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FJ SUMMIT XII

A staff member's first time visit to the annual event and Rebelle U.

OVERLANDING KYUSHU

Visit Kyushu, Japan through the eyes of the "slowest overlanders in the world."

OUTDOOR RETAILER

A visit to the summer retail show in Denver showcasing new products.

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PHOTO BY Kathy Locke

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FROM THE PUBLISHER

Another amazing summer of epic adventures in Toyota (and Lexus, Page 16 ;)) vehicles is in the books.

Did you spend your summer seeking sights that few can experience?

We would love to share your story so find us on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter (Just search TCT Magazine) and tag #thetoyotamagazine on any platform. You may end up in an issue, on our feed or on the site at <http://tctmagazine.net> You can also share with us through our online form at <http://tctmag.us/myrig>

Ok...What's next? Well, as I write this our family is on a much needed trip to Europe to explore the roots of Angie's family. Not Toyota related, but you'll be able to see the amazing places we find around The Netherlands (and a few other areas) over at <http://LiveToExplore.co>.

What about the rest of 2018? We're already deep into finding great stories of adventure and exploration to share in the Fall issue. Our 12th year of publishing is looking promising too! From Moab to Oregon, and SoCal to Maine: We're working on content that's meant to inspire that seed of vehicle based adventure travel in all of our readers.

I hope you enjoy our latest issue, Phillip, Bob, Daniel, Kathy, and the rest of the team continue to do amazing work! Remember, you can always send us your thoughts and ideas on any of our networks! We strive to bring the best content to you, and are always willing to chat *Toyota Trucks & Cruisers*!

Until next time,

Shane



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AND ALWAYS CHECK US OUT AT TCTMAG.US

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NEW & NOTEWORTHY

By TCT Staff



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A good tool roll is a required piece of kit, especially when your Toyota vehicle transitions from 'late-model' to 'classic'. This roll from Delta Vehicle Systems is perfect for hanging, rolling, and tossing in the back of your rig. It features zipper pockets on one side and snap-down tool slots on the other with our DELTA logo. Metal AustriAplin cobra buckles and high-strength webbing. These rolls are made by hand in the great northwest by Delta Vehicle Systems.

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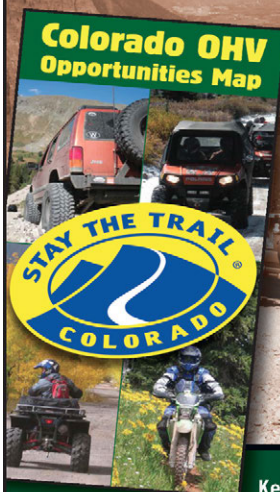
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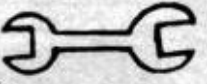





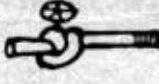






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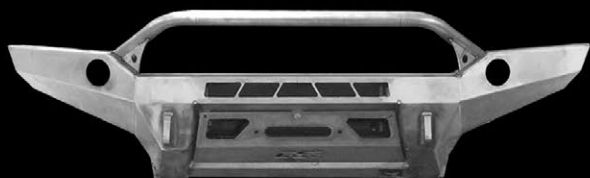
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A man in a blue hoodie and cap stands on a rocky ledge next to a dark SUV, looking out over a valley at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm glow over the scene. The valley below is filled with green fields and small towns, with mountains in the distance.

TWILIGHT ON BLACK BEAR PASS

Story by Todd Gatewood • Photography by Emily Reiten

The mention of three words “Black – Bear – Pass” evokes emotions of respect, excitement or fear. Depending on who you are, you most likely fall into one of those categories; or perhaps all of them. It is the kind of mystique that, if in a crowded bar in downtown Telluride someone spoke softly the words “Black Bear Pass”, the music would stop, the old and young alike would stand with hats removed and a silence would fall over the crowd. The trail’s legendary status continues to grow as more rollovers, near misses, and served divorce papers come attempting this trail than any other in Colorado. It is considered by numerous publications as one of the most challenging and dangerous trails in America.





The overlook at Black Bear Pass stands touting tourists, ski bums, and mountain bikers below all year above the beautiful historic gold mining town of Telluride, Colorado. The winding switch backs zig zag like drapes blowing in the wind with hair pin turns and narrow shelves. Main Street in town literally dead ends at its feet- as it spews a continuous fountain of water from the towering water falls onto the worshipers in town like an ancient Idol providing the required life source to the adoring villagers.

To conquer this god of a trail, one must traverse the scenic backside of the mountain with gradual respect— offering words of adoration along the way. It cannot be approached from the level of the worshipping villagers in the valley. The entrance is from the famous Million Dollar Highway between Silverton and Ouray and up lush green steep hillsides roamed by bellowing sheep and scrambling marmots.

The day started with no thoughts of the team attempting Black Bear. The loosely put together plan the



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evening before over adult refreshments was simple: leave Telluride, Colorado early in the morning and cross one mountain pass to get to the heart of the "Switzerland of the United States"—the San Juan Mountains of Southwest Colorado. The idea was to take advantage of the weather forecast and explore one of the most scenic by-ways in the United States – the Alpine Loop and return to "Base Camp Telluride" by highway for an easy but long first day of trails.

What began as an early start of day for a diverse team of 200 Series Land Cruiser Owners to conquer some of the most scenic trails in Southwest Colorado ended with what was most likely a record number of trails run by 200 Series Land Cruisers in a single day (14 hours).


Ophir pass was the first victim of the ambitious adventurers. It was then on to Silverton and Animas Forks to take Engineer pass to complete the Alpine Loop into Lake City. Fueled by some fresh grub from the Southern Café, it was on to Cinnamon Pass, California Gulch and then Corkscrew Gulch down to the Million Dollar Highway. Even with such a long day, there was plenty of time for pictures, bathroom breaks and admiration of the vistas and intake of the fresh mountain air. However, after such a great day the maps showed the reality that was clear but



regretful to the adrenalin fueled group of imaginary renegade explorers. We must repeat the earlier traversed Ophir Pass over the mountain back to Telluride.

Somber and quiet, the team assumed formation and began heading back. Then, striking life back into the group, the GPS lit up as the turnoff for the legendary trail came into view. Quick ham radio communications and the new energy lead the team for a bold decision: "Let's do Black Bear Now!" After a check of the time, glimpse of the sky, and repositioning of rigs for safe leaders and tail gunners, it was clear: leave now and we could make it to the overlook by twilight. The photographers in the group displayed a grin that could only mean epic shots were to come. The last trail for the day would be the most rewarding and just what was needed for this group of fresh air-crazed enthusiasts.

The sheep were clearly not impressed with our late decision and let us know we were interrupting their evening meal. They seemed to have quite a bit to say, or perhaps they were mocking us for what some would view as a decision with unnecessary risks. On cue the lone literal black sheep of the herd stormed into view with his entourage of followers. Taking it as a sign

A photograph of a dark-colored Toyota 4Runner driving on a rocky, gravelly mountain trail at dusk. The vehicle's headlights are on, illuminating the path ahead. The background shows a steep, forested mountain slope under a dark sky. A text box is overlaid on the upper part of the image.

AFTER A CHECK OF THE TIME, GLIMPSE OF THE SKY,
AND REPOSITIONING OF RIGS FOR SAFE LEADERS
AND TAIL GUNNERS, IT WAS CLEAR: LEAVE NOW AND
WE COULD MAKE IT TO THE OVERLOOK BY TWILIGHT.



and fueling the testosterone of the male drivers, radio chatter and side-splitting jokes ensued. It is a not so well-known pleasure of trailing with a great group with good radios, who, if they were not otherwise employed, would be on stage at the local comedy clubs performing for free drinks.

At the summit, the laughter subsided as the excitement and anticipation was building. The path continued to narrow down, and as a final taunt, an official sign warns there is no turning back from this point. The group trudged onward while carefully maneuvering down the main obstacles at the ledges on the edge of the waterfall. It was the most dangerous and rewarding section on the trail.

The clouds parted, and the distant mountains stood transfixed. The setting sun was gold and red and the twinkling of the lights in the valley below came into frame like a fine work of art. Then briefly, the sky stood still, the cameras came out and all that could be heard was the rushing of the falls—it was the golden hour. It was Twilight on Black Bear Pass.





Epilog: This trail team was one of four in the 4th Annual 200 Series Land Cruiser event- Land Cruiser Destination Club (LCDC). The event continues to grow with new adventurers and families seeking to use one of the most capable 4-wheel drive vehicles in the world- The Toyota Land Cruiser.

The 2018 event was based in Telluride July 25-29 with about 40-late model 200 Series (2008-2018) Land Cruisers on the trail each day. The organizers and attendees will tell you- it's about families, having fun, zero pressure, no fixed trails or strict times and most notably, no cost or sign up deadlines. It is all run by

volunteers and sponsors who give their time and money to make memories for the families. If you own or plan to own a 200 Series before next summer be sure and check out the Facebook and webpage (200LCDC) for information about next year.

About the author: Todd Gatewood is the husband to amazing wife and father to two like-minded kids who come on nearly every adventure. He is the founder and owner of Elite Land Cruisers which sponsors the LCDC event each year. He is an avid Toyota enthusiast and collector and has written before for TCT Magazine covering the same event. *TGT*

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Project 4 Adventure: 2012 Lexus GX-460



You wheel a Lexus?

Who hasn't heard that while in the back country on an amazing adventure?

If you've been reading *Toyota Cruisers & Trucks* for a while, you've seen previous articles on our **GX-470 F.A.S.T** build, and the Best Kept Secret from GXOR founder Dan Kunz. Clearly the GX (aka Land Cruiser Prado) platform isn't exactly new. So why did we decided to start A New Beginning with our Project 4 Adventure: 2012 GX-460?

As I covered in the original article, a variety of factors

culminated in saying goodbye to the **TCT Explorer** Tundra and welcoming the new rig. For this installment, I'll do a full rundown of not only our upgrades, but how our family has become acquainted with this practically perfect Adventure Vehicle.

KEEPING IT BASIC

As I mentioned in the initial article, the goal for Project 4 was for a simple build. These trucks are so capable off the shelf, a few well thought-out upgrades are all that



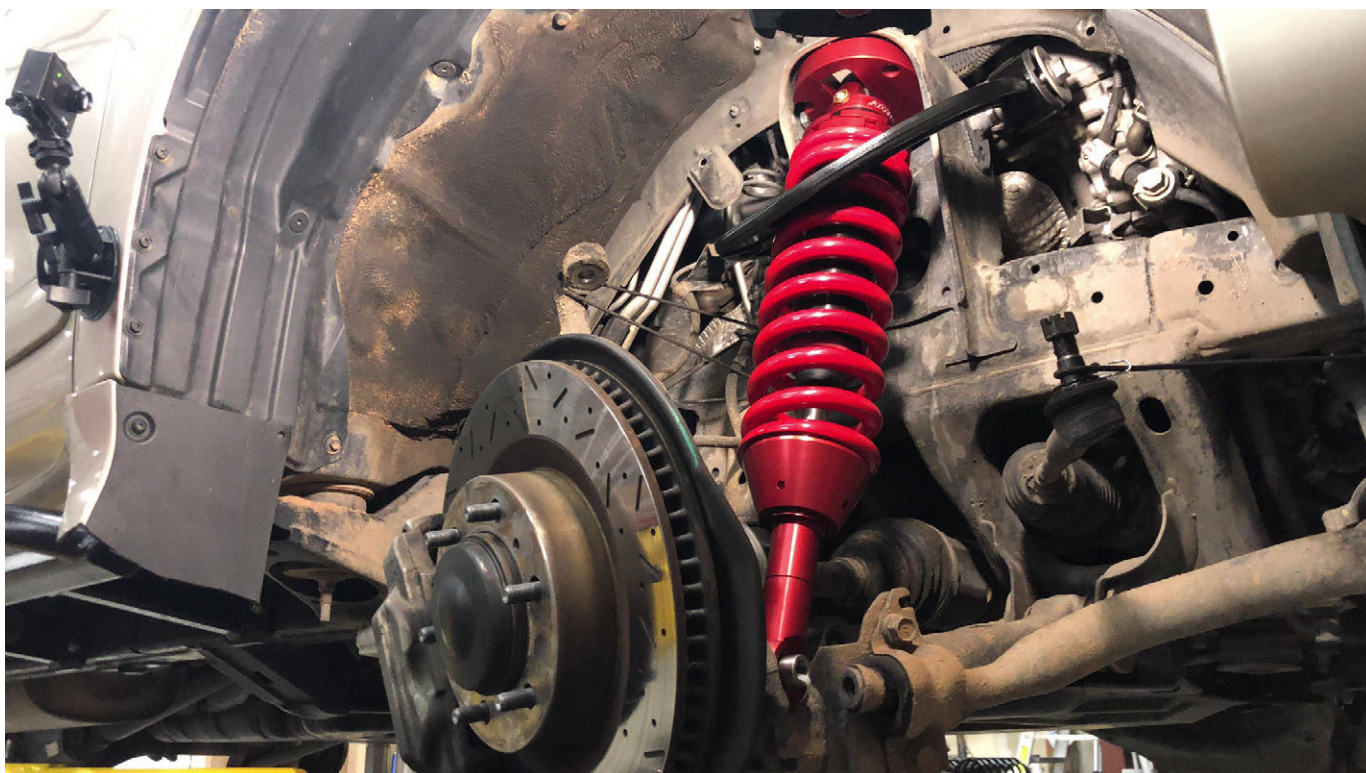


are needed for a fully adventure-ready rig.

The most noticeable addition is, of course, the Toytec BOSS suspension. Adjustable coil overs up front along with adjustable SPC Control Arms (the new forged version), combined with new springs and shocks in the rear. The original suspension had over 80,000 miles on it and was well worn. The Toytec hardware has performed flawlessly as always.

PREP FOR TOWING

Since we regularly pull our 24' Winnebago Minnie travel trailer (see 2,000 Miles In The Rockies on LiveToExplore.co), the GX needed a little extra support in the rear. Luckily, Toytec stocks the Coil-Rite in-spring air bag kit, so we got that part installed before summer arrived. Even with the taller Toytec Springs,



the air bags at 30psi give just enough extra support to avoid sagging.

The other huge upgrade that was required for towing is, of course, brakes. We connected with Cruiser Brothers to install fresh drilled/slotted heavy duty brakes on all four wheels. CB imports Terrain Tamer parts from Australia, and this upgrade has certainly ensured our GX can stop safely and securely at all times.

These trucks are so capable off the shelf, a few well thought-out upgrades are all that are needed for a fully adventure-ready rig.



A LITTLE PROTECTION, MAYBE A BIT MORE?

While we won't be doing any hardcore rock crawling with Project4, losing the GX running boards in favor of slider protection was top on the list. We installed the OPOR KDSS compatible sliders from Metal Tech, and chose to trim and keep the body side moulding for a cleaner look.

The stock thin skids have held up okay so far, but I think a set of lightweight skid plates may be a good addition in the future.

TESTING TIRES

As you read in our original article, we chose to take a chance on entry level A/T tires from our local Discount Tire. Overall these tires have been acceptable, and we haven't been stuck or had any safety issues. The only item of note is that during particularly cold times of year, they seem to lose balance fairly easily. Once the tires are warmed to operating temp they perform fine, but it is a little annoying during the winter.

We're currently at just over 25,000 miles, so we'll be looking for a new set to test later this year.

AN ODD TRANSFORMATION

Adding sliders and a lift kit will absolutely change the look and performance of any SUV. However, when it comes to transforming a GX from a grocery getter to an adventure-mobile, the rack (and accessories) are the most noticeable.

Rhino-Rack USA set us up with the Pioneer platform, MAXTRAX Mount, and High-lift/shovel mount. We also added the impeccable Batwing awning, and couldn't be happier.

For summer running, we modified the rack to flat-mount MAXTRAX, leaving the rest of the rack open for bikes, kayaks, or anything else we need.



The stock thin skids have held up OK so far, but I think a set of lightweight skid plates may be a good addition in the future.

A Toyota Tacoma driving through a body of water, creating a large splash. The vehicle is equipped with Toytec lifts. The background shows a mountain range under a cloudy sky.

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The Batwing has served us well for shade at the park, rain cover in the woods, and a cool place to get a little work done.

The Batwing has served us well for shade at the park, rain cover in the woods, and a cool place to get a little work done. We're really looking forward to testing some of the new add-ons for the Batwing that Rhino-Rack USA has in the pipeline.

For the interior, we haven't made many changes. We used a ProClip vent mount for the Yaesu ham, which supports APRS when we're out and about. Nite Ize also supplied a Steelie windshield mount so the iPad is front-and-center on the trail. Note that we never run the iPad when on paved roads due to visibility concerns.

MAKING IT WORK FOR THE TWIN COMPRESSOR

A search for mounting the ARB Twin Compressor under the hood of a GX-460 doesn't show many options. A few Prado owners created their own mount, and our friends down under have one or two off-the-shelf options. I found on a social network that someone used a mount from Hefty Fabworks on a GX-470, so I gave Chris a call. A quick trip to Colorado Springs and I arrived







home with a nicely welded 5th Gen 4Runner bracket. It didn't fit the GX. Careful drilling, a bit of primer spray paint, and a few nuts and bolts took care of that. The compressor is now securely mounted under the hood, ready to serve all of our high-performance on-board air needs.

OUR ADVENTURE RIG

So far this summer, we've taken the GX across the Rockies to Idaho. We've hauled bikes, stand up paddleboards, and lumber all around southern Colorado. We've loaded up seven adults and children to trek down from our campsite to town multiple times. Last winter we logged 15 ski days, and expect to double that number this season.

While the TCT Explorer Tundra was an amazing full-size truck, Project 4 Adventure has proven to be the quintessential Adventure Rig for a well-traveled family. We love all Toyota based vehicles, of course, but if you require room for a family (and then some), V-8 power, and a relatively modest cost, the GX-460 could be your perfect vehicle. *TCT*



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The Diversity OF KYUSHU, JAPAN

STORY BY KARIN-MARIJKE VIS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY COEN WUBBELS

It's easy to see why travelers stick to Honshu when they fly there and rent a car for a couple of weeks. With Tokyo, Kyoto, numerous samurai towns and the Japanese Alps, Japan's main island has much to offer. On Kyushu Island, the southernmost of Japan's four main islands, however, is where you can truly get away from Japan's massive urbanized world of concrete and highways. Here, within a couple of hours' driving you can visit the bright pink and blue geysers of Beppu, hike around the Aso Volcano, and chill amidst hippy vibes along the beach of Miyazaki.

Let's take a closer look.

Rough camp on
Miyamija beach.



The mountainous island of Kyushu is covered with beautiful cedar pines.



Along the road sit *jizos*—small, often childlike, statues in meditation position.

On the Road

The mountainous island of Kyushu is covered with beautiful cedar pines. The ancient ones, with massive, awe-inspiring trunks that reach for the sky grow around Shinto temples, along the staircase leading up to the main hall or in the grounds around them. Along the road sit *jizos*—small, often childlike, statues in meditation position. They are guardian deities and with winter on its way, people give them hats and scarves to protect them against the cold.

Narrow, asphalted roads twist and turn back on themselves, leading from forests to valleys allocated for agriculture and dotted with hamlets. Parabolic mirrors in every curve facilitate the driving and makes honking your horn to warn oncoming traffic unnecessary. Even though we were in Toyota country, our truck was as conspicuous as ever. stood out in the crowd of small, flashy Japanese cars that characterize the roads. Many Japanese didn't realize we were driving an actual Toyota. Even when we pointed out the logo, some responded with an unconvinced look, "Really? This is Toyota?!" The Japanese people don't typically own older cars, plus taxes are higher on older vehicles.

Volcanic Activities

Inland lies the Mount Aso caldera, with 80 miles in circumference the it's the world's largest volcanic crater. The Aso Volcano is Japan's highest volcano (5,220 feet) and was active when we were there, making it impossible to walk up the edge and peek down. We had to make do with the Volcano Museum onsite for more information and detailed pictures. But the trip wasn't a waste of time. The surrounding landscape characterized by high grasslands is magnificent for driving and hiking.

In Minamiaso (lit: 'South of Aso') we learned how to cook soba noodles (buckwheat noodles) in the Soba Dōjō restaurant (*Dōjō* means "place for learning"). Mrs. Furusho was patient but very specific in her instructions: don't push too hard, roll out the dough deeper and thinner, and mix with more kindness and dedication. She almost made us talk to the dough, I felt. We handed over the process of preparation to the cooks who lowered the noodles into boiling water and a few minutes later they were served on a tray with soya sauce and side dishes. I'm sure we won't get a Michelin Star any time soon for our noodles, but it was quite satisfying to eat a tasty meal that was of our own making.

On the east coast lies Beppu, arguably Kyushu's biggest attraction. Set up by the founder of



In Minamiaso, we learned how to cook soba noodles in the Soba Dōjō restaurant.

the Jishu sect of Buddhism, it was once a health spa in the middle of nowhere. Today, it has a high level of 'Disneyworld' entertainment, as Coen and I like to call such a place. Despite the hordes, it was worth a visit. Beppu boasts the second highest number of hot springs in the world and the city abounds with hot baths ranging from small, basic ones to the most extravagant spas. En masse people visit the surrounding *jigokus* ('hell'), hot pools in the boldest of colors, from bubbling grey mud to boiling, blood-red clay with red steam rising from the surface, and turquoise water smooth as glass. We ate eggs and corn on the cob prepared with steam from the *Kamado Jigoku* ('furnace' or 'oven hell') while we soaked our feet in scalding hot, transparent water. All of this, of course, is very good for your health.

A Lesson in History in a Samurai Town

Driving a bit farther south we were in for some Dutch history and being from the Netherlands, we were intrigued. In 1600, while searching for Japan, the Dutch had got lost and sailors were dying. The ship 'De Liefde' stranded and the 23 survivors were saved. This unexpected encounter became the start of a trade relationship between the two countries that lasted several centuries, while all other countries were banned from coming here. Together with

The drive to active volcano, Mount Aso caldera.





Driving under the Ayakawa Gorge suspension bridge.

the Chinese, the Dutch were required to live secluded on the island of Dejima, which is now part of Nagasaki (on the west coast). Only goods could go to the other shores, no foreigners. This fact aside, Usuki was our introduction to Japan's picturesque samurai towns that you find throughout Kyushu as well as Honshu. On the hilltop were the remains of a castle, which in Japan looks more like a vast white mansion than like the gray fortress-type constructions we have in Europe.

Usuki itself is a tranquil, pleasant town. Strolling the narrow Niōza-Historical Road we admired the rustic architecture of white plastered or natural stone walls and the traditional, unpainted wooden houses. At the far end we crossed the road and visited the impressive Ryugen-ji temple. It had an elaborate three-story pagoda and, adjacent, an old cemetery with a higgledy-piggledy collection of weathered stones covered with moss and lichen. In between we stumbled upon little Buddha statues and couldn't miss the occasional modern tomb of smooth, shiny natural stone, which looked out of place.

Back in the countryside we stopped at a suspension bridge that hangs across the stunning Ayakawa Gorge. Being 820-foot in length and 465-foot in height, it is one of the highest pedestrian suspension bridges in the world. From the bridge we looked out over the evergreen primeval forests that cover the slopes. Beyond the bridge a trail zigzagged

through the forest for about a mile and we were warned to watch our step because of poisonous snakes that might be warming up in the sunrays that shone across the path.

Beaches and Hippy Vibes

We headed to the beaches of Miyamija, in the southeastern corner of Kyushu. Here you may meet people who refuse to buy food from Honshu, afraid of the Fukushima pollution and not trusting the government to be honest about it. Many grow their own food, including rice. Along the roads (throughout the country) are machines where people can take their harvested rice and have it dehusked. People from Honshu come here to settle in the countryside, sometimes maintaining a somewhat hippie lifestyle and maybe joining the surfing scene that is particularly alive along Miyazaki's coast in the southeastern corner. Some start their own business, whether a car workshop, a restaurant, or something else. Most of the people we met were fed up with the world of consumerism, didn't care about wealth and belongings, and just wanted to live happy, peaceful and easygoing lives.

On Miyamija's beaches we unfolded our rooftop tent and took swims in the lukewarm waters. It was the perfect region to unhurry, to absorb and digest all the information and sights



Rice fields dot the landscape of Kyushu.

of the past few weeks. It was time for a rest. We had explored only the east side of the island. The south and west were patiently waiting until we were ready for them. We would need many more weeks to see it all, but that will be another story. *187*

Freelance writer Karin-Marijke Vis, along with her partner Coen Wubbels, photographer, combine their love for adventure with work they enjoy. Sometimes described as being the 'slowest overlanders in the world,' they believe in making connections and staying in a place long enough to do so. In 2003, the couple purchased an antique BJ45 Land Cruiser and after a three-year trip from their home in the Netherlands to Asia they traveled in South America (nine years) and the Far East (two years). Karin-Marijke and Coen are currently traveling in Russia. They've been published in car/4x4 and travel magazines around the world. How to follow their adventures:

Website:
landcruisingadventure.com
Facebook:
facebook.com/landcruising
Instagram:
www.instagram.com/landcruising.adventure

Author and photographer with new friends.







[FRAMED]

Prewitt Ridge in Los Padres
National Forest captured with DJI
Mavic Pro.

PHOTO BY SIMON MORRIS



[FRAMED]

Corkscrew Gulch in Colorado
captured with Nikon D4

PHOTO BY KEN REITEN





[FRAMED]

f/2.8 1/177s 4mm

GX adventure

PHOTO BY SHANE WILLIAMS





[FRAMED]

f/9, 1/100sec, ISO100

Finding that fall time
Mountain Goodness in the
Colorado high country

PHOTO BY JANELLE HENDERSON





Outdoor Retailer Summer 2018

Denver hosted its first Outdoor Retailer Summer show July 23-26, 2018. Being my hometown, my plan was to take a few hours each day to steal away from the office and take in the show a bit at a time.

Day 1: We had a few appointments to structure the day, which was good because it was easy to become frozen and overwhelmed: Where to start? What to see? How do I fit it all in! So Creative Director Kathy Locke and I spent at least an hour laying hands on every **Goal Zero** product. Some were familiar, others not yet released. All of them focused on solving a power or light issue.

DAY 2

At least I knew how to find the front door and had my media credentials. A few more appointments got me off to a good start and feeling like I might actually figure this thing out. I had answers for why a Toyota 4x4 magazine was at a retail show. I raced to the show after lunch just in time for my appointment with **Dometic**. After barraging marketing rep (and avid 4x4 enthusiast)



Matt Glass with questions by e-mail for months, I got facetime with the technical designers and did my best to stump them. But first I cooled off with ice cream from one of their freezers (look for my in-depth review of the CFZ 75DZW fridge/freezer in an upcoming issue). After the show, activities went on at the pitch party hosted by our good friends and neighbor at Gear Junkie. We hung out with old friends like Bryon Dorr of Exploring Elements and got to know Adam Wood of Step 22 better.

DAY 3

It was a quick morning visit then off to the "office" to "work." But that's a problem worth having. We met good friend Scott Brady of Overland International (think Overland Journal and Expedition Portal) to catch up. Scott was visiting with Joe Risi of Backbone Media who represents several brands including Tincup Whiskey. Being that the following weekend was the Rising Sun Four Wheel Drive Club of Colorado (my home club) annual "Ghost Town Run" including the old town of Tincup, Colorado: Joe arranged for some Tincup Whiskey to ride along with us, which was consumed responsibly by adults around the campfire, of course.



DAY 4

Feeling like a pro, I started off with power breakfast with our friend Chandra Proffitt from Proffitts Resurrection Land Cruisers. We met at downtown's local favorite, Sam's #3, and walked the few blocks to the Denver Convention Center. Thursday is considered by some as the "slow" day at OR. Understandably vendors are running on fumes, aching feet, and barely any voice left. But for us it was

an amazing day. Not only had we figured out the trail, but we showed up full of coffee and enthusiasm. We had the best conversations with product designers and brand managers. They are dedicated to the product and have struggled to make it their best. We have technical questions (and sometimes suggestions). We have to know how its going to hold up. The designers and brand managers are the people we can geek out with.

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Here are a few highlights of what we saw and discovered:

We have been demoing **Klimt's** KSB Double Down Sleeping Bag, 650 fill 30 degree rated double sleeping bag and Luxe Pillows. That and many other innovative products designed for a comfortable camp were on display.

In vehicle dependent travel we have the luxury of being able to carry a more substantial sleeping pad than a backpack. Many of **Exped's** products are light enough for packing and comfortable enough for use anywhere. We like their products and we like that the feature photo in the booth showed an employee's Tacoma bed outfitted with Exped product.

Garmin offers an amazing array of electronics that keep us safe and enhance our adventures. With many models of GPS mapping products (I have been an eTrex user since around 2002) and satellite communications within reach of any budget. We looked with interest at the new InReach mini, a powerful



(Garmin photo: Business Wire)





yet bite sized GPS emergency beacon system with text message capability, as well as a line of wristwatches that wirelessly connect with your other devices.

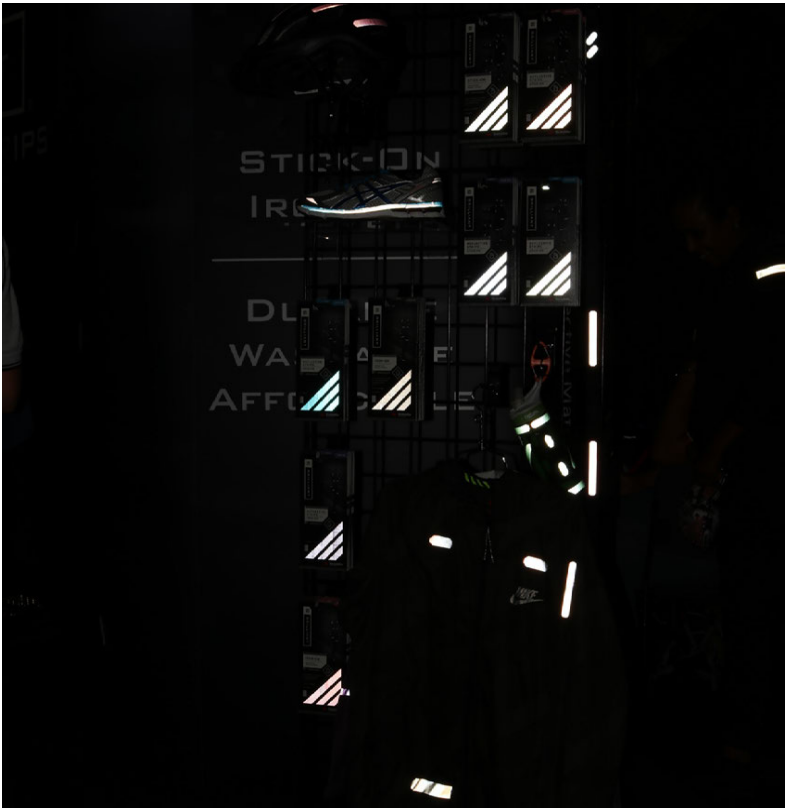
The **Wyoming Outdoor Recreation Office & Division of State Parks, Historic Sites and Trails** had a booth right next to Colorado's. Dave Glenn from WY spoke with us about the great opportunity for Toyota 4x4 based adventures in Wyoming, and his FJ40. We live in the West, love it, respect it, and enjoy it. We love to see interest at the state level in promoting outdoor activity and Wyoming understands that responsible motorized use is the only way to access our vast western landscape.

I have a few hundred nights on **Nemo Equipment** mattresses. I took a hot shower at Overland Expo this year courtesy of their Helio Shower. I could not pass the opportunity to pick the brain of one of their product designers and check out new gear.

Smartwool recently announced HQ relocation from Steamboat Springs, CO to the Denver area. We are delighted that they are staying in CO. Its understandably tough news for our friends in Steamboat. Don't underestimate how a good pair of socks can make you feel.

Eureka! was a term uttered all across the west in the Gold Rush days. It still is thanks to **Eureka/Jetboil**. Eureka is a brand long established and respected from the basic green Boy Scout tent to their latest innovative products such as the Gonzo Grill which is fast becoming an essential part of our kit. On display was a soon to be launched line of cooking pots and pans which incorporate the JetBoil heat retention architecture for faster and more fuel efficient heating and cooking. The JetLink features mean you can do all your cooking off one propane bottle.

Safe Reflections has a line of





reflective material you can buy in retail sticker packs or work with them to create custom products for your application. Why we liked it: They have created a process to color the material to suit your need with barely any loss in reflectivity. Black reflective decals to keep you safe stuck on the side of the road at night. Imagine that. You can also add their products to almost any gear imaginable.

We admit to being serious map geeks. We love our GPS products but there is still no substitute for a good printed map. We said “printed” not “paper” in a nod to **National Geographic’s** plastic “paper” maps which are durable and waterproof. We are lucky that they, like so many great companies, are here in Colorado and we can’t wait to go visit.

Also just down the road in Boulder, CO is **Nite Ize**. Adding to the list of companies whose products we use, starting with their reflective tent ropes and line tensioners. We foresee more in-depth looks at their lights and hands-free mobile mounts in the future.

While there is not enough space here to write about all the great products we saw and good people we met, just like there was not enough time to see every great product and meet everyone, big picture: we saw many small local innovators, large well known national brands, and overseas manufactures. There has never been a better time than now to get just the right gear for your adventures and we here at *Toyota Cruiser & Trucks* will strive to keep you advised and informed. If you have an experience with gear you want to share, please drop us a line!. *TCT*

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A Summer with Sea To Summit



Testing out breakfast to dinner with the modern camp cookware set from Sea to Summit

In our **Winter 2018 issue** we showed off the Sea to Summit Alpha 4.2 set. The initial specs and demo units from Outdoor Retailer looked great, so when the set arrived for testing, we couldn't wait to get outside for a nice meal... or 10.

This set, including the 8" and 10" Alpha frying pans is not only lightweight and non-stick, but it all fits together well and comes in at just over four lbs. in weight

As you would expect with modern camp cookware, this set is built solid and will likely withstand years of hard use.

The real feature of this set is the integrated handle

system. Instead of flimsy detachable handles, the Alpha system uses flip up (or out) handles with built-in safety locks. This means the pots and pans are easy to handle... and safe and secure when in use or when stowed.

While I'm no backcountry chef, this system has cooked eggs, bacon, brats, dogs, and burgers without fail. The even heating also allows water to quickly boil for coffee, tea, or a quick dehydrated meal.

OTHER DETAILS WORTH NOTING

The nonstick coating is PFOA free, and the pots and pans



are hard anodized aluminum.

- The nonstick coating is PFOA free, and the pots & pans are hard anodized aluminum.
- These pans and bowls are very easy to clean, especially with the included dishrag.
- Delta Bowls and cups are BPA free and microwave safe
- Delta cups include lids and insulation sleeves
- The entire Alpha 4.2 set stacks together neatly

For a lightweight, easy (and safe) to use cookset for under \$120, check out the Alpha 4.2 from Sea To Summit! *TCT*





FJ SUMMIT XII and Rebelle U

The FJ Summit celebrated 12 years this year, but for this first-timer, it was an adventure a year in the making.

I purchased my 2008 FJ Cruiser in April 2017. It has been an amazing vehicle and I honestly don't know how I've lived this long without one. I first heard about the FJ Summit right after I bought my FJ, and because it was April, the Summit had been sold out for a few weeks. I was fascinated and eager to learn about this event in Ouray, Colorado, filled with Toyota enthusiasts from across the country and off-road trails traversing through some of Colorado's most majestic mountain ranges.

My main goal for this event though, was attending Rebelle U.

ON OUR WAY

Our trip starts on Wednesday morning of the FJ Summit with my daughter, Grace, and I packing up the FJ Cruiser to meet up with *Toyota Cruisers & Trucks* Associate Editor, Daniel Markofsky, and his girlfriend, Anna Kowalska, near Morrison, Colorado. Daniel and Anna arrive in Daniel's 1993 FZJ80 Land Cruiser, "with 305,000 miles," Daniel proudly exclaims, to work our way toward Ouray, Colorado.

After a stop in Grand Junction, Colorado, Daniel asks if we would be interested in a quick visit to see one of his friends, Jeremiah Proffitt, to check out some of Jeremiah's Land Cruisers and FJ40s at his place, Proffitt's Resurrection Land Cruisers in Austin, Colorado. In my 30+ years living in Colorado, I had never heard of Austin, but I tell him we're game for anything, so off we go.



LEFT: The famous TCT magazine sticker signifying where you're going. **RIGHT:** One of the many gorgeous FJ's at Proffitt's Resurrection Land Cruisers

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We reach Proffitt's Resurrection Land Cruisers and meet Jeremiah and his wife, Chandra, who is busily ordering parts for vehicles undergoing restoration in their shop. There are so many gorgeous vehicles in this shop, I can't stop taking photos. I learn from Jeremiah the different types of restorations and the approximate cost for some of the vehicles in his shop. Even though I know how much a classic vehicle restoration can be (as much as \$200,000 or more), it still floors me when I hear the numbers.

We say our goodbyes and head to the local grocery store so Daniel can stock up on ice cream—that's right, ice cream. Daniel is testing out the new Dometic CFX-75 cooler (read about his review in the Fall 2018 issue), and he wants to hand out ice cream to participants on the trails he will be leading during the FJ Summit. If the scenery wasn't enough during the trail runs, I'm pretty sure the ice cream will be the cherry on top.

FJ SUMMIT

We start our final trek down Highway 550 into Ouray and as we enter town, I can hardly contain my excitement. I'm thrilled to look around at the beautiful, historic buildings, the mountains surrounding Ouray, and... SO MANY FJs! Daniel leads us to Main Street and 3rd Avenue in downtown Ouray to Twin Peaks Lodge & Hot Springs, or for the next few days, FJ Summit Headquarters.

Daniel introduces me to many people at the event—

some are friends, some are vendors, most are both. One person I run into is Tiffany Walker along with her husband, Tom. I'm beyond ecstatic to see Tiffany—a wonderful friendship has formed between us since I wrote the story about her and her Rebelle Rally partner, Rori Lewis [Read It Here] from Team #154 Roads Less Traveled. She reminds me about the Rebelle U class that begins the next day. I am excited to learn navigation

LEFT TO RIGHT, TOP TO BOTTOM: A rare 1983 FJ in the works at Proffitt's Resurrection; Daniel and Anna speaking with Emil Foldager with Bilstein; Vendors, vehicles, and visitors galore at FJ Summit; a nice Tacoma setup from RCI Offroad



OURAY, COLORADO

Known as the "Switzerland of America", Ouray (pronounced Yer-ray) was founded in 1876 as a gold and silver mining town and is also filled with numerous hot springs. Named after Chief Ouray of the Ute Native American tribe, Ouray is a small, quaint town of just over 1,000 people, and during one week in July, it's filled with more than 300 Toyota vehicles and over 600 attendees.



ABOVE: Practicing plotting at Rebelle U; **BELOW:** Emily Miller explaining the importance of navigation and understanding your vehicle

and off-road driving skills from two of the most amazing, off-road rally women in the industry.

THE WOMEN OF REBELLE U

Emily Miller has trained over 4,000 people for off-road driving. She is the founder of the Rebelle Rally, the first women's off-road navigation rally raid in the United States, and she will be teaching the two-day Rebelle U course. She was trained by none other than Rod Hall, raced on his team, and had multiple podium finishes, most notably in the Baja 1000 and the Rallye Aïcha des Gazelles in Morocco, where she placed 2nd driving a stock vehicle and was the first American to podium. She is calm and confident when she speaks and presents, making you quickly aware of the knowledge she possesses. She knows a lot. You listen.

Nicole Pitell-Vaughan is the co-owner of Total Chaos Fabrication and sponsors the Rebelle U and the Rebelle Rally. She is equally happy on two or four wheels. She, too, has raced in numerous off-road events, landing on the podium at many of them. Nicole has raced in the Rallye Aïcha des Gazelles twice, placing 2nd in 2016 driving the Total Chaos Tacoma, Morocco Taco, with another famous off-road driver, Chrissie Beavis. They were the first American team ever to podium finish at the Gazelles, which began in 1990. I would say Nicole probably knows a little bit about off-roading as well.

While Emily is calm, cool, and collected, Nicole is a hurricane of energy, laughter and passion—the wild child. That energy quickly



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rubs off on you. You can tell she loves what she does, and she loves sharing that passion and knowledge with everyone else, and she wants to make sure everyone finds their passion, too. Together, they create a balance of each other and encompass everything I need and love about women-led instruction—learning, support and empowerment, trust, and in the end, laughter and amazing friendships formed.

To say I am starstruck is an understatement. For the next two days, I feel like I'm in a dream world surrounded by off-road rally royalty.

REBELLE U

On day one of Rebelle U, I finally get to meet Rori Lewis, the other half of Team Roads Less Traveled. Rori is just as sweet and kind in person as she was when I interviewed her last year. She is helpful and supportive and full of navigation tips and tricks—she is a navigating phenomenon and I look to her during our next two days for help, a lot.

We learn about map and compass navigation, understanding the most important part of a map

is being able to locate yourself by geographic landmarks and formations, first and foremost. We triangulate, plot, find and create checkpoints, and learn latitude and longitude. I quickly learn calculating longitude is my navigation nemesis—it's kicking my butt and it's frustrating.

Day two is geared toward our vehicles—learning about them, the different four-wheel drive systems in each of our vehicles, suspension, and vehicle dynamics. I learn how far I can truly see in front of my vehicle, and where my tires actually are in relation to where I am in the driver's seat which, coincidentally, becomes invaluable on Saturday when I do the Alpine Loop.

We take off for some on-trail training in four-wheel drive. I learn all I really need to air down my tires is a pebble, along with a countdown, which I find incredibly entertaining. We are taught to left-foot brake, and we drive a certain section of the trail without braking but using our gears, and more importantly, planning, to help while we do all of this. Emily was in my vehicle during this lesson. I felt like I was 16-years old again taking the driving test with



OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP TO BOTTOM: Maps, maps, and more maps at Rebelle U; Me (right) with Emily Miller (center) and Nicole Pitell-Vaughan (left); **ABOVE:** A lesson on tires, tire maintenance, and airing down with just the right pebble



TCT EVENTS



LEFT TO RIGHT, TOP TO BOTTOM: Anna getting even better views of the San Juan Mountains on top of Daniel's Land Cruiser; Daniel chatting with some of the drivers in our Alpine Loop group; The group makes a stop at Ute Ulay Mill and Town Site; **OPPOSITE PAGE:** My first breathtaking view of the San Juans at Odom Point before the top of Engineer Pass with other FJs in the distance





the driving teacher—it was nerve-racking for a little while.

At the end of the training Friday evening, we gather for a happy hour celebration to acknowledge our successes over the last two days. We congratulate and encourage one another—especially for those who plan to race in this year's Rebelle Rally, and give supportive suggestions on things we can practice and improve on, like my longitude calculations mostly, but also trusting my own driving skills and judgement. I get a moment with Nicole during the ruckus and laughter to thank her for her time and for sponsoring such a great class. We talk a little about our lives and she begins to tell me a little more about her personal life—successes as well as her struggles. This just makes me appreciate her more. I realize that even though I think she's tough-as-nails and an off-roading badass, she's vulnerable too, just like the rest of us. Among teary eyes between us, I hug her and tell her she's amazing.

I tell the bartender he is surrounded by off-road racing royalty. Nicole says at the end of the day, she "ties her shoes just like everyone else." I smile and agree, but I let her know that along with Emily, Tiffany, and Rori, she represents for other women, courage, confidence, and empowerment to let us know we can all do this. We can all be great off-road drivers as well as navigate our own path—whether on a paper map or in our day-to-day life. We can do *anything*.

ALPINE LOOP

Saturday, I meet up with Daniel again who will be the trail leader for the Alpine Loop trail where I've decided to put my new driving techniques to the test. The beginning of Engineer Pass proves a little more tippy than I like, and I need a spotter through a small section, mostly because I panic and lose my line, feeling like I'm holding up the rest of the group even though there are only two other people behind me. I manage and make it through the rest of the rocky section, but I keep having to tell myself it's okay; I'm not in a race. Be calm. Be accurate. Feeling panicked and rushed in situations is something I am still working through.

Our group arrives to the top of Engineer Pass to beautiful views. We make our way to Lake City for lunch and then head back out to Cinnamon Pass to Animas Forks. One section of this trail is where my true Rebelle U class training comes into play. Coming in the opposite direction is a Nissan truck who pulls over, as much as he can, leaving us to drive by his passenger side with a steep shelf on our driver's side. I've been off-roading for more than a year now, but I am definitely a newbie with passing on shelf roads. This has been a big fear of mine for some time.

One by one, each vehicle works their way slowly past the truck. When my turn comes, I take some deep breaths, check where my tires are and roll down my

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LEFT TO RIGHT: Working our way to Animas Forks; Daniel adding some costume flair while brewing up some Turkish coffee during our break in Animas Forks

window so I can see how close I am to the edge. I realize I am definitely closer than I want. My daughter watches out her passenger window to let me know how close I am to hitting the truck. I take it slow and steady and little by little, we work our way through. I'm pretty sure I want to jump out of the car and kiss the ground, but there are still a few vehicles behind me, so I can't. Unfortunately, the new 4Runner behind me isn't so lucky and hits the truck as he goes by, scraping his rear passenger fender. It is that close and that scary.

We make our way to Animas Forks ghost town and check out the beautiful abandoned buildings and take photos of the majestic mountains surrounding us. Unfortunately, Daniel doesn't get a chance to refill the Dometic cooler with ice cream for this trail, so he brews some of his delicious Turkish coffee for the group instead.

HEADING HOME

Back in Ouray, my daughter and I enjoy our last night at the FJ Summit and meet up briefly with Daniel and Anna. We've had a blast at the Summit but we are thoroughly

exhausted. My daughter and I eat some dinner and head back to our hotel. We want to be up bright and early the next morning for the annual FJ Summit group photo and for our trip home.

After the group photo in the morning, we have breakfast with Daniel and Anna in town and meet up later at their camp site as we begin making our way back to Denver. We take McClure Pass while the engine from Daniel's Land Cruiser cooks up Rueben sandwiches, and we find a secluded rest area by the Colorado River just off the highway to enjoy them. After a few more hours on the road, we all make it home, tired, but safe and sound.

It was so incredible to be a part of this event and to meet so many great people and see such amazing scenery. The training and camaraderie from the Rebelle U class and the wonderful women I met is something I won't soon forget. Much luck to those from the class that are racing in the Rebelle Rally this year—Team Roads Less Traveled and Team Locos Moccos Rebelles. Hopefully, I can attend the FJ Summit again next year, but until then, I will be patiently waiting for the 2019 FJ Summit registration announcement just like everyone else. *TCT*

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The Tundra Project of a Lifetime



Take a 2018 Toyota Tundra Platinum with the 5.7L V8.

Gently unbolt and remove the bed. Add the first PATRIOT CAMPERS OFF ROAD (PCOR) body for the Tundra platform in North America. Outfit it to handle virtually anything. Explore the world.

As Expedition Overland founder Clay Croft tells it, this project has been the dream build he and his team have been thinking about for years. It's truly inspiring and showcases the full potential of the well proven Tundra full size pickup.

You can watch the build of this truck beginning in Episodes 2 and 3 of their new series, Overlander. <http://tctmag.us/xoverlander>

See page 62 for the full build list, but I'll cover a few of my favorites here:



PCOR

This mod gets its own page because well, it's fairly substantial.

Instead of pulling another trailer with this full-size truck, XO partnered with Patriot Campers to test the bed-replacement PCOR body. In Australia this type of modification is very common on the smaller Hilux truck, so what works there should obviously be perfect on our continent.

So much more than storage and toolboxes, the PCOR transforms the Tundra into a self-contained Overland ????

This thing literally has everything. ARB Twin Compressor? Check. 20Gal onboard water w/ pump? Check. Lighting all the way around? Check. Inverter, chargers, and enough outlets to run an epic overland series? Check. Dometic Fridge? Check. EZ Awn tent up top? Check.

If there's more, I'm not sure what else could be added.



X3 MERIDIAN

2016 Toyota Tacoma
TRD Off-Road | 3.5L Atkinson Cycle V6

OVERLAND

Camper System

AT Overland Habitat - Awning, Nemo Roof Top Tent, Customized Goose Gear Interior

Roof Rack

Eezi-Awn K9 Custom Roof Rack

Fridge

National Luna Weekender 52L Fridge Freezer Aluminum

Fridge Slide

AT Overland Combo Fridge Slide with JK Stove

Air Compressor

ARB On-Board Twin High Performance Air Compressor

Auxiliary Water

Water Jerry Cans on CBI Rear Swing Away Bumper

Auxiliary Gas

Gas Jerry Cans on CBI Rear Swing Away Bumper

Roof Rack Storage

Two Hard Mounted 42L Aluminum Alu-Boxes, K9 Roof Rack Dual Jerry Can Mount

Snorkel

Safari Snorkel

TIRES, SUSPENSION, WHEELS

Tires

General Tire Grabber AT/X Tires in 285/70/R17

Wheels

ICON Alloys Six Speed Wheels

Front Suspension

ICON Vehicle Dynamics 2.5 Series Extended Travel Coilover Shocks, with CDCV Remote Reservoir (0-2.75" Lift)

Rear Suspension

ICON Vehicle Dynamics 2.5 Series Omega Bypass Rear Shocks w/CDCV Remote Reservoir (0-1.5" Lift)

Upper Control Arms

ICON Vehicle Dynamics Billet Upper Control Arm Kit

Diff Breather

ARB Differential Axle Breather

BODY ARMOR

Front Bumper

CBI Aluminum Front Bumper

Rear Bumper

CBI Split Dual Rear Swing Away Bumper with Tire Carrier and Dual Jerry Can Carrier

Steps & Skid Plates

CBI Aluminum Steps & Skid Plates

ELECTRICAL

Main Switch Panel

sPod 4X4 8 Circuit SE System, 2 Touchscreen Control Panels | Accommodates all Auxiliary Lighting

Truck Radio

ICOM ID-5100A Deluxe VHF/UHF Dual Band D-STAR Transceiver

Truck Satellite Phone

Iridium 9575 Extreme Satellite Phone with External Antenna.

Dual Battery System

National Luna Dual Battery System with Surface Mount Controller, 2 Odyssey Batteries within Goose Gear Charge Box

Charge Box

Goose Gear Custom Build Charge Box with 8 x 12v Charge Sockets and 4 USB Charge Ports

RECOVERY

MAXTRAX

MAXTRAX MKII | Mounted using MAXTRAX Rear Wheel Harness

Winch

WARN 68500 9.5xp 9500-lb Winch with Synthetic Rope | 9500 lb. Capacity

Hi-lift Jack

Hi-Lift Jack 48" X-TREME | Mounted on CBI Rear Swing Away

Recovery kit

WARN Medium Duty Winching Accessory Kit

Winch Shackle

Factor 55 FlatLink E

Tire Repair Kit

ARB Orange Speedy Seal Tire Repair Kit

Tire Deflator

ARB E-Z Deflator

Tire Inflator

ARB Blue Inflator with Gauge and Braided Hose

LIGHTING

40" Combo Light Bar

RIGID Industries SR-Series White 40" Spot/Flood Combo LED Light Bar | Mounted under Roof Rack

Reverse Lights

RIGID Industries 20251 Dually 60° Lens | Mounted in CBI Rear Bumper

Area Lights

RIGID Industries 1X2 65° DC Scene Light | Mounted on Habitat Sides

Rock Lights

RIGID Industries Rock Light Kit 6 Lights Cool White

Lighting Security Hardware

RIGID Industries Security Hardware Kit | All Lights Mounted with Security Hardware

Habitat Interior Lighting

National Luna Hard Mount and Clip-on LED Lights

MISCELLANEOUS

GPS/Mapping

Hema Explorer 4WD Map App on iPad Mini

Accessory Mounts

Assorted Ram Mounts for Phone, GPS, iPad, etc.

TRD Accessories

TRD Cold Air Intake, TRD Exhaust, TRD PRO Grille, TRD PRO Hood

Tinted Windows

Tinted Windows | Bos Tint & Sound Bozeman, MT

Custom Vehicle Wrap

Vehicle Wrap | SCS Wraps in Bozeman, MT

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Version 05/18

ARMOR

For armor the team went with front and rear bumpers, sliders, and skid plates from CBI Off Road. They also added front and rear WARN Zeon 12k winches to help aid in recovery, should the beast ever become stuck.

LIGHTS + ELECTRIC

All around the truck RIGID lights are available to illuminate the night, all wired through the sPOD 8 circuit system. XO had to relocate the washer fluid in the Tundra to accommodate the custom auxiliary battery tray.

There is so much to love about this Tundra. It really is a unique specimen of what is possible with a full-size truck, with legendary Toyota dependability. We're looking forward to watching future episodes of Expedition Overland featuring this amazing vehicle.

Expedition Overland is now streaming their new series **"Overlander"** on their YouTube channel. Watch all 9 Episodes now! *10/17*



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Camping

This summer our family (and entire TCT Crew) have had the chance to go camping (link: <http://tctmag.us/gocamping>). That's right, old-school... tent on the ground (and sometimes a trailer), nothing more than basic supplies... camping.

You know what? It felt a lot like overlanding. I don't mean the 'capital' Overlanding, but just spending time in the great outdoors with friends and family. Don't get me wrong, I enjoy the professional Overland scene as much as anyone (See Trinity on Page 60).

The real point I'd like to get across is simply this:

Go out. Explore. Find Adventure.

You don't need the gear, the rig, the photo and video equipment. You certainly don't need an Instagram account

to truly enjoy our amazing world.

If you choose to put together an epic multi-week trip, great.

If you choose to head out after work on a Friday, pitch a tent, and make it to the top of your local mountain, that's also great.

Call it **Camping**. Call it Overlanding. Call it Vehicle Based Adventure Travel (VBAT). Call it a Tuesday for all I care. I encourage you to explore your world.

We started this little project over 10 years ago to help promote the idea of using amazing Toyota vehicles to get out and see our world. We still enjoy that exploration, and hopefully our words and photos inspire you to do the same. *TCT*



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YOUR RIGS

IT'S NICE TO SHARE!

Have a great photo with a story to share? Submit it and you may be included here!

» tctmag.us/myrig



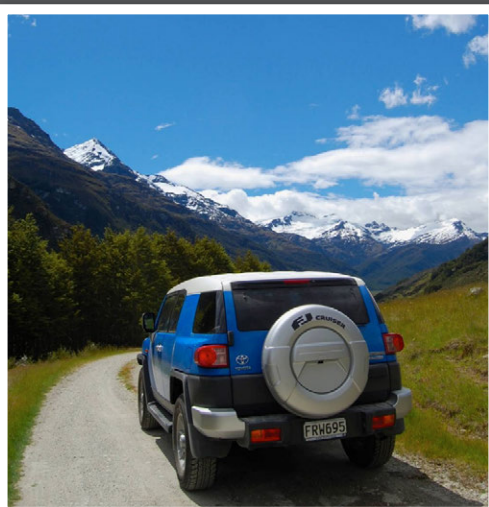
BLACK MOUNTAIN, NC

2014 Tacoma

From Jordan

#THESMURFRUNNER

Find this truck on Instagram



KIWI TOUR '11

#throwback from New Zealand

<http://tctmag.us/kiwi11>