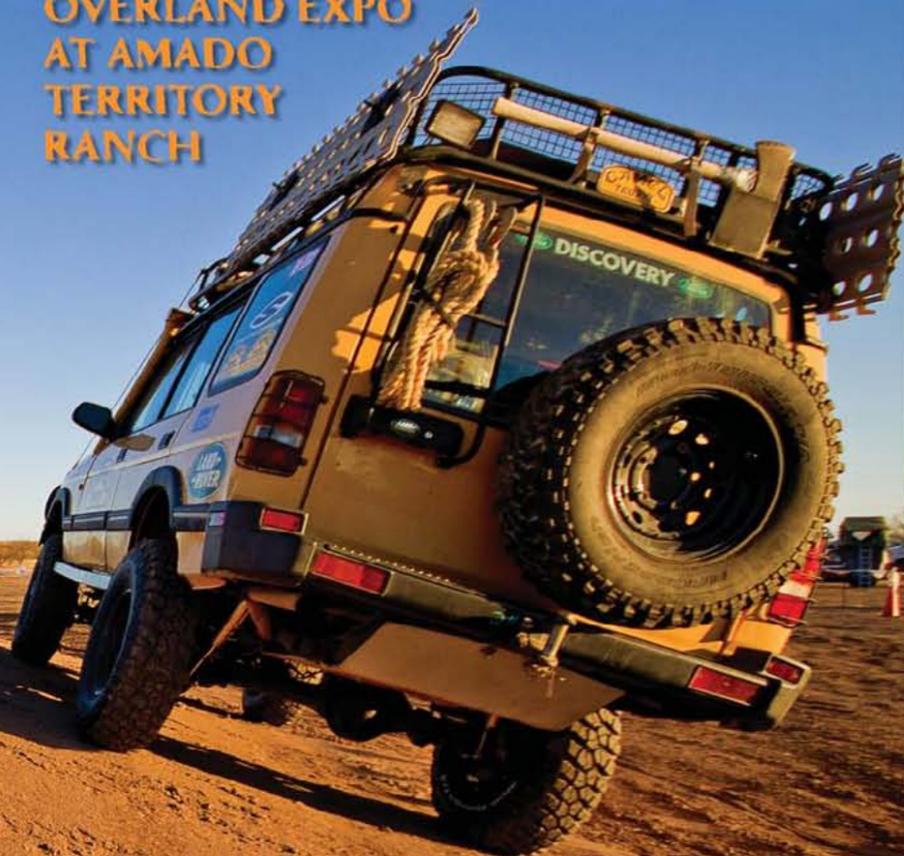


OVERLANDING... WHERE THE JOURNEY IS THE PURPOSE

OVERLAND EXPO
AT AMADO
TERRITORY
RANCH



BY DAVID BOLDT
PHOTOS BY CHRIS MARZONIE

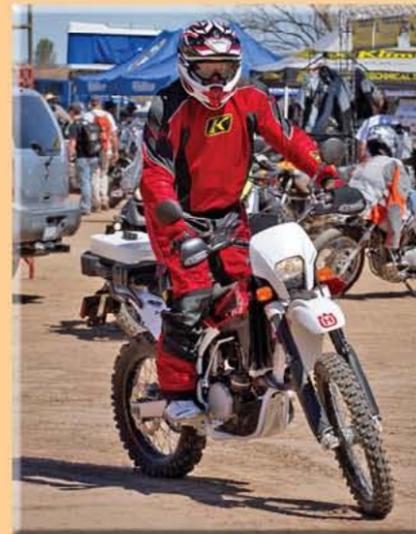
On the first weekend of April (this being the third consecutive year), Roseann and Jonathan Hanson invite all their rowdy friends—and a growing number of off-road vendors—to Overland Expo at the Amado Territory Ranch, between Green Valley and Nogales, south of Tucson. For those attendees coming from the lower 48, Canada and Mexico, the Expo serves as a great way to shake off winter, compare notes on personal adventures planned for the summer and/or those adventures planned for a lifetime.

The Hansons differentiate an expedition—a “journey with a purpose”—from overlanding, which is where the journey *is* the purpose. It is also demonstrably different from rock-crawling and mud-bogging, although all three share a similar enthusiasm for the great outdoors and locking differentials. And like any number of other vehicular pursuits, your commitment—and investment—can be as simple or as extravagant as you’re prepared to make it.

One of the simpler (or, at least, most minimalistic) methods of overlanding is by motorcycle. And this year, the two-wheeled category enjoyed its own specific area at the Expo for both product placement and adventure training. Given that adventure touring is perhaps the only growth area of the motorcycle business, this increased emphasis by the Expo was almost divinely strategic. Tucson’s Iron Horse BMW is a regular exhibitor, and was supported by the home team, BMW Motorrad USA. Celebrating over 30 years in the marketplace with the BMW G/S, the Bavarian two-wheeler was an early proponent of the on-road/off-road adventure.

At the opposite end of the investment spectrum was Global Expedition Vehicles, whose lineup of adventure vehicles combines survival-type bodywork to chassis supplied by Ford, Freightliner, Mercedes and Unimog. While the sports car enthusiast will find the aero numbers absolutely abysmal (think broad side of a barn), the standard conversion is all you need for a 10,000 mile exploration of the great unknown; failing that, perhaps North Dakota. Global Expedition (www.globalxvehicles.com) can provide the ultimate trade-up for those rolling down I-10 in their gas-powered Winnebagos.

Between these extremes, of course, was exactly what you’d expect. Among OEMs, Jeep—along with partners ARB and AEV—was the most visible. At Montana-based AEV their Hemi-equipped 4-door Wrangler drew appropriate raves, and gets a highway economy number—around 15—not unlike the V6-equipped stocker. And at ARB USA, a division of Australian-based ARB, the display



The whole wide world beat a path to the Overland Expo at Amado AZ this year, with both Germany and Tucson represented by Iron Horse BMW, Australia by its ARB USA division, England by Land Rover, Missouri by Global Expedition Vehicles and Montana by AEV. For them, this journey was on an expedition, with a purpose, but they were well equipped for it.

included a diesel-equipped Euro-spec Cherokee (Liberty in the US), as well as a Wrangler Sahara fitted with ARB’s Old Man Emu suspension (think a moderate lift that an “old man” could climb into...). Land Rover went off-road with its own training curriculum, and was also used as a display platform for any number of adventure-specific accessories. There will, it would seem, always be an England.

And based on the response to this year’s Overland Expo, there will—at least in the foreseeable future—always be an Overland Expo. Beyond the vehicles were a multitude of conveniences and accessories, along with adventure trailers, camper conversions, hiking wear and biking gear. For those trekking beyond water and sewage, Restop offered portable storage of liquid and solid waste, while Hydro Flask provided consistent temperatures for your hot or cold beverages. You want to kayak, but want that kayak conveniently transportable? Pouch America offers both single and tandem folding kayaks—fabricated in Germany—for between \$3,200 and \$3,500.

Mark next year’s event—around the first weekend of April—on your calendars now. That gives you ten months to determine your ideal set of overlanding wheels—and find a banker willing to take your appointment. ■

