

#33

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APRIL 2020 | ISSUE 33

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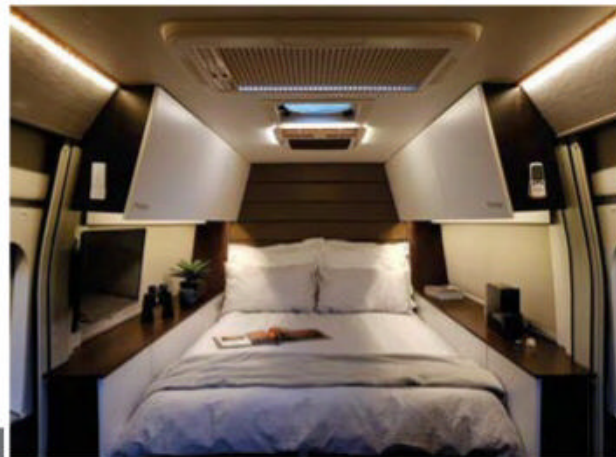
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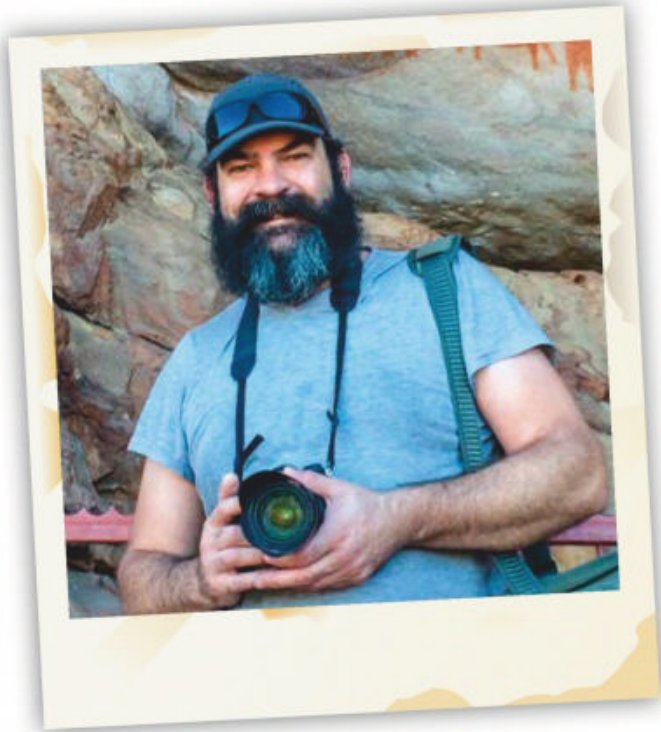
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# Rather turn around



“

If we arrive at a campsite and it fails the “Would I bring my mother here?” test, we rather turn around and camp elsewhere

”

When last, if ever, did you send someone a picture of a dirty toilet over WhatsApp? I ask, because I want to know if it's only our editorial team who does it.

We have a WhatsApp group where we chat among ourselves when we're not actually in the office. I'll be the first to admit that I'm not a huge fan of such groups, especially when two members decide to talk to each other about trivial matters.

But as for the *Drive & Camp* editorial team, it comes in handy when you need to know where the long-term test vehicle is parked and you're not sure who the last person was to drive it. Or if you need to quickly find out when last we camped in the Richards Bay area and who visited there last. Or when you want to let the rest of the team know that you'll be late because the trains have been cancelled (this happens when Eskom decides to cut off Prasa's power...).

These messages were all shared on our group over the past few weeks and it probably doesn't differ much from any other group where colleagues communicate.

But I had to smile when Cyril turned to WhatsApp while travelling. He started his message by saying the place he was at would not make it into the magazine, followed by a photo of a toilet and then two more pics of the remainder of the ablution facilities.

The photos were grim enough for us all to share in his pain. We didn't need to be there ourselves to experience the dilapidated and dirty amenities. Cyril ended with, “My mom wouldn't bath here.”

And that is an excellent summary of our approach to the places we visit. If we arrive at a campsite and it fails the “Would I bring my mother here?” test, we rather turn around and camp elsewhere.

We're not going to waste pages just to tell you how awful a place is when we'll be recommending you to avoid it anyway. We would rather use that space for the places we do want you to visit.

Don't let this stop you, though, from contacting us if you're unsure about a campsite. Email me about the place you're interested in, and I will be happy to let you know what it looked like the last time we visited.

Safe travels!

Schalk

EDITOR

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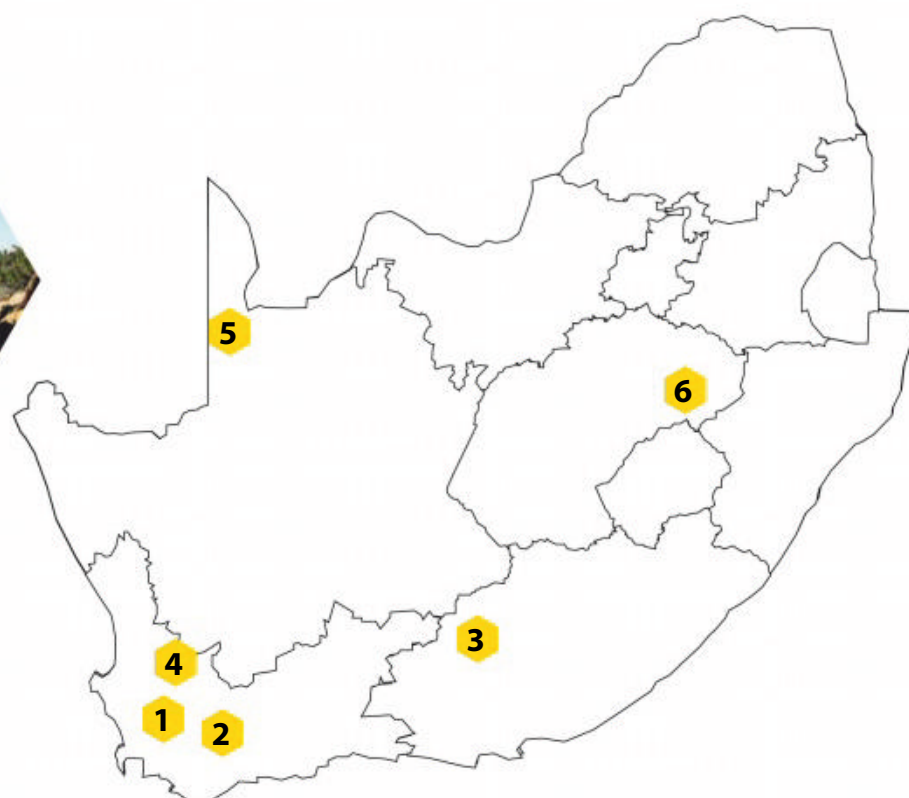
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### #33 COVER PHOTO – EVAN NAUDÉ

“On my first morning in the Kgalagadi I was greeted by this beautiful colour palette. Our tour group camped in a laager around this camelthorn tree and when the light turned a subtle shade of pink, I knew that it could become an attractive photograph. If you’ve ever camped in the Kgalagadi, you’ll know how special the mornings can be.”

**Camera settings** Nikon D6 1D; F6,5;  
 1/60th of a second; 12–24 mm; ISO 800





THE BEST WAY to fully experience the mountainous treats of the Baviaanskloof is with an off-road vehicle, but there are a few hidden places where no bakkie could possibly go. The Baviaans has several gorges and some, such as the Waterkloof pictured here, is easily reachable on foot. The 3 km long gorge penetrates the bowels of the Earth and emerges in a garden of ferns.

PHOTO EVAN NAUDÉ



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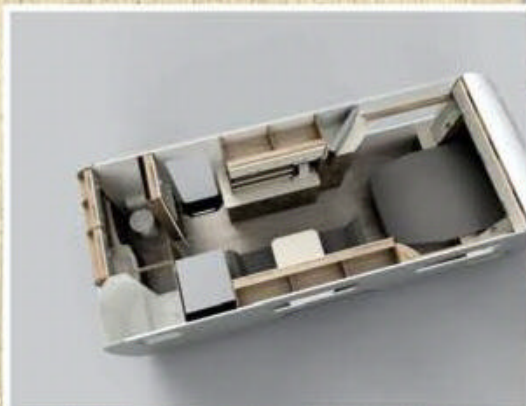
Low Profile with full bath-room. Dometic flush toilet, full shower, washup basin, built in water tank, with hot and cold water!



### CHATEAU



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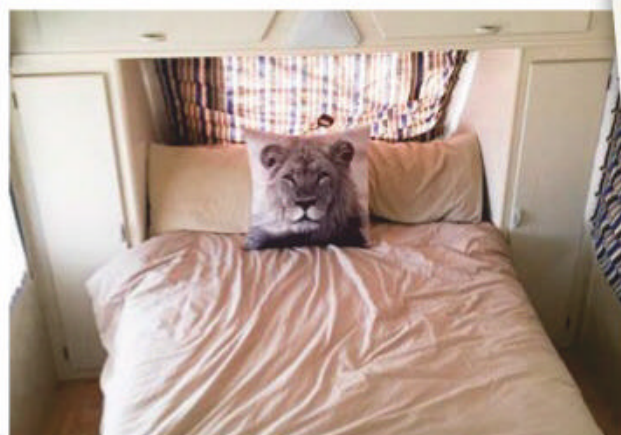
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We love hearing what's on your mind! Write to us at [drivecamp@gomag.co.za](mailto:drivecamp@gomag.co.za) and please remember to give your full address and contact details. Drive & Camp reserves the right to edit and shorten letters – and publish them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



## We discovered camping...

My wife, Christa, and I are avid travellers and have visited around 40 different countries in the past 30 years. As kids, we spent a lot of time in the Kruger – then as a young couple and later with our kids.

We used to stay in hotels, chalets or B&Bs until we went camping with friends a few years ago. That's when the caravanning bug bit us. We

bought a Sprite Swing and customised it to our needs.

We initially planned to use it for Kruger Park excursions but now that we've gained experience, we are planning longer and more frequent touring trips to different destinations.

We love the caravanning lifestyle for a number of reasons. Firstly is the

simplicity. Less is more. We have everything we need to be comfortable – an island bed, toilet, air-con, a fridge-freezer, four crates with groceries, an outside kitchen, cameras, binoculars, phones and a tablet with maps, a birding app, a banking app and one for the news. What else do you need to live a simple and happy life?

Secondly is the mobility.

You simply lock up your home and hit the road to explore new locations and make new friends. And see more sunsets, wildlife and nature.

We are blessed in SA to have many great camping facilities and road infrastructure to get us there. It's an affordable lifestyle – it's no wonder camping and touring through the country is growing.

## WINNING LETTER



**Lourens** 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 lunch box and a 1,5 l cool drink bottle. The lid also has space for a coffee flask. The interior is lined with PVC, which makes it easy to keep this bag clean and hygienic. The bag has a short strap that reaches over the top and attaches with a Velcro strip, and also 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](http://winkel.weg.co.za)







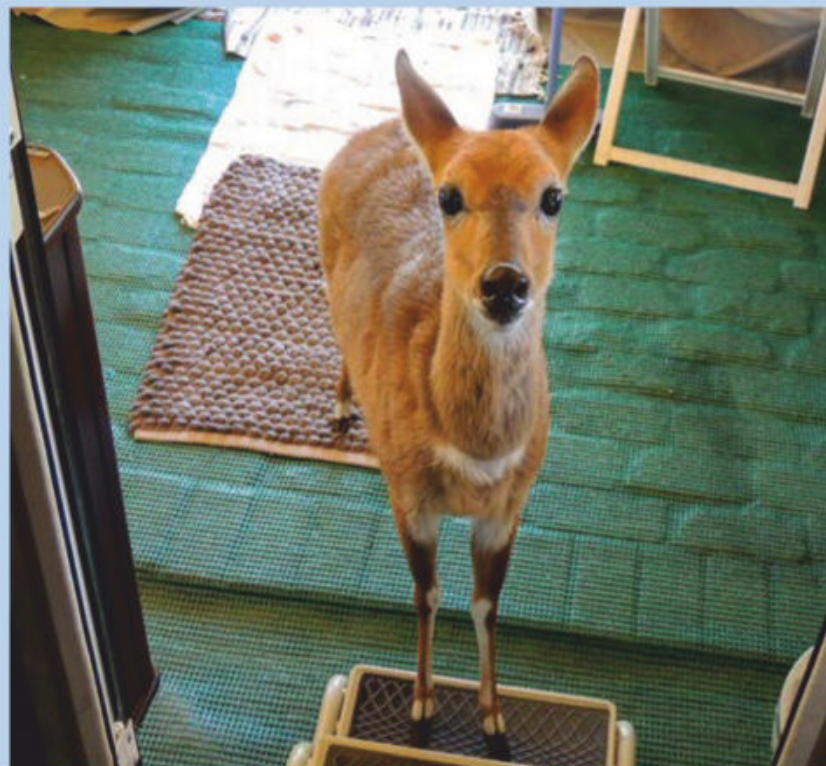
Lastly, you have the luxury of freedom and independence. Once the caravan is hitched, we can simply pick a route and start driving, knowing that our house is with us.

Having said that, we also enjoy planning in detail before a trip. In 2020, we're planning a south-to-north Kruger trip from Malelane to Punda

Maria, as well as a trip to the Kgalagadi and Etosha in the winter. In-between, we'll have short excursions to some local campsites, more Kruger and the beach.

Our theme is always travel light and live close to earth.

**LOURENS BOTHA**  
Pretoria



### Camp bakkie

I met this bushbuck at the Letaba camp in the Kruger and baptised her Bella.

She came to check me out every afternoon at exactly the same time.

That was usually when I opened my laptop to write a story, and she was good company and inspiration.

I even wrote something about this beautiful brown buck with her full-moon eyes.

It was the most precious moment when she looked so deeply into my eyes.

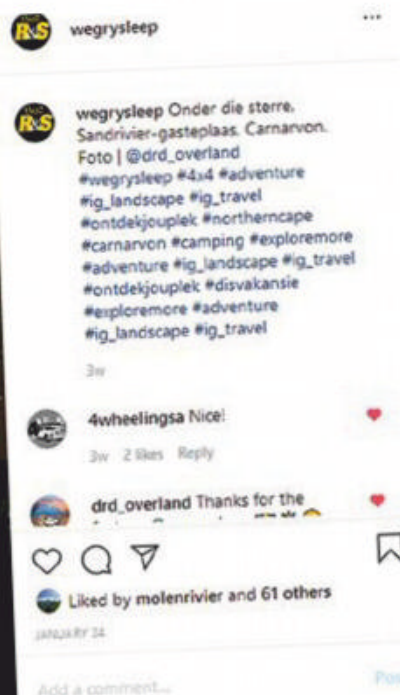
Bella became part of the family. She sometimes lay in front of our caravan at night, sleeping.

She was our caretaker and I was never afraid walking to the bathroom at night.

**ANTOINETTE SCHOEMAN**  
Riebeeckstad



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



### COMMENT OF THE MONTH!

When asked on Facebook what lessons you have learnt about camping equipment, **Leroy Venter** said you need to make a plan with your netted groundsheet: "Go to an engineering workshop and get six old engine valves. Peg in the flaps and it tightens the groundsheet so you won't stumble and bash your toes."

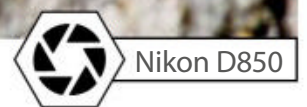




YOUR PHOTO



# In the moment



Two readers showcase their lovely memories  
– on a farm and in the fork of a tree...

By **Leon Botha**

## I can see you!

**Patience is key when you wait for the right moment in front of the lens, the way Dickey Wheeler from Horizon in Roodepoort did.**

*"We stayed at Balule in the Kruger and were on our way back from Satara that day. A large herd of buffalo caught the attention of several cars ahead of us – or that's what we thought at first. Only when we stopped and asked someone what they were looking at, did we see the leopard in the tree, but only his tail was visible. After a long wait – and after some of the cars had driven off – he turned and peeked at me."*

As Dickey explains, you can only see a tiny bit of the leopard, which is exactly what makes the photo stand out.

Because we're all familiar with a leopard, there's no need to see any more because your subconscious completes the picture without you really thinking about it.

Of course, you see the leopard's eye first – it is the focal point of the photo. But in the rest of the photo, it's the tree's bark that is almost overwhelming.

The pattern of the bark contrasts with the leopard's softer lines – and that places even greater emphasis on the leopard.

Dickey cropped the original shot in

a square format. Photos are usually horizontal (called landscape format) or vertical (portrait format). Square-format images can easily get boring unless you use strong compositional elements.

The front of the tree draws a vertical line through the centre of the photo and the branch in the background runs diagonally up to the leopard. It's the green twig in the foreground that makes all the difference.

Not only does it add colour, but it feels as if it's blocking your view and you want to move it away to better see the leopard. It's slightly bothersome, but gives the pic that bit of extra depth and turns it into a winning photo.



## Twin track to nowhere

Although the beach is calling, Danny Vermeulen from Doringkloof in Centurion still makes time to stop for a great photo along the way.

*"I took this picture on the farm Allendale in the Karoo just outside Graaff-Reinet. It was early morning, and after being inspired by a monochrome photo in your December issue, I decided to change my pic as well."*

By getting rid of the colour, Danny makes 'just another' photo a better photo.

The colour version looks like a pic for your family album, but the black and white version looks like it belongs in an art gallery.

At first, the windmill seems to be the focal point, but the twin track that passes it is visually stronger and leads your eye around the fence. Then when you focus there, there's not much to see and you have to stand back to appreciate it as a whole. This is how the photo really comes into its own, because the detail around the windmill and water tank – along with all the interesting shades in the air – makes this a work of art.



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 Tonga Camping Trailer

3 Uranium street, Unit 2,  
Triangle farm, Bellville

# TONGA



# More power

After the successful Grey Box and Black Box National Luna is happy to introduce the latest power concept: the Green Box.



For more than 15 years, our Portable Power Pack (dubbed: The Grey Box) has served the 4x4 community and outdoor market as a mobile source of electricity, as well as a stand-alone dual-battery system.

More recently, in 2017, we developed a stripped-down version of our Portable Power Pack, forgoing the dual-battery solenoid and opting for an affordable, customisable, auxiliary battery box with an array of power outlets. Of course, it wasn't long before the off-road community 'renamed' our auxiliary battery box 'The Black Box'.

Surprisingly, instead of cannibalising The

Visit [nationalluna.com](http://nationalluna.com) for more information, or call 011 452 5438 for pricing



Grey Box's sales, the Black Box found its own market of value-seeking buyers wanting the ability to customise their power needs.

What's more, the release of The Black Box quickly revealed yet another need in the 4x4 market. A select number of off-road travellers were now buying the National Luna 25 A DC-DC charger, and bolting it to the outside of their The Black Box system.

The demand was clearly indicating a need for a mobile dual-battery system with the added benefit of a built-in DC-DC charger, as well as the ability to connect solar energy. So, we developed our next portable-power solution: 'The Green Box'.

**The objective here was simple: create a complete plug-and-play mobile power solution that offers:**

- A class-leading DC-DC dual-battery system.
- Plug & Play solar input with 25 A MPPT regulator.
- The ability to charge wet-cell, AGM and lithium-ion batteries.
- A wide range of power ports and connections.
- Automatic compatibility with 12 V and 24 V vehicle electrical systems.
- A dedicated external charger port.
- A remote monitor that displays information about the system (optional accessory).
- The ability to operate in vehicles with intelligent alternators.

So, if you're looking for a portable-power pack and dual-battery system that is solar-ready and effortless to install, look no further than our Green Box – the most comprehensive mobile power solution we've ever developed.

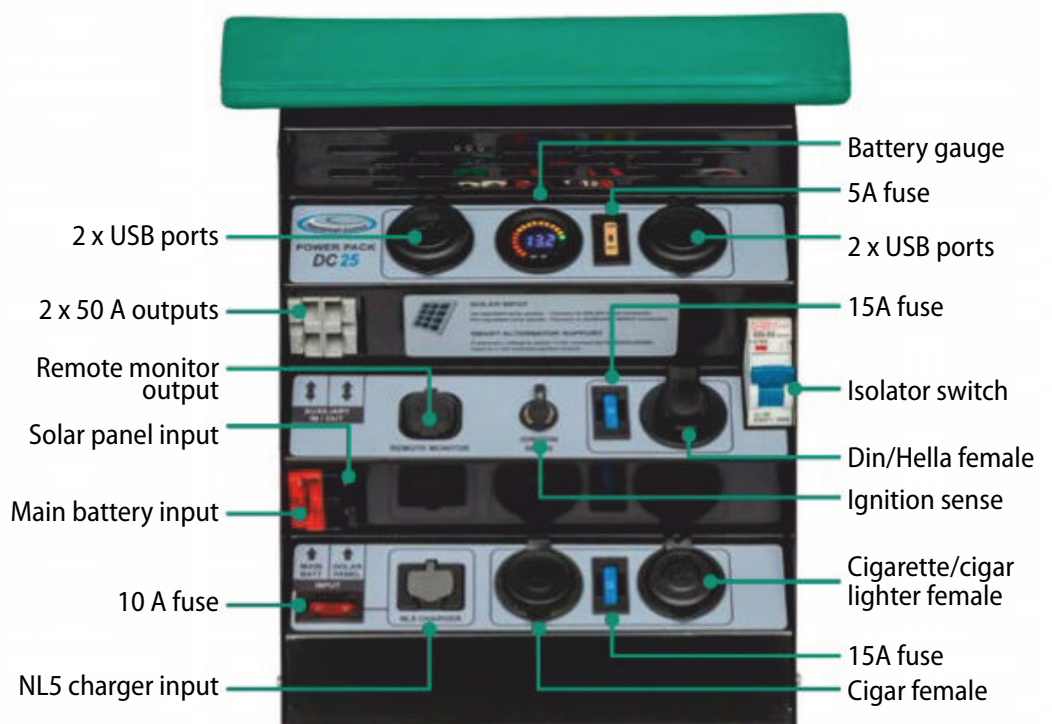
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*National Luna is a 33-year-old South African company that produces the world's largest selection of commercially available 12 V fridge/freezers, and a global distributor of more than 200 outdoor products and accessories.*



## FEATURES

- Simple installation.
- Compatible with 12 V and 24 V power supplies.
- Battery temperature charge compensation.
- Suitable for all 12 V lead-acid & lithium batteries.
- Built-in 25 A DC-DC converter & MPPT solar regulator.



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# Best in show

If you're a caravan manufacturer, February is show time. We visited the kykNET Buite Expo Western Cape outside Malmesbury and the Caravan Show in Midrand. Here are some new and revamped caravans that caught our eye.



## Think outside the box

A modular off-road trailer that fits together like building blocks until you have the camper that suits your needs is what Albre de Villiers of ADV Trailers in Centurion came up with.

The lower part of the trailer and the chassis looks a bit like a flatbed tow truck. On top of this sits a frame that fits up to four containers of equal size, each with a door at the end. Up to two roof tents can then fit on top of the frame with its containers, and when the roof tents are folded, a roof rack flattens over it.

The secret – and clever idea – behind this lies in the four containers. Each is oblong (1,3 x 0,6 x 0,6 m), and you can place one to four of them into the frame. The containers are empty and

you can therefore equip them with whatever makes your camping life convenient. Two of the container lids are located on the tail end of the camper and the other two on the front left.

An empty container works well as storage space for camping goods such as chairs, tables, a ground sheet and the like. Albre also makes other camping gear that fits in the boxes. An example is a double loading system that can fit up to six ammo crates. A fridge/freezer fits comfortably in a container on its sliding frame and the same goes for Albre's kitchen unit. It emerges from the trailer (and its box) like a typical outdoor kitchen and has a two-plate stove, microwave, a frame for a loose basin

and a drawer with sponge cut-outs for your camping mugs.

Albre also designed his own roof tent to go on top, one with entrances at the end and on the left. The framework is large enough for two roof tents facing each other.

The entire unit has supports like corner steadies that fold down. You pull out the trailer section from under the frame and leave it standing in the campsite while you load your quad onto the flatbed trailer.

**GVM** 1 800 kg

**Price** R120 000-R360 000

**Contact** 072 658 3811 [advtrailers.co.za](mailto:advtrailers.co.za)

[albre@silverx.co.za](mailto:albre@silverx.co.za)





## More options for Tonga

The Tonga fibreglass caravan, which is still relatively new to the market, has had a couple of new options added.

The Tonga's sliding kitchen is unique, but you can now also order one without a kitchen. Instead of the kitchen drawer, a door opens like a bonnet. This section has canvas and mesh windows and allows more air and light to pass through the caravan. With the kitchen unit, you get some shelves for clothes on the inside. Without it, that section at the top of the bed becomes one large open shelf.

Close to the coupler, the hull gets another door. It's a cooler box, complete with its own plug.

A water tank (40 ℓ) now fits in the back of the Tonga on the left. The tank's tap is outside – water runs at the push of a button.

Furthermore, the tent has been slightly adjusted. Previously, the canvas was pitched with fibreglass rods outside the tent. The new tent gets adjustable poles that stretches the tent from the inside and then fold up with the tent afterwards.

A fibreglass table with aluminium legs now fits in the door where the tent folds away.

**GVM** 750 kg

**Price** From R105 000

**Contact** 021 945 2142 or  
074 893 0748

tongasa.com

admin@tongasa.com







Bush Lapa has launched its first double-axle off-road caravan. According to the owner, Jannie Oeschger, he received numerous requests to build a large off-road caravan for four people, one without panels that fold down so there's no canvas between you and nature.

Thus the Graveloader does not have a folding bed, but a fixed queen-sized bed and two bunk beds for the little ones. Even the roof is solid without a pop-up section.

So, when you arrive at the campsite with your Graveloader, you just have to erect the awning – it couldn't be simpler (or faster).

The bathroom with its shower, toilet and basin is built into the caravan. Instead of Bush Lapa's regular inline gas geyser, the Graveloader gets a Hansen geyser, which is almost a scaled-down model of a regular domestic geyser. It is also the first Bush Lapa model to have a wardrobe and glass windows instead of mesh windows.

The outdoor kitchen not only has a longer worktop than the other models, but you also get twice as many cupboards in the hull. Instead of the usual cast-iron gas stove, there's a Dometic two-plate gas stove.

Like all other Bush Lapa models, the Graveloader is made of 3CR12 stainless steel and aluminium.

There are items such as air-conditioning that are optional, and you can choose whether to install one on the roof or inside, under one of the benches.

**GVM** 2 500 kg

**Price** From R592 250

**Contact** 021 871 1607 [bushlapa.com](http://bushlapa.com)

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## Aha, it's wheelchair friendly!

Aha Outdoor Systems is known for its bakkie campers, but has now built a caravan, the Mobile Cabin.

You don't use steps to get into the caravan, but a ramp – so people in a wheelchair can get up, too. The interior is also wheelchair friendly.

The entire kitchen is built into the nose side behind one big door. As you open the door, you have access to a sink-and-stove combination, your fridge/freezer, a shelf for groceries, and the in-line gas geyser on the far left. When you close the door, you still have access to the entire kitchen from the inside.

You can divide the interior of the Mobile Cabin into two: where the ramp comes in through the door is a huge shower area to the left, with a lovely big bed to the right. According to owner, Dawie Maas, the Mobile Cabin has the largest bed of all caravans (1,8 x 1,7 m, just smaller than king size).

Items such as air-con, the microwave, the fridge/freezer, a dual-battery system and two gas cylinders come standard.

For its size, the Mobile Cabin is light. Its nett weight is 660 kg and it has a gross vehicle mass of 750 kg. So you don't need a special driver's license to tow it.

**GVM** 750 kg

**Price** R385 250

**Contact** ☎ 012 804 6111 or 083 653 4642 📧 ahaweb.co.za

📧 info@ahaweb.co.za



Not only did Armadillo launch its latest model, the XTR302, but all existing models were also slightly updated.

The XTR302 gets a door directly across from the existing entry door – it is used for a dressing room and shower area. There are also no canvas panels between you and the outside after you pitch the caravan (except the shower tent section). You do, however, have a door that you can close at night.

Just as with the other models,

the spare wheel's storage space shifts from the chassis to the tail, and all the caravans now also have permanent plumbing and gas-pipe networks. A 3,5m awning is now standard as well – the same one fits all models.

The XTR302 is designed for two people, pitches within 15 minutes and fits in a standard garage.

**GVM** 1 800 kg

**Price** From R289 000

**Contact** ☎ 021 981 2992

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## A new caravan manufacturer makes waves

An experienced builder of cold stores has now used his knowledge and built an entire range of caravans he calls Scorpion Trailers.

JP Horn, owner of Insulated Trailer Designs, builds no less than four models. The Scorpion Lite is based on American teardrop-type caravans – a bed-on-wheels with the kitchen at the back. The Scorpion Classic is slightly larger but in the same style. It has a queen-sized bed, but also a three-quarter bed that folds out from one of the panels. The Scorpion Toy

Hauler has space for a bike or motorcycle, and the Grand, the largest of the four, is the full-sized caravan.

Because the Grand's outside kitchen is also fitted at the rear, the entire left panel, which usually houses the kitchen, is open. There is a shelf that folds out to house two loose plastic basins and a drying rack, and an open area on which you can place a TV.

The greatest luxury of the Grand is all the open space. There are two queen-sized beds,



one of which pulls from the caravan about halfway, like a drawer – which of course creates space in the caravan.

All Scorpions have a galvanised chassis, and the frame and panels are made of aluminium.

Lite R99 500; GVM 750 kg Classic R129 500; GVM 1 600 kg Toy Hauler R95 500; GVM 1 600 kg Grand R179 500; GVM 1 600 kg

**Contact** 081 2833 005 ✉scorpiontrailers.co.za ✉info@scorpiontrailers.co.za

## BorderX seizes an opportunity

BorderX is still new in the caravanning world, but few manufacturers will be able to better its new Extreme model's large door. Just about the entire back-end section is a door (1,2 x 1,2 m). Werner Pretorius says it was built this way to be wheelchair friendly. As you stand at the open door, the roof section extends above you with the floor area a little bit ahead of you, which makes it even easier to get in and out.

The Extreme has a stainless-steel chassis, independent suspension and two shock absorbers on each side. The panels consist mainly of synthetic materials and the cabinets inside are aluminium. You can customise the configuration to suit your



requirements. The queen-sized bed is built into the nose. The outside shower pops up to the right of the nose and the spare wheel includes a hub with its bearing.

With the pop-up roof down, the Extreme fits



into a standard garage.

**GVM** 1 300 kg or 1 600 kg

**Price** From R249 000

**Contact** 082 929 0824 ✉borderx.co.za ✉info@borderx.co.za





## Conqueror takes a new direction

Conqueror, known for its rigid off-road trailers and caravans, has now built a model halfway between the two styles of caravans and dubbed it the UEV Hybrid. (UEV stands for Urban Escape Vehicle and is already used for Conqueror's last off-road caravan series, but Hybrid refers to the blending of the two styles.)

The Hybrid is similar to Invader's Duo and the hull is similar to an old collapsible caravan because the roof with its pneumatic pillars lifts to create an interior. When the roof is raised, a bed pulls out with canvas around it that makes it part of the interior.

Conqueror's Philip de Vries says the concept is nothing new, but this one was built as a prototype to see the market's reaction. What isn't immediately apparent is that all the storage space outside can also be reached from the inside. This means you can pack the caravan in a confined space – such as your garage – without pulling it out.

The building materials are the same as those used by Conqueror on its existing UEV range and includes independent suspension with dual shock absorbers. Like the Companion model, the Hybrid gets a pop-up shower at the back.

**GVM** Not yet determined, but it should be in the region of 1 500 kg.

**Price** R299 000

**Contact** ☎ 016 349 6533 📧 conqueror.co.za 📧 info@conqueror.co.za



## Vagabond roughs it up

The Vagabond, based on the traditional teardrop design and made entirely of fibreglass, has acquired a third model, the Rogue. It's designed for off-road conditions.

The Rogue comes standard with a 12 V-220 V fridge/freezer and extra storage space in the kitchen. The stove moves away from the kitchen to the corner of the left-hand panel obviously creating more space for the kitchen. The stove itself fits on a sliding frame that you can pull away from the hull so you don't get greasy spots on the hull. When you tow, the stove's table folds away and the stove comes loose from the frame. So you can transport it in the caravan.

Below the kitchen, to the left, the Rogue gets extra storage space for an ammo box. The gas cylinder gets a cool stand on the mudguard and it even has rock sliders for the day you're deep in the bush.

**GVM** 750 kg or 1 400 kg

**Price** R169 950

**Contact** ☎ 074 601 0271

📧 vagabondsa.co.za

📧 bryce@vagabondsa.co.za





## Stealth gets onto a bakkie



Stealth has properly established itself in the marketplace in the past year or two. Now, says owner Garry Coady, they have gone back to its roots with the new Bakkie Mate. They originally wanted to kick off with a bakkie camper, but as they began to build caravans, that gained momentum and the Bakkie Mate got left behind... until now, that is.

The Bakkie Mate consists of a monocoque frame originally consisting of two fibreglass sections that are bonded together – the way some boats are made. To make the Bakkie Mate lighter, the panels are not made of composite materials, but fibreglass. An empty unit weighs about 500 kg, which means you still have a good 250 kg load weight when you look at the average double-cab loading capacity. To achieve equilibrium, the unit's centre of gravity is kept above the wheel, regardless of whether it sits on top of a long or short loading bay or that of a double cab.

Supports for removing the unit so you can leave it in the campsite are an optional extra. The bed is king size and you can change it into a double bed by packing the mattress components differently.

In addition to Stealth's existing caravan series, it has also launched a Sprinter series. This is a lighter and cheaper version of the XR model – there's a steel chassis with an e-coat layer, less insulation on the nose and rear (though it still meets market requirements), and there's no sliding kitchen or gas appliances.

A loose basin and drying rack fit into a frame next to the hull and an induction plate is standard. The sliding doors for the interior cabinets have been disposed of and you get a full wardrobe to the right of the bed where the other model has a bedside cabinet.

Bakkie Mate R199 500; dry weight 460-480 kg

Sprinter From R279 500; GVM 1 400 kg

**Contact** [stealthcaravans.co.za](http://stealthcaravans.co.za)



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Naboomspruit 014-743-0226

\*Prices valid from 1 April 2020 until 30 June 2020 while stocks last.  
\*Namibian prices will differ as a result of import and transport costs.





## New Exclusive shows itself

Jurgens recently revamped its range, but not all models changed at once. First up was the popular Penta, and now the grand master of the series, the Exclusive, has had its chance.

It retained its distinctive double axle, but instead of the dark strip at the bottom of the hull you associate with the older Jurgens models, the newcomer is completely white. The door used to sit near the rear before, but now moves forward, between the wheels and the A-frame. In addition, the outdoor kitchen extends just above the wheels, and the microwave is now larger at 28 l.

Because the door has moved, the interior layout looks completely different. The bathroom was previously in the back section

with the bed by the nose. Now the dinette is in the nose and the bedroom in the rear. The bathroom has moved to the centre of the caravan and includes a cassette toilet, shower and basin.

Just like the Penta, the rest of the Jurgens series will now also come without gas and you cook on an induction plate. The Exclusive also has no other 12 V appliances. The fridge works with 220 V power.

**GVM** Not available at the time of going to print.

**Price** Not available.

**Contact** ☎ 080 001 4802





# Summit gets a redo

Summit has completely redesigned its flagship, the Kilimanjaro, says Francois Mulock Houwer.

The dinette has moved to the front left, and the bed – which extends wall to wall – got six large drawers underneath. The new windows can open outwards with screens and blinds included.

The Kilimanjaro now also has room for a cassette toilet, and the mechanical pop-up roof has an electric mechanism. But the fanciest change is the pull-out stairs with its strip lights. Each stair has a strip of light on the side so you can see where to step.

The Kilimanjaro's kitchen drawer is close to the rear.

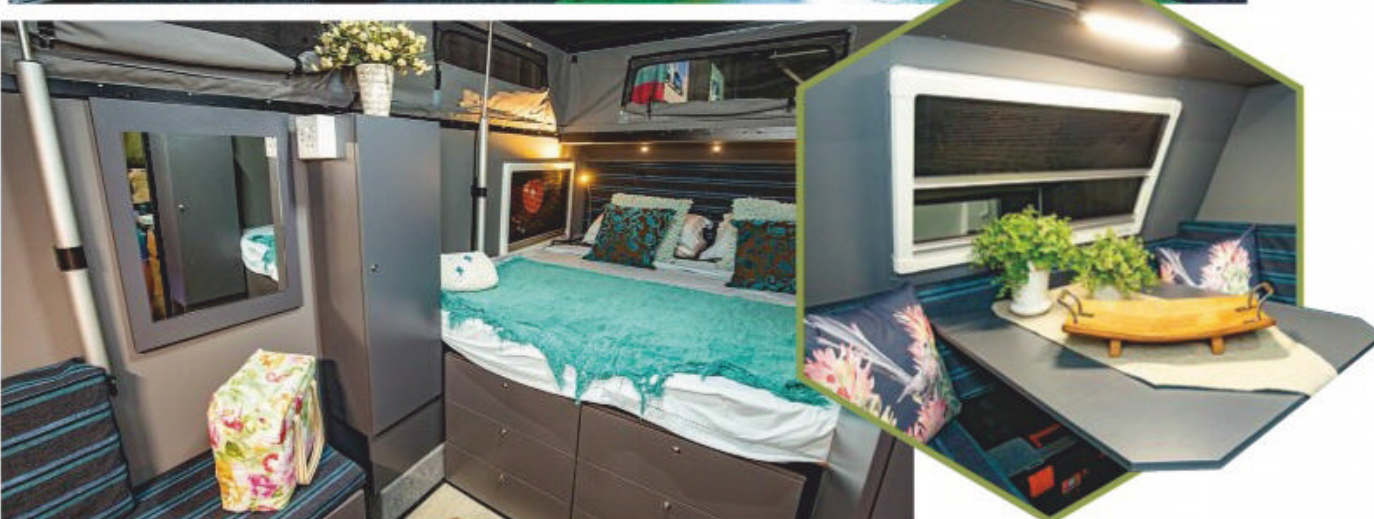
**GVM** 1 650 kg

**Price** R386 900

**Contact** 012 329 2259

pretoriacaravans.co.za

adri@pretoriacaravans.co.za



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| DESCRIPTION              | X-Country 533 | X-Country 594 |
|--------------------------|---------------|---------------|
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| GROSS VEHICLE MASS (GVM) | 1600 kg       | 1600 kg       |
| HEIGHT                   | 2 200 mm      | 2 200 mm      |
| WIDTH                    | 2 400 mm      | 2 400 mm      |
| LENGTH                   | 5 276 mm      | 5 926 mm      |
| PAYLOAD                  | 420 kg        | 320 kg        |
| BERTHS                   | 3             | 4             |



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## Badger builds unique bakkie camper



After Badger recently launched four caravans, it also revealed its Camper – a bakkie camper.

You could say it's a Badger caravan without wheels that fits onto the back of a bakkie, but it is 10 cm narrower than the caravan's 170 cm. Still, the layout remains essentially the same – including the unique

right panel that pulls out as a whole to form part of the bed. Unlike the king-size in the caravans, the Camper has a double bed.

The bakkie camper has the same 12 V-220 V power system as the caravans. The outdoor kitchen, a compact version of those in the caravans, still pulls left out of the hull at the rear. The fridge is located

inside close to the cab, and the Camper gets supports on which it can stand on its own in the campsite.

**Dry weight** 225 kg

**Price** R115 000

**Contact** 082 490 1117

badgercaravans.co.za

adventure@badgercaravans.co.za





# Unipod changes panels

UniPod Toy Haulers builds 'caravans' with which you can also carry your big toys. The caravans, therefore, have room to load your motorbike, for example, and once offloaded, that's space for a bed.

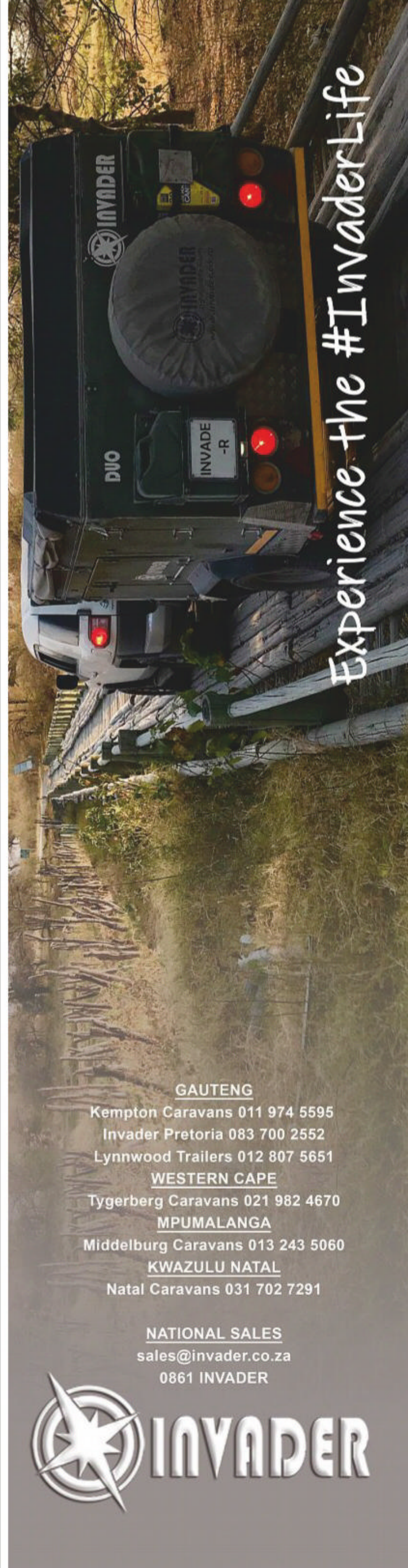
The BushPod XL is such a model, but Brandon Hardie explains the interlayer panels have been changed to fibreglass outer layers with a synthetic honeycomb interior.

Furthermore, the bare aluminium strips now get a powder coating, and the pop-up roof – which pops up at the back where you get in – is 60 cm wider than before. This creates more space in the caravan, although they kept the double bed.

**GVM** 1 500 kg

**Price** R199 500

**Contact** 072 192 2845 [unipod.co.za](mailto:sales@unipod.co.za)  
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# Mobi Lodge gets a new look

Part of the ever-popular Mobi Lodge is the fibreglass caravan's sand colour finish. Now, says Leon Ras, his 2020 models are changing to white and there are more changes.

One is a panoramic window in the left panel above the outdoor kitchen. According to Leon, it is popular with customers, who speak of the Mobi Lodge's 'big screen'.

Other than an awning that spans over the kitchen area, a similar roof now fits over the sliding bed on the other side of the hull. Buyers also get an option for a bed that extends electrically – ideal for people in a wheelchair. The awning area has been equipped so it can now also be enclosed as a room.

The frame in which the sink and drying rack fit also changes to two stainless steel sinks with a fold-up glass top. And the brakes, previously rated for 2,5 t, can now handle 2,8 t. Nevertheless, the GVM remains unchanged.

**GVM** 1 750 kg or 1 950 kg

**Price** From R478 000

**Contact** 082 899 9999

[mobilodge.com](http://mobilodge.com)

[leon@mobilodge.com](mailto:leon@mobilodge.com)







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# Gray's now even safer

Fred Oosthuizen's Gray caravan is one of the heaviest and largest caravans on the road. At 8 m in length with a GVM of 2 500kg you need a huge towing vehicle.

The caravan is much like a hotel suite, but Fred has made a few more changes. The anti-swing coupler and Al-Ko Trailer Control are now standard. The microwave that stood inside moved outside and has its own cupboard just to the left of the door.

Fred allows custom changes when it comes to interior finishes and colour schemes. The basin, which previously



pulled from the hull on the left, now moves closer to the rear, and an induction plate now sits where the basin was.

**GVM** 2 500 kg

**Price** From R525 000

**Contact** 084 470 0802

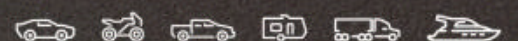
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# Okto offers more of a choice

Okto is one of the newer caravan manufacturers with two models: the Villa and Cabana. Now they have a variant of both models.

The Villa En-Suite is a Villa with a bathroom. That sits in the rear, close to the door, instead of the dinette. As you stand in front of the bathroom, the shower cubicle is to the left, the basin in the middle with the cassette toilet to the far right against the wall. Woody Loftus, who oversees the marketing of Okto, says it's now the only road caravan with a pop-up roof that has a built-in bathroom.

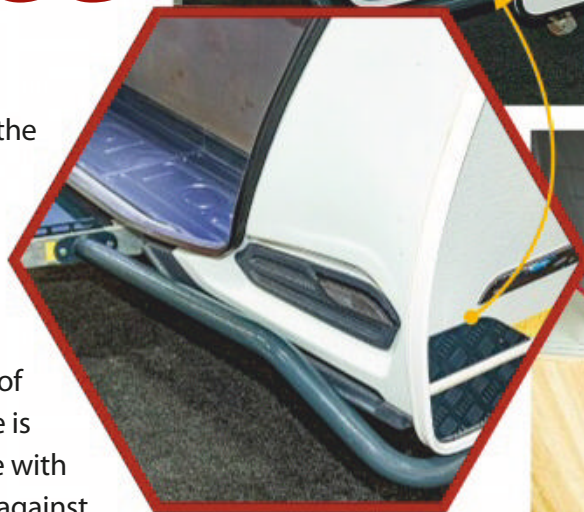
Because the fridge is next to the bathroom, this door has also been changed to open from the right.

The new Gravellor has the same layout as the Cabana, but you can take it on a gravel road. The chassis is reinforced and the caravan has 15" wheels instead of the 14" versions. The Gravellor also has a pressure vent in the roof that helps keep the dust out of the caravan as you tow. It also boasts mud flaps and tread plate at the bottom of the panels as well as a bullbar around the nose. The fibreglass cover over the coupler has been replaced with a flat plate surface on which you can load a bag wood or two.

Another new addition is a geyser and water tank plus a shower head with its extension in the right panel alongside which you can pitch a shower tent.

Villa En-Suite R389 000; GVM 1 500 kg  
Gravellor R389 000; GVM 1 700 kg

**Contact** 084 471 9674 info@okto.bz  
oktocaravans.co.za



**ROUGH STUFF** The Gravellor's 15" wheels, tread plate and bull bar better prepares the caravan for dirt roads.





# GT Campers 'build' a play room

Unlike other off-road trailers, GT Campers' ones have a unique feature: the section that folds over to allow the tent to unfold on top becomes the floor of the tent room.

Now the owners have taken the tent a little further with the Libra model: another tent room is fixed at the front of the existing tent – they speak of a 'children's room'.

The three kitchen drawers that previously pulled from the nose cone now get an extra drawer to fit all your cutlery and spices.

The geyser built into the front cupboard on the right-hand side of the caravan now sits on a sliding frame, and a pulley system sits on the A-frame so you can pitch and collapse the tent on your own.

**GVM** 1 500 kg

**Price** From R152 000

**Contact** 012 770 3633

gtoffroadtrailers.co.za

sales@gtoffroadtrailers.co.za



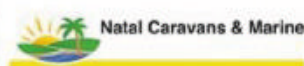
Discoverer 4 | Discoverer 6 | Discoverer iD\* | Discoverer Deluxe\* | Discoverer Xtreme 4x4

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# Panther's Onca is here

Panther, known for its small fibreglass caravans, has built its first full-sized road caravan, the Onca. Owner Martin van der Westhuizen explains that though the smaller caravans are popular, some of his customers are looking for 'everything' in a caravan.

At the rear-end is a built-in island bed, and as you get in, the small dinette is to the left with the fridge in the far corner. Manufacturers usually place the fridge above or near the axle, but Martin says the fridge is light enough to be where it is. The following new models will get a larger dinette so it can fold out as a single bed. The fridge will also move and be replaced by a double-door model.

The outdoor kitchen is above the left wheel and the caravan has no gas equipment – the Onca gets an induction stove.

Like Panther's small caravans, the Onca consists mainly of fibreglass.

**GVM** 1 320 kg

**Price** R279 900

**Contact** 082 416 2578 [pantheraa.co.za](http://pantheraa.co.za) [martinpanthercc@gmail.com](mailto:martinpanthercc@gmail.com)



## Okapi makes storage space

After Nayela introduced its Okapi last year, it has made a few minor changes.

The outdoor kitchen's crockery cupboard is deeper, and the door at the back that you could open from the inside to get to it is now a permanent panel. The wardrobe near the far corner of the bed gets shelves – previously it had hanging space.

The lower section of the Okapi's hull is charcoal in colour, but you can also choose khaki.

**GVM** 1 750 kg

**Price** R495 000

**Contact** 058 863 1027 [nayela.co.za](http://nayela.co.za)  
[info@nayela.co.za](mailto:info@nayela.co.za)







## Motorhome-World's first panel van

The Discoverer range of Motorhome-World's products has a newcomer. Dennis Bouwers, co-owner of Motorhome-World, says it's the first time they've made a panel-van conversion as part of its range.

The Discoverer Journey takes shape in a Fiat Ducato panel van, and even though it is one of the cheapest products they offer, the same high-quality finish applies to the Journey.

The entire rear section is two benches across from each other that fold together to form a huge bed.

If you open the back doors, you can fit a tent here in case you want

to add another 'room'.

As in many other motorhomes, the front seats swivel to look back toward the interior.

The door where you get in is obviously a large sliding door in the left panel, and has a mesh section over the opening to keep insects out. The same goes for the front side windows and the windshield has a blind to make it private.

**GVM** 3, 500 kg

**Price** From R849 850

**Contact** 021 577 3863

motorhome-world.com

info@motorhome-world.com



## Chobe's steel nose is gone

The Chobe is one of Echo4x4's most popular off-road caravans, but its angular nose box now makes way for a fibreglass one. It makes sense, as the new box has a more fashionable shape and is made of the same material as the hull. Not only does it give the Chobe a nicer look, but with the fibreglass cone, the Chobe also weighs a few kilos less.

**GVM** 1 500 kg

**Price** From R273 000

**Contact** 012 345 3333 echo4x4.co.za

echoacc@echo4x4.co.za





# Quantum builds its dream caravan

Quantum, that focuses on luxury fixed-roof caravans, has added two more models to its range of four.

The new Oasis takes over as flagship model from the Grand Infinity and is manufactured to order only. At 8,385 mm, it is more than a meter longer than the Grand Infinity, but both come standard with roughly the same accessories.

The Grand Infinity can accommodate up to three people, while the Oasis has a bunk bed for two – thus a total of four people can sleep in it. The bathroom is not a combined unit either – the toilet is now on its own.

Outside at the rear is a cupboard that's already wired for a TV.

On the other side of the rear, a bicycle rack sits on a sliding frame from the hull when the bunk bed inside is collapsed.

From now on, all Quantum models come with a modular awning with side panels that zip together. This means you can place a door panel wherever you want or add more.

The Quantum Comfort also gets a variant, the Comfort Family. Four people sleep in the Comfort, but the newcomer has room for two more.

Quantum Oasis R625 000; GVM 2 095 kg  
Quantum Comfort Family R369 000; GVM 1 660 kg

Contact [quantumleisure.co.za](mailto:quantumleisure.co.za)

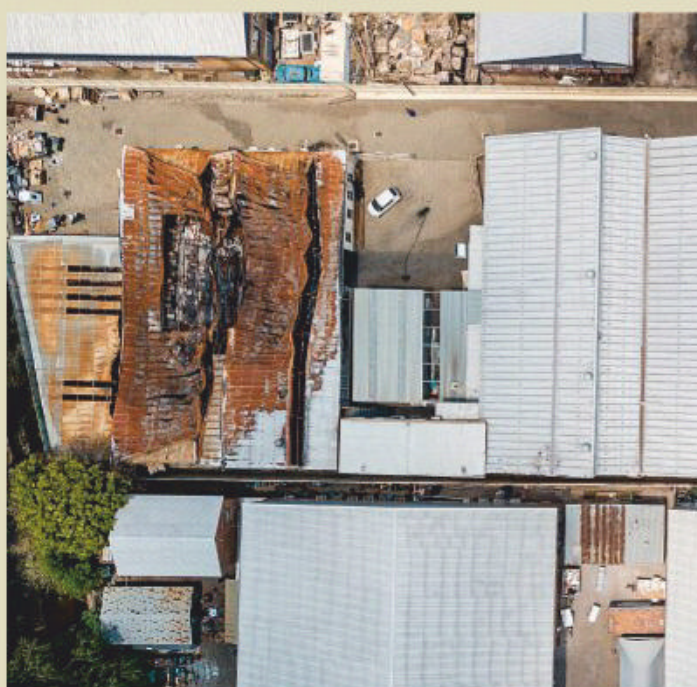


## National Luna on the road to recovery

A large section of National Luna's plant burnt to the ground in November last year. The factory consists of seven buildings, two of which were destroyed – with everything in it. Customers whose fridges were at National Luna for service and repairs got the unpleasant news about their December holiday plans.

The good news is that the buildings are being rebuilt and National Luna is temporarily renting another building to keep up with its orders from America, Australia, the Far East and South Africa.

Customers who lost their fridges will be given a brand-new one with a new three-year warranty.





# The French return

If you're older than 40, you probably remember the Peugeot 404 and 504 bakkies built in South Africa in the 1970s. They were initially built by PACSA (Peugeot and Citroën South Africa), but after Peugeot left South Africa in 1979, the Sigma Motor Company took over.

Sigma merged with Ford to form Samcor in 1985, and the Peugeot 404 and 504 pickups was discontinued.

In November last year, we reported that Peugeot's bakkie is returning to South Africa after a 35-year absence. The French manufacturer has just unveiled photos and specifications for this bakkie. As we reported, the Peugeot Landtrek has indeed been developed in collaboration with Changan Motors in China, and Nissan's D23 platform will be used. The D23 already forms the base for Nissan's own Navara, the Renault Alaskan, Kaicene F70 and Mercedes-Benz X-Class, which was recently killed off.

Peugeot wants to take on the three big ones, but it's unlikely they scare Ford, Toyota or Isuzu. These are the specifications of the Landtrek as provided by Peugeot:

- The double-cab version will be 5,33 m long and the single cabin 5,39 m, and 1,92 m wide.
- The double cab's load bin takes two 'Euro' cargo pallets (1 630 x 1 600 x 500 mm) and the single cabin takes three (2 430 x 1 600 x 500 mm).
- The single-cab version's tailgate can open 180 ° and hang straight down.
- The loading capacity of the double cab is more than 1 t and that of the single cabin 1,2 t.



The towing weight is estimated to be 3 t.

- The load bin is lit by LED strips and there is a 12 V power socket.
- The interior is strongly reminiscent of the Peugeot 3008 SUV and the company's flagship vehicle, the 508.
- In the double-cab model, the rear seats can fold down (60/40) so you can load camping equipment on them (up to 100 kg).
- In the front, you can choose between two seats or a Multiflex three-seater. The latter was inspired by Peugeot's delivery vehicles.
- In the version with the three seater, there will be seating for six passengers and there are six airbags for everyone's safety.
- There will be an impressive 27 ℓ of storage space scattered throughout the cabin where all kinds of loose items can be stored.
- Gadgets including USB sockets, Bluetooth connectivity, dual air-conditioning, a 10 GB hard drive and Apple CarPlay as well as Android Auto come standard.
- Electronic safety devices include traction

control, anti-sway trailer control, anti-lock brakes and lane control.

- The Landtrek can be equipped with one to four cameras that keep a 360 ° eye on the road.
- The wading depth is 600 mm, it has a ground clearance of 235 mm and the approach and departure angles are 30 ° and 27 °.

The Landtrek is powered by a 1,9 ℓ turbodiesel engine (16 valves) producing 350 Nm of torque, and a 2,4 ℓ petrol engine producing 157 kW. When it comes to gearboxes, you can choose between a six-speed Getrag manual transmission and a six-speed Punch automatic transmission with a Sport and Eco mode. The Landtrek is available in rear-wheel drive or part-time four-wheel drive with high- and low-range gears. Both versions have an eLocker diff lock on the rear axle.

The Landtrek is coming to South Africa in 2021, but the company has not yet confirmed whether we will get the turbodiesel as well as the petrol versions with the same specifications as above.





# Make ice at home or in your campsite

No matter how prepped you are as a camper, or how heavily laden your vehicle may be, one of two things are bound to happen on every camping trip: you're either going to run out of ice or firewood.

**I**t's no surprise then that a portable ice maker is the one product we've received the most requests for.

Although we were keen to fill this portion of the market, we had some concerns about launching an ice maker in South Africa, and the most important one was: heat!

The biggest problem facing many ice makers and camping fridges that are designed and developed in Europe and China, is that most of them are not designed to cope with our summer heat.

Generally speaking, the bulk of these products are rated at a 24 °C ambient temperature – and as we all know, most places in South Africa reach those figures on an average winters day, never mind a summer one. (This is why all our camping fridges are tested and developed to 43 °C tropical specifications)

**With this in mind, when we began the process of sourcing and developing a portable ice machine, we felt that four essential requirements had to be met:**

1. We wanted the biggest compressor possible (to make ice fast).
2. We wanted the unit to be able to operate in a +40 °C ambient temperature.
3. We wanted the unit to be compact and lightweight.
4. We wanted a durable stainless-steel finish.

Fortunately, we were able to meet all of these requirements, opting for a 12 kg (per day) ice maker that would be just as useful at home as it is in a campsite.



Visit [nationalluna.com](https://nationalluna.com) for more information, or call 011 452 5438 for pricing



## SOME OF THE ICE MAKER'S NOTABLE FEATURES INCLUDE...

- National Luna-approved compressor.
- Removable ice bucket and scoop.
- Low-water indicator.
- Stainless-steel finish.
- 'Ice-full indicator' with automatic restart.
- Bullet-shaped ice with two size options (large and small).
- A cycle time of 6 to 13 minutes.
- Making 12 kg of ice in 24 hours.
- A 2,2 litre water tank.
- An operating ambient temperature of 10 °C to 43 °C.
- Dimensions of (w x d x h) 242 mm x 358 mm x 328 mm.
- A net weight of 7.8 kg.
- Power supply: 220 - 240 V, 220 W.



## FAQ: IS THE NATIONAL LUNA ICE MAKER AVAILABLE IN A 12V OPTION?

Although we explored the idea of developing an ice maker that can operate on 12 V as well as 220 V power sources, the reality is that such a unit would cost five to eight times more. Which would also put it in the same price range as a full-blown camping fridge.

In addition, without adequate insulation (which would greatly add to the units size), a 12V ice maker would draw impractical levels of electricity from your vehicles' battery.

In general, most well equipped campsites offer 220 V power, but for those of you who would still like to run the NL12 Ice Maker on battery power, you'd need at least a 1 000 W pure sine-wave inverter.

*National Luna is a 33-year-old South African company that produces the world's largest selection of commercially available 12 V fridge/freezers, and a global distributor of more than 200 outdoor products and accessories.*



or to find a distributor near you. Prices may vary.





# Diwali in the Karoo

The Mahindra Pik Up range's new flagship model, the S11 Karoo, got an automatic transmission, and **Cyril Klopper** got a chance to take this bakkie for a drive.

**M**ahindra is filled with renewed confidence in its Pik Up after testing the reliability of a new automatic transmission for a whole year at the Gerotek testing facility outside Pretoria.

"South Africa is the first country in the world to officially launch the all-new Pik Up Automatic, which is only fitting, since it was the test bed for this model. There has been an overwhelming demand for an automatic transmission in our bakkie range, and we believe we have the perfect answer with the S11 and S11 Karoo AT," says Rajesh Gupta, CEO of Mahindra South Africa.

The gearbox wasn't developed by Mahindra itself, but supplied by Aisin Seiki (formerly Aisin-Warner), who supplies gearboxes to manufacturers including Toyota, Suzuki, Jeep and Volkswagen.

"Our market research showed that South Africans prefer

an automatic transmission in their double-cab bakkies, which is why we now use it in our luxury bakkies."

## How's the drive?

When you accelerate normally, the gearbox shifts smoothly – sometimes you almost can't tell it's onto the next gear. But when you push it, the changes are more noticeable.

Mahindra's 2.2 mHawk turbodiesel remains unchanged, but it fits well with the new gearbox. We can't really think of a reason why anyone would choose a manual transmission over this automatic box, except for the R47 500 price difference, of course.

The Pik Up still feels like a bakkie and doesn't try to equal the ride quality of a sedan the way the Volkswagen Amarok does. The body rolls slightly through corners and the suspension doesn't conceal too many of the flaws in the road surface – which is how things should be with a bakkie.

At the launch in Gauteng, we were given the opportunity to tackle moderate 4x4 obstacles, but nothing an ordinary two-wheel drive bakkie wouldn't also cope with. We sometimes deliberately made it harder for ourselves by picking a wrong line through an obstacle – in two-wheel drive – and then we could feel the mechanical diff lock kick in. The diff lock is Mahindra's own part, but it was developed in collaboration with Eaton, an American company that has been building axles and diff locks since 1911.

## What about its looks?

The first Pik Up Karoo (with manual gears back then) was launched in 2018, in celebration of the opening of Mahindra's Durban plant. The name was chosen to reflect Mahindra's dedication to South Africa. The Karoo version has all the luxuries of the regular S11 Pik Up, but it also has a lockable load-bin lid that rolls open, and the load bin itself is covered in a durable rubber coating. The alloy wheel rims with fancy silver and black spokes are also unique to the Karoo.

The grille, front bumper and headlights are new, while the roll- and nudge bar has the name Karoo etched into them. There are even stickers on the doors depicting the silhouette of a Karoo landscape – complete with





hills and a sweet thorn tree!

Inside, the S11 Karoo gets a 7" touchscreen with a multimedia player, satellite navigation, Bluetooth connectivity and the image seen by the rear camera in the tailgate. The air-conditioning has been updated with a thermometer that maintains the indoor temperature the way you like it – an improvement on the previous version you had to set manually. The steering wheel now has buttons for the media player, your phone and cruise control.

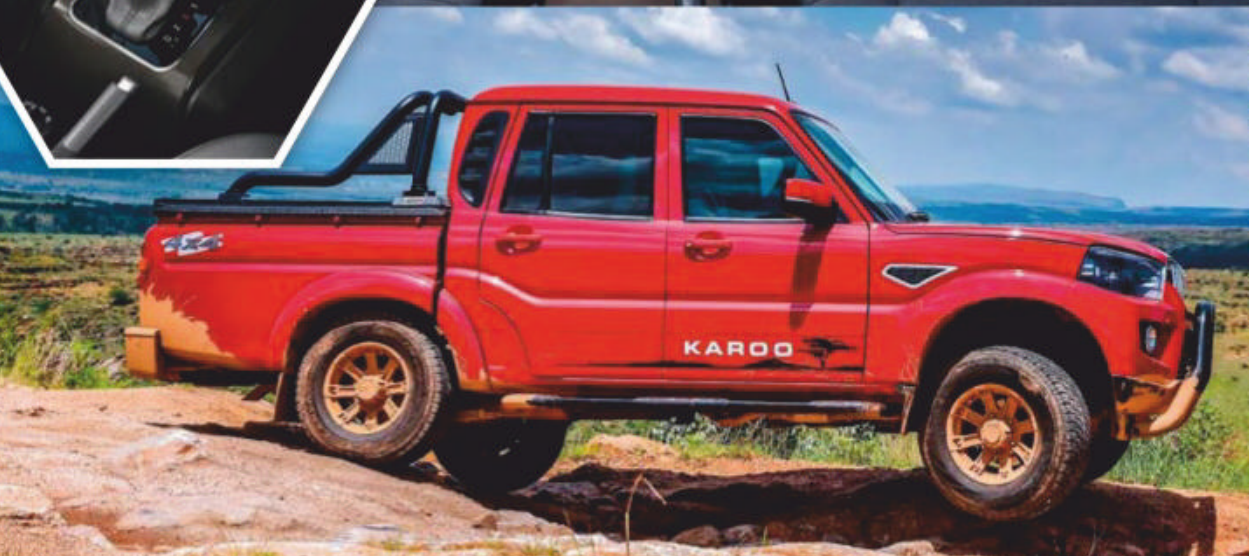
In terms of safety, however, Mahindra is

still something of a Third World product, as its bakkies have only two airbags (as opposed to the Ford Ranger's five, for example) and few electronic safety aids. Where the Ranger, Toyota Hilux and Isuzu D-Max boast features such as traction control, the Pik Up has only ordinary ABS and EBD – hence the average three-star rating from the Australian NCAP crash test performed in 2012.

The automatic Pik Up nevertheless seems to be excellent value for money, and despite our short time spent in the Karoo, we have no problem recommending it.

## SPECIFICATIONS

|                                            |                                      |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Model tested</b> .....                  | Mahindra Pik Up S11 4x4 Karoo (auto) |
| <b>Engine</b> .....                        | 2 179 cc, four-cylinder turbodiesel  |
| <b>Power</b> .....                         | 103 kW @ 3 750 rpm                   |
| <b>Torque</b> .....                        | 320 Nm @ 1 500 rpm                   |
| <b>Gearbox</b> .....                       | 6-speed automatic                    |
| <b>Tank</b> .....                          | 80 l                                 |
| <b>Fuel consumption</b> .....              | 7,9 l/100 km                         |
| <b>Cargo weight</b> .....                  | 995 kg                               |
| <b>Tow weight</b> .....                    | 2 500 kg                             |
| <b>Approach and departure angles</b> ..... | 34 ° and 15 °                        |
| <b>Ground clearance</b> .....              | 210 mm                               |
| <b>GVM</b> .....                           | 3 150 kg                             |
| <b>Safety rating</b> .....                 | ★★★ (ANCAP, 2012)                    |
| <b>Service plan</b> .....                  | 5 years/100 000 km                   |
| <b>Warranty</b> .....                      | 4 years/120 000 km                   |
| <b>Service periods</b> .....               | 20 000 km (first service, 10 000 km) |
| <b>Price</b> .....                         | R429 999                             |



## COMPETITORS

### Double-cab lifestyle bakkies – 4x4 and automatic



#### R538 100 Ford Ranger 2.2 TDCi XLS 4x4

A whole hundred thousand rand dearer, but probably significantly safer in a collision.



#### R565 000 Toyota Hilux 2.4 GD-6 4x4 SRX

The country's favourite bakkie won't easily be dethroned.



#### R653 400 Isuzu D-Max 300 LX 4x4

Isuzu's D-Max 250 does not have an automatic 4x4 version – hence the more expensive D-Max 300.



# CAN YOU HEAR THE ROAR?







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**MOTUS**  
AFTERMARKET PARTS

That is the sound of bakkies converging on the Bushveld town of Alldays from far and wide for the very first ***Weg Ry & Sleep Bakkie Run.***

**B**ring your bakkie to the Bushveld and be part of the fun. On the weekend of 24 to 27 April, guys and gals will test their mettle on a series of obstacles and challenges designed to separate the wheat from the chaff. Are you brave enough to take on beasts like the ***Twister, Damduiker, Wiggle-Waggle*** and the ***Outlaw Drag Strip***? You also get to show off your rallying prowess in one of the most beautiful parts of the country.

You can enter one of four categories, so it doesn't matter what kind of bakkie you drive. It can be your pride and joy,

a pimped-out overlanding 4x4, or your farm bakkie that has seen better days. Both 4x4s and 4x2s are allowed. Just don't bring your Tupperware bakkie.

Get your team together, get your outfits sorted and get your backside in gear. Time is running out and space is limited.

We are also hosting a huge party on the Saturday with entertainment on stage, fun rides and bouncy castles for the kids, a variety of exhibitors and, of course, a beer tent and food stalls.

Check out the Facebook page "**Bakkie Run 2020**" to see what it is about and go to [quicket.co.za](http://quicket.co.za) to get involved or mail ✉ [francois.malan@media24.com](mailto:francois.malan@media24.com).





# Circling the country

Here's how to visit South Africa's best off-road destinations in one continuous circular route.

Words and photos (except when stated otherwise) **Evan Naudé**



**H**ave you ever just wanted to take your off-roader and drive right around the country? With this monster of an itinerary, you pass through all nine provinces and 12 of South Africa's best-known off-road destinations in a single circular route.

The route is almost 10 000 km long and you stay away as far as possible from capitals, highways and tar roads; instead you aim for back roads, dirt roads and 4x4 twin tracks. Along the way, however, there are plenty of big towns where you can buy supplies for the next leg of your journey.

You could drive the entire route continuously, but also each of the different stages separately – we indicate the minimum distance and recommended days for each leg.

The route is shown counterclockwise here, but you could drive it in the opposite direction, too. In addition, you could leave from anywhere, but for this article we start and end in Johannesburg. This itinerary is only a route description and doesn't include overnight stays, as each region has its own number of attractions, alternative back roads and interesting places to turn your back on the main roads. Besides, everyone has their own preference of how far they like to travel and where they want to sleep, but if you stay more or less on this route, you can explore South Africa from top to bottom and side to side within 50 days.

Fill up your long-distance tank and make sure the fridge works. We're going to be on the road for a while...





## KALAHARI AND AUGRABIES

The first 540 km from Gauteng is unfortunately on the N14 highway. Granted, it's not a great start, but it's the quickest way to get to the Kalahari.

In Kuruman, head northwest on the R31 through the towns of Hotazel and Vanzylsrus to Askham. Here, the R360 takes you along the Nossob River northwards to Twee Rivieren, the entrance to the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park.

Give yourself plenty of time here to search for the park's iconic lions on the dirt and sandy roads between the reddish-brown

dunes. You can also drive the Leeudril 4x4 Loop and the Nossob 4x4 Eco Trail within the park. That will keep you busy for four days at least.

Leave the park at Twee Rivieren again and drive across Askham to Upington. Stay on the N14 for about 81 km to Kakamas. Make a turn at Augrabies Falls, about 37 km northeast of Kakamas, then drive through Blouputs to Riemvasmaak. Wash off the Kalahari dust in the warm water pools and explore the Riemvasmaak Conservation Area's 750 km<sup>2</sup> on one of three 4x4 trails: Molopo (41 km), Perdepoort

(49 km) and Deurspringer (79 km).

From Riemvasmaak, drive south to the N14 and from there to Pofadder.

**Distance** 2 200 km

**Days** 6-8

**Where to buy provisions** Kuruman or Upington

**Highlights** Kgalagadi, Augrabies waterfall, Riemvasmaak

**Drive & Camp says** Bring enough fuel for your time in the Kgalagadi. The main camps do have filling stations, but often no fuel.





### NAMAQUALAND AND THE RICHTERSVELD

The Pella Mission Station turnoff is 24 km west of Pofadder. The longest 4x4 trail in the country, the 600 km long Namakwa Eco Trail, starts at Pella and ends at Alexander Bay on the coast.

The eco trail is divided into two sections: the first takes you along the course of the Orange River past Witbank, Goodhouse and the impressive Kamgab River course up to the N7, about 50 km north of Steinkopf. Part two runs from Vioolsdrif west past Kotzeshoop and then turns south across the Helskloof Pass before reaching Eksteenfontein. From here, the route turns at Tierhoek and Rooibank before joining the Kuboes-Alexander Bay gravel road (S28.505023 E16.722629).

You can, however, aim straight for Kuboes from Eksteenfontein and keep north to Sendelingsdrif from there. The entrance to the Ai-Ais Richtersveld Transfrontier Park is here and the South African section

of the park lies snugly in a bend of the Orange River. The popular De Hoop and Richtersberg campsites on the river bank are exceptional – and don't miss Tatasberg, the wide Springbokvlakte and the rock formations at the Kokerboomkloof camp in the east of the park.

Leave the park via the Helskloof (the one inside the park) and head west along the Orange River to Alexander Bay.

**Distance** 690 km

**Days** 6-8

**Where to buy provisions** Pofadder, Alexander Bay

**Highlights** Orange River, Richtersveld, mountainous desert landscape

**Drive & Camp says** This region gets extremely hot in the summer and there are not many shady spots, so bring your own.





### THE WEST COAST

From Alexander Bay, turn south and aim for Kleinsee and then get back on the R355, over the Spektakel Pass, to Springbok farther inland.

Drive south from Springbok for 15 km and look for the Soebatsfontein turnoff to the right. This dirt road leads you across the Messelpad Pass to the Namaqua National Park where the steep Wildeperdehoek Pass welcomes you with a wide view of the landscape.

From here, you're on the Rooikat Eco Trail, which runs along the gravel road to Hondeklip Bay and aims toward the coastline in the southern part of the park. Here it becomes a sandy twin track (in spots the sand gets nice and deep). So reduce your tyre pressure for sand driving.

Over the next few days you keep the sea to your right. You can camp up to the Groen River estuary within the park boundaries, but keep enough supplies for another

night or two of camping south of the Groen River. The route leads you past the Sout River estuary to Brand se Baai before it turns inland again at Gert du Toit se Baai (S31.492223 E18.033602) to Lutzville. Drive through Vredendal to Vanrhynsdorp.

**Distance** 600 km

**Days** 4-6

**Where to buy provisions** Springbok and Vredendal

**Highlights** Orange River estuary, Goegap Nature Reserve and Namaqua National Park, spring flowers, beautiful seaside campsites

**Drive & Camp says** Pack long tent pegs and extra ropes, as the infamous southeaster can blow up a storm next to the sea.

PHOTOS CYRIL KLOPPER





## 4X4 DESTINATION

### CEDERBERG AND THE TANKWA

Take the R27 to Nieuwoudtville and then south with the Oorlogskloof road to where it joins the R364. Turn right and follow the Botterkloof Pass southward to the Klipronteinrant Pass. Turn off at the top of the pass and continue south over Hoek se Berg Pass and the Kouberg Pass to Wupperthal.

On the other side of Wupperthal, a cement twin track climbs up the mountain to Eselbank. Stop for a while at the waterfall just out of town before continuing on to Matjiesrivier. It's worth turning right here and exploring the famous part of the Cederberg. Visit the Stadsaal Caves, Truitjieskraal or the Wolfberg Cracks, drink a boutique beer at Dwarsrivier, visit the observatory and buy a packet



### LITTLE KAROO

Follow the R354 to Matjiesfontein, then the N1 west for 55 km into Touws River. Here, you turn south and aim for Anysberg, a pristine 625 km<sup>2</sup> nature reserve between the Cape Fold Mountains.

Leave Anysberg through the eastern gate. When you reach a T-junction (S33.431150 E20.800427), turn north on the R323. About 72 km further you reach the turnoff to the right for the Seweweekspoort. Screw on your camera's wide-angle lens because your vehicle will look small among the big mountain landscapes.

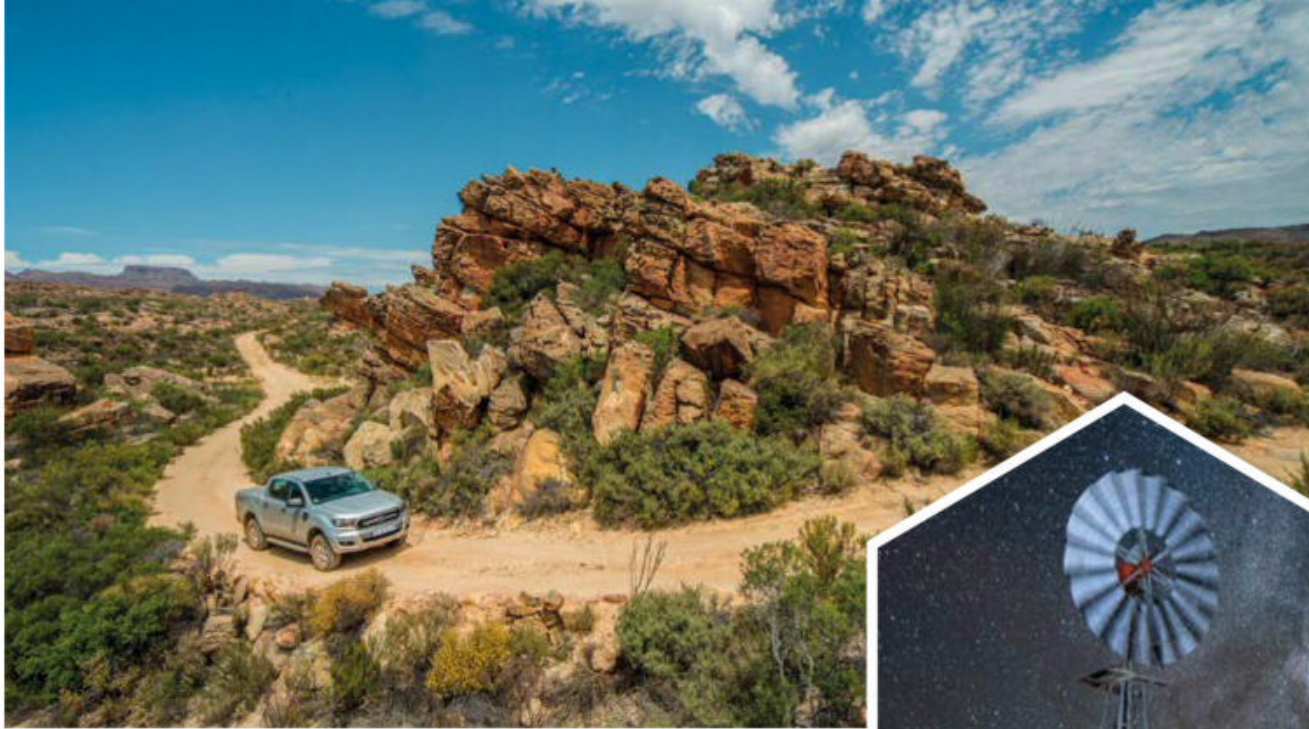
After the pass, turn east onto the R62 to Calitzdorp. If you want to do a proper shop, continue on to Oudtshoorn and then aim for the R328 for the Swartberg Pass; otherwise drive with the Besemkop road past the Calitzdorp Dam. About 47 km beyond the dam you reach the R328 where you turn left in the direction of the Swartberg Pass.

Shortly after reaching the top of the pass there is a turn-off for Gamkaskloof (S33.339460 E22.038565) on your left. The 37 km winding dirt road pass to the Gamkaskloof, also known as Die Hel, belongs on every off-roader's to-do list. So work in an extra day or two to spend the night in this secluded kloof.

Then continue north with the Swartberg Pass to just before Prince Albert where you turn right







of rooibos tea before heading south from Matjiesrivier in the direction of Op-die-Berg. Turn off for the Katbakkies Pass (S32.935813 E19.451315) and stop at the top for a photo, because in front of you lies the wide plains of the Tankwa Karoo.

At the bottom of Katbakkies, turn north on the R355. Stop at the Tankwa farm stall and turn off 65 km further for a cold beer in the Onverklaar Bar at Stonehenge. East of Stonehenge lies the Tankwa Karoo National Park. They've got two 4x4 trails, Leeuberg and Watervlei, which you can explore before leaving the park with the winding Gannaga Pass and shooting to Middelpos. At Middelpos, take the R354 to Sutherland, the country's best stargazing location.

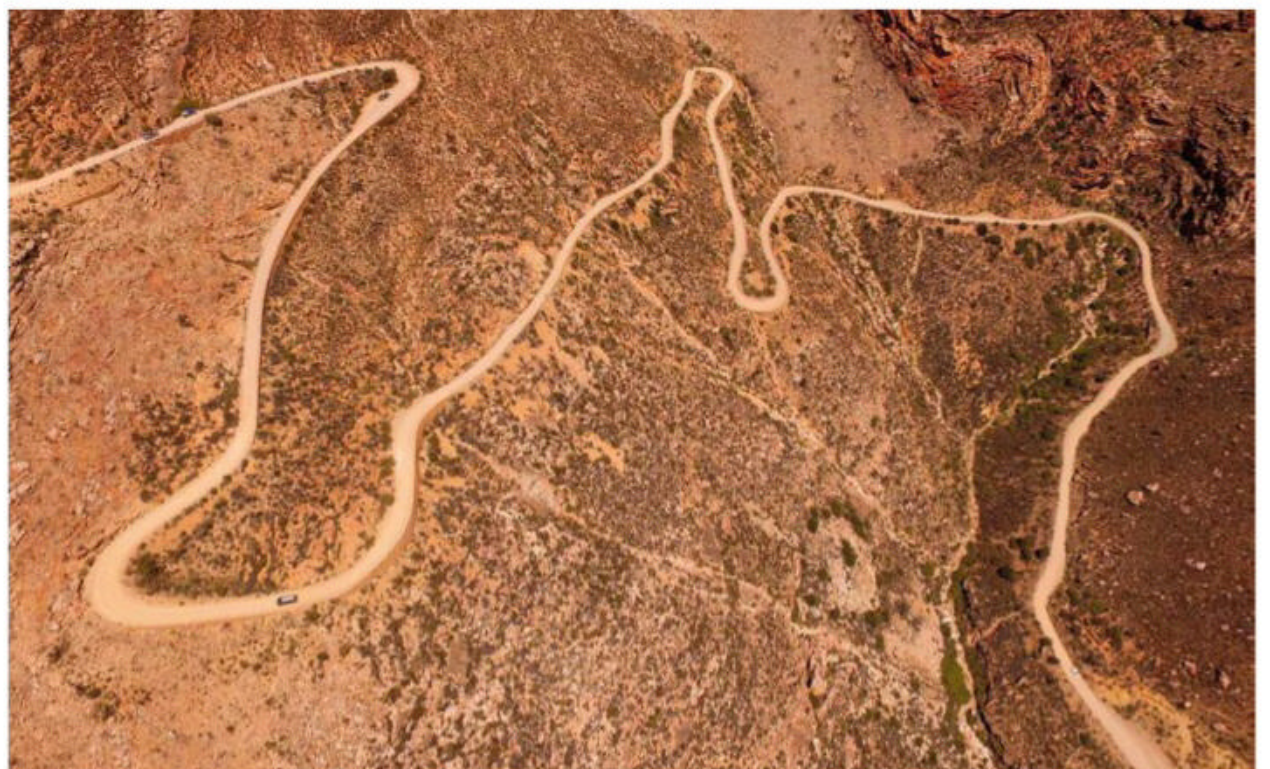
**Distance** 570 km

**Days** 3-4

**Where to buy provisions** Sutherland

**Highlights** Rock formations, mountain passes, Karoo plains, stargazing

**Drive & Camp says** The R355 is notorious for chewing tyres. Bring a second spare wheel and a handful of tyre repair plugs.



on the R401 to Klaarstroom. Just before the town, join the N12 that will lead you south to the Little Karoo's most famous stretch of road: Meiringspoort.

Once through it, turn east on the R341 and continue to the junction with the N9 that takes you to Willowmore.

**Distance** 740 km

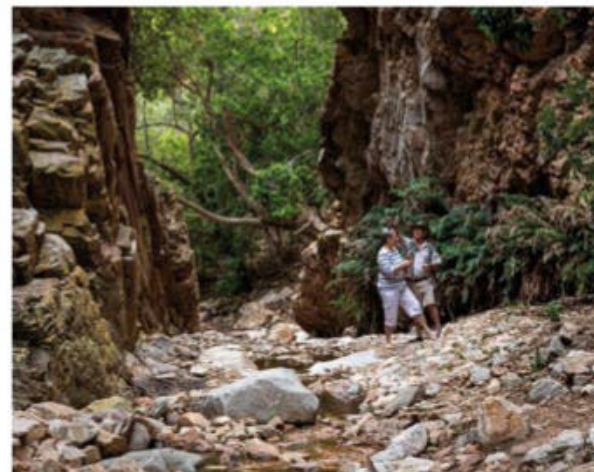
**Days** 3-5

**Where to buy provisions** Touws River, Calitzdorp or Oudtshoorn

**Highlights** Iconic mountain passes, R62, Kango caves

**Drive & Camp says** During holidays and when the Klein Karoo Arts Festival (KKNK) in Oudtshoorn is held in March, the roads of the Little Karoo are busy and places are usually crowded.





## BAVIAANSKLOOF AND ADDO

From Willowmore, drive southeast on the R332 that runs along the Nuwekloof Pass to the Baviaanskloof. The western part of the Baviaans is a comfortable dirt road with guest farms on either side of the road, but when you reach the conservancy, only off-road vehicles are allowed to drive through the eastern part of the kloof.

If it has been raining, the road takes you through several river crossings before climbing the Grasnek, Holgat and Combrincks passes and finally reaching the Gamtoos Valley beyond Patensie.

Turn north on the Elands River road that brings you to the R102 just before Uitenhage. Take the R334 to the N2, but turn off just before the highway on the old R102 road. This back road brings you to the turnoff to the Matyholweni Gate of Addo Elephant National Park.

Take your time in the north of the park

and explore the various loops in search of elephants. Leave Addo at the main gate in the north, take the R335 north across the Suurberg and then take the R400 and R350 up to Grahamstown, now named Makhanda. Continue for 212 km north on the N2 until the turnoff to Morgans Bay (the R349). If you want to miss the hustle and bustle of King Williams Town, drive along the R72 to East London before rejoining the N2.

**Distance** 765 km

**Days** 4-6

**Where to buy provisions** Willowmore, Uitenhage or Grahamstown

**Highlights** Baviaanskloof, Addo's elephants

**Drive & Camp says** Set aside a day to ride a 4x4 route – there's Doringkloof in the Baviaans or the Bedrogsfontein route in the north of Addo.

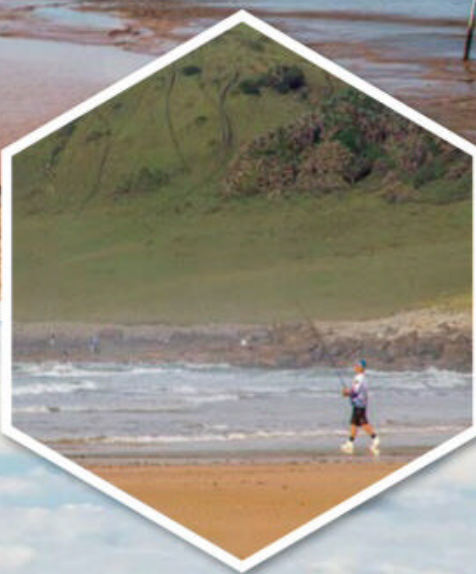




“

From here, the route runs along the coast on winding dirt roads without proper names

”



### THE WILD COAST

Keimond is next to Morgans Bay, with the Wild Coast 4x4 trail beginning on the northern bank of the river. The river used to be the border of the Transkei and a ferry takes you to the other side.

From here, the route runs along the coast on winding dirt roads without proper names. The Wild Coast route is indicated on Tracks4Africa and Slingsby's also has a good map, but road conditions soon change in these regions. So keep your GPS on and ask the locals about the road ahead.

Mazeppa Bay is worth a visit if you like fishing, and the Dwesa Nature Reserve, 22 km farther north on the coastline, is a nature photographer's dream. From Dwesa, it's 88 km to the impressive Hole in the Wall rock formation in the ocean. Head north up to Coffee Bay, a popular spot to get a surf lesson from a hippie.

North of Coffee Bay, the route is simpler and there is only one main gravel road that winds more or less along the coast to Port St Johns. From Port St Johns, follow the R61 to Lusikisiki and turn right in front of the village towards the Magwa tea plantation. Take a stroll at the spectacular 142 m Magwa Falls (S31.447169 E29.639297) before chilling next to the sea at Mboyti for a day or two.

**Distance** 450 km

**Days** 4-6

**Where to buy provisions** Port St Johns

**Highlights** Hole in the Wall, Dwesa, Hluleka, Magwa Waterfall, coastal fishing, pristine beaches

**Drive & Camp says** Check out the nguni cattle that love hanging out on the Wild Coast beaches.



## EASTERN CAPE HIGHVELD

Return to Port St Johns and then take the R61 to Mthatha. Avoid city traffic and get off the R61 at Nqwangi (Misty Mount Road, S31.536169 E28.935154). Continue 18 km north to where the road joins the N2.

Turn off about 13,5 km later onto the R396 to Maclear. On a map you will see the roads in these areas are full of twists and turns. That's for good reason, because it's the southern part of the Drakensberg and the gravel roads here (all over 2 000 m above sea level) are among the highest in the country.

Take the R396 from Maclear and over Naudé's Nek Pass. On the other side of Rhodes, the Carlisle'shoekspruit Pass runs north to Tiffendell, South Africa's only ski resort. Take the Volunteershoek Pass westward to the R393 junction and then continue north over the Lundin's Nek Pass until you reach the Lesotho border.

Drive 34 km north, along the border, to the Telle Bridge border post and from there west across the Dulcie's Nek Pass to the T-junction at the R726. Turn right here and drive up to Zastron and from there, take the R26 to Wepener.

**Distance** 570 km

**Days** 3-5

**Where to buy provisions** Maclear, Rhodes

**Highlights** SA's highest mountain passes, snow in winter, fly fishing

**Drive & Camp says** While you're here, try the Ben 10 Eco Challenge where you drive the 10 highest passes within seven days.







### EASTERN FREE STATE AND THE DRAKENSBERG

Head northeast on the R26 through Hobhouse, Ladybrand, Ficksburg and Fouriesburg to Clarens. The eastern Free State is known for a number of good 4x4 trails in and around the Maluti Mountains, and this popular village is a great base from which to explore some of them. The most popular ones include Didibeng, Koranna Wegbreek and Moolmanshoek where a guide takes you on horseback into the mountains.

From Clarens, drive east on the R712 through the Golden Gate National Park. Cross the R57, and about 29,5 km later, turn right onto the R74 that leads you

south along the Sterkfontein Dam. Cross the Oliviers Pass until you get to a turn-off to the right into the Drakensberg World Heritage Site. This road takes you across the Tugela River to the Royal Natal National Park, and from here you head southeast past the Woodstock Dam. Just after crossing the dam bridge, turn right (S28.46636 E29.13712) and follow this dirt road for 22 km south to where it joins a tar road. Turn right onto Cathedral Peak or keep left in the direction of Winterton. At the next T-junction, turn right and continue 31,5 km to the turnoff to Giant's Castle.

From here, the heart of the Drakensberg

lies to the right. As you head south, you will get turn-offs to the various conservation areas, lodges, camps and attractions of the highest mountain range in the country. When you're done exploring, drive up to Himeville.

**Distance** 610 km

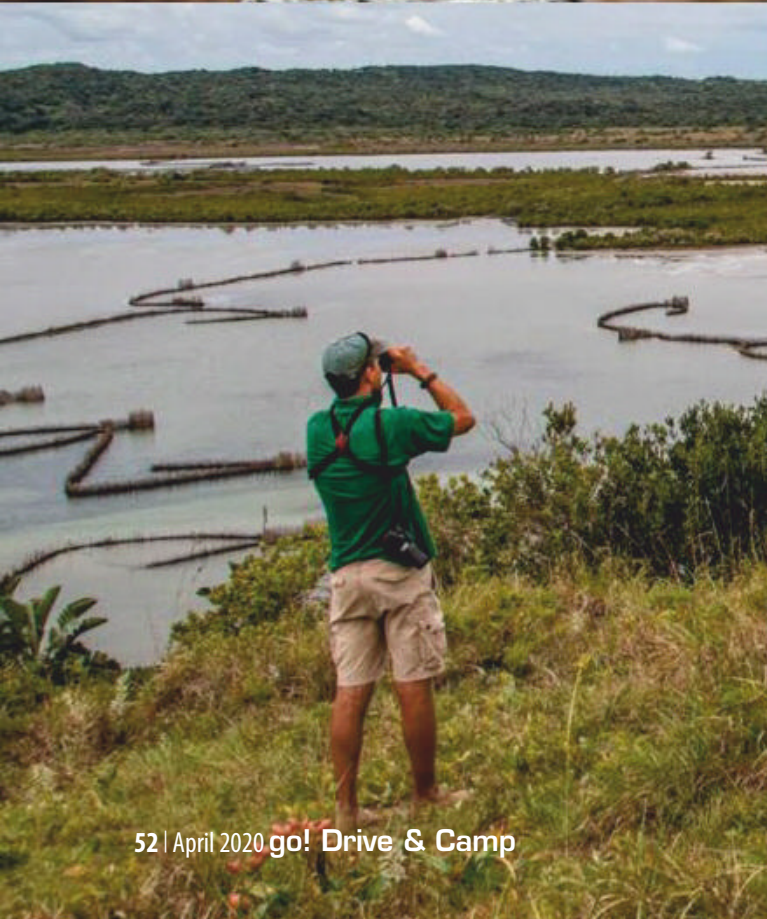
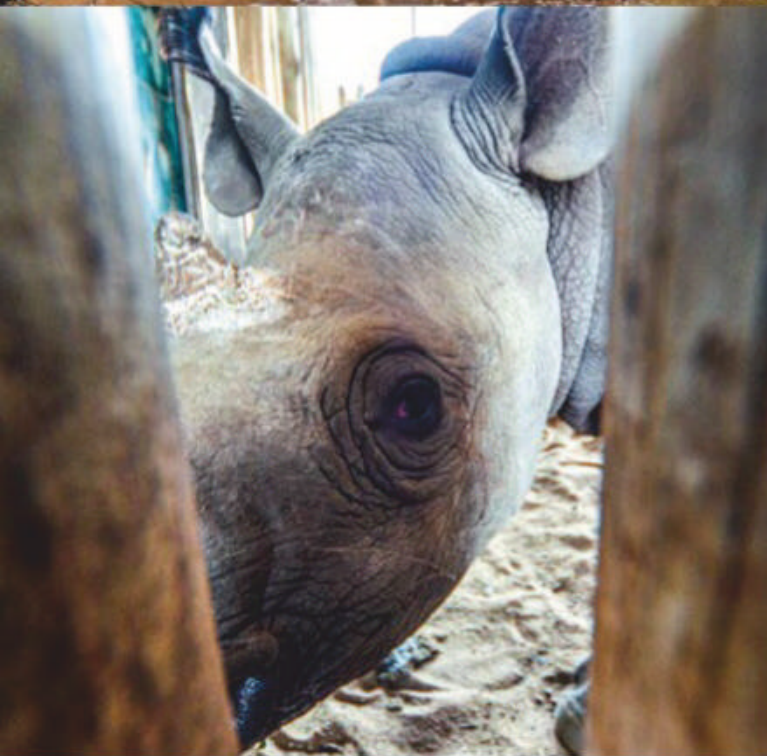
**Days** 4-6

**Where to buy provisions** Ficksburg, Clarens

**Highlights** Maluti Mountains, the Drakensberg, Golden Gate National Park

**Drive & Camp says** Bring your passport to visit the famous Sani Pass.





### NORTHERN KWAZULU-NATAL

Drive to Underberg and from there take the R617 to Howick, about 115 km to the northeast. Visit the town's famous waterfall before continuing on the Karkloof road. The Karkloof Waterfall lies about 12 km outside the town. From there, take the R33 junction at the Albert Falls Dam and turn toward Greytown.

Take the R75 eastwards from the village and after 33 km turn off to Kranskop. Take a look at the lookout point (S28.916901 E30.953369) before driving across the Tugela River to Eshowe. Then take the R66 to Ulundi. Just before the town, turn off to the Hluhluwe-Imfolozi Nature Reserve and after 35 km you reach the Cengeni Gate. This 960 km<sup>2</sup> reserve is one of the oldest in the country and is best known for protecting and relocating white rhinos.

Leave Hluhluwe-Imfolozi at the Nyalazi (east) or Memorial Gate (north) and aim for a coastal town known for having hippos in the streets: St Lucia. From here, the iSimangaliso Wetland Park stretches 220 km north to Kosi Bay on the Mozambican border.

Definitely visit Cape Vidal before driving on the N2 to Hluhluwe. Turn off on the R22 to Sodwana Bay. From here, a network of sandy trails runs north to Kosi Bay, but your GPS and locals will soon point you to the D1848 that goes past Sibaya Lake and Mabibi to where it joins the R22 just before Manguzi. Kosi Bay is about 12 km north of Manguzi.

**Distance** 810 km

**Days** 4-6

**Where to buy provisions** Howick, Greytown, St Lucia

**Highlights** iSimangaliso Wetland Park, Hluhluwe-Imfolozi, fishing, scuba diving, turtles (November to February)

**Drive & Camp says** The coastline north of St Lucia is full of sandy twin tracks – you'll need to have a GPS and a tyre pressure gauge.







PHOTOS CYRIL KLOPPER

### THE LOWVELD

Leave Kosi Bay early and drive through Jozini along the Pongolapoort Dam to the N2. Continue 150 km north to Piet Retief and turn 11 km past the town onto the R33 to Amsterdam.

About 52 km north of this town, the R33 joins the N17. Keep east and drive until you reach the Diepgezet turn-off (S26.197090 E30.947834) 48 km along. Drive for 46 km over the mountains to the R40 and then turn north to Barberton.

Take the R38 and N4 to the Kruger National Park's southern gate at Malelane. From here, an extensive network of roads stretches north through South Africa's largest nature reserve – it's your choice where and for how long you want to look at the game. Once you have ticked off the Big 5, leave the Kruger at the Phabeni Gate and drive to Hazyview.

You can take the R536 tar road up to Sabie, but the back road past Kiepersol and over the Bakenkop Pass (S25.130725 E30.881704) is definitely more exciting. Find some of Sabie's famous waterfalls before exploring the Panorama Route.

With the Blyde River Canyon in your rearview mirror, drive the R36 up to Tzaneen. The impressive cycad (S23.629743, E30.351261) at Modjadji, 36 km north of Tzaneen, is one of a kind in South Africa and worth a visit. From here, take the R71 over the Magoebaskloof Pass to Haenertsburg.

**Distance** 1 040 km

**Days** 6-8

**Where to buy provisions** Barberton, Sabie, Tzaneen

**Highlights** Kruger National Park, Panorama Route, Magoebaskloof

**Drive & Camp says** Visit Mariepskop, a lesser-known lookout point on the east of the Blyde River Canyon.





## 4X4 DESTINATION



### THE BUSHVELD

Drive to Polokwane and take the N1 to Mokopane. From there, take the R518 towards Marken. Turn right onto Sterkrivier road and continue north past the Masebe Nature Reserve to Marken.

You are now in the Bushveld. It's hunting world, which means large parts of the region are hidden behind game fences. Even if you're not a hunter, there are some lovely guest farms and game reserves where you can escape deep into the Bushveld and watch wildlife or birds.

From Marken, take the R518 to Lephalale and then south on the R33 to Vaalwater. Past the town, turn off onto the Alma road (S24.454983 E28.161688) and aim for the Rankin's Pass. After 29 km, turn right and cross the Jan Trichardt and Bakkers passes to the entrance gate of Marakele National Park.

From there, head to Thabazimbi, then take the R510 south and make a stop at the Pilanesberg National Park before driving to Rustenburg. Take the R104 east, turn off onto Rex Road and look out after 2,5 km for the Renosterfontein road to the left. This road takes you to the turn-off for the Maanhaarrand Pass (S25.863921 E27.443096) that climbs south over the Magaliesberg and joins the R24. With this tar road it is about 15 km to Magaliesburg and from there you're practically back on the N14.

**Distance** 725 km

**Days** 3-5

**Where to buy provisions** Polokwane, Lephalale, Thabazimbi

**Highlights** Waterberg, Pilanesberg, Magaliesberg

**Drive & Camp says** Stop at the Lenong lookout point in Marakele and look out for Cape vultures who love to hang out above it.



“

You are now in the Bushveld. It's hunting world, which means large parts of the region are hidden behind game fences

”







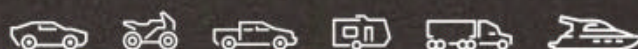
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Oxford Nylon  
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102cm x 67cm x 74cm  
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600g Heavy duty material  
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SPECIFICATIONS  
Nylon Ripstop  
Steel frame  
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150kg  
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SPECIFICATIONS  
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**R880**  
Bag, each  
**R245**

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2.4m x 1.8m x 1.0m  
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We strive to ensure that, at the time of going to print, all information is correct. However, Tentco will not be held liable for any errors that may occur.

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## TRAILER TENTS



(Trailer not included)  
Jnr tent to fit 1.3 m (h) **R11676**  
Jnr tent to fit 1.45 m (h) **R11855**  
Snr tent to fit 1.6 m (h) **R15495**

## POP-UP GAZEBO



Replacement cover available in Safari Ripstop material  
3 m x 3 m **R1350**

## CAPRIVI 2 & 3



**SPECIFICATIONS**  
2.1m x 2.1m x 1.3m **R780**  
3m x 3m x 1.8m **R1410**  
INNER TENT: 190T POLYESTER NYLON  
FLYSHEET & FLOOR: 210D OXFORD NYLON

## BUNDU CANOPY



Side walls available  
2.5m x 3m **R1585**

## SNR DELUXE & EXT COMBO



3m x 3m Dome Tent Extension 2.8m and Verandah 1.8m **R11500**  
Side walls and front wall available

## BAOBAB COMBO

Extension of Boabab to Bow 2.5 x 2.5 x 3m



JNR 2.5m x 2.5m TENT PLUS EXTENSION 2.1m **R7660**



SNR 3m x 3m TENT PLUS EXTENSION: **R9125**

## SNR DOUBLE BOW EXTENSION ONLY



Extension to fit any Tentco 3m x 3m bow tent **R4805**  
BOWTENTS NOT INCLUDED

## SAFARI BOW



Heavy duty canvas Traveller **R2855** 2.1 x 2.1 x 1.5 m  
Ranger **R3270** 2.1 x 2.1 x 1.8 m  
Junior Bow **R4635** 2.5 x 2.5 x 1.9 m  
Senior Bow **R5690** 3.0 x 3.0 x 2.2 m

## JNR SAHARA



4.5m x 2.9m x 2.5m **R7100**  
Side walls and front wall available

## SNR SAHARA



5.6m x 2.9m x 2.5m **R8745**

## HEXIBOW SAFARI



**R6840**  
4.8 m x 3.6 m x 2.0 m  
VERY SPACIOUS

## SHADENET INNER ONLY



**R1910**  
To fit Snr Tentco gazebo  
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Built-in groundsheet  
**NEW**

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**R4655** 3 Sides with mozzi net + four solid slides, 3 x 3 x 2.5 m

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SNR 3 m x 2.8 m x 2.3 m **R2240**  
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**NEW!** Re-inforced Nylon Corners  
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Gazebo to bow tent connector  
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End wall  
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1.2 m x 2.45 m (OPEN) **R8745**  
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Ranger 90cm x 2.4m - **R8150**  
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**AFRICA NO.1 BEST SELLER**

## WANDERER BOW TENTS



**AFRICA NO.1 BEST SELLER**

JNR: 2.5 x 2.5 x 1.9 m **R3445**  
SNR: 3 x 3 x 2.2 m **R4050**  
RIPSTOP MATERIAL

## SAHARA DELUXE



**AFRICA NO.1 BEST SELLER**

**R10530** 6m x 2.9m x 2.5m  
Side walls and front wall available

These products are available from:  
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# Nature and culture merge in *Graaff-Reinet*

Camping in this historic town gives you the chance to explore its history on foot, or pitch a tent a few kilometres away... in Mother Nature's embrace.

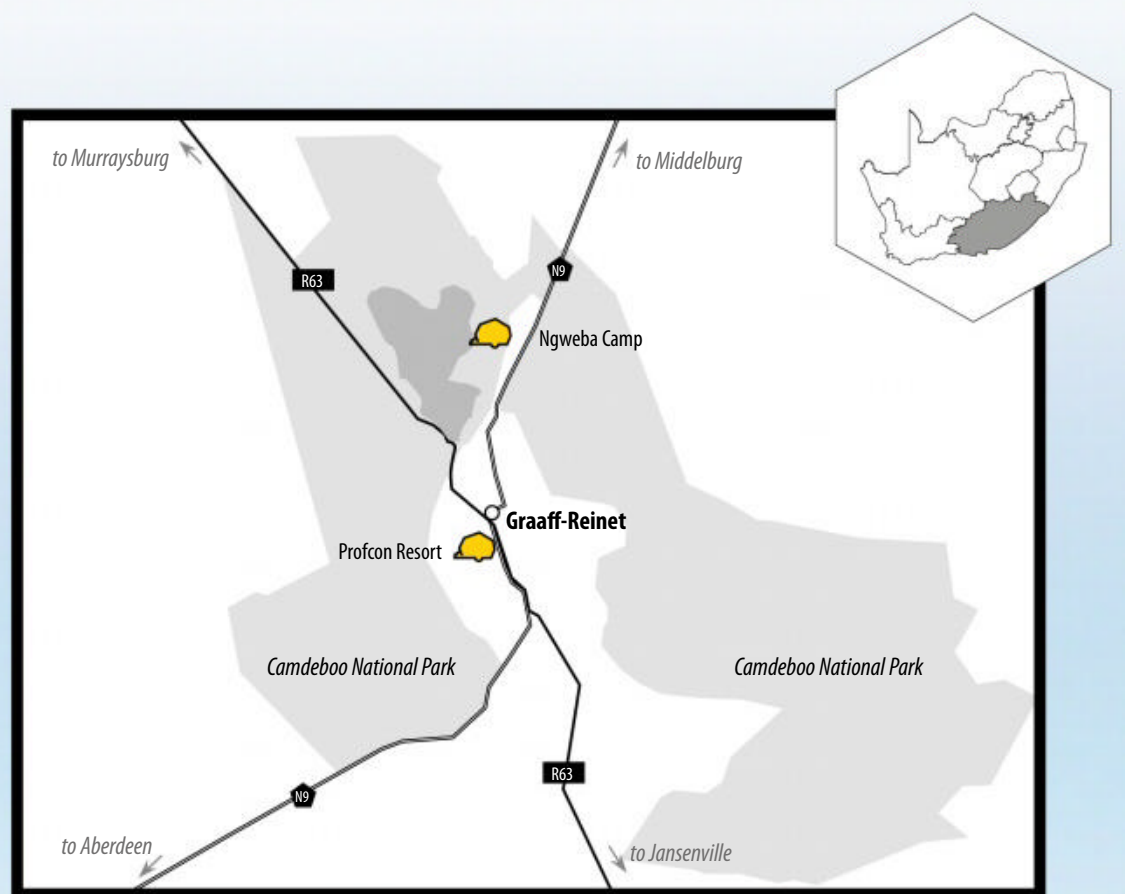
Words and photos **Cyril Kloppe**





**G**raaff-Reinet is South Africa's oldest colonial town after Cape Town, Stellenbosch and Swellendam. It was founded in 1787 by the Dutch East India Company and named after the then Governor of the Cape Colony, Cornelis Jacob van de Graaff and his wife Reinet. The town is not only known for the nearby natural treasures, but also because it boasts more historical monuments and buildings than any other town or city in South Africa.

Pitch your tents at two campsites that give you access to the rich heritage and scenery of this Karoo town.





## CAMPING DESTINATION



### NQWEBA CAMP

## The beauty of the Camdeboo

A mere 4 km north of Graaff-Reinet lies the Camdeboo National Park on both sides of the N9 highway. The main gate and the park office are on the left; this is where you get your entry and overnight permits.

Along with these, you will receive a map of Nqweba Camp showing its stands as well as a brochure with all the park's activities, animals you can expect to see, and a map of the entire park. You also get a code to gain access at unmanned gates in the park.

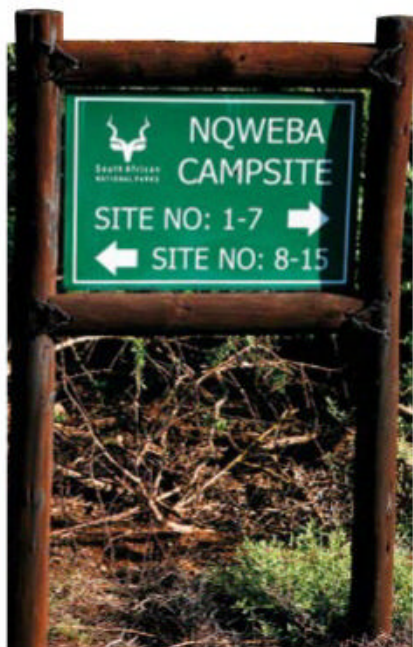
Now that you're checked in, drive through the first unmanned gate to a ridge with a striking view of the park and the Nqweba Dam. Just 100 metres after going through the gate, there's a bust of Andries Pretorius, the Voortrekker leader after whom Pretoria was named. To the left of the sculpture is a twin track that leads to the Nqweba Dam. Stay on the main dirt road as it winds its way to the campsite less than a kilometre farther along. Once again, enter your code at the gate and drive into the enclosed Nqweba Camp.

**ONCE INSIDE, YOU'LL** first see the four permanent tents of the Lakeview Tented Camp and their ablution facilities on your left. Continue on to Nqweba. It is densely wooded here, but the road is wide enough so that even a double-axle caravan won't get scratched. During our visit, a huge Mercedes-Benz Axor motorhome made its way through the campsite without doing too much damage to the thorn trees.

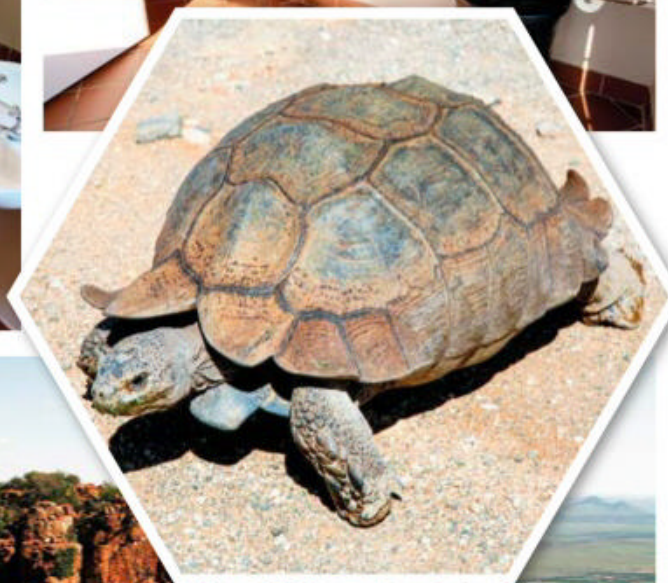
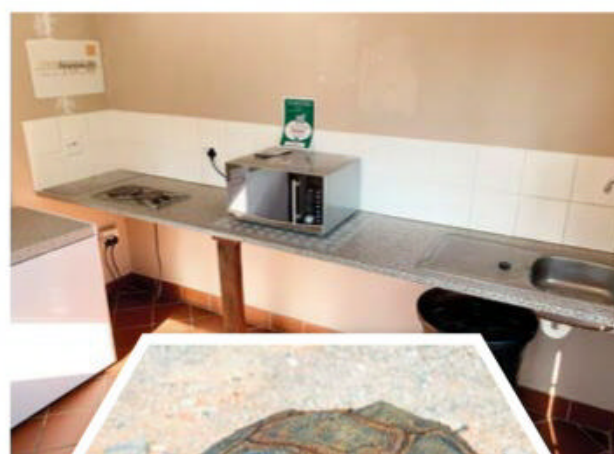
Nearly all 15 stands are under shade trees. Stands 2, 4 and 14 are against the game fence, but the thorn trees are so lush that you can't see very far. An elevated wooden platform next to stand 14 allows you to see over the trees – it's also a great



**PARK IN THE PARK** The bust of Andries Pretorius (insert) greets you as you pass through the gate. The stands are roomy so that even enormous motorhomes and their runabouts (above) can easily fit. The ablution facilities (right) are devoid of decoration but they're spotlessly clean and nothing is broken. Keep an eye out for tortoises crossing the road while driving through the park on your way to the Valley of Desolation (bottom right).







spot to relax with a cocktail. Each stand has a metal braai on legs that you can drag around so the smoke doesn't stink up your tent. There's also a monkey-resistant garbage bin (which can't be moved) and a power point on a lamp post. The light automatically blinks on early in the evening and doesn't have a switch where you can turn it on or off.

The power point is the ordinary domestic type and the lamp post to which it is fastened is on the outer corner of each

stand. If you want to position your tent or caravan deep into the stand to make the most of the shade, then bring a long extension cord (at least 20 m), because you will be far away from the power point. Against each lamp post is a warning to not feed the vervet monkeys and to properly secure your supplies. The monkeys are cheeky and could pose a threat to children if they lose their fear of humans.

Every two stands share a tap and you never have to take more than 30 steps to

get water. There are no lawns, but driving your tent pegs into the gravel isn't difficult.

After you've settled in, sit back and listen to the birds chirping. Now, for the first time, you may get the sense that dozens of eyes are watching you – these are the vervet monkeys waiting patiently for you to leave a bowl of Niknaks unattended.

**THE SINGLE ABLUTION** block sits in the middle of the campsite. If it is important for you to camp near these facilities you should aim for stands 6, 12 or 15. There's a women's and a men's side, each has two basins (with mirrors), bins, two toilets (toilet paper is provided) and two showers. The shower cubicles have a spacious shower with soap dishes and a curtain. The walls are tiled from top to bottom and are sparkling clean. Each cubicle has a dry area to get dressed in with a narrow wooden bench and hooks for clothes.

The men's side has two urinals while the woman's side boasts extra work surfaces. There are also facilities for the disabled and the infirm: a toilet, basin and shower, specially designed for wheelchair or Zimmer-frame users.

Finally, there's a camp kitchen that is neatly furnished with two sinks, two electric twin-plate cookers, a microwave oven and kettle, rubbish bins and a large chest freezer. A notice outside the kitchen asks you to please close the door behind you – yes, it's to keep the monkeys out.

Outside the ablution building is a laundry line and more sinks. The vervet monkeys hang out here during the day and they've learnt how to open the taps. Campers need to take responsibility for the outdoor scullery and occasionally close a tap that the monkeys opened. Unfortunately, the cheeky rascals also sometimes poo in the sinks. But don't worry, the staff will clean it in the morning.

**GET IN YOUR CAR** and take a drive through the park. Sedans will manage fine in the game-viewing area north of Nqweba, except where you cross the Sundays River. For this you need good ground clearance – and if the river is flowing, you'll need to engage four-wheel drive. Rangers will close the river crossing if they think the water is flowing too strongly.

During our visit, contractors appeared to be building toilets at the picnic spot beyond the Sunday River – a welcome amenity indeed. Look out for leopard





## Briefly | Nqweba Camp



**Campsite** 15 stands on bare soil and under trees.

**Ablution facilities** 1 neat building that is cleaned every morning.

**Price** R270-R335 pn per site for two people (depending on the season) plus a conservation fee of R46.

**Arrival and departure** 12:00 and 11:00. However, you may stay in the park until 19:30 after packing up (to view game or visit the Valley of Desolation).

**Contact** 049 892 4248 (tourism office)  
info@graaffreinet.co.za sanparks.org

**Nearest town** Graaff-Reinet, 7 km.

**Road condition** Tar to the main gate and a good dirt road to the campsite.

**GPS** S32.22054 E24.54170

**Drive & Camp says** There is little wildlife here, but that's fine, because it means the place doesn't get too busy.



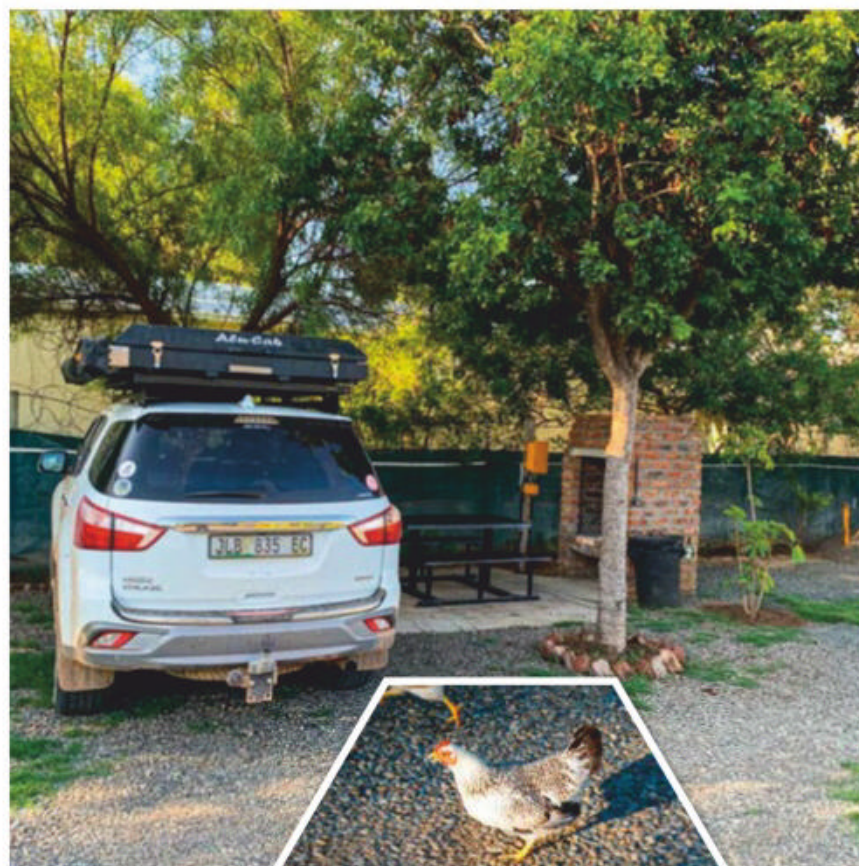
tortoises, blesbok, eland and black eagles.

Leave the park at the Impangale gate, drive back towards Graaff-Reinet and enter the park again at the gate to the Valley of Desolation. Have a picnic at the Ribbokberg braai area before continuing uphill to the topography-map view point from where you can see the town's circular layout. On a clear day, you can almost imagine that you can see the Swartberg Mountains 100 km away on the southern edge of the Camdeboo.

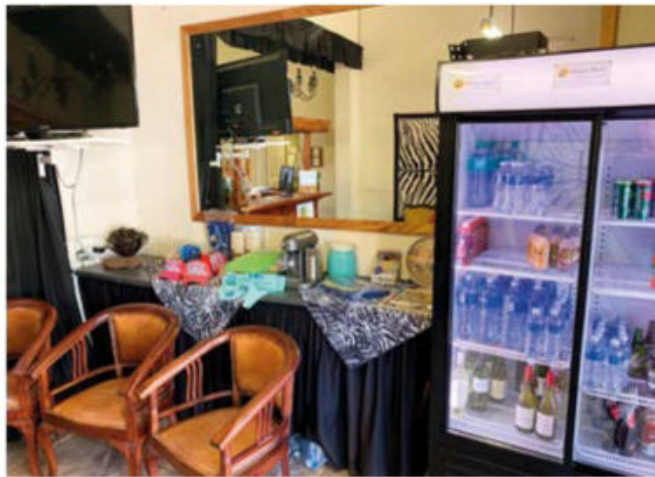
A little bit farther down the road are parking spaces where you leave your car

and hike to the Valley of Desolation on foot. Engraved metal plates along the trail inform you about the vegetation: kuni-bush, buffalo spike-thorn, mountain apple and false olive. At the view point, shout as loud as you can at the opposing cliffs that grimace like yellow horse's teeth, and then listen to the forlorn echo.

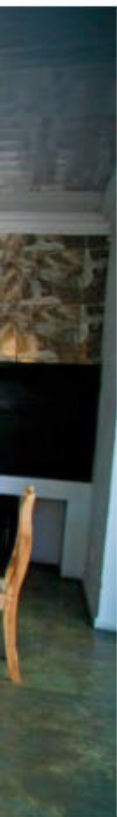
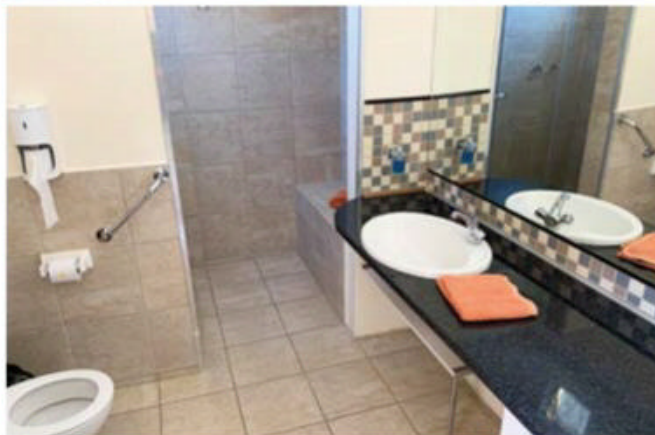
Follow the road back down the mountain to Nqweba and start a fire for tonight's braai while sleepy vervet monkeys yawn and hold on to each other tightly before drifting off.







**TOWN LIFE** Profcon Resort has manicured lawns on which you set up camp (left) and there are drinks in the fridge at reception (above). The toilets are neat and clean, and although the resort is inside the town, the stands are hidden from the streets.



## PROFCON RESORT

### Paint the town red

You will find the Profcon Resort on the corner of Somerset and Cradock streets. Owner Leanne Bezuidenhout greets you warmly at reception where a fridge hums next to the counter as you complete the register. It contains cool drinks, bottled water, beer and wine. If you have not yet bought braai wood, you can get it here at R25 per bag.

Leanne hands you an electronic tag and instructs you to drive around the corner to Cradock Street. Here you hold the tag to a sensor, wait for the automated gate to slide open and drive through to the campsite.

**THE LAWNS, JUNGLE GYMS** and children's playgrounds are all nicely hidden away from the town's streets. Profcon has eight stands on grass, each with a bin, tap, electricity, a built-up braai with a stubby chimney and a table with benches. Stands 1 to 3 are under shade trees while 4 and 5 have gazebos. Trees have been planted next to the latter stands, but it will require a number of years before they are tall enough to cast proper shade.

Stands 6 to 8 aren't clearly marked and are more suitable for a large group of friends with randomly pitched tents.

If all eight stands are occupied, four rectangular patches of lawn can be set aside for camping. These are actually playgrounds for kids, but Leanne believes everything at Profcon Resort should have multiple purposes.

Ducks and chickens wander around the campsite, but mercifully, there aren't any roosters to wake you up at dawn.

Profcon's bread and butter are its 10 single-bedroom cottages, three twin-bedroom cottages, one three-bedroom house and several single rooms, but Leanne is proud that she once hosted an impressive 18 motorhomes full of jolly Dutch tourists at Profcon. By the way, many of her guests are European travellers curious about Graaff-Reinet.

**CAMPERS HAVE ACCESS** to three ablution facilities, one of which you must share with guests if there's a wedding. The other two are for campers only. The shared bathrooms have a men's side with a shower, two urinals, one toilet and a sink with



## CAMPING DESTINATION



**PLAYTIME** The pool is enclosed to keep unsupervised toddlers out and there are several jungle gyms and other activities to occupy the little ones. The camp kitchen (right) is dated but everything works and it's a good place to take shelter during inclement weather.



a mirror. The women's side is similar, but without the urinal and with an extra toilet. Between the men's and women's sections is a toilet for the disabled and a surface for changing a baby's nappy. The facilities are incredibly tidy.

Near the gate where you drove in is another ablution facility, one room for each gender, each with a shower, toilet, and a granite worktop with a basin and mirror. There's also a family bathroom with a toilet, basin and a tub rather than a shower. Towels, floor mats, soap and toilet paper are all provided – and once again everything is spick and span.

Lastly, in the middle of the campsite, there is a camp kitchen with a fridge-freezer, sink, kitchen table and a microwave oven. Dishwashing liquid and sponges are provided, and there's also a couch and chairs if you want to hang out in the kitchen while it's raining. Behind the kitchen are two outdoor showers (roofless) with soap trays and a dry area with a bench. There are also two toilet rooms, each with a basin and mirror. This building is older than the other ablution facilities,



### Briefly | Profcon Resort



**Campsite** 8 stands on grass and some under trees.

**Ablution facilities** 3 neat buildings that are constantly being cleaned.

**Price** R200 pn per site (R300 during December holidays).

**Arrival and departure** 14:00 and 10:00

**Contact** 049 892 2887 or 084 208 2340

✉ profconresort@gmail.com

🌐 profconresort.co.za

**Nearest town** It's in Graaff-Reinet.

**Road condition** Highway to Graaff-Reinet and urban streets to the resort.

**GPS** S32.25241 E24.53108

**Drive & Camp says** Profcon is a great alternative to the Urquhart municipal caravan park with its filthy ablution block.

and while dated, it is... as always... sparkling clean and tidy.

If you do not feel like having a braai and don't want to cook in the camp kitchen, you can take a seat at Profcon's dining room. Just book your table and meal in advance – the same goes for breakfast.

**A KIDS' PLAYGROUND** has zip lines, jungle gyms, seesaws, slides, a mini golf course and paths for plastic scooters. Leanne says Profcon is definitely a family resort – not only for guests, but also for her own family, who all help manage the resort. Leanne's eldest child is currently studying tourism and will soon be taking over the resort so she and her husband can retire.

There is also a swimming pool with a short slide that deposits happy kids into the pool. It is fenced so toddlers cannot gain entry without parental supervision.

The main reason one chooses to stay at the Profcon Resort, however, is its location. Cradock Street is just two blocks from Graaff-Reinet's main street and therefore within walking distance of most museums, heritage sites and shops.

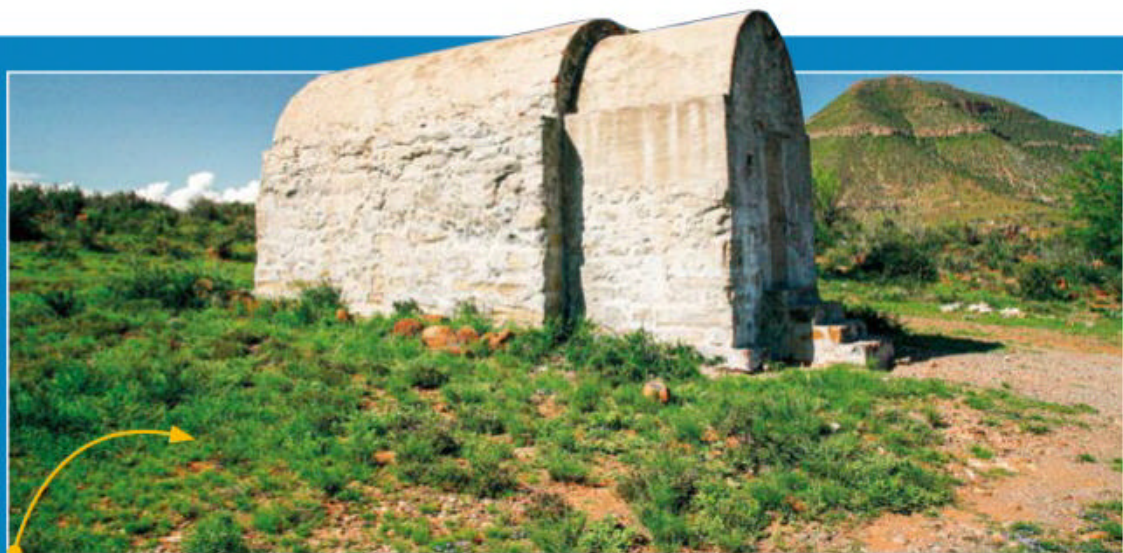


# STUFF TO DO

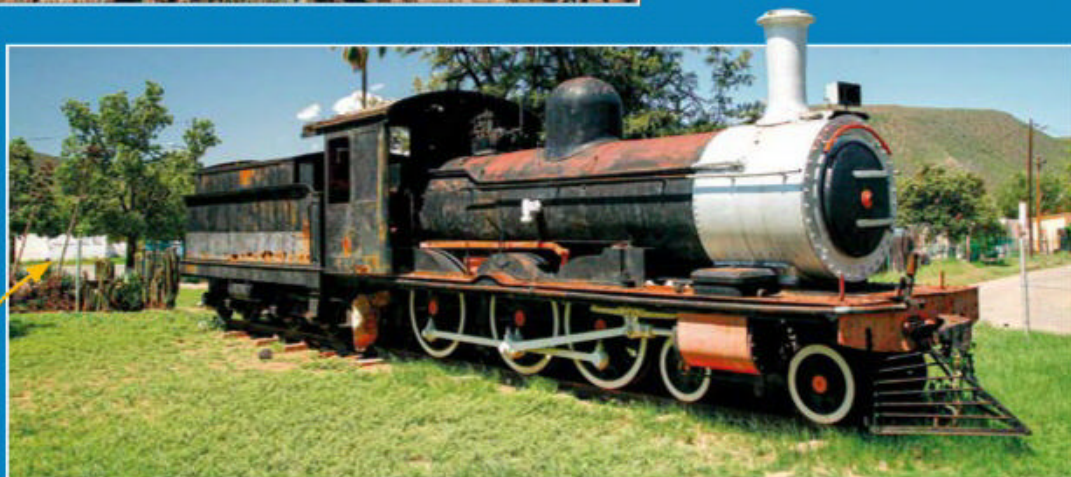
In addition to the obligatory visit to the Hester Rupert Art Museum, the Reinet House, the old pharmacy and the Drosdy Hotel, here are some attractions you can visit for mahala.



**THE OBESA NURSERY** at the end of Leeb Street exports succulents to the whole of South Africa and around the world. Chances are that the succulents in your local nursery were originally grown at Obesa.



**THE OLD GUNPOWDER MAGAZINE** was built in 1893 by the British army to defend the town against Boer forces. Graaff-Reinet was to become the British military seat in the Eastern Cape in 1901 during the Second Boer War.

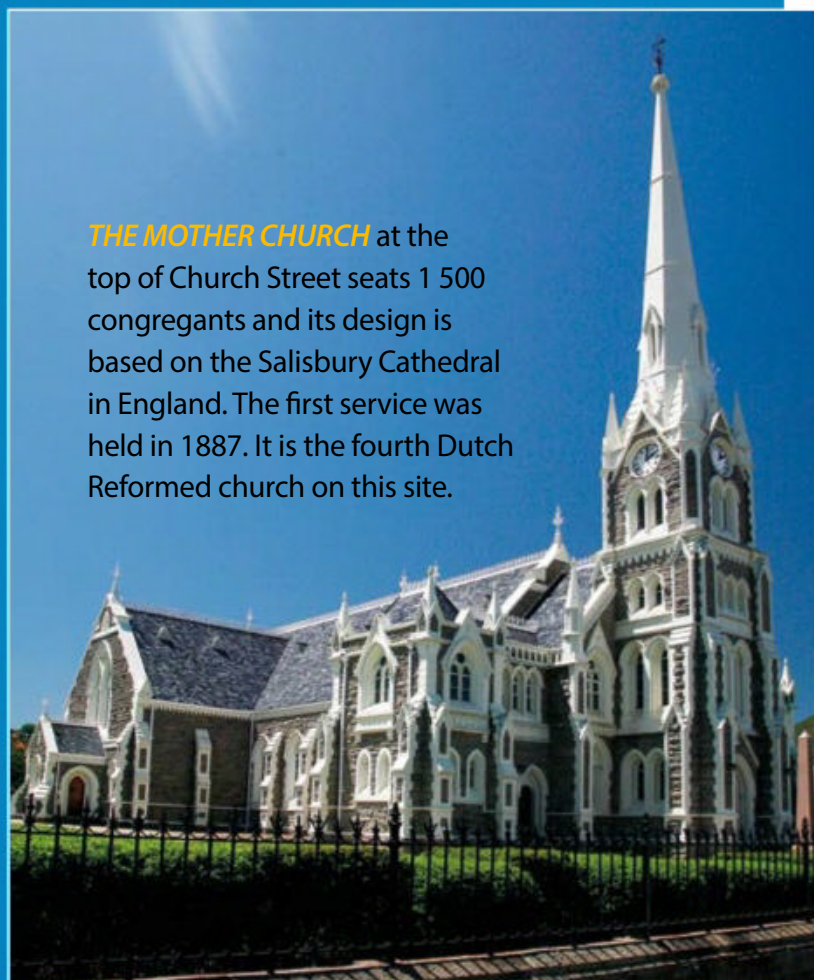


**THE OLD STATION** is in ruins – it formed the railway link between Graaff-Reinet and Port Elizabeth that was opened in 1879 by the then prime minister, John Molteno. An old 4-6-0 steam locomotive with its tender is steadily rusting away in front of the old railway terminal.



**THE VILLAGE** is a blend between a vintage car museum and a traditional roadhouse that sell milkshakes, burgers and chips. We spotted a Bull Run vehicle (number C082) driven by team Karoo Dogs parked in a shed.

**THE NQWEBA DAM WALL** was completed in 1925 and holds back a volume of 46 369 000 cubic meters of water. This huge structure on the edge of Graaff-Reinet is in dire need of repair and residents fear it will eventually crack and flood the entire town.



**THE MOTHER CHURCH** at the top of Church Street seats 1 500 congregants and its design is based on the Salisbury Cathedral in England. The first service was held in 1887. It is the fourth Dutch Reformed church on this site.



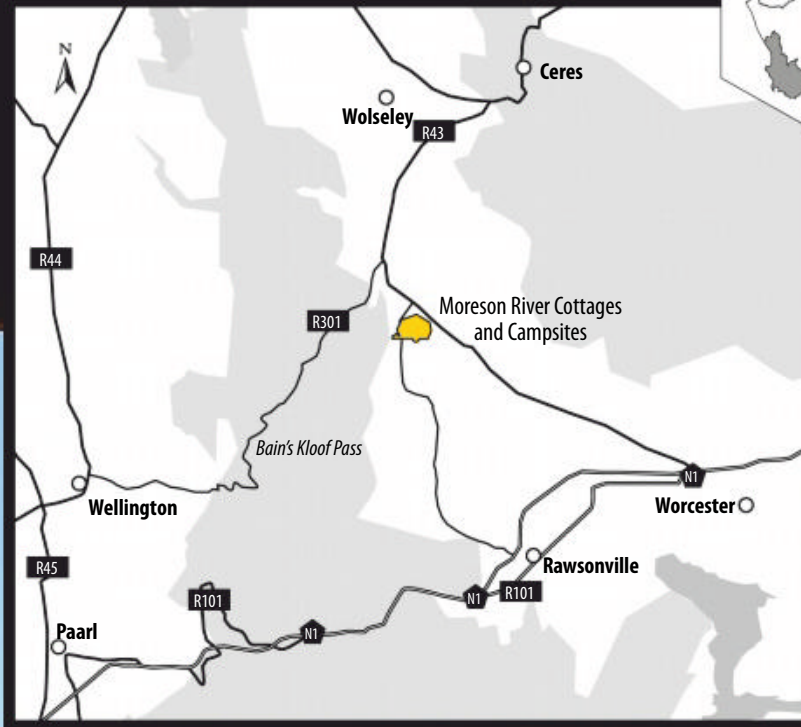


# Unwind in the winelands

If laid-back Cape Town is still too busy for you, why not head to the winelands of the Breede River Valley where you can relax at the Moreson River Cottages and Campsites?

Words and photos **Leon Botha**





**W**hen you gaze at all the vineyards and orchards in the Breede River Valley, you realise why this region is known as the fruit basket of the Western Cape.

The smaller Slanghoek Valley on the Cape side of Worcester is also here, and it is truly picturesque with its mountains, blue sky and all the greenery.

Right at the top of the Slanghoek Valley is the farm Moreson with its chardonnay and chenin blanc grapes. The Breede River forms the northern boundary of the farm, and this is where you come to take a break..





**ABOUT HALFWAY BETWEEN** Worcester and Ceres, the Slanghoek road turns off the R43 in the direction of the well-known ATKV Goudini Spa and the town of Rawsonville. The turn-off to Moreson Farm comes up quickly on your left. Once you're on the Slanghoek road, it goes up a ridge – now look left over the vineyards and watch how the Breede River meanders through the valley. You'll spot a cluster of trees next to the river that looks like it could be a bluegum forest. That's Moreson's campsite.



“

It's a decent farm road and you can tow a standard road caravan with confidence

”

**KICK YOUR SHOES OFF** You'll follow a winding trail through the vineyards before reaching the campsite. Once you're settled in, feel the stress of the daily grind evaporate. The healing power of a simpler life on a farm is remarkable.



Shortly after the farm's turn-off, you drive down a ridge on a concrete road – it's so steep you wouldn't be able to get up here if it weren't for the concrete. After 300 m, the road veers to the left and it turns into a dirt road, but fortunately the incline is now behind you. Barely 100 m away you'll encounter a sliding gate, ironically without a fence on either side. On a pillar next to the gate is the cellphone number of the owner, Pieter Le Roux, and he will open the gate as soon as you let him know you've arrived. About another 100 m farther on

is a large barn with the farmhouse just behind it. Pieter will meet you here and invite you to follow him.

It's a decent farm road and you can tow a standard road caravan with confidence. After a few turns to the left and right, the first stands start 1,2 km from where you found Pieter. Once you're at your stand, Pieter hands you a bathroom key (with a remote for the gate), and if you've arrived without wood, you can buy some from him. On the back of his bakkie he's got several bags at R40 each.





## Briefly | Moreson River Cottages and Campsites



**Campsite** 16 stands next to the Breede River, divided into 3 groups.

**Ablution facilities** Your own bathroom close to your stand. It may be basic but it's clean.

**Price** R300 pn per site for up to 4 people; thereafter R50 pp (maximum 6 people).

**Arrival and departure** 13:00 and 11:00. On Sundays you can stay longer, because then there is no set check-out time.

**Contact** 072 436 9377

[moresoncottagesandcampsites.co.za](http://moresoncottagesandcampsites.co.za)

[moreson@mb-net.co.za](mailto:moreson@mb-net.co.za)

**Nearest town** Ceres and Worcester, both 27 km.

**Road condition** The last 1,4 km is a good farm dirt road.

**GPS** S33.555915 E19.206115

**Drive & Camp says** Pets are welcome provided they are 'friendly'. Dogs are also free to join you for a walk in the vineyard.



**THE STANDS ARE** divided into three groups. As you drive through the vineyard, you get to the Pomphuis Cottage with the first six stands shortly after it (stands 11-16). Stands 7-10 are next, followed by the Brughuis Cottage with the last six stands (1-6) at the end.

The stands are laid out side by side with a shoulder-high wicket fence between them. In the dry season, the river may look like a rocky bed, but even then, some water will have pooled up near the first campsites and kids can splash around in it.

Each stand has a power point (regular domestic socket) with a bin and a light – which you can turn on and off yourself – next to it. You also get a portable steel braai, but you need to remember to bring your own grid.

The first group of stands have the most grass, because the trees are smaller and your stand is also more open. The trees by the second and third group of stands form a continuous piece of shade and so you camp on bare soil. You'll probably battle to pitch a caravan's rally tent here as some

of the trees encroach on the stands – you may need to worm your way through the trees. It's more suitable for off-road trailers, though the third group of stands have some larger open spots and you could easily manage a caravan and tents here.

Behind each of the three groups of stands there's a fence with a lane of trees next to it – they help to somewhat protect against the wind, but they also block your view of the vineyards. Speaking of the wind: once it picks up speed as it comes down from Goudini, you won't be able to hide



## WEEKEND BREAK

from it. Remember to park your caravan so the outdoor kitchen faces the river side, otherwise your stove's gas flame won't manage to boil water for your coffee.

**THE NEAREST TAP** is at the ablution block. Each group of stands has its own block with a string of numbered doors on the one side. These correspond to the stand numbers, which means your bathroom is private.

It's a modest bathroom with just the essentials: a small basin with a mirror, and a narrow shelf where your vanity case will just fit, and next to it a toilet. We were at stand 8 and our toilet's flushing lever gave up the ghost. This was fixed with a length of wire, but everything else worked as it should. In the other corner is an open shower that is spacious enough so you don't splash water everywhere. The sinks for dirty dishes are at the end of the ablution block.

If you hear a few gunshots in the distance, there's no need to duck – the Kleinberg clay pigeon club meets at Moreson every third Saturday.

**VISIT THE NEARBY** Slanghoek Cellar for a free wine tasting. Pieter supplies grapes to the cellar and it is barely 12 km away. Among the wines you can taste is the 2009 Red Muscadel, which was awarded a Veritas Award in 2019 – plus a host of other excellent wines.

There's even an open barrel filled with corks and a bunch of colourful beach spades and rakes where the little ones can play while Mom and Dad do some tastings. Just remember, the cellar is open only until 13:00 on a Saturday and it's closed Sundays – so if you come for the weekend, make sure you go there on Saturday morning shortly after breakfast. (On weekdays, they're open from 9:00 to 17:00.)

As you drive back, pop into the Slanghoek Resort's shop 2,6 km toward Moreson. (Moreson doesn't have a shop.) Here you can buy a variety of souvenirs, but also soft drinks, ice cream, pies, candy canes, sugar and even meat – we spotted lamb chops and chicken sausages. You can also buy wood and charcoal.

**SAVE YOUR ENERGY** for Sunday and walk to a cave. It's halfway up the mountain on the far side of the vineyard. This vineyard is not on Pieter's land, but belongs to his neighbour Danie Zeeman. There are no



**THERE'S MORE TO EXPLORE** The Slanghoek Cellars (right) is near Moreson and wine tastings are free. The cellar closes early on Saturdays and don't open at all on Sundays. Moreson doesn't have a shop but if you need anything you can pop in at the Slanghoek Resort (above) on your way back to the farm. Did we mention the free wine tasting?



boundary fences, and Danie doesn't mind people walking through the vineyard.

It's at most a 45-minute walk to the cave, and only the last 100 m is steep. However, keep your eyes open for orb spiders when you walk early in the morning – they like weaving their web across the path between the high bushes. Fortunately, the webs are large and easy to spot.

The cave's mouth is nice and big (20 m wide and 10 m high), but it gets narrower as you penetrate the mountain. About

25 m inside the cave is a square stone that serves as a bench and it's polished to a high gloss by the bums of countless visitors. Danie says that as kids they used to crawl through the cave to get out the far side, but adults won't fit. If you look straight back from the mouth, Moreson's campsite is right in the middle of the picture-perfect scene in front of you. Fortunately, going down also goes faster and you return to the campsite in time at all to breathe in some more fresh air before heading home.





## Our vehicle

The Audi Q3 is a small SUV, but it's not scared of a farm road. It's actually quite sprightly – even while towing a caravan. In a recent tow test, it flexed its muscle with a Sprite Swing that weighed 940 kg.

The standard model costs R599 000, but if you're going to be towing, you'll need the electric tow bar (R10 500 extra). The rearview camera (R6 800) is also an optional extra if you don't want to struggle when parking your caravan.

*(See our January issue for the full tow test. – Ed)*

### SPECIFICATIONS

|                                               |                            |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Model</b> .....                            | 35 TFSI S line S tronic    |
| <b>Engine</b> .....                           | 4 cylinder turbopetrol     |
| <b>Power</b> .....                            | 110 kW                     |
| <b>Torque</b> .....                           | 250 Nm                     |
| <b>Transmission</b> .....                     | 6-speed automatic          |
| <b>Drivetrain</b> .....                       | Front-wheel drive          |
| <b>Tank</b> .....                             | 64 ℓ                       |
| <b>Maximum towing capacity</b> .....          | 2 000 kg                   |
| <b>Towbar's maximum tensile weight</b> .....  | D-value 12,6 kN (1 285 kg) |
| <b>Towbar's maximum vertical weight</b> ..... | 90 kg                      |
| <b>Is the tow bar removable?</b> .....        | No                         |
| <b>Can a drop plate be fitted?</b> .....      | No 🚫                       |





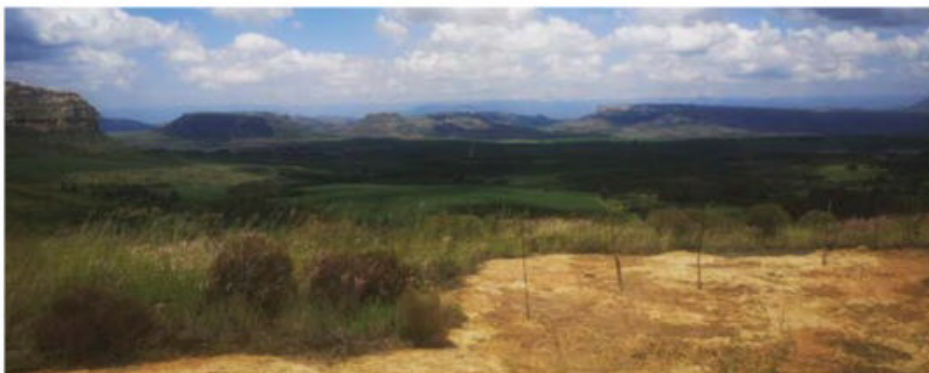
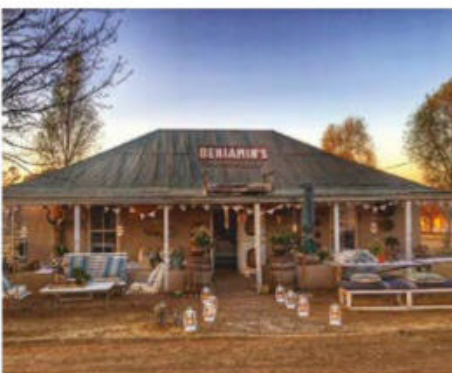
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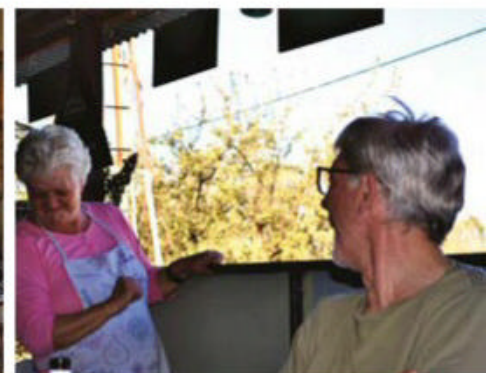
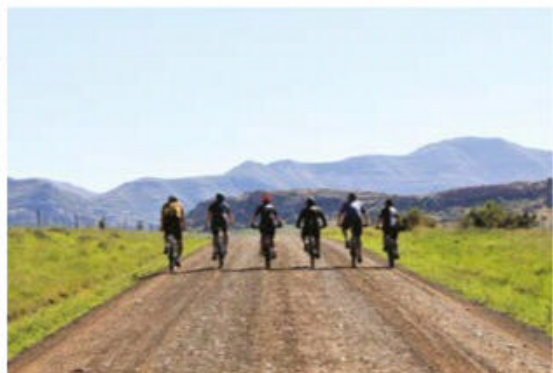
***Follow the sandstone markers along the winding farm roads of the beautiful Eastern Free State; a region virtually untouched by the stresses and strains of modern life.***

The Sungazer Pilgrimage offers a full route, week route, mid-week route and two short routes; all of which begin in the cosy village of Paul Roux, at an altitude of 1539m.

The 211km circular Sungazer Pilgrimage Route, offers varied and unique views of the spectacular Eastern Free State landscape. Expect to see breathtaking views, birds, and wildlife in peace and tranquility, while passing farms and game farms with little to no traffic.

Overnight accommodations along the route vary from snug B&Bs to spacious lodges, game farms, and backpackers.

We're finding new and exciting ways to help you break away from the stress and routine of modern life. Whether you enjoy cycling, horse riding, slack-packing, or a brisk and bracing hike, we customise routes, designed around your preferences.





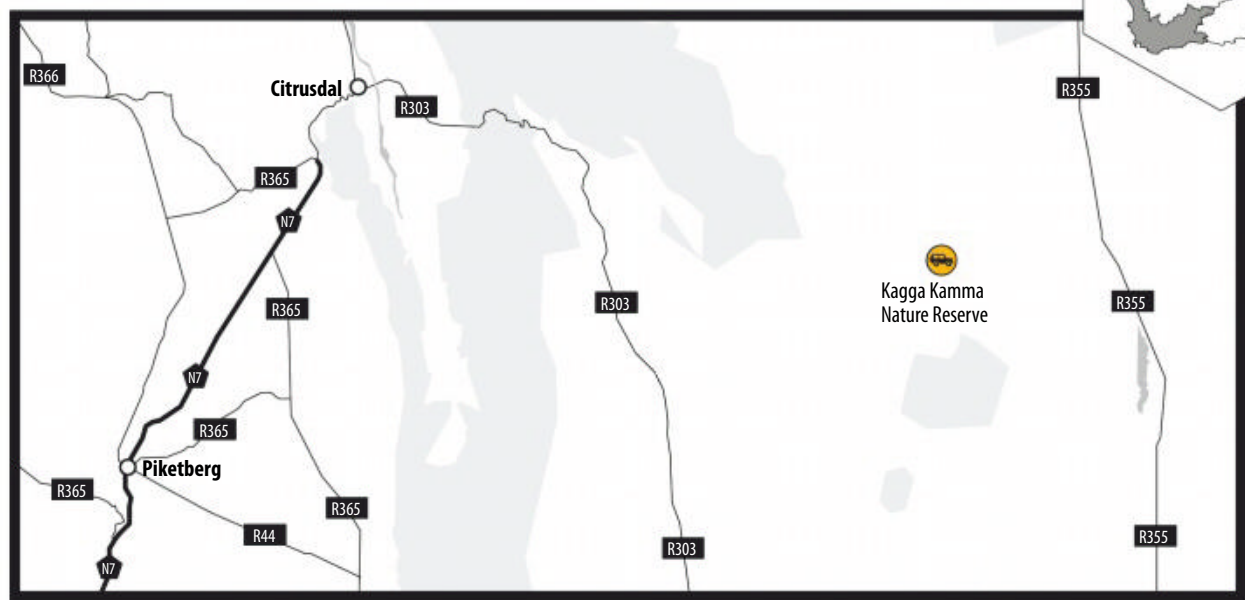


# Crossing sand and rock in the Cederberg

The Cederberg is synonymous with hiking, rock climbing and mountain biking. But at Kagga Kamma, there's also a decent route for 4x4 enthusiasts.

Words and photos **Evan Naudé**





**ALONE IN THE WILD** This rocky twin track traces the eastern edge of the Cederberg mountain range that humans have largely abandoned. This hardy gemsbok (left) probably likes the absence of people.



**T**he Cederberg is one of the best places in the country to get away from people. Kagga Kamma clearly specialises in this kind of escape, because they offer open-air rooms and secluded bush camps where you sleep alone under the stars – with no cellphone signal or electricity.

The 4x4 trail in this nature reserve, which has been around for more than 20 years, stays true to form as it takes you deep into the mountains.

#### THE ROUTE

After paying your access fees at reception, drive back toward the entrance gate and turn left at a road sign with the number 36. Keep straight until you reach no 40 – this is where the route officially begins.

It is a circular route with several loops running north, and each intersection is marked with a number. You decide whether you just want to take a quick spin or whether you'd like to spend half a day in the veld. Basically, the eastern side of the trail is the more relaxed section and the western side a more challenging route with steep inclines and descents, and narrow bends over rocky outcrops.

The loop that takes you east, past route markers 54, 53, 52, 51 and 50, is a stony twin track with a rocky incline here and there where you have to choose your line carefully so your off-roader's belly doesn't scrape. These sections are challenging enough to make things interesting, but not so hectic to make you sweat. Besides, you want to keep your eyes on the gorgeous





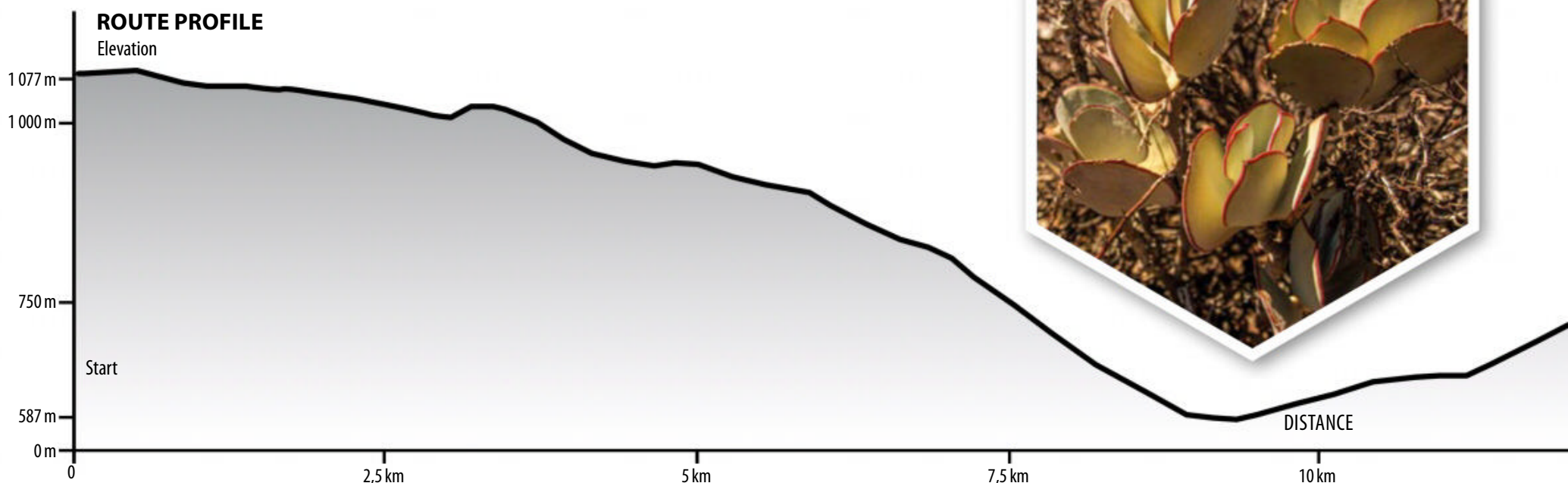
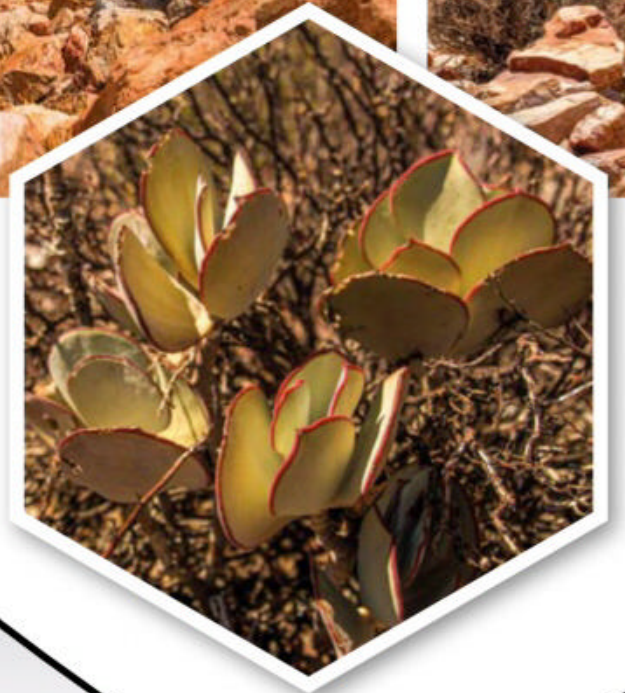
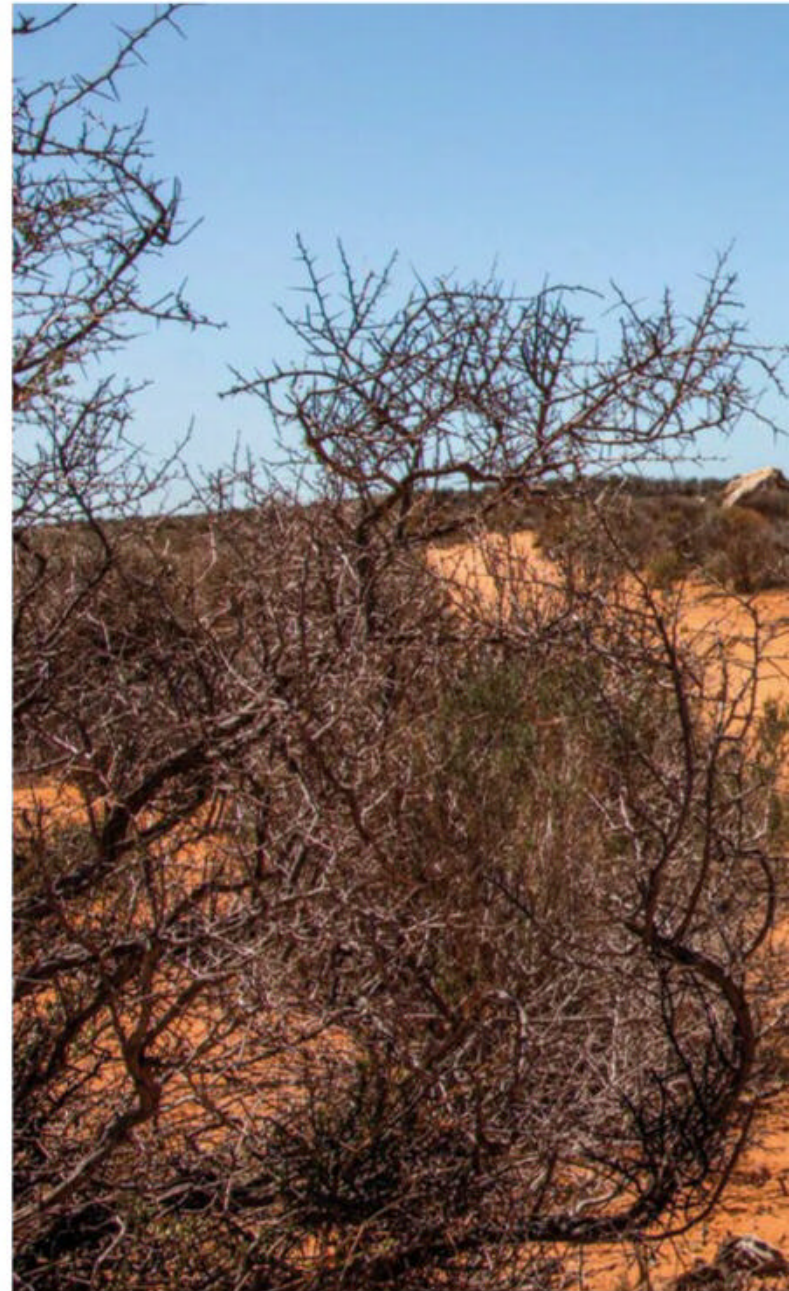
views around you: the imposing peaks of the Cederberg lie to the west and the expansive plains of the Tankwa Karoo stretch below you to the east.

From Graskop (no 47), head south with a smooth twin track to the Tierkloof lookout and further to the memorial plaque lookout point before you reach Kagga Kamma's bush camp again.

If you have a penchant for forging your own path and want to really test your off-

road vehicle's abilities, aim for Joubert's se Vlak (no 45) from Graskop, and then on to Joubert se Werf and Joubert se Vlak (no 45) before you reach Bobbejaanskrans again. On this part of the route you need a vehicle with good ground clearance – and a spotter that can get out and show you the best lines to take.

You finish the route by driving back to no 40 and from there to the entry road (no 36) between the lodge and the main gate.







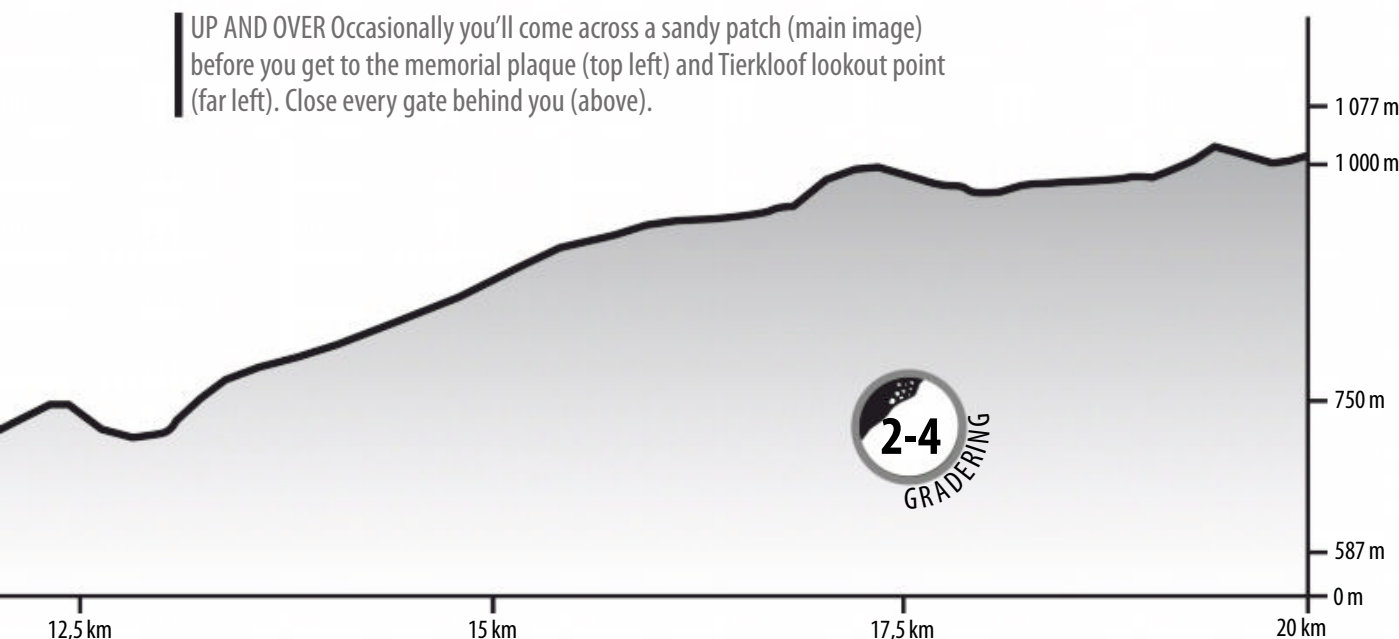
“

the imposing peaks of the Cederberg lie to the west and the expansive plains of the Tankwa Karoo stretch below

”



**UP AND OVER** Occasionally you'll come across a sandy patch (main image) before you get to the memorial plaque (top left) and Tierkloof lookout point (far left). Close every gate behind you (above).



## What you need to know



**Do I get a map?** Yes, and the route is also on Tracks4Africa.

**Will I scratch my vehicle?** The bushes are close to the road in places, but if you drive carefully, your bakkie's paint will remain undamaged.

**Do I need to take a compressor?** Yes.

**Can we braai along the way?** No, no fires are allowed in the nature reserve. However, you can arrange to braai at the lodge's lapa in advance.

**Can I turn around halfway?** Yes.

**Will I see any game?** Watch out for eland, gemsbok and kudu.

**Is there cellphone signal?** MTN has spotty reception.

**Best time to go?** In the autumn and in spring, when it is flower season.

**Can I take my family along?** Yes, but pets aren't allowed in the reserve.

**Can I come for just the day?** Day visits are allowed. If you drive all the loops on the route, you could be occupied for up to six hours.

**Are there ablution facilities?** Not on the trail, just at the lodge.

**Directions** Drive from Ceres to Prince Alfred Hamlet and take the Gydo Pass to Op-die-Berg. Turn right at the Ceres Karoo/Cederberg sign and keep straight for 25 km. Turn off to the right and drive 20 km on this gravel road. When you see the Kagga Kamma sign, turn left – the entrance gate to the reserve is 15 km from here.

**GPS** S32.746139 E19.562325

**What does it cost?** You pay a daily access fee of R215 pp for the nature reserve. You must also obtain a (free) permit for the route and a release form at the reception office before you leave.

**Contact** 021 872 4343

kaggakamma.co.za





# Camping on the Breede

You can swim, row and fish at the Bonnievale River Lodge... or simply have a good time with friends, says **Evan Lodewyks** of Southfield in Cape Town.

“Friends who previously camped here recommended the Bonnievale River Lodge, and when we recently spent some time in the Robertson area, we decided to come and stay here for a couple of days to really relax.

## WHAT IS THE CAMPSITE LIKE?

The landscape is picturesque, with green grass everywhere, a neat garden and the Breede River flowing next to the resort.

The stands are large with space for more than one tent and plenty of space to relax. The stands vary in size. Those next to the water are bigger, but your car isn't allowed there.

On the terrace, the stands are slightly smaller, but you have a better view from here. Those look like the better stands for braaiing and having fun.

## WERE YOU SATISFIED WITH THE ABLUTION FACILITIES?

The bathrooms have no frills, but they are

cleaned throughout the day. The water pumped from the river is filtered; so it's safe for washing, but bring drinking water.

## WHAT DID YOU TO DO TO KEEP YOURSELVES OCCUPIED?

The resort has a pool that's barely a five-minute walk from the campsite. There you'll find loungers so you can relax under a gazebo or lie in the sun.

They've got canoes you can rent at reception if you want to go for a paddle, but you can't stop at the other side of the river as it's private land. Remember your fishing tackle, there's bass, carp and barbel (catch and release). But you can also – like us – just come to relax and socialise with friends.

The resort lies between a number of wine farms and you could set aside an entire day for wine tasting.

## IS THERE A RESORT SHOP HERE?

Yes, it sells the essentials, including wood,

ice, snacks, soft drinks and ice cream. But you're close enough to Bonnievale if you need anything else.

## IS THERE OTHER ACCOMMODATION HERE?

Yes, there are cottages and chalets, as well. ”



**CONTACT** 081 799 2152

bonnievaleriverlodge@gmail.com

bonnievaleriverlodge.co.za

GPS S33.943799 E20.077128

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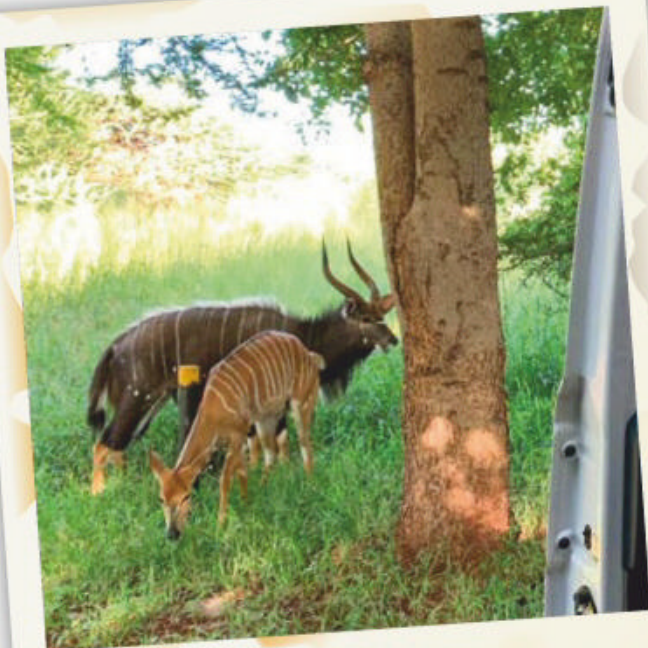






# For business and pleasure

When her husband decided to purchase a panel van for work, little did they know that their Hyundai H1 vehicle would become a camping vehicle, says **Michelle Naudé** from Pretoria



“My husband Louis is in the glass business, and needed a vehicle that could carry glass panes for work. He didn't want a **double-cab bakkie**, and the only other requirement was that it could also carry his bicycle, as he's an avid cyclist.

We looked at the usual panel van suspects, including the **Mercedes-Benz Sprinter** and **Volkswagen Transporter**, but settled on this used **2017 Hyundai H1 2.5 CRDi** automatic for **R370 000**.

It met our requirements with its good service plan and warranty. Not only that, but we could also throw the Vespa in with the bicycles for weekends away, and still have more than enough space to spare.

We had to fit our own **Bluetooth system**

so that our cellphones would always be connected and then we also had to jack up the audio system a bit as we wanted to use the van for recreation purposes and not just as a workhorse. Oh, and we added a set of **aftermarket wheels** as well.

One day my husband told me that it would be cool if we could also sleep in the Hyundai, which we simply call, **the Van**. After I agreed, he came home with a cool **mattress that folds up into a bag**, but one thing led to another and, before long, his mates and he had kitted it out with a **drawer system**, too.

Then we got a gazebo and camping chairs, and someone gave us a folding camping table as well. We also have





**removable screens** that allow us to keep the doors open and the mosquitos out – and they work just like those on a tent, with mesh and zips.

The H1 is **easy and smooth to drive**, and the turbodiesel motor pulls strongly and can keep up with holiday traffic, but if we had an extra R30 000 lying around right now, we'd **improve the suspension**. Perhaps we'd also add a few fun modifications inside: **cover the car seats** with blue wildebeest hide and **fit a fridge** between the front seats.

The Hyundai rewards our easy style with a good **10 L/100 km** average and so far, we haven't had any issues, but then again, we did keep it simple with the upgrades.

We're relatively new to camping and have

just returned from our second trip away with our H1, and are already looking forward to the **Tsendze Rustic Camp** we've booked to visit later this year.

We've heard that it's small, but the lack of electricity, simple but functional amenities, abundant wildlife and awesome **Bushveld TV** are all things that have us excited to hit the road again.



#### Show us your wheels

Send an email to [drivecamp@gomag.co.za](mailto:drivecamp@gomag.co.za) and tell us about what's in your garage.





# Hooked on the Free State

Campsites in the northeastern Free State are few and far between – fortunately there is the Bassfeather Country Lodge just the other side of Reitz.



## Bassfeather Country Lodge

### STRETCH YOUR LEGS – AND YOUR RODS – NEXT TO THE LANGSPRUIT

The Bassfeather Country Lodge is located on the Langspruit just outside Reitz in the northeastern Free State.

When you turn off the Reitz road, the small river runs for about half a kilometre to the right of the good dirt road to meet a dam wall.

The owner, Manie Fichardt, built the embankment here 37 years ago with the idea of establishing a spot where people could relax.

From here, of course, the water forms a dam with Bassfeather on the other side of it. In stark difference to the Free State plains that stretch around you, shade

trees are plentiful here, and the neat lawn extends to the water.

There are 23 numbered stands but they aren't allocated in advance.

Each of the built-in barbecues (with their own grids) gives you an indication of where to camp; so the sooner you arrive, the better your chance of getting the best spot – especially if you want to camp on one of the 14 sites facing the water. A number of garbage bins are peppered about, each with a black bag that gets replaced every day.

The bathrooms are tidy. The showers and tubs are clean and there are even

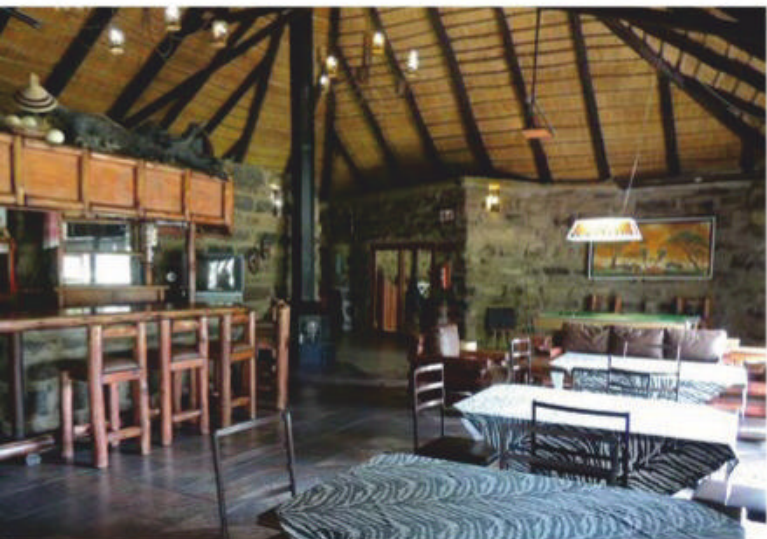
plenty of sockets and toilet paper – there is even hand-washing soap and hand cream.

The kids can head straight to the playground and the outdoor pool, or the whole family could go for a walk to enjoy Mother Nature.

You can walk up a small hill behind the resort from where you get a nice view of the surrounding area. If you're lucky, you'll see blesbok, black wildebeest, zebra or ostriches in the veld.

Of course, there are a number of bird species near the water and keep your eyes peeled, because you may be lucky enough to also encounter a chameleon.

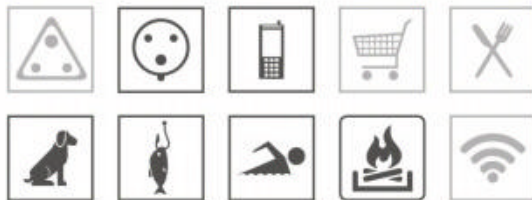




Words and photos (unless otherwise stated) **Antoinette Schoeman**



## Briefly | Bassfeather Country Lodge



**Fish** Black bass, catfish and carp

**Campsite** Sites for 23 caravans on a lovely lawn with plenty of shade trees.

**Ablution facilities** 1 building. On the men's side are 2 showers and 3 toilets and the same on the women's side, but with 2 extra baths.

**Price** Depending on the season, R200-R220 p/n per site plus R80 pppn (R40 for children under 12; free for under 6).

**Arrival and departure** 14:00 and 11:00.

**Contact** 📞 082 378 6991 📧 bassfeather.com 📧 info@bassfeather.com

**Nearest town** Reitz, 9,6 km.

**Road condition** The last kilometre is a stretch of good dirt road.

**GPS** S27.812397 E28.504346

**Drive & Camp says** Fishing is free, but release the bigger fish you catch.



## FISHING EQUIPMENT

### Cover your bases

Depending on how and where you fish, a fishing vest comes in handy. Thanks to all its pockets, you can carry anything from lures to your cellphone and water bottle while standing on the rocks for example.

Adrenaline's fishing vest is an item that takes it all one step further. Not only does this vest have useful pockets, but also buoyancy inserts that will help you afloat in the water: there's one buoyancy insert in the back and two on the front (one on each side). The vest will float up to 75 kg and the buoyancy inserts can be removed if you like.

Furthermore, the jacket's design does not restrict your movements while fishing. The jacket can make your life easier whether you're casting your line from your kayak, fly-fishing or looking to catch a black bream in the ocean.

**Price** R685

**Contact** Adrenalin Importers & Distributors (importers) 📞 021 982 1510

📧 catches@4adrenalin.co.za

📧 adrenalinfishing.co.za

## FISH DISH

### KOB WITH CHILLI JAM Fish with bite

South Africans love to braai a snoek basted with mayonnaise, garlic and apricot jam. This dish is similar, but with extra oomph.

#### Ingredients

(serves 4)

- 1 kob, snoek or another fish suited to braaiing
- 4 tablespoons chilli jam
- 8 tablespoons soft butter
- 4 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon rosemary, finely chopped



- an extra sprig of rosemary

#### Here's how

**1 Rinse** the cleaned fish and press it dry it with kitchen paper.

**2 Mix** together the jam, butter, lemon juice and rosemary. Now baste 3 tablespoons

on the inside of the fish and also push the sprig of rosemary into the stomach cavity. Baste the outside of the fish with 3 tablespoons of the mixture.

**3 Braai** the fish over moderate coals for 6 minutes with the skin side down until the skin is crisp.

Then flip it over and braai the other side until crisp. Once the meat can be flaked, the fish is cooked.

**4 Spoon** the rest of the butter mixture onto the hot fish and serve immediately.

**Drive & Camp says** If you don't have chilli jam, use sweet chilli sauce or tomato jam to which you add a little chopped chilli. 📸



# The inimitable Frenchman

Plucky, cheeky and contrary are appropriate adjectives for the stereotypical Frenchman as well as the new Citroën C3 Aircross.

Words and photos **Cyril Kloppe**





**T**he French have always built quirky vehicles, and Citroën is often the frontrunner when it comes to distinctive cars. There was, however, a period around the millennium when this manufacturer got really boring, especially with regard to its C range of vehicles. The C5 family sedan (2000 to 2017) was the epitome of conformity and the C3 hatchback (2002 to 2009) looked cute with its bubble roof, but it was otherwise unremarkable.

Citroën's had bigger problems in South Africa than bland appearance, though: its reputation for a serious shortage of available parts. Things got so bad that the manufacturer withdrew from the country in 2016 – not that anyone really noticed.

Xavier Gobilie, the man largely responsible for Renault South Africa's resurrection, has now been tasked to reincarnate Citroën South Africa as well.

This sounds like an impossible task, but working in Xavier's favour is the fact that Citroën has regained some of its former flamboyant French exoticism – with the C3 Aircross a prime example.

#### **Plucky**

Jaws dropped when the C Aircross concept vehicle was unveiled at the Geneva Motor Show in February 2017. The body boasted inventive features and the interior showcased all kinds of technologies and gadgets that few automakers had previously considered.

But bean counters probably spoilt all the fun as the exotic interior of the C3 Aircross production vehicle was stripped of all its innovations. They retained most of the bodywork, but the cutest features were dialled back so the C3 Aircross wouldn't look too quirky.

Nevertheless, the C3 Aircross still has a striking appearance with dayglow orange roof rails, wing mirrors and fog lamp trim.

Also, the body paint (dubbed Soft Sand) is a remarkable colour that appears light brown in bright sunlight, then silver or even white depending on the type of light that falls on it. The Aircross won't be to everyone's taste, which is something Citroën accepts, but they hope that it

FROM AWFUL TO OVAL  
Citroën went from bland to boss in recent years and the C3 Aircross really embraces the oval design element, as well as that dayglow orange detailing. Some will hate it, but we love it!

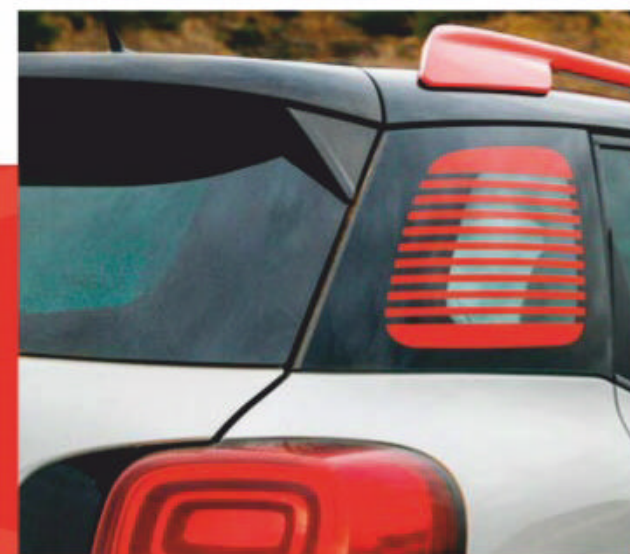
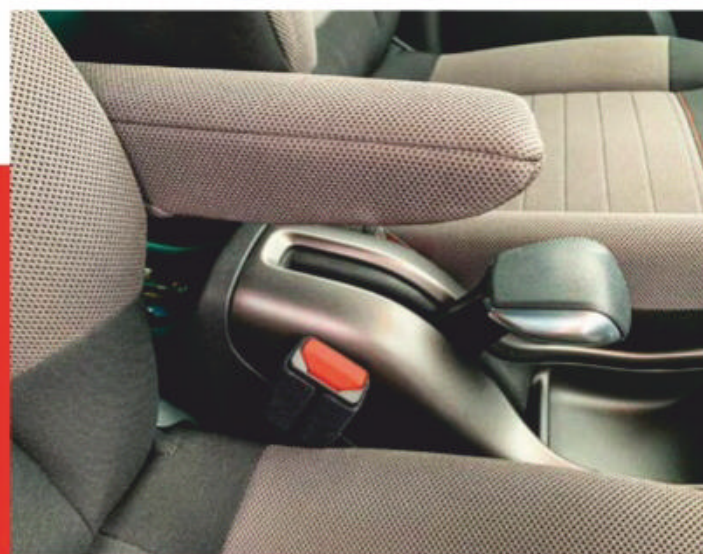




## DRIVING IMPRESSION



**LOOK AROUND** The oval shapes are repeated inside as well as that spicy orange colour. The armrest for the driver is a welcome feature. Our only complaint is the obstinate French approach to switchgear, but we admit it adds to the quirkiness.



will appeal to those who seek something different to the norm.

Despite its cheeky dimensions, the C3 Aircross is a tad longer than its competitors (except for the Mazda CX-3 that's 2 cm longer) and it's both wider and taller than the Hyundai Venue and Renault Captur. It therefore feels surprisingly spacious on the inside – an illusion that many compact SUVs successfully pull off – and the luggage space is indeed larger than that of its competitors.

### Cheeky

The C3 Aircross is marketed as a true SUV, not just a crossover, despite being front-wheel drive only. Citroën argues that large wheels and good ground clearance are sufficient to swap the highway for farm roads.

European models have a drive-mode button on the centre console for snow, sand and rocks, which is odd for a two-wheel drive

vehicle – and possibly why Citroën insists that the C3 Aircross is a true SUV. However, South African models don't have this button.

We took to a sandy dirt track and the C3 Aircross did well at first thanks to good electronic traction and stability control systems, but later the suspension struggled on a corrugated road and we could feel the Aircross slipping sideways even though the steering wheel pointed straight ahead.

On tar roads, the ride is wonderfully comfortable, almost too comfortable as the C3 Aircross's steering action doesn't feel as sharp as we expected from a compact hatchback. It's not that the steering action feels dead, but rather that the Aircross has its own idea of how responsive it should be.

This may sound like harsh criticism, but there's actually nothing wrong with choosing a comfortable ride over agile handling. It is, after all, a personal preference.

The 1,2 turbocharged petrol engine pulls nicely when you're on your own, but once it's packed with people and their luggage, you can feel the little engine struggling to get going. The automatic gearbox smooths out at higher speeds, but in the low gears there are noticeable pauses between transitions – it's not frustrating and simply feels as though you're stepping on the clutch and an invisible passenger handles the gears.

### Contrary

Things typically work slightly differently inside French cars than in German or Japanese cars. To gear up in Sport mode, you have to tap the lever downward, and vice versa if you want to shift down.

To tune into the next radio channel, you need to roll the wheel on the steering wheel back rather than forward.

The C-pillar window (made of plastic rather



## SPECIFICATIONS

|                                  |                                      |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Model tested</b> .....        | Feel 1.2 PureTech Spicy Orange       |
| <b>Engine</b> .....              | 1 199 cc, three-cylinder turbopetrol |
| <b>Power</b> .....               | 81 kW @ 5 500 rpm                    |
| <b>Torque</b> .....              | 205 Nm @ 1 500 rpm                   |
| <b>Transmission</b> .....        | 6-speed automatic                    |
| <b>Top speed</b> .....           | 184 km/h                             |
| <b>Acceleration</b> .....        | 11.8 seconds (0 to 100 km/h)         |
| <b>Fuel consumption</b> .....    | 6,7 l/100 km                         |
| <b>Tank</b> .....                | 45 l                                 |
| <b>Luggage compartment</b> ..... | 410 l                                |
| <b>Wheel size</b> .....          | 205/50/R16                           |
| <b>Ground clearance</b> .....    | 178 mm                               |
| <b>Safety rating</b> .....       | ★★★★★ (NCAP, 2017)                   |
| <b>Service plan</b> .....        | 5 years/100 000 km                   |
| <b>Warranty</b> .....            | 5 years/100 000 km                   |
| <b>Price</b> .....               | R345 900                             |



than real glass) is so garnished with orange pinstripes that the driver can hardly see through it at all, and the rear passenger has to peek through these stripes. But who cares? It's unique...

The hand brake lever is huge and it takes up significantly more space on the transmission tunnel than the thinner gear selector, and to open the bonnet, you need to pull a lever on the passenger side rather than the driver's side.

There are no physical buttons for the air-con and you have to adjust it via the touchscreen, an action that takes relatively long – while your full attention is not focused on the road.

The steering wheel is somewhat ovoid rather than round because it's flattened at the bottom. It's fine, but it's weird. The stalk for the cruise control is hidden behind the steering wheel's left spoke and you can't see

its buttons unless you climb out and take a closer look. So, you will need to remember the placement of the buttons if you want to use them while driving.

### Conclusion

In terms of reliability and after-sales service, Xavier Gobille proclaims boldly that Citroën has turned over a new leaf. Xavier has restructured the parts network and all workshops must henceforth meet his strict standards. According to Xavier, dealers will be fined for failing to complete repairs within two days, and they will need to give you a replacement vehicle while you wait to get your Citroën back.

As for the C3 Aircross, we can summarise as follows: a lovely ride and youthful looks – but there are vehicles, including the Hyundai Venue, Renault Captur and Mazda CX-3 that cost less while offering similar specifications.



## COMPETITORS

### Compact crossovers with lively engines.



#### R325 900 Renault Captur Turbo Dynamique 88kW

Evocative appearance – especially in orange – and a lower price, but with a shorter service plan.



#### R333 900 Mazda CX-3 2.0 Active

More powerful, but with a shorter warranty period and service plan (only three years).



#### R339 900 Hyundai Venue 1.0 TDGI Fluid DCT

Similar performance, fuel consumption and price, and in terms of reliability, Korea is the new Japan.



# 'Little' Everest reaches new heights

It was only a matter of time before Ford made its 2.0 bi-turbo diesel engine part of its Everest range. This is how it fares when towing a caravan.

Words and photos **Leon Botha**



**FORD EVEREST 2.0 BIT LIMITED 4X4**



**F**ollowing the Ranger bakkies, the much-talked-about new 2 ℓ engine from Ford is now also the flagship model in the Everest range.

#### **Here to stay**

Ford's focus is clearly now on the new engine: of the six available Everest models, three have the 2 ℓ bi-turbo diesel engine, one the 2 ℓ single turbo, while only one model each has the 2,2 ℓ and 3,2 ℓ engine. In terms of power output, the bi-turbo engine

overshadows the other two: the 2,2 ℓ and the 3,2 ℓ deliver 118 kW and 147 kW respectively (with 385 Nm and 470 Nm of torque, respectively), while the new engine boasts 157 kW and 500 Nm.

These numbers are also reflected in the improved gross combination mass (GCM) of the new engine and its towing capacity. The GCM of the 2,2 ℓ and 3,2 ℓ is 5 700 kg and 5 800 kg respectively, while the new derivative is 5 900 kg. The same is true for the single turbo, but this model loses some

of its towing ability. Its 3 000 kg corresponds to the older models, while the new engine derivative can tow 3 100 kg.

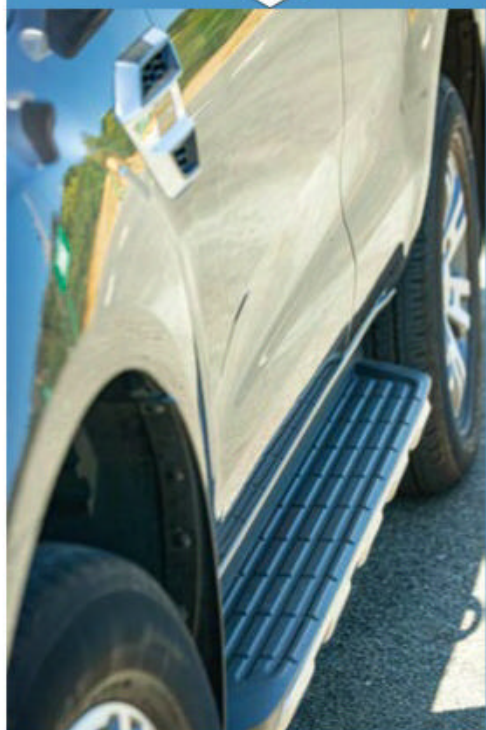
#### **How does fuel consumption differ?**

Ford says the new engine has an up to 9% improved fuel consumption based on what it calls 'true driving cycles'. This may be true, but not when towing.

We've used a similar 1,3 t Jurgens Xplorer in two previous tow tests with Everest models as well as this one. It is therefore easy







to compare the numbers. The new engine was the thirstiest of the three with a fuel consumption of 16 l/100 km (6,2 km/l) versus 15,1 l/100 km (6,6 km/l) of the 3,2 l and the 2,2 l's 13l/100 km (7,7 km/l).

#### Built for towing

A tow bar is standard on all models, and if you stand behind the Everest you can see the trim is designed around it. Ford uses a removable tow bar. With our test vehicle, the tow bar itself is certified for a towing mass of 3,1 t (which is in line with the vehicle's towing capacity) and the permissible nose weight is 310 kg. This is

more than three times the legal limit (100 kg) but it shows how strong the tow bar is.

Most caravans in South Africa are equipped with run-in brakes, and according to legislation, these caravan's GVM may not exceed the vehicle's tare weight. So, with the test vehicle, it is 2 459 kg, but you are allowed to tow up to 3 100 kg if the caravan is equipped with service brakes, for example.

When you hitch a caravan, the computer knows it and even shows a picture of the car and a caravan on the side of the rearview screen. The reverse sensors are therefore automatically switched off when you tow. As soon as you connect the caravan's light plug

with the Everest, the dashboard computer warns that the blind-spot sensors and cross-traffic alarms are now turned off. When you engage reverse, it also notifies you that the reverse parking feature is deactivated because of the caravan.

Besides the tow bar, all models come standard with caravan sway control.





## What does Pieter Crous, our towing expert, think?



“One of the first things that strikes me behind the wheel is that the test vehicle – a flagship model – has no paddle shifters. It’s probably because you can control the gears with a button on the side of the gear lever. Ford calls it Progressive Range Select. If, for example, you’re stationary in Drive mode and press the ‘-’, the Everest ‘takes away’ gears.

So when you’re towing up a mountain pass and prefer that the Everest only chooses between the first four gears, you can set it to do so. Let’s say you don’t want to pull off in first gear, the gearbox even allows you to use second. When driving in Sport mode and you press the ‘-’ button, the gearbox switches to a lower gear, and when you press the ‘+’, it goes up one – just like a manual transmission.

The gearbox does hunt around quite a bit, but that’s because there are 10 gears. It goes without saying that the range of each gear is shorter than in a gearbox with fewer gears, but it doesn’t bother at all when towing.

When not towing, the Everest sometimes skips certain gears. For example, when accelerating from a stop, the Everest might use first, third and then fifth. When you tow, that doesn’t happen.

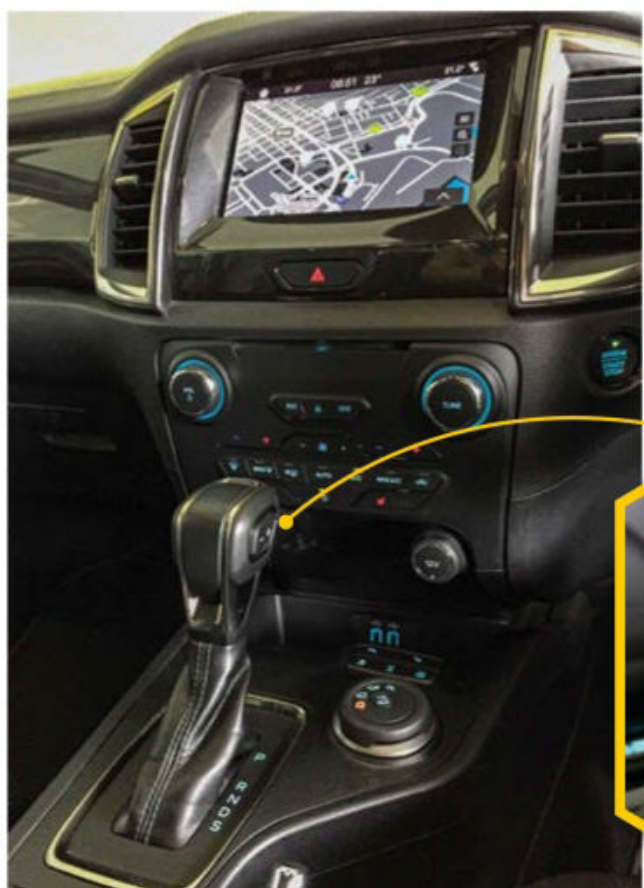
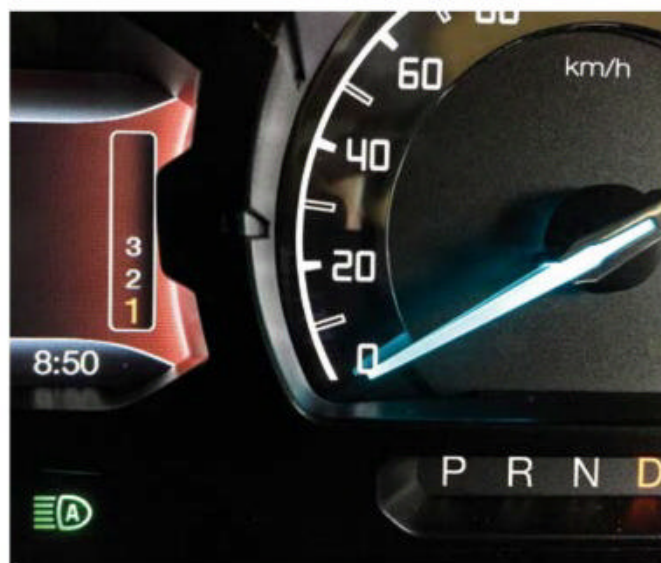
The Everest behaves perfectly in front of the caravan and doesn’t struggle at all. Accelerating from 80 to 120 km/h with

a caravan in tow isn’t that impressive, though. We got 15,25 seconds in Drive and 16,2 seconds in Sport mode.

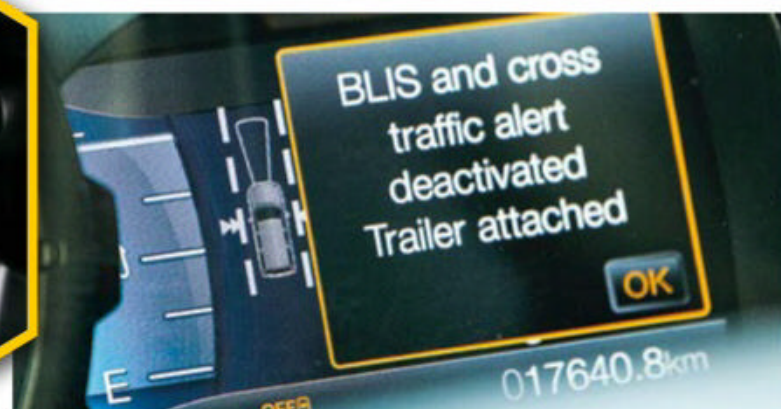
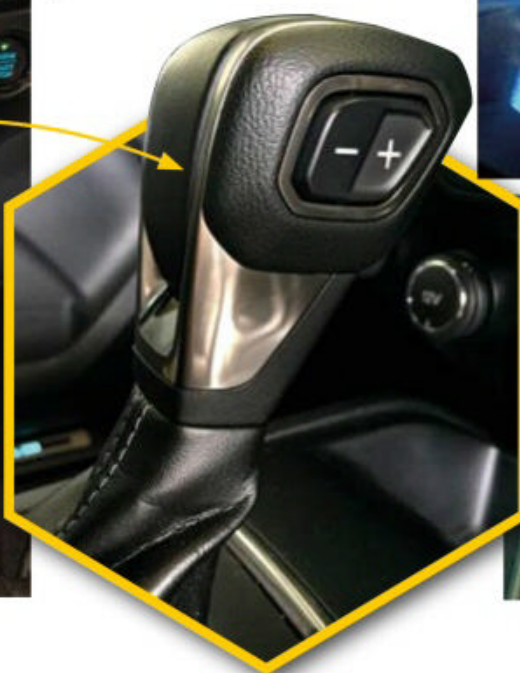
You’d expect a fair amount of body roll due to the soft suspension, but it was minor and that impressed me. Its turning circle is just as great. If you’re to the left of the yellow line on the road’s shoulder you can make a U-turn and face the other direction just the other side of that yellow line. That’s pretty amazing for an off-road vehicle.

If I had to complain about one thing, it would be the position of the window button in the driver’s door. When your arm is at rest, the buttons are just under your wrist. When you try to pull your arm back to reach them, your elbow presses into the seat, making it awkward to reach the levers.

Nevertheless, the Everest remains my number one choice when it comes to SUVs. It comes at a good price and is excellent value for money.”



**GADGETS AND GIZMOS** The Everest features an analogue speedometer flanked by twin digital screens that display information about the audio system, drivetrain and safety feature menus. A large infotainment screen takes pride of place on the dashboard.





## TOW TEST



**Drive & Camp says** Ford warns you not to tow with the Everest at speeds exceeding 100 km/h.



### The caravan

**Manufactured by** Jurgens

**Model** Safari Xplorer

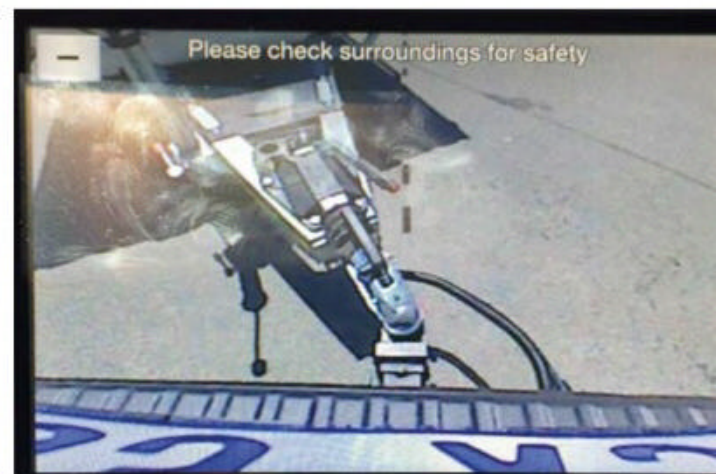
**Year model** 2020

**GVM** 1 650 kg

**Loaded weight on axle during test**  
1 300 kg

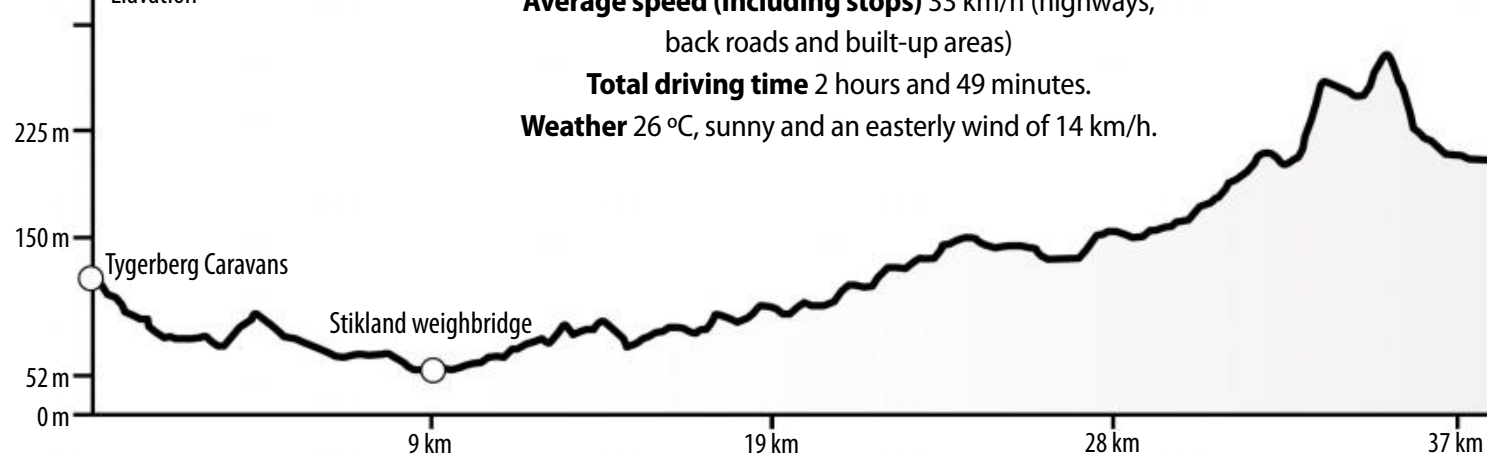
Drive & Camp borrowed the new Jurgens Xplorer from Tygerberg Caravans. Call Wesley Dempster at 021 982 4670 if you want to take a closer look at the Xplorer.

[tygerbergcaravans.co.za](http://tygerbergcaravans.co.za)



### TOWING PROFILE

Elevation





## SPECIFICATIONS

|                                                            |                               |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Model .....                                                | 2.0 BiT Limited 4x4           |
| Engine .....                                               | four-cylinder bi-turbo diesel |
| Power .....                                                | 157 kW @ 3 750 rpm            |
| Torque .....                                               | 500 Nm @ 1 500-2 000 rpm      |
| Transmission .....                                         | 10-speed automatic            |
| Drivetrain .....                                           | 4x4 with a rear diff lock     |
| Tank .....                                                 | 80 ℓ                          |
| Fuel consumption with caravan .....                        | 16 ℓ/100 km (6,3 km/ℓ)        |
| Range with caravan .....                                   | 504 km                        |
| Tare weight .....                                          | 2 459 kg                      |
| Weight during test (nose weight of caravan included) ..... | 2 700 kg                      |
| GVM .....                                                  | 3 100 kg                      |
| GCM .....                                                  | 5 900 kg                      |
| Combination mass during test .....                         | 4 000 kg                      |
| Towing capacity .....                                      | 3 100 kg                      |
| Tow bar's maximum tensile weight .....                     | 3 100 kg                      |
| Tow bar's maximum vertical weight .....                    | 310 kg                        |
| Is the tow bar removable? .....                            | Yes                           |
| Is there room for a drop plate? .....                      | No                            |

PRICE .....R776 500



## From the competitors (diesel, 4x4, automatic)



R713 600

Toyota Fortuner 2.8 GD6

450 Nm

It weighs 400 kg less and you can load 65 kg more into a Fortuner.



R609 900

Isuzu Mu-X 3.0

350 Nm

Similar towing capacity but the tow bar is optional, not standard.

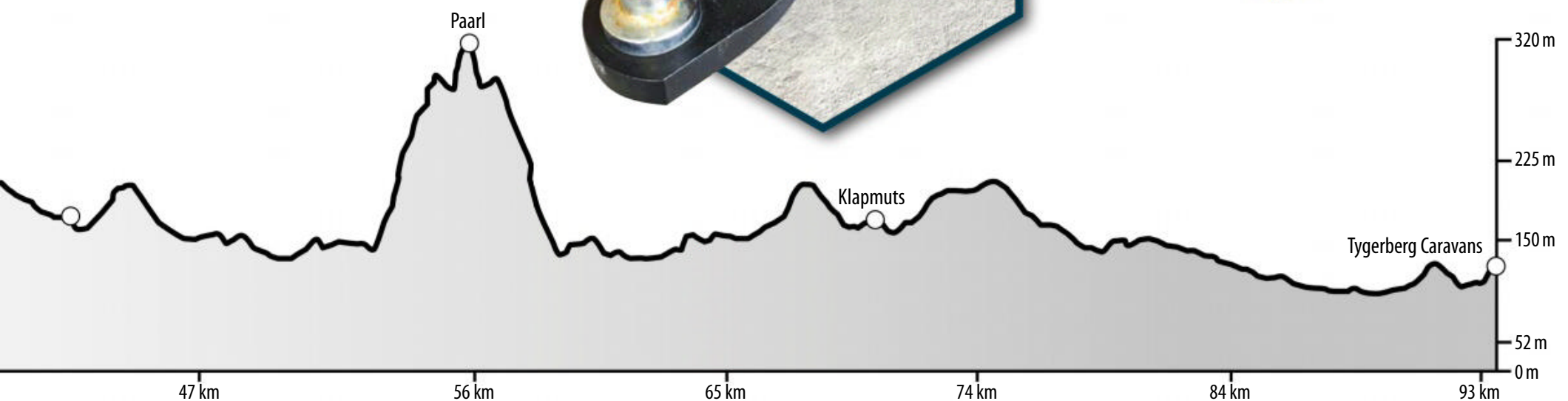


R639 995

Mitsubishi Pajero Sport 2.4 DI-Cl

430 Nm

Lighter on fuel with a caravan in tow but it has a smaller fuel tank. 🚗





# Three's company



OKTO CABANA

The new Okto Cabana road caravan was designed with the modern camper in mind – from front to back and from the bottom to the top.

Words and photos **Leon Botha**

**O**kto is a new road caravan manufacturer that doesn't follow the conventional approach. They apply contemporary trends to the design and construction of their caravans, which means they are more suited to the

modern-day camper. This is especially true when it comes to the materials they use. The panels are made of fibreglass and aluminium, so they're not only strong, but also impervious to rot. Another plus is the fact that Okto caravans – including the Cabana – fit

into a standard garage and the caravan's refrigerator runs on 12 V power instead of the usual 220 V.

On our trip through the Bushveld, we found that even though the Cabana is meant for tar roads, it's not scared of a dirt road at all.





### Solid foundation

The Cabana's chassis – that includes the coupler, corner steadies, brakes and axle – is built by Al-Ko. The two rear corner steadies are flush with the body, while the front two are each 26 cm away from the

front of the body. Here you push the crank lever through a hole at the bottom of the hull to reach it.

The Cabana has a feature you typically see on off-road caravans: its jockey wheel can be removed.

Road caravans mostly don't have this feature as the chassis is lower than those of off-road ones. This means that the hoisted jockey wheel is

usually the lowest point on the caravan, and if, for example, you have to drive over a speed bump, the wheel could hit the road surface. You won't have this problem with the Cabana.

The Cabana's nose storage hold is cavernous. The whole door hinges upward, completely out of the way – gas struts help to lift it. Furthermore, the floor of the storage hold is just about level with the threshold, which means you can easily unload camping gear.

The Cabana is 2,36 m wide and the door 1,67 m. Inside, the storage hold measures 41 cm deep with an interior height of 73 cm. The gas cylinder is to the left, out of the

way, and the 25 ℓ water tank is on the right. The hold also has its own light with a switch.

The spare wheel is not in its usual spot in the middle section of a nose cone; the carrier on which it rests hangs within the chassis behind the right-side wheel.

The only other storage hold you can access from the outside sits behind the right wheel. In it are two shelves, with the deep-cycle battery at the bottom.

The battery and charger are placed far enough from the door that they don't obstruct the storage space. This is also the perfect spot for a toolbox or equipment that don't see frequent use.





## Time to cook

The entrance is on the left, with the outdoor kitchen occupying the space from the door all the way to the front. Two hatches provide access to the kitchen utilities.

The hatch closest to the entrance drops down and is supported by two poles. It becomes a useful, large worktop (915 x 815 mm), and on its edge is a rubber seal to keep it dust- and waterproof when closed.

Usually, this type of seal collects crumbs when you wipe it down, but not here. The rubber is firmly attached to the surface and the curvature only sticks out about 2 or 3 mm.

Behind this worktop in the caravan's hull, there are no fewer than seven shelves. The 20 l Defy microwave is at the bottom right next to the worktop with five of the other shelves open – this is where you can pack all your groceries if you like.

A power point with room for three- and two-pronged sockets is in the shelf next to the microwave. Plates, mugs and bowls fit into the top

shelf on the right, in foam cut-outs so they don't bang and rattle while you tow.

To the right of the worktop are two USB ports to charging mobile devices.

The Dometic stove- and sink combination is imbedded in a drawer that emerge from behind the front hatch. The stove and sink each have their own glass top that folds down so you can also use them as work or packing space.

The stove isn't permanently connected to the gas; you need to place the gas cylinder next to the stove and connect it.

The stove's worktop is a comfortable 81 cm high (10 cm lower than the other worktop) and 60 cm wide. The whole unit emerges 129 cm from the hull.

When standing next to the worktop, there are two drawers below waist height. One is for the cutlery and the other is bare – good for spices and such items.

To round off this luxurious kitchen, a double stainless steel drying rack hooks onto the edge of the drawer.











## Let's step inside

The caravan door opens to the right and has a small bar cabinet on the inside that can hold four upright bottles of wine. The step is recessed into the caravan and is level with to the threshold – at its back, the name 'Okto' is cut out and illuminated when you turn on the lights – an indication of the excellent workmanship.

The light switches are in a panel to the left of the door. There's also a small door that opens into the outside cupboard that houses the crockery set.

As you get in, the dinette – that can also fold down into a single bed – is to the right and the island bed (more or less the size of a double bed) to the left. The cushion end is adjacent to the nose cone side.

The mattress isn't rectangular and tapers off toward the foot-end. At the top-end, the bed measures 136 cm wide and at the bottom, 103 cm. This enables you walk past the corner of the bed without banging a shin, but you still have to crab walk along the length of the bed. The bed is 187 cm long.

If you look at the bed from

the door's side, it is not 100% centred, but slightly to the right. So, there's more space to the left of the bed: next to the aisle is a knee-high cupboard – its top is not only a welcome place to put stuff, but can also lift up and has a few shelves below it.

The cupboard has two large open drawers at the bottom – they can each fit a large pillow. The mirror is to the left above the cupboard and you can swing it to see your reflection when sitting on the bed. There's also a bedside table on this side, while the other side has just the aisle, without a cupboard. There is, however, a closet for hanging clothes.

Above the bed are three more cupboards for clothes or bedding. Both people have their own reading light and there is also a 220 V plug and two USB ports.

The metal handles on the cupboards are of high quality, and there are cabinets across from each other in the middle of the caravan. The cupboard on the left is shoulder-high with three doors and has plenty of room for at least a month's worth of clothing.



Next to the 12 V Defy fridge (192 l) is a small worktop with a vanity basin. A loose lid fits over the basin when not in use. A light shines on the worktop, and the rest of the lights are hidden behind the tops of the cabinets for softer light. Two LED strips have also been fixed across the pop-up roof.

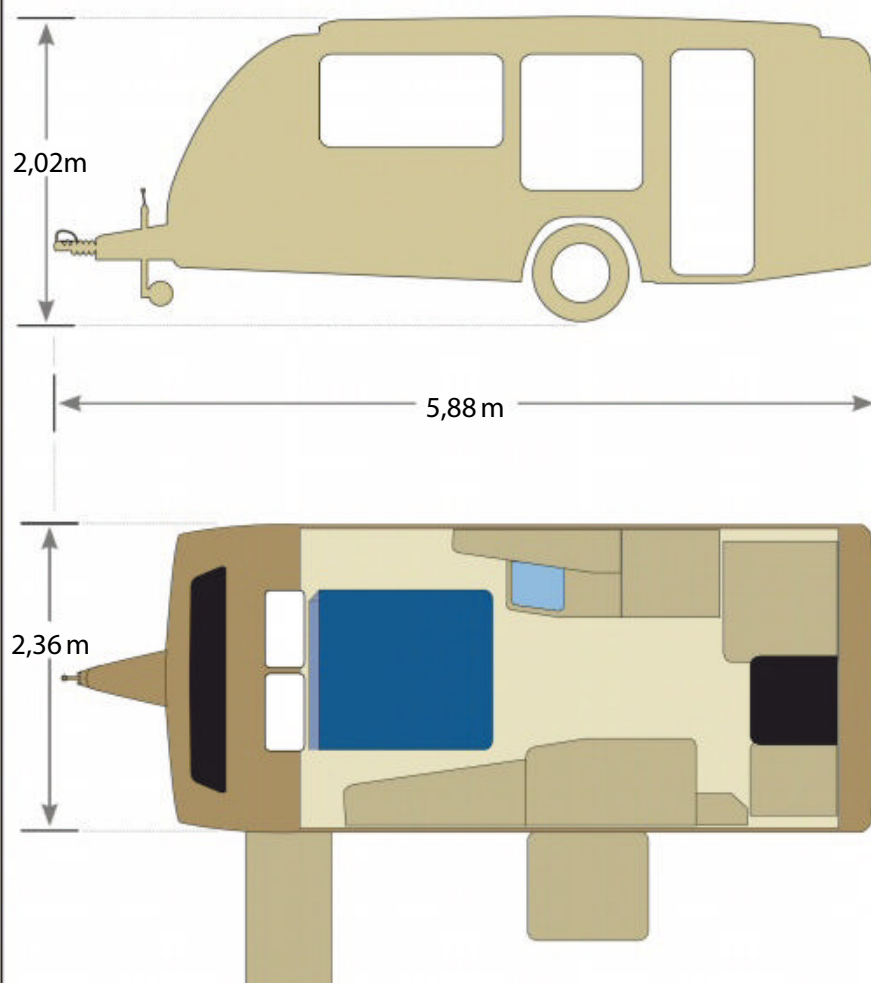
Two large side windows that open are on either side of the bed – though the lace curtain seems to belong to a different

era. Blinds would go better with the modern interior and are also more practical. The same applies to the front and rear windows.

When you open these curtains, you can see straight through the caravan with your car's rear-view mirror and get a good idea of what's going on behind you.

That's not something you see too often anymore, as the rear panel nowadays often lack a window.





## The technical stuff

**Length** 5,88 m

**Width** 2,36 m

**Height** 2,02 m

**Head height inside** 1,99 m

**Net weight** 1 140 kg

**Carrying capacity** 360 kg

**GVM** 1 500 kg

**Axle** 1 500 kg

**Wheel size** 195 R14C

**Price** R329 000 (includes tent)



Plus

- Great finishes with attention to detail.
- The nose hold is huge and accessible.
- The removable jockey wheel is practical.
- The spare wheel carrier in the chassis is a good idea.
- The 12 V refrigerator is a winner.
- You could hardly ask for more cupboards.



Minus

- The person sleeping on the right has no bedside table.

- Those curtains...

Drive & Camp borrowed the Okto Cabana from Loftus Caravan City.

**Drive & Camp says** If you examine the Cabana's keys, they look like proper car keys. These aren't the small, flimsy caravan keys you're used to. The locks are therefore sturdy and all the locks on the cupboards use the same key.

## Dealer network

The factory is in Pretoria, with two dealers in SA.

**Contact** 084 471 9674

oktocaravans.co.za

info@okto.bz





# CAMPING STARTER PACK 101



These are the first five items to get when you (eventually) decide to start camping.

**W**e're often asked what the most important camping equipment is. It all, of course, depends on your personal preferences – a jaffle pan and a gas stove may be more important to you than a solar panel.

Besides, there is a host of camping products available on the market, and when you're in a shop next to an overzealous salesman, he will try his level best to sell you all sorts of gear

that you may or may not need to pack in your Fortuner for your first weekend away.

In this article, we want to help people who don't have a trailer to acquire the most important stuff first. (We assume you already have a tent that suits your needs.)

We asked our Facebook friends for help and the consensus seems to be that the following five items are the most important things to get.

“

Nothing spoils camping faster than when you are uncomfortable. Especially for newcomers. Make sure your tent is of good quality and not leaking – **Cathy Buggs**

”



## 1 Perfect perch

The camping experience is much better if you can sit comfortably. Because let's be honest: that's what we like to do at home, too.

Make sure your chair is sturdy and that it doesn't take up too much space when packing.

With camping chairs, buying cheap is usually expensive in the long run. Invest in a good chair. You won't regret it.

*“Test a few first. And lean back far enough to find out exactly how comfortable each one really is.” – Russel Browne*





**2 Get horizontal**  
If you don't sleep well, you won't camp well, so get a decent bed.

Our Facebook friends seem to agree that you should avoid an inflatable mattress and rather invest in a stretcher bed. They make a valid point, sure,

but stretcher beds are by no means cheap.

No matter where you sleep, just make sure you lie on a level surface to improve blood flow.

*"Buy fewer items at a time and make sure they're better quality." – Morné Eloff*



**3 Dinner time!**  
The problem that newbie campers will soon notice is that you always need a place where you can put stuff down.

A table is an absolute must when you go camping. Nowadays, you get a variety of models in all colours and

styles that fold smartly.

Choose one that is durable and folds up easily.

*"With the smaller stuff, you can consider cheap choices, but when it comes to your camping furniture, you have to buy decent stuff."*

*– WesMon Gerber*



**4 Stay cool**  
There are no two ways about it: your food and drinks need to be kept cold. And your choice is basically between a cooler and a camping fridge/freezer. Your budget and space will determine what you acquire but try once again to get a better quality item.

It may look like that ice will last you all weekend, but if it's one big puddle by late morning, no one's going to be impressed with you.

*"The best investment you can make is to exchange your cooler for a 12 V refrigerator. You will never regret it." – Jason Reyneke*



**5 Light the way**  
Fortunately, portable light is something you probably already have thanks to our friends at Eskom.

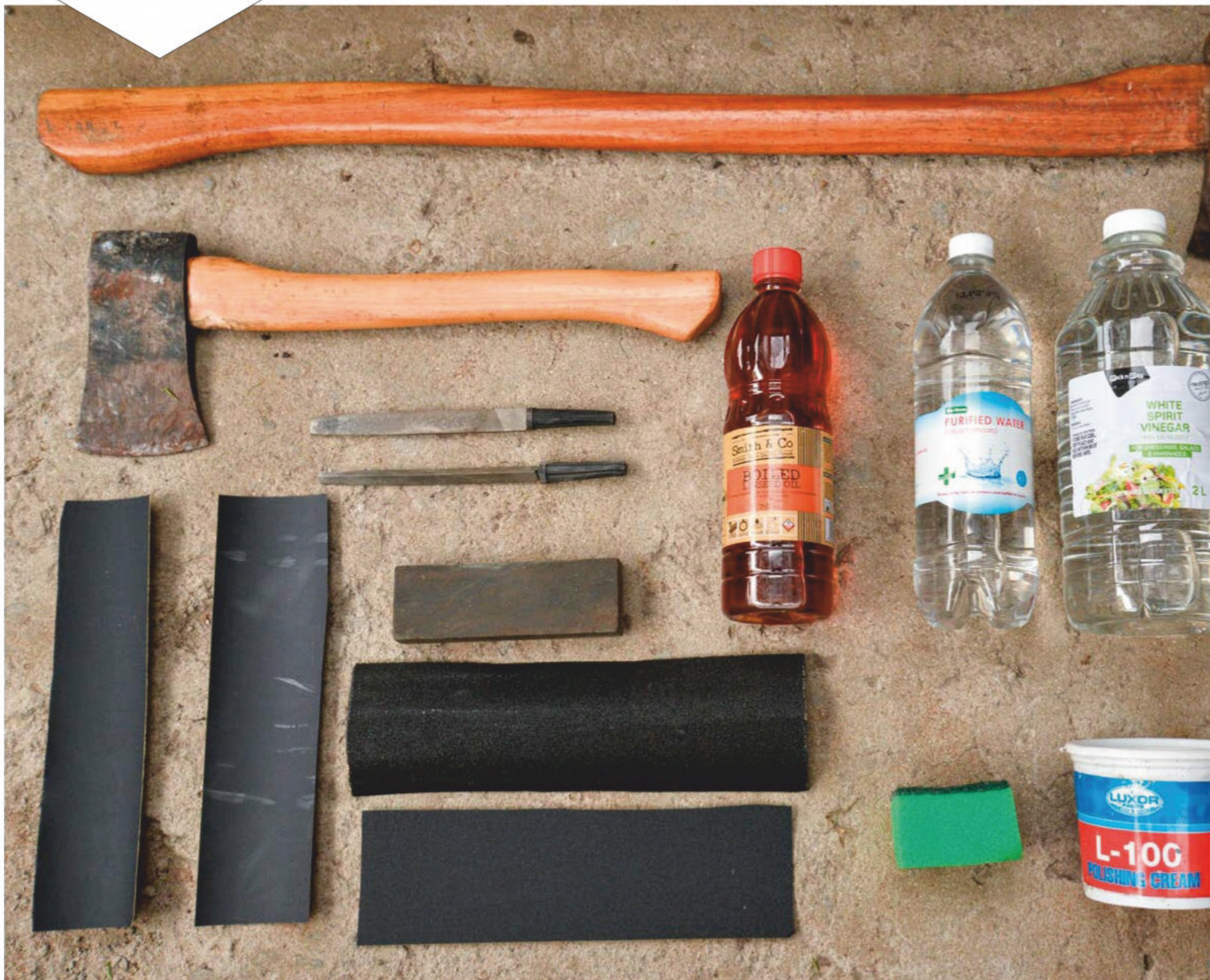
It gets dark quickly in a campsite, and when you rummage through a storage bin for the braai salt, the light of the fire won't help much. You can never have

enough light and torches.

Get yourself a headlamp, a camp lantern and one that fits firmly in your hand as you walk to the ablution block late at night.

*"Take care of your body. You should sleep, sit, drink and eat comfortably. And get a good torch." – Rina Cilliers*





# Got an axe to grind?

The saying goes that a bad carpenter blames his tools. We'd like to qualify that and add that a bad carpenter is someone who doesn't take care of his tools.

Words and photos **Kyle Kock**

**L**ast month we took some of the popular choices of firewood and put them to the test to see which burns hotter and longer. To get to that point, though, we first had to split some of the larger stumps from the nine bags of wood we used.

Does that mean we simply chucked the axe back into the shed for use during the next camping trip?

No, because just like any other expensive camping investment, if you look after your axe properly, it'll look after you.

Abraham Lincoln famously said "Give me six hours to chop down a tree, and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe." Not only was good old Abe honest, he was pretty wise too. The rarest of politicians indeed.

We're not going to get into

specifics about how to split logs and chop smaller pieces for your fire, but we're confident that whatever you're packing could probably do with a spruce up.

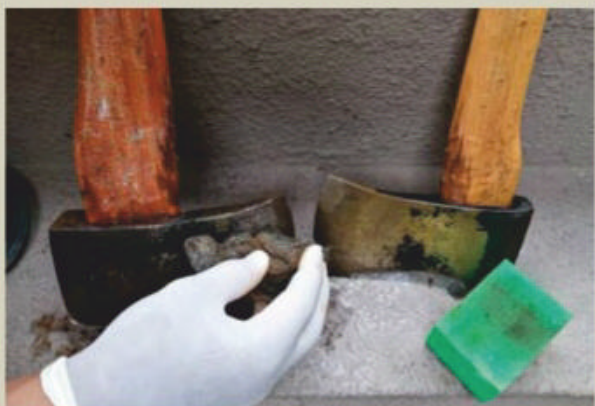
Have a look to see whether you have any of these tools lying around in the garage or shed.





## YOU'LL NEED

1. **A blunt rusty axe**, or hatchet – something that needs to be looked after regularly.
2. **Vinegar** – to break down the rust particles on the surface.
3. **Foam sponge** with a scourer – to clean off the surface rust and other dirt that might have settled on the axe since you last used (or cleaned it).
4. **Linseed oil** – there's plenty of online debate about using raw or boiled, but we used the boiled variety instead of the raw. It absorbs and dries quicker.
5. **Sandpaper** – we used 100, 220 and 800 grit sandpaper to sand down the axe head and handle.
6. **A file** – we used two small files to sharpen the edges.
7. **A whetstone** – not everyone has one, but it comes in handy when you're finishing the edge and want to get it quite fine.
8. **Paper towel or rags** – the sanding and filing is messy. Use paper towels to absorb excess oil under your work surface.
9. **Latex gloves** – you really don't want the sharp-smelling combination of vinegar and linseed oil on your hands.
10. **Thicker gloves** – especially handy after you've filed the edge, and it starts to get very sharp. Better safe than sorry.



## Cleaning

Typically, the heads of even high-quality axes aren't made of stainless steel. Exposure to the elements for long periods, with plenty of use in between, will result in oxidation and the discolouration that's the first indicator of surface rust. Douse the axe head with a generous helping of vinegar and use the scourer side of your kitchen sponge to start

scraping away the rust. Your axe could have a coat of paint like ours did, so you might want to take that off too.



## Rub, rub, rub

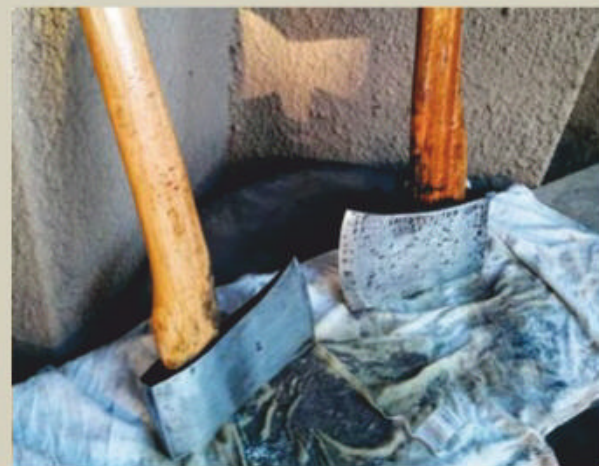
The next step is to start scraping off the rest of the debris and prepare the axe head for sharpening. Start with a rough grit sandpaper. We used 100 initially, but perhaps go down to 60 if your axe head is in particularly bad shape.

**\*Pro tip\*** If you have a G-clamp at home, it will help to hold the axe in place for your sanding – you're going to need a fair bit of force.



## Deep tissue

The next step is to start filing the edge. This is not as daunting as it sounds. Don't try to take off excess metal and stick to the existing profile of the edge. You can judge it using your eyes or, if you have a tool to measure the exact angle, use that for added peace of mind. File diagonally into the edge and repeat in the opposite direction as you return to the spot where you started. Using different files will help to get a clean edge. **\*Pro tip\*** A bastard file, made of hardened steel, will come in handy. It bites into the metal of your axe head more and will help you profile the edge before you start using the other files – especially if your axe head has picked up a nick or two.



## The finishing touches

If your handle is looking particularly tired, use the leftover sandpaper to scrape it down and prepare for coating. Our axes both have wooden handles with exposed eyes, and we allowed them to soak in a bit of linseed oil overnight for the wood to absorb some of the oil. You can coat the axe head in a layer too.

The sharpening stone we used requires a bit of oil, so we let that soak too, before using it to finish the edges. Use a rag to apply a layer of oil on the handle as well. If it's warm outside, it shouldn't take much longer than a day to dry. If your handle is still tacky, or wet, rather sand it down again and apply a thinner layer of oil that will absorb quicker.

If you want a mirror finish on your axe, use some polish to buff it to perfection, but then would you really want to use it afterward and not just hang it over your fireplace?

**\*Warning\*** The linseed oil is flammable, so be careful how you dispose of your rags and paper towel. Wash the rags in soapy water first, because they can apparently combust spontaneously. You also want the handle to be dry when you use it, if it's smooth, it might slip out of your hands.



## Lastly

Don't store your axe in excessively dry or damp conditions lest your axe handle crack, shrink or warp. This in turn can cause the axe head to loosen around the eye. A quick file and oil on the head after use will see yours last ages. Coat the handle once or twice a year as well.





If you're buying a new bakkie or SUV in South Africa, there's a strong likelihood that it will be turbocharged. But what exactly goes on under the bonnet, and when did it all start?

Words **Kyle Kock**

**T**o understand how a turbocharger benefits your engine, you first need to grasp exactly how an engine generates its power.

The engine is basically a pump, sucking in air through the intake to be used for combustion, whilst fuel is pumped up from the tank – and the air/fuel ratio that is compressed by the pistons reciprocating motion is then ignited by spark plugs. In a diesel motor, the combustion

happens slightly differently, with the air being compressed first and then the diesel fuel added afterward. Because compressed air is hot, and diesel has a high energy potential, the mixture ignites on its own without the use of spark.

Either way, the resultant energy released by the engine is what essentially drives your motor. But there's also wasted gases that are expelled through the exhaust system. And this is where a turbocharger comes in.

#### **War brings innovation**

In the early days of locomotion, when the world was still getting along fine with horses, progress was slow but steady. But when the world was thrown into strife with World War I, things started speeding up. With the advent of flight, and the use of airplanes in war, engines needed vastly more power because, as most of you who do road trips know, the higher the altitude, the thinner the air becomes. Basically, planes needed more oxygen

than the air could provide.

In the early years of the internal combustion, there weren't many options other than increasing the motor's capacity to satisfy the need for more power – even though Gottlieb Daimler and Rudolf Diesel toyed with forced induction in the late 19th century. It was an engineer named Alfred Buchi employed by Swiss manufacturing works Gebrüder Sulzer, who is largely credited for being the father of the modern exhaust gas turbo.





### In the beginning

At the dawn of the 20th century, the Sulzer company was working on negating the effects of power loss experienced by aircraft engines, and in 1923, Alfred Buchi's labours resulted in the first commercially available turbocharged engines when they were fitted to two 10-cylinder marine diesel engines. The engines were used in two passenger liners commissioned by the German government, and instead of 1 300 kW, they

produced 1 860 kW.

Just before the start of World War II, the turbocharger became particularly popular with manufacturers of bombers and fighter planes. And the technology progressed rapidly as the war between the Allies and the Axis powers intensified. But war is expensive, and in its aftermath, efforts went into rebuilding cities and economies, with less spent on research and development of turbochargers.

“

Just before WW II, the turbocharger became particularly popular with manufacturers of bombers

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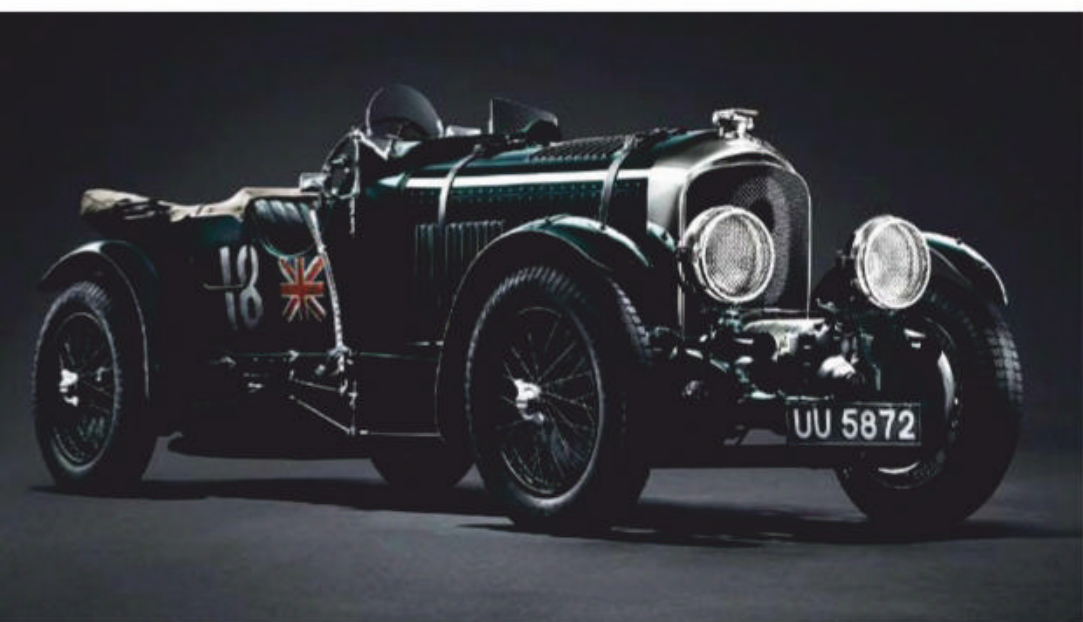
sports car manufacturers pursued the technology.

The 1968 Indianapolis 500 was won by a car running the Offenhauser turbo V8, and turbocharged cars dominated at the series' premier event, the 24 Hours of Le Mans from 1976 to 1989. Turbocharging was introduced by the Renault RS01 to Formula 1 in 1977, and in the 1988 season, the turbocharged McLaren-Honda MP4-4 won 14 out of 15 races.

The Audi Ur-Quattro was the first vehicle to introduce not only four-wheel drive but also turbocharging to the world rally stage in 1981, even though the sport's governing body had legalised the use of both technologies two years earlier and Lancia, who had competed well against Audi with the 037, later introduced twin-charging on the Delta S4, using both a supercharger and a turbocharger. But the cars were fast and crowd control was an afterthought.

After a number of deaths in 1986, the Group B rules were abandoned in favour of less reckless regulations.

German sportscar manufacturer Porsche launched the 930 911 Turbo in 1975, with a 3,0 litre flat-six engine supplemented with a blower that helped it make 191 kW at 5 500 rpm and 329 Nm at 4 000 rpm. The first twin-turbocharged car was the Maserati BiTurbo in 1981, with a bi-turbo V6, and 10 years later, the Bugatti EB 110 used four turbos on its 3.5 l V12. Today's modern turbodiesel vehicles have a lot to thank the 1978 Mercedes-Benz 300D for, as it showed how economical and reliable this combination could be.



### Cars and turbos

General Motors was one of the first major vehicle manufacturers to introduce mass-produced turbocharged cars through subsidiaries Oldsmobile and Chevrolet in 1962: the F-85 Cutlass Jetfire and Corvair Monza

respectively. Remember, this was almost 60 years ago, and it will come as no surprise that these vehicles had reliability issues.

Turbos largely fell by the wayside for regular production cars but racing teams and







### Why did turbochargers take over from superchargers?

The very first turbos were called turbosuperchargers. Superchargers were simpler in design, but they used a lot more fuel. Back when it was only the super wealthy who owned vehicles, so that wasn't too much of an issue, because they could afford the expensive bill at the pumps.

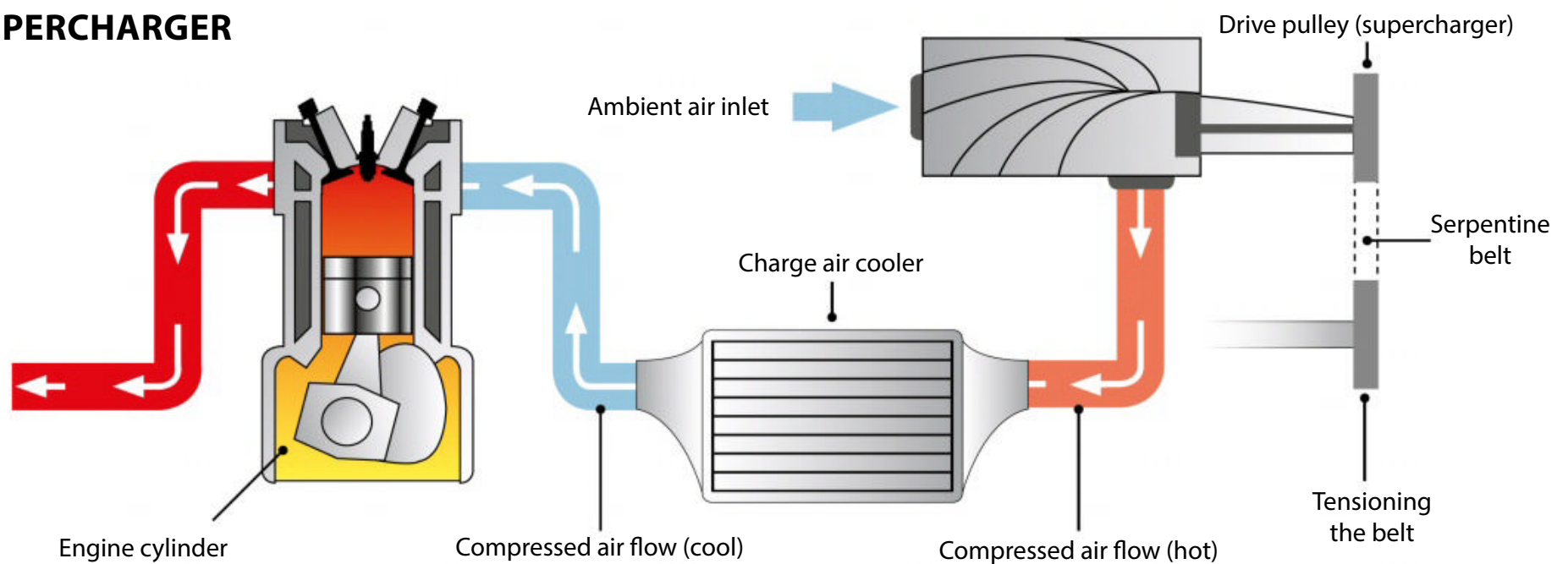
Because a supercharger runs off the crank, it requires a fair bit of engine power to use. This is not a problem if you're using a big V8 like the Range Rover Sport SVR or Jeep Grand Cherokee Trackhawk pumping out a crazy amount of power anyway. But a supercharger is a little impractical in a small city hatchback.

Yes, there's a jump in power output,

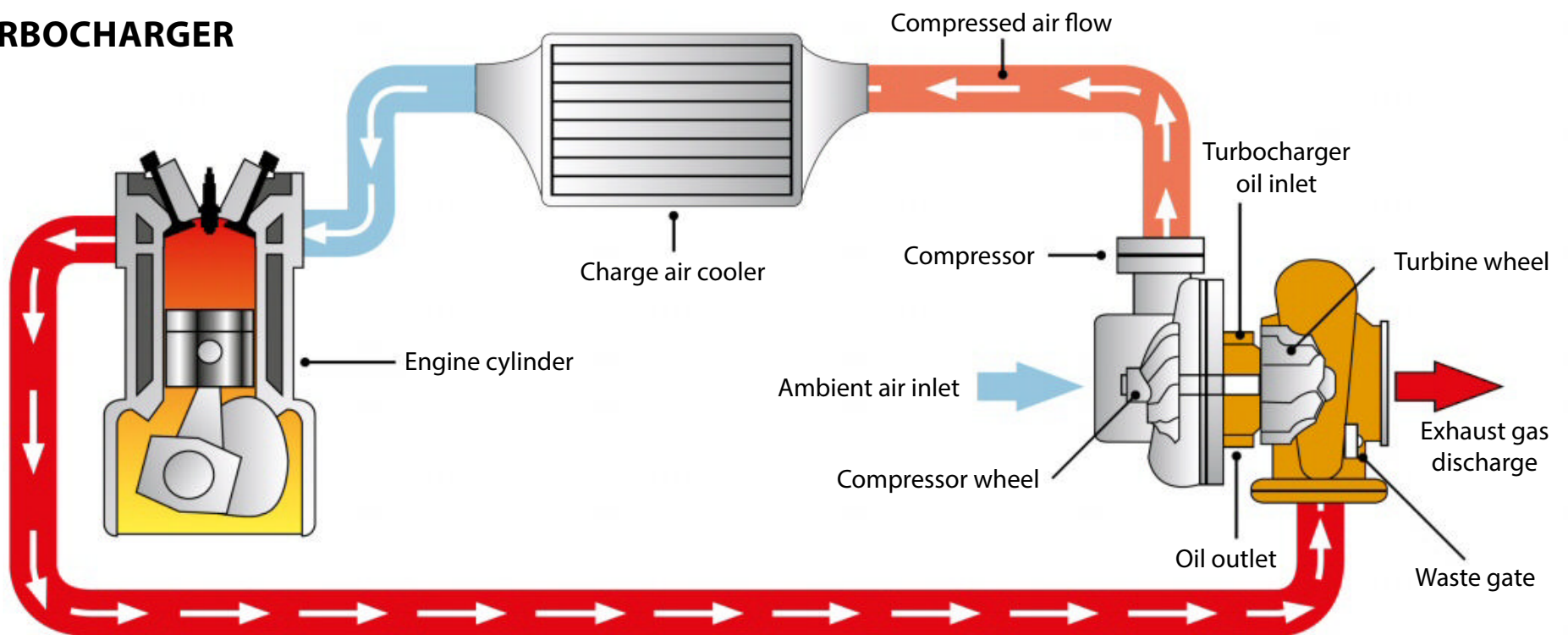
but beyond a certain point it's more of a load on an engine and – because the system uses additional pulleys and gears to operate – there are more mechanical parts that could fail. The major benefits are that there's no lag, and that they boost an engine's



## SUPERCHARGER



## TURBOCHARGER







performance at relatively low rpm. But another factor in the initial popularity of superchargers was that, in the early days, there were simply few metals that could handle the high temperatures generated by turbochargers.

Turbochargers are more efficient than superchargers, because they use wasted air that is already leaving via the exhaust. The system still requires energy to spin the turbine though, and with the extra air that's being

forced back into your engine, there's an increase in the amount of fuel required to match the air. The power benefits are generally superior to that of a supercharger and altogether the turbo and all its plumbing combined generally weighs less than a supercharged system.

The downsides to a turbocharged system are that the system doesn't result in power gains from idle and low engine speed, and then there's the delay

in the moment you put your foot down on the throttle pedal and the moment you feel the turbo build up boost, also known as lag.

The early uses of turbochargers on sports and racing cars had spectacular lag, with a relative lull in power from the moment you put your foot down, to a dramatic surge in power. Today's systems do not lag nearly as much, thanks to advancements in the combustion process and fuel-injection technology.

### How it works

A normally or naturally aspirated engine refers to exactly that, an engine that breathes unassisted, sucking in air through the intake to use in the combustion process.

Simply adding cylinders or more capacity to the engine is an obvious way to increase power, but it depends on the application and isn't always the most practical way.

You could simply add more air and fuel, and that would result in more power, right? Of course it would, but while you can easily push in more fuel via a stronger pump and bigger injectors, you'd have to match that with an increased amount of air.

Compressors like turbo or superchargers force more air into the engine by way of specially shaped wheels within the unit that, when spinning, massively increase the amount of air the engine would otherwise get.

The term compressor refers to exactly what both systems do. The air, moving very fast, is heated and compressed and

pushed back into the engine.

On an engine-crank-driven supercharger, which is connected to all the belt-driven ancillaries in the engine bay, the amount of extra power or boost is available almost immediately. The engine spins the supercharger unit from idle.

The exhaust-gas-driven turbocharger uses gasses already exiting the engine out the exhaust to compress the air and force it back in.

But even though you now have more air coming back into the engine so you can make more power, it's very hot from being compressed and that reduces the oxygen density.

This is where intercoolers come into play. They can be used on both turbocharged and supercharged engines and are plumbed in between a compressor and an engine's air intake.

By cooling the compressed air, intercoolers effectively allow more oxygen-dense air to re-enter the engine.



### Can I add a turbo to my car?

We will assume that if you didn't buy a turbocharged car from the manufacturer, you're possibly looking for more power for towing. And you could decide to opt for a turbo or supercharger, but the sheer amount of aftermarket turbo supplier and vehicle tuners who prefer the use of turbos means that a supercharger might be the more expensive of the two options.

There are bolt-on turbo kits available for a wide variety of normally aspirated vehicles but remember that the more complex and modern your engine, the more expensive the labour for all that turbo plumbing is going to be.

Some engines are easier to turbocharge because of the high tolerances already factored in by the manufacturer. Obviously, if you already have a turbodiesel

bakkie, simply fitting a larger turbo won't be that difficult to do. Should you want to fit a larger, more efficient intercooler, then that's okay too, as long as you don't turn up the boost too high before compensating with the compression ratio and stronger engine components.

Remember that by adding something to your engine or by taking it away, you'll have upset the complicated balance that's in play to give your motor the ideal compromise between power and reliability.

Building a turbocharged engine will depend on how much extra power you want. As your power increases, so too will the amount of extra work your engine requires to get the tolerances up if it's not already a turbocharged motor. Either way, your engine's longevity will be negatively affected. 🔥



# Along for the ride



What is a holiday without kids cycling up and down between your stand and the pool? Here are the most secure ways to load your family's bicycles for the long drive to your favourite resort.

Words **Cyril Kloppe**

**M**any factors will determine what kind of bicycle rack you require: are you tall or short, old or young? Is your SUV a hatchback or does it have a door with a spare wheel mounted on it?

How heavy are your bikes and how many members of your family will be cycling? Here are 10 bike racks that you can consider, depending on your type of vehicle and individual needs.

## Mount it on the spare wheel

The spare wheel on the back door of an SUV is a great place to mount a bicycle rack, because then the tow bar remains free to hitch a trailer and the roof is available to fit a roof rack or rooftop tent.

The disadvantage, however, is that women's bikes don't hang level on this kind of rack, and should a wheel land up behind your vehicle's exhaust pipe, the bike's tyre may melt. And, if the spare wheel isn't mounted centre-rear, your bikes will poke out past the body.

## YAKIMA SPARERIDE Bikes on a pole

Remove the spare wheel, place the mounting plate against the wheel mount and return the spare wheel. The SpareRide bike rack is then attached to the plate with a lockable knob.

This bike rack will not work with a spare wheel cover unless you are prepared to cut a hole in the cover.

**Loading weight** 30 kg

**Number of bicycles** 2

**Lock** The rack locks onto the spare wheel, but you need your own lock for the bikes.

**Price** R4 800 from Rack & Carry

**Drive & Camp says** Yakima's rack holds your bikes high above the exhaust pipe.



## THULE SPARE ME PRO SUV friendly

Thule's bike rack fits in the same way as Yakima's SpareRide, but it has a slider so that you can adjust it to hold your bikes in the middle of your SUV's rear end if the spare wheel is mounted off-centre.

The rack is also height adjustable so that a bike's wheel isn't affected by hot exhaust gas.

**Loading weight** 34 kg

**Number of bicycles** 2

**Lock** Yes, the knob can be secured to the mounting plate with a key and Thule provides an integrated cable lock.

**Price** R5 800 from Thule

**Drive & Camp says** This is a good option for 4x4 enthusiasts.





### Get them on the roof

The biggest advantage of a bike rack mounted on the roof of your vehicle is that there's nothing in the way when you want to tow a trailer or caravan.

In fact, if you tow a Venter or off-road trailer, you could bolt the bike rack to the lid of the trailer rather than on your car.

The disadvantage of having a bicycle rack on the roof of your SUV is that it can be difficult to lift a heavy bike above your head and load it onto the roof of a tall vehicle.

Another disadvantage is that you may forget about the bikes on the roof and get a rude awakening when you park under a tree...



HOLDFAST TOP RUNNER PRO 3

### Made in SA

The Top Runner Pro can carry virtually any type of bike and is particularly suitable for mounting on a trailer lid. It's sturdy, and thanks to pool noodle padding, it won't scratch your bikes. Unfortunately, it has no locks and you will have to supply your own.

**Loading weight** 60 kg

**Number of bicycles** 3

**Lock** None.

**Price** R4 200 from Holdfast

**Drive & Camp says** It's built to last.



THULE FREERIDE

### Simple, but effective

The FreeRide has brackets that fit on Thule's own aerodynamic load bars, but Thule also sells brackets that attach to the bars of roof racks.

The bicycle rack is secured to the vehicle with an integrated lock and there is a similar lock that grabs hold of your bike – all of the locks work with the same key.

There are also two straps that hold down the wheels of your bike.

**Loading weight** 17 kg

**Number of bicycles** 1

**Lock** Yes, two integrated locks.

**Price** R1 500 from Thule

**Drive & Camp says** it's Thule's cheapest bike rack, but the quality is excellent.



YAKIMA FRONTLOADER

### Do you wear a yellow jersey?

You buy this rack when your bike costs around a hundred thousand rand. Yakima's bicycle rack is compatible with carbon fibre rims and won't scratch expensive custom paintwork – in fact, it doesn't touch your bike's frame at all. It's made for a Santa Cruz rather than an Avalanche.

**Loading weight** 18 kg

**Number of bicycles** 1

**Lock** Optional at R300 per set.

**Price** R3 450 from Rack & Carry

**Drive & Camp says** It's expensive because it's meant for expensive bikes.







### Use the tow bar

After a roof bike rack, a platform bike rack is arguably the most stable way to transport a bicycle. Your bikes aren't shaken by wind, you don't have to dodge trees and it is ridiculously easy to load and offload your bikes.

The big disadvantage of a platform bike rack is that it attaches to your vehicle's tow bar and you therefore cannot use it for anything else.

So, if you want to tow a caravan or trailer to your favourite resort, you may as well ignore the next three products. Another, less important, disadvantage is that your vehicle is now longer and you won't fit into just any parking space.

However, if you're sleeping in a rooftop tent or plan to spend the night in a dome tent or chalet – and you don't care about shopping mall parking – then this type of bike rack is definitely worthy of your consideration.

#### MENABO RACE 3

### Affordable Italian

The Race 3's frame is made of steel and the tracks on which your bikes rest is aluminium. The connector that attaches to the tow bar can pivot downward so you can open your SUV's hatch without having to remove the rack first.

You will need to purchase a 7 pin light plug adapter to meet its needs.

**Loading weight** 45 kg

**Number of bicycles** 3

**Lock** None.

**Price** R5 300 from Rack & Carry

**Drive & Camp says** It's fine for occasional use.



#### BUZZRACK EAZZY 3

### Transformer

You place the folded-up Eazzy 3 on your vehicle's tow bar, tighten the attachment and fold open the bike rack. Straps then secure the wheels and frames of your bikes to the rack.

In addition, there is an integrated cable lock that allows you to secure the bikes.

**Loading weight** 60 kg

**Number of bicycles** 3

**Lock** Yes, a cable-type bicycle lock.

**Price** R7 300 from Cycle Lab

**Drive & Camp says** It folds up small enough to store in a broom closet.



#### THULE VELOCOMPACT 3

### Podium finish

It's light enough to mount on a tow bar by yourself. It can be locked onto the tow bar, three built-in locks secure each bike, and flexible straps hold down the wheels.

All manner of bikes fit on this rack: men's, women's and children's bikes, thin or thick wheels.

**Loading weight** 60 kg

**Number of bicycles** 3

**Lock** Yes, integrated locks.

**Price** R11 000 from Thule

**Drive & Camp says** It can be upgraded with an accessory to carry four bikes.





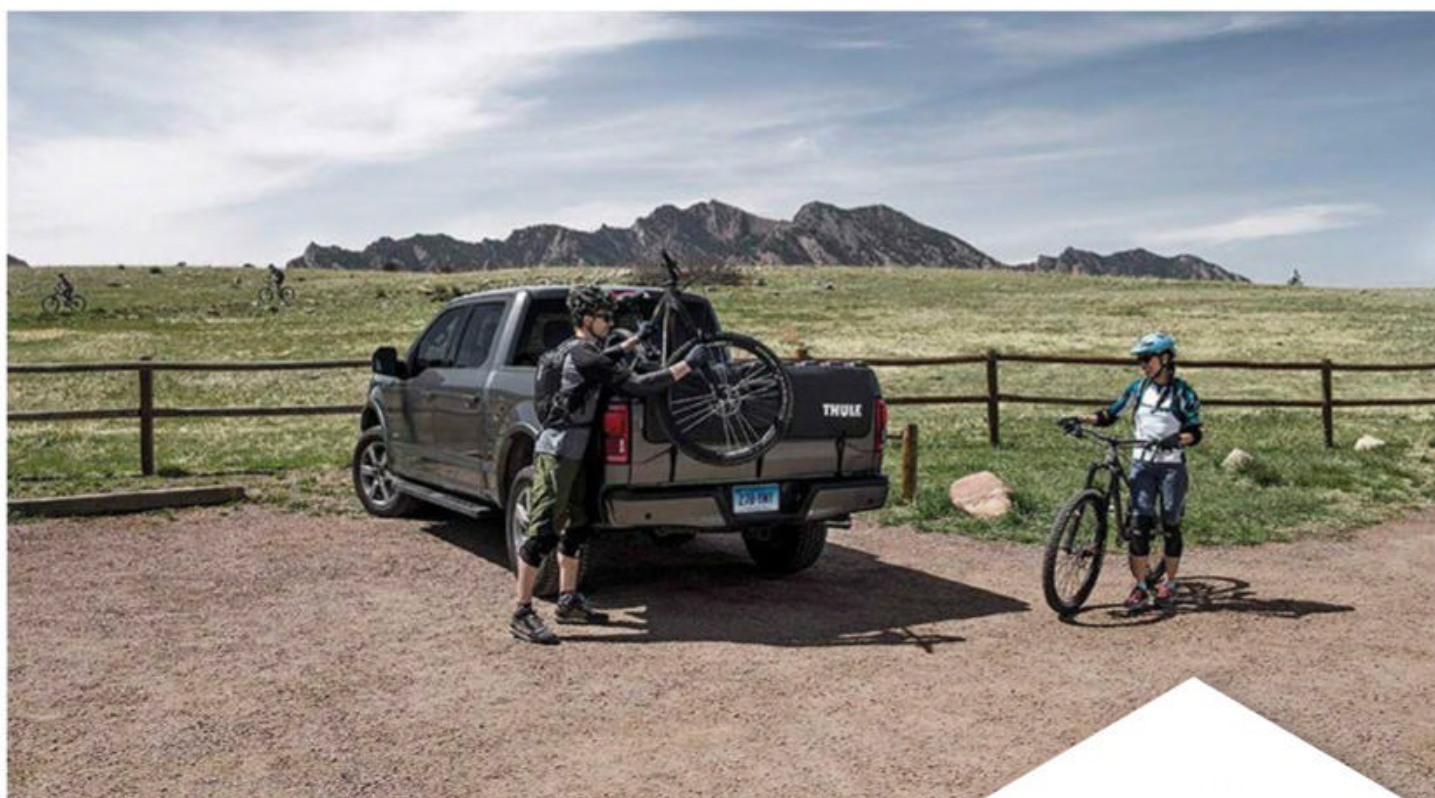
## Alternatives

Sometimes you have unique needs that an ordinary bicycle rack won't fulfill.

A tow bar is, after all, an important piece of equipment and you shouldn't have to leave a trailer at home just because you're taking the bikes.

And your vehicle's roof is also valuable real estate that is better used for a rooftop tent or to carry gear on a roof rack.

Here are two suggestions for those who want to transport more than just three bikes – and for when you don't have a tow bar, nor a free roof or even a door-mounted spare wheel.



### THULE GATEMATE PRO

#### A tailgate solution

The GateMate Pro is a flexible vinyl 'blanket' that fits over the tailgate of most bakkies.

The load bed is obviously taken up by bikes, but the good news is that you can carry up to seven bikes, which isn't possible with any of the other bikes racks featured here.

**Loading weight** Unspecified.

**Number of bicycles** 7

**Lock** None.

**Price** R4 800 from Thule

**Drive & Camp says** Its loading weight is determined by the tailgate of your bakkie. It's a good solution for large families.



### SARIS BONES

#### What a-boot this one?

Bicycle racks that strap onto a vehicle's boot are not ideal, but if you have no other option, then Saris's Bones is definitely the lesser of two evils.

Its rubber feet shouldn't damage your vehicle's paintwork and multiple straps should hold it firmly in place.

**Loading weight** 45 kg

**Number of bicycles** 3

**Lock** None.

**Price** R3 100 from Rack & Carry

**Drive & Camp says** Wash off all the dust from your car's boot before mounting the rack to avoid abrasions.



GET THE PRODUCTS HERE

**Thule**  [thulestore.co.za](http://thulestore.co.za)

**Holdfast**  [holdfast.co.za](http://holdfast.co.za)

**Rack & Carry**  [rackandcarry.co.za](http://rackandcarry.co.za)

**Cycle Lab**  [cyclelab.com](http://cyclelab.com) 



# Rich and

# creamy

Spoil your sweet tooth with these treats made using condensed milk.



## EASTER FUDGE

### Easy in the microwave

This playful delight decorated with tiny Easter eggs is the perfect treat over Easter weekend – for young and old alike.

#### Ingredients

(makes 16 squares)

- 2 cups castor sugar
- 1 tin (385 g) of condensed milk
- ½ cup soft butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla essence
- ½ cup speckled eggs
- ½ cup chocolate balls, we used Chuckles

#### Here's how

**1 Pour** the sugar, condensed milk and butter into a deep microwave-proof bowl. Stir everything and melt the mixture for 2 minutes on high in the microwave. Remove the bowl from the microwave and stir the batter again until smooth.

**2 Now** cook the mixture five times at 2 minutes a time (thus a total of 10 minutes) or until the fudge has a lovely caramel colour. The strength of your microwave oven can affect the cooking time – so if your fudge appears too light, cook it for another 2 minutes.

**3 Once** the colour is correct, stir in the vanilla essence and stir briskly using a wooden spoon for a final 2 minutes. This step helps solidify the fudge and provides a lovely fine texture.

**4 Pour** the batter into a square shallow pan, greased or lined with baking paper. Immediately sprinkle the sweets on top, before the fudge starts to set and gently press them into the fudge. Allow to cool and cut into squares using a sharp knife.

**Drive & Camp says** If the tin is empty and you want to make fudge without a microwave, you can, of course, cook all the ingredients in a thick-bottomed saucepan on the gas stove. Use low heat and stir constantly. It will take slightly longer – about 20 minutes. To test whether the fudge is ready, drop a spoonful of the mixture into ice water. If it comes together in a stiff ball, the fudge is ready and you can add the vanilla as above and continue with the steps.



## RUSKS WITH CONDENSED MILK

### Polly, put the kettle on

**Bake a tin of rusks and pack a flask of coffee – for the road and breakfast!**

#### Ingredients

(makes 60 rusks)

- 1 kg self-raising flour
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon aniseed
- 1 cup soft butter
- 1 tin (375 g) condensed milk
- 2 cups buttermilk

#### Here's how

**1 Preheat** the oven to 180 °C. Sift together the flour, sugar and salt and stir in the aniseed.

**2 Rub** the butter into the dry ingredients until

the mixture looks like coarse breadcrumbs. Now stir in the condensed milk and buttermilk and mix everything together until it forms a soft dough. Knead the dough until just smooth – use a little extra flour if needed.

**3 Roll** the dough into balls and squeeze them slightly to elongate them. Pack them into three greased bread pans. Don't overfill the pans; there must be room for the rusks to rise.

**4 Bake** the rusks for 1 hour or until a test skewer comes out clean. Allow to cool in the pans for 5 minutes before turning out onto a dry rack.

**5 Once** the rusks have cooled, cut into individual rusks and pack them in a single layer on baking sheets. Dry the rusks overnight in a 100 °C oven. Allow to cool completely before storing them in airtight containers.

**Drive & Camp says** Rotate the rusks in the oven as they dry and turn them over every now and then to make sure they dry evenly.





## PINEAPPLE MALVA SURPRISE

### A yummy bazaar fridge tart

This recipe in my mother's church bazaar booklet is one of my personal favourites – and so easy you can knock it out anywhere.

#### Ingredients

(makes 28 squares)

- 1 packet (200 g) Tennis biscuits, crumbed
- 1/3 cup melted butter
- 1 tin (385 g) condensed milk
- ¾ cup lemon juice
- 1 cup Orley Whip
- 1 tin (227 g) pineapple crush, drained
- 21 marshmallows, chopped
- 100 g glazed cherries, chopped

#### Here's how

**1 Mix** the biscuit crumbs and butter together and press the

mixture into the bottom of a rectangular pan (22 x 30 cm) to form the crust. I always line the pan with baking paper, just in case.

**2 Whisk** together the condensed milk and lemon juice. In a separate bowl, beat the Orley Whip until stiff peaks form.

**3 Stir** the pineapple and marshmallow pieces into the condensed milk mixture, followed by the Orley Whip. Don't stir too vigorously – it should be just mixed.

**4 Pour** the mixture onto the crust, level the top and decorate with the cherries. Put the tart in the fridge until set. Cut into squares and enjoy!

*Drive & Camp says* I use half plain and half coconut-covered marshmallows for extra texture in the squares. Keep the squares small as this dessert is quite sweet.

## DATE PUDDING POTJIE WITH CONDENSED MILK SAUCE

### My cup runneth over...

This pudding is pure decadence.

#### Ingredients

(serves 8)

- 100 g dates, roughly chopped
- 1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
- 1¼ cup boiling water
- ½ cup soft butter
- ¼ cup sugar
- 3 eggs
- 1½ cup brown flour, sifted
- 1 teaspoon vanilla essence

#### FOR THE SAUCE

- 1 tin (385 g) of condensed milk
- 1 cup cream

#### Here's how

**1 Mix** together the dates, bicarb and boiling water and set aside. Beat the butter and sugar until light and then whisk the eggs one by one until everything is

well mixed. Fold in the flour, followed by the vanilla essence, and immediately stir in the date mixture until it forms a smooth batter.

**2 Spoon** the batter into a greased flat-bottomed potjie and cover with the lid – I have a number 3 potjie with a 3 l capacity.

**3 Place** the potjie on a triangular stand over moderate coals with a few smallish coals on the lid, and bake the pudding for 35-40 minutes or until it is cooked and a test skewer comes out clean.

**4 Make** the sauce by heating the condensed milk and cream in a saucepan. Pour the warm sauce over the hot pudding and allow to soak in. Serve with ice cream if you like.

*Drive & Camp says* If you bake the batter in a larger flat-bottomed potjie, the pudding will form a thinner layer and affect the baking time, but it's still delicious.







## UPSIDE-DOWN CARAMEL APPLE TART

### An apple a day

This dessert needs only a handful of ingredients, and it's fun to make!

#### Ingredients

(makes 1 x 25 cm tart)

- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 5-6 small Granny Smith apples, peeled, topped and tailed, and halved
- a big lump of butter
- ½ cup almond slivers, toasted
- ¼ cup condensed milk
- 1 roll (400 g) puff pastry, thawed

#### Here's how

**1 Sprinkle** the lemon juice over the apples – it enhances the flavour and prevents oxidation and discoloration.

**2 Melt** the butter in a cast-iron pan (make sure you have a lid that fits the pan) and slowly fry the apple slices until soft and they start to caramelise on both sides. Add a dash of water to the pan if you want to steam the apples a bit.

**3 Sprinkle** the nuts over the apples

and drizzle with the condensed milk. Remove the pan from the heat and allow the mixture to cool slightly.

**4 Cut** a circle from the puff pastry that is just larger than the pan. Place the pastry on top of the apple layer in the pan and tuck the pastry around the edge of the filling.

**5 To the coals** we go! Cover the pan with a greased black potjie lid and place the pan on a triangular stand on top of a number of moderate coals. Place a few coals on the lid and bake the tart until the dough is cooked and risen. After about 20 minutes, check on the pastry and use your judgement as to whether the tart is ready or needs more time over the coals. Remove the lid, place a plate upside down on the pan and tip it over with one quick motion so the apples are on top. Slice and enjoy – with ice cream if you like.

**Drive & Camp says** If you struggle to bake the dough over the coals, you can tip the tart over after 20 minutes and slip it back into the pan with the dough layer at the bottom. Then braai it until cooked through.

## RICE PUDDING BALLS

### Rice and shine!

Rice pudding is lovely whether hot or cold. These balls are a new way to serve an old favourite.

#### Ingredients

(makes about 18 balls)

- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 cup long-grain rice (we used jasmine rice)
- 2 cups milk
- 1 cup water
- ¼ cup sugar (optional)
- 1 stick of cinnamon
- ½ cup condensed milk
- 2 packs (200 g each) Marie biscuits, crumbled
- 2 eggs, beaten
- oil for deep frying
- caramel sauce to serve

#### Here's how

**1 Melt** the butter in a saucepan and fry the raw rice grains until

brown all over. Stir in the milk, water, sugar and cinnamon and heat the mixture to a boil. Turn the heat down to very low and simmer until thick and creamy (15-20 minutes). Remove from the heat and stir in condensed milk. Allow to cool.

**2 Once** the pudding is cool, shape the rice into bite-sized balls. Roll the balls in the biscuit crumbs, dip them in the egg and then coat with crumbs a second time. Repeat until all the rice is used.

**3 Heat** the oil and deep-fry the balls until the biscuit layer is crisp and the rice hot. Keep the oil heat moderate; the balls are already cooked and you don't want the biscuit crusts to become too dark. Serve them warm with a dash of caramel sauce – or the condensed milk left in the tin.

**Drive & Camp says** Add ground cinnamon to taste when making this pudding.





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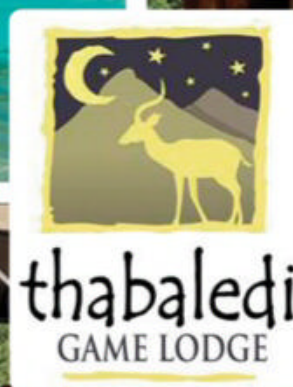
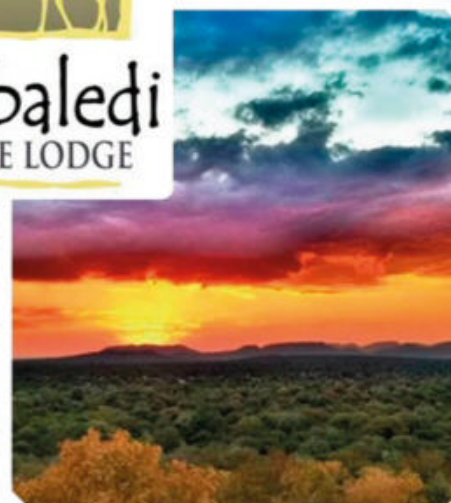
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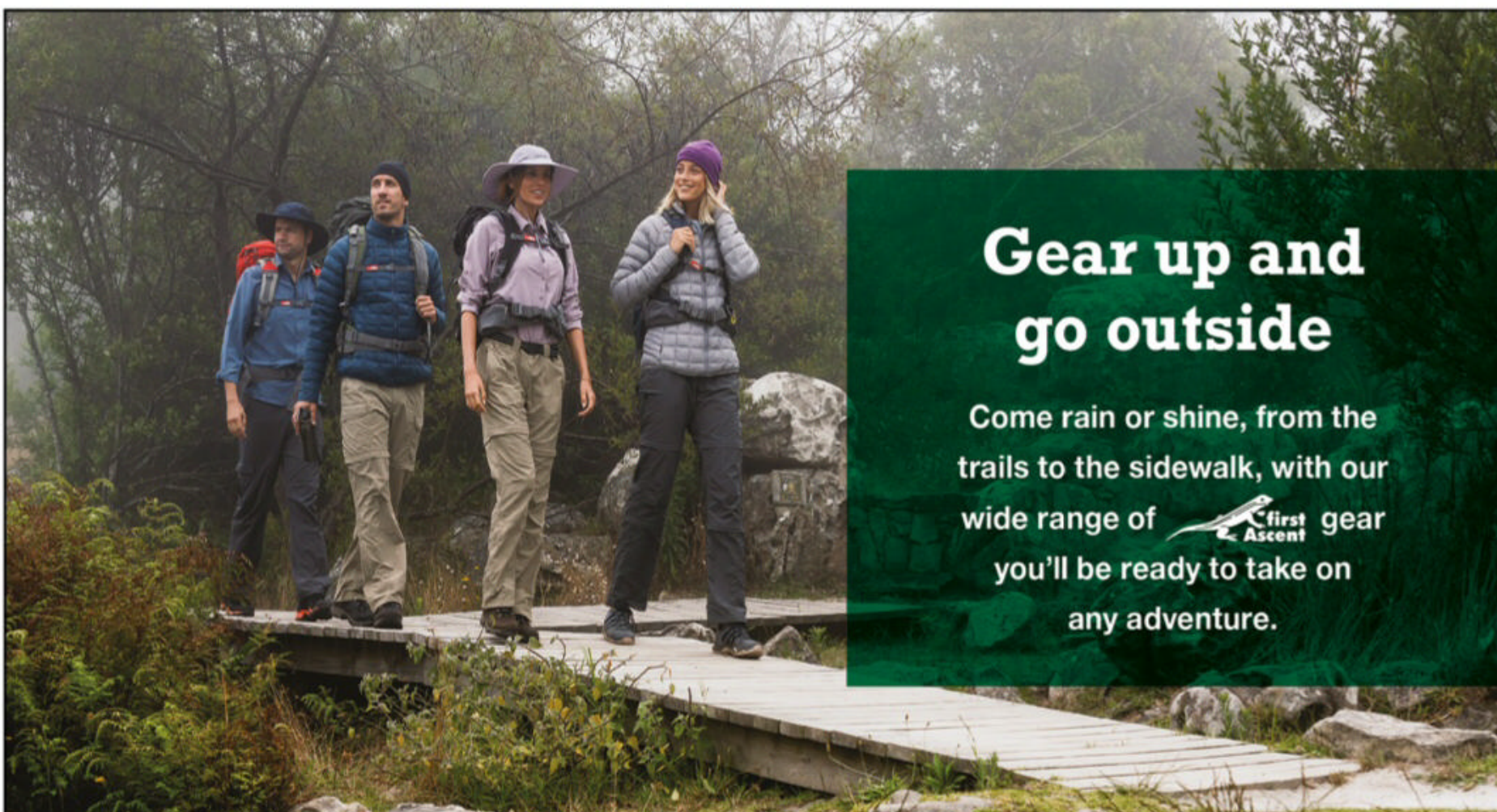
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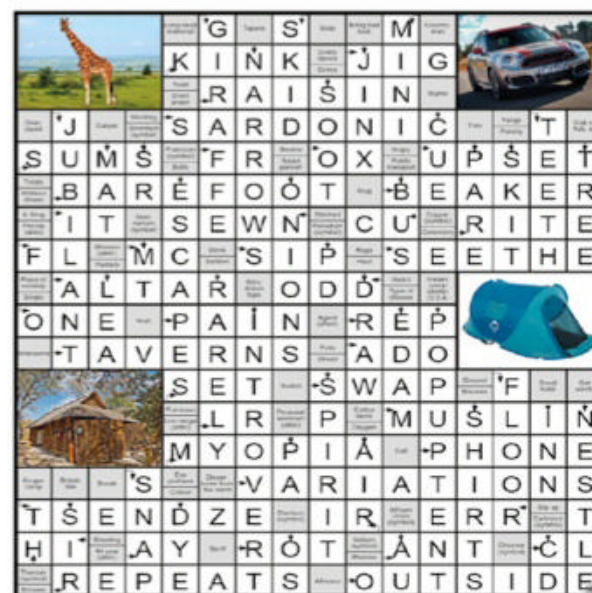
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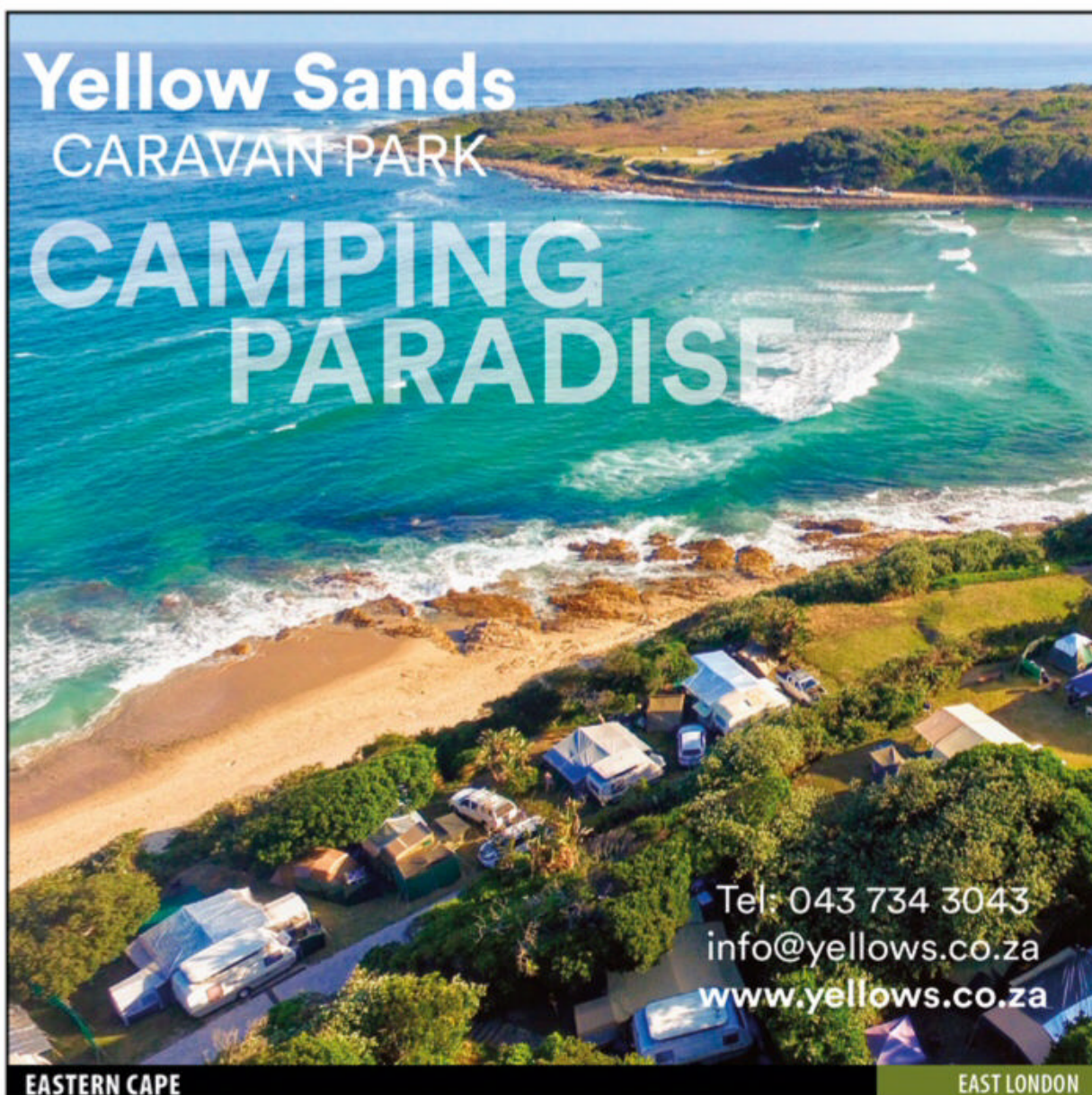


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BRITS



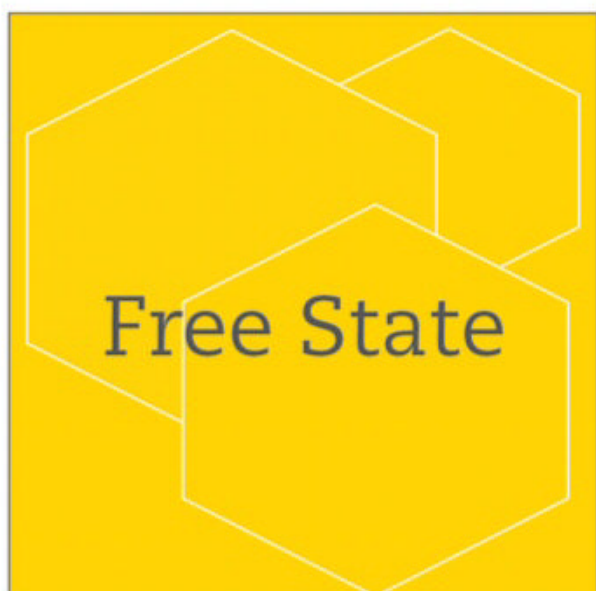

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Resort guide 2020



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**R250**

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# CROSSWORD

Howard Westcott from La Lucia has won **Van Loveren** wine worth R1 000 for his entry in the February 2020 crossword competition. Complete this one and e-mail a picture to [drivecamp@gomag.co.za](mailto:drivecamp@gomag.co.za). Please include your contact details. Or do it at <https://bit.ly/3cxROS8>. Last month's solution is on p 124.

|                                                                                     |            |                |                                   |                                  |                    |                     |                                  |                                                                                     |                     |              |              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------|
|    |            |                | Gravel pass in the Zuur-berg area | Spirit distilled from sugar-cane | Grey-hound, eg     | Acquired            | Nature reserve west of Bela-Bela |  |                     |              |              |
|                                                                                     |            |                |                                   |                                  |                    |                     |                                  |                                                                                     |                     |              |              |
|                                                                                     |            |                | Lisbon is its capital             |                                  | Ruthenium (symbol) |                     | Cry Information                  |                                                                                     |                     |              |              |
| Unravel                                                                             |            | Earth          | Sprite                            |                                  | Biased             |                     |                                  | Friends                                                                             | Stoop               | "Go away!"   |              |
| Natural                                                                             |            | Beside         | Radon (symbol)                    |                                  | Tiny bit           |                     |                                  |                                                                                     | Tin (symbol)        |              |              |
|                                                                                     |            |                |                                   |                                  |                    | Expires ... and fro |                                  |                                                                                     |                     |              |              |
|                                                                                     |            |                |                                   |                                  |                    |                     |                                  |                                                                                     |                     |              |              |
| Fastening                                                                           |            |                |                                   |                                  | Indefinite article |                     |                                  |                                                                                     |                     |              |              |
|                                                                                     |            |                |                                   |                                  | While              |                     | Gigantic                         |                                                                                     |                     |              |              |
|                                                                                     |            |                |                                   |                                  |                    |                     | Small hotel                      |                                                                                     |                     |              |              |
| Plus                                                                                |            | Magazine in SA | Country-wide                      |                                  |                    |                     |                                  |                                                                                     | Gallium (symbol)    |              |              |
|                                                                                     |            |                | Sleeps                            |                                  |                    |                     |                                  |                                                                                     |                     |              |              |
|                                                                                     |            |                | Pitch                             |                                  |                    |                     | Wood-wind instrument             | Mailed                                                                              |                     |              |              |
|                                                                                     |            |                | Alter ...                         |                                  |                    |                     |                                  | Selenium (symbol)                                                                   |                     |              |              |
| European language                                                                   |            |                |                                   |                                  | Winter flakes      |                     |                                  |                                                                                     |                     |              |              |
| Stoppers                                                                            |            |                |                                   |                                  |                    |                     |                                  |                                                                                     |                     |              |              |
|                                                                                     |            |                |                                   |                                  | Messengers         |                     | Calcium (symbol)                 |                                                                                     |                     |              |              |
|                                                                                     |            |                |                                   |                                  |                    |                     | Insect                           |                                                                                     |                     |              |              |
| Feeling                                                                             |            |                |                                   |                                  |                    |                     | Equipment                        | Rhodium (symbol)                                                                    | Holiday town in KZN |              |              |
|  |            |                |                                   | Trying period                    | Road edge          |                     |                                  |                                                                                     | Before Settled down | Kudu feature | Depend (4,2) |
|                                                                                     |            |                | Tambo (airport)                   |                                  | Duped              |                     | Airport building                 |                                                                                     |                     |              |              |
|                                                                                     |            |                | Chasms                            |                                  |                    |                     | Drench                           |                                                                                     |                     |              |              |
|                                                                                     |            |                | Inactive                          |                                  |                    |                     |                                  | Sierra ...                                                                          |                     |              |              |
| Sandstone formation in the Free State                                               | Be in debt |                | Tariffs                           |                                  |                    | Nocturnal fowls     |                                  |                                                                                     | Thallium (symbol)   |              |              |
|                                                                                     |            |                | Notion                            |                                  |                    | Sphere              |                                  |                                                                                     | Equals              |              |              |
|                                                                                     |            |                |                                   |                                  |                    |                     |                                  | A country                                                                           |                     |              |              |
|                                                                                     |            |                |                                   |                                  |                    |                     |                                  | Samarium (symbol)                                                                   |                     |              |              |
| You and I                                                                           |            |                | Beam of light                     |                                  |                    |                     | Radio                            |                                                                                     |                     |              |              |
| Container                                                                           |            |                |                                   |                                  |                    |                     |                                  |                                                                                     |                     |              |              |
|                                                                                     |            |                |                                   |                                  | Decibel (abbr)     |                     | State-of-the-art                 |                                                                                     |                     |              |              |

COMPILED BY GERDA ENGELBRECHT

## Wanna win wine?

### Win with Van Loveren's Tangled Tree range

This mouth-watering eco-friendly range was inspired by a tree on the Van Loveren farm. In 1941, Jean Retief ordered a *Rhus lancea* tree from the then Natal province. Her husband Hennie believed that it was the same as the Karee tree that grew along the river and planted a shoot next to it to prove this.

The two trees have since intertwined into one tree, which has come to symbolize their love. And the best part of the range? It has a 60% lower carbon footprint compared to wine in glass bottles.

Try the Tangled Tree Chocolate Cabernet Sauvignon, Butterscotch Chardonnay, Moscato Rosé, Tropical Sauvignon Blanc and Spicy Shiraz today. Find out more at [tangledtree.com](http://tangledtree.com).





Colour in



### COLOUR IN

Get your crayons and colouring pencils out and bring life to this black-and-white drawing.

### WORD SEARCH

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

### SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

There are at least 10 differences between the two sketches. 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.



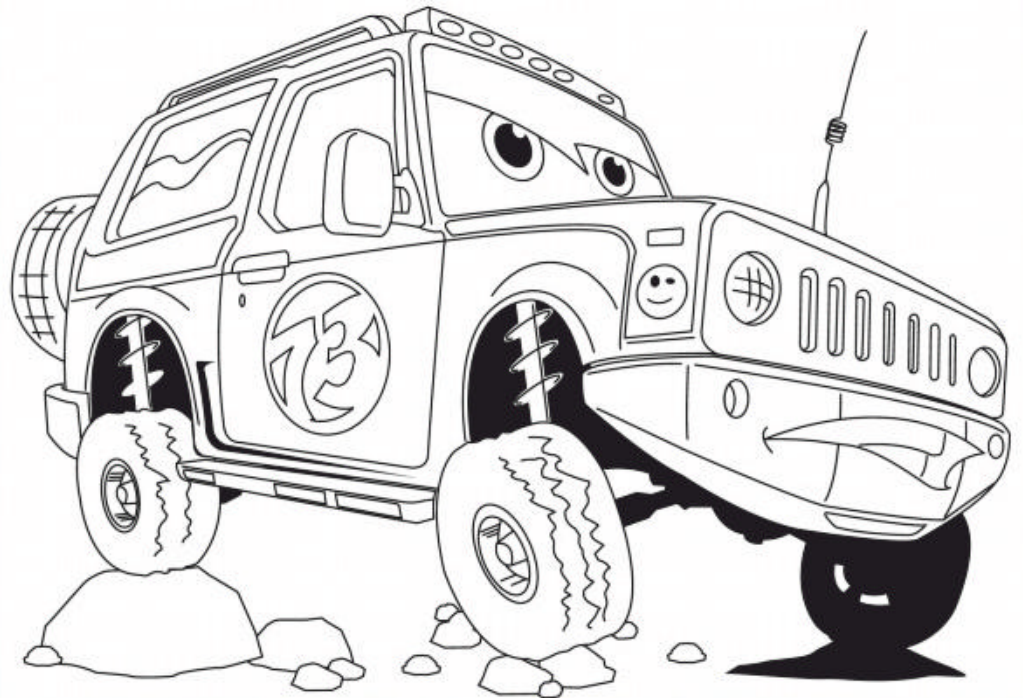
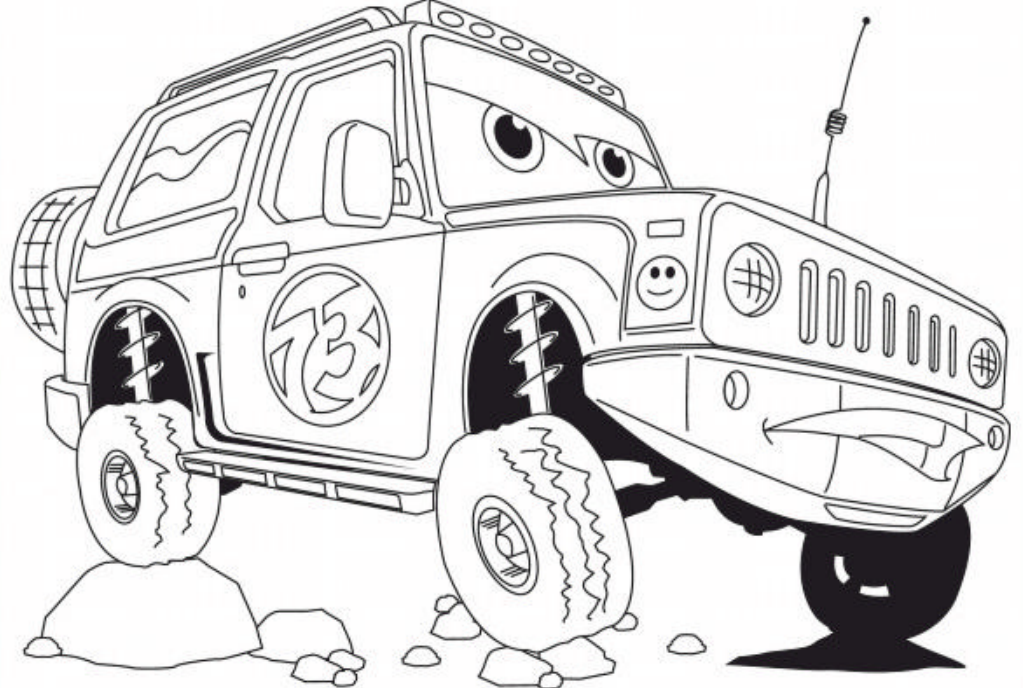
## Word search



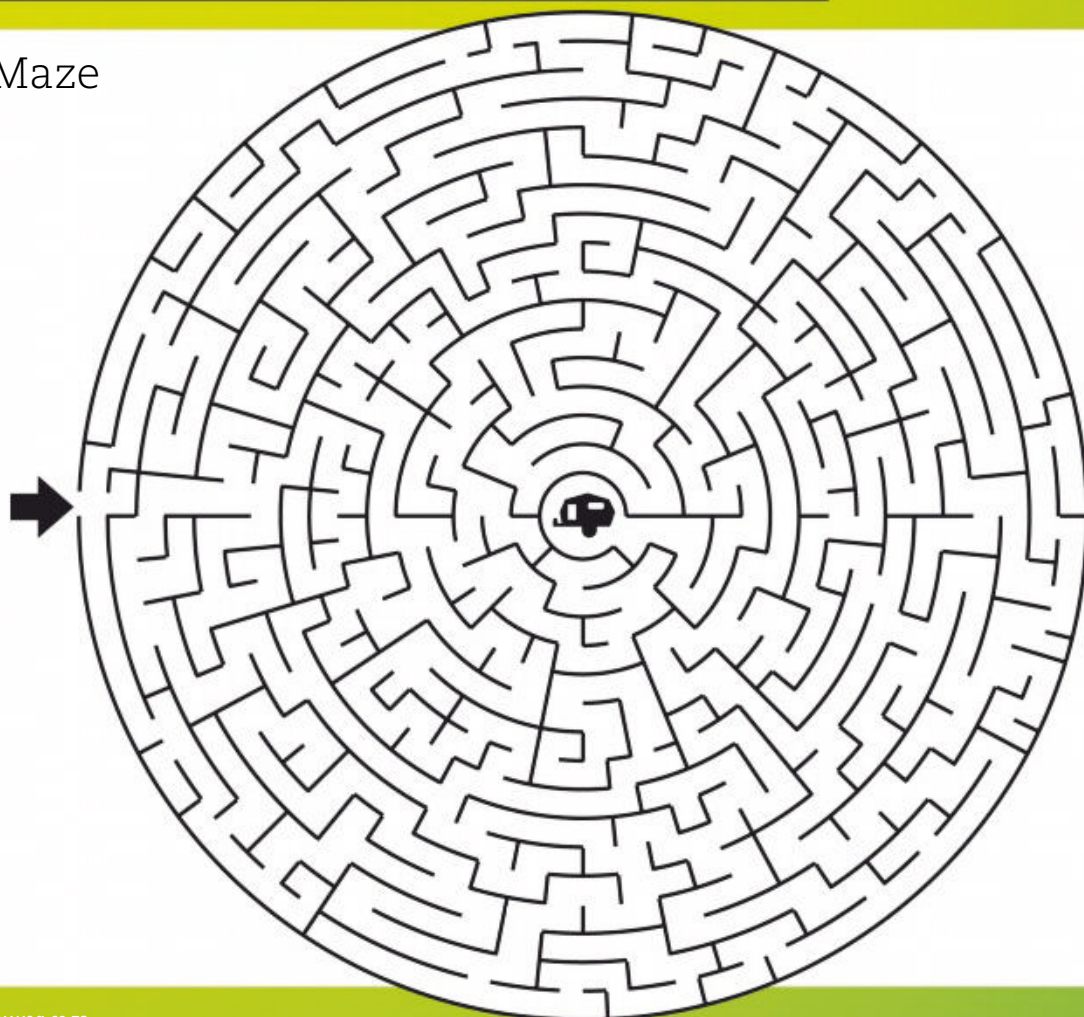
### FUN IN THE SUN

|                  |                |               |
|------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Slide            | Amusement park | Swings        |
| Kiosk            | Ice cream      | Swimming pool |
| Climbing wall    | Chocolate      | Trampoline    |
| Climbing room    | Skateboard     | Paintball     |
| Cool drink       | Candy floss    | Supertube     |
| Mini golf course | Popcorn        | Diving board  |

## Spot the differences



## Maze



## Animal facts



- Turtles date back to the time of the dinosaurs, over 200 million years ago – woah!
- Contrary to popular belief, a turtle cannot come out of its shell.
- Some turtles are carnivores, others are herbivores and some are omnivores.
- Many baby turtles start life as carnivores but grow to eat more plants as they mature.
- These cold-blooded creatures have a long lifespan, the oldest ever recorded lived to 188!



# Understanding sand driving

You need to understand why your vehicle gets stuck in the sand to avoid it happening in the future, says **Mic van Zyl**.

**L**ast month I mentioned how I got stuck in sand during my recent trip to Namibia. It was very hot and while digging, I promised myself that I would investigate the science behind sand driving upon my return home.

Understanding why your vehicle gets stuck despite your best efforts should go a long way to prevent this from happening in the future. Most of my focus was on tyre pressure but, as I found

to my dismay, this was not enough.

Dropping your tyre pressures when negotiating sand is simply a given.

Most of us are under the impression that this improves traction, which is basically true. But according to the experts the real reason for dropping your tyre pressures is to reduce rolling resistance. When your tyres are too hard, you sink into the sand and you now have to try and push through the sand rather than drive on top of it.

**REDUCING YOUR TYRE PRESSURE** enlarges your tyre's footprint. It gets fractionally wider but it's the length that matters. The longer footprint prevents the tyre from sinking into the sand thus reducing the rolling resistance. There is also an increase in traction due to more of the tyre being in contact with the sand.

If your vehicle's tyres, however, cannot overcome the rolling resistance of the sand, they will spin and dig into the sand, increasing the rolling resistance as you sink into it.

With these basics in mind, the question has to be "What is the correct tyre pressure?" It depends on many things including vehicle type and weight, tyre type and size, type and temperature of the sand and even the time of day. Wet beach sand is easier to drive on than soft, hot dune sand.

Dropping your tyre pressures in the cool of the morning before setting off will almost certainly require another deflation later in the day as the terrain, ambient temperature and the tyres themselves get hotter. There is therefore no single correct pressure for all sand conditions. I have also found that even as little as 0.2 of a bar in pressure can mean the difference between heaven and hell.

**THE EXPERTS ALSO** say that a certain amount of wheelspin is required for your

tyres to overcome the rolling resistance in sand; enough to overcome it but not so much as to induce digging in. This is one of the reasons why fuel consumption in soft sand is higher than on firm surfaces. The speed at which you travel on sand is also important. Rolling resistance increases with an increase in speed up to a point where it becomes less and the going gets substantially easier.

A couple of other things to bear in mind when sand driving is that it is advisable to follow in the tracks of the vehicle in front

“

I have also found that even as little as 0.2 of a bar in pressure can mean the difference between heaven and hell.

”

of you. The sand in these tracks has already been somewhat compacted by the vehicle in front making your progress a little easier.

Also, turning in soft sand immediately increases the rolling resistance. If you have to turn, increase your engine power to try and maintain constant speed and traction in a safe manner. Beware however of un-beading a tyre from the rim. If you have to stop, roll to a stop without using your brakes and if possible, face the front of the vehicle downhill. This will make pulling away a lot easier.

As with most challenging things in life, practice makes perfect. I guess I'll be heading back to the challenges of the Namib dunes real soon then.





TOURS



## NAMIB DESERT

# *Vanish into a sea of sand*

The Namib is the world's oldest desert and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Experience this unique landscape for yourself on one of two 4x4 tours.

The Namib is an ever-changing dune landscape – unspoilt, vast and mesmerizing. It might seem like an inhospitable place, but look carefully and you'll find animals and plants completely adapted to the environment. You'll also discover remnants of the desert's rich diamond mining history, as well as haunting shipwrecks. Out there, it's you and your 4x4 surrounded by a sea of sand. It's easy to imagine you're the only person on this planet.

Since this is a concession area only a limited number of tours are offered every year. Make sure you are

one of the fortunate few who get to experience this ultimate journey.

### Faces of the Namib

Join us on this seven-day tour and discover the many faces of the Namib region, while testing your dune-driving skills among the world's highest sand dunes. You will be part of a convoy making your way up and down the dune landscape.

The tour starts in Solitaire. We'll first travel in a westerly direction through the Kuiseb Canyon, then on to Conception Bay across the iconic sand dunes. We'll pass through a ghost town and visit the wreck of the *Eduard Bohlen*. Our convoy then heads north along the Lange Wand (a high wall of dunes along the

coast) to Walvis Bay. The aim of this tour is to experience the desert in all its splendour.

### DATES

28 June – 3 July 2020

11 – 16 October 2020

### Lüderitz – Walvis Bay

This seven-day tour starts in Lüderitz and goes north to Walvis Bay, passing Meob Bay, Conception Bay and Sandwich Harbour along the way.

This part of Namibia was once the scene of a diamond rush and is known as the Sperrgebiet. Access to the area is still controlled and only a number of vehicles and groups are allowed to drive this route annually.

You'll get to test your off-road skills

by scaling some epic dunes while landmarks like an old, broken-down Ford truck, the wrecks of the *Eduard Bohlen* and *Shawnee* and the remains of mining settlements provide good photo opportunities.

### DATES

21 – 27 May 2020

2 – 8 November 2020 (Cruisers only)

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### Included in the rate:

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# Be wary who you ask

Think carefully before asking for camping advice on social media, says **Neels van Heerden**.

**S**ome questions that haven't been thought through properly on social media platforms elicit all kinds of reactions ranging from the outrageous and comical to the merely inappropriate.

I recently followed such a post with great interest when someone was doing research for a campsite on a farm in the Free State. "We're planning 50 stands," they posted online. "Ablution facilities will include showers, baths and dishwashing facilities. For entertainment,

there'll be a pool with four slides, as well as a jungle gym and kiosk. The campsite is on the banks of a river and there is an electric fence to keep out animals and criminals. What facilities would you like to have on site? Should we be pet friendly or not?"

The reactions of those who voiced their opinions clearly indicated that everyone felt strongly about ablution facilities. Clean bathrooms are on everyone's wish list. This is why I am so stunned when I see in what condition campers sometimes leave a campsite's facilities. It's our responsibility to leave the facilities clean and tidy for the next guy. My advice to anyone trying to set up a campsite is to make sure there is a mop in the ablution facilities so campers can clean up after themselves.

**CAMP FEES WERE** also a big discussion point. Of course, everyone would like to camp on the cheap, but there are those who, along with the low rate, also want private bathroom facilities and a shade net over their stand. People ask for trees and grass, and some Swaeltjies Club members would like stands dedicated to pensioners... all at a fair price.

As you'd expect, an argument broke out on the topic of allowing pets, and not even the best mediator on earth would be able to help reach a settlement there. Then, an enthusiastic angler enters the conversation and insists on a stand by the water where he can watch his rod from his rally tent.

Someone advised the campsite owner to plant spekboom between stands to create privacy and do something about our country's carbon footprint. But then a botanist warned that species that are not native to the central parts of South Africa should not be planted willy-nilly as they supplant indigenous grasses.

**MY ADVICE TO** the developer of the campsite is to first determine the size of the local market and decide accordingly how many stands to initially develop. That will also determine how many ablution facilities they need to provide.

The area in which this campground would be developed doesn't get many weekend and school holiday tourists. It would therefore benefit the developer to talk to people from the area, as this is where their market lies. Not with people from Pretoria. Few campers will drive from Gauteng to the Free State for a weekend of camping, as it is simply too far. The Free State's cold winter shortens the camping season even further; thus, installing a supertube or waterslides is an unnecessary expense.

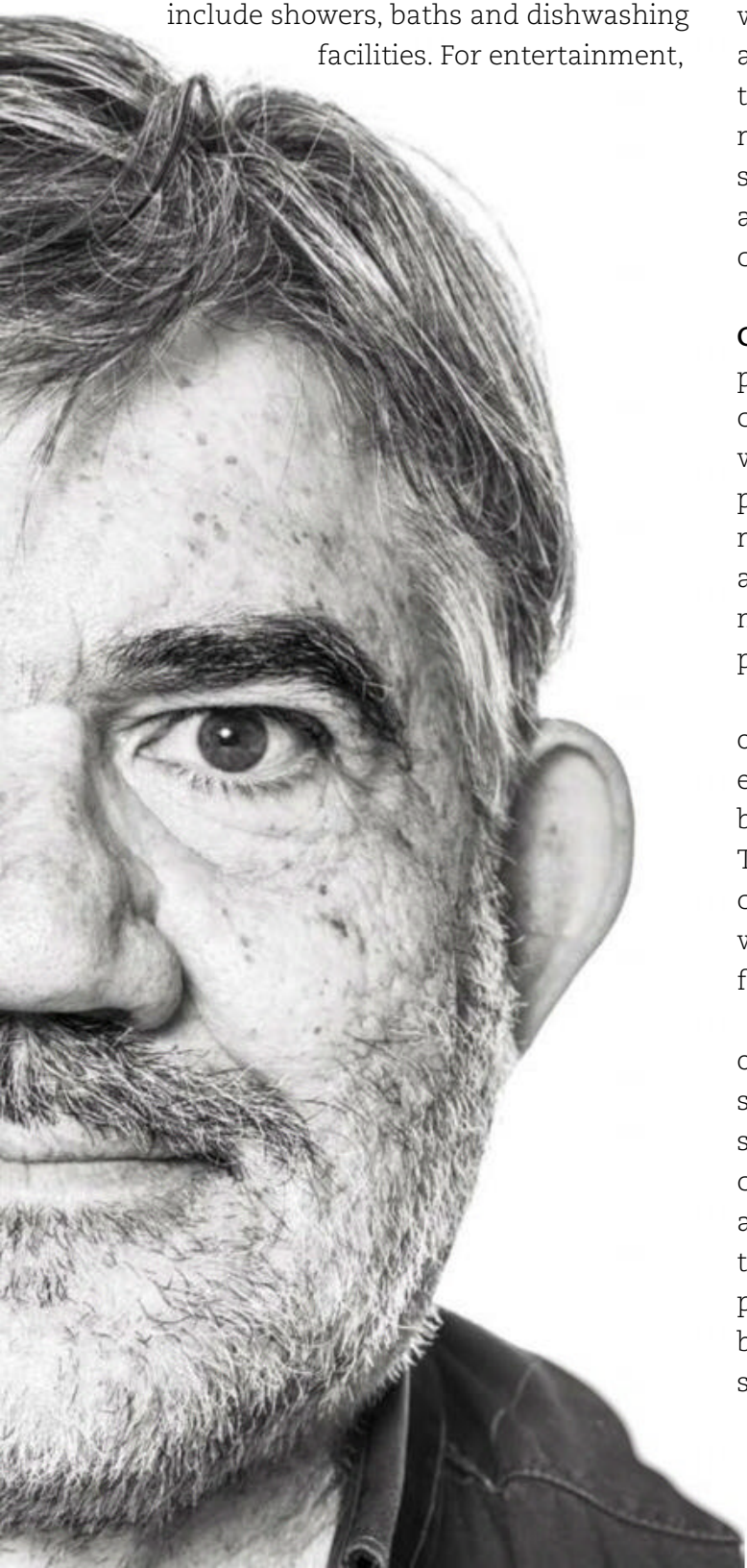
The success of a new campsite will be more easily ensured by a combination of good facilities and a pleasant camping experience. So, ask campers in the Free State to advise on their expectations and then build your campsite accordingly.

Start small with 10 stands and offer a carefree farm experience that will attract town dwellers. Your guests, who would eventually return again and again, are a far better source of advice than the trolls who hang around on social media.

“

The success of a new campsite will be ensured by a combination of good facilities and a pleasant experience

”





# Where will you camp next?

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Detailed information on 80 great  
campsites in South Africa and Mozambique



# When Dad decided to have another go...

When your dad decides to go camping for the first time since his army days, you have to hope and pray things go smoothly, says **Annamai Mailovich**.

I thought my eyes were deceiving me when I spotted my slender mother and her girlfriend casually lift a freezer into the minibus. How on earth was there still space for it? In there already were six mattresses, enough bedding for a five-bedroom house, a steel table – the kind people use to bake pancakes on at the church bazaar – and two brand-new fans.

It was the December holidays and the Mailovich family was on its way to camp in a place where there would be only a barbed wire fence between us and hell: Serengeti, where the temperature varies between 39 °C and 45 °C. No, not the one in East Africa with all the animals... we were heading for a caravan park just outside Marble Hall in southern Limpopo, a 90-minute or so drive from home.

This holiday was a huge deal as my dad had not gone camping since the end of his army days. Johnny is 57 years old. He's many things, but easy is not one of them. When something upsets him, everyone's upset, and when something makes him happy, everyone's happy. He is the epitome of an Afrikaner male, all dressed in khaki and speaking with a powerful voice.

I suspect a campsite has always had too little structure to appeal to him. But as the years went by, the economy started pinching and he had to go work in America to earn money. Back in South Africa, the rest of us had to get creative with our holidays. In his absence, we started honing the art of caravan parks and SANParks campsites, because they're affordable getaways and we secretly love the whole camping vibe. For the rest of us, it's logical to become nomads on holiday.

**WE GET TOGETHER** once a year. I live in Cape Town, sister Claudi in the City of Gold, my other sister, Anne-Marie, lives in Pretoria, our little brother, Rodney, and our mother, Anne-marié, are in Mookgophong. And, of course, Dad Johnny, all the way from the USA.

After much begging, my mom persuaded my dad to go camping, even though I had to emotionally blackmail him two or three times and threaten to not join in the fun.

My dad got so panicky about the camping, he'd been swearing and trying to pull out for days, throwing two or three tantrums in the process. And then, barely a day before the trip, he decided to drag my mom's girlfriend along to help pitch the tent. This meant that he had to drive almost two hours to get her back home again – even though my mother, my brother and I are all perfectly able to pitch a tent when we want to.

By the time he returned, we'd all overheated and had gone swimming with the Afrikaans *treffers* "Boerepompie" and "Hardekole" blaring in the background. We relaxed after the gruelling pitching of tents and the laborious unpacking of a large pile of household items. I had just decided to make a salad for the braai when the clouds darkened and gave their first rumbling sounds. We looked at each other with trepidation, things did not bode well.

Few things are as scary as an electric storm in the Bushveld, especially when your tent leaks and you can see the resort's power points aren't exactly protected against rain.

My mother is usually a calm person, but it was as if the lightning strikes short-

circuited something in her brain, because she was suddenly reduced to a mess.

As the drops fell harder and harder, my father jumped up and stood ready, pushing the dammed-up water off the tent roof. Anne-Marie busied herself with a broom and put a mop on top of the freezer (which didn't actually freeze in that heat), and Claudi kept our glasses topped up, because somebody needed to remain calm and support the troops.

**RODNEY AND I** shared a wet mattress later that night and counted in seconds to try and estimate the lightning's distance from us. When the lightning started to be around a kilometre away, I decided I'd had enough; I was going to climb inside the car. Sternly I commanded everyone to follow me.

My mom and younger sister stayed put in each other's arms (seemingly peaceful). My father valiantly tried to sleep on the mattress that simply did not want to stay on the stretcher bed beneath it.

Me and my vivid imagination could already see us on the cover of a newspaper. "Camping tragedy in the Loskop Valley: family wiped out by lightning storm." I managed to scare my brother and Claudi into seeking safety with me. My brother was high on adrenaline, and caused so much trouble teasing and tackling us, my dad had to use his army voice to silence his three naughty children.

And so, we dragged ourselves back to the tent, back to the wet mattresses on which my dad had tried to fashion himself a dry spot to sleep.





Sometime during the night, sleep won, and when the sun came up, everything was warm, the morning dew gone and the mattresses and bedding dry again. The sky was clear blue, the clouds white and the sun beamed enthusiastically, as if nothing had happened. Never have the expression “right as rain” been so inaccurate.

Our neighbours, who had come camping in a Porsche (for the grown-ups) and a Nintendo Wii (for the children), were also not happy with recent events. My dad had made the rounds early morning, fishing to find out if the others had also gotten wet.

Only the people in caravans had stayed dry. The guys with the Wii had managed to erect their tent canvas the wrong way around, so they didn’t stand a chance against the downpour.

But, we learnt from our mistakes and we were ready should Mother Nature menace us again.

**BY LUNCHTIME**, as the white clouds gradually changed colour, we had already consulted WeatherSA and my dad took to the road shortly after breakfast to find better tent pegs. He evaluated the situation early on and realised that the tent pegs we used the night before were too puny and the ropes had to be tightened.

Then, all the power points were ‘isolated’ and covered with a waterproof tablecloth, which had originally been intended for the family feast table.

Our only misstep was about when this fresh serving of chaos would erupt.

WeatherSA’s app claimed the storm would only hit us around bedtime and we believed it. As a result of this misplaced trust, my dad had to make an impromptu plan and braai with a lid as the first drops hit us around six o’clock that evening.

Claudi dutifully started pouring drinks again, but this time my mother was ready

with the salad and Ann-Marie again patrolled potential weaknesses, armed with her mop.

We laughed, the clouds cried, and then we planned next year’s camp. I suggested Mozambique, the others reckoned KwaZulu-Natal... and my dad gave a speech about houses having walls.

After all the drama, tantrums and inspections, we packed up the 12-man tent (without the help of my mom’s girlfriend) and packed the freezer and the fans back in the minibus. The only thing we forgot was the mop hanging in a tree.

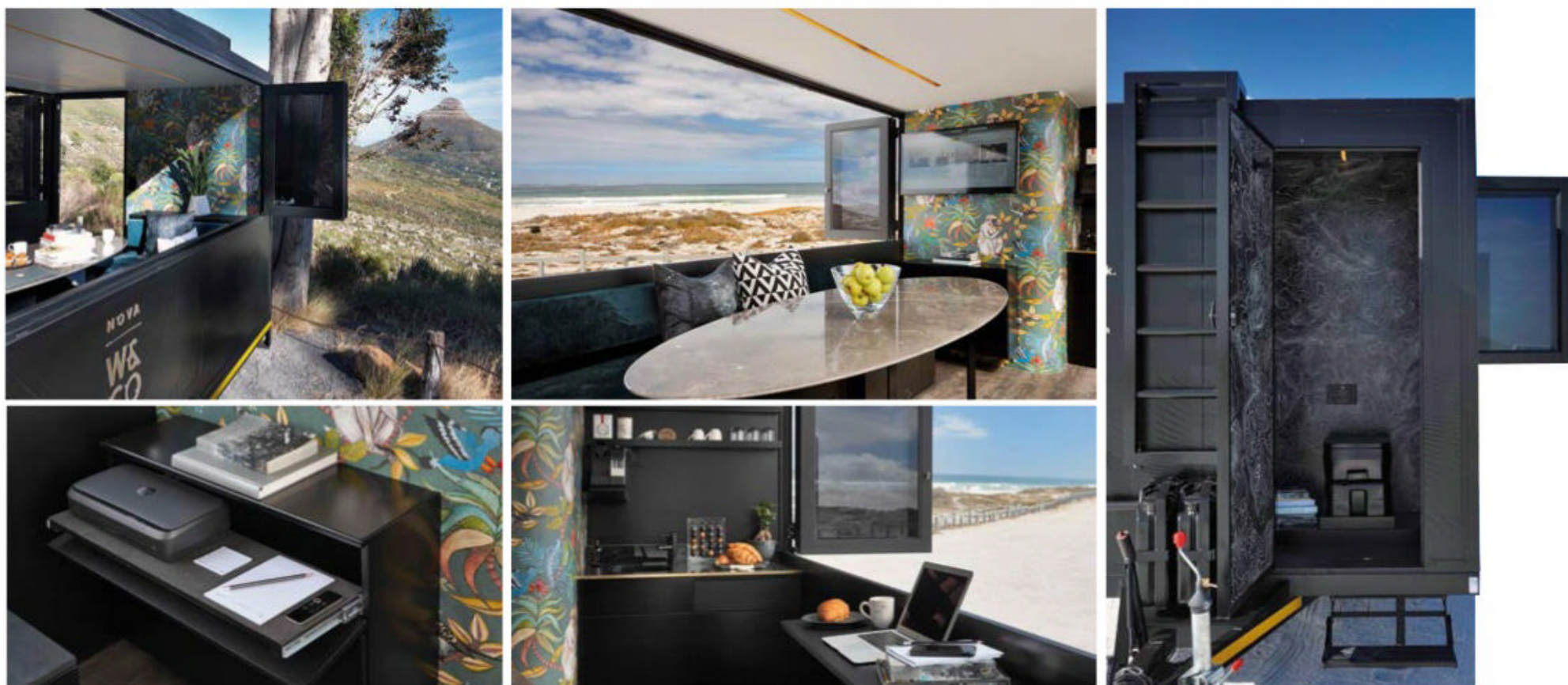
When we got home that day, I feared there’d be no water (we had a water crisis in the town) and took a shower. I was barely in my pyjamas before the electricity went off. With the calmness of experienced tent-dwellers we pulled the camp stove closer... and started cooking under a camping lantern.



... AND FINALLY

# Breakaway boardroom

We go camping to get away from the daily grind, but what if your work requirements weren't mundane and allowed you a breath of fresh air or a magnificent mountain view?



Being avid campers, we know what it's like when you live and work in the city and look forward to a weekend or a family holiday away from the urban jungle, traffic congestion, and the confines of an office space.

Besides, when you're away from it all, you also usually get a whiff of fresh air, perhaps a sea breeze, with a few floral scents thrown in and bees buzzing nearby.

Well, alternative workspace solutions firm Work & Co, who offer entrepreneurs, freelancers and small businesses hot desks,

private offices and meeting rooms in Cape Town on a short-term basis has come up with an innovative alternative – a mobile workspace that can be towed to scenic locations in and around the Mother City.

The Nova is essentially a trailer, but this mobile work pad is fitted with all you need for a productive day at the office, including a bathroom, charging station for computers and mobile devices, a Nespresso coffee machine, printer, running water, stocked mini fridge and white board. There's also a smart TV and Apple TV. There's even an option for a set breakfast to be laid out to start your day with a hearty meal.

Work & Co has the Nova towed to five locations around Cape Town. As it runs on solar power and uses water tanks, it's completely off the grid. It seats up to six people, and can be booked for meetings, work, strategy sessions or simply an amenable space. Interestingly, the service doesn't include getting picked up in the Hyundai H1 that tows the Nova to location, so you'll have to make your own way there.

## Contact

workandco.co.za

021 202 6040



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





26.9020° S 27.3901° E

# THE PLACE TO BE

## 9 May 2020

For more information contact  
**Antoinette Badenhorst**  
Tel: 018 293 0750

Fun for the whole family @  
Stonehenge, Parys from 8 till late.  
4x4 Track, Adventure Bikes competition,  
Kids Warrior race, Fly fishing  
demonstration, Wine Expo and sales,  
Kids play area, Live Music,  
Food stalls and much more.



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