



# 4X4 ACTION

PRODUCTS / NEWS / TRAVEL / INFORMATION / ADVICE / LIFESTYLE

ISSUE 41

RED CENTRE -  
THE ADVENTURE  
CONTINUES



SPECIAL EDITION

# CHRISTMAS ISSUE HUGE SAVINGS INSIDE

## ARB PRODUCTS

Check out the latest products including the new Ascent canopy for Mazda BT-50 owners, the latest Intensity LED lights, protection equipment, camping accessories and more.

## ASCENT CANOPY ENGINEERING

Get the inside info on the development of the ARB Ascent Canopy.

## TRAVEL

We take you around the world, from China to Bolivia, India to Indonesia and back home through WA and the Northern Territory.

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FOR  
HEAPS OF  
**CHRISTMAS  
SPECIALS**  
AND GIFT  
IDEAS  
CHECK OUT  
**PAGE**  
**72**

WIN! AN ARB TOILETRIES BAG. VISIT PAGE 38 FOR MORE DETAILS.



# SNAPSHOT

There are a couple of questions that many of us here at ARB get asked on a frequent basis, the most common of these being “what’s the best 4WD vehicle on the market?”. I’m certainly not going to go there in this column, so I’ll move straight onto the next question - “what’s your favourite part of Australia to go 4WDing?”. Having just returned from my third Kimberley trip, I’m now confident in saying that this has to be the ultimate destination to head to in your 4x4.

This latest Kimberley trip was on assignment, filming with the crew for the television show, Your 4x4. We’d been planning the trip for almost two years and had a very full itinerary. So comprehensive in fact, that the producers anticipated getting enough material to fill two seasons of the show.

We all met at Kununurra and then worked our way through the Kimberley along the Gibb River road. This is a classic Outback route, with numerous spots to visit along the way. Waterfalls, gorges, ranges and wildlife, the Kimberley just seems to have an abundance of everything. I’ve always found the Aboriginal people of the region to be very accommodating, so it’s also a great place to learn about the country through their experiences. We had a few young children with us on the trip, and they were just fascinated spending time with the locals on the Dampier Peninsula spear-fishing, catching mud crabs and looking for ancient rock art. Flights up to the Horizontal Falls and Mitchell Plateau were other memorable highlights.

With the exception of a few minor mechanical issues, our trip went smoothly, and I don’t think a single day went by where somebody didn’t comment on how fortunate we were to be in this very special part of the world. However, a phone call from a customer in the NT the week I got back was a sobering reminder of how things can turn horribly wrong when travelling in the Outback. The gentleman in question, Alan Specketer, has written a letter in this magazine about his unfortunate experience. He also caught the whole thing on video, and after some discussion, we decided to include this quite graphic video in the tablet versions of this magazine.

Alan was travelling at night between Katherine and Darwin, where he tragically struck a wild horse at high speed. The reason we have chosen to show this video is that it graphically demonstrates just how little reaction time you have when a stray animal wanders in front of you at night. Alan is a highly experienced professional driver, yet in his own words, he didn’t even have time to swear between seeing and striking the animal. Many people think that a good set of driving lights will prevent an animal strike, and in many cases this is correct. Indeed, Alan had good road vision up until the moment he had to dip his lights to oncoming traffic. It takes time for your eyes to adjust when switching from high to low beam, and even with modern vehicles fitted with HID low beam lamps, night vision is very limited. Inevitably, if an animal steps out in front of you the only options are to strike or swerve. The latter can lead to a catastrophic outcome, so in a well protected 4WD, avoiding erratic directional changes and slowing the vehicle in a safe and controlled manner is the best option. Alan’s HiLux had seen better days at the end of this experience, but as the video shows, he was able to maintain absolute control of the vehicle throughout this unfortunate incident.

It’s always quite sobering when we receive these types of testimonials, but it also illustrates the quite unique conditions Outback motorists encounter on a daily basis. A major survey was run a few years back that was completed by tens of thousands of remote area motorists in response to government plans to introduce legislation that would have effectively put an end to functional bull bars. That legislation was shelved when the government at the time realised just how prevalent animal strikes were, and the dangerous consequences of operating vehicles in remote areas without adequate frontal protection.

We’d like to thank Alan for sharing his experience with us, and providing yet another example of why it’s critical to drive a well prepared vehicle when travelling in these areas.

Matthew Frost – National Sales & Marketing Manager



# WHAT'S NEW

THE LATEST PRODUCTS FROM ARB TO HELP YOU GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR NEXT 4WD ADVENTURE



## G5 SUPER MINI BOOSTER

There's nothing worse than a flat battery and having to wait for a kind stranger to pull over and help you jump start your vehicle. ARB has the solution with its G5 super mini booster, a compact portable power pack that incorporates jump leads to provide an all-in-one, easy to carry solution.

Weighing only 4.9kg, the G5 is compact in size (L20xW16x13cm) and includes a carry handle, making it the perfect accessory for all your vehicle needs.

Located between the positive and negative jump cables are two powerful LED lights to help illuminate the engine bay when using the jumper cables. The 2 x 5V USB charge ports enable the charging of devices such as mobile phones and iPads. Supplying 12V of power, the CIG socket can be used to run 12V powered items such as camp lights, hand held spotlights and even small air compressors.

> Contact ARB for part numbers and pricing

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## IPF 800XSH2T UPGRADE

Further upgrades in HID technology and bulb design have resulted in IPF being able to incorporate the internal ballast within their 800 Series style body for a cleaner look and ease of mounting.

The 800 HID touring beam includes a multi-segmented reflector (MSR) lens similar to the 900 internal ballast touring beam. Other features include a tough, press formed steel body and hardened glass lens for superior durability and resistance to breakage or heat shock. The optional new touring beam is optimised for rural and non-highway use, the hybrid beam pattern combines the best features of both spot and driving beam styles.

> Contact ARB for part numbers and pricing





CHRISTMAS  
SPECIAL  
**15% OFF**  
ALL APPAREL  
SEE PAGE  
**78**

### ARB ROCK ESCARPMENT TEE

To further complement ARB's extensive range of quality apparel, the all-new Rock Escarpment tee is a must have addition to any 4WDer's wardrobe.

Coming in a stylish dark grey or navy with a 'bleached out' printed rocky line and climbing dual cab, the Rock Escarpment tees have an edgy, modern design.

Made from 100% cotton combed jersey and both enzyme and silicon washed, they have a super soft feel. Combined with a looser neck size and herringbone neck tape for a comfy fit, this is sure to become your new go-to tee for everyday use.

► PART NO: 217559-217570  
PRICE: \$36.95



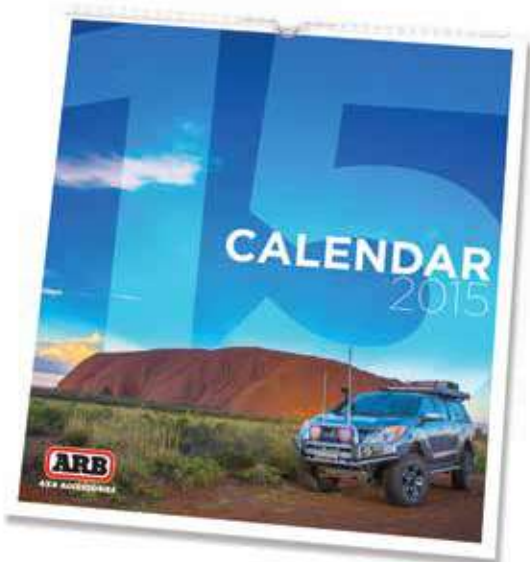
### 2015 ARB CALENDAR

Whether it's hanging in your office, home or man cave, the 2015 ARB Calendar will be a stylish addition to any wall.

Featuring some of the best shots from renowned 4WDing photographer Michael Ellem, the 2015 ARB Calendar includes a wide array of 4WDs in all their track-ready glory.

This ring bound calendar measures in at W340mm x H370mm.

► PART NO: 216152  
PRICE: \$14.95





# LONG MAR BA

KEN DUNCAN RECOUNTS HIS  
ADVENTURES THROUGH CHINA  
OVER THE PAST 30 YEARS AND  
WHY HE KEEPS RETURNING TO  
THIS AMAZING COUNTRY.

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY  
BY KEN DUNCAN





# CH CK

Okay I admit it, if I were asked what I would like for a last meal it would be Peking Duck. If you are going to die anyway, what is a bit more fatty duck skin with incredible accoutrements going to do to you? It's worth it for the taste sensation, and to go out with a big smile.

As you can tell, I already have a taste for China, which was first ignited back in 1985 when I was invited by my publisher to participate in a book project to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the famous Long March undertaken by China's Chairman, Mao Zedong, and his army. The gruelling march began in 1934 and cost many lives by the time it ended in Beijing in 1949 with the formation of the new People's Republic of China.

I arrived in China with a 35mm manual camera, a couple of lenses, two Widelux cameras, a light meter, and a small tripod. Some of the world's best photographers arrived with (literally) trolley loads of camera gear. One asked me where my gear was and I replied, "I travel light." It was an honour to be invited, but I felt way out of my league.

At the initial photographers' briefing in Beijing, we saw reconnaissance photos of the Long March route, before various sections were allocated to individual photographers. I noticed a white area, identified as the Great Snowy Mountains. It looked remote and very cold and I wondered which sucker would get to photograph that region. My name was called. The 'white area' was mine - and no substantial information was available due to recent floods and mudslides in the area. I found out later that thousands of Red Army soldiers died in the Great Snowy Mountains.

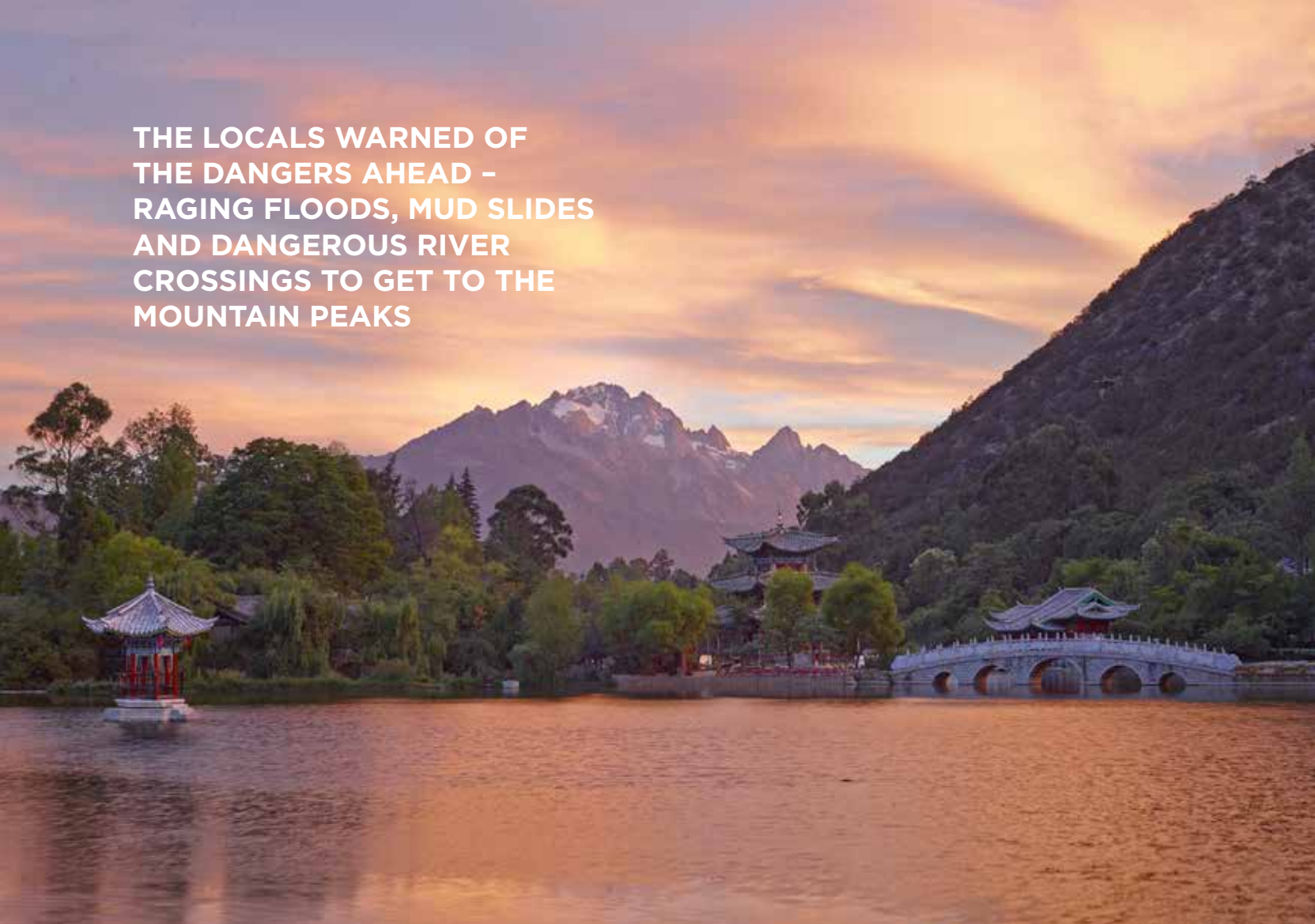
Ahead of preparations for the photographers to head off on their various assignments the next day, we all went out to a big banquet that night. The restaurant was touted as the best place in China for Peking Duck. They won me that night, but on the roads ahead the food was very different.

I was assigned a Chinese interpreter named Carlos who became a good buddy. In one small town, the local dignitaries honoured us with a big banquet. They knew about the book project and they all seemed to love Mao. The hospitality was wonderful. In those days the only available safe drinks were hot tea, boiled water, or rice wine. According to local custom, it was disrespectful to refuse a drink, so I sipped on the rice wine (which was like rocket fuel) figuring that if I had picked up any bugs, the rice wine would surely kill them.

The locals warned of the dangers ahead – raging floods, mudslides and dangerous river crossings to get to the mountain peaks. Extra people were assigned to come with us - a cook, an army guard and police guard because of rebels in one area, plus a horseman with his assistant and some horses. I was also given a propaganda man (PM for short). I assumed he was there in case I tried to convert anyone to western Capitalism.



## THE LOCALS WARNED OF THE DANGERS AHEAD – RAGING FLOODS, MUD SLIDES AND DANGEROUS RIVER CROSSINGS TO GET TO THE MOUNTAIN PEAKS



When I saw our horses the next morning, I thought someone had shrunk them. Although my horse was a strong little fellow, my legs were dragging on the ground, so we used the horses to carry things other than me.

I quickly made friends with most of the team, but the PM stayed aloof. My travelling friends were wary of him, as though scared of his power. He always departed later than us, then met up with us at the end of the day. He wore brilliant white sandshoes and at the end of each day's trek, when we were mud-splattered, the PM would arrive without a spot of mud on him. One day we were slowed down by a flooded river and a mudslide. We looked back and saw the PM being carried across the mud by some locals. He was embarrassed that we'd seen him and discovered how he managed to stay clean.

That night, close to our final ascent of the mountain, we stayed in a small village. My interpreter was sick and went to bed early, leaving me at dinner with the team. The PM kept filling up my glass of rice wine and I respectfully kept drinking. Thankfully I have a good liver.

I had only learned a few words of Chinese along the way, but after a while language didn't matter; we were all laughing our heads off. What I didn't realise was that the PM was deliberately trying to get me drunk, to embarrass me in front of the others. They noticed that he drank very little, while I drank more than a full bottle by myself.

I suddenly remembered our big climb the next day and headed off to bed. I walked straight as an arrow up the stairs and at the top of the stairs, when I turned back to say "goodnight", I noticed everyone looking at me strangely. I entered my room, fell onto my bed and passed out.

The next morning the first thing I remember is Carlos lamenting, "Oh, I should never have left you alone. They told me what the PM tried to do. They couldn't believe you just walked to your room as you did". I felt as if someone had nailed me to the bed and the room stank of rice wine - it was coming out of my pores. It took all my willpower to get off that bed and get going. I couldn't let the western team down and give the PM anything to exploit.

Finally, we reached the top of the mountain and it was white - not with snow, but shrouded with mist. It was like being in a steam room. We stayed the night with yak farmers on the mountain and ate some interesting food which I didn't question - I thought it better not to know. When the PM brought out rice wine, I said, "I will drink with you again, but not now. I have to take photos". I assured him we would have another drink when we got back to town.

I intended to bunk down by the yak farmers' fire, but the chief insisted I sleep in his bed. I tried to protest, but Carlos said that it would be an insult to refuse the man's hospitality. As I drifted off to sleep in the chief's yak-skin bed, I wondered how many Aussies would give up their bed for a





strange foreigner. He was typical of all the people I met on that trip. They had little, but were willing to share whatever they had.

The next day the weather didn't improve, so we headed back. When we returned to our starting point, the dignitaries threw another party. I warned my team that I was going to try and get the PM a bit tipsy, so they shouldn't try and keep up with my drinking that night.

The PM sat beside me at the banquet but I took hold of the bottle, saying, "Please, let me serve you". I kept filling his glass and watched to make sure he drank his wine. After he'd had about half a bottle he began to act like a child. He asked me if I knew Kung Fu and I said, "not personally". His English was limited, so the humour was lost on him. He got up to show me what he meant. The town leader was watching him carefully. The PM did a big Kung Fu side kick, connected with the table, and knocked food all over the dignitaries.

Some of the leaders jumped up and told the PM he was an embarrassment to the town and should leave. Sheepishly, he headed for the door, but he must have been seeing double, because he walked straight into a wall, then slid along it until he found the opening. The leader was very apologetic, but the tension had lifted and we all enjoyed the rest of the party.



When Carlos and I left the next day, everyone came to say goodbye, except the PM. The town dignitaries graciously presented me with a parting gift - two bottles of China's finest rice wine. They believed I liked it, but it certainly wasn't the right spirit for me.

After completing that first assignment, I knew I would return to China one day. Twenty-eight years later I was back in China doing reconnaissance for a photographic expedition. I was asked to lead for Australian Geographic and Helen Wong Tours.

Amazing change had occurred during those 28 years. China had awoken – and with upwards of 1.3 billion people,



## ITS BEAUTY HELPS BRING A SENSE OF PEACE, ESPECIALLY FOR THOSE CAUGHT UP IN THE VORTEX OF CITY LIFE



that's a lot of breakfasts! No wonder big franchises like McDonalds want in on the action.

Since that reconnaissance trip and a subsequent tour, I am hooked on China and will be leading other adventures into the more remote areas of this exotic nation. I do not believe all our western ways are good for this emerging nation. My heart is to document what is left of China's great culture, as well as its natural wonders. I also want to be able to record the change as China emerges into this new era. I believe it is important for people around the world to see all that China has to offer. It has far more than Peking Duck, The Great Wall and Terracotta Warriors.

Admittedly, I'm not keen on spending much time in the rapidly expanding cities, although they have some must-see attractions, great shopping opportunities and fantastic cultural shows. If you are not a fan of crowds, then you are in the wrong country, as you will have to deal with multitudes of people at some locations. When visiting attractions, it is best to arrive before the gates open, so you can be among the first in. That's about as good as it gets.

I don't really understand why they still call the old palace in Beijing the Forbidden City. It's not forbidden any more. By midday in peak season it's a bit like attending an AFL Grand Final at the Melbourne Cricket Ground - except you can feel like the football. Beijing has many wonderful places to see and serious shopping temptations. Good luck to any man who takes his loved ones to the Jade Centre. What do you say when your beloved tries on a stunning piece of jade



jewellery, then looks you in the eye and says, "What do you think, honey?"

The Great Wall, just outside Beijing, is one of the must-see destinations. But I recommend you do the trip at sunrise, or stay on until sunset, to avoid the crowds and to see this wonder in the best light.

In crowds the Chinese locals can seem to be pushy and it's easy for Australians to get offended. Keep in mind it's



not personal for them – it's just a way of life. If you are in a crowded area, always be mindful of your personal space and keep a firm hold on your valuables. Clever pick-pockets take advantage of crowded situations and a friend of mine had his wallet stolen. When it comes to shopping, take it easy. You can get caught up in the excitement and end up paying too much. Remember, bargaining is part of the Chinese culture and they love the challenge.

There are many other exciting cities like Chengdu, where you will be able to see heaps of pandas at The Giant Panda Research Base and a fantastic Changing Face and Cultural show where you will see talented people changing faces and costumes in the blink of an eye.

Another great place to visit is Lijiang Ancient Town, a very eclectic town with many interesting shops. Here you can do some interesting shopping and people watching. The area has an intriguing vibe and the enchanting Black Dragon Pool Park is not far away.

I also recommend a stay in Kunming, with a visit to the Stone Forest Scenic area. This city hosts the Shangrila – Dynamic Yuuan Show. The shadow peacock dance will blow you away.

Enough with shows and shopping - let's get to some of what I believe to be China's greatest treasures. There are many little-known gems, like Tiger Leaping Gorge on the Yangtze River; or Jiuzhaigou, with its bright crystalline lakes, snow-capped mountains and waterfalls. Adventure beckons in scenic Guilin on the Li River, with its craggy, mist-shrouded peaks and fishermen working on bamboo



rafts. Hire a small local boat for this adventure as the sun rises. Most tourists do the trip on big boats at around 9-10am but by that time the river has peak hour traffic issues.

I'm encouraged by the Chinese people's love for their natural environment. It's beauty helps bring a sense of peace, especially for those caught up in the vortex of city life. In a nation growing as rapidly as China, the people need to be protective of their natural assets, lest they lose them. Balance is found when humanity works together with nature. If we don't respect creation, our actions may return to hit us on the head like a boomerang or, in their case, a Nunchaku.

I wish you the very best, China. You no longer need to be imitators; it's time for you to shine with your own innate creativity. I look forward to visiting you again, as I know I have only scratched the surface.

If you would like to join Ken on his next expedition, visit [www.kenduncan.com](http://www.kenduncan.com) for details.

# TRAIL BEHIND

WE CONSULT MARK LOWRY FROM ARB HQ ABOUT HOW TO ENSURE TRAILER TROUBLES DON'T RUIN YOUR NEXT TRIP.



**T**here is nothing worse than spending countless hours researching your next big trip, putting every effort into ensuring your 4WD is ready to tackle the toughest tracks, only to set off and realise that your trailer just might not be up to the same task.

With over 25 years of touring experience under his belt, Mark Lowry gives us his tips to ensure you (and your trailer) are well prepared for your next adventure.

*"A while ago I remember travelling the Gunbarrel Highway and finding no less than seven trailers in various states of disrepair - states that I viewed as completely preventable had they been better designed or properly maintained.*

*I noticed that all of these trailers were of the leaf-sprung box type. Corrugations are incredibly tough on a vehicle, even if coil springs are fitted, so the effect on a trailer without the same sophisticated suspension can often be disastrous."*





*"Most box trailers use a standard spring, rated to 500kg or so. They have a bushed eye on the front and a slipper on the rear, meaning that the rear of the spring is running metal to metal and simply sliding on the chassis, retained only by a clamp or bracket. These trailers do not use a shock absorber thus resulting in uncontrolled suspension movement.*

*A tough track or stretch of corrugation can cause this type of spring to fatigue and simply break off at the eye or through the centre bolt hole. Although at the time this may seem like the end of the trip, with a few tools and some clever ingenuity, you may be back on the road in no time.*

*If you are afraid that your trailer may not be up to the task your 4WD has been prepared for, your best bet is to carry a few spares. A spare spring pack or main leaf, a couple of u-bolts and an eye bolt will set you back less than a hundred and fifty dollars and doesn't take up much space. These parts are quite easy to change using a few simple tools."*

In this editor's experience, not being prepared can really change your plans. Whilst driving along Vrilya Point last

year, a camper trailer in our convoy snapped all seven leaf springs in half. We managed to make it to Loyalty Beach by innovatively using the shaft from a vehicle jack as an untested, temporary bandaid solution (not recommended). Our trip was then put on hold for five days whilst we waited for a new pack of leaf springs to be delivered from Cairns.

*"The best preparation of course is to ensure that when you are first in the market for a camper trailer, that you look for a heavy-duty trailer that is built for serious off roading. The A frame should be very strong and if it does have leaf springs, they should have double spring eyes, not slippers. Shock absorbers will take some of the harshness out of the ride, which, in turn, will create less stress and wear on the other components.*

*If you are in doubt about your trailer's suitability for your next trip, take it to a reputable service agent or manufacturer, before you leave."*



# THE ASCENT OF THE BT-50

**HOT ON THE HEELS OF  
ANNOUNCING THE BIRTH OF  
THE ASCENT CANOPY, THE  
FAMILY OF PRODUCTS HAS  
BEEN RAPIDLY EXPANDED.**

Now Mazda BT-50 2011+ dual cab vehicle owners will have the option of experiencing the sophisticated style and innovative design process that is offered by ARB's Ascent canopy.

ARB's engineers were challenged to design a canopy that would push the limits of design, usability and ingenuity. With features such as a vanishing edge design, frameless windows and curved rear door glass with an 'invisible' hinge, this challenge was not only accepted, but conquered.

As functional as it is stylish, the Ascent also incorporates user-focused features such as vehicle key operated remote central locking for both side and rear windows for improved security and convenience. Alongside improved security and an enviably sleek appearance are features such as an automatically activated internal LED light and electronic unlatching of the side lift-up windows and rear door negating the need for external handles. Other features that demonstrate the Ascent has been designed by four wheel drivers, for four wheel drivers, include a slim line canopy vent and improved sealing to reduce dust ingress, concealed internal fasteners for a visually clean interior and plug-n-play wiring harness for easy installation.

Well considered outside and in, the unique internal support brackets have also been developed to add strength and practicality to the design, providing a solid foundation that allows Ascent canopy owners to choose from a host of roof load carrying solutions. The internal support bracket fastens to the strong base rail and window frame without affecting access to the side window or taking up valuable internal storage space. Some of the roof load carrying solutions include steel or alloy trade racks - which are simple in design yet offer an integrated approach to load carrying.





Developed from the ground up by ARB's canopy team in Melbourne, the Ascent canopy joins a growing number of accessories available for the BT-50. Some of these accessories include:

- Deluxe combination bar
- Sahara bar
- Under vehicle protection
- Air Lockers
- OME suspension
- Recovery point
- Rear step tow bar
- Side rails and steps
- Classic canopy
- Under vehicle battery tray
- Safari snorkel

With each of the features of the Ascent built tough to thrive in the harshest Outback conditions, Mazda BT-50 owners can rest assured that all compatible ARB accessories are designed in accordance with and tested to Australian standards. The Ascent canopy is also backed by a three year, 60,000km warranty.

To read more about the design journey that ARB's Ascent canopy engineers took when faced with a blank canvas and high expectations, be sure to check out 'Not Just a Pretty Face' on page 16.

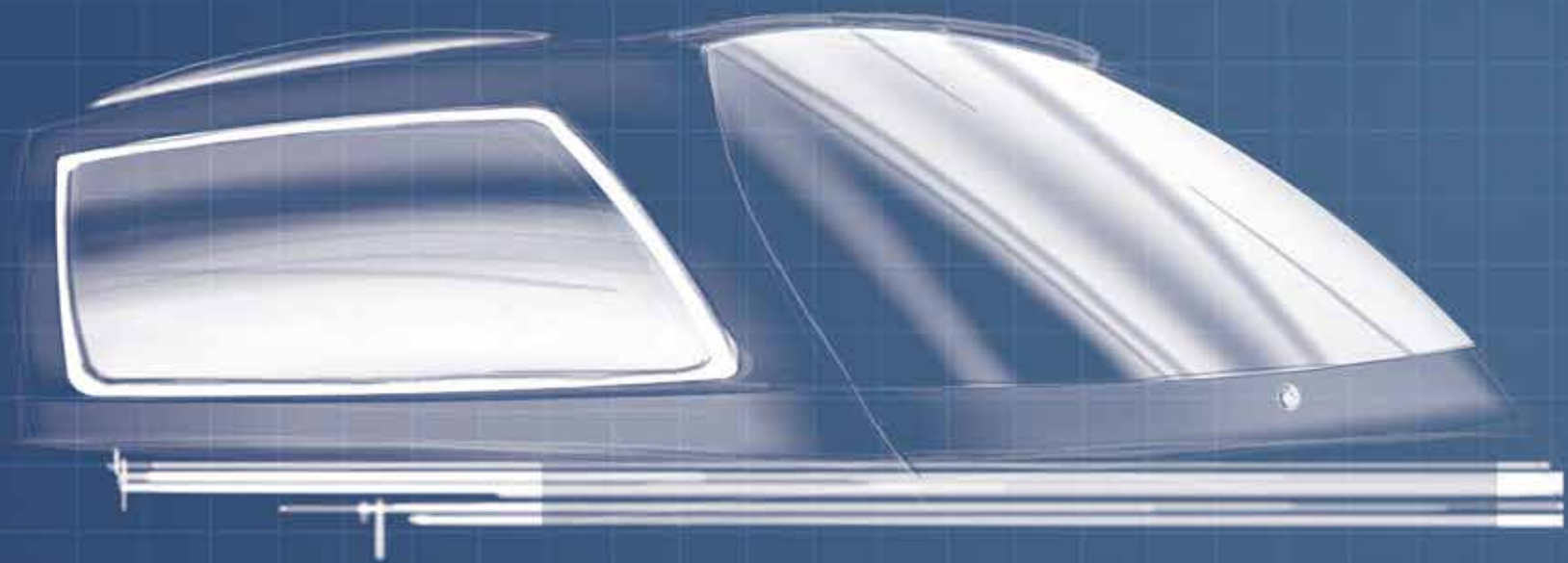


Contact your local ARB store for more details, part numbers and pricing.



# NOT JUST A PRETTY FACE

GET THE INSIDE STORY ON THE  
DEVELOPMENT OF THE ARB ASCENT CANOPY.




**B**ehind the impeccably smooth surface and the frameless exterior edges, the new ARB Ascent canopy is a jaw-dropping product that displays a design years ahead of its time. In this article the canopy team provide further insights into the development of the Ascent canopy.

Listening to the voice of our customers, it was determined that the market was ready for a next generation ARB canopy packed full of features to complement the release of stylish late model dual cab vehicles. The ARB canopy team eagerly went to work, faced with the challenge of a blank canvas to generate a canopy that would leave competitor products in its wake.

To complement the existing Classic canopy range, and stay ahead of the market, ARB needed to ascend to new heights of innovation. After a review of several concept designs the team proceeded to finalise a design whereby the ARB canopy would integrate with the vehicle tub and give the illusion of a pick-up being transformed into a wagon.

Along with a sleek exterior, the Ascent canopy delivers key innovations, such as being the first centrally locking canopy that operates via the existing vehicle key, along with electronic latching to unlock the door and windows for increased security. The tinted side lift-up windows include frameless curved glass and an 'invisible' door hinge mechanism to remove unsightly exterior fasteners while





## ARB'S CANOPY MANUFACTURING FACILITIES IN MELBOURNE HAVE UNDERGONE SIGNIFICANT CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT, INCLUDING A RE-LAYOUT TO ACCOMMODATE MASS PRODUCTION OF THE ASCENT CANOPIES

increasing strength. ARB also removed any mechanical handles, replacing them with a push button sensor pad (similar to OEM vehicle boot lids) for operation of the frameless, three dimensional curved glass rear door.

Enhancing safety for consumers, ARB have continued the use of tempered safety glass to E43R standards on all canopy windows/doors, and an integrated internal safety release on the inside of the rear door. Easily identified, the yellow dial can be rotated to open the rear door from within the canopy when the door is closed, and even locked. The high mount brake light has been incorporated on the exterior of the canopy and is integrated into the rear spoiler. The rear spoiler improves air flow over the rear door to reduce dust and improve visibility.

Key design improvements have been implemented, with the canopy shell to provide a 'vanishing edge' design for excellent vehicle integration. The minimalistic exterior is the result of class leading vacuum forming for the window and door recesses.

The innovative attachment system for the Ford Ranger and Mazda BT-50 Ascent canopies use a suspended attachment design, meaning the vehicle's hard points are used for attachment. The hard point mounting brackets support the weight of the canopy and are superior in strength, durability and performance over clamping methods. The interior design is almost car-like with hidden fasteners, cover mouldings, special wiring channels and dimensionally stable thermoplastic door seals.

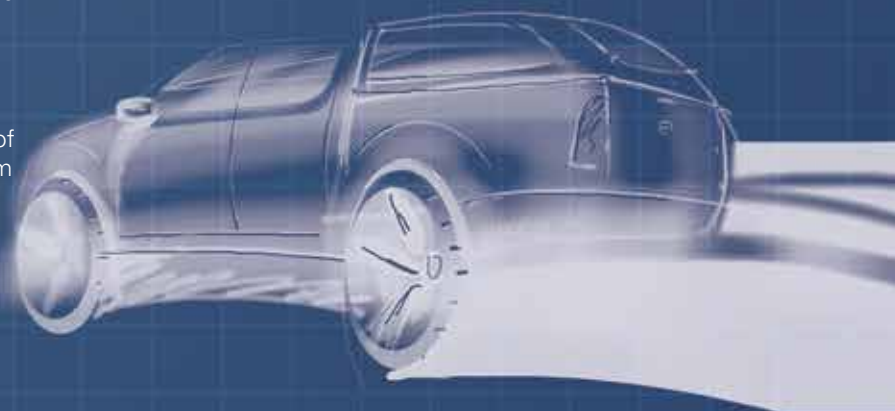
Developing a canopy from a blank canvas meant that ARB was required to validate new designs and put them through a rigorous testing regime. Utilising a combination of software, laboratory and real world testing the canopy team performed validation simulations using the latest software through Finite Element Analysis in CAD along with real life testing of a complete canopy in our specially built thermal chamber with temperatures up to 90°C. Further laboratory testing was undertaken on latches, actuators and relays via special ARB made life cycle rigs. To certify the design

against water entry, canopy engineers utilised several high pressure water washing facilities.

The most rigorous of testing was done on the test track in Anglesea, Victoria, where the canopy and vehicle were put through corrugation testing, high speed testing, articulation and the renowned Belgian blocks. A long term assessment vehicle was utilised to perform field testing on new mount rail configurations and the attachment system. Following numerous months of testing it passed with flying colours.

To ensure ARB's canopies are manufactured to the highest level of quality, ARB's manufacturing facilities in Melbourne have undergone major changes and an extensive re-fit to allow for mass production of the new Ascent canopies. New tooling for a completely redesigned range of windows has been developed, from extrusion dies, frame bending dies and glass moulding tools, all the way through to the latest assembly jigs, build assembly stations, adhesive and paint facilities.

Not just a pretty face, the new ARB Ascent canopy is backed by extensive testing, technological advancement and innovation from our diverse and highly skilled engineering team. The Ascent canopy is our flagship model, complemented by the popular Classic heavy duty smooth canopy and the Classic textured canopy to suit more than 35 vehicle models within 10 different vehicle brands.



# VIEW FROM THE TOP

Words and Photography by **Steve Fraser**

JOIN ICONIC AUSTRALIAN PHOTOGRAPHER, STEVE FRASER  
ON HIS UNFORGETTABLE JOURNEY THROUGH BOLIVIA.

**W**e are on final approach. We're coming in at twice the normal landing speed. The air is so thin the plane needs to come in much faster than normal or it will fall out of the sky. At the last moment, the engines roar to full power. The pilot aborts and we head around for another attempt as we overshoot the runway.

Welcome to La Paz, Bolivia, a city of 2.3 million people and the world's highest airport. This is where pilots get danger money and the passengers erupt in applause when they land safely.

You step onto the tarmac and the altitude of 4400 metres begins to have its effects. It's also the reason several of the passengers are being taken into the oxygen room (sort of like a smoking room, just a lot more healthy). It's the first airport I have been to where oxygen is administered to fainting and light headed passengers regularly.

My bags arrived, which is a huge relief. I don't mind losing them on the way home, but they are full of camera gear I can't work without so I am a very happy camper, or maybe I'm feeling euphoric from a lack of oxygen. Either way, I feel good.

As we leave the airport, it's time to tackle Bolivian traffic. I thought a Sydney freeway with an accident and road

works was crazy, but La Paz at 5pm is another whole level of crazy. Road rules are irrelevant, drivers choose the line of least resistance, the congestion is off the grid and yet nobody gets road rage (something that can't be said about a Sydney freeway in peak hour). This is my introduction to the easy-going nature of Bolivians. Life has a certain pace and order (in Bolivia it's a complete lack of structure) which means they adapt, compromise, don't get angry and are rarely stressed.

It's August so the temperature varies between 3 and 18 degrees Celsius. If you are wealthy in La Paz, and not many are, you live in the bottom of the valley, where you are several hundred metres lower, the air is thicker and the temperature's milder. Most live higher up and have to endure extreme conditions.

The next day I meet Pablo who is to be my driver. Whilst my Spanish is poor and his English is worse, we strike up a great friendship over the next few weeks. He is a gentle giant who is so laid back that nothing is an issue. I was relieved that his vehicle of choice was a well equipped 100 Series LandCruiser as we were going to be travelling along remote, notoriously dangerous roads.

It doesn't take long before we are outside of the capital, on our way to Sacaca, a remote rural village about 350kms







## THE LEVEL OF POVERTY IS CONFRONTING AT FIRST, AND YET I WAS TO MEET SOME OF THE HAPPIEST PEOPLE ON THE PLANET

away. Given the roads and traffic, this will take around eight hours. Bolivia is a land locked country and has no rail system so everything is transported by road.

Upon arrival the villagers have put on a grand welcome for us, and food plays a big part in the festivities. Bolivians love family, food and celebrating.

The level of poverty is confronting at first, and yet I was to meet some of the happiest people on the planet. Their passion for family is central to everything they do. I was there to photograph some of the locals, and the beautiful children all proudly dressed up in their traditional clothes.

I met several of the families and was invited into their homes. The warmth I was shown amazes me to this day. I was taken to a medical centre, a simple, mud brick building in the midst of a paddock. With only one semi-qualified nurse whose job varied from vaccinating children, delivering babies, treating the elderly to generally caring for anyone who shows up.

After a night in a 1 star motel, we head further away from the capital towards Cochabamba the central city in Bolivia. The drive includes a few 4WD tracks. The terrain is rugged, arid and at times down right dangerous. Bolivians don't seem to understand that passing on a blind crest is not good for your health. On one occasion, at night, we approached

the crest of a hill only to see two trucks coming straight at us. At the last minute, they parted and allowed us to pass between them. They would have been doing about 90km/h and we were doing about 70km/h. Pablo said something under his breath, which I think meant "bugger that was close" in Spanish.

People are often amazed at the danger found on the infamous Death Road. After driving on it and other Bolivian roads, I would choose the Death Road any day. There is less traffic on the Death Road and at least you put your life in your own hands, not in some overworked truck driver's who is overtaking on every blind bend. I found myself muttering, "breathe Steve, breathe. It's all going to be okay!" often.

Cochabamba is on the edge of the Andes and one of the main destinations of the trip. The chance to visit and photograph these beautiful mountains had attracted me for years and now I was there. It was time to rug up, forget about the crazy driving and enjoy the mountains.

I had arranged to visit and photograph a small charity working in a remote community with disabled children. Raising a disabled child in remote Bolivia is something extraordinary and what I saw challenged me to my very core.



As I photographed, a young boy of around five years of age kept hanging on to me. This sweet little guy was an orphan, with a mental disability. I spent a lot of time with him that day and when I finally left he was standing on the roadside, waving goodbye until we were out of sight. It was a heart breaking moment. I leave for my hotel and he returns to a small room and no family. It doesn't seem right at all.



After a few days in that region, we headed north for my final destination in Bolivia. Lake Titicaca is the highest navigable lake in the world. The surface elevation is 3,812m above sea level. My aim was to photograph it at dawn from the highest point on Sun Island at 4,700m.

I leave Pablo in town for a couple of days of well-earned rest and head out on an old boat towards the island. We pass by floating villages, which are artificial islands made of floating reeds. They are a major tourist attraction and we are right on the border of Bolivia and Peru.

I limited the amount of gear I would take to 20kgs, which I thought was about the most I could carry up the mountain. The next time I get hassled by kids offering me a donkey to take my gear, I will listen to their advice. I decided to climb to the mountain carrying my gear – what an idiot! The altitude sickness must have been kicking in again.

By the time I reached my mud hut accommodation, I was stuffed, with only enough energy to manage dinner before heading off to bed. Man was it cold. I slept fully clothed

and only took off my boots. I began the last part of my trek to the summit for sunrise wondering why I was so itchy. I soon realised that the bed bugs had made a meal of me overnight, oh well, onto the summit.

The last 300m climb was both demanding and exhilarating. I reached the summit just before dawn. I was so excited to finally set foot on a place I had dreamed of for so long. You see, I spend my life chasing colours and searching for light and I was about to experience something very special that made all the crazy driving, unfamiliar food and hard climbing worthwhile.

Often we can go through life and feel like so many days are the same average, ordinary days, but occasionally we have rare moments when we are reminded that we are alive, really alive. This was to be one of those days for me.





## I FELT ALIVE, SOMEHOW THE COLD WAS FORGOTTEN AND LIFE SEEMED JUST PERFECT IN THAT AMAZING MOMENT

As the warm glow of the sun started to peek over the horizon, I could see the lake 1,000m below and the Andes glowing in the distance. I felt alive, somehow the cold was forgotten and life seemed just perfect in that amazing moment. I stood there for a couple of hours savouring this rare moment, really taking it in and not letting it rush by.

The journey back down the mountain was a lot easier as I enlisted a couple of local kids and their donkeys to carry the gear. I met up with Pablo back on the mainland and went to lunch with some of his local friends. It was the perfect way to draw my time in Bolivia to a close. The memories of wonderful local food, great people and a very special experience of dawn in the Andes will stay with me forever.

I am thankful for the chance to experience the bliss of Bolivia. The warm, generous people whose joy and optimism seem to belie extreme poverty, a land of beauty that inspires, and where you have to breathe deep, not because of the thin air, but because some days are truly worth living.



# JOIN 350,000 FANS

IT'S BEEN A BIG COUPLE OF MONTHS, WITH GREAT COMMENTS, MESSAGES, TIPS, FAN PHOTOS AND A HEAP OF PRIZES UP FOR GRABS.



Facebook: ARB4x4 | YouTube: ARB4WD | Twitter: ARB4x4 | Instagram: ARB4x4



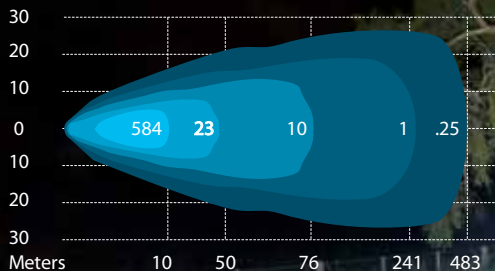
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ARB INTRODUCES  
THE NEW  
**AR21**  
INTENSITY LED  
LIGHT

# SMALL BUT MIGHTY





**E**ngineered in Australia, the ARB Intensity LED light range has been specifically designed to meet the demanding requirements of 4WDers throughout the world.

Since their debut into the vehicle light market in 2012, ARB's Intensity driving lights have remained at the forefront of durability and reliability. From producing white light that is the closest possible imitation of sunlight, to a virtually indestructible polycarbonate lens, it's no wonder these lights are the premium choice for 4WDers. Due to their structural design however, the ARB Intensity light range fits in most, but not all, bull bars. After further development, ARB has finally solved this conundrum. The AR21 ARB LED Intensity light contains 21 LEDs and is W184mm x H209mm, manufactured smaller to fit all bull bars on the market.

Just like the original AR32 design, the performance of AR21 can only be described as intense and hence where the

range derives the name INTENSITY. Many ARB customers prefer a combination of a spot and flood driving light due to the various driving conditions encountered in general 4WDing. The LED range not only offers the broad flood beam associated with light bars, but also offers a spot beam with the ability to stretch over longer distances. With the flood beam reaching 483m at 0.25 lux, in width, and the spot beam reaching a massive 949m at 0.25 lux, in length, the AR21 range is designed to illuminate all pathways and give light to any situation you may find yourself in.

At 6,500K, the colour temperature of the LEDs is as close to daylight as possible and with 21 LEDs per light producing a broad beam, even on spot versions, the lights illuminate everything in the driver's field of view. No longer does the driver find themselves straining to see beyond the edge of the beam, hence reducing fatigue.

Integral to the design was the need for the light to be robust and suited to the conditions encountered off road like the constant vibrations of corrugated roads, animal strikes and the ability to be submersed. With the general abuse that off road driving can dish out, the light also needed to be rebuildable.

With the light assembly weighing close to 1.5kg, a mounting system was designed from tough 304 grade stainless steel to ensure integrity under the harshest conditions. Required to handle vibration, the AR21 underwent military specification vibration testing on a shaker table and both the light and bar resisted fatigue, passing the test.

A unique moulded rubber seal sits between the polycarbonate lens and cast aluminium body, creating a watertight and dust proof seal to allow the light to achieve an IP68 rating – meaning complete protection against dust ingress and submersion beyond 3m. ARB's engineering team designed the Intensity range with the steady advancement in LED and optics in mind, creating a 'future proof' product that only requires changes to the circuit board and optics.

To finish the outer surfaces of the AR21 and ensure durability under the harshest conditions, the aluminium body is finished in a textured polyester powder coat that passes the ISO7253 3000 hour salt spray test. The lens-retaining bezel is finished in a UV resistant red two pack automotive paint. This combined with the 304 stainless steel mount makes the ARB Intensity light extremely corrosion resistant.

If you're driving around with 4WD's best light on the market, you'll be sure to turn a few heads and be noticed by all creatures great and small. For extra peace of mind, each light has a cap screw pivot bolt with tamper proof TORX® security fasteners used on the adjuster nut for improved security.

ARB's AR21 Intensity LED lights are sold separately as either a spot or flood beam. An optional wiring loom has also been developed that includes waterproof Deutsch DT-06 connectors.

Available early 2015, contact ARB for part numbers and pricing.

# RED CENT ICONS





# RE

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CENTRE.**

Words by **Dean Mellor**  
Photography by **Offroad Images**



**A**fter experiencing such a spectacular sunset at Uluru the previous afternoon, we really thought that nothing would be able to top it. Even the superb buffet meal at Sails in the Desert Hotel that followed our sunset at The Rock was diminished by Uluru's magical light display. Yet here we were, early the next morning, wandering around in the dark at the Uluru sunrise viewing area, looking for a good vantage point to see the first light once again illuminate the massive sandstone monolith before us.

The absence of stars above us was a worrying sign. We were all hoping that an overcast sky wouldn't spoil our morning.

We had arrived here after a three-day drive from Alice Springs and had already camped out at the Two Mile campsite near Glen Helen Gorge, and then at Kings Creek Station. Our route had taken us west out of Alice along Namatjira Drive, then around the Mereenie Loop Road and finally down to the Lasseter Highway for the final leg to Uluru. Highlights of our trip to this point had been Glen Helen Gorge, Gosse Bluff (Tnorala), Kings Canyon (Watarrka)

## **DARK CLOUDS ABOVE AN OMINOUS-LOOKING ULURU FOUGHT FOR PROMINENCE WITH FLASHES OF BRIGHT GOLDEN LIGHT THAT LOOKED LIKE A FIRE IN THE SKY**

and, of course, the perfect sunset at Uluru. We had already managed to pack a lot into a very short time.

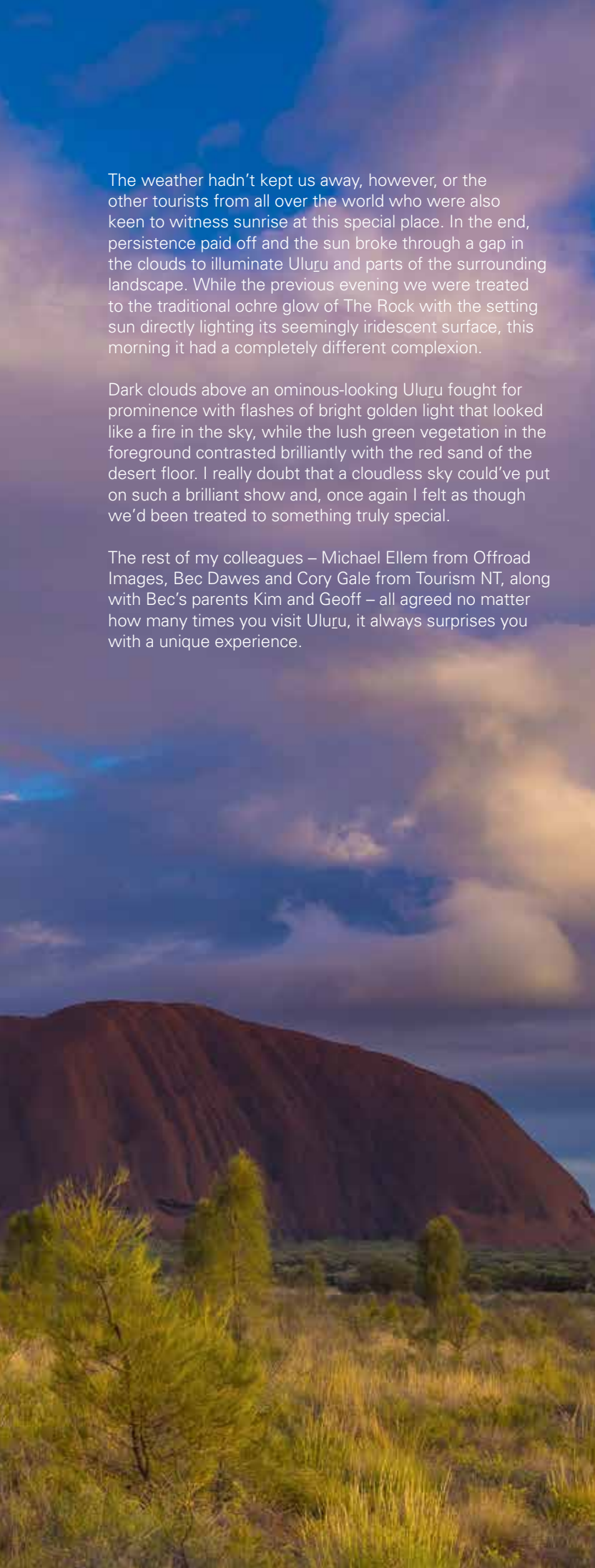
So far the weather had been on our side. The days had been pleasantly warm and sunny, and it hadn't even been too cold at night. But this morning, as the sun started to light the sky well before it popped over the horizon, we could see that we were in for a change; grey clouds in all directions. Before long it even started to rain... just a light sprinkle, mind you, but rain nonetheless.



The weather hadn't kept us away, however, or the other tourists from all over the world who were also keen to witness sunrise at this special place. In the end, persistence paid off and the sun broke through a gap in the clouds to illuminate Uluru and parts of the surrounding landscape. While the previous evening we were treated to the traditional ochre glow of The Rock with the setting sun directly lighting its seemingly iridescent surface, this morning it had a completely different complexion.

Dark clouds above an ominous-looking Uluru fought for prominence with flashes of bright golden light that looked like a fire in the sky, while the lush green vegetation in the foreground contrasted brilliantly with the red sand of the desert floor. I really doubt that a cloudless sky could've put on such a brilliant show and, once again I felt as though we'd been treated to something truly special.

The rest of my colleagues – Michael Ellem from Offroad Images, Bec Dawes and Cory Gale from Tourism NT, along with Bec's parents Kim and Geoff – all agreed no matter how many times you visit Uluru, it always surprises you with a unique experience.



After brewing a coffee in Michael's Bialetti, we headed back to the hotel for breakfast and to pack our gear for the journey ahead. At this point, Bec and Cory were to fly out of Yulara and back to Alice Springs due to work commitments, while Kim, Geoff, Michael and I would head east to the Stuart Highway and then north to Rainbow Valley, where we would camp for the night.

After dropping Bec and Cory at the airport, we fuelled up the vehicles and then stocked up with supplies at the Yulara supermarket. Before long we were on the Lasseter Highway and were driving the 250km to the roadhouse at Erldunda, on the Stuart Highway.

The rain that had started as a sprinkle earlier that morning was becoming steadily heavier, and by the time we arrived at Erldunda we had to make a run for it from the vehicles to the shelter of the roadhouse shop. After another enjoyable coffee, we continued on our way, this time north along the Stuart Highway to the Rainbow Valley turn-off.

With a nice, sandy base, the final 24km of unsealed road to Rainbow Valley was an easy drive despite the now quite heavy rain. The sandstone bluffs and cliffs of Rainbow Valley are said to be at their most spectacular late in the afternoon and early in the morning, when the structure's rainbow-like rock bands are highlighted, but with the weather the way it was there was little chance we'd see Rainbow Valley at its best. It was decision time; head into Alice Springs (about an hour away) and spend the night in a warm, dry hotel room, or camp out here in the rain and hope the wet weather would clear by the morning. With some decent shelters, tables and seating in the campground, we opted to stay for the night... and thanks to the dodgy weather, at least we'd have the place to ourselves.

As we were primarily here to capture images of some iconic Red Centre locations, we really needed to see and photograph Rainbow Valley in good light so, over breakfast we tweaked the itinerary so that we could return to this beautiful site after a stop at Palm Valley. One of the great things about this part of the Northern Territory is that, despite its vastness, a lot of the best places to see are all within easy reach, so it was no problem for us to modify our itinerary and still see what we wanted to see. After stocking up on supplies, we left Alice by early afternoon for the

126km drive to Hermannsburg. From here it's 4WD-access only to Palm Valley; in fact, the sign to Palm Valley warns 'severe 4WD route - allow 3 hrs'.

We assumed (correctly) that three hours would be the worst-case scenario and, after stopping to drop tyre pressures, it only took us around 90 minutes to cover the 18km to the camp ground, including a 15-minute stop to collect firewood before we entered the Finke Gorge National Park.

Although there was plenty of space in the campground, which has gas barbeques and solar-heated showers, we decided that a potential bush-camp site we'd spotted just outside the park in the sandy riverbed would be more to our liking. And it was, so under a cloudy sky we rolled out our swags on the sand by a sheer rock wall and got stuck into dinner.

After a peaceful night's sleep, and a very satisfying breakfast, we packed up camp and started the 5km drive to Cycad Gorge at the end of Palm Valley. I jumped in the BT-50 with Michael while Kim joined her husband Geoff in the HiLux for what would be his first genuine off-road driving experience. While not overly difficult, in places the track is quite technical. There are a few small creek crossings and rocky gullies, all the while the track surrounded by imposing red cliffs. Geoff loved it... and the HiLux came back unscathed.

Permanent waterholes are a feature of the Finke River and they are an important habitat for migrating waterbirds and fish. There are two easy walks in the Palm Valley – the 2km Arankaia Walk heads up past lush groves of palms and then back along a dry sand plateau offering great views; and the 5km Mpulungkinya Track that heads further up the valley where the palm groves are thicker and then back along the plateau, rejoining the Arankaia Walk. The Central Australian red-cabbage palms are only found in this park, and some of the cycads here are said to be 200-300 years old! These trees survive here thanks to a massive subterranean basin of fossil water that's largely unaffected by present-day droughts.







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After we'd had a good look around, and taken plenty of photos, we took some time to reflect on our lush surroundings. The sound of the gentle breeze through the palms was soothing and peaceful, and the green vegetation seemed quite out of place in the Red Centre.

We had earlier bumped into the park ranger and we had arranged to meet up with him before we left the park. After wolfing down a piece of his most excellent chocolate cake, we made plans to come back here in a few months time to drive the Boggy Hole track with him. Having driven along the Boggy Hole track several years ago, I can attest to its beauty, and to its more challenging off-road driving aspect that will appeal to more hardcore four wheel drivers.

We could've chatted all day (and eaten more cake) but we were on a mission: we had to get back to Alice Springs for fuel and supplies, and then drive back down to Rainbow Valley to catch the sunset.





## AS THE SUN STARTED TO SINK DOWN TOWARDS THE HORIZON, THE ROCK FACE OF THE RAINBOW VALLEY STRUCTURE LIT UP LIKE A JEWEL

And what a sunset it turned out to be! Compared to the wind, rain and lightning two evenings prior, this time we were treated to perfect weather. Once again we collected firewood before we entered the Rainbow Valley Conservation Area and with plenty of time before sunset we set up camp.

As the sun started to sink down towards the horizon, the rock face of the Rainbow Valley structure lit up like a jewel. Its bright oranges and white highlights stood out against the blue sky and the now-purple claypan in the foreground, which was still wet from the earlier rain.

As the last light of day disappeared and the sky lit up with stars, we got the barbecue going and had a couple of drinks by the fire. This would be our last night in the Red Centre and we began to reflect on the week that was. Despite having had to adjust our itinerary due to inclement weather, we got the opportunity to visit Palm Valley off-the-cuff, and it was amazing to think how much we'd packed into just one week.

That's one of the great things about touring here – despite being so far from Australia's capital cities, once you're in the Red Centre everything is so accessible. I envy Bec and Cory, who live in Alice Springs and get to see this beautiful part of the Northern Territory day in, day out. And I'm sure that, like me, fellow east coasters Kim, Geoff and Michael can hardly wait to come back.

Our last night was a great one, drinking beers with a young Austrian mechanic called Patrick who had driven here from Perth in a 60 Series LandCruiser with 500,000km on the clock, and then setting up powerful LED lights to illuminate the Rainbow Valley rock structure so that Michael could keep photographing well into the wee hours. I guess he just didn't want our adventure to end...

Nevertheless, end it did. After a morning coffee at Rainbow Valley, and a few more photos, we had a leisurely drive back into Alice Springs. We then washed the vehicles and returned the HiLux to Matt at the local ARB store and, before I knew it, I was on a plane heading home, thinking once again that I've got one of the best jobs in the world.



# MADE TO ORDER



## MAZDA BT-50

After many years photographing four wheel drives all over Australia, Michael Ellem of Offroad Images has set up his Mazda BT-50 just the way he likes it, for on and off road performance, comfort and an ability to safely haul all of his gear.

### This is how he's kitted it out:

#### Protection and Traction

- Colour-coded ARB Sahara bar
- ARB side steps
- ARB rear bar
- ARB under vehicle protection system (UVP)
- Safari snorkel
- ARB front Air Locker
- Factory rear locker
- ARB Old Man Emu suspension with 600kg rear springs

#### Recovery Gear

- ARB recovery point
- Warn Magnum 10,000kg winch
- Bushranger recovery shackle at rear
- Complete recovery kit

#### Communications

- GME 6.6dBi gain UHF antenna
- GME dual band 6.1dBi gain phone antenna
- GME headless 80 channel UHF radio (mc524)
- Strike Smoothtalker iPhone cradle

#### External Lighting

- ARB Intensity lights
- ARB fog lights in bar
- Wurton 40" spot/spread roof light
- Wurton rear flood work lights

#### Up Top

- ARB aluminium trade roof rack
- 4 x Maxtrax recovery tracks with retaining pin system
- Kaymar shovel and Hi-Lift jack roof rack holder customised to hold a long handled shovel and camera tracking system
- 2 x 15L RotopaX removable diesel fuel cells with mounting kits
- ARB awning

#### Inside the ARB Smooth Canopy

- Dual vents for increasing air pressure in the canopy enclosure
- ARB Outback Solutions dual drawer system
- Custom LED lighting systems on each lift-up window and in roof system
- MSA 4X4 droplide
- MSA 4X4 fridge barrier
- ARB 60L Fridge Freezer
- Fire extinguisher in rear canopy area and front of driver's seat
- 2 x MSA 4X4 utility bags
- First aid kit
- 4 x Baintech CIG at or above rear of drawer system
- 5 x internal 240V power points

#### In and Around the Outback Storage Drawer Systems

- ARB twin dual air compressor
- ARB air tank
- Redarc 40 amp charger
- 105Ah AGM battery
- Cotek (Redarc) 1000W pure sine wave inverter
- Custom fuse module for all rear power
- Cotek remote control module
- 2 x external 240V power points
- 4 x Baintech USB outlets
- Baintech battery monitoring module at rear of drawers for quick referencing

#### Under the Bonnet

- Custom Baintech fuse module for all front power
- Distribution for all rear power
- Diesel pre-filter
- 3-inch Manta exhaust system

#### In the Cab

- Hema HN7 Navigator custom mount on dash with reverse camera
- Custom iPad mount for Hema Explorer mapping
- 4 x Baintech USB outlets
- Baintech battery monitoring module for quick referencing of front battery
- 2 x Baintech CIG at rear centre console
- Redarc brake controller
- Custom light and Air Locker switches in roof replacing sunglasses compartment
- Snatch strap and 2 x shackles under seat for easy access



### Wheels and Tyres

- 17" American Racing Wheels ATX Series Dune
- Cooper Discovery ST Maxx 285/70R17
- ARB E-Z Tyre Deflator

### Tyre pressures

We were on and off the blacktop several times on this trip so we were regularly changing tyre pressures to suit the conditions.

Both the Toyota HiLux (BF Goodrich Mud-Terrain) and the Mazda BT-50 (Cooper ST Maxx) were loaded with a lot of gear, so on sealed roads we ran 35psi up front and 38psi in the rear. On gravel roads we dropped pressures to around 32psi front and rear, while on the 4WD track out to Palm Valley we dropped them down to 26psi front and rear.

Lower tyre pressures off road not only help with traction but to improve the ride quality over rough terrain, and minimise the chance of damaging the tyres on sharp rocks and the like. Two tools made adjusting tyre pressures painless on this trip – the ARB E-Z Tyre Deflator and the ARB twin motor air compressor. The E-Z Deflator is about the quickest way you can drop pressure as it removes the valve core for rapid deflation. Re-inflating the tyres was also a quick process thanks to the twin motor air compressor with 4L air tank; in fact, it's faster than some air compressors I've used at the servo!

### ARB SkyDome Swag

This trip was the first time I had the opportunity to use an ARB SkyDome swag, and what a great design it is. It's easy to set up, has great ventilation, is made from quality materials and has top-notch YKK zips. Awnings mean you can have the flaps open in inclement weather without getting wet, and the swag comes with a comfortable 75mm thick foam mattress. A host of little convenient features add to the appeal, such as a hat holder, internal hooks for a torch or keys, and pockets for a water bottle, phone or wallet.

### Trip Summary and Distances

Day 1	Alice Springs to Two Mile campsite (near Glen Helen Resort)	120km
Day 2	Two Mile campsite to Kings Canyon	226km
Day 3	Kings Canyon to Uluru	326km
Day 4	Uluru to Rainbow Valley	395km
Day 5	Rainbow Valley to Palm Valley	245km
Day 6	Palm Valley to Rainbow Valley	245km
Day 7	Rainbow Valley to Alice Springs	95km
TOTAL		1652km

More information: [www.tourismnt.com.au](http://www.tourismnt.com.au)





## THE LATEST ADDITIONS TO ARB'S TOURING & CARGO GEAR RANGE WILL ENSURE THAT YOU ARE FULLY KITTED OUT FOR YOUR NEXT CAMPING ADVENTURE.

Whether you're crashing in your swag after a hard day on the tracks or hitting the hay in your camper trailer at your favourite spot, ARB's new sleeping bag is the versatile camping accessory to suit any situation.

With its spacious king single design and clever, unique features, the ARB sleeping bag is the perfect addition to your touring collection.

Featuring a removable hood with a pocket to insert your pillow, which comes in handy when joining two sleeping bags together. The clever, no left or right hand model design means that the sleeping bag can be exited from either side, as opposed to the middle as is common with most models. This is not only extremely convenient in the tight confines of a tent or swag, but keeps your sleeping partner happy in avoiding the

dreaded midnight 'body climb', or even worse, the 'open zipper breeze freeze'.

With a -5°C comfort rating, and with an Invista Dupont Thermolite® Quallo 7 hole fill, the ARB sleeping bag will keep you cosy on those extra cold nights.

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### ARB SLEEPING BAG

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#### Features:

- Genuine YKK single continuous zipper with Velcro® closure
- Nylon outer shell with fire retardant treatment
- 2 zip up pockets
- Generous, rectangular shaped stuff sack with compression straps for practical packing
- 100% cotton brushed flannelette inner lining, treated with Sanitized® anti-bacterial treatment
- Sleek black and stone design with ARB topo print
- L2460mm x W1000mm (with hood)



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## ARB TOILETRIES BAG

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Adding to ARB's range of cargo gear products, the ARB toiletries bag keeps personal hygiene products together in a compact manner.

Designed to hang open for easy access, the bag features large internal capacity with multiple mesh and zippered pockets to hold all your bathroom essentials. Also included is a removable mirror and internal quick dry mesh pocket with hook for hanging items such as shampoo and conditioner in the shower.

### Features:

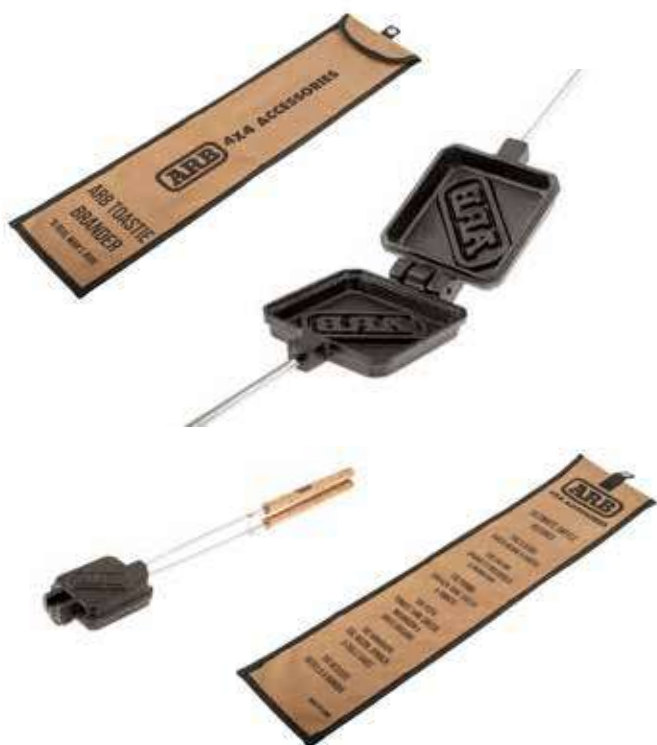
- Manufactured from durable polyester woven fabric and fully lined
- Two zippered internal pockets and one zippered external pocket
- Internal and external mesh pockets for storage of multiple items
- External handle for ease of carrying
- External elastic cord for storing additional bulky items
- Internal elastic retaining strap for smaller items
- Hooks for convenient hanging on a towel rail or shower head
- Removable mirror
- Removable quick dry mesh pocket for hanging items in the shower
- Quality YKK zippers




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## ARB TOASTIE BRANDER

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### "A REAL MAN'S IRON"

Traditionally known as a pie iron, jaffle iron or toastie maker, the ARB Toastie Brander is designed to make toasted sandwiches on the coals of an open fire, or an electric or gas burner.

Consisting of two cast iron plates which clamp together to form a closed compartment, the toastie brander can cook a variety of sandwiches, filled with your favorite recipes, sealing the outside edges of the bread together to ensure none of the hot contents escape.

Not only does the ARB Toastie Brander toast sandwiches and heat the contents within, but as

the name suggests, it also brands the ARB logo into both the top and bottom of the sandwich, making the perfect toastie for diehard ARB fans.

The ARB Toastie Brander is a heavy duty piece of cookware designed with stronger hinge points, larger diameter handle rods and longer timber handles than most jaffle irons to ensure long life and safe operation.

The ARB Toastie Brander is pre-seasoned in vegetable oil for immediate use and comes in its own carry bag, complete with printed recipes for your culinary inspiration!



# SCRUB UP COMPETITION

SEND A PHOTO OF  
YOUR MOST **INNOVATIVE**  
**CAMPING SHOWER SET UP TO**  
**PROMOTIONS@ARB.COM.AU TO**  
**WIN AN ARB TOILETRIES BAG.**





# OUTBACK SOLUTIONS FOR THE JK

**The four door Jeep JK Wrangler is a fantastic vehicle on and off road, and while it gives its owners plenty to smile about, some challenges do arise when it comes to considering storage.**

In order to make the most of the JK's luggage area and maximize storage and flexibility of use, a new roller drawer module has been developed by Outback Solutions. Incorporating a single drawer and an integrated roller floor top, the design allows for plenty of secure and accessible storage for inside the drawer.

Outback Solutions modular drawer systems have unique and practical features incorporated into their designs to ensure high quality, maximum functionality and ease of use. The JK drawer module features anti roll back systems, anti rattle designs, slam shut latches and purpose folded stainless steel runners, preventing the movement of belongings, unintentional closing and wear and tear while driving.



## 200 SERIES RECOVERY POINT

**ARB understands how serious 4WD recovery situations can be. They can be frustrating and without the correct equipment, dangerous for everyone involved.**

For years ARB has set new industry benchmarks for how recovery points are designed, tested and selected by 4WDers. ARB's recovery point range seeks to address issues surrounding generic tow points and how they are not suitable for a range of recovery situations.

Each ARB recovery point is built from the ground up and undergoes considerable research and design involving actual vehicle chassis samples and CAD data relating to critical front sections of the vehicle. ARB's recovery point for the 200 Series is the newest addition to our large recovery point range.

The ARB 200 Series recovery point is designed to be fitted to the left or right hand side of the chassis or both. Manufactured from 20mm flame cut steel plate,



Exterior surfaces of the drawers are finished in hard wearing commercial carpet and interior surfaces are trimmed in automotive boot carpet. Both materials resist abrasion and conceal dirt in tough off road conditions. Aluminium and toughened plastics are used in the design to mirror the rugged nature of the JK.

The roller drawer handle is key lockable and the roller floor has a mechanical lock under the top behind the handle, providing great security for your belongings.

The side floor kit is a recommended optional fitment and fills in the area between the outer edge of the drawer and the side of the tub, making Outback Solutions drawers the perfect storage solution for JK owners.



each recovery point is supplied as a single unit with the necessary mounting hardware.

To ensure that during an angled recovery there are no inappropriate forces exerted on the shackle, the recovery point has a long slot to allow the recommended bow shackle to be fed through and the strap attached via the pin instead of the bow. This allows even distribution of the recovery force through the shackle to avoid side loads on the pin.

ARB's recovery point for the 200 Series holds a maximum strap rating of 8000kg and the recommended shackle rating is 4.75t.

# GAME ON, SOUTH AFRICA

Words and photography by **Patrick Cruywagen**

PATRICK CRUYWAGEN TAKES US ON A 4X4 JOURNEY FROM THE AWE-INSPIRING BEAUTY OF THE ZAMBEZI RIVER TO ONE OF THE MOST PICTURESQUE CITIES IN THE WORLD, CAPE TOWN.

We only had a week at our disposal and in that time we wanted to do one of the most popular southern Africa safari routes. It would take us from Zambia's Victoria Falls to the popular South African city of Cape Town.

To save time, our expedition leader Colin Fitzgerald had arranged that our diesel V8 Toyota LandCruiser be already waiting for us in Victoria Falls when our plane landed. Our route was to include many iconic stops along the way and we would be covering a distance of about 3,400km in total. By Australian standards that is probably equivalent to a trip to the shopping mall if you live in the Outback.

Colin and I have done a few interesting 4x4 trips together and he is my 4x4 mentor. One of those trips was the Canning Stock Route where we got horribly stuck in some black cotton soil mud. Bizarrely I somehow found an old railway sleeper which Colin promptly used as a ground

anchor to winch us out of trouble. Colin was the first person to introduce ARB products to Africa in the early nineties and today he owns nine 4x4 MegaWorld stores throughout South Africa. So he is definitely not the worst fellow to have on a trip with you.

Also with us was his trusty Lieutenant Deon Venter, an accomplished off road racer and also the MD of 4x4 MegaWorld. I would probably have to fight the two of them for a turn behind the steering wheel, though my main task was to keep a photographic record of our trip.

For those that don't know Victoria Falls, it is the adventure capital of southern Africa. Here you can walk with lions, raft down grade five rapids or plunge head first towards the mighty Zambezi River by doing a bungee jump off a bridge that is over 100 years old. The first time I came here I wanted my viewing of the mile wide falls to be special.







**TO WITNESS AROUND 750 MILLION LITRES OF WATER GUSH OVER THE LIP OF THE FALLS EVERY MINUTE IS A SIGHT EVERYONE NEEDS TO SEE AT LEAST ONCE IN THEIR LIVES**



managed to find an old Tiger Moth aeroplane that was still in a serviceable condition and the owner kindly took me for a flight over the falls. To witness around 750 million litres of water gush over the lip of the falls every minute is a sight everyone needs to see at least once in their lives. Many don't know it but at certain times of the year you can actually swim on the edge of the falls at a place called the Devil's Pool. This should not be done without a guide though. Be wary as some of the Rastafarian guides like to smoke the giggly weed and this makes them even more oblivious to the seriousness of a potentially deadly plunge over the edge.

From the falls, our white 'Cruiser headed west for about 100 kms before we took the ferry across the Zambezi River at Kazungula. The ferry dropped us off near Kasane in Botswana but first we had to negotiate our way through one of the most corrupt border posts in all of Africa. You have to stand in about seven different lines to pay a whole host of fees and before you know it you have spent several hundred dollars.



Kasane might just be a small town on the southern banks of the Chobe River but its close proximity to the popular Chobe National Park has contributed to its astronomical growth. Each time I go back there a new lodge or shop seems to have popped up. We did not have the time to take a drive through the park but we did get onto the river for an afternoon of game viewing followed by a sunset cruise. The first thing you see when entering the park by boat is a small military base. Three countries meet at this part of the river and the soldiers try to make sure that no one crosses



the river to poach the precious wildlife. In the late afternoon the animals come to the water in their droves and you are guaranteed to see a host of elephants, hippos, crocodiles and antelope. We were lucky and also managed to spot lion, buffaloes, giraffe, warthogs, baboons and a lone spotted hyena.

To get to Namibia from here we had to pass through the northern part of Chobe National Park towards Ngoma Gate. We had to stop several times as breeding herds of elephants were crossing the road. Our crossing from Botswana into Namibia at Ngoma Gate was less stressful than the ferry at Kazungula had been. This was probably because an ARB cap might have exchanged hands between Colin and the local police commissioner.

Namibia's Caprivi Strip is a rather unusual occurrence. It's as if someone has glued a long thin strip of land onto the top right hand corner of a perfect rectangle. It juts out unnaturally on a map. So before we could start heading south towards South Africa we would first have to cross this 400km long strip.

When people think of Namibia they see dunes, deserts and desolation. Not so in the Caprivi Strip where there is water in abundance and the place is pretty much green all year round. There are some great affordable community campsites along it and they can normally be found next to a river or just outside one of the many national parks. The western part of the strip sits at the top of the pan handle of the Okavango Delta, another world famous wildlife area. We did not have time to head into the Delta and instead pushed on towards the Etosha National Park. The landscape quickly changed to the more familiar dry and stark look that Namibia is famous for.

We had timed our visit to Etosha to perfection as this was the end of the dry winter, perfect for game viewing. The name Etosha means great dry place, which is a perfect description of this massive white pan that takes up a







quarter of this 22,270km<sup>2</sup> park. I have been here before in the wet season and not seen any animals despite the fact that the place is flat and featureless. This is because when there is so much water about they don't have to come to the roadside waterholes. Now only a select few roadside waterholes had water and the animals had to venture to them or else die of thirst.

We entered the park from the east at the Von Lindequist Gate and then slowly made our way towards the rest camp at Okaukuejo where we planned to camp for the night. On the way we stopped at several busy waterholes, each with hundreds of animals in attendance. We got lucky and at one of these were several lazy lions, chilling underneath the only tree for miles. They seemed rather unperturbed by all the potential sources of food at the waterhole. There is probably no better game viewing than at an Etosha waterhole during August and September.



One of the highlights of our trip was the drive along the remote Skeleton Coast, which occupies about a third of Namibia's coastline. As there is hardly any accommodation in this remote part of Namibia, you should not encounter too many other tourists, especially if coming from the north as we were. The only people we saw were some locals who were having serious tyre issues. Luckily we had an ARB tyre repair kit and we soon had them on their way again. There are several shipwrecks along this treacherous stretch of coastline. We allowed ourselves a stop at Cape Cross where in 1845 the Portuguese navigator Diego Cao came ashore. No European traveller had been this far south on the West African coastline and he paid the price for his bravery and today lies buried nearby. There is another attraction at Cape Cross and that is the massive seal colony. You hear and smell them before you see them but they are definitely worth a visit as there are thousands just laying on the beach.

**ON THE WAY WE STOPPED AT SEVERAL BUSY WATERHOLES, EACH WITH HUNDREDS OF ANIMAL IN ATTENDANCE. WE GOT LUCKY AND AT ONE OF THESE WERE SEVERAL LAZY LIONS, CHILLING UNDERNEATH THE ONLY TREE FOR MILES**

From Swakopmund we made our way to the dunes of Sossusvlei along a good gravel road. Namibia is famous for its many good quality gravel roads and one is easily able to drive at 120km/h along some of them. Colin hit one of the slightly raised cattle grids a little too quickly and he got the 'Cruiser airborne.' 'The shocks can handle it,' he explained as we clocked up the air miles. To get to the famous Sossusvlei sand dunes we had to deflate our tyres as the sand was rather thick. The dunes are at their most magnificent at sunrise and sunset. I was lucky enough to see them from a hot air balloon at sunrise. We had one more stop before crossing the Orange River and entering South Africa that was the viewpoint at the Fish River Canyon. I have never seen the Grand Canyon but I doubt that it is as grand as this. In the winter there is a week-long hike one can do along this 100 mile long canyon, and if you don't want to carry a heavy backpack there is the option of taking along a mule to carry your kit.



Once in South Africa it was all tar along the N7 to Cape Town. We cruised through Namaqualand and as it was Spring, the flowers were out. There were buses of tourists everywhere who had come from far to see the fields covered in bright flowers. I was already missing Namibia, where more often than not you find yourself alone. Our 'Cruiser had behaved impeccably, gobbling up all we had thrown at it. We had only been cruising for a week but in that time we had seen more than most do in their lifetime.

# SAHARA STYLE

**ADDING TO THE COMPREHENSIVE VEHICLE PROTECTION LINE-UP FOR THE 2013 TOYOTA PRADO 150 SERIES IS THE SAHARA BAR FOR GX AND GXL MODELS.**



The Prado Sahara bar features ARB's renowned five-fold upswept and tapered wing profile, with a split pan design offering greater strength and airflow to the engine. Utilising a deluxe bar mounting system ensures the Sahara bar clears the lower grill and headlight assembly, while offering full air bag compatibility.

Further enhancing safety is the inclusion of optional fog and LED combination lights (clearance and turn indicators).

Sahara bars create the ideal platform for mounting ARB Intensity or IPF driving lights, CB antennas and Warn winches. Hi-Lift jacking points are integrated into the centre pan of the bar.



ARB's unwavering commitment to quality is seen across the entire bull bar range. Computer controlled mandrel bending results in centre tubing with uniform wall thickness and no material deformation, providing unparalleled structural integrity and visual aesthetics.

Prado Sahara bars are a valuable investment to protect your vehicle and passengers in the event of an animal strike, while ensuring intrinsic vehicle safety remains uncompromised.

The optional alloy centre tube comes polished as standard, with a painted matte black finish also available. The centre tube is removable should the need arise, providing access to the engine bay.

> Contact ARB for part numbers and pricing



# SOLID AS A ROK

**VOLKSWAGEN AMAROK OWNERS CAN NOW TACKLE TOUGH OFF ROAD TRACKS WITH THE CONFIDENCE THEIR VEHICLE IS PROTECTED, WITH THE RELEASE OF ARB SIDE RAILS AND PROTECTION STEPS.**



Designed to suit dual cab models with standard or factory extended flares, these side rails and steps are manufactured from 47.6mm x 2.6mm mandrel formed steel tubing for maximum strength.

Side rails are crucial in protecting the vulnerable sides and quarter panels of your vehicle when faced with narrow and unpredictable terrain. Mounted directly to the bull bar, side rails actively direct branches, shrubs and other damaging hazards along the rail and away from the vehicle. Additionally, they do not impede fitment of a Safari snorkel.

Available as a side rail, protection step or side rail and protection step, all variants are supplied with corrosion resistant mounting hardware and are finished in a durable black powder coat (with the option to colour code).

Step sections include 2.5mm, 5 bar aluminium tread plate for increased traction when entering and exiting the vehicle during inclement conditions.

> Contact ARB for part numbers and pricing



**HYBRID**

# India

**JOINING THE FINAL LEG OF THE LAND ROVER  
HYBRID SILK ROAD EXPEDITION, CHRIS COLLARD  
TAKES US ON A JOURNEY THROUGH INDIA'S RICH  
CULTURE AND OLD-WORLD CHARM.**

Words and Photography by **Chris Collard**







slammed on the brakes and veered left as a camel cart entered my path, its 'driver' oblivious to the onslaught of oncoming traffic. The car to my left, just inches off the fender, honked, accelerated, and slipped around the dromedary. The camel jockey never flinched, slipping into the void and continuing on at a camel's pace. I glanced over to my passenger, Peter Richings, to check for white knuckles, pallid skin, or signs of cardiac arrest. Wide-eyed and with a death grip on the overhead handle, he just stared out the windscreen; apparently the thought of dying on an Indian roadway wasn't on his short list of things to do this day.

A month earlier I'd been offered the opportunity to pilot one of three prototype diesel-electric Range Rovers (the Vogue) on the final leg of the Silk Road Expedition, a 16,000km trek from Solihull, England, to Mumbai, India. I was well aware of the vehicle's four wheel drive capabilities, but I'd not spent much time in hybrids and this was an offer I could not pass up. I'd also never been to India.

Peter is Director of Engineering Technical Services for Land Rover, and the hybrid motor under the bonnet of our Range Rover was his baby. During the past three years he and his team of 260 engineers developed the EV components, and with emissions regulators breathing down auto manufacturers' intake manifolds, Land Rover has dedicated in excess of \$US30 million to bring the project to fruition. With mounting scepticism surrounding the use of the terms hybrid and four wheel drive in the same sentence, and considering the company's heritage, they needed to present the new platform in a manner befitting Land Rover. A carefully manicured course in England was out of the question. This was a bold move, and in the previous 45 days

the team had crossed Europe, Russia, the Stans and the Himalayas. I joined them in New Delhi and the next 1,000 miles on India's back roads would provide me with a firm feel for the company's newest offering.

The route passed through Agra, Uttar Pradesh, home of the Taj Mahal and crenelated walls of Red Fort, along the banks of the Yamuna River, and included a roadside festival for Lakshmi, the goddess of luck and prosperity.

A few days earlier I'd landed in New Delhi and had a free day before hitting the road. Having heard and read about the storied markets of the old city, Old Delhi, I hired a pedal-rickshaw and headed into a world unknown to many Westerners. A walled complex and once the capital of the Mughal Empire, Shahjahanabad (as it was originally named) was constructed in 1639. Its streets, which were once lined with the elaborate mansions of nobles, have since succumbed to centuries of neglect. Plaster and paint peel away from ornate facades, and rusting balustrades lead to weathered and stained courtyards lined with sooty satellite dishes.

Leaving the rickshaw outside the fray of congestion I ducked off the main street and into a narrow passageway just wide enough for a handcart. Merchants and artisans, hidden away in small alcoves, plied their trades while labourers burdened with massive crates and burlap sacks hurried past. As I entered Khari Baoli, the street in Old Delhi which is reputed to be the world's grandest spice market, the aromas of sage, saffron and thyme spilled into the streets, permeating my nostrils. Baskets, brimming with a plethora of colours and fragrances greeted me as I slowly made my way through the chaos of Khari Baoli. I moved on





Resting on the banks of the Yamuna River (the largest tributary of the famous Ganges River), the Taj Mahal is widely revered as the crown jewel of Muslim art. From nearly any elevated point in the city of Agra you can glimpse its white domed marble mausoleum above the landscape. In Arabic the name Taj Mahal translates to Crown of Palaces, and a palace it is. It was constructed under the direction of Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan in the 17th century in honour of his third wife, and is testament to thousands of artisans and craftsmen who fashioned its millions of tonnes of marble. Walking its grounds and halls is truly inspiring; every stone is cut with laser precision, every structure positioned with geometric perfection.

We were on the banks of the river before dawn in hope of catching the sunrise over the Taj Mahal. If we were in the laundry or fishing business we would have been late for work. Downriver, half of Agra's population was on the shoreline washing clothes, repairing fishing nets and bathing.



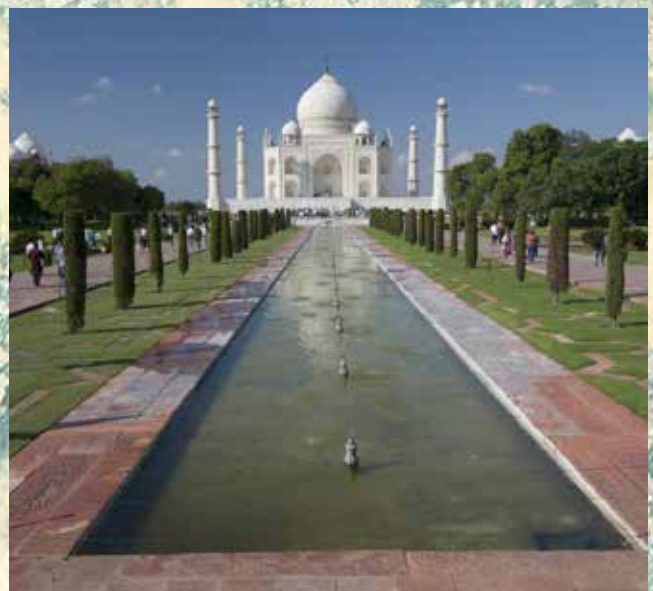
Agra's landmarks are nothing short of inspiring. Though the first inhabitants settled here a thousand years before the birth of Christianity, it didn't find its stride until the 16th Century when Sultan Sikandar Lodi founded the city and declared it the capital. When Shah Jahan moved the capital to Delhi, about the time he built the Taj Mahal, he also built Red Fort. Built of crimson sandstone, an afternoon walk through this complex is not to be missed.

## **ALONG THE ROUTE WE CAME UPON A LONG PROCESSION OF DECORATED WAGONS, CARTS AND WOMEN DRESSED IN BRILLIANTLY COLOURED DRESSES DANCING DOWN THE ROAD**

to the Kinari Bazaar, where gold-coloured tin is passed off as 'solid gold', and then to the red stone walls of Jama Masjid, India's largest mosque.

With a population of 22 million, Delhi is the second most populated city on the planet, and it seemed at least half were trying to enter or exit the old city. Pulling up a stool at a local café I lunched on a plate of authentic Mughal cuisine and took in a visual smorgasbord of humanity. After taking down the last sip of tea, I joined the flow of bicycles, handcarts and labourers, and made my way back to the city walls. In the morning I'd be navigating my way south with the area's other 11 million people.

After spending time in the country and delving into the intricacies of Indian culture and Hindu belief, one begins to understand the country and its people - including how a billion Hindu can manage to work their way through the same intersection, weaving and honking at breakneck pace, without so much as a raised hand or extended middle digit.





There was a marked increase in wealth and industry as we moved south towards Mumbai. The narrow tracks through small villages and farmlands yield to a four lane highway, larger towns, and industrial sites. Having said this, if you take a left or right off the roadway, or simply keep your eyes open, you'll find some of the region's other jewels. Along the route we came upon a long procession of decorated wagons, carts and women dressed in brilliantly coloured dresses dancing down the road. Akkin said it was part of the 10 day festival of Navratri to honour the goddess Lakshmi. We pulled ahead and stopped, hoping they would pass by. We were rewarded with hundreds of women and children laughing and dancing and singing. I stepped into the flow to be swept along in a current of good fortune. I eddied out near the vehicles and let Lakshmi resume command.

Near Jaipur we turned the Range Rovers west through the mountains towards Amber Fort. In a small village near the fortified walls I slipped away from the group and down a side street lined with fruit and vegetable vendors, craftsmen selling silver jewellery and Persian rug shops. Though many peddled their wares atop used milk crates on small patches of asphalt, everything was clean and tidy. I knelt down to talk to several women selling vegetables and was greeted with big smiles and ivory white teeth. I don't think they received many foreign guests on that street. They didn't speak a word of English nor do I speak any Hindi, but the message of open acceptance was clear and mutual.

Arriving in Mumbai (renamed Bombay by the British because they found it difficult to pronounce, and now reinstated as Mumbai) we were received by a marching band and a full tilt celebration in honour of the completion of the Silk Road Expedition. Pushing the prototype hybrids through a dozen countries and 16,000km - and letting journalists write with transparency about the vehicle's performance - was a gutsy move in my opinion. Short of a dozen or so flat tyres, the hybrids had no major mechanical issues. Expedition leader and Camel Trophy veteran Hans Hermann excitedly shared a story of a mishap in Nepal where, during a photo shoot, one of the drivers got off track and ended up bonnet deep in a river; an event one might think could kill an electric motor. Apparently the electronics are exceptionally well sealed. The vehicle was pulled out and survived for me to pick it up in Delhi. I was impressed.

On our final night, Land Rover put us up in the Taj Mahal Palace, a 5 star hotel with rooms overlooking the port and the Gateway of India, a large waterside monument erected to welcome King George V in 1911. Though the hotel was luxurious and the monument impressive, I was again drawn away from the tourist traps and Chinese made trinkets and took off on foot through the city. I've found that stepping past the melee associated with any metropolis and immersing myself in the local culture, even for a short time, brings me closer to understanding its soul. If there are 3,500 million gods that reside in a cow, so be it. And if the white and yellow lines on the road are simply a waste of good paint, who am I to judge?

Traveling in India is an assault on the senses; it permeates the being, saturates the soul and triggers a flood of neurotransmissions that heighten our cognitive awareness. The clap-shot pitch of camel hooves, a rickety wooden cart,



## **BASKETS, BRIMMING WITH A PLETHORA OF COLOURS AND FRAGRANCES GREETED ME AS I SLOWLY MADE MY WAY THROUGH THE CHAOS OF KHARI BAOLI**



millennia old cobblestones in a street market, the pungent airborne concoction of spices and herbs from a nearby trader, and a vibrant array of hand-woven wool rugs piled high in a corner market - this was the India I'd come to see.

Overall Land Rover have done an exceptional job with the Vogue EV. They've retained the Land Rover pedigree and made major advancements in economy, all in a vehicle that is fully capable of a 16,000km trek on the Silk Road. Job well done.

### **Specifications**

Vehicle: Range Rover Vogue  
 Engine: 3.0-litre SDV6 HEV  
 Output: 335 hp @ 4,000 rpm  
 Torque: 700 Nm (516 lb-ft) @ 1,500-3,000 rpm  
 EV motor: 35Kw permanent-magnet AC synchronous  
 EV output: 46 hp, 125 lb-ft torque  
 Batteries: 72 6.8 NCA lithium-ion  
 Transmission: 8-speed ZF automatic  
 Weight: 2372kg (5,300lb)  
 Performance (0-60 mph): 6.7 seconds  
 Top Speed: 135 mph/225 kph  
 Economy: 44.1 mpg (estimated)







# THE FALCON AND THE DRAGONFLY

**W**hilst travelling through the Flinders Ranges photographing 4WDs in touring destinations, we found ourselves heavily restricted when trying to reach planned locations due to the heavy rainfall in the area over the past few days.

We came across a lake, which usually dry and lifeless, was full of water and had been transformed into a teeming hive of activity.

What immediately caught my attention was a single "little falcon" (Australian Hobby) racing around this water mass with awesome speed and agility. It would head out along the waters edge at an unbelievable rate, always returning to a single tree branch sticking out of the water, a handy platform that the falcon was utilising to rest between its activity. This structure sat out about 50m from the water's edge, just out of reach of my Canon 400mm f2.8 IS lens, even with the 2 x Extender, so I figured I would need to get my feet wet in order to create the perfect image.

Unsure of what the falcon was feeding on, but seeing clearly that it was enjoying itself, I knew I had to get involved, so off with the shoes and out I went towards the falcon's perch. Each time the falcon would head

out on its hunt, I would take a few steps further into the drink. On its return, I would hastily snap a few frames of it on its branch.

I am not sure how long this process had taken but gradually, I ended up in water to my chest level holding approximately 7.5kgs of camera gear safe above the water level. Tiring stuff, but worth every moment.

I absolutely loved my experience capturing this little falcon's unique character. I am still in awe of its ability to see a dragonfly some 400m away, take flight at amazing speeds, catch the dragonfly and devour it upon its return.

The variations of the falcon are great, and I always enjoy seeing them... I hope you enjoy this image as much as I enjoyed creating it... with mud between my toes.

**Michael Ellem, Offroad Images**

## Photography Specifications

Camera: Canon EOS-1D MkII  
 Lens: Canon EF 400mm f/2.8L IS  
 Lens conversion with Extender  
 EF 2x II Lens = 800mm f/5.6L  
 Shutter speed: 1/160th of a second  
 Aperture: f5.6  
 ISO: 100

# DEPTH AND

## LEARN HOW TO ADD DEPTH AND DIMENSION TO YOUR IMAGES WITH THESE TIPS FROM MICHAEL ELLEM.

Words and Photography by  
**Michael Ellem, Offroad Images**

You're standing in front of a beautiful scene. A scene which seems to go on forever. A scene which should be hanging on your wall or at the least needs sharing on social media.

But how is it that when you take the photo, it looks kind of flat? The problem of course is that a photograph is a flat two-dimensional image.

When your eyes look into a scene, they will automatically focus on areas of the image. As you look around the scene, a relationship between objects close and objects far away builds. You might not realise that this is even happening as it all works in your subconscious, but your eyes referencing objects in this three dimensional scene can see it as a scene which has the depth that simply goes on forever.

To photograph this scene with a normal camera, turns it into a two dimensional image, and at the same time, potentially loses the sense of dimension in the scene.

So how do we create depth and dimension?

As you are the photographer it is completely up to you to create a look that works in composition and is technically correct. It's actually not that difficult!

We have gone over a number of elements in previous articles which will all come together to make this work for you, so if you have been following these articles, you might see where the pieces fit.

I really enjoy the art of photographing a scene with the intention of creating dimension and whether this includes product, people or scenery you will find it extremely rewarding chasing a particular look in your photography.

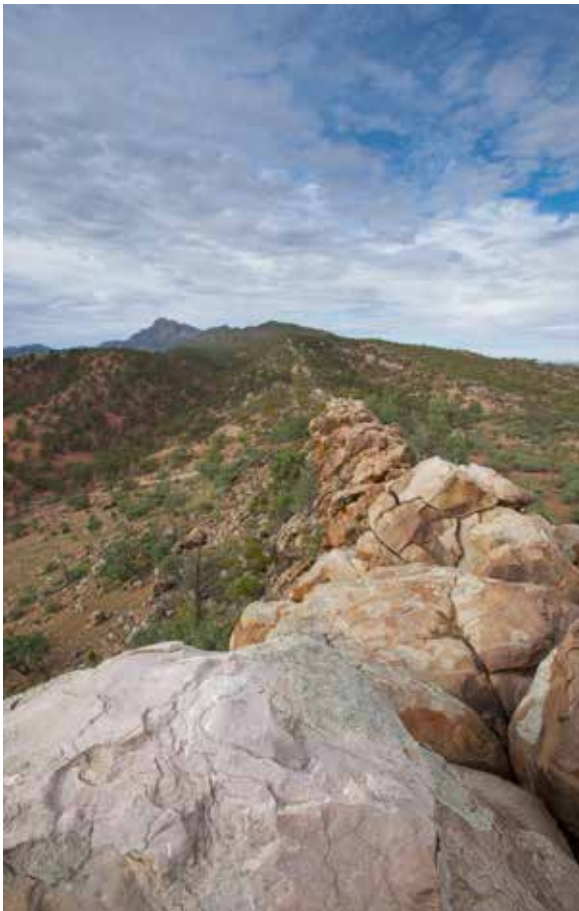
Start by assessing the scene before you take any photos. You will be looking for some of the following features to assist in the process.

# DIMENSION



## LEADING LINES

A road, train track, fence line, riverbank, tree line, tyre track, ripple in the sand etc will all start and finish somewhere. The object here is to allow these natural or manmade lines to feed through the image creating a start and vanishing point, guiding the viewer to see an important feature along or at the end of these leading lines, thus adding perspective to your image.



## MOVE THE CAMERA

So often I see people photographing from eye level whilst standing up. This is fine for a basic snapshot but you can achieve so much more by sometimes just moving the camera a little higher or lower, maybe even positioning it near the ground to get the right look. This is where you, the photographer, can really make the difference in your images.



## UTILISING FOREGROUND FEATURES

Utilising a few features in the foreground can be extremely helpful in creating depth – a tree or shrub, some spinifex or grass, rocks or an old log etc. This included object may not be the subject, but might simply act as a reference to assist in creating depth in the image.



## LAYERING

Colours in a scene that appear vibrant in the foreground have a tendency to wash out when they are in the background. This also helps create depth in an image and is usually due to particles in the air acting like a filter and affecting the intensity of the colours. So the hill, mountain range or sand dune close to you will have a different weight of colour than the one behind it, and the one behind that etc. Therefore this layering will encourage the illusion of distance and depth. We can make good use of this by creating angles and utilising the background as an important component in our composition.



## FRAMING

Good composition is so important to photography and it really is something that you will get better at as you build your style. If you try to make good use of major foreground features in the scene, you might find that it can add natural framing to your image. This in turn will assist in creating image depth and dimension.



## STAGGERING THE SCENE'S SUBJECTS

Staging the scene by either staggering the subjects or obtaining an angle where the features are staggered will assist in creating a depth and dimension in your imagery. Simply put, the further away the subject appears from the camera, the greater the perceived depth in your image. When items that are physically similar in size appear to be reducing in size, it is obvious to the viewer that there is depth within the image.



## LEADING LINES (CURVES)

Leading lines don't need to be straight! The flow of lines through an image can create great depth. The flow of a feature like a winding road can create an awesome image.

## MAKING GOOD USE OF THE CLOUD FORMATIONS

Heading out into this great country of ours, you will be delighted at how many beautiful cloud formations you will encounter during your travels.

Apart from the individual characteristics of cloud formations, their presence enables an additional dimension to be captured. I love my clouds and encourage everyone to see them as adding a new dimension to the scene.





THE ADVENTURES OF FOURBY AND FRIENDS



FOURBY AND ARIEL ARE ENJOYING THEIR CAMPING TRIP IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY.



ARIEL JUST LOVES SITTING BY THE CAMPFIRE AT NIGHT.

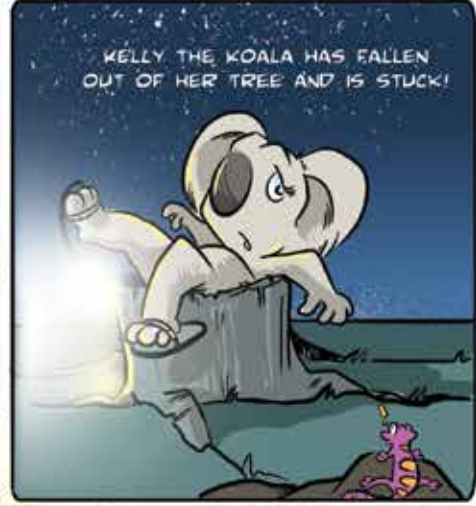


ALL OF A SUDDEN THEY HEAR SOMEONE IN TROUBLE.

HELP!



THEY CAN'T FIND ANYTHING IN THE DARK SO ARIEL TURNS ON HER EXTRA-BRIGHT SPOTLIGHTS.



KELLY THE KOALA HAS FALLEN OUT OF HER TREE AND IS STUCK!



NO MATTER HOW HARD THEY TRY, THEY CAN'T GET KELLY OUT.



FOURBY DECIDES THAT THIS IS A JOB FOR HIS WINCH.



1, 2, 3 PULL!



FINALLY KELLY IS FREE.

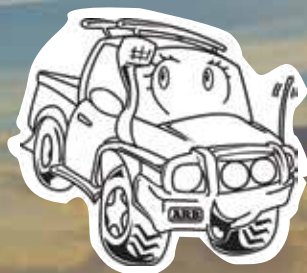
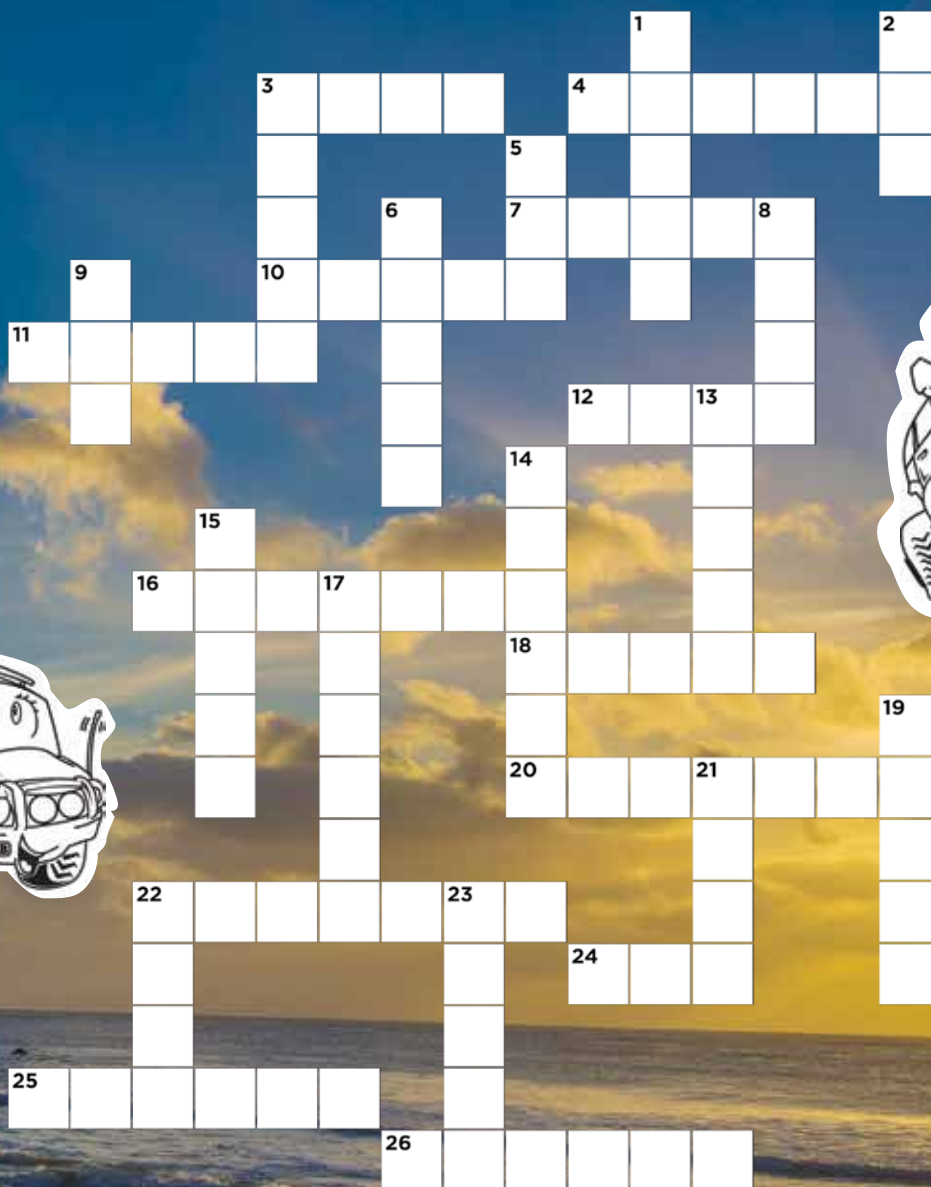
THANKS GUYS! I REALLY NEED TO WATCH WHERE I AM WALKING AT NIGHT!



KELLY JOINS THEM BY THE CAMPFIRE AND THEY ALL SHARE DELICIOUSLY MELTED MARSHMALLOWS. YUM!



# FOURBY AND ARIEL CROSSWORD



## ACROSS

3. When Dave the Dingo is happy he wags his \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Fourby winds these down to keep cool.
7. Ariel stores her gear on her ROOF\_\_\_\_\_.
10. To get to the top of her tree, Kelly the Koala needs to \_\_\_\_\_.
11. The noise Debbie the Duck makes.
12. Fourby's favourite speed to drive.
16. Fourby and Ariel's favourite type of holiday.
18. Ariel smiles when she is \_\_\_\_\_.
20. This helps Fourby breath under water.
22. Ariel and Fourby are best \_\_\_\_\_.
24. The colour of Fourby.
25. Ariel uses these to see behind her.
26. What Fourby drinks for energy.

## DOWN

1. What Fourby uses when he is stuck.
2. The type of vehicle Ariel and Fourby are.
3. The type of road in the middle of the bush.
5. Fourby and Ariel's favourite shop.
6. What Ariel and Fourby swim in to cool down.
8. What Outback Matt sits on when Fourby takes him for a ride.
9. What you have with friends.
13. The type of animal Soxy is.
14. What Ariel turns on when it gets dark.
15. What Fourby and Ariel use to talk to each other when they are far apart.
17. The colour of Ariel.
19. When Kelly the Koala is tired she goes to \_\_\_\_\_.
21. What fourby drives on.
22. The number of wheels that Fourby has.
23. Fourby and Ariel love to \_\_\_\_\_.

# HIGH PRAISE

Words and Photography by **Alan Specketer**

ALAN SPECKETER RECOUNTS A TERRIFYING NIGHT ON NT'S OUTBACK ROADS AND WHY HE CHOOSES TO INVEST IN AN ARB BULL BAR FOR HIS FAMILY'S SAFETY.

I'm one of the lucky ones to call the Northern Territory home. With its wide open spaces and abundance of opportunities for remote travel, driving long distances was par for the course so we made sure our car was suitably equipped for it. Our 4WD of choice was a 2003 Toyota HiLux SR5 in dual cab configuration with a 3L turbo diesel engine. We'd set this vehicle up with a number of modifications for touring with our young family, including an ARB combo winch bar. Given the proliferation of wallabies on the roads up here, it seemed a smart investment in the safety of both our vehicle and our family.

On Friday 29 August 2014 I was headed from Darwin towards Katherine for a day out in the bush. Being a keen wildlife photographer it was a rare opportunity to have a day's indulgence in my passion. I'd left home earlier than usual in order to complete the three hours travelling to my destination near Katherine prior to the sun kissing the horizon. Being a relatively experienced traveller, I kept my speed down travelling at night, dropping my headlights when oncoming traffic approached. The first two hours of the drive passed uneventfully. Leaving the dazzling lights of Pine Creek behind me, the spotlights cut the night away and the kilometres of the Stuart Highway fell behind.





At about 5.45am I saw some headlights coming towards me. I dipped my lights to low beam and washed off speed to about 90km/h, and saw the oncoming car dip their lights also. It was a well maintained part of the Stuart, and a sweeping bend with a deep drop-off on the eastern side of the road. As our two vehicles closed to a distance of about fifty metres, blurry movements of an animal running across the road from west to east between our cars caught my attention. Having experienced animal strikes before, my stomach immediately fell away when I recognised the silhouette of a wild horse running across the road in front of the oncoming headlights.

I've relived that moment a hundred times. There simply was no time to react. The horse ran across the road, narrowly evading the oncoming car but colliding with my car on the front right corner. As the horse spun with the impact of the collision, it struck the driver's side of the car with its flank, before its hind quarters collided heavily with the back right corner of the ute. Immediately the rear of the car broke traction but was quickly brought under effective control and I pulled the HiLux up quickly, turned on my hazard lights and checked on the occupants of the other vehicle. By some miracle, they had avoided hitting the animal and no-one had been injured.

Grabbing a flashlight from the car, I checked on the horse but found that it had been killed on impact. I returned to the HiLux and inspected the damage.

The left shoulder of the horse had collided with the right wing of the ARB bull bar at a speed of about 90km/h. Under the force of the impact, the bull bar had flexed backwards far enough to leave impressions of the top of the bull bar and the aerial mounting tabs in the bonnet, as well as a well defined imprint of the top right hoop of the bull bar in the panel above the right front wheel. All of the plastic flares had been torn from the right side of the vehicle and every panel along the driver's side had sustained substantial damage.

The bull bar itself was heavily twisted and was about three inches out of true from the left side to the right. The right hoop of the bar was bent backwards several inches, and the mounting brackets connecting the bar to the chassis were contorted, as a result of absorbing the energy of the collision. I also found a puddle of coolant under the car and after finally prising open the bonnet (which was substantially damaged by both the horse and the rearwards flexing of the bull bar), I found that the force of the impact had sent the fan through the top of the radiator. In short, the collision with the horse had caused devastating damage to my vehicle, which would later be assessed as being so damaged by the collision that it was irreparable.

Phone calls were made to the police and my insurance company, and a tow arranged due to my vehicle being immobile. Due to the remote location, it would be five hours before a tow truck would arrive. Those five hours gave me a lot of time to think and analyse the events, and commentary from passing trucks on the UHF radio confirmed what I suspected - I'd been incredibly lucky that the vehicle was fitted with a proper bull bar and not an imported fashion accessory. I have no doubt that the ARB combo winch bar made the difference between walking away from the accident uninjured, and sustaining serious or life-threatening injuries (or worse) in a remote location. The ARB bull bar absorbed an enormous amount of energy, preventing damage to the critical components such as steering and suspension in the front of the vehicle and allowing me to bring the car to a controlled stop.

In my mind, investing in a quality bull bar that meets Australian standards designed for Australian conditions is a pretty simple decision. It's an investment in the safety of my vehicle and the safety of my family. Will my next car be fitted with an ARB bull bar? Absolutely!



# BUSHRANGER

## BUSHRANGER MULTI-TOOL



**Bushranger's new multi-tool encompasses comfort and functionality into its stylish design.**

Constructed with premium quality high grade stainless steel, in combination with a sturdy protection pouch, the Bushranger multi-tool has been designed to withstand the rigors of the Australian Outback.

Incorporating two LED work lights cleverly fitted within its handles, the Bushranger multi-tool extends its functionality to include applications for use at night or in low light situations.

### Features

- Single handed use, clip-point lock knife
- Hardened 440A stainless steel knife blade
- Snap open, spring loaded pliers
- Combination wire cutter and stripper
- LED lights on both ends for pliers and knife
- Sturdy scissors for reliable performance
- Bottle and can opener
- Flat-head and Phillips-head screwdrivers
- Made from 420 stainless steel with a durable black oxide finish
- Closed length of 104mm
- 3 year warranty

> Contact ARB for part numbers and pricing

## BUSHRANGER PORTABLE HOT WATER SHOWER



**The Bushranger Portable Hot Water Shower allows you the option of instant hot water wherever you go.**

Taking only a few minutes to set up, the Bushranger Portable Hot Water Shower offers instant hot water from a water source of your choice. Designed to reduce water consumption, the shower uses only 6L of water per minute (360L/hour) without compromising shower head pressure. The safety aspects built into this Bushranger unit includes a digital temperature display, max temperature cut out

(50°C), instant ignition/no pilot light technology and AS2658 gas compliance.

Whether you're camping, caravanning, 4WD driving, boating or even needing to wash the animals, the Bushranger Portable Gas Hot Water Shower is a great solution to having the comforts of home wherever and whenever you need it.

> Contact ARB for part numbers and pricing



# THE WINNING POWER OF REDARC

**REDARC HAS BEEN AWARDED 2014 TELSTRA BUSINESS OF THE YEAR -  
A PROGRAM THAT HAS BEEN CELEBRATING BRILLIANT AUSTRALIAN SMALL  
AND MEDIUM BUSINESSES SINCE 1992.**



**The award was presented by Federal Treasurer Joe Hockey. Will Irving, Telstra Business Group Managing Director and Ambassador for the Telstra Australian Business Awards said the 2014 national winners were trail-blazers who excelled in their ability to be brilliantly different and change industries by either creating new business or thinking about old business models in new ways.**

"REDARC is a high growth, high quality manufacturer that has focused on innovation, deep customer understanding, targeted marketing and investment in new capability," Mr Irving said.

"They demonstrate that with a very strategic focus on their value proposition, partnerships with universities, high levels of investment in research and development, and production quality, domestic manufacturers can capture value and not just survive, but thrive."

REDARC is now part of an elite group of Australian businesses whose outstanding business practices have demonstrated great success and achievement.

Anthony Kittel said that the secrets of the company's success were "continually investing a minimum of 15% of our sales revenue back into research and having about 25% of our employees working in R&D and innovation."

"As an advanced manufacturer we need a highly skilled and empowered workforce. The commitment of the REDARC employees to learning and embracing training is impressive. Without a highly skilled workforce our product wouldn't be at the technology level it is."

Mr Kittel and his team were recognised by the Telstra awards judges for having a huge pipeline of ideas that were turned into a stream of product development that drives REDARC's growth.

Also the winner of the Medium Business Award at the 2014 Telstra Australian Business Awards ceremony in Melbourne, REDARC has a distribution arm in France, sells its battery management products in countries from Iceland to Spain and has medium term plans to distribute in the US.

The award's judges described REDARC as a financial success with impressive durability and robustness, high future potential and significant investment in staff training and product development.

ARB is a proud supporter of REDARC and their products are available for sale in all ARB stores nationally.



JOIN FRED M. KRIJGSMA ON AN EPIC 2000KM DEEP  
JUNGLE ADVENTURE AT THIS YEAR'S INTERNATIONAL  
INDONESIA OFFROAD EXPEDITION.

# WELCOME TO THE JUNGLE

Words and Photography  
by Fred M. Krijgsman





Combine 75 vehicles, 2,000km of Indonesian jungle, monsoon rains and treacherous mudslides and you have a recipe for one of the most epic offroad events this year.

It all started with a phonecall back in July 2013 from my two Indonesian friends, Tinus and Syamsir. Wanting me to join them as part of the official media team in this adventure through the jungles of South Sumatra. My immediate response was a resounding 'yes!'. Fast forward seven months and here I was, in the city of Palembang, surrounded by a perfectly selected group of die-hard off roaders with their impressively well equipped vehicles.

The International Indonesia Offroad Expedition is a 2,000km deep jungle adventure that takes us through 14 base camps and ends in the centre of Merdeka Square, Central Jakarta. The teams are made up of mainly local Indonesians with a mix of international participants that hail from Malaysia, Vietnam, the UK, Italy and Holland. With only one mandatory rule for each participant, an 8274 WARN winch must be fitted to every vehicle.



At the Novotel Hotel in Palembang, the air was abuzz with the excited preparations needed to undertake this journey. Fuelling up, shopping for supplies and last minute vehicle checks were vital as our only option would be local jungle villages in the event of an emergency. I teamed up with Herman Harsoyo and Ero Kebo Ireng in their well prepared Toyota Fortuner 4x4. I have written about this 4wd in the past and felt reassured that it would get us through the next 16 days.

A mixture of Toyota, Jeep, Land Rover, Suzuki and even Daihatsu vehicles lined up at the start line. The expedition was split into three convoys of about 25 vehicles, then into five teams with five vehicles in each team. These teams worked together to ensure they all made it through the trickiest parts. Being at the front of the convoy is obviously preferred as the track is in a completely different state after the 60th car has struggled through.







**DURING THE NIGHT, THE WEATHER COMPLETELY CHANGED AND MONSOON RAINS TRANSFORMED THE EASY TRACK INTO A MUDDY, SLIPPERY, STICKY MESS**



The course consists of 14 base camps and up to Camp 5 all things went smoothly. The tracks were easy to handle with a few river crossings and some steep hill climbs – Mother Nature was at her kindest. Upon reaching Base Camp 5 very late at night, we put up our minimal campsite, whipped up a basic meal and crashed. During the night, the weather completely changed and monsoon rains transformed the easy track into a muddy, slippery, sticky mess.

The Super Swampers, Simex Jungle Trekkers and the local Indonesian GT Radial Komodo tyres were all being put to the test, as well as our winches with constant use. On the advice of the convoy leader, the media teams were directed to head straight to Base Camp 7.

Base Camp 7 was set up in a local jungle village and upon our arrival the area came alive with children and adults alike, warmly welcoming us to their home. Upon leaving, we were faced with quite a tricky river crossing. Villagers lined the bank of the river and the overhanging walking bridge to watch the never-ending line of cars tackle this formidable obstacle.

On the way to Camp 11 we were briefed that the track ahead should take between three and four hours to complete. Well I can tell you, that three to four hour track turned out to be a whopping three days on the trail!

Day one went ok, we covered some good mileage, but around midnight and after several recovery attempts of our vehicle, we decided to set up camp in the middle of the track. Day two started with an early rise and a firm resolve to



**DAY TWO STARTED WITH AN EARLY RISE AND A FIRM RESOLVE TO REACH THE END – 15 HOURS LATER WE HAD MOVED 600 METRES**



reach the end – 15 hours later we had moved 600 metres. The vehicles in front were either stuck deep in the mud or mid way through repairs so we decided to call it a night.

Day three began with a broken, leaking radiator and some very ingenious jungle bush-craft solutions. After two hours we were finally out, entering a local jungle village where we happily accepted a shower and hot meal. After much discussion we agreed that it would be futile to try and catch up with the original scheduled tracks, so the decision was made to take a 300km detour directly to Base Camp 14 at Kalianda Resort.

A far cry from the knee high, mud slides that we had experienced, we expected this detour to be a breeze. The traffic was unbelievable and the two lane road jam packed with mopeds, trucks and locals took us 21 hours to navigate. We finally reached our destination and re-grouped with the entire convoy at the Kalianda Beach Resort.

The next day we boarded a local ferry and crossed the sea from the island of South Sumatra for our last night camping on Java Island. The following morning we headed to the finish line, the National Monument in the center of Jakarta. The excitement at completing such an epic adventure was evident and everyone celebrated the arrival of all teams, safe and relatively in one piece. Despite the exhaustion, everyone had a smile on their face with the knowledge that this was a trip of a lifetime that would never be forgotten.





# ON THE TRAIL





# THULE TRAIL ROOF BASKET



Largely credited for originating the roof basket as far back as 1950, Thule has taken the design of modern, functional lightweight trays to a new level with the introduction of their new Thule Trail.

Designed in durable, lightweight aluminium, Thule has smartly integrated 'T-tracks' into the framework of the tray so that users can seamlessly and securely add other Thule products to the top of their vehicles with the kind of ease we've grown to expect from the brand.

Bikes, kayaks, trade supplies and more can be added just as they would on a set of normal roof bars, leaving the internal area of the tray free for swags, spares or anything else you might fit.

Fully lockable at its attachment points, the Trail offers a versatile fit in two sizes – the Trail 823 (135cm x 90cm) or the Trail 824 (160cm x 100cm).

You can see the Thule Trail, along with all of the other premium Thule products at [www.thule.com.au](http://www.thule.com.au).

> Contact ARB for part numbers and pricing



# AN UNTOLD DESTINATION

Words and Photography by **Paul Kowalski**

**PAUL KOWALKSI TAKES US ON HIS JOURNEY OF SELF DISCOVERY  
AS HE EXPLORES AND PHOTOGRAPHS THE PICTURESQUE  
KARINJINI NATIONAL PARK.**

Karijini National Park is a rare gem located in the remote Pilbara, a mining region in Western Australia's north west. To get there it's rough – there's a sea of red dust that swallows all inhabitants and the bone rattling, corrugated tracks give no mercy to those eager to travel through. However, the ancient geological formations that live in the humble national park, are well worth the journey. Covering a massive 627,422 hectares, Karijini National Park is a destination that is distinctly beautiful, one that contains spinifex covered mountains, deeply carved iron ore gorges and pristine water ways – it's a destination far removed from our everyday lives.

My wife Belinda, our two daughters Chloe and Lili, and myself embarked on a life changing 4WD expedition to reach this rich, untold destination. The journey from our home in Canberra to Karijini National Park totalled three months, with over 6,000 demanding kilometres and many breathtaking destination stops along the way.

In March 2014, after much preparation, we began our journey. Our holiday really kicked off when we hit the south west of Western Australia, a farming and tourism region known for its pristine beaches and world class wineries. It was refreshing driving through the region after our long





trek through the Nullarbor. The fresh salty air filtered through our windows from the east, as the smell of fresh cut grass and mulled wine seduced our nostrils from the west. Cape Le Grand, Stirling Ranges, Two People's Bay, Denmark, Augusta, Hamelin Bay, Dunsborough and Busselton were just some of the regions we visited as we crawled our way north to Perth. We resided in a campsite just north of Perth until the day finally came to start attacking the 1,500 kilometres we needed to drive to get to Karijini National Park. It was a surreal experience leaving that day as I had been dreaming of Karijini's secrets and sun kissed panorama for years.

For three days we drove along the barren path of the Great Northern Highway. The Pilbara itself is a scorched land, a harsh place reputed for hard work and hard living. Dirt, dust and shrubs threatened our hopes of crystal gorges and playful waterfalls. We camped just off the main roads, finding old dirt tracks that would lead us to hidden camping spots. Being in the wide open Outback meant we heavily relied on being self sufficient, so having all the gear was essential. In return however, the wildlife chirped songs of welcome and the night sky displayed unforgettable beauty that only my dreams could replicate.

On the third day of driving, the sea of red finally gave way to the rolling Hamersley ranges – we had reached our destination. Although I had spent months researching and years dreaming about this place, my eyes were still shocked by its tantalising beauty. The high plateau of Karijini National Park is fractured by gorges that are carved, knife-like into the earth. The stony, tree-lined water courses wind their way over its dusty plain and lead their spellbound victims into the sacred depths of their mystical pools. Erosion has slowly carved this landscape out of rocks that are over 2,500 million years old. It's not the most famous National Park, but for me it's one of Australia's most beautiful.

## THE PILBARA ITSELF IS A SCORCHED LAND, A HARSH PLACE REPUTED FOR HARD WORK AND HARD LIVING

We set up camp in Karijini Eco Retreat, a family friendly retreat and campground located in the heart of Karijini National Park. The roads in the national park are very rough and tested every piece of our 4WD gear, from the suspension on the 4WD and trailer, right through to all of our camera equipment. The closest town for resources is Tom Price, roughly 80km away. Just like our entire trip so far, being self sufficient was crucial. The most reliable resource of ours became our solar panel system, used to recharge the batteries for our fridges, phones, laptops and other essentials.

The temperature up here threatens to reach 40°C each day and the air, although dry, carries red dust in its wake that seems to leave its mark on everything, almost claiming its territory on those who dare to enter the park. This meant we had to keep everything clean. For weeks after the trip I still found gear and clothes that were stained red, becoming constant reminders of the trip I had just experienced.







The mood of the weather warped dramatically one day and we were lucky enough to watch an untamed lighting storm. The beauty of the sharp white sparks against the deep night sky was magical, but the power and anger behind every clap of thunder was extremely unsettling, especially for the natives. The lack of resources, the temperamental weather and the corrugated tracks were just pleasant reminders of how untouched this sacred land was.

The most famous sights in Karijini National Park are Weano Gorge, Hancock Gorge, Oxer Lookout, Knox Gorge, Joffre Gorge, Kalamina Gorge, Fortescue Falls, Fern Pool, Circular Pool and Hamersley Gorge. Unfortunately due to the age of our daughters, they were unable to walk the majority of the gorges. We did eventually get into Kalamina Gorge as a family, which proved to have the roughest road of any in the region. Together we walked the gorge, touching and experiencing the rough edges of the iron ore walls. We delicately crept down the gorge, looking out for slippery





rocks and strong bumps to cling to. We kept this up, following the sound of the waterfall, until our eyes were rewarded with the abundance of water gliding effortlessly through the rocks and delving into the deep blue pool of Kalamina Gorge. Excitedly we mimicked this motion – maybe not as effortlessly – and spent the rest of the afternoon paddling in the clear, fresh water that was a nice respite from the heat.

It was on the third morning at Karijini that I finally ventured into Hancock Gorge and photographed Regan's Pool – a place of sacred beauty that's every photographer's dream to capture. The entire descent down the rock scree was an adrenaline rush. The gorge is steep and dangerous so I wouldn't recommend it to minors or inexperienced hikers. The gorge remains very narrow and the deeper I was descending, the finer detailed the layers of the rock walls became, making them more difficult to cling to. The

**TOO FRIGHTENED  
TO AWAKEN ITS  
RESTING BEAUTY  
I STOOD STONE  
STILL, WITH  
ONLY THE SOUND  
OF MY WILD,  
BEATING HEART  
INTERRUPTING THIS  
PEACEFUL MOMENT**



clambering, sweating and the sporadic thumping of my heart was all worth it when my eyes finally resided upon Regan's Pool. What a sight. Too frightened to awaken its resting beauty I stood stone still, with only the sound of my wild, beating heart interrupting this peaceful moment. Onward I went to photograph its beauty – I had the whole pool to myself. When I was satisfied, I sat on the cold stone and watched the endless stream of water, flowing busily to reach its final, unknown destination. I stayed in here for hours, just soaking in the tranquility.

Other than its gorges, Karijini National Park is home to a plethora of wildlife and flora, unique to this region of WA. The yellow flowering cassias and wattles are a welcoming sight amongst the dirt and shrubbery of the north. Red kangaroos, rock-wallabies, echidnas, bats, dingos and

the rare pebble mouse are natives of the area and when camping, are not a rare sight.

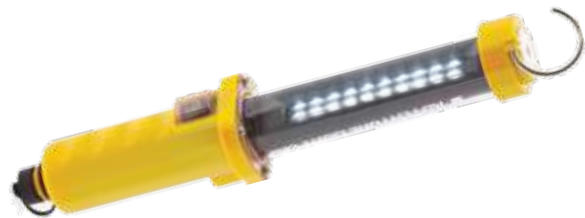
All too suddenly our week in Karijini National Park was up and it was time to start packing the 4WD. It was very hard for me to leave this place. I felt a connection here and just wanted to stay for as long as possible. We travelled for a further four weeks, stopping at more of the famous sights WA has to offer. Ningaloo Reef, Coral Bay and Shark Bay are some of these places. There is just too much beauty in this part of the world. From WA's south to WA's north, pristine beaches and untouched destinations conceal the distance. There is just not enough time to see it all. Looking back at the photos however, I smile with great confidence, knowing that I made the right decision to choose Karijini National Park and share its untold story.



# OLD MAN EMU



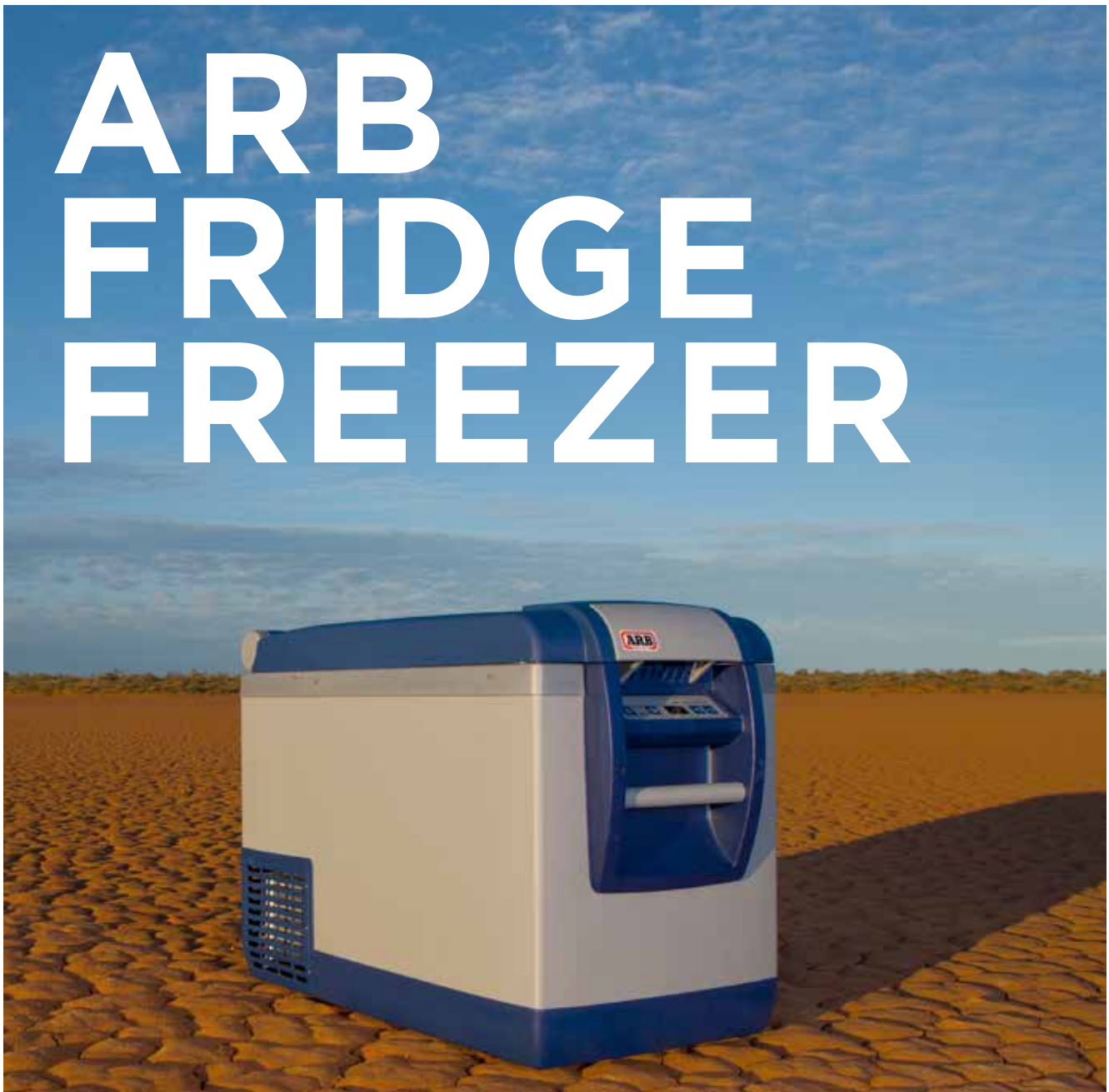
PURCHASE ANY  
**4 X NITROCHARGER SPORT  
SHOCKS AND RECEIVE AN LED  
HEAD TORCH AND ARB MINI LED  
ADVENTURE LIGHT**



Conditions: Promotion runs from Monday November 10 to Wednesday December 31 inclusive. While stocks last.



# ARB FRIDGE FREEZER



PURCHASE AN  
**ARB FRIDGE FREEZER**  
AND RECEIVE A **FREE**  
**BBQ AND CARRY BAG**  
VALUED AT **\$249**



Conditions: Promotion runs from Monday November 10 to Wednesday December 31 inclusive. While stocks last.



# ARB SKYDOME SWAGS



PURCHASE **A SINGLE OR DOUBLE SKYDOME SWAG** AND RECEIVE A **FREE ARB SPORT CHAIR** AND AN **ARB TOASTIE BRANDER**

# KIDS' SWAGS

PURCHASE **A FOURBY OR ARIEL KIDS' SWAG** AND RECEIVE A **FREE FOURBY OR ARIEL PLUSH TOY**



Conditions: Promotion runs from Monday November 10 to Wednesday December 31 inclusive. While stocks last.



# ARB RECOVERY KIT



PURCHASE A  
**PREMIUM ARB RK9 RECOVERY KIT**  
**AT 10% OFF AND RECEIVE A FREE**  
**ARB LED HEAD TORCH**



Conditions: Promotion runs from Monday November 10 to Wednesday December 31 inclusive. While stocks last.



# ARB AIR COMPRESSORS



PURCHASE ANY  
**PORTABLE OR ON-BOARD HIGH  
OUTPUT COMPRESSOR AND  
RECEIVE A SPEEDY  
SEAL TYRE REPAIR KIT**



PURCHASE ANY  
**PORTABLE OR ON-BOARD  
MAXIMUM PERFORMANCE  
COMPRESSOR AND RECEIVE  
A SPEEDY SEAL TYRE REPAIR  
KIT AND AN E-Z DEFLATOR**



Conditions: Promotion runs from Monday November 10 to Wednesday December 31 inclusive. While stocks last.



# ARB INTENSITY LED LIGHTS



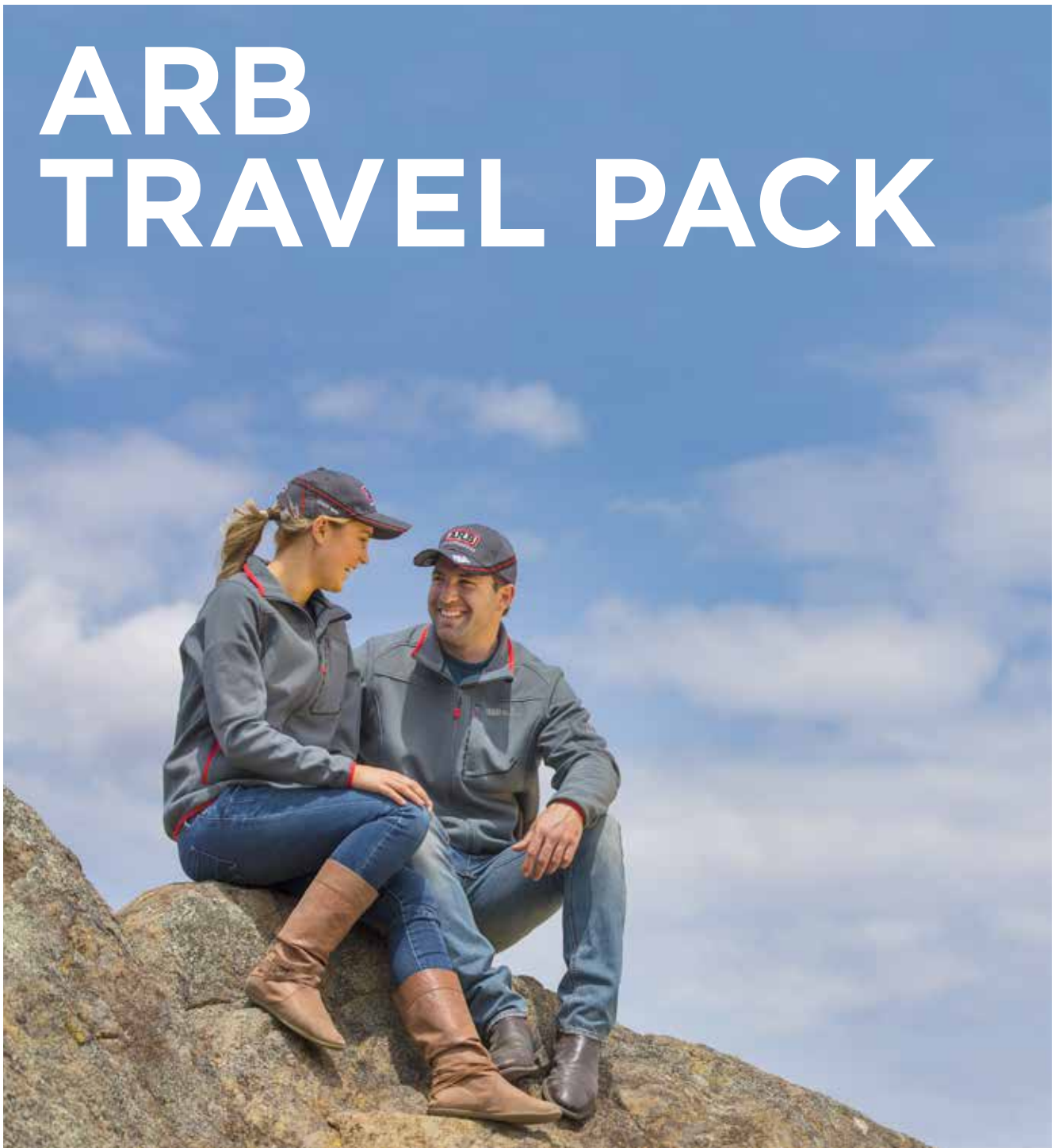
PURCHASE A  
**PAIR OF ARB INTENSITY LED LIGHTS AND  
RECEIVE A FREE WIRING LOOM, LOCK NUT  
SET AND MINI LED ADVENTURE LIGHT**



Conditions: Promotion runs from Monday November 10 to Wednesday December 31 inclusive. While stocks last.



# ARB TRAVEL PACK



**ARB TRAVEL PACK -  
ARB OUTBACK  
SURVIVAL KIT, CARGO  
GEAR BACKPACK AND  
ARB TOILETRIES BAG  
FOR \$95 (VALUED AT \$120)**



Conditions: Promotion runs from Monday November 10 to Wednesday December 31 inclusive. While stocks last.



# ARB AWNINGS



**15% OFF ALL ARB AWNINGS AND AWNING ACCESSORIES**

Conditions: Promotion runs from Monday November 10 to Wednesday December 31 inclusive. While stocks last.



# OTHER CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEAS FROM ARB



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# HEAD **INSTORE** COMPETITION

**LAST EDITION WE ASKED READERS TO SEND IN  
A SELFIE WITH THEIR CURRENT TORCH.**  
THANKS EVERYONE FOR SENDING IN YOUR PHOTOS,  
HERE ARE SOME OF OUR FAVOURITES.





# OFF THE TRACK

Exploring the Flinders Ranges, SA **Rich Renouf**



"Old boys being little boys at Poeppel Corner in the Simpson Desert" **Susan Black**

KICK OFF YOUR SHOES AND GET INSPIRED BY THESE PHOTOS FROM OUR 4WDERS LIVING THE DREAM.

Catching dinner after a hard day on the track, High Country, VIC. **Sean Butters**



Taken at Mount Skene, VIC. **Rea Cowie**



Taken at Border Track on the South Australia/Victorian border. **Josh Grieger**

**WIN!**

For your chance to win an ARB Speedy Seal kit, send in a photo and caption from your own 4WDing adventures to [marketing@arb.com.au](mailto:marketing@arb.com.au).





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