

#16

go!

CAMP FOOD SPEND THE DAY AROUND THE FIRE p.92

NOVEMBER 2018 | ISSUE 16

Drive & Camp

DUELLING DUNES IN THE KALAHARI Conquering the desert sands Dakar-style

TOWING LICENCE

We pass (and fail)
the EB and EC1 tests

Cool off next to the
Olifants River at a
family resort or farmstay

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Sexy VW sports sedan is no slouch at towing

Catch your breath at an
oasis in the Bushveld

Power vs torque

Do you drive a cheetah or a bull?

4X4 TRAIL A SCENIC ROUTE, HAUNTING SIGHTS p.70



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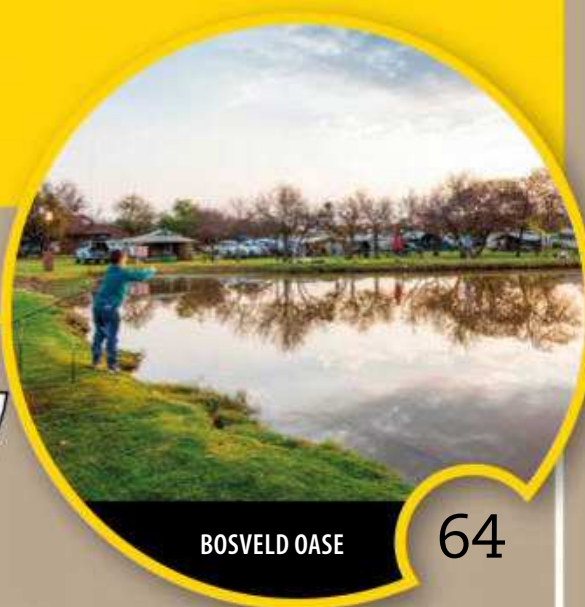


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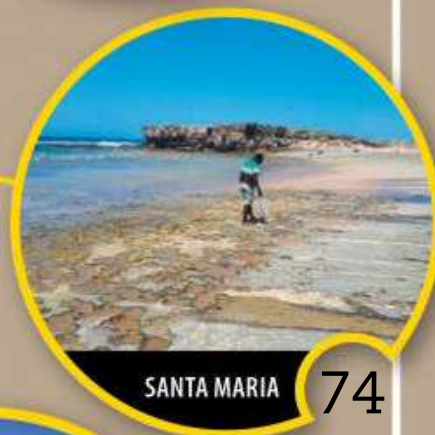
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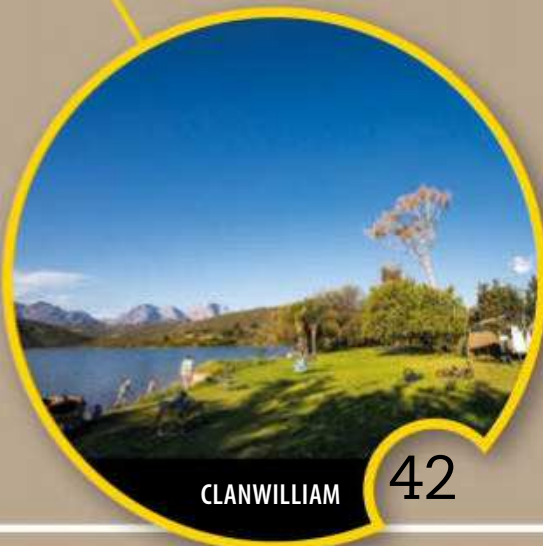
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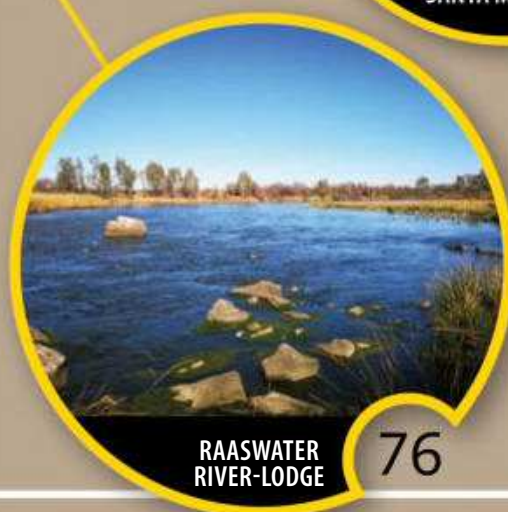
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Camping next to the water is like ice-cream on a waffle with syrup: the ultimate. We unhitched on both sides of Clanwilliam all along the Olifants River.

Anything but quiet



Here we are in the last quarter of the year, and I'm sure you've already made your plans for the December holiday. Of course, there are still quite a few things that need to happen before you can pack the car, hitch your wagon and hit the road. But it's so close you can almost taste it...

Here at *go! Drive & Camp*, though, things are anything but chilled. Without applying for the job, Kyle was appointed our unofficial Middle Eastern correspondent – he had to travel to Jordan this month where he was one of the first to get behind the wheel of the new Hyundai Santa Fe.

He returned with a few good impressions and a flu like he's never had before. That'll teach him to complain about our winter weather.

Leon hitched a caravan, headed to the Cederberg and visited two campsites on both sides of Clanwilliam, while Evan travelled all the way to the Northern Cape to go play on the Goera Pan along with some colourful characters from the Nissan Patrol Forum.

Cyril, in turn, succeeded in getting stuck in sand with the new Volkswagen Touareg. He claims it's the car's fault and not his. In between he also took the reins on our stand-alone magazine *Roetes Wat Roep 2018*. We sent it to print a week before this issue and it's already on shelf, waiting for you.

The team put together a guide with 40 trails across South Africa and in our neighbouring countries where you can go and play with your off-roader. That includes everything from single-day destinations to week-long trips, and the additional info was checked and rechecked to ensure that GPS coordinates, places to stay, contact numbers, maps, trail descriptions and advice are all up to date.

Roetes Wat Roep 2018 is just the thing to keep close while you're planning your future adventures.

In the meantime let me know where you're heading this December holiday and remember to take photos and send it to us.

Safe travels!

Schalk

EDITOR

schalk.jonker@media24.com



A few vehicles try to take on Yster, with Thys behind the wheel, but that's like expecting Faf de Klerk to arm wrestle Eben Etzebeth.

p.56

Main photo **Evan Naudé** (Goera Pan, Northern Cape)

go!
Drive & Camp

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Stuck on you

We decided to visit Botswana and Namibia in June with my brother Frans du Preez and his wife Ansie, and my son and daughter-in-law Francois and Nicolene de Klerk.

The Puros campsite close to the Skeleton Coast was one of the places on our itinerary. The last 80 km is a 4x4 trail that runs up and next to the Hoarusib riverbed. At the start of the riverbed we see it's not completely dry and in places the water has welled up. After the first 10 km we pitch camp for the night. As we progressed we noticed the edges of the bed had a wetness and in some areas there was so much water that there were turtles swimming around.

The next morning we leave early enough to get to Puros by late afternoon. Every now and again we have to drive out of the riverbed so we don't get stuck. It's also clear that no one has driven here after the recent rainy season. Meanwhile we enjoy the impressive rock formations that tower over us. At 15 km/h it's slow going because there's no real road to speak of. At 3:30 pm the GPS indicates it's another 35 km to Puros and it feels as if the road is more visible. If we maintain 30 km/h we'll easily get there before dark.

Frans is driving in front of us with Francois following them, and the next moment the Amarok gets stuck. We take out the recovery gear and try to pull the Volkswagen out, but it's as if the wet sand has grabbed hold of the car – so much so that the underside of the Amarok is now on the sand.

After more than an hour of struggling and broken kinetic ropes, we decide to pitch camp. We'll start digging tomorrow.

Just past six the following morning we start digging trenches to drain some of the water, but the walls keep on slipping away. We decide to dig a bigger hole a short distance away so we can divert the



water. We carry rocks that we want to put underneath the Amarok as we lift the car with several jacks. Some of the rocks also serve as props underneath the jacks, and some of the jacks sink into the sand as they try to lift the car. Then we just put another rock on top until the jack doesn't sink in.

Eventually we lift the Amarok high enough so we can get rocks underneath the wheels. After almost six hours, the Amarok gets enough grip to drive out of

the riverbed and we aim for a dry spot so the guys can clean up.

The next 30 km to Puros goes without a hitch. Here the owner tells us he actually went to help two vehicles the week before at exactly the same spot. One of them was stuck for two whole days. We were very lucky to spend only one extra night in the river.

ELIZE AND SAREL DE KLERK
Delmas



Winning letter

Elize and Sarel win a Booxe Ultimate Boot Box to the value of R1 695.

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Top of the pops

In response to *go! Drive & Camp*'s invitation to write in with stories of unusual cars and caravans, I'd like to share the following.

I had a camper made at Vredenburg 4x4 Accessories and I'm very happy with it. By the way, Flip Pretorius and Gerhard Prinsloo of this company have built quite a few "firsts", like a rooftop tent that slides out from underneath a trailer.

I have a Hilux Extended Cab, and Flip and the guys built a

double bed behind the cabin that opens up diagonally. The mattress is 20 cm thick and it rests on a drawer unit with ample packing space. There's even a small kitchen section with space for things like cutlery and crockery.

You climb in at the back with a step ladder and the roof section folds up so you can stand upright. We prefer that to a rooftop tent where you have to climb up to your bed with a ladder. (Our Snomaster fridge/freezer is in the cabin behind the seat.)

It takes me only four minutes to pitch and take down. And, my bakkie fits into any garage because the top section of the camper is nearly as high as the cabin itself. So there's no more wind resistance compared to a standard bakkie.

RIAAN LAUBSCHER
Langebaan



Thanks for going the extra mile

We've been camping at the Hartbeeshoek Nature Reserve near Brits for many years. This neat resort belongs to Braam and Mimi Bothma, and we call it our home away from home. Besides it being an excellent spot, their customer service also speaks volumes.

It was again time for a well-deserved break at Hartbeeshoek, but the night before we were due to leave, Mimi phones to tell us about possible unrest at the nearby Lethlabile and says she'll keep us posted.

We decide to get going at 5 am to avoid any possible trouble. Shortly thereafter, we get a message from Braam to hear whether we'd already left. Ten minutes later we get a call from one Bennie Dercksen from a security company in Brits to tell us that when we get to Brits he'll escort us to Hartbeeshoek. Things



were indeed volatile, and we drove past burning tyres and two burnt-out wrecks, but we didn't feel unsafe for one minute. Bennie came to introduce himself and we were extremely grateful for his help. A concerned Braam had

organised everything beforehand and Bennie was already ready for us by 4 am.

We are truly grateful for the service, but it's concern like this that makes us return to Hartbeeshoek year after year.

To Braam, Mimi, Bennie as well as staff members Deona Becker and Heinrich Horn: You are amazing people.

LEON AND MARIETJIE
DU PLOOY
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What's your position?



How do you feel about assigning stands beforehand? Do you prefer choosing your own when you get the campsite?



George Jacobsz

I prefer choosing my own. I've had some not-so-good experiences after I was forced to take a specific stand.



Hennie Lacock

If you know what the campsite looks like it's nice to be allocated a stand. But in general I prefer choosing my own spot.



Johan Munnik

I choose my own stand.



Marco Pretorius

I definitely prefer allocated stands.



Jan van Rooyen

I like it when you're given a stand beforehand. Then I don't have to rush to get there to get a decent spot. I prefer leaving later – and then I know what I'm going to get.



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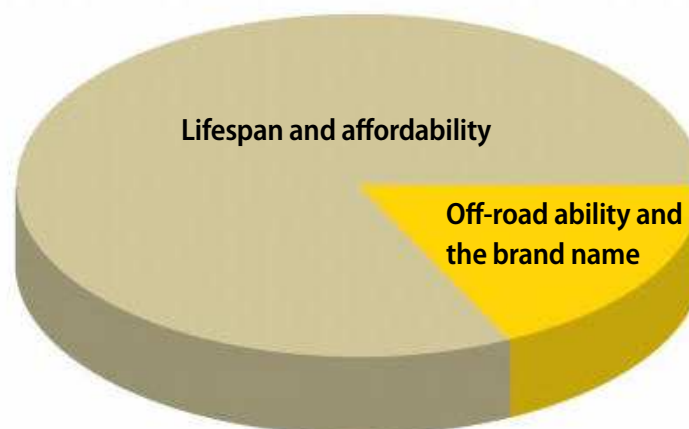
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What is more important when it comes to buying new tyres?



COMMENT OF THE MONTH!



John Henry Cooper says one of the camping hacks we recently shared on weg.co.za looks mighty familiar.

"I did it like that years ago with my old Colt bakkie. The fuel gauge didn't work and I often ran out of fuel. Then I'd take a canister and pour fuel in through a 2 l cooldrink bottle with a hole in. That was 1983 and I came up with that plan by myself."



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Cross pollination

While vehicle manufacturers are fiercely competitive as a rule, they are also smart enough to realise that collaborations can and most often do have very real advantages, says Mic van Zyl.

I recently had the opportunity to take some time out and meet an old acquaintance that I had not seen in far too long. We met at one of those Irish pubs for a late lunch, which would inevitably lead to late afternoon. It was great catching up with my mate and we covered many topics during the course of the afternoon.

At some stage the conversation turned to the new Mercedes Benz X-Class pickup. My mate was adamant that the German manufacturer had made a grave mistake to essentially re-badge a Nissan Navara as a Merc. He seemed quite upset by the fact that Mercedes had the audacity to believe that people would accept this. I should mention that he is a huge Merc fan and owns, amongst others, a CLK 63 AMG Black Series as well as an AMG SLS Black Series.

OUR CONVERSATION did make me reflect on the Merc X-Class the next day and, notwithstanding my mate's very strong opinion on the matter, I do have a different opinion. While vehicle manufacturers are fiercely competitive as a rule, they are also smart enough to realise that collaborations can and most often do have very real advantages, even for the car buyer who may feel cheated. These collaborations have been happening since the dawn of the automobile itself. Manufacturers used to be able to keep this type of thing a bit

of a secret, but with the advent of the internet and social media, nobody's secret is safe anymore.

There are at least three very good reasons why vehicle manufacturers collaborate on vehicle development. The first would be for cost saving. Vehicle development is a massively expensive exercise. One should always realise that the price of the vehicle is not merely dependant on the cost of manufacturing. The money spent on development, engineering and testing has to be recovered as well. Safety requirements and emission adherence is getting more and more complex as time goes by, pushing development costs up. When two competing manufacturers join forces to develop a new platform, they share these costs. This enables each manufacturer to develop models with smaller production runs which may not have been possible had they gone it alone.

VEHICLE MANUFACTURERS are forced to come to market with new models at a higher rate. Back in the day, vehicle models used to last for a decade or more. Nowadays it is every couple of years. By collaborating, manufacturers cut down on development time. Bear in mind that vehicle manufacturers are also essentially huge engineering firms. By having two teams work in tandem on one platform, development times can be vastly reduced. The third reason is

perhaps more interesting, and the Merc X-Class is a case in point. Yes, the X-Class is based on the Nissan D23 Navara. Put these two vehicles next to each other and there are a lot of similarities. Jump into them and drive them back to back and you will start to see the differences though.

Bakkies are one of the only vehicle segments that are showing a robust pattern of growth globally. The most popular vehicles sold in South Africa, Australia, Thailand and the USA are bakkies. Merc quite rightly felt they needed to get into this segment. By approaching Nissan, they could take an already good bakkie platform in the Navara and turn it into something Mercedes. It would take much less effort, time and money than starting with a blank page, and they were dealing with a partner who knows a thing or two about building a good truck.

I believe the Germans put just enough Mercedes into the Nissan platform to warrant the three-pointed star on the nose. Any more and it may have started to be considered a soft option, which is something the VW Amarok sometimes battles with. Time, of course, will tell. 

“
There are at least three very good reasons why vehicle manufacturers collaborate on vehicle development.”

Mic van Zyl is the director of Ironman 4x4 Africa, the sole importer and distributor of the full range of Ironman 4x4 products.

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Who's going to serve our interests?

The South African camping industry is in deep trouble and we need to work together to save it, says Neels van Heerden.

The camping industry in Australia is worth an estimated AUS\$19 (approximately R190 billion), with Chinese tourists contributing about 10% to this amount. It comes as no surprise that visitors from this country are regarded by the Aussies as one of the market segments with the best growth potential.

Recent research shows that almost 3 500 companies in Australia offer camping-related products directly to consumers. That includes manufacturers, importers, retailers, workshops and campsites.

An estimated 53 000 people earn their bread and butter in the Australian camping industry. About 23 000 caravans and motorhomes were manufactured in 2015 alone. Compared to South Africa's approximate 110 000 caravans and 2 000 registered motorhomes, there's a fraction less than 590 000 in Australia.

The Caravan Industry Association of Australia (CIAA) is a non-profit trade association whose vision it is to ensure a sustainable camping industry. The pillars of this vision supports, amongst other things, marketing, research and lobbying aimed at all levels of government.

The CIAA also concentrates on the accreditation of manufacturers and suppliers to ensure quality manufacturing, products and services. The organisation's membership fees fund its budget, and all activities are aimed at promoting its members interests.

IT'S PRAISEWORTHY that the CIAA plays an active role in promoting camping tourism, and it has the support of caravan clubs in all seven Australian states.

The organisation encourages research, and vehicles' sales patterns as well as international visitor patterns and behaviour are analysed intensively. Members of the CIAA are supplied with comprehensive research reports to help them with future planning. In fact, there's a plan in place that extends to 2030.

The CIAA accredits caravan parks and offers marketing assistance to members. A wide range of training programmes, ranging from customer service to financial management to maintenance of campsites is offered.

Campers don't pay, but they benefit from the CIAA's activities. Any company that displays the CIAA logo declares its commitment to top-quality management and excellent customer service.

WHAT CAN WE IN South Africa learn from the Australians? We don't have the same kind of financial resources to establish a similar entity, but we have to start somewhere as soon as possible.

The issues at the Jurgens factory can cripple our entire industry, and it's evident that the South African camping industry could benefit from a representative body.

One could get initial funding from an agreement where manufacturers of towing vehicles

contribute small amounts to a development fund. It might even be possible to negotiate some kind of tax benefit.

There are currently too few caravans and motorhomes being manufactured and campsites are struggling to show profit. That's why they can't be approached right now to be donors or sponsors.

A board of interested parties in the camping industry can be appointed to manage the funds, and interested researchers can serve on a research committee.

This body must create a direct channel to discuss urgent matters like star ratings and EB drivers' licences with the national departments of tourism and transport.

Training programmes should be established within the national qualifications framework so that courses in caravan and camper van design and manufacturing as well as quality control can be offered.

Courses in financial management, stock control, caravan park management and marketing can also be developed. These kinds of programmes must have official accreditation and the costs can be covered by making use of the skills development levies charged by government.

A team of consultants can offer advice to any camping-related company that struggles to keep head above water. We must simply put our shoulder to the wheel to help get the South African camping industry out of the deep hole it's in.

The issues at the Jurgens factory can cripple our industry, and it's evidence that the South African camping industry could benefit from a representative body.

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Another new road caravan for SA

A new caravan manufacturer, Stealth Caravans, has entered the market, and with the problems at Jurgens Ci it's good news for local caravanners.

Judging by Stealth's managing director Garry Coady's qualifications and work experience, he clearly knows what he's letting himself in for. For 10 years Garry had been providing fibreglass caravan bodies to one of the biggest off-road caravan manufacturers in the country.

Garry is now ploughing his knowledge and abilities back, but this time his focus is on the ordinary road caravans. The first model, the Evolution XR6, is comparable to the Sprite Swing. The interior and exterior sides of the panels have a fibreglass layer over a polystyrene foam inner. This inner material is already used in the manufacturing of European and Australian caravans.

Besides the floor and some of the interior finishes, the caravan has no other wood construction parts. Because the caravan panels consist mostly out of fibreglass, the panels are joined in such a way that the body forms a monocoque unit and there's no possibility of water leaks.

The Evolution's queen-size island bed fits in front at the nosecone's side, with the top on the side of the A-frame. The breakfast nook at the back of the caravan folds flat to form a single bed. The Evolution has an exterior kitchen with a basin, gas stove and 220 V electricity system. The 158 ℓ fridge/freezer is inside and

operates with 220 V, but the Stealth also has a 12 V transformer for the water pump and LEDs. The design includes a pop-up roof.

Garry says that at this stage the Stealth will be available at four dealers. Visit Loftus Caravan City in Randburg, Kempton Caravans in Johannesburg, Natal Caravans & Marine in Pinetown and Tygerberg Caravans in Cape Town for a closer look.

The numbers 5,276 (l) x 2,399 (w) x 2,096 m (h); tare weight approximately 1 110–1 200 kg; payload 300–400 kg; GVM 1 500 kg; axle 1 600 kg

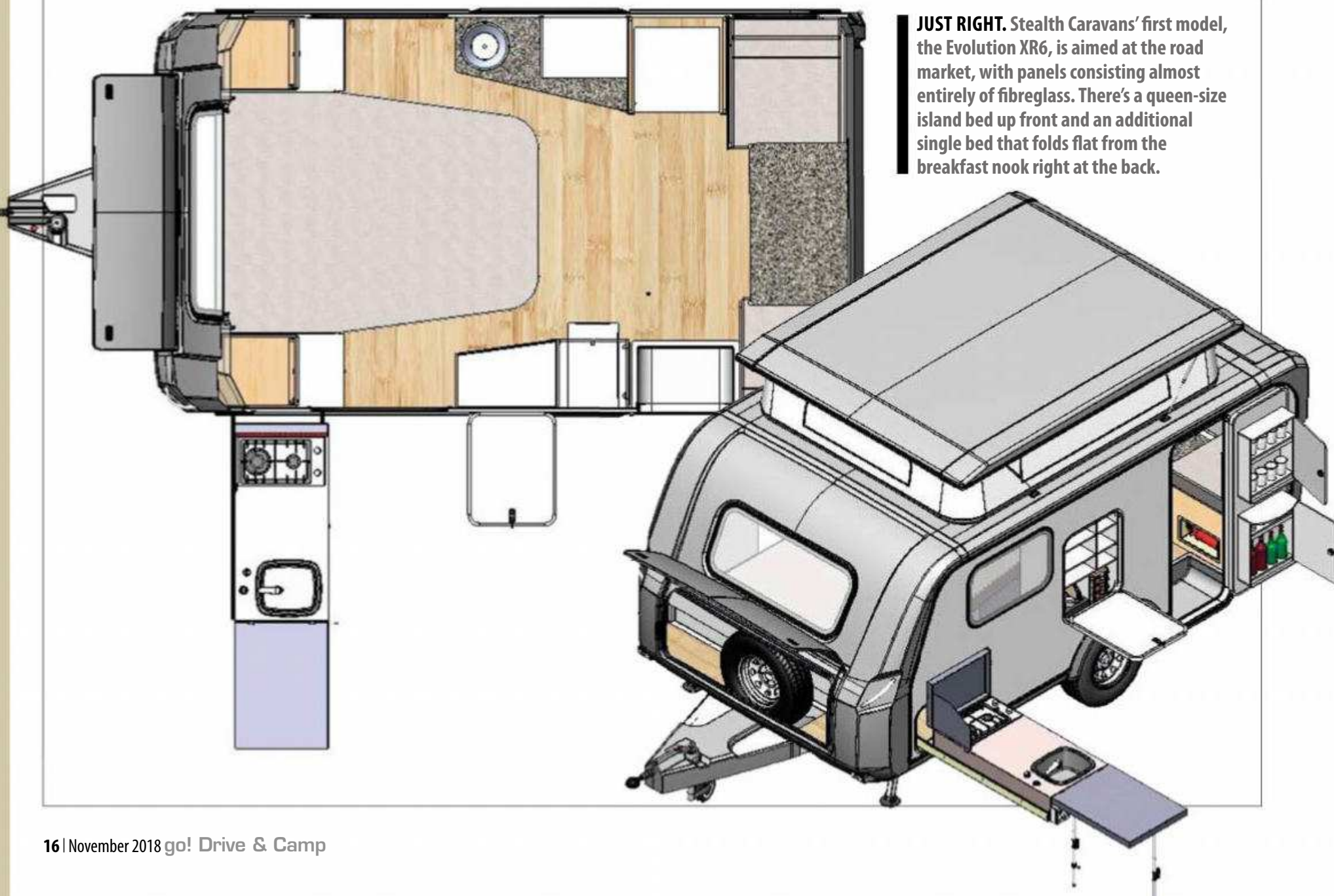
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>



JUST RIGHT. Stealth Caravans' first model, the Evolution XR6, is aimed at the road market, with panels consisting almost entirely of fibreglass. There's a queen-size island bed up front and an additional single bed that folds flat from the breakfast nook right at the back.



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The new Jimny is here

The new Suzuki Jimny was recently unveiled at the 2018 Festival of Motoring at the Kyalami Racing Circuit in Gauteng. There's been a lot of speculation about which engine and trim levels we'll be getting in South Africa, and we finally have the facts.

The new Jimny will be powered by a 1.5 l petrol engine with variable valve timing (VVT) that generates 75 kW at 6 000 rpm and 130 Nm at 4 000 rpm. You'll get to choose between a five-speed manual gearbox and a four-speed automatic transmission.

Two vehicles with different trim levels were on show at the festival: a base-model GA and a fancier GLX. Both models at the festival were preproduction prototypes, but we were nevertheless impressed. Two things that especially caught the eye were the old-school four-wheel-drive lever and the gutters on the edges of the roof on which you can mount various types of roof racks in many configurations. Naturally, the most striking feature was the boxy body with its retro design.

The GA model will come with air con, power steering, an immobiliser, ABS, brake assist and ISOFIX child seat anchor points. There are airbags in front, electronic stability control, traction control, hill start assist and descent control, and, of course, Suzuki's improved AllGrip Pro part-time four-wheel-drive system with a transfer case connected to an actual physical lever and not just some wimpy button.

Despite the excess of technologies, the GA model is still nice and simple, with 15" steel rims, no radio (although provision is made for one) and cranks to manually wind the windows up or down. We approve!

The posher GLX model has everything the GA has plus the following: colour-coded door handles and side mirrors, electrically adjustable side mirrors and windows, central locking with remote control key, and cruise control. It also has LED projector headlights, fog lights, a 7" touch screen in the centre console for the media player (with Bluetooth, USB sockets and an SD card slot), phone buttons on the steering wheel (lined with real leather no less), and a 12 V power socket in the luggage compartment.



Suzuki claims that the Jimny will enjoy a fuel consumption of only 6.3 l/100 km. That'll be a welcome relief considering how expensive fuel is nowadays.

Unless our economy takes another round of punches, Suzuki South Africa plans on selling the Jimny GA manual for R265 000, the GLX manual for R300 000, and the flagship GLX automatic for R320 000.

The new Suzuki Jimny will be available nationwide from 1 November at Suzuki dealerships, but put your name down now because there's already a long waiting list. >



Conqueror off-road campers are for good reason Number 1 in South Africa!

Conqueror boasts a solid 25 years' experience manufacturing off-road campers. They are the market leader in South Africa due to their own manufacturing processes, export and good aftersales service.

Conqueror is at the forefront with their innovative designs, relentless field tests and unique manufacturing processes. Africa's roads are definitely not for sissies, so Conqueror campers are not only built strong enough to withstand the African bundus, but also any bad road in the world. You can tow a Conqueror with absolute peace of mind, and with all its built-in luxuries, you will camp like a king.

Conqueror initially focused on building military products, and in the early 1990's applied this know-how to building new campers. The first Conqueror campers were available for sale during the Nampo harvest festival, and within six months became South Africa's top seller. The company's methods have even been incorporated by other manufacturers in the industry. Conqueror stays ahead of the pack by being cognizant of the latest trends.

Four highly specialised engineers and three programmers have now joined the design team to set the bar even higher.

Conqueror's factories encompass almost a full hectare (10 000 m²) where more than 170 well-trained staff bring these campers to life with streamlined and unique manufacturing processes. These include materials like galvanised steel, aluminium and stainless steel, hot-dip plating on the chassis and epoxy powder-coating for the panels. These panels are joined with, amongst others, a special polyurethane sealant – the same method used in aviation. The layer is strong enough to absorb all the stress on the body-work from severe towing conditions.

Conqueror campers, unlike most other campers on the road, do not just have a spare wheel. The wheel includes a complete wheel boss with the bearings. A high-pressure fan ensures that the camper stays dust free while you are sleeping, and the harness-coupling to the towing vehicle

is made of rubber and is waterproof. The 24 A-power pack is custom-made and is able to work with alternating and direct current (AC/DC) and you are able to see how much power the

system is drawing and supplying. Actually, this system is so sophisticated and modern that it even works with an app from your smartphone for you to control. Conqueror also uses patented, independent suspension that has been tried and tested time and again, and the tent material is of military grade. To emphasize the quality, Conqueror backs their products with a 3-year structural guarantee. Conqueror has built almost 17 000 campers since 1996, some of which have been exported all around the world, including Australia – where it won Camper of the Year – Canada, Europe,

Conqueror is at the forefront with their innovative designs, relentless field tests and unique manufacturing processes.

Mongolia, Saudi Arabia, South Korea and the USA. In the meantime Conqueror also took top honours as the *The Great Outdoors Guide's Caravan of the Year 2017!*

Conqueror does not let the grass grow under its feet, and is launching a road-caravan project mid-year. In so doing Conqueror is getting a firm foot in the door enabling it to take over the reins in the road camper market.

📞 conqueror.co.za 📞 016 349 6533.



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Northgate 011 026 6350 or 083 229 4276

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Western Cape 072 434 9062 or 021 072 0800

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Pretoria 012 567 1378 or 082 442 5713

Southern Cape (Mooiwa George) 044 050 0071

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Duster gets a makeover

The 2018 Renault Duster was also unveiled at the Festival of Motoring. This new model appears beefier, has a chrome-plated grille, new headlights, bolder rear lights, and improved ground clearance, but other than that the differences aren't too dramatic.

It also comes with automatic air con, keyless entry, multi-view cameras, blind spot sensors and hill descent control. A spruced-up all-roader is also on its way.

At the time of going to print, we were at the official launch of the new Duster. Read our impressions in an upcoming issue. >

The prices for the new Duster are as follows:

1.6 Expression 4X2	R249 900
1.5 dCi Dynamique 4x2	R282 900
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Nikon



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**NIKON
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- 10 year warranty
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The Chinese way

Haval also launched a vehicle at the Festival of Motoring. The huge H9 is powered by an eight-speed automatic transmission connected to a four-cylinder turbopetrol that delivers 180 kW at 5 500 rpm and 350 Nm at 1 800 rpm.

The H9 uses a part-time four-wheel-drive system, and like Haval's other vehicles, the trim levels are top notch. Our own Kyle Kock is currently travelling with Haval as part of their outreach and anti-rhino poaching campaign. Kyle will share his impressions of the H9 in a future issue.

The H9 is now available at Haval dealerships for R599 900.



A new “face” in Botswana



The Australian 4x4 specialist accessories supplier Opposite Lock has already found its foothold in South Africa and exports products from here to the rest of Africa, including Tanzania, Namibia and Botswana. The distributor in Botswana, Hi-Range Safari City in Gaborone, recently revamped its shops and now boasts more modern buildings.

Darrell van Zeil of Opposite Lock explains that the African distributors' products are exactly the same as those on local shelves. So, if you run into trouble across our border and you need a specific part, you now know exactly where to find it.

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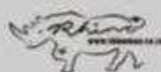
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Conqueror and the Recces join forces

The off-road caravan manufacturer Conqueror approached the guys from Recce Incorporated (Pty) Ltd. to assist with further development of their off-road trailer and caravans. Philip de Vries, Conqueror's managing director, says he's excited about the prospect of making their products even better.

SASMA is the official member organisation for the veterans of the South African Special Forces. The organisation's aim is to support veterans, and with this in mind, Recce Inc. was established to use the Recce brand for commercial purposes.

Callie Roos, the CEO of Recce Inc., says they chose Conqueror as a partner because they share the same values and because of the manufacturer's proud tradition of quality.

It's not unfamiliar territory for Conqueror. The company started in the 1990s as manufacturer of specialist military gear. They've been building off-road caravans since 1998.

Meanwhile, Conqueror has bought 20 computerised assembly robots to make their production line even more streamlined. These purchases have made the caravan manufacturer one of the most advanced production lines in the country,



because these machines can weld, move plates around for the punch, laser cutting and bending machines, add strips of glue, and pick up and join panels.

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Bovines and BMWs

This year, BMW's plant in Rosslyn outside Pretoria added 300 new robotic labourers. These robots are required to assemble new BMW X3 models for South Africa and Europe. That's right: The Germans drive in BMWs manufactured by us. This shouldn't come as too much of a surprise considering that this same plant won the JD Power satisfaction award in 2002 for assembling the highest quality cars in the world.

Fortunately, these 300 new robots didn't steal human jobs. To the contrary: BMW's engineering academy trains 300 new apprentices per year and a total of 2 000 skilled artisans have already graduated from the academy to the assembly line.

- BMW's promise to become more environmentally responsible has been strengthened by using the services of the Bio2Watt bioelectricity station outside Bronkhorstpruit. Every year the Bio2Watt station converts 40 000 tons of manure and 20 000 other organic waste into flammable gas by means of a digestion process. The gas is then used to fuel generators that push 4.2 gW of electricity into Eskom's power grid. And BMW gets credit for their contribution to the national power supply. BMW South Africa hopes to be able to rely 100% on alternative and sustainable sources of energy by the end of 2018. This compares favourably to BMW Germany's aim to reach the same goal by 2020.

- Because 30% of BMW's sales are thanks to the X-models, the BMW Waterval branch in Midrand opened a new "lifestyle park".

From this month onward you can pay R2 750 for a professional 4x4 course on a 1,3 km long obstacle trail. The course was specifically

designed to make BMW's X-models shine. *go! Drive & Camp's* Cyril Klopper drove the trail (still unfinished at the time of his visit) and he confirms that it should impress BMW owners.

Other than the 4x4 trail there's a zipline, abseiling, parkrun trails, and a BMW shop where you can buy BMW-branded clothing and sip on expensive imported coffee.



Swift is here to stay

Since the beginning of the year, Loftus Caravan City has been importing Swift caravans from England, a move that was greeted with scepticism by some local caravanners. It's understandable if you consider that other caravan brands were imported in the past without success.

However, it looks as if Loftus bagged a hit with the Swift, and according to Woody Loftus, co-owner,

they've already imported 17 caravans, including 10 double axles, and have placed more orders. Loftus also obtained a five-year distribution deal for Swift in South Africa. If the plant in England has stock, it takes six weeks after placing an order before you can pick yours up at the dealer.

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Unapologetically soft

Hyundai's Santa Fe has carved the way forward for the brand's SUV models for two decades. With the fourth generation they've aimed to make the experience as comfortable as possible, says Kyle Kock.



Hyundai Santa Fe

The Dead Sea is a pretty extreme part of the planet, at more than 400 m below sea level, with a toxic quantity of salt in the water that's unable to sustain any sort of plant or animal life.

And the end of summer temperatures are living up to the harsh environment. It's a blistering 36° when Hyundai presents the fourth generation Santa Fe to a panel of motoring writers from Africa and the Middle East out in an open-air amphitheatre.

There's a sense of relief when the proceedings end and it's time to get behind the wheel. Unlike the human element, who are sweating bullets walking to the parking area of the Mövenpick Dead Sea Resort, two neat rows of Hyundai's latest SUV stand there without so much as a puddle of air-conditioning water under their bellies, idling quietly.

Cool cabin

We're relieved to be able to jump into the Santa Fe after tossing our bags in the back and watching the auto-tailgate do its thing. The temperatures have already been preset to room temperature but the (dual zone) system is immediately turned down to cool us a bit faster. We also reach for the seat-cooling function and turn it on full blast. You feel the effects after only 30 seconds.

The other thing you immediately notice is just how spacious the cabin feels. Luc Donckerwolke, head of Hyundai's design centre, explains how the longer wheel-base, longer roofline and wider body frees up interior room,

especially for the second- and third-row occupants. Up front, the dual-cockpit layout separates the driver from the front passengers and a twin-tiered fascia provides layers on the dash so it seems bigger than it actually is.

Hyundai wanted to make the Santa Fe as comfortable for the occupants as possible and nowhere is that more obvious than in the rear of the interior. To access the third row you just push a button on the rear seatback to slide the second row seat forward. And if your third-row occupants are nothing taller than 1.7 m, they're comfortably accommodated for – being able to sit with legs at 90° and in the comfort of a separate air-conditioning system.

Oil burner only

There is a multiple engine line-up going to market abroad but only one engine and transmission combination is headed our way: the company's 2.2 ℓ turbodiesel and newly developed eight-speed automatic, arguably the pick of the bunch if you're a South African feeling the pinch of the ever-rising fuel costs.

The engine is silky smooth, and it certainly seems that NVH control could be a high point for the Korean firm.

Hyundai chose to develop their own eight-speed automatic in-house and first impressions are good. At 70 km/h it's capable of selecting the last ratio for cruising if the conditions are ideal, but if we have one criticism of the system it's that it's programmed to shift up as early as >





UPMARKET FINISHES.

Hyundai has certainly not skimped on design, and the Santa Fe catches your eye both inside and out. This is the biggest Santa Fe ever and the most spacious, and Hyundai's decked it out with plenty of contrasting trim and character lines.



The 2.2-litre turbo diesel and new eight-speed automatic transmission is the only powertrain option headed for South Africa.



DON'T SWEAT IT. The Santa Fe is designed to be as effortless for its occupants as possible. If the driver's air con setting is too cold for you, you can adjust it with dual zone control up front, in the second and third rows. Those who are going to me mounted on the rear chairs don't need to fuss about getting seated. All that's needed is a simple push of a button on the second row seatback for the bench to slide and fold forward.

SPECIFICATIONS

Model	Hyundai Santa Fe 2,2 CRDI Elite
Engine	2 199 cc turbodiesel
Power	147 kW at 3 800 rpm
Torque	440 Nm at 1 750 rpm
Top speed	205 km/h
Acceleration	(0-100 km/h) 9.3 s
Transmission	8-speed automatic
Ground clearance	185 mm
Fuel consumption	6.3 l/100 km

Price

To be confirmed

possible. That's all well and good on a flat surface, but add a few degrees of incline and the Santa Fe starts to feel like it's lugging a bit. The most ideal setting for this is Sport mode and to shift "manually" via the steering wheel-mounted paddle shifters, but then the throttle is noticeably more sensitive.

Still, driving in Sport mode for more than 100 km the Santa Fe still managed to return about 8,3 l/100 km, which is very impressive.

What else can you expect?

While final specifications are still to be decided on, it's been confirmed by Hyundai South Africa that we'll have three model derivatives headed our way: Premium, Executive and Elite. The entry-level and mid-spec models are front-wheel drive (the engine layout is transverse), while the range-topper benefits from Hyundai's new HTRAC all-wheel-drive system that automatically transfers torque to the axle that needs it most but that you can also lock into a 50:50 split with a button next to the steering wheel.

A 7-inch touchscreen infotainment system will also be standard across the range in South African with Bluetooth, Apple CarPlay and Android Auto connectivity. The mid-spec model adds LED headlamps, keyless entry and start, as well as electrically operated tailgate. The range-topper will feature a 7-inch TFT display in the instrument cluster to better inform the driver of the Santa Fe's operations, heated and cooled front seats, and a rear seat alert that emits a beep when a rear passenger tries to open a door and there are vehicles approaching from behind.





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Indigo icon

Named after the ethnic Berber inhabitants of the Sahara, you'd think that the VW Touareg is a legend in the sand. Cyril Kloppe takes it to the dunes to find out how well it fares.

The Dakar Rally was dominated by the Volkswagen Touareg from 2009 to 2011. Giniel de Villiers, Carlos Sainz and Nasser Al-Attiyah each finished first after ploughing thousands of kilometres through the Atacama desert with a Touareg.

Granted, those Touaregs and the one in Woolworths' parking lot have virtually nothing in common, but the connection remains.

We recently attended a launch of the new Touareg and have already shared our first impressions with you (*go! Drive & Camp #14*), but after Volkswagen dropped off a test model at our offices we were able to perform a thorough test.

The sand monster

It's a beautifully bright morning in the Atlantis dunes outside Cape Town. The sand is still damp from the night before and we don't anticipate that the Touareg is going to struggle. We nevertheless reduce the air pressure in the 19" tyres to 1.2 bar. We don't dare go any lower because the plan is to take action shots of the Touareg kicking up big waves of sand.

But immediately you realise that the Touareg and sand are not friends. Everything goes swimmingly when you drive in a straight line, but as soon as you turn sharply, the onboard computer cuts engine power and brakes the spinning wheels. This causes the Touareg to lose momentum and you can feel the 2-ton vehicle sinking into the sand.

The Touareg is hesitant to do anything naughty, not unlike that school friend who aspired to be a prefect. Cajoling doesn't help and you have to trick him into stealing avos from the housemaster's prized tree. The same goes for the Touareg: You have to put pedal to the metal and jerk unexpectedly on the steering wheel to briefly kick up a shower of sand before the traction intervenes to put a stop to the fun.

Halfway into a turn up the leeward side of a low dune, the traction control decides to cut power to the four-wheel-drive system. If something like this happened on a tall dune, a vehicle could easily roll over and end up on its roof, but luckily for us the Touareg simply lies down flat on its stomach.

Because you can't turn off the traction control – and also not lock the differentials – the wheels with the least amount of grip turn uselessly while the wheels that should be digging refuse to do any work.

A good Samaritan in a Toyota Hilux offers to tow us out. A dune buggy the Touareg clearly is not.

Dirty mind

Because the traction control is such a head boy in sand, we decide to tackle a dirt road next. Here the suspension nullifies smallish potholes and stones and the traction control definitely helps if you accidentally round a bend too fast or if you swerve to avoid killing an endangered tortoise.

If you drive like a maniac, though, you'll soon feel the traction control reach its limits. Unlike in the dunes, here it appears that you can easily wipe out in a Touareg if you have a bizarre desire to do so.

The entry-level Touareg is shod with 18" tyres (our test vehicle had 19") but we do >

The Touareg is hesitant to do anything naughty, not unlike that school friend who aspired to be a prefect.



COCKPIT COMFORTS. The interior is spartan, but in a good way. Below the electronic brake – which can be set to function automatically – is a driving mode dial. If you choose the optional air suspension you'll get a ride-height selector next to the mode dial. The start button is also located down here (which feels logical), as is the hazard button (which does not).



prefer the previous 17" wheels – they might not have looked particularly cool, but the ride was extremely comfortable. The new Touareg is also available with 21" tyres, but then you're limited to tar roads.

In short: The Touareg fares well on dirt roads, provided you can resist the urge to channel your inner Colin McRae. It's by no means dangerous (it certainly has better grip than a bakkie), but a Subaru Outback will fare better.

Harder is better

The Touareg is a dreamboat on tar. There's virtually zero noise in the cabin, you can barely hear the hum from the tyres, and the V6 diesel engine growls contentedly when you accelerate.

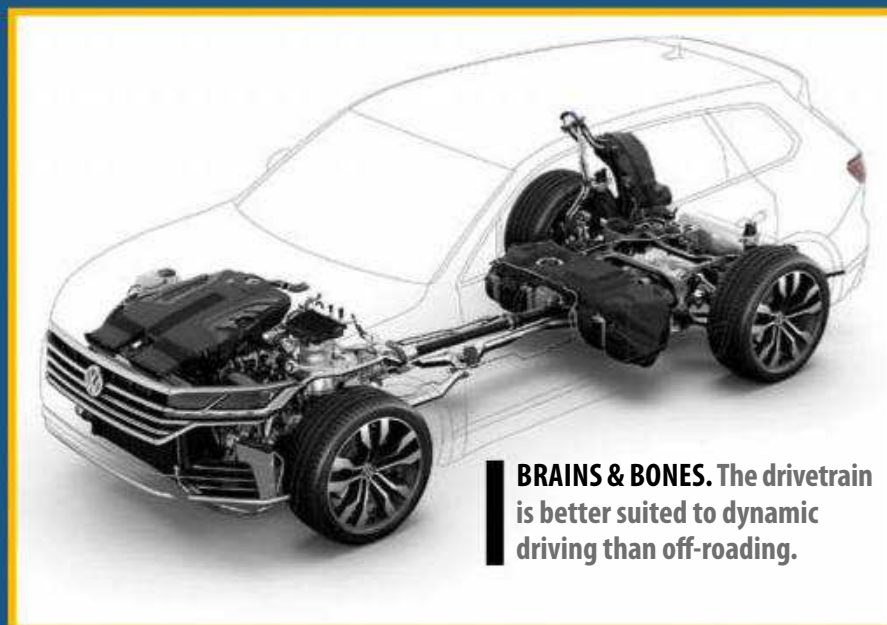
Even the shrill sounds of a street musician's trumpet at a traffic light can't undermine the

Touareg's superb sound system. A 730-Watt Dolby 7.1 amplifier powers 12 speakers and the performance is so sharp that even Vivaldi's toes will curl up in sheer delight.

The interior is classy, and after only a few minutes behind the wheel a feeling of contentment will wash over you, something you simply don't experience in a cheaper vehicle. And because the body is now 77 mm longer and 44 mm wider, Volkswagen was able to increase the boot space by 113 ℓ (from 697 ℓ to 810 ℓ) so you can now load an extra suitcase for that well-deserved holiday at the beach.

Conclusion

The new Volkswagen Touareg is less competent in the rough than its predecessors, but it's dexterous on dirt and a tsar on tar.



BRAINS & BONES. The drivetrain is better suited to dynamic driving than off-roading.

SPECIFICATIONS

Engine	2 967 cc, V6, turbodiesel
Power	190 kW @ 4 500 rpm
Torque	600 Nm @ 2 510 rpm
Transmission	8-speed DSG
Top speed	218 km/h
Fuel consumption	7 ℓ /100 km
Tank	90 ℓ
Ground clearance	215 mm
Approach/departure angles	25°
Fording depth	490 mm
Boot space	810 ℓ
Tare weight	2 040 kg
Towing capacity	3 500 kg
Service plan	5 years/100 000 km
Warranty	3 years/120 000 km
Model tested	3.0 TDI Luxury

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Pushing a new Frontier



Isuzu's rivals have gone from strength to strength, but the South African market still plays favourites every so often. The new mu-X has just rolled up its sleeves and joined the fight. Kyle Kock goes ringside.

Isuzu mu-X

You probably remember the old Isuzu Frontier. You know, that little SUV from the 90s that was considered large by yesteryear's standards. What ever happened to that pioneer? Because at the time it was amongst the first of the bakkie-based SUVs in our market. Well, that one and the Nissan Sani. Both heralded a new era of sleek looks but trusted capability.

That was essentially at least a decade before manufacturers really stepped up their SUV game in this country and these models became wildly popular. Unfortunately for Isuzu, the Frontier was relegated to the backseat as Chevrolet's Trailblazer ran point for General Motors South Africa – Isuzu's local parent company for a couple of years before the firm pulled out of our market.

A good starting point

Isuzu Japan stepped in to save the day by investing in the Struandale plant in the Eastern Cape and taking over local operations. Adding to the "passenger" vehicle line-up, which primarily consisted of just the luxury double cab KB, the mu-X is essentially a fresh take on the Trailblazer.

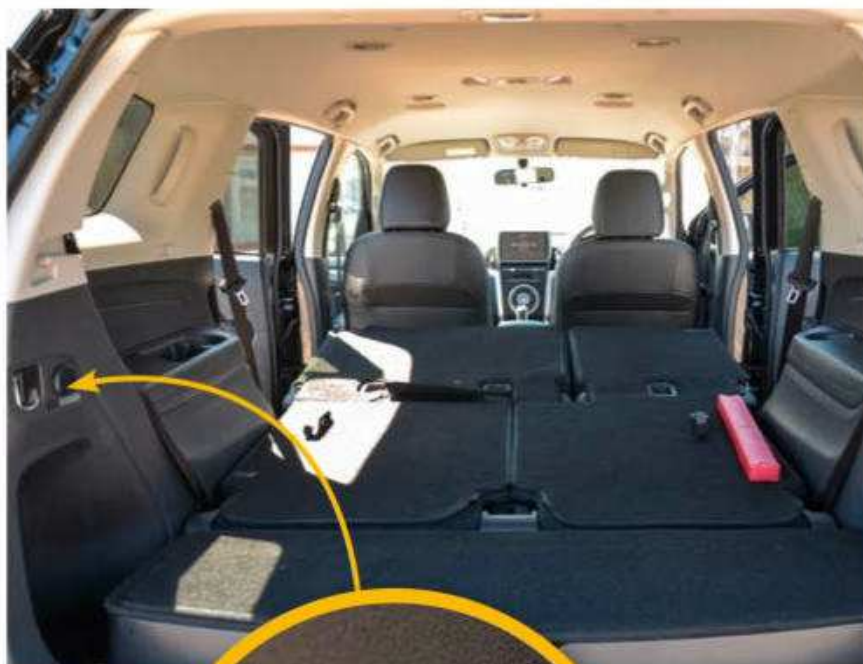
The similarities are mostly apparent when you view the mu-X side-on, but it gets unique alloy wheels to distinguish it further. Then there's a whole new nose, with large headlamps and integrated daytime running lights that form a unique pattern – sort of like an angry bull. The front grille features the heavy use of chrome, which forms a stark contrast to the black paintwork of the test vehicle. The optional polished stainless steel

nudge bar is perhaps then a bit overkill. The rear end has been similarly smartened up with more detail to the tail lights and fog lamps integrated a bit higher onto the rear bumper.

Familiar cabin

Isuzu wiped the slate clean when it came to the interior. The fascia is very much exactly what you've come across in the KB, but Isuzu definitely went the extra mile to make its passengers more comfortable. There's soft-touch surfaces and stitched leather upholstery all over the interior. The seats are soft yet supple, and the switchgear has a solid, reassuring feel.

The most noticeable new inclusion is that of a touch-screen infotainment system that dominates the centre console. From here



FAMILIAR FACE. There are still traces of Trailblazer left in the overall design, but Isuzu have performed a clever facelift, with a refreshed nose and tail and an interior that's more akin to the KB double cab that we're already so well acquainted with here in South Africa. The second and third rows fold almost flat so you can load particularly large items when you need that kind of utility room.



you can control functions like which media to play from a variety of inputs like disc drive, USB port, auxiliary port and even HDMI. The second row of passengers also have a say in the matter because there's an extra USB input between the front seats.

The second row of seats tilt backwards and forwards in a 70:30 split, and you only need to tug at the lever on the seatback once for the entire unit to tuck into itself and up against the front seatback – this allows easier access to the third row, comprised of two individual seats and three-point harnesses. There's enough room back here to seat older children, but teenagers with an early growth spurt will complain about cramped leg room, even with the second row slid forward on the rails. What the second and third row do benefit from are their own air-con vents in the ceiling.

Tried and trusted

The 3.0 l turbodiesel motor might be 200 cc larger than the 2.8 range-topper from the Trailblazer, but the larger engine doesn't stress its components as much to deliver its peak outputs of 130 kW and 380 Nm of torque. Plus, it's already served time in the KB, so it's not like Isuzu had to develop a new engine from scratch.

The mu-X also uses an upgraded six-speed automatic transmission unlike early versions of the KB, which used a five-speed auto.

Isuzu saw fit to only have a single trim specification available in South Africa, but you can opt for a 4x4 model instead of a 4x2. This drivetrain will cost you R50 000 more. The model sent to us for testing is the lesser of >

the two, being essentially just a raised body rear-wheel-drive family wagon. That said, the Isuzu does have good ground clearance, which counts for when the terrain gets a bit rugged.

We put the rear-wheel-drive mu-X through its paces with a full complement of passengers on the mud-slicked obstacles of Dirt & Dust, just outside Durbanville, and it put up a fairly decent account for itself. Obviously we're not encouraging you to venture out into knee-deep sludge, but the mu-X does have a handy 600 mm fording depth for when you need to cross some water.

Despite the fitment of road-biased Bridgestone Dueler tyres and side steps, the Isuzu was actually quite capable on the ridges and mock hills of the obstacle course where there was no need for low range or even drive to the front wheels.

On the road

The mu-X isn't packing the same kind of latest technology as some of its more modern and with-it rivals, but it's definitely not far behind in any department.

The motor might sound gruff on idle (especially after a cold start), but the tractor clatter smoothens as the transmission sends torque to the rear wheels and the mu-X gets moving. And despite the old-school engine, it's not lazy if you ride the torque plateau to just under 3 000 rpm. Considering that our week with the Isuzu consisted of commuting in heavy traffic for 36 km every day, its 9,1 ℓ/100 km fuel consumption average is nothing to scoff at for a vehicle weighing in at well over 2 tons.

Is it a worthy purchase?

We're not going to pretend that brand loyalty doesn't play a major role in purchasing decisions in this country, because it does. Isuzu's reputation abroad and on this continent is nothing short of stellar, but perhaps the mu-X should have come to market a few years ago because rivals like the Toyota Fortuner and Ford Everest have since run away with market share. Still, don't be surprised if you see the mu-X well-represented off the beaten track, because it's a pretty decent buy that you're not going to see parked on everyone's driveway.



SPACE FOR ALL. Access to the third row of seating is a simple affair, with plenty of room for ingress and egress with the second row chair folded right up against the rear of the front seatback. There's stowage room for small items too.

SPECIFICATIONS

Model	mu-X 3.0 4x2 AT6
Engine	2 999 cc turbodiesel
Power	130 kW @ 3 600 rpm
Torque	380 Nm @ 1 800 rpm
Fuel tank	65 ℓ
Approach angle	24°
Departure angle	25.1°
Breakover angle	19.5°
Ground clearance	230 mm
Fording depth	600 mm
Service plan	5 years/90 000 km
Price	R568 000



Considering our 36 km daily commute, a 9,1 ℓ/100 km fuel consumption average is nothing to scoff at for a vehicle weighing in at well over 2 tons.

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Camping next to the water is like ice cream on a waffle with syrup: the ultimate.
We unhitched on both sides of Clanwilliam all along the Olifants River.

Text and photos **Leon Botha**



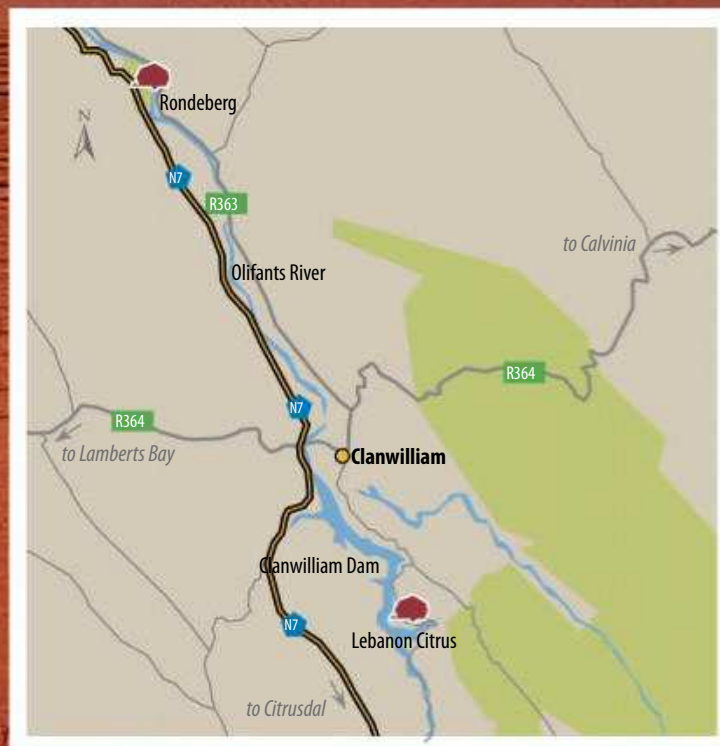


to dam Olifants

The Bulshoek and Clanwilliam dams have more than one thing in common: Firstly, the busy N7 runs past both, and secondly, the Olifants River flows through them to where it eventually ends on the West Coast. But what really gets us excited are the lovely places where you can pitch camp on the shores of

both dams. And each have their own vibe.

At the Rondeberg Holiday Resort next to the smaller Bulshoek Dam you'll find a whole lot of luxuries, whereas you can really kick back and relax on the shores of the Clanwilliam Dam between the orange groves and the water on the opposite side. >



RONDEBERG HOLIDAY RESORT

Peaceful sleep

The Rondeberg Holiday Resort is next to the N7 and you'd be excused for thinking that this busy road between South Africa and Namibia is not the ideal location for a campsite. But you would be wrong.

When you turn off the N7 and drive through the gate, the young date trees on both sides of the straight dirt road look like a guard of honour welcoming you to the resort. Behind the trees are vineyards. The 400 m long road takes you to the reception office where a boom stops you.

The resort lies in a bowl and is about 50 m lower than the highway. The traffic isn't bothersome and you're surrounded by natural beauty. Right behind the office is the round koppie from which the resort takes its name and the campsite stretches from here down to the Bulshoek Dam. The water in this dam comes from the Clanwilliam Dam, with the river that winds for 20 km to this spot.

The office also acts as a modest shop – on the one shelf you'll find a few cans of baked beans, sunflower oil, a few loaves of bread and some serviettes. On the shelf to the right are goodies that the good people at Rondeberg make themselves. The words "Dam lekker" are written on the label of the spare ribs marinade (R26 per bottle) and on the makataan-and-granadilla jam (R45).

The receptionist allocates a stand to you and gives you the code for the boom next to the office.

Take your seat

You'll find all the different kinds of stands that you could possibly get at a campsite here: from ordinary grass stands with more or less no shade to the most luxurious ones with private bathrooms.

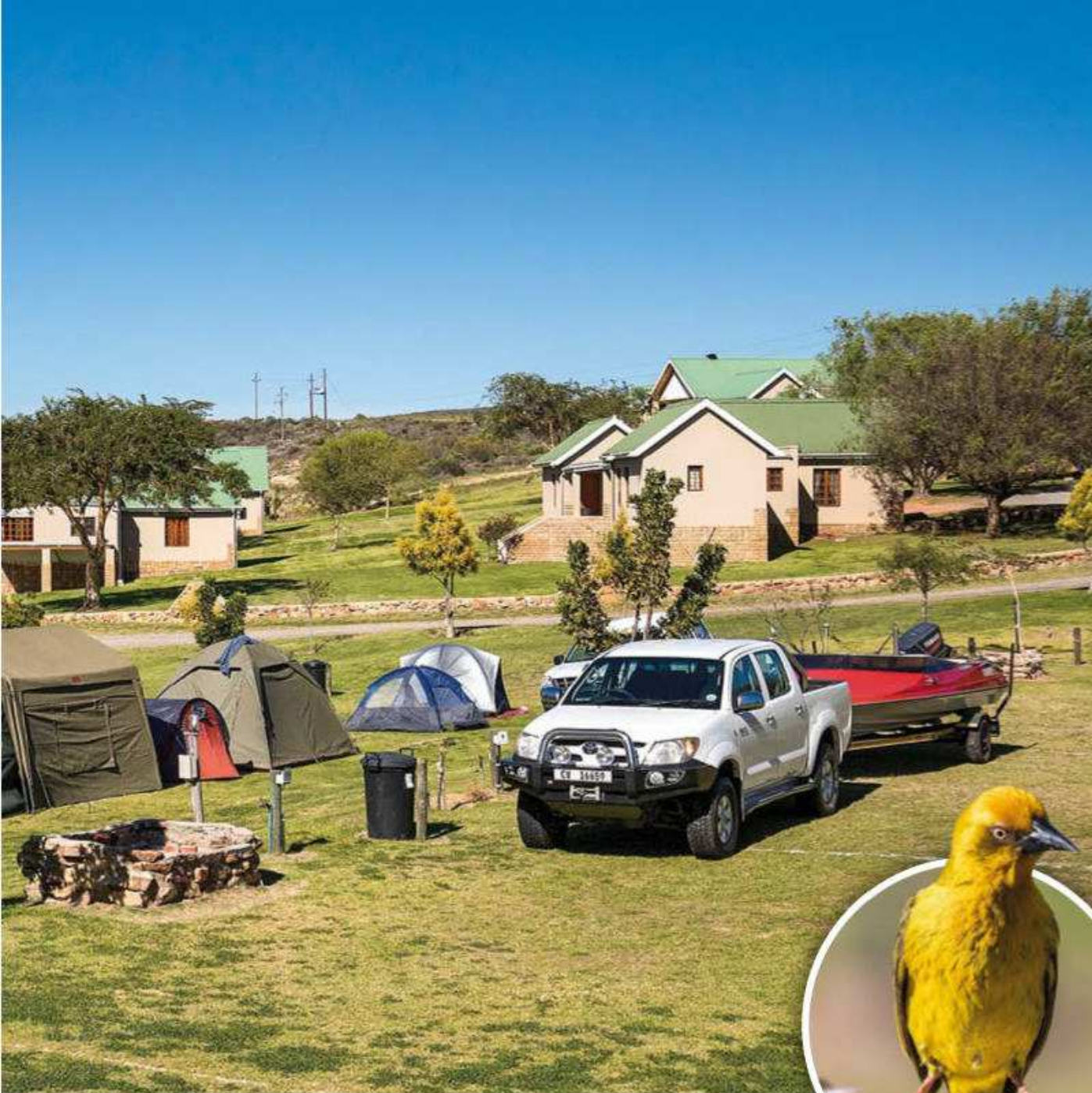
The layout of the stands reminds one of a music theatre. The dam is the stage with the middle stands forming the rows of seats. The row of six stands on the far right is higher, on a terrace, and are the cheaper box seats. The 10 stands in the "fancy neighbourhood" are to the left and this is where you have the luxury of your own bathroom.

The green lawn is immaculate and a great space for the kids to kick off their shoes because there are no thorns. The grass is so lush you won't need to unfold your tarp.

Most of the stands in the centre have a fixed square stone braai. Just remember to bring your own grid.

ONE RING TO BIND THEM ALL. The stands are laid out so that each one looks out onto the dam. The middle stands are closest to the water, and the kids' play park is situated between these stands and the shore.





Mike and Liz Struthers from Somerset West camp with their 2013 Nissan Navara and 2013 Fendt Saphir 450 caravan.

They say

“ We like the peace and quiet. The people behind us were a bit noisy, but it's more a case of us older folks having to be patient with the younger crowd. We like the six stands next to each other because those are where the most campers come and go. Over the last 35 to 40 years we've made many good friends with people we met at campsites. ”

Most of the stands in the middle have a fixed square stone braai. Just remember to bring your own grid. There are also a few free-standing steel braais and taps and three-prong power sockets aplenty. (An extension cord of 10 m will suffice.)

There are trees, but they don't provide much shade. If you want to keep the sun out, you'll have to make your own shade.

The terrace with the six stands next to each other also don't have much shade, but the braais are better equipped. There's a steel frame on the braai platform where the grid fits on to; you can also adjust the grid's height. The power socket is on a post next to the braai and the light that you can switch on and off yourself is on top of the post. These stands are slightly cramped because they're only 7 x 7 m big. Our medium-sized Quantum Comfort caravan took up the whole space and we had to park our towing vehicle opposite the stand.

Good clean fun

The bathroom for the bottom and terrace stands is on the far side of the terrace. Between the gents and ladies' sides is a space where you can wash your clothes and your dishes. The tumble dryer and



washing machine work with R10 tokens that you buy at the office.

We can't emphasise enough how clean the ablution facilities are. It is by no means what you would call the epitome of modern design and there are no marble counters, but it's super simple and cleaner than clean. It can get a bit cramped at the basins though if you and both your neighbours are tending to your dental hygiene at the same time. The two shower cubicles have a dry section with a wooden bench, but it's the mat in front of the shower that draws your eye. When you get out of the shower you don't have to worry about putting your warm feet on cold tiles. You'd think that after a day or two the mat would be wet from all the foot traffic, but it was dry the whole time. It is slightly disappointing though to see that it's a shower curtain that has to keep the water inside. But at Rondeberg the shower is so big you're far enough away from the curtain that it won't bother you.

The stands with the private bathrooms are divided into two. The first six have three buildings where the bathrooms and open kitchen area border on each other. In front of the kitchen there's a covered patio with paving and braais and there >



In front of the kitchen area there's a covered paved patio with braais, and there's a big fridge as well as a microwave in the kitchen.



is a big fridge as well as a microwave in the kitchen. The bathroom is a room with its own door.

The second set of stands – four in total – you won't often find at a campsite. These four share two buildings and also have the facilities of the first lot, but with an added bonus: Each one has a room with four beds with bedding included. You're basically camping next to your own flat block.

If a good view of the water is what you're looking for, there are two stands next to each other to the far left right next to the dam. Behind them is a stone ablution block with four rooms. Two of the rooms are allocated to a specific stand – you also get a key to keep the door locked. Inside is a basin and toilet and the shower is open.

Relax to the max

The jungle gym with swings is between



the middle stands and the dam – a very practical spot because you can see it from almost all the stands. That means you don't have to interrupt your downtime to check on the little ones. There's also a sandpit next to the jungle gym and the pool is diagonally behind it in the direction of the mountain.

You're allowed to fish for carp and bass in the dam, but it's catch and release. Rondeberg has a decent slipway if you want to bring your boat, but you have to bring all your licences for yourself and your boat and it costs R100 extra.

The circular hiking trail around the koppie is a must. It's 4,6 km long and



NEAT IS THE WORD.
Rondeberg is a very well-kept campsite and the ablution facilities are first class in terms of cleanliness. The beautiful natural scenery is the perfect remedy and escape from a busy life in the city.



Briefly | Rondeberg Holiday Resort



Campsite 29 stands that range from open stands on grass to accommodation units next to your stand with your own bathroom.

Ablution facilities It couldn't be neater. Ten of the stands each have their own bathroom.

Price R129–R900 per stand depending on the season and the stand. (Maximum 6 people per stand.)

Arrival and departure times 2 pm to 8 pm, and 11 am

Contact 021 100 3689 or 079 760 0247

info@rondebergresort.co.za

rondeberg.com

How far from Clanwilliam? 24 km

Road condition The last 400 m is a very decent dirt road.

GPS S32.001688 E18.772504

go! Drive & Camp says You can bring your dogs if you arrange ahead of time, but no more than two pets per stand are allowed.

there's no climbing involved. The footpath mostly follows the contour of the koppie, making it a chilled outing. The path starts behind the office and is clearly marked. The first part runs through a young olive grove, after which you systematically start walking uphill. There's a lovely view from here down to the resort and you can see the Bulshoek Dam stretching for kilometres into the distance. As you walk along the koppie you'll see the Olifants River far down below in the valley – now you're walking along the edge of a rock face. Apparently there's a turn-off to a cave somewhere here but we couldn't find it. As the trail winds around the koppie you see the dam wall where it spurts a wide stream of water through one of the sluices. The footpath connects with a dirt road that takes you back to the office. If you take it slow it's about a two-hour walk – it's even easy enough for young kids. >

LEBANON CITRUS HOLIDAY FARM

For starters

Just like at Rondeberg, you turn off the N7 to Lebanon Citrus, and the corrugated gravel road is a sign of things to come as you drive further into the Cederberg. It's the turn-off after Algeria, 25 km after the Clanwilliam turn-off.

Algeria is along that road, but 1,6 km further on, after a concrete causeway, you turn left to the holiday farm. The causeway is more than simply a way of crossing the wide Olifants River; to the left are a few cubic metres of clean river sand almost level with the bridge. The sand is very inviting and you can't help but take off your shoes and dig your toes into it. The sand looks like the causeway's personal beach, and you couldn't ask for a bigger sandpit for the kids to play in. The clean water of the Olifants follows you all the way to Lebanon Citrus.

When you finally manage to get the kids away from the sand, the second pleasant surprise awaits: The road all along the river, together with the picturesque surroundings, makes the drive worth it. The smooth dirt road climbs up to the ridge, from where you can see the river down below. In the sections where the road isn't a single lane, the dirt road runs in three tracks and you can only hope that you won't encounter someone else with their wide

caravan coming from up ahead because someone will have to reverse a long way. In certain areas you almost literally rub shoulders with giant boulders next to the road. The road is not bad and at 30 km/h an ordinary caravan should stay in one piece. At one stage you see an overhang to the right of the road; from now on you're on Lebanon Citrus's property (even though the gate is still a few kilometres further). The river has now become the Clanwilliam Dam, with the dam wall another 14 km on.

Turn off and turn around

The turn-off to the office is to the right of

the dirt road and you have to drive up a steep section that runs between orange groves and palm trees with beautiful rose bushes. Next to the road to the right is an ancient caravan that looks like it's being restored. The farmhouse is to the left, and the office is through the first door. You have to go out of the gate again, a few metres to the right in the road and then left through more groves in the direction of the water. Luckily there's enough space to turn the caravan around. The orange trees look healthy and grow right next to the road. If your caravan is wider than your towing vehicle, it will scrape against some of the trees' branches.

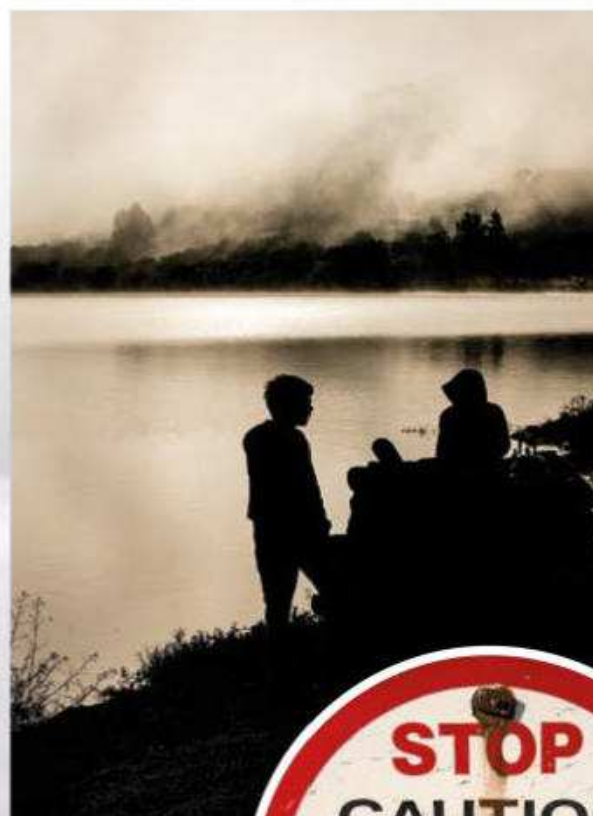


GROUNDING. Most of the stands have a fence of trees around, which makes things a bit more private. The front opens toward the dam.





STOP. STOP RIGHT THERE. Explore the area a bit first before you turn towards Lebanon Citrus. There is, among other things, a concrete water bridge where you can stretch your legs and simply enjoy being out in nature.



A sign in the road warns you against planes, and you cross an airfield to get to the stands. In fact, it's easier to drive along the airfield if you want to camp on one of the farthest stands. Otherwise you drive over it to where the dirt road veers to the left and the stands begin. There are short wooden stumps on both sides of the road. If you have a long towing combination, you'll have to make a wide turn and keep an eye on the left mirror so you don't hit one of the stumps with your caravan.

All in a row

The stands are laid out next to each other and are between the airfield and the shores of the Clanwilliam Dam.

You can divide the stands into three groups, of which the first is the biggest. All Lebanon Citrus's stands have lush grass, and your three-prong socket and tap are close by. Most of the stands are surrounded by small trees with the front open towards the water.

You'll be hard pressed to find bigger stands than the first six. They're a good 17 x 10 m, and besides having your own small farm, there's almost double as much space in front of you to the water. The braais are built out of stone and are on the shore. You have to bring your own grid.

The next stands, numbers 7–15, are closer to the standard size you're used to (7 x 9 m) and they're also easier to reach if you drive along the airfield. The entrance is opposite the farthest bathroom, and double-axle caravans won't fit on these stands. The strip of grass in front of these that stretches to the water is narrower and there are more shade trees than at the first lot. Besides the standard socket there's also space for your blue Fredlin plug. There's a fixed braai on your stand (also without a grid).

The following eight stands are a smidgen bigger and your braai is opposite the entrance road. >

The clean waters of the Olifants follow you as it winds along the road on your left all the way to Lebanon Citrus.



There are plants next to the dam, so you don't have direct access to the water.

The washing-up area is between the first two groups of stands and is simply two basins out in the open where you'll have to make do with cold water.

The slipway is just before the first stands, if you brought your boat. It's a neat, clear spot on the shore where you can pull your trailer in the water.

Stone and wood

All three of the ablution buildings are on the other side of the landing strip. Two of them are close to the first stands while the third one is at the bottom, opposite the last stands.

The first two buildings are next to each other – the one is made of stone and the other wood, almost like a Wendy house. It looks like the stone one was there first, and in it are two bathrooms, each with a toilet, basin and shower. The shower has a curtain, but the space behind it is big enough so it won't cling to you.

In the wooden building are three separate bathrooms with similar facilities. It's spacious enough that more than one person can use it at the same time. Even though it's made of wood, the floors are, oddly enough, tiled. The farthest bathroom is also a wooden building and looks like the newest of the three. The building is right next to the airfield and also has three rooms. Unlike the other wooden building's, this one's toilet is open and the floor has some kind of Novilon finish. The shower cubicle has a glass door, but be careful before opening the taps. Some of the showerheads are positioned in such a way that when you open the water you'll get wet outside the shower. Turn the showerhead to the side before turning on the taps. The hot water for all three is supplied by gas geysers.

For the birds

Even if you're not a keen birder you can't help but marvel at all the feathered friends next to the water. One of the resident species is the spur-winged goose, which looks almost like a black swan. But unlike the swan, this black bird is so ugly it's almost beautiful. When it spreads its wings to fly you can see how big it really is. Spur-winged geese and Egyptian geese often choose the same pastures, and that's also the case here at Lebanon Citrus. Don't be surprised if you see the



The ground in the shallow parts of the water is sandy and it won't become a muddy affair if the kids want to play there.



WHILE AWAY THE TIME. At Lebanon Citrus you can really kick back and relax because it's just you and nature, and you get to watch the world go by from the luxury of your camping chair.





Briefly | Lebanon Citrus Holiday Farm



Campsite 25 stands on grass that range from extra-spacious to small. Most have power sockets (5 without), water and a braai without a grid.

Ablution facilities 3 buildings, with the closest stand 30 m away.

Price Depending on the season and stand it's R300 per stand for 2 people and up to R480 for 4 people.

Arrival and departure times 2 pm and 10 am

Contact 027 482 2508 or 072 895 1993

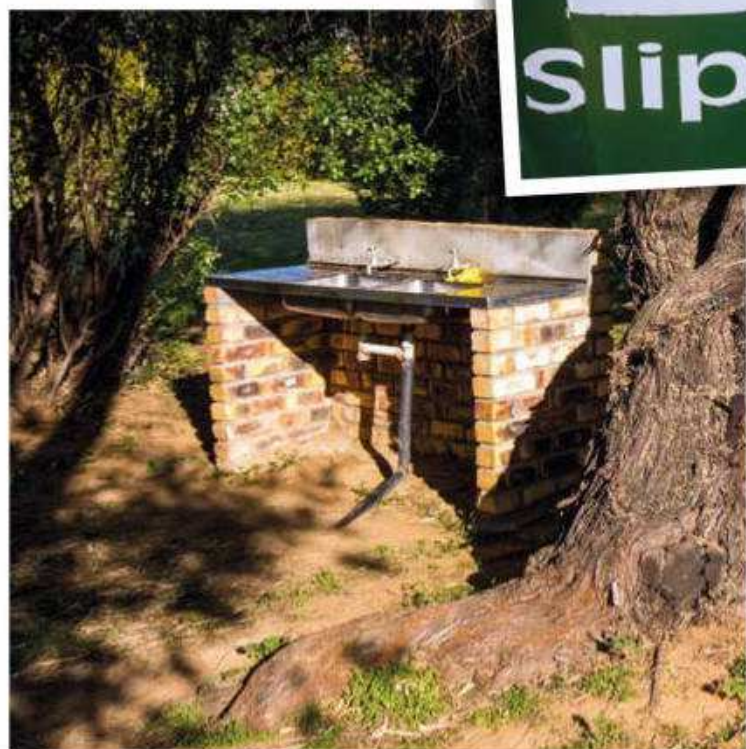
lebanon@hantam.co.za lebanon.co.za

How far from Clanwilliam? 16 km (dirt road).

Road condition The last 13,8 km after turning off the N7 is dirt road that ranges from rocky with corrugated areas to a decent dirt road. At 30 km/h your ordinary caravan will stay in one piece.

GPS S32.267344 E18.930442

go! Drive & Camp says At night it's pitch-dark and there are no lights at the stands, so remember to bring your own.



Egyptian geese in pairs – these birds mate for life.

And the dozen or so black “ducks” that drift to and fro on the water in front of the stands are actually red-knobbed coots.

Keep boredom at bay

There are no facilities like a play park to keep the kids busy, and there are no swimming pools or trampolines. The ground in the shallow parts of the water is sandy and it won't become a muddy affair if the kids decide to play here. But this is a farm, so there's more than enough safe open spaces where the kids can occupy themselves. Bicycles are a good idea too because the airfield is an open stretch of flat ground where they can cycle to their hearts' content.

It's also not long before our young ones return to camp with their bikes and an orange or two. Harvest season has just ended and the trees are still full of blossoms. The kids cycled along the entrance road up the koppie and picked up oranges. Some of the fruit look about as big as a bowling ball. The owner, Paul Raad, explains that the best size for quality and taste is an orange as big as a tennis ball. Paul also says that the Russians prefer extra-small oranges because they want to be able to fit the fruit into their lunchboxes.

The farm of more than 600 ha has belonged to Paul for 30 years, and if you're wondering where the name comes from, the answer is that Sue, Paul's wife, is of Lebanese descent.



TYRE EXPERT: WHY FIT AN OFF-ROAD TYRE?

What's the best 4x4 on the market? Of course, before we can venture down this rabbit-hole, we first need to determine what "best" actually means. Are we referring to extreme off-road capability? Or are the deciding factors comfort, economy and price?

Considering the above, most of us recognise that comparison tests are generally flawed, and the reason for this is simple: we all value different things. But, despite how obvious that may be in the vehicular sense, various media publications continue to compare tyres that are vastly different from one another, particularly light-duty SUV / Passenger tyres against Light Truck (LT) alternatives.

Making this mistake is no different from conducting a comparison test between a Jeep Wrangler Rubicon, a Land Cruiser 76 Series, and a Defender 110, and then declaring the winner a Toyota RAV4 because it's "lighter on fuel and nippy in the dunes".

Much like the vehicle market, it's not a question of one model versus another. Rather, it's a question of which product matches your needs. Comparing a RAV4 to a Land Cruiser 76 is going to outline many extreme "strengths and weakness" in both vehicles, largely because the application of each is so vastly different from the other.

The same goes for tyres, in which your choice of rubber will act either as a strength for your 4x4, or potentially as a weakness; it's all matter of knowing your application and matching the right tyre qualities to your needs.

That said, for the next six months we'll cover several off-road tyre topics that will help you decide which tyre is best for you, and we'll also be looking at some of the most common tyre facts and fables. But, before we get to those, let's cover the 3 primary reasons for fitting an off-road tyre in the first place, starting with...

TRACTION

The subject of traction is undoubtedly the most controversial of all tyre-design topics; but for now, the important thing to remember is that most off-road terrain types are loose in traction, as opposed to firm – like asphalt. In this way, off-road tyres need to possess design features that address the added problem of loose terrain.

In a later column, we'll look at what these features may be, but regardless of the design, the primary goal is two-fold: performance and safety.

PUNCTURE RESISTANCE & LOAD INDEX

This is possibly the most overlooked, yet essential, quality of any 4x4 tyre product. A tyre that punctures easily off-road is about as useful as a suspension system that collapses under load.

For this reason, we strongly believe that light-duty SUV/ passenger tyres have no place in the dedicated off-road arena. These tyres are fine for occasional (mild) gravel roads and the odd stretch of sand, but if puncture-resistance is a key requirement, then a LT tyre is an absolute must.

Unfortunately, despite the importance of this feature off-road (especially for overland adventurers who travel to remote regions), it's a frighteningly disregarded quality in most tyre tests.

We'll cover more on this topic in the future, along with what differentiates an LT tyre from a light-duty tyre in the all-terrain segment, as well as what to consider in terms of load.

DURABILITY

Another frequently overlooked (yet pivotal) tyre quality that has never featured in any South African media test.

Cut & Chip is the number-one cause of tyre damage off-road; and the differences here make a light-duty tyre and an LT product incomparable. The use of a highway-terrain tyre on rocks or abrasive gravel roads will immediately highlight the importance of Cut & Chip qualities.

What makes one tyre more susceptible to Cut & Chip than another? Generally speaking, four things:

- TREAD COMPOUND
- TREAD BLOCK SHAPE AND SIZE
- SIPING
- TYRE PRESSURE AND LOAD

We'll cover more on each of these topics in a future column, but until then, feel free to send your tyre-related queries to marketing@tyrelife.co.za or visit www.tyrelife.co.za for more expert tyre advice.

Regards,

The TyreLife Team



Visit our website and discover more on our Mileage Warranty and Protection Plan. Terms and conditions apply.



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Patrolling the Kalahari

Members of the Nissan Patrol Forum come together one weekend every year somewhere in the country to push their vehicles to the limit. This year Goera Pan in the Kalahari was the chosen playground.

Text and photos **Evan Naudé**

It's early morning in the Kalahari and a blood-red crescent sun rears its head over Goera Pan's flat horizon. There's a slight chill in the air, but it's definitely not cold enough for tough guys to put on long pants.

All along the one side of the pan you see Nissan Patrols parked next to tents, off-road caravans and trailers. Here and there is one with an open bonnet, almost like it's woken up with a big yawn, with the engine purring in the morning sun like a contented cat.

Slowly but surely people start crawling out of their tents, and the smell of coffee and bacon permeates the air. Between the sounds of sizzling bacon you can hear tyres deflating – a sure sign that today there will be dune-driving. But that's not all the members of the Nissan Patrol Forum came to Goera Pan to do: This weekend we'll also see who's king of the quarter mile.

The wild thing and the GT-R

Every year the Patrol Forum chooses a

destination where they can test their vehicles in the dunes as well as on a fast, flat surface, like that of the Goera Pan. This year the guys extended an invitation to Nissan South Africa and they arrive with the best vehicle for such a challenge: the 5.0 V8 T1 Navara that's going to participate in next year's Dakar Rally. The Nissan team will be using this opportunity to test the bakkie but also take the Forum guys for a spin in this wild ride.

While we're enjoying breakfast, this insane set of wheels chases over the pan with staggering speed, roars up and down the dunes, and slides sideways through turns before dropping off its wide-eyed passengers at the camp. And if that didn't drum up enough excitement, Nissan also brought a few new Y62 Patrols to play in the dunes as well as a GT-R to take on the quarter mile.

Tommie Watkins from Centurion is camp commander for the weekend and convenes a meeting with all the drivers before the day's festivities start. He





explains that everyone will be driving in convoy to Eensaamheid Pan, a salt pan on the other side of the R360 where the quarter mile track is laid out. En route there's a trail that takes you through the dunes. "I suggest you drop to 0.8 bar for the sand," says Tommie. We take the last few sips of our coffee and the group sets off in a long line over the pan.

Quarter mile gambol

It takes some careful driving via a detour to get the GT-R on a trailer to the Eensaamheid Pan, but when it gets there

it's the first to tackle the quarter mile – while the surface is still hard and even. And this isn't any old track: The guys from Turbologix brought professional timing equipment and starting lights so that every vehicle's speed and time can be measured to a millisecond.

There are two tracks laid out and next to each is an electronic board that displays the speed and time after each rally. Tommie explains the safety rules, the different vehicle classes (diesel, petrol, and a modified class for each) and what you should do when you're on the >



starting line: “When that light hits green, you go, go, go!”

The GT-R does exactly what you’d expect from it, despite the road tyres’ lack of grip on the gravel surface. With Nissan’s Janus Janse van Rensburg behind the wheel, the GT-R effortlessly scores the day’s best time of 12,217 seconds at a speed of 180 km/h within the first two rallies. Its wild team mate with the roaring engine, the T1 Navara, tries in vain to catch up. The T1 does a few more rallies over the course of the day and every now and again you see the crazy thing chasing over the pan in the distance. Its ultimate best in the quarter mile is 14,199 seconds, with a top speed of 141 km/h.

Now it’s the Patrols’ turn. There isn’t a specific schedule; you simply look your opponent square in the eye and do the “it’s you and me, mano a mano” thing with your finger. First up it’s those with similar vehicles or engines that challenge each other to see if there’s any truth to the specs written on paper.

Pairs form up and fly off in a cloud of dust. Attie Diedericks’ 4.2 l turbodiesel bakkie throws dust in the eye of David Marais’ red one. Steven Robinson’s supercharged 4.8 only just beats Eben Barnard’s turbocharged 4.8 the first time, but later Eben claims victory.

Although it’s a Nissan Patrol weekend, there are a few friends of some of the Forum members who came along with other vehicle makes. And, of course, they also have to be measured against the Patrols.

Johann Horn’s Ford Ranger 3.2 goes up against Eben and later also Steven, but can’t keep up. Michael Steyn with his 4.2 turbodiesel challenges his friend Marius Vorster in his 3.0 Hilux and shows



him who’s boss. The Hilux races against other Patrols, with mixed success, and Deon Louw’s Land Rover Discovery 4 also leaves a trail of dust in its wake. David Volschenk gets an opportunity to do a few rallies in the one of the new Y62s and it’s really surprising how quiet the engine is. But the big kahuna on the quarter mile remains a Patrol, and it’s one you don’t use to drive to the shopping centre.

“Yster” is a creation of Tommie and his friend Thys Ellis. It has the bonnet of a dark-green Patrol bakkie, but the loading

bin has been replaced with a framework that will eventually be transformed into an Aussie-style flat bin. But for now it carries a spare wheel and a cooler box fastened with a strap. But it’s what’s underneath the bonnet that gives Yster its name: a 7 l V8 Chevrolet engine. Yster is not a vehicle to cart around groceries; it’s a monster that should be unleashed somewhere in the wild.

A few vehicles try to take on Yster, with Thys behind the wheel, but that’s like expecting Faf de Klerk to arm wrestle >





SPEED HUNTERS. The quarter mile strip never lacked for action and Yster (top right) was the only one that could really take the fight to Nissan's supercars. Nevertheless, there were still some interesting challenges (below).



Ariet Louw from Centurion explains how it feels to ride in the T1 Navara.

They say

“ It was very nice; it felt like a rollercoaster! But I felt so safe because the driver was fully in control. ”



Next, Tommie explains that they now have to tackle the dune in reverse, and suddenly it's a completely different story.

Eben Etzebeth. The only noteworthy attempt is from the T1 Navara (the GT-R is in a class of its own), and although they were neck-and-neck, Yster ultimately beats the Dakar bakkie.

By lunchtime the team from Oranje Nissan from Upington light a fire and we have a braai. Afterwards, the vehicles race across the pan in pairs to see if they can better their best times, until the track is so rutted that the dust starts to interfere with the sensitive time-measuring equipment. It's just as well an official halt was called, otherwise some of the guys would have raced until dark.

Dune patrol

After breakfast the next morning the group heads back across the road, but this time dune-driving is on the menu. Today, it's just the Patrol Forum members and it's an opportunity to continue the never-ending battle between petrol and diesel vehicles in the sand. Tommie takes us to the first obstacle: a warm-up dune called Loerduin, with a 20 m gradual climb to the top with a narrow turn taking you back down.

The next dune is more challenging. At the top there's a nice sharp turn to the right and you have to put your foot down to make it through. But the drivers don't struggle, even though the engines work harder to make it down the other side. Next, Tommie explains that they now have to tackle the dune in reverse, and suddenly it's a completely different story. Now it's a turn to the left at the top, but with a steep incline before you get there. This time one or two guys don't make it at all and others have to try three or four times before they do it.



Michael Steyn
from Centurion

They say

It's my first time at Goera Pan and it's a great place. This event was a good combination of challenges and it was a much tougher competition between petrols and diesels than I thought it would be!





DONS OF THE DUNES.

(Clockwise from top left) Yster didn't take any nonsense from the dunes, but other guys like Steve Robinson and his son Ethan (inset), Dave Marias, David Volschenk and Attie Diedericks had to attempt the climbs more than once to conquer the soft Kalahari sands.

Eben's 4.8, however, makes mincemeat of the dune and scores a point for the petrol vehicles. Shortly after, Attie levels the score when he also effortlessly conquers the dune on the first try. The rest of the day is more of the same – when it seems as if the diesels are winning, Eben or Steven form up, and when the petrols start taking over, Michael and Attie step in.

Michael tries a few times without success and parks at the bottom. "It's a difficult dune and I'm not ashamed to say it beat me," he laughs with a shrug.

But then, just before we leave, Michael gives himself a pep talk and tries for the last time... and finally makes it over! Another point for the diesels.

The higher the sun, the hotter and looser the sand. Before each new obstacle the drivers check their tyres, because the warmer temperatures have an impact on the tyre pressure. Half a bar can make a huge difference on the sand and on the scoreboard.

The mini-rally and the big dune

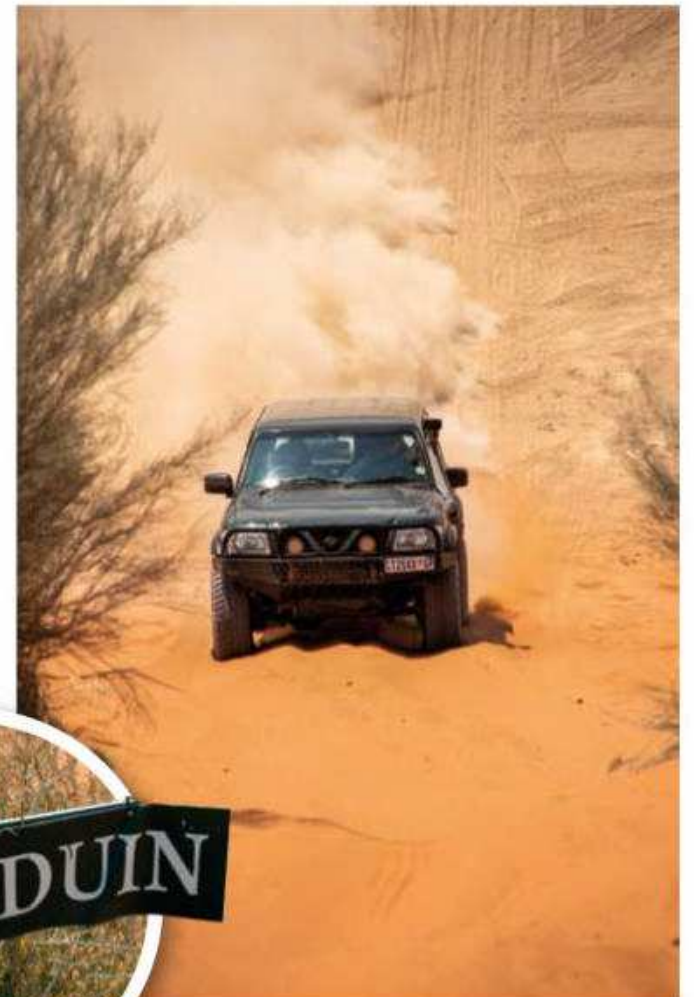
Next up, Tommie takes us to a mini-rally track between the dunes. After >

the Patrols showed their mettle in the quarter mile and then in the dunes, it makes sense that there's an event that combines speed and dune-driving. The track starts up a dune, winds through a row of dunes and then drops down to a straight "street" where you can put foot down before turning back to the starting point where Tommie waits with the stopwatch.

Eben is first out of the blocks and clocks a decent time of 3 minutes, 28 seconds. That serves as benchmark, and all the other vehicles manage to get times under four minutes. But there's only one who does the track in under three minutes, and it's one of the big surprises of the weekend: Attie in his diesel bakkie.

Before we head back to camp, there's one monster dune left in need of a good hiding. It's a sneaky one because you can drive up almost three quarters of the way with no trouble, but the last section is incredibly loose and that's where your vehicle starts to falter. And, to make things even more difficult, there's a border fence at the bottom that makes the run-up very short.

The diesels are now well on their way and Attie makes it over on the first try. Michael deflates his tyres to 0,3 bar, forms up, and also drives over the first time. "Diesels 2, petrols 0!" shouts Tommie while everyone is clapping hands, but he drives a petrol and we know that score



PROVIDE AND PLAY. The team from Nissan Upington came to enjoy the fun on the pan as well and made sure that all the participants enjoyed a hearty lunch. Michael Steyn's turbodiesel (right) performed well on the quarter mile and dunes.



“
The last dune is a sneaky one because you can drive almost three quarters up with no trouble, but the last section is incredibly loose.”



Attie Diedericks
from Polokwane

They say

“ For me the highlight was definitely the drags. It was interesting to see what the diesels did. ”

will definitely change. Eben, who's been relaxing a short distance away, is called upon to immediately come and rectify the situation. After he drives over, Tommie takes his GQ, which up until now has only acted as guide vehicle, and also shows the dune who's boss.

It's late afternoon when we head back to the camp with sand in our shoes and sunburn on our skins. To end things properly we make a huge fire for a braai. We have a prize-giving and everyone gets a cool prize from G-Tech Auto. Then it's time to get the meat on the coals, tell campfire stories, and make plans for the next trip. And it should be sooner rather than later because there's still no conclusive answer in the petrol vs diesel debate.

If you want to join the Nissan Patrol Forum, visit patrol4x4.co.za.

I WANT TO GO TOO!

Where? Goera Pan is about 100 km north of Upington on the R360.

Provisions Do your last shop in Upington and fill up your bakkie.

Accommodation You can camp or stay in one of 13 chalets at the Kalahari Goerapan Lodge (kalaharigoerapan.co.za). The campsite is very basic with limited solar power, but there is an ablution block with hot showers. Bring your own braai wood. 📍

CAMPFIRE STORIES. As the weekend comes to an end, all the experiences are relived around the campfire, like when Ben Barnard (middle) rode shotgun in the T1 Dakar and how Marius Vorster (below) went head-to-head against the T1.



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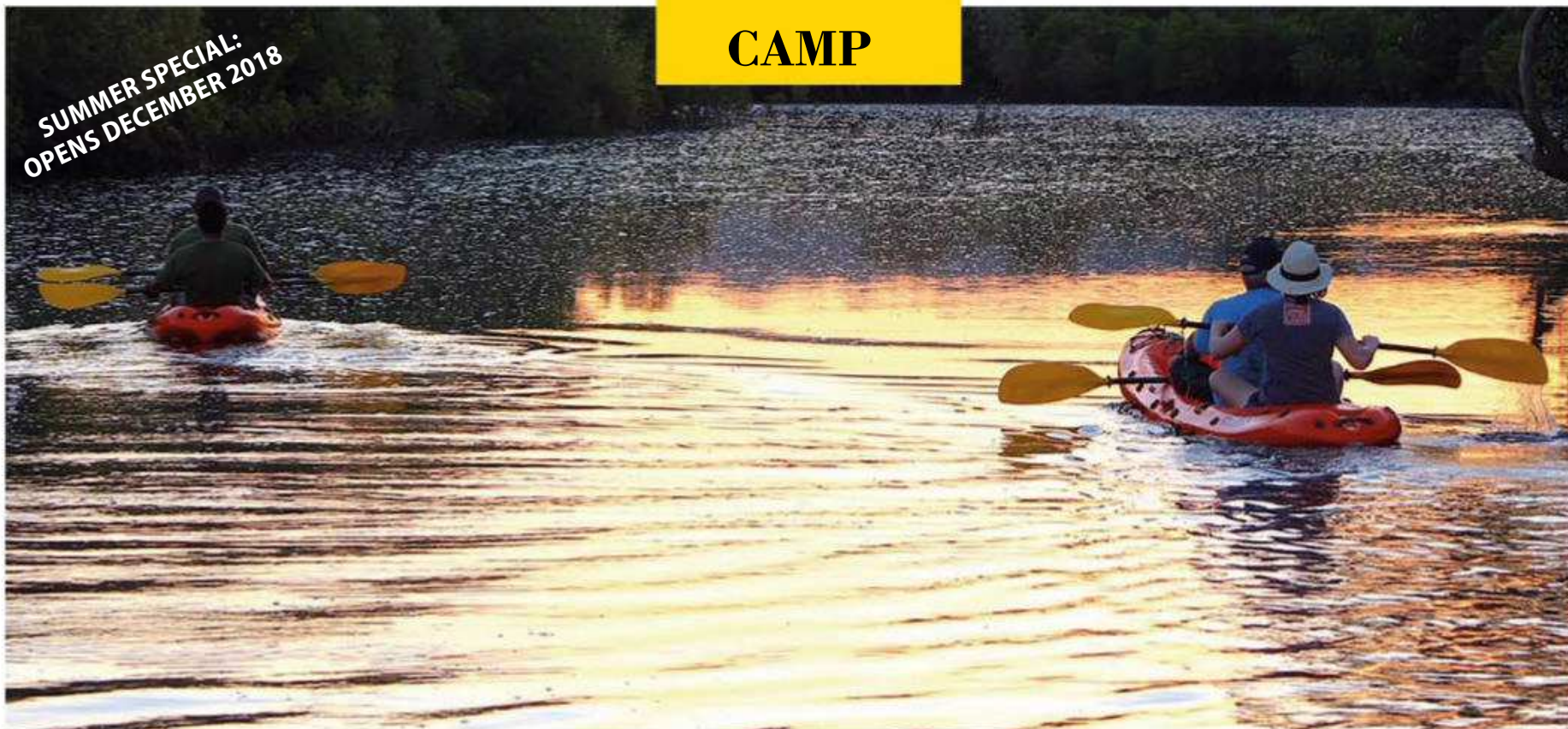
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SUMMER SPECIAL:
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CAMP



Bitou Valley Bush Camp

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- Surf and SUP lessons
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R1 380 per person per night sharing, including dinner and breakfast. Kids under 10 pay half-price; single supplement costs 20% extra. Early booking is recommended as this is an intimate camp. *A minimum two-night stay is required.

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Sunshine, ice cream and water sports



Bosveld Oase has something for every member of the family, so arrive early and make the most of your weekend.

Text and photos **Helenus Kruger**

Ask any camper in the north of our country where their favourite weekend breakaway spot is and chances are good they'll mention one of the resorts in or around Brits. This area is a stone's throw from Gauteng and is known for its excellent campsites that cater to almost everyone – from the peace and quiet of a game farm to the jolly vibe at a family resort.

Bosveld Oase is one of those resorts where you can check in early on a Friday.

If your kids aren't in school yet you can drive through the gates at 8 am.

And even if you have to wait for the school bell to ring before you can hit the road, you can still pitch your tent here before sundown.

This is a family resort, and if scooters and

street cricket bother you, this is definitely not the place you should visit. Here it's all about swimming, riding on bikes and fishing, all day every day.

Still, there's a peaceful atmosphere in which you can experience the Bushveld in all its glory. Early in the morning, before the rest of the camp is up, the birds start singing and it's not long before the blue waxbills pop in to say hello. Late in the afternoon, when the golden sun rests on the horizon and the bikes have been left next to the caravans, a feeling of tranquillity descends on the camp. Fires burn high and before long the nightjars start their conversations.

On the grass, in the shade

When you book at Bosveld Oase you get an email with a map of the layout of the camp and a list of available spots so you can choose your stand.

The roads to the stands twist and turn in places, so bring your map when you come and keep your eyes peeled for the stand number on the road and against the pole or lamp post next to your stand. Philemon Mareke, the friendly security guard at the gate, knows the layout like the back of his hand and he'll point you in the right direction.

The entire campsite is level and you camp on a thick mat of kikuyu. The 114 stands are on average 15 x 15 m and about half of the camp has indigenous trees for shade. Many of the trees are between the stands, so you have shade only for part of the day.

>



WEEKEND BREAK

The stands next to the water are always popular, and here you get the best of both worlds. You can camp next to the dam (stands 106, 107 and 111) and you have a grass patch with trees in front of you. Kick back in a camp chair in the shade and you can keep an eye on your rods to see if the bream, carp or black bass are biting.

The other stands with ample shade are 3, 6, 10, 16, 29, 37, 53, 93, 95, 103 and 113. If you don't feel like staring at your neighbour's caravan, stands 52–69, which are next to the fence, are a good choice. At numbers 37, 39 and 41 you can watch game with your binoculars from your front stoep. Late afternoon is feeding time and then the impala, nyalas, blue wildebeest and sable descend on the troughs.

All the stands have electricity (bring your own blue plug), a braai drum with grid, tap and garbage bin. There are lights spread throughout the campsite and unfortunately you can't switch them off. If you have one right in front of your tent, it might be bothersome.

Decisions, decisions

Bosveld Oase has a long list of activities that will keep you entertained the entire weekend.

The waterpark at the entrance of the resort, with its 10 m high supertube, slides, heated pool, putt-putt course and big recreational area with thick grass and loads of shade trees, is by far the resort's most popular hangout.

The supertube winds for 100 m down to the ground and by the time you land in the pool at the bottom, you've built up quite a bit of speed.

There are two slides that are lower and shorter for the littler ones who don't want to try the supertube, but be warned: You can come down fast here too. So it's best to keep an eye on the youngsters. There's also a member of staff at the supertube and the slides' starting points to ensure that everything goes smoothly and safely.

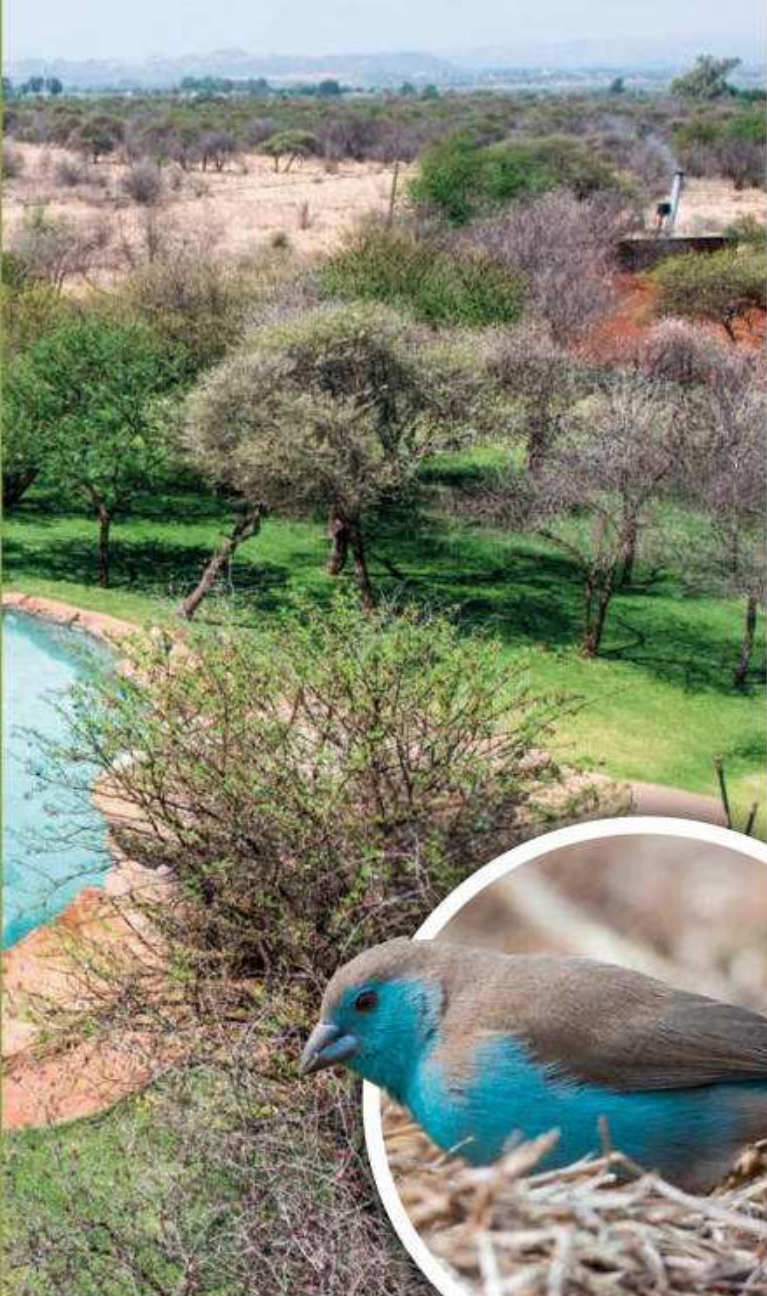
The pool is decorated with faux rock. Next to that is the kiddies pool, but they have to be at least hip height for their heads to stick out above the water if they have their feet on the bottom.

The big pool becomes increasingly deeper and the first step is shallow enough for the really small ones to splash around. Mom and Dad must just stay close to stop them from going deeper.



AS THE NAME SUGGESTS. If you consider all that's on offer at Bosveld Oase, then its name couldn't be more fitting. This is a Bushveld garden where children are kept occupied and content all day while their parents are able to sit back in their camping chairs and relax.





What it costs

(2 adults)

Fuel 50 ppm diesel @ 8 ℓ/100 km
and R14,26/ℓ and 129 km (there
and back) **R147,16**

Toll gates (there and back) **R28**

Accommodation (2 nights) **R880**

Food (2 people) **R1465,97**

Grand total **R2521,13**



In between cooling off in the water you can catch some rays on the grass or have a picnic in the shade underneath the indigenous trees. There is also a putt-putt course. You can get the clubs and balls from the tuckshop if you pay a deposit of R50. The tuckshop, right behind the reception office, is also the place to find ice creams, cooldrinks, sweets, wood and firelighters.

The waterpark is open Mondays to Saturdays from 7:30 am to 5:30 pm and Sundays from 8 am to 4 pm. Day visitors are welcome.

When the mercury starts rising in the Bushveld there's a cold-water pool more or less in the middle of the campsite where you can cool off. This pool also has a smaller and shallower pool on the side for toddlers. There's a trampoline, swings and a jungle gym, and next door is the games room with a ping-pong and pool table and DStv.

In the farthest corner away from the office is the big heated pool – by far the best place to hang out in winter. >



Jurgens and Riana Potgieter and their daughters Wilmari (19) and twins Rialet and Laura (13) are from Mookgopong and camp with their 1996-model Jurgens Palma which they tow with their 2015 Isuzu 2.5D double cab.

They say

“ It's our first time at Bosveld Oase. The kids love the supertube and the pools. We like camping on green grass and enjoy the peacefulness. The bathrooms are always clean and the staff friendly. ”





PLENTY FOR ALL . You can cast pretty close to the water from your stand and then watch your rods from just a few steps away. In the late afternoon the animals come closer to visit the feeding troughs.



The pool is covered and there are benches and tables on the paving around the pool. Next to the pool is an outdoor chess set, and, like at the waterpark, a bike frame where the kids can store their wheels.

Bosveld Oase is heaven for birders. The campsite and surrounding veld are littered with feathered friends. Bring your binoculars and walk the 2 km path around the camp in search of the crested partridge, blue waxbill, fork-tailed drongo, Cape firefinch, Marico flycatcher, pied babbler and Kalahari scrub robin, to name but a few.

Time to clean up

The four ablution blocks (A–D) are spread out in the campsite and are more or less identical on the inside, with small differences here and there.

The B and D blocks are bigger, each with four showers and toilets and a bigger communal area, while the A and C blocks each have only two showers and toilets.

Each ablution block has a separate side for men and women and is tiled from the floor up to the thatch roof. The shower rooms are spacious (2 x 2 m) and the wet and dry sections are divided by glass shower doors. On the dry side is a bench and hooks for your clothes and towels. There isn't a tray for soap or shampoo in every shower, but you can simply put it on the windowsill.



Briefly | Bosveld Oase



Campsite Stands with a thick carpet of grass on level ground.

Ablution facilities Neat, clean and nicely distributed throughout the campsite.

Price From R440–R630 p.n for 4 people per stand depending on the season. There's an administration fee of R50. Contact the resort for winter specials.

Contact 072 215 2114

bosveldoasebrits.co.za

info@bosveldoasebrits.co.za

Arrival and departure times 8 am and 4 pm, but 1 pm and 10 am during school holidays.

Road condition The last 2,5 km is dirt road with corrugation in places.

GPS Gate S25.530793 E27.827206

Reception office S25.527500 E27.827349

go! Drive & Camp says If someone in your party requires the wheelchair-friendly facilities, ask to camp close to one of these blocks. The site plan doesn't indicate the numbers.



In the communal area the basins share mirrors, and there's a small garbage bin and hand wash. There are no hooks on the walls at all the ablution blocks, so it's a bit inconvenient to store your clothes. But there is space to put your toiletry bag between the basins on the counter.

Three of the ablution blocks have marble counters. The A-block has freestanding basins, each with a small wooden shelf to put things on. There's

at least one power socket in each block's communal section.

Each building has a family bathroom, on the side between the men's and ladies' facilities. It has a bath, basin with mirror and a toilet.

The B and C blocks each have a wheelchair-friendly bathroom that's fully equipped with an open shower with a chair inside and railings against the walls.

On the other side of the buildings is a scullery with single basins so you have to bring a dish for clean rinse water.

The camp has two areas where you can clean your porta-potti – one next to the A-block and other in the farthest corner of the camp, just past stand no. 52.

Shopping

The shop has a variety of canned food, spices, sauces and fresh bread. Bags of dry wood are stacked against the wall and if you want to keep the kettle braai going there's also charcoal. Bored kids can buy a soccer ball or damboard, and of course you'll also find the four things that kids can't do without: chocolate, ice cream, cooldrinks and chips.



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65 cm thick, with cover
straps and handle

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Director's Chair Plain

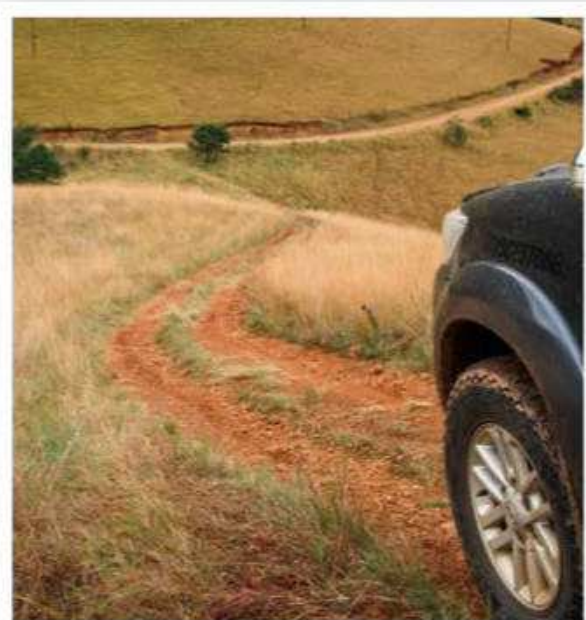
Steel frame
250 kg weight capacity

R650.00

En route to a ghost town

Along the Swazi border, near Barberton, there's a dirt road pass that used to serve a former asbestos mine. Today, the pass is quiet as the grave and almost forgotten. And that's how we like it.

Text and photos **Cyril Kloppe**



If you're ever in the vicinity of Barberton, put aside a day for one of the most enchanting trails in South Africa. From this town (named after one Graham Barber and not a type of fish in the Vaal Dam) you drive east on the R40 tar road, also known as the geotrail, in the direction of the Josefsdal-Bulembu border post to Swaziland. About 2 km before the border post is a half-hidden turn-off and a sign that reads "Oshoek and Badplaas".

Long way down

Turn right at the sign and follow a downhill dirt road to the base of a narrow valley. The road drops 800 m over the next 14 km, which places it amongst the top 3% of South Africa's steepest passes. The road surface is usually in good condition, but after heavy rains you definitely won't make it in a regular sedan.

The trail runs through the eastern quarter of the Songimvelo Game Reserve, which is managed by the Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency. Although you drive through the reserve, you don't have to pay because the trail is a regional road.

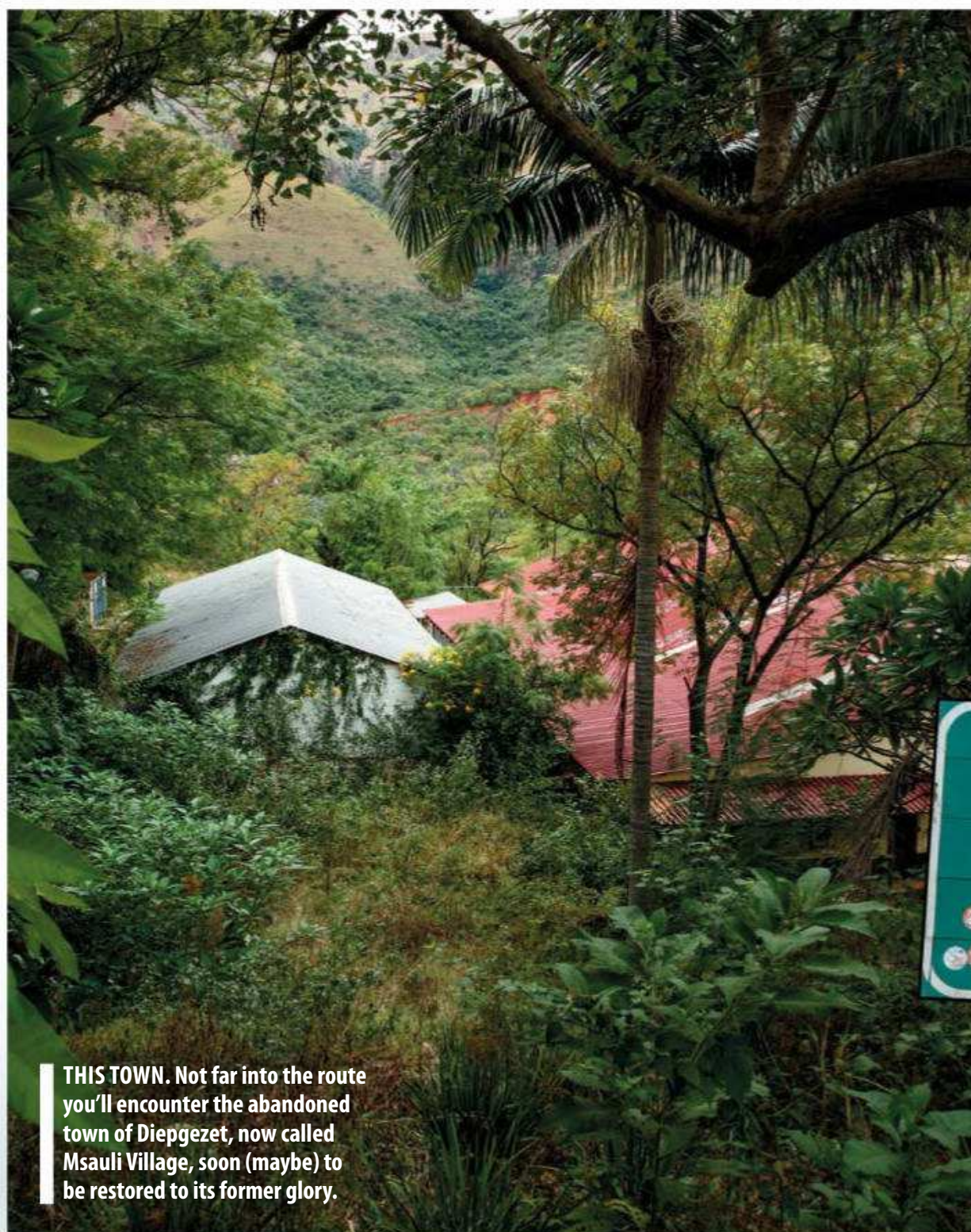
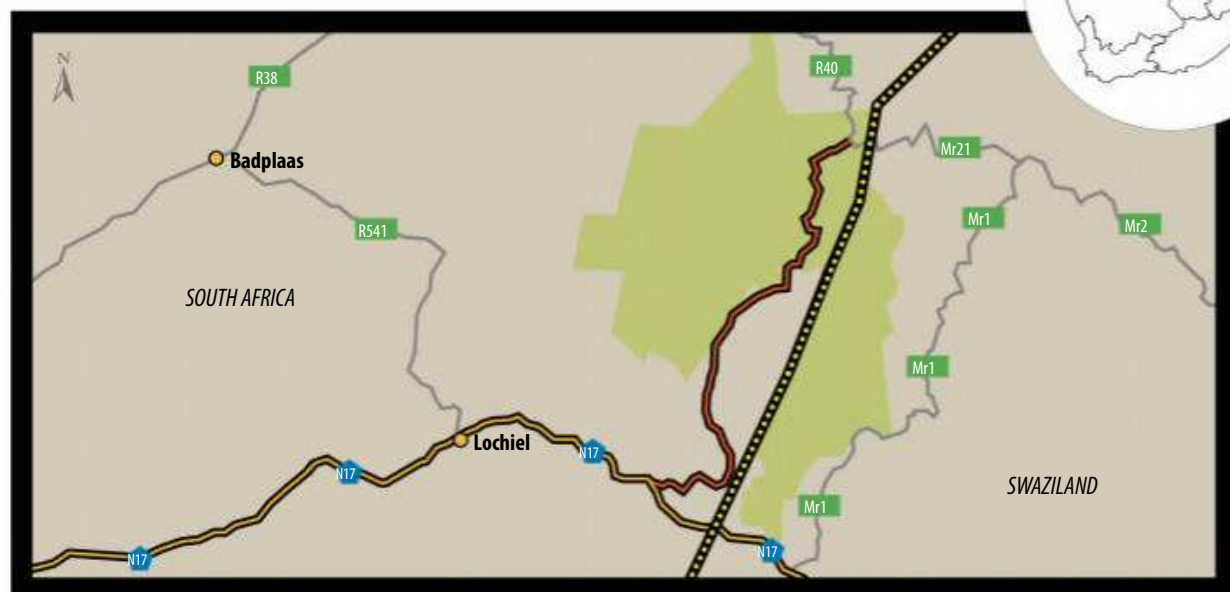
After 7 km a hill rises out from the valley floor. A twin-track runs dead straight up this hill (someone cleverer would have built a winding road, but that's neither here nor there) and you will definitely have to engage low range to make it to the top. Once there, you'll have a magnificent view over the valley. To the left a waterfall roars, Swaziland lies in front of you, and to the right mountain after mountain fades into the hazy distance.

Four kilometres south is the turn-off to the Dunbar 4x4 Trail. You're only allowed to drive the trail by appointment and the minimum requirements are that there must be at least two vehicles in your group and that both those vehicles



must have low-range gearing. This trail ends after 8 km deep in the mountains and you have to retrace your tracks back to the gate. Although the trail is not particularly challenging, the park's management doesn't want you to take any chances because elephants and buffalo often roam around here.

Around the corner from the Dunbar trail, a deserted suburban house suddenly appears in front of you. Then there's another and another. Soon you're in the middle of a deserted town with not a soul in sight.



THIS TOWN. Not far into the route you'll encounter the abandoned town of Diepgezet, now called Msauli Village, soon (maybe) to be restored to its former glory.

All alone

The houses' windows are intact and the doors are all closed. The lawns, however, are covered in weeds and creepers have started covering the roofs. If you peer through the windows you'll see armchairs, sofas and toys on the wall-to-wall carpets. It's unsettling to see a town like this – like something out of a Chernobyl documentary. But it's not a creepy place, because there's no sign of violence or vandalism and the strange beauty of Mother Nature slowly chewing and swallowing the neat buildings is emotive.

A Ferris wheel towers out over the area. Its eight cars are all rusted shut, but every now and again you hear a creaking sound coming from the structure. On one side >

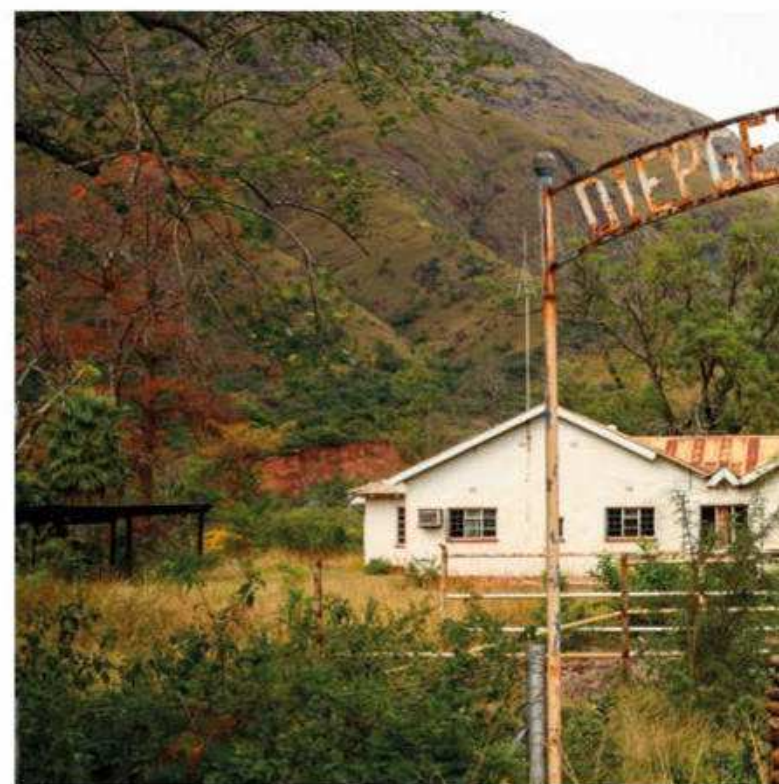




ABANDONED. Nature is slowly reclaiming the land, but a few monolithic structures – like the Ferris wheel – do their best to resist her.

of the ladies' bar in the hotel there's a piano and when you try to play it the hammers hit flat strings, creating muted, melancholy sounds.

The school's rusted corrugated roof is sagging. At the entrance it reads "Diepgezet Laerskool". The town of Diepgezet was established in 1940s to serve a nearby asbestos mine, but when it was discovered that asbestos causes cancer, the town was evacuated and the



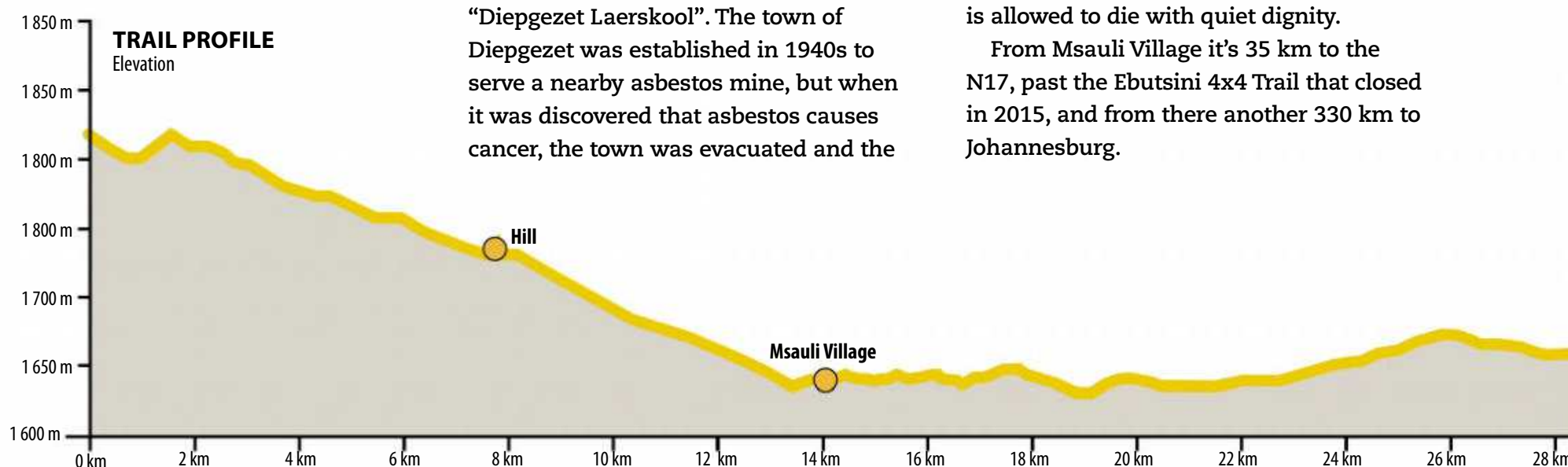
mine's entrance collapsed with dynamite. The last resident moved away in 2003 and the land was handed over to the local people (the town is managed by the Ekuphleni Kesive Songimvelo Communal Property Association).

There are still people in Diepgezet: Alan and Liz Eltze are renovating the houses on behalf of the community and they plan to eventually restore the entire town to its former glory and turn it into a tourist destination. The town's name has since been changed to Msauli Village.

When you see a wild fig's fleshy roots squashing the walls of the hostel for unwed males, you'll start to doubt the feasibility of their plans. Nevertheless, there's accommodation for 14 guests (R550 per room and R380 per chalet, both for two people). There's also a coffee shop where you can order a light meal.

It's a pity that Alan and Liz are so keen to restore the town. They mean well, but there's a beauty to a town that is allowed to die with quiet dignity.

From Msauli Village it's 35 km to the N17, past the Ebutsini 4x4 Trail that closed in 2015, and from there another 330 km to Johannesburg.





DECAY. Most of the buildings are intact, some houses are even fit for occupation, but it just doesn't seem possible to bring this town back from the brink – not completely anyway. And definitely not any time soon.



Ebutsini



What you need to know



Maximum number of vehicles allowed

Unlimited.

Do I get a map? No.

Will I scratch my vehicle? No.

Should I take a compressor? No.

Can we braai next to the road? Rather braai at Msauli Village.

Can I turn around halfway? Yes.

Is there cellphone reception? A weak signal.

THE TRAIL

Best time to go? Year-round.

Can I take my family? Yes, definitely.

For the day or for the weekend?

Weekend.

Are there ablution facilities? In Msauli Village, yes.

Directions From Barberton it's about 35 km south over Saddleback Pass to the Oshoek-Badplaas road sign. If you're driving from the south with the N17, you have to turn off at the Ekulindeni road sign, about 17 km after Lochiel.

GPS S25.94348 E31.10560 (north)
S26.18171 E30.93896 (south)

Price Free

Contact Songimvelo Game Reserve (Dunbar 4x4 Trail) 017 883 7942

mpumalanga.com

Msauli Village 011 828 0227 (office hours) or 082 777 2026 (after hours)

msaulivillage.co.za



Lost in

paradise

Their second excursion to Mozambique got off to a rocky start, but that didn't mean that Leon and Rosalia Barnard's trip to the Santa Maria peninsula was ruined.



“After previously spending a month in Mozambique, my wife Rosalia and I knew we had to return because our neighbour to the north holds such promise of great adventure, hidden gems with surreal scenery, and interesting cuisine.

So we packed up our Ford Ranger Wildtrak, towing a Mobilodge caravan, and headed straight for the Kosi Bay border post after leaving our Klerksdorp home earlier this year. While our excitement levels were understandably high, our navigation wasn't quite where it should have been and just after passing into Mozambique we realised we had already taken the wrong sand track.

It sounds like you had a tough time getting there.

We tried using GPS, but the signal was too weak to offer proper guidance. There are also virtually no signposts or boards that help pinpoint certain places so it is a bit difficult to find your way.

For example, after about 50 km we turned right at the first turnoff indicating that the Maputo Elephant Reserve is in that direction. We later found out that we should actually have turned towards the park 50 km later, because we entered it from the southern gate.

We also got stuck despite decreasing tyre pressures to between 1,2 and 1,5 bar, because the caravan's jockey wheel caught on the soft sandy road and broke

our momentum. It didn't help that the Mobilodge was heavily loaded.

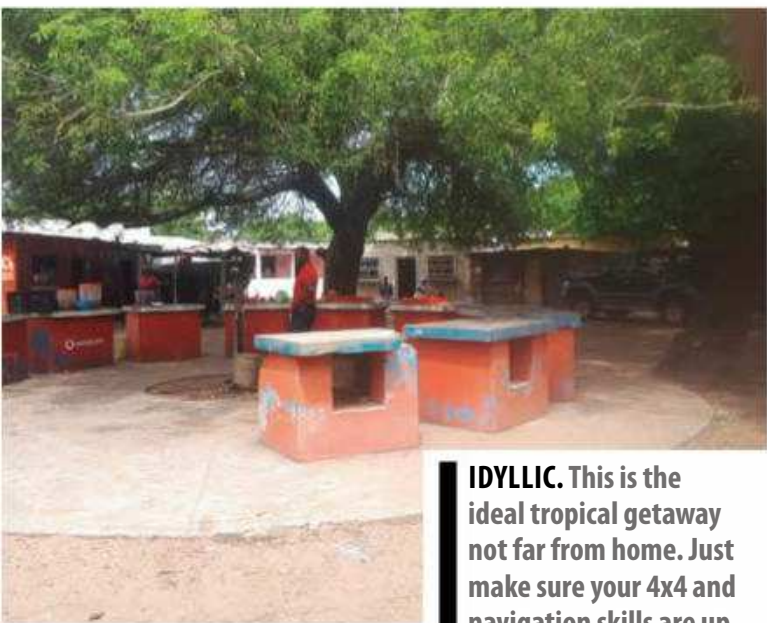
Eventually, a rescue party was sent out to look for us. We had used a satellite phone to call back home to our son Andre, who called for help on our behalf.

What does it look like there?

All of the camping stands are shaded by lush trees and each has its own boma, electricity, running water and plenty of space for a certain degree of privacy. There are breathtaking views all around you, white sandy pathways, quaint little huts and fishing dhows on the lagoon.

What does it cost to camp there?

It's R150 per person. The stands are



IDYLLIC. This is the ideal tropical getaway not far from home. Just make sure your 4x4 and navigation skills are up to the task.



spacious enough for a party of 12, which is the number that management limits a group to (at R1 800). Children between four and eight years old pay 50% of the sharing price and toddlers under three stay for free.

What did you get up to?

We pretty much spent our days roaming the flawless beaches of the area and kept on visiting the nearby rock pools, where there's an abundance of marine

life, shells, coral, and even a shipwreck to explore. We tried our hands at fishing, another local pastime, but sadly nothing took the bait. We also snorkelled around the reef of Inhaca Island after taking a ferry across the water. This was how we spent our days until we eventually had to pack up and head back.



Contact +25 8840425236

bemugis.com

bemugis@gmail.com

GPS S26.093828 E32.950055

WIN

Leon and Rosalia win a **Camp Cover Bundu Bag** worth R500.

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

campcover.co.za.



Any tips for someone headed that way as well?

Call ahead and get proper directions from the campsite or resort you're staying at. Also, if you have access to a resource like Tracks4Africa, make use of it. Ask the management at your destination if the road inbound is suited for towing a caravan. Fortunately, we remembered that we had brought along a satellite phone, which came in handy because cellphone reception and signal to our Garmin GPS was intermittent.



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FREE STATE: BLOEMFONTEIN 051 447 7042 WELKOM 057 050 0050 BETHLEHEM 058 303 5661 LIMPOPO: MOKOPANE 015 491 2855 LOUIS TRICHARDT 017 638 0725/6
TZANEEN 015 306 0136 EASTERN CAPE: HUMANSDORP 042 291 0086 PORT ELIZABETH 041 484 1905 NORTHERN CAPE: KIMBERLEY 053 807 9403 UPINGTON 054 338 8833
WESTERN CAPE: PAROW 021 930 4613 PAARL 021 871 1317 SWAZILAND: 00268 2518 7867

www.landwindsa.co.za



LANDWIND

No shot in the dark

What does a slingshot, a campsite next to the river, and a smoky fire have in common? Why, a fish on the line, of course.



FISHING RESORT

RAASWATER RIVER LODGE

Quiet time

The Vaal River is known for its fishing resorts. From about 30 km south of Potchefstroom the river takes a southwesterly turn and connects with the Orange River 400 km on. And this is where Raaswater lies on the North West side of the river.

Raaswater's fishing shore is a kilometre long, and the campsite, which also borders on the shore, is far right as you drive through the gate. You can pitch camp right next to the water, but because of the 100-year flood line, the nearest power socket is 50 m away.

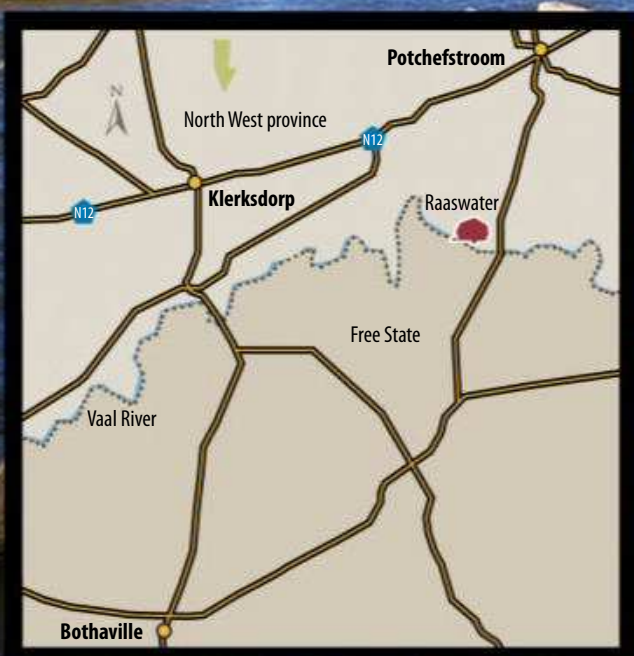
The stands are not demarcated and you can choose your own spot. There's space for about 10 caravans next to the water, with more stands away from the river. The entire campsite is flat with grass, shade trees and one ablution

block (which includes a washing-up area). There are no brick braais, but there are a few loose-standing steel braais that you can take to your stand.

There are also three jetties from which you can fish. Some of the facilities on the jetty include a table, six chairs, a canopy, braai, basin with cold water, electricity and lights, in case you feel like fishing till the early morning hours. To make use of a jetty will set you back R300 per day.

The cold-water pool is close to the office and there's a play park nearby. The shop has a liquor licence and sells basic provisions. It's open during the week and on Saturdays from 8 am to 5 pm and Sundays and public holidays from 8 am to 1 pm.

The owners request that you release the yellowfish, and you'll get a fine if you don't.





Briefly | Raaswater River Lodge



Fish Carp, yellowfish, mudfish, catfish.

Campsite An open camp area that stretches to the river. The stands are not demarcated and there's space for about 30 caravans.

Ablution facilities 1 building for campers next to the campsite that's cleaned three times a day: 9 am, 2 pm and 4 pm.

Price R250 p.n. per stand plus R55 p.p.n.

(R35 for kids under 12, free for under 5s). Maximum 6 people per stand.

Arrival and departure times There are no fixed times, but it must be during office hours.

Contact 072 185 5674 raaswater@vodamail.co.za raaswater@riverlodge.com

Road condition The last 3,8 km is a decent dirt road.

GPS S26.931267 E27.018817

go! Drive & Camp says The biggest carp caught here recently tipped the scales at 9,8 kg.



FISHING GEAR

Shoot 'em up

Carp anglers make a feedlot for the fish they want to catch, but the problem is it's a good 50 m or so away from the shore. A lot of fishermen use a remote-controlled bait boat or even row out with a canoe to get the bait to the right place.

But now anglers also have a third choice: Stonfo's "feeding slingshot". Werner Lubbe from Fear None Quality Fishing Tackle, the sole importer, says your options are not limited if you don't have a bait boat or canoe. Not only does Stonfo's Fiona Maxi feeding slingshot take up almost no space in your tackle box, but you can also shoot your bait to the desired feeding spot in a matter of seconds.

The slingshot is manufactured in Italy and the frame is aluminium. The grip is made of durable ABS plastic and the elastic is strong enough to launch bait up to 120 m through the air. The slingshot's elastic bands are fastened in the middle to a small rubber basket in which you put the bait. For accuracy, boilies (16 mm) and molasses bait balls (40 mm) are the ideal "ammunition", but it can also launch things like kaboemmielies, mixed seeds and ordinary bait balls to the desired feeding area.

The slingshot is available in all good tackle shops.

Contact

Fear None
Quality

Fishing Tackle

011 979 2766

fearnone@mweb.co.za

fearnoneqft.co.za.



SMOKED FISH

I'm so stoked!

Tiaan has experimented with this method a lot. It creates a unique taste and is surprisingly easy.

Ingredients

- 1 fresh fish filet like kabeljou, yellowtail or Cape salmon
- olive oil
- salt and pepper, to taste
- a few handfuls smoke shavings (for sale at supermarkets and co-ops)
- a large piece of foil

Here's how

1 Paint the fish all over with oil and put with skin down on the grid. Braai the fish for 3–5 minutes on both sides so it's not completely raw when you start to smoke it.

2 Tear off a piece of foil big enough to cover the grid and the coals. Take the grid off and throw a handful of shavings on the coals. Put the grid back on and cover with the foil.

3 Try to capture as much smoke as possible while the shavings are burning – a Weber with a lid works well. Keep the foil on for about 5 minutes. You can turn the grid once and immediately put the foil back on.

4 Add salt and pepper. (By now the fish will have a light yellow tinge. Press the fish lightly with your fingers to feel if the meat is firm. If it flakes easily, it's ready.

go! Drive & Camp says Oak shavings from old wine barrels work the best. A bag of 315 g costs R60 at Agrimark.

South Africa's Leaders in Leisure

LeisureWorld

4 X 4 Deluxe Overnight Bag
Heavy Duty Canvas and Leather
4X4BAGLUX

R1249

4 X 4 Ripstop Canvas Travel Bag
with side pouches and carry strap
4X4BAGCAN

R749

R1000 Gift Voucher with any
National Luna Fridge/Freezer
bought during November and
December 2018

R459

400 Lumen Output
Natural Colour redemption
Removable light head for upward light
MS5151

R89

Super Bright LED plus 2 Wide Angle LED's
with adjustable head, 3 x AAA included
MS7412

R495 each

Ultra Light Parachute Quality
Packable Hammock
(Green and Blue)
UH1112

AC/DC 2 Speed 10" Rechargeable Fan
with built-in Emergency LED Light
MS5171

R795

BonBraai Carry Bag
BBD600

R390

Solar Power Bank 12000mah
Dual USB with LED Flashlight
SU6401

R549

10x50 National Geographic
Porro-Prism Binoculars
UG4024

R849

10x25 National Geographic
Porro-Prism Compact
Binoculars
UG4008

R395

BonBraai Table Top
Stainless Steel Braai
BBD601

R1750

8 High-Bright LED's
150 Lumens Rechargeable
Lantern
MS7049

R395

Glow-In-The-Dark switch
Supa-LED Switchlight
200 Lumens
SI4830

R95



All above price are valid from 1 November 2018 to 31 December 2018. While stocks last.

Participating Dealers

Benoni Caravans	Benoni	011-973-3747	Kimberley Caravans	Kimberley	053-861-4865
Bethlehem Karavanne	Bethlehem	058-303-5050	Loftus Caravan City	Randburg	011-792-1456
Bloemwa	Bloemfontein	083-702-8970	Middelburg Caravans	Middelburg	013-243-5060
Cara-Camp Caravans	Somerset West	021-852-8215	Natal Caravans & Marine	Pinetown	031-702-7291
Claredon Caravans	Springs	011-811-9900	Northern Natal 4 x 4 &		
Eastern Cape Caravans	Port Elizabeth	041-581-5363	Outdoor Centre	Newcastle	034-312-5707
GC Gypsy	Witbank	013-697-5121	Pretoria Caravans	Pretoria	012-329-2259
Kempton Caravans	Edenvale	011-974-5595	SafariCo. 4 x 4	Midlands	033-342-1424
Kennis Caravans	Roodepoort	011-664-7000	Tygerberg Caravans	Brackenfell	021-982-4670

In the fast lane

Volkswagen's new Arteon is a sporty sedan that's just as versatile with or without a caravan on the hitch.

Text and photos **Leon Botha**

VOLKSWAGEN ARTEON 2.0 TDI R-LINE

It's a well-known fact that Volkswagen is a manufacturer that keeps caravanners in mind when it designs its cars. From models like the modest Caddy to the stately Touareg, the vehicles' onboard computer acknowledges the caravan when you connect the towing lights to the harness. As you'd expect, that's also the case in the newer models, like the Arteon, which we're test driving this month.

The Arteon is Volkswagen's new standard-bearer in terms of luxury sedans. It is, however, much more than just a fancy family vehicle, and although towing a caravan might not be the first idea

that pops into your head when you see the Arteon for the first time, you shouldn't let its appearance fool you. We see how this speedster behaves in front of a caravan.

Spoilt for choice

The Arteon replaces the Passat CC model, and at a quick glance their rear ends look very similar. And when you get in, the dashboard is also pure Passat.

But the Arteon isn't merely a sporty version of the Passat. Even with all the similarities, it's a model in its own right.



In terms of towing power, the newton metres of the three models won't make your decision any easier. Two have a 2 ℓ turbodiesel engine and one a turbopetrol (also 2 ℓ), but all three send 350 Nm to the wheels. That's quite unusual, especially for the petrol and diesel engines with the same engine capacity. Both the diesel engines deliver 130 kW, with the petrol engine overshadowing both with its 206 kW.

Down to Earth

When you get into the Arteon you can immediately feel that it's

lower than an ordinary sedan. The front and rear doors don't have door frames over the windows and you have to bend down to not bump your head. On the driver's seat the top of your head brushes against the roof when the seat adjustment is at its highest.

The dashboard is one big computer, with the Active Info Display in front of you and oversized rear-view camera screen to the left. The small analogue clock at the top in the centre console looks out of place and is exactly the same as in the Passat. In general, manufacturers are moving away from analogue clocks, though this one is more than welcome in the console. >

TOW TEST

There are also two USB sockets. The one is at the bottom in the centre console and other one in the space at your left elbow. That's the closest one if someone on the backseat wants to use it.

Practice your swing

The Arteon has a similar electric swing-away hitch like we saw on the Tiguan, but this test vehicle has an Oris hitch and not one from Westfalia. At first glance they're identical, except for the socket. It's also placed diagonally across in the neck of the hitch, but it's on the right unlike Westfalia's which is on the left.

The button you have to pull for the hitch to swing out from where it's hidden behind the bumper is to the right in the boot. When you pull it the hitch lowers halfway and you use your hand to push it into place until it locks. The hitch is certified for a nose weight of 90 kg and its load test – the D-value – is fixed at 11,3 kN. That's equal to 1 152 kg.

The hitch is also suitable for bike racks, but the total loaded weight on the ball can't exceed 75 kg and the horizontal distance from the ball must be less than 70 cm.

When you put the Arteon in reverse, the Volkswagen badge in the boot opens like a valve. The camera's lens is hidden underneath the badge.

Thin and spacious

As you'd expect from a sportier vehicle's wheels, the sidewall of the 20" tyres (245/35/R20) gives you about 6 cm's rubber between the road and the rim. A big plus, however, is the size of the boot. There's space for Africa and the tailgate opens and closes electrically. The storage space is 102 cm wide and 110 cm long. In the middle of the backseats a narrow section folds flat if you want to pack something long like a pole of 2 m. The opening is 20 cm wide and 36 cm high.

The spare wheel is full-size and is stored underneath the boot's floor.

The caravan steals half

The Arteon is chock full of electronics, including the Active Info Display and Heads-up Display. The rear-view camera system is also advanced, and besides the fact that you can see what's going on behind you as you reverse, it also shows a shot directly from above so you can see the coupler and hitch. Round index lines appear then on the screen in half circles around the hitch and you can see exactly how far you still need to reverse to connect with the coupler.



A REAL LOOKER. The Arteon replaces the Passat CC, and then some. This is arguably one of the prettier Volkswagens to be launched in recent years. The R-line package adds low-profile tyres to massive 20-inch alloy wheels and more aggressive styling cues.



Pieter Crous
understands caravan towing.
This is what he thinks...

Pieter says

“The Arteon is so pretty it draws attention everywhere you go. Personally, I prefer sportier vehicles, but I also like sitting high, and with the seat at its highest setting my head touches the roof. Its shape reminds me of a coupé, but it has four doors. I must admit, for this type of vehicle it has a surprisingly big boot.

The dashboard looks very similar to that of the Tiguan that we tested two months ago.

There are various drive modes, where the engine is sluggish in the Comfort mode and wide awake in Sport. When you put your foot down in Sport, the transmission and engine react immediately and the



The system of three electronic dials on the centre console draws your eye. It shows the readings of the turbocharger, the G-force that you experience in the Arteon, as well as the kilowatt usage of the car. It's almost superfluous info that you don't really need to know. Who cares if the turbo reading is higher or lower than 1 bar, and if the G-force is 0,05? But it's not every day that you get to see how much power the engine uses to maintain the towing combination at a certain speed.

One way to mess with the aerodynamic shape of the Arteon is to hitch a caravan. Because the Arteon is so low on the ground, an ordinary caravan creates quite a bit of wind resistance. The resistance of course steals some

of the towing vehicle's power and you're left with less horsepower with which to tow the caravan. This is where the kilowatt meter comes in handy because it shows you the big difference a caravan makes to the car's power output.

Without a caravan on the highway, on a flat surface and at 100 km/h, the Arteon uses 15 kW. When you accelerate to 120 km/h and maintain that speed, the engine uses 50% more power for only 20 km/h faster. Then the reading is 23 kW. With the caravan hitched, the Arteon uses double the power at the same speed. At 100 km/h, the 15 kW becomes 30 kW and at 120 km/h the engine has to produce 48 kW versus the 23 kW to maintain the speed without the caravan in tow. >

needle in that kilowatt metre in the centre console hits 130 kW as the engine pushes out maximum power.

The suspension is stiff, and the very low-profile tyres also don't help to make it a softer ride.

I enjoy the Heads-up Display that allows you to see the speed reading at the bottom of the windscreen. The reading is directly in your line of sight and it's something that should be in every car.

The Arteon is definitely the prettiest car Volkswagen has ever built, and you might buy it based purely on its appearance. That goes for the interior and the exterior. If I had one, though, I wouldn't use it as a towing vehicle; it leans more to the sporty side, but the test proved that the Arteon is more than capable to hitch a caravan.

The Arteon is excellently priced, and I have to say, this car has my name written all over it.



TECH TRENDY. The Arteon is packed with electronic gizmos and gadgets. There are even G-force and boost meters, as well as an immediate readout of how much engine power you're using.



TOW TEST



What we towed with

Make Sprite

Model Surfer

Year model 2004

GVM 1 150 kg

Loaded weight on the axle at time of testing 880 kg

Nose weight 80 kg

go! Drive & Camp borrowed the Sprite Surfer from Tygerberg Caravans. Phone Wesley Dempster on 021 982 4670 for a closer look at the Surfer. tygerbergcaravans.co.za

The test

Distance 80,3 km

Top speed 119 km/h (GPS)

Average speed 57,6 km/h (highways, back roads and built-up areas)

Driving time 1 hour 25 minutes.

Weather 16 °C, sunny, with a 11 km/h north-northwesterly wind.



Before you open your wallet

What does the book say?

Fuel Diesel

Engine 1,968 ℓ

Cylinders 4

Power 130 kW @ 4 000 rpm

Torque 350 Nm @

1 608–3 500 rpm

Transmission 6-speed (DSG)

Drivetrain Front wheel

Tare 1 390 kg

GVM 2 150 kg

GCM 4 150 kg

Wading depth Not available

Towing ability for trailer with overrun brakes Up to 2 000 kg

Dimensions 4 862 mm (l);

1 871 mm (w); 1 427 mm (h)

Axle distance 2 841 mm

Track width 1 587–1 591 mm

(front); 1 577–1 581 mm (rear)

Ground clearance 138 mm

Fuel tank 66 ℓ (includes a

6 ℓ reserve)

Price (new) R649 900

Price (second-hand) We saw one with 8 000 km on the clock on autotrader.co.za for R639 950.

Fast facts

The hitch is optional on all three models, and like with the test model it costs an additional R8 350.

Suspension Multi-link rear and dual wishbones in front. For a sporty car the tail dropped quite a bit under the nose weight of the caravan: a full 25 mm, which also explains the bumpy ride.

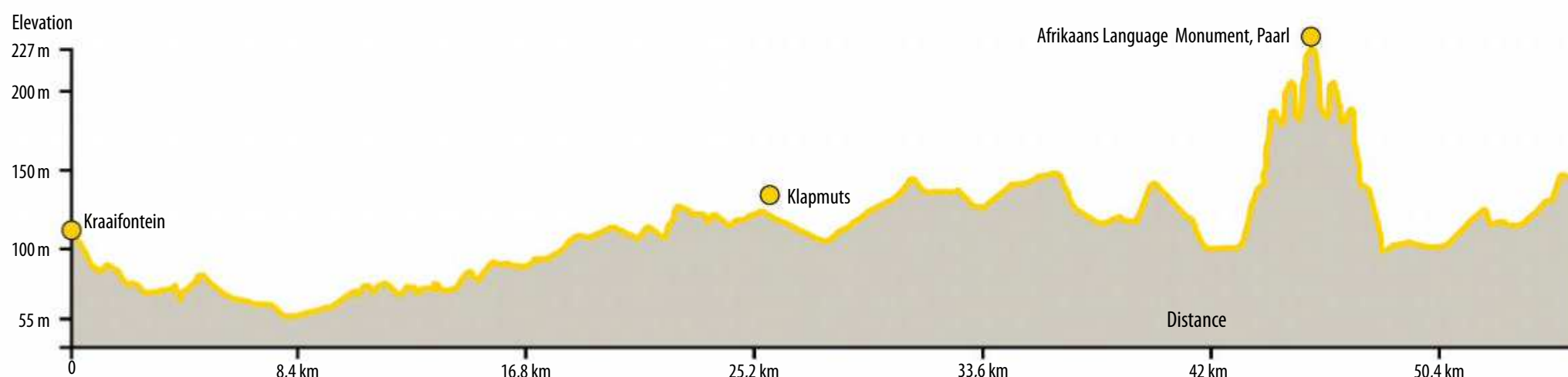
Weight 1 860 kg with a full tank of gas and the caravan's nose weight on the



TOW MATE. The Arteon is not unlike other Volkswagens in that it's very friendly towards caravanners. The computer recognises that there's something on the hitch when you plug the caravan into the harness.



TOW PROFILE





hitch. The combination mass was 2 740 kg.

Interior Front and back in the car your head almost touches the roof, but the rear passengers have no cause for complaint about their legroom: a palm and a half in front of the knees.

Speed The odometer was 3 km/h out from the GPS reading on 100 km/h. That was 97 km/h.

Fuel consumption You can't complain about the 10,8 l/100 km (8,7 km/l). And our calculations matched the computer's.

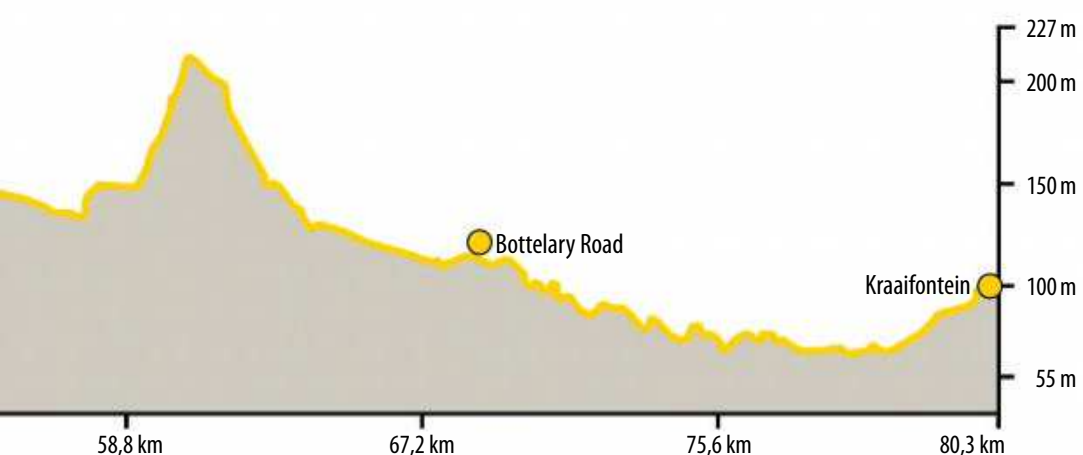
Finishes Stylish, angular, and mostly black. Even the roof inside above your

head is black, and "R" on the steering wheel looks like it was cast in the aluminium section to emphasise the quality.

Extras R2 250 for metallic paint, R16 150 for the Parking Assistance system that includes the rear-view camera and Park Assist and R9 350 for the Heads-up Display.

Other models?
2.0 TDI Elegance R599 900
2.0 TSI R-Line 4Motion R699 900

go! Drive & Camp says Volkswagen recommends extra services between the standard intervals when you're towing regularly. 🚚



From the competitors (and their sporty variants)



400 Nm

6%

BMW 420d Sport Line
R686 200

14%



400 Nm

9%

Audi A5 Sportback S line
R711 198

14%



430 Nm

31%

Jaguar XF R-Sport
R853 700

24%

Hot little number

Manufacturers are tapping into the previously overlooked B-licence camping segment and Aloe Caravans have hit the ground running with the Peri Peri.

Text and photos **Kyle Kock**



ALOE PERI PERI

Ask anyone under 35 years old if they have an EB licence and the answer is likely to be a resounding “no”. Or that they’re not sure. And if they don’t have one it means they’re not allowed to tow a large caravan or trailer.

Allan Keyzer and his son Matthew of Aloe Caravans in Boksburg have been contemplating this predicament for some time now. While they’ve mainly been in the business of custom-building caravans and a few campers for clientele who value a more personal touch to their recreational vehicles, they’re now aiming squarely at the B-licence segment with the Peri Peri, the first of their new range of standard caravans.

Simply put, your teenager fresh out of matric is allowed to

tow one of these if he or she hasn’t done an EB from the get-go. Or if your parents are looking to downsize but aren’t keen on a teardrop, this might be the sort of caravan they’re after.

In a world where consumers demand the best and very latest in technology and gadgets, there are two main factors when it comes to building these types of caravans: weight and price. It has to be affordable enough for those driving smaller vehicles and those who can’t afford a bigger and more expensive vehicle, and then it has to be light enough to legally have a listed gross vehicle mass (GVM) of 750 kg.

We hitched the Peri Peri to the back of a Hyundai Creta and spent a few days visiting campsites in Limpopo.



“
The Peri Peri’s appearance is mostly inconspicuous, until you notice the decals and windows on the sides.

Box me in

The Keyzers have kept the design simple to keep costs down. A simple aluminium frame is used in the Peri Peri’s construction while a composite material insulates it and aluminium sheets make up the majority of the caravan’s body panels. Finished off in a matte silver (metallic paint is an option as the standard colour is white), the Peri Peri’s appearance is mostly inconspicuous and most people would be forgiven for thinking that this is some mobile kitchen that you’ll find at a carnival, or a very large trailer. But it’s only when you notice the decals along the sides and front, the two windows, and the pop-up roof that the Aloe’s smallest caravan actually starts making a statement of its own.

Up front, depending on how you spec your Peri Peri, there’s a spare wheel on top of the A-frame that’s kept locked in place with a padlock. Checker plate protects the lower third of the Peri Peri’s nose from stone chips and road debris. The upper half of the front is also curved slightly backwards to improve the aerodynamics because it would otherwise just be a plain brick to tow and negatively affect fuel consumption.

Each side has a small window, and on the left toward the rear is where you plug in your standard blue caravan lead. The door is exactly in the centre at the back and you step up 30 cm to gain access. >



ONE MAN JOB.

The Peri Peri is light enough to be moved into position by just one person using the grab handles. Once it’s exactly where you want it, you can lower both corner steadies at the rear.





If you've ordered the optional awnings, you can find them stored in bags underneath the bench seating inside.

Easy does it

The Peri Peri is simple to set up once you arrive and unhitch at the campsite. Lower the jockey wheel and walk around to the back where you use a crank lever kept in the drop-down kitchen to lower the two rear corner steadies. They're tucked in handily underneath the floor. You just rotate the hex nuts clockwise to lower them and voilà. The Keyzers reckon it's sturdy enough with five points on the ground (including the tyres) and jockey wheel. If you're still not happy with how the Peri Peri is positioned on your stand, you can lift the rear corner steadies slightly and move it via one of the four handles, at the front and rear of both the left and right sides.

The pop-up roof is a one-man affair. There are four safety clips at each corner that you'll have to undo first. These are held in place by easy-to-use carabiners. Once unclipped, you'll have to enter the caravan and hoist the roof using two handles (one at either end) that have been bolted into the roof

front and rear, and the roof is lifted by gas struts so it's easy enough to do on your own. You can push the round cross bar of the support bracket up and then you screw in a fastener. At the opposite end you tighten the fastener horizontally from the other one. The roof is then secure.

If you've ordered the optional awnings from Aloe, you can find them stored in bags under the bench seating. The awning set comes complete with five pieces of canvas, three of which slide into place along metal strips that border the rear end of the caravan. There are two sides with windows and two separate panels form the front (with a zipped door in the one), with the roof the largest piece. They're held in place with extendable poles that click into sockets on the Peri Peri's body. Whoever is going camping with you in the Peri Peri is definitely going to have to lend a hand because getting the awnings up is not a one-man job.





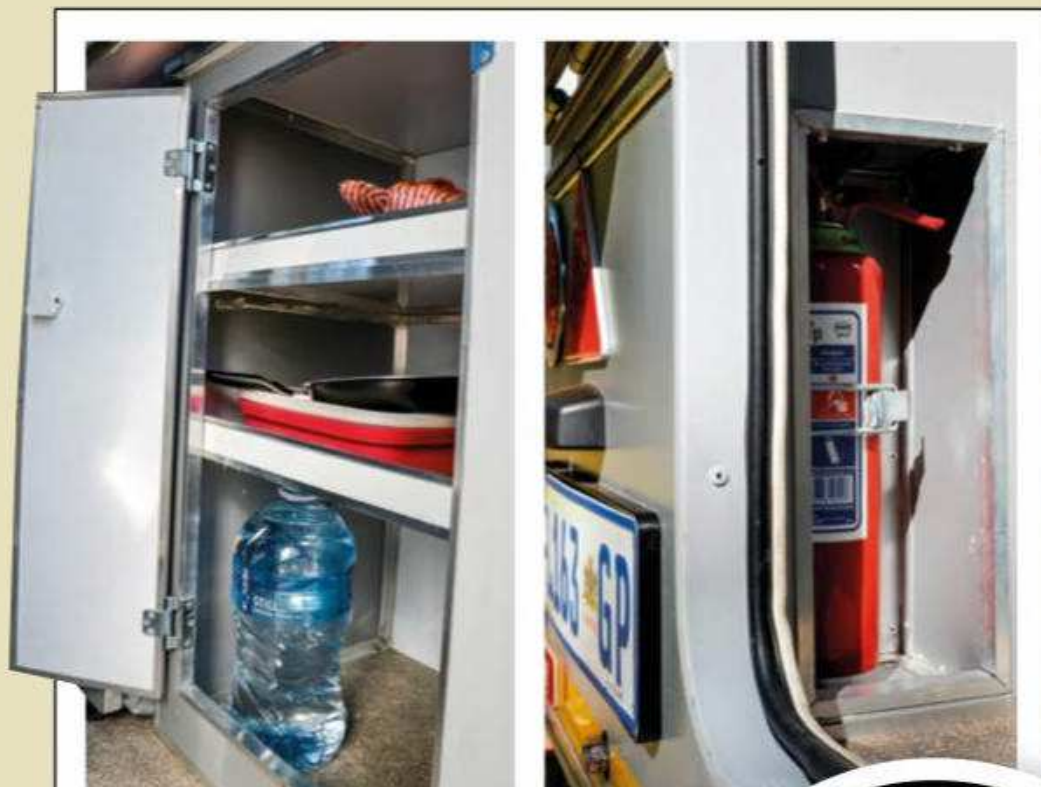
Table for two

Given this category of caravan, you won't expect anything fancy from the kitchen, but the Peri Peri dishes up for two quite nicely. The kitchen is located next to the door, which folds down to create a worktop, held in place at 90° by a strap. You can also support it with one of the extendable poles from inside.

Inside this 58 cm wide nook are basic eating utensils for two in plastic sleeves – a pair of knives,

forks, dessert and teaspoons, dinner plates, bowls, mugs, highball glasses and tumblers. Against the inside panel of the body are dual three-prong power sockets if you need to power something like a kettle. Also standard in the Peri Peri is an Alva single-plate stove, which uses a narrow butane cartridge to supply the flames for your cooking. There's also space here for a few cooking utensils, dishwashing liquid and dishcloths. >





What's inside?

Immediately to your left upon entering is a small shelf formed by the kitchen storage unit. Against the bulkhead are two light switches: one for powering the LED unit in the middle of the Peri Peri's roof and the other for the LED strip that acts as an outside light above the kitchen. Right next to your feet on the left is where the fire extinguisher is stored. There's no door over it so it constantly catches your eye. Right next to that is the 91 l fridge.

To your right are cupboards for your groceries and other odds and ends. The bottom row of the left-hand-side cupboard is high enough to allow a few 5 l bottles of water to stand upright. The entire surface on top is flat, and at 845 mm long and 475 mm wide, it's the largest surface to use, bar the table.

There are three shelves/cupboards along each wise, up against the roof. They each have about 450 mm long storage space inside. Right at the front end, where the roof curves, is a little shelf for your reading material. Directly underneath each one is a single LED reading light that can swivel and tilt according to your or your partner's requirements. Both have independent switches.

The benches on either side of the table, behind the fridge on the left and cupboards on your right, are converted to a double bed that fills the entire width of the Peri Peri. The table top drops and forms a bridge between the two benches, and the wood planks and rectangular cushions laid out across the two form your base and mattress.

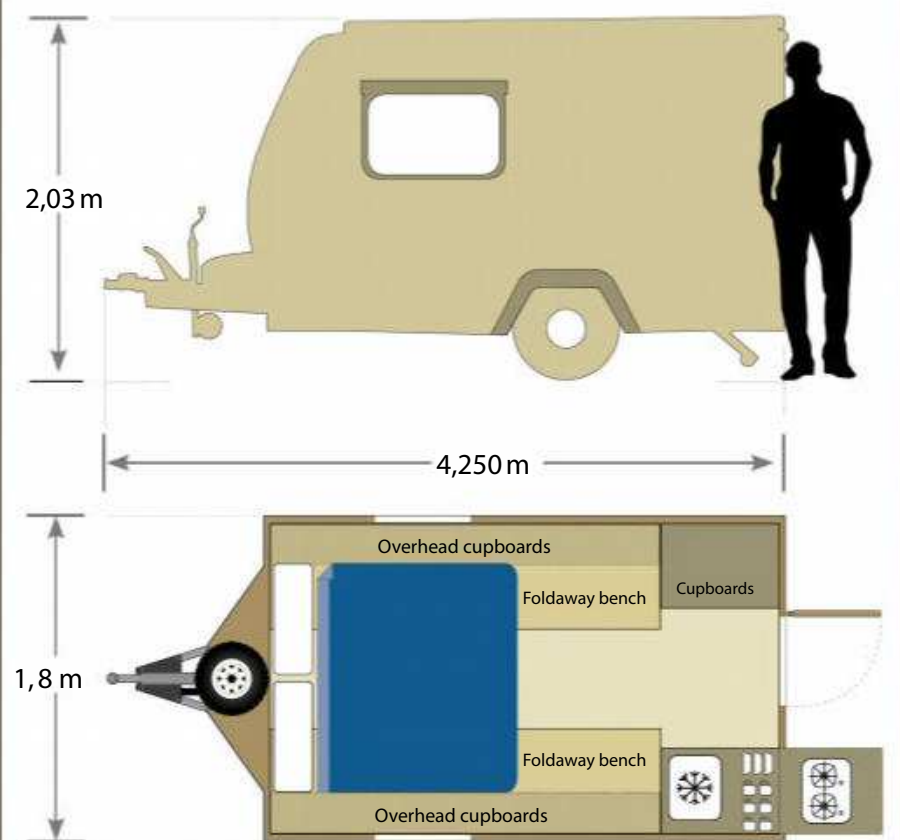


The benches convert to form a double bed when you drop the table and fold out the wood planks and seat cushions.





But wait, there's more
Behind where you would put your pillows are more crannies for hiding things like keys and documents, or that packet of speckled eggs you promised to share with your partner. The two sections under the benches are also ideal for storing your awning and poles, though the one on the left side is smaller because it houses the battery that supplies the fridge, lights and plugs with electricity.



The technical stuff

Length 4,250 m
Width 1,8 m
Height 2,03 m
Apex height inside 1,9 m
Net weight 580 kg
Payload 170 kg
GVM 750 kg
Price R161 302



Plus

- The pop-up roof is easily pitched.
- There's sufficient packing space for a couple.
- There are twist-and-turn LED reading lights at each end of the bed.
- There's a shelf above the individual lights for storing books and magazines.
- There's a light inside the kitchen section.
- It has modern-looking interior.
- The optional awning roof and walls create a closed kitchen area.
- The benches fold up to allow easy stowage of tent poles and larger items.



Minus

- When you're sitting at the table your head will knock the upper cupboards if you're taller than 1,7 m.

- The kitchen work surface is small. And even smaller if you use the standard one-burner gas stove.
- Because of the low ball height you're limited by what you can use to tow the Peri Peri.
- A mirror would be handy.

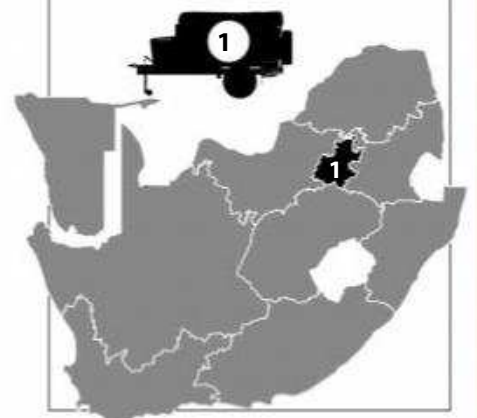
go! Drive & Camp says It will keep seasoned campers happy and might convince younger ones too.

go! Drive & Camp borrowed the Aloe Peri Peri from the manufacturer.

Dealer network

Head office is in Boksburg. This is where they build and sell the caravans from as well.

Contact 011 892 1100
aloecaravans.co.za
matthew@aloecaravans.co.za



An all-day affair

This delicious braai menu will have you eating in sessions: First mushroom braai pitas as a starter and later prego rolls and braaied fish with two salads. Remember to save space for pudding.



BROWN RICE SALAD WITH GRILLED PEPPERS Rice to the occasion

This brown rice salad is easy to make in a campsite. Any remaining salad can be used to fill halved gem squash – simply put them in foil parcels and cook over the coals.

Ingredients

(serves 6)

- 1 cup brown and wild rice
- 2 red or yellow peppers
- 1 can (400 g) chickpeas, rinsed
- 1 small red onion, cut into thin rings

FOR THE SALAD DRESSING

- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
- 100 ml olive oil
- 2 tablespoons white wine vinegar
- salt and black pepper, to taste

Here's how

1 Cook the rice according to the instructions on the packet. Drain and put to the side.

2 Cut the peppers in half and grill over the coals until the skins have blackened. Cover for 5 minutes in a container (or wrap in newspaper) so it steams. Remove the skins and cut the flesh into strips. Stir the peppers, chickpeas and onions through the rice.

3 Make the salad dressing

Dry fry the cumin seeds in a pan over the coals until fragrant – keep an eye on it so it doesn't burn. Mix the oil, vinegar and cumin seeds together, flavour to taste with salt and black pepper, and pour over the rice salad. Mix everything together and serve hot or cold.

go! Drive & Camp says

For a more filling salad add feta or crispy bacon.

PREGO ROLLS Buns on fire!

Make your chili sauce at home and take it along for these amazing prego rolls.

Ingredients

(serves 6)

- 2 cups (250 g) bread flour
- 5 g instant yeast
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- ½–¾ cup lukewarm water
- 600–800 g steak (sirloin or fillet)
- rocket or lettuce, to serve

FOR THE CHILI SAUCE

- 1 small red onion
- 3 cloves garlic
- 1 small red pepper, deseeded
- 6–8 serrano chilies
- 1 tablespoons olive oil

- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 50 ml red wine vinegar
- juice and zest of 1 lemon
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- salt and black pepper, to taste

Here's how

1 To make the chili sauce Blend the ingredients for the chili sauce in a food processor and flavour with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Pour the sauce into a glass jar and keep in the fridge until needed – it should keep for at least a month.

2 Mix the flour, yeast, salt and sugar in a large bowl and add two thirds of the water. Mix everything together with your hands until it forms a dough and add the rest of the water bit by bit until the dough is pliable.

3 Knead the dough for 10 minutes until smooth and elastic. Cover with cling film and leave to proof for an hour in a warm spot until it's doubled in volume.

4 Flatten the dough slightly and divide into 12 balls. Pack the balls on a floured surface. Place a damp cloth over it and leave to proof until it doubles in volume.

5 Braai the rolls over lukewarm coals, turning often. The rolls are ready when they sound hollow when you knock on them. The secret to a good roll is to keep the heat low so they rise properly and cook slowly.

6 Cut the meat into 6 thick steaks and flavour to taste with salt and black pepper. Braai it over hot coals for 2 minutes on each side until cooked to your liking.

7 Put the cooked meat in a dish and paint with the chili sauce. Cover and leave to rest for 5 minutes. Cut each steak in half and serve on a buttered roll with extra chili sauce and fresh rocket leaves.

go! Drive & Camp says If you prefer a milder sauce, deseed the chilies before you add it to the food processor.

>



GREEK YELLOWTAIL Catch of the day

Follow this method and you won't struggle with fish skin sticking to the grid.

Ingredients

(serves 4–6)

- 1 medium-sized yellowtail, cleaned
- 1 onion, peeled and cut into rings
- 1 garlic bulb, sliced through horizontally
- 2 lemons, thinly sliced
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 punnet (250 g) cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 packet (200 g) pitted Kalamata olives
- 2 sprigs fresh sage (or 1 teaspoon dried sage)
- 2 sprigs fresh origanum (or 1 teaspoon dried origanum)

Here's how

1 Cover a hinged grid with a piece of heavy-duty foil – it should be big enough so there's

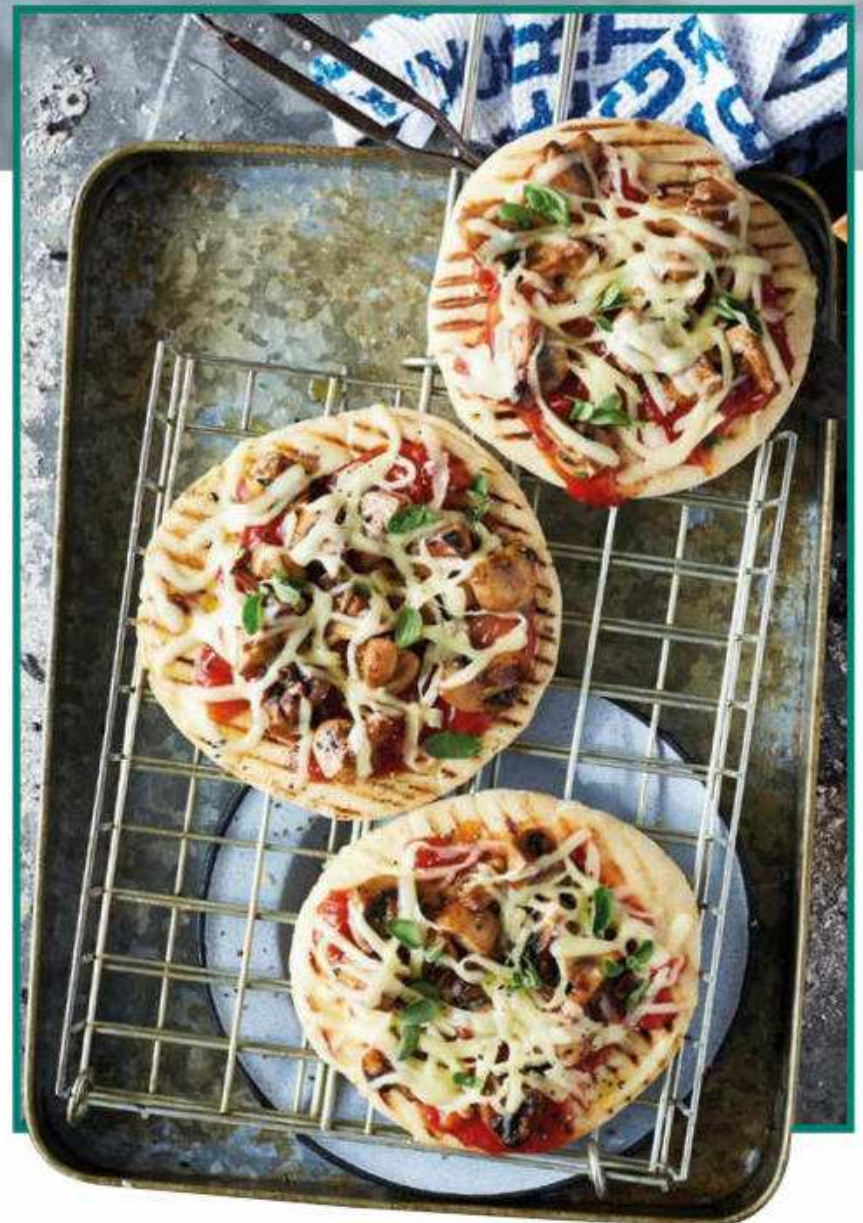
5–10 cm of foil open on all four sides when the fish is on it. Bend the corners of the foil upwards so it forms a bowl.

2 Stuff the fish with half of the onions and the two garlic halves. Put the lemon and the rest of the onion in the middle of the foil and put the fish on top of that. Sprinkle the fish with olive oil.

3 Arrange the cherry tomatoes, olives and herbs on top of the fish. Place another piece of foil (just as big as the first piece) on top of the fish and close the sides right round.

4 Braai the fish over medium coals for 15–20 minutes. Open the foil lid carefully (watch out for the steam!) and test to see if the fish is done. Remove the onion and lemon from inside the fish, sprinkle over more olive oil and serve immediately.

go! Drive & Camp says You can also cook the tomatoes, olives and herbs separately in a pot and then spoon the mixture over the cooked fish.



PITA PIZZA WITH MUSHROOMS That's so cheesy

Serve these pitas instead of braaibroodjies.

Ingredients

(serves 8)

- 8 pita breads
- 2 punnets (200 g each) mushrooms, chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, crushed
- 2 sprigs fresh thyme (or 1 teaspoon dried thyme)
- 1 teaspoon finely chopped rosemary (or use ½ teaspoon dried rosemary)
- salt and black pepper, to taste
- 1 can (400 g) tomato-and-onion relish
- 2 cups grated mozzarella

Here's how

1 Put the pita breads over the coals and braai them for a few minutes on one side until golden brown.

2 Meanwhile, braai the mushrooms, garlic and herbs until all the water has evaporated. Flavour to taste with salt and pepper.

3 Dish a spoon full of the relish onto the braai side of each pita bread and spread evenly. Now dish up the mushroom mixture on top of this and sprinkle with cheese.

4 Place the pita breads back on the fire over medium coals and braai until the cheese has melted.

go! Drive & Camp says Instead of pita breads you can also use defrosted ready-made pizza bases.



NUT SALAD WITH HONEY AND CAYENNE PEPPER

A bit of a bite

Make this salad with any fresh lettuce leaves you can find on holiday – you can even use grated baby marrows, carrots or butternut.

Ingredients

(serves 4–6)

- ½ cup honey or syrup
- 1 packet (100 g) pecan nuts
- ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 150 g baby spinach leaves
- 2 apples, cut into strips
- ½ cup sultanas

FOR THE SALAD DRESSING

- 100 ml olive oil
- 50 ml balsamic vinegar
- 10 ml honey

Here's how

1 Melt the honey in a pan – let it simmer for about 3 minutes until it becomes a deep golden colour. Add the nuts and cayenne pepper and simmer for another 3 minutes.

2 Dish the nuts out onto a chopping board and leave to cool. Roughly chop into smaller pieces.

3 Mix the spinach leaves, apple and sultanas together. Mix the ingredients for the salad dressing together and pour over the leaves, then add the pecan brittle.

go! Drive & Camp says You can use any store-bought brittle in the salad.



BUTTERMILK DOUGHNUTS WITH CARAMEL SAUCE

Sweet seduction

Pour the caramel sauce into a deep tin plate and let everyone dunk their doughnuts into it as they come out of the pot.

Ingredients

(serves 8)

- 2 cups cake flour
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ¼ cup sunflower oil
- 180 ml buttermilk
- 1 large egg
- sunflower oil for deep-frying

FOR THE CARAMEL DIPPING SAUCE

- 1 can (400 g) Caramel Treat
- ½ cup cream
- ½ teaspoon fine cinnamon

Here's how

1 Mix the flour, sugar, baking powder and baking soda in a large mixing bowl. Make a well in the middle.

2 Mix the oil, buttermilk and

egg together in a separate bowl. Pour into the middle of the flour mixture and then slowly mix in the dry ingredients.

3 Heat enough oil in a pot to deep-fry the doughnuts. Test the heat – if a small piece of bread floats and bubbles but doesn't burn, it's ready.

4 Dish spoonfuls of the batter into the hot oil and fry until golden brown and cooked through. Don't fry too many at once because then the oil will cool down. Place the doughnuts on kitchen towel to absorb the excess oil.

5 Make the caramel dipping sauce. Heat the caramel, cream and cinnamon together and stir until the mixture is smooth. Serve as a dipping sauce for the doughnuts.

go! Drive & Camp says

Melted chocolate and cream with a dash of brandy is also a delicious sauce for the doughnuts. Or instead of the cinnamon, add a tablespoon of peanut butter.

Cast your eyes on these

Cast-iron cookware is synonymous with South African culinary culture, so you'll appreciate these must-haves to make the most of the summer weather.

Text **Kyle Kock** Photos **James Garaghty**

South Africans are pretty fond of cooking and dining alfresco, and we mean more than just a simple chop or sausage on the grill. One such exercise is the phenomenon known as the potjie,

where great minds come together to put together the ultimate stew. It's not just a meal, but an event. We even turn these things into competitions.

But that's just one example. There are plenty of other ways in which we cook

outdoors, and the common denominator is the use of cast-iron cookware to prepare the dishes we enjoy. We've put together just a handful of these to make your next social gathering that little bit extra-special.

Take care

Cast-iron can last you a lifetime if you take care of it properly. The good news is that most of this kind of cookware already comes cured or seasoned from the store. This means that it's specially coated in oil to prevent rust while it's standing on a shelf waiting for you to buy it. Still, it doesn't hurt to give your pot or pan a once-over for extra peace of mind. Here's how to do it properly:

Wash the product with warm soapy water and rinse thoroughly. Before you dry, pre-heat your oven or stovetop to around 180 °C. You then need to make absolutely sure that you dry the pot and lid properly.

When the pot and lid are dry, use kitchen towel or a clean cloth to coat the surfaces of the pot with a layer of vegetable or canola oil (inside if you're heating it on a stovetop and inside and out if you're going to

cure it inside your oven). You'll know if you've used too much oil when you lift the pot or lid and oil runs and drips off quickly.

All that's left to do is to "bake" your pot or pan for an hour, and perhaps the lid if you have space in the oven. If you're just maintaining the inside of the pot, you're going to leave it on the stovetop for about an hour. Let the pot cool down a bit and give it another rubdown with kitchen towel and you're set.

Remember that leaving your cast-iron cookware in water for an extended period will end up damaging the metal. Rather wash and dry it out all in one go. Use a scourer to remove any burnt food around the bottom. Re-season it with oil (about a teaspoon is sufficient) and heat until the oil starts burning slightly. Then wipe it down with kitchen towel. Maintaining it like this should see your cookware last for decades.



AFRITRAIL BREAD POT High rise

There's nothing quite like freshly baked bread, especially if it's just come out of a bread pot fresh off the coals. This little guy measures in at 27 cm long, 12 cm wide and 14 cm deep, and weighs in at 4,1 kg. It's been pre-seasoned and is ready to use.

Price R350 from Camp & Climb

go! Drive & Camp says

The lid is deep, so you can drop a few coals on top to have heat all-round. You pick the pot up with a large stainless steel handle.



BEST DUTY #2 FLAT POT

Low-down

This is the guy you need when you want to cook anything from breakfast to supper and everything in between. Plus you can also use it on a gas stove if you've taken that along on your camping excursion.

Price R850 from Camp & Climb

go! Drive & Camp says

A particularly handy trait of flat-bottom potjies is they're easy to pack away if you have limited space.



LE CREUSET SIGNATURE SQUARE SKILLET GRILL

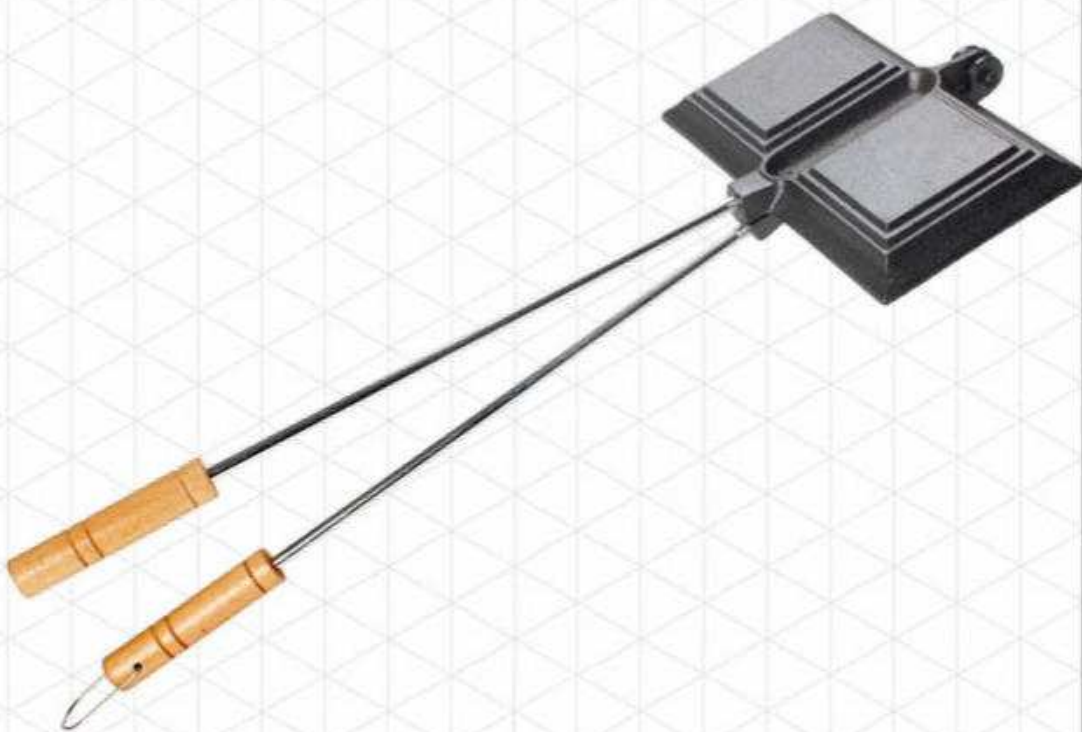
Exclusive option

Products from the premium French cookware firm won't be found in just anyone's inventory. Be the envy of your camping buddies when you pull out one of these iconic skillets in the brand-new kale colour scheme. It has spouts on both sides for spill-free pouring and an extra

loop handle for easy lifting.

Price R1 940 from Le Creuset

go! Drive & Camp says A lifetime guarantee is nothing to scoff at, plus you also get a complimentary grill and plancha cookbook with your purchase.



FIRESIDE DOUBLE CAMP COOKER

Hot off the press

You could always get away with your average, round jaffel maker, but who wants to be average anyway? Because of its depth, this is more of a pie iron, but you could make an unbelievable grilled cheese sandwich with one of these.

Price R280 from Outdoor Warehouse

go! Drive & Camp says You can fold this one away easily by unscrewing the handles.



OZTRAIL 2QT CAMP OVEN

All-rounder

This nifty pot is for those times when you need slightly more room for your camp baking or a saucepan-sized pot for one of your side-dishes. The deep, concave lid helps when you want to put more coals on top for even heat distribution.

Price R370 from Camp & Climb

go! Drive & Camp says

The handles have an extra bit of metal wrapped around it for lifting out of a hot campfire. >



BUSH CHEF #3 ENAMEL 3-LEG POTJIE The professional

Using and collecting brightly painted enamel-coated cast-iron pots is a craze unto its own. But if you show up at the campsite or potjie competition with one of these you'd better know what you're doing.

Price R1 250 from Outdoor Warehouse

go! Drive & Camp says Red is the most popular colour of any brand, and in this case it's easy to see why.



OZTRAIL 30 CM PAN WITH WOODEN HANDLE Shallow pan

This pan is equipped with a long handle so you can reach in over the braai and get your morning eggs off the coals without fear of roasting a few digits in the process. It also comes pre-seasoned and it's ready to cook with from the moment you take

it out of the packaging.

Price R350 from Camp & Climb

go! Drive & Camp says If this is a little too large for you, there's a 25 cm pan available from Oztrail.



LK'S ¼ SIZE ENAMEL 3-LEG POTJIE One for you and one for you

If you really want to wow your camping buddies, try serving them their starters in their own little pot. Creamy garlic mussels and cheesy bread is always better when you don't have to share.

Price R300 from Camp & Climb

go! Drive & Camp says You can also cook up your secret braai marinade in one of these.



AFRITRAIL DUAL BBQ/GRIDDLE PAN Double up

Who doesn't love their meat served on a hot plate? With this bad boy from AfriTrail you can have the best of both worlds. The one side is your typical hot plate with an edge and the other side is a griddle for letting the fat run away. It's 51 cm long and 23 cm wide.

Price R320 from Camp & Climb

go! Drive & Camp says You're going to need some serious mitts to lift this one off the fire – the handles are part of the structure.



GET THE PRODUCTS HERE

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Graduation day

Last month we went into detail about how you go about obtaining a learner's licence and towing lessons for the EB and EC1 driving codes. Now, we take you inside what it's like to pass out.

Text **Kyle Kock**

So, you've made the effort to at least download the K53 app and have been learning the dos and don'ts of road regulations. You've obtained your learner's licence and now you just have to go and pass out.

Here's the catch: You *have* to do this through a driving school. It's not just that they teach you the important sequences of using the controls while you're behind the wheel but also the starting sequences, interior and exterior inspections and a whole bunch of other information that's vital to making you a safe and competent driver.

The thing is, as much as we'd like to believe corruption is being rooted out of our system, it seems the system is constructed in such a way that would require someone, no matter how experienced or competent a driver, has to spend a significant amount of money in order to come out with a pass – especially when you're up against the authorities for the first time.

We're not saying that a pass without a driving school is impossible, but the chances are pretty good that you're not going to pass without going through a school and learning the K53 system inside and out.

THE SKILLS

Exterior inspections

You're required to blurt this out in parrot fashion, but it really does help to understand the meaning of what you're saying and repeating it when you're under the cold, hard scrutiny of the testing official. You start in the front of the vehicle by saying that you've checked under the vehicle for leaks and obstructions.

Then you move to the front fender and lift the driver's side windshield wiper. Run your finger along the rubber and say that the windshield wiper is undamaged.

Then, bend down alongside the front right tyre and mention that the tread depth is sufficient (the legal minimum is 1 mm), that the tyre sidewall is undamaged, that you've checked that the air pressure is correct and that the valve cap is secure. From here, you move back to the bonnet and say you've checked under the bonnet as well, specifically the water, oil drive belts and brake fluid.

Once those are out of the way, you slowly move around the vehicle to complete the exterior inspections. Every time you pass a tyre, say that you've checked it (same as the first). You'll also need to show that the towing vehicle's tail lights are clear and free of damage. Then, show the testing official that the trailer has been secured properly and that the power plug is connected. You also need to tell the testing official that the trailer's licence disc is valid and up to date. Check the reflector strip and move around the rear and show that the trailer's lights are working, clear and free of damage. You also need to tell the testing official that the fuel cap is closed.

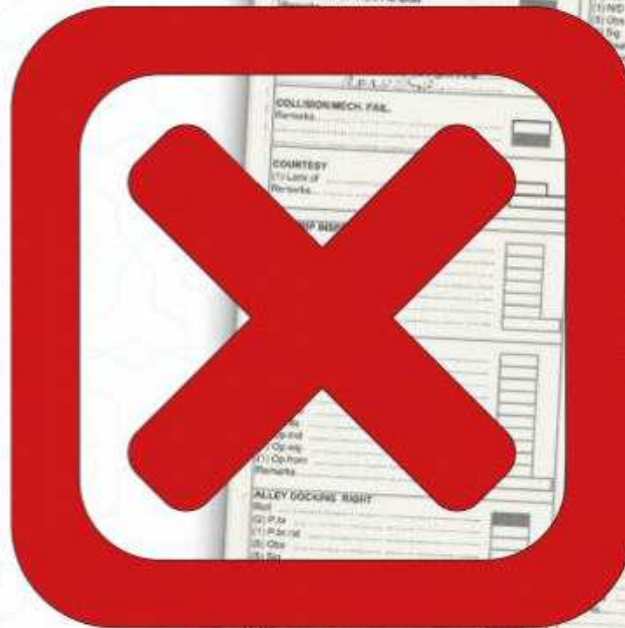
When you're doing the EC1, you have to check that the battery and cabin is secured and that there are no obstructions between the double wheels.

Interior inspections

The officer will be positioned either right outside or inside the vehicle for this one. You will need to acknowledge that the doors are closed, that the parking brake is engaged, that the vehicle is in neutral, that there are no obstructions in the footwell, and that the mirrors and driver's seat have been adjusted to you. After that, it's time for the yard test.

Left turn, Clyde

This is a crucial part of your driving career. To be able to merge left safely is a must. It's a left turn for obvious reasons. We drive on the left-hand side of the road, like Australia, Japan and the United Kingdom, as well as our immediate African neighbours.



You'll have to demonstrate your prowess within demarcated lines in the test yard. After you pass the first line (the official will show you when the exercise has to be started), you'll have to check your rear-view and left-side mirror and the left blind spot before indicating left. Just before you turn left, you check the blind spot again. Midway during the turn, you check the mirror and blind spot. And once the vehicle and trailer combination has cleared the turn and the steering wheel has been straightened, you check the blind spot one more time. Better safe than sorry.

The incline start

Here you're required to stop your vehicle and trailer on an incline and drive off smoothly without rolling backwards, stalling, jerking or spinning the wheels. You get one attempt.

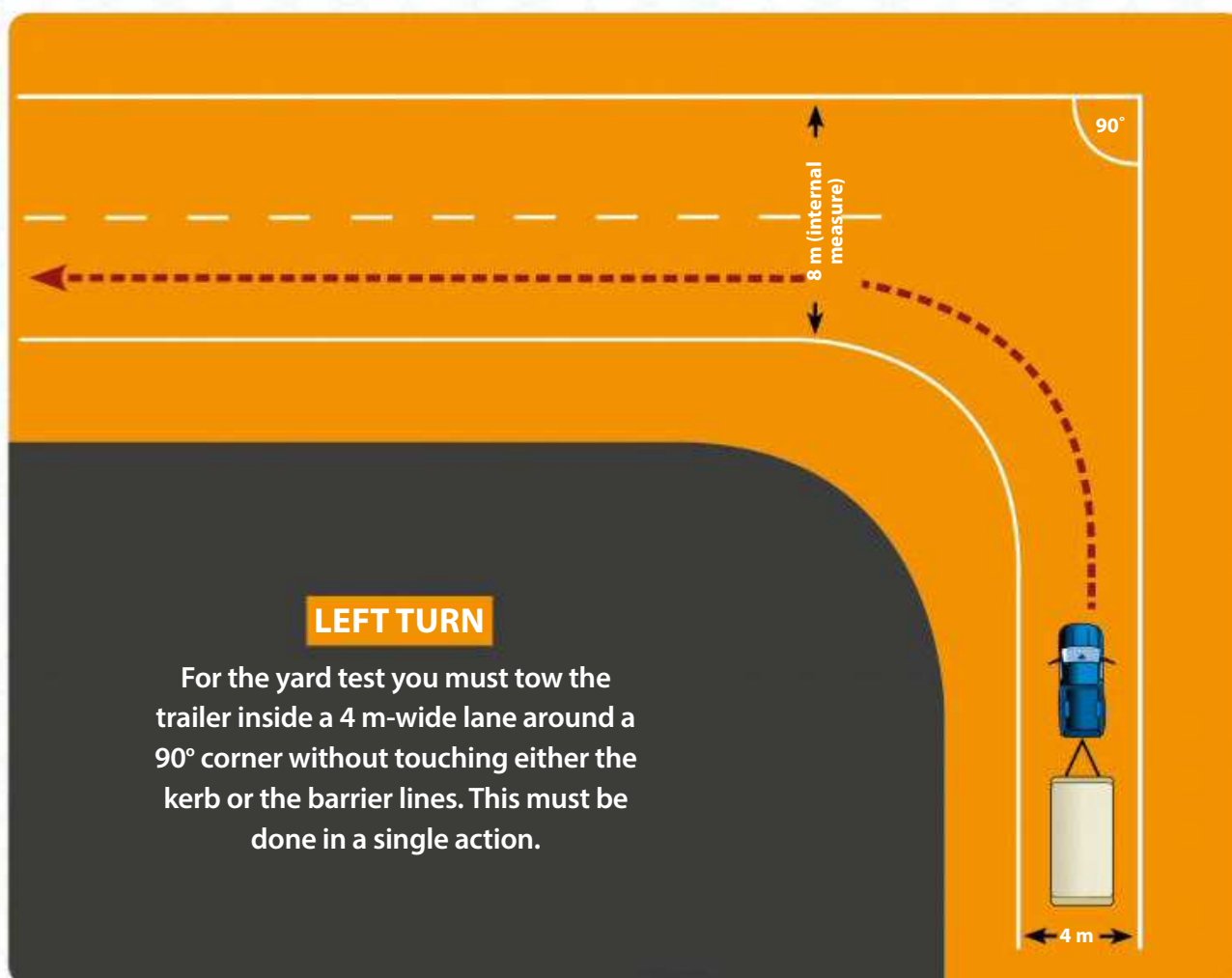
Remember to stop where the instructor indicates without allowing the vehicle to move backwards. Apply the handbrake, select neutral and check the mirrors and the blind spot. In Schalk's case, he had to perform a right turn immediately after, so he had to signal his intention. You then select first gear and obtain clutch control.

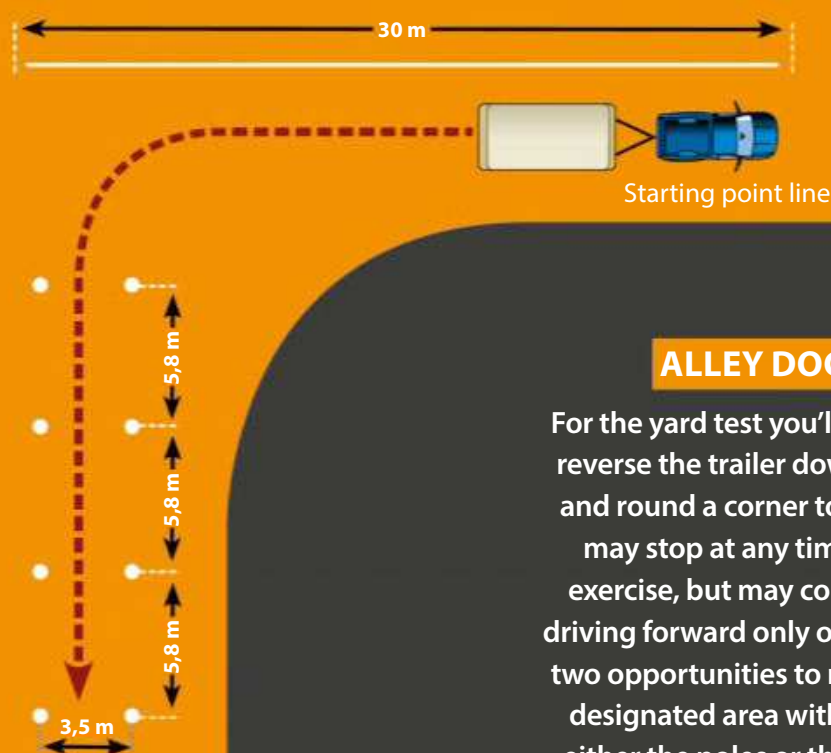
Observe 360° and release the handbrake. With an incline start you will likely need to accelerate as well as obtain clutch control in order to achieve enough revs to stop the vehicle from stalling or rolling backwards.

The 40 m reverse

This is the exercise I failed when I went for my first appointment in July. Some might disagree, but I found it hard to keep the combination straight while the vehicle is pretty much idling. This is the one exercise in the yard where the officer will be checking to see if you're using the clutch to control your speed, because that's not allowed. When the clutch is depressed, either all the way or halfway, and you're not shifting, that's seen as an uncontrolled action and is a fail.

I didn't disengage the clutch all the way, and during the test the officer noticed this and warned me to let go of the clutch completely. The resulting jerk was quite a surprise and the combination gained speed. I didn't cross any lines or miss the painted box you have to reverse the trailer into, but the difference in speed made it clear I had been "riding" the clutch and that resulted in me failing the test.





ALLEY DOCKING

For the yard test you'll be required to reverse the trailer down a 3,5 m lane and round a corner to the right. You may stop at any time during the exercise, but may correct errors by driving forward only once. You receive two opportunities to reverse into the designated area without touching either the poles or the barrier lines.

If you're an experienced driver, you're going to have to unlearn many of your bad habits before going to pass out.



REVERSING IN A STRAIGHT LANE

For the yard test you'll need to reverse with the trailer along a single lane of 40 m and stop with your vehicle's rear wheels within a marked 5 m zone without touching the barrier lines – all of which must be performed in a single action.



On my second attempt a month later, I made sure to keep my right foot hovering just above the brake, and as soon as the clutch started to bite, I controlled the speed with the brake instead. I passed the exercise.

Alley docking with a trailer

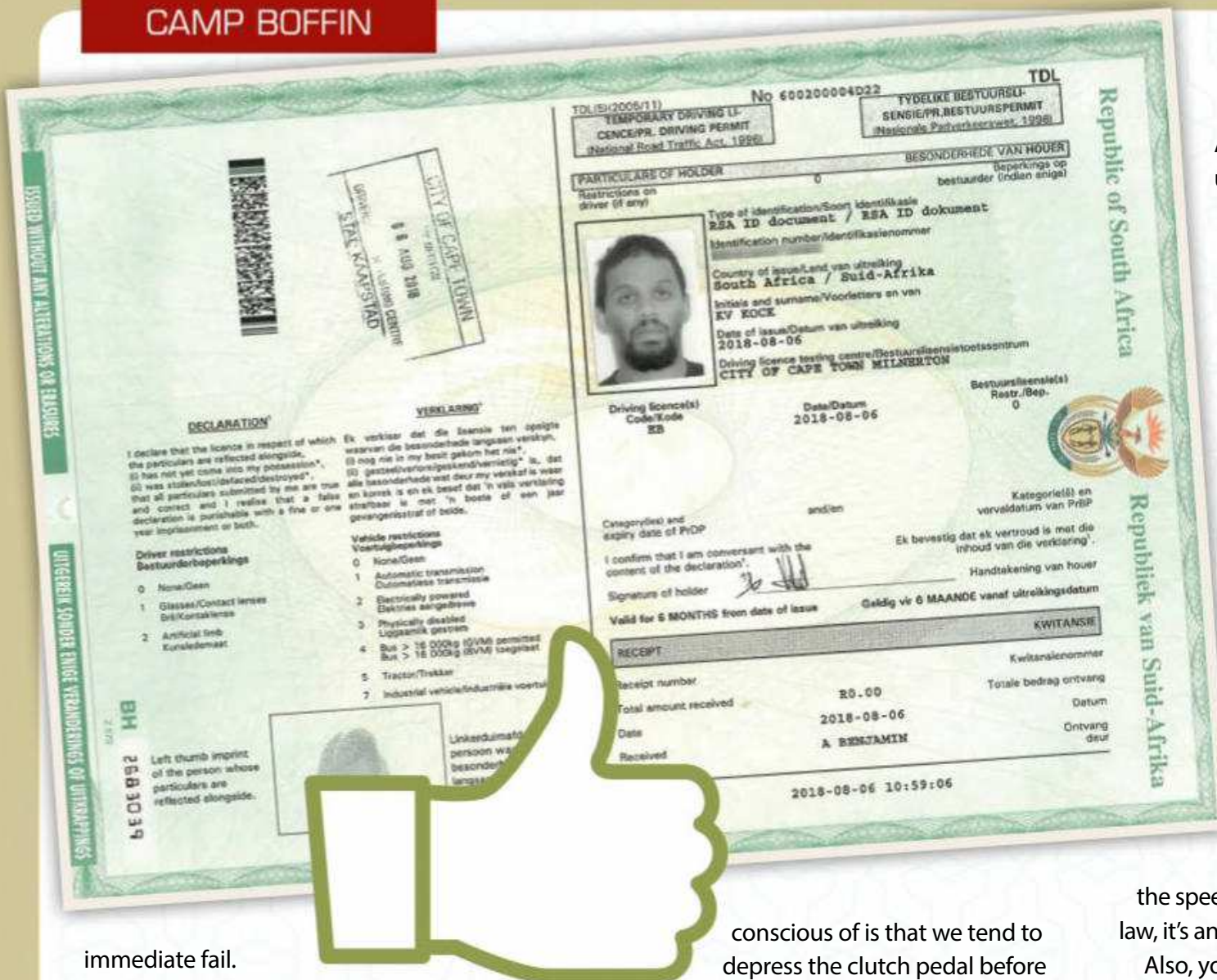
Schalk maintains that this was the most difficult exercise for him in that he was never sure when to start initiating the turn. There is no exact answer for this, but his instructor gave him the sage advice of reversing slowly and turning the wheel quickly.

The important bit to remember is that you have to check the opposite blind spot as well before you start the turn, because you could lose a penalty point needlessly. I preferred turning early and sort of lining up the trailer with the "entrance" in a horizontal line. That gave me enough time to straighten the combination at my leisure. The downside to waiting too long to initiate the turn is that you have limited space in the yard and if you hit the kerb on the other side of the area demarcated for the exercise, that's a fail. You could also jack-knife the combination quickly if you leave the turning too late.

Also, it's important to remember that you're allowed to stop during the procedure and inform the testing officer that you're going to move forward (in a straight line) a little to line up the combination properly or to your liking. It all counts as one manoeuvre and rather be safe than sorry that you didn't keep your ego in check and just move forward a little. The nose of the towing vehicle is required to be behind the second row of poles for the exercise to be a success.

Line up and park

The yard test is probably the real tough part of whichever licence you're applying for. The entry-level EB is slightly more strenuous in that you're required to also unhitch the trailer you're passing out with during the yard test. You then have to perform a parallel park manoeuvre (one side or both as determined by the examination officer present) and then you have to reverse your vehicle and align the tow bar with the trailer's A-frame so that you can hitch. I learned a cool trick at Alpha Driving School that makes reversing toward your trailer a breeze. Remember that if any part of the vehicle touches or hits the trailer before you've intended to come to a stop, that's regarded as an accident and is an >



immediate fail.

You don't have to perform a parallel park when you're applying for an EC1.

Start-up sequence

If you've passed the yard test, the testing officer will ask you to perform the start-up sequence. This is the final check to see if you're competent enough to be able to actually be let out onto the road. Schalk had to do his starting sequence before the yard test, so it varies from one testing centre to the next.

You have to show that the parking brake is engaged and that the release button works, that the vehicle is in neutral, and that the warning lights are off. Then you turn the ignition on and check that the warning lights are functioning and that after the initial flash they're all off, except the parking brake. Lastly, inform the testing officer if the vehicle has an automatic choke.

Once on the road

If you've just finished high school or have never had the need to be behind the wheel until your mid-20s, you'll probably be fine – especially after plenty of lessons with a driving instructor. If you're an experienced driver, however, you'll have to unlearn many of your bad habits. For example, you're not allowed to cross your arms while driving – even though that's allowed for your yard test.

Another one that many of us aren't really

conscious of is that we tend to depress the clutch pedal before braking. That's an uncontrolled

action according to the law and a fail. Firstly, you need to check your rear-view mirror before braking and only depress the clutch when shifting or coming to a complete stop.

After stopping, pull the parking brake up. You need to perform a full suite of observations before moving off.

Another way we "cheat" every day is letting our vehicle drift over solid white lines. You'll have to make sure that none of the combination's tyres does this. Like when you're turning right and you cut the corner slightly. Rather go wide. The same goes for the left side of the combination. Go wide so the trailer's inside tyre doesn't hit or climb the kerb.

Remember to observe. A good rule of thumb is to check your mirrors every time you drive by a lamp post. It feels a little silly, but you get marked negative points if you don't. Say something like "mirror, mirror" every time you do, to bring it to the official's attention. Also keep your eye on the speedometer. If you break even one traffic law, it's an automatic fail.

Also, your road test could lead to moments of uncomfortable silence. That's totally fine. Stay focussed and resist the urge for idle chit-chat with the official. They're only interested in your driving abilities.

But above all, remain calm. You've got this.

COST BREAKDOWN

Here's a breakdown of what *go! Drive & Camp* spent on our education:

Learner's licence appointment	R68
Learner's issue	R33
Four ID photos	R60
K53 app (for the kind of question-and-answer sheets) –	R30
Driver test appointment	R135
8 lessons	@ R240 per lesson
1 car and trailer hire (comes with at least 1 hour lesson before test)	@ R900 failed
Driver test appointment	R135
1 car and trailer hire (comes with at least 1 hour lesson before test)	@ R900 passed
Card issue fee	R140
Total*	R4 288

• It's important to note that the costs for my assignment did not include the amount of money for fuel required to get to the lessons. Most driving schools will pick you up at work or home, but that depends on the school and where you're based. Our options for this assignment were limited by where the driving schools actually operate. For my part, I had to embark on a 26 km commute to get to the lessons, while Schalk had to drive from the Cape Town CBD to Parow, a 40 km round trip every time.

• Schalk took a package with He and She Driving School for R3 110 (including VAT). It included 10 driving lessons (one hour each) and the use of the truck and trailer on the day of the test. He also didn't need to repeat the test because he passed with his first try. 🚗



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Speed OR strength

What is power and what is torque? What's the difference between the two and why do petrol engines generate more of the one and diesel engines more of the other?

Text **Cyril Kloppe**

While the average motorist focusses on cost of ownership, boot size and the number of seats, petrolheads obsess about a different set of numbers: power and torque.

When these petrolheads were still young and played with Top Trump cards, they shouted out the technical specs listed next to engine capacity and horsepower and probably paid scant attention to the vehicle's width and weight.

The guy with a Ford Capri card (400 hp.) in his hand smiled like the Cheshire Cat while his friend with the Renault 5 card's (70 hp.) heart sank into his shoes.

But what is power and what is torque? Before we get to the technical definition, let's first chat about petrol and diesel engines.

Cream soda or Coke?

The first truly successful spark-ignition internal combustion engine was built in 1876 by the German Nikolaus August Otto. Before that, there were attempts by inventors in France and Britain, but Otto's engines were simply better.

Otto engines were originally powered by coal gas, but later models used various gaseous fuel products like ligroin, propane and benzene.

In a petrol engine a mixture of air and petrol vapour is ignited by a spark in the combustion chamber. The ensuing explosion moves a crankshaft, which in turn rotates the vehicle's wheels. It's a short explanation that ignores a number of important steps, but, basically, that's what happens. Petrol engines are known for their excellent power delivery.



NIKOLAUS OTTO



RUDOLF DIESEL

Diesel engines came later when Rudolf Diesel built his compression-ignition internal combustion engine in 1893. Diesel's original engine burnt finely ground coal dust and later models were powered by, among other things, peanut oil.

The fuel used today to power diesel engines is actually semi-processed petrol, but it could just as well be refined cooking oil or any other "heavy" flammable liquid.

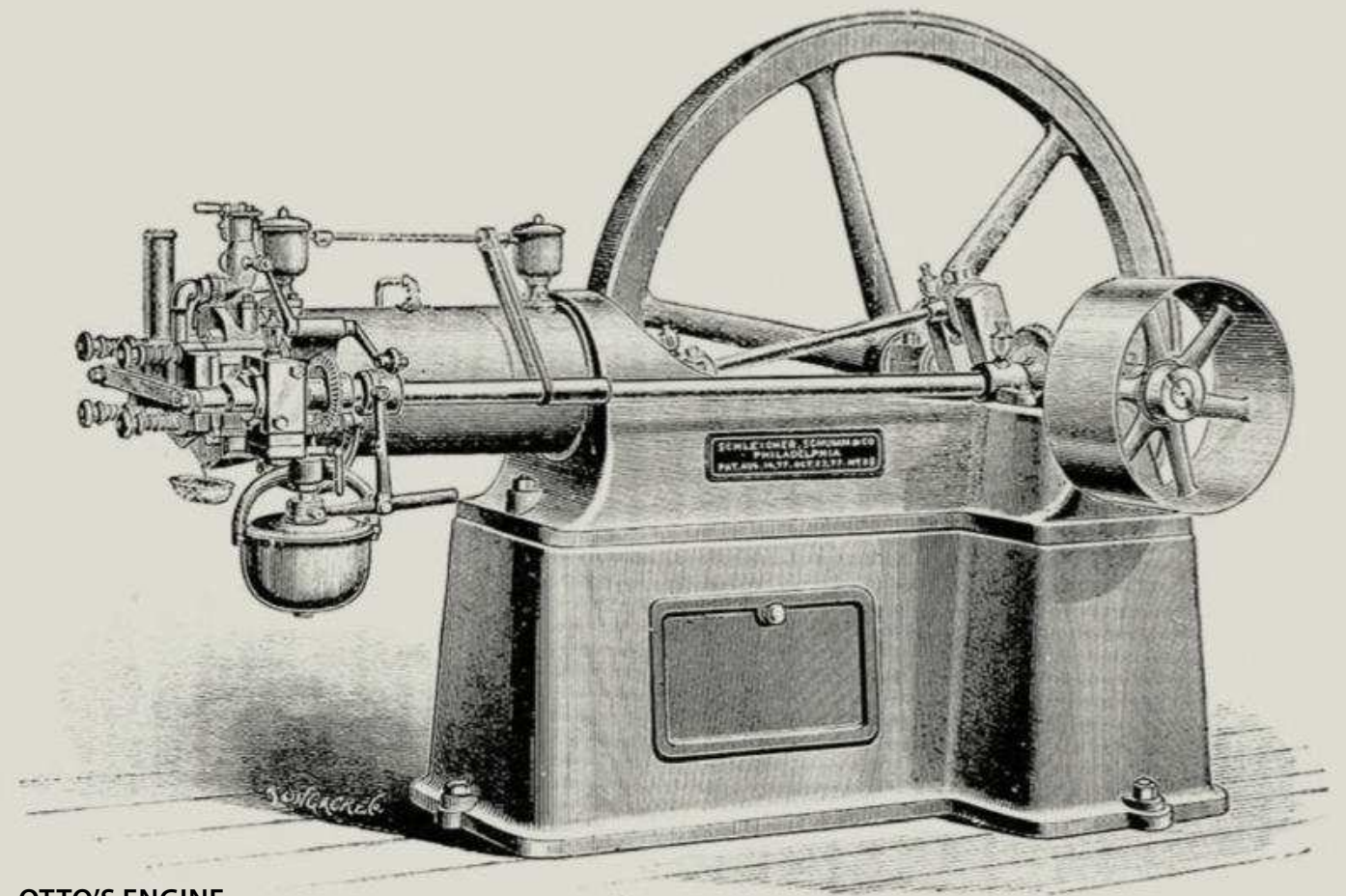
In a diesel engine a mixture of air and fuel is compressed in high pressure until it spontaneously ignites. What follows is identical to a petrol engine's drivetrain system, but the diesel engine is known more for its torque than its power.

Diesel, the fuel, is therefore named after this kind of engine (and the engine after its inventor) while the petrol engine gets its name from its fuel – petroleum.

But what is power and what is torque?

Power is the amount of work an engine can perform during any given time and the energy that's released in that period of time. One horsepower equals 146 W, and 1 W is equal to 1 Joule that's used in one second.

One Joule is the energy that's transferred to an object when the power of one Newton acts on that object in the direction of



OTTO'S ENGINE

its motion through a distance of one metre (therefore 1 Newton metre, or Nm). One Newton is the force that's necessary to accelerate 1 kg of mass at one m/s in the direction of the applied force. And that brings us to torque (Nm).

Torque is a measure of how much turning power an engine's crankshaft can exert on a driveshaft. Torque is equal to the compression ratio, expulsion and stroke of an engine, but not the revs because maximum torque is reached before maximum revs.

Besides its unique kind of ignition, a diesel engine has a longer piston stroke that exerts more leverage on the crankshaft and that provides excellent torque. A petrol engine on the other hand has a shorter stroke with smaller parts that move faster – power is directly proportional to revs per minute (rpm) – and although a petrol engine generates less torque, it's more energetic, which is why it puts out more power (kW).

Think about it like this: A cheetah can cover a distance of 120 km in one hour (if it drinks Energade and pops Disprins), but after that it's spent. A buffalo takes three times as long to >



Some history

Where does the word "gasoline" come from? In 1862, a resourceful Brit called John Cassell peddled his patented petroleum product called Cazeline Oil. By the way, the word "petroleum" is Latin and means mineral oil. Cassell's Cazeline was used in lamps and lanterns and it was popular because it produced an unusually bright flame.

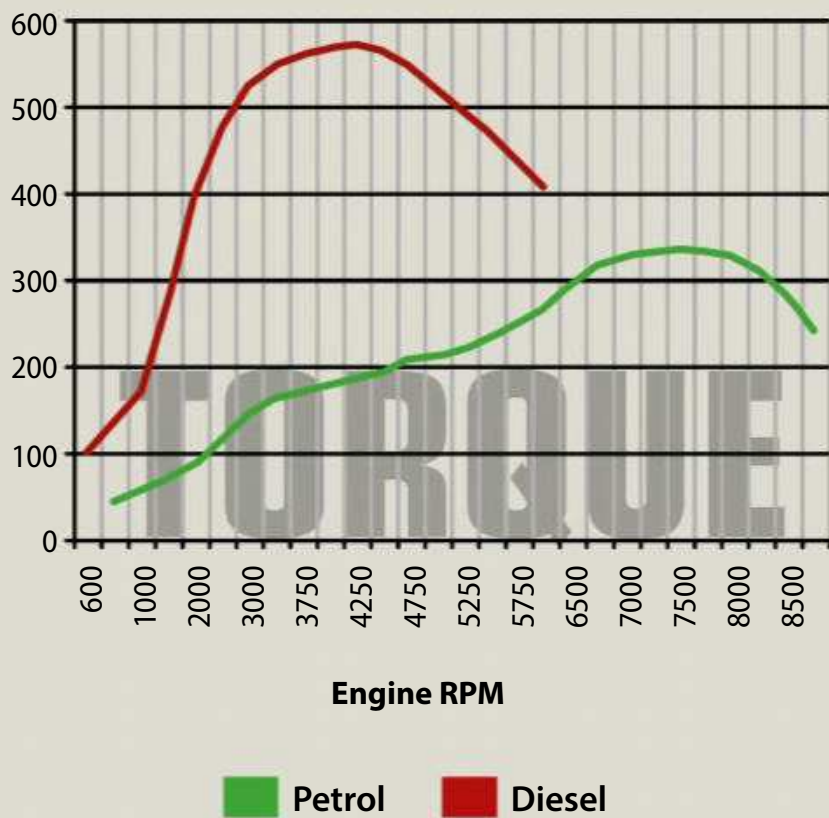
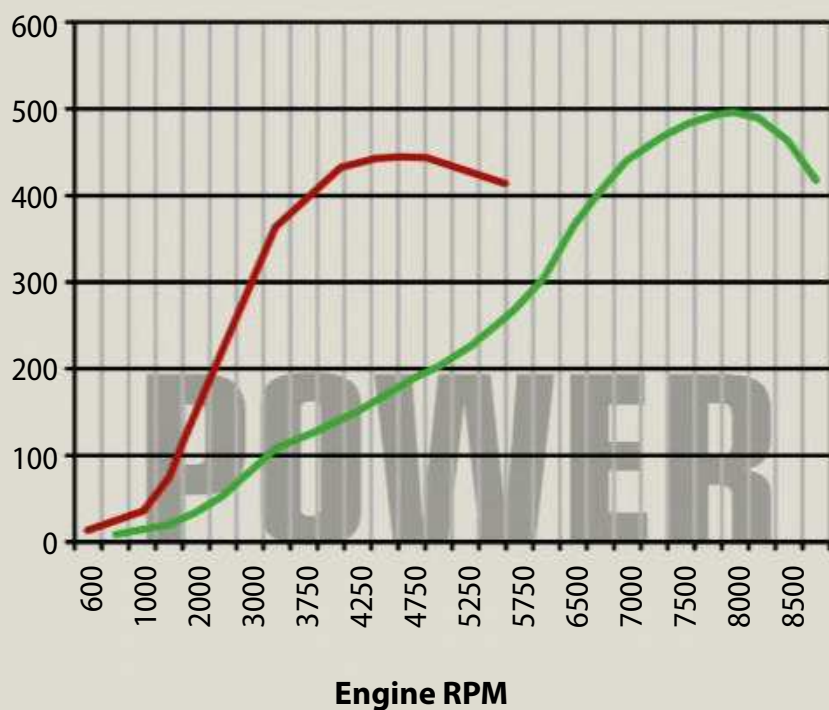
An Irishman by the name of Samuel Boyd sold an imitation of Cassell's oil, and to sidestep the patent law, he marketed his product as Gazelene.

Boyd's Gazelene was later used in American spark-ignition engines and the name eventually morphed

into "gasoline". The British colonies stuck with the scientific name "petroleum", shortened to "petrol". Most nations in the world, however, use the word "benzine" (not to be confused with "benzene"), while Spain and Portugal also refer to petrol as "gasoline".



PETROL VS DIESEL



cover the same distance, but you can ride on its back (if it allows you) while it's doing it.

Buffalo or cheetah?

Look at the graphs of two engines – one petrol, one diesel – with a similar engine displacement. The reading was taken over a period of 10 seconds and it kicks off as soon as you floor the accelerator.

The petrol engine has a longer, more linear performance curve that will gradually climb from low to the maximum revs.

At 8 000 rpm it reaches the maximum power delivery of 500 kW and after that the efficiency drops. After 10 seconds the engine reached an impressive 8 500 rpm.

The diesel engine's max power delivery is lower – 450 kW – and it occurs at 4 500 rpm. After 10 seconds the diesel engine could only reach 5 750 rpm.

The petrol engine also has a longer, linear torque curve that gradually climbs from low revs to the max, and at 7 500 rpm the torque is maxed at 350 Nm.



The diesel engine reaches an impressive 580 Nm torque at just 4 250 rpm.

What does it mean for my vehicle?

With a diesel engine you have loads of torque at low revs, which comes in handy when you have to drive slowly over huge boulders. You only have to accelerate slightly to keep momentum. A petrol engine struggles with this and you have to keep the revs high, otherwise there's not enough torque to conquer those obstacles and the engine might stall.

In sand the situation is reversed. If you're driving through the Namib's dunes, the even performance curve of a petrol engine will count in your favour. The flatter torque curve also prevents your tyres from digging in and the extra power helps to get you over those mountainous dunes. Diesels will struggle here because the diesel engine is generally not as eager and willing as a petrol engine.

If engines had star signs, petrol would be a fiery Scorpio and a diesel the dependable Taurus. An irate petrol scorpion will burst through walls, sending bricks flying, while the calm diesel bull will push over the wall and then drag it behind him.

A diesel engine converts 40% of the potential energy in its fuel to kinetic energy (to

power your vehicle) and petrol engines convert only 25% into movement.

The rest of the energy is lost in things like noise and heat. You therefore save fuel with a diesel engine and a diesel engine doesn't heat up nearly as much as a petrol engine – great news if you have half of Marienfluss' grass between a hot exhaust and the chassis.

Torque, not power, is ultimately what will pull an off-roader out of the mud or have it climb up a steep hill. That's why a diesel engine is generally the better option in 4x4 conditions.



ASK THE PROFESSOR

Do you have a question for the 4x4 professor?

Something like what happens if you accidentally put petrol in your diesel vehicle's fuel tank? What is a powerband? Or why is your engine's performance lower on the Highveld than at the coast? If the professor can't answer these questions, we ask an expert. Send an email to

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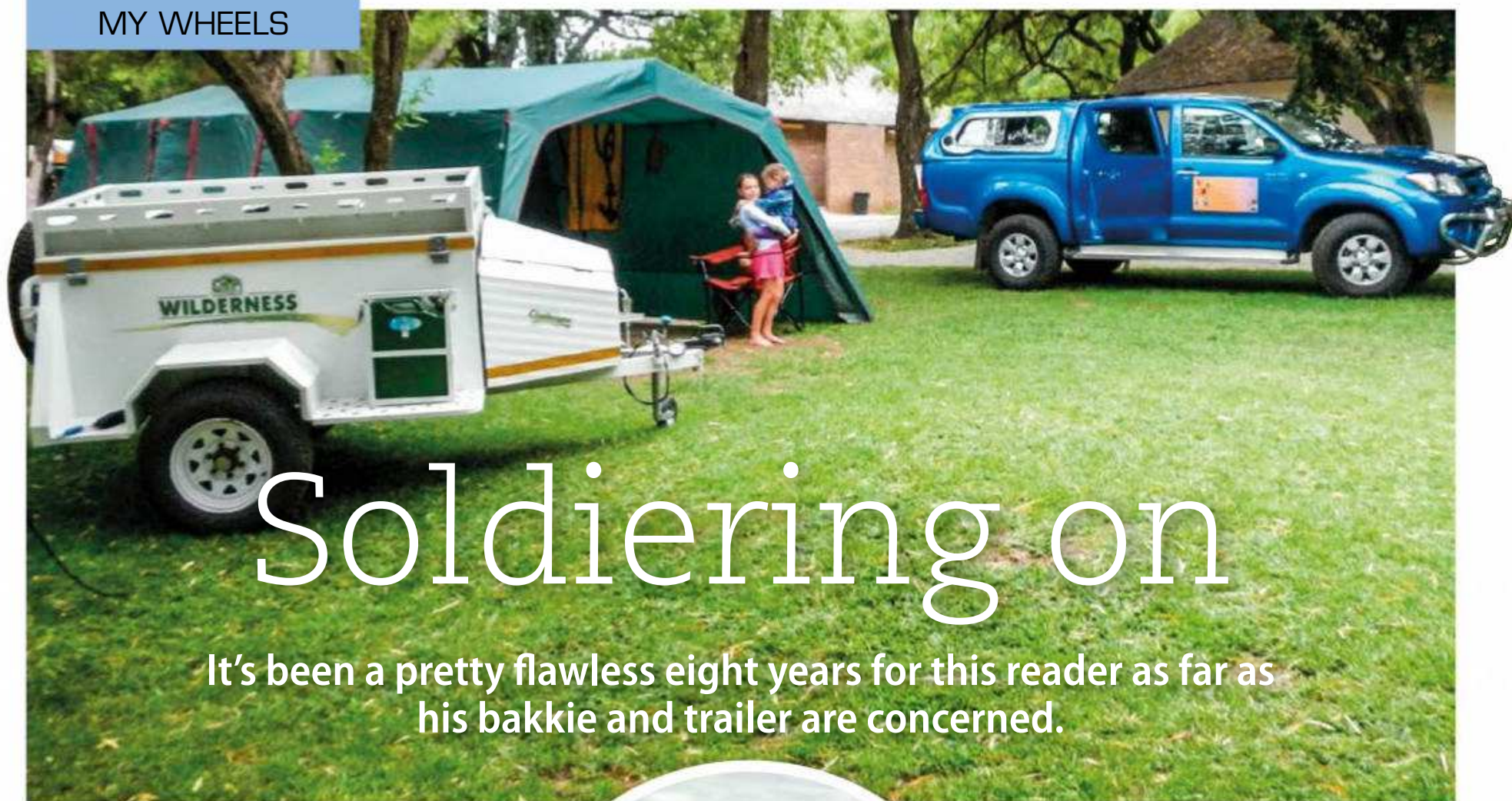


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Soldiering on

It's been a pretty flawless eight years for this reader as far as his bakkie and trailer are concerned.



Trusty twosome

2007 TOYOTA HILUX 3,0 D-4D DC

The previous generation Hilux, like its predecessors, was a massive sales success in South Africa. It also came up against stiff new competition as the premium double cab market exploded. But **Jaco Dippenaar** from Roodepoort only has good things to say, despite his combination being eight years old.

“At the time I was looking to purchase a double cab bakkie, there were a number of vehicle options that suffered from **horrible turbo lag**. I'm not a fan of that kind of problem, so whichever one I was going to buy had to have negligible lag and also plenty of torque.

I eventually opted for a **brand-new** Hilux that cost me **R267 000**. Three years later I also purchased a **Camp Master Wilderness** off-road trailer. One

thing missing on these early versions of previous Hilux is a front passenger cup holder, and newer models also came with a bigger wheel and tyre combination. That said, after 10 years this is still a very good towing vehicle **and maintenance is relatively cheap**.

I was fairly happy with the Hilux overall, but it was a bit asthmatic straight out of the factory, so I had a **3-inch exhaust system, K&N air filter and a Windbooster electronic throttle control system** fitted. After the modifications were done, the 3.0 D-4D breathed a bit easier and it was really noticeable on the open road.

I usually tow between **100–110 km/h**, which is really an effortless speed for the Hilux, post modifications. Average fuel consumption with the trailer hitched to the standard Toyota tow bar is around **10 ℓ/100 km**. Without the trailer, the Hilux can average around **8 ℓ/100 km**.

I also had the chance to tow the trailer with a much newer Toyota Fortuner, which was actually a really nice alternative, but felt too much like my “old” Hilux. Most people get used to the poor performance over time, but for me, the modifications are a must.

We are particularly fond of **ATKV Eiland Spa**, which is usually the direction we point the Hilux in. It feels like an oasis in the bush, and there's plenty for both young and old to do.

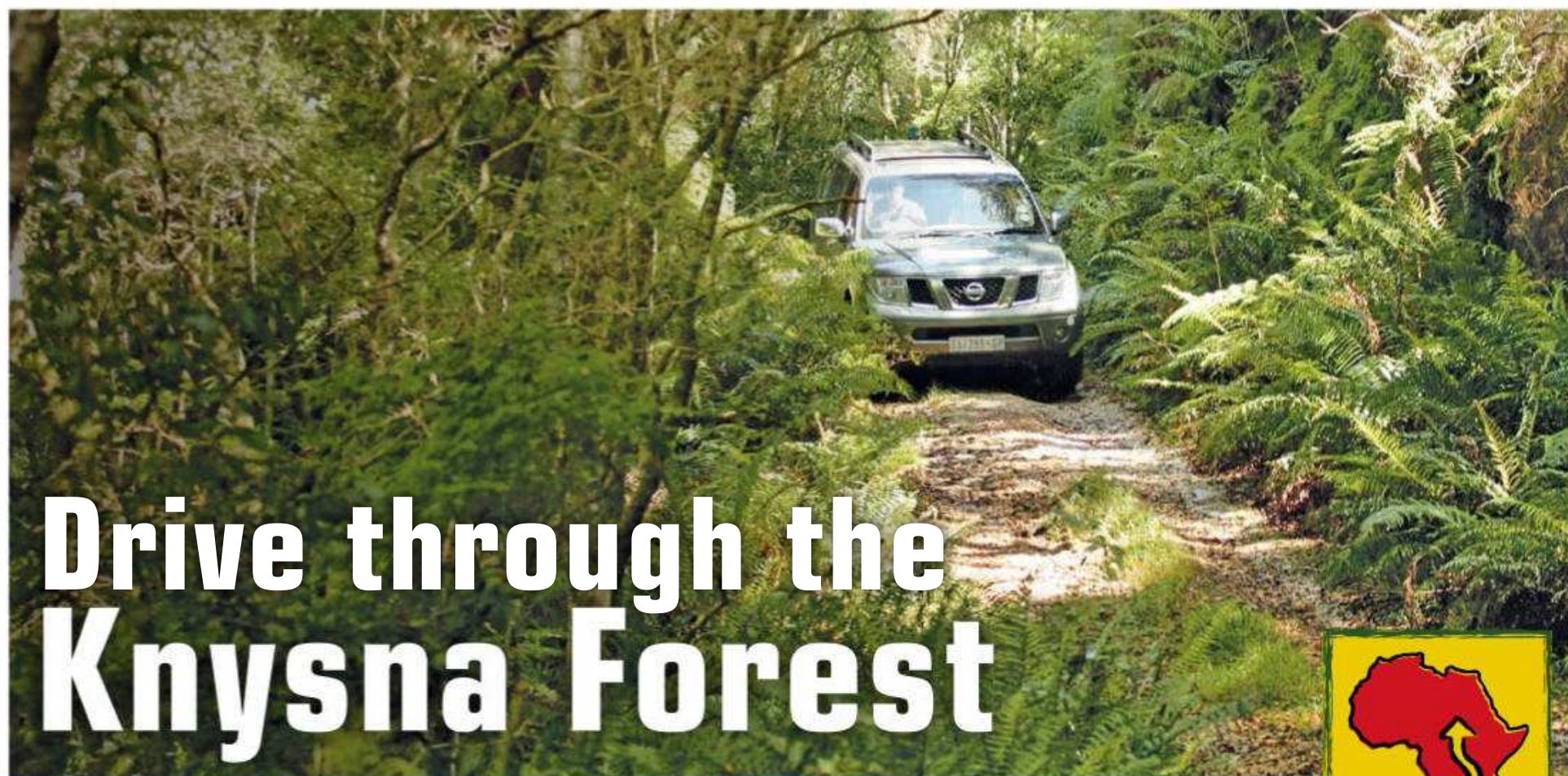
The variety of attractions in and around the area ensures that we keep going back.



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Drive through the Knysna Forest

If you're going to relax somewhere along the Cape South Coast, explore the Knysna Forest for a day with *go! Drive & Camp* and Bhejane 4x4 Adventures.



HERE'S WHAT TO EXPECT

If you've ever wondered what it would feel like to be inside the world of Dalene Matthee's stories, populated with phantom elephants, giant yellowwoods and lush ferns, here's your chance. SANParks has awarded Bhejane 4x4 Adventures the exclusive rights to do day trips into the inner sanctum of the Knysna Forest.

On this trip you'll experience the indigenous yellowwoods, stinkwoods, ferns, bushbuck, blue duikers and Knysna turacos. You might even see an elephant.

This isn't merely a drive-and-sightseeing trip. You will also learn more about the forest's fauna and flora, Italian settlers who hoped to make their fortune in the silk trade, woodcutters and lost travellers.

We meet at Harkerville, about halfway between Plettenberg Bay and Knysna, just off the N2. Here, the Bhejane crew members explain the day's events and hand out two-way radios before we take to the tracks through the Diepwalle Forestry Station area.

The first stretch is a gravel road through the forest and our first encounter with real yellowwood, Outeniqua yellowwood, stinkwood, wild elder, ironwood, Cape beech, Cape ash, candlewood...

Then the forest becomes denser and the track narrower. It takes us through tree tunnels so dense they even shut out daylight. The lushest ferns grow among Cape blackwood, rock elder, wild peach and white stinkwood.

When we stop to stretch our legs, we'll hear the sounds of the 40 resident bird species,



including the red-chested cuckoo's distinctive "Piet-my-vrou" call as well as the Knysna turaco's "kok-kok-kok-kok".

We stop in a clearing in the fynbos. It's on islands such as this that the woodcutters lived in the 1700s and 1800s, from where they penetrated the forest to fell one giant tree after the other. From here, the track becomes even narrower, more winding, and overgrown with ferns.

We end with a lunch prepared by women of the local community at the Diepwalle Forestry Station before everyone drives back to the N2 in their own time. You will leave the forest but you will carry the experience with you forever.

Yes, I want to go!

To book, call ☎ 044 535 9033 or email ✉ bookings@bhejane.com
Find out more at 🖱 bhejane.com

***NB: If you are coming to see the forest and need a place to stay, contact us on the same numbers for more info.**

COST AND DATES

HOW LONG IS THE TOUR? It's a day outing that starts at 8:30 am and ends just after lunchtime.

WHEN? Every day of the year (except Christmas Day). You must book at least one day in advance.

DO I NEED A 4X4? No, you can also drive it in a 4x2 or you can drive with us in our vehicle.

WHERE DOES THE TOUR START FROM? From the Sasol service station in Harkerville on the N2 (halfway between Knysna and Plettenberg Bay).

WHAT MUST I BRING?

- Yourself and your family
- Your own vehicle and fuel
- Your own drinks and snacks

AND FOOD? Lunch at the Diepwalle Forestry Station is included and we stop at one of the river crossings for tea and coffee.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST? R450 per person. Students pay R250 and children under 10 years pay R120. R550 per person if you drive with us.

THE TOUR PRICE INCLUDES

- Park entrance fees
- Two-way radios
- Lunch
- A professional tour leader and an experienced guide.
- Remember, only five vehicles can be accommodated per tour.

On the phone



Whether it's the north coast or the Namib Desert, these three readers always have their smartphones at the ready in case they come across a snap-worthy scene.

By Leon Botha

One against three

She was busy playing with her new smartphone's camera when **Aneke Kruger** from Bloemfontein took this month's winning photo.

"Our family went on holiday to Mtunzini and went down to the beach one day. Because I'm not a big fan of swimming, I stayed on the beach while the others played in the waves. My sister, Zanalee Wolmarans (far left on the photo) didn't want to get wet, but my boyfriend, Jade Hastings, nevertheless tried to splash water on her. My mom, Adèle van der Merwe, is the one with the white headband and my aunt, Zelda Meyer, is at the back.

I set my camera to black and white to create a more dramatic photo and I captured quite a few frames. This is one of my favourites."

A good photo is one that makes

you do a double, triple take. Aneke's photo has two layers that work together: good composition and the energy between the people.

The composition is complex, but it works really well. It consists of two strong elements: the placement of the people and the rest of the surroundings.

The sea and horizon draw a wide line through the middle of the photo. A composition element in the middle like this can be monotonous, but this is where the beach and the sky work together. The coastline is the balancing point between the dark beach and the detailed air, both of which are the same size in the photo.

You see the human figures first and your eyes are automatically drawn to the bigger one (because it's closer to the camera). Zanalee is looking at



the other people in the photo and your eye follows her to see what she's looking at. You experience the energy between the people and you can almost feel Jade splashing that cold water.

The three women in the group also balance the shape of Jade's figure. With Zanalee taking a step forward, over into the other composition element, it connects the two levels. You could zoom in if you wanted to get rid of the negative space without the photo falling flat. The people's facial expressions and body movements already tell you enough about the moment and you can't help but smile and picture yourself in that moment.

Anybody home?

Amorie Wagenaar from Rawsonville travels everywhere on her mountain bike and keeps her smartphone handy for that perfect picture.

"My friend Alet Rootman and I explored Contermanskloof on our mountain bikes one Saturday morning. We enjoyed the trail and the scenery was breathtaking. We stopped often to take photos and eventually my cellphone's battery died. When I saw the Ford bakkie in the veld I just had to take a picture, so I asked Alet if I could use her phone. I love Ford bakkies and I couldn't help but think about the many roads this one has travelled. I wonder what stories it would tell."

The open gate makes you want to have a closer look to see who's home. The bakkie is between the fence and the open gate and is the focal point, but the flare

WINNING PHOTO



Huawei P10; 3,95 mm (27 mm in 35 mm format); 1/600th of a second; f2,2; ISO 50



Huawei P9 Lite; 3,79 mm (27 mm in 35 mm format); 1/250th of a second; f2; ISO 50.

above the roof gives the photo a mystical feel. The flare makes the shadows on the side of the photo greyer and they lose their pitch-black parts. Flare can be bothersome but in this case it actually gives the photo another dimension. It's almost as if someone walked into No. 10 and left the gate open. It also

looks as if this scene has remained unchanged for the past three years or so...

If Amorie wanted she could even have stood slightly more to the left so that the bakkie doesn't touch the gate (in the photo) but even as it is it's a scene you can't help wondering about. Where are the people?



The right angle

It was a day filled with surprises, and Johan Nortjé from Midrand also got a beautiful photo out of it.

"We visited Namibia and for my 60th birthday my family planned a few surprises for me. That morning we took a trip in a hot-air balloon and later that day we drove to Sossusvlei. At about 3 pm I saw this dune and with all the pretty lines and textures I couldn't help but enjoy the breathtaking scenery".

You really have to take an exceptional photo of a dune because it generally tends to be a bit boring. If, however, the dune's colour stands out against the rest of the environment, and it looks like a triangle, you'll want to look and relook.

The photo has a subtle "theme", which is unnatural

iPhone 7 Plus; 6,6 mm (59 mm in 35 mm format); 1/1 100th of a second; f2,8; ISO 20

for a nature scene: geometric shapes with straight lines. The dune makes a triangle and the dark sand on the right a trapezium. There's also a straight line running through the middle of the photo (between these two shapes). Even the smaller dune to the right at the back looks like an upside-down triangle. The informal shapes of the trees, the uneven clouds, as well as the stumps on the left (which are in a slightly skew line) balances the rigid geometric lines.

Even though the dune is the main focus, the big tree on the far left draws your eye first. There's a road on the left that ends at the tree and from there you look at the rest of the photo.

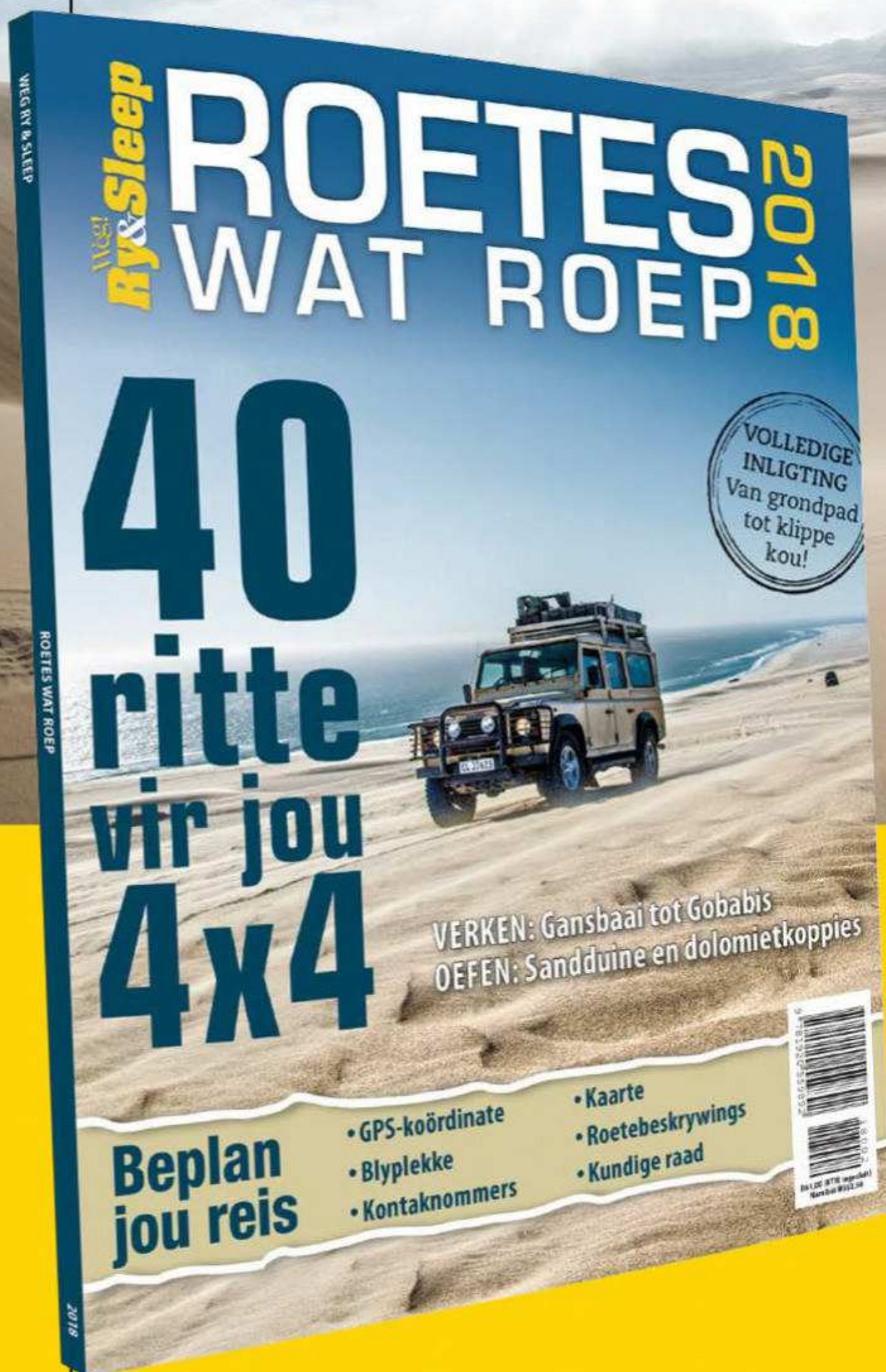
SEND YOUR PICTURES

to us and we might publish it here. All photos are welcome: from mud-covered kids in the campsite or a colour photo of a street vendor's towels to a solitary cactus in the desert. Whether it was taken with a big DSLR camera or your cellphone, if you can put it in your family photo album it's all good. **ANEKE KRUGER wins a Camp Cover camera bag to the value of R520. Congratulations!**

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Weg! **Ry & Sleep**

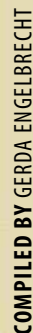
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CROSSWORD

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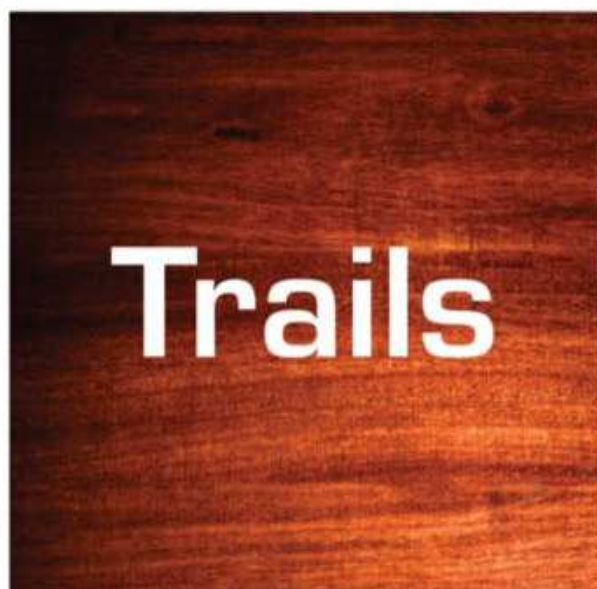
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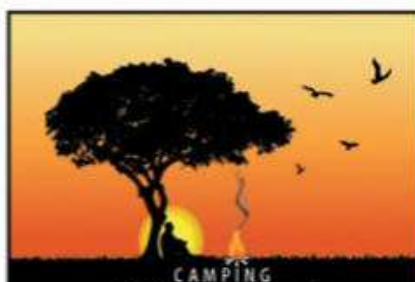


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Why you should never wear a Speedo

The thing about bad luck is that it never comes your way at a convenient time. So you should always try to learn a life lesson when adversity strikes, says Christie Gerber.

Ben and Tas leave Eshowe early morning and point the Hilux's nose in the direction of Goedertrouw Dam in the Nkwaleni Valley.

This dam on the uMhlatuze River is one of the biggest in KwaZulu-Natal and you definitely won't struggle to hook a largemouth bass. Your chances, however, are much better if you get to the water early, which is why Ben and Tas have hit the road at 5 am already.

Ben's boat, Ntombazane, is behind the Hilux. The road is quiet and the kilometres flash past.

The two avid fishermen arrive at the dam and look for a private spot to camp. Each angler has his own secret recipe to catch that big one and the fewer prying eyes the better.

Tas is wearing conventional swimming trunks, but Ben decides to spend the day in his orange Speedo. He wants to use the opportunity to get some colour on his 120 kg frame. That morning, Meisie, his wife, had sternly told him to remember to put sunscreen on and now his skin is glistening.

Soon, they're on the boat and heading out on the dam. It's a scorcher of a day in the valley and on the water. The two have their fishing

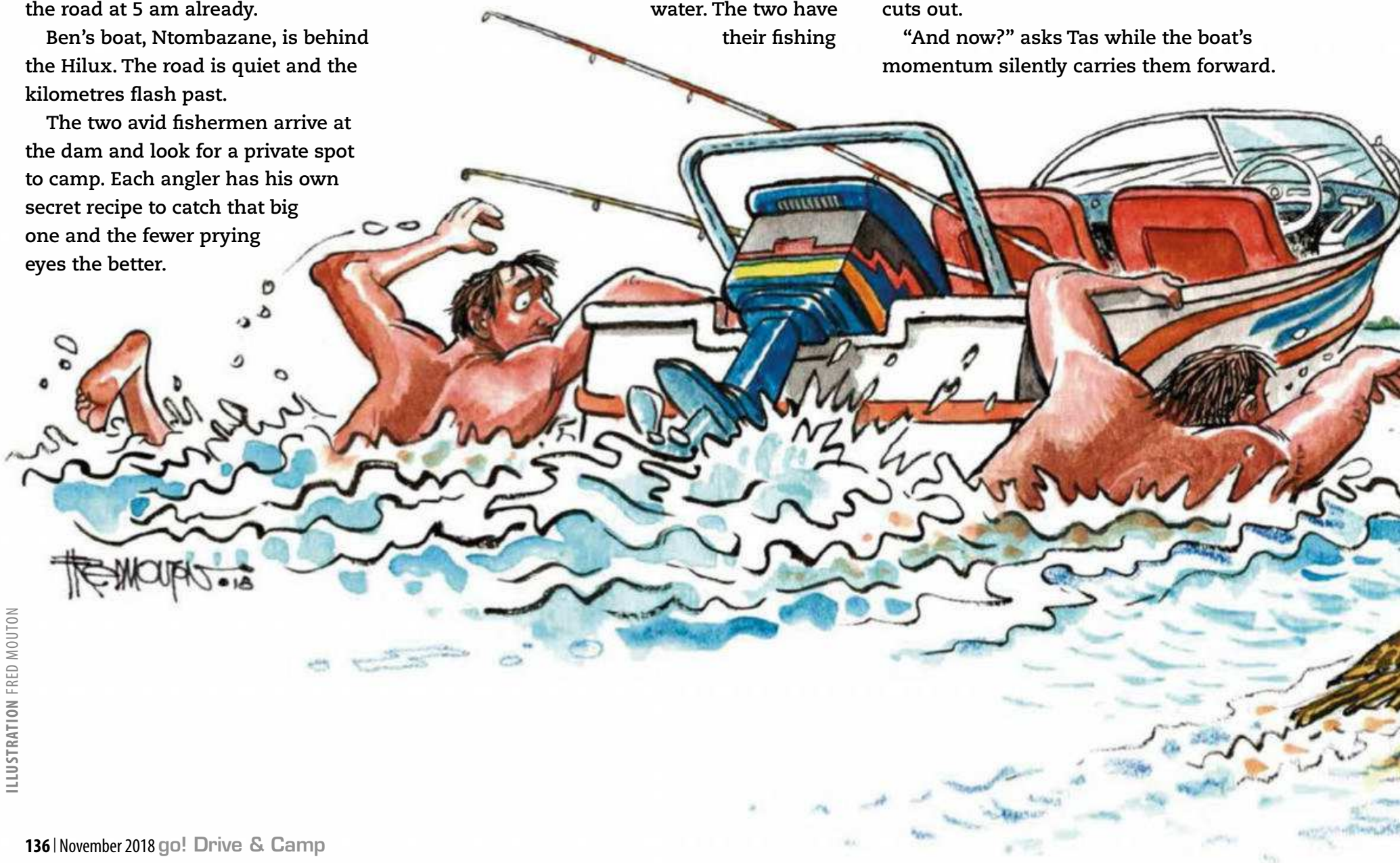
gear ready and the sinkers splash into the water. Now it's time for patience and silence.

An hour later there's still no sign of a fish. In fact, the only bite the two friends can claim they've felt is that of the sun.

"Let's go a bit further," suggests Tas. They reel in, Ben puts Ntombazane in gear, and the two head off further up the dam.

The next moment the engine suddenly cuts out.

"And now?" asks Tas while the boat's momentum silently carries them forward.



"I don't know," answers Ben. Tas leans over his friend's shoulder and checks the dashboard.

"We're out of fuel," he declares.
"Where's the spare tank?"

Ben is silent for a second. "At home in the garage," he admits sheepishly.

Tas calmly says, "Right, get your flare. There are enough fishermen on the dam, I'm sure someone will see it and come and help."

Ben looks uncomfortable and struggles to get his words out. "Uhm," he finally manages, "I don't have stuff like that on the boat."

Tas tries to keep it together but finally let's rip. It's a scorching February day and the sweat is running down his face.

"My friend, you do realise we're basically in the middle of the dam, right? We can't even see the shore. Calling for help won't work. We're too far and no one is going to hear us."

"THERE'S JUST ONE thing to be done," says Tas when he's finally calmed down a bit. "We'll have to row to shore."

Ben, who for the moment forgot that as the owner of the boat it was his responsibility to make sure all the emergency equipment was on the boat, cheekily asks Tas which oars he wants to use, because there aren't any. But the look on Tas's face shuts him up quickly.

"You and I are going to get into the water on both sides of the boat, hook one arm around the side and row with the other. It's the only way," says Tas.

"But what about crocodiles," asks Ben nervously, but Tas refuses to budge.

**You do realise we're basically in the middle of the dam, right?
We can't even see the shore.
And calling for help won't work.**

"If we don't row to shore we're going to stay here until the archangel Gabriel comes to fetch us."

The two friends jump into the water, point the nose of the boat to where it seems the shore is closest, and start to simultaneously kick and paddle. It's slow going since it's a near impossible task.

Ten minutes later Ben asks if they can stop to rest. No. "We'll have to knuckle down and swim, otherwise we'll still be here tonight," replies Tas.

So, they paddle and kick. Paddle and kick. And finally, after what seems like a lifetime, they feel rocks and gravel underneath their feet. They push the boat out of the water and drop down next to Ntombazane in an exhausted heap.

Ben is the first to get up. He takes a cooldrink out of the cooler box and downs it in three sips.

Tas looks at him with a wry look on his face. "Listen my dear friend, you'll have to go fetch the bakkie and trailer and I'll stay here and look after the boat."

The thought of having to walk a kilometre or two in the heat in nothing but his orange Speedo is almost too much for Ben. But he has no other choice and he puts on his slip-slops (which, thankfully, were on the boat) and starts walking over the rocks to the nearby dirt road. Out of breath and tired, he stumbles on, down the road. The slip-slops are not the best protection against the sharp pebbles and his feet are suffering.

A LITTLE BIT further, two men are sitting in the shade of a big flat crown tree, staring at the figure coming down the dusty road.

"Indoda emhlope izohambolani nqunu elangeni?" asks the one. Ben can speak Zulu so he knows the man wants to know why he's walking semi-naked in the hot sun.

He decides to ignore the comments and rather focus on the sound of an oncoming car. Instinctively he holds out his thumb.

The bakkie stops next to him and, of course, it's two ladies.

"Where are you going with those two red cheeks?" asks the driver, a striking redhead with a mischievous smile.

"It's a very long story," Ben says, trying to steer the conversation into another direction. "Could you maybe take me to the campsite?"

The ladies agree and Ben gratefully gets onto the back of the bakkie. A kilometre further they drop him off and the redhead tells him he should put cream on his bum before he goes to bed that night.

Ben gives an embarrassed wave goodbye and heads to the camp to put on shorts and a T-shirt.

A few fellow campers help hitch the trailer and as he drives to fetch Tas he shifts from one butt cheek to the other.

He finds Tas peacefully standing at the water's edge, fishing rod in hand. There's a giant largemouth bass lying next to the boat.

"And that?" asks Ben.

"I had to pass the time somehow and I got this monster," boasts Tas with a huge smile.

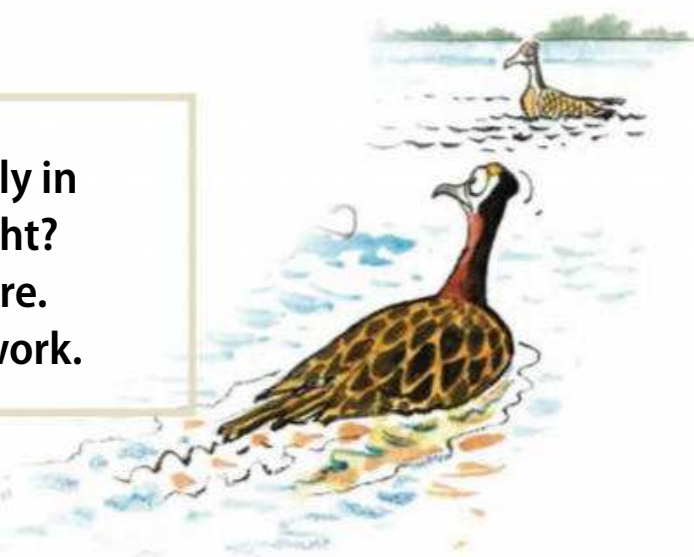
When they finally get the boat securely on the trailer, Ben wants to know if maybe, just maybe, there's a cold beer left. Tas nods in the affirmative and Ben slowly sips the welcome refreshment.

He looks searchingly at Tas. "I have this friend who claims you create your own problems," he declares. "That's why I made two decisions today, here next to the Goedertrouw Dam.

"I'm going to sell the boat, buy a caravan and from now on rather camp next to the water. It's much more convenient to fish from the side, as you've seen for yourself."

"And your second decision?" Tas wants to know.

"When we get home, I'm throwing my Speedo in the bin."





A fisherman's friend

“ I bought this trailer a few years ago from a guy in Colesberg after his son told me his dad wanted to get rid of the thing. The guy was getting on in years and couldn't use the trailer himself anymore.

He had built the trailer himself. I think it was an ordinary trailer with a bakkie canopy on it to create the bed on wheels.

I went to have a look and saw it was exactly what I needed for my fishing excursions. I really enjoy camping next to the fishing waters over weekends and this trailer has everything I need to comfortably do what I want to do.

Inside is big enough for a three-quarter mattress. This I put on two wooden pallets so that I don't sleep entirely on the ground. There are two fans on the roof to circulate the air and keep things cool inside. There's also a light against the roof and a 220 V power socket so I can make my coffee inside the trailer.

Above the bed is a space with shelves for my bags and clothes and other loose odds and sods, and it's nice that it has a roof rack on top for the rest of the luggage, my rods and fishing gear.

I used to tow the trailer with my Opel Kadett, but I sold it and now I tow it with my Ford Bantam.

I'm super chuffed with my trailer and it really turns heads whenever I drive into a campsite. People usually come over and ask if they can have a closer look. You don't see something like this every day of the week. ”

With this homemade trailer he can make himself at home next to the water and try to hook a big one, says Apie Geldenhuys from De Aar.



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