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OCTOBER 2017 | ISSUE 3

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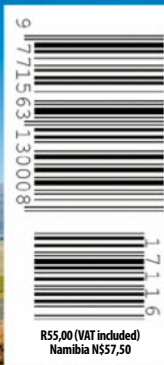
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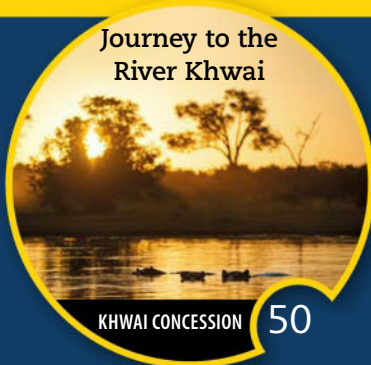


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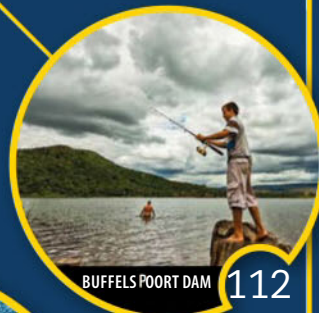
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THE
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Hot springs are to campers like what sweets are to kids: you can never get enough. We took a dip at three resorts in the Western Cape and camped up a storm.





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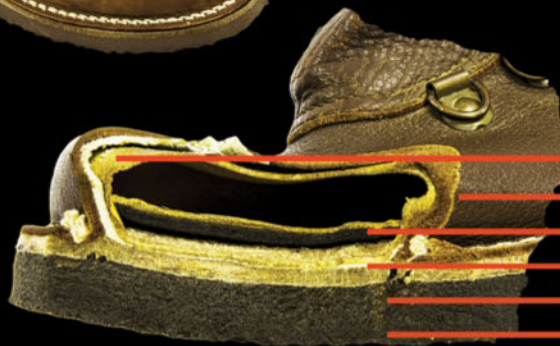
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Silence the bragger

We all know that guy who loves to boast. About everything. It might be your neighbour, your colleague or your brother-in-law, but everything he owns, his experiences and achievements are better than yours.

If you chat about your car's fuel consumption, he'll be quick to point out that his is lighter on diesel than yours. If you mention how much more power your car has now that you've chipped it, he'll tell you that the wrong guy put in the wrong chip. If you feel like bragging a bit about your granddaughter's report card, he'll interrupt you with a story about his granddaughter who's studying to become a doctor.

Obviously it's the same when it comes to talking about holiday plans. You finally got round to booking your stand at Hartenbos, but he already paid his deposit for his stand at Harties months ago. You're almost ready to cross Sani Pass off your bucket list, and he's packed and on his way to Van Zyl's Pass... with a off-roader trailer in tow.

Someone like this has the ability to irritate the living daylights out of you. But I have some advice... and we've done all the work for you. I can almost guarantee that Mr Bragger has never had the guts to tackle the road to the north of Botswana to the Khwai Concession on his own. Maybe as part of a tour group, but definitely not on his own.

And here you have one-up on him. We were there and came back with 28 tips for a dream holiday to this incredible destination. Your enjoyment of your neighbour's unbridled jealousy is on us.

So turn to page 50, start planning, and be sure to write to me at schalk.jonker@media24.com to tell me how your trip went. And what shade of green your brother-in-law turned when he heard about it.

Safe travels.

Schalk

EDITOR

THEY'VE JOINED OUR CONVOY...



CYRIL KLOPPER was previously involved with our sister magazine *go!* where he oversaw the gear and motoring pages.

The Kloppe family enjoys travelling and has visited all of our neighbouring countries.

One of his fondest memories is of when a pack of wild dogs chased a kudu through their campsite on the Makgadikgadi Pans. He'll also never pass up an opportunity to visit Namibia.



KYLE KOCK is a bona fide petrolhead, and for eight years cut his teeth on one of the leading motoring magazines in the country. He also has a healthy interest in technology.

After taking a well-deserved breather for a year, he's more eager than ever to drive, camp and review all the latest vehicles and gear on the market – all for your benefit.

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DAD'S HOME ON WHEELS



My dad, Ken, grew up in Pretoria, and then moved to Virginia in the Free State in 1953. Here he established himself as a building contractor, and in later years he built, amongst other things, the Voortrekker Monument in Winburg.

I recently looked through old photos of Dad. He must have returned to Pretoria a number of times. Hartbeespoort Dam is in one of the photos; it was taken in 1957

and the area looks untouched, compared to today.

Just like with building, Dad didn't shy away from hard work. On another photo there are old canvas-and-wood camping chairs next to a bakkie – a lot more noticeable than the bakkie itself.

On the back of the bakkie is a garden shed, the door of which opens up over the tailgate. You can even see the legs of a steel bed inside the house on the bakkie. I'm not sure what kind of bakkie it is,

but I wouldn't be surprised if it's a Chev, because that was Dad's favourite.

You can clearly see the "OXV 956" number plate – Virginia's number plate years ago.

I was born in 1961 and Dad passed away in 1987. I never heard the full story about the bakkie with the garden shed, but I do know about Dad's love of nature – something you can clearly see in the photos.

CHRIS PAPENFUS
Port Elizabeth



Look how cheap it is overseas

In earlier years I travelled across the country and also visited some of our neighbouring countries. I was, therefore, up to speed with accommodation costs, as well as camping tariffs. Today I'm retired and you look at costs differently.

A month or three ago my wife, Tina, and I bought a travel package to Thailand. Accommodation was a week in a fancy hotel, and with the flights it cost R8 200 p.p. We decided to stay a bit longer and found a spot in a small, neat hotel at R165 p.d. We explored the area on a scooter that cost only R80 p.d. Even eating out wasn't expensive compared to prices at home.

We've camped all over, from Jeffreys Bay to Saldanha Bay. The accommodation in our Thai hotel was cheaper than in many of the campsites, and that in off-season. Addo was the most expensive. To camp these days comes at a premium, even if you only consider the water and electricity you'll be using.

WILLY PITNER
Edenvale



Winning letter

Chris Papenfus wins a Coleman Cooler Combo and a Divide +700 LED flashlight worth R2 498! The Cooler Combo consists of three cooler boxes that hold 51, 11, 4, 7 l, and 1, 3 l respectively. You can pack 85 cooldrink cans in the larger box and six in the smaller one. The boxes are made of polyurethane,

which improves insulation by up to 30%. The Divide +700 flashlight beam shines 110-330 m far depending on the brightness level. The torch has a BatteryLock system that ensures batteries don't run down when not in use. It weighs 433 g and is made of anodised aluminium.



Close encounter

We visited the Kruger National Park recently where we stayed in one of Lower Sabie's bungalows. One day we drove past the Ntandanyathi hide on our way to Crocodile Bridge. Here we saw a peculiar thing: A few blue wildebeest standing together on the riverbank, looking restless. I then spotted a crocodile in the water.

One of the wildebeest walked into the water. Meanwhile, I'm watching events through my Canon 650D with a 55-250 mm lens. As the wildebeest started to jump, I began taking pictures, and I managed to capture the animal's bravery on quite a few shots. I'm not an expert photographer; I just take pictures for fun. But it's not every day that you get to see a wildebeest survive a situation like that – and manage to capture it on film!

ANSIE MEYER
Pretoria



Hidden in plain sight

We travelled to Botswana in May with two other couples, and everyone drove in their own vehicle. We drove in convoy, and at one stage, coming back from Maun, a man in plain clothes jumped out in front of us and waved us down. Piet and Marie de Vos drove in front in their Land Cruiser; they reduced speed but didn't stop completely. My attention was focussed on the man and I realised that he could be a speed cop. The next moment I drove my Fortuner into the back of the Cruiser. A traffic vehicle appeared from behind the bushes and the man who tried to draw our attention was now in uniform.

The Fortuner was badly damaged and we were injured. Marlene, my wife, suffered a

fractured kneecap and five broken ribs. The seatbelts left bruises on our bodies. Two of my ribs were bruised and my nose bled from the impact of the airbag. In front of us, Marie was concussed.

A tour bus drove by and the "official" pulled the driver over and instructed him to take us to the hospital in Maun. After this the "official" drove away in the direction of Gweta. We were discharged from hospital that same day and spent a few days in Maun to make arrangements after our ordeal.

We spoke to the police commissioner in Maun and suggested a better way to pull vehicles over.

After three days we flew home – Marlene's leg in a cast. The Fortuner was written off

and we left it in Maun until my son, Johann, could go fetch it three weeks later.

Johann towed the wreck, and wouldn't you know it, on the same stretch of road a man waving his arms with a jacket in hand pulled him over. Again the man wasn't in uniform, and he showed Johann on his speed camera that he drove 90 km/h instead of 80 km/h. He demanded a cash fine but also mentioned that he didn't have a receipt book with him. Johann told him about our accident and he admitted that he was involved. And just like that, the fine was forgotten and Johann drove on.

Tourists should be on their guard in the Gweta district.

WILLIE STADLER
Jeffreys Bay



Ever heard of Penta biltong?

After working for 54 years, we finally retired at 72. Our favourite winter destinations are the Kruger National Park as well as the ATKV's Eiland Spa, because Mossel Bay winters are really bad for our health.

En route we stopped in Kimberley, where we tried to make some biltong.

This year our timing was a little off and the meat needed to come with to the Kruger.

With no other option, I hung it inside the Penta's pop-up roof to dry – here I could keep an eye on it from my bed. Now it's time for my pocket knife to do its thing!

FREDDIE AND MARIE BOTES
Mossel Bay

Equipment matters

It's a given that you'll need tools at some stage while camping. But do you need to pack your whole tool shed when hitting the road?



Who takes their entire tool kit and who only takes pliers and a piece of wire? We asked our Facebook friends.



Johan Hattingh

My caravan has its own small tool kit that always travels with. In it are the essentials like pliers, a small hammer, insulation tap, and cable ties.

I don't cart around a load of tools.



Jacques Albertyn

I take my pocket knife, a flat-head and Torx screw driver, and cable ties. That's it.



Chris and Alida Laing

I only take the things I think I might need. Between my own tool kit and my brother-in-law's one we've managed to fix problems like a leaking tyre. We even take pruning shears and a small saw. Anything we don't need to use while on holiday is a blessing from above.



Thinus Kotze

I take a lot of equipment when we go camping. Just in case... I don't want to have to struggle, and I don't like borrowing other people's things.



Mandi van den Berg

We pack cable ties, a tyre repair kit, Q20, a carpet knife, hammer, and fuses. For anything else we play MacGyver.



Petro Doman Jordaan Nel

We always take our tool kit and make sure we have the things we needed in the past.



Gerhard du Toit

I'm a mechanic and I don't take any tools. What if there's someone in need of a mechanic with tools? I don't want to work when I'm camping. If you're

looking for tools in the campsite, look for someone driving a Land Rover – they can never be without tools.



Piet Botha

I take a small tool kit with a few screw drivers, pliers and cable ties. Nothing more than that.



Gideon Carstens

I have a small tool kit in my vehicle, but I don't use it often. I keep a small selection of tools and other equipment in my caravan. The kids always make fun of me because I take "Justin" along – that's obviously "just in case" – but I don't want to struggle if a problem does arise.



Gustav Somers

I just take my air compressor and tyre repair kit. Then I'm fine.



Willem Brits

I don't travel with a special tool kit, but I do have the essentials in the caravan.



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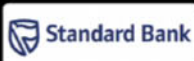
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A standard for standard features

If one car manufacturer can offer a full range of standard features at a similar price point, Mic van Zyl asks why can't they all?

The popularity of double cab bakkies is at an all-time high. The choice of which one to spend your hard-earned cash on has become rather difficult. I have found this to be true when discussing this topic with a number of people.

There is a high level of brand loyalty from current bakkie owners. This is cemented by the fact that these vehicles seem to just get better and better with every new generation. There is, however, a large segment of prospective first-time double cab buyers coming

ABS, vehicle stability and traction control systems, and airbags should feature on the very top of the standard-feature list for any vehicle.

from brands which do not offer this type of vehicle in their ranges. Brand loyalty doesn't feature in their decision-making process.

The current crop of top double cab bakkies include models from Toyota, Ford, Mazda, VW, Mitsubishi, Isuzu and Nissan. All are great multi-purpose lifestyle vehicles. While they are all capable off-road, the degree of capability does vary from one model to the next. When it comes to the ability to accessorise these bakkies and better prepare them for serious overlanding or very rough terrain, the gaps become even wider.

There has also been a subtle shift in focus from some of the above-mentioned bakkies. Some have become more orientated to an upmarket multi-purpose lifestyle role while others have more of a tough workhorse-feel about them. In between are some that do a pretty good job all round. What is rather perplexing is the vast difference in the levels of standard equipment between the top models from the above manufacturers, especially in vehicles around the R600 000 mark.

Personal preference for niceties and must-haves vary from one person to the next, but there are arguably some items which are essential from a safety point of view. Nice-to-haves include keyless entry, push button start, heated seats, mood lighting, refrigerated gloveboxes, sunroofs, folding wing mirrors, load bay lighting, sliding rear windows, cup holders, rear passenger air vents, and illuminated vanity mirrors.

One however simply cannot place a price on active and passive safety equipment in your vehicle. ABS, vehicle stability and traction control systems, and airbags should feature on the very top of the standard feature list for any vehicle. I find it inexcusable that the Amarok does not offer rear side airbags in their vehicles, never mind the top spec models. The Amarok does, however, have one of the best off-road braking systems on offer. The Ford Ranger Wildtrack offers adaptive cruise control as well as lane keep assist, which are great features to help you stay safe.

Reverse camera and park distance control both front and rear are in my opinion essential for negotiating the urban jungle, especially in parking lots where the bays were clearly not designed for a double cab bakkie. Parking areas are shared with pedestrians, especially small ones which are hard to spot out of a double cab when reversing. Driving position is not merely a function of comfort.

When negotiating seriously challenging terrain, the wrong driving position could lead to momentary loss of control over steering and pedals. Trying to adjust an incorrect driving position manually while on the move is wrong but I too have found myself doing this when the going gets rough. Electric seat adjustment is exact and you do not have to move the seat with your body weight.

It is therefore unfortunate that I find myself venturing away from my favourite, market-leading brand when considering my own upcoming double cab 4x4 auto purchase.

My favourite is just too thin with standard features. If one of the fierce competitors can offer a full range of standard features at a similar price point, why can't they all?

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

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It's written in the stars...

A five-star camping experience is a bit more than private bathrooms with marble tiles and shiny taps, says Neels van Heerden.

In the Bushveld there is a place that brags about its five-star ablution facilities.

It's even proclaimed in a radio ad that's often broadcast on Bosveld Stereo.

But nowhere on the Tourism Grading Council of South Africa (TGCSA) website will you find any mention of this particular campsite's star grading. Which makes me wonder: Is it just excessive bragging – a deliberate misrepresentation – or is it total ignorance of how the star grading system works?

It's probably a bit of both. I also think the TGCSA doesn't have enough clout to challenge a campsite like this. If someone complains to the TGCSA about misrepresentation, you'd hope that the resort would get a polite phone call.

of resort owners to get a four- or five-star grading. To some people a three-star grading indicates "average" and anything less means the campsite is not on par. A grading should rather be an indication that a resort adheres to certain minimum requirements.

A LONG, LONG TIME ago, I was involved in the star-grading system. A campsite is evaluated in a large range of categories, and even if it has an official grading and that grading is lower than five, it's not allowed to claim it has five-star ablution facilities.

I believe a grading of three or four stars is the safest. If owners support this grading with excellent service, visible and constant maintenance, and friendly staff, success is virtually guaranteed.

The star grading system has received a lot of criticism over the years – mostly because of irregularities in the awarding of stars in the formal accommodation category.

There was some tinkering with a few campsites' gradings, but it was soon discovered because the camping community is alert. One example is where a campsite bribed a grading official to award them four stars. After a number of complaints, a re-evaluation was done and the site was downgraded to two and eventually zero stars.

With time the TGCSA has made the requirements for a five-star grading so strict that it's almost impossible to adhere

to it. A guesthouse with a few rooms doesn't require the same intense level of maintenance than a campsite.

The TGCSA then decided to appoint so-called expert officials to audit all grading reports. That's when I butted heads with the expert from Limpopo. He had no camping experience but still rejected one grading after another.

It also wasn't long before he got involved in an email war with a resort owner. At that stage the owner in question had the top campsite in the country and took serious exception when the official described his resort's bathroom as "sub-standard" because the taps didn't compare to the expensive imported ones in the Mount Nelson Hotel. The resort owner withdrew from the grading system.

WHAT DO FIVE STARS look like to me? Many years ago the late Jim Reeves wooed the country with this rendition of De Waal and Van Rooyen's song "Daar doer in die bosveld". A few words from the song perfectly sum up my opinion of a five-star camping experience:

*Daar doer in die Bosveld
daar's rus vir my.
... in vreedzaamheid en stilte
gaan die tyd verby.*

Shiny taps and marble tiles might warrant top marks, but it's not worth much if noisy neighbours have no respect for nature, the facilities, and the peace and quiet you came in search of.



A three- or four-star grading is the safest, and if owners back it up with excellent service, visible and constant maintenance, and friendly staff, success is guaranteed.

The biggest damage to a campsite's reputation is false claims made in radio jingles, printed ads or on a website, creating unrealistic expectations. It only leads to disappointed campers. And the end result is criticism voiced on social media, where things can turn ugly.

A recognised star grading creates its own problems – and you can see it in the desperation

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TuffCats roars louder



The off-road camping vehicle manufacturer TuffCats recently sold its 20th trailer.

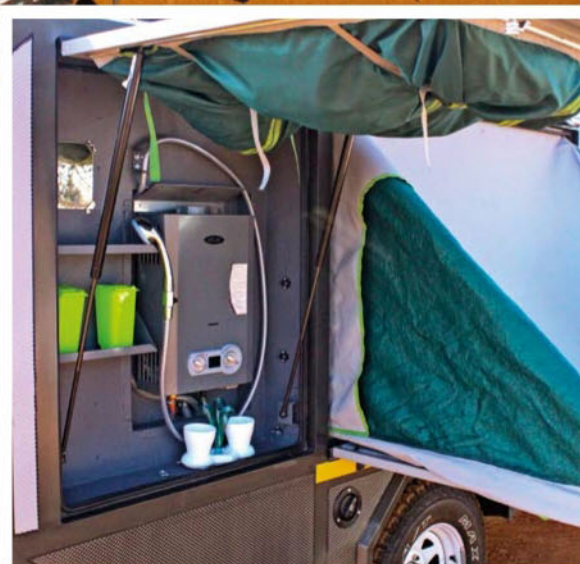
The owner, Gerrie Nel (*No, not that Gerrie Nel – Ed*), bought an off-road trailer in 2012 from an existing manufacturer, but he wasn't satisfied with the weight of the trailer. He decided to build his own, but shortly afterwards a friend bought it from him. After building and subsequently selling another three to satisfied friends, Gerrie saw a business opportunity. This led to the establishment of TuffCats. Today, customers can choose between a standard off-road caravan, a smaller version of this, and an off-road camping trailer – all with aluminium body and frame fitted onto a galvanised chassis.

The three models are called the Mdaba (the off-road trailer),

Shumba Cub (the smaller off-road caravan), and Shumba (the standard off-road caravan). The names are all Shona words and translate to leopard and lion respectively.

The Mdaba's Cub model is about half a metre shorter than the standard caravan. The outside kitchen is almost the same, and where the Cub's door is at the back, the standard model's is in the left-hand side panel. Both are available with one or two beds – in the standard caravan these fold out of the right-hand side panel. The second bed opens up over the A-frame.

The vehicles are equipped with items like a water tank (with a pump), a gas geyser, one deep-cycle battery, an awning over the kitchen area, a two-plate stove and crockery like cups, glasses and plates (six of each).



One of the Shumba's more unique features is the outside shower that unfolds right next to the fold-out bed. A square door with hinges fastened to the roof swings upwards and is propped up by a gas lift. And then there's a canvas cubicle that folds out below the door to the ground.

The figures

Mdaba R148 200 (tare ± 780 kg, GVM 1 600 kg);

Shumba Cub R222 300 (tare 880 kg, GVM 1 600 kg);

Shumba R239 400 (tare 920 kg, GVM 1 600 kg).

Contact 082 301 2393;

gerrie@tuffcats.co.za;

tuffcats.co.za



Rival's lightweight bullbar

Russian 4x4 accessories manufacturer Rival has launched a new range of aluminium bullbars in South Africa.

Rival's product is made of a mixture of marine and aircraft-grade aluminium and weighs less than 50 kg, but it provides similar protection as steel does.

The 6 mm aluminium plate has few joins, and where possible it's punched from a single sheet of aluminium. Also included are LED fog lights and recovery points for a high-lift jack or kinetic

straps. There's also space on which to mount a winch.

The bullbar complies with ADR69 standards for air bag deployment, which means neither your car's warranty nor your air bags will be adversely affected.

The bullbar currently only fits a Toyota Hilux and Ford Ranger, but aluminium bullbars for other vehicles – for example the Volkswagen Amarok – are in the works
Price R25 500

Contact ☎ 011 394 8235;
✉ info@tuffstuff.co.za;
🌐 tuffstuff.co.za

WATER WHEELS

If you're planning on travelling independently through Africa, you definitely have to take your own drinking water.

This 60 l water tank can be tied to your car's roof rack with ratchet straps. It has a wide filler, a drainage hole at the bottom, and a tap that you can connect to a shower hose. Built-in wheels makes pulling the tank around a campsite easy as pie.

Price R750 at Makro

Contact 010 0407 364;

 pioneerplastics.co.za

Quick and easy

Bundutec's latest rooftop tent weighs just 55 kg and, best of all, can be unfolded in only 30 seconds – by one person!

You also don't need a dust cover, because the tent has a hard outer shell that seals when it's folded up .

After unfolding the tent, you only have to pull two tabs to pitch the awnings.

The tent can be mounted across the length or the width of a vehicle's roof. Bundutec gives a one-year warranty. That also covers the mechanism.

Dimensions (closed)

1 500 x 1 500 x 300 mm

Dimensions (open)

1 500 x 2 800 x 1 030 mm

Price R15 700

Contact ☎ 063 872 7667;

 info@bundutec.co.za;

 bundutec.co.za



INFANTA'S BABY

Manufacturers are increasingly adding smaller caravans to their ranges, and Infanta recently launched theirs: The Enkulu 1 – a caravan with space for two people who desire a lighter tow load.

After Infanta launched its off-road caravan – the Enkulu 2 – the owner, J.W. Swart, took the lead and built one of the swankiest double-axle off-road caravans in the country.

The Enkulu 4 is like a hotel on wheels, and now J.W. has set his sights on the opposite end of the market.

If you look at the Enkulu 1's structure, it seems very similar to its two predecessors, and you

can see J.W. still applies his three pillar philosophy: You need to be able to cook, shower and sleep comfortably.

The inside is taken up by one large double bed, the shower is outside at the back and is fed by a high-pressure geyser, and the kitchen is on the left-hand side. Just like with the newest Enkulu 2 models, the pop-up roof also only lifts up at the back – this is done simply by pushing a button, thanks to electric motors. But you won't be left homeless if the motors should break down, because you can also lift the roof manually.

The door is on the left-hand side at the back, and the bed is

If you don't know jack

To change your trailer's flat tyre is often dirty and difficult work.

But the Easy Wheezy will make your life a bit easier: You fit this cam over your trailer's axle and then tow the trailer for a short distance.

The curve of the cam will cause the trailer's flat tyre to lift off the ground. The process takes only a few sec-

onds. The Easy Wheezy is made out of 6061-T6 aluminium alloy and has a carrying capacity of 2 t. It also fits onto square axles.

To see the Easy Wheezy in action, go to Facebook and search for Roadque.

Price R400

Contact 012 804 1967;

info@roadque.co.za;

roadque.co.za



WEIGHTLIFTING

This electric jack plugs into your vehicle's 12 V socket, and it can lift up to 3 t. It also has a built-in compressor that you can use to inflate flat tyres, and there's an electric impact wrench to loosen and fasten wheel nuts.

In the suitcase you'll also find a 3 m cord, hammer, jumpers with crocodile clips,

gloves, two fuses, a manual, and 17 mm, 19 mm, 21 mm, and 23 mm sockets.

An even more powerful model (R3 700) that's able to lift 10 t is also available. A battery-operated version will be available soon.

Price R2 950

Contact 010 0031 676;

jackhub.co.za

to the left of the door, towards the nose. In front of you, if you're standing at the door, is a cassette toilet against the opposite panel, and the black water tank can be reached from the outside.

Above the kitchen, against the body of the caravan, you can attach a loose shelf for small household items – it's out of the way but still within reach. There's space for anything from spices to a butter dish, and it's ideal to keep the work surface clean.

The figures Tare 610 kg (fully equipped); GVM 1 600 kg.

Price R250 000 (fully equipped).

Contact 028 512 3663;

jswart@twentyfour.co.za;

infantatrailers.co.za



Good day, mate!

The owners of Caravan Xpress, an Australian caravan dealership, approached Sherpa Leisure to import some of its products to sell Down Under.

Sherpa Leisure builds the well-known Tiny and Rambler models, and its vehicles are aimed

at campers who prefer smaller fibreglass caravans.

Neville de Meillon, Sherpa's owner, says Caravan Xpress is now the sole distributor of all their products in Australia, and the Sherpa is already turning heads.

The local Sherpa is

exported as a complete unit, but without power sockets and a freezer. Caravan Xpress then adds its own local freezer and sockets compatible with Australian plugs.

Contact 011 452 8188;

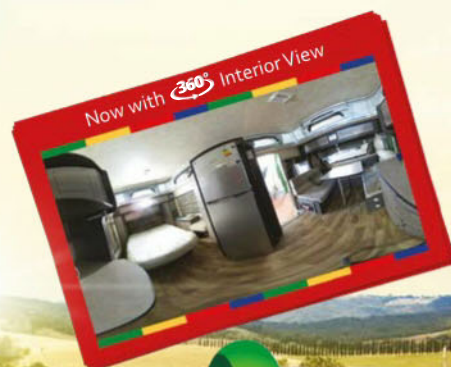
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Finally, the new Pajero Sport

The long-awaited Pajero Sport has just arrived. We had to wait two years, because of the rand's poor performance against other currencies, and Mitsubishi South Africa not wanting to bring the model in at an uncompetitive price.

The 2017 Pajero Sport is equipped with Mitsubishi's new Super Select 4-II four-wheel-drive system, which promises the same respectable off-road ability the company is known for. The previous 3.2

turbodiesel (120 kW, 343 Nm) has been replaced with a smaller but stronger 2.4 D4 MIVEC turbodiesel that delivers 133 kW power at 3 500 rpm and 430 Nm torque at a relatively low 2 500 rpm. A V6 petrol and 2.5 diesel model are available overseas, but South Africa will only get the 2.4.

The Pajero Sport is available in two- and four-wheel-drive models and both have an eight-speed automatic gearbox with a sport mode that can be used

by tapping shift paddles on the steering wheel.

The bodywork is mounted on a ladder frame chassis and independent suspension with coil springs and stabiliser bars on both axles. These updates ensure a smoother ride than before and compares favourably with the Ford Everest and Toyota Fortuner.

Prices range from R569 995 for the two-wheel-drive Pajero Sport to R599 995 for the four-wheel-drive version.

LOCK UP AND DON'T GO

Without access to your vehicle's pedals, hijackers and car thieves won't get very far. You bolt this steel plate to the floor of your vehicle, underneath the mat.

When you park, you lift the plate and it locks into position so that feet that have no business being there can't use the pedals. The Lockup mechanism is unlocked with a key, and folds flat when you want to drive.

For a demonstration of how this gadget works, go to YouTube and type "lockupdotcodotza" in the search box.

Price R6 500

Contact sales@lockup.co.za;
lockup.co.za



SONDELA: SO HOT RIGHT NOW

Sondela near Bela-Bela converted one of its five cold-water swimming pools into a heated pool.

The owners put a roof over the pool to the far left of the office, and you can close the sides with canvas panels if you want to keep the heat inside.

The water temperature is 34 °C – just what the doctor ordered for a cold day in the campsite.

Contact 014 736 8900;

info@sondela.com;

sondela.com >



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R16 200.00
Incl. VAT



Coil-Coil Kit

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From
R14 200.00
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Isuzu KB-RA,
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Toyota Hilux IFS

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R23 010.00
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Things are moving at Dinokeng

The owners of the Dinokeng Resort, one of the newest campsites in the Dinokeng Reserve, is not letting grass grow under their feet: They've also built a heated pool.

The building where the pool is located has a colourful history. The previous owner filled in an old farm dam and converted it into a small church to host weddings, amongst other things.

But they didn't demolish

everything and the roof of the church remained intact. The pool's water is heated to between 35 and 36 °C throughout the year, says owner Coleen Pieterse.

Coleen has also added another 13 stands to the existing 33. Four of these have their own bathroom with a shower, basin and toilet. The nine ordinary stands have grass, electricity, water, shade and a braai. Behind the existing bathrooms is another new ablution block.

A second supertube will be installed in November and they've also recently opened a restaurant in the resort.

Contact 063 771 6856 or 060 970 5990;

✉ info@dinokengresort.co.za;

✉ dinokengresort.co.za



MAXIMI'S TWO FOLD-UP MODELS HAVE ARRIVED

The creator of the Maximi off-road caravan, Frik Oosthuizen, says his FTX fold-up vehicle is available in two models.

The standard caravan doesn't have a nosecone, sliding frame for an ice freezer, or a built-in electrical system. According to Frik, this caravan is aimed mainly at tent campers who want to upgrade to a small caravan where you can sleep but who don't want to fork out a tiny fortune for the luxury.

There's a proper double bed and the chances of wearing out the mattress are slim because it's a comfortable 17,5 cm thick.

Besides the equipment that's added to the standard caravan, there's also a gas bottle. The 130 l water tank with pump (R8 000), geyser (R3 500), and gas stove (R3 000), however, are optional extras. Not one of the two caravans have an ice freezer that come standard.

The caravans' bodies are made of a steel frame covered



in aluminium plates. Frik is also working on a smaller caravan. This model, FT, has smaller wheels than the FTX, and the

chassis (and the caravan) is lighter. The FT is aimed at campers who do not have a towing licence (code EB), because you can tow the FT with your ordinary light vehicle driver's licence.

The FTX's figures 3,51 (l) x 1,89 (w) x 1,55 m (h) – folded out it's 2,76 m high; tare ± 500 kg; carrying capacity ± 900 kg; GVM 1 400 kg.

Price R150 000 (standard) and R170 000 (fully equipped).

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PEUGEOT MIGHT BE EMBELLISHING EVER SO SLIGHTLY...

Peugeot's new 3008 is a beautiful vehicle, but as a SUV it's unfortunately a bit impractical: It has a maximum tow weight of only 600 kg, which means the heaviest vehicle you can tow is a Venter Glide, which is their smallest trailer. And, there's no four-wheel-drive option.

How can Peugeot then market it as a sports utility vehicle? Well, it looks like one and its traction control is good enough to take on a fairly rough gravel road. But deep sand, mud and rocks? I don't think so.

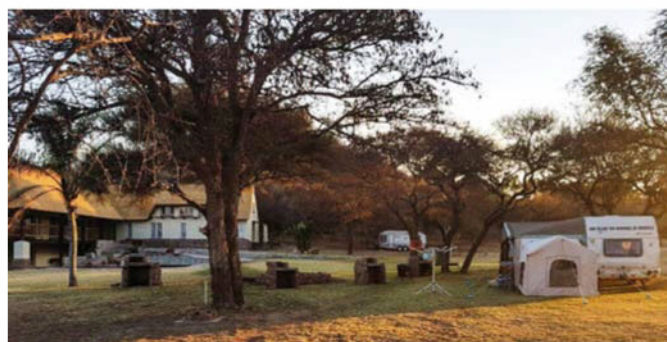
The firm suspension and 18" wheels are also not happy on corrugation or potholes. Prices range from R399 900 for the

entry-level Active 1.6 THP (automatic) to R569 900 for the flagship GT Line+ 1.6 THP (automatic).

In other news, Peugeot South Africa says there is definitely a double cab on its way. But contrary to what's been reported in certain publications, it won't be based on the Nissan Navara, and also not on the Chinese (and ugly as heck) Dongfeng Rich.

Peugeot is keeping mum on the donor of the chassis, but because Peugeot signed a trade agreement with Toyota, it seems likely that it will borrow more than a few bits from a Hilux.

We'll know for sure when the bakkie is launched in 2020.



Christmas comes early at Pulani

It's always nice to hear about a new campsite. On the mineral resources road right outside Mookgophong in Limpopo, opposite the Constantia Caravan Park, Pulani Park has opened its gates. It used to be a reception hall for festivities like weddings.

But Sean and Ansonia Jacobs, two of the sectional title owners, saw an opportunity to establish a campsite.

There are 13 stands with water and electricity, and you can choose between a brick braai or a loose-standing one. Besides the brand-new bathrooms, there's also a swimming pool.

If you prefer more privacy, choose a bush spot about a kilometre from the campsite.

There are also facilities like water, electricity and bathrooms. Now wedding guests can overnight in their own caravans!

The area is known for its magnificent scenery. Bring your mountain bikes and explore Pulani's tracks or take a hike up the mountain.

Pulani means "place of rain" in Tswana, and on this piece of land of 260 ha there are quite a few springs with mineral-rich water.

Price R250 p.n. per stand for the first 4 people, R50 p.p. extra.

GPS S24.4119860 E28.7324180

Contact 082 698 1778 or 082 443 8962;

pulanipark@gmail.com; pulanipark.com

CAN-DO ATTITUDE

It can be quite a disaster if a roof rack or another important part made of aluminium breaks when you're in the middle of nowhere. You used to have to hold thumbs that the backyard mechanic in Maun had the right equipment to weld aluminium.

But now you can rest assured: This portable brazing torch and bottle contains a methylene and propane mixture (or MAPP gas) that burns at a scorching 1 980 °C – definitely hot enough to solder aluminium.

Price R445 for the gas bottle torch (welding rods excluded).

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Shock absorbers... for life

It sounds like an offer you can't refuse: Pro Comp ES9000 shock absorbers with a lifetime guarantee.

The 10-step speed-sensitive valves inside the shock absorbers automatically adjust to road conditions, and according to the importer and manufacturer, WAC4x4, the shock absorbers ensure a

comfortable ride on tar without compromising a vehicle's off-road abilities.

The shock absorbers fit a variety of Jeeps and Toyotas Contact WAC4x4 to find out which.

Price From R1 590 (depending on the vehicle)

Contact 082 570 7336;

info@wac4x4.co.za



HERE COMES THE CRUISER TRAIN

Mbizi is one of the most popular campsites in Bela-Bela, but when more than 400 Toyota Land Cruisers descend here on one day, camping becomes an afterthought.

Year after year, Marius Opperman tries to see how many Cruisers they can get together on the same day – and then they see how many of those vehicles they can get to drive in convoy. Marius understands the logistics of this type of event, because he's involved in Afrikaans pay-channel kykNET's outdoor expos.

Last year they managed to get 427 Cruisers together, and 359 of them drove in a 22 km long convoy.

This year, however, the record was shattered. Cruiser owners who wanted to partake had to register and then specify with

what type of Cruiser they were coming. Any model – from an FJ Cruiser, Prado, Cruiser 79 bakkies to the Cruisers 76 and 200 – were allowed. Even Lexus models were welcome.

On this day no fewer than 431 Land Cruisers gathered at Mbizi, of which 415 drove in the convoy. It was 23 km long and they drove an average speed of 30 km/h. After the first car in the convoy pulled off, the last one had to wait 40 minutes before it could take off.

The Cruiser with the highest mileage on the clock was Pieter Banning's 1975 model F45 with a whopping 2 600 000 km to its name – yes, 2,6 million! – while Jacques Odendaal travelled the farthest distance to get to the event: 1 567 km from Kuils River.

Contact Marius Opperman

082 570 5758



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8000kg **R1195**
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Snatch Straps
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Incl. VAT

Small Recovery Kit
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Incl. VAT



Tree Trunk Protector
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Incl. VAT



Winch Extension
R850
Incl. VAT



Still the king of SUVs

The new Honda CR-V might not get everyone's pulse racing, but neither will it send your blood pressure through the roof by dropping you in the dwang. It's this reliability that's made the CR-V one of the most popular SUVs ever, says **Pierre Steyn**.



HONDA CR-V

After the disastrous invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs in 1961, a self-pitying President John F. Kennedy declared: "Victory has a thousand fathers, but defeat is an orphan". At the other end of the success-spectrum, people queue up to claim that they are the inventor of something spectacular... like the internet. Even a guy like Al Gore, who nearly became American president, boldly

claimed that he was the father of the World Wide Web.

The same goes for car manufacturers that seemingly take turns to claim that it was their company that put the first SUV on the market 20 or 30 years ago. This parental possessiveness boils down to the success of the SUV segment, the only one that seems to be growing in a struggling economy.

These days every manufacturer has an SUV, even ultra-luxury brands such as Lamborghini and Bentley have built one. It surely doesn't matter if you were the first to sell an SUV in 1989, 1991 or 1995; what matters now is how many you can sell.

And it's here where the fourth-generation Honda CR-V has been crowned as the world's most popular SUV, selling 9 million cars in 150 countries in little more than four years.



It's not a flashy car, but it's a reliable all-rounder that's safe, cheap to run, built to last, and has good resale value. Now there's a brand new fifth generation in the market. We chose a wet day in the Western Cape to find out if Honda was silly to mess with a winning concept. The short answer is no, they didn't – and here's why.

On the outside

Honda's designers tried to incorporate some of the more extrovert elements of the smaller Honda Civic, things like pronounced contour lines on the bonnet, curved headlights, and sharp-angled rear lights, into the design of the CR-V. But this doesn't turn it into a rap artist. Instead, it still resembles a well-groomed, neatly dressed gent that combs his hair and applies Nugget to his shoes.

Protective cladding applied to the lower sections of the car's body panels and scuff plates at the front and rear of the car are there to remind you that it's fine to tackle the occasional gravel road in a CR-V.

On the inside

The interior bears testament to some of the major upgrades

in the new CR-V. Even though the car is not necessarily larger than its predecessor, the interior does feel roomier thanks to the wheelbase that's been extended. Legroom in the back has grown by 9 cm, and there's more shoulder room for both front and rear passengers. The back seats now fold down completely flat, which effectively doubles the cargo space from 522 l to 1 084 l.

The days of analog dials are over, and in the new CR-V all the essential information is now shown on a digital display. There's another digital display in the central dashboard, just above the gear lever, that controls the car's infotainment system. It syncs easily with your Apple or Android device.



It's the kind of car you tackle the long road with - en route to a favourite holiday destination. Secure in the knowledge that you'll tour in in comfort.

Under the bonnet

The most notable change is the addition of a turbocharged petrol engine, which is a first for the CR-V. There was once a time when Honda was as averse to turbocharged engines as Romain Poite is to running-rugby, but the world has changed. Now there's a 1 498 cc turbo engine in the two top CR-V models (the 1.5 T Executive and the 1.5 T Exclusive), and a computer decides how much power the part-time AWD system should send to the front or back wheels. The engine, linked to a constantly variable transmission (CVT), delivers 140 kW at 5 600 rpm and 240 Nm torque through a broad range between 2 000 rpm and 5 000 rpm. Who knows, one day we might even get a >



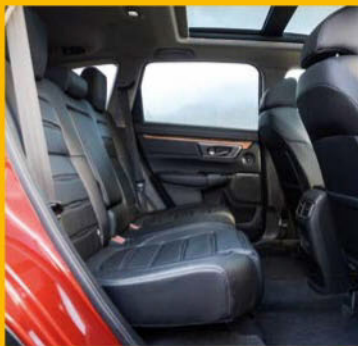
NEW FRONTIERS. Honda's gone for a more extroverted look this time round. This is the first time CR-V uses a turbopetrol, which found a home in the two top models. The ECU decides when to send power to all fours.





HIGHLY RATED.

A touch display allows integration with smart-phones and control of infotainment. The rear seats can fold virtually flat, maximising cargo room when the need arises. A longer wheel-base means that taller rear passengers won't scrape knees against the front seats.



French rugby referee that doesn't feel the need to blow his whistle every 30 seconds. (*I'm not holding my breath.* – Ed)

The two entry-level cars, the 2.0 litre Comfort and Elegance, use the same four-cylinder i-VTEC petrol engine that did duty in the previous CR-V. A CVT transmission sends power to the front wheels only. This engine produces 113 kW at 6 500 rpm and 189 Nm at 4 300 rpm.

Behind the wheel

The fifth-generation CR-V rides on a brand new chassis, and the biggest advantage of this is probably the car's increased torsional rigidity. Practically this means road-holding and ride comfort are better than before (not that it was at all bad in the old CR-V). The front and rear suspension has also been tweaked, once again to make the ride more comfortable.

Honda may be heavily involved in Formula One but the CR-V is not the kind of car you're going to go drag racing

with. Instead, you'll tackle the long road to a favourite holiday destination with your family, secure in the knowledge that you're going to tour in comfort. It's the kind of car which Grand Prix racers like Fernando Alonso and Stoffel Vandoorne (his name really is Stoffel and he really is Alonso's teammate at McLaren) will buy for their parents because they love their papa and mama.

Conclusion

All the elements that contributed to the success of the first four generations of the CR-V are still present in the new car. It's just been refined and the technology updated so that it's now a thoroughly modern car. Although the competition is fierce in the world of SUVs, this particular king might still rule for some time to come.

go! Drive & Camp says The warranty on the whole range is 200 000 km or five years, and a service plan of 90 000 km or five years is included. 

Prices

CR-V 2.0 Comfort	R422 900
CR-V 2.0 Elegance	R477 900
CR-V 1.5T Executive	R584 900
CR-V 1.5T Exclusive	R626 900





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Any colour as long as it's black

A fresh lick of paint can easily push up the value of a house. Cyril Klopper drove a special edition Toyota Hilux to see if a bit of spray paint here and there can make it a better set of wheels.

Is the Hilux Black Edition a response to Ford's pitch black Ranger Fx4? Toyota categorically denies it, claiming they started planning the launch of this special edition at the beginning of 2017.

South Africa's favourite bakkie is in no way a newbie when it comes to special editions.

There was the Dakar, the Legend 35, 40 and 45, as well as the Heritage editions.

Naysayers will maintain it's purely a marketing ploy by Toyota to sell more bakkies – and that's obviously their intention – but these special editions do offer unique features not found in the standard versions. Let's have a look.

On the outside

The Black Edition is based on the 2.8 GD-6 double cab bakkie – the flagship model – and you can choose

between two- or four-wheel drive. What sets it apart from the standard GD-6 are its black grille, black inset on the front bumper, a black rear bumper, and a black roof.

The hub caps, door handles and side mirrors are painted the same colour as the bodywork. Toyota also offers a separate load bin cover and nifty 18" alloy wheel rims.

The Black Edition is available in three colours: glacier

white, chromium silver and graphite grey metallic. Strangely enough, it doesn't come in black.

The interior

The seats are covered in black leather with silver stitching, and the driver's seat is electrically adjustable.

The dashboard has carbon fibre panel inlays (obviously not real carbon fibre) and it looks great. >





MH10

600 lm

150 m

120 h

MH6

200 lm

120 m

20 h

MH2

100 lm

100 m

40 h



SPEED CHARGING

It only takes four hours to reach 80% of the charging capacity.



The Black Edition is available in three colours: glacier white, chromium silver and graphite grey metallic. Strangely enough, it doesn't come in black.

In terms of safety, there are seven air bags and ISOFIX anchor points for car seats. There's also an oversupply of electronic aids with three letter abbreviations such as vehicle stability control (VSC), hill assist control (HAC), trailer sway control (TSC), traction control (TRC) and electronic brake force distribution (EBD).

Other cool gadgets include a big touch screen in the centre console that displays basic info like radio stations, songs and contact details straight from your phone. There's also a smaller 4,2" screen between the speed- and tachometer that shows, amongst other things, your fuel consumption, cruising range, and average speed.

Under the bonnet

No changes were made to the engine, and the Hilux Raider Black Edition is powered by Toyota's 2,8 l turbodiesel motor. This engine develops 130 kW of power, and the six-speed transmission pushes out 420 Nm of torque while the six-speed automatic comes with a 450 Nm peak torque output.

Behind the wheel

They also didn't change the suspension. The ride is slightly bumpy, like you'd expect

from a Hilux, but if you put a canopy on and load a few bags of cement, it immediately improves.

The diesel engine runs silky smooth and there's surprisingly little valve noise compared to other commercial diesel vehicles.

We tested a manual, and while it's fun playing around with the gears, the automatic transmission is still our favourite, especially when paired with a diesel engine.

In a nutshell

Only 1 000 Black Editions will be made available to the public, says Mzolisi Witbooi, product communication manager at Toyota South Africa. Which means you'll have to hop to it if you want a Hilux with a black roof. But are the black roof and bumpers worth R27 000 more than an ordinary Hilux? Those extra rands can buy 30 tanks of diesel that you can use to travel more than 30 000 km. We'll leave it to Toyota fans to decide.

One thing is certain though; the Black Edition does look rather good. 📸



BACK IN BLACK. The large touch screen is clearly legible even in direct sunlight. Below the touch screen are two 12 V sockets as well as two USB sockets to recharge phones or GPS devices. The pitch black interior is stylish rather than sombre and foreboding.

Prices

Hilux Raider Black 2.8 GD-6 6MT	R521 100
Hilux Raider Black 2.8 GD-6 6AT	R538 900
Hilux Raider Black 2.8 GD-6 4x4 6MT	R585 300
Hilux Raider Black 2.8 GD-6 4x4 6AT	R604 300



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Belly armour

With all-terrain tyres and a steel rear bumper fitted plus a winch mounted up front, it's time we shift our attention to the protection of the BT-50's underbody.

Text **Schalk Jonker** Photos **Johann Viljoen**

Our brand new Mazda BT-50 3.2 4x4 SLE bakkie (double cab, automatic) is steadily becoming a formidable overlander ready to take on any off-road adventure, thanks to our monthly Bakkie Project. We've already equipped this long-term test vehicle with a set of gnarly BF Goodrich T/A tyres, a steel rear bumper, bullbar and winch, and now it's time to protect the underbody against the bumps and bruises the vehicle will invariably receive off-road.

This month we make a fourth off-road modification to the

Mazda and explain, as per usual, the importance of this specific modification. We also discuss how and why it was done, and how much it costs.

Bulletproof vest

Your 4x4 has a few things on the underbody that you definitely want to protect – especially if you're far from home. A radiator, differentials, oil pan, and transfer case, for example, are located here and it goes without saying that these parts are vulnerable when you go off-roading.

The BT-50 comes with a standard underbody bash plate to protect critical parts, but it's only 0,5 mm thick. It's totally adequate for guarding against a pebble or three flung up when you're driving on a stretch of

gravel to go visit Dave and Sally on their farm, but when you start doing serious 4x4 driving you need superior protection against rocks, tree trunks, and the like to minimise the risk of damage to these important parts.

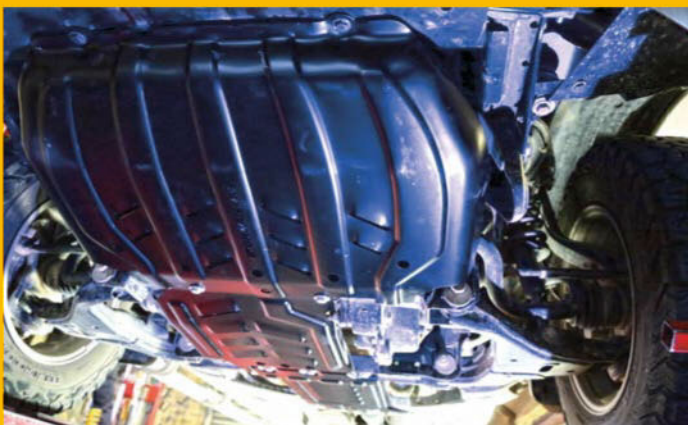
We put one of Ironman 4x4's protection plates on the Mazda. This model is perfect for the BT-50 and it fits in well with the design of the chassis. The ventilation and water-distribution holes are also carefully positioned to ensure that air flow and the durability of parts are not affected.

The plate is made of 3 mm steel (six times thicker than the standard plate) and is developed with the latest technology to ensure you don't have to sacrifice weight for the extra peace of mind.

Set aside an hour

As with last month's modification, Johann "Tyres" Viljoen and his super-competent team at 1st Alignment Centre in Stikland, Cape Town fitted the plate. Because the protection plate was made specifically for the BT-50, the work didn't take long and we could afford to wait on-site with a cup of coffee for Johann and his guys to finish the job.

It was a simple matter of loosening bolts, removing the existing plate, and fastening the new one. Easy as that. The only difference between the standard plate and the Ironman plate is that the latter has an additional plate that terminates further towards the back and therefore offers more protection than the standard version. 



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 underbody protection plate

R6 755
(+ R395 for installation)

Total

R64 795

This installation was done by 1st Alignment Centre, 78 Willow Road, Stikland, Cape Town. Contact them on 021 949 5041 or send an email to johann@1stcca.co.za.



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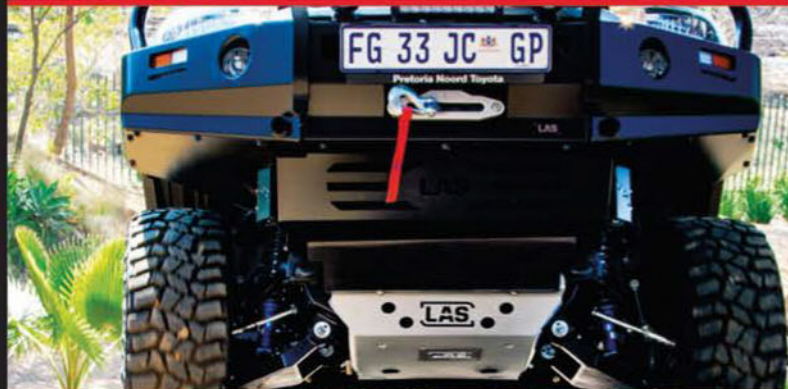
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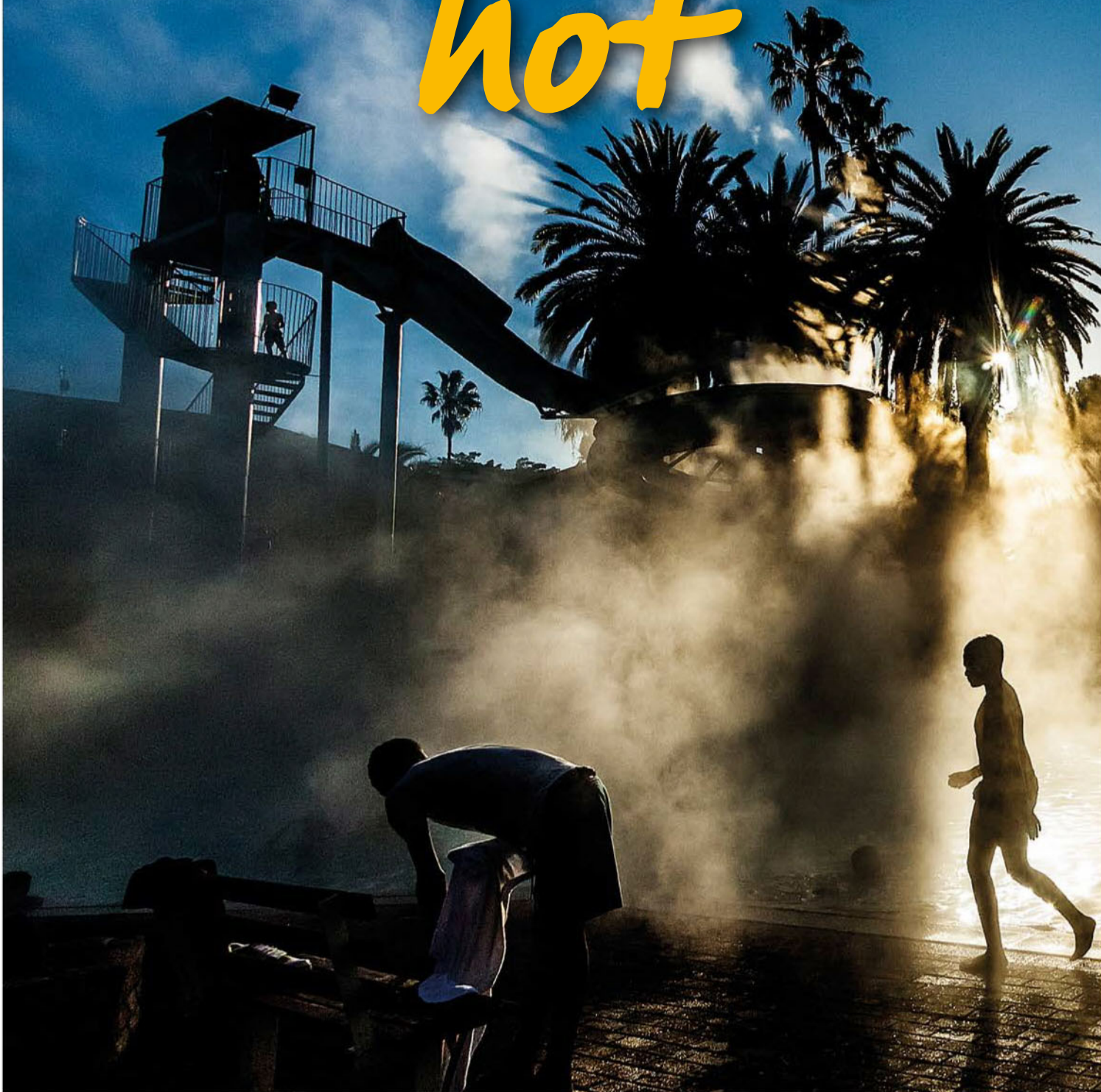
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Steaming *hot*





Hot springs are to campers like what sweets are to kids: you can never get enough. We took a dip at three resorts in the Western Cape and camped up a storm.

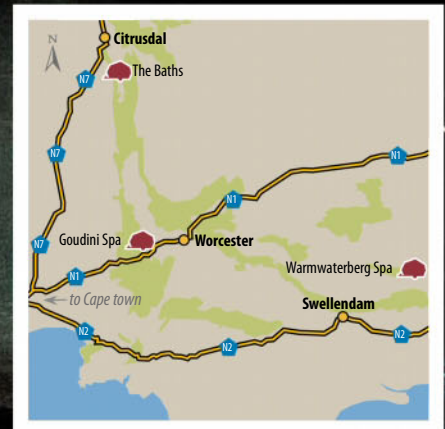
Text and photos **Leon Botha**

To own a resort with a mineral hot spring is like being born with the proverbial silver spoon in your mouth. With the luxury of an inexhaustible source of hot water, the battle many resort owners face is half won.

That's not to say that all hot spring resorts were created equal. The three Western Cape campsites we visited each has a character of its own, and there's something for every type of camper.

At The Baths near Citrusdal you feel at

one with nature as you camp beneath big shade trees, and even though the campsite is jam-packed, there's still plenty privacy. The ATKV's Goudini Spa is the polar opposite and is geared for a large number of visitors. It's about 5 km from Rawsonville and just the right spot if a super-long supertube is high on your family's holiday priority list. And the Warmwaterberg Spa near Barrydale creates the feeling of a farm camp where you pitch next to a dirt road and relax in bubbling hot water for a day or three. >





THE BATHS

Unhitch and unwind

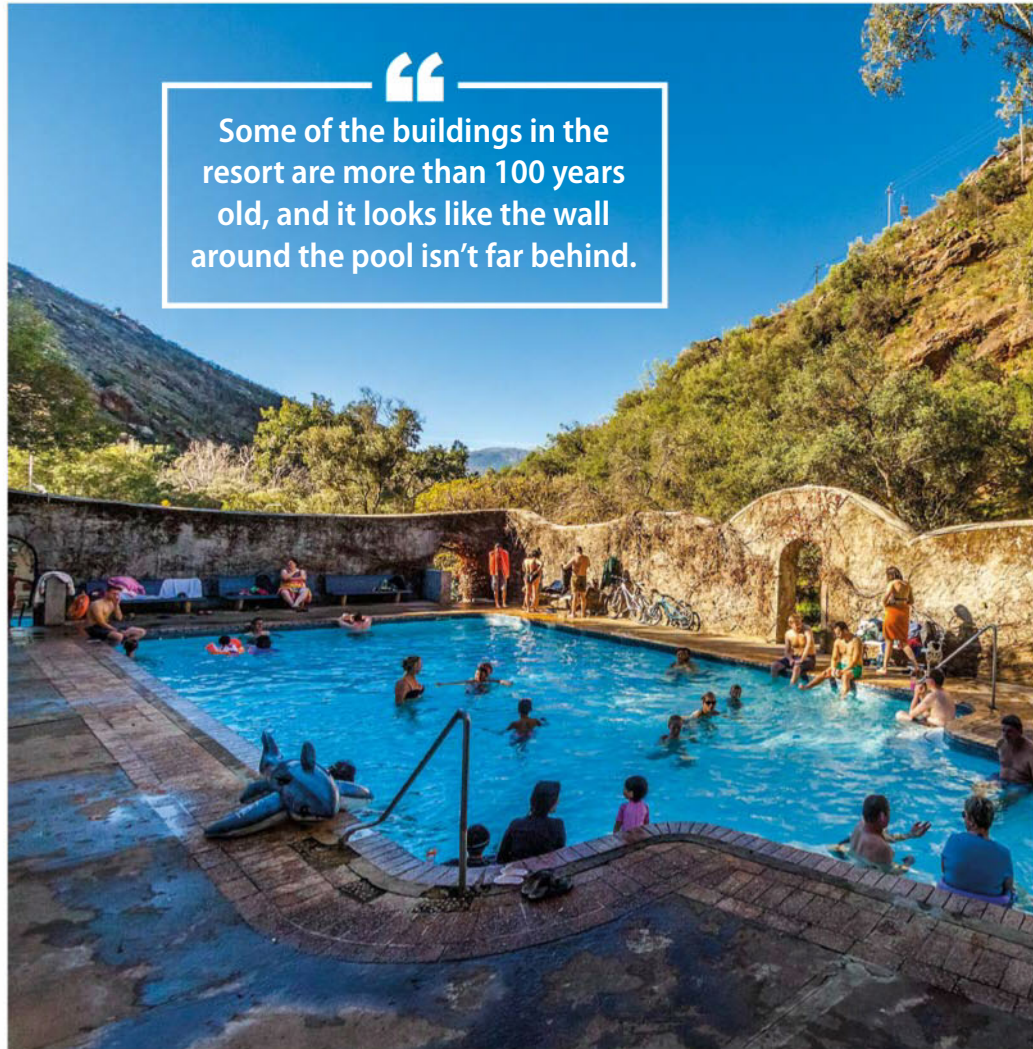
For this resort you have to book way in advance because it's popular. The guard at the gate of The Baths knows you're coming because when you stop here his first words are: "Surname please?" He walks back to his office and checks a list. "Your stand is number 22. Report to the office first. It's straight down this road."

The stands start to the right of the road as soon as you drive through the gate. Just hope there's not a car approaching – the half-kilometre dirt track runs up a small hill, but it's narrow and two caravans won't be able to squeeze past each other. Driving to the office with your caravan in tow is a mission, because you have to turn your vehicle around where the road ends in a circle 150 m further. This struggle to get to the office is unnecessary. It makes sense to first unhitch at your stand before clocking in at the office.

Shady spot

To the left of the entrance road there's a stream that runs back towards the office, and on both sides of the water are large trees. Besides the few stands to the right of the road, the rest are beneath the trees next to the stream.

The 20 or so stands snake along the river up the hill towards the office. The stands are all the same size and range from huge to tiny patches that allow only a car and a tent. Keep that in mind when booking, especially if you're camping with a motorhome. In some spots the branches hang low and you'll struggle to park your motorhome there.



Some of the buildings in the resort are more than 100 years old, and it looks like the wall around the pool isn't far behind.

The abundance of shade is all good and well, but it also means there is little to no grass on the stands, so bring a tarp to remedy the situation. At least the ground is sandy and it's not a struggle to drive your tent pegs in. The stand number is on the stand's electricity box, and this operates with a standard domestic socket. Your light is also at the box and you can switch it on and off yourself. The boxes aren't in the same spot on all the stands and at some you'll need an extension cord of at least 10 m. The garbage bin is close by, but the taps are hidden and you don't see many of them. There are quite a few loose steel braais standing around that you can use if you didn't bring your own. Remember your grid.

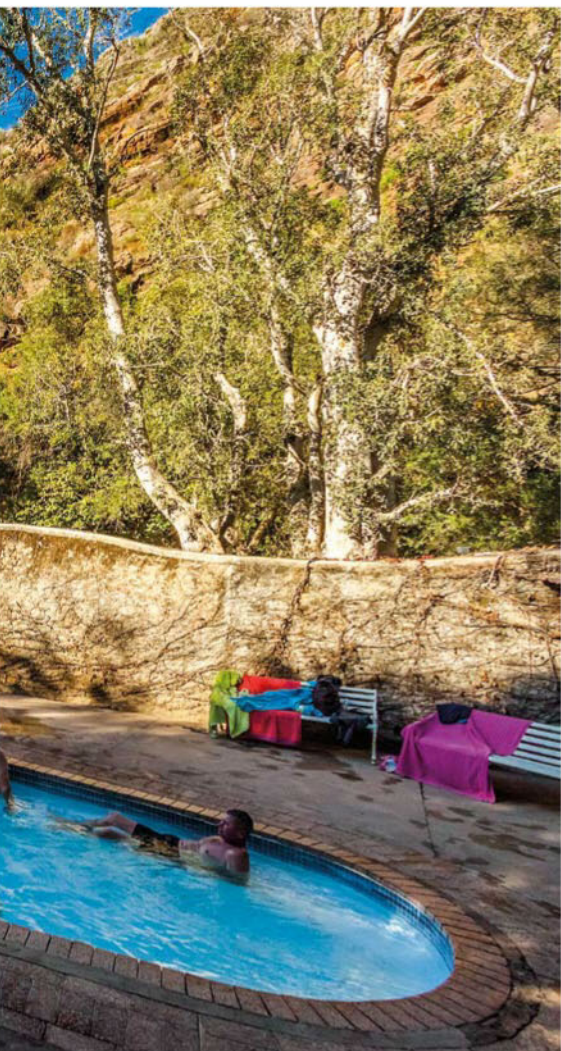
The loos

The Baths' bathrooms are enough to ensure a return visit. It looks new and from the outside it's simple yet stylish, but on the inside it's neat. There are three

of them: one close to the bottom end, the next one near the middle stands, and the biggest one at the top, near the office.

The bottom two each have two family bathrooms, a separate toilet, as well as a scullery. The family bathroom has a shower cubicle, toilet and basin with a mirror. Your heart may sink when you enter and see a shower curtain, but the curtains here aren't like those that start flapping as soon as you turn on the taps. The bottom of the curtain is about knee-height above the ground and doesn't bother you. The basin might be a bit low for a tall person, but it's good for kids.

The bathrooms at the top have separate facilities for men and women. There are three ceramic basins on a mosaic slab and behind it is a colossal mirror on the wall. The shower cubicle has a wet and dry area plus a bench to put your toiletries. At the bottom stands there's another square building but this hasn't been in use for a number of years and is really



only for emergencies because there are only two toilets in it. (This structure has since been demolished and new bathrooms are being built on the same spot. – Ed)

To the pool

The pools are next to the office and a bit of a walk if you're camping on one of the farthest stands. Nevertheless, it's one of the reasons you come here and the hot water on your skin will totally refresh you.

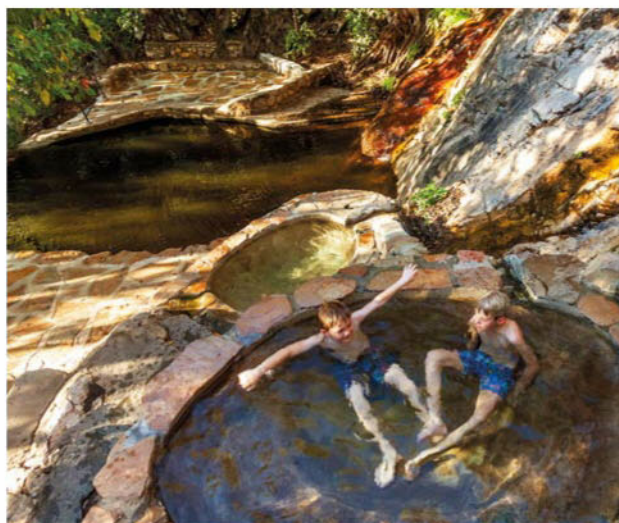
Some of the buildings in the resort are more than 100 years old, and it appears the wall around the pool isn't much newer. It's covered in creepers and creates a slightly Mediterranean vibe. But that's completely forgotten once you see how everyone enjoys the water.

The source of the spring is behind the office and is enclosed in a small structure. (If you want to go have a look, get the key from the office.)



BIG AND SMALL.

The stands differ in size and so do the swimming pools. If the larger pools get too crowded you can always retire to one of the smaller rock ponds.

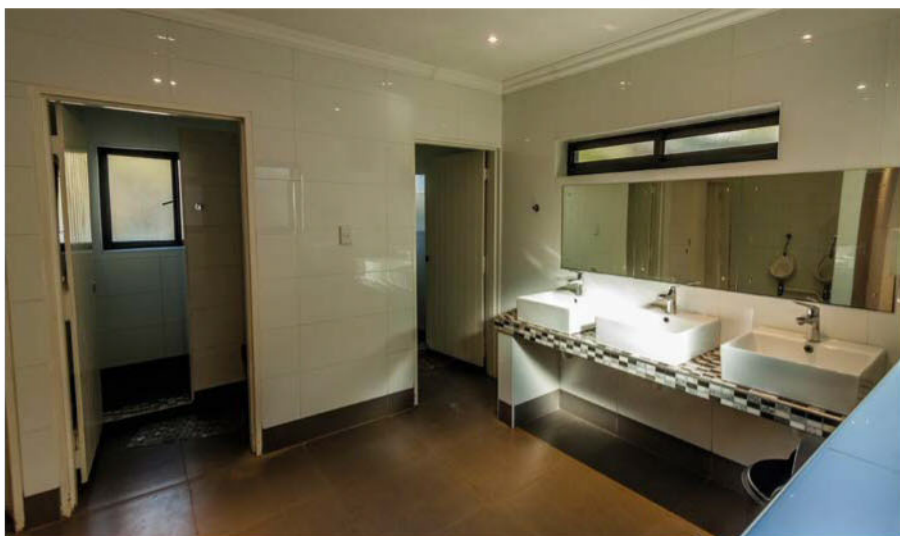
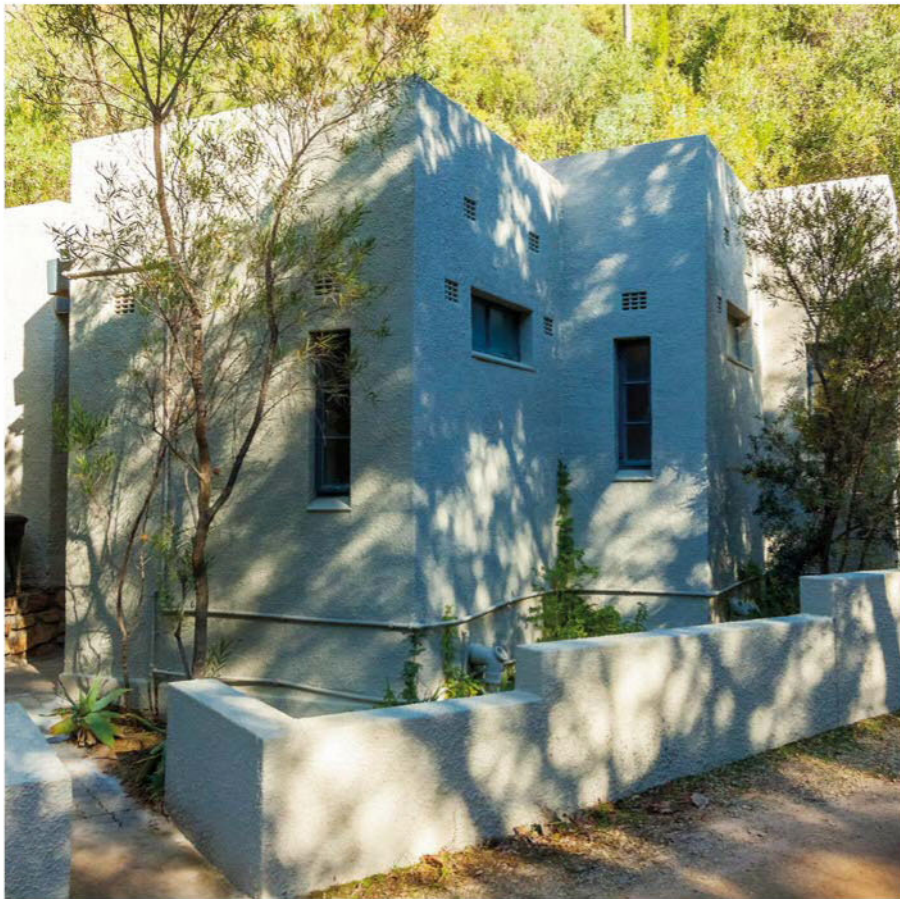


The water runs in at the shallow end, which is a pity because it's hot and can be uncomfortable for little ones. The water is about 43 °C at the source, with roughly 105 000 ℓ of water streaming out of the ground per hour. It's enough to fill an Olympic-size swimming pool in a day.

Next to it, on the other side of the wall, is another pool with cooler water, and close to where the road ends is a building with four spa pools. They're empty and

there's a note on the door that says it'll be renovated in January 2018.

If you're up for another short walk, get a coldrink at the shop opposite the office and take the kids to the rock pools in the mountain – the pools lie directly behind the building – no more than 40 m or so – at the circle. There are two stone pools. They're each about as big as a Jacuzzi and the hot water runs to here as well.



Briefly | The Baths



Campsite 25 stands of varying sizes, with little to no grass and lots of shade.

Ablution facilities New and neat.

Price Depending on the specific day and season R100 p.p. to R300 per stand for the first 2 people (plus R100 p.p. extra). Kids under 3 camp for free and over weekends you have to stay for longer than 1 night.

Arrival and departure times 2 pm and 10 am.

Contact 022 921 8026/7;

reservations4@thebaths.co.za;

thebaths.co.za

Closest town Citrusdal, 17 km.

Road condition Tar to the gate, and decent gravel road in the resort.

GPS S32.735953 E19.040857

go! Drive & Camp says For the kids there's a small wood jungle gym and a trampoline, as well as a trampoline next to the hot-water pool.

NEXT TO GODLINESS! Even Mother Grundy won't find much to complain about when it comes to the ablution facilities.





SCORCHING. The indoor pool is big enough that you can swim in peace, and there are shallow areas specifically for kids.

ATKV GOUDINI SPA

Camp town

When it comes to resorts, the ATKV doesn't do anything in half measures, and Goudini is no exception. When you stop at the gate, it almost feels like you are about to enter one of those fancy modern security complexes. The paved pathway runs next to neatly trimmed bushes all the way to the office. This parking area makes no provision for vehicles towing caravans.

We visited during the school holidays, and it was bustling. The pools – and obligatory holiday entertainment – is right behind the office, and the annoying sound of hip hop music travels far.

Before you even enter the office, you see a framed certificate to the left of the door. The word “Taal” is printed big on the certificate and below the statement: “The system that people use to communicate with each other and build relationships.” The words “Ulimi” and “Puo” are also printed on the certificate – the Zulu and Tswana words for language.

It's busy in the office, where three receptionists help guests. Two of them are on the phone taking bookings, while the



third one ensures we quickly get through the paperwork. You're given a stand, which is just as well because this place is filled to the brim.

A block with blocks

The campsite is about 100 m further on the path that runs along the left of the office. It's a square block of 100 m x 100 m. On the periphery large trees stand shoulder to shoulder, with more trees in the middle. If you had to look down on to the trees, you'd

see a big circle around the ablution block in the middle.

There's also a paved road along each side and the stands are on both sides of it. There's no favouritism when it comes to comfort because each stand has its own paved block of 7 x 7 metres on or next to which you can park your caravan. That's great, because you won't find yourself in a mud bath if there's a cloudburst, and you can get your caravan level without much effort. The only problem is to get >



your tent pegs in the ground, because the rocks are densely packed. The stands are numbered, but the number is painted onto the paving stones, which makes it difficult to see in some cases. There are manhole covers on some parts of the paving, and you might think it's a drain for grey water, but it is, in fact, irrigation for the grass.

Each stand has a fixed kettle braai with a grid that swings over the opening. Most of the braais are to the back of the stands. Your tap is in front next to the road with a drain area underneath it, and the power socket is next to the tap. You share the socket with your neighbour, so remember your blue caravan socket. It's not a train smash if you forget yours though – you can buy one at the shop for a reasonable R160.

Opposite the entrance of the resort are another five stands next to each other. They also have their own paving, but there are no trees. Three of the five have shade cloth over the paving.

The most important place

You can see the ATKV knows how to keep a busy campsite's bathroom clean because whenever you walk past you see a cleaner.

They also didn't hold back with the interior finishes. A row of white ceramic basins are sunken into a granite slab, each with a mirror behind it. You don't feel boxed in, and you're spoilt with all the space. On the wall are containers with handwash – similar to what you'll find in upmarket malls.

The showers each have a wet section with a swing glass door and a stainless steel bench on the dry side. The bench is about as big as an A4 sheet of paper.



TRUE BLUE. The campsite has standard domestic sockets. The resort shop sells blue caravan sockets if you forgot yours.

The scullery is located in the middle of the building, between the male and female sides.

The heart of the matter

Technically speaking Goudini doesn't have a mineral source where the water streams from the earth. A source was discovered in 1719, but after the earthquake in 1969, it dried up. After that several boreholes were made to reach the water. The water's temperature is 52 °C but cools down to 38 °C when it reaches the pools.

There are two big hot springs in a lovely garden with green grass and a row of palm trees. The one next to the supertube is the

more popular of the two – the temperature of the water here is 38 °C. The other one is slightly cooler (35 °C), and next to it is a pool with cold water. The supertube is busy because it's free.

The take-away kiosk, restaurant, bar and resort shop is to the back of the pools. The shop is super-neat and well-stocked, and there is also an ATM if you run out of cash and your kids want money for ice cream. On the opposite side is a putt-putt course (you pay a deposit of R20 per person).

But Goudini's crown jewel is the indoor pool, 200 m further behind the office building. If you walk in early in the morning, the steam is so thick you can't see the opposite side of the pool. There's more than enough safe splash space for kids and it's big enough to fit a whole school into it. The three private Jacuzzi rooms (R50 for four people for half an hour) are to the left of the pool. A patio stretches to the far end, and you can see all the way to Worcester over the vineyards. You can also see the busy N1 from here.

The games room is next to the pool building and has a few pool and foosball tables (R5). Bring your own ping pong paddle and balls if you want to use the ping pong table.



Briefly | Goudini Spa



Campsite 70 level stands each with a paved block and more than enough shade.

Ablution facilities Close by, modern, and always clean.

Price Depending on the season R240–R735 per stand (up to 6 people per stand).

Contact 023 349 8100;

goudini@atkvoorde.org.za; atkvoorde.co.za

Closest town Rawsonville, 5 km.

Road condition Tar to the resort and paved roads inside.

GPS S33.669630 E19.265747

go! Drive & Camp says You are not allowed to swim between 11 pm and 6 am.

WARMWATERBERG SPA

Farm style

Warmwaterberg lies on the R62 – if you're driving from Cape Town, just outside of Barrydale, the start of the Karoo. Shortly after famous Ronnie's Sex Shop there's a turn-off left to Warmwaterberg. A long, straight dirt road stretches out in front of you. You almost expect to see George and Lennie from *Of Mice and Men* walking down the road. It feels as if time stands still here.

Warmwaterberg Spa's grounds of more than 600 ha lies in front of you against a hill, and it's surprising to see there's no fencing or even a boom gate. Some people pitch their tents beneath the pepper trees right next to the dirt road. These days we're so used to living behind locked doors, but here you feel like you're relaxing on a farm far away from everything – things are safe.

There's a long, white building next to the road. It used to be the stables, but nowadays there's an office behind the last door, with the bottle store next to it. The stoep enhances the old character of the building (some of the other buildings on the farm are also more than 100 years old).

Chrismerie van Zyl sits in front of her computer crocheting. She says she used to camp here as a child with her grandfather. In the early days the hot water streamed down the mountain and people camped on both sides of it. Today the source has been

capped and the water is directed via pipes. One of the black-and-white photos against a wall shows the building next door that still exists today. It was the sanatorium where more well-to-do people came in search of relief from their aches and pains. The spring was discovered in the 1700s, and even well-known political figures stayed here. The statesman Dr. D.F. Malan apparently came here on his honeymoon.

Chrismerie points to the resort map to the right of the office table while she explains which stands we can choose. You can't help but smile when you look at the map. It's neat and hand-drawn and a few >



HELTER SKELTER There are several camping spots to choose from, some with electricity and some without, some on lawns and some that are not.





colour photos have been stuck to the paper to indicate, for example, the pool, office, and other buildings. The photos are slightly faded, but you can make out the respective landmarks.

Lastly, Chrismerie takes out a sheet of A4 paper, puts it in front of you, and turns it towards you so you can read it. She points out the rules: departure time is 10 am, no music is allowed, and neither are pets or drones.

Unhitch

There are a few buildings on the site, amongst them a restaurant, a few chalets, and even permanent caravans. The stands are spread out all over the resort, with a few opposite the office and some behind the pool.

The biggest group of stands close to each other are behind the office against the hill. They are laid out on terraces, fairly even, and have mostly grass and shade trees. The electrical point's standard domestic socket is close by, and there are also a few loose-standing braais and garbage bins standing around. There's even a grid or two if you need it, but that's it.

If you prefer more privacy, there's a large stand with a reed fence around it – it's directly behind the office and also has grass and a shade tree.

Two tame roosters are slowly making their way from the bottom stands and look at ease amongst people. This is not our last encounter with these feathered residents – that night they make themselves comfortable on one of the benches in the showers in the bathroom opposite this block of stands. They become quite restless when you come closer, but they don't leave. The next morning, before sunrise, you hear them crowing from the bathrooms, but it's not long before they're up and moving on again.





Something you also don't see often at other resorts is only one tap at each basin and in every shower. The hot spring's water comes straight to the bathrooms, and if you turn on the tap, you smell the ice in the water. It's just the right temperature and you won't freeze or scald yourself.

To the right of the bathrooms are two other rooms, each with a sunken bath that can hold 1 000 ℓ. These are the Roman baths – a handrail helps you descend the stairs into the steaming-hot water.

Five toilets in a row (each in its own cubicle) are left of the bathrooms and there's a wall with two basins on it – it looks new and is for general use. The scullery is covered and next to the toilets.



A PLACE IN THE SUN. The facilities aren't posh and overbearing. Everything is appropriately rustic with a focus on nature rather than architecture.

Bath a second time

The hot springs are across from the office and are fenced in. There are four square pools, all next to each other. One is cold and two hot – these are for adults and older children; next to it is a smaller shallow bath for the little ones. The water has a slight brown tinge because of the iron levels. The source delivers about a third of the water compared to the one at The Baths (790 000 ℓ per day) and the water is 44 °C at the source. But it's cooled down when it reaches the pools.

If you want to go out for dinner or send the kids to buy some ice, there's a big hall on the other side of the pools. There's a café and a bar and restaurant. There's also a ping pong table and pool table that uses R5 coins.

Briefly | Warmwaterberg Spa



Campsite 16 stands with electricity (7 without) that ranges from a private stand to a block of stands, all with some shade and grass.

Ablution facilities Old, cramped and basic. The Roman baths are big.

Price R100 per stand plus R60, R80 or R100 p.p.n respectively depending on whether it's a week day, a weekend or holiday time.

Arrival and departure times 2 pm and 10 am.

Contact ☎ 028 572 1609;
book@warmwaterbergspa.co.za;
warmwaterbergspa.co.za

Closest town Barrydale, 29 km.

Road condition The last 3,4 km is slightly rocky dirt road, but it's not an issue if you drive slowly.

GPS S33.765101 E20.900922

go! Drive & Camp says Climb the small hill behind Warmwaterberg to get to the source. It's not even 150 m from the campsite and from here you can see for miles and miles over the Karoo plains. 📍

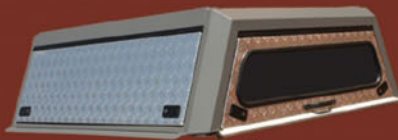
URBAN OR BUSH



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Journey to the River Khwai

With these 28 tips for an unforgettable trip to the enchanting Khwai Concession in Botswana, we did all the hard work for you. All you have to do is phone and book.

Text and photos **Villiers Steyn**





Our tour leader, J.I. de Wet's 80-series Land Cruiser gained a new nickname. That's after one of its spotlights conked out the previous day during a deep water crossing: "Camp, camp... come in for the Three-eyed Monster," he signals over the two-way radio.

J.I. is sitting with us at the Matswere Pan where we're watching a group of ravenous pelicans. It's roughly 5 km as the crow flies between us and the Khwai Concession from the Magotho public campsite in Botswana.

"Stand by," answers his mom Almarie, who's sitting underneath a colossal camel thorn tree. This whopper at stand no. 7 has enough shade for four camping trailers. "Eight wild dogs just ran through the campsite!" she shouts. "They ran through one by one, like we weren't even here."

Under normal circumstances we would have raced back like the Dakar Rally legend Stéphane Peterhansel to take photos of these rare animals. But the last four days we've seen them on every game drive. Which is

why J.I. casually answers: "Fantastic! Enjoy it."

This pack, which consists of 13 dogs, has a den with young cubs in this area, and they're terrorising every impala, kudu and zebra in sight.

We follow them daily on one of the many sandy twin-tracks that wind through Magotho's camel thorn tree forest, while we wonder why almost half of the trees are dead. It looks almost like that deserted place in *The Lion King* where Mufasa forbids Simba to venture. >



It's not often you encounter such an ominous place.

Like a bunch of school boys spraying each other with water, a group of about 10 elephant bulls entertain us in the afternoons with their antics in the shallow Khwai River, and at night we hear Moremi's lions roaring on the far side of the river. Apparently they swim through from time to time to patrol the banks of the Khwai.

We even attempt a few water crossings, which, thanks to the Cruiser's snorkel, is more exciting than frightening. There is, however,

a family in a Ford Ranger who chose the wrong line through the river and whose vehicle did not a snorkel... an act that brought an abrupt end to their trip. Novices and seasoned travellers often sleep here, 3½ hours' drive from Maun, the nearest industrialised settlement.

We spend the last four nights at Sable Alley's private campsite, and the change in habitat is astounding. The veld consists mainly of mopane, forest fever berry, and apple leaf trees, and it's a lot more marshy than Magotho, about 5 km south-east.

We watch a female leopard and her 3½-month cub devour an impala, and an adolescent male from a previous litter unsuccessfully chasing a swarm of spur-winged geese through the shallow water.

We learnt a lot during our nine days in Khwai – which tracks to drive and which to avoid, how the local wild dogs find each other after a failed hunt, why it's a bad idea to drive off the road, and even where you can buy a cold Black Label quart.

Here are a few tips to make your first – or next – trip to Khwai one you'll never forget.

WHEN SHOULD I GO?

1 Wait until the water levels drop

The north of Botswana usually receives heavy rains between January and March, and even up to late May, making marshy areas like Khwai almost inaccessible in a particularly wet year. The best time to go is between June and September, before it becomes unbearably hot.

2 Avoid school holidays

Khwai lost its status as "hidden gem" a few years ago. These days the campsites are chock full over South African winter and spring school holidays. So book either before or after 22 June to 17 July and 28 September and 9 October 2018.

PLAN YOUR TRIP

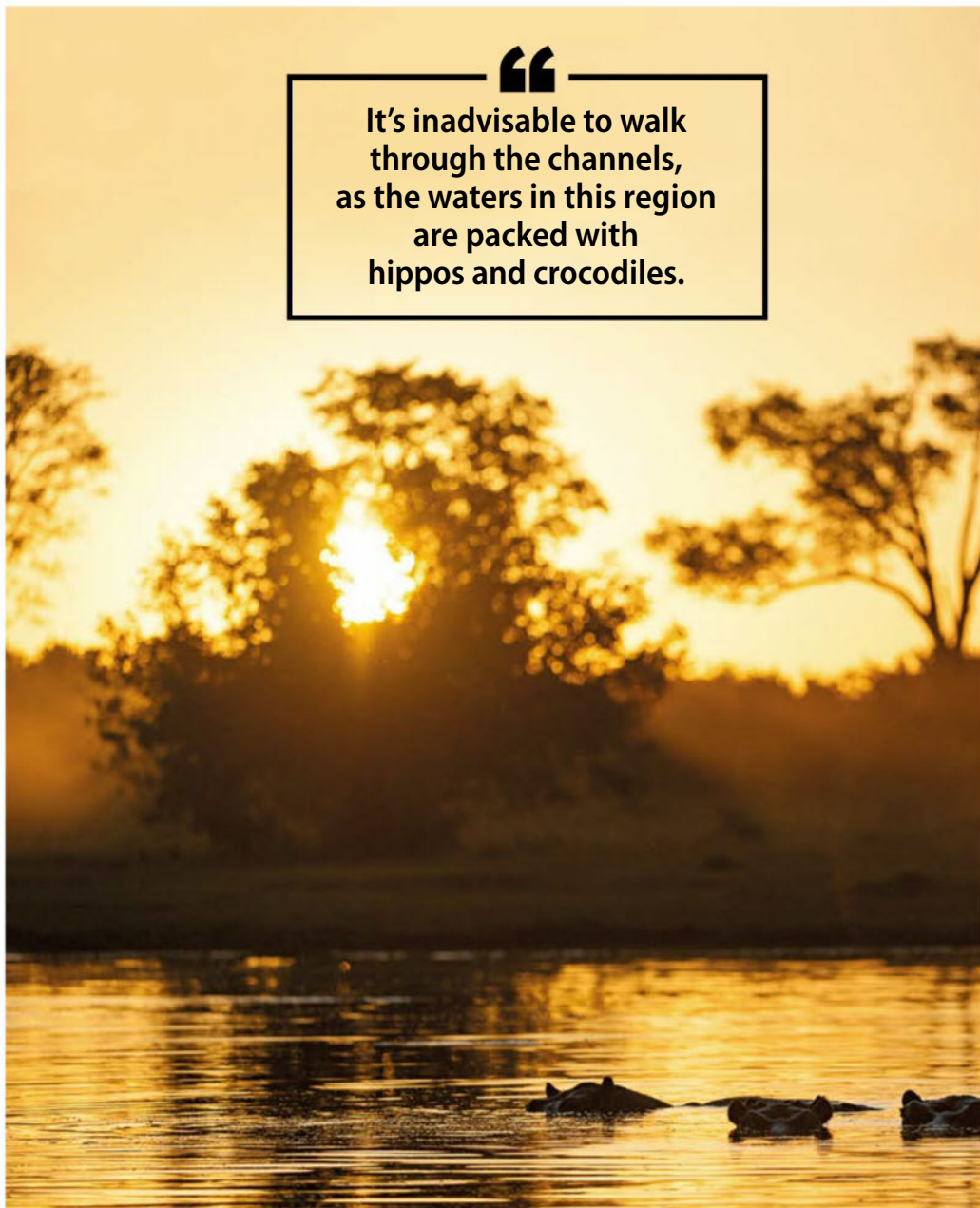
3 Stay longer

It's tempting to try and squeeze Moremi, Khwai, Savute and Kasane into 10 days, but the reality is that two to three days in Khwai are not enough. Rather camp here for nine to 10 days if you want to see a greater variety of game – five nights each in Khwai and Savute. Moremi looks like Khwai and the road to Kasane is a massive detour.

4 Start saving today

A stand beneath one of Khwai's trees will cost you substantially more than a spot in Satara or Twee Rivieren – so start saving. South Africans pay BWP300 (R388) p.p. at Magotho

“
It's inadvisable to walk through the channels, as the waters in this region are packed with hippos and crocodiles.”





SAFE CROSSING. If you're uncertain about trying a line through a river crossing, then wait for another vehicle with a snorkel or a lodge game viewer to do it first. The local guides know exactly where the waters are shallow enough to drive through.

and BWP400 (R517) p.p. at Sable Alley. If you plan on going between June and September, make your booking today.

5 Booking tips

Send an email to the Khwai Development Trust at khwai@botsnet.bw or ☎ 00 267 686 2365. You can book one of 15 public stands at Magotho, or, if you want complete privacy, ask for Sable Alley or Matswere – both are exclusive stands.

Kids of all ages are welcome, and even though there isn't a limit on the amount of vehicles, a maximum of 20 people per stand is allowed. 📧 khwaitrust.co.bw

6 Magotho first

If you want to camp at Magotho and Sable Alley or Matswere, start at Magotho. Although the game-viewing opportunities here are excellent, there's more traffic than in the two exclusive camps. Plan your trip like you would a visit to the Kruger: Start where it's busiest and end where it's quiet.

YOUR VEHICLE

7 Take your 4x4

You definitely need a 4x4 to tackle Khwai's sandy tracks, and if you are towing an off-road trailer, low range is essential.

Although a snorkel isn't a requirement to get to your campsite, it will allow

you to cross the network of channels, meaning you'll be able to explore a larger area on your game drives.

8 Check everything

The corrugation between Maun and Mababe Village, together with the thick sand, mud and water in Khwai, will quickly take its toll on your vehicle.

Therefore be sure you thoroughly check your engine and chassis before you leave. Remember, if your Fortuner breaks down, you're very far from the nearest Toyota service centre. It's always safer to drive in a convoy of at least two vehicles.

9 Repair work in Maun

If you do encounter problems and you're looking for a mechanic in Maun, phone Hokkan Haisambanga. He'll come to where you're staying to inspect your vehicle. ☎ 00 267 7418 5114

THE ROAD IS LONG

10 Cross at Stockpoort

South Africans love crossing the border at Groblersbrug, but it's quicker to cross at the smaller Stockpoort border post near Lephalale.

Take the tar road from Lephalale to Stockpoort (the dirt road is in a dreadful state) and don't worry about the 50 km dirt road on the Botswana side – it's in excellent condition and takes you to the A1 highway south of Mahalapye. >





BIG SHOWOFFS (clockwise from above). The bull elephants resident to the area definitely aren't camera shy and playfully spray each other with water in the evenings. You're camping without electricity, and in some places with no toilets, so bring a spade and toilet paper for when nature calls. It's good practice to hang up your refuse in a heavy-duty garbage bag to keep it out of reach of hyenas and wild dogs.

11 Drive this route through Botswana

Don't drive the A1 and A3 highways through Francistown and Nata. The way to Maun is shorter and quieter on the A14 that runs past Orapa and south of the Makgadikgadi Pans.

To get from Maun to Khwai you drive on the dirt road that runs north through Mababe Village. On this stretch the road forks and a sign indicates you turn left to Khwai and right to Savute. Keep right; if you turn left you have to drive through Moremi and pay a park fee. The road turns west as soon as you get to Mababe and the turn-offs to

Magotho and Sable Alley lie at the following GPS coordinates:

Magotho turn-off S19.093310 E23.871491

Sable Alley turn-off S19.133292 E23.766164

12 This is where you should spend the night

KHAMA RHINO SANCTUARY

This small reserve is a day's drive from Pretoria and has big stands with loads of shade. Ask for stands no. 5, 6, 7 or 8 if you want privacy but still be within walking distance of the ablution facilities. The stands don't have electricity, but the showers are (usually) hot. There's also a restaurant with an extensive menu.



It costs BWP92 (R119) p.p.p.n. to camp and the entrance fee is BWP87 (R112) p.p. and BWP71 (R92) per vehicle per day.

You can buy wood at the entrance gate for BWP20 (R26) per bag.

📞 khamarhinosanctuary.org.bw

MAUN REST CAMP

Camp on the banks of the Thamalakane River on the outskirts of Maun at this shady camp. Stands have electricity and there are hot showers and free wi-fi. It's BWP100 (R129) p.p. for a stand next to the water. You can also book a full-day boat trip to Chiefs Island for BWP1 250 (R1 612). 📞 maunrestcamp.com



13 Pack your fridge carefully

You are usually allowed to take meat out of South Africa northward through Botswana, but you're prohibited from transporting any meat from the north down to the south. But when there's an outbreak of a specific illness, you won't be allowed to take, for example, pork or chicken products across the border or through vet fences. There may also be a temporary ban on certain fruits and vegetables. Double check with the AA before you leave.

14 Fill up in Botswana

Fuel is up to R3,50 cheaper per litre in Botswana than in South Africa. So fill up your jerry cans on that side and don't forget to fill your

tank before re-entering South Africa. Remember, the nearest filling stations to Khwai are in Maun. Take at least 40 ℓ of extra fuel per vehicle if you're planning a lot of game drives.

If you're in a bind, ask Onks at the Khwai Development Trust (he comes round to check bookings and collect trash) for help. He sells diesel in Khwai Village at BWP290 (R375) for 20 ℓ.

15 Stop at Riley's

Riley's in Maun is a good place to fill up, let air out of your tyres (to about 1,8 bar), and buy a cooldrink for the road to Khwai. There's also an AutoZone if you forgot to pack an emergency fan belt or light bulbs.

GPS S19.988167 E23.426089

>



PARK RULES

16 Stay on the road
Although the signs in the campsites instruct you not to deviate from the roads, you'll notice that nobody obeys this rule – and there's also nobody who enforces it. But be warned: Chances are you'll cut one of your tyres' sidewalls on an old tree trunk. We lost two tyres like this.

17 Pick-up sticks
According to the website you're not allowed to collect wood within 1 km of the campsite. You'd think that meant you're allowed to do it elsewhere. If you don't feel like searching the bush, you can buy bundles next to the road in Mababe Village between Maun and Khwai. Bury the remains of your campfire at least 30 cm below ground before you leave or use it to fill up your toilet hole.

18 Lights out
Night drives are not allowed for self-drive visitors, but because Khwai is not in a national park and the camps don't have gates, you can linger a little before sunrise and a little bit after sunset without getting into trouble.

GAME FOR AFRICA!

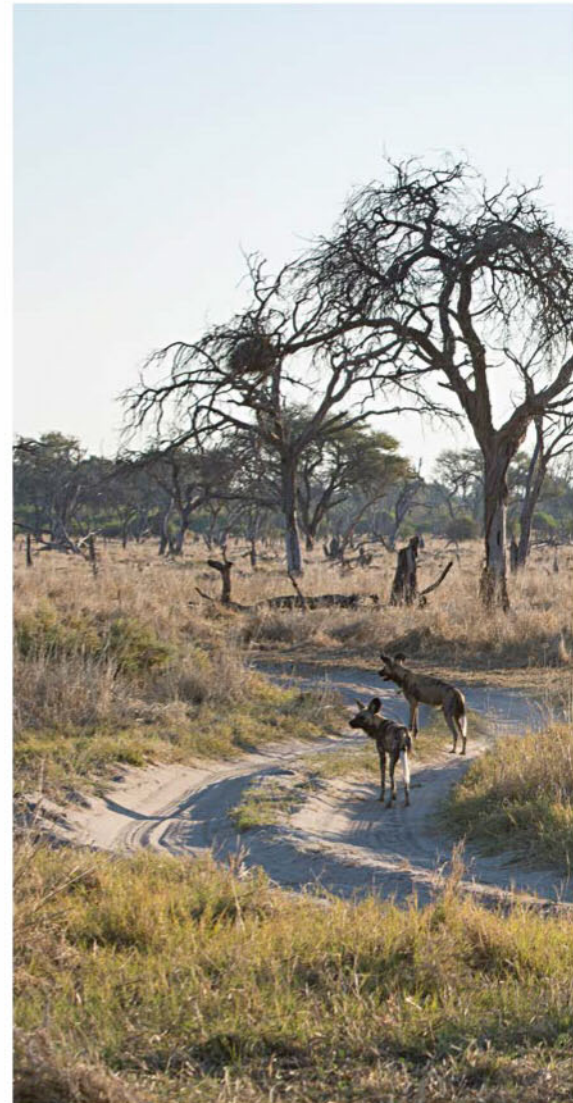
19 Ask the guides
Between Machaba Camp, Khwai River Lodge and other camps in Khwai, you'll spot game-drive vehicles. Don't be shy to stop and ask the guides where the wild dogs are



hiding their cubs or where a lion killed its prey. They are usually very friendly and eager to assist. Of course, you can also pay it forward by sharing your finds with others.

20 Elephants
Khwai is widely known for its elephants, and the big bulls love coming down to the Khwai River late in the morning. Look for them about 2½ km north-west of Magotho, where a game-viewing track veers off away from the river (GPS S19.101661 E23.852531). On a warm day there could be as many as 10 of them together in the shallow water.

21 Lions
Of all the predators, lions are probably the most difficult to spot in Khwai. There isn't a dominant



pride that protects the area, but rather various prides that move through the area from time to time.

Your best chance to spot them is if you drive slowly along the Khwai River, looking for them on the Moremi side (south).

22 Leopards
There are leopards aplenty in these parts, especially in the Sable Alley area. There's a very peaceful female named Matsebe that loves the attention of cameras. Most of the cubs, including a beautiful young male, are also peaceful and they are regularly spotted by visitors.

Keep your eyes peeled for these spotted cats around Magotho.

If there's one place where you might spot a leopard sitting on a tree trunk, it's here. Listen carefully to the warning



WHO LET THE DOGS OUT? It's quite difficult to miss the wild dogs. With pups born in May or June ready to feed in the winter months, this is an ideal time to visit Khwai as the pack tends to hunt more during this time. They've also developed a unique method of finding each other if they get broken up during a hunt – they simply make their way south to the river and follow the others' tracks.

cries of the impalas, vervet monkeys and guinea fowls – it may well indicate where the leopards are hiding.

23 Wild dogs

It's really difficult not to spot African wild dogs when you're visiting Khwai.

The resident pack uses a deserted aardvark burrow near the Matswere Pan north-west of Magotho as a den, and the pups are usually born in May or June. This means chances are fairly good that you'll spot them during the winter months.

They enjoy hunting in the Magotho area so the odds of seeing them every morning and afternoon are pretty good.

When the pack breaks up during a hunt, each dog runs south to the river and then follows the trail of the others until everyone is reunited. >

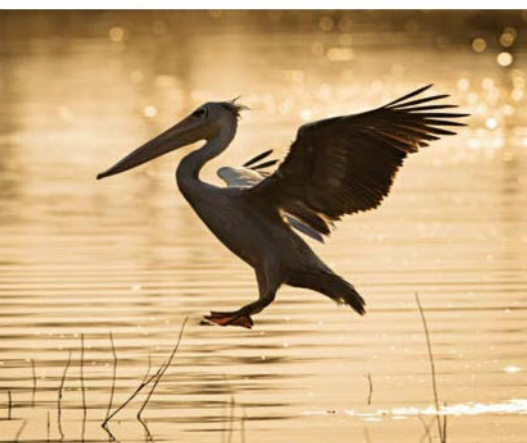


TAKE WINNING PHOTOS

24 The golden hour
In the first half an hour after sunrise, the Khwai River is sometimes covered in a layer of fog – a picture-perfect sight if you're driving towards the sun. Look for some hippos to snap while they're grunting and bearing teeth.

If you're staying in Sable Alley, you have enough time for a late-afternoon visit to the Lechwe Plains, where you can take pictures of the beautiful antelopes. Be sure to park your vehicle so that the animals are exactly between you and the setting sun.

GPS S19.157040 E23.785391



25 Birds
If you've never visited the north of Botswana, you'll definitely be able to add some new bird species to your list.

Red-billed francolins like to take a sand bath in the twin-tracks, and Bradfield's hornbills often hang out with their yellow-and-red-billed cousins.

Be on the lookout for long-toed lapwings, rufous-bellied herons, and Senegal coucals on the banks of the Khwai River, and use your binoculars so you don't mistake the rare lesser jacana with the more common African jacana – they look almost identical.

Keep your eyes peeled for the lilac-breasted roller and wattled cranes on the Lechwe Plains near the Khwai River Lodge, and stop at Matswere Pan to see common spoonbills, grey herons, pied kingfishers, and, if you're lucky, white pelicans.

GPS S19.087974 E23.829522

26 Pack a wide-angle lens
In the absence of any air pollution, and with giant camel thorn trees in the foreground, Magotho is a fantastic place to take night sky photos, right from your camp. Remember, aim south if you want to snap star rings.



28 Stay in contact
Two-way radios are absolutely essential when travelling in a group. It keeps you in contact even if you break away from the group in search of game – and in doing that you cover a larger area.

Once you're on the open road, it's a good way to make the others aware of any cattle, donkeys, or potholes in the road – or to just shoot the breeze.

There is also no cellphone reception in Khwai and it's worthwhile to rent a satellite phone.

If something goes wrong, you're very far from civilisation.

IN GENERAL

27 Road conditions
Some sections, especially in the Sable Alley area, quickly become very sandy without warning. You can get stuck here if you're not concentrating, especially if you're towing an off-road trailer. Remember to bring your tow rope.

The water crossings aren't very deep but rather wait for a vehicle with a snorkel to drive through first – just to be on the safe side. Remember, there are hippos and crocodiles in these waters, and that's why it's unsafe to walk through the channels. If you're unsure about the line, wait for one of the lodge vehicles – they know exactly where the shallow water is.





THIS IS WHAT THE CAMP FACILITIES LOOK LIKE

Magotho

Magotho has 15 stands that are all a few hundred metres from each other. There is no electricity or any other facilities, but you can't really get any closer to nature. Big, old camel thorn trees provide ample shade, and the adjoining Khwai River invites anything from noisy spotted hyenas to inquisitive elephant bulls.

The resident group of vervet monkeys also won't think twice before stealing your Corn Flakes while you're taking an afternoon nap, so make sure your food is locked away when there's no one around to keep an eye on things.

Even though you get a stand number on your booking form, Magotho is a campsite where you choose your own spot. If someone has already made themselves at home on your stand, keep on looking until you find a space you like.

That said, you do have to camp on a demarcated stand. Rogue campers who arrive without booking and who pitch a tent underneath a tree of their choice pay double. Someone from the Khwai Development Trust drives through Magotho every month to check bookings, so you don't have to drive through to Khwai Village.

Sable Alley and Matswere

According to the Khwai Development Trust's website, Sable Alley and Matswere are only available to registered Botswana safari operators and their clients, but with our visit one of their employees confirmed that anyone can book these two camps.

Both lie in a leadwood forest that looks out over a marsh where hippos and osprey entertain you at sunrise and sunset. There are also no facilities and you'll seldom encounter other self-drive tourists around the camp. There are, however, a few game-drive vehicles from the surrounding lodges that come here in search of animals.

Water

You only have to take drinking water. Shower and dishwashing water you take from the river or marsh. Just make sure you get a spot where the water is shallow and clear so Mr Crocodile doesn't give you a nasty surprise. Take at least two empty 20 ℓ plastic bottles to fill up, as well as a 1 ℓ bucket to make the process easier.



Ablution facilities

There aren't even pit toilets at the stands, so you have to bring along everything you need to heed the call of nature comfortably.

We dug a deep hole, placed a steel sheet with a hole in it over it, and then put our toilet chair on top of it. For privacy and shade we spun shade cloth between posts.

There is also no official rest stops in the bush, which means you'll probably have to squat behind a tree at some point.

Keep a small spade in your car and always burn or bury your toilet paper, otherwise the animals will scatter it everywhere. Gross.

Garbage

Put your trash in heavy-duty black bags and hoist it into a tree with a rope at night so hyenas can't tear it open. Members of the Khwai Development Trust come to Magotho with a bakkie every now and again to collect rubbish.

Khwai Village

If you run out of flour or toothpaste you can shoot through to Khwai Village. It's less than an hour's drive south-west from Magotho. There is a shop with a surprising variety of provisions, like baked beans, ice, Coke, and even ice-cold Black Label quarts.



GPS S19.165944 E23.750944

(Please note If it's very wet there are a few deep water crossings on the way to Khwai Village.



Camping with kings

Few things fascinate people more than the roar of a lion. Here are six campsites not in the Kruger where you can park your caravan within a stone's throw of these beasts.

1 Tau Roara Lodge, North West

Tau Roara means “place where the lion roars” – yes, even here on open plains. In fact, if you open Google Maps and search for Tau Roara Lodge you’ll see the faint outlines of an old golf course in the shape of a lion. Right next to the “grass lion” there are a few cages containing the real McCoy.

These are laid out in an L-shape, right around the corner of the campsite. You camp on these beasts’ doorstep and you couldn’t ask for better “guard dogs”.

You can walk the 150 m between the cages under supervision. At one of the cages a sign suggest to rather keep your hands to yourself if you want to keep all 10 digits. The older lions are used to visitors – they appear to not even notice people walking past – but the younger ones purr against the fence not unlike domestic cats.

The campsite is on a piece of even lawn that stretches along the cages and is laid out in a large circle. Two stands share a double power socket, and if you require water you’ll have to walk to the bathroom, which is about 30 m away. You can braai your chops next to the big old willow near the reception office. In the cordoned-off braai area the wind is less of a nuisance than at the clearing next to the cages, and there are a few loose-standing braais to choose from.

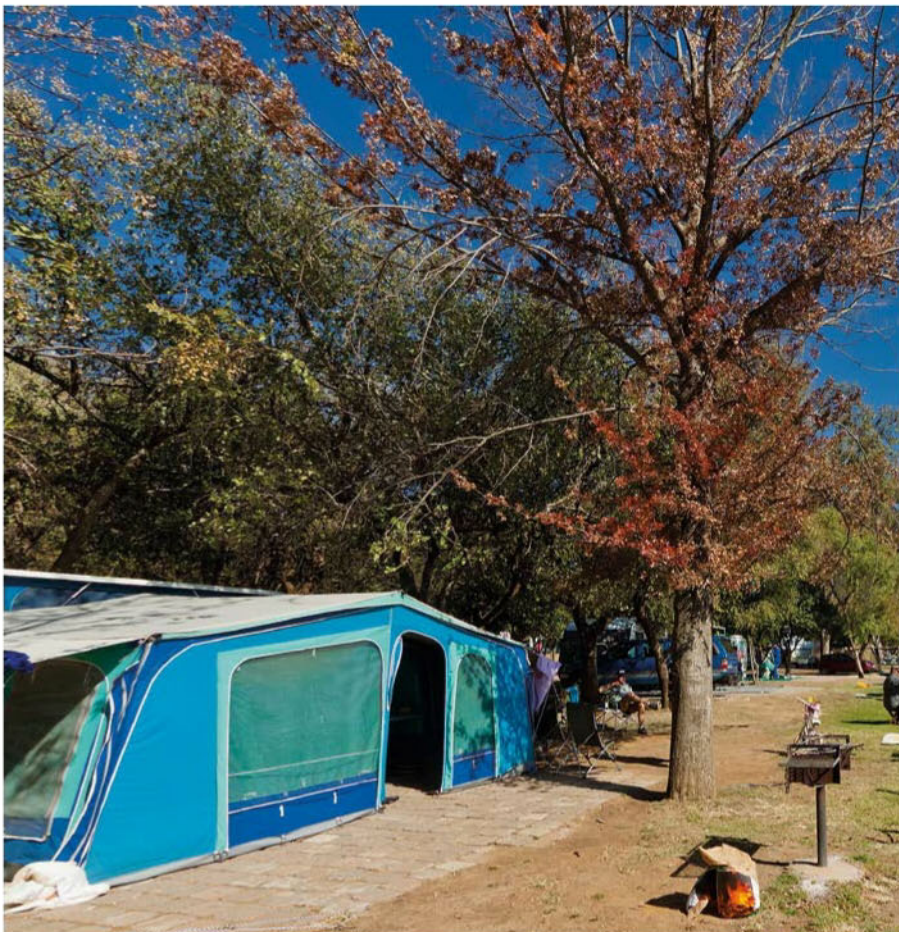
Contact ☎ 018 571 0233; 🌐 tauroaralodge.co.za
GPS S26.580010 E26.116167 >



PHOTOS LEON BOTHA



PHOTOS LEON BOTHA



2 Wawielpark Holiday Resort, Free State

Wawielpark is one of the more popular camping destinations in these parts – a claim justified once you see how many vehicles are crammed in here on any given weekend. As with any decent family resort, there's something at Wawielpark for everyone to do.

You camp on the bank of the mighty Vaal River, and fishing is the main pastime. And while you're trying to hook one of the slippery suckers, the kids can enjoy the play park with its imaginative equipment, putt-putt course, trampoline and go-kart track. Not to mention water fun... You can rent canoes and pedal boats or splash around in the hot or cold swimming pools.

And you should bring a bodyboard because there's a wave pool where you can imagine you're catching some waves in the ocean.

It feels like you're camping deep in the bush because you're not very far from Simba and the Lion Guard. At the resort's entrance there are a few large cages with electric fencing around it. If you want to entertain the kids, you can walk here during the day. It's free. There are also white lion breeding pairs and Bengal tigers. Besides the cats there are a few springbucks as well as a camel and an ostrich.

There are 65 stands, all with electricity and plenty of shade. There are two ablution facilities – a neat, old building close to the campsite, and a very modern one next to the hot-water pool.

Contact 018 441 1093;
wawielpark@wawielpark.co.za;
wawielpark.co.za
GPS S26.94483 E26.84148

Lion Park Resort

PHOTO: LEON BOTHA

3 Lion Park Resort, Gaborone, Botswana

A holiday in Botswana usually means seeing wild animals in the bush, but at the Lion Park Resort, 13 km from the capital, Gaborone, there's an additional big attraction. Yes, you camp close to the king of the jungle, but here playtime reigns supreme.

Lion Park is probably the campsite with the biggest entertainment area in the southern hemisphere. The theme park with its water slides and rides attract visitors from all over, and the campsite was laid out in 2010. It's four hours from Gauteng, on the Trans-Kalahari highway to Windhoek, the Okavango Delta, and the Vic Falls in Zimbabwe. The campsite next to the theme park came about because so many tourists were looking for accommodation in the area – people travelling from the north and the south.

You don't have to worry about security, because the resort has a concrete palisade fence around it and the entrance gate is locked at 6 pm every night.

Not long after sunset you're greeted by a hair-raising roar: On the other side of the fence a lion is making his presence known – and before long some of his mates will join in. These terrifying conversations between the big cats happen about five or six times a night.

The lions are fed once a week and also over weekends. You may check it out if you want to. They're kept in an enclosure about half as big as a rugby field.

Contact ☎ 00 267 73 29 29 69; 🌐 lionpark.co.bw

GPS S24.787417 E25.817147

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4 Olifantsrus, Etosha, Namibia

Etosha's newest campsite, Olifantsrus, lies in the west of the game park, on the road between the Okaukuejo and Dolomite camps, and is the only overnight spot in the national park that is exclusively aimed at campers.

The world here is as untouched as it comes, because the campsite is not even three years old and lies in an area of the park that until recently was sheltered from hordes of tourists. It is, however, better suited to an off-road trailer than a Penta, since it's dirt road all the way – one that is not well maintained – and it's a test for even the most seasoned tower.

Olifantsrus' pride and joy is the lookout point at the waterhole, a double-storey thatched rondawel where you can see game up close from two different levels. Those in the know at Namibia Wildlife Resorts claim shy animals such as black rhinos and black-faced impala are more established in this part of the park, which means you have a better chance of spotting them. There are also quite a few lions here and you can hear them from your stand at night. You can see them at the waterhole by day.

The campsite has 10 stands – some of them are bigger and more isolated than others. You share a power point (standard domestic socket) with your neighbour and you need to bring an extension cord of at least 20 m. You get your own loose-standing braai drum with a grid, and each stand also has a concrete boma where you can relax around the campfire.

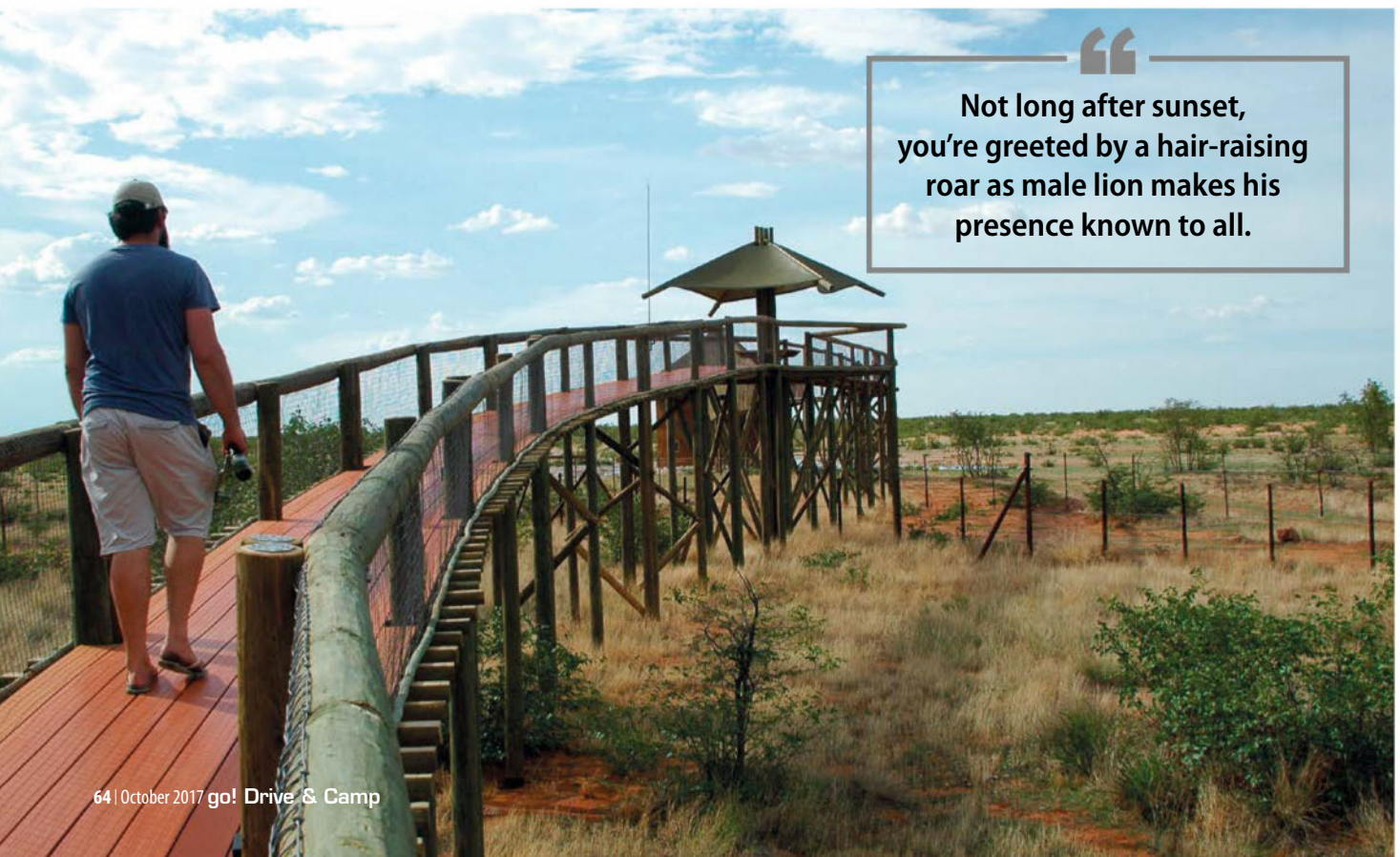
The ablution facilities are neat and modern and are cleaned daily. Its divided into two with the shower facilities (two showers and one basin each for men and women) on the one side and toilets (three for the ladies, one for the guys, plus two urinals) on the other side.

Contact ☎ 00 264 61 285 7200; ✉ enquiries@etoshanationalpark.org
GPS S18.971116 E14.861153



PHOTOS NELLIE BRAND-JONKER

“Not long after sunset, you're greeted by a hair-raising roar as male lion makes his presence known to all.”





PHOTOS DIRK KOK



5 Tri-Hunt Game Lodge, Free State
A little bit more than halfway between Bloemfontein and Brandfort lies the Tri-Hunt Game Lodge between the Southern Free State's hills. Besides the giraffes and 20 or so buck species in the veld, there are cages with anything from orphaned monkeys and a wildcat to caracals that the resort's owners are rearing by hand. And next to the lodge is a camp with two white lions.

It's good to know the lions are behind a fence, because at night their roars are so loud it sounds as if they're right next to your tent.

You have two choices here in terms of camping: a small caravan park at the guest lodge or a bush stand next to the dam. In the enclosed caravan park there are no numbered stands but there's space for up to 10 caravans between karee and olive trees. The spot close to the only electricity box is a good choice because then you don't have to roll out an extension cord to power a light and a bug zapper at your stand. A little bit further is a tap with borehole water, and there are two loose-standing steel braais.

The ablution facilities consist of two separate bathrooms for men and women and are neat, with space to store or hang your clothes. Opposite the campsite is a dam where antelope come to drink. About a kilometre or so from the caravan park is an overnight spot in the bush with old fibreglass railway houses and an old double-decker bus that's been converted into a kitchen and entertainment area. It's next to a dam with an abundance of bird life.

You can park your camping trailer here and use the bus kitchen, which has a two-plate stove, microwave and a fridge. There's electricity in the kitchen but not at your stand. There are open cold-water showers and flush toilets behind a wooden fence.

Contact 0832977299; info@tri-hunt.co.za; tri-hunt.co.za
GPS S28.861508 E26.368692 >



5 Thaba Monate, Limpopo
Thaba Monate lies hidden in the Waterberg, not even 100 km from Pretoria. Here you camp in one of two separate camps, and you can hear the lions roar from beneath your rally tent.

The one camp, Njala, is at the top of the mountain, while the other one, Rooibok, is a little distance down the side of the mountain. There are about 100 stands in the Njala camp and they are mostly even. The camp is fenced in to keep animals out and it looks like they tried to lay out the site around the original trees. Like you find so often in the Bushveld, the shade trees are not the biggest, but there are smaller trees that supply some shade. The Njala camp has three ablution facilities and they're tiled with neat brown slate tiles and the shower cubicles are spacious with a separate bench inside.

The Rooibok camp has only 15 stands. You pay more to camp here, but your stand is slightly bigger. The trees are like those in the rest of the resort and the grass is slightly more thin on the ground, but at least you're not camping in dirt. Some of the stands are slightly uneven, but it's a small price to pay if you want to camp close to the heated pool.

There is only one ablution building, and the two basins inside can become quite crowded if the campsite is full.

About 100 m from the office are two lions in a large enclosure, and you can organise a viewing with management. There are also quite a few self-drive 4x4 routes – all free. A map is included in the paperwork you get when you sign in.

Contact 083 808 5354;

thabamonate.co.za

GPS S24.815987 E28.330734





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Some people take it very seriously, others do it to relax, and some do it to shed those unwanted kilograms before heading to Amanzimtoti in December.

We're talking about cycling of course. It seems like everybody's doing it these days. Everywhere you see bike racks on the back of vehicles, meaning more and more people are taking their bikes when they go on a weekend getaway or holiday.

But not all campsites are geared for cycling, especially if you want to pound the pedals for exercise. Your kids might be



able to knock about in the campsite, but if you and your significant other want to burn a few kilojoules, you usually have to head for the highway.

Mankele Mountain Biking is known in cycling circles for its superb mountain-biking routes – it's therefore the right spot if you want to prepare for the 94.7 cycle challenge and you want to camp.

Although Mankele is an exercise area and playground for fitter cyclists and hosts races throughout the year, everybody is welcome to come ride here. You don't have to be embarrassed because your bike costs

less than your car, and you also don't have to wear tight cycling shorts.

The campsite

You can immediately see you're in cycling country when you stop at Mankele's reception office. Every vehicle in the parking area has a bike rack on the back, and there are cyclists as far as the eye can see. Young and old. Up and down. There are quite a few day visitors that come through to cycle, swim and braai. These visitors are welcome, provided you bring a bike. And that you ride it.

Mankele lies in a valley and is surrounded by mountains covered in indigenous forest. The V-shaped site is big: it's about 1 km long and 400 m wide. The site is divided by a lapa and pool area in the middle. To the right of the lapa are the cycling trails, with the campsite on the left-hand side.

The campsite itself is divided by the second pool. The stands are unmarked and you camp where you wish. There's no limit on the amount of people that can camp here; sometimes on race weekends there are as many as 600 participants at >

“
Don't be embarrassed because
your bike costs less than your
car, and you also don't have to
wear tight cycling shorts.”

one time. Unless you're a spectator or participant it might be better to camp here on a weekend when there are no races. The dates of the annual competitions are on Mankele's website, but it may change so it's safer to phone ahead and find out.

To the right of the pool you camp amongst thorn trees, thatch-roofed canopies and brick braais. The roof is too low for a caravan, but you can park next to it. You have to arrive bright and early if you want a canopy; there are more stands than canopies.

The four brick braais each have two sections with grids and are split by a work surface where you can put your spices and dishes. The 12 power sockets (standard domestic), lights, taps, and garbage bins are at the braais.

The stands to the left of the pool lie in a long, wide, straight strip. Unlike at the other stands, here you braai on a concrete slab that's low on the ground. It's best to bring your own grid as not all the braais have one. There are quite a few half-drum braais in the camp but if you're worried that they might be snatched up before you arrive, bring your own.

The 38 power sockets are spread out in the campsite and you must remember to bring an extension cord. The four taps are in the middle of the campsite, next to the foot path, and the garbage bins are spread out between the stands.

All the stands at Mankele have grass and you camp on a combination of field grass, kikuyu, and shade lawn. The trees are still young, with only about five providing shade in the summer. The ground is mostly even, with a slight slope here and there.

Besides the ordinary stands, Mankele also has what they refer to as bush stands: two next to the mountain and five next to the river. It's not bush stands in the true sense of the word, because they are only divided from the rest by an access road

that runs around the camp. It only means you don't see your neighbours from your tent. The two spots next to the mountain have trees behind and next to them and are the most private.

The stands next to the river lie next to each other and are less private, but have the advantage of shade trees in summer and the tranquillity of the water – it's lovely to picnic and braai on the riverbank. There's grass and two brick braais.

The swimming pool in the middle of the campsite has a fence around it and lawn right round with wooden chairs and tables underneath thatch canopies. Outside the pool gate is a communal kitchen with a bar fridge, microwave, two-plate stove, a kettle, and sink.

Bathroom facilities

The resort's one ablution building has separate facilities for men and women. Both sides have four showers (with gas geysers), four toilets and three basins

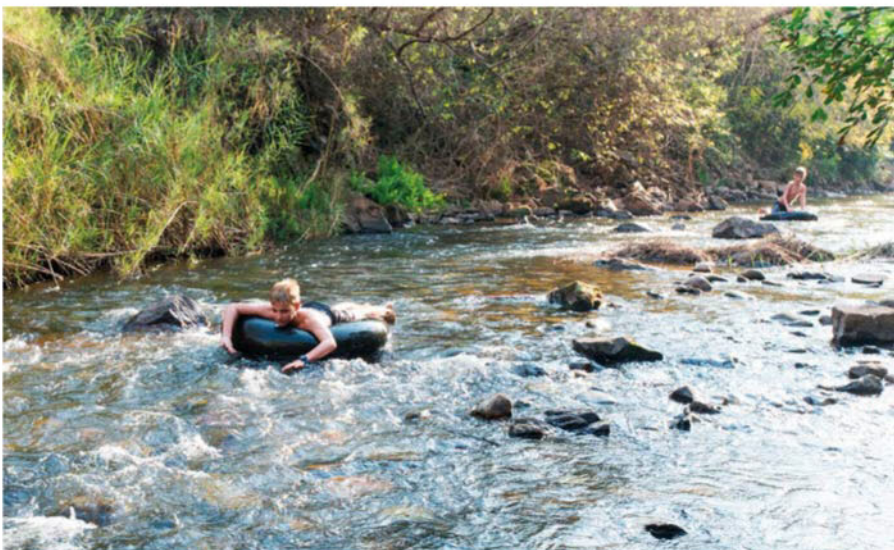
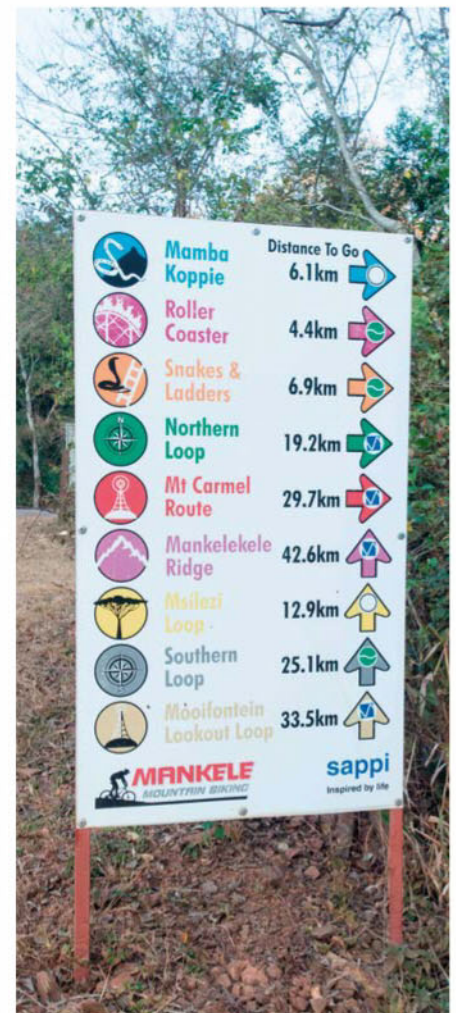


TRAIL RATED (main). There are plenty of bike trails that cater to beginners and pros alike.

RIVER RUN (right). A plethora of activities at Mankele will keep campers of all ages satisfied.

WATER HOLE (below). You're likely to spot a few bikes around the pool as well.





each. The bathrooms are tiled from top to bottom.

The shower cubicles are spacious and have wooden doors, and the wet and dry areas are divided by a shower curtain. You have to place your toiletries on the wall between the showers, because there isn't space in the cubicle. Inside against the wall are two hooks for clothes.

In the communal area are two hooks against the walls between the showers, a mirror above each basin, handwash and paper towels.

Saddle up

Kids and unfit cyclists can try the easy Adventure Zone, a dirt track of 2,4 km. It's perfect for those who are starting out. It's also a good spot to warm up before tackling one of the trails. Just make sure there are no kids on the track.

The mountain bike trails start at the reception office. There's a route for every fitness level. Before heading off, you have to get a red tag at the office that you have >



to put somewhere on your bike. Mankele's info and emergency number is on it in case you get lost or hurt and you have to get help. The route names, colour codes, distances and grades are on a sign post at the entrance. There are eight routes with different skill levels. The blue and pink routes are the easiest and you need a skill level of 20–30%. For the yellow, orange and red routes you need a skill level of 30–50%, and by the time you get to the green (70%), purple (80%), and black (100%) routes, you have to be in complete control of yourself and your bike.

But be warned: You need to know your own limitations before tackling a trail. The blue route might only be 5 km and is described as a beginner trail, but it's definitely not for someone who's only been cycling for a week. You need basic skills and fitness to conquer the rocks and the short but steep hills and sharp turns. If you're unfit, rather head to the Adventure Zone track or ride the 1,8 km circle around the campsite a few times.

You may feel lost if you're tackling the trails for the first time. Although they're clearly marked along the trails, the map on the signpost behind the reception office is confusing because it differs from the signs on the trails. The website does give a description and grading of the trails, but a printed map would have come in handy.

Day visitors welcome

Mankele is well equipped to accommodate day visitors, and all the facilities in the

COOL BY THE POOL (clockwise from above). You can picnic at one of many shaded braai areas around the pool. The grounds are neat and well-kept. There's a single but spacious ablution block for the entire campsite that's tiled throughout.



camp are for everyone's use. The fenced-in lapa area in the middle of the site has a pool, jungle gym and trampoline for the little ones, as well as braais with benches and tables under thatch canopies. The thatch lapa has a big-screen TV with DStv for rugby games, and there's a pool table and toilets.

If the tummies start to rumble, you can head to the Feed Zone coffee shop for breakfast (R30–R50), a sandwich (R30–R40) or ice cream (R15–R20). The Feed Zone is open daily from 7.30 am

This is what it costs

(2 adults)

Fuel (95 octane petrol) @
9 l/100 km and R12,72/l and 600 km
(there and back) **R686,88**

Toll gates (there and back) **R346**

Accommodation (2 nights) **R400**

Food (2 people) **R845**

Grand total **R2 277,88**



to 4 pm – you can also buy things like ice, wood, charcoal, fire starters, and cooldrinks here. A bag of dry wood costs R25 at the reception office.

Behind the coffee shop is an ablution building with separate male and female sections, each with three showers, five toilets, and a basin. Day visitors can braai here on the built-up braais underneath the thorn trees.

Other adventures

If cycling isn't your thing, there are other adventure activities. Next to the river, below the bush stands, is an obstacle course where you can leopard crawl, swing on ropes, and climb over hurdles. (No thanks, then I'll rather stick to cycling – Ed) You and your friends can go paintballing (R200 p.p.), and depending on the river's water level you can go river-rafting (R150 p.p.). For the adventurous there's a 275 m long foefie slide from the mountain to the campsite (R150 a turn). You can also rent a bike (R175 for a half day) if you left yours at home and the urge to cycle becomes too much.



Briefly | Mankele



Campsite Large campsite with grass and 58 power sockets.

Ablution facilities Sufficient when the campsite isn't too full over race week-ends. Clean and neat.

Price It costs R100 p.p.p.d. to camp. Day visitors pay R40 (R30 for kids under 16, free for under-2s).

Contact 078 801 0453;

mankele.co.za;

ride@mankele.co.za

Arrival and departure times They're not strict.

Road condition Tar all the way.

GPS S25.388302 E30.712562

go! Drive & Camp says The theme here isn't subtle. Bring the whole family's bikes. 



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When did the camping bug bite?

Is our love of camping genetic? Or is it something that's taught by one generation to the next? **Leon Dillman** from Pretoria looked through his family photo album to see who was bitten by the camping bug first.

He was sitting looking at his Sprite Swift the other day and started wondering why he loved camping so much. "We go camping at least five times a year when the opportunity arises," says Leon Dillman about his family holidays with his wife, Elmi, and their children, Ruben (12) and Cara-Lee (10).

"It feels like an inherent trait, and I can see it in my kids too. It's like they know

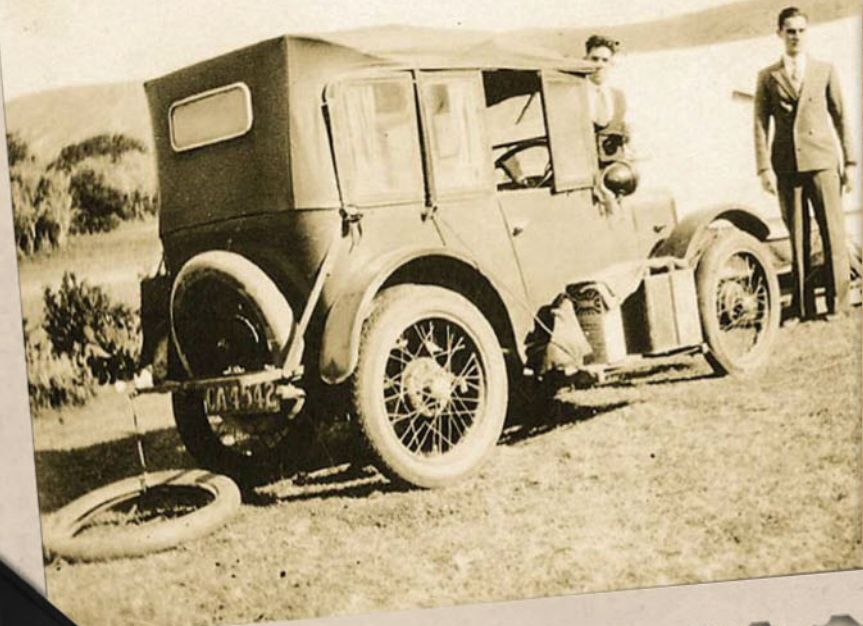
the only real holiday is one involving a tent or a caravan. There's no denying it: there's a palpable difference between a camping holiday and one where you stay in a chalet, especially if you're traveling with children. With camping there's just so much for them to do – you almost never see them. But when you're in a chalet, it's up to you to entertain them.

"I believe the children of anyone who as a child experienced the joys of camping will always want to camp. Maybe it's genetic, or maybe it's something you teach to your descendants.

"With this in mind, I started going through our family photos to try and find out when exactly the Dillmans started camping."

1928

The first photo of a Dillman family camping experience that I managed to find was when my grandfather Wilhelm Albertus Dillman camped with a tent somewhere in 1928. He's the guy on the right and I have no idea who the man standing next to him is. And where he camped I'll never know. I assume, though, that he enjoyed it, because shortly after that trip he started planning to camp with a caravan.



1936

Grandpa built his first caravan in 1936. He got his hands on the plans of an American caravan, jumped in, and built that thing from start to finish. He towed his caravan with a 1934 Chevrolet. I suspect it might have been one of the first caravans in the country. Or at least one of the first self-built caravans in South Africa. I think it looks really smart, particularly for that time. That's Ouma Dillman sitting on the car.



To Yzerfontein

My grandfather and family lived in the Cape at the time and camped mainly in places like Yzerfontein, where this photo was taken. In those days people didn't drive that far with their caravans. I doubt even my grandfather would have driven as far as Stilbaai. Remember, there weren't things like caravan fridges and suchlike. Back then it was probably very strange and much more of an adjustment to holiday in a caravan than what it is now. Today we camp with homes-on-wheels, but in those days it was probably more like beds-on-wheels.



The whole family

I'm not exactly sure who's in this photo. On the left is my dad's brother, Francois. The blond boy in the woman's arms is my dad, Hercules, and the rest are probably aunts and cousins.



The brothers and their best friends

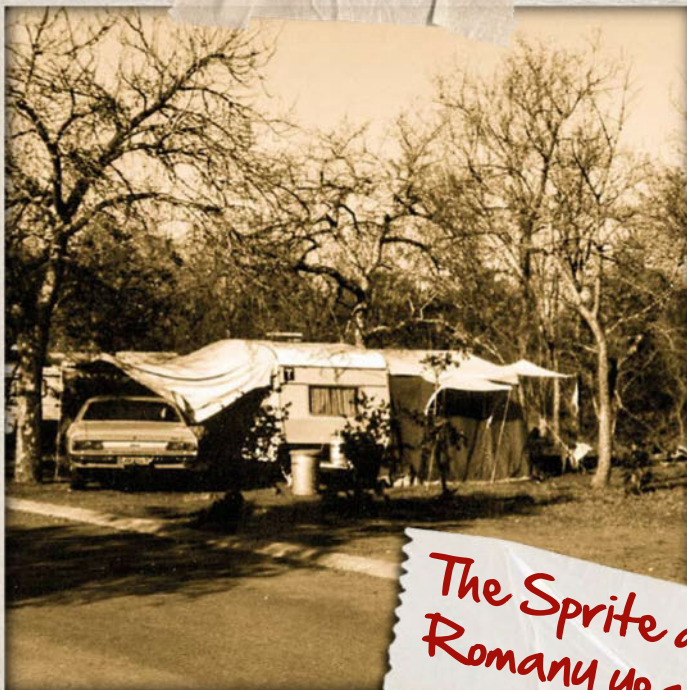


The family moved to Prins Albert, and the big caravan had pride of place in the yard. Here's my dad and his brother Francois posing with the dogs in front of the caravan.



1945

About 10 years later the self-built caravan was replaced with this bigger caravan. Unfortunately my dad can't remember what kind of caravan it was and I also haven't been able to pinpoint the manufacturer. My dad says that they really explored the world properly with this caravan.



*The Sprite and
Romany years*

My grandfather's love of camping also spilled over to my dad. From before I was born to last year, my parents camped with their Gypsy Romany. We pulled off in Stilbaai every December and camped there for almost the whole month, and in the winter we headed up to Die Eiland.

The December holidays must have been heaven for my loving parents because both my brothers and I were born in September... exactly nine months later. On this photo we camped at Die Eiland in 1982.

That was my dad's first Sprite. We were a little embarrassed by it because my dad painted it the same shade of brown as the Valiant with which he towed it. Doesn't matter how uniquely the caravan was painted, those holidays were perfect with loads of memories and a fun scandal or two.

My dad is now 78 and reckons he's too old to camp. But my brothers Konrad and Werner and I continue the tradition. We are all avid campers.

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To Mozambique!

Mozambique is a dream destination, even though there are people who believe it's dangerous and that you'll struggle to find basic necessities. It's not nearly that bad, says Lambert Badenhorst of Mooketsi in Limpopo.

Once you've buried your toes in the snow-white sand, swam in the warm waters of the Indian Ocean, enjoyed freshly caught fish and crayfish, and washed it down with an ice-cold Laurentina Preta, you won't ever want to leave enchanting Mozambique. My wife, Mardene, our kids Lané (15), Du Toit (9) and Nuelle (5) and I had been here once before, but with our last visit, in July this year, we camped in our Jurgens Xplorer for the first time. It was an incredible experience.

Where did you camp?

We stayed at Morrungulo Beach Resort, 150 km north of Imhambahne, for 15 nights. It's about 650 km from the Giriyondo border post. Here you camp in the shade of lush trees next to a long, white beach and clear-blue sea. James and Barbara Nelson own the resort and make sure you relax and have everything you need. I can honestly say you won't want for anything. You camp on grass and there are more than enough power sockets for you appliances. The ablution facilities are superb and you have a strong stream of hot water.

What vehicle did you use to tow?

We towed with my Volkswagen Amarok. It only has a rear diff lock, but it's more than enough. In fact, you can reach any well-known resort in Mozambique with a Toyota Tazz, although you will at some stage encounter some sand or even a bad dirt road. Most of the time it's in the



resort you're staying at. In my opinion a diff lock is adequate.

What preparations did you make for your trip?

Although we travelled on our own this time, I can highly recommend that prospective visitors join the Facebook group DriveMoz. Here you get advice on travel documents and other essential information, and you can find other travellers who want to drive in convoy with you. It makes things a lot easier.

What are the road conditions like?

Most of the roads to destinations like Xai-Xai, Bilene, Guinjata, Inhambane and Morrungulu are in good condition, but

don't be surprised if you encounter a pothole or three. Traffic officials wear white shirts. Be friendly and if you can, greet them in Portuguese if you're stopped. I've been pulled over many times and have never been treated aggressively. Mozambique has a lot of pedestrians. Be very careful, keep to the speed limit (it's never more than 100 km/h) and try not to travel at night.

What about food and fuel?

You're allowed to take a little bit of meat and provisions, but every town has a shop that sells fresh bread, dairy, and fresh produce. There are also well-known retailers like Shoprite and they're a lot cheaper than in South Africa. Almost every town has a filling station where you can pay with your bank card. Be on the lookout for Petromac, which (mostly) has clean toilets. Remember, you won't find 50 ppm diesel in Mozambique.



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Done and Duster

How do you make a vehicle that's already good (and popular) even better?
You give it a proper gearbox, of course.

Text and photos **Leon Botha**

Renault's Duster hasn't been in the country that long, but since its entry into the market in 2013, more than seven of them are sold every day. The sales have surpassed 12 000, and it seems as if every third car on the road is a Duster.

Its popularity can be chalked up to a number of reasons: It's affordable for a new car, it's a compact yet

comfortable car perfect for a family, and then of course it also performs well when you hitch a caravan or trailer to it. The 1,5 l diesel engine's 240 Nm torque is more than enough to tow a vehicle with far more than its tare weight (that's if it was legal of course).

Now Renault has expanded the range by introducing the Duster's first automatic variant. Not only do buyers now have more options, but the EDC automatic transmission is the transmission of the future, in

more ways than one. Renault also gave this model's diesel engine a bit more oomph and pushed the torque up to 250 Nm.

In high gear

From a towing perspective, double cab bakkies and utility vehicles have taken over the market, and on closer inspection you'll notice that most of these vehicles have diesel engines. The Duster fits perfectly into the smaller utility vehicle segment. Three of the five models have diesel engines and their

prices also don't differ vastly. The cheapest diesel model costs R280 000, the new automatic model is R20 000 more, and for another R5 000 you'll get behind the wheel of the 4x4 model.

Besides the decent price and engine, the automatic transmission isn't just any old transmission. The EDC stands for "efficient dual clutch" – the type of transmission commonly used by manufacturers such as Volkswagen, which calls its version a DSG. This transmission



RENAULT DUSTER 1.5 DCI 4X2 EDC DYNAMIQUE



is known for seamless shifting between gears without having to compromise on torque. It's therefore ideal for towing and even more economical than a manual model.

It's odd that manufacturers don't all throw their weight behind this type of transmission, because you still see conventional automatic gearboxes in new and

even more expensive vehicles. The dual-clutch transmission in essence isn't a pure automatic gearbox but rather an automated transmission. It's basically two gearboxes in one, with a clutch plate that makes the gear changes in a fraction of a second. The one clutch works on the uneven gear numbers (1, 3 and 5) and the second one on the rest (including reverse).

The lighter side

The Duster is not a heavy-weight and also not intended to tow heavy trailers.

Besides the 4x4 model that has a towing capacity of 1,5 t, the rest can tow up to 1,2 t. If you look at the tare weight, the caravan or trailer's gross vehicle mass (GVM) is not allowed to exceed 1 136–1 224 kg (depending on the model). With the automatic model it's 1 224 kg, which means there are only a handful of caravans you can choose from. You can, for example, tow only one of Jurgens' range of seven road caravan if you adhere to Renault's 1,2 t limit, and that's the Sprite Sprint with a recorded GVM of 1 110 kg.

You could also tow the heavier Sprite Swing (with a GVM of 1 240 kg), because empty it weighs 1 016 kg, but its GVM is

16 kg heavier than the Duster's tare weight, and the authorities don't allow that.

The Kilber-Startrek tow bar (which is on our test vehicle) ironically enough is restricted to a tow load of 1,5 t, but the allowed vertical weight on the ball (the caravan's nose weight) is fixed at a measly 45 kg – among the lightest on the market. That limits you, because Renault's own limit for the nose weight is 75 kg. Looking at the Sprite again, it's highly unlikely that you'll be able to pack the caravan in such a way that the nose weight won't exceed 45 kg without negatively impacting the caravans' road-holding ability.

The Duster with this type of tow bar is therefore better suited to smaller caravans (like the tear-drop type, smaller camping trailers, as well as fibreglass trailers built by companies like Sherpa Leisure). The nose weight of the Sherpa Tiny, which we used for this tow test, is 48 kg (that includes the Sherpa's spare wheel in the back and not in the nosecone). >



**ALL THE RIGHT BUTTONS.**

The button on the end of the wiper stalk is for cruise control. The large digital clock display on the reverse camera screen is a nice touch. The parking sensors can be toggled on or off.

**EDC GEARBOX****What does the inside look like?**

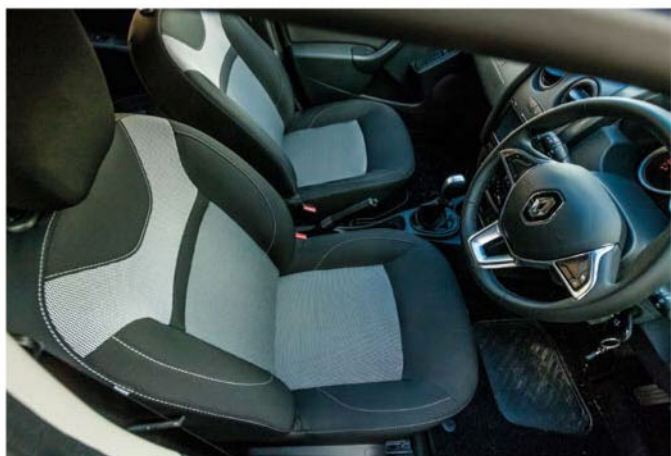
For this class of vehicle, a rear-view camera is a luxury. The screen is an impressive 15 cm wide and is located in the centre console, in front of the gear lever. Unfortunately the camera's lens isn't in the middle of the back door. It's above the number plate above the tow bar but offset to the right by 22 cm. That means the image of the tow bar on the rear-view screen is to the left – on the first third-line. So if you're using only the screen to reverse towards a caravan or trailer, it requires practice because the images makes it appear as if you're reversing askew.

Many vehicles in this class have parking sensors that sound an alarm if there's an obstacle in its

path. With some cars you can't even switch the alarm off and in others you can, but it deactivates when you switch the vehicle on and off. The Duster's stays off until you switch it on again.

Another luxury is the height-adjustable headlights. It enables you to lower the angle if you're towing or even if you have passengers and luggage in the car. The knob is to the right of the driver, closer to the bottom of the panel. If you want to see what angle you've set it to, you have to get out of the car, and judging by how difficult it is to turn the knob, it seems like a complicated procedure.

The lever that opens the bonnet is below the beam-angle knob. The bonnet is easy to lift and is propped up by gas struts.



ON POINT Attractive cloth seats come fitted as standard on the Duster but the tow bar is a Renault-approved aftermarket accessory.



Pieter Crous
has been towing his whole life – this is what he thinks of the Duster.

Pieter says:

“The Duster is neat on the inside, but very plain. The driver seat height can be adjusted, but not when you’re sitting on it – you have to get out to do it. The settings are limited and I struggled to get comfortable.

You have to be ready to really hit the brakes, especially if it’s your first time behind the wheel. Initially you don’t brake hard enough to bring the Duster to a complete standstill, but you do get used to it. The steering wheel is small – almost like a race car’s.

I like it! And the bottom is flattened to create more leg room and it’s nice and thick for a strong grip. One thing though: I would have preferred it closer to my body – with my long legs it’s impossible to sit any closer to it.

Unfortunately the door handles are in the way of the controls for the electric windows.

If you look at the dashboard, I miss the engine’s temperature gauge. I prefer to be able to see the temperature.

The 250 Nm torque for the 1,5 l engine is good and the car tows fine, even though the caravan or trailer is lighter than it’s towing capacity. The engine sounds a bit gruff compared to today’s quieter diesel engines. The most comfortable towing speed is 100–110 km/h. At 100 km/h the revs are at 2000 rpm in sixth, and goes up with 400 rpm if you accelerate to 120 km/h.

It’s not a bumpy ride because the Duster has a soft suspension. It handles well and there’s no sign of body roll. And, of course, the transmission totally takes the cake. >

Before you open your wallet

According to the specs

Fuel Diesel

Engine 1 461 ℓ

Cylinders 4 in-line

Power 80 kW @ 4 000 rpm

Torque 250 Nm @ 1 750 rpm

Transmission 6-speed (automatic)

Drive chain Front wheel

Tare 1 224 kg

GVM 1 818 kg

GCM 3 018 kg

Load capacity 550 kg

Wading depth 350 mm

Towing ability for trailer with overrun-

brakes Up to 1 200 kg (612 kg for a trailer without brakes)

Measurements 4 315 mm (l); 1 882 mm (w); 1 634 mm (h)

Wheelbase 2 673 mm

Track width 1 560 mm (in front); 1 567 mm (rear)

Ground clearance 205 mm

Fuel tank 50 ℓ

Price (new) From R299 900

Price (secondhand) The automatic Duster is brand new – we couldn't find any second-hand models yet.

Fast facts



The tow bar This does not come as standard. The Kilber-Startrek tow bar on the test vehicle costs R6 836 extra (R1 573

labour included). It's removable if you want to store it away or if you need to park your car in a tiny space and you need the extra 16 cm. The ball is 48 cm above the ground and you can lift it by 6 cm. You can fit a drop plate if you need to go lower or higher.



Suspension McPhersons in front and flexible axle with coil springs in the rear. The tail dropped 2,5 cm with the Sherpa's nose weight of 48 kg.



What does the scale say? 1 619 kg with two people in the car, a full tank of fuel, and the Sherpa's nose weight on the tow bar. The gross combination mass was 779 kg short of the allowed 3 018 kg.



Interior With the seats adjusted quite high, a six-foot driver has a good four fingers above his or her head, but your left ankle presses uncomfortably against the panel. On the back seat a six-footer has three fingers above his or her head and in front of the knees. For a small utility vehicle the boot is roomy: it's 96 cm deep and runs all the way to the back of the back seats, at its narrowest its 1 m and 52 cm if you factor in the cover that fits over the boot.



Speed Driving at a 100 km/h the speedometer reads 4 km/h faster than the 96 km/h indicated by a GPS.



Fuel consumption The 7,4 ℓ/100 km (13,5 km/ℓ) will make a tower smile

from ear to ear. It costs R615 to fill up the Duster (we paid R12,29/ℓ at the time of the test). With this you can tow comfortably from Pretoria to Durban, since the distance is 675 km. In city traffic (with a caravan or trailer) the consumption is around 5,5 ℓ/100 km (18 ℓ/km) – you'll struggle to do any better than this. Compared to the 4x4 model that we tested a two years ago (with the same engine), the 4x4 was 30% heavier on fuel, but the caravan we towed was also three times heavier. Without something hitched to it, the automatic model is 20% lighter in city traffic than the 4x4.



Finishes Mainly dark grey plastic panels that creates the impression that it's solid and sturdy; the seats are covered in neat fabric.



Extras Metallic paint R2 500 and leather seats R10 000.



Other models

1.6 Expression 4x2 R239 900;

1.6 Dynamique 4x2 R259 900;

1.5 dCi Dynamique 4x2 R279 900;

1.5 dCi Dynamique 4x4 R304 900

go! Drive & Camp says Renault limits the Duster's towing speed to 80 km/h and the tyres must also be 0.2 bar firmer than usual.

The test

Distance 156 km

Top speed 120 km/h

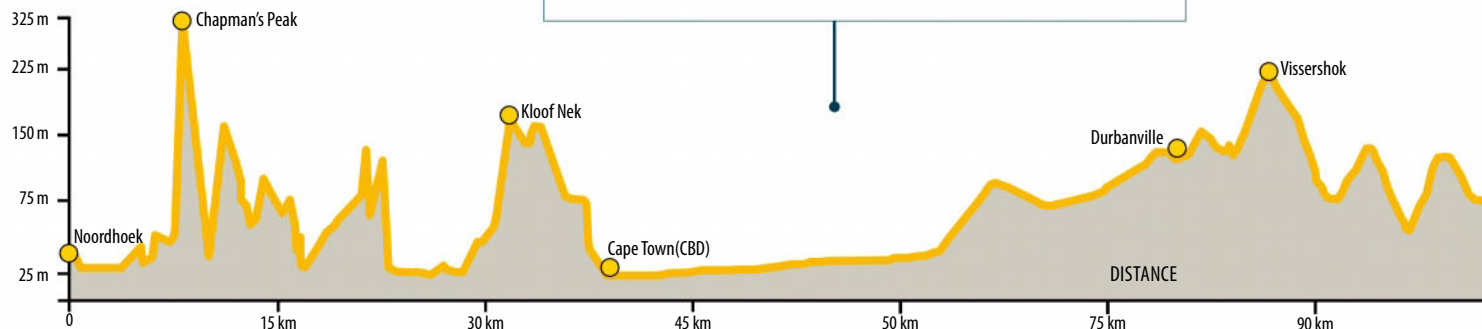
Average speed (stops included) 29,7 km/h (highways, back roads and built-up areas).

Total driving time 5 hours 13 minutes.

Weather 12 °C, from early-morning drizzle to sunny later in the day, and a south-southeasterly wind of 23 km/h.

TOW PROFILE

Elevation





What's on the tow bar

Make Sherpa

Model Tiny

Year model 2015

GVM 750 kg (overrun brakes)

Loaded weight on the axle

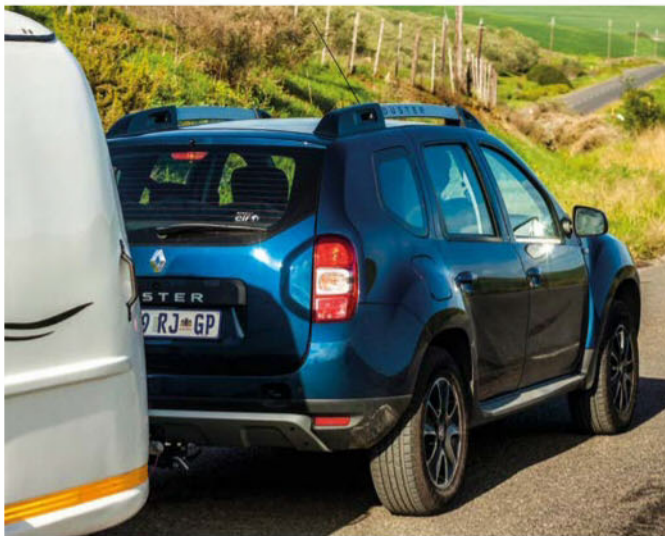
during testing 620 kg (weighed hitched to the Duster)

Nose weight 48 kg

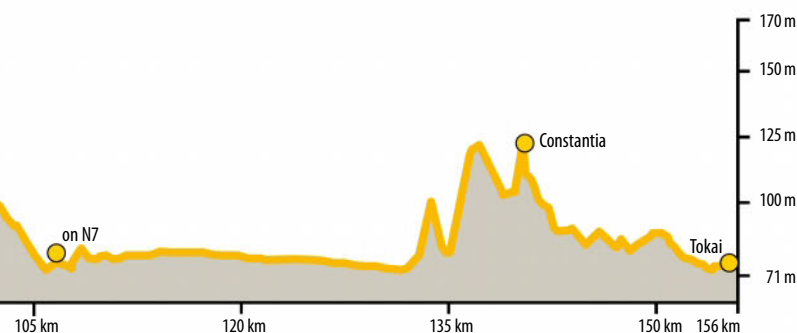
go! Drive & Camp borrowed the Sherpa Tiny from Coast & Country Leisure. Phone Mike Schacht on

082 822 5882 if you want to have a closer look at the Sherpa.

candcleisure.co.za



"FRUGAL" IS MY MIDDLE NAME. Thanks to its excellent fuel economy, it's always a pleasure to get behind the wheel.



From the competitors
(with an automatic transmission)



Ford EcoSport 1.5 Titanium PowerShift
R312 900

138 Nm



Suzuki Vitara 1.6 GL+
R325 900

151 Nm



Opel Mokka X Enjoy 1.4
R429 548

200 Nm

Square away



BATELEUR OFF-ROAD CARAVAN



Anchor it

Because the Bateleur is so basic, it doesn't require jack corner steadies, but on every corner there is a round corner steady that you lower and then tighten when it reaches the ground, ensuring the trailer will be rock steady. Use the jockey wheel's handle and adjust the height of the coupler until the trailer is level.

By the way, there's a small spirit level on the coupler where you can see when the trailer is level as you turn the handle.

As soon as the trailer is in line, you lower the nose by about 5 cm, loosen the two rear corner steadies, and lower them to the ground. Tighten them and lift the nose about 2–3 cm higher than the spirit level.

Now lower the front corner steadies and tighten them, then lastly turn the jockey wheel to the original level. Depending on how firm the ground is beneath the trailer, it should rest firmly on the corner steadies.

If you're looking for a lightweight yet sturdy off-road caravan for two, the Bateleur is for you.

Text and photos **Leon Botha**

George native Hannes Uys is known for the off-road trailers he builds in his home town, but now he has launched his first off-road caravan.

The new caravan has the same genes as his trailers, but the chassis and framework are made of steel and clad with aluminium sheets.

The Bateleur off-road caravan can hardly be any simpler. It's really nothing more than a square box on wheels. But Hannes outdid himself with the design.

A double bed folds out of the right-hand side panel, and the outside kitchen covers the entire left-hand side. On the A-frame is a massive nosecone, and as with so many new caravans, the door is at the back.

We hitched the Bateleur and travelled for 1 500 km through the Western Cape, camping along the way. >





Bed, bath and beyond

Both side panels – left and right – create a big door that folds flat and forms the kitchen and the sleeping area respectively. Hannes uses refrigerated truck lock mechanisms on the doors. It's one of the best ways to keep an off-road trailer's doors dust- and waterproof.

Before folding out the bed, you have to thread the loose fly sheet in to the aluminium extrusion near the roof and then swing the bed base 90 degrees down to the ground (once the bed is folded out you won't be able to reach). Besides the fact that the base of the bed hangs on two 5 mm stainless steel cables, there's a loose adjustable leg for both the two corners to make things a bit sturdier. A springloaded

steel rod fits onto each edge and the middle ridge of the bed. This stretches the fly sheet as well as the canvas over the bed.

The folded-down kitchen counter is extra large for a caravan of this size (193 x 61 cm). Even though the two-plate stove is mounted onto the right-hand side, there's still more than enough space to operate. The shiny counter doesn't have raised edges and is easy to clean.

The space for the cutlery, crockery and food is behind the counter in the body of the caravan. The camping fridge is far left and the drawers and shelves take up the rest of the space. The space for the fridge (on a sliding frame)



is big enough for a 40–50 l model, and the four drawers in the middle are big enough for larger pots and pans. Far right, behind the stove, is an open shelf or two for fresh fruit, as well as a socket for your kettle or toaster.

The drawers and sliding frame open up over the work surface, which means you have to take out what you need before you start cooking or you'll find yourself rummaging through the drawers with flour-covered hands in search of a rolling pin.

Big nose

Even though the design and layout of off-road caravans are pretty standard, you often do see different nosecones. One of the more practical inventions is a nosecone on the A-frame with a door on either side.

Hannes prefers the chest type, and while the body of the trailer is covered in aluminium sheets, the entire nosecone is made of fibreglass. It's fitted onto an A-frame and has a cover that you can lift up. That's also where you can see storage

space is very important to Hannes. The nosecone is more than big enough for a caravan of this size, and it's just what you need for all the loose camping goodies.

On the longest side the measurements are 110 x 68 cm, and there's space for everything from loose pegs and straps to a ground sheet and axe.

The electrical socket for a cord from the Bateleur's to the campsite's socket is mounted on the left-hand side at the nosecone's lid.



Front door at the back

The Bateleur is small for an off-road caravan, but it has one of the biggest doors you'll find on a trailer this size (68 cm wide). A step that's slightly wider than the door folds down so the door can open.

You'll find this type of step in some other caravans, but it's so handy and practical, it's difficult to understand why it's not more common.

Because the step folds up over the door it also gives you extra peace of mind because this design ensures there's no chance of the door opening while you're driving.

There's a jerry can on both sides of the door, and the gas bottle is underneath the left



can. The door has a small hole for a hook to keep it open, in case the wind blows.

When you open the door you see another one of Hannes's



clever tricks: On the inside of the door there's a large canvas bag with a zip – almost like those garment bags business people use to transport their suits.



If you need to create your own shade around the trailer, a 270-degree awning folds out from the kitchen side to the back door.

>



The interior

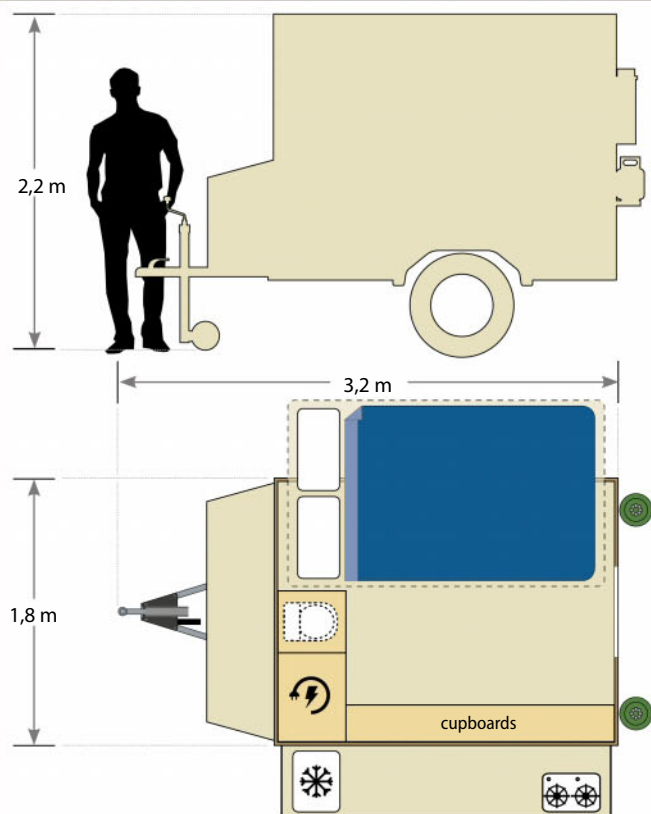
Inside, from the door to the nose, is an open space with more than enough room for two people. This space comes in handy when you need to store bulky items while you're towing. We easily fit in three mountain bikes and a 3 x 3 m dome tent.

Because the upright panels of the body are quite high (2,2 m), the pop-up roof lifts only 37 cm, leaving enough space to stand upright inside. The body is relatively high, so it does catch a significant amount of wind if the towing vehicle is low. At the bottom of the left-hand side panel are canvas bags to put your things, and above that is space for your clothes – this is behind two canvas flaps that zip up.

At the bottom end, next to the nose, are more cupboards with canvas flaps. The right one is big enough for a cassette toilet. The top of the cupboard

is also the bedside table. The battery with its charger is in the top cupboard, and on top is more storage space for a blanket or two if you need it at night. There is also a double 220 V socket next to the cupboard if you want to use a cellphone charger or hair dryer in the trailer.

You lie down the length of the trailer on the double bed (195 x 135 cm), which means one person sleeps next to the floor area and the other on the farthest side of the bed. That can be a nuisance if that person needs to get up first. The bed (with the mattress) is a comfortable height above the ground (48 cm) if you want to sit on it and do something like, for example, tie your shoelaces. Beneath the edge of the mattress, right against the floor space, is another small cupboard that you can use to pack things.



The technical stuff

Length 3,2 m

Width 1,8 m

Height 2,2 m

Ridge height inside 1,97 m

Nose weight 70 kg

Tare weight 700 kg

Load-carrying capacity
800 kg

GVM 1 500 kg

Price R190 000 (fully equipped)



Plus

- Clever and practical design with loads of storage space.
- The kitchen counter is huge.
- Same with the massive nosecone.
- The step is a winner.
- The space behind the door where you can hang your clothes deserves a medal.



Minus

- The corner steadies could be of the jack variety.
- One of the sleepers has to climb over the other when getting in and out of bed.

- The trailer stands high above the ground and catches quite a bit of wind when you're towing.
- It's just big enough for two.

go! Drive & Camp says

The Bateleur has an LED light inside against the roof, but nothing outside. There are two Hella sockets at the door where you can plug in an LED light with a long cord.

go! Drive & Camp borrowed the Bateleur from the manufacturer. 📸

Dealership

Bateleur is a one-man operation in George.

Contact 082 804 5945;

sonja.hansen8@gmail.com





ENJOY THE JOURNEY WITH CAMP MASTER

WILDERNESS 310 6 FT TRAILER

- 3070 (L) x 1740 (W) x 1540 (H) mm
- Tare Mass: 360 kg
- Pay-Load: 390 kg
- GVM: 750 kg
- Includes Tent

makro
Selected stores



ROADSTER 200 5 FT TRAILER

2400 (L) x 1380 (W) x 1050 (H) mm
Tare Mass: 160kg
Pay-Load: 290kg
GVM: 450kg

**same
makro**



ROADSTER 500 6 FT TRAILER

2965 (L) x 1380 (W) x 1545 (H) mm
Tare Mass: 220kg
Pay-Load: 430kg
GVM: 650kg

makro



TOWN AND COUNTRY 210 6 FT TRAILER

2965 (L) x 1545 (W) x 1200 (H)mm
Tare Mass: 220 kg
Pay-Load: 430 kg
GVM: 650 kg

makro



TOWN AND COUNTRY 300 6 FT TRAILER

3220 (L) x 1600 (W) x 1300 (H) mm
Tare Mass: 260 kg
Pay-Load: 440kg
GVM: 700kg

makro



ELITE 1150

2400 (L) x 1380 (W) x 1050 (H) mm
Pay-load: 290 kg
GVM: 450 kg

Life Long Non-Service Bearings

makro



APEX 500

2965 (L) x 1545 (W) x 1050 (H) mm
Pay-Load: 430 kg
GVM: 650 kg

LED combination rear lights
Integrated Roof Rack
Life Long Non-Service Bearings

makro



Tents
Gazebos



Sleeping bags
Mattresses
Camp beds



Chairs
Cupboards
Tables



Cooler boxes
Cooler bags
Thermo coolers



Charcoal
Briquettes
Braais
Firelighters



Accessories



Lighting

A chicken in every pot.

Crispy outside and juicy inside... this is how you cook chicken.



SUNDAY LUNCH

For the potjie

Make this juicy chicken in a flat-bottom potjie with a few coals on top of the lid.

Ingredients

(enough for 6)

- 1 large onion
- 4 carrots
- 3 celery ribbons
- 5 large garlic cloves
- 1 whole chicken of 2,5 kg
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon dried oreganum
- Salt and ground black pepper to taste
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 clementines or naartjies ("soft citrus")

Here's how

1 Cut the onion, celery and garlic in large pieces and stuff the chicken with as much of this as possible. Rub the chicken with the mustard, oreganum, salt and pepper, and butter.

2 Put the remaining vegetables at the bottom of a flat-bottom potjie and place the chicken on top.

3 Place the pot over medium coals – it should be slightly cooler than what you normally use to braai chicken, because you want to cook it slowly and you don't want to burn the veggies. If you can keep your hand over the coals for 10 seconds, it's the right temperature. Put a few embers on the potjie's lid.

4 Leave the potjie for 3–4 hours. You can check after 2 hours and add some coals if necessary. The chicken should be falling off the bone. Squeeze the citrus juice into the potjie and dish up.

go! Drive & Camp says You can bake the chicken the same way in the oven or in a kettle braai at 115 °C (also in a flat-bottom potjie).

CHICKEN POPPERS

Fiery starter

You know chilli poppers – those chillies filled with cheese and covered in pastry. Here we wrap a strip of chicken breast and bacon around the stuffed chilli and braai it over the coals. It's healthier and tastier.

Ingredients

(enough for 10)

- 10 chicken fillets
- 10 fresh jalapeño chillies
- ½ cup cream cheese
- 1 cup grated cheddar cheese
- 20 strips streaky bacon
- 1 cup sweet and smoky braai sauce (we used Woolies')

Here's how

1 Put the chicken fillets between two layers of cling film and flatten it with a meat mallet or the edge of a side plate.

2 Halve the chillies lengthwise and scrape out the seeds. Mix together the cream cheese and the cheddar and fill the halved chillies with the mixture. Put the halves together. (If the chicken strips are too small you can use the chilli halves just like that.)

3 Wrap a piece of chicken around each filled chilli and then wrap two bacon strips around the chicken to hold everything together. Use toothpicks if necessary.

4 Braai the poppers for 20 minutes over medium coals until cooked through – turning every 5 minutes. Paint the poppers with the braai sauce during the last 5 minutes and allow to caramelise. Just keep an eye on things because the sauce tends to char quickly.

go! Drive & Camp says You can make your own chicken fillets by deboning and butterflying five breasts. Then halve it lengthwise.

>





PAPRIKA CHICKEN WINGS

Wonderful wings

These chicken wings are braai'd first and then slathered in sticky sauce to make it even tastier.

Ingredients

(enough for 6)

- 1,5 kg chicken wings
- 3 tablespoons dark brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons chilli powder
- 2 teaspoons paprika
- 1 teaspoon mustard powder
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 3 tablespoons apricot jam
- 2 tablespoons soya sauce
- juice of ½ a lemon

Here's how

1 Dry the wings with paper towels. Mix together the sugar,

chilli powder, paprika, mustard, pepper and salt. Rub half of the mixture over the chicken and put the rest aside.

2 Braai the wings over medium coals for about 15 minutes (you should be able to keep your hand over the coals for 10 seconds). Sprinkle the rest of the spice mixture over the chicken. Turn the wings every now and again until the skin is crisp and golden brown.

3 Mix together the jam, soya sauce and lemon juice in a plate. Dip the wings one by one into the sauce and then braai it for another 5 minutes. Serve right away.

go! Drive & Camp says This spice mix is also delicious with other chicken pieces, especially thighs. Adjust your braaiing time accordingly.

PORTUGUESE SPATCHCOCK AND TOAST

For the fire

Take this chicken off the braai and leave it to rest on top of braai'd bread... and then enjoy the chicken together with the sauce-soaked bread.

Ingredients

(enough for 6)

- 1 whole chicken of 2,5 kg
- 2 teaspoons chilli flakes
- 2 tablespoons smoked paprika
- 6 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 tablespoon coarse salt
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- ¼ cup red wine vinegar
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- ½ cup olive oil
- 1 whole sourdough loaf, sliced
- 4 lemons, cut in half
- ½ cup chopped parsley

Here's how

1 Using a pair of sharp scissors, cut the chicken down each side of the backbone. Take out the backbone and butterfly the chicken.

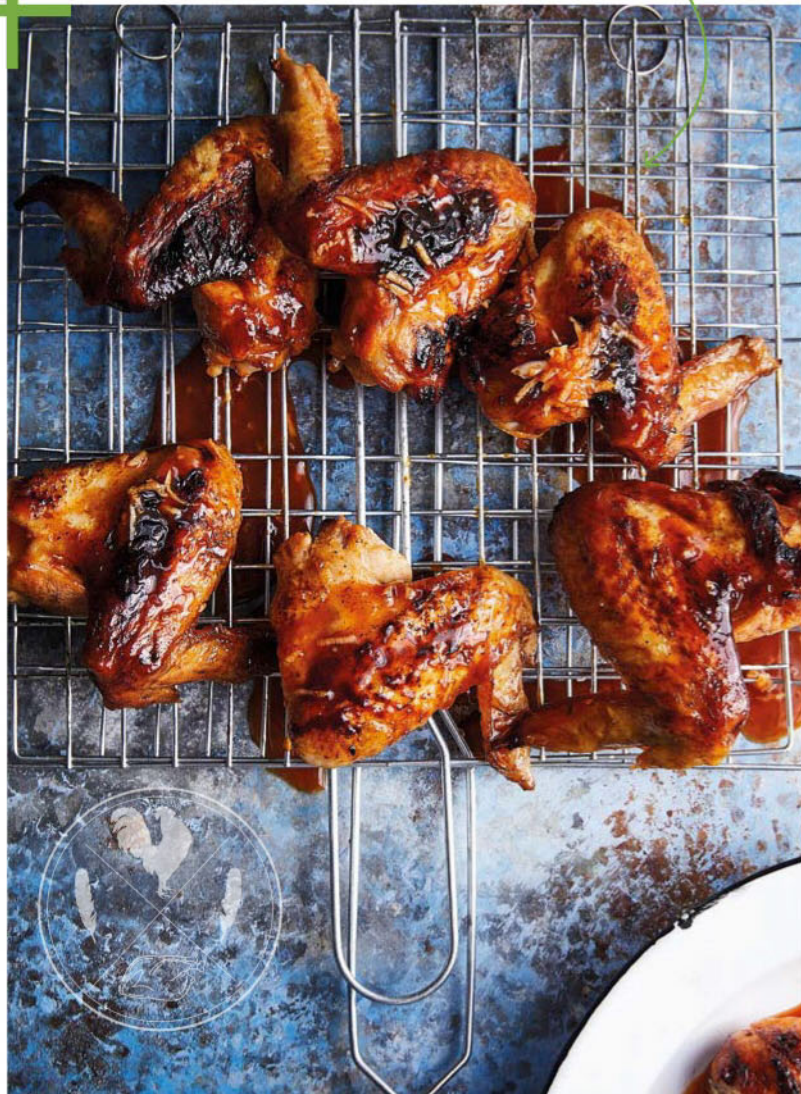
2 Mix together the chilli flakes, paprika, garlic, salt, coriander, red wine vinegar, black pepper and ¼ cup olive oil. Rub the chicken properly with half of the marinade and put the rest aside.

3 Drizzle the remaining ¼ cup olive oil over the bread slices and braai the bread on a grid until crispy. Place the bread in a single layer at the bottom of a flat dish. Braai the lemon halves with the cut side facing down until caramelised. Also put that in the dish.

4 Braai the chicken over medium coals until cooked through – about 45 minutes. Continue painting the chicken with the remaining marinade.

5 Leave the chicken to rest on top of the bread for 15 minutes, then sprinkle with the parsley. Portion the chicken and serve with the bread and a squeeze of lemon juice.

go! Drive & Camp says Keep loads of serviettes handy for this saucy affair.





PINEAPPLE SOSATIES WITH PEANUT BUTTER SAUCE

Goodness on a stick

Deboned chicken thighs make the juiciest sosaties, but it's time-consuming to do the deboning yourself. This recipe uses breasts – the marinade will ensure that it's still juicy and tasty.

Ingredients

(enough for 6)

- 1 kg chicken breasts (boneless and skinless)
- 1 tin (410 g) pineapple pieces in juice
- 4 tablespoons peanut butter (preferably chunky without added sugar)

FOR THE MARINADE

- ½ cup pineapple juice (from the tin)
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- ¼ cup soya sauce
- juice of ½ a lemon
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons sriracha sauce (or any chilli sauce of your choice)
- 1 teaspoon grated fresh garlic
- 1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger

- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- ¼ cup roasted peanuts, finely chopped

Here's how

1 Mix together all the ingredients for the marinade. Cut the chicken into 2 cm chunks and put it in a Ziploc bag together with the marinade. Leave it in the fridge overnight. You can also freeze it like this.

2 Thread the marinated chicken pieces and pineapple chunks onto the sosatie sticks.

3 Heat the rest of the marinade and let it simmer with the peanut butter in a potjie until thick. Flavour to taste with more chilli sauce, sugar or lemon juice. If the sauce becomes too thick, add water.

4 Braai the sosaties over very hot coals until golden brown and juicy. Serve with the peanut butter sauce and chopped peanuts.

go! Drive & Camp says Freeze the chicken and pineapple pieces in the marinade before you leave and make sure you pack peanut butter for your camp pantry. 🍴

HONEY-AND-BEER CHICKEN FILLETS

Easy sosaties

With this easy method you can braai juicy chicken breasts and serve on sosatie sticks without cutting it in blocks first.

Ingredients

(enough for 4)

- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, halved lengthwise
- 250 g streaky bacon

FOR THE MARINADE

- ¾ cup beer
- ¼ cup honey
- 1 teaspoon chilli flakes
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- ¼ cup soya sauce
- 2 tablespoons olive oil

Here's how

1 Mix together the ingredients for the marinade. Put the chicken and the marinade in

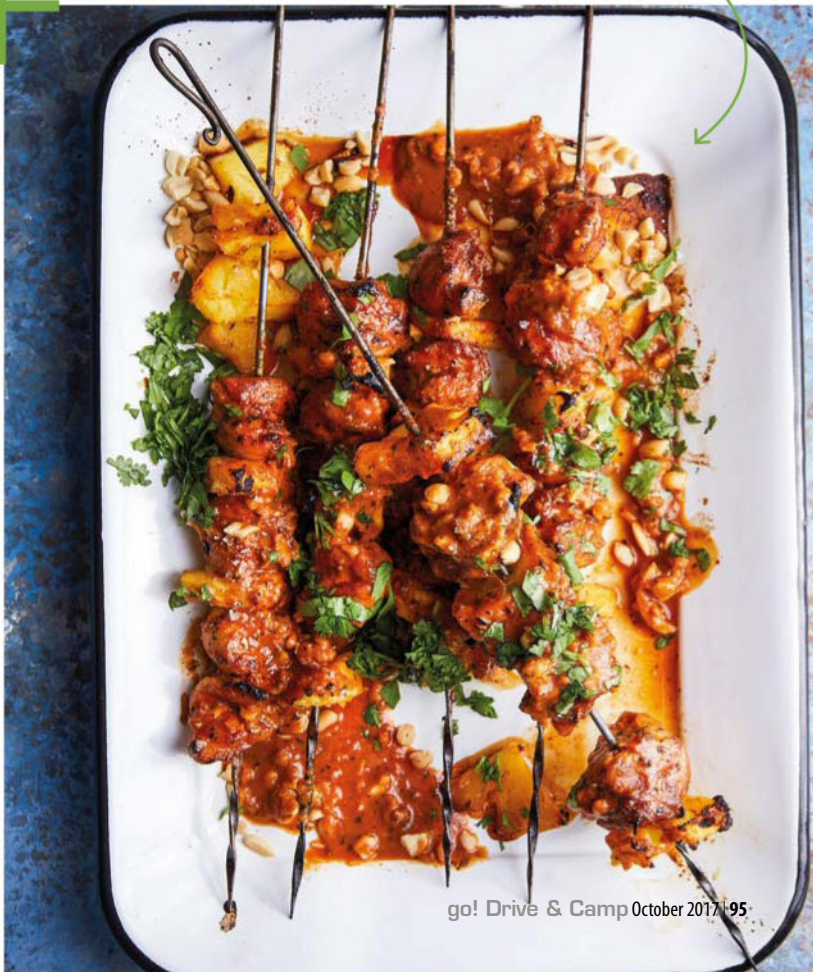
a Ziploc bag and leave in the fridge overnight.

2 Thread the chicken and bacon widthwise onto the sticks. Do it as follows: Put 4 strips of bacon and 3 pieces of chicken in turn next to each other (start and end with a piece of bacon) and secure with three sosatie sticks – one at the top, one in the middle, and one at the bottom.

3 Braai the sosaties over medium coals until cooked through, all the while painting the chicken with the marinade. Take the sosaties off the coals and put on a plate. Pull out the middle sosatie stick and cut the meat where the stick was so it makes two separate sosaties. Serve immediately.

go! Drive & Camp says

You can freeze the chicken and bacon in the marinade in a Ziploc bag.





PITCH PERFECT

Not everyone appreciates the fine art of assembling a tent in the dying light of day. For those who don't, these seven budget-friendly pop-up tents are like a dream come true.

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

Call them instant or pop-up: these tents have become all the camping rage. They're popular with casual campers on a week-end getaway as well as hardened bush veterans with calloused hands.

Let's face it: few of us enjoy putting a puzzle of poles and pegs together after a long drive getting to our destination.

We've assembled some of the more affordable, widely available options on the local market.

They're priced from just under R600 for something that can comfortably sleep a single person with luggage, to a five-sleeper for R2 400 that takes only a few minutes to set up fully on your own.



COLEMAN INSTANT DOME 5 Exoframe game

This is the only tent we tested that uses an external frame. After some initial frustration with the instructions (it's not that instant), it took us about two minutes to set up. We pushed out the folding "joints" and pulled the extendable legs out to the locking position, and that was all she wrote.

An average-sized person can almost stand upright, and even though the manufacturer claims it can sleep five, there's legitimate space inside

for four people. It features a built-in 75 D Taffeta flysheet with a WeatherTec system to keep the water out, and a 1 000D polyethylene ground sheet. With steel and fibre-glass used in its construction, it's also fairly heavy at 6 kg.

Dimensions 3 000 x 2 130 x 1 670 mm

Price R2 399 at Trappers

go! Drive & Camp says You have to extend and click certain legs into place. The frame does the rest.

HIGHLANDER UP IN 2

The festivalgoer

An ideal tent for a person without a plus-one for weekend festivities, because it's actually on the tiny side. Because you'll be going it alone, you'll be glad to hear that this is the easiest tent out of those featured here to erect.

It comes in a disc bag like most other pop-up tents, but because of its relatively small size, it's quite easy to carry and weighs just 1,5 kg. Like its name

suggests, once it's out of the bag it expands into shape in just two seconds. It takes a bit longer to tie down though.

Dimensions 2 100 x 1 200 x 950 mm

Price R659 at Camp and Climb

go! Drive & Camp says

It's ideal for when you have to make a plan for your snoring in-law and you're on a tight budget.



CAPE UNION MART THREE-PERSON POP-UP

Couple's bliss

This is one of the more spacious tents thanks to its unique shape. It uses the same materials as the Two-Person, but boasts a lot more room inside. At a squeeze, three large people could fit snugly inside.

And if you forgot to pack your other half's favourite snacks, there's plenty of room to sleep with some distance between you. This one can be

a bit intimidating to fold on your own, but the Cape Union Mart website has a nifty video that will help you get it right the first time.

Dimensions 2 700 x 1 800 x 1 100 mm

Price R1 299 at Cape Union Mart

go! Drive & Camp says It only costs a few bucks more than its smaller brother.

K-WAY KIDS POP-UP TENT

Little castle

You're going to reach the stage – if you haven't already – where the little ones also want to be independent and sleep in their own tent like the grown-ups do. And who are we to stop them?

The best thing about the K-Way Kids Pop-up is that it's so compact it can go almost anywhere and not get in your way. It can also double as a palace for your little princess

when she's playing in her own little kingdom in the safety of your home. Simply toss it up into the air and the design does the rest.

Dimensions 2 100 mm x 1 000 mm x 800 mm

Price R599 at Cape Union Mart

go! Drive & Camp says

The little ones will be occupied for hours. >





CAPE UNION MART TWO PERSON POP-UP

The Solo adventurer

At 2.6 kg in the bag, this is quite an easy one to carry. With its unique design it sets up in no time at all. And thanks to its polyethylene floor and 190T polyester roof, it's quite durable. A 1 500 mm waterhead rating also means it can keep a fair bit of rain out.

Realistically, it might get a bit tight with two people plus

camping gear, but it's ideal for an individual with lots of stuff to lug around.

Dimensions 2 400 x 1 400 x 950 mm

Price R999 at Cape Union Mart

go! Drive & Camp says

This is a respectable size for the price, not to mention convenience.

HIGHLANDER RAPID PITCH 2

Bob's your uncle

Highlander's mid-level tent costs just a little bit more than the smaller model and is arguably faster to set up. It's not a large tent, and it's best if you sleep alone – but two people can fit in a pinch.

It has 190T breathable polyester and waterproof polyurethane coating, with a fibreglass frame to keep weight low (2 kg) and portability high. It comes in a circular pack that's

just 70 x 700 mm across and 50 mm deep. A flow-through ventilation system also ensures that it doesn't get too stuffy in there.

Dimensions 2 250 x 1 200 x 1 100 mm

Price R795 at Camp and Climb

go! Drive & Camp says This one really shoots into shape the moment you let it out of the bag.



BUSHTEC KESTREL INSTANT CAMPER

No frills, no fuss

The Kestrel is an example of a simple design with maximum functionality in mind. Because it's able to withstand wind forces of up to 20 km/h and is able to set up within a minute, this one would be ideal for those going on longer trips. Minus luggage, it should be able to sleep three people in relative comfort, and it weighs in at only 4 kg when

folded up. The 190T polyester flysheet will keep most of the inclement weather out too.

Dimensions 2 400 x 1 700 x 1 200 mm

Price R1 499 at Takealot.com

go! Drive & Camp says

This tent looks like it should be able to withstand a decent storm.

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CAMPING WITH GAS

It can make your campsite as comfortable as home, but incidents of gas-related deaths have unfortunately popped up on the news radar again in recent months. We talk to an industry expert about the dos and don'ts of gas safety.

Text **Kyle Kock**

Although most of us prefer the bliss of a roaring fire when we take our much-needed camping holidays, few of us leave home without packing our trusty gas bottles.

Whether we use it to warm us up on cold winter nights or to cook our bacon and eggs on the skottel braai, gas is an integral part of camping. But, as with most things, it can be extremely dangerous if you're not careful and responsible.

In July this year, two high school buddies from Krugersdorp died tragically after they fell asleep with their gas heater still burning in their dome tent. It's instances like these that make you sit up and take notice.

We thought it would be a good idea to touch base with Kevin Robertson, CEO of the Liquefied Petroleum Gas Safety Association of South Africa, to assist us in helping you ensure that your outdoor experience doesn't turn into a disaster.



Quick and deadly

Carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning is a silent killer. In instances where carbon fuels burn efficiently, or where there is plenty of air, each carbon (C) atom bonds with two oxygen (O) atoms and forms carbon dioxide (CO₂). This poses no danger to you; however when there isn't enough oxygen available for the fuel to burn completely, a single carbon atom bonds with just one oxygen atom to form carbon monoxide.

Carbon monoxide can quickly kill a person. This is particularly evident during fires, when victims succumb to smoke inhalation. While there are other harmful chemicals that are produced during combustion, it's more often than not carbon monoxide that is the cause of death.

"Anything that combusts will release carbon monoxide," says Kevin. "Liquefied Petroleum Gas, or LPGas, is incredibly clean-burning, so the amounts of CO released is negligible. The problem comes when people use these CO-releasing fuels in enclosed spaces.

"Because the flame requires oxygen, it robs the atmosphere of that gas which a person also needs to breathe. With LPGas, however, there's a stenching agent that lets people know that gas is in the air. So it's critical that there's an open window or door for the stale air to escape and clean air to enter. The real problem is not the use of the gas, but the subsequent lack of oxygen."

Buy right

It's imperative that you buy your gas equipment from a reputable dealer. Check that the seal on the cylinder matches the branding on the cylinder. Avoid a cylinder where the shrink wrap on the cylinder valve doesn't match the branding – such as a generic wrap. These are red flags.

Also check the connection from the heater or device to the cylinder. The regulator contains a rubber seal that ensures an airtight seal. They can crack and perish, so always make sure they're in good condition.

Remember to check for leaks. Open the cylinder one and a half turns and pay close attention to where there's a joint in the system. These joints open the potential for leaks. Apply a soapy water solution to the regulator and the piping around it. If it's leaking, you'll notice further bubbling from the soapy solution.



TAKE PRECAUTION. Ideally you want to operate your gas appliance in the outdoors, where there's an ample supply of oxygen. According to the law, in a mobile unit designed for the use of occupants, such as an off-road trailer or caravan, an LPGas cylinder is to be stored in a compartment that's airtight to the inside and vented to the outside.

"We notice this problem more with the exchange of commercially branded cylinders, with a manufacturer like Afrox, for example, not the type you purchase from a national retailer, hardware store or an LPGas dealer," says Kevin. "What's happening is that the cylinders are not returned to the brand owner and are instead being illegally filled by other parties. They're not being checked and scrutinised properly to ensure that they are fit for purpose.

"Something we notice quite frequently is that LPGas cylinders are incorrectly underfilled. An underfilled cylinder means that you, the consumer, are being defrauded. Furthermore, by law, a cylinder must only be filled to 80% of its maximum capacity with the understanding that if the cylinder is exposed to extreme heat, there's

room inside the cylinder for the contents to expand.

"Generally, if the cylinder is overfilled and the contents expand past the barrier, it can lead to the cylinder being ruptured and possibly lead to a hazardous situation."

Rather safe than sorry

An odourant has been added to LPGas, and if you get a persistent whiff of that familiar spell and not just a sniff, you have a leak on your hands.

When this happens, close the cylinder valve in whichever direction the nozzle shuts – usually anti-clockwise. Move the device, be it a stove or heater, together with gas cylinder outside. Open doors and windows where possible to get fresh clean air in and eliminate any remaining fumes. >

CAMP BOFFIN

The best practice is to not use LPgas in an enclosed environment, says Kevin. But with small stoves, like on the inside of a caravan for example, you want to be extra careful. "Campers will use gas for cooking, heating and lighting. Sometimes people will have a gas lamp inside the tent or caravan. That doesn't mean that you have to have your doors and windows wide open. Just an outlet for 'dirty' air to escape and be replaced by 'clean' fresh air."

Know the symptoms

At low levels, CO poisoning can mimic flu-like symptoms such as headaches, nausea, fatigue, and shortness of breath. If you are able to go outside and your condition improves, then CO poisoning is a likely suspect.

Higher exposure can lead to more intense headaches, vomiting, impaired vision and hearing, and even fainting. At the highest levels, CO poisoning can lead to loss of consciousness, coma and, eventually, death. Bear in mind that the symptoms can rapidly develop within minutes of exposure. Just 30 minutes could be fatal.

WHAT PRECAUTIONS CAN YOU TAKE?

Inside the motorhome, tent or caravan

- Only use heaters and ovens specially designed for use in your caravan.
- Never use your gas oven as a heater.
- Check all connections for leaks before opening the gas cylinder.

In general

- Regularly check all washers and O-rings on appliances, cylinders and regulators.
- Adjust burners accordingly: There's no need for giant flames if all you're making is a pot of coffee.
- Use gas-fuelled items in well-ventilated areas only.
- Do not open the cylinder until you're ready to ignite.

go! Drive & Camp says According to the law (SANS 10087), in instances where a mobile unit is made with occupancy in mind, such as a trailer or caravan, an LPgas cylinder is only to be stored in a recess or



compartment that is airtight to the inside and vented and accessible to the outside. The law also states that the cylinder should be secured in such a way that when a force equalling that of four times its filled mass is applied to it in any direction, it should not become dislodged.

You can find a list of reputable dealers of LPgas in South Africa by visiting www.lpgas.co.za. They also provide a list of safety-approved LPgas by brand and/or type. For more info, call the **LPgas Safety Association of Southern Africa** on 011 886 9702. ☎



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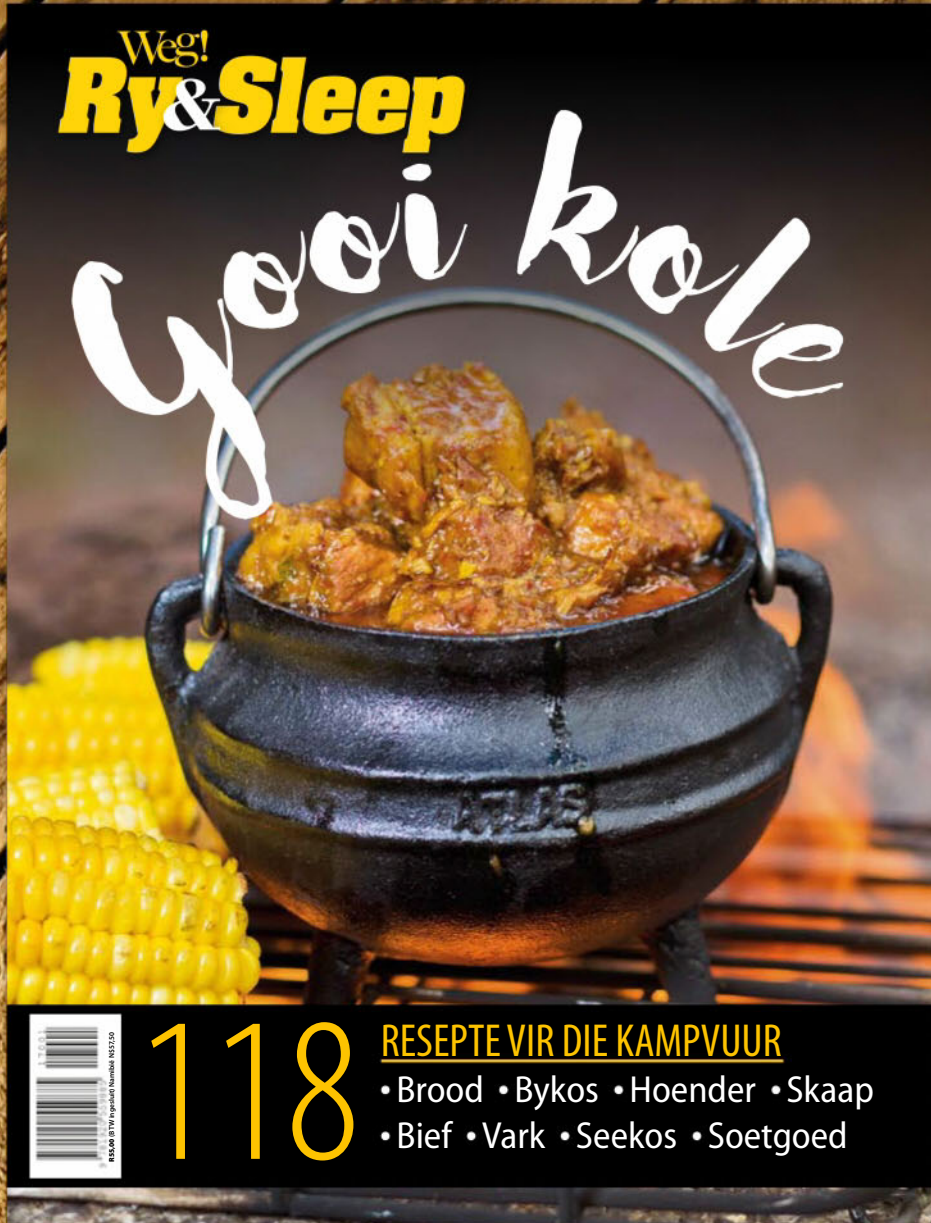
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To braai meat well is an art
that requires undivided
attention from the cook.
– C. Louis Leipoldt



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For bye for, for what?



Are you new to the off-roading scene? Does your head spin when you hear terms like low range and axle wind-up thrown around? We're here to help.

Text **Cyril Klopper** Photo **Evan Naudé** Illustrations **Owen Willoughby**

Regular family sedans are generally driven by just two of its four wheels. Sometimes it's the front pair and sometimes the rear. As you'd expect, four-wheel drive vehicles are driven in all four wheels. Why? For the same reason that it is easier to climb up a rock using both hands and feet rather than just your feet.

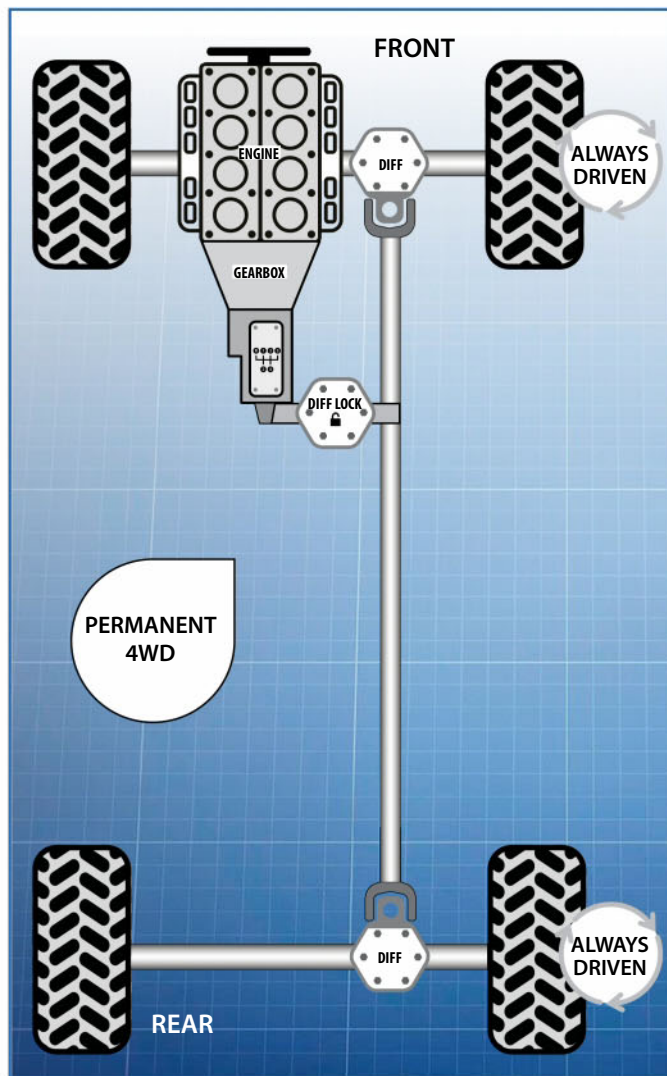
The first mechanical four-wheel-drive system was invented in 1902 by two Dutch brothers named Hendrik-Jan and Jacobus Spyker. Back then, race cars used unpaved dirt tracks, and the Spyker brothers developed four-wheel drive to improve their car's handling. It was a simple system but it enabled them to win several races. The competition took notice, and manufacturers like Mercedes-Benz immediately embraced the technology.

Nowadays there are three types of four-wheel-drive systems – actually four, but we'll get to the fourth kind later. The three systems are: permanent, part-time, and all-wheel drive.

PERMANENT FOUR-WHEEL DRIVE

The Spyker brothers' race car had permanent four-wheel drive (4WD), but how did it work? Since the basics remain unchanged in over a century, we'll use a Land Rover Defender as an example: A Defender's engine is connected to a gearbox and this gearbox is in turn connected to a centre differential. From here a short driveshaft extends forward to a second differential on the front axle. A second, longer driveshaft leads aft to a third differential on the rear axle.

Occasionally it may happen that none of the four wheels rotate at the same speed, and these three differentials prevent differences in torque to cause a phenomenon called axle wind-up, which can damage moving parts. The centre differential also allows more engine power to be transferred to the axle that



ABBREVIATIONS

- AWD** All-wheel drive
- 4WD** Four-wheel drive
- FWD** Front-wheel drive (also Four Wheel Drive Auto Co.)
- RWD** Rear-wheel drive
- 4x4** An activity in which a 4WD vehicle participates
- 2H** Two out of four wheels driven with high range gearing
- 4H** All four wheels driven by high range gearing
- 4L** All four wheels driven by low range gearing
- 4Hlc** All four wheels driven by high range gearing and locked differentials
- 4Llc** All four wheels driven by low range gearing and locked differentials

requires it most. The two differentials on the axles send power to the wheels with the least resistance.

That's all well and good but if you need to exercise more control over where the power is sent, the centre differential can

be locked to force the system to divide power equally between both axles. This is particularly useful when you're negotiating an obstacle and you need the front axle to pull just as hard as the rear axle is pushing. If you need even more control over

power distribution, you can fit locking differentials on the axles, which will send an equal amount of power to every wheel – in other words, each wheel receives 25% of the engine's output.

The drawback of a vehicle equipped with permanent 4WD is that they are heavier on fuel than a car driven by just two wheels. The benefits are that your vehicle is always ready for 4x4 action, and because the system is relatively uncomplicated, the odds of the system failing is low.

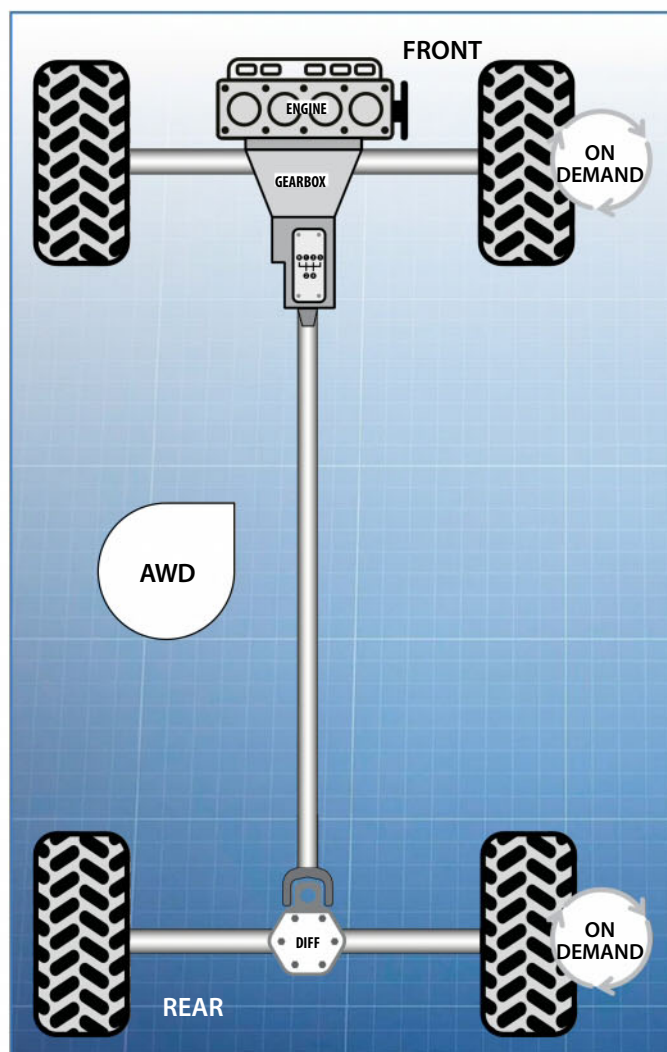
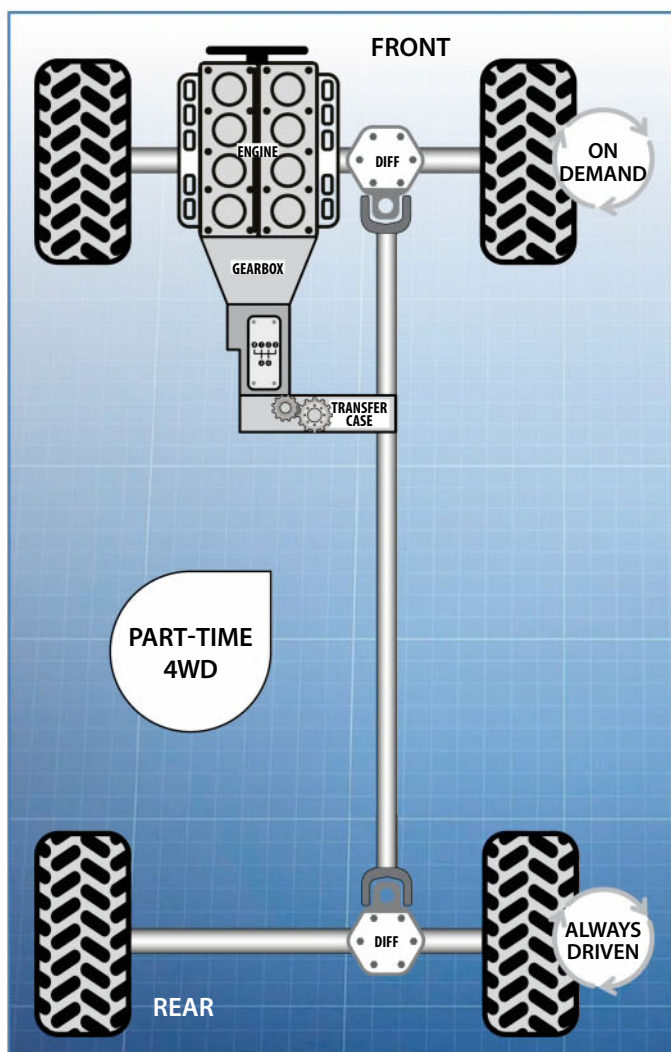
PART-TIME FOUR-WHEEL DRIVE

In 1911, US truck manufacturer The Four Wheel Drive Auto Co. became the first to develop a system by which the front axle could be disengaged from the gearbox when 4WD wasn't required.

As a more recent example, we'll use the Nissan Patrol. A Patrol's engine is connected to a gearbox and the gearbox is connected to a transfer case. From this transfer case a driveshaft extends forward to a differential on the front axle. Another driveshaft leads to a differential on the rear axle.

When on paved roads, only your vehicle's rear axle receives power from the engine, and the rear differential determines which of the two wheels will receive the lion's share of this power. If road conditions deteriorate, you only need to tug on a short lever next to the gear lever (or press a button) and a strong chain belt will grab hold of the front axle and turn it along with the rear axle – almost like the centre differential of a permanent 4WD system.

The major advantage of a part-time system is that you can disengage one of the axles and thereby improve fuel economy. The drawbacks are that the increased complexity raises the odds of one or more parts failing. For instance, if you engage 4WD on hard surfaces, the aforementioned axle wind-up caused by >



unequal torque between the axles can cripple your ride.

Mitsubishi found a way around this by employing both a transfer case and a centre differential. It's called Super Select and it allows you to disengage the front axle and save fuel, or you can leave it in 4WD all of the time and drive it like you would an old-school Land Rover on any surface.

ALL-WHEEL DRIVE (AWD)

Technically all 4WD vehicles are also all-wheel drive, as are six-wheel-drive vehicles. But the term is generally reserved for sedan cars that are driven in all four wheels but are not specifically designed to go off-road. Think Subaru and Audi.

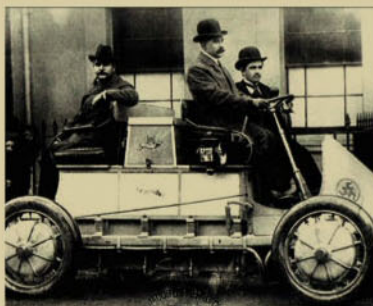
Certain AWD systems are similar to permanent 4WD in that all the wheels are powered all

The future

The fourth type of 4WD system is coincidentally the oldest. The Spyker brothers may have invented the mechanical drive but it was the illustrious engineer Ferdinand Porsche who in 1899 used four electric motors to each power the four wheels of a small truck. Electric vehicles were all the rage during the turn of the 19th century, and were it not for inadequate batteries at the time, internal combustion engines would never have become as established as they did.

But the electric car is making a comeback thanks to people like Elon Musk and improved battery technology that allows for greater range per charge. Forgive me if I sound heartless but your burbling V8 is fast becoming obsolete. The time is

approaching when you'll have to trade your gnarly bundu basher for a whirring electric jobbie. But don't despair; electric motors are known for making huge amounts of torque quickly. The potential therefore exists that an electric 4WD off-roader may one day be equal or even more capable than current gas guzzlers. Provided the next generation are as in to off-roading as we are.



of the time, as is the case with a Subaru. Other vehicles such as the Q5 has a part-time system that favours the front wheels and only engages the rear axle when wheel spin is detected by electronic sensors.

But why would you want a regular car with all-wheel drive? As the Spyker brothers showed, four powered wheels grip better than just two. Another important consideration is convenience. If it suddenly starts to rain or snow you don't have to pull over to the side of the road, engage 4WD, and continue – the car does it automatically.

go! Drive and Camp says 4WD works great in the soft sand of the Kgalagadi, and AWD is perfect for slippery mountain passes. 

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Gran turismo

Tinus says his brand new Ranger can't put a foot wrong; there's very little Gerhart doesn't like about his Isuzu KB300; and Piet says his second Mitsubishi is equally at home on gravel and tar.

No problem, thank you very much!

FORD RANGER 2.2 (DOUBLE CAB, AUTOMATIC)

You have to be careful because it's very easy to tow or drive too fast with a Ranger, says **Tinus Evert-Roos** from Springs.

“We camp with a **2013 Gypsey Regal** and I tow it with my Ranger, which I bought brand new for **R360 000** five months ago. I used to tow the Gypsey with a Mazda 6 2.5 Dynamic (automatic), but it was too

low to tow comfortably and my jockey wheel often hit the ground.

I was looking for a towing vehicle with enough storage space and power, and I also considered the Toyota Hilux 2.4 GD-6 and Isuzu KB300 LX, **but both were more expensive** and the Toyota was only available in manual. I would have liked parking assist on the Ford, but the **good-quality bodywork**, the quiet when you're driving, the general ride quality, and the many standard functions more than make up for it.

Its strength also surprised me. Now I'm itching for its big brother, the Wildtrack 3.2.

I tow comfortably at **100–120 km/h** and my fuel consumption is **12,5 l/100 km** with the Gypsey in tow. Without it I get 9 l/100 km.

We camp as much as possible in the **Kruger National Park** and our kids love it there – it's beautiful, the stands are top notch, and the wild animals you see really makes it a special experience.”



MORE GAME THAN A GAME FARM

2012 ISUZU KB300 (DOUBLE CAB)

With a bit more ground clearance and proper shock absorbers, “Willehond” will be the top dog, says **Gerhart Niewoudt** from Magaliesburg



I bought the Isuzu secondhand for

R260 000 in 2015, and in the two years I’ve been driving it I’ve kitted it out with a **bullbar, aluminium canopy, and 17” wheels**. I’m also very pleased with its fuel consumption of about 11 ℓ/100 km.

My previous bakkie was the **Ford Ranger 2.2 (double cab)**, and in the two

years I had it, it only gave me problems.

I’ve driven to **Botswana** with Willehond and it’s an experience I won’t soon forget. That’s wilderness in the true sense of the word. Untouched and beautiful, and a place where man hasn’t yet made his mark.



Soaking up all bumps

2008 MITSUBISHI PAJERO 3.2 DID GLX

The comfort of a soft ride on a dirt road that would otherwise rattle teeth and bone – that’s Donkie’s best quality, says **Piet Swart** of Somerset West.



My old Colt 2.8 double cab bakkie that I owned until 2015 was, to be completely honest, **too slow**. I always had to plan ahead if I wanted to overtake someone. It was time for a new vehicle, and I seriously considered the Toyota Land Cruiser double cab bakkie, but ultimately it was beyond my means.

The secondhand Pajero was more in my price range. **It cost R220 000** and I haven’t regretted buying it for a second. **Its gearbox is excellent**, and its turbodiesel engine has enough power to get me where I need to be.

I installed **rock sliders, a nudge bar and a Hannibal roof rack with an awning** and had a drawer system custom-made. In terms of fuel consumption, I usually get about **12,5 ℓ/100 km**.



If I had a spare R10 000 lying around I’d fit an extra diesel tank and water tank.

On the mechanical side there’s nothing to complain about, but it does bug me that the interior is starting to rattle more as it gets older.



Show us your wheels

Send an email to

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

Depth of field simplified

Unsure how much of your subject is in focus? An app on your phone might be the answer...

Text and photos Villiers Steyn

If you've read *Digital Photography for Dummies* or spent some time watching YouTube tutorials, you'll know the benefit of changing your camera's f-stop when photographing wildlife.

This is done in Aperture Priority (A/Av), and the principle is simple: if you decrease the f-stop, less is in focus, and if you increase it, more is in focus. In other words, you'll likely use a small f-stop (f/2.8 – f/5.6) when you want

to blur the background when taking a portrait photo of a lion and a larger f-stop (f/10 or greater) will work well when photographing a herd of zebra grazing on an open plain.

The question is: have you ever given any thought to what the actual depth of field is, in centimetres, when you take photos?

And did you know that the distance between you and the animal greatly influences this value?

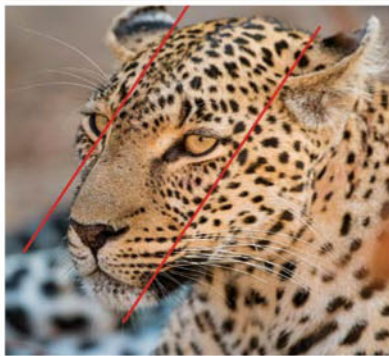


1 An exponential drop

Let's look at an example: You're in the Kruger National Park and a leopard stands 30 metres away from you and you're photographing it with a Canon 7D MkII and a 100-400 mm lens at f/5.6 for maximum background blur. What is the depth of field? 119 cm – more than enough to ensure all of it is in focus when you're photographing it side-on.

It's your lucky day and it walks halfway closer to you. What's the depth of field now? Half of 1.19 m? No! It's only 29.43 cm. And if you were in the Sabi Sands and the leopard comes to stand five metres from you? Believe it or not, but the depth of field drops to 3,09 cm!

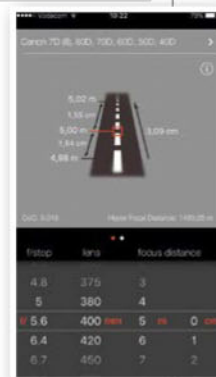
The depth of field therefore drops exponentially as the distance decreases, and thus, at this close range, even if you've focussed on one of the animal's eyes, the other one will most likely be out of focus if you don't increase the f-stop slightly.



2 Super-smart app

How on Earth did you calculate those values, I hear you ask. Why, with the Simple DoF Calculator* app by Dennis van den Berg (US\$1.99) on my iPhone of course. You simply select your camera model, f-stop, focal length and distance to your subject, and the app automatically calculates the depth of field for you. If you don't find your camera model in the list at the top, simply click the refresh button at the top right corner of the screen.

I've made a point of spending as much time as possible playing around with different combinations of lenses and f-stops, learning what the depth of field would be over specific distances. That way I train myself to instinctively choose the right f-stops in the field.



*As far as I know, Simple DoF Calculator is not available in the Google Play store, but there's a host of similar apps that Android users can download. Simply do a search for "DOF calculator".

Improve your wildlife photography skills by downloading Villiers's wildlife photography app, *Learn by Example – Wildlife Photography*, in the App Store or Google Play Store and follow his adventures on Instagram: @villierssteyn

Spectacular Lesotho

See Sani Pass, Katse Dam, Maletsunyane Falls and Thaba Bosiu on a six-day, guided self-drive tour with *go! Drive & Camp Tours*, in conjunction with Bhejane 4x4 Adventures.



DAY 1

Our adventure starts in the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands town of Himeville, where we meet at the Stone House Café.

For the rest of the day we do the awe-inspiring drive up Sani Pass. After clearing customs on the South African side, we have a picnic lunch and then make our way up the pass with more than enough time to enjoy the scenery and take pictures.

Our accommodation for the night is the cosy Sani Mountain Lodge. It feels like you're literally on top of the world at this lodge, which is built on the edge of the Drakensberg and affords breathtaking views into KwaZulu-Natal.

DAY 2

Our route to Katse Dam takes us along the highest roads in Southern Africa. We cross the Senqu River, which becomes

the Orange River when it enters South Africa.

The houses that we stay in at Katse overlook the dam. We relax tonight with dinner in the restaurant.

DAY 3

After a big breakfast, we do a guided tour of the Katse Dam wall and learn more about the Lesotho Highlands Water Project. We spend the rest of the day driving a circle route around the dam, with a picnic lunch on the way, and return to our accommodation in the late afternoon.

DAY 4

Today we traverse mountain passes such as the God Help Me and Blue Mountain passes. We get a glimpse of the Mohale Dam, which is also part of the Highlands Water Project.

In the late afternoon we arrive in the small town of Ramabanta, where we stay

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- Your own 4x4 vehicle and fuel.

over at the Trading Post Lodge for the next two nights and get spoilt with homemade food.

DAY 5

We take it easy today. We'll visit Maletsunyane Falls at Semonkong, where the water drops 192m down a cliff, have a picnic lunch, and return to the lodge to relax for the afternoon. There are some lovely walks in

the area and you can go horse riding.

DAY 6

After our last big breakfast together, we make our way towards Maseru. We drive around Thaba Bosiu before we say our goodbyes at the visitor centre near Maseru Bridge Border Post, and then everyone goes their own way. 

YES, I WANT TO GO!

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Drop a buoy at Mooinooi

Why is the galjoen mentioned in the same sentence as the springbok and protea? And have you ever gone fishing at Mooinooi?



FISH FACTS

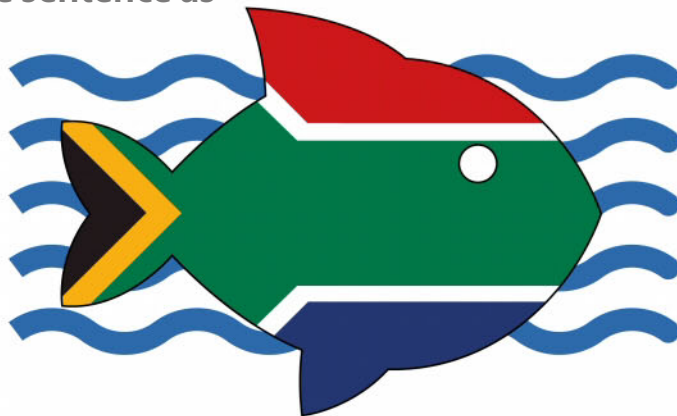
Springbok, protea... galjoen

To all outward appearances, the yellowwood tree, blue crane, and galjoen have little in common, but just like the springbok and the protea, these three are national symbols of South Africa.

The choice of galjoen as national fish may seem odd – you'd think the honour would be bestowed on a great white shark or the North Atlantic right whale. But according to southafricaexplorer.co.za, the galjoen was chosen because it's

indigenous – this fish can be found from Namibia to Durban and nowhere else in the world.

In 2005, 25 000 tagged galjoen were released at four points along our coasts. No fewer than 95% of the fish were recaptured where they were released. And the remaining 5% didn't go much farther than their endemic area. Although it isn't considered territorial, a galjoen probably won't stray very much farther than 1,38 km of its "home".



The proposal to declare the galjoen a national fish came from one Margaret Smith. According to *The Sea Fishes of Southern Africa*, published in 1950, Margaret was the wife of coelacanth expert J.L.B. Smith. She argued that the galjoen was probably the first fish early settlers noticed and

that's why it may as well be chosen as the marine symbol that's equal to the protea and the springbok.

Mercifully our national sports teams are named after an antelope and a type of flower. Just imagine the shame if the Galjoene lost a cricket test to England...



FISH SPECIES

Krom River redfin *Pseudobarbus senticeps*



The Krom River redfin was identified years ago by famed coelacanth expert J.L.B. Smith. Smith had described a redfin species from the Krom River system in the Eastern Cape, and named it *Barbus senticeps*. But this species was later identified as the same fish as the Eastern Cape redfin, *Pseudobarbus afer*.

Recent studies have confirmed that Smith's redfin is indeed a species in its own right. After additional studies by Doctor Albert Chakona and Prof. Paul Skelton, which was published in the ZooKeys journal, the fish is now officially called *Pseudobarbus senticeps*.

Size and biology The breeding

biology of this species has not yet been studied, but it's likely to be similar to its congeners, which breed in summer. Further studies are also required to determine its diet. **Habitat** *Pseudobarbus senticeps* occurs in perennial streams with clear to peat stained water, and heterogeneous substrates (boulders, cobbles and pebbles). It's likely to have also occurred in the main-stream sections of the Krom River, but these habitats are now dominated by non-native species.

Catch me if you can It's a fish usually caught by fly fishermen, while nets are the most effective capture method for research purposes. The clear mountain streams of the Cape Floristic Region also offer a

unique opportunity to snorkel and see them up close. If you do catch one, please release them alive – and in the same place. Don't move them from one catchment area to another as it can cause genetic pollution through hybridisation.

That's a record The biggest recorded Krom River redfin is 8 cm long.

SASSI status They are currently listed as critically endangered, meaning this species faces an extremely high risk of extinction. Major threats include invasion by alien fish, as well as habitat degradation and water abstraction.

Text Dr. Albert Chakona Photo Ernst Swartz © Southern African Institute of Aquatic Biodiversity (SAIAB)



All quiet on the North Western front

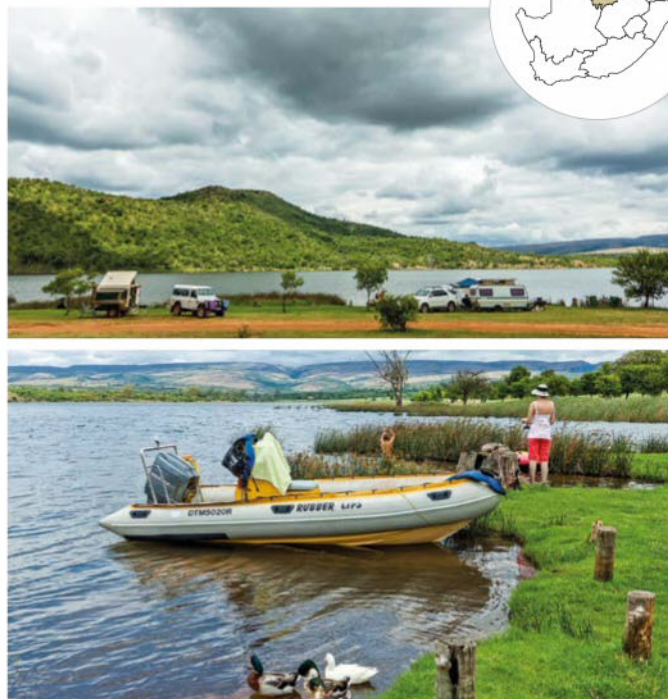
BUFFELSPOORTDAM

The Buffelspoort Dam lies just outside Mooi-nooi, right next to the Maanhaarrand road. The dam lies in front of you as you drive through the gate. The opposite bank is roughly half a kilometre away, and the waters stretches for 3 km to either side with the dam wall at the far left.

The campsite is near the wall and stretches about a kilometre along the bank. The stands with electricity are front left and most of them are on mowed lawn – all have their own braai.

Twenty of them are right on the water and are clearly marked. Angling from these spots is only allowed during winter months but you're allowed to fish year-round from the stands further down the bank.

There are two bathrooms. One is located near the centre, between the stands with electricity. There's a scullery area and spacious shower cubicles. On the far side, away from the gate, there is another ablution facility for those camping without electricity on the large lawn area.



The galjoen was chosen as the national marine symbol of South Africa because it's native to the coastal waters between Namibia and Durban.

Briefly | Buffelspoortdam



electricity it's R110; R30 for your vehicle and R60 per boat.

Contact 074 344 3496 or 084 746 5757

Nearest town Mooi-nooi, 11,1 km.

Road condition Tar all the way to the resort and dirt tracks inside.

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Fish Carp, bream, black bass, yellowfish and catfish.

Campsite 20 waterside stands with water, and a large open campsite without electricity with some shade.

Ablution facilities Old but clean.

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CROSSWORD

We have great news for **Jakkie Nel** from Porterville: a R500 Trappers gift voucher is on its way to you for your correct entry in the crossword competition in our September 2017 edition. You can also win a R500 Trappers voucher. Complete the crossword, take a picture of it, and mail it to us at drivecamp@gomag.co.za. Remember to include your contact details. You can also complete it online at <http://bit.ly/2e002fP>.

			A Volks- wagen bakkie	Utiliser	Text message (abbr)	Refill (3,2)	Resort close to Hluhluwe			
			Silent		Kid					
			Zeal		Charged particle					
							Decline (3,2)			
Acqui- sition		Worries Equip	Regarding To be		Precious stone			Obscure		Tree In the direction
					Count You and I					
Soldier Mall stand					Maths symbol	Standard		Almighty deighty		
Alter ... Depart			Hiking trail in SA	Legume			Hectare (symbol)			SA language
		Perform Flightless bird		Thus	Potato crisp			Make a mistake		
Tops					Ocean Estimate		Bring up	Trailer by Eko Veld Gear		
		Vest- ment				Expert	Radium (symbol) "I see!"			
Birtstone Govern				Increase		Paddle Garden pest				
				Empty	Drain Impulse			Very much	Type of grain	Thou
			United States (abbr)		Lived		Pay Sea bream			
								Colour		
Gravel road on the SA border	Combine	Born	Replied Plutonium (symbol)	Fuss Pigpen		Inactive Pixie				Plus
						Honey Greeting		Either ...	That is (L abbr)	
Subtract Lyrical poem					Shout				Indium (symbol)	
		Clear	Kentucky (abbr)		In the know					

COMPILED BY GERDA ENGELBRECHT

Here's your prize

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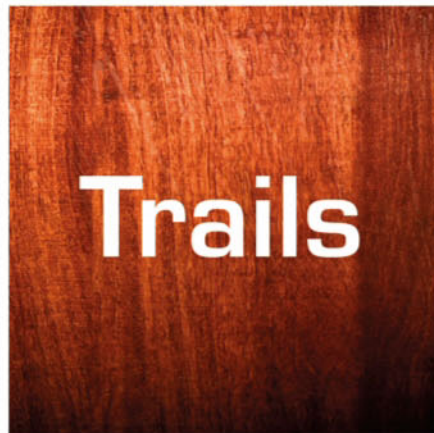
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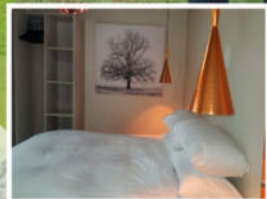
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The mystery of the ghost trailer

It's not everyday a 2,2-ton trailer disappears mid-journey, says Piet van Heerde.

I look in the rear-view mirror and I realise something isn't right. Then it hits me like a ton of bricks: My trailer is gone!

I hit the brakes, jump out, and run to the back of my car. Nope, there's still no sign of a trailer. Anxiously I get back into my Cruiser. It can't be. It can't just have disappeared.

I retrace my route and I shake my head from side to side more than a spectator at a Wimbledon final. And the more I say it to myself, the more I don't want to believe it.

The trailer is gone.

I'M BUSY MOVING from Hopefield to Brackenfell, and like any move, it's an exercise in inconvenience. I rent a 2,2-ton double-axle trailer for all the small items. When I go to fetch it in Brackenfell, the staff and I inspect the tow bar and lights – exactly like any responsible tower would.

My Cruiser tows that trailer like a champ. I'm almost unaware that I'm towing because I can't feel the trailer, and because you sit high up in a Cruiser it's difficult to see it.

Again, like any good tower would do, I make a point of checking my rear-view mirror to see if the trailer is still trailing behind me. I stop in Malmesbury to refuel and check everything again. Everything seems fine; no problems or irregularities. And while I'm driving out of Malmesbury I even check to see how I'm managing to keep the trailer in the lane perfectly around a bend. I really am a good driver and a responsible tower.

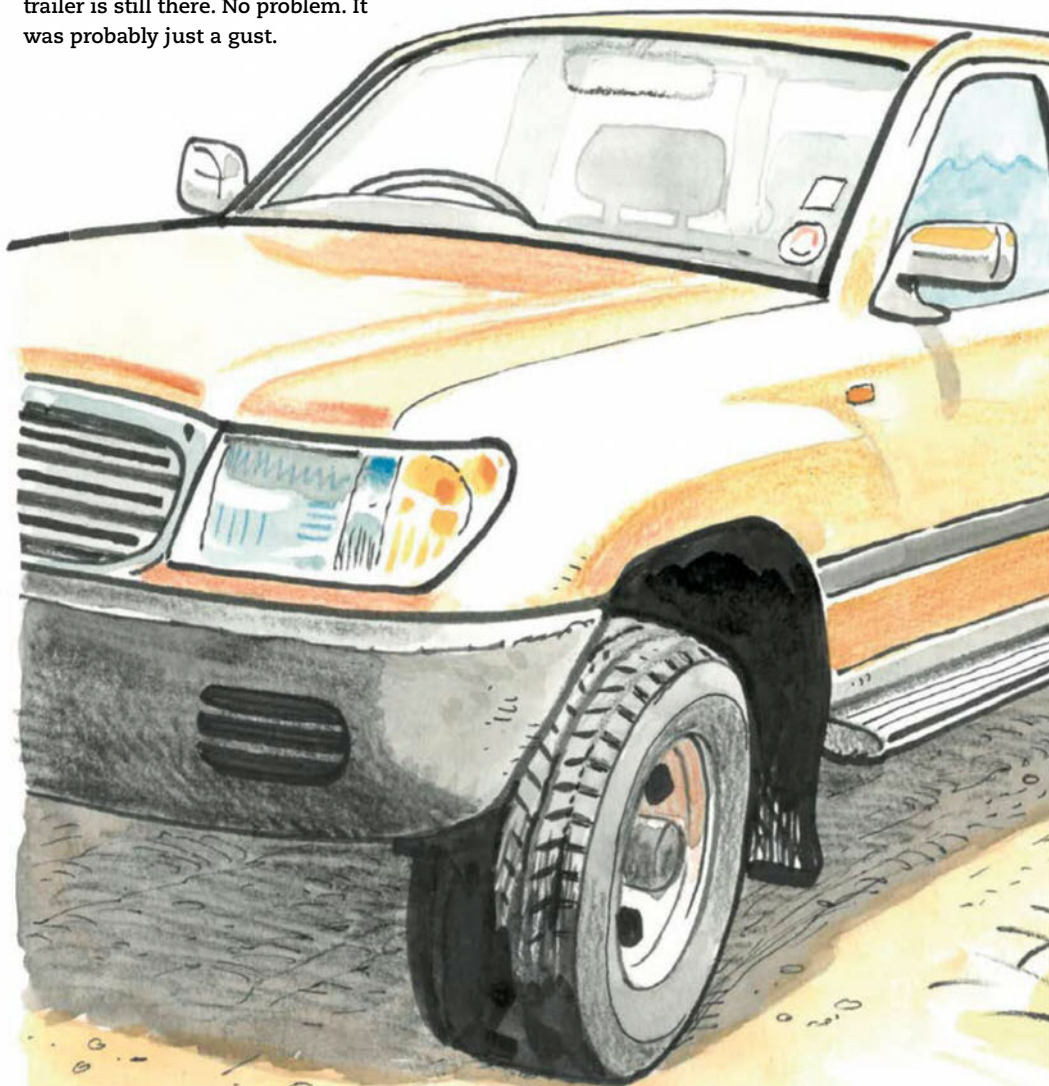
Over the hill outside Malmesbury the turbodiesel is pulling like a steam engine. I even pass a few trucks. I turn off towards Hopefield and everything is

going smoothly. I'm going at about 100 km/h, Pink Floyd blaring on the stereo, and the trailer is performing admirably.

The next moment, I feel a slight jerk. I'm still a bit entranced by Roger Waters and the boys but I quickly snap out of it. I look in the rear-view mirror. Nope, the trailer is still there. No problem. It was probably just a gust.

A while later I remember that the road is about to get bad. And once I see the first potholes, I slow down and look back to check that the trailer isn't shaking too much. Everything checks out.

A kilometre or so further down the road I check again. Gone!



WHILE I'M DRIVING AROUND looking for the trailer, I start to doubt myself. I am after all on the wrong side of 50 – did I perhaps imagine that I saw the trailer every time I checked? Was I too engrossed in Dave Gilmour's guitar solos?

My brain feels numb, like when I had to write exams in school. The numbness changes to dizziness and tunnel vision begins to set in. I drive all the way back to Malmesbury, which is where I know for sure I last saw the trailer. Nothing. I phone

the owner of the trailer. At first he thinks I'm pulling his leg, but then he starts getting upset. No, he says, he'll send some of his people to come help me look.

I drive back the way I came, just a lot slower. And I check the world around me like a professional hunter.

The trailer is nowhere to be found.

I reach the point where I first realised that my trailer had disappeared, and I turn back again. This time I drive even slower and I imagine that if I narrow my eyes I'll spot it.

But the trailer really is gone. Like last month's salary.

I DECIDE to drive back to Hopefield to fetch the kids from school. Three pairs of eyes are better than one. Again we drive the stretch of road over and over again, but we see nothing – not even a mark on the road that would give us some kind of clue.

I inspect the back of the Cruiser and I start to get a clearer picture of what happened. The tow bar is not the typical fixed ball type, but rather a ball with a shaft which fits vertically through the mounted piece. A safety clip through

the bottom end keeps the shaft in place. It looks like the safety clip broke, because the ball and shaft is missing.

The next line of defence was the cable that winds around the tow bar

to activate the trailer's brake in case it unhitches. But that couldn't have happened because the entire tow bar is gone.

I decide someone obviously saw the trailer, hitched it, and drove away. It's the only logical explanation. So I report the matter to the police. The constable looks at me like I'm crazy as he writes: "...while driving, the trailer went missing in an unexplained manner".

Back in Brackenfell I go to the owner and we agree that I'll write a report he can use to get the ball rolling with his insurance. I still need to move my things though and for that I need a trailer. But I'm too embarrassed to ask the same guy for another trailer so I go somewhere else. I drive to Hopefield, and there, in the Bermuda Triangle of trailers, I spot a trailer in a field next to the road.

I stop and walk closer. It's my trailer! I'm so happy I jump into the air like Fred Flintstone and click my heels.

"Are you looking for this?" a voice next to me asks suddenly while I'm looking for my cellphone to call the owner. It takes every inch of self-control not to hug the farmer because he looks like the type of guy who probably wouldn't appreciate that kind of affection.

Yes, I say. Where did you get it?

"This morning I was putting the sheep into the camp, but then quickly went to inspect the fence. I came to a spot where only the bottom two wires were broken and there was a faint track running to the opposite side of the field. I went to go look and I found your trailer at the end of the track. I hitched it and towed it here."

WHAT EXACTLY happened? The safety mechanism broke, the trailer unhitched with ball and shaft and all and then with its own momentum went full steam ahead. Thank goodness there was no oncoming traffic. The trailer went through the fence and continued for about 300 m before coming to a standstill at the far side of the field – neatly concealed underneath the bushes.

I didn't see the broken fence because it was in the tall grass. And it must have happened right before I looked in my rear-view mirror because I stopped not even 750 m further on.

I'm thankful that nothing and nobody got hurt... except for the fence and my ego. But I'm even more thankful that the mystery of the ghost trailer was solved. 🕵️

A kilometre or so further I check again. And there is nothing. I start to doubt myself. I am after all on the wrong side of 50.



The start of our camping life

Nearly 50 years ago, Josef and Johanna Tolmay from Drie Rivieren rented a fold-up caravan to take their baby boy to see the ocean. They have been camping non-stop ever since.

Edited by **Kyle Kock** Photo **Josef Tolmay**



“ In 1969, Johanna and I had been married for only about three years, and our first-born Danie had just arrived. Johanna and I both love the ocean, and we dreamed of the day when we could go show our son the vast waters. But there was one problem: At that stage we couldn't afford to rent a holiday flat near the sea.

So we had to consider an alternative, and that was to rent a caravan. But I drove a 1966 Fiat 1100D. With its limited performance the options of what I could tow were fairly limited – I needed a light caravan with low wind resistance.

I soon realised a fold-up caravan was the answer.

I started looking and eventually we were referred to someone in the Magagong area in the North West province. They had a fold-up caravan and were willing to rent it to us for R2 a day. We agreed and towed the caravan to Hartenbos.

The caravan was similar to a trailer but it had a heavy metal roof. You lifted the roof and then two metal poles – one in front and one in the back – propped the roof up. But that was easier said than done – it took two strong men to lift the roof.

With the roof in place, two single beds folded out to the outside. The frame's sails were permanently fixed to the roof and both beds were supported at the bottom by metal props. These props and the two that kept the caravan stable at the back operated with telescopic poles.

The sails of the entire framework were fastened with brackets to the bottom of the beds and the bodywork. I remember there were two single benches with a small walkway in between. It was a great place to sit and had extra beds for two more people. You could lift up the benches – and that was the only storage space in the caravan.

The tent also didn't have any zips, which meant you didn't have much control over keeping rain, wind or the cold out.

You climbed in at the back of the caravan through a door that folded out

“ Someone in the Magagong area had a fold-up caravan that they were willing to rent to us for R2 a day. We agreed.

to the bottom. On the inside of the door was a built-in step; I remember it was a clever plan that made climbing in and out much easier.

That holiday by the sea was our camping baptism by fire and an unforgettable experience. Since then we've been enthusiastic campers who've travelled all over with our Jurgens Expo.

I do wish though that we knew a bit more about the origin of our rented fold-up caravan. Maybe someone can help with some info. ”



Have you spotted any wacky wheels on your travels? Tell us about it and send a photo to

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