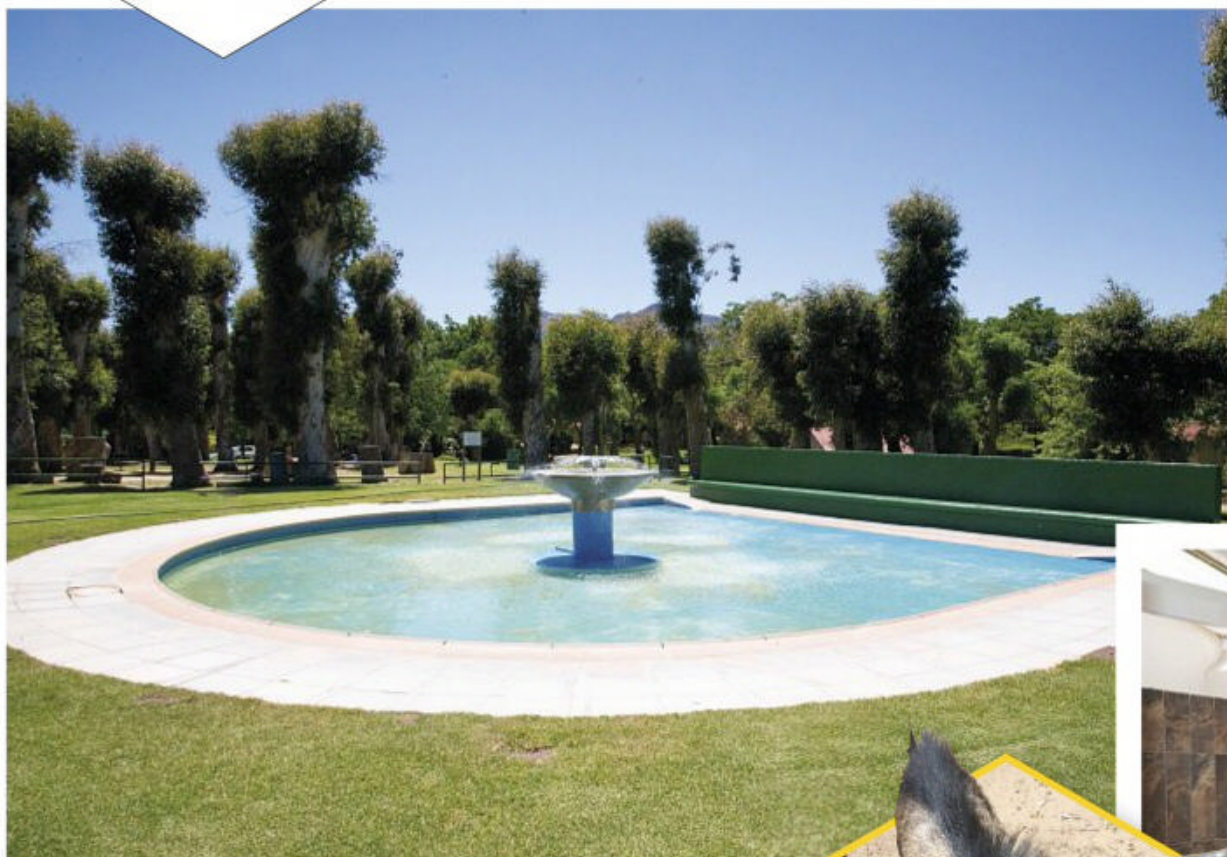
The resort only accepts bookings for the December holidays and the Easter weekend. As for the rest of the year, those who show up first are helped first. So, if you get stuck on the N1 at Bellville on a Friday afternoon on the way there, chances are that the stands along the river will no longer be available when you arrive. But Chris says it's never happened that there were no stands available over a weekend. At most, you won't be pitching your camp on the spot you identified online. By the way, on Fridays the gate stays open until 19:00, and if you let them know you're stuck in traffic, they'll wait for you until 20:00.

WiFi is available here, but you'll need to walk closer to the reception office to access it.

YOU PICK YOUR stand on arrival, except when it's very busy. Choose from close to 170 stands divided into five camps. About 40 are next to the river, and if you hammer in your tent pegs there, you can sit under your rally tent and keep watch over your fishing rod.

Block A's stands are next to the river and Block B, which is only for caravans, is behind the chalets. Blocks C, D, and E are farther from the water, but there are also a handful of hidden stands in the farthest part of the resort (behind the shop) with a wonderful view of the river.

There's plenty of grass and shade trees, but as is often the case, the stands with lush grass have little shade, while the stands with shade trees don't have



COME SAY HI. There's a petting zoo not far from the reception building where the little ones can feed farm animals.

grass in some spots. So, bring your reflective sheet and gazebo, because you won't want to sit in the sun in the summer months.

Each numbered stand has its own braai, but you must bring your own grid. Also bring an extension cord because you share your power point (domestic socket) with your neighbours. You also share a rubbish bin in pairs, while the taps are spread throughout the resort. At least you don't have to walk too far if you need water. The blue bins you'll see in the campsite are for recycling glass.

In the other corner of the resort there's also a bush camp: there's no power here, and you have to be largely self-sufficient. This site has about 50 unmarked stands.

You don't have to worry about safety. At night, at least four security guards patrol the campsite to make sure your belongings are safe.

In quieter times, you're allowed to bring your pets along, but you have to arrange this with the resort in advance. Chris says that they're planning a separate pet-friendly block that they hope to have ready after the Easter weekend.

A TOTAL OF 12 SMALL ablution blocks are scattered throughout the campsite, and you'll never have to walk farther than 40 m to get to one. Each block has two showers, four basins, and two toilets, and the facilities are more than adequate, even for a crowded resort. There are also no complaints about the hot water here. The shower cubicles have a dry area with a bench and hooks for your towel and clothes.

You get your own key for the ablution facilities and pay a deposit of R50 for it when you check in.



Briefly | Berg River Resort



Campsite 170 demarcated sites, all with power and varying grass and shade. There's also a bush camp with about 50 undemarcated sites without electricity.

Ablution facilities 12 clean and neat ablution blocks with separate facilities for men and women.

Price R240-R1 110 per stand, depending on when you camp and how many people there are (maximum six per stand). The price for the bush camp is R90-R160 pppn.

Contact 021 007 1852

✉ info@bergriverresort.co.za

🌐 bergriverresort.co.za

Arrival and departure 14:00 and 10:00.

On Sundays you may stay until 16:00.

Nearest town Paarl, 4 km.

Road condition Tar all the way.

GPS S33.795644 E18.961615

Drive & Camp says The drinking water comes from the resort's boreholes. The water is constantly tested to make sure it's safe – be it for drinking or swimming.

ENJOY A CARE-FREE HOLIDAY WITH THE HELP OF ULTIMATE ROUTES

If you're heading into the bundus for your next holiday, you need to know what you're doing because planning such a trip requires specialist knowledge. Travel experts **Ultimate Routes** can help you book the perfect getaway in Southern Africa.

PHOTO WILLEM VAN DER MERWE

In the mood for a cross-border, self-drive adventure but unsure about what destination to choose or where to begin with planning your route and booking the right accommodation for you? It can get quite tricky, especially if you're doing it on behalf of your family or a group of friends. Add the frequently changing travel regulations caused by Covid-19, and it gets even more complicated.

You can trust the team at **Ultimate Routes** to help plan and organise your dream holiday to any destination in Southern Africa. The team's extensive route planning experience, valuable industry contacts and knowledge about destinations will ensure an unforgettable holiday experience.

Ultimate Routes does the planning and the booking, all the donkey work, before your trip – you do the driving. Your holiday will be planned according to your specific needs. This is not a tour group: you drive your own car, unaccompanied, on your own time.

ULTIMATE ROUTES OFFERS THE FOLLOWING SERVICES:

- Planning routes according to your needs
- Booking accommodation (camping, self-catering or luxury accommodation) in South Africa, Namibia, Botswana and Zimbabwe as well as in these countries' national parks
- Booking activities
- Hiring fully equipped 4x4s and camping gear
- A detailed travel itinerary and maps

E-mail explore@ultimateroutes.co.za or visit www.ultimateroutes.co.za for more information.



ULTIMATE
Routes

The tortoise shell

South Africa's third oldest town has a beautiful reserve – located on a mountain where you can go driving through the veld – or fish, rock climbing, hike, and braai from morning to late afternoon.

Words and photos **Cyril Kloppe**

The Paarl Valley was originally inhabited by the Cochoqua, a prosperous Khoisan tribe that farmed mainly with livestock. The Cochoqua called the mountain above their valley *!hom !nāb/s* – or Tortoise Mountain. Later, in 1657, a fiscal of the Dutch East India Company, one Abraham Gabbema, renamed it “de Diamontd and de Peerlberg” because of the way the mountain's largest granite domes glistened in the sun after a morning shower. *Peerl*, old Dutch for pearl, would later become Paarl.

The granite domes that impressed Abraham so much are today called Bretagne (French for Britain) and Gordon's Rock (named after the Dutch explorer of Scottish descent Robert Gordon) and a third, smaller dome closest to the town is Paarl Rock, or the pearl of Paarl.

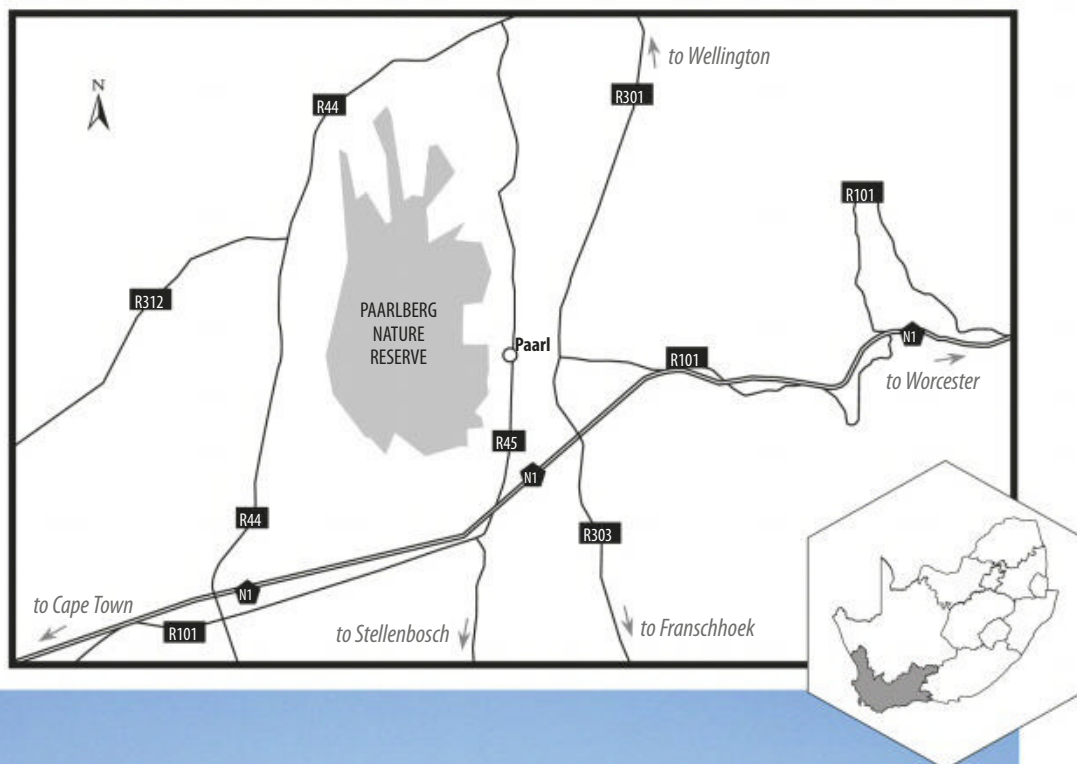
Our route starts at the Afrikaans Language Monument. Follow the 11 km-long Jan Phillips mountain road – a bumpy trail with attractive views – for 5 km, past an amphitheatre, followed by the Victoria Dam and Meulsteen Botanical Garden and picnic site. Shortly after Meulsteen is a road sign for “The Rocks”: turn left

here and continue uphill.

Near the reserve's entrance gate is another picnic spot, Pienaars Camp, with a neat ablution block. Meulsteen and Pienaars Camp's picnic spots are free to use and the ablution blocks are usually clean – the Drakenstein municipality definitely deserves a pat on the back for their excellent work.

Now drive through the Paarlberg Nature Reserve's entrance gate – admission is free during the week, but on weekends you have to pay – and keep to the right when the road forks. A one-way road winds for 7 km over Paarlberg past numerous smaller granite domes and rocky ridges that are not visible from the valley floor. Once you've passed Grootwaboombkop on the right, the road descends steeply. The first piece of the descent has a concrete slab, but it eventually degrades into deep erosion ditches, and you have to be careful not to fall in and beach your vehicle. An ordinary family sedan probably won't make it here.

Shortly after the washed-out section, you can turn left towards Bethal Dam and drive back to the gate, but rather keep going straight ahead to the western slope of Paarl Mountain with



its beautiful views over the Swartland and Cape flats.

During our visit, the veld was recovering from a fire a few years before. Despite the fire risk, the Drakenstein municipality operates a picnic spot along the route where you can braai, and we're heading there now.

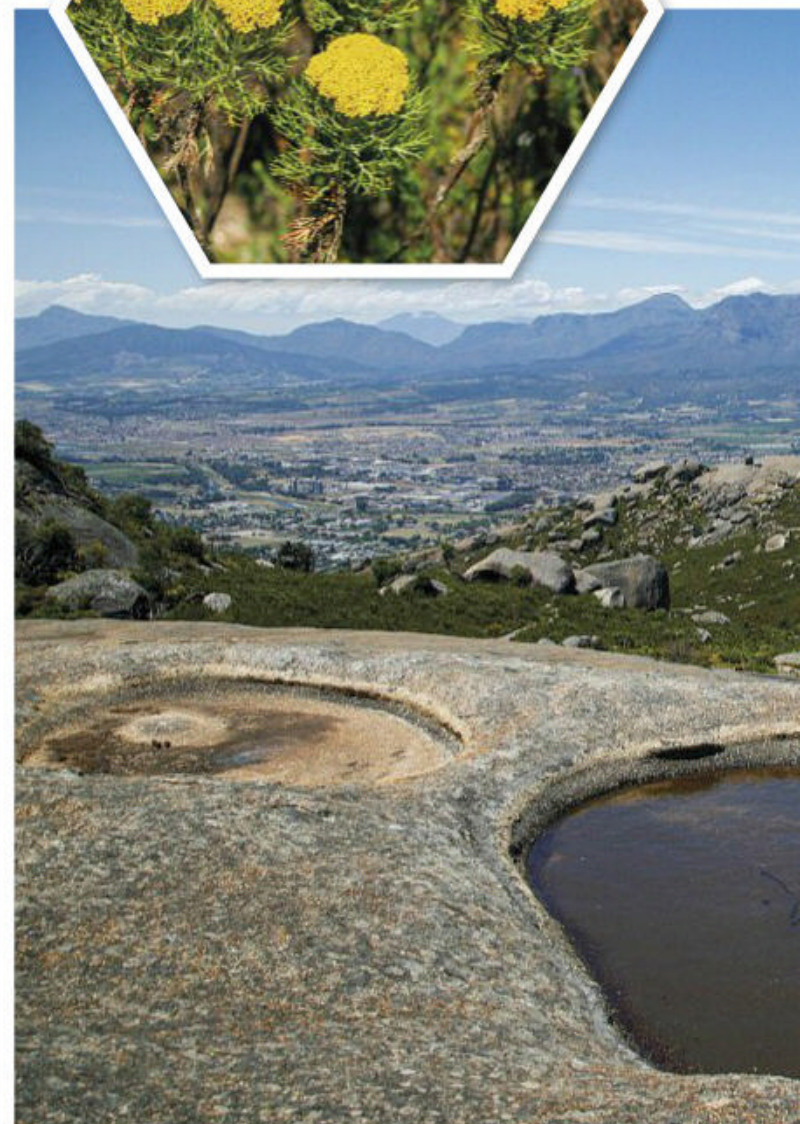
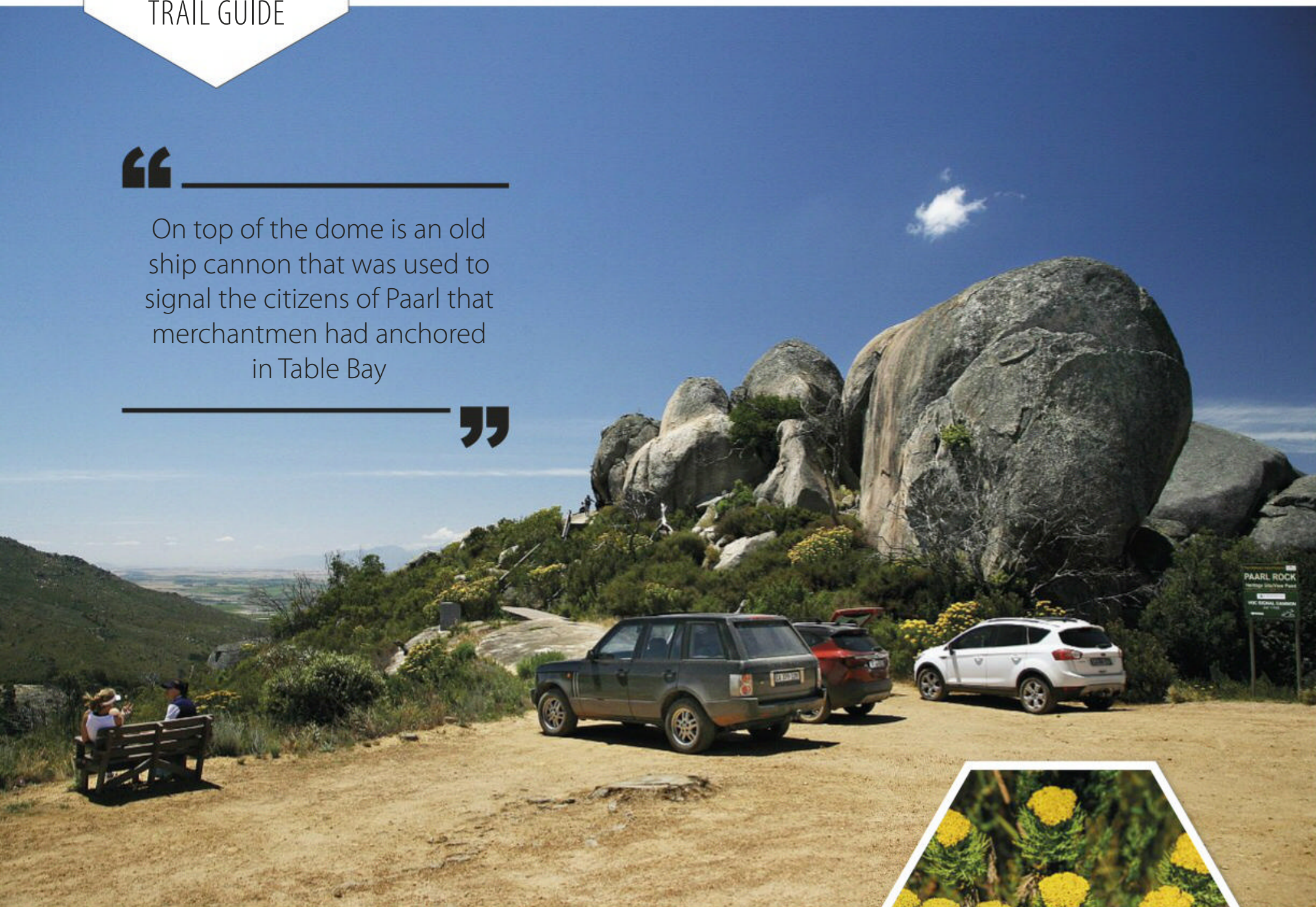
There are a few obstacles before you get there, but we didn't need to engage four-wheel drive. We must mention that we wouldn't venture down the road in a VW Polo, for example. There are a number of ditches you could end up falling into, and then you'll need four-wheel drive, or at least a diff lock, to extract yourself.

Drive past Kleinwaboomkop to Krismis Camp for a picnic under shade trees.

“

On top of the dome is an old ship cannon that was used to signal the citizens of Paarl that merchantmen had anchored in Table Bay

”



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 a compressor? No.

May I braai? Yes, at the picnic spots.

Can I turn around halfway? Certain parts of the route are one way.

Is there cellphone signal? Yes.

Best time to go? All year round, but in January and February it gets really hot.

Can I take my family along? Yes, definitely.

May my dog join us? No, pets are strictly forbidden.

Can I ride a motorcycle here? Large adventure bikes are allowed, but scramblers

and quads are turned away.

Just for the day or the weekend? Just for the day.

How long does it take? It takes about three hours to explore all the roads.

Are there ablution facilities? Yes, at the picnic spots, and they are clean.

Directions Follow the road signs for the Afrikaans Language Monument through the suburb of Courtrai and drive along Gabbema Doordrift Road towards Paarlberg. A road sign 1 km before the Language Monument will send you along the Jan Phillips mountain road to the Paarlberg Nature Reserve.

Hours 07:00-19:00 (between 1 April and 30 September until 18:00).

Price R30 pp and R30 per vehicle on weekends and holidays. Free during the week.

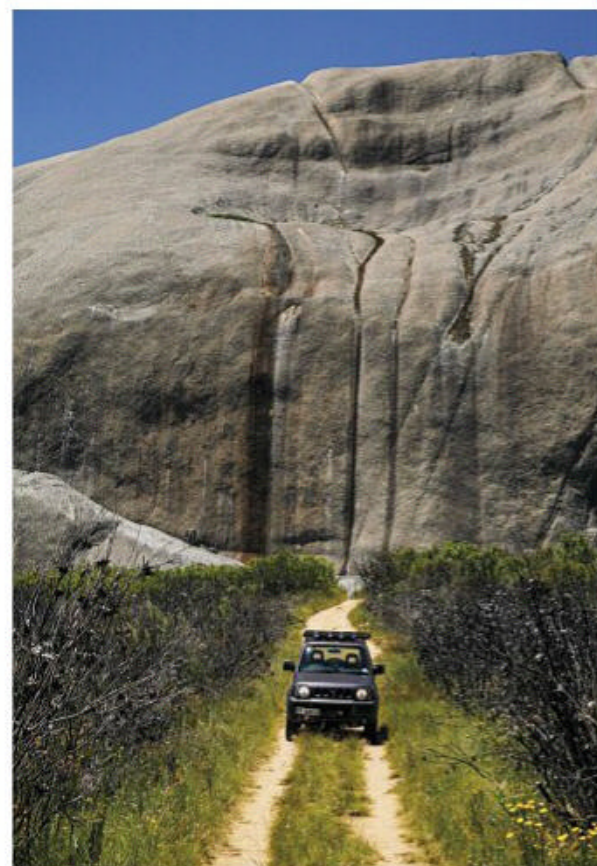
Contact 021 807 6231 (Lindsay Lewis)

lindsay.lewis@drakenstein.gov.za

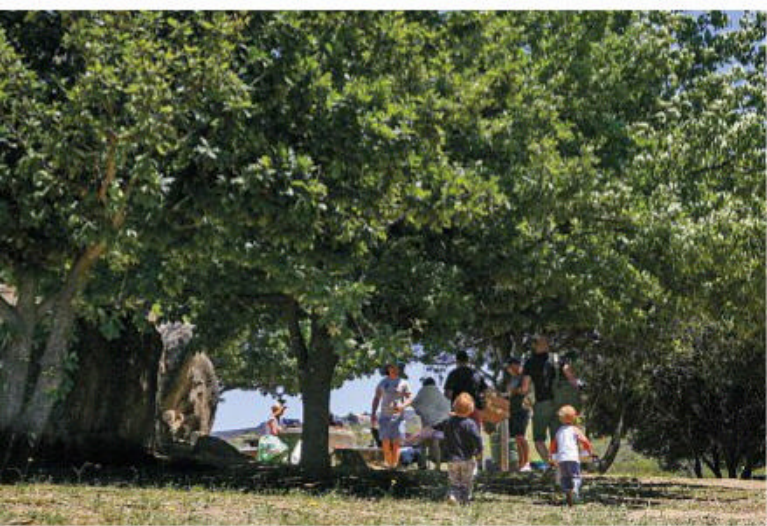
drakenstein.gov.za

GPS S33.73276 E18.94247 (entrance)





CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE. The Afrikaans Language Monument (above) commemorates European, Malay, and African languages that form the foundations on which Afrikaans was built. There's small game on the mountain, but they're shy and you won't easily see buck, unless you take one of the many hiking trails.



After tucking into some boerie rolls, there are plenty of other trails left on the mountain to explore. Some take you to the base of Bretagne and Gordon's Rock and others meander through dense fynbos with views of Drakenstein.

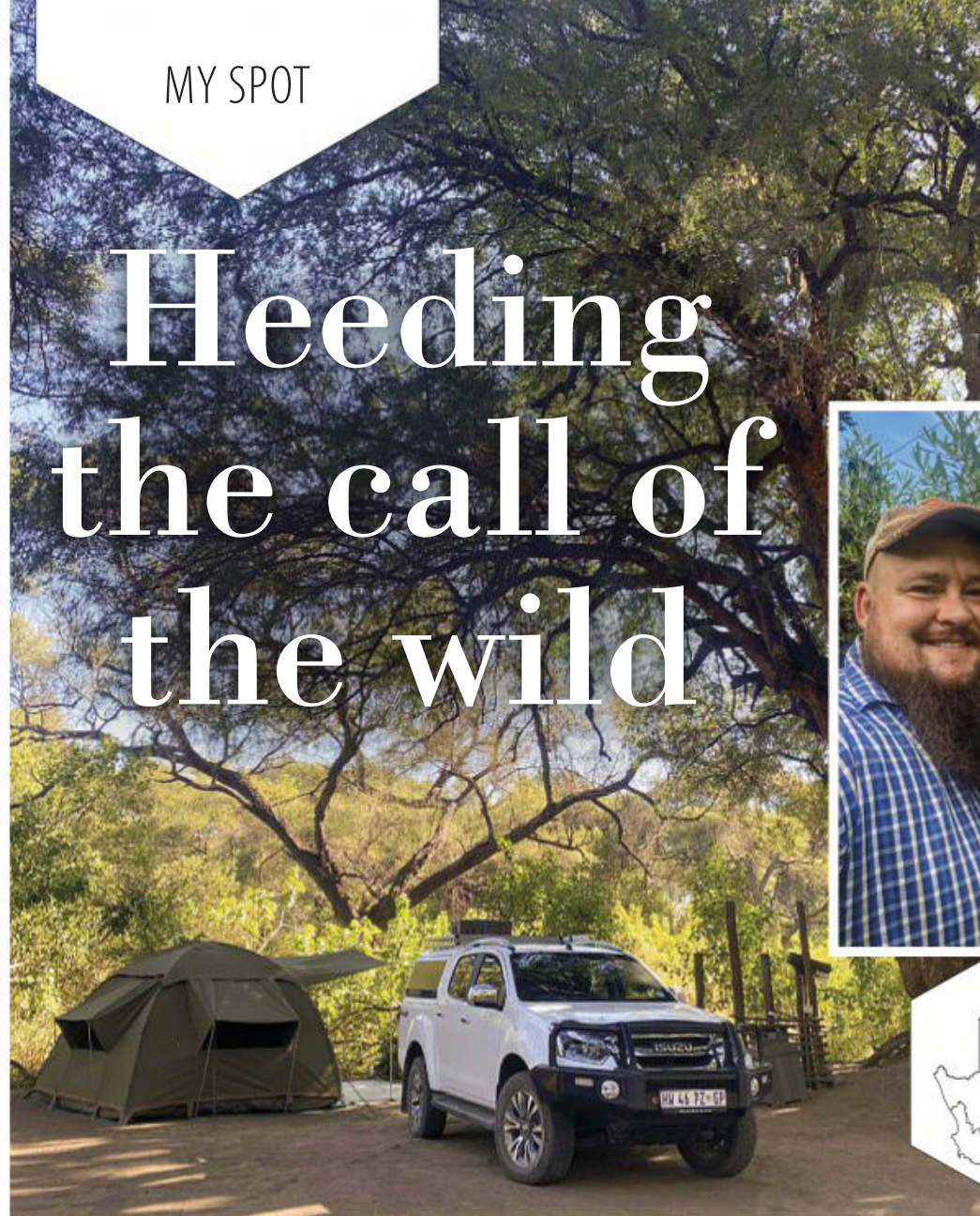
Nantes Dam lies, as the crow flies, 500 m from Bethal Dam and is a favourite place for anglers. Then return to the entrance gate, but don't leave the reserve quite yet. Turn right at the gate and drive to Paarl Rock. There's parking here, but no ablution facilities. A boardwalk leads you to the granite dome, but the last bit requires you to scramble up the bare rock – it's certainly not wheelchair-friendly. On top of the dome is an old ship cannon that was used to signal the citizens of

Paarl that merchantmen had anchored in Table Bay. The free burghers then loaded their wagons full of agricultural produce and headed to the castle to trade.

Now, there's only a short dirt road left to the largest of the granite domes. You can climb Bretagne with the help of chains and plects anchored in the stone. You have to be reasonably fit to make it to the top, but it's definitely worth it. Gordon's Rock is only accessible to experienced mountaineers with proper equipment.

The routes in the Paarlberg Reserve total 25 km, and you can drive through fynbos, go fish, climb, hike or braai from morning to early evening. It's one of the loveliest spots in South Africa. 

Heeding the call of the wild



Contact

015 534 7923,

sanparks.org

reservations@sanparks.org

GPS S 22.243305, E 29.400607

As an avid bird watcher, **Mariska Kruger** of Pretoria packed the tent in their bakkie and hit the road when she heard of one specific bird that appears in the vicinity of Mapungubwe.

“ We had not visited Mapungubwe National Park before, but when I heard the very rare Pel’s fishing owl appears around there, my husband, Sarel, and I decided to pack our camping gear – plus binoculars and camera, of course – into our Isuzu KB300 double cab bakkie and go. It was June last year, and I simply had to go and look for this bird.

As I was looking for a campsite, I came across Mazhou, and although we were camping in the middle of winter, it was actually shorts-wearing weather. As soon as we arrived, we realised this was no ordinary SANParks reserve. Mapungubwe is divided into two with a piece of private land in the middle. To get to Mazhou, you enter at the main gate on the eastern side of Mapungubwe. After signing in, you drive all the way back and enter at the western gate. There’s a dirt road that goes through the middle of the reserve, but I’m not sure if an ordinary sedan with a regular caravan would make it.

TELL US MORE ABOUT THE CAMPSITE?

Ten stands are laid out in a circle. You can’t prebook your stand, so it’s first come, first served. We pitched camp under a large nyala tree. During our visit, our neighbours camped with off-road caravans, bakkie campers, and tents, but we didn’t see a regular caravan. You camp on open spots in the bush, on hard ground – you know you’re in nature when you hear the lions roaring from Botswana’s side at night. You have power (domestic socket), a light, and a rubbish bin. There’s also a braai, although ours wasn’t in a great condition. It’s probably a good idea to bring your own.

WIN Mariska wins a Camp Cover Camera bag worth R400.

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

campcover.co.za

CAMP COVER



WHAT ABOUT THE ABLUTION FACILITIES?

There’s one ablution block in the middle of the campsite with two showers – one for men and the other for women, but the basins and toilets are for both. There’s a wheelchair-friendly bathroom at the dishwashing area next to the facilities. It’s clear the facilities are well maintained.

WHAT DO YOU DO TO KEEP BUSY?

Well, there aren’t swimming pools or playgrounds, but we came to watch animals and especially birds... and I’m happy to report that I found the Pel’s fishing owl! Then, I also ticked off birds like the saddle-billed stork, the Senegal coucal, and the tropical boubou. We also saw lots of game, including lions, leopards, elephants, giraffes, zebras, kudus, klipspringers, and warthogs. There are several vantage points and 4x4 eco trails – more than enough to keep you busy. I must warn you about the monkeys in the campsite, though: if you don’t keep everything closed tightly, you’ll pay the price. We had barely stopped before they got into our bakkie and made off with a packet of nuts!

IS THERE A SHOP?

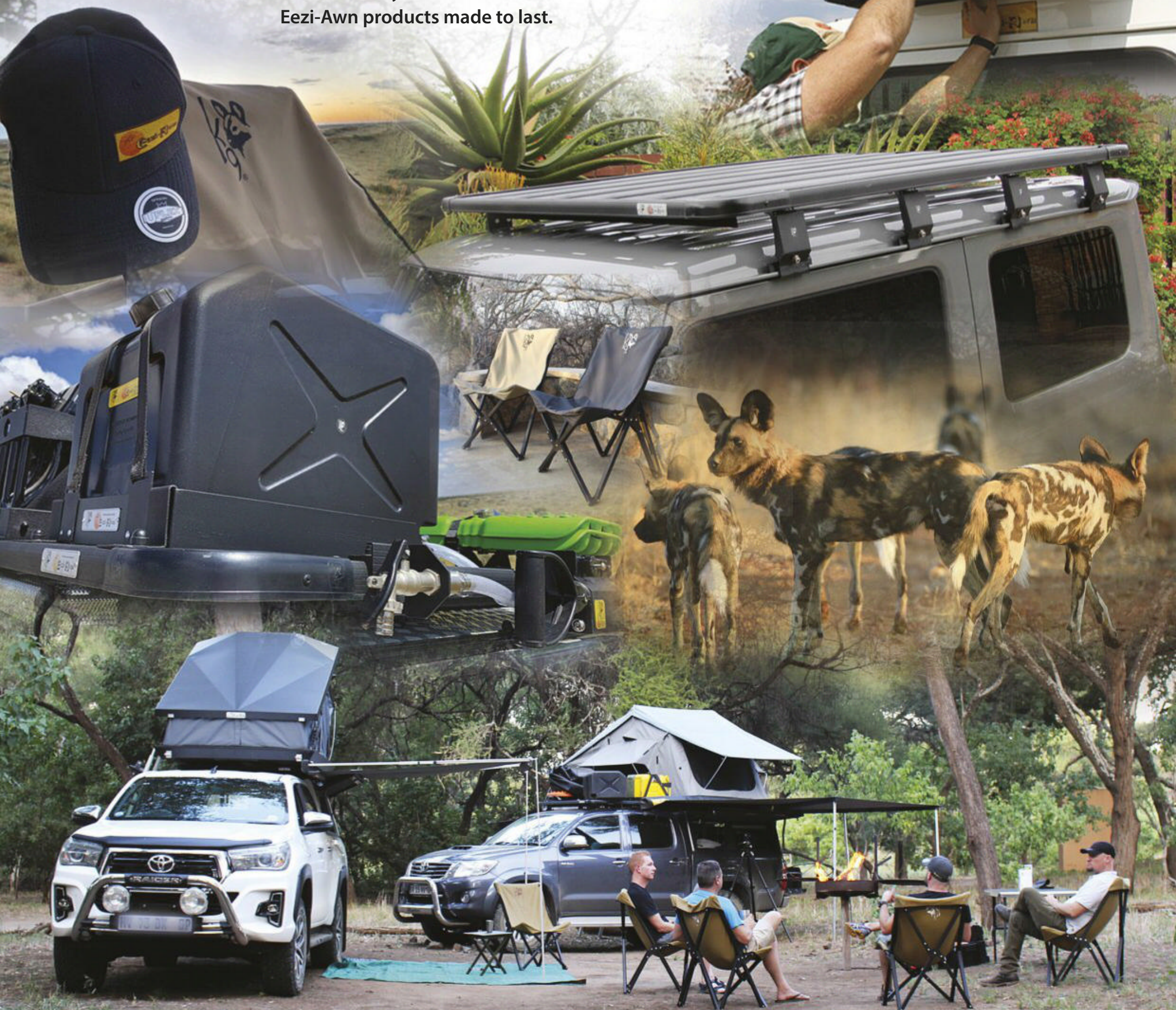
Yes, but when we visited, it wasn’t open at all. Alldays was the nearest spot to buy supplies such as wood, ice and, fuel – and it’s a good 40 km away. ”



Roof Racks & Accessories

Eezi-Awn's K9 Roof Racks and Accessories are the benchmark in the industry used by professionals world wide... which others strive to achieve.

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Age is but a number

At 22 years of age, Knersus is considered young – and this Cruiser has become part of the family, says **Johnny van Dyk** of Wellington.

“After a disastrous tour in 2009 with my Volkswagen Syncro bus, I decided to upgrade to a more conventional off-roader.

I spotted the dark blue roof of Knersus – its wasn't called that yet, of course – among other cars at a second-hand car dealer. I took a deep breath... and that was it. The Land Cruiser, with its 4,7 l-V8 engine, **was already 10 years old** and had more than 200 000 km on the clock – in my opinion, it had just been run in quite nicely. It already

boasted a few extras: a spot for the second spare wheel, a long-distance fuel tank, and a drawer system in the rear.

It appears, however, as though the previous owners weren't particularly concerned about servicing the vehicle, and **a number of items needed attention**. The hydraulic suspension was at the top of the list. Its new Ironman coil springs with shock absorbers lifted the car by about 50 mm, and after that, the ride was smooth. To help with

heavy loads, I also fitted suspension air bags.

The plastic front bumper made way for steel bull bar, which improved the approach angle, and I also fitted high-lift jack hard points. After that, Knersus got a Heyman Reece towbar – and this was where I was able to temporarily mount a winch.

Later, the leather upholstery began to show its age, and I bought a set of Caprivi covers. **All that was left now was the snorkel** – for attitude, of course! – as well as



a roof rack.

Knersus served us well for several years in this guise. But the towbar endured severe off-road conditions – so much so that it bent. It had to make way for a rear steel bumper, and the winch found a permanent spot inside the bull bar.

The Toyota agents in Paarl usually serviced Knersus, but **lately it received some more special attention:** after 10 years, I took another look at the suspension and replaced the Ironman shock absorbers with Tough Dog ones. I also approached the Land Cruiser specialists Snyman 4x4. Joubert Snyman upgraded and replaced a number of parts on the 20-year-old Cruiser. The steering wheel got some attention, the exhaust system was replaced with a free-flow version and, for better fuel consumption, it **got a performance chip**. That added power with significantly better consumption.

The name Knersus came from a friend, Johan Steyn. He named his Land Cruiser 100 GX “Hercules”. “Knersus” (a pterodactyl puppet in a children’s TV show) was, therefore, very appropriate, because he proved he can chew rocks!

We’ve toured widely without major problems: Mozambique, crisscrossing South Africa, the Kruger National Park, Kgalagadi, up and down our coastline, and many tours in Namibia and Botswana.

Usually, I tow my off-road trailer, and my wife, Liza, and I have made quite a few trips alone. Our last big tour was to the Khaudum National Park in Namibia with Liza’s family.

We’ve had some minor issues, but **I was always able to fix those on our return home.** Once, I was forced to drive with the central diff lock engaged after the one front CV joint broke off. That trip was all the way from Baviaanskloof to Wellington – with the off-road trailer hitched.

Knersus recently visited the panel beaters. At the age of 22, with 335 000 km on the clock, they needed to remove a few rust spots. I also had them touch up the paintwork.

Even though Knersus no longer sports his characteristic battle scars, I can now show off anew with a car that is well taken care of. We’re ready for the bush – Knersus is wearing a new pinstripe suit.”



What about your wheels?

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

Next up: Botswana and Namibia...

In our previous issue, we toured the Kruger National Park with **Hennie and Emmerentia Hugo** of Brackenfell. In the second part of their story, they head to Botswana and Namibia.



An unforgettable tour (part 2)

Hennie and Emmerentia, who had to postpone their retirement trip for a year because of the COVID-19 pandemic, finally toured the Kruger National Park last year. At various stops, they were joined by friends and old acquaintances. We left them in Marekele in the previous issue, just as they were getting ready to cross the border into Botswana. Hennie continues the story...

“It was still pitch dark, but we were ready to go. On Thursday, 3 June 2021, our brand-new passports, which had been patiently waiting in the safe for

a year, were due to get new stamps. We were to cross the border at Groblersbrug and then enter Botswana through the Martin’s Drift border post.

We headed for Lephalale and turned towards the border. We got there sooner than expected and saw the trucks already in the queue. Luckily, friends had told us we simply needed to drive past all the trucks to the front of the line.

The service here was pretty unfriendly, but we got through without any issues. Then, off to Martin’s Drift. Shortly before the border post, there was a cattle stop, where they tested for foot-and-mouth disease, but staff didn’t seem very

interested in finding out whether we were transporting any meat. We drove through a trough with liquid to disinfect our tyres and then got out to step onto some damp material for the same purpose.

Here, too, kindness wasn’t abundant in the office, but we were helped quickly. Then, it was time to pay... “Sorry, we’re offline.” So, we had to wait, but mercifully not too long. After paying for everything, we got ready to be searched at the border post, but little came of that as well. The customs official asked me to open our caravan’s back door, but he only gave it one look and remarked: “Oh, it’s a bedroom. You can go.”



KEEP 'EM PEELED. You need to be eternally vigilant when travelling through Botswana. Not only for wildlife but also domestic animals such as the donkeys and cattle of the local population.



And just like that, we're suddenly in another country.

Our destination was an overnight stop at Woodlands near Francistown. The speed limit changes frequently – anything between 60 km/h and 120 km/h. We'd been warned to not exceed the speed limit anywhere in Botswana.

The road was pretty monotonous, with lots of potholes – they're big too – and, of course, an incredible number of trucks on the road. Our trip to Woodlands went according to plan and, thanks to Tracks4Africa, we found it easily.

Woodlands is an oasis in the otherwise dry world, with excellent facilities, and we found a lovely stand on a lush lawn under

some shade trees. On Friday, we headed out again early in the morning.

Our first stop was the weighbridge clinic at Kazangula for a COVID test so that we'd be allowed to visit Victoria Falls. The plan was also to pitch camp at the Senyati Safari Camp in the Lesoma Valley.

The section where we were driving is in a national park. First, we spotted elephant dung, and not long after that, we saw the first big foot close to the road. We later passed another group and also came across a herd of seven giraffes.

At the Kazungula weighbridge clinic, we were first referred to the border post to pay for the COVID tests. It was touch and go whether we'd again be subjected to border procedures, but fortunately

our receipt was sufficient proof that we hadn't left Botswana. We were told we could pick up the results of our tests on Saturday morning.

So, we headed to Senyati, and found it easily, thanks to good directions. The last stretch of road to the camp is very sandy, with a high median, and here and there I could feel the caravan's axle scraping on the sand. I was very grateful for our off-roader's diff lock.

We had a great stand at Senyati. Each stand has a private ablution block with a veranda under a thatched roof. A donkey that provides the hot water is kept going by the staff.

But dammit... we were greatly disappointed. We heard the news that

READER STORY

Zimbabwe's borders were closed to tourists, and so we couldn't make the day trip to Victoria Falls. Well, that was that... there was nothing we could do about it.

Senyati has a waterhole that gets its water from the camp. Many elephants and other animals – various antelope species, giraffes and even foxes – come to drink here. The waterhole is completely open and there's no fence between the visitors and the animals. It felt a little weird to be sitting in armchairs while drinking about 15 steps away from the animals, but what a feast for the eyes.

On Saturday, we picked up the results of our COVID tests and stopped in Kasane to buy some supplies. It's so weird to see wild animals walking around in the town. We saw many warthogs.

Seeing as our plans to visit Victoria Falls were scuppered, we decided to leave a day earlier and spend an extra night in Etosha instead. So, early the next morning, we hit the road again. Once again I had to use the diff lock until we reached solid ground. It was a short distance to Kasane and the entrance to the Chobe National Park. Here, too, we saw elephants very close to the road.

On the western side of the park, we had to stop to write down our details. Both posts we passed were unmanned, but all vehicles have to stop and do the necessary paperwork.

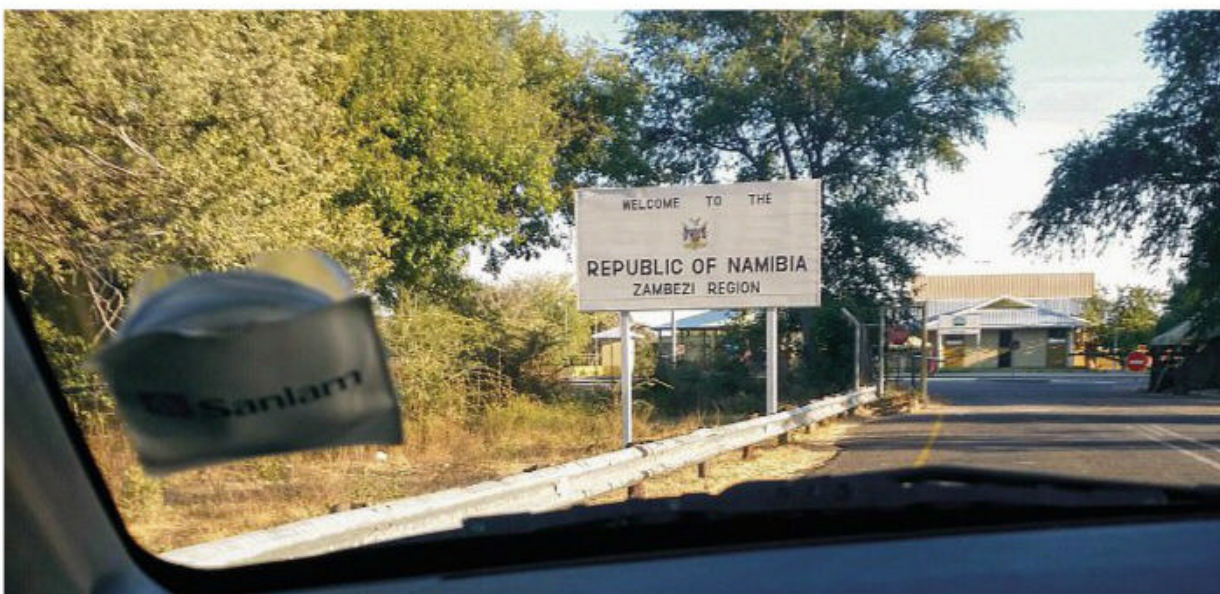
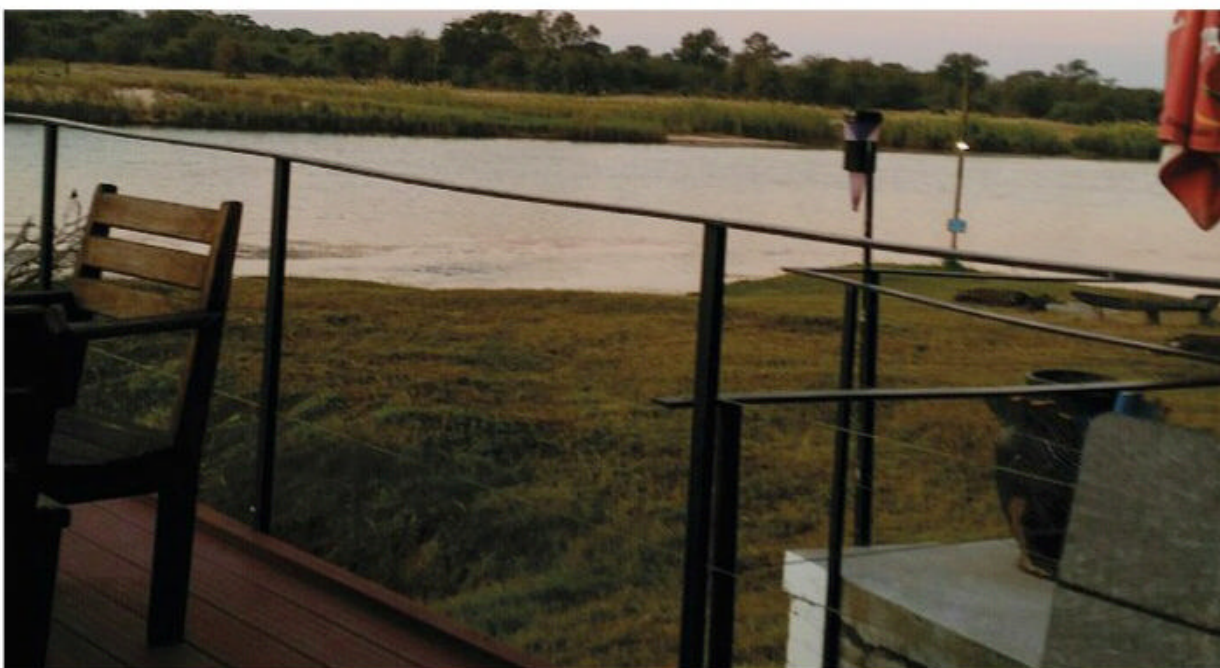
Now, we had the border post at Ngoma to traverse. On the Botswana side, the officials completed yet more paperwork and waved us through, and we crossed the Chobe River with the Ngoma Bridge. On the Namibian side, they asked to see our COVID results, after which we headed to the office to get our passports stamped and obtain an entry permit. Here, too, there was little interest in the contents of the bakkie or the caravan. And so we arrived in the Zambezi region, perhaps better known as the Caprivi.

We stopped at Katima Mulilo to refuel. Nobody wore masks there, and those who had one, wore them around their necks. We also bought a Namibian cellphone card and data. They're not bothered by things like RICA there.

The road is in pretty good condition, with surprisingly few potholes, and we refuelled in Divundu. We've learnt to refuel wherever we could.



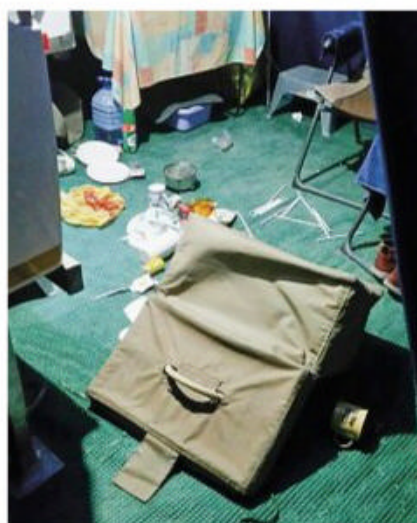
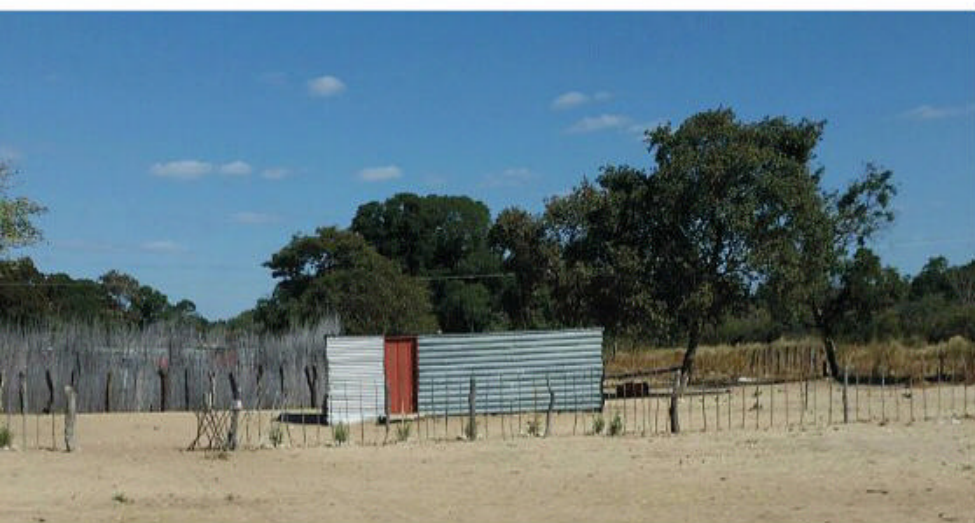
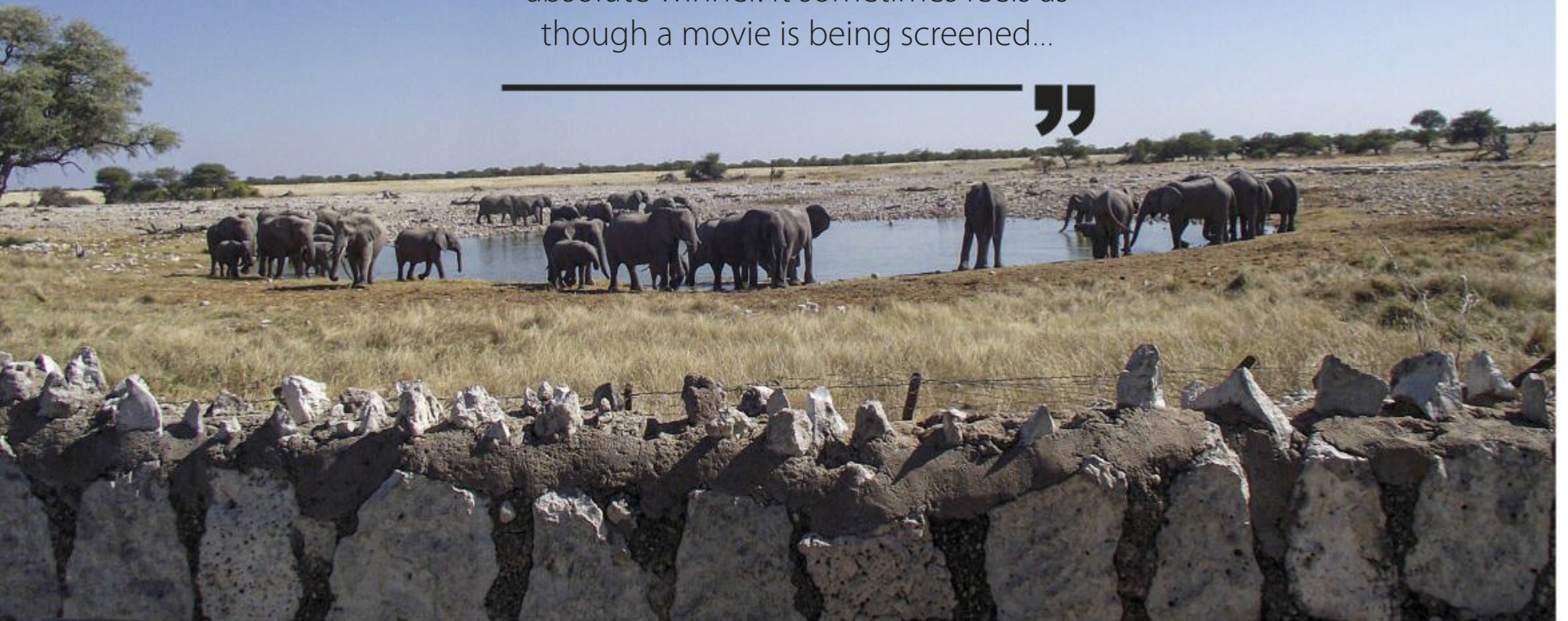
HELLO, BIG FOOT.
It's always great to see one of the Big Five. If you have enough patience, you should see most of them in the Okaukuejo region – fingers crossed!



“

The waterhole at Okaukuejo is an absolute winner. It sometimes feels as though a movie is being screened...

”



We reached the Kaisosi River Lodge on the banks of the Kavango, about 10 km east of Rundu.

It's a lovely place with a stunning view over the water and into Angola. We were the only campers there that night, and after a delicious meal in the restaurant, we went to bed early. The next day, we'd be heading to Okaukuejo in Etosha, so we arranged with the gate guard to open it early for us the next morning.

After a good night's rest, we were on our way again. The drive was pretty monotonous, with huts and houses for miles on end along the road. Here you also see women walking more than two kilometres to carry water to their homes.

Grootfontein now has a new Shell garage. It's a lot like our own Ultra Cities, but smaller. Weirdly, they don't serve tea, but only coffee.

At Outjo, we stopped again to buy some supplies and refuel one last time before entering Etosha.

Although we were a day early, we didn't struggle to find a place to stay in Okaukuejo. The staff were very friendly and helpful, but the conservation fee of R1 250 for five days hurt a bit. They don't have anything like a Wild Card.

The stands in the camp are very neat. Each stand has its own power point (blue plug or domestic socket), tap, light, built-up braai area with a grid, and a concrete table with four benches. You choose where you want to pitch camp.

The waterhole at Okaukuejo is an absolute winner. It sometimes feels as though a movie is being screened in front of you. The animals alternate constantly, and elephants, black rhinos, gemsbok,

springbok, giraffes, and even a herd of impala come to drink regularly. We also saw many lions at night.

Apart from the animals at the waterhole, there were also a number of ground squirrels in the camp – they regularly visited our stand, looking for something to eat and to drink water. I indicated to one of the females that I had nothing to eat by showing her my open hand, and she jumped up and bit my finger! The result? A series of five injections against rabies.

Shortly before we left, foxes turned over our basket of padkos and scampered off with our food and a coffee mug Emmerentia had bought in the Addo Elephant National Park.

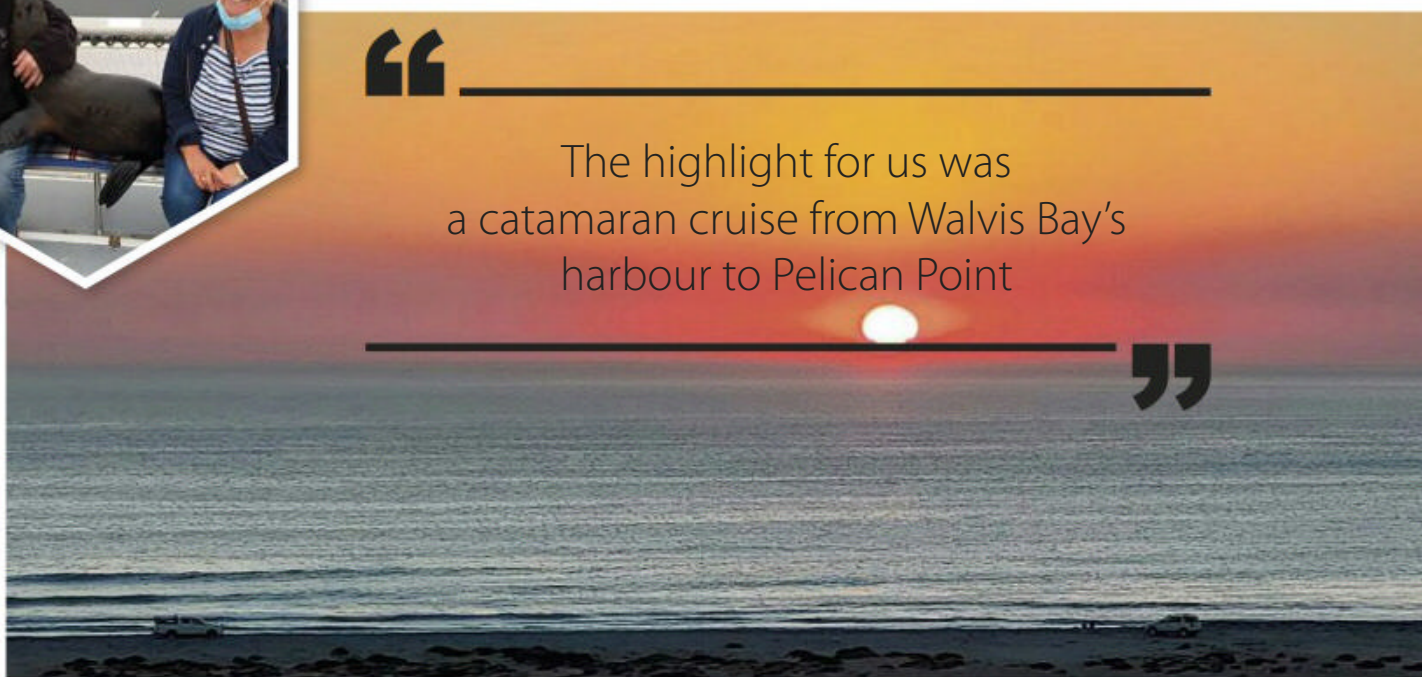
Our time in Okaukuejo was over far too quickly. The next destination was the Erindi Private Game Reserve, but then we



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The highlight for us was a catamaran cruise from Walvis Bay's harbour to Pelican Point

”



got a message that the place was closed due to a COVID outbreak. Time for Plan B, and we drove straight to the Alte Brücke campsite in Swakopmund.

This campsite is one of our favourites. Each stand has its own ablution block and braai, and you camp on the greenest of grass. The camp is fenced with a high wall and an electric fence, and access is controlled.

From here, we had some excursions, especially to Café Anton, where we were served the most delicious pastries and other dishes. Gorgeous colonial buildings abound in Swakopmund, and are many a photographer's dream.

The highlight for us was a catamaran cruise from Walvis Bay's harbour to Pelican Point. Although there was thick fog, it was an experience. Our guide, Monica, knew her subject matter, and we learnt many interesting details from her. While she was still talking, Deurmekaar, the seal, joined us. She was only too eager to pose with each couple for a photo,

because every time, she got a fish as a reward.

We were slowly starting to return to Brackenfell. Our plan was to drive from Swakopmund to Windhoek and then sleep over at the Arebbusch Travel Lodge, but once again our plans were thwarted by COVID-19. Windhoek was on lockdown, and we decided to drive on to Mariental, where there was overnight accommodation.

By now, the pandemic was starting to play a serious role in our lives – to such an extent that we were no longer sure whether we wanted to stop for coffee or tea at a petrol station. Between Windhoek and Rehoboth, we pulled over at a picnic spot and prepared our own food and drink. Fortunately, the cassette toilet in the caravan is there for such moments.

We got to Mariental, where we opened our slightly damp tent canvas on the pavement to dry. After breakfast at a local restaurant, we were on our way

to Grünau, where we stayed at the White House.

It was Saturday, 19 June, and it felt like a very long time ago when we left Brackenfell on 30 April. There were many kilometres behind us – fortunately without any real mishaps.

This was one of the shorter legs of our tour. After a stretch of terribly corrugated road, we checked in at the White House where Kinna de Wet welcomed us with a packet of delicious home-made rusks.

Now, we had time to relax and do nothing. The campsite is clean and tidy, as are the ablution facilities. A rocky hill surrounds the campsite and there are hiking trails for the energetic campers. On the hill, there's even a bath with an amazing view.

We'd arranged in advance with Kinna to have our dinner delivered to our stand: she brought the food snugly wrapped in a blanket, all in beautiful glass dishes and still piping hot. If you haven't eaten one of Kinna's meals, make a plan.



CALL IT A DAY. Every journey has a beginning, middle, and an ending. Hennie and Emmerentia eventually had to head back home, but it wasn't a mad dash. Instead, they took their time during the return leg.



On Sunday morning, we got underway nice and early again. It was still dark, but we had to get to Ariamsvlei and Nakop's border post – plus, of course, do the ever-present COVID test. Augrabies was our next destination.

At the Namibian border control in Ariamsvlei, everything went really smoothly. We almost got the impression they were happy to see us leave. Then, we drove quite a few kilometres before we reached Nakop. It was a busy border post with an incredible number of queueing trucks.

Here, we did yet another COVID test, before reporting to the police for the necessary forms and formalities. The officer on duty asked me to open the side door of the caravan and lean in slightly. "That's a cute tent – welcome back to South Africa!"

There was a light breeze and the air was cool. We drove through Upington and then headed for the Augrabies National Park.

We arrived at the same time as a tour group, but we got lucky: we were allowed to go through and get to the rest camp, which was in a bit of turmoil as there had been a cycle race. But there was still plenty of space, and we got a comfortable stand with shade near the ablution block.

The Augrabies waterfall had water, but it wasn't as spectacular as it gets during or just after the rainy season. Regardless of the time of year, though, it remains a beautiful sight every time to see the water rush over the massive rocks.

We stayed there until the Tuesday, when it was time to tackle the penultimate shift. Our accommodation was booked at Letsatsi in Vanrhynsdorp. We didn't really know the road to Springbok, even though we returned to South Africa after a previous tour via the Onseepkans border post.

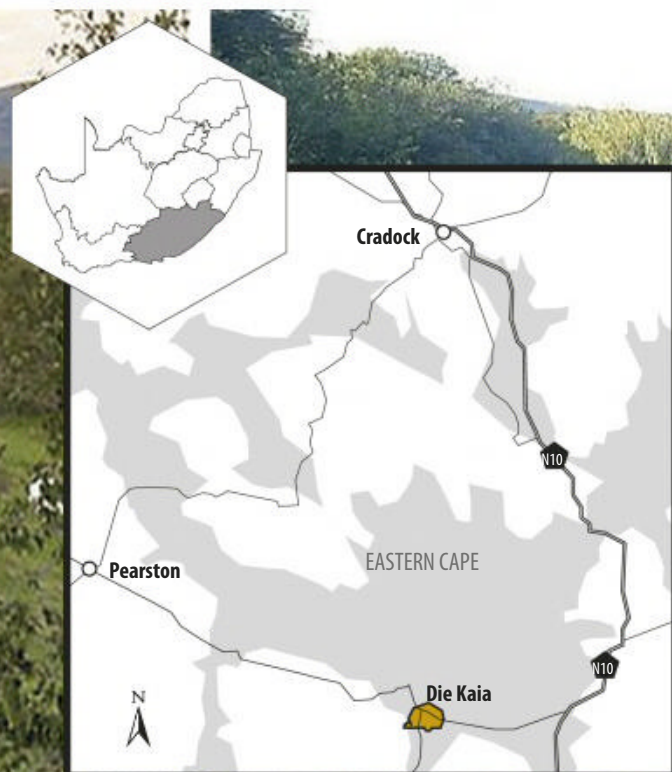
Pofadder was a surprise. I don't know exactly what we expected, but we were pleasantly surprised by a takeaway restaurant – you could order almost

anything. The food was tasty and the prices reasonable.

We refuelled in Springbok. I have to say that it's quite busy for a rural town. At Letsatsi we'd booked a self-catering unit with an outside plug where we connected the caravan's power. A good thing, as we still had frozen supplies in the freezer.

That Wednesday morning, the world had been washed clean by the previous night's rain. The breakfast at Letsatsi was outstanding. Tasty, and the coffee was excellent too. We refuelled one last time at Vanrhynsdorp before turning our bakkie's nose south for the final push. It had just gone 15:00 when we stopped safely in front of our house in Brackenfell.

This was an unforgettable tour that we'd planned for a long time – all 10 491 km of it. A tour that had to be postponed due to COVID-19, but then finally happened. A tour of a lifetime, but one that was over far too soon. We feel truly privileged.



Big fish, Little Fish

Just outside Somerset East is a modest campsite where you can relax and catch a fish or two.



DIE KAIA

HOME AWAY FROM HOME

Die Kaia is six kilometres outside Somerset East and lies on the Little Fish River, which flows towards Gqeberha and into the Indian Ocean.

The campsite belongs to Festha Erasmus, and is on the farm Grootplaas, which belongs to her and her husband Danie. Fifteen years ago, there was nothing here, Festha says, but they were looking for a picnic spot outside the town where people could come to relax. There was already grass growing on the riverbanks, and the lapa and bathrooms were the first buildings to go up. The campsite continued to be developed, and now, as you drive in with the river in front of you, the caravan stands are to the left and the ones for tents are on your right.

Here, you always camp near the water. The power points are ordinary domestic sockets, and the braai drums

(with grids) are portable and you can drag one closer to your stand.

Another bathroom building has been built, meaning both camps now have their own facilities. And, when you turn on the tap, the water is immediately hot, thanks to the gas geysers.

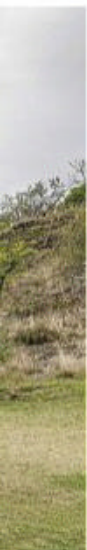
The lapa has a communal kitchen for everyone to use, and there is a small lounge and bush bar.

If you don't have the time or inclination to set up camp, there are four permanent tents that sleep up to eight people combined.

The water is safe for swimmers, and you can also catch various types of fish such as carp, yellowfish, barbel, and eel.

There's very much a farm feeling here. Festha says the idea is that you simply kick off your shoes and relax. Animals, including rabbits and chickens, also contribute to the atmosphere, but that means your own pets must stay home.





FISHING GEAR

Fancy a frog's leg?

Frogs are high on the list of favourite dishes for a black bass. So, if you're thinking about imitating a frog using a realistic lure, you're on the right path. That's exactly what Livetarget did with its Freestyle Frog bait.

This frog bait looks just like the real deal, which means the chances of attracting a bass are great. It's a soft bait, so you thread a loose hook through the bait. You can cast it pretty far.

The bait has two translucent tails that point to the back like two legs. As you reel it in, it almost looks as though these legs are kicking by themselves. Because it's transparent, the fish



Briefly | Die Kaia



Fish Carp, yellowfish, barbel, and eel.

Campsite Two separate open camps for caravans and tents, near the river.

Ablution facilities One bathroom building at each of the camps.

Price R200 pppn (R150 for children over 12 years; free for kids under six).

Arrival and departure No set times.

Contact 078 579 3959

festha18@gmail.com

diekaiaresort.co.za

Nearest town Somerset East, 6 km.

Road condition The last 4,2 km is a dirt road that's sometimes graded, but it can get bad. Call ahead to hear what state it's in.

GPS S32.776163 E25.604038

Drive & Camp says If you don't eat your catch, the fish must go back in the water.



sees the body of the bait, and there you have it.

When you allow the bait to swim on top of the water, the two tails create a splash, which also attracts attention. Like other baits used to lure fish to the surface, this one works best in the early morning or late afternoon.

You can also lower the tip of your fishing rod so the bait swims a little under the water.

The bait is 75 mm long and available in six colours. You get it in a set of two.

Price R200 per set.

Contact Available in angling stores nationwide – also in Namibia.

catches@4adrenalin.co.za

adrenalinfishing.co.za



FISH DISH

FISH WITH RICE AND SALAD

Colour me pretty

In this colourful dish, the fish is the true hero.

Ingredients

(serves 4)

- 4 servings of fresh fish with the skin on – we used dorado
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 cobs on the cob, cooked
- 200 g courgettes, halved
- 1 tablespoon butter
- a pinch dry dill
- 1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar
- 1 cup basmati rice, cooked
- 2 ripe tomatoes, coarsely chopped
- ½ red onion, thinly sliced
- 2 avocados, diced
- sriracha mayonnaise to serve

Here's how

1 Pat the fish's skin dry and score it. Now baste both sides with olive oil. Also, oil your clean braai grid or you'll have pieces of the delicious crispy skin sticking to it.

2 Braai the fish for a few minutes with the skin side down over hot coals until crisp. Remember, single servings cook faster, and you don't want to overcook the fish. Once the meat at the top turns white on the edge, turn it over and braai it for another 1-2 minutes. At the same time, braai the corn and courgettes – thread the courgettes on a stick so that they turn easily, or use a griddle pan

3 When the fish is just cooked and the meat flakes easily, coat it with butter. Season lightly with salt, white pepper, dill, and a few drops of vinegar or lemon juice.

4 Divide the rice between four plates. Cut the corn kernels off the stalk, and arrange them with the courgettes, tomato, red onion, and avocado with the fish in the middle. If you like your food to have a bite, add a few streaks of sriracha mayonnaise on top, or stick to the original taste with an extra lump of butter on the fish. Eat immediately.

Drive & Camp says Cucumber, sweet potato cubes, or peas also work really well in this dish.



Turnaround time

At first, people said it was ugly, and now some say it's too pretty. We take a look at the latest Mazda BT-50 to get to know it better.

Words and photos **Cyril Kloppe**

After a 14-year co-operation agreement with Ford, Mazda decided to break away and join Isuzu. The latest BT-50 is based on the upcoming Isuzu D-Max, which landed in Australia ages ago. Unlike the collaboration between Volkswagen and Ford for the new Amarok and Ranger, Mazda was not involved in the development of the D-Max at all. Mazda simply gets a complete bakkie from Isuzu – with a Mazda badge on it, some unique body panels, and that signature Mazda grille.

Inside and out

The large grille has you taking a second look when a BT-50 heads toward you, because you could easily mistake it for a CX-5 or another

Mazda. It's commendable when a vehicle manufacturer ensures all its models follow a style guide. Mazda calls its design language the Kodo philosophy.

From the side, the BT-50 looks a bit like a hot rod with its hindquarters up high and its nose dipping slightly downwards. At the rear, there's not much to discuss, except that the brake lights use bulbs – unlike the LEDs for the headlights. One wonders if Mazda shouldn't have used LEDs here as well, because light bulbs feel so old-fashioned in a modern-looking vehicle like the BT-50.

The interior is pleasant, with black fabric upholstery and a combination of glossy black and satin silver on the centre console and instrument panel. The largeish nine-inch

touchscreen has matt glass that doesn't reflect sunlight into your eyes – that's a blunder some manufacturers make.

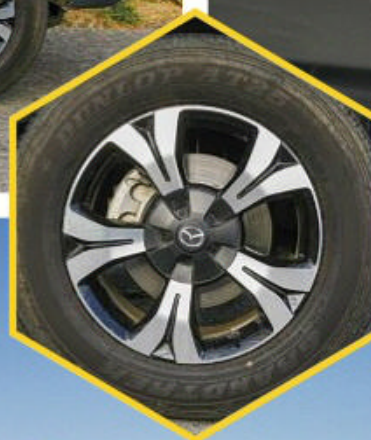
The seats are comfortable, with an adjustable backrest for your lower back and kidneys, and the steering wheel can be adjusted up and down and closer and farther.

There are 1,5 l bottle holders in all four door pockets, two cup holders in the fold-out armrest for the rear passengers, and two cup holders near the gear selector for the occupants in the front. Just be mindful not to put a McDonald's coffee cup in these, as the holes are deep and you might struggle getting the paper cup out again.

The back bench is comfortable, but the backrest is quite upright. There's at least



MAZDA BT-50



enough legroom for the average adult, although a tall guy will have to manspread. There are Isofix anchor points for baby seats, and one USB port for your teen's cellphone. A clever feature is the two spacious compartments under the bench in which you can hide valuables.

And the ride?

First the good news: it's been a while since we had an engine-gearbox combination that works this well together. The 3 l four-cylinder turbodiesel – it's Isuzu's J Series engine with a Mazda badge on it – and six-speed automatic gearbox complement each other brilliantly.

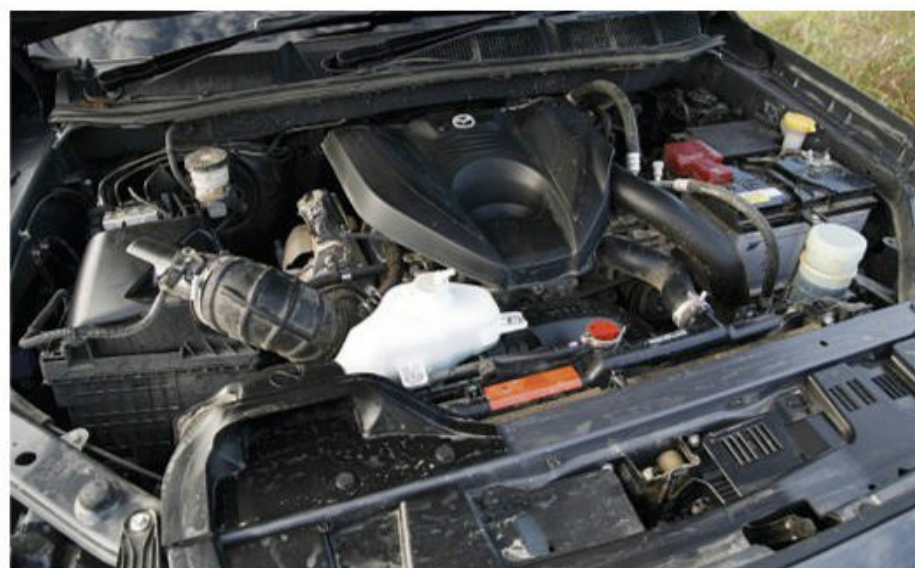
The gearbox uses a compact gear train and a hydraulic control system that responds quickly. According to Mazda, the electronic control module is programmed to match the torque delivery characteristics of the

engine by always choosing the best ratio. Control modes such as Skip Gear Shift, Slip Lock-up and Slope Control ensure that the automatic gearbox responds correctly and intuitively to the prevailing driving conditions. It's a mouthful, but in short: the combination works well.

We ventured on a moderate 4x4 trail in the Paarlberg Nature Reserve with the BT-50 (see p 62), because it was so pretty that we didn't want to go hardcore on a proper 4x4 track – and we didn't struggle at all.

Now for the bad news: the ride quality is poor. The last time we were this shaken up in a bakkie was during the nineties. We don't know if Isuzu should be blamed for this, or whether Mazda fiddled with something best left alone. We measured the tyre pressure, and that's not the problem.

After loading 15 bags of building sand (600 kg) on the



back, the ride was significantly better, and the shaking was gone. Mazda South Africa doesn't provide the specific permissible payload for the BT-50, and its media release states that it's "significantly more than a tonne".

But according to Mazda Australia, which gets the same bakkie as us, the number is 1 220 kg. From this, we deduce that the suspension, which can carry 1,2 tonnes, is so stiff that without a load it makes the BT-50 bounce even on tar.



This is, however, good news if you're planning to fit a heavy canopy with a drawer system and built-in camp kitchen.

The competitors

When it comes to power and torque, the Volkswagen Amarok V6 leads the way with 190 kW and 580 Nm, compared to the BT-50's 140 kW and 450 Nm. As for fuel economy, the current Isuzu D-Max is the winner with its 7,8 l/100 km (according to the manufacturer),

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The stiff rear suspension is clearly meant to carry loads, and you won't be sorry if you buy the BT-50 to transport heavy goods

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which is only slightly better than the BT-50's number of 8 l/100 km (also supplied). We must mention that both these numbers

are optimistic, because our fuel consumption in this Mazda BT-50 and the Isuzu D-Max that was our long-term test vehicle was heavier.

The Ford Ranger is the largest and heaviest bakkie on this list (not that it's a good thing) and the Amarok the shortest – a whole 3mm shorter than the BT-50 – although the Mazda BT-50 weighs the least: 2 018 kg against the runner-up, the Amarok, 2 078 kg.

The BT-50 also performs well with its towing capacity, in this case 3 500 kg, but it's obviously reduced by legislation to 2 018 kg (the Mazda's tare weight). As we've already mentioned, its load capacity is by far the best among its competitors here, but when it comes to peace of mind, Isuzu's five-year/120 000 km warranty is the best. Mazda only gives a three-year warranty... for the same bakkie as the Isuzu.



Conclusion

The stiff rear suspension is clearly meant to carry loads, and you won't be sorry if you buy the BT-50 to transport heavy goods. But the smart interior and its striking outward appearance suggests that the BT-50 is intended for a different role – one that doesn't necessarily include the transport of building materials.

The new BT-50 also costs more than the outgoing Isuzu D-Max and Ford Ranger in the same category, and that's something budget-conscious South Africans may not accept. Its appearance, inside and out, and the great engine-gearbox combination do count in the BT-50's favour. 

SPECIFICATION

Model tested	3.0 Individual (automatic)
Engine	2 999 cc, four-cylinder turbodiesel
Power	140 kW @ 3 600 rpm
Torque	450 Nm @ 1 600 rpm
Transmission	6-speed automatic
Fuel consumption	8 l/100 km
Tank	76 l
Load capacity	1 082 kg
Maximum towing capacity	3 500 kg
Measurements	5 280 (l) x 2 160 (w) x 1 790 mm (h)
Ground clearance	240 mm
Wade depth	800 mm
Wheel size	265/60 R18
Safety rating	★★★★★ (ANCAP 2020)
Service plan	3 years/unlimited kilometres
Warranty	3 years/unlimited kilometres
Price	R794 400



FANCY DRESS. The interior looks smart in black. The 4x4 dial is slightly hidden away below the air-con switches, but the rear-view camera's display is clear, with guidelines that assist you when you reverse.



From the competitors
3 ℓ 4x4 diesel bakkies with a double cab



R728 200

Isuzu D-Max 300 LX 4x4

A new one is on its way and we're looking forward to checking if it's less bouncy than the BT-50.



R721 900

Ford Ranger 3.2 TDCi XLT 4x4

There's also a new one of these on the way – and it will use an American 3 ℓ engine rather than the older 3,2 ℓ version.



R953 100

Volkswagen Amarok 3.0 TDI 4Motion

The next Amarok will retain the outgoing model's stonking 3 ℓ V6 engine.



NISSAN NAVARA 2.5DDTI PRO-2X (AUTOMATIC)

Upping the ante

Many South Africans tow their caravan with a bakkie. Nissan, it would seem, is taking this market segment seriously with its new Navara.

Words and photos **Leon Botha**

The Nissan Navara's first model made a big impression, but it feels as though the latest models lost some momentum with their more modest looks. We drove the brand-new Navara as a test vehicle for a week, and more than one person along the road said: "Nice bakkie!"

It's true: Nissan has breathed new life into the Navara with this more aggressive look. And if towing and camping are important to you, the new Navara might just catch your eye, too.

Getting hitched

The first Navara model we tested 10 years ago had a 2,5 l diesel engine that delivered

140 kW and 450 Nm. The next generation got a 2,3 l diesel engine with exactly the same muscles. Now, the wheel has turned, and the latest model has the 2,5 l engine again – yes, with exactly the same power output. It seems to be a winning recipe for Nissan, and there are no grounds for complaints.

What is different, though, is the vehicle's towing capacity. The model we tested back then, the 4x4 LE (automatic), had a towing capacity of 3 000 kg and a five-speed gearbox. With the 2,3 l engines, the towing capacity has been increased to 3 500 kg, and the Navara has a seven-speed automatic gearbox. This limit also applies to the new model, which

means it's still one of the leading towing vehicles in the country. All models come equipped with sway control called Trailer Stability Assist (TSA).

The Navara is, therefore, made for towing, but ironically, the towbar doesn't come standard. In the PRO-2X (test vehicle) and PRO-4X, the towbar is part of the purchase price, but customers also have the option of buying these models without one.

Like the 2,3 l models we tested before, the new Navara still has a removable towbar.

Looking all around

The blind-spot sensors are a useful tool, but in the Navara it doesn't automatically switch

off the way it does in some vehicles when you hitch a trailer or caravan. One of the reasons may be that the computer doesn't know something's been hitched. If you turn sharply to the right, you would expect the sensor to recognise the caravan as a vehicle, but this doesn't happen. The left-hand sensor flickers sporadically while you're driving, as though the caravan wants to overtake you.

The Navara probably has one of the best rear-view camera systems. The caravan coupler is nice and clear on the screen when reversing, but you also get many combinations from various angles around the car. When you put the vehicle in reverse, the



Here's what Pieter Crous, our tow expert, has to say

“The exterior look is lovely, and the finishes

on the outside and inside are great. It's the most comfortable I've been behind the wheel of a towing vehicle in a long time. In addition, the driver's seat adjusts electrically – not the passenger's one though.

Although the model has just about every imaginable gadget, it doesn't have gear shift paddles or an electronic hand brake. Although, I do prefer a brake lever you pull by hand.

On the highway, the Navara tows without difficulty at 120 km/h, even going up steep hills. The automatic gearbox with its seven gears is basic, but shifts evenly and

also doesn't hunt between gears unnecessarily. The accelerator is quite sensitive – you barely touch it and the car responds. You don't have to kick down for the gearbox to wake up and downshift when you want to accelerate, for example.

The instrument panel displays a variety of information at once – and it's easy to interpret. For example, the screen with the electronic speed also shows the wind direction you're travelling towards.

I think the consumption of 14,9 l/100 km is fair, because we mostly towed at 120 km/h with a strong wind.

My only gripe is the turning circle – it feels a bit wide.

The price is competitive. It's definitely an improvement on the previous model, which reminded me of a revamped Hardbody, and it tows like a champ. In fact, I think it's now moving in on the Ford Ranger and Toyota Hilux. If I were to choose a bakkie today, this would be my choice.

It simply has everything you're looking for: beautiful, comfortable, tows well, has a smooth gearbox, and a strong engine... all at the right price. What more could you ask for?

”



screen turns on automatically, but there is also a Camera button to activate the screen, and so you can choose between the different angles. (It doesn't work when in motion.) This system was available on the model we tested in late 2018 (the 2.3 D LE 4x2 automatic). It gives you all-round vision – the screen shows what's going on in front of the car and a wide shot to the rear, or the sidewalk at the left front wheel for when

you park. The screen also has dynamic index lines that curve as you're reversing.

Because the computer doesn't register when you plug in the caravan, the alarm sounds when you reverse with the caravan. Silence it with a button by your right knee.

Cool extras

The small electric sliding window at the back of the cabin has been a feature of

TOW TEST

the Navara for a while, and it's still there.

Nissan also knows how to keep all passengers happy. There are no less than three USB ports in different spots: one is in front of the gear selector, the other one in the box between the front seats, and the third one behind the box for the guys on the back seat.

The ride is on the softer side, thanks to the coil springs. When you're towing, however, it does get a little bumpy, but it's nothing too serious.

On both sides of the loading bin there's a rail with two anchor points that can move. It's practical, and you can attach anything from a motorcycle to a pile of camping gear. What's even more practical is a spring at the hinges of the tailgate. This prevents the lid from falling open and also helps with closing it. That's something that belongs on every bakkie.

Then, of course, the real question is how much you'll have to budget to get to a campsite. At

14,9 l/100 km, it's on the heavy side, but we must say that with our test, a strong wind blew. The numbers for the three models we previously tested were 13,44 l/100 km, 13,1 l/100 km, and 14,71 l/100 km respectively. It may be a coincidence that the latter was also for the 2,5 l engine, which means the newer model is slightly thirstier than its modest predecessor.



SPECIFICATIONS

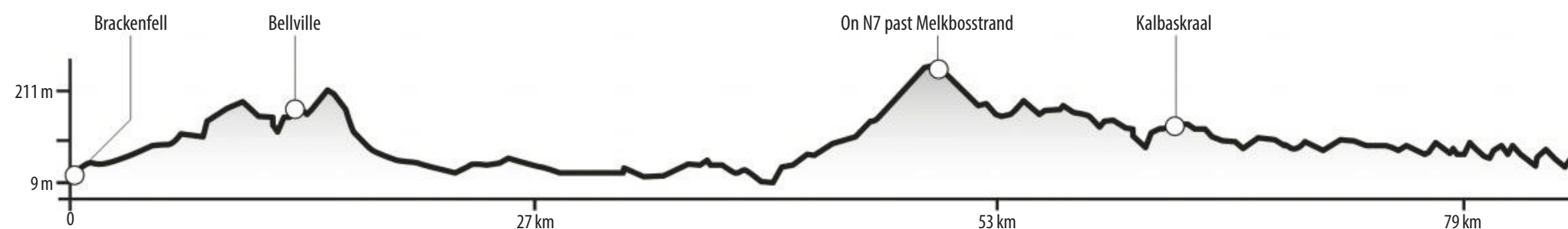
Model	2.5DDTi PRO-2X (automatic)
Engine	Four-cylinder turbodiesel
Power	140 kW @ 3 600 rpm
Torque	450 Nm @ 2 000 rpm
Transmission	Seven-speed automatic
Drive	Back wheels with electronic back diff lock
Tank	80 l
Fuel consumption with caravan	14,9 l/100 km (6,7 km/l)
Reach with caravan	536 km
Tare weight	1 943 kg
Weight during test (nose weight of caravan included)	2 220 kg
GVM	3 115 kg
GCM	6 130 kg
Combination weight during test	3 500 kg
Tow capacity	3 500 kg
Towbar's maximum tow weight	3 500 kg
Towbar's maximum vertical weight	140 kg
Is the towbar removable?	Yes
Space for a drop plate?	Yes
PRICE	R699 000

TOW PROFILE

Elevation

Distance 145,6 km **Roads** Highways, back roads, and built-up areas

Total tow time 3 hours and 7 minutes **Weather** 21 °C and sunny with a strong southeasterly of 37 km/h





“

Drive & Camp says If you want to read about the 4x4 model's off-road ability, see our previous issue – it costs R50 000 more than the 4x2 model reviewed here.

”



From the competitors
Double cab, 4x2, diesel, automatic



R743 900 **VW Amarok 2.0 BiTDI 132 kW Highline**
420 Nm with an eight-speed gearbox, able to tow 2 800 kg.



R735 200 **Ford Ranger 2.0 BiTurbo Wildtrak**
500 Nm with a 10-speed gearbox, able to tow 3 500 kg.



R735 100 **Toyota Hilux 2.8 GD6 RB Legend**
500 Nm with a six-speed gearbox, able to tow 2 750 kg.

What we towed

Manufacturer Bush Lapa

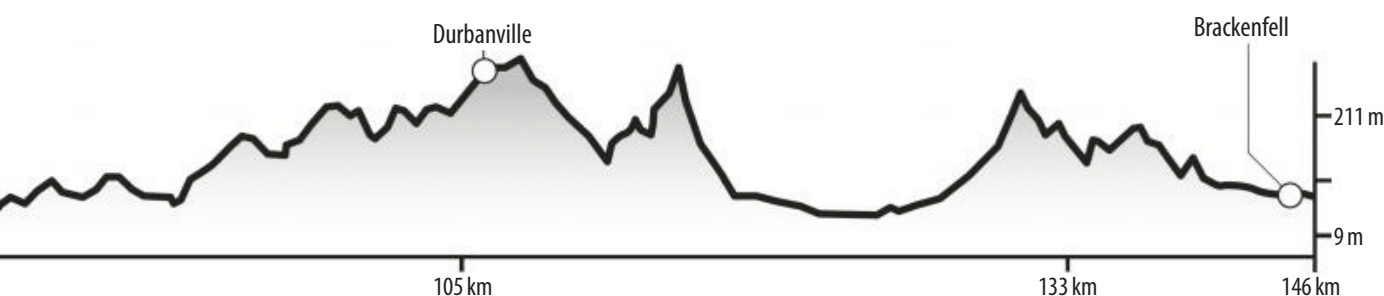
Model Baobab

Year 2017

GVM 1 800 kg

Loaded weight on the axle during test 1 280 kg

Drive & Camp loaned the Bush Lapa Baobab from Kubu 4x4 Trailer Rental. They have branches in Krugersdorp, Brackenfell, Potchefstroom, and Ballito, and you can choose between a variety of off-road caravans or trailers. kubu4x4.co.za
jannie@kubu4x4.co.za



Podding along



BUSHPOD XL

Unipod's dual-purpose caravans are quite unique: part trailer, part caravan

Words and photos **Helenus Kruger**

Most caravans are built for convenience in the campsite, but who hasn't stood scratching their heads to figure out where the family's bicycles should go? And what about your 125 cc scrambler... this would usually be left at home.

One solution is the so-called toy hauler that's popular in America and some other countries. Locals haven't really taken this seriously yet, but manufacturer Unipod has a number of models available.

You're allowed to tow Unipod's Bushpod Lite with your standard driving licence, and both models – the Lite and XL – have a load capacity of 720 kg. For the test, we hitched the XL.

The bikes (or motorcycle) fit through the back door. The opening is almost a metre wide, which means there's no hassle when you load your extra wheels – provided they don't exceed 2,3 m in length. To make loading easier, you can use an

optional extra ramp. There are four anchor points on the floor with which you tie down a bike. The bed base and mattress are folded up to the right, so you have the entire width of the aisle as a loading bay.

Inside the door are six canvas bags in which you can pack your bike's odometer, pump, water bottle, and tools. And to make it easier to get in and out, the Bushpod has a step and a rail – both swing out to secure in place.





Setting up camp

The Bushpod has two swing-down corner steadies at the back, and as soon you've got it nice and level, you lift the pop-up roof. You do this from the inside, but first you have to untie the four straps that secure the roof. Now, you lift the roof with the H-hinges upwards. The canvas between the roof and the body has windows that zip from both sides.

The 270° awning, which is at the top of the trailer on the kitchen side, swings open effortlessly and is fastened with straps to the other side at the front and back. The poles and ropes to make the roof sturdier are only needed when the wind picks up.

The base of the fold-out bed swings open from the panel on the right. The base, therefore, flattens until it hangs horizontally on two steel cables. The section of the bed that folds outward is about two-thirds of the length of the bed; the rest is on the inside. Remember to unfold the bed tent's fly sheet, which is in a bag above the tent, before you pitch the tent, otherwise you won't be able to get to it.

Now, flatten the smaller section of the bed inside. These have two adjustable legs that stand on the floor. The mattress (2 x 1,44 m) folds open before you pitch the tent using its aluminium poles. Then, you

CARAVAN TEST

head outside to stretch the fly sheet with the spring-loaded rods.

With the bed flattened, inside you have about a ruler length to move around between the bed and the sides.

The inner cupboards all have canvas doors. As you enter, on the left, there's one with three shelves, with a corner cupboard on the right. The third cupboard is in front of you, farthest from the door. It's narrower than the first cupboard, but there are four shelves and it's deeper. The second shelf from below is narrower because it's the back of the tap box on the outside.

Storage space for what you want to have close at hand when

you go to bed sits between the left-hand cupboards at the headboard. The sliding window is above that, and two 220 V sockets are at the bottom right.

There's ample storage space in the front corner, plus another two power sockets.

There are two cupboards with lids on either side of the headboard. The gas geyser is in the one and the water pump in the one closest to the door. The battery is under the mattress in the cupboard above the wheel.

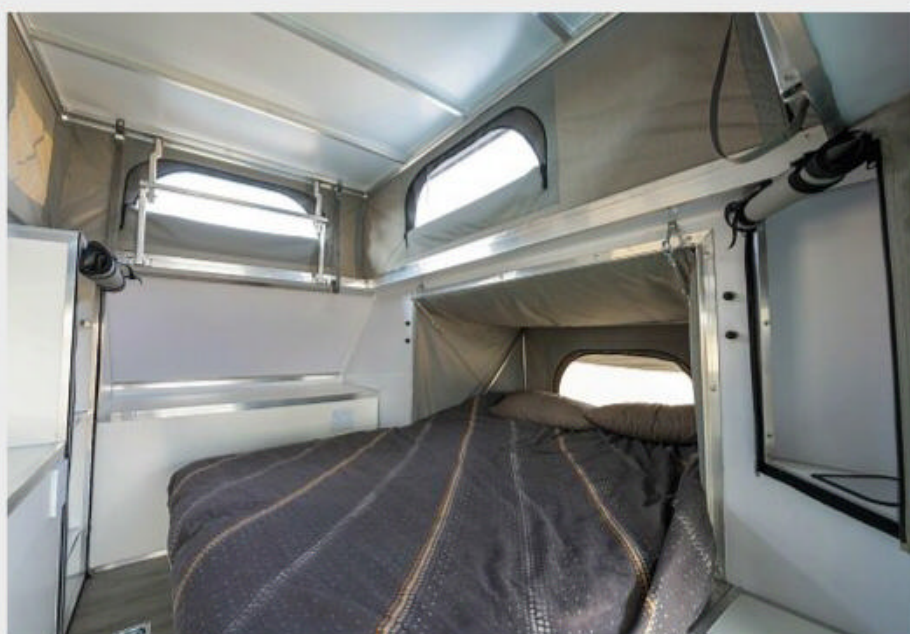
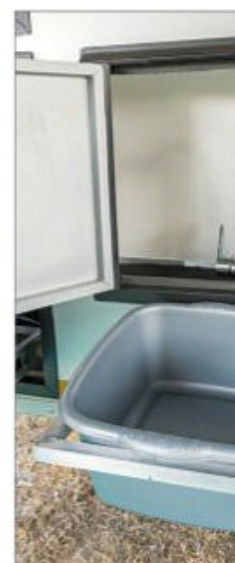
The switch for the interior light – above the door – is on the right where you get in. That's where you'll find the switches for the water pump and geyser as well.

The kitchen

The kitchen is on the left and has five cupboards with storage space for groceries, the fridge/freezer on its sliding frame, and a cupboard with the tap, sink, and its frame.

The Bushpod doesn't have a typical built-in kitchen. You have the option to purchase a stand-alone unit with a two-burner gas stove and three drawers with cutlery and crockery (for four). The lid above the stove becomes a shield against the wind when it's open, and when it closes, everything is nicely stored away.

An upright cupboard is on the far right with three shelves inside. Its door swings down like a worktop with an LED lighting it up.





There's space for groceries in the cupboard above the wheel. The door swings down to form storage space next to the cupboard – with an interior light and two 220 V sockets.

The frame into which the sink fits sits to the left of this, and inside is the hot- and cold-water tap. When you're packing up, fit the sink with its frame behind the tap. The water comes from a 75 ℓ tank that sits at the bottom behind the axle.

You pull the fridge/freezer's sliding frame from the cupboard right up front next to the A-frame. Above the fridge is a small cupboard in which a pot and pan or two can go. You must close the hinged door before you can open the fridge lid. There's another LED for this section of the kitchen.

At the back of the fridge – on the opposite side – is the power box with two 220 V sockets, the solar regulator, and circuit breakers. Also in the right-hand panel are the geyser's vents, a socket for the outside, the shower coupler, and the water tank's lid.

The nose cone takes on the shape of the A-frame with two doors. The gas cylinder sits on the right in the cupboard, and the kitchen unit goes in the left. There's space for poles, tent pegs, and a few folding camp chairs.

The shelf on top of the nose cone has holes through which you can thread straps. The spare wheel is mounted at the front against the nose cone, and there's a Brad Harrison connector at the coupler, the handle for the brakes, and the jockey wheel.

SPECIFICATIONS

Manufacturer	Unipod
Model	Bushpod XL
Sleeps	Two
Dimensions	4,2 x 1,9 x 2,1 m
Wheels	15"
Axle	2,5 t
Tare weight	780 kg
Load weight	720 kg
GVM	1 500 kg
Chassis	Steel (you can choose stainless steel)
Body	Aluminium layers with insulation in the middle
Standard price	R215 000
Contact 072 192 2845 unipod.co.za sales@unipod.co.za	
Dealer network	Factory and headquarters in Pretoria
Available at	Loftus Caravan City in Randburg and Sonpark Camping & Leisure in Mbombela

From the competitors* Other Unipod models



R185 000 **Bushpod Lite** **GVM 750 kg**

Aimed at those towing with a standard driving licence.



R260 000 **Adventurepod** **GVM 1 500 kg**

Meant for bigger motorcycles – the likes of a BMW GS – you can ride up the ramp. Sleeps two to three.



R300 000 **Toypod** **GVM 2 300 kg**

Also meant for larger motorcycles. Double axle and sleeps four.

* Unipod's caravans fall in the so-called "toy haulers" category, and are unique in South Africa.

Airs and graces

Nobody will argue about how important a camp mattress is. Nowadays, you get them in all shapes and sizes – and some even inflate on their own. We take a closer look.

Words and photos **Leon Botha**



When you temporarily exchange your bed at home for one in the camp, you still want to have a good sleep. Nothing stops you from replacing the standard mattress in your caravan with one you prefer.

It's a completely different matter when you camp with a tent. Storage space is a bigger problem, as you don't have the convenience of extra space in a caravan. Everything has to fit in your car – and the most you can do is add a roof rack or trailer. Taking the mattress from your spare room will use up all the space in your trailer.

The answer, of course, is a mattress that folds up or, even better, one that inflates.

Mattresses that fold aren't really the answer, as they're usually more square-shaped instead of rectangular, and they're also usually too thin for a good night's rest. An inflatable mattress has its own challenges... Who hasn't heard someone's compressor just before bedtime in the campsite? You'll probably have to inflate it more than once as well. And, if you're camping in the Bushveld under a thorn tree, it's only a matter of time before a thorn makes its way into the mattress.

The answer is a combination of the two: you want a mattress that's thick enough to give a comfortable sleep and can fold up small enough, too. And, if it's inflatable, it shouldn't be able to deflate by itself... Inflating itself is perfectly okay, of course.

Marius and Carina La Cock of Durbanville faced the same dilemma years ago and saw people lose the battle with camp mattresses on overnight river rafting excursions they hosted.



DON'T WASTE YOUR BREATH. It sounds too good to be true: a mattress that inflates by itself. But the science behind this is simple – and for a camper an excellent, practical solution.





Their company, Carma Quip, is known for its self-inflating mattresses, and the concept is so simple that it's actually quite complicated to explain.

Marius explains one of the most important components is the foam itself. You get three types: low-, medium-, and high-density foam. The low-density type is the cheapest, but if you sit on that for a while, the foam loses its original shape. These mattresses don't last very long.

The answer is, therefore, a quality high-density foam, as it's nice and firm and returns to its original shape when you get up.

Another problem with foam is that it absorbs water... like a sponge. So, Marius simply adds a waterproof sleeve. Both sides of the foam gets a waterproof PVC layer, which means it's also airtight, except for the opening with a plug on a corner.

The secret of this self-inflating mattress lies in the way you fold it. Marius found a specific high-density foam that's 7 cm thick and is not only comfortable to sleep on but also thin enough for you to roll up. You place the weight of your knees in the middle while gripping the sides as you roll it up. This pressure means you squeeze most of the air out of the mattress. The rolled-up mattress is surprisingly small, and when you get to the end, you seal the valve to prevent air getting back in.

Rolled up like this, the mattress is 70 cm wide (still the original width), but with a diameter of 25 cm. Now you can fit a few of these into your car, of course, as their volume is much reduced. Rolled up, the mattress occupies 34 ℓ, while the original open mattress (200 x 70 x 7 cm) takes up 98 ℓ – it reduces to a third of the original size.

And now for the inflation, which is as easy as pie: unscrew the cap and the mattress rolls open by itself as the foam sucks in air through the opening and expands to its original shape.

The great thing about this is that the mattress cannot deflate by itself because it's foam – it retains its shape even if the PVC layer is damaged. You can still roll it up. You also get straps to keep the mattress rolled up.

Marius and his family say that some of their mattresses are already 10 years old and are still good. And if you're wondering about a good night's sleep... Marius says one customer who weighs well over 100 kg said it's the perfect answer for campers – even after a few back surgeries!



It's oil good

Your rig – whether it's a bakkie or SUV – is more than just a vehicle. It's your travel companion, and you want to keep touring with it for as long as possible. The best way to keep it healthy? Use the right oil.

Words **Cyril Kloppe**

Engine oil plays a critical role in your vehicle's engine: it forms a slippery layer on the metal surfaces of the engine, thus reducing friction and wear. Without oil, your vehicle's engine will only run for a few minutes before seizing up – and the resulting damage will be bad. By adding oil and replacing it regularly, you can extend the life of an engine from a few minutes to several decades.

Good oil not only keeps friction to a minimum, but it also improves fuel economy, helps prevent degradation and rust that would otherwise damage parts, and it cools the engine by conducting away heat.

Two types of oil are available: synthetic and mineral oil. The latter is distilled crude oil (or processed coal) with various additives for better performance. Despite its name, synthetic oil is

not entirely man-made but rather a natural oil base that's been chemically altered in laboratory conditions, which is why it's so expensive. Semi-synthetic oil must contain at least 10% synthetic oil according to the API standard (that is, the American Petroleum Institute) to be called as such.

The viscosity – or resistance to fluidity – of engine oil plays a significant role in how efficient

it is. A liquid with high viscosity, such as hot tar, will be slow to lubricate your engine parts and will impede the free movement of pistons, ball bearings, and gears. On the other hand, a liquid with a low viscosity – diesel, for example – will not cling well to parts to help reduce wear. Good engine oil has the right viscosity to adhere to metal without affecting performance.

Modern synthetic oils form

thin layers that offer the same protection as cheaper mineral oil, but they allow higher revolutions. It's also less likely to accumulate impurities such as microscopic metal filings and then circulate them through the engine. As we've already mentioned, synthetic oil is much more expensive than mineral oil, and it's a decisive factor in a country like South Africa that's reeling from rising – and rising some more – fuel prices.

Using synthetic oil is like being on a diet consisting of salmon with saffron and a salad. This diet is extremely healthy, but few of us can afford to eat salmon every day, never mind saffron.

Mineral oil, on the other hand, is more like eating meat and potatoes. It may not be the healthiest food on Earth, but it does the job.

Jacobus Langenhoven is a technical manager at TotalEnergies South Africa, and he knows everything there is to know about lubricants. According to him, choosing the right lubricant for your car can be like the difference between a bronze or a gold medal for an athlete.

"If you want to ensure your car is a tireless athlete, you need to look at its overall health. An athlete strives to be in optimal health, and they take care to ensure that their body receives the best sources of nutrition. But they're also concerned with performance and using clean, efficient supplements and nutrients to go the distance," says Jacobus.

"Many of us want to take better care of our vehicles, which is why a lot of people interested in cars will choose synthetic lubricants. But a semi-synthetic is also an option and can be a cost-effective compromise for end users."

We wanted to know if a more expensive (and hopefully better) oil would save us money in the long run. Jacobus' response was that the right oil for your vehicle

will definitely extend the life of the engine. On top of that, he says, your maintenance costs are going to be lower and your repairs less.

Jacobus also believes that there are short-term benefits, such as better fuel consumption and higher performance. "Many lubricants have been designed to improve fuel economy, and

this relates to the additives that can alter the viscosity of the lubricant, meaning it's easier for your engine to function on less fuel. That's one thing you can check for on the label of any bottle of lubricant."

Here, Jacobus refers to not only the ingredients in the oil but also the viscosity grading; or the so-called SAE number.



SAE 0W-20



SAE 0W-30



SAE 0W-50



SAE 5W-20



SAE 10W-40



SAE 10W-50



SAE 10W-40



SAE 15W-40



SAE 20W-50



SAE 20W-60



SAE 30



SAE 5W-30



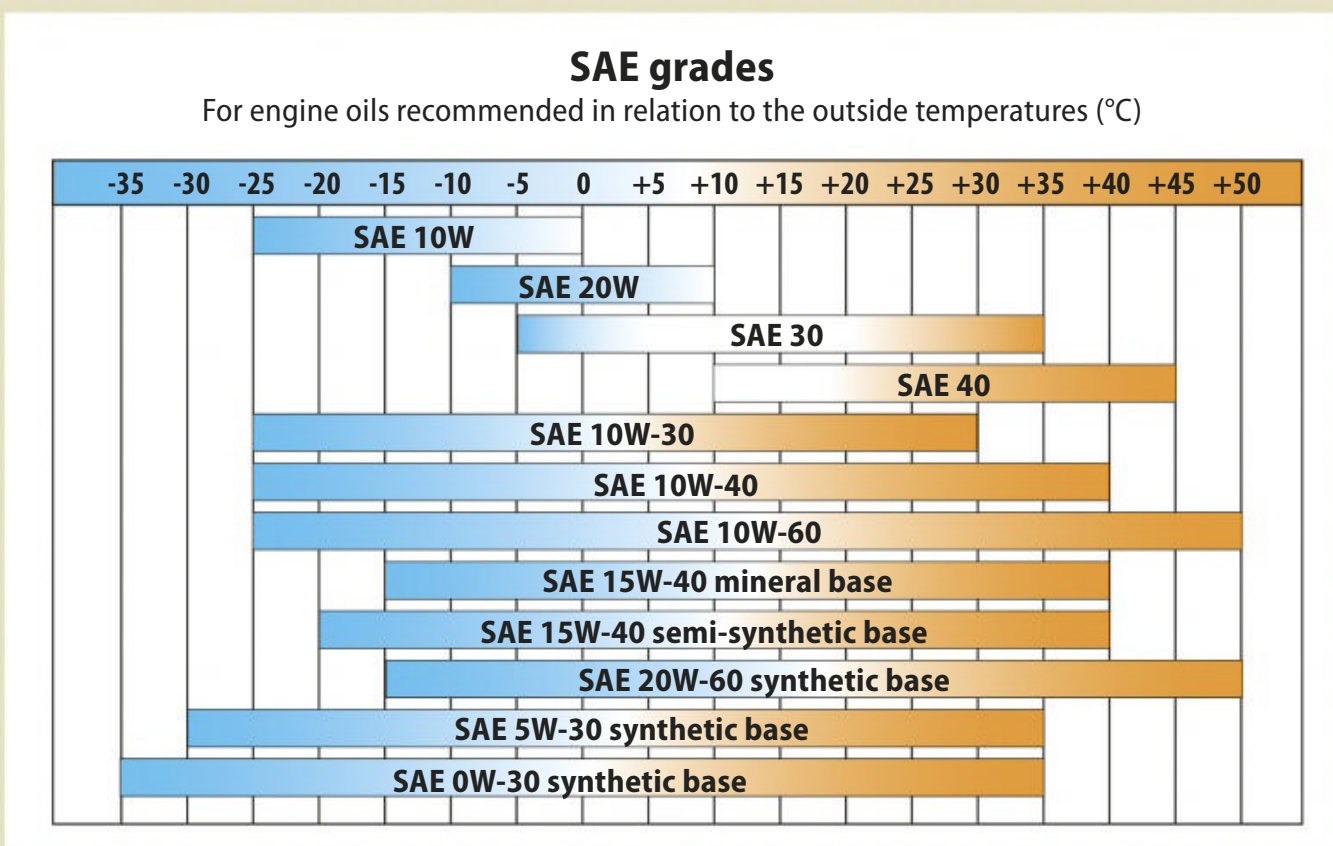
SAE 5W-40

SAE, what?

When you buy engine oil, you will see letters and numbers on the container – something like SAE 15W-30. But what does that mean?

SAE stands for Society of Automotive Engineers. These are the guys who determined the standardisation of engine oil. W stands for winter. The number before the W is an indication of the oil's viscosity at low winter temperatures and the letter after the W is the viscosity at the temperature of a running engine – that's usually around 90 °C.

That letter before the W is the most important, because it determines how liquid the oil is after it's cooled overnight. If you live in a cold country like Canada, you want something like SAE 5W-30, because 5W oil remains liquid even in icy temperatures. The "5" doesn't stand for 5 °C – it's a symbol to indicate that the oil is still liquid at -30 °C. (A Canadian with a vehicle that sleeps outside can easily consider 0W-30 – this oil works optimally between -35 °C and 35 °C.)



But if you live in a hot country like Mali, you don't have to pay much attention to the first digit, because any oil remains liquid in such a sweltering climate. A Malian should rather focus on the figure after the W that determines whether the oil's viscosity will be maintained at extremely high temperatures.

Here, you want something like 20W-60 (this oil works best between -15 °C and 50 °C).

South Africa has a temperate to warm climate, and you won't go wrong with a midway rating of 15W-40. This advice, however, doesn't apply to owners of sports or vintage cars (but this article isn't aimed at them). If

you're unsure which oil is best for your SUV or bakkie, simply flip through your vehicle's owner manual, or ask the workshop that services your rig what the best oil is for your region's climate.

By the way, viscosity is derived from the Latin word *viscum*, which means "sticky".

Cooking oil as lubricant

Let's imagine a rock hits your rig's sump, creating a hole, and all the engine oil ends up on the ground. You can't continue on, because, as you read on previous pages, oil is essential to prevent your engine from seizing.

Collect all the metal shards, clean them properly, and use Pratley Steel epoxy glue to patch

the hole in the oil pan, much like a jigsaw puzzle using the shards. Yes, it can work – we have first-hand experience.

Yes, there is a can of oil in your toolbox, but that's just to top up the engine and not enough to replace all the oil. You heard somewhere that you can use cooking oil... Could that be true? Cooking oil is, after

all, a Newtonian liquid, just like engine oil. (A Newtonian fluid, named after the physicist Sir Isaac Newton, is a fluid whose viscous stress arising from its flow linearly correlates with the local strain rate over a given period – more on this later when we get to Pascal seconds.)

The 4x4 Professor could certainly have carried out this

experiment, but why? The thinking has already been done by university students.

In 2014, Lemuel M. Diamante tested the viscosity of various cooking oils at different temperatures for the Department of Wine, Food and Molecular Natural Sciences at the University of Lincoln in Christchurch, New Zealand.



“

We're therefore not saying that you should be pouring regular cooking oil into your engine. On the contrary, we strongly discourage you from doing so

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Krystyna Buda-Ortins tested the auto-ignition point of several cooking oils for the Department of Engineering at the University of Maryland in the United States in 2010.

Sure, neither of the two academic papers deal with the use of cooking oil in car engines, but the findings still offer food for thought.

Diamante's paper discussed an almighty 13 types of cooking oils, from avocado to walnut oil. However, we're going to ignore exotic stuff like rapeseed and safflower oil and only discuss the results for sunflower, canola, olive, and avocado oil (the usual cooking oils you get at Checkers).

Diamante's finding was that avocado oil has the best viscosity at an outside temperature of 26 °C with 0,0576 Pa·s (Pascal second, the unit by which the viscosity of a Newtonian liquid is measured). However, your rig's engine gets much hotter than that – between 90 °C and 120 °C (oil in a sump is usually 10 °C cooler than at the

top of an engine) – which is why we took the results for Diamante's viscosity test at 90 °C. The winner here is canola oil at 0.0108 Pa·s.

We consulted Buda-Ortins' paper on the risk of the oil spontaneously combusting. She determined that olive oil starts smoking at 130 °C (canola oil smokes at 154 °C), but that olive oil lasts the longest and only bursts into flames at 435,5 °C. Unfortunately, Buda-Ortins did not mention whether it was extra virgin or regular olive oil.

However, your vehicle's engine should never reach this extreme temperature, and if you use cooking oil as engine oil, it will probably not even smoke excessively, although the smell of the exhaust gases may remind you of a fish and chips shop.

But how does cooking oil compare to engine oil in terms of viscosity? According to the Anton Paar oil laboratory, the viscosity of cheap SAE 30 oil (for your lawnmower) is 0,0114 Pa·s at 90 °C. In contrast, the figure for

full synthetic SAE 10W-60 at the same temperature is 0,0243 Pa·s. Canola oil is – when it comes down to the numbers – poorer than even the worst motor oil, but not as bad as you'd expect...

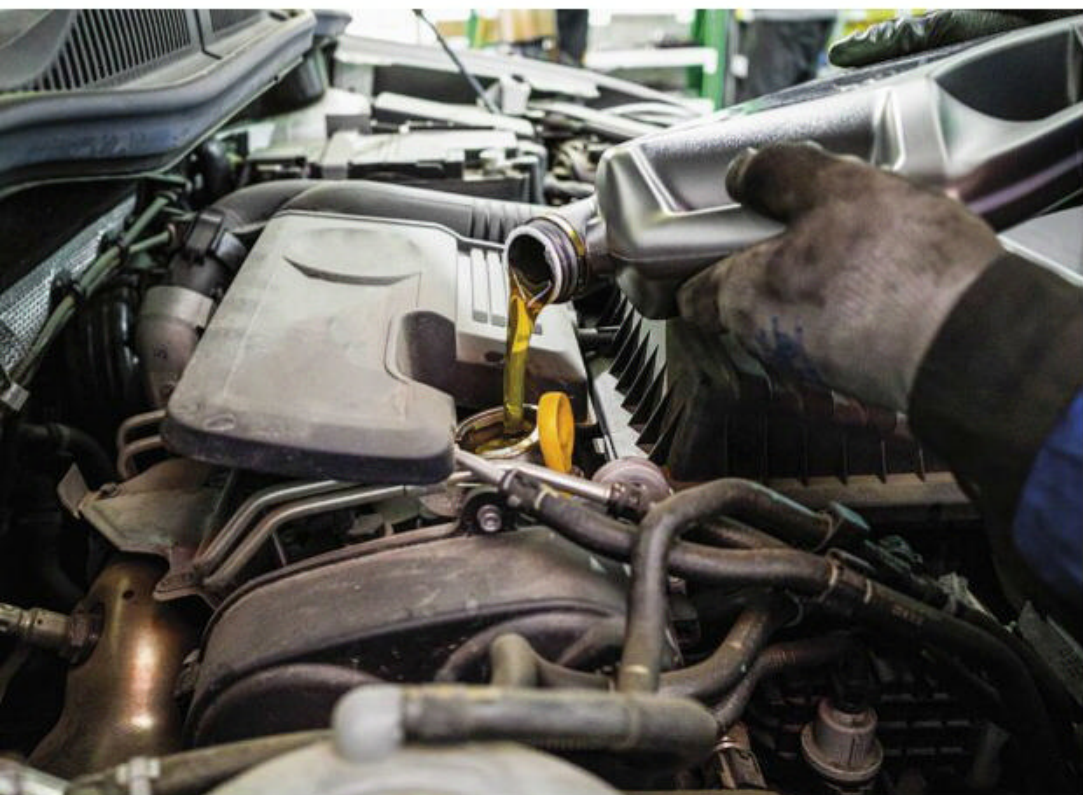
Note that Diamante and Buda-Ortins' academic papers consist of thousands of words and contain complex formulas and rheogrammes, a kind of diagram that depicts shear stress versus shear rate – and here we're trying to explain it in layman's terms in just a few hundred words.

Also note that engine-oil manufacturers conduct comprehensive tests to develop the best lubricants. We're therefore not saying that you should be pouring regular cooking oil into your engine. On the contrary, we strongly discourage you from doing so.

Our reasoning, though, is as follows: when you're stranded in the middle of nowhere and there's only a small chance that someone will come accross you, you have



one of three choices. You can wait for better days; you can drive without oil and see how far you get; or you can consider cooking oil – provided you packed 5 l of it – because even bad oil is better than no oil at all. Just don't rev the engine excessively and drain the cooking oil as soon as you can and replace it with real motor oil.



A bit of history

The name Castrol, the British oil manufacturer, comes from castor oil. Yes, the nasty laxative your grandmother made your dad take as a kid was used as a lubricant in engines way back when.

Englishman Charles Wakefield of the Wakefield Oil Company discovered in 1906 that castor oil, made from castor beans, had a good viscosity to lubricate engines.

Plus, it had a boiling point of 313 °C.

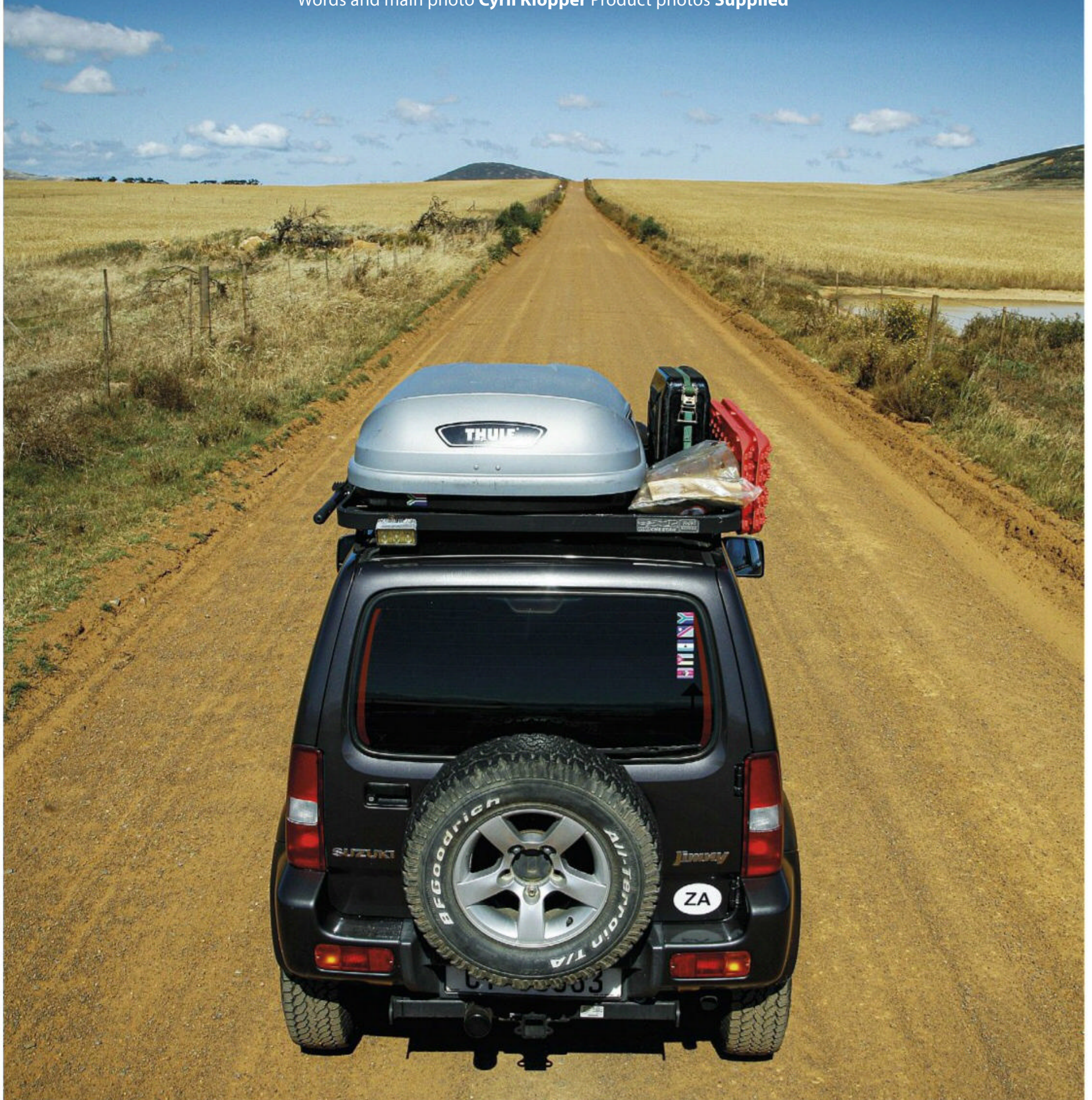
Wakefield registered this engine oil under the name Castrol. It was one of many lubricants manufactured by the Wakefield Oil Company, and it was so popular that Wakefield later rebranded his entire company after this product.

And no, Castrol is no longer made from beans...

Rig your rig

Your SUV's boot is sometimes too small for all your luggage, especially if Rover joins you on holiday. Luckily, there's a cheaper and easier alternative to towing a trailer.

Words and main photo **Cyril Klopper** Product photos **Supplied**





ALU-CAB THE ROOF BOX

Boxing clever

A roof tent takes up valuable roof space, but if you own an off-road bakkie, there'll probably be some open space available on top of the cab – this is where you bolt Alu-Cab's roof box down. It's spacious enough for three ammo boxes, or you can lock a high-lift jack, traction boards, and other recovery gear in it. It's lined with carpet, so loose items don't slide around, and the lid is waterproof and dustproof.

It's available in sizes of 200 ℓ and 250 ℓ.

Volume 250 ℓ (pictured)

Measurements 103,5 x 70,5 x 33 cm

Weight 21 kg

Price R9 517 at 4x4 Mega World

Contact ☎ 011 454 2558

✉ support@oldmanemu.co.za

🌐 4x4megaworldonline.co.za

Drive & Camp says You can mount jerry cans on either side if the width doesn't bother you.



THULE FORCE XT S

By popular demand

This Swedish company is synonymous with roof boxes. The Force range is popular because it has claws that can hold on to virtually any type of luggage rack.

Due to its flat bottom, the Force XT S can also be mounted on a roof rack – something like a Front Runner roof rack – and because it's relatively small, there's enough space left for a bag of wood, a gas cylinder, and fuel cans.

The Force XT S can carry 75 kg, and its lid opens on both sides.

Volume 300 ℓ

Measurements 139 x 89,5 x 39 cm

Weight 14,3 kg

Price R12 000 at Thule

Contact ☎ 066 212 6800

✉ thulestore@sportandcargo.co.za 🌐 thulestore.co.za

Drive & Camp says The key can only be removed from the lock once it's locked.



YAKIMA 752

Smooth operator

Yakima is an American manufacturer known for its bicycle racks. This roof box can carry 75 kg (just like the Thule Force above), but it weighs and costs a bit more. The lid can open from both sides, and standard equipment includes T-bolts that fit on Yakima's streamlined crossbars.

But the company also supplies U-clamps that attach to virtually any loadbar, plus special clamps for BMW

vehicles' luggage racks.

Volume 450 ℓ

Measurements 200 x 89 x 43 cm

Weight 19 kg

Price R13 900 at Rack & Carry

Contact ☎ 044 382 2808

✉ sales@rackandcarry.co.za

🌐 rackandcarry.co.za

Drive & Camp says Due to the shaped bottom it doesn't go on a roof rack unless you drill holes and bolt it down.



EVO TUNING

Penny wise

As you can see, roof boxes are relatively expensive, but the Evo Tuning costs less than half of its closest competitor on this page.

That's because it comes from China and is a copy of an older Thule model but made of cheaper plastic and with limited functions.

For example, the lid only opens on the passenger side, and although the manufacturer doesn't give

a weight limit, one can easily feel that it's not that strong.

Volume 360 ℓ

Measurements 139 x 90 x 39 cm

Weight 11 kg

Price R5 895 at Autostyle

Contact ☎ 062 070 6604

✉ sales@autostyle.co.za

🌐 autostyle.co.za

Drive & Camp says It looks and feels cheap because it, well, is indeed cheap.

GEAR



FRONT RUNNER TRANSIT XL

Box bag

Front Runner has a solution if you prefer transporting your clothes and provisions in ammo boxes.

The Transit bag holds three of these. The bag is made of 600d UV-protective material that's dust- and rain resistant. It has a 1 100 g PVC base so you can transport it on a roof rack or load bars.

The seams have three rows of nylon stitching for extra durability, and it has handles

so you can carry the bag with the boxes in it.

Volume 180 ℓ

Measurements 120 x 50 x 30 cm

Weight 1,78 kg

Price R956 at Front Runner

Contact ☎ 011 466 0155

✉ frontrunneroutfitters.com

Drive & Camp says The Transit is narrow so that there's storage space next to it on your roof rack.



GEAR4GEAR

Homegrown

This bag is made in Gqeberha, and it consists of 440 g Ripstop material on the outside. Inside, it's lined with 480 g polyweave material, which makes it waterproof.

The straps and buckles have been tested to hold 400 kg of cargo (although, of course, you shouldn't carry that much weight on your SUV's roof). It's suitable for a roof rack and even for vehicles without roof bars. In that case, you need to purchase

Gear4Gear soft bars.

Volume 300 ℓ

Measurements 120 x 85 x 30 cm

Weight 5 kg

Price R3 499 at Nautical Sports

Contact ☎ 041 811 2628

✉ info@gear4gear.co.za

✉ nauticalsports.co.za

Drive & Camp says Stuff it with enough clothes so it remains streamlined and won't flap in the airstream.



IRONMAN 350L

Tailor-made

This bag is made of 500d water-resistant PVC material, and the heavy-duty zipper is covered by a flap that's sealed with Velcro strips.

You tie it to a roof rack, and the clips release easily. The bags are available in five sizes: 600 ℓ, 500 ℓ, 350 ℓ, 250 ℓ and 200 ℓ.

In our opinion, the 350 ℓ version is the most practical because it's easier to carry and it leaves enough space next

to it on the roof rack for braai wood and a jerry can.

Volume 350 ℓ

Measurements 120 x 96 x 30 cm

Weight 3,66 kg

Price R2 550 at Ironman 4x4

Contact ☎ 011 634 7770

✉ info@ironman4x4.co.za

✉ ironman4x4.co.za

Drive & Camp says It's more suitable for a roof rack than an ordinary sedan with roof rails.



RHINO BAGMATE

Big boy

The Rhino BagMate is designed to fit on any vehicle's roof – with or without roof rails. If your vehicle has no rails, clip the straps to the door frame.

Of course, it's easier to attach the bag to load bars or a roof rack. The material is of military grade and completely rainproof, and the seams are fused rather than stitched.

It's a huge bag, and we suggest you get someone to help when you want to remove

it from the roof of your car.

Volume 540 ℓ

Measurements 124,5 x 88,9 x 50,8 cm

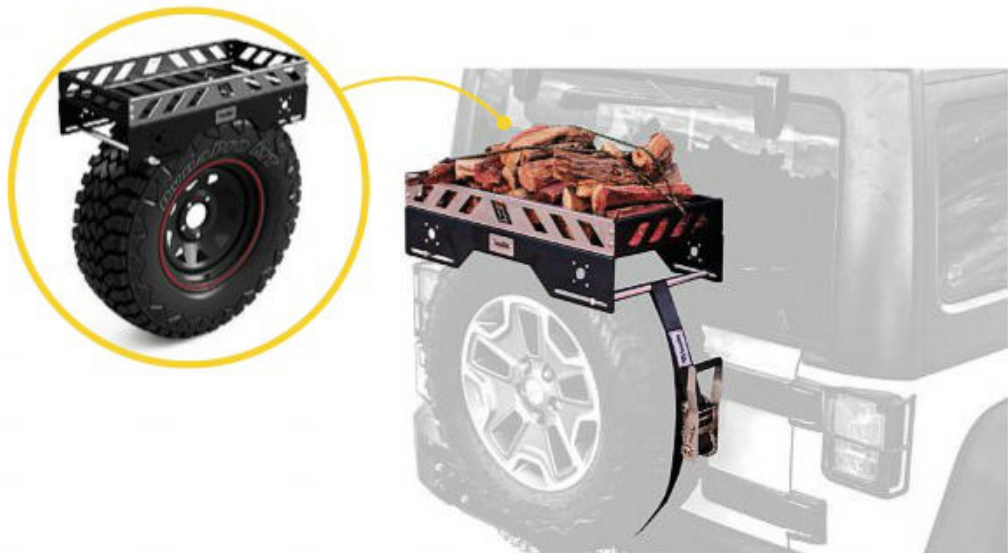
Weight 4,3 kg

Price R1 950 (VAT excluded) at Maclaren Air

Contact ☎ 011 315 4348

✉ maclaren@ust.co.za

Drive & Camp says Avoid loading hard and pointy objects in it if it's lying directly on the bare roof of your car.



BUILT SPARE WHEEL TRAY

Put shoulder to the wheel

Other than the roof, there's another surface that's often overlooked: the spare wheel on the back door.

Okay, you can't load much weight here because the wheel itself weighs quite a bit. It is, however, a suitable place for something light – a bundle of braai wood, for example. Built says they load around 20 kg without problems.

The spare wheel tray is made of mild steel, stainless steel, and aluminium, and

it's adjustable to fit most wheel sizes.

Load weight It depends on the vehicle

Measurements 70 x 35 x 7,6 cm

Weight 7,5 kg

Price R2 499 at Built Concepts

Contact 084 601 6264

hello@builtconcepts.co.za

builtconcepts.co.za

Drive & Camp says The ratchet strap is not included – get one of 50 mm x 5 m.



RHINO-RACK XTRAY

Basket case

This Australian roof-rack manufacturer has been in business for 30 years, so it knows a thing or two about cargo baskets.

This basket fits almost all roof bars, whether Thule, Menabo, or Holdfast. It's especially suitable for transporting a variety of loose bags, suitcases, or boxes on your roof, and Rhino-Rack claims that it has made the basket strong enough for proper 4x4 adventures. The

metal is powder coated so that it doesn't rust or fade.

Load weight 75 kg

Measurements 148 x 110 x 15 cm

Weight 21 kg

Price R5 450 at Rack & Carry

Contact 044 382 2808

sales@rackandcarry.co.za

rackandcarry.co.za

Drive & Camp says It's like a roof rack, but more versatile and not as permanent.



How heavy may I go?

Your SUV's roof bars may be strong enough to carry 300 kg, but your roof box can only handle 90 kg. Your vehicle's manual states the maximum allowable dynamic weight on the roof is 80 kg.

Then, the maximum weight you may load in the box is less than 80 kg, because you have to consider the weakest link in

the combination. We say "less than 80 kg" because you also have to take the weight of the roof bars and box in account.

For example, if you own a Toyota Fortuner with a permissible roof weight capacity of 80 kg, you have to subtract 3 kg for the roof bars and 19 kg for the roof box, which leaves you with



58 kg for your luggage.

And that's not the end of your sums. If you're planning to tackle challenging roads that will rock your Fortuner back and forth like a ship on the ocean, you'll have to lower the maximum load by a further 33%, because the claws of your roof box and points where the load bars attach to the rails

don't like lateral movements.

This means that if you want to tackle Van Zyl's Pass with a Toyota Fortuner, you should not load more than 38,86 kg into the roof box.

Anything more than that modest figure could result in broken roof box claws or, worse, land your Fortuner on its roof.

Ode to the olive



There's more to olives than a delicious snack. They also enhance everything from salads to pasta.

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

TAPENADE

Rough diamond

A delicious olive spread can be made by crushing olives and adding a little olive oil. And you can do so much with it: stir it through pasta, smear it on bread, or spoon it on a lamb chop. This recipe remains my favourite.

Ingredients

(makes 350 ml)

- ½ cup good olive oil
- 1 slice white bread, crusts removed and cubed
- 1 small white onion, finely chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, finely crushed
- ½ cup pitted green olives
- ½ cup pitted black olives
- a handful basil and parsley
- 3 anchovy fillets, coarsely chopped
- 1 tablespoon capers
- 1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice

Here's how

1 Heat 1-2 tablespoons of the oil in a pan and fry the bread cubes until golden brown and crispy. Spoon them out and then add another tablespoon of olive oil and sauté the onion until it's soft and translucent. Add the garlic and fry for another minute or two. Remove from heat.

2 Mix together the toasted bread, onion mix, green and black olives, herbs, anchovies, and capers in a food processor and process until the mixture has a coarse texture and is well mixed. Don't let it get too fine.

3 Scrape the tapenade into a bowl, season with the lemon juice, and pour the rest of the olive oil on top to form a layer. Keep it in the fridge until you use it. Chilli, chopped pecans, and sun-dried tomatoes are optional extras if you want to experiment.

Drive & Camp says Buy the green olives stuffed with anchovies, then there's one less ingredient to check off the list.



SAUCY CHICKEN AND CHORIZO

Spicy bird

This dish is full of strong flavours and works best with a simple side dish. Think steamed rice or creamy mashed potatoes.

Ingredients

(serves 6 with a side dish)

- 1 chorizo (about 200 g), chopped
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 4 chicken breast fillets, cut into bite-sized cubes
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 1 tablespoon cake flour
- 1 tablespoon tomato purée
- 1 tin (400 g) chopped tomatoes
- 3 sprigs thyme (or use a pinch of dry thyme)
- 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
- ½ cup stuffed green olives, coarsely chopped – try the ones with anchovies or red pepper
- a pinch sugar

Here's how

1 Fry the chorizo in the oil until crisp. Remove it from the pan, but retain the fragrant oil. Now fry the chicken cubes until they're nicely golden brown all over.

2 Stir in the paprika and flour and mix with the chicken. Add the rest of the ingredients, spoon the fried chorizo back into the sauce, and simmer for about 10 minutes until the chicken is just cooked through and the sauce is thick and fragrant. Serve immediately.

Drive & Camp says Allow the mixture to cool and use as a delicious braai pie filling. Spoon the chicken, chorizo, and olives from the sauce with a slotted spoon onto a large square of puff pastry – keep the tomato sauce for serving. Sprinkle over a layer of grated mozzarella, place a second square of dough on top of the filling, and firmly press together the edges of the pie with a fork. Gently braai the pie in a grid over medium-high heat until the dough is golden brown and cooked through. Serve the pie with the fragrant tomato sauce.



PASTA PUTTANESCA

See red!

This classic pasta dish is a delicious, quick dinner if you want to go pescatarian for the night.

Ingredients

(serves 4)

- 1 onion, finely chopped
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 4 garlic cloves, finely crushed
- 4 anchovy fillets, finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon dry chilli flakes
- ½ cup kalamata olives, pitted and cut in half
- 2 tins (400 g each) chopped tomatoes
- 1 teaspoon dry oregano
- a pinch sugar
- 500 g spaghetti
- ¼ cup fresh basil (optional)
- ½ cup grated Parmesan

Here's how

1 Slowly fry the onion in the oil until glossy and soft. Stir in the garlic, anchovies, and chilli flakes and fry the mixture until fragrant. Now add the olives, tomato, oregano, and sugar, and season to taste with salt and pepper. Simmer the mixture gently while you cook the pasta. **2 Cook** the pasta in salted water until al dente – you want it tender, but with texture. Drain it and mix the tomato sauce through the pasta. Finally, stir in the basil (if using) and cheese, and serve the pasta immediately with freshly ground black pepper.

Drive & Camp says Seeing as the campfire is there anyway, make a delicious garlic bread to enjoy with the pasta.



PASTA SALAD WITH TUNA

Easy peasy

This is my mom Hymne's creation and the easiest lunch you could imagine. If you're very hungry, add a can of drained mixed beans plus boiled eggs cut into quarters. The fresh herbs are optional.

Ingredients

(serves 4 as a light meal)

- 1 cup rice pasta (Rosmarino)
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon tomato sauce
- a few drops Tabasco sauce (to taste)
- 2 tablespoons milk
- 2 tins (170 g each) tuna – I like the ones in oil
- 1 tablespoon capers
- 2 anchovy fillets, finely chopped
- ½ cup green olives, stuffed with red pepper

- 4 plum tomatoes, diced
- ½ cup mixed fresh herbs (think basil, parsley, chives, and rocket), shredded – or use some fresh spinach leaves

Here's how

1 Boil the pasta rice in salted water until al dente – follow the directions on the package. Rinse in cold water and drain.

2 Whisk together the mayonnaise, tomato sauce, Tabasco, and milk, and mix through the pasta.

3 Add the rest of the ingredients to the salad. Season to taste with salt and freshly ground black pepper – remember, the olives, capers, and anchovies are already salty.

Drive & Camp says A fresh baguette and butter make the perfect accompaniment to this salad.



BEAN SALAD WITH FETA AND OLIVES Full of beans

The longer the beans marinate in the fragrant sauce, the more flavour they absorb. But the secret of this quick bean salad is the bag of marinated sun-dried tomatoes and their sauce: mix together the beans, olives, and tomatoes the day before for the best flavour.

Ingredients

(serves 8)

- 1 bag (240 g) sun-dried tomatoes in vinaigrette – we used Ina Paarman's one
- 1 tin (400 g) white beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 tin (400 g) red kidney beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 tin (400 g) chickpeas, rinsed and drained
- 90 g kalamata olives, pitted
- 100 g green beans
- 100 g feta, diced

Here's how

1 Drain the vinaigrette from the bag of sun-dried tomatoes and mix it through the tinned beans, chickpeas, and olives. Chop 6-8 of the sun-dried tomatoes into smaller pieces and mix through as well. (Save the rest of the fragrant tomatoes for another meal.) If you can, allow the beans to marinate in the fragrant sauce in the fridge for at least a few hours.

2 Slice the green beans and boil in salted water until just cooked but still crisp. Mix them with the feta and then into the beans just before serving. Chopped red onion and chilli are great with this too.

Drive & Camp says The fresh colour of the green beans works wonders for the appearance of an otherwise pale salad, but you can, of course, also mix it from the beginning if it's more convenient.



MUSHROOM "BURGERS" Stuffed!

Hot or cold, these mushrooms with their cheesy hearts are a delicious starter.

Ingredients

(serves 6 as a starter)

- 12 large brown mushrooms
- 12 tablespoons tapenade - see the recipe on page 101 or use store-bought tapenade
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- a large lump of butter
- 6 slices salami
- 6 slices mozzarella

Here's how

1 Wipe the mushrooms with a damp cloth and slice off the stems. Baste them all over with olive oil. Spoon 1 tablespoon of tapenade into each mushroom.

2 Now stack the stuffed mushrooms in pairs – almost like a burger – with a slice of salami and cheese in between. **3 Melt** the butter and the rest of the oil in a fire-proof pan and carefully braai the stacks until the mushrooms are soft and juicy with melted cheese in the middle. Turn them regularly with a braai tong. The tapenade is usually sticky enough to hold everything together, but if you struggle, use a skewer to keep the stacks together.

Drive & Camp says You can, of course, also use a grid that shuts, or thread the stacks on a stick and braai them directly over the coals. Then drizzle the butter over the hot mushrooms and season with a last sprinkle of black pepper before serving.

go! Drive & Camp

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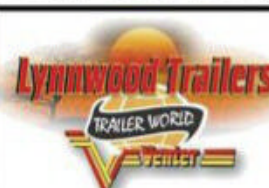
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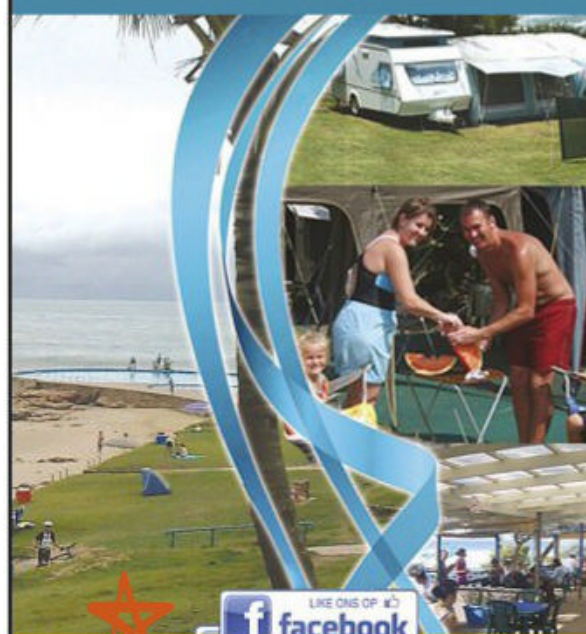
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BRITS

CROSSWORD

Wilna Jurack from Bloemfontein has won a **Van Loveren hamper** for her crossword entry in our October-November 2021 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/3ys1MQk>. Last month's solution is on p 111.



COMPILED BY GERDA ENGELBRECHT

Win with Van Loveren wines

Tangled Tree recently expanded their eco-friendly range to a three-litre bag-in-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

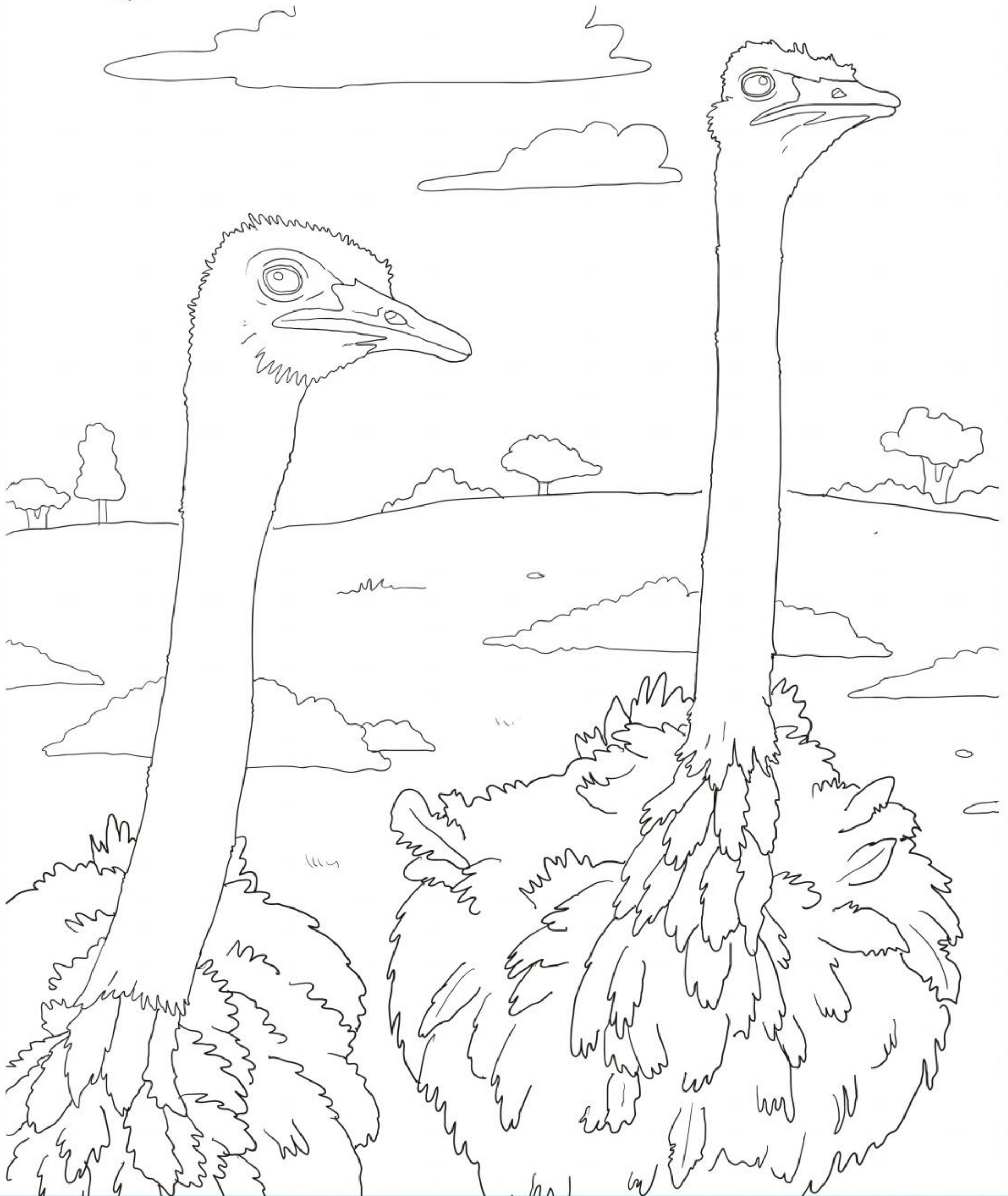
of Van Loveren's commitment to sustainable winemaking but also tells a story of love – find out more at  **tangledtree.com.**

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

Prize includes a mixed case 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.

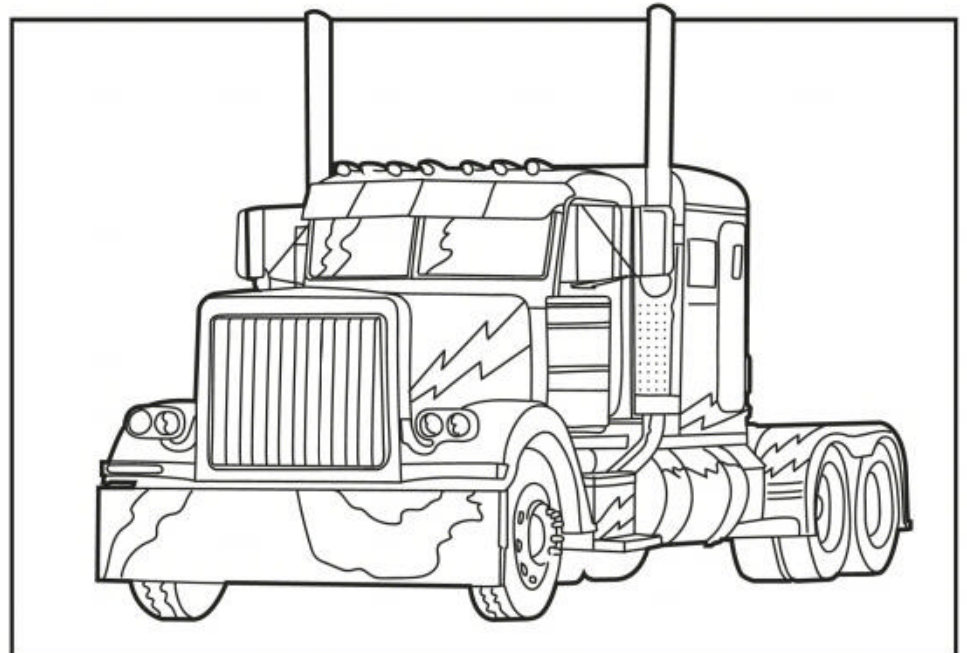
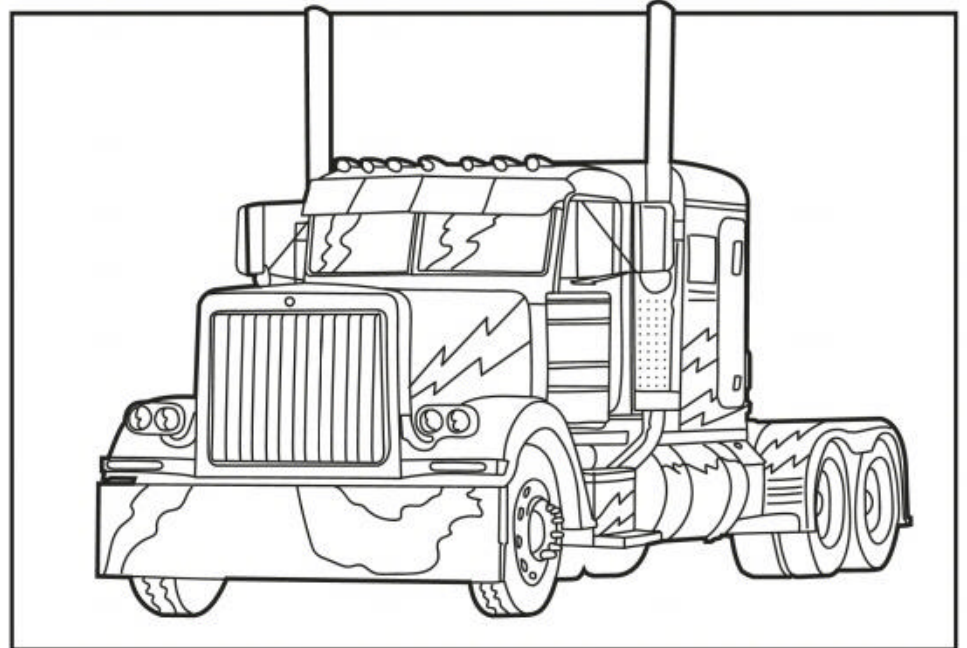
Word search

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

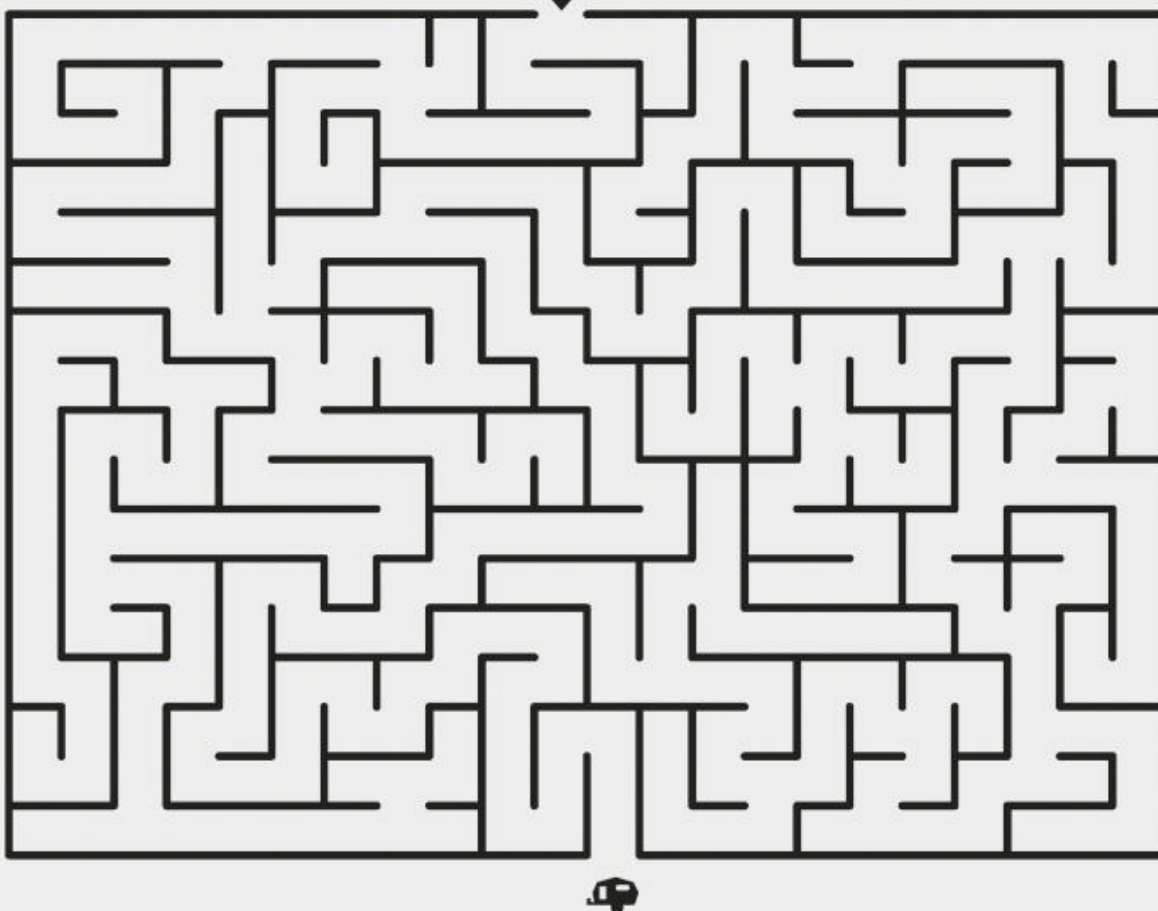
DINOSAURS

Daemonosaurus	Skorpiovenator	Tyrannosaurus Rex
Anzu	Tyrannotitan	Spinosaurus
Gigantoraptor	Triceratops	Brachiosaurus
Iguanacolossus	Carnotaurus	Giganotosaurus
Khaan	Diabloceratops	Stegosaurus
Raptorex	Dracorex	Velociraptor

Spot the differences



Maze



Animal facts



HONEY BADGERS (*MELLIVORA CAPENSIS*)

- Honey badgers are in the same family as weasels, and while usually solitary, have also been known to live in pairs.
- They have long claws and, if needed, can dig themselves into a hole in a matter of minutes.
- Honey badgers usually try to avoid confrontations, but when faced with one, they seldom back down.
- At the base of the tail, they have a gland containing a stinky liquid, which is released in times of distress.
- Honey badgers are omnivores who will go after mammals, birds, reptiles, insects, larvae, plants, fruit, eggs, and roots—and, of course, honey.

What does 2022 hold in store?

Amid the ongoing difficulties surrounding the pandemic, especially in the motor manufacturing industry, there's much excitement in the 4x4 vehicle industry to look forward to this year, says **Mic van Zyl**.

Last year saw the launch of the much-anticipated Toyota Land Cruiser 300 series. Sadly, all that excitement has been dampened by the chronic shortage of vehicles due to global challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Component shortages are playing havoc with vehicle production, and car dealers are beyond frustrated.

We're all hoping for the situation to improve sooner rather than later.

With bakkies – especially double cabs – being the most popular class of 4x4 vehicle in most markets, we're set to be treated to, not one, but two new series launches in 2022. Top of the list is the much-anticipated new Ford Ranger, and the other is the new Isuzu D-Max.

The hype around the new Ford Ranger is arguably bigger, as it's the more popular vehicle of these two when you consider sales figures. However, the new Isuzu D-Max has been voted the best dual-cab bakkie in Australia by no less than three independent motoring publications. This is quickly becoming a great spectator sport.

The new Ranger replaces the current T6 vehicle that was launched way back in 2011. The T6 elevated the Ford bakkie to the top shelf, often outperforming the venerable Hilux for the top sales spot both here in SA and in other markets. During the last decade, the series has been facelifted and upgraded twice, with Ford continuing to improve the product.

During this time, the Ranger has outclassed the competition on many occasions, with leading automotive publications bestowing top honours to the Ranger above its competitors.

The new 2022 Ranger promises more of the same with an evolutionary approach to replacing the current truck. Dubbed the T6.2, the platform sees much of the underpinnings of the current bakkie carried over to the new model, albeit with much development and refinement. From what I can gather from the press kit, it will be even better than the outgoing model. Big news is South African production, as well as a range-topping 3.0 V6 turbodiesel engine from the F-150. Developed by Ford Australia again, it's sure to be a winner.

Having owned a late-model 3.2 WildTrak for a spell, it would, in my opinion, be the best offering in the bakkie segment, were it not for questionable reliability. I loved my Ranger, but it constantly broke. The Ranger simply doesn't measure up to the Hilux when it comes to long-term ownership reliability.

In our company fleet of over 60 bakkies, we've had major failures on more than half the Rangers we've used, mainly related to the drivetrain. While this may be a question of bad luck in our case, online forums tell a similar story. A short week-long stint with a press vehicle for an article simply cannot investigate the long-term reliability of a vehicle.

The dark horse in this story must be the new Isuzu D-Max. Already launched in 2019 in Thailand and subsequently in Australia, the new D-Max has had several accolades bestowed upon it in major bakkie shoot-outs. This has brought the Isuzu brand right back into contention in the hotly contested bakkie segment in these markets, and I think this may well be the case here in SA too.

Isuzu have a solid history here in SA since the very early days of the double-cab bakkie. To my mind, the Isuzu bakkie was never ahead of the pack but also never put a foot wrong. This new D-Max promises to rectify this and will get right into the faces of the current frontrunners.

I'm not aware of any fixed launch dates, and these may well be affected by the vehicle production challenges I mention upfront. What is certain, though, is that this new injection of healthy competition will fire up the local bakkie market and make for much interesting debate around the campfire.





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Teach your children well

When there's "nothing" for kids to do at a campsite, they should find ways to keep themselves busy, says **Neels van Heerden**.

When you look at what a campsite needs to keep children busy, WiFi, a games room, and an open space where they can play ball are often enough. As a parent, you can also get your kids involved in planning your camp getaway so they're engaged right from the start.

For example, have them make a list of everything that needs to be packed, involve them

in the purchasing of supplies, and give them certain tasks they're responsible for. They could check out the campsite's website and gather information about the facilities and activities on offer.

Then, at your campsite, they can evaluate these activities and amenities and afterwards send a friendly email to the management telling them about their experiences and opinions. Any decent camp manager would welcome constructive comments and actionable suggestions – especially if they want to market the campsite as a place for kids.

If the activities don't suit children's tastes, or the campsite's budget prevents it from revamping, there are a number of inventive solutions. For example, the whole family can apply the basic principles of school subjects before, during, and after your camp in a meaningful way. This could lead to topics for school projects and even lead to curiosity and perhaps a career choice.

The first subject is geography. Judging by the ignorance I've seen on social media about the location of smaller towns, kids can only benefit from an extensive knowledge of provinces, regions, roads, and towns.

Tell them to download a route map – it will, first of all, create an awareness of what South Africa's road network looks like. Then, they can search some more for historical, geological, palaeontological, and other natural phenomena near the campsite. You can then plan excursions to those as a family.

Biology can also be mined for information in and around the campsite. Our country has a rich variety of plant and animal life. The biggest challenge, of course, is to identify trees – I also think campsites could easily compile a bird

and tree list and place labels on trees, identifying them. Also, there's a great many smartphone apps available with detailed information.

Children's reading skills can be encouraged subtly by studying field guides, thus, hopefully, developing a greater environmental awareness in our young.

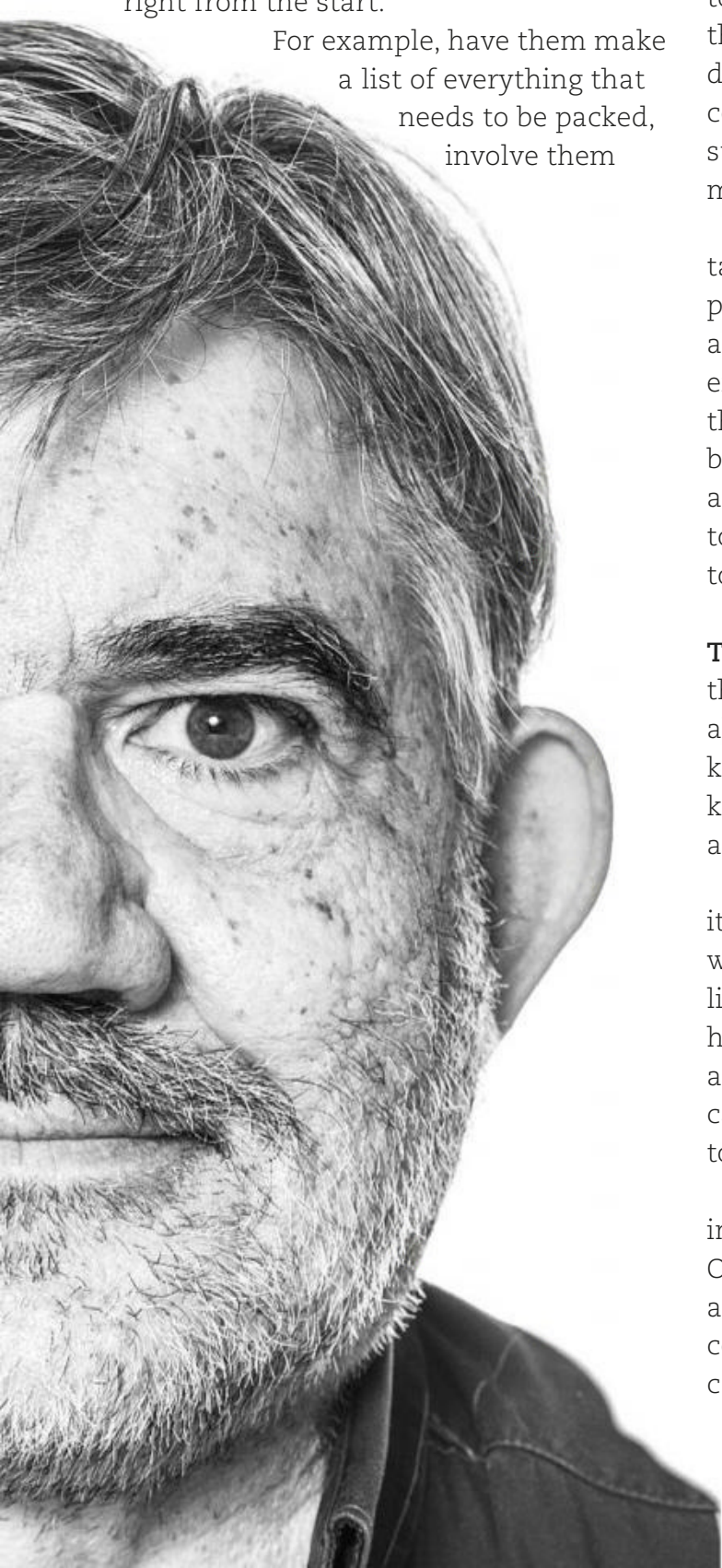
Expand children's accounting or bookkeeping skills by having them keep track of all expenses: items to buy in advance, camping tariffs, tolls, travel expenses, and all unplanned expenses. It develops their numeracy skills and teaches them the importance of keeping to a set budget.

Aspiring biomedical and health technologists can study information on packaging to compare ingredients. Just think of the different mineral water brands on the shelf – the difference between the composition and content is astounding.

When a child's interest is stimulated in an inventive way, they can expand their use of smartphone technology. For those a little bit older, chemistry, physics, maths, and advanced maths can be placed under the magnifying glass.

The universal gas laws and principles of thermodynamics are the foundation on which appliances such as air cons and fridge/freezers operate, and prospective engineers and scientists can consult Google to learn more about the five major gas laws.

There is, of course, a time and place to browse social media. It's my sincere wish that this technology, and the activities resorts offer, are combined in such a way that kids can experience an enriching camping experience with family and friends.



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My little yellow tent and I...

A tent is a marvellous, simple thing. Toast Coetzer remembers some spots where his fold-up home has been.

During my first few years as a travel journalist, I didn't own a tent, and I often had to borrow one from a friend. Everything went well until this tent "disappeared" once next to the Pongolapoort Dam outside Jozini. I thought it was stolen at first but spotted it the next morning floating about 100 m away in the dam. The wind was the thief.

It was high time to get my own tent, and I knew exactly what I wanted: a strong, lightweight tent that could fold up small enough to fit into a backpack when I went hiking – or my suitcase when I had to fly to my destination.

A fly-in camping holiday isn't really something seasoned campers readily attempt, because what on Earth do you do with all your camping gear? But as a travel journalist, I almost always travel alone – without three children's bicycles, five inflatable mattresses, two gas cylinders, and so on and so forth. That's why it's possible.

I found my little yellow tent – made by E3 Gear, a manufacturer that apparently no longer exists – at a specialist shop that supplies equipment to mountaineers. It's a two-man tent – but only if you and the second occupant are very much in love – and weighs less than 3 kg. And if you roll it up neatly, the bundle is as thick as a 2 l Coke bottle. Perfect, because with such a small tent, I still have room in my 60 l K-Way carry-on bag for one of those triangular folding chairs, a pillow as big as a laptop,

a sleeping bag (it just mustn't get below 5 °C!), a pack of Pro-Vitas, a few tins of sardines, and maybe even some clean underwear.

My first fly-in camping trip was to Zambia, where I visited the South Luangwa National Park. I remember first having to walk through the campsite to look for a "safe" tree, because there were loads of sausage trees, and if one of those hulks had rained down like a North Korean missile, my new house and I might not be here today.

I immediately liked my tent. It was easy to pitch, and I could lie down inside within minutes, away from the onslaught of mosquitoes. My sweaty socks could hang above me, where a special bag against the tent roof was apparently fitted for this because the ventilation is good. I'm sure the guys who designed the tent designed this bag for something else, but I've never used it for anything other than damp socks that need to dry out overnight...

My cellphone, car keys, and headlight fit snugly in one of the side pockets at ground level. The tent wasn't too short nor too long. Not too wide, not too narrow. It was perfect.

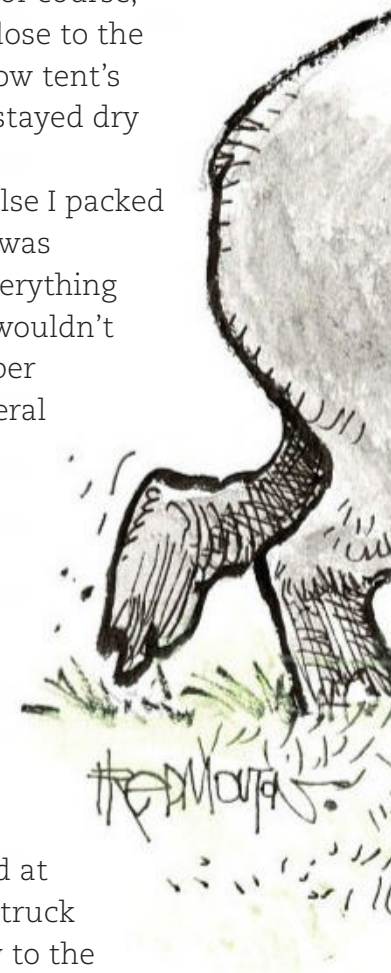
It wasn't the rainy season and so I didn't need the flysheet. At night I could hear the fruit bats beeping their sonar beeps, and somewhere in the night I got to see elephants that came to strip leaves from a juicy tree barely 10 m away.

A year or so later, I embarked on another fly-in camping holiday to a soaking wet Rwanda. It was one that required me to scale down my equipment even more. I didn't have my own transport and got a lift to the south of the country, where I camped for three wonderful days in the Nyungwe Forest National Park. It is, of course, a rainforest, because it's close to the equator, and my little yellow tent's raincoat did a great job: I stayed dry all night.

I can't remember what else I packed on this tour, but because I was backpacking, I had to fit everything in my 28 l backpack, so it wouldn't have been much. I remember buying a kettle from a general store, using it for a few days, and then giving it to someone as a present because it wouldn't fit in my backpack.

But the tent was in, and that meant I had a roof over my head. So, I was able to hitchhike (as long as my mother didn't hear about it...), and at one point got a lift from a truck driver who was on his way to the Congo with jet fuel. After that, I got onto a crowded bus on the winding roads to get to the village of Kibuye, which overlooks the beautiful Lake Kivu.

There was no official campsite, but the hotel gave me permission to camp



on their lawn. In the mornings, I could zip open my home's door and, as I rubbed the sleep out of my eyes, watch boats filled to the brim with crates of beer find their way across the silver, calm waters.

My little yellow tent's home ground is Southern Africa, though. Over the past decade and a half, it's gotten to know Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, parts of Mozambique, and every province in South Africa during hundreds of nights. Namibia is the crowning glory for a camper, as none of their fancy hotels or lodges are able to provide what you get from sleeping in a tent.

Stumbling out of your tent at the Spitzkoppe at the crack of dawn is like finding yourself barefoot and wearing only boxer shorts in Heaven. Farther south, at Mirabib, you're often as alone as the first man on Earth. From a distance, your tent looks like alien space ship, unusual on the otherwise pristine surface.

The small yellow tent has been all the way around the Tiras Mountain, among the dunes of the Kalahari around Koës, northwards through the Khaudum Game Reserve, and up and down the Kunene, Kavango, Kwando, and Zambezi rivers. I've been in my tent at many of the Caprivi's river campsites, and listened to the gnashing of hippo teeth near me. Then I lie still and try to think of something special I would eat when I got back to town. Something like a Magnum ice cream.

I've enjoyed camping on the Limpopo River in the Bushveld. Once, I got special permission to camp at Raaswater near Swartwater. It's on the Mmabolela private reserve (where you can spend the night in farmhouses), and directly downstream of Mabalel's Pool – yes, the very Mabalel of the famous Afrikaans poem by Eugène Marais.

There's a sense of place when a spot has a difficult-to-articulate emotional value. The Raaswater is such a piece of land. Here,

your footprints intersect with those of historical figures, including the traveller Thomas Baines, who one day in 1871 also camped here along the Raaswater. (The famous Baines' baobabs in Botswana bear his name.)

That night, I heard an animal calling. I still don't know what it was – what sound does an aardwolf make? – but its strangeness had me forget about the Mahindra bakkie a few metres away. The call made me forget about my smartphone, my headlight, and even about my little yellow tent. That's the thing about camping: it brings you so much closer to nature than a comfortable lodge room where you struggle with the blinds and wonder why they only offer the cheap version of DStv.

It turns out a tent is not a home but a doorway – a doorway to simplicity where campfires are lit, coffee is made, and watching the sun rise is worth a thousand times more than your bank balance. It's also a doorway to a part of yourself that you neglect in your usual hectic city life.

My little yellow tent has been repaired several times: I had to have a zipper replaced, and the sun has rendered some of the fabric brittle. But I'm not ready to part with it just yet.

How could I?



Ugly ducklings

Cars you find attractive may look less so to your neighbour. Tastes differ, after all. We asked readers for their opinions on some of the more distinctive vehicles on our roads. Do note, these aren't necessarily bad vehicles; it's all about the looks...

Words **Cyril Kloppe**



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

2000 CHRYSLER PT CRUISER

American Bryan Nesbitt was obsessed with the cars of the 1930s, and when the wave of nostalgia hit the car industry with models such as the VW Beetle and the Mini Cooper, Bryan found his calling. His PT Cruiser looked great as a concept car, but something went wrong along the way. The size of the PT Cruiser's boot was praised in advertisements, but due to those chunky wheel arches, it's pretty tight inside.



2002 TATA TELCOLINE

We couldn't find the designer's name, but it was probably an engineer who valued function over form. Owners' feedback on this Indian bakkie is that it either keeps working forever or packs up well within its warranty period. Behind its boring lines and wheel hubs that stick out like pimples lies a sturdy chassis and a fairly solid body. However, many a Telcoline has had its engine replaced.



2010 NISSAN JUKE

The Juke is a product of Nissan's European design studio in London, but Shiro Nakamura at Nissan Japan signed off on it. The Juke was launched in Johannesburg in October 2011, and South Africans were divided by its appearance from the start.

Some Juke owners are like bull terrier parents – if you dare say something negative, you'll be corrected immediately. We expect to be set straight after writing these words.



1998 FIAT MULTIPLA

Italian designer Roberto Giolito wanted to create the ideal family vehicle, and he largely succeeded. The problem is that kids are bullied after Mom drops them off at school with a Multipla. It's a lovely ride, yes, but its front has been described as "that of a psychotic cartoon duck". The Multipla performed the worst in our poll.



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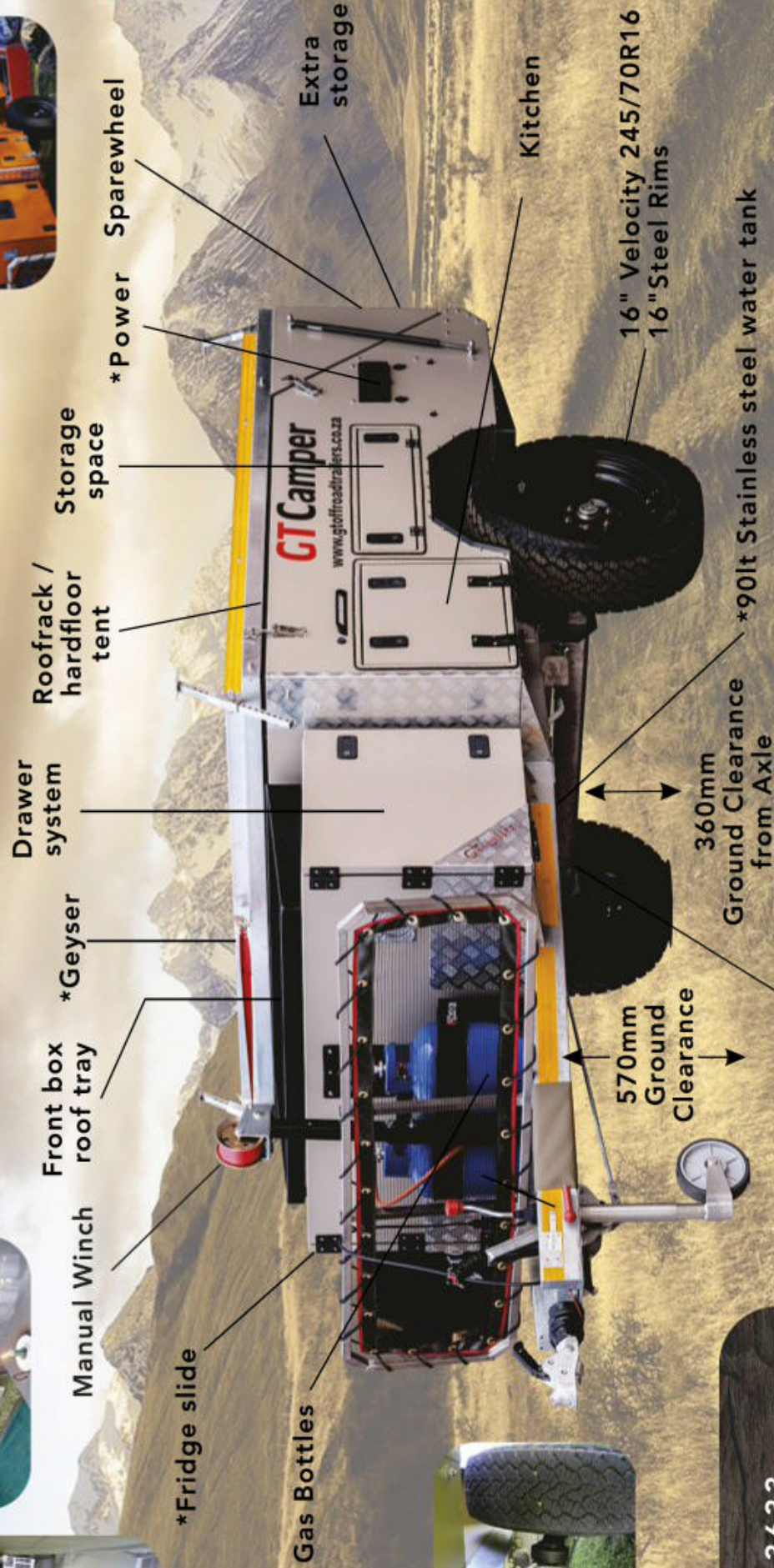
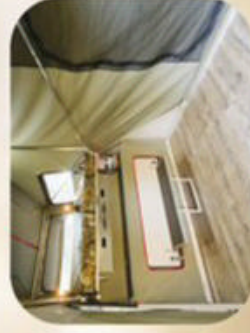
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