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SEPTEMBER 2019 | ISSUE 26 | WWW.WEG.CO.ZA

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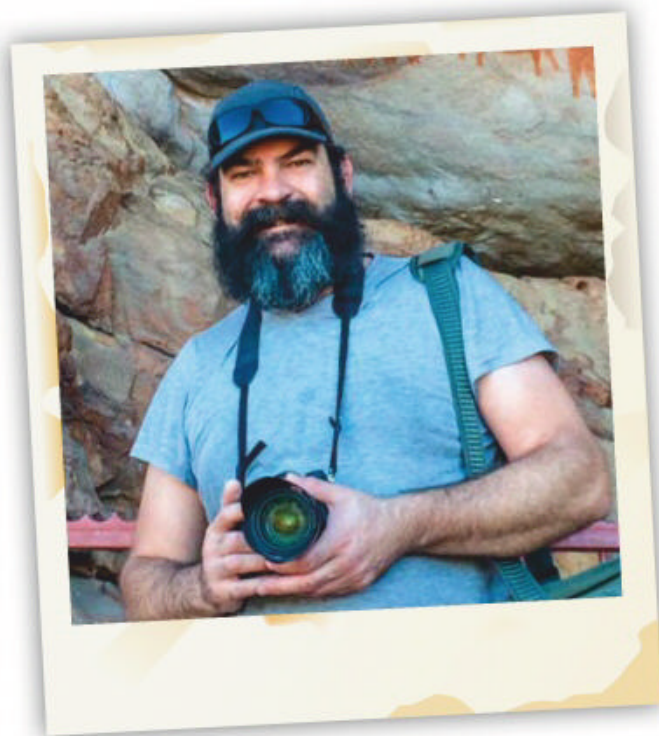


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A perfect pairing



“

In our family, the only thing we plan carefully when we go camping is the first night's braai. Because it feels as if that's the most important one

”

The world has seen several iconic collaborations that have provided loads of entertainment across a wide spectrum. Instances where you can't say the one's name without instinctively thinking about the other. I'm talking about combinations like Victor and Bakkies, Lennon and McCartney, Laurel and Hardy, Jagger and Richards, Petersen and Kramer...

The thing about these combinations is that although each would probably have reached extraordinary heights on his own, he was just so much better off with the other one. Victor would still have been unmatched in the line-out, but how many opportunities would he have had to excel in the loose if Bakkies hadn't tossed his opponents aside like empty wrappers?

And if it wasn't for McCartney's light and more optimistic approach coupled with Lennon's darker and sadder slant, the Beatles probably would have had significantly fewer hits.

There is, I believe, another iconic pairing on this list: the outdoors and braais. And now that winter is bidding us goodbye, we'll all once again get more opportunities to pack our vehicles, hitch our caravans and head to our favourite destinations.

In our family, the only thing we carefully plan when we go camping is the first night's braai. Because it feels as if that's the most important one, where everything must go smoothly from the moment we stop until we finally sit back in our camping chairs to stare at the fire. Then you're not in a hurry for coals, and when you finally dish up the meat, braaibroodjies and salad (and maybe a potato that had been covered in foil and placed on the coals), the meal tastes better than anything a Michelin star chef might conjure up.

September is braai month and on p108, Johané serves up some great ideas to brighten up your braai.

Invite your friends and family, stack the wood (or charcoal if you insist), sit back, socialise and then eat like kings.

Safe travels!

Schalk

EDITOR

schalk.jonker@media24.com

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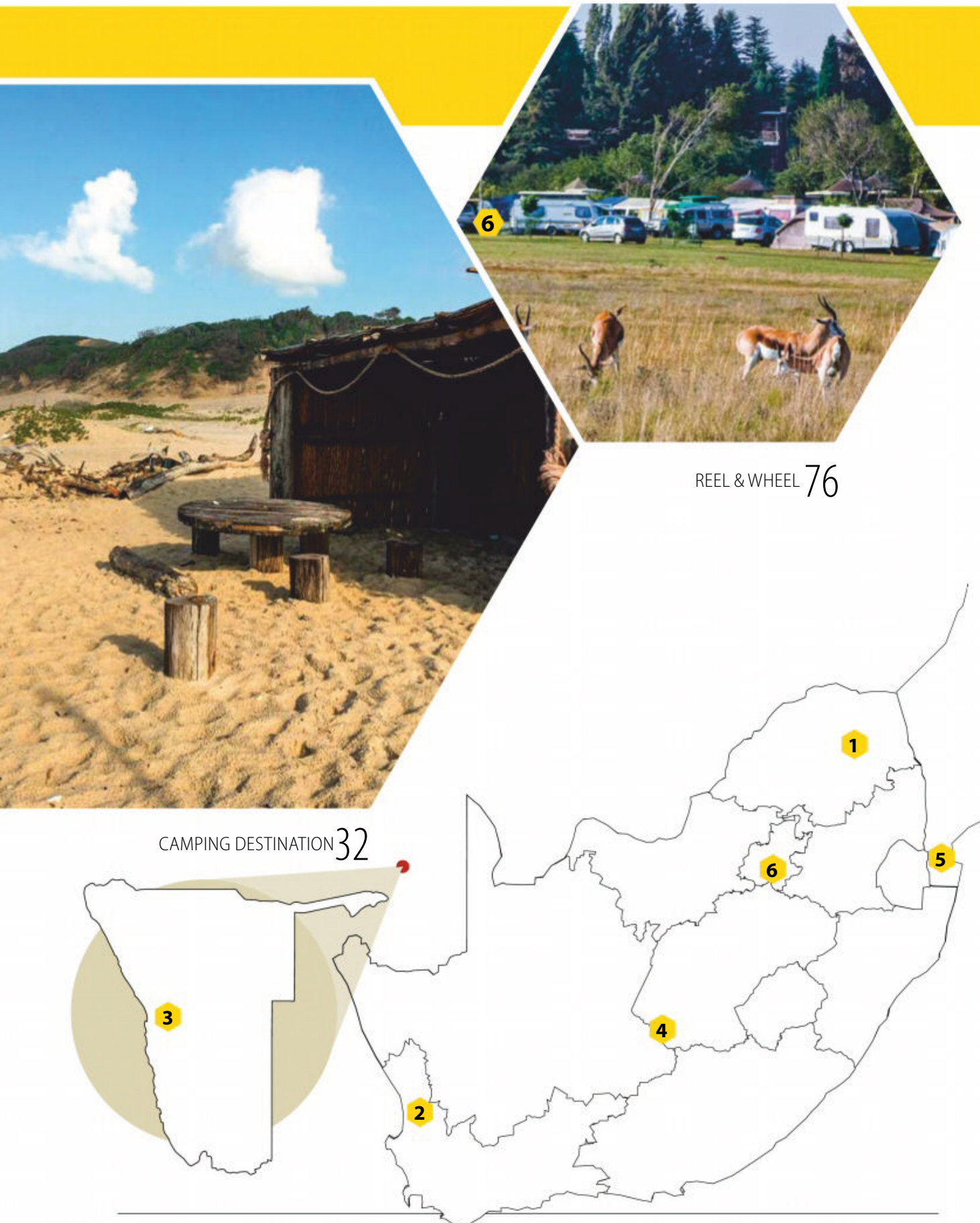


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MEDIA24



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CAMPING DESTINATION 32

#26 COVER IMAGE – EVAN NAUDÉ

“A few kilometers north of Conception Bay in Namibia, our convoy passed the wreck of the Shawnee. It was late afternoon and yet the fog persisted. There was a strange beauty to the eerie scene and it served as a stark reminder that the sea gives and takes in equal measure.”



Settings F8; 1/1 000 s; ISO 200; 4.8; 72 mm



FLIP OUT My family and I visited Maputo with some friends. We had drinks at the Catembe Gallery Hotel and saw a couple of local boys diving off the pier. One boy was particularly brave and did backflips into the Espírito Santo estuary.

PHOTO SUZAAN KRITZINGER-KLOPPER

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Namibia is a wonderful place

This past June holiday, I was privileged to travel through Namibia with my wife, Ancen. How friendly the people are was evident, and we felt safe. It was only the bad roads around Sossusvlei that bothered a little.

The first night we camped at the Orange River Rafting Lodge and shot up to Rehoboth for the second night which we spent at Lake Oanob. It was quite an experience camping next to the dam and we appreciated the hordes of bird species. You get your own bathroom facilities, a kitchen, built-in braai area and a private deck.

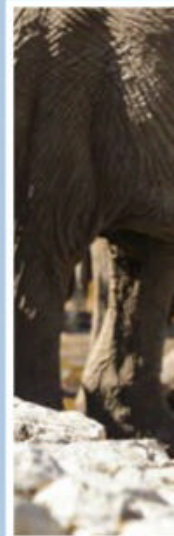
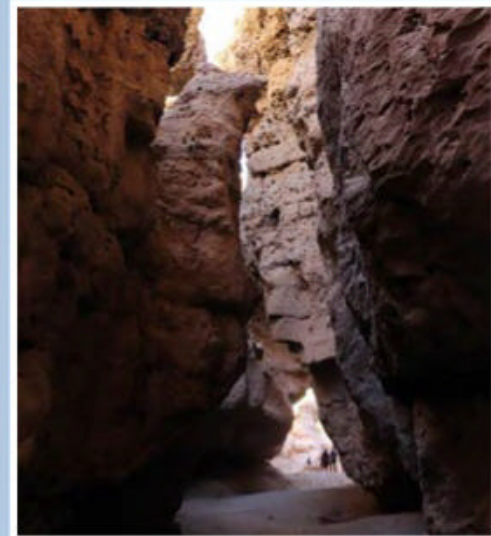
Etosha, however, was somewhat disappointing and we did not see as many animals as in the Kruger National Park. The game we did see was healthy. From here we drove west, past Palmwag to the Khowarib Lodge south of Sesfontein. The surrounding mountains are special and the weather... well, it was so hot we could swim, even though it was winter. At Palmwag itself they have a unique campsite where the elephant walk down the riverbed only about 20 m from your stand. The rosy-faced lovebirds that have made their home in the makalani palm trees were just as extraordinary. The seeds of these palm trees are so big, we used them as balls for our own bowls!

The campsite at the recently renovated Goanikontes Oasis was next. It's next to the Swakop River and very popular. If you like silence, you should preferably not be there on a weekend.

The roads around Sossusvlei are very bad and it doesn't look as if the authorities are maintaining them. I think it's the big buses that speed that destroy them. There is a sign warning of potholes, and it seems to be a permanent fixture. Fortunately, the



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.



new Sesriem Oasis campsite at Sossusvlei compensates. We were the first guests at our specific stand and the builders were still on site. You have your own amenities at your stand.

Many of the campsites we visited – except for Sossusvlei – weren't that crowded, and next time we won't book ahead.

After 20 days through Namibia, Ancen and

I agreed it was one of the best holidays ever. Who knows, maybe the cheaper fuel price contributed to that? It's almost R2/ℓ cheaper than at home.

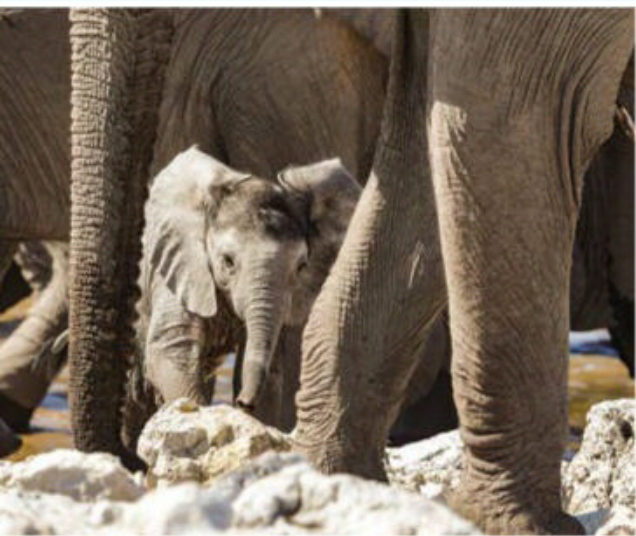
JOHAN VAN BOSCH
Bellville

WINNING
LETTER



Johan 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 and a 1,5 ℓ cool drink bottle. The lid also has space for a coffee flask. The interior is lined with PVC, which makes it easy to keep this bag clean and hygienic. The bag has a short strap that reaches over the top and attaches with a Velcro strip, and also a longer shoulder strap if you're going to carry it over longer distances. It's an ideal picnic accessory or a padkos bag for a road trip. winkel.weg.co.za





COMMENT OF THE MONTH!



We recently got behind the wheel of the new Ford Ranger to find out more about the 2.0 single and twin-turbo engine. The engines may be smaller, but they provide more power and torque than the older 2.2 l and 3.2 l engines. George and Marinda Botha decided smaller can't be better:

"It looks good in writing, but there's no replacement for displacement."



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JULY 8

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Our Facebook friends recall those ceramic fuses...



Piet van Heerde

I remember that foil from a pack of 30. Tear it into narrow strips to apparently change their "strength".



Eugene Heiberg

My Ford Cortina bakkie still uses these ceramic fuses today.



Frikkie Booysen

I also used the shiny paper and almost burnt out my Chev Firenza.



Cedric Pieterse

I was brave enough to use a copper screw instead of the fuse. When doing that, one of two things could happen: either the problem didn't return, or you could immediately see the problem because that's where the smoke or flames would start.



Beware of fingers burning

Mic van Zyl's "Wired for fire" column in the July issue reminds me of years ago. We simply wrapped the foil from a cigarette box around your car's ceramic fuses when one of them fused and you had to make a plan next to the road.

But it's not always such a smart fix, as the whole affair easily catches fire. The fuse is there to protect the rest of the car's wiring, after all.

You would experience similar problems at home if you routed the wiring around the circuit breakers so the power doesn't trip.

Which brings me to the next issue: a battery that isn't properly clamped down. When such a battery – think of the one in your caravan – should fall over in an accident or because of a bad road, it can also cause a short circuit. With the possibility of nearby fuel (in jerry cans), this could result in even worse consequences.

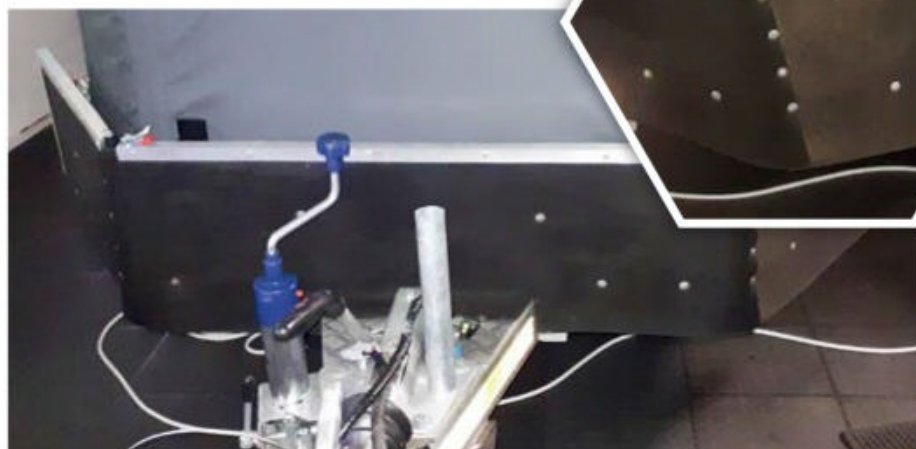
JAN EBERSOHN
Somerset West

A plan with the flap

With reference to the Infanta Enkulu 2 caravan test in the August issue, we took delivery of our Enkulu 2 in February and we had the mud flaps mounted for our tour of Namibia and Botswana. I read in the article that the mud flaps stand out slightly and that you can bump into them. So I took our caravan to Jaap Botha in Velddrif and he adjusted the flaps slightly. They are now slightly bent back.

SAKKIE DE WET
Langebaan

The mud flaps are standard on the Enkulu 2, but Infanta's Jurie Swart says it depends on the customer whether they want them mounted or not. If they don't need them, the Enkulu 2 comes without them. – Ed





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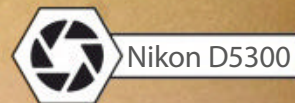


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I see you!

From the dusty roads on the outskirts of Piet Plessis to the cold of Clarens and the beautiful beaches of Wilderness... four of our readers show us a moment that gave them pause.

By **Leon Botha**

Dusty wonder

She may have been on her way to a social event, but Mari Marais of Leniesdeel in the North West never leaves her camera at home.

"I took this picture on my way to a farmer's dance between Leniesdeel and Piet Plessis. We drove ahead of our friends on the dirt road and pulled over to watch the sunset. The breeze blew the dust to the one side, and it was the perfect moment for a pretty pic with our friends driving up through the dust."

Mari captured a very special moment, and you immediately spot the car. And even though it's coming towards you, it's actually the clouds of

dust that give the photo a sense of movement. You can see in your mind's eye how the dust slowly subsides to the one side, like a bank of fog, as the car rushes towards you.

Your eye wanders next between the trees and the clouds of dust, but then you see the photo has another half. To the right of the road is an open field with some grazing cattle; other than the fence there isn't much other detail. There is, therefore, a neat balance between the sections on either side of the road.

But there is also clever composition, something that you don't immediately realise, but it gives the photo extra life. The road runs to the left – and into the corner – of the photo frame and you can almost feel the bakkie going past Mari moments later.

SEND US YOUR PICTURES

and we might publish them here. We're not looking for traditional "prize winners", just regular pics that you love. Think of the type of pic you'd use as your Facebook cover photo; or something charming, such as kids warming their hands over a campfire. Whether the pic was taken with an expensive DSLR camera or a run-of-the-mill cellphone, if it's good enough for your family photo album it's good enough for us. **Mari Marais** wins a *go! Drive & Camp* camera bag worth R520 with her photo – congratulations, Mari!

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



Huawei P20 Lite

You've been framed!

She likes nature scenes and loves to experiment with the frames around her photos, says Madelein Marais of George.

"I love photography and I especially love nature scenes. I also like to play with different frames around my photos, like this one I took on Wilderness's beach."

The framing of a photo can play a vital role, so much so it becomes part of the composition.

Madelein's photo is a good example of this. Without the frame, the photo would attract less attention. If you look at it from a distance, the frame is just about the first thing you notice; it almost works like a focus point to direct your attention to the content of the photo. When you look closer, you see a couple's silhouettes in the background, which is what the photo's actual focal point is. Because the frame is also black (just like the figures and the rocky sections), your eye constantly jumps between the three elements as you look further into the photo and enjoy the rest of the detail.

Now you see me, now you don't...

When he goes for a walk, **Devon Bruiners** of Kuils River not only keeps his eyes open for the bigger subjects including trees and rivers and the mountains. He sees the small details, like this camouflaged lizard on the ground.

"I went for a walk with a friend in the Jonkershoek reserve outside Stellenbosch. Right at the end, I saw a sudden movement at my feet. I stopped and slowly moved one foot... and at that moment I saw a lizard running. Shortly afterward, he stood still on a rock where I could shoot him."

You have to look closely to see the little guy in the photo - he blends so well with the rock that he just about becomes an extension of it.

The brown background and the green bits on the back right distract your attention, and don't really contribute to the photo. But as you crop the picture closer to the lizard, it looks as if you're looking at a small dinosaur perched on a rock, and it feels as if its small eye is looking right through you. That's something that gets lost in the bigger image.



Samsung A20



iPhone XR



Window mates

The cold does not affect **Hein le Hanie** of Centurion, especially when he steals a picture of his two sons early in the morning.

"We went to Clarens during the winter holiday, and it was so cold that morning that the window of the room was steamed over. I got up to make coffee and when I turned around, I saw my two sons, Joah and Logan, doodling on the glass. My phone was next to the bed and I could capture the moment quickly. I changed the photo afterward to monochrome."

Photos are invaluable on these occasions, because you capture a spontaneous moment between two people, and you will revisit that image.

The focal point is the two figures, but Logan's hand links the two together. The two also look away from you. It's when you get closer that you see the real focus of the photo: Joah is drawing on the glass behind his head.

The contrast between black and white naturally creates more atmosphere, but you can also get rid of the rest of the detail in the dark bits so the photo will have even more impact. The bright sections can also be slightly softened. That way it highlights more detail, specifically the finger marks on the window pane between the two boys.





Jurgens releases a brand-new Penta

The Penta has been the most popular caravan in the Jurgens range for several years, and now the manufacturer has launched the latest version. And it's not simply a case of new stickers and different upholstery.

The new Penta has been completely redesigned from the wheels up, says Jurgens Campworld's Jurgen Adler. "In fact, not a single fibreglass mould corresponds to any of our existing caravans," he continues. Jurgen has been working on the new caravan for a year and says they decided to overhaul the Penta because it is so popular.

To preserve the Penta genes while improving the model, Jurgen says he kept a number of specific features in mind: the dinette area remains at the nose to the left of the door as you get in. Next is the full-size fridge and then the island bed in the back. The big difference is the kitchen that used to be inside, in the middle of the caravan against the right panel. The kitchen area is now moving



out, a first for the Jurgens range. Gas is a thing of the past and the new Penta now relies entirely on 220 V power in the campsite.

The dinette in front is more rounded, Jurgen says, so it can accommodate more people, and the upholstery is now multi-purpose. It has a fabric side and a faux leather side. The material is for ordinary use, while the faux leather is

aimed more at kids. (The surface easily wipes clean.) Instead of a fold-out top, the dinette's table is now loose with a foot like that of an ironing board, which can turn into a double bed so that four people can sleep in the Penta.

There is a fire extinguisher near the door as required by law, but it's also the face of a hidden drawer to the left of the dining area.



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Drive like a 'Pro'



The wardrobe, which was previously fitted to the left panel by the bed, moves to the opposite wall next to the fridge (which previously also stood against the panel near the door). The Penta now also has a built-in laundry basket and small garbage bin. The cassette toilet's spot remains under the bed.

The outside kitchen is to the right of the door – above the left wheel. Not only is it a new addition, but the layout is refreshing compared to existing outdoor kitchens. A door flaps out of the panel and you pull out the induction plate and sink from the hull. The microwave (formerly part of the indoor kitchen) also sits on a pull-out shelf above that. The top drawer provides storage for smaller containers, and it also has a sliding frame.

The water tank in the nose and a geyser is now optional.

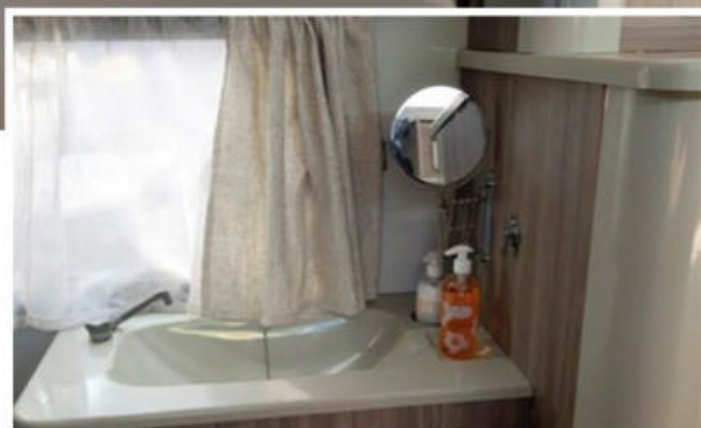
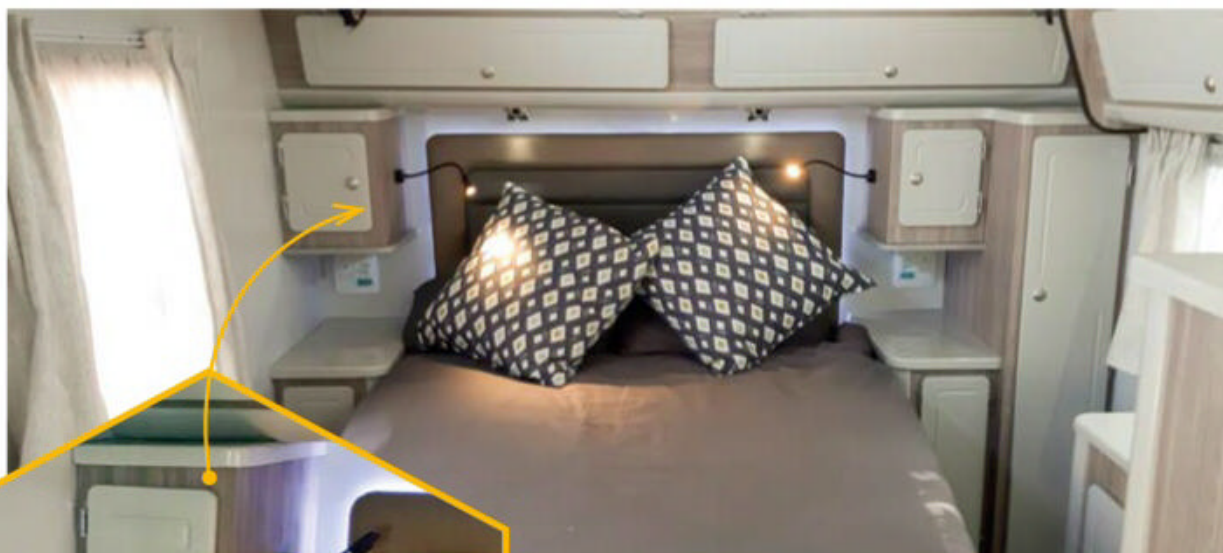
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Since Jurgens Campworld lost a good 20 dealers due to financial problems, quite a few have rejoined Jurgens Campworld. These include Tygerberg Caravans in Cape Town as well as Pretoria Caravans plus two new dealerships: Performance Centre in Centurion and Three Brothers Trading in Upington. Of the eight dealers that had remained, Jurgens has now expanded its dealer network to 16. – Ed



Rare dragonfly discovered at Swadini



There are more than 5 000 known dragonfly species and the Eastern scissortail is a very rare and elusive example. It has just been photographed in Swadini by Antoinette Snyman. It is, as far as is known, the first Eastern scissortail photographed in South Africa, reports the newspaper *Beeld*. Previously two larvae have apparently been spotted – one at the Oribi Gorge and the other at the Nkomati River.

The Eastern scissortail is found in Zimbabwe on the border with Mozambique. It was first described in the 1960s.

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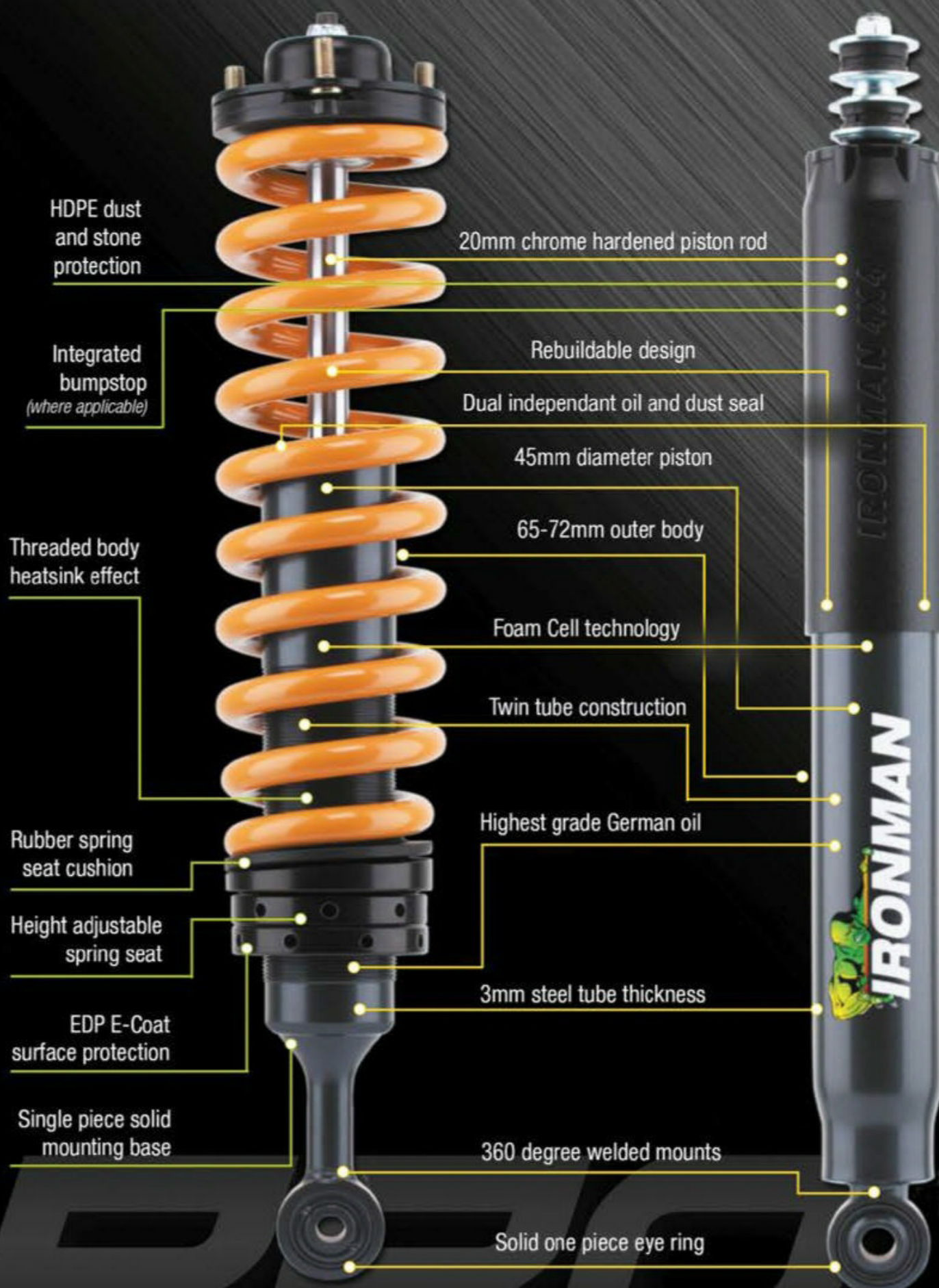
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Toyota	Prado 120
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Toyota	FJ Cruiser

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Off-roaders celebrate their 40th

The Western Cape branch of the Four Wheel Drive Club of Southern Africa recently celebrated its 40th birthday with a weekend rally at the Hollandsche Molen.

The club was formed in the 1970s when a number of friends and enthusiasts gathered on weekends to drive dunes and dongas. Any vehicle was welcome back then, but over time the guys with 4WD vehicles began to look for increasingly challenging playgrounds, and what with the camping and socialising, a club was started. Today, there are branches all over Southern Africa.

Some of the highlights include the emergence of the Off-Road Rescue Unit – a volunteer group consisting largely of club members who assist authorities when rescue efforts are in difficult terrain. They have already saved several lives.

At the birthday celebrations, several club members – from six months to 80 years old – got together and had a great time. There were also seven former club chairmen at the event and two of the club's founders related a little more about the club's origins – complete with a slideshow. The club also entertained its major sponsor – Toyota SA. This manufacturer plays a big role in the Atlantis Dunes Fun Day that the club has been running for the past 13 years.

Toyota was looking for a site in 2006 to launch one of its new 4x4 vehicles, and the club's committee proposed the Atlantis Dunes. After a very successful day there, the idea for a fun day came to be... since then there has been no turning back. It will be held again on 12 October this year.



THE MEN BEHIND THE WHEEL Previous club chairpersons include (from the left) Johan Marais, Charl Kruger, Gerhard Buitenhals, Schalk Louw, Frans Stander, Roy van Schoor (the founder and first chairperson) and Fred Bartens.



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Caravan repair services move house

After eight years and a modest start, Wessel McMaster's Caravan Services & Repairs has expanded to the extent that they had to move from Kempton Park to a new site in Boksburg.

Wessel started his business in 2011,

focusing mainly on wood rot in caravans as well as repairing accident damage. He also services all types of caravans and trailers.

At 1 000 m², there is now more than double the floor space for Wessel and his six staff members.

New address Unit 8, corner of North Rand and Elizabeth Road.

GPS S26.178803 E28.268361

Contact 082 652 8139

caravanrepairs.co.za

info@caravanrepairs.co.za



Ironman 4x4 showcases its new flagship store



Ironman 4x4 Africa recently moved to its new home. The Ironman 4x4 Centre is located in the Auto Repair Center at 1 Voortrekker Road, Alberton. Here you'll find a showroom with all Ironman 4x4's products and a fitment service centre where you can have your truck equipped with all types of accessories.

Director of Ironman 4x4 Africa, Mic van Zyl, says the flagship store was the next logical step for the company and he's excited to welcome fellow off-road enthusiasts. Since the grand opening, hordes of people have been popping in and the service centre is often fully booked.

Contact ironman4x4.co.za

sales@ironman4x4.co.za

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www.ironman4x4.co.za



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1 Voortrekker Road, Alberton
Tel: +27 11 058 3026
sales1@ironman4x4.co.za





Motorhome-World knocks on China's door

Motorhome-World, which has been exporting its motorhome hulls to Australia since 2017, has now gained a foothold in the Chinese market.

Caravan company Loncen has approached Motorhome-World to import its Discoverer Xtreme model to China, says Dennis Bouwers, MD. As in the case of exports to Australia, it only involves the hull of the Xtreme, which then gets fitted on the chassis of an Iveco Daily 4x4 over there. It is the same chassis used locally but the engine differs slightly. Locally, the engine complies with the Euro 3 exhaust standard, but the Euro 5 standard applies in China.

Because the Chinese drive on the right-hand side of the road, the Xtreme's hull had to be adjusted as well. The door that usually sits on the left had to move to the right. And, for example, where the built-in geyser sits on the right in the hull, it had to move to the left. But the interior layout otherwise remains similar, says Dennis.

Dennis also says China still has a relatively small motorhome and caravan market, but Motorhome-World believes there is a lot of potential.

Contact ☎ 021 577 3863 or 087 985 0630

🌐 motorhome-world.com

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The end of Merc's X-Class?

Rumours started doing the rounds in June this year that German luxury vehicle manufacturer Daimler will be discontinuing its Mercedes-Benz X-Class bakkie.

The reasons given by various news sources range from it being too expensive to a sour relationship between Daimler and the Renault-Nissan-Mitsubishi group after the latter group's CEO, Carlos Ghosn, was arrested for fraud.

Other reasons that apparently contribute to the relatively poor sales figures are that the X-Class is not sold in the US, that certain X-Class models have been recalled for manufacturing defects, that the Merc bakkie contains too many Nissan parts, that the build quality is not up to Mercedes' usual standards,

and that the production version had strayed too far from the original concept vehicle (the yellow vehicle below) that had the world abuzz in 2016.

Daimler South Africa's media specialist Sibusiso Mkwanazi says the company does not respond to "rumours" – the official party line echoed by Daimler's PR people around the globe. Sibusiso acknowledged that Mercedes-Benz SA would indeed like to sell more bakkies, but he also insisted that they are continuing to market the X-Class.

According to NAAMSA (the body that monitors new vehicle sales in South Africa), Mercedes-Benz sold a total of 113 new light commercial vehicles in August 2019. This category includes the X-Class, V-Class, Vito

and Sprinter, but Mercedes-Benz South Africa remains quiet on the sales figures of each individual model range. It is therefore unclear how many of those 113 were X-Classes.

If Mitsubishi can stay afloat with only 33 new light commercial vehicle sales in the same month and Mazda can carry on with a mere 26, chances are that the German vehicle giant could handle the relatively low X-Class sales.

Will the X-Class see its demise? At the time of going to print, these were only rumours largely ignored by Daimler. But if they turn out to be true, those with an X-Class, especially the X350d V6, may own a collectible.

Speaking of rumours: One can only wonder what lessons BMW will learn from Mercedes' palaver and whether the Bavarian manufacturer will persist with its own rumoured bakkie plans.



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V-Class gets a facelift

Unlike the struggling X-Class, it appears that the V-Class is a success story for Daimler, the parent company of Mercedes-Benz. Since its launch in 2015, some 209 000 of these vans were sold worldwide, of which 64 000 found homes in 2018. This is in contrast to the 16 700 X-Classes sold in the same period.

This is why Mercedes-Benz decided to give its popular van a makeover. "It will be easy for the V-Class facelift to take over from where its predecessor left off, as it was such a stylish and dynamic offering. In its latest guise, the V-Class continues to convince families, various leisure adventurers and business customers alike, that the V-Class is the perfect fit for any purpose," says Nadia Trimmel, vice-president of Mercedes-Benz Vans South Africa.

So, what's new? The front bumper's air scoops are much larger and are reminiscent of Mercedes-Benz's new range of sedan cars. The grille sports a diamond pattern and the three-point star now sits right in the centre of the grille with two chrome strips that further accentuate it. The wheel rims are also new, and you can choose between 17 inch and 18 inch rims – black or grey.

Inside, the air-con vents are new and the finishes have been refurbished. A notable new feature is optional rear comfort seats that are even better than the ones you'll find in an airline's business class. These comfort seats can recline, massage your back and cool or warm your body.

The engine options remains unchanged and all-wheel drive is unfortunately not available. Prices range from R913 951 for the base model V200d to R1 292 474 for the V250d Avantgarde flagship model.

Contact

[mercedes-benz.co.za/vans](https://www.mercedes-benz.co.za/vans)



Tucson's new sporty body

Thanks to satisfactory sales of the 2016 model Hyundai Tucson, the Korean manufacturer has just launched its latest Tucson Sport.

"After the midlife upgrade of the Tucson, the time was right to create another Sport derivative," says Stanley Anderson, sales and operations director at Hyundai South Africa. "We have again fitted the Tucson with bespoke black rims and a body kit that gives it a very sporty look without being overbearing. Tucson customers have really taken to the Sport after our first 'experiment', so we could confidently repeat the exercise this time," he continues.

The new Tucson Sport is available in two versions: a petrol version with a 1,6 l turbocharged four-cylinder engine and a 2 l turbo diesel. Both are chipped by a ChipBox Pedalbooster and both are driven by the front wheels. Unfortunately, all-wheel drive is not an option.

The 1.6T delivers 150 kW at 5 500 rpm and 300 Nm at 4 500 rpm. The power and torque are only sent to the front wheels by a seven-speed automatic dual-clutch transmission (DCT) with a sport function that allows you change gears with the gear lever.

The 2.0D also delivers 150 kW, but at a lower 4 000 rpm. The torque is 460 Nm at 1 750-2 750 rpm and is sent to the front wheels by a standard eight-speed automatic transmission.

The Tucson 1.6 TGD I Sport (DCT) costs R654 900 and the Tucson R2.0 Sport turbo diesel R664 900.

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Bigfoot

Isuzu South Africa has teamed up with Icelandic firm Arctic Trucks to bring a D-Max with the AT35 treatment straight from the factory.

Words **Kyle Kock**

We all know just how popular Isuzu is in the light commercial vehicle segment. You need only look around in traffic to see a white single cab D-Max, delivering courier parcels or furniture. And every second old *plaasbakkie* with hundreds of thousands of kilometres on the odometer is an Isuzu, so that speaks highly of the manufacturer's reputation in the commercial and agricultural sectors.

But even after the ageing previous-generation KB/D-Max got a massive overhaul in 2012 after an incredible 10-year life-cycle, the attempt to put Isuzu on the map as a premium double cab player has yet to bear significant fruit. With rival manufacturers launching special edition pickups here, commemorative double-cabs there, and the newest "performance truck" craze that's doing the rounds – Isuzu's finally decided that it will try its hand at making its own desirable lifestyle bakkie.

Enter Arctic Trucks, an Icelandic truck

customiser who specialises in making conversions to bakkies and SUVs that allow them to handle the most inhospitable terrain in the Arctic Circle, and more recently, expeditions across the vast inhospitable whiteness of Antarctica. Isuzu South Africa got the go-ahead from its Japanese parent company to collaborate with Arctic Trucks and the result of that is the D-Max Arctic AT35 4x4 monster.

Broad shoulders

The AT35 is quite easy to distinguish on the road, not least because of the fat 35x12.50 R17 LT BF Goodrich rubber that it rides on. The AT35 also rides significantly higher than

any other D-Max, with a ground clearance 48 mm taller than the 3.0 LX 4x4 Auto (which rides on lower-profile 255/60 Continental tyres and 18-inch alloy wheels).

But the height is only a small part of the story because the AT35 barely fits into your typical shopping mall parking bay. Sections of the regular D-Max's wheel arches are cut out in a special booth at Isuzu's Struandale plant in Port Elizabeth, where the new Arctic Truck widened units are fitted, and official Arctic Truck plates are added to the chassis to accommodate the beefed-up suspension system courtesy of American specialists Fox.

Apart from those visual cues, there's also an Arctic Trucks logo on the tailgate, in case you

ISUZU ARCTIC AT35



SPECIFICATIONS

Engine	2 999 cc, four-cylinder, turbodiesel
Power	130 kW @ 3 600 rpm
Torque	380 Nm @ 1 800 rpm
Gearbox	6-speed automatic
Fuel consumption	8,6 l/100 km (manufacturer claim)
Tank	80 l
Ground clearance	268 mm
Approach and departure angles	36° and 28°
Breakover angle	31.4°
Wading depth	718 mm
Tare weight	2 130 kg
Payload	911 kg
Towing capacity	2 900 kg
Warranty	5 years/120 000 km
Service plan	5 years/90 000 km
Safety rating	★★★★★(EuroNCAP,2012)
Model driven	Isuzu Arctic AT35 VS 3.0 D-MAX 4x4 LX DC
PRICE	R803 300



missed the obvious, and the mud flaps are also special Arctic Trucks examples.

Out and about

The AT35 uses exactly the same 3.0 turbodiesel engine you'd find in the regular range-topping D-Max, so it might disappoint those of you who were expecting a few extra ponies being freed from the powerplant to hear that it kicks out the same outputs. The D-Max is already slightly down on power compared with its rivals, and now it's got massive tyres to rotate as well.

You feel the worst of it as you pull away from the traffic lights, but it's still no donkey. The deficit is barely noticeable on the open road and at freeway speed, but what you will notice is the D-Max's gruff engine note, which is now infamous for being slightly agricultural in the noise it makes. You'll also discover that you are also way more noticeable as fellow road users crane their necks to see exactly what's towering above them.

Surprisingly, the big BF's under the wheel arches are not that noisy on tarmac, which

is a feather in the cap for the all-terrain variety they stock. The AT35 tracks a little skittishly at the national limit however, but these conversions were not exactly designed for that kind of speed on this type of surface.

Where the AT35 really shines is off the beaten track; as the surfaces loosens, and the speed comes down slightly. Potholes that you might have avoided before with the relatively low-profile tires and large rims typical of today's double cabs are now swallowed whole, and there's a sense of sure-footedness as the AT35 confidently munches up the miles on a gravel back road.

It also made a strong case for itself on the dunes of Brakkedune 4x4 and Camping – which is the surface most like the deep snow for which these vehicles were made. No matter how much sand was dug up and the established tracks through the obstacles seemingly ruined, the AT35 muscled its way around like a champ.

Conclusion

If you're worried about getting a flat, know that Isuzu doesn't leave you in the lurch because you also get a 245/70 R16 tyre on a 16"x 6.5J steel rim as a standard spare when the emergency puncture repair kit isn't sufficient. Isuzu South Africa says that, initially, 50 units will be built annually. Instead of going to your nearest 4x4 outfitters, now you can get a course-ready vehicle right off the showroom floor, that was built on Isuzu's own production line.



COMPETITORS Double cabs with spice



R786 400 Ford Ranger Raptor

You won't be able to beat it point-to-point in an off-road race



R707 400 Toyota Hilux GR Sport

A few suspension upgrades and cosmetic tweaks to the local bestseller.



**R829 200 Volkswagen Amarok 3.0 V6 TDI
Extreme 4Motion**

The king of road-going lifestyle bakkies.

Moving mountains

The new Ford Everest has received a bit of a cosmetic nip and a tuck, but the real improvements lie under the bonnet, says Pierre Steyn.

You would think the sales success of the Ford Ranger bakkies would have a positive influence on the sales of its SUV sibling the Ford Everest – but the Everest has a mountain to climb. And so far it just hasn't been able to summit Mount Fortuner. Toyota's hugely popular Fortuner SUV, based on the Toyota Hilux, still outsells all its rivals combined by a Kalahari mile.

With a new range of turbocharged engines, a sophisticated 10-speed automatic transmission, and an improved front suspension, the Ford has definitely reached base camp though.

We spent some time driving the new Everest in town and off-road on the sandy tracks of Botswana, and the improvements to the engines, transmission and suspension certainly transforms the Ford into a serious contender.

The engines

The new 2.0 bi-turbo and single turbo engines recently unveiled in the new

Ford Ranger, now power the Everest too. The existing 2.2 four-cylinder and 3.2 five-cylinder Duratorq engines remain part of the line-up though.

The 2.0 engines (you'll find a tweaked one in the Ranger Raptor too) have more power and torque, are more fuel-efficient and offer better refinement. The only thing the older models have got going for them now is price. It's the bi-turbo that will get the most attention, and it's available in the XLT models in both 4x2 and 4x4 guise, and it powers the range topping Limited 4x4. It delivers maximum power of 157 kW, but its real beauty lies in its torque – 500 Nm from as low as 1 500 rpm.

A small high-pressure turbo is connected in series to a large low-pressure turbo. When the engine speed is low, the turbos work together to deliver low-end torque. The smaller turbo is bypassed at higher revs when top-end power is delivered by the low-pressure turbo.

These turbos are guaranteed to make old-

school off-roaders more than a bit nervous, and Ford reckons it's got durability nailed. The company says it's done stringent testing on the new engine to the equivalent of 5,5 million kilometres, the turbocharger housing – made from high-grade alloy – can withstand exhaust temperatures of up to 850 °C and the belt-in-oil primary drive is maintenance-free for the life of the engine.

The transmission

The new 10-speed automatic transmission, available only with the new 2.0 engines, is good. It does what any decent automatic should do in the sense that you mostly don't notice it doing its work. The multitude of gears allows smaller steps, so acceleration feels smooth. The electronic control system mostly does a good job of selecting the correct gear for the right application. You might not want all these gears when you're towing, or when crawling up a steep hill. Progressive Range Select (PRS) allows you to lock out gears from the automatic shifting

FORD EVEREST





range by pressing the '4' button on the gearshift lever. The transmission will only shift between the gear range that you've selected.

The suspension

The reworked front suspension adds a third leg to the improved refinement of the new Everest. The anti-roll bar has been repositioned behind the axle, giving the engineers more space to increase its diameter and stiffness. The load on the suspension bushes have also been reduced, and the various model derivatives now have individual front damper settings. All these suspension tweaks have enabled tyre pressures to go down – from 240 to 210 kPa. The ride is more compliant and comfortable, and you'll notice the difference on corrugated roads. We certainly did.

Conclusion

The Limited model, a proper seven-seater with luxury specs, is dear at R760 000, even though Ford says it's classy enough to compete with the much more expensive Land Rover Discovery and Toyota Land Cruiser Prado. That might be aiming at a peak too high. The XLT 4x4 at R690 000 has the same engine, suspension and transmission as the Limited. If you want to attempt Mount Fortuner, this is the one to get.

SPECIFICATIONS

Engine	1996 cc, 4-cylinder bi-turbo diesel
Power	157 kW @ 3 750 rpm
Torque	500 Nm @ 1 500 - 2000 rpm
Transmission	10-speed automatic
Top speed	n/a
Fuel consumption	7,6 l/100 km
Tank	80 l
Wading depth	800 mm
Ground clearance	225 mm
Approach and departure angles	29.5° and 25°
Tare weight	2 446 kg
Maximum towing weight	3 100 kg
Warranty	4 years/120 000 km
Service plan	6 years/90 000 km

PRICE

Ford Everest XLT 4x4	R687 700
Ford Everest Limited 4x4	R761 200



COMPETITORS Bakkie-based 4x4 SUVs



R657 800 Isuzu mu-X 3.0 4x4 AT6

They've streamlined the line-up to only two models. It's showing its age in terms of finishing, but will last forever.



R599 995 Mitsubishi Pajero Sport 2.4 D4 MIVEC

The Pajero Sport brings irrefutable off-road credentials and polarising design to the table. Appeals to some.



R556 400 Toyota Fortuner 2.4GD-6

SA's favourite is also, surprisingly, the cheapest. That explains why every third or fourth vehicle you see is a Fortuner. 🚗

The balmy, *friendly south*

Forget about the contentious political climate, because on Mozambique's south coast everyone is on perpetual holiday. We visit three beach resorts where you can swim, paddle and fish.

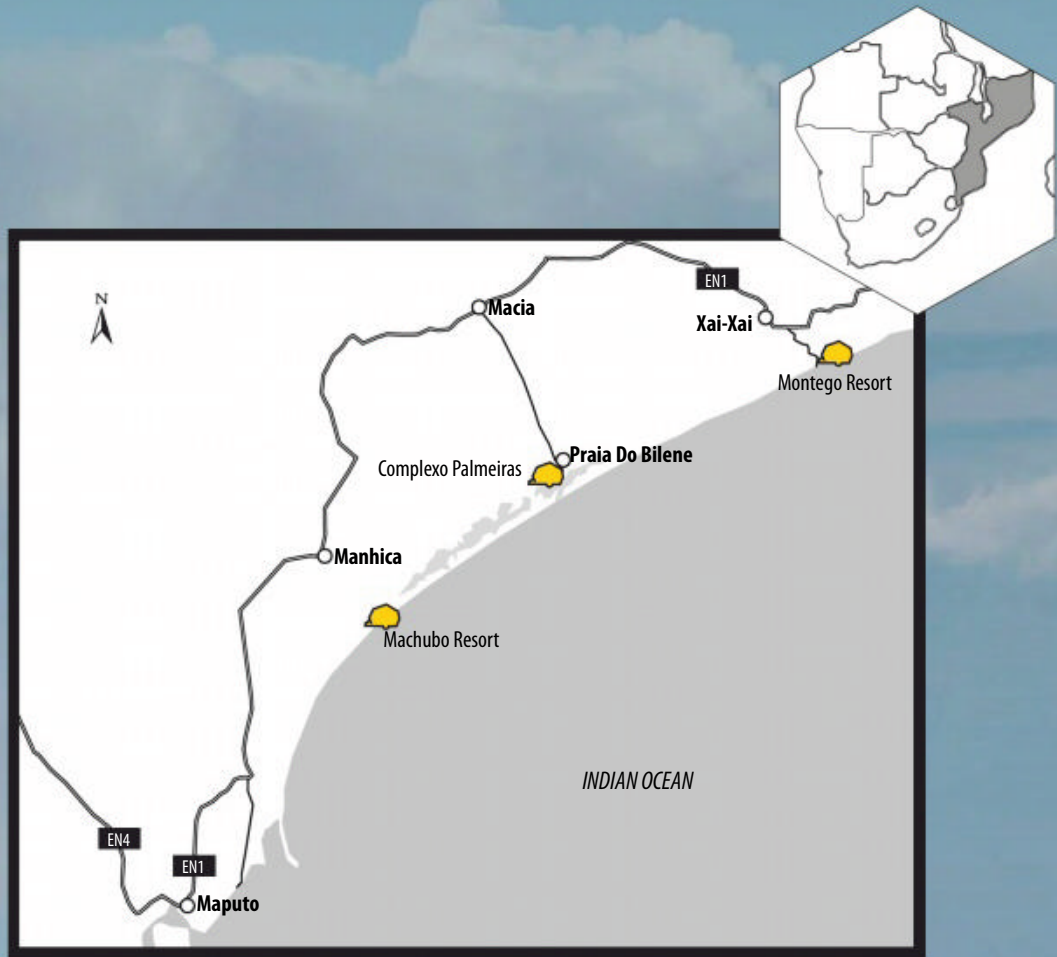
Words and photos **Cyril Kloppe**

When you say you're off to Mozambique, friends and family usually give dire warnings about cyclones, rebels, floods, malaria and corruption. They're right, of course: you need to prepare for these risks, but in the south, there's far less to worry about.

The cyclones mostly occur in the north (where the rebels live); there have been no major floods in the south since the year 2000; and the fight against malaria is progressing well. But do check out the weather report before you travel to Mozambique, just in case. And while many South Africans who regularly holiday here say they don't bother with prophylactics, we strongly encourage you to take your anti-malaria meds – especially kids, regardless of the season.

As far as corruption goes, we can honestly say that we did not experience any issues with the authorities on this recent visit to Mozambique. They were always friendly and professional – all the policemen could speak English and they would playfully reprimand you if you didn't memorise at least a few Portuguese phrases.

All the South Africans we spoke to in the resorts agree that Mozambique is safe and friendly. So, load up your bakkie, hitch your caravan and head east.



MONTEGO RESORT, PRAIA DO XAI-XAI

Taking it easy

The Montego resort lies next to the Indian Ocean and forms part of the Praia do Xai-Xai Beach Resort community. It is located approximately 18 km southeast of the bustling main town of Xai-Xai and about 300 km from Komatipoort. The road is tarred from the Lebombo border post all the way to Praia do Xai-Xai, but the last 3 km along the coast to Montego is a compacted sandy road that one can manage with a family sedan and a regular caravan.

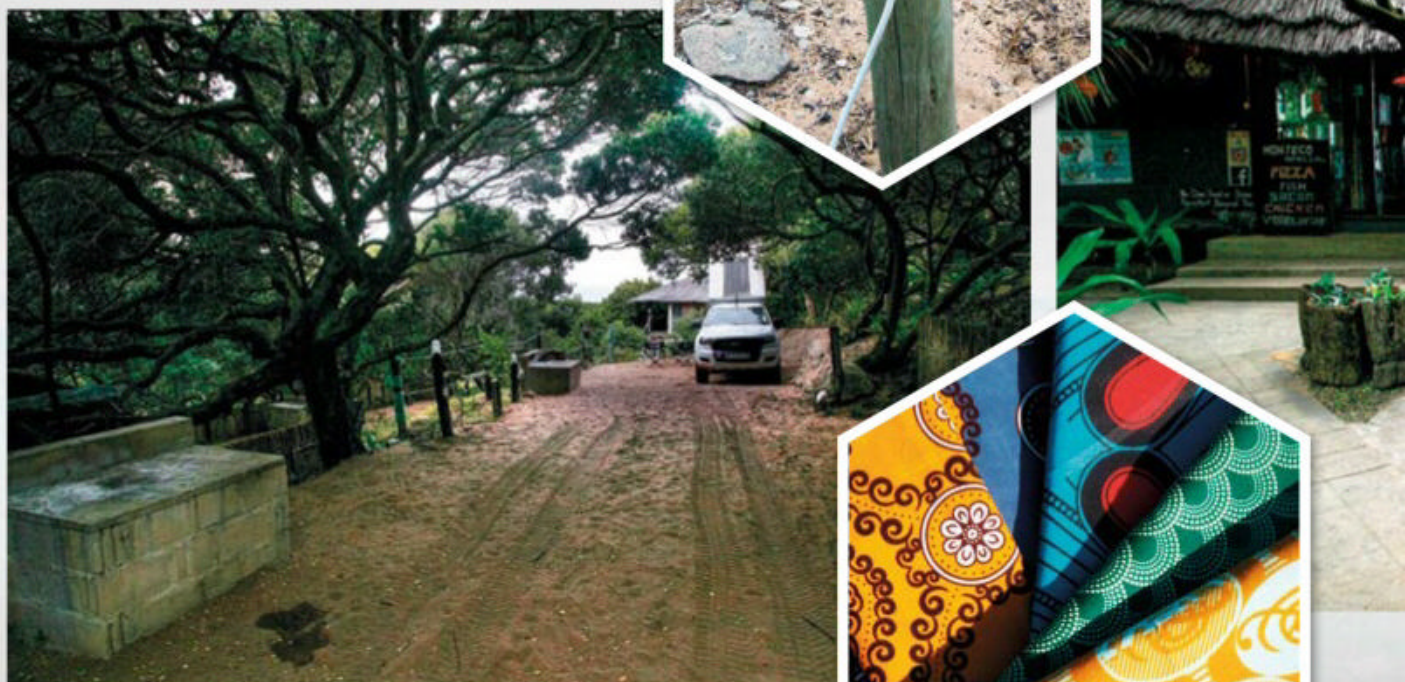
You know from the get-go this is a cheerful resort – as you drive through the gate, you're greeted by bright graffiti: orange octopuses and a scarlet sunset with sailboats passing behind palm trees.

The resort is run by Moné Wauts, and though she was born in Pretoria, she considers herself a Mozambican. Moné will recommend the best stand after checking out your rig or towing combination. Road caravans are sent to the most level section of the resort, closest to the beach. If you were to tow an off-road caravan with a 4x4-vehicle, she will probably direct you to one of four terraces above the reception building. They each have a built-up braai, power socket and a light that you can turn on and off yourself. The topmost terrace has a beautiful view of the sea, while the others enjoy extra shade and are protected from wind by the trees. In the furthest corner of the resort are smaller campsites designed for tents.

There are three-point plug points everywhere, but taps are somewhat more scarce. If the nearest tap is too far, Moné will sort you out with a garden hose. You camp on firm sand and your tent pegs will



TRUE COLOURS The trees at Montego offer plenty of shade. During the evenings the grownups hang out in the Pirates Point bar while the kids make full use of the resort's free WiFi.





definitely not bend, unless you strike one of many tree roots.

IT'S OFF TO THE SEA with you, as there's no swimming pool here. The resort, however, isn't directly on the beach and you must first cross the narrow sandy path that serves all the resorts in Praia do Xai-Xai before you can stick your toes in the water. On the way to the beach, you'll pass the Lapulana curio shop next to Montego's entrance. It was closed during our visit, but in peak season you can buy items such as swimwear and handbags here.

You won't need to wrestle with the waves because the Chongoene Reef, barely 100 metres from the shore, calms the incoming swell before it reaches the beach. The reef teems with the most beautiful tropical fish but be super careful when swimming near the rocks – an undertow sometimes forms behind it, and if you're not a particularly strong swimmer, you could get dragged under.

There are, of course, fantastic angling opportunities, but you will have to paddle your kayak beyond the reef and cast your line in deeper water if you want to catch something to eat. There is also a natural gap in the reef near the resort where a motorboat can get access to open water.

In the summer months, when the Mozambican coast gets really busy, Moné opens the Breezo's Beach Bar so you can enjoy an ice-cold drink under your beach

umbrella. Between June and October, the coast is also visited by humpback whales and the Montego Resort's restaurant, Pirates Point, has a high-lying stoep from where you can watch them.

The most popular dish on the menu is the Montego hamburger (R120) with a massive 320 g beef patty. A bar serves hard stuff, wine and several South African and Mozambican beers and soft drinks.

Order a drink and enjoy your Montego burger on the restaurant's stoep overlooking the ocean – you'll have to ignore the unsightly power lines between you and the water, though. The restaurant has free WiFi that is fast enough for you to post holiday pics to your Facebook profile. There are also board games, including Monopoly and Rummikub in the restaurant's recreation area.

THE ABLUTION FACILITIES for campers are simple but clean and neat. One ablution block is open all year round, and when Montego will be getting a large number of visitors, an extra ablution block is unlocked.

The main block has two toilets, two showers and two basins in the men's facilities. The women's side looks identical.

Should you opt not to camp, there are 13 chalets ranging from double-bed rondavels to six-bed family cottages, and you pay R250 pp for all of them. It's a laidback resort that is often used by tourists as a halfway stop when travelling from the SA border to Inhambane, but it's also comfortable enough to spend a number of days here. And yes, you could make it your final destination.



Briefly | Montego Resort



Campsite 40 stands – all on sand and under trees – of which nearly half are level and large enough for caravans.

Ablution facilities Clean but well-used and cramped.

Price R100 pppn plus R100 pn per stand.

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

Contact 082 653 8197 (SA) or 00 25 84 207 1650 (Mozambique) montegomoz.co.za
bookings@montegoresort.co.za

Nearest town Xai-Xai, 21 km.

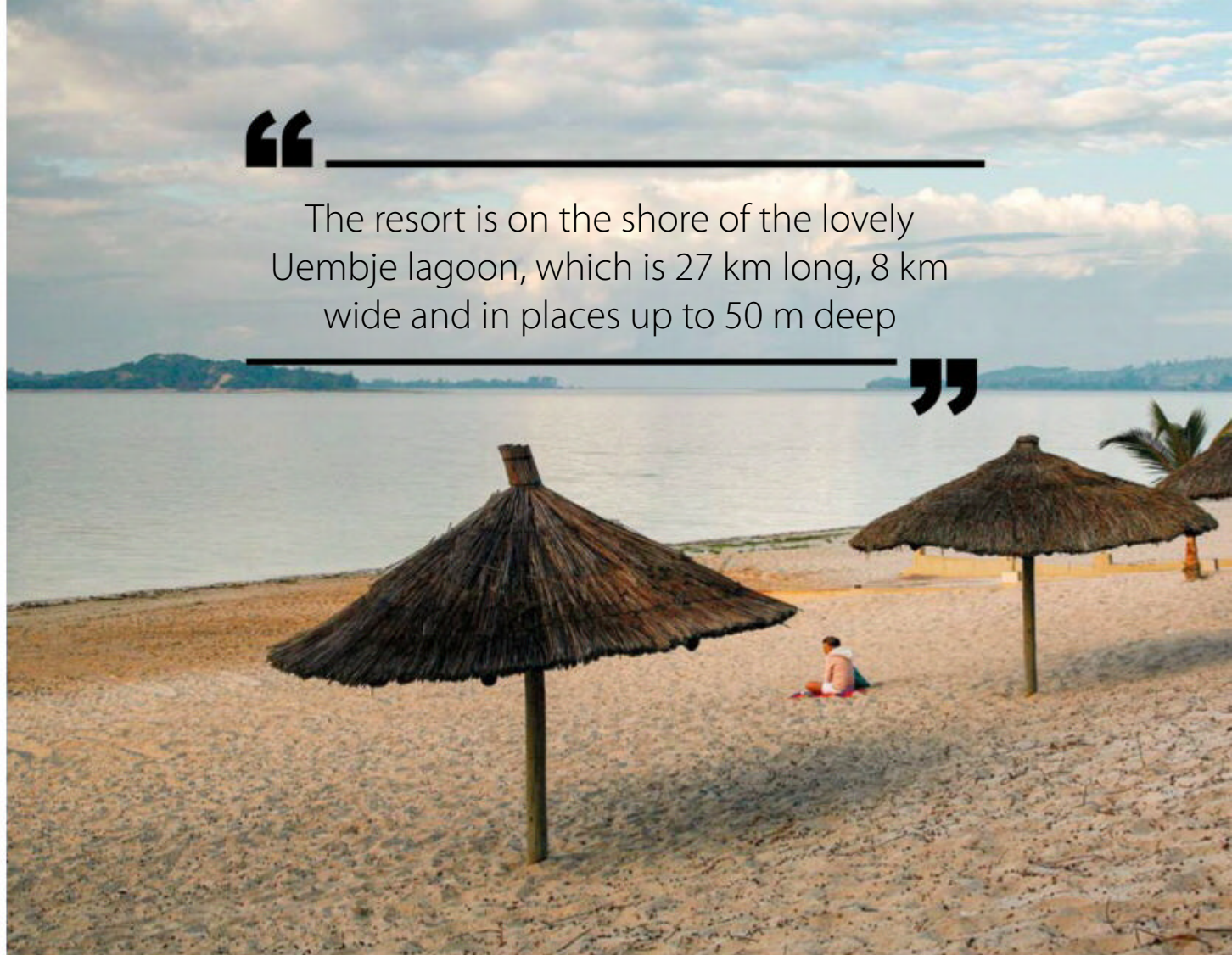
What does the road look like? Tar and a firm sandy road.

GPS S25.10511 E33.76751

go! Drive & Camp says You come here to swim and fish. Don't swim alone near the reef.



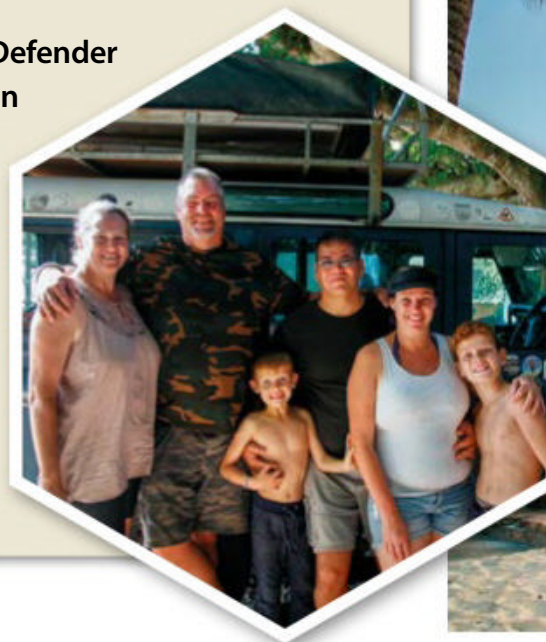
“ The resort is on the shore of the lovely Uembje lagoon, which is 27 km long, 8 km wide and in places up to 50 m deep ”



They say

Shaun Stevens (centre) of Vanderbijlpark drives a 1996 Defender 110. He camps with his wife, Carien, and their sons, Jaden and Joshua, in a Tentco Bush Camper. Shaun's cousin Zanetta van Huijssteen (left) from Potchefstroom and her husband, Hansie, drive a 2005 Discovery 3 and tow a Sprite Tourer SC.

“We feel safe here and the water is clean. You can go snorkelling in the lagoon and see the fish clearly. It's strange that the resort's management does not provide toilet paper, but the ablution facilities are clean at least.”



COMPLEXO PALMEIRAS, PRAIA DO BILENE

Some bitter with the sweet

Praia do Bilene, or just Bilene, lies 250 km east of Komatipoort and 650 km from Pretoria. And this is where one of Bilene's oldest resorts, Complexo Palmeiras, lies.

The resort has two camping areas: one is to the left of the gate and the other to the right. The left-hand camping area is the one you should aim for, because it's the nicest – and the stands closest to the ablution block are the best in the resort. The power points are not weather resistant, but rather the type that belongs indoors and not outside in the wind and weather. Fortunately, they are bolted to short posts with a roof over the socket to keep rainwater off them. Each stand has a bright light that you control.

There are no built-up braais, but on arrival you will be met by two friendly men who offer to dig a shallow pit and provide that wood that you can burn in this pit (for a fee). The stands are also not raked by the resort's management and the same guys who supply wood will clean your stand. We paid 500 meticals for their services and a large bundle of firewood.

It is clear that the gardener here takes pride in his work, because you see flowers in pots everywhere, the ferns are lush under the trees, creepers adorn the fences and bougainvilleas grow like weeds.

THE ABLUTION FACILITIES look nice from the outside, but the inside is old and worn.

There are three toilets (two were damaged at the time of our visit), three washbasins with mirrors and three showers each in the men's and women's side. Each shower cubicle has a wooden shelf on which you can place your clothes, but the shower itself does not have a soap tray nor a spot for your shampoo. The showers and toilet doors are at chest-height and if a tall person passes by, he'll see what you may not want on show.

Behind the ablution facilities is a counter with six sinks where you wash dishes and rinse out clothes. Other than the tired condition of the facilities, there is nothing wrong with their cleanliness, and the floors and surfaces are cleaned regularly.



FUNKY TOWN The street markets (below) sell cute trinkets and because the resort is in town you can walk everywhere. The single ablution block (bottom) is inadequate during peak season.



If you are told to camp to the right of the entrance gate, you should rather ask for your money back and find somewhere else to go. There are five spacious stands, with little shade and the power outlets are often nailed to a tree with a limp tarp covering them. Judging by the scorch marks on the sockets, these coverings don't work that well in separating water from live electricity.

The advantage of having few trees is that you have grass, but the stands are uneven and they're next to a busy road near a

street bar that can get rowdy at night.

THERE'S NOT ONLY BAD NEWS: the resort is on the shore of the lovely Uembje lagoon, which is 27 km long, 8 km wide and in places up to 50 m deep. There are man-made reefs in the lagoon where you can snorkel and Palmeiras also has a diving centre where you can rent scuba gear if you don't have your own.

The main reason you'd want to camp at Palmeiras, however, is the slipway where you can launch your boat and water ski. In December, several boats play on the

Briefly | Complexo Palmeiras



Campsite 35 stands, all on sand and mostly under trees. The ground isn't 100% level, but it's nothing a brick under a wheel of your caravan can't fix.

Ablution facilities Dilapidated, but serviceable. There is no toilet paper.

Price R60 pppn plus R80 pn per site.

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

Contact 000 25 82 825 9019 (Mozambique)

palmeirasbilene@gmail.com

complexopalmeiras.blogspot.com

Nearest town The resort is in Bilene.

What does the road look like? Tar all the way.

GPS S25.28213 E33.25971

go! Drive & Camp says You come here to play with your jetski and to snorkel – just avoid the less than desirable half of an otherwise good resort.



Uembje lagoon, but it's large enough that the sailboats and motorboats don't get in one another's way and spoil the fun. The resort also has a ferry service (on request) that will take you across the lagoon to the sea if you didn't bring a own boat.

To the left of Palmeiras's restaurant, the water is exceptionally shallow, and you have to walk a long way before it gets deep. It's the perfect spot for your toddler to splash around in the water.

Despite the shortcomings, Palmeiras is still a great place to stay with friendly staff and an excellent lagoon.



“

There are man-made reefs in the lagoon where you can snorkel and Palmeiras also has a diving centre where you can rent scuba gear

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MACHUBO BEACH RESORT, MANHICA

Coast of the Cape gunard

The Machubo resort is 170 km from Komatipoort and 590 km from Pretoria. The resort is right on the beach and you can only get to it if you drive a 4x4 vehicle. The owner, Bertie Stander, discovered this piece of paradise in 2008 after his bakkie broke down in the area and he was stranded in Mozambique for five months. He lost his heart to the region, and after settling here, his wife, Lynne, and their two sons joined him.

Getting to Machubo is no easy feat, so Bertie or Lynne will rather meet you near the Illovo sugarcane factory in Maragra, about 8 km south of the town of Manhica and escort you to the resort. Machubo is remote, and the sandy road requires you to lower your car's tyre pressure to 1 bar and engage four high.

The resort's bush camp is about 100 m from the beach and behind a dune where it is sheltered from wind. There are 10 unmarked stands and a neat ablution block with two private bathrooms and kitchen facilities. A solar panel provides electricity for lights, but if you want to keep refrigerators and other electrical appliances running, you'll have to bring a portable generator. Bertie laid a electrical cable underground between the ablution building and a cage off to one side. All you have to do is hook your generator up to the plug point in the cage and you have electricity without having to deal with a generator running next to your tent.

THE MAIN BUILDING where Bertie, Lynne and their sons live, also serves as Machubo's restaurant. Here you can sit down for drinks while Bertie regails you with local legends and Lynne and the boys prepare seafood in the open-plan kitchen. Besides her role as hostess, Lynne also runs a curio stand where you can buy cozzies and souvenirs. (Talking of cozzies: Bertie is busy building a freshwater swimming pool next to the main building where guests will be able to cool down during the summer months.)

There's free WiFi, but it's slow and basically only good for WhatsApp messages – Junior won't be able to play Fortnite against his mates.

Next to the main building are five demarcated stands, each with its own private toilet, shower and sink. A reed



Briefly | Machubo Beach Resort



Campsite Five enclosed stands at the main building and 10 unmarked stands at the bush camp.

Ablution facilities Private facilities at the main building and 1 ablution block at the bush camp.

Price R125 pppn.

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

Contact 00 25 884 546 2263

(WhatsApp)

stander.bertie@gmail.com facebook.com/MachuboBeachResortMozambique

Nearest town Manhica, 8 km.

What does the road look like? Loose sand; a 4x4 vehicle is essential.

GPS S25.54998 E32.86643

go! Drive & Camp says The Machubo Beach Resort is still expanding; so it will only get better with every visit.

WATERWORLD There is an underwater reef at Machubo that hasn't been fully explored yet. Bertie will also introduce you to the *pescadores* (local fishermen) who will take you out on their dhows and show you how they have been catching fish for countless generations.





fence provides privacy and shelter from the wind, and there is a power socket if you want to connect your off-road caravan to the resort's power supply. Machubo relies on solar power and a 10 kVa generator, which is why they charge a fee of R75 pd for the electricity (guests are asked not to plug in energy guzzlers such as hair dryers and air-conditioners).

If you don't feel like camping, there is a house for 14 people, a chalet with six beds and a four-bedroom flat. A fourth house that will sleep 18 is currently under construction and should be done by June 2020. Bertie built all these structures himself with the help of local people.

The Stander family co-owns the resort with a local chief, and a percentage of the resort's income goes to the community.

IT IS, HOWEVER, the pristine beach that gets the most attention. Here you can frolic in the waves during the day and fish late into the night. Bertie has erected a shelter to ward off a chilly breeze while you fish, and a table on which you can clean your catch. Frightfully ugly, but equally delicious Cape gunards are abundant here, as well as white musselcrackers, but you may pull out 10 blue crabs for every musselcracker – not that anyone complains, because these crabs taste great too, particularly with coconut curry and chili flakes.

The Stander family also offer guided tours into Maputo to visit the fish market and other attractions (R500), and Bertie is a member of the Turtle Watch group which allows him to drive on the beach and to search for turtles – you go snorkelling at Turtle Rock near Bilene (R500).

This is a fishing resort where you can sit day after day on a remote beach without anyone bothering you.

They say

Corrie and Nicky Gouws of Nelspruit drive a 2000 Mitsubishi Pajero 3.2 DID and camp with a Campmor dome tent. Their grandchildren Michaela and Michael joined them on this trip to Mozambique together with their friends Charlotte and Barry Barnard.

"This is our tenth visit to Machubo, and Bertie and Lynne have become like family. We love the simplicity, nature and the lack of cellphone reception at Machubo. No one bothers you here because it's far from the hawkers and tourist traps. Mozambique generally feels

safe and friendly, and this is why we prefer to spend a holiday here rather than in South Africa. This is the third time that Barry and Charlotte, also from Nelspruit, have come to Machubo, and when they hear us making plans, they're ready to join us."



Beware the runners

Various cautionary tales about Mozambique's notorious Lebombo border post do the rounds – here's what we experienced.

At the Komatipoort entrance (the South African side of the border) a soldier handed us a permit. Then we parked outside the customs building (there are extra-long parking bays for vehicles towing caravans) and handed our passports over to a customs official inside the building. The official wanted to see the border letter for our tow vehicle. (If you have a child with you, they will also ask for an unabridged birth certificate.) We checked the stamps in our passports, got into our vehicle and gave the permit to another soldier as we left South Africa. The first part of the border post procedure was done and dusted in under five minutes.

At the Ressano Garcia offices (on the Mozambican side) we parked as close to customs as we could without obstructing traffic. Here, the parking is more random and your vehicle is quickly swallowed up by a crowd of hawkers. According to the South African High Commissioner's website, we were to receive

a permit here, but nobody gave us one. The website strongly discourage travellers from using the so-called runners to help them cross the border, but we wanted to know what their services entailed and chose an honest face from the crowd.

Emerson was his name, and he immediately wanted to take our passports and permits. We insisted on carrying our documentation but nonetheless thanked him for his zeal.

Before Emerson took us to the customs building, we first wanted to establish his fee. His opening offer of MT5 000 was unacceptable as it would work out to more than R1 000 (R1 was equal to 4,3 metical at the time of our visit). We made a counter offer of MT500 (R116). Emerson was appalled, but we eventually settled on MT1 000 (R230).

He took us to the building, pushed in front of a group of confused South Africans who weren't sure which queue they should join, and attracted a customs officer's attention. We

“

The Internet teems with stories about South Africans who could only get their passports back after a hefty ransom was paid

”

handed our passports to the official ourselves and checked the stamps afterwards. Now, Emerson wanted to take our vehicle papers from us to obtain third-party insurance at a shack opposite customs. We had, however, bought it in advance at an Outdoor Warehouse in Gauteng and turned down his offer.

The next step was a visit to a table immediately next to the customs counter. Here was another official who checked our third-party insurance and issued us with a blank form. Emerson took it from the official, but we insisted he give it to us to carry. Emerson reluctantly handed it over.

Back at our car, Emerson helped with the translation of the Portuguese on the form. It was nice of him, but we pointed out that there are English annotations. We declared the content of our vehicle, including occupants and electronic devices. Hawkers selling fire extinguishers and emergency triangles gathered around us and Emerson asked them to leave us alone.

Emerson then left, but a minute later he returned with a customs official. The official searched our caravan, asked some questions about our supplies, and peered under our bakkie's canopy. He handed us a stamped permit and wished us a good journey. Once again, Emerson wanted all the paperwork. We had to be firm to keep it with us. The customs official looked on with an amused expression and said something in Portuguese that had a few spectators grinning.

Emerson jogged on ahead and beckoned to us to follow him in our vehicle. At the border's last gate, a soldier took the

stamped permit. Emerson waited a few steps further along, in the middle of the road, waiting for his payment.

I handed over the MT1 000 as agreed upon, but he suddenly wanted MT4 000. The reason, he said, was because he had to bribe a customs official to conduct only a superficial inspection of our caravan and that the official's price was MT3 000. But we insisted that he stick to our original agreement... and this is when things got nasty. He threatened us with physical violence and swore that he would get his customs connections to give us a hard time.

We left under a barrage of insults.

What did we learn from this incident? You definitely don't need a runner to get through the border, although they can speed up the border procedure by a few minutes. We strongly advise you to not use the services of such a person – and never hand any documentation to anyone other than a customs official. The Internet teems with stories about South Africans who could only get their passports back after a hefty ransom was paid to a runner. So be warned.

If you lose your passport in Mozambique – no matter how – you need to report it to the nearest police station and make your way to the South African High Commissioner in Maputo to get an emergency travel certificate: the address is 41 Avenida Eduardo Mondlane (on the corner of Avenida Eduardo Mondlane and Avenida Julius Nyerere). Or call them on 00 25 82 124 3000 (after hours 00 25 884 304 4600).



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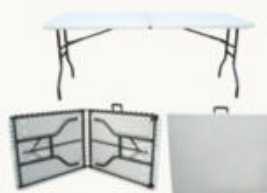
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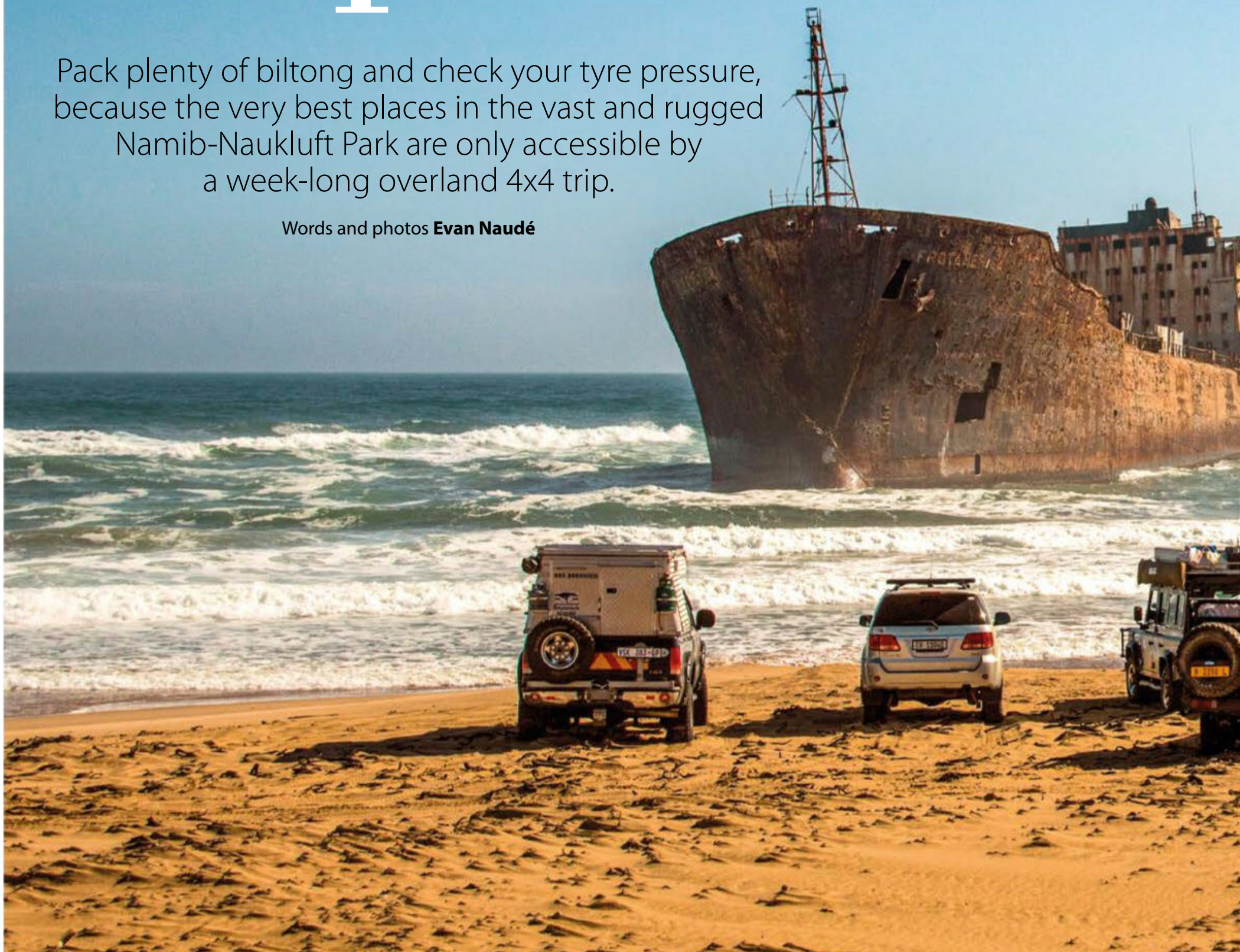
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A journey among shipwrecks

Pack plenty of biltong and check your tyre pressure, because the very best places in the vast and rugged Namib-Naukluft Park are only accessible by a week-long overland 4x4 trip.

Words and photos **Evan Naudé**



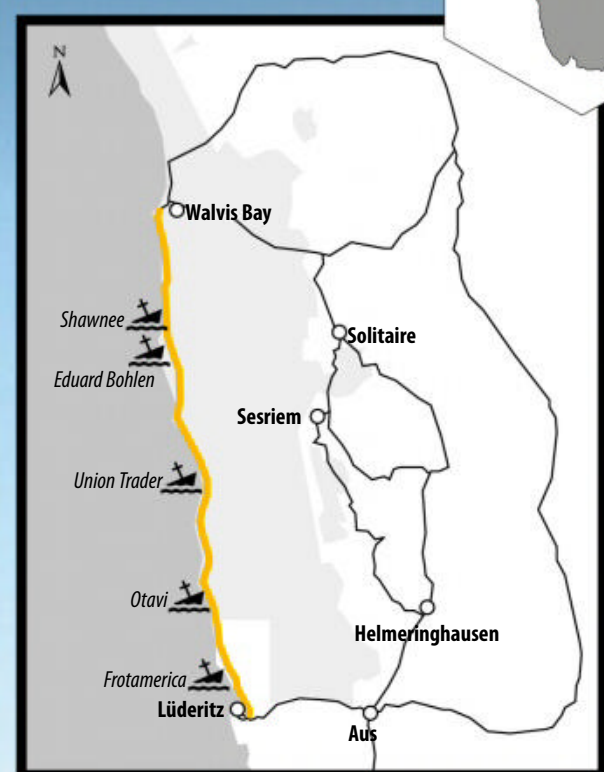
The fate of nearly all of Namibia's coastline changed one day in 1908. That was the day railway worker Zacharias Lewala noticed a particularly shiny stone in the sand near Lüderitz. He had found a diamond and, in an instant, changed the course of history for this part of the world.

For much of the 20th century, the coastline from the Orange River mouth to a few kilometres south of Walvis Bay was declared a restricted area, known as the Sperrgebiet. As mining operations scaled down in the late 1970s a large swathe of the Sperrgebiet (known as Diamond Area 2) was incorporated into what became the largest game park in Africa, the Namib-Naukluft Park. At nearly 50 000 km², the park is bigger

than Switzerland, but still very little of this stunning landscape is accessible to the public. Mostly, day trips to Sossusvlei and Sandwich Harbour or scenic flights over the area are your only options.

That is unless you embark on a six-day overland expedition from Lüderitz to Walvis Bay. For this, you'll need a 4x4 vehicle, a guide with a concession permit, a sense of adventure and a fair amount of grit. We joined Route Africa Expeditions in search of shipwrecks, seal colonies, gigantic dunes and solitude in one of the continent's greatest wildernesses.

THE SUN HAS just risen, and the sky is a clear blue yet the air still holds a chill as the tour group departs from Lüderitz early





INTO THE DESERT The convoy makes its last preparations (top left) before leaving Lüderitz and heading into the Namib desert. We pass a dilapidated mine building (above and below) before tour guide Simon Wearne (insert) gives a briefing on the techniques of dune driving.

on a Sunday morning. Our tour leader, Simon Wearne, leads us to the deserted mining town of Kolmanskop where we sign a register and the drivers are breathalised. The reason for this is that the first 70km or so of our route takes us through the northernmost section of the last remaining restricted mining zone that runs from here down to the Orange River mouth.

Before long we leave in convoy across the B4 tar road and continue past the Lüderitz airstrip before arriving at the remains of some or other building dating from bygone mining days. Sand fills the dilapidated building and its walls are crumbling under the weight of a tower of rusted metal struts, chains, and colossal gears and pulleys. It is the first sign that mankind's impact on this wild area is fleeting.

We continue on to Agate beach where we stop to deflate tyres for the sand driving ahead of us. Before we set off again Simon gives the group a quick briefing on the route and routine for the trip and then explains a few very important rules for sand driving. "Rule number one," he says while holding up

a finger, "is stay in my tracks. Rule number two... stay in my tracks. And rule number three?" Simon holds up three fingers. "Stay in my tracks! If you all do that, it will prevent a lot of headaches." The group nods in unison.

With Lüderitz disappearing in our rearview mirrors, we head for the dunes.

THE FURTHER NORTH we progress, the higher the dunes get. It is a gradual learning experience which gives the drivers a chance to get used to the terrain. Momentum is a subtle and tricky skill to master in the sand. Sometimes it carries your vehicle through a loose section while other times too much momentum might land you in trouble. We soon meet the first slipfaces: the leeward sides of dunes where the loose slope is more than 30°. Here you need to let the vehicle's engine do the braking by selecting a very low gear. Using the brake pedal might drag the vehicle sideways, which is a recipe for disaster. Luckily the slipfaces start small and by mid-afternoon we are descending dune faces in excess of 30 m high.





“

Namibia's coast is littered with hundreds of shipwrecks and the largest remaining ones can be found along our route

”

Roughly 70 km north of Lüderitz a large vessel appears in the ocean spray on a beach in front of us. It is the wreck of the Frotamerica, a cargo ship underway to be scrapped in India, that stranded here in 2013. While the Namib desert is one of the most unforgiving wildernesses on earth, it is equaled by the ferocity of the ocean waters along its coastline. Namibia's coast is littered with hundreds of shipwrecks and the largest remaining ones can be found along our route.

In the late afternoon, we have more dunes to navigate before we reach our camp for the evening. The fading light bathes the dunes around us in shades of gold, orange and pink as we set up camp near Hottentot



OVER THE EDGE The Namib is filled with ominously steep dune faces, nicknamed “slipfaces”, which grow in size the deeper you travel into the desert. The technique here is to idle down slowly in a low gear and use engine braking.



Bay. Our campsites on this expedition are all “wild”, meaning there are no facilities. The Route Africa team come prepared, however, and set up a kitchen, wind shield, shower and toilet each evening. A strict leave-no-trace policy means we take all our rubbish along so as not to pollute the environment.

That evening, as the Milky Way spans across the night sky, you grasp the privilege of being in such a serenely special place.

AFTER BREAKFAST THE next morning we set off through an undulating dune belt. The drivers are markedly more sand savvy now and we manage a good pace northward. Where the route allows it, Simon leads

us down onto the beach where the firmer sand helps us progress even swifter. These sections on the beach have their own set of potential dangers from tyre-sucking sand near the water to impassable rocky outcrops and sharp bedrock. Most dangerous of all is the tide. Get your timing on the beach wrong and you might find yourself trapped between a rising tide on one side and dunes too steep to cross on the other.

We drive by a place near Saddle Hill South labeled on the map as a “vehicle graveyard”. Here you’ll find the rusted remains of mining machinery dumped after mining ceased in the area in the late 1960s.

When we pass Saddle Hill North the

environment becomes more rocky, revealing another face of the Namib. In places, we drive past dark dolerite ridges that run up and over the mountains. It is a barren yet beautiful landscape.

In the afternoon we stop at Spencer Bay. About 800 m from Mercury Island, previously the site of guano mining operations. Today the island is a protected area and considered one of the most important seabird breeding sites in Namibia. Unfortunately, we cannot see any of the thousands of penguins, gannets and cormorants from our position on the beach, but Spencer Bay has another drawcard for those of us who are land-bound.

EVER NORTHWARD As the expedition heads north, the route follows the coastline (top right) where possible. Headlands, rocky outcrops and the high tide however intermittently forces the convoy inland and into tricky dune fields.





The Otavi was a steam tug with a cargo of guano that wrecked in 1945 in a small sheltered bay just south of Spencer Bay. The wreck's location is arguably the most spectacular of all the shipwrecks along the Namibian coastline. The towering cliffs that surround the beach like an amphitheater are often shrouded in an ominous blanket of mist. The disintegrating Otavi, arranged on the sand like a macabre ornament, is guarded by a colony of seals in their thousands. They fill the beach on either side of the ship, their collective mass so dark in colour that it almost looks as if the Otavi is leaking oil all over the sand.



We pitch camp near Easter Point, but tonight it feels like only a name on a map. In all this sandy serenity we might as well be on another planet.

THE NEXT MORNING we wake up in a thick fog that stays with us for most of the day. Now and again we seem to find a gap in the greyness and the sun appears, only for the fog to engulf our convoy again. It provides an eerie feel and prevents us from seeing beyond our immediate surroundings. "This area is actually beautiful," Simon assures us, "but today you'll have to use your imagination."

Before lunch, we stop at the site of the United Trader, only to find that there isn't much of a wreck left. This transport ship ran aground here in 1974 with a cargo of nearly 700 tons of explosives. The story goes that rather than try to salvage the load, the ship's owners instead detonated the explosives where the ship lay. Today you'll only find bits of mangled metal and some iron chains near the blast site, though



“

When darkness falls, Mother Nature delivers another spectacle as bioluminescent plankton emit blue flashes

”

scraps of metal from the ship have been found up to 5 km away.

We descend to the beach for a short sprint to one of the expedition's toughest obstacles: The Devil's Workshop. This particularly tangled dune belt is one big pile of steep inclines, slipfaces and tight twists and turns. The furrowed sandscape is messier than the blankets in your dog's bed. And if that's not enough, the mist makes visibility very poor.

Nevertheless, we push through in good time due to fine teamwork. Like the head of a snake, Simon's vehicle sniffs out a suitable route at the front which the rest of the convoy follows. Soon the radio chatter reduces to clear instructions such as "Follow me", "Hold on", "Sharp turn ahead" or "Slipface coming up" as each driver relays warnings to those following.

Nearly three hours and several recoveries later, we finally escape the Devil's Workshop and use the beach again to make up some time to reach our campsite near Easter Point before sunset. Here, when darkness falls, Mother Nature delivers another spectacle as

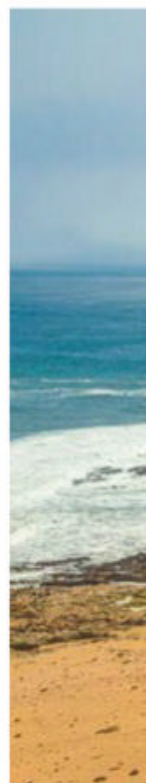
bioluminescent plankton emit blue flashes in the crashing waves.

AFTER SUNRISE, THE convoy heads north once more on a cold and grey beach. Soon the incoming tide forces us to turn back into the dunes and we set a course for Sylvia Hill. On the way, we pass a number of stone circles in the sand thought to have been built by early nomads as temporary residences or perhaps even hunting blinds.

We stop at Sylvia Hill and hike up the rocky outcrop. We smell them long before we see them: Thousands of seals on the rocks, beach and dunes. They are a noisy bunch, barking and grunting at one another as they jostle for position in the sunshine. The barren Namibian coastline serves as a relatively safe breeding ground for the Cape Fur Seal and some estimates put their numbers at over a million strong.

For the rest of the day we navigate the dunes, but it's not as monotonous as it sounds since there are many different types of dunes to be found in the Namib. For the better part of the day we travel through linear dunes, sometimes nicknamed "dune streets". Like giant corrugations across the landscape, they form a series of ridges with flat valleys in between. This allows for a less stressful driving experience and gives you a chance to appreciate the immensity of the landscape, now a creamy colour like that of milky tea.

Simon picks a campsite with a picturesque backdrop of gentle sand dunes. At dusk the sun draws long shadows over the slopes and when it finally disappears



below the horizon we're once more enveloped in a dense fog.

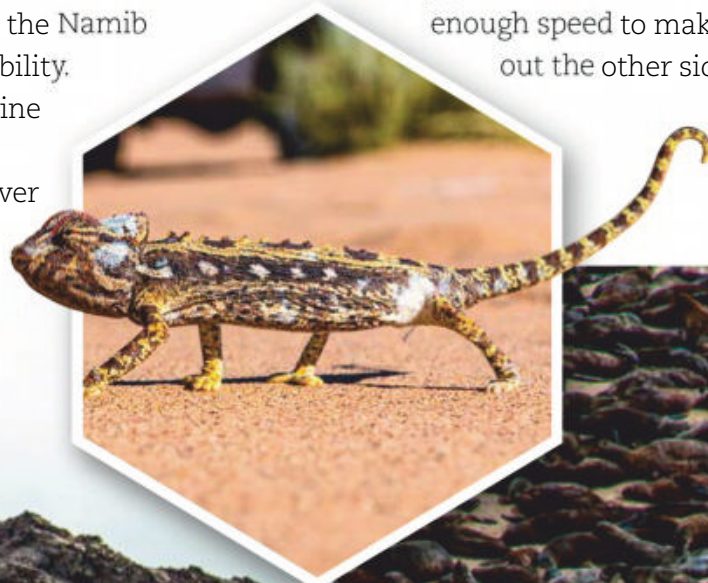
IN THE MORNING THE campsite is covered in dog-like paw prints between each of the tents and the camp kitchen. Then we spot the culprit on a dune: a black-backed jackal. These persevering canines survive in surprisingly large numbers along the Namib coast because of high food availability. Their diet mainly consists of marine birds and seal pups, though they have no shame in stealing whatever

they can from a passing group of campers.

By mid-morning our route takes us past a few deep sand bowls, nicknamed "rollercoasters" for the stomach-churning feeling of driving through them. These steep bowls have rounded edges on either side as well as a smooth bottom, allowing you to safely put foot in order to gain enough speed to make it out the other side.

In some places our vehicles clock over 100 km/h on the down slope. In the pocket at the bottom, the G-force pushes you down into your seat and when you hit the uphill all you see in front of you is blue sky.

We follow the coastline past the fishing camp at Meob Bay and on to a beach full of sun-bleached bones sticking out of the sand. "This is a whale graveyard of sorts," explains Simon. The area was frequented by whalers back in the day and their bad habit of simply dumping carcasses overboard after harvesting resulted in



LIFE IN THE NAMIB The wreck of the Otavi (main photo) and the remnants of mining vehicles near Saddle Hill South (left) and even the limitations of modern vehicles (top left) are reminders of how difficult it is for humans to survive in the Namib. Spectacular coastline views (middle, top and bottom), vast seal colonies (above) and tiny critters such as the Namaqua chameleon show how vibrant the desert can be.



thousands of bones scattered on the beach.

By lunchtime, we reach the most famous shipwreck in all of Namibia, the Eduard Bohlen. This 94 m cargo ship was on its way to Table Bay, but a thick fog (the kind we have become very familiar with) made sure it never reached its destination.

In the hundred years since the wreck, the desert has done an outstanding job in swallowing it up and creating a long sand dune off the Bohlen's bow. What makes the scene more astonishing is the fact that today the ship lies more than 400 m from the watermark as the desert has steadily been creeping out to sea. "It's an example of a dynamic coastline," explains Simon.

North of Conception Bay we pass the wreck of the Shawnee where it lies in the waves and after traversing the day's final set of dunes we arrive at our campsite at Sandwich Harbour.

SANDWICH HARBOUR IS considered to be one of Namibia's most important coastal



A DYNAMIC PLACE Over the final two days there is yet more to see as the convoy passes the wrecks of the Shawnee (main photo) and Eduard Bohlen (insert), tackle more massive dunes (above), visit the Sandwich Harbour museum (top right) and camp in stunning landscapes (top left, opposite top right and insert).

wetlands. Of all the different faces of the Namib desert, this is one of the most beautiful. From atop high dunes on the northern side of the bay you can see how a long sandy peninsula holds the Atlantic back, creating a safe haven for thousands of greater and lesser flamingos, pelicans, Damara terns, swifts and chestnut-banded plovers. Larger animals are attracted to the area too and it's not uncommon to spot black-backed jackals, brown hyenas and even the odd oryx in the lush greenery of the wetlands.

Simon picks a camp spot in one of the many sheltered bays on the inner edge of the bay. It is a privilege to set up our last campsite in this place.

The next morning is a straight sprint for Walvis Bay where we bid farewell to the Namib. On the way, however, we weave our way through the iconic dunes we've come to know and love over the past week. Come on, what do you say? One more rollercoaster before we go...

“ North of Conception Bay we pass the wreck of the Shawnee where it lies in the waves ”



WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

Can I do this route on my own? No, this route runs through a concession area only accessible by a permit on a guided 4x4 tour such as this one.

How long? The Skeleton Coast Shipwreck Expedition is a six-day trip starting in Lüderitz and ending in Walvis Bay.

What should I drive? You can only do this route in a 4x4 with good ground clearance, low range and at least a rear differential locker. Make sure your vehicle is fitted with front and rear recovery points.

How much fuel do I need? Plan for a minimum of 700 km in 4x4 conditions. At least 220 ℓ for diesel vehicles and 250 ℓ for petrol vehicles is recommended.

Gear to pack? Bring a tyre gauge, a compressor, a tyre puncture repair kit, recovery gear and basic spares. Your guide might ask you to bring extra wood and water for the communal camp kitchen at night.

Can I tow? No trailers are allowed.

Cost R12 800 per person (at time of going to print).

What is included? Breakfast and dinner, park fees and permit, a warm camp shower, ablution facilities and two-way radios. You bring your own camping gear, drinking water and snacks.

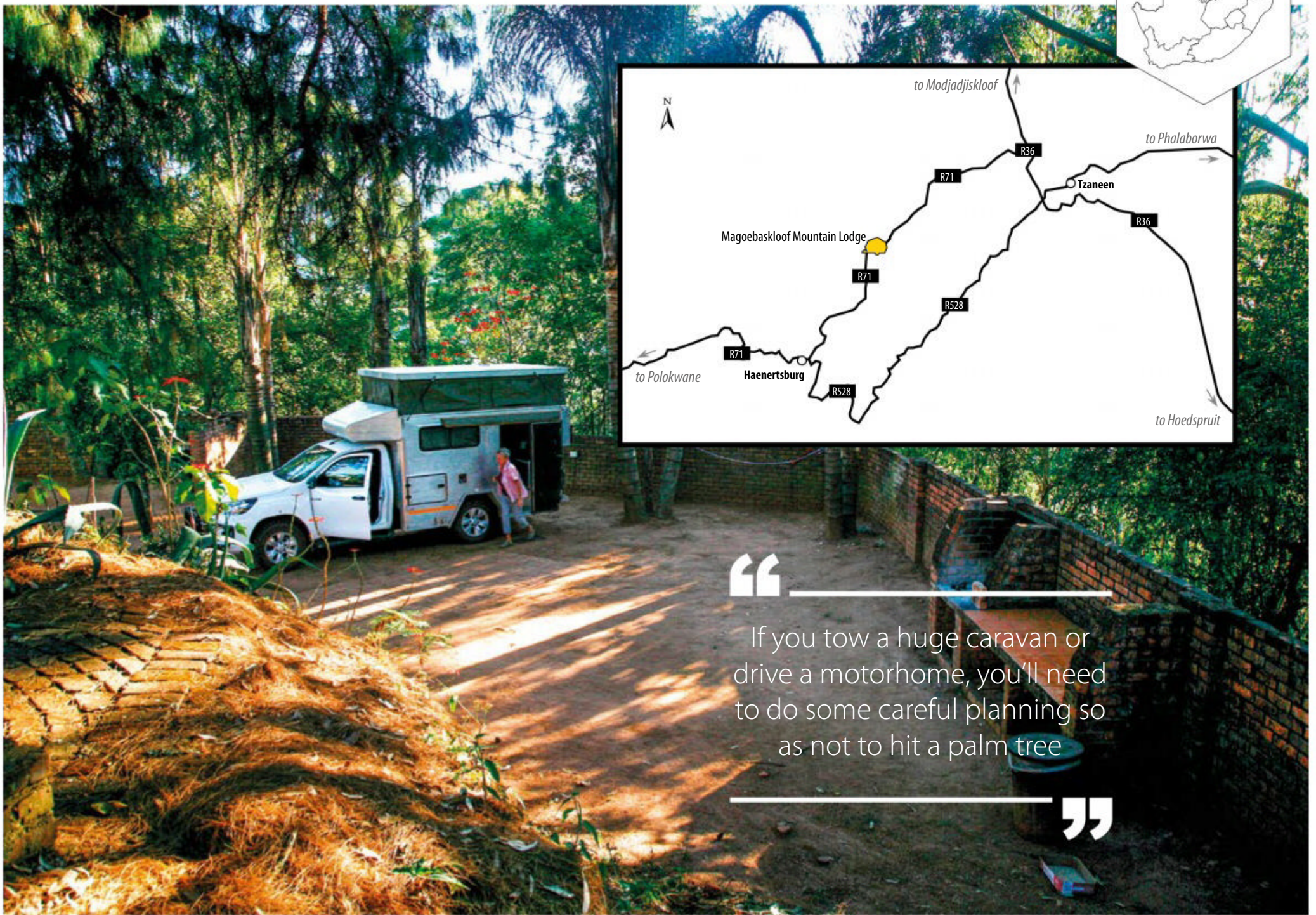
Contact

📧 simon@routeafricaexpeditions.com 📞

Land of the. silver mist

The region around the Magoebaskloof Mountain Lodge is rich in history, and when you later go through the photos you've taken here, it appears as if you holidayed somewhere in Europe.

Words and photos **Cyril Klopper**



“ If you tow a huge caravan or drive a motorhome, you’ll need to do some careful planning so as not to hit a palm tree ”

The Magoebaskloof is a spectacular series of gorges on the northeastern tip of the Drakensberg. This region in Limpopo was named after chief Mamphoku Makgoba who was beheaded 124 years ago by Swazi warriors and, according to some German tourists, the region looks exactly like the Black Forest between the Rhine River and the Feldberg in the Baden-Württemberg state. That is, of course, if you ignore the banana trees...

At the top of the Magoebaskloof Pass, between Tzaneen and Haenertsburg, lies the Magoebaskloof Mountain Lodge, which is practically surrounded by the broad tar road that winds over mountains and gorges. Motorists and motorcyclists like to speed their way through the twisties, and if you’re coming up from Pretoria, you’ll have to hustle to get your caravan across the oncoming traffic lane before you can stop in front of the lodge’s entrance gate.

A gate guard will direct you to a parking spot next to reception. After completing all the paperwork, you’ll get a key for your own bathroom. Right next to the reception building is a shop where you can buy items such as bread, milk, wood and sweets – for meat, vegetables and other groceries you’ll need to drive to Tzaneen.

You tow your caravan on a narrow brick path between a number of rondavels. If you tow a huge caravan or drive a motorhome, you’ll need to do some careful planning so as not to hit a palm tree or damage a rondavel’s thatched roof. You’re in the clear once you see the campsite’s swimming pool.

HERE YOU’LL FIND three spacious stands, each with a paved, level surface. Next to it is a patch of clean, swept earth where you can pitch a tent.

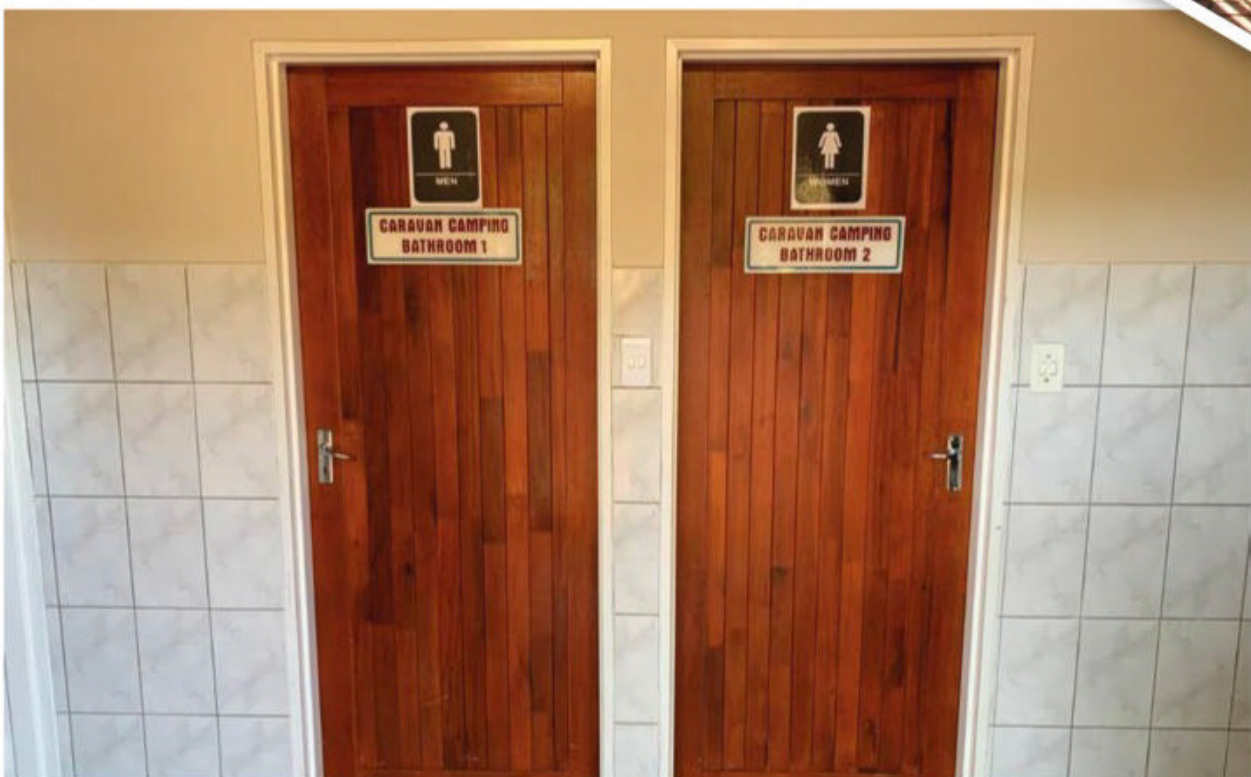
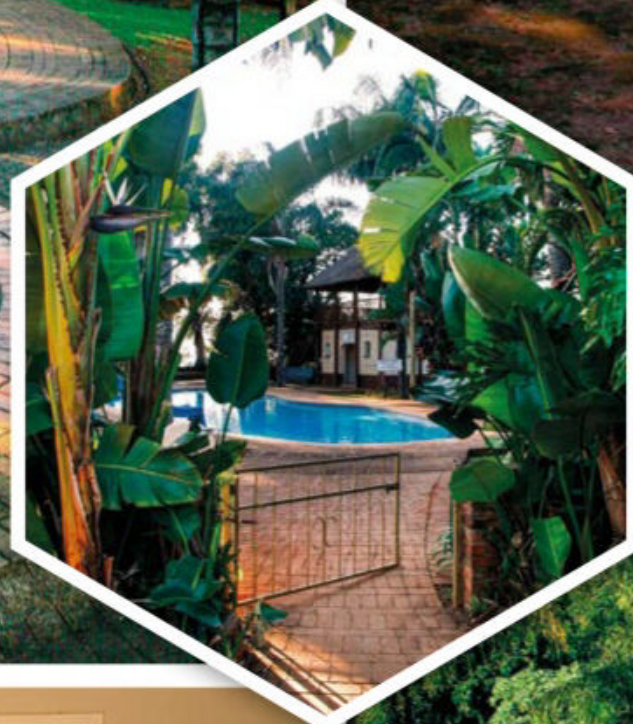
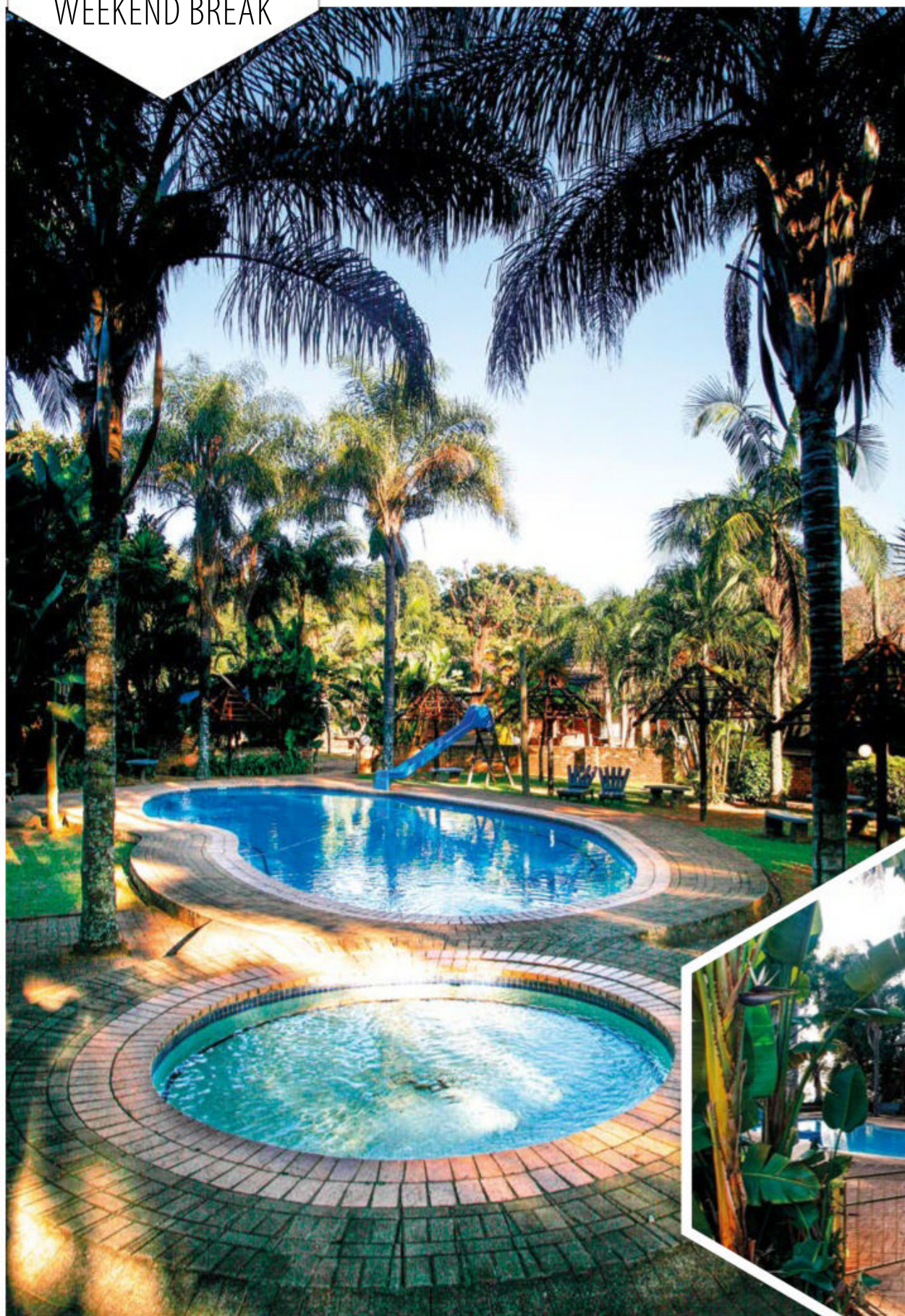
Each of the stands have a built-up brick braai with a tiled work surface next to it.

There is also a weather-proof power socket (the three-point type) plus a tap and a rubbish bin. Remember to bring your own braai grid and a stand to raise it above the coals. There are no lights at the stands and the closest sink is at the ablution block.

Right next to the stands are two unheated swimming pools – a small one for toddlers and a larger one with a slide. Beyond the paving are palm trees, lawns with picnic tables and sunbeds. The pool area is surrounded by a low brick wall with gates that can be locked so your little rascal can’t go swimming without supervision.

Next to the pools is a communal braai area with two fireplaces, a brick bench, a sink and a worktop.

THE ABLUTION FACILITIES are next to the pools, in a double-storey lapa. The lower half has a single toilet and the door is lockable from the inside. Anyone





“ Right next to the stands are two unheated swimming pools – a small one for toddlers and a larger one with a slide ”

Briefly | Magoebaskloof Mountain Lodge



Campsite 3 stands near the pool and 2 stands farther away.

Ablution facilities 1 building with 2 private bathrooms.

Price R350 pn per site for 4 people (R445 in peak season); then R25 pp extra (maximum 6 people).

Contact 015 305 7906 info@magoebaskloofmountainlodge.co.za
magoebaskloofmountainlodge.co.za

Arrival and departure times 12:00 and 10:00.

What does the road look like? Tar all the way.

GPS S23.86404 E30.00692

go! Drive & Camp says It's a stunning destination, but few stands.

GREENLAND There aren't many stands but this may be a good thing if you prefer to camp away from a maddening crowd. The bathrooms are clean and perfect for family use. If it's too cold to swim – which is rarely the case – you can head on over to the Jacuzzis to unwind.



who is swimming or braaiing here may use it, even the guests staying in the rondavels. Next to this toilet are two private bathrooms, each with a bathtub, basin, soap dispenser, mirrors, shower, toilet and a bench. The walls are tiled from floor to ceiling and are kept spotless and obsessively neat. The shower is roomy with a step on which to put your soap and shampoo. The shower head is adjustable, and the shower curtain hangs far enough from your body that it doesn't cling to your legs.

The key you received at reception unlocks one of these two private bathrooms. If there are campers on all three stands, the left-hand bathroom becomes the mensroom and the right-hand side is for women. If there are only one or two groups, each group gets its own private bathroom.



WEEKEND BREAK



MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME You have a choice between a buffet dinner or à la carte. Next to the dining room is a bar with a pool table and a big-screen TV. If you prefer to cook your own food there are plenty of braais dotted around the resort.



The top floor of the lapa is under a roof but open on all sides with tables and chairs. From here you can see the whole of Magoebaskloof and watch motorists imagining themselves taking part in the Monaco Grand Prix – don't worry, it quietens down at night.

FROM THE RESTAURANT you also have an outstanding view of the surrounding forests and plantations. On cold nights, a fireplace crackles, and when the mercury starts to rise, fans stir the humid air. Next to the restaurant is a fully licensed bar with a pool table and a large-screen TV where you can watch sports all day long.

Below, at the foot of the restaurant, is a giant chess set next to a conference hall. There are also two Jacuzzis on a wooden deck with forest views, a putt-putt course and a trampoline. A little further along, among a group of rondavels, you'll find a jungle gym and a seesaw.

If the Magoebaskloof Mountain Lodge still offers too little to entertain you, visit the nearby Debenge Waterfall, Agatha Crocodile Farm and Modjadji Cycad Forest. And the Kruger National Park, of course.



Makgoba's woes

Mamphoku Makgoba was the chief of the BaTlou who opposed the efforts of the boer Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (ZAR) to relocate them and convert the gorges into a buffer zone between white farmers and black tribes.

Commandant-general Piet Joubert was tasked by the ZAR in 1895 to drive Makgoba out. He led about 800 boer commandos and an impi of more than a thousand Swazi warriors to the valley where Chief Makgoba hid with 500 of his Tlou warriors – and where the Magoebaskloof Mountain Lodge stands today.

A battle erupted, Makgoba was defeated and beheaded by the Swazi, and his head was brought to Joubert as evidence. The gruesome trophy was on display for a long time and the skull was eventually lost – presumably stolen.

A bust of chief Mamphoku Makgoba (pictured here) was unveiled at the Magoebaskloof Hotel

on 3 September 1999 as part of a marketing campaign, but a few months later, it too was stolen. The bust was later found at a nearby road-side stall when a hawker tried to sell it.

Makgoba's bust was unveiled for a second time at the Magoebaskloof Hotel on 4 September 2004, and this time the ceremony was attended by one of Makgoba's descendants, chief Mokopa Makgoba. The bust is still here today.

An official bust of Makgoba was commissioned in 2004 by Limpopo's Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, but this sculpture was never unveiled due to a dispute among Makgoba's descendants and it is crated up in a state warehouse somewhere.

A few years thereafter, a skull in Pretoria's National Cultural History Museum was discovered that is believed to be Makgoba's. Scientists were asked in 2011 to examine the skull and determine whether it is the real deal, but so far it hasn't been confirmed due to reticent descendants.



SOURCE TIMES LIVE (2011) AND CONSTRUCTING A COLLECTIVE MEMORY (2014) BY DR. MAHUNELE THOTSE.



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Ditch the N1

Planning to travel from Gauteng to Cape Town? Set aside a few days and take the lovely back roads through the Great Karoo.



Words and photos **Cyril Kloppe**

South Africans aren't afraid to drive long distances. Ask the average Brit to quickly drive from London to Edinburgh – a distance of 650 km – and his eyes will pop out of his head. Johannesburg and Cape Town are 1 400 km apart, but many South Africans drive this distance along the N1 in one day. The back road through the Great Karoo, however, is 1 700 km long – equal to London to Rome – and you cannot complete it in a jiffy.

The first day requires getting out of Gauteng. Try and avoid Sanral's toll booths by taking the Vereeniging road through Meyerton rather than the highways. And

yes, Sasolburg isn't South Africa's prettiest town, but there is something striking about the towering refinery that wafts its white breath over the town.

See several miniature Eiffel Towers on porches and in gardens in Parys, Free State. From here you take the R59 regional road to outside Bothaville where it becomes the R504. At Leeudoringstad, which was all but destroyed in 1932 when a train carrying 330 t of dynamite exploded, you turn left towards Makwassie and then join the N12 highway, only for a short while to Bloemhof.

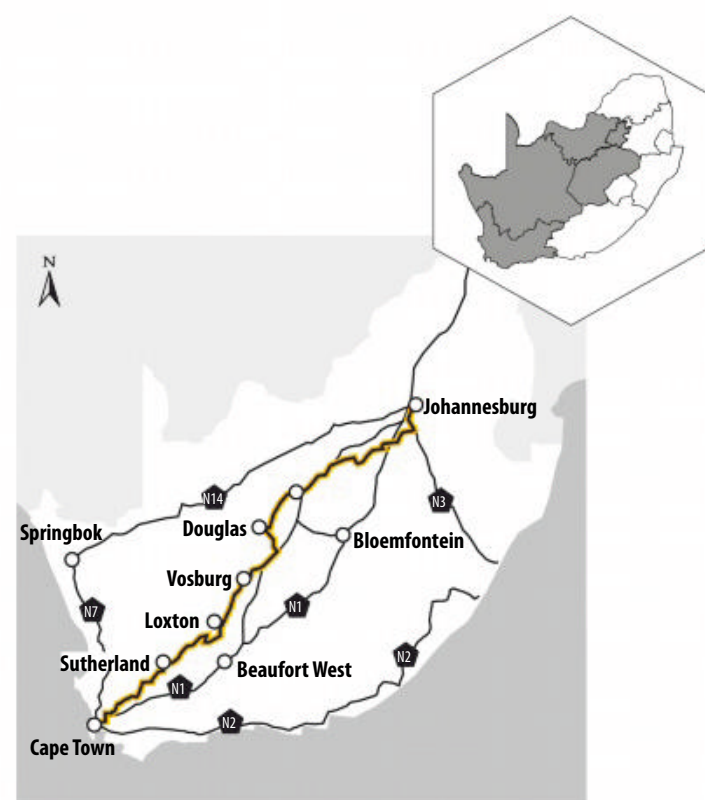
Take the road opposite Bloemhof's Excell petrol station next to the N1 and cross the

Vaal River. Follow this road for 2 km past a number of center-pivot irrigated fields until you get to the first turnoff to the right (S27.67338 E25.59025) and then follow the flow of the Vaal River to Christiana. It's a decent gravel road, even though it's slightly corrugated. At Christiana, you again take the N12 to Warrenton.

When you get to Warrenton, turn off the N12 onto Buite Street (S28.10532 E24.86515), a severely damaged road with potholes within potholes. Fortunately, today's destination isn't far away: the Transka Holiday Resort with its large campsite, chalets and a swimming pool.



BIG SKY COUNTRY What is the Karoo without wide open spaces, tall church spires and lonely railroad tracks? The back road from Gauteng to the Cape may be profoundly quiet, but there are no speed traps nor any toll roads.



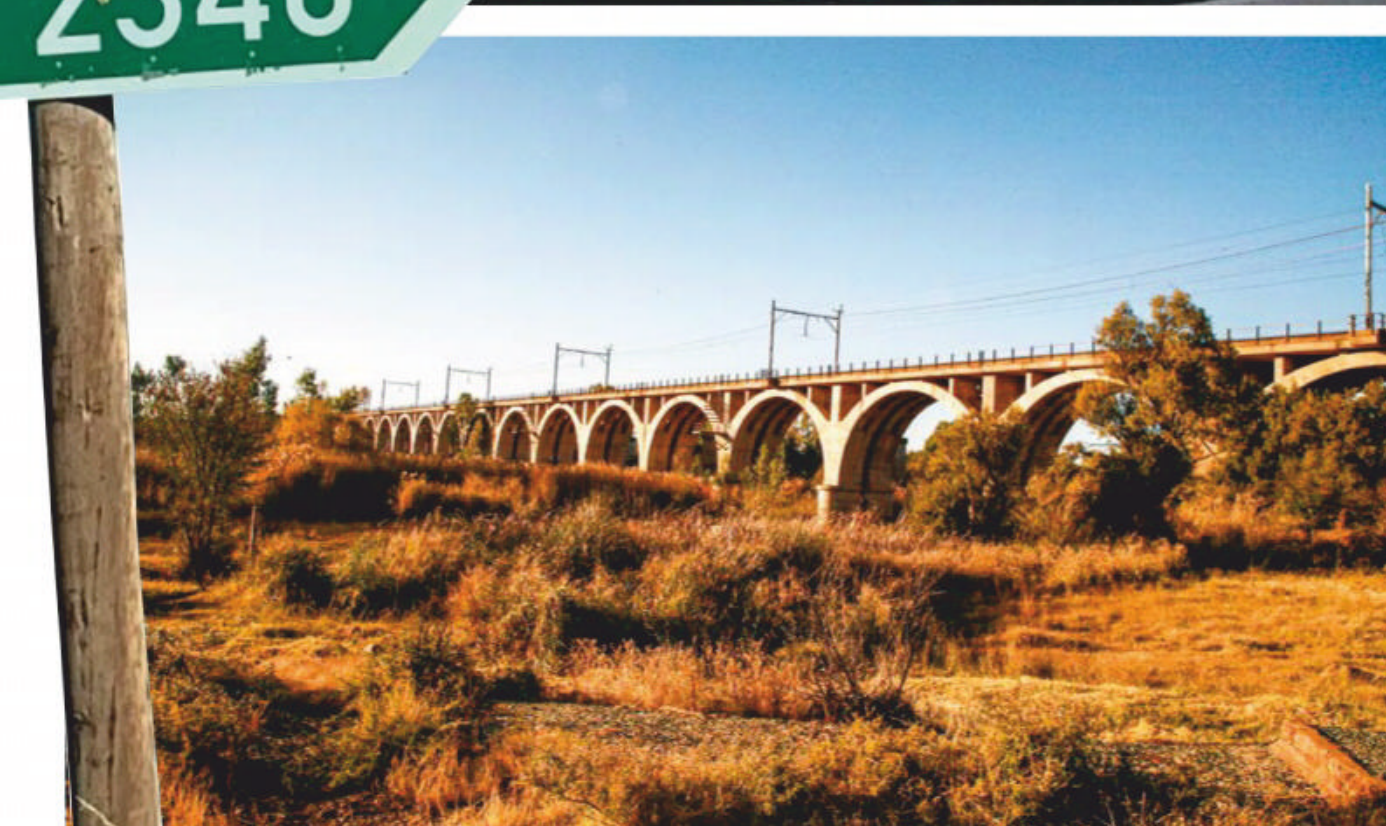
THE SECOND DAY of your trip has more gravel roads, we promise. Drive through Warrenton, across the Vaal River, then immediately turn left onto a dirt road that will deliver you to the R370. It's a lovely road along the Harts River, past the Spitskop Dam to the Schmidtsdrift farm community.

Here you connect briefly to the N8 highway (for only 5 km) to get back to the R370 and then head south to Douglas. From Douglas you follow the R357 (the Prieska road), but turn left at Markdrif after 15 km (S29.16733 E23.68927) onto a dirt road that you follow for 100 km southward to Strydenburg, which got this name because the founding fathers couldn't decide where the town should be built.

At the end of the town, near a Total garage, turn right (S29.94603 E23.67060) onto a dirt road, and turn left after 2,5 km (S29.93536 E23.64629) toward Vosburg. Dry pans spread out all around you and every now and then you have to brake for sheep that dart nervously over the road. In Vosburg, stop at Ricks Karoo shop to pick up some chops before joining the R384 regional road, and turn left after 3 km onto another gravel road. This farm road leads to Pampoenpoort, a lonely settlement away from the main routes. Check in at Pampoenpoort's abandoned train station before travelling further south to Loxton, today's destination.

The Rooi Granaat in Jooste Street, across the Dutch Reformed Church, makes delicious vetkoek with figs, pomegranates and cheese (R35) – perfect for tomorrow's padkos. There is also a display of Deon Meyer's novels as the writer had until recently a home in Loxton. Deon apparently liked to sit and write in a corner of the Rooi Granaat next to the fireplace.

Haul out Vosburg's mutton chops and



TRAIL GUIDE



TOWN PROUD Loxton is a lovely town that received a big dose of eccentricity. And it's a good thing, too, because the artists and writers who live here help to keep it alive.

light a braai fire next to your off-road caravan in the Pear Tree campsite on the corner of Schalkwyk and Beaufort streets. If it's too cold to camp, you could always stay in one of the Rooi Granaat's guest rooms.

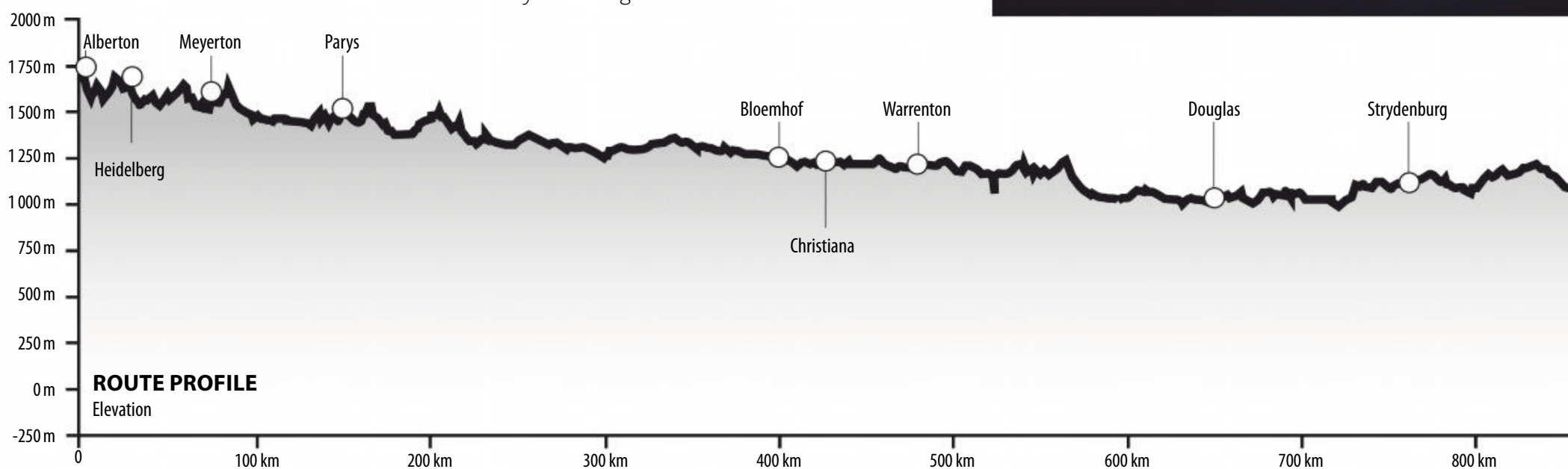
THE NEXT MORNING, check out the Old Truck Museum in Magrieta Prinsloo Street. They've got several military trucks dating from the Second World War – from Chevrolet desert patrol lorries to an M3 half-track personnel carrier.

But your people in the Cape are waiting for you and it's time to continue south on the R381 through a riverine rabbit conservation. Farmers here adapted their farming methods to preserve the natural habitat of the threatened riverine rabbit. Watch out for these bunnies as you drive in the dry bed of the Slangfontein River. Halfway through the conservation area,



turn right (S31.68375 E22.35808) and follow a twin-track road to the R356. Drive through Fraserburg with its historic architecture. Check out the corbelled houses built by trekboers, Cape Dutch gables, Victorian corrugated iron roofs, Art Deco shops and a hexagonal bell tower called the pepper pot.

The next town on your route is Sutherland with its famous observatory. Then you drive a section of the well-known R356 gravel road between Ceres and Calvinia, the longest uninterrupted gravel road in South Africa, before a tar road leads you through the Ceres fruit orchards.





Stay here
The Transka Holiday Resort, Buite Street, Warrenton. ☎053 497 3115
GPS S28.09659 E24.87367
Pear Tree campsite, c/o Schalkwyk and Beaufort streets, Loxton. ☎083 411 1043
GPS S31.47822 E22.35181
Die Rooi Granaat, 20 Jooste Street, Loxton. ☎082 805 2982
GPS S31.47853 E22.35304



You entered the Western Cape 150 km back when you crossed the Tankwa River halfway between Sutherland and Ceres, but it is only when you stop at the top of the Bainskloof Pass and see the Boland vineyards below you – with Table Mountain on the horizon – that you *know* you're in the Cape. Welcome.



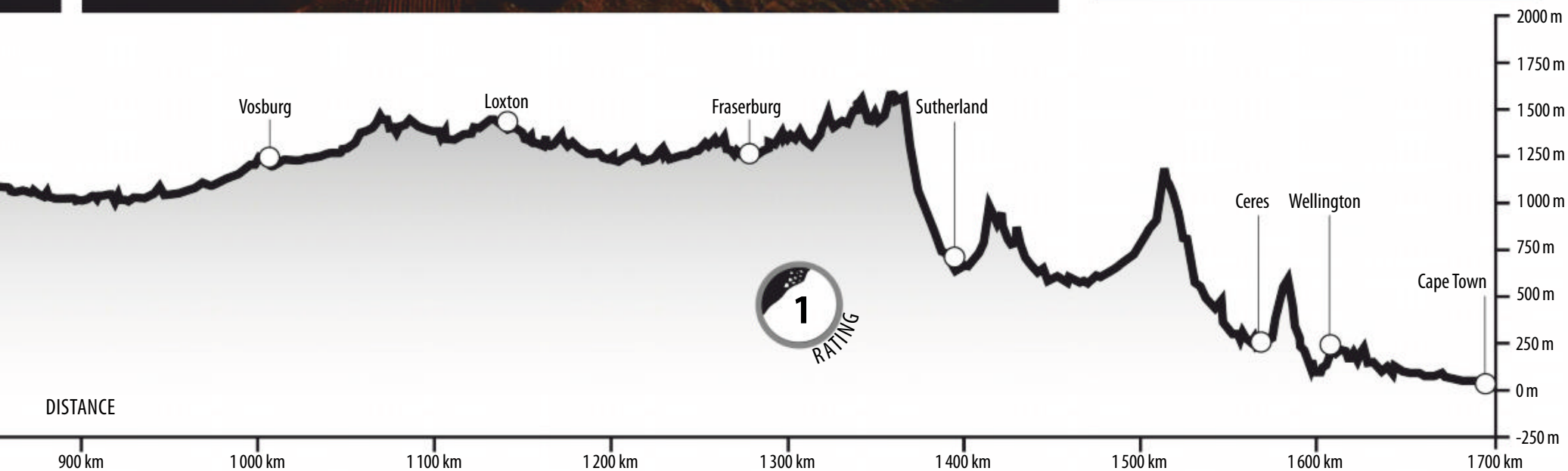
What you need to know



Maximum number of vehicles None. It's a public road.
Do I get a map? No.
Will I scratch my vehicle? No.
Should I take a compressor? No, unless you need to repair a tyre.
Can we braai next to the road? It's going to look weird, but yes, why not?
Can I turn around halfway? Of course.
Is there cellphone signal? Yes.

AROUND THE ROUTE

Best time to go? All year.
Can I take my family along? Yes, definitely.
How long does it take? Three days.
Are there ablution facilities? Yes, in the towns.
Directions From Johannesburg, you drive along the back roads through Parys, Bloemhof, Warrenton, Douglas, Strydenburg, Vosburg, Loxton, Sutherland and Ceres to the Cape.
Cost? Your tax money pays for it.





Best of both

Being a member of a 4x4 club means your camping trips involve an off-road trail, and that's exactly what **Llewellyn Pieterse** from Parow North had planned in the Cederberg.

“We are members of the Western Cape Off-road Camping Club and we often go camping in a group. For a recent trip, my wife La Tanya and I hitched our Conqueror Companion to our Toyota Prado and headed to Marcuskraal 4x4 Chalet and Camp Site.

Our adult sons Jason and Kyle, and daughter Stephanie with her boyfriend Jonty joined us later. Also along for the fun were friends Roland and Marlow Straub and their three boys: Jared, Jordy and Joshy as well as Chris and Claudia Sobolewski and their daughter Mila.

Marcuskraal is a mere two-hour drive from Cape Town on the N7, 20 km after the Citrusdal turnoff.

TELL US MORE ABOUT THE CAMPSITE

It looks like an oasis, with a sparkling and clean swimming pool and beautiful green lawns, palm trees and plenty of other shady trees to take shelter from the sweltering heat and sip on a chilled drink – our trip was in the heart of summer. Grass covers all the stands and they're spacious – they're also at different levels, separated by grassy embankments.

If you don't have a caravan or camping equipment, then you can also check into one of the self-catering chalets – each one with its own Jacuzzi on the stoep. The ablution facilities are not only modern but also kept immaculately clean throughout the day.



HOW DID YOU SPEND YOUR TIME THERE?

The pool is irresistible and, of course, off-road enthusiasts can tackle the Cederberg mountains that overlook the valley in which the campsite lies, with the Atlantic Ocean in the distance. There's also a jungle gym for the kids and you can take walks around the farm. There's an honesty box for when you take wood and ice. We took all our food with us, and there's a petrol



station between Citrusdal and the turnoff to Marcuskraal on the N7.

WAS IT EXPENSIVE?

The cost to camp during the December holiday period was just R130 per person per night. This was our second time there and we've enjoyed the place so much that we've already booked again for the end of this year.

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

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

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3.8L Supercharged Jeep Rubicon JK 40" Tires

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Morne Helberg & Riaan Helberg

3.0L Toyota Hilux D/C 35" Tires

Nicholas Harris & Henry Lee Austin

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Gert Helberg & Mauritz van Den Heever

2.0L Turbo Suzuki SJ AKA "Klein Bliksimpie" 35" Tires

Martin Ferreira & nikki Claasen

Pajero 3.2 Diesel LWB 35" Tires

Johny Durant & Hilda Durant

3.6L Jeep Rubicon JKU 37" Tires

Fransie Smit & Johny Durant JNR

Lexus V8 Toyota Hilux Single Cab AKA
"Plaasbakkie" 33" Tires

Rudolf Durant & Jana Durant

4.0L Jeep Wrangler TJ 35" Tires

Fanie Erasmus & Ronel Erasmus

Isuzu Trooper Custom build by 4x4 Traction
Polokwane 35" Tires

Pierre Mouton & Herman Venter

Toyota Prado, Solid Axle Conversion 40" Tires



Photo taken by Liane Cronje





Twin Toys

Some people say that Land Cruisers are unstoppable in Africa, and keen angler **Freddie Durand** from Roodeplaat, Pretoria couldn't agree more. He owns two of them.

Boy's toys

2018 TOYOTA LAND CRUISER 200 VX-R
and

2016 TOYOTA LAND CRUISER 79 DC

You've got to have serious brand loyalty to buy two Land Cruisers just a few years apart, but **Freddie** had his reasons, and now he has a choice of what to pull out of his garage depending on the upcoming trip.

“I own a **2016 Land Cruiser 79 double-cab** that's kitted out with a rooftop tent, which is ideal for my fishing trips to **Henties Bay in Namibia** and **Angola**. But what really bothers me with the 79 is that the rear-seat passengers have awfully limited room to get comfortable in. Toyota South Africa should consider

adding around **100 mm of legroom** and, while they're at it, throw in an automatic transmission option as well. It's as if nobody there at Toyota has actually had to sit in the back of one.

I still own it and have three trips planned for the upcoming months; one in Namibia with the family, a boys' trip to Angola and then one with the all the families to **Flamingo Lodge** in Angola as well – all to do with fishing of course.

I bought the **200 brand new** last year and

though I've only been driving it for a few months, I've been dreaming about owning one all my life. My wife will tell you what a bargain it was for **R700 000**. I'm always towing, so a vehicle powerful enough that makes towing a pleasure and not a pain is of the utmost importance. To be honest, I never considered buying anything other than a **Land Cruiser**.

My **200** is kitted out to make long trips pleasurable for all passengers – especially those seated in the rear of the cabin, with Toyota's built-in refrigerator a particular hit with the occupants. I also quite like that I don't have to stir a manual gearbox when driving such a big vehicle.

I've had the 200 fitted with **Rebel aftermarket wheels** wrapped in **285/60 R18 BF Goodrich AT tyres**. It also has



Show us your wheels

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



a **Safari snorkel, nudge bar, DVD** screens to keep the rear passengers entertained and a **conversion by Van Der Linde Developments** that has noticeably increased the engine's outputs (from **195 kW and 650 Nm to 250 kW and 930 Nm**). After the mods, and with the slick automatic transmission, the 200 tows our **Destination Journey** caravan effortlessly, and makes it a pleasure to be behind the wheel.

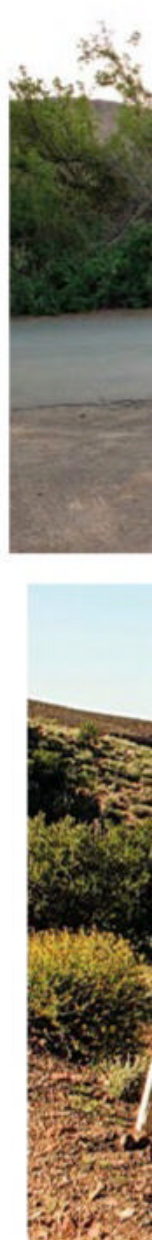
With this sort of grunt available under your right foot, you can expect a penalty at the pumps, because the **200 drinks** around **17,5 ℓ/100 km** of diesel without the Destination on the hitch. That figure goes up to around **21,2 ℓ/100 km while towing**.

So far, our favourite getaway with this combination is the **Rocky Bay Resort** between **Pennington** and **Park Rynie** on the **KwaZulu-Natal South Coast**. The resort is right next to the shoreline and even if you



are pitched on a stand in the back row, it's still very close to the beach. I have three children and the beach is safe enough for them to play on all day while my better half and I kill time behind our fishing rods. Just 100 metres from the resort is the ski boat club and we go deep sea fishing every year on the good ship

Wotalotigot. We always see whales breaching, birds diving and dolphins, not to mention the sardines during June/July. The service from resort manager Dino and ladies at reception Estelle, Selina and Annien is always outstanding, and in the past two years we've camped there five times.



Do the Cape three-step

What's a winter holiday without crossing a couple of passes and camping at three national parks, wonders **Chris and Alida Laing** of Paarl.

Winter is no one's friend: it's a time when most people will light a fire, get comfy on the couch... and not budge till spring.

But this is not what the Laings are about. In May this year, they loaded all their camping gear into their 2006 Jeep Cherokee Sport 2.8 CRD and hit the road. They aimed to visit three national parks – the Karoo, Tankwa Karoo and Augrabies – and to cross a series of beautiful passes. And, as happens on such adventures, they came across a pass they've never even heard of. Alida Laing tells us more...

“We're excited as we leave Paarl and drive up to Wellington, from where we drive over the Bainskloof and Mitchell passes to Ceres. We're not

towing a caravan on this trip, because we intend to drive a number of gravel roads we don't know. So we load all our camping equipment into the Jeep.

After Ceres, we jump onto the R46 in the direction of Touwsrivier and cross the short Theron'sberg, Hottentotskloof and Venster passes. There are no signboards for the last two, but it's a lovely route on a good tar road. We stay on the R46 until it joins the N1, turn left and drive to the Karoo National Park – about 5 km before Beaufort West – where we pitch our tent.

When it the time comes to make our bed, we're shocked to realise we haven't packed our sleeping bags. Fortunately, we have a double bed sheet and a blanket for the three nights we camp here.

While here, we check out the interesting Interpretive Centre, drive up another pass

called Klipspringer, visit the bird shelter and also visit the Bulshoek picnic spot where we have a wonderful picnic.

On our second day we drive through Beaufort West to explore the Molteno Pass and see if we can see the Gamka Dam, but it's impossible from the road. On the way back to the park, we stop in town to fill up with diesel and buy another blanket as a precaution against possible cold.

AFTER THREE NIGHTS, we pack up and get back on the N1 to Prince Albert Road, where we turn right onto a tar road to Merweville, a small town with a pretty church. We drive through the town and turn off on Dominee Pienaar Street at a sign pointing to Sutherland, a corrugated dirt road that weaves between the farms of this beautiful area. We drive through



a drift without a problem, but at the Allemanshoek Pass the road gets bad and we can see there's been recent flooding. A little bit farther, the road ascends steeply up to a plateau. We will later learn that that we are on the Rammekop Pass. Fortunately, there is some concrete or tar on the steepest bits.

We're rewarded with the most beautiful views at the top of the plateau. We don't see a single car coming towards us and we decide right there and then to have a picnic. That night we camp outside Sutherland at the Sterland Caravan Park. Our nylon tent has many mesh windows and it gets pretty cold that night. Thank goodness for that extra blanket...

The next morning we pack up, fill up with diesel in town and drive a short distance on the R356 tar road past Sterland. We turn right onto a dirt road at a sign pointing to Ouberg and Bo-Visrivier. This road is also corrugated, but

A WONDERFUL SURPRISE On the road between Merweville and Sutherland, the Laings traversed a pass unknown to them. They later found out that it's called the Rammekop Pass.



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NO TIME TO HUDDLE Chris and Alida aren't put off by the colder winter weather and are enticed by beautiful landscapes, interesting destinations and adventure.



the scenery is stunning. At the top of the Ouberg Pass we stop for photos.

Here, at 1 404 m above sea level, there's a sign that tells the history of the pass. We read that the Ouberg Pass was used by the pioneer farmers as one of the first two access roads to the Roggeveld and later the town of Sutherland. Ox wagons were the only means of transport, and when they began to die out, the pass was used for more than 80 years only as a trail for sheep. At the request of the Bo-Visrivier Farmers Association, the Sutherland Divisional Council built the road, but the association had to come up with the money – and in the end Sutherland's farming community donated the funds. Construction of the current pass started in 1968, and by 1969 it was completed.

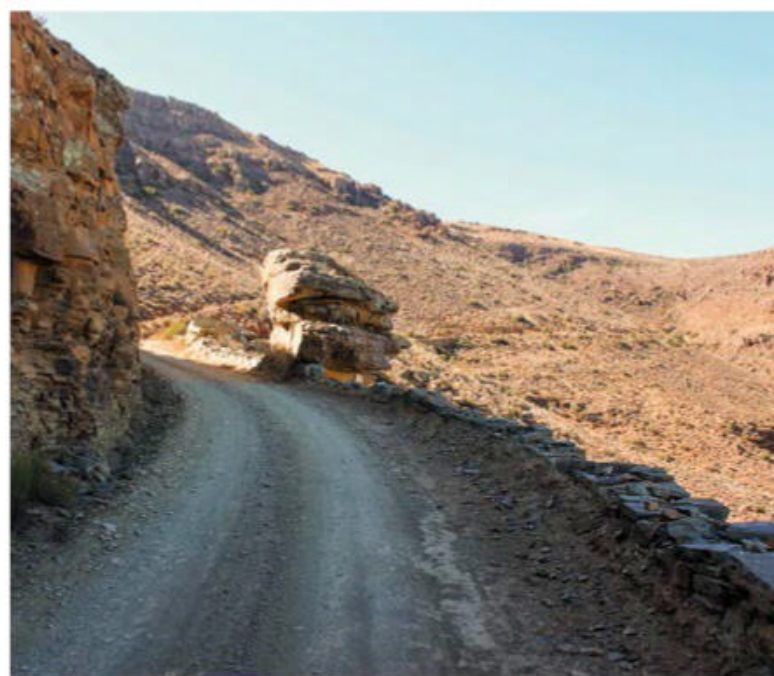
It's a shame that graffiti and a bullet hole disfigures the sign, but the view of the valley is beautiful. We descend the Ouberg Pass – very steep with sharp turns.

WE TAKE IT easy getting to our next destination: the Tankwa Karoo National Park. At reception, we're given the key to our ablution facilities and then we get settled in at Langkloof's stand number one.

The stand, as its name suggests, is located in a kloof, and you need a vehicle with good ground clearance to get there. There are only two campsites without electricity, but each has its own ablution facilities. A gas geyser provides hot water and there are paraffin lamps in the bathrooms.

We are alone in the kloof and thoroughly enjoy the silence and solitude. All we see is a herd of eland grazing near our camp.

After our stay at Langkloof, we pack up and drive in the direction of Calvinia through the Gannagas Pass that winds up the mountain. We continue through Middelpoos to Calvinia. We sleep one night at Kleinplasië – in a round room that was a dam in a previous life. The next morning



we pack up and get provisions, including *skuinskoek*, a particular deep-fried favourite snack of ours.

We take the R27 to the Augrabies National Park and camp here for four nights. We explore the park from one corner to the other and see loads of giraffes. One highlight is observing a fight between two giraffe bulls, right in front of us. It was quite something to see how the two of them attacked each other with their necks.

There are a few different hiking trails, and on our penultimate day we walk one



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	6,2 m
Width	2,3 m
Height	2,3 m
Tare	500 kg
GVM	910 kg
Price	R101 500

52%

Roadster 450 2012

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

Length	3,86 m
Width	1,86 m
Height	1,6 m
Tare	500 kg
GVM	910 kg
Price	R101 500

39%

2011

lack storage space but this version has a 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
Price	R101 500

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

Available in September 2019

FORTUNER
4x4
CHALLENGE 2019



TOYOTA

LEAD THE WAY



WIN A FORTUNER!

One lucky reader* will team up with a South African sports hero and win a Toyota Fortuner 2.4 GD-6 4x4 AT. Teams will compete in a series of challenges this October** at the Pezula Resort in Knysna.

THE WINNER WILL RECEIVE A TOYOTA FORTUNER 2.4 GD-6 4X4 (AT) WORTH R556 400!

WHO ARE THE HEROES?

GINIEL DE VILLIERS, rally driver

OUPA MOHOJÉ, Cheetahs rugby player

KIRSTEN MCCANN, SA Olympic rower

NKATEKO "TAKKIES" DINWIDDY, dancer and choreographer

WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO?

You'll compete in cycling, speed and paddling challenges, and should be able to perform mental gymnastics. Your friends envy your physical prowess and fitness.

HOW DO I ENTER?

Take a photo or make a video (optional, but it will make your entry stand out) and fill in the online entry form at toyota.M24travel.co.za. Don't delay - entries close 27 September at midnight. Tell your friends to be on standby to vote for your online competition. The rest of the details will be confirmed at a later date. Terms and conditions apply.

ALSO UP FOR GRABS

The semi-finalists will each win a Garmin Fenix 5 Plus Multisport GPS watch.

THE FOUR FINALISTS EACH WIN:

- Specialized Epic Comp mountain bike valued at R49 000
- Garmin Fenix 5 Multisport GPS watch worth over R14 000
- Salomon active gear

*One finalist will be chosen from Weg, go!, Weg Ry & Sleep, go! Drive & Camp, Men's Health, Women's Health, YOU and Bicycling entrants. The finalists' flights and accommodation are included.

salomon

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HOTEL



GARMIN

** Exact dates in October to be confirmed.

Go to <http://www.toyota.M24travel.co.za>



that's 2 km along the ravine to the two waterfalls and a lookout point where two klipspringers pass right by us. Our time at Augrabies is over far too soon.

FROM HERE, WE drive through Pofadder to Klein-Pella's campsite on Karsten's date-palm farm. We camp for two nights on the grass with our own ablution facilities. Campers are allowed to explore the farm, and we drive past date-palm trees and vineyards right to the Orange River.

At reception we buy giant dates and delicious raisins and then leave for Springbok where we camp for two nights in the Springbok Caravan Park. A strong wind blows, and we get some rain during the night. Our next and last campsite is in the Vanrhynsdorp Caravan Park where we

also spend two nights. Here the ablution facilities are old but clean, and we have an equally enjoyable stay. We visit the tourist bureau and museum as well as the old prison cells in town.

And so our holiday comes to an end. We buy some more *skuinskoek* and then take the N7 home, through the beautiful Piekenierskloof Pass.

We drove 2 624 km and consumed just a little more than 318 ℓ diesel at a cost of R5 044. Our stay for the 17 nights and our groceries cost R6 255, which means the cost for our entire holiday amounted to R11 299. And it was worth every single cent!



Alida 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

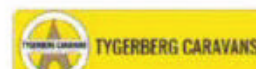
All models available with manual or automatic gearboxes, except the 4x4 Xtreme models



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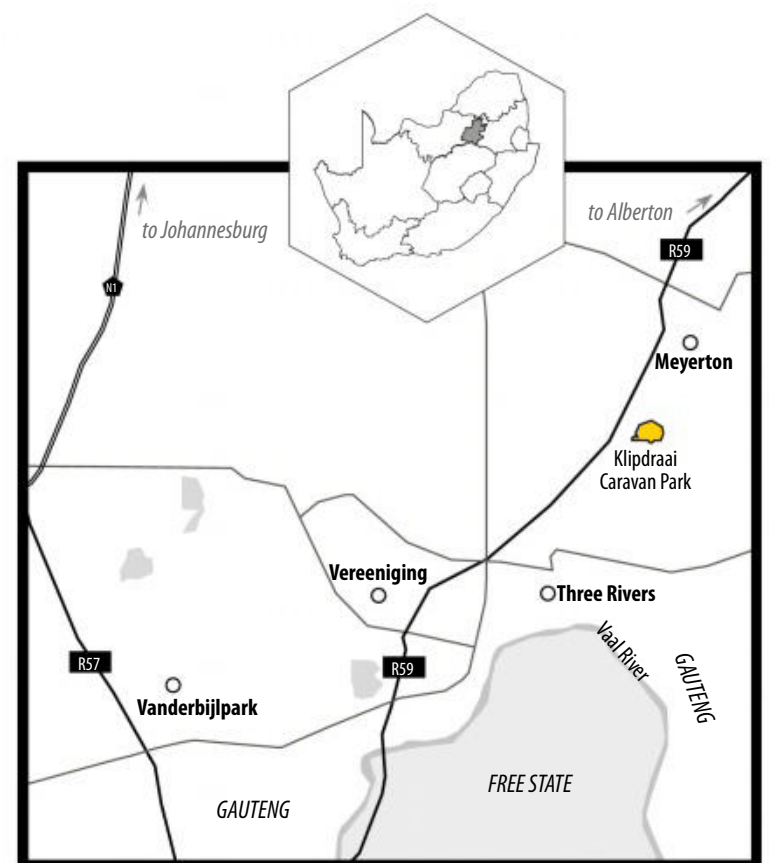


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Only a stone's throw from the big smoke...

Campsites in Gauteng aren't overly plentiful. Fortunately, there is Klipdraai, where you can also hook a catfish or carp.



KLIPDRAAI CARAVAN PARK

CHOOSE YOUR SPOT

Much of the Klipdraai Caravan Park lies on the Klip River in Meyerton. On the way here, you'll briefly drive through the Rothdene neighbourhood, and mere moments later you'll find yourself in front of the resort. The town's road stops at Klipdraai's gate, and this is where you leave the town behind.

Below the high-voltage pylons in front of you lies a patch of grass where several

antelope graze. Expect to see springbok, blesbok and nyalas at the very least.

If you want to camp close to the heated pool, aim for the first stands, but if you desire more shade, carry on past them. The farthest stands are on the banks of the river (which forms a horseshoe around the resort) – here you can fish right out of your camping chair.

Most of the sites are unmarked, but the resort staff have begun applying numbers. The electrical sockets are of the usual three-prong type. If you camp some distance away from a plug point, you're going to need an extension cord. A braai area is also being built for each site.

But no matter where you camp, you're always close to a bathroom, because the 10 ablution blocks are dotted around the campsite. The largest one is near the heated pool and the second biggest is at the farthest point of the resort.

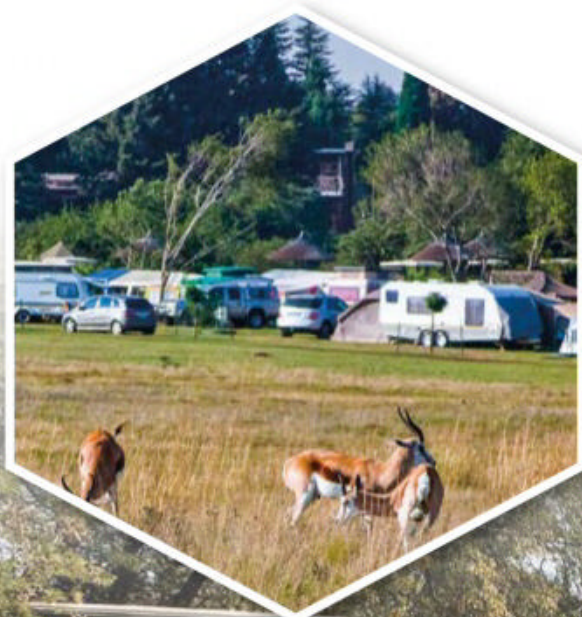
Instead of the usual sign showing the men's and women's sides, two large concrete figures stand here: to the left is

an replica of the David statue that looks as if he's checking out the Eve's side, where there's a sculpture of a woman with her hands behind her head.

At Klipdraai, all the action happens in the middle of the resort, almost like in the arena of a circus or an old-fashioned town square. On a leafy patch of grass, about the size of a rugby field, you can choose which way you and your offspring want to get rid of pent-up energy. There is a huge timber jungle gym, an airplane-shaped trellis, a big sandpit (around 21 x 6 m) and, on the side, two trampolines.

Next to it is a mini-golf course (R20 per game), a games room with two pool and two foosball tables (R200 deposit for the cues and R2 per game), a giant garden chess set, a volleyball court with a sandy surface plus an unheated pool and a splashpool for the little ones.

The shop is next to the games room and here you can buy basic groceries (such as milk) and all kinds of sweets. A bag of sickle wood costs R28 and charcoal is R38.



Briefly | Klipdraai Caravan Park



Fish Yellowfish, mudfish, catfish and carp.

Campsite 350 stands with power. The sites vary depending on where you pitch, you might have shade, full sun or half shade.

Ablution facilities 10 neat bathrooms and 4 sculleries.

Price Depending on the season, R300

or R400 per stand for the first 4 people; thereafter R100 pp (R50 for kids 3-12 years); max 6 people per stand.

Contact 076 017 4354 or 072 823 5236 klipdraaikaravaanpark.com discussions@klipdraaikaravaanpark.com

Nearest town Klipdraai is in Meyerton.

What does the road look like? Tar road to the resort, with the last 340 m paved.

GPS S26.609762 E27.9962660

go! Drive & Camp says Catch and release is the law at Klipdraai. And don't sneak one into the pan or over the coals, as evidence of insecticide was found in the water last year.



SMOKED FISH PÂTÉ WITH BRUSCHETTA Fishy spread

Even when you camp in the Bushveld, you can make this delicious snack - just in time for sunset.

You need

(enough for 4)

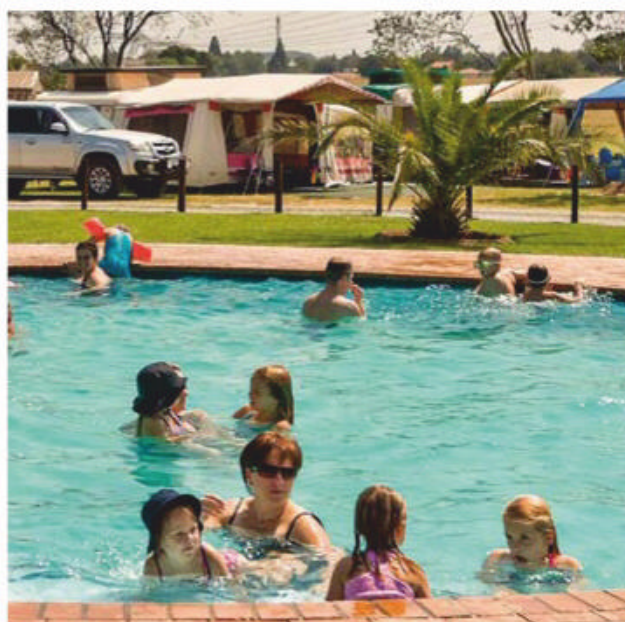
- 1 tin (215 g) sardines
- ½ cup cream cheese
- zest and juice of ½ lemon
- salt and pepper to taste
- 2 tablespoons fresh parsley, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons onion, finely chopped
- 8 slices ciabatta
- olive oil for frying

Here's how

1 Carefully remove the bones from the fish and then mix the meat with the rest of the ingredients (except the bread and oil).

2 Baste each slice of bread well with olive oil and fry in a hot pan on both sides until golden brown. Serve the pâté with the bruschetta.

go! Drive & Camp says The secret of this pâté lies partly in the salt and pepper. Taste it as you go to make sure it is flavoured the way you like it.



FISHING GEAR

Just the one for you

The landing net is an indispensable tool for any fisherman. But if you're not careful, the fish in the net can be injured as you lift it out of the water. The knots that tie up the strands to form the mesh can snag on the fish's scales or even the dorsal fin, and the hook may even become entangled in the mesh.

Here's a smart solution: a landing net that has no knots, and where the strands are coated with PVC. So it's more fish-friendly, especially if you have to release it again as is the case in most places these days.

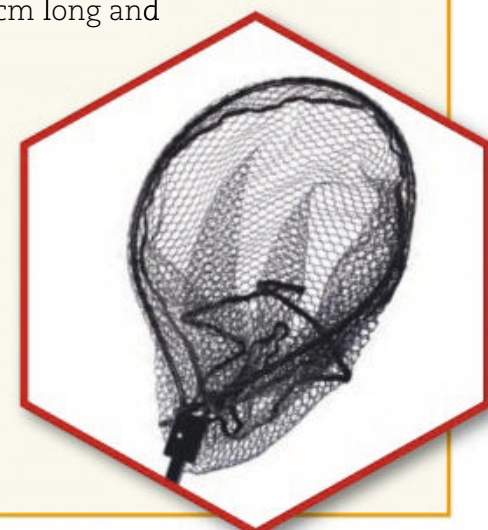
Adrenalin's PVC landing net has a 92 cm handle with the

grip at the back made of rubber. This staff isn't tubular, but octagonal – and you can remove the shaft if you want to store the net. The oval hoop is 60 cm long and 50 cm wide, and the net is 55 cm deep, which means you can scoop up a fairly big catch.

The shaft is aluminium and you can use the net in both fresh and seawater.

Price R389 at fishing shops.

Contact Adrenalin Importers & Distributors (importers) 021 982 1510 catches@4adrenalin.co.za adrenalinfishing.co.za



Come hell

It's sink or swim for the new Mitsubishi Triton.
Cyril Klopper heads for the mountains to see what it's made of.

Mitsubishi's new Triton is popular in Asian markets, but it poses little threat to its competitors in countries with more Western sensibilities, like South Africa and Australia. More's the pity, because it boasts off-road talents that give it the potential to be an excellent adventure rig. For this reason, we took a drive through the dams and mountains of the picturesque town of Franschhoek in the Cape winelands to find out what these talents – and shortcomings – are.

The drive

In *go! Drive & Camp* # 23 we shared our first impressions on the Triton's outward appearance and interior finishes – this

is our driving review after a week behind the wheel. The 2,4 ℓ MIVEC diesel engine introduced to us in 2016 remains unchanged, but the old five-speed automatic gearbox is now replaced by a six-speed auto box that delivers a far smoother ride. You'd think the extra gear would result in a fuel saving, but during our test the average consumption of 8 ℓ/100 km was more or less the same as with the previous gearbox.

The ride is slightly stiffer than before due to an extra leaf spring on the rear axle (the vehicle now has six leaf springs on each side as opposed to the previous five). It's still a softer ride than that of a Toyota Hilux, but not as plush as offered by a VW Amarok. We would replace the standard 18-inch wheels with 16-inch rims and fit proper off-road tyres so that there's

or high water

MITSUBISHI TRITON

added rubber between you and solid ground.

Mitsubishi keeps mum about the Triton's wading depth, but with a little sleuthing, we were able to determine that it's a relatively poor 500 mm (less than wheel height). This doesn't compare well to, for example, a Ford Ranger, which can drive through water that's 800 mm deep, but it's nothing that a snorkel and a diff breather kit can't fix. To test if this is an issue, we drove our Triton through a dam which is a little deeper than wheel high – and survived to write about it.

Mitsubishi is eager to provide the Triton's approach, departure and break-over angles though. The former two measurements compare well to those of its competitors,

and thanks to a shorter wheelbase, its break-over angle of 25° is markedly better (18,5° for a Ranger and 22,4° for a Hilux). We crawled over moderate rocks and tree trunks to see what this meant, and the side steps only scraped against the largest of objects. The Triton's small turning circle made it easier to simply bypass obstacles, though.

Four what?

Mitsubishi's Super Select II four-wheel drive system (or SS4-II for short) works as follows: in two-wheel drive and high-range gears (2H), the front axle is disconnected, and the vehicle is rear-wheel driven only. Use this mode on a highway to save fuel.

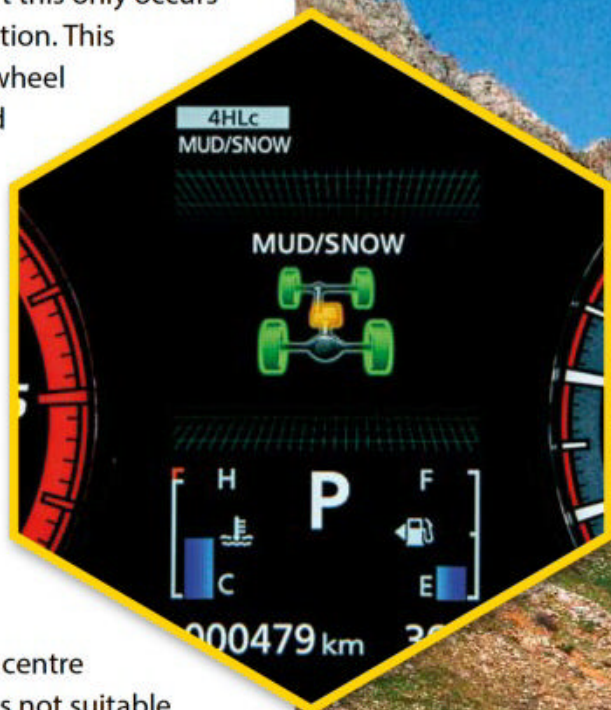
DRIVING IMPRESSION

In four-wheel drive and high-range gears (4H), between 33% and 50% of the available torque can be sent via a viscous coupling to the front drive shaft, but this only occurs if the rear wheels lose traction. This mode is similar to the all-wheel drive systems in Audis and BMWs, and works well on wet, winding roads when you're worried about skidding. Thanks to the hydraulic nature of the coupler, you can switch from 2H to 4H while driving, and leave it in 4H regardless of whether you're on a tar road or on gravel.

Four-wheel drive and high-range gears plus the centre differential locked (4HLc) is not suitable for tar roads because the front and rear drive shafts are mechanically locked together and receive equal amounts of torque. However, the differentials on each axle still determine how much torque each wheels receives. When you turn the Triton's 4x4 dial to 4HLc, the centre differential occasionally struggles to engage when stationary with the gearbox placed in neutral. You then have to drive a few metres forward or backward before a tell-tale light confirms that 4HLc is successfully engaged. We found that the centre differential locks more readily if you switch from 4H to 4HLc while driving at low speed. In 4HLc, the onus is still on you to deactivate traction control if conditions require it – like when playing in dunes, for example. The digital display between the rev counter and speedometer now also shows three electronic driving modes: sand, gravel and mud/snow.

Four-wheel drive and low-range gears and the centre differential locked (4LLc) works similarly to 4HLc, but the low-range gearing ups the torque at the expense of speed. You'll be using this mode to either plow through knee-deep snow and sticky mud or to crawl over boulders, and the Triton must absolutely be stationary with its gearbox placed in neutral before you can engage 4LLc. In 4LLc, the traction control will automatically deactivate and a fourth electronic driving mode – rock – will become available.

What makes the Triton even more capable is a lockable rear differential that provides extra sure-footedness when the terrain become more challenging. We had



“

It boasts off-road talents that give it the potential to be an excellent adventure rig

”



SPECIFICATIONS

Model	2,4 l DI-DC 4x4 automatic
Engine	2 442 cc, four-cylinder diesel
Power	133 kW @ 3 500 rpm
Torque	430 Nm @ 2 500 rpm
Transmission	6-speed automatic
Fuel consumption	(tested) 8,2 l/100 km
Weight	1 850 kg
Approach and departure angles	28° and 23°
Towing capacity	3 100 kg
Ground clearance	220 mm
Guarantee	3 years / 100 000 km
Service plan	5 years / 90 000 km
Safety rating	★★★★ (EuroNCAP, 2015)

PRICER589 995



KNACK FOR BLACK The interior is bedecked in classic black and chrome trim, the digital displays being the only providers of colour. The traditional 4x4 icon between the clocks (opposite page) has been modernised.



to perform a few turns while both the differentials were locked: the axles wound up and consequently the diffs wouldn't unlock after we completed the obstacle. This is a common phenomenon with diff locks and can lead to damage if you ignore it. The best remedy for this is to put the gearbox in neutral as soon as it is safe to do so, lower the handbrake and allow the Triton to roll back freely for a metre or two. This is usually enough to sufficiently unwind the axles for you to unlock the diffs with the 4x4 dial.

Conclusion

We think Mitsubishi's Super Select II system is the bee's knees. It's certainly handy that you can activate four-wheel drive in the city, and tackle diesel spills on tar roads during inclement weather, but it's not a decisive factor when off-roading alongside rival vehicles can also stay in four-wheel drive mode all day long.

What does impress is how easy it is to drive a Triton. Most bakkies feel big and clumsy compared to this agile Mitsubishi.



COMPETITORS

4x4 lifestyle bakkies with attitude.



R431 400

TOYOTA HILUX 2.4 GD-6 4X4 SRX

Considerably cheaper than the Triton, but the ride quality isn't as good.



R451 000

ISUZU D-MAX 250 HI-RIDER 4X4

A fair price to be sure, but it's not nearly as nippy as the Triton.



R582 700

FORD RANGER 2.0 TURBO XLT 4X4

Only slightly cheaper and with a smaller engine, but surprisingly similar performance.



BMW X5 XDRIVE30D

High 5, BMW!

Over the past 20 years, BMW has sold more than two million X5 SUVs worldwide. But you don't often see one towing a caravan. This is quite surprising, because it's very much at home doing so.

Words and photos **Leon Botha**

The BMW X5 is a great tourer, it's also good for towing. Take the towbar as an example: at the push of a button a towbar swings out, and as soon as you plug in, a computer detects your caravan. Now add 620 Nm of torque and there are few things that can stop you on your way to a campsite.

We first hitched a regular road caravan and then an off-road model, and drove roughly 3 000 km across the Bushveld and the Drakensberg region, up to the Mozambican border.

Towing made easy

As you'd expect from a BMW, the X5 comes with everything that opens and closes. The

car is chock-full of clever gadgets, though the electrically deployable towbar is optional and will liberate R11 500 from your pocket. Its button sits on the right inside the luggage compartment, and within 12 seconds of pressing it, it's ready for towing. (It takes the same time to retract.)

It's an Oris towbar, and as with

many European vehicles, the loom socket fits to the left of the bar's neck. Of course, it comes standard with a European 32-point socket, but you do get an adaptor for our nine-point plug thrown into the deal. When you connect the caravan's plug to the loom, you'll see "Trailer Mode" is activated on the digital display. The computer also reminds



you that some of the driver aids – such as the lane-change warnings and blind-spot sensors – are limited, but the trailer swing control is now active.

Because it is a swing-out towbar, there is no place for a drop plate, so you can't adjust the height of the ball itself if your caravan's coupler is higher or lower. The ball is 41,5 cm

above the ground – completely within the legal limit of between 35 cm and 46,5 cm for a caravan, though off-road trailers tend to be higher off the ground.

This means some off-road caravans and trailers are likely to be slightly nose-down behind the X5. (The test vehicle had air suspension, and the height of the towbar was taken on the

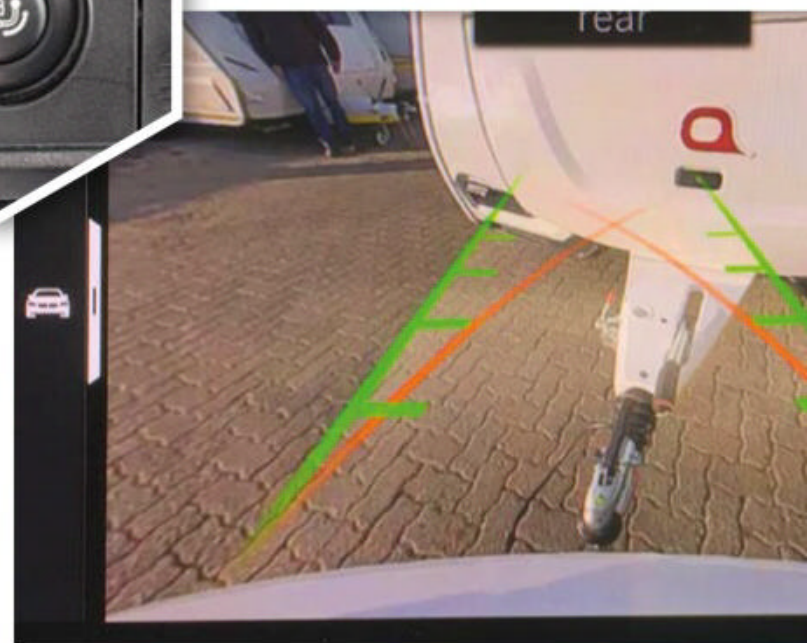
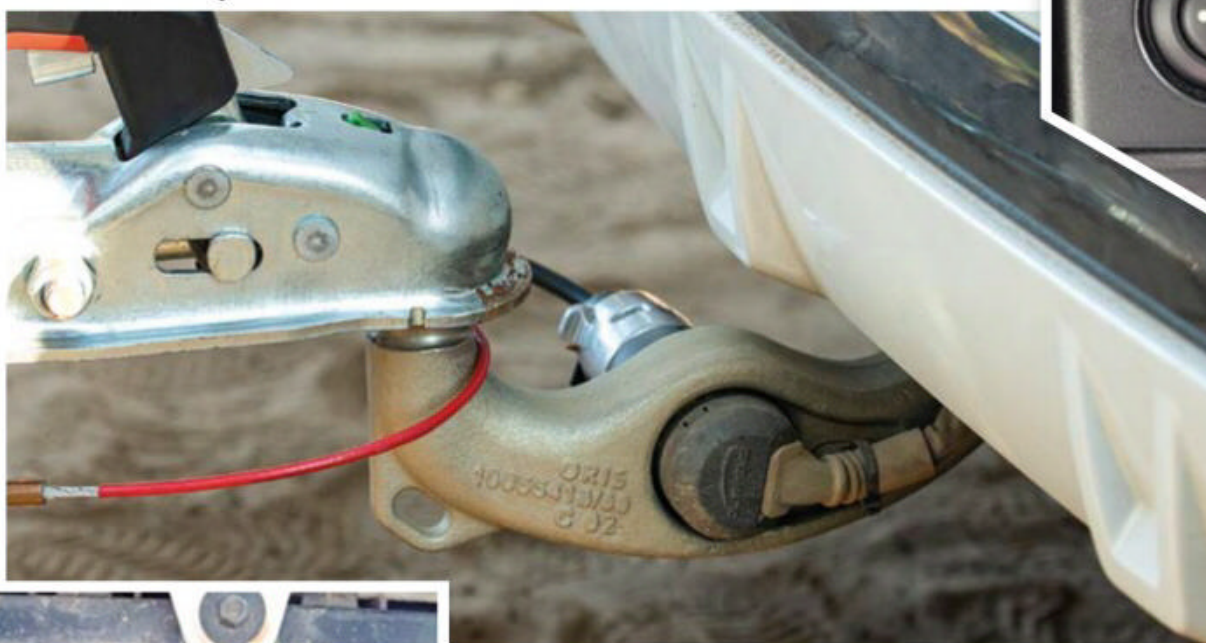
suspension's middle setting.)

With the air suspension, you can set the X5's bodywork to sit higher or lower off the road, but for towing, the choice is limited. If you drop the suspension to its lowest setting, the ball is 37 cm above the road surface and at its highest 48 cm.

It's a remarkable 11 cm difference, but for example, if

NO LOAD TOO HEAVY The X5's high-tech air-suspension system automatically selects the ride height and self-levels when you hook up your caravan.





Aim with the screen

The X5's rear-view camera is advanced and shows, for example, the imaginary track that your wheels are about to follow. Part of this are two red lines – one on each side – that crosses over and shows the centre of where you're heading. So you can use it like the crosshairs of a gunsight and take aim on the caravan's coupler.

As you get closer to the caravan, the computer warns you that you may collide with it. The screen then switches to a bird's eye view, the same used

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So you can use it like the crosshairs of a gunsight and take aim on the caravan's coupler

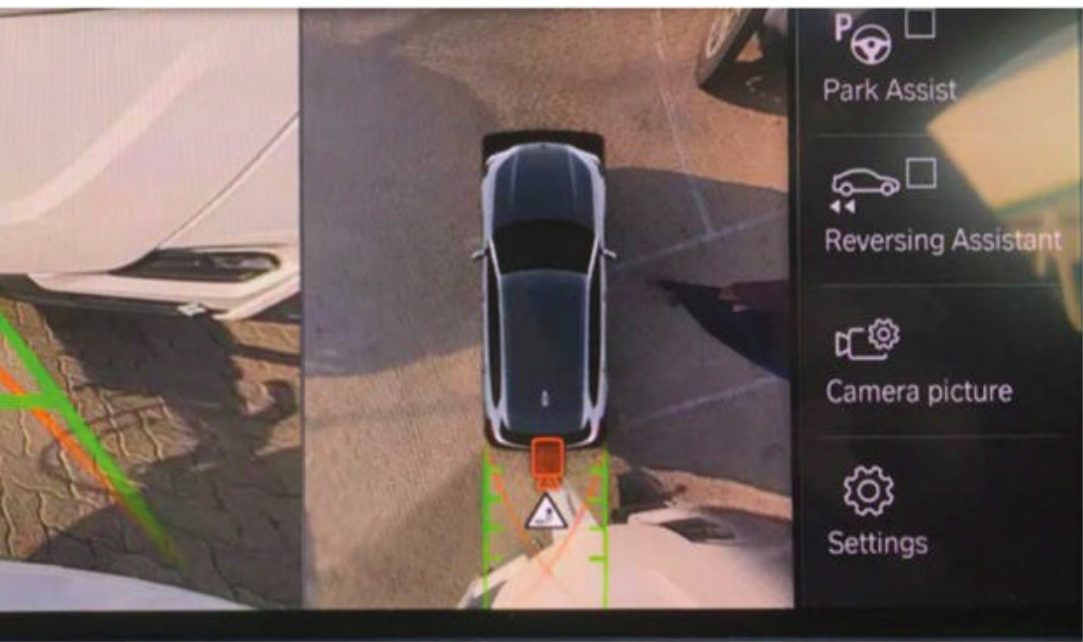
”

you adjust the suspension to its highest, hook the caravan and want to tow, the computer automatically adjusts the height to the middle setting. And while the caravan is hooked, the computer doesn't allow you to adjust the height.

for when reversing into a parking bay. Tapping the screen now shows some choices, including "Tow Hitch". Tap this and the screen shows a top-down view

of the towbar and coupler, and you can see exactly how far and at what angle you should move for the final approach. At the same time, a white index





TOW MATES The X5 and towing are best of friends. This is thanks in part to the X5's computer that recognises when you've hitched a caravan or off-road trailer and inserted its light plug. The index lines on the infotainment screen and reverse camera also lines you up perfectly.

line appears in the centre of the screen that curves in the direction the steering wheel is turned. That's how the X5 helps you to the coupler.

When you connect the light plug, the computer doesn't simply assume everything is hunky-dory with the caravan's wiring. Should an error be detected somewhere in the

system, the computer will warn you. In our case, the computer warned us that there was a fault with the plate light (our trailer had no number-plate light).

See what you're using

Torque delivery matters when you tow, but you also realise you're going to fork out more at the petrol station.

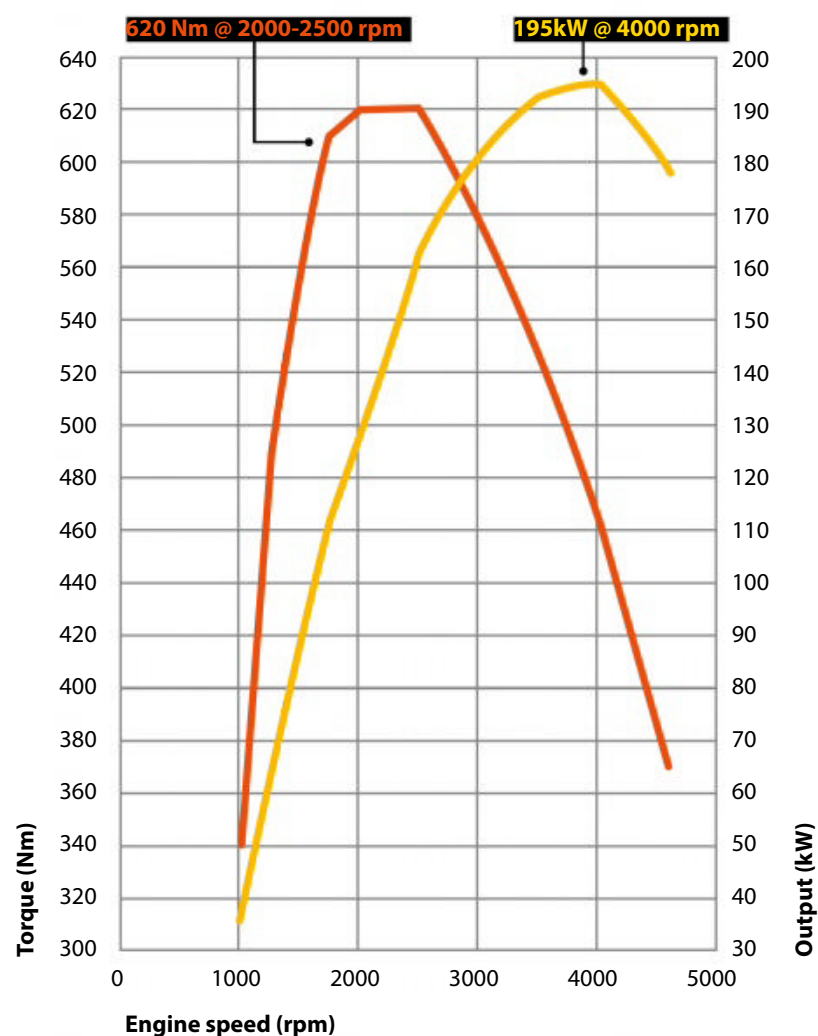
Heavier fuel consumption is a given, but the remarkable thing is that you can see on the instrument panel how many Newton metres and kilowatts the engine uses to keep the towing combination running at any given time. The two graphs are next to each other on the electronic screen in front of you and you see exactly how much power the car uses while towing. The Newton meter needle goes up to 600 Nm, while the engine can actually deliver up to

620 Nm. Yet, it gives good insight to be able to see when the engine is working harder than necessary, and you may be able to ease off on the pedal while maintaining momentum.

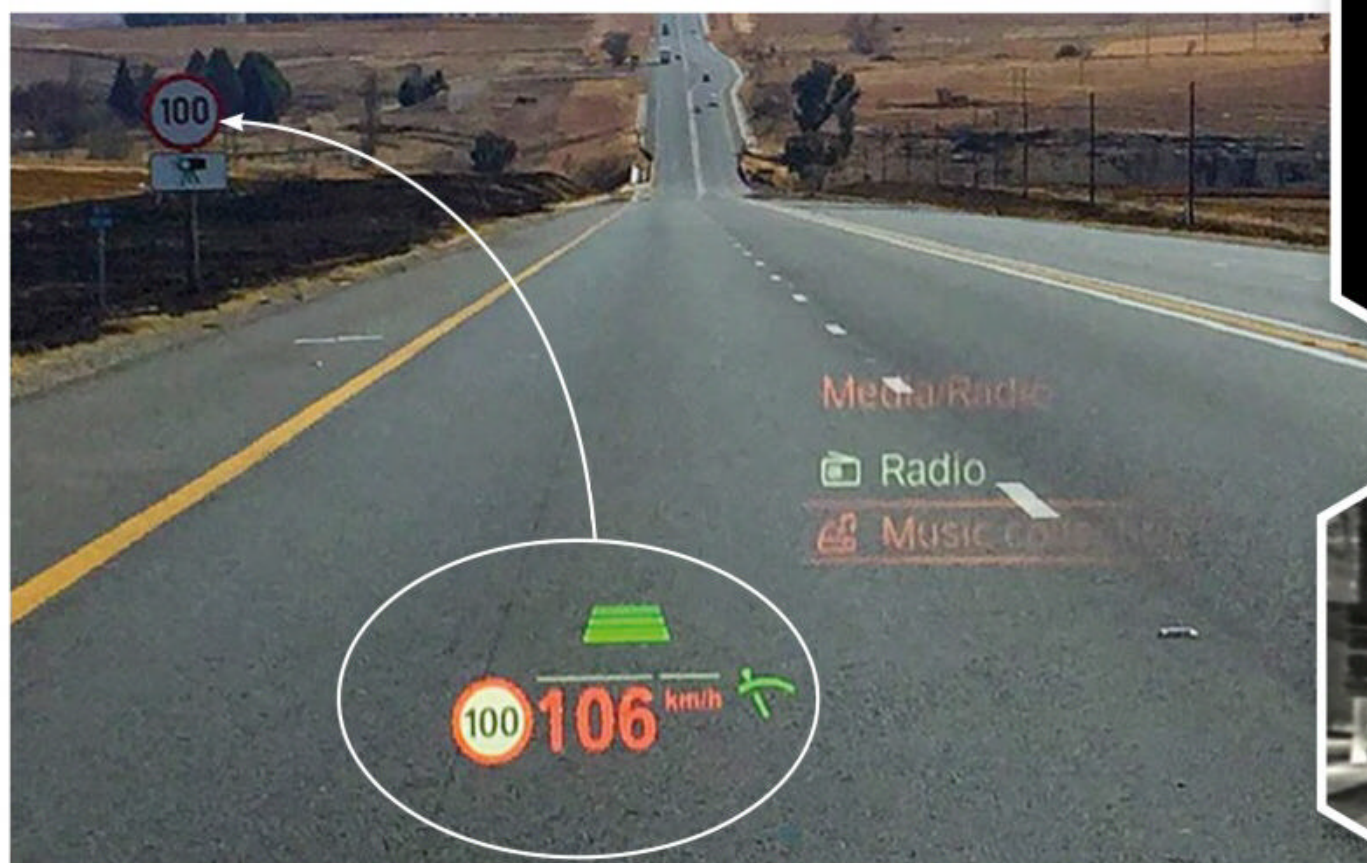
On a level highway, at



BMW X5 POWER AND TORQUE CURVES



TOW TEST



SPEED READER The X5's head-up display will usually show your velocity in white numbers, but if you exceed the speed limit the numbers flash in red so you know you're in the wrong. The ECU uses a forward-facing camera to cleverly read the roadside signs and promptly informs you what the maximum allowed speed is.

120 km/h in the eighth gear and 1 500 rpm with a 1,1 tonne road caravan on the towbar, the X5 uses about half of its Nm reserve, as the meter hovers in the middle. The kW graph hardly reaches its quarter mark (about 50 kW).

At this speed, the computer shows fuel consumption is 10,8 l/100 km – a reasonable figure for the size of the towing combination and the speed you maintain.

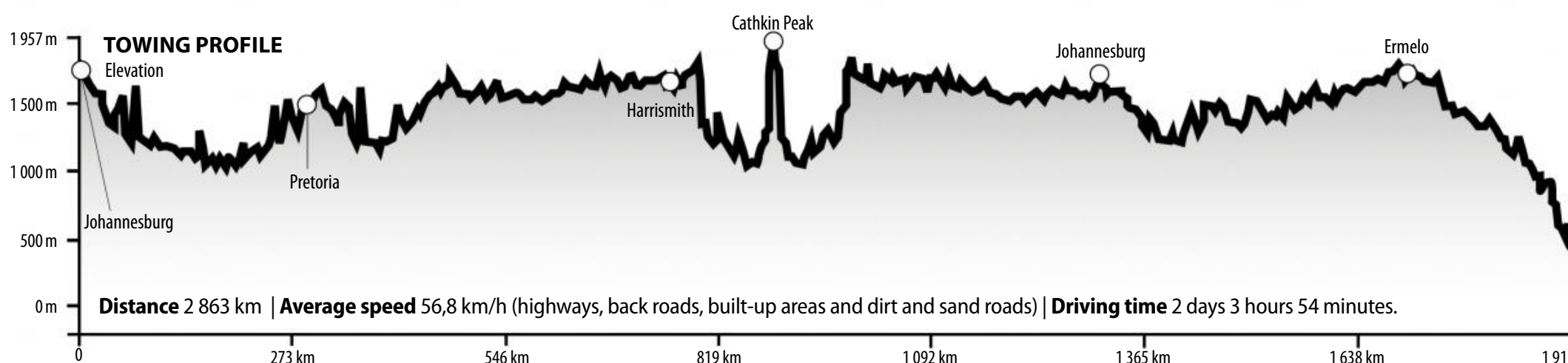
It compares well to the average consumption of 12,2 l/100 km, which is what we got over the total distance of 2 900 km.

A third eye on the road signs

With the Head-up Display you not only see how fast you're going on the windscreen; the computer also "reads" the speed limit on that specific section of the road. (It therefore doesn't rely solely on a GPS map.)

As soon as you drive past a traffic sign showing the speed limit, the computer repeats it on the windscreen. If you drive faster than this, the speed readout flashes in red to get your attention.

So, if you didn't notice the last speed sign, you can rely on the computer. The tin brain isn't all-knowing though: for example,



if you encounter roadworks and a yellow sign recommending 60 km/h, the computer slavishly follows that regardless whether there is any actual construction going on.

When you're past the roadworks and there is no sign showing you may drive 120 km/h again, the computer still insists that the speed limit is 60 km/h.

But the computer isn't dumb, though. If you drive 120 km/h on a highway and a road sign shows vehicles of 3,5 tonnes should drive 80 km/h, the computer ignores it.

With cruise control activated, the X5 is in its element, even with a caravan – up and down hills. Weirdly, the speed-reading eye won't interfere with cruise control even if it is set to exceed the speed limit.

Not so fast!

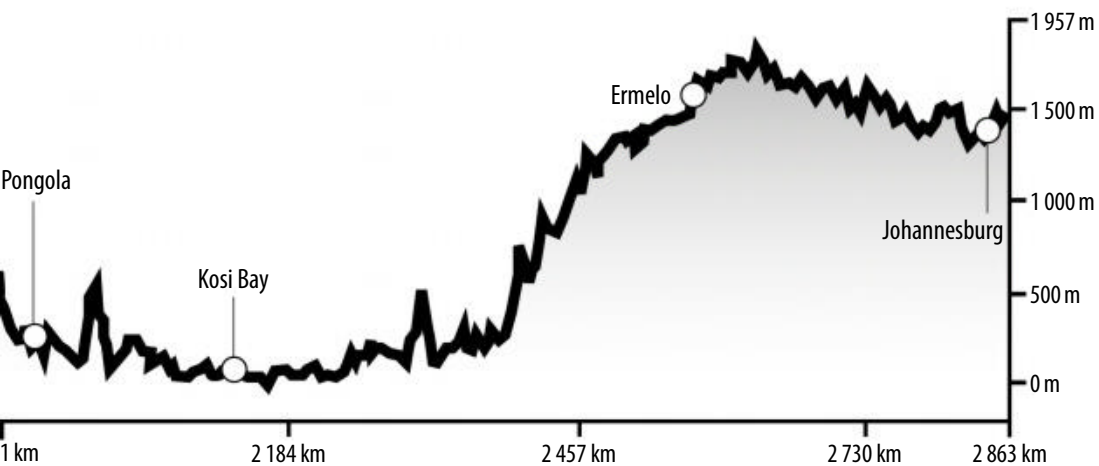
Without a caravan in tow, the X5's lane assist feature is overeager – it catches you off guard if you're not used to it.

The steering wheel vibrates slightly when you start driving over a line, but then the computer takes over and "forces" the X5 back into the lane.

You need to properly grip the steering wheel if you still want to change lanes. The only way to effortlessly change lanes is by using the indicators. *(Which may be a novelty for some BMW drivers... – Ed)*

With a caravan hitched, the X5 pretty much leaves you alone and only warns you through vibrations on the steering wheel that you're drifting, but it doesn't intervene.

go! Drive & Camp says According to the X5's GVM and GCM figures, this car can tow a load of up to 3,5 tonnes, but BMW recommends a maximum weight of 2,7 tonnes for a braked caravan on roads with a slope of up to 12% (6,84°).



**From the competitors
(standard prices)**



R1 215 687 Mercedes-Benz GLE 300d 4Matic 500 Nm



R1 094 000 Audi Q7 TDI quattro 600 Nm



R1 229 700 VW Touareg Executive 600 Nm

SPECIFICATIONS

Model	X5 xDrive30d
Engine	6-cylinder turbodiesel
Power	195 kW
Torque	620 Nm @ 2 000 - 2 500 rpm
Transmission	8-speed automatic
Drive	All wheel
Tank	80 l
Fuel consumption with caravan	12,2 l/100 km (8,2 km/l)
Driving distance with caravan	656 km
Tare weight	2 050 kg
GVM	2 860 kg
GCM	6 360 kg
Towing capacity	2 700 kg
Maximum towbar weight	3 500 kg
Maximum vertical weight of towbar	140 kg
Is the towbar removable?	No
Is there room for a drop plate?	No
Standard price	R1 186 200
Price as tested	R1 522 646

Boxing clever

The Tonga is a new option for those who prefer a smaller caravan. This one also has some unique features you won't easily find anywhere else.

Words and photos **Leon Botha**

Smaller caravans are becoming increasingly popular – mainly because you don't need a veritable locomotive to tow them. It's mostly couples who buy them, so if you're in the market for a new caravan and want to start small, or perhaps you want to scale down from your double-axle caravan, check out the Tonga.

It is important for caravan manufacturers to stay current

– think of the familiar USB socket that was a novelty a year or so ago but is now standard in many caravans. The makers of the Tonga, Etienne van Zyl and his son Jean-Pierre, came up with a host of innovations. The “canopy”, for example, can be removed so you can use it as a trailer; the kitchen cabinet with its double doors slides out of the nose over the A-frame; and you can suspend a tent room beneath the rear hatch.



TONGA



Settle in

The standard Tonga has no brakes, which means you may rely only on the corner steadies to keep the caravan from rolling away. There's one at each corner, but the steadies don't have a jack mechanism which would otherwise allow you to rest more weight on them once they are lowered. Each is simply a square leg that you drop to the ground and then tighten with a knob.

You can stabilise the caravan by lowering the front first with the jockey wheel's crank, until the hull leans forward a little. Now drop the two rear steadies and tighten them. Crank the jockey

wheel out again to lift the nose slightly past where it would be level. Drop the two front steadies to take the load off the jockey wheel, and tighten them. There you go.

The Tonga's interior is open plan – the mattress lies folded up in front of you against the nose side, leaving more than enough storage space for all your bedding, camping furniture, gear and other luggage.

The Tonga has only one door. The rear hatch lifts up until it is perpendicular to the hull allowing you easy access to the entire interior volume.

Drop the foyer

A tent is stowed on the inside of the hatch – so when you open the hatch, the folded tent faces downward, with two fibreglass rods and a nylon strap that secures the tent in place. To unfold the tent, you need to release the rods and strap.

The hatch thus forms the roof of the tent section – a fibreglass rod fits into each corner to pitch the corners of the tent, not unlike like a dome tent. The section between the interior of the hull and the tent is open, of course, but the two join on the door's edge with a velcro strip. Each corner is secured with a tent peg... and there is: the Tonga's antechamber.

The Tonga also has an awning that covers the entire caravan and is stored in a long box that is secured to the left of the roof (along the length of the caravan). If you want to use the awning, you should deploy it before opening the rear hatch, otherwise you'll struggle to swing the awning over the antechamber tent.





A nose for good food

A modular kitchen pulls out over the A-frame like a large drawer, but first you have to remove a door with open-end hinges. This door now becomes a worktop: above the wheel there is another set of hinges in which the door fits, and a strut onto the rim holds it firmly in place. This top is a ergonomical 89 cm above the ground, but because the door hangs upside down, the lock's swing mechanism may be slightly in the way.

The kitchen module, with a door on both sides, can now be pulled out of the hull. The doors also open at right angles to form a smaller worktop next to the cupboard. Each of the cupboards in the two sides have two shelves. A kettle, all the cutlery and a few bottles of wine all fit into form-fitted foam in the left cupboard. A one-plate gas stove is in the opposite cabinet – it is removable and you place it on the worktop next to the cabinet when you want to use it.

The back of the cabinet forms the two wardrobes inside.

A freezer is drawn from the hull on the left, just behind the kitchen cabinet.



Ready for bed

The tent section's floor measures 2 x 2 m, and two adults can comfortably stand here and undress without elbowing each other in the ribs – it's even bigger than the open space of an average caravan and you could conceivably fit an extra mattress in here. There's a light against the roof that illuminates the tent well.

The entire interior of the Tonga is one large bed, and the fold-up mattress extends right up to the door. It's easy to climb into bed since the top of the mattress is 69 cm above the ground (as opposed to your bed at home which is around 60 cm high). The bed measures 2 x 1,3 m in size and is only a teensy bit narrower than a double bed. When you sit on the mattress, there is ample headroom so you don't feel claustrophobic.





The 220 V electrical outlet and USB sockets are in a panel to the right of the door. The main switch for the lights and a switch for the battery charger are also on this panel.

There are two closets for your clothes – one above the other – at the top end of the bed, each with a canvas flap that zips shut. The interior light is of the LED type and is fixed above the top end.

At either side of the mattress is a space wider than your hand – this is where you can stow all those loose items you'll want near you when you go to bed. Considering the size of this caravan, this is a luxury as there's often no storage space near the bed in your average tiny caravan.

The Tonga has three windows in each side panel, but they can't be opened. Enough fresh air comes from the tent's side, though.



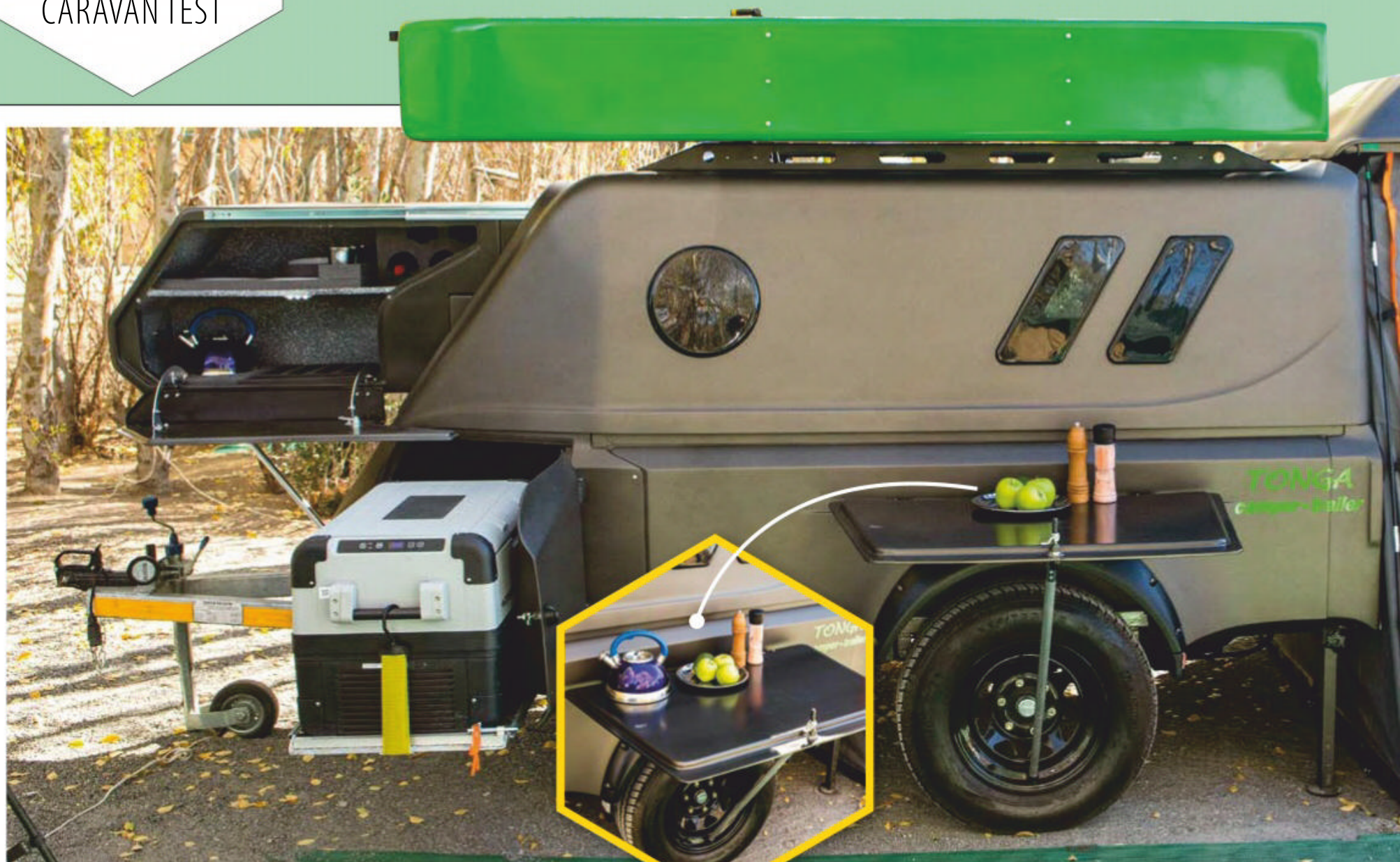
Pole position

The long box from which the awning swings out lies flat on the roof and has a lid on top with a clip on each end. The box has hinges on the left corner of the hull, and when you want to deploy the tent, you'll need to swing the box onto its side so that the lid is aligned with the hull. The box lifts up easily as there are gas struts that help – they also keep it all in place after you flip it over.

Now take off the lid – remember, you'll need an extra pair of hands to help.

The poles of the awning and the fiberglass rods for the rear tent fit neatly to the inside of the lid. Each pole has its place and you can easily determine if one of them is missing so that you can look for it before heading home.



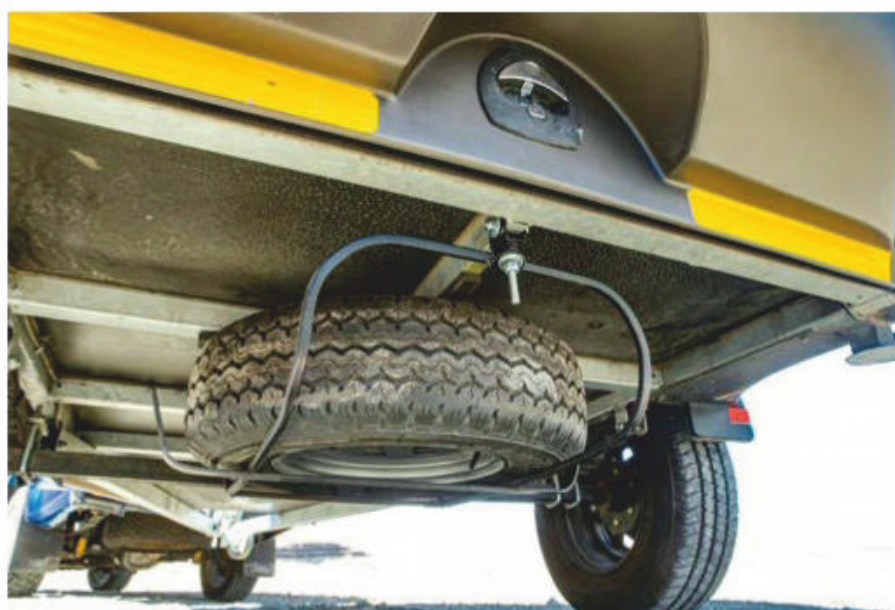


Raise the roof

Four aluminium arms fold out of the box like a batwing to create a canvas awning, but first you have to untie some of the loose canvas sections. One section folds out and then hangs over the left panel almost reaching the ground, while another section has to be pulled over the box to the far side of the Tonga.

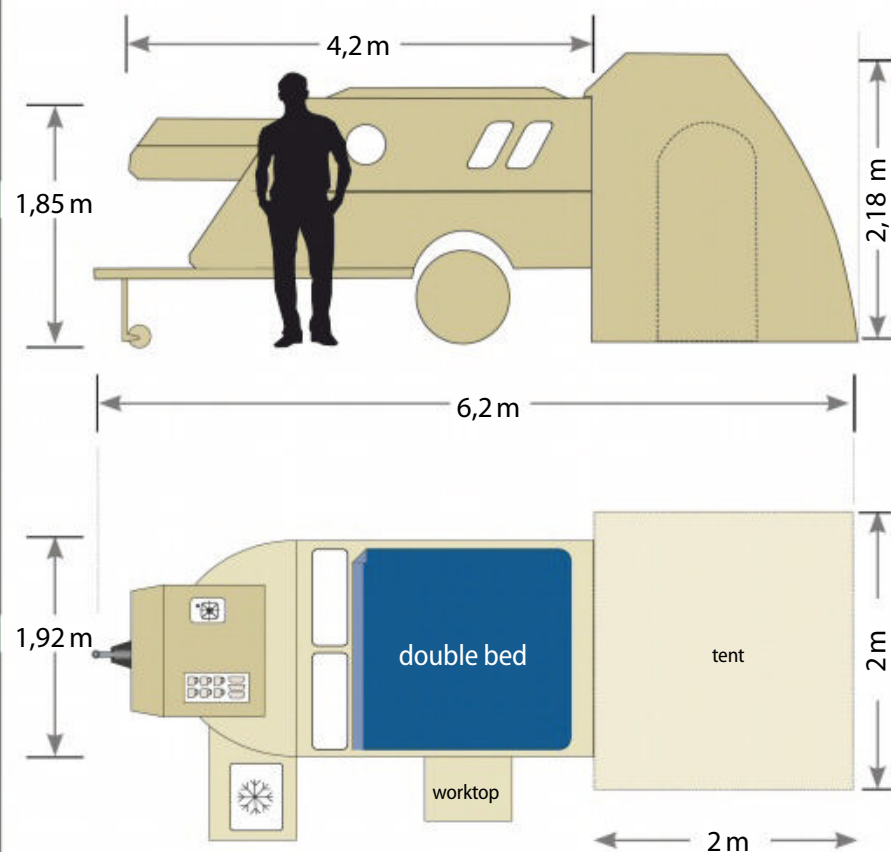
A hinge connecting the beams sits on the back corner and thus swings open rearward. The canvas is attached to the beams that then forms the awning as they swing open. The first beam swings out at the largest angle to where it stands parallel to the back of the caravan. This section of the canvas is attached by a zipper to the one you've previously pulled over the roof – and the awning forms a single roof over the entire caravan.

At the tip of each beam, an adjustable support leg swings down to the ground, and at the opposite corners – at the left front and right rear – loose struts stretch the awning into shape and curved ribs fit inside the outer hem of the awning to keep the shape of the batwing awning neat and tight.



Low-slung spare

The spare wheel lies on a rack below the Tonga: you reach it from the rear. The rack resembles a basket, with one side that drops down to the ground. You can then drag out the wheel.



The technical stuff

Length 4,2 m
Width 1,92 m
Height 1,85 m
Ceiling height (of tent) 2,18 m
Net weight 380 kg
Carrying capacity 370 kg
GVM 750 kg
Axle 1,5 t with leaf springs
Tyres 255/70 R15
Price From R105 000



Plus

- You could hardly ask for more storage space.
- The tent can serve as a dressing room or extra sleeping space.
- The kitchen is unique and a bonus for a caravan this size.
- The rally tent extends over the entire caravan and works well.
- The storage space next to the bed is luxurious for a caravan this size.



Minus

- The corner steadies don't have a jack mechanism.
- Because the Tonga is unbraked, only vehicles heavier than 1,5 t may tow it.

Brakes are optional.

- Although the Tonga is small, it does not have handles on the corners where you can hold onto it to move it around the campsite.

go! Drive & Camp borrowed the Tonga from the manufacturer.

go! Drive & Camp says

The whole hull is made of fibreglass and the chassis is galvanised steel.

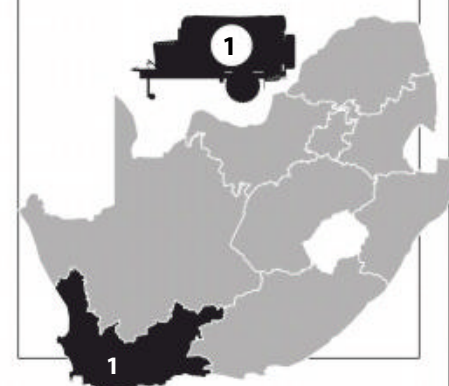
Dealer network

Tonga's factory is in Cape Town.

Contact ☎ 021 945 2142
 or 074 893 0748

🌐 tongasa.com

✉ admin@biprojects.net 📍



Are you one of us?

The Davids can't wait for a camping weekend with their caravan club, and the Smiths have long since booked the only stand at Solitary Bay. Where will you be going?

Words **Leon Botha** Photos **SACA and CCSA**



Variety is the spice of life, and in the world of camping it is no different. One family may prefer a bustling resort that you could almost call a mobile city; while another looks for a solitary stand deep in the Kalahari under a camelthorn tree. Some families load their children's push bikes, while some couples head for resorts where no kids are allowed. Music is another bone of contention...

The same goes for caravan clubs, of course. But how familiar are most campers with what caravan clubs are really all about? We turned to the South African Caravan Association (SACA) and the Caravan Club of Southern Africa (CCSA) for answers.

Say what?

SACA celebrates its 50th anniversary this year and has a membership of 1 125 families in 35 regions. The membership

fee amounts to R365 per household per year (R355 for people over 60). The CCSA, in turn, is the oldest caravan club and was founded in 1947. This organisation has a membership of 1 414 families divided into 36 regions, and the membership fee amounts to R440.

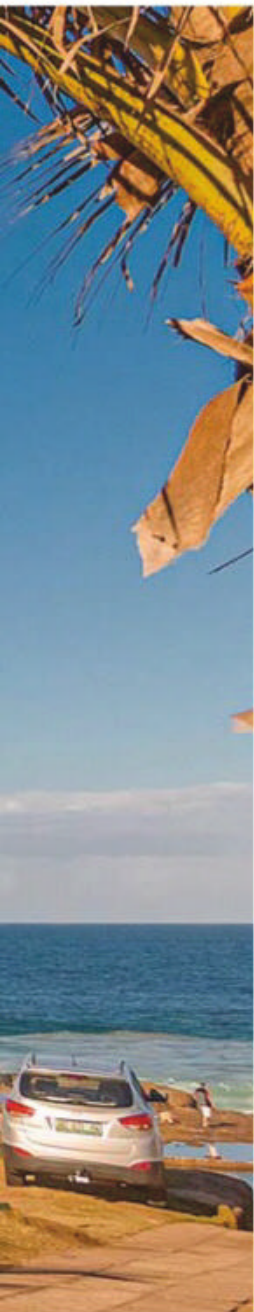
SACA's national chairman, Jurie Dreyer, and CCSA president, Russel Gibbens, answered a few questions.

Who is the club's typical member?

SACA Our members consist mostly of families, but of course the numbers of those above 60 increases as time goes on. We also have singles, including quite a few women who even tow their caravan on their own.

CCSA Most of our members are older couples, and many of the friendships formed in the club extend beyond the club.





Is a caravan required?

SACA No, people with camping gear such as tents, off-road trailers, motorhomes and rooftop tents are also welcome.

CCSA Not at all.

How often do you all camp together?

SACA The regions arrange their own gatherings, if possible they happen once a month, while the larger areas meet once or twice a year. The national gatherings – such as the annual presidential conference – are attended by as many regions as possible.

CCSA The regions hold 10-12 events a year with an average turnout of around 50%.

Are you obliged to attend a certain number of gatherings?

Neither club requires that.

Do you camp less during school holidays?

SACA We stay active, for example, in the holiday season

earlier this year we arranged no less than 30 rallies. During the winter holidays, 27 regions went camping. Long weekends are used to travel farther afield.

CCSA It is true that caravan clubs camp less in these times because rates are higher.

What happens at a gathering?

SACA Members relax, enjoy nature and make use of the facilities at the resort. Depending on the theme for the weekend, communal braais and other entertainment are organised.

CCSA At many instances members get a light dinner on Friday night – a hamburger, boerewors roll or curry and rice – at a nominal fee. The Saturday consists of activities that the weekend's rally marshals arrange and often includes a programme for kids. No activity – for children or adults – is mandatory. On Saturday night, we braai, and some of our regions will have a church service (and Sunday



THE ORIGINALS The Caravan Club of Southern Africa (CCSA) has the distinction of being the oldest caravan club in SA and was founded in 1947. Its membership consists of 1 414 families across 36 regions.



What do our Facebook friends say?



Johan Duvenhage

I was previously a member of SACA, but it wasn't for me. Everyone says you are not obliged to participate at such gatherings, but if you don't, you get looks. There were also a few cliques.



Mathys Pretorius

I have nothing against clubs, but we do our own thing with friends and family.



Zaandre Campher

I was a member of a club for a few years and had great times. A club does need to grow and change as members change. Right now, I'm not part of a club and camp with a group of family and friends. We let each other know when we go camping, and those who want to join, do so. It's not a problem if you can't or don't want to. Sometimes you feel like having a nice visit with lots of people and a lot of noise, but other times you want to experience the silence with only a few people around a campfire. A club therefore has its place, but there is also an argument for not being a member.



Isabel de Klerk

On 20 December 1979, we established our own private club with our children, in-laws and grandchildren.



Marinda Mulder

We have been part of the CCSA Vaal Triangle since December 1987 and it's a wonderful group of people. We're heading to Malonjeni just outside Heidelberg this weekend.



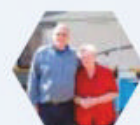
Nico Prinsloo

I camp with a caravan club, with friends and on my own. I enjoy camping and it doesn't matter who is there with me or how I camp.



Henry Austin

I like to camp alone. In a group there are sometimes people who know best about everything and women who want to establish menus. Camping on my own is better and I make new acquaintances every time.



Hennie Jansen van Rensburg

We once tried camping with a group, but we'd rather do our own thing with our own circle of friends.



school) on Sunday morning. We conclude the weekend with awards for people who attended a certain number of rallies, followed by fun “penalty fines”. This is for “perceived misdemeanours” and is actually a form of fundraising: the proceeds are usually donated to a charity.

Which years did you have the most members?

SACA Membership has declined over the years, but the eighties and nineties were the most prosperous.

CCSA The late 1970s to the early eighties.

To what do you ascribe this decline?

SACA The arrival of the EB license, toll fees, the cost of acquiring a proper tow combination, the condition of certain roads, the camp rates and the decline of certain resorts, especially those under municipal control.

CCSA The towing license is one of the reasons, but the world

has changed dramatically over the years. The economy pinches and there’s the possibility of burglaries while leaving your home empty. People also arrange their lives around school-going children.

Do you actively recruit new members?

SACA We are currently busy with extensive planning that also looks at increasing membership.

CCSA We focus on retaining our existing members, and our membership is an issue that is discussed annually. This is a continuous process.

How has the caravanning landscape changed over the years?

SACA More campers have switched from traditional road caravans to off-road trailers and caravans – the condition of some roads is no longer suitable for a regular road caravan. Motorhome owners have also increased. Furthermore, caravan parks are struggling to remain profitable





HALF CENTURY The South African Caravan Association (Saca) celebrates its 50th anniversary this year and has a membership of 1 125 families who come from 35 regions.



because of higher electricity and water charges – and wages.

CCSA Before our existence there were no caravan parks in the country. Thanks to the dedication of our club's founding members who exerted pressure on municipalities to make land available, we have such campsites today. Camping with a caravan has been regarded as a cheap holiday for many years. That is no longer the case – you'd struggle to find a towing combination under R250 000; in fact, combinations of R1 million or more are a common sight. Caravan parks also feel the economic pressure, and without the seasonal holidaymakers they struggle to keep their heads above water. That's why the CCSA also camps out of season – it's an extra income for the parks.

What are the benefits of a caravan club?

SACA Campsite rates are negotiated on your behalf; we have a website for everyone plus a nationwide network of resorts and dealerships; safety risks at gatherings are mitigated; there's an annual programme that makes planning easier; plus the companionship of fellow campers who become good friends and stand together as a family.

CCSA You experience good camaraderie when you get away with your friends for a weekend up to 12 times a year. Your campsite is also booked for you – often at a discounted price. Your savings can be even more than your club rate, and of course it's safer when a group of people go camping together.



What do our Facebook friends say?



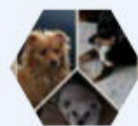
Hendrik Bezuidenhout

Sometimes we camp on our own and at other times with a club. We are members of a motorhome club and enjoy it a lot.



Piet Botha

A club has its benefits, including making good friends, but then you're also bound to specific events on such a gathering. I prefer to decide for myself when I go and what I do.



Andreana Swanepoel

I think some people have a misconception about caravan clubs. We have been camping with the members of the CCSA Tygerberg since 2013. Each event is one big party. There are no stories of one being better than others, and no gossip. The only obligation is to sign in on Friday night – and that only takes five minutes of your time. The rest of the weekend you do what you want. No one gets upset with you if you only attend a camp once a year or every month. Come and try it out.



Bonita Fourie Schultz

We belong to the CCSA Eastern Province. Although we sometimes camp alone, I can honestly say that camping with the club is the best as you know everyone around you. When you camp alone, you are only familiar with the people who go with you. Our club has a lot of members.



Andre Geldenhuys

A caravan club is great when it is a small group, such as a group of friends who regularly camp together. As soon as stuff such as raising the flag ceremonies and many rules appear, I keep clear.



Ben Visagie

The clubs serve a good cause and bring people together. However, I prefer to camp on my own or with friends. Otherwise I make friends in the campsite.



Johan Visser

From a safety point of view, it is better to belong to a caravan club.





THERE'S A PLACE FOR EVERYONE You get three types of campers: those who belong to a club, those who do not belong to a club, and then those who support both.

What do the resorts say?

The Dolphin Holiday Resort in KwaZulu-Natal gives discounts to groups such as caravan clubs, but these special rates apply only out of season. This excludes school holidays and long weekends. In the past, they had a prerequisite of at least 10 caravans to make a block booking, but because the club visits declined, they reduced it to five. According to the resort, this arrangement still works well, as a number of clubs make use of this. For a booking, a club should send a list of prospective campers so that the price can be fixed. Pensioners automatically qualify for their discount, but the remainder get a 10% discount.

The Kam'Bati River Resort in the Western Cape say they have seen a noticeable decline in club bookings over the past two years. It seems the economy is pinching and the clubs go to resorts closer to big cities where they are based. Kam'Bati gives a 10% discount for a group of 20

families or more – that's for two adults plus kids per site.

Forever Resort Plettenberg is also in the Western Cape and does not have a fixed discounted rate, says resort manager André Steyn, but they will negotiate discounts for groups (such as caravan clubs). There has to be a minimum of 15 caravans and it would exclude long weekends, Easter holidays and December holidays. Although there is also a school holiday during October, it is quieter in the resort and groups are welcome. Depending on the numbers, groups can get up to 20% off (sometimes even more), but André warns that people should keep to agreed numbers. It happens, for example, that someone negotiates discounts for 100 caravans, but then arrives with far less and still expect to pay the lesser tariff.

ATKV Eiland Spa is in Limpopo and the resort manager, Bennie

Steenkamp, says as an ATKV group, for example, they have an agreement with SACA for better rates – and that applies to all seven of their resorts. Bennie also says better rates apply to times when they are quieter. They are prepared to negotiate

a good rate for a group, but then it must consist of at least 15-20 caravans. They do their best to handle such a group as a block booking and try not to disperse the group all over the campsite, especially because groups like to stick together.



What do our Facebook friends say?



Anton Pretorius

It seems to me that people have a misconception about caravan clubs. I am a member of the CCSA South Rand region and would like to invite those who live in our area for a weekend with us. Join in the joy of children who move around without worry; and the adults also appreciate the camp life. And if you want, you can be on your own, too.



Jan Ebersohn

I've been with SACA for 45 years. We are not a group of friends, but one big family and know each other's loves and sufferings. The management organises the camps that we decided on at the annual meeting. If you can't or don't go, just excuse yourself. Nothing keeps you from camping on your own.



Erika Sandbaai

We're one of two families who try to camp once a month. It's fabulous and great fun. I'm not interested in a club.



Gielie Lambrechts

A friend long ago belonged to such a club and they enjoyed it very much. But when I heard about a "chairman's tea", I lost all interest.



Johann L Lemmer

We have been members of SACA for 40 years and it is fantastic. It is truly a family where everyone can do their own thing.



Sonya de Beer

We don't belong to a club, but are considering it. I think when camping, you make friends as you wish. We have always camped on our own, but have had wonderful neighbours. I think both have its pros and cons.



Dion Marinus

I am a member of the CCSA Eastern Free State. Do yourself a favour and camp with a club for a couple of times before deciding whether to join. The club eventually becomes like family. You can still camp on your own, but doing it together is great.

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.

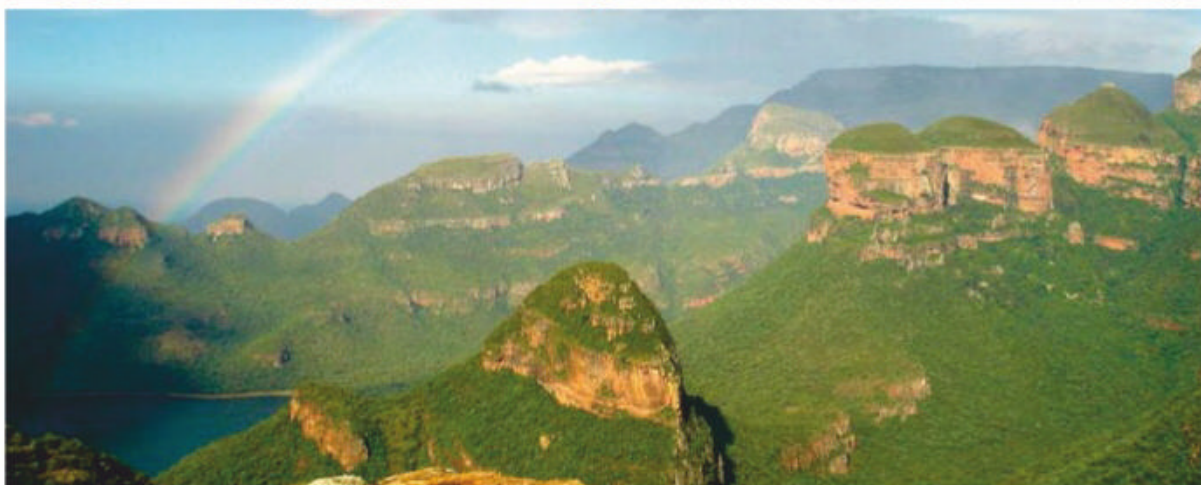
Send us a photo or three – even those beautiful cellphone pics – from your time at your favourite resort, tell us in a nutshell what we can expect at the resort, and your name is in the hat for the prize.

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.

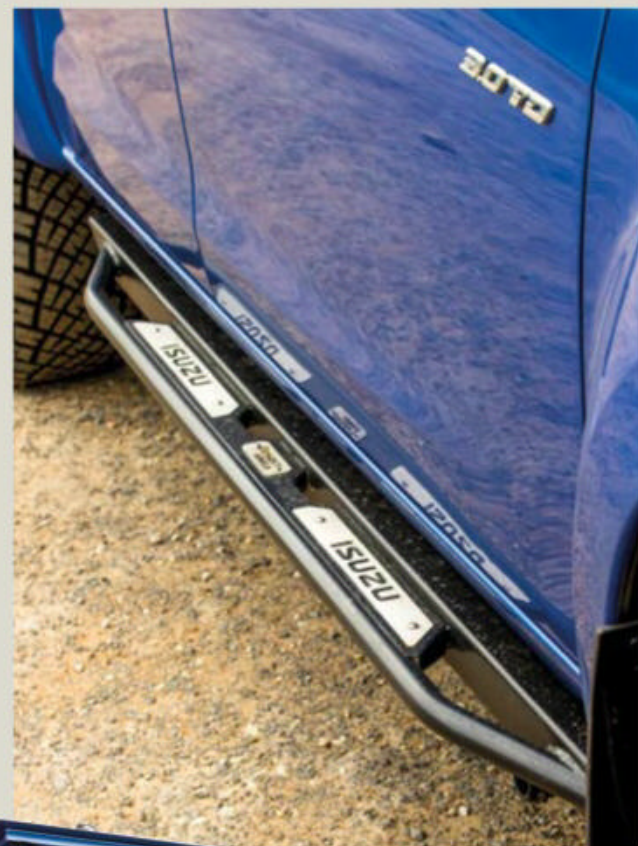


Weighing in on things

You've bought your dream double cab and kitted it out for some serious overlanding. But just how much extra weight can you add, and will it change the way the law looks at you?

Words **Kyle Kock** Photos **Leon Botha**





You've just kitted out your new vehicle with R200 000 worth of accessories, and you're ready to visit that remote campsite with your trusty off-road caravan, already looking forward to the nearby 4x4 trail that's been marked out in the area.

Everything is packed and you hit the long road. You join the impromptu convoy on the N3 heading to the KwaZulu-Natal coast. At first, it's a mere inconvenience when a traffic official waves you down as you pass a weighbridge. But then you get told that you're 300 kg overweight and need to start unpacking before you can carry on. Oh, and you've also been handed a fine. And let's not forget that you need to organise for someone pick up your goods as well. So, what now?

Setting the tone

We happened upon this topic when we discovered how perilously close our very own long-term Isuzu D-Max was to the legal limit on the tow test performed for the May 2019 issue. With a full tank and driver, the bakkie tipped the scales at 2 840 kg. With the GVM of 3 100 kg, this means it only had 260 kg of packing weight left; and that's not even considering the possible 100 kg nose weight of a

caravan, or your spouse and kids.

Some South Africans have a lackadaisical approach to the law and the authorities appear to be this way inclined as well. Except, of course, when it's time to fill municipal coffers at certain times of the year. Which could explain why the interpretation differs depending on who stops you – and where. There can be no arguing with the law written in black on white, however.

Of course, there are serious implications, especially where insurers are concerned. If your vehicle gets written off, the assessor could get difficult when it comes time to pay out, regardless of whether it was your fault or not.

What the legal eagle says

"The National Road Traffic Act, 1996 and Regulations has two provisions that deal with altered, reconstructed or modified vehicles. Reg 31 states that if a vehicle is altered or reconstructed and the licence disc no longer describes the vehicle, the licence becomes null and void and the vehicle needs to be homologated and go for a roadworthy inspection again. Most of these vehicles are not so drastically changed that they would require re-homologation. Vehicles that need to be re-homologated are goods



vehicles or panel vans that are changed into motorhomes," says legislator Alta Swanepoel.

Alta's description places into perfect context the case of someone who has purchased a Volkswagen Transporter Panel Van or Crafter and turned it into something that has more seats and so on. For example, if you added seats under the canopy of a Land Rover Defender or Toyota

NICE TO HAVE The accessories added to our long-term are great, but they add plenty of weight.

Land Cruiser 79, then your seating arrangement will no longer correspond to the number on your licence disc.

You're much safer going the route of purchasing an already altered vehicle from an established "manufacturer" of

such products. They've already gone through the tedious route of homologating their products abroad and locally, so you don't have to go through the laborious back-and-forth to get your backyard special officially recognised by the law.

Carry your own weight

Motorhomes and campers are one scenario. But there are plenty of bakkies out there just like our long-termer that are flirting with the limit when you decide to go on a trip with the entire family, plus your boat or caravan in tow. With many of these vehicles also kitted out extensively for handling 4x4 excursions over the weekend, as well as overlanding, this is where the problem lies, because all that equipment is heavy.

On our D-Max, the tare weight is 2 100 kg, which is not unlike most of its 4x4 double-cab rivals. We've also added an ARB bullbar, behind which lurks a T-Max 12 500-pound winch, IPF Sport XS spotlights, Desert Armour chassis protection, Old Man Emu suspension lift, snorkel, Desert Armour rock sliders, Front Runner roof rack, on top of which rests a T-Max 48-inch off-road jack and sand tracks. It's also got an RSI canopy, which covers the Front Runner drawer system, ARB compressor, Desert Products dual-battery system, Engel Fridge Freezer on a Desert Armour sliding frame, a picnic table, fire extinguisher, burglar bars, and a kitchen complete with cutlery and a gas stove. Plus there's a 60 ℓ long-range tank underneath.

That's 740 kg extra weight. If your family has a high BMI score, just having all of you in the vehicle might exceed the legal limit when your caravan's in tow.

"The tare reflected on the license disc is the mass of the vehicle empty, which is what we sell. If the vehicle is taken over a weigh bridge, the vehicle will be weighed at GVM and not tare. The accessories that have been added to the vehicle are part of



“

There are plenty of bakkies out there flirting with the limit when you go on a trip with the entire family and boat in tow

”

the vehicle's payload, which as mentioned is more than 700 kg – the allowable payload on the range-topper 3 ℓ 4x4 automatic is 1 000 kg. Payload = GVM (3 100kg) minus tare (2 100kg)," says Dominic Rimmer, Executive Technical Services at Isuzu SA.

You can bend, but not break the law

The National Regulator of Compulsory Specifications (NRCS), an independent division of the South African Bureau of Standards that's responsible for the homologation of vehicles in our country would require that the vehicle be homologated again if the tare is changed by more than 250 kg, but Alta says that the majority of vehicles aren't so drastically altered that the tare needs to be changed, because anything that's not permanently fixed isn't considered to be part of the tare.

"The tare is an issue if the officer investigates whether the vehicle's

HEAVYWEIGHT It's all very well and good if you're driving solo for a weekend with the boys, but the extra weight means a family of five is a tall order.

increases, the GVM cannot easily be changed, and even then only by the manufacturer through a complicated process determined by the NRCS. If the tare goes up, the load capacity will be less."

What it comes down to is that you are responsible for whatever you put in or on the vehicle. And it's on you to make sure that you don't exceed the GVM with or without something in tow – just in case you break the law.

Weights

The Isuzu engineering team had this to say about tare, GVM and payload.

Tare mass (kg): This is the weight of an empty standard vehicle with all its fluids, including oils and coolants, but only 10 ℓ fuel in the tank. We assume 10 ℓ was chosen as an industry standard to allow otherwise empty vehicles to be driven to and from a weighbridge.

Gross vehicle mass (GVM): This is the maximum your vehicle may weigh when fully loaded as specified by the manufacturer. You will usually find this figure on the vehicle's weight placard, which is generally found in the driver's door opening, or in the owner's manual. GVM is the kerb mass plus all accessories such as bullbars, roof racks, winches, and payload. And if you're towing something, GVM includes the tow bar.

Payload: This is the maximum load your vehicle can carry as specified by the manufacturer. GVM minus the tare equals how much the vehicle can carry. Don't forget this includes all passengers and their luggage.

ISUZU

Last chance!

Weg!
Ry & Sleep



A few months to go for **Bull Run 2019**! Prepare yourself for screeching tyres, clouds of dust and heaps of excitement. All you need is a vehicle manufactured before 1980 (that costs less than R25 000), a team and lots of spirit. And get ready for some superlative fun!

When?
26-29 September 2019

Where?
Vanwyksvlei, Northern Cape

Register now – Spaces often fill in a jiffy.

Contact Francois Malan for more information at francois.malan@media24.com

In case of emergency

Nobody wants to be stuck on the side of the road in the first place, though realising you don't have the necessary tools to get you on your way again must be an even worse feeling.

Words and photos **Kyle Kock**

We've all been in situations that require someone to unbuckle the seatbelt, roll up the cuffs, and get out and do what needs to be done to keep you moving – that's if you're not tempted to call roadside assistance to drive the 100 km or so to your location and do your dirty work for you. But what if your convoy really is in the middle of nowhere, and

someone's vehicle catches alight or needs a tow to the nearest workshop? We've compiled a list of items you will need to get out of most scenarios.

Military tough

PRO-QUIP JERRY CAN POURING SPOUT

You might not have a long-range tank equipped to your overlanding combination, but you do have jerry cans at the ready. This spout has a metal spout that makes it feel satisfyingly heavy to hold, with a flexible plastic "trunk" right up front where your life-saving unleaded will flow from. Apparently, this is the same specification that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) uses.

Price R176 from 4x4 Mega World

go! Drive & Camp says This is not one of those cheap items you buy that breaks in a few months – it comes with a 10-year warranty to give you peace of mind.



Holy moly

HOLTS TYREWELD EMERGENCY PUNCTURE REPAIR

If your wife isn't the type to jack up a vehicle and get the spare out of the boot or hasn't the inclination to plug tyres on the side of the road, then you can always gift her with a can of this. Besides, this 340 ml bottle is limited to 16-inch tyres, so it's more suitable for the runabout SUV she uses for town driving, anyway.

Price R106 from the AA

go! Drive & Camp says While it re-inflates the tyre and helps seal a hole smaller than 5 mm, drive slowly for 10 km for the seal to take real effect and then replace the tyre immediately when you're safe at home.



Precious paws

DROMEX ECO LEATHER GLOVE

An industry leader in personal protective equipment, Dromex is passionate about making sure that users of its products don't bear the scars of their work. That makes these gloves perfect for lifting recovery equipment in and out of the back of your bakkie and keeping your hands clean. They're made of pigskin split-grain leather that's been tan dyed, so this pair should last a lifetime.

Price R98 from 4x4 Mega World

go! Drive & Camp says It comes in a nifty dry bag to protect your prized piggies from rot.

Pulling power
DESERT PRODUCTS HEAVY DUTY PULL STRAP

This product is reserved for when one of your travel companions in the convoy manages to get stuck, which is usually not such a big deal. The problem is, he's towing his caravan plus his boat behind it. That's not a problem for this product. It's 10 metres long and can handle up to 10 000 kg of weight.

Price R903 from 4x4 Mega World

go! Drive & Camp says The 100 % polyester has protective sleeves covering the high-tenacity yarn in certain sections and has reinforced eyelets.



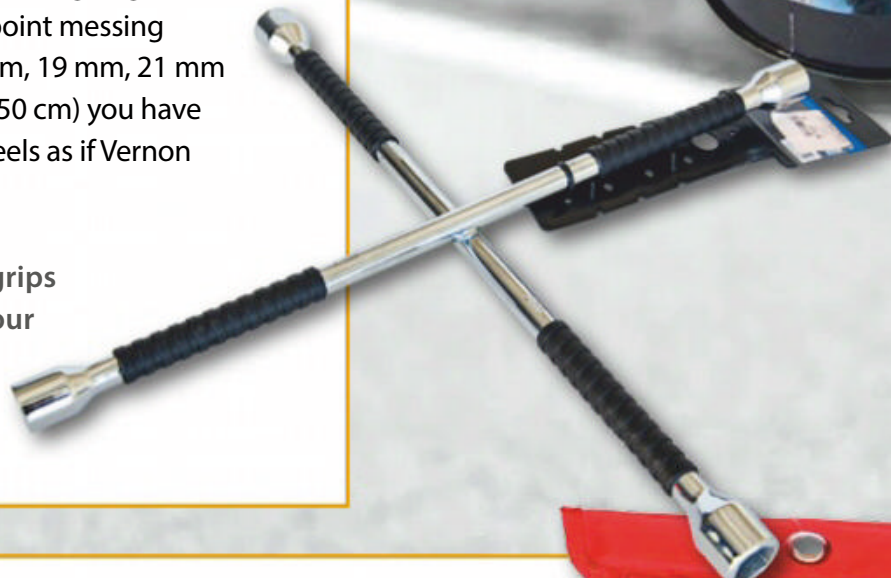
Criss-Cross

MOTOQUIP 4x4 WHEEL SPANNER

Most people have a pretty decent wheel spanner in their car or garage somewhere, but you drive a Land Cruiser, so there's no point messing about with the tiny stuff. This one's got the usual 17 mm, 19 mm, 21 mm and 23 mm sockets, but with so much extra length (50 cm) you have more leverage to loosen that one pesky nut that feels as if Vernon Koekemoer tightened it.

Price R275 from 4x4 Mega World

go! Drive & Camp says There are rubber grips on the ends close to your sockets, so your hands don't slip when you're sweaty after changing that flat tyre.



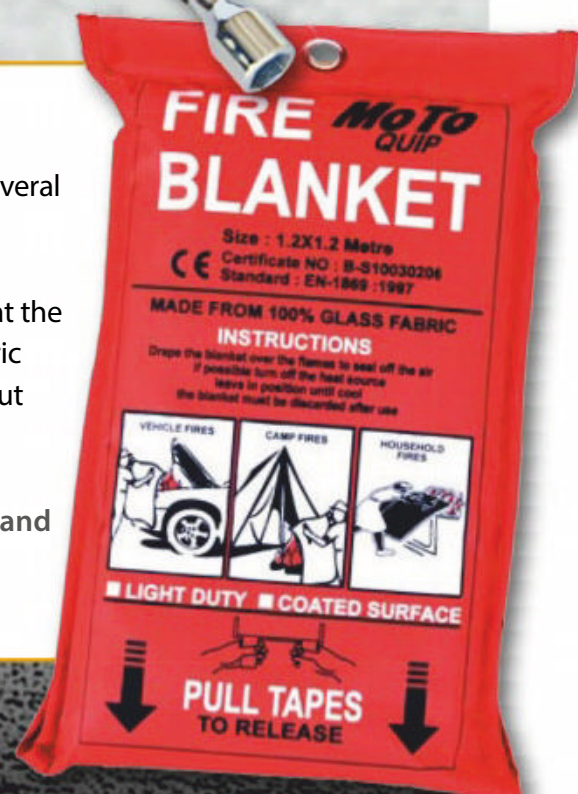
SMOTHER BUG

MOTOQUIP FIRE BLANKET

The best thing about this product is not that you can use it for several household and camping applications, but also for your vehicle should you see flames emerging from under the bonnet. You simply loosen the Velcro strip on the bag, pull on the tabs at the bottom and the blanket releases. It's made of a glass fabric with a specially coated surface and should be able to put out small fires with ease.

Price R201 from Makro

go! Drive & Camp says This isn't a wash, rinse and repeat jobbie. You must discard the blanket after use.



Top up

MOTOQUIP FLEX N FILL FUNNEL

You service your vehicle at least once a year or every few thousand kilometres, but on that last trip, your vehicle worked especially hard to pull your Bush Lapa Baobab through the soft sand in Botswana. A check engine oil message comes up on your information display. You don't have to mess oil all over the place, because this flexible funnel has you covered – and has a great little mesh filter inside the cup to keep dirt out.

Price R28

go! Drive & Camp says

Makeshift funnels from old Coke bottles work just fine, but the extra length on this spout means you can reach the oil cap easily, and not spill those precious yellow drops.





Jack of all trades 24-PIECE AUTO SAFETY KIT

With all these items, your last name might as well be MacGyver. There's a bungee cord, little booster cables, a dynamo LED torch, long-nose pliers, a bit driver, 10 bits, a pair of gloves, tyre pressure gauge, electrical tape and five cable ties.

Price: R400 from the AA
go! Drive & Camp says The little triangular bag it comes in doubles as the warning triangle when you're on the side of the road.

Hardcore 4x4 TAURO BASIC 4X4 RECOVERY KIT

As expected from the name, you just have the bare essentials in here to get you out of those sticky situations, including a nine-metre snatch strap, a five-metre pull strap that can double as a winch extension strap, two bow shackles and a pair of Dromex leather gloves. Simple yet effective.

Price R1 595 from Camp & Climb
go! Drive & Camp says It comes in a handy canvas bag that keeps all your items together.



POWER UP MOTO-QUIP 800 AMP BOOSTER CABLES

Flat batteries happen to the best of us. Sometimes it's the headlamps we left on, or maybe your battery is just a little run down and needs replacing. Either way, a set of these big guys should see you right, if someone's willing to give you a jump, with large copper strands that transfer a lot of power from the donor vehicle. They're nice and long too, at 4,8 metres.

Price R460 from Makro

go! Drive & Camp says Attach the red clamp of the one end to the dead battery. And then attach the other red and black clamp to the donor car's battery. Attach the black clamp to a grounding spot away from the battery to avoid an explosion or sparks.



Whoa, mister! MOTO-QUIP SAFETY EMERGENCY VEST

At the risk of looking like a car guard, at the very least you'll be highly visible in one of these. Because of the mesh comprising most of the vest – you basically just have three strips across your chest and back – your clothing underneath is more visible, distinguishing you from the countless other reflective vests in parking lots.

Price R102 from Makro

go! Drive & Camp says The mesh is also lightweight, and you won't sweat if you have to keep it on for long.



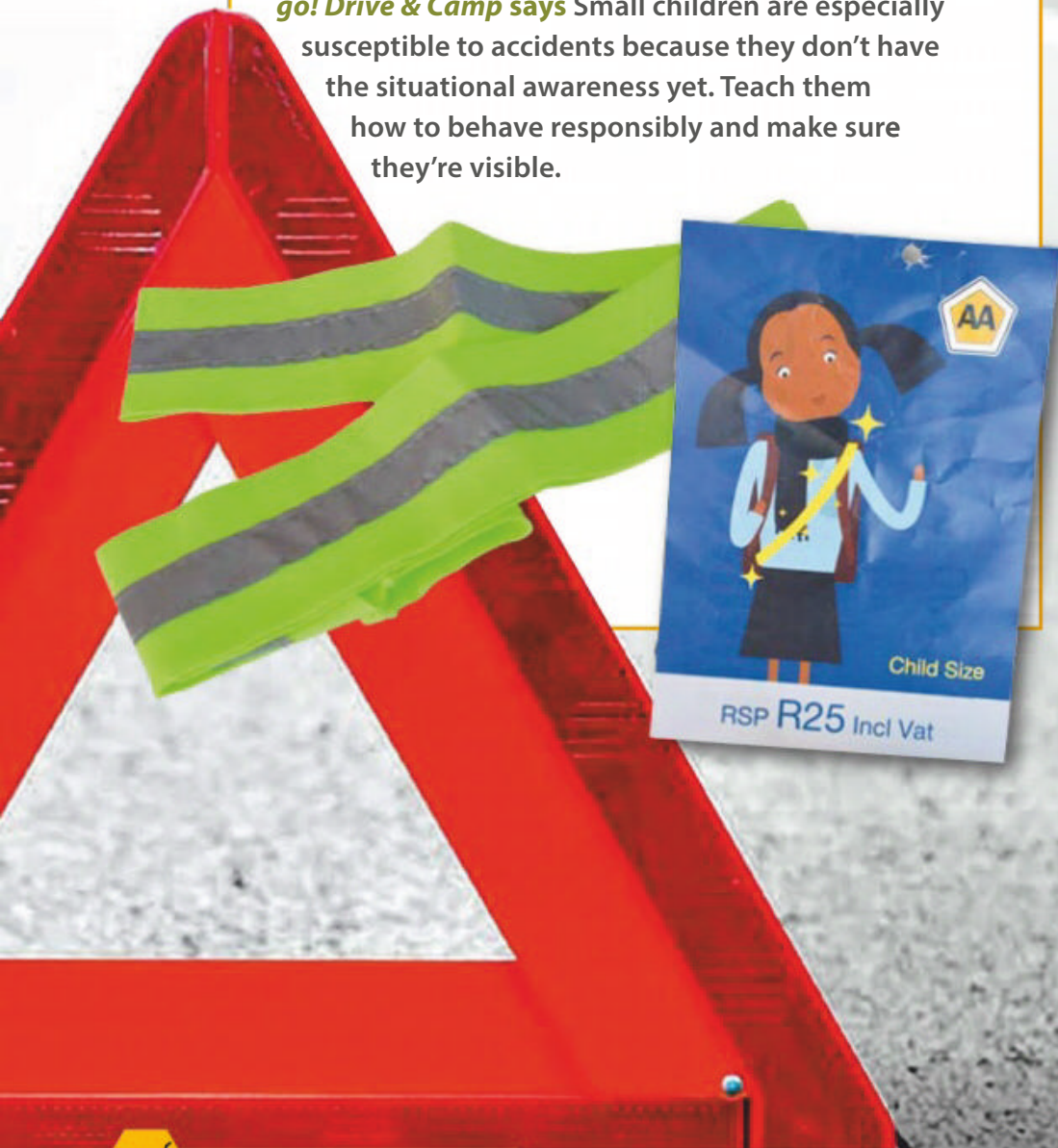
Little helpers

AA CHILD-SIZE VISIBILITY STRAP

Sometimes Johnny Junior just wants to help dad get everything going again, so let him. Safety first, though, so make sure he pulls one of these across his chest. It can also be used for when they're pedestrians on a school outing.

Price R30 from the AA

go! Drive & Camp says Small children are especially susceptible to accidents because they don't have the situational awareness yet. Teach them how to behave responsibly and make sure they're visible.



Put it out quick SAFE-QUIP 1 KG EXTINGUISHER

This is always the go-to solution for most fire scenarios. Most of the time, the dry chemical powder one (as determined by the blue label) is the one that's applicable to most of life's impromptu blazes. This one also comes in a plastic mount that you could screw onto the inside of your canopy.

Price R280 from the AA

go! Drive & Camp says

Remember to have your extinguisher serviced at least once a year to keep it in peak operational performance.



Don't hit me

MOTO-QUIP FOLDABLE WARNING TRIANGLE

A warning triangle shouldn't be a clunky piece of equipment but should offer you high visibility and not blow over easily in the wind. This is especially vital when you've had to pull over on the side of the road to change a flat. This nifty item folds and clips together, with bright reflective fabric inside the frame and the actual frame covered in reflective red panels.

Price R68 from Makro

go! Drive & Camp says The entire item folds away into a plastic holder than measures 55 mm wide, 30 mm high and 320 mm long. It has a Velcro strip underneath so it doesn't roll around your boot.



GET THE PRODUCTS HERE

Automobile Association www.aa.co.za

Makro www.makro.co.za

Camp & Climb www.campandclimb.co.za

4x4 MegaWorld www.4x4megaworldonline.com

Rub it in!

Flavour is king in this month's recipes, and the easiest way to get taste to the max is by using a rub.

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

LAMB SHOULDER POTJIE WITH CURRY

Soul food

Good lamb doesn't need a lot of fuss when you braai it, but this melt-in-the-mouth lamb shoulder in its curry sauce is simply an absolute delight.

Ingredients

(enough for 8)

- 1 lamb shoulder – 1,2 kg
- 1-2 red chillies, coarsely chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, quartered
- 2-3 tablespoons masala curry spread
- 1 tablespoon desiccated coconut
- 3 onions, thickly sliced
- cooking oil for braaiing
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 bottle (330 ml) beer
- salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 1 cup coconut milk
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice

Here's how

1 Pierce the meat with a sharp knife all over and squeeze the garlic and chilli pieces into the cuts. Mix together the curry paste and desiccated coconut and rub it all over the meat. Refrigerate overnight. (Remember to take it out the fridge early enough the next day so it's at room temperature when you cook it.)

2 Light the fire and wait for moderate coals. In the meantime, pack the onions in a thick layer at the bottom of a black potjie with a teaspoon of cooking oil and the bay leaves. Now place the lamb on this bed, pour the beer down the side of the potjie and season to taste with salt and black pepper.

3 Replace the lid and place the pot over the coals – remember a few coals for the lid. Braai the meat slowly for about three hours or until the lamb is cooked and soft – I prefer mine to not completely fall apart. (You can peep after an hour and baste the meat but try not to open the potjie too often.) Keep the coals going throughout.

4 Stir in the coconut milk and heat through. Taste and season with the lemon juice, salt and pepper, and then serve with rice. Fresh coriander is an optional extra.

go! Drive & Camp says Much of the success of this recipe depends on the curry paste – choose one that is fragrant or strong enough for your taste.

SALTY BACON BRAAIBROODJIES

Smokey, the bandit

Stretch six strips of bacon to flavour a whole 12 braaibroodjies!

Ingredients

(12 sandwiches)

- 6 smoked bacon strips
- 4 tablespoons sea salt flakes
- 1 teaspoon coriander seed, crushed
- a generous pinch of pepper and dry origanum
- 24 slices plain white bread
- soft butter to spread
- 3 tomatoes, thickly sliced
- 1 red onion, thinly sliced
- 1 large block (400 g) white cheddar, grated
- 1 small block (250 g) mozzarella, grated

Here's how

1 Fry the bacon in a pan until crispy and drain on kitchen paper. Crumb the now dry bacon slices and place it in a spice grinder

or food processor with the salt, coriander, pepper and origanum. Blitz until the mixture is a coarse rub.

2 Spread 12 slices of bread with butter. Then turn it over and build the sandwich on the side that's not spread: pack tomato slices on all the slices, sprinkle with plenty of the salty bacon rub, and then divide the onion and cheese between the slices. Spread the remaining slices with butter and close the sandwich, butter-side on the outside.

3 Slowly braai the sandwiches over very moderate coals – braai them slowly and turn them regularly so that they get lovely and golden brown on the outside, with the cheese melting on the inside and the onion tender and fragrant. Serve immediately while still hot and the cheese pulls into lovely strings.

go! Drive & Camp says The salty bacon rub is delicious on anything from fried eggs to popcorn! Feel free to experiment with it.





SALT-AND-PEPPER STEAK WITH MUSHROOMS AND TOMATO BUTTER **Sergeant Pepper**

Steak and lots of pepper is a classic combination.

Ingredients

(enough for 4)

- ½ teaspoon each Sichuan, pink and black peppercorns
- 1 teaspoon coriander seed
- 1 tablespoon sea salt
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 deboned sirloin steak – 800 g
- ½ cup butter
- 1 large tomato, peeled, pitted and finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons oil
- 16 button mushrooms

Here's how

1 Dry fry all the peppercorns in a pan with the coriander. Combine with the salt in a pestle and mortar and grind till fine. Rub

the mustard all over the steak, followed by the spice mixture to taste – you can always sprinkle over more as the meat braais. Allow the meat to marinade on the side while you get the coals ready.

2 Melt the butter in a pan and fry the tomato until just soft. Add the vinegar plus a pinch of salt. Set aside the mixture.

3 Heat the oil in a pan and fry the mushrooms until golden brown. (Or thread the mushrooms onto skewers, baste with oil and braai over the coals.)

4 Braai the steak over hot coals until it is cooked to your taste – baste with a little oil so the flames lick and scorch the meat.

5 Rest the meat on a cutting board before slicing it. Serve with the cooked mushrooms, tomato butter and extra salt and pepper.

go! Drive & Camp says You can also braai individual steaks instead of one big one.



PORK NECK STEAKS WITH A PUNCH **Something meaty**

Pork neck has great marbling and works well with the strong flavours of this rub.

Ingredients

(enough for 4)

- 1 teaspoon cumin seed, crushed
- 2 teaspoons coriander seed, crushed
- 1 heaped tablespoon smoked paprika
- 1 teaspoon mustard powder
- 2 teaspoons brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon fine all spice
- 1 teaspoon coarsely ground black pepper
- 1 tablespoon sea salt flakes
- 1 teaspoon dry oregano
- 4 large boned pork necks

Here's how

1 Mix together all the spices and rub the meat all over. Marinate for about three hours in the fridge. (Remember, the meat must be room temperature before you braai.)

2 Braai the meat over hot coals until a nicely caramelised crust has formed – be careful to not let the sugar burn. Once the meat has some colour, raise the grid to allow it to cook through. Turn the meat as required.

go! Drive & Camp says Give the steaks that little extra by mixing together a heaped tablespoon each of apricot jam, tomato purée and Worcestershire sauce and baste the steaks with the mixture just before removing the meat from the coals.



ISLAND CHICKEN 'Jamaican-me-crazy'

This rub mixture is fragrant, but without a bite – so do add dry chilli to taste if the youngsters aren't sharing your meal.

Ingredients

(enough for 6)

- 1 tablespoon dried onion flakes
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon dried thyme
- 2 teaspoons sea salt flakes
- 1 teaspoon fine all spice
- 1 teaspoon coarse ground black pepper
- a pinch of nutmeg
- a pinch of fine cinnamon
- a pinch of ginger
- a pinch of cayenne pepper
- 24 chicken drumsticks

Here's how

1 Combine all the spices in a

food processor or spice grinder, mix thoroughly and store in an airtight container.

2 Score each drumstick three times – this helps absorb the flavours and also shortens the braai time. Place the chicken and the spice mixture into a Ziploc bag and marinate for at least an hour, but preferably overnight.

3 Braai the chicken until cooked and juicy. Remember, there is sugar in the marinade – if the coals are too hot, the chicken will get scorched before it is cooked. So take your time. Serve the chicken breasts with fresh lemon wedges and buttered mielies.

go! Drive & Camp says Do double – or triple – the spice mixture as it will last for up to a month in an airtight container. It's also delicious on kebabs and pork.



BUTTERNUT SLICES WITH SESAME SALT Worth their salt

This side dish is definitely not a mere aside.

Ingredients

(enough for 8)

- 3 tablespoons sesame seeds
- 1 tablespoon sea salt flakes
- 1 medium-sized butternut, unpeeled and cut into 1 cm slices
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon sesame oil
- ½ cup buttermilk
- 1-2 tablespoons sriracha sauce
- 1 tablespoon fresh lime or lemon juice
- 3 tablespoons pomegranate seeds

1 Roast the sesame seeds and salt in a dry pan until light brown. Allow to cool and store in an airtight container – as easy as

that. If you prefer a finer texture, you can fine-tune it before storing it.

2 Boil the butternut in water until just soft. Drain and allow to cool so you can handle it. Mix the two oils and baste the mixture onto the butternut. Then pack it in a single layer on a hinged grid. Braai the slices until they have a good colour with nicely scorched grid lines.

3 Mix together the buttermilk and sriracha sauce.

4 Sprinkle with the sesame seed, followed by the lime juice, pomegranate seeds and buttermilk sauce. You can also serve the sauce separately so everyone can help themselves.

go! Drive & Camp says A pomegranate in the fruit bowl while you camp is an asset. It lasts long and adds wonderful colour and crunch to any dull dish.

go! Drive & Camp MARKETPLACE

• ADVERTISING PROMOTION

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For their 10th anniversary, outdoor specialists Carma Quip introduced the Scout adventure mat.

The name reflects "a search for something in various places". It is a truly hard-wearing, compact and practical sleeping mat, aimed at hikers, motorcyclists or any adventurous travellers.

Carma Quip (Carina & Marius) has always been passionate about outdoor adventure and they believe in creating durable, high-quality products that surpass adventurers' expectations. The Scout is built using the same handmade process and top-quality materials as their other products. Don't miss this brand-new investment in a good night's sleep.

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- Size: 1,8 m x 50 cm x 5 cm
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Jan Theron Photography

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At Battery & Outdoor King you don't buy a product – you buy a solution! Customers, for example, may ask for a 105Ah battery as they're used to using for dual-battery systems, but here the specialists will first focus on what you want to do with it so you can get advice on the best possible product.

The store sells several top brands, such as Ctek, Victorinox, Leatherman, Noco, Victron, Discover, Indeflate, Energizer, National Luna, Snomaster and Nitecore. The merchandise may vary, but the emphasis is always on quality.

A recent customer was helped with a 3kVa 12V to a 230v conversion system for his trailer. This Victron system also has a built-in 120Ah intelligent battery charger. This means it needs the minimum time to recharge its two 230ah Victron super-cycle batteries (which can be discharged 300 times to 0%).

Of course, Battery & Outdoor King also helps those guys who want to run fridges for a few hours or even weeks without electrical power. You can also get advice on the new SnoMaster ice machine running on 12v and 230v power.

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& Outdoor King is the American Noco Genius Booster, a lithium jump starter that works like a dream. The latest model GB50 has just been launched and can connect up to 4,5 l diesel and 7,0 l petrol engines. This unit weighs barely 1 kg and can be recharged 1 000 times. They are also completely safe and will not damage your vehicle's computer. The unit can even recharge your phone.

If you want any advice on DC-to-DC dual-battery systems or solenoid systems, you're in the right place. Battery & Outdoor King also holds the full range of Tjhoko paints.

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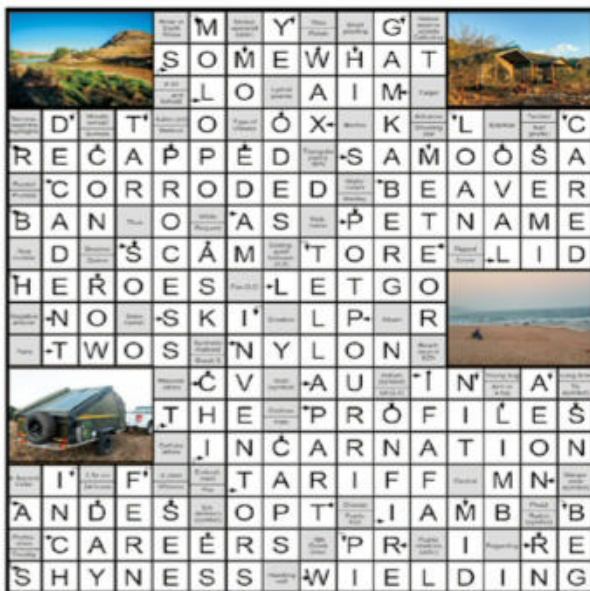
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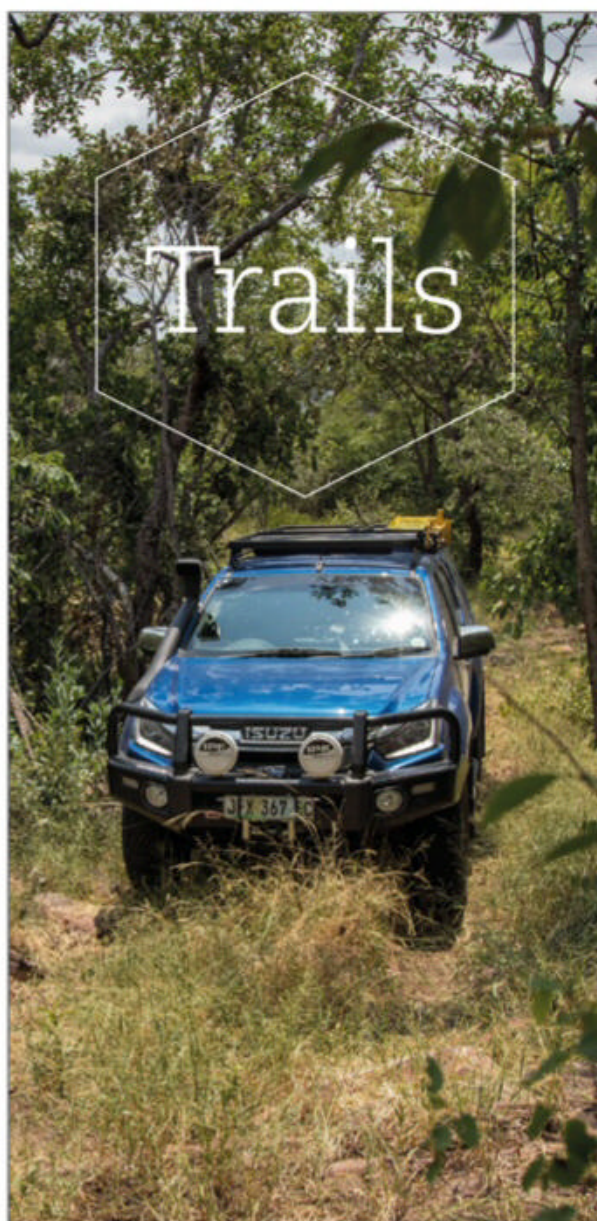
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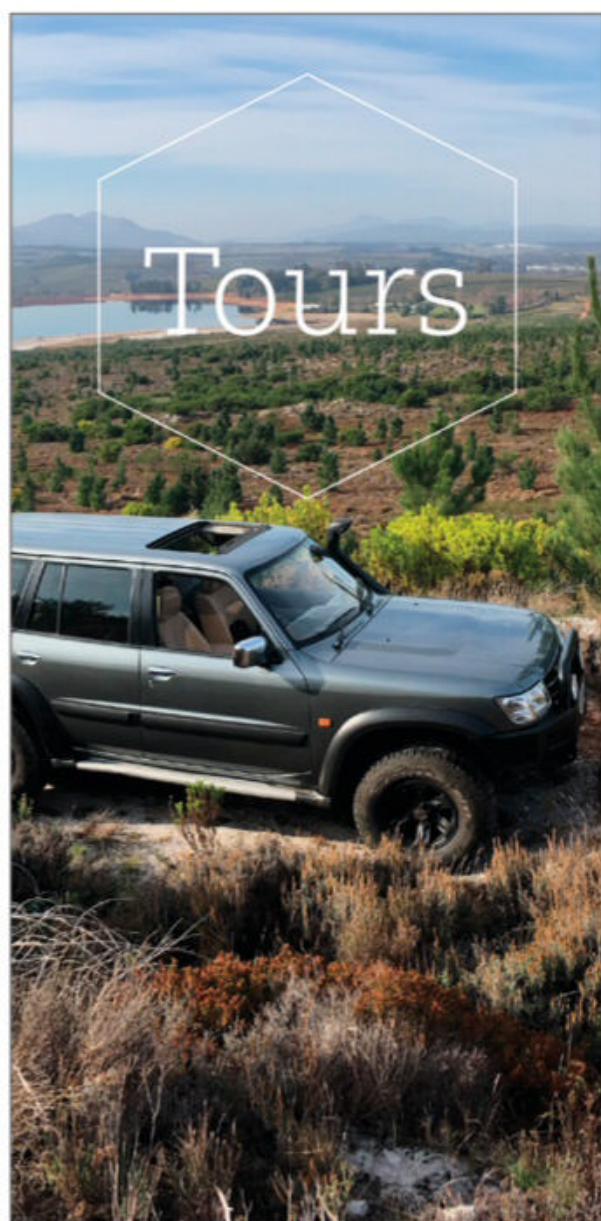
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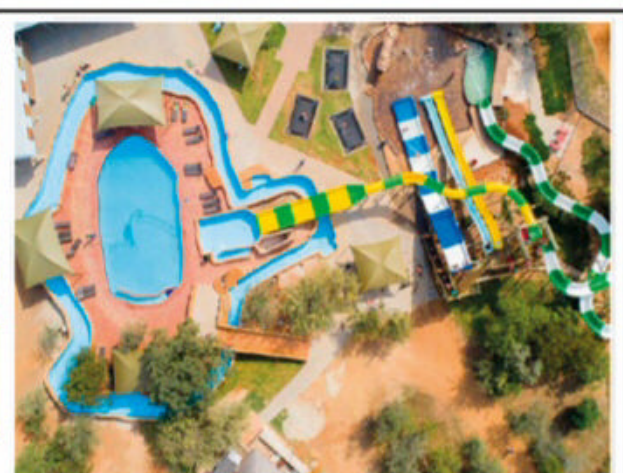
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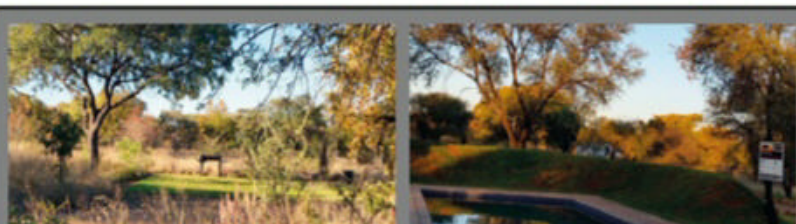
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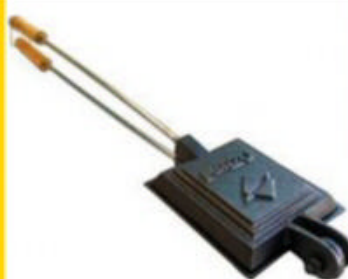
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CROSSWORD

Greta Meyer from Port Elizabeth has won **Van Loveren's Tangled Tree wine** worth R1 000 for her entry in the July 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/2TwcsJ9>. Last month's solution is on p 114.

			Valley in the Camdeboo	Error Music genre	Boat	Iodine (symbol)	National park outside Kimberley			
			Ridicule			Punctuation mark	Candy on a stick			
Bamboo musical instruments	Mug Title for a male	Re: vision		Pardons Samovar				Opening	Covers Iridium (symbol)	Put away
Informal Pinch		Sea eagle Perched			Mosquito-borne fever					
Public relations (abbr)		River A flower				Album Regarding		Las Vegas (abbr)		
	Downfall Cap			Watchful 12 months				Employ		
Maths symbol Snapshot				Thou Very happy		Digested	Rest camp in the Kruger			
		Born (French)			Shock	A single unit				
Legumes Halt			Lan- thanum (symbol)		Trouble					
			Hesitated Rodent					Deserve	Anticipate Soundness	Exist
				Insect				Cry Resided		
		Animal doctor Chime			Rutherfordium (symbol)	Racket Grain				
A Ford bakkie	(Have) consumed	2,54 cm Cot		Japanese soup						Glacial deposit Plus
				Flightless bird			Travel document			
Total cost (abbr) Look!		Chair part		Hidden						
				Cipher			Coloured			

COMPILED BY GERDA ENGELBRECHT

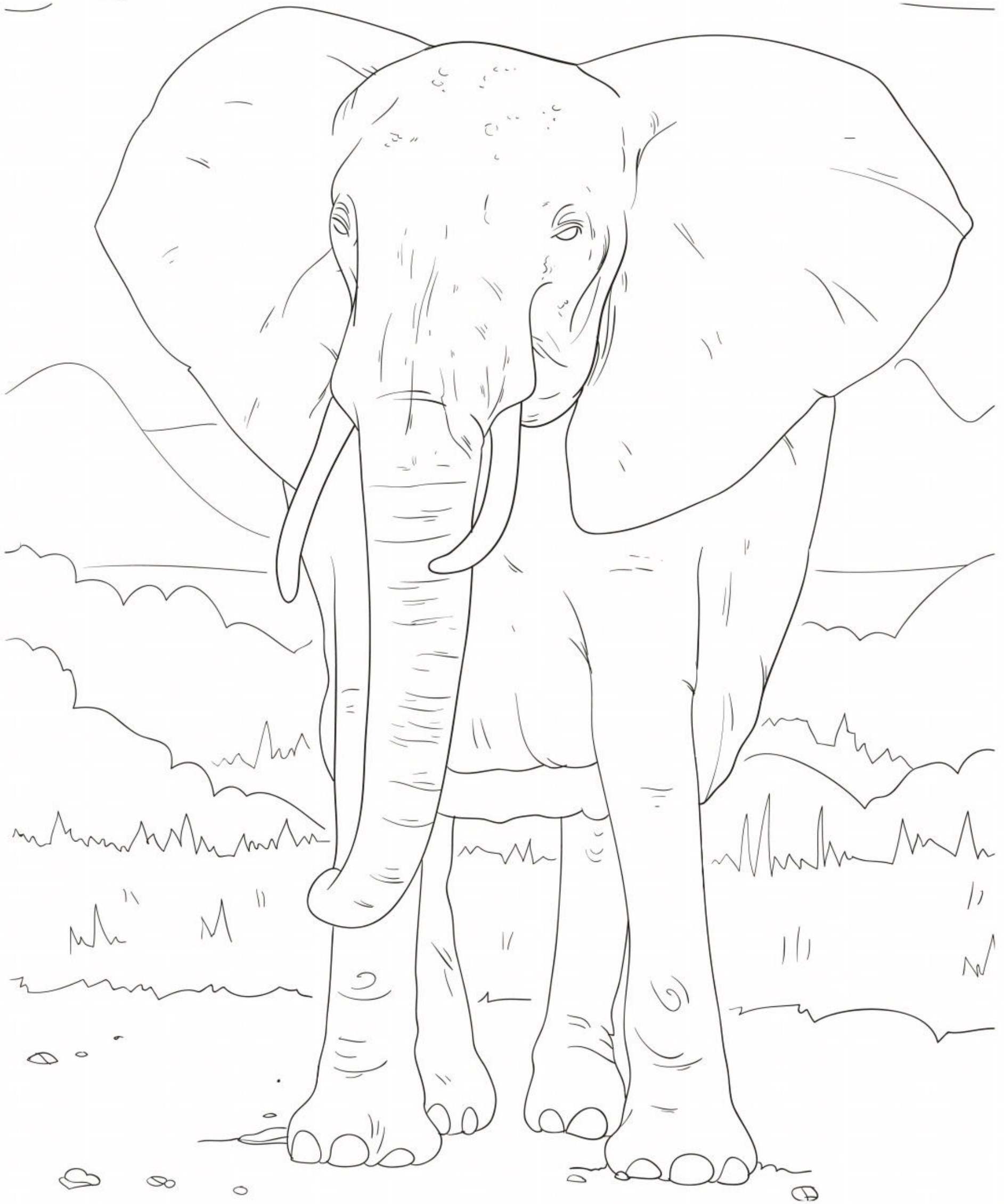
Win wonderful wine!

Make winter exciting with Tangled Tree wines. The mouth-watering eco-friendly range of Tangled Tree wines comprises of Chocolate Cabernet Sauvignon, Butterscotch Chardonnay, Moscato Rosé, Tropical Sauvignon Blanc and Spicy Shiraz. Enjoy the Tangled Tree Shiraz or Cabernet Sauvignon in front of a roaring campfire this winter. The **Tangled Tree** range, with its

lower carbon footprint, is not merely an embodiment of Van Loveren's commitment to sustainable winemaking but also tells a story of love, find out more at tangledtree.com. Follow **Tangled Tree** wines on social media at @tangledtreewines (Facebook & Instagram) 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 black-and-white drawing.

WORD SEARCH

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

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

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

MAZE

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

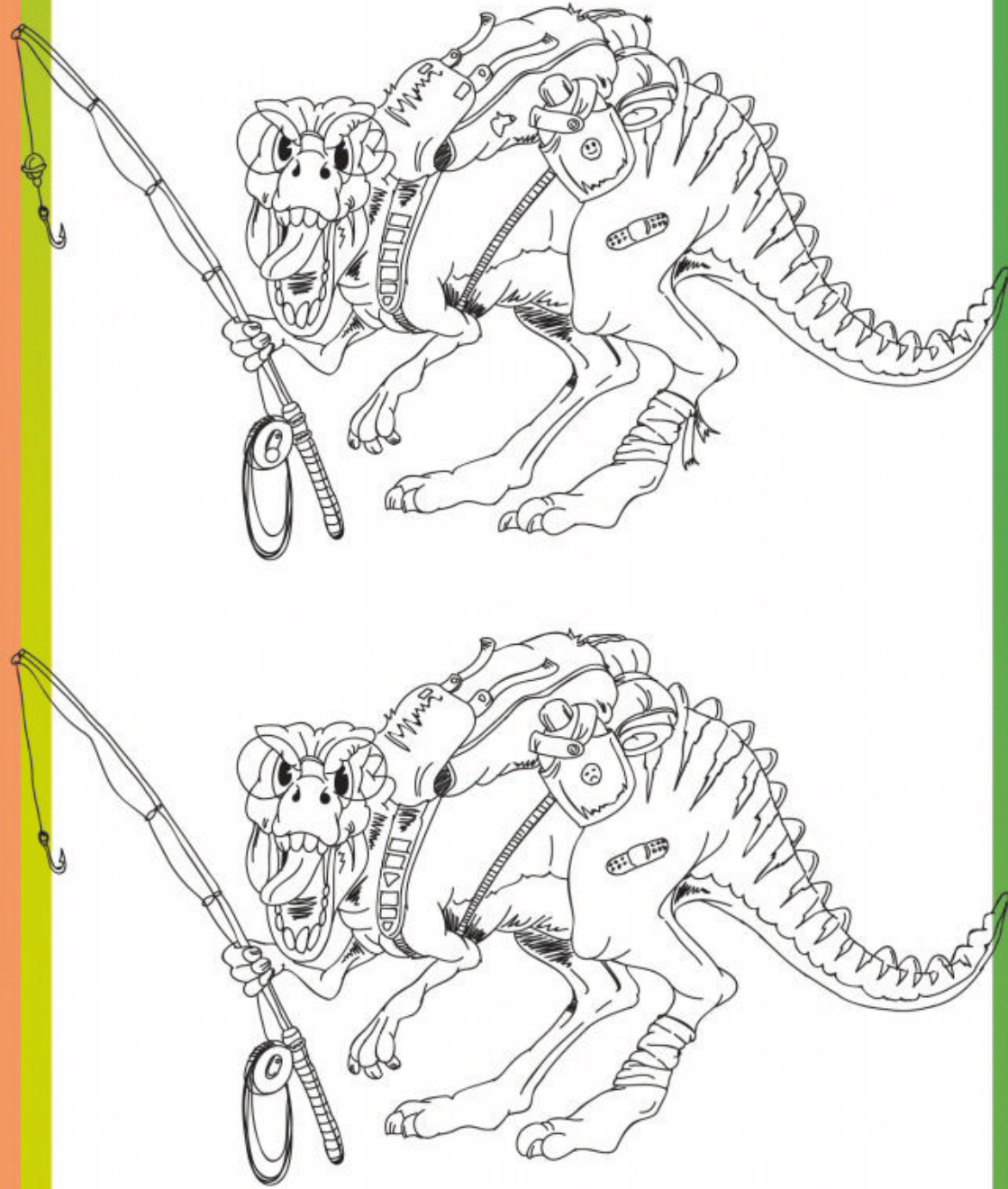
Word search

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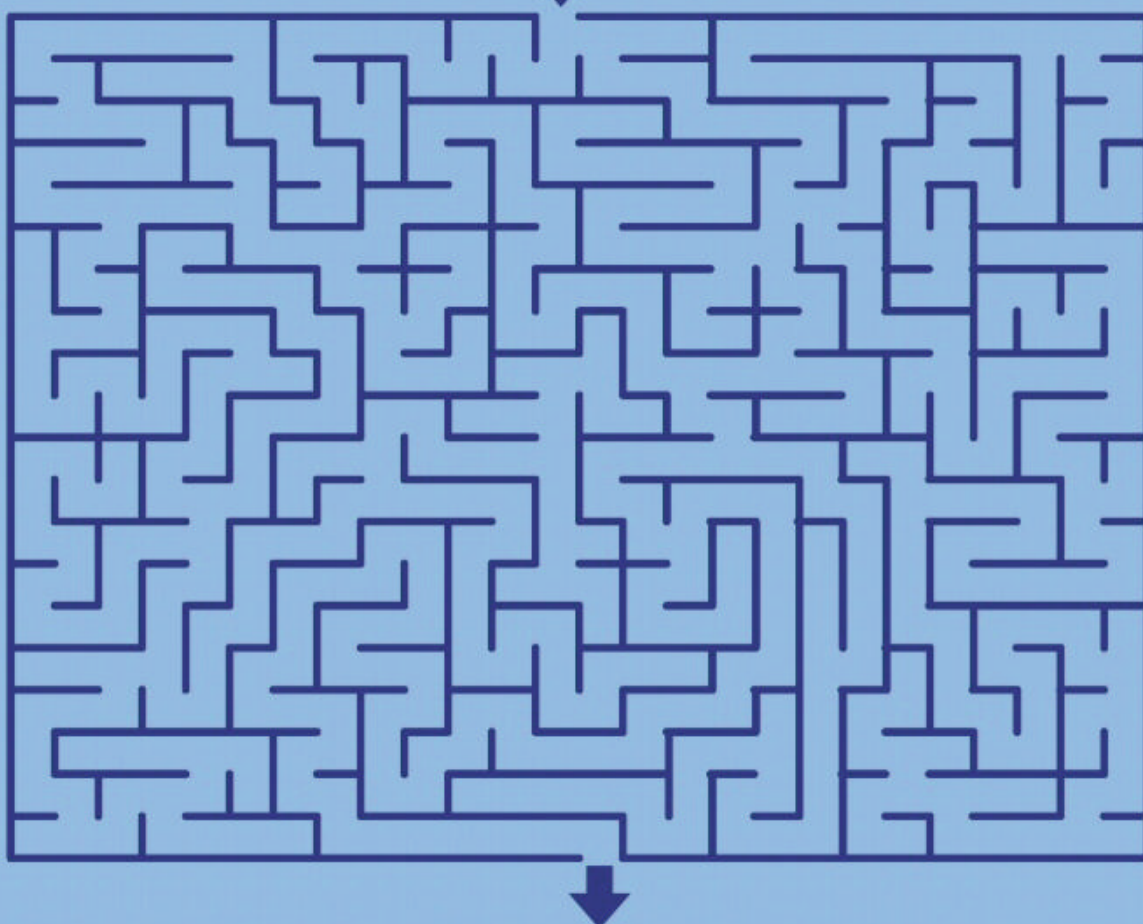
ON THE BACK ROADS

Tyre pressure	Low range	Wheel
Bull bar	Wrench	Turbo diesel engine
Roof rack	Map	Traction control
Jack	Gearbox	Safety belt
Rock slider	Shocks	Suspension
Compressor	Snorkel	Winch

Spot the differences



Maze



Animal facts



- Killer whale males weigh up to 9 000 kg and females up to 5 500 kg.
- Killer whales hunt everything from fish to walruses – seals, sea lions, penguins, squid, sea turtles, sharks and even other kinds of whales.
- But wherever they are in any of the world's oceans, average-sized killer whales may eat about 227 kilograms of food a day!
- Often referred to as 'wolves of the sea', killer whales live and hunt together in 'pods', or family groups, much like a pack of wolves.

It's time to clear the air

His new Cruiser is no fuel miser, and this prompted **Mic van Zyl** to investigate his carbon footprint.

It has been an interesting couple of weeks for yours truly. An opportunity came up to replace my Ford Ranger Wildtrak with a vehicle I've been coveting for several years – a Toyota Land Cruiser 76 Series wagon.

As I drove out of the Toyota dealership in my new truck, that old familiar feeling came rushing back of being in a very basic machine with awesome capability.

Despite all the great four-wheel driving that I have done over the years, the times behind the wheel of my first 4x4 always seem to have been the best. I still miss my old Hilux bakkie with its solid front axle.

The timing of this acquisition for me is probably more significant than the mere desire to own an old-school classic 4x4. Engines like the V8 turbo diesel in my new 76 are not likely to survive the ever-increasing restrictions being placed on vehicle manufacturers regarding emissions for much longer.

Currently, one of the major factors determining vehicle development is carbon dioxide emissions. Global warming is a real issue and vehicle pollutants are a significant contributor to this.

THERE IS A MANDATORY emissions data sticker on the windscreen of my new wagon. It states the amount of CO₂ emitted per kilometre and fuel-consumption figures. My vehicle is Euro 4 emissions compliant and features a catalytic converter. The Cruiser is certainly no fuel miser, and this prompted me to investigate carbon dioxide emissions as a matter of interest.

Interestingly, modern engines have experienced a decline in fuel consumption of around 0,5% per annum between 2000 and 2014 as stated by a recent study published by *The Journal of Energy in Southern Africa*. Car manufacturers are being forced to make more fuel-efficient vehicles.

The most popular emissions data referred to are greenhouse gas emissions. CO₂ is, of course, one of the main contributors to greenhouse gases that cause global warming – bad for us all in the long run. We measure these emissions in CO₂ grammes per kilometre (CO₂ g/km) emitted.

“ The second group of emissions is arguably more menacing as they have a more direct impact on our health

These are all buzzwords that get the environmentalists going.

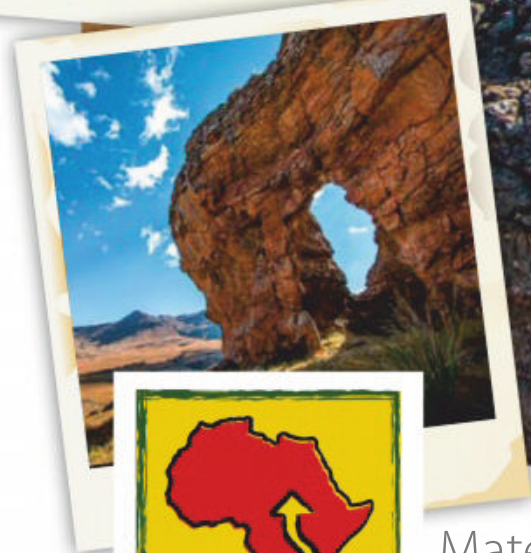
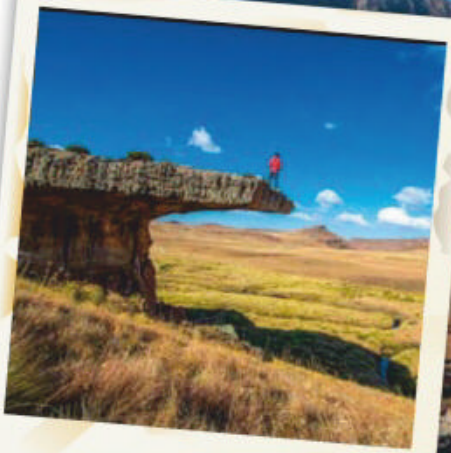
The second group of emissions is arguably more menacing as they have a more direct effect on our health rather than the long-term wellbeing of the planet. These are air-pollutant emissions that cause the poor quality of air we're forced to breathe. The main culprits here are mono nitrogen oxides or NOx emissions. These types of emissions kill people.

American emissions authorities estimate the number of premature deaths from vehicle air pollutant emissions to be around 60 000 per annum. Yet the sticker on my windscreen omits the level of NOx emissions or any of the other nasty air pollutant emissions.

What I found most interesting pertaining to diesel engines was the fact that CO₂ emitted by a diesel engine is locked into the intrinsic method of diesel engine combustion. Every litre of diesel combusted produces 2,7 kg of CO₂. No amount of clever engine engineering can alter this equation. To produce less CO₂, you must burn less diesel. The amount of NOx produced can, however, be altered.

Next month I'll let you in on some lesser known but interesting and shocking NOx information.

Southern Lesotho



Matebeng Pass, Lake Letsle, Sehlabathebe National Park, this adventure spans approximately 800 km and will cover some of the most beautiful and scenic landscapes you will ever see!

DAY 1 The adventure starts in the town of Matatiele in the late afternoon. After checking in at our guest lodge we will enjoy a delicious dinner where everyone will meet one another.

DAY 2 Our adventure starts when we ascend our first mountain pass, Qacha's Nek, en route to the Lesotho border. Once in Lesotho, we will make our way to Sehlabathebe National Park where we will spend the next two nights – along the way conquering three passes namely Suspension Bridge Pass, Melikane Pass and the famed Matebeng Pass.

DAY 3 Today we will take a break from driving and do some sightseeing of the Sehlabathebe National Park. This national park boasts magnificent and unusual rock formations, unique wild flowers and alpine flora and rock pools.

Our second night is again spent at Sehlabathebe National Park.

DAY 4 Today our adventure continues with a drive from Sehlabathebe National Park to Ramabanta. We will also visit the second highest single-drop waterfall in the world before eventually making our way to our lodge at Ramabanta for the night.

DAY 5 Today we spend most of our time on gravel roads having our lunch at the site of a waterfall. Our evening will be spent in a hotel in the town of Mohale's Hoek.

DAY 6 Our last day in Lesotho and the scenery will continue to amaze. We visit a house built into a cave, traverse the Maphooaneng pass and have lunch at the highest natural lake in Southern Africa.

We will then we make our way back to Matatiele for our last night.

DAY 7 After breakfast it is time to say our goodbyes.

6-NIGHT / 7-DAY ADVENTURE (LODGE AND GUESTHOUSE ACCOMMODATION)

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COST R 11 350 per person sharing
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WHAT YOU NEED TO BRING

- This unique trip requires a 4x4 vehicle with high vehicle clearance and low range gear for the mountain passes – some of which will be fairly technical).

Yes, I want to go!

To book, call ☎ 044 535 9033 or
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Let's declare war on plastic

It's safe to say that South Africans are still doing too little about plastic pollution, says **Neels van Heerden**.

Four years ago, the amount of plastic in our oceans was estimated at around 40 billion tonnes. This, apparently, is enough to cover the earth with clingwrap six times over.

Marine biologists predict that by 2050 there will be more plastic than fish in the oceans – some even claim that there are more microplastics in the oceans than the 200 billion stars in our galaxy.

Plastic in the ocean moves along ocean currents and collects in five vortices. Two of these are located between South Africa and Argentina,

and southeast of Mauritius. Packaging material from South Africa is found in some of these vortices.

Our 3 500 km coastline is an irreplaceable food source, attracting tourists and providing a home to some 13 000 marine species, of which 33% aren't found anywhere else in the world. Research on beach debris on our coastline has shown the worst plastic pollution to occur near our major coastal cities, such as Durban and Cape Town.

ON ONE OF the most popular beaches, more than 3 000 microscopic pieces of plastic were counted in every square metre of sea sand. Cigarette butts, plastic bags, fishing tackle and food and beverage containers are the most common forms of plastic pollution on our beaches.

Marine animals including mussels, crayfish, sardines and many whale species are filter eaters. Because the plastic particles have broken down to be as small as plankton, they get incorporated into their systems. So, there's a red light flashing around food security. Many marine animals, such as seals, whales, tunas and sharks eat other fish that have plastic in their system, and therefore absorb it, too. Theoretically, therefore, the chances are good that humans also have microscopic plastic in their organs.

Plastic that end up in rivers and dams, also eventually find its way into our oceans. The average South African, for example, consumes more than 150 plastic water bottles annually, but recycles only 25% thereof. It's safe to say that South Africans have done too little to solve our plastic problem.

South Africa currently ranks 11th globally and third in Africa on a pollutant ranking. We must all stand together and declare war on plastic.

First, we need to reduce our dependence on plastic packaging. SANParks banned the use of plastic bags in its stores many years ago, but other campsites need to join the fight.

THE TOURISM GRADING Council should have rules on this. If a resort cannot provide evidence of how they manage plastic waste, they shouldn't receive a star rating.

The entire camping community should put shoulder to the wheel by avoiding, for example, single-use plastic products such as shopping bags and straws. Pack your groceries in reusable material bags or containers that are also biodegradable.

By deliberately changing our behaviour, we can easily cut single-use plastic from our lives. If plastic waste does accumulate during a camping holiday, the campsite needs to provide labelled containers where reusable waste can be separated from single-use plastic.

Glass bottles and bamboo or hemp are good alternatives to plastic. Our camping stores can customise their product lines to make a greater contribution in the fight against plastic.

Before we throw anything in a garbage bin, we need to consider how it can be reused. If it cannot be reused, we must recycle it. If it can't be recycled, we must ask why we purchased it in the first place. 🗑️

“

SANParks banned the use of plastic bags in its stores many years ago, but other campsites need to join the fight

”





The best of northern Botswana – and neighbours

On this classic tour with Bhejane 4x4 Adventures, you'll experience the wonders of northern Botswana. You'll also explore the Caprivi in Namibia, and Vic Falls in Zimbabwe.

TRANS-BOTSWANA

11 days/10 nights
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Start point:

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End point:

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DATES & RATES

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THE RATES INCLUDE

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WHAT SHOULD I BRING?

- Your own vehicle, and fuel
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This self-drive tour is one of the most popular on the Bhejane itinerary, for good reason: It allows you to have a true African adventure at a reasonable price, and you don't need any technical off-road driving skills.

Travel from the vast Makgadikgadi Pans around the Okavango Delta and up the Panhandle, pausing at the mysterious Tsodilo Hills – a world-renowned rock art site. You'll travel east through the Caprivi in Namibia, and back to Botswana via the ever-impressive Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe. The tour ends with a cruise on the Chobe River, where you

can toast the sunset while elephants splash in the shallows.

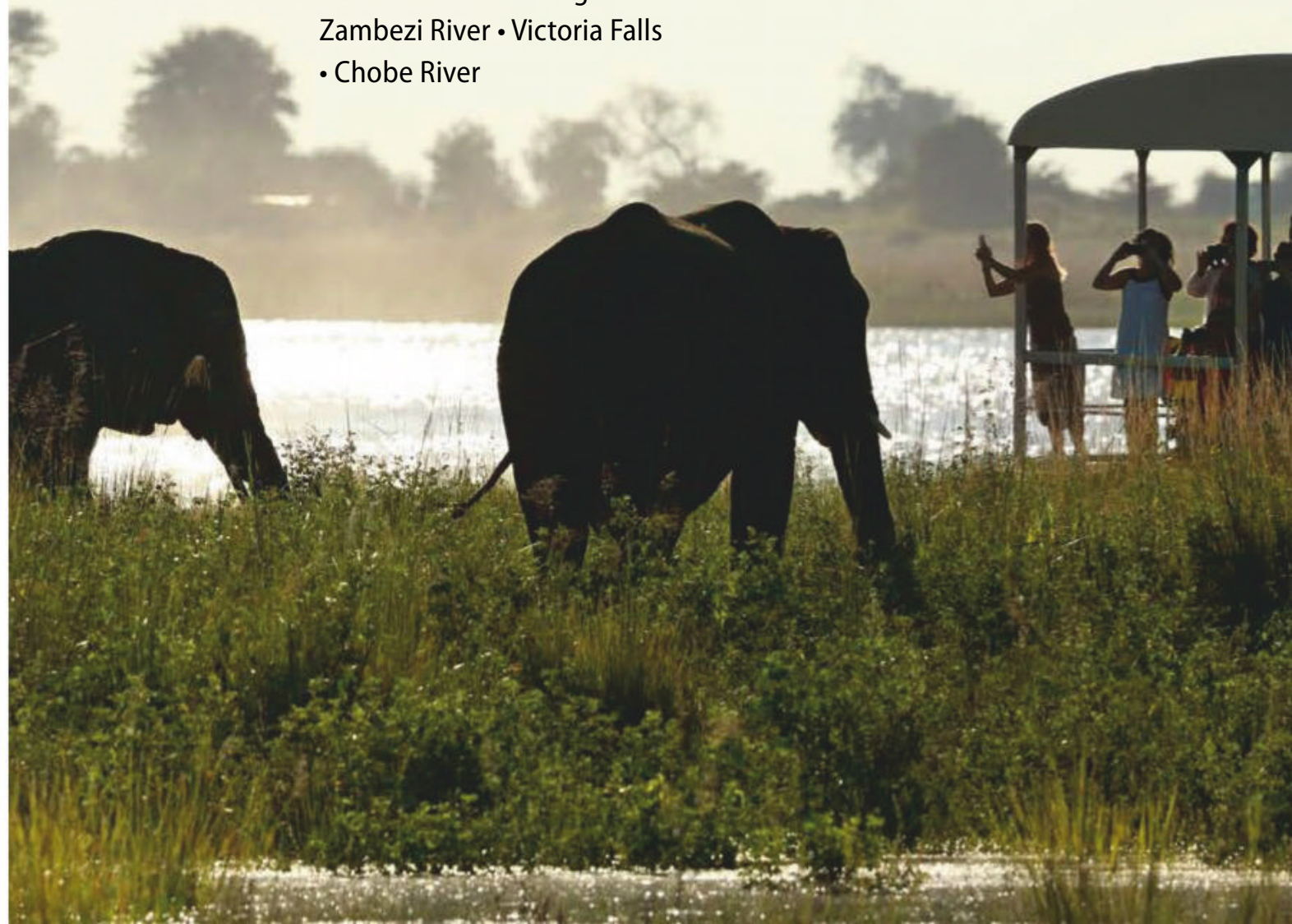
Bhejane will provide all tents and camping equipment, and their staff members will set up and strike camp. Experts will be on hand to guide you through sections of technical driving, and they'll be carrying all the necessary recovery gear should you get stuck.

A highlight of any Bhejane trip is the food, and this one is no exception: Our experienced bush chef will prepare three meals a day in his mobile kitchen, with fresh salads, potjiekos, braais and many other treats on the menu. The coffee pot will be on the fire until late.

All the campsites visited, other than the wild camp on spectacular Kubu Island, will have hot showers and flush toilets.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Kubu Island • Okavango Delta
- Tsodilo Hills • Kavango River & Zambezi River • Victoria Falls
- Chobe River



The amazing Ranchero slide

When you wreck your dad's treasured bakkie, you probably deserve the resultant spanking. **Cyril Kloppe** remembers one day in May only too well.

A while back I read about a teacher in the Western Cape who slapped one of her pupils. The online article and the comments below it – a combination of people defending corporal punishment and allegations of racism – made for unpleasant reading, but it did take me back to my childhood when I received my first hiding.

My mother will tell you that I am responsible for each of her grey hairs, and if you ask my dad whether I was really that wayward, he'll drop his chin to his chest and point his index

finger at the last three hairs on his shiny bald head.

I got this paddling at the tender age of five. We lived in Richards Bay, in KwaZulu-Natal, in a suburb called Arboretum. Many of our neighbours were fresh off the boat, mostly Scottish engineers who came to South Africa to help build the Richards Bay harbour. (It was the largest coal export port in the world at the time.) My father was a civil engineer at a firm responsible for much of the new port during the 1970s, and he rewarded his hard work with cool cars. Parked in our garage

was a bright red Holden Monaro GTS with black racing stripes down the bonnet.

Outside, between the garage and a Vibracrete wall, stood a 1970 Ford Ranchero bakkie – his second favourite. Years later, I would come to learn that my dad had planned to turn the Ranchero into our holiday bakkie, since the Monaro offered little luggage space. A Ford Ranchero may not have been the most practical holiday rig, but 1977 was the days of disco and it was more important to look cool than to be practical.

We never drove in the Ranchero and

I can't remember my dad ever starting up the engine.

ILLUSTRATION FRED MOUTON



When I asked him about this, he replied bluntly, “It doesn’t work.” My father isn’t gruff, but he is a man of few words. In my five-year-old brain, these words meant that the bakkie would never work. Therefore the car was useless, and you are free to do whatever you want with useless stuff.

THE NEXT MORNING I invited our neighbours’ kids, Christopher and Shelly, to come play at my house. The Ranchero’s two-tone paint job – chocolate brown below gold metallic paint – glistened in the morning sun. The bakkie had been stationary for a long time and the grass that the lawnmower couldn’t reach touched the chassis. No, this bakkie definitely didn’t work, but my friends and I would find a use for it on that fateful day.

To me, it seemed as if the Ranchero knew exactly what was about to happen and agreed that children’s entertainment was of paramount importance. The long bonnet and sloping windshield gently beckoned: “Come and slide on me. Come slide.” The stubby single cab and the long, streamlined load bin pleaded: “Get up, kids. Play on me.”

Christopher and I were powerless against the Ranchero’s siren song. Shelly wanted to confirm that we were actually allowed to play on my dad’s bakkie, but the boys were already in the load bin.

Christopher was the first to clamber onto the roof of the cab. Somewhere in the back of my mind a voice begged me to stop him, but it was too late. Whoosh! Down the windshield, over the bonnet and with a hop onto the lawn. Christopher lay on his back and cackled with delight. It was my turn next. With a push I slid down the glass. I saw the Ranchero’s dashboard zipping past below me, then I hit the wipers, bounced over the bonnet, flew through the air and fell next to Christopher on the soft grass. We howled with laughter in brotherly love but quickly rolled out of the way when Shelly flew over the bonnet toward us. The three of us giggled hysterically and it was the best day ever in my young life.

It wasn’t long before Tony, another boy from down my street, came to see what was going on. For the rest of the morning, my friends and I jumped around like mountain goats on that Ford Ranchero. Four pairs of bums and feet bounced over the bodywork and the bakkie got flatter, flatter and flatter. The metallic paint started to crack and flake, and with each



A Ford Ranchero may not have been the most practical holiday rig, but 1977 was the days of disco and it was more important to look cool



passing child, little flakes of paint merrily floated down onto the grass next to us like golden glitter.

Eventually, the roof had become so beaten down and the bonnet so dented that it was getting difficult to slide down it.

Somewhere in the leafy street where the four of us lived, Tony’s mom called out to him. He had to say goodbye because it was nearly lunchtime and he still had to wash his hands. But Shelly, Christopher and I persevered and tried to get a last couple of slides in before “the bakkie that didn’t work” became truly useless.

I gave my best impression of Johnny Weismuller’s Tarzan call and got ready to jump onto the windshield one last time. Suddenly, I heard an anguished scream. I looked up and saw my mother, staring at us with large eyes. A tray hung limply in one hand and cooldrink cups and sandwiches littered the ground in front of her feet.

“What are you doing?” she hissed. She took a long step over the spilled lunch and slowly approached our handiwork.

“Daddy said I could!” I peeped, but I could tell from my mother’s expression that there may have been a slight misunderstanding.

MY MOM SENT CHRISTOPHER, Shelly and me to their house. She wanted us out of the way when my dad came home to calm him down first. When she brought me home later, my dad stood in the living room with his arms dead straight down his sides. I was clearly in big trouble.

My dad wanted to know just two things: why and who. The first part of my explanation made him nod slowly. I detected suppressed anger simmering within him, but he seemed to accept the innocent mistake. When I listed the names of my accomplices, my mom casually

remarked that Tony couldn’t possibly have been part of the devastation because he and his family were in Durban that week. My “lie” triggered a lightning-quick response in dad. He launched himself over the coffee table like a lion and grabbed me with those enormous hands. I don’t remember much about the beating other than my bum hurting like it was on fire.

Tony’s parents later confirmed they had returned from Durban a day earlier than planned, and that Tony had indeed come to play at our house.

I would like to claim that this spanking would cure me of future abominable acts, but my hands would get spooned by mom and my bottom caned by teachers for many years to come.

My dad, however, never struck me in anger again. He did grab me once or twice thereafter when I did something stupid that could have ended my life – like the time when I persuaded my girlfriend Donnelee to run away from home with me. Our parents spent hours searching the streets of Arboretum and eventually found us near the shore of the Nundwane River – which was awash with crocodiles back then. Unlike my Ford Ranchero walloping, I clearly remember this one. My dad was equally relieved and angry, and while he paddled my butt like it was a bongo drum, I stubbornly refused to cry.

And the Ford Ranchero? My dad sold it, at a great loss of course, and it never became our holiday bakkie. A further blow was the death of Elvis Presley – my dad’s favourite singer and idol – who died at the end of 1977. It was not a good year for my my father.

And so, the holiday bakkie project was put on the back burner until we got a Chev Nomad some years later. We took it on holiday often until it rusted to pieces.

All of this seems a world away. I’m a parent myself now, but my child is nothing like I was at her age. She is considerate, careful and thoughtful. I spanked her once for giving her mom lip – coincidentally when she, like me, was five years old – but her reaction was gut-wrenching and I vowed never to hit her again. She doesn’t deserve this sort of punishment.

I don’t feel qualified to weigh in on the teacher who slapped her pupil. Nor will I judge a parent who practices corporal punishment. We have to do what is best for our kids, just remember to communicate clearly, lest yours wreck your bakkie. 🚗

Whippersnapper's golden girl



During a visit to the Gouritsmond Caravan Park, **Josef Tolmay** from Three Rivers did a double take when he spotted a rare classic.

“ I couldn't miss the unmistakable profile of this Slipstream folding caravan on a recent visit to Gouritsmond. The unlikely owner is 24-year-old Julian van Rensburg from George, whose parents picked up this 1982 Slipstream Mark 3 from its original owner a year ago for a mere R16 000. The purchase price included the caravan's complete tent and awning.

The caravan was intended to be a project for Julian and his brother, Juan, but the latter didn't take much of an interest, and Julian took it on himself. Julian is quite the handyman and has many talents he uses to his advantage. His hobby of restoring classic cars, with great success,

means that the Slipstream was in the right hands to be spruced up and modernised just a bit.

The Slipstream's hard panels were resprayed, and Julian also paint-stripped the aftermarket wheels to respray them. The cabin consists of a double- and single bed, a wardrobe that collapses cleverly

whenever the Slipstream's roof is dropped, and three additional cupboards for extra storage room. The original carpet was replaced in favour of laminated flooring. The wardrobe and cupboards were sanded down and got a new lick of paint as well.

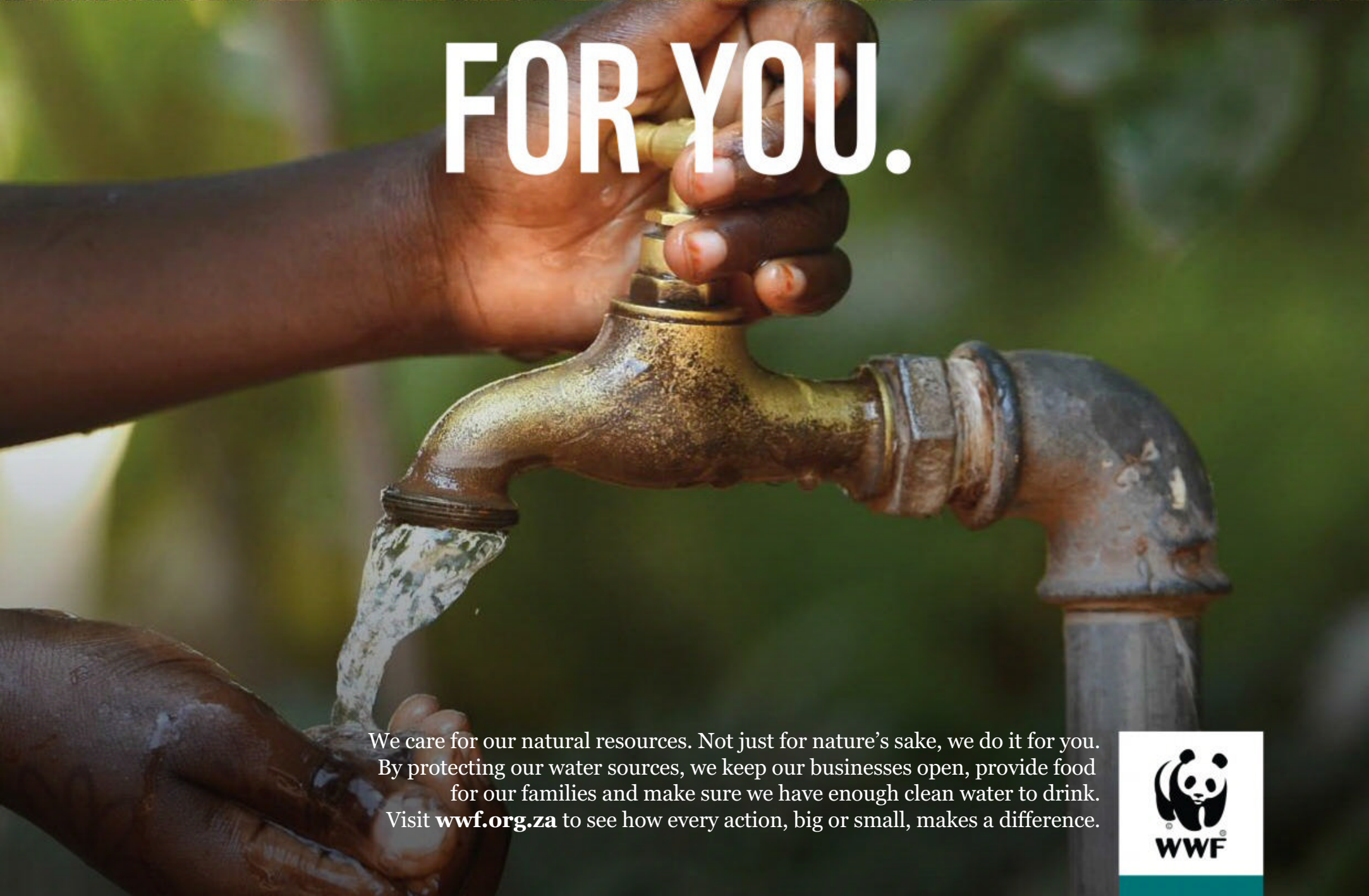
But the young man also plans to spend some more time on the exterior details to restore the Slipstream to its former glory. He and his family camped at Gourits for a month and during their stay, the canvas leaked in some sections, so next up will be the caravan and its rally tent's canvas. As a nature-loving young man, Julian enjoys the outdoors very much and plans to visit more of the caravan parks dotted along the lovely Garden Route. ”



Have you spotted any whacky wheels on your travels? Tell us about it and send a photo to *go! Drive & Camp*, PO Box 740, Cape Town 8000 or drivecamp@gomag.co.za



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