

INDUSTRY
CUSTOM

GO! THE TROOPY

OUT OF THE BOX THEY'RE ONE OF THE BEST TOURING RIGS MONEY CAN BUY, BUT THIS BLOKE HAS FOUND A WAY TO TURN HIS BIG WHITE VAN INTO SOMETHING SPECIAL...



Toyota Troop Carriers have always had a bit of a cult following in Australia since the first 45 and 47 Series LandCruisers introduced the public to the idea of touring in an off-road van back in the 1970s.

While the engines have come a long way, the electrics are a little more advanced and the front end leaves were ditched some time ago for somewhat more comfy coils, they have fundamentally remained unchanged. They're still highly capable, highly respected and highly functional touring vehicles that are just about the ideal base to build the perfect tourer from.

This is one example of a Troopy that has been taken to the next level. The owner, Phil, has done just about everything you can imagine to make this bus his version of a faultless Outback mile-muncher; and after crawling all over this thing myself, I did find it difficult not to be a little jealous. It just has everything.





HIGH QUALITY SHOCKS FOR THE TOUGHEST TRACKS.

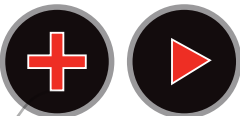
— SINCE 1857 —



Heavy Track



RAID



Specifically designed for SUV, 4WD, & Light Truck applications

Q PRODUCT FINDER



Topperformance
Products Australian Distributor of KONI Shock Absorbers



topperformance.com.au



THE OWNER

The BFG KO2 rubber is mounted on tried and true Dynamic black steelies



It probably won't come as much of a surprise to learn that as an owner with a vehicle this decked out, Phil owns and operates OzAdventure4X4 – a 4X4 shop that sells a wide range of 4WD parts and accessories. Make no mistake though, Phil isn't some sort of glorified accountant trying to cash in on the off-road lifestyle we all know and love. He's a fair dinkum off-road adventurer who has turned his passion and thirst for travel into a successful business. When his 'other car' is a Unimog, you know he's serious about his low-range obsession.

In fact, at the time of writing, Phil was unable to be contacted due to being halfway across the Simpson Desert. If you see him out there, say g'day from us. His vehicle is hard to miss and he's a top bloke to boot.

THE VEHICLE

By today's standards, Troopies are not exactly what you'd refer to as having 'all of the bells and whistles.' They're fairly Spartan to be honest; even AC is a \$2K+ option. They're as bare bones, pure 4WD as you can get this side of a Land Rover Defender (not that you can buy them new these days). But it's that ruggedness, capability and the acre of space in the back that makes them so appealing to tourers everywhere.

Phil's came with the highly regarded 4.5L V8 turbo-diesel under the bonnet, and the stock standard leaves out back and coils up front with solid axles at either end. As far as blank canvasses go, it was screaming out for a few aftermarket extras... which Phil set about providing as soon as the ink was dry on the rego papers.

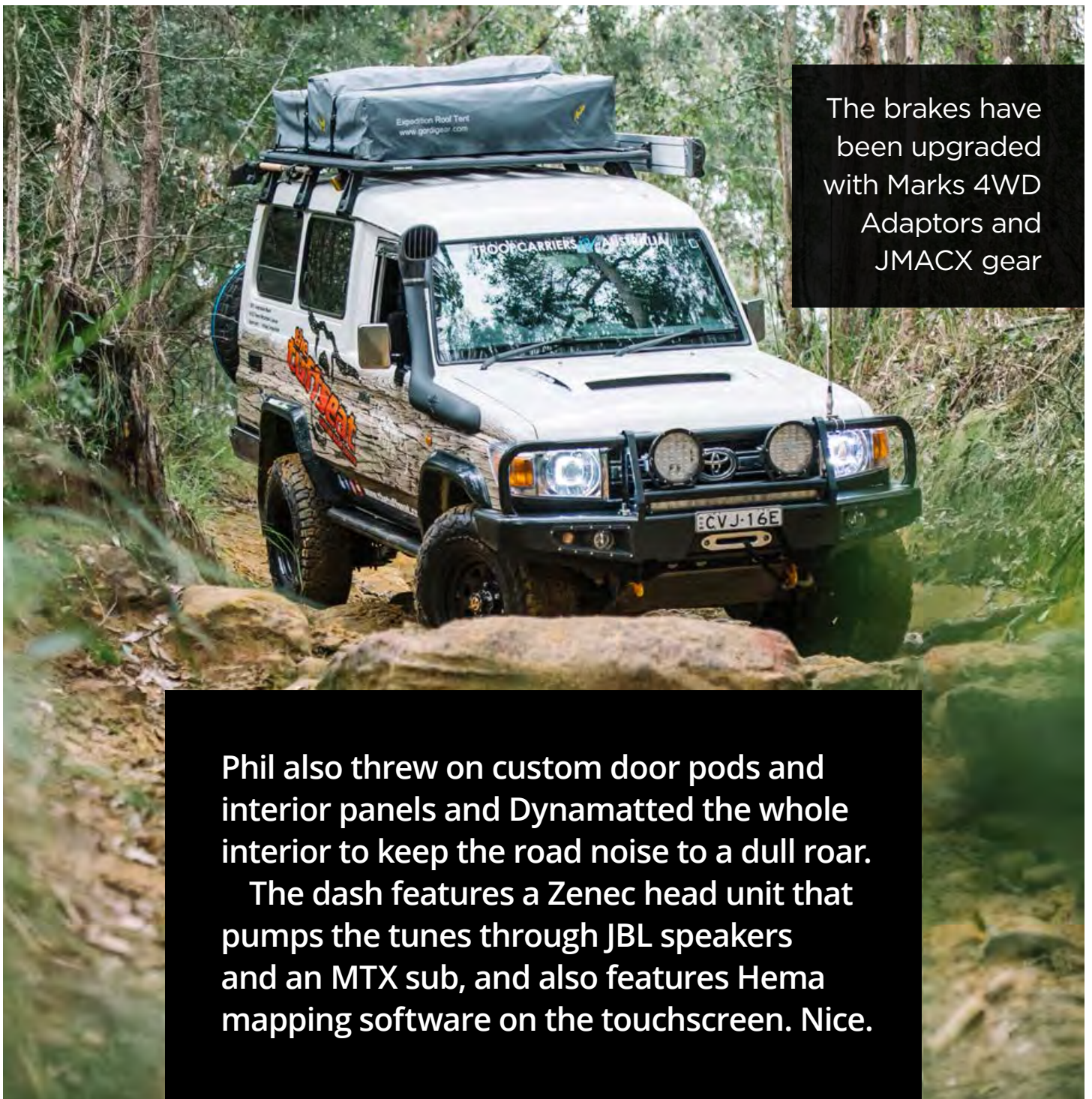


Can you spot all the gadgetry?
Take it from us, there's a lot!

THE MODS

Where to begin... it would be easier to list the stuff Phil hasn't done. But that wouldn't make for a very interesting read I guess, so I'll try and cover as much as possible. I won't get it all without writing a novel...

Starting on the inside, there are Tuffseat canvas covers on the front pews, while Wetseat neoprene (wetsuit material) covers keep the rear bench from copping a beating. The same brand also supplied the seat organiser and cargo box. The seat covers have been custom trimmed with the 'Troop Carriers of Australia' Facebook group logo. If you're even passingly into tough Toyotas, check the page out – there's a great bunch of enthusiasts on there.



The brakes have been upgraded with Marks 4WD Adaptors and JMACX gear

Phil also threw on custom door pods and interior panels and Dynamatted the whole interior to keep the road noise to a dull roar. The dash features a Zenec head unit that pumps the tunes through JBL speakers and an MTX sub, and also features Hema mapping software on the touchscreen. Nice.

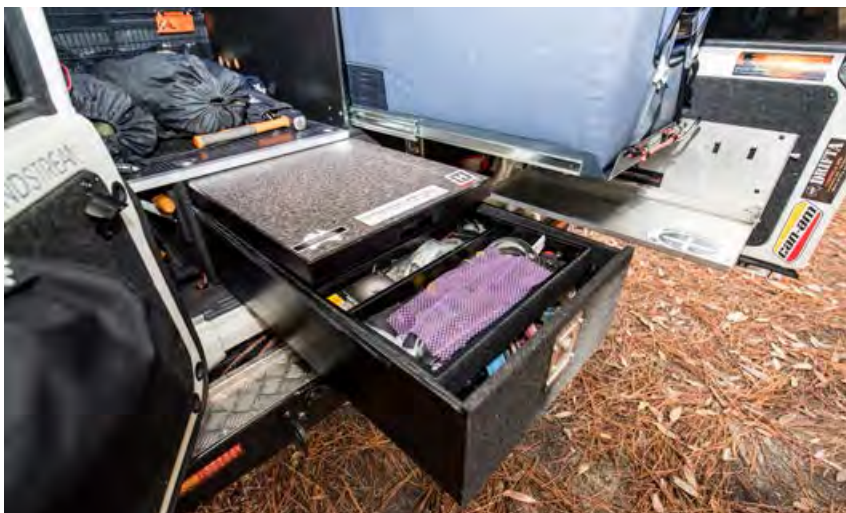
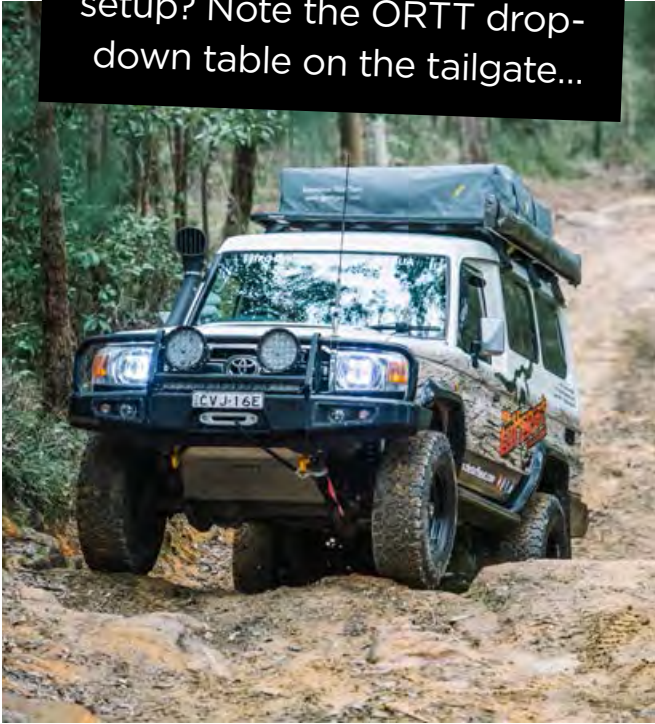
A custom pillar pod holds the Redarc boost, EGT and dual volt gauges while a Scan Gauge 2 keeps an eye on what the engine is up to at any given moment. Keeping any trailer Phil may be towing on the straight and narrow is a Tekonsha brake controller, while the Uniden UHF keeps him in touch with the rest of the convoy. All of the interior lights have been replaced with Korr LEDs and a Steelmate tyre pressure monitoring system lets him know if he forgets to air up the rear left BFG.





Is this the perfect rear cargo setup? Note the ORT drop-down table on the tailgate...

In the rear of the Troopy is a set of Drifta drawers that keeps the essentials organised and gives the ORS fridge slide and ARB 78L fridge a place to be mounted. The rear of the vehicle is made much easier to access thanks to the Expedition Centre gullwing rear windows which let Phil reach in from either side to grab whatever he needs. As you can see from the pics, it's a hell of a neat set-up.



Moving down past the Thorburn Fabrications rear bar and crawling underneath the 'Cruiser you'll notice a few things. The first will probably be the bling Fox remote-res shocks that work together with the EFS springs and adjustable front Panhard to deliver ride comfort and load-carrying capacity for touring. When the 285/75R16 BF Goodrich KO2 rubber starts to slip in the muck, front and rear E-Lockers are engaged with the flick of a switch and boom – traction is maximised. You don't need flex when you have lockers, after all.

45L Staino water tank from Thorburn Fabrications has a 12V pump attached for easy pressurised water





Following the 3-inch Redback exhaust back up into the engine bay you'll notice the HPD intercooler and catch can; and if you delve a little deeper you'll spot the Unichip Q4 that has four different maps to choose from – power, economy, towing and factory. The front bar came from AFN and incorporates a front skid plate and mounts for the Runva 11XP winch, Roadsafe recovery points, Drivetech 4x4 9-inch LED spotties and 30-inch light bar.



Moving up the guard, an Airflow snorkel supplies the turbo V8 with plenty of oxygen and the Rhino Pioneer platform supports the Gordigear rooftop tent and Foxwing awning – all of which results in a comprehensive and comfy camping setup that's ready to go in a few minutes and can be accessed either by the Southern Cross Fabworks sliders or the spare-mounted Thorburn step. Look, I'll level with you. There are still about 300 more mods, tweaks, accessories and gadgets on this thing that I haven't talked about... and I'm out of space. Take a look at the pics though, and try and tell me that this isn't one of the most comprehensively modified (and most functional) Troop Carriers you've ever seen. If you reckon yours has more gear, we'd love to hear from you.

Go the Troopy! UNSEALED 4X4



Like this feature?
Why not share it...



SUBSCRIBE

