ADVENTURE Afrika

4x4 | OUTDOOR | LIFESTYLE

4X4AFRIKA.COM

SAAIA MEMBER

Digimag Issue 3

June 2025



CARAVAN REVIEW

WE TAKE A LOOK AT THE CONQUEROR COMMANDERX

DESTINATIONS

GONAREZHOU NATIONAL PARK PARK: GUIDE & FAQ

TECHNICAL

CELEBRATING 120 YEARS OF TYRE INNOVATION

contents

Elevating Adventure Industry Standards p4
Enhancing professionalism across Africa's adventure tourism sector with expert insights.

Omoda and Jaecoo bring the volts p8
Meet the OMODA C9 PHEV and Jaecoo J7 SHS, two new hybrids offering standout range, plenty of tech and value for money.

Volkswagen Amarok Life 2.0 TDI 4Motion p9
Driving the new Volkswagen Amarok Life 2.0 BiTDI 4Motion

Review Conqueror Commander X p11
We took the Conqueror Commander X to the Kruger and this is what we thought of it

Spirit of Africa 2025 p15
Spirit of Africa 2025 ups the ante with the Nissan Navara PRO-4X

Suzuki Jimny in the Mountain Kingdom p20
Suzuki Safari's Jimny convoy tackled Lesotho's highlands in a 6-day epic

Nature's November Spectacles p26
Witness Zambia's epic wildebeest and bat migrations with expert guides.

From military Defender to Camping Queen p35
A rugged ex-military Land Rover finds new life and purpose.

Ultimate guide to Gonarezhou p34
Discover Gonarezhou National Park – Zimbabwe's untamed wilderness. Explore camps, wildlife, and activities for the ultimate safari adventure.

ARB celebrates 50 yours of 4x4 ingenuity p39
From Melbourne to Africa, ARB's rugged legacy drives adventure forward.

120 years of tyre tread innovation p44
From hand-carved grooves to AI-designed patterns, tyres transform driving.

Gear & Gadgets p47
Fathersday Ideas

Recipes p49







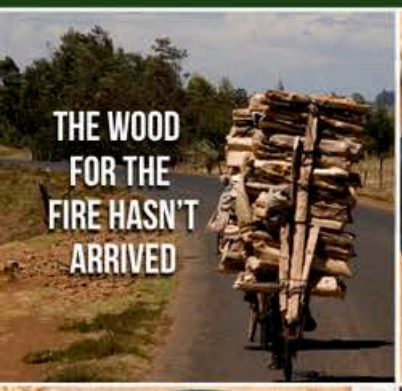
ADVENTURE Afrika

Publisher: Anton Willemse
Editor: Liana Reiners
Design & Layout: Anton Willemse

For more information | queries:
Editorial/Content: liana@4x4afrika.com
info@4x4afrika.com
Advertising Sales: anton@4x4afrika.com
Adventure Tours: anton@4x4afrika.com



ENHANCE YOUR 4X4 EXPERIENCE WITH CONVENIENT *"Just in Case"* MEAL OPTIONS

















THE
TRAIL FOOD
COMPANY

BECAUSE NO GREAT ADVENTURE STARTS HUNGRY!

trailfood.co.za

SA AIA – IMPROVING PROFESSIONALISM IN THE ADVENTURE INDUSTRY



For us, like our loyal readers and followers, the concept of adventure is not an unknown one. It is what inspires and motivates us, driving us to go further, do more and discover everything this wonderful planet of ours has to offer. Adventure Afrika... our name says it all really.

Whatever your idea of adventure is – whether it be overlanding, off-roading, camping, hiking, exploring, fishing or more adrenaline-filled activities – the options are almost endless in terms of destinations, venues and service providers. This means that you have to think very carefully before you decide where you go, what you do and with whom you do it. It is imperative to know that you are in safe and capable hands.

This is where the South African Adventure Industry Association (SA AIA) comes in, a non-profit organisation established in 2020. Acting as an association for two sectors – the school camping/ team building industry and the adventure tourist guide history – the organisation aims to take the guess work out of choosing a qualified, experienced and reliable service provider. It also provides backing to the industry through education and guidance and is in the process of registering with SAQA as a professional, non-statutory body representing these two sectors.

Of course, everything ground to a screeching halt during the COVID-19 pandemic and when Jessi Sunkel, the current driving force behind SA AIA, took up the reigns in October 2021, she soon realised that there was no real understanding of the adventure industry and that no clear guidelines existed. In fact, in many cases the necessary skills and experience were sorely lacking. In addition, the adventure industry is very segregated, and all stakeholders seem to have their own ideas on how things are done.

According to Jessi the organisation came into being after a few tragic incidents involving children at school camps and events. These highlighted the necessity for an umbrella body to organise the industry and to ensure that service providers have the knowledge and credentials to be able to serve the public safely and effectively. She stresses, however, that SA AIA is not a watchdog, and its main purpose is to provide information and guidance and to bring structure to an industry that is still largely unregulated.

Although SA AIA itself is not a regulator in the legal



sense of the word, the adventure industry operates under many laws. So, for instance, the Occupational Health & Safety Act, the Tourism Act and the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act (to name but a few) all come into play for industry members, depending on the specific field they are involved in. For SA AIA to be recognised as a statutory body, it needs to be written into South African law. That is not off the table, but for now, Jessi and her team simply want to promote the industry as a professional one.

Because SA AIA is not a statutory body, it is not a legal requirement for businesses and service providers within the adventure industry to be members. It is purely voluntary. According to Jessi SA AIA strives to be inclusive rather than exclusive and as such welcomes any prospective members with open arms. “There are no stringent criteria for membership, but obviously we make sure that everything is above board.”

As such, new members must provide certain key information, sign a code of conduct and ethics and must conduct their business in a lawful manner. A membership fee is also payable. SA AIA currently has 37 corporate members and 23 professional members. “SA AIA is for anybody making use of adventurous endeavours to facilitate experiences – whether for recreation, education, development, therapeutic, or ministry purposes. It is for businesses wanting to be more knowledgeable or sensitive to intentionally make learning from adventurous experiences more impactful. Membership of SA AIA provides the perfect opportunity to learn, network, gain tools and self-develop,” Jessi enthuses.

Each tier has its own specific membership perks. Those include the following:

- Online member community.
- Online facilitator and tour guide database.
- Direct business and marketing mentoring (including social media training and assistance)
- Monthly interviews and articles with experts
- Members-only workshops
- Members-only and public job boards
- Virtual events
- Volunteering programmes
- Exclusive, industry-specific offers
- SAAIA-only posts and messages
- Full library of publications and research access
- Member-only voting power
- Outdoor industry discounts
- Listing on the SAAIA website and social media platforms
- Access to industry networking events
- Monthly newsletters.
- SAAIA stamp of approval on your site
- Assistance and mentoring around getting your business legal and safe
- Public relations.
- Direct and indirect relationships with governmental organisations and stakeholders

Jessi has big dreams for SA AIA, and plans are already under way to include the following in the membership offering:

- CPD accreditation
- RPL processes
- Professional designations
- Flexible online learning and certifications
- Mentoring programmes

As part of SA AIA’s mission to unify the adventure industry, the overlanding and 4×4 community obviously also comes into play. As a key role player in this industry, Adventure Afrika is now a proud member of SA AIA and will contribute towards unifying, vetting and educating businesses and service providers operating within this realm. Says Anton Willemse, the man at the helm of Adventure Afrika and all its associated platforms: “We are thrilled to be involved with SA AIA and the great work it is doing to unify the industry. We hope that our expertise will contribute towards making sure that professionalism reigns supreme and that the public have the peace of mind of know that they are dealing with duly trained, experienced and reputable service providers.” ■

OMODA AND JAECOO BRING THE VOLTS



With the South African EV space growing faster than a toddler with sneakers on backwards, it was only a matter of time before the new kids on the block flexed their hybrid muscles. Enter the Omoda C9 PHEV and Jaecoo J7 SHS, both recently introduced.

The two may wear different badges, but they share more than a family resemblance. Both fall under the Chery Group umbrella and feature bold styling, lavish spec sheets and enough electric range to make your local petrol station miss you. But while they're closely related under the skin, they offer two very distinct takes on the plug-in hybrid experience.

Big brother Omoda C9: serious muscle, serious luxury

The Omoda C9 PHEV doesn't tiptoe onto the stage – it power-poses straight in, flexing a combined 440kW and 915Nm thanks to a turbocharged 1.5-litre engine and three electric motors. That's more power than a BMW X5 M60i, but it claims fuel consumption of just 1.4 litres/100km and an all-electric range of 150km. In other words, you could theoretically do a week's worth of school runs without sipping a drop of unleaded.

Charging is painless. DC fast charging (70kW) tops you up from 30% to 80% in just 25 minutes, and a wall box at home gets the job done overnight. But it's on the road where the C9 impresses most: silky power delivery and zero turbo lag.

The cabin is no less dramatic. Nappa leather, heated and ventilated seats, a dual-screen setup with a slick UI, and a Sony 12-speaker sound system make it feel properly premium. It even smells posh, thanks to a built-in fragrance diffuser. Honestly, I've stayed in hotels with less to offer.

Factor in dual-zone climate control, acoustic glass, a panoramic sunroof and enough USB ports to charge a scout troop, and it's clear the C9 is chasing the likes of Volvo, Lexus, and even the Germans, but at a far more reasonable R999 000.

Enter the Jaecoo J7: little brother with a punchy attitude

While the Omoda comes dressed for the opera, the Jaecoo J7 SHS is more of a hip brunch date; still stylish, but more laid-back and approachable. It's powered by a similar 1.5-litre turbo petrol setup with an electric motor, offering a combined 255kW and 525Nm. That's more than enough grunt for overtakes, on-ramps, and impressing the teenagers at school pick-up. It's front-wheel drive, but the three-mode setup (Sport, Eco and Standard) means it can adapt to your mood… or your partner's driving style.

Its electric-only range sits at 90km – perfect for day-to-day driving in urban areas – and the smaller 18.3kWh battery charges in around 20 minutes on DC. So yes, it's a little more practical and a little





less shouty, but it's not short on flair.

Inside, it borrows a few tricks from its big brother: heated and ventilated leather seats, panoramic roof, large infotainment system (14.8-inch), digital cluster, and a wireless charging pad. There's also a nifty mini fridge in the centre console for your Red Bulls or biltong, depending on the flavour of the day.

The rear seats are spacious, and boot space comes in at 500 litres (growing to over 1200 litres with the seats down), so it's just as happy hauling gear as it is people. Safety-wise, the J7 gets the full Euro NCAP five-star treatment, with 17 ADAS systems including adaptive cruise control, rear cross-traffic braking, and 540-degree cameras.

And the cherry on top? It'll set you back R689 900, making it a compelling alternative for families who want hybrid benefits without the C9's grand price tag.

Same DNA, different personalities

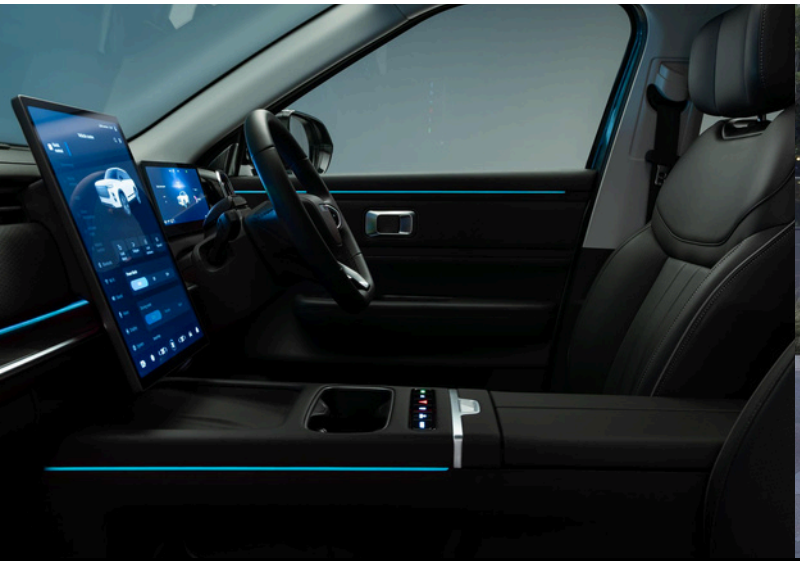
Despite their shared underpinnings and plug-in hybrid systems, the Omoda C9 PHEV and Jaecoo J7 SHS feel like siblings who took different paths in life. The C9 is the high achiever: powerful, poised and dressed to impress. It's the kind of SUV you valet park at a wine estate. The J7, meanwhile, is more chilled, slightly rebellious, and ready for a weekend road trip with mates or messy kids and muddy boots.Both offer impressive all-electric range, enough for most South Africans to commute during the week without dipping into their petrol reserves. The Omoda's 150km electric-only range is especially noteworthy, outlasting most PHEVs in this price range by a country mile.

So, which one is for you?

If your budget allows and you're after something with punchy power, plush finishes and enough tech to launch a satellite, the Omoda C9 PHEV is a solid contender. It blends performance, comfort and cutting-edge hybrid tech in a very attractive package.

But if you're more about practicality, value and keeping your carbon footprint low without breaking the bank, the Jaecoo J7 SHS is a clever buy. It's smartly specced, fun to drive, and – at under R700k – represents excellent bang for your hybrid buck.

In short, both are strong entries in the growing NEV segment. Whether you choose the suave older sibling or the sporty upstart, you're in for a greener, quieter, and surprisingly stylish drive.






The South African
GAUTENG
4x4 & Outdoor Show
THE MOST ACTION-PACKED OUTDOOR & LEISURE SHOW!
6 & 7 SEPTEMBER 2025
VENUE
ZWARTKOPS RACEWAY
R55, PRETORIA, GAUTENG
CLICK ON
COMPUTICKET
TO GET YOUR TICKETS
www.4x4outdooshow.co.za
94.2 jacarandafm

VOLKSWAGEN AMAROK LIFE 2.0 TDI 4MOTION



Capable cruiser or costly compromise?

It's been a long wait – nearly three years, in fact – but we finally managed to get our hands on the latest-generation Volkswagen Amarok for a proper test. While we've admired it from afar and seen plenty of press material, it was great to finally experience it firsthand on familiar turf. And while we didn't test the range-topping PanAmericana or Aventura variants, the mid-spec Amarok Life 2.0 BiTDI 4Motion still gave us more than enough to unpack.

Bold but Familiar

The new Amarok's Ford DNA is immediately evident – and that's no bad thing. The platform, drivetrain and interior design share much with the new Ford Ranger (no surprise there, given the joint development), but VW has done a decent job of giving the Amarok its own identity, especially on the outside. The bold grille, prominent VW badge, squared-off wheel arches and crisp body lines lend it a presence that arguably even outshines its Blue Oval cousin in this trim level.

Inside, though, it's a bit more conservative. The Amarok Life feels functional rather than fancy. Yes, there's a large central touchscreen and a slick digital cluster, but aside from that, it's not far removed from what you'd expect in a high-end Polo – plenty of hard plastics, straightforward design, and minimal flair. For a bakkie in this price bracket, that feels like a bit of a missed opportunity.

Composed and comfortable

Once behind the wheel, the Amarok impresses quickly. The 2.0-litre BiTDI diesel engine, producing 154kW and 500Nm, is paired to a smooth-shifting 10-speed automatic gearbox and VW's updated 4Motion system – and the result is a refined driving experience. On tar, it's incredibly composed, soaking up road imperfections and cruising effortlessly on the open road.

Even without the chance to push it on a serious 4x4 trail due to the rainy conditions during our test week, we could sense its off-road potential. Having a proper low-range transfer case – something the old Amarok lacked – gives this new model much more credibility among off-road enthusiasts and overlanders. It's no longer just a soft-roader with a bakkie body; it's the real deal when it comes to trail capability.

Surprisingly frugal

Over our week of mixed driving, we achieved a fuel consumption figure of around 9.5 litres/100km – commendable for a double cab

of this size. It matches what you'd expect from a Ford Ranger with the same engine, which speaks volumes for the engineering under the skin.

Cabin comfort: A mixed bag

Here's where things got a bit divisive in the Adventure Afrika camp. The driver's seat felt narrow and a bit unaccommodating, especially for larger builds. While ergonomics were generally good, we couldn't help but feel that some of the comfort found in competing double cabs was lacking here. Perhaps it's something you'd get used to over time, but for longer overland trips, it's worth considering.

Passenger space is decent, and the second row can comfortably accommodate adults, but again – nothing here really stands out as best-in-class.

Value for money?

At its current price point – sitting just north of R900 000 at the time of writing – the Amarok Life 2.0 BiTDI 4Motion lands in a fiercely competitive part of the market. While it certainly offers solid mechanicals and a premium badge, it's up against stiff opposition from not only the Ford Ranger but also the Toyota Hilux, Isuzu D-Max, and even newcomers like the GWM P-Series.

The interior finishes, while robust, don't quite justify the price tag when compared to rivals offering more premium materials or better-equipped mid-range models. And while you're buying into the VW name and the unique



Amarok character, you might be left asking if it's enough to tip the scales in its favour.

The verdict

The new Amarok is a very good bakkie – let's be clear on that. It looks great, drives beautifully, and is much more capable off-road than some of its predecessor thanks to the addition of a transfer case. It's refined, solidly built, and has genuine overlanding potential – no doubt about it.

However, there are a few asterisks. The interior feels a little too basic for the price, and the driver's comfort – especially for those of us with slightly larger frames – might leave something to be desired on long trips. That said, if you value driving dynamics, road presence, and a blend of German style with proven Ford tech, the Amarok deserves a place on your shortlist.

Would we buy one? That's a harder question. In isolation, it's a brilliant vehicle. But in a competitive market packed with equally (or better) equipped rivals at similar or lower price points, we'd recommend prospective buyers to shop around – and drive a few others – before signing on the dotted line. ■





Caravan Review

CONQUEROR COMMANDER X



Conqueror has long been associated with rugged durability, innovative design, and true off-grid capability, and their latest offering, the Commander X, is no exception. We recently had the opportunity to tow this off-road caravan from Johannesburg to the Kruger National Park with a 2.4-litre Toyota Hilux diesel, and the experience left us seriously impressed.

Effortless towing, solid build

Despite its size and weight – 1 500kg tare and 1 950kg fully loaded – the Commander X towed exceptionally well. With approximately 450kg of available payload, it feels solid but balanced on the road, and its independent suspension system with heavy-duty shocks made light work of bumps and uneven terrain. Fitted with all-terrain tyres and carrying a full-size spare at the rear, it's purpose-built for remote travel through the likes of Namibia, Botswana, or the Kalahari.

What sets the Commander X apart is its road-holding confidence. Even when fully loaded, it remained stable behind the Hilux, and the compact footprint ensures it doesn't feel cumbersome in tight or challenging terrain. The braked axle system adds an extra layer of safety and control, particularly on steep descents or rough passes.

Designed for off-grid comfort

The Commander X is clearly designed with self-sufficiency in mind. It boasts a 150-litre onboard water tank, ample for several days of off-grid living, even if you're showering daily. The onboard geyser connects seamlessly to one of the two external gas bottles, while the two-plate gas stove is powered by the second bottle – a simple but highly effective layout.

Inside, the pop-up roof (assisted by a pneumatic lift system) makes set-up easy and quick. A press of a button lifts the roof in seconds. Setting up and breaking camp is quick and efficient, allowing more time to enjoy your destination.

Sleeping arrangements are generous, with space for four adults and two children. The main bed is particularly comfortable, and there's additional sleeping space in the form of bunks and a hammock-style berth. The internal space feels spacious and cleverly laid out, offering a mix of privacy and openness ideal for families.

Kitchen and storage features

The kitchen layout is compact but well-equipped, including:

- Crockery and cutlery for six people
- Storage compartments with designated slots
- A dual-compartment National Luna fridge

Unfortunately, during our test, the fridge proved to be a source of frustration. We set the temperatures manually (-1°C on one side and -2°C on the other), but experienced erratic readings and performance



fluctuations. While this could be an isolated issue, it's something worth checking before purchasing. Alternatives such as Snowmaster, Engel, ARB, or Dometic may offer more reliability.

Storage is another strong point.

The Commander X features 25 dedicated storage compartments, including slide-out drawers, vertical shelving, and overhead lockers. Everything has a place, making packing and unpacking straightforward.





Minor niggles

While the general construction is sturdy, we did notice that the Velcro-secured canvas cupboard flaps tend to detach when you unzip the internal zippers – a small design issue that could be improved by using adhesive or additional fasteners. Apart from that (and the fridge), we had no real complaints.

Some users might also find the overall weight a concern, especially if your tow vehicle isn't particularly powerful. However, with a capable bakkie or SUV, this shouldn't be a major issue.

Tech and living comforts

The caravan features ample internal lighting, fans for ventilation, and even a television. Provision is also made for the installation of an air conditioner, making it a real home away from home.

Power is provided via a Victron IP22 charger (30A, 24V) with the option of lithium or lead-acid batteries, depending on the unit you choose.

The 12V and 220V systems are well integrated, and USB charging ports are available throughout the interior, making it easy to keep devices powered even in the wild. The Commander X also includes a battery management display, which allows users to monitor consumption and battery levels at a glance.

Exterior and utility

- Two jerry-can holders
- 16-inch off-road rims with A/T tyres
- Integrated Insta-Awn (270-degree)
- Internal and external shower system
- 25 built-in storage compartments
- Slide-out kitchen with sink and work surface
- Rear-mounted spare wheel
- Rear recovery points and heavy-duty chassis







The inclusion of a 270-degree awning provides ample shade and shelter, ideal for those hot African afternoons or sudden downpours. The external shower connects to the onboard geyser, offering hot water on demand.

Pricing

- New units: Pricing on request from Conqueror (depending on spec and options)
- Pre-owned (2024 model): From R589 900 (East Rand Caravans)
- Close-to-new: Roughly R550 000 for well-kept demo units

Considering the included features and build quality, the price is competitive for a premium off-road caravan. Factor in the lifespan and durability, and it becomes a worthy long-term investment.

Conclusion

The Conqueror Commander X is a serious bit of kit for those who want to explore Africa's remote trails without sacrificing comfort. It's well-engineered, cleverly laid out, and ideal for adventurous families or couples. A few small flaws aside, this caravan is built to last – and built to roam.

Whether you're bush-camping in the Caprivi, crossing rivers in the Okavango, or navigating deep sand in the Richtersveld, the Commander X offers the confidence and comfort you need. For anyone serious about overland exploration, this is a contender well worth a test drive. ■



D.A.G™

OUTDOOR

D.A.G | 55L KALAHARI FRIDGE

- Dual compartments with individual temperature control
- 3-stage battery protection for vehicle safety
- Suitable for both vehicles (12V) and home use (220V)
- Optional detachable battery pack lasting 4 to 24 hours
- Shockproof design for rugged terrain
- Comes with storage brackets, drain plug, and LED light
- Can operate at a 45-degree angle for overlanding.

4x4 Wholesalers Africa is a South African outdoor and overlanding gear supplier. We offer rugged, bush-ready 4×4 accessories and also have our own in-house D.A.G Outdoor brand.

LET'S ENABLE YOUR ADVENTURES

www.4x4wholesalersafrica.com +2741 260 0603 info@4x4wholesalersafrica.com

Spirit of Africa 2025



Spirit of Africa 2025 ups the ante with the Nissan Navara PRO-4X Warrior taking centre stage. We joined the action on Media Day!



For more than two decades, the Spirit of Africa has been a proving ground for those who dare to test their mettle – and their machines – against the toughest off-road terrain this continent can throw at them. In 2025, the bar has been raised yet again, as Nissan's formidable Navara PRO-4X Warrior officially takes the reins as the event's competition vehicle.

We were fortunate to once again be invited to the exclusive Media Participation Day, held on 27 May at Sandwani Game Lodge, just outside Cullinan, Gauteng – the very grounds where the elimination rounds for this year's competition are currently underway.

Africa's toughest just got tougher

Now in its 21st year, and the third under the Nissan banner, the Spirit of Africa continues to cement its reputation as the continent's most gruelling 4x4 driving challenge. Founded by South African rally legend Sarel van der Merwe, the event pits amateur off-roaders against a technical course designed to test every facet of their driving skills. With 400 two-person teams battling for a spot in the finals, only the Top 20 will advance after the concusion of the elimination rounds in June.

This year, however, comes with an exciting twist. The vehicle of choice for the 2025 competition is none other than the newly launched Nissan Navara PRO-4X Warrior by Premcar – a beast born of South African assembly and Australian engineering, specifically tuned for conditions just like these.

We got the chance to put the Warrior through its paces across 12 of the 16 competitive stages – a split of four technical and eight high-octane speed tests. And make no mistake: this event is no Sunday cruise.

A Warrior in the wild

Our day started early, with bleary eyes and frosty breath in the crisp 3°C dawn air. By 07:00, teams were lined up at Sandwani, clutching coffees and sizing up their rivals. After a short but thorough briefing, we hit the trails – flagged gates, tight corners, dusty straights, and all.

The format? Brutally simple. Hit a red-flagged pole, lose 30 points. Knock over a white one, that's 10. Reverse? That'll cost you 20 points. Over 12 rounds, every decision counts – and every slip-up adds up fast.

I was teamed up once again with Willem van de Putte (IOL), and while we didn't get off to a flying start (those first few obstacles were rough – we clipped multiple flags and even had to reverse), we eventually found our rhythm. It helps having a seasoned racer in the passenger seat. Willem, currently competing in the GR Cup behind the wheel of a Yaris, came into his own during the speed sections. There's something about the countdown – "Car 3, are you ready? In 3, 2, 1..." – that brings out a touch of the red mist. All banter vanishes, and the desire to win takes over.

Brotherhood in the bush

Of course, it wouldn't be Spirit of Africa without a bit of friendly rivalry. As motoring journalists from various publications, we know each other well – and we're not above throwing a little shade between rounds. But it's all in good fun. The camaraderie and shared passion for off-roading keep the spirit of the event alive.

That said, there's always something to prove – and as we tackled high-speed sprints, technical challenges, and even a sadistically difficult reverse S-course (yes, I obliterated two flags – completely splintered them), the pressure mounted.

One drag race could have been our redemption, but we forgot to switch off the traction control. As we hit a dip, the Warrior hesitated just long enough for Lawrence Smith and Alan Rosemeyer to edge past us. Thankfully, a subsequent speed run gave us the comeback we needed. We switched lanes, put the hammer down, and overtook them with a healthy car-length to spare.

A final reckoning

As the dust settled and the final scores were tallied, 14 teams stood in anticipation. We listened as the placements were called out – 14th, 13th, 12th... we were still in the running. When we cracked the top five, our ears perked up. Could we podium?

Turns out, yes.

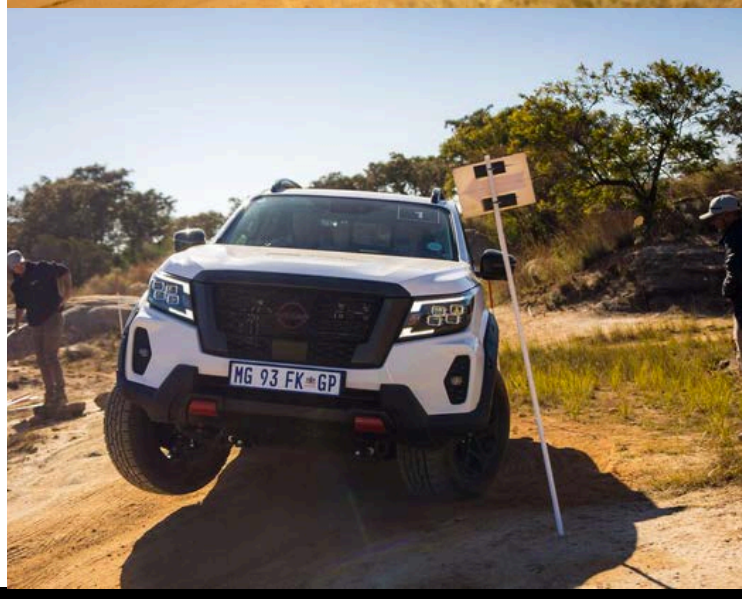
We clinched third place overall – trailing behind Denis Droppa and Reuben van Niekerk in second, and this year's winning duo, Oliver Keohane (Leisure Wheels) and Brendon Staniforth (Maroela Media). A hard-fought, well-deserved podium for a day that delivered on thrills, challenges, and serious fun.

Machine made for mayhem

If there's one takeaway from this year's event, it's that the Nissan Navara PRO-4X Warrior is no marketing gimmick. It's the real deal.







Packing a 2.5-litre DDTi turbo-diesel engine with 140kW and 450Nm of torque, the Warrior is built to do more than look good. Thanks to Premcar's upgrades – including revised suspension, increased ride height, a wider track, all-terrain tyres, and reinforced underbody protection – the Warrior makes light work of rough terrain. Its proper 4WD system (complete with low-range, rear diff lock, and intelligent traction control) gave us the confidence to tackle whatever the course threw our way.

What we love most? The Warrior is refreshingly functional. It's not cluttered with oversized screens or needless tech. Everything you need is right where you expect it – from solid 4×4 controls to practical camera systems and an interior that's all function, minimal fluff.









Is it flashy? No. Is it capable? Absolutely. If we weren't already Toyota loyalists, the Warrior would be high on our shopping list. Given the price difference between the top-tier Navara and its Hilux rival, the Warrior is making a seriously compelling case.

Looking ahead

As the Spirit of Africa 2025 elimination rounds continue through June, 400 teams will do battle to earn one of just 20 finalist spots. The Warrior, tested by both pros and passionate amateurs alike, will carry each team forward into the finals later this year – a showdown set to crown the continent's ultimate off-road champions.

As for us? If the invite comes again, you can bet we'll be there – maybe this time with a bit more strategy and a little less flag carnage. After all, with a Warrior in your corner, anything feels possible. ■

ADVENTURE
4x4 | OUTDOOR | LIFESTYLE Afrika

4X4AFRIKA.COM



Adventure Awaits! Unlock Exclusive 4x4 & Overlanding Content with Adventure Afrika Digimag!

Explore More, Spend Less! Get instant access to the latest Adventure Afrika free digital magazine—packed with epic 4x4 trails, expert gear reviews, and overlanding tips.

PLUS: Dive into our archive of 36 past issues—never miss an adventure story or hidden gem route again!

Register Today – Your Next Journey Starts Here!
Brought to you by 4x4Afrika – Your Ultimate 4x4, Outdoor and Lifestyle Companion!









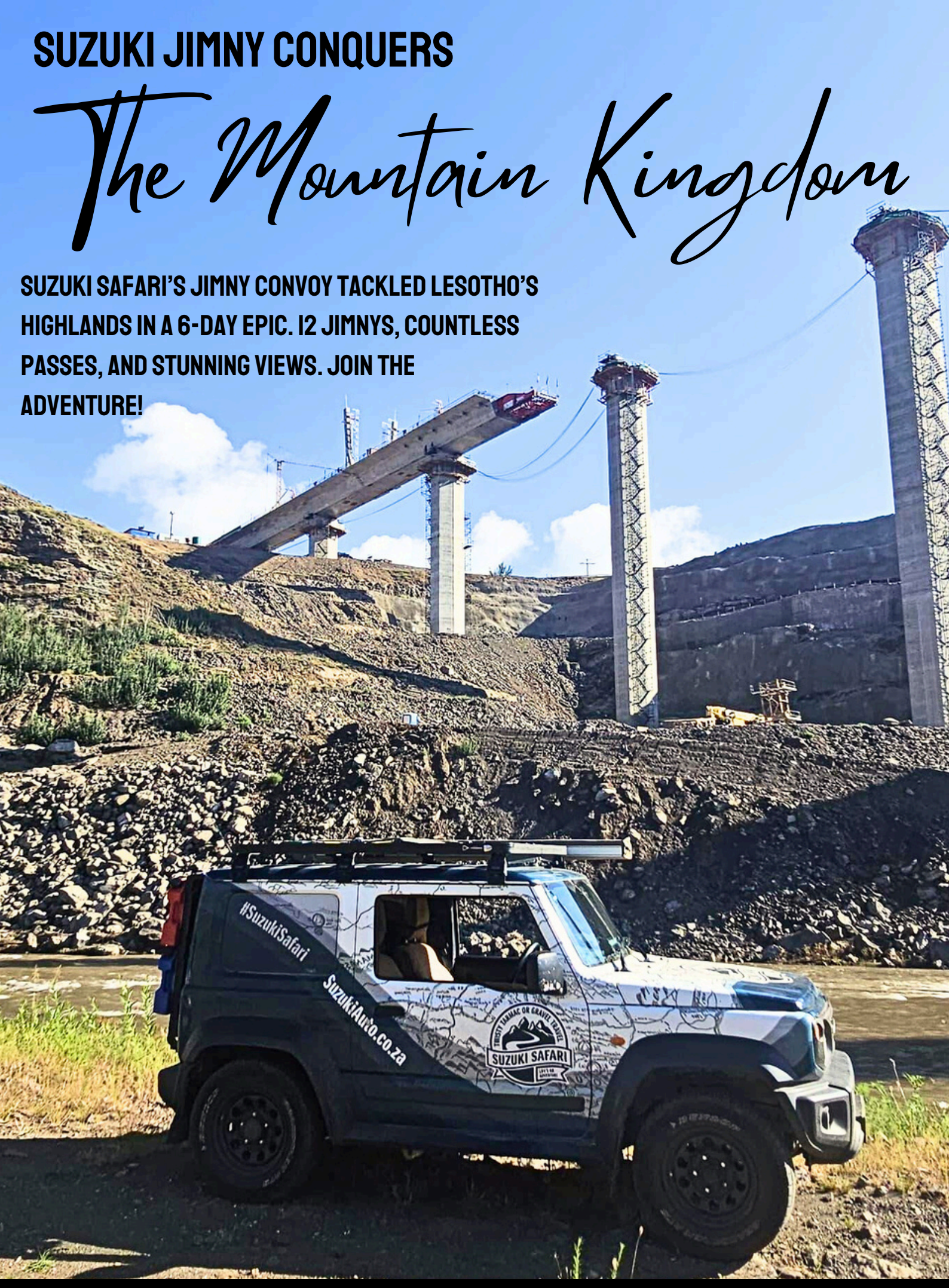
Register

4X4AFRIKA.COM

SUZUKI JIMNY CONQUERS

The Mountain Kingdom

SUZUKI SAFARI'S JIMNY CONVOY TACKLED LESOTHO'S HIGHLANDS IN A 6-DAY EPIC. 12 JIMNYS, COUNTLESS PASSES, AND STUNNING VIEWS. JOIN THE ADVENTURE!





Born from a shared passion for accessible travel and 4x4 exploration, Suzuki Safari is a proudly Suzuki Auto South Africa initiative that invites Jimny owners to embark on unforgettable guided journeys across some of the most remote and jaw-dropping landscapes in southern Africa. Think of it as a rolling convoy of capable, quirky 4x4s, expertly shepherded through mountain passes, hidden valleys, and forgotten trails – no roof-top tent required, just a full tank and an open heart.

One of their latest escapades was a six-day immersion into the highlands of Lesotho – twelve Jimnys, dozens of passes, three dams, one "Sani-pilgrimage" and countless breath-stealing views. This wasn't just a road trip; it was a spiritual reset wrapped in 1.2 bar of tyre pressure and low-range enthusiasm and Justin du Toit was there for all the action and adventure.



Himeville to the heavens

Our journey began in the charming town of Himeville, where we gathered beneath a canvas of morning mist and mountain dew. The convoy of twelve brightly coloured Jimnys, lined up like toy soldiers in a child's dream garage, buzzed with anticipation. Drivers sipped strong coffee, double-checked gear, and snapped photos of their 4x4s like proud parents at a school play.

No sooner had the engines warmed than we were headed for the legendary Sani Pass, South Africa's most fabled gateway to the Mountain Kingdom. The climb was as dramatic as ever: switchbacks clawing at the sky, sheer drops daring you to blink, and the Jimnys... well, the Jimnys simply purred. They skipped over potholes and scrambled up loose rock with all the tenacity of a mountain goat wearing trail shoes.

At the top, we were met with crisp alpine air and a view so vast it felt like we were staring into the soul of Africa. This is what the Jimny was made for: narrow tracks, big altitude, and adventure around every bend.

Mokhotlong, mountains and memories

Our first night was spent in Mokhotlong, a town that seems to cling to its mountaintop perch with equal parts pride and serenity. We overnighted at the Senqu Hotel, a Suzuki Safari staple that's been hosting explorers for over 30 years. The welcome was warm, the beds soft, and the view out the window – golden light spilling across ancient ridges – was simply sublime.

The following day saw us tackling the recently tarred Senqu Pass, which unspooled before us like a ribbon laid out by giants. We paused often, not because the Jimnys struggled, but because the land demanded reverence. Wild horses trotted across ridgelines, rivers shimmered below, and silence settled over us like a prayer. At times, the only sound was the crunch of gravel and the quiet hum of wonder.





From the pass we moved on to the monumental Polihali Dam, still under construction but already an impressive testament to human ingenuity set against nature's magnificence. We circled around to Mafika-Lisiu Pass, a winding, waterfall-laced marvel that kept our cameras clicking and hearts soaring.

Dams, passes and picnic pauses

Our third day slowed the pace slightly. We visited the peaceful Metolong Dam before making our way to the Bella Vista Pass. Despite its modest name, this pass offered views that humbled and hushed us all. We pulled over, unpacked a picnic, and simply sat. There was birdsong, a breeze, and that rare, golden kind of silence that you only find far from Wi-Fi and routine.



We followed this up with two of Lesotho's oldest routes: God Help Me Pass and Bushman Pass. Tricky in places, but endlessly scenic, these historical tracks were navigated with ease by the Jimnys, who seemed to grin through every twist and turn.

Braais at altitude and Basotho warmth

Next came Mohale Dam, the third jewel in Lesotho's hydrological crown. But the real showstopper of the day was Senqunyane Pass, where we staged what might be the highest boerewors braai in the southern hemisphere. With twelve Jimnys parked in a protective circle, smoke drifting into the sky, and laughter bouncing off canyon walls, it felt like a celebration of everything Suzuki Safari stands for – community, exploration and joy.

That night we were treated to a traditional Basotho dinner, seated cross-legged and passing plates like old friends. There was no formal toast, just the soft, contented hum of people who'd been touched by something special.

A waterfall that whispers to the soul

The next day saw us travel to Maletsunyane Falls... just the name sounds like a drumbeat in your chest. Towering at 192m, this thunderous plunge is somehow more than a waterfall. It's an encounter. I've stood at the edge of many falls across Africa, but this one... this one felt like it belonged to the sky. No crowds, no fences – just you, the drop, and the sound of your heart forgetting how to beat.

Our final night was spent in the quiet charm of Semonkong, under stars so bright they felt alive. The journey was drawing to a close, but the memories were still ripening, steeping like rooibos in the bloodstream.

A reverent return

We ended our adventure with a gentle cruise through Thaba Bosiu, Lesotho's spiritual heartland. There was no better place to reflect on the past six days in a land that challenged us, enchanted us, and, most of all, welcomed us.



Crossing the border at Peka Bridge, there was a sense that we weren't just heading home, we were carrying something new with us. A deeper appreciation for our neighbours. A respect for the mountains. And a renewed love for our trusty little Jimnys. Because this wasn't an off-road gauntlet. it was a guided, thoughtfully planned immersion in wonder. And the Jimnys? They were flawless: economical, agile, and full of cheeky character.

Somehow, despite the high-altitude terrain and 4x4 demands, many of the Jimnys returned astonishing fuel consumption figures of up to 14km/litre. That's not just efficient, that's borderline witchcraft, especially considering how often we stopped to marvel, meander, and munch.

Evenings were spent around hearty dinners and shared tales, with mountain silhouettes framing every conversation. There's a special kind of tiredness that comes from high-altitude travel; clean, satisfying, soul-deep exhaustion. And there's nothing quite like sharing that with fellow wanderers.





Want in on the magic?

Suzuki Auto South Africa covers 50% of the Suzuki Safari cost if you're a Jimny owner. Yes, half! That's six days of fully guided exploration, excellent food, hot showers, comfortable en-suite accommodation and unforgettable memories for less than you'd pay for a long weekend of mediocre self-catering.

If you own a Jimny – or even just dream of owning one – this is your sign.
Visit : https://content.suzukiauto.co.za/suzukisafari2025 for more information.

AVAILABLE FROM

Kremetart Clothing

ADVENTURE

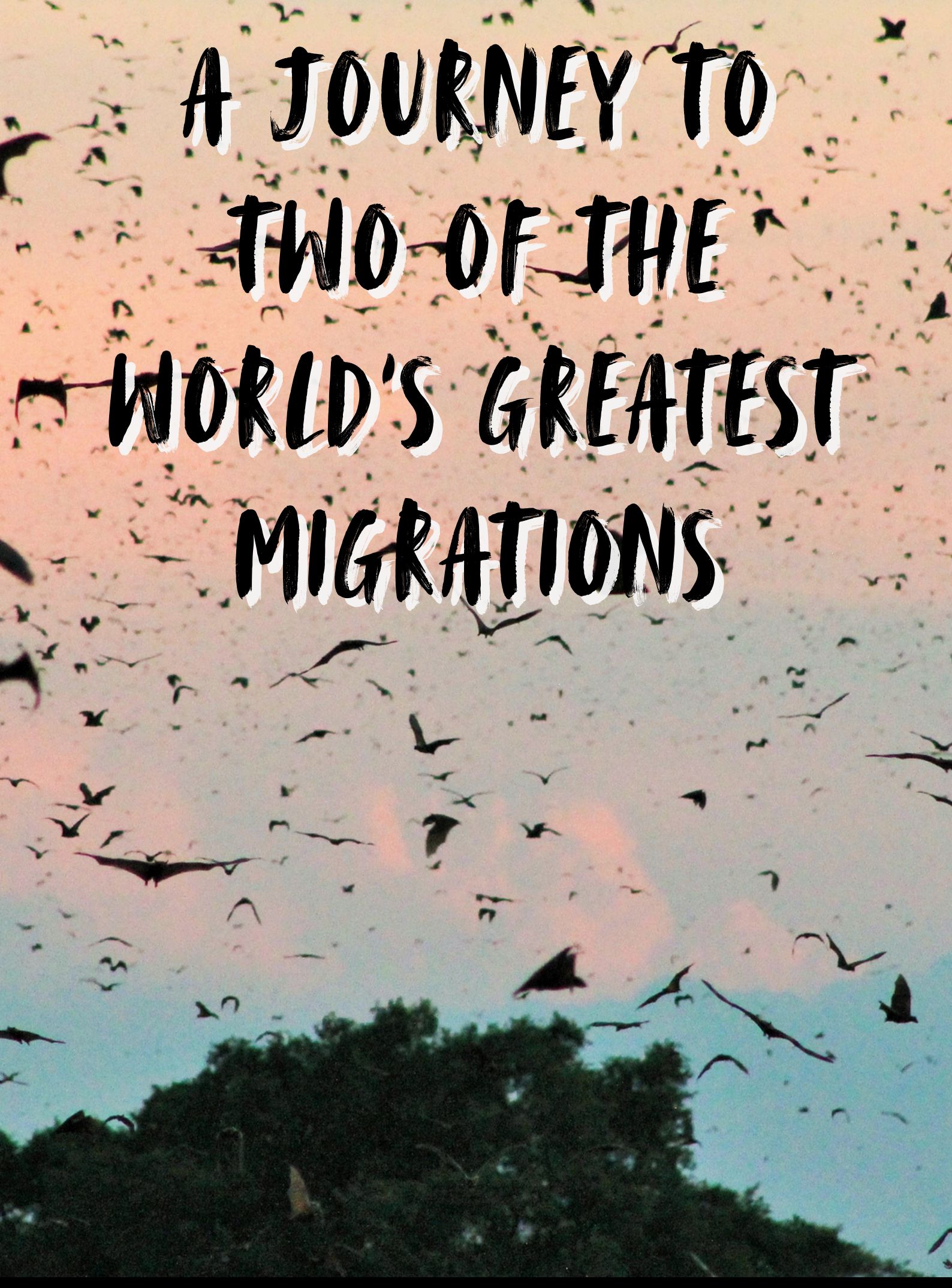
4x4 | OUTDOOR | LIFESTYLE Afrika

4X4AFRIKA.COM



Order Now!

4X4AFRIKA.COM


A JOURNEY TO TWO OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST MIGRATIONS

Each November, two of the world's most incredible annual mammal migrations take place. The first is the brindled gnu migration in Zambia's Liuwa Plains National Park – Africa's second-largest wildebeest migration after the Serengeti. The second is the world's largest mammal migration: the arrival of over ten million Straw-coloured bats in Kasanka. Louwrens Fouché of Ultimate Adventures has had the privilege of guiding groups to both, and it's truly a bucket-list adventure.





Our group was fully booked, and the first day's meeting point was Muchenje Lodge and Camp, perched on the floodplain of the Chobe River in northern Botswana. It's an excellent spot for our meet-and-greet. Group members arrived at various times during the day, with everyone present by 5pm. By 6pm, the fire was crackling, and we gathered with our chairs and refreshments for the evening's introductions and tour briefing.

While we chatted about expectations and adventures to come, dinner was expertly prepared by our culinary maestro, Master P – a well-qualified and experienced chef who would treat us to hearty, delicious meals every evening on tour.

I kicked off the proceedings with a short address, handing out our customary branded gift packs to each participant – a few unique, practical items that would serve them well for many adventures to come.

Through Namibia to Zambia

Our journey began in earnest as we passed through the Ngoma Border Post into Namibia, crossing the famous Caprivi Strip to reach Katima Mulilo. From there, we entered Zambia and made our way to Kabula Lodge and Camp for a two-night stay.

This gem on the banks of the Zambezi River is owned by Piet, a friendly South African expat from Pretoria who always welcomes us like old friends. The setting offers great tigerfishing opportunities and relaxed sunset cruises – a perfect way to unwind before the more challenging stages ahead.

Sand and wildebeest in Liuwa Plains

Liuwa's notorious thick sand tracks were on my mind as we prepped for the next leg – a 30km



stretch that demands attention and confidence. Thankfully, in all my visits, we've only ever had one vehicle need recovery.We were pleased to find the new bridge at Kalabo over the Luanginga River fully operational, saving us from the nerve-wracking hand-drawn ferry that was the only way across until recently. As fun as it sounds, that ferry always felt like an accident waiting to happen.

From Kabula, the 250km drive to Mongu was straightforward. We stocked up on food and fuel before heading into Liuwa Plains National Park, where we would spend the next four nights at the peaceful Kwale Camp. Nestled among giant trees on a small island surrounded by vast floodplains, it's basic but beautiful.

Wildebeest on the move

Early the next morning, we set off on our first game drive and soon encountered the first arrivals of the migration near King's Pool – hundreds of blue wildebeest pouring in from eastern Angola. The rains had started, and fresh green grass was sprouting everywhere, attracting the herds.

But Liuwa isn't just about wildebeest. It's home to an impressive variety of mammals and birds – from the tiny Oribi antelope and Burchell's zebra to saddle-billed storks, wattled cranes and crowned cranes. Predators are fewer, but we saw plenty of jackals and spotted hyenas.

To Kafue and on to Kasanka

After four days, we headed back to Mongu to refuel before turning east towards Kafue National Park. Roy's Camp, our riverside stopover, offered us a peaceful night's rest after nearly 400km on the road. A stunning Kafue River sunrise was the perfect way to start our journey to Kasanka National Park – and the main event.

Excitement built as we neared our destination. Some travellers couldn't even remember the last time they'd seen a bat, let alone millions of them!

Into the forest

We spent two nights on the road before reaching Kasanka. After checking in, we made our way through the dense forest to our base at Pontoon Camp. Kasanka may be small, but it's packed with life – including Yellow baboons, Puku, and Sitatunga antelope.

At dusk and dawn, we witnessed the mind-blowing spectacle of more than 10 million Straw-coloured bats filling the skies – a natural phenomenon like no other. From our elevated hide, over 20 metres above the lush swamp, we had a front-row seat to the show.

Evenings were cosy around the fire, with Master P's cooking aromas mingling with the forest air. Hot water was a treat – our showers









here were fire-heated and manually filled, so our next stop was much appreciated.

The long road home

After leaving Kasanka, we stayed over at Palm Farm near Kabwe – a charming, family-run spot where we were welcomed with fresh fruit from their orchard. The showers here were warm and plentiful, a real luxury after our rustic forest camp.

We continued south the next day, passing through Lusaka before reaching The Moorings – a peaceful working farm and camp. Our final night in Zambia was spent in the lively town of Livingstone, home to the Mosi-oa-Tunya Falls and always buzzing with activity. We camped at Baobab Campsite and enjoyed some downtime before heading to the border.

Kazungula Border Post, a modern and efficient crossing, saw us back into Botswana without hassle. From there, we travelled to Nata Lodge for our final night in Botswana – a well-appointed stop with a bar, bush setting and all the comforts needed after a long trip.

Farewell under the Limpopo stars

Our last stop was at Stockpoort Bush Camp on the banks of the Limpopo River, just beyond the Stockpoort Border Post. It's a scenic andtranquil place to reflect on the journey. We shared stories, swapped photos, and planned future tours as Master P whipped up his final showstopper meal.

The following morning, everyone made their way home at their own pace. Some took a detour to the nearby Nata Bird Sanctuary, one of the best birding spots in Botswana, while others hit the road straight away.

It was, once again, a journey of a lifetime. We witnessed two of the planet's greatest wildlife spectacles, made new friends, and were blessed with good weather, good fortune and great company. We'll be doing it all again this coming November – and we can't wait. ■

Contact Ultimate Advenmtures for your next Overland Safari

ULTIMATE ADVENTURES

From military Defender to Camping Queen



Story & pics by Mel Henderson



Willow the Tank, an ex-military 1994 Defender 110 200Tdi, came into my life in March 2023. Her name, Willow, is of Old English origin – the willow tree symbolises survival, known for its ability to thrive despite tough conditions. Apparently, Native Americans used to tie willow branches to their boats as protection from storms. She became Willow the Tank after my husband, Andrew, drove her through busy Hillcrest (KZN) and commented: "She drives like a tank!"

She arrived at our home (Series Ranch in KwaZulu-Natal) as a standard three-door Defender 110 with two rear seats. "Yay!" I exclaimed, "We finally own a four-seater!" Well, that didn't last long.

Built, not bought

Andrew replaced Willow's rear seats with a self-made wooden storage unit that doubles as a bed base. He fitted aluminium rails above the windows for camo-print curtains, wired up interior LED lights, and added a solar system with plug points. Over time, he designed and fitted MOLLE panels, attached branch deflectors (which conveniently double as clotheslines for wet towels), and made an aluminium drop-down table for Willow's rear door. He even sourced a second-hand rooftop tent online, which later proved its mettle in a proper Drakensberg storm.

These modifications can be seen on our Series Ranch YouTube channel – it's a DIY paradise for Defender fans!

I took on the task of crafting reversible window covers using large car sunshades and camo-print fabric. After watching countless YouTube videos, I got the holes punched for suction cups at Embocraft Shop & Training Trust, an NPO in Botha's Hill. These covers reflect heat during the day and insulate against cold at night – win-win.

Rain, wraps, and racing to the ablutions

As a camping newbie, I quickly learned that every time we arrive somewhere, it rains. So, I started prepping meals in advance. Cold-weather favourites include pasta salad, curried beans, potato salad, cooked veggie sausages and chicken breasts in a tasty sauce. When the heavens open just as you light the braai, out come the pre-cooked goodies, bread rolls or wraps and a tin of curried veg. Gourmet under the gazebo!

We've also mastered the art of sprinting to the ablutions with a pre-packed bathroom bag in









record time – it has practically become a competitive sport!

First trips and monkey business

Our first Landy camp was at Nyalazi campsite, just outside iMfolozi-Hluhluwe Game Reserve. We stayed on one of the smaller sites on higher ground under low-hanging thorn trees. The lower sites are much roomier. We slept inside Willow and were woken during the night by the cackling of hyenas, and in the morning, we spotted giraffes in the distance. Not bad for a first outing.

Our second trip was to Monks Cowl campsite in the Central Drakensberg. The birdlife was a treat and the hiking trails stunning. Watch out for vervet monkeys, though! One poor employee spent her days chasing them away from campers' sites. These little thieves had a field day leaping on gazebos and “shopping” from unattended cooler boxes. We watched packets of chips zoom past us, grey tails streaming behind them, followed by a flustered staff member puffing after them. Highly entertaining.

Turning 50 with a bang (and a storm)

In October 2023, to celebrate my 50th, we headed to Hermits Wood near Drakensberg Gardens in the Southern Berg. With our rooftop tent, winch, sand ladders and MOLLE panels, we looked like seasoned overlanders. People kept asking, “Have you been to Botswana?” and we’d reply, “Not yet – we’ve only been to the Drakensberg and a game park!” The looks of surprise were priceless. We were clearly living proof of the motto: Fake it till you make it.

By the time we passed Pietermaritzburg, the outside temperature had climbed to 39°C. Despite Andrew fitting an extra fan to Willow’s radiator, the heat was overwhelming, and poor Willow started overheating. We pulled into the shade at the Hilton Shell garage, grabbed some ice cream, and took a breather.

That’s when we noticed a beady-eyed Land Cruiser parked nearby, its owner watching us. It rumbled over and its burly, red-cheeked driver — dressed in two-tone khaki and wraparound sunglasses – greeted us with a cheerful, “I come in peace!” We exchanged wary hellos. Some Toyota drivers just can’t help themselves when a Landy has its bonnet up.

Turns out, he used to own a 300Tdi himself. Claimed it cost more to run than he paid for it, that it broke down in Mozambique and had to be towed home, and that he swore he’d never buy a Land Rover again. Just as he made that bold declaration, his Cruiser’s alarm blared.

I quipped, “Even your car’s laughing,” and to his credit, we all had a good chuckle. As he roared off, I patted Willow’s fender and whispered: “Never mind, we love you.”

Blown away at Hermits Wood

Hermits Wood is peaceful during the day – until you open the cooler box. The Friday evening brought a storm from nowhere. By 17:00, the wind arrived with hurricane force, tearing at the rooftop tent. We’d barely finished our pre-cooked dinner and made it up the ladder when it struck. Each time I thought it was calming, another gust hit, shaking us like dice in a cup. I was convinced we’d either be blown off the roof or the whole Defender would tip over.

The majestic trees of Hermits Wood, so idyllic by day, became looming threats. Each creak had me whispering to Andrew: “That one’s going to fall on us!” But miraculously, the tent survived. No damage, no leaks, and thanks to Andrew securing the ladder and reinforcing it with a wooden support, we stayed safely in place.

Lesson learned: arrive early and always leave enough space inside to move in during bad weather.

Snow, smiles, and Sani Pass

On the morning of 29 October – my actual birthday – the rain forced us to abandon our hiking plans to Rhino Peak. Instead, we opted for a relaxed drive up Sani Pass. The wetter the better, we say!

We stopped at The Whistling Goat in Himeville for a birthday breakfast, then grabbed huge slices of coffee-chocolate cake to enjoy on the pass. Outside the restaurant, we found two more Defenders parked near Willow. I was lining up a photo when a local recognised us from Facebook and asked: “Are you the Hendersons?” He invited us to watch the rugby final with locals at a nearby aircraft hangar. That’s the magic of Land Rover life – it’s more than a vehicle, it’s a lifestyle.

Sani Pass never disappoints. We’ve done it in Nelly (my 1977 Series 3), in Beasto (our 2005 Defender 90), on mountain bikes and motorbikes. This time, as we trundled up in Willow, it started to snow – just a sprinkle, but it was magical.

Willow the Tank is our forever vehicle. She’s the embodiment of fun, freedom and adventure. We’ve done bush and berg – next stop: beach. I’ve already packed my cozzie and snorkelling gear. Andrew, my mountain-loving man, just needs a little more convincing.

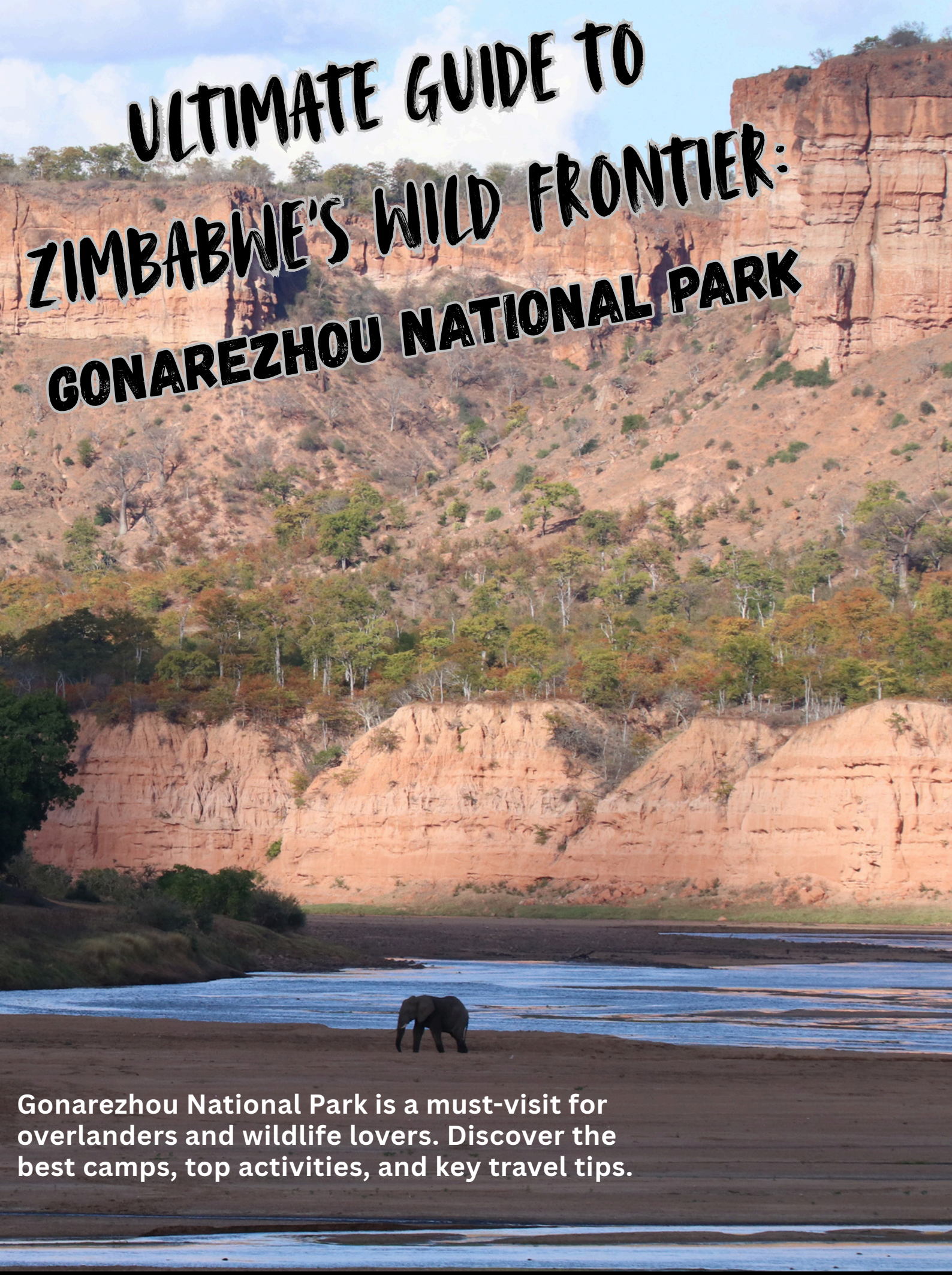








Ultimate Guide to Zimbabwe's Wild Frontier: Gonarezhou National Park



Gonarezhou National Park is a must-visit for overlanders and wildlife lovers. Discover the best camps, top activities, and key travel tips.

Gonarezhou National Park, located in southeastern Zimbabwe, is a pristine wilderness area renowned for its rich biodiversity and stunning landscapes. Established in 1975, the park spans approximately 5,053 square kilometers, making it the country's second-largest national park. The name "Gonarezhou" translates to "Place of Elephants" in the local Shona language, reflecting the park's significant elephant population. nationalparksassociation.org



Brief History
The area now known as Gonarezhou has a complex history. Initially inhabited by the Shangaan people, it became a game reserve in 1935. In 1968, the region was designated as a reserve for the Shangaan community, but by 1975, it was proclaimed a national park. During the subsequent decades, Gonarezhou found itself at the crossroads of civil conflicts in both Mozambique and Zimbabwe, impacting its wildlife and infrastructure. Today, it forms part of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park, linking with Kruger National Park in South Africa and Limpopo National Park in Mozambique, allowing for free movement of wildlife across these protected areas.



Activities in the Park
Visitors to Gonarezhou can engage in a variety of activities:

- **Game drives**: Self-guided or guided drives offer opportunities to observe elephants, lions, leopards, cheetahs, and diverse antelope species in their natural habitats. zimparks.org.zw
- **Bird watching**: With over 450 bird species recorded, the park is a haven for ornithologists and bird enthusiasts.
- **Walking safaris**: Guided walks provide an intimate experience of the park's flora and fauna, emphasizing safety and environmental awareness.
- **Cultural tours**: Engagements with local communities offer insights into the traditions and lifestyles of the Shangaan people.
- **Photography**: Landmarks like the Chilojo Cliffs provide stunning backdrops for both amateur and professional photographers.

Accommodation and camps

Gonarezhou offers a range of camping options:

Developed campsites:

- Chipinda Pools: Situated along the Runde River, this site offers communal facilities, including hot and cold running water, flush toilets, and an on-site camp attendant.
- Mabalauta: Located in the southern section, these campsites are shaded by a tall canopy of trees along the Mwenezi River. Each site has a tap with running water and a braai area, with shared ablution facilities.

Exclusive campsites:

- Chilojo Cliffs: Offers breathtaking views of the iconic red sandstone cliffs. Facilities are minimal, enhancing the remote experience.
- Runde River: Located along the river, these sites provide opportunities for fishing and game viewing.

Wilderness campsites:

Eleven exclusive sites are set in remote areas, offering solitude and a true wilderness experience. Amenities are basic, typically including a bush toilet and fire pit.

Top 10 Frequently Asked Questions

When is the best time to visit Gonarezhou National Park?

The dry season, from May to October, is ideal for wildlife viewing as animals congregate around water sources. However, the park is open year-round, with each season offering unique experiences.

What wildlife can I expect to see? Gonarezhou is home to over 11 500 elephants, as well as lions, leopards, cheetahs, buffalo, and various antelope species. Birdlife is also abundant, with over 450 recorded species.

Are guided tours available? Yes, guided game drives and walking safaris are available and can be arranged through the park's management or licensed tour operators.

What facilities are available at the campsites?

Developed campsites offer communal ablution blocks with hot and cold running water, flush toilets, and braai areas. Wilderness campsites provide basic amenities like a bush toilet and fire pit.



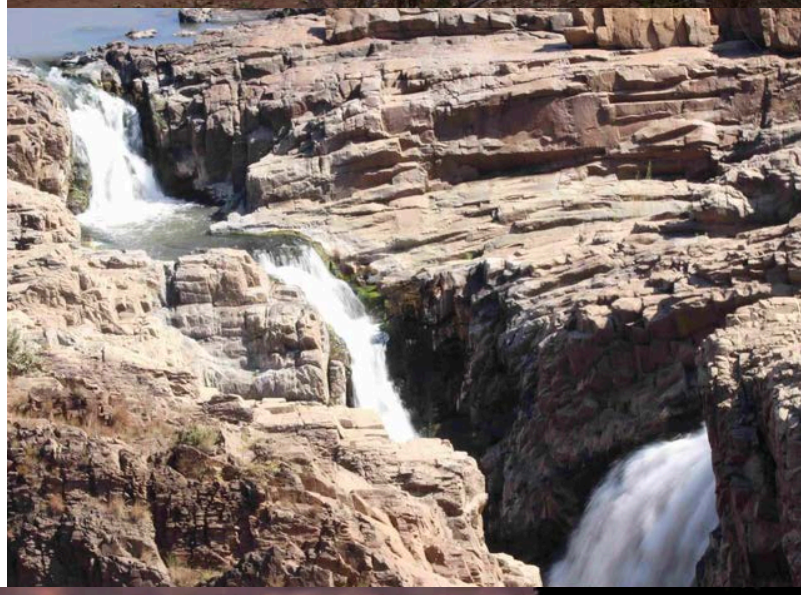


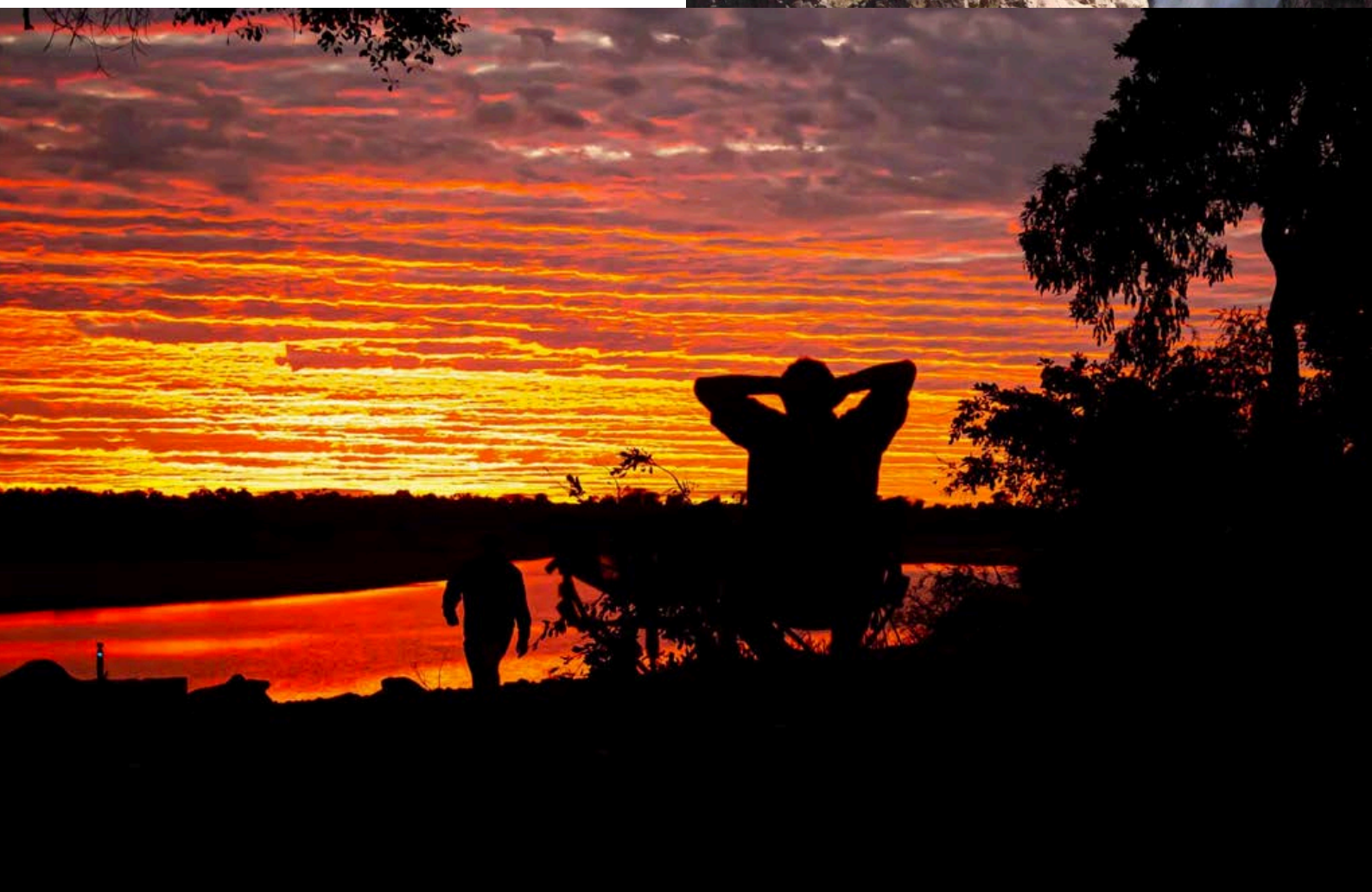


Is it safe to visit the park? While Gonarezhou is a wilderness area with inherent risks, following park guidelines and regulations ensures a safe and enjoyable visit.
Can I visit as a day visitor? Yes, day visits are permitted, allowing for self-guided game drives and picnics at designated sites.
What should I bring for camping? Essential items include camping gear, food supplies, drinking water, insect repellent, and a first aid kit.
Are there any cultural sites within the park? Yes, the park contains sites of cultural significance, including ancient rock paintings and historical artifacts.
How do I get to Gonarezhou National Park? The park is accessible by road from major cities like Harare and Bulawayo.
Are there any health precautions I should take? Visitors are advised to take anti-malarial medication and ensure vaccinations are up to date.

Gonarezhou National Park offers an authentic and immersive wilderness experience, combining rich biodiversity with cultural heritage. Whether you're an avid wildlife enthusiast, a bird watcher, or a casual traveler seeking tranquility, Gonarezhou provides a unique and memorable adventure. ■







Expedition:
Lions & Lakes

FORE & EXPLORE
GOLF | SAFARIS | ADVENTURE

18 SEP - 14 OCT
2025





R42 500

PER PERSON SHARING

TOUR DETAILS

- Destinations: Kapishya Hot Springs, Katavi NP, Lake Tanganyika, Ruaha NP and Lake Malawi
- Duration: 28 Days
- Accommodation: Camping
- Meals: Self-Catered
- Included:
  - 2 dinners
  - Camping and Park Fees
  - Guide Fee

CONTACT INFO

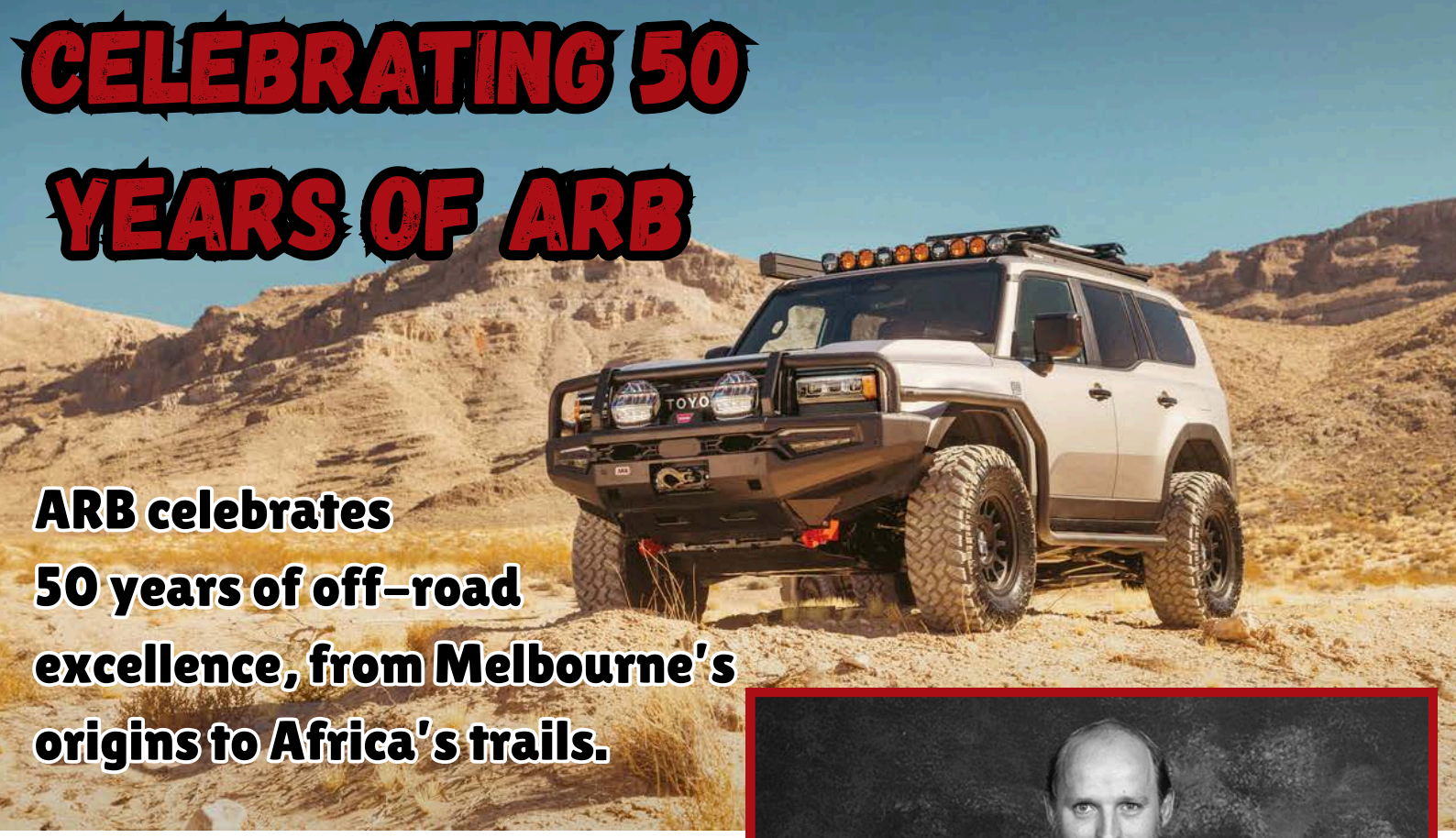
+27 84 447 4666 - Simon

+27 73 709 5242 - Des

www.fore-explore.com

info@fore-explore.com

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF ARB



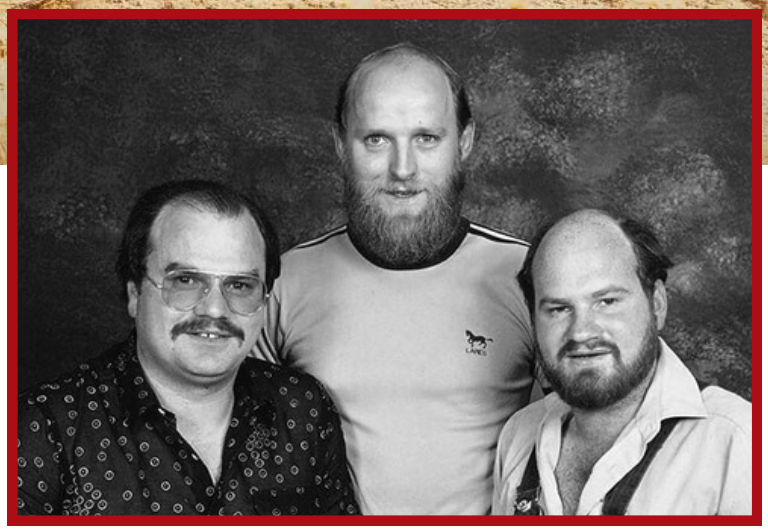
ARB celebrates 50 years of off-road excellence, from Melbourne's origins to Africa's trails.

In 2025, ARB 4x4 Accessories celebrates a monumental milestone – 50 years of innovation, adventure and off-road excellence. From a modest driveway in suburban Melbourne to a global leader in off-road equipment, ARB has redefined how we conquer the toughest terrains, shaping overlanding cultures across the globe – including the rugged landscapes of Southern and East Africa. This golden jubilee isn't just about products; it's a tribute to a legacy of durability, pioneering spirit and a passionate community of explorers who trust ARB to lead them into the wild.

From backyard beginnings: The birth of ARB

The ARB story began in 1975 when Anthony Ronald Brown – known to all as Tony – tackled the brutal trails of Cape York, Australia's northernmost frontier. Frustrated by equipment failures in the unforgiving outback, Tony returned with a vision: to craft gear tough enough for the harshest conditions. Armed with mechanical expertise and a no-nonsense attitude, he started forging steel bull bars in his parents' driveway in North Coburg, Melbourne. Word of his robust, functional designs spread quickly among local 4x4 enthusiasts, and ARB – named after Tony's initials – was born.

By 1981, soaring demand pushed ARB into a larger facility in Bayswater, Melbourne, transforming it from a backyard venture into a full-fledged manufacturer.



Roger Brown, John Van Den Eynden & Tony Brown

Early innovations, like the iconic upswept wing bull bar, optimised approach angles and protection, setting a benchmark for engineering excellence that still defines ARB today.

Global ambitions: Taking Australian grit to the world

Australia's brutal landscapes honed ARB's products, but Tony saw the same hunger for adventure worldwide. By the late 1980s, ARB went global, establishing ARB USA in Seattle in 1988 to tap into North America's growing 4x4 scene. In 1991, Air Locker Inc. was founded to focus on ARB's game-changing locking differentials. Today, ARB's gear is available in over 100 countries, supported by a network of dealers who share its ethos of quality and exploration. From Europe to the Middle East, South America to Africa, ARB equips adventurers for every terrain.

In Africa, ARB's presence is amplified through a strategic partnership with 4x4 Mega World – a powerhouse in off-road retail and distribution. Beyond South Africa, 4x4 Mega World extends ARB's reach across borders, with outlets and trusted dealers in Botswana, Zambia, Namibia, Kenya and Tanzania. This expansive footprint ensures that adventurers tackling the Okavango Delta's swamps, the Serengeti's plains or the Namib Desert's dunes have access to ARB's premium gear, backed by expert advice and fitment services tailored to Africa's diverse challenges.

Enter Old Man Emu: Elevating the ride

In the late 1970s, Old Man Emu (OME) emerged as Australia's go-to for off-road suspension systems, offering tailored solutions for load-carrying, comfort and clearance. ARB recognised OME's potential and acquired the brand in 1988, creating a powerhouse combination. This merger allowed ARB to offer complete off-road solutions, from protection gear to suspension systems fine-tuned for the world's toughest terrains.

OME's suspension range is a cornerstone of ARB's offering – especially in Africa, where varied landscapes demand versatility. The Nitrocharger series is the go-to for general off-road touring, delivering reliable performance for overlanders exploring from the Kalahari to Kenya's Maasai Mara. Designed for durability, it balances load-carrying capacity with ride comfort, making it ideal for long-distance adventures.

For those seeking a step up, the MT64 shocks offer a perfect blend of comfort and performance. With adjustable settings, they allow drivers to fine-tune their suspension for varying terrains – whether navigating Zambia's rocky escarpments or cruising Tanzania's savannahs. The MT64's versatility makes it a favourite for adventurers who demand adaptability without sacrificing quality.

At the pinnacle, the BP-51 shocks represent the ultimate in off-road suspension. Engineered for extreme tuning and unmatched control, BP-51's bypass technology allows precise adjustments for compression and rebound, ensuring optimal performance on Botswana's floodplains or Namibia's Skeleton Coast. Whether you're a hardcore overlander or a weekend warrior, BP-51 transforms your vehicle into a terrain-conquering machine, offering unrivalled stability and comfort under the most punishing conditions.









ARB in South Africa: Built for Africa's wild heart

South Africa's diverse landscapes – rugged Drakensberg passes, arid Karoo plains and lush Lowveld trails – are a natural home for ARB's battle-tested gear. Since the 1990s, ARB has met the demands of South Africa's passionate 4x4 community through its partnership with 4x4 Mega World. This collaboration goes beyond distribution; it's a shared commitment to equipping adventurers with gear that thrives in Africa's extremes.

With 12 company-owned stores, 13 franchises and a vast dealer network, 4x4 Mega World brings ARB's full range to every corner of South Africa – from Polokwane's bushveld to Piketberg's mountain trails. Beyond South Africa, their cross-border presence in Botswana, Zambia, Namibia, Kenya and Tanzania ensures that adventurers across the region can access ARB's bull bars, recovery gear and OME suspensions, supported by expert fitment and advice tailored to local conditions.

Impact on the local market: Redefining off-road standards

Before ARB, South African 4x4 enthusiasts often relied on generic imports or makeshift solutions, rarely suited to Africa's unique challenges. ARB changed the game, introducing purpose-built gear tested in conditions as brutal as Australia's outback. From bull bars and roof racks to recovery equipment, ARB's products became the benchmark for reliability and performance.

The Air Locker locking differential became a local legend, empowering drivers to tackle slippery riverbeds in the Kruger National Park or rocky inclines in Lesotho with a single button press. Long-range fuel tanks, drawer systems and waterproof fridges further solidified ARB's status as the gold standard for overlanders, enabling extended journeys into remote corners of Africa without compromise.

The suspension revolution: Old Man Emu's African legacy

Africa's roads – paved or not – are relentless. From the Kalahari's bone-rattling corrugations to Lesotho's axle-twisting tracks, suspension systems must endure heavy loads and unpredictable terrain. OME's tailored solutions have become a game-changer, offering options for every setup, from lightweight daily drivers to fully loaded expedition rigs.

The Nitrocharger is the backbone of OME's touring range, delivering dependable performance for overlanders crossing Botswana's Makgadikgadi Pans or Tanzania's Ngorongoro Crater. The MT64 shocks, with their adjustable damping, strike a balance between comfort and control – perfect for Zambia's mixed terrains or Kenya's rutted tracks. For the ultimate setup, the BP-51 shocks offer unparalleled tuning, ensuring stability and precision on Namibia's gravel roads or South Africa's rocky trails. Fitment centres across the region report a surge in demand for OME, as adventurers ditch generic lift kits for systems that deliver true performance.

Community and conservation: Beyond the gear

ARB's impact in Africa transcends products. Through 4x4 Mega World, the brand supports community events, technical challenges and conservation initiatives. From sponsoring 4x4 club outings to equipping anti-poaching vehicles in protected areas, ARB fosters a culture of responsible adventure. Workshops at 4x4 Mega World stores educate enthusiasts on safe recovery, vehicle setup and expedition planning, strengthening Africa's growing overlanding community.

Looking ahead: Innovation without limits

As ARB marks its 50th year, the brand remains at the forefront of off-road innovation. From LINX electronic control systems to vehicle-specific drawer solutions, ARB continues to push boundaries. In Africa – where adventure is a way of life – ARB and 4x4 Mega World are expanding their reach, ensuring that new vehicle models are met



with tailored fitments that blend OEM quality with off-road prowess.

A legacy forged in the dust

From a Melbourne driveway to the riverbeds of Botswana, the savannahs of Tanzania and the deserts of Namibia, ARB's 50-year journey is a testament to trust, toughness and adventure. In South Africa and beyond, ARB isn't just a brand – it's a symbol of freedom and exploration. With Old Man Emu's Nitrocharger, MT64 and BP-51 suspensions beneath you, and 4x4 Mega World's expertise behind you, there are no limits to where the trail can take you. ■



OLD MAN EMU



EXPANDING THE GREAT OUTDOORS

WWW.CONQUEROR-JHB.CO.ZA

CELEBRATING 120 YEARS OF TYRE TREAD INNOVATION



In the grand tapestry of mobility, there are few innovations as quietly heroic as the tyre tread pattern. It may not get the same fanfare as a turbocharged engine or a futuristic infotainment system, but without it, none of those bells and whistles would mean much. Continental stepped onto the world stage 120 years ago with a breakthrough that would transform personal mobility forever: the world's first car tyre with a tread pattern.

At the time, cars were still a novelty. Roads were, shall we say, less than ideal, and driving was an unpredictable, often slippery affair. Vehicles were getting heavier, more powerful, and faster, yet the tyres were little more than smooth rubber hoops. Continental's innovation introduced structure and intelligence to the only part of a vehicle that actually touches the road.

By carving grooves, blocks, ribs, and sipes into the rubber, the brand vastly improved traction and braking performance, especially on wet or dirty surfaces. It was a game-changer, and it set the stage for more than a century of continuous advancement.

How tread evolved over time

Over the decades, Continental has refined this concept through an ever-evolving line-up of tread designs, each tailored to specific performance needs. From the early longitudinal grooves that aided straight-line stability to the V-shaped directional patterns designed to tackle aquaplaning and snow, the art of tread design has become a high-tech discipline.

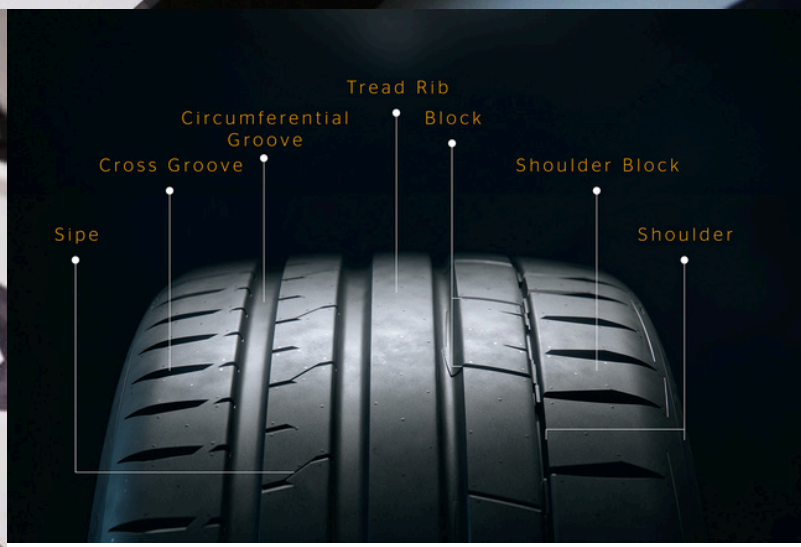
Today, modern Continental tyre families like the PremiumContact, EcoContact, and WinterContact cater to everything from fuel-saving daily driving to hardcore winter conditions. And let's not forget the SportContact 7, a high-performance tyre designed to cling to the tarmac like a gecko on glass.

Small patch, big responsibility

The impact of tread design on safety cannot be overstated. Imagine the size of a postcard. That's roughly the contact patch each tyre has with the road. It's this modest area that handles the full







weight of your vehicle and manages acceleration, braking, and steering.

On wet roads, the tread channels water away to maintain grip. On snowy roads, it digs in like a seasoned mountaineer. In fact, the entire driving experience – from ride comfort and noise levels to braking efficiency and tyre longevity – is heavily influenced by the tread pattern.

Tread types explained: symmetrical, directional and asymmetrical

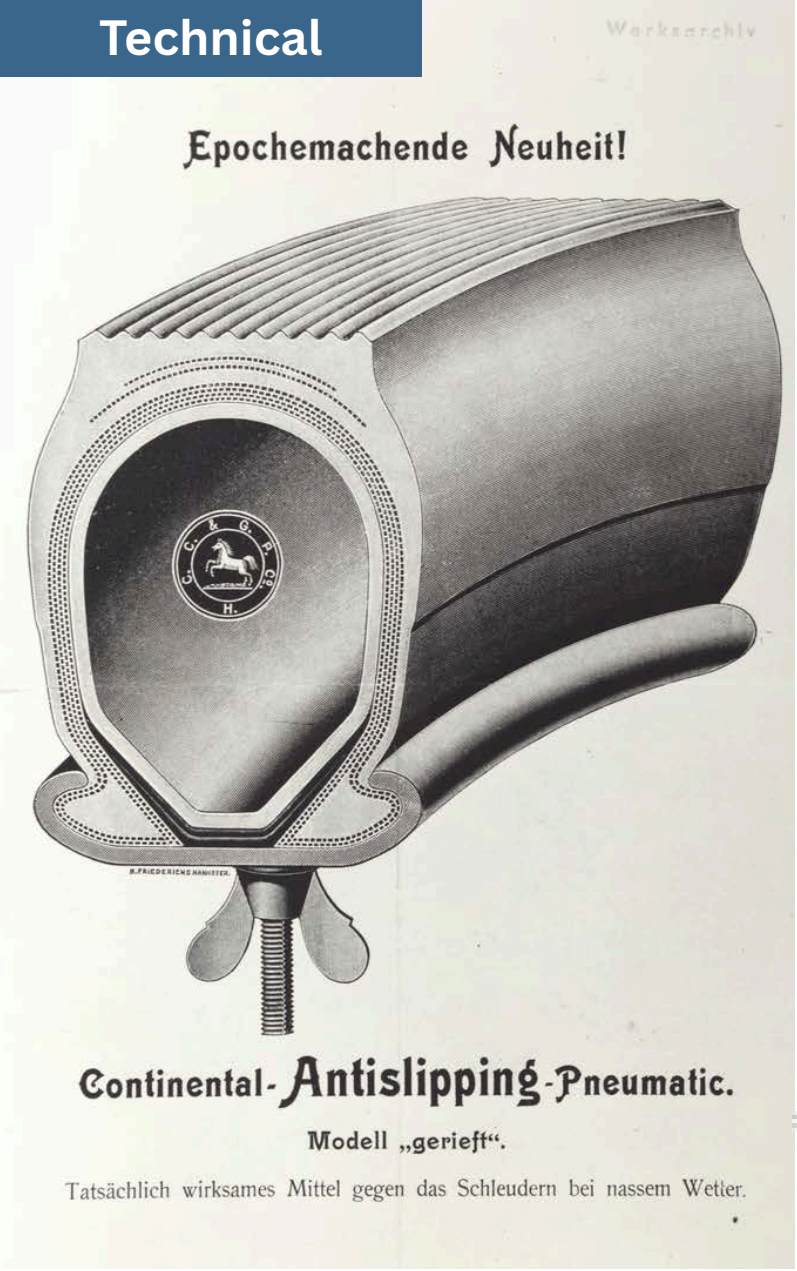
Not all tread patterns are created equal. Depending on the intended application, tyres can be symmetrical, directional, or asymmetrical.

Symmetrical treads, which can be mounted in any position, are ideal for vans and city commuters. Directional treads, with their arrow-like design, excel at high-speed stability and water displacement. Asymmetrical treads combine multiple features, offering both wet grip and dry performance, making them the go-to choice for sporty summer tyres.

Anatomy of a tread pattern

Behind each pattern is a delicate balance of four main components. The blocks are the raised parts that bite into the road for grip. The grooves are the channels that evacuate water. Ribs are the rows of tread blocks that enhance directional control. And sipes – those tiny cuts in the blocks – flex and adapt to the road surface, improving grip on slippery terrain.

Continental's tyre boffins combine these elements with both scientific precision and design flair. The resulting patterns are so unique and effective, they're often protected by patents… more than 1 700 of them, to be exact.



From hand-carving to AI simulations

Of course, today's development process is a far cry from the hand-carving days of yore. Tyres are now born in digital labs, where virtual prototypes are created using sophisticated simulations. Artificial intelligence plays a growing role, crunching massive datasets to predict how a tread will perform in various conditions.

Patterns are fine-tuned and tested virtually, allowing engineers to discard underperforming designs before a single tyre is ever produced. This not only speeds up development but also reduces waste, saving hundreds of tyres and valuable resources each year.

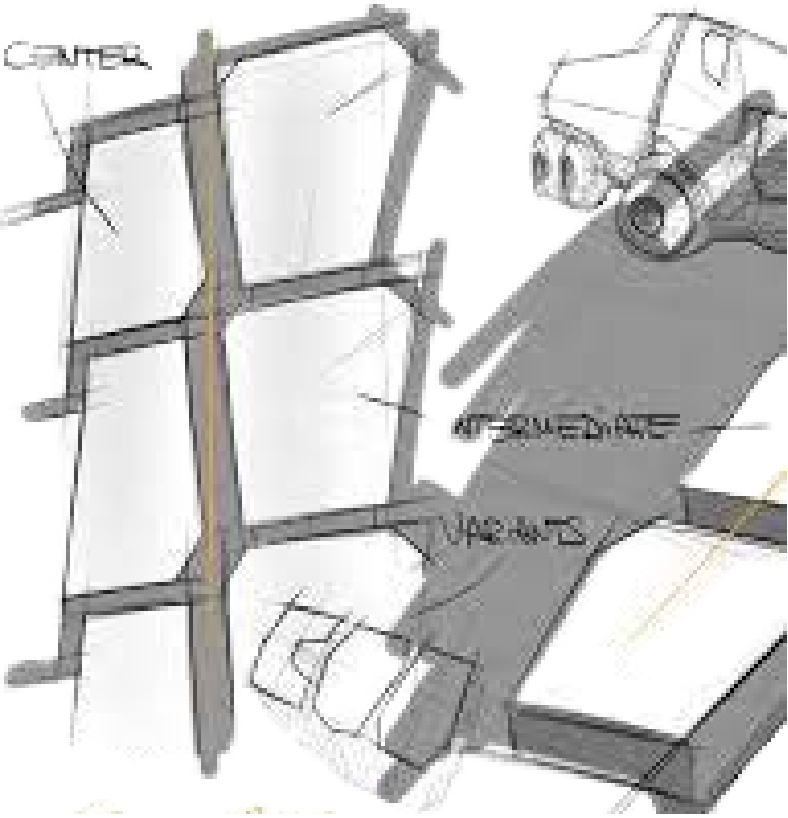
The road ahead: performance meets sustainability

Looking ahead, the tread pattern will continue to evolve alongside emerging trends and technologies. Sustainability is now a major driver, with emphasis placed on rolling resistance, wear rate, and eco-friendly materials. At the same time, tyres must adapt to changing climates, regulatory landscapes, and the needs of new vehicle types, including electric and autonomous cars.

Continental is already exploring enhanced sipe geometries and innovative tread structures designed to squeeze every last kilometre from a tank (or a battery) while maintaining top-tier safety.

Quietly revolutionary

What began as a simple idea in a workshop 120 years ago has blossomed into a complex, data-driven science. Thanks to that first hand-carved pattern, we enjoy safer, smoother, and more efficient journeys today. The tread pattern may not shout for attention, but its legacy – and its future – is anything but ordinary. ■





FATHERS DAY GIFT IDEAS



Father's Day is the perfect time to celebrate the dads who live for the thrill of the open trail, the crackle of a campfire, and the freedom of Africa's wild spaces. At Adventure Afrika, we know the heart of an adventure dad beats for 4x4 journeys, overlanding expeditions, and wild camping under starlit skies. Whether he's tackling the rocky passes of the Cederberg, the sandy dunes of Namibia, or the muddy floodplains of Botswana, these six rugged, practical gifts – available in South Africa – will fuel his passion for exploration. From recovery gear to camp comforts, here's our handpicked selection to make your adventure dad's next trip unforgettable.

Desert RT1 Hardshell Rooftop Tent



Unveil the ultimate camping luxury with the Desert RT1 Hardshell Rooftop Tent. This elevated camping experience is not just a product, it's an investment towards your adventurous spirit. A testament to superior performance and reliability, this rooftop tent is designed to elevate your outdoor experience.

Price: R49 500
Where to purchase: 4x4 Mega World, a trusted ARB distributor with outlets across South Africa, Botswana, Zambia, Namibia, Kenya, and Tanzania.

Web link: 4x4megaworldonline.com

RED-E





Red-E 200W Solar Panel V2

The Red-E 200W Solar Panel V2 is a foldable, high-efficiency monocrystalline panel, ideal for off-grid camping. With a 5m Anderson 50A cable, it powers fridges or lights in remote spots like the Kalahari or Kruger, keeping dad's campsite powered for the long haul.

Price: From R5 999
Where to purchase: Outdoor Warehouse, a go-to for camping gear across South Africa.

Web link: outdoorwarehouse.co.za

San Hima Luxury Folding Camping Chair

The San Hima Luxury Folding Camping Chair offers comfort and durability for wild camping. Made with 600D Oxford fabric and a steel frame supporting up to 200kg, it's perfect for dad to unwind by a campfire in Lesotho or Tanzania's Serengeti.

Price: R2 395
Where to purchase: 4WD Warehouse, stocking quality camping gear for Africa's rugged terrain.

Web link: 4wdwarehouse.co.za





UBA Spare Wheel Tray & Table

Some accessories just make life so much easier and cannot be ignored. This is one of them. More packing space, another working surface, out of the way and quick to attach.

Price: R6 995
Where to purchase: Ultimate Bush Adventurer, offering locally designed 4x4 and camping gear.

Web link: ubadventurer.com

Camp Cover Kitchen Organiser

The Camp Cover Kitchen Organiser, proudly South African, is a heavy-duty ripstop bag for crockery, utensils, and condiments. With UV-treated YKK zips and multiple pockets, it keeps dad's cooking gear tidy on overlanding trips through Namibia or Kenya.

Price: R699

Where to purchase: Camp Cover, specialists in 4x4 storage solutions.

Web link: campcover.co.za



Pricing: Prices are approximate, based on typical South African retail costs as of June 2025. Verify with retailers, as prices may fluctuate due to exchange rates or promotions.
Availability: All products are available through reputable South African retailers with online platforms or cross-border presence, ensuring accessibility for Adventure Afrika readers.
Father's Day fit: These gifts blend rugged functionality with the spirit of adventure, making them ideal for dads who live for 4x4 overlanding and wild camping—perfectly aligning with Adventure Afrika's ethos of exploring Africa's untamed trails.

DRY RUBS TO ROCK YOUR NEXT BRAAI



Forget store-bought spice blends – these dry rubs are the real MVPs of any South African braai. Whether you're cooking boerie, ribs or spatchcock chicken, a good rub can take your meat from meh to mouthwatering. The secret? A clever combo of spices that lock in flavour and caramelise beautifully over the coals.

And let's be honest, making your own is probably cheaper than those flashy little bottles at the shops. Plus, you get to play spice alchemist: toss in a bit more chilli here, a pinch of lemon zest there... and voilà, it's your signature blend! Even better, you know exactly what's going in. No thickeners, no anti-caking agents, no chemical chaos – just pure flavour and braai-time brilliance.

Why use a rub in the first place?

Dry rubs aren't just about flavour; there's real food science at play here. The salt helps draw moisture from the surface of the meat, then allows it to be reabsorbed, carrying all those delicious spices deeper into the flesh (hello, osmosis!). Sugar helps with that mouth-watering caramelised crust, especially over hot coals. And the spices? They add layers of flavour, from smoky to sweet to spicy. A good rub transforms your meat before it even hits the grid – no messy marinades or long prep times required.

What's more, you can prep dry rubs in advance and store in a jar for months... if they last that long! These blends have been tested over many a fire, and they deliver every time.



Basic Braai Rub (perfect for steak or chops)

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp paprika
- 1 tbsp brown sugar
- 1 tbsp salt
- 1 tsp ground black pepper
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp onion powder
- ½ tsp ground cumin
- ½ tsp dried thyme

Spicy Karoo Rub (for lamb or beef with a kick)

Ingredients

- 1 tbsp ground coriander
- 1 tbsp smoked paprika
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp chilli flakes
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ tsp black pepper
- ½ tsp ground ginger

Directions

- Combine all ingredients for your chosen rub in a bowl and mix well.
- Pat meat dry and rub generously on all sides.
- Let it rest for 30 minutes before braaiing to let the flavours soak in.
- Store any leftover rub in an airtight jar away from light and heat.
- Serve with your favourite braai sides – think roosterkoek, potato salad, or chakalaka – and don't forget a cold one!

Discover delicious monthly recipes with Trail Food, your go-to for trail-ready meals! Explore their offerings and get inspired at trailfood.co.za.

