

#6

go!

4x4 ROUTE RUMBLE IN THE RICHTERSVELD

JANUARY 2018 | ISSUE 6

Drive & Camp

Twin peaks

Bush camp in the Waterberg
and party in the Pilanesberg

READER STORY

Towing through
Angola

CARAVAN TEST

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tailor-made for 2



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HAVE YOU HEARD? A NEW WRANGLER AND 3 CHALLENGERS ARE HEADING OUR WAY p.16

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Fraaigelegen is a beautiful patch of land at the foot of the Witzenberg mountains where a camping weekend is also a fresh start.

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Where are you going?



One of the my brothers always has the same phrase that he slips into his birthday wishes when he phones on the big day. Somewhere between the introductory "Howzit" and the closing "Please send my love to everybody", his voice becomes slightly deeper and more austere and then he says: "May the best day of last year be the worst day of next year".

Sure, it's a corny expression and I smile every time he says it, but you can't really fault the sentiment. Isn't that what we all actually wish for: That we will be better off tomorrow than we are today? Isn't that the essence of well-being?

We're poised at the start of a new year that is surely going to be filled with new challenges and probably a lot of changes too. We don't have any control over this.

One thing you do have some control over, however, is your travel plans for 2018. Whether you're headed for Angola or Amanzimtoti,

Botswana or Bela-Bela, Namibia or Nooitgedacht, the West Coast or the Wild Coast, we wish you only the best. May the road be quiet and without challenges – unless you prefer them – and may your caravan stand be even and in the shade of a grand old tree.

And remember to share your experiences with us. One of the best things about our job is getting to read all the readers' stories. Take, for example, the Taits from Ottosdal's story on p.70. We all hunger for stories like these, because it gives us the opportunity to experience places we might never get to.

So make your plans, write it down in a diary, take lots of pictures, and send it to us. Maybe your story, like the Taits', will be published in the magazine.

Safe travels.

Schalk

EDITOR

schalk.jonker@media24.com

It became clear we would not be getting a break from the squall as we had hoped. But were we going to leave? No way!

p.136



Cover photos Leon Botha (Fraaigelegen) and Evan Naudé (South Luangwa)

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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.



FREE OF CHARGE

We had recently emerged from the Richtersveld after driving some hectic routes with a broken front shock.

After a windy, cold night spent near Springbok, we set off for the Cederberg with the heater turned up.

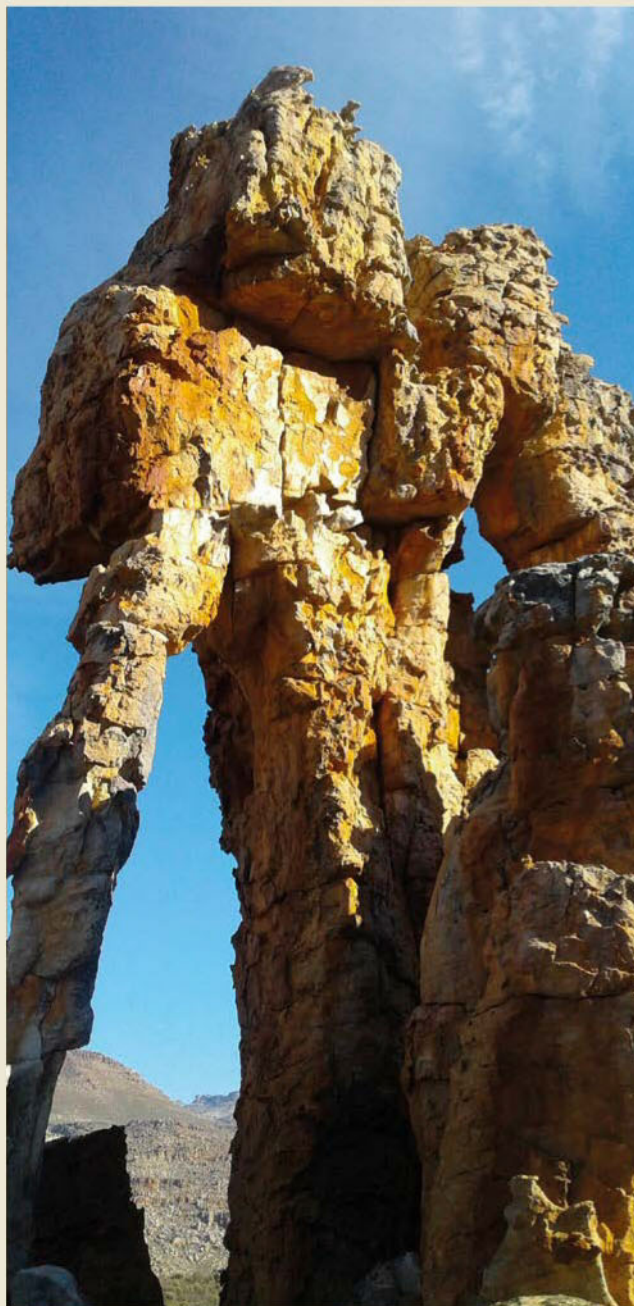
After a while, a diesel smell became noticeable. I switched off the heater, thinking it might be picking up engine smells. After my wife, too, became aware of the smell, I stopped and discovered an injector pipe with a hairline crack. Back on the farm in KwaZulu-Natal, I'd have fixed the problem easily, but that horrible feeling of being helpless in "the middle of nowhere" set in.

After about 30 km, we drove into the village of Garies. The attendant at the fuel station directed us around the corner to the workshop of the local mechanic (I never did get his name unfortunately).

Without any fuss, this gentleman removed the offending pipe, braised it, and replaced it before we could drink a cup of coffee. Upon enquiring about payment, we were told that none was required! I need say no more.

Oh, yes, one thing: the Garies Tourism Stall is worth a visit – their venison pies are darned good.

ROB AND CELIA SPEIRS
Boston, Howick



Winning letter

Rob and Celia wins a go! Drive & Camp lunch bag cooler and a handy saddle bag worth R410. The cooler can comfortably hold a packed lunch and a 1,5-litre bottle in the main compartment, with extra space in the lid for a coffee flask.

The saddle bag fits over a gear lever (like a saddle) and is made from durable ripstop material. Keep your passports and important documents in a large pocket and store charger cables, keys or wet wipes in the smaller pockets.





Skollie and the waterman

My wife Trudie and I and our friends Hoffie and Santie Hoffman recently returned from an unforgettable trip to the Baviaanskloof.

Our first stopover was at the Bokloof Guest Farm, where you can explore the kloof on foot. Skollie, the resident dog, is your "guide" because he walks with you and shows you which direction to go. (According to Anina Bezuidenhout of Bokloof, Skollie's mother was an Australian border collie, but the father's breed is unknown.)

After I downloaded the photos at home, I see something that we didn't notice



in the kloof. On one picture Trudie is standing between giant rocks with water seeping down the sides. The water stain resembles the silhouette of an old man with a walking stick.

If you're heading this way and plan on walking, bring something for Skollie to eat. He loves snacking, even if after 13 summers he's getting on a bit.

FLIP MARAIS
Benoni

BAHATI WILL SEE US AGAIN

Thanks very much for the article about Bahati in *go! Drive & Camp's* August issue. We spent eight days here in August and the campsite was just as great as you described; the red duiker even came to greet us at our stand. As older campers we appreciated the private ablution facilities very much.

We used Bahati as a base from which we could visit the reserves in the area.

Walking and driving around in Bahati was equally enjoyable, since there's quite a variety of animals to see. We enjoyed walking safely through Bahati because there are no elephants, rhinos or predators.

We will definitely be back very soon.

JIM GOSS-ROSS
Umkomaas



SWEET, SWEET WATER

After 34 years our family decided to go camp at Soetwater close to Kommetjie again.

We managed to fit all our camping gear into two cars and two bakkies and we drove the beautiful coastal road past Scarborough to Soetwater.

When we arrived, the guys had to hustle to pitch the tents while my friend Nazeem Hendricks got the fires going.

After the braai the conversation kept going and we eventually finished all the wood.

The next morning we had to buy more and I also bought a great tree stump next to the road for R10 to keep the fire burning for even longer.

Back at Soetwater we saw a diverse crowd of campers who had all come to relax next to



the water. In the one corner was a group of bikers and on the opposite side, nuns.

We were going to stay till the

Monday because it was a long weekend but then we heard rain was coming so we packed up and left a day early.

We enjoyed it so much we've booked again.

ASA BESSLEY
Mitchels Plain

Pump fiction

How do you prefer to fill your car's tank at the pumps?



Do you allow the attendant to fill all the way to the cap or do you use the auto-stop function?



Chris van der Merwe

We fill the Cruiser right to the brim. Then we scratch around for more containers, even an empty chutney jar lying at the children's feet. Everything needs to be filled if we're going to make it to the next pump.



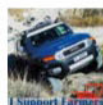
Stef du Raan

I tell the attendant to keep going. After the first auto-stop, my car can take another R140 worth of fuel.



Adrian Trevor Smuts

When I'm on the road it depends how far it is to the next stop and how much money I have available. Those extra litres cost a few rand.



Mike Hamilton

I drive a Cruiser. I say "stop" at R2 000.



Geert de Jong

I fill it to the brim. My car is so thirsty that when I pull away from the station it's already on the auto-stop level.



Hentie Holtzhausen

I always ask the same pump attendant to fill up until the auto-stop kicks in.



Niel Maree

Heck, guys. You're a couple of wealthy buggers. It's been many years since I could afford to fill my tank. These days the attendant auto-stops on R100.



Suzette Lambrechts

We fill up until auto-stop kicks in, otherwise my car gets dirtied with petrol.



Gielie Lambrechts

I use the same attendant, a guy called Paulus. He never spills the fuel.



Pieter Schoeman

Shake it to and fro until the kids get sick, then auto-stop, and then it's full.



Jaco Prinsloo

I park the rear wheel on the same side as the cap, up onto a block, and then I fill up – preferably early in the morning.



Johan Bantjes

In my experience they can fill an extra 5 to 10 l when they do the full tank thing, yet my mileage per tank is more or less the same when filling up either way.



Chris and Alida Laing

We fill until the auto-stop kicks in and then round off to the nearest rand. Our Bantam got damaged after we filled the tank to the cap and then parked in direct sunlight.



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Which bakkie for me?

Bakkies from the seven mainstream manufacturers in South Africa are all great vehicles. They are, however, not all the same, says Mic van Zyl.

After many months of deliberation and indecisiveness, I have finally taken the plunge into bakkie ownership. My new company 4x4 is a double cab diesel automatic. People who know me will know that I am a huge Toyota fan. There have, therefore, been many surprised reactions that my latest choice in vehicle is not a Hilux.

Over the last couple of months I have written quite a bit about double cab bakkies and bakkie ownership. I have tried to stay neutral. The reason for this is quite simple. In my opinion, the bakkies from the seven mainstream bakkie manufacturers represented in South Africa (Toyota Hilux, Ford Ranger, Nissan Navara, Volkswagen Amarok, Isuzu KB, Mazda BT-50, and Mitsubishi Triton) are all great vehicles. They are, however, not equal. Even the closely related Ford Ranger and Mazda BT-50 differ significantly.

Unless you are brand loyal, the decision about which one to buy is difficult. As a 4x4 enthusiast and head of a large 4x4 company, I have realised a few things about people when it comes to their choice in vehicle brand. People buy a particular brand of vehicle for various reasons. Previous ownership and brand loyalty are big ones. Perceived quality, affordability, peace of mind, available vehicle options, trade-in value, resale value, perceived status... the list goes on.

Another thing I've realised is that there is an awful amount of

misinformation out there that has become worse with the advent of social media. A bad experience for one person can spread like wildfire and create the wrong impression about a certain vehicle or brand among a huge amount of people. This is true for just about any product. I'm a big fan of social media, but it can sometimes be quite damaging.

"SO WHAT DID YOU GET?" you may ask. Here is my opinion of the seven bakkies mentioned above and my personal choice. The Triton is a great little truck with many great features and standard gear. I think it's vastly improved from the previous generation. I used to occasionally drive the previous model when I worked for Ironman 4x4 in Australia and it was horrible. The pain still lingers.

The Mazda should be better than it is because it's supposed to be a Ford with a Mazda badge. But it's not. The interior is not great, the steering nowhere near as good, and the looks don't do it for me.

The Isuzu does everything well and without fuss. It has a great list of standard features. It's an old favourite of mine. And therein lies the problem. Old. It should have the 2,8 ℓ engine from the Chevrolet Trailblazer by now.

The Amarok is great. I've always liked VW. The V6 is stonking. Pity it can't handle a 2-inch suspension lift. The standard equipment is very weak with an expensive options list.

The new Navara D2.3 is very

pleasant. I love the rear coil spring suspension. There is a decent amount of standard equipment. The radio is terrible though, and the engine and gearbox is not convincing. This leaves the Hilux and Ranger.

If my choice was based on looks, reliability and resale value, it would have to be the Hilux. I like that shark nose and I like the tablet-style radio. Toyotas are reliable, period. The problem is, after an 11-year gap between the launch of the previous model (Vigo) and the latest (Revo), there has been no quantum leap forward with the Hilux. It's a little better in most areas. Besides, how do you significantly improve on something that is already so darn good? Not easily. I get this.

I would have thought, however, that they could have done something about the shockingly poor ride of the Hilux suspension. Also, the standard equipment list on the top model is quite thin. This is what has driven me away from my favourite brand and I'm a bit sad.

After having driven the Ranger Wildtrak extensively, I just could not fault it. Beautiful ride, heaps of standard gear, solid feel to the steering, and mountains of torque and power. This is the car that Toyota should have built. 🚗

“
People know that I am a huge Toyota fan, so there have been many surprised reactions that my latest choice is not a Hilux.”

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

Don't let a bad battery system ruin your holiday

Andre van Vuuren is a tour guide with Fly Africa Safaris and he has more than 18 years of overlanding experience in Africa. He's led more than a thousand vehicles across the border, as far as Uganda, and he has worked on many dual-battery systems, deep-cycle batteries and charging systems. Here's his advice.

I have seen technology evolve from a cooler box packed with dry ice to a fridge connected directly to the vehicle's main battery. Then solenoid systems took over the market and today we have vehicles with smart alternators, absorbent glass matt (AGM) batteries and best of all, DC-to-DC chargers.

People have argued for many years about which split-charging system is the best, but with the latest alternator and battery technology, we need to admit that solenoid technology is outdated. It served the market very well for many years, but DC-to-DC charging is the future.

Most vehicles still have an older lead acid battery as its main cranking battery, and the alternator is designed to charge that battery. However, with the use of an "intelligent charging system" the unit can be programmed to specifically charge more specialised auxiliary batteries (AGM, lead calcium or gel).

It is important to remember that a battery is just a storage tank and it will not determine the efficiency of the system. The most important factors are the efficiency of the charging system and the condition of the battery. Although driving time also plays a role, it is not as important as the other two factors. A DC-to-DC charger will always charge the second battery to 100% – the same cannot be said of a solenoid system. A solenoid system will initially charge a depleted battery quicker to a certain point, but it won't be able to charge the battery to full capacity. It will take a little longer for a DC-to-DC charger to charge the same battery, but it will restore the status of the battery and charge it to full capacity.

It is extremely important to use the correct charging method. If incorrect charging methods are used, it may result in premature battery failure or permanent battery damage.

The InterVOLT DCC Pro DC-DC charging system has endured vigorous testing in Africa that has led to some impressive results. The greatest benefit is the unit's ability to perform at 20% at temperatures

between 50°C and 85°C. (All other chargers in this category switch off at 50°C). It will also remain effective to an operating humidity of up to 98%.

The DCC Pro has a multitude of features with great benefits:

- The unit is IP67 rated, with unrivalled temperature performance. It can safely be fitted under the bonnet of the vehicle, in a dust-proof and waterproof casing.
- The unit comes standard with an in-cab display, which gives you accurate battery performance from the comfort of the driver's seat. The display system allows you to keep track of two individual chargers from one display monitor.
- The built-in MPPT solar controller allows for optimal charging in the sun.
- The unit will correctly charge AGM, gel, deep-cycle calcium and lead acid batteries.
- The unit works with all newer "smart alternators" currently available, and will give true 25-amp charging.

This revolutionary charging system is made in Australia for the harsh conditions of the Outback and Africa. As a standalone power conversion

unit, you require no modification to your vehicle's original wiring and no changes are made to the manufacturer's electrical system.

Once installed, the system requires no maintenance and all necessary info is displayed in the cabin. Many other brands only display battery voltage; the InterVOLT display gives a real-time indication of charge rate, current usage and charging phase.

The ability to connect more than one unit to the display is unheard of in the industry. Monitoring up to four batteries at once allows a user to maintain batteries in a trailer or off-road caravan while travelling.

SO WHAT IS MY RECOMMENDATION?

I would choose a flooded wet-cell deep-cycle battery like the Discover Mixtech EMX. (Buy it from a reputable battery dealer for proper fitment and warranty purposes.) This kind of battery is much less expensive than a dry-cell, EV traction battery and will perform equally well if connected to an InterVOLT DCC Pro DC-DC charging system, available from Opposite Lock and numerous 4x4 outlets.



MORE INFO:
www.oppositelock.co.za





Status symbol? No...

A person's behaviour says more about him than his caravan or camping gadgets, says Neels van Heerden.

I see there's a buzz on social media lately about how a caravan is apparently a status symbol.

That reminds me of a story about a pitch black 1967-model VW Beetle named Nap. It used to belong to a former Tuks rector, prof. C.H. Rautenbach. Prof. Rautenbach was widely known as prof. Nap – short for Napoleon. He may have been small in stature, but he was big in personality.

At the end of his tenure, a student asked him if he would consider a car that was a truer reflection of his social status.

I also remember camping friends who recently emigrated to Canada who always sipped on their extremely fancy coffee, pinkys in the air.

"No," prof. Nap answered with a smile. "My car doesn't give me status. I give status to my car."

After that the VW was also nicknamed Nap, and apparently black Beetles became extremely popular in Pretoria after prof. Rautenbach's retirement.

WHILE I'M FOLLOWING this debate about caravans as status symbols, I couldn't help but wonder whether any children have ever argued about who was

going to inherit their parents' caravan and who was going to get the Persian carpets. People younger than 40 who don't have an EB driver's licence probably wouldn't give the caravan a second glance and rather make a beeline for the carpets.

But what is a status symbol actually? Is it fancy things that people spend their money on with the express intention of impressing others?

A typical status-conscious camper might sit around the campfire and brag about how his toddler's laptop's memory is bigger than the combined memory of all the computers on the Apollo 8 spacecraft. This is the same guy who says things like how he prefers lager to beer because the former's brewing process is done by a master brewer.

I also remember camping friends who recently emigrated to Canada who always sipped on their extremely fancy coffee, pinkys in the air. This coffee was brewed by a special, shiny machine and according to them it was impossible for anyone to have a better machine than this.

Other camping acquaintances liked to display their bottle of Johnny Walker Platinum in a cabinet at the door. Koos Junior, however, once let the cat out of the bag when he mentioned his dad pouring cheap whiskey into the bottle.

Then there's that special group of people who simply have to have every new gadget

on the market. A new Weber in the stores? Buy, buy, buy! At the campsite, the Weber is put on display for all and sundry to behold. It doesn't matter that the fillet steak is as tough as leather after the braaier and his fancy Weber are done with it.

YOUR STAND is also a status symbol. After my dad bought his first caravan in the 1970s, every year he hammered his pegs in at Scottburgh on stand no.193. It was the one located farthest from the gate.

Back then the stands on that particular side of the park didn't have electricity and the people (let me just call them snobs) who camped close to the gate referred to the section without electricity as Monkeyland.

With time, power sockets became standard but people continued to chase status with fancy extras like air con.

Where the choice in towing vehicles used to be restricted to Kombis, Ford V8s and Big Six bakkies, the focus shifted to towing vehicles as status symbols. You'll also get looks if your vehicle isn't chipped.

In my opinion, a caravan with fancy accessories is not a status symbol. It's simply a mobile home that you use to go and relax somewhere with your family to recharge your batteries.

We, as campers, must give status to this type of holiday through our impeccable behaviour on the road and at the campsites.



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Challenge(r) accepted

The Mookgopong-based manufacturer Challenger has added another range to its already impressive collection of caravans: They designed a vehicle that is both trailer and caravan. The new Cross-Over range is a luggage trailer that you can kit out so that you ultimately have an off-road trailer.

Most trailers don't have a side door with a sliding frame or corner steadies or a door in the back that you can fold open to create a work surface, much less a roof rack that fits a roof-top tent with space to put a table underneath. Two 12 V power sockets? Forget about it.

That, however, is exactly what Challenger managed to do with the Cross-Over. This trailer is perfect for campers who want to start small. Well-equipped off-road trailers are not cheap – these days there are a number of models that cost as much as a caravan. With the Cross-Over you can start with a basic trailer and then add extras as you go. This includes a sliding frame system for the rear door and a two-plate gas stove with a gas bottle. There is also a wood rack, a 42 l water

tank, and a power system with a converter.

The standard Cross-Over is aimed at people who tow with a light motor vehicle driver's licence, because the gross vehicle mass (GVM) is 750 kg. That means the run-in brakes aren't standard, but are an optional extra. The same goes for shock absorbers.

The Cross-Over range comes in khaki only, but there are three models. The overall design of the Caprivi, Kalahari and Sahara are the same – the only difference is their length (between 2 525 mm and 3 135 mm). Due to 15" wheels, the Kalahari and Sahara's height and ground clearance is higher than that of the Caprivi with its 14" wheels.

Price At the time of going to print the prices were not yet available.

Contact ☎ 014 743 1151

✉ sales@challenger

trailers.co.za

✉ challengertrailers.co.za



There's an eland on your roof

A roof rack is handy to transport items such as gas bottles, wood and extra fuel. But when there's nothing on your roof rack you often wish you didn't have one at all

because the wind noise can be maddening.

The Bush Company came up with a solution: to put the slats of its Eland roof racks lengthways instead of crosswise.

It's a simple solution that works so well you can't help but wonder why other manufacturers don't also do it.

The Eland roof rack is welded together, so there are no bolts or screws used.

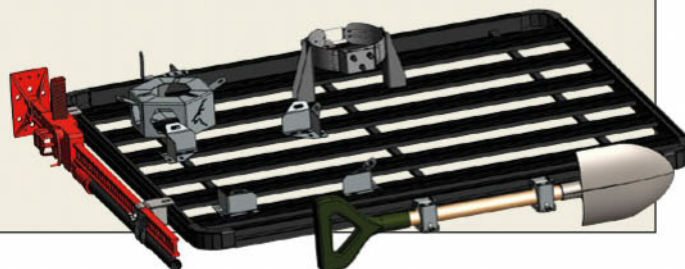
The aluminium frame

has three slots – inside, on top and on the outside – to mount accessories. These accessories are available through The Bush Company.

Contact ☎ 010 010 0060

✉ info@thebushcompany.co.za

Price R6 995 (double cab) >



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Toyota comes out on top

International market research company IPSOS conducted a telephonic survey in which the satisfaction of 7 000 owners of 17 different car brands were measured. Owners were asked about their general satisfaction with sales, service, reliability and overall impressions.

Toyota was named the overall winner in the survey after it won in 10 of the categories.

Its winners were the Yaris (best small hatchback), Corolla Quest (best small sedan), Avanza (best multi-purpose vehicle), Prado (best large sport utility vehicle), Hilux (best petrol single cab

bakkie), Hilux (best diesel single cab bakkie), best one-ton bakkie (shared with Nissan), best bakkie manufacturer, best passenger vehicle plant (shared with Volkswagen), best passenger vehicle brand, and best local light commercial vehicle manufacturing plant.

Nissan scored eight gold medals with the Micra, Almera, NP200, NP300 Hardbody, Navara double cab, best one-ton single cab (shared with Toyota), one-ton double cab (shared with Volkswagen), and best-seller (shared with Volkswagen).

In third place, with six medals, was Volkswagen

for its Polo hatchback, Polo sedan, Amarok, best one-ton double cab (shared with Nissan), best-seller (shared with Nissan), and best passenger vehicle plant (shared with Toyota).

Audi won five golds for its A3 Sportback, A5 Sportback,

A3, and Q5, and a gold medal for overall best passenger vehicle.

Ford won two medals, both for its Ford Mustang, and Opel and Renault each received one medal for the Mokka and the Captur, respectively.



A LOOK AT THE NEW JEEP

Rumours about the 2018 Jeep Wrangler have been doing the rounds for some time, but speculation reached fever pitch after a few pages of the owner's manual were leaked on social media.

Fiat Chrysler first refused to comment on the photos, but they have recently released an official statement as well as some photos. The press release reads as follows:

"The most capable SUV ever delivers even more legendary Jeep 4x4 capability, a modern design that stays true to the original, advanced fuel-efficient powertrains, more open-air options, and is loaded with more safety features and advanced technology than ever before. The all-new Wrangler's design includes an instantly recognisable

keystone-shaped grille, iconic round headlamps and square tail lamps, improved aerodynamics, a convenient fold-down windshield for off-road purists, even more open-air freedom, and dozens of different door, top and windshield combinations."

What we can derive from the photos is that the new Jeep does indeed have a folding windshield while the A-frame remains upright. There is also some kind of vent near the front mud guard and air intakes on the bonnet. It also looks like the Wrangler's doors and roof are much easier to remove than the previous model's. >



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- I** Large lockable heavy duty latches with strong moulded hinges. **R2 700.00**

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- J** 510g Heavy duty 100% Cotton Canvas, Water Resistant, including extra sandwich layer of foam for your comfort. **R5 500.00**



BULL RIDE

Infanta 4x4 recently launched its first camper. The Inkunzi (which means "bull" in Xhosa) is a camping unit that Infanta builds onto the back of a single cab bakkie. They started off with a model that fits onto the chassis of a Land Cruiser bakkie. They do custom designs, though, says Jurie Swart of Infanta, and they can fit the Inkunzi onto other manufacturers' vehicles.

A year or two ago, Infanta did groundbreaking work by adding a slide-out bed to its Enkulu 2. Jurie and his team use the same winning recipe in the Inkunzi, putting the slide-out part behind the driver's seat. You therefore sleep diagonally, in the back of the cabin, with built-in compartments at the top of the bed. This leaves extra room in the Cruiser where you can place a porta-potti to the right of the door.

The fridge is to the left of the door right at the entrance. You can tell Jurie doesn't shy away from innovation. A fridge in a vehicle isn't unusual but it is often a bit inconvenient if it's not on a drawer, like this one is. So you have to get in the vehicle if you want to get something out of the fridge.

The solution is a large door in the left panel that folds up and ensures easier access from

the outside. There are two doors built into the kitchen section, with the fold-out shower on the other side.

What comes standard? A pop-up roof (which you lift manually), slide-out bed, a spare wheel that fits underneath the bed, a 120 l water tank, one-plate gas stove, 220 V electrical system with a charger as well as a 102 Ah battery and 1 kg fire extinguisher.

Extras A 5 kg gas bottle R570; porta-potti R2 052; 12 V water pump with pipes R4 560; 19 l high-pressure geyser R9 120; outside shower R3 249; electric roof lift R9 120; 60 l Engel freezer R15 390; and a 150 W solar panel R8 135. If you want the camper the same colour as your vehicle, it's an additional R2 280.

Price R216 600 (standard) and R284 471 (fully equipped).

Contact 028 512 3663

info@infantatrailers.co.za

infantatrailers.co.za

For more information about Infanta-4x4's off-road caravans, read our review of the Enkulu 1 on p. 84. – Ed.



Boxing clever

If you don't want to stow recovery or fishing gear underneath your Fortuner's seats, but you also don't want a toolbox rolling around in the boot, you're in luck because now there is a clever solution: The BOOXE BootBox is a storage box that fits into

the footwell behind the second row of seats in any Toyota Fortuner – new or old.

The box's lid is level with the floor so you can still use all the boot space. BOOXE also has a BootMat rubber mat that hides the box so you can store valuable items inside without fear of it being detected.

Contact 066 1762 522

info@booxe.co.za

booxe.co.za

Price R1 495 for the BootBox and R995 for the BootMat (R2 395 for both) >



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More new vehicles sold

According to the Department of Trade and Industry, local new vehicle sales have increased for the fifth consecutive month. Despite the country's struggling economy, new vehicle sales increased by 4,6% in October 2017 when compared to October 2016.

A total of 51 037 new vehicles were sold to local

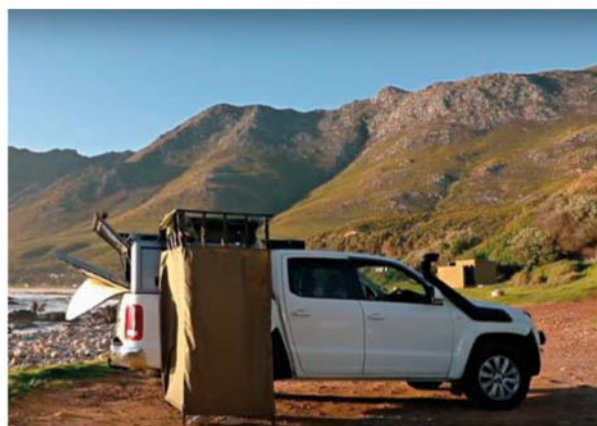
buyers (versus 48 782 in 2016), and 28 229 were shipped to overseas markets.

Exports dropped by 8,3% – the department attributes that to declining investor confidence and a severe storm that hit Durban Harbour (pictured below) and the Toyota South Africa plant (also in Durban) during October of 2017.

HERE ARE SOME NUMBERS FOR NEW VEHICLE SALES AND EXPORTS FOR OCTOBER 2017

	Local	Exports
Toyota	12 312	3 611
Volkswagen Group	7 898	2 177
Ford	6 337	5 801
Nissan	4 858	804
Hyundai	3 464	0
Kia	2 219	0
Renault	2 150	0
Mercedes-Benz	2 015	9 562
BMW	1 341	5 858
Mazda	1 116	0
Suzuki	917	0
Honda	570	30
Jaguar Land Rover	537	0
Volvo	460	54
Mahindra	402	0
Tata	220	0
Fiat	130	6
Mitsubishi Motors	123	0
Subaru	107	0
Peugeot Citroen	73	0

Source: NAAMSA



SHOWER IN A JIFFY

A portable shower is one of the basic necessities you take with on a trip through Africa, and now Quick Pitch and GT Camper in Pretoria have joined forces to design and build an instant shower tent.

The Quick-en-Suit bolts onto your bakkie's canopy or a caravan's wall – pitching it couldn't be easier. The shower cubicle's curtains are made of polyester and rolled up in an aluminium box (or a canvas bag, depending on your preference).

An aluminium frame folds out of the box and the cubicle hangs from this. The top part of the cubicle is fixed to the frame with narrow, adjustable bands



so you can adjust the height of the tent.

The bottom part can also be fastened to the surface area with tent pegs in case of wind. The cubicle is set up in a mere eight seconds.

You also don't have to use the cubicle as a shower only; you can use it as a changing room or a toilet.

Price R4 047 (fabric bag) and R5 073 (aluminium box)

Contact 012 770 3633

gt.camperoffice@gmail.com

gtoffroadtrailers.co.za



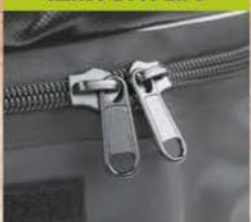
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A wolf in sheep's clothing

As the demand for SUVs of all sizes continues to increase, Alfa Romeo has decided to vie for a piece of that market pie. Kyle Kock gets behind the wheel of the Stelvio.

The Italians have recognised that the automotive world is changing, with car makers trying to appeal to as big an audience as possible. It just doesn't make financial sense to cater to the boutique hatch crowd and supercar elite, does it? No, and what better way than to make a splash in the SUV crowd?

In the metal

Using the same design language used on the Giulia sedan, the Stelvio compact SUV strikes a familiar pose thanks to its narrow

headlamps and elongated V grille with gaping vents that flank it. The shoulder line rises continuously to the rear, culminating in a sort of sill just above the tail lamps. The profile looks a lot more race-ready than family-friendly, with a tinted glasshouse bordered by chrome trim and massive wheel arches that appear to be able to hold a lot more than the 18" wheels that come fitted as standard on the base model Stelvio.

Living up to the name

You're probably wondering what business this mid-size Milanese SUV has being named after one of the most picturesque mountain passes in the world that features no less than 75 hairpins bends. Well, Alfa Romeo is a company that is famed for developing the suspension and overall driving dynamics of its vehicles in the mountains, and they're the first carmaker cheeky enough to name a vehicle after a pass.

SUVs aren't exactly small cars, and to keep excess mass to a minimum, the company made liberal use of aluminium in the Stelvio's construction. To this end, even the driveshaft is made of ultra-light carbon fibre. Even more impressive is that the engineers achieved perfect 50:50 weight distribution between the Stelvio's axles.

Elegantly appointed

The interior is very much like the Giulia's, where it feels like you're sitting in a tub



ALFA STELVIO

rather than perched on top of a seat looking over everything. That also means that even tall drivers will find there's a few fingers worth of headroom.

There's a decent array of safety equipment, including active cruise control, blind spot monitoring, pedestrian detection, and lane departure warning.

You can have up to 525 ℓ of boot space if you spec your Stelvio with a puncture repair kit, but if that makes you feel a bit nervous you can always sacrifice 26 ℓ and get a proper spare.

A hoot to drive

For now, the Stelvio is equipped with a 2.0 ℓ turbopetrol four-cylinder engine that's good for 206 kW and 400 Nm of torque. Drive is sent to all four corners if need be via an eight-speed automatic transmission and Alfa's Q4 all-wheel-drive system. In most

driving conditions the system acts like a rear wheel drive with all the torque sent to the rear axle. Up to 50% can be sent to the front if the conditions require it.

Alfa Romeo claims that the Stelvio's power-to-weight ratio is the best in its class, and we can tell you that the 1 660 kg certainly doesn't feel like much when you put your foot down. It also helps that there's a double wishbone front suspension and multilink rear setup, and that the Stelvio's steering also got plenty of attention to ensure maximum response to driver inputs.

Conclusion

The Stelvio is a sign of the times. Manufacturers are scrambling for a share of every possible niche – sometimes with dire consequences. But Alfa Romeo has managed to stay true to its values and not look silly in the process.

Even more impressive, is that the engineers achieved perfect 50:50 weight distribution between the Stelvio's axles.



SPECIFICATIONS

Model Alfa Romeo

Stelvio Super

Engine 1 995 cc, 4-cylinder turbopetrol

Power 206 @ 5 250 rpm

Torque 400 @ 2 250 rpm

Transmission 8-speed automatic

Fuel consumption 7 ℓ/100 km

Fuel tank capacity 64 ℓ

Luggage capacity 525 ℓ

Towing capacity 2 300 kg

Ground clearance 200 mm

Wading depth 480 mm

Maintenance plan

6 years/100 000 km

COSSETING CABIN. Passengers are mounted low in the Stelvio, thanks to the high shoulder line. The materials used in the cabin look and feel premium. The DNA selector is close at hand for when you're in the mood for a sportier experience. The front seats are particularly well bolstered to keep buttocks planted.

PRICES

Stelvio Super..... R810 000

Stelvio First Edition..... R946 000



Silver dream gracer

A fourth member of the Range Rover family has arrived. Cyril Kloppe has a look at the most stylish Landie yet.

The brochure of the new Range Rover Velar is 82 pages thick. Page 1 bears the royal crests of Queen Elizabeth, Prince Phillip and Prince Charles, because they all have a Range Rover in their garage. The brochure has a word count of 2 353 words and yet the word “sophisticated” appears just four times in it. They’re clearly too sophisticated to blow their own trumpet. But it’s the actual driving of the Range Rover Velar that really matters, isn’t it.

At first glance

The Range Rover Velar is designed to fit between the

Range Rover Evoque and the Range Rover Sport, but it will attract a wholly different customer. Where the Sport is a favourite among footballers’ wives and the Evoque beams perkiness and success, the Velar will appeal to adults with impeccable taste.

As if whittled and sanded from a single block of aluminium, the Velar has smooth, unbroken lines. Even its door handles are completely flush with the body, rising out of the shell only when its owner approaches. There are no extremities, no excesses, no embellishments, just a compelling yet visually

reductive design and an almost obsessive attention to detail.

It’s not a car that immediately stands out in a crowd, but catch a Velar on its own and the pure simplicity becomes achingly beautiful.

On the inside

The name Velar comes from the Latin *revelare*, meaning “to unveil”. And what an unveiling it is to slip inside this vehicle. The ivory white looks phenomenal on the dashboard and seats, and it also contributes to the airy feel to the interior. Slide open the panoramic sunroof and it becomes doubly so.

The touch screens on the centre console look fantastic, and the physical buttons that blend into the glass touch screens is a technology that isn’t even commonly available in smartphones yet.

The fabric on the seats look and feel like leather but it’s actually a hi-tech recycled textile. It’s meant to offer every advantage of leather but with none of the drawbacks.

There are too many optional and even standard features to mention in the scope of this review – think massaging seats and autonomous parking. Have a look at the configurator on the



RANGE ROVER VELAR

Land Rover website. There you can equip a Velar with as much technology and bespoke levels of trim as you can afford. It's not unlike sitting down with a maritime architect to design your dream yacht. Just don't hit "Enter" at the end unless you have the means to pay for it.



As if whittled and sanded from a single block of aluminium, the Velar has smooth, unbroken lines.

How does it drive?

The drive is similar to the Jaguar F-Pace in that it gives sufficient feedback from the road without rattling your bones. Even on dirt roads the suspension provides a reasonably soft ride, but not quite as soft as that provided by a Volvo V90 Cross Country. Grip is good though, and stomping on the accelerator while driving on a muddy dirt road failed to get our test vehicle out of shape. We were unable to test the full potential of its off-road capability during the official launch but we hope to put this to the test in the near future.

Don't expect a flood of Velars on the 4x4 trails at Moegatle any time soon though.

We drove three variants: the 2.0 diesel D240 HSE, the 3.0 diesel D300 R-Dynamic HSE, and the 3.0 petrol P380 R-Dynamic HSE. We expected the 3.0 petrol to be impressive, and it was. We expected the 2.0 diesel to be sensible, and it was. But we had no idea that the D300 would be such a beast. It had none of the tappet clatter the smaller 2.0 diesel had and almost all of the roar and raw power offered by the 3.0 petrol, but with more torque.

Conclusion

It's a magnificent machine. Land Rover/Jaguar's business model is perplexing though. The Velar competes with its own cousins the F-Pace and Discovery. Admittedly it appeals to a different type of individual, but still...

Should you buy one? Yes, absolutely, if you have the money, but not at the expense of trading in your beloved overland-ready off-roader – and somehow the Velar doesn't strike us as a typical towing vehicle either.



EYE OF A NEEDLE. The steering wheel is classic Landie, but the touch screens are pure sci-fi. The door handles retract into the body and only reveal themselves when the owner requires them to.



PRICES

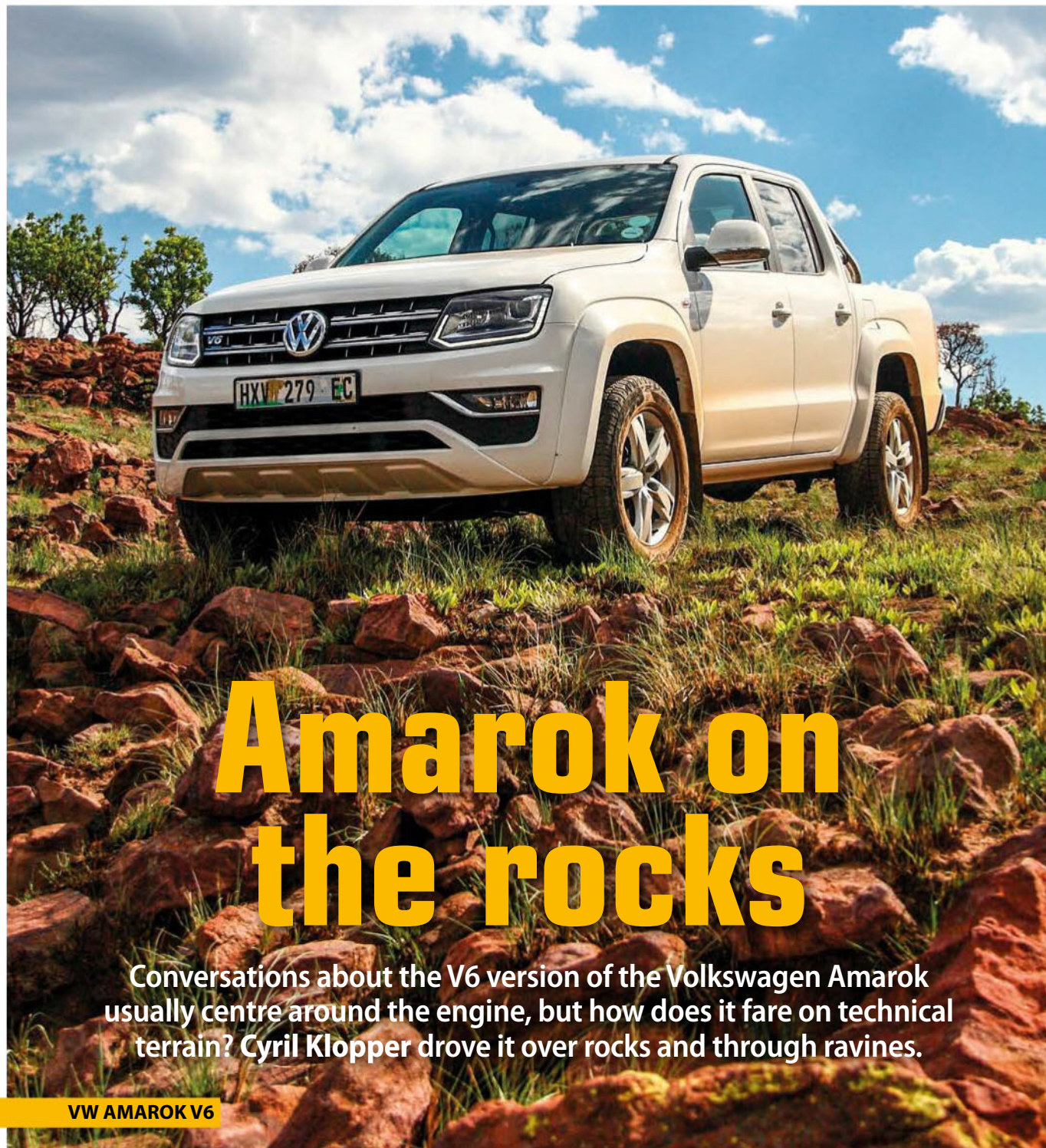
There are a staggering 50 standard variants of the Velar, and that's not counting the custom options to make your Velar unique from just about anyone else's on the face of the Earth. Here are the base prices (without options) for the least expensive, the one that impressed us most, and the dearest. Brace yourself.

Velar 2.0 D D180	R947 700
Velar 3.0 D D300 R-Dynamic HSE	R1 346 400
Velar 3.0 P P380 First Edition	R1 539 800

SPECIFICATIONS D300 R-Dynamic HSE

Engine 2 993 cc, V6 turbodiesel
Power 221 kW @ 4 000 rpm
Torque 700 Nm @ 1 500 rpm
Transmission 8-speed automatic
Fuel consumption 6.4 l/100 km
Fuel tank capacity 66 l
Luggage capacity 558 l
Maximum towing weight 2 500 kg
Ground clearance 251 mm (with air suspension)
Wading depth 650 mm (with air suspension)
Approach and departure angles 29°/29°
Warranty 5 years/100 000 km
Service plan 5 years/100 000 km





Amarok on the rocks

Conversations about the V6 version of the Volkswagen Amarok usually centre around the engine, but how does it fare on technical terrain? Cyril Klopper drove it over rocks and through ravines.

VW AMAROK V6

Let's get the talk about the engine out of the way: The Amarok's V6 engine is the same as what you'll find in the VW Touareg, Audi Q7, and Porsche Cayenne, and it's coupled with Volkswagen's excellent eight-speed automatic transmission. In August 2017, we hitched an off-road trailer to the V6 Amarok and it really impressed us. But

this month we're putting its off-road abilities to the test.

Purists prefer a short stick next to the gear lever, and some die-hards even enjoy the tactile involvement of locking the freewheeling hubs manually. The Amarok V6 4Motion that we tested will certainly not impress these purists because it has a button that takes

control of all of the driver's off-road decisions. A button that simply reads "Off Road".

We pressed this button and explored the mountains around Thabazimbi. Afterwards, we studied Volkswagen's technical manual to find out how their 4Motion four-wheel-drive system actually works.

What does the button actually do?

Volkswagen's 4Motion system is available in a full-time and part-time version. In the part-time 4Motion system (available in the 2.0 ℓ versions) the engine's power is sent to the front or rear axles via a transfer case at the driver's command. But we're focussing on the V6 with its full-time 4Motion and that Off Road button.

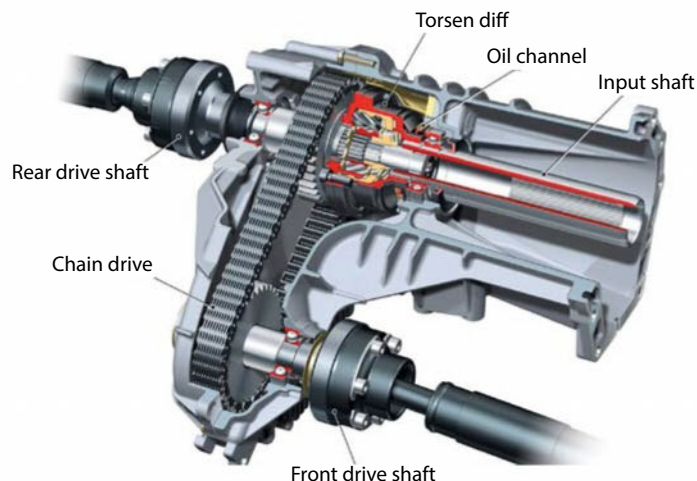
In the full-time 4Motion system, like the one we tested, engine power is sent to both axles via a non-selectable transfer case that is permanently locked and a Torsen differential with limited slip. A Torsen (Torque-Sensing) differential is similar to an ordinary differential but it locks automatically when there's a torque imbalance between the front and rear axles. The diff allows between 20 and 60% of

the torque to be sent to the front axle and between 40 and 80% to the rear axle. No driveshaft can receive 100% torque.

By pressing the Off Road button you activate systems such as the off-road ABS function, off-road electronic stability control and hill descent assist. The on-board computer decides which function should be used when. In the off-road ABS mode the brake pressure build-up and holding phases are extended and depressurisation is shorter and takes place later. If there's wheel-slip, the ABS system purposefully ploughs a wedge of sand or gravel in front of a wheel to help shorten the stopping distance. The off-road stability control intervenes later at speeds lower than 50 km/h when the Amarok experiences understeer and also at speeds lower than 70 km/h if



It's just the thing for people who aren't fazed about best 4x4 practices. All that matters to them is that their Amarok will be able to conquer obstacles.



TIGHT LINES. The tailgate is understated just like that of the Mercedes-Benz X-Class. But unlike the Merc the various perspectives and details of the Amarok seems to have been designed by one person rather than by a committee. Its lines are simple, yet elegant.

oversteer occurs. The hill descent control applies the brakes and it almost feels like low range, even though the transfer case doesn't actually have low-range gearing.

An undetectable array of clever electronic decisions is, therefore, unleashed every time you press that button. It's just the thing for people who aren't fazed about best 4x4 practices. All that really matters to them is that their Amarok will be able to conquer obstacles – how it achieves this is the computer's problem.

But does it work?

The Off Road button works fine, but it doesn't belong in the same league as a serious off-roader like the Toyota Land Cruiser Pickup or a Nissan Patrol bakkie. Even a Mitsubishi Triton with its Super Select II system scores higher than this Amarok. What does count in its favour is that you don't have to worry about whether to drive in second gear in high range or >

third gear in low range to conquer that massive sand dune in front of you. All you have to do is put your faith in VW's engineers and programmers who have computerised years and years of off-road knowledge and experience.

Another impressive characteristic is the Amarok's soft ride over rough terrain. We drove over rocks as big as coconuts and it might as well have been golf balls because there was very little body shake. It also has a very respectable ground clearance of 239 mm and a wading depth of 500 mm.

The V6 turbodiesel is overkill for regular off-road conditions where caution should trump speed, but if we tested the V6 in Namibia's Skeleton Coast route we would definitely have appreciated the extra power. And if the Off Road button doesn't cut it, there's always the diff lock button that will, at any speed, engage the rear differential.

In a nutshell

The V6 is brilliant as a towing vehicle or as a fast bakkie for the open road, but we're not convinced that the full-time 4Motion system is as good as some of its competitors when it comes to off-roading. The six-cylinder engine is a beast and the suspension is extremely comfortable, but the Mercedes-Benz X-Class V6 that we experienced in South America recently will very likely trounce on the V6 Amarok when it's launched in South Africa in 2018.

SPECIFICATIONS

Model tested 3.0 TDI V6 4MOTION

Engine 2 970 cc, 6-cylinder, turbodiesel

Power 165 kW @ 3 000 rpm

Torque 550 Nm @ 1 400 rpm

Tank 80 ℓ

Towing capacity 3 200 kg

Payload 1 010 kg

Warranty 3 years/100 000 km

Service plan 5 years/90 000 km

Service periods 15 000 km



FINGERS ON THE BUTTON.

No levers, no dials, just one button that does it all. The dashboard is arguably the nicest of all bakkies available in SA. The V6 badge is discreet, which somehow makes it menacing. 🐾

PRICES

3.0 TDI V6 165kW 4MOTION
Auto Highline.....**R665 700**
3.0 TDI V6 165kW 4MOTION
Auto Highline Plus.....**R716 600**
3.0 TDI V6 165kW 4MOTION
Auto Extreme.....**R748 600**





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The better to see you with

Our bakkie project is still going strong, and this month we give the BT-50 a set of spotlights.

Text and photos **Schalk Jonker**



Our long-term test vehicle, a brand new Mazda BT-50 3.2 4x4 SLE bakkie (double cab, automatic), is becoming more and more off-road ready with each passing month. We've already kitted it out with a set of BF Goodrich T/A tyres, a steel rear bumper, bullbar, winch, underbody protection plate, sidesteps and an aluminium canopy. And now it's time for spotlights.

Look where you're going!

You didn't buy your 4x4 to drive around in town and on highways. If that was the case, the standard headlights would have been more than sufficient.

But where you want to drive there are no street lights. And that's why you need a proper set of spotlights for your 4x4.

We chatted to Charl du Plessis of Extreme Lights in Stellenbosch and asked him to recommend the best option for the BT-50. Charl suggested the 30 W Vega XL LED spotlights and says there are three advantages to this choice.

Firstly, the Vega XL throws a concentrated beam, which means you can see farther down the road. Secondly, there's a strip of smaller LED lights in each spotlight that functions as daytime running lights. They improve visibility during the day, making you safer on the road. Thirdly, and let's be honest here, it looks cool and it gives your 4x4 additional attitude.

The Vega XL is also good value for money. In terms of specs and quality it holds its own against the much more expensive models on the market, but you don't have to take out a second bond on your house to pay for it.

To the wire

Charl recommended that we have the spotlights installed by an accredited auto-electrician and referred us to Marius Swart at EPR 4x4 Off Road Centre.

You might think you can do the installation yourself, but if you have it done by a professional the advantages are twofold. You do it once and it's done and it won't void the warranty on your vehicle.

It's a complicated process to connect the lights to your vehicle's electrical system and the wiring practically needs to be done from scratch. So prepare yourself to wait at least a day or two for your car. It's totally worth the wait though.

Modifications so far

JULY 2017

BFG tyres

R16 780

AUGUST 2017

Ironman steel rear bumper

R10 885

(+ R1 083 for installation)

SEPTEMBER 2017

Ironman bullbar

R14 470

(+ R1 500 for installation)

Ironman winch

R12 277

(+ R650 for installation)

OCTOBER 2017

Ironman protection plate

R6 755

(+ R395 for installation)

NOVEMBER 2017

Ironman sidesteps

R5 785

(+ R950 for installation)

DECEMBER 2017

Eko Aluminium canopy

R24 090

JANUARY 2018

Vega XL spotlights

R3 290

(+ R1 615 for installation)

Total

R100 525



This installation was done by EPR 4x4 Off Road Centre in John Costas Road in Plankenbrug, Stellenbosch. Phone them on 021 887 4217/ 082 775 8733 or send an email to admin@epr4x4.com.

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EVOLUTION
BUMPER

AVAILABLE FOR
MOST MODELS

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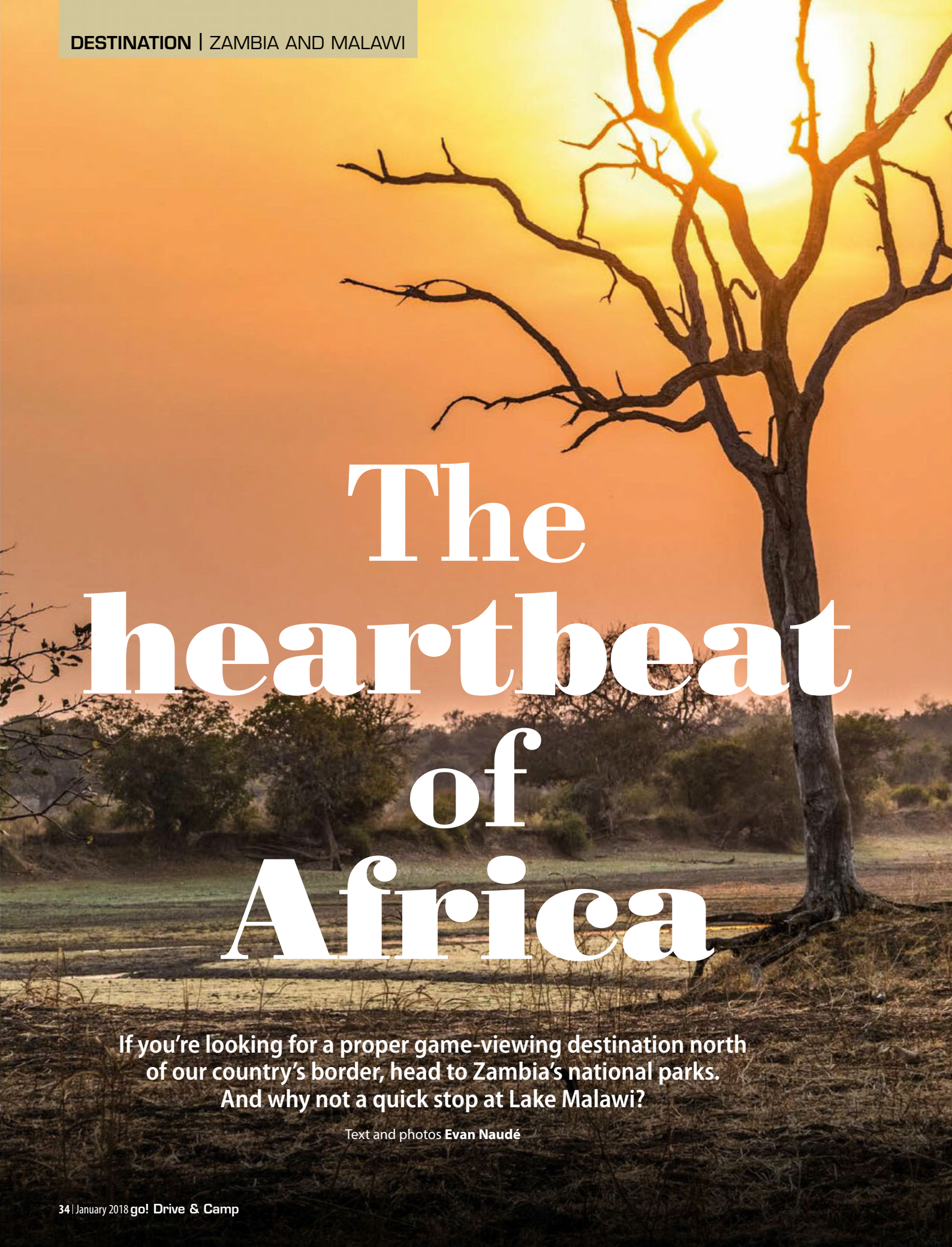
Toyota
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Ford
Ranger

RHINO
4x4

We also offer a range of high quality:
Winches, Recovery Gear, LED Lighting





The heartbeat of Africa

If you're looking for a proper game-viewing destination north of our country's border, head to Zambia's national parks. And why not a quick stop at Lake Malawi?

Text and photos **Evan Naudé**



Zambia has a unique natural beauty, and with its 20 diverse national parks it's no surprise that this country is a popular tourist destination. There are two parks on the banks of the Zambezi River, in November the Liuwa Plains are crawling with migrating wildebeest, and between October and December millions of bats descend on Kasanka in the north. It's probably too many places to experience

in one trip, but once you've visited a few parks, you're bound to return to visit more.

A good way to start exploring this part of the world is at two of Zambia's best known parks: South Luangwa and Kafue. And because Malawi is just around the corner, a visit to the African continent's third-largest lake is not to be sneezed at.

We explored this piece of Africa for 16 days with Bhejane 4x4 Adventures. >



Westwards from Livingstone

The tour group, consisting of 10 vehicles, meet at Camp Nkwazi on the banks of the Zambezi. To get here is in itself an epic trip for those coming from South Africa, which is why we spend the first night comfortably around a campfire before the tour starts in all earnest the following day.

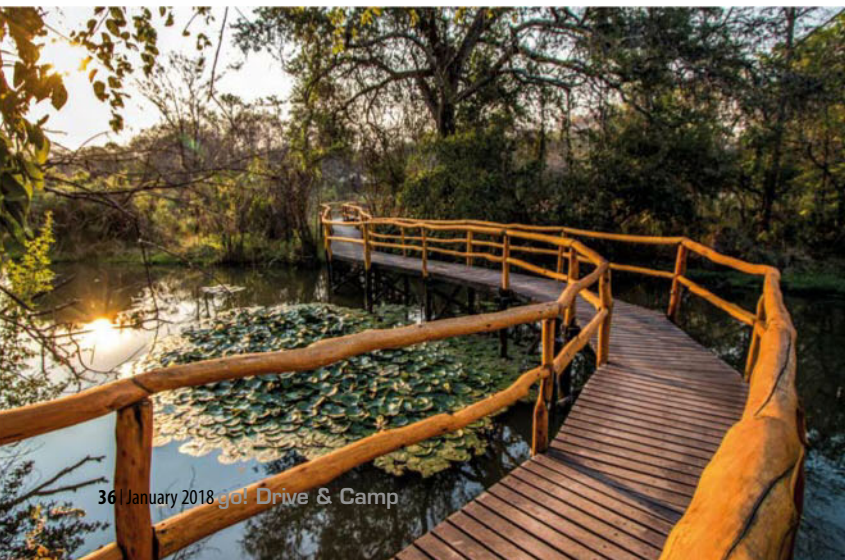
The convoy sets off early on the M10 in the direction of Livingstone. The road leads you through the Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park. It's a small park but it's also the home of one of Africa's most famous natural phenomena: the Victoria Falls. If you haven't yet been here, you need to make a plan, stat. You won't be disappointed. If you really want to spoil yourself, book a guided tour through the park. You walk with a game ranger, and the chance of encountering a lion or rhino is basically 100%.

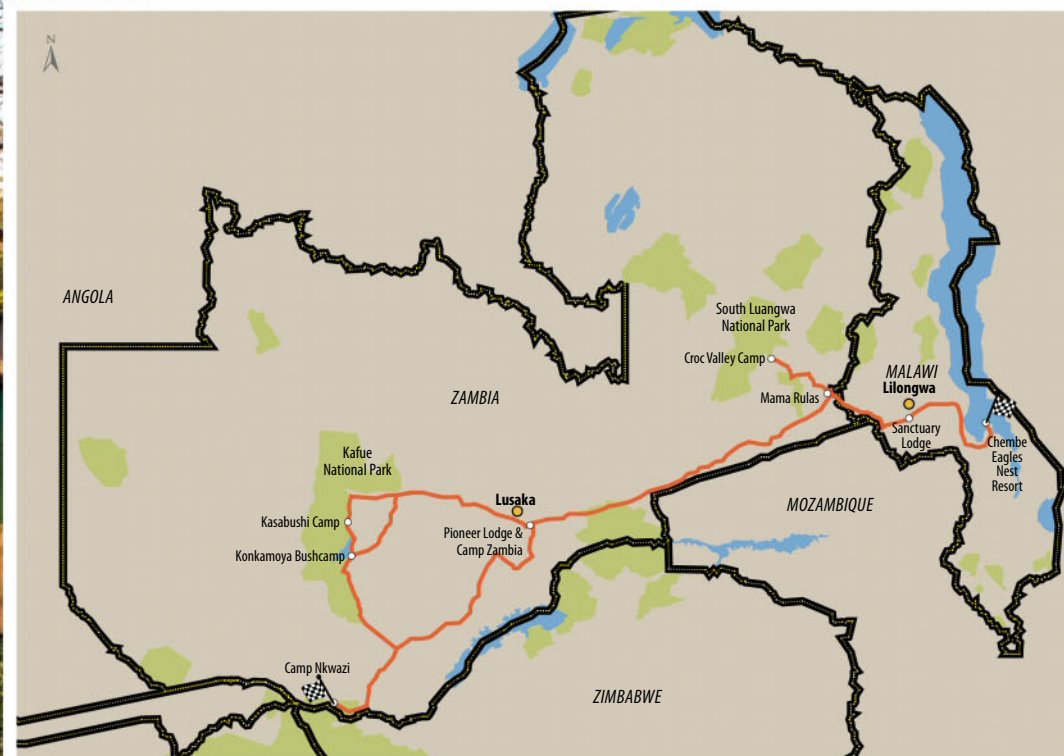
Your car's fuel tank should still be full if you filled up in Kazungula in Botswana (fuel is cheaper here), but there are also garages and supermarkets in Livingstone where you can fill up and obtain provisions before properly letting loose in Zambia.

From Livingstone you drive north-west on the T1 tar road through the small towns of Kalomo and Mazabuka towards the T-junction with the T2, where you head north through Kafue to Lusaka. Immediately you start seeing things on the side of the road that are synonymous with a tour through Zambia: Almost everywhere veld is either burning or smouldering and there's a smoke haze that hangs in the sky from dawn to dusk. This is because of the outdated belief that grass needs to be burnt every year to encourage new



HELLO ZAMBIA. The tour kicks off at Camp Nkwazi (above, below and bottom left) on the Zambezi River before the convoy hits the road (bottom) heading east through Zambia. Shortly thereafter camp life and coffee over a fire becomes the order of the day (left).





growth. When this is done too often it leads to large-scale deforestation and the destruction of habitats – a huge problem in Zambia. You also see bags of charcoal for sale everywhere on the side of the road – the production of which means the end of many large, old trees. The charcoal production is a direct result of the severe poverty, but you can't help but think that if no one intervenes, soon there will be no trees left.

The next thing you notice is large-scale farming. In recent years, the government started subsidising crops such as wheat, cane sugar, maize and cassava, and brought in farmers from South Africa, Zimbabwe and even Argentina to work the land.

One of the big players in the Zambian economy is the copper industry, and you'll see an almost unending string of trucks on the roads transporting this metal to South Africa. They are probably the reason why you get to travel on neat tar roads, but they'll definitely test your patience and raise your blood pressure because of their erratic driving style.

Lusaka is a hive of activity. Unlike the rural areas, it looks like there's major development happening here, though it's mostly centred around shopping malls. >

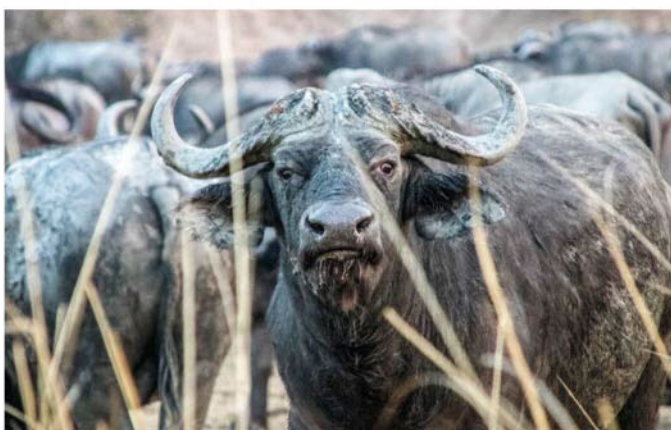


WELCOME TO OUR COUNTRY! You'll be bombarded with curious spectators (above) not long after you stop on the side of the road for lunch. When you get to Lusaka, be on the lookout for AK47-toting passengers on the back of police bakkies (below left) and vehicles with questionable aftermarket wheel accessories.





“
It’s a small park, but it’s also home to one of Africa’s most renowned natural phenomena: the Victoria Falls. If you haven’t been, make a plan!



Brand new shops with well-known South African franchise names displayed on them line the streets – even Food Lover’s Market – and it’s like the city is trying its best to squeeze in as many advertising signs into every available space next to the road to try and sell you every product imaginable.

Outside Lusaka, the convoy heads east along the T4 road to the Luangwa River close to the Mozambican border. After you’ve crossed the bridge over the river, about 50 km of dirt road awaits before you get to a brand new road that will take you

all the way to Chipata. It takes two days to get here, but it’s worth it, because right around the corner you’ll encounter one of the highlights of the tour.

South Luangwa National Park

From Chipata it’s about 120 km north-west along the D104 to South Luangwa’s Mfuwe Gate. We pitch camp for the next three nights at the Croc Valley Camp on the southern bank of the Luangwa River. As you arrive you hear the sounds of hippos in the water. You are now in their backyard – at night hippos and elephants

even come into the camp. Hide all food-stuffs – even during the day – because the vervet monkeys are a bit of a nuisance.

South Luangwa is known for its high concentration of wildlife, and the animals in the park are not fazed by vehicles. That means excellent game drives at all times of the day, although early morning and sunset are always the best. There’s ample game and a good chance of spotting lions, leopards, large herds of elephant, buffalo, kudu, and waterbuck. Keep your eyes peeled for the unique Thornicroft giraffes and cute pukus – these antelope look like



WILD AND UNAPOLOGETIC. South Luangwa National Park is one of the highlights on the tour. Take a few days to explore the park and don't forget your camera because the odds of seeing buffalo, hippos, giraffes and even leopards are always good (left). Only legitimate 4x4 vehicles are allowed into the area (below). The campsite at Croc Valley (above) sits right on the banks of the Luangwa River.



ALL SORTS. The elephants are fond of dropping by every now and then to say hi at Croc Valley, so make sure you keep your edibles at bay. South Luangwa is also the natural habitat of the cute puku, a medium-sized buck.



woolly impalas. And if you're an avid birdwatcher, there are in excess of 400 species in South Luangwa that you can tick off in your bird guide.

It's worth it to put aside an extra day to explore the Nsefu section of the park. Legend has it that former president Kenneth Kuanda wanted to build a house here, but first sunk a borehole. When the water came out it was boiling hot and therefore unusable. Today the water is equally hot, and the source of the spring has formed a beautiful wetland that teems with birdlife.

Malawi and Cape Maclear

From South Luangwa it's about 500 km to Cape Maclear on Lake Malawi, but it's best to drive the distance over two days and sleep over in Lilongwe – you never know how much time you're going to lose at the border. It took our convoy of 10 vehicles three and a half hours to cross the border, consequently arriving in Lilongwe late afternoon.

Like Lusaka, Lilongwe is a busy place, and because of traffic you slowly crawl through the city. One advantage of this is that you have the opportunity to look

COSTS AT THE BORDER POST

Several tariffs are payable at the Zambian and Malawian border posts. During our visit R1 = ZMW0,7 (Zambian kwacha) and R1 = MKW53 (Malawian kwacha). Bring enough cash (there's an ATM at the Zambian border post) and rather avoid the annoying money traders at the border.

Zambia The ferry across the Zambezi from Botswana costs ZMW150. At the border on the Zambian side you have to pay carbon tax in Zambian kwacha: ZMW200 or ZMW275 for engines bigger than 3 l. You also have to pay a council levy of ZMW60, local third-party insurance (about ZMW300) and a road tax in American dollar (US\$20). Keep your road levy's proof of payment in the car, because you have to produce it to traffic officials at road blocks and toll gates.

Malawi You'll need a temporary import permit which costs MKW10 000, as well as local third-party insurance (about MKW25 000). When you return to Zambia you have to pay the council levy and road tax again.

>

Bring this for your vehicle

- Registration documents
- Police clearance
- Two emergency triangles
- Reflective vests for everyone in the vehicle
- Fire extinguisher
- Reflectors – white in front on the vehicle and red at the back
- ZA sticker

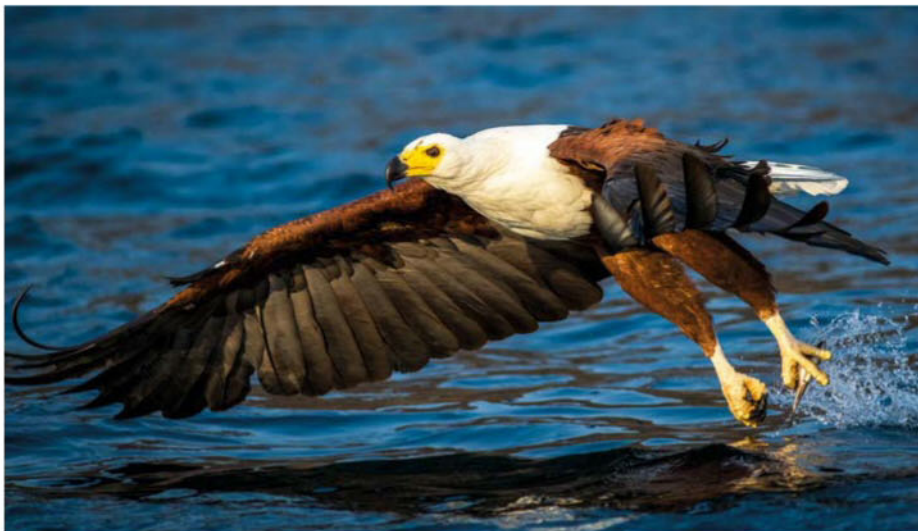
around a bit. Dilapidated tuk-tuks scurry to and fro with impatient passengers. On every street corner there's an informal trader with a host of assorted products. At the traffic light a guy with a goat on the back of his motorbike stops abruptly to give a man with a wheelbarrow loaded with bananas a chance to cross the road. Hundreds of cyclists weave through traffic with loads of building materials, huge bags filled with cassava, and piles of wood that tower out above their heads. And when we leave the city southwards on the M1, you see vendors selling the most beautiful wooden toys on the side of the road. In a small country with loads of people everyone needs to find their own unique way to ensure their survival.

David Livingstone called Lake Malawi the Lake of Stars, and during our first night at Cape Maclear we can clearly see why. At sunset, dozens of fishing vessels cruise out, each with three or four wooden canoes fastened across the boat. These canoes are then unloaded all over the lake and guys catch fish throughout the night. Each canoe has a lantern that lures the fish and it's these lights that in the dark look like stars on the lake.



SOURCE OF LIFE. The locals living around Lake Malawi (above) provide for their families by fishing on the lake. You can also opt to explore the lake by boat (left), or simply enjoy the spectacular sunset from its banks (below).





We spend three nights at the waters edge. Cape Maclear has a string of lodges next to the lake where you can enjoy a cold drink, nap in a hammock underneath a palm tree, and eat as much fish and chips as you can manage. And then, when you feel rested and relaxed, you can snorkel, scuba dive, kayak, fish, and swim in the lake. There are operators who organise day trips to Thumbi and Domwe islands where you can enjoy a traditional fish braai.

You can also do a sunset catamaran trip to Thumbi Island and watch how the osprey – which the skippers have all given names! – catch fish next to the boat. If you've always wanted to snap a photo of a bird of prey in action, this is a great opportunity. For birdwatchers there's the Cape Maclear Nature Reserve where you can go on a guided bird-watching hike.

Kafue National Park

We say goodbye to Malawi and head west again through Zambia for two long days behind the wheel to get to Kafue National Park.

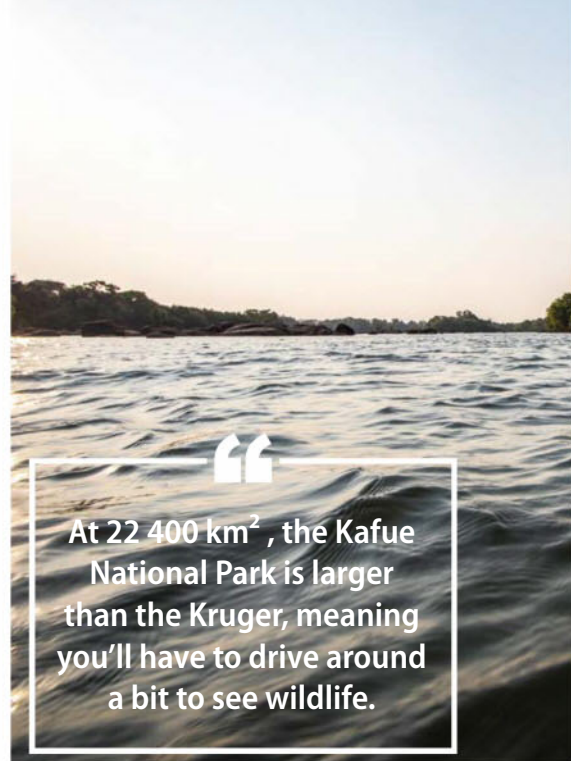
When you enter the park, you start to get an idea of how the rest of the country's trees look. The mopane, teak, miombo, cluster leaf, bush willow, and msasa trees stand tall and thick. All of them protected species.

Kafue is a huge park – at 22 400 km² it's even bigger than the Kruger National Park. That means you'll have to drive around quite a bit to see wildlife. It should also be said, though, that the wildlife population here is relatively low for a park of this size. Presumably one of the reasons for this is because the park is surrounded by so-called wildlife management areas which are supposed to act as a buffer zone for the park and create an area in which animals can come and go freely. Unfortunately there's a lot of poaching that happens here and the animals are very suspicious of people and vehicles. Don't even attempt to get as close to the elephants as in South Luangwa... They will quickly let you know what they think of you.

We spend two nights in the park and the first night we sleep over at the most beautiful campsite on the whole tour: Kasabushi. The owners, Andy and Libby Wilson, built a brilliant camp, lodge and chalets in the central part of Kafue that >

TILL NEXT TIME. An Osprey snatches its unsuspecting prey from just under the surface of the lake (above). The group bids farewell to Lake Malawi with a braai on the beach (below) and one last boat ride. A fan of the Big Bullets football team in Lilongwe (insert).





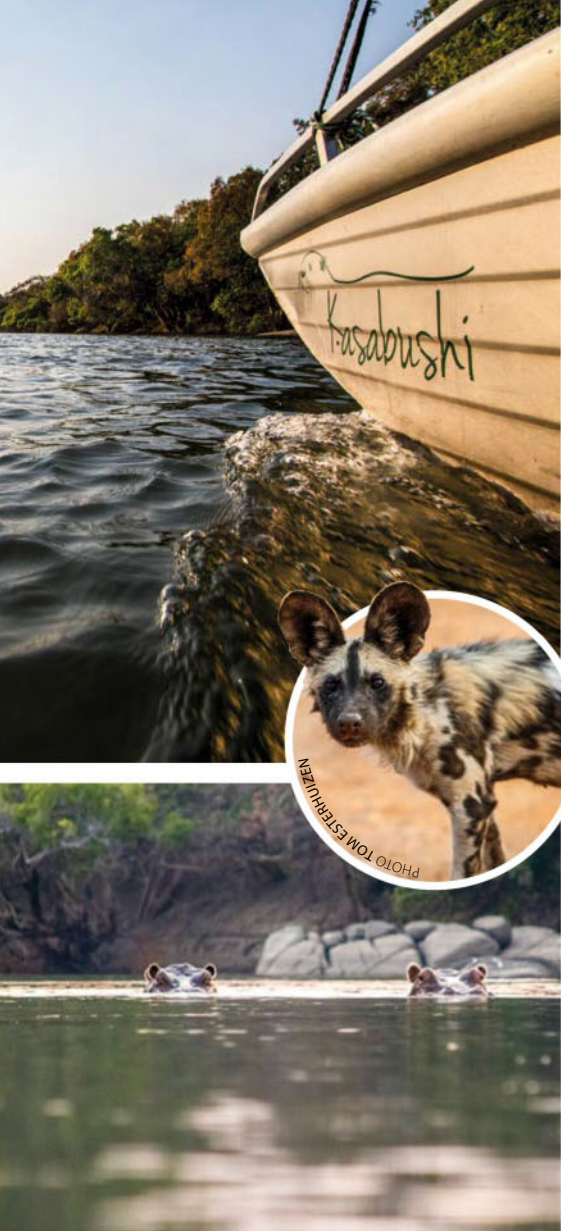
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At 22 400 km², the Kafue National Park is larger than the Kruger, meaning you'll have to drive around a bit to see wildlife.



CAMPING IN KAFUE. Kasabushi Camp (above and right) in Kafue National Park has outstanding facilities. In Malawi, you can find an assortment of beautifully crafted wooden toys for sale along the roadside (below right). The last day of the tour was spent at Nanzhila Plains (below left) at the southern end of the park and right in the backyard of locals like waterbuck (left).





RELAXING ON THE RIVER. At Kasabushi Camp you can do a sunset boat cruise on the Kafue River (top and below) while hippos check you out from the river (above). Right outside the camp a pack of wild dogs (inset) were hanging out on the side of the road.



I ALSO WANT TO GO!

Best time to go June to December is the best time for South Luangwa and Kafue, because it rains in the summer and most of the parks' roads are flooded and therefore locked.

Do I need a 4x4? Not on the road, but you do in the national parks. This route is almost tar road or decent gravel road all the way, but in the South Luangwa National Park you are not allowed to bring your own vehicle in if it isn't a 4x4. In the Kafue National Park there's loose sand everywhere and twin-tracks where 4x4s are preferable.

Can I tow here? Yes, you can do the whole route with an off-road caravan or trailer.

How far am I going to drive? We drove almost 4 000 km on this route. That's without the distance to and from the starting point in Zambia. So make sure your vehicle has been serviced before you leave.

Fuel Fill up in Kazangula in Botswana before crossing the border because it's cheaper than in Zambia. In Zambia there are filling stations in Livingstone, Lusaka, Chipata, Mfuwe (South Luangwa National Park) and Mumbwa (Kafue National Park). In Malawi you can fill up in Lilongwe.

Do I need a visa? South Africans don't need a visa to visit Botswana, Zambia or Malawi for holiday.

Cash or card? It's recommended to bring cash or draw at an ATM to fill up, because in Zambia the ATMs are unreliable and in Malawi virtually non-existent. Where you can pay with a card your MasterCard won't cut it – rather bring Visa.

Where did we camp?

CAMP NKWAZI (LIVINGSTONE)

☎00 260 973 048 830

✉info@campnkwazi.com

GPS S17.83074 E25.64537

PIONEER CAMP (LUSAKA)

☎00 260 966 432 700

✉mail@pioneerzambia.com

GPS S15.2378 E28.2702

MAMARULAS (CHIPATA)

☎00 260 965 790 225

✉beatrichards@gmail.com

GPS S13.58245 E32.61031

CROC VALLEY (SOUTH LUANGWA)

☎00 260 216 246 074

✉reservations@crocvalley.com

GPS S13.10098 E31.79489

WOODLANDS (LILONGWE)

☎00 265 991 775 203

GPS S13.96711 E33.78678

CHEMBE EAGLES NEST (CAPE MACLEAR)

☎00 265 999 966 507

✉enquiries@chembenest.com

GPS S14.01236, E34.85054

KASABUSHI (KAFUE NATIONAL PARK)

✉info@undiscoveredzambia.com

GPS S15.25931 E25.97114

NANZHILA PLAINS (KAFUE NATIONAL PARK)

☎072 536 1337

✉res@nanzhila.com

GPS S16.28197, E25.91946

To do this tour with Bhejane 4x4 Adventures, make a booking at

☎044 535 9033 or

✉bookings@bhejane.com.

was previously not accessible to tourists. Kasabushi is on the banks of the Kafue River, and a boat ride with Andy at sunset is an absolute must.

The next morning we head south through the magnificent teak forests and later all along the western bank of the Itzhi-Tezhi Dam. The dark silhouettes of dead trees tower out above the water while lechwes and pukus graze on the juicy grass on the shore. It really is picturesque.

In the afternoon we head off to our campsite at Nanzhila Plains on the southern tip of the park. On the way there the landscape unfolds into wide grassland, and suddenly there's wildlife everywhere.

We stop often to take photos of herds of wildebeest, rhebok, zebras, waterbuck, roan, and sable. We even see a family of large grey mongoose scurrying close to a stream in the grass.

Later that night, after everyone has gone to bed and the last embers of the campfire are smouldering in the dark, there's some activity in the kitchen. Upon closer inspection I see it's a baby honey badger. Chasing it away doesn't help; it's stubborn and runs in circles around the tents and back looking for more food. We leave it; it's his home after all. In any case, we need the sleep because tomorrow we hit the road south – this time all the way home.



NITROCHARGER SPORT SHOCK ABSORBERS

During development, particular focus was placed on how well these shock absorbers are matched to the specific springs they'll be controlling. With Ride Control Engineers tailoring shock absorber valving to work with the different springs in the range, the result is multiple shock absorber options for each vehicle.

BP-51, BY OLD MAN EMU

The BP-51 range allows on-vehicle, independent adjustability of both rebound and compression to offer class leading ride customisation that can be tailored to the individual vehicle or trip requirements. Each shock absorber is individually designed to suit a specific make and model of 4x4; engineered and tested to ensure a perfect match to your vehicle.



OLD MAN EMU
4x4 SUSPENSION BY ARB

ENGINEERED. INTEGRATED. TESTED.



WHY OLD MAN EMU?

OME 4x4 suspension provides a range of tuned, matched and integrated systems, each offering optimum levels of comfort, load carrying capability and control characteristics. We take integration to the highest level with our own selection of bushes, U bolts, centre bolts, spring liners, trim packers and suspension fitting kits.



Go tell it on the mountain

**We camped in the Waterberg and Pilanesberg.
Both national parks have excellent game-viewing opportunities,
but the campsites are as different as chalk and cheese.**

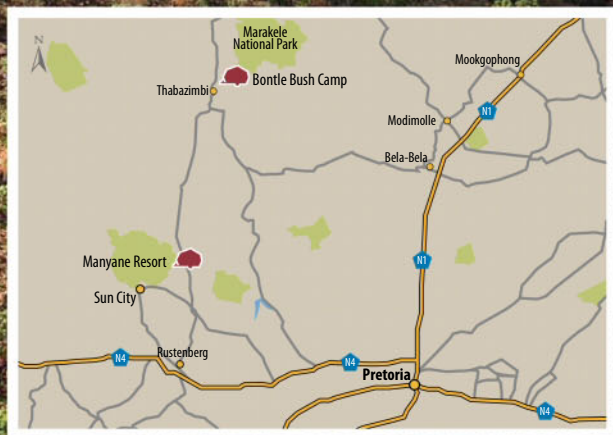
Text and photos **Cyril Kloppe**





There is something special about mountains. If your hometown lies at the foot of one, you automatically feel an added sense of pride. Especially if the noble city fathers of old decided to spell out the town name in white rocks against the mountain slope. Also, we don't simply "go camping". We head for the mountains.

The Waterberg or Pilansberg mountains are definitely not your average, run-of-the-mill piles of rock. Both are spellbinding, and both have unique legends, isolated climate, and their own character traits – even though they are a mere hour apart by car. If you've had enough of the hustle and bustle of city life, pack a bag, hitch a trailer, and head on over to the mountains.



BONTLE BUSH CAMP, MARAKELE NATIONAL PARK

Peace, man

Bontle is a hushed campsite where you'll lie awake at night listening to the munching sounds of impalas grazing outside your tent. There is no swimming pool, supertube or even a swing. It's definitely not the right spot if you have little ones in need of entertaining, and pets are not allowed either. There's no shop where you can obtain provisions or wood for the campfire – you need to bring everything you're going to need with you. Fortunately the town of Thabazimbi is just a 10-minute drive from the main gate.

It's a bush camp without fences. You'll be safe as long as you stay close to your stand and the ablution facilities. If a giraffe drop kicks you to kingdom come because you tried to pet it, you have no one to blame but yourself. You have been warned. >

Need to know

Bontle Bush Camp is divided into four sections: three campsites – the Rhino, Tsessebe and Sable that is accessed by three circular roads – and a tented camp. Rhino is the closest to a waterhole; Tsessebe is slightly farther from the waterhole but still offers a decent view of the animals that come to drink here at night; and Sable is in a wooded area of the Bontle Bush Camp with no view of the waterhole. At Sable you constantly have to be on the lookout for vervet monkeys that try to steal your food. The Bontle Safari Camp is a permanent tented village and each dwelling has its own bathroom and air conditioner.

Two stands share one garbage bin, two three-prong sockets and a bright light that you can switch on and off yourself. You'll have to check with your neighbour how illuminated you want your campsites to be since the light discourages impalas from grazing near your stand.

The Waterberg area can be scorching hot and a shaded stand can mean the difference between a wonderful time and a thoroughly unpleasant experience. There is, however, only one stand that has all-day shade: Rhino no. 5. This stand is close to the waterhole and has a park bench where you can sit and watch the animals. Because you can't book a specific stand at Bontle, you have to hold thumbs that no. 5 is available when you arrive. Other stands with relative shade are Rhino no. 3, 6 and 12, and Tsessebe no. 2, 3, 9, 11 and 12. Although the Sable section is in a wooded area, its trees are not of the shade-providing kind.

A swimming pool would be a welcome addition, even if it's just a farm dam to offer some respite from the ever-present heat. Apparently the park's management petitioned SANParks' head office to build a pool, but no decision has been made yet.

Convenience matters

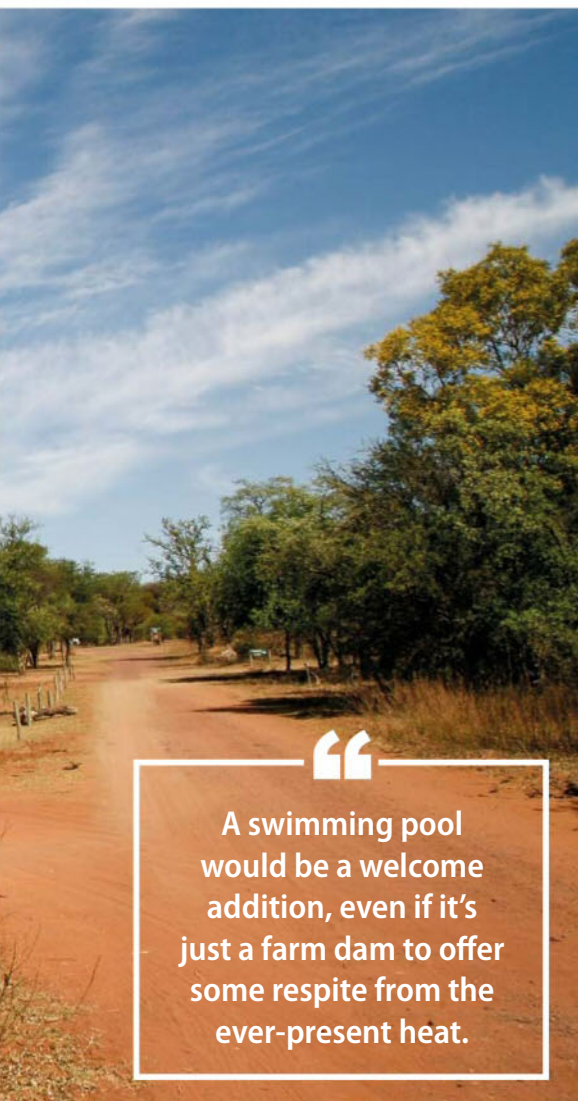
Each of the three campsites has its own ablution block which is near identical to the others. The men's side has two double sinks to wash dishes and one refuse bin. The women's side has double basins and an ironing slab with two three-prong sockets. The men and women's sections are separated by a bench and a shade tree and is roughly 5 m apart.

Inside the ablution blocks is a counter with two basins and mirrors, a smallish >





IT'S A DRY HEAT. The main gate is manned until 10 pm, but closes at 6 pm. Park off to the side in the bus parking zone if you're towing. Bontle Bush Camp's resident ostrich male is a grumpy guy and he certainly doesn't appreciate being stalked. Crouching to photograph him will result in an immediate attack... as we discovered.



A swimming pool would be a welcome addition, even if it's just a farm dam to offer some respite from the ever-present heat.



RUSTIC RETREAT. The ablution facilities are by no means The Ritz. Instead, the fixtures are robust and simple, which suits the theme of a bush camp. The shower and toilet for disabled and elderly people has a fold-down seat and enough floor space to turn a wheelchair around. The grab-rails also make it easier to use the facilities.



shower, and a toilet. (On the men's side there is a urinal and sockets for an electric razor.) There is also a roomy shower with facilities for the disabled, as well as a toilet for the disabled.

Friendly and helpful

Livhuwani Magodi (inset far right) is a junior ranger who visits your stand every morning to clean the braai, rake the ground, and empty the garbage bin. Livhuwani also regularly checks the ablution facilities to restock toilet paper and make sure everything is neat and tidy. He has a charming smile and enjoys a chat to find out if everyone is still happy. He joined SANParks four months ago, but plans to enrol in their training courses so

he can further his career and maybe get a management position in the future.

Every staff member you encounter in Marakele National Park looks happy. The security guard at the gate is armed with a new joke every time you pass through, and the receptionists eagerly explain how long a game drive along a certain route will take. It's clear that the people here love their jobs.

Game time

Entrance to the park is included in the camping fee. There are no gates or fences between you and the animals and you can go for a drive whenever you feel like it, as long as it's between 5 am and 4 pm. (Not that there are gates to restrict access, but

if the rangers find you in the park after sunset, you'll be fined.)

Bontle means "beautiful" in Tswana, and the word accurately describes the Marakele National Park. It's a huge park, one that you can only explore half of by car. It's divided into two sections: The west has "safer" animals like giraffes and blue wildebeest – guys who are more inclined to leave you alone. The eastern section of the park is separated from the western section by a game fence – you can drive through by pressing a button that opens an automated and unmanned gate. In the eastern part you'll see a lot of elephants. Unfortunately they have a reputation for toppling cars, so give them a wide berth and please don't honk at

Bontle means "beautiful" in Tswana, and the word accurately describes the Marakele National Park.



Briefly | Bontle



Campsite 66 stands, each with electricity and a shared garbage can.

Ablution facilities 3 buildings, tidy.

Price R285-R355 per stand plus a conservation fee of R48 per person.

Arrival and departure times 2 pm and 10 am.

Contact 014 777 6928 (park)

sanparks.org/parks/marakele

Nearest town Thabazimbi 11 km.

Road condition The last 2 km is a decent dirt road.

GPS S24.522197 E27.494613

go! Drive & Camp says Bontle is small and intimate and you can camp next to interesting people. It's not an ideal place for children though.





INTO THE WILD. The Marakele National Park is kept relatively natural with comparatively few roads that crisscross it. You can get in your car and go search for game or you can remain in your fold-up camp chair, beer in hand, and wait for them to come to you. If you want to see large game such as elephants you'll have to leave the comfort of your camp and travel to the eastern section of the park.



them or rev your car's engine to try to get them to move out of your way because it's a game your going to lose.

Besides the campsite, there are four other places where you can leave your vehicle. The Ikhutseng Picnic Site is about 4 km from the Bontle Bush Camp. There are 14 picnic tables and benches with braais and an ablution block. In the north is the Bollonoto bird hide next to a water-hole where you can do a spot of amateur ornithology. The Mbidi route along the mountainside above the Tlopi tented camp has a view over the western reaches of the park, and there are five picnic spots where you can relax. The fourth place where you're allowed to get out of your vehicle is the Lenong lookout point on Marakele's highest peak.

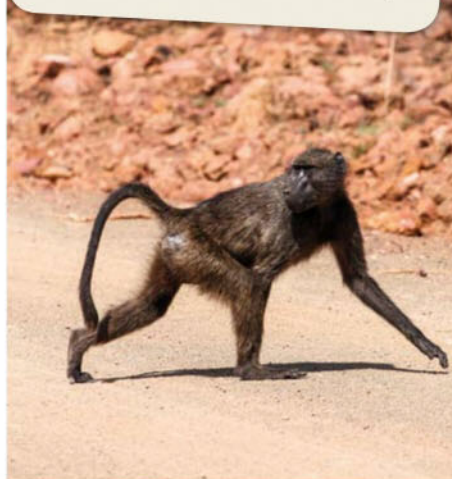
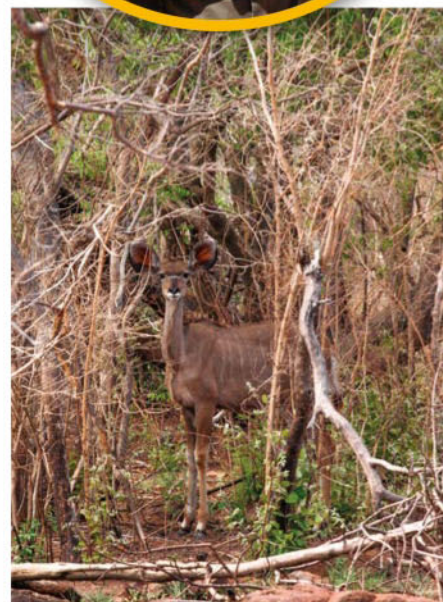
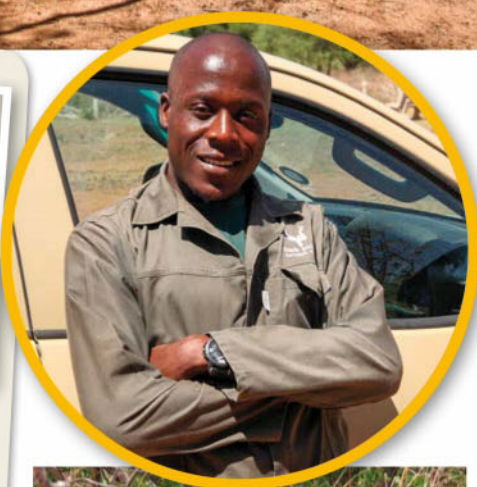
It takes about an hour to drive from here back to the Bontle Bush Camp – so factor that into your journey so you don't reach the campsite after 4 pm. >



Ulrich and Lasea Venter of Pretoria North in their 2005 Sprite Swing that they tow with a Ford Ranger 2.2.

They say:

“ The staff are so friendly, but we wish SANParks would build a swimming pool because the heat can be intense. Our kids left home a long time ago, which is good because Bontle isn't really a place for kids. You come here for the game viewing. ”



MANYANE RESORT, PILANESBERG NATIONAL PARK Holiday fun...

In complete contrast to the Bontle Bush Camp, Manyane is anything but quiet. Here you'll encounter rowdy children running too and fro between their parents' caravans and the nearest pool. Even when it's not the school holiday you still won't find much peace here because it's popular among tour groups and stag parties.

While Bontle doesn't allow any music, the rule at Manyane is simply that you're not allowed to play your music loudly. "Loud" is a relative term because when we visited the music at the stand next to ours was indeed soft, but the conversation became increasingly louder and carried on well into the early morning

hours. It's not necessarily an unpleasant experience because your neighbours are likely in a friendly mood. So if you're in need of some company, you can always ask to join their party.

Good and bad news

The ablution facilities are generally clean, but some buildings have a few shortcomings. There are some cracked tiles and broken soap holders. The ablution facilities for the caravan stands are generally in better nick than those of the tent stands. Block D in the tent camp, for example, is seriously rundown with rusted pipes, broken doors, and mold on the grouting between the tiles. In contrast, block A (in the caravan camp) is decked out in gleaming granite and shiny tiles. Both facilities are regularly

checked by cleaners but if a building is falling apart there's only so much floor polish and Handy Andy can accomplish.

It also doesn't help if some guests' holiday spirit leads to vandalism and general sloppiness. Pick up that empty toilet roll and throw it in the bin! Honestly, you do it at your own house so why not here?

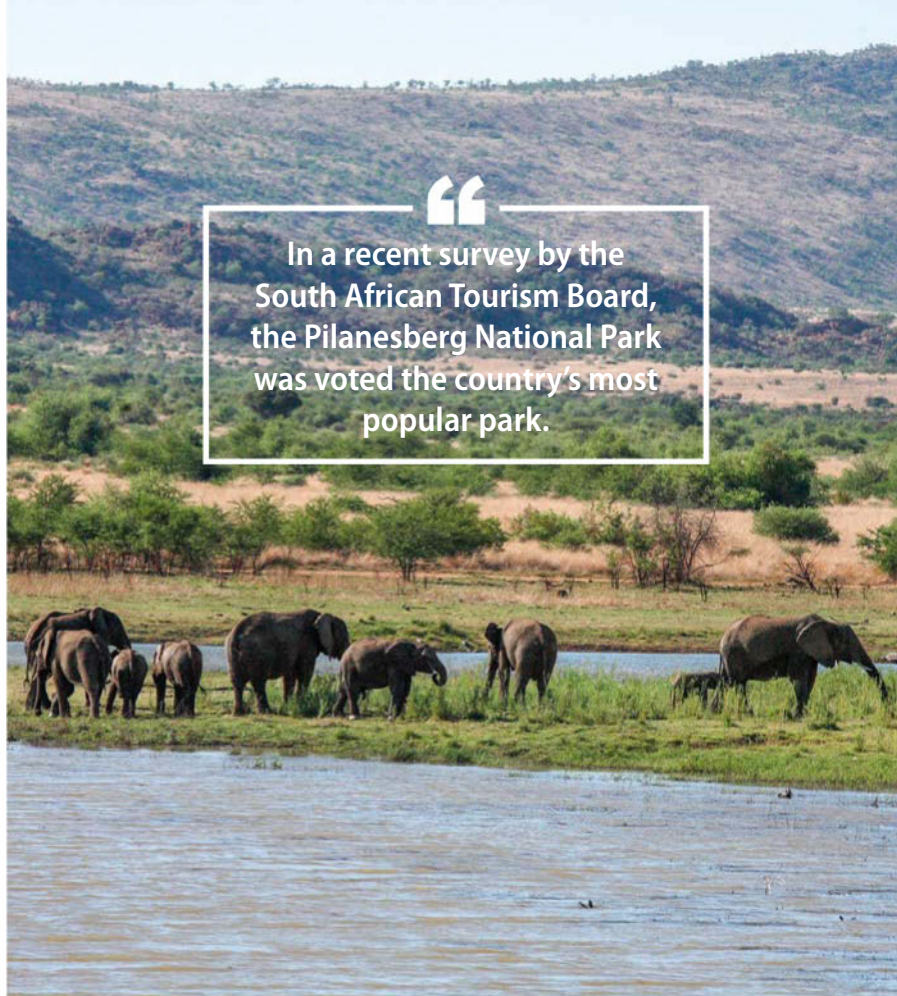
Ablution block D in the tent camp has only one toilet, one shower, and one basin (plus a urinal on the men's side). The facilities in the caravan camp, on the other hand, boasts four toilets, four showers (with dressing space), two bathrooms, a shower and toilet for disabled visitors, six basins with mirrors, and on the men's side, a urinal. Between the men and women's sides is a scullery with six sinks for dishes and six for laundry.



HOME AND AWAY.

Most of the campsites are shaded but grass is uncommon. Some of the ablution blocks have porcelain tiles that wouldn't look out of place in a residential bathroom. They look good but they may also be too fragile for a facility that sees heavy traffic.





“
In a recent survey by the
South African Tourism Board,
the Pilanesberg National Park
was voted the country's most
popular park.

WATER WORLD. Pilanesberg has so much wildlife that it almost seems artificial. On the plus side, you're unlikely to return from your game drive without a sighting, particularly if you visit the dams. The pools are clean but the mosaics and coping have seen better days. Unlike Bontle, Manyane is a great place to entertain the kids.



Time to shop?

The Caravan Shop doesn't sell caravans. In fact, they don't sell much at all. Count yourself lucky if you don't smoke because the shop only stocks three brands of cigarettes. You can forget about finding bread, and don't even think about looking for meat or fruit and veggies. In terms of canned food, you have a choice of tuna, chakalaka and baked beans. If you're in the mood for chips and ice cream, though, you're in luck. Plus the fridge is stocked full of SAB beers and on the shelf behind the cashier are a few bottles hard tack.



Briefly | Manyane



Campsite 94 stands.

Ablution facilities 4 buildings that vary between very neat and rundown.

Price From R170 (out of season, without electricity) to R350 (during holidays, with electricity) per stand.

Arrival and departure times 2 pm and 10 am.

Contact 014 555 1000

goldenleopardresorts.co.za

Nearest town Rustenburg 60 km.

Road condition Tar road all the way.

GPS S25.257038 E27.225564

go! Drive & Camp says Manyane is a social resort where you have to make peace with unruly children and your neighbours' late-night jokes next to the campfire.

If you're looking for something to chuck on the coals you'll have to exit the resort and drive to the nearby Engen garage. There is a small butchery with a blockman who presumably received his certification via correspondence. He is evidently very proud of his tragically thin slivers of meat, butchered with no appreciation for grain or bone. Put on a brave face as you watch how your chosen piece of meat is stuffed into a clear plastic bag and leave the butchery as you'd enter a pet shop with a dying gold fish.

>



The entertainment

The mini golf course is no more. The felt is gone and the cement cracked. The archery course is better off, but is not popular – the staff sit around waiting for clients. The pools' water is clean and clear, but the blue mosaics are dislodged in places. The restaurant staff are helpful and the food is tasty. Just don't order a steak, because it's probably sold out. Fish? "Sorry, sir, that's also sold out." Chicken schnitzel? "Yes, we have some of that."

It's a recurring theme in Manyane: The staff is willing and hardworking but it looks like the resort is sliding down a slope into disrepair and neglect.

If you're heading to Manyane to have a party with friends you probably won't notice the flaws, but if you're a regular camper with a broad frame of reference, the shortcomings will be obvious and bothersome.



Game drives

The resort and the Pilanesberg National Park are managed separately and your camping fee doesn't include entry to the park. The resort falls under the Golden Leopard group and the park is managed by the North West Parks and Tourism Board. Entrance to the park costs R80 per adult and R40 per car, plus you have to fork out R100 for a map. If your vehicle has satellite navigation, you won't need the map. Smartphones also have GPS and there's decent signal inside the park – just drive to each dam because that's where most of the animals are. You can also download the map for free from the park's website.

The Pilanesberg is a veritable zoo with more than 10 000 mammals and 300 bird species. It's unusual not to see at least one elephant herd or a giraffe family. The only common Southern African animals you won't find here are bontebok, blesbok, spotted hyenas, njala and roan. There are a few places where you exit your vehicle and walk to a hide, but remain on the lookout for wild animals.

In a recent survey by the South African Tourism Board, the Pilanesberg National Park was voted the country's most popular park (after years of being the runner-up and finally beating the Kruger National Park). The reason it won is because you're bound to spot the Big Five, its proximity to Joburg, and the absence of malaria.

GAME ON. Your game viewings will be rewarding but unfortunately the playground is rundown. The mini golf course is all but destroyed but ironically the grounds around it is well-kept. It's indicative of a willing staff but an indifferent management. Visitors to the resort aren't blameless either. Plates of leftover food are often observed near signs that expressly forbid the feeding of wild animals – which lead to baboons and monkeys that harass unwary campers.





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A fruitful adventure

Fraaigelegen is a beautiful patch of land at the foot of the Witzenberg mountains where a camping weekend is also a fresh start.

Text and photos **Leon Botha**





It's not often that the hostess at your destination welcomes you with a bottle of olive oil. But olives are the name of the game on the farm Fraaigelegen outside Tulbagh, so here it's not unusual at all.

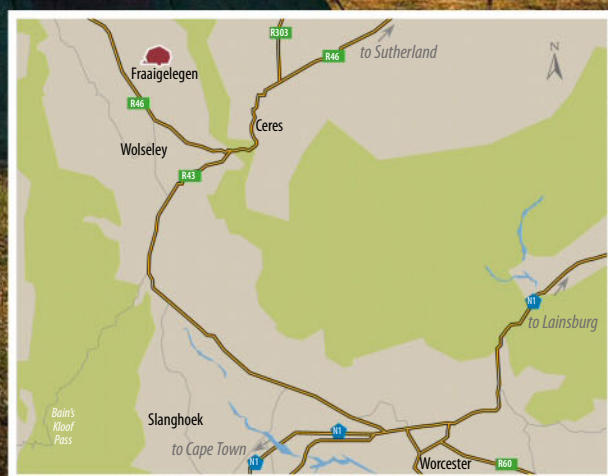
There's a campsite on one section of the farm where you can relax while the farming activities continue undisturbed around you. German couple Venishree and Juergen Mayer bought the farm a year ago, and when you book you can tell that things are already running smoothly. Before you can say knife, Venishree has emailed through documents and you know what the dos and don'ts on the farm are.

Included is a comprehensive map of the Tulbagh Valley – print it and take it along. The area is a tourist's dream and the map is a perfect companion with which to plan your excursions.

In the same email Venishree mentions that they sell braai wood for R50 per crate. You can also order a 250 ml bottle of olive oil at the same price. It's this bottle that Venishree is holding when she welcomes us.

To the farm

Coming from the direction of Ceres, the turn-off to the farm is 10 km before Tulbagh. The 3,3 km dirt road is decent, on which you can easily tow an ordinary caravan or drive on with a motorhome. The first section is dead straight, as if someone used a ruler to draw it, and then it ends at the Witzenberg mountains. The mountains stretch as far as the eye can see, and Fraaigelegen's gate is to the right after a speed sign that looks home-made. It's a blue-painted ploughshare that reads "30 km/h", >



and judging by the rust it looks like it's endured quite a few winters.

After the gate you drive on a concrete twin-track through the vineyards down a hill and then you notice that they farm more than just olives. The owners grow cabernet sauvignon and shiraz grapes right through to mourvèdre and petit verdot – all to make wine.

The Mayers await you at the farmhouse. As soon as you get out of your car you feel the warm hospitality of the couple. Venishree gives you a pamphlet or two: another guide to Tulbagh as well as an A4 page with the title “Best for the Guest” on it. It's a list of businesses in the area where you'll get a discount. Venishree also gives you a small keychain with an engraving of a key on it. That's your “proof” when you visit the tourist spots in Ceres, Wolseley or Tulbagh. You can get 10% discount or even a free cup of coffee or wine, depending on who you visit.

Even though there's space for five families at Fraaigelegen, the idea is not to overfill the place. The Mayers want there to be enough room for everyone. The campsite is anything but a busy resort, says Juergen. They try not to have a rigid approach, which is one of the reasons the stands aren't demarcated.

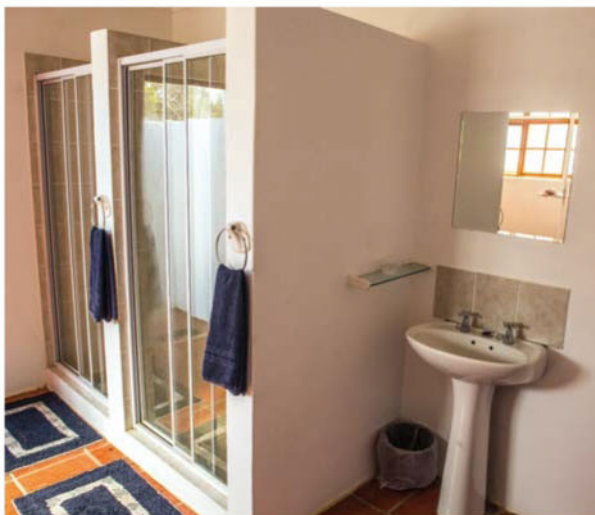
Find your spot

From the main farmhouse the road makes a 90° turn and you drive for 150 m along the olive grove to a white building. This is the bathroom, behind which is a rectangular patch of grass that is a bit smaller than a quarter of a rugby field. It's not the lush green grass of Newlands but rather a combination of wild grass and weeds tended to by a lawnmower. There are no thorns and the little ones can kick off their shoes without concern.

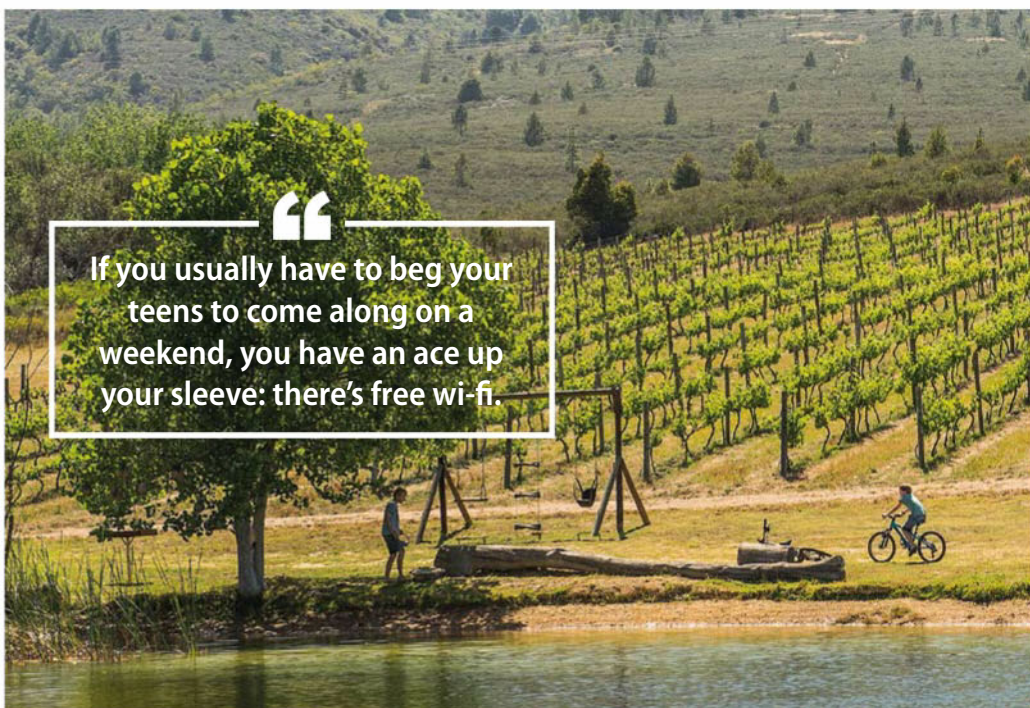
The ground slopes down slightly, but it won't impede you from getting your caravan level.

To the left of the ablution block are three wooden poles more or less equal distance down the side. The electricity boxes, each with two three-prong sockets, are mounted to these.

There are no shade trees in the campsite, but between you and the olive grove is a decent shade tree. Nothing prevents you from unfolding your chair underneath it if you didn't bring a gazebo.



FIRST CLASS. Fraaigelegen has everything you need when it comes to peaceful camping. You couldn't ask for wider open spaces, the bathrooms are nice and clean, and the simple farm life is a pleasure.



If you usually have to beg your teens to come along on a weekend, you have an ace up your sleeve: there's free wi-fi.



Keep your eyes peeled when you're next to the olive trees. Not all olives are the same and these trees have just as many cultivars as the vineyards. Leccino, frantoio, and mission are all grown on Fraaigelegen.

If you want to make a fire at your stand, you have to bring your own braai. There are no braai facilities, but to the far left of the campsite are two separate small bomas where you can make a fire. It is partitioned by upright stumps planted into the ground, and in the middle is a fire pit with a loose grid.

The garbage can and nearest water are at the bathrooms underneath a canopy and that's where you can do the dishes. The crates of wood are also here if you want to put some of Fraaigelegen's wood to the test.

If you usually have to beg your teens to come along on a weekend, you'll have an ace up your sleeve. There's free wi-fi at Fraaigelegen – even in the campsite so your teens can spend their time chatting to their mates on Snapchat.

The white house

The ablution block has separate sides for men and women, and the showers have glass sliding doors. It's a good thing you're not in a busy resort because when you get out of the shower cubicle, you're in the communal area. So you have to dry yourself in the cubicle if you don't want to get water everywhere.

There's a towel ring at each door with a face cloth provided by the owners, but there's also space to put your own towel. In front of each shower door is a bath mat.

The basins each have a mirror that's high enough and a narrow glass shelf next to it for your toothbrush or watch. You can put your clean clothes on the bench at the door. It's big enough for more than one person.

Dam fine

On a farm with such wide open spaces, a bicycle is just the thing if you don't feel like walking. The foot paths on Fraaigelegen are a cyclist's friend, and in one weekend we only had one bike-related incident: a flat tyre.

The dam is not your typical round, cement dam with a windmill next to it. Fraaigelegen's dam is man-made, but it's an embankment that keeps the water in. The dam is about 300 m past >





VISIT THE NEIGHBOURS. Who would have thought that you'd be able to buy home-made chocolate in Tulbagh, to say nothing of the potbelly pig that rolls over when you pet it?



the farmhouse – away from the campsite – and lies a bit higher at the foot of the mountain. You'll definitely work up a modest sweat on the ride there, but coming back is easier since it's downhill all the way.

The water is crystal clear and perfect for swimming. It's even safe for the little ones, provided there is adult supervision, because it's shallow at the sides and you can keep an eye on them as they fish for tadpoles. The dam is nearly 160 m in length and 70 m wide. There's a poplar tree on the one side (where the path is), and there's a tree stump on a grassy knoll where you can sit and rest. A metre or so from the dam wall is a swing with a rope ladder if the kids have had enough of the water.

Beyond the dam the vineyards stretch further up the mountain – this is where two of the farm's cottages are located.

Visit Tulbagh

Everyone knows that they're in for an early rise on a farm, but it feels like these birds enjoy rubbing it in. If the pheasants, peacocks, hadidas and turtle doves don't wake you, the Egyptian geese surely will.

The Witzenberg mountains are painted orange during sunsets, but when the sun rises behind the mountain it's a vastly different scene. The grey peak contrasts starkly against the blue sky.

Once you've finished breakfast, pull out the map of Tulbagh. There is something for everyone and it's not a major outing. It won't require too much convincing to

get the family into the car – all you need to do is mention the fact that the Moniki chocolate factory is close by and Bob's your uncle. The magic happens 4 km outside of Tulbagh. As you enter Tulbagh from Fraaigelegen's side, continue straight through town to the Klipfontein sign (there's a small Moniki sign). Drive to the farm buildings and park next to the lawn.

The chocolate is made in a bungalow to the far left on the lawn, near the big oak tree. The trunk is about 5 m in circumference – it's so big the former governor Ryk Tulbagh probably planted it himself. It's opposite this tree where you can kiss your diet goodbye. The shelves are stacked with different flavours and colours of chocolate, but do yourself a favour and pay for a tasting session. It's R40, R50 or R60

for three chocolates of your choice with tea, brandy or port. Berrie Horing is the chocolatier. The place's name, according to her, is derived from the owner's name, Niki van Kooij.

Drive back to Tulbagh and wash down the chocolate with some homemade ginger beer (R24) at Things I Love. This restaurant on the main road is also a souvenir shop. If the kids can handle more sugar, order their organic chocolate milkshake with honey (R38).

Now it's time to work off all that energy, and the Fynbos Guest Farm is just the spot to do it. It's just past the turn-off to Fraaigelegen as you're coming from Tulbagh (basically the neighbouring farm). It's, amongst other things, an animal sanctuary, and you can feed or pet these furry friends.

You'll receive a map of Fynbos Guest Farm that shows which animals are where and you can walk from one area to the other at your leisure. As part of your visit you'll also be given veggies and pieces of bread. Your self-guided tour starts at the potbellied pigs that surely tip the scale at over 100 kg. Next to the camp is a post with brushes. If you brush these burly beasts, they'll keel over with pleasure. The paths between and to and from the animals camps are painfully neat, and you'll see anything from nguni goats to rabbits, and in a bigger camp there are zebras, donkeys and alpacas. (An alpaca can stretch his neck further than a donkey for a fresh carrot!) In the next camp there are a few springbucks.

Besides the animals, the garden is decorated with art pieces. Behind the "pig sty" is a pool where kids can cool down before you hit the road. The visit costs R50 per adult and R20 for kids. Let Fynbos know you're coming first because you can't just arrive unannounced.



ROLL UP. This is as close to real farm life you are likely to get unless you become an actual farmer. Kids love hay bales.



Briefly | Fraaigelegen



Campsite An open, flat campsite with 4 power sockets and almost no shade, against a slight slope.

Ablution facilities Neat, simple and close by.

Price R120 p.p.p.n. (R70 for kids under 13).

Arrival and departure times As a rule 2 pm and 10.30 am, but the owners are flexible (within reason).

Contact 071 404 2766

✉ fraaigelegenfarm@gmail.com

🌐 fraaigelegenfarm.co.za

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

GPS S33.3633 E19.203251

go! Drive & Camp says You are allowed to bring your pets, but do let the owners know beforehand. Remember to bring a leash for your dog because there are areas on the farm where Spot is not allowed to run around.

This is what it costs

(2 adults and 3 kids)

Fuel @ 11.9 ℓ/100 km and R13.27/ℓ and 252 km (there and back)

R397.94

Accommodation (2 nights)

R1 000

Food

R950

Grand total

R2 347.94*

*All the activities and olive oil excluded.



Veld focus

Your adventure is far from over after you leave the Richtersveld National Park. Between Kuboes and Eksteenfontein a quieter and more challenging 4x4 route awaits.

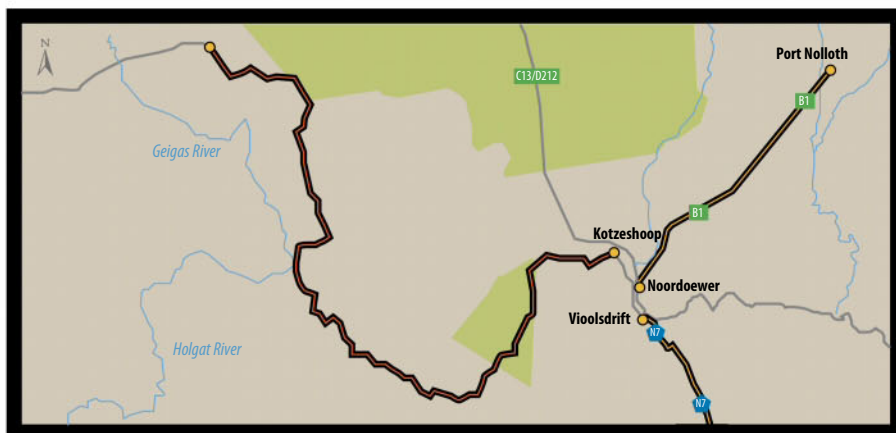
Text and photos **Cyril Kloppe**

No, we're not talking about the wide gravel road between Kuboes and Eksteenfontein that anyone can drive in a Corolla. South of the national park lies the Richtersveld Community Conservancy, which was declared a World Heritage Site by Unesco. The local Nama community manages a 4x4 route that winds through the mountains south of the park.

While it is recommended to start at Eksteenfontein and head north – this is the most popular direction of travel – it's not a problem if you start at Kuboes and drive south after holidaying in the Richtersveld. There's ample opportunity to squeeze past an oncoming vehicle on the single track. Some of the ravines are tight and there's very little space between you and the cliff face next to you. There are no gatekeepers to check documentation, but do the right thing and buy a permit at the Kuboes tourism office (or Eksteenfontein) – it doesn't cost much. And make sure you're sitting behind the wheel of a 4x4 because your 4x2 bakkie is not going to cut it here, even if it has good ground clearance. Your 4x4 doesn't need a diff lock though.

The way forward

From the Kuboes tourism office you drive west. After about 6 km there's a turn-off to a campsite in a dry riverbed. You're permitted to camp there but there are no ablution facilities or shade. A kilometre further is the so-called whale rock. It's a





“
Make sure you're sitting behind the wheel of a 4x4, because your 4x2 bakkie just won't cut it here – even if it does have good ground clearance.”

pile of smooth rocks that looks like a giant sea creature when the sun shines on it at a certain time of day.

Approximately 5 km further the road forks; take the left-hand side track (right is a dead end) through a rivercourse and head up the mountain. It's quite an incline and you'll definitely have to engage four-wheel drive and low range gears. About 6 km after the rivercourse there's a T-junction where you turn right. The road left ends at Koeskopfontein and the Richtersveld Hiking Trail.

Cellphone signal is strong if you're driving on the ridge of the mountain

range but it disappears completely as soon as you descend into the ravine. There's no chance of getting lost over the course of the next 27 km – you simply follow the track in front of you until you reach the Kook River, where you can turn either left or right. After 10 km the road to the right connects with a wide main road to Eksteenfontein, while the road to the left takes a bit longer because it takes you over Smith's Pass to Eksteenfontein.

From Eksteensfontein it's a 6 km drive to the turn-off to the famous Helskloof that will lead you north to the banks of the Orange River and your nearest filling station at Rooiwal. Now you have to decide whether you're going to take the highway home or if you're up for the rest of the Namakwa 4x4 route to Pella...



What you need to know



Maximum amount of vehicles allowed

Officially 10 per day, but this rule is flexible.

Do I get a map? No.

Will I get scrapes on my vehicle? It's unlikely.

Must I bring a compressor? No, except to fix flat tyres.

Can I braai next to the road? Rather not.

Can I turn around halfway? Yes.

Will I see game? Yes, small game like buck and baboons.

AROUND THE ROUTE

Best time to go May to September.

Can I bring my family? Absolutely.

Day or weekend? The route takes a full day, and you need a few days to get there and back.

Are there ablution facilities? No, a spade will have to do.

Directions The route runs between Kuboes and Eksteensfontein.

GPS coordinates S28.44663 E16.98883 (Kuboes) S28.82025 E17.23027 (turn-off close to Eksteensfontein)

What does it cost?

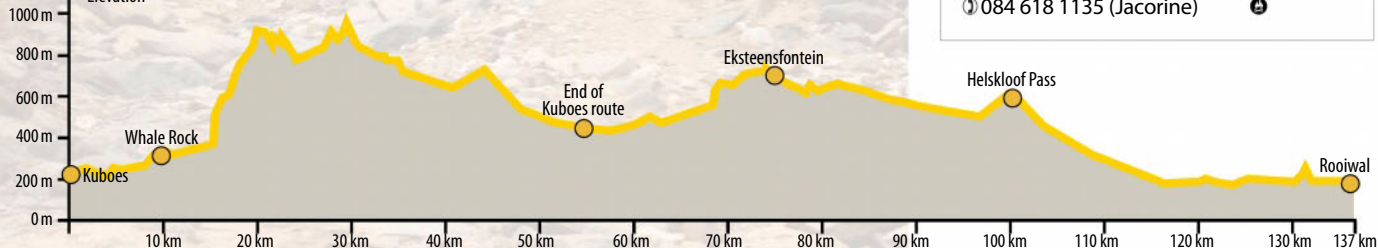
4x4 route: R53 for the permit.

Contact 084 015 3690 (Gert) or

084 618 1135 (Jacorine)



ROUTE PROFILE





En Route



Is there a place more beautiful than the Storms River Mouth on the Garden Route? asks permanent campers **Gus and Pat Tweehuysen** from Pretoria.

“ We bought our first caravan in 1990 and spent years camping with our kids at places like Brits, Bela-Bela, and the surrounding areas over long weekends. We are now on pension and have been on the road since May 2016. We recently visited Storms River Mouth Rest Camp.

How did you end up there?

It's a national treasure and has become a big hit with international tourists. After reading about it so often and having vowed to go back to the region after visiting the nearby Otter Trail, we ended up at Storms River after a year and a half of being on the road full-time.

Tell us about your towing combination.

We tow a Sensation Anee caravan with our Chevrolet Trailblazer 2.8 LTZ.

Did the campsite live up to your expectations?

It's everything we heard it was. Just wow! The sea is always rough and there are spectacular crashes from the waves against the shoreline. Some of the stands are on the small side if you tow a large

caravan as we do. What makes the stands amazing is that you can camp quite close to the sea. We chose to camp at a stand a bit further back, which makes for some spectacular photo opportunities. There's also a variety of self-catering log cabins.

Were you happy with the ablution facilities?

They are kept clean and are average. There was one issue though which was that the showers kept flooding so there was always water on the floors in the bathrooms on the men's side.

What is there to see and do?

This is the ideal place for thrill-seekers as there are not only plenty of activities at the Storms River Mouth but the area in general. There are plenty of hiking trails that take you into the Tsitsikamma forest, including one that allows you to cross the river on a long suspension bridge. You can also opt for tubing, canoeing, scuba diving and snorkelling.

How did you prepare for the trip?

Because we are full-time travellers we have

everything we need. As a precaution the tent had to be particularly well protected against wind as there are often big wind storms along the coastline. Fortunately we experienced no problems and enjoyed three beautiful days and just two days with rain.

Can you stock up there?

There is a shop with limited provisions and a big restaurant. This place is a huge tourist spot and is very busy every day. Fuel is available 17 km away. **”**



Contact 042 281 1607

sanparks.org/parks/garden_route/camps/storms_river/

GPS S34.021889, E23.896639

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Catch and release

The red steenbras might be king of the reefs, but it's overfished. Rather just take a photo if you have one on the hook – and then throw it back.



FISHING RESORT

Across the borderline

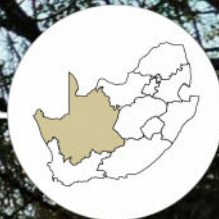
Aan-die-Oewer Caravan Park

This caravan park is in Orania, and like the name suggests, is on the banks of the Orange River. The resort is in the Northern Cape, and if you cast further than 150 m you'll be fishing in the Free State.

When you drive into the campsite, the stands are to the left, but you first need to check in at the office right in front of you. The eight stands are arranged in fours on

both sides of a circular road. On the side closest to the gate there are a few pepper trees that provide shade. The opposite stands don't have much grass and is laid out underneath a great old oak tree. On the lower terrace, closest to the river, are two more stands, also with shade.

The bathrooms are halfway between the two groups of stands, only a few steps from both sides; there is a covered scullery



Briefly | Aan-die-Oewer Caravan Park



dirt road that runs through a residential area.

GPS S29.799911 E24.420218

Fish Catfish, carp and yellow-fish are the most common.

Campsite 10 caravan stands (about half of which are in shade and on grass).

Ablution facilities Basic and very clean.

Price R240 p.n. plus R10 p.p. Maximum 6 people per stand. (Pensioners pay R175 p.n.)

Contact 053 207 0118 or 076 265 2675 navrae@oewerpark.co.za aan-die-oewer.com

Nearest town Orania 2,4 km

Road condition The last 850 m before the resort is a decent

go! Drive & Camp says

For the more adventurous anglers there are kayak excursions where a guide will take you through, amongst other things, a series of rapids. Bring your own fishing gear and test your fly-fishing abilities to see if you can get a yellowfish on the hook. It costs R1 000 p.p. and is from sunrise to sunset (book at the office). The fee includes food and drink as well as the kayak rental and the services of the guide.



FISH SPECIES

Red steenbras *Petrus rupestris*

You could say the red steenbras is a born-and-bred South African because it's endemic to our waters and you won't find it anywhere else. They are found from False Bay in the Cape to St. Lucia on the KwaZulu-Natal north coast, with the largest numbers around the Wild Coast and the Eastern Cape. It's a big fish with a reddish-bronze colour, but it can also be golden yellow. The adults are mainly copper-coloured, and in the breeding season the males' top half, including their top lip, turns black. The adolescents are a reddish orange with a yellow belly and a red dot near the tail. **Size and biology** Red steenbras are slow-growing, reaching a maximum length of 2 m, and live to 33 years. Spawning takes place during spring (August to October) between East London and the south coast of KZN.

Habitat Adults are found on offshore rocky reefs ranging in depths of 50 to 160 m, mostly between Cape Agulhas and the south coast of KZN, while

juveniles are found on shallower inshore reefs at depths of 10 to 50 m, mostly between Cape Point and Kei Mouth.

Where to find them Adults are at the top of the food chain in the reefs, feeding on octopus and other fish species such as klipvis, fingerfins and seabream. Historically, red steenbras were important in recreational and commercial skiboat catches, both of which contributed to this species' collapse. Today, red steenbras generally contribute little to recreational and commercial catches in most areas, except the Eastern Cape and the Wild Coast.

That's a record 56,6 kg, but they can weight up to 70 kg.

SASSI status If you accidentally get one on the hook, rather set it free. There's a ban on the catching, buying and selling of this fish.



Text Dr. Taryn Murray **Sketch** Elaine Heemstra © Southern African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity (SAIAB)

near the bathrooms. There's no need to worry about hot water because there are gas geysers. There is a washing machine and a refrigerator that campers can use free of charge. There are free-standing braais with grids located throughout the campsite, the plug points are standard three-point sockets, and your tap is close by.

Hidden behind the ablution block is a timber jungle gym with a monkey swing for kids.

This part of the world gets extremely cold in the winter, but you can still pack your swimming costume despite the winter weather because there's a heated pool – it's covered and entrance is charged at R25.

There's no need to pack or plan when you're headed for the fish waters. It's just 70 m from the stands and there's a great spot where you can cast and see if the fish are willing to co-operate.

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A camping trip through Angola

With clever planning, loads of patience, and a handful of good friends at their side, their almost month-long trip through Angola was an experience they will never forget, says John and Marie Tait from Ottosdal.



The Tait's and their group of friends regularly camp together, and in 2016 they started toying with the idea of hitching their off-road trailers and towing it to Angola. In February last year they progressed from ideas to actual planning of logistics such as the route, food, availability of fuel, attractions, campsites, and where to stock up on provisions along the way.

The Tait's' travel companions were Nic and Dorothy Theron, Leon and Vasti Jordaan and their kids Mareli and Gerard, and George Basson and Nici Maree – all from Pretoria.

They checked their passports, applied for visas, and serviced their vehicles. They decided not to employ a guide, and John obtained a copy of *Portuguese in your Pocket* instead, in case the language barrier became an issue.

John and Marie towed a Brakah off-road trailer with a Land Cruiser 80 4.5, Leon hitched a Jurgens Xplorer to his Ford Ranger 3.2 (automatic), Nic also had a Brakah off-road trailer and towed it behind a Land Cruiser 70 V8, and George had a Front Runner rooftop tent on his Land Cruiser V8 double cab. Here is John's story:

28 June
“Nic and I decide to leave earlier and take our time getting to our meeting place in Zeerust. From there we all drive to the border post at Skilpadshek. Things are going smoothly, and on the Botswana side we are searched for fresh fruit and vegetables. We're not detained for long and we soon head towards Sharon du Plessis' campsite, Phuduhudu, approximately 15 km south-west of Lobatse on the Ramatlabama road.

It costs R100 per person per night and R50 per vehicle. It's a nice campsite with electricity, water and clean ablutions. There's wood for a fire and we chat till late.

Contact sharondoepe@gmail.com

GPS S25.31756, E25.61283

29 June

We head out early to get as much distance behind us as possible. The road to Kang is nice and clean, and we arrive at Thakadu Bush Camp just before 5 pm. It's about 8 km on the other side of Ghanzi. It's a private game reserve with a bar, restaurant, pool, and decent ablutions, and we pay 400 pula (R520) per stand. That night we have a lovely dinner in the restaurant.

Contact info@thakadubushcamp.com

GPS S21.73931, E21.67860

30 June

Filling up in Ghanzi, my Cruiser imbibes, after 450 km, an impressive 119 l. But we're on holiday and I don't lament the almost 28 l/100 km.

The road from Sehitwa north to the Molembo border post is a nightmare. We can't exceed 45 km/h and have to swerve to avoid pothole after pothole. Luckily we make it through the border quickly and drive on to the Shametu River Lodge. It's a beautiful place below the Popa Falls on the Okavango River. The stands are well-kept, each with their own shower and electricity, kitchen, toilet and braai. It costs us R200 per person per night.

Contact enquiries@shameturiverlodge.com

00264 66 259 035 or 00264 81 129 6133

GPS S18.11767, E21.58740

>



1 July

We drive slowly to Rundu, fill up, and head to the Samsitu Riverside Camp. We camp next to the Okavango, and the facilities are neat with hot water and clean toilets. It costs R150 per person per night. Late afternoon, Leon and George and their families arrive. Everyone is excited about the trip to Angola.

Contact 📧 kavpharm@iafrica.com.na
GPS S17.84989, E19.66949

2 July

We set off early to Katwitwi, and cross the Namibian border to Angola. We exchange our rands for Angolan kwanzas and take the road north in the direction of Menongue. It feels weird to drive on the right-hand side of the road. The road itself has seen better days. We putter along at 35 km/h, and 100 km further on we stop to pitch camp in the bush. A few inquisitive eyes come to have a look and I turn to my Portuguese phrase book: "Podemos acampar aqui de noite?" (Can we camp here tonight?) We are answered by a nod and a "sim", which means yes. We start a fire, braai, wash up, and go to sleep to gather our strength for the remainder of this horrible road.

3 July

Just 15 km in, Leon realises that the right rear tyre and rim of his trailer is shredded. We fit a spare and continue. A little ways on we have to drive over a high ridge and the plate protecting his trailer's water tank is sheared off. Talk about damage.

Near Carundu we hit a tarred road and I check the underside of my trailer. It doesn't look good. There are fractures in the chassis, but luckily I always carry a piece of angle iron which I use to effect repairs. We travel down to Cuito Cuanavale. The road is tarred until about 8 km outside of town, where we drive into the Halo Trust's campsite.

4 July

We visit the Angolan war museum and other locations where the border



STOPPING FOR GRAZE. You can camp for free at Zulu Bar if you buy a meal at the restaurant (above). The beach at Binga Bay is a dream for pebble collectors (left). Angola is littered with the remains of old military vehicles (inset). There is plenty of space to set up bush camp in the region but you have to be willing to traverse some rough terrain to get to the spots that are worth staying at (bottom).





war was fought. A local colonel and war veteran accompanies us, along with an interpreter. It's very interesting!

There is no garage to fill up in Cuito. We return to Menongue to exchange more rands for kwanzas. We find a campsite at the Kambumbe Lodge, but it's not great so we end up camping in the lodge's parking lot instead.

5 July

The road to Chinguar is okay but at times riddled with potholes. We try to find a space to make a bush camp and stumble upon a deserted factory that used to manufacture concrete columns for bridges. The machinery and equipment are still there. We stay here for the night after I chat to Ricardo the security guard using my trusty phrase book.

6 July

We head to Quibala, over Alto Hama and Waku Cunga. Fuel is easily found in Quibala and we take pics of Russian tanks that have been obliterated there. The road is beautiful and we drive through the Sumbira Bush Reserve. About 50 km after Sumbe we leave the road and pitch camp next to an old, abandoned mill. The phrase book comes in handy again and the old man who lives here says it's fine if we sleep here. By sunset a bunch of kids arrive and Leon entertains them with his drone. Later, Gerard plays hockey with some of the boys.

7 July

The Cachoeira Waterfall is a short distance from where we overnighted and you can camp here or have a picnic. It costs 150 kwanzas per person (about R6.50). It's pretty but neglected. Just outside Sumbe we turn off to go explore the caves. I highly recommend doing this. Take a strong torch and go have a look. The locals ask a few kwanzas, but it's definitely worth the expense. (GPS S11.26172, E013.91457) The road to Sumbe is also under construction and there are massive potholes. We camp on a beach just outside Sumbe.

8 July

Tonight we sleep on the beach again and we search for firewood. Nic decides to use his Cruiser to look, and promptly gets stuck in thick black mud. We perform our first recovery, and after three vigorous yanks on the rope he's freed.

9 July

We drive to Lobito and visit Cubal Gorge, where we take photos before driving further. The road is bad and we pull in at the Zulu Bar, where we pitch camp. We eat in the restaurant and the food is delicious. It's safe to camp here and if you eat in the restaurant you camp for free. You will, however, pay at least 12 000 kwanzas per meal.

Contact 00244 923 50 9834

GPS S12.31765, E13.58001

10 July

The owner of Zulu Bar, Jesue Viegas, helps me find someone to repair my caravan's chassis. Eric Thouillot (000244 926 69 9636) does excellent work and I can highly recommend him if you're ever in Lobito and in need of repair work.

11 July

Today we drive further south to Benguela and part Baia Farte through Dombe Grande. It's a tar road up to 3 km before Dombe Grande Pass. Some of the most beautiful bridges were built here but we have to drive underneath or next to them. The road is bad. We turn off to Binga Bay and pitch camp right outside their gate.

12 July

At Binga Bay's beach we take photos and hit the road to Meva Bay. There's a lovely campsite next to the ocean and the beach is heaven for those who love pebbles because there are millions of them to pick up.

13 July

We drive the 21 km back to the big dirt road and 4 km before Lucira we're on tar again. We fill up and take the road to Bentiaba. It's a pretty town, >



HIGH ATTRITION WARNING. Damaged caravan chassis; ripped-off underbody protection plates (top), belly deep in thick mud (above), and potholes deep enough to swallow Kia Picantos whole (below) are part and parcel of any trip north of our borders.





EXPLORER'S DELIGHT. There are endless abandoned old factories and buildings that you might find uninteresting, but thankfully there are also decent campsites that cater to the vast majority of campers with clean ablution facilities and well-kept stands.

with large-scale farming along and in the riverbed. At Turtle Bay we turn off to Pipas Bay, where we pitch camp.

14 July

We sleep in late and then travel north up the coast. The scenery is stunning. The old harbour master's house in Turtle Bay is something to behold. Further up we drive on the ridge of the dunes parallel to the sea and down into a ravine to a fishing village called Babe. We marvel at the rock formations.

15 July

From Pipas Bay to Namibe we drive on tar road. We fill up with fuel, stock up on provisions, and grab a quick pizza. We drive on to the famous Flamingo Bay, and after a gruelling 23 km bumpy sand track we're welcomed by Theresa. We pitch camp and then go eat in the restaurant. We plan on exploring a bit tomorrow and maybe do some fishing too.

16 July

The weather won't play along. It's cold and windy, but we still try to fish. We're not successful and decide to visit a canyon. The rock and sand-stone formations are breathtaking. From here we drive to Tombua. At the camp people offer us five big shads, and I prepare and braai them. After dinner, George and Nici go to bed, but Vasti calls over the radio to say that they're stuck in sand behind a dune. They were chasing after a fox. Nic is elected for recovery duty, but we all help out. We all turn in late for the night, dead tired.



17 July

We eat a hearty breakfast and explore the area around Flamingo Bay. We enjoy fresh mussels on a beach, which we also take to the restaurant later that night to share with the owner, Ricco.

18 July

By 8 am we leave Flamingo Bay on a bumpy sand track. We photograph a cheetah that appears right in front of us. We drive to Namibe and do some shopping before heading to Lubango. We experience the Leba Pass and at the lookout point we propose a

toast to Mrs Leba who, legend has it, designed this pass. We pull in at the Tundavala Road Camp. It's a very neat campsite with decent stands, braai facilities, ablution facilities, and clean water.

Contact 000244 941 90 1100
GPS S14.841213, E13.402660

19 July

We visit the lookout point at Tundavala. It's breathtakingly beautiful with 1 000 m sheer cliffs. From here you can see everything. Back at the campsite we plan on setting off early to Cahama.

20 July

We look for the Mirage 111 fighter plane that was apparently shot down on the way to Cahama. We can't find it and on the way to Onjiva we bid Leon and his family goodbye. We're all a bit emotional because it's been a lovely journey thus far. Nic, George and I turn around and head to the border at Calueque. Outside Cahama we turn onto a sand track and drive 50 km before the border post and set up camp.

21 July

Before the border in Calueque we exchange our last kwanzas for Namibian dollars. It feels odd to drive on the left-hand side of the road again. We drive to the Ruacana Waterfall (it's dry but still beautiful) and then to the Omunjand Rest Camp on the Swartbooisdrif road. The camp is on the banks of the Kunene River and has excellent facilities. We have a good time despite the fact that our trip is almost over, with George and Nici heading to Swakopmund the



John and Marie win a **Camp Cover** Bundu Bag to the value of R500. This dual-purpose bag can be used as a toiletry or a medical bag. Check out Camp Cover's excellent protective gear on www.campcover.co.za.



WIN

next day and us heading home by way of Grootfontein to Gobabis.

GPS S17.42286, E14.15568

22 July

The road to the town of Tsumeb is an absolute pleasure. We camp at Bush Baby Lodge just outside Grootfontein. It has neat facilities and loads of taps.

Contact info@bush-babycamping.com

GPS S19.52681, E18.01973

23 July

The road ahead is long because we want to overnight in or close to Gobabis. We fill up in Grootfontein and stop at the Hoba meteorite. We drive on tar till just past Otjiwarongo and turn off onto the C30 to Gobabis. It's 300 km of dirt road, but you can

drive between 90 and 100 km/h on this surface. We get to Gobabis late and camp at the Goba Lodge.

24 July

We leave the Goba Lodge early and drive to the Buitepos border post. We go through without any hassles and drive to Jwaneng. We stay at the Dladeng campsite and enjoy a final evening together.

25 July

The road home is beautiful. We slip through the border and stop for a coffee in Zeerust where our journey started. We say goodbye with heavy hearts but also thankful for an incredible trip without any major problems. ☺



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of The Heads. Afterwards, we return to camp for another delicious dinner.

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DAY 4 The adventure comes to an end after breakfast.



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A Ranger in a tuxedo



FORD RANGER 3.2 TDCI FX4 (4X4, AUTOMATIC)

The Ford Ranger is one of the top sellers in the country, and besides its great towing ability, Ford has also spruced up its XLT model with a limited-edition Fx4 version.

Text and photos **Leon Botha**

Manufacturers of double cab bakkies aren't holding back anymore when it comes to towing ability. Many of the big names can tow up to 3,5 t, and the Ford Ranger is no exception. It can hitch any local caravan on our roads, regardless of size.

The Fx4 we tested was dressed in black from head to toe – from the grille and side mirrors to the door handles and roof racks. If you're not crazy about black, you can also opt for a white, silver or grey version.

These cosmetic changes are all well and good, but what really counts is

the 470 Nm hiding under the bonnet. If you hitch with this guy it's a case of sitting back and holding on tight.

Tow like a pro

When you look at the Ranger you'd be forgiven for thinking that this bakkie was designed starting at the tow bar and concluding at the front. Besides the fact that the tow bar comes standard, it would be difficult to build it any sturdier. The bumper and tow bar are separate, with the tow bar fitted slightly below the bumper.

Ford uses a Brink tow bar, with a nose weight limit of 225 kg – that

also corresponds with what Ford itself allows. This falls far above the legally permitted weight, but it's an indication of what type of vertical weight the tow bar can handle. There is just one set of holes in the flange plate where the ball part is bolted on to the larger tow bar. You sometimes see tow bars with two sets of holes so you can lift or lower the ball by 5–6 cm without using a separate drop plate. If you want to adjust the ball height, therefore, a drop plate is the answer. That said, you can't lift the ball much higher because the bumper is in the way and you only have 15 cm to work with. >





The Fx4's computer knows you're hitching a caravan, but nowhere does it show that it's registering it.



Load bin and camera

The load bin is lined with a heavy-duty plastic finish with grooves that reminds one of corrugated roof sheets. You can't ask for better protection, but unfortunately the anchor points all sit low against the sides of the load bin. It's fine if you don't want to load the bin to capacity, but if you're filling it up you won't be able to reach the hooks.

On both sides of the brake light in the roll bar are two white lights that shine directly onto the load bin, something that comes in handy if you need to pack before the sunrise. The switch for these lights is to the right of the driver's knees.

The rear-view camera's lens is neatly in the middle of the tailgate – right beneath the Ford badge. That means the tow bar is also in the centre of the screen – something some of the other manufacturers have not been able to get right because their camera lenses are not exactly in the middle at the back.

The Fx4's computer knows you're hitching a caravan, but nowhere does it show that it's registering it. When you reverse, the reverse parking sensors are dead quiet and there are no index lines on the screen. This only happens without a caravan – then the lane that you're reversing in appears with a dotted line in the middle. As you turn the steering wheel, the lines curve in the direction that you're reversing. This is where the dotted line comes in handy: You aim with the coupler and in one movement drive up to the caravan.

An extra eye on the caravan

Like with many other new vehicles these days, the Ranger's trailer sway control comes



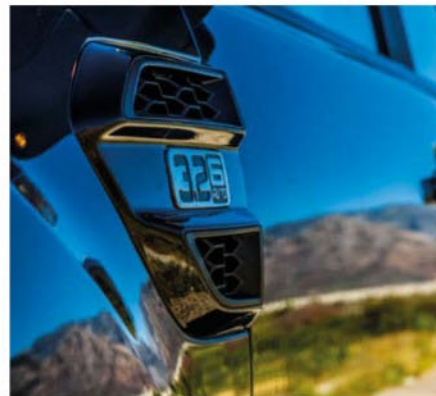
standard. It activates automatically when you start the Fx4, but you can switch it off. The system doesn't prevent swaying, but it reduces it when it starts. The computer will brake the wheels separately to counter the sway, and even reduce the engine power, if necessary. And you as the driver must take your foot off the pedal to reduce speed.

The computer turns the sway control off when you switch to 4x4 low range or if you lock the rear diff electronically.

The finer details

In a vehicle with a price tag of R600 000 you'd expect the seats to be electrically adjustable, but alas, that is not the case here. That's where the complaints begin and end.

APPEALS TO THE EYE. You can see that Ford's designers pay attention to the details as you gaze upon the Fx4's profile. It's basically only just the headlamps and taillights that haven't been colour-coded to match the rest of the bakkie's stealthy exterior.



The lights switch on with a knob at the driver's right knee. In the middle of the knob is a smaller button that releases when you push it – this you turn to adjust the lights' beam angle.

The speedometer is analogue. On either side are electronic screens controlled by corresponding buttons left and right on the steering wheel. The left screen and buttons are for the radio and cellphone usage, and right is the speed control and you can check all sorts of fuel consumption information.

There are two USB sockets in the bottom part of the centre console, but they are slightly hidden. There isn't one for your passengers though, so prepare yourself for your teens constantly asking you to plug in their cellphones.



Pieter Crous

has been towing forever – this is what he thought of the Fx4...

“Be honest: This five-cylinder diesel engine has the nicest drone of all the bakkies on the market.

The driver's armrest in the door does bother me though, because it's not the best place for the buttons for the electric windows. If my arm rests on it, the buttons are underneath my wrist and it's uncomfortable to reach because there isn't a lot of space to pull my arm back.

Conversely, the navigation screen at the top of the centre console is big and clear – even if the sun shines on it you can still see the information easily.

On a bad road the ride is slightly bumpy, but in general the Fx4 has a good suspension

and it drives comfortably. You also sit comfortably and I found my driving position easily. You are aware of the caravan at the back of the Fx4. The nose of the caravan we used for the test is on the lighter side and the caravan tends to sway on its axle.

The automatic gearbox is better than the old Ranger's. It's more direct and the shifting smoother. You notice this especially when you're towing up a pass, because now it's much better. Still, the gearbox is slightly slow when you suddenly step on the pedal to accelerate. It takes about a second but then this five-cylinder jumps properly. At 80 km/h on an even road the engine almost idles (1 500 rpm) in sixth and you are completely unaware of the ton on the tow bar. When you accelerate quickly the transmission shifts down two gears and the revs go up to 3 500 rpm. But the Fx4 isn't exactly a bullet train because it takes a 'slow' 16,28 seconds to reach 120 km/h.

At R600 000 the price is fair. You get a strong engine, 4x4 abilities, and an automatic transmission. If you're judging the Fx4 on its appearance, Ford's Ranger remains the best-looking bakkie on the market. >



**What was towed****Make** Armadillo**Model** Shack**Year model** 2017**GVM** 1 800 kg**Loaded weight on the axle during testing** 1 060 kg (weighed hitched to the Ranger)**Nose weight** 42 kg

go! Drive & Camp borrowed the Armadillo Shack from Eko Veld Gear. Phone Fanie Botha on 021 981 5999 for a closer look at the Shack.

ekoveldgear.co.za

Before you open your wallet**What does the book say?****Fuel** Diesel**Engine** 3,198 l**Cylinders** 5**Power** 147 kW @ 3 000 rpm**Torque** 470 Nm @

1 750–2 500 rpm

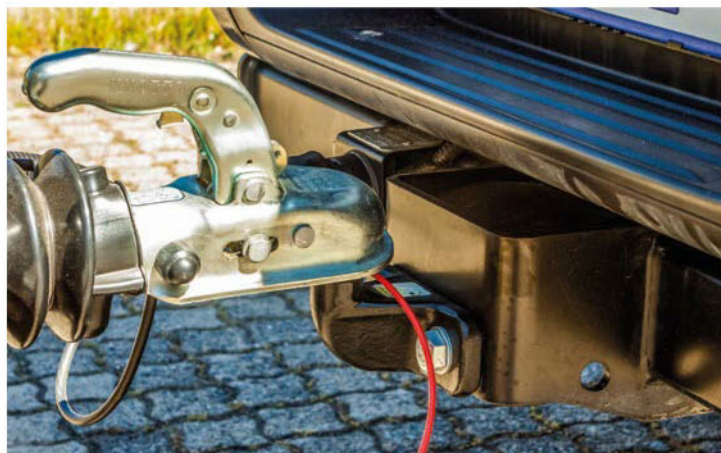
Transmission Six-speed (automatic)**Drive chain** Front wheel or four-wheel with high and low range as well as diff lock.**Tare** 2 282 kg**GVM** 3 200 kg**GCM** 6 000 kg**Wading depth** 800 mm**Towing ability for trailer with overrun brakes** Up to 3 500 kg**Measurements** 5 362 mm (l); 1 860 mm (w); 1 821 mm (h)**Wheel base** 3 220 mm**Track width** 1 560 mm (front and rear)**Ground clearance** 237 mm**Fuel tank** 80 l**Price (new)** R661 900**Price (second-hand)** R539 995 for a 2017 model with 7 000 km on the clock.**Fast facts**

The tow bar The tow bar is standard and the ball is 52 cm above the ground. You can fit a drop plate in case you want to adjust the ball height. Even though the Ranger has a towing capacity of 3,5 t, the caravans on our roads aren't allowed to exceed 2,282 t (because of the tare weight). The bakkie can tow 3,5 t, but in reality you're limited to 2,8 t – that's the caravan's maximum weight if you subtract the GVM from the GCM.

Suspension Independent double wishbones in front and leaf springs at the back. The Armadillo Shack that we used for the test was standard out of the factory without a fridge. The nose weight was therefore on the lighter side (42 kg) and the Ranger wasn't even aware of it on its tail. It dropped only 15 mm, which is under-standable. Ford recommends a minimum nose weight of 6% of



MADE FOR EACH OTHER. The Ranger Fx4 doesn't bat an eyelid with a caravan attached to the rear. The tow bar is strong enough to tow a tanker and the Newton metre output is on the right side of 400 Nm.

**TOW PROFILE**

Elevation

227 m

200 m

150 m

100 m

55 m

0

Kraaifontein

Klapmuts

Berg River Dam

DISTANCE

69 km

the weight of the caravan. The caravan weighs 1 060 kg, which means the weight with the caravan must be 64 kg.

What does the scale say? 2 420 kg with a full tank of fuel, the driver in the car, as well as the Armadillo's nose weight on the tow bar.

Interior For a six-foot person with the seat adjusted quite high there are still three fingers' space between the top of your head and the roof. The backseat passengers are also not overlooked because they have the same amount of space above their heads and in front of their knees.

Speed When the speedometer reads 100 km/h, the GPS says you're driving 96 km/h.

Fuel consumption For a diesel engine of this size and power, fuel economy is not

the best feature, but the 3,2 ℓ engine can hardly do any better. You don't complain about the 11,9 ℓ/100 km (8,4 km/ℓ) indicated by the computer. (You can trust the computer, because it corresponds almost 100% with our calculations.)

Finishes Predominantly black inside with matte dark and matte grey sections at the gear lever, door handle and on the steering wheel.

Extras Headlight protectors R848, Tonneau cover R4 167, ARB LED spotlights R9 593, and nudge bar R7 270.

Other models Besides the standard Ranger models, only a manual version of the Fx4: R601 900.

go! Drive & Camp says Ford offers free 4x4 training for all buyers of a Ranger 4x4.

The test

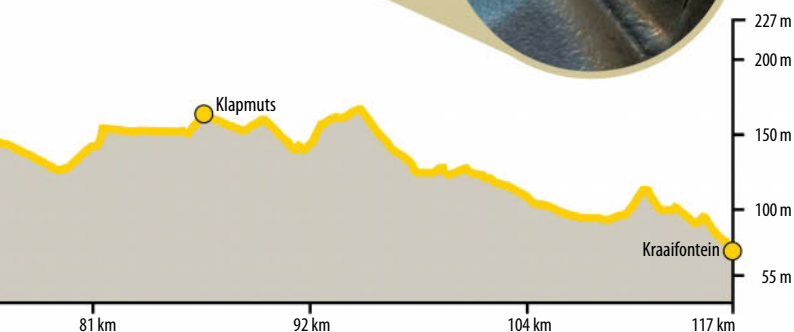
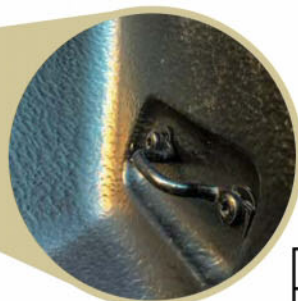
Distance 117 km

Top speed 117 km/h

Average driving time (including stops) 44,62 km/h (highways, back roads as well as built-up areas)

Driving time 2 hours and 36 minutes

Weather 17°C, sunny and virtually no wind (5 km/h south-southwesterly wind)



From the competitors
(4x4, diesel and automatic)



Amarok 3.0 TDI V6 4MOTION Auto Extreme
R778 600

550 Nm



Toyota Hilux 2.8 GD-6 Raider
R589 800

450 Nm



Nissan Navara 2.3D double cab 4x4 LE
R587 900

450 Nm

Small stature, big heart

If your car can get there, so can Infanta 4x4's Enkulu 1. We hitched this sturdy little guy in Swellendam and travelled all the way to Upington.

Text and photos **Leon Botha**



Enkulu 1

The Overberg manufacturer Infanta 4x4, known for its off-road caravans like the Enkulu 2 and the fancy double-axle model Enkulu 4, recently parked its smallest off-road caravan on the showroom floor.

The off-road caravan market is booming. With so much variety out there, prospective buyers are spoilt for choice, and that's partly thanks to manufacturers who have started including

smaller models in their range – usually nothing more than a bed on wheels. It's in this market segment that you'll find the Enkulu 1.

Although it's the smallest in Infanta 4x4's stable, don't underestimate it for a second. The owner, J.W. Swart, uses the same materials and basic concepts that you'll find in the Enkulu 2 and 4. This little guy, however, is a bit easier on the wallet. >





A multi-purpose step

Manufacturers are limited by where they can put the door on an off-road caravan of this size because the bed takes up most of the space inside. Usually the door is in one of the corners on the left-hand side panel, or, as is becoming increasingly popular, in the back.

When you're standing to the left of the Enkulu 1, the door is in the back to the right. It's nice and wide – 76 cm versus the 81 cm of a standard house door.

Like with most other off-road caravans, the body stands quite high off the ground – 60 cm to be exact. That means you have to stretch your legs to climb in. Luckily, J.W. and his team designed a unique step to help make things a bit easier: It's on the floor at the door when it's packed away inside the caravan and is kept in place by a rope while you're driving. When you stop at a campsite, you can easily reach it and place it right in front of the door. It's 32 cm high, making getting in and out a lot easier.

But that's not what makes the step unique. The step is essentially a small

aluminium box with a checker plate top that you step onto. Inside is a square, waterproof 20 l plastic container that you can use as a makeshift washing machine. Before you hit the road in the morning you put yesterday's clothes in the container with some washing powder and water and close the lid. The motion of the vehicle as you drive will help mix things up inside the container and your clothes are clean when you reach your destination.

The pop-up roof works electrically. It's not a conventional pop-up roof; it only lifts at the back (the hinges are in front, above the A-frame). The switch for the roof is next to the door frame inside. You flip the switch and two telescopic arms lift the roof to about 96 cm. To lower the roof, you push the switch back down.

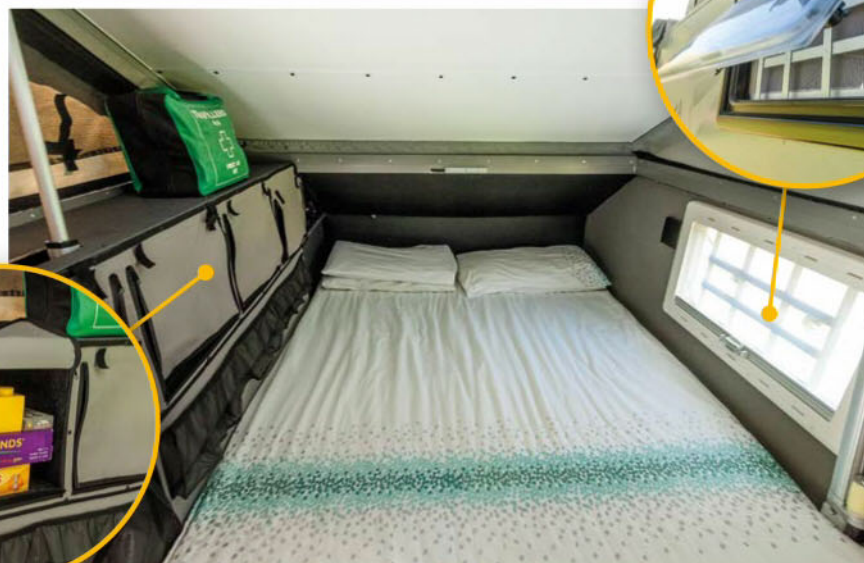
If the electric roof decides to leave you high and dry, you're not completely at its mercy – you can lift and lower the roof manually if necessary. Both electric motors have a pin you can pull out to disconnect them.



Everything in its place

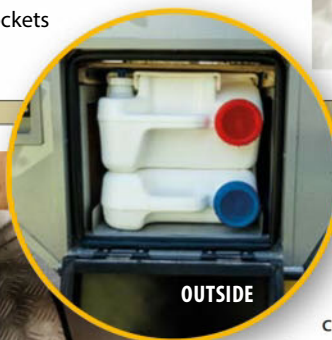
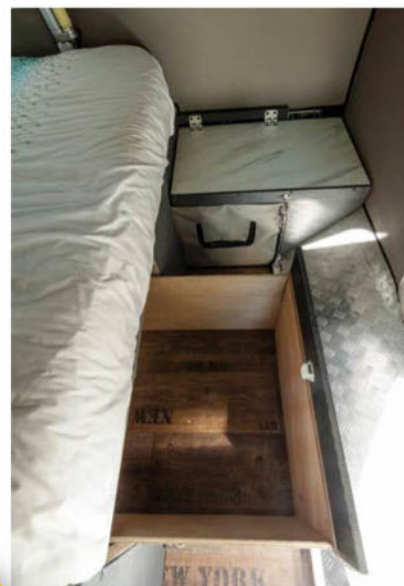
In a small caravan such as this you have to be clever when it comes to optimising room, and Infanta 4x4 really came up with some cool tricks. If you're standing in front of the door, the bottom end of the bed is left in line with the door frame. Your sleeping space stretches from here to the front of the caravan's body and runs along both sides. The bed is slightly larger than a queen size (192 x 143 cm) and together with the mattress it's a comfortable 69 cm above the ground. In front of you, against the right-hand panel, is a bench with a seat that folds up. The porta-potti is underneath the seat, and to the right, at the rear panel, is space to hang your clothes. This is essentially a hook for your hangers, and about midway down is an elastic that you can stretch around your clothes to keep everything contained. Don't pack your entire wardrobe because there's really only space for about four or five hangers.

There's an extra-large drawer (67 cm x 58 cm and 35 cm deep) that pulls out from underneath the bottom end of the bed. The drawer doesn't have partitions, which makes it perfect for storing things like blankets or extra pillows. There are small compartments with canvas covers to the left above the bed. Below these are pockets stitched to the compartments for things like keys or a cellphone.



The Enkulu 1 has only one window, in the right-hand side panel directly opposite the compartments. And J.W. uses a huge window. It's a three-in-one Dometic that opens up and has two blinds (made of mesh and lining fabric respectively) that can be pulled separately over the window. For the test vehicle, J.W. also added optional aluminium bars in front of the window as burglar bars.

The switch for the LED above the top end of the bed is close at hand and you don't even have to lift your head to reach it. All the instrumentation – the water-level indicator, the geyser's electricity and gas settings, as well as the switch for the outside light – is next to the switch that you use to lift and lower the roof-top tent. There are also electrical sockets and a USB port.



Emergency calls

You don't often see a caravan with a built-in cupboard for emergency equipment. This one is built into the floor of the right front cupboard. The cupboard is not only big enough to fit bigger items like a fold-up chair or two, but an aluminium table also fits into the top section.

The equipment cupboard's lid is made of aluminium tread plate and serves as the base of the bigger cupboard. The inside is lined with synthetic rubber and has cut-outs for everything that needs to be there – things like a bow saw, emergency triangle, caravan light socket, axe, and fuses. Full marks for this cupboard.

The second door in the right-hand side is where you can access the porta-potti's two tanks. >

Clever cooking

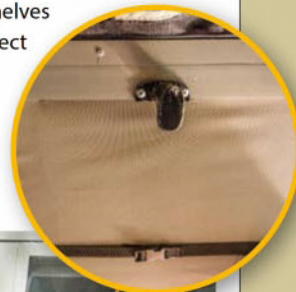
If you look at the kitchen it's clear that J.W. considers cooking an important part of camping. Besides the door in the left-hand side, the rest of the panel consists of cupboard doors. There are four and all of them are for the kitchen.

The biggest door folds out over the wheel and forms the kitchen's work surface (54,5 cm x 136 cm), which is 3 cm higher than the standard 90 cm comparing it to your cupboards at home. A two-plate stove, fastened to the left on the work surface, comes standard, but the test caravan had a one-plate cast iron gas stove. Behind the stove, in the body of the caravan, are numerous shelves of varying sizes – here is storage space for anything from cutlery and crockery to Tupperware and canned food, and there are even small hooks for keys and a spirit level to see if your caravan is level.

Underneath the work surface, in front of the wheel, there's a drawer where you can put groceries or a small pot and pan. The same goes for another small compartment top left. The camping fridge pulls out behind the door to the far left. Depending on your preference you can fit a fridge of up to 60 l.

Even the back of the door can be used as storage space, with pockets to put small things like firelighters and mosquito repellent.

But that's not all: You also get nifty loose shelves that hook into a slot above the kitchen – perfect for things like spice bottles. (The shelves remind you of those trays you found years ago at road-side cafes that could hook onto open car windows. In fact, J.W. calls them roadhouse shelves.)





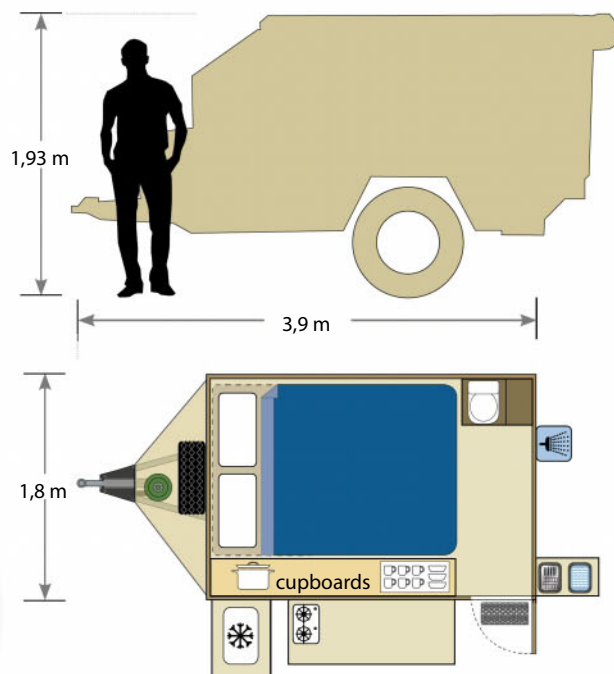
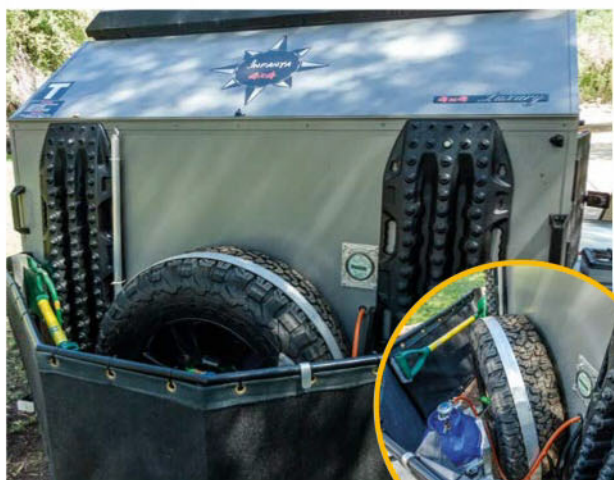
Who's doing the dishes?

When it's time to clean up you have to walk around the caravan to the back. There's an aluminium frame that folds out where you can fit a basin and a dish rack. To the right of this is a folded-up shower cubicle. A loose aluminium floor plank comes standard with the caravan so you don't have to stand in mud while you're showering. The showerhead and its extension arm is for both washing dishes and showering and is located conveniently in the middle of the rear panel.

The awning is folded up against the roof and opens up over the kitchen area.

Where's the nose?

A nosecone is standard on almost all caravans, but not on the Enkulu 1. Still, the space above the A-frame is utilised – there's space for things like a gas bottle, a spare wheel, and a spade. Wire mesh netting is spun around the A-frame like a fence and prevents stones and mud splatter from hitting the lower front part of the caravan.



The technical stuff

Length 3,9 m
Width 1,8 m
Height 1,93 m
Inside height 2,2 m
Nose weight 95 kg*
Net weight 610 kg*
Payload 990 kg
GVM 1 600 kg
Price R295 000*
 (* fully equipped)

- The drawer beneath the work surface is slightly hidden away.
- The clothes hanger hook could be bigger.

go! Drive & Camp borrowed the Enkulu 1 from the manufacturer.

go! Drive & Camp says
 16" wheels are standard, but you can also choose wheels that will match those of your towing vehicle.



Plus

- The electric roof is a winner, as well as the emergency equipment cupboard, washing machine step, and the space to hang your clothes.
- You couldn't ask for a better window.
- The loose shelves in the kitchen are unique.
- The top of the porta-potti can also be used as a bench.



Minus

- The work surface has a raised edge, which makes it difficult to wipe down.
- The gas stove takes up about a third of the work surface.

Dealer network

Infanta is a one-man operation in Buffeljagsrivier.
Contact 0028 512 3663
 or 0082 558 4935
jjswart@twentyfour.co.za
infantatrailers.co.za



The sweetest thing

From cold fridge treats to a chocolate pudding with a molten centre, this is how to make pudding when you're camping.



Recipes and styling **Aletta Lintvelt** Photos **Myburgh du Plessis** Food assistant **Merrill Buckley**



LAYERED BANANA PUDDING- Fabulous fruit

You can easily make this fridge tart in a campsite. Make one big trifle or pack the layers in bowls.

Ingredients

(enough for 6)

- 1 tin (360 g) cold condensed milk
- 1½ cup (375 ml) cold water
- 1 packet (90 g) Moirs banana-flavoured instant pudding
- 3 cups cream
- wafer biscuits
- 4 bananas, sliced
- 4 tablespoons caramel ice-cream syrup

Here's how

1 Whisk the condensed milk and water together, then add the instant pudding. Place the bowl in the fridge for the pudding to set.

2 Whip the cream until soft peaks form and slowly fold into the banana pudding.

3 Pack the wafer biscuits, banana and pudding in layers inside pudding bowls. Add a few tablespoons caramel sauce on top. Serve immediately.

go! Drive & Camp says

You can keep this pudding in the fridge for up to two days. Just make sure that it's covered.

STRAWBERRY AND CONDENSED MILK ICE Summer refreshment

You'll be hard-pressed to find an easier and more refreshing dessert for those warm summer evenings.

Ingredients

(enough for 6)

- 500 g frozen strawberries
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 tin (360 g) condensed milk

Here's how

1 Cut the leaves off the strawberries and cut the fruit into biggish pieces.

2 Mush the strawberries, sugar and lemon juice together to form fine ice.

3 Spoon the ice into glasses and drizzle condensed milk over it. Serve immediately.

go! Drive & Camp says

You can also serve whipped cream with the strawberry ice. Then add the condensed milk to make it even more delicious. >



CHOCOLATE SQUARES

A firm favourite

This chocolate version of the old favourite Rice Krispies squares is just as nice.

Ingredients

(makes 16 squares)

- 3 tablespoons butter
- 280 g coconut marshmallows
- 5 cups Coco Pops
- 1 cup Tennis biscuit crumbs

Here's how

1 Line a rectangular pie dish

of 30 cm x 20 cm with baking paper.

2 Melt the butter and marshmallows together in a big pot. Stir in the Coco Pops and biscuit crumbs.

3 Spoon the mixture into the pie dish. Leave to set and then cut into squares. You can keep it for up to a week in an airtight container.

go! Drive & Camp says

The baking paper should stick out about 2 cm above the dish. It makes it a lot easier to lift out the squares.



CRUNCHIE BRAAI PIE

Sweet salvation

This braai pie is sweet... and absolutely delicious!

Ingredients

(enough for 4)

- 2 Crunchie chocolate bars
- 2 bananas
- 1 roll puff pastry, defrosted

Here's how

1 Finely chop the chocolate or use a wine bottle to break it up while still in the packaging.

2 Cut the bananas into slices.

3 Unfold the pastry, sprinkle

the chocolate over one half and then place the bananas on top. Fold the pastry and close the sides using a fork or your hands.

4 Spray the grid liberally with cooking spray. Place the pie on the grid and braai over medium coals until puffed up and golden brown – about 30 minutes.

5 Cut the pie into squares and serve with ice cream.

go! Drive & Camp says
If you don't fancy banana, you can substitute it with pineapple or nectarines.

CHOCOLATE PUDDING Easy-peasy

You bake this warm chocolate pudding with its molten centre for a minute in a microwave.

Ingredients

(enough for 2)

- ½ cup flour
- 4 tablespoons dark, unsweetened cocoa powder
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- 4 tablespoons sugar
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup milk
- 4 tablespoons melted butter or olive oil
- 2 heaped tablespoons Nutella

Here's how

1 Mix together the flour, cocoa, baking powder, sugar and salt in a Ziploc bag and pack it with the other food-

stuffs to go along on holiday.

2 Whisk together the milk and butter or olive oil and add the dry ingredients until well combined.

3 Divide the dough between two glass containers with a volume of about 400 ml each. You can also use large cups that are microwave-safe.

4 Put 1 tablespoon Nutella in the middle on top of each pudding. Don't stir it; wait for it to sink into the dough mixture.

5 Microwave the puddings, one at a time, for 70 seconds on High.

6 Serve the puddings with berries. Be careful, because it's hot.

go! Drive & Camp says Microwave power levels vary – add a few seconds to the cooking time if you want a firmer pudding.



TIRAMISU JARS A taste of Italy

This pudding gets better if it stands for a while. Make it in individual glass jars or tin cups and take it along inside a cooler box when you're going on a picnic or game drive.

Ingredients

(enough for 6)

- 1 cup mascarpone
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla essence
- 1 tablespoon brandy
- 1 cup (250 ml) cream
- 1 cup lady finger biscuits
- 1–2 cups strong filter coffee
- Cocoa powder for dusting

Here's how

1 Mix together the mascarpone, sugar, vanilla essence and brandy until soft and spreadable.

2 Whisk the cream in a separate bowl until soft peaks form and then fold into the mascarpone mixture.

3 Cut a few biscuits in short enough pieces to fit into the bottom of the jars or cups that you're using. Quickly dip the biscuits into the coffee and pack a single layer at the bottom of the jars.

4 Put a spoonful of the mascarpone mixture on top of the biscuits. Dip some more biscuits in the coffee and place it upright all along the inside of the jar. Fill the jar up to the top with cream. Sprinkle some cocoa powder on top. Keep it covered in the fridge for at least 4 hours before serving.

go! Drive & Camp says You can also use full-fat cream cheese instead of mascarpone.





The air out there

Stuck with a flat in the middle of nowhere with no compressed air? These portable jobbies will save the day when you have a puncture.

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

You've been tackling another tough mountain pass and have the upper hand close to the end when the rocky terrain strikes back and claims a few points by puncturing a tyre.

Fortunately, the spare wheel is on the back of the tailgate, but unfortunately

someone forgot to check that it's inflated. Don't get caught out in the bundus without a compressor at the ready.

Experienced 4x4 guys know that this is definitely a must-have if you're going to be overlanding on your own.

And even if you're in a group, you'll be the toast of tonight's braai if it's your

compressor that helped your buddy in his hour of need.

In the interest of fairness we tested the following compressors in the same conditions and on the same tyre: a BF Goodrich All Terrain T/A KO2. Starting at a bar, we then put each compressor up against a stopwatch on the way to 2 bar.

IRONMAN 4X4 FLOMAX 72 LPM

In contention

This is a solid middle-of-the-field compressor that punches way above its own weight.

The battery clamps are a little on the small side but overall it can talk the talk and walk the walk.

Price R2 095 at 1st Outdoor & 4x4

Time 1 minute 10 seconds

go! Drive & Camp says It's a worthy entry that's above average in performance.



TRAILBOSS 300 LPM

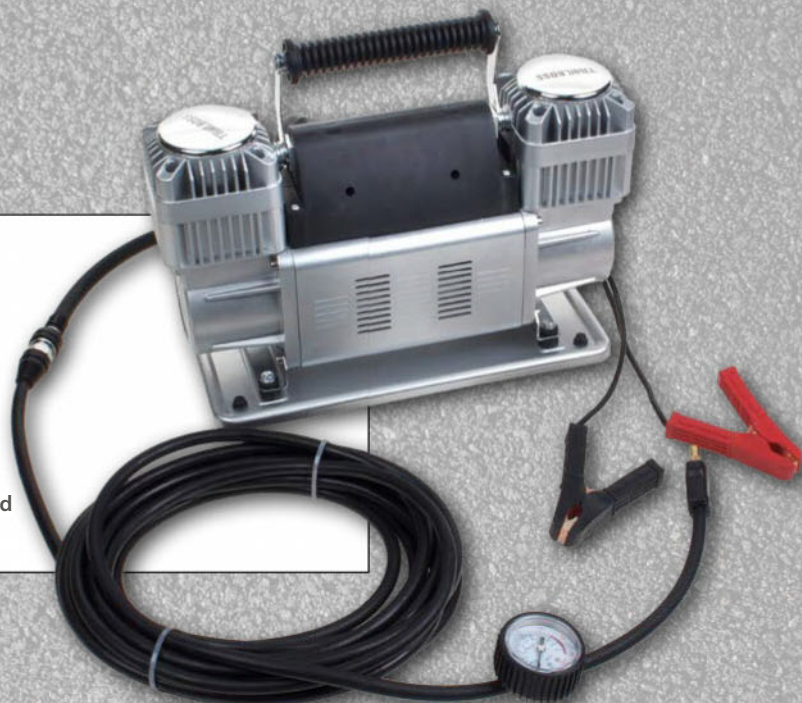
Tough enough

The biggest compressor available at Outdoor Warehouse packs a mighty 300 litre per minute punch, and didn't break a sweat in our benchmark test. It comes standard with an 8 m hose and handle that folds down conveniently for easier stowage.

Price R2 496 at Outdoor Warehouse

Time 35 seconds

go! Drive & Camp says Its chrome finish and twin piston design helps to make this good performer look rugged.



TRAILBOSS 35 LPM

Up to the task

The little Trailboss 35 managed quite a tall order with our chunky off-road tyre. It took its time, and there is a warning to not exceed 20 minutes of usage – which would probably lead to premature failure. It emitted minimal noise during our test.

Price R795 at Outdoor Warehouse

Time 3 minutes 10 seconds

go! Drive & Camp says If you stick within the guidelines this guy will see definitely you through.



IRONMAN 4X4 FLOMAX 160 LPM PRO

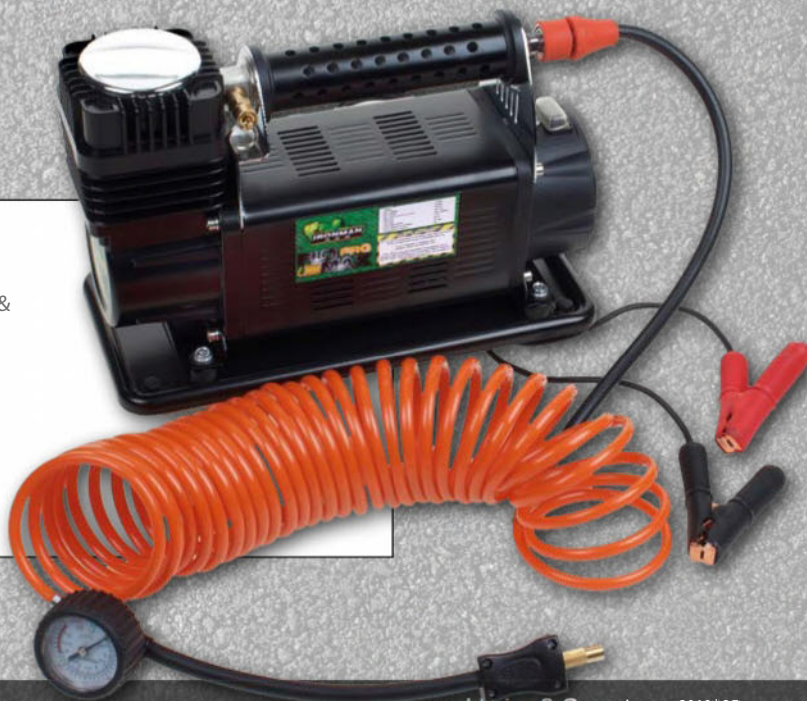
For enthusiasts

This one features an extra-long hose and battery cable, and pumps more than double the litres per minute capacity of the other IronMan compressor in this review. It's not twice as fast though, but it should prove reliable in the long run.

Price R3 150 at 1st Outdoor & 4x4

Time 50 seconds

go! Drive & Camp says Just as the name suggest, this one is perfect for epic adventurers. >



ARB 75 LPM

The connoisseur's choice

This compressor is mounted in its own polypropylene carry case which is sealed against water and dust. There's a lot of lightweight components used, which explains the low mass despite the bulky packaging. And at the high price, it's surely unbreakable. One hopes.

Price R5 600 from 4x4

Mega World

Time 1 minute 30 seconds**go! Drive & Camp says**

ARB not only backs up its products with replacement parts but also with an impeccable reputation.



T-MAX 160 LPM

More bang for your buck

The big T-Max has actual metal bolts holding it to its base plate and isolated by thick rubber bushes for minimal vibration. It also has an amperage overload protector. Be mindful of the 45 A draw and keep your off-roader's engine running.

Price R2 295 from 4x4

Mega World

Time 40 seconds**go! Drive & Camp says**

It's a comfortable middle weight that can run with the big dogs.



T-MAX 72 LPM

Alternative choice

The little T-Max has a 2,4 m power cord and a 30 amp in-line fuse. It can maintain 50 LPM at 30 psi, but tends to get a bit hot after just one tyre. There are accessory fittings for balls and other inflatables too.

Price R1 595 from 4x4

Mega World

Time 1 minute 5 seconds**go! Drive & Camp says**

It's really light and portable and not badly priced.



MOTOQUIP 26 LPM

Slowly does it

This tiny compressor managed to come close to matching the time of a bigger one from another brand while inflating our tyre. It also comes with attachments for other inflatables and plugs into a 12 V DC lighter socket. The cables are a bit short though.

Price R500 at Game

Time 3 minutes 5 seconds

go! Drive & Camp says

Because of the capacity, we would recommend rather using this on smaller SUVs.



MOTOQUIP 35 LPM

Budget beater

This is another rather impressive unit from the brand given its size, which is only slightly bigger than the 26 LPM model. It comes with a quick-release coil hose that's long enough to reach all the way around your vehicle.

Price R700 at Game

Time 2 minutes 25 seconds

go! Drive & Camp says

The built-in pressure gauge is a useful feature.

MOTOQUIP 50 LPM

Dynamite comes in small packages

This is the cheapest dual-cylinder model that we tested, with battery clamps, quick-release hose and built-in pressure-release valve. It works hard, so its a bit noisier than its brothers from the same brand.

Price R900 at Takealot

Time 1 minute 3 seconds

go! Drive & Camp says

This little guy offers extremely good value for money.



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Game game.co.za

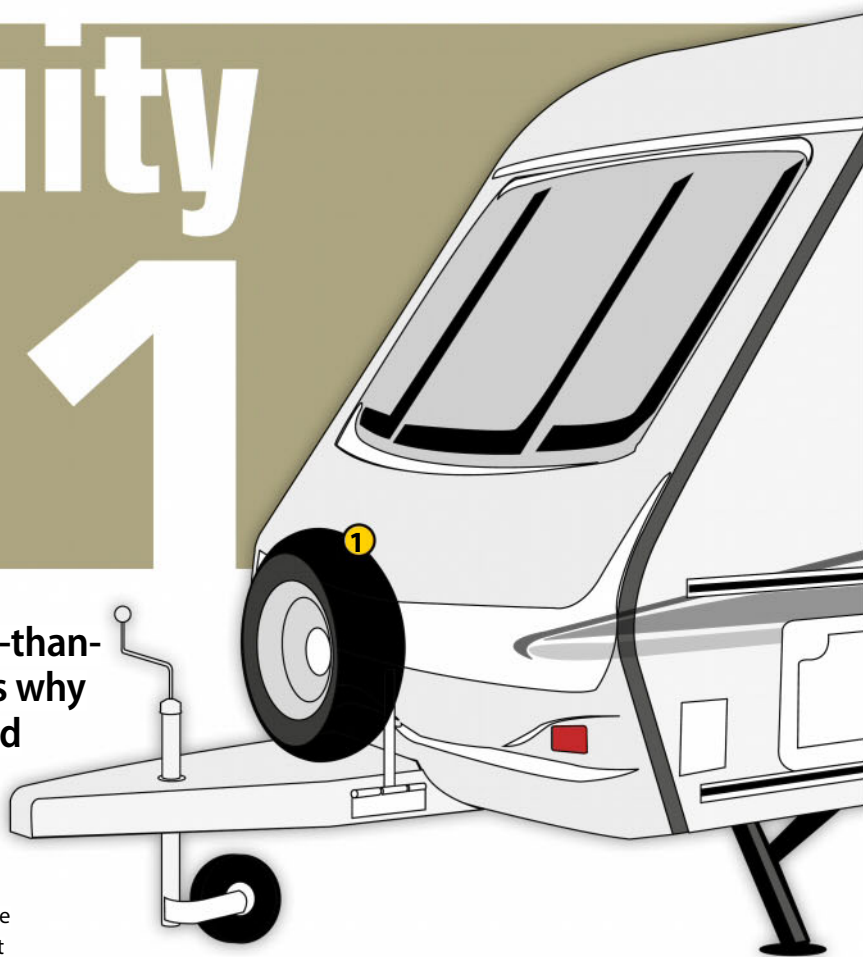
Takealot takealot.com



Ingenuity 101

Our readers simply cannot accept less-than-perfect camping experiences, which is why they have come up with some left-field ideas to ensure optimal situations.

Text **Kyle Kock** Illustration **Dominic Wienand**



Desperate times call for solutions that would put MacGyver to shame.

If you're in need of something when you're out in the wilder-

ness or at a campsite but you're far from a shopping mall, don't despair because often there's a solution right under your nose – and it's usually everyday objects you'd never think of using.



1 THE WHEEL DEAL
Your caravan's spare wheel is almost always loose inside the caravan, and there are likely to be some unwanted consequences, like marks on the floor. **Jan Wentzel** from Paarl has a solution.

"If your spare is located in a spot that's particularly difficult to

reach, this might be the solution for you.

I mounted mine on my Gypsey's A-frame, right in front of the nose box. It's held in place by a galvanised frame, which won't rust easily – perfect if you enjoy camping near the sea.

The frame has a fixed hinge on one side of the nosecone and it's held in place with a sliding bolt

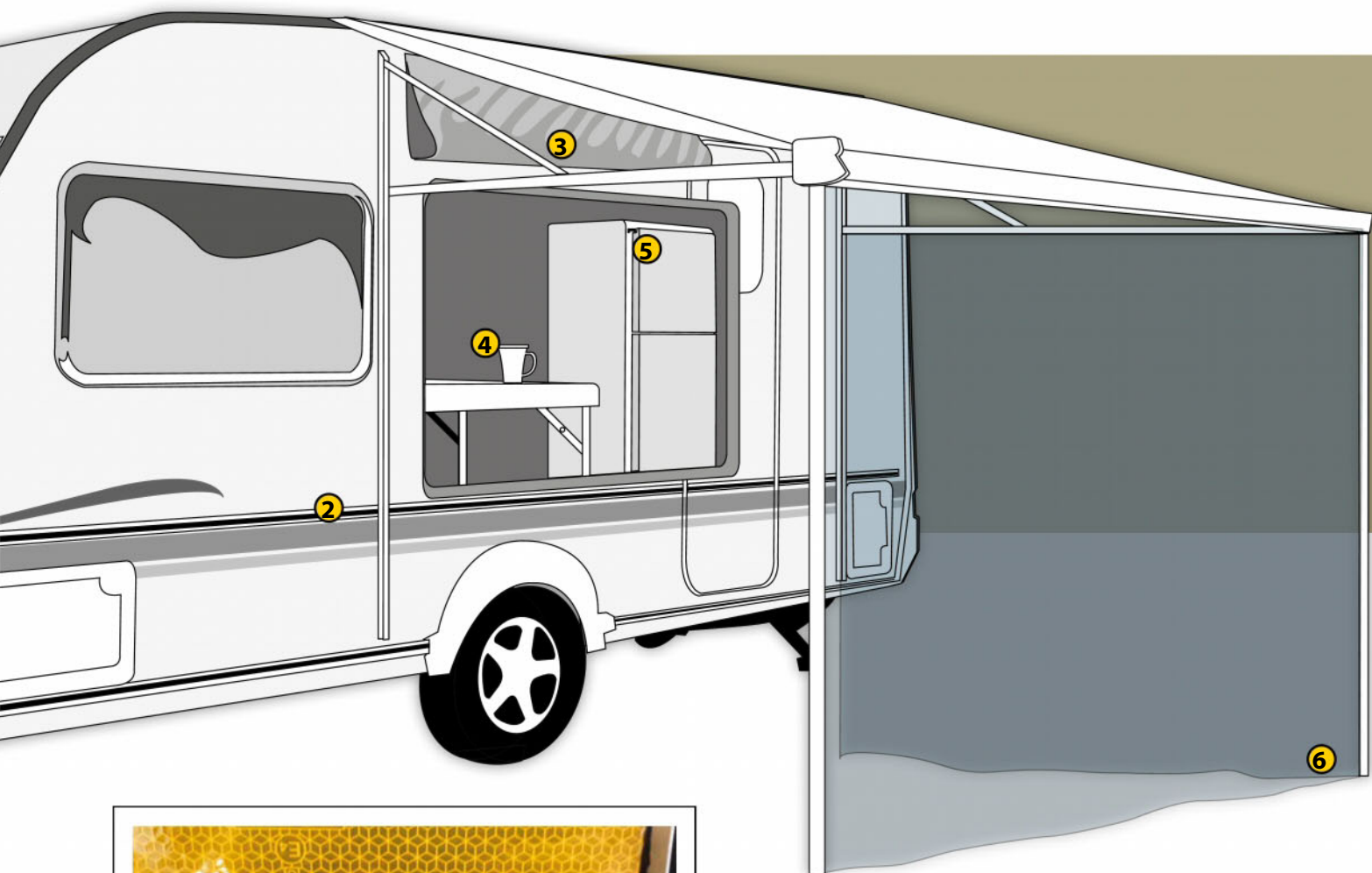


that's secured by a lock.

An added bonus is that the nose box can't be opened if the wheel is locked in place."

go! Drive & Camp says Get your welder buddy to help you with this one. Simple and safe to use.





2 EVEN STEVENS

We often use the naked eye to judge whether something is level. But if you really and truly want to make sure that your caravan is sitting pretty, maybe your old spirit level could do the trick, says **Pieter Townsend** from Klerksdorp.

"If you don't have an old level or two lying around you'll have to buy two of these devices and remove the transparent tubes that indicate if the surface is perfectly horizontal or vertical. Then you need to try and level the caravan. If you remove the end cap from the aluminium



strip on a door you can slide the levelling tube into the strip. Secure the tube with silicone and replace the end cap."

go! Drive & Camp says Judging by the prices, it's best to use an old level for this. Or try to find a bargain at a pawn shop or Sunday market.



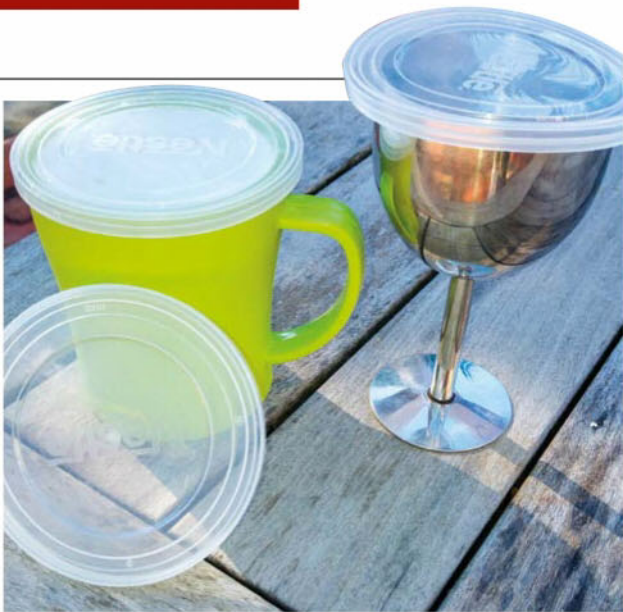
3 BASKET CASE

After recently buying a Sprite Tourer SP and finding that it didn't come with a specific case to store tent poles, **Harry Greef** made a plan.

"I asked a local seamstress to add a length of rope to the bag that came with the tent poles. The rope slides into the slot at

the rear end of the caravan along its profile while the tent hangs over the front and the poles hang over the rear. I then had two additional lighter bags made to keep the tent and awning poles separate."

go! Drive & Camp says Put the seamstress in your family to work – and never confuse your poles again. >



4 CUPPERWARE
You're ready to let your hair down for a few days but the local insect population has double-booked your stand. Bees, midges and moths all seem to be fond of the same drinks you enjoy. **Marieta van Rensburg** from Durbanville was tired of sharing.

"Before you leave for your next camping trip, pack in a few of

those plastic lids that you find on food and drinks tins. It's a multi-purpose solution: It keeps the goggas out of your drink, it keeps your drink hot for a little longer, and it's a good way to reuse that old Ricoffy or Milo tin."

go! Drive & Camp says Who doesn't have at least one of these lying around? And you do your bit to save the environment as well.



5 LOCKDOWN
After replacing the old refrigerator in his caravan with a modern unit, **Corrie Singeling** from Riviersonderend found that the door kept opening into the passage because the original had a cap that kept it closed.

"I used the existing hole in the door of the fridge and made a U-shaped iron to fit that size to exact standard. I then screwed a bracket to the kitchenette wood. The other side of the U-iron fits into the hoop plate support, holding the door in place."

go! Drive & Camp says It's a smart hack that owners of older caravans will appreciate.

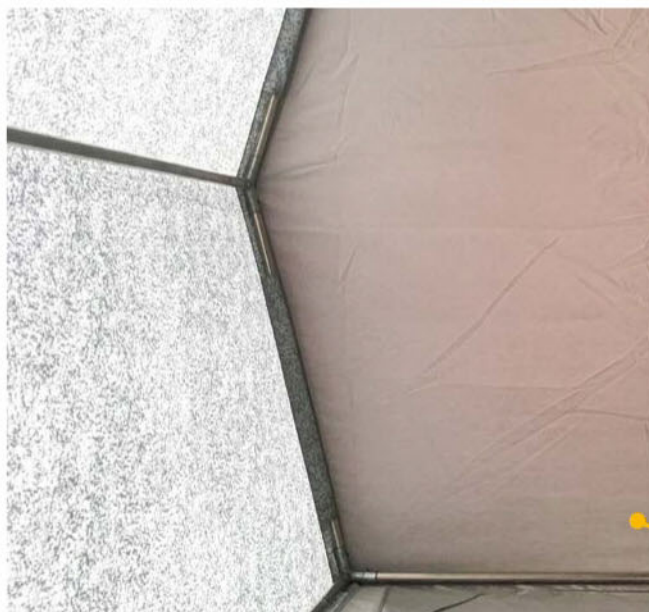


6 CUT OUT THE SLACK
If there's a frame that holds up the top of a tent, awning or gazebo, why not apply the same principle to the walls and floor? asks **Johan Pretorius** from Brakpan.

"I'd just opened my caravan's multi-room to clean it after returning from a trip, but I had to ask my wife Karien to push the poles out so that we could sweep up properly."

As I'm sweeping between the folds on the floor, Karien says that if she had to design a multi she would put poles around the edges so the flooring is taut."

So, using a few spare poles we had lying around, we did exactly that."



go! Drive & Camp says It's a pretty unique idea that could

very well work – if you have the right materials available. 🛠️



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What's in a name?

Is Kia short for something, who owns Land Rover these days, and did Hitler really drive a Beetle? We answer these and other questions.

Text **Cyril Kloppe**

This month we investigate the origin of four-wheel-drive vehicle manufacturers that are popular in South Africa.

We look at the manufacturers' family trees and who currently has the controlling interest in the company. We left out manufacturers like Lamborghini, which isn't known for its 4x4s, and Haval, which is new in the country.



Mercedes-Benz



Audi

Audi has a complicated history. German engineer August Horch founded two companies: Horch (in 1904) and Audiwerke (1910), and in 1932 Horch's companies merged with two other manufacturers, DKW and Wanderer, to form Auto Union. Auto Union was bought by Volkswagen in 1960, and the Audi brand name was established in 1962.

"Horch" means listen in German, and the Latin translation of that is "audi". The four rings in Audi's emblem symbolises the four founding companies, and their slogan, *Vorsprung durch Technik*, is translated as "Advancement through technology".

Majority shareholder

Volkswagen Group

Head office Ingolstadt, Germany

Local plant Uitenhage, Eastern Cape



BMW

Similar to Audi, BMW, or Bayerische Motoren Werke, owes its existence to the merger of three other engine manufacturers: Rapp Motoren Werke, Bayerische Flugzeug Werke, and Fahrzeugfabrik Eisenach.

Initially, the company built aeroplanes, some of which were flown in the First World War. In accordance with the Treaty of Versailles, BMW had to cease all aircraft manufacturing after the war and it was only allowed to produce domestic appliances. BMW's first motorbike was launched in 1923 and their first car five years later. Today, BMW owns Rolls-Royce and the Mini brand name.

Majority shareholder

Bayerische Motoren Werke AG

Head office Munich, Germany

Local plant Rosslyn, Gauteng



Chevrolet

In 1900, the Swiss racing driver Louis Chevrolet established himself in North America. After an encounter with the then-boss of Buick, William C. Durant, Chevrolet established his own car company in 1911 in Detroit. Chevrolet and Durant were not good business partners, and in 1916 Chevrolet sold his shares to Durant and returned to the race course. By this time Durant was also the owner of General Motors (GM) and he consolidated the companies.

On a side note: Do you remember the Chevy "Call me Kelly" Nomad that was manufactured by GM in South Africa between 1973 and 1982? Although it had rear-wheel drive, people tried to drive it on all types of terrain.

Majority shareholder General Motors

Head office Detroit, USA



Ford

Henry Ford needs no introduction. This American established the company in 1902 when he was 39 years old and is responsible for the first mass-produced vehicle, the Model T, which drove off the assembly line in 1908.

Today, Ford owns an 8% share in Aston Martin and a 49% share in Chinese manufacturer Jiangling. Ford also owns the American brand name Lincoln. Henry Ford's descendants have only a 2% stake in the company, but that 2% is worth approximately US\$1,2 billion.

The Ford family, however, has 40% voting power and final say over the company's operations.

Majority shareholder Ford Motor Company

Head office Dearborn, Michigan, USA

Local manufacturing plant Silverton, Gauteng



Honda

From a young age, Soichiro Honda loved cars, and he worked at the Art Shokai garage as a junior mechanic when he was 15 years old. A friend lent him money, and in 1939 the 22-year-old Soichiro opened a workshop in which he manufactured parts for Toyota.

Soichiro's workshop grew along with his technical knowledge, and in 1945 the first engine-powered bicycle (with a Honda engine) rolled out of the shop. By 1963, Honda was the biggest motorbike manufacturer in the world, and they started building cars.

In 1992, Honda was nearly acquired by Mitsubishi, but they were able to avoid this hostile takeover.

Majority shareholder Honda Motor Co., Ltd.

Head office Tokyo, Japan



Hyundai

Like many other vehicle manufacturers in Asia, Hyundai's origin dates back to the years shortly after the Second World War. Business man Chung Ju-Yung established the engineering and construction company Hyundai in 1947, and his first vehicle was a Cortina – built with Ford's permission.

When Hyundai decided to build its own vehicle, they approached George Turnbull, previous manager of British Leyland. Turnbull joined Hyundai and took five trusted engineers with him to Korea. In 1975, the Hyundai Pony became South Korea's first vehicle, although the engine was supplied by Mitsubishi. Hyundai has a controlling share in Kia Motors.

Majority shareholder Hyundai Motor Group

Head office Seoul, South Korea



Isuzu

In 1922, Isuzu was the first company to build a Japanese-manufactured passenger vehicle in Japan. It was a copy of a Wolseley A9, under licence of the British manufacturer. At the time, Isuzu was known as Ishikawajima Motor Works, and when they merged with DAT Motors (a predecessor of Nissan), their products were promoted under the brand name Isuzu.

In the following decades, Isuzu partnered with Subaru, Mitsubishi, and Nissan, but the longest-lasting partnership was with General Motors, which bought a 35% share in 1972. Toyota also own shares in Isuzu.

Majority shareholder Isuzu Motors Ltd.

Head office Tokyo, Japan

Local plant Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape



Jeep

When it became clear that the US' entry into the Second World War was imminent, the military accepted a design for a compact off-roader made by American Bantam Car Company. Unfortunately, Bantam was too small to provide the military with the numbers required and the contract was awarded to Willys-Overland Motors to assemble large quantities of Jeeps.

Since then Jeep has changed hands many times, from Kaiser Motors (1953), to AMC (1970), and Daimler Chrysler (1998). Today it's owned by Fiat Chrysler, which belongs to the super-rich Italian family Agnelli. The Agnellis also own Alfa Romeo, Lancia, Dodge, Ferrari, Maserati, Ram, and the Juventus soccer club.

Majority shareholder Fiat Chrysler Automobiles

Head office Toledo, Ohio, USA >

Chevrolet



Willys Jeep

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Mitsubishi

GOOD OLD DAYS Durant and his mechanic Fred Corner in Louis Chevrolet's race car. The Willys Jeep and Mitsubishi Trucks left an indelible mark on the motoring world.

VETERANS. The Mazda-Go auto rickshaw and red Mitsubishi town car barely resemble the companies' modern products. Landies and Datsun bakkies look great in pastels, but the poor Renault buggy needs much more than paint to improve its looks.



Mazda-Go



Mitsubishi



Kia

Kia was started in 1944 as the Kyungsung Precision Industry, manufacturer of Korea's first bicycle, the Samchully. In 1952, the company changed its name to Kia Industries and built reproduction Honda motorbikes and Mazda bakkies under licence. Kia is derived from *ki* (Korean for "out of") and *a* for Asia.

Although Ford owned shares in Kia, the company went bankrupt in 1997. Hyundai bought a 51% controlling interest in Kia and booted out Ford. Today, Hyundai owns 33% of Kia – a stake worth US\$6 billion. Kia in turn owns between 4 and 45% share in some of Hyundai's subsidiary companies. That's worth about US\$8,3 billion.

Majority shareholder Hyundai Motor Group

Head office Seoul, South Korea



Land Rover

The first Land Rover was designed by Maurice Wilks in 1947 for the Rover Company in the UK. The prototype was based on an American Army Willys Jeep, and it was launched at the Amsterdam International Motor Show in 1948.

The Land Rover brand name kept changing ownership. The Rover-Triumph group sold it to British Leyland in 1967, after which it was owned by British Aerospace for a short while (when British Leyland was broken up and privatised). After that the Rover Group was sold to BMW (1994), Ford (2006), and finally Tata (2008). Tata reserves the right to use Ford engines until 2019.

Majority shareholder Tata Group

Head office Whitley, Coventry, United Kingdom



Mazda

Mazda started out in 1920 as Toyo Cork Kogyo, a company that manufactured machine tools. Their first vehicle was the Mazda-Go in 1931. All of their vehicles were labelled Mazda and were initially marketed and sold by Mitsubishi.

Between 1974 and 2015 there were strong ties with Ford, which owned a 33% share in Mazda. This relationship, however, soured over the years, and in 2015 Ford sold its last 2% in the company. In that same year, Mazda signed a deal with Toyota in which Mazda agreed to build diesel engines for Toyota in exchange for hydrogen fuel cell technology.

Majority shareholder Mazda Motor Corporation

Head office Hiroshima, Japan

Local plant Silverton, Gauteng



Mitsubishi

Mitsubishi was established in 1870 after the founder, Yataro Iwasaki, started a shipping firm. It was Yataro's grandson Koyata Iwasaki who in 1916 decided to start building automobiles.

Mitsubishi's first vehicle, the Model A (based on a Fiat Tipo 3), saw the light of day in 1917. Mitsubishi's involvement in the Second World War cost the company dearly, and after the war the Allies insisted that the company disband. The harsh ban was lifted at the 1951 San Francisco Peace Treaty and a new Mitsubishi Motor Company was established – without the Iwasaki family at the helm. In 2016, Nissan bought a controlling share in Mitsubishi Motors for US\$2 billion.

Majority shareholder Nissan Motor Company Ltd.

Head office Tokyo, Japan



Land Rover



Nissan



Renault



Mercedes-Benz

Mercedes-Benz

The first Benz vehicle was also the world's first practical petrol-powered car. Carl Benz, the inventor, built it with money lent to him by his wife, Bertha.

In 1901, Wilhelm Maybach worked on Carl's car to improve its looks, entrepreneur Emil Jellinek gave it a name (Mercedes, who was a cousin of Emil), and Gotlieb Daimler promoted and sold it. And that's how the Mercedes-Benz brand name came to be.

Daimler-Benz AG, the holding company, merged with Chrysler in 1998, but it was not a happy union. In 2007, Chrysler was sold to the Agnelli family, and the Mercedes-Benz owner is now simply called Daimler AG.

Majority shareholder Daimler AG
Head office Stuttgart, Germany
Local plant East London, Eastern Cape



Nissan

Nissan was a tiny enterprise that agreed to manufacture Datsuns (formerly known as Dat Car) on behalf of the Tobata Casting Co. The agreement was signed a few years before the start of the Second World War.

After the war, the Allied forces occupied Nissan's factory for a more than a decade. In those 10 years, Toyota overtook Nissan as Japan's largest motor company.

Today, the Nissan group owns Datsun, Nissan, Infinity, and it has a controlling share in Mitsubishi Motors and trade agreements with Renault, Mercedes-Benz, and several other manufacturers.

Majority shareholder Nissan Motor Company
Head office Yokohama, Japan
Local plant Rosslyn, Gauteng



Renault

This company was established in 1899 by brothers Louis, Marcel and Fernand Renault. They didn't start as cart, aeroplane or weaving loom makers – they went straight into cars. Their first vehicle was a 276 cc buggy that could reach a maximum speed of 32 km/h in short bursts.

The company has a rich history and is the only French car manufacturer that is still privately owned. Renault was, however, part of alliances over the years, one of which was everyone's favourite bed fellow, General Motors, as well as Volvo, Nissan, and Mercedes-Benz. Renault has the controlling share in Romanian car manufacturer Dacia.

Majority shareholder Groupe Renault
Head office Boulogne-Billancourt, France



Subaru

Subaru was established in 1954 as a subsidiary of aircraft manufacturer and current parent company Fuji Heavy Industries. The Japanese name refers to the Seven Sisters star cluster (or Pleiades).

Nissan bought a 20% share in 1968, but sold it to General Motors in 1999. When GM struggled in 2005, they sold Subaru and the Swedish brand name Saab to Toyota. Toyota currently has a 16% share in Subaru and by all accounts it's a match made in heaven.

Subaru South Africa's former MD, Kazunori Suzuki, confirmed to us that the company has no ambition to expand further or reach mainstream popularity.
Majority shareholder Fuji Heavy Industries
Head office Tokyo, Japan >

Suzuki



TOO CUTE. Large manufacturers scoffed at these diminutive cars but the public responded quite unexpectedly. Today VW and Suzuki are much-loved brands.



Volkswagen



Suzuki

The first machine ever built by Suzuki was a weaving loom, and for 30 years that was enough for the company. But with the arrival of mechanisation, Suzuki finally built its first tiny car in 1937. During the Second World War they returned to manufacturing looms, which is why they were not punished by the Allies after the conflict ended. After the war, Suzuki manufactured engine-powered bicycles, and in 1955 they built the cute Suzuki Suzulight. Until now, Suzuki has enjoyed a relaxed existence. In 2009, Volkswagen did acquire a 20% share in the company, but after some unpleasantness an international court ordered that VW sell its share back to Suzuki.

Majority shareholder Suzuki Motor Corporation
Head office Hamamatsu, Japan



Toyota

Like Suzuki, Toyota started out manufacturing looms, but this company shifted its focus to vehicles in 1933. The first Toyota was actually a Toyoda, but the "d" was later replaced with a "t" because it sounded better. The first Toyotas were available in South Africa as Toyopet Scouts – later called the Toyota Hilux. In 1989, the Lexus brand name was established to compete with expensive German vehicles.

Today, the Toyota group owns Lexus, Hino, Daihatsu, and Ranz (the last two are not available in South Africa), and it has shares in numerous other vehicle manufacturers like Isuzu and FAW.

Majority shareholder Toyota Motor Corporation
Head office Toyota City, Japan
Local plant Durban, KwaZulu-Natal



Volkswagen

Many vehicle manufacturers owe their existence to the Second World War, and none more so than Volkswagen. In 1937, Adolf Hitler established the state-controlled Gesellschaft zur Vorbereitung des Deutschen Volkswagens mbH. Hitler asked the famous engineer Ferdinand Porsche to design a vehicle for the average Joe – it would later come to be known as the Beetle.

After the war, the factory was destroyed, but the British Army rebuilt the plant and Volkswagen was rescued from the ruins. Today the Volkswagen Group owns Lamborghini, Porsche, Bentley, Bugatti, Skoda, Seat, and Audi.

Majority shareholder Volkswagen Group
Head office Wolfsburg, Germany
Local plant Uitenhage, Eastern Cape



Volvo

The name Volvo, Latin for "to roll", was registered in 1915 by the SKF car company as a ball bearing manufacturer, but the brand name was never used for that intention. When SKF started building luxury cars in 1927, they dusted off the Volvo brand for this new range of vehicles.

From the very start, Volvo was underfunded, and the original CEO knew Volvo had to merge with another manufacturer.

In 1973, Volvo tried to merge with Saab, and in 1993 with Renault, but both deals were thwarted by investors. In 1999, Volvo was sold to Ford, who unfortunately couldn't make a success of it, and resold it in 2010 to Chinese company Geely for US\$1,3 billion.

Majority shareholder Geely
Head office Gothenburg, Sweden

Zambia Malawi Adventure

Join the Bhejane 4x4 Adventure Team to experience an unforgettable awe-inspiring holiday exploring the warm heart of Africa.



ADVENTURE ITINERARY

DAY 1

We meet at Camp Nkwazi, just outside Livingstone. By the time you arrive, your tents would have been pitched and our bush chef will be preparing the first of the culinary delights you will be enjoying on this safari. The evening will be spent socialising around the fire.

DAY 2

Making an early start after a hearty breakfast, and after you have all been issued with two-way hand-held radios, we take to the road and leave for Lusaka. We will overnight there on our way up to South Luangwa National Park.

DAY 3

We continue our journey northwards, over-nighting at a campsite just outside of Chipata.

DAYS 4, 5 & 6

This is one of the greatest wildlife sanctuaries in the world. The camp is set along the banks of the Luangwa river. From here we will explore the National park at our own leisure in our own vehicles. Please note that we will not be game viewing in a convoy. It would be advisable to have a GPS with Tracks 4 Africa.

DAY 7

Today we cross over into Malawi and sleep in Lilongwe. A trip to the old-city market is well worth it, with gleaming fruit, stunning wooden carvings and African cloth. We will also use this as a chance to resupply before heading on to the lake.

DAYS 8, 9 & 10

We leave early from our camp for Lake Malawi! Half a day of driving through spectacular scenery takes us to our camp on the shores of this majestic Lake. We have 3 nights/2days here. Included in the trip is a sunset boat cruise

DAYS 11 & 12

We start our southward journey, making our way to Kafue National Park.

DAYS 13 & 14

This must be one of the most under-rated parks in Africa. Kafue is Zambia's oldest and largest National Park. It is still relatively undeveloped and always gives a feeling of true wilderness. We spend two nights at Kasabushi camp on the banks of the Kafue River. A two-hour boat trip on the Kafue River is included.

DAY 15

Today we travel through the park to Nanzhila Plains; the Plains teems with game. The birding in this area is also exceptional. The campsite is situated at a waterhole, so you can sit and relax, or you can take a drive around the area.

DAY 16

We make our way out of the park and drive on to Livingstone, where we will have our last evening dinner together around the fire.

DAY 17

After a hearty breakfast, we say our good-byes.



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Endless adventure

No matter if the vehicle is an older model or the caravan is one of the larger ones on the market, these readers have managed to find a sweet spot with their rides.

Power and stability

**2013 KIA SORENTO 2.2 CRDI
4X2 AUTOMATIC**

A towing veteran with more than 40 years under his belt, **Etienne Groenewald** from Polokwane isn't afraid of switching between brands in search of the ultimate combination.

“After successfully towing with an automatic **Ford Fairlane** with a trapezium stabiliser for a number of years, I decided to change my everyday vehicle to an Isuzu KB 300. It was a good towing vehicle and up to the challenge of towing our Jurgens Exclusive. However, my wife, Estelle, was never quite comfortable parking a big manual bakkie and found it a bit impractical for daily use.

So after just six months with the Isuzu, I bought a brand new automatic Kia Sorento for R342 000 five years ago. It has great ground clearance, is very stable as a towing vehicle using nothing other than the standard tow bar, and has plenty of power. Unfortunately the ride height still doesn't suit my wife.



One of its stronger points is definitely the fuel consumption, which can drop to as low as **7,5 l/100 km** and climbs to a maximum of only **13 l/100 km** when towing at an average of 110 km/h. The Sorento is more than capable of towing at higher speed, but generally tows easiest in sixth gear at an average speed of around **120 km/h**. Maybe one day I'll be able to upgrade to the new Fortuner or Everest.

After four decades, it's difficult to pick an absolute favourite destination, but Gariep, Glentana, and Silver Rocks definitely rank highly on our list.





Tried and tested

1996 NISSAN SANI 3.0 V6

It's a really tough old bakkie that's recently been given a new lease on life with a few modifications, say **Nic and Tillie Swart** from Annlin in Pretoria.

“Ten years ago we purchased a Sani double cab with 220 000 km on the clock for **R75 000**. After a few years towing various trailers and caravans, we came across another bargain in the form of a **2007 Jurgens Exclusive** for **R150 000**.

Despite being an older engine, the 3.0 towed surprisingly easily and comfortably at 100 km/h and could even manage 120 km/h, though a self-imposed limiter of 110 km/h is now in place for the purposes of safe towing practices. Most hills were a breeze, but the steeper gradients required us to gear down to third, with between 3 000 and 3 500 rpm on the tachometer. The only time we would have liked a bit more power and closer gear ratios was when we were forced to shift down to second gear on certain mountain passes

because the speed limits were as low as 60 km/h – third was definitely too long to tow in. Regardless of whether or not the caravan was hitched, the Sani consumed an average of between **15 and 16 ℓ/100 km**.

Despite the engine having managed 340 000 km without giving us any issues, we decided at the end of 2016 that it would be a good idea to have it rebuilt and upgraded. With a 40% increase in power and torque, towing the Exclusive is now a breeze and requires a light foot to make sure that we don't trip up any speed cameras. The R75 000 for the modifications was definitely worth it. All in, the combination has cost us **R300 000** so far, which is very acceptable considering the prices of new bakkies and caravans these days. ”



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Proudly Pajero

2006 MITSUBISHI PAJERO GLX

There's nothing like a trusty 4x4 for those off-road excursions, says **Ben Loots** from Durbanville.

“I bought the Pajero second-hand in 2009 for **R280 000**, and in the nine years I've had “Wit Pou” it has never let me down.

I previously owned a **1997 Toyota Hilux 2.4 double cab** for five years, but my wife refused to be seen in it, so I had to start looking around for a replacement. My

needs were simple: It had to be able to go where I wanted it to go.

After considering a **Prado**, I found the Pajero more suitable for my needs. It's very reliable and capable off the beaten track. It helps that I've added an Old Man Emu suspension system, an additional fuel tank, drawer system, underbody protection plates, and steel front and rear bumpers.

After so much bundu-bashing, though, the paintwork could really do with a touch-up. If money wasn't an issue, I would gladly have an **Iveco Discoverer Xtreme**.

The only thing that really bothers me is that this model has particularly low service intervals, because it has to go in every 7 500 km. Otherwise, I'm quite happy with it. The fuel consumption hovers somewhere around **14 ℓ/100 km**.

We've been all over Botswana and Namibia, but our favourite is **Kaokoland**. The adventure of Van Zyl's Pass, the splendour of Marienfluss, looking for elephants along the Khumib and Hoarusib rivers and driving in the tracks of famed ecologist Jan Joubert. ”

On the radar...

Everyone has a different idea of what they think is beautiful. For some it's mountain streams while for others it's an old Valiant parked next to a windmill. And some people even think a bat is beautiful.



WINNING PHOTO

Completely batty

Erica Demetriou of Roodepoort isn't afraid of the challenge of taking a difficult photo.

"I took this photo in Marloth Park. At first I thought the movement close to us was a bird, but I quickly realised it was actually a bat. With the help of my friend Leandi Mollentze I was able to take two pictures of the bat. I couldn't keep my eye on the bat and aim through the camera at the same time. The bat flew back, I aimed, Leandi gave me the go-ahead, and I was ready for the photo."

go! Drive & Camp says This type of photo is a challenge – even for professional photographers. Animals aren't remote-controlled beings and you can't always predict their movements.



You therefore have to be very alert to try to capture a quick-moving bat.

On Erica's photo the flash "freezes" the bat's movements and accentuates every single detail that is in focus around the animal's mouth. The downside to a flash, however, is the shadow that it casts behind the object. In this instance the shadow is

less distracting because the background that it's set against is far enough away from the bat so there are no clear lines.

To make the photo even more striking you could crop out some of the unnecessary detail around the bat. Even the fence at the bottom could be darker. Right now it shifts your focus away from the bat.

Canon EOS 760D; Canon 70-300 mm lens; 1/60 of a second; f5,6; ISO 400

SEND YOUR PHOTO

If you have a photo in your album that you would like to share with others, send it to us and we might publish it here. Any pic is welcome – from a spoonbill next to the road or the kids on a jungle gym to a campfire photo. And it can be taken with any camera – from professional cameras to mobile phones.

ERICA DEMETRIOU wins a Camp Cover camera bag to the value of R595.

Congratulations!

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



Samsung Galaxy S7;
4,2 mm lens; 1/3 000 of
a second; f1.7; ISO 40

In the eye of the beholder

When he goes walking in the mountains, John Wait of Hankey in the Eastern Cape always takes his Nikon with him.

"I took this photo during our monthly InniKloof waterfall hike in the Stinkhoutberg Nature Reserve, which is part of the Greater Baviaans near Hankey.

I used the HDR technique and shot five frames with the same aperture, but each with a different shutter speed – it's called bracketing. (The middle one of the five is the right exposure.) Afterwards I used the computer to compile the images into one."

go! Drive & Camp says

The HDR John is referring to stands for high dynamic range, and is essentially a

composite photo. With a standard digital photo you can't capture all the detail in the light and the dark areas of a scene at once. The HDR setting allows you to do this (to a large degree).

You take one shot with the correct exposure and two each that is too light and too dark. If you combine them, you'll see much more detail. This photo is more true to how the iris in the human eye adjusts to changing light.

John's photo, therefore, shows all the detail – from the clouds to the dark corners in the rock pools.

Nikon D7200; Sigma 10-20
mm lens; 5 shutter speed;
1/320 to 1/5 000 of a second;
f4.5; ISO 1 000



Wait just a minute

Natasha Hijbeek of Melkbosstrand doesn't mind bringing everything around her to a standstill and park in the road to take a picture with her phone.



"We were on our way to the annual Bull Run at Vanwyk's Vlei and my husband had to pull over quickly to adjust the Valiant's engine.

Our lives are so rushed with daily tasks and responsibilities, and sometimes it takes something really special for us to stop and appreciate the beauty around us. We were surrounded by silence and a sense of peace. All you could hear was the soft creaking of a windmill close by. I have to add: After that you certainly appreciate tar roads."

go! Drive & Camp says

Thanks to cellphones, the world these days have countless instaphotographers whose images are shared on all digital platforms.

With her photo, Natasha takes you to the middle of nowhere to experience the solitude. While these days you can click anything

that moves with your cellphone, you can capture everyday life even better by taking note of a few tips. One of the most underrated techniques is how high off the ground you hold the camera. If you (like the most of us) stand and hold the cellphone in front of your face, the photo will reflect how we all see the world: at eye level. Try kneeling for a change or climb a hill and see how it changes the photo. It won't necessarily mean a better-quality photo but rather add an unusual angle that you don't see everyday and this will draw attention.

With Natasha's photo you can try to make the composition even more interesting. Lift the camera so that the horizon doesn't fall in the middle, or, if you have photography software, crop out the unnecessary background. 📱

TAKE A LOAD OFF

Spending time in the wilderness need not be intimidating. Here are six overlanding solutions to make camping easier and to help you explore further for longer.



National Luna is the preferred supplier to Avis Safari Rentals and their extensive fleet of fully equipped 4x4s. These vehicles tour some of the most remote places in Africa and demand the best in equipment, reliability and backup service.



Visit avis.co.za/safari-rental for more information
or call 011 392 5202



Embrace the ice age

Nothing has revolutionised an outdoor way of life quite like the 12V camping fridge. Gone are the days of melted ice and floating lamb chops – now you can run a powerful fridge at ice-cream-freezing temperatures for more than 24 hours on a single battery charge.

But efficiency isn't the only thing that matters. Backup service and reliability are also key features to consider when purchasing a fridge/freezer, along with the fridge's ability to perform in extreme heat and when exposed to excessive vehicle vibration.

National Luna's fridges tick all these boxes. They're designed and manufactured in Africa, for Africa.

Take power with you

Dual-battery power is great, but "power on the move" is even better! Our portable power packs have travelled the globe, from the toughest overland routes in Africa to the furthest reaches of the Australian Outback. It's drop-proof, shock-proof and bang-proof, and it will keep your campsite running smoothly no matter where you are.

The National Luna Portable Power Pack is easy to install and features a built-in dual-battery system, an accurate battery monitor and multiple outlet plugs.

Box clever

For a number of years, National Luna had repeated requests to manufacture a no-frills auxiliary battery box that would make it easier to connect electronic devices to a 12V battery. Instead of just slapping together a plain old plastic box with limited features, the new Auxiliary Battery Box can be fully customised. Yes! Save money by choosing which connection types you require: a DIN/Hella connection, a cigar socket, countless USB ports? The choice is yours!



For more information and other overland solutions,
visit  nationalluna.com or call  011 452 5438.





Get your backup system sorted

As 12V refrigeration becomes more powerful and efficient, so too does the need for bullet-proof backup power. And what could be more reliable than a mechanically proven solenoid system, trusted for 20 years? Indeed, National Luna's onboard dual-battery system has been serving the worldwide 4x4, boating and caravan markets since 1997. It's the dual-battery setup of choice for Avis Safari Rentals and their fleet of hard-working Ford Rangers and Toyota Land Cruisers.



Charge it right

Batteries are expensive. If you don't look after yours, it won't last. To make matters worse, and contrary to popular belief, most vehicle journeys are not long enough to fully recharge a deep-cycle battery, which is why you should connect your auxiliary battery to an Intelligent Maintenance Charger when it's not in use. If not, you'll do permanent damage to the battery.

After extensive research into battery technology and recharge/discharge curves, it became clear that battery maintenance is a critically ignored subject. That's why National Luna invested more than three years into developing this charger. It boasts an eight-step charging program that allows the charger to optimally analyse and restore your battery. Best of all, you can leave it connected for an indefinite period, without the risk of damaging or over-charging the battery.

DID YOU KNOW?

- National Luna is the only camping fridge manufacturer in South Africa.
- National Luna was the first company in the world to design and manufacture a dual-compartment fridge/freezer that used a single compressor. This product was released in 2002 and it took 10 years before the first Chinese copy appeared on the market.
- All National Luna fridges are manufactured and tested to tropical spec (43°C), the highest international fridge/freezer test specification.
- National Luna boasts the world's widest range of 12V camping fridges.



Let there be light

Here's the thing about outdoor lighting: Sometimes you need a lot; other times you want less. The only thing worse than a harsh camping light that ruins the ambience is a dinky light that doesn't let you see anything.

National Luna has an extensive range of LED camping lights, which are all fitted with multiple brightness modes, from easy-on-the-eye to blindingly brilliant. Each also has a dual-colour mode (red or yellow), which doesn't attract insects. There's even a helpful blue light on the back to make your light easy to find in the dark. (Great for caravan and trailer owners.)

Each light is water-resistant and fitted with a polycarbonate lens/diffuser that's almost unbreakable, and each has a built-in battery protection feature that automatically shuts down the light to prevent it from draining your vehicle's battery.

Established in 1987, National Luna is a leading specialist in 12V outdoor products, and the preferred supplier to all major off-road trailer and caravan manufacturers in South Africa. National Luna products are available at all leading outdoor and 4x4 stores.



Visit nationalluna.com or
call ☎ 011 452 5438 to find a dealer near you.

CROSSWORD

Congratulations **Fanie Fourie** from Betty's Bay. You have won a Camp Cover Lunch Box Cooler worth R290 for your correct entry in the crossword competition in our December 2017 edition. You can also be a winner like Fanie. Complete the crossword, take a picture of it, and e-mail it to us at drivecamp@gomag.co.za. Remember to include your contact details. Or simply complete it online at <http://bit.ly/2A6aCVA>.

			An ATKV resort	Male offspring	Increase	Chops and wots, eg	A camp mattress			
						Gull				
						Smear				
			Insect		Ocean					One time
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					Sleeper-coach				Beer	
					Album				Request	
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One of the Big Five					16th Greek letter	Appear				Children
Perjurer						Peruse				
				Expert			Morning (abbr)			A Jurgens model
				Perform			Droop			
Indefinite article			Expire			Cut				
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			Hectare (abbr)			Cadmium (symbol)		Negative answer		Pledge
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A Land Rover series		Raise		Friend				"... no!"	Jump	
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Winter ailment				Fashionable (inf)		Russian leader				After hours (abbr)
Block						Tier				
					Lock and ...			Rent		

COMPILED BY GERDA ENGELBRECHT

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Bars, Nudge Bars, Styling Bars, 12/220V Fridges and Freezers, and many more. We are continuously adding new products to our range. Please contact our Sales Department on 011 845-3672 prices and information on all our products or visit our website at www.alumbox.co.za. Also, we would love to show you around our fitment centre and assist you with your requirements. Our aim is to provide our customers, whether they are an individual, or a company, with excellent service and quality products.

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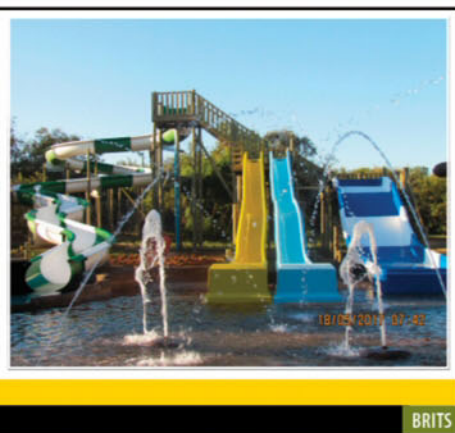
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All's well that ends well

You shouldn't measure the success of your camping holiday by how it started but rather by how it ended, says Anita Homann.

We've been camping for 20 years and in all that time we had never visited the beautiful Storms River Mouth Rest Camp. It was time to rectify the situation. We paid the deposit, bought a Wild Card, and started counting down the days.

At the end of winter we pulled the caravan out of the garage, spring cleaned it, and packed everything we needed. Everything was carefully ticked off a list, just to make sure that we fiftysomethings remembered everything.

We had recently bought mountain bikes. People say that cycling is good for you and an excellent way to de-stress.

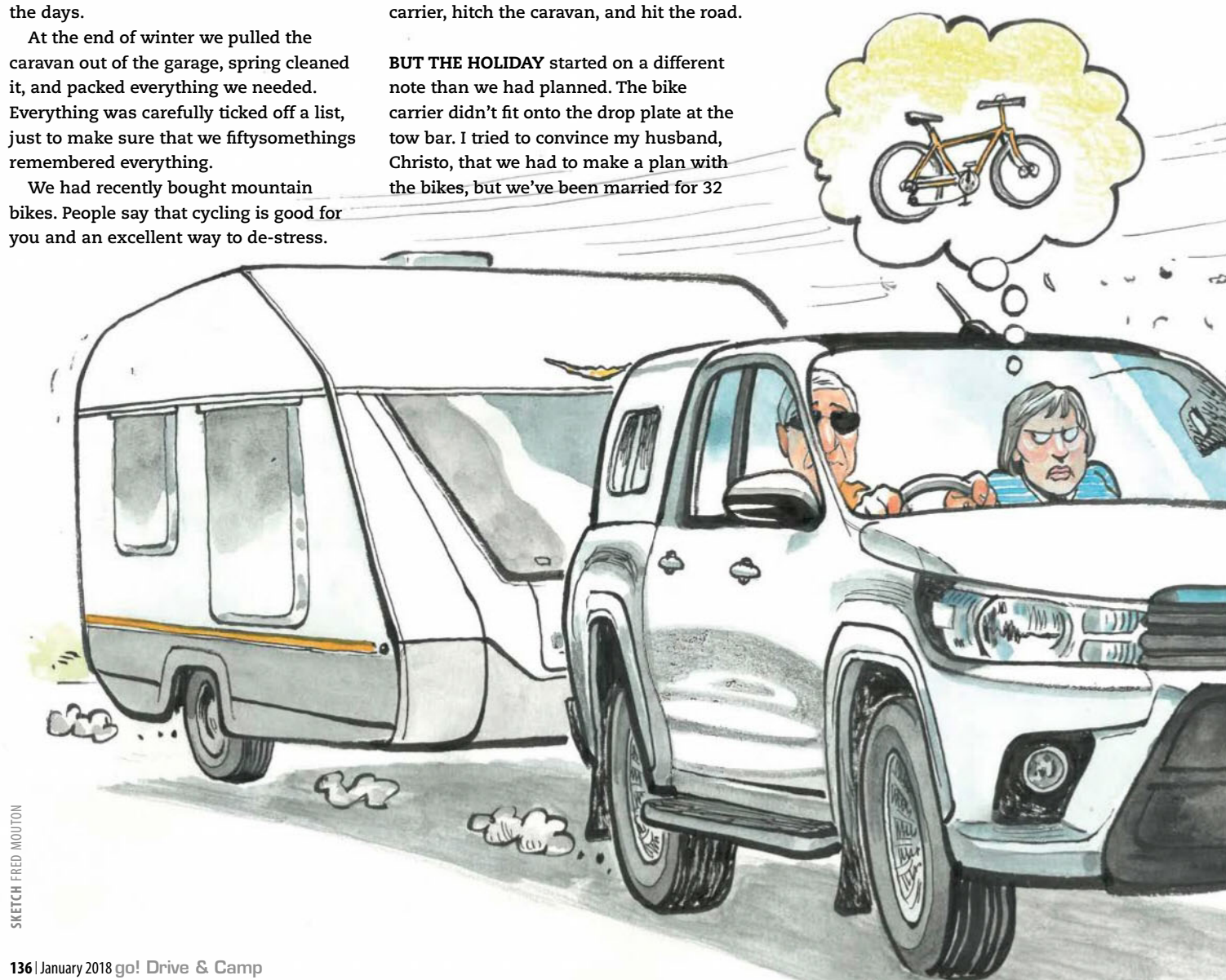
To say I was extremely excited at the prospect of exploring the Tsitsikamma on my bike is putting it mildly. We even converted one of the caravan's cupboards into a space for our cycling gear.

The morning we left a hot Kimberley, all we had to do was load the bikes onto the carrier, hitch the caravan, and hit the road.

BUT THE HOLIDAY started on a different note than we had planned. The bike carrier didn't fit onto the drop plate at the tow bar. I tried to convince my husband, Christo, that we had to make a plan with the bikes, but we've been married for 32

years and I knew what the answer was going to be. The bikes were either going to damage the caravan or the bakkie. Since it was a brand new Black Edition Hilux, the bikes were left behind.

If you're wondering why we didn't just load the bikes in the caravan, you



SKETCH FRED MOUTON

obviously don't know Christo. Everything inside the caravan is packed neatly. No loose items allowed. End of story!

There was an awkward silence between us as the wheels started turning towards the Garden Route. My mind was racing and the disappointment over the bikes still lingered. I was so excited about a week's worth of cycling in one of the most beautiful parts of our country, but my stubborn husband selfishly put an end to that plan.

While we were driving, I tried to hide all the emotions I felt, but the anger, hurt and disappointment welled up often.

We drove in silence in the Black Edition. Stupid bakkie, I thought. And stupid man. And stupid bike carrier.

WE STOPPED OUTSIDE Three Sisters at a farmstall and I ate a farm breakfast in silence. I'm an emotional eater. Christo tried his best to make conversation, but his questions were answered by silence. Every attempt at explanation was ignored.

After a while I realised that it was probably time to clear the air. I didn't want our long-awaited holiday to kick off on such a sour note. What if we were involved in an accident? By the time we reached Oudtshoorn, we'd started talking to each other again. Gradually we progressed from curt responses to complete sentences.

The other thing that had been bugging us since we left was the wind. It had been blowing non-stop all the

“
It became clear we would not be getting a break from the squall as we had hoped. But were we going to leave? No way!”

way from Kimberley and was spoiling our towing experience. And it also appeared as if the new bakkie was extraordinarily thirsty.

We stayed over and by the time we hit the road the next day, all emotions were back in check, our weaknesses and sins confessed, and a new leaf turned.

But the wind didn't get the memo, and when we arrived in Storms River early afternoon, it was still howling. We stopped at a beautiful paved stand with the sea on our doorstep. All the campers around us also had beautiful sea views, and I thought to myself that if the wind didn't bother them then it surely wouldn't bother us.

IT WAS TIME to pitch the tent, and what a struggle it was. I clung desperately to the poles and ropes. It felt like the caravan and I were both about to blow into the stormy sea.

As he hammered in the pegs, Christo realised that the paving stones were spaced too tightly and it was all but impossible to drive the storm pegs in between them. At every swear word a peg received a heavy blow – with little effect.

“Would you please control your anger? The neighbours are watching,” I mumbled through a grimace. But the wind blew away my request and I watched helplessly as my husband exacted his pent up anger over his demanding wife, the bikes, the wind and the bakkie's fuel consumption on the hammer and the hard, rocky ground.

Three hours later, the rally tent was pitched. It was a new record for us – the longest it had ever taken. Needless to say, we were dead tired and on our first evening at our dream destination we are in bed by eight. Christo had to swallow two pain pills for his aching wrists.

The relentless wind didn't subside for three days. Eventually we decided to

abandon the stand for one that offered more shelter. Our camping experiences up to this point had been positive, but with the fierce wind we were no longer loving it. The wind heralded in a storm and it felt as if we were camping during a European winter. It was freezing, and we noticed that most of our neighbours had traded their caravans for wood cabins. It made us feel a bit better to see that others shared in our misery.

RETREATING was equally eventful. The neighbours had to help with the tent. We moved the caravan back about 50 m and again started the cumbersome process of pitching the tent. This time at least we were on grass and getting the pegs into the ground was a lot easier.

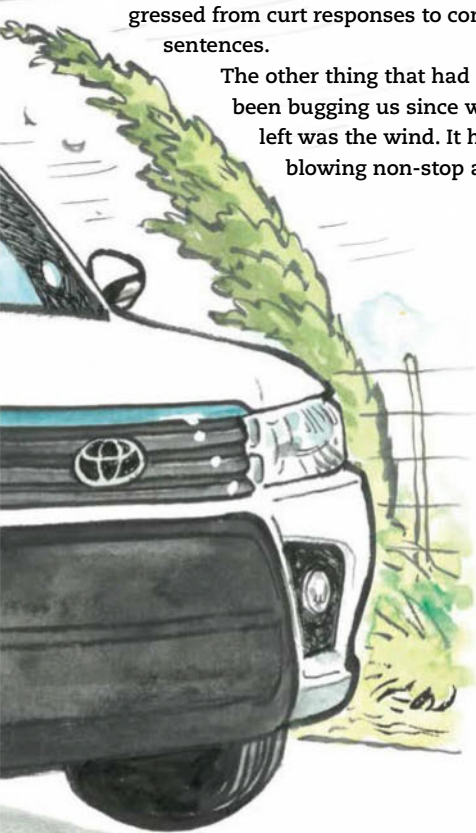
We went to bed early again, but the wind never tired. It became clear we would not be getting a break from the squall as we had hoped. But were we going to leave? No way!

Christo and I both realised that we would have to adjust our expectations. Things weren't how we thought it would turn out, but that didn't mean we couldn't enjoy our holiday.

One cold, windy day Christo made a delicious paella and the next morning I threw some of the leftovers on the grass in front of us. A seagull came to partake and afterwards became a daily guest. Sometimes he hovered in the air before the wind allowed him to land, but he came every day. One late afternoon, while we were huddling underneath blankets looking out over the restless sea, the gull flew overhead to introduce his new girlfriend. I grabbed a camera and started taking pictures of their mating ritual. I became aware of the wonder of nature, of the love language of bids... and all thoughts of the weather faded.

My diary contains only positive remembrances, and as we headed home – on a beautiful sunny day, of course – I came to realise that even though there were a lot of disappointments, there were also many enjoyable moments which added a different dimension to a cold and windy camping trip.

We met interesting people (and birds) and our neighbours probably thought the same about us. Later I admitted that the bikes would have been unusable, and the new bakkie wasn't that heavy on fuel. It was just the wind.





Simple sophistication

Modern-day motoring is a technologically advanced affair, but Jan Ebersohn from Stellenbosch remembers just how capable his old-school Volvo was.

Edited by **Kyle Kock** Photo **Jan Ebersohn**

“ While reading the write-up on the new Volvo XC60 in your August issue, I thought of my 1962 Volvo PV544 that I purchased new for R1 800.

I read about the new safety features that have become such a talking point as automotive manufacturers scramble to cater to the safety-conscious citizens and governments of the world. Stuff like city safety, pilot assist, active cruise control, brake assist with electronic brake force distribution, and even all-wheel drive have become the norm.

It's a miracle that after 55 years I'm still alive, because back in those days we had no such electronic nannies to help get us out of sticky situations. It was all up to the driver.

My Volvo was a revamped version of the old PV444, so it came with a one-piece convex windshield instead of the split

glass featured before, as well as a larger rear window. These additions made it easier to see right around the car, which is a safety feature in itself. The newer models like mine also had a padded upper section of dashboard to protect occupants in the unfortunate event of an accident.

My PV544 also featured “cool” (for the time) items like a speedometer strip, low mounted headlamps, and a distinctive fastback bodyshell. The 1.8 l motor was the uprated S, or Sport version, which meant that it produced 71 kW instead of 67 kW.

These models were quite successful with rally drivers at the time, and because it was Volvo's first car post World War II, it helped cement the brand's reputation for reliability and solid build quality – which the company is still known for today, on top of being a manufacturer of particularly safe vehicles.

If I think about it now, my Volvo was pretty basic with its drum brakes all-round. Your driving style made up for the lack of gadgets because you had to read the traffic situation to get anywhere safely.

These days, however, I believe that all these safety features do contribute to making our roads safer, but I also think that young drivers should not depend on these and instead focus on the necessary training and good driving practises to become better motorists. ”



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