

#11 go!

CAMP FOOD SOUP IS NOT JUST FOR SICK PEOPLE p. 92

JUNE 2018 | ISSUE 11

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HIKING TOURS



How does it work?

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Where do I stay?

There are two accommodation options: Stay in three- and four-star-graded lodges in Plett or can camp in style. We provide fully kitted out dome tents with stretchers, mattresses, bed linen and bath towels.

Our campsites are in the Diepwalle section of the Knysna Forest and in Nature's Valley. Both campsites have excellent ablution facilities with hot showers.

How much?

Glamping costs R9850 per person sharing.

The lodge option costs R11750 per person sharing, plus 30% per single supplement.

Come glamping with us

Day 1: We meet up at the Diepwalle campsite late in the afternoon. Later we enjoy a leisurely dinner around the campfire with our tour guide.

Day 2: After breakfast, our guide will take us on the Circles in the Forest Trail through indigenous forest and fynbos. We'll have a picnic lunch at Jubilee Creek or Diepwalle before we hike through the Diepwalle section of the Knysna Forest.

Day 3: Today we'll tackle the 12 km Keurboomstrand to Nature's Valley stretch, which begins at the picnic site at Keurbooms beach. We'll walk along the beautiful coastline until we stop for lunch at Forest Hall. We end the day with dinner around the campfire in Nature's Valley.

Day 4: Today's 8 km Kalandepad Trail again winds through beautiful indigenous forest and fynbos with magnificent views across the valley, the Tsitsikamma Mountains and the ocean. The trail transects the deep forest in the valley, where you'll walk among giant Outeniqua yellowwood trees, strelitzias and lush ferns.

Day 5: Robberg Peninsula is on the menu today. Set in a marine protected area, we might see dolphins, humpback whales, seals or even a great white shark. Pelagic bird species are also plentiful.*

2018 DATES 9 – 13 August; 20 – 24 September; 11 – 15 October; 29 November – 3 December

... Or stay in a lodge

Day 1: Check into the Whalesong Hotel in the late afternoon, where we will meet the tour leader and enjoy a delicious dinner afterwards.

Day 2: See Day 3 on the glamping hike (Keurboomstrand to Nature's Valley). We overnight at the Whalesong Hotel (or alternative).

Day 3: See Day 2 on the glamping hike (Circles in the Forest Trail). We stay at the Bitou River Lodge (or alternative) tonight, renowned for its spectacular birding on the Bitou wetland. Dinner is a braai on the banks of the river.

Day 4: See Day 4 on the glamping hike (Kalandepad Trail). Lunch is at Bramon Wine Estate and we end the day with a sundowner cruise on the Keurbooms River.

Day 5: It's your last day of hiking and what better way to round off the experience than on a morning hike around Robberg Peninsula ending with a gourmet picnic lunch.*

2018 DATES 1 – 5 November; 15 – 19 November

**The programme can be adapted on the final day if you'd rather go riding or canoeing, but these activities are not included in the cost.*

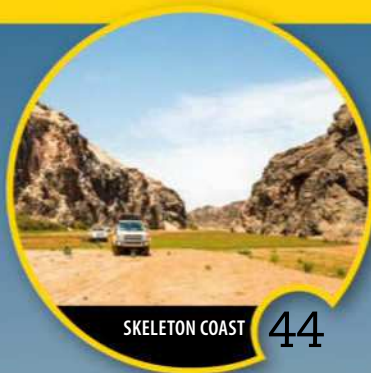


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4X4 ROUTE

The Skeleton Coast isn't something to be taken on lightly. We tackled this treacherous strip between sand and sea along with the experienced folk from Bhejane 4x4 Adventures and Unbounded Namibia.

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A hot topic



We didn't think it was possible, but this month's 4x4 Professor article gave Cyril even more grey hair than he already has. The past few months we received letters from readers expressing their concern about the safety of bull bars.

One reader was worried about the effect of aftermarket products such as a bull bar on a vehicle's safety rating, while another had first-hand experience of how his car's airbags didn't deploy when he was involved in an accident. He wondered whether the car's reinforced nudge bar could possibly be the culprit.

Cyril first approached the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) to get their take on South African guidelines, but it would seem as if the people there realised the kind of thorny topic we're dealing with, and he was sent from the one person to the next – until there was eventually no one left for him to speak to.

He also chatted to the manufacturers of vehicles and off-road accessories to get to the truth of the matter, and then submitted the story minutes before we sent the magazine to print. But it was worth the wait. It's an insightful feature that we should all read closely. I would even go so far as to say that it has the potential to open up a hornet's nest.

Yes, it makes sense to equip your 4x4 for the best possible off-road experience, but do you know what the consequences are of driving with non-standard issue parts on your vehicle? And no, we're not just talking about the warranty.

When it comes to bull bars, the landscape is busy changing worldwide, and in many countries they've already been banned. It's not far-fetched to think that it might happen here too. At this stage there are just too many things we simply shrug off.

I think we each have a responsibility to chat to vehicle manufacturers regarding the accessories we put on our vehicles. Find out whether it adheres to guidelines and requirements and if not, please make a plan to do something about it.

Safe travels!

Schalk

EDITOR

schalk.jonker@media24.com

Don't fight against the sand;
fly with the angels...

p.46



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We want to hear what you have to say. Write to us at drivecamp@gomag.co.za or go! Drive & Camp PO Box 740, Cape Town 8000. Remember to include your full address and contact details. go! Drive & Camp reserves the right to edit and shorten letters – and to use it in the magazine, the website or elsewhere.

“FEVER” IS A GOOD THING

I refer to the article written about shock absorbers in the February issue of *go! Drive & Camp*.

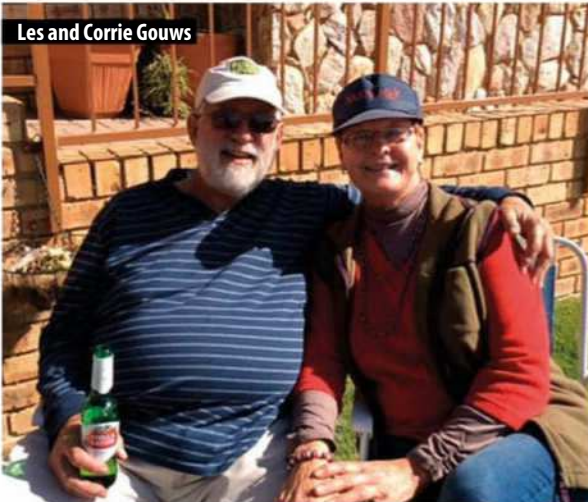
Here is some advice that I've been following for more than 40 years. If you suspect your vehicle's shocks are worn, put a piece of canvas or a floor mat in your car and drive for about 20 km on a dirt road. Pull over where it's safe, preferably on a level surface. Now put the canvas or floor mat underneath your vehicle, close to the shocks, and lie on it underneath your car. Touch the bottom half of the shock absorber to find out if it's hot or cold. If it's hot, it means it works. If it's not, it's worn and you need to replace it.

And don't only replace the worn shock. Replace both on the same axle.

JOHAN VORSTER
Windhoek



Les and Corrie Gouws



DRAW THE LINE (AGAINST ANTS)

We were at a timeshare in Sedgefield last year and we struggled with all the ants in the kitchen. They were everywhere: on top and inside the cupboards, against the walls and even inside the sugar container. Because it was only a short visit we didn't bring along insect repellent.

Out of desperation I rummaged through my toiletry bag and found a bar of Peaceful Sleep. I wiped down the ants from the cupboard doors onto the floor and to the step in front of the door. I applied some Peaceful Sleep to the tiles' edge at the step

and also up against the wall inside. To my surprise I saw the ants walk up to the line of Peaceful Sleep and then turn around. This was the end of the ant infestation and I now also use this method when I camp.

We live in a retirement village on the West Rand and there are just as many ants here. I probably don't have to explain how I get rid of them...

CORRIE GOUWS
Johannesburg >

Winning letter

Johan wins an Orion Poseidon Orange Jacket worth R1 599. This outdoor-technical men's three-in-one jacket will keep you protected from nature's elements and is a functional and fashion-

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"CAN" VS "SHOULD"

In the Seventies we had a quick way to determine what size caravan your vehicle could tow. In short, this formula says that for each 3 cc of your vehicle's engine you can tow 1 kg. That means a Ford Cortina XR6 with its 3 l engine (therefore 3 000 cc) could tow one ton. Those were the days before turbochargers.

Regarding the towing abilities of a vehicle, regulation no. 362 (2) of the National Road Traffic Act refers to the power-to-weight ratio: 240 kg/kW – which is relevant to heavy towing vehicles. A truck with a 460 kW engine can therefore tow 110 000 kg.

It makes me wonder if there are any such regulations for lighter vehicles. I also wonder how vehicle manufacturers determine the weight that their vehicles are allowed to tow.

JAN EBERSOHN
Stellenbosch

Some vehicle manufacturers certify their vehicles with a higher towing capacity than the law allows. That's especially the case with bakkies – some of them "can" tow up to 3 500 kg. But that's merely the ability of the bakkie and not how much it's "allowed" to tow on our roads. The law restricts you to the tare weight of the bakkie – that's if your caravan is equipped with run-in brakes. Most double cab bakkies are only allowed to tow about 2 t.

Jan refers to the former regulations (1989) that are applicable to older vehicles, explains Alta Swanepoel, a road traffic legislation expert. In the new regulations (2000), regulation no. 245 is applicable and that counts for all goods vehicles (of which bakkies form a part). The towing ability is thus determined by multiplying the P/D value (a value provided by the manufacturer) of the engine by 240, the gross combination mass (GVM) of the bakkie, and to multiply the weight of the driving axle by 5. The P/D of a Toyota Hilux, for example, is 122. The Hilux's three values therefore look as follows: The P/D x 240 is 29 280 kg, the GCM is 4 500, and then the driving axle weight (1 200 kg) x 5 is 6 000 kg. You're not allowed to exceed the lowest value, which in this case is the GCM (mostly the case with lighter vehicles). Big trucks' P/D is in the region of 250–310 and the P/D allowance is aimed more at big trucks with small engines. – Ed



GIVE AN OLD ALTERNATOR MORE KICK

I refer to the advertorial about dual battery issues in the March issue.

It's all good and well, but I have another solution. Deep in the bush you don't have the luxury of 220 V electricity and your only options are solar panels or a generator. A dual battery system relies on the charging abilities of your towing vehicle. The standard setting of a vehicle's voltage regulator for the alternator is 13,8 V and 14,4 V for others. With this setting the alternator charges only 10 A/h, which means an average size deep-cycle battery (100 A/h) will take 10 hours to charge.

To cut this time in half a voltage regulator of 14,7 V is the answer. It pushes the alternator's abilities up to 20 A/h, but you should rather not fiddle with a new vehicle's

alternator while it's still under warranty.

Up until four years ago I drove with a double cab Isuzu 280 TD 4x4 for 17 years. On my first serious trip through Kaokoland a dual battery system left me in the lurch because I eventually sat with flat batteries.

Back home I decided to install a second alternator – a Bosch – but that was also not the answer. After a lot of research I found the solution at a local company: a 14,7 V voltage regulator specifically for a Bosch alternator. That's when I saw that this setup charges at 20 A/h. It also charges the batteries until its reached almost full capacity. At least it's a solution if you have an old vehicle and you don't mind making adjustments to the alternator.

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Pet-friendly camping

f Do you only go camping where your fur babies are allowed to accompany you or do you choose to leave them home? Have you had any issues when taking them along? And where are your favourite pet-friendly campsites?



Danie van der Westhuizen

Silwerstrand Caravan Park is a great place. Just make sure your dog doesn't bother other campers. I don't camp without my four-legged children.



Ben Visagie

Pets are okay on condition that the owners pick up the poop where it falls. And keep the cats in their own caravan.



Linda Burger Visser

Oh dear. We camped for a weekend and someone's dog came to lift its leg against our tent. We were left with the smell. Is that acceptable?



Jan Jacobus van Rooyen

As long as your four-legged children don't bother me, I'm okay with you bringing them along.



Joey Gouws

Montagu Caravan Park is a very cute pet-friendly place.



Denise Hopkins

Lake Pleasant Holiday Resort in Sedgefield. It's a beautiful campsite with friendly staff.



Adolph Mostert

We camped with our dog children for the first time in January at the Warthogs Bush Camp between Magalies and Hekpoort. It's a very quiet and peaceful place. Our dogs quickly made friends with other campers' dogs.



Erika Sandbaai

We only camp where our Sausage is also allowed. We particularly enjoy Glentana Caravan Park and Bonnievale River Lodge. We have just heard about Umshanti at Buffeljagsrivier. Still have to check that one out.



Marietjie Miles

My baby went along in December. He thoroughly enjoyed the attention at Smilin Thru Resort just outside Parys next to the Vaal River.



Instagram



Liked by toastcards, dinkywille and 61 others
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#wegrysleep #4x4 #landrover #atlantis #tablemountain #ontdekjouplek

COMMENT OF THE MONTH!

When Ford revealed the Ranger Raptor, it left many tongues wagging, including ours.

Andries van Schalkwyk I wonder what the guys are saying now about milk, juice and Amaroks that only come in 2 ℓ.



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Recycling issues

There needs to be a fundamental shift in the way we think about the impact that our households have on the environment, says **Mic van Zyl**.

Quite by accident I've started noticing more and more articles in the news regarding the immense collection of plastic waste floating on the surface of the ocean in just about all parts of the world. The pictures are shocking. I've only noticed these articles since I've become more aware of the environment and related issues, primarily due to the fact that I meet many environmentalist-type people in my job.

“
Not everyone can look past the enjoyment that observing nature gives and see the effect that we as the human race has on it.”

My personal interest in conservation is borne out of years of visiting places like the Kruger. The wildlife, the plants and the environment have become more important to me as I've gotten older. Not everyone can look past the enjoyment that observing nature gives and see the effect that we as the human race has on it. Many people are dismissive about what is happening and this is quite sad. There are, however, a number of people who are quite troubled by what is going on. Like the majority of the people on the planet, I'm not a staunch environmental activist. I have a 9-to-5 job in the big city

with a young family to raise and care for. I try and get out into the country to go off-roading and experience nature, but I am, for the most part, a city slicker.

I OFTEN WONDER about how I could get more involved in making a difference in conservation or environmental issues. When I chat to people who are involved in conservation or advocating increased awareness for environmental issues, it always seems to me that their passion has outstripped their concern for creating wealth or holding down a steady day job. But surely there must be something that somebody like me can do.

After chatting to a very interesting young person recently, it turns out that there is indeed a huge amount that somebody in my situation can do. We've all heard the saying "Charity begins at home". Well, according to this young lady, conservation and the concern for environmental issues also start at home. And it does not have to be major, time-consuming projects either. The trick is that there needs to be a fundamental shift in the way your family thinks about the impact your household has on the environment. The consumption of water and electricity and the generation of waste are the most prominent areas that every household could pay attention to.

Being frugal with power and water is simple enough. It's a habit that needs to be taught to our children and practiced.

Waste management is another story though. I spent two years living and working in Melbourne, Australia, around 10 years ago. They had a proper recycling programme for household refuse and waste. It was great and I wish we had the same system in my hometown.

THE ONLY RECYCLING I come across in my hometown is the odd recycling container hidden away at some obscure, unadvertised recycling point. I have to take it there myself and even then I'm not so sure that this recyclable waste won't end up back with my non-recyclable waste on the landfill.

The point is that far too much of our plastic waste ends up in our oceans. The effect on sea life is horrendous. I for one am quite ashamed as a human to see what my fellow man and I are doing to the oceans. Scrolling down through my Facebook news feed I came across some organisation that is developing a material made from harvested plastic waste from the oceans that will be used to make roads instead of traditional tar made from fossil fuels. I feel a bit better, but I am going to make that fundamental shift in my household. And how about you?

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

ironman4x4.co.za

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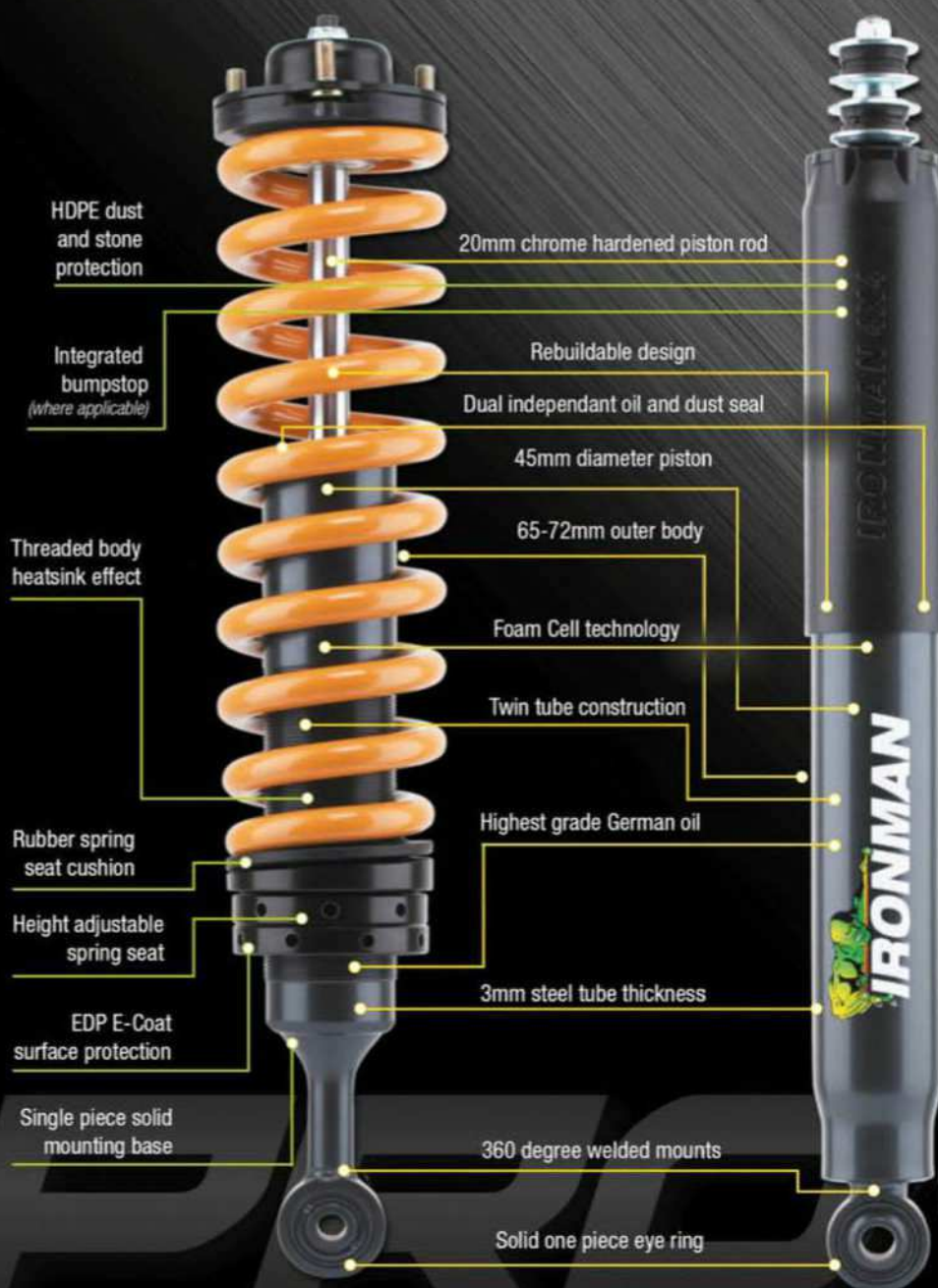
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Nissan	Navara D40
Nissan	D23 2017
Nissan	Patrol LDV Y61/GU
Toyota	Hilux Vigo 2005-2016
Toyota	Hilux Revo 2015+
Toyota	Fortuner 2005-2015
Toyota	Fortuner 2016+
Toyota	Landcruiser 76,78,79
Toyota	Landcruiser 80
Toyota	Landcruiser 105
Toyota	Landcruiser 200
Toyota	Prado 120
Toyota	Prado 150
Toyota	FJ Cruiser





Think of the children

Kids of all ages need to keep themselves busy and shouldn't expect the campsite to offer them entertainment, says Neels van Heerden.

It's definitely not child's play to run a campsite. Especially not when you have guests expecting everything that opens and closes but don't want to pay "an arm and a leg" for it. Speaking of child's play, when I think back I remember playing games like marbles, rotten egg, hopscotch, and cowboys and Indians.

Kids (and even some of our members of parliament) occupy themselves with computer games like Candy Crush and spend all their time on social media. If there isn't Wi-Fi or an internet signal in the campsite, people choose to rather avoid the place.

An ordinary tennis ball is one of the most versatile and harmless toys for old and young to play with.

I also keep an eye on social media and often see people asking what there is for kids to do at a specific campsite. And things like a swimming pool and games room won't do either because it seems to me as if the parents want the resort to entertain their kids.

When I was younger kids were seen and not heard. We had to play outside and we

kept ourselves busy with cricket, rugby and soccer. Even the younger cousins were roped in, even if it was just to field.

I FIRMLY BELIEVE kids of all ages should create their own entertainment and it shouldn't necessarily be supplied by the campsite.

Maybe someone like the ATKV can take the lead by bringing back games from yesteryear? It will help to keep kids entertained in the winter months when the swimming pool is not an option. Oh, I forgot – campers look for sites with heated pools, at a low price of course.

An ordinary tennis ball is one of the most versatile and harmless toys for old and young to play with. A tennis ball doesn't break windows, damage cars or leave blue marks on bodies – unless that's your intention.

Universities train countless sports and recreation students for practical projects. Campsites could employ them to help develop activities.

There are dozens of hand-eye coordination activities that can be played with, for example, a tennis ball.

CAMPSITES CAN ALSO OFFER shorter hiking trails where trees and unique natural phenomena can be identified. It's an enjoyable outing for the whole family. Technology can also be used to expose the ones who'd rather

sit and Snapchat to their natural surroundings. They can put the photos they take on Instagram for friends and family back home. It's a great way to record memories.

Campsites can also place a bird guide on their website that can be downloaded onto smartphones and tablets beforehand. One of the nicest apps that I've come across is PlantSnap. You take a pic of the plant in the field and the app identifies it for you.

Parents need to think out the box when it comes to creating things to do for the whole family. Get the kids to help you prepare lunch or dinner. Give them a budget (for example R200) and get them to develop or find a recipe, buy the ingredients themselves, and then prepare the meal. Remember to take photos and put it on social media.

Go have a look at the MindSports South Africa page on Facebook – it has a wide variety of games (from bridge to mahjong).

On the website srsa.gov.za you can also go find out more about traditional games like Dibeke, Diketo, Drie Stokkies, Intonga, Juskei, Kgati, Kho-Kho, Morabaraba and Ncuva. Let the kids teach you one new game per camping weekend.

In doing that the kids will learn to occupy themselves and at the same broaden their horizons. Enjoy!

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There's a new caravan builder in town



Oкто Caravans, a new local manufacturer, has announced that it is entering the South African caravan market.

Okto's plant is in Pretoria North with Loftus Caravans in Randburg as the Gauteng branch. Two existing caravan dealers in Cape Town and Durban have already been appointed as Okto dealers and will be announced soon.

Amongst them the owners and shareholders of Okto have decades' worth of knowledge and experience. Keith Laing, the former managing director of Jurgens Ci, as well as Tinus van Wyk, who served as production director there, are at the helm.

Woody, Joël and Neil Loftus of Loftus Caravans, the biggest road caravan dealer in the country, oversee Okto's marketing. With 30 years' experience in caravan sales under their belt, they know the market as well as buyers' needs like the back of their hand.

On the design side are Ingo Ferreira, an industrial designer with seven years' experience at Jurgens Ci, and mechanical engineer Rudolph Venter. Lastly, Derek Laing also lends a hand as electrical engineer.

The first Okto caravan is a medium-size standard road caravan in the class of Jurgens' Penta and the Sprite Splash, and it's aimed at small families of up to four. The island bed is on the nose side and the caravan has an outside kitchen with a microwave inside. The sitting area is in the back and the door is right behind the wheel in the left-hand panel.

The Achilles heel of road caravans are their size, especially the height, because the medium-sized and bigger caravans that fit into a standard-size garage are almost impossible to find. The Okto caravans have pop-up roofs and are designed to fit into your garage.

Wood rot is a huge headache with caravans, but the Okto caravans avoid this by employing aluminium and fibreglass >

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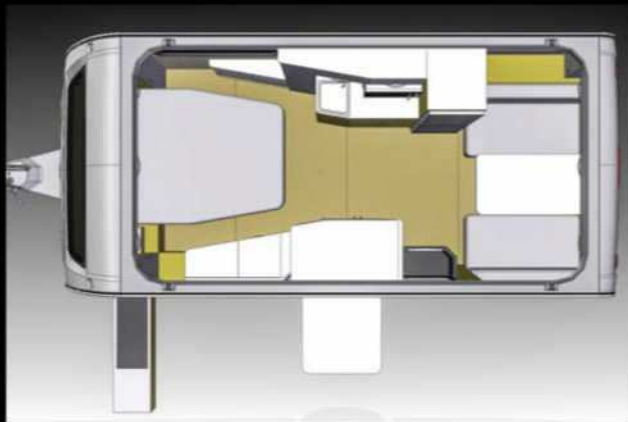
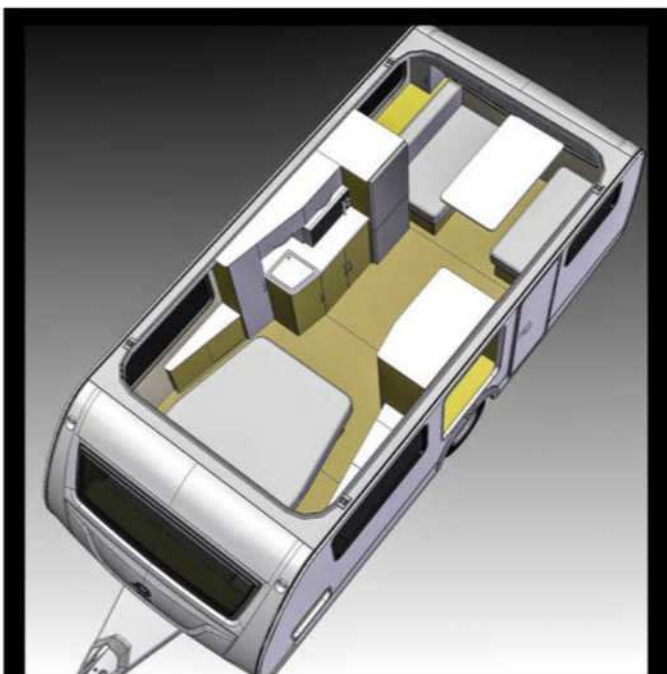
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in the body panels and framework. Besides eliminating wood rot, aluminium is also quite a bit lighter and stronger than the conventional construction.

The Okto's Al-Ko modular chassis is made of galvanised steel and the axle's independent suspension of rubber (which you currently also see underneath caravans). That's imported from Germany.

The Okto caravan has a 12/220V electricity system that includes a battery charger and the stove works with gas. The double-door Defy fridge can also work with 12 V and you're not dependent only on 220 V. The caravan's battery can also charge using your towing vehicle when you drive.

Okto also addressed the relatively low payload of caravans. If you look at Jurgens' Classique 167, the Penta 127 and the Sprite Splash, a road caravans' payload is between 236 and 270 kg. The intended tare weight of the medium-size Okto will be just over a ton (similar to the Splash) but its gross vehicle mass (GVM) is 1 500 kg. That means you can put up to half a ton in the caravan without overloading it.

Contact 011 792 1456 or 082 673 0701

woody@loftuscc.co.za loftuscaravans.co.za



PARADISE IN PIKETBERG

If you enjoy camping in the vicinity of Piketberg you now have one more campsite to choose from.

Kleine Paradys is on Conrad and Antoinette Thiar's farm, and this 60 ha piece of land lies on the Berg River just 8 km outside of Piketberg. Conrad and Antoinette bought the farm, with its lemon, guava and olive trees, two years ago and they immediately decided to make a campsite. They've been camping for several years themselves so they understand the needs of campers.

All 13 stands, of which two are private, lie right on the river. The private stands are both big enough for two to three caravans and are ideal for friends camping together. These stands are separate from the rest and they have their own bathrooms.

Six of the 11 remaining stands have shade netting to keep the

sun out, and two have shade trees. All the stands also have a paved surface that you can camp on or next to. These stands share one big ablution building, but you also have your own facilities – each stand is allocated its own bathroom.

Bring your fishing gear because you can catch catfish, carp and bream. There's also a smaller dam for the kids if they want to practice casting first. Just note that it's catch and release.

If angling isn't your thing, there are four kayaks you can use free of charge.

The heated pool is close to the non-private stands and the water reaches a lovely 28 °C. The shop is at the office and has basic provisions.

Prices R100 p.p.p.n. and half price for kids under 12.

Contact 083 300 8202 or 084 206 3190 info@kleineparadys.co.za kleineparadys.co.za



A variety of caravans are in the works, but Hoefler's first focus is on its lighter caravan. The SuperLite is aimed at folks with a light vehicle driver's licence who are not allowed to tow caravans with a gross vehicle mass (GVM) of more than 750 kg. Because the SuperLite comes with overrun brakes you can tow it with almost any vehicle currently on the

You may think this size caravan is no more than a bed on wheels, but the SuperLite actually has a lounge area inside, which is separate from the bed. What makes the SuperLite Special – a variant of the SuperLite – unique are the panoramic windows at the front and back. It curves from above the A-frame to the roof, and the same at the back. The base model is more angular, but also has windows in the panels.

and the bed is to the right in the back. Naturally, the one panoramic window is above the sitting area and the other above the bed. Because of the demand for an island bed, Hoefer has also made this part of the SuperLite's layout.

The figures 4,94 x 2,28 x 2,54 m (h);
tare weight 575 kg; GVM 750 kg

Contact hoefergroup.com >



The Lion's share

Custom Canopies in Pretoria has added a third caravan, the Lion's Den Deluxe, to their range.

Compared to the Lion's Den, the Deluxe's interior layout is the other way around. The bed moves from the front to the back and is now an island bed. The shower in the back corner moves to the outside next to the right wheel. The washing line is still on the same side but is now also where you hang the shower curtain to form the shower cubicle. Opposite the existing door in the left-hand panel is another door on the right that opens onto the shower side.

The kitchen is still outside in the back, but the fridge/freezer that stands on the work surface moves to a side cupboard with a sliding frame. The Deluxe actually has two cupboards with sliding frames that can fit a fridge/freezer of 50 l – one in the right- and the other in the left-hand panel. A 42 l fridge/freezer comes standard with the caravan. The kitchen is therefore bigger and the kitchen cupboard that used to be in the left panel moves to the middle section in the kitchen and consists of four shelves with canvas flaps that zip up. The two-burner gas stove is to the left of the cupboard and the sink to the right in the work surface.

Unlike the original flatbed chassis, the Deluxe comes with an integrated chassis with rubber axle.

The figures 1,9 m wide and 4,7 m long; tare weight 590 kg; GVM 1 600 kg

Price R200 000

Contact 083 281 7800; customcanopies@mweb.co.za; customcanopies.org >





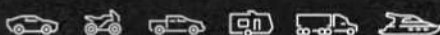
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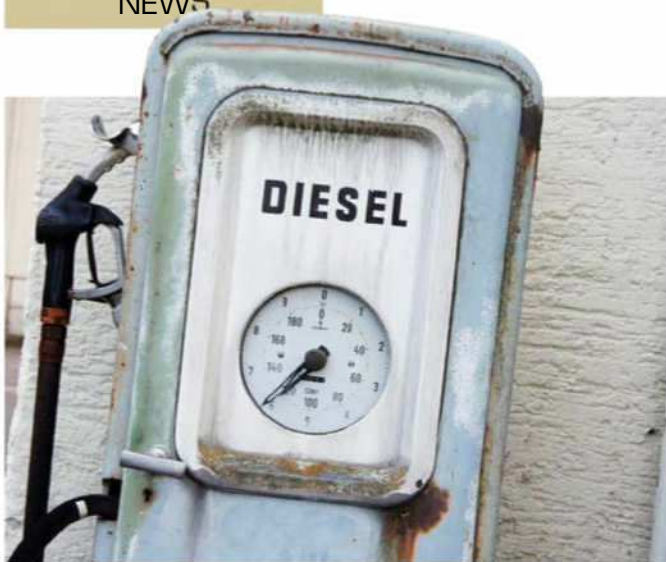
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Diesel vs petrol

A recent survey by the AA found that 56% of South African motorists prefer diesel to petrol. A total of 37% of the respondents still preferred diesel even after they were informed that diesel emissions lead to 38 000 deaths per year.

The AA, however, stated that diesel engines will soon go the way of the dodo. Vehicle manufacturers regularly have to comply with stricter anti-pollution regulations and diesel engine technology struggles to reach their targets. Vehicle manufacturers have to decide whether they want to spend millions to develop cleaner diesel engines or throw in the towel and stop using diesel engines altogether.

It's a debate that hasn't started in South Africa yet, but the decisions made overseas certainly has an effect on local soil, according to the AA.

Diesel vehicle sales in Europe dropped sharply in 2017 after concerns that the resale value of such cars will decrease. Some cities also banned diesel engines outright or set deadlines for when they will get banned.

The AA further states that though their survey currently shows that South Africans are in favour of diesel, we need to consider whether the new vehicle we buy should be a diesel one.

Other info that came from the survey is that 60% of respondents believe electric vehicles are a good idea. The AA agrees that electric vehicles can work in South Africa, but only if enough affordable electricity can be generated and there are enough recharging stations.

Sorry!

We published the incorrect prices and contact details for Drie Berge Caravan Park in our April issue. These are the right prices: R200–R550 per stand per night depending on which specific day and season and for up to four people, plus R50 for each additional person up to eight on the stand. Email address: drieberge@lantic.net

Moving Rhino

The canopy manufacturer Rhinoman has been doing business for six years, and now, after more than 10 000 canopies, they're moving to a brand-new building.

They are still in Rosslyn, Pretoria, but they're moving down the street to 5 William Hoyt Street where the entire operation is under one roof. The factory takes up 6 000 m² of the 14 000 m², and besides the production line there's also a warehouse to stock supplies.

The telephone number has also changed to 010 010 0060.

Contact sales@rhinoman.co.za
rhinoman.co.za



Amarok now even stronger

In reaction to Mercedes-Benz's X350d, Volkswagen has launched a more powerful version of its V6 Amarok. The new Amarok will kick out 190 kW and 580 Nm. That's considerably more than the previous 165 kW and 550 Nm.

These figures are similar to the Merc but torque-wise the Volkswagen has 30 Nm more than its fellow countryman. There are also rumours that

Volkswagen will use the 190 kW Aventura Exclusive concept (photo) to give Mercedes a run for their money.

We'll have to wait and see what South Africans regard higher: Will the extra torque in the Amarok be the most enticing or will it be Mercedes's low-range transmission and mechanical simplicity? And how will Volkswagen react when Mercedes decides to build an AMG X-Class?





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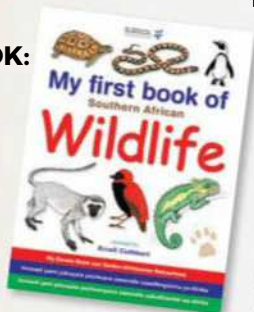


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NEW VEHICLE SALES

Here are the top 10 vehicle sellers in South Africa. Toyota's best seller was the Hilux with 3 825 per month and the Fortuner with 1 274 – that's even more than the Corolla. Volkswagen stays in second place thanks to the Polo range that sold approximately 5 000 units, but their most popular SUV was the Tiguan with 525. There were 176 Amaroks sold. Ford sold 2 753 Rangers and 813 Ecosports. That's followed by Nissan's NP300 that continues to perform well with 603 sales, followed by the Qashqai with 489. Hyundai's most popular lifestyle vehicle is the Creta with 413 and Renault sold 186 Dusters. BMW's money maker is the 3-Series, but with regards to SUVs the X1 did well with 224 units per month. Isuzu also had a good month with 1 273 KBs sold, and lastly Kia, which sold 181 Sportage units.

MANUFACTURER	SALES
1. Toyota	11 378
2. Volkswagen-groep	7 541
3. Ford	5 595
4. Nissan	5 410
5. Hyundai	3 065
6. Mercedes-Benz	2 379
7. Renault	1 904
8. BMW	1 713
9. Isuzu	1 581
10. Kia	1 517

In general the sales figures are lower than the same period in 2017. The Department of Trade and Industry blames the many public holidays during the first half of the year, but this argument doesn't really hold water because there were public holidays in 2017 too...

Figures supplied by NAAMSA

Maserati Levante gets V8 power



The new Maserati Levante Trofeo can accelerate from 0 to 100 km/h in 3,9 seconds and reach a top speed of more than 300 km/h. The V8 is one of the most powerful engines ever used by the Italian manufacturer and it generates 440 kW at 6 250 rpm and 730 Nm at 2 250–5 000 rpm.

The Trofeo's chassis had to be reinforced to handle this impressive power delivery and the standard wheel rims have been replaced with 22" forged aluminium rims.

"It's proof that when you play with the elements you end up in a storm," says Maserati's head, Tim Kuniskis. "In the case of Trofeo, the engineers and designers in Modena knew that the driveline parameters were more than able to cope with additional power and they also knew that Maserati had access to the finest engines on Earth. So, they were up to the challenge of making the finest luxury SUV also one of the fastest."

At the time of going to print there still wasn't an official South African launch date for the Levante Trofeo.

LONGER TIGUAN

Volkswagen saw a gap between the smaller Tiguan and the larger Touareg, but instead of building a completely new vehicle, the manufacturer extended the Tiguan's wheelbase by 100 mm and the body by 215 mm. The new Tiguan Allspace is now 4 701 mm long and has a third row of seats.

By extending the wheelbase and bodywork, the passengers in the second row have 60 mm more legroom. With the third row of seats in use, there's 230 l luggage space and when the seats are folded flat you have an enormous 700 l – 115 l more than before. If all the seats in the back are folded flat, the volume goes up to 1 775 l. And

at 1 921 mm deep, there's enough space to load in your surfboard.

The Tiguan Allspace is powered by a 2.0 TDI diesel engine or a 1.4 and 2.0 TSI petrol engine. All models besides the entry-level 1.4 TSI get 4MOTION all-wheel drive as standard.

Prices are as follows:

• 1.4 TSI 110kW Trendline DSG	R463 400
• 2.0 TSI 132kW Comfortline 4MOTION DSG	R523 800
• 2.0 TDI 110kW Comfortline 4MOTION DSG	R571 100
• 2.0 TSI 162kW Highline 4MOTION DSG	R604 800 >



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MITSUBISHI GETS FIT

A brand-new version of the Mitsubishi Triton, called the Athlete, is now available. The Triton Athlete is manufactured in Thailand and imported to South Africa.

It has similar safety features and comfort levels as that of a luxury sedan vehicle. There are double airbags in front, knee airbags for the driver, and curtain airbags throughout the cabin.

You'll recognise the Athlete by its orange and black decals and equally daring interior. Highlights include the 2.4 l MIVEC VGT turbo-diesel engine that generates 133 kW and 430 Nm, and Mitsubishi's Super Select II four-wheel drive.

The Triton Athlete costs R559 995 – a special launch price that's the same as the standard Triton 4x4 double cab automatic. The new Triton Athlete has a three-year/100 000 km factory warranty and a five-year/90 000 km service plan. Service intervals are every 10 000 km. >

A facelift for Forever Badplaas and Warmbad

If you walk into the hydros at Forever's Badplaas and Warmbaths resorts and notice that things look a bit different, it's with good reason. Forever has renovated these two resorts' hydros and it's right on time for the winter months. The multi-million rand project took nine weeks to complete at Badplaas and five at Warmbad. Both hydros use mineral-rich water from a hot spring.

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Motoring news from the States



RAV4 ON SHOW

Toyota launched a new RAV4 at the New York International Motor Show. The RAV4's designers apparently focussed on the keywords "adventure" and "refined" to create a tougher yet more elegant vehicle.

The latest RAV4 is wider and lower and is more aggressive-looking on the outside. Inside the finishes have been given a facelift and there's now more legroom for rear passengers.

The RAV4 will have the same chassis as the Toyota C-HR that was launched last year. It will also get multi-link suspension at the rear and a new 2.5 l four-cylinder petrol engine with an eight-speed transmission as well as a hybrid engine with continuously variable transmission (CVT).

The 2019 Toyota RAV4 will be available in South Africa from the second half of 2019.

Brand new Forester

Subaru also launched its latest Forester at the show. The Forester will be available in South Africa early in 2019 and is expected to include technology like all-wheel drive and EyeSight Driver Assist Technology.

The American version – like at the show – is powered by a new 2.5 l four-cylinder boxer engine. It also boasts Subaru's X-mode four-wheel-drive system that mimics low-range gears and electronic driver aids.

Other technology includes USB sockets in front and at the back, intelligent air con that adjusts to the amount of people inside the vehicle, software that remembers the driver's seat position, side mirror adjustment and preferred cabin temperature. It will also have an 8" touch screen with improved Apple CarPlay and Android Auto software.



CLEAN SWEEP FOR VOLVO

Also at the show: Volvo's XC60 walked away with the International Car of the Year award. Unlike in South Africa, the rest of the world's motoring journalists did not rate the Porsche Panamera higher than the Volvo. The XC60 also dethroned the North American SUV of the year, and the smaller Volvo XC40 was chosen as the European car of the year at the Geneva Motor Show. Read our impression of the XC40 on page 32.

Velar takes the crown

The Range Rover Velar was chosen as the most beautiful car in the world at the motor show. And that's only the most recent award this SUV has received for its appearance.

"The Range Rover Velar is an outstanding, superior SUV. Compelling modernity, eye-catching design, innovative infotainment technology and a clear focus on sustainability – what a combination. This product speaks for itself." says Ralf Speth, head of Jaguar Land Rover.





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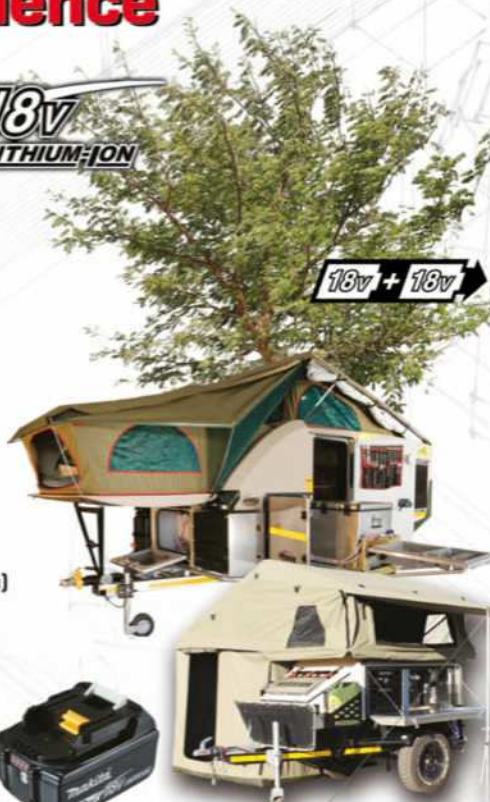
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Scandinavian mojo

Volvo forged a name for themselves with their mid-sized XC60 and larger XC90. Now they've entered the premium compact SUV market and their competitors had better watch out.

Text Cyril Kloppe



VOLVO XC40 T5

Volvo aren't messing around. They've won several motoring awards in various markets and almost completely shaken off the stigma of being dull but safe cars. Nowadays Volvo's are sensational without sacrificing their reputation for safety. The all-new XC40 is no different and after being named

European Car of the Year, it has arrived in South Africa. We drove it around Midrand in Gauteng and although we weren't given adequate time to thoroughly test it, we obtained a realistic impression of what this car has to offer.

The looks department

From the outside the XC40's stubby body reminds one of a bull

dog. But unlike that breed, this Volvo has the legs of a terrier. It's quite high off the ground with plastic panels on the lower sections of the body to protect it against up-flung gravel.

The interior is both Spartan and stylish. A look only the Swedes can pull off successfully. There's nothing brash about the interior, but of all the modern Volvo's we've driven, this is by far the most daring – particularly if you opt for the sporty R-design package.

The inside is minimalistic but features impressive technologies such as inductive charging for smartphones, Volvo's impressive 9" touch screen, a fully digital instrument cluster, and an excellent Harman Kardon sound system with nine speakers.

Rear passengers enjoy good head and legroom, and right in the back is a multi-adaptable boot

floor which offers various ways to control clutter, keep shopping bags from spilling their contents and transport oversized objects.

Safety first

Volvo's are all about safety. They are, after all, the company that invented the seatbelt – by Volvo engineer Nils Bohlin in 1959, if you were wondering. Research conducted in the United Kingdom discovered that the Volvo XC90 hasn't killed a human in 16 years. That's right; since the XC90 went on sale back in 2002, not a single Brit has died inside a XC90 or were killed by an XC90, touch wood.

The XC40 contains practically all of the XC90's safety features – a few of these are optional extras, but they're available if you want them – including a front collision warning and full autobrake package called City Safety (standard). The same sensors and cameras



employed by City Safety also detects pedestrians, cyclists and large animals, even at night, and will automatically brake if one of them wanders into your direction of travel (standard).

If the sensors detect that a rear collision is imminent, the seatbelts will tighten, the brakes will activate – if you're stationary at a traffic light – and the hazard lights will flash in an attempt to warn the approaching driver (standard).

There's also lane-keeping aids, cameras that read speed signs, blind spot and cross traffic alert, and Pilot Assist that will autonomously steer the XC40 if the driver becomes incapacitated for whatever reason (R19 250).

We also like the Park Assist feature which will not only manage parallel parking for you, but it will also autonomously exit a parking bay whether it's parallel or perpendicular while simultaneously keeping an eye on other vehicles and pedestrians in the parking lot (R7 900).

There is, of course, also a first-aid kit and more dual-stage airbags than you can shake a stick at. The Swedes truly appear to have your well-being at heart.

How does it drive?

There are two engine variants: the D4 diesel and T5 petrol – both are all-wheel driven. A T3 front-wheel-drive version will go on sale in the third quarter of 2018.



The interior is both Spartan and stylish. A look only the Swedes can pull off successfully.

As mentioned at the start, we didn't get to spend a lot of time behind the wheel but we hope to do so soon. What was noticeable was the low road noise levels and lively engine, particularly the T5 petrol. The D4 does have more torque but the diesel engine clatter at low speeds can be distracting. There is a brief delay when you step on the pedal before the XC40 gets going, but

we suspect it's a technical issue with the pedal rather than a performance issue with either one of the two engines.

Conclusion

It may be too soon to call, but we think that the Volvo XC40 is every bit as good as a Jaguar E-Pace and a BMW X2. In fact, the XC40 feels more thoughtful than the aforementioned competitors.

Prices start at R489 500 for the XC40 T3 manual Momentum, which is around R100k less than the Brit and the German. It'll be heartrending if South Africans don't embrace the XC40 because it's a great little SUV. 🇸🇪

SPECIFICATIONS

Model	XC40 T5 Geartronic AWD R-Design
Engine	1 969 cc, transverse 4, turbopetrol
Power	185 kW @ 5 500 rpm
Torque	350 Nm @ 1 800 rpm
Transmission	8-speed automatic
Fuel consumption	7.2 l/100 km
Fuel tank capacity	54 l
Luggage capacity	460 l
Maximum towing weight	2 100 kg
Ground clearance	211 mm
Maintenance and warranty	5 years/100 000 km
Service intervals	Annually/20 000 km
Price	R649 700

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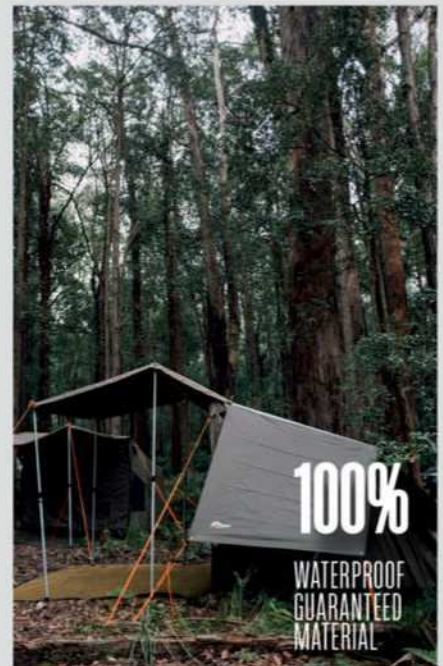
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The power of Neptune

The Maserati Levante feels serene like the sea... until you press the sport mode button, says Cyril Klopper.



Maserati Levante S



DOWN ON THE BEACH. The Levante is no beach buggy, but the all-wheel-drive system should get you through mild obstacles. The pitch black body paint absorbs sunlight like a sponge, but on closer inspection you'll see all the colours of a rainbow glittering in the metallic paint.

Fifteen years ago, Porsche fluttered the dovescotes with its Cayenne. British and Italian sports car manufacturers first resisted the SUV trend, but the writing was on the wall and those manufacturers eventually accepted that you simply have to have an SUV in your ordnance if you want to be successful. These days Jaguar has the F-Pace, Alfa the Stelvio, there should soon be a Lamborghini Urus on our roads, and both Ferrari and Rolls-Royce are working tirelessly to roll out their SUVs in a year or two.

Off-road ability isn't as important as it used to be. As long as the swanky vehicle has all-wheel drive and you get to look down at the person in the car next to you, it's all good.

We tested Maserati's Levante S on sand dunes and mountain passes to see what it's made of.

What do we have here?

The Levante is a big boy. At 5 003 mm it's 148 mm longer than a Porsche Cayenne plus it's also 29 mm wider. The Levante is clearly proud to be a Maserati because it boasts no less than eight Maserati badges on the outside and even more on the inside – just in case you forgot what you're driving. >

PRICE

Maserati Levante S GranSport **R2 061 000**



“
We know the Levante is a looker. You can tell by the amount of people staring at you with their mouths agape.
”

Three vents in each fender look great but it's doubtful whether it has any practical use. The red Brembo callipers inside the 21" rims look equally good, but unlike the vents these have a purpose and they work brilliantly.

We know the Levante is a looker. You can tell by the amount of people staring at you with their mouths agape. Some point and elbow their partner as you drive past. BMWs even pull out of the fast lane so you can pass. Seriously. You won't get this kind of reaction with just any old car.

The interior of the Levante is beyond lavish, featuring swish leather upholstery and what appears to be real carbon fibre panels on the centre console. The seats support your body in all the right places and it never feels like you're going to slide out of them when you corner sharply. At the rear there's ample leg room and even tall passengers shouldn't feel too cramped.

Next to the gear selector are four driving mode buttons. You can choose whether to save fuel by pressing the I.C.E button, leave

the car in normal mode, or whether to make some noise in sport mode. There is also an off-road button that raises the air suspension by 40 mm above the standard ride height.

When you park, the Levante's suspension lowers 45 mm lower than the standard ride height so that shorter people don't have to leap out or clamber back in.

What a beautiful noise

The Levante's twin-turbo V6 is built by Ferrari in Maranello, Italy, but despite its family ties >



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SPECIFICATIONS

Engine	2 979 cc, V6, turbopetrol
Power	430 kW @ 5 750 rpm
Torque	580 Nm @ 5 000 rpm
Transmission	8-speed automatic
Tank	80 ℓ
Fuel consumption	11 ℓ/100 km
Luggage capacity	580 ℓ
Towing capacity	2 700 kg
Ground clearance	247 mm
Kerb weight	2 109 kg
Top speed	264 km/h
Acceleration (0–100 km/h)	5,2 s



you can hardly hear the V6 over the din of the traffic around you. Until you press the sport button. Then the exhaust starts to grumble and the suspension drops like Usain Bolt settling in the starting blocks, ready to race.

The exhaust system works almost like a wind instrument: In sport mode valves in the exhaust system opens to channel emissions via a shorter route. This elevates the sound to that distinctive Maserati growl and the engine delivers more power and torque. Every tug on the aluminium paddle shifter results in a bark from the exhaust. In sport mode you can force the transmission to stay in a chosen gear until you decide it's time to shift. Step on the throttle and listen how the growl is swiftly replaced by the whoosh of twin turbo-chargers, punctuated by another loud bark that turns heads.

But how does the Levante perform in off-road mode? You raise the body via the off-road button so the body doesn't scrape in muddy ruts or deep snow, and the paint job doesn't get pockmarked by up-flung gravel. It's fine for dirt roads and European winters, but how does it fare in mud and sand? We couldn't find any mud near the coast but there was more than enough sand to test it on. You can't significantly lower the pressure in the Levante's low-profile tyres and we quickly discovered that deep sand is the Levante S's Achilles heel.

Conclusion

Just like a Porsche Cayenne, Alfa Romeo Stelvio and nearly every BMW X-series, the Maserati Levante belongs on an engineered road rather than hardcore terrain. We can't imagine anyone buying a Levante to go play in the dunes, but it is capable of tackling a fairly bad dirt road – just watch out for those low-profile tyres.



RED ALERT. The Levante isn't for shrinking violets. Everything about it speaks of confidence and success. The flamboyant interior doesn't only look good, it's also practical and comfy. You can start the engine remotely with the key, but the doors will remain locked, which is a treat. Our only complaint is the 21" tyres which stymies any attempt at adventure.





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There's life in the deep desert

The Skeleton Coast isn't something to be taken on lightly. We tackled this treacherous strip between sand and sea along with the experienced folk from Bhejane 4x4 Adventures and Unbounded Namibia.

Text and photos **Marzahn Botha**



COASTAL JAUNT. The vehicles ride virtually right next to the shore near the Southern Cross shipwreck.



When you leave on this specific trip, says Herman Kielblock, co-owner of Unbounded Namibia and one of Bhejane 4x4 Adventures' guides, you're burning with anticipation. "I often used to play hooky and then lay on my bed reading *The Skeleton Coast* by John Henry Marsh. I was enthralled by this kind of adventure and that's why I do what I do today."

It's Herman's inquisitiveness that brought him here, ready to lead a convoy of adventure-seekers to the northern part of the Namibian coastline. It's a place the Portuguese seafarers dubbed "The Gates of Hell" and the Bushmen refer to as the place God forsake.

In the Skeleton Coast your plans and schedules mean nothing. Here nature has the last word.

DAY 1 | THE SKELETON GATES OPEN **Swakopmund to Möwe Bay camp (450 km)**

The fog lies thick over Swakopmund and Bhejane's bakkies groan under the heavy loads. Herman and Phil van Wyk are the tour leaders – Herman is from Cape Town and Phil from Goghas.

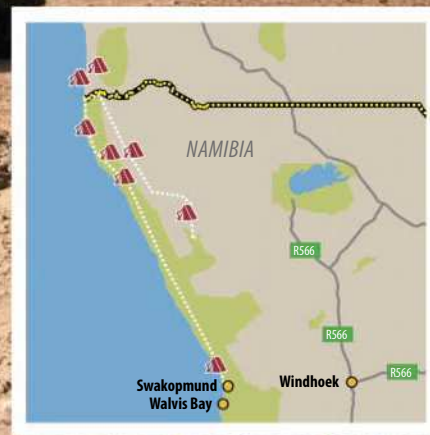
"The people who tour with us each have to bring about 220 ℓ diesel and 260 ℓ petrol with them and that has to last to Sesfontein," says Phil. Each bakkie also gets 60 ℓ water and then the heavy tents also need to go on top.

Finally, we leave Alte Brücke: lights on, radios installed, wheels inflated to 2,1 bar.

If you're an avid angler you can first head to Wlotzkasbaken and Jakkalsputz in Dorob National Park in search of cod, steenbras and sand shark. From there you head to Henties Bay for rations and fuel because you'll only fill up again in Terrace Bay in the Skeleton Coast National Park.

About 40 km further is the Cape Cross reserve and salt mine. You'll see pink salt slabs displayed on tables – you can buy these for R30 (they call it an honesty fee).

The gate to the Skeleton Coast National Park with its skull signpost says it all. You're entering a world where man and >





beast are left to their own devices. The big signs near the Ugab River warn you that you need a permit, and if you want to attempt the epic trip in the area between Möwe Bay and the Kunene River Mouth, you have to do it with a tour operator that has a concession from the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism.

As we drive through the gates to get onto the C34, the wheels are 1,8 bar in front and 2,5 at the back.

The dry Skeleton Coast is covered with colourful lichen. Remnants of the Toscanini Mine, started by the brothers Jasper, Koos and Fanie van der Westhuizen, lie scattered all over.

At Torra Bay on the D2302, Jot Awob comes out of his house. “There’s no one here now. The people come during December and January,” he says.

After Torra Bay, the quiet Himba Kavisina Kasaona, or simply Kai, speaks from the back of the bakkie. He came along to show us his world. “Come, let us find the track of the lion,” he says near the mouth of the Uniab River in the sea, but unfortunately the desert lions walk elsewhere today.



On the Skeleton Coast your plans and schedules amount to nothing. Here nature will always have the last word.

Close to Möwe Bay with its sea cottages is a colony of about 70 000 Cape fur seals and the wind shoves the smell up your nostrils. It’s the headquarters of the reserve. Time is running out and we push on in low range to see the wreck of the Southern Cross on the rocks. Tonight we’re camping 2 km from here next to the ocean.

DAY 2 | SEE DANNY, THE DESERT ELEPHANT, TRUMPET

Möwe to Sarusas Springs camp (177 km)

By daybreak red fox tracks surround our tents.

“Don’t fight against the sand; fly with the angels,” Phil grins when our convoy struggles with the soft sand. This isn’t a place to get too comfortable behind the wheel. The sand is thick and if you’re not in low range you will get stuck. About 22 km from where we camped lie the remains of old tractors and bulldozers that was apparently the landing strip of a mining concession.

You can also stop at the Lockheed Venture (1942) where bones and the remnants of a plane’s broken engine lie scattered. The plane was used to rescue the wreck of the Dunedin Star, but a certain Captain Immins Naude threw out provisions when he lost an engine and crashed into the sea. He did survive though.

Now you’ll find the dunes in the eastern direction. Put the vehicle in low-range gear. “You drive up in





FAR LEFT The entrance to the Skeleton Coast National Park.

LEFT Remnants of the broken-off engine from Captain Immins Naude's Lockheed Ventura that crashed here in 1942.

BOTTOM LEFT Hansie Ruben digging Phil's tyre out of the soft beach sand.

BOTTOM Bones are scattered all over Möwe Bay.



second, quickly put it in third, and hit it." Kai snaps his fingers when he says "hit it".

If you're driving in convoy it's a good idea to send the strongest bakkie ahead. Phil's Hilux 4.0 has to work hard to get to the top. One by one the bakkies climb up the dune. When you get to the top the sand is hard with soft spots. The view stretches wide at the back of the dune over the sea. It's a magical feeling when you drop down the "face" of the dune like a teardrop – all the way in first gear.

It's the prettiest scene once you're through the Hoarusib and you see the green of the protected valley between the red and black cliffs. It's a remarkable sign of life in the dry desert.

"This is why I came," says Cathy Yates from Oxfordshire in the UK. She prefers greener scenery like the Drakensberg.

In the distance we see a young elephant bull called Danny. As we approach he doesn't seem too happy with the bakkies disrupting the peace. Danny walks down a dune and the scene is beautifully framed by the red and black rocks. We are now in the Skeleton Coast's backyard and there's volcanic ash scattered everywhere. It's still about 40 km to camp. At the Khumbi River we turn left, towards the sea. Keep your eyes peeled for shy gemsbok grazing at the Sarusas Springs. We pitch camp in >





“
It’s the prettiest scene once
you’re through the Hoarusib
and you see the green of the
protected valley.

the Khumib River Mouth and we’re warned about the desert hyenas that like to visit late at night.

DAY 3 | MINERAL COAST

Khumib River Mouth to past Angra Fria (136 km), about 386 km from Terrace Bay

A breakfast consisting of Maltabella porridge and toast gets us ready for a long day on the road and the onslaught of the wind. In winter it can get icy cold – summer is a better time to travel here.

We get to an ultraviolet amethyst firmament where these purple gemstones were mined between 1950 and 1960. You can see why the German expert brought here for this task went crazy from loneliness. About 60 km from the

previous night’s camp you’ll find round stone altars built hundreds of years ago by the Strandlopers, who were descendants of the Bushmen.

As you drive on, the red, black, ochre and brown desert colours flow into each other. We drive in 4x4 to Agate Mountain. This glowing peak shines rust red in the sun and we eat couscous for lunch. “This is why I came back. For this view,” says Callie Mulder from Pretoria, who’s visiting the Skeleton Coast for a second time. He is also a photographer who’s already filled a couple of memory cards.

You drive over the ridge to the Cape Frio Reserve, about 58 km further. Here you’ll find two colonies of fur seals basking in the sun. The colony is smaller than the one at Cape Cross. Every October the

males fight for their female mates and at the end of the year you can see thousands of young seals frolicking about.

Angra Frio is a weather station approximately 111 km from our previous camp. About 10 km outside Angra Frio is the shipwreck of the Dunedin Star. Close by is a metal plaque erected by one Sidney Palmer, one of the survivors, that reads: “In memory of Mathias Koraseb and Angus McIntyre, and for everyone who risked their lives to save us”. In 1942 this 530-foot British ocean liner sailed onto the rocks. After a relentless struggle of 26 days, the two Scotsman drowned.

We drive another 25 km down the beach and pitch camp in a wind that makes the Cape southeaster feel like a light breeze.



DAY 4 | SWIMMING IN THE KUNENE

Beach camp, Kunene Mouth and dune driving (61 km)

It's 400 km between you and civilisation. SMSes are lost in the wind and Phil's load is about 100 kg lighter after four days. You have to wait for low tide before you can drive. To your right are the pans. A dead beached whale lies on the sand, and there's a diamond concession near the mouth.

For the next 12 km the Kunene River Mouth beckons. Pink flamingos, pelicans and cormorants fly up. For about 80 m from where the Kunene's brown water-course flows into the sea, the brown mixes with the blue. The river flows from Angola, past the Ruacana border. On the other side of the mouth fishermen are trying to hook cod. It's also a good place for a group photo because you can't go further north.

We check the tyre pressure (0,9 bar in front and 1 bar at the back) before we

tackle the dunes in an easterly direction. "If the wheels are too flat it will slip off the rims," says Phil. You drive back in your tracks for about 13 km and enter the stretch of dunes in a northeasterly direction near Bosluis Bay. Herman leads the group in his Hilux. The extra wind power helps over the dunes. It's here that Kai shows his mettle. He runs barefoot over the scorching dunes, stands on the flat top and navigates the drivers over the face of the dune and down. There is no road, but Kai knows his way.

In the middle of nowhere you find a dune of about 36 km. When you look back, the black-red iron deposits lie on the ground. Apparently, that's the rust that occurs when the sea comes in contact with the air.

It takes close to six hours to get to camp, where you have a spectacular view of the Kunene River and Angola. Sundowners just taste better next to water in Africa. >



ABOVE The convoy enters the green protected valley of the Hoarusib River.
INSET Danny the elephant stomping around.
RIGHT Curious gemsbok cautiously surveying their surroundings at Sarusus Springs.





ABOVE Another one of the fountains of the Sarusas Springs.

DAY 5 | IN THE BELLY OF THE BEAST

Hartmann's Desert camp to the Hartmann's Valley (61 km)

The Hartmann's Valley is, as the crow flies, about 45 km from the camp. There was some rain last night, which helps to dampen the dunes.

Today, the Land Cruiser is in front. Kai and Callie are far ahead of the group. The Fortuner, which isn't carrying a very heavy load, fairs equally well in the dunes. And then a bunch of vehicles get stuck. At the face of the dune there's deep sand at the bottom and the bakkies are just too heavy to get out of the groove as they get to the bottom. Herman's bakkie is unloaded and Phil needs three ropes to get his partner out.

For the last 15 km it feels if the monster dunes want to keep the bakkies for themselves. Then they spit you out and by late afternoon you've had enough.

Suddenly there are fewer dune formations. The landscape opens up and there are signs of gemsbok and ostriches on the glimmering horizon.

The concession section is behind you and you drive tired and dispiritedly to the top. Your reward is a northern view over the Hartmann's Valley, a valley meant only for heroes with lion hearts.

We drive 12 km to our campsite. Tonight we sleep in the hollow of the Hartmann's Valley.



DAY 6 | SAY GOODBYE TO MANKIND

Hartmann's Valley to Omenya camp, Purros (220 km)

Cassie Mulder once again says this is the most beautiful place on Earth. The group has a late breakfast and we hit the road at 10 am. The desert is always begging for water and it looks like there's rain on the way.

"When it rains the river comes down and washes away all the dirt. Year after year nature cleans up after itself," says Phil.

Put your bakkie in 4x4 and take the road south in the direction of Purros. You drive about 72 km to the green drum. It's Oupa Choppies's drum with its famous laptop without electricity. Somewhere a stone figure sits against a tree on a ledge or on a rock – it's artwork by Trevor Knott who uses his surroundings creatively to show you that you are not alone in this desolate area.

Push on to Purros, which means "fountain". The Himba Chips Tjambiru and his wife, Alvina, in her Herero dress await us at the Omenya camp. Omenya means "place of the springbok". The showers are big and water hot.

Chips and Alvina don't like sitting still – they sweep and keep the place clean. In the patriarchal Africa, Alvina looks like

the matriarch who keeps Chips on his toes. Over the past five years they have turned this camp into a place to be proud of.

It feels as if the toughest part of the trail is over. Finally you can sit back and enjoy the view.

DAY 7 | CHIPS LOOKS FOR RHINOS FOR 40 KM

It's not often you get the chance to walk with a tracker in search of white rhino. In this area there are three desert rhinos that survive on the mountains and in the hard terrain. Chips is a tracker and his thin legs carry him all over. Michale Omeny is a policeman with a gun who travels with him. He is at a new concession area every three months to take care of the rhinos.

You have newfound respect for the guys who track for more than four hours in the scorching sun to ultimately maybe find a white rhino. "A handful of people see this in their lifetime. It's a very tough terrain and to actually do it is incredibly difficult," says Phil.

Back at the camp, bacon, eggs and freshly baked bread await.

Then it's time to visit the Himba community about 7 km from here. About 50 000 Himbas live in the Kaokoveld, the northern part of Namibia, and on the other side of the border of Angola, but not all of them lead a traditional life.

At the kraal are 18 women and children with skins rubbed in a mixture of ochre, butter fat and herbs. The men sit in the Manchester bar in Purros. These women are just as well adjusted to these harsh conditions as the rhinos and the desert elephants.

DAY 8 | HOARUSIB IS IN FLOOD!

The Hoarusib, one of many rivers that also run underground, is in flood. That's because it rained a lot at the Epupa Falls. By 10 am the water flows down even stronger and by 3 pm we stop trying to get to the other side of the river. Phil doesn't want to take any chances with the convoy. A young giraffe came down with the river, tried to stay standing, but sadly drowned.

DAY 9 | MOVING ON TO PALMWAG (211 KM)

Today the river doesn't flow as strongly

and we manage to get to the other side. We drive in a southeasterly direction for about 110 km to Sesfontein, where we refuel.

Adventure lovers can drive back to the Hoanib concession past the Elephant Song campsite. The place is apparently deserted because the lions chased everyone away and the staff are too scared to go back.

But the Hoanib River and other tributaries are too strong and our plans change. The one thing about water driving is that you need to maintain momentum >



AT THE SEASIDE. The sun keeps things cheerful as the wind batters the tents on our beach camp.

and ensure that the vehicle doesn't die. Our bakkie did just that in the rivercourse but thankfully it didn't swallow any water.

We can't go further up in the concession area and the best option is to shoot through to Palmwag, 101 km from Sesfontein.

DAYS 10 & 11 | THE PHOTOGRAPHER AND THE PUBLISHER

Today we have a choice: We can lie next to the pool or drive around the Palmwag concession for more than 300 km with Phil and Callie. The concession houses about 70% of the world's free-roaming black rhino.

We stay behind with nature photographer Heinrich van den Berg,

his wife, Dana, and their two sons, Gustav and Arno.

They stayed in Möwe Bay for a few days with Dr. Philip Stander. Heinrich is also the publisher of Phil's book, *Vanishing Kings – Lions of the Namib Desert*. It's an exceptional coffee table book that tells the story of how desert animals adapted to survive the hot days and icy nights.

The Skeleton Coast is a garden – one of sand, skeletons, desert animals, agate, amethyst, diamonds and shipwrecks – that grows daily. The sea desert world teaches visitors a lesson. Be as adaptable as Danny the desert elephant and you will survive in this land of the dead.

And in the unforgiving land of the living too.



For the last 15 km it feels as if the monster dunes want to claim the bakkies for themselves. Then they spit you out...





MAIN The weary convoy pulls into the Hartmann's Valley.
MIDDLE The rockman is the creative fruit of artist Trevor Knott.
LEFT BELOW Chips and Alvina work tremendously hard at their campsite, Omenye.
LEFT A Himba woman near Purros.

WHERE TO STAY

The southern part of the Ugab to Terrace Bay is open to the public. It costs R80 p.p. and R20 per vehicle. If you're a day visitor you need to be in the park by 3 pm and out by 5 pm. You can't go further in the concession area without a tour operator.

- Torra Bay is the only official camp in the park and is open in December and January. It costs R230 p.p.p.n. (8 people per stand). ☎ 00 264 61 285 7200
- The Terrace Bay Lodge has double rooms ranging from R920 p.p.p.n. to R1 360, depending on the season. Breakfast and dinner are included. There are two self-catering cottages on the

beach that sleeps 6 and 10 respectively.
 ☎ 00 264 61 285 7200 ✉ nwr.com.na

Other numbers

- Alte Brücke in Swakopmund: Camping at R300 p.p., R400 for 2, and R600 for 4 people. Stands range between R720 and R795 p.n. ☎ 00 264 64 404 918 ✉ info@altebrucke.com 🌐 altebrucke.com
- Amenya campsite at Purros: R100 p.p.p.n. ✉ resomenjepurros@gmail.com
- Palmwag Lodge's campsite: R270 p.p.p.n. A double room costs R2 270 p.p. sharing, breakfast and dinner included. 🌐 palmwaglodge.com



THE SKELETON COAST CONCESSION

The Skeleton Coast National Park's coastline stretches from the Angolan border for about 500 km to the Swakop River near Swakopmund. Because it's a highly sensitive area you have to adhere to the rules when you do the trail.

Not everyone can do the trail; you have to work through a tour operator with a permit. Othipupu Investments own the concession and control the permits.

After a long process it was the first time that Bhejane and Unbounded Namibia got a permit to explore the full Skeleton Coast. We covered about 1 500 km on our trip. 🌐



A rural delight

Next time you're heading to the coast, take some time to relax amongst the north Eastern Cape's rivers and cliffs first.

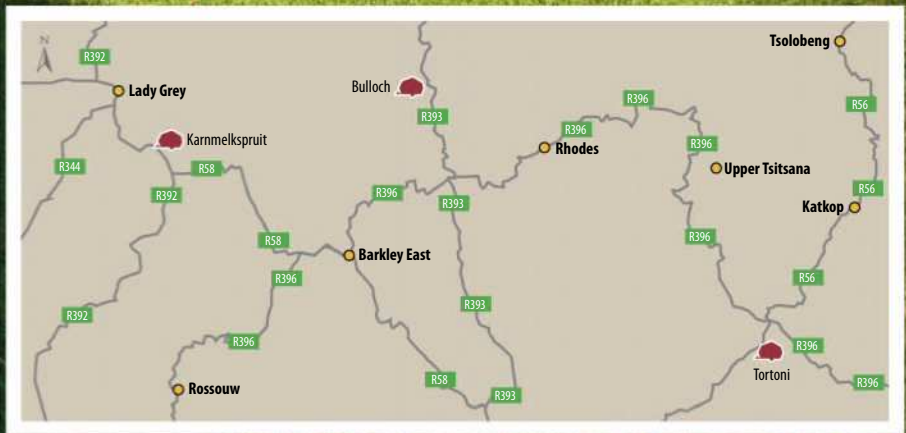
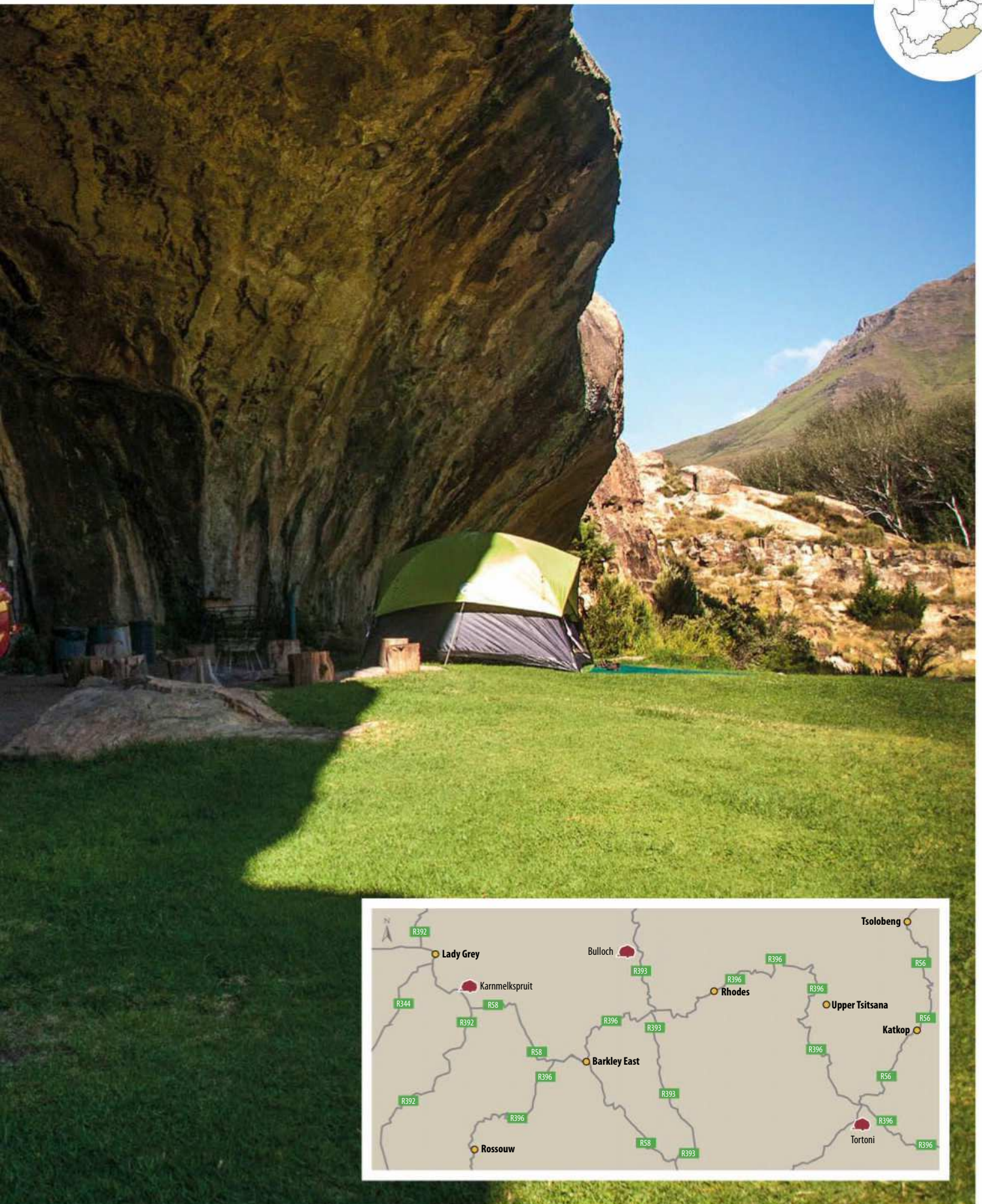
Text and photos **Zigi Ekron**

When you think of rolling hills, impressive sandstone cliffs, fishing spots, hiking and 4x4 trails and hidden waterfalls of the Eastern Cape Highlands, it's actually surprising that you don't find more campsites here.

Many people drive through on their

way to KwaZulu-Natal or the Wild Coast, but this part of the country has just as much tourism potential as the Lowveld or the Eastern Free State.

Once you've camped here you'll almost certainly adjust the plans for your next holiday so you can spend more time here. We visited three excellent campsites. >



TORTONI GUEST FARM AND CARAVAN PARK

The sounds of nature

"Turn left after that harvester," Megan Bezuidenhout says as we arrive at Tortoni's farmyard. "You'll see the sign pointing to the road between the trees. We can deal with the paperwork tomorrow." Megan manages the campsite along with her mom, Sandra, while Ernst, her husband, keeps the farming operations going.

It's not dusk yet, but the late-afternoon routine of a busy farm is clearly visible. The John Deere tractors need to be taken to the barn, dogs are fed, and cattle make their way to the kraal.

As you pass the trees, as Megan indicated, the sounds of the farm start fading and you see the campsite laid out on a large, open triangle.

On the one side are trees and on the other a cornfield, and in front of you the pinkish purple clouds reflect in the farm dam. There are six stands to choose from, all of them about the same distance from the stone building in the middle that serves as kitchen, scullery and ablution facilities.

In front of the building a few big stumps are packed in a circle around a boma for when you and all your camping buddies want to braai, but each stand also has its own concrete braai place with free firewood packed underneath it.

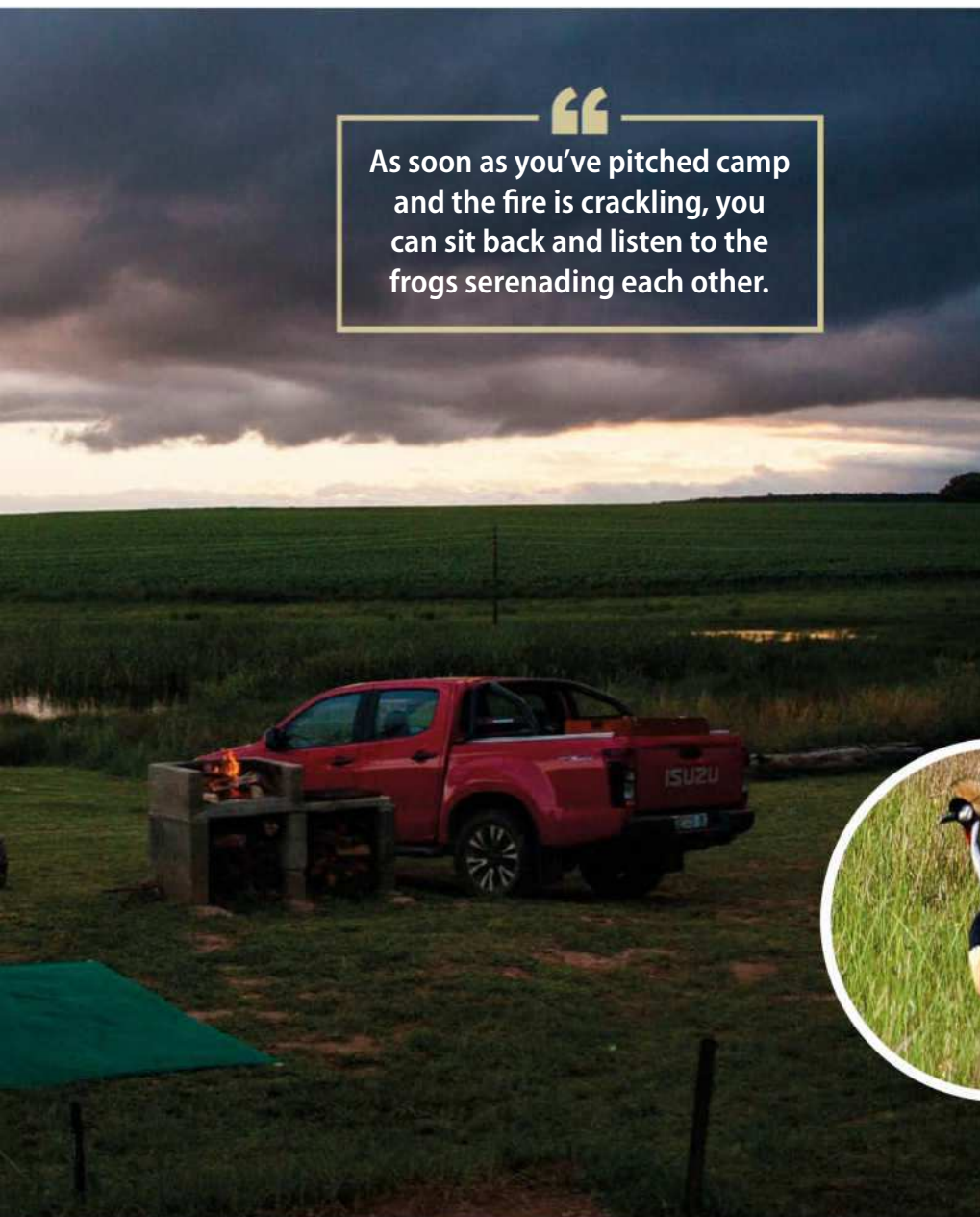
STAY CALM. The tranquility of Tortoni's farm dam at late dusk is a good remedy for a long day behind the wheel.



It'll take another year or three before the trees between the stands will be tall enough to cast shade, so you don't have to stress about getting the shadiest spot. You also don't have to fret about the view because the stands are all on level terraces against a slight incline. You'll see the dam and the birds that frolic on the water from almost anywhere.

As soon as you've pitched camp and the fire is crackling, you can sit back and listen to the sounds of the frogs serenading each other in the marsh. Megan tells the story of a group of zoologists who recently stayed in Tortoni's guesthouse who ran out with flashlights and raincoats in the middle of the night during a

“
As soon as you’ve pitched camp
and the fire is crackling, you
can sit back and listen to the
frogs serenading each other.



summer downpour to catch frogs. Apparently, they were very chuffed with the variety of species they found here. (By the way, you’re allowed to fish in the dam, but everything you catch needs to be put back.)

When the twilight finally disappears, two big floodlights will ensure that you don’t stumble over a rock or a tree trunk on your way to the bathroom. You can, however, switch them off by hand if you prefer sitting in the dark and marvelling at the Milky Way – it feels like its mere metres above you.

There are two bathrooms in the stone building and when the place is packed they’ll probably separate the men’s and



women’s sections, but the facilities are exactly the same on both sides. Each have a shower, toilet and concrete slab with a basin. The bathroom and kitchen get hot water from a boiler that Megan lights when you arrive, but you have to remember to stoke the fire yourself from time to time if you want a nice, hot shower.

Early morning you’re woken by water birds on the dam, and you might even see an osprey mating pair circling the water making their distinct call. There are also quite a few herons and cranes like the crowned crane, and if you’re lucky you might see the rare wattled crane. Guests have even taken photos of a rufous-bellied heron – a bird that is seldom seen outside of Botswana.

Behind the waterfall

There are a few smallish waterfalls in the area. Most of them, however, are on private land and are not accessible to the public. But you can take a trip to the Tsitsa Waterfall

outside Maclear. It’s the most well-known and probably also one of the biggest in the area.

On the R56 point your car’s nose in the direction of Matatiele and drive about 8 km outside of Maclear, where you’ll see the first sign post to the waterfall on your right. From here you drive 10 km on a farm road until the next sign that indicates to turn right to the Tsitsa Falls Backpackers 3 km further. Stop and ask the caretaker, Richman “Nepo” Mphomane, to show you the waterfall.

You can walk from the backpackers to the waterfall but if you have a vehicle with good ground clearance you can drive the last 500 m. There’s a place to park and turn around from where you have a view of the Tsitsa River tumbling over the abyss.

If you’re feeling particularly fit and energetic you can walk with Nepo and his dog, Luma, down the hill to an overhang behind the waterfall. >

THANK GOODNESS. The bathrooms are small but neat and tidy and the hot water supplied by a donkey is pure bliss.



TSITSA WATERFALL

Road condition The backpackers' website recommends to rather drive 20 km past Maclear and then turn right for a better and shorter dirt road (8 km). We found, though, that you can drive any of the roads with your mother-in-law's Honda Jazz, provided you do so slowly over the rough parts.

GPS S31.014948 E28.483558

Contact 073 020 8801

tsitsafalls.co.za info@tsitsafalls.co.za



Briefly | Tortoni



Campsite 6 stands, each with electricity, a braai, wood and a garbage can.

Ablution facilities A neat, small stone building with 2 showers, 2 toilets and 2 basins. Hot water is provided by a boiler.

Price R150 p.n. per stand.

Arrival and departure times 2 pm and 10 am

Contact 084 200 2548 (Megan) or 083 386 0059 (Sandra) tortoni.co.za
megan.staples@yahoo.com

Nearest town Maclear 9 km.

Road condition Tar road to the farm entrance and then about 800 m's good dirt road to the campsite.

There are currently road works with stop-and-go points on the R56 between Ugie and Maclear that will probably last till June this year.

The turn-off to the Tortoni Guest Farm is on a stretch of road that only allows one-way traffic at a time between two of these control points.

GPS S31.118615 E28.334422

go! Drive & Camp says It's a good overnight spot en route to KwaZulu-Natal, but it's equally nice to spend a few days here.



PLUNGE POOL. You can swim in the pool under the Tsitsa Waterfall or simply walk behind the water curtain.

BALLOCH

Take a chance

When British settlers, quite a number of them Scots, arrived on the southern foot of the Drakensberg early in the 19th century, they felt right at home amongst the mountains and the grasslands. It reminded them of their native country, and presumably because they were homesick they started naming their new place of residence after places close to their hearts in the old country.

Balloch is one such place. The original Balloch is a town with an impressive castle in the southwest of Scotland on the banks of Loch Lomond – the very place where Nana Mouskouri and others perform. Unlike, say, Parys in the Free State and Paris in France, here you can easily imagine that you're really in Scotland.

When you turn off onto the farm road and drive through a tree canopy of poplars and thorn trees, you almost expect someone with a crop, a hound's-tooth jacket, jodhpurs and riding boots at the front door. But it's Graham and Margy Frost's four dogs that playfully come running to the door to greet you.

The road to the campsite is back the way you came and then right at the dam, past the Willowstream cottage to where the road forks. You'll see signs as you drive in, but you first have to check in at the farmhouse, which also serves as reception office.

To the right of the fork is a big campsite next to the river and to the left is a giant overhang with a lush lawn in front where you pitch camp. If you're worried about rain and don't mind pitching your tent on sand, you can pitch in the overhang. In fact, you'd be able to park two Pentas next to each other in the overhang, but the dirt road leading here isn't one you should tackle with a standard caravan.

You'll easily be able to mete out 10 or even 15 stands on the two campsites, but Graham only allows one group of campers at a time. You can therefore camp here on your own or with your friends, without unfamiliar neighbours.

The river camp and the one at the overhang have a tap, garbage cans and a single power socket, but it's not Eskom electricity. Graham and his team generate their own electricity with a hydroelectric

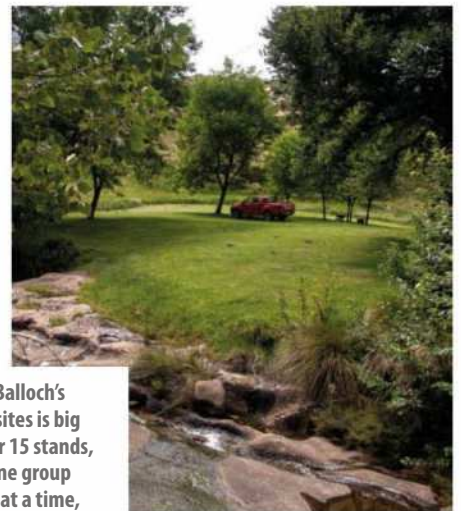
power station. That's why they ask nicely that you don't use multiplugs and devices that use a lot of power. You can plug in a camping fridge and charge your cellphone but rather leave the electric blankets.

Each camp has a braai drum, and at the overhang there's a boma with stumps packed around it for seating.

When you're at the one campsite you are really not aware of the other one, even though they're barely 100 m apart and they share an ablution block. It's built out of river rock and is an example to bigger, fancier resorts of how things should be done. There are two toilets with a door to the outside, and inside, behind a reed curtain, is a room with >



You can easily imagine that you are really in the Scottish highlands.



PRIVATE. Balloch's two campsites is big enough for 15 stands, but only one group is allowed at a time, so you can camp with family and friends and no strangers.





a sink for your dishes. On both sides of this room is a door that leads to the shower room. Each of the two shower rooms have a basin, toilet and a modern shower cubicle with a glass door. There are also hooks for your clothes and towels and a bench that you can sit on when you want to put on your shoes.

Walk upstream

From your stand you can stare for hours on end at the strange shapes of the sandstone cliffs that tower out high above the valley, while a man on a horse chases Graham's Bonsmara cattle up against the mountain slopes with a few loud whistles. A red-chested cuckoo answers from somewhere along the lower end of the river.

The river in Afrikaans is known as Vlooiakraalspruit, but the English name, Willow Stream, fits better with the surroundings. The river is filled with brown and rainbow trout and the farm is a popular destination for fly-fishermen. If you're looking for some exercise you can bring your rackets and hit a few balls on Graham's tennis court, or you can ask them to guide you to the San rock art on the farm.

Up and down

Balloch lies almost in the middle of eight of the most well-known Eastern Cape passes. (We wrote about these in the May issue. – Ed) You are within reach of Naude's Nek, back in the direction of Maclear, or Volunteershoek and Carlisle'shoek, which are both feeder lines for the Tiffendel Ski Resort.



SHINING. Balloch's bathrooms are excellent and an example to other campsites. White storks also come visit here in the summer.

From Balloch you can also drive over Lundin's Nek Pass to the Lesotho border and then along the border to Lady Grey. The other passes are the Bastervoetpad, Otto du Plessis, Jouberts and Barkly passes. The latter is the only one that's tarred. Make sure you at least have a vehicle with good ground clearance and preferably a diff lock if you're planning on tackling any of the others. Also put aside enough time because it can take anything from two to six hours to finish one of the passes.

The road to Balloch is accessible with a sedan if you take the route over Barkly East like Margy suggests on their website. Otherwise you're going to hit a few nasty back roads.



MOUNTAIN FORTRESS. The hollow at Balloch is a unique and unusual campsite. The overhang protects you and the view is unbeatable.



Briefly | Balloch



Campsite 2 spacious camps on lush lawn, big enough for groups. Each stand has an electricity socket and a garbage can.

Ablution facilities A stone building between the two camps with 4 toilets and 2 showers and basins.

Price R400 p.n. for 2 people and then R150 p.p. (R100 for kids between 4 and 16 years).

Arrival and departure times 2 pm and 10 am

Contact 045 974 9228

ballohcottages.co.za

frost@balloch.co.za

Nearest town Barkly East 45 km.

Road condition 41 km dirt road from Barkly East.

GPS S30.712047 E27.698396

go! Drive & Camp says It's probably one of the more exceptional places you'll ever pitch a tent. >



You can stare at the strange sandstone formations for hours on end from the comfort of your campsite.

KARNMELKSPRUIT

Time out

Lady Grey is more or less halfway between Bloemfontein and East London and years ago was an important stop on the train route between the interior and the Eastern Cape coast. You can still detect a hint of this history on the farm Karnmelkspruit, about 20 km outside the town.

The farm belongs to Ian and Elize Cloete. About 10 years ago Ian made a campsite on a patch of land next to the river that is today known as Karnmelkspruit River Resort.

The initial plan was to just have a space where friends and members of their camping club could come hang out, but it has since become popular as a good overnight spot for travellers on their way to and from the Wild Coast.

Besides the few solar panels that provide light in the ablution block, there is no electricity and the stands are not cordoned off, but there is space for about 25 caravans or tents. In the middle of the campsite is a lapa with a braai for groups, and on both sides of this is a men's and ladies' bathroom.

You can cast your line in the stream that flows past

the campsite, and sometimes you can hear the call of the baboons further down in the ravine.

A quick to and fro

Where that ravine become narrower through the Karnmelks gorge there's a colony of Cape vultures. It's a strange

sight to see this lot where they sit in the hollows of the sandstone cliffs while the sun bakes their nests on the opposite cliff. A few vultures swoop over one's head to come check out the new visitors. Arrange beforehand with Ian and Elize to take you on a guided tour there.



WHERE'S THE TRAIN? Karnmelkspruit's tunnel to nowhere and the vulture colony are some of the interesting things you can experience at the Cloete's campsite when you stay there.



Joe and Anne Gordon from Pretoria drive a short wheelbase Land Rover with a rooftop tent.

They say

“ It’s our first time here. We’re on our way back home from the Wild Coast and needed a place to stay over for the night. It’s a very neat and comfortable campsite. Next time we might stay an extra day so we can go see the vultures. ”



Ian will then also tell you that the gorge used to be a big headache for the railway people who wanted to lay down tracks between Lady Grey and Barkly East.

Early in the 20th century there were plans to build a bridge from the one side to the other. On Barkly East’s side a train then had to go through a tunnel in the cliff. The track builders started with the tunnel while they waited for the steel for the bridge, but this never arrived. The consequence of this was a train tunnel that just ends in a sheer drop.

Another plan then had to be made to get the train to Barkly East, but the slope of the alternative route was too steep for the steam train’s iron wheels. Eventually

the solution was eight to-and-fro tracks that zigzagged up against the slope. The train would go forward up a slight slope, and then reverse up the slope, go forward up the slope again and then reverse until it reached the top. This to and fro apparently took an entire day and Lady Grey quickly became known for its “reverses”.

You can see the remains of this on Ian’s farm.



Briefly | Karnmelkspruit



Campsite About 25 unmarked stands on grass without electricity.

Ablution facilities Neat, clean bathrooms with gas geysers and a bath on the ladies’ side.

Price R200 p.n. per stand plus R10 p.p.

Arrival and departure times 2 pm and 10 am

Contact 084 584 7036 or 051 603 7036 wikivillage.co.za/karnmelkspruit-river-resort
elizekrr@gmail.com

Nearest town Lady Grey 24 km.

Road condition Tar road to the turn-off and then about 1 km of decent dirt road to the campsite.

GPS S30.805313 E27.267457

go! Drive & Camp says The history of the “reverses”, the train tunnel and the vultures are reason enough to stay here for more than one night.

ON OWN STEAM. There is no electricity at Karnmelkspruit’s campsite, but solar panels provide light in the bathrooms and the lapa. Gas geysers provide hot water.

Find serenity in the *Klein Karoo*

The Klein Karoo is a peaceful place where you can escape the noises of the city. Come on, let the sounds of silence feed your soul.

Text and photos Cyril Kloppe



The geographical regions of South Africa are difficult to define. Where does the Lowveld end and the Bushveld begin? Is Cape Town part of the West Coast or does that only start at Saldanha? You can debate the semantics for hours.

But unlike most other regions, the Klein Karoo's borders are clear. The northern border is the Swartberg mountains, south is the Langeberg and Outeniqua mountains, the eastern border is the R57 between Willowmore and Uniondale on

the foot of the Kouga Mountains, and on the western border is the Anysberg mountains. This is where you'll find one of Cape Nature's most peaceful conservation areas: the Anysberg Nature Reserve.

Veld focus

The reserve was established in 1988 and officially proclaimed in 1990. It covers approximately 800 km² and lies in a transition region between mountain fynbos and typical Klein Karoo veld. The region is classified as semi-arid, but to the

naked eye the veld looks lush green. It's a stunning part of our country, and after the rains the kapok-, sosatie-, klapperbos and yellow milk and cancer bushes boast beautiful brightly coloured flowers. Quartz crunches underfoot as you tread carefully between Natal plum and red hairy heath in narrow ravines. High in the mountains proteas stand proudly and ericas bloom pink-purple bouquets.

There are a few dirt roads that wind through the reserve, and you can explore the reserve with your car, but for most



trails you need a vehicle with good ground clearance. An ordinary sedan will limit you to the main road and then you'll have to make alternative plans to explore the rest of the reserve. On some trails, like the Tapfontein circular trail, you'll even have to engage four-wheel drive.

The broad valley between Anysberg in the south and Matjiesgoedberg in the north has quite a bit of wildlife. There is mountain zebra, steenbok, duiker, gemsbok, red hartebeest, and many smaller, shyer animals. Leopards lying on cliffs

peer down at potential prey on the valley floor below. At night the chances are good that bat-eared foxes will visit your camp and if you take a drive during early evening you'll see fiery-necked nightjars crouching in a hotly baked twin-track. If you're really lucky you might even see a caracal's eyes shine in the dark.

Bird watchers will be in their element because there's almost 200 species, amongst them bustards shuffling on the plains, fairy flycatchers in rivercourses, and Verreaux's eagles nesting in the

mountainsides. Reptiles are represented by tent and angulate tortoises, boomslang, Cape cobras, puff adders and dozens of ordinary-type lizards.

There are also archaeological signs of man's history in the Anysberg area. Ruins from the 18th century tell the story of Europeans who trekked here in the late 17th century, and in hollows you'll find rock art that testify to the region's original inhabitants, the /Xan San, and excavated potsherds show that the Khoekhoen arrived here roughly 2 000 years ago. >

In the camp

Unfortunately you can't book a stand on Cape Nature's website (chalets you can though); you have to phone them directly or send an email. There are five stands, all on a patch of grass underneath towering eucalyptus trees. The stands are not numbered and it's first come, first served. A maximum of six people per stand is allowed and the stands are partitioned off by a 1,8 m high wooden fence.

The first stand, the one closest to the ablution facilities, doesn't have its own shade tree (the tree was planted only recently and it's still shoulder height), but a large old widowmaker on the stand next door provides morning and early-afternoon shade. You do have your own tap though, and there's a bird bath where birds drink during the day and foxes at night. The second, third and fourth stands share taps, but they have ample shade all day. The fifth stand (the one farthest from the ablution facilities) is the biggest, has the most shade and is more removed from the other stands. You therefore have some privacy.

Each stand has its own baboon-proof garbage can, picnic table with benches, an umbrella, and knee-height brick braai. There is no electricity on the stands and you need to bring your own grid and light. You can buy wood for R30 per bag at the park office shop, but rather be safe than sorry and bring your own.

Clean up

The ablution block is a neat structure consisting of four rooms. The first door leads to the men's facilities with two toilets, two showers and two basins. The showers are big enough so you can stand on a dry floor when getting dressed. Next is a wheelchair-friendly bathroom with open-plan shower, toilet and basin. Then



“
You have your own tap
and there's a bird bath where
birds drink during the day
and foxes at night.
”

BAD MOON RISING. The trees provide ample shade so your tent should be cool after you return from a bike ride.



it's the ladies' facilities with the same layout as the men's.

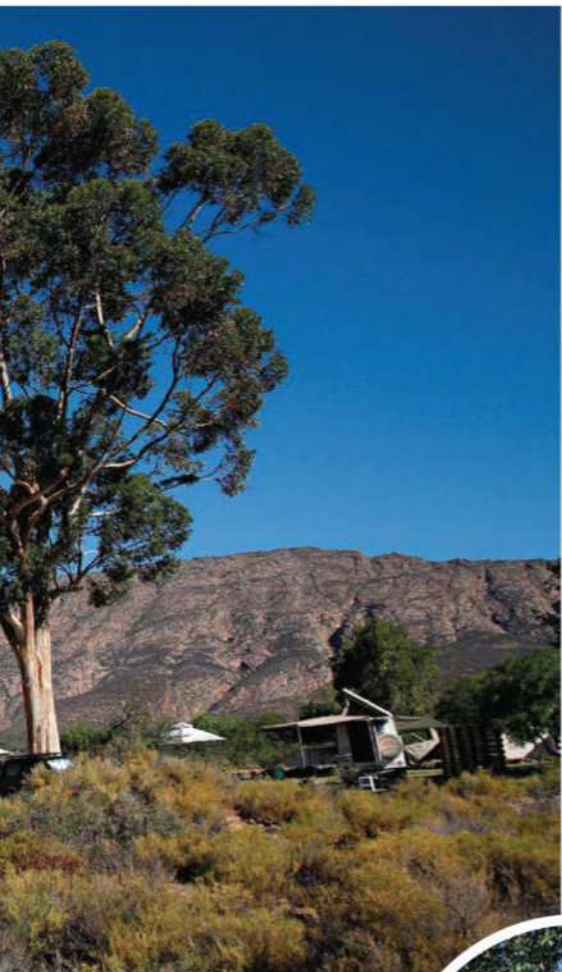
Lastly is a big kitchen with work surfaces, chairs, garbage cans, four sinks, two gas stoves and two fridges. You share the fridges with your neighbours if you didn't bring your own. (*Fridges, not neighbours.* – Ed) Next to the ablution block is a fenced-in courtyard with two basins and 3 m long washing line.

The building is in excellent condition. There is always hot water, the floors are swept often, the wastepaper baskets are cleaned daily, and toilet paper is provided. The lights work with batteries charged by solar panels during the day.

A few metres from the ablution block is a patch of trees with birds' nests. Regulars at Anysberg tell of frequent boomslang sightings, so best warn your kids not to climb the trees.

Drive, slide, swim and jog

Although Anysberg is known for its peaceful atmosphere, there's quite a bit to do here. When it's scorching hot – in



the summer temperatures reach 35 °C – you can cool off in the concrete farm dam opposite the reception office. There is a wooden deck with a canopy and sunbeds. Relax with something cold in your hand while you keep an eye on the kids. The dam's water comes from the Anysberg mountains, which is covered in fog in the morning. It even snows in the mountains round about July and August. Next to the dam is a jungle gym with a slide and a bright-green lawn that's irrigated by the mountain springs.

You can hire mountain bikes for R60 per day at the office. Helmets are provided and the ranger on duty will request that you wear one.

When the Anys River is in full flood the Rooidamme, about 1,5 km from the

campsite, will fill up and you can hire a kayak to go rowing. The Anys River is the main artery in the reserve and together with the Touws, Prins and Buffels rivers it forms part of the Gourits River's catchment area.

Anysberg doesn't have any hiking trails but you are more than welcome to go traversing through the veld. The ground is level and the vegetation not so thick that you'll struggle to walk. Just be on the lookout for snakes and scorpions and please take along enough water. Although there is no cellphone reception in the camp, you'll often find a signal on the nearby ridges and hills so you can let the reserve's office know if you need help (office hours are between 7.30 am and 4 pm).



GIDDY-UP. Other than cycling, exploring the reserve on horseback is unbeatable. If the kids don't like horses they can play on the jungle gym near the pool.



Henriette Marais and Helgard du Plessis from Kleinmond camp in a dome tent and tow a Karet with Helgard's 2004 Land Cruiser 79 4.2D.

They say

“ We don't like big resorts; rather give us a quiet nature reserve like Anysberg. I bought my Karet in 1984 at the former Vetsak, but we're considering an off-road trailer and are planning to soon be camping and touring permanently. > ”



What it costs

(2 adults and 1 child)

Fuel	50 ppm diesel @ 8.0 l/100 km and R10.88/l and 500 km (there and back)	R435.20
Toll gate	(there and back)	R71
Accommodation	(2 nights)	R510
Food		R1 562.87
Grand total		R2 579.07

If you're keen for something more than cycling or hiking, you can explore the reserve on horseback. Anysberg offers two kinds of guided rides: For R180 per person a guide will take you on a two-hour ride, but there is also a two-day trip that costs R875. You have to organise with Anysberg beforehand if you want to go horseback riding.

And then there's the Tapfontein circular trail that you can only tackle with a mountain bike or 4x4. The trail is 16 km long and takes about an hour by car if you don't stop for a picnic and to take photos.

It's a narrow road and there's little space to pull over for oncoming traffic.



SNAKE! Beware of the boomslang near the bathrooms. Leave it alone and it will leave you alone.



So first enquire at the office whether any other vehicles are on the trail and whether they're driving clockwise or anti-clockwise.

The halfway mark on this trail is Tapfontein, a collection of four log cabins, a boma, and an observatory in the fold of the Matjiesgoedberg mountain. Tapfontein is considered one of the darkest places on Earth. At night there is no light pollution; even the moon is obscured by the mountains. The





What we camped with Toyota Hilux 2.4 GD-6 4x4 with a Bush Lapa Bosluis 2

We visited the Anysberg Nature Reserve with Bush Lapa's modified Toyota Hilux. It's a single cab bakkie, and Bush Lapa's Bosluis 2 sleeps two.

The Bosluis 2 is not a family vehicle but perfect for a retired couple who wants to explore Africa or for a mom and her daughter on a girls' weekend.

Read what we think of the Bosluis 2 in a future issue.

Power 110 kW @ 3 400 rpm
Torque 400 Nm @ 1 600 rpm
Price R415 000 for the bakkie and R269 100 for the modification.

sheer volume of stars and planets will make you feel insignificant while meteors and satellites dart across the night sky.

Structured sleeping

If you prefer sleeping in a house rather than a tent, there are five self-catering cottages to choose from. The cottages are

close to the campsite and their prices range from R680 per night for the smallest (out of season) to R1 460 for the largest during holidays and long weekends. You can also stay in one of Tapfontein's log cabins at R250 per night per cabin, but you need an off-roader to get here.



Briefly | Anysberg Nature Reserve



Campsite 5 stands next to shade trees. No electricity.

Ablution facilities A clean building not even 70 m from the farthest stand.

Price Off-season R120 for 2 people and then R35 p.p. (maximum 6 per stand), and R260 per stand during long weekends and holidays. There's a conservation fee of R40 per day (R20 for kids).

Arrival and departure times 2 pm and 10 am

Bookings ☎ 021 659 3500 📧 bookings@capenature.co.za 🌐 capenature.co.za

Enquiries ☎ 023 551 1922

📧 anysberg@mweb.co.za

Road condition The shortest route from Cape Town is through Touws River and along a sandy dirt road (40 km) to the park's western entrance. From here it's a rocky twin-track (27 km) to the park office. This route takes about 3 hours from Cape Town and is not suitable for a sedan.

An easier route is southwards from Laingsburg to the main entrance. From here it's 17 km to the office and campsite. It's a corrugated road that you can do in a sedan if you drive slowly, but a standard road caravan will not fare that well.

Nearest town Laingsburg, 60 km.

GPS S33.46360 E20.58883

go! Drive & Camp says Bring a telescope for stargazing, binoculars for birdwatching, and glasses for reading. 📺

Show your mettle in the Roggeveld

Sutherland is known for stargazing and snow in the winter, and just outside of town there's a 4x4 trail where you can experience the Roggeveld mountains first-hand.

Text **Evan Naudé** Photos **Supplied**

Skurweberg is a working farm in the Roggeveld, about 45 km outside Sutherland. The farm is in a valley straddling the Fish River and is a stone's throw from the Ouberg Pass that winds from the edge of the plateau to the Tankwa Karoo. You can stay over in a self-catering cottage or camp next to the river and hike, bike, swim, stargaze, or simply experience farm life with Witjan and Elsa van der Merwe.

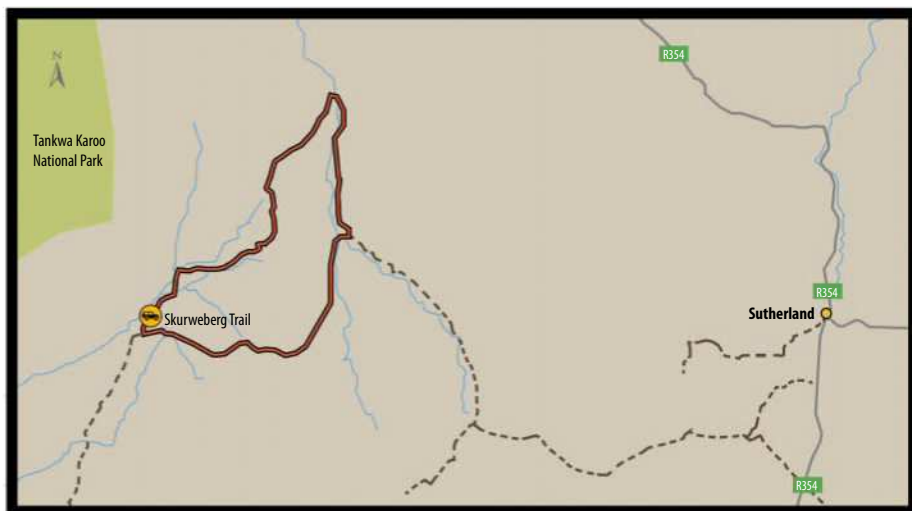
But Skurweberg is actually better known for its 4x4 trail all along the



ROUTE PROFILE
Elevation



LET'S ROCK. From hot summers to chilly winters, the landscape is ever-changing. The rocks are eternal though, and always offer up a challenge. It's a five-hour drive from Cape Town so you may as well stay over on the farm.



35 km 40 km 46,5 km

www.weg.co.za

edge of the plateau, with exceptional views over Tankwa and challenging rock obstacles. So, what do you say, are you keen to take on Granny's Bum, Broekskeur (which roughly translates as tough going) and Banggat (scaredy-cat)?

The drive

The trail starts and ends at the farmhouse. The road immediately ascends Kameelkop and it feels like you're on a seesaw as you drive over furrows that carve across the road. The first few kilometres are not that tough, but from Red Rock the road is littered with stones.

Past Red Rock there's a loop that leads to a rock vane with two round boulders, called Granny's Bum. You can test your bakkie's rock-climbing ability here as well as at two other rock vanes, the SS and Hot Rock. Be warned though – you need hair on your teeth for these.

A bit further on you can turn off to have a look at a Verreaux's eagle nest on a sharp rock that juts out like a crooked tooth. If you're lucky you might even spot one of the birds.

Shortly after you reach Ysterkop with a beautiful panoramic view over the Ceres Valley and the Tankwa far down below. You follow the road all along the edge to Karoopunt and before long you'll grit your teeth at Broekskeur, a short but steep rock step that will test you.

But the real test is at Banggat, an incline with loose rocks that leads you further down the Skuinsvoetpad. You can turn around at Banggat, but then you'll carry that name with you...

Skuinsvoetpad is a sheep trail from donkey years ago that the Van der Merwes



What you need to know



Maximum amount of vehicles allowed

A minimum of 6 and a maximum of 12 vehicles are allowed on the trail.

Do I get a map? Yes.

Will I scratch my vehicle? There are very few thorn trees so it's unlikely.

Should I take a compressor? If you have one bring it along, but there is one on the farm.

Can I braai next to the road? No, only in the campsite.

Can I turn around halfway? Yes.

Is there cellphone reception? There's a weak, sporadic MTN signal.

THE TRAIL

Best time to go? Summer because it snows in winter (May to September).

Can I take my family? Yes, of course.

For the day or for the weekend? If you live in Sutherland you can do a day visit but otherwise it's better to come for a weekend.

Are there ablution facilities? About 18 km in on the trail there's a toilet for emergencies at Winteroord.

Directions From Matjiesfontein you head towards Sutherland along the R354. Turn off 2 km before the town (look out for the Ouberg sign) and 43 km later you'll see the turn-off to Skurweberg.

GPS S32.289474, E20.374343

Price R250 per vehicle.

Contact ☎ 023 571 2728 ☎ 023 004 0012

✉ skurweberg@roggeveld.co.za

used to transport sheep in winter. Even though the road today is a twin-track, it's still fairly steep with a lot of loose gravel, so low range or hill descent control will come in handy.

The road runs past Winteroord, which is the Van der Merwes' winter home, and eventually connects with the Ouberg Pass. You then drive up the pass to get back to the farm.

Bliss in the Baviaanskloof

How do you get away from the bustle of city life? According to Marisca Coetzee from Paarl, you head to a part of the country that you've never visited.

“ We started the first part of our journey by trekking along the Garden Route out of Cape Town and continued toward the Baviaanskloof.

Where did you end up?

We camped at Bruintjieskraal. And I promise you that the peace and quiet is remarkable. You're surrounded by nothing but stunning scenery. There are rock walls, river pools, and even private space for your children's inflatables and fishing adventures. This is also ideal for resting your back against rocks to gaze at the stars.

Who else went along and how did you get there?

This was a family vacation with my husband, two kids and the added bonus of my mother-in-law coming along for the ride. She's a jewel of a human being and the kids' favourite playmate, the best camp vetkoek chef, and bedtime storyteller. We hit the road in our trusty Ford Ranger Odyssey double cab 4x4, armed with a roof rack packed with our tent and plenty of accessories.

Describe the campsite and stands.

There are different types of stands. Those numbered 1 to 5 are grouped together, while units 7 to 10 form a separate unit and 10-14, where we camped, are more spacious and widespread. The last cluster of stands have two braai spots, one on a lower terrace and another closer to each unit's private 'kitchen', which is basically a wooden structure that houses more than enough worktops and a sink. The stand itself was swept, with not a leaf out of place.

Were the ablution facilities up to scratch?

The stand we booked has its own, private ablutions. It's a neat and tidy building with a separate shower and toilet on either side with their own entrances.

The showers are big enough to clean two children comfortably and the hot water ran without issue.



A RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT. Bruintjieskraal is no mega-resort, but it's comfortable and neat. Stripped down to the basics, it gives you the opportunity to appreciate the simpler things in life.





How can you keep yourself occupied?

This is not the sort of place for people who want resort-like facilities. Our kids enjoyed themselves with a little plastic boat in the river and used their rods in the catchment area to fish. Oh, and don't forget your binoculars if you're fond of watching birdlife because you'll definitely be able to tick a few off your list. Also, keep your eyes peeled for game like kudu, duiker and steenbok.

Are you able to stock up close by?

You can fill up in Patensie, which is 32 km away. There you'll also have a choice of shops from which to buy supplies. Just be mindful of the time of year, because when we visited over the festive season it was difficult to find everything we needed. You can buy wood at the campsite, though.

Is there any other accommodation available?

Bruintjieskraal is for hardcore campers, but the nearby Glencoe chalets (2,5 km away) are booked through the same website. There are three fully equipped



units that can accommodate two, eight and 10 people respectively.

Any tips for someone who wants to go there?

At just R70 per adult per night and R35 for children under the age of 9, Bruintjieskraal is affordable and worth the effort of getting there if you value nature and not camping on your neighbour's doorstep. You will need to bring your own drinking water along as well.



Contact 084 515 0993

bruintjieskraal.co.za

GPS S33.705000 E24.609793

WIN

Marisca wins a Camp Cover
Bundu Bag worth R500.

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

campcover.co.za



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WESTERN CAPE: PAROW 021 930 4613 PAARL 021 871 1317 SWAZILAND: 00268 2518 7867

www.landwindsa.co.za



LANDWIND

Welcome to paradise

At Klein Paradys you camp right on the water. And if you head to the beach you can use a drone to get to the fish.



FISHING RESORT

KLEIN PARADYS

Camping and fishing are equally fun!

Klein Paradys outside Brits is a popular resort and it's a stone's throw from Johannesburg and Pretoria. The resort's campsite is laid out on both sides of a waterbody and the stands are underneath large shade trees on the shore – and are covered in lush lawns. The dams are created by the runoff from the vegetable fields and flow through the camp. There are quite a few weirs that cause the water to well up between the two camps' stands.

The standard stands are on the side where you enter the resort, with the fancy neighbourhood on the other side of the water. Here every stand has its own bathroom.

The standard stands' big ablution block is in the middle of the campsite. You might not have your own mirror and basin, but the bathroom has

marble surfaces inside with decent basins and big shower cubicles. Outside, next to the men's facilities, are two sinks for dishes, also with a marble slab. Right at the bottom, farthest from the gate, is another smaller bathroom on the edge of the stands.

A nice extra next to the big bathroom is a small building that houses two family bathrooms which is also suitable for wheelchair-bound people. Each one has a shower, bath, toilet and basin.

Besides all the swimming pools, the supertube and putt-putt course, Klein Paradys is also synonymous with fishing. So if you feel like catching some black bass – or maybe a carp – you'll get a chance here. Just remember to release the fish back in the water – after you've taken a photo, of course.



Briefly | Klein Paradys Caravan Park



Contact 012 252 1938

bookings@kleinparadys.com

kleinparadys.com

Road condition The last 500 m is a slightly eroded dirt road, but a road caravan won't struggle.

GPS S25.508998 E27.734931

go! Drive & Camp says

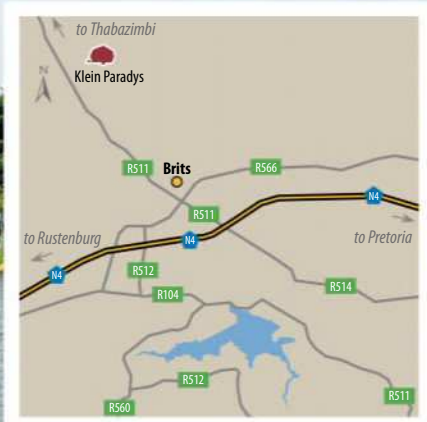
Klein Paradys is only open over weekends and during holiday and closed from 21 May till 8 August. You have to book early to ensure you get a stand.

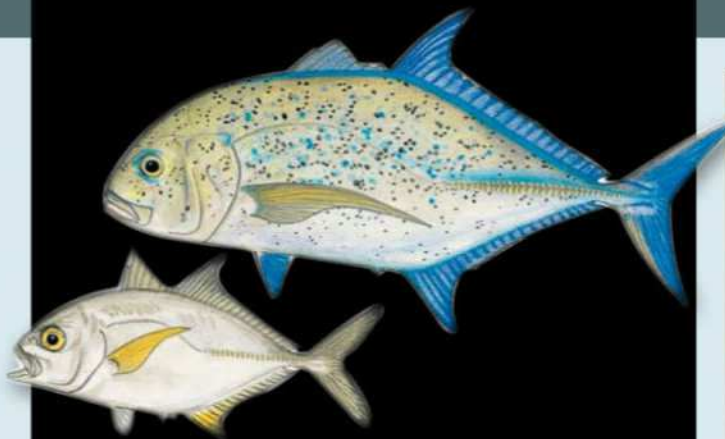
Fish Bream, carp, catfish, black bass.

Campsite 80 standard stands with loads of shade and grass, and 20 private stands, each with its own bathroom.

Ablution facilities Private and communal facilities – neat and clean

Price R460–R810 p.n. per stand (4 people) depending on which weekend and which stand.





FISH SPECIES

Bluefin kingfish *Caranx melampygus*

You'll find the bluefin kingfish throughout the Indian and Pacific Oceans, from South Africa to Hawaii and Japan to the western coastlines of South America. It has a iridescent blue colouration pattern on its dorsal region which varies from turquoise to greenish blue.

Adults have several blue or black spots concentrated most densely above their lateral lines and have a streamlined body shape and a sloping forehead.

Size and biology They mature at 35 cm (about two years old) and on average reach up to 60 cm total length. Juveniles are known to school, becoming solitary and more territorial as they reach sexual maturity. Bluefin Kingfish aggregate in groups of various sizes during the summer months to spawn.

Habitat They prefer tropical and subtropical marine waters, but juveniles are often found in estuaries that are borderline freshwater. Their marine habitat consists of near-shore and offshore coral and rocky reefs, isolated atolls, and coral-line and granitic islands. Their depth range is 1–190 m. They eat a mixture of fish, cephalopods, crustaceans, and other benthic invertebrates.

Where to find them They are strong predators and are popular amongst fishermen, especially in KwaZulu-Natal and the Wild Coast.

That's a record 7,7 kg (South Africa); 13,24 kg (Clipperton Islands).

SASSI status None, but where ever possible release the fish once you've caught it.

Text Jessica Glass

Sketch Elaine Heemstra

© South African Institute of Aquatic Biodiversity (SAIAB)



FISHING GEAR

Catch a fish from the air

Deep-sea fishing isn't something you can do from the beach, because even if you're as strong as Popeye you will never be able to cast your hook and sinker far enough. That's why boats or kayaks are often used to get to the fish in deeper waters.

Jacques Venter from Ballito found an easier way for you to cast your bait up to 500 m from the shore. Jacques uses a drone that he connects to his Gannet device. The drone carries your bait over the water to where you want to fish. When it's in the right spot, you press a button on the drone's remote control and the bait is released. Now you can catch tuna, snoek, yellowtail and barracuda from the shore.

As you send the drone over the water you can also check on the screen to monitor any activity and then release your bait right there amongst the hungry school and hold thumbs you get a cheeky one.

The Gannet fits onto most of the larger drones and can carry bait with a hook and sinker weighing from 450 g to 2,5 kg. The device itself weighs less than 50 g. It recharges via a USB port and you can use it approximately 50 times before having to plug it in.

Price R2 000–R4 000 (for the Gannet device, without the drone)

Contact admin@dronefishing.com

dronefishing.com

LYON VENTER (16) with a mackerel which he caught using a drone.





Batmobile of the bush

It's not every day you get to lay your hands on a vehicle designed for use by military forces, but as soon as Fred Weitsz from Johannesburg bought this 1974 Land Rover Forward Control, he set to work to make it the ultimate camper.

It can certainly be crushing when you've planned your trip down to the last detail and you're looking forward to leaving only to discover that a small oversight has the potential to shake up the entire experience.

That's what happened to Fred Weitsz when he discovered that the booking he'd made for a camper truck to attend the AfrikaBurn festival in 2017 was for the wrong dates.

Fortunately, Fred realised his mistake four months ahead of time, but after phoning all around the country and being unable to secure a suitable vehicle for the end of April, he decided to simply buy one and not miss any of the festivities in the Tankwa Karoo.



Just what I was looking for

I really dislike sleeping in a tent, and figured that if I bought my own truck and built my own camper, I could also use it afterward as my children Ben (14) and Ava (12) are very keen on the outdoors. They are particularly fond of game reserves.

I decided to try to locate an old military truck as they are usually indestructible. I scoured the internet and managed to find a 1974 Land Rover Forward Control in KwaZulu-Natal and bought it immediately. The kids thought the old Landie was cool and that was already a big plus. But they couldn't have dreamed of what I had in store for it over the coming months. The previous owners

had already tried making it a little more comfortable for use as a camper, but I had a full rebuild in mind.

The first thing I did was to strip the vehicle down completely. Right to the chassis. From there I took measurements of the spaces and used computer software to do a three-dimensional drawing of the frame so that I could plan the use of space more efficiently. Next I sat the kids down to discuss what each of us wanted in the truck.

We wanted the final product to feel like a small home so that wherever we stopped we would be able to relax within 10 minutes. This is the list of “must-haves” we came up with:

1. A fully “off-the-grid” power and water system
2. A full queen-size bed for me and a rooftop tent for the children
3. Fully equipped kitchen
4. Fully equipped bathroom
5. A winch, because Ben used one in a video game and thought it was cool.

Once we had established our goals, it was time to come up with a layout that could accommodate everything. I realised the door would have to be moved to the middle of the Forward Control’s profile to make everything fit. It was quite crucial early on to draw the equipment to scale on the 3D model because even a few millimetres out here and there could have a snowball effect and end up with us not being able to fit our chosen freezer or something.

Clever solutions

To be honest, some of the nice-to-haves got a little out of hand and I ended up adding things more for the challenge than for necessity. I became slightly obsessed with not wasting any space, no matter how small.

For example, the lounge in the back was designed to become the bed by lowering the table top. I figured that we’d either be sitting or lying down in this part of the truck, so the space under the seating area was going to waste. A four ammo box slider built in under that space was the solution.

Other spaces where I had to get creative included the door post, which was hollow. So we built an outside shower into it. As crazy as it sounds, we decided that we also wanted a dishwasher in the camper because I >



DOWN TO THE DETAILS. Right after he bought it, Fred decided that the Forward Control would undergo a full rebuild. This included designing a 3D model on a computer to get the measurements down to exact specifications. The build included extensive use of aluminium.



personally find that chore too traumatic to bear. We found a small unit that only uses 10 litres per wash, which is probably less than you would use washing by hand anyway.

Every space that was not used for an appliance was saved for storage – like the latches I designed for the rear that take ammo boxes.

Down to the bone

With the 3D model complete, we commenced with the tweaks to the body and cabin. I will never forget the look on the kids' faces when they saw that I had cut off the truck's entire roof. Because the design work included extensive use of aluminium, my logic was that the final product wouldn't be too top-heavy when I raised the roof by 300 mm.

Even the aluminium cupboard frames were welded onto the structure so that everything would be rigid and that nothing could shake loose.

The next step was to insulate the truck. I used expanded polystyrene (EPS), Sisalation, and 5 mm wooden strips to block any thermal bridges. Despite the fact that the truck's exterior finish is dark grey, it is extremely well insulated and the air-conditioning system can comfortably maintain a cool cabin temperature.

As my self-imposed deadline loomed, my friend Charl Burger initially helped to spray paint the truck but then ended up assisting with other items too. I also included my children in some of the work. My daughter suggested that we find the right foam for the couches and beds, so we went and picked out suitable sponge and material. Once again, I designed each cushion to fit even before the actual carcass was built.

Although I have some technical knowledge and found the overall design and building process relatively easy, I had to call in help from another buddy, Charl Maritz, for the mechanical upgrades and to service the engine.

We fitted it with new disc brakes all-round and added an upgraded brake booster, new prop shaft, and a pneumatic rear suspension. Andre Mouton, who runs Leimer's spare parts shop for Land Rover vehicles, was extremely helpful with these.

INSIDE JOB. With much of the exterior work completed, like the panels and paint, Fred turned his attention to the cabin. There's plenty of nooks and crannies that Fred designed for extra storage options, and those not set aside for packing items are taken up by appliances. There's quite a sophisticated power system to supply energy to the appliances.



The finishing touches

We managed to get quite a few comforts in the cabin, including a 9000 BTU inverter air conditioner, dishwasher, ice machine, microwave, refrigerator and stove. We also have an outside kitchen that consists of a two-plate stove with a tap. A gas canister powers the two stoves.

The bathroom with toilet, shower and basin, hot-water geyser and outside shower is supplied by a 180 l baffled water tank.

On the outside there's also a 2.7 m Ostrich Wing awning, a 12 000 pound T-Max winch, upgraded headlamps, and four LED spotlights.

One of the hardest parts to figure out was the design of the power system. The internet is flooded with all sorts of marketing fluff on solar panels, inverters and batteries and the like, so it was difficult to filter through all of that to get down to the facts so I could design a system that would work and supply electricity to the cabin. In the end we

settled on two 285 Watt solar panels, six 102 Ah batteries, a pulse battery charger, charge controller and 3 000 W/24 V Sine Wave inverter. We could just plug the Landie in at a campsite where electricity is available, but we can also go solo for a while.

I worked through many nights to finish the project in time, and the first time the Forward Control left my workshop was the day before we left for AfrikaBurn so that the exhaust system could be fitted and the roadworthy test performed.

The trip to the Tankwa went surprisingly well given that we were not able to test the vehicle before we left. But because we neglected to clean the new fuel tank

before we installed it, I had to change the fuel filter about 10 times during the journey. Otherwise the truck performed without issues and we have since gone on several camping trips to game reserves – much to the delight of my children.

It has a 4.1 l straight-six Chevrolet engine fitted right now that is fed from a 180 l baffled fuel tank, but a Lexus V8 conversion with automatic transmission is on the cards because it could do with more power and I feel that it would be better not to shift gears manually when driving in loose sand. ”



Fred wins a Camp Cover Bundu-bag worth R500. The multifunction bag has been designed so that you can use it as a first-aid kit or simply as a suitcase. Have a look at Camp Cover's range of excellent protective covers on their website. campcover.co.za



WIN



MISSION ACCOMPLISHED. From humble beginnings when Fred first laid his hands on the Forward Control to the very luxurious finished product, this is an extremely impressive build. Especially when you consider that this was all put together in just under four months.





Fly with the swallows

The Swaeltjies is a large group of camping friends who visit the warmer parts of our country during the winter months.

“The Swaeltjies came about in 1998 at the ATKV Eiland Spa when a bunch of campers decided it would be nice to stay in contact with each other. “We realised all of us, the majority pensioners, were just like swallows that fly from the cold,” says the chairman, Paul Jansen.

He emphasises that they are not a registered club but rather a group of friends. They do have an official emblem though, and when you join you get one as well as a number. Your name, phone number, address and birth date are also put on their list, which is circulated amongst the members together with their newsletter, which also contains

info about all the activities that are in the pipeline.

These activities are planned together with the resort management and include social gatherings like bring-and-braais and soup or curry-and-rice evenings. They also often play jukskei, bowls and horseshoes.

When the temperatures drop, the Swaeltjies hitch their caravans and pitch camp at places like Eiland Spa, Thsipise, or other resorts on the KwaZulu-Natal north and south coast. “We stay up to six months before we head off to campsites in the mountains or on the coast. Hartenbos is always very popular amongst our members.”

Here they eat, hang out and sleep. Sometimes it gets so rowdy you have to go home to get some rest, jokes Paul.

At the beginning of winter this year there were more than 250 Swaeltjies at Eiland Spa and just over 200 at Tshipise.

“If you want to become a Swaeltjie you either have to be retired or be planning on retiring soon. You also don’t have to camp for months on end.

“Once you have the Swaeltjies member list you can travel through the country with more peace of mind because you know there are over 400 friends across the country ready to lend a hand if you’re in trouble, if you need info, or if you just need want some company.”



It costs R25 per year to be a member of the Swaeltjies and you pay a once-off fee of R75 for your emblem and number. If you're interested in joining this circle of friends, phone Paul on 083 632 0696 or send an email to pauljj08@mtloaded.co.za.



BRAINS *AND* BRAWN

The new Land Rover Discovery is a serious towing vehicle with loads of innovations to spoil caravanners even more.

Text and photos **Leon Botha**





If you look at how the new Land Rover Discovery is equipped for caravanners, you'd be forgiven for saying that it has no equal in this market segment.

The rear suspension's height can be adjusted, which means the ball height also lifts or lowers along with the suspension. It makes it so much easier to hitch caravans with different ball heights without having to use a drop plate. The hitch also has a built-in electronic scale to see what the coupler on the ball weighs.

The Discovery also checks the caravan's lights to see that all the bulbs are working as they should. And if that wasn't enough, the Discovery also helps you reverse the caravan around a corner... without you touching the steering wheel. It's simply astounding.

And then there's the Discovery's wading depth of 90 cm. It's one of the deepest on the market, and when you need it at a water crossing you should rather unhitch your caravan otherwise it might just float in tow behind you.

Button up

The Land Rover brand name has been with us since the Second World War, and the Defender models were actually built out of the scrap aluminium of the planes used in the war.

Today, more than 70 years later, aluminium still plays a significant role in the new Discovery. The new model weighs half a ton lighter than its predecessor because the bodywork now mainly (85%) consists out of aluminium. This is where the past meets the present because of this 85%, half (43%) comes from recycled aluminium.

You're not surprised to see that the cabin looks like that of a Boeing. Everything works with the push of a button and it feels like all you have to do is turn the steering wheel in the right direction – the Discovery will do the rest. The steering wheel has a small lever on the right of the steering column that you use to move the wheel up, down, farther away or closer to you.

The Discovery doesn't have a gear lever. After you press the button to switch on the engine, a dial rises out of the centre console between the two front seats. You rotate this dial to alternate between the various driving modes.

The second- and third-row seats also fold flat with the push of a button and when you're driving with passengers the computer knows if any one of the seven people on the seats is not buckled up. The dashboard will also show you if someone decides to unbuckle while the car is in motion.

To emphasise the amount of luxuries in this car, the electric handbrake automatically kicks in when you put the car in Park. Usually you can't switch off an automatic vehicle and take the key out without some alarm sounding because it is not in Park. You can switch the Discovery off in Reverse, Drive and Sport and the transmission will automatically switch over to Park. If you switch off in Neutral it won't move and the handbrake will also engage.

Without a hitch

You can choose between three engines: a 3 ℓ petrol (450 Nm) or diesel (600 Nm) or the 2 ℓ petrol (400 Nm), each with different trims for the S, SE, HSE and the HSE Luxury models.

The removable tow bar is standard on all models, and like with the test vehicle you have an option for an electrically deployable hitch. This hitch doesn't fit on the three S models though, and it's an additional R17 000 out of your pocket on the high-spec models.

Land Rover fixed the Discovery's towing capacity on 3,5 ton and the nose weight for the standard tow bar isn't allowed to exceed 195 kg. The electric hitch's limit is higher at 350 kg. Just remember, the authorities will only allow a nose weight of 100 kg on a public road.

The button to deploy the hitch is to the left in the boot. When you press the button an alarm sounds in the cabin. After 14 seconds you're ready to tow. (It takes 16 seconds to retract and the alarm sounds again.) >

With the hitch folded out, the ball is 43 cm off the ground – that's with the suspension at its lowest and the car switched off. Next to the hitch button is the button to lift the rear suspension should your caravan's coupler be higher. The ball lifts a whole 56 cm off the road and is 13 cm higher than the lowest setting.

When you connect the light socket, the Discovery must be switched off so the computer can register the caravan when you switch on. The trailer sway control also then activates automatically.

It's also not necessary for someone to stand behind the caravan to see if all the lights are working. Another button in the boot switches each caravan light on and off individually in a three-minute cycle. You can therefore stand behind the caravan yourself to look for burnt-out globes.

Screen time

The rear-view camera screen is 23 cm wide. The lens in the boot sits 73 cm above the tow bar but also 16 cm to the right. You therefore expect the hitch on the screen to not be in the middle. Even though the screen is 23 cm wide, the image of the back only takes up 16 cm of the screen.

The ball is basically in the middle of the screen and only 5 mm to the left. Land Rover rectified the parallax error on the screen with smart technology and reversing with the help of the screen is super simple.

It's not every day that a car can tell you what the weight on the tow bar is. It's one of the displays on the computer and with the Echo Kavango hitched it showed a weight of "120–150 kg". (That's the dry weight of the Kavango before loading to get the weight under 100 kg.)

The Discovery's computer can also help you reverse. When you hitch a specific caravan for the first time you can enter its specs (like the width as well as the distance between the coupler and axle) into the computer. You also get a special sticker with the car that you stick onto the front of your caravan. The sticker is about as big as two flat hands next to each and has three black dots on it – two at the bottom and one at the top; each as big as a fist. This sticker must be between 1 and 2 m from the Discovery (1,12 m in our case).

The computer sees the sticker through the rear-view camera and lets you know it's ready to assist with the reversing. Close to the transmission switch is another button where you can set the road conditions, >



MISSION CONTROL.

The button to deploy and retract the hitch is located in the boot, as are the controls for the light checker, second- and third-row seats, rear suspension height and the drop tailgate.



The previous generation Discovery was the best vehicle he's ever towed with, says **Pieter Crous**. How did the new one fare?

Pieter says

“From the outside the new Discovery looks smaller than the previous model, but once you get inside it's a different story. It's incredibly spacious.

The computer picks up the caravan because when you use



the indicators you'll see not only a green arrow on the dashboard but also a trailer icon.

I enjoy the drone of the V6 engine, but you also know it means litres and litres of fuel moving through the engine. But at this price fuel consumption is less important. A vehicle with these kinds of specs can only be a proper towing vehicle. It has more than enough power and is stable and heavy. The ride, however, is a bit bumpier than I experienced with the previous model.

It takes only 9 seconds to accelerate from 80 km/h to 120 km/h, and after the engine gears down initially it pushes the revs up into the red (6 500 rpm) without changing over. At 120 km/h you still don't feel the caravan. I was able to push it to 150 km/h in the blink of an eye – amazing. (Pieter! – Ed)

The smart reverse system impressed me, but I still manage better myself. I think it would work better if you also had a rear-view camera on the caravan.

Even though it's a big vehicle it has a very small turning circle. If a road has a shoulder on both sides, you can turn in one go with the caravan without driving off the shoulders.

Visibility through the rear-view mirror is limited. The rear window is small and the back headrests are in the way. But luckily that's less of a concern when you're towing because the caravan obstructs your view anyway.

This is the kind of towing vehicle where you switch on cruise control and sit back and relax while you keep the vehicle in the right direction. I am not keen to hand back the keys...



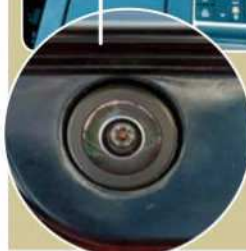
GO DOTTY. Apply the dotted decal to the front of your caravan and the Discovery will recognise it for what it is. By tracking the three dots the Discovery will be able to assist you with both hitching your caravan and parking it.



OLD AND NEW. The instrument cluster is a mix of old-school analogue clocks and modern digital displays.



LARGELY HIDDEN. The infotainment screen could hardly be larger. Rather than a simple gear lever, the gear selector dial rises out of a recess in the centre console.



TOW TEST

like sand, snow or rock. The knob pulls out a bit further and you're then able to control the direction in which you're reversing. Index lines appear like a lane on the screen to help you aim. The lines are at the image of the sticker on your screen. Green lines mean you're reversing straight, the lines curve to the left or right as you turn, and turn red when the caravan will jackknife.

Release the brake pedal and the Discovery will reverse while it idles – as quick as a brisk walk. As you turn the knob, the lines on the screen show in which direction you're reversing while the steering wheel turns by itself. You can't only rely on the screen though, because you can't see behind the caravan, but it helps if you use the rear-view mirrors together with the computer.



What we towed

Make Echo 4x4

Model Kavango Tec

Year model 2017

GVM 1 500 kg

Loaded weight on the axle during testing 1 120 kg (weight hitched to the Discovery)

Nose weight 150 kg (not loaded)

go! Drive & Camp borrowed the Echo Kavango Tec from Tygerberg Caravans & Camp-world. Phone Wesley Dempster on 021 982 4670 for a closer look at the Kavango.

tygerbergcaravans.co.za

The test

Distance 105 km

Top speed 144 km/h (GPS)

Average speed 61,4 (highways, back roads, built-up areas as well as dirt road)

Driving time 1 hour 44 minutes.

Weather 15 °C, sunny and 21 km/h south-southeasterly wind.

Before you open your wallet

What does the book say?

Fuel Petrol

Engine 2,995 ℓ

Cylinders V6

Power 250 kW @ 6 500 rpm

Torque 450 Nm @ 3 500 rpm

Transmission 8-speed (automatic)

Drivetrain Permanent four-wheel with standard central diff lock and optional rear diff lock.

Tare 2 155 kg

GVM 3 170 kg

GCM 6 670 kg

Fording depth 900 mm (not faster than 7 km/h)

Towing ability for trailer with overrun brakes Up to 3 500 kg

Dimensions 4 974 mm (l); 2 002 mm (w); 1 846 mm (h)

Wheelbase 2 923 mm

Track width 1 703 mm (front); 1 698 mm (rear)

Ground clearance 208–283 mm (adjustable air suspension)

Fuel tank 89 ℓ

Price (new) From R1 388 700

Price (second-hand) We saw an HSE 2017 Si6 model with 22 000 km on the clock on autotrader.co.za for R1 199 000.

Fast Facts

The tow bar A removable tow bar comes standard, but as in the case of the test vehicle it has a Brink electric deployable hitch. The tow bar is certified for a nose weight of up to 350 kg and has a D-value of 16,32 kN – that amounts to 1 664,18 kg and refers to a specific load test for the tow bar.

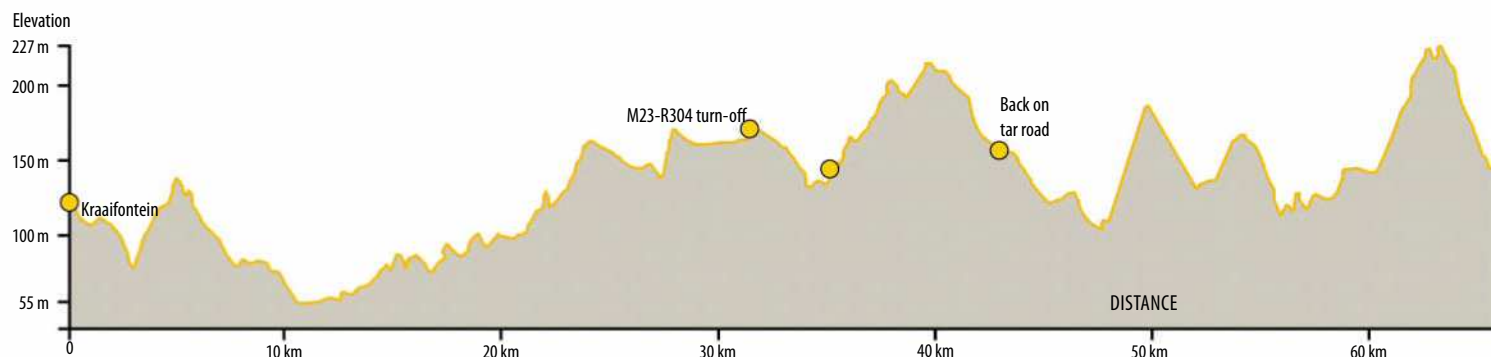
Suspension SLA suspension with double-wishbone air suspension with passive dampers in front, and integral rear link air suspension with dampers at the back, both on subframes. With the rear suspension lifted to the max, it dropped 3 cm under the 150 kg nose weight of the Kavango. The ride is bumpier on a corrugated dirt road than you'd expect.

What does the scale say? 2 720 kg with a full tank of fuel, the driver in the car as well as the Kavango's nose on the tow bar.

Interior The boot is massive and also has a handy fold-out cover when you



TOW PROFILE



open it. As the hatch lifts, a 30 cm wide cover folds flat to the outside. It's handy for extra support when you're loading things in or out and it also acts as a barrier when it's in the up position so things don't fall out when you open the hatch. The cover also has its own button so it can lift or lower automatically.

Speed The speedometer is out by 5 km/h compared to the speed on the GPS – when the GPS reads 95 km/h, the speedometer says 100 km/h.

Fuel consumption According to the car's computer, the consumption was 17,7 ℓ/100 km (5,6 km/ℓ), but 25 ℓ/100 km according to our calculations. That's equivalent to 4 km/ℓ. It's on the thirsty side but at 7 000 km the engine isn't fully run-in yet.

Finishes Dark, solid, stylish and durable. And there's a button for everything.

Extras There are more than 80 options for the Luxury model and you don't

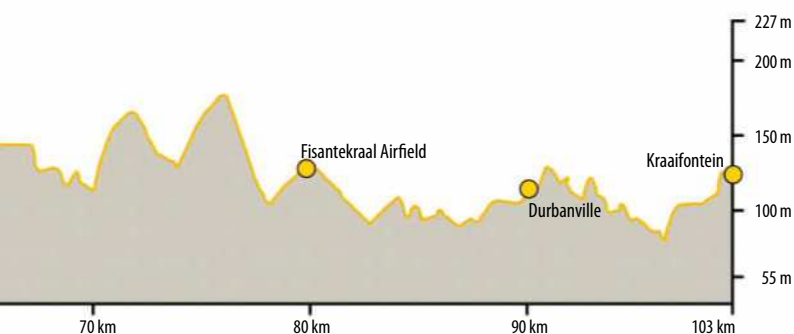
pay extra if you choose a black or white car. The other 10 colours cost R5 500 or R38 500, depending on the specific colour. Other extras include a heated steering wheel R3 600, tyre-pressure monitors R7 700, electronic differential R16 800, and seven seats R22 500.

The Discovery range

• 2.0 S	R976 200
• 3.0 TDV6 S	R1 016 400
• 3.0 V6 Si S	R1 056 100
• 2.0 SE	R1 121 100
• 3.0 TDV6 SE	R1 155 900
• 3.0 V6 Si SE	R1 173 900
• 2.0 HSE	R1 243 700
• 3.0 TDV6 HSE	R1 277 000
• 3.0 V6 Si HSE	R1 295 000
• 2.0 HSE Lux	R1 337 400
• 3.0 TDV6 HSE Lux	R1 370 600
• 3.0 V6 Si HSE Lux	R1 388 700

go! Drive & Camp says

For a smoother pull-away with a caravan that exceeds 2 t, select low range. As soon as you start moving you can switch to high range.



www.weg.co.za

From competitors with petrol engines



-30%

Toyota Prado 4.0 VX-L
R977 800

381 Nm

-15%



-5%

Nissan Patrol 5.6 V8 LE
R1 310 900

560 Nm

25%



15%

Mercedes-Benz GLS 500
R1 597 869

700 Nm

56%



Campy master

MAXMO CAMPY

The Maxmo Campy is just like that red Swiss Army knife that your dad always has in his pocket. It can do a little bit of everything.

Text and photos **Schalk Jonker**

Let's get the obvious out of the way: The Maxmo Campo is *not* the first image that pops up when you think of a motorhome. It's not the kind of home on wheels that a retired couple uses to camp for months on end on the KwaZulu-Natal south coast.

What it is, though, is a cutting-edge solution for active adventure-seekers

who need a vehicle with which to enjoy the outdoor and camping life and that can also be used to transport the kids around town. This kind of leisure vehicle is what's referred to as a hybrid.

Leon Ras, owner of Maxmo, says he is very excited about Campy, the smallest of the range of motorhomes that he manufactures. "We've created something new for the local market," explains

Leon. "The construction is done almost exclusively with imported materials (From the German manufacturer Reimo. – Ed) and is top quality. And of course the cross between a leisure vehicle and an everyday car is not something that's been seen on local soil before. I think we have a winning recipe."

We took Campy to the Vaal River for a few days.

Start at the beginning

With its 2 l turbodiesel engine producing 103 kW of power and 340 Nm of torque, the Volkswagen Caddy is definitely not a sluggish vehicle. And it especially comes into its own when you put the six-speed DSG transmission in sport mode.

The engine is quite economical in terms of fuel consumption, but there is still ample horsepower for when you want to hitch a trailer, jet ski or quad bike for a weekend away. The tow bar is available as an additional extra.

Inside the cabin it looks exactly like you'd expect from a luxury German vehicle. You

might not sit on leather seats, but things like a multi-function steering wheel, climate control, and the radio/GPS combination in the centre console are definitely nice to have.

You can kit out your Campy with extra accessories like a rear-view camera, alloy wheels, metallic paint, and Maxmo X-suspension for when you leave the tar road.

The test model had seating (with seatbelts) for two, but you can order yours with seating for four. The motorhome is laid out a bit differently at the back but can still sleep two adults and up to two kids.



Raise the roof

From the front the Maxmo Campy looks like your stock-standard vehicle, but it's at the back where things get interesting.

It has sliding doors on both sides, but what draws your eye is the large, white pop-up roof that basically stretches over

the entire length of the car. The roof is kept in place inside by straps at the front and back and when you release them the roof shoots up. With the roof raised it's surprisingly spacious inside and you have to be taller than 2,05 m before your head touches the top.

Time to sleep

If you opt for the two-seater you have various choices in terms of sleeping space. The bottom bed can be folded out to create either a bed slightly smaller than a standard single (2 m x 70 cm) or a bigger "double bed" (2 m x 113 cm).

The base of the bed is hinged on the left inside and it folds flat against the wall when you fold it out. The legs are two aluminium tubular frames that fold out. Between these frames is another plank that also folds out and then props up against the opposite cupboard to make the bed bigger.

With the single bed option there's a small passageway

where you can stand and get dressed, but if the double bed is out it takes up the entire cabin from wall to cupboard.

The bed's head is behind the front seats. The second row of seats have been replaced with a two-seater bench. That also serves as the top of the bed. The bench's cushion can lift and you can store big stuff underneath.

You also get a complete set of thermal window covers to protect your privacy. It's reflective on the outside, which means the inside of the vehicle is nice and cool when it's nap-time. >





The top storey

If you're more than two you'll need the Campy's top bed for the kids. This bed folds up flush with the roof, bedding and all, with gas struts when you don't need it during the day and you simply lower it when it's time to turn in.

The bed measures 1,95 m x 930 mm and two small kids or one teenager can sleep comfortably on it. There are mesh windows on both sides for fresh air, but the canvas panels can zip up when it rains. The top bed isn't standard and costs R12 800.



Kitchen basics

There's even a kitchen in this small motorhome, complete with sink, water tank and gas stove for breakfast and water for coffee.

Sure, you won't be catering for your sister's wedding from this kitchen, but if you and your other half want to sit around the table playing cards on a cold, wet day in the Kruger, you'll easily be able to rustle up lunch.

The basin, with tap, and small work surface is on the right inside and the designers performed miracles with this smart layout. Underneath the basin is a large drawer for your cutlery and crockery and next to this is an equally big drawer with two "levels". On the top level, on a surface that slides out, is a one-burner gas stove, and underneath that is a deeper

drawer with more storage space.

The fresh- and greywater tanks (13 l each) are hidden in the bottom cupboards.

To the right of the basin are two more cupboards, top and bottom respectively, with a drawer in the middle. The standard 18 l 12 V fridge is in this drawer, but if you have the two-seater and you go for the bigger 35 l fridge, this will stand behind the driver seat and you therefore have extra storage space at the back.

During the day, when the bed is folded up, you can create a nice place to relax around the fold-out table. The surface and leg are stored behind the driver's seat, the bench's backrest folds up, and there is even space for a third guest on the bench on the other side of the table.

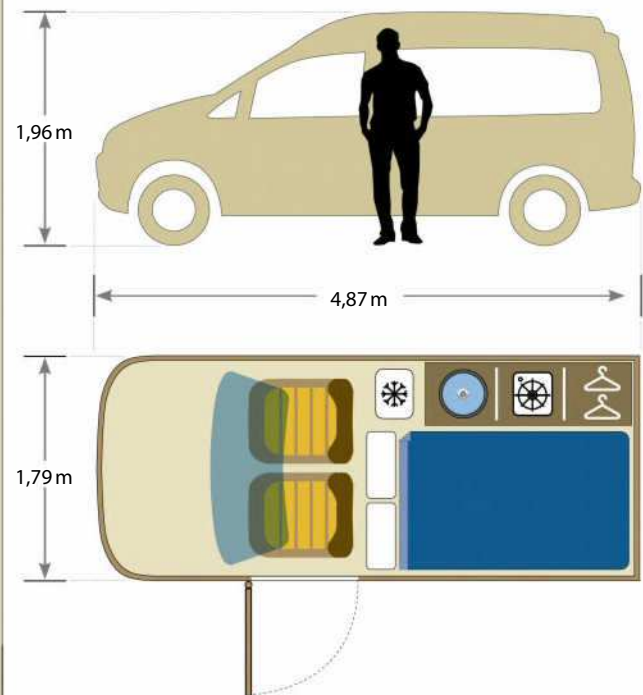




Pack it up

With the bed folded up you almost have a whole panel van's storage space in the Campy. If you don't have a trailer you will probably have to pack your clothes in suitcases

and store it here with other big things like the gazebo and camping chairs. But that's not a problem because when the bed is folded out there's enough storage space underneath it.



The technical stuff

Length 4,87 m

Width 1,79 m

Height 1,96 m

Interior height 1,7 m in front and 2,05 m at the back

Fuel tank 60 l

Price R638 000–R763 700 depending on the model.



Plus

- The layout is smart and the small space is used cleverly to create a surprising amount of space. The top bed is especially impressive.
- The window covers are difficult to beat.
- Although there aren't a lot of cupboards, there's loads of storage space when the bed is folded up.



Minus

- Space isn't a problem, but it can get quite cramped when the bed is folded out, especially for tall people.
- It requires a bit of a scramble to get to the top bed.

go! Drive & Camp says

There's a range of optional extras to choose from, including awnings on one or both sides, a bathroom tent that fits over the back door, a porta-potti, and camping chairs.

go! Drive & Camp borrowed the Maxmo Campy from the manufacturer.

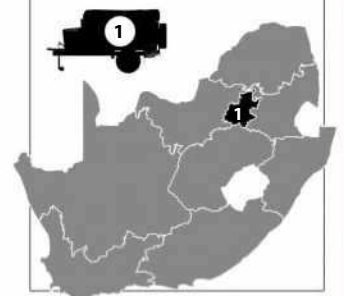
Dealer network

1 dealer in Pretoria.

Contact 082 899 9999

leon@maxmo.life

maxmo.life



Soup for the soul



Recipes and styling **Aletta Lintvelt** Photos **Jan Ras** Food assistant **Tani Kirsten**



What could
be easier than
opening up a few
packets and cans
and adding some
extra goodies to
make a delicious
pot of soup in
the campsite?

CHICKEN-AND-VEGETABLE SOUP Here a cheep, there a cheep

Transform a can of chicken soup and a chicken breast into a solid meal.

Ingredients

(enough for 4)

- 1–2 cups chicken stock
- 2–3 chicken breasts, deboned and skinned
- 1 can (400 g) cream of mushroom soup
- 1 packet vegetable noodles (like baby marrow noodles)
- salt and pepper, to taste
- fresh parsley

Here's how

1 Bring the chicken stock to a boil in a pot and poach the chicken breasts in the liquid for about 15 minutes. Remove the chicken, shred with two forks, and put back in the pot.
2 Mix in the mushroom soup and bring to a boil. Then add in the vegetable noodles and reheat. Flavour to taste with salt and pepper. Serve with freshly chopped parsley.

go! Drive & Camp says If you can't find vegetable noodles you can simply grate some baby marrows over each portion.

MEXICAN TOMATO-AND-BEAN SOUP Delicioso!

This soup really is ridiculously easy and you can put it together quick-quick, anywhere.

Ingredients

(enough for 6)

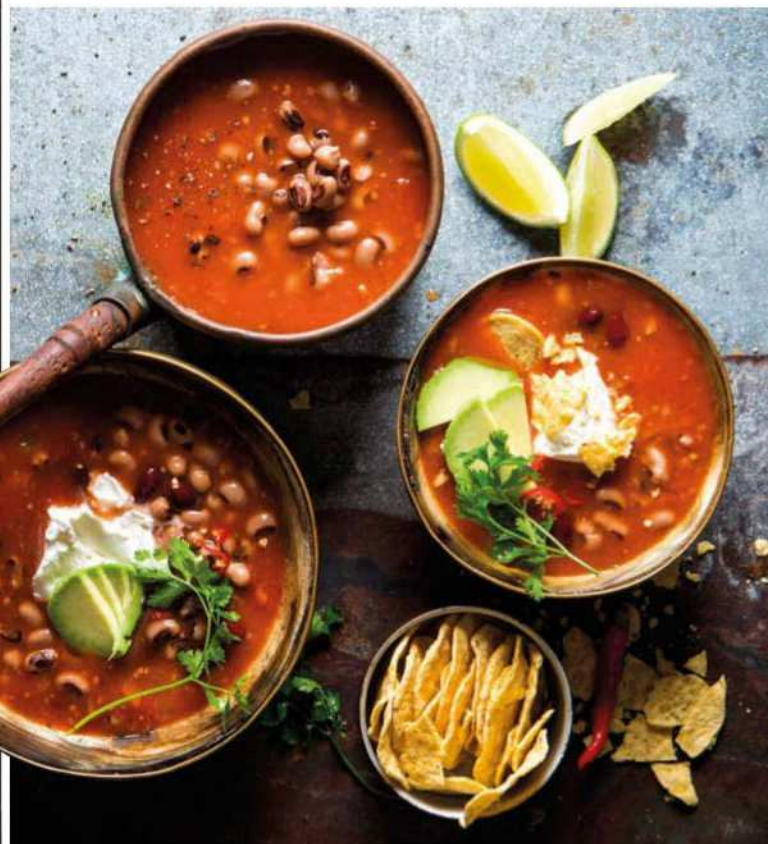
- 1 can (410g) Mexican-style tomatoes
- 1 can (410 g) cream of tomato soup
- 1 block vegetable stock
- 1 cup water
- 1 can (410 g) red kidney beans, drained
- 1 can (410 g) black or barloti beans, drained
- 1 red chilli, finely chopped (or use chilli sauce)
- salt and pepper, to taste
- nacho chips, to serve
- 1 cup sour cream, to serve
- 1 avocado, cubed
- fresh coriander, to serve (optional)

Here's how

1 Bring the tomato, tomato soup, stock and water to a boil and allow to simmer for 10 minutes. Stir in the beans and add the chilli (to taste). Let the mixture simmer for another 10 minutes.

2 Serve each portion with nacho chips, sour cream, avo, and fresh coriander.

go! Drive & Camp says If you can't find the Mexican-style tomatoes you can use any canned tomato-and-onion relish and season with cumin, chilli and paprika. >



RED LENTIL SOUP WITH SMOKED SAUSAGES

The mighty lentil

This hearty soup will keep tummies full for longer. Make a double batch because it freezes well.

Ingredients

(enough for 4)

- 2 tablespoons cooking oil
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 3 large carrots, peeled and grated
- 1 cup red lentils
- 1 l chicken stock
- 2–4 smoked sausages like bratwurst or Russians
- salt and pepper, to taste

Here's how

1 Heat the oil in a pot and sauté the onion over medium heat until soft and translucent. Add the garlic and cook for another minute.

2 Add the carrots, lentils and stock and bring to a boil. Leave to simmer over a low heat for 20 minutes until the lentils and carrots are soft.

3 Cut the sausages into thin discs and fry it in the pan until crisp before stirring it into the soup. Flavour to taste with salt and pepper.

go! Drive & Camp says You can replace the carrot with peeled and diced butternut.

POTATO-AND-BILTONG SOUP

Beefy goodness

This soup is rich and delicious, but if you prefer it even richer you can replace the water with milk or cream.

Ingredients

(enough for 4)

- 4 tablespoons butter
- 4 large potato, peeled and roughly grated
- 2 tablespoons white onion soup
- 1 block chicken stock
- 3–4 cups water
- 200 g finely carved biltong
- salt and black pepper, to taste

Here's how

1 Heat the butter over low heat in a large pot and add the potato. Let it sweat for about 10 minutes until soft.

2 Stir the onion soup powder and chicken stock into the mixture and add half of the water. Bring to a boil and then simmer for 20 minutes. Use a potato masher to dissolve the soup powder and add more water until the soup is diluted to preference.

3 Mix in three quarters of the biltong and heat the soup until hot. Flavour to taste with salt and pepper.

4 Sprinkle the rest of the biltong over the soup and serve with toast.

go! Drive & Camp says Sweet potato instead of potato is also delicious.



SPINACH-AND-LENTIL SOUP WITH MEATBALLS

Flex those muscles

This soup is the perfect way to use up any leftover meatballs that you didn't eat on the road.

Ingredients

(enough for 4–6)

- 1 packet (600 g) fresh vegetable soup mix
- 1 ℓ beef stock
- 1 can (410 g) brown lentils, drained and rinsed
- 2 cups baby spinach leaves
- 1 packet instant noodles
- 8–12 cooked meatballs
- salt and pepper, to taste

Here's how

1 Pour the soup mix, beef stock and lentils into a big pot and bring to a boil. Simmer for 30 minutes until the veggies are cooked. Add water if necessary.

2 Stir the spinach, dry noodles and meatballs through the boiling soup until all the ingredients are heated through. Flavour to taste with salt and pepper.

go! Drive & Camp says Instead of using the soup pack you can use 4 cups of chopped veggies like onions, carrots, leeks and green beans.

SHRIMP-AND-CORN CHOWDER

Prawn to be wild

This soup must be thick and creamy – you can add cheese to make it even better.

Ingredients

(enough for 4)

- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 1 cup cubed potatoes
- 1 ℓ chicken stock
- 2 cup homemade or store-bought béchamel sauce
- 1 can (400 g) creamed corn
- ½ cup whole corn kernels
- 1 can (110 g) shrimps, drained
- salt and pepper, to taste

Here's how

1 Melt the butter and sauté the onion until soft and translucent. Stir in the potato.

2 Pour the stock in and simmer for 10 minutes until the potato is soft.

3 Mix in the béchamel, creamed corn and corn kernels and simmer for another 10 minutes.

4 Add the shrimp and stir the soup until hot. Flavour to taste with salt and pepper.

go! Drive & Camp says You can also use frozen, peeled prawns, but let it thaw completely first.



Best seat in the house

We all know how difficult it is to clean that coffee stain or try to vacuum beach sand or dog hair off your vehicle's seats. These covers will help you keep the cabin clean and your seats looking as good as new.

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

When it's time to let go of your faithful set of wheels and upgrade, most prospective buyers will look at the condition of the seats as an indication of what kind of care you took of your vehicle. It'll stand you in good stead to keep your seats covered because it's almost like insurance you take out for your car's interior. Avoid unsightly stains, smells and unnecessary wear and tear on your seats with one of these seat covers.

Mellvill and Moon Traditional seat covers for Toyota Hilux Traditional and tough

Just like the other model from this brand also featured on these pages, this three-piece seat cover has flaps on the sides to allow seats equipped with side airbags to pop open and keep you safe. The 100% cotton canvas is breathable to keep you cool. There's smart buttons on the side and a rear pouch as well as zipper pockets.

Price R4 200 at 4x4 Mega World (front set)

go! Drive & Camp says The grippy canvas will help you to not slide across large leather seats.

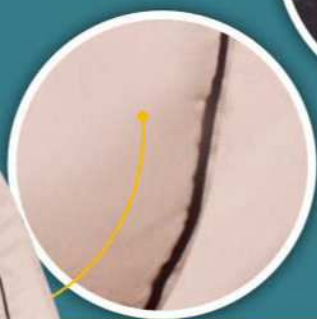
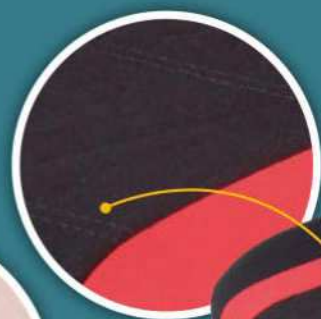


Stingray Sport Cheap and cheerful

This extremely affordable set is machine-washable in case you suffer a massive spill. The Sport logos are embroidered, but otherwise this set is 100% polyester. The seatback and cushion is one-piece, with a separate cover for the headrest.

Price R280 at Makro (full set)

go! Drive & Camp says Red is racy and these are an ideal look to embrace your sportier side.



Trailboss front seat covers Local is lekker

This simple universal cover with contrasting piping has drawstring on either side of the seatback so you can adjust how snug it will fit. There are three mesh pockets behind the seatback and a large one just in front of the seat cushion. It also comes with a six-month warranty.

Price R555 at Outdoor Warehouse (front set)

go! Drive & Camp says These aren't designed to be used with seats with side airbags.

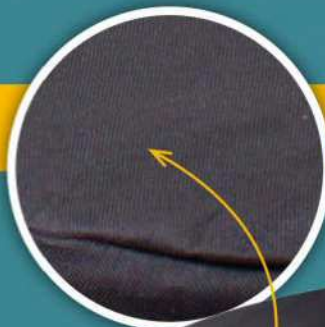


Gladiator Safari Eastern warrior

The hand-washable heavy-duty polycanvas material is reminiscent of the backpack you used to carry your books in at high school. There's even a backpack-style pocket that closes with a flap that uses a plastic clip. It slides completely over the seatback and cushion – even over the headrest.

Price R470 at Makro (front set)

go! Drive & Camp says The two-tone design breaks the sombre black nicely.



Escape Gear Tuff canvas front seat covers

Durable don

This one looks rather plain and therefore not so special, but this polycotton blend was put through a 350 000 rub test and passed with flying colours. The smooth finish is abrasion-resistant and water-repellent.

Price R3 550 from Escape Gear (front set)

go! Drive & Camp says This set is only available in one colour: charcoal.



Stingray Grandeur

Pseudo stylish

One of the more premium items from this brand, the 11-piece Grandeur set has stylish two-tone faux-leather finish, piping on the side bolster sleeves, and chevrons embossed in the seat cushion and backrest polyester fabric.

Price R430 at Makro (full set)

go! Drive & Camp says The built-in lumbar support is a bonus.



Mellvill and Moon Bokseil seat covers for Land Rover Discovery 5

Luxury look

This three-piece set has a unique denim-style appearance. There's a massive pouch at the back for books, tablets or board games and it has overlapping flaps on the side to allow airbags to pop open. The other side of the cover has a smaller storage pouch.

Price R3 650 at 4x4 Mega World (front set)

go! Drive & Camp says The embroidery you see in this pic isn't standard fitting.





Ironman 4x4 Ford Ranger seat covers Covers from down under

Each 340 g 100% cotton canvas cover has an added layer of foam underneath the surface fabric for an extra bit of seating comfort. It's resistant to water, doesn't allow you to slip and slide, has built-in map pockets, and is also flame-retardant.

Price R4 620 from 1st Outdoor & 4x4 (front set)

go! Drive & Camp says There's a two-year warranty included in the price.

Escape Gear Traditional seat covers Chasing the competition

The full cotton seats are made of 510 g fabric so they are heavy-duty, won't crease when you climb into your vehicle, and are vehicle-specific so they fit snugly. Liquid doesn't seep through these covers.

Price R3 550 at Escape Gear (front set)

go! Drive & Camp says Despite being more of a premium product, you don't pay more for full cotton canvas than their other fabric.



GET THE PRODUCTS HERE

1st Outdoor & 4x4 1stoutdoor4x4.co.za

4x4 Mega World 4x4megaworldonline.com
Escape Gear escapegear.com

Makro makro.co.za
Outdoor Warehouse outdoorwarehouse.co.za



Emergency edibles

Camping is synonymous with braaivleis. And we always stock our fridges with meat and fresh produce before we hit the road. But what is your plan B if something goes wrong and you can't eat that food?

Text **Kyle Kock** Photos **Craig Kolesky** and **Kyle Kock**

You're roughing it with your off-road trailer in the middle of nowhere and your fridge is packed with everything from T-bone steaks, chops, boerewors, and fresh tomatoes and cheese for the all-important braaibroodjies.

But the dung hits the fan, the fridge conks out, and now you're stranded what feels like a million miles from civilisation without fresh provisions.

In situations like these it will help to have a plan B when your supply of daily nutrition is threatened. But your survival doesn't have to depend on those nasty biscuits they pack into life rafts and tell you tastes like shortbread.

We've found some classics and even stumbled across a couple of surprises that don't compromise on taste, calories or nutrients.

BREAKFASTS ON THE GO

According to the Nutrition Society of South Africa which worked with the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organisation to develop dietary guidelines specifically for our country, starches should be included in every meal. Most of us already know this and have enjoyed pap (maize meal) for many generations – particularly in breakfast format. You even get varieties that are faster to cook, some as quickly as two minutes. They pack around 1 400 kilojoules in a single 100 g serving.

Mieliepap isn't to everyone's taste though, and we've thought about that too, so another easy option are the Jungle Oatso Easy packs. There's a variety of flavours and unlike pap you have to cook it a bit, here you just stir in some boiling water. They pack over 800 kilojoules per serving and the fibre will aid in your digestion.

go! Drive & Camp says Your pap needn't be bland. Use a teaspoon or two of the apple sauce mentioned under the sugar section.



FREEZE-DRIED FOOD

New Zealand-based Back Country Cuisine has been in business since 1998, and its products have been in South Africa for the last decade. We chatted to Rob French, owner of Toreda, the local importers of Back Country, about this interesting food type.

"The difference with Back Country Cuisine's products is that they're not dehydrated with hot air but instead undergoes a complex process where the ingredients for each meal is rapidly frozen in a huge freezer that acts in almost the same fashion as a hyperbaric chamber. The fast freezing essentially captures all the moisture for the food, but then the temperature is turned back up slowly and the water turns into gas as the pressure difference extracts moisture from the food. It leaves almost a porous sort of sponge of the original food product."

The range available locally at the moment includes 24 different products, including some dessert options, and expands with new ideas every year.

"Freeze drying retains about 95% of the nutritional value of the food. The smell and taste doesn't change much, but the texture will differ," Rob adds.

According to Rob, hikers, long-distance adventure runners, survivalists,



and even 4x4 enthusiasts count among Back Country's clientele. While they recommend a storage period of about three years, in the right conditions, Back Country believes its foods can last up to 30 years.

We sampled two of the products: the cottage pie and apricot crumble. In both of these cases there's an extra sachet inside the packaging that contains another ingredient. The instructions are very easy to follow. After removing the extra sachets, simply add boiling water, give it a solid stir, and re-seal the packaging.

After 10 minutes you can break another seal lower down on the packaging and enjoy as is in the bowl you've just created.

Back Country meals aren't exactly cheap, but they are extremely convenient, and when you're out in the bundus probably the closest thing you'll find to a traditional Sunday lunch roast lamb with vegetables, Thai chicken curry, and even apple pie. They're quite lightweight to pack in and carry around and the different meals mean that you can get your fill of nutrients according to what you need.

go! Drive & Camp says You can leave the mixture in the packaging while it "cooks" but make sure you stir it quickly and get right down to the bottom. Don't use a fork, lest you pierce the packaging.



SUGAR RUSH

We're not condoning cravings that you can't keep in check. But for a quick burst of energy, one or two sweets (okay, maybe a little more than that) can pack as much as 353 kilojoules in a 25 g serving.

Apple sauce is pretty much dessert in a jar, but it's also tasty when accompanying meat off the braai. Actually, it will go with almost anything else in this feature.

go! Drive & Camp says You could substitute the apple sauce for honey, which has infinite shelf life.

SOUP IT UP

Yes, we know that these will never compare to the soup prepared by your Ouma when she knows you're going to visit her in the June holidays, but it's better than going hungry. There's plenty of options on the shelves of retailers with regards to ready-to-serve canned soup as well as the powered "cuppa soup" variety.

The versions featured here pack virtually the same amount of kilojoules per gram at just over 100, but with the box that contains four individual packs, you consume only as you require whereas you might not be able to store the open can if you can't finish the 400 g container on your own.

go! Drive & Camp says Powdered versions offers plenty of bang for your buck and is very affordable. The canned varieties are fancier though. >



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PROTEIN POWER

The topic of corned meat is sure to divide people, but it's something that can be enjoyed right out of the can immediately. In addition to the 881 kilojoules per 150 g serving, bully beef also packs plenty of protein at 15 grams for the same portion.

There are more and more flavours being introduced so those who don't enjoy

the original might change their minds, especially in a tight situation.

Tuna is often given the nod as the go-to cheap fishy protein for those whose budgets don't stretch to salmon steaks, and while the nutritional value of tuna can't be sniffed at, the even cheaper tins of pilchards are overlooked far too often. At nearly half the price and with just as much protein (18 grams per 100 g serving), the choice is an easy one to make.

Biltong can be carried around anywhere and if you don't make your own you'll definitely know where you can purchase South Africa's favourite dried snack. Just 100 grams of lean game biltong can pack more protein than tinned tuna – depending on what's been dried.

go! Drive & Camp says Remember that pilchards are a source of omega 3 fatty acids. They also come in a tomato or chilli sauce so you won't get bored.



SNACK ATTACK

Those crackers and plain biscuits don't only come in handy just before payday, but you can also smother them in the spread of your choice. Marmite won't agree with everyone's palate, but it packs a massive B vitamin punch per 8 g serving.

Peanut butter is another strong candidate for your emergency shelf, with about 4 g of protein per 15 g serving.

go! Drive & Camp says Peanut butter's real clout comes in the form of kilojoules – more than 400 from just 15 g.

GREENS AND BEANS

First prize will always be to have your vegetables fresh, but in this scenario being able to store your veg is unlikely. Canned veggies are a cheap alternative and they tend to last a lot longer than the fresh kind. Peas in brine pack about 236 kilojoules per 100 g and plenty of fibre (6.5 g). Creamed-style sweetcorn has a little more sugar but isn't really bad for you and packs a similar kilojoule profile.

Straight-up baked beans are so 19th century. The modern day cowboy goes for a three- or even four-bean salad. They're ready to eat right out of the tin and legumes pack plenty of fibre and protein, which should please vegetarians.

go! Drive & Camp says Try to go for multiple colours on your plate – the yellow and greens are caused by vitamins and pigments in plant flesh that in turn strengthens our bodies.



Sources

- fao.org
- myfitnesspal.com
- nutritiondata.self.com
- nutritionssociety.co.za



The big bull bar CONUNDRUM

We received a few letters from readers expressing their concerns over the safety of bull bars. Cyril Klopper investigates this thorny topic.

It doesn't count in a manufacturer's favour to have a reputation for dangerous products.

That's why they spend millions making their vehicles safer with things like crumple zones, airbags and other safety measures. Bumpers and bonnets are also designed these days to minimise injuries to pedestrians.

A bull bar doesn't care about the well-being of pedestrians though. It might sound cold-hearted, but if you hit a cow or a kudu late at night on a deserted road, your chances of survival will greatly increase if you have a bull bar fitted. This is the primary purpose of a bull bar.

And like car manufacturers, bull bar manufacturers also don't want a reputation for dangerous products, and that's why some of them also spend large amounts of money to ensure that their bull bars prevent more damage than they cause.

Besides the fact that it offers personal protection, it also protects your vehicle against small game. No one wants to sit on a dry plain between Purros and Orupembe for two days with a hole in their radiator. You also need a sturdy place to mount a winch, spotlights, and recovery points. And a bull bar usually offers a better approach angle than a standard bumper.

Years ago workshops would simply shape a piece of steel and bolt or weld it onto your vehicle's chassis. Those first bull bars were so sturdy that if you were in a

collision with another vehicle that car looked like a piece of carved up biltong. With the arrival of airbags these bull bars also caused the airbag sensors to give an incorrect reading in a crash situation, causing the airbags to deploy unnecessarily or not at all.

In our review of the Ford Ranger FX4 (*go! Drive & Camp* #2), we mentioned that the Ranger comes equipped with seven airbags, which is why it was awarded an unprecedented five-star NCAP safety rating. Thinus Potgieter from Cape Town had this to say in reaction:

THINUS'S LETTER

"What confounds me is the fact that a manufacturer adds all the airbags for safety to get a five-star NCAP safety rating and then South Africans come and put bull bars on the cars. Firstly, it's deadly for pedestrians, and secondly, it influences the safety features of the vehicle. It should be banned on public roads. Just imagine one of these vehicles hitting a family member. I would love to hear the South African Bureau of Standards' opinion and whether they've considered a test like this."

We contacted the SABS, but after being sent from pillar to post and not receiving a definitive response, we decided to rather approach an expert on road traffic laws to hear what the legal stance on bull bars is.

WHAT DOES THE LAW SAY?

Alta Swanepoel of Alta Swanepoel and Associates, a law consultant for the Department of Transport, says: "There has been some suggested legislation surrounding bull bars, but it never comes to fruition. The following regulation comes from European legislation."



EC Regulation 78/2009

lays down the requirements for the type-approval of motor vehicles relating to the protection of pedestrians and vulnerable road users. It is important to note that all frontal protection systems fitted or made available for fitting to new vehicles at registration or before entry into service since 21 May 2007 must bear an E-mark. If it does not, then the vehicle would not be registered or allowed entry into service. Once vehicles are in service they must adhere to >

If you hit a cow or a kudu late at night on a deserted road, your chances of survival will greatly increase if you have a bull bar.

the requirements set out in the Road Traffic (Construction, Equipment & Use of Vehicles) Regulations (S.I. No. 190 of 1963). Article 32 states that vehicles “shall not have any inessential object in a position where it is likely to strike any person involved in a collision with the vehicle, unless injury is not likely to be caused by reason of the projection of the object”. Furthermore Article 96 states that “every vehicle while used in a public place shall be such, and so maintained and used, that no danger is likely to be caused to any person”. Owners or

drivers of vehicles breaching these regulations may be found guilty of an offence under Section 11 of the Road Traffic Act 1961 as amended.

In short

You’re not allowed to bolt a bull bar onto your vehicle if it can seriously injure another person. This legislation hasn’t made its way to South Africa yet, but since we constantly adopt European legislation, this regulation may be on the horizon.

Alta mentions that the tare weight of your vehicle must be amended if you permanently

mount any extras onto your vehicle. If, for example, you add a heavy steel bull bar, your vehicle needs to be weighed again and if it now falls into a higher licence category you’ll have to

pay a higher licencing fee.

Danny Eldridge from Port Elizabeth wrote in about his experience of two vehicles – one with a bull bar and one without – crashing into each other.

“The tare weight of your vehicle must be amended if you permanently mount any extras to your vehicle.”

DANNY’S LETTER

“We were involved in a head-on collision in December 2017 with a vehicle that was on the wrong side of the road on the Zuurberg mountain pass. We were lucky and came out uninjured. We were almost at a stop when a Ford Kuga collided with us at between 30 to 60 km/h. We were in a 1999 Toyota Prado 3-litre diesel which had a re-enforced nudge bar (10mm S/S plate) that reduced the damage to the vehicle considerably. The Kuga was worse for wear but its airbags deployed and ours did not.

Was it because of the reinforced nudge bars? Or maybe because the speed was too low for deployment? Maybe it’s because my vehicle was basically at a stop or because the damage did not reach the crumple zone? How do we rectify that so that the airbags deploy?

We sent Danny’s questions (and photos) to Toyota South African and this is their response:

Toyota’s answer

“As a manufacturer, we can only recommend Toyota genuine accessories (nudge/bull bars in this context) as they’re approved by Toyota Motor Corporation (TMC) for customer safety.

These are also designed to ensure there’s no negative impact on vehicle performance.



“All Toyota-approved nudge bars and bull bars are subjected to airbag crash performance tests to ensure that deployment is not compromised. This means we guarantee 100% airbag deployment equivalent to OE standard. Furthermore, Toyota genuine accessories are designed with uncompromising safety and guaranteed quality, durability and reliability in mind, and also to meet regulatory requirements as set out by authorities.

“However, Toyota South Africa Motors cannot comment on aftermarket non-genuine accessories as we have no

information on their manufacturing and testing criteria.”

The trend abroad

In December 2017, the same the time as Danny’s accident, the Indian government banned the use of bull bars in the country.

Their reasons were that it undermined crumple zones, influenced airbags, were dangerous to pedestrians and cyclists, and that it caused undue damage to other vehicles during collisions.

We sent India’s reasons and the above letters to local manufacturers to find out what they thought.

FRIEND OR FOE?

Europe has banned them and the rest of the world may follow. Share your thoughts on the matter by writing to us at drivecamp@gomag.co.za



A WORD FROM THE BULL BAR MANUFACTURERS

Louis van Niekerk, manager at **LA Sport 4WD Megastores**, says: "The LAS bull bar is definitely compatible with airbags. We physically tested the bull bar to see whether the airbags still deployed on the vehicle manufacturer's specifications, and it did."

Regarding the danger to pedestrians, Louis says: "It can go both ways. It can kill pedestrians, but it can also better protect the driver and the passengers."

"If you're driving in Africa and you hit an animal walking in the road, it will protect your vehicle as well as your family. Our bull bar was designed to push any object you hit away from the vehicle."

"That will lessen the chances of the animal or object you hit crashing through the windshield and injuring passengers."

Mic van Zyl, owner of **Ironman 4x4** in South Africa, says: "My bull bars are airbag compatible. Ironman is an Australian product and it is the law in that country that all bull bars be airbag compatible."

"Bull bars as we know them have been banned in Europe for some time now. But I find it particularly unfair in Scandinavian countries where people have to drive long distances in the dark, putting their lives at risk because of this law."

"If I had to choose between being hit by a bakkie with or without a bull bar I will obviously choose the one without. But since I don't want to be run over at all, I simply choose not to jaywalk. I've been involved in an animal strike more than once and I can honestly say that a bull bar saves lives." >



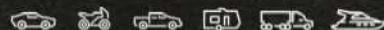
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CONCLUSION. A correctly built and fitted bull bar shouldn't affect the safe deployment of a vehicle's airbags.

HOW DO AIRBAG SENSORS WORK?

An airbag is an important safety feature, but it plays a secondary role to safety belts. If you're not strapped in, the airbag isn't going to help much and it might even make injuries worse.

Airbags deploy after sensors in the bodywork pick up that something catastrophic is occurring. The simplest airbag system uses two G-force sensors in the nose of a vehicle (usually on either side of the radiator) that detects that you've made a dead stop.

These sensors usually consist of a tube with a magnet, a ball bearing and a switch. In a serious collision the ball bearing will detach from the magnet and tap against the switch. A signal is then sent to the airbag computer which detects whether the seat-belt is buckled in and the airbag is deployed.

More expensive airbag systems have plenty of G-force sensors across the body and also uses a sensor that monitors the deformation of the body so

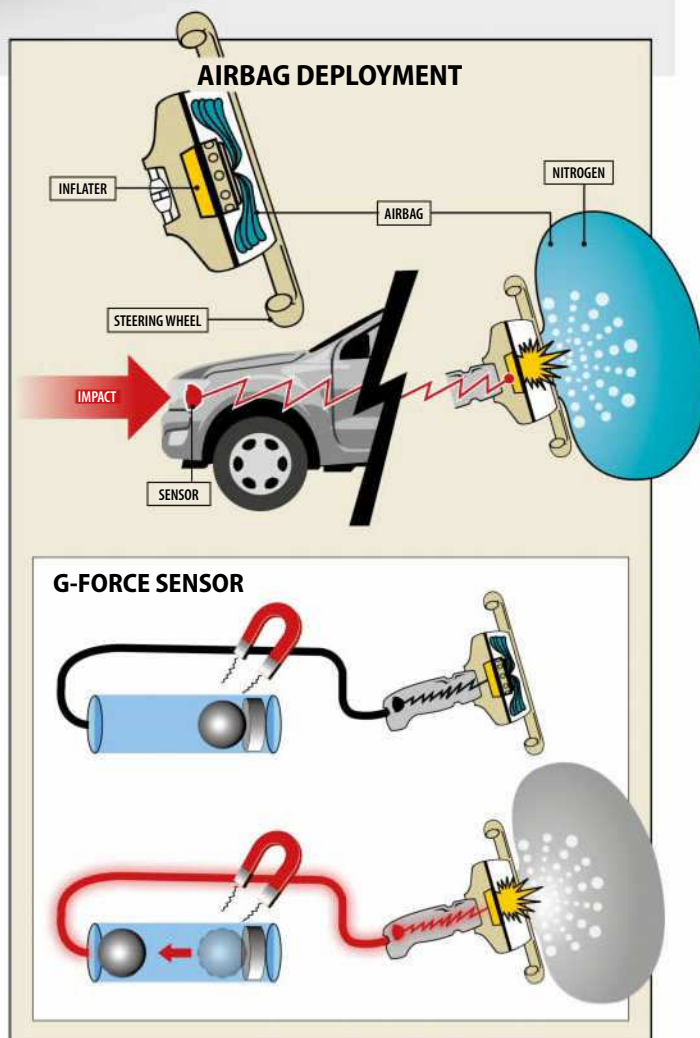
that the airbag computer knows where and when to deploy.

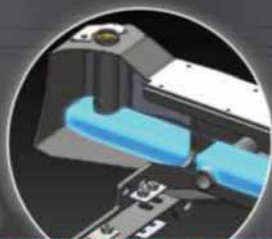
An airbag that deploys is no laughing matter. You can't roll it up and put it back for next time because it basically rips the steering wheel apart.

The rest of the cabin also pays the price if the curtain or passenger airbags deploy. An airbag that unfolds sometimes causes bodily harm like burnt skin, a broken nose and a black eye. It can even break the neck of a small child sitting next to the driver. In some vehicles you can switch off the front passenger airbag exactly for this reason.

Air bag systems are therefore designed in such a way that it only deploys in extreme circumstances.

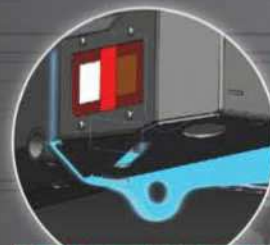
You really don't want it to burst forth for no good reason, because though it is trying to save your life, it will probably give you a licking you won't soon forget.





REINFORCED CORNER

- Strong base for the bumper
- Bolt onto chassis
- Houses swing-arm support



RECOVERY EYES

- Part of super structure 10mm thick
- Below bumper for a smooth cover



SUPER STRUCTURE

- Super structure extends entire width of the bumper
- Prevents excessive movement of bumper
- Provides extreme rigidity

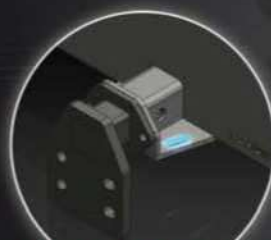


HIGH LIFT POINTS

- Welded to super structure
- Does not protrude outside bumper cover
- 32mm ID



REAR BUMPER



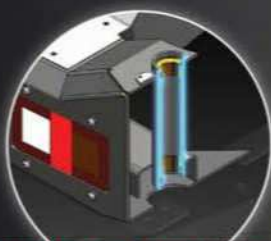
REINFORCED CORNER

- Hook support chains for trailers
- Safety straps during recoveries



REMOVABLE TOW HITCH

- 12mm drop-plate
- Two possible heights
- Anti-rattle flange
- Safety pin



SWING ARM SUPPORT

- Supported by super structure
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LED TAIL LIGHTS

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Off the showroom floor

These readers have been lucky enough to purchase brand-new towing vehicles, and they mostly have positive things to say.

Do it all yourself

2016 TOYOTA HILUX 2.8 GD6 4X4

Apart from a few minor irritations, he's only ever had fun with his **Toyota Hilux**, says **Lourens Greyling** from Louis Trichardt.

“I used to drive a **Fortuner** and then a **Hilux Legend 45** for about a year. The Legend 45 had small issues, but then I developed an itch and decided to buy the all-new **Hilux** right off the showroom floor for **R570 000** two years

ago. It's comfortable, reliable, safe and has loads of power.

If money wasn't an issue then I'd definitely be driving a **Land Cruiser 200 VX**. But otherwise I'm quite happy with my Hilux – and drive it on a daily basis.

Towing my **2014 Wildebeest Exclusive**, the **2.8 ℓ engine** consumes **11,76 ℓ/100 km** and can manage **9 ℓ/100 km** without it hitched to the standard tow bar. This engine can easily haul a caravan down the freeway at the national speed limit

of **120 km/h**, though I do try to tow slower than that.

There's very little that bothers me about the Hilux, save for a slight rattle near the windshield and the fact that the radio jumps from a station after I've made a telephone call with the **on-board Bluetooth system**.

With this towing combination I've enjoyed visiting the **Shingwedzi Camp** of the **Kruger National Park**. I appreciate the peacefulness.”





Climb the highest mountain

2014 FORD EVEREST 3.0 TDCI

There were more popular vehicles available at the time, but his choice hasn't left him in the lurch, says **Willie Jordaan** from Krugersdorp.

“ I shopped around a bit before I made the decision to buy a brand-new **Ford**. Instead of buying a **Nissan** or the even more popular **Toyota** (my dream vehicle would be a **Land Cruiser**), the **Everest** seemed to be a fairly reliable choice in the end. It is quite powerful and, most importantly, at **R240 000** it was also affordable.



I towed a **2012 Sprite Tourer SP** with the Everest for two years but have since upgraded to a **2017 Jurgens Xscape** that I've been towing for just under a year.

Nothing fazes the Ford, and it easily towed each caravan at **120 km/h**. It averages about **14,29 ¢/100 km** with the Jurgens hitched and about **11 ¢/100 km** without it.

Our neighbouring countries rank among my favourite destinations, especially the **Caprivi in Namibia**, parts of **Botswana**, and also **Mozambique**. The surroundings are always beautiful and there's plenty to see and do – definitely worth the effort.

Just right

2013 CHEVROLET TRAILBLAZER 2.5 LT

He fantasises about a **Ford Everest 3.2 XLT** and even looked at a **3.0 D-4D Toyota Fortuner**, but **Gustav Engelbrecht** from Centurion has been pleasantly surprised by his **Chevy**.

“ I managed to pick up my **2013 Trailblazer** as a demo for **R320 000** and have owned it for nearly five years now. I use it to tow my Jurgens Exclusive.

I had one objective and that was to purchase a vehicle that had the maximum torque available when towing at a speed of **100 km/h**. When I looked at the **Toyota Fortuner** as a prospective rival, I realised that it couldn't match the **Chevy** in terms of interior room, affordability and performance.

The **2.5 ¢ turbodiesel** peak torque output is only just available at **100 km/h**, so I prefer towing at around **105 km/h** so I'm always within the optimum powerband.



This is an amazing engine considering its size and when it was produced. The **Trailblazer** also rides very comfortably.

My only bugbear is that this model didn't come with full **Bluetooth compatibility** on the audio system so I can't use my mobile phone the way I'd like, and the tyres that come standard are also a bit of a frustration if you want to venture off-road.

When I'm towing the **Exclusive**, fuel consumption hikes up to about **15,35 ¢/100 km**, but the **Trailblazer can manage**

8,33 ¢/100 km without anything hitched to the standard-issue tow bar.

For long vacations I'm fond of heading to **Jeffreys Bay** where we virtually camp on the beach, but for shorter stints I can also settle for the serenity of the **Kruger National Park**.



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WINNING PHOTO



People make the difference

When you have a human subject in your photo it often leads to a better image.

By Leon Botha

Life amongst the Dead Vlei

They travelled to Namibia to celebrate her husband, Glen's, 50th birthday and she returned home with some of the scenery in her pocket, says Sally Mackay from Durban.

"I took this photo in the iconic Dead Vlei in Namibia. Through the dead trees you could see a couple standing on the opposite side of the vlei. From my side they were surrounded by the trees and it created a frame around them. The people give scale and context to the photo with its dry surroundings as background. I decided on black and white to highlight the texture of the dead trees."

The Dead Vlei is on every serious nature photographer's bucket list, and when you're there you simply have to make the most of it. You see so many photos taken amongst the red dunes but many of them look similar, although the red of the dunes and the blue of the sky together with the dead trees make a winning recipe for a good photo. To play around with black and white is therefore risky because you lose some of the most important elements.

But you can see Sally has an eye for a good photo. She uses the black and white and the people in her photo cleverly.

In circumstances like these you usually want to take a beautiful nature photo (without tourists standing all over the show and spoiling the photo), but Sally does exactly the opposite and

makes the people part of the scene. The people in the photo make the difference between a good photo and a better photo.

The tree branches look like fingers growing out of the ground. The people are in the background, but in the centre, surrounded by the trees.

Because they're so small in the photo you don't see them right away – they actually look like a tree trunk in the background. It's only when you have a closer

Canon EOS 5D Mk. III; Canon EF 24-105 mm lens on 105 mm; 1/400 of a second; f 9; ISO 100

look that you can clearly see it's tourists – something that gives the photo that something extra.

For an even better photo you could cut out the negative space to the left of the trees. The photo might be square then, but the composition is better.

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 camera or your cellphone, if you can put it in your family photo album it's all good. Sally wins a Camp Cover camera bag to the value of R595 – congratulations!

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

Double trouble

When he was at a photo exhibition in London recently, **Harald Spiwak** from Pretoria saw quite a few of the entries were taken with smartphones.

"I took this photo with my smartphone at Mabibi, near Lake Sibaya in the north of KwaZulu-Natal. My wife, Marisa, and I are standing on a large sand dune next to the sea and the setting sun behind us casts a long shadow over the sand. I just had to take a photo. It's a photo within a photo: Firstly, there's the beach in front with the sea that disappears in the distance, and then the dune with the shadows on it. You think you're looking at one photo, but it actually has two visual levels."

How many times did you have to stand out of the way so that you don't capture your own shadow on a photo? But like Harald, you can use that to your advantage.

The shadow tells you a bit more about the scene without

you having to think about it. Your subconscious immediately interprets the perspective because you know how a shadow falls away from you. You can therefore see the depth in the photo because the human silhouettes' legs in the forefront

are bigger than the bodies and your brain automatically draws a line between that and you experience it as depth.

But the real winner is the outline of the shadow of the dune that almost runs parallel with the waves; and because it

iPhone 6S; 4,15 mm (29 mm in a 35 mm camera); 1/1 900 of a second; f2,2; ISO 25

runs at an angle diagonally to the top on the right of the photo, it rounds off the composition nicely.



A light in the darkness

When they visit the Cederberg with their 4x4, **Beverley le Grange** from Kraaifontein is always on the lookout for a photo that will later remind her of this special place.

"We often pack our 4x4 and visit the Cederberg – and particularly the Stadsaal, which falls under Cape Nature. It's full of beautiful rock formations that are close to our hearts. I tried to capture the beauty of the area in a photo... for the times when we can't be there. Then

Samsung HD WB 30F with 10x optical zoom on 7,6 mm (42 mm in a 35 mm camera); 1/350 of a second; f3,9; ISO 80

at least I can enjoy the place when I look at the image. You look out from the shadows over the plains and you admire the splendour, just like the two people in the photo."

Even though the Cederberg is picture-perfect, it's not that easy to capture the natural beauty in a photo. All the rocks and dry ridges can start looking monotonous. Beverley uses the silhouettes of the people cleverly, and even though the scene behind them is a true representation of the natural surroundings, the people create an extra layer to the photo. Suddenly you can place

yourself there. You can feel the shade while the sun bakes in the distance, but it also immediately gives you a sense of the size of the area thanks to the figures.

In these lighting conditions some cameras' light meter won't always create the best exposure and results in a photo that's either too light or too dark. In Beverley's case the light meter did its job admirably, but there is still some detail in the shadowy parts. There is nothing wrong with that, but depending on personal taste it can be a case of not hot or cold, rather lukewarm. You'd prefer to see enough detail in the shadows or nothing at all. I prefer nothing at all because it transforms the dark sections into proper silhouettes. It's something you can fix on the computer later (if you don't mind making adjustments to your photos).

Lesotho snow



There is an old African tale about the Creator's quandary about the Southern part of Africa being as beautiful and bountiful as Central and Eastern Africa with very much the same climate, animals and topography.

THE ADVENTURE

The myth goes that the Creator wanted the areas to be somehow different but did not want to make any drastic changes. It was decided that there would be one subtle difference: The northern areas would have permanent snow-capped mountains and the southern areas would not.

We cannot fault this story as every year in mid-winter we are treated to a wonderful white blanket on the Maluti Mountains in Lesotho. Even if there is not a lot of snow, there are amazing frozen waterfalls and lakes to be seen.

ADVENTURE ITINERARY

DAY 1

We meet at the Imperani Guest House in the Eastern Free State town of Ficksburg late on the Friday afternoon. It's a comfortable three-hour drive from Gauteng. We spend our first evening getting to know each other while the Bhejane guide briefs us on the next day's adventure into Lesotho. We enjoy our first hearty meal that the Imperani Guest House is famous for.

DAY 2

After a big English breakfast, we make our way down to the nearby Lesotho border post and enter Lesotho, crossing the Caledon River. Border post procedures are a mere formality, but you'll need a valid passport.

Our route is on tar the whole way and we wind our way slowly up the Maluti Mountains, eventually getting to almost 3 000 m above sea level. It's up at this altitude that we'll get to experience our first frozen waterfalls, lakes and icicles. Weather and road conditions permitting, we will cross the Motheng Pass

and make our way down to the Oxbow area and on to the Afriski Resort. While you enjoy the snow, the Bhejane team will set up a nice picnic lunch and something warm to drink.

After lunch we head back to Ficksburg. The late afternoon drive is always memorable, with the soft light making the area look spectacular.

The Bhejane guide will inform you at all times of road conditions and potential hazards, while at the same time, sharing his knowledge of the area with you via the two-way radio. Once over the border and back at the Imperani Guest House, we enjoy one last evening together comparing photos, exchanging phone numbers, and planning our next adventure.

DAY 3

After yet another hearty Imperani meal, we sadly say our goodbyes and head for home.

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CROSSWORD

Congratulations **Attie Barnard** from Great Brak River, you've won a case of Van Loveren wines for your correct entry in the crossword competition in our May 2018 edition. You can also be a winner like Attie. Complete the crossword, take a picture of it, and e-mail it to drivecamp@gomag.co.za. Remember to include your contact details. Or complete it online at <https://bit.ly/2vCjq78>. The solution to last mont's crossword puzzle is on p. 125.

		A Jurgens trailer		Normally		Text message (abbr)	A constrictor		Umfuta resort is close to this town			
		... laude				A degree (abbr)			Time series (abbr)			
		Travel document				Target						
Uniform armband		Frost		Plutonium (symbol)		Beams				Tariffs	Satan	
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Vicinity				Set			Therefore	Courage				
								Person				
Southeast (abbr)			Related			Boot, eg					Iran (abbr)	
			Pair (abbr)			Thou						
		16th Gr letter			Nobelium (symbol)	Reflexive pronoun						
		Legume				Sprinted						
Osmium (symbol)												
Pinafore					Regarding		Pledge		Alfa Romeo's SUV			
					Competed							
			Star			Helium, eg						
Anger					Stylish (inf)		Pismire					
Information							Sphere					
					Fib		Oganesson (symbol)		Pica		Lawrencium (symbol)	
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				No data (abbr)		Genuine			Sick			
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4x4 trail in the Eastern Cape (3,7)	Tax		Rodents			Joined					Morsel	
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								Electrical unit		Took off		
										Hectare (symbol)		
6 balls in cricket				New Delhi is its capital	Compact disc (abbr)			Require		Hello (inf)		
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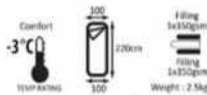


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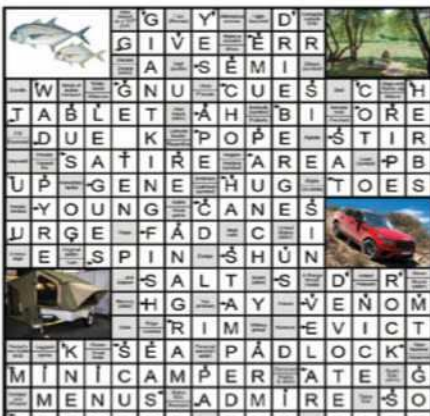
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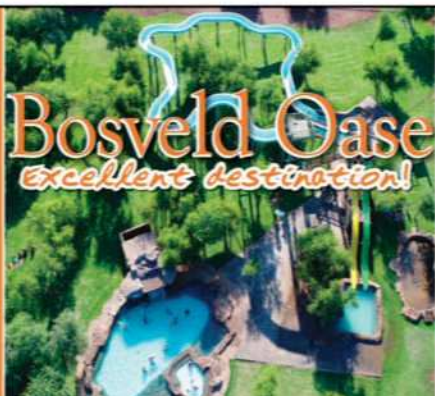
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Smurfie's army boots

It's one thing to go camping in a foreign country, but when you're suddenly surrounded by soldiers it's a completely different story, says Leon Botha.

I grew up camping – every year our family tackled the road from Sasolburg to Sodwana. The last 100 km or so was dirt road, and countless times Dad got stuck with our Opel Rekord and the fold-up caravan because the last stretch was basically just loose sand over dunes.

If I remember correctly, our family never really camped alone. If it wasn't

Dad's (then) unmarried brother, uncle Peet, it was uncle Evan Corbett – a work friend of my dad's – and his family who came along.

Even Mom's brother-in-law, a lanky Hungarian businessman who only ever wore a black suit and thin tie, joined us. This time we drove more south and pitched camp at Zinkwazi. The reason

for this was uncle Mike's pale-green Jeep Wagoneer. With this vehicle we could drive on the beach and with his boat we could play around on the lagoon.

THEN DAD DID a strange thing. Each one of us – Mom, Dad, my two brothers, Hugo and Paul, and I got a hiking backpack. We loved new adventures and tackled



ILLUSTRATION FRED MOUTON

many hiking trails in the country: from Swellendam and the Tsitsikamma to the Fanie Botha at Graskop and the tough Soutpansberg.

Not to complain because I did get to see the country, but if I have to be honest it wasn't as enjoyable as camping. Everyone struggled because of long walks. And when the mountain path didn't go up, it went down. All you ate for days on end you carried yourself – and a 20 kg pack on your back eventually feels like it weighs a ton.

Thankfully Dad carried his bulky cassette player himself because at that stage The Shadows and he were inseparable. I would just like to add that the player only travelled along once... the first time.

At the day's halfway mark you filled up your water bottle at a mountain stream and suddenly a piece of processed cheese on a Provita seemed like a gourmet meal. And not to mention the Toppers and Smash for dinner. Later, when you were trying to sleep on a thin, hard mattress without a pillow, you had to try really hard not to think about the arduous task that lay ahead the next day. Moreover, your well-deserved rest was on a

bunkbed in a room that you shared with other hikers while the smell of Deep Heat permeated the air.

It just wasn't as much fun as camping. No sun, sand and sea water. Only tough times.

THROUGH THE YEARS MY DAD

always rode a motorbike, and I can still see in my mind's eye a black-and-white photo of him standing next to his Lambretta with a long cigarette hanging from the corner of his mouth sporting a greasy Elvis fringe and a broad smile. Once, on a dirt road somewhere near Rustenburg, Dad gave his dressed-up future father-in-law a lift to town and then proceeded to crash with Grandad in his suit and all.

A motorbike is a dangerous thing and today you'd think twice before buying one for your school-going kids, but back then motorbikes were "safer". So, Dad bought one for each of us – not for Mom though. Scrambler bikes. Little did we know that those two

wheels would not only mean a return to camping but also a scary night in Lesotho.

We were going to tour in our neighbouring country for a few days with our motorcycles and would sleep in tents as we went along. We didn't go alone though as Dad organised with the school that we would do it as a "school tour". So the touring party doubled in size and two of the principal's sons, Jean-Pierre and Sam Pellissier, as well as the PT teacher, Mr. Smit, went along. Mr. Smit was shorter than a lot of boys in the school, which would explain how he got his nickname, Smurfie.

Smurfie had the newest bike of us all: a Yamaha XT500. These bikes were known for almost ripping your leg off if you didn't know how to kick-start it. If you didn't step on the kick-starter properly and give it a helluva kick, the starter would kick back. And if you weren't careful you'd get a bruised knee if the handles weren't positioned correctly. Smurfie obviously did a stint in the armed forces and had a pair of army boots for the tour to kick-start the XT. But these boots would end up being the cause of the trouble in Lesotho...

Put your boots on,
because if we have to
run you don't want to do
it barefoot.

WE LEFT THE CARS with bike trailers in Fouriesburg at a rectory and from there it was just a few kilometres on the bikes into Lesotho. The principal (also Sam) warned us that Lesotho was basically one big eroded ditch. This was partly true but for every ditch there was also a mountain.

Sam navigated and brought along a detailed topographic map so that we didn't get lost in the mountains. I don't know exactly how the tour was planned but we went – just like in our hiking days – up and down the mountains, all on footpaths. Today you know that you have to at least double your travelling time when you're in Lesotho, because thanks to the inhospitable terrain things just go a lot slower. I reckon Sam didn't factor that in, and when the sun started setting on the first day we weren't even close to our destination.

It's one thing to ride mountain tracks with a motorbike, but if you do it in the dark next to cliffs and through informal cornfields, it's really no fun at all.

Suddenly Sam pulled off the track and pointed out the incline on the left: That was where we would be camping for the night. After a struggle, the tent that Dad, Hugo and I shared was pitched. It was dark, my bum was sore from a day on a seat, and we were past hunger. We climbed into our sleeping bags tired and dirty.

I don't know how long we were sleeping but the next moment there was a commotion outside the tent. Someone – maybe Smurfie, maybe Sam – was busy arguing with a stranger. We couldn't hear properly but it sounded hostile. Dad turned to Hugo and I and said: "Put your boots on, because if we have to run you don't want to do it barefoot".

Dad unzipped the tent to see what was going on. That's when we realised things could escalate quickly. Soldiers, armed to the teeth with machine guns and ammo belts over their shoulders, stood there and shone flashlights in our eyes. And judging by their aggressive demeanour, we knew we had to follow their orders.

Sam and someone else managed to calm down the soldiers and he indicated to us that he was going with them to see if he could fix the situation. We were very relieved when Sam returned – I suspect he was quite the diplomat. He explained that someone next to the road saw Smurfie with his army boots and thought we were a group of South African soldiers invading Lesotho.

Sam explained that we were merely tourists here to enjoy the surroundings and we didn't know about Lesotho's first commandment: Though shalt not pitch a tent anywhere without permission. Part of Sam's plea deal was that we also would ask permission from the chief for us to camp on his land.

The next few days we reached our destinations before sunset, and before anyone could even think of taking out a tent we headed straight to the chief.

A FEW YEARS AGO I was in our school hall and there's still a picture of our group in Lesotho. It's a photo without soldiers and chiefs; only tourists on bikes in a beautiful neighbouring country.



The best of friends

You're only as old as you feel, according to **Jaco Bergh** from Durbanville, who set out camping with his old buddy in their classic Land Rover and good old Sprite caravan.

Edited by **Kyle Kock** Photos **Jaco Bergh**



“For the longest time my best pal Leon and I have been ardent campers. More recently we entertained the idea of taking Agarob and Engeltjie along. To be more specific, Agarob is my 1968 Land Rover Series 2A and Engel is Leon's 1969 Sprite Muscat caravan. We were up for the challenge and wanted to find out how practical an excursion of this sort would be.

Remember that those of us who drive these vintage Land Rovers don't wave their hands to greet other Landie owners, but more to show that their hands aren't covered in oil.

We departed one weekend from Durbanville in the direction of Yzerfontein on the West Coast. We dressed up in period-appropriate clothing and Leon

looked just like one of those pipe-smoking English bankers from the 1960s; those old gents whose 'v' and 'f's sounded like p. So we set a lofty target of 'pipty pive' miles an hour. (just under 90 km/h – Ed) It's just as well there were no 'parthogs' running out in front of us.

We both sucked on a pipe for the nerves. Just air, mind you – so as to set an example for the children. The Landie's 50 kW 2.25l engine consumed around 22 litres/100 km – not quite as bad as I had anticipated. The seats aren't comfortable over longer journeys, but popping a Panado or two does the trick.

We enlisted the help of our spouses, children and friends, who all drove in separate vehicles just in case Agarob and Engeltjie needed assistance.

We thoroughly enjoyed our time at Yzerfontein Caravan Park, which is well maintained, with rules applied daily and therefore always popular with campers.

Halfway on the way back home we hit a swarm of bees and at that moment I told Leon, who's as strong as an ox, to stop pushing and jump back in. Just kidding, but the legendary Cape Doctor was quite feisty that day and driving head-on into the south-easter relegated our speedo to read no more than 60 to 70 km/h.

The winding slopes of Vissershok Road on the way to Meerendal annoyed me slightly, but it was possible to just about make the transition to second gear without engaging low range. We achieved what we set out to do, and I can look back and laugh at the outing. However, I cannot recommend the towing combination for everyone and I doubt that it was actually a popular pairing in the old days.



Have you spotted any whacky wheels on your travels? Tell us about it and send a photo to

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Nevada T53X multi purpose camper from R890 000

Practical multi purpose vehicles for touring, camping, sport, adventures, towing or whatever. It is easy & economical to drive with 2x4, 4x4 and off-road suspension options. Seating and sleeping for 4 persons with kitchen, toilet & storage. This is the ~~car~~avan of the future!

maxmo
great adventure campers



Tourer C60X



Tourer D64



Tourer S60



Arizona T49X