

#2

go!

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SEPTEMBER 2017 | ISSUE 2

Drive & Camp

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seaside campsites

TOW TEST

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There is only one thing better than spending a day in nature with fresh air and peace and quiet... another day like that. In the Bontebok National Park, days like these are plenty.





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Until we meet again!

It's never nice to say goodbye. But for me the time has come. I'm saying goodbye to Cape Town and the magazine world and returning to Bloemfontein and the radio world. (I remain a camper, though.)

My two years and a few months at *WegSleep* and the last two months at *go! Drive & Camp* were a privilege and an honour. And it was fun, thank you very much.

The magazine is in good hands. At my farewell, my three *WegSleep* colleagues and good friends Schalk Jonker, Leon Botha and Dominic Wienand made a special *go! Drive & Camp* cover of us four as The A-Team. And even if I have to say so myself, that's exactly what we were: an A-team. Schalk, Leon and

Dominic are more than just colleagues. They're friends and guys with whom I'd go to war.

Schalk, who is a seasoned journalist and camper, is taking over the reigns. And there are two brilliant motor-journalists joining the team. Cyril Kloppe and Kyle Kock are passionate about 4x4s, engines, and highways and byways. With them and freelance designer Owen Willoughby, *go! Drive & Camp* has an A-team par excellence.

And I might see you somewhere on the road or next to a campfire.

Go well and safe driving and camping.

Dirk
EDITOR



Our first campfire cookbook, *Gooi Kole*, is available on shelf from this month. We've compiled a selection of some of the best recipes our foodies have made for us over the years. Keep *Gooi Kole* in your camping vehicle or 4x4 for some great new ideas for tasty camp food.

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A clever coffee plan



This is a story you've heard many times but never seen. Until recently I've also only heard about it, but now I can say I've experienced it too.

Not too long ago we were in the Kgalagadi. Every morning starts with proper filter coffee from the plunger. The first few mornings everything is hunky-dory, but then the plunger's shaft breaks off right at the strainer. Graham Jones, who was travelling with us, says he has two spare batteries in his vehicle and that we should use these to weld the shaft to the strainer.

As they say, no harm in trying. We're still in the bush for another week and we don't want to go without our morning coffee. We connect the batteries with the jumper cables, press the one pole against the strainer, and Jan Brand – also part of our group – presses the other pole against the shaft. And so we melt the two together.

The weld job kept the plunger intact the whole holiday and we enjoyed our filter coffee every morning.

JOHANNES KLEINHANS

Vryheid



Kgalagadi is the spot (even for toddlers)

We recently returned from a lovely break in the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park. Truth be told, we're still busy ridding our car and shoes of all the dirt.

We would like to give SANParks a well-deserved compliment. We are still new to camping, and our children Rigardt and Marizaan Barnard, and granddaughter Elma-Louise (22 months), travelled with us. We booked a year ago to ensure a spot, because the Kgalagadi is very popular. If you snooze, you lose.

We stayed at all three camps – Twee Rivieren, Mata-Mata en Nossob – and were impressed with their bathrooms. There are bath facilities for babies and smaller children at all three of them. It means a lot if, like us, you have a grandchild that isn't yet big enough to shower.

Camping is definitely now engraved in our lives!

CARL AND ELMARI STRYDOM
Malmesbury



Winning letter

Johannes Kleinhans wins a Coleman® Cooler Combo and a Divide +700 LED flashlight worth R2 498! The Cooler Combo consists of three cooler boxes that hold 51,1 ℓ, 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.





Sherpa is tops!

We were the owners of a Sherpa Tiny caravan and recently exchanged it for the bigger model, the Rambler.

In April we were towing with the Rambler through Namibia and travelled 6 500 km. It's a wonderful caravan to tow and performs admirably. Even though many of the roads are not great, the Rambler came home in one piece. One wonders how other caravans would fare on such a trip.

To make absolutely certain everything is in order, I took the Rambler to Sherpa so they could check everything out. Neville de Meillon, the owner of Sherpa, did it for free and only minor repairs were needed here and there. We towed the Rambler with our Volkswagen Amarok and the fuel consumption was 9 l/100 km (11,1 km/l). That's a winning combination!

OCKIE AND POPPIE VAN SCHALKWYK
Potchefstroom



Check this four-legged Toyota!

In May my wife Johanna-Marie and I explored the section of Namibia against the Angolan border. We went to the Epupa Waterfall, Van Zyl's Pass, Marienflus, and Kaokoland.

Right before Van Zyl's Pass, next to the road, we saw this Toyota with four legs – complete with Toyota badge on the forehead. Talk about reliable and low maintenance!

JOHAN LOTTERING
Bloemfontein



Operation kudu rescue

In November last year my wife Ina and I went on a romantic break to the Kameeldoring chalet in the Mokala National Park.

It's unbelievably hot and the area is dry. You almost feel like you want to pass away when you're lying on the bed. A small bird flew into the frame of the open window and landed dazed on the floor. It appeared to be gasping for air and I tried to revive it with a block of ice. After a short while it looked better and flew away.

The concrete waterhole was teeming with animals coming to drink. One day, at sunset, a kudu slipped into the waterhole and

didn't get up. During the night we heard her bellow, and unfortunately she didn't make it. The park's staff came to remove the carcass.

The next day at sunset an old kudu bull with trophy horns came walking up to the waterhole. He also slipped, fell, and landed with his rear in the waterhole – and his hindlegs couldn't get a grip on the ground. Ina and I looked at each other: We didn't want to see another animal die.

We headed down to the waterhole – me with my camp chair that I wanted to use as a tool to help the animal from behind. Ina stood to the side and distracted it, while I

walked into the water behind it. I managed to get the chair underneath its behind and I gave him a slap on the buttocks. He wormed himself out of the water slightly, but couldn't escape completely. With another slap or two and help from the chair I managed to get him over the side of the waterhole. After initially laying in the mud, he got up and walked off.

Later that night our break ended on a high note: A white rhino came to drink at the waterhole! We couldn't have asked for more.

PETER DE VRIES
Ceres



No more monkey business

You sometimes encounter monkeys and baboons during your travels. So what to do with Mr Baboon and his mates?



Our Facebook friends share their advice for those pesky visitors in the campsite.



JJ van Rooyen

Use a slingshot. You shoot only once, and when they see it again, they quickly disappear. A big problem is campers who feed the animals. It makes them come back because they think everyone likes them.



Anita van Greunen

Just buy a lot of rubber snakes. Put it at the door, windows, and any other place where they're visible. Believe me, the monkeys and baboons keep their distance.



Belinda Bekker Lang

We went camping recently and were surrounded by them. The management tried to scare them away with rubbers snakes, but with debatable success. As those in front ran away, the ones in the back just took their place. It was actually kind of funny.



Peet Becker

Few things work as well as a BB gun.



Jaline Versfeld

The problem isn't with the people who feed them. The problem is they know that where there are people, there's food. And they're not afraid of people anymore and only get smarter. And it feels like we humans are getting dumber. We were at Berg-en-dal in the Kruger recently and a group of baboons destroyed a tent in the camp. When we wanted to scare them away, they started chasing us when we came too close. I also know of a woman who was bitten by a monkey in Letaba.



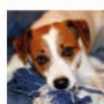
Adriaan Cilliers

Baboons and monkeys are almost as bad as my neighbour who thinks everyone wants to listen to his music. We usually just pack our food away and make sure the tent is closed.



Francois Nel

I vote for the rubber snake. Put one or two close to your tent and it's the end of your problems.



Cornell Mans

I sometimes use my mother-in-law to scare them away.



Morne Eloff

The big thing is to lock up food like chips, sweets, fruit, and bread. These guys don't miss much with their good sense of smell and sharp eyes. They don't care if it's breakfast cereal or milk tart.



Philip Hand

A rubber snake works like a charm!



James Pfister

A cap gun is very effective. You fire off a few shots in their direction and then they stay away. I used it at ATKV Natalia and it worked really well.



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All bakkies are not created equal!

He's about to buy a new double cab bakkie. The big question is, which one? asks Mic van Zyl.

The United States Declaration of Independence contains the phrase: "All men are created equal". In that context it certainly rings true. The same can, however, not be said about our beloved double cab bakkies.

A glimpse at new vehicle sales will confirm that the double cab bakkie is immensely popular – and for good reason. Versatility is close to the top of the list. I too have now come to terms with the fact that for my next company vehicle, due in October,

Until very recently my first choice was a Land Cruiser 70 series V8 Diesel – wagon or double cab – to be decided upon. This has, however, changed due to a couple of reasons, most notably the cost of the vehicle and the related perks, tax implications, as well as the fact that, as desirable as the Cruiser is, it has a very Spartan standard equipment offering. With only electric windows, power steering, air con, a single cup holder, and manual gearbox on offer, I'm convinced that living with this beast on a day-to-day basis will be more challenging than I'm up to.

I have been very fortunate to have recently driven the top offerings from all of the major double cab brands in succession during a trip through the Moremi area in Botswana. A couple of weeks later we took our own fleet of various new double cabs down to KZN, and then up and down the Sani Pass. Bad gravel roads, heavy sand tracks, water crossing, rocky mountain pass, mud – all of the stuff we wish we could do every day.

Not many people get the opportunity to drive so many different vehicles back to back and compare apples with apples in the moment. It is this that has led me to realise that, while there are inherently no bad vehicles in this group, some bakkies are

definitely "more equal" than others.

This is certainly the hot topic at the moment in many vehicle publications with many bakkie "shoot-outs" appearing across several of the leading magazines. One must bear in mind, however, that while these articles are very informative, the one area that they cannot cover is long-term ownership, which includes maintenance and reliability issues that may arise over time with extended use, as well as resale value, which may also be a consideration for some.

What I do find somewhat frustrating is the very different levels of standard equipment found in the top models from the different brands. I can never understand why some brands can offer certain items as standard and other brands don't. Some of these items are nice to have but some are actually a real requirement from a safety point of view. I'll elaborate on this in next month's issue. Perhaps I will have made my mind up by then.

Decisions, decisions! 🤖

What I find frustrating are the different levels of standard equipment across the range-topping double-cab offerings from the leading brands in this segment.

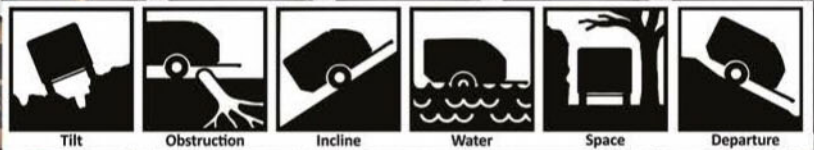
I'm going to forego a wagon in favour of a double cab. Which one? That's the big question. The first requirement would be diesel auto. Secondly it needs to ride more like a wagon than a bakkie. Thirdly, a high level of standard luxuries would be nice for a change.

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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If it sounds too good to be true...

Many timeshares and holiday clubs have become complete rubbish. The camping industry mustn't make the same mistakes, says Neels van Heerden.

At many sales events for timeshare units or clubs that hawk holiday points, a pretty picture is painted for you. It's mostly exaggerated promises of all the choices of break-away spots for you and your family. All too often they fail to mention the hidden administration costs, excessive fee increases, and fine print making it almost impossible for you as buyer to back out if you want to.

And very often this "amazing exclusive offer" that the sly salesman tells you about turns out to be anything but. Take for example the sales trick for accommodation in a sought-after seafront hotel in one of our popular Western Cape coastal towns. What the wily salesman doesn't tell you is that the offer is limited to a single night per year during a quiet week.

“
For successful camping timeshare or camping points we'll have to go about it differently and not make the same mistakes as the fixed-accommodation industry.
”

THE AUDITING FIRM Grant Thornton estimates that almost 750 000 South Africans have some form of timeshare points. Widescale misleading sales practises in this industry have gone unpunished for years. The National Consumers Commission, however, is now launching a nationwide investigation after an opposition

party submitted more than 4 000 written consumer complaints against 18 holiday clubs. A spokesperson for the party says most of the complaints have to do with the non-availability and poor quality of options. He reckons consumers' rights are violated with contracts that bind them permanently.

They also came to realise that two of the biggest holiday clubs sell more points than they have holiday options available. Points are also basically worthless in the so-called secondhand market.

One of the biggest clubs apparently also fraudulently marketed points ownership as timeshare ownership. In terms of the law, there is a clear distinction between the ownership of holiday points and timeshare.

The party became aware of the problems when it assisted over 60 000 members in the Transnet pension scheme drama. Many of the pensioners tried unsuccessfully to get rid of their club membership. A dubious salesman apparently sold a wealth of holiday points to pensioners.

Some clubs have even started threatening people who can't afford their timeshare with the seizing of assets. Hundreds of consumers offered that their points be taken away without compensation, but in the contract fine print they are not absolved of the yearly fee.

Amongst the victims are those who regret selling their caravans to buy points. One retiree says if he looks at the prices of second-hand caravans, he realises it's a

much better investment with more options: "I should have had my head examined when I allowed a salesman to convince me to sell my caravan".

The National Consumer Tribunal recently used the Consumer Protection Act to classify the activities of one of the biggest holiday clubs as corrupt. It's on the High Court roll.

MANY ATTEMPTS TO exchange chalet or apartment accommodation holiday points for camping accommodation schemes at the sought-after campsites fell flatter faster than a pyramid scheme.

Resorts also didn't reap the full financial benefits of the points. A marketer earned a percentage of the stand money as income.

Regular campers know that during December and over Easter weekend demand for stands is high, and in the Kruger you don't easily find a spot between 16 June and 16 July.

Now there's a new scheme that wants to register 100 or so independent resorts for camping holidays, and wants to make dealers members in exchange for discount on camping goods and services.

For successful camping timeshare or camping points we'll have to go about it differently and not make the same mistakes as the fixed-accommodation industry. Let's keep a watchful eye on things so as not to suffer the same headaches.

And don't hawk your caravan to buy holiday points or sign a contract for yearly fees! 

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FORD RANGER



Mercedes makes its mark

South Africans will be getting a belated Christmas present from Mercedes-Benz, but judging by the reaction to the new X-Class double cab bakkie, the wait until early next year will be worth it. (The first models are due to hit the European roads in November.)

Double cab bakkies are popular in South Africa, and the manufacturers in this segment regularly refresh their existing models. These days you often also see Eastern names investing in this market. Even Fiat's first double cab recently arrived on our shores. The market, therefore, is not stagnant.

Diesel vehicles currently dominate the sales charts, and with its X-Class, Mercedes – known more for its luxury vehicles – is widening selection with a 2,3 l diesel engine. The X-Class's 220d model has a single turbocharger that provides 403 Nm torque, but an extra turbo in the 250d pushes





Families also use double cab bakkies as family vehicles, and for this reason Mercedes has included extra comfort. For example, the X-Class comes standard with a 1,5 l water bottle holder in each door. The ride also promises to be very comfortable, because the chassis has front and rear coil springs.

In terms of towing ability, Mercedes doesn't hold back, because depending on the model it's either 1 650 kg or 3,5 t. Although, the 1 650 kg is only for the X200, the petrol model not destined for South Africa. The diesel models' tare weight ranges between 2 158 kg and 2 259 kg, so it's heavy enough with its 403–450 Nm to tow the largest caravans on our roads without issues. The braking system ensures further peace of mind, because all the models come standard with disc brakes on all the wheels. The X-Class's trailer sway

The price is still unavailable. In Germany you have to cough up €37 294, which amounts to about R570 000. >



AN ENGINE FOR CHOBE

Echo4x4 is known for its off-road trailers and caravans as well as their wide variety of canvas tents. After the company recently expanded their operations and built its first motorhome, it now has a unique approach: Clients can bring their single cab bakkies and Echo will fit its off-road caravan to the chassis of the bakkie.

The Chobe, Echo's newest off-road caravan, launched late last year. It's already popular because it's small and perfect for a couple. And instead of having only one bed that folds out over the A-frame, you can get another double bed that folds out of the right-hand side panel – perfect for a small family.

From a manufacturer's point of view it's a clever design, especially because clients have more choice. The Chobe's body fits like a glove onto a bakkie – and the bakkie's length isn't affected.

The motorhome is called the Chobe RV, and is intended only for couples because there is only one double bed – the one that folds out of the right-hand side panel (the bakkie's cabin takes up the space of the other bed).

The Chobe RV comes standard with a 70 l water tank (which includes a pump), a kitchen with crockery, mugs, and even whisky glasses (six of everything), a fire extinguisher, power system (that includes an Echo 80 Ah double battery system), and even an Echo braai grid that fits over the spare wheel.

What is optional? Among other things a 150 W solar panel R7 780, 20 l microwave oven (700 W) R1 195, 3 kg gas bottle R550, side panels for the canopy R6 850, and geyser R2 895.

The figures 2,415 (l) x 1,84 m (w) – the body of the Chobe.

Price R191 480 (labour included).

Contact 012 345 3333;

✉ echoacc@echo4x4.co.za; 🌐 echo4x4.co.za



CLEVER. With their Chobe RV, Echo4x4 managed to marry the caravan world and the motorhome industry by fitting the off-road caravan to the chassis of a single cab.





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A (perfect) shot in the dark

As if Ford's flagship Ranger didn't look intimidating enough, the company has released a special model where all the customary chrome is painted black in all the right places.

Text **Charles Thompson**

Every few years, bakkie manufacturers breathe new life into an existing model by releasing a slightly different version of the same product. Toyota, for example, had the Hilux Dakar and Legend 45, Isuzu the KB X-Rider, and Volkswagen the Amarok Ultimate.

These types of limited editions often have nothing more than a shiny bumper and a few stickers on the body, an upgrade for which you shell out tens of thousands of rands.

Ford recently expanded its popular Ranger range with just such a limited version – the Fx4. And it's a very special addition.

Appearance matters

It's not for nothing that Ford refers to it as the "black pack" to describe the changes to the Fx4. The bakkie gets 17-inch Panther alloy wheels and a pitch black Fx4 roll bar and roof racks. With its pitch black grille and bumper, the Fx4 looks seriously mean from the front, and the picture is completed with a black steel rear bumper. Even the fog lights, door handles, and side mirrors have matte black covers, and we particularly like the big black sticker that covers the

largest part of the bonnet – very impressive.

The Fx4 can be ordered in white, silver, grey or black. In black – like our test model – this sturdy Ford looks almost like a big cat that's getting ready to pounce.

Pop the hood

Under the bonnet, there is the same mighty 3.2 turbodiesel engine (147 kW @ 3 000 rpm and 470 Nm torque between

1 500 rpm and 2 750 rpm) as used by its fellow Rangers, and you can choose between a six-speed automatic or six-speed manual gearbox.

And while Ford's automatic gearbox for the Ranger might not be the most sophisticated one in a local bakkie, it's still dependable and does its job. The gearbox "gets to know" your driving style over time, and after a few days it starts changing gears almost always when you think it should do so.

You also get the same tough ladder frame chassis,



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- Carabiner
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- Outside-accessible Features
- One-hand Operable Features



BATMOBILE. Shod in menacing all-black trim, the Ranger Fx4 casts an imposing shadow, with details like the model-specific stickers, bulky roll bars, and black 17-inch wheels setting it apart from lesser Rangers.

CLOCKS. Instrumentation consists of an analogue speedometer, flanked by digital colour screens that can be customised to display exactly what the driver wants, such as navigation instructions, audio or even a compass.



ground clearance of 237 mm, wading depth of 800 mm, and a towing capacity of 3 500 kg. The 17-inch wheels are suitable for both tar and off-road. And because the Fx4 is built on the same chassis as the popular XLT, you get the same tough 4x4 and work abilities.

The interior

The Fx4's interior is the same well-known stylish cabin as the flagship XLT model. And there is almost nothing from the seven-seater sports utility vehicle, the Everest, that you won't also find in this bakkie.

There is Ford's Sync3 infotainment system, a neat and intuitive computer system that integrates and controls everything from the air con to the satellite navigation and Bluetooth on an eight-inch touch screen. The system runs smoothly, with no delays when you're moving between programmes or entering commands. The interface also didn't lock up once while we drove with the bakkie – very often a glitch with these types of vehicle computers that try to do too much with limited computing power.

We are also impressed with the amount of power sockets in the cabin. There are two USB and three 12 V sockets (two in front and one for the passengers at the back). More bakkie manufacturers should start following the same recipe. One USB socket for the whole

family isn't enough anymore.

Like the Everest, the Ranger Fx4 also has two digital screens in the console in front of the driver. Only the speedometer is analogue – all the other info is displayed on two colour screens to the right and left of it.

Because you have digital screens, you have control over what is displayed.

For example, you can decide if you want to see the tachometer and fuel gauge, or the fuel gauge and your fuel consumption, or a digital speedometer that gives your speed in digits. On the

left-hand screen you can choose between options like a compass, the name of the album or radio station you're listening to, or directions if you're using the navigation system.

Let's drive

The Fx4 remains one of the more comfortable bakkies on the road, especially with an automatic gearbox. The EPAS electronic steering system makes steering a breeze, and the dynamic stability control and roll over mitigation helps to make the ride much more comfortable. The Ranger

also features trailer sway control to assist you when the caravan or trailer starts to swerve out of control. It also features a handy system that minimises the impact of a heavy load on the drive quality and steering control of the vehicle.

Seven airbags, one of which protects the driver's knees, help to give the Ranger a five-star NCAP safety rating. That's the highest mark awarded, and the Ranger was the first bakkie in the world to achieve this. 

Price R608 900

FORD RANGER 3.2 TDCI DOUBLE CAB FX4



1 DARK HORSE. The grille and front bumper are painted pitch black in the Fx4 edition of the Ranger.

2 UNMISSABLE. A big black sticker that covers the bonnet makes the Fx4 look even more imposing.

3 X-FACTOR. Stickers on the side and at the back of the Fx4 further distinguishes it from the normal model.

4 BLACK SWAG. The 17-inch alloy wheels are pitch black and look great on this special Ranger, particularly with the black body paint.



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All bark and lots of bite

The second generation Audi Q5 is here and Cyril Klopper muddies it up in the name of science.

It would be a gross understatement to say that the Q5 is a popular SUV. By this time last year, Audi had sold over a million Q5s in more than a 100 countries. Europeans are particularly smitten with this mid-size SUV. From Milan to Manchester, you'll find a Q5 parked on almost every street.

Like the A4, the Q5 is an important model

for Audi, and they absolutely needed to get it right with this second generation model. The German manufacturer hopes to sell around 100 units per month in South Africa, which seems doable considering they sold 90 in July of this year, a mere month before this new Q5 was launched. So what changes did Audi make?

On the outside

There is a strong evolutionary link between the new and old Q5, unlike the second generation Q7, which was completely redesigned to distance itself from the first generation Q7. It's as if the old Q5 was sent to boot camp and returned all muscled and toned. The character lines are crisper and the



nose slopes down lower into a squat, broad face. By improving the Q5's aerodynamics, the lab coats at Audi not only lowered the drag coefficient but also reduced wind noise.

The new Q5 is 90 kg lighter than before, despite having grown in nearly all of its dimensions. Even the boot is up from 550 litres to 610 litres. The 17-inch wheels limit your choice in all-terrain tyres but we doubt the average Q5 owner would be interested in fitting a set of Mickey Thompsons.

On the inside

If you're built like Eben Etzebeth you probably won't enjoy the driver's seat. Audi claims they created more space by "floating" and simplifying the dashboard, but we don't think they went far enough. The centre console that runs between the front seats continuously rubs against your left leg, and the bewildering array of glowing buttons can be intimidating. It's not claustrophobic behind the wheel, but you are constantly aware of the car around you. The similarly sized BMW X3 and even the Mercedes GLC feel more airy.

Standard equipment includes a tyre monitoring system, multifunction steering wheel, and a rather good sound system. If you want semi-autonomous driving, air suspension and electrically adjustable seats, you'll have to order one of several options packages, which quickly increases the already hefty price tag.

Under the bonnet

There are three engine variants to choose from: A diesel 2.0 TDI, petrol 2.0 TFSI, and a 3.0 SQ5. The latter is currently only available in petrol but a diesel SQ5 is on its way. The smart money is on the sensible 2.0 TFSI, which has 20 kW more power than the old Q5, bringing it up to 185 kW. But it's the TDI and its 400 Nm of torque that won us over. At a smidgen under R700 000, it's also the cheapest Q5 in the range, which is great news because we prefer it over the TFSI anyway.

Then there is the amazeballs 3.0 SQ5. Knock the selector into Sport and tap the Tiptronic gear shift paddles in Dynamic driving mode. There are eight gears to paddle through, and every gear shift is punctuated by a throaty bark from the exhaust system. Fun!

Behind the wheel

We drove the Q5 along muddy dirt roads in the Western Cape's Overberg region. Almost any other softroader would have skidded on the slippery surface, but the quattro system



SPACE AGE. Despite Audi making significant changes to the dashboard – in the interests of increased legroom – the accommodations remain somewhat cramped, but it's no less pleasing to the eye. The boot is 60 litres larger than before and the sill is clad in metal so that you can drag luggage over it without concern about damaging the car. The TDI has a surprisingly quiet diesel engine (at least when heard from the inside) and the wide body gives this Audi a daring appearance.



never faltered. It's a part-time AWD system that requires just two milliseconds to engage when the ECU detects – or even predicts – wheel spin. The benefit of this is that you save fuel by not having all four wheels drive all of the time.

The five-link suspension performed brilliantly as we crashed through pot holes. The SQ5 fared particularly well on gravel despite its 18-inch wheels, thanks to the adaptive air suspension which automatically adjusts damping and raises the ride height. Our only complaint would be the lack of steering feedback. The Q5 doesn't have the same sense of connectedness as one gets in a Jaguar F-Pace. Steering through corners feels a little numb, and you're not really aware what the road is like beneath the tyres. No doubt this is exactly what many drivers want, but we prefer a more involved drive.

Conclusion

Audi's quattro system is impressive as always. The interior trim is of outstanding quality and the exterior styling is both tasteful and humble. The price tag is unfortunate but South Africa's economic climate rather than Audi is to blame for this. Of the current five derivatives we choose the base TDI model. Yes, the SQ5 is a blast to drive but if we wanted brute performance we'd have picked something like a Porsche Macan instead.

Prices

Q5 2.0 TDI quattro S tronic R698 000
Q5 2.0 TDI quattro S tronic Sport R748 000
Q5 2.0 TFSI quattro S tronic R747 500
Q5 2.0 TFSI quattro S tronic Sport R797 500
SQ5 3.0 TFSI quattro Tiptronic R1 044 000

Welcome to the land of luxury



Can a two-litre diesel engine in a seven-seater sports utility vehicle make the grade? Yes, says Volvo, and with loads of spoils.

Text **Charles Thompson**

Less than a decade ago, Volvo was on its way out, although you'd think this Swedish name would flourish as part of Ford's premier brands, along with the likes of Jaguar, Aston Martin, and Land Rover. Ford did, however, expand their product range in this era with a few new luxury Volvos, of which the XC60 – currently an extremely popular mid-range SUV in Europe – is one. But think about it: Can you remember anything special about a Volvo from the early aughts?

By 2008, Ford was making a loss with Volvo, and it took the takeover by Chinese company Geely to breathe new life into this marque. The transaction was

concluded in 2010, and Stefan Jacoby, previously the boss at Volkswagen in the US, came in to get the house in order.

With the support of Geely, Volvo started doing advanced, even revolutionary, research and development. Their engines are now modular, meaning with a few small adjustments the same engine can be used in a wide range of vehicles. The chassis is equally adjustable, thanks to the SPA philosophy (Scalable Product Architecture), whereby various vehicles – from sedans to five- and seven-seater sports utility vehicles – can be built on the same basic chassis.

Volvo also recently announced that from 2019 all new Volvos

will contain an electric motor. According to the company, every new Volvo will be either a hybrid vehicle or completely electric. They're even planning a few high-performance electric cars under their Polestar trademark.

So if you're given the opportunity to test drive a Volvo for a week, especially one from the flagship XC90 range, you of course grab the opportunity with both hands.

Under the bonnet

The XC90 D5 has a two-litre four-cylinder diesel engine. It might sound a bit lightweight for a utility vehicle that can comfortably transport seven people, but that's hardly the case. The engine

has two turbochargers, and the performance figures are impressive: 173 kW at 4 000 rpm and 480 Nm between 1 750 rpm and 2 250 rpm.

The torque curve looks slightly weak on paper, because the engine develops its maximum torque in a very narrow range on the tachometer. Volvo, however, has smart technology for this: PowerPulse. If you've ever driven a turbo-engined car you may have noticed that it takes a while for "turbo power" to "kick in", because all turbo-engines first need enough revs – and therefore pressure – before the turbo charger can do its job. But PowerPulse sucks air in through a compressor at the air filter and

stores it in an air tank under the bonnet. When you need power at a low speed (and low engine revs), this air is fed to the turbo and you have enough power from the get-go.

All this power and technology, coupled with a sophisticated eight-speed gearbox, makes the D5 a pleasure on tar and dirt road. You never worry about power and accelerate quickly at every traffic light and when overtaking. In fact, it is sometimes difficult to believe you're driving such a large vehicle equipped with a relatively small engine.

Inside

The XC90 D5 Inscription lies more or less in the middle of the XC90 range, but after the initial glance we had to check Volvo's website to make sure we didn't actually get a model with higher specifications.

It's pure Swedish luxury behind the wheel and in the rest of the cabin – soft, black Napa leather covers large heated seats, a nine-inch touch screen in the dashboard looks like a tablet and controls every imaginable function, a 12-inch electronic screen replaces the traditional speed- and tachometer, and a

projection in the windshield shows info such as speed and the next turn-off if you're using the satnav. Cameras in the windscreen read road signs and display the current speed limit, in case you missed the sign.

As part of its Premium Pack, one of the extras (at R65 000) you get is a Bower & Wilkens sound system with no less than 19 speakers. We tried listening to my rock'n roll playlist but it didn't last long. In this cocoon of luxury you rather want soft, soothing music. Something like a violin concerto.

Behind the wheel

The XC90 doesn't just drive well, it drives itself! With the Pilot Assist system (standard), this Volvo can accelerate, brake and follow the road up to a speed of 130 km/h. All it needs is a vehicle in front of it and visible road markings. (The latter is often a tall order on South African roads.)

And you can't exactly lie on the backseat with a book – if you keep your hands off the steering for too long, the vehicle warns you to put them back on. But technology like this drastically decreases the effort it takes to drive long distances.



THE GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING

The stylish design is in no way ostentatious. The air suspension is a must-have and certainly improves the drive quality on gravel. The tow hitch is deployed at the press of a button and a reverse camera offers a bird's-eye view on your surroundings. The rear-facing camera can be selected to allow safe and accurate reversing up to your trailer or caravan. All this tech is available on a large touch screen.

The system also includes adjustable cruise control. Often with ordinary cruise control you maintain a speed, but as long as there is a vehicle in front of you, the Volvo will brake and accelerate within your speed limit. It works wonderfully in town and on the open road.

The XC90 also has Volvo's Intellisafe system that with a combination of radar, cameras, and computer technology spots pedestrians, cyclists, and large animals, and either warns you or reacts autonomously. The system monitors cross traffic at a crossing, alerts you to vehicles in your blind spot or when you veer out of your lane, and will brake if it looks like you're about to drive into a vehicle in front of you.

Conclusion

There is a reason why the XC90 has won South Africa's Car of the Year award. It's a superb car in all aspects, with a powerful yet economical engine, loads of spoils for the standard price, and so many security systems it's almost impossible to make an accident in it. The only problem is that you don't often have a spare million lying around.

VOLVO XC90 D5 AWD INSCRIPTION GEARTRONIC



1 TOW STAR

The tow bar is hidden neatly behind the bumper and is accessed by the push of a button.

2 ON THE UP AND UP

Thanks to air suspension you can increase the ground clearance by 300 mm for dirt roads.

3 TYRE-MANIA

The 20-inch alloy wheels are definitely made for tar roads, but full-time four-wheel drive makes dirt road driving a pleasure.

4 BRIGHT SPARK

The headlights move in the direction the car is turning.

Base price
R1 031 000

Price as tested
R1 175 750



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DELUXE BULL BAR

PLUS MONSTER
WINCH

PLUS RECOVERY
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7" COMET LED SPOTLIGHT	R3 850
SUSPENSION UPGRADE	R21 150
UNDER BODY PROTECTION PLATES	R7 250
SIDE STEPS	R6 595
SIDE STEPS & RAILS	R10 885
REAR PROTECTION TOW BAR	R12 885

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BULL BAR

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A bull bar and a winch

In the third instalment of our bakkie project the attention shifts to the front of the BT-50 for two very important off-road modifications.

Text **Schalk Jonker** Photos **Lorraine Flack**

Our brand new Mazda BT-50 3.2 4x4 SLE bakkie (automatic, double cab) that we're testing long term has already been kitted out with tough BF Goodrich T/A tyres and a steel rear bumper as part of our bakkie project. This month we're adding an Ironman bull bar and winch.

Every month we make a new off-road modification to the Mazda and explain the importance of said modification. We chat about how and why it was done and how much it costs.

Why a new bull bar?

A bull bar is one of the most important things you can buy for your off-road vehicle. And it does a lot more than simply alter your 4x4's appearance.

Your and your family's safety is the principle reason why you should seriously consider a bull bar. It also protects your vehicle's engine (the radiator in particular) when a kudu or a mopane tree unexpectedly jumps out in front of you in northern Namibia. There are certain places where you simply don't want to deal with a cracked radiator.

A bull bar also improves your vehicle's approach angle, which makes for better off-road ability. The approach angle is the angle between the ground and the imaginary line between the bottom of the front bumper and where the tyres touch the ground. Most of the newer 4x4 models have low plastic bumpers – for aerodynamic purposes. It's definitely not designed for off-roading and can easily get damaged. These plastic bumpers aren't recovery-friendly, but with a steel bull bar you don't have to worry about damaging anything when you have to tow the vehicle over uneven terrain.

MOST EXPERTS will agree that a winch shouldn't be the most important part of your recovery arsenal. The biggest limitation is that it can only be used on the one end of your vehicle and it's also useless without a tree, anchor or a buddy's vehicle. But that's not to say that a winch doesn't play a very important role, and if used correctly it can make recovery a lot safer and more manageable.

There are a few things to consider before spending your hard-earned 13th cheque on a winch. How much weight should it be able to handle? How much does it weigh? How much does your vehicle weigh? Where should you mount it? The best advice is to chat to an installer about which model will be best suited to your vehicle.

We put Ironman's Commercial Deluxe bull bar and the Monster winch on the BT-50 – both tailored for the Mazda.

Put it on

Like last month, we did the installation with Johann "Tyres" Viljoen and his very competent team at 1st Alignment Centre in Stikland, Cape Town.

The bull bar was designed specifically for the BT-50 and fits perfectly. Johann and his guys first cut a section off the plastic bumper to make space for the bull bar. With this out of the way, they fastened the bracket for the winch to the chassis, mounted the winch, and put the bull bar back over it.

The bull bar comes with its own lights and has crumple zones for added safety. Johann says the bull bar will not interfere with the air bag sensors and that they'll still deploy when necessary.



Modifications so far

JULY 2017

BFG tyres

R16 780

AUGUST 2017

Ironman rear bumper

R10 885

(+ R1 083 for installation)

SEPTEMBER 2017

Ironman bull bar

R14 470

(+ R1 500 for installation)

SEPTEMBER 2017

Ironman winch

R12 277

(+ R650 for installation)

Total

R57 645

*This installation was done by 1st Alignment Centre,
78 Willow Street, Bellville, Cape Town. Contact them on
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“Little” Everest stands its ground

With the arrival of the new Ford Everest a year or two ago, there were only two models to choose from. But now consumers are spoilt for choice, because the range has been expanded by a further six models.

Text and photos **Leon Botha**



FORD EVEREST XLS 2.2 4X4 (MANUAL)

The first two models of the new Everest were both given the 3.2 litre turbodiesel engine, and with a vehicle on the tow bar it's pure towing pleasure. Now, a year or so later, Ford has expanded the range to eight models, but stuck with the diesel engines.

Another 3.2 litre model was added, as well as five 2.2 litre models. But even though some of the newer models have the smaller engine, Ford didn't

lose the towing ability. You can still hitch up to 3 t with a nose weight of up to 300 kg.

Out of sight

The ball side of the tow bar is detachable. It is a solid piece of square steel that fits into the square tube in the fixed part of the tow bar. A shaft, that fits in a round hole through the tow bar and tube, keeps the tow bar in place, but it does exhibit some play when you jiggle it. It's minor though and doesn't

bother you. When you're towing you can hear the movement of the caravan's coupler as you brake and pull away.

The ball is 520 mm above the ground. If you leave the tow bar in place when you unhitch, you can fasten the bolt to the bottom of the tube so that it doesn't make a noise when there isn't anything on the ball. You do, however, have to loosen the bolt when you hitch. When you're not using the tow bar and you want it

out of the way, there's some space underneath the floor in the boot.

Looking back

On this type of vehicle you'd expect a reverse camera to come standard. While this is the case with the Everest (it's located above the centre console), the screen is quite small – about the size of two upright matchboxes next to each other. Yes, it's *that* small, but it's still useful.

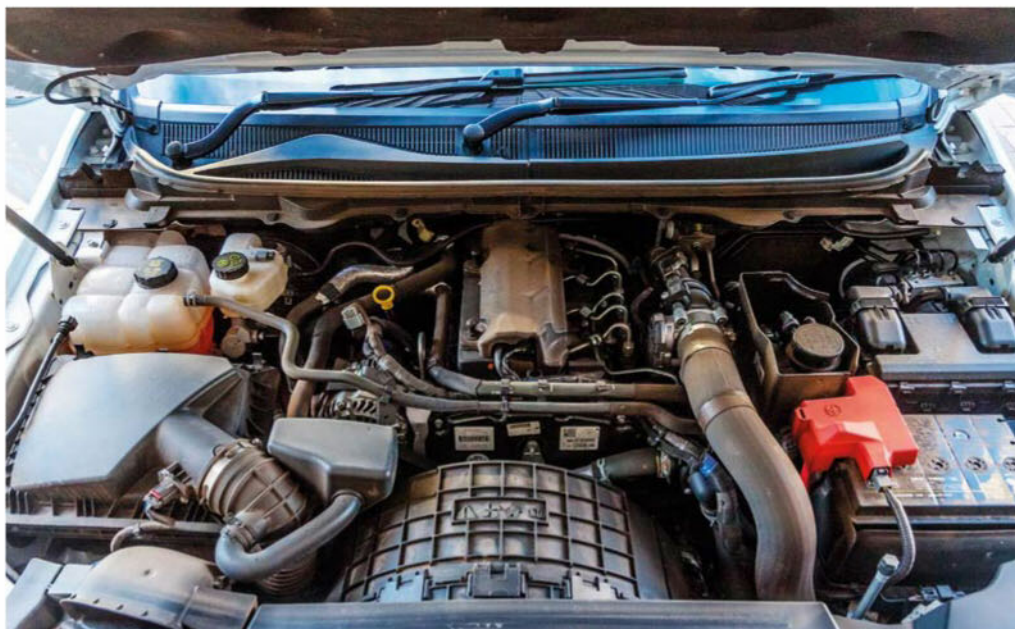
The lens of the camera sits in the bodywork, right above the ball, and you can see the coupler through the screen as you hitch.

The lens's angle is extra wide and shows you all the possible obstacles you could reverse into. Apart from the sensors that warn you of possible dangers, you can also see what's going on behind you from the driver's seat. You can reverse with ease right up to the caravan's coupler. You can also switch off the sensor's alarm with the touch of a button.

The screen has index lines like the lines on the road. These show you in which direction you're reversing. The further you turn the steering wheel, the more the lines curve in the direction you're going.

Between the two outside index lines is another line, almost like a broken line on the road – this means you can see the centre of the "lane" and aim with the ball of the tow bar.

As soon as you push the caravan's light socket into the harness section of the Everest, the index lines disappear. The Everest's computer then knows you have something on the ball and the sensor alarm is deactivated. >



CLEAR AND PRESENT. These days engines are usually hidden away completely behind plastic panels, but in the case of the test vehicle, you can see almost the entire engine. The side mirrors are also big enough so you can keep an eye on the caravan.





Something else you don't see everyday is the function with which you can focus on the rear image and enlarge the section at the top of the screen. The lens is 300 mm above the bumper and the image shows 400 mm on both sides. If you enlarge the image, you see 220 mm both sides of the centre point of the lens on the bumper.

A heavy lightweight

The bodywork of the 2.2 litre Everest is relatively heavy for this engine (the 4x4 chassis adds to the weight). The 3.2 4x4 top model's tare weight is 2 368 kg and its 470 Nm is comfortable with the weight. But the 2.2 has 20% less torque (382 Nm) and when empty weighs only 100 kg less.

You feel the heavy bodywork, especially once you've hitched and you're trying to pull away. If you're not used to the car, it's easy to stall the engine but you eventually learn to rely more on the clutch to stop it from happening.

The engine is also slow at 2 000 rpm. When you pull away in first and the revs go to 4 000 rpm (which makes the engine sound strained) the revs fall a good 1 500 rpm when you shift to second gear. So the engine tows better in the higher revs.

Compared to an earlier tow test of the 3.2 litre model, the bigger engine is about 10% heavier on fuel with a similar

caravan: 15,1 ℓ/100 km versus 13 ℓ/100 km.

If you look only at the price of fuel (R12,71/ℓ at the time of the test), a trip will cost you R1,92/km with the 3.2 and R1,65/km with the 2.2. So if you're towing for 5 000 km, you'll save R1 350 – and the car is R100 000 cheaper than the 3.2.



Pieter Crous has towed with more than 60 different towing vehicles. This is what he thinks...

Pieter says

“Even though the test vehicle has 10 000 km on the clock, the gearbox feels stiff. It doesn't bother me, but I prefer an automatic gearbox. Every gear has its slot; it's not like you can drive the Everest like a race car and choose the shortest distance between gears with the gearshift.

The engine is a third smaller than that of the 3.2 litre model, but the car has enough power. It's not necessary to spend an extra R100 000 on the bigger engine.



“After only a few kilometres I could convincingly say: 'I'm already sold!'”



After only a few kilometres I could convincingly say: 'I'm already sold!'” The fabric seats are comfortable, but I noticed that the lights don't have an automatic adjustment that switches it on and off as light conditions change. Also; when you open a door, for example,

there isn't a warning light that comes on on the dashboard. The Everest rather clues you in on what's going on, and I really like it. When the engine is on and you open the driver's door, a message on the dashboard reads: 'Vehicle is on'. If you open the rear passenger door, the



ON AND OFF. The loose part of the tow bar can be removed quickly and easily. A pen holds it in place, but if you want to pack it away there's space underneath the floor in the boot.

computer lets you know: 'Rear left door open.'

Every vehicle has its speed with which you can comfortably tow. With the Everest I feel completely at home between 100–120 km/h. I have to add, Jurgens's Xplorer tows well. In fifth and at 100 km/h the engine goes at 2 300 rpm and tows comfortably, but it's too slow if you want to use sixth.

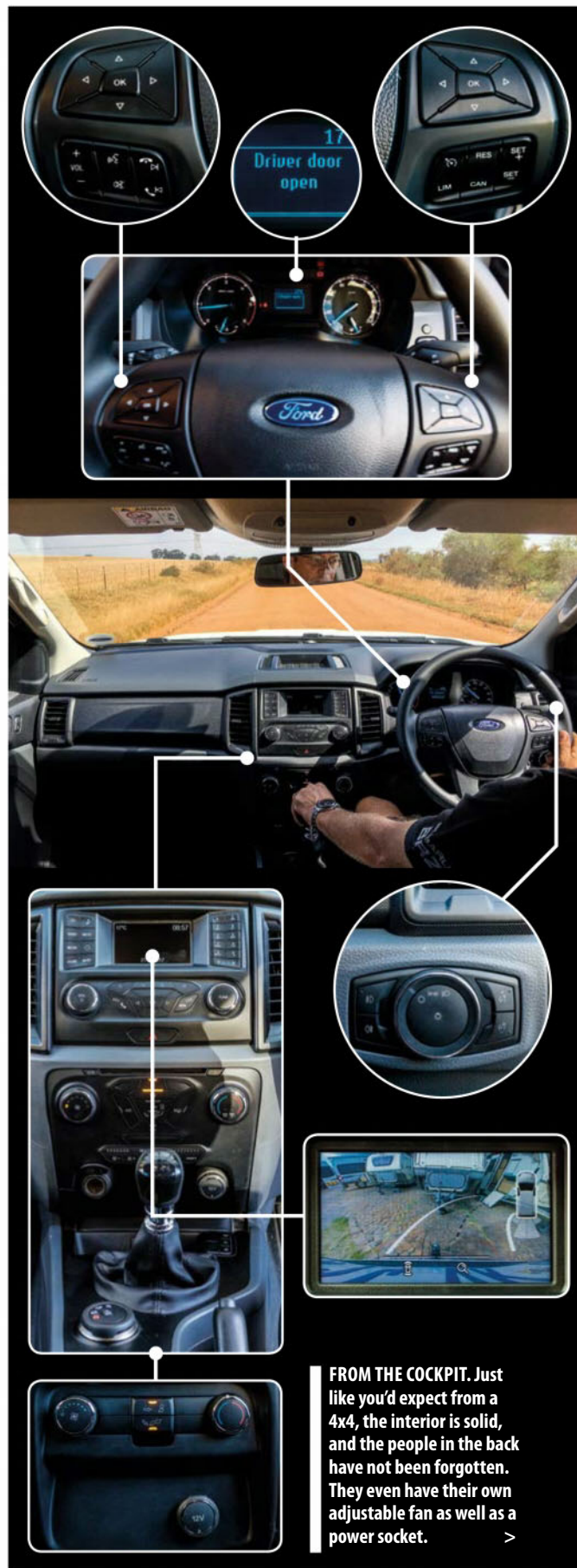
The revs fall with 500 rpm and the engine doesn't react if you want to accelerate. At 120 km/h and in sixth it's more comfortable, but you still have to be ready to gear down when

going uphill. The ideal towing gear, therefore, is fifth.

The ride is surprisingly good on bad dirt roads, even if you expect a more bumpy ride. You also don't hear any rattles inside the car.

When it comes to big 4x4 utility vehicles, the Everest is my choice – it's simply excellent value for money. Even though it's not the best towing vehicle in its class, it's still the one I'd buy.

It's my towing vehicle of the year out of all the vehicles I've towed so far, and the reasonable price greatly contributes to this.



FROM THE COCKPIT. Just like you'd expect from a 4x4, the interior is solid, and the people in the back have not been forgotten. They even have their own adjustable fan as well as a power socket.



What we towed

Make Jurgens Safari

Model Xplorer

Year 2008

GVM 1 650 kg

Weight on the axle during test 1 300 kg (weighed hitched to the Everest)

Nose weight 140 kg

go! Drive & Camp borrowed the Jurgens Xplorer from Tygerberg Caravans & Campworld.

Contact Wesley Dempster on 021 982 4670 for a closer look. tygerbergcaravans.co.za

The test

Distance 102,7 km

Top speed 121 km/h (GPS)

Average speed 61,8 km/h (highways, back roads, built-up areas as well as a corrugated dirt road).

Drive time 1 hour and 40 minutes.

Weather 19°C, sunny and partly cloudy with a 10 km/h southwesterly wind.

Before you open your wallet

What does the book say?

Fuel Diesel

Engine 2,198 ℓ

Cylinders 4

Power 115 kW @ 3 700 r.p.m.

Torque 382 Nm @

1 500-2 500 r.p.m.

Gearbox 6-speed (manual)

Drive chain Rear wheel, or four-wheel with diff lock on the rear wheels, and trailer sway control.

Tare 2 268 kg

GVM 2 900 kg

GCM 5 900 kg

Carrying capacity 750 kg

Wading depth Not available.

Towing ability for an overbraked towed item Ford allows up to 3 000 kg.

Dimensions 4 892 mm (l); 1 860 mm (w); 1 837 mm (h)

Wheelbase 2 850 mm

Track width Not available.

Ground clearance 225 mm

Fuel tank 80 ℓ

Price (new) R537 900

Price (secondhand) From R469 949 for a 2017 model with 6 000 km on the clock.

Fast facts

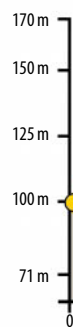
 **The tow bar** The tow bar is optional and removable. It costs R4 000, but doesn't include the ball. It's certified for a tow weight of 3 t and a nose weight of 300 kg.

 **Suspension** Independent coil springs in front as well as rear coil springs with Watt links. The Everest has a soft suspension and the tail dropped by about 3 cm with the 140 kg nose weight of the Xplorer on the ball.

 **What does the scale say?** 2 600 kg with a full tank of fuel, a driver behind the wheel, and the caravan's nose on the tow bar. The combination was

TOW PROFILE

Elevation





3 900 kg, which is a good 2 t below the allowed GVM.

Interior There's an upright hand-size space above the driver's head (for a six-foot person), and the same for the two occupants on the back seats next to the doors. You're also spoilt with all the leg room – two flat hands – but the person in the middle only has two fingers above his or her head.

Speed The odometer's 100 km/h is 5 km/h faster than the GPS's reading.

Fuel consumption You can trust the Everest's computer, because its calculations correlates with ours. Its 12,8 l/100 km (7,8 km/l) is very close to the measured 13 l/100 km (7,7 km/l).

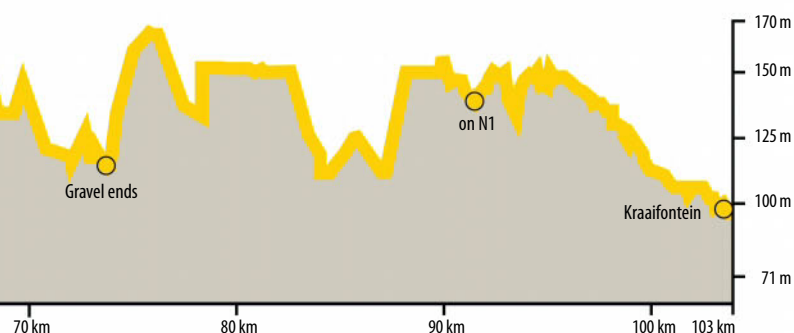
Finishes Predominantly dark grey and black, and

the dashboard gives the impression of solid, durable plastic.

Extras Besides the tow bar, amongst other things metallic paint at R1 200, front mud guards at R270, and an airbag at the driver's knees at R1 250.

Other models
XLS 2.2 R459 900; XLS 2.2 automatic R477 900; XLT 2.2 R489 900; XLT 2.2 automatic R509 900; XLT 3.2 automatic R569 900; XLT 3.2 4x4 automatic R639 900; Limited 3.2 4x4 automatic R699 900

go! Drive & Camp says Besides all the space in the Everest, the boot is a bonus. It's one of the biggest we've ever seen in a utility vehicle. (That's if you don't use the two seats in the back.)



From the competitors
(diesel and manual)



Mitsubishi Pajero Sport 2.5 Di-D 4x4
R574 900

400 Nm



Toyota Fortuner 2.4 GD-6
R456 300

400 Nm



Land Rover Discovery Sport 2.0 TD4 4x4
R698 100

380 Nm



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5 BUCKET-LIST PLACES IN AFRICA

We recently did an epic 90-day tour in a Toyota Fortuner, crossing six international borders and driving more than 17 000 km. We stopped at these iconic places along the way:



1

Drive to Dar es Salaam. Tanzania's biggest city is very accessible if you're travelling from South Africa – it's tar roads all the way. A trip there and back is one of the best self-drive tours you can do in Africa. Visit reserves like Ruaha and Mikumi along the way and take the ferry to see Zanzibar for a few days!



2

See Kilimanjaro. No, you don't have to climb it, but you should go and gaze at it. Africa's highest mountain is in northern Tanzania. Along the way you can visit national parks like Mkomazi, Arusha and Tarangire.



3

Go wild in Ngorongoro and the Serengeti. Two of Africa's most famous wilderness areas, and they're right next to each other! Lions, leopards and cheetahs galore, wildebeest in their thousands, a classic savannah sunset... You'll find all of the above and more.



4

Explore Rwanda. You can get around this little country on one tank of petrol. Go see mountain gorillas, golden monkeys and rare birds in the forest, and spend a few blissful days on the shores of Lake Kivu.



5

Fruit bats on steroids. Every year between October and December, Kasanka National Park in Zambia is home to up to 15 million fruit bats. Watch them leave their roosts at sunset. Wow!



One lucky reader* will team up with a South African sports hero and win a Toyota Fortuner. The teams will compete in a series of challenges this October** at Conrad Pezula.

WHO ARE THE HEROES?

- Dakar racing driver Giniel "Put-foot" de Villiers
- Cheetahs rugby player Oupa "Unstoppable" Mohoje
- Mountain biker Bianca "Handlebars" Haw
- Obstacle course athlete Hanneke "Hard-core" Dannhauser

WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO?

Being an all-rounder will count in your favour. You'll compete in cycling, speed and paddling challenges. To keep things interesting, Toyota might even throw in a cooking challenge...

HOW DO I ENTER?

Take a photo or make a video (optional, but it will make your entry stand out) and fill in the online entry form at Toyota.godriveandcamp.co.za. Don't delay – entries close on 29 September. Tell your friends to be on standby and vote for you in the online competition. The rest of the details will be confirmed at a later date. Terms and conditions apply.

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

**Dates to be determined.

The winner will drive off in a **TOYOTA FORTUNER** 2.4 GD-6 Auto worth more than R480 000!

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ALSO UP FOR GRABS



The four finalists will each win a 2017 Specialized Epic Comp FSR mountain bike, plus cycling apparel and Salomon safety gear.



The semi-finalists will each win a Garmin Virb Ultra 30 action camera.



Salomon

GARMIN

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go!

Drive&Camp



MOTORHOME-WORLD DISCOVERER 6

Pick up 6

Motorhome-World's Discoverer 6 motorhome is driving and camping comfort at its best – for a whole half a dozen people.

Text and photos **Dirk Kok**

The Bouwers family's motorhomes and off-road camping vehicles need no introduction. Bobo Campers, with Tim Bouwers at the helm, is Africa's largest motorhome and off-road camping vehicle rental company, supplying to local and international campers who want to explore South

Africa. After a few years' use, their fleet vehicles are made available to campers looking to buy a secondhand camping trailer or vehicle, and if you're in the market for a new motorhome, off-road motorhome, or off-road camping trailer, head to Motorhome-World, where Dennis Bouwers runs operations.

Motorhome-World builds motorhomes and off-road camping vehicles for anything from two to six people for Bobo and the camping market.

We camped at three places with the Discoverer 6 motorhome – with space for, yes, six.

You won't be able to drive technical terrain like the Sani Pass or the Baviaanskloof with

this big and luxurious motorhome (built on the chassis of a Iveco minibus) but it's a superb family motorhome for good tar, dirt and sandy roads.

And the best thing about it is that you have your entire camping home – complete with bathroom and kitchen – on board in the back of the Iveco's cabin.

Let's talk torque

We drove and camped with the Discoverer 6 on the Iveco 35S15 chassis. With its 2,3 l turbodiesel engine (107 kW and 350 Nm) and six-gear manual gearbox, the motorhome does a very respectable 110 km/h and even 120 km/h on the open road, despite its size, and it also doesn't shy away from uphill or overtaking. Our average diesel consumption was 12 l/100 km.

The two cabin seats have a spring system that you adjust with a rotary knob according to your weight to take the bumpiness out of the ride.

You sit nice and high and you can see the traffic and the road in front of you.

Together with the side mirrors, the rear-view mirror gives you a good view of the road behind you through the motorhome's large rear window. Just remember: the motorhome is high, so beware of the branches and that tap you might not see in the mirrors.

You also have the comfort of power steering, ABS, air con, a radio-CD-MP3 player, and electric windows. The Discoverer 6 is also available in two different eight-speed automatic models.



That 6...

By day the interior is a living space with seating for four at a table next to the motorhome's large rear and side windows. In front, directly behind the driver's seat, is more seating for four at a table.

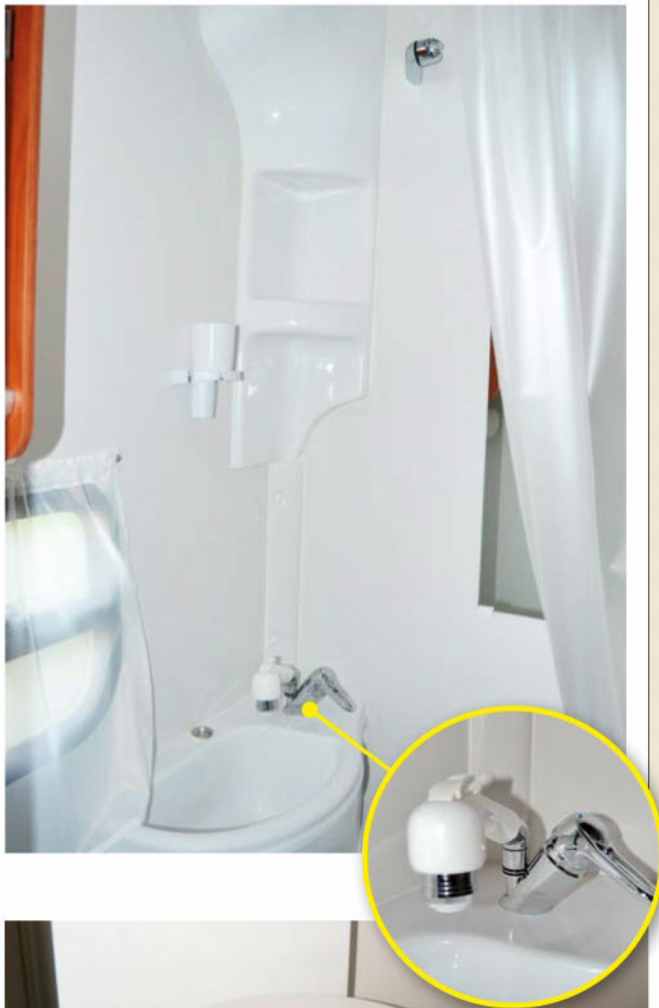
Two passengers sit with their backs to the driver, with the other two on the opposite side of the table facing front. These seats – with safety belts – are next to a large side window. In front of the rear window and side windows (that slide open and have removable mesh) are durable concertina curtains.

At night the seats and the tables combine to become double beds. You lift the rear tabletop off its post, remove the post, slide the tabletop in

between the seats, and put the cushions on the tabletop. It's as easy as pie and you have your first bed (1,3 x 2 m) ready. For the second bed (1,25 x 2 m) you need to lift the front tabletop of its post, remove the post, and use the tabletop as well as an extra-length top and extra cushion to build this bed.

The second bed stretches from the right side of the motorhome to the bathroom on the left. The third bed is for two people (1,4 x 2 m) and is in the hatch above the driver section.

You have to get on the bottom bed and then climb up a narrow three-step ladder to get to the top. Grandma and Grandpa won't manage and toddlers may need your help. >



Bathroom basics

The enclosed bathroom (with its own door) is on the left-hand side as you enter. It's spacious, with more than enough room for a sturdy rugby player, and the showerhead sits high enough for a tall adult to stand upright.

The basin tap also serves as the showerhead – it's hooked up via a pipe that extends and can be hung on a wall. The shower has a built-in space to put soap and shampoo, above the basin is a toothbrush holder, and in front of the room is a cabinet against the wall. The toilet is in front by the door, and a plastic curtain separates this from the shower. You remove the black water cassette on the outside of the motorhome.

Two 3 kg gas bottles are fastened in an outside cupboard above the right wheel. The 22 V socket used in campsites and the filler for the 60 l water tank are also above the right wheel. Behind this wheel is the outside



cupboard with the charger for the motorhome's two batteries (beneath the one back seat) as well as the 12 V en 220 V distribution box with the circuit breakers. There's also storage space for loose objects in this cabinet. The 20 l geyser (beneath the front bench next to the safe) works with electricity or gas. The switches for the choice between gas and electricity options are underneath the table, as well



as a two- and three-prong socket and USB charger.

The motorhome has oblong LED lights at the beds, in the kitchen and bathroom and outside above the door, all with settings to brighten or dim. There are also small spotlights at the beds that you can swivel in different directions to change the angle.

And with the control panel above the door in the motorhome, you stay in charge. This is where you switch off the electricity, outside light and water pump, and you can check if you have enough battery power and water and if everything that needs to charge is charging and everything is working as it should. >





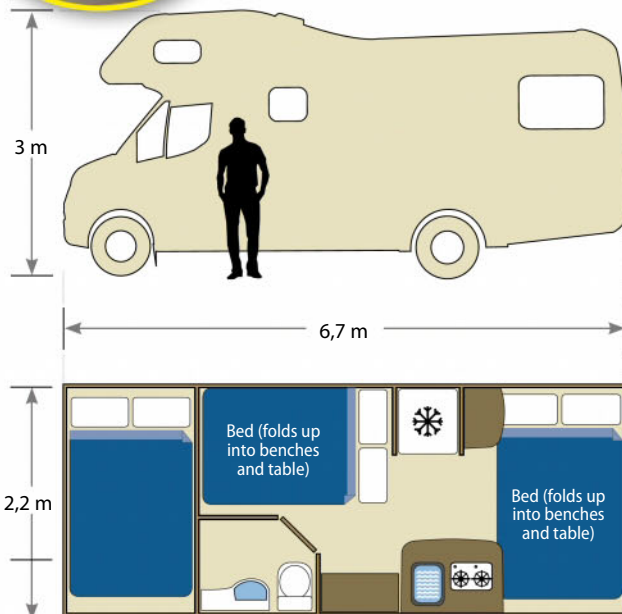
Kitchen confidential

The kitchen is to your right as you enter. The twin-plate gas stove and sink (with hot and cold water) are built-in next to each other, with glass tops over both. These glass tops double as work surfaces when you're not using the stove or sink. Beneath the stove is a cutlery drawer and beneath that another drawer with crockery for six people – and right at the bottom is a deep drawer for pots and pans.

There's storage space aplenty. To the right of the drawers, beneath the sink, is a hip-height cupboard with storage space for dishes and a bucket, and shelves at the top for things like braai tongs and dish cloths. In front of the stove is a wooden rack with two flat shelves and perspex partitions in front for spices, a torch, and candles, and a slanted wooden shelf where you can slide in fire-lighters and other small items.

The microwave (19 ℓ) is built into the wall above the sink, with a wine rack next to it. There are small cabinets with fold-out doors running down the right wall for things like glasses and food, or even towels and clothes.

At the back and in the front of the motorhome are more cabinets and shelves, and beneath the seats is more storage space plus a small safe. The drawers and shelves all close firmly with silver push-button handles. Because the vehicle is big, a person behind you can take a cooldrink out of the ice freezer (80 ℓ) against the opposite wall or walk to the table in the back while you're cooking or doing dishes. Above the fridge is a wardrobe, near which there is a work surface with two- and three-prong sockets, an air con and a ceiling fan that extracts food odours or draws fresh air in.



The technical stuff

Length 6,7 m

Width 2,2 m

Height 3 m

Interior height 1,92 m

Interior width 2,1 m

GVM 3 600 kg

Fuel tank 70 ℓ

Price R1 076 160–R1 122 900, depending on the model.

go! Drive & Camp says

Optional extras like a roll-down or retractable awning, bigger fridge or microwave and grey water tank are available.

go! Drive & Camp borrowed the Discoverer 6 from the manufacturers.



Plus

- It's luxurious, well-equipped and comfortable, and sleeps six people.
- Because it's a motorhome, you're allowed to drive it with your EB driver's licence.
- Despite its size, it's easy to drive.



Minus

- Its size limits the routes you can explore.
- It's not easy to get on to the top bunk.
- The roof fan sounds a bit like a Boeing taking off.

Dealerships

Motorhome-World builds the Discover 6 in Cape Town.

Contact 021 577 3863;

info@motorhome-world.com; motor-home-world.com





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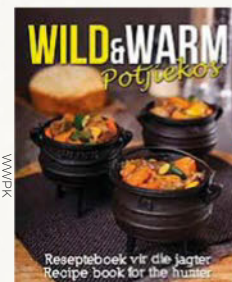


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Where Namibia hides its jewels

In the south of Namibia you can easily experience the Orange River, spectacular mountain landscapes, wild horses, the sea, and the Namib Desert in one holiday.

Text and photos **Evan Naudé**



You never visit Namibia only once – partly because the untouched beauty of the country is so enchanting, but also because it's such a big country.

The distance between attractions is big, and if you try to see the whole country in a week or two you're going to spend more time inside your vehicle than anywhere else.

Rather choose an area and take your time exploring the back routes because that's where Namibia hides its most beautiful jewels. The south is full of places like these. There's enough here to fill a multitude of holidays. >



All along the Orange

The Vioolsdrif border post is the most popular and easiest port into Namibia. From here the N7 on the South African side turns into the B1, and if you quickly want to get to Windhoek or further north, this is the road to take. But if you want to experience the southern part of the country properly and in all its glory, head north-west and climb onto the C13.

The 50 km between Noordoewer and Aussenkehr is tarred – there's even an Engen with a Wimpy – but on the other side of Aussenkehr it turns into a gravel road that winds westwards all along the Orange River. For almost 90 minutes you drive through Ai-Ais-Richtersveld Transfrontier Park, an impressive geological spectacle.

The paths south of the river – in the Richtersveld – are intended only for 4x4s, but on the Namibian side it's not a requirement. Here you can experience the scenery on a wide and even dirt road without any trouble.

If you leave the border post at the break of dawn, you'll see the day's first rays start to colour in the mountain landscape. Pack your coffee flask, park

next to the river, and see if you can spot a giant kingfisher or hear an osprey's call between the cliffs. Even though the Richtersveld is a dry place, the river is teeming with life.

The road eventually brings you to Sendelingsdrif. Here is a border post where you can travel with a ferry over the river to the South African side of the Richtersveld.

About 25 km north of Sendelingsdrif lies Rosh Pinah. It's on the other side of this town, when the C13 once again turns into a long stretch of tar, that Namibia opens up in front of you for the first time.

Where the wild horses run

Aus is known for two things: its history as a prisoner-of-war camp during the First World War, and the feral horses that roam outside the town. In town there are still a few buildings from way back when – like the Bahnhof Hotel, which doesn't just give you a glimpse of bygone times but also a cold beer. The remains of the prison can be seen on the outskirts of town.

About 20 km outside of Aus, on the B4, is a waterhole with a lookout point over

the Garub Plains, where you can see the wild horses.

No one knows exactly where they came from: Some say they are descendants of the horses left behind by the Schutztruppe after the First World War, or that they are survivors of a ship that ran aground south of Lüderitz, while others reckon their ancestors are a team of horses that belonged to Captain Hans Heinrich von Wolf, a German who built the Duwisib Castle not far from here and who escaped after the war. Whatever the case might be, the horses claimed this stretch of land for themselves and over the years adapted to survive in the tough desert conditions.

The waterhole next to the B4 is part of attempts by a non-profit organisation, the Namibia Wild Horses Foundation, to look after the wild horses during >



THROUGH THE RICHTERSVELD (main picture).

Between Aussenkehr and Rosh Pinah is a well-graded gravel road on the Namibian side of the Ai-Ais/Richtersveld transfrontier park.

ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR (below left). The road signs in the NamibRand Nature Reserve warns drivers to be on the lookout for local residents.

RIVERSIDE (right). The C13 takes you all along the Orange River right up to Noordoewer. The river is an oasis in the arid environment and teems with birdlife.





times of drought. The past few years have been dry ones, and you can see it when you look at the condition of some of the horses. But do resist the temptation to feed the animals (some of them are very tame and will walk right up to your car) or to touch them. Rather donate money if you want to help.

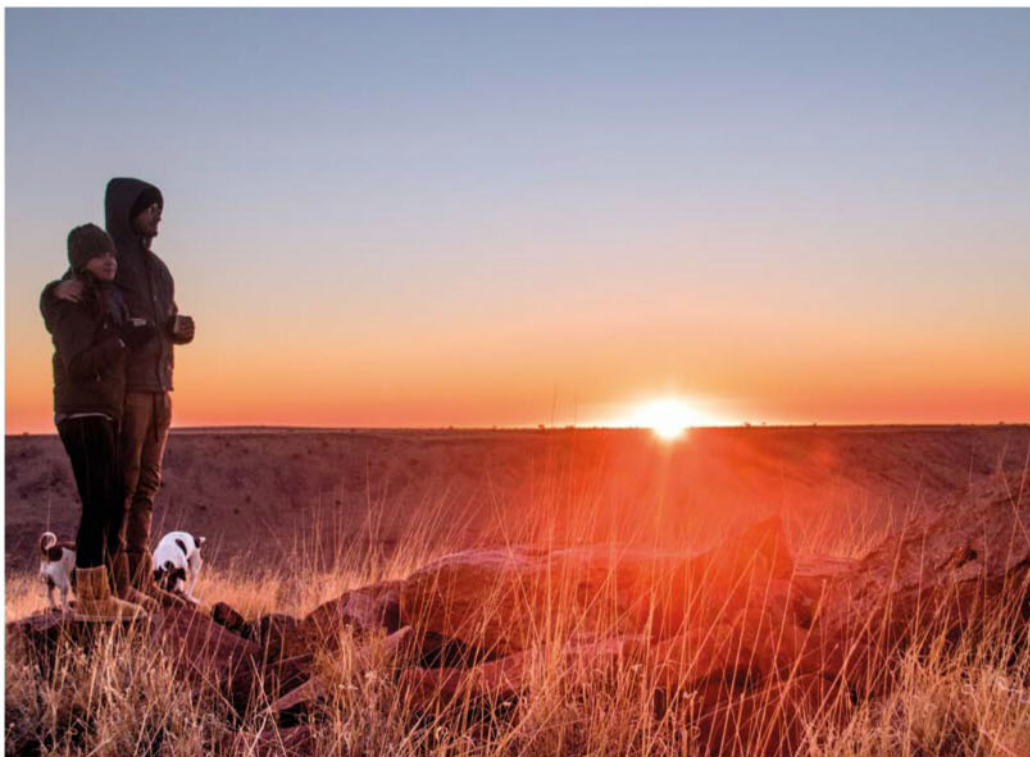
More than just a pit stop

You can't really call Helmeringhausen a town, because there's basically just a hotel, a filling station, and one shop. For many people it's a place to stretch their legs, fill up, and enjoy a light meal at the hotel before heading further north on the C14. But do yourself a favour and stay here for a day or two. And with a brand new campsite opening soon right outside of town, you now have an excuse to extend your pit stop.

On the farm Kosos, about 23 km north of Helmeringhausen on the C14, Kobus de Klerk and his fiancée Kirsty Hewitt are hard at work on their Mount D'Urban tent camp.

The stands have been laid out, the ablution facilities are being built, and trees have been planted. Hiking, mountain bike and 4x4 routes are currently being laid out on the farm.

"People easily drive past Helmeringhausen on their way to Aus or Sesriem, but there is actually a lot to





NAMIBIAN FARMLIFE (left). Mount D'Urban, on the Kosos farm situated just outside Helmeringhausen, is a campsite that plays host to 4x4 and mountain bike trails – all of which lead to spectacular lookout points in the surrounding mountains.

ACTIVITIES OF ALL SORTS. Just outside Aus is Klein-Aus Vista where you can camp (top and middle right). There's also a restaurant, pub and swimming pool (below right) on site.

see here," says Kobus, pointing towards the mountains on the farm. "This place is incredibly beautiful, especially if you stand up there when the sun sets."

Kobus and Kirsty have travelled far and wide, but when they return to the farm the place still affects them. "We realise we are extremely privileged to have this in our backyard, and it's nice to be able to share it with others," says Kobus.

Heading down the garden route

From Helmeringhausen most people head towards Sesriem or Solitaire. The C14 is the quickest and easiest way to >



get there, but then you'll miss one of the most beautiful dirt roads in the country.

The D707 is known as Namibia's garden route, but it's not the same garden route we South Africans know. You definitely won't find thick forests and beaches. This dirt road curves from the C13 northwards to the C27 over a wide landscape between the red dunes of the Namib Desert on the western side and the dramatic peaks of the Tiras Mountains in the east.

It's a place where the tranquility of nature envelops you, and the best way to experience this peacefulness is to spend a day or two in the area. "The big attraction of this place is the vast landscape," says Thorsten Theile of the Namtib Lodge.

"But the big challenge is how do you take everything in? The best way is to walk, because at that speed you can





5 things you must do



There is so much to see and do on this route that it's worthwhile putting aside a day or two for activities.

EXPLORE CREVICES

After you've visited Dead Vlei and you've had your fill of dunes and dead trees, you can take a walk through the Sesriem Canyon. It's only 2 km from the park gate, and it's an easy hike that'll keep you busy for two hours.

A GHOST TOWN AT THE SEA

If you're staying over in Aus you might as well work in an extra day to eat fish and chips in Lüderitz. The well-known ghost town, Kolmanskop, is right before the town and definitely worth a visit. Remember your camera and visit Kolmanskop in the early morning for the best light over and in the abandoned buildings.

FROM A DIFFERENT ANGLE

Klein-Aus Vista, the Tsauchab River Camp,

and Mount D'Urban have hiking and mountain bike trails you can take to explore your surroundings. You can go horse riding at Klein-Aus Vista, while at Tsauchab and Mount D'Urban there are 4x4 routes that lead you to beautiful lookout points (with especially spectacular sunsets).

A CASTLE IN THE SAND

On the D826 road between the C14 and the C27 there's a peculiar building in the middle of the desert: A German castle. Die Duwisib Castle was built in 1908 by Captain Hans Heinrich von Wolf, a German militarist. You can visit the castle, have lunch there, and spend the night in the guesthouse or camp.

ROW YOUR BOAT

There are various operators on both sides of the Orange River that offer guided canoe trips. It's a unique way to explore the Richtersveld. Your options range between short day tours to longer overnight routes where you camp all along the river. >



feel and smell things and really see everything.”

Thorsten grew up here, feet planted firmly on the ground and at one with the Namib earth around him. And it's that balance between man and nature that he wants to share with guests... but only a handful at a time. Thorsten believes that just like nature has a certain load capacity, a place can also accommodate only so many tourists before the balance is disturbed.

“We are a small place, and that's how it's going to stay. We want people to experience the wide open spaces and seclusion, things they don't have at home,” he says. Luckily it looks like the locals in this corner of Namibia won't easily allow tourists to take over their wide open spaces.

Place of the iconic dune

South Africa has Table Mountain, America has the Grand Canyon, and Australia Uluru – all natural phenomena synonymous with these countries.

Namibia has Sossusvlei.

Even if you've never been here you know exactly what it is: that iconic postcard photo of dead trees in a white salt pan with bright orange dunes in the background.

The best time of day to visit Sossusvlei is early morning, because later in the day the desert's heat hits you. The park's gate opens at sunrise, but then you still have to drive 60 km to Dead Vlei, a drive that can take an hour.



Sesriem is especially popular during the July holidays, as the desert's climate is milder during winter, and the area's likely to be packed to capacity.

The last 5 km to the pan is only accessible with a 4x4 (there's also a shuttle service at R150 p.p.) and you have to walk the last kilometre. If you hurry you can reach the pan in the “golden hour” – the hour after sunrise when the light is at its most beautiful.

Next to Dead Vlei is the 325 m high dune, Big Daddy. You're allowed to climb

it – the view from the top over Dead Vlei is something special.

Dune 45 lies next to the tar road on the way to Dead Vlei. Stop and climb it, or go check out the lesser known Hidden Valley.

Do keep one very important thing in mind: During the holidays, Sesriem is bursting at the seams. Especially during



the July school holidays you'll struggle to find a place to stay, and by the time they open in the morning you'll probably find yourself in a long queue at the Sossusvlei gate. Thankfully visitor numbers start decreasing by end August.

If you can't go at any other time but you still want peace and quiet, book a spot at the Tsauchab River Camp.

It's about 70 km from Sesriem, and you can do a day trip to Sossusvlei and by late afternoon you'll have your privacy again. There are also hiking trails plus a restaurant with a bar as well as a swimming pool.

And you can marvel at owner Johan Steyn's sculptures, which dot the entire property.

Goodbye for now

From Sesriem the north awaits. Check out Solitaire, head towards the coast to see what's happening in Swakopmund, and then push through to Windhoek. On the other side of the capital your choices are broad: Kaokoland, Etosha, and the Caprivi.

You can of course circle back to Noordoewer and go have a look at the Fish River Canyon and Ai-Ais, or drive home through the Kalahari. And if you have to get home before you have time to visit all these places, save them for next time.

Because there will be a next time. >



ICONIC LANDSCAPE. During the winter school holidays, Dead Vlei is a popular tourist destination (left). Be prepared to walk a kilometre between the parking area and the dramatic setting of the dead trees on a salt pan (main picture).

I also want to go!

Best time Summer's days in Namibia are excruciatingly hot. The milder day temperatures in winter make it a good time for a visit, but if you want to avoid hordes of tourists, stay away in July and August. Do pack warm clothes in the winter months because it gets really cold at night.

Do I need a 4x4? No. We drove this route in a Renault Duster, a softroader. As long as your vehicle has good ground clearance and you adjust your tyre pressure for gravel roads. A 4x4, however, will allow you to explore more places along the route, like the Tsauchab River and Kosos's 4x4 routes.

What do the roads look like? The main gravel roads (C19, C14, and C13) are well maintained but the smaller roads (C27 and D707) are roughly corrugated and sandy in places.

Paperwork at the border Your passport (valid for at least six months), the unabridged birth certificates of any minors travelling with you, and the registration documents of your vehicle. If the vehicle doesn't belong to you,



bring along a permission letter from the bank or rental company. You pay a road usage fee of R242 per vehicle and R154 per caravan. For motorhomes with double rear wheels it costs R500.

Where we stayed

Felix Unite River Camp has chalets, a restaurant, and a bar. ☎ 087 354 0578; felixunite.com

Klein-Aus Vista has rooms, chalets and a campsite as well as a restaurant and bar.

☎ 00 264 63 258 116/021;

info@klein-aus-vista.com

Mount D'Urban Camp opens in November. There are 10 stands with its own ablution facilities. ☎ 00 264 81 327 9328 (Kirsty Hewitt)

Namtib Desert Lodge has rooms and a campsite. ☎ 00 264 63 683 055;

stay@namtib.net

Tsauchab River Camp has self-catering chalets and a campsite, a restaurant and a bar. ☎ 00 264 63 293 416;

tsauchab@iafrica.com.na




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DRIVE THE LEGEND.

The call of the *mountains*

People in the north of our country are spoilt to have the Magaliesberg on their doorstep. There's so much to do, but also untouched natural splendour in abundance when it's time to recharge your batteries.

Text and photos **Schalk Jonker**



The Magaliesberg – a stretch of land that extends from Rustenburg in the west to Pretoria in the east – is the type of destination where everyone in your household will be catered for when it comes to things to do.

The mountain range is 120 km long and its highest peak is 1 780 m above sea level. Rustenburg, however, is a fair distance from the closest ocean, which means the peak, about 35 km south-east of the town, stands approximately 300 m above the ground.

But that doesn't matter when you kick off your Crocs underneath your awning and sit back to appreciate the surroundings. That mountain may be only 300 m high, but it provides a sense of calm that you certainly won't find in the city.

And while you're relaxing, the adventure-seekers in the family are spoilt for choice with things to keep them busy or to get the adrenaline going.

Treetop tours, elephant rides, golf courses, game viewing, quad bike tours... it's all on the menu – not to mention all the water sport fun you can have at the

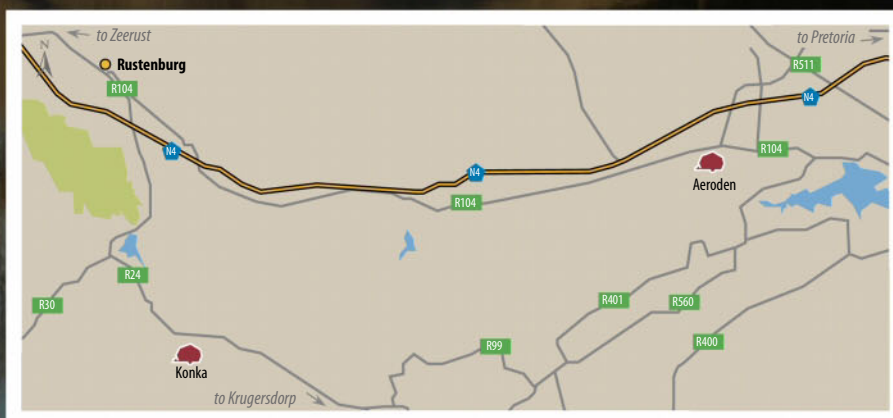
Hartebeespoort Dam. Oupa can practise his golf swing, and Miracle Waters – a famous scuba-diving spot – is also part of this world.

If you've ever reflected on who you are and where you come from, the Magaliesberg is a good place to seek these answers. The Cradle of Mankind lies east of the town of Magaliesburg, along the R400. It's in this area where our ancient ancestors lived more than 3 million years ago and where almost 40% of the world's human fossils have been found. It's a homecoming of sorts.



Be sure to go to the Maropeng Visitors' Centre and take a tour through history. The centre is open daily from 9 am to 5 pm and it costs R120 p.p. (children under 14 and pensioners pay R65 p.p. and under-4s enter for free). From here you can also explore the Sterkfontein Caves (R165 p.p.; R97 for kids and R85 for Grandma and Grandpa), but you can combine the two tours and pay only R190 p.p. for both (R125 for children under 14). There's no pensioners discount for this offer.

We unhitched in two campsites in these parts to escape the hubbub of the city. >





AERODEN LODGE

Planes on your patio

There's a wealth of campsites in this part of the country, but we haven't yet visited the Aeroden Lodge. The lodge and campsite lie on the western tip of the Hartebeespoort Dam, and you camp at the foot of the Magaliesberg, about 10 km from Hartebeespoort on the Old Rustenburg Road.

Aeroden used to be the headquarters of a local microlight club, hence the name. The lodge and campsite were developed later, but the name stuck.

The airfield and hangars remain and a few local pilots still come to start their microlights and light aircrafts. So don't panic when you hear engines humming and buzzing early on a Saturday morning. Take your camera and go and relax beneath the thatch-roof canopies next to

the pool right at the top of the airfield and watch the planes taking off – it's strangely soothing.

Spacious and private

These days there is an abundance of campsites with private stands, but Aeroden almost sets a new standard when it comes to privacy. The caravan park's six stands are laid out in a neat row and lie next to the first path on the right after you drive through the gate on the main road.

Your stand is a good 16 x 12 m big, which means you can park even the largest caravan without problems and move it around to find the perfect spot. There's a shoulder-high wooden fence between you and your neighbour and you know very little to nothing about each other's business. >





Billy and Linda Meintjes from Skeerpoort camped in their dome tent with Alida and Herman Grobler from Rustenburg with their Jurgens Explorer.

They say:

“ This place has excellent facilities and camping beneath the jacaranda trees is lovely. It's a short drive for all of us to get here, it's just unfortunate that the heated pool is currently out of order. ”

FULLY LOADED. Every stand is huge, shaded by jacaranda trees, and mostly covered by lawn. A wooden fence creates a sense of privacy by separating your spot from the next, and each stand has its own ablution facility. Light a fire on the built-up braai and put your feet up while the kids frolic in the playground. As a final touch, the height of the braai grid is adjustable. What more could you possibly want?





All the stands have a lush green patch of grass and are surrounded by tall jacaranda trees, but you can plan your camp so that you stand in the dirt section.

Your braai is in front of the stand and it looks like something you'd build at your own home if you had money to spare. The brick braai is hip-height, your grid is spotless and adjustable for when you need to slowly braai a spatchcock. And next to it is a work surface for all the important things like snacks and drinks. The braai is on a neat paved slab and underneath the braai is space for the *hardekool* you brought along. There's a light above the braai, so you there's no need to pack a headlamp.

Just for you

Between every second stand is a small

brick building with a thatched roof. This is your private ablution facility with a toilet (bring your own toilet tissue), basin with a small mirror, a hook for your towel, and curtained shower.

The shower cubicle isn't the biggest we've seen, but the water is hot and the pressure good. The shower curtain does tend to stick to you, and it's difficult to close the bathroom's big wooden door from the inside. You lock it with a latch and it's quite a mission to get the door in exactly the right position to slide the latch in the hole. But that's really the only complaint... and that's if we absolutely have to complain.

Outside the bathroom, to the right of the door, are two standard domestic sockets and a blue caravan socket – remember

to bring your 20 m extension cord. The switches to the bathroom light and the outside light above your kitchen section are also to be found here.

The kitchen is to the left of the door on the outside of the building. There's one sink (bring your own plug), shelves for the dish cloths, a big work surface on which to prepare braaibroodjies, and a shelf underneath the work surface for your crockery. The sink's taps are also your stand's water supply. A little bit further, in the corner of the stand next to the braai, is your big plastic garbage bin.

I'm watching you...

Aeroden's caravan park is next to the playground and swimming pool, which means you can keep an eye on your kids



from your stand. There's a large blue cold-water swimming pool with a high slide, jungle gym with swings, a Wendy house (or gang lair if your son wants to hang out there) and sand box. The trampoline is around the corner, next to the covered heated pool (which was not working during our visit).

The resort's restaurant is next to the recreational area and in the same building as the reception office. You can eat breakfast, lunch and dinner here, but remember the restaurant is only open at certain times of the day: 8–10 am, 12–2 pm, and 5–8 pm. So you can't just walk in and order a cheeseburger and chips. With our visit they also didn't have a liquor licence – so find out in advance if you need to bring your own bottle of wine.



If you don't want to eat at the restaurant but also don't feel like cooking at your own stand, you can make a fire in the boma outside the restaurant and braai your chops in the communal braai in the company of fellow campers.

Pack your hiking shoes and tackle the 2,2 km long hiking trail up the mountain. Take photos of the proteas and look for volcanic rock. The trail takes you up to the summit on this side of the mountain but our neighbour walked it and claims you don't have to be super-fit to make it all the way up.

There isn't a shop and the closest supermarket is 10 km away. There is a butchery, liquor store and filling station 2 km from the gate in the direction of Hartebeespoort.

LOOK, UP IN THE SKY! Aeroden originated as a microlight aircraft club and the hangers and crews are still here. The airstrip is active and you can relax below the thatched roof at the restaurant and watch as the planes lift off.



Briefly | Aeroden Lodge



Campsite 6 stands with big shade trees, grass and private ablution facilities. Each one has its own kitchen section, brick braai, power socket, tap and garbage bin.

Ablution facilities Clean, neat and exclusively for your own use.

Price R420–R570 per stand, depending on when you camp.

Arrival and departure times 2 pm and 10 am, depending on how busy they are.

Contact 083 999 3842;

bookings@aeroden.co.za;

aeroden.co.za

Nearest town Hartebeespoort 10 km.

What does the road look like? Tar to the gate and good sandy track to your stand.

GPS S25.725638 E27.739454

go! Drive & Camp says The main gate opens with a code – phone the number on the sign when you arrive. >

KONKA ADVENTURE FARM

Camp next to the lions

The Konka adventure farm between Magaliesburg and Rustenburg is a popular destination for things like sports events and camps, team-building sessions, school camps, and weddings. The past 10 years clients like the South African Rugby Union, BMW, Anglo Platinum, and Clover SA have made themselves at home here.

Now the people of Konka have decided to expand further, and the next step is a caravan park where you can unhitch your wagon next to the Magaliesberg and the Hex River. Sure, you don't camp next to the river, but it runs through the farm and you still have a nice view of the mountain. You can choose if you want one of the nine stands with a private bathroom or one of the seven with shared ablution facilities.

To get to the caravan park you drive through the main gate, past the lion camp on your right, and then you turn right at the first road.

The campsite's stands are laid out in two rows on both sides of the road. The luxury stands – those with private bathrooms – lie to the right and the ordinary stands to the left. Your stand is about as big as half a tennis court and you're partly on grass and partly on a paved slab. There's enough space for your caravan with a full tent and your car.

In terms of neatness, there's nothing to complain about but there aren't many shade trees to talk about either. Remember your heat reflective sheet and gazebo. You do camp next to the lion camp, and when you hear them roar at night you'll think that you're in the Kgalagadi.

For braaiing you have one of those ploughshare jobs with an adjustable grid. This is cleaned daily by the resort staff. The staff are friendly and helpful and check in often to see if everything is in order or if you need help with anything. You also have an electrical outlet, garbage bin and tap at your stand.

Bath time!

The luxury stands' ablution facilities are on a level above you and you climb a set of steps to get there. Inside the building is a toilet (with toilet tissue), bath, shower with a curtain, and a basin (no plug) with a makeup mirror. There's also a table with a larger mirror and two power sockets for hair dryers.



The past 10 years clients like the South African Rugby Union, BMW, Anglo Platinum, and Clover SA have made themselves at home here.

The scullery for dirty dishes is at the bar, the Konka Saloon, about 100 m from the farthest stand. There are also four deep steel double sinks in a row, but you need to bring your own plug. The ordinary stands' ablution facilities are also here and there are separate facilities for men and women. There are two showers, two basins – these are actually in the shower section – and one toilet. It can get quite busy if the campsite is full. The ordinary stands also each have their own steel braai, garbage bin, power point, and tap.

Just relax man!

Konka's large recreation area is below the caravan park and consists of two pools (one for the kids), a communal braai, jungle gym, putt-putt course, and trampoline where the youngsters can get rid of their excess energy. You can also organise game drives, abseiling, wall climbing or zipline excursions with the resort management.

If you want to explore the area yourself, you can tackle the hiking trail that starts immediately outside the entrance to the resort. It's 6 km long and you may cycle it with your mountain bike.

Below the recreation area lies a big cricket field, and against the border, on the campsite side, is the Konka Saloon. Here you can get something to eat or enjoy a beer while watching the Boks play on the big screen.

Be warned: Konka is popular and is often overrun by school groups, sports teams, and big companies' team-building excursions. Inquire in advance how busy it's going to be when you plan on visiting.

Perhaps also find out if the Konka Saloon will be hosting a 21st or someone's stag party when you plan on being there. The bar is uncomfortably close to the stands, and at half past two in the morning even *Stairway to Heaven* can sound like nails on a chalkboard.



RIP-ROARING. The campsite at Konka Adventure Farm lies between a lion enclosure and a cricket field. The stands are spacious and covered by both lawn and paving. There's also nothing amiss with the private ablutions. A word of caution: It can get busy due to all the activities on offer. Bachelor parties and team-building exercises sometimes cause a commotion.



Briefly | Konka



Campsite 9 stands with private ablution facilities and another 7 with shared bathrooms.

Ablution facilities Clean and neat.

Price R450 p.n. for a stand with a private bathroom and R350 for an ordinary one. Maximum 6 people per stand.

Arrival and departure times 2 pm and 10 am.

Contact 076 141 8960;

caravanpark@konka.co.za;

konka.co.za

Nearest town Rustenburg, 31 km.

What does the road look like? The last 1,2 km is a good dirt road.

GPS S25.869820 E27.308692

go! Drive & Camp says There's a shop that sells anything from wood, alcohol and meat to two-prong plugs. The nearest supermarket is in Rustenburg. 📍

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Seaside rendezvous

If huge beach resorts like Hartenbos aren't for you, head to these less busy campsites next to the sea.



1 Cape Columbine Nature Reserve, Western Cape

You won't easily find a stand closer to the sea. And you'll have to search far and wide for a more unspoilt seaside campsite than at Tietiesbaai in the Cape Columbine Nature Reserve – the Western Cape's most westerly point.

If you choose one of the stands right next to the sea, you'll feel the spray of the waves that hit the enormous rocks.

You camp with the sound of the ocean and the calls of gulls in your ears. On the opposite side of the rocky coastline in this reserve lie fynbos veld and the, well, tip of Tietiesbaai – a large hill with a big pointy rock on top.

You can climb the hill in 30 minutes and look out far over the sea and the reserve. You can also walk for kilometres on the beach, put some white mussel on your hook to catch a hottentot, or brave the cold water to dive for crayfish – if it's



crayfish season and you have a permit, of course.

There is no electricity or shade trees, and the 64 stands are all on grass, sand or dirt. The first 10 stands are just below the Cape Columbine lighthouse. Eight of them are in a row next to each other, opposite a rock embankment with the

sea right behind it. These stands are of the more private ones in the reserve, but they are a good five to 10 minutes' walk to the ablution facilities. The other two are right next to the sea against the rocks and are just a minute or two's walk from the ablution facilities. Three minutes' walk down the sand path is the main campsite at the Tietiesbaai beach. There are five stands in a block, another 23 all along the beach, and 12 behind them, further from the water.

A little bit further down, the road veers to the right, where there are another five stands next to the water and nine more private stands next to the rocks.

There are two ablution blocks with separate bathrooms for men and women. The solar geysers, however, are small and during busy holidays the warm water runs out quickly.

Contact 022 752 2718;

saldanhabay.co.za

GPS S32.8393 E17.8618 >





PHOTO DIRK KOK

2 Cape Vidal, KwaZulu-Natal

The stiff camping tariffs here resulted in many regular visitors to Cape Vidal taking their caravans elsewhere, but it remains a great place – if you can afford it.

To pitch camp in Cape Vidal will cost you more than R1 000 a day for a family of six, but your trip here is a game drive that rivals the best. You drive through grassland and indigenous forest and past swampland and the world's largest covered dunes. If you drive early from St. Lucia, chances are good that you'll spot rhinos, crocodiles, hippos, wildebeest, kudus, warthogs, bushbuck and duikers next to the road – and even a white-starred robin and olive bushshrike.

The Cape Vidal campsite's 50 stands are laid out in a circle. It's next to an enormous dune with the long, white beach of Cape Vidal behind it. The stands are on average 10 x 10 m big, with some of them slightly bigger and some smaller. Bring your own ground cover because you camp on soft ground between the shade trees of the indigenous forest.

Some of the stands are in rows next to each other, but others are fairly private with only one or two neighbours nearby. You share an electrical socket and tap with a neighbour, and you have to bring your own braai grid. The water here is fine for washing but you have to bring your own water for drinking and cooking.

Your garbage bin has a heavy iron lid to keep the blue and samango monkeys out. But these heavy lids don't always work and you often end up having to clean the mess they leave behind.

In front, in the middle, and at the back in the campsite are three ablution blocks with separate bathrooms for men and women. These neatly tiled bathrooms have spacious shower cubicles, and the front and back ablution blocks both also have a family bathroom. Outside each ablution block there are sinks for your dishes and clothes, and a rotating washing line. On your way back from the beach you can wash off the salt water and sand under one of the outside showers.

Contact 035 590 9012;

bookings@kznwildlife.com;

kznwildlife.com/about-cape-vidal

GPS S30.7052 E30.4795

3 Dwesa Nature Reserve, Eastern Cape

Don't expect a highway when you're heading in the direction of Dwesa. The corrugated road here is littered with potholes, and it is a welcome sight when you finally see the reserve's entrance.

The campsite is lovely and absolutely worth the trip. The stands are not demarcated, and you can camp anywhere on the soft green lawn under the trees. The sea is just behind the hill.

Here you have to lock up absolutely everything – not because of suspicious characters but because of the blue monkeys that'll take anything that isn't nailed down.

The Dwesa and Cwebe nature reserves lie on both sides of the Mbashe River, deep in the old Transkei. Here are wild animals aplenty and a serious lack of cellphone reception – just the place to recharge your batteries.

You do, however, need a 4x4 if you want to explore the reserve properly and you need to take a guide.



Take binoculars and go for a walk on the beach to the Kobolo River mouth. A forest path swerves to the left and takes you back to the campsite. Dwesa has about 290 bird species, including the rare narina trogon and mangrove kingfisher.

The lookout point over the Kobolo River (there are crocodiles) is about a

20-minute walk from the campsite.

There are two ablution blocks with sufficient facilities, but according to people who camp here often, the bathrooms smell a bit if there are a lot of people.

Contact 047 799 0073 or 047 499 7900
GPS S32.303891 E28.830453 >





4 Coffee Bay, Eastern Cape
Coffee Bay's large campsite with its 50 stands is in an enclosed indigenous forest. The stands are neatly laid out on both sides of a twin-track circular road of 600 m that runs through the campsite. Thirty stands have electricity and are suited for caravans. Ten of these stands are big enough for two vehicles. The other 20 are for camping trailers or tents.

The stands to the left in the campsite are next to the sea – you camp with the sound of the Indian Ocean in your ears. A footpath runs right next to the fence and you'll often see a local peering through, asking if you want to buy crayfish, fish, or beads. The stands on the right-hand side are closer to the dirt road that runs through Coffee Bay, and from here you can

hear the traffic and sometimes the noise of the town.

Your stand is cloaked in shade, with the forest around you and a leafy canopy above you. It's nice and private, with trees and forest between you and your neighbour. Some of the stands are on grass, some on dirt. Stands no. 26–29 are more open and have views over the bay and Sugarloaf Hill with the sea around it. Here you can sit back in your camp chair and watch whales and dolphins through your binoculars.

Each stand has a built-in braai, but you have to bring your own grid. The campsite's taps are in the tree line between the stands, and you don't have to walk more than 20 m to fetch water.

The wooden ablution block in the middle of the campsite has three tiled bathrooms

for men, women, and families, and isn't more than a minute's walk from the farthest stand. The men's and women's bathrooms both have three showers, four basins and two toilets, and in the family bathroom are three showers, two toilets and a basin. Next to and opposite the ablution block are two outside showers in the forest. Thanks to gas geysers there's always warm water in the bathrooms, but in December you'll have to wait your turn to shower and shave, because the campsite is filled to the brim during that time.

In front of the men's bathroom are two sinks and a little bit further is a washing line.

Contact ☎ 082 332 1870;

📍 stay coffeebaycamping.co.za;

📍 coffeebaycamping.co.za

GPS S31.985252 E29.148835



5 Dunes 4x4 campsite, Vleesbaai, Western Cape

The Dunes 4x4 campsite is named thus because it lies at the start of the infamous 4x4 route of the same name, and although the 100 m dirt road to the campsite is quite steep, it's certainly not only campers with off-road caravans that can get here.

The campsite lies less than 1 km from Vleesbaai and is surrounded by security gates. The strict safety measures around the town might seem a bit much, but it does have its benefits. Once you've signed in with the security guard, chances are good it'll only be you and a handful of other people on one of the best swimming beaches in South Africa.

"Intriguing" is the first word that comes to mind when you drive to the front terrace of the campsite. The stands are not demarcated; you can park your vehicle anywhere on the lawn and you connect your electricity at the socket in the bushes, about 20 m left of the communal kitchen. (So bring a 20 m extension cord.) The kitchen in the corner of the terrace is a

wooden room with a big dining table, sink, and two fridges where you can put your perishables.

The campsite's biggest attraction, however, is the open shed with table and benches, called Die Bult, from where you can see Vleesbaai, Boggomsbaai and Danabaai. Beyond Die Bult is another thatch shed where you can kick back when the sun is still high.

The campsite lies between the bushes in the Vleesbaai conservation area and is a lot bigger than it looks from the front terrace. The small terrace closest to the sea is only one small part and beyond the bushes lies another big patch of grass that's more sheltered from the wind and sun. These stands each have an electrical socket and a loose steel drum that you can make a fire in.

The front terrace has a small white ablution block with a shower, basin, and toilet in each of the two rooms – one for men and one for women. You'll struggle to find anything neater. Outside the bathroom are open showers and a urinal. At the other stands there are loose-standing



wooden huts each with a toilet inside, as well a wooden hut with a shower and toilet inside.

Contact 072 249 0492

GPS S34.2954 E21.91488

>

6 Buffalo Bay Caravan Park, Western Cape

The coastal town of Buffalo Bay is as big as two rugby fields and consists of a few holiday homes, a café, a pizza place next to the sea, two beaches, and a caravan park at the high-water mark. The caravan park lies right on the tip of the bay and clearly struck it lucky when they marked out property years ago.

To the right of the bay, if you look towards the sea, is the so-called “wild side” and to the left is the swimming beach.

The campsite is in the shape of an inverted V, with a row of stands next to the sea on each leg. There are a

few stands in the middle where the ablution block is also located.

The stands next to the sea have a gravel slab for your vehicle and are surrounded by grass for your tent pegs and maybe a two-man tent for the kids. Bring some storm straps, because the weather here is as unpredictable as South Africa’s politics.

The sea stands each have a stone braai, but bring your own braai if you’re camping on one of the other stands.

The row of stands next to the entrance (if you’re looking towards the sea) offers the most shelter against the wind, but you don’t have much of a view.

The brick ablution block looks newly tiled and is neat. Each shower cubicle has a blue plastic chair and a hook behind the door for your gown.

A 6 km walk along the beach in the direction of Knysna brings you to Brenton-on-Sea, or head towards the wild side’s beach to your right as you drive into Buffalo Bay.

Here it’s quiet, there’s a nice rock pool to swim in, and kilometres of beach to explore. At the parking area is a sign with all the hiking trails and a plastic container with maps of each.

Contact 044 383 0045;

buffalobay.co.za

GPS S34.08908 E22.97613



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Get some colour in Bontebok

There is only one thing better than spending a day in nature with fresh air and peace and quiet... another day like that. In the Bontebok National Park, days like these are plenty.

Text and photos Leon Botha

You don't really think of Swellendam as the centre of the camping world – and that's understandable. Because this town lies halfway between Cape Town and George – on the N2 it's a two-hour drive from both sides – people from the Mother City shoot through to places like Mossel Bay or the Garden Route.

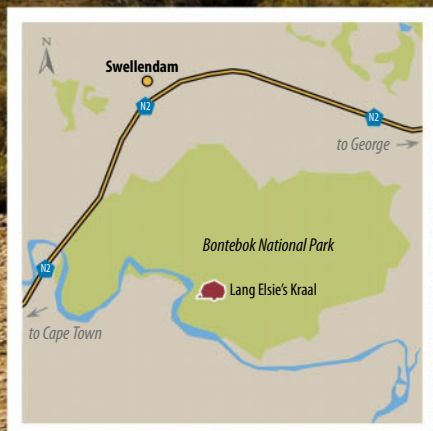
The highway also doesn't run through the town, but to the right of it. It's on this stretch of road where you should ease your foot off the accelerator because you often see speed cops at the side of the road – sometimes with a camera and other times to send trucks to the nearby weighbridge. Close to this weighbridge you drive over the Breede River, and as soon as you've crossed it you see the sign for the Bontebok

National Park to the right on a hill. The park runs south of the N2.

Bontebok has an excellent overnight campsite. But why just stay the night if you can exchange the everyday hustle and bustle for a weekend in nature with the family? Next to a roaring campfire...

Little guy with big shoes

Bontebok is just about 10 km long – the smallest of all the SANParks – but is





HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS. Besides the masses of resident bontebok, other species also call the park home, such as the red hartebees (left).



unique in more ways than one. As the park's name suggests, the bontebok is the honorary citizen. Thanks to conservationists in the early 20th century, this animal has been saved from extinction. There were only 17 of them left because hunters shot them without batting an eye, but even more frightening is that those were the only 17 left in the entire world!

A conservation area was initially established near Bredasdorp, but the

animals were later moved to an area next to Swellendam, and that's how the park as we know it came about. Today there are more than 3 000 bontebokke in the world, about 200 of which live here (the maximum that the reserve can sustain).

Park in the park

The hills around Swellendam are covered in wheat and canola, but as you drive through the park's gate, the landscape changes radically: Now you're surrounded by fynbos that grows to hip height, but rather keep your eyes on the road because a sign warns to look out for tortoises.

You just get used to all the fynbos when you stop at the office about half a kilometre after the gate. It's hardly a dilapidated structure, but thankfully also not an extravagant, shiny building. It's partly plastered and finished off with

stone, and you can see the environment was taken into consideration with the design and finishes.

Inside, two groups are standing in front of the long counter: one of the receptionists is explaining to the people in front of her how to get to the campsite; the other lady is asking her group to go fetch their passports. They sound German, and they're bickering about whether or not to buy a Wild Card so they can save on the day tariff.

One of the first things you notice is the stuffed bontebok to the left of the counter. It stands on three legs – with one hind leg in the air it looks like it's trying to scratch an itch behind its ear.

Visiting Elsie

Bontebok has only one campsite, Lang Elsie's Kraal, and it's 4,3 km from the >



office, right next to the Breede River. The camp is named after Captain Lang Elsie, a female Hessequa chief who ruled in these parts in the 18th century.

In front of the campsite the veld changes again: Now you start to see trees. A sign at the campsite's entrance indicates the chalets are to the right and the campsite to the left. The sign is between lush tilt-headed aloes, some of which tower into the sky.

The bathrooms are in the middle of the campsite, with the stands running next to and opposite each other in a half-moon to the left of the building. To the back of the stands in the outside circle there are trees against a hedge, making it feel almost like a kraal.

The stands are numbered, and like with the other SANParks camps, you can choose where you want to stand. Even though there are thick shrubs and trees behind the outside stands, there aren't exactly any shade trees to speak of. Each of the stands have short, wild grass, and it's nice and even. You can easily push your caravan or trailer





ALOES AS FAR AS THE EYE CAN SEE. The landscape is dominated by fynbos and bontebok, but tilt-headed aloes also vie for your attention. They can be found all over the park, along the river, at the campsite and even guarding both sides of the office entrance. The bathrooms are very neat, though the showers are on the small side. Fishing from the banks of the Breede River and enjoying the fresh air.

(without the towing vehicle) to where you want it.

Some of the stands are more private than others, but in general you can't complain about the space. Between the stands are yellow-painted concrete blocks a few feet apart, and this almost dotted line indicates the border between you and

your neighbour. There is enough space to park the longest caravan and towing vehicle on your stand. There is even enough space to open up all the flaps and there's enough open space where you can hang out if you don't want to sit underneath the awning.

Between every second and third stand is a slate slab on a U-shaped stone wall. The stone work is neatly done and similar to that of the reception office – nicely varnished and all. There's a light in the middle of the slab which switches on automatically in the evenings before dark. It's a good thing because you don't want to stumble to the bathroom late at night and an aloe jumps in front of you.

Your tap is to the left of the slab with a neat drainage area beneath with rocks >

This is what it costs

(2 adults and 3 kids)

Fuel @ 14.3 ℓ/100 km and R12.21/ℓ
and 424 km (there and back)

R740.32

Accommodation (2 nights with Wild
Card)

R81.8

(R294 extra without Wild Card)

Food

R783

Grand total

R2 341.32

stacked on top. The electrical socket is beneath the slab and can be reached from the open U-side. There are standard domestic sockets, and blue caravan sockets have also been installed but the power cables haven't been connected. It's great that campers get a choice of sockets, because as a rule SANParks stick to caravan sockets.

There are also a few loose-standing braais (without grids) if you didn't pack yours, and your garbage bin is also here, firmly anchored between two planted wooden poles.



Maybe a little bit too close for comfort

The bathroom building is built in the same style as the reception office. To the right of the building there are three recycling bins – one each for plastic, glass, and cardboard.

There are tiles around the sunken basins in the bathroom and a mirror above each. There is also a bathroom specifically for disabled people. The shower cubicles could be a bit bigger though. At the door is the seat of a chair that folds flat when you close the door – it reminds you of a plastic garden chair.

At the shower side there are hooks against the wall, making it easy to reach your towel from the shower. The shower curtain is also disappointing. The shower side is small, and as you turn on the taps, the shower curtain takes on a life of its own. Eventually the cold curtain sticks to you like a wet washcloth – then it's pulling off with the one hand while soaping up with the other. Between the male and female sides there's an area where you can send your teen to do the dishes.



A FEATHER FOR ALL WEATHER.

Bontebok National Park probably feels like a summer getaway during the winter for the birds. They are abundant, despite the chilly temperatures, and bird-watchers are in for a treat. Expect to tick wagtails, boubous, robins, fiscal flycatchers and secretary birds off your list.

Birds of a feather

It's not just the reception staff who make you feel at home; the birds in the campsite also do their bit. As you unpack your braai, hordes of these little guys invite themselves over and feast on the leftovers on the grid. The one bird is more forward than the other. A wagtail takes a shortcut over your feet, while robins, boubous and fiscal flycatchers also come to eagerly introduce themselves.

Behind the bathrooms is the riverbank. But on the way there, in the road, is a boom indicating "no. 31-41". It also shows no caravans are allowed on these stands. The bank is sprawling lawn, and to the left, away from the water, there are short, planted stumps indicating these few stands. You're only allowed to camp here in summer.

Behind the lawn is a small hill that's worthwhile to climb. From the top you see how the river kinks against the grass, with the campsite behind it. Remember your camera.

You can also fish in Bontebok. On the way to the campsite you drive past a section of the riverbank that's intended for anglers. According to the Bontebok species list there are seven endemic fish species and six invasive ones. The former includes freshwater mullet and full moon, while black bass and catfish are amongst the uninvited guests.



Briefly | Lang Elsie's Kraal, Bontebok National Park



Campsite 29 flat stands with electricity (some without) without much shade but with ample space, plus 10 tent stands on the riverbank (on grass) that are only available in summer.

Ablution facilities Very neat and clean, but small shower cubicles with annoying shower curtains.

Price R210–R265 (depending on the season) per stand without electricity for the first 2 people, plus R82 p.p. extra (R41 for kids). Stands with electricity are R245–R300, and a stand next to the river costs R225–R285 (for more than 2 people the

tariff stays the same). Also budget for a conservation tariff of R37 p.p.p.d. (R18 for kids) if you don't have a Wild Card.

Arrival and departure times 2 pm and 10 am.

Contact 028514 3206 or 076 648 5397;

reservations@sanparks.org;

sanparks.org

What does the road look like? Tar to the park, and mostly neat dirt roads in the park with a section specifically for 4x4s.

Nearest town Swellendam (5 km from the office).

GPS S34.059155 E20.430527

go! Drive & Camp says Bring the following: your family, your caravan, your mountain bike, your hiking boots, and your bird guide.

Besides the bontebokke, there are also red hartebeest and Cape mountain zebras, as well as bigger birds like the secretary bird. From the campsite, away from the reception office side, there's a circular route if you want to go in search of game. But it doesn't require much searching, because the low fynbos makes it difficult for any animal to hide. The dirt road is narrow and intended for

one-way traffic, but you can drive it with your Yaris. One late afternoon we saw a buck or three but the next morning the animals were littered to the right and left of the same road.

There are no animals that pose a threat to you, so you can explore the area on your bike with peace of mind. There are no real hills and cycling here is pure pleasure.



Pretty, but also pretty dangerous!

Make sure you're well informed, well prepared and well stocked before tackling the dirt roads of the Eastern Free State and Lesotho. The world is postcard-pretty, but also completely isolated, says Amanda van Blerk.

The Eastern Free State and Lesotho have great dirt roads and mountain trails, but don't just take any road and expect to come out unscathed on the other side. Just ask Herman Tolken and Andrew van Wyk from Vredendal in the Western Cape, and Waltie and Trichia van der Walt from Mokopane in Limpopo. Their "quick afternoon drive" outside Clarens turned into a long, cold night in the mountains. And if that wasn't bad enough, the Van der Walts also had trouble with their vehicle, right there in the middle of nowhere.

At least the group could support each other, and luckily for them the farmer

couple Bees and Amanda van Blerk rushed into the mountains with their Isuzu KB 300 single cab to help.

Beautiful, but...

“You could say the Eastern Free State is both famous and infamous: Famous for its incredible natural splendour, and infamous for its low temperatures. Nature lures you in, but the cold can be unbearable. My husband and I farm here next to the R711 between Fouriesburg and Clarens, and we know these parts like the back of our hands. The Caledon River runs all along our farm. It's a world rich in history and sandstone

formations. On the opposite side of the river is Lesotho with specks of thatch-roof rondawels and houses against the mountainside. The deeper you go into the mountains, the less sign of life there is.

Our immediate neighbours are guest farms, with one of them, Old Mill Drift, a short distance away. It's the closest you'll find to untouched wilderness in this busy tourist area. It's beautiful as you move further and further into the bundus with the Caledon flowing to the right of you. You also often see snow on the Malutis.

It's here where the four adventurers' trouble started. You could even say that the beautiful landscape played a nasty trick on them.





Nature calls

Herman and Andrew and their wives Denie en Zelda are staying over in one of Clarins's many guesthouses. Herman and Andrew don't feel like browsing through the quaint town's shops with the ladies and decide to go for a drive; maybe even put the Land Cruiser through a 4x4 test or two.

The mountains beckon and they take the R711 between Clarens and Fouriesburg. Next to the road they see a Mercedes ML with Limpopo number plates. As any good West Coaster would do, they stop to chat. And wouldn't you know, Waltie and Trichia in the ML are also looking for some adventure and beautiful scenery, and they decide to join the guys.

From the R711 they turn off to Old Mill Drift. If only they made a U-turn at Old Mill

their wives wouldn't have been angry or worried. But the twin-track winding path looks too inviting, and after all, they do have the right set of wheels and time is on their side.

Old Mill Drift's owner isn't there. They talk to the caretaker and yes, he says, he doesn't mind if they drive where they want to drive.

He confirms the road runs over the mountain to Clarens. What he doesn't say is that no four-wheel drive ever goes there and that the route is now only used by baboons and donkeys.

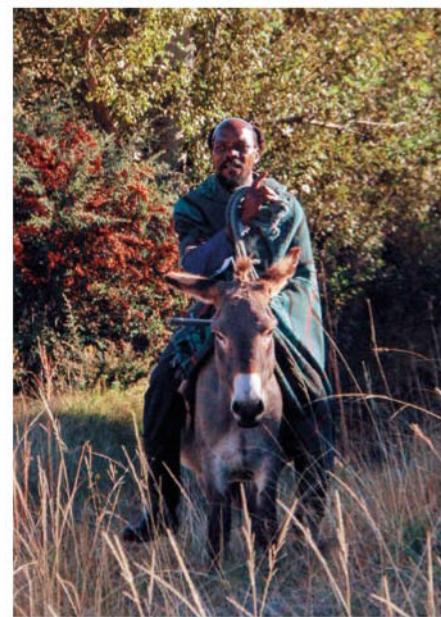
"Just keep right and right and right. The tar road is on the other side of the mountain," the caretaker instructs, and gives them – thankfully – the owner's business card. That card would later save them.

The road less travelled

The caretaker didn't lie: There is indeed a road running over the mountain in the direction of Clarens, but the last maintenance work on this road was done in the early '90s. You might find a baboon or two here, maybe even a few donkeys, but a person in a vehicle? Definitely not. (On the other side of the mountain, on the way down, there is a 4x4 route that you can drive with a guide, but there has been loss of life and there is more than one 4x4 wreck.)

The road that the Vredendallers and Mokopaners take is not much more than an eroded strip that indicates that there was once a road here. It's definitely not a road for an afternoon drive to Clarens. But how could they have known? After all, they did ask.

At first everything goes well. The road is rough but manageable. They leave Old Mill behind and wind from the one farm road to the next. At the first right-hand turn-off, up the first steep mountain, the former owner tried to play Thomas Bain. Here and there is cement road and there are sharp hair-pin bends laid out. But >



DECEIVINGLY BEAUTIFUL (main photo).

Part of the allure of the landscape is that it's untouched, but it has claimed a few victims - like unsuspecting visitors.

ALL-SEEING EYES. Fortunately, a few alert Basotho locals were able to send the rescue party in the right direction.

that was decades ago, and with the earth that's eroded in between the concrete your vehicle now basically has to climb stairs. But the two vehicles continue to crawl up the mountain.

Luckily they miss the left-hand turn-off further up the mountain and the valley's hills are less steep. It's untouched here high up against the mountain. There isn't a house, person, or vehicle, only the odd Lesotho cow grazing, and angora goats and sheep.

After taking the wrong turn-off and continuing for a few kilometres, they completely go off the narrow path. The sun is setting fast and it's too late to turn around. They are completely lost but they stay calm and decide not to drive any further. No one can drive here in the dark. Luckily there is cellphone reception and Herman and Andrew can at least let their wives know they're safe.

It's an icy cold night in the cars, without blankets and food. And very little water...

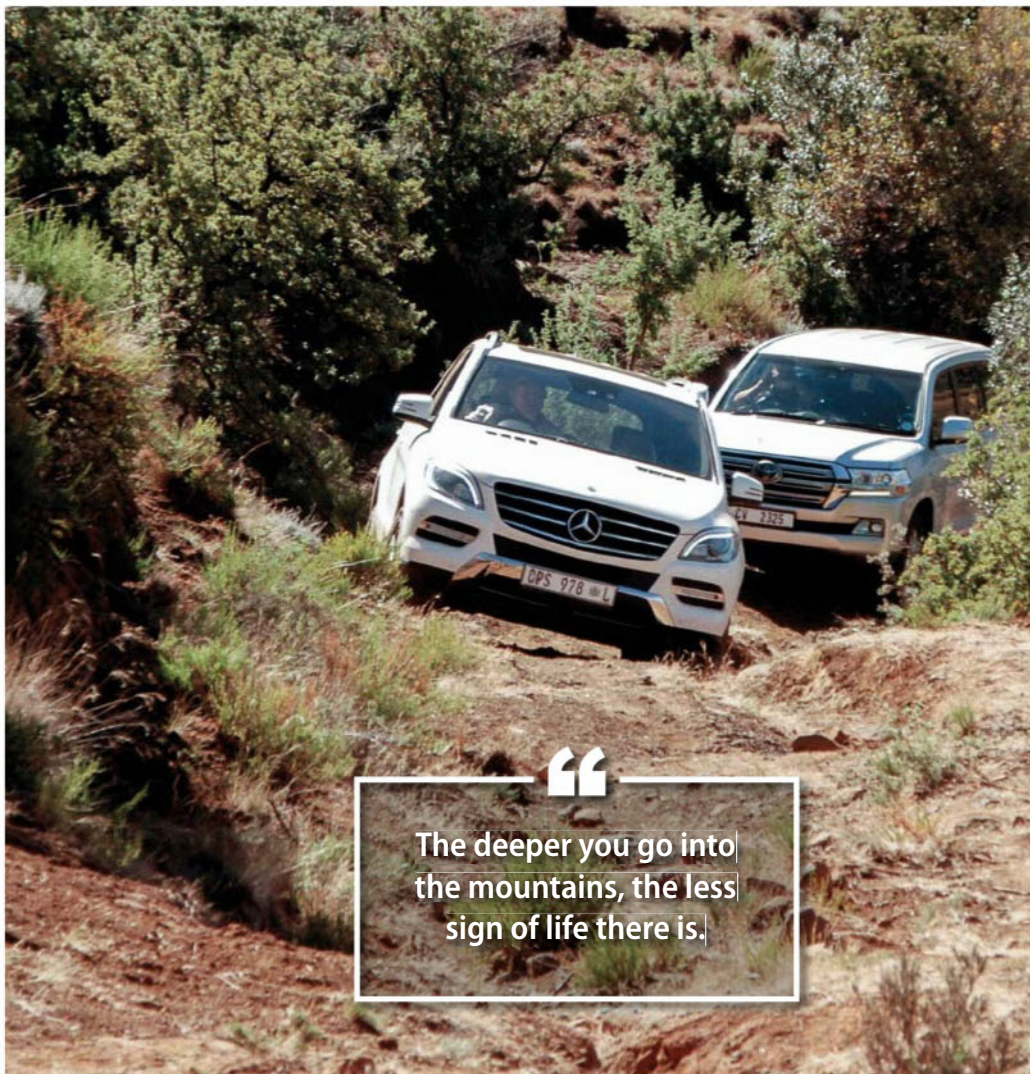
Bees to the rescue

By dawn, it's drama upon drama. It's freezing, the ML's battery is flat, and they don't have jumper cables. And you can't push start the automatic Mercedes and the Vredendallers don't want to leave their new friends in the mountain. They phone the number on the business card. Old Mill's owner, Yvonne McCarthy, isn't home yet but gives them the number of someone called Bees, who knows the area well.

Bees is busy counting and taking care of his cows when he gets the call: They're lost in the mountains and can't explain where exactly they are. Can Bees please get a helicopter to bring them jumper cables? But in these parts there are no helicopters to call and Bees has also never been on call for a rescue mission in the mountains. But he hears the panic on the other side of the phone and he knows: today the cows will have to wait.

Bees saved Waltie's number as "Man in the mountain". He informs the Man in the mountain that they must wait. We're going to look for them and bring the cables.

Old Mill isn't far from our farm and Bees knows this part of the world. But the people in the mountain can't tell us exactly where they are. Waltie, the Man in the mountain, says they are on a plateau and the river is below them. He send coordinates, but it's an address somewhere



The deeper you go into the mountains, the less sign of life there is.

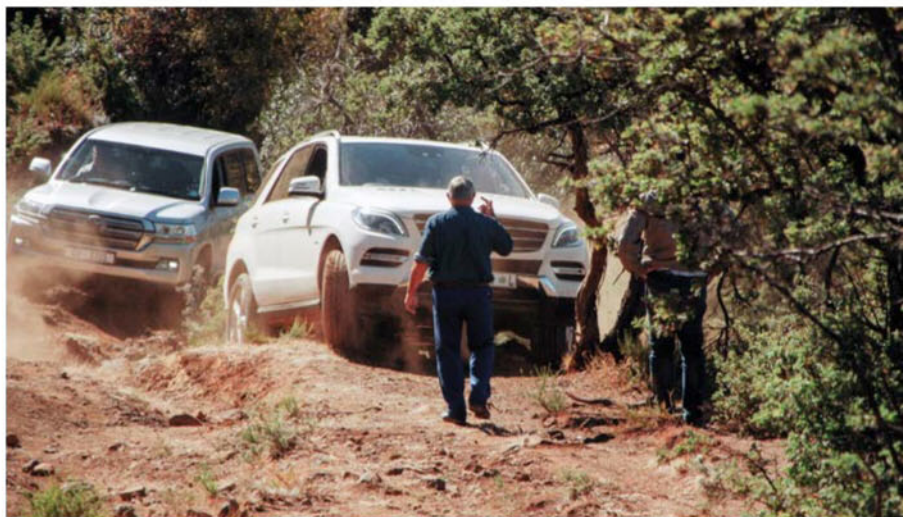
HELPING HANDS. The Toyota Land Cruiser and Mercedes-Benz ML managed to climb up the mountain but needed some assistance from local farmer Bees on the descent (above and far right). The Merc's battery died during the night, and because it uses an automatic transmission, they were forced to wait for a jump from Bees's Isuzu KB the following morning (right).

in Soweto. The cellphone reception is also not so great anymore. Maybe the battery is a bit flat, like the car's.

They can be anywhere in a 60 km² radius. It can take ages before we find them. We'll have to move, otherwise they'll spend another night there. Bees talks to the Man in the mountain again: "If I haven't found you in two hours I'll turn around and send an official search party."

The Man in the mountain warns us that the road is very bad. We know that, but I wish I knew that they had nothing, absolutely nothing, with them. Then I





would have made sandwiches and some coffee and we would have just left half an hour later. But in our haste we threw the cables on the back of the bakkie and I grabbed my camera for early-morning photos in that unspoilt part of the world that I love so much.

It's quarter past seven when we head towards the mountains in our Isuzu.

Tracking time

We hit the road past Old Mill, and outside the farm's border we start looking for vehicle tracks. Here and there we see clear tracks. At the turn-off right, however, it disappears completely in the tall, white-frosted grass. We call a Basotho who's busy carting around wood for the winter. No, he hasn't seen any lost souls.

We crawl on to where the road forks to the left and right in two twin tracks. No tracks here. While we're looking at each exasperatedly, a Basotho on a donkey

appears out of nowhere. Bees asks in his best Sotho if this man maybe knows about a vehicle and people in the mountain.

Yes, says the man on the donkey, but they're not on this side. We need to drive back to the last homestead and take the road up the mountain. His people in Lesotho phoned him to say there were people who took the old mountain path to Clarens and they're way up top.

Bees has a light bulb moment. He now knows where they are. We turn back and tackle the road up the mountain.

I don't think anyone has ever done a difficulty grade for this route. It's almost impassable but we know two vehicles have gone up before us. What type of vehicles, we don't know. We can only speculate. It has to be something with good ground clearance... Something like a Land Rover, Land Cruiser, or maybe a Geländewagen.

We slowly crawl up and down the hills, through the ravines and around hair- >



pin bends. Ouhoutbos obstructs the view and in many places we drive blind so Bees hangs out of the window to see the line he's driving.

We see you!

Around the hill of the hundredth valley, Bees sees something shine in the distance. Yes, it's them!

We slowly drive over another hill, then another one, and another one. We move on through ditches and turns. And then we see both vehicles. But how on Earth did the Mercedes ML get there? And how is it going to make it all the way back?

We greet everyone and the guys connect the cables. Waltie has since phoned a mechanic to ask what to do with the flat battery and the jumper cables. They make sure the ML's lights are switched on so the sudden surge in electricity doesn't damage the computer system.

The Isuzu moans and groans and soon the ML is alive again. Everything goes smoothly and we expect to be home in about two hours.

But it wasn't going to be that simple...

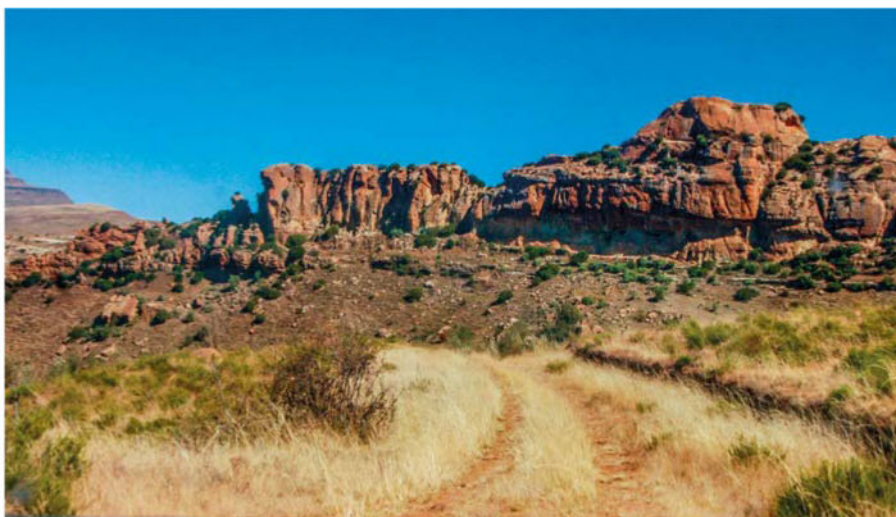
The Vredendallers and Mokopaners were going to drive back in our tracks. We say goodbye and start crawling back home.

At the tip of the second valley, Bees stops to pack some rocks.

"For the ML," he says and I see the hurt in his eyes. He has never packed a single rock for himself or for the Isuzu – and we've driven many really bad roads. I help build a track for the ML, and we continue.

Bees later pulls to the side of the road in a clearing to see if the ML is coming. The Merc and the Cruiser are driving carefully but comfortably over the packed rocks, but against the slope the ML struggles. Bees goes to help and leads it out easily.

We greet for the last time, and at one o'clock we walk into the house.



An hour later the Cruiser comes past on the highway, but not the ML.

Bees phones them. There are more problems. The ML has a flat tyre and there's something wrong with the spare tyre. Waltie is waiting at the ML and the Vredendallers are going to get the wheel fixed.

For the strangers in our part of the world it must have felt like the nightmare was never going to end.

But all's well that ends well. The wheel was fixed in Clarens, and that night the group got to know each other better. And now they know what everyone should know: You don't drive the Eastern Free State and Lesotho's dirt roads without proper planning, water, food, blankets and warm clothes. Don't be mislead by the short distances, which are often very difficult roads. Get reliable info beforehand and turn around before it's too late and nature claims more lives.

NOT TAKEN LIGHTLY. Mrs van der Walt won't forget this ordeal in a hurry (far left). Concrete paths that haven't been maintained since the early '90s make for rough going (top). Winding tracks and breathtaking scenery can lull visitors into a false sense of security (above).

Zofa™

Amanda wins a Zofa inflatable sofa from Zartek. The Zofa – worth R700 – is self-inflatable, is durable and waterproof, and is the just the thing for a relaxing recline in camp or next to the pool. Be sure to visit zartek.co.za/Zofa.htm for more.





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Blissful in Bobbejaansberg

It's hard to believe that a mere 30 km outside of Pretoria you can camp knee-deep in the Bushveld. It's here where you appreciate the peace and quiet of nature with your family, says Morné and Mariët Myburgh from Germiston.

Tussen-I-Bome (meaning "among the trees") is known for its ox-wagon accommodations. But for those who'd rather pitch a tent, co-owner Gerhard van Jaarsveld suggests the 12 caravan stands.

Tussen-I-Bome lies just outside of Pretoria, 25 km along on the Moloto Road (R573) just after the Hammanskraal turn-off. After a further 2 km dirt road, it lies next to the road to the left.

Where did you hear about Tussen-I-Bome?

“Our kids, Marné (10) and Minette (8), visited the area while on a Voortrekker camp. Easter weekend was around the corner, and after their camp we decided to look for a campsite in the same area for the long weekend. Many of the resorts are busy during these times. We preferred to get away from the bustle.

I phoned ahead to find out more about the facilities, and the end result was a camping weekend.

What do the stands look like?

The stands are located behind the other accommodation. It's also, as the name implies, among the trees, and you camp on dirt, but you don't feel squashed in between your neighbours. The stands are



also not demarcated and the space on your stand is welcome. Every stand has its own tap and power point.

We camp with an Off Trax Outplay off-road camping trailer, but here you can also camp with an ordinary caravan or trailer. In fact, a retired couple spent the weekend here with their ordinary camping trailer.

The ablution facilities can only be described as excellent.

What can you do here?

One of the first animals you'll probably meet is Vlekkie, the tame zebra. Gerhard immediately told us about Vlekkie and said he'd even come and eat out of our hands. The kids enjoyed our stay at Tussen-I-bome, and Vlekkie visited us every day.

There are two swimming pools – one close to the office and one on a hill. The

area is part of the Bobbejaansberg and there are four hiking trails. One of the hiking trails took us all the way up to the top pool where we had a picnic. Also remember your mountain bike. There are more than enough safe trails to enjoy your surrounds.

Is there other accommodation?

Besides the caravan stands (and the ox-wagons), there's also a chalet for 10 people, a bush lapa for six people, plus a guesthouse (bed and breakfast) for up to 15 people.

What does it cost to camp here?

The stands are R250 p.n for up to four people – thereafter it's R50 p.p. ”



Contact 082 511 1169;

info@tussenibome.co.za;

tussenibome.co.za

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Pork on the coals

Pork is often a cheaper option than red meat. And if you braai it right, it's food fit for a king

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

LEG OF PORK SOUVLAKI

Sticky situation

Cut pork leg chops into blocks and make this tasty souvlaki. It's a much more economical cut than fillet.

Ingredients

(enough for 4)

- 500 g pork leg chop blocks
- salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste
- 2 green peppers
- 2–3 baby marrows
- 1 eggplant

- 1 cup cherry tomatoes
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 4 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon smoked paprika
- 1 tablespoon each fresh oreganum, dill and rosemary
- 4 cloves garlic, crushed
- 125 g feta cheese
- pita breads
- tzatziki or Greek yoghurt

Here's how

1 Cut the meat in evenly sized blocks of about 2 x 2 cm, season

with salt and pepper, and put in a Ziploc bag. Cut the green peppers, baby marrows and eggplant in evenly sized blocks, season with salt and pepper, and put together with the cherry tomatoes in a second Ziploc bag.

2 Mix the lemon juice, olive oil, vinegar, paprika, herbs and garlic together and divide evenly amongst the two bags. Place in the fridge overnight or keep outside the fridge while you get the fire ready.

3 Thread the meat and veggies on separate sosatie sticks. Braai

the sosaties until the meat and veg are cooked through and soft. Pull the meat and veggies off the sticks, mix in a bowl, and crumble in some feta. Keep warm.

4 Toast the pita breads over the coals until lightly charred. Fill the warm pita breads with meat, veggies and a spoonful of tzatziki.

go! Drive & Camp says Braai the meat and veggies separately - then you don't overcook the meat while waiting for the veggies to soften.



BLUE CHEESE-STUFFED PORK FILLET

For the coals or the kettle braai

Stuff these guys at home, wrap them tightly in cling film, and refrigerate. Then you simply braai them when you get to your campsite.

Ingredients

(enough for 4)

- 1 kg pork fillets
- 2 teaspoons paprika
- salt and black pepper to taste
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 8–10 strips of bacon
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 250 g brown mushrooms, chopped
- 1 red pepper, chopped
- 1 jalapeño chilli, chopped
- 50 g pecan nuts, chopped
- 1 cup crumbled blue cheese
- 125 g baby spinach, stems removed

Here's how

1 Butterfly the pork fillets yourself or ask your butcher to help. Put each butterflied fillet between two layers of cling film and flatten it with a rolling pin so that the

meat is about 1½ cm thick. Rub the olive oil onto the meat and flavour to taste with paprika, salt and black pepper.

2 Fry the bacon until cooked but not crispy. Remove from the pan and keep to the side. In the same pan (in the bacon fat) fry the onion, garlic, mushrooms, pepper and jalapeño chilli for about 10 minutes until soft. Flavour the mixture to taste with salt and pepper.

3 Fold open the fillets and place the bacon strips in a single layer on top. Now pack a layer of spinach leaves, and then the mushroom mixture. Sprinkle the nuts and blue cheese on top.

4 Roll the fillets up lengthwise and tie it firmly with kitchen string.

5 Braai the fillet for 15–20 minutes over medium coals. Turn the meat every 3 minutes and ensure all sides braai evenly.

6 Let the meat rest for 5 minutes on a chopping board, cut into slices, and enjoy!

go! Drive & Camp says If you don't like blue cheese, rather use feta. >



PULLED PORK ON THE COALS

For the pot

Make the marinade at home and transport it frozen in a Ziploc bag.

Ingredients

(enough for 6)

- 1 pork shoulder of 1,5 kg
- 1 tin (410 g) pineapple in juice
- 2 teaspoons grated ginger
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup soya sauce
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup tomato sauce
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup rice or apple vinegar
- 2 tablespoons chilli sauce (sriracha sauce works well)

For the pineapple salsa

- 1 cup chopped fresh pineapple
- 2 cups chopped cabbage
- 3 tablespoons Greek yoghurt
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 4 spring onions, chopped
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh coriander (optional)
- Chopped fresh chilli, to taste

Here's how

1 Fry the pork in a flat-bottom potjie until it's browned evenly. (You can omit this step but it

adds to the flavour.)

2 Mix the rest of the ingredients together. Add half of the pineapple sauce to the pot together with 2 cups water. Put the lid on.

3 Simmer over medium coals for 3–4 hours or until the meat falls off the bone. The longer you cook it and the lower the temperature, the better the results.

4 Use two forks to pull apart the meat in the pot. Remove any skin or bones. Mix the rest of the pineapple sauce through the shredded meat, taste, and add salt and pepper if necessary. Put the lid on and put the pot back on the heat.

5 Mix all the ingredients together for the pineapple salsa.

6 Eat spoonfuls of the meat and the pineapple salsa in a tortilla wrap or on rice. Cheese and avo slices work well with this.

go! Drive & Camp says If you bring the pot to boiling point quickly before you go to bed and then put it on lukewarm coals, the meat will be perfect tomorrow morning when you wake up.

PORK CHOPS WITH APRICOT JAM

For the coals

Use chops with the bone left in and a nice, thick layer of fat – it's delicious with the caramelised jam!

Ingredients

(enough for 6)

- 6 pork chops
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup balsamic vinegar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup olive oil
- 4 teaspoons rosemary, chopped
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup soya sauce
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup apricot jam
- chopped fresh chilli, to taste

Here's how

1 Mix everything together

well by putting the meat with the rest of the ingredients in a Ziploc bag. Freeze it or put it in the fridge for up to three days to marinade.

2 Braai the chops with the fat side down until golden brown. Char the meat for a few seconds on both sides. Brush the rest of the marinade on each side every time you turn the chops.

3 Season to taste with salt and pepper, and let the chops simmer for five minutes or longer before serving.

go! Drive & Camp says

Always ensure meat is room temperature before putting it on the coals.





BRAAIED PORK BELLY For the kettle braai

Succulent pork belly over the coals.

Ingredients

(enough for 6)

- pork belly of 1½–2 kg
- olive oil
- 2 tablespoons paprika
- 2 tablespoons coriander
- 2 tablespoons cumin seeds
- freshly ground black pepper
- coarse salt
- 4 sprigs fresh rosemary
- ½ cup red wine
- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar

Here's how

1 Rub the olive oil and herbs on the meat side of the pork. Using a sharp knife, cut a shallow diamond pattern on the skin – don't cut into the meat. Season the skin thoroughly with coarse salt.

2 Make two medium coal heaps in the kettle braai with space for a roasting tin between the heaps. Always use quality briquettes.

3 Place the rosemary sprigs at the bottom of the roasting tin with the pork on top – skin side up. Place the roasting tin on the grid, between the two briquette heaps. Put the lid on and make sure the ventilation holes are open.

4 Check after 30 minutes and add the red wine and vinegar – make sure you don't pour it over the skin, otherwise it won't crisp. Then leave it for two hours. The intense high heat at the beginning and the increasingly lower heat as time passes is just what the belly needs to be crispy on top and succulent at the bottom. When the meat is soft, it's ready.

5 Take the roasting tin with the belly out of the kettle braai and let it rest underneath a foil sheet for 20 minute before cutting it into pieces.

go! Drive & Camp says Mix two tablespoons of butter and your favourite braai marinade with the meat juices in the roasting tin to enjoy with your meal.

PORK SAUSAGE AND GRAPE SOSATIES As a starter

Use pork sausages to make these delicious sosaties that kids love. It's a great snack to eat straight from the coals.

Ingredients

(enough for 6)

- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 teaspoon chilli flakes
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh herbs of your choice (we used rosemary and oregano)
- juice and zest of 1 lemon
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 2 tablespoons honey
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 400 g pork sausages
- 1–2 red onions, cut in wedges
- 1 cup grapes

Here's how

1 Mix the garlic, chilli, herbs,

lemon juice and zest, mustard, honey and olive oil together and put it in a Ziploc bag. Add the sausages to the mixture and keep in the fridge until you're ready. You can even freeze it like this – just make sure you defrost it properly before you cook it.

2 Thread the sausages, onions, and grapes on a wooden sosatie skewer that's been soaked in water. I use 2–3 sticks and thread the sausages crosswise with the rest of the ingredients in between (see photo).

3 Braai the sosaties over medium coals. When the sausages are almost done, paint with the marinade and enjoy!

go! Drive & Camp says

This marinade is also delicious with chicken sosaties. You can bring a Ziploc bag full of marinade and use it for pork or chicken.



In the palm of your hand

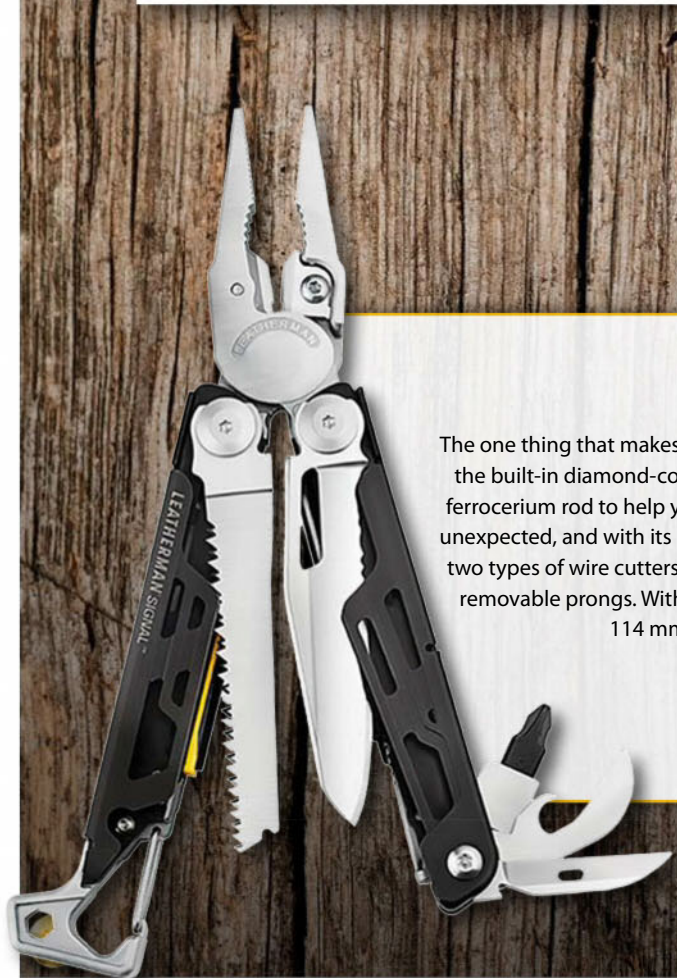
You feel ready to take on more if you have a proper multi-tool within reach. Here are seven to choose from.

Text **Schalk Jonker**

Multi-tools are nothing new. In fact, it dates back to the Roman Empire, when Caesar's men were equipped with something that is reminiscent of a Swiss Army knife. They used it as cutlery, but the fork, spoon, knife and toothpick folded out just like that

famous red knife's blades and tools.

When companies like Leatherman started adding pliers and a screw driver to the design, things changed, and this product became so popular it seems these days you should rather judge someone by his multi-tool than by the way he dresses.



LEATHERMAN SIGNAL Big boy

The one thing that makes the Leatherman Signal different from all the other models, is the built-in diamond-coated blade sharpener. It also has an emergency whistle and a ferrocerium rod to help you get your fire going. With this guy you are prepared for the unexpected, and with its 19 tools you should be okay in any situation. It has two pliers, two types of wire cutters, a knife blade, opener for bottles and cans, and a socket with removable prongs. With the blade (which is 69 mm long) closed, the Signal stands at 114 mm. And like all Leatherman products, it has a 25-year warranty.

Price From R2 770 at Awesome Tools.

go! Drive & Camp says It even has a little hammer.

LEATHERMAN SUPER TOOL 300

As strong as an ox

Leatherman says the pliers in the Super Tool 300 are the strongest it's ever produced, and the handles are designed so that you can get the mouth of the pliers into the smallest of spaces. It also has a no-nonsense wire stripper, which can be used to cut the insulation of electrical wire. It has 19 tools in total – you'll be your neighbour's hero when he wants to do a closer inspection of his LED lights' wiring.

Price From R1 685 at Awesome Tools.

go! Drive & Camp says It has four screwdrivers (flat-head and Torx) in different sizes. So you can fix anything from your ice fridge to your sunglasses.



GERBER BEAR GRYLLS ULTIMATE

For the sake of survival

If outdoorsman Bear Grylls puts his name on anything, you can probably safely say you're dealing with a quality product. This multi-tool is also made by Gerber, and it's so tough it's not afraid of any challenge. It has extra grip on its handles and spring-loaded pliers for easy use. You also get three screwdrivers, two blades, a wire cutter, and scissors. Folded up it's just longer than 100 mm, its blade is 60 mm in length and it weighs 249 g.

Price R1 350 at [takealot.com](#).

go! Drive & Camp says Its components are waterproof, so you don't have to worry about rust.



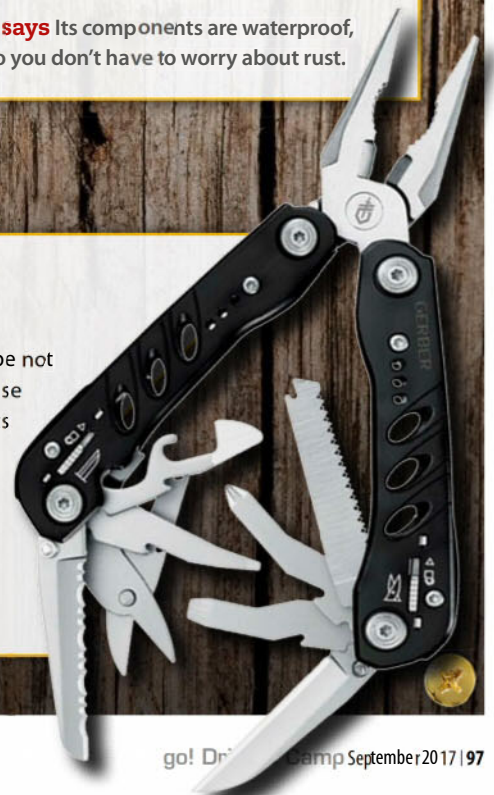
GERBER EVO TOOL

A good option

If Leatherman is the Naas Botha of multi-tools, then Gerber is the Gysie Pienaar. Maybe not as well-known, but not any less dependable. The Evo Tool is 100 mm long, and because it's made of metal, it weighs 337 g. Its blades also fold out from the inside, and with its sharp-mouth pliers you can get into those hard-to-reach spots. Its blade is 52 mm long and it also has a small pair of scissors.

Price R1 170 at [takealot.com](#).

go! Drive & Camp says The Gerber has a 25-year guarantee. >



LEATHERMAN SIDEKICK

Close at hand

The Sidekick is perfect for someone who first wants to see if a Leatherman is for him or her. Although it's one of the smaller models on the market – 97 mm long with the blade folded in – it doesn't mean it's any less capable. It's made of stainless steel and has 14 tools, including pliers, two blades and a saw, can and bottle opener, flat-head and Torx screwdrivers, and a wire cutter.

Price From R1 080 at Awesome Tools.

go! Drive & Camp says The blades fold out from the outside. That means you don't even have to open it up to take out a blade.



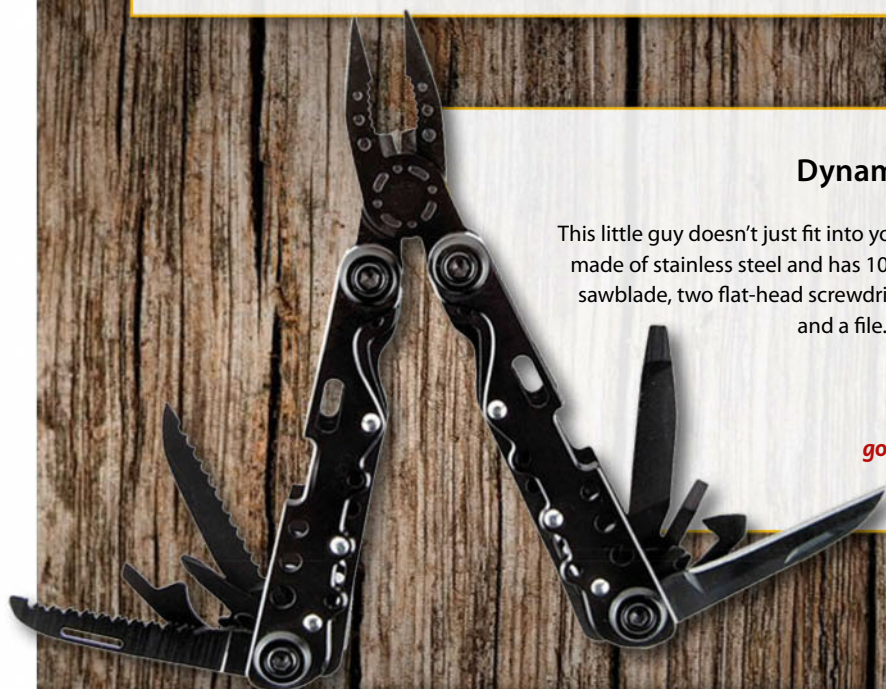
CAPE UNION MART COTTUS

Dynamite comes in small packages

This little guy doesn't just fit into your pocket, it is also easy on the pocket. It's made of stainless steel and has 10 functions, including a knife, pliers, a small sawblade, two flat-head screwdrivers and a Torx screwdriver, bottle opener, and a file. With the blade folded in it's 105 mm long.

Price R400 at Cape Union Mart.

go! Drive & Camp says Its blade is 51 mm long and it weighs 300 g.



GERBER BLUNT NOSE 600

Don't look down your nose

There are times when your sharp-mouth pliers will frustrate you – like when you have to firmly grip a 12 mm bolt. In these instances you'll be very thankful for this little guy from Gerber. Its pliers know how to grab hold onto something, and with its sturdy handles you'll easily keep your grip. It has two knife blades, three screwdrivers, a bottle and can opener, file, and even a ruler. Its longest blade is 36 mm long and folded in it's 124 mm. It weighs 255 g.

Price R1 390 at [takealot.com](#).

go! Drive & Camp says There's also a wire cutter that you can put in the mouth of the pliers and take out as needed.



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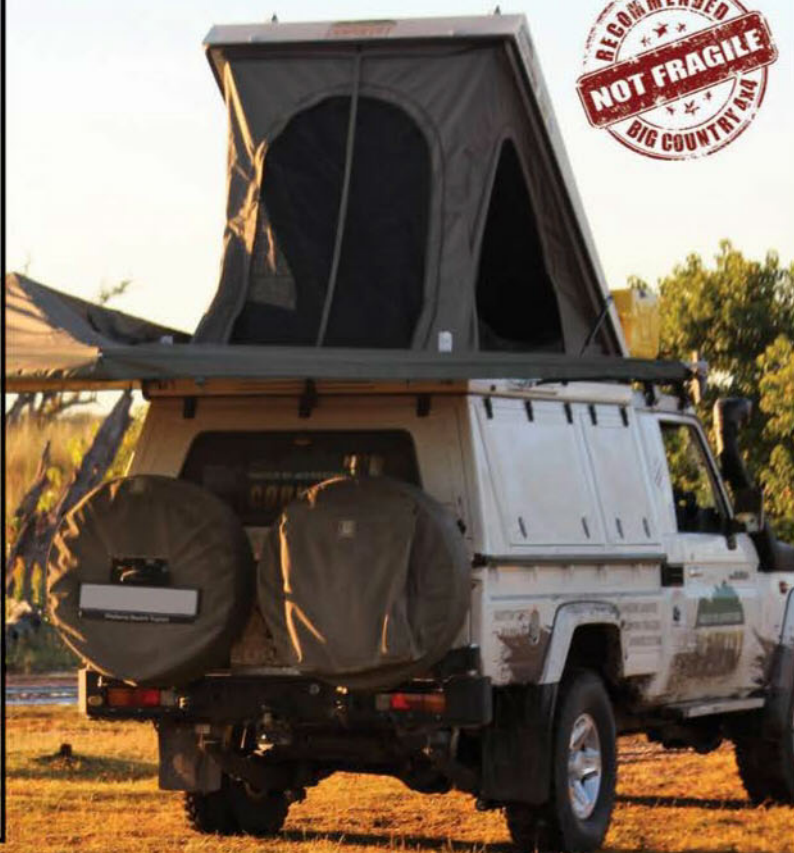
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Ensure you're insured

Many of us think of insurance as one of life's necessary evils. But when fate steps in, your insurance broker is probably the first person you'll call.

Text **Schalk Jonker**

The American filmmaker Woody Allen once said there are worse things than death... you can, for example, spend an evening with an insurance salesman. And cartoonist and humourist Kin Hubbard once quipped: "Fun is like life insurance; the older you get, the more it costs".

We can admit amongst each other that no one really likes paying their insurance premium every month. Many of us feel it's too expensive to pay for something that may or may not

go wrong. But speak to someone who's suffered serious damage and they'll quickly tell you how grateful they are for insurance. Or chat to someone who doesn't have insurance and had something go wrong and you'll realise it's worth every cent.

But what do you do when it comes to insuring your caravan, camping trailer or motorhome? Not all insurance is created equal, and what exactly do you need if you want to insure your home on wheels? We chat to Ian Lesar from CaraSure, who underwrites

our own Sleepseeker product, and to Eric Scriven, an insurance broker at CertiSure in Kroonstad.

The specialist

One of the first things people usually want to know about caravan insurance is what exactly it entails, says Ian. It's easier to explain it in a nutshell and to highlight how it's different from things like motor, household and building insurance.

"We offer insurance for leisure vehicles such as caravans, off-road caravans, camping trailers,

and motorhomes on a 'stand-alone' basis, meaning there is no car, household or building insurance attached. The reason for this is that caravans and other leisure vehicles are generally low risk.

"We offer complete and comprehensive cover for your caravan, which includes accident, theft, hijacking, malicious damage, and storm and hail damage. In all our policies we include contents worth R30 000. That is for standard camping equipment and accessories



WHEN DISASTER STRIKES. Besides the actual camping trailer, caravan or motorhome, insurers will also cover the contents of your leisure vehicle like microwaves, tents and fridges. But be warned: Mechanical or electrical failure isn't part of the deal.



like bedding, crockery, clothes, electrical appliances, as well as tents like dome tents, ordinary tents and awnings. We also offer optional additional contents coverage of either R45 000 or R60 000."

Ian says the coverage for caravans, off-road camping trailers and motorhomes is similar. "Generally it's the same, but you can customise your policy to also cover things like jerry cans and portable fridges."

That little something extra

Specialised caravan insurance also includes additional services like roadside assistance for when

your towing vehicle or caravan needs to be towed in an emergency. Then there's also assistance with flat tyres, keys locked in vehicles, running out of fuel, accidents, etc. that is part of your policy.

Ian says another important part of the policy is assistance with the recovery of vehicles from neighbouring countries like Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Lesotho, Swaziland, Malawi and Zambia. In case of medical evacuations you are also assisted with general advice, a helpline, and a list of medical emergency services available.

Other options

Someone with a specialised service like CaraSure isn't your only option when you want to insure your caravan. Eric says although the big insurers like Hollard Santam, and Mutual & Federal don't sell insurance specifically for caravans, they insure your leisure vehicle together with your household and other vehicles.

"Even if I have to say so myself, it's relatively cheap insurance. We have few claims on caravans and usually a standard excess payment of about R1 000. The premiums are low, especially if you add it to your existing policy," he says. "Basically you insure your caravan like you would your car. You also have the option of insuring it only for third-party damage. So, for example, when your caravan unhooks and causes damage to another vehicle or to property. You can of course take out comprehensive insurance to cover things like fire and hail damage, and an all-risk insurance type cover."

However, Eric warns that mechanical damage isn't included in your cover. "These types of things are always excluded. You'll struggle to get insurance for wear and tear."

By the book

Like with any insurance of vehicles, you need to ensure that your personal paperwork and your camping vehicle's documents are in order.

"It's incredibly important," says Ian. "If you don't have the right driver's licence – for example a code EB – for your caravan, we

won't be able to insure it. And a bank or financial institution won't give you financing."

Eric agrees and also warns that people should make sure their camping vehicle's licence disc hasn't expired. "You'll run into trouble if there's something wrong with your driver's licence or your caravan's licence disc. If you are involved in an accident and your licence or that of your vehicle's has expired, the insurance won't pay out."

With regards to GVM and load weight and vehicles' towing ability, Ian says the insurer doesn't have any control over it. "It's very difficult because we don't ask what the towing vehicle is. In the past 15 years, however, we have not had any issues with this. But something all drivers should keep in mind is that the insurance will only pay if the insured has complied with all the rules of the road ordinance."

What about my fridge?

Ian has bad news if you thought you could claim for a new fridge if it fails. "The short, simple answer is no. Why not? Insurance will indemnify the insured against certain perils like storm, accident, theft and malicious damage.

"We often get this question and we simply answer with a question of our own: If the client had a broken fridge in the house, would the insurance pay for that?" Electrical failure, lack of maintenance, and mechanical failure are not covered by any insurance company.

"The other big question is wood rot. It's something we >

Specialised caravan insurance includes additional services such as roadside assistance, and even the recovery of vehicles from neighbouring countries.



CLAIMANTS BEWARE. Remember that insurers will not honour a claim if your driver's licence or that of your leisure vehicle has expired. Any extras such as special fittings or lighting will also have to be declared to the insurer, otherwise you could end up losing thousands of rands.



compare with rust on a vehicle – it isn't covered."

Eric says that which comes with the camping vehicle – the fridge, microwave, tent, etc. – is automatically part of the vehicle. "But that brings us back to wear and tear. If it breaks because it's old, we can't help you. But it's a different story if the fridge is stolen or there's lightning damage. In these cases you are covered."

Ian and Eric both point out that it's crucial to separately specify any new additions to your camping vehicle, like an after-market air conditioner or TV.

Do it yourself

If you installed LED lights or redid the electricity system in your vehicle yourself, Ian says they don't ask too many questions. "Things like that are beyond our control. But if there's fire damage and it's because of negligent electricity installation, there will probably be issues."

The problem is when people want to insure self-built vehicles. "We don't offer coverage for that because the repair network in South Africa and in neighbouring countries wouldn't be able to accommodate it," says Ian.

All dolled up

And what if you kitted your 4x4 out with things like a bull bar, canopy, winch and snorkel? "You have to add these things to your vehicle's policy as you install it, and it has to be specified as extras," says Eric. "We look at your vehicle's resale value. If it is stolen and you didn't specify the extras you're going to lose money."

go! Drive & Camp says If you plan on taking your camping vehicle abroad, chat to your insurer and find out about the territorial limits of your policy. Include the duration of your journey and the countries you plan on visiting.

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Have you ever lost your caravan or camping trailer somewhere outside Augrabies, or had a flat tyre on the way to Badplaas? Take out Sleepseker insurance and get peace of mind.

We have introduced several innovations in the caravan and camping world over the past few years, and now, together with CaraSure, *go! Drive & Camp* has another product that can be useful to our readers: towing insurance!

With *go! Drive & Camp's* insurance product Sleepseker, we've negotiated a special tariff for our readers. The insurance covers caravans, camping trailers and motorhomes. There are two packages available:

Sleepseker Prestige

- Sleepseker coverage
- Sleepseker contents (of R30 000)
- SleepWeg roadside assistance

Sleepseker Econo

- Sleepseker coverage
- SleepWeg roadside assistance

The benefits include

- **Towing coverage:** The towing vehicle has comprehensive insurance that covers accidents, malicious damage, storm damage, theft, hijacking and fire.

- **Sleepseker coverage:** Coverage for contents worth a total of R30 000 is included in the Prestige package. You have the option of insuring your contents for up to R45 000 or R60 000. That includes: bedding, kitchenware, clothes, electrical appliances, caravan and tent accessories and gear, as well as tents (dome tents, ordinary tents, and canopies).
- **SleepWeg roadside assistance:** This includes the towing of the leisure and the towing vehicles in an emergency. Plus:
 - **Assistance next to the road:** Help with flat tyres, keys locked in the leisure vehicle, running out of petrol, accidents and more.
 - **The recovery of vehicles from neighbouring countries:** This includes Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Lesotho, Swaziland, Malawi and Zambia and covers emergencies (like accidents).
 - **Medical evacuations:** General advice and a helpline plus medical emergency services.

Why insure with us?

- *go! Drive & Camp* has partnered with

CaraSure, a company that specialises in the insurance of leisure vehicles in South Africa.

- The Sleepseker Prestige as well as the Econo packages include credit shortage options. This coverage makes provision for the outstanding amount plus interest when there's an overall loss of the vehicle.
- Because we partnered with CaraSure, we know that we're working with specialists in the insurance industry – a company that also understands the needs of its campers.

HOW DO I APPLY?

Go to weg.co.za for all the information and application forms, or phone **0860 107 772** for quotes and inquiries. Fax the application forms to **086 607 0494** or email it to wegsleep@carasure.com. Claim forms can be sent to wegsleep@carasure.com. For SleepWeg roadside assistance, phone the call centre at **0861 111 215**.



The policy is underwritten by Natsure (Pty) Ltd. (FDV 4578) and the Guardrisk Insurance Company Limited (FDV 75), both authorised financial services providers.



Come to the Rapport Holiday Show for free!

It's almost time for the Rapport Holiday Show, and if you join Sleepseker, *go! Drive & Camp's* insurance, you'll get a free ticket.

The Rapport Holiday Show is an incredible business opportunity for people in the travel, tourism and leisure market.

The show will be taking place from 29 September to 1 October

at Sandringham in Stellenbosch in the Western Cape.

We invite you to come visit the *go! Drive & Camp* stall. Come renew your subscription, buy your favourite T-shirt at our shop, or just come and chat to us.

Apply for Sleepseker insurance today! Go to: weg.netwerk24.com/Toerusting/krywegsleep-versekering





Let's talk satellites

In remote areas, a satellite phone can mean the difference between life and death. We chat to the people from Zippistat about what a satellite phone entails.

Text **Leon Botha** Illustration **Dominic Wienand**

These days living without a smartphone is unimaginable – so much so that many people think twice before holidaying at a place where there is no cellphone reception. Even travellers who

prefer places with as little as possible modern comforts grab their phones first when they're in an emergency.

If you own a 4x4, chances are good you'll be without cellphone reception for days on end on your trip. It might not be that big a problem if you're travelling in a group, but you

can land knee-deep in trouble if you're travelling on your own and things go wrong. In these places you often don't see another soul and there's nowhere to ask for help. If there isn't cellphone reception in a 35 km radius, you can pack away your cellphone.

And don't think the problem only lies on the other side of the country's borders; about half of South Africa doesn't have reception. If you go look at a map by

OpenSignal – a company that maps cellphone signal strengths worldwide – you'll see the "open" gaps in South Africa.

The biggest sections of the plains in the Northern Cape, central Karoo right through to the Eastern Cape interior up to Lesotho have almost no signal coverage.

The great thing about a satellite phone is that you are not dependent on a signal tower. Just like your satellite navigation





system works in every corner of the globe, a satellite phone also works everywhere.

IT'S TWO WORLDS UP THERE

In the years of videotapes there were two systems: VHS and Betamax. The one didn't work on the other's player, and you had to choose your preference. It works almost the same way with a satellite phone in South Africa, because there are two mainstream satellite constellations to choose from: Inmarsat or Iridium.

Each have their own satellites and the one's phone won't work with the other's. But regardless of the constellation, you must also remember that a satellite phone works with line of sight from the handset to the satellite. In other words, if there is a physical barrier between you and the satellite, it influences the signal.

Therefore you mainly use the phone outside where the signal has an uninterrupted line to the satellite.

Inmarsat is the oldest of the two and was started in 1979 to use on ships. Inmarsat's I4 constellation uses four geosynchronous satellites above the equator. That means each of the satellites stays above a specific part of the globe, and they turn along with the Earth in their own tracks.

They're also spaced out so that they cover almost the entire globe. Their Achilles heel

SIGNAL BLUEPRINT. You can access OpenSignal's online maps to check mobile signal strength throughout the country. It also includes individual networks bunched onto the same map, as displayed above.

are the North and South poles. The phone networks don't work here.

Inmarsat's satellites are stationed relatively high above Earth (35 700 km). That means the radio wave of the phone to the satellite and back can cause a delay when you're talking. The wave typically takes 250 milliseconds to the satellite, meaning it takes a quarter of a second there and back.

But with the modern voice technology that the network uses, you can have a conversation like you would over a regular phone – without talking and waiting, talking and waiting.

Iridium entered the market 20 years after Inmarsat, and relies on 66 satellites that move in several tracks around the globe. They are not geosynchronous, and because they move around the Earth in their own time, the network works everywhere – even in the poles.

Iridium's satellites are a lot closer to Earth (640–1 120 km) and their orbit time around Earth is 70–100 minutes. Where with Inmarsat you rely on a specific stationary satellite >

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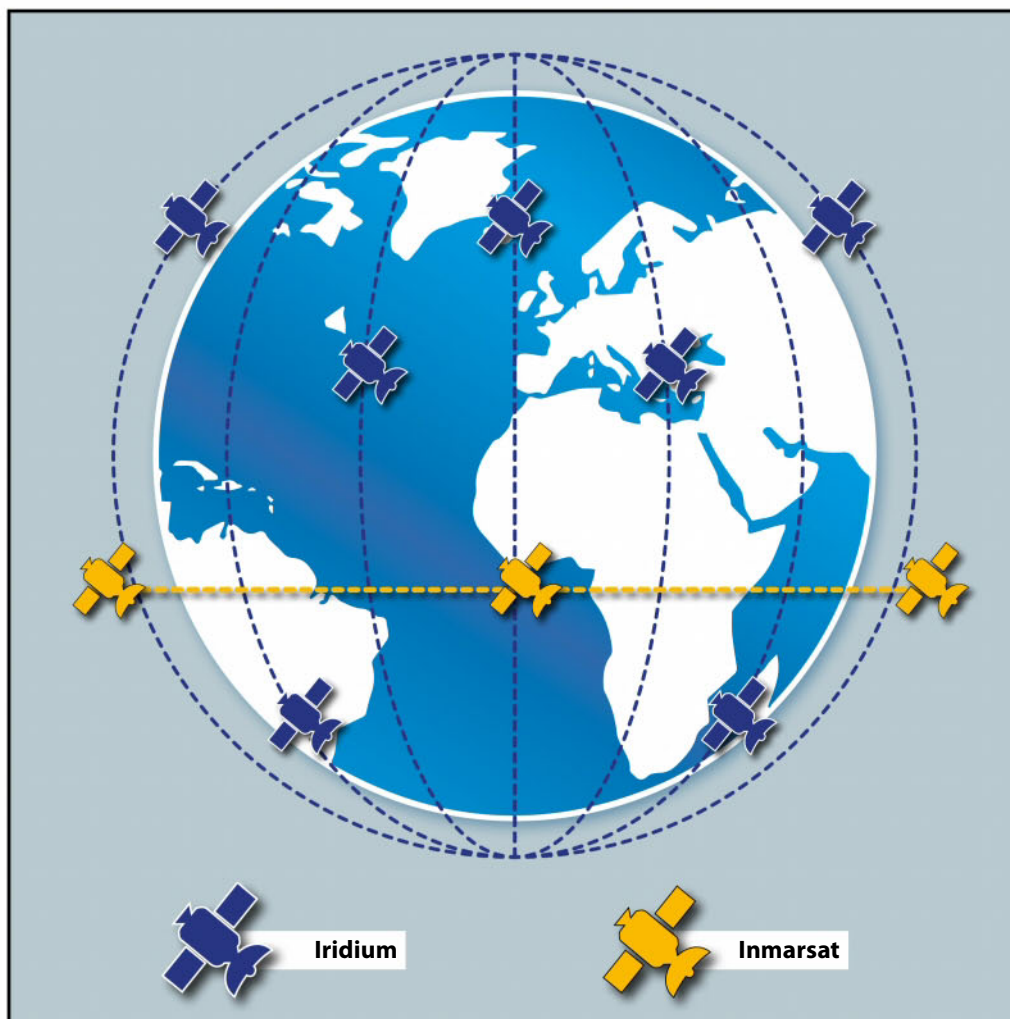
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The best thing about a satellite phone is that you're not at the mercy of a cellphone tower.

above you, Iridium's radio wave jumps to the next satellite as they move above you in their orbit track. You'd typically use a specific Iridium satellite for 4–15 minutes before the signal jumps to the next one.

WHAT DOES IT COST?

The prices for the handset and airtime differ depending on which service you use. You can buy or rent the handset, and

also buy the airtime beforehand. This is what the costs look like if you use Zippisat:

Inmarsat

The rental tariffs differ depending on how long you want to use the phone. You have a choice of four periods: up to 14 days, up to 31 days, and 60 days or longer.

For the two-week period the rental costs R80 p.d. (R1 120 for

the full two weeks). That works out to about R12 per day (R68) cheaper if you want to rent the handset for 31 days (R2 108 for the full 31 days). But if you're going to need the handset for longer, there's a discount of R57 p.d. after the 31st day. If you want to buy your own handset, you're looking at about R11 500.

Just like with a cellphone, you load the prepaid airtime on the phone's sim card. The airtime works in units where one minute equals 1,3 units. You also have an option of prepaid airtime that's valid for anything from 30 days to a year.

For 50 units (38,5 minutes' airtime) that's valid for 30 days it costs R933, and 100 units that's valid for 90 days cost R1 853. Incoming calls cost you nothing, but the person phoning you has

to cough up: R50-R80 per minute is not unusual. It's cheaper to phone back from the satellite phone.

Iridium

Iridium is a better choice for long-term users in Africa. Zippisat sells an Iridium 9575 Extreme handset for approximately R18 500.

For the airtime options you can choose between a package that's valid in Africa, or, if you want to travel further, the rest of the world.

The Africa option's package is valid for a year, costs R4 372, and includes 300 minutes' airtime. That gives you on average 25 minutes per month – equal to just a bit less than one minute per day.

That boils down to R364 per month, which compares favourable to the cheapest cellphone contracts in South Africa.

The prices for both networks are worked out as if you're buying the handset and airtime separately. If you buy the handset, there are options for special tariff packages.

go! Drive & Camp says For the average Joe, a satellite phone is an emergency phone. If you run into trouble in the middle of nowhere, the phone can be your lifeline.

Contact ☎ 072 7676 578;
✉ info@zippisat.com;
✉ zippisat.com

All prices include VAT, and the rand-dollar exchange rate for the airtime – as well as the Iridium handset – is calculated at R13.

Alternative internet sources
✉ electronics.howstuffworks.com; ✉ Cellhire.com; wikipedia.com

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Easy riders

Harry explains how he got his Land Cruiser ready for Africa's roads, Norman brags about how smoothly his Hilux runs with the Sensation on the tow bar, and Japie says his Tata is perfect.



Land Cruiser ready for Africa

2017 TOYOTA LAND CRUISER V8 4.5D

He kitted his Land Cruiser out properly and now he's ready to tackle Africa's roads, says **Harry Pohl** from Nelspruit.

“I bought my Land Cruiser new for **R600 000** in February this year.

Before that I drove a **Volkswagen Amarok**, but was looking for something with **more load capacity and in which I would sit a bit higher**.

I also prefer a vehicle that drives comfortably and that has enough ground clearance for tough terrain,

and that's why I ultimately decided on the Cruiser. I also think you feel more at ease driving through Africa with a Toyota instead of a Volkswagen.

I named my Cruiser “**Indabuscha**”, and am very satisfied with its ability to conquer any 4x4 terrain. The ride is a bit **hard and bumpy**, but it's not the end of the world. I kitted it out with a winch from EFS, a **Kilber bull bar**, a heavy-duty rear bumper with two swing arms for the spare wheels, a De Graaf exhaust system, air compressor, inverter, spotlights, a roof rack, Rhino canopy, gas

bottles with fittings, **alloy wheels with Cooper off-road tyres**, a two-way radio, **80 ℓ long-distance tank**, storage tray system, water tank, air suspension, and protection plates for the engine. It's now pretty complete and ready to tackle any rough terrain.

I have no complaints, not even about the **20 ℓ/100 km** it gives me. The best destination we've visited with Indabuscha was **Mabuasehube in Botswana**. There are no fences and the game walk around freely. It's a true experience.”

STRONG AND COMFORTABLE



2016 TOYOTA HILUX 4x4 2.8D

The people at Toyota know how to put together a proper towing vehicle, says **Norman Gasson** from Marquard.

We camp with a **2015 model Sensation Devee** (I was lucky enough to order one before Sensation stopped producing it), and for the past year I've towed it with my Hilux.

I was looking for a towing vehicle with **enough power** for the big caravan, and

after also considering the Land Cruiser, I ended up buying the double cab Hilux with automatic gearbox **new for R570 000**.

It's a lot easier for me to tow with an **automatic gearbox** rather than a manual. I'm very pleased with it. It's not noisy, doesn't handle like a bakkie, and it has more than enough power.

I previously towed with a Hilux 3.0 diesel, but the new one's **six-speed gearbox** is a big improvement on the

old one. It's also lighter on fuel. Without the caravan I get close to 10,5 ℓ/100 km. I haven't measured it exactly when we're towing, but I reckon it's in the vicinity of **14 ℓ/100 km**.

I'm very satisfied, but that said, I wouldn't mind towing with the new BMW X5. We like to camp at **Forever Thipise** to escape the cold Free State.

The hot springs are lovely and there is always entertainment for young and old.



Hello, Tata

2009 TATA XENON 3.0

He also wants to brag with his towing combination, says **Japie Coetzee** from Roodepoort.



We tow a **2004 Sprite Swing** with our 2009 model Tata Xenon 3.0 bakkie, and I can honestly say it's an excellent combination.

I don't experience **any problems** with the Tata and the Swing follows obediently. I tow comfortably at 120 km/h, because the bakkie's maximum power comes out at **2 000 rpm**.

The fuel consumption ranges from 8–9 ℓ/100 km without the caravan and **10–11 ℓ/100 km** with it on the bar. However, I don't always tow at 120 km/h and prefer to keep things closer to **100 km/h**. But I have caught myself doing 140 km/h.



The bakkie makes towing a pleasure and I think it can be chalked up to the **rear wheels sitting further back** than on other bakkies.

I don't use a stabiliser, because the caravan doesn't really swerve, even when I overtake a truck.



Show us your wheels

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

Eye-level extravaganza

Tired of photographing animals from your Fortuner? Get down to water-level in one of Southern Africa's incredible underground hides.

Text and photos Villiers Steyn

Since an increasing number of people are switching their focus from mere game viewing to wildlife photography, classic platform hides are slowly but surely being replaced by sunken hides that are clearly designed with the perfect photo in mind. The waterholes they overlook are

smaller, the directions they face ensure that every guinea fowl, buffalo and giraffe they attract are perfectly lit, and their comfort levels make Lake Panic's benches feel like torture. We're talking high-back swivel chairs, moveable gimbal heads and, in some cases, even air con! Here's everything you need to know:



1 When to go
Going to an underground hide during the wet season (November to May) is like going to watch the Bulls play Super Rugby this year – disappointment is virtually guaranteed. Animals

are more likely to quench their thirst at flowing rivers and pools of rainwater. Rather book between June and October when the hides' pumped waterholes are the only reliable sources of water in the area.

2 What to expect
What makes this experience so exhilarating is the fact that you're looking tree squirrels and blue waxbills in the eye when you photograph them, and up at everything that's bigger. Not only does this give your photos a fresh angle, but it also makes it possible to blur the background of even the smallest of subjects – something that's nearly impossible from within a vehicle.



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



3 Which lenses to take
You never know what you might need, so pack your camera bag like you would a first-aid kit – take everything you have. Short lenses (24-70 mm) are a must if you're expecting to photograph large mammals like elephants or herds of antelope, and long prime lenses (500 mm and 600 mm) are perfect for small birds. A zoom lens (like a 70-200 mm or 100-400 mm) is also very handy for everything in between, including Egyptian geese, herons, baboons, warthogs, etc.

Must-visit hides

1 Zimanga, KwaZulu-Natal
Four unique underground hides – two for small birds, one overlooking a lagoon, and one you can overnight in – all designed by world renowned photographer Bence Mate. Photographers and animals are separated by one-way glass to eliminate the chances of startling the subjects. For more information, visit zimanga.com.

2 Indlovu River Lodge, Lowveld
Photographers can switch between two extremely comfortable hides: a morning hide for small birds, and an afternoon hide predominantly for mammals. For more information, visit irl.co.za.

3 Mashatu, Tuli Block, Botswana
Perhaps not as comfortable as some of the other underground hides (photographers sit on bar stools), but by far the most reliable place to photograph elephants, and definitely the wildest feel. You have a choice of two nearly identical sunken shipping containers, each located in a different habitat. Read more about each hide at c4photohides.com

Zambia-Liuwa Plains Wildebeest Migration



The adventure

Our route takes us from Katima Mulilo in Namibia, where we catch our first glimpse of the mighty Zambezi, and back again. Following the course of the Zambezi past the Sioma Falls, we cross the Barotse Floodplains and on through the town of Kalabo. From Kalabo, we enter the Liuwa Plains National Park where we will encounter the second biggest wildebeest migration in Africa.

The team

Your tour leader is an experienced nature conservationist and adventure guide. He will be in radio contact with you at all times. Three meals a day will be prepared by our bush chef.

The coffee pot will brew on the fire from six till late.

Our logistics crew will pitch and take down the camps at all the overnight stops we visit. Tents and tables are supplied by Bhejane Adventures.

Adventure itinerary

DAY 1

We meet at Namwi Island Camp near the Namibian town of Katima Mulilo.

The evening will be spent socialising around the fire and getting to know each other as the sun sets over the Zambezi River.

DAY 2

Making an early start after breakfast, and after you have all been issued with handheld two-way radios, we take to the road and leave for Katima Mulilo in Namibia. After refuelling our vehicles in Katima, we cross the border into Zambia. As the border post procedures here can take a while, we will only be travelling a further 115 km to our next overnight stop at Kabula Lodge campsite. Before dinner we enjoy an evening sundowner boat cruise on the Zambezi River.

DAY 3

Today your destination is Liuwa Plains National Park. Our route takes us via the town of Mongu, where we refuel and restock. Then we move west onto the 50 km-wide flood plain of the Zambezi.

We cross the mighty river again via ferry and then make our way to the town of Kulabo.

COSTS AND DATES

DATES 3–12 November 2017 and 13–22 November 2017

TOUR PRICE R13 950 per person (half price for children under 10)

THE TOUR PRICE INCLUDES

- All camp and park entrance fees
- All advertised activities
- Tents, cutlery and crockery
- Coffee and tea all day every day while in camp

WHAT YOU NEED TO BRING

- A vehicle and fuel
- Mattresses and/or a stretcher and sleeping bags and pillows
- Camp chairs
- Drinks and snacks
- All relevant medical emergency and evacuation insurance cover
- Border crossing fees and road taxes

We have an interesting manual ferry crossing from Kulabo into the national park. Our campsite for the next four nights is as centrally located in the park as possible and has flush toilets and cold-water showers.

DAYS 4, 5 & 6

After a good night's rest and a hearty breakfast, we make our way into the endless expanse of the park. We break our convoy into smaller groups to facilitate better game viewing. We spend our three days in Liuwa Plains enjoying panoramic landscapes, wildebeest in their thousands and, with luck, the predators that prey on them.

DAY 7

Sadly today we have to bid farewell to the Liuwa Plains

National Park. We retrace our steps back via the ferry to Kulabo and on to Mongu and back to Kabula Lodge campsite.

DAY 8

Today we visit the Ngonya Waterfall. It is not as big as the Victoria Falls but wilder and a thousand times less commercialised. We spend our last night in Zambia at the Kabula Lodge campsite.

DAY 9

Retracing our steps via Katima Mulilo, we make our way back to Namwi Island Camp. We spend our last night together around the campfire.

DAY 10

After a lavish breakfast, we must sadly part ways. 📍

YES, I WANT TO GO!

To book, call Bhejane on 0044 535 9257 or e-mail bookings@bhejane.com. Find out more at www.bhejane.com

Load your fishing gear and head to KZN

Pitch camp at the Tugela Mouth Resort, and hook an elf, grunter or bigeye stumpnose.



FISH FACTS

How do fish drink?

Because fish live in the water, most people think they also drink that water. But you'll be surprised: It's true in some cases, but definitely not in all.

People drink fresh water, but you can die of thirst next to the sea because the salt in the water will dehydrate you. It works a bit differently with fish: Fish in the sea drink the water, but fish in fresh water do not.

Freshwater fish take water in through their mouth and it runs out through their gills. The water is absorbed into the fish's bloodstream via the gills through a process called osmosis. That's because the fresh water contains a lower concentration of dissolvable substances (like salts and

sugars) than in the fish's body. Therefore freshwater fish don't physically drink the water they take in.

In the case of sea fish, the concentration of salt dissolved in the water is higher than that in the fish's body. Some of the water the fish takes in through its mouth also moves over the gills, but it swallows the rest of the water, which then lands in its digestive system. Here the water is absorbed into the bloodstream – just like with people. So sea fish drink their water.

The differences between these two types of fish are even more apparent if you look at their excretion. A freshwater fish releases a large amount of urine because of all the water

that's absorbed into the bloodstream. With sea fish it works the other way round, because this type of fish releases water out of the bloodstream via the gills through diffusion.

That means sea fish release

less urine, but it's a lot more concentrated with loads of waste products and absorbed salts.

Sources macmillanlearning.com, indianapublicmedia.org and amnh.org



FISH SPECIES

Cape knifejaw *Oplegnathus conwayi*



The Cape knifejaw can be found from False Bay to Aliwal Shoal in KwaZulu-Natal. This medium-sized fish is oval-shaped and has a parrot-like beak and a grey head and

body, with a dark mask around the eyes. Juveniles are yellow-orange in colour with two

distinctive black bars in the front and back of the body.

Size and biology They grow slowly, reach a maximum length of 90 cm, and live to about 13 years. Spawning takes place throughout the year, with peak spawning occurring in spring.

Habitat Adults can be found in depths of 5 to 32 m. It appears adults choose a mate and then stay close to a particular reef. Juveniles are found on shallow inshore reefs, tidal pools or beneath floating objects at sea.

Catch me if you can This omnivore feeds on red and

green algae, sponges and acidians. It's an easy fish for spear fisherman to catch, particularly in the Eastern Cape. It is inquisitive by nature, making them an easy target.

That's a record A fish of 5,8 kg, caught by a spear fisherman in 1961.



SASSI status You're allowed to catch five per day (any size) and take it home.

Text Dr. Nikki James

Sketch Elaine Heemstra

© South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity (SAIAB)



FISHING RESORT

At river's end

Tugela Mouth Resort

An hour or so's drive south of Richard's Bay, the N2 shoots past the Mandini exit. On the left you will find the Tugela Mouth Resort.

The resort management allocates a stand to you and also gives you a resort map. Each stand's size is indicated on the map – the smallest is 8 x 9 m and the biggest 10 x 14 m. You can also see if it's sun, shade, or partly shade.

The stands are neatly cordoned off with shoulder-high topiary shrubs that are clipped squarely. Not every stand is covered with grass.

A garbage bin is next to the braai and the resort's staff clean it early every morning. You have your own tap. The braai doesn't have a grid, but if you arrive without your own you can buy one for R130 at the shop.

There are three ablution facilities. The one is to the left as you drive in, next to the pool, the next one is in the middle, and the family bathrooms are to the far right. Each of the bathrooms have a dishwashing area next to it.

Behind the middle bathroom is another pool, with the gates leading to the beach behind it. From here it is a quick 90 m walk to the beach. If you see lots of caravans in the resort but no people, they're probably at the beach. With fishermen who patiently



peer out over the blue water, rod in hand, the beach almost resembles a porcupine. There are easily 30 fishermen at a time – it's amazing that their lines don't get tangled.

You can catch up to nine different sharks as well as seven types of ray and at least 25 of the bigger fish species.

If you walk 15 minutes along the beach toward Durban, you'll get to the mouth of the Tugela River.

If the fish are jumping and you run out of bait, don't fret – the shop in the resort is well stocked with everything from bait and line to rods and sinkers.



Briefly | Tugela Mouth Resort



Arrival and departure times
2 pm and 10 am.

Contact 082 803 6339;
info@tugelamouth.co.za;
tugelamouth.co.za

Nearest town Mandini, 14 km.

What does the road look like? The last 4 km is dirt road, but the road is currently being fixed in preparation of it being tarred.

GPS S29.216759 E31.506867

go! Drive & Camp says

The nearest post office is in Mandini – here you can buy a fishing permit if you don't already have one.

Fish Includes elf, grunter, bigeye stumpnose, skipjack, small kob, Malabar grouper, silver whiting, and various ray and shark types.

Campsite 37 demarcated stands with electricity and water.

Ablution facilities 3 ablution blocks, 1 of which has family bathrooms, and 1 laundry (get the R25 tokens at the shop).

Price From R200 for 2 people out of season to R770 for 6 in season.



CROSSWORD

High five, **Anlie Dietrichsen** from Standerton: You are the winner of a R500 Trappers gift voucher for your correct entry in the crossword competition in our August 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/2uZmRm8>.

			A Renault SUV	... and behold	Atomic number 30	Taxi	West coast town (8,3)			
					In addition					
			Bamako is its capital			"Oh ...!"				
			Ready			Increase				
Sur-rounded		Stitch Born	Scarlet	Golf iron, eg			Beside	Cover	Shrek, eg	
				Beat			Zodiac sign	Hit hard	Unused	
					Naming the letters of a word					
Wide-spread						Bookworm				
Drainage						Morning (abbr)				
That is (L abbr)			Egyptian sun god	Thus		Particle			You and I	
Regarding				Hall		In ... and sevens				
		Climbing plant	After hours (abbr)		Depart			Infanta's bush caravan		
					Text message					
Colossus				16th Greek letter		Exist				
Revolution (abbr)										
			Either ...	Former partner		Indefinite article				
				Glimpsing						
Colour			Negative answer		Port Elizabeth (abbr)	You know (abbr)		Show again	Utiliser	Cat or dog, eg
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			Sick			Oval				
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			Cloak	Pismires	Sleep	Ceremony				
Wetland park in KZN	Runner	Air pollution					Radar devices		Handle	
							Not off		Fib	
								Flat-screen, eg	Indium (symbol)	
Largest		Choose		Copy-right				Two (Roman)		
					Not no		Broad blade			

COMPILED BY GERDA ENGELBRECHT

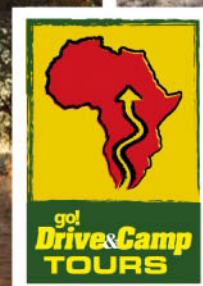
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DAY 1

Our adventure through the Kalahari begins as we settle in at our first campsite – Twee Rivieren in the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park.

DAYS 2 AND 3

We pack up and leave for Nossob Camp, where we stay for the next two nights. On our way, we visit the Auchterlonie Museum with displays of the park's history. When we arrive at camp, our pitched tents, as well as coffee and tea, will be waiting. After a light breakfast, you can choose to either explore the camp or do a game drive. The waterhole at the campsite is sure to provide some entertaining moments.

DAYS 4 AND 5

After an early rise and light breakfast, we head north, crossing the Nossob River into the Botswana section of the park and towards the Kaa gate. It's a beautiful day's drive through spectacular dune

fields. In the afternoon, we enter the community concession.

We spend the next two days travelling through one of the wildest places in Southern Africa. The roads consist of twin tracks, cutlines and bush drives through the savannah and red Kalahari sands. The area is renowned for its low-lying pans, where giant eland, springbok, gemsbok and the famous Kalahari lions come to quench their thirst. Game has free access to a wilderness area more than twice the size of the Kruger National Park. Apart from rustic vehicle tracks, there is nothing else man-made, not even light pollution, so the night skies will take your breath away.

During our two days' stay, we will be joined by a qualified community Bushman guide who will share his stories, knowledge, and history of the area and his people with us. We will be camping wild alongside two magnificent salt pans, listening to the sounds (and the silence) of the night time wild.

COSTS AND DATES

DATES 28 January to 4 February 2017

TOUR PRICE R11 650 per person (half price for children under 10)

THE TOUR PRICE INCLUDES

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- Stretchers or mattresses, bedding and camp chairs
- Drinks and snacks
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DAYS 6 AND 7

After an early start, we make our way to the Botswana village of Hukuntsi in the northern part of the concession, where we will replenish our water and fuel supplies. We then head south to Mabuasehube on the Botswana side of the park, where we spend two nights at the same campsite on the edge of Mabua Pan. Get ready

for spectacular sunsets and days spent game viewing in an area known for lion, leopard, cheetah, honey badger and brown hyena sightings.

DAY 8

After a last breakfast, we pack up and head for home, travelling together on sandy cutlines to the small town of Tshabong where we say our goodbyes. 

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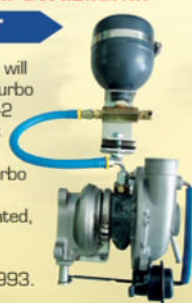


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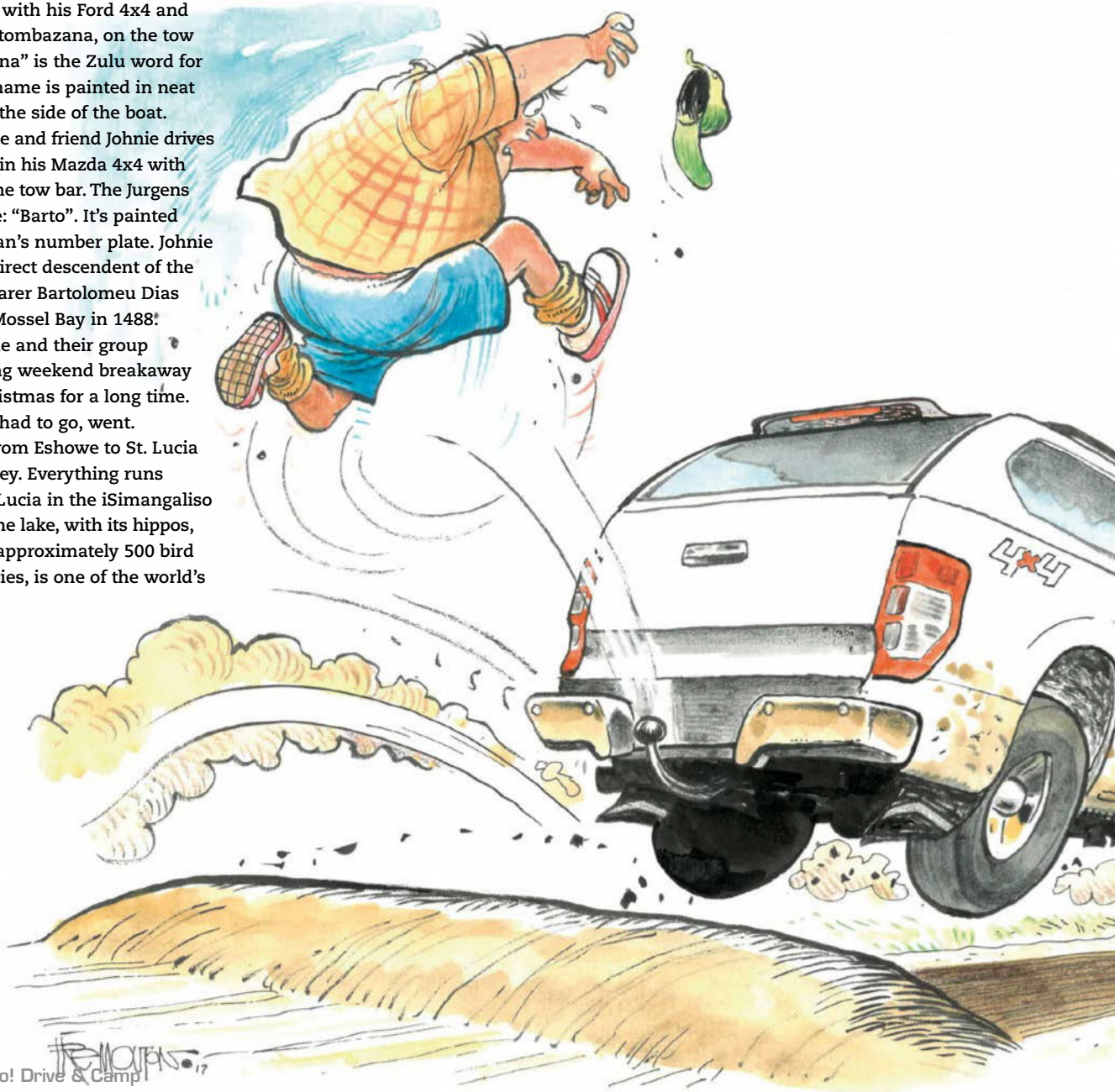
It's not always nice to have a boat, says Christie Gerber.

Friday morning eight o'clock they leave. Ben and co drive in front with his Ford 4x4 and boat, Intombazana, on the tow bar. "Intombazana" is the Zulu word for "girl", and this name is painted in neat black letters on the side of the boat.

Ben's colleague and friend Johnie drives behind the boat in his Mazda 4x4 with his Jurgens on the tow bar. The Jurgens also has a name: "Barto". It's painted above the caravan's number plate. Johnie reckons he's a direct descendent of the Portuguese seafarer Bartolomeu Dias who landed in Mossel Bay in 1488.

Ben and Johnie and their group planned this long weekend breakaway right before Christmas for a long time. Everything that had to go, went.

The 130 km from Eshowe to St. Lucia is an easy journey. Everything runs smoothly to St. Lucia in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park. The lake, with its hippos, crocodiles, and approximately 500 bird and 14 fish species, is one of the world's



SKETCH FRED MOULTON

largest. With the 280 km coastline on the Indian Ocean, the Mkuze wetland, Sodwana Bay, Kosi Bay and its great campsites, this is Utopia.

UPON ARRIVAL AT THE CAMPSITE, Intombazana gets tied to the jetty. Tents are pitched because the Jurgens doesn't have space for everyone.

The camp is ready, the afternoon is over, and now it's a big trek to the showers.

From early evening already the adults are relaxing next to the fire. The kids are busy somewhere in the campsite. To the side of the fire, above a heap of coals, Johnie's carefully crafted mussel potjie is simmering slowly. There is peace on Earth. Around this fire we start to understand what the self-actualisation at the top of Maslow's hierarchy of needs really means.

But then suddenly the peace is disturbed: Marcus, Ben's youngster, comes running and shouts: "Dad, Dad! Come check the grunter that the guy next to us caught."

In his excitement he kicks and topples the mussel pot. Four adults rush forward to save what can be saved. At the speed of lightning mussels, sand, sauce, water, celery and everything and more goes back in the pot.

Ben burns his hand in the rescue operation. He's so mad at young Markus and angry because Johnie's special potjie isn't going to be so special anymore. But

Ben's wife, Meisie, says soothingly: "Accidents happen..."

She looks into the pot and grins nervously: "Besides, all is not lost. There's still enough for everyone."

Over dinner there's an almost deafening silence. Johnie quietly told everyone not to upset Ben any further. As they munch and crunch on sea sand, mussels and other seafood, no one pulls a face. Markus sits outside the campfire circle, some distance from his dad – just in case Ben's anger flares up again.

**Drive now! Now!
I'll stand on the
bumper and hold
on to the canopy.**

DAY BREAKS AND YOU CAN SAY THAT the potjie debacle has been forgotten. It's an excited group cruising on the lake in Intombazana in search of a few big ones. A while later the boat is tied up again, and the group – sunburnt, tired and very thirsty – heads back to the campsite.

The cold beer is refreshing after a long, hot day on the water.

Ben sips his second beer. This time Markus doesn't come running, but comes chasing over in the Ford. He makes a wide turn and shouts: "Dad! The boat is loose and it's floating away!"

Ben rushes over: "Drive! Now! I'll stand on the bumper and hold on to the canopy."

Ben is a big guy, but very nimbly jumps onto the Ford's rear bumper and holds on to the canopy. Markus pulls away quickly. It is, after all, an emergency.

"Slowly, slowly!" Ben roars from the back, but then the Ford hits the first of the speed bumps in the campsite. Ben shoots into the air, but lands dexterously with his feet on the bumper and grips firmly onto the canopy.

"Markus, slow down... Slow down!" he shouts from the back. "Slow down!"

Just then the Ford hits the second speed bump. Ben again shoots into the air, but this time the Ford isn't there as he comes down. It's already disappeared around the corner, and Ben's 120 kg hits the ground with a thump and a bounce. Ben lies still, bruised and bloodied.

Campers come rushing over from all directions, unsure if he survived the fall. It was a really big fall and he's lying awfully quiet...

"Water, give him some water," says someone.

"No, I think he needs something stronger," says someone else.

Then, with a loud groan and a lot of effort, Ben sits up. It's clear that he's hurting. He leans against his friend Johnie.

Johnie gives Ben neat whisky, "for the shock". Ben takes a swig, utters a few choice words, and takes another sip. "When I get my hands on that little..." And with his big hands he makes a strangling motion.

While everyone is recovering from the shock, the Ford comes roaring round the corner. Markus jumps out: "Dad, Dad, why did you get off while the car was moving? You can really hurt yourself. I had such a fright when I saw you were gone. What did you do... Look at you!"

Luckily for Markus there are a lot of bystanders and Ben keeps himself in check. "Where is my boat?" he asks calmly with enormous self-control.

"A friendly guy had already tied it up when I got there. That's why I could return so quickly to see what happened to you. Your shenanigans will give a person a heart attack."

Silence, o silence. Ben doesn't have the words, and it's probably better that way. Like the preacher rightfully says: "Calmness prevents great offenses..."

BACK AT THE CAMP, MEISIE IS BUSY doctoring Ben's wounds and bruises, and gives him a lecture on "stupid men who stand on the back of moving bakkies". Ben accepts the sermon quietly and starts looking a bit more like himself.

From a little distance away, Johnie pipes up: "My brother has this small red book: *Life's Little Instructions*".

"Why are you telling me this?" Ben enquires.

"The one bit of advice in the book made me think of you today."

"Yes?"

"It says: 'Resist the temptation to buy a boat.' It's just not worth the trouble."

"So what are you saying?"

"The solution is very simple."

And what is it?

"Rather befriend someone who already has a boat."





A knockout Boxer

Camping is more enjoyable when you've built your motorhome yourself. Ben Grobbelaar from Reebok in the South Cape tells us how he converted his Peugeot Boxer into a house-on-wheels.

Text **Schalk Jonker** Photos **Ben Grobbelaar**

“It was with great interest that I read about Chris Liebenberg's conversion of his Peugeot Boxer in *WegSleep* #86, because I undertook the same project in 2014.

In July that year I sold my Wilk caravan and Isuzu double cab bakkie and bought a 2008 Peugeot Boxer. The Boxer fits perfectly in the caravan garage and its dimensions inside were ideal for what I had planned.

I immediately started drawing up designs for the layout. I cut out openings and windows, lined the entire cabin inside with underfelt for insulation, and lowered the rear wheel arches by 100 mm to get the right height for the benches and our bed. After that I lined the interior with 4 mm plywood.

It was important for my wife Mara and I to make space for our bathroom, and although we use a free-standing cassette toilet, we can at least shower in the Boxer. We also made space for a large wardrobe

(700 x 550 mm) with drawers and hanging space and small boxes for other clothes.

The kitchen consists of a cupboard that partially stands in the sliding door's gap. Here we have a 40 l Waeco freezer, a microwave, and four drawers for groceries and other essentials. There is also a work surface (1 100 x 550 mm) with two drawers underneath, a single gas burner that pulls out, and our 45 l fridge that works with both 12 V and 220 V. The fridge pulls out and runs on heavy-duty tracks. Next to the fridge there is a pull-out vegetable drawer, and above the work surface is a small cupboard for our crockery and glasses.

The benches in the back of the Boxer folds flat to make a bed, and when the weather is bad we eat here. You access the cupboards underneath the benches through the rear swing doors – here we store all the extra things like the ground cover, braai and electrical lead. The 50 l water tank is located below one of the

benches and its plug is also at the swing doors. I fitted an electrical geyser in the Boxer's belly that provides 10 l warm water for the bathroom and the kitchen.

I also installed a reverse camera – something that makes life a lot easier.

The entire conversion cost me R50 000, and we thoroughly enjoy our kitted-out Boxer. We've driven close to 24 000 km with it and we've visited the West Coast, Eastern Cape, Kruger National Park and the Drakensberg. Its engine is quiet and powerful and makes any road feel shorter. Its fuel consumption is about 10 l/100 km when we drive at around 100 to 110 km/h.



Have you spotted any wacky wheels on your travels? Tell us about it and send a photo to

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