

#27

READER STORY OFF-ROAD CONVOY IN BOTSWANA

OCTOBER 2019 | ISSUE 27 | WWW.WEG.CO.ZA

go! **Drive & Camp**

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Next trip: motorhome!

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Onverwags is an
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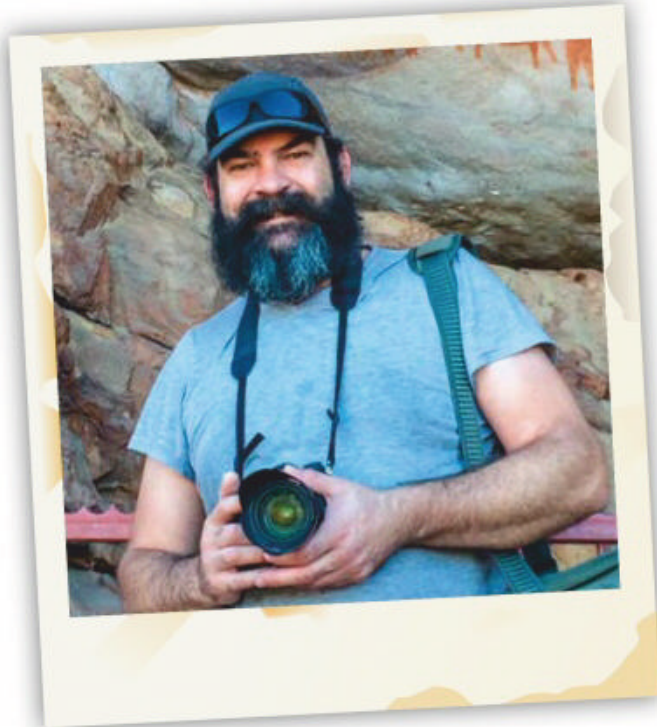
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Get out there!



“

You should never pass up on a chance to get out there and experience something wonderful

”

Anita Botes from Witbank said something this month in the My spot article (page 62) that stuck with me.

Together with her partner Johan, Anita says she goes away at least twice a month and prefers visiting destinations close by – within a radius of 200 km. She also asks why you would want to sleep at home when you can enjoy nature, sunsets and the outdoors?

She hits the nail on the head, of course, and it's particularly true during this time of year. Why would you stay home when, no matter where you live, there's somewhere within a two-hour drive where you haven't been yet? You already have all the outdoor gear you need, after all. And even if you don't have the equipment, you can always make a plan and rent it, as the Camp Boffin explains on page 96. So, why are you staying put?

Goodness knows, we all deserve a break. It's October, we're in the final stretch of 2019, and I can guarantee you we're going to start hearing “*Come they told me, pa ram pam pam pam*” in the malls within a week or three, announcing the start of the end of the year.

I understand the temptation to stay in your pyjamas after a long and arduous week, close the curtains, turn off your phone and veg out in front of the TV. But you should never pass up on a chance to get out there and experience something wonderful.

Which weekend will you remember one day? The one hiding out in your TV room? Or the time when, at the spur of the moment, you loaded your family and your camping gear into the car to look at the Big Five in Dinokeng?

I think you know the answer.

Safe travels!

Schalk

REDAKTEUR

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MEDIA24



#27 COVER IMAGE – KYLE KOCK

“It’s not easy camping with a motorhome, depending on how you look at it. In this case, once we had parked at our campsite, the family wanted to stay put for the weekend. That meant I couldn’t drive around looking for settings for the photographs of the motorhome I needed for the article. But my patience paid off because as we were leaving the resort early on the Sunday, I realised that the backdrop of bright canola fields and blue skies would be picture perfect.”

Settings F8; 1/1 250 s; ISO 400; 4.8; 31 mm



SOFT JEWELS. I deliberately softened the foreground by widening the aperture and thereby drawing attention to the caravan. Our eyes tend to linger on images of flowers but I thought the abandoned caravans along the West Coast were far more intriguing.

PHOTO **CYRIL KLOPPER**

The All New!



GRAVELLOR

This popular island bed layout is now available in a gravel road caravan. Features a large double door 12v fridge, built-in 75ltr water tank with monitor, 220v and gas geyser, shower facility, Victron smart charging to a 105amp/hr battery, 12v LED lighting and full modular side tent!

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Nothing wrong with Land Rover

Some people – and that includes certain friends – always have disparaging comments when they see you driving a Land Rover.

My wife Annamarie bought a new Discovery Sport HSE in 2015 that now has 45 000 km on the clock. This vehicle is an absolute pleasure and so far, hasn't given us any problems.

We recently drove it to Namibia to attend the sixtieth birthday celebrations of friends at Sossusvlei. While there, we had to drive through thick sand on our way to Deadvlei. We switched to sand mode and proceeded without any issues. And that's when one of our friends – in a Lexus LX – got stuck.

From Sossusvlei, we drove to Walvis Bay. We went through Solitaire, on one of the worst roads I have ever experienced. I was very impressed with the Disco and once again there were no problems, and the rest of trip to Erindi and Windhoek went as smoothly.

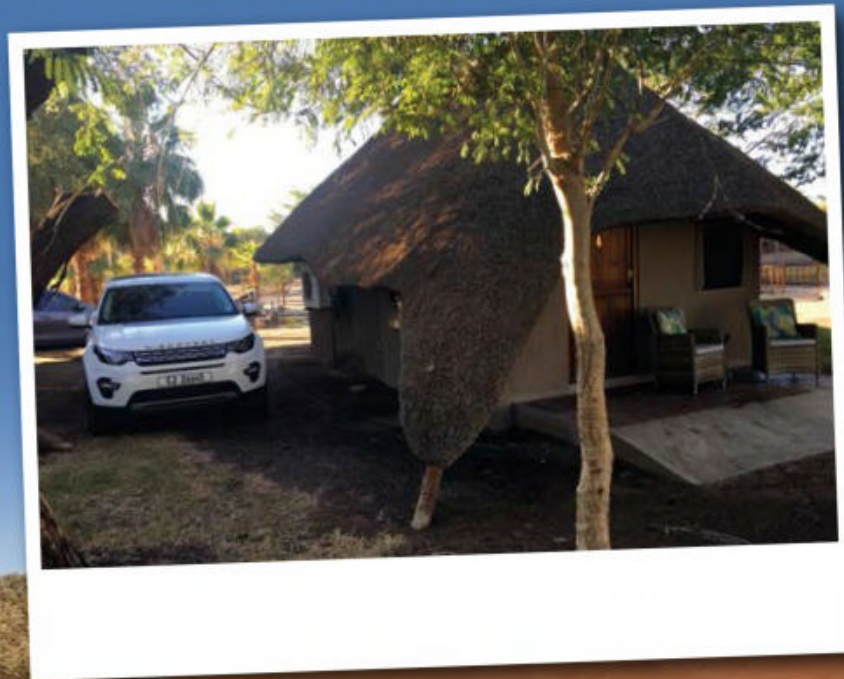
I drive a Volkswagen Touareg myself and I'm equally satisfied with it.

SMITTIE DE VILLIERS
Paarl

By the way, Smittie is Giniel's dad... and we know what he drives! – Ed



We love hearing what you have to say! Please write to us at drivecamp@gomag.co.za and do remember to provide your full address and contact details. *go! Drive & Camp* reserves the right to edit and abbreviate letters – and to publish them in the magazine, on the website and elsewhere.



WINNING
LETTER



Smittie 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.



f Facebook comments

Speaking of Land Rovers, here's what our Facebook friends had to say about the brand:



Mathys Johannes Mathey

Everyone always has something to say about Land Rovers leaking oil. My reply would be that a Landy is merely marking its territory. I had a Discovery that never leaked any oil though.



Henri Henri Conradie

When Land Rover owners braai, the topic is usually about hunting, camping and fishing. When Toyota owners braai, they talk about Land Rovers.



Andre Ros

If a Toyota was only half as good as all the Land Rover jokes, I would buy a Toyota.



Llandy Bardner

Have any of you heard all the crazy jokes about Ford? The Land Rover guys don't have to feel bad.



Klasie Itireleng Olivier

Someone who speaks negatively about a Landy usually owns a company car.



Gerhard Human

I love Landys myself, but do you know why they always use Land Rovers in the Camel Trophy? Apparently, it was to make the contest even tougher.



Werner Barkhuizen

Put a cat in a Mercedes-Benz ML with all the windows rolled up for an hour, and it will suffocate (two hours in a BMW X5). Put the cat in a Land Rover and after 15 minutes the cat will have escaped.



Roelof van der Breggen

I've stopped at many places and saw people admiring and taking pics of my Landy. I've never seen a stranger take photo of someone else's Japanese car. Then you know you just have to laugh at the jokes, because you have something they don't have.



Sarel Jacobsz

A Landy is the only "green" vehicle you get, because it puts the oil back into the earth.



Johan Buys

I also love a luxury 4x4, but unfortunately I have to be able to get everywhere. Land Rover is a lifestyle, and if you don't have one, you won't understand. I own a 2004 TD5 with 554 000 km on the clock – it's a workhorse matched by few.



Armand Steyn Smith

My Land Rover doesn't leak oil; it simply self-lubricates the chassis.



Kobus Vermeulen

A Land Rover doesn't leak oil; it sweats power.



Gert Engelbrecht

A friend gave me a nice Land Rover jacket the other day, but it leaked oil in the wardrobe. I had a Land Rover myself and towed a boat with it. It's by far the best boat towing vehicle ever..



Piet Leeu

What do you call a Land Rover with two exhaust pipes? A wheelbarrow.



Carel Sebastiaan

I don't know what all the fuss is about. My Landy has 400 000 km on the clock: 200 000 km on the road and 200 000 km on the back of a flatbed.



Chris en Alida Laing

It's just like our Jeep. Nobody can tell us we didn't buy a good vehicle because the Jeep has already done many kilometres. The same goes for Defenders. You get some with problems and some without. Enjoy your Defender if it gives you good service!



Dup du Preez

In the Land Rover manual you will find a bus schedule on page one.



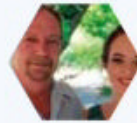
Konrad Myburgh

Land Rovers don't have engine numbers, just expiration dates.



Johan Coertze

There are only two man-made things on earth that you can see from space: The Great Wall of China and the crack in a Land Rover's engine block.



Sontie Bruwer

I love my Landy and participate in all the jokes – sometimes making a joke at my expense.



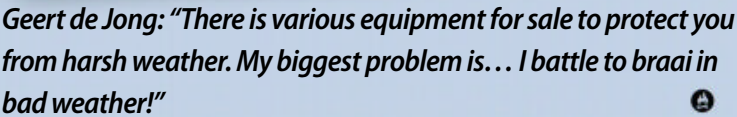
Maarten Kruyshaar

That's what makes life beautiful. You can still make jokes about someone else's vehicle. But hear me out, Mahindra stays the best!



Just after passing, we encountered more lions. One came walking down in the middle of the road. When I stopped, he walked past us and lay down behind our off-road caravan, a Bushwakka. Fortunately, my sister Margaret and her husband Sias Rabie were driving behind us and were able to capture the moment on camera.

Earlier this year, we ran an article on how to camp in inclement weather. **Geert de Jong** says he has worse problems than worrying about sleeping comfortably.



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Upon reflection

Madelein Marais lives in George and when the opportunity for a beautiful photo presents itself, she waits for just the right moment before pressing the button.

"I took this photo at the George Dam. My husband, Willem, and I were walking along the dam that day when I saw people rowing on the water. I realised it would make a great photo and stood behind a tree branch. As they passed, I took the photo."

In the photo, Madelein – probably unwittingly – breaks some rules of photography. But she does it in such a way that she turns it all into a solid and good overall composition.

Having the focal point right in the middle of the photo is usually not the best idea, let alone the wake disturbing the water – also centred.

The photo has several other strong compositional elements that subtly draw attention away from the centre and then balance it all. The branch – in the front right of the photo – covers almost a third of the image, but behind the busy twigs you can still see enough of the detail beyond. Even though these twigs have a lot of detail, you can easily see through them because of the clean and clear reflection behind it on the water. The vegetation on the opposite side of the dam forms a solid strip of detail on the third line, and the mountains in the background give the photo its ultimate depth.

The silent winners are the twigs in the other three corners. This applies to a lesser extent to the one on the front left, where the one on the top left rounds off the good composition. It's as if these twigs, like fingers, direct your attention back to the centre.



Nostalgia

Four of our readers turn back the clock with a great moment in front of the lens.

By **Leon Botha**

SEND US YOUR PICTURES

to us 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. **Madelein Marais** wins a *go! Drive & Camp* camera bag worth R520 with her photo – congratulations, Madelein!

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

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Panned late lunch

If he has to, he'll even lie down on the ground to take a good picture, says **Bert Kruyswijk** of Rustenburg.

"One afternoon during a visit to Botswana we had an impromptu skottel braai on Kubu Island. We simply grabbed what we needed at our campsite and drove to the pan. There, we realised we forgot the matches. But there was much more to the day than just that.

At one point, I moved away from the group and lay down on my stomach to take this photo. In the photo you can see the kids playing with their wire cars. It's my daughter, Lizelle, and her husband, Pratish Keshav's children: Dhyen, Arun and Jaiden. My wife, Erika, was also there.

The photo is submitted straight off my phone and I made absolutely no changes to the image."

It's a poignant photo and has three strong elements that work together: the overpowering black, the strong orange stripe and the silhouette shapes of the people, bakkie and camping chairs.

Thanks to Bert's explanation, you can easily imagine the situation, and it's moments like these that makes you look forward to your next holiday.

Unfortunately, the fussier among us are likely to delete the photo



Samsung J5 Pro

from our phones because it is not very sharp. But that makes you take a longer look at the pic while trying to understand the interactions between the figures. The photograph therefore has such an abstract value that it resembles a work of art. It reminds you of the well-known British photographer Julia Margaret Cameron who was criticised for her "soft focus". But it was more of a technique as she has been described as one of the most remarkable portrait photographers of the nineteenth century.



Nikon D500

Homeward bound

She's never without her camera, says **Amanda van Blerk** from Bethlehem. What if a stunning scene is waiting just around the corner?

"Slowly driving out of Clarens in the Free State in the late afternoon usually produces good photo opportunities.

Initially, I tried to shoot some kids on a local soccer pitch, but eventually returned to my car. It was then that I saw workers from all over going back to their homes for the night. The light was beautiful; it was also the right place and time. This photo is the embodiment of the Free State countryside."

Human figures in a photo immediately grab your attention, and here Amanda uses it on more than one level. Of course, the two people on the right are the focal point and you can see they're chatting as they walk. As soon as you see them, you notice the next figure close to them in the background, and then your eye jumps to the person on the far left. It is at this point that you stand back and understand the scene better as you see the rest of the figures in the background.

The light adds to the atmosphere and as the sun shines from behind; it emphasises the smoke in the background. It also lights one side of the people and seems to draw a bright line down the sides of the figures. When this works, it works well, but then you just have to be careful of a lens flare when the sun shines directly onto your lens.

Family tree

At a waterhole, **JM Wolfaard** from Midstream in Centurion keeps his lens ready not only for big game, but also for birds.

"I took the photo during our visit to the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park. It was a cold morning just after sunrise. All the sparrows scrambled for a spot of sun on the tree stump next to the Kwang waterhole."

The sparrows sit in a row as if they're being served on a sosatie stick and you can just imagine the chattering among themselves as each one clings to a place.

The selective focus works well because only the birds are in focus and the background forms all the negative space in the photo. That's because JM used a large aperture (f6,3). Should the background contain more detail (if, for example, you increased the lens aperture toward f22), it would disturb the focal point and detract from the photo.

Once again, composition plays a decisive role. Even though the stump is at the bottom of the centre line, it goes up to where it leans to the right. Along with the dark sections in the background, it balances neatly with the light side (the left side of the photo) making it a pleasant photo.



Canon EOS 550D

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AARTO in effect



President Cyril Ramaphosa signed the AARTO Bill on 13 August 2019. This law, officially titled Article 4 of 2019, was published in the Government Gazette (number 42748) on 19 August, and according to Transport Minister Fikile Mbalula, it will help curb the massacre on our roads.

The legislation is based on a points system and, in a nutshell, involves losing your driver's license when you accumulate a certain amount of points over a given period. It's complicated, but in short, you should know:

- Each driver starts with 0 points as soon as AARTO comes into effect.
- 1 to 6 points will be awarded to a driver depending on the offense. If a driver reaches 12 points, his driver's license is temporarily suspended. After three suspensions, the license is withdrawn.
- Drivers must apply to renew a driver's license after each suspension.

- Overdue fines will prevent a driver's license from being renewed.
- One point will be deducted from a driver's record after every three months.
- Traffic officials may issue fines electronically and send reminders via WhatsApp messages or SMS.
- An appeals tribunal will be set up to hear objections and pleas.

Various points will be awarded to specific offenses such as drunken driving (6 points), driver's license expired (4 points), 81km/h in a 60 zone (2 points) and disregarding traffic lights (1 point).

"People must know when they see a police officer that the laws must be respected. Not even an attempt must be made to bribe an officer," said Mbalula.

According to road traffic law expert Alta Swanepoel, who made a significant contribution to the new bill, the next

steps will be the following:

- to publish a proclamation with the implementation date of the amendment Act and the date AARTO will become effective in the other areas in SA (already in force in Tshwane and Johannesburg), and.
- to publish the set of regulations that addresses the new and amended provisions covered in the Amendment Act, such as the appeals tribunal, electronic service, rehabilitation programmes, etc.

Alta says she will host workshops where interested parties can learn how AARTO works. The dates are as follows:

- **May 26, 2020 - Stellenbosch (Protea Hotel Techno Park)**
- **May 28, 2020 - Durban (Garden Court, Marine Parade)**
- **June 10, 2020 - Pretoria (CSIR)**

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Hoefer broadens its horizons

The Eswatini government (formerly Swaziland) has officially welcomed Hoefer as a caravan manufacturer in the country. Charles Hoefer is the CEO of this manufacturer. The event was attended by, among others, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Trade Manqoba Khumalo and US Ambassador to Eswatini Lisa Peterson.

The event also coincided with the release of Hoefer's second model now being exported to South Africa. Hoefer made its entrance earlier this year at the Camp and Destination show with its Azzero caravan. For its size, it is the lightest caravan available on our roads, and Charles followed the same recipe with his second model. It comes in two configurations: the StradaX with an extra-large lounge and the NevadaX with a bathroom.

The island bed on the nose side is built in on both models. The rears of the caravans differ though. Instead of the large lounge area at the back of the StradaX, the NevadaX has a smaller living area with a section cordoned off for a bathroom.

This size caravans seen on our roads are usually equipped with a pop-up roof, but the Hoefer range sticks to solid roofs. Of course, it ensures a stronger body and the material is so strong you can walk on the roof (*not that you should – Ed*). Both models' tare weight is under a tonne, and with a GVM of 1 300 kg you can tow it with a medium-sized vehicle.

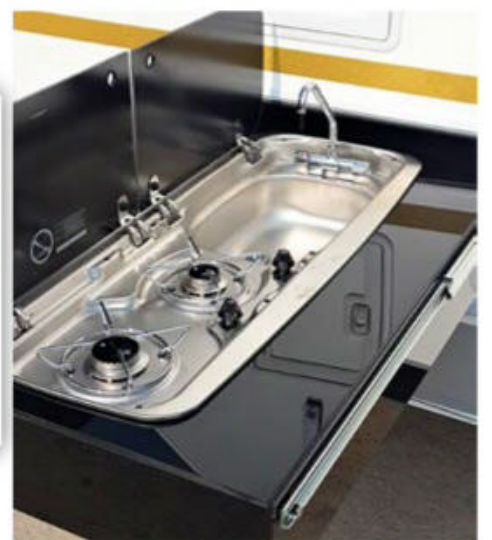
Charles says he will also export some of the new models to America, he already has an order. The first consignment of 20 should be shipped by February, but they are being adapted for the US market. From the outside, they look similar, but the interior layout changes. The island bed goes to one side and the kitchen also moves to the inside.

The numbers StradaX 5 (l) x 2,42 (w) x 2,65 m (h); tare weight 915 kg; GVM 1 300 kg; R344,000, NevadaX 5.7 (l) x 2,42 (w) x 2,65 m (h); tare weight 935 kg; GVM 1 300 kg; R391 300

Contact 013 697 5121 gccaravans.co.za

michael@gcgympsey.co.za

(The Hoefer caravans are only available at GC Caravans in Witbank, but delivered nationwide free of charge.)



KEY PEOPLE Kin Kine (Hoefer's production manager), Andrea Kine (president of Hoefer), Manqoba Khumalo (Eswatini Minister of Commerce, Industry and Trade), Lisa Peterson (US ambassador) and Charles Hoefer (CEO Hoefer) . . . and a photobomber.



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La-di-da Defender?

We have long been waiting for the new Land Rover Defender. Until recently, we only had spy pics of a camouflaged Defender 90, and these pics were mostly taken on tarred roads, with relatively little proof of the new Defender in the wild. Camouflaged Defenders abound on race tracks, though. One such Defender 90 went round and round the racetrack in front of baffled spectators at the Goodwood Festival of Speed in the UK in July this year, and it was also repeatedly spotted at the Nürburgring Nordschleife in Germany.

We are delighted that Land Rover is improving its new Defender's road-holding ability, but the proportion of time it spends on the racetrack compared to in the bush confirms our suspicion that Land Rover

has embraced its newfound reputation as a luxury vehicle rather than a hard-core off-roader.

This was how we felt before we saw a recent photo of a Defender 110 – without camouflage – on Instagram. An anonymous photographer apparently took the photo on the set of the upcoming James Bond film and shared it with friends, and it soon found its way onto the internet.

It's not a given that the movie and production versions will be the same vehicle, though. The movie version has excellent ground clearance, there appears to be a winch in the front bumper (possibly just a prop), tread plate on the bonnet and the traditional Alpine window at the rear in the cant rail.

What we do know is that there will be three body derivatives; the short 90, a longer 110 and an eight-seater 130. By the time you read this the defender will have been launched at the Frankfurt Motor Show, and we can't wait to see how soft or tough the Defender is. We sincerely hope that Gerry McGovern, Land Rover's chief designer and a man who loves designer suits and satin handkerchiefs, remembers that form should follow function when it comes to a Defender, and not the other way around. The photo supposedly taken on the film set does give us hope, but we're holding out for a desert sand, base model Defender without a 12-inch touchscreen, but with steel rims, thinnish "tractor" tyres and a roof rack stacked with braai wood.



Topwolf now at Tentco

Tentco has now expanded its carrying bag range with the imported Topwolf New York range.

As you would expect from such a durable brand, the bags are made of sturdy 450 g canvas, and you can choose between five types: from a shoulder bag in which you can fit a water bottle or two with some snacks to a large duffel bag that is 65 cm long and 33 cm and 25 cm wide and high. There is also a backpack in the range. The price ranges from R350 to R550.

Contact ☎ 011 397 6451/2 🌐 tentco.co.za ✉ info@tentco.co.za

Caravans become 'transparent'

You will soon be able to see straight through your caravan as you reverse it into a tight campsite. No, it's not magic, but rather a clever combination of hardware and software.

American carmaker GMC uses a 15-camera network that allows more than a 360 degree view. The technology is currently only available in the GMC Sierra (not the most attractive bakkie in the world) and the Yanks seem satisfied with the system so far.

Here's how it works: when you engage reverse gear, you turn on two cameras: one on the back of the bakkie and a second camera on the back of your caravan. The scene that the camera on the back of your vehicle sees is displayed on the touch screen inside the cabin, but the scene that the camera on the back of the caravan sees is superimposed on top of the first scene with smart software but only where the caravan should be.

The result is that the caravan appears invisible, with only an outline of the caravan so you don't get a fright and think you've lost it somewhere along the way.

And that's only two of the cameras. Others show an image from above the tow bar. There are also cameras on either side of the

vehicle so you can see what's happening next to your caravan. There is even a camera inside the caravan for when you want to see if everything is still where you packed it, and not sliding around on the floor - this is obviously also useful when towing a horse trailer and you want to check on Golden Irish, your Sun Met trophy winner.



Toyota's off-road bus

Two years ago, in October 2017, Toyota unveiled a concept vehicle, the TJ Cruiser (not to be confused with the FJ Cruiser), at the Tokyo Motor Show, a vehicle that had motoring journalists buzzing. The FJ Cruiser actually owes its existence to a similar buzz. Fans made such a fuss about that concept car at the 2003 Detroit Motor Show that Toyota turned it into a production model in 2005.

Reports from Japan claim that Toyota is currently working on a pre-production version of the TJ Cruiser that may be unveiled at the Tokyo show in October this year.

In 2017, we saw that the TJ Cruiser may have seven seats, six of which can fold down to create a huge cargo space, or all seven seats so you can convert the interior into a giant bed.

The 2017 concept vehicle was relatively short at 4 300 mm, with a 2 750 mm wheelbase (versus a VW Kombi's 4 904 mm and 3 000 mm), and according to sources, the production version will not deviate far from those modest dimensions.

If the TJ Cruiser is indeed launched this year, it will probably have a hybrid engine and most definitely all-wheel drive. However, there had been no official confirmation from Toyota's head office by the time we went to print. By the time you read this, we should know whether the rumours are true and if a TJ Cruiser with a regular internal combustion engine and proper four-wheel drive will happen.

CAMPING

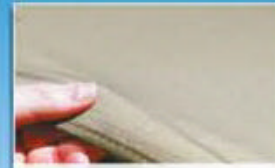
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The Inkunzi sheds weight

In addition to Infanta's Enkulu off-road caravan range, this manufacturer also builds a bakkie camper: the Inkunzi. Infanta has announced that it is now disposing of aluminium as a building material for the popular Inkunzi.

According to the manager Jurie Swart, he decided on a new synthetic material that is considerably lighter. Bakkie camper shells like these can weigh around 750 kg when fully equipped, which of course limits you when you consider the carrying capacity of the bakkie on which it is mounted.

The layout of the new units remains similar to the aluminium models. The remarkable synthetic fabric is imported from Germany and then locally prepared. Jurie doesn't

want to name it, but it's the same material engineers use in the blades of wind turbines. It is then casted and the end result is a super-strong structure that weighs just half of the aluminium model. So the new unit weighs about the same as the bakkie's load bin that is removed to permanently mount

a camper shell. Compared to other models, this has almost no effect on the bakkie's total carrying capacity.

The material is twice the price of aluminium, but Jurie says he will try and keep the price of the Inkunzi as low as possible. The aluminium models currently cost from R350 000 and fit on the chassis of a Ford Ranger, Toyota Hilux and Toyota Land Cruiser.

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Purple mover goes 4x4

Purple Line is world renowned for its caravan movers and has just released its latest model.

Instead of just one drive roller, the new Quattro model has two. However, it looks more like two wheels than drum-like. The roller in conventional movers is predominantly pressed against the centre of the caravan's tyre, while the Quattro's two wheels push closer to the outer edges – but still on the tread – of the tyre. The "old" model's gearbox uses grease as a lubricant, where the Quattro has a sealed gearbox filled with oil. At a gradient of 15%, the Quattro has a 500 kg higher weight power output (2 500 kg versus 2 000 kg), it uses half the electrical power (meaning you can use a smaller battery in the trailer for the mover), the operation is quieter when you measure it from a metre away from the mover (50 dB versus 80 dB) and have a 12% improved speed (18 cm/s versus 16 cm/s).

Of course, caravan movers come in a set (one for each side) and work with a wireless remote control. It uses a smart system where you can even see on the remote if it detects an error somewhere in the system. For example, it can track the power of the battery, and if it picks up a fault, it can tell you where the fault lies.

Contact 012 813 8528 info@purplesa.co.za

info@purplesa.co.za



AA criticises SANRAL



The Automobile Association of South Africa (AA) has called on SANRAL to scrap the e-toll system and refund fines to motorists.

The AA states in an open letter that it conducted a survey of road users and it is clear that motorists will never support the e-toll system. The AA says SANRAL is wasting money by harassing or otherwise trying to convince motorists to cooperate.

The AA made the following demands on SANRAL:

- The immediate cessation of e-toll in Gauteng.
- The immediate refunding of toll fees to those who have paid it to date.
- An increase in the fuel price (each province determines its own fuel price) from which funds for road maintenance is generated.
- The immediate cessation of reminders and harassment by SANRAL to motorists who refuse to pay.

The AA believes that South Africans have lost confidence in SANRAL and that the above measures will help restore confidence. Read the full letter at aa.co.za/insights

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Bringing the 'Boost'

Suzuki ushers in forced induction on the beloved Vitara. And it's not a moment too soon, says **Kyle Kock**.

Can Suzuki do anything wrong at this point? The Japanese automaker, arguably more famous for its motorcycle and boat engines, is sitting on a pretty good wicket in terms of cars.

On the SUV front, it's brought the eagerly anticipated Jimny to our market and is also hitting record sale highs in South Africa. To top it all off, the facelifted Vitara is now available with a turbocharged 1,4 ℓ four-cylinder engine that Suzuki calls "Boosterjet".

The new engine isn't here to replace the 1,6 ℓ normally aspirated engine that's been doing service across the Suzuki lineup for a decade already, but more to supplement the range offering and show that Suzuki's still pushing the edge on the technological front.

Touch up

The current, fourth-generation Vitara was introduced four years ago, but Suzuki refreshed the line-up earlier this year by adding new details including vertical slats on the grille that puts extra emphasis on the brand's "S" logo, enlarged fog lamp recesses and a J-shaped moulding at both ends of the front bumper to house the LED daytime running lights.

Around the back, the bodywork and tailgate have also been fitted with new LED light clusters that mimic the DRLs upfront and, to top it all off, there's also a set of new 17-inch alloy wheels available as an option.

What's the deal with this engine?

It's been available abroad for a number of years already, but Suzuki has only just brought the 1,4 ℓ turbocharged K14C motor to our shores. With our dodgy fuel quality, it makes sense that they keep the venerable M16 1,6 ℓ engine around, because of its proven reliability and robustness.

But rival brands have been keeping up to date with the downsizing trend and adding forced induction to not just make up for the lack of displacement, but also keep performance on par with bigger engines and yet maximise fuel efficiency – so the K14C could not have come too soon. It features direct fuel injection and a minimal overall weight of just 88,6 kg, and is also significantly more compact than the M16 so that the Suzuki engineers could mount it lower down in the engine bay – an improvement also for the Vitara Turbo's centre of gravity.

The local launch route headed southeast from OR Tambo and swung east in the direction of Red Star Raceway in Mpumalanga, where Suzuki would also be introducing the Boosterjet motor in its Swift Sport hatchback.

Behind the wheel, it is immediately apparent that there's quite a decent helping of grunt available low down the rev range – resulting in quick getaways from stops and merging with traffic with just a flex of the right foot.

The torque peak is at just 1 500 rpm and

is available all the way to 4 000 rpm, which is plenty of room to keep the Vitara hustling along. The other noticeable aspect of the drivetrain that should be commended is the six-speed manual gearbox offering smooth and precise shifting and a clutch that's easily modulated. Overall, the experience is so impressive that you have to wonder why the Boosterjet wasn't made available earlier. It's a pleasure to drive and after 50 km of mixed driving scenarios, including a stint on gravel roads, the Vitara's computer was indicating an average of 6,5 ℓ/100 km.

Don't forget the interior niceties

The Vitara's cabin is a comfortable place to be, not least of all because of the climate control, cruise control system with speed limit function, front and rear park distance control and seven-inch touchscreen infotainment system, with integrated Android Auto and Apple CarPlay, that doubles as a screen for the reverse camera. The soft-touch surfaces and modernised digital info screen between the analogue speedometer and tachometer that were part of the updates at the beginning of 2019 are also welcome additions.

The impressive safety specifications includes seven airbags, electronic stability control, and ABS-assisted brakes with EBD and BAS.

Unfortunately, the Allgrip moniker that denotes all-wheel drive eludes the Vitara Turbo in both manual and automatic guise and is still only available with the M16 motor with manual gearbox, but that might be remedied according to demand – especially given how well Suzuki has been performing in South Africa.



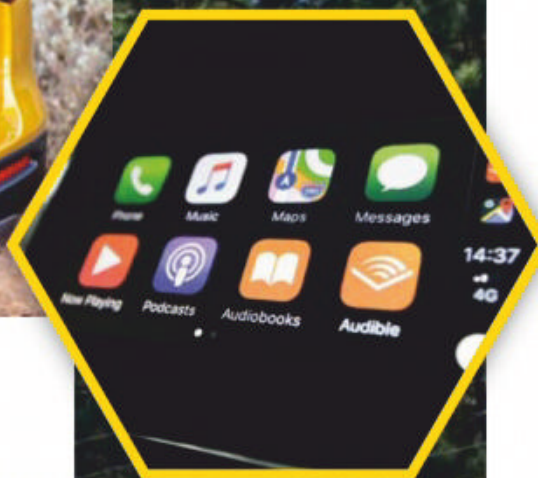
SPECIFICATIONS

Engine	1 373 cc, 4-cylinder, turbopetrol
Power	103 kW @ 5 500 rpm
Torque	220 Nm @ 1 500 rpm
Gearbox	Six-speed manual
Top speed	200 km/h
Fuel consumption	5,8 l/100 km
Tank	47 l
Ground clearance	185 mm
Approach and departure	n/a
Wading depth	n/a
Luggage space	375-1 120 l
Tare weight	1 140 kg
Maximum towing weight	n/a
Safety rating five-star	★★★★★ (Euro NCAP, 2015)
Model tested	Suzuki Vitara 1.4 Turbo GLX

PRICE R378 900



PEP IN ITS STEP The new turbocharged 1,4 litre engine provides the sort of performance that the design deserved all along. The bootspace isn't cavernous, but to be expected from this segment. The 7-inch infotainment screen doubles as the reverse-view monitor.



SUZUKI VITARA



COMPETITORS Manual baby SUVs with poke



R397 200 Mazda CX-3 2,0 Individual

Expensive, but with plenty of bells and whistles. And Mazda's showed it can still be economical with a normally aspirated engine.



R342 600 Ford EcoSport 1,0 Ecoboost Titanium

Helped usher in the crossover craze a few years ago, updated just over a year ago, and powered by an award-winning engine.



R368 575 Opel Mokka X Enjoy 1,4T

One of the models entrusted with turning around the German marque's fortunes and despite being the entry-level version, packs plenty of features..

Jewels along the *West Coast*



Between the Hardeveld's wildflowers and an icy Atlantic Ocean – with the Olifants River to the south and the Spoeg River to the north – lies a beautiful coastal region, and you'll need an off-road vehicle to experience the best of it.

Words and photos **Cyril Kloppe**



The trail starts next to the Olifants River in the small West Coast town of Koekenaap and ends 235 km farther in Hondeklip Bay. When driving up from Cape Town, you'll arrive in this town shortly before noon, and there'll only be enough time to complete a quarter of the route on your first day.

Koekenaap has a general dealer where you can buy basic supplies; if you need fresh bread and vegetables, there are larger shops in Vredendal, 30 km back the way

you came. (By the way, if a guy with ginger hair, a two-tone shirt and a pair of jean shorts in Vredendal tries to convince you that the correct pronunciation is "Koek en aaaap" – yes, the "aap" must be drawn out – don't believe him! The lady at the general dealer will give you the evil eye if you pronounce her town's name in this way.)

Less than a kilometre north of Koekenaap, you'll come across a signpost for the MSR Tormin mine. Here you turn left and follow an excellent dirt road

for exactly 23 km, past an Eskom wind farm, to where the road forks (S31.49390 E18.06061). The superb dirt road veers to the left toward the Tormin mine and to the right runs a smaller sandy track. This track follows the coast and will eventually deliver you in Hondeklip Bay. Remember your camera, because over the next two days you will drive along a picturesque coastline with white beaches and numerous sheltered bays – and, if you time it right, beautiful wildflowers too.



FALSE ICE PLANT (*Herrea elongata*). The route kicks off near an Eskom wind farm (top left) and follows the coast past the Dr Andrew Wright memorial (top right), several abandoned caravans (below) and ends in Hondeklip Bay.

SHORTLY AFTER YOU turn right at the fork, the first of many farm gates awaits. A notice on the gate informs you that you are now entering private property. However, the stern message does not forbid you to enter, as the road is a servitude that serves several farms along the coastline.

After closing the gate behind you, the dirt road takes a long, leisurely curve to the coast. You can manage the dirt road with a family sedan, but there are occasional patches of loose sand and it is advisable to lower your Toyota Corolla's tyre pressure to about 1,8 bar, just in case.

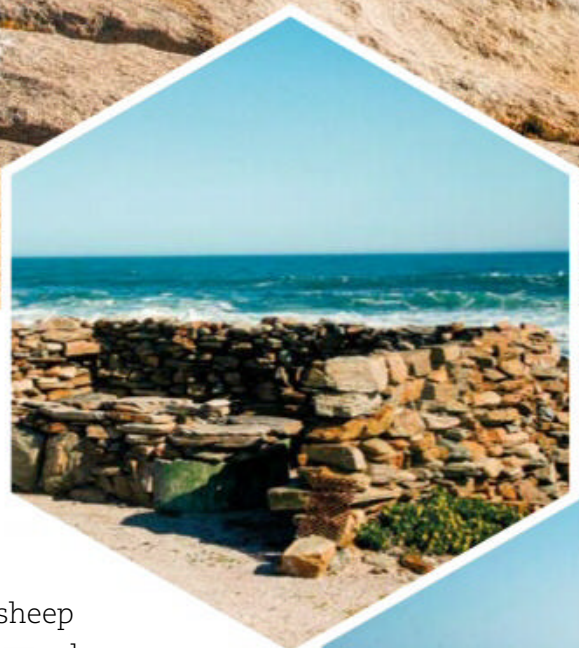
There are several twin tracks that turn off to the beach, and for these you will need a proper four-wheel drive vehicle as the sand is deep and loose. This is why it makes little sense to come here in a sedan since the hard gravel road never comes nearer than 200 m to the beach. If you want to dip your toes in the sea and pitch a tent

next to the beach, you'll absolutely have to bring a 4x4 vehicle.

Reduce the tyre pressure to 1 bar and take the first sandy twin track (S31.47817 E18.01859) to the beach. The first bay where you are allowed to wild camp is called Gert du Toit-se-baai. Here you'll encounter an old Jurgens Fleetline with its wheels removed, one of the many to come. Considering the remarkable view, a caravan could hardly retire at a finer place.

Gert du Toit-se-baai is popular with West Coasters, and you'll see braai places and wind-breaks built by local campers over many years using scree. If you're planning to travel here over the Easter weekend or December, you'll probably have a hard time claiming your own private beach at Gert du Toit-se-baai, because everyone will have the same idea as you. The good news is that there is more than 200 km of coast ahead and you will definitely find an unoccupied





spot. However, if you travel out of season as we did, the entire coastline is yours for the taking.

The veld is verdant and you'll occasionally see the woolly black-and-white bodies of Dorper sheep nibbling on bushes and skipping through the flowers.

Two farm gates further down the road is a fenced-off diamond mining concession where you are not allowed to camp; keep going along the main gravel road to where the fence ends and then aim for the beach again using a twin track. There are dozens of coves where you can pitch your tent or light a fire for an afternoon braai.

About 14 km after the mining camp, you'll come across a road sign that directs you to Brand-se-baai. This informal





campsite was built by locals, and although there are ablution blocks and kitchen facilities, they are usually locked. Technically, you are free to camp here, but if the locals arrive on public holidays or weekends, you'll be asked to move aside, because they'll want to camp next to their mates on the stands they laid out for themselves, and then the facilities that they built will also be unlocked.

Rather leave Brand-se-baai to the locals and continue for another 10 km along the main gravel road until you reach the Salt River. Here the gravel road turns inland to take the locals to their homes in Vredendal, Nuwerus and Garies. Where

the road turns right there is a sandy twin track that heads left (S31.22360 E17.82212) toward Malkopbaai.

There are numerous sheltered bays and coves among huge rocks at Malkopbaai where you can camp in peace. One such inlet – behind a dune and next to a short stretch of sand (S31.21661 E17.81674) – caught our attention and this was where we pitched our tent, unrolled our sleeping bags and lit a fire. Don't be alarmed if an ominous, dark shape emerges from the deep and comes shuffling across the sand toward your camp after sunset. It's just an inquisitive seal that has come to check you out. Sleep tight.

FOR THE NEXT 50 km along the sea, however, there are hundreds of small inlets similar to Malkopbaai, including Jurg-se-kaja, Bruinklip, Gaatjiekamp, Blougat, Geelklip and, eventually, Volwater and Abraham Villiers Bay. The latter two are on municipal land, but you may still wild camp for free. The municipality's coastline is unfortunately disturbed by bamboo farms and sand mining. It's troubling to see entire beaches being dug up and driven away in trucks.

In many of these bays – whether on a farm or on municipal land – there's an old caravan (nearly always without wheels) waiting patiently for its owner to return

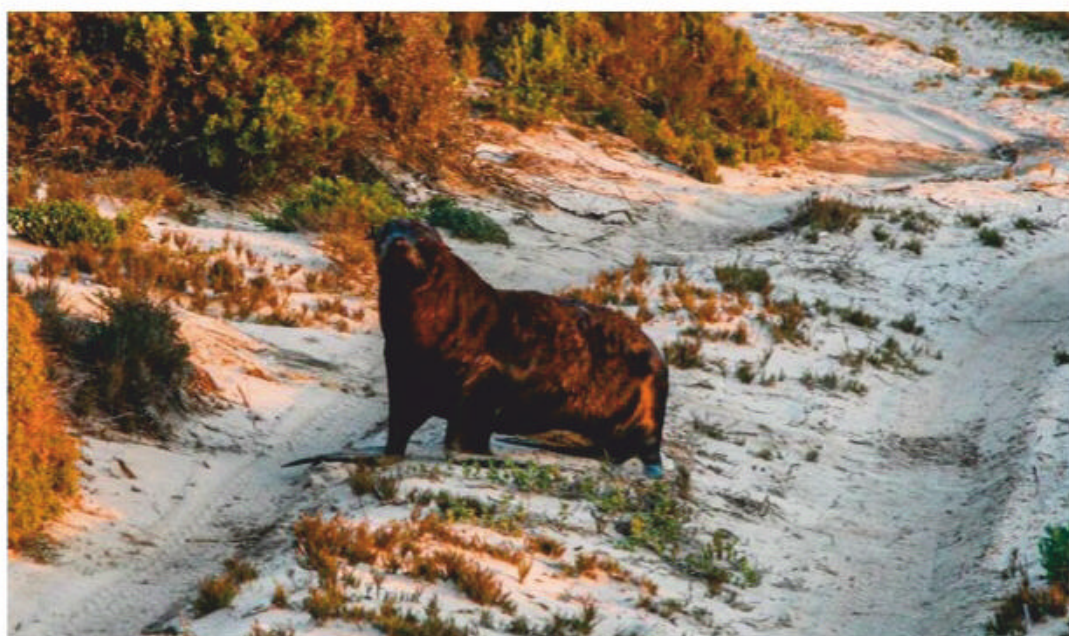




with a fishing rod and cooler box.

The twin track sometimes runs perilously close to the high-tide mark. The law forbids vehicles on the beach and there is always a risk of getting stuck and looking on helplessly as the incoming tide claims your vehicle. Absolutely stick to the trail.

Shortly before the estuary, you will find the Groenrivier Lighthouse (Admiralty light number D5720). This sentinel is relatively new (built in 1988) and stands 17,2 m tall. This is also where you enter the Namaqua National Park's southernmost tip. There's a campsite with 12 stands, six eco-toilets and braai facilities for day visitors. The braais are free to use, so you may want to



VOLSTRUISVYGIES AND KUSBOSLAAI (*Cephalophyllum spongiosum* and *Didelta carnosu*). Strandbaai (left) has, as the name implies, a long beach whilst Brand-se-baai (middle above) has a smaller cove. At Malkopbaai (top right) a seal (above) will sometimes get out of the water to visit you but nervously shuffle off if you make sudden movements.



LIVINGSTONE DAISY (*Dorotheanthus bellidiformis*). You're not allowed to drive on the beach but the twin track occasionally takes you within a hair's breadth of it (above). The Groenrivier Lighthouse (middle) blinks every five seconds and its beam is visible up to 26 nautical miles out at sea.



STAY HERE

The coastal area north of Koekenaap and south of the Groen River belongs partly to farmers and the local municipality. You can pitch your tent almost anywhere on the coast unless it is fenced – like the diamond concessions. No bookings are taken and it is free to camp, but the landowners ask that you leave no litter, don't destroy their fields or scare the sheep.

Within the **Namaqua National Park** north of the Groenrivier Lighthouse, you have to pay to camp. There are eight campsites along the sea, each with between two and 12 stands. There are also two tented camps: the miner's camp by the sea and the luxurious Skilpad

camp in the Skilpad reserve.

Price R150 pn per site (maximum 6 people per site).

Contact 012 428 9111 sanparks.org

The **Skulpieskraal Resort** in Hondeklip Bay has six permanent tents, three of which each have three single beds and the rest have one double bed and one single bed. You'll find a restaurant, the Red Spider, here and also a fully equipped kitchen if you want to make your own food. However, what you can look forward to most are the ablution facilities with hot showers, flush toilets and mirrors where you can shave or do your make-up.

Price R500 pn per tent.

Contact 076 430 8300

skulpieskraal.co.za

enquiries@skulpieskraal.co.za

The **HonneHokke Resort** in Hondeklip Bay has six self-catering cottages – or “kennels” – that can accommodate two to five people each. The rooms are neat and breakfast is free. There is also a pool, braai area, pool table and bicycles for rent. And yes, you may bring your dog.

Price It ranges from R700 to R850 per room (in season time R100 more).

Contact 082 564 5471 honnehokke.chalets@gmail.com honnehokke.co.za



pop open your bakkie's canopy and grab an early lunch here.

Now cross the Groen River via a low-water bridge and report to the park office to pay your conservation fee so you can go deeper into the park. A ranger will enquire whether you deflated your vehicle's tyres before raising the boom gate. You are now entering the Groen-Spoeg coastal area of the Namaqua National Park.

There are nine campsites in the Groen-Spoeg area. The first one, the miner's camp, is barely a kilometre from the park office, but it is a tented camp for people who aren't self-reliant like you are.

The park is certainly better cared for

than the coastline between the Groen and Olifants rivers that you've just explored. There is no sign of rubbish or rampant mining but the downside is that all nine campsites are laid out on flat plains some distance from the sea. From a conservation point of view it makes sense, but if you camp here, you will wish you could rather take refuge against the ever-present wind in a sheltered bay. The braai areas are nonetheless neat and there are eco-toilets at all the campsites.

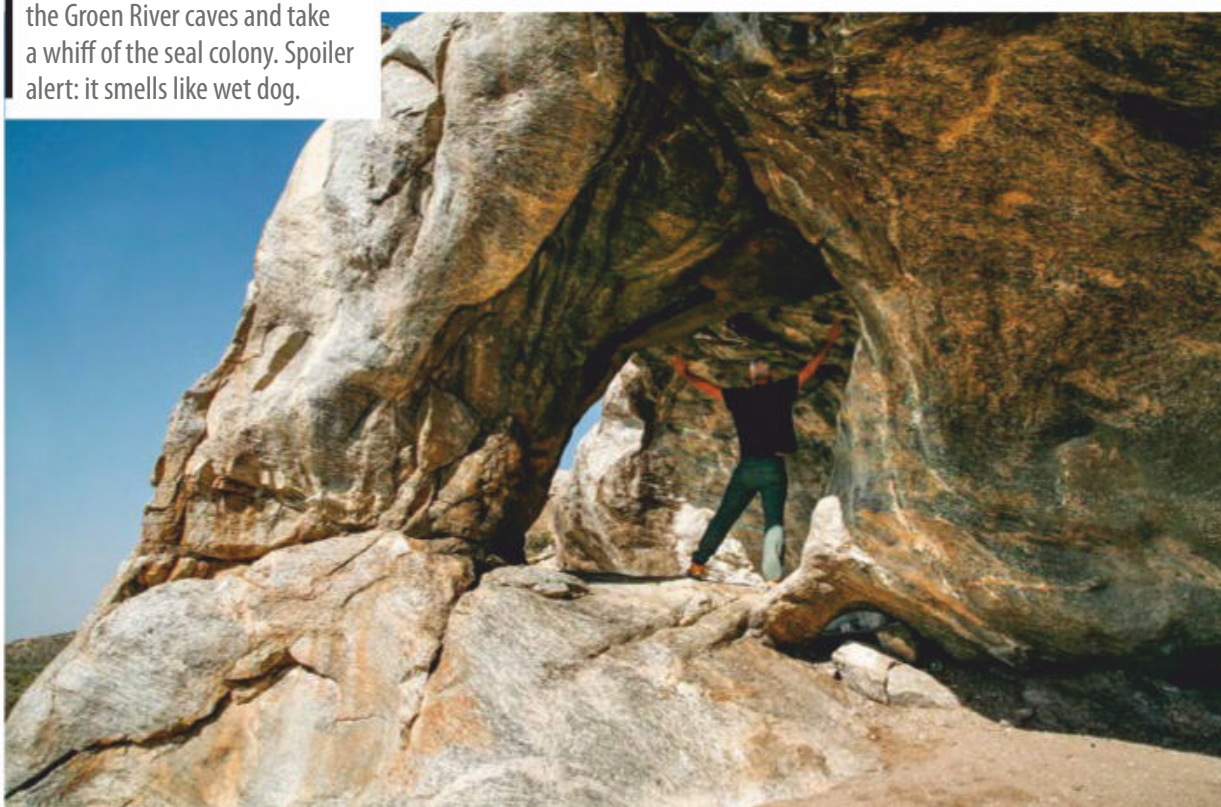
The road forks 13 km beyond the miner's camp in two parallel lanes. Contrary to our country's traffic laws, a road sign instructs you to keep right rather than

left. The sand is deep here, and if you're towing an off-road trailer, you have to give it stick so you don't get stuck. The sand continues for about 2 km until you reach a second campsite, Kwass-se-baai. The various campsites are spaced at intervals of roughly 5 km apart until you reach the Bitter River. Here you'll have to cross a dune field where the sand is even deeper and looser than at Kwass-se-baai.

About 2 km after you conquered the dunes, you'll come accross a small sign with the word "Seals" on it (S30.55948 E17.42348). It directs you to the coast along a narrow twin track where hundreds of seals sunbathe on rocks not unlike dogs



SHINING T'NOUROE BUSH
(*Lampranthus suavissimus*).
Learn about the Nama people at
the Groen River caves and take
a whiff of the seal colony. Spoiler
alert: it smells like wet dog.



on a stoep. A short distance after the seal colony you'll find a fountain where water pours out from beneath the earth. It is brackish, however, and should only be drunk in an emergency. About 5 km past the seal colony there is another turn-off to the ninth and final camp area in the Groen-Spoeg coastal area, Boulder Bay, and 4 km beyond that is a flat rock called the policeman's hat.

Continue north to the Spoeg River estuary. Walk along a boardwalk to a bird hide where you can watch waterfowl bathing in the Spoeg. A short way to the east are the Spoeg River caves, which are really just cavities in a rock face, but still worth a visit.

You are going to have to leave the coast for a while and aim inland on a badly corrugated road. We have endless praise for SANParks' dedication to conservation, but goodness, is it too much to ask that they grade their roads? It's just 17 km

to the park's gate, but it feels like an eternity and your vehicle threatens to shake apart on the corrugations. The agony ends as soon as you exit the park and take a regional road westward to Hondeklip Bay.

Snap some pics of the *Aristea* shipwreck (S30.34561 E17.27909) that ran aground here at the end of the WW11. The wreck is rusting away at an exponential rate and in just a few years you may no longer recognise it for what it is.

Hondeklip Bay's caravan park is rudimentary but clean, and if you prefer not to camp here, there are permanent tents at the Skulpieskraal Lodge and rooms at the HonneHokke Resort. Tomorrow you'll head farther north to the Richtersveld or maybe you're going to see the wildflowers in bloom at the Skilpad Reserve. Call us crazy, but how 'bout turning around and doing it again?



ROADSIDE DEWFLOWER (*Drosanthemum hispidum*). The *Aristea* (top right) is rusting away and Namaqua daisies cover the veld near the park gate (below).



FAST FACTS

Length of the route 235 km.

Number of gates you open and close 11.

Starting point Koekenaap.

End point Hondeklip Bay.

Lighthouses Groenrivier (D5720) and Hondeklip Bay (D5704).

Cellphone signal Weak. Sometimes a WhatsApp message will unexpectedly come through, but before you can answer it, the signal is gone again.

Fuel There are no gas stations along the route. The last one before you start the trail is at Lutzville, and your next opportunity to fill up is at Koiingnaas, 265 km from Lutzville and 22 km past Hondeklip Bay.

May I drive on the beach? The coastal area between the low and the high tide mark on all South African beaches is state-owned and you are not allowed to drive here without a permit. According to Article 28 of the integrated coastal management act, 2008 (act 24 of the National Coastal Management Act, 2008), you can be fined up to half a million rand or given two years imprisonment if you're caught driving on a beach without a permit. Don't give them the opportunity to make an example out of you. 🚫



LEADERS of canvas tents in Africa



DIRECTOR CHAIR



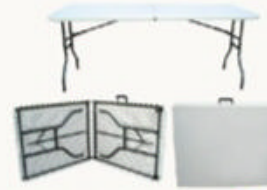
Max weight 180 kg
R656

SPECIFICATIONS
Ripstop canvas
Powder coated
Steel frame

Heavy duty

AFRICA'S
NR.1 BEST
SELLER

FOLDABLE TABLES



180cm x 74cm x 74cm (H) **R725**
120cm x 60cm x 74cm (H) **R599**
80cm x 80cm x 74cm (H) **R630**

BUNDU SLEEPING BAG



SPECIFICATIONS
Filling 350 gsm
210 Polyester Nylon outer
Cotton inner
Complete with stuff sack
Size: 2.1m
R499



FISHERMAN-STOOL



Max weight 150kg
R335

SPECIFICATIONS
Ripstop canvas
Powder coated
Steel frame

TENTCO FOLD-UP TROLLEY



Big Wheel
R1470

STRETCHER



BASIC LARGE
Size: 2.1m x 75cm
x 47cm
Max weight: 130kg
R850

DELUXE STANDARD
Size: 1.9m x 65cm
x 40cm
Max weight: 130kg
R699

SELF INFLATING MATTRESS



SIZE: 2m x 62cm x 5cm **R599**
SIZE: 2m x 67cm x 10cm
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No pumps needed
Complete with compression stuff sack

CLASSIC CHAIRS



600g Heavy duty material
Sponge padding
Steel frame
Max weight: 130kg

R695

HIGH BACK

PORTA POTTY



SPECIFICATIONS
20Lt
R880

Bag, each
R245
Ripstop canvas

COOLER BOXES

20 LT - **R1426**
40 LT - **R1875**
60 LT - **R2655**
90 LT - **R3115**
120LT - **R3567**
140 LT - **R4265**

Extra heavy duty
Bottle opener
included



SL-22 & SLX-2



Oxford Nylon Cover
Steel Frame
Mesh Backing
150 kg
SL-2 **R599**
SLX-2 **R750**

BIG BOY CHAIR



SPECIFICATIONS
Nylon Ripstop
Steel frame
Max weight: 150kg
R535

POP-UP GAZEBO



3 m x 3 m **R1350**

TENTCO ALUMINIUM STORAGE CASES

Lockable, high quality aluminium cases
Waterproof/dust proof

30L **R999**
49L **R1299**
94L **R1999**



CAPRIVI 2 & 3



SPECIFICATIONS
2.1m x 2.1m x 1.3m
R750
3m x 3m x 1.8m
R1338
INNER TENT: 190T
POLYESTER NYLON
FLYSHEET & FLOOR: 210D
OXFORD NYLON

DC 3 CHAIR



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

TENTCO AWNINGS



2,0 x 2,0m **R2200**
2,5 x 2,0m **R2300**
280g ripstop canvas

TENTCO 270° AWNINGS



420D Oxford Nylon **R5500**

TENTCO KITCHEN CABINET DELUXE



R1020

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No Boundaries

ROOFTOP TENT RANGE

AFRICA
NO.1 BEST
SELLER



1.2 m x 2.45 m (OPEN) **R8745**
1.4 m x 2.45 m (OPEN) **R9635**
1.6 m x 2.45 m (OPEN) **R11920**
2 m x 2.45 m (OPEN) **R13720**
Ranger 90cm x 2.4m - **R8150**
REPLACEMENT COVER FOR YOUR
ROOFTOP FROM **R480**

HARD SHELL ROOFTOP

NEW!



Size:
1.2m x 2.1m
Telescopic ladder
R19050

SNR DOUBLE BOW EXTENSION ONLY



Extension only to fit any
Tentco 3m x 3m bow tent
R4805

BOWTENTS NOT INCLUDED

SNR DELUXE & EXT COMBO



3m x 3m
Dome Tent Extension
2.8m and Verandah 1.8m **R11500**

JNR SAHARA

Side walls & front walls available



4.5m x 2.9m x 2.5m
R7100

SNR SAHARA



5.6m x 2.9m x 2.5m
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SAFARI BOW

Heavy duty canvas traveller
2.1 x 2.1 x 1.5 m **R2855**
Ranger **R3270**
2.1 x 2.1 x 1.8 m
Junior Bow **R4635**
2.5 x 2.5 x 1.8 m
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3.0 x 3.0 x 2.2 m



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R4655 3 Side with moszi net
+ four solid sides, 3 x 3 x 2.2 m

INNER ONLY



NEW

R1910
To fit Snr Tentco gazebo
Shadedoth
Built-in groundsheet

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R6840
4.8 m x 3.6 m x 2.2 m
VERY SPACIOUS

3-IN-1 BUSH SHELTER **R9485**

STANDALONE
4 x 2.8m
Fitted groundsheet
Double roof
Fully enclosed



Fits most bakkies or SUVs

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YOUTUBE



Extend your living space by adding your 2.5 x 2.5,
3 x 3m or Hexibow (upright pole optional)

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SNR
3 m x 2.8 m x 2.3 m
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Sidewalls with
windows available

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JNR: 2.5 x 2.5 x 1.9 m **R3445**
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RIPSTOP MATERIAL

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R10530 6m x 2.9m x 2.5m
Sidewalls available

These products are available from:
NB: PRICE WILL VARY BETWEEN STORES.

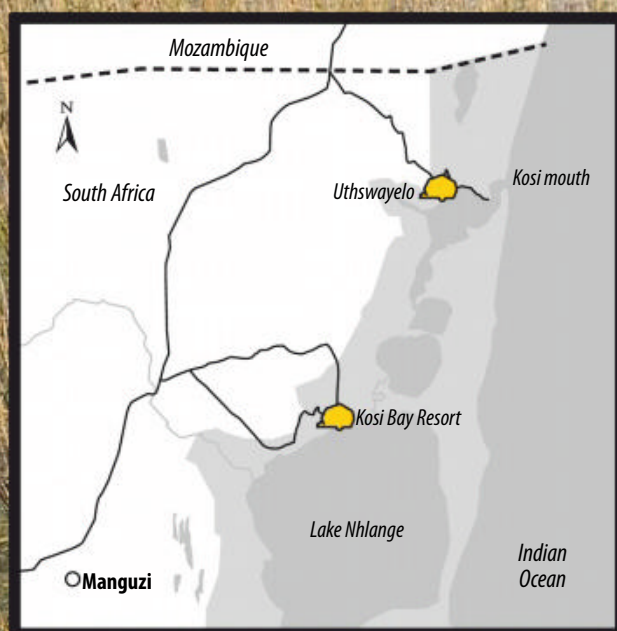


AGENTS: SEE LIST ON WEBSITE

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PRICES ONLY VALID FOR OCTOBER 2019

We'll be back, Kosi Bay!





Once you've visited Kosi Bay, you'll return again and again.

Words and photos Leon Botha

Kosi Bay evokes images of sand and 4x4 action for most people. Still, it's not as secluded as it sounds – you can even get there with an SUV and road caravan.

Here in the far north of KwaZulu-Natal, the Mozambican border lies just a few kilometres farther, and the tar road that leads to it skirts Kosi Bay. It is therefore tar all the way until you turn off, and then the road varies depending on the campsite you're heading to: from a normal dirt road to a sandy trail.

We stopped off at Utshwayelo near the lake's mouth of Kosi Bay and at the Kosi Bay Resort by the lake. The two campsites are 8 km apart as the crow flies, with Utshwayelo closest to the sea (3,4 km).

But your travel adventure starts a good 100 km before you even get to Kosi Bay.

THE N2 IS THE EASIEST route to get to this part of the world, wherever you come from. From Pongola's side (the town close to the Golela-Swaziland border post), you also travel between vast sugarcane fields – with no fences along the way. Don't be in a too much of a hurry as tractors crawl up and down the road with their sugary cargo.

The turn-off to Kosi Bay from the N2 is right next to the Pongolapoort Dam, which incidentally is also the hunting ground of the fearless tigerfish. The narrow tar road winds around the southern end of the dam and then you need to get ready to engage your towing vehicle's lower gears to get over a short but steep mountain pass. The town of Jozini lies just beyond the mountain while the lovely view to the left over the water will have you catching your breath. This water eventually worms its way ahead of you through the gorges to the dam wall in Jozini.

Jozini is a hive of activity and a place where people pay scant attention to traffic rules. Ironically, we saw several traffic officers, also at the intersection where you keep straight on to Sodwana Bay or turn left across the dam wall to Kosi Bay. It's at this very intersection where you can decide which road you want to take to Kosi Bay. Google Maps says the road heading straight measures a mere 109 km to Manguzi, the big town near Kosi Bay, but it will take nearly two hours. The route to the left, across the embankment, is only 3 km shorter, but shaves 20 minutes off the time.

You may not stop on top of the 89 m high dam wall, but there is a place to pull over if you want to take a family pic. It's good to stretch your legs here, take a deep breath and gather courage for the stretch of road ahead. The road does not have the best tar surface in the country, and you won't have a smooth ride. Here it's not sugar-cane tractors you have to watch out for, but goats, chickens and cattle ambling back and forth across the road.

Manguzi is a mini-metropolis where you could stop if you've forgotten something at home. You can see the businesses are geared for tourists, especially the 4x4 guys. We pulled into an Engen garage and deflated our tyres for the dirt and sandy roads ahead. You don't have to deal with a regular air pressure gauge here; you enter the desired tyre pressure on a compressor's keyboard and a computer takes care of it.

UTSHWAYELO KOSI MOUTH LODGE & CAMP

Near the mouth

Utshwayelo is the northernmost campsite in KwaZulu-Natal – the turn-off to get here is 13 km after Manguzi and barely 1 km before the Mozambican border. The broad, corrugated gravel road is rocky at times, but any city sedan should be able to cope with it, even if you're towing a caravan. Utshwayelo is 4,5 km farther on the right-hand side of the road.

In front of you is the entrance gate to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park, with a sign that shows only 4x4s may enter here. To the left is a stall where you can purchase bright fabric and African jewellery, and a bundle of wood for R20. Utshwayelo is across the road where a waving national

flag welcomes you. The road from here is sandy, but it is solid. Large water berry trees are everywhere and will most likely shade you from the sun on your stand. The office is 50 m to your right.

On the open office's counter is a large glass container with ice cold water and orange slices. And then the friendly Anna Mthetwa, the assistant manager, welcomes you. If you have questions during your stay, come here for the solution. If you didn't bring a braai grid, she'll come to your aid. Anna walks you to the opposite of the courtyard to point out one of the resort's bathrooms and walks ahead to show you to your stand.

THERE ARE 14 stands, most of which are laid out like a kraal with a reed fence all around – so you have privacy. Each stand has a blue power socket, a light, a tap, a garbage bin and a braai area (a moveable

drum braai). The stands are spacious and you have plenty of parking space after you set up camp. In some places there's grass, but others only have sand. The trees on some stands are low and you will not get your caravan under them but stand 17 at the far end is a winner. The ground is level, and the tree is in the middle.

Stands 11 and 12 are straight across from the office, but it's too small for a caravan and more suitable for tents.

There are three ablution blocks. One is among the first group of stands, the second at the square, and the large one is just behind the square closer to the farthest stands.

The building at the square is made of timber, but inside you have tiles plus two toilets and two showers (men and women share these). The shower side of your cubicle does not have a roof, so you stand under open air when you shower.



GOOD DAY Anna Mthetwa greets you at Utshwayelo after you survived the livestock hurdles on the way here.





Briefly | Utshwayelo Kosi Mouth Lodge & Camp



Campsite 14 stands, most of which have a reed fence. There is plenty of shade, but not all stands are level.

Ablution facilities Earthy, tidy and the open-air showers are great.

Price R220 pppn (half price for kids 6-12).

Arrival and departure times No scheduled times.

Contact 082 909 3113 kosibay.info

info@kosimouth.co.za

Nearest town? Manguzi, 21 km.

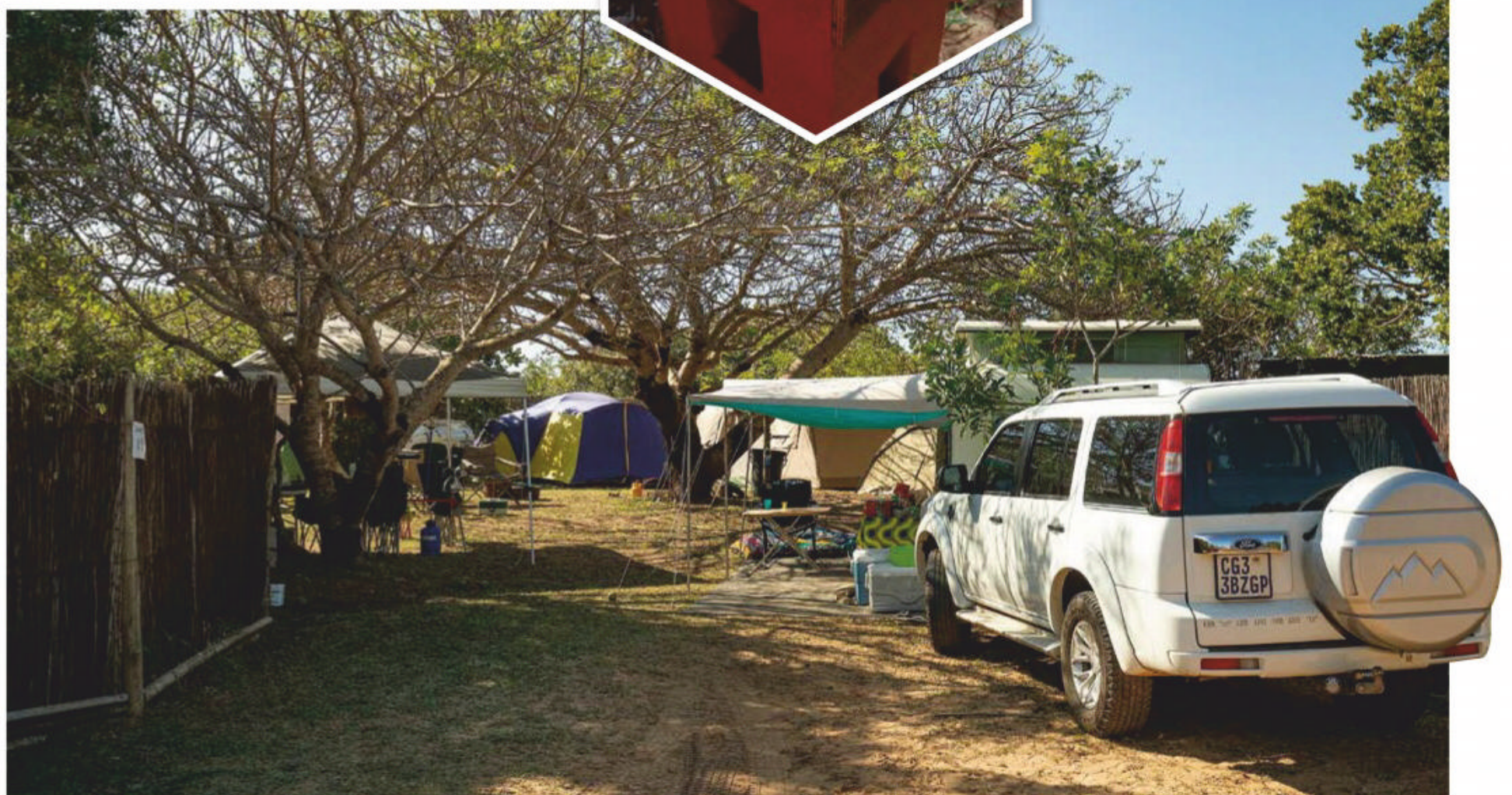
What does the road look like? The last 4,5 km is a corrugated road with sandy trails in the resort itself. It's compacted and you can drive a regular sedan without getting stuck.

GPS S26.892218 E32.858621

go! Drive & Camp says Pets are welcome provided it is out of season, but you still need to notify the resort. Remember, pets are not allowed in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park.



FENCE ME IN Some of the bathrooms have a similar reed fence as the type surrounding your stand. You are therefore camping in private with an earthy, rustic theme. Some of the ablution facilities have male and female sections but others are unisex.



“

...depending on the tide,
you can walk in the knee-height water
all the way across to the other side

”



The ablution block near the first sites are a more modest version of the square's one (also with an open shower) and have a dishwashing sink on the side of the building.

In the large block, men and women are separated – the “Itoti” and “Itete” let's you know who goes where. There are several shower cubicles, but they are not as spacious as the others. The tops are still open, although there's a large thatched roof covering them. The dishwashing sink is at the back of the building.

WHEN IT COMES TO WATER AND POWER, the resort is self-sustaining. The water comes from a borehole and the electricity from a solar panel and generator. They do have Eskom power, but these points are not

intended for appliances such as kettles and air-cons that draw a lot of power.

The pool is in the courtyard and there is a large open lounge under the thatched roof. Here you'll also find an honesty bar: you write your name in the book on the counter with what you take next to it. Beer costs R20-R25 per bottle, soft drinks are R20, a bottle of wine R150 and water R10. You can also get ice cream, charcoal and fire lighters here for R30, R70 and R30 respectively.

UTSHWAYELO'S BEST ASSET is its location. It is the closest campsite to where the Kosi lake system flows into the sea. (This also explains why you come across large groups of foreign tourists throughout the campsite.)

The estuary is 3,4 km from the camp, and you need a beach permit to visit the area. Yes, you guessed it: you take a walk up to Anna and she will issue you one that is valid for the duration of your visit. It costs R80 pp but comes with several conditions. For example, you can only visit the estuary between 6 am and 6 pm; if you have a fishing permit, you can fish from 400 m north of the estuary (and 200 m south of the estuary), but not in the conservancy itself; you may not bring a trailer or boat here; and you need a 4x4 vehicle. All this is understandable, this is a World Heritage Site, after all.

Just grab a picnic basket for the day, the children's cozzies and all your snorkels and flippers. Here you can relax with no disturbance except for the handful of



HERE, FISHY, FISHY
Even though you're in
a nature reserve, you
are free to swim. Watch
your step because highly
venomous stonefish
may lie underfoot.





other visitors. The sand road winds down from the gate against the overgrown dunes to where you look out over one of the lakes with its famous fish traps. ("Utshwayelo" in Tsonga means "fish trap".) It's not long before you're right by the water, although the road turns away from the water to a small open piece in the bushes where you park.

Against the hill to the right (on the lake's side) is the snorkelling site and, depending on the tide, you can walk through the knee-high water to the other side. On your beach permit, the authorities warn about the stonefish found here. You don't want to tread on one of them because it's the most poisonous fish in the sea, according to *Coastal Fishes of Southern Africa* by Phil and Elaine Heemstra. It digs itself slightly under the sand, and when you step on it, one of the sharp needles in its dorsal fin can stick into your foot. The pain is apparently immediate and things can go awry within an hour.

If you don't have a 4x4 but would like to visit the mouth, Anna can help again: for R400 for up to 10 people they will take you to the mouth and back.



They say

Magdell, Jakob and Ariana (7) Iten are from Sasolburg and camp with their 2019 Toyota Fortuner 2.4 GD-6 and 2011 Jurgens CampLite.

"We usually go to the Kruger National Park in the winter but decided on Utshwayelo after seeing it online. This is our first time here and we have been pleasantly surprised. We all enjoy the peaceful atmosphere.

I am a cave diver and love diving. We also often camp at Sodwana Bay not far away with our diving club. Here at the Kosi estuary I have already seen a large variety of fish barely 1,5 m below the water – and that includes stonefish. Among the others are a devil firefish, a moray and a surgeonfish.

We're sad to be packing up, but we will definitely be back."



KOSI BAY RESORT

Lakeside delight

The Kosi Bay Resort is one of Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife's resorts and is located in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park. The resort is at the Nhlanga Lake, the largest of the four Kosi lakes. Although it is called a resort, there are no water slides, putt-putt courses or hot-water pools; you camp in a jungle. The stands are wonderfully large, and you could hardly get closer to nature.

After booking, your invoice reminds you that you need a 4x4 vehicle to reach the camp due to sandy roads. It's not really necessary because the road is a compacted sand road, but there will be a difference if you tow something. There is a steep hill where the dirt road gets bad and you have to take things slowly so everything doesn't shake loose in the caravan. A front-wheel drive vehicle towing something won't easily make it.

A sand road runs directly from Utshwayelo to the Kosi Bay Resort, but if you're afraid of getting stuck, it is better to drive back to the tar. Turn in Manguzi's direction and the turn-off is 11 km farther to the left – it's the D1846. Then a sign shows the resort is 6 km along. At first it looks like the dirt road to Utshwayelo, but this one has many more forks. The first one is 800 m after the turn-off. Every single resort or overnight spot in the area has a sign at a fork in the road. Keep following the green signs that say "Kosi Bay Resort" with the rhino and Zulu shield logo of Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife on it. The initial corrugated road disappears

and becomes a mixture of corrugation and sand. The next fork is 2,9 km further, where you keep to the right. The road to the left is the sand road back to Utshwayelo.

The track is now sandier, but nothing that would stop a city sedan (although the centre growth gets a bit high). If you try to tow a regular caravan here, chances are good that the coupler will plough into the sand somewhere. The gate where you sign in is 1,8 km farther on, and a steep hill is coming up next, before you reach the second gate. You also have to drive through a narrow corridor where the road has been carved down the dune and is just wide enough for one car. Logs are packed crossways on this stretch of road.

To the left, in a timber building, is the office. Here you can see the many awards that Kosi Bay has already won, including one for the cleanest resort. In the office, basic items including ice cream, soft drinks and beer are for sale, but rather bring everything you might need in this campsite with you.

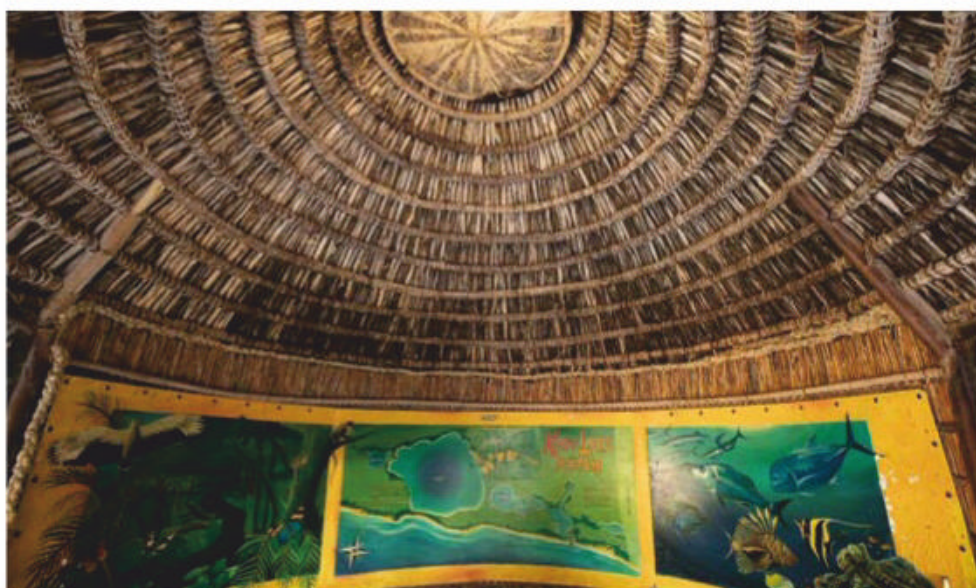
THEN YOU SIGN IN A THIRD TIME, this time at another gate. It's right after the office as you enter the campsite. The dense bush towers around you and at the next fork in the road (about 230 m further) there's a sign to show stands 8-15 are on the left.

There are two ablution blocks here. The first one is a short distance along the

road to the left. The brick building with its asbestos roof has taken a few knocks and the "Ladies" sign lies on the windowsill. The basins with mirrors are on the left wall as you enter. It has seen better days, but at least everything is clean, and you can't complain about all the open space at the basins. The shower cubicles are on the small side and you need to make peace with the shower curtain clinging onto you. At least you have a tiled bench where you can pack your stuff.

The road now dives a good 50 m further down the dune with a similar corridor to the one you've already gone through. The shore of the lake is 40 m in front of you – if you could give a prize for the site in the country that has the best location, this handful of stands will definitely make the shortlist. To the right of the road are three stands next to the water. It's barely knee deep, and the water is crystal clear with clean sea sand on the bottom. It's shallow for a good 60 m before the water turns into dark blue depths. Remember





DARK GREEN At the Kosi Bay Resort you camp in dense foliage but, mercifully, it doesn't feel as if a tiger might pounce from the brush and carry you off. The stands are neat and tidy, and the weather is, as you would expect, simply perfect!

Briefly | Kosi Bay Resort



Campsite 15 stands ranging from set apart and in the bush to more in the open. Stands 1-3 near the lake are first class.

Ablution facilities The 2 bathroom buildings are basic and clean but need some attention.

Price Depending on the season, R560 or R660 per site at the water for up to 4 people, plus R140 or R165 pp. For the sites away from the water, it costs R460 or R560 (and R115 or R140 pp extra). From November, a base rate of R280 or R230 applies for 2 people, depending on where you camp.

Arrival and departure times 14:00 and 10:00.

Contact 033 845 1000 isimangaliso.com/accommodators/kosi-bay-camp-site/ bookings@kznwildlife.com

Nearest town? Manguzi, 12 km.

What does the road look like? The last 6 km is a dirt road that varies from corrugation to sand. It is not suitable for front-wheel drive vehicles when towing.

GPS S26.956318 E32.824675

go! Drive & Camp says You may ask for a specific site after they accept your booking.



CAMPING DESTINATION



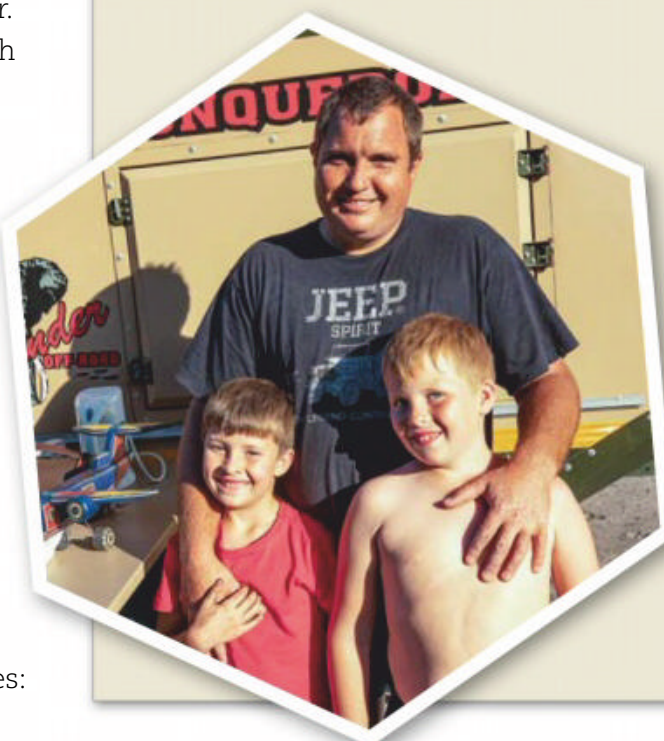
that you're camping in a reserve and share the environment with wildlife, including crocodiles and hippos. Fortunately, the water is clean and shallow – so you would see anything approaching.

The site on the far right has a sturdy leaf canopy and at the bottom the sand is level. There's a braai (without a grid), a tap as well as Fredlin sockets for power. The other two stands are more open with similar amenities.

The rest of the stands are to the left of the road and away from the water, but otherwise there is nothing to complain about. There is also a rondavel with a thatched roof next to the road. The interior walls are one large painting that includes a map of the lake system. A wooden walkway runs from the rondavel into the forest until you finally stand above the water. Note the marked palm tree to the right of the deck shortly after the start. This is an example of the Kosi palm, which apparently has the largest leaf of all trees:

They say

Duan Massyn from Witbank camps with his two sons, Rickus (10) and Hendrik (7), with their 2019 Isuzu D-Max 3.0 TDI 4x4 and 2010 Conqueror Commander.



"For our bush holidays we usually aim for Botswana, but for the sea holidays we come here. This is our third or fourth time here. We come to simply relax, and as a holiday resort it is a children's paradise. The weather is great, especially in winter. This is when, unlike in the interior, you can easily wear just a T-shirt and shorts.

We prefer to camp up here, away from the water, because the wind can sometimes get tricky down there. Our stand is also conveniently close to the bathrooms.

When camping at the Kosi Bay Resort, we also make a quick visit to Mozambique. It's a day trip to Ponta do Ouro and Ponta Malongane."



CREATURES BIG AND SMALL Snakes in this region aren't uncommon, but you can't always be sure whether they are venomous or harmless. Rather leave them be and they'll hopefully return the favour.



up to 10 m. According to the *Field Guide to Trees of Southern Africa* by Braam and Piet van Wyk, the trees grow to 24 m and bloom only once (after 30 years!) after which they die. The walkway is more than 100 m long and at the far end a few benches await. Unfortunately, the deck and benches need attention.

A small quay is set up next to it in case you brought a boat and stands 6 and 7 are at the point where the road again runs up the hill, in between the trees. These stands are more open, and this is also where you'll find the other ablution block. Inside, the layout and finish is a clone of the other building, but from the outside it looks newer.

Although the bathrooms have walls with a roof, they don't keep snakes out. During our visit, one camper told us to come look at the "boomslang" in the bathroom. The slender green snake had made itself at home on one of one of the roof beams where it sat and watched a gecko. Fortunately, according to the African Snakebite Institute, it was the Eastern Natal Green Snake, which is not venomous... but we only found that out afterwards!

“

Unfortunately, the deck and benches need attention. A small quay is set up next to it in case you brought a boat

”





Get cosy at Onverwags

Visit a campsite where the Bushveld enchants, neighbours become friends and children run and play till late.

Words and photos **Helenus Kruger**

Few people may be able to point out the D1121 gravel road north of Brits on a map, but name some of the resorts lined up like sardines along this road and any camper worth his salt will know exactly which road you're talking about. Onverwags Caravan Park is one of these resorts.

Upon arrival you call Miemie Botha, who is at the helm of Onverwags with her husband, Frik, to obtain the gate code.

At another gate a kilometre farther on, Frik awaits to take you to your stand.

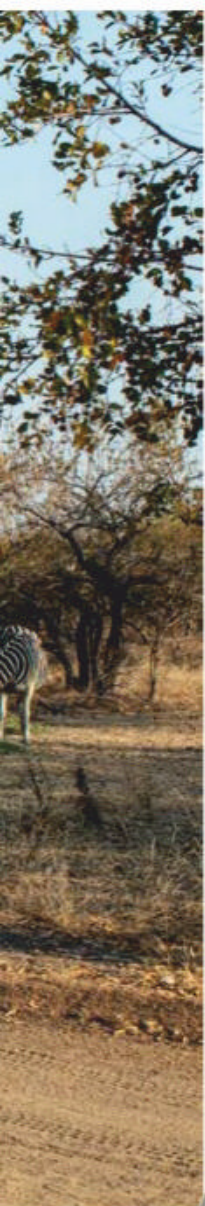
You realise early on that Onverwags's campsite is a social kind of place. Your fellow campers are not shy to come say hello and soon you meet everyone around you and start chatting. The braai fires get lit early, the kids ride up and down on their bikes and you can tell from a distance that the crowd at the indoor heated pool are enjoying themselves.

Despite the hustle and bustle in the campsite, Onverwags also has a quieter side. The game camp that borders the campsite, is a place where you can just

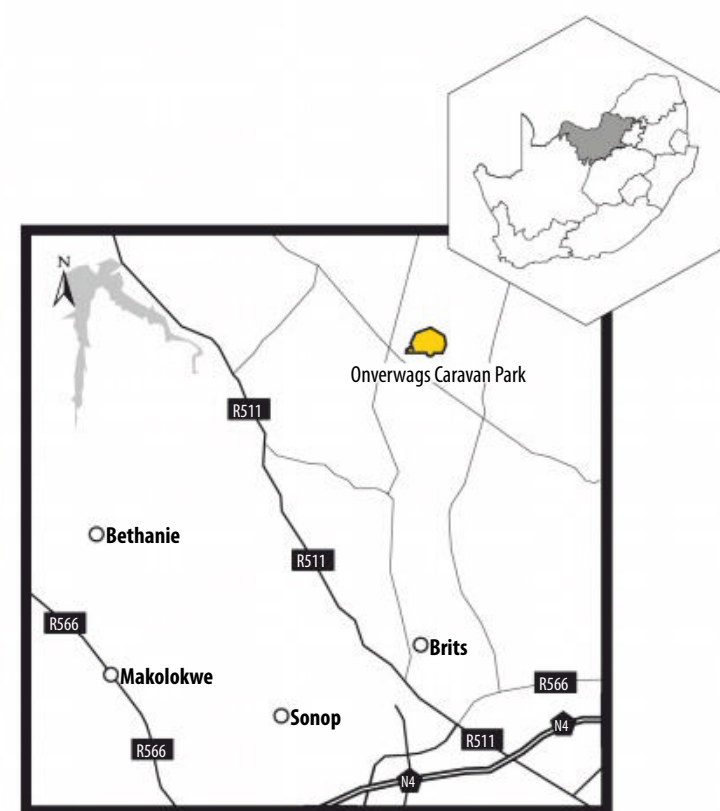
relax with the Bushveld silence around you. You can walk through this camp or hop on your bicycle and go looking for wildlife. The giraffes are quite tame, but you have to mind yourself and move stealthily to sneak upon the impala before they dart away.

ONVERWAGS HAS 42 sites, allocated in advance. The stands vary in size and you can ask for a specific one when booking.

The largest stands are close to 280 m² while the smallest ones are still a fair



PARTY IS LIT The flames start flickering early at Onverwags. Remember to pack your blue Fredlin adaptor because it'll spell the difference between darkness and light.



120 m². All the stands have electricity, but bring a long extension cord, because some power points are a short distance away. Remember your blue plug! Garbage bins and taps are shared and you can choose whether you want a large drum braai or a small kettle braai – both come with grids.

The stands are divided into three groups, each with its own ablution facilities. To your right, closest to the gate, are 34 stands in four rows. There are plenty of trees and grass here, but some trees are too small accommodate a caravan underneath them.

Stands 21-28 are smaller than the others and lie back to back, so you have neighbours all around you. The largest stands are in the row next to the camp where a few nyalas graze (29-32) and in the row along the border fence (34-29) from where you have a view of the game camp. Sites 10-17 are smaller and are located closest to the heated pool.

This part of the camp has two ablution buildings: one near the entrance named Eland, and another one a little farther into the camp called Kudu.

Here, as with all the ablution facilities in the camp, the shower rooms and

“ Your fellow campers are not shy to come say hello and soon you meet everyone around you and start chatting ”



bathrooms have basins with mirrors, the showers have shower curtains, there are hooks and tiles on the walls and wooden benches for your clothes. There are refuse bins dotted about.

Eland and Kudu look more or less the same inside. At the Eland block there is no common area and you have to hope there is a shower room available if you want to wash your hands. The shower cubicles are also smaller than at Kudu and there is no scullery to do the dishes. On the women's side, they swapped out one of the shower cubicles for a bathroom.

At the Kudu block there are common areas in separate rooms at the entrance to the ablution block. There's a surface on which to put your stuff, basins with mirrors, power points and urinals on the men's side. The two dishwashing sinks are located next to the common areas.

The next group of six stands is a little farther down the road you took. Sites 4, 5

SWIM EVERY DAY Onverwags is geared for summer and winter: They have a regular cold water pool plus a heated one. The latter is indoors so there's no need for sunscreen.



They say

Tokkie and Ben Grunwald are from Rustenburg and camp with an Isuzu 4x4 motorhome.

"Like many campers, we first started camping with a tent and then a caravan. We then decided on something else and that is when the idea of a motorhome was born. There is room for six people, so our family can camp with us.

We especially like to go camping in the bush, where there is nothing and no one else. Because we are fully self-sufficient, we can wildcamp. But we also camp regularly at places that have all the facilities for formal camping.

We decided to camp at Onverwags after hearing their ad on the radio. We like the dam – it adds to that farm feel. There is also a good balance between a campsite with activities, especially for children, and tranquillity in nature. We love walking and are active photography enthusiasts. The game camp is just the place to combine the two and an early morning walk through the camp provides some exercise as well as great pictures of the wildlife and birds."





and 6 each have their own ablution and kitchen facilities. There is no grass here, but massive trees with lots of shade make up for it.

Inside the ablution building are two rooms: one is for washing dishes and brushing teeth and the other has a shower or a bath tub. The toilet has a separate entrance on the side of the building.

At the far end of the camp, past reception, there are six stands usually reserved for groups. These stands are totally separate and with the reception and pool buildings between you and the other stands, you effectively have your own private campground.

There's grass, but no shade. There is also a small, round pool. One of the game camp's waterholes is nearby and in some places, you don't even have to get out of your camping chair to watch the wildlife come to drink.

These stands also have their own unisex ablution facilities. There are three separate shower rooms (one with a toilet) and two toilets. The dishwashing spot is on the side of the building.

THE FARM DAM at the playground and the indoor heated pool a short distance away are by far the most popular hangouts in the camp. The wooden platform on one

side of the dam is level with the top and with a depth of 1,8 m you may dive safely into the water from here.

There are, however, stairs for those who would rather not. If you shudder at the thought of algae floating around you in a farm dam, not to worry: the inside of the dam is coated just like that of a swimming pool and the water is kept clean.

The heated pool varies between 35-40 °C and it reminds one of a spa. There are also two shallow splash pools (15 cm and 35 cm deep) for the little ones next to the larger heated pool.

At the playground next to the dam you can play volleyball and miniature golf,



They say

Johan and Claudette Strauss and their son, Rouxwaldo, 15, and his friend Dilan are from Pretoria and camp with a Venter Savuti trailer which they tow with a Toyota Rush.

"This is our first time at Onverwags. We prefer a quieter campsite in nature rather than the large resorts where it is so busy. The boys also love the tranquillity – they even leave their cell phones at home! We keep things simple and prefer not to carry unnecessary camping gear.

We like to watch birds and never travel without our binoculars and bird books. It's lovely to simply sit and relax and listen

to all the bird sounds. The night owls get particularly busy as the sun sets. Trees are a passion for us and we love to see how many tree species we can identify. Onverwags offers us all this.

The boys both do cross-country running and went jogging in the game camp. They also brought their bikes and went for regular swims in the heated pool."



DEEP DIVE Nobody gets bored at Onverwags. Aside from cycling you can play volleyball on sand, hit a couple of balls on the minigolf course or bounce on a trampoline. Do your best impression of a nuclear bomb in the farm dam.

climb all over jungle gym and bounce on the trampoline. You'll also find a boma with a braai where you can sit around the fire or make yourself at home on one of the cement benches next to the fence to watch the giraffes and antelope come to quench their thirst at the waterhole.

Floodlights illuminate the playground in the evening and during the high season and long weekends there is a bouncing

castle on the lawn in front of reception.

The camp shop is at reception and it stocks basic provisions, fresh bread and the usual sweet treats such as ice cream, cold drinks, candy and chocolates. You can also buy wood, firelighters and ice here.

Next to it is the hall where you can watch television (DStv) and play darts, table tennis and pool.

The cues, balls and paddles are available

at the office and the deposits range from R20 to R50, of which you will get some back if you return them undamaged. Bicycles can also be rented here.

You don't have to explore the game enclosure on foot or on your bike. You can hitch a ride on a tractor-pulled trailer (R30 pp, free for children under 1). It lasts about an hour. Remember to bring snacks and drinks for this game drive.



Briefly | Onverwags



Campsite A campsite with 42 stands, three of which have their own ablution facilities.

Ablution facilities The regular stands share two ablution blocks.

Price off season: R400 (regular stands) and R450 (private stands) per stand for 4 people. In season and long weekends: R500 (regular stands) and R560 (private stands) per stand for 4 people.

Contact 082 899 1900 onverwags.co.za

onverwags@xpressgt.co.za

Arrival and departure times 13:00 and from 11:00.

What does the road look like? Tar road with 5 km of corrugated gravel road and a good dirt track the last kilometre from the gate to the reception.

GPS S25.458906 E27.786079

go! Drive & Camp says Bring swimwear, bikes, running shoes, bird books and don't forget your binoculars.



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Secrets in the Soutpansberg

You can relax properly at Tshipise's hot springs in Limpopo, but if the 4x4 bug unexpectedly bites, there's a free trail nearby for you to tackle.

Words and photos **Cyril Kloppe**

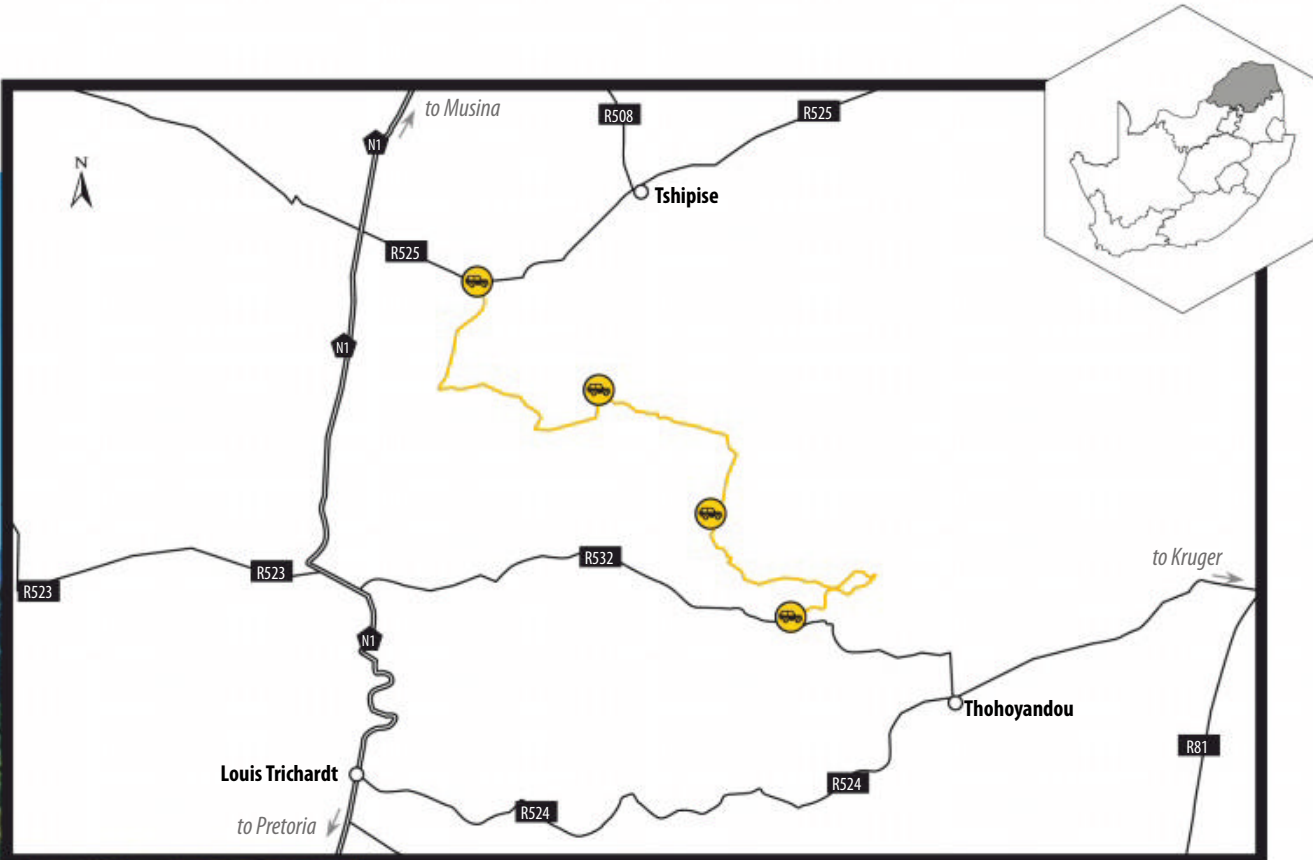
It is wonderful to spend all day at the pool at Forever Tshipise, but sometimes a person needs a little excitement lest all this relaxation turns to boredom. Zip up your tent, hop in your off-road vehicle and head south to the Soutpansberg where a few surprises await you.

Drive 18 km east from the resort on the R525, in the direction of the N1 highway, until you reach a turn-off on your right (S22.67385 E30.02589) and a road sign that sends you to Schuifdrift. It is a corrugated road that follows the Mutamba River for 10 km. At the first road that turns left (S22.75702 E29.98918) is signage for Nzhelele Dam: take it.

Drive across the Mutamba River – 10 km further you cross the Mutshedzi River. The road is terrible, but if you persevere, you will arrive at the Mufungudi River 7 km later. But before

crossing the Mufungudi, turn right onto the Mangwele road (S22.75831 E30.13449). All around you is a harsh, dry and dusty landscape. Aloes crack through rocks and goats listlessly chew on whatever they can. Drive 13 km east, through the Maranikwe settlement, and focus on the back of the Soutpansberg. In the distance you'll see a winding trail – this is what you have come for.

The turn-off (S22.79112 E30.25043) has no road sign or any indication of where the road is leading but believe us when we say it's fairly challenging. If you (like us) have an off-road caravan hitched, you may regret it, because the road is rocky and quite steep. Engage low-range and consider the diff lock if you have any doubts about your vehicle's ability. Bear in mind, though, the road has many, many a bend, which



A STONE'S THROW The first part of the route is bumpy through an arid landscape. It's probably a good idea to walk your intended line first and to make a mental note of where the bigger rocks are. The remainder of the route is far more relaxing.





Most of the logging trails through the Thathe Vondo plantation are easy to drive and you explore them for the fun of it



isn't something that diff locks like much.

The road first sweeps to the right, then left, then right again. So far everything is going well, and you may think that we are just worry-worts, but then the road gets steeper and more rock-strewn before making a 135 degree turn to the right. Your bakkie is bouncing wildly by now, but an end seems to be in sight.

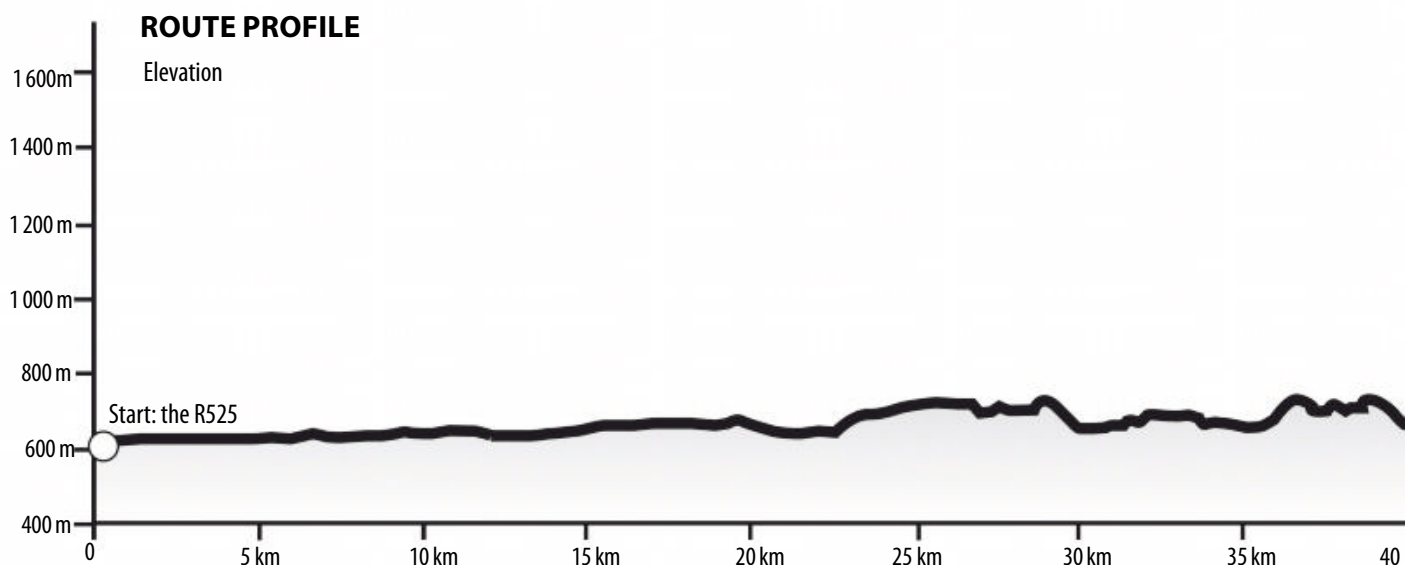
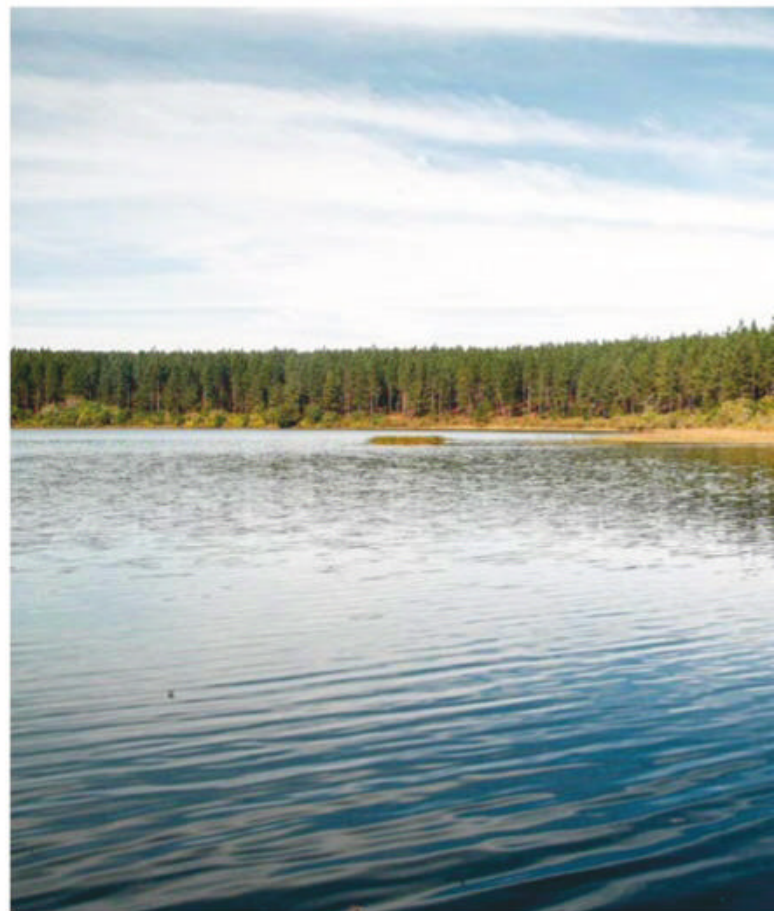
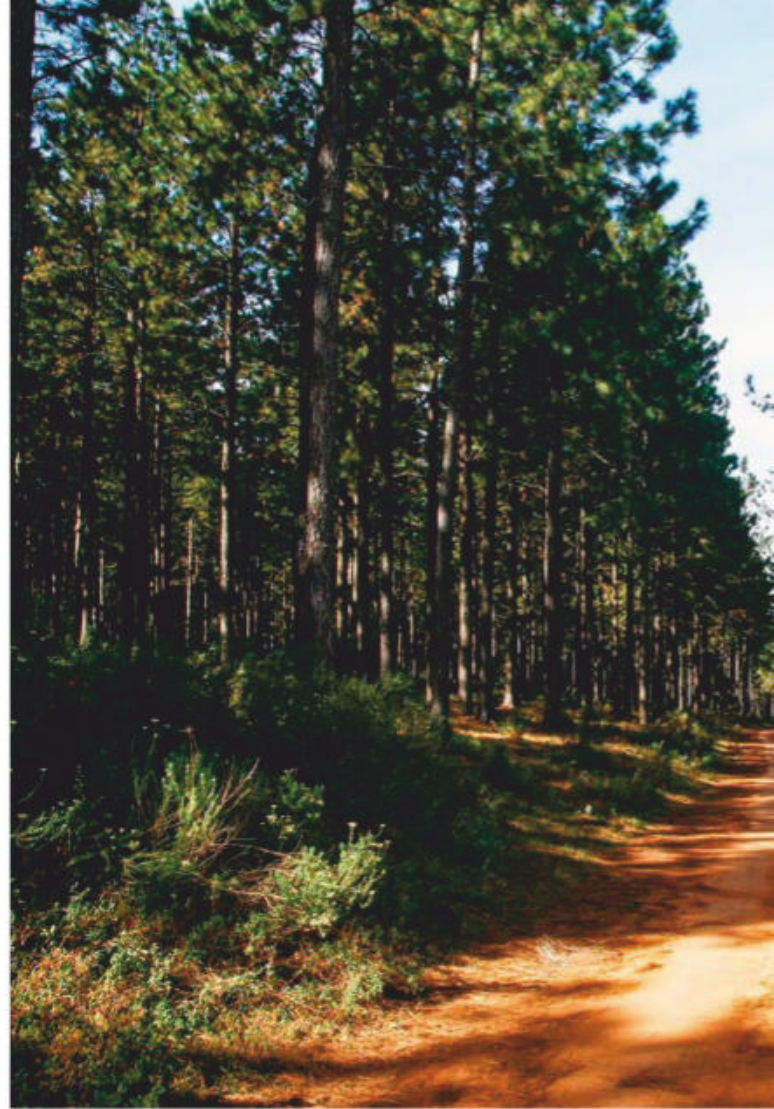
From here the route goes downhill with a long curve that disappears behind a slope. Judging by the mountains around you, however, you clearly have not yet reached the summit; this road may have to climb even higher somewhere... You're barely around the corner when you discover that it is, indeed, the case. There are large stones lying about that could conceivably damage your vehicle's chassis, so it is advisable to walk ahead and plan your line first – or ask a travel companion to give you directions.

It's steep here, but mercifully someone has assembled and cemented thousands of stones together to create paving – although the pass doesn't seem to have a name, it is clearly important enough that someone has spent time and money on it. However, you must first drive over 50 m of coconut-sized stones before reaching the paving. From here, the road gets easy and you know you're done with it when you arrive at a settlement called Khakhu. From here it is 5 km to Thononda. Turn left (S22.86364 E30.23532) to Thathe

Vondo, the holy forest of the Vendas.

Thathe Vondo is a forest that has largely been cleared over the years and has nowadays largely been displaced by a pine plantation. There are patches of indigenous forest left, but these islands of teak, hardwood, coral and fever trees are drowned out by a sea of alien pine.

The reason why patches of the original forest still exist is because several Venda chiefs are buried here. Tourists are allowed to walk through the holy forest, but they must stick to the footpaths. Originally from the Great Lakes region of Central Africa, the Vendas migrated to Southern Africa and settled in the present-day Thohoyandou area. Here they built the city of Dzata (the stone ruins are still visible today), and according to tradition, Chief Dimbanyaka was the first Venda chief to





WOODLAND Little remains of the original forest but the pine plantation isn't unsightly either. The scenery looks as if it was brought here from the northern hemisphere.



What you need to know



Maximum number of vehicles This is a public road.

Do I get a map? No.

Will I scratch my vehicle? No.

Do I need to take a compressor? No, unless you repair a tyre.

Can we braai along the way? No.

Can I turn around halfway? Yes.

Is there cellphone reception? Yes.

THE ROUTE

Best time to go? All year round.

Can I take my family? Yes, certainly.

How long does it take? Four hours.

Are there ablution facilities? No.

Directions Drive 18 km east on the R525 regional road and turn left at the Schuitdrift road sign. A bad dirt road takes you to where the nameless mountain pass begins.

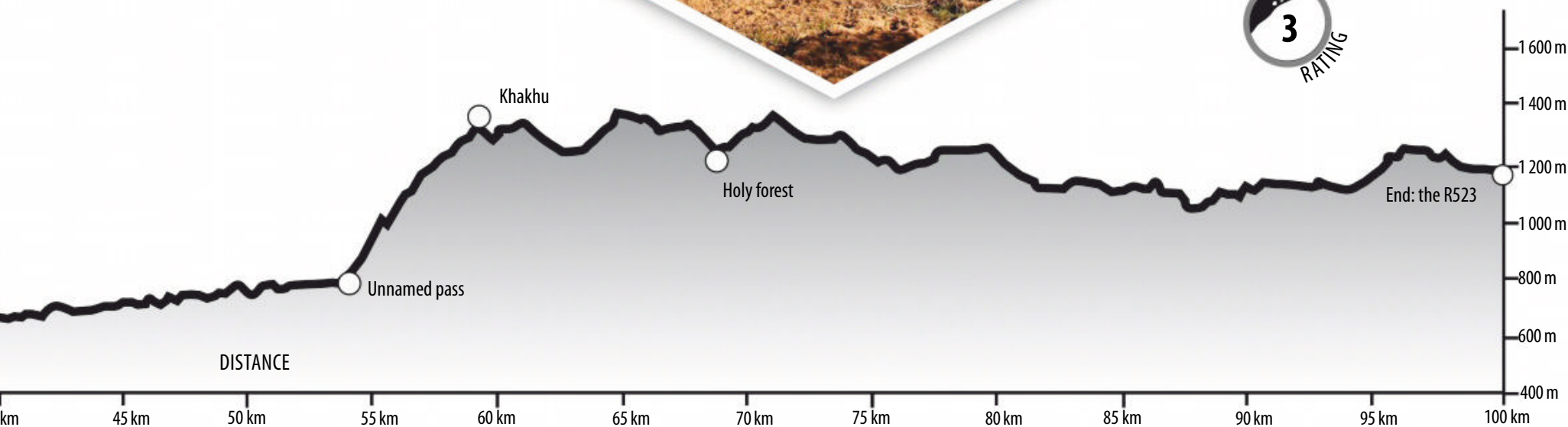
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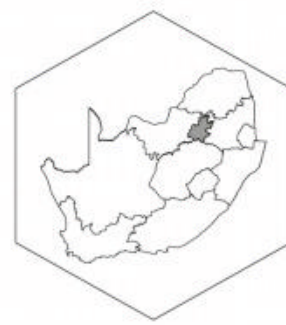


be buried in the holy forest. Dimbanyaka's eldest son, Thohoyandou, is considered the founder of the unified Venda nation.

Most of the logging trails through the Thathe Vondo plantation are easy to drive and you explore them for the fun of it. Turn right at S22.90583 E30.34117 to visit the Mukumbani Lake. Get out and relax on the shore for a while. There is a river crossing (S22.90044 E30.35372) with accompanying mud next to the Mukumbani waterfall if you want to splash around in your off-road vehicle.

With your 4x4 needs now hopefully satisfied, it's time to return to the braai fires. Go back the way you came but turn left where you previously turned off to Mukumbani Lake. This road will take you to the R523 regional road. All that remains is to head back to the N1 highway... and less than an hour later, you're back in Tshipise's warm-water mineral pool.





All good at Almega

They are die-hard campers, who break away at least twice a month, and recently **Anita Botes** and partner Johan Conradie from Witbank happened upon this lovely spot near Dinokeng.

“Johan and I are always searching on various camping forums and in magazines for new places to visit. We camp no less than twice a month and usually within a 200 km radius of where we stay. Why should we sleep at home if we can enjoy the beautiful nature, sunsets, bonfires and our well-equipped caravan?”

We read about Almega Caravan Park on Facebook and it looked like the perfect spot to charge our batteries. We loaded and hitched our 2007 Jurgens Xplorer to our 2014 Isuzu KB 3,0 DTEQ and hit the road. It took us about one hour and 41 minutes on tar, with the last bit a mere 200 metres of gravel road that's quite well maintained.

DID THE CAMPSITE MEET YOUR EXPECTATIONS?

On arrival a friendly hostess met us at the gate, and then Piet Geyser escorted us to our stand on his scooter, which was perfect. The campground is surrounded by Bushveld, and a variety of buck and bird life came to feed at the feeding hole opposite our campsite. The three-hectare caravan park is well taken care of.

WHAT DO THE STANDS LOOK LIKE?

The stands are fully covered by grass, with ample shade trees about, and a small paved area with a large braai. These stands therefore cater for bigger caravans and tents, and you can set up camp any way you like, as long as you stay within the boundary that Piet points out to you. There is also a private scullery area at each stand with a double sink and drying area, and the lighting is excellent.

DESCRIBE THE ABLUTION FACILITIES

It's five-star indeed, and each site has its own private ablutions. The interior is

neat and clean, with a dressing table with sockets for hair dryers or shavers, a large wall mirror and work surface, a basin, towel hooks and a huge shower with a double towel rail and place to put your vanity bag and clothing.

WHAT ACTIVITIES ARE THERE TO DO?

The guided game drive on electric scooters is highly recommended! There is a 27 km hiking/bicycle trail, play park for the kids, guitar-shaped pool for cooling off in, and you can also watch birds. Big five game viewing is available by booking on a neighbouring game farm. The call of a jackal at night is achingly beautiful.

WHAT ABOUT FOOD AND FUEL? IS THERE A SHOP IN THE CAMPSITE OR NEARBY?

The owner Andre comes around delivering oven-dried sicklebush wood at R20 per bag and ice at R10 a bag once a day. There is no shop on site, but there is a small shopping complex about 1,2 km from the camp where you will find the necessary groceries and fuel.



CONTACT

082 452 0269

almegakamp.co.za

GPS S25.339782 E 28.385382

WIN Anita wins a **Camp Cover** Camera bag worth R520.

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Small soldier, big ambition

Adopted Capetonians **Michael Rupp** from Munich and **Olivia O'Prey** from London are on an epic road trip to Tanzania and back again with their Suzuki Jimny and African Backbone Caprivi.

Cute but capable

2017 SUZUKI JIMNY

“We owned a **2014 Honda Civic** for about three years. Michael inherited it from his sister, but it was getting too old and started to have problems. We wanted to get rid of it before it completely fell apart, and before we started taking more adventurous camping trips. It simply didn't suit us anymore.

We had always wanted a 4x4, so that drivetrain was at the top of the list, but obviously, price was a factor and we didn't need a huge car as it's just the two of us. We needed something

practical for moving camera equipment (we're videographers and photographers) that also had to be fuel-efficient and compact enough for city driving, but tough and capable enough to take us camping and exploring come the weekend.

The current expedition wasn't on the cards when we bought the **Suzuki Jimny** new for **R250 000** in **2017**, but we're so glad that it's worked out, so much so that we're able to take it overlanding too.

We have a weird nickname for each other – '**Schnappi**' – so our Jimny has become the third Schnappi and even has its own name-tag on the side.

The only thing we'd appreciate more is a **bigger fuel tank**. At **40ℓ** it runs dry rather quickly. Otherwise, it's perfect for what we wanted. It also has nothing fancy inside, but for us, that's fine. Fewer things to break.



We really love its short wheel-base, impressive low-range, the fact that it's lightweight (we almost never get stuck), and that it surprises people. They don't expect it to perform alongside bigger 4x4s, or tow so we get a lot of great comments.

We've had the suspension upgraded to a **full EFS kit**, with **Zombie off-road underbody protection**, **radial arm cup protectors**, **transfer case protector**, **rear recovery point and tow hitch**. We've also had a **Front Runner roof rack** installed with **plenty of accessories** including an awning, spare wheel mount, **spotlights** and **jerry cans**. Anthony from **Manic 4x4** gave it all an anti-corrosion treatment.

If we had the extra money, it would be an easy decision to go for a diff lock, front and rear bullbars, rock sliders and a long-range fuel tank.

We bought our **African Backbone Caprivi trailer** because a Jimny could tow it, so it's been a breeze so far. Both the vehicle and trailer have survived over **6 000 km** – from **Cape Town** to our current spot in **Hwange National Park** – with no major issues, but you compromise on speed. We're not in any rush though, so driving slower just means we get to see more amazing things along the way. We've been averaging around **13,5 L/100 km** with the **Caprivi in tow** and about **10,5 without it**.

When the trailer is hitched, we can't

open the Jimny's rear door. To reach anything inside the back of the car (which for us is a lot, including all our camera gear), you have to disconnect the trailer from the car. That's a little annoying, but mostly just because we're lazy.

One of the more significant challenges we've encountered so far are the **Namibian roads**, particularly the long and corrugated stretch from **Aus through to Twyfelfontein**. It gave us a few challenges and we lost a couple of nuts and bolts along the way. Nothing that we couldn't easily fix, however, and it taught us a good lesson to check everything over more often.

It's really hard to pick a favourite campsite, so can we just say the whole of **Namibia**? The camping there is just spectacular – from the rocky moon landscape of the **Namib-Naukluft Park**, to the grassy banks of the **Caprivi**.

If you were to put a gun to our heads, we'd probably name **Spitzkoppe** as our number one spot, with its wide-open spaces, large stands that make you feel alone, enormous boulders and magnificent sunrises and sunsets that turn the landscape orange. There really isn't a better place to start and end a perfect day in Africa



Show us your wheels

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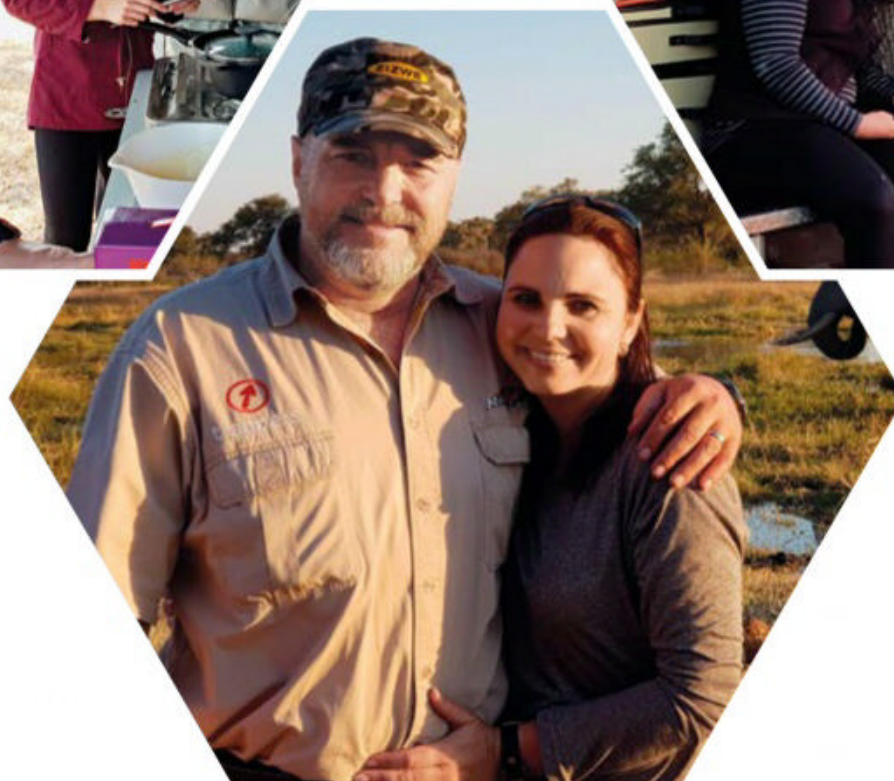
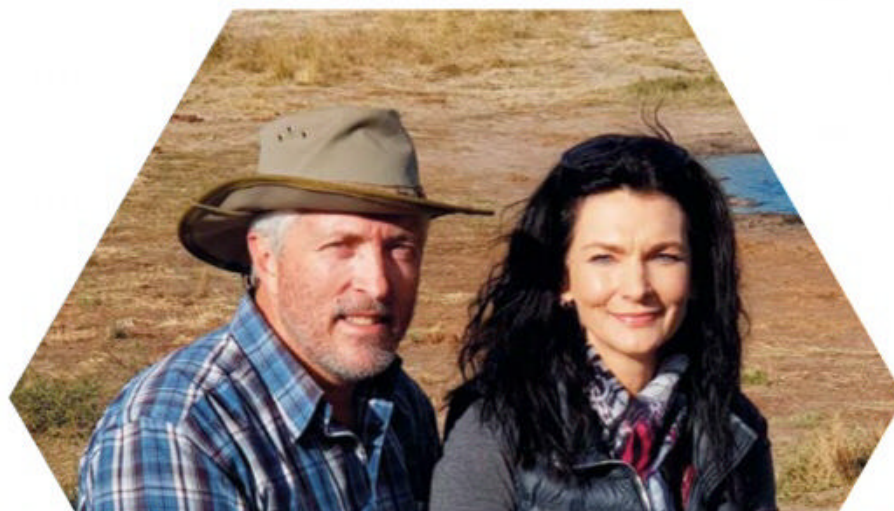
drivecamp@gomag.co.za and tell us about what's in your garage.



6 Mobi Lodge caravans in Botswana

As manufacturers, it's important that they test their own product, and that is why they headed for Botswana's sandy roads for two weeks says **Leon Ras** from Pretoria.





A TIME FOR ADVENTURE, FRIENDSHIP AND PLANS FOR THE FUTURE The brothers Ras at the helm of MobiLodge, Leon (top) and Marius (above), put their product through the paces recently on a trip deep into Botswana with family and friends.

The Mobi Lodge brothers, Leon and Marius Ras, their families and some of their friends recently toured Botswana for two weeks. It was a time for socialising, beautiful photos and adventure.

Marius, Leon and their wives, Lorinda and Anchell, tackled this exciting trip with friends Monique and Marnus, At and Riana, Christo and Nandi, Pieter and Christa, and Leon's daughter, Rochelle, with her husband Christo.

And in between they also held bush indabas and made big plans for the future. Leon tells us more...

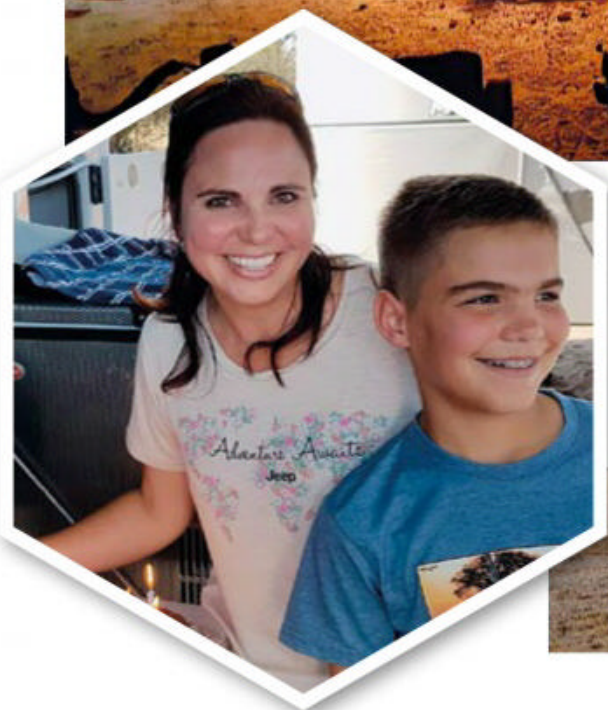
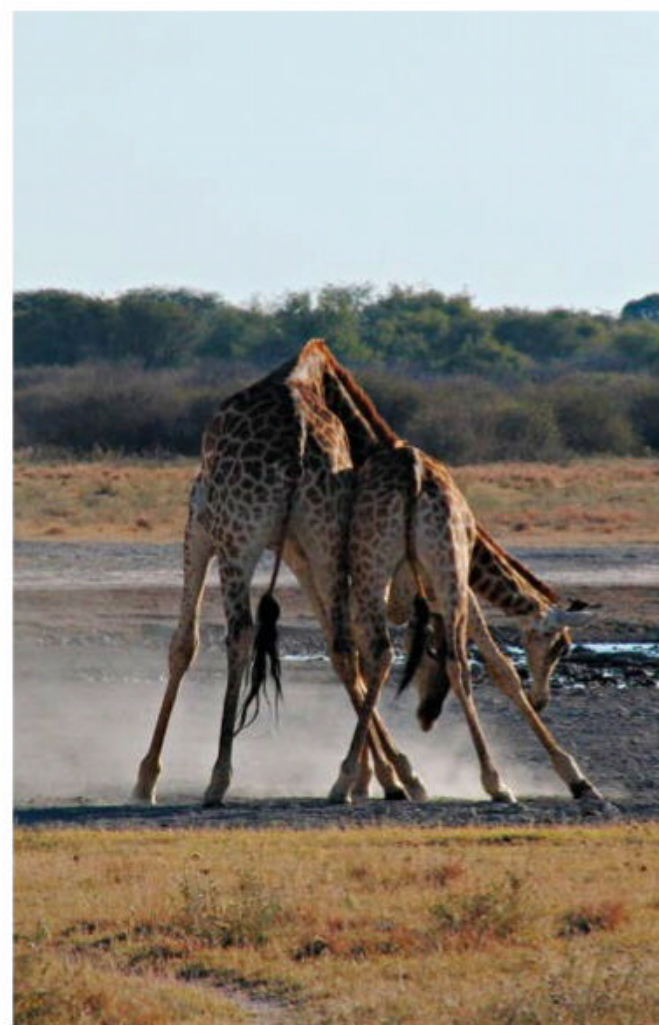
“Our group camped the first evening in the beautiful gardens at Big Fig Inn near the border and then the six Mobi Lodge caravans went

through the Martin's Drift border post, past Palapye and Serowe, as we made our way to the Khama Rhino Sanctuary.

That night it was time for our first pot bread under mild coals, with deliciously dark nightshade jam and a layer of cheese.

The next day we took the long road to Rakops and the messages over the convoy's radios ranged from 'elephants crossing the road to our left' to 'watch out for the donkeys' and 'bad pothole on the left'.

At Rakops, we refuelled and replenished our braai wood supply for a few days in the central Kalahari's deep sandy roads. We lowered the Mobi Lodges' tyre pressure to 1,5 bar and our towing vehicles to about 1,5 bar in the rear and 1,2 bar in the front. We tightened all the wheel nuts, made sure everything



ABOVE LEFT The overnight stop at Big Fig Inn near the border.
ABOVE MIDDLE Giraffes in the Khama reserve.
ABOVE RIGHT The group's camp in Deception Pan.
LEFT All together for a quick group photo in Khama.
BELOW LEFT Celebrating a birthday in the reserve.
BELOW RIGHT Deception Pan in the Central Kalahari.



was good with the vehicles and caravans, tested the radios and then fell in behind Marius who set the pace with his F250.

The roads are not well maintained and there are bad and uneven sections. At one point we had to tow the caravans over the sandy verges next to the road to find a detour through the bush after a preceding convoy's off-road trailer broke down and blocked the road.

The next day we drove along the Lethiahau's dry river bed toward Deception Pan. We saw three cheetahs, and it made all the hassle of tackling the bad roads worth it. We also saw jackals and ground squirrels that provided a lot of entertainment.

However, it's not easy towing here and we had to stop regularly to cut down branches and look for detours along the way.

The Kalahari was completely dry, and we wondered where all the gemsbok we saw got water to drink.

Each Mobi Lodge carried 150 l shower water, 20 l purified drinking water and 40 l diesel. In each towing vehicle, there was about another 60 l drinking water and 100 l extra shower water. We could all shower blissfully, even in the middle of the desert.

Many of the Kalahari trails are powdery sand and we welcomed it when a crosswind blew, as that meant that the convoy could drive closer to one another without too

much dust. There were times, however, when there was no wind, and then the dust hung in the air and we had to space ourselves a kilometre apart.

FROM THE CENTRAL Kalahari, we had to cross the Boteti River. As we stopped, we could see the ferry operator's eyes light up at the prospect of making some decent money that day.

But we had other plans, and shortly thereafter, Marius's F250 and Pieter's Cruiser 79 were tied together with recovery ropes longer than the river was wide. They unhitched the caravans and did a controlled crossing with just the vehicles – while the



ferry operator looked on disappointedly. Then they turned around and came back on a slightly different route. On their return, we could see the water just reaching the big F250's bonnet.

The men deliberated and the women pondered, but we finally concurred that it was safe to do the crossing with the caravans. The ferry operator immediately whipped out his phone to video the event.

MARIUS WENT THROUGH first, followed by Christo and At in their Ford Wildtraks, my son-in-law Christo and



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READER STORY

I with our two Chevy Trailblazers, and lastly Pieter and Christa with their Cruiser.

We engaged low range, put our vehicles in first gear and kept the revs around 3 000 rpm to ensure enough momentum. The water flooded over the bonnets, but it didn't reach our windscreens and the radiators stayed safe.

Despite the Mobi Lodges' ground clearance of 500 mm, it looked as if one caravan was starting to float at one point. But it ended well, actually everything went well, and we crossed the river without incident. At the Khumaga rest camp, we filled up the water tanks, made camp and carried our chairs to the fire.

Along the Boteti River we saw literally thousands of zebras, kudu, giraffes and elephants. "It looks like that scene in *The Lion King* where the animals stand in front of Pride Rock," someone commented on the radio. The sunset over the riverbed behind the silhouettes of a few elephants was one for the books!

For dinner, we roasted giant beef fillets over the coals and once more baked pot bread – this time with honey and more of that delicious nightshade jam to cement our team spirit.

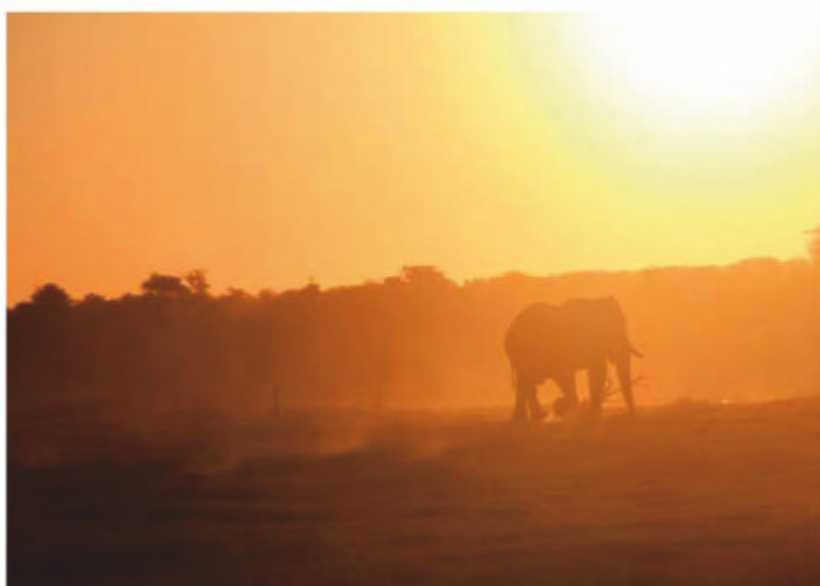
MARIUS SAID TO me one morning: "We should practice what we preach – so let me show you Khwai."

From Khumaga we again crossed the Boteti River and then drove toward Maun. On the way, we saw many elephants. We also didn't drive faster than 110 km/h on the tar after one of us had to swerve wildly when an elephant bull unexpectedly crossed the road in front of us.

The road between Francistown and Maun is really bad, and we tried to see the funny side as we swerved from side to side, dodging potholes.

We filled up in Maun and while enjoying





TOP River crossing at Khumaga; a bonafide holiday house in the Kalahari; and the Khumaga herds.
MIDDLE The ferry at Khumaga; the camp at Khwai; and an elephant in the last light during a Khumaga sunset.
BOTTOM A merciless swamp at Khwai; a scene almost straight from *The Lion King* movie.

milkshakes, we deliberated on the day's route. Going in Moremi's direction we would again be on sandy roads, which meant that the tyre pressure had to be lowered and the wheel nuts tightened again.

Christo and Nandi van Zyl, our longtime friends, are Botswana veterans and their

knowledge of the region's plants, wildlife and the delta's rivers came in handy on the radio as we progressed.

The next minute we could see only water ahead of us – the rivers had flooded their banks. We connected our recovery straps and pulled them over the bonnets just in case. All six of us made it through the first water crossing, but at the next one, the F250 and its Mobi Lodge sank in too deep. We turned around to try and find a temporary detour between the swamps. However, this road was well hidden and not marked at all.

At Khwai we pulled the caravans into a half-moon next to the river, and as the fire burnt bright, we talked about the past years' experiences here. One story was about an evening when the lions roared in such a way that it felt as if the earth was shaking. "It wasn't the neighbours' lions, it was our lions," Marius recalled.

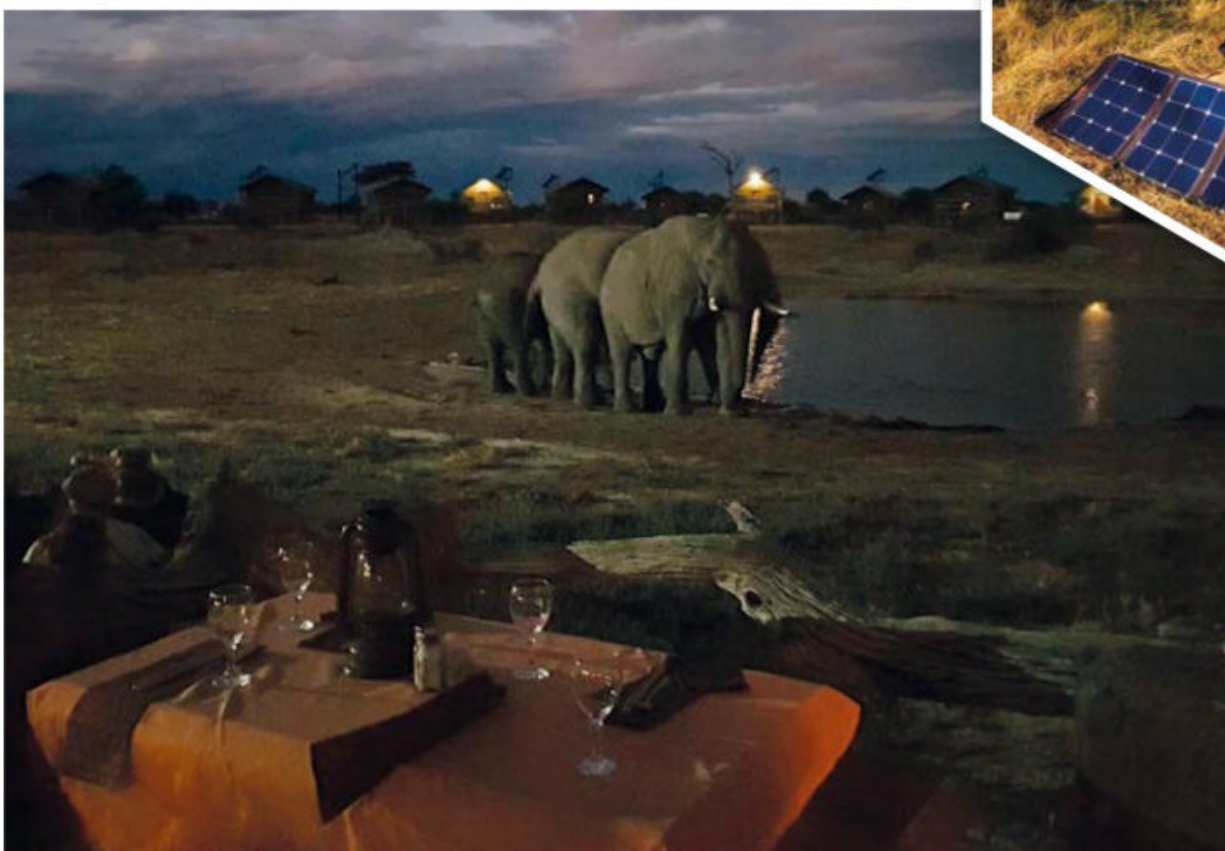
That's why we brought the camping chairs into a tighter circle around the fire and made sure there was enough light that each of us could watch the one sitting across from them and alert them early should any unexpected visitors arrive.

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Because the Mobi Lodge is equipped with a decent shower and indoor toilet, we agreed that no one would go out at night. That was probably a good idea, because in the dark we heard how close the hippos were to us and we heard the hyenas close by. And then, in the early morning hours, we heard a lion roaring from Chobe's direction. That's what we were here for!

The next morning we drove along the rivers toward Moremi and saw many hippos floating in the river, elephant herds playing in the water and a pack of wild dogs that made an appearance.

On our last at Khwai, we enjoyed sundowners with all kinds of biscuits and cheese; right on the riverbanks next to the

TOP The beauty of the Okavango Delta. MIDDLE A table with a view, please (left); Solar power and sufficient drinking water are the order of the day in Khwai (inset); Riana and Nandi with their modern Livingstone impression (right). ABOVE Stormy clouds on the horizon at Makgadikgadi. OPPOSITE Back in the good old Republic.



elephants. My body may be back, but my heart is still there.

FROM KHWAI, WE went back to Drifters through Maun, for pancakes in the rain with a nice view of the river. The next morning, we headed straight for the A3 route through Nata to the bird sanctuary to the east of Makgadikgadi. The lady at the reception office peeked through the window at the grey caravan behind my SUV. "Are you going in with that?" she asked skeptically. I said that's the plan and she warned us to be careful of the wet areas, as there is no

cellphone reception there. If we got stuck, it would be a proper mess.

The Makgadikgadi Pan is enchanting. The vast horizons, flames and pelicans contribute, of course, but it may also have

something to do with the silence.

From the pan, it was time to head for Elephant Sands. After first having an unplanned chat with a traffic officer on the outskirts of the village, we followed the beautiful road to the place where humans and elephants eat together. It was special to sit here at the table with the elephants coming to drink at the dam in the background.

After early morning coffee and rusks, we locked the Mobi Lodge for the route to Francistown, across the border, and straight to the Big Fig Inn's dining room.

Our two weeks in Botswana were over – a time of adventure, wildlife, stunning sunsets and good friendship. ”



Leon wins a **Camp Cover Bundu Bag** to the value of R500. The 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



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

* standard with front swivel seats and large island beds

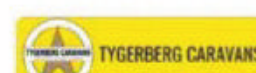
All models available with manual or automatic gearboxes, except the 4x4 Xtreme models



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NAMIB DESERT

Vanish into a sea of sand

The Namib is the world's oldest desert and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Experience this unique landscape for yourself on one of two 4x4 tours.

The Namib is an everchanging dune landscape – unspoilt, vast and mesmerizing. It might seem like an inhospitable place, but look carefully you'll find animals and plants completely adapted to the environment. You'll also discover remnants of the desert's rich diamond mining history, as well as haunting shipwrecks. Out there, it's you and your 4x4 surrounded by a sea of sand. It's easy to imagine you're the only person on this planet.

Since this is a concession area only a limited number of tours are offered every year. Make sure you are

one of the fortunate few who get to experience this ultimate journey.

Faces of the Namib

Join us on this six-night tour and discover the many faces of the Namib region, while testing your dune-driving skills among the world's highest sand dunes. You will be part of a convoy making your way up and down the dune landscape.

The tour starts in Solitaire. We'll first travel in a westerly direction through the Kuiseb Canyon, then on to Conception Bay across the iconic sand dunes. We'll pass through a ghost town and visit the wreck of the *Eduard Bohlen*. Our convoy then heads north along the Lange Wand (a high wall of dunes along the

coast) to Walvis Bay. The aim of this tour is to experience the desert in all its splendour.

DATES

1 – 6 March 2020
28 June – 3 July 2020
11 – 16 October 2020
6 – 11 December 2020

Lüderitz – Walvis Bay

This seven-day tour starts in Lüderitz and goes north to Walvis Bay, passing Meob Bay, Conception Bay and Sandwich Harbour along the way.

This part of Namibia was once the scene of a diamond rush and is known as the Sperrgebiet. Access to the area is still controlled and only a number of vehicles and groups are

allowed to drive this route annually.

You'll get to test your off-road skills by scaling some epic dunes while landmarks like an old, broken-down Ford truck, the wrecks of the *Eduard Bohlen* and *Shawnee* and the remains of mining settlements provide good photo opportunities.

DATES

23 – 29 January 2020
21 – 27 May 2020

RATE FOR BOTH TOURS

R12 950 per adult

Included in the rate: A guide team in own vehicles, two-way radios for all vehicles, breakfast and dinner daily, concession fees, park fees, community levies.



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MINE BEATS YOURS

Ever wondered how the weight of a road caravan compares to an off-road trailer, or a motorhome? Pit these camping rigs against each other with our new **Towing Trumps** cards. The deck of 52 playing cards feature vehicles launched between 2008-2013 for players to compare technical specifications.

Towing Trumps

43%

AVN Compact 2010

This caravan boasts some unexpected luxuries for its size. According to André van Niekerk, owner of AVN, the Compact was 30% cheaper than its rivals in the market. The caravan is made of fibreglass and aluminium, and aimed at couples.

Length	5,2 m
Width	2,3 m
Height	2,2 m
Tare	1 000 kg
Loading capacity	230 kg
GVM	1 230 kg
Price	R99 900

42%

2012

The big gist of Echo4x4's trailers, but it takes the kitchen drawers behind the front left side and buyers then had a choice between the newer version.

Length	4
Width	1,3
Height	1,8
Tare	R10

52%

Roadster 450 2012

The Roadster models, but perhaps the Conqueror's designers worked on the and showering inside, and eating and

Length	6,2 m
Width	2,3 m
Height	2,3 m
Tare	500 kg
GVM	910 kg

39%

2011

lack storage space but this version has where you could easily store four bags or has some cool technology. In fact, it's can go and get lost for a month!

Length	3,86 m
Width	1,86 m
Height	1,6 m
Tare	500 kg
GVM	910 kg

Towing Trumps



The game is based on the popular Trump playing card series and will provide hours of fun on the back seat of a car while travelling to the coast. Hey, perhaps your own model caravan is featured in this game!

go!
Drive&Camp

On sale now



Of tents, tigers and trout

To have a great camping spot is one thing. Now add a playground for kids to frolick around, a dam with fish, and everyone is happy.



FISHING RESORT

Koningskop

CROWN JEWELS IN THE MOUNTAINS

Koningskop's stands are set on the banks of the Jansekraal River flowing through the campsite. The first stands you get on the left are a new addition. They're out in the open and perfect for groups who want to camp together. The rest of the stands start on a decent piece of even grass to the right of the driveway. Just behind



them, there are six laid out on a higher terrace for tents.

Beyond the karee trees is one of the three bathrooms to the right and then there are about five stands to the left on open grass – this is where your caravan would fit the best. You do camp right next to the water, however, and the weavers' din in the rushes can eventually become white noise.

The road continues with a bend and over a steep hill under a large oak tree with low branches (you're unlikely to get a large caravan through here). The next section



FISHING GEAR

A tiger's nemesis

You don't tackle a tigerfish with bare hands. This predator doesn't scare easily, and it will happily take on fish half its size and swallow them head first.

It is a smart but greedy hunter, and it won't ignore a lure. Adrenaline has now launched three unique spoons specifically aimed at tiger fish. It's a double spoon and therefore has two sides. The shape is such that it mimics the swimming movement of a fish as you reel it in. The hook is made of reinforced metal and sits completely in the open at the tail end of the double spoon. As you reel it in, the hook "follows" the spoon, and because the spoon has two sides, they bang against each other, which emits a sound under the water.

The lures come in three finishes and are known as the Slim Twin, the Duplex Tiger and the Double Trouble. All three are also available in three colours: copper, silver and copper with silver.

The Duplex Tiger and the Double Trouble work equally well if you want to catch a yellow-belly bream.

Price From R35 each at fishing shops.

Contact Adrenaline Importers & Distributors (importers)

☎ 021 982 1510 catches@4adrenaline.co.za

🌐 adrenalinfishing.co.za



Duplex Tiger

Briefly | Koningskop



Fish Carp and black bass

Campsite 50 stands against a hill, most of which has grass and some shade. Everyone has a power point.

Ablution facilities 3 separate bathroom buildings, clean and tidy throughout.

Price R130 pppn (R70 for children

2-12 years; free for under 2s); credit cards accepted.

Arrival and departure times

No scheduled times, but make arrangements if you wish to check in after 19:00.

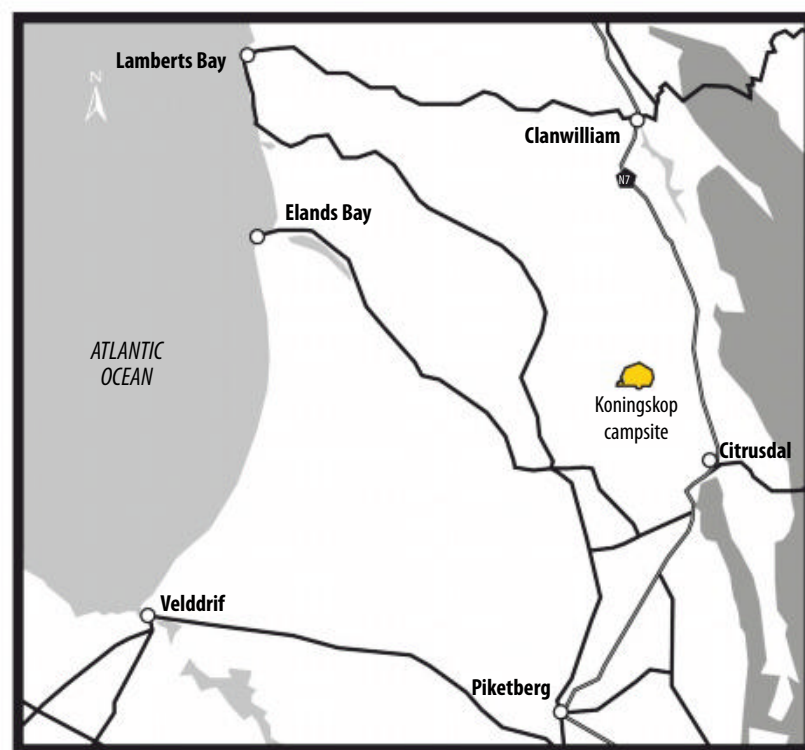
Contact 021 100 3758 koningskop.com info@koningskop.co.za

Nearest town Citrusdal, 25 km.

What does the road look like? Tar road.

GPS S32.498437 E18.848489

go! Drive & Camp says Give the fish a second life by releasing them.



of the camp starts here on two terraces to the right of the road. All the shade here is probably the reason the grass is a bit sparse in some places. The terraces are also narrow and you could fit an off-road trailer in here at best. To your left is the dam (with the reception on the far side) and a jungle gym near the water for the little ones.

This is where you can see if you can catch a carp or a black bass. In the morning, the weaver choir next to the dam comes alive and all the birds in the valley get busy. Everyone, from the pin-tailed whydah to the Karoo thrush and yellow bishops flit about.

There are dense clusters of wild olive trees, and the oaks next to the dam are giants from a previous century or two. The dam also gets water from a side stream that first fills up two square pools next to it. The two pools are opposite each other; it looks like the smaller one might be intended for kids, but both are too deep for those who can't yet swim. At least it's fresh and natural mountain water and not sterilised municipal water.

The last stands are just past the next bathrooms, also with lovely green grass, but one or two are on a slope. The guys at the end enjoy the most shade. Every stand has a power point (ordinary domestic socket), and at every second or third one there is a light that you can turn on or off at night. There are also hordes of loose braai spots – halved 210 l drums on steel frames – but you need to bring your own braai grid.



WHOLE ROASTED TROUT WITH CITRUS Fish for the gourmand

Serve this excellent trout with freshly baked bread from the campfire.

Ingredients

(enough for 4)

- 125 g butter, melted
- grated zest of 1 lemon
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon fennel seed, lightly toasted and crushed
- 2 cloves garlic, finely crushed

- 1 whole fennel bulb, thinly sliced, with the leaves finely chopped
- 1,5 kg trout (1 large fish or 4 small ones)
- 2 oranges, peeled and thinly sliced
- salt and black pepper

Here's how

1 Mix together the butter, lemon zest and juice, fennel seeds, garlic and chopped fennel leaves.

2 Use a sharp knife and make shallow cuts in the fish into which you squeeze the fennel and orange slices. Season the fish to taste with salt and black pepper.

3 Place the fish inside a grid (or tie it with twine) and braai for 7-8 minutes on each side as you continually baste it with the butter mix. Serve it with fresh bread.

go! Drive & Camp says You can flavour and braai any other fish the same way.

From greyhound to bullet train

At first glance, Audi's Q8 seems to belong only in places like Llandudno, Houghton and Ballito, but hitch a caravan and the country's roads are your oyster.

Words and photos **Leon Botha**

Audi's Q8 is the latest addition to the manufacturer's sport utility range. As expected, this is a luxurious SUV, but Audi has also equipped the Q8 with a tow bar.

Furthermore, Audi also makes the choice between the Q8 models easy, as there's only one petrol and one diesel model. Both have oodles of power (500 Nm for the petrol; 600 Nm for the diesel) and come with Audi's famous quattro all-wheel drive. The petrol model's top speed is 30 km/h faster (250 km/h) than that of its diesel brother and is also R51 000 cheaper at R1 388 000.

We got into the petrol model, hitched a Gypsy Regal and went for a lovely drive over a Cape mountain pass.

Looking good!

The large 22" alloys look like they belong on an Italian racing car, but they are equally at home on the Q8. And although you wouldn't really associate this type of performance SUV with towing a caravan, an electric tow bar is indeed hidden behind the Q8's bumper.

The towbar isn't the usual type you see where its base rotates to swing the ball portion past the bumper. This one comes from Westfalia and drops straight down until the ball is slightly past the bumper and then swings out. To get the towbar to extend out, simply push the button on the left in the boot, which also opens and closes with the push of a button.

AUDI Q8 55 TFSI QUATTRO TIPTRONIC



There are, in fact, two buttons here – one to swing the towbar out and the other to fold it back. It takes 13 seconds for it to swing out completely. The trailer socket is to the left in the shaft portion of the towbar, and as is common nowadays, the socket also has an adaptor for a South-African caravan's trailer plug. The towbar can't be stowed with this adaptor in place. Stowing the towbar takes 13 seconds.

Get into the cockpit

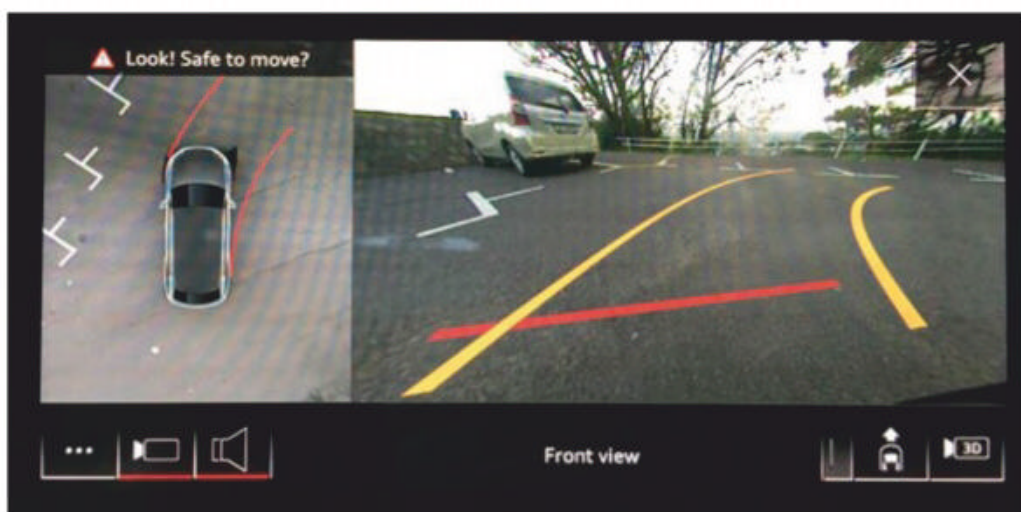
The cabin resembles the cockpit of a

Learjet. When you open the door, Audi's four-ring emblem is projected onto the ground so that you don't accidentally step into a puddle at night.

In front of the gear lever, the Q8 has two digital displays, the front of which is angled toward the centre of the ceiling so that it is clearly legible. The instrument panel behind the steering wheel is also digital and on this you can see, among other things, the navigation map between the digital odometers (oddly enough, this screen is not angled). The Q8 also has so-called

Heads-up Display that projects your speed on the windscreen in front of you so you can keep an eye on it without looking at the instruments.

Put the Q8 into reverse, and the image behind the car is displayed on the top-most screen of those in the middle. When you get close to the caravan's coupler, you can select the on-screen Trailer View button that projects a blue triangle – with its pointy end on the towbar. A yellow line inside is the angle at which the steering wheel is turned, so you can reverse to the



Here's what our towing expert Pieter Crous has to say.



“The cabin is probably one of the most beautiful I’ve ever seen, but unfortunately all the finger marks on the computer screens bother me. Of course, this is because you control everything on them, from the air-con to the radio. When you want to make an adjustment, you also need to first look at the screen to see where your finger should be. Some cars have a knob between the seats that you can rotate to make choices on the screen, and I prefer that.

It’s as you pull away that you realise power is a big asset to the Q8. In fact, the Q8 is so comfortable it’s only when you look in the rearview mirror that you remember you’re towing a caravan.

At 120 km/h, the car tows like a dream. The speedometer is accurate and only shows 2 km/h faster when the GPS indicates 100 km/h.

The car’s 80-120 km/h

acceleration with a caravan is impressive. In Drive mode and on a level road, the engine turns at 1 200 rpm in eighth gear when you drive at 80 km/h. Put down foot and it takes a mere 7,845 seconds to accelerate to 120 km/h. The gearbox switches from eighth gear directly to third and the revs shoot towards the red.

Switching to Sport mode is a different story. At 80 km/h, the transmission keeps the revs slightly higher (2 500 rpm and fifth gear), but it speeds up to 120 km/h one second faster: 6,63 seconds. When you switch the gearbox to manual, you realise the computer does a good job in Sport; my attempt was 6,83 s. (I chose third gear at 80km/h with the revs at 4 000 rpm.)

The two modes also react slightly differently when you step on the accelerator. In Drive, it takes a moment or two before the six-cylinder engages. In Sport, however, the Q8 is just as awake as you are and it’s as if the exhaust system gets a little extra bark.

The Q8 feels particularly wide,

and you can see comfortably past the road caravan in the rear-view mirrors. Furthermore, the steering wheel turns very easily for a vehicle of this size. Go easy on the brakes, too, because they are very responsive.

In cars like this where the upper door frame is missing, you usually hear more wind noise, but in Q8 that isn’t the case at all.

The suspension is really great, even when you tow. It feels as if the Q8 is floating on the road, as if the wheels aren’t even touching the tar.

I like the speed control, which, like the hazard lights, has its own arm. It therefore doesn’t form part of the buttons on the steering wheel. The wide head of the gear lever also grips well, and the window levers are at your fingertips when you drop your forearm onto the door rest.

You always see on the dashboard in what gear the car is – not a feature all automatic vehicles have. In addition, you can see if the gearbox is in Drive (D), Sport (S) or Manual (M) mode.



“

The gearbox switches from eighth gear directly to third and the revs shoot towards the red

”



WRITING ON THE WALL Not only is the Q8 brand new, but it also features the latest tech. You finger paint where you want to go and it deciphers your handwriting, but the jury is still out on whether it could handle a doctor's scribbling.



coupler at exactly the right angle. The screen not only shows your reversing lane, but can also show the lane in front of the car as you move forward. What makes the system even more special is that it also shows the trajectory of the rear wheels. This is a clever feature and of great help. If, for example, you reverse and turn the steering wheel, your front wheels follow a wider path than the rear ones. That's when you hit the post you didn't see next to the car. With this rear-view camera system, you can see exactly what path the wheels will follow.

After hitching the caravan and starting the engine, the computer shows that Towing mode is active and some of the Side Assist – such as lane control and blind-spot sensors – are deactivated.

The satnav is displayed on the lower-most screen and has a novelty: the screen turns into a chalkboard so you can simply write with your finger instead of keying in your destination. The computer deciphers your writing and then lists possible destinations.

Just after you pull off, the seatbelt tightens over your shoulder, and it almost feels like

a reassuring hug. When you stop and switch off, your seat automatically slides backwards and the steering wheel lifts up a bit so you can get out easily.

Interestingly, the computer does not deactivate the engine's automatic start/stop function when you hitch a caravan. (Some manufacturers recommend that you turn off this mode when you tow.)

At 17,9 ℓ/100 km (5,6 km/ℓ) you pay for all the speed, comfort and power. But in a luxury car like this, that's what it's all about – fuel consumption is a minor issue.

TOW TEST

The caravan

Manufacturer Gypsey

Model Regal

Year model 2003

GVM 1 300 kg

Loaded weight on the axle

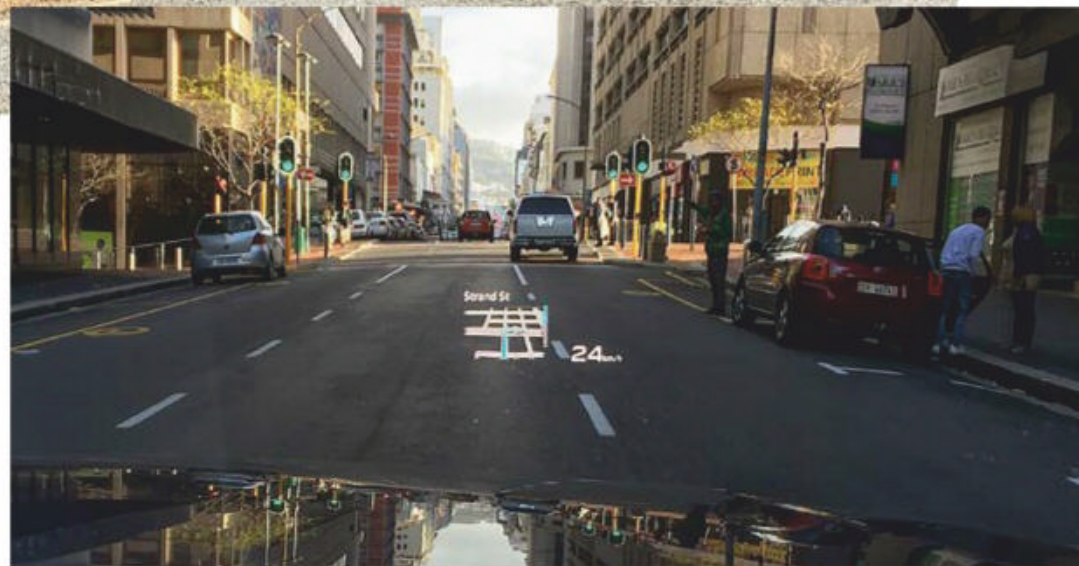
during test 1 120 kg

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

tygerbergcaravans.co.za

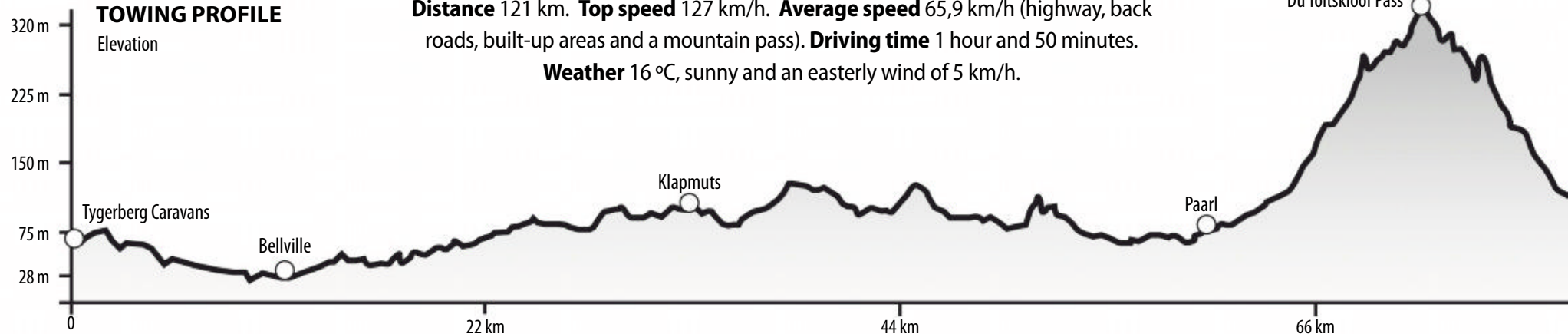


UNDERNEATH AND UPFRONT
Thanks to the air suspension (insert left) it feels as if the Q8 glides along a road, and you can follow the satnav directions on the windscreen ahead of you.



TOWING PROFILE

Elevation



Distance 121 km. **Top speed** 127 km/h. **Average speed** 65,9 km/h (highway, back roads, built-up areas and a mountain pass). **Driving time** 1 hour and 50 minutes.

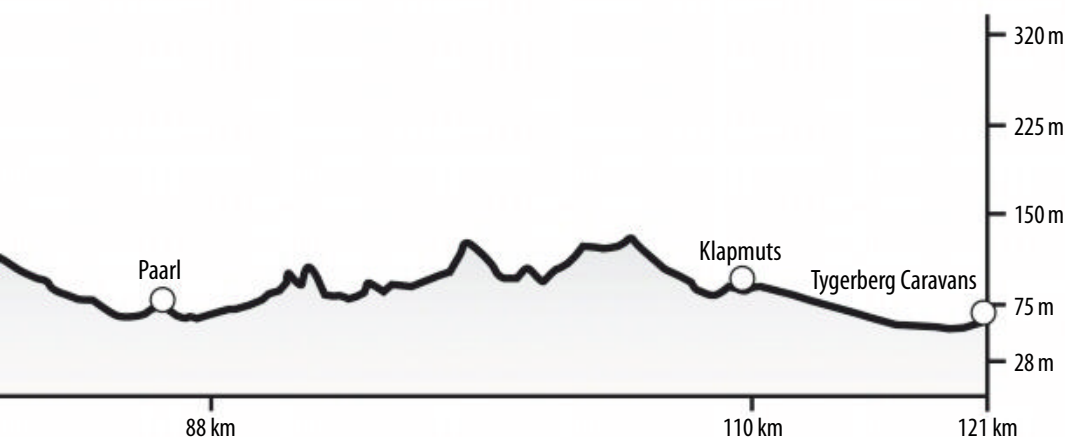
Weather 16 °C, sunny and an easterly wind of 5 km/h.



“
go! Drive & Camp says If the Q8's stability control detects the caravan swaying at speeds faster than 65 km/h – and if that movement will affect the car – it will brake automatically.
”



SPECIFICATIONS	
Model	55 TFSI quattro Tiptronic
Engine	2 967 cc
Power	250 kW
Torque	500 Nm
Transmission	Eight-speed automatic
Drive train	Permanent all-wheel drive
Tank	85 ℓ
Fuel consumption with caravan	17,9 ℓ/100 km (5,6 km/ℓ)
Range with caravan	476 km
Tare weight	2 090 kg
Weight during test (nose weight of caravan included)	2 480 kg
GVM	2 815 kg
GCM	6 315 kg
Towing capacity	3 500 kg
Combination weight during test	3 600 kg
Towbar's maximum pulling weight D-value	16,6 kN (1 693 kg)
Towbar's maximum vertical weight	140 kg
Is the towbar removable?	No
Does a drop plate fit?	No
PRICE	(standard) R1 388 000
PRICE	(as tested, including the towbar at R16 260) R1 613 227



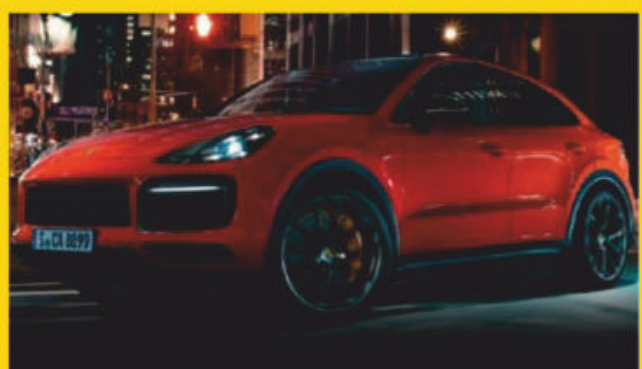
From the competitors
 (petrol, all-wheel drive, automatic, standard price)



R1 187 900 BMW X6 xDrive35i 400 Nm



R1 341 291 Mercedes-Benz GLE 450 4Matic 500 Nm



R1 353 000 Porsche Cayenne Coupé 450 Nm

Destination unknown

When you're taking everything with you – including the kitchen sink – you may end up driving forever. Well, you can do just that with the Motorhome-World Discoverer 4.

Words and photos **Kyle Kock**



MOTORHOME-WORLD DISCOVERER 4

There's an unwritten rule – and a tacit understanding – among campers that when you're young, you don't mind what you're sleeping in and therefore a small two-man tent is sufficient, whereas when you've climbed the ladder of success, and have done the hard yards towing and camping with road caravans and off-road trailers, you can now look

at a motorhome. Not that everyone can afford a motorhome, despite their different variations and spec levels, which is why you can rent one from the likes of Bobo Campers, who stocks Motorhome-World vehicles.

Their popular Discoverer 4 model was updated this year and is now in its fourth version – having first been introduced to the world all the way back in 2001.



Comfort break

The Discoverer comes with a full bathroom that's immediately to the left as you enter. The toilet has a cassette below it and is right against the left wall.

Above that is a toilet paper holder and then there's a little corner shelf to the right for toiletries. The basin is against the front left corner, with a toothbrush holder just above it.

The wall to the inside of the motorhome has a large mirror, and next to that is the showerhead.

Water drains in the corner below the mirror. There's also a shower curtain to pull across the door.



Upfront

This model uses a Iveco chassis, powered by a 2,3 l turbodiesel engine that sends 100 kW and 320 Nm to the rear wheels via an eight-speed automatic transmission, which you can override in a manual mode, or leave to its own devices in pre-programmed Eco or Power modes. The Eco mode is obviously the fuel-saver, which keeps engine speed as low as possible in the highest possible gear ratio. Conversely, Power mode drops a gear, and holds the revs a lot longer depending on how much stick you give.

The driver's seat is adjustable six ways, but the steering column is only reach-adjustable, so you can't determine the rake, forcing you to sit upright – much like a lorry driver. Because the Discoverer 4 is a four-sleeper, your passengers are well catered for and have their own seats with seatbelts behind the front dinette.



Fully fitted

The kitchen is to the right as you come in through the door. The worktop is long and wide and in the middle are two tinted glass lids. The one on the left is the more rectangular of the two and lifting it backward on its rear hinges reveals three gas burners. On the right, under the lid that's squarer and closer to the door, you'll find a sink. The mixer tap is recessed in the stainless steel under the lid, and it swivels up when you need to do the dishes or rinse veggies.

Above the worktop on the left and against the bulkhead are wooden shelves that make the perfect storage for your spice collection, and here the supplier places a box of matches, a candle and glass candle holder. There's also a handheld torch. On the right side up against the bottom of a shelf is an LED strip with three brightness settings so you don't have to work in the dark. The shelf above is where the Defy microwave oven fits snugly and to the right of that, next to the door, are another two shelves that could hold your keys,

wallets or anything else you would want to grab before you walk out the door.

Under the worktop on the left is the cutlery drawer complete with enough eating utensils for four, including knives, forks, spoons, teaspoons, steak knives, tin opener, a pair of scissors, vegetable peeler, whisk and cheese knife, bread knife, serving spoon, spatula, tongs and wooden mixing spoon. Below is another draw with a large block of foam that has cut-outs for four plates, four side plates, four bowls, and four glass mugs. The last drawer has small and large teapots, two cooking pots and a saucepan.

Next to the drawers is a cupboard with two shelves. You're limited for space because the sink drops down into almost half of the top shelf's space, but it's more than enough room for rubbish bags, dishcloths and dishwashing liquid. On the lower shelf, you can find a couple of mixing bowls, plastic containers, a cutting board and a pan.



“

The kitchen is to the right as you come in through the door

”





Electric everything

Right above the door as you come in is the control panel for the various switches of the elements you need on your camping excursion. The most important one is at the top right, because that's the on-and-off switch for the whole shebang. Below that is the control for all the lights, and the next one controls the water pressure.

On the opposite side, the top switch will show you how the motorhome's engine battery is doing, the one below shows how much charge the living quarters' dual batteries have left and the one below that indicates the water levels on the tank. Right in the middle, there are two green lights, with the motorhome's batteries indicated by the left, of which the default setting is always on. Once you plug in at the campsite's electricity point, the next light will indicate the electric supply override.

This being pretty much a mobile home, there are plug points all over for you to power up whatever you need to make your journey and destination

more comfortable. Upfront, right in the middle of the top of the dashboard are two USB charge points to keep the driver and front passenger's mobile phones topped up. Under the dinette table behind the driver's seat, there's a three-point domestic socket and a round two-point unit in a single plastic mould.

A little further to the right there's a single USB socket. Between those, you'll find the switches for the geyser. The one on the left is on/off and the one on the right gives you a choice between using gas or electricity to power the

geyser. Behind the first dinette is the 80 l Engel fridge/freezer, which can be run off the dual batteries all the time so you can stock up on meat and cheese before you get to the campsite. Right at the back, just above a small shelf for those sleeping on the rear bed or sitting at the dinette, is another plastic mould with a three-point and a two-point socket. Above this is the air-con system for the rear cabin. In the middle of the ceiling is the vent you open and close manually, but operate with an electric switch to suck air into or out of the cabin.



Nooks and crannies

There's plenty of storage room in and around the Discoverer 4, and spaces that the manufacturer has maximised. To the left of the door on the outside is the portal through which you remove the toilet cassette. Behind the rear axle on the left, there's a space with a flip-up lid, in which you store the motorhome's fold-up table and camping chairs. The spare wheel is mounted underneath the rear window and has its own cover.

Around the right side is another space that matches the one at the left rear and houses the lone camping chair that doesn't fit on the other side, a jerry can, and a large wheel brace. The circuit breaker can also be found here and looks just like the one at

home. In front of the rear axle, there's a smaller compartment where the gas cylinders sit, then there's the electricity supply socket (your Discoverer comes with an extension cable and domestic and Fredlin fitting). The last slot is where you fill the 60 l water tank.

Starting upfront inside, there are at least five slots in the plastic fascia that you can slide wallets, keys, and important documents into, and two deep cup holders on the far ends.

The fibreglass moulding that angles from the motorhome's roof down onto the front of the windshield is where the bedding is stored, and its cupboard door is the one that's facing you as you get in from the rear and turn towards the cab. This is also where you find



the planks and cushions to complete the second bed.

On the right side above the window are your towels and there's a tiny bit of packing space next to that before the block of foam that hold all the glasses in place. Behind that and above the fridge is a wardrobe with hangers for your coats and jackets.

You have another cupboard to pack larger items of clothing on the right side at the rear, plus two larger cupboard doors for more clothing. Behind the kitchen on the left-hand side are two more cupboards. Most of the corners in the Discoverer have rounded shelves with see-through fronts that look like little balconies.

Underneath the rear-facing seats in front is the geyser, plus storage space for a bucket, washbasin, hand broom and dustpan. The bench on the opposite site holds a small safe where you can keep valuables under lock and key.

Hit the hay

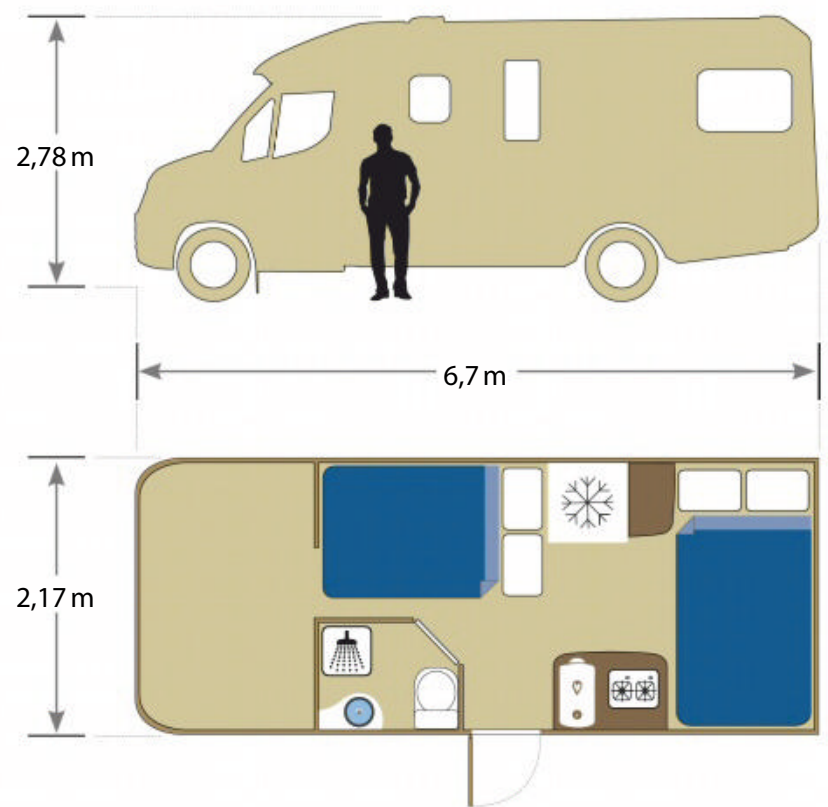
As with everything when it's time for bed, remember to start at the back first. Lift the tabletop off the aluminium pole and pull the pole out of its stand in the floor. Now you drop the tabletop into the slots just under the seating cushions on the right and left side. All that remains is to untie the seatback cushions from their hooks and lay them flat. This bed is now 1 200 mm wide and 2 000 mm long – just short of being a legitimate double. Slide the pole in underneath to store it. Grab the bedding from the front of the cabin and there you go.

The front bed requires a little more finesse. Two flaps in the aisle rise from the front- and rear-facing benches and lock into place. The table drops the same way, but to complete the puzzle you'll need to grab additional boards and cushions from the bedding recess. The way they shaped the cushions and boards to fit and complete the front bed is clever, and it's slightly wider (50 mm) and a bit shorter than the main bed (by 100 mm). The only hindrance is the rearward flap that protrudes from underneath the cushion and requires careful



leg placement by the rear occupants if they want to go stargazing in the middle of the

night or if the motorhome's toilet is occupied to not smack a shin against it.



The technical stuff

Length 6 700 mm
Width 2 170 mm
Height 2 780 mm
Interior height 1 900 mm
Net weight 2 820 kg
Packing space 780 kg
Fuel Tank 70 ℓ
Price R1 196 000



Plus

- Appliances such as the fridge can run when in transit.
- Fully kitted – just bring clothes and groceries.
- Fit and finish are superb.
- Electrical sockets and extra USB points.
- You can choose to heat the water with gas or electricity supplied by the campsite.
- Separate storage space for outside table and chairs.



Minus

- Parking sensors or reverse camera lacking.
- Fold-up plank for the front double bed makes it a bit troublesome for those sleeping in the rear to get to the bathroom.
- No awning.

go! Drive & Camp borrowed the vehicle from the manufacturer through its rental division.

go! Drive & Camp says For the real grown-ups who don't mind taking the house with them. 🚐

Dealer network

Bobo Campers have rental offices in Atlantis, Johannesburg and Windhoek, Namibia. The Motorhome-World Factory is in Atlantis, Cape Town. And they are represented by dealerships in Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg.

Contact 📞 011 395 1020
 📧 info@bobocampers.com
 🌐 bobocampers.co.za
 📞 021 577 3863 📧 info@motorhome-world.com
 🌐 motorhome-world.com





CONQUEROR COMMANDER RECCE

Eyes front!

There are off-road caravans and there are hardcore off-road caravans... and then there is the Recce.

Words and photos **Cyril Kloppe**

Conqueror has long been known for its hardy off-road caravans, and until recently the Commander Platinum was the flagship model. The Recce, however, is a higher-grade version of the Platinum that boasts independent air suspension

among other things. And the rationale behind the Recce is not simply to be more luxurious. Proceeds from the Recce sales are donated to the South African Special Forces Association (SASFA), which looks after the well-being of veterans of the Special Forces.

Take cover

To raise the Recce's roof, you turn out two knobs and then simply pop the roof up. You don't get much easier than that.

Deploying the front tent requires more effort, though. The first thing to do here is to climb onto the nose cone and open a bag in which a weatherproof flysheet is stored.

Unroll the flysheet and release two clips on either side of a hatch. Pull the hatch forward and down as you back down the nose cone, making sure the flysheet comes with so you can later reach it from the ground.

Once you're down on terra



On manoeuvres

To thoroughly test the Recce, we towed it across the border to neighbouring Mozambique and tackled the most difficult sand, stone and dirt roads we could find. The Recce's air suspension is impressive, and even though our towing vehicle would get tossed around on a rocky mountain pass, the Recce floated unperturbed behind us. On the pass in question (see page 58), the AL-KO overrun

brake prevented the Recce from pushing our towing vehicle downhill.

Its huge Cooper Discoverer STT Pro tyres were larger than those of our towing vehicle and easily rolled through mud and over rocks. At around 1,4 tonnes, the Recce is, however, a proverbial tank and our Isuzu battled to pull it through the deep, loose sand at the ruins of the Chongoene Hotel near Xai-Xai.

firma, rest the bottom-end of a Y-shaped support on the Recce's A-frame coupler.

Now climb inside the Recce and extend two collapsible tent supports. Then climb out of the Recce again and thread spring steel rods through eyelets in the tent and flysheet, and push the lower ends of the rods into the hatch that now forms the floor of the tent. If sunny weather is forecast, you can, of course, leave the flysheet in its bag.

The next step is to pitch the awnings. There is one on either side of the Recce and they spread out like two batwings from the flysheet at the front

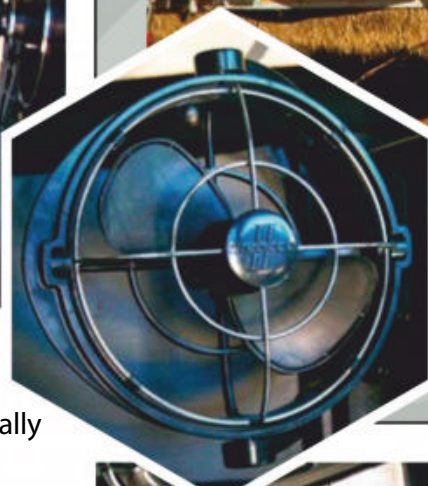


to the back of the Recce where they almost touch. We say "almost" because you need to zip an extra rectangular canvas between the two so that you now have 360° coverage around

the Recce. The awning has legs, braces and anchor ropes to secure it during harsh weather.

It may sound like hard work, but if you're camping in one place for a few days, you'll be

grateful for the convenience this shelter offers. However, if you are a restless traveller who camps in a different place every night, it can get tedious to repeat these steps every day.



Mobile barracks

The Recce has two doors – one on each side – that can be locked from the inside and the outside. Before you can get in, you must first swing down a stepladder. At the back of the camper is a table and two benches with seating for four. The table and benches convert to a double bed at night (1,6 m long and 1,68 m wide). At the top of the bed (or table) there are five hollows with shelves for clothes and bedding.

On the right wall is a window that can open, and above it extra storage space. On the left wall there is more storage space, and by zipping open a flap you get access to the food cupboard that is usually reached from the

outside. This feature is especially useful if you want to have a snack at night, but don't want to get out in the cold to open the cupboard from the outside.

There are also two fans to cool you down and a reading light above the bed. Near the left door is a panel with switches, a battery-monitoring system, USB and 12 V power sockets, a DVD player and a flat-screen TV. We need to mention that despite the Recce's excellent air suspension, the TV broke off its adjustable arm when we drove a rough 4x4 route. Conqueror provides a strap with which to secure the TV to the wall, but clearly all the rocking and rolling defeated it.



The second double bed is in the aforementioned tent that deploys over the A-frame of the Recce. This bed is 1,85 m long

and 1,66 m wide. Stowed at the foot of this bed is a large, folding table with enough seating for up to six people.



The field kitchen

A food cupboard is behind a lockable door on the left side of the Recce. There are three shelves for tinned food, a work surface that drops down, and pockets in which you can store dry supplies such as pasta. Don't, however, place eggs on the shelves and then go on a 4x4 drive – we learnt this lesson the hard way.

To the right of the food cupboard is a 220 V socket to connect to a resort's power grid via an extension cord, and underneath it is a toolbox (with a padlock). And to the left

of the cupboard is a pressure pump with a filter to increase the internal air pressure so dust cannot enter while towing on a dirt road.

Below the pressure pump are three domestic power sockets. Then follows the left-hand door – inside are shoe pockets, a drinks cabinet and extra storage for oft-used items.

Finally, at the front of the Recce is a hatch from which you pull a drawer with a fridge/freezer, a two-plate stove, crockery and cutlery, a mixer tap and two basins.

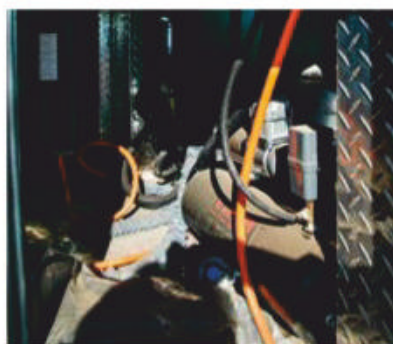
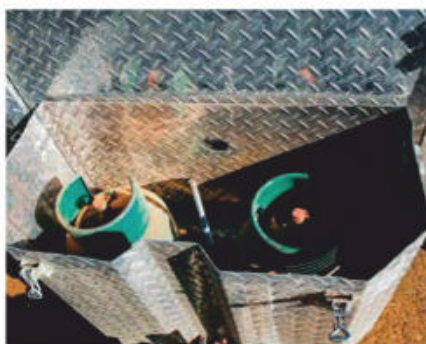
CARAVAN TEST



Inspection

Behind a hatch on the right is a drawer with a sink and a mixer tap for hot and cold water, and below the sink is a cubby for toiletries.

Behind the right door are compartments of different sizes, two shelves behind a small work surface and more storage space above it. In the middle of the Recce's hull is a shower head on a flexible pipe with a mixer tap. You need to supply your own shower tent or pick one from Conqueror's options list. Below the window is an identical toolbox to the one on the left-hand side.



“

The Recce, however, is a higher-grade version of the Platinum that boasts independent air suspension, among other things

”

Foot lockers

There are two nose cone trunks: the larger one has a volume of 450 l and has doors (with locks) on either side – behind the door is a compressor for the Recce's air suspension with which you can also inflate tyres.

Here you'll also find a spade and a gas geyser – the rest is available space for extra tenting. On the outside of the door is an axe (we would rather have had it inside the door) that is secured with a small padlock.

The smaller nose cone (also with padlocks) has two gas

cylinders that you can take out to connect to the geyser and stove, or you can leave them here and permanently route the gas pipes to the cylinders.

The jockey wheel can be unclamped and stored inside one of the nose cone boxes. There is also a tap (cold water only) on the A-frame.

The A-frame has no apparent recovery hardpoints and it is hard to find a good place where you could attach a winch cable without damaging either the clevis hook or the caravan.

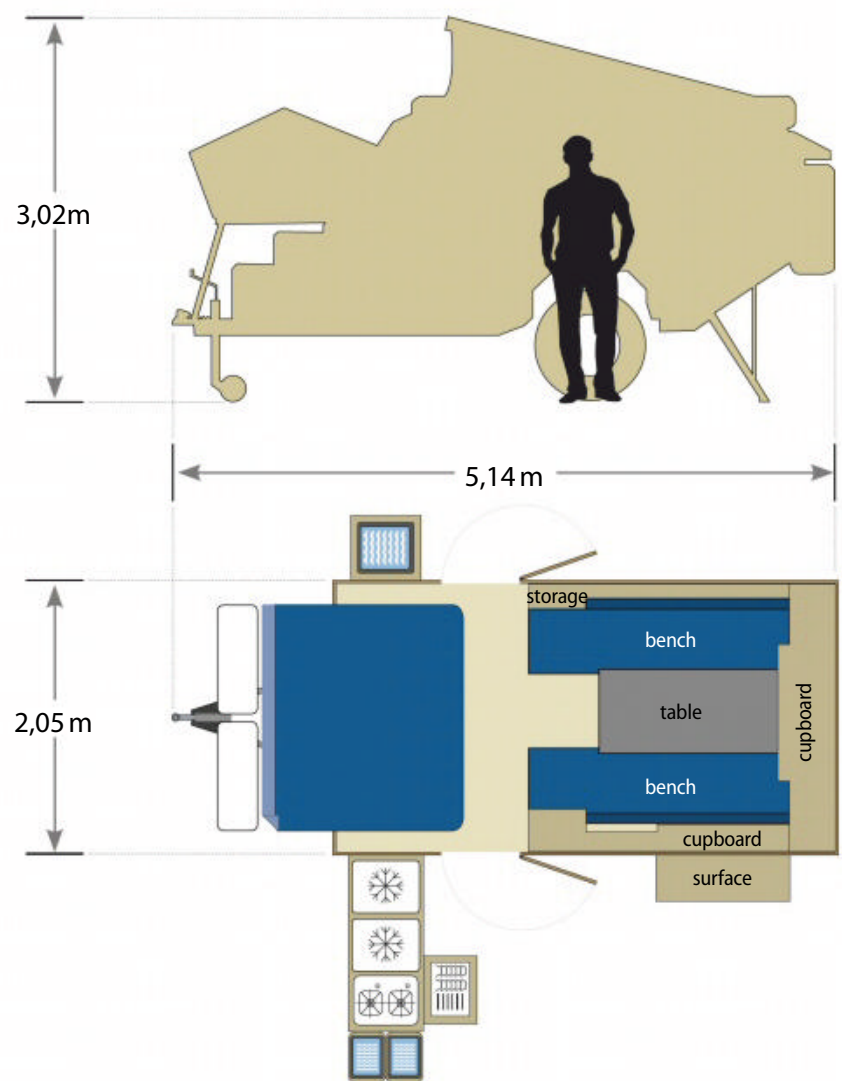


Watch your six

At the rear, in the middle, is a full-sized spare wheel covered with Conqueror's proprietary braai grid.

On either side of the wheel are jerry cans and above it is

a shelf for firewood. Below the spare tyre are two corner steadies that keep the Recce solid when camping. Inside the hull, toward the rear, is a 150 l water tank.



The technical stuff

Length 5,14 m

Width 2,05 m

Inside height 2,25 m

Height (when closed) 2,25 m

Tare weight 1 380 kg

Loading capacity 620 kg

GVM 2 000 kg

Wheel size 285/75/R16

Suspension Independent, air

Price From R505 293

go! Drive & Camp *loaned this off-road caravan from the manufacturer.*

go! Drive & Camp says The Recce is certainly tough and appropriate for trans-continental trips, but you need a beefy vehicle to tow it.



Plus

- The air suspension works a treat! Your tow vehicle may bounce around, but the Recce floats behind you.
- It's clearly built to last.
- The kitchen area is well thought out.



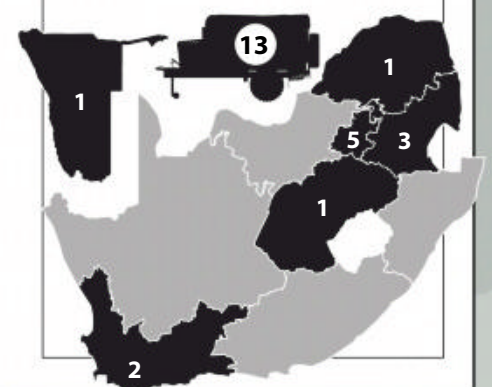
Minus

- Think carefully where you'll be towing a Recce as it's fairly big and heavy.
- The TV is a luxury best left at home, unless you want to watch live sports.

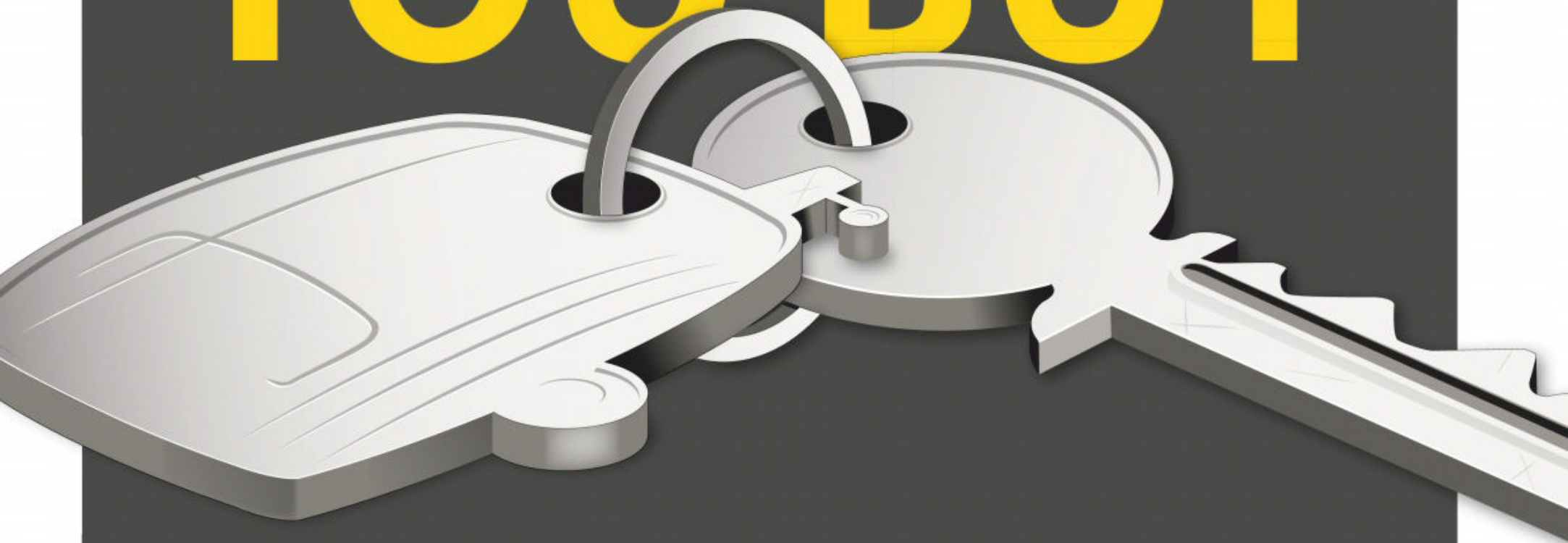
Dealer network

Conqueror has 12 branches and official agents in the Western Cape, Gauteng, Free State, Limpopo and Mpumalanga plus 1 branch in Namibia.

Contact conqueror.co.za



TRY BEFORE YOU BUY



Motorhomes and bush caravans exist at the upper echelons of the camping fraternity, but you can also experience the pleasure of using one without the pain of ownership – just get a rental.

Words **Kyle Kock**

You already know the joys of camping, and we'd bet that most of your first experiences, like ours, were in that of a simple bow, lodge or dome tent. All you needed was to throw a bagged tent in the back of your vehicle, and you were all set.

Later, you might want to use an off-road trailer or roof-top tent, and when the family expands, you may even want to upgrade to something more substantial – like

a big road caravan or off-road caravan if you're especially fond of camping out in the bundus. Depending on your budget and tastes, these can cost you the price of a premium hatchback.

And then there are motorhomes, which offer you most of the luxuries you're used to having at home or in a chalet once you get to your destination – with the major plus of you being able to pack up and take it all with you to your next destination.

These will set you back the price of an apartment or small house, again depending on your tastes.

An option that's a lot more attractive for most of us, however, is to rent said vehicle when the time is opportune. And once you've experienced one for yourself, you might purchase a new or used one when you're able to afford one down the line.

We spoke to two companies in the rental industry, both of whom have a manufacturing arm – Bush

Lapa who started a rental fleet in 2017 and Bobo Campers, a division of Motorhome-World.

Why have a rental industry at all?

Motorhome-World: South Africa competes with significant markets like Europe and North America, and countries like Australia and New Zealand in the global motorhome rental market. International tourists in groups that hire up to 20 units

a time for up to 50 days often choose this method of travelling and accommodation as the ideal way to explore a country. Locals find it ideal to use for long weekends, visiting our many parks and having the convenience of everything at hand. Sports and cultural events like the Cape Epic and Sani 2 Sea mountain bike stage races and the AfrikaBurn festival are just some that are ideal to attend in a motorhome.

Bush Lapa: Most people would like to test something out before they decide to purchase especially when it's a huge financial undertaking like buying a new caravan. And then there are also those who can't really afford a new caravan or those who camp less than 10 times a year, in which case it's not worth buying one.

What do you require upfront?

Motorhome-World: We require a 50% deposit one month before departure. The rest on collection. You also must provide us with a valid B or EB driver's license, the credit card details of the hirer, and we also require that the hirer be over the age of 21 years, or 23 with our 4x4 models.

Bush Lapa: Contact us through the link on our website, and then we'll sign a rental agreement and get a deposit from whoever is renting the vehicle from us. An EB license is non negotiable.

How does the insurance work?

Motorhome-World: You have the option not to take any CDW (Collision Damage Waiver) so only the daily rate applies. You will then have an own-risk excess up



HOUSE SWOP Rather than breaking the bank it seems obvious to rent a caravan or motorhome instead of buying one. Be sure to read the fine print though, stick to permitted activities and don't be heavy handed with someone else's property.

“

There are also those who can't really afford a new caravan or those who camp less than 10 times a year

”

to R53 000 in case of damage or accidents. To reduce the excess, you can choose to pay R270 per day (CDW Midi) to reduce this excess to R19 000, or R350 per day (CDW Maxi) to have no excess. The latter also includes windscreen and tyre damages. Also, the CDW reduction applies from three (CDW Midi) or eight rental days (CDW Maxi) onwards.

Bush Lapa: Because our rental operation is relatively small, and the factory is right next door,

we're okay to do any major repairs to our caravans, so we just have cover for third-part damage, fire and theft, otherwise the premiums would just be way too expensive.

What are the dos and don'ts when you hire?

Motorhome-World: Take your camera, sunscreen, toiletries, food and drinks along. We provide the rest. No TV - the experience provides reality-bush-mountain-game-or-sea TV. Also, find, book and plan your trip in advance to find good campsites, especially on long weekends and holidays. We can also pre-book your itinerary for you to avoid disappointment when arriving at a destination. Don't drive at night, on very poor roads or off-road where you can help it. Driving under the influence of alcohol or narcotics is also a no-no.

What are the limitations in terms of mileage and roads?

Motorhome-World: All our campers may travel on any properly tarred surface. Good, smooth sand roads (non-corrugated) are also permitted. There are areas however that are not suitable for driving with





a camper, including the Swartberg Pass (SA), the Sani Pass (SA), the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park, the road to the Sentech Towers in Marakele Park (SA), Baviaanskloof Pass (SA), all of Mozambique, all of Malawi, all of Angola, Zambia further than Livingstone, all 4x4 trails, the Skeleton Coast Park (Namibia), the short road from Hobas to the Viewpoint (Fish River Canyon), Van Zyl's Pass (Namibia), any sand dune, Sandwich Harbour (Namibia), the entire Kaokoland (Namibia), the Okavango Delta (Botswana) the Makgadigadi Pans (Botswana), as well as D, G or F-marked roads in Namibia (for example D4130, etc).

Bush Lapa: There's no limitation from our side, and we provide you with the relevant registration documentation and permission letters for when you want to venture across borders into neighbouring countries.

How large is your local rental fleet?

Motorhome-World: The fleet size changes because of units being sold on our website (campersales.co.za) and new, replacement models are always added. The fleet is usually around 130 units from August and 100 units early January. All models are 2016 to brand new.

Bush Lapa: We have four units that are currently rented out from our branch in Paarl but will soon add a fifth caravan. They're the bigger models in our line-up because families get more value when camping in larger vehicles like a four-sleeper Baobab. Our dealers up in Gauteng also rent caravans out though, but that they do under their own auspices.

How about breakages or wayward customers?

Motorhome-World: In the unlikely event that a breakdown occurs, a stand-by mechanic can be contacted 24/7 as per your contract. Before phoning the mechanic though, please consult your provided information book. It might not be necessary to make contact. We charge breakages when you return the camper

Bush Lapa: There are always going to be issues with people using something that is not theirs. Customers rarely really look after it like they would if it's their own. We are available to contact at any hour if you're unable to figure something out, such as switching on the geyser or how to unfold the awning. Most of the time the issues are minor stuff, but if it's something like a damaged tent, then it will have to come off your deposit.

COME IN, ORANGE LEADER! The Orange Army from the Netherlands, like nothing better than to tour in huge convoys (left). South Africans are steadily coming round to the European preference of holidaying in rented motorhomes.



Win a 7-night camping vacation!



Let us know where your favourite campsite is and stand a chance to win a holiday for you and your family at any Forever Resort of your choice.

go! Drive & Camp's annual Resort Guide has been on shelf since January 2019, and for the upcoming 2020 guide, we'll include your suggestions.

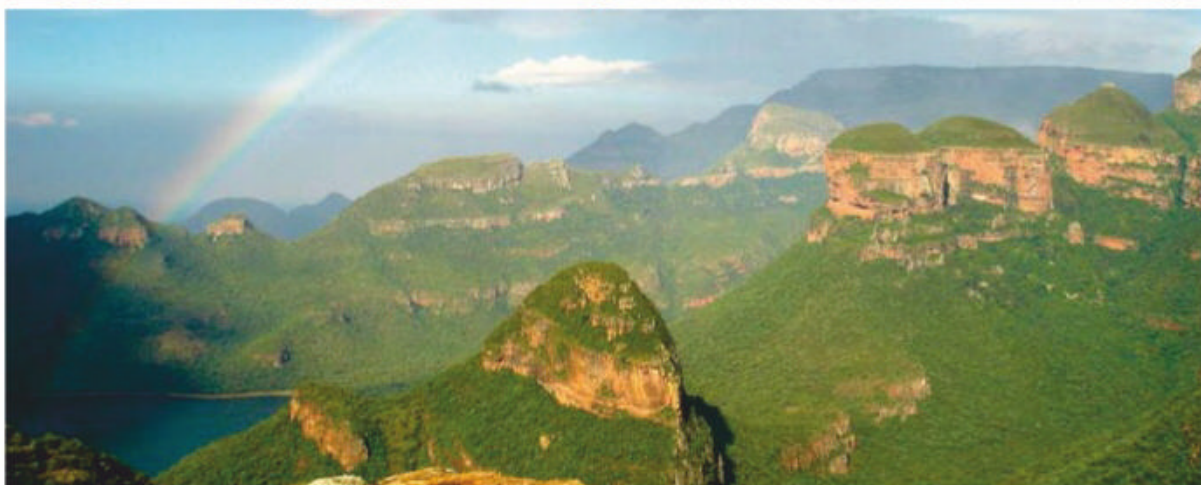
Send us a photo or three – even those beautiful cellphone pics – from your time at your favourite resort, tell us in a nutshell what we can expect at the resort, and your name is in the hat for the prize.

What else?

- It must be a resort that you've visited in the past two years.
- It can be any resort of your choice in southern Africa. From a bush camp with a single stand to a large family resort with 500 stands, it doesn't matter.
- Tell us about your experience and why other campers should also visit the campsite.

The fine print

- The closing date is 31 October 2019.
- Your entry should include photos and a short description, as well as your contact details.
- The prize is valid from 1 March to 1 September 2020 in consultation with Forever Resorts.
- Terms and conditions apply.
- Visit weg.co.za for details.



Anatomy of an SUV

When it comes to designing vehicles, every element on an SUV's body has a name. As with algebra, you won't be using these designations often, but it is good to know what a swage line is and what purpose the crown serves on your SUV's bonnet.

1 A-pillar

The original purpose of A-pillars was simply to hold the windshield up. Nowadays, an A-pillar is considerably thicker and stronger to protect you and your front passenger should your bakkie roll down a dune and end up on its roof.

2 B-pillar

This is the middle pillar and is often painted either black or hidden behind glass, since designers feel it disrupts the flow of their design. However, engineers love the B-pillar, as it keeps the body firm and it's a handy place onto which to bolt the front seatbelts.

3 C-pillar

The C-pillar is the last of three when it comes to sedan cars and double-cab bakkies. Designers pay close attention to this pillar as it's an important element of a vehicle's character. The Toyota FJ Cruiser's C-pillar is possibly the fattest one in history and it's a distinctive feature.

4 D-pillar

Ordinary cars and bakkies don't have a D-pillar – you only get them on station wagons and SUVs – as illustrated here. Much like the B-pillar, designers don't seem to like it much, though it is essential.

5 Joint line

Due to the extreme curve, a bumper and fender can't be

punched from a single metal sheet. Where these parts come together, a joint line is sometimes welded up, filled and painted over. Nowadays, though, bumpers are made of plastic and therefore cannot be welded to the metal body.

6 Wheel arch

A wheel arch is usually crescent-shaped, but sometimes more angular – as with the FJ Cruiser. The edge is often covered with plastic trim to protect the paintwork.

7 Fender or arch trim

This panel protects your car's body against mud splashes, stones and other debris. A Jeep Wrangler is one of just a few modern vehicles with traditional mud guards rather

than the modest trim that are integrated into side panels.

8 Cheater panel

This triangular panel has two purposes: it's a convenient place to attach a wing mirror and the front side window can terminate in a blunt stop so that it won't take up too much space inside the door when lowered.

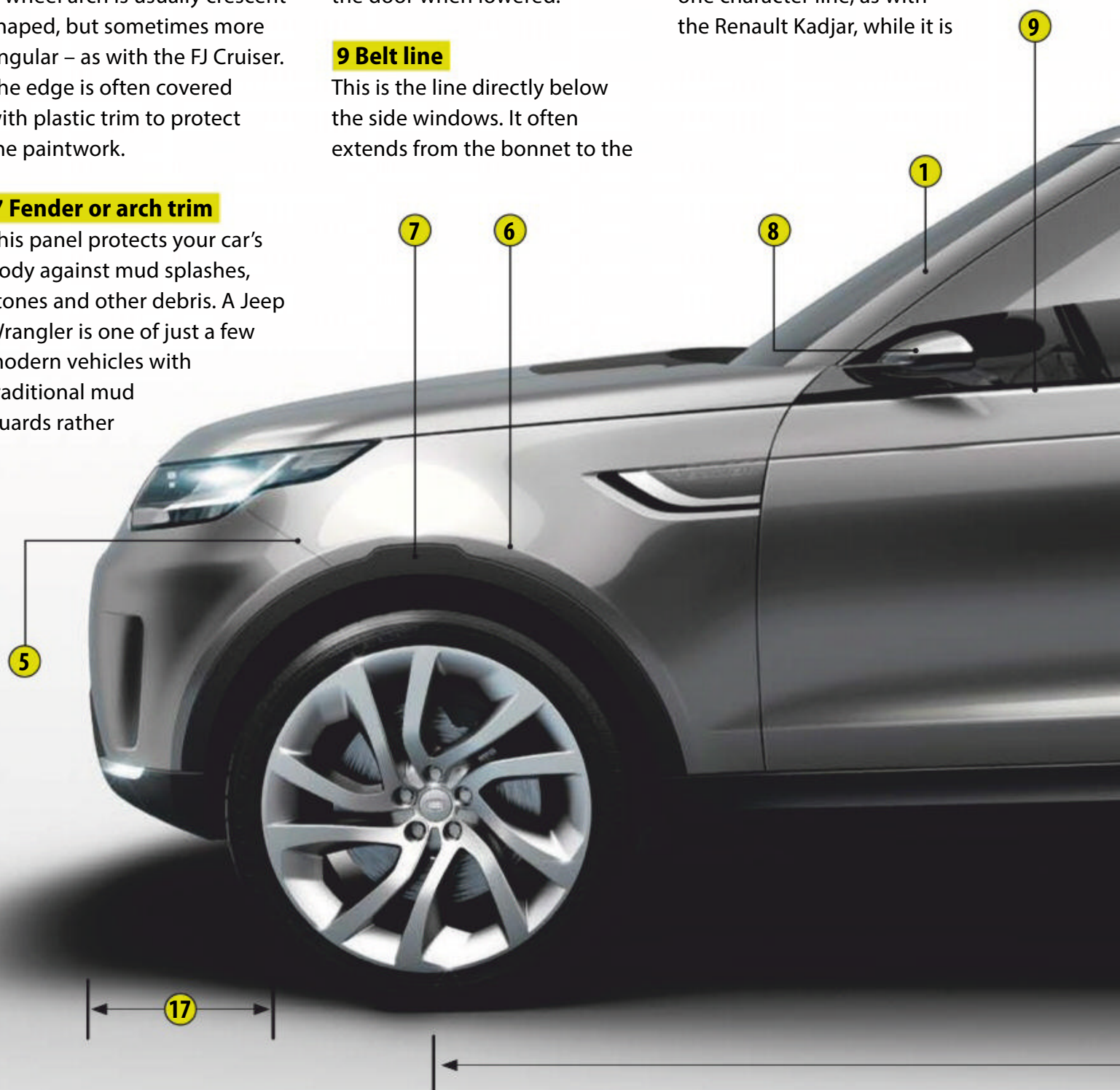
9 Belt line

This is the line directly below the side windows. It often extends from the bonnet to the

brake lights and serves as the foundation of a car's design. It is one of the first lines drawn by a designer when putting pencil to paper.

10 Character line

A character line is a fluid, soft curve in the metalwork. You'll sometimes find more than one character line, as with the Renault Kadjar, while it is



completely absent in squarer cars such as the Mercedes-Benz G-Class and the Suzuki Jimny.

11 Swage line

Unlike a character line, a swage line is a more distinct, raised fold or sunken seam that extends longitudinally over the body. It is more than mere decoration; it makes doors and panels rigid, so they don't dent when you lean against your vehicle or slam a door closed. BMW's designers, in particular, love the swage line.

12 Cant rail

This is the metal bit above the windows where the roof starts. Sometimes the seam between the pillars and the roof is welded to soften the cant rail, but sometimes – as with the new

Land Rover Discovery and Range Rover Velar – it is emphasised. In some older SUVs – and the new Suzuki Jimny – there is a gutter on the cant rail that helps to drain rainwater and provide a hard edge onto which you can clamp a roof rack.

13 Haunch

A vehicle's haunch sits on its hindquarters, just like an animal's. It's the bulge above the rear wheel. Porsche and Renault like to put sensual haunches on their SUVs, while Toyota's Land Cruiser 76 has a haunch like Sheldon Cooper's of *The Big Bang Theory*.

14 Quarter panel

This panel performs the same purpose in modern vehicles as

the rear mudguard of yore. You'll find the fuel cap here and the C-and D-pillars sprout from it.

15 Shut line

The term should actually be finger-crusher, because this is where little hands get pinched. The opening between doors and the bodywork can complement or mess up a vehicle's

appearance, but unlike most other elements in car design, a shut line is unavoidable. Volkswagen is known for its perpendicular shut lines.

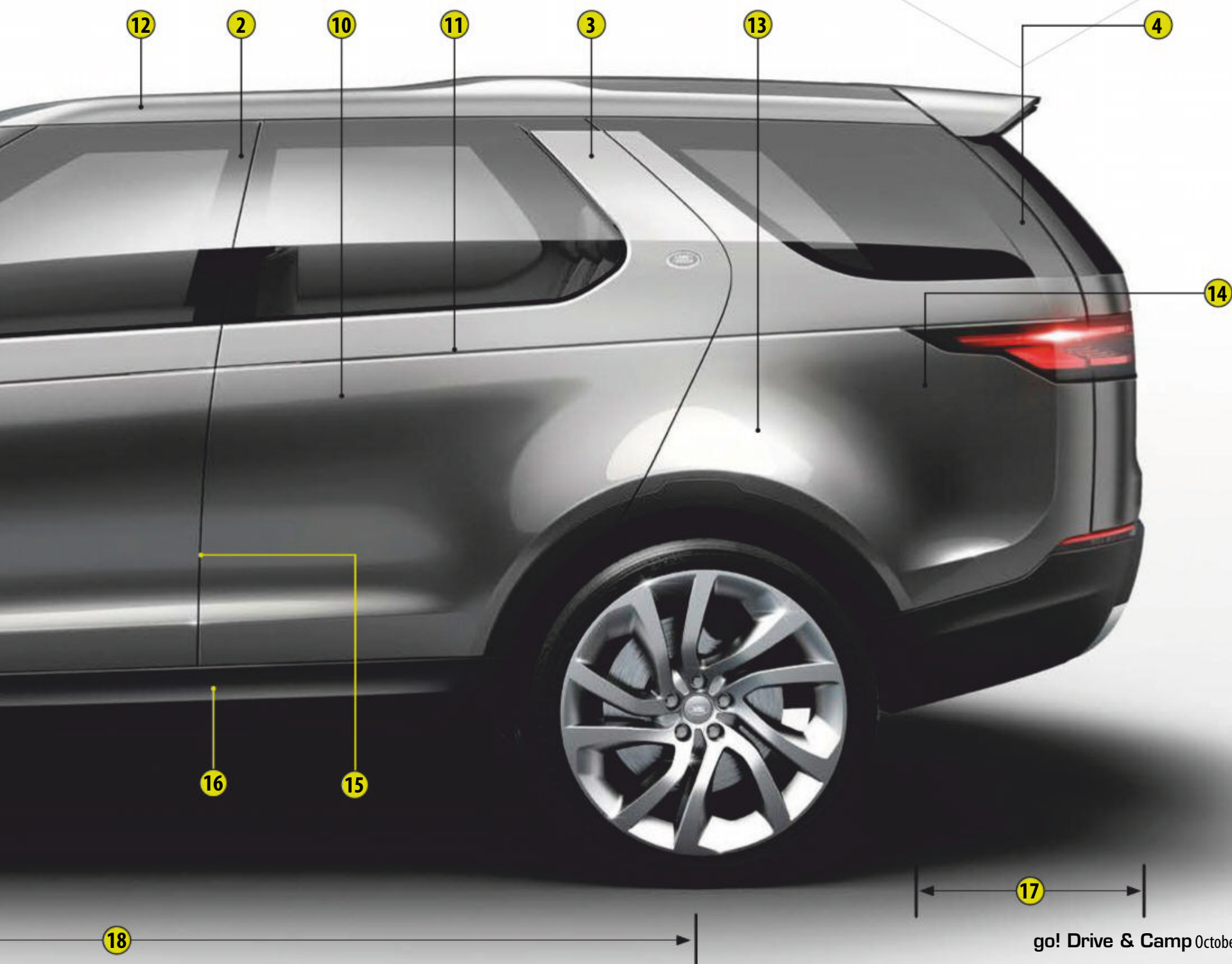
16 Sill

What is a door without a sill? In a rock-crawling off-road vehicle, the sill is often dented, which is why rock sliders are needed.

“

The term should actually be finger-crusher, because this is where little hands get pinched

”



17 Overhang

This is the distance between a wheel and the farthest point of the bumper. A long overhang looks good on a Ferrari, but it messes up your off-roader's approach and departure angles. The only advantage of a long overhang on an SUV is that it offers a longer crumple zone.

18 Wheel base

A stretched vehicle like the Range Rover Velar with its axles spaced far apart certainly looks posh, but it defeats the breakover angle of your off-roader, and this is just as important as the approach and departure angles.

19 Tumblehome

A tumblehome is the space where the bodywork curves in towards the centre of the vehicle (as

seen from the front). It is often above the swage line and always below the cant line. Sports cars such as the Lamborghini Aventador have an exaggerated tumblehome while an old Land Rover Defender hardly has one at all. Vehicles that spend long days outdoors benefit from a narrow tumblehome that allows in little noon sunlight, so the interior stays cooler.

20 Crown

Those lines – or seams – on a bonnet are called a crown and the purpose of it is to keep an otherwise flimsy bonnet rigid. The crown is becoming increasingly important as a bonnet nowadays should readily deform when hitting a pedestrian, so they're not seriously injured.

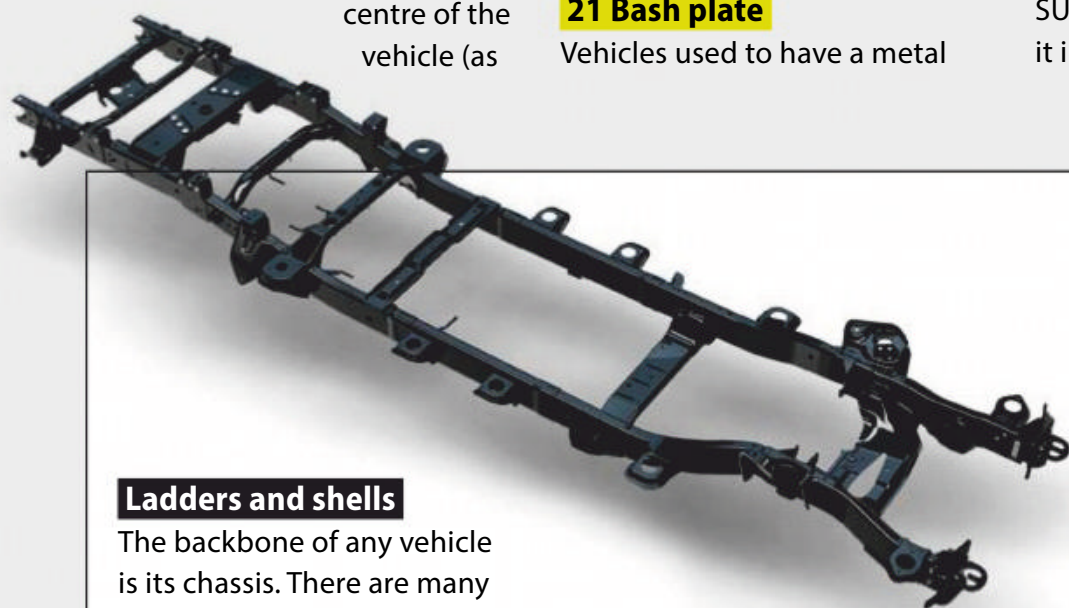
21 Bash plate

Vehicles used to have a metal



section under the front bumper called a stone tray – remember the VW Golf 1 and Mazda 323? Nowadays the stone tray is either no longer there or it is covered up by the bumper. SUVs, however, have retained it in the form of the bash plate,

even though it is sometimes made of silver-painted plastic.

**Ladders and shells**

The backbone of any vehicle is its chassis. There are many types of chassis, but the most common is the ladder-frame chassis and the unibody.

The former gets its name from the thing you use to climb onto a roof. Two long parallel beams are joined by transverse struts – the more struts, the stronger the ladder frame.

This type of chassis is especially suitable for vehicles that carry or tow heavy loads but it's also popular in 4x4 vehicles because it allows moderate twisting.

Another advantage of a ladder-frame chassis is that you can relatively easily

remove and replace the suspension, axles and even raise the bodywork on such a chassis. Think of the skeleton of a whale: the entire animal is basically draped over that considerable spine.

If a ladder-frame chassis can be compared to a whale's skeleton, a unibody is more like a tortoise's shell. In a unibody chassis, the ladder frame is absent, and the floor pan and body are fused to form a single structural unit.

A vehicle with a unibody weighs less, is cheaper to



manufacture and is statistically safer in a collision because the entire bodywork helps to absorb the impact.

A unibody cannot carry as much load as a ladder frame, but its biggest drawback is that it's difficult to modify. The bodywork of an SUV with a unibody cannot easily be raised and it requires next level

engineering skills to replace the suspension and axles of such a vehicle with more rugged off-road parts.

Examples of modern vehicles with ladder frames are the new Suzuki Jimny and the Jeep Wrangler, while the Kia Sportage and all Land Rovers used to have ladder frames but now feature unibodies.



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Tuck in!

Make mealtime a breeze with these camping cutlery and crockery sets.

Word and photos **Kyle Kock**

Nobody is going to break out the fine china on a camping trip, and paper plates are not exactly to everyone's taste. We test neat solutions for your mealtimes when you're out in the wild.

WOTALOTIGOT

GSI Outdoors Cascadian 4-person set

All the eating utensils for a family of four pack up nicely in a box that folds up like a piece of origami. Each person gets a colour-coded plate, bowl and 354 ml mug.

Price R525 from Ram Mountaineering Gear.

go! Drive & Camp says The cups have indentations on the inside so you can measure exactly up to 1 ½ cup (375 ml) of beverage.



LOCKED AND LOADED

Tentco Ammo box dinner set

If you don't want to shop around for the individual items, you could consider this ammo box. There are six dinner plates, side plates, bowls, mugs and glasses, and six knives, forks, dessert spoons and teaspoons. The plates, bowls and mugs are made of ABS plastic.

Price R1 385 from Camp & Climb.

go! Drive & Camp says Everything comes securely fitted inside two foam inserts with cut-outs for each set of items.



ARMOURY

Oztrail 24-piece stainless steel cutlery set

This set includes a fork, knife, desert spoon and teaspoon for six people. The stainless steel is durable and obviously rust free, but the painted plastic isn't dishwasher friendly, so make sure to wash up properly in camp.

Price R395 from Camp & Climb.

go! Drive & Camp says It all comes in a handy plastic caddy for easy transportation.



LEGEND REBORN

Oztrail 12-piece enamel dinner set

We remember those old green and yellow enamel camping plates and mugs, so we love this modern remake, with starry white spots on blue enamel coating and shiny lip on the bowls, mugs and plates.

Price R550 from Camp & Climb.

go! Drive & Camp says The enamel coating has been applied twice, so it's more than 1 mm thick.



HANDLES YOUR BUSINESS

UST stainless steel utilitensil set with case

Need to do more than simply shovel food? The Utilitensils with multi-purpose handles will be your allies. The spoon has an integrated bottle opener and 2-inch ruler, while the fork features a can opener and three hex wrenches, and the knife also has a butterfly wrench. It also comes in a stylish soft case.

Price R200 from Cape Union Mart.

go! Drive & Camp says The knife in this set is properly sharp and will cut through the toughest meat.



MIX-A-DRINK

Leisure Quip wine goblets

Some might argue that the only way to drink fermented grape juice is from a proper glass, but they've probably never broken glass in a campsite before. You don't have to with this set of four, and you don't have to ask which drink yours is, as you get your own colour.

Price R77 from Makro.

go! Drive & Camp says Unlike the other LQ items here, these are dishwasher safe.

WE'RE ALL-WHITE

Leisure Quip ABS plastic dinner set

This is not technically a set, because you can purchase these items individually, but you can get all five of these for R100 – including a platter on which to rest your steak right after it comes off the coals.

Price R100 from Makro.

go! Drive & Camp says Easy on the wallet and easy to clean.



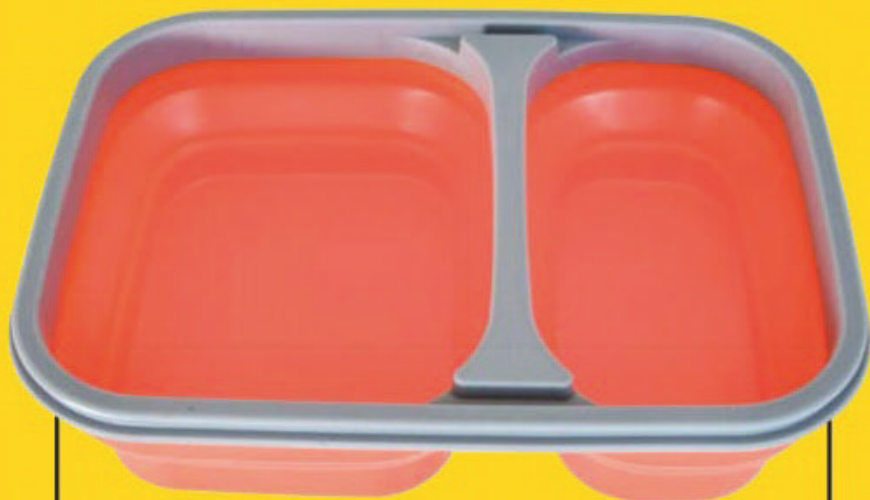
TREE-HUGGER

Eco Soulife camper set

The plate, bowl, mug and cutlery are all made of recycled paper, among other naturally occurring materials. It all comes in a handy mesh bag and a carabiner keeps the knife, fork and spoon together.

Price R300 from Cape Union Mart.

go! Drive & Camp says The manufacturer claims these would biodegrade within three years if buried in the ground.



SLIM FIT

Leisure Quip foldaway lunch box

This will be difficult to beat when mom's packed in that delicious bototie for padkos and you simply can't refuse. You'll get your own portion and have your own eating tool as well – a spork that fits into a recess in the lid.

Price R80 from Makro.

go! Drive & Camp says This isn't microwave, dishwasher or freezer safe.

FULL SIZED

GSI Outdoors cutlery set

The best thing about this set is that it's sized much like your regular set of cutlery at home, so that you won't have to fumble with items that would be more suited to hobbits.

Price R195 from Ram Mountaineering Gear.

go! Drive & Camp says They're BPA-free should you have any concerns about bisphenol A.



THE DUKE APPROVES

Lifeventure Ellipse cutlery set

This British made set is endorsed by Prince Philip himself, and some of the proceeds go towards the Duke of Edinburgh Awards, which recognises exceptional young people around the world.

Price R100 from Ram Mountaineering Gear.

go! Drive & Camp says It all clips together like Lego to pack away effortless. Its also really lightweight.



SLICK AND SLEEK

UST Packware dish set

This set is made of lightweight and flexible polypropylene, so the plate and bowl offer a little give when you apply enough force on them. The mug and cutlery are slightly thicker though. The outside of the mug, plate and bowl has a matte finish, while the inside is shiny and smooth.

Price R200 from Cape Union Mart.

go! Drive & Camp says Comes in a mesh bag and with a two-year warranty.



GET THE PRODUCTS HERE

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Cape Union Mart capeunionmart.co.za

Makro makro.co.za

Ram Mountaineering Gear rammountain.co.za

CAMP FOOD

When we talk about skewers at a braai, it's not only kebabs we're referring to...

Recipes and styling **Johané Neilson**

Photos **Ed O'Riley**

Give it stick!

CURRIED PORK MEDALLIONS Reward yourself

A curried kebab over the coals remains a delight. Prepare these impressive pork medallions for a festive occasion.

Ingredients

(enough for 4 as main course)

- 1 small white onion, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, finely crushed
- 2 tablespoons mild curry powder
- 1 teaspoon turmeric
- salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 2 dried bay leaves, crushed
- ¼ cup brown vinegar
- 4 skinned pork belly strips, 2 cm thick
- 1 heaped tablespoon apricot jam

Here's how

1 Mix together the onion, garlic, spices and herbs and vinegar with an equal amount of water. Pour over the meat and make sure it is well covered. Leave to marinade for about 1 hour to develop the flavour.

2 Remove the meat from the marinade (keep it for later), pat it dry and thread it onto kebab sticks. Then braai it slowly over moderately hot coals so that the fat can render.

3 Melt the jam and add the marinade in a saucepan and baste the meat just before it's done. Serve the pork wheels with steamed rice, chutney, banana salad and vegetables.

go! Camp & Drive says This quick curry sauce is not sweet because you don't want the meat to burn while roasting. Feel free to skewer soft vegetables (such as mini squash) onto sticks and braai them next to the pork for an easy side dish. Baste the veggies with the curry marinade if you like.



CHICKEN SATAY The peanut gallery

With our suggested amount of red curry paste, you'll get a moderate dish – feel free to add more if you like your chicken with a bit more of a bite.

Ingredients

(enough for 6)

- 1 tablespoon red curry paste
- 3 tablespoons coconut milk
- 6 chicken breasts, cubed into bite-sized pieces
- salt and freshly ground black pepper

For the peanut sauce

- 1 tablespoon red curry paste
- 2 teaspoons peanut butter
- 1 cup coconut milk
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- juice of 1 lime (or to taste)

Here's how

1 Mix the curry paste and coconut milk into a smooth mixture and then coat the chicken cubes with it.

2 Skewer the chicken onto short wooden kebab sticks (remember to soak them in water beforehand so they don't catch fire) and allow it to marinade as you light the fire and wait for the coals.

3 Whisk together the sauce ingredients in a saucepan and heat to warm in the meantime. Dilute it with a dash of water, if necessary.

4 Braai the chicken kebabs quickly over fairly hot coals until nicely seared and barely cooked. The chicken will continue to cook from within once removed from the heat.

5 Season the cooked chicken to taste with salt and freshly ground black pepper, and serve with the sauce.

go! Camp & Drive says If served as a main, sprinkle crushed peanuts and cut spring onions over the chicken served on a bed of rice. If it's a snack, gobble it straight off the stick.





HONEY AND CIDER LAMB RIBS

Sticky and moreish

These delicious sticky ribs present the perfect balance of warm, sweet and spicy flavours.

Ingredients

(enough for 4 as part of a finger supper)

- 12 individual lamb ribs
- about 1 tablespoon chipotle spice mix (we used the one from Checkers)
- a tot (25 ml) fresh lemon juice
- ¼ cup tomato sauce
- 2 large moderate chillies, finely chopped
- ½ cup apple cider
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 tablespoon Worcester sauce
- 1 clove of garlic, crushed

with the spice mix and lemon juice. Braai for about 45 minutes over mild coals until soft and juicy. (The braai time will depend on you and how hot the coals are; use your judgment. The meat should start to pull away from the tip of the bone and the fat should be nicely rendered.)

2 Mix together the rest of the ingredients in a bowl.

3 Dip the cooked ribs in the sauce one by one and then braai them again, this time nearer the coals, but still not too hot. Turn the meat over regularly and baste with the sauce every now and then (at your discretion). When they're nice and sticky, they're ready. Eat the ribs off the grid while they're still hot – yes, with your hands, of course!

go! Camp & Drive says If you can't get hold of the chipotle blend, use your favourite braai salt with a pinch of cumin and coriander – and finally add some fresh citrus zest. Where are the sticks we hear you say – the ribs are the sticks!

Here's how

1 Season the lamb all over



SAUSAGE PIES ON A STICK

Puff pastry for the win

Thaw a roll of purchased puff pastry and whip up a starter or padkos in a jiffy.

Ingredients

(enough for 6 as a snack)

- 4-6 smoked cheese grillers (or use frankfurters)
- 1 roll of puff pastry, thawed
- 1 tablespoon mustard, plus extra to serve

Here's how

1 Cut the sausages into thick chunks (3 cm lengths). Depending on the size of the sausages you use, to create 20 chunks of sausage.

2 Roll the dough out on a clean work surface and spread a thin layer of mustard over it. Now cut the dough lengthwise into five

strips, each 3 cm wide. Now cut each strip again into four sections and wrap a piece of sausage in each.

3 Carefully skewer the tiny sausage pies on kebab sticks (remember to soak them in water first). Work quickly before the dough softens and loses its shape.

4 Braai the kebabs over moderate coals. It helps to put a large casserole lid over the kebabs on the coals to create an oven effect so the dough can puff up and cook all round. Just don't burn your fingers as you lift the lid, and remember to turn the kebabs often.

go! Camp & Drive says These sausage pies on a stick also work with leftover boerewors and tomato sauce (instead of mustard). Or use a mixture of tomato sauce and mustard.





POTATO AND SALAMI KEBABS

Garlicky delights

You say potato, we say: "Put another one on my plate!"

Ingredients

(enough for 4-6)

- 4 large potatoes
- 100 g salami slices
- 2 large red onions, cut into quarters and layers separated
- ¼ cup butter
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 4 cloves of garlic, finely crushed
- A pinch of dry mixed herbs

Here's how

1 Boil the potatoes in salted water for about 10 minutes. Allow to cool until you can handle them, then cut each, with the peel, into 1 cm slices.

2 Thread the half-cooked

potato slices on sticks with a salami slice and onion in-between.

3 Braai the potato kebabs over hot coals without any oil or butter until completely cooked with delicious crispy, scorched pieces. (If you add oil too early, the fire will ignite and the smoke will give off a bitter taste.)

4 Melt the butter and oil in a skillet and then add the garlic and herbs – slowly fry the mixture until the garlic is fragrant. Once the potatoes are completely tender, pack the kebabs in a dish or in foil and then drizzle with the garlic butter.

go! Camp & Drive says Make sure your other half has one as well so you don't have to sleep outside the tent after eating all that garlic!



YOGHURT LOLLIES

A lolly for your jolly

If your campsite has freezing facilities, grab the opportunity and spoil yourself with an easy run on a stick.

Ingredients

(enough for 6)

- 6 individual yoghurt tubs of 100 g each (in the fruit flavour of your choice)
- banana, tinned pineapple and/or fresh raspberries, finely crushed
- 2 tablespoons Malibu rum (optional)
- honey to taste

Here's how

1 Carefully remove the lid film from the yoghurt tubs without breaking up the sixpack.

2 Decide whether you want extra fruit flavour and rum in

your lollies and dose the yoghurt to taste with fruit, rum and honey. Bear in mind the flavours tend to be more subtle when it's cold.

3 Now cover the sixpack of yogurt with a sheet of foil. Using a sharp knife, cut a small slot in the middle of each container and press a icecream stick into each one. The foil will keep the sticks in the middle and prevent them from moving around.

4 Freeze the yogurt until set before turning them out carefully. Enjoy!

go! Camp & Drive says We cut the heads off wooden teaspoons to create the sticks. Remember, the yoghurt shouldn't be stirred during the freezing period to reduce the ice crystals – and full-cream yoghurt will have better texture than low-fat yoghurt would.



go! **Drive & Camp** MARKETPLACE

• ADVERTISING PROMOTION

DC-DC BATTERY CHARGERS ON STEROIDS

There's nothing better than heading out of the city though many of us still enjoy some home comforts while camping or bushwhacking. Especially those that require power such as a fridge, lights and perhaps even an on-board entertainment system or work-related equipment.

Charging Systems Africa (CSAF) has just introduced two compact, light, tough, advanced dual-battery management systems to the South African market, to help power up your on-board battery banks, whatever their size. Both are from Australian-based Projecta, a leading player in the DC-DC charger market.

The Projecta IDC25 Intelli-Charge 25A 9-32V, 3 Stage DC/Solar Battery Charger provides a host of intelligent features for safer and more reliable charging than its competitors, including charging simultaneously from solar and alternator inputs.

The new Projecta IDC45 will help meet the demand of high-power DC-DC charging. It is the first DC-DC charger on the market that provides 45A output current so can fully charge a 300Ah battery bank from empty in less than seven hours. And, having been developed with the design experience of the Projecta IDC25, it is also able to charge simultaneously from both solar and alternator inputs, with no manual switching. It allows customer to charge their 12V second/auxiliary deep-cycle battery on the go.

Both Projecta chargers are IP67: shock, vibration, dust-proof and water-resistant up to one metre. Some of the other key features include:

- Compact design. The IDC25 weighs 800g and the IDC45 only 1,54 kg
- Operating temperature: -10 to +80 °C
- Built-in maximum power point tracking (MPPT) function
- Multi-chemistry support: charges auxiliary battery at optimal voltage
- Dual-input voltage ranges for smart and conventional alternators
- Temperature compensated charging

to prevent overcharging and overheating

- Remote charger indicator LED
- Electrical fault protection – reverse connection, over and under voltage, over temperature, short-circuit, anti-sparking and input transient
- Low idle current drawn from starter and secondary auxiliary batteries
- Five metre temperature sensing cable
- Max solar input 700W (IDC45) and 400W (IDC25) The retail packs for both the IDC25 and IDC45 include the charger, 1 x bag cable joiner and heat shrink tubes plus 1 x bag cable ties.

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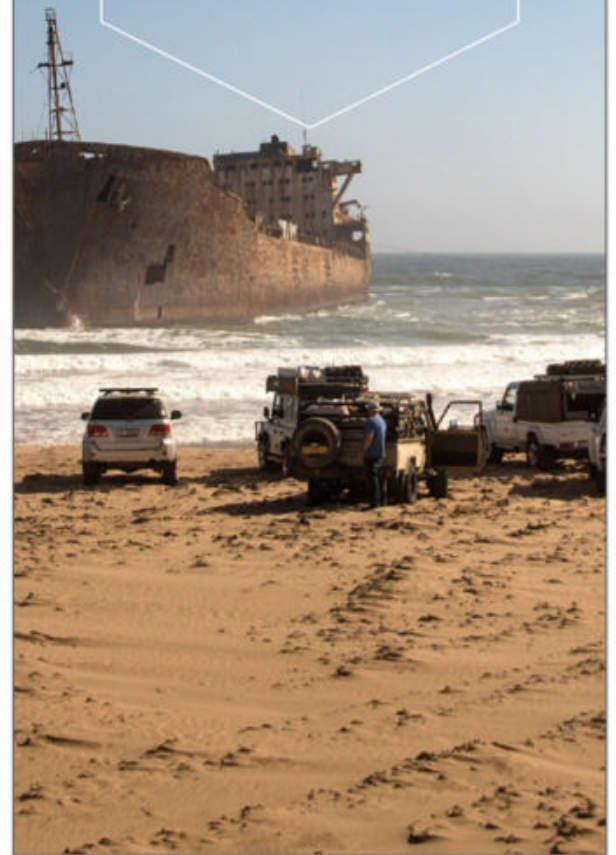
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by XtremeOutdoor



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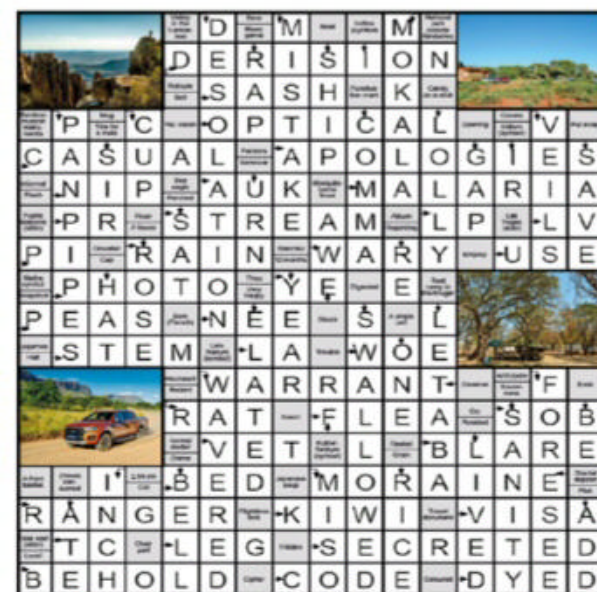


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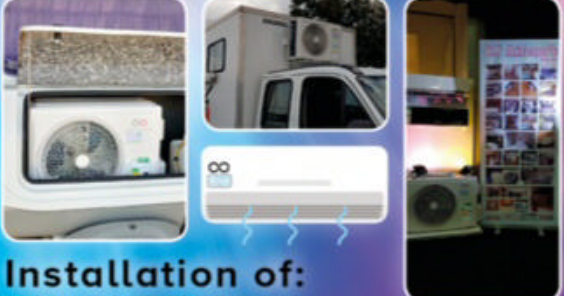
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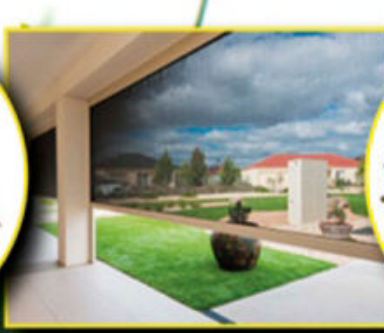
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CROSSWORD

Hein van Rooyen from Swellendam has won **Van Loveren's Tangled Tree** wine worth R1 000 for his entry in the August 2019 crossword competition. Complete this one and e-mail a picture of it to drivecamp@gomag.co.za. Or do it online at <https://bit.ly/2ITlJrA>. Last month's solution is on p 117.

				A Kruger camp	Tilt and shift (abbr)	Type of cheese	Sash	Infamous 4x4 road in Lesotho (7,4)				
				Part of a goalpost	Oxygen (symbol)	Insect trap		Uttered				
Islands												
Long-necked animals	Light touch	Go astray		Capital of Italy					Delay	Reject		
						Halt			Grain towers	Neon, eg		
						Increase						
Guest							Type of candy					
Severe							Help					
			Swine				Drooping		Plutonium (symbol)	Thus		
			Grain				Stone		Request			
Light brown	Sign	Sheltered side				Duct						
						Selenium (symbol)						
Dental thread					Family car							
					Destroy							
				Island (abbr)			Ship part		A Fiat 4x4			
Swerve												
Not junior						Thou	Square feet (abbr)			Ferociously	Excursion	Perched
							Tantalum (symbol)	Components				
				Neuter	Particular		Paths	Providing				
				Alpine sport						Period of time		
										Seep		
						Hectare (symbol)	Broccoli piece					
Coastal town close to Mossel Bay	Trade		Sprite		Talk			Flatten			Type of beer	
	Fib				Tavern							
							Regarding				Los Angeles (abbr)	South Korea (abbr)
Sick						@						
Well-being				Text message (abbr)		Low rate (abbr)		Prison rooms				
						Pursue				Beast of burden		

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Tree range, with its lower carbon footprint, is not merely an embodiment of Van Loveren's commitment to sustainable winemaking but also tells a story of love, find out more at tangledtree.com. Follow **Tangled Tree** wines on social media at @tangledtreewines (Facebook & Instagram) and @TangledTree (Twitter). Prize includes 10 TT wines and a gardening apron.



Colour in



COLOUR IN

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

WORD SEARCH

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

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

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

MAZE

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

Word search

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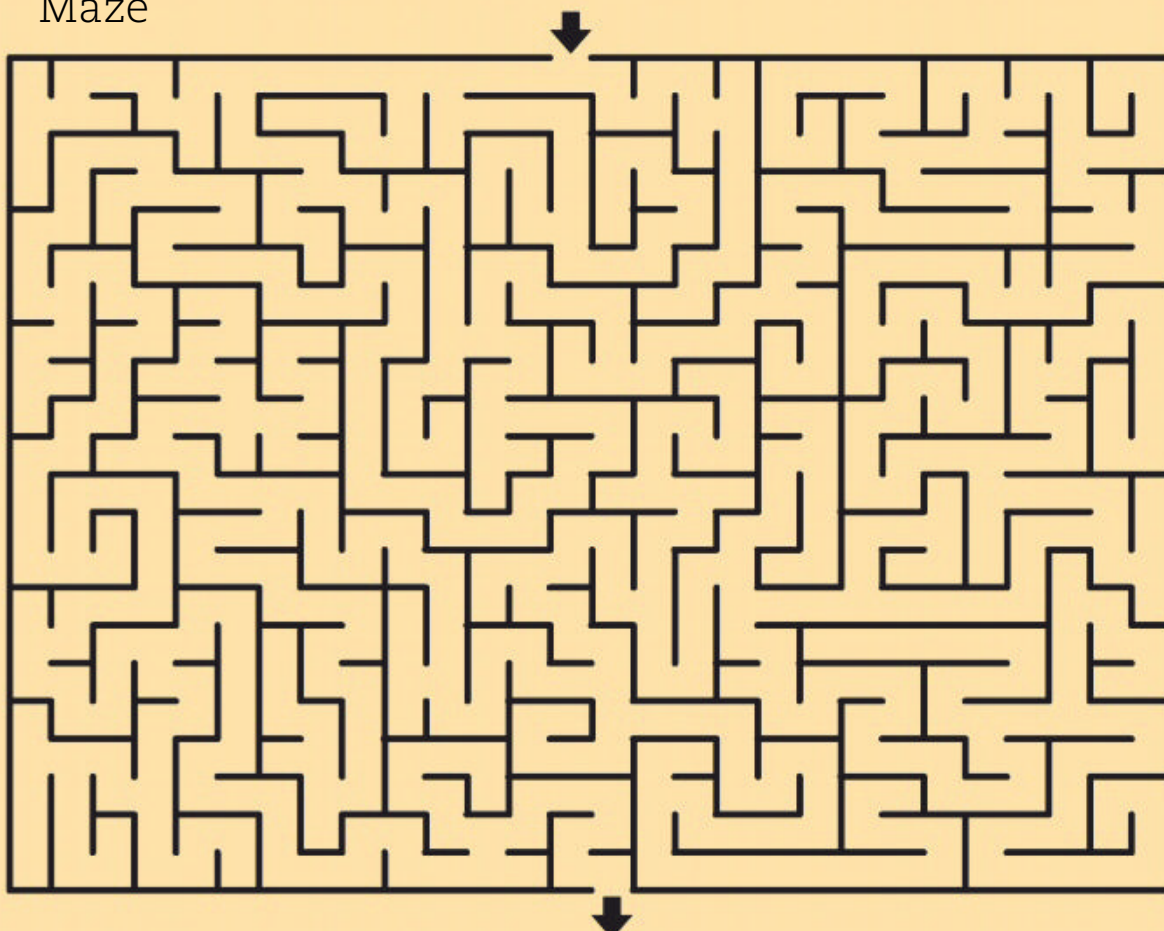
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Spot the differences



Maze



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- Their sense of smell is so good, they can sniff out prey from up to 16 km away!
- Polar bears are excellent swimmers, and have been spotted in waters over 100 km offshore.

Salt in our wounds

Several reputable vehicle manufacturers have been found guilty of cheating on their emissions tests. **Mic van Zyl** is none too pleased.

Last month's article touched briefly on vehicle emissions – a murky subject at the best of times but one that I, for the moment, find morbidly interesting.

According to Daniel Sperling and Deborah Gordon, two-vehicle population researchers in the USA, the global vehicle population should reach two billion by 2020, with passenger vehicles accounting for around 73% of that number. That is a serious amount of pollution.

No matter how concerned we think we may be, even staunch environmentalists would have to agree that the world would

be a very different place had it not been for the invention of the automobile. It is hard to imagine our world with all that we take for granted without the convenience of automotive transport.

Environmental protection agencies and governments all around the world are stepping up efforts to reduce this pollution for the sake of both the environment and human health. It is an ongoing tug of war between the profit-seeking car manufacturers and these environmental policemen to determine acceptable levels of emissions for new vehicles.

In Europe, this is referred to as the Euro standards for vehicle emissions. These standards determine the amount of, among others, carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides (NOx), hydrocarbon and particulate matter new vehicles may emit in the European Union. Any vehicle that does not conform to these standards may not be sold there. The USA has its EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) doing the same.

INCREASING FUEL EFFICIENCY and ongoing reductions in emissions are expensive and somewhat complicated. I am amazed at how far vehicle companies have come in recent years at reducing these. I would imagine that a very large portion of the motor company engineering team spends a very large portion of time and money on this facet of vehicle design. Vehicle manufacturers are often taxed according to the emission levels of their vehicles and this is especially relevant when these car companies are seeking to expand their footprints in large, lucrative markets. Furthermore, if your vehicle does not comply, you may not be able to sell it in that relevant market.

There is however a very dark side to this story. Recently, several reputable motor companies were found guilty of wilfully cheating on their emissions scorecards in the USA to sell more of their diesel-powered cars and pay less

emissions tax. These car companies wilfully designed a deceit device and installed them into millions of vehicles. These devices would ensure compliance when the vehicle was being emissions tested in a standard laboratory test environment. When the vehicle is however operated outside of a laboratory test environment, the emissions control measures are relaxed or cancelled and in subsequent real-world driving environments, these vehicles were found to be emitting up to 40 times the allowable levels of NOx (nitrogen oxides).

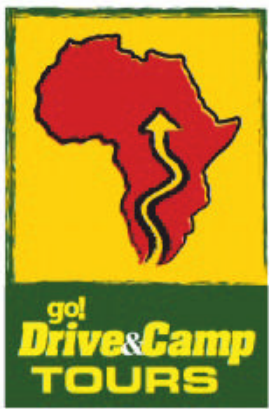
LET ME AT THIS POINT remind you that NOx gases breathed in react with moisture compounds and can penetrate deeply into lung tissue causing permanent damage and even premature death – 60 000 annually according to some sources. It is beyond shocking that reputable car companies would do this. I have crossed them off my favourites list and banished them to eternal contempt. To add insult to injury this scandal was not even unearthed by any of the Euro or NPA watchdogs we trust for our wellbeing. A small university department in West Virginia accidentally unearthed it doing research on real-world emissions performance. As I said earlier, morbidly fascinating.

Next month we'll be looking at some of the measures car manufacturers use to control emissions, specifically catalytic converters and DPF filtration as well as the moral dilemma around the removal of these devices by vehicle owners.

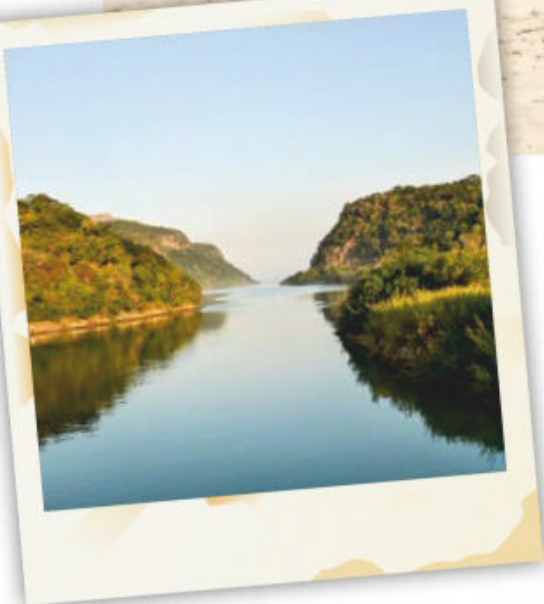
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Pondoland paradise



When the great African coastline was formed, one section remained rugged, wild and beautiful. Traditional home of the Mpondo people, this South African gem is a nature lovers paradise that combines undulating hills and grasslands, forest-fringed seashores and unspoilt beaches.

DAY 1 We meet on the outskirts of the town of Lusikisiki (an hour's drive from Port St Johns or Kokstad) early afternoon and then proceed to our first lodge on the Mbotyi River where we will spend the next two nights. Mbotyi River Lodge is a nature lover's paradise and the perfect place for relaxing away from the everyday stresses of life.

The Lodge has an extensive range of facilities that include a swimming pool, mountain bikes, canoes and a multitude of sunny decks for relaxing.

DAY 2 After early-morning coffee and rusks there will be a little free time to walk along the beach or go for a paddle on the magnificent Mbotyi Estuary.

Our day trip, with a picnic lunch en route, will take us to a Cape vulture colony (the rarest vultures in Africa) of over 170 birds nesting on cliffs of a magnificent gorge. We then head on to the meandering jeep tracks that will take us along the coastline. We will only be using existing legal tracks and never drive along the beach. We visit the wreck site of the Grosvenor and get some insight into the unbelievable treasure-hunting tactics that people have attempted over the years to get to her alleged secret treasure.

We return to the lodge in the late

afternoon in time for a beach sundowner before dinner and bed.

DAY 3 We pack up after breakfast. Our route for the day, which leads to our next hotel, will take us through the local tea plantations and past some awe-inspiring waterfalls. We also visit a World War II airstrip and bunker complex used by airmen to bomb German U-boats off the coast.

Our hotel for the next two nights is the Ocean View Hotel in Coffee Bay, right on the beach. Accommodation at Ocean View is characterised by light airy rooms overlooking spectacular beaches and sea views. All the rooms are comfortably furnished and have en-suite bathrooms.

After check-in there is time for a late afternoon beach walk or a cast or two.

DAY 4 After a hearty breakfast we once again pack the vehicles for a day trip that takes us to one of the unspoilt estuaries in the area and a visit to the famous and awe-inspiring Hole-in-the-Wall rock.

DAY 5 After breakfast we say our goodbyes and you have an hour's to reach the N2 just west of Umthatha.

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THE ADVENTURE

For 300 years the Xhosa have been the custodians of this gem in our country. The area is still very rural, traditional, with a very basic road network. It is on these roads that we will explore the rugged coastline, shipwrecks, pristine estuaries and crystal waterfalls.

The whole area lends itself to safe walking, mountain biking and wonderful fishing, so bring your toys along as there is time during the tour for these environmentally friendly and fun activities. We will stay at Mbotyi River Lodge and the Ocean View Hotel while on our adventure.

THE TEAM

Your tour leader is an experienced nature conservationist and adventure guide. He will be in radio contact with you at all times and impart a wealth of biological, cultural, historic and four-wheel drive knowledge.

This is not a very "technical" 4x4 trip, but should you experience any difficulty, the Bhejane crew do have the know-how and recovery equipment to assist with off-road problems.

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The Barmy Army cometh

Entrepreneurs in the tourism industry can look forward to the British and Irish Lions' visit to South Africa next year for good reason, says **Neels van Heerden**.

The biggest rugby event next to the World Cup is the British and Irish Lions' tour of the southern hemisphere every four years. The Lions will return to South Africa next year and up to 50 000 of their supporters are expected to tour with them.

Because the Cape Town, Ellis Park and FNB stadiums appear to be the frontrunners for hosting the three tests against the Springboks, there will be an increase in rugby enthusiasts streaming to Cape Town and Gauteng. There'll be huge logistical demands,

of course, but think about the opportunities it will create to showcase the local tourism market. Entrepreneurs worth their salt will be looking forward to the Lions' visit with good reason, but I believe there are two aspects that need to be addressed now: the offering and expansion of potential tourist experiences and the safety of visitors.

You can expect large numbers to visit the Western Cape and the Kruger National Park. Although most will stay in guesthouses and hotels, the camping community could already be looking at ways to benefit from the tourist who comes to watch rugby and also wants the true African experience.

TOURISTS SHOULD BE made aware of what we can offer with regard to camping. I expect the Kruger to be fully booked by safari companies in July and August next year. This creates opportunities for campsites, for example, in the Dinokeng Game Reserve to get them on the international tourist's radar.

Local tour operators should join hands with tourism destinations in places such as Dinokeng and offer packages for the two or three nights before and after the tests in Gauteng as soon as possible.

Arrange game drives and hikes and provide a fully equipped tent with comfortable beds, breakfast, lunch and a decent South African braai at night.

A boma is a must, where guests can sit around a campfire, breathe in its scent, listen to the night sounds and observe the glittering stars. Give everyone a blanket and have waiters serving drinks.

Your guests should enjoy it so much that they'll want to come again and again (even if there is no rugby tour). They will tell all of their family and friends in a cold Blighty about the wonderful

experiences they had here in South Africa.

In August and September, the flower kingdom in the Western and Northern Cape also shows its splendour. If you're smart, you will arrange tours leading to the area around Springbok, where they'll see flowers that can't be seen anywhere else.

WE ALSO NEED TO take the safety of tourists seriously and make feel safe while visiting South Africa.

The camping industry needs to establish more effective measures anyway that will benefit all future guests. The installation of unobtrusive cameras, drone technology and visible access control is just a start.

Rural tourism authorities and campsites need to work together more closely with the local community. When members of the community understand that tourists create jobs and stimulates the local economy, they may be more likely to report criminal elements or help combat crime.

We should never lose sight of the fact that the local tourist will also enjoy the improvements made, but excessive spending on gimmicks and a focus on getting-rich-quick schemes won't work.

Many operators learnt expensive lessons during the 2010 World Cup. Excessively high prices are a big mistake because it scares foreigners and is unfair to local tourists. Hopefully, we learn from those lessons this time around.

“
The camping community could look at ways to benefit from the tourists coming for rugby and a true African experience
”



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Knock, knock! Neighbour!

When arriving at a campsite with a brand-new caravan, steel yourself for curious visitors, says **Schalk Jonker**.

I'm somewhere between dreamland and waking, but I can hear the conversation clearly as my neighbour and his wife walk from the top terrace in the direction of my caravan.

My caravan isn't actually mine. I just borrowed it. Because I work for an outdoor magazine, we often get the chance to go camping with new caravans.

My camp neighbours initially don't know it's a borrowed caravan, of course. And yesterday, driving into the campsite with this brand-new house on wheels – built by a new manufacturer – I could see the heads turning.

I had barely stopped at my stand before the first visitor waves at me next to my double-cab bakkie's driver's door. I wind down the window to say hello. "Hello, mate," he greets back. He's wearing one of those distinctive SuperSport golf shirts that granddads regularly get for Christmas, a pair of shorts with more pockets than needed, his feet in Crocs and a wide-brimmed hat on his head. You could probably call it a full-time camper's uniform. "Goodness, but you've got a nice caravan. Who builds it?"

I explain that I work for a camping and 4x4 magazine and the caravan is on loan. But as soon as I've set up camp, I'll come over and invite him to come and check it out, I promise. I don't mind. In fact, I like hearing other campers' impressions about

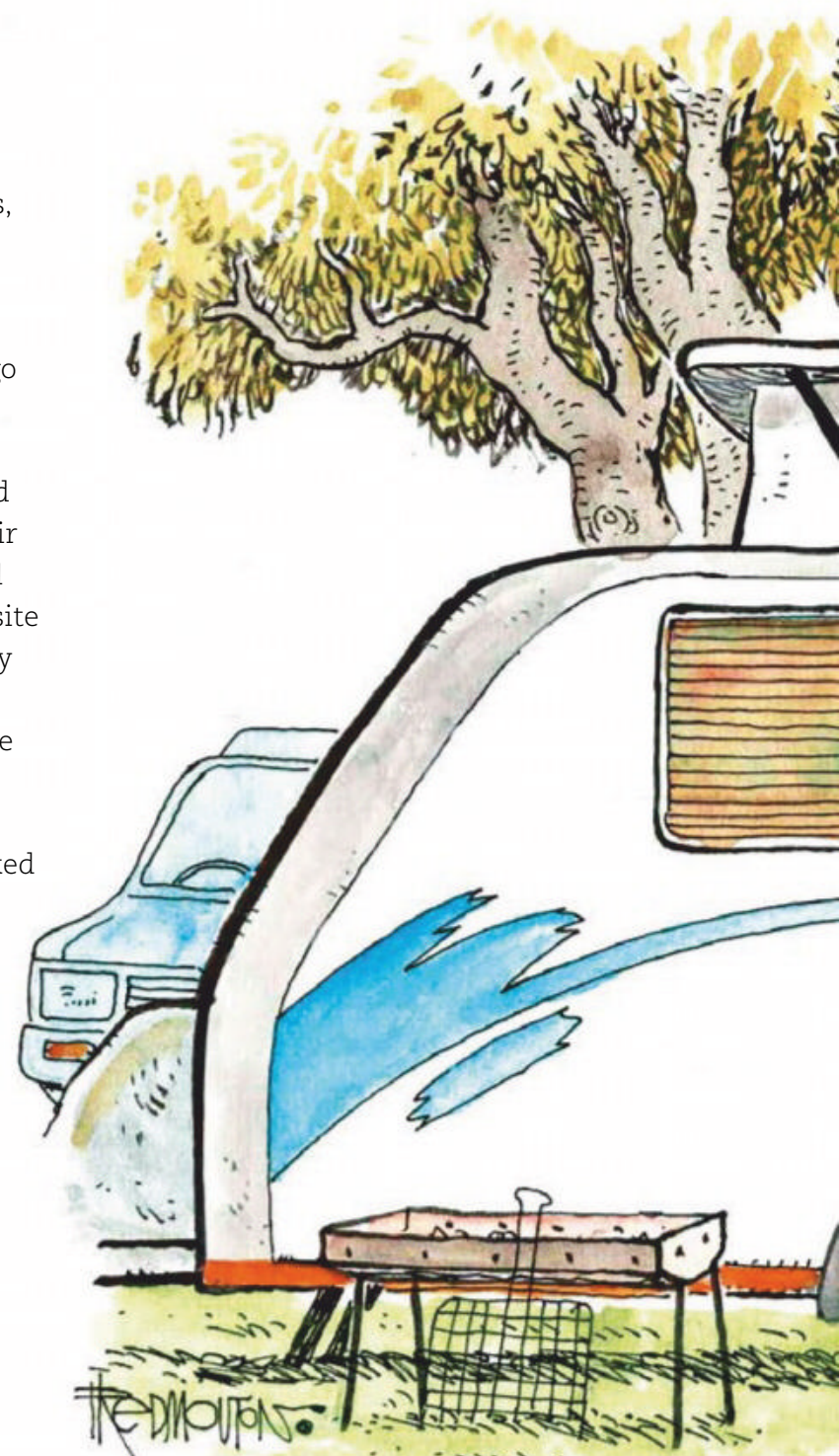
a new product as well, because between the "oh, it's beautiful" and "wow, that's clever", you also hear valuable criticisms, such as "I would place the sliding frame with the fridge on the other side" or "the step could be slightly lower" or "you'll battle to pack everything in here if you go away for longer than a weekend".

Later, after the guy in the SuperSport shirt, his wife and the neighbours behind them looked at the caravan and had their say, I light my fire, crack open a beer and sit back in my camping chair. The campsite is quiet – that's mostly the case when my colleagues or I camp – and I can clearly hear the conversations on the top terrace behind me.

"The man works for *go! Drive & Camp* and he's testing the caravan that he picked up near the airport this morning. We went and looked and, listen here, it is lovely. You have to have a look, Fanie, then you can also ask him what's going on at Jurgens."

I steel myself for more visitors. I hope they wait until tomorrow. I hold my breath and listen closely for their approach. But then Fanie says they'd rather do it tomorrow, "because it's probably too late now".

"NO, FANIE, THE MAN IS still sleeping. Let's come back later," I hear his wife protest early the next



morning. “No, man,” Fanie argues. “He won’t care. He’s used to this and Bertus came to look yesterday. Knock, knock! Neighbour!”

I fly upright and my head just misses the shelf above my head. “Just a minute,” I shout, wiping the sleep from my eyes. I see on my phone it’s just before six. Not an unusual time to be awake, but I don’t have to be at the office today and so I turned off my alarm last night. (One beer turned into four and think I remember a glass of red wine also appearing before I went to sleep).

“We just want to quickly check out this fancy new caravan,” Fanie calls from outside. I look around me. On the table in the caravan is last night’s dirty plate, cutlery and wine glass, my clothes lie

strewn across the sofa next to the table and my shoes and socks are still lying in front of the bed.

“Are you up, neighbour?” Fanie is relentless and starts knocking on the door.

I open the door, but only just enough so I can peer out. The reason is twofold... I am still wearing my pyjama pants and I also haven’t brushed my teeth yet, so it’s good to have something between me and Fanie and his wife.

“Hey, morning... just give me a chance to quickly tidy up,” I request. “No, don’t worry about it. We don’t care if the caravan is messy,” says Fanie and pulls the door wide open. “I’m Fanie and this is my wife, Nina.”

Nina smiles kindly and greets me where I stand in the

door of the caravan in my pjs. My hair and beard are flying off in all directions and I hold one hand in front of my mouth to stop my garlic-bread-and-beer-and-red-wine morning breath as I greet her.

There is no stopping Fanie, however, and when I put out my hand to greet him – and beg for more time – he pulls me forward and scoots past me into the caravan.

This is not on. How can one person be so in your face and not respect someone else’s personal space? This is not the Beeld Holiday Show. The caravan isn’t on show. He can’t just walk in and do what he likes. It’s six o’ clock in the morning! And then he has the audacity to say “it’s quite dark in here”. Yes, Fanie. That’s because the curtains are still closed... because I was still sleeping.

THE NEXT MORNING I AM UP before six. I’m not mad at Fanie anymore, but I did ask him kindly to have more consideration for others.

I have to pack up camp early as I have a long way to go to tonight’s campsite and I need to get there while it’s still light enough for photos.

As I walk back from the ablution block to my stand, my eye hits a new caravan that, somewhere between late yesterday afternoon and now, has found its spot near the pool. It looks as though this could be a self-built caravan. And, hey, because of the nature of my profession, this is something I’m always interested in. I decide on the spot this is a caravan that belongs on the pages of this magazine.

I hurry back to my stand, grab my camera and notebook and jog back to this lovely caravan.

“Knock, knock! Neighbour!” I call out.

“Just a minute,” someone replies in a croaking voice... and I imagine I can hear him wiping the sleep from his eyes.



A look at the future

Possibly the world's most expensive motorhome, the **Hymer VisionVenture** isn't for sale, but it had tongues wagging at the 2019 Caravan Salon in Germany.



“ Concept cars are usually the domain of mainstream vehicle manufacturers, where the concept offers the automotive world a preview of what an upcoming model will look like in a few years' time.

German caravan and motorhome manufacturer Hymer flipped the script at the Caravan Salon trade show 2019, held in Dusseldorf, where it rolled out the VisionVenture, a futuristic look at the adventure motorhomes of tomorrow. What makes this vehicle extra special is that Hymer teamed up with compatriot company and chemicals giant BASF and together they built the VisionVenture using 20 innovative materials.

Based on a 2019 Mercedes-Sprinter van, the VisionVenture's origins are unmistakable from the nose, though Hymer has reworked the A-pillars, windshield and bonnet slightly to create a sleeker appearance. But that's where the similarity ends because this camper concept is anything but contemporary.

The matte finish Chromacool paint is by BASF and regulates temperature so that the vehicle's surface is up to 20

degrees cooler in sunshine and the interior by four degrees.

Inside the pop-up roof reaches its maximum height by way of inflatable sidewalls, and this section houses the only bed in the camper, making the VisionVenture for couples only. You reach the upstairs section by walking up actual stairs, which cleverly double as storage drawers. The rear section of the flat roof behind the pop-up room acts as a little balcony.

That clears up the entire lower section of this motorhome for an uncluttered living room – inspired by the tiny house phenomenon. The kitchen lies directly behind the stairs.

The walls of the bathroom are lined by another of BASF's products, dubbed Veneo Slate, which features a millimetre-thin layer of natural stone on plastic. And the sink and shelving are on an inner wall that folds up against the toilet to transform into a shower.

Throughout the VisionVenture, the use of luxurious materials including bamboo, felt, leather and wood are designed to make

the occupants feel more at home.

The main living area is in the rear and features a foldaway dining table and sofas that face each other. Inspired by yachts, the walls underneath the panoramic wraparound glass are wooden, and that combined with the lower section of the rear hatch that folds down to create a little verandah, finishes the maritime-inspired design. There's an outdoor kitchen on the right rear, complete with a built-in gas braai.

The pop-up room's roof is one large solar panel so you could live off the grid, and steep approach and departure angles, 4x4 system and all-terrain tyres make sure you get there.

And no, Hymer isn't planning on building the VisionVenture, but has offered it up as a design study for what future campers could look like. It's would probably cost you a few million Rand if you could convince them to make it especially for you, though.”



Have you spotted any wacky 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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