

#31

go!

CAMP FOOD TASTY MEALS WITH MIGHTY MINCE

FEBRUARY 2020 | ISSUE 31

Drive & Camp

Wild Coast

Chill out on the beach
outside East London

WEEKEND BREAK

BEERS AND CHERRIES

Camp under sandstone
cliffs near Clarens

LABOUR OF LOVE

A reader's self-built
motorhome

TRAIL GUIDE

Grab the tiger by its tail
at **TIERKLOOF 4X4**

Explore the Midlands
Back roads and 4x4 routes

Game-changer

Caravan test A shake down of
Echo4x4's new Kunene flagship
p88

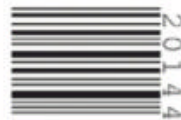
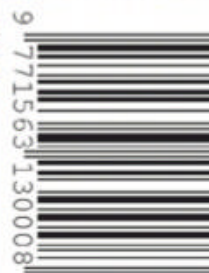


GEAR Wet coal, really? Get a portable power plant

4X4 PROF

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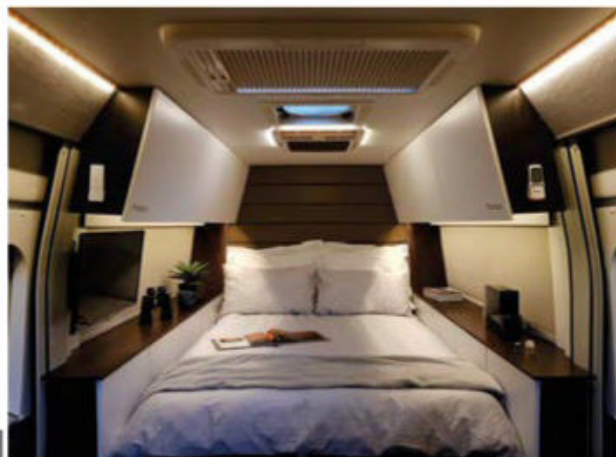
“V6 diesel auto, 4x4 with low range, raised suspension - perfect!”

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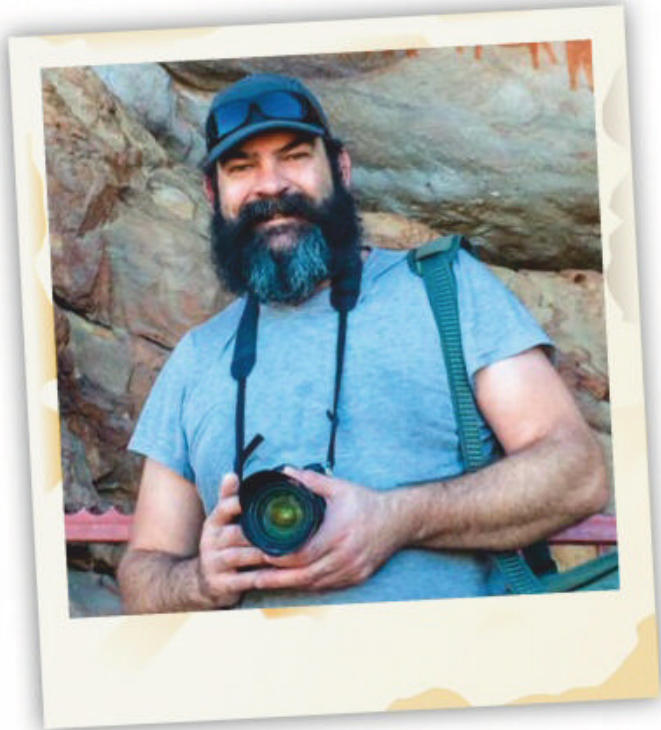
The Hilux Legend 50 is a celebration of 50 years of tougher-er, with both technological and design updates and 13 models to choose from. The exterior boasts a more aggressive grille and front bumper, unique wheel design, black styling bar, roof rails* and a tow bar; while the interior has a larger, integrated multimedia display and smart entry* with push start*. Legend 50 badging inside and out ensures the legendary legacy continues. *Available on selected models.

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HILUX
LEGEND 50

Balance of power



“

And then Elon announced to everyone that the truck's steel body and metal windows are bulletproof and can handle a sledgehammer attack

”

The future of the automotive industry is clean, quiet and electrically powered. I think we would all agree on that, even though not everyone is exactly keen on the idea.

I must admit we struggled to conceal our surprise when South African-born founder of Tesla, Elon Musk, showed off his new electric bakkie to the world. It wasn't exactly what you'd call the epitome of car design, right? And then Elon announced to everyone that the truck's steel body and metal windows are bulletproof and can handle a sledgehammer attack. But when his head of design hurled a steel ball at the left windshield, it shattered on the stage – and the world's screens. “There is room for improvement,” Elon allegedly muttered.

But despite this disastrous marketing ploy and widespread criticism about the Cybertruck's dubious design, Elon recently tweeted that Tesla had already received close to 150 000 orders. Amazing!

While getting this magazine ready for print, our colleague Cyril said you have to make sure you are on the right side of history when it comes to electric vehicles. I agree, and think the signs are there for all of us to see. Besides, all major vehicle manufacturers are getting their house in order. I'm not sure whether South Africa is ready for this. Hybrid cars, definitely. But I think we simply have too many infrastructure issues right now to say farewell to all internal combustion engines.

I can only imagine how I would react if I stopped at a place like Colesberg or Beaufort West to take a break, get a cool drink and ‘refuel’, and then hear there's load shedding happening and the electricity will only be back in two hours. And then that's not even talking about the problem of range for travel enthusiasts like us – and, to be blunt, the price of these vehicles. It takes a lot of money to develop all this technology and it has to be recovered somewhere. Usually from the buyer.

Don't get me wrong: I'm not completely opposed to the idea of electric vehicles. Greta Thunberg also doesn't get my blood boiling. But where we are now, we're still far from prepared.

Safe travels!

Schalk

EDITOR

schalk.jonker@media24.com



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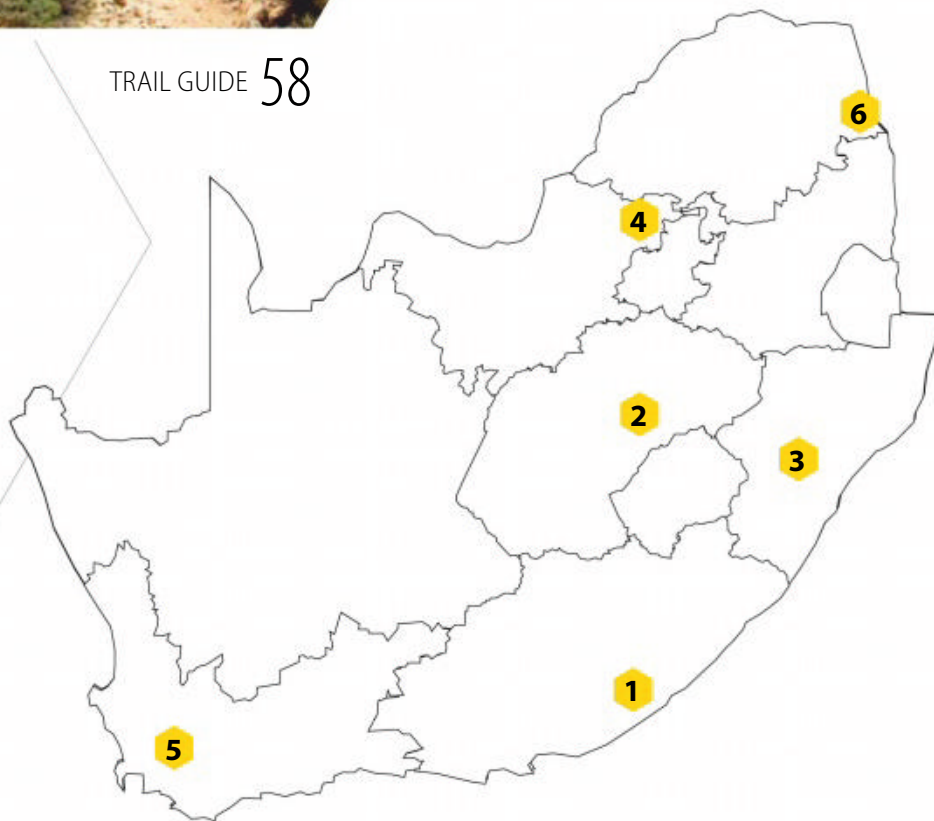
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MY SPOT 64

TRAIL GUIDE 58



#31 COVER IMAGE – ANTON ALBERTS

“I took this photo the very same day that I completed the build of my Iveco motorhome. My wife, Renda, and I made a spur-of-the-moment decision to go camping at the Berg River Mouth near Paarl, even though it was already late in the day and the middle of the week! After two-and-a-half years spent on this project, I could no longer wait to take it on a shakedown cruise. It was satisfying to finally enjoy the fruits of my labour and spend time in it without a drill and a screwdriver.”

Read Anton's story on page 68 – Ed.

Camera settings F4; 20 s; ISO 250; 24 mm



OWL PROWL I fully agree with Ronel Myburgh (page 64) – Tzendse Rustic Campsite in the Kruger is my favourite camping spot, too. Rodgers Hobyane, camp supervisor par excellence, took me owl spotting on a recent visit. This little African barred owlet was perfectly content to have me snap away until I got the perfect pic, then we just stood and looked at each other for the longest time. So special.

PHOTO **ERIKA BORNMAN**

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Aiming for gold

My wife, Bianca, and I set a goal every year, and in 2019 it was to get a license to tow. We both obtained a B license in 2008, but after *Drive & Camp's* focus on the towing license, it was enough motivation to aim for the "big" towing license – the EC.

We made an appointment for our learner's license, we took it the same day, and both got it. But then it was time to prepare for the road test. At first we decided on 10 driving lessons each, but

eventually took 16 each, just to make double sure. Both of our last lessons were on the morning of our road test. Our examiner, a quiet woman with steely eyes, took me through the yard test. I was tense, but everything went swimmingly.

The road test itself was a horse of a different colour. There were a lot of roadworks on my route and, to top it all, load shedding – and that meant traffic was awful. My relief was great when the woman told me back at the office that I had passed.

Bianca was next: the same woman, the same yard, just an hour after my test. Unfortunately, she hit a plastic marker while alley docking.

Three weeks and six more lessons later, Bianca completed the alley docking.

But, then a delay. We had to wait a long time for our driver's licenses to arrive and listen to many excuses, but now we can at least tow away!

CHRISTI WEIDEMAN
Doornpoort, Pretoria



WINNING LETTER



Christi 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.



The West Coast rocks

Following your article 'Jewels along the West Coast' in the October issue, we reviewed our bucket list. All of us, my husband, Herman, and my parents, Fanie and Isella Schoeman, are adventurers and also wanted to experience the route you wrote about.

We loaded up the tents and camping gear, and hit the road with great enthusiasm. With our tyre pressure reduced and your magazine as a tour guide, it was time for the endless twin-track trail.

The tranquillity one experiences on this route is truly food for the soul – pure serenity. We discovered the 'jewels' only the West Coast can offer. I could live like this every day. The simplicity and silence makes you appreciate what life is really about.

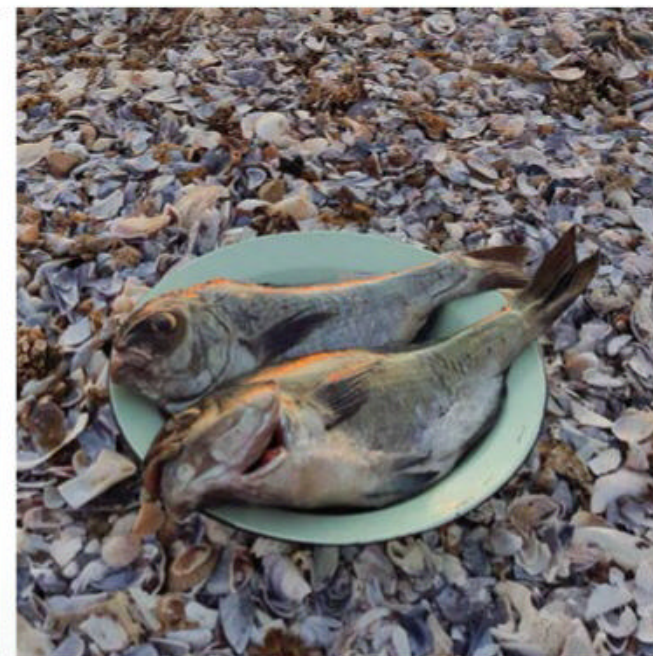
Our days consisted of cruising next to the sea, then a picnic for lunch and, finally, the highlight: finding a place to camp for the night. There are so many beautiful coves to choose from – each with its own beauty. Boulder Bay with its shells, Varswater with its long white beach, Kwass-se-baai with its beautiful views, and many more.

Whenever we pitched camp, we lit a fire. Too many other lights would disturb the beautiful moonlight. The din of the surf breaking against rocks is the background music, and the fire had to do its part against the cold West Coast wind.

We feasted on dishes from the sea: mussels and prawns in the paella as well as our catch of the day on our way to Brand-se-baai.

Ordinary things are just so much nicer next to the sea. There's no traffic; here and there a buck crosses the road. The coffee bubbling away in a tin kettle and bathrooms with a beachfront view and late-night chatting around the fire. Everything is better: campfire stories and chats, sleep... and this is how time stops to become a perfect moment.

SEL-MARIE BRAND
Strand



A disaster that ended well

After having a wonderful time camping in the middle of the week at De Voetpadkloof, it was time to go home. Just before Middelburg, I drove through a pothole. I decided not to pull over and hoped that there was no damage to my Jurgens Palma.

But even before we reached the outskirts of Middelburg, a minibus driver indicated that there was a problem with my caravan. Gratefully, I pulled over and saw that the caravan's right wheel was damaged. I called Middelburg Caravans & Campworld and Johan van Schalkwyk came to my aid.

Johan took one look, told us the wheel was busy falling off and we certainly couldn't drive any further. Fortunately, he devised a temporary fix on the wheel and so we made our way to his workshop.

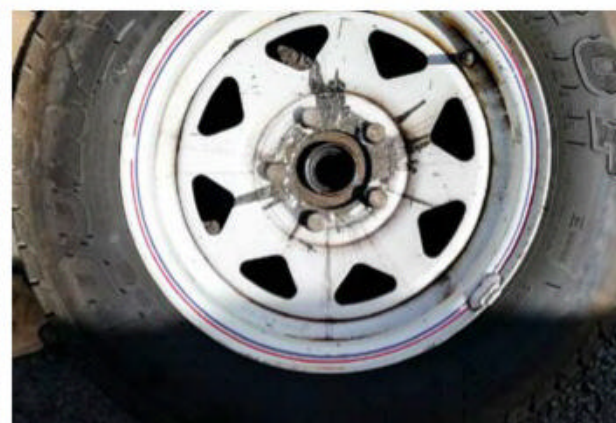
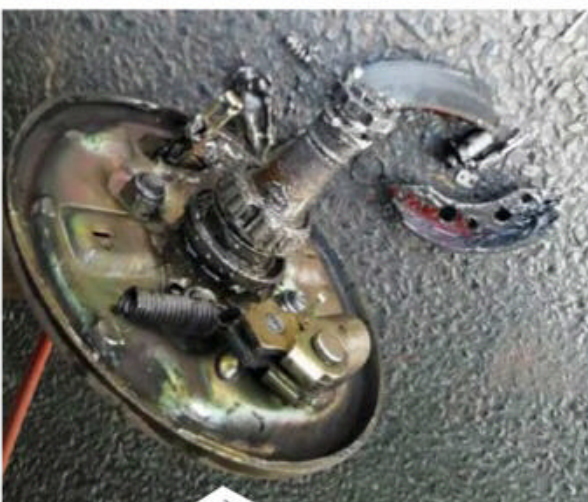
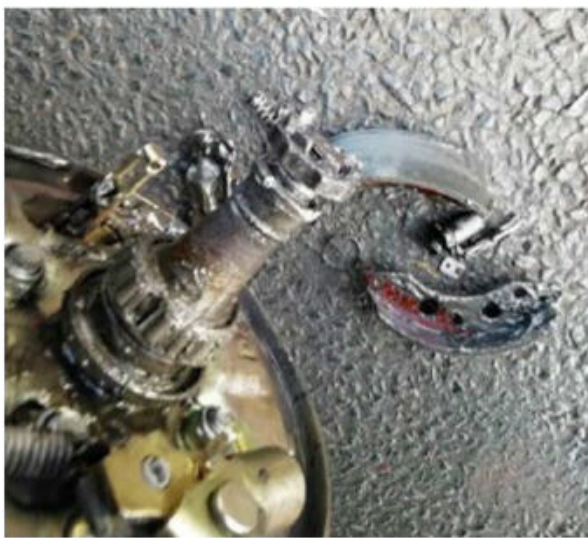
At the workshop, the damage seemed to be so severe that we had to replace the axle. Not even a new set of wheel bearings could save the day. Fortunately, Johan and his team fitted a new axle and we could continue on our journey.

Our troubles began at 8 am, repairs started at 12 pm and we hit the road at 2:30 pm.

I would like to sincerely thank our fellow road users – and one Samaritan who stopped to help. And give thanks to Middelburg Caravans & Campworld: great service from you.

SEEF DELPORT

Pierre van Ryneveld, Centurion



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54w



Liked by overland_spirit and 57 others

NOVEMBER 21, 2018

COMMENT OF THE MONTH!

Following the article on how to look after your cast-iron potjie, **Henning Vanessa Spinnler** writes on Facebook: "After using my potjie, I place it on a hot plate until it is heated. Then I simply store it just like that, without oil or paper. It doesn't rust at all."





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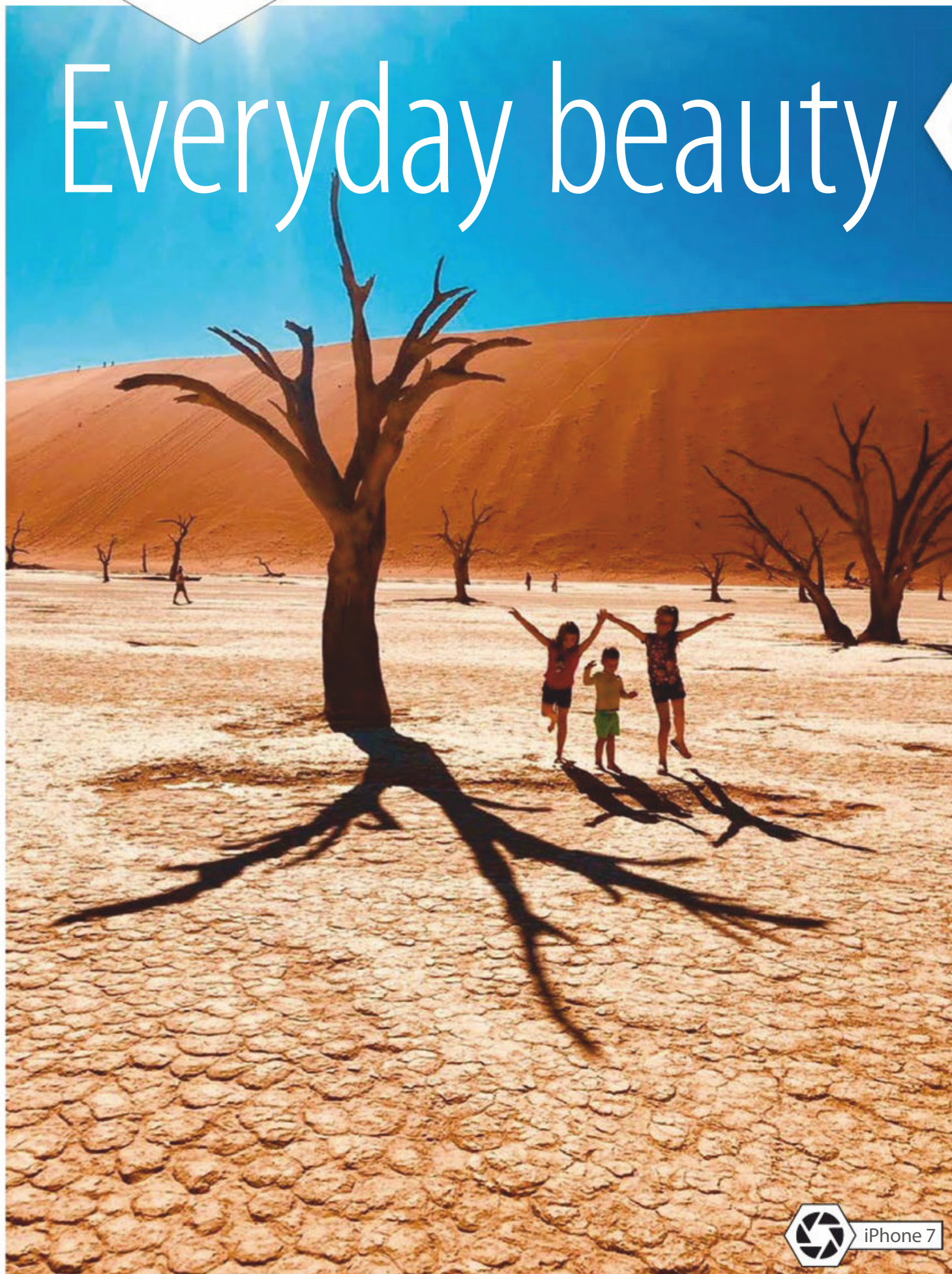
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Everyday beauty



sun rises over the Big Daddy Dune, the highest dune in the Sossusvlei area. After this we headed to the Dead Vlei where my three children, Amorie, Ockert and Lila, sought out the ancient ballerina tree. In the photo, they're standing next to the tree, mimicking the tree's shadow. It was a wonderful day, we swapped stories and wondered what it looked like here a thousand years ago."

The Dead Vlei is a wonderful spot for photos – so much so that you already know what it looks like, even if you haven't been there yourself.

In this photo, Idene goes a step further and gives it a personal twist by arranging her kids next to the tree. Their shadows resemble those of the tree's branches and add an extra dimension to the photo.

You'd expect the tree to be the focal point (because it's so big), but the group of children next to it draws your attention first, probably because of the interaction among the children. So your eye jumps between these two strong elements and you feel how human and nature fit together.

If you look closer, there are more human figures in the picture. They're small and don't disturb the focal point, but rather extend the depth of the photograph. In fact, there are three tourists in the background and at least three more on top of the dune.

If I absolutely have to fault something, it is the lens flare from the top of the frame. It almost feels as if the sun is shining into your eyes, but it does add to the spontaneity and honesty of this image.

Ballerinas, thirsty tortoises and swans in a garden had three of our readers reaching for their cameras.

By **Leon Botha**

Branching out...

She had to get the kids out of bed before sunrise on a winter morning, but that also meant Idene Doyer from Welgemoed

in Cape Town was rewarded with a winning photo.

"In July last year, we travelled to

Namibia with four other families. Sossusvlei was the highlight for us – on that particular cold morning we got up before dawn, before the



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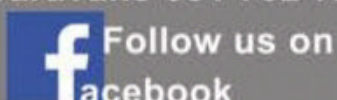
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Shake those feathers

To test his new camera, Paul Jonker from Randjesfontein captured a swan in his garden near Midrand.

"I took the photo late afternoon with my new Nikon P900. You can see the swan is not yet mature as its feathers have an ivory sheen. I would estimate he's around 2-3 years old. With this photo I was able to capture the fine details of the feathers on the bird."



Looking at the detail in Paul's photo, it looks as if the swan has just gotten out of bed.

A distant swan is an elegant bird, but this photo reveals interesting visual information when you look at the bird from close range.

The slightly erect feathers certainly hit the eye first, but otherwise it is really



just a portrait of a swan.

To give the photo a more artistic feel, you can crop the photo. You could also convert the photo to black and white as the colours don't contribute much to the original.

This way, you would still see it is a swan, but the feathers on its head show finer details – even the saddle on the beak is now more prominent.

SEND YOUR PICTURES

and we might publish them here. We're not looking for traditional 'prize winners', just regular pics that you love. Think of the type of pic you'd use as your Facebook cover photo; or something charming, such as kids warming their hands over a campfire.

Whether the pic was taken with an expensive DSLR camera or a run-of-the-mill cellphone, if it's good enough for your family photo album it's good enough for us.

Idene Doyer wins a *Drive & Camp* camera bag worth R520 with her photo – congratulations, Idene!

Send your photos and contact details to

leon.botha@media24.com

Ah, what a relief!

It hadn't rained much in Piet Plessis where Jana van Wyngaardt lives, but she could see there was a light shower over their farm just outside the town. She just had to go and see.

"It's dry and parched here at Piet Plessis in the Molopo. When a farmer sees it's raining on his farm, you want to drive through all the camps to see how much water the thirsty earth received. The other day, a rain cloud came over and so I drove to the farm with my husband, Jan-Hendrik. We estimate it rained about 5 mm... and that's when we saw the tortoise sitting in the pool of water – in what is usually a bone dry pan."

It enjoyed the water so much that it didn't even retract its head when we got there."

You can easily feel the scene when you look at the photo



and read Jana's description. It reminds you of the important role water plays in nature.

We would have all taken out our phones to capture the scene to share it with others. But what you may not realise is that the original photo isn't entirely true to what you



would observe on the scene.

One of the big culprits is colour changes in shadows, or

where there is no direct sunlight due to the clouds, as is the case here. It gives the photo a blue tint – which you wouldn't see when standing there.

You could make the colour in the photo more realistic by warming it using photo software. If you can choose the colour to counter the blue yourself, make the photo slightly yellow (yellow is the opposite of blue in the colour spectrum).

You can also adjust the contrast to show the black better, and also darken the top of the photo so you can see all the detail in the clouds better. You'll still have the same scene, but a more realistic version. 📷

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Tiny and tough

From the outside, it may look like a Sherpa, but the new Badger, a fibreglass caravan for two people (and maybe one child) has a fresh approach to layout.

What makes the caravan unique is its patented fold-out double bed. The Badger's entire right panel deploys as a unit along with the roof to form the double bed. Of course, this means more space in the caravan, as only half the double bed is inside. A canvas then stretches over the open section.

In addition, the Badger, which is manufactured in Durban by owners who have deep roots in the international yachting industry, has everything that opens and closes.

On the nose side are a few cupboards with a flat surface on top – forming a child's bed in some of the models.

The Badger has two doors: one in the left panel and a large one on the tail. Here you can place a ramp for wheelchair access into the caravan. As you open the tail door, the fridge/freezer is right in front of you on its sliding frame that slides to the left out from the hull.

The outside kitchen is on the left. A door opens and forms a roof over the cupboard section in the hull. (These cupboards are also accessible from the inside). Below the cupboards, you pull out a narrow tabletop with the twin-plate gas stove in it.

Choose from five models: four are caravans and one is a bakkie camper shell. The latter is called the Badger Camper and is simply the hull of the Badger that fits on the back of a bakkie. (It has legs so you can leave it on your stand if you want to

go on a game drive.) The Badger models are called the Mini, Lite, X-Over and Extreme, with the Extreme suitable for 4x4 conditions. All are braked.

The Mini and Lite's GVM is 750 kg, which means you can tow them with a regular light vehicle license (code B).

What comes standard? A spare wheel, 105 Ah battery with charger, 80-100 l water tank and water pump, 3 kg gas cylinder, twin-plate gas stove and space for a cassette toilet. The X-Over also has a Hansen geyser, basin and mixer tap,

aluminium tread plate for protection, and the Extreme also gets shock absorbers, mud flaps, a fridge/freezer and rock sliders to protect the chassis.

The numbers 3,5-4,8 (l) x 1,7 (w) x 2-2,1 m (h); tare weight 425-700 kg; GVM 750-1000 kg.

Prices Mini from R135 000, Lite from R175 000, X-Over from R215 000, Extreme from R265 000, Camper from R115 000.

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You can now pitch your tent or caravan in an oak forest just past Heidelberg in the Western Cape.

The Coetzee family farm with dairy cattle on the farm Goedehoop. After purchasing a plot of land next to their farm, Adré Coetzee decided to set up a campsite. A 100-year-old oak forest on the plot was the perfect place.

The Noukrans Bush Camp does not have demarcated sites, but the bathrooms can accommodate up to 10 families. And even though there's no electricity here, gas geysers heat the water for the showers. The lights work with solar energy.

The campsite is named after a perpendicular cliff and waterfall deeper into the mountain. It's a five-hour walk to get there, but the scenery makes every step worthwhile. The children can also help feed milk to the calves – just arrange with Adré beforehand. And if you fancy freshly baked farm bread and butter, a variety of homemade jams or fresh farm milk, place your order before you arrive.

The last 12 km to the campsite is a reasonable dirt road and you can tow an ordinary road caravan up there.

Price R70 pppn (free for kids under 6). Discounts are available if you stay more than three nights.

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Jeep goes tiny

Fiat-Chrysler, the owners of Jeep, recently revealed to the UK website AutoExpress that a tiny Jeep will be launched in 2022. It hasn't been named yet, but will reportedly be smaller than the Renegade – about the same size as the Suzuki Jimny.

"The car will be able to be used as a bad-ass Jeep, but it has also been designed to be used everyday," said Marco Pigozzi, the company's European head of marketing.

Pigozzi also said that the merger of Fiat-Chrysler with Peugeot-Citroën means that greater emphasis will be placed on environmental awareness.

According to him, Fiat-Chrysler does not have a small platform for the compact Jeep, and therefore it is likely that Peugeot-Citroën will donate technologies from its smaller Peugeot 208 or Citroën DS3 Crossback as part of the merger agreement.

Jeep's global president, Christian Meunier, said at a recent business event that Jeep should become the "greenest SUV brand in the world" and the new hybrid Jeeps could be "the best Jeeps ever". According to Meunier, all Jeeps will be partially or fully electric by the year 2022.



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Tuff Cats gets a kitten

Centurion bush caravan manufacturer Tuff Cats, known for its Shumba and Mdaba, has just released a third model – a pop-up caravan this time.

This model is aimed at campers who tour, says Jaco Nel of Tuff Cats. It sets up quickly and easily, and then your bed awaits. And if you have to leave the next day, it's as quick to get it ready for towing again. In South Africa, these kinds of caravans are as scarce as hen's teeth – Armadillo's XTR202 is the only real other option.

The newcomer has a flat roof that lifts like a flattened Z, with the door in the left panel by the tail. Also on the left, but closer to the nose, there's a pull-out drawer with the fridge/freezer and two-plate gas stove.

The deep-cycle battery and power system are part of the standard model. The caravan has a galvanised



BMW embraces the robot

If you're a BMW owner and use a Samsung, Sony or LG smartphone, there's finally reason to celebrate. For the first time ever, BMW will have Android Auto software available in its cars.

To date, BMW has only used its own smartphone software and Apple CarPlay. Android Auto will be available in BMWs from around mid-2020.



chassis that's made of aluminium – that's also what the side panels are made of.

Because the caravan has a flat roof, you can mount a roof rack so you can take a bicycle or three – or a canoe – with you.

The Tuff Cats team hasn't decided on a name for the newcomer yet, but the names of the existing models – Shumba

and Mdaba – are Shona words meaning 'lion' and 'leopard,' respectively, and they want to stick to a Shona name and the cat family. Tuff Cats has launched a competition and members of the public are welcome to submit name suggestions – the plan is to baptise the caravan by the end of February.

What is optional? An inside basin R4 307,

cassette toilet R1 599, 20 l microwave oven R1 725, 100 l water tank R8 159, gas geyser R4 462 and shower cubicle R6 210.

The numbers 4,8 (l) x 1,83 (w) x 1,58 m (h); tare weight 780 kg; GVM 1 800 kg and a 1,8 t axle.

Price R215 050.

Contact 083 609 6947 tuffcats.co.za
jaco@tuffcats.co.za



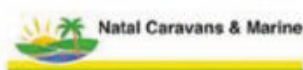
Discoverer 4 | Discoverer 6 | Discoverer iD* | Discoverer Deluxe* | Discoverer Xtreme 4x4

* standard with front swivel seats and large island beds

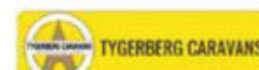
All models available with manual or automatic gearboxes, except the 4x4 Xtreme models



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Top sellers among bakkies and SUVs

According to the latest Naamsa new vehicle sales figures, a total of 44 738 new vehicles were sold in South Africa in November 2019, while 35 271 vehicles were exported in the same month.

Below is a list of new bakkies and SUVs sold that month. The Toyota Hilux leads the pack as per usual, while the Volkswagen T-Cross has left the

starting blocks in fine form. Please note, we provide the base price for a model range, although we're well aware that the flagship model is often the top seller in a series.

Also note that some manufacturers, including Porsche, Lamborghini and Mercedes-Benz, don't disclose sales figures for specific models.



Bakkies and SUVs with a base price under R350 000

MODEL	SALES	BASE PRICE
Toyota Hilux	2 588	R267 700
Ford Ranger	1 894	R295 800
Ford EcoSport	1 360	R266 100
Isuzu D-Max	1 299	R276 100
Volkswagen T-Cross	842	R334 600
Nissan NP200	694	R183 500
Toyota Avanza	507	R238 300
Renault Sandero	446	R189 900
Nissan NP300 Hardbody	445	R235 600
Fiat Panda	332	R139 900
Mazda CX-3	275	R311 500
Renault Duster	244	R260 900
Mahindra Pik-Up	238	R199 999
Renault Captur	210	R251 900
Suzuki Vitara	164	R289 900
GWM Steed	151	R164 900
Honda BR-V	141	R258 800
Mahindra KUV10	136	R142 999
Toyota Rush	129	R317 800
Opel Crossland X	108	R275 000
Suzuki Jimny	106	R279 900
Mahindra XUV300	75	R249 999
Mahindra Bolero	65	R156 999
Mahindra XUV500	40	R309 999
Peugeot 2008 SUV	18	R301 900
Citroen C3	12	R239 900
Citroen C3 Aircross	12	R339 900
Mahindra Scorpio	12	R309 999
Jeep Renegade	10	R340 000
JMC Vigus	9	R211 880
Mahindra TUV300	9	R249 999
Mahindra Thar	4	R236 999
GWM M4	2	R177 400
JMC Landwind	1	R241 990



Bakkies and SUVs with a base price higher than R350 000, but under R600 000

MODEL	SALES	BASE PRICE
Toyota Fortuner	664	R495 700
Volkswagen Tiguan	536	R445 300
Hyundai Creta	416	R359 900
Toyota RAV4	373	R436 200
Mazda CX-5	321	R406 300
Nissan X-Trail	310	R409 900
Hyundai Tucson	304	R425 900
Nissan Qashqai	278	R368 100
Toyota Land Cruiser 79	224	R582 000
Ford Everest	220	R509 900
Kia Sportage	206	R399 995
Volkswagen Amarok	186	R545 700
Nissan Navara	161	R494 600
Toyota C-HR	124	R352 400
Ford Kuga	99	R403 700
BMW X1	78	R517 400
Audi Q3	70	R565 000
Hyundai Kona	63	R384 900
Mini Countryman	51	R474 200
Subaru Forester	47	R451 000
Honda HR-V	46	R376 700
Volvo XC40	45	R519 400
Audi Q2	37	R461 000
Mitsubishi Pajero Sport	31	R589 995
Honda CR-V	28	R462 700
Mitsubishi Eclipse Cross	27	R409 995
Mitsubishi Triton	26	R519 995
Mazda BT-50	25	R471 100
Mitsubishi ASX	23	R364 995
Subaru XV	22	R413 000
Renault Koleos	15	R409 900
Peugeot 3008 SUV	13	R388 900
Opel Mokka X	12	R389 000
Kia Sorento	11	R599 995
Volvo V40 CC	11	R497 500
Citroen C5 Aircross	10	R469 900
Opel Grandland X	10	R442 000
Jeep Cherokee	10	R565 000
Suzuki Grand Vitara	9	R465 900
Peugeot 5008 SUV	8	R534 900
Mitsubishi Outlander	6	R559 995
Jeep Compass	1	R599 990

Bakkies and SUVs with a base price between R600 000 and R1 million

MODEL	SALES	BASE PRICE
BMW X3	161	R649 000
Isuzu mu-X	90	R605 800
Toyota Land Cruiser Prado	84	R875 000
Audi Q5	73	R711 500
Volvo XC60	64	R692 600
Range Rover Evoque	60	R734 300
Jeep Grand Cherokee	46	R790 000
Land Rover Discovery	37	R999 300
Jeep Wrangler	30	R658 900
BMW X4	27	R843 000
Land Rover Discovery Sport	27	R703 143
Jaguar F-Pace	28	R839 300
Jaguar E-Pace	21	R684 400
Kia Grand Sedona	19	R643 995
Hyundai Santa Fe	18	R609 900
Lexus NX	12	R722 600
Lexus UX	12	R620 100
Mitsubishi Pajero	12	R699 995
Toyota Land Cruiser 74	12	R794 800
Toyota FJ Cruiser	8	R664 800
Alfa Stelvio	7	R750 000
Subaru Outback	3	R617 000
Volvo V90 CC	1	R853 800

The one percent

MODEL	SALES	BASE PRICE
Range Rover Sport	79	R1 133 300
BMW X5	68	R1 186 200
Toyota Land Cruiser 200	55	R1 064 900
Volkswagen Touareg	55	R1 074 600
Range Rover Velar	38	R1 018 650
Volvo XC90	34	R1 029 300
Audi Q7	21	R1 094 000
BMW X7	18	R1 554 500
Lexus LX	12	R1 752 800
BMW X6	9	R1 187 900
Lexus RX	9	R1 032 200
Audi Q8	8	R1 388 000
Range Rover	6	R2 024 600
Nissan Patrol	1	R1 464 100

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Pace setter

The not-so-Mini Countryman's John Cooper Works got a bump in performance specs recently. Here's what **Kyle Kock** thinks of it.

When the BMW Group revived the Mini marque just after the turn of the century, it stuck to the world-renowned three-door hatchback body style. But when the second-generation model rolled off the production line just over a decade ago, the company started introducing a slew of new models to bolster the original offering, including a six-door station wagon complete with two barn doors comprising the tailgate (Clubman), a roadster, a convertible, an SUV coupe (Paceman) and the regular SUV (Countryman).

Given the worldwide interest in SUVs, the Countryman is probably one of the smarter decisions made by the BMW board, but what's this one all about I hear you ask?

Of course, being a John Cooper Works, this model gets a beefier external appearance, with large vents up front that suck air into the drivetrain and channel air into the wheel wells to cool down the brakes. Then there's also model-specific side skirts and a rear bumper with an integrated diffuser element. Aerodynamically optimised side mirrors, 18-inch alloys (with a different style of 18- and 19-inch options

also available), and a tailgate wing complete the look. And let's not forget the Union Jack motif cleverly integrated in the taillight design.

Strongest yet

The previous JCW Minis made use of a turbopetrol 1,6 l. It wasn't a slouch, putting out a strong 160 kW and 280 Nm of torque. Now there's a 2,0 l powerplant under the bonnet.

It's the biggest engine the British brand has ever used in one of its models (if you don't count the racing special X-Raid JCW Buggies used by the Mini ALL4 Racing team at the Dakar a few years ago – those were





RED RACING STRIPES JCW badges basically mean that this Mini has performance abilities two tiers up from regular models – and has all the go-fast trim, too.

six-cylinder BMW turbodiesels). The new Countryman JCW borrows the engine from its German cousins, but the motor is also used in the lesser Countryman and Countryman S.

To make it more worthy of JCW status, the engine has been treated to a shot in the arm thanks to a revised air intake, bigger turbocharger, model-specific pistons and connecting rods, variable valve timing and BMW's famed variable camshaft manipulation on the exhaust and intake sides of the cylinder head. The comprehensive modifications lead to some lofty figures: 225 kW and 450 Nm – increases of 32 and 28% compared with its predecessor's outputs respectively.

But that doesn't mean you pay a penalty at the pumps. Mini claims a combined cycle return of 7,9 l/100 km, with just 155 g/km of CO₂ emitted into the atmosphere. All that twist is sent to tarmac or gravel through each

wheel by way of an eight-speed automatic transmission. There's also a mechanical diff lock on the front axle to keep the Countryman pointed in the direction you choose under hard acceleration, with 39 % locking effect to whichever side.

To match the extra ponies under the clamshell bonnet, the manufacturer has made some chassis adjustments as well by adding a new strut across the top of the engine bay and dual reinforcements underneath as well. And when you need to put a stop to all your fun, there's 360 mm ventilated brake discs up front and 330 mm versions at the rear – all clamped down on by four-piston calipers.

Behind the wheel

Unfortunately, we didn't get a chance to put the Mini's all-wheel drive system to the test on the local launch but were kept entertained



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by the lively soundtrack from the dual exhaust tailpipes.

Pootling about town, you can be certain that the ALL4 system is channelling all the available torque to the front axle, which is also the most efficient from a fuel consumption point of view, and it's only when the system detects slip on the front wheels that it will send the appropriate ratio to the rear. You can also monitor the ratio via the central infotainment screen, where you will clearly see which driving mode you're in. You don't even need a gravel surface to see the system channel energy to the rear because there's enough power to light up the front wheels just by

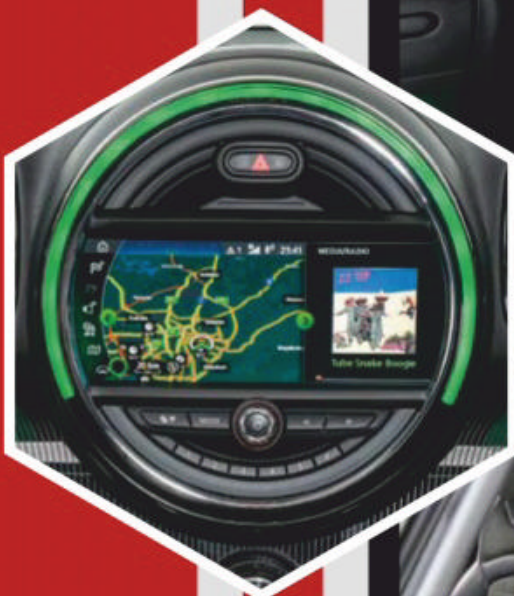
prodding the throttle pedal a bit too enthusiastically when you take off from a traffic light.

Conclusion

The JCW moniker has always been reserved for those who like their motoring with a pinch of racing DNA thrown in. There are enough logos and visual elements to ensure that those around you don't forget just how special your model is either. Sure, we know that the Countryman JCW can hold its own around a racetrack. But if you're planning to venture off the beaten track, rather stay away from the 19-inch low-profile rubber and stick to well-graded dirt roads.



MOOD LIGHTING The colour of the Mini's cabin visuals is manipulated by a toggle on the dashboard, which is dominated by the brand's round trim.



Competitors

Boutique SUVs with room and vroom



R716 900

Jaguar E-Pace P250 AWD

The E-Pace surprised us with its impressive turn of speed cross country, and exciting off-road credentials when it got us through snowy terrain as well.



R834 900

Alfa Romeo Stelvio 2.0T Super Q4

Even in base specification, the Stelvio lives up to the sporting heritage of the legendary Italian marque. It's remarkable all round and easy on the eye.



R718 419

Mercedes-Benz GLA250 4Matic

Definitely not as tightly strung as the rest of its competition but would blend in wherever you go. Not that it's a slouch... Be prepared to tick lots of options though.

SPECIFICATIONS

Model	Mini John Cooper Works ALL4 Countryman
Engine	1 998 cc, four-cylinder, turbopetrol
Power	225 kW @ 5 000 rpm
Torque	450 Nm @ 1 750 rpm
Transmission	8-speed automatic
Top speed	250 km/h
Luggage space	216-912 l
Tank	50 l
Maintenance plan	3 years/75 000 km
Safety rating	★★★★★ (EuroNCAP)
PRICE	R708 000

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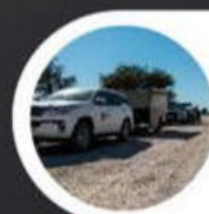
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Sleek, rugged & well thought out. Durability is key and simplicity fits the bush. Best dimensions, weight & platform in it's class.

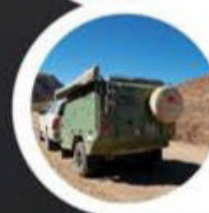
Built for offroad use and this is clear from both the chassis and the body construction. Designed for comfort, yet rugged and bush-proof. It looks like a trailer, camps like a caravan and feels like a 4X4.



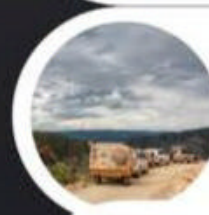
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Return to the backroads

Contrary to popular belief, you can avoid the major routes in the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands and put your off-roader to the test on your way home.

Words and photos **Kyle Kock**





You've just been down to the South Coast and enjoyed every moment of whiling away the hours behind the grill, talking about World Cup trophies, while the kids frolic in the waves or slide down tubes.

Before you start packing up, sit down and consider these routes and trails with loose surfaces beneath the rubber and vistas that'll take your breath away. It may take you eight days to get home (if you include the training at the last venue) but it will keep you away from annoying toll gates, and mostly away from thousands of tourists on their way back home.

STARTING IN KINGSBURGH, head in the direction of the Big Smoke by making

your way through sugar-cane country via the R603 en route to Gwahumbe Game Lodge and Spa – a luxury treatment lodge that also offers a variety of trails for the off-road enthusiast. Turn left off the R603 toward Mid-Ilovo at S29.911744, E30.583025, and once you pass the sole service station in the village, prepare to turn left towards Gwahumbe.

Call ahead and book yourself in at one of the catered accommodation rooms, or if you're a group of adventurers, book the entire 10-sleeper bush camp.

The gate is unmanned, but reception will let you in when you ring the intercom. As you pass through the gate, you'll see a trail following the fence on your left – that's the route that takes you down to

the river and to the picnic cave, but continue straight ahead for now, keep right at the fork and follow the road to reception where you'll be welcomed with a refreshing warm towel to wipe away some of the KZN humidity.

After paying the fee to drive the course (R90 per person and R70 per vehicle), you'll receive a map showing you where the reserve's attractions are and, as you drive out of the welcoming area, you realise that the trail kicks off on a ridge. Keep left and you'll head for the tougher section that requires 4x4 mode, but swing right and first visit the Mzigi camp, Thirsty's Deck and the waterfall – signposts will point you in the right direction. Although it's recommended that you use the diff



4x4 DESTINATION

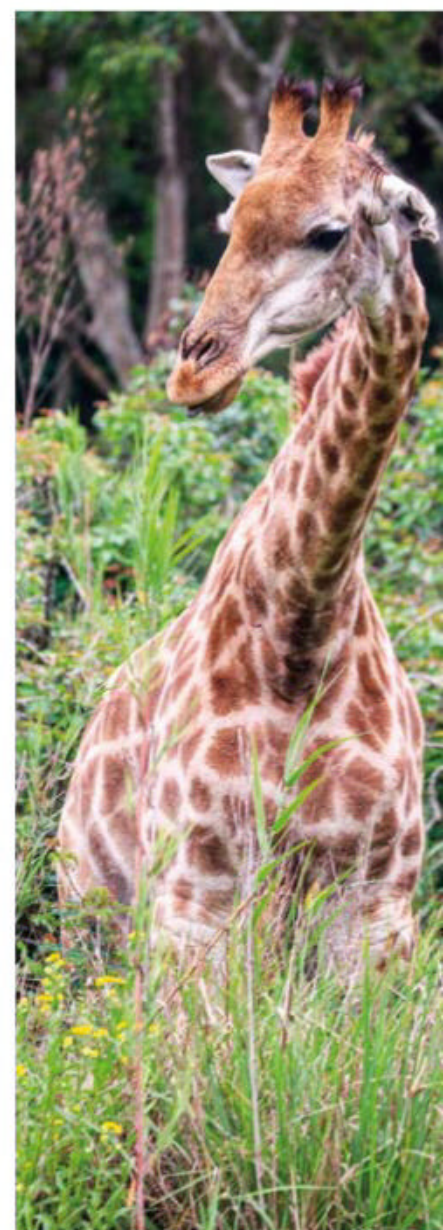
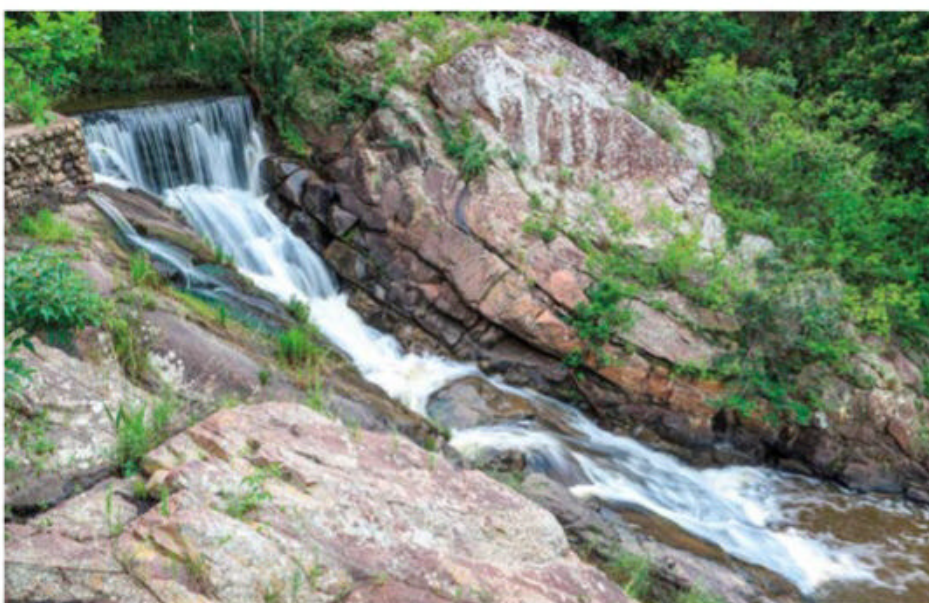
lock (you don't need to be in 4x4 mode), the conditions were favourable enough for us to not experience too much trouble on our trip.

Turn right at the T-junction and you'll see why they recommend that your vehicle has good ground clearance. It will definitely come in handy, and don't be in too much of a rush because there's good game viewing. The zebra herds are used to vehicles so they're not too skittish when you approach.

The trail leads you down to the Mzigi bush camp, where you could come rough it in thatched huts. You would need to book out the entire facility, but it wouldn't cost much more than a stay for a couple in one of the luxurious options with all three meals thrown in. The bush camp overlooks a stream, with a lapa between the five huts. To the right as you enter the camp there's a kitchenette, flushing toilet and a hot water shower, all housed in the same small building, and to the left is a braai boma.

The tall foliage around Mzigi also means that you're likely to cross paths with a giraffe munching on something that's out of your reach. Just after the camp, there's a path that veers to the left, taking you across the same stream you look at from the boma, and up the embankment on the other side. This is how you get to the picnic benches and waterfall, where you might find a family of duiker grazing just before they duck behind the dense bush when they see you pull up. You then cross the same stream, but it's deeper here.

If you head back the same way and stick to the righthand-side of the trail all the way, you'll need to engage the transfer case in a 4x4 mode because this route takes



“

Keep right at the forks and you'll come across the river route section, and this is where you'll need low range the most

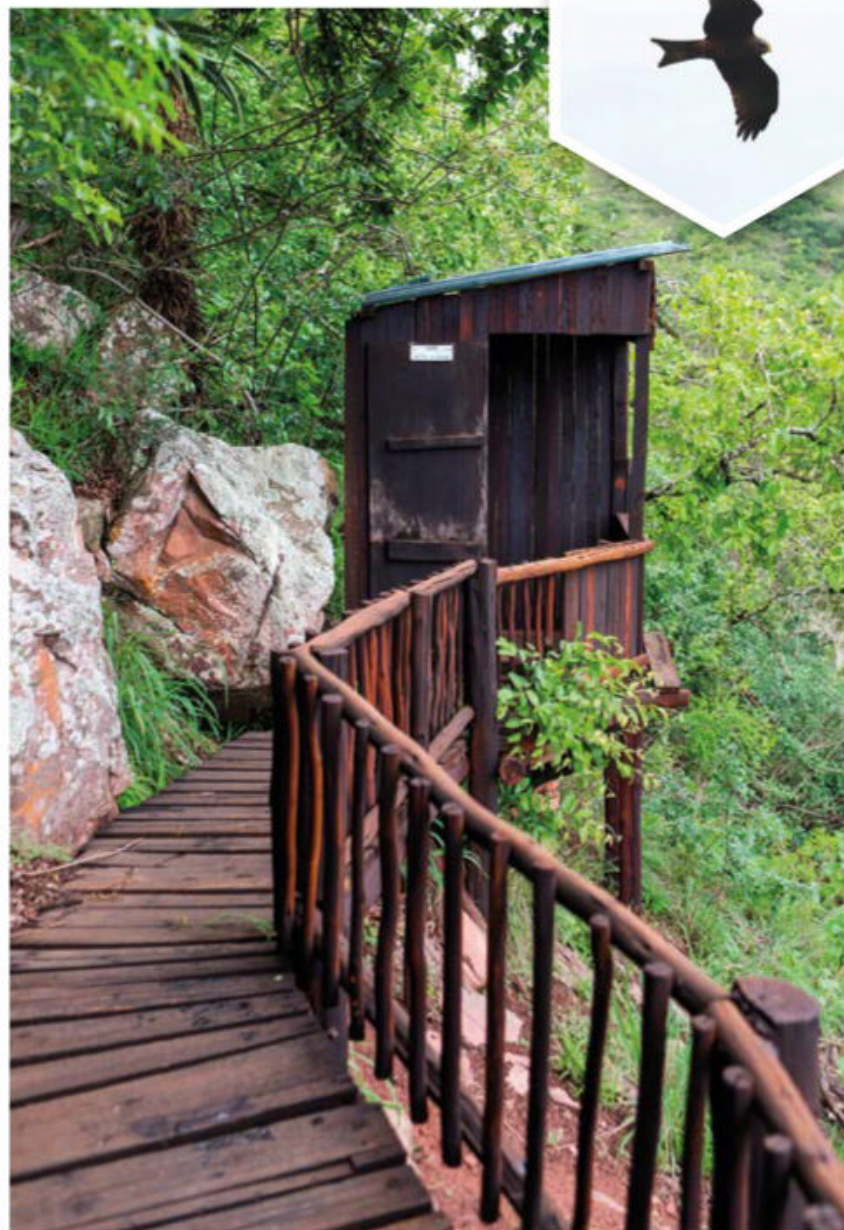
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GREEN GROWTH The scenery at Gwahumbe is stunning and you'll not see anything greener than the KZN midlands during summer season in South Africa. The trails are signposted very well, so you don't have to worry about making a wrong turn. Do keep your binoculars at the ready, because there's plenty of game-viewing opportunities.

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GWAHUMBE GAME & SPA

South African Natural Heritage Site No. 307

Warning Dangerous Animals. Entry to this Reserve is at your own risk. Management accepts no responsibility for any death, injury or illness sustained or suffered by any persons or theft or loss of or damage to any property occurring within this Reserve whether allegedly due to the negligence of the management or any of its employees or facilities, equipment, vehicles, and foodstuff supplied or any other manner whatsoever.



you all the way to the Hippo Pool. There are two more water crossings, and if it's rained recently, then the mud will make it an interesting excursion. The hippos were in hiding during our visit, but there were wildebeest making themselves comfortable in the long grass nearby.

Head back up toward Thirsty's Deck – a platform that gives you a commanding view of the cliff that drops down to the Hippo Pool. Haul out your zoom lens and watch the birds of prey keep a keen eye out for a tasty morsel down below. If you need a toilet break, this would be prime time to make use of the appropriately named Loo with a View – a long-drop just a few steps from the viewing and picnic platforms.

Keep to the right at the forks you come across and you'll head for the river route section, and this is where you'll depend on low range the most, and where the trail is the rockiest. After rain, this gets slippery in sections, but generally this trail wouldn't exceed a level 3 grading.

Provided you don't do anything silly, you'll be okay. If not, it will cost you R400 in recovery fees.

The path takes you to another picnic area at the Cave that isn't really a cave but more a rocky overhang under which you can enjoy sandwiches and coffee. Overall, depending on how long you spend on the 11 km route, where you stop for food and how much you enjoy watching wildlife, it could take between two and four hours. Spend the night and soak in your surroundings.

THE NEXT DAY, stay off the main routes by taking what seems to be a more direct route to the nearby Killarney 4x4. Keep right toward the R603, avoid the temptation to take the faster route according to your GPS, and take the MR489 dirt road through villages before turning left on MR589. Pass the Denny Mushrooms facility and turn left away from the N3 toward Shongweni Farmers Market – where depending on when you pass through and if you're not in too much of a hurry, you'll be able to sample some of the wares of the 150 stalls, including fresh produce. You can have a meal and stock up because you're quite close to Killarney.

You shouldn't miss the turn-off to Killarney 4x4 facility as there's ample signage that guides you right off the MR551



TOUGH MUDDERS You'll have to dip into one of the mud pits at Killarney 4x4 to paint your off-roader in the correct earthy tones before you leave the premises with your head held high.



opposite a rock feature pool, massive lapa, and ablution facilities. Electricity points and brick braais are dispersed intermittently throughout, and you'll need an extension lead if you want to power up anything.

Killarney 4x4 is essentially split into three distinct sections, the Crocodile Area, Nightmare's Creek and the Sandpit. The former is on your left as you descend the hill toward the campsite. Parts of it are graded as a level 2 obstacle, but if it's wet around here, then some would consider the mud pits a grade 4, because you're not going to be able to get through without chunky tyres, serious skills and enough momentum.

Find out from reception which areas are out of bounds on your visit – most of Nightmare's Creek was closed during our visit. It's quite overgrown and they previously required that at least two vehicles go out at a time. The one path leading up to the lookout point that was open didn't take much low range, without even lowering the tyre pressure, but we can't comment on the rest of the route.

It feels as if you're driving out of Killarney when you start to see houses on your left, but you turn left immediately at the top in front of the row of homes and turn left again onto a grassy ledge from where you'll have excellent vantage of the proceedings in the campsite and a small piece of the last section – the Sandpit.

The Sandpit covers a large percentage of the property and is where you'll find most people heading out for the day's activities. As the name suggests, the obstacles quite literally are hillocks and small dunes with

and up toward the Nshoweni train station before you turn left toward Killarney.

It's a brief dirt road that's parallel to the railway line for a bit before detouring around the natural contours of the hilly surroundings. The end of the road continues left into the facility but rather head up to a gate to announce your arrival at the office, where you'll also receive a map to the 200-hectare property.

It's R110 per 4x4 or 4x2 vehicle for a day

visit or per night if you're camping. If you're just popping in for the day, then adults and kids under 12 pay R60 and R30 respectively, otherwise it's R110 and R55 for camping. They don't have card facilities at reception, so bring cash. Until very recently, the facility was for sale, so 4x4 enthusiasts can count their blessings that the owners have decided to keep it open.

You'll have to pitch a tent to sleep comfortably at the campsite/picnic area –



foliage, but there are river crossings in this section, too. And you'd better believe the map when it says that the southernmost river crossing is a grade 4-5 section. We took a wrong turn and were faced with a wall of boulders and had to reverse 100 metres to turn around. Make no mistake about it, this is custom climber territory.

The rest of the sandpit is a glorious playground and you'll find groups of people driving around here who are camping for a weekend, as well as locals visiting just for the day. Killarney opens at 08:00

and close at 18:00, but obviously if you're camping here for the weekend you can play into the night. They warn you that there'll be no recovery after hours though, so don't go parking your new 1-bar car in the river by mistake overnight –it's R250 to recover your vehicle if there is a recovery vehicle available.

AFTER KILLARNEY, your 4x4 options are fairly limited for off-road excursions, but you can take the scenic route to the Karkloof Reserve. That will take you at least two hours via the N3, but if you don't need to be back in the city for an important



SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE Killarney 4x4 caters for novice off-roaders as well as fully fledged rock-hoppers out on the trails, and the whole family can come along for the weekend or for the day to braai, and enjoy the water slide and rock pool.



4x4 DESTINATION

meeting on the Monday, go the long way around past Impendle – that will take at least four hours.

The route is mostly tarred as you turn off onto the R617 from the N3 joining the P 127-1 and turning left on the Stoffelton road just before Impendle at S29.610159 E29.875961. Shortly after you cross the Nzinga River, you turn right onto Inzinga road. After the secondary school, the tar ends, and it becomes a decent dirt road again.

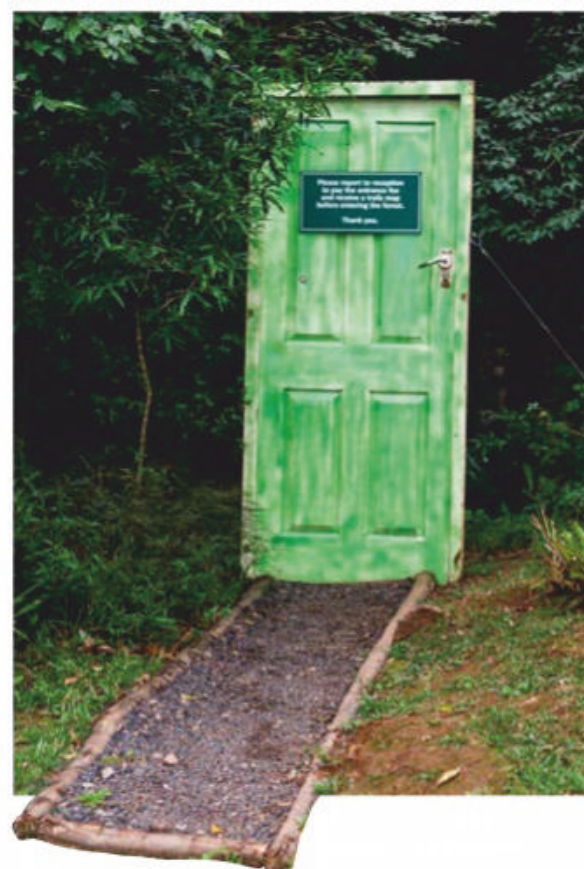
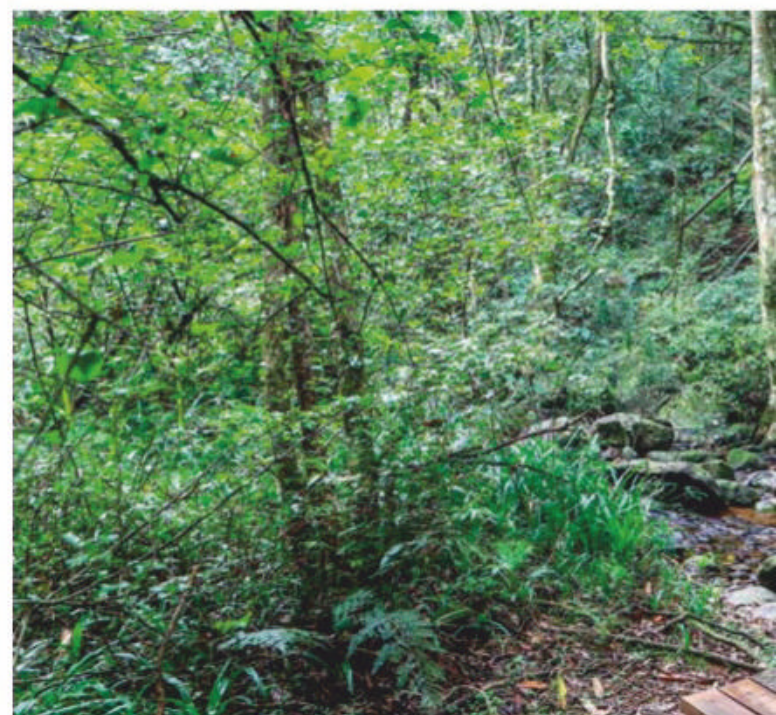
At the fork joining Lower Lotheni Road, swing right up the hill and continue your loop in the direction of Nottingham Road, crossing the Nzinga River once more as you traverse a narrow bridge. The views on this detour alone are worth the drive, and as you get close to the Midlands proper, you'll notice the number of dairy farms prominent in the area.

If your belly is rumbling by the time you reach Nottingham Road, drop in at the

Bierfassl Restaurant for some authentic Austrian and Bavarian grub and the local Notties brews. Or you could continue toward the N3 and cross over and eat at Linga Lapa – renowned for its steak and butchery.

Refuel at the BP across the road and pop in at the farm stall for some supplies before continuing along Curry's Post Road until you get to the P-145 road and turn left toward Karkloof. It's decent gravel until you reach a four-way intersection. You continue straight, following the sign that says Karkloof Reserve (West) and through the gate for another 1,5 km to the reception at Rockwood Lodges.

To be allowed to drive in the Karkloof Reserve, you'll have to stay at Rockwood Lodges. They have various accommodation options – two of which are little more than a stones' throw away from reception. The Farm Cottage and Farm House are right next door to each other and sleeps four and eight

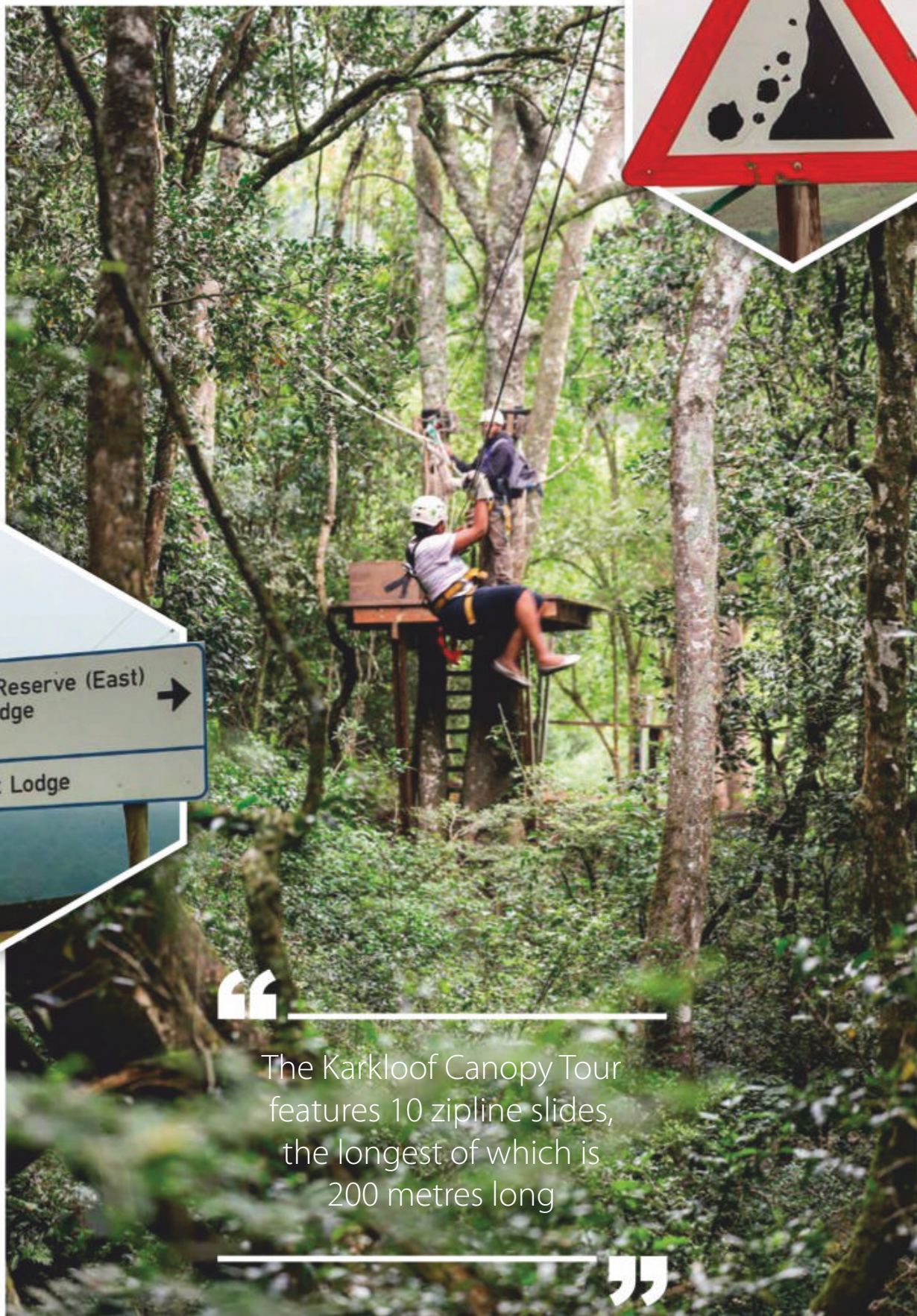


DEEP FOREST The Karkloof Nature Reserve is home to the second largest indigenous forest in Southern Africa, and to access the trails in the reserve you'll need to book one of the accommodation options run by Rockwood Lodges.





Karkloof Nature Reserve (East)
Rockwood Mt. Lodge
(4x4 ONLY) →
↖ Rockwood Forest Lodge



“

The Karkloof Canopy Tour
features 10 zipline slides,
the longest of which is
200 metres long

”

people respectively. There are all sorts of luxuries to make your stay comfortable, but the kids might want to play outside in the playground area next to the two buildings.

To get to the six-sleeper Forest Lodge and Mountain Lodges, you're going to need good ground clearance and 4x4. To get to the former, you'll cross four streams as you drive deeper into what can only be described as a dense forest – in some places the branches hang so low, they sweep dust off the top of your vehicle.

It's remote enough that you will have very limited cellphone reception (Vodacom signal was non-existent at the time of our visit). You'll pass the KZN Wildlife office on the

way there but don't worry about the rangers if you're booked in here – rather keep an eye out for mountain bikers exploring the reserve as the cycling routes intersect with the 4x4 trail in places. If you're fit enough, tackle the 40-minute hike to the Godwini waterfalls near the Forest Lodge.

The Mountain Lodge is in the eastern section of the reserve, some of which had been burnt when we visited, with logs barring the path in sections. Certain parts are overgrown – but overall the trails in Karkloof don't actually exceed a grade 3 rating. The second remote lodge serves as a perfect springboard to visit the Canopy Falls, and also to quickly access the Canopy

Tours ziplining course – but you'll need a gate key for that from reception. It's useful to get the key, because without it, what could have been a 1 km shortcut becomes a 20 km drive out of the reserve and around to the usual public entrance.

The Karkloof Canopy Tour features 10 slides, the longest of which is the last one at 200 metres – taking you through the second largest indigenous forest in Southern Africa. If you're not that adventurous, but up for walking quietly in the forest below, then take a camera with and try to snap the elusive Knysna loerie or Narina trogon.

Turn right as you take the public entrance exit to also visit the Karkloof Falls a bit



further south down the road. After you turn off into the Sappi plantation, it's a 6 km drive to the picnic area and viewing deck. Entrance is free and this is great time to take in the surroundings before hitting the road again.

RESUME YOUR TREK north by driving back up Karkloof Road, which becomes a gravel road before the turn-off to Bushwillow Caravan Park. Paper companies Mondi and Sappi have operations in this area, so be on the lookout for slow-moving commercial vehicles, despite the road being graded well

enough to make you feel like nine-times world rally champion Sebastien Loeb in a Finnish forest.

If you haven't had your 4x4 kicks yet, head toward Stoney Ridge 4x4 in the direction of Colenso. Follow the R622 towards Mooi River and stay off the N3 by taking the R103 which runs parallel to the N3 anyway, and then from Estcourt (a good opportunity to fill up on fuel) turn right onto Harding Road toward the R74.

The road takes you through the Weenen Nature Reserve, and signposts warn you of game that might be crossing the road,

so slow down and take your time.

Turn left at the T-junction and, at S28.803051 E29.944696, turn right toward Stoney Ridge Off-Road Academy. Where the gravel road forks, keep right and continue over the dry riverbed before you get to the tented camp. This 2 300-hectare thornveld is where John Rich offers 4x4 training from level 1 to level 3 certification. The courses cover lectures and guided driving as well as advanced recovery and winching.

If you've never been, be warned that they don't recognise any other certification so if you're a group of first-timers to the



CONTACT

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✉ info@gwahumbe.co.za

Killarney 4x4

📞 031 769 2427 🌐 killarney4x4.co.za

✉ killarney4x4@mweb.co.za

Rockwood Lodges

📞 031 502 4043 🌐 rockwood.co.za

✉ info@rockwood.co.za

Stoney Ridge 4x4

📞 073 697 5108 🌐 stoneyridge.co.za

✉ john@stoneyridge.co.za



facility then call ahead and arrange to have a weekend of training.

The terrain ranges from flat gravel sections and soft sandy hills to mud, river crossings and axle twisters. If you've already completed John's courses, then all you need is R300 to drive and play to your heart's content on the close to 200 km of 4x4 trails. There's also a section suitable for 4x2s with lockable differentials.

Remember your camera and binoculars because this massive reserve plays host to lots of game and birds. Also, take the proper equipment – most of the course could be

considered to be a tough grade 4 level.

Don't worry about where you'll stay because there's tented accommodation, and a large boma where those participating in training or just brushing up on their skills can break bread together. And Stoney Ridge is also open to hiking, fishing, mountain biking and river tubing when if weather permits it.

You could tackle these trails and sections before your yearly holiday at the coast or set aside some extra time to stay at any one of the places mentioned here and follow your own route.



PRETTY YEAR-ROUND The KZN Midlands offers plenty of stunning vistas that will leave you wanting to visit this region over and over again.



What you should know



Can I drive the route on my own?

Most of it yes, except that at Stoney Ridge you'll have to have completed the training courses set out by John before he'll allow you to drive there.

How long will it take? You could do this over a long weekend, but we suggest you bank on being in the Midlands for a week and a half, so you have enough time to explore the region and its attractions, and get to relax and sightsee as well.

What should I drive? A pukka 4x4 vehicle with low range and diff lock is preferable. While you could tackle some of the terrain at these locations with just the rear diff locked, when conditions are adverse, you'll need everything at your disposal. Good ground clearance is not negotiable.

How much fuel do I need? Fuel is readily available at all of the trails, and you will not need to drive more than 70 km to the nearest filling station.

What equipment should I pack?

You won't even need to drop the tyre pressure in most of these locations, except maybe in the very soft sand of Killarney 4x4. At Stoney Ridge you'll need to come prepared with decent recovery equipment.



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TENTCO AWNINGS



2,0 x 2,0m **R2 300**
2,5 x 2,0m **R2 500**
280g ripstop canvas

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420D Oxford Nylon **R5 800**

TENTCO KITCHEN CABINET DELUXE



R1020

FOLDING TABLE



4ft **R599**
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DC 3 CHAIR



Oxford Nylon
Steel Frame
Compact folding design
Ultra durable & strong
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R399 each

TABLE AND 2 BENCHES



102cm x 67cm x 74cm
R1 250

DIRECTORS DELUXE



R640

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600g Heavy duty material
Sponge padding
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SL-22 & SLX-2



Oxford Nylon Cover
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150 kg
SL-2 **R599**
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BIG BOY CHAIR



SPECIFICATIONS
Nylon Ripstop
Steel frame
Max weight:
150kg
R535

PORTA POTTY



SPECIFICATIONS
20Lt
R880
Bag, each
R245

CAPRIVI 3 POP UP



2.4m x 1.8m x 1.0m
R999

CAMPING CUPBOARD



3-Shelf **R610**
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STRETCHER



BASIC LARGE
Size: 2.1m x 75cm
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Max weight: 130kg
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Size: 1.9m x 65cm
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SIZE: 2m x 62cm x 5cm **R599**
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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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E-MAIL: info@tentco.co.za
WHOLESALE: colin@tentco.co.za

COLOURS, SPECIFICATIONS
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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**
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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

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To fit Snr Tentco gazebo Shadedoth Built-in groundsheet

NEW

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Gazebo to bow tent connector

Available: End wall Side walls (solid or with windows)



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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:
NB: PRICE WILL VARY BETWEEN STORES.



AGENTS: SEE LIST ON WEBSITE

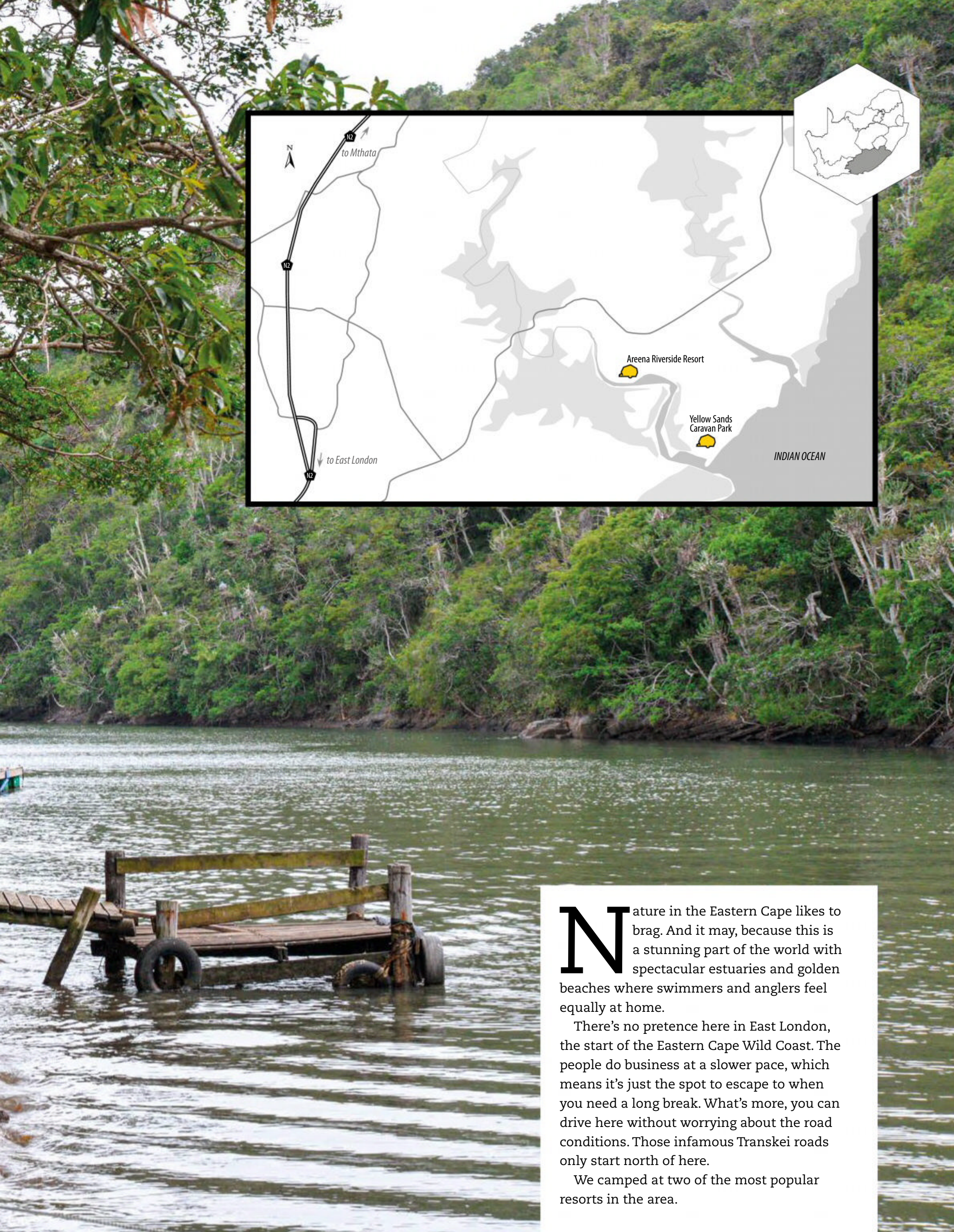
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Chilling on the *Wild Coast*

Take a deep breath and relax on the Wild Coast just past East London... while the kids play to their hearts' content.

Words and photos **Schalk Jonker**



Nature in the Eastern Cape likes to brag. And it may, because this is a stunning part of the world with spectacular estuaries and golden beaches where swimmers and anglers feel equally at home.

There's no pretence here in East London, the start of the Eastern Cape Wild Coast. The people do business at a slower pace, which means it's just the spot to escape to when you need a long break. What's more, you can drive here without worrying about the road conditions. Those infamous Transkei roads only start north of here.

We camped at two of the most popular resorts in the area.

AREENA RIVERSIDE RESORT

Pick and choose

The Areena Riverside Resort, about 23 km east of East London, is located on the banks of the Kwelera tidal river. Come hide out here, at the start of the Eastern Cape Wild Coast, when you need to recharge your batteries.

After stopping in front of the boom gate and completing the paperwork in the large reception, it's almost as if a feeling of wholesomeness envelops you as you drive through the campsite. Something that tells you this is a place where the family comes first and where kids can be themselves without danger.

There is an atmosphere here that will leave you hankering for those days before cell phones and tablets, when we didn't hide behind security gates and fences.

At this resort, which has been hosting visitors for almost 30 years, you have an unobstructed view of the river from your stand and there's a wealth of birds. There are loads of activities for the whole family, and the kids get a playground, trampolines, a swimming pool, tennis court, volleyball court and a games room with pool tables and table tennis.

While the kids cavort in the pool, you can sit back on one of the loungers around the water and check with your binoculars to see if you can tick off one or more of the many birds here in your bird guide. You're probably in luck if you haven't yet checked off, for example, the Cape cormorant, Hottentot teal duck, black eagle or the yellow-bellied greenbul. There was even an ostrich right next to our stand.

OR GO EXPLORE the small game reserve of 350 ha on an accompanied game drive to see wildlife including zebra, wildebeest, kudu, eland, blesbok, impala, nyala, waterbuck, duiker and bushbuck. A big highlight is when you come across Abby, the friendly giraffe who calls the Areena Riverside Resort home.

If, for some reason, you don't want to drive in your own car, you can book a quad bike and even a horse to ride through the reserve.

The resort has a team-building and adventure centre so don't be surprised if



“

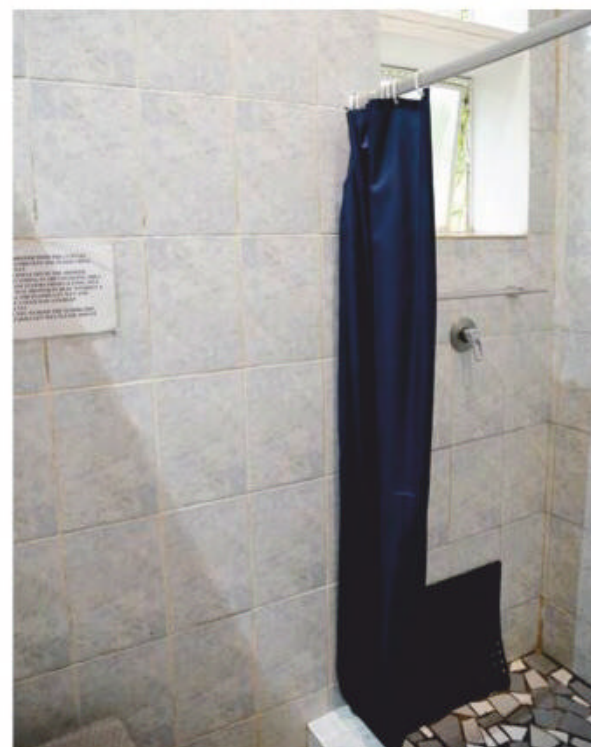
While the kids cavort in the pool, you can sit back on one of the loungers around the water...

”





ALL WASHED UP There are five ablution blocks in the Areena Riverside Resort and men and women share the facilities. It is, however, private and constantly cleaned.



you find a group of travel agents getting to know one another better on the paintball range. They've also got an obstacle course, abseiling, archery range, and a proper foofie slide to satisfy your adrenaline needs. Although these activities are aimed at team-building groups, you can also do them on your own, just chat to the staff.

While you do battle with your brother-in-law and the boys on the paintball range, book your wife and teenage daughter in at the resort's spa. Various treatments are available – and there is even a hair salon.

If you've come here for the sun, make yourself at home right at your stand next to the water, and see if you can hook a fish – or cast a line in the black-bass dam.

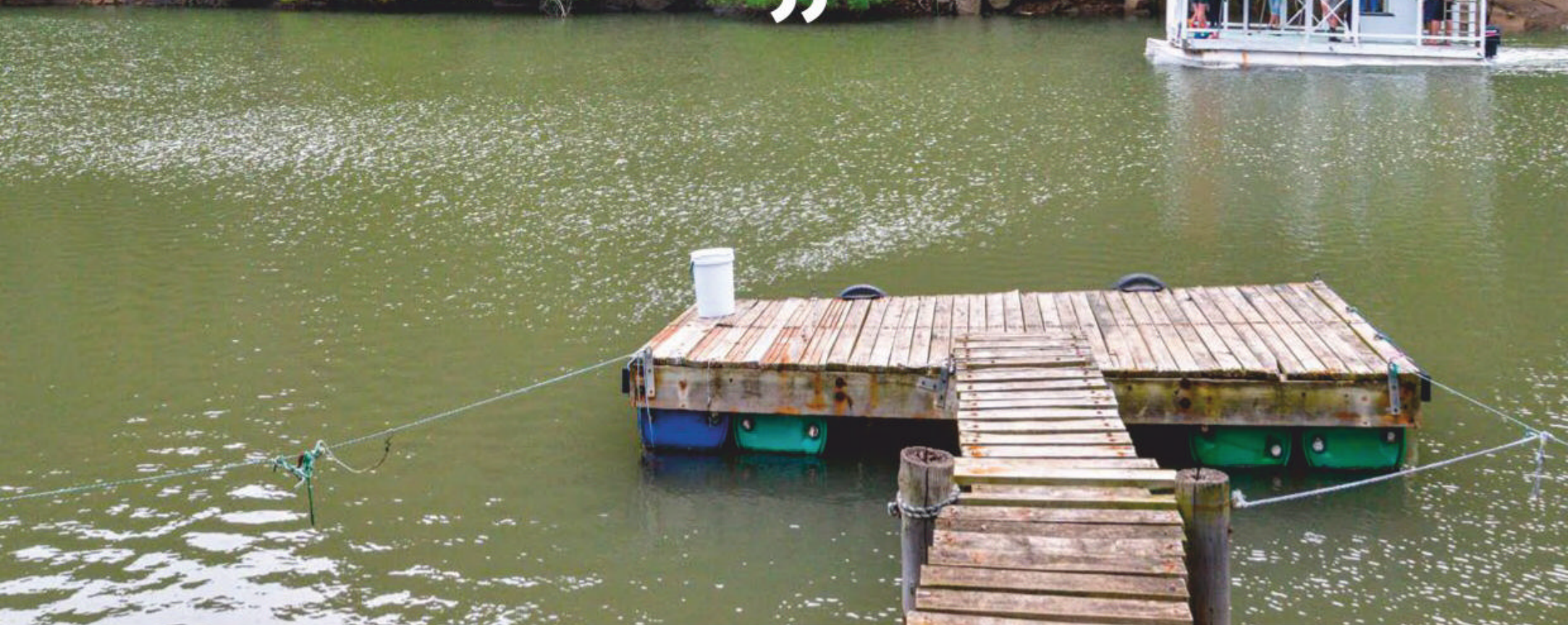
Unfortunately, you're still about 5 km from the sea as the crow flies, and the nearest beaches – Glen Gariff and Glen Eden – are a five-minute drive from the resort. If you're feeling adventurous, rent a canoe or a sea kayak and paddle down the river to the beach. Or book your spot on Kareena, the resort's double-storey riverboat for a cocktail cruise.

All along the river bank are jetties where you can dock your own craft. Just speak to the resort staff beforehand to

“

Most of the 110 stands here are on the banks of the river, which means there is nobody between you and the water

”



determine what is allowed and what is not permissible.

When you don't feel like cooking, spoil the family at the Areena Quays restaurant. The restaurant (and bar with a big-screen TV) is also on the waterfront with beautiful views and you can wolf down ribs, burgers and a Sunday buffet.

MOST OF THE 110 stands here are on the banks of the river, which means there is nobody between you and the water. The caravan stands are big enough for your caravan, full tent and vehicle, and you should have some shade somewhere during the day. Just let the resort staff know what you're camping with ahead of time so they can allocate a spot that's right for you. And then just ask about the shade situation, so you know whether to pack your reflective sheet and gazebo.

Most stands have grass, and some even have a concrete slab on which your caravan will be perfectly level. Your

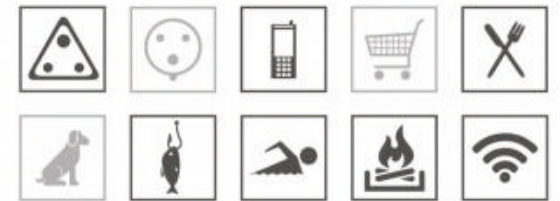




KEEP BUSY You can eat at the restaurant or have a drink at the bar, or watch the big game on the telly while the kids play in the pool. There's also WiFi but it's not free and you need to get a coupon at reception.



Briefly | Areena Riverside Resort



Campsite 110 stands, all with power, a bin and on grass. Some have a paving slab.

Ablution facilities 5 clean and neat ablution blocks with shared facilities.

Price Depending on the season and the number of campers, R190-R1 050. Maximum 6 people per site. There are special rates for pensioners.

Arrival and departure 14:30 and 10:30.

Contact 043 734 3055

areenaresort.com

info@areenaresort.com

Nearest town East London, 23 km.

Road condition Tar all the way.

GPS S32.883435 E28.061201

Drive & Camp says There's so much to do here that you and your family won't sit still for a moment... unless, of course, you want to.





DRIVE ALIVE The resort is inside a small game reserve and you can go on a guided trip using quads or horses, or simply drive yourself in your own car. Abby the giraffe is something of a local legend.

power point is an ordinary house socket (we recommend you bring an extension cord of at least 20 m) and you get a bin and a built-in braai and grid. There are two different types of braais – some are hip height and others are calf height. The latter work best for a campfire. You share your tap with your neighbours, but you don't have to walk more than a few steps to get water for coffee or wet a cloth.

Between the stands are many permanently parked caravans, complete with gardens and sliding glass doors. These are predominantly weekend homes for locals and there are also many full-time residents.

When it is bath time, you've got five ablution blocks scattered throughout the campsite. All of them have shared facilities and so you use whichever one



is open. However, the shower rooms and toilets have floor-to-ceiling walls, so you won't even know if you and Mrs Neighbour are next to each other.

The largest ablution block is near the gate of the caravan park and the other four are all smaller and more or less the same. They each have two toilets, two showers, a bathroom and one basin with a mirror. The facilities are modern, clean and tidy, but we think it will get overcrowded when the resort is busy. The washing-up facilities are on the outside.

You can buy wood from the reception office, but the bag we got was quite wet and took half a pack of fire lighters to get the fire going. Fortunately, we were able to find decent hardwood at the supermarket in the shopping complex, 6 km from Areena's gate, for the next night's campfire. Besides the restaurant and bar, the complex also has a liquor store, gas station and ATM.



YELLOW SANDS

Twice as nice

The Yellow Sands caravan park – a private campsite owned and managed by the Leppan family for the past 50 years – is a place where you have the best of two worlds: you camp on terraces, with the Kwelera River on one side and the sea on the other. So, regardless on which one of the three camp blocks you pitch camp, with the odd exception, you have an unobstructed view of the water.

The beach at Yellow Sands is a safe swimming beach that's pretty private, and because it is at the mouth of the Kwelera River, there are also many other activities, including fishing, snorkelling, surfing and rowing. Or simply take your book and chill on the beach.

Remember to bring the children's bikes, body boards, cricket bats and other beach toys. If you come here during the December holidays, the resort staff arrange holiday entertainment to keep the young crowd busy.

Bring your fishing gear as you can fish in the sea and the river, and the kids can also swim safely in the river. A heated pool has also recently been built at the top of the B block. There are a number of loungers and picnic tables if you prefer to spend the afternoon by the pool. And then there's also a playground and trampolines in the resort.

WITH THE SEA in front of you, the river to your right and your campfire burning hot, the campsite is the perfect place

to forget about all your worries.

The most sought-after stands are probably those of the B block, where you camp on a hill overlooking the Indian Ocean, or C block, where you have a nice view of the river. Some of the stands in A block don't have a view and you are also more exposed to the elements here. So, first see if you come right at one of the other two.

The stands are level, on grass and there are many shade trees. You get your own home-socket power point (remember an extension cord), bin and tap. There are lush plants growing between the stands, which not only give you privacy, but also protect against the wind.

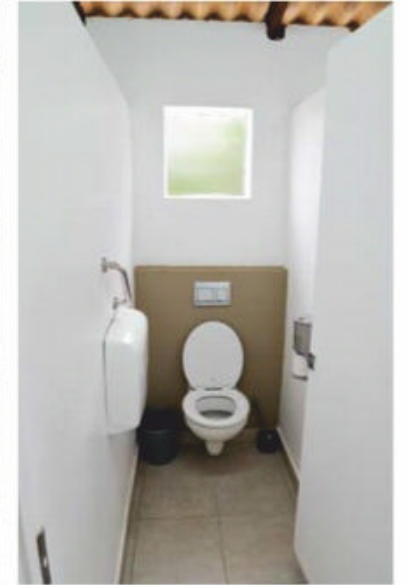
The stands with the best views of the sea are the ones that lie along the path



PICTURE PERFECT At Yellow Sands Caravan Park you camp with the ocean on one side and the Kwelera River on the other. You therefore have a view of a waterbody no matter where you pitch your tent.



CAMPING DESTINATION



THE OTHER POND If the weather is foul and the sea choppy, you can get your hair wet in the heated swimming pool. Be sure to pack a basket full of snacks because there are picnic tables here. The Yellow Sands Caravan Park is painfully neat, with everything in its place.





“ You may bring a small dog, but it will have to remain at your stand at all times ”



Briefly | Yellow Sands



Campsite Close to 200 stands divided into three blocks, mostly on grass and under shade trees with views of the sea, river or both.

Ablution facilities 3 ablution buildings (one in each block) with clean and modern amenities.

Price In the quiet season, R100 pppn or R150 if you camp on your own (R50 for children under 15). During Easter and school holidays, the rates are R150 and R100 respectively. From 1 December to 10 January, you pay R250 pn per site plus R200 pppn (R70 for children under 18). There's a minimum rate of R650 pn.

Arrival and departure 12:00 and 10:00.

Road condition The last 2 km is dirt road.

Contact 043 734 3034 info@yellows.co.za

Nearest town East London, 25 km.

GPS S32.903172 E28.074338

Drive & Camp says Pensioner couples can camp between 16 January and 31 October at a special rate of R1 795 per month.

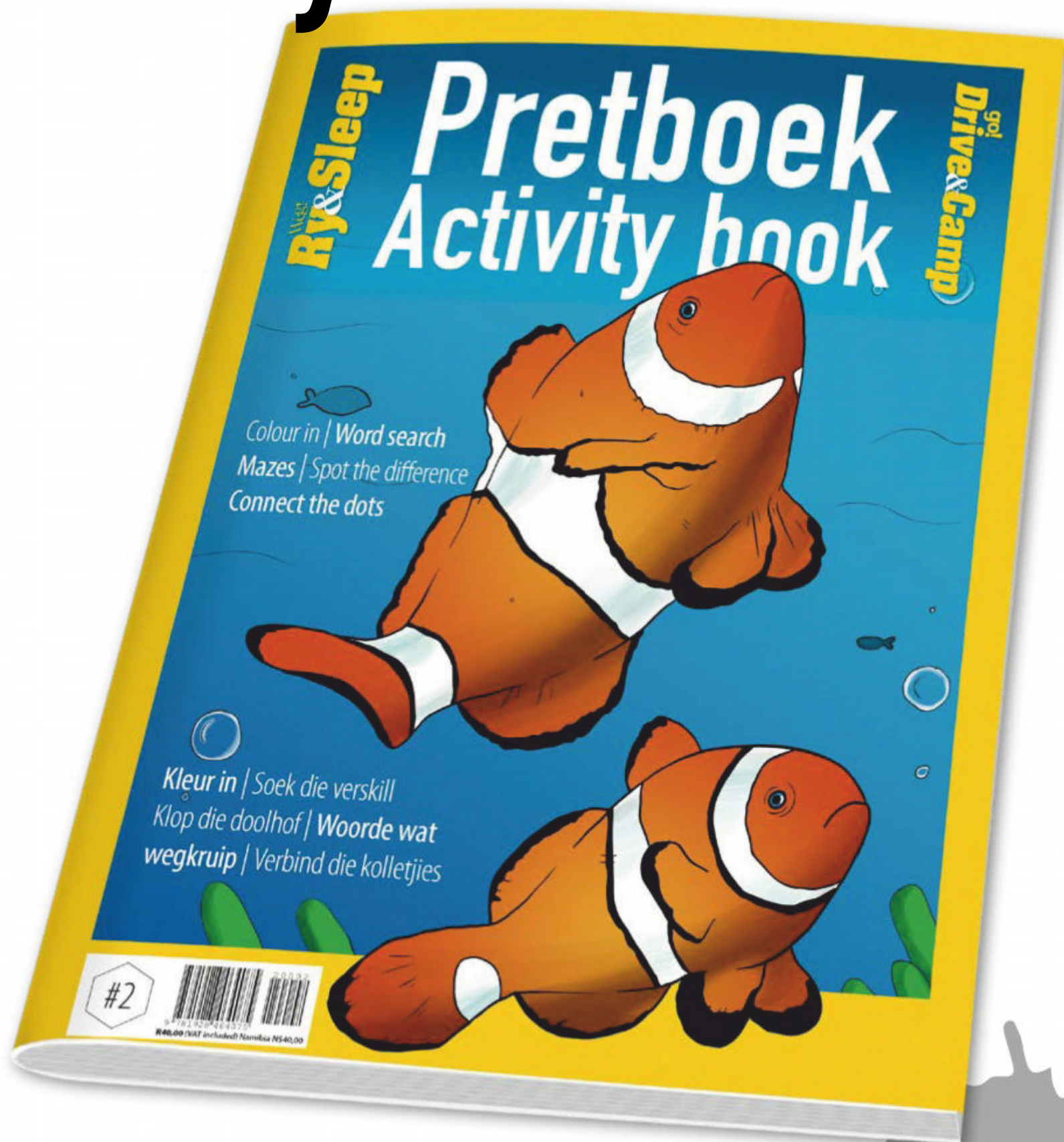
along the seafront. Follow the turn-off for B block and turn left at the seafront path. From there it is a short walk to the estuary.

The stands don't have built-in braais, but you can ask the reception desk to have the staff bring you a half-drum braai.

Each block has its own ablution facilities that vary in size, but no matter where you camp, the facilities are adequate. However, it can be far from your stand – a good 300-400 m walk. There's nothing to complain about here. The hot water sprays strong, there's plenty of storage space and hooks by the showers, and the facilities are serviced daily. There are also laundry and washing-up facilities.

As long as you don't come camping during the December holidays, you may bring a small dog, but it will have to remain at your stand at all times. And when you take it for a walk, it will need to be on a leash. Arrange this in advance with resort management.

Add some colour to your life...



Our newest colouring and activity book has just landed in time for the holidays – pick one up and keep your kids entertained for hours.

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shops

go!
Drive&Camp

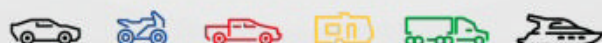
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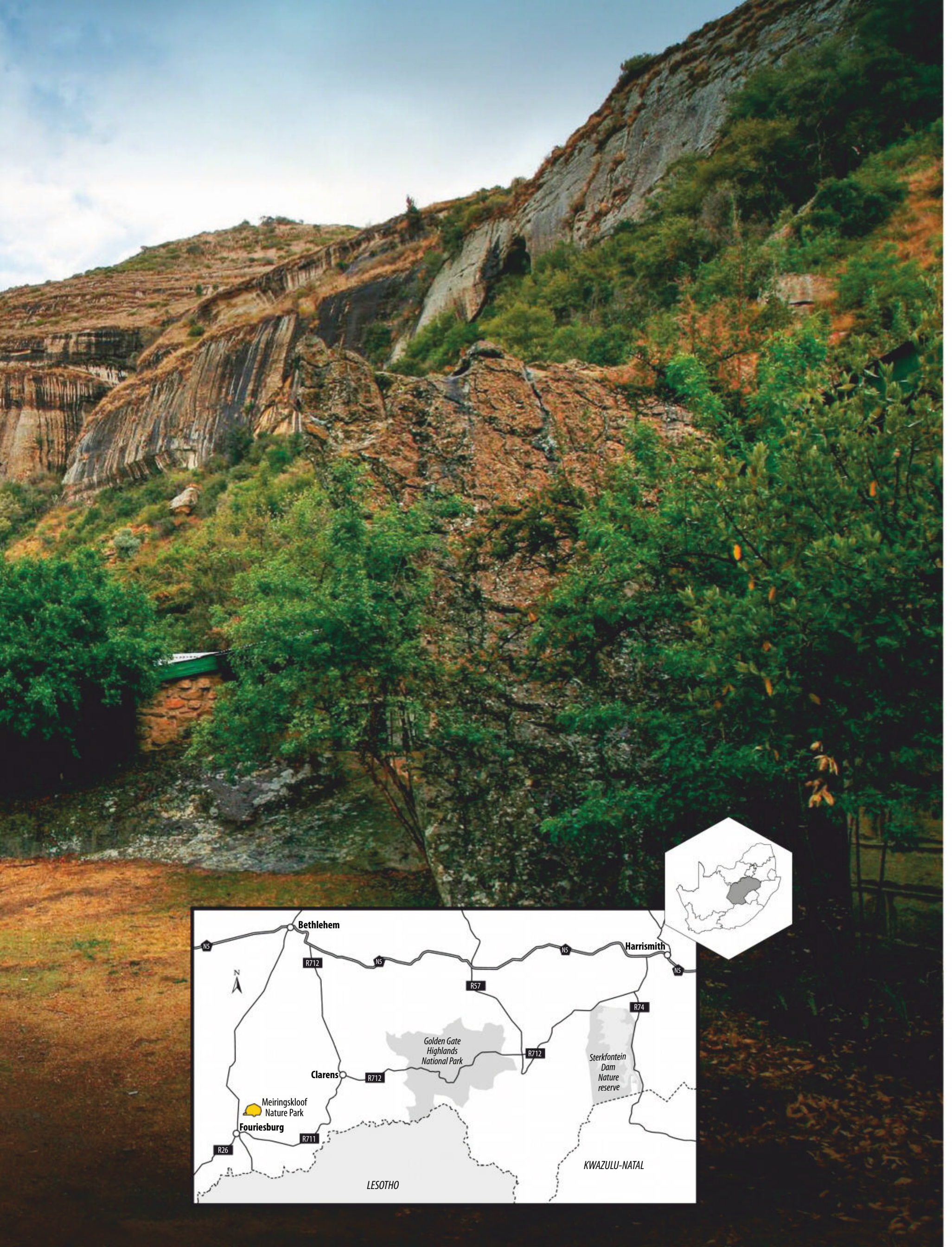
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Camp in an evergreen kloof

The Eastern Free State is a stunning area of South Africa, and halfway between Clarens and Ficksburg is the Meiringskloof Nature Park where you pitch camp in a sheltered gorge.

Words and photos **Cyril Kloppe**



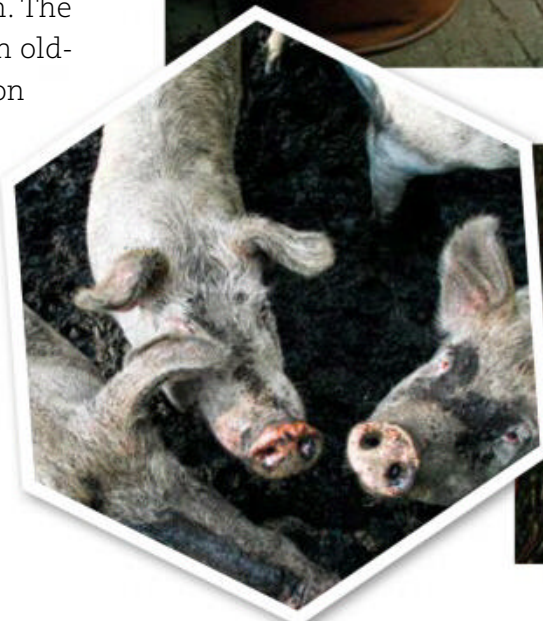


The Meiringskloof Nature Park is located on the outskirts of Fouriesburg about 12 km from the Lesotho border. It is a three-hour drive from Bloemfontein and four hours from Johannesburg.

The resort is a popular accommodation choice for people who travel to the Eastern Free State highlands to attend the annual Cherry Festival in Ficksburg and the Beer Festival in Clarens. And, since Fouriesburg is only 10 km from Lesotho's Caledonspoor border post, you can visit Afriski (100 km from here) or the Katse Dam (130 km) in one day.

WHEN ENTERING THE resort's gate, you first stop at reception to sign in. The building is painted pale yellow, with old-timey farm implements scattered on the outside. They'll check your booking and direct you to your stand. You don't get a key to the gate, but it is staffed day and night by a security guard who will let you in or out at any hour.

Next to the office building is a shop where you can buy basic provisions, but rather visit the town's butchery if you're looking



MEIRINGSKLOOF NATURE PARK

THIS IS AN ECOLOGICALLY SENSITIVE NATURE AREA.
THE TOTAL NUMBER OF VISITORS ARE CONTROLLED

ADVANCE BOOKING IS ADVISABLE

- LIMITED NUMBER OF DAY VISITORS PERMITTED
- DAY VISITORS: FROM 8:30 - 17:00 ONLY
- TRUCKS, BUSES AND MOTORCYCLES ONLY ALLOWED IN BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ENTRY AND USE OF FACILITIES AT OWN RISK

RESERVATIONS: CHALETs / CARAVAN SITES (059) 223 0067

DAY VISITORS (059) 223 0037

PRIVATE PROPERTY



“

Twenty stands under English oak, European poplar and South American tipu trees

”



SHADY Every stand has shade, some more than others. The ground is level so that your caravan needs no adjustment and electrical outlets are abundant. We discovered that Meiringskloof can get a bit clammy during the rainy season.



for braai meat. There's free WiFi around the office (no cellphone reception in the gorge) and a pigsty with half a dozen pigs who come to say hello while you WhatsApp your folks at home.

A dirt road turns immediately left at the office and leads you to stands 21 and 22 – the two most isolated stands in the resort. They are covered by weeping willows and they're also right next to a few chalets. You'll be far from the other campers as these stands are really meant for people attending a function at the resort and want to camp close to other members

of their group in the chalets.

As you drive past the shop, you'll find a pool and braai facilities for day visitors on your right. There's a lawn next to a swimming pool, toilet facilities and a jungle gym for kids. After the pool, the road turns left past stands 23, 24 and 25, and then turns right past the resort's ablution facilities before taking you to the actual campsite with its 20 stands under English oak, European poplar and South American tipu trees, while an indigenous buffalo thorn peeks out here and there.

Stands 19 and 20 are farthest from the

ablution block, but they have privacy. Stands 1, 2, 17 and 18 are close to the ablution block, nicely sheltered, but also right on the road that serves all the stands and chalets. If you don't mind people walking past your camp all day, these stands, especially number 17, are excellent choices.

Numbers 3 to 16 are quieter and range from small to large. For example, stand 7 has room for only one car and a small tent, while number 8 right next to it offers enough space for a large motorhome plus its tow car.

Each stand has a brick-built braai, its own domestic power socket and a bin that is regularly emptied by the resort's staff. Some stands have their own cold water tap while others have to share.

Stand 12 has a view of the brook that runs through the gorge, stands 9, 14 and 15 are less overgrown and receive the most sunlight while numbers 17 and 18 enjoy a lot of shade.

By the way, if you are travelling with a motorhome, the resort asks you to notify them in advance so that they can trim low-hanging branches to allow you to fit underneath.

THE ABLUTION BLOCK is split into two. On the men's side are six basins with mirrors on either side of a shoulder-high wall in the middle of the room. A skylight directly above the basins allows natural lighting throughout the day. There are seven shower cubicles to the left and right of the basins. Each has a soap tray, shower curtain and a small dressing area where you can hang clothes and a towel. There's also one bathroom in the righthand corner of the room. At the front of the room, to the left of the entrance, are three toilets and a urinal. There are power points and bins dotted around the room.

The women's facilities also have six basins with mirrors and a skylight in the middle of the room, but on either side are four showers and two bathrooms. There's also a makeup table with mirrors and power points where you can blow-dry your hair, a work surface where you can change a baby's nappy and five toilets, each with a bin.

Between the men's and women's facilities is a small laundry room with

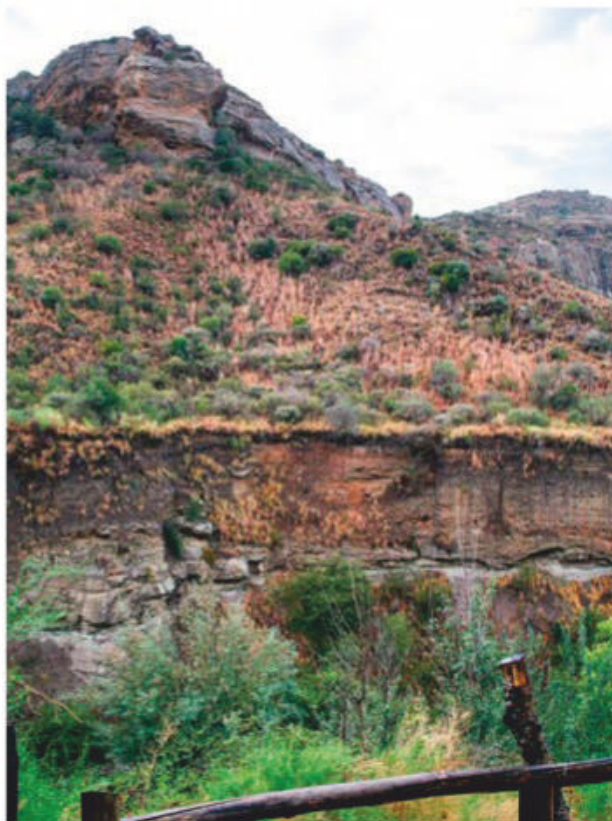


SANDSTONE The pool (above) provides welcome respite during the warmer months and there's a splash pool for toddlers. The ablution block (below) is kept tidy by the resort staff but during our visit the showers had a fair bit of mildew growing in them.





NATURE TRAILS One of the best things about Meiringskloof are the many paths that wind up and down the ravine. Keep an eye out for birds and small antelope.



Briefly | Meiringskloof Nature Park



Campsite 25 stands with power, water and braais under shady trees.

Ablution facilities 1 building kept clean and 1 smaller building next to the pool for campers and day visitors.

Price R110 pppn out of season (R50 per child) and R280 for two adults in peak season (R70 per child). Pensioners pay R80.

Contact 058 223 0067 meiringskloof.co.za admin@meiringskloofpark.co.za

Arrival and departure 14:00 and 10:00.

Road condition Tar to Fouriesburg, but not all the town's streets are tarred. Take the last street – Meiring Street – out of town, past Glen Skye Guest Farm and follow a good dirt road for 2 km to reception.

GPS S28.60419 E28.22441

Drive & Camp says This resort is for hikers and birders. Other than the pool, there isn't much for kids to do.

a work table, an ironing board and a sink. Outside the laundry room (on the men's side of the ablution block) is a laundry line.

The pool's ablution facilities have two toilets each for men and women, plus a basin and mirror on either side.

All the buildings are relatively neat, but it is obvious that the resort's golden age has passed. Everything works, but it's a little run down and no provision is made for disabled campers.

THE RESORT'S MAIN attractions are the hiking trails and cliffs in the gorge. The trails lead you through a forest where you can listen to birdsong and climb the cliffs to see the gorge from above. The resort's webpage has a list of birds for you to print out with the 140 species found here: among others, the paradise flycatcher, red-collared widowbird and jackal buzzard. The area outside Meiringskloof is also known for various 4x4 trails, farm stalls, farm tours, art galleries and places to eat.

Rocky heights

When it's time for a break from fishing and water-skiing, head to the Tierkloof 4x4 trail that leads from the banks of the Brandvlei Dam into the mountains.

Words and photos **Evan Naudé**

The Brandvlei Dam, just outside Rawsonville and Worcester, is a popular holiday destination for good reason. Here you camp next to the dam and there's water sports aplenty: bring your ski boat, fishing rods or even just a tube. But don't neglect your off-road rig the entire holiday. There's a challenging 4x4 trail right by the dam.

THE TRAIL

The 12 km circular Tierkloof 4x4 route starts near Tierkloof's

entrance gate. After paying your fee at the farmhouse, head back to the gate and look for a turn on the left. Lower your tyre pressure to 1,2 bar, as it will soon get steep with loose stones.

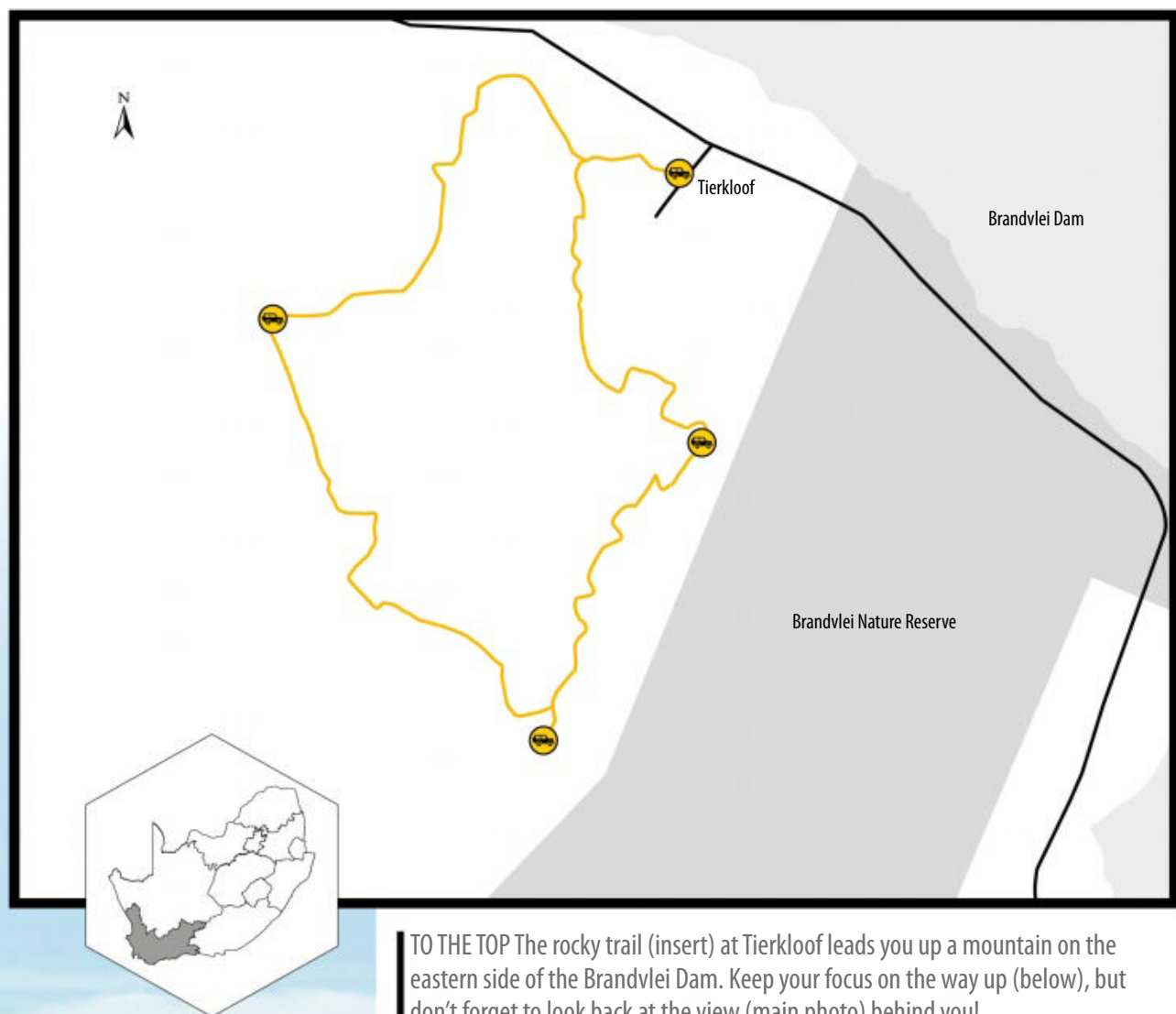
Keep left where the track forks, about 220 m after the start of the trail. Follow the twin-track as it begins to climb the mountain. Just 480 m along you reach a steep rock surface where you need to switch to low range and choose your line upward. Stay in low range for a while as after this incline the track is full of loose stones and leads you to a second ascent on a rock that's even steeper than



the first. Choose your line carefully here; an extra pair of eyes in front of the bakkie will help a lot. Pass on the left if you drive a standard double cab, because the rock's steep angle will get the back of a long vehicle stuck.

As you drive past a wooden white cross, take a moment to breathe deeply and take in the view of the dam behind you – the worst obstacles are now behind you. The rocky trail continues to climb for 1,4 km until you turn off to a lookout point on your left.

After the lookout, the trail turns right and you continue going up.



TO THE TOP The rocky trail (insert) at Tierkloof leads you up a mountain on the eastern side of the Brandvlei Dam. Keep your focus on the way up (below), but don't forget to look back at the view (main photo) behind you!





What you need to know



4x4/Low range/Diff lock? You need a 4x4 vehicle with good ground clearance and low range. A rear diff lock will come in handy now and again.

Maximum vehicles None.

Do I get a map? No, but the trail is easy to follow.

Will my vehicle get scratched? Here and there, you'll find a boulder or high rock face right by the road, but if you drive carefully, the odds of damage are low. However, take off your running boards.

Do I need to take a compressor? Yes.

Can we braai along the way? No, only at the campsite.

Can I turn around halfway? No, the route is one way only.

Is there cellphone signal? Yes.

AROUND THE ROUTE

Best time to go? The trail is open all year, but the climate is best in autumn and winter.

Can I take the family along? Yes, definitely.

Just for the day or the weekend? The route takes two to four hours to complete.

Are there ablution facilities? Only in the campsite at the start of the trail.

Directions Take Van Riebeeck Street out of Rawsonville and look out for the turnoff to Brandvlei Prison after 6 km. Turn right, Tierkloof's entrance is 3,6 km along.

GPS S33.704654, E19.396011

Cost? R180 per vehicle.

Contact 082 578 1853,

tierkloof4x4.com

DOWN THE BACK The descent on the back of the mountain (top right) is less intimidating with plenty of stunning views (bottom left and right). However, one last big obstacle (above) awaits those brave enough to tackle the sandy slope.

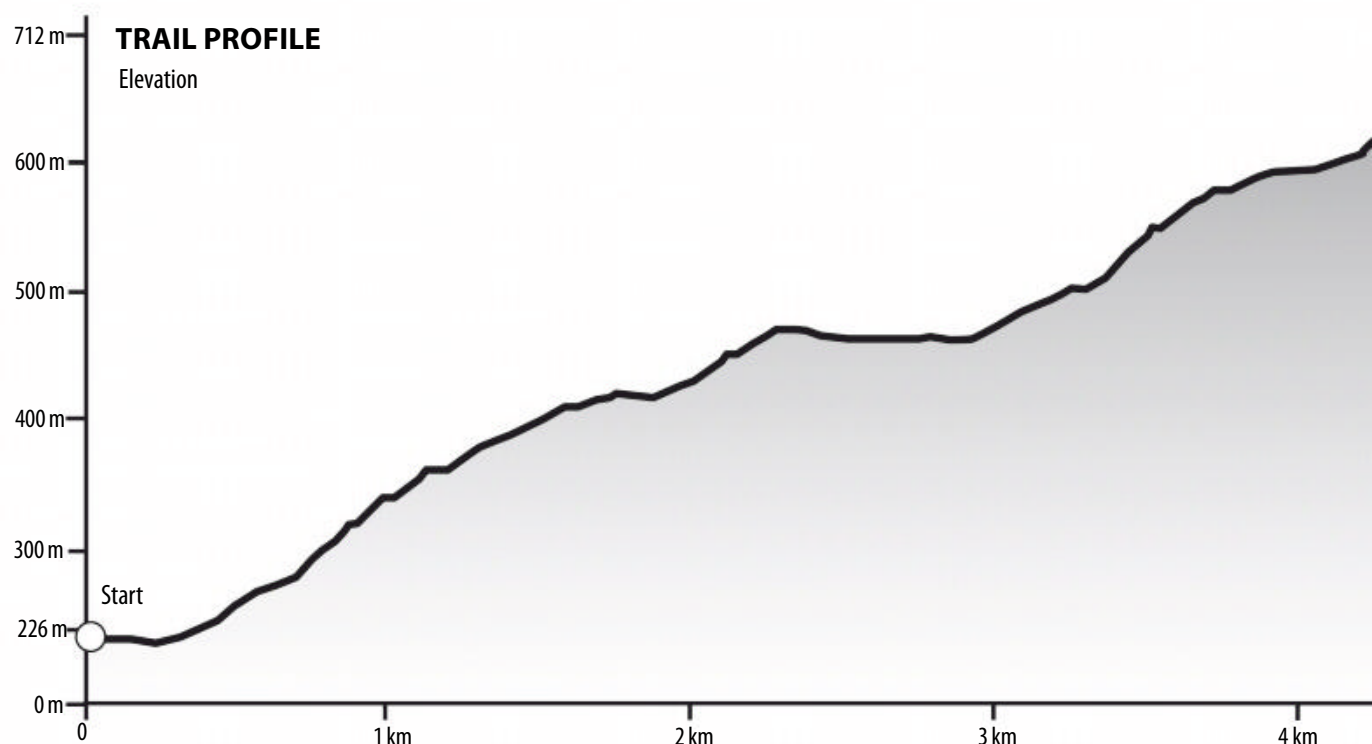
Before long, there are more steep slopes with loose stones and two or three tight turns where you have to wrap your vehicle carefully around the rocks on the track.

It's 2 km to a second lookout point where you finally reach the highest point on the trail, Bloukop, at 780 m. Here, the route turns northeast and slowly starts to descend downhill. Switch to low gear or use downhill control so that you don't sit on the brakes all the way down. You want to maintain a crawl speed going down, because the track is steep and full of rocks

that could damage your chassis if you start going too fast.

About 4 km from the lookout point and almost at the bottom of the mountain, you reach a scary donga in the road. If you have the right vehicle and the guts, tackle this obstacle by all means, otherwise keep left.

Past the donga, you reach a fork in the road: go right to a 300 m sandy track, while the left is the easier option. Both take you back to the main track that curls around the mountain to the right, back to where you started.

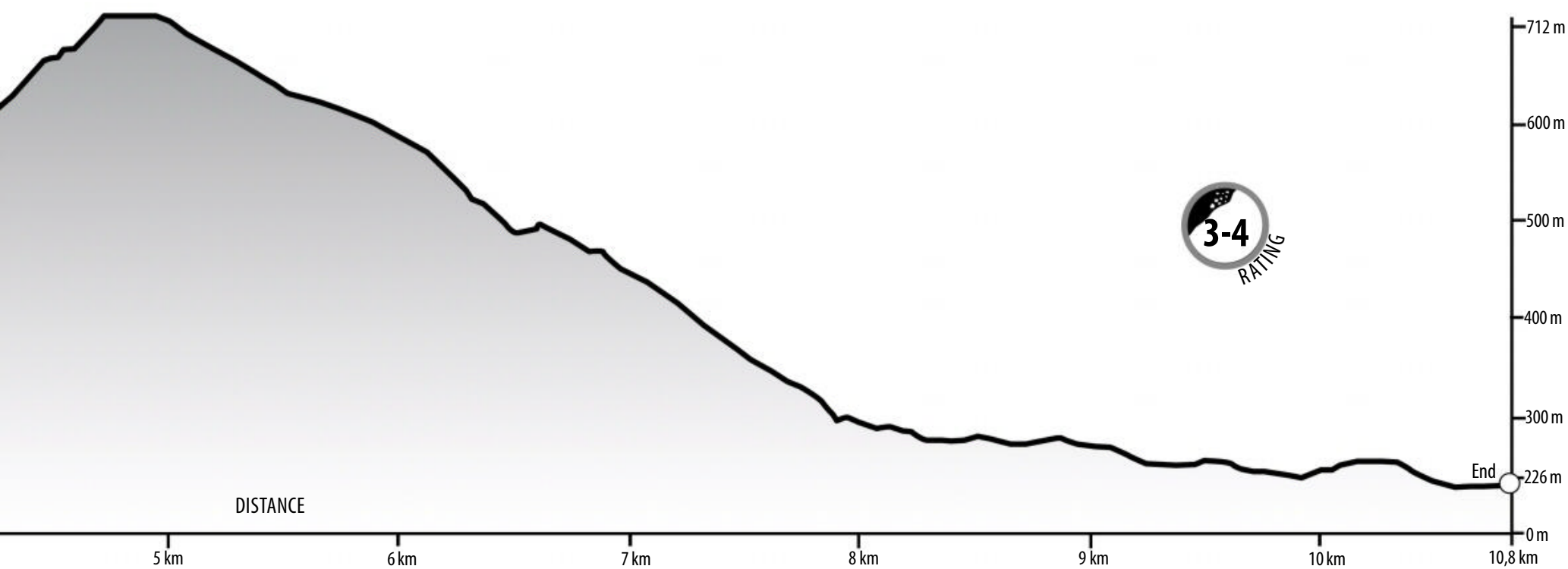




“

It's 2 km to a second lookout point where you finally reach the highest point on the trail, Bloukop, at 780 metres

”



NEW EVENT

WHERE THE BAKKIES ROAR!



The **Weg Ry & Sleep Bakkie Run** is the first and only event celebrating these iconic vehicles. Get your bakkie (any bakkie) and your teammates together and come join us in the Bushveld town Alldays for an epic family-oriented weekend of fun events: 4x4 obstacles, rallying, drag racing and everything in-between.

Bakkies of all shapes and sizes can enter and will compete in different classes. This means you, in your 4x2 Isuzu KB farm bakkie, have the same chance of winning as the guy in the Ranger Raptor. So, pick a theme, dress up and come kick back for a weekend of motoring fun.

WHERE? Alldays, Limpopo

WHEN? 24-27 April 2020

For more information visit quicket.co.za or send an email francois.malan@media24.com for details.

Weg!
Ry & Sleep

Africa's Premier Caravan Show

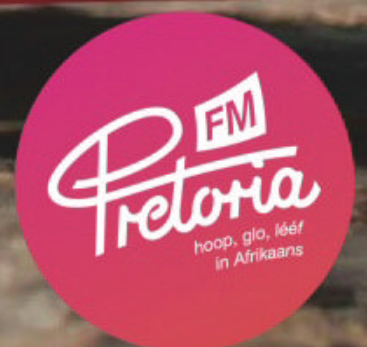
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Soul food in the Kruger

Tsendze is a bush camp in the Kruger National Park, and it's right at the top of her list of favourite camping destinations, says **Ronel Myburgh** of Boksburg.



“When I go camping with my husband, Johann, and our son Jeandré, I want to leave technology at home and just be in the bush to get away from the everyday rush. It's a time for family and to switch off. That's why I love Tsendze so much. We started camping about five years ago after previously staying in chalets. We first used a rented off-road caravan and then bought ourselves a Tentco tent about two years ago. And haven't looked back since then.

WHY IS TSENDZE SO SPECIAL TO YOU?

I'm in nature while cooking and listening to the bird sounds and the calls of foxes and hyenas. It is pure tranquility that gives me goose bumps every time. When I'm here, I return to a calmness that allows me to appreciate and respect nature all over again. This past December, we were at Tsendze for a full eight days and in March we went back for a long weekend. The incredible moments with all the wildlife we saw were an indescribable experience. There's also a large variety of birds in the campsite. [Next time, ask Rodgers to show you the resident owls. – Ed]



CONTACT

013 735 6535/6

sanparks.org

GPS S23.556463 E31.444141

WIN

Ronel wins a **Camp Cover** Camera bag worth R400.

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

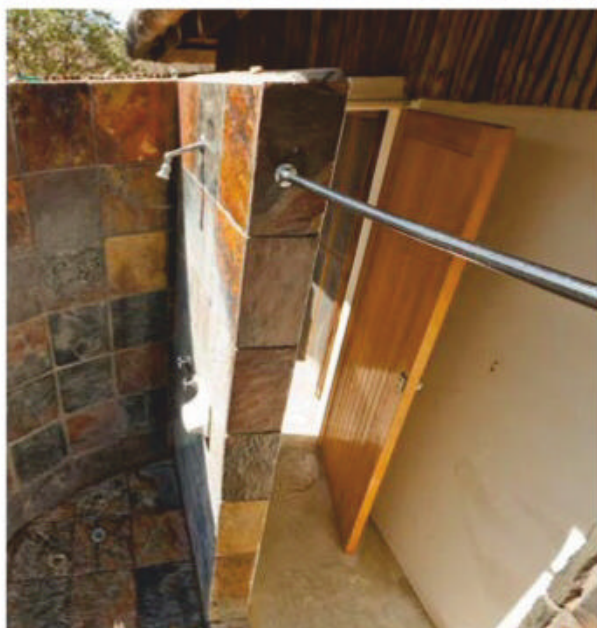
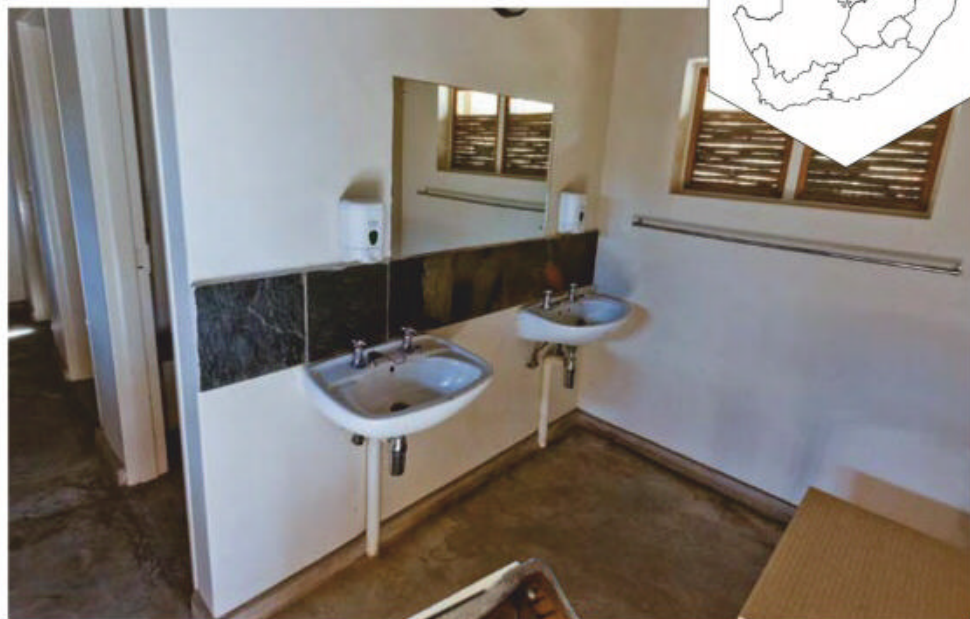
campcover.co.za

CAMP COVER

Because Jeandré is mentally impaired, we try to spend as much time as possible together as a family. He loves to zip around; when the alarm goes off early in the morning, he jumps in our 4x4 vehicle, ready to go on a game drive. It is wonderful to experience his excitement. He also loves water, so we take him to the pool at Mopani in the afternoons to cool off.

WHAT'S THE CAMPSITE LIKE?

We love that there's no electricity here. There are a lot of trees and you have a good chance of shade on your stand. You also get



a garbage bin and a planted steel braai. It's a bush camp so there's not much grass to speak of, but that doesn't detract from the lovely atmosphere.

AND THE ABLUTIONS?

There are two sets of ablution blocks next to each other. There are lights, but they only work at night. To the left and right of the door are two basins on each side, sharing a large mirror between the two. The shower cubicle has all the necessary storage and hanging space plus a shower curtain. The hot water is just warm enough to shower and doesn't make the gas geyser work unnecessarily. The outdoor showers

are private and lovely, too. Behind every bathroom, there are bath amenities for people in a wheelchair. Next to it is an elongated thatched roof with rows of sinks for dishes as well as two-plate gas stoves in case your stove might give up the ghost. There's also a communal freezer for your use.

WHAT ABOUT FOOD AND FUEL?

Tsendze doesn't have a shop or petrol station, but Mopani is around the corner, and there you can get everything. Also, remember to book a game drive at Mopani. They simply pick you up at Tsendze's gate.

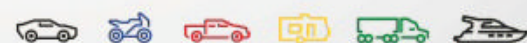
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Carfind.co.za



Reworked warrior

After it conquered much of Botswana, **Grahame McLeod** says that nothing can beat his old Toyota Hilux 4x4.

“ In **1989**, I came to Botswana to work as a teacher of agriculture. I first lived in Bobonong, close to the Tuli Block. Within weeks of my arrival, I bought a 4x2 Nissan bakkie. Since this region isn't sandy, I decided that this vehicle would suffice for getting out into the bundu for weekends without too many problems.

In **1993**, I decided to see more of this wild country and realised I would need to buy a 4x4 to go off-roading into the sandy wastes of the Kalahari. I did not have a vehicle in mind, but a few weeks later I saw the advert for a used **Toyota Hilux Single Cab 4x4**, with **70 000 km** on the clock, complete with **metal canopy, roof rack, bull bar and tow bar**.

The vehicle's owner, a Belgian, was working in Francistown at the time. I immediately went to view the vehicle and after staying overnight with his family, I took it for a test drive the following day, including a drive through the sandy bed of the nearby Ntshe River in low range 4x4.

The **Hilux** did not disappoint and passed the test with flying colours. By lunch time, my pocket was **22 000 Pula lighter (R29 700**, at the time), courtesy of a quickly arranged bank cheque. I knew that I had found a bargain so the thought of trying out other vehicles did not even occur to me.

The vehicle was equipped with retreads and within a few days I replaced all of them with new **Goodyear Wrangler 215R 15C**

tyres. The hassle of removing the spare wheel from under the chassis annoyed me and so I mounted the tyre, plus a second spare, inside the canopy. I also replaced the well worn shock absorbers with heavy-duty ones and replaced the bench seat with two comfortable single seats.

In **2009**, the **engine was given a complete overhaul**. Despite its good points, '**The Beast**' is thirsty and makes me pay heavily at the pumps. In the past, it used to drink around **11 ℓ/100 km** of petrol on the open road; nowadays, I'm lucky if the consumption is no worse than **14 ℓ/100 km**.

Two years ago, I considered selling the Beast and buying a new **Landcruiser Prado** – my dream vehicle. But such an SUV

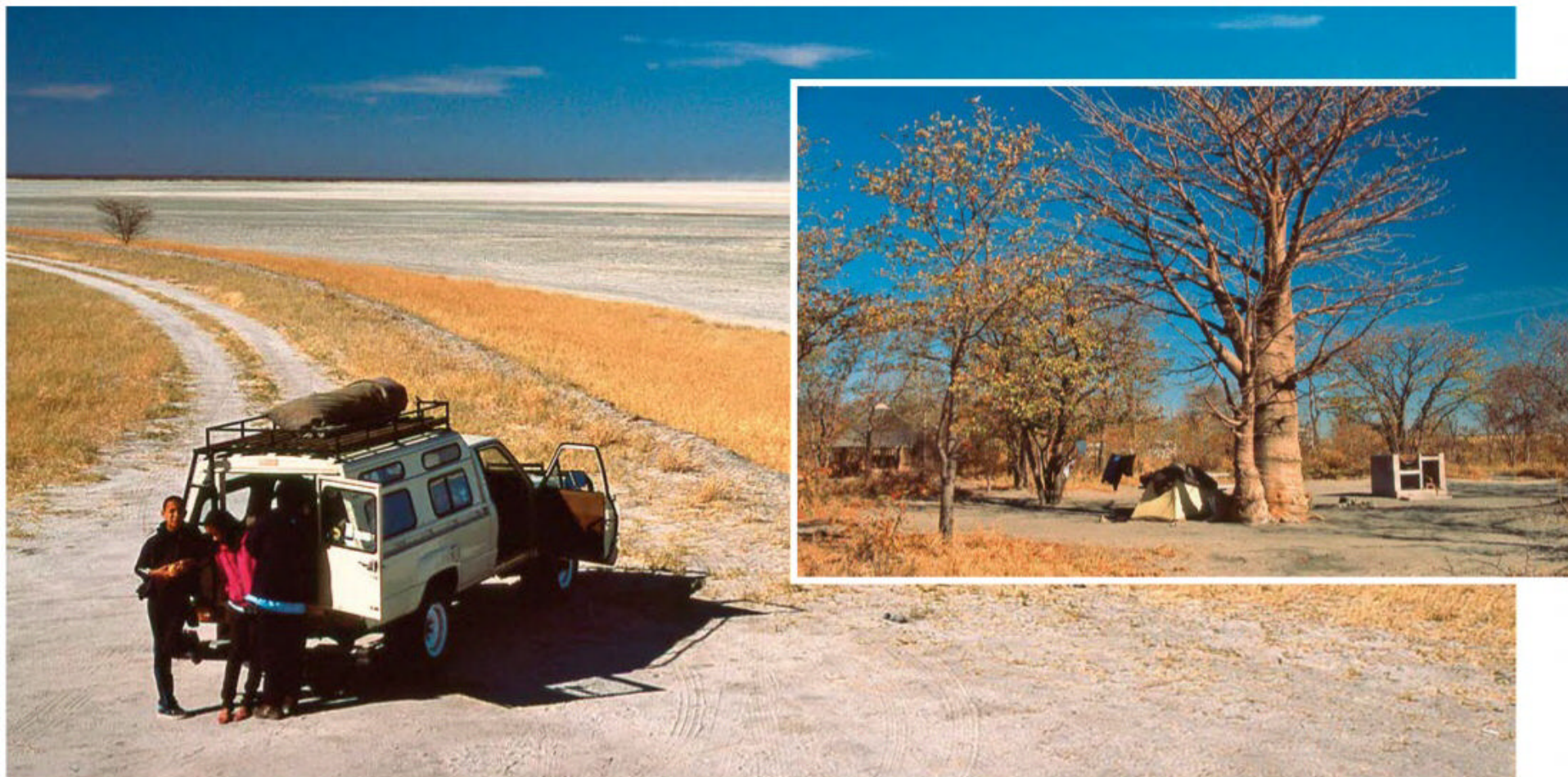


BEFORE



1989 TOYOTA HILUX SC 4X4





“

I knew that I had found a bargain so the thought of trying out other vehicles did not even occur to me

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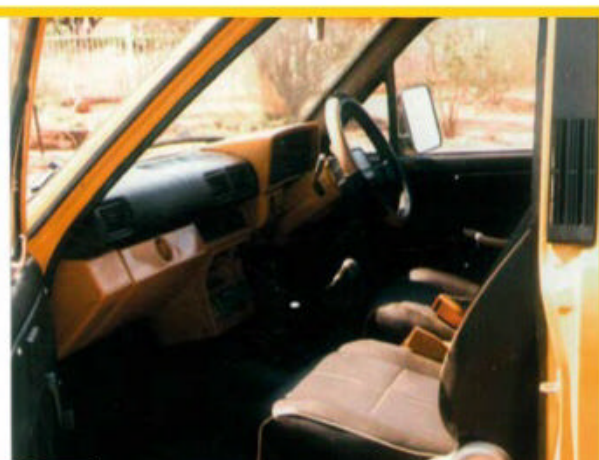
would have set me back by **420 000 Pula (R567 000)**. And I would not get more than **30 000 Pula (R41 000)** for my Hilux. I then decided to give it a new lease on life with a bit of a renovation. I gave the job to a local village mechanic.

After some panel beating, he sprayed it in a sandy yellow colour. The **load bin** was also **rubberised** and I bought a new set of rims that allowed me to fit tubeless tyres. **New lights** and a **front bumper** were bought along with several other spare parts. The total cost, including labour, was about **40 000 Pula (R54 000)**.

I still own the truck and the odometer reads **679 000kms!** This 4x4 has truly stood the test of time, has been reliable, and easily deals with anything that the Botswana bush can throw at it.

I've visited **Chobe, Moremi, Nxai Pan, and the Makgadikgadi Pans**. Destinations outside the country have included the **Matobo Hills** and **Hwange National Park** in Zimbabwe and the **Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park**. Namibia is also on my radar. But it's the **Makgadikgadi Pans** that is extra special to me – an endless canopy of blue sky and dazzling white salt flats extending to the distant horizon.

Not one month passes by without someone approaching me to buy it. And they get excited when they learn that the Beast has an original **4Y engine**. There's a high demand for vehicles like mine in Botswana since very few owners are willing to part with their trucks. But for now, it's not going to anyone else!



Show us your wheels

Send an email to drivecamp@gomag.co.za and tell us about what's in your garage.



Home, home on the range...

It would take almost two years and 2 000 hours, but nothing would stand in the way of Anton Alberts of Monte Vista in the Cape to build his own motorhome.



BEFORE AND AFTER The Iveco that caught Anton's eye started life as a panel van, but after many months of careful planning and troubleshooting, it has morphed into a fully-fledged overlanding motorhome.

Anton's journey with motorhome renovations runs like a golden thread through his life. At the age of 23, he paid the deposit on a 1969 Volkswagen Kombi with his first salary as a teacher. The pupils named his Kombi the Ambulance as it was painted red and white. Early on, a bed was added and the motorhome seed was planted.

Anton's next combi was a panel van, which he also converted to a motorhome. He used a modular concept to make packing easy. Then, Mitsubishi launched a motorhome and Anton persuaded his brother, Theo, to buy one with him.

They saw a business opportunity and later owned five vehicles they rented out to tourists. But things didn't go so smoothly and they ended up selling all but

one of the motorhomes. The one they kept may be reliable, but it's also clumsy and slow – and a pain to drive when it's windy, says Anton.

Its Achilles heel is that it's not a 4x4 vehicle. So, you're limited with the kind of destinations you can visit.

Time for plan B. Anton tells us more...

“I see an Iveco 4x4 panel van online and the price is right. It's a short wheel base model and has a Toyota Land Cruiser chassis with Nissan Patrol differentials. The transfer case is American, the NP205. It gives you a choice to engage the front and back differentials separately or together in 4x4 mode. There are, however, two problems: the vehicle is in Pretoria, and, as I would

discover, if I exceed 40 km/h, the steering wheel threatens to jerk out of my hands. Nevertheless, I decide to buy the Iveco, pay a deposit and fly back home.

The problem, of course, is how to get the Iveco to the Cape, because driving it here won't work. I am lucky: Carel van Niekerk of Piket Implements hears of my dilemma and says he has a spot on a truck that's heading south from there.

By now, I'm pretty broke and for the time being can't spend more money on the Iveco. This does, however, give me time to diagnose the fault on the internet.

I can't find a solution and approach Mic van Zyl of Ironman and Johann Viljoen (or Johann Tyres, as everyone calls him) of 1st Alignment Centre for advice. I even approached an expert on race car chassis,



and decided I knew enough now to piece together all the advice.

Basically, I have to change the front section of the chassis. Not only do I need to move the steering box, but also all the steering arms and their ball joints. Furthermore, 10 mm steel sheets must be welded to the ladder frame chassis and the front differential must be moved.

Steering issue solved!

AFTER SIX MONTHS of watching YouTube videos on the subject, I'm ready to tackle the interior. But first I set some principles I will adhere to.

Firstly, the weight: it must be kept as low as possible. All heavy items in the Iveco must also be mounted as low as possible. For example: instead of using

heavier steel ball bearing loading trays, use Teflon. It's light and incredibly strong. The interior finish of the motorhome will be aluminium and fiberglass.

Secondly, the interior space should be utilised efficiently.

Next, add proper insulation against cold and heat – this also means less noise in the motorhome. And a comfortable bed is a must – and one for each of my twin daughters, Anicia and Rencia. They've already left school, but sometimes they camp with us.

The layout must be such that everything is easily accessible, but also where it belongs – for example, kitchenware together and bedroom items where you sleep. I don't want to struggle with everything packed away in ammo boxes.



DIY GUY Anton had spent countless hours on YouTube before undertaking most of the work himself with a basic toolset in front of his garage.



SMART SOLUTIONS Throwaway bar countertops fashioned from fibreglass were the donor materials for much of the furniture Anton eventually put together for the motorhome. Rubber that guards against noise and vibration and rolls of insulation were used on the inside of the body panels to help regulate the cabin temperature were used in the build process. The cupboards were finished in a plastic that features a wood-grain finish.

Nothing is allowed to roll around while I drive, nor do I want rattles. For this, I line almost the entire interior with rubber before any of the panels are secured.

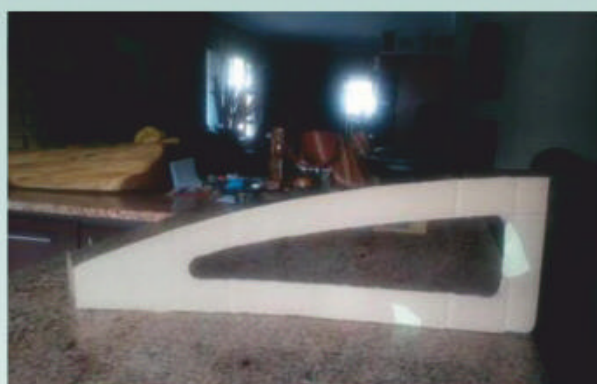
I install a toilet and shower for when we camp deep in the bush, and finally – just in case – the Iveco has to fit inside a shipping container.

THE FIRST STEP is to purchase a TIG welder so that I can weld aluminium. Again, YouTube teaches me. Coincidentally, the owner of my local hangout wants to get rid of his fibreglass bar countertops at the same time and I recognise this could become furniture for my new motorhome. I load it all and soon my backyard is littered with used countertops.

In terms of tools, I started the whole project with just basic equipment: a circular saw, a drill, a jigsaw and an angle grinder. I make my own table saw by mounting the circular saw upside down in a wooden box.

The whole building project is done in my driveway since the Iveco is too high to fit into my garage.

It's time to start with the insulation. The most important element is finding the right material, but I come across something that will work – it comes in 10 m rolls and is similar to the insulating material you see around air-con pipes. It's as light as a feather, keeps the Iveco cool and it's also effective for sound insulation. I eventually use three of these rolls for the six layers of insulation and manage to reduce the noise level at 100 km/h



PATTERN MAKER The metal work was completed at Unmet Precision Cutting, who made the custom panels for the Iveco from cardboard cutout that Anton created, but couldn't manufacture himself.

from 76 Db to 64 Db. This material goes everywhere; even the fridge and freezer each get a layer.

The interior walls and windows are next. I decide on glass because it is affordable and doesn't scratch as easily as Perspex windows. I custom make it so they can roll completely down out of the way.

On the side is a smaller window through which my camera's long lens fits.

I lift the floor by an inch because the space needs insulation, and it creates room for wiring – nicely out of sight. I use conduit pipe to guide the wires from one end to the other, and clearly mark where it goes so that I can easily fix outages.



TOP DOWN After trial and error, Anton found that the hydraulic lifting system he first used on the roof wasn't quite what he needed and eventually settled on four gas struts to help him lift it. There's also guaze fitted to keep out hungry and curious primates.





HOMEMADE The Iveco was too tall to fit into Anton's garage, so it had to be parked outside while the two-year build took place. Newspaper is the perfect collector of overspray.

Initially I choose wood for the cupboards, but quickly decide it won't work. I scrap the idea and switch to fibreglass. I use a special aluminium product for the walls and panels. It's a plastic layer between two aluminium layers. This material is also available in different colours. (It is a good idea to build sample cabinets of boxes and planks. I went camping with these to see if everything fitted and worked properly, and ended up changing a thing or two.) Although it looks as if the cabinets have a wood finish, they're those fibreglass countertops covered in a layer of plastic with a wood design.

The LED strips run all along the edges of the floor and roof. Don't attach it directly to the aluminium as I did. On a trip to Namibia, the rivets in the aluminium scoured the LEDs and interfered with their operation. First apply a rubber layer.

Two seats sit side by side next to the sliding door. Initially, I made them too high but then the twins complained their feet weren't touching the ground.

THE FIRST ITEMS you need at a campsite are the camping table and chairs, which is why I set up a shelf above the driver and passenger for the chairs. Both my camping tables as well as a smaller one is stored by the passenger door. The induction plate



got its own cupboard at the tail of the Iveco with its own door.

For the solar panels, inverters and other electrical equipment, I needed to ask for advice again. Jos Hartog of HBC Systems explained what to do. The two 105 Ah deep-cycle batteries are now under the front seats – I had to adjust their bases anyway – and are connected to 300 W of rooftop solar panels.

The seats themselves I found on the

internet. They're the ones you can swing around to sit in your 'living room'. By the way, while adjusting the seat bases, I also moved them slightly farther apart so that my 40 l freezer could fit into the space between them. It was quite a thing as the handbrake and gear lever changing mechanism also had to move. It is also a good place for heavy goods such as the batteries, which should be as close as possible to the front wheels.



SPECIAL COATING Anton's Iveco received a special layer of paint called Raptor coating – essentially more scuff and rust resistant than ordinary paint.



The Australian Projecta MPPT regulator monitors matters here. With this system you are completely self-sufficient in terms of electricity.

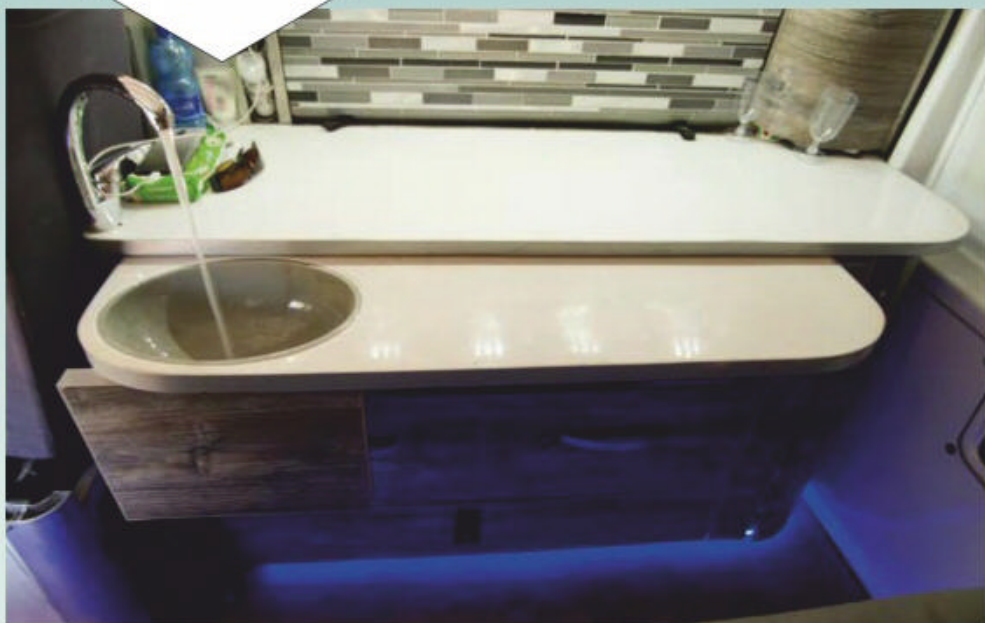
My water-heating system is unique. The electric 10 l geyser with its temperature regulator plugs into the inverter and can work while driving – when you arrive at the campsite you can connect it to the national grid. The water heats quickly; you can shower within 15 minutes. When you

open the hot-water tap, the temperature's just right and you can shower using only 4 l of water. The water tanks are two transparent 25 l plastic containers. They're by the back door and you can see how much water is left. They're placed in such a way that you can easily fill them from a river.

The floor at the sliding door and in front of the second row of seats is also a concealed shower floor. A shower curtain

keeps things private and you can stretch it from side to side behind the front seats to make the whole interior private. The cassette toilet pulls out from under the farthest seat.

The roof had to come off for the pop-up roof, and here I also learnt a lesson. I decided to lift the roof hydraulically, but I made a mistake somewhere and the roof shot off the Iveco like a rocket. Now it's back to the conventional way and I use



BUSHWHACKER The finished product took two years, but as the photographs show, all the dedication and hard work Anton threw into his project has paid dividends – especially considering how fabulous the finished product is.



four gas struts to get the job done. The roof can open to any side so it can ‘follow’ the sun.

I didn’t want to use mesh between the roof and hull of the Iveco as I love the open feel. But monkeys at Augrabies and baboons at Citrusdal changed my mind. Now I have one-way gauze material that’s actually used for blinds. So, I still have my privacy and have fresh air passing through to the interior.

The Iveco has two 75 ℓ diesel tanks that can be refilled from both sides. I haven’t had the courage to fill both at the same time, because I shudder to think how much it will cost. You also don’t want to carry unnecessary weight – except, of course, when you’re headed for somewhere remote.

WHEN YOU TACKLE such a project, there

are essential services you will need. Almost all of my metal bending was done at Unmet in Beaconsvale – I took cardboard cutouts as templates.

An upholsterer is needed for the seats, because you want them to look good. Rowan Arendse of RA Upholsterers deserves a medal for his patience.

Thanks to the great service from Barkocel (importers of U-pol) for the Raptor coating. Without the technical guidance Theo Mullins provided, I would have been lost. (Raptor is a new way to spray paint your vehicle – unlike ordinary spray paint, which scratches more easily, the Raptor coating is scratch proof and rust resistant.) Gideon Chinyama at Super Auto Paints helped mix the paint.

You’re not supposed to mix the Raptor paint with metallic paint, because you’ll battle to get the colour 100% right. Save

yourself a lot of trouble and choose a flat shade instead.

TODAY, I’M PLEASED with the layout and the Iveco handles well. Renda no longer has to help push start the vehicle as she did the Ambulance on our honeymoon.

Remember, such a project comes at a price. Renda was a work widow for almost two years, I had to perform all the labour on the Iveco after hours... and you may as well cancel all your weekends off.

Check out my YouTube video – search for overlandervanman – where you can follow the process.





WIN

Anton wins a **Camp Cover Bundu bag** worth R400. This multi-purpose bag is made in a way that you could use it as a first-aid kit or weekender bag. Check Camp Cover's range of protective covers on the website campcover.co.za.

CAMP COVER
www.campcover.co.za



Lesotho's *mystical* Mapoka

There's a place entirely unique, remote and mystical in the Lesotho mountains. **Clive George** from Durban tells us about his trip to Mapoka Camp.

In September 2017, Clive, his son Craig, and a group of friends completed a hectic 4x4 adventure from Ongeluk Nek in the south of Lesotho to Sani Pass in the east, via the Senqunyane River and the Katse Dam.

Seeing as that trip was almost two years ago, it was time for them to pay another visit to the great Mountain Kingdom... but this time with less travelling and more relaxation, says Clive.

“Our plan was to spend the first night at the top of Sani Pass, and then the second and third nights at Chalets in the Sky in the magnificent Khubelu Valley, or hopefully, camp at Hamapoka Camp, commonly referred to as Mapoka camp, also in the Khubelu Valley.

So, on a Friday morning in June last year, we left Durban and travelled to Sani Pass via Underberg. From the beginning of the pass to the South African

border post, the road was under construction and therefore in good condition, presumably in preparation for it to be tarred. The stamping of our passports was a mere formality and we sped through the border without incident.

We travelled up the remainder of the famous Sani Pass to the Lesotho border post, admiring the breathtaking views, as we engaged low range most of the time and diff lock where the road became steep and rocky – particularly around hairpin bends. This section of the pass was similar to what it was like in the old days and therefore presented much more of a 4x4 challenge, since it did not appear as if the upper section of the road had been maintained.

Again, we sailed through the Lesotho customs – the officials were courteous and polite. And, after a comfortable sleep at the clean and reasonably priced Sani Stone Lodge (situated 8 km from the border and signposted on the left at the white church), we headed



MORE MOUNTAINS Lesotho will certainly not disappoint if you're looking for adventure at high altitude, and the remoteness of the Mapoka campsite and rough roads had Clive and Craig George's hearts racing as they drove deeper into the Mountain Kingdom.



“

This section of the pass was similar to what it was like in the old days and therefore presented much more of a 4x4 challenge

”





to the small town of Mokhotlong along the main tar road on Saturday morning.

It took us about an hour to get to Mokhotlong, which is nestled in the mountains in the middle of nowhere, and where a jubilant, carnival-like atmosphere prevailed. The local people were friendly and helpful and assisted us in purchasing our much-needed cooking gas, Maluti beers and ice – the last two from a fully stocked Shoprite store.

After our brief shopping spree, we got back onto the main tarred highway in a northwesterly direction to Chalets in the Sky in the Khubelu Valley. Then, after travelling for about another hour we turned right off the main road onto a dirt road

winding its way through the valley and its river below.

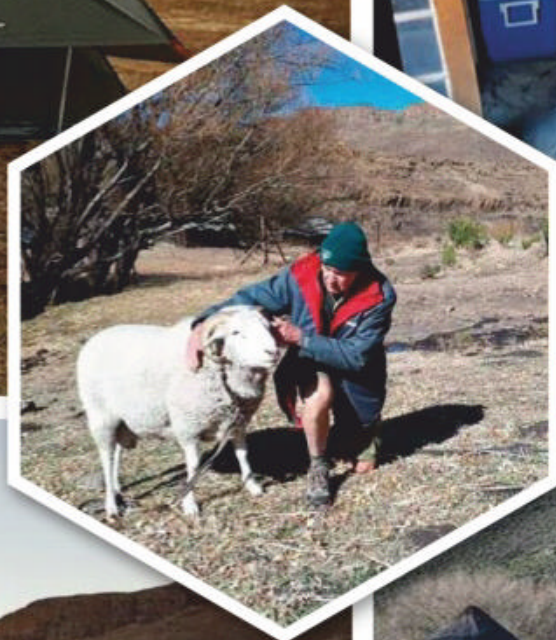
The condition of this road is good until it meets the bridle path in the valley where low range and diff lock were again required. The bridle path crosses the scenic Khubelu River no less than seven times, making this section of the road a spectacular and interesting 4x4 experience.

At about 13:00 we eventually arrived at the picturesque Chalets in the Sky, where there's a conference centre and several stone and thatched rondavels overlooking the Khubelu Valley. Alice and Claudia, the camp manager and supervisor were there to welcome us and to inform us that only one self-catering chalet was available, since

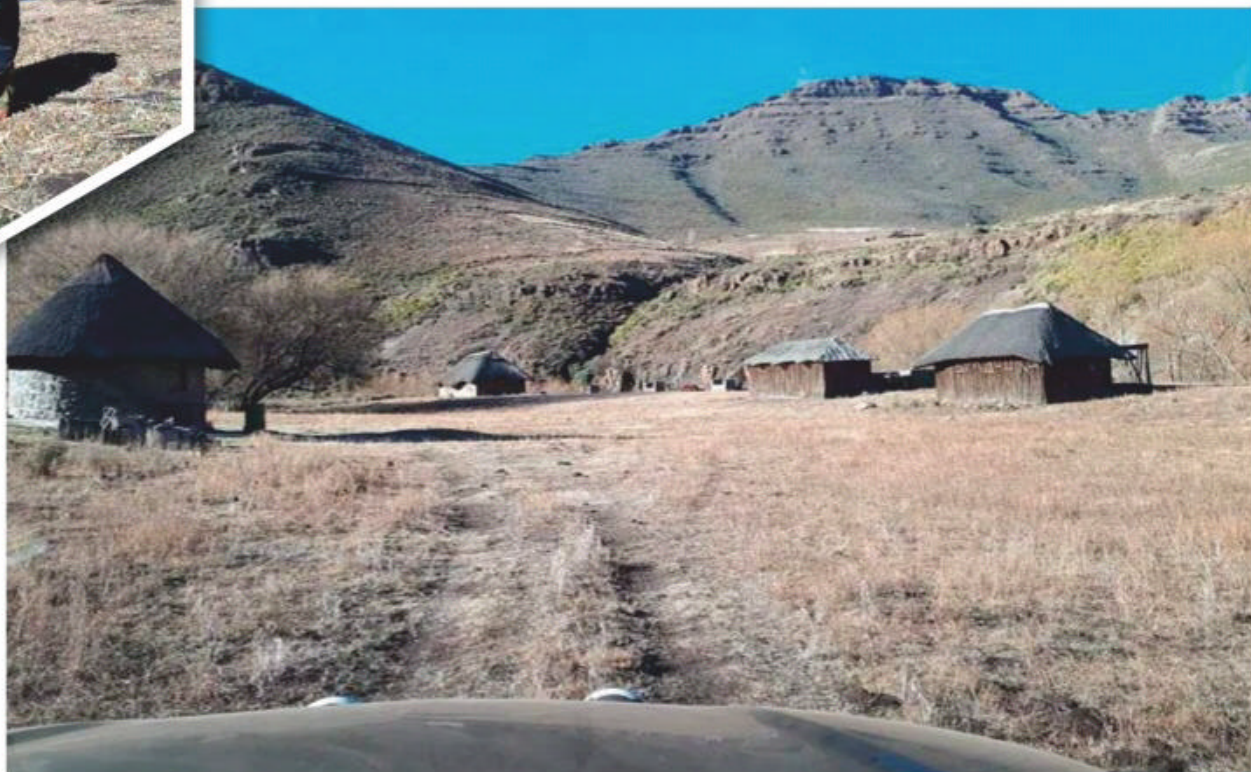
the rest of the chalets were occupied by employees of the Letšeng diamond mine.

As we would have preferred more than one chalet, we asked Claudia if the campsite was still in operation. Much to our surprise, she confirmed that it was, at R80 per day per stand. There was no water, she said, but this was no problem as we had brought along our own water.

And, as we had thought we might camp at Mapoka, we had our RV 5 Oz tent strapped on our roof rack, 30 l of water and half a bakkie load of wood, we proceeded along the bridle path leading to Mapoka Camp with some trepidation. Claudia told us that the security guard, Frank, stays at the camp and would be there to take care of us.



READY TO ROLL For their last night at Mapoka, Clive and Craig slept in the stone communal room, and packed their tent in their Mitsubishi Triton so as to be able to hit the road early the next morning (top). The bells hanging around the necks of sheep grazing in the hills nearby could be heard late into the night (inset).



AND SO, OUR ADVENTURE began as we headed along the precarious bridle path leading to the remote Mapoka Camp. A section of the road was destroyed by miners excavating for diamonds, but fortunately, one of the grader drivers helped us find our way back to the bridle path. Even though we were back on the trail, by this point merely a faint twin-track path, we were unsure if we were still following the right road.

The twin-track bush path wound its way up the mountain slope and past local villages where we got directions from the locals. Most of them knew where Mapoka Camp was and confirmed that we were on the right track. We had to keep checking

as the road kept branching off in various places, making it extremely difficult for us to know which direction to take. We drove the majority of this section of the trip in low range as the road was fairly steep and rocky, requiring us to engage diff lock from time to time.

The road seemed to be never-ending, which increased our anxiety to no end. Then at about 15:00 on Saturday afternoon, out of the blue and just when our adrenalin levels were at their highest, our Mitsubishi Triton rounded a bend and we saw the mystical Mapoka Camp in the otherwise deserted Khubelu Valley below us.

What a magnificent sight! The camp is on the Khubelu River and is surrounded

by steep rocky cliffs. We could see Frank waiting for us as we were about to cross the Khubelu River for the umpteenth time. And this would be our final hurdle: a 50 m river crossing.

With Frank guiding us with hand signals from the opposite side of the river, Craig slowly launched the vehicle into the water, and it immediately felt as if we were sinking into the soft riverbed. Fearful that we'd get stuck, and having learnt from previous experience, Craig accelerated and the Triton sailed through the river to the other side without incident.

We had finally arrived at the mystical Mapoka Camp nestled in the Khubelu River Valley. I might just add, that although we

were in a valley, the altitude ‘down there’ was 2 250 m.

An incredible sense of solitude and peace reigned as we eagerly carried out a recce of the deserted camp. There were four shower cubicles (no water), four long-drop toilets, several braai areas, Frank’s abode, a communal thatched function room/dormitory and a disused hot-water boiler room.

WHILE EXCHANGING PLEASANTRIES

with Frank – even though he could not speak much English, we could understand one another – we learnt that he had been working at Mapoka Camp as the camp security guard for 19 years. And, in his imperfect English, he told us that he had “fork-all money and fork-all torch”.

We had plenty provisions, so we shared some of our food and gave him a couple of Maluti beer quarts.

Seeing as we had our Oz tent, we decided against staying in the stone communal room for the first night and duly erected our tent facing the river. We had plenty of firewood, briquettes and water that we’d brought with us and used the river water for washing ourselves and our dirty dishes.

We were alone in the campsite and the only sounds we could hear were the peaceful ringing of sheep’s bells as they grazed on the slopes of the surrounding mountains. And so, as we lit our camp fire and enjoyed a few welcome Maluti beers with our braai, Craig and I both agreed that this was tranquillity and exclusivity in paradise.

We were exhausted after that long six-hour drive from the top of Sani Pass to Makopa (Craig did most of the driving), so we retired to bed only to be woken shortly afterwards by the thunderous sound of Lesotho cattle bells racing past our campsite. The sound then continued across the valley until it faded, much to our relief, and we fell asleep.

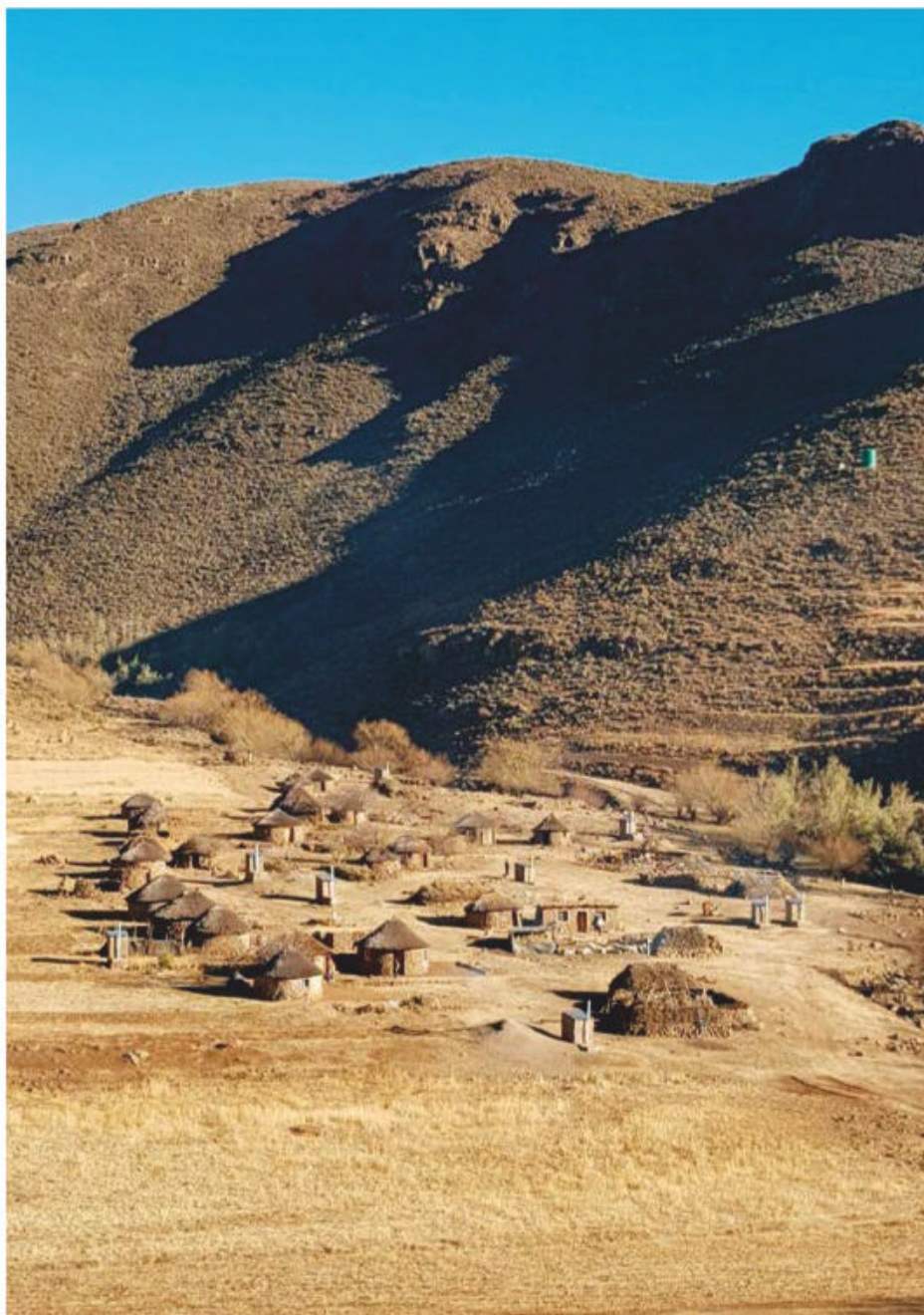
It must have been after midnight when the frightful sound returned, waking us with a jolt. Craig went outside to investigate what the cause was, and was relieved to see Frank keeping a watchful eye on our camp.

Fortunately, the eerie sounds faded and we could go back to sleep. Frank told us the next morning that the scary sounds

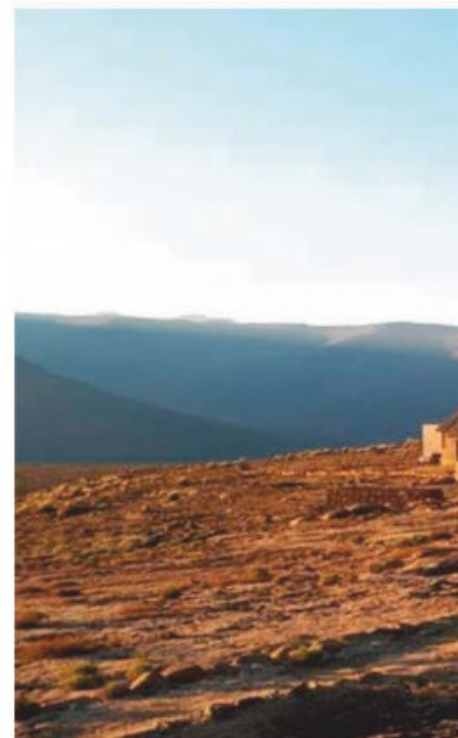
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Even though we were back on the trail, by this point merely a faint twin-track path, we were unsure if we were still following the right road

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ROLLING HILL AND REMOTE VILLAGES
The road to Mapoka had Clive and Craig stopping many times to ask for directions from locals, and they criss-crossed the Khubelu River many times.





Clive wins a Camp Cover Bundu Bag worth R400. This multipurpose bag is so versatile that it could house lots of nifty first-aid items or double as a weekend case. Check out Camp Cover's range on their website campcover.co.za.



WIN



came from harmless locals travelling to a tavern on horseback – the horses had been fitted with cattle bells.

SUNDAY WAS OUR LAST day at Mapoka camp, so we spent the day on the banks of the Khubelu River, which had iced up during the night as the temperature dropped to -7 °C. Then, after a few hours relaxing, Craig and I went for an exhilarating run around the perimeter of the camp.

We wanted to get an early start on Monday morning, so I suggested to Craig that we move into the stone cottage for our last night. That meant we could pack the Triton in advance and secure the Oz tent on the bakkie's roof rack. We also made room on the back seat for Frank as he was complaining of chest pains and needed to see a doctor in the nearby town of Mapholaneng.

Our plan worked well and we moved our camp stretchers and belongings into the communal stone cottage and enjoyed another braai around the campfire outside

the cottage washed down by a few more Maluti beers. We had a comfortable sleep in the communal cottage without further incident and we left at about 08:00 on Monday morning.

Frank was our guide and directed us along a shortcut to the diamond mine, bypassing Chalets in the Sky.

We dropped Frank off at the small town of Mapholaneng and said our goodbyes. Then it was back on tar to Sani Pass, and we got to Durban at 15:00.

WE LEARNT TWO VALUABLE lessons on this trip: take two vehicles (regardless of the additional costs) in case of mechanical breakdowns and don't forget (as we did) the Tracks for Africa map.

This short excursion ranks as one of our favourite trips to Lesotho. A trip in which we were able to enjoy a challenging off-road experience amid the beauty, splendour and solitude of the remote Mapoka Camp and Khubelu Valley – in absolute safety.

One for the memory banks, and a trip to be repeated.



The fish in your life



BUSH 'N BUCK PRIVATE GAME FARM

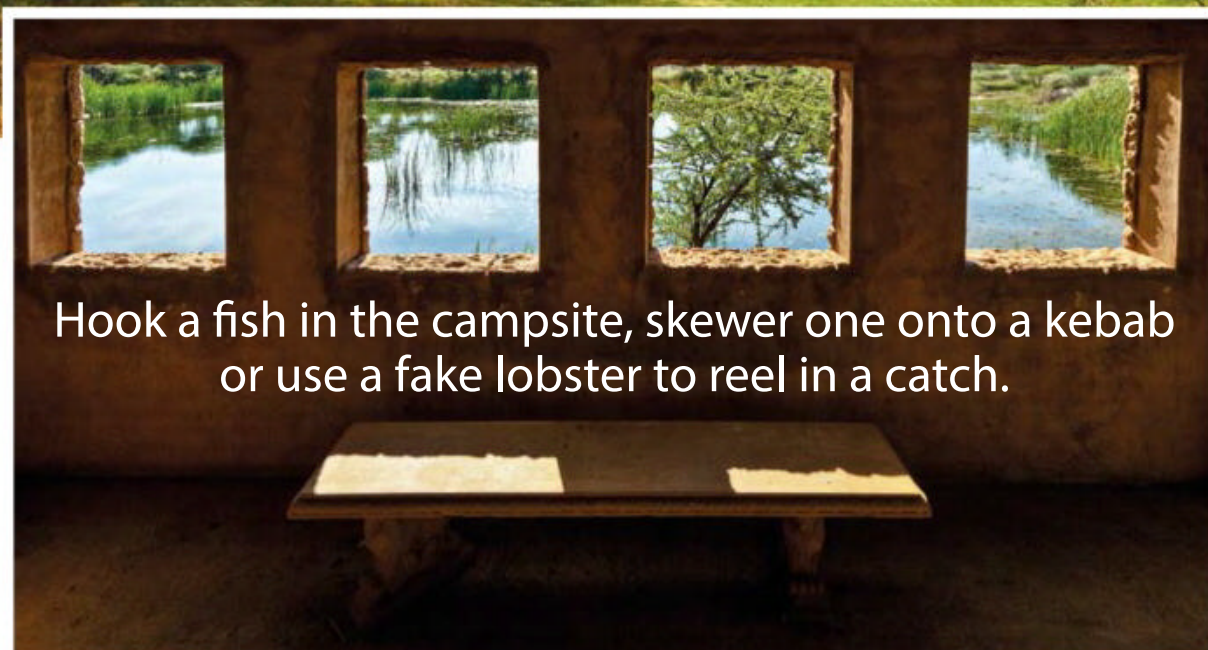
PEACE FOR ALL

Bush 'n Buck is a campsite just outside Brits. The stands on this lovely piece of bushveld are laid out on a green grass carpet on both sides of two straight roads.

Each stand has its own tap – some of them marked as drinking water while others aren't potable. The stands are clearly numbered next to a light on a high pole, and are demarcated with knee-high stumps. Each has a loose steel braai and bin, and the lawn is perfectly manicured.

The trees aren't too big, but stand 11 has a decent shade tree.

Four ablution blocks are spread throughout the campsite – no matter where you camp, you're always within walking distance of the facilities. (There are no divisions between men and women here; all four ablution buildings consist of a number of private family bathrooms – four of them have baths and the rest showers.) Each bathroom has its own wood-fired boiler providing hot water and there's also a washing-up area next to each.



Hook a fish in the campsite, skewer one onto a kebab or use a fake lobster to reel in a catch.

The nine private stands with their own bathroom facilities are brand new and at the far end of the campsite.

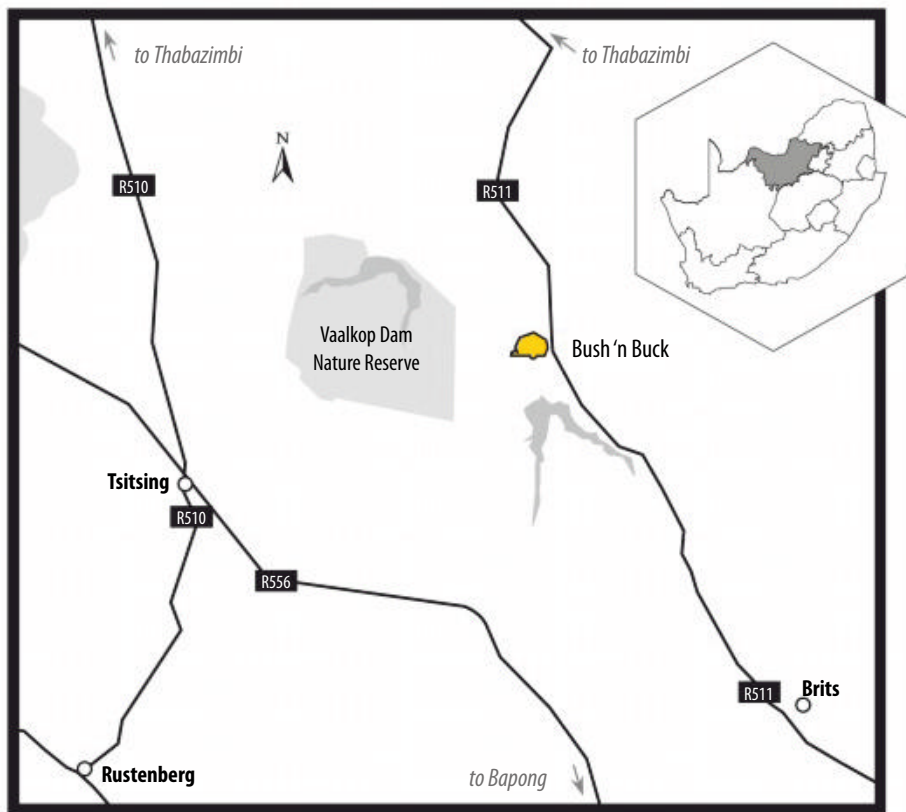
The resort has an overall driving ban. You may drive to your stand with your car, but nothing more – no game drives either. Next to the reception building is a building full of golf carts. If you want to drive around, you must rent one of these buggies. It costs R125 per hour for a two-seater and R225 for one with four seats – book at reception.

The 120 ha farm has a lot of buck wandering around, and you can go on a game drive between 07:00 and 19:00. You could see kudu, red hartebeest and zebras, or maybe blue wildebeest or impala... and, who knows, maybe even a Mozambique spitting cobra or two.

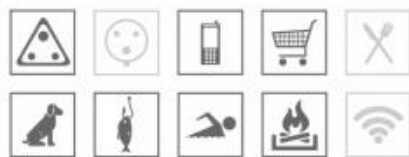
There's a dam with a bird hide and this is where you can see if you can catch one of three types of fish: black bass, bream or catfish. Enjoy but remember, it has to go back into the water.

The pools – two cold and one undercover heated pool – are probably about 150 steps from the campsite. As are the mini golf course and tennis court. There is a great amusement park for the young ones with anything from jungle gyms, swings and trampolines to an outdoor chessboard and two slides.

The kiosk is open from 08:00 to 17:30 and apart from treats such as sweets, soft drinks and ice cream, you can also order take-away meals if you get hungry before tonight's braai.



Briefly | Bush 'n Buck



Fish Black bass, bream and catfish.

Campsite 62 level grass stands with power, of which 9 are luxury stands with their own bathroom facilities.

Ablution facilities 17 private bathrooms for the communal stands, and 9 bathrooms at the private stands.

Price Depending on the season, R450-R530 per site for the communal stands and

R490-R600 for the private ones.

These rates are for 5 people – a sixth guest pays R35 pn extra.

Arrival and departure 12:00 and 11:00.

Contact 082 772 4747

bushnbuck.com

info@bushnbuck.co.za

Nearest town Brits, 37 km.

Road condition Tar road to the resort and a good dirt road within the resort.

GPS S25.374499 E27.587810

Drive & Camp says The resort is only open on weekends and long weekends and during holidays. You may ask for a specific stand when booking.

FISH AND VEGETABLE KEBABS

The right end of the stick

The flavour of the fish and vegetables beautifully complement one another. Thread the fish and vegetables on separate skewers as then you can remove the fish from the grid as soon as it is cooked but still juicy.

Ingredients

(serves 8)

FOR THE KEBABS

- 800 g solid white fish fillets
- 8 baby marrows
- 1 red onion, cut into thick wedges

FOR THE MARINADE

- 8 tablespoons lemon thyme, finely chopped
- ½ cup lemon juice
- 4 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 4 tablespoons honey
- ½ cup olive oil
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper
- ½ teaspoon salt

Here's how

1 Skin the fish and cut the fish and baby marrows into cubes of 3-4 cm (smaller cubes may break and fall off the skewers when cooked).

2 Skewer the fish on 8 skewers, and the onion and baby marrows on another 8 of them. Pack the kebabs in a foil dish (or another dish that can go on the braai).

3 Mix together the ingredients

for the marinade and pour over the kebabs.

4 Clean your grid and heat over moderate coals. Place the kebabs on the hot grid and leave the foil dish with the rest of the marinade on the side to get it lukewarm (but not boiling!).

5 Braai the fish kebabs for 2 minutes on each side and then set them in the lukewarm foil dish. Leave the dish on the side of the grill so the fish can carry on cooking. Take care to not overheat the bowl and dry out the fish. The vegetable kebabs should be cooked after 10-15 minutes.

Drive & Camp says We used lemon thyme in the marinade, but any other herbs you like – origanum or basil – will be delicious. You'll see in the photo we skewered the fish and vegetables on lemongrass stems. They add an extra citrus flavour, but you can also use bamboo sticks soaked in diluted lemon juice.



FISHING GEAR

A bite of crayfish?

It's not every day you get the opportunity to add a winning lure to your fishing gear.

The LiveTarget Hollow Body Craw lure was the winner of freshwater fish lures at the Icast Show in America in 2018. (Icast prides itself on being the biggest sports angling show in the world.)

The design of this bait is a combination of traditional black bass bait: there's the bait with which lure the fish underwater, and one you reel in on the surface to attract the fish's attention.

This is an imitation of a freshwater lobster. The eye of the hook sits at the lobster's tail

and then curls around its body where the barbed hook sits between the pinchers. As you reel in the bait, it seems that the lobster is fleeing to get away from the danger – just like a real lobster.

The pinchers are hollow, which means when the lures lie still on the bottom, the pinchers float upward, just like a lobster on high alert. As you reel it in, the pinchers pull closer to the lobster's body, and that's when a black bass can't resist it.

The bait is designed in such a way that

it will not easily snag on anything under the water.

The Hollow Body Craw is available in three sizes and eight colours.

Price From R179 each (spare pincher included).

Contact Adrenalin Importers & Distributors (importers) 021 982 1510

catches@4adrenalin.co.za

adrenalinfishing.co.za



Introducing Moeks

A month ago, we took delivery of an Isuzu mu-X long-term test vehicle. It has already clocked many adventure miles (and one small dent).

Words and photos **Cyril Kloppe**

ISUZU MUX



The Isuzu staff seemed green with envy as we drove out of Isuzu South Africa's Port Elizabeth plant. While they resumed driving their desks and finishing paperwork, we were headed for adventure unknown – in one of their vehicles that had been tailored to our needs.

Over the next eight days, we would travel on the back roads between PE and Gauteng, and from there through the Northern Cape down to Cape Town. We got well acquainted with the mu-X on this 3 520 km trip, which included various obstacles, mountain passes and dirt roads. Here are our impressions.

By the way, does our mu-X have a nickname? Yes, of course: Moeks! Because we're South African, #ImStaying.

Accessories and options

With the mu-X's launch in May 2018, we were disappointed by the lack of a diff lock on the rear axle, and it appears as though Isuzu has taken our comments to heart, because an optional Eaton diff lock has been available for the mu-X since November 2019.

The Eaton MLocker works just like a limited slip differential in normal driving conditions, but when the rotation of the rear wheels differ by 100 rpm or more, the diff locks up, and this without the driver having to lift a finger. In addition, the MLocker automatically unlocks as soon as your speed exceeds 30 km/h and it then functions as a limited slip differential once more.

Other than the optional diff lock, we asked Isuzu to add three



accessories to our mu-X. The first was a set of all-terrain tyres – nothing too aggressive. Second on our wish list was an adjustable towbar so we could hitch a variety of trailers, and lastly we asked for a roof rack to load an inflatable boat or bicycles for the kids, or perhaps a roof tent should we go camping without a caravan.

The tyres Isuzu chose are General Tire Grabber AT3 – and we couldn't have asked for better. They're surprisingly quiet on a tar road, but nonetheless offer good grip on dirt roads.

When this issue went to print, we hadn't yet had a chance to hitch a caravan, but the towbar is bolted to a drop plate with three rows of holes. At the very lowest setting, the towbar is way too low – we doubt we'll ever use that setting. The highest setting, however, will be useful for large off-road trailers such as a Conqueror Commander and the like.

Front Runner's roof racks are always excellent, which is why we're pleased that Isuzu chose one for the mu-X. The roof rack obviously creates wind noise, but it's not too bad and the advantage of being able to load extra camping gear trumps the noise.

The drive

The Isuzu mu-X is good on tar, and that 3 ℓ turbo diesel engine flies up any mountain pass. The body doesn't sway alarmingly through sharp turns and the multi-link rear suspension maintains a balance between good road-holding ability and a comfortable ride.

On regular dirt roads, everything goes swimmingly, but the rear of the mu-X tends to slide a bit when you hit corrugations. It can be unnerving if you're going fast, but the electronic traction control mercifully kicks in before things get ugly. The reason for this is the short wheelbase (something you can't do anything about) and high tyre pressure (we kept the tyres at 2,8 bar for the duration of our trip). We must mention, however, that the mu-X feels considerably safer than what the first batch of first generation Toyota Fortuners did, which gained a reputation as a vehicle that easily overturned on gravel roads.

To test its off-road ability, we tackled the Hennops 4x4 obstacle course outside Hartbeespoort, and the mu-X was able to overcome nearly all the obstacles. There were only two that had us turn around – and that was because we were afraid we would damage the chassis and side steps (the mu-X does have underbody protection



“

We applaud Isuzu for offering the Eaton MLocker as an optional extra, because it certainly helps

”



CORPORATE CLIMBER The solid rear axle allows for good wheel articulation (top) while the multi-link suspension keep things safe when rounding a bend at speed. The LED headlights look modern as does the interior with that huge touch screen display.



SPECIFICATIONS

Model	3.0 4x4 AT6
Engine	2 999 cc, four-cylinder turbodiesel
Power	130 kW @ 3 600 rpm
Torque	380 Nm @ 1 800 rpm
Gearbox	6-speed automatic
Fuel consumption (tested)	10 l/100 km
Tank	65 l
Approach and departure angle	24 ° and 25,1 °
Wading depth	600 mm
Ground clearance	230 mm
Warranty	5 years/120 000 km
Service plan	5 years/90 000 km
Safety rating	★★★★★ (ANCAP, 2017)
PRICE	R629 100



for the sump and transfer case).

The Eaton MLocker does its job, but it's not as smooth as the proper diff lock found on a D-Max. You can feel a rear wheel spinning followed by a slight surge as the differential closes and both rear wheels dig in. It is not distracting nor dangerous, but you do notice it. However, we applaud Isuzu for offering the Eaton MLocker as an optional extra, because it certainly helps when you have to crawl over rocks or push through mud.

Conclusion

When it comes to mechanical components, the mu-X is old-school – and it's a good thing. The electronics have been modernised, though, and so the mu-X feels a bit like an

old soul with a young mind.

On the question whether Moeks can compete against the new Ford Everest, Toyota Fortuner and Mitsubishi Pajero Sport, the answer is no. These three SUVs are already in their second generation, while the first-generation mu-X has only received a facelift and name change since the Chev Trailblazer. However, if you compare it to the first-generation Everest, Fortuner and Pajero Sport, we would choose this mu-X in a heartbeat. But it's an unfair comparison because those competitors are no longer being sold as new.

A brand-new Isuzu D-Max bakkie is on the way and a new mu-X sports utility is sure to follow shortly thereafter. We hope Moeks' replacement will have just as much spirit.



COMPETITORS

4x4 SUVs based on bakkies



R656 900 **Ford Everest 3.2 XLT 4x4**

Luxurious, but it feels almost as old as the mu-X these days.



R639 995 **Mitsubishi Pajero Sport 2.4 D4**

Modern, fresh and different. It performs well in the bush.



R699 600 **Toyota Fortuner 2.8 GD6 4x4**

Everybody knows you can't go wrong with a Fortuner. 🙌

Cool, clever Kunene

After almost 30 years in the off-road trailer and caravan industry and more than 10 000 units later, Echo4x4 now boasts a new flagship model. Meet the Kunene.

Words and photos **Leon Botha**

ECHO KUNENE





The jewel in Echo4x4's crown takes the lead when it comes to design and layout. The company specialises in off-road trailers and off-road caravans, and use mostly fibreglass on the caravan models. They're sturdy, and the finishes are excellent – just consider the Kunene's interior cupboards; they would look good inside a Boeing. The shower section still pulls

from off the righthand-side panel as with the Kavango, but boasts a brand-new design. Furthermore, the oversized glass windows, nicely flush with the bodywork, extend all the way down the hull next to the bed for a chic look. The Kunene also has two double beds, and with its independent suspension, nothing stops your family from exploring the African interior.





Steady does it

After dropping the four corner steadies and securing them, the pop-up roof must first be raised before you can continue.

Unlike the Kavango model, where the roof only lifts on one side, the Kunene's roof lifts parallel to the hull. This roof doesn't have four gas struts, but only one on each side, in the middle where there's a scissor mechanism. Inside and at the ends of the roof are two unique levers that you flip over to effortlessly lift the roof. It's an inventive and fresh design that requires little effort.

With the roof raised, you can now fold out the front bed. It folds out of the hull over the A-frame, and as you swing the bed over, a pedestal unfolds, which then supports it. The tent section above this bed is almost like a rooftop tent, although the top canopy is fixed to the pop-up roof. It attaches past the edge of the roof at the bottom – a design that prevents possible leaks.

Two U-frames fold out inside the tent to form the top of the tent and the frame at the end of the bed. Four spring-loaded slats that are stored under the mattress, now each fit into a corner to tighten the flysheet. (By the way, below the mattress is also a shallow cupboard where you can pack items such as extra swimwear or towels.)

The shower cubicle that pulls out of the righthand side of the hull is in the same place as in the



Kavango, but Echo4x4 owner Willie Grobler adapted this patent for the Kunene. From the outside, it looks just like a door across from the entry door, but it pulls away parallel from the hull to form the shower cubicle.

The trough and transparent roof of the cubicle fold back right to the inside of the door, but fold out as you pull out the cubicle. The roof rests on the shoulder of the hull and the trough hooks into the floor.

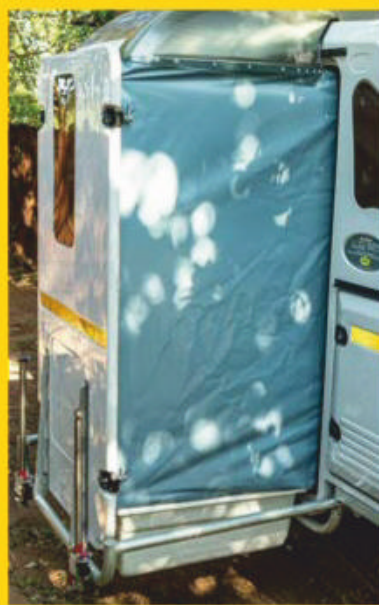
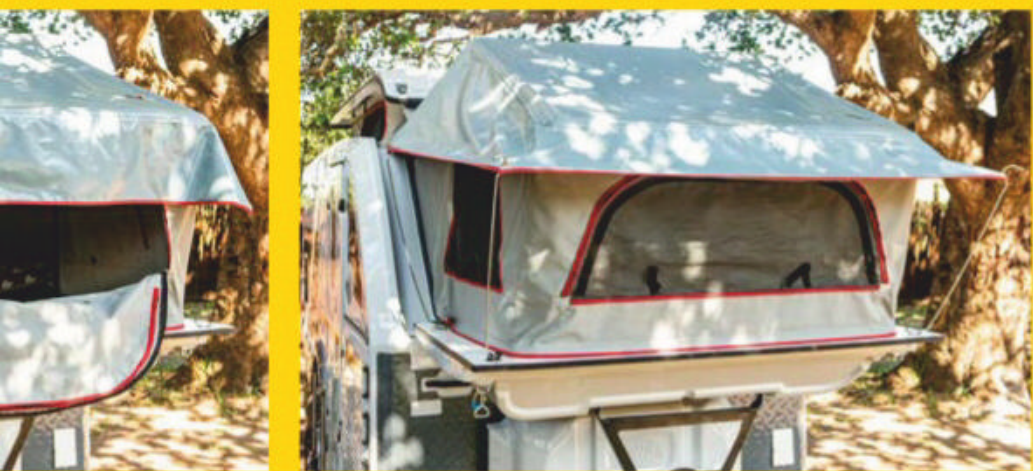
Between the roof and the

trough is a permanent canvas that attaches with Velcro to the hull. The cubicle has two steadies, each of which you open with a ratchet and a strap that tightens over the top of the steady so it stands firmly on the ground.

This shower cubicle is unique to Echo's products, but if you're slightly clumsy it takes some practice to get the better of the ratchet system.

Inside, the trough is 26 cm deep and the shower roof is 1,96 m high.





Heart of the home

The outside kitchen is to the left of the Kunene and pulls out almost in its entirety on a large drawer between the door and the A-frame. The recessed two-plate gas stove sits crosswise at the end of the drawer with the fridge/freezer against the hull – also crosswise. Two surfaces over the stove fold open on both sides to form a stand for the basin (on the left) and the drying rack (on the right). A tap with a swivel head sits to the left of the stove so you can run hot and cold water into the loose basin. The stove also has a glass top in case you don't use it and want more work space. If you need even more space near the kitchen – when dishing up or cleaning – set up the loose stainless-steel table.

Two drawers extend beyond the tip of the kitchen drawer. The plates, mugs, glasses and the like fit into the bottom one, while the top drawer is a shallow space for serving spoons or a box of biscuits or two.

For more storage space – to pack groceries, for example – you need to walk around to the other side of the

Kunene. Between the shower cubicle and the A-frame, is a three-drawer cupboard. It's perfect for items such as tinned food and cereal.

The cupboard is on the right in the space with an open area next to it if you want to place something bigger – an ice machine, for example – here. This cupboard is in the same space as the freezer on the other side. (The wheel wrench and emergency triangle sit on the inside of the door.)

The gas cylinders and gas geyser rest on the A-frame against the hull behind a fibreglass cover. The cover has hinges and tilts toward the coupler so that you can open the cylinder valve. It's also needed for sufficient ventilation for the geyser. In addition to the shower and basin water supply that are connected from here, there is also a hot and cold water tap at the A-frame.



CARAVAN TEST



Let's get inside

To keep the bugs out of your bedroom there is a gauze door that covers the entire front door – not a feature that many off-road caravans have, but one that belongs on every single one.

As you get into the Kunene, the fold-out double bed is, of course, on the left, the shower in front of you and the other bed on your right.

This open space in the caravan is one of the Kunene's big benefits. Two adults can easily get dressed here without the one elbowing the other. It's about 1,3 x 1,4 m.

The folding bed is 142 cm wide and fairly high off the ground – 88 cm. So it's easier for youngsters to get in and out of bed.

The distribution box with all its circuit breakers, fuses, battery displays and a two- and three-point power plug sits directly to the left of the door. The light switches are to the right of the box.

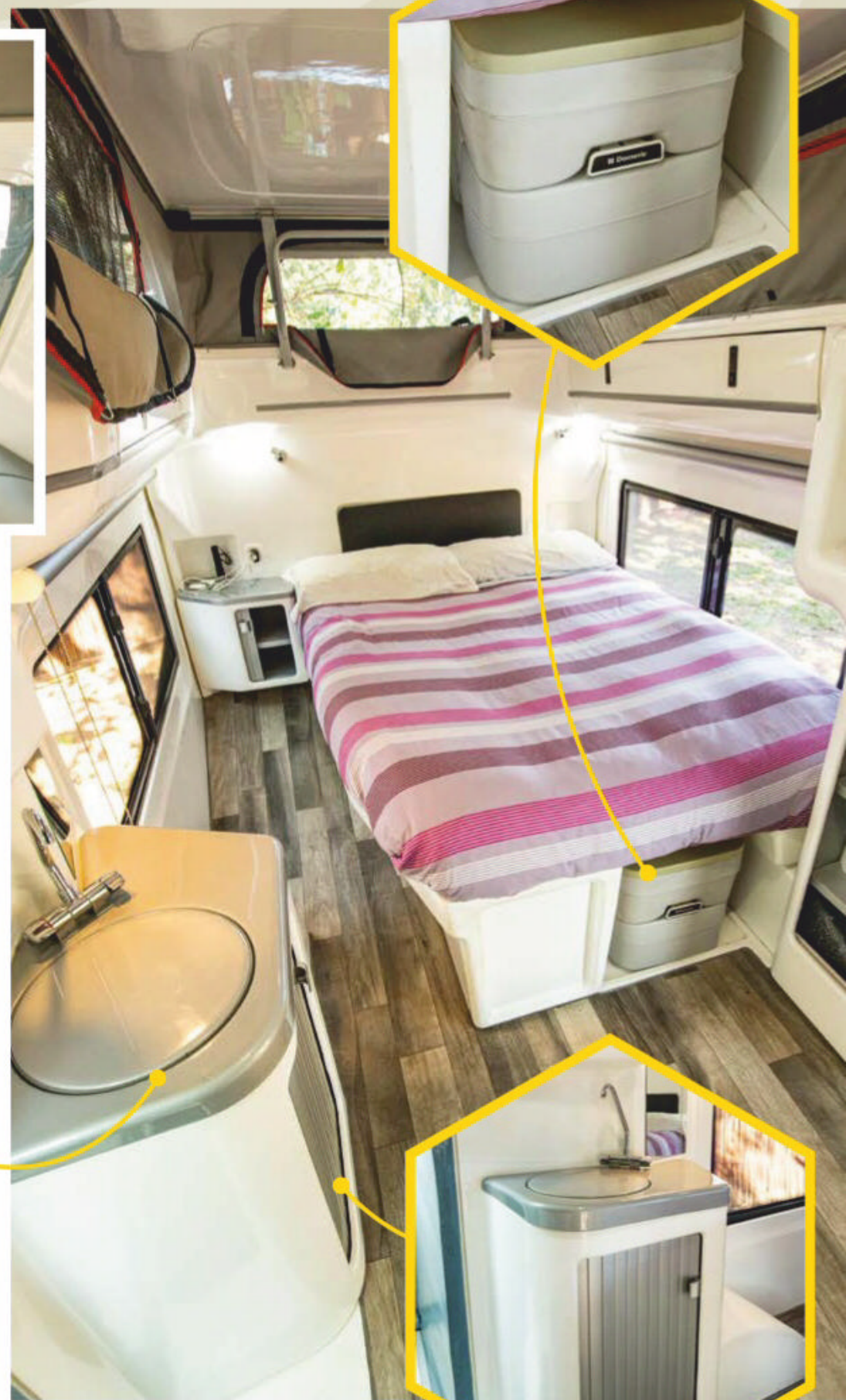
As you look from the door to the back of the caravan, the bed is on the right with a spacious corridor of 50 cm to the left. The vanity corner with its basin and mirror (and a shelf or three) sits between the start of the corridor (at the corner of the bed) and the shower.

Another cupboard is to the



right of the main door and has a large open shelf that can fit a microwave. Underneath it is a closet with a folding door with three shelves.

The other storage space in the caravan is on either side of the bed against the roof. These are two elongated cupboards and the doors open towards you like those of an aircraft's hand luggage compartments. It's unusual and a smart use of space.



There's a large sliding window in each of the wall panels next to the bed (141 cm long – almost as long as the bed itself) that let in lots of light. These windows are sunk in on the outside and sit flush with the bodywork. Inside, it gets roller blinds that cover the window. They're simple, but work like a bomb.

The bedside table stands at the end of the corridor, and has a two- and three-point power

socket next to it. The one who sleeps against the wall has a shelf big enough for a pair of glasses and a cellphone.

On both sides – and above the bed – is a swivel head reading lamp, each with its own switch.

In addition to the extra storage space under the bed, an optional cassette toilet can fit into an open shelf under the foot of the bed.



What's included and what's not?

The independent suspension and EPP MK2 power box, shower, two jerry cans, the gas stove, a 120 l water tank, the 12 V water pump and basin with its tap come standard.

Some of the options include a 700 W-20 l microwave oven

(R1 393), 3 kg gas cylinder (R642), wiring to allow the towing vehicle to charge the Kunene's battery (R1 989) and a Fresh Jet Dometic 2200 air-conditioner (R24 990).

The administration and registration fee is (R2 568).

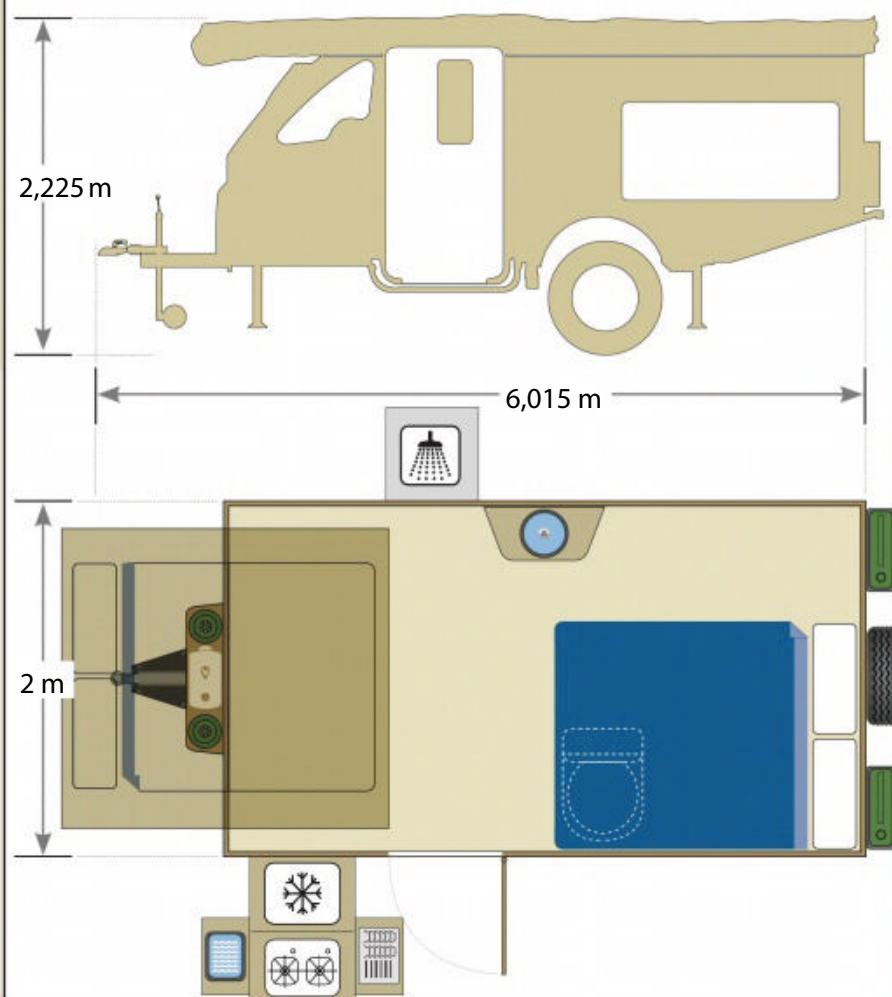


At the back

The spare wheel fits against the back of the hull with a jerry can on either side. Also, on either side of the spare wheel, but closer to the roof, are two shallow boxes, each with two shelves and a door. Some of your tools could fit into this, or

fire lighters, storm straps and that Fredlin plug (before it goes missing again).

At the top in the middle is a shelf in which a bag or two of braai wood can go, and under the spare wheel is a tow bar for mounting a bicycle rack.



The technical stuff

Length 6,015 m

Width 2 m

Height 2,225 m

Head height inside 1,875 m

Net weight 1 260 kg

Load capacity 1 090 kg

GVM 2 350 kg

Wheel size 15"

Axle Independent suspension with a coil spring and shock absorber on each side.

Price From R471 326



Plus

- The roof lifting mechanism is a piece of ingenious engineering work.
- The shower cubicle is practical and easy to erect.
- The open space in the caravan is a luxury.
- The large window panes with their roller blinds are fashionable and practical.



Minus

- The ratchet steadies of the shower cubicle work well, but they take time to master.
- The one who sleeps on the right in the main bed doesn't get a bedside table.

- The Kunene is intended for large towing vehicles only.

Drive & Camp borrowed the prototype Echo Kunene from the manufacturer.

Drive & Camp says With its low tare weight, the Kunene has one of the highest gross vehicle masses for a caravan in South Africa (2 350 kg). So, you can load up more than a tonne, but you'll require a powerful towing vehicle.

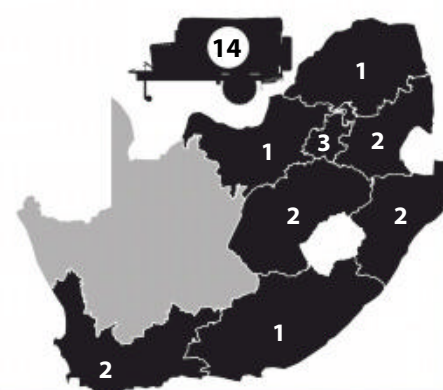
Dealer network

Headquarters in Centurion plus 3 of their own stores in Gauteng and Cape Town. A total of 14 dealers nationwide. Echo also exports to Namibia, the UK, Australia, USA and Canada.

Contact 012 345 3333

echoacc@echo4x4.co.za

echo4x4.co.za



More genius hacks

There were some leftover camping hacks from the last time we put these clever plans to the test. Here are some of the better ones, using items we already had lying around the house.

Words and photos **Kyle Kock**

Last month we showed you some of the more popular camping hacks out there, ranging from the easiest portable toilet to how to make your guy lines a little more visible – both of which used pool noodles, of all things. We even had popcorn in a beer can. Here's the best of the rest for tidying up things around your campsite.



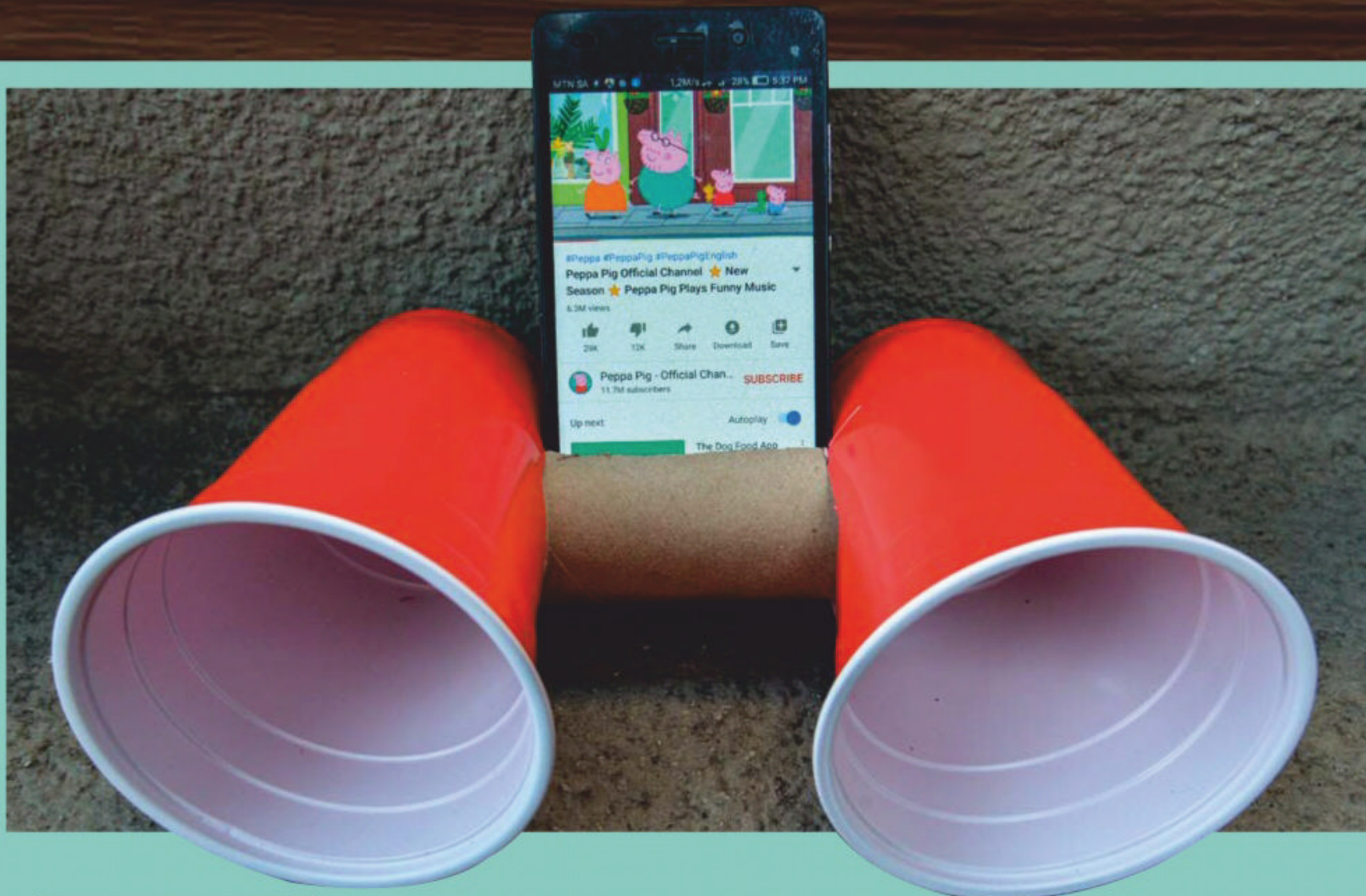
Tin-can cookers

What is it?

When mom and dad's little darlings get bored, there's always the possibility that they're going to come back to the stand and try to assist with one of the meals. Now you can let them cook their own food in safely with a DIY cooker made from two tin cans.

Does it work?

You'll have to pack in your smallest pot and pan, so the kids can heat their porridge. It's better if the can that's going to be holding the pot or pan is significantly larger than the one that is used to stoke the coals. Mom or Dad will have to cut the hole in the big tin, though.



DIY boomtube speaker

What is it?

When it's time for bed and the kids just don't want to put their heads down, perhaps they need their favourite show to lull them to sleep. You don't have to fork out on a rechargeable Bluetooth speaker if you have an empty toilet paper roll and plastic cups lying around – they form your phone's cradle and speakers respectively.

Does it work?

You need to cut holes in the sides of the cups and a slit that your mobile phone can slide into on the roll. The bigger your phone, the more likely it is to fall out, so you need to cut the cup holes more-or-less in the middle, lengthwise. If it's a phablet you need to hold, an empty kitchen paper roll can replace the toilet paper roll. We found that plastic cups work better than the foam variety and sound louder.

Shoe bin

What is it?

We all know just how awful it is to be packing away the tent after your stay at the campsite, only to have to clean up all the muck you tramped in after those afternoon thunderstorms. Avoid a muddy mess by keeping your boots and Birkenstocks in a dedicated basket for muddy shoes.

Does it work?

Trust us on this one if you appreciate having to simply sweep when you're packing up.





Kitchen organiser

What is it?

You'll know exactly what we're talking about here if you or your significant other has tired of shoes lying everywhere when you're not wealthy enough to have a walk-in closet. These lightweight shoe shelves have saved many relationships and uncluttered plenty of bedrooms and clothing cupboards. So, because it folds and takes up little space, you can use it to organise your camping pantry.

Does it work?

Instead of having your kitchen utensils and vegetables lying around or stashed in ammo boxes, all your kitchen necessities hang from the frame of your gazebo or rally tent – within easy reach. It doesn't just have to be rolls of foil and spatulas, it works for sweet treats and snacks as well.



Cut-out spoon

What is it?

Most people won't forget a pair of solid braai tongs when packing for the braai they're undoubtedly going to have when they're camping, but a ladle or serving spoon isn't necessarily at the top of everyone's packing list. That doesn't mean you'll have to resort to using a fork, as a spoon cut from an empty 2ℓ coke bottle will work just fine.

Does it work?

Of course, because by the time the food is ready, you'll almost certainly have worked through your first bottle of chaser or the kids will have polished off enough cooldrink to keep them energised till the end of your stay. The bottles with a thicker base work better for this, because the thinner bottles of the cheaper brands lose their structural integrity when they get warm – just cut it wide enough and don't be afraid to use the entire length of the bottle.

Clever condiments

What is it?

Your favourite sauces and dressings must accompany the boerie roll or burger you're about to scoff down. But nobody takes as much care as you do in replacing the chutney's lid, and there's that one person who always uses a quarter bottle of HP sauce... The solution? A muffin tray – you get to control how much sauce leaves the bottle.

Does it work?

A deeper muffin tray will hold more sauce and ensure that everyone gets a spoonful. You don't have to take a massive tray along, because who has that many sauces at home anyway? The standard six should be just fine.



Laundry service

What is it?

Washing machines or laundry rooms at resorts sure do work a treat when you're staying for a longer period, even if it's a bit of a mission to make sure you have the exact change for the machine or to purchase a token. But even if there are no such amenities that doesn't mean you have to make do with dirty clothes, just take along a bucket and a plunger.

Does it work?

Technically, you can do this if you don't have a lid, but if you have a lid with a pouring spout, then you can properly get stuck in there without having to worry about splashing water all about. If you don't have a pouring spout, simply cut a hole in a regular lid. Don't do all the washing by yourself, though. Share the load – unless you want a cardiovascular workout while you're at it.



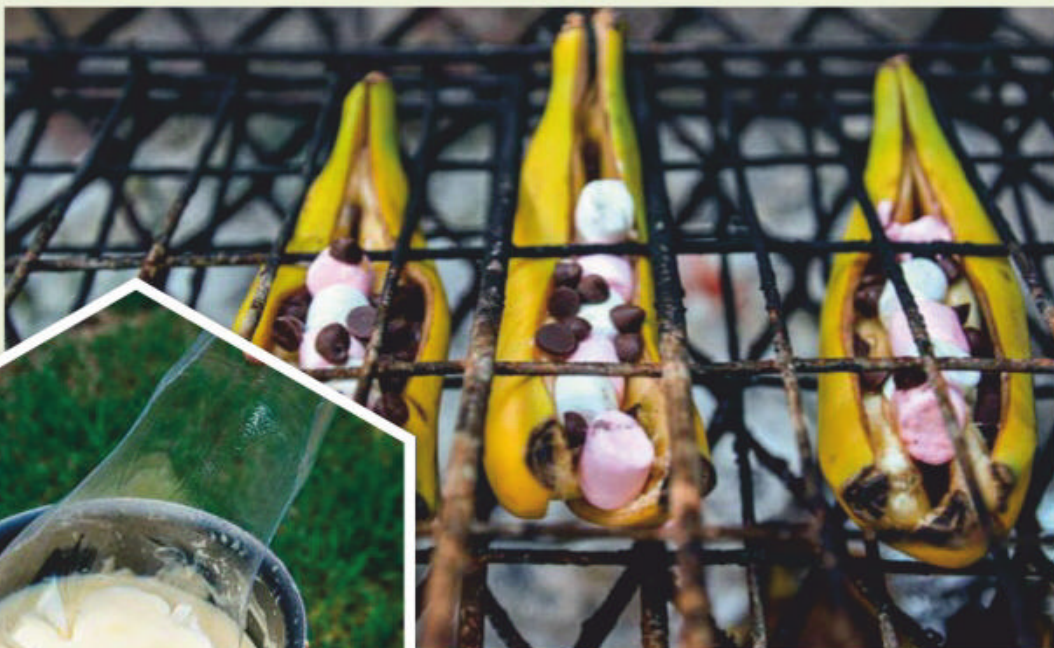
Braaied banana s'mores

What is it?

Thanks to last month's popcorn-in-a-can snack, there was absolutely no way we'd do more hacks without throwing in a delectable dessert. Forget about banana splits when the chances of getting ice cream are slim to none. Ever thrown a banana onto your grid? No? Well then, what are you waiting for?

Does it work?

This is a gooey sweet treat that requires nothing other than slitting an opening in the middle of the top curve of a banana, and stuffing it with chocolate chips and marshmallows.



Perfectly roasted

What is it?

You're not the designated braai master of your group, but are tasked with throwing the wrapped sweet potatoes, marrows and onions directly on the coals. The problem is that every other time you've done this it's ended in disaster, with just half the veggies edible and the others engulfed in a thick black crust. Apparently, adding a layer of cabbage leaves first turns you into a hero.

Does it work?

Yes. The moisture in the cabbage not only steams your vegetables nicely, but takes a lot of damage from the hot coals – without leaving a burnt taste. 🍴





80 years of off-roading

We commemorate the mass production of off-road SUVs – you know, those vehicles that happily drive through the bush, swamps, sand dunes and rivers instead of on tar.

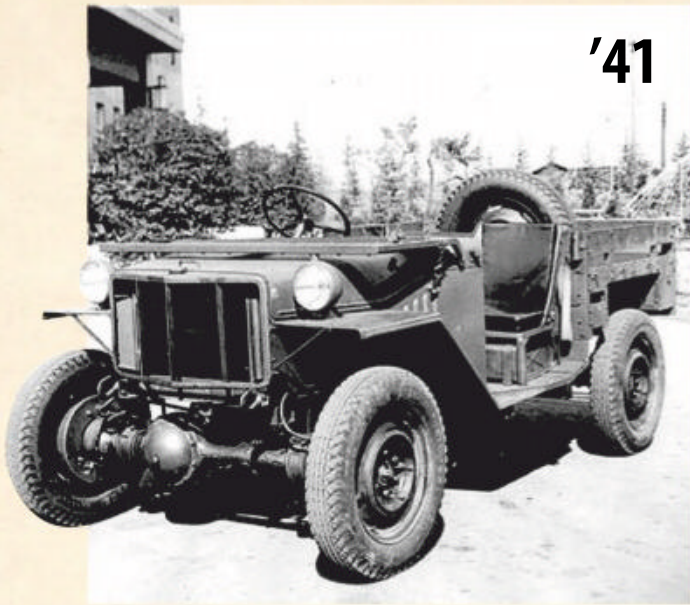
Words **Cyril Kloppe**

Our focus here is only on the big players in the 4x4 SUV market (no bakkies) as it's impossible to

name every 4x4 vehicle here.

This meant that we had to leave out a few. Sorry, all the Fiat Panda and VW Amarok owners!





'41

THE FORTIES

The 1940s is dominated by World War II, and during this time the personal off-road vehicle and off-roading becomes popular as a hobby.

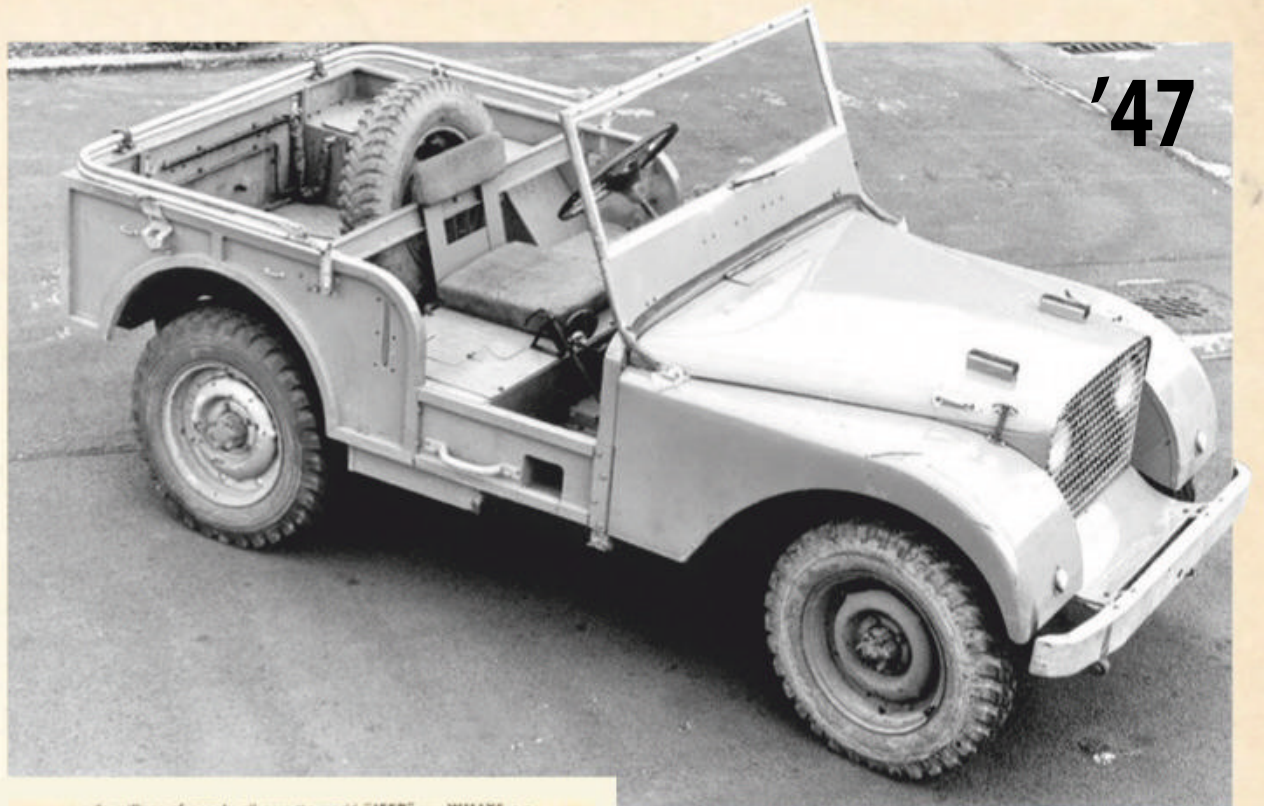
When the US military sees the British army use a tiny two-wheel drive Austin 7 for reconnaissance at the outbreak of the war, they immediately order the development of a similar vehicle for military use: a vehicle that eventually becomes known as a Jeep.

1940 Work on the Bantam BRC begins on 17 July 1940. It takes designer Karl Probst only two days to come up with the BRC on paper and a working prototype is delivered to the US Army within 49 days. Unfortunately, Bantam's modest plant is unable to manufacture the first order of 3 500 BRCs on its own and the Willys-Overland and Ford manufacturers are each asked to deliver a third of the order.

The Bantam BRC (Blitz Buggy), Willys MA (Quad) and Ford GP (Pygmy) drive ashore in Europe in 1941. American GIs soon give these little off-road vehicles a collective name: Jeeps. The origin of the name is unclear; some historians say it a slurring of GP from Ford's buggy and others believe it's based on the comic book character Eugene the Jeep.

According to General Eisenhower, the 'Jeep' is one of the most important weapons that made victory over the Nazis possible.

1941 The Japanese army occupy the Philippines – and loot an American base. One of the spoils is a Jeep that is immediately sent to Japan and the Toyota Motor Company is ordered to back-engineer it for the military. The result is the Toyota Model AK, but Japan is defeated before



'47



'44



'48

production can begin in earnest.

1943 Willys-Overland posts advertisements in newspapers suggesting that they created the Jeep and try to register the name in February 1943. Bantam appeals to the court and a judge rules that the vehicle does not belong to Willys-Overland but to Bantam.

1944 Notwithstanding the court decision, Willys-Overland introduces the CJ (Civilian Jeep) to the American public in May 1944. They're an immediate success and sell like hot cakes, especially among returning US soldiers who relate how much fun it is to play around in the mud with this small four-wheel drive vehicle.

The 4x4 bug bites ordinary citizens who have previously associated technical terrain with hardship, but now come to consider it a fun challenge.

“ The Jeep inspires the Rover car company of the United Kingdom to build a similar vehicle for the agricultural sector ”

1947 The Jeep inspires the Rover car company of the United Kingdom to build a similar vehicle for the agricultural sector. A prototype is tested in September 1947 and is characterised by the driver's seat in the centre and two rear passenger benches on either side. Their reasoning is that the so-called Centre Steer would appeal to farmers who are already used to tractors.

1948 Rover launches its first Land Rover, the Series I, at the Amsterdam Motor Show on 30 April 1948. The middle seat is discarded and the steering wheel now sits on the right.

'50



'54



'55



'59

THE FIFTIES

The 1950s is marked by the Cold War, especially the Korean War in which 2 Squadron of the South African Air Force is involved, and the establishment of Springbok radio and Sasol. It also marks Japan's entry into the 4x4 vehicle market.

1950 Willys-Overland is allowed to retain the Jeep name and given ownership in the USA after a court rules that Bantam isn't sufficiently committed to provide Jeeps to the public – Bantam soon goes bankrupt.

1951 The Nissan car company launches its 4W60 off-road vehicle in September. It is loosely based on the same Jeep that was

brought to Japan in 1941. In this year, the US Army, now involved in the Korean War, instructs Toyota to build military Jeeps in Japan from where they can be shipped to Korea faster and cheaper than from the USA.

1954 Willys-Overland learns that Toyota is marketing its military Jeep to the Japanese public and threatens the automaker with litigation. Toyota renames its 4x4 vehicle Land Cruiser, supposedly out of respect for the British Land Rover.

1955 Toyota's second-generation Land Cruiser J20 – now further removed from the Jeep – is launched and exported to

international markets. It is followed shortly thereafter by a stretched four-door Land Cruiser FJ35.

1959 Nissan's second off-road vehicle, the Datsun Patrol 60, is sold in Australia where it becomes the first motor vehicle to successfully cross the Simpson Desert in central Australia.

Rover launches its Land Rover Series II. This model gets both cosmetic and mechanical attention. The Series IIA is considered to be the toughest Landie ever and it sells more than 60 000 units a year in the 1960s – compared to Defender's annual sales of 25 000 during its peak in the 1990s.

'60



THE SIXTIES

South Africa becomes a republic and Hendrik Verwoerd declares a state of emergency following the Sharpeville massacre. The first Boeing 747 lands in South Africa and the popularity of 4x4 vehicles increases.

1960 The Toyota Land Cruiser J40 makes its appearance and by the end of the decade Toyota will sell nearly 200 000 units.

1967 Toyota doesn't rest on its laurels and launches the Land Cruiser J50. It is the first of Toyota's 'luxurious and comfortable' Land Cruisers – and the forerunner of the current Land Cruiser 200 series.

THE SEVENTIES

This decade is marked by the oil crisis in the Middle East. Led Zeppelin and ABBA blast over your car radio. Despite the high fuel price and sanctions against South Africa due to apartheid, the popularity of off-road vehicles continue to grow and they are no longer the exclusive domain of farmers and explorers.

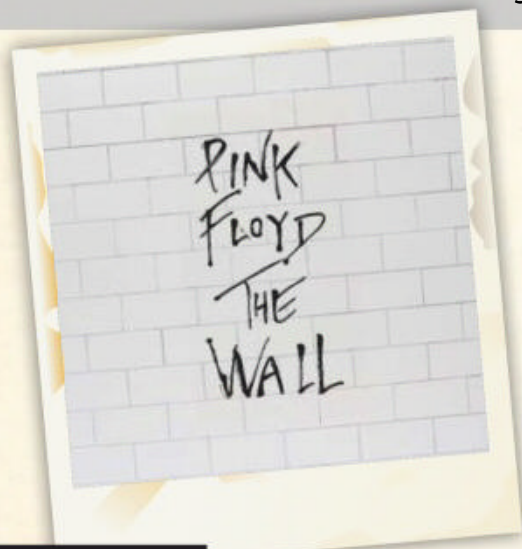
1970 With the launch of the Toyota Land Cruiser J50 in 1967, Charles Spencer King of British Leyland realises the future popularity of luxury 4x4 vehicles and the Range Rover is born in June 1970.

The Land Rover Series III is

launched a few months later in 1971. The 1970s are dominated by Land Rover, Toyota and Nissan while Jeep decreases in popularity.

Suzuki joins the 4x4 world with its Jimny LJ10, a tiny little vehicle that weighs just 590 kg and reaches a top speed of 75 km/h.

1979 Luxury vehicle manufacturer Mercedes-Benz makes a surprise appearance in the off-road market with its Geländewagen. It is originally intended as a military vehicle for the King of Iran's private army. However, that plan goes awry and the G-wagon is sold to the general public instead.



THE EIGHTIES

Computer technology explodes in the 1980s – along with garish attire. Pink Floyd's *The Wall* is banned in South Africa. The incident between Zola Budd and Mary Decker Slaney has everyone talking, and an ever increasing number of 4x4 vehicles enter the market.

1980 Nissan introduces its third-generation Datsun Patrol: the 160 and the 260. It is the last Patrol to carry the Datsun badge and, although it's a somewhat unremarkable Patrol, it inaugurates a popular 1980s fad: square headlights.

1981 The second-generation Suzuki Jimny, the SJ, is introduced to the public in May 1981. The Jimny is initially popular with anglers looking for a cheap car they can take fishing as well as farmers who have to negotiate muddy roads.

1982 Mitsubishi blasts out of the gates with its first Pajero. Yes, the Pajero's ancestor is actually the PX33 that was built in 1937 (before the Jeep), but that four-wheel drive vehicle was a prototype. The Pajero L040 is



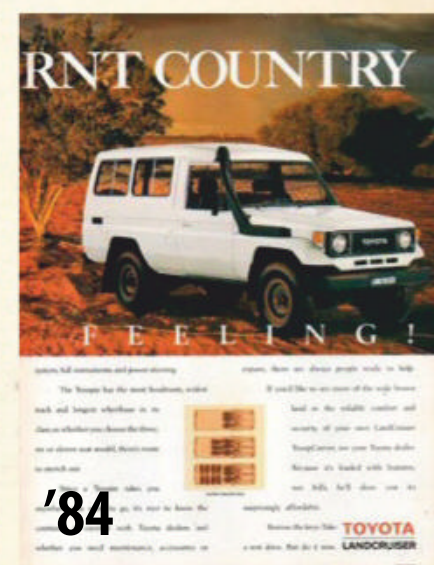
barely on sale before it competes in the 1984 Dakar Rally. The Pajero will leave its mark in this rally for many years to come.

1984 Toyota strikes back with the Land Cruiser 70: a vehicle that is still popular today with farmers, emergency services, adventurers, military forces – in fact, any hardcore profession you can think of.

1986 Lamborghini surprises the world with its LM002. The Italian sports car manufacturer intends it to be a military 4x4 vehicle for oil magnates. A total of 328 of the so-called 'Rambo Lambos' are produced.

1987 Nissan launches its Patrol Y60. It's the first Patrol with coil springs at the front and a multi-link suspension at the rear. It will become a popular seller, but its entry into the market is overshadowed by the return of an American legend.

Jeep is back after almost half a century of stagnation. Jeep is now owned by the



Chrysler Corporation and its brand-new offering is called the Wrangler. It captivates the nations of the world. The Jeep Wrangler has square headlights – typical in the eighties – but this will soon change.

1989 Land Rover launches its Discovery at the end of the 1980s. The Disco is supposed to fit in-between the Land Rover and the Range Rover. It has to please both hard-core adventurers and soccer moms who do the school run.

The regular Land Rover will be renamed Defender a year later in 1990.



'93



THE NINETIES

The internet really kicks off this decade, and Nelson Mandela's release and Dolly the cloned sheep dominate the headlines. Teenage boys (and their dads) are captivated by *Baywatch* and dozens of new 4x4 SUVs are introduced.

1990 Toyota launches its Land Cruiser J80 – the most luxurious Land Cruiser to date. It has full-time all-wheel drive and coil springs on all four wheels.

1992 Mitsubishi brings out a new Pajero, the V20. It's bigger and Mitsubishi launches its famous Super Select 4WD system.

1993 Jeep comes up with its Grand Cherokee. It's a golden age for SUVs.

1994 The first Range Rover in a quarter of a century sees the light. You can buy it with BMW's six-cylinder turbodiesel.

1996 Toyota creates a new product called the

Land Cruiser Prado. Mitsubishi does the same with its Pajero Sport this year.

1997 The Nissan Patrol Y61 makes its appearance in December this year. Big luxury off-roaders battle it out. Land Rover introduces its Freelander: a compact but deeply flawed sports utility vehicle that almost kills the company.

1998 Land Rover rolls its Discovery Series II off the production line. It's marketed with the slogan '720 differences', but it's difficult to distinguish it from the Series I. This year, we also get the Toyota Land Cruiser J100 and the third Suzuki Jimny.

1999 Jeep launches its second Grand Cherokee, six years after its first, and Mitsubishi releases its third Pajero, the V60.



THE DAWN OF THE 21ST CENTURY

Survivor makes its debut on TV, Hansie Cronje is unmasked as a cricket charlatan, and the Kruger National Park and southern Mozambique get flooded.

The good news is that in the last quarter of the 1990s, the 4x4 market is growing to such an extent that *Drive Out* magazine, a predecessor to *Drive & Camp*, is founded in the year 2000 to meet the needs of 4x4 enthusiasts. *Drive Out* establishes the 1 out of 5 difficulty rating for 4x4 obstacles we still follow today – as do the owners of all South African obstacle routes.

2000 – Mitsubishi kicks off the millennium with its third Pajero.



'08

'02



2002 – A third Range Rover makes its appearance, now fully under BMW, and Jeep introduces its smaller Cherokee. Porsche enters the market with the Cayenne and before long, every car manufacturer has a SUV.

2003 – There's a second-generation Prado from Toyota's stable.

2004 – Land Rover introduces its third Discovery, called the Disco 3.

2005 – Jeep introduces its third-generation Grand Cherokee and Land Rover gets its first Range Rover Sport – a favourite among footballers.

2006 – Jeep launches its first Compass while Land Rover releases an improved Freelander 2.

2007 – Mitsubishi renews its Pajero with the fourth generation, the V80.

2008 – It's a busy year with a second Jeep Cherokee, the Toyota Land Cruiser 200 and a second Mitsubishi Pajero Sport.

2009 – The Toyota Land Cruiser Prado is now in its third generation and the Land Rover Disco 4, a favourite among dentists, is out.



'04

“ ————— ”

The Land Rover
Disco 4,
a favourite among
dentists, is out

'05



'09



AFTER THE MILLENNIUM

South Africa hosts the Soccer World Cup and *Egoli: Place of Gold* comes to an end. Everyone talks about climate change, businessman and TV personality Donald Trump becomes president of the United States and Britain announces it's leaving the European Union. Off-road vehicles – especially SUVs – have never been as popular as they are now.

2010 Nissan's latest Patrol, the Y62, is released, but South Africa will only get it a few years from now.

2011 The Jaguar Land Rover Group, now owned by Tata, launches the Range Rover Evoque, and there's a fourth Grand Cherokee for Jeep.

2012 The fourth Range Rover, the L405, drives off the Solihull plant in Britain.

2013 The second-generation Range Rover Sport makes its appearance.

2014 Jeep's latest product is called the Jeep Renegade, while Land Rover renames its Freelander to Discovery Sport.

2016 This year, Jeep releases its third Cherokee, its second Compass and

2020 AND BEYOND...

The dispute whether climate change is a reality or not is coming to an end. Electric vehicles seem to be one of the ways in which we can save the environment and several governments are drafting plans to ban internal combustion engines. Vehicle manufacturers, such as Volkswagen and Volvo, announce that they will cease manufacturing all internal combustion engines. The electrification of 4x4 vehicles begins, with Tesla, Rivian and Bollinger taking the lead. Even Ford is waking up and building the Mustang Mach-E, a hybrid SUV that nobody really asked for.

Will the old 4x4 gang survive the paradigm shift? Shortly before Christmas 2019, when this article was written, there was still no sign of an electric Land Cruiser, Patrol or Defender. They will have to get going soon if they don't want to become a footnote in the history books.



'12



'18

Mitsubishi releases the third Pajero Sport.

2017 Land Rover gives its Discovery a brand-new look (we're politely asked not to call it the Disco 5) and introduces the Range Rover Velar.

2018 Land Rover introduces the second Evoque, but it looks basically the same as the first Evoque and – who would have thought! – Mercedes-Benz surprises us with a new G-Class, which also looks just like the G-wagon from 40 years ago. Suzuki introduces its fourth Jimny and Lamborghini surprises us yet again



'20

just like they did with the LM002 way back in 1986, but this time with its beserk, dirt road-capable Urus.

2019 Land Rover introduces its new Defender, but this time – to the dismay of Landie purists – it has independent suspension and a unibody rather than solid axles and a ladder frame chassis.

Jeep gets a court order against Mahindra to halt the sale of its Mahindra Roxor on the grounds that it looks too much like the Jeep CJ, a vehicle that was last built in 1985.

ANOTHER BIT OF HISTORY

The first off-road vehicle ever is not the Jeep – that honour goes to the first half-track. Frenchman Adolphe Kégresse built this half-track for Tsar Nicholas the second of Russia in the early 20th century. It was obviously not a mass production vehicle, nor was it available to the regular man on the street.

Off-roaders were seen at this time as a solution to unpleasant activities – like driving from your castle to the train station through knee-deep deep snow. It was only with the arrival of the Jeep in the early forties that people started to think it was



fun to struggle through off-road terrain. By the way: running for fun only got popular in the sixties. Yes, that is correct, off-roading predates jogging.

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Portable power

With these alternative energy options, you won't get caught in the dark... even when Eskom tries to explain how coal gets wet.

Words **Kyle Kock**

We're all used to having the lights go out at a certain time at a campsite or resort, and even unexpectedly at home.

But there are plenty of ways other than relying on the national power provider to keep your devices powered or ensure the milk stays fresh.

SMOOTH OPERATOR

Trade Power camping generator

Plenty of campsites don't allow the conventional generators of old, because of noise pollution where most campers prefer peace and quiet. You don't have to worry about that with this 2 000 W petrol pure sine wave inverter rental unit from Go Camp, which is relatively silent compared to the generators of yesteryear.

It runs off unleaded petrol stored in a 5,7 l fuel tank and weighs just 31 kg – providing 220 V or 12 V power for more than four hours.

Price R540 for a three-day rental from Go Camp.

Drive & Camp says See what the generator is like on a camping trip, and if you like it, purchase the unit from Go Camp.



CLEAN AND GREEN

SFC Energy Efoy Comfort

If solar options just won't provide the power supply you need, and you're concerned about harmful emissions from the usual type of generators, then German energy-solutions company SFC Energy might have the option for you – especially if you're towing a large caravan.

The Efoy Comfort is a methanol fuel cell that uses a mixture of methanol and oxygen to create a direct current (DC) supply of electricity to a leisure unit that uses a 12 Volt system. The manufacturer claims that the unit makes less noise than a laptop computer and that the by-products are water vapour and CO₂ and weighs a maximum of 8,5 kg.

There are three kWh capacities, the Efoy 80, 140 and 210, at 960 Wh/day, 1 728 Wh/day and 2 520 Wh/day.

Price From R42 235 from Atkins Industries.

Drive & Camp says The Efoy Comfort constantly monitors the vehicle's battery voltage and charges it when required.



VALUE PACKED

Everlotus S3-1399S/BT

The little Everlotus looks like nothing much more than the usual camping lanterns you'd hang off a tree, but it's also got an FM radio with MP3 player and Bluetooth connectivity, comes with a 4-into-1 USB cable to charge a variety of devices and there's two 3 W LED bulbs.

The 4 V lead acid battery

can keep a single bulb on for 23 hours, both on for 12 hours, and with the radio playing there's enough power for 15 hours.

Price R580 from Camp & Climb.

Drive & Camp says It takes six hours to charge via the AC adaptor and 10 hours to charge via the solar panel.

SUN SOAKER

Solar panel

Here on the southern tip of Africa, we're fortunate enough to enjoy plenty of sunshine – almost all year round. Take advantage of the free rays with this foldable 120 W solar panel to keep some of the smaller items in your campsite running. It's quite compact when folded, measuring just 525 mm long, 285 mm wide and 23 mm thick – but opens to 1 415 mm x 525 mm x 3 mm.

Price R350 for a three-day rental from Go Camp.

Drive & Camp says This unit slides perfect into the battery box that Go Camp also stocks.



X-MAN

Magneto rechargeable LED lantern

These versatile lamps have become immensely popular over the last few years, or ever since rolling power outages have become the norm. But they double as excellent camping lanterns as well and have a USB port to charge your mobile from in case of an emergency.

There are two brightness settings, the strongest of which is 1 000 lumens, but the dimmer setting can last up to 60 hours

on a single charge. Magnetos come with a built-in discharge and overcharge circuitry for added peace of mind.

Price R200 from Builders Warehouse.

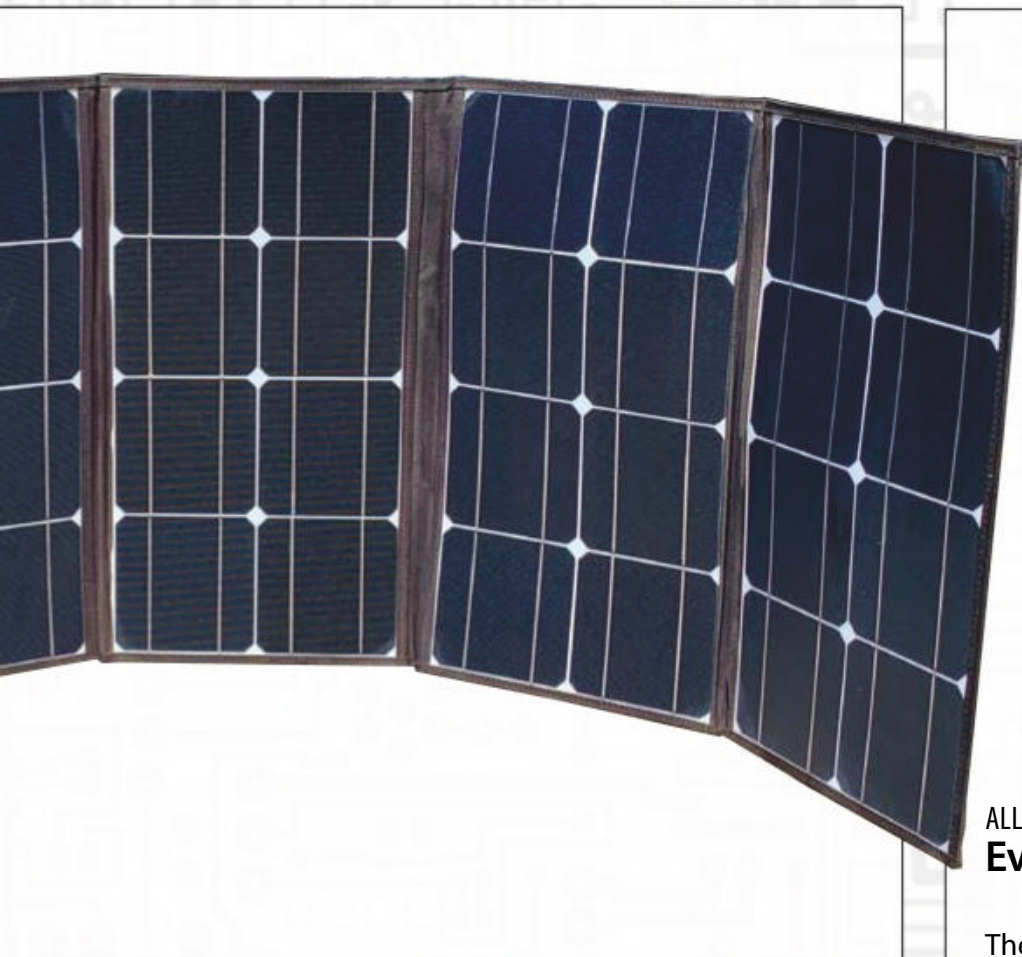
Drive & Camp says If you keep it plugged in at home there's a setting that allows it to automatically switch on as soon as the power trips, or when there's load shedding.



GET THE PRODUCTS HERE

Atkins Industries 064 906 6182

Camp & Climb campandclimb.co.za



ALL-IN-ONE Everlotus S20-2377

The biggest unit from Far East energy-solutions company Everlotus, is also one massive Bluetooth speaker, in case you want to practice your karaoke skills in the middle of the Richtersveld, but its built-in 300 W inverter can also power the four LED bulbs for 12 hours or two for 24 hours.

Depending on how much energy your small devices such as laptop computers, fans and cellphone

chargers draw, you can plug up to six appliances in at the same time.

You can charge it fully before you leave home in six hours and top it up in 10 hours at the campsite using the solar panel included in the box. Everything weighs just under 10 kg.

Price R2 995 from Camp & Climb.

Drive & Camp says The built-in LED display helps you keep an eye on things.

“

...there are plenty of ways other than relying on the national power provider

”

SMART SYSTEM

Go Camp battery & box

This deep-cycle system from Go Camp makes use of a smart solenoid that's built into the box to switch between your vehicle battery and battery box for charging. There's a Ctek 220 V smart charger on the unit that keeps tabs on the 104 Amp/hour dry cell battery, and a solar regulator for those who want to power up using solar panels.

This unit obviously keeps your fridge-freezer going and your LEDs, but you can also plug low-power accessories in like pumps, compressors and 12-volt electronic devices.

Price R480 for three-day rental from Go Camp.

Drive & Camp says The company claims that this unit is maintenance-free, as it uses a high-tech microprocessor to regulate its temperature.



Mmm... mince!

A few campfire stalwarts made with mince that'll take the sting right out of the new year's budget...

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

TORTILLA 'LASAGNA'

Pan you handle it?

This saucy recipe stretches four tortillas to a feast for eight.

Ingredients

(serves 8)

- 2 tablespoons cooking oil
- 350 g mince
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 2 teaspoons of peri-peri rub (we used Nomu's)
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 1-2 tins (410 g each) red kidney beans, drained
- 1 tin (410 g) chopped tomato
- a lump of butter to grease the potjie
- 4 flour tortillas
- 200 g (about 1 cup) cheese sauce
- 1 cup grated cheddar
- slices of jalapeño peppers to sprinkle (optional)

Here's how

1 Heat the oil in a pot and fry the mince with the onion and garlic until nice and golden brown – break up the meat with your spoon so the mince isn't lumpy. Season with the peri-peri rub or your favourite braai spice. Stir in the tomato paste, beans and tomato and simmer for 20 minutes.

2 Grease a cast-iron skillet or black potjie – one in which your tortillas will fit snugly – with butter. Place a tortilla in the bottom of the pan and spoon a large spoonful of the mince on top, drizzle a spoon of some cheese sauce and place another tortilla on top. Repeat the layers until all ingredients are used up.

3 Sprinkle the cheese over the tortillas, place a lid on the potjie and bake with the lid on for 20 minutes until warm and bubbling (place a few coals under the potjie and on the lid). If you like a bit of a bite, you can also sprinkle over extra jalapeño slices.

Drive & Camp says If you don't want to make cheese sauce from scratch, you can freeze ready-made cheese sauce bags to take to the campsite (the Woolworths Simply Heat Cheese & Roasted Jalapeño Sauce is a favourite). A decadent alternative is to melt cream cheese.



MINCE AND POTATO CURRY

Carbs for the win

Yes, potatoes, rice and lentils may be starchy, but these three musketeers are the business in this delicious curry.

Ingredients

(serves 6)

- cooking oil for deep frying
- 12 baby potatoes, cut in half
- 1 onion, sliced into rings
- 350 g mince
- 1 tablespoon biryani masala
- 1-2 green chillies, pitted and finely sliced
- 1 cup jasmine rice
- 1 tin (410 g) lentils, drained
- 2 cups chicken or vegetable stock
- 200 g mange tout or ordinary peas

Here's how

1 Heat about 2 cm of oil in a saucepan and fry the potatoes in batches until golden brown. Spoon them out and brown the onion rings in the same oil. Spoon these out onto kitchen towels to soak up the oil. The frying may sound excessive, but it delivers

a delicious flavour in the eventual dish. (You can also shallow fry the vegetables, if you like.)

2 Pour out most of the oil and leave a thin layer in which you fry the mince until golden brown. Season the meat with the masala and chilli and stir in the raw rice grains. Fry the mixture until the rice grains are covered in oil and then fry for about 2 minutes.

3 Add the lentils, fried potato and onions and the stock to the meat. Simmer the potjie with its lid on over low heat for about 15 minutes until the rice is almost cooked. (If you're unsure, read the directions on the rice packet). Remove the potjie from the heat, season to taste with salt and stir in the peas. Steam the potjie with the lid on for another 10 minutes until all the flavours are well mixed. This potjie is delicious with a spoonful of plain yogurt and, if you like, fresh coriander.

Drive & Camp says A dash of fresh lemon juice always helps to lighten the flavours. You can also add fresh ginger and garlic while frying the mince.



MINCE POTJIE Dumpling delight

For this recipe, we take a short cut and use shop-bought bread dough, but if you're in the bundus, feel free to knead your own.

Ingredients (serves 8)

- 1 tablespoon each butter and oil
- 600 g lean mince
- 500 g button mushrooms, finely chopped
- 2 large carrots, finely chopped
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 350 ml stock
- 12 walnut-sized bread dough balls (I just use store dough; it's about 400 g)

Here's how

1 Melt the butter and oil in a flat-bottomed potjie and fry the mince and mushrooms until golden brown – take your time and make

sure the meat is caramelised.

2 Stir in the carrot, onion and garlic and fry for another 5 minutes. Season the mixture with salt and pepper, and add the Worcestershire sauce and tomato paste. Stir in the stock and simmer everything for 15 minutes.

3 Remove the lid from the mince and stir – it should be deliciously saucy, and not catching at the bottom. You can add a little more stock or even a can of chopped tomatoes if you like.

4 Arrange the dough balls evenly on top of the mince – remember, the bread will rise! – and put the lid on. Bake the potjie over moderate coals for about 30 minutes without peeking – remember to place a few coals on the lid.

Drive & Camp says Savoury mince is a stalwart and if you have time, make it in bulk. Freeze individual portions to pack for quick campfire food such as nachos, quesadillas or this potjie with dumplings.



STICKY MEATBALLS Sticky stars

Braai lovers looking for new flavours will love char siu, a Chinese braai sauce.

Ingredients (makes about 24 meatballs)

- 350 g mince
- ½ small onion, finely chopped
- 1 small chilli, pitted and finely chopped
- a 2 cm piece of fresh ginger, peeled and finely grated
- a pinch each salt, ground coriander and ground cumin
- ½ cup dry bread crumbs
- 1 egg
- 2 tablespoons oil
- 2 tablespoons char sui (or any braai sauce of your choice)
- 1 teaspoon sesame seeds

Here's how

1 Mix the mince, onion, chilli, ginger, spices, breadcrumbs and egg and then form bite-sized meatballs with the mixture. Wet your hands so you don't have the meat sticking to your hands.

2 Heat the oil in a cast-iron pan over the coals and fry the meatballs until golden brown all over.

3 Baste the meatballs with sauce and braai gently for a few more minutes until fragrant and chewy. Keep the heat moderate, as the sauce can burn easily.

4 Sprinkle over the sesame seeds the meatballs and tuck in!

Drive & Camp says Chopped fresh coriander is also delicious in the mince mixture – give it a try.



MINCE WHEELS

Plenty to go around

Make this delicious padkos for a long drive – it's delicious to eat warm or at room temperature (and no one will know you used leftovers!).

Ingredients

(makes about 10 wheels)

- 1 roll (400 g) puff pastry, thawed
- 1½ cup cooked mince meat (leftover Bolognese or stir-fry works well)
- 200 g bacon, fried crispy
- ½ cup smooth cottage cheese
- 1-2 cups grated mozzarella

Here's how

1 Preheat oven to 180 °C. Roll out the sheet of puff pastry on

a clean surface and spread the cream cheese all over – work quickly, as puff pastry should stay cold for best results. Sprinkle the mince and bacon in an even layer over the cottage cheese, followed by the mozzarella.

2 Now carefully roll the dough with the filling to form a firm sausage.

3 Cut the roll with a sharp knife into 1½ cm slices and place them on a greased baking sheet. Bake for 15-20 minutes or until cooked and risen.

Drive & Camp says If you fold the puff pastry in half instead of rolling it up, you make a giant braai pie you can braai over the coals when you camp.



COCONUT MILK PANCAKE WITH CHAKALAKA MINCE

African-Caribbean crêpes

A tin of coconut milk is easy to pack when you go camping, and it's also a great alternative to long-life milk.

Ingredients

(serves 8)

- 1 tin (400 ml) of coconut milk, shaken
- 1/3 cup cooking oil
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 cup self-raising flour
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1 tablespoon chopped chives (optional)

FOR THE FILLING

- 350 g mince
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 1 tin (410 g) chakalala (we used Koo's Mild & Spicy)
- 1 cup grated cheddar

Here's how

1 Beat together the coconut milk,

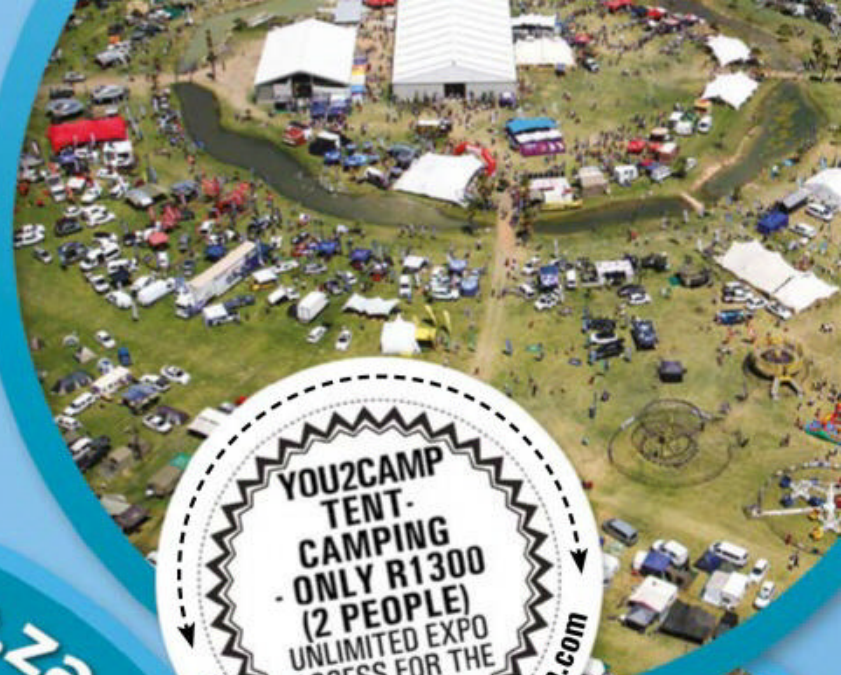
oil, eggs, flour, salt and sugar until smooth. Stir in the chives and leave to stand for 15 minutes.

2 Heat a medium-sized pan sprayed with non-stick spray, and spoon some of the batter into the pan (make sure the pan's entire bottom is covered). Bake the pancake for a minute or two, flip it over and cook the other side. Repeat the process until all the batter is used up (8-10 pancakes).

3 Make the filling Heat the oil in a second pan and fry the mince until brown. (Use the oil sparingly, because the chakalaka is also rich.) Break up the mince with your spatula or wooden spoon. When the mince is golden brown, stir in the chakalaka and heat the mixture until warm.

4 Divide the mince between the pancakes, roll them up, sprinkle over the cheese and enjoy.

Drive & Camp says If you like, melt the cheese over the coals, but even without doing so, these pancakes are delicious.



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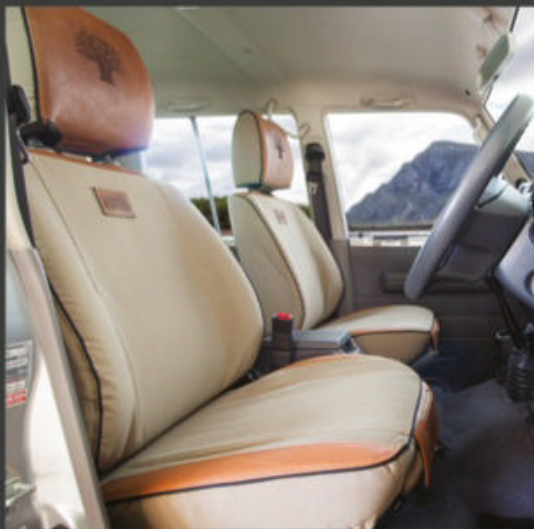
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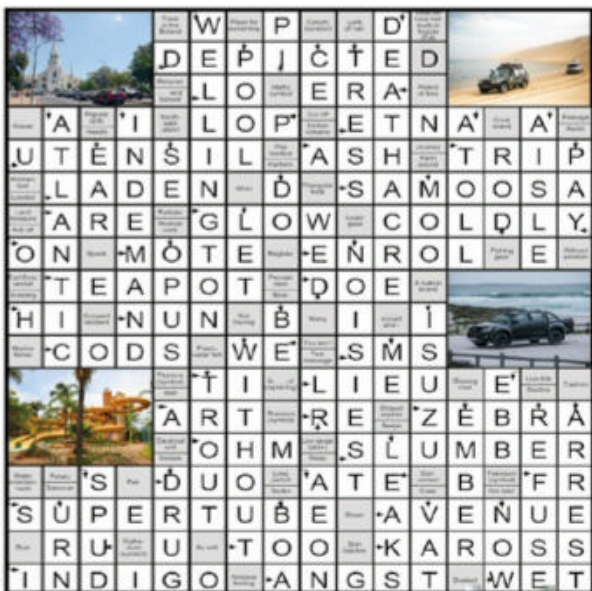
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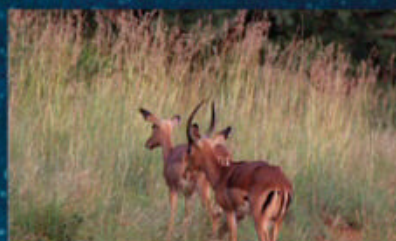
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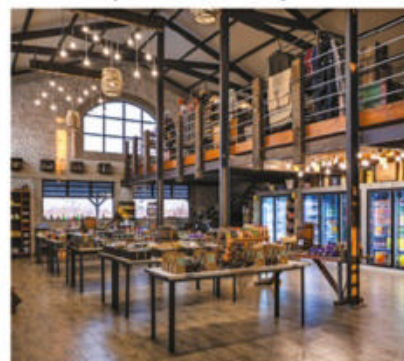
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CROSSWORD

Annie Smith from Jan Kempdorp has won **Van Loveren's Tangled Tree** wine worth R1 000 for her entry in the December 2019 crossword competition. Complete this one and e-mail a picture of it to drivecamp@gomag.co.za. Or do it at <https://bit.ly/2r9M3aw>. Last month's solution is on p 124.

			Town in the Klein Karoo	Type of grain	Americium (symbol)	Retreat	Water mammal (short)			
			Yellow spice		Dysprosium (symbol)		Hack			
Three dots	Receive	Charged particle	Combine forces (4,2)				Forbidden (2,2)	Bereaved woman	Sidetrack	
								Leave	Easy gait	
				Primate		A tree				
						This evening				
Pincers			Stop				Strains	Smell		
Destiny			Layer					Church feature		
Indium (symbol)			Church leader			Palm starch				
Increase			Leave (L)						Negative answer	
		Blackthorn			Skilled					
		Unit of land			Power unit					
Mythical creature				Exclusion		Internet code for Ethiopia		Nissan bakkie		
Rent										
			Neither			Minibus				
Lays (a table)			"Oh ...!"			Period of time				
			Wise up			Mature				
			Text message (abbr)	Sauté	Silicon (symbol)		While	Straddling	Wears away	Wooden pegs
							Subsided	Individual		
				Observes		Tennessee (symbol)				
			Benefit				Vintage			
			Period				Am and ...			
Piece of equipment	Sea-weed	Utilise	Journey			Song-bird				
						Not high				
							Rhenium (symbol)	Edge		
								Mount (abbr)		
Ferment			Seaborgium (symbol)					Guide		
								Example		
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COLOUR IN

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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

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

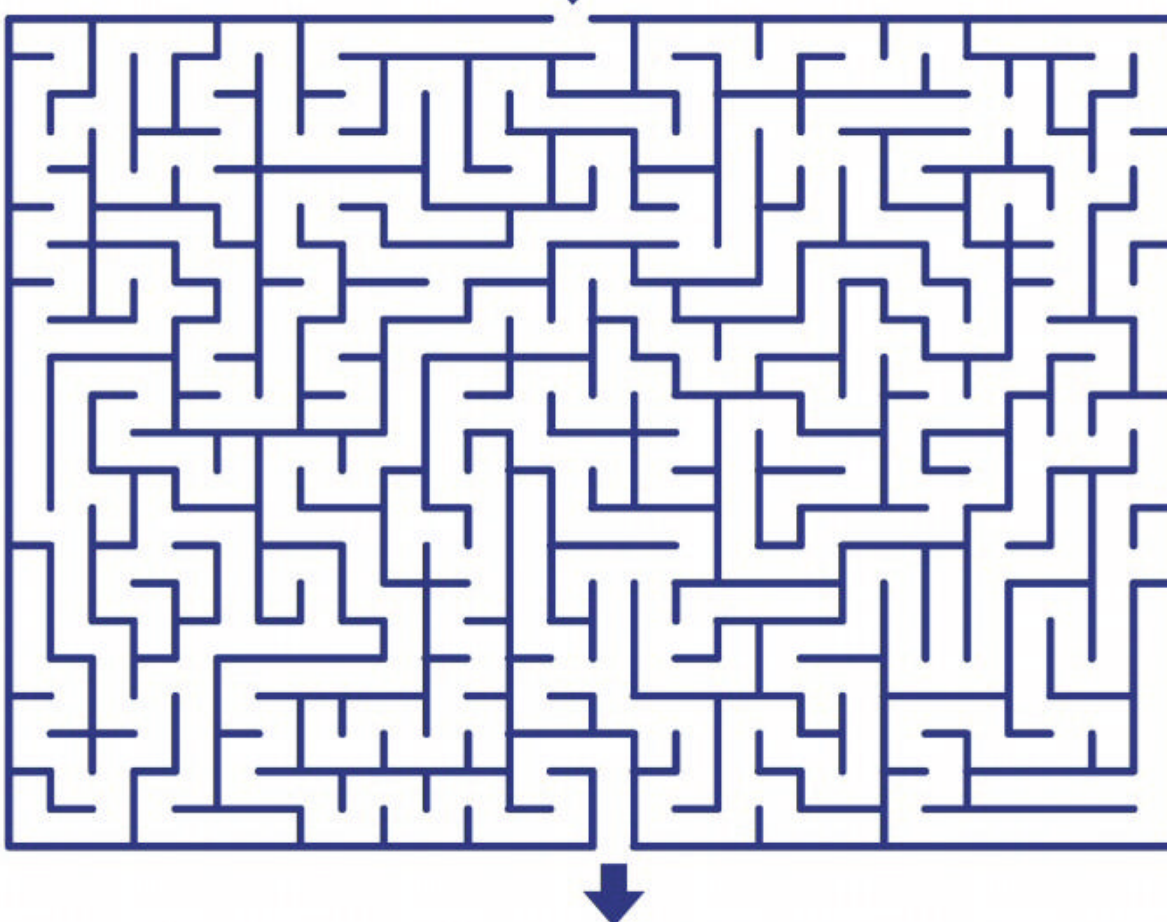
FUN AND GAMES

Slide	Ice cream	Trampoline
Kiosk	Chocolate	Superslide
Jungle gym	Candyfloss	Paintball
Cool drink	Popcorn	Skateboard
Mini golf course	Swings	See-saw
Amusement park	Swimming pool	Climbing wall

Spot the differences



Maze



Animal facts



- There are over 12 000 ant species worldwide including flying ants!
- Ants are the longest-living insects and the queen ant of one particular species can live up to 30 years.
- The ant is one of the world's strongest creatures and can carry 50 times its own bodyweight.
- Male ants have wings and their only purpose is to mate with the queen.
- The bullet ant is said to have the most painful bite in the world, comparable to being hit by a bullet.

Upping the ante

He has always been under the impression that more power equals more fuel expended. But after much research, **Mic van Zyl** discovered that this needn't be the case and that there may be side effects.

I have been wrestling with the idea of enhancing the power and torque output of my V8 Land Cruiser 76 series station wagon ever since we completed turning it into an off-road touring vehicle.

It has become significantly taller, heavier and wears bigger tyres. It is shaped like a good-looking brick and has a full-length roof rack as well. All of this has had an effect on the performance and, at times, I wish there was just a little bit more power.

This does not happen all the time though and it's really only when overtaking out

on the open road. My daily commute has a mix of about 40 km of stop-start driving in the suburbs and another 40 km of highway driving. The power of the Cruiser is fine here. It is, after all, a utilitarian beast and not a pocket rocket. The experience of driving an old-school 4X4 is one that I enjoy very much.

The sceptics I have spoken to about power upgrades will tell you that you can either get more power or more economy but that they are mutually exclusive. It's one or the other. The tuning gurus will tell you that you can have both and that their particular product or engine map is the best in the West.

I was always under the impression that more power equals more fuel burnt. Upon closer investigating I have come to the realisation that I was somewhat mistaken.

WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE to turbodiesel engines like mine, engine performance enhancement is more of a three-way split. These are mid-range power (essentially torque), fuel economy and emissions. You can have two wins out of the three but the third is going to be a big loss.

Depending on the engine, you can have more power and maintain acceptable levels of economy by leaning out the fuel to air mixture in the engine. The combustion runs hotter with the same fuel equating to more power. Think of a campfire. A stiff breeze will make more flames from the

same wood (fuel). You get the idea.

The problem with this is twofold, however. Emissions go through the roof with a massive increase in NOx gasses being emitted into the atmosphere. I have written about this in previous articles and if you've read them, you'll know that this is really bad for all of us from a health point of view. NOx gasses kill an inordinate amount of people annually worldwide. This increase in power also has a negative, long-term effect on engine life and vehicle reliability. I can attest to this after my recent foray into Ford Ranger ownership.

MY RANGER WILDTRAK was a great truck. Strong, comfortable and very capable.

I miss it often. Sadly though, it let me down more times than I care to recall. I cannot state definitively that the performance upgrade caused all of the issues that I experienced. However, it does not take a rocket scientist to figure out that the failure of the flex plate on the torque converter of my Ranger had to have something to do with the massive power and torque increase produced by the factory-approved upgrade. I am sure that there are many owners of the same vehicle that have power upgrades with no visible ill effects. I was just not that lucky.

I remain hesitant about my Cruiser though. As a vehicle, it will arguably do better than the Ranger with a mild power upgrade but it is still a massive leap of faith for me – too big right now, I fear.

“

The sceptics I have spoken to about power upgrades will tell you that you can either get more power or more economy but that are mutually exclusive. It's one or the other

”

From bush to coral coast



The spectacular palm-covered coastline of Mozambique that was off limits to us South Africans for such a long time, is now once again available for us to explore and enjoy.

DAY 1 We meet at Punda Maria Camp in the northern section of the Kruger National Park, where we will spend our first night camping in tents.

DAY 2 We make our way to the Pafuri Gate, where we cross the border and enter Mozambique. After about 80 kilometres, we reach the village of Mapai, where we cross the Limpopo. (Should the Limpopo be in flood, an alternate route will be considered).

DAY 3 Early to rise and, after a hearty breakfast, we break up camp and continue on to Machaila, then the town of Mabote and lastly on to our destination at Inhassoro. At Inhassoro we'll be sleeping in chalets almost on the beach with a view of Bazaruto Bay where we will enjoy the evening together.

DAY 4 We take a boat trip to the beautiful Paradise Island and hopefully get to see dolphins and turtles in the crystal clear water of the Bazaruto Sanctuary with its bounty of marine life. In the late afternoon we return to our camp as the sun sets over the palm-lined beaches of the mainland.

DAY 5 Today we head north onto the

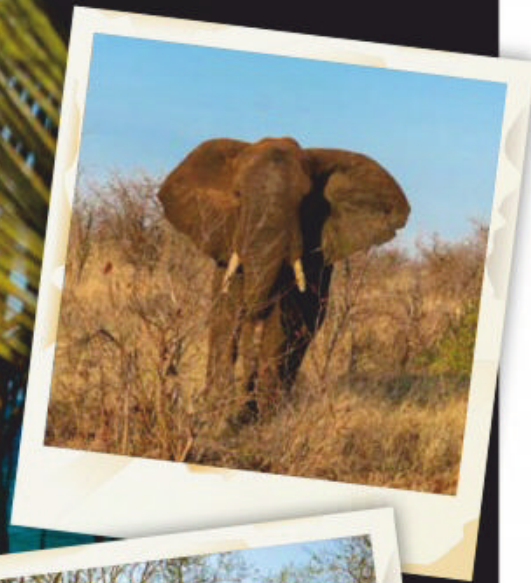
Inhassoro peninsula, driving along the top of the dunes, with the sea on our right and the lagoon to our left. Here again we explore the coastline, snorkel and swim.

DAY 6 We have the whole day to relax. As our beach driving permits are still valid, those of you who want to head up the beach will be more than welcome to do so. Or you might want to go shopping in Vilanculos – it can be a very interesting and fun excursion.

DAYS 7 & 8 We have a long drive down to our campsite, just north of the town of Xai Xai. Here we spend two nights camping and have a day to relax and enjoy the magnificent coast.

DAY 9 From Xai Xai, we head inland towards Masingir and enter the new Limpopo Transfrontier Park at its southern gate. We spend about two hours driving through the park and camp at a magnificent campsite overlooking the Masingir Dam.

DAY 10 After breakfast, we sadly say our goodbyes and you make your way back into the Kruger National Park via the nearby Giryondo border post, just north of Letaba.



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Adapt or die

Camping resorts need to change if they wish to survive, says **Neels van Heerden**.

The current business model for campsites is to charge sky-high rates during peak season (such as the December holidays), thereby extorting the camper who doesn't holiday at other times of the year. There are only a handful of caravan parks that have a revenue stream throughout the year, but even they struggle to stay afloat.

I was surprised when I saw a popular seaside resort recently offering a 20% discount for bookings between

10 December and 5 January. The rate is normally just under R1 000 pn for four people, then adjusted to just over R780 pn.

And so I wonder what the reaction will be among campers who paid the higher rate months ago already. This resort required a booking deposit of R3 000 for the 2019 season. If you wanted to keep your specific stand, you had to pay the deposit at the end of your previous holiday already.

This is understandable: a number of deposits at the end of the previous high season create a cash flow to carry the resort through the low-income times. Time will tell how consumer behavior will be affected by such discount promotions.

ANOTHER FACTOR that badly affects coastal resorts is the unbridled partying and tumult on nearby main beaches. For decades, campers have known that you don't go anywhere near a main beach on a public holiday.

A friend who lives south of Durban says disturbances, conflict and public indecency are now an almost daily occurrence on most main beaches. Every morning, local residents help pick up broken bottles near the shore.

One such a resort, one that has private access to a swimming beach, charges around R400 pppn, which amounts to R1 600 pn for four people. This, of course, compares poorly to the above promotional rate of R780 a night. The question is whether the almost double tariff will be

absorbed by those who prefer access to a private beach.

Charging excessively high rates also doesn't work when you look at the buzz on social media. Suddenly, I see large numbers of campers looking almost pleadingly for people to take over their reservations. And the interior resorts don't look to be benefiting from empty coastal resorts.

Around November last year, social media was agog at the news of the many resorts that still had space available for the December holidays.

YET IT IS NOT only the economy and the noisy, messy day visitors contributing to this sad state of affairs. I know of more than one incident where property owners and managers cause their own demise.

People forget that we live in the age of social media, and that it's a potential enemy to any business that doesn't know how to communicate on these platforms.

The latest incident was at a popular resort in Gauteng where the conversation between management and a prospective camper got so explosive, it all detonated on social media. And it was no surprise that most people sympathised with the camper and not the resort. It's hard to recover from something like that.

The consumer is king, but the weak economy requires sober thinking and reflection on how to create an adaptable yet profitable business model that will ensure long-term survival.

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People forget that we live in the age of social media, and that it's a potential enemy to any business that doesn't know how to communicate on these platforms

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One 'Hel' of an adventure

Her father has always had a knack for turning mundane trips into epic adventures. And now he has roped her husband into it as well, says **Elza Human**.

We grew up on stories of my dad, Roelof, and his adventures in his VW Beetle. We'd ask about photos of him and my mother, Dalena, touring Namibia in a Fiat and caravan. Most stories about my dad include some manner of wheels. My mom has always said that if she had wheels, my dad would have traded her in or sold her long ago!

So it wasn't really a surprise when my dad came up with a 'Hel' of an adventure...

MY FATHER'S PLAN was to tackle Gamkaskloof – or Die Hel – with his 150 cc Vuka scooter. I've heard of men who start acting strange in their middle years, but at that point my dad was already 70 and so we couldn't attribute this to a midlife crisis.

You'd probably have to look far for someone who would take this adventure as seriously as my dad, but not us. My husband, Anton, is also an explorer at heart who rarely turns down a challenge and likes to hit unknown dirt roads.

And so begins the story of my dad taking his son-in-law to Die Hel on a scooter.

Anton had to look for a scooter because his KTM 990 was not approved by dad for this adventure. We searched the internet and finally decided on a Yamaha 100 cc bike in Malmesbury. We did our research, and then we saw it described as Yamaha's 'big-wheel scooter' and even as 'the ultimate off-road machine'. It definitely

seemed to be the right wheels for job.

Now planning could start in earnest. The men had to decide what they could take on the ride and how they would cross streams. The plans varied: they could lift the scooters up on their back wheels or carry them or even use an inflatable mattress to get them to the other side...

ONE OCTOBER MORNING, the scooters took off from the Kanga Mountain Resort. Two Pajeros (both with 3,2 l diesel engines) followed as support vehicles – my in-laws, Richard and Emmie, in one, and my mother, our seven-month-old daughter, Lienka, with me in the other.

It was a beautiful bright sunshiny day, a grace we would only really appreciate the following day. The area is spectacular and you absolutely have to stop every so often to take pictures.

The Yamaha stayed behind my dad's Vuka. We could watch the two-stroke engine's blue smoke from afar. The first 20 km was the Swartberg Pass. It's a rough dirt road, but the enthusiasm was high and everyone felt brave.

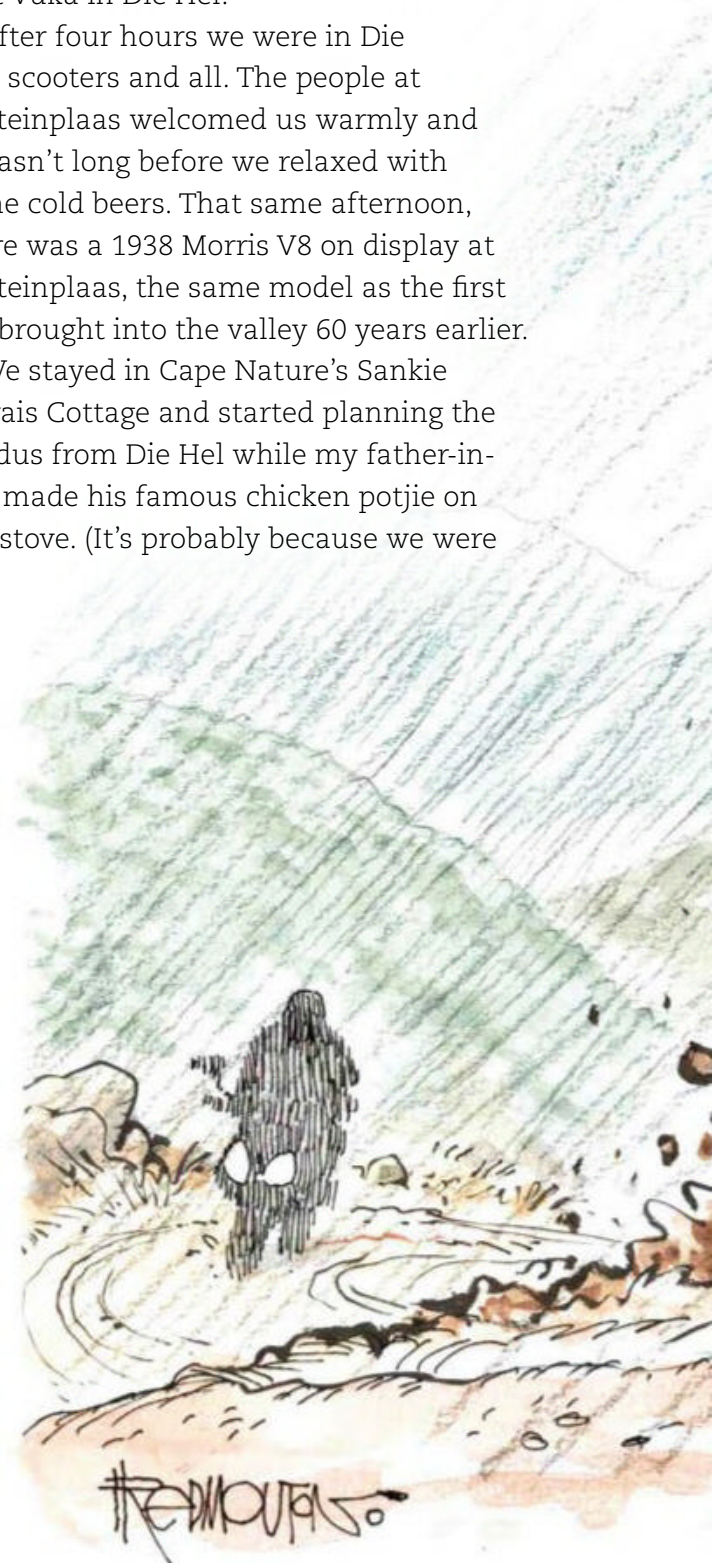
After breakfast, we were ready for the next 50 km – the road into the Gamkaskloof. They drove across the Gamkaskloof Pass and Eland Pass and realised that, unlike in the Bible, the path to this Hel is anything but wide.

Speaking of Die Hel, we should have expected the snake, too. When dad saw the big Cape cobra undulating across the road,

he barely looked back at his son-in-law before he let rip. We only caught up with that Vuka in Die Hel.

After four hours we were in Die Hel, scooters and all. The people at Fonteiplaas welcomed us warmly and it wasn't long before we relaxed with some cold beers. That same afternoon, there was a 1938 Morris V8 on display at Fonteiplaas, the same model as the first car brought into the valley 60 years earlier.

We stayed in Cape Nature's Sankie Marais Cottage and started planning the exodus from Die Hel while my father-in-law made his famous chicken potjie on the stove. (It's probably because we were



watching that chicken potjie so carefully that we missed the baboon who came to steal bread from the kitchen.)

THE NEXT MORNING, we left early on the winding road out the valley. The weather changed and suddenly there was rain in the sky. The scooters want to go faster, but it was difficult with the rear wheels slipping to the side. I watched from behind as my dad's takkies turned into brake shoes.

At Skelmdraai, we caught up with the scooters. By now it was freezing cold. The

wind and rain made it hard to see ahead. Anton and my dad were shivering so hard that their teeth were chattering. They battled to take off their helmets to take a sip of coffee.

We all looked at each other slightly concerned and wondered who was closest to being in big trouble. But there was no question of turning back or surrendering. I was convinced we'd find a man next to his scooter in the mud in a few kilometres. Driving that road on a nice sunny day with a scooter is already quite a task. These were challenging weather conditions for

good off-roaders – and therefore ridiculous conditions if you were on a scooter.

Eventually, just before the chills really set in, my dad and Anton arrived at Kobus se Gat. They stood, warming their hands on the heaters as they thawed while we brought them coffee.

Afterward, we checked the extent of damage to the scooters – it was surprisingly minimal. The Vuka's battery cable screws had to be tightened and one rear light bulb wasn't working, while the Yamaha only blew a light bulb after a water crossing.

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When dad saw the big Cape cobra undulating across the road, he barely looked back at his son-in-law before he let rip.

We only caught up with that Vuka in Die Hel

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WHAT, THEN, WOULD be the appropriate conclusion to such an adventure? First, a good shot of gratitude for being healthy enough to take it on, and having family and friends who are foolish and brave enough to join you. Of course, there's also the prospect of the next adventure... maybe the Cederberg Postal Route or even the Sani Pass? Only time will tell... 🐾



Highly charged Volksie bus

Tired of that beloved classic camper chugging down excessive amounts of fuel at the pumps? An American company can now retrofit a modern electric powertrain to get your green credentials up to scratch.

There are a number of electric vehicle manufacturers enjoying the spotlight as the global automotive industry looks to shed its emissions footprint and appeal to carbon-conscious consumers who want to leave the planet in a better state.

But what about those classic vehicles garaged lovingly that get frowned upon by the Greta Thunberg tribe of environmentalists? Well that's where US-based electric vehicle conversion specialists EV West come in, because they have established a name for themselves by kitting out old models, including Porsche 911s, Toyota MR2s and VW Beetles for the 21st century and beyond by removing the dirty old internal combustion motors and replacing them with energy efficient electric engines.

EV West's conversions are so detailed and professionally done that the firm caught the eye of Volkswagen of America, who

commissioned the company to build an electrified 1972 Volkswagen Type 2 Bus – known affectionately on our side of the Atlantic as a Volksie bus. The catch was that they had to use a donor engine from VW's own e-Golf.

"Their passion for classic-car culture and commitment to renewable energy made EV West the ideal choice for this project. We thought, who better to see if the e-Golf powertrain would be the perfect fit for our older vehicles. It's great to see that the spirit of hot rodding is going to live on into the electric age," says Volkswagen of America's Mathew Renna.

The 2017 e-Golf powertrain slots into the rear compartment under the luggage tray, where the standard 45 kW air-cooled four-cylinder engine used to reside, while the 38 kWh battery system is housed in custom

fireproof compartments under the front seats where the old fuel tank used to sit. While the performance of the 100 kW

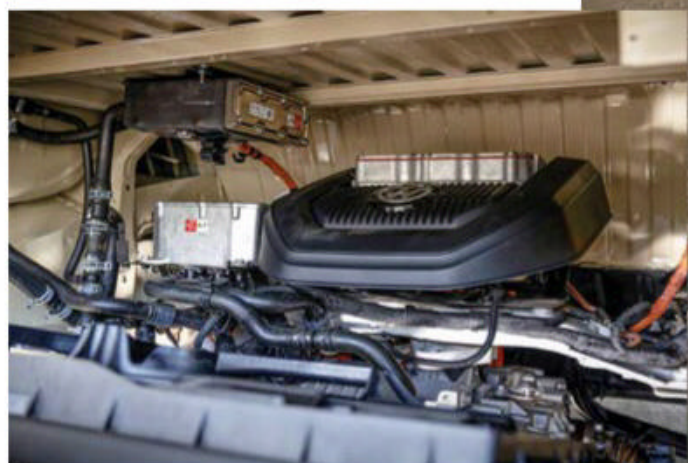
and 270 Nm engine undoubtedly makes acceleration on the Type 2 a lot more exciting, the important part is that the distance range is in the region of 300 km – depending on your driving style, of course.

Little has changed inside the Type 2, save for a long throw shifter that now selects park, reverse neutral and drive modes (the old Volksies were manual, remember?) and they've also added an analogue EV gauge that suits the classic style of the interior.

"We are very excited to be a part of this project. Merging an historic model from an iconic brand with the technology of today, is just one of many ways that we can step closer to a more sustainable future while continuing to enjoy our rich automotive heritage," says EV West founder Michael Bream. 🚗



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



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