

# 69 FAQ

Before Going  
**Overland**

The Most Meaningful FAQ of your Travel Life

**The Pin Project**

# 69 FAQ Before Going Overland

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This book is dedicated to all the **overlanders** who explored the world in the old days with a map & a compass.

# A few words about The Pin Project

**The Pin Project** is a self-funded overland trip with a final goal to travel around the world in our own home-registered vehicle(s) -wherever it is possible- without any time restrictions.

**The Pin Project** is **Nikos Dimitriou & Georgia Micheli**, two Greeks who are trying to explore their inner souls during their quest to explore the world.



We left from **Greece** on the **29th of April 2012**, and apart from a short 9 month break in Greece in 2014, we have been **traveling full time since then** (first in a Suzuki 4x4, now in a Toyota camper van).

We have visited 50+ countries in Europe, Africa & America but most importantly, we have experienced a unique mix of kindness and hospitality that fuels our trip and motivates us to carry on.

You can follow our trip, check our photos & read our travel stories in our website: [www.thepinproject.eu](http://www.thepinproject.eu).

For comments or questions, please email us at: [thepinproject@hotmail.com](mailto:thepinproject@hotmail.com).



# Please share this book

This book has been written by actual travellers. Our only objective in writing this book is to make our small contribution to the long-standing travellers community who have a passion about overland trips. If you find it interesting and useful, we encourage you to share it with others. It is FREE ;)

Our suggestions, ideas & opinions are totally personal but totally true & down to the earth. Our main intentions are to guide, inspire, motivate & assist by sharing our knowledge & experience.

By planting this little seed, we want a pine tree to grow rather than an apple tree. **It's all about the shade, not the "fruits"**.



# 69 Friendly Asked Questions Before Going Overland

(The FAQs are interactive. Just hit one & you will go directly to the answer.)

1. Why travel around the world?
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3. What is the difference between a tourist & an overlander?
4. How shall I choose the right vehicle & what makes a vehicle suitable for overlanding?
5. What is the most important thing to consider while travelling overland?
6. How much time shall I allow for preparing myself & my vehicle before setting off?
7. How much money will I need to start overlanding?
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14. How to secure my vehicle over thefts & break-ins?
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25. Do I need to equip my 4x4 with diff-lock, snorkel, winch & advanced recovery gear?
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27. Do I need a 12V refrigerator with compressor?
28. Do I need a solar panel installation, and if yes, how do I set it up?
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43. Should I carry a tablet or a laptop. Or both?
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50. What about paying taxes & social security benefits back home?
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57. How can I get valid information & updates about my next destination & which types of resources should I trust more?
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# Prologue

**69 FAQ Before Going Overland** is a book that comes after 6 years of full-time overland travel in the continents of Africa, Europe & America. It all started as a joke on whether we could actually come up with real life questions along with verified & valid answers for all of those who are wondering if it is possible to do a long overland trip & how this could be accomplished.

We did the writing, editing & publishing of this book in a municipal camping in central Argentina. Honestly, we could not have found a better place to write about overlanding.

A couple of weeks before even conceiving the idea of publishing this book, we had met a Dutch couple on a Toyota Land Cruiser. **Jery & Betty** was a lovely couple in their mid 60s (actually we never asked about their age). After a long time, we had the chance to meet a couple of travellers with a well-established idea about overlanding. They had an extensive experience on overland travels but most important they were so conscious & mature about what they were doing, how & why. What really impressed us was the fact that they were so humble, modest & extremely easy-going. They had a great but simple overland set-up & it was fascinating to see the comfort & safety standards of a middle-aged couple who have been around for more than 15 years and having covered more than 380.000 km in all continents.

In general terms, overlanding is an adventure pursuit that takes place for more than 60 years with all available means. No matter how you will decide to travel & what type of resources you are going to employ, one of the most important things to keep in mind and try to refresh from time to time is why you want to travel this way. What does motivate you, what is your actual dream, what exactly do you want to achieve & why do you choose this mode

of travel against some other?

Being simple, quiet & humble are the keys for a great trip along with a decent set-up which will be suitable for full-time touring across several countries for an extended period of time. Bear in mind that you are not the first or the last overlander out there ;)

The truth is that there are countless options & ideas about overland travel gear, vehicles modifications & upgrades. Everything depends on your travel style together with your comfort & safety prerequisites & the destinations and territories you want to explore. It is a continuous trade-off between useful & useless, big & small, compact & bulky, cheap & expensive, romantic & practical, convenience & luxury, and so on. For any choice, there is no right or wrong. It is your trip after all. Any compromises that need to be made should be mindful & well considered but it is not the end of the world. After all, overland travel is neither a race, nor a competition. Overlanding is all about fun & adventure.

In this sense, we created **69 FAQ Before Going Overland** in an attempt to balance all available options & present in the simplest way how you could be ideally prepared before an epic trip. All the answers are a product of personal -or other overlanders- first-hand experience & have been tested & tried extensively. In case someone will remain unsatisfied or not fully covered, please remember that overland travel is a vast & fast-growing activity that incorporates lots of cultures, communities & resources. See all our questions & answers as suggestions, not recommendations (unless otherwise stated) especially those ones which are travel lifestyle related.

# 1. Why travel around the world?

The world is an amazingly beautiful place with great diversity & countless things to see & appreciate. By travelling around the globe, a person has the opportunity to create memories, build up first hand experiences, change their personal standards, challenge themselves & eventually accomplish things that never dreamed or desired before.

After all, travelling around the world is about wandering freely without serious commitments, dealing with the unexpected & fully exploring your inner soul.

# 2. What is Overlanding?

Wikipedia defines the term Overlanding as “self-reliant adventure travel to remote destinations where the journey is the principal goal. Typically, but not exclusively, it is accomplished with mechanized off-road capable transport (from bicycles to trucks) where the principal form of lodging is camping, often lasting for extended lengths of time (months to years) and spanning international boundaries.”

Yet, people tend to misunderstand long term overland travel with short backcountry off-road trips mainly because the principal means of transport is a heavily equipped 4x4 or a big motorbike. Therefore, the type of vehicle is not an absolute for a journey across international borders. The vehicle & equipment can be anything from a bicycle to a 6X6 truck but, at the end of the day, they are only the means.

Available budget, time spent overseas, shipment of vehicle & self-sufficiency are also significant aspects of overlanding. Additionally, the interaction & connection with other cultures is a substantial part of an overland quest as well as the exploration of the surroundings.

Overlanding is all about the rewards & the challenges. Wildlife & nature, history & culture, local people & new friends are only some of the reasons to embark on such an adventure.

### **3. What is the difference between a tourist & an overlander?**

Practically, all travellers are tourists (except people who travel for business!). However, the available resources of money & time do make a difference when it comes to this type of differentiation. Theoretically, an overlander can be a tourist but a tourist cannot be an overlander.

For example, when visiting a cultural sightseeing such as Machu Picchu, no matter how you get there, you are a tourist. So, it is at least hypocritical for an overlander to complain that “Machu Picchu was so touristic!”. On the other hand, an overlander has the available means to go explore regions that tourists literally have no idea that do exist. In this sense, when tourists go back home, they cannot claim that they went off-the-beaten track & visited not touristic places!

Normally, the majority of tourists are able to allow a significantly higher budget for their short holidays whereas the majority of overlanders allow more time to their quest around the world. Finally, overlanding is not an infinite holiday but a mindful pursuit that usually takes some time to get accomplished.

## 4. How shall I choose the right vehicle & what makes a vehicle suitable for overlanding?

First of all, there is no right vehicle to go overland. The perfect decision is the one that will match your travel style with this very specific type of vehicle which will fully cover your personal needs, comfort and safety levels & can tackle with all the conditions you are going to confront.

After all, the perfect vehicle is the vehicle of your dreams. This is why you meet happy people riding bicycles against all elements & weather conditions.

Besides that, there is no vehicle manufacturer worldwide to certify their stock vehicles as "Overland Ready" apart from Toyota probably for its legendary Land Cruiser Series. But not everybody fancy going off road with 4x4 cars, or can afford a Land Cruiser and so on.

Any used vehicle is suitable to go overland as long as it has a proven sales record, a breakdowns history, relative spare parts availability worldwide & has been carefully prepared for long term living inside (& outside) it.

Assuming you can repair & service your vehicle anywhere, it can tolerate extensive mileage & you can live inside it with comfort & safety, then it becomes suitable to travel around the world for a certain period of time.

## 5. What is the most important thing to consider while travelling overland?

The most important thing to consider while travelling overland is the principal reasons you are doing it. Why are you leaving home, why do you want to travel and live in a vehicle, why do you want to visit other countries, why do you want to cross land borders, why do you want to go off-road in a foreign country, etc. Working out & focusing on all these why's, will make it a thoughtful & meaningful life change pursuit rather than a plain recreational activity!

On the other hand, there is a substantial amount of overlanders who travel for recreation only. The famous British gap year finds lots of people to go overland especially in Africa. Still, it is a thoughtful decision which requires some serious preparation. Even if you do not principally aim for a complete life change, a year-long overland trip will influence in a great way your general approach on the way you perceive the world. Eventually, you will come to appreciate it only when you will return home.



## 6. How much time shall I allow for preparing myself & my vehicle before setting off?

There is not an absolute answer about this since it is very personal & depends on the country of origin, final destination, available budget, timeframe, comfort levels, etc. Yet, the decision itself to go overland for an extended period of time is quite serious and sometimes may take longer than the preparation!

From a practical aspect, anything between 6 months to 1 year is a decent amount of time to get prepared emotionally & financially as well as set up your dream vehicle for a year-long overland trip.

The most time-consuming tasks are the selection & purchase of your overland rig (if you don't own one) as well as its assembly with all travel, camping, safety, recovery & cooking gear. Gathering the necessary travel & vehicle documents, having all your vaccinations done, planning your route around your destinations & saving as much as possible are the most basic items in your checklist.

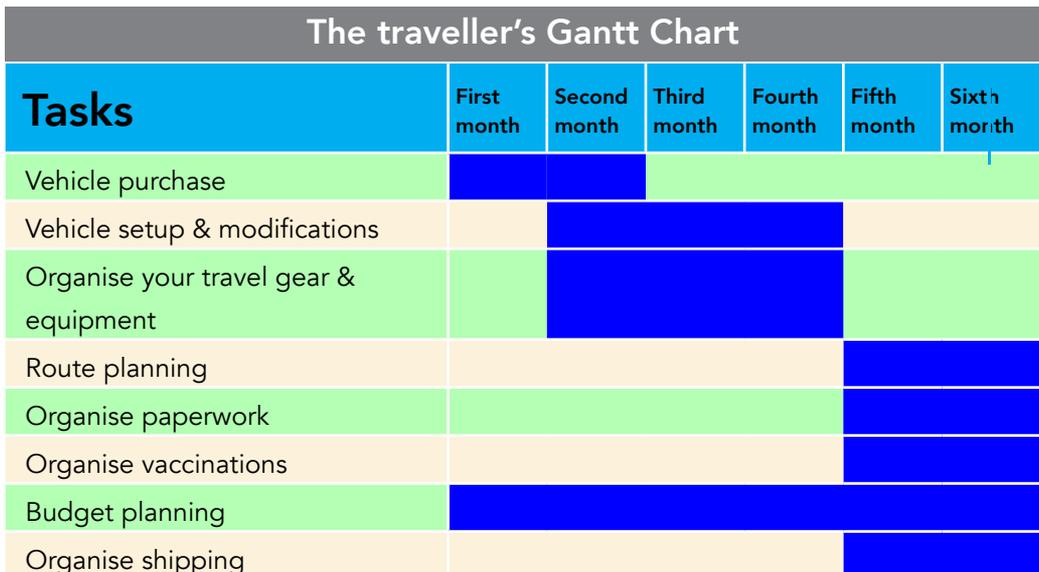


Figure 1 The Traveller's Gantt Chart (Source: Traveliving | A Romantic & Practical Guide, N. Dimitriou, 2017)

## 7. How much money will I need to start overlanding?

The main parameters that will certainly influence this hard-making decision are how long you are planning to travel, what type of vehicle you are going to get & what type of upgrades & modifications you will do that will serve your comfort, safety and will be suitable for your chosen destination as well as your travel style.

From our experience, anything between 40.000 to 50.000 EUR for an automobile, 20.000 to 30.000 EUR for a motorbike, 5.000-10.000 EUR for a bicycle and 5.000-10.000 EUR for backpacking is a sufficient entry-level amount that will allow 2 people to get off their couch, prepare, and start wandering off for a year.

From discussions with quite a few overlanders on different types of vehicles, the average daily budget for a couple in a car is around 50-60 EUR, 40-50 EUR for a couple on two motorbikes, (30-40 EUR if they are on the same bike), 20 EUR for one person on a bicycle and pretty much the same for a backpacker.



## 8. How to finance an overland trip & how to save money while overlanding?

There are lots of ways to finance your overland trip together with saving money on-the-go.

- Passive income is the major source of income for those who are going overland. Renting your apartment or house, trading stocks, shares or cryptocurrency, living off on some sort of royalties and so on, are some indicative sources of passive income. Usually, you need to do almost nothing but checking your bank account at the end of the month & make sure that you have enough to carry on.
- Working during your trip is another way to have a sustainable travel budget; you can do so either by “taking” your actual job along, or creating & selling -tangible or intangible- stuff on your way. The former usually applies to people who are related to the IT industry, graphic design projects, journalism & arts such as travel writing, landscape photography, etc. People who have scuba diving, martial arts, yoga & kite surfing certificates & qualifications do also fall in the first category. The latter applies to people who know how to make jewelry, post cards, sort of clothing & food or give open street performances (open circus, etc.)
- Having a donation button in your website, running a crowdfunding campaign before setting off & organising fund-raising events at the places you are visiting.
- Volunteering for a good cause, house-sitting or working in exchange for food & accommodation. This way you don’t actually create income but

you can extend your travels (& create incredible memories). There are several online platforms that offer relevant opportunities worldwide.

- Being sponsored. A long-term agreement with let's say a travel gear company to endorse, promote & advertise their products through your online channels usually is translated to a small but steady income or alternatively giveaways of high value that will make you save a significant amount of money from your preparation expenses.
- Crazy saving. The majority of the people do save lots of money after taking the decision to go for an overland trip. Usually, this period can take up to 2 years in order to accumulate the appropriate amount of money they need for the preparation as well as the daily expenses during the actual trip.

Assuming that you are able to self-finance your long trip, the following saving methods will enrich your journey in multiple ways.

- Prefer to cook than eating out. Avoid the fancy restaurants but try the cheap local shacks (as long as you see locals hanging around).
- Drive slowly & cautiously. In this way, fuel consumption is improved & life of several parts of your vehicle is prolonged.
- Wild camp or go stay in a campsite rather than a hotel room (especially those on motorbikes). Remember that accommodation accounts for the 20% of your total travel budget.
- Stop travelling, take reasonably long breaks & live like a local.
- Limit your daily mileage to no more than 250 km (depending on the

country, the road conditions, the route etc.). The slower you go, the longer you travel, the better you split your current budget, the less you spent at the end of the day.

Last thing to consider is to keep records and monitor your financial performance & daily expenditure. This way, you know if you can afford an activity, an extra bottle of wine, etc.

There are at least two popular theories to track your expenses and create your own benchmarks. The first theory calculates the cost per km at a given time, so if you cover a distance of 2000 km in a period of one month and you have spent 1500 EUR, then your daily cost per km is 0.75 EUR.

The second theory which is more straightforward calculates the daily expenses at a given period of time by dividing the total expenditure with the time. For example, if you have spent 2000 EUR in a month, then you know that you need around 66 EUR per day to cover all your needs.

There are some people who use the first calculation method to prove that going faster is cheaper but it does not work the same if you apply the second method. Definitely, there is a sweet spot between cost & speed but, as a rule of thumb, you must always be consistent with the way you budget your trip as well as cautious on your spending.

## 9. How to attract sponsors for an overland trip?

The employment of the right social media tools & applications along with an attractive travel website will empower your online presence & increase your followers base. A solid, loyal & continuously growing network with -preferably- real people who follow your adventures & find your online content appealing & motivating is what a company requires as a prerequisite before even starting considering to offer you freebies & other sorts of benefits.

Getting -and most importantly maintaining- a sponsorship is a proper job with lots of compromises, agreements & deadlines to meet. However, the trade-off is of high value if you manage to satisfy both your sponsors & your audience.



## 10. Which are the basic categories of overland travel expenses?

The main categories of expenses while you are on the road are:

- Food (including both eating out & your groceries shopping)
- Accommodation (campings, hostels, hotels, airbnbs etc.)
- Fuel
- Vehicle maintenance & repairs
- All the expenses that are related to border crossings (visas, temporary import vehicle permits, various taxes, duties, charges & fees like fumigation depending on the countries import procedures etc.)
- Transportation related expenses (purchase of local road insurance, ferries, bridges, tolls, tunnels etc.)
- Flight & bus tickets as well as public transportation costs
- Activities, tours and any souvenirs you might buy
- Ocean or air freight expenses
- Communication related expenses (e.g. purchase of local sim card and data packages, post, internet cafes etc.)
- Your overseas bank charges & commissions

# 11. How to organise an ocean cargo shipment for my vehicle?

Basically, there are two ways to ship your car or motorbike from A to B; with a container ship or with a RORO vessel. Loading your vehicle inside a container is the safest & most expensive option whereas ROROs (Roll-On Roll-Off) are way cheaper than containers but when you hand over your vehicle with the key on the engine, then you can expect anything to go wrong (or maybe not).

Shipping in a container means that you can load from anywhere and ship to everywhere in the world. Your agent & the shipping company are responsible for all the connections and loading/ unloading which is needed in order to receive your vehicle in ports that they don't have a direct line. For example, when we shipped our Suzuki Grand Vitara in a container from Tema, Ghana to Cape Town, South Africa, the direct shipping was up to Durban, SA. Two trans-shipments from Durban to Port Elizabeth & from Port Elizabeth to Cape Town took place in order to receive the container in our selected port of discharge.

RORO lines are also direct but fixed since they mainly work for the car manufacturers who move overseas fleets of brand new cars. Trans-shipments are also feasible when shipping in a RORO but tend to be more complicated and you don't want your car to be driven in & out in every port. So, if you want to ship your vehicle let's say from Europe to South America, you have 4-5 port options in each continent.

International marine shipping entails plenty of bureaucracy. Lots of documents need to be created, signed, etc. For this reason, we recommend hiring an agent (or broker or forwarder) who will take over, especially if you are shipping in a container. In case you are shipping in a RORO, the procedure (both for booking & for clearance of the cargo) is simpler and more straightforward.

Most of the time, you can handle it personally, skip the agent's charges and be quicker with it, need be (everything depends on the shipping line, the ports of loading & discharge & the local laws). When you are inquiring for a container shipment, make sure that you ask for an All-In (Port to Port) quotation that includes all costs, charges & fees at both ports (Port of Loading & Port of Discharge).

The most important document of marine shipping is the BOL or B/L (Bill of Lading). It acts as a receipt & delivery note and goes through all the checks & controls of the shipping line, the customs & the forwarder, so it is very important to be filled in correctly.

Always make sure that it designates you personally as the cargo's Consignee (& Notify Party). In case of RORO shipment, you will be also appointed as the Shipper of the cargo. This way you have full & legal control of your shipped vehicle & you can take over anytime if it is needed.

Any type of communication (quotations, exchange of documents, etc.) must be written & well documented. Avoid phone calls (unless it is an urgent situation) & keep records & transcripts with your agent & shipping line.

Don't forget to inquire how many transit days the shipment will take. In this way, you have a very good idea of when the cargo will arrive at the selected destination.

Finally, we recommend going for 2 or 3 quotations from shippers, so you can compare prices & services. Bear in mind though that the cheapest might not always be the best. Usually the cheapest shipping quote hides lots of port charges & clearance fees at the destination whereas the most expensive is typically from a shipper who does not operate in the line you are inquiring & just want to cover all risks & charges. If an agent does not operate in a shipping line, it means that they are not so well connected & their network will

be of little to no help in case something goes wrong. So, prefer companies who are well established in the industry & operate (or even own) direct & indirect lines.

RORO shipping companies normally charge by volume, so the first thing they will ask you is the dimensions of your vehicle. A rough estimate is between 40-50 EUR per cubic meter but these costs change rapidly & are tightly connected to the price of fuels (which keeps constantly fluctuating). For a container shipment, anything between 2.000-4.000 EUR for a 20 feet general purpose dry container is a reasonable price depending on the shipping line, the agent salary, the charges & fees at both ports (POD & POL), the distance, the transit time, the customs inspections & the marine insurance.



## 12. Is it possible to fly my motorbike to my desired destination?

Absolutely yes. Most of the airlines offer airfreight. However, shipping your motorbike by air will save you just time, not money. It is as expensive & complicated (document-wise) as marine shipping. Your bike must be dismantled and packed in such a way that will be suitable for loading in a cargo plane. Emptying your gas tank, disconnecting & sealing your battery terminals & deflating your tyres are only some of the must-do steps before crating your bike & deliver it to the airline. Again, you will need an agent to take over all the bureaucratic procedure, make sure that your bike is safe to fly, sort out all relevant documents & ensure the receipt at the airport of destination is also flawless.

If you are in a rush, airfreight is a great alternative. But, do consider the extra expenses such as dismantling & crating, as well as delivering & receiving the crate (which is usually done by transportation companies) at both airports.

## 13. How to prepare my vehicle for an intercontinental shipment?

In all cases, prior to loading, the shipping companies will give you a list of instructions that describe you in the best way how to deliver your vehicle in case of a RORO shipment or how your vehicle should be in case of loading in a container.

Normally, the gas tank must be almost empty (for gasoline engines), your LPG gas bottle should be empty & there must be no loose items/ saddle bags etc. Especially for cars, typically they require that your car is free of stuff in general & especially any valuables. Obviously, this is impossible to happen since most of the furniture & installations are fixed. However, in certain questionable port destinations in Africa & South America, thieves will try to get anything they can. According to reports & stories from travellers, while the RORO was in the open sea, the robbers broke in & literally emptied their vehicles from clothing, footwear, cooking gear, electronics (inverters, split charge systems, etc.) & travel gear (walking sticks, backpacks, water filters, etc). Generally speaking, when you hand over the keys of your car, anything can happen. Secret compartments with extra keys & a solid piece that will separate the main cabin from the dashboard generally can be of some help that will delay but not discourage the thieves.

For this reason, it is strongly advised to get as many valuables & gear as possible with you, so buy extra weight allowance if needed with your flight ticket. No insurance is going to cover this type of break-ins. The marine insurance will only cover you in case of sinking of the ship.

On the other hand, container shipping is considered to be way safer than ROROs. Since the container is sealed with a security seal, you have a peace of mind that you will receive your vehicle in one piece as exactly you loaded it.

## 14. How to secure my vehicle over thefts & break-ins?

According to the Murphy's Law, if something can go wrong, it will go. In this sense, if someone wants to break into or steal your vehicle, they will do it. All the security measures & precautions which overlanders are taking, are products of great thought & deep consideration that -under normal circumstances - would be able to stop the robbers. However, for any action, there is a reaction & for any safety system you are installing, there is always a counter product.

As a general rule of thumb, tinted & extra-resistant windows (don't go as far as installing bulletproof windows), extra locks, GPS-enabled alarm, a kill switch (i.e. a switch installed between the battery or fuel pump wiring that technically prevents the thief from starting the engine) & locked compartments inside the vehicle will significantly delay the crooks. Unfortunately, overlanders on motorbikes, are not that lucky. If the bad guys will not go for your saddle bags/ tank bag, they will steal the whole bike. Disc brake padlocks, really loud alarms & heavy-duty cables would make them think twice if it is really worth it.

In general, a low-profile vehicle is less desirable & eye-catching. Flags, expedition stickers & sponsor logos make it different than other vehicles parked in the same street, so more notable. Not to mention that internal security cages, visible lockers, a fully-loaded roof rack, hitch storage boxes, bicycles and many other exterior add-ons makes it look valuable, so worthier to be followed and broken into (there are lots of stories of vehicles being checked & followed).

On the other hand, several travellers claim that a striking foreign-plated overland vehicle -a fully loaded iconic Toyota Land Cruiser or a massive BMW

GS1200- full of badges & stickers will make local people to want to protect them as well as to wait until their owners are back in order to meet them & talk about their adventures.



## 15. How to cross the land borders?

Crossing a land border peacefully & safely is a matter of good organization & right mood. Forget the horrible stories & get meticulously prepared. In most cases, the process is straightforward & consists of two steps. The first step is going through immigration control & having your passport stamped. This way, the officials will grant your entry to the country. A thorough research about the visa status, if you actually need one, how much it costs & how you can get it, must be done beforehand. In some cases, you can buy right at the borders from the same official that will stamp your passport. In other cases, you have to make sure that you apply & get the visa in your home country. It also happens that you can get the much-needed visa for your next destination by applying in their embassy at a neighbouring country (this was the case for us in order to get the Mauritanian Visa by applying at the Embassy of Mauritania in Rabat, Morocco in 2012).

The second step is for your vehicle to go through customs control (or aduana in Spanish). The officials will ask for your vehicle registration/ title, driving license, passport (and maybe insurance if it is mandatory for the country you are entering), will probably cross check the VIN/ Chassis number at the registration/ title and the one on the vehicle & will check the car inside & outside. Certain items are prohibited like guns, drones, dairy & meat products/ sub products, local handcrafts, etc. depending on the local laws & regulations. After all, the customs authorities will issue a Temporary Import Paper (or Laissez-Passez or Passavant in West Africa) that will grant temporary permit to your vehicle unless it is required to have a Carnet de Passages en Douane (CPD) (or triptych or just Carnet).

However, the most important thing to bring with is your good manners and positive energy. Take off your sunglasses, keep smiling, greet everybody in a formal way -speaking the local language or dialect if possible-, play the dumb

if needed, have some humor but be always polite, ask for further explanations but don't argue if something is not clear & leave the attitude back home.

If all your documents are right, you will barely have any problems to go through and any delays will occur because of long queues & too many people waiting for the same thing. In case you are stressed out or nervous for your own personal reasons, the borders officials have the "talent" to sense it & will sometimes give you hard time. For example, if you are in a rush, they will try to slow you down, if you are a bit scared, they will try to make you realize who is in charge and so on. There is nothing you can do about it but chill out, ignore those who get on your nerves, sympathize with them & move on.

Both you & your vehicle can stay in a foreign country for a limited amount of time (it spans from 3 to 6 months per calendar year or for a period of 365 days). Renewals & extensions are usually possible in most countries but you must deal with the local authorities & follow the procedures. Steep fines for overstaying and vehicle confiscations for not sticking to the exit date do occur from time to time, so make sure that you apply for an extension promptly, or cross the borders before your visa & TIP expires.

**Last thing to consider:** almost all borders are full of touts & hawkers who will approach you & offer to help with immigration, customs, exchange money, sell you insurance, etc. In the vast majority of the cases, if not always, you can do everything by yourself. Ignore them and politely refuse their "help" unless you are in a real hurry and you literally want to go through in the fastest possible way. By hiring them, eventually you help their peculiar business to grow, along with the corruption that is always involved. Plus, you make it harder for the next traveller that will try to deal with everything on their own, without using their odd services. If you still wish to use them, at least bargain hard before giving them the green light to take over & make sure they will not ask for more money at the very end.

## 16. What type of official documents do I need to carry with me always?

Your passport is the number one document you must carry with you, along with any visas issued back home. Always make sure that it is valid for more than 6 months before entering in a foreign country.

In order to have valid & updated information about the countries you need a visa & how to apply for one, you should always seek confirmation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the embassies & consulates of your home country in the places you are visiting.

Another essential document is a travel & health insurance; you must make sure that you organise everything prior to your departure (please see [FAQ 38](#)).

An International Certificate of Vaccinations & Immunizations is another must-have document that is required by some land borders (especially the shot of yellow fever) and it is issued by the health centre/ travel clinic that will vaccinate you.

Your national driving licence, an International Driving Permit issued usually by your National Automobile Club or Association, your vehicle registration/ title & a valid 3rd party road insurance for the country you are visiting are the vehicle-related documents that you need to carry with you. You must ensure that they are updated, valid & all are under the same ownership & name. You have the option to get an international car or moto insurance that will cover your vehicle from theft, damages etc. in any country you are planning to visit but usually they are insanely expensive.

In order to enter certain countries in Africa, Asia & Oceania, it is required to have a Carnet de Passages en Douane (CPD) (or triptych or just Carnet). This document is issued by your National Automobile Association after depositing a respectable amount of money which is refundable upon delivery of the filled with ENTRY & EXIT stamps Carnet. Usually the deposit is related to the value of your vehicle and it can be anything between 3.000 to 10.000 EUR. Having a Carnet guarantees that you will not need to pay any import fees & duties when entering a new country; the high deposit has been set to discourage you from selling your car or motorbike in a foreign country.

Finally, a couple of VISA & MASTERCARD credit & debit cards issued by your local bank with a long expiration date, are a must-have. Don't leave without letting your bank know that you are going to withdraw money from Senegal, Swaziland, Nicaragua and so on, unless you want them to unexpectedly suspend your card.



## 17. How to have control of my money & how to withdraw/ exchange money in a foreign country?

Nowadays, most of the banks have a smartphone application that give you full control of your account. Download it, verify it with your bank and make sure that you check regularly all the transactions & transfers that are made. Bad surprises like a hacked card can happen anytime. Our VISA debit card was hacked in South Africa & was charged with purchases of 1.200 EUR value until we cancelled it.

Using your debit/ credit card to make purchases at the groceries store or fill up your motorbike with gasoline tends to become a norm in most of the countries but definitely do not rely on this. A sudden power cut, a slow internet line or the denial of your foreign card are all real potentials & as such you must be always prepared.

Cash is king & you must always have some local currency handy. Despite the fact that US dollar, Great British Pound and Euro are widely acceptable at the most popular & touristic destinations, you must have enough Mexican pesos, Brazilian reais, Peruvian soles, South African rands and so on available for the tolls, for the local shack that you will have lunch in the middle of nowhere, for the time that your card won't be accepted, etc.

Getting local currency can be done in two ways. You can either use your bank card at a local ATM and withdraw the maximum amount you can get in local money, or exchange some dollars or euro at an exchange bureau/ store or in the black market at the borders. Both banks (yours & the local) will charge you with some commission for the service offered, so always bear in mind that a 1-2% charge is involved in every transaction. In some countries, the local banks offer free of charge services but you must try almost all of them to find out the lucky strike. On the other hand, the exchange stores usually give

you a better rate than the bank one, without any extra charges. If you choose the black market you run the risk of being given fake notes or being caught. Needless to say that you must carry with you a big chunk of money in order to exchange at every country if you want to skip the bank fees.

If you are planning to carry with you all the money you have budgeted for your trip & exchange them locally, the bank notes must be brand new, crispy & clear without any markings. 50 & 100 Euro notes & 20, 50 and 100 US dollars notes are only welcome.



## 18. Which is the principal difference between a camper van & a 4x4 with rooftop tent?

First & foremost, you don't need a 4x4 vehicle to go overland. Yet, four-wheel drive is a great advantage to have & allows you to be more flexible, versatile and autonomous. Not to mention that guarantees a more adventurous -and as such more memorable- trip.

If the existence of 4WD system is your principal concern, then you must know that almost all cargo vans have 4x4 versions as well. Mercedes Sprinter, VW Transporter, Toyota Hiace, Iveco Daily, Mitsubishi L300 and lots of other vans come with part-time or full-time 4x4 (some come with low gear selection as well). So, for a few grants more, you can have the comfort of a camper van combined with the higher than average off-road capabilities.

Not to mention that rear-wheel powered camper vans combined with a relatively big engine (2.500-3.000cc), fitted with a set of off-road tyres and a higher than average clearance (maybe with a set of spacers) are surprisingly capable & will deal with almost all light off-road situations like very steep ascents, low river crossings, ditches & corrugated dirt roads.

However, vehicles like Toyota Land Cruiser, Hilux, 4Runner & Tacoma, Land Rover Defender, Mitsubishi Pajero/ Montero & L200, Nissan Patrol, Terano & Navara, Mercedes G Wagon, Suzuki Grand Vitara and many others have been designed principally for going off-road, so their overland skills are well above the average and promise so much fun, adventure and confidence!

But the key difference between the two different types of vehicles is the comfort level mainly because of the existence of a fixed installation (bed & kitchen) and maybe a toilet/ shower. A typical camper van setup is a bit more comfortable and spacious than the typical setup of a 4x4 with a roof

top tent or a fixed camper shell with pop-up roof. Storage, bedding, power systems & water connections do not change dramatically and both types of cars guarantee a safe, dry, almost dust-free, cool or warm -given the ambient temperature- setting to travel around.

It becomes obvious that the trade-off is more comfort & a bit of luxury for serious off-road competencies & ability to explore the surroundings beyond the gringo trail.

## **19. Should I carry a water filter?**

It depends more on your travel style rather than your destination. In almost all the countries worldwide, you can find bottled pasteurised water in very reasonable cost. In some cases, you can just drink straight from the tap. However, if you really enjoy the outdoors & you love hiking, trekking or just exploring off-the-beaten track with your motorbike or 4x4, then you should probably get a portable water filter from a well-known company.

In case you are thinking to install a house filter for your water supply inside the van or truck, keep in mind that you will need to carry enough spare elements & regularly change them, including a quite long hose to connect with the tap. If the tap pressure is low, unfortunately, it will never work or it will take ages.

## 20. How many spare tyres, what type do I need & what is the ideal pressure?

If you don't do extreme off-road & tend to drive in the main road network, one spare tyre is more than enough. However, if you enjoy the sounds of the desert or the remoteness of a glacier lake up in the Andes, then you should always carry two spares with enough tread (if not new tyres). In case of a flat tyre, bear in mind that there are countless places to fix it (or fit new) almost everywhere. For travelers on motorbikes, one tyre for each wheel & at least 2 tubes are enough, given that you can repair them easier by yourself.

For normal driving on a camper van, you should go for tyres which are specifically designed for heavy loaded panel vans. This type of tyres usually has a reinforced outer exterior & can withstand the higher pressure of the extra load.

For off-road driving on a 4x4, you have two options: the 50/50 all-terrain tyres or the mud type tyres. The former has a more versatile orientation that makes them suitable for rolling in both paved and unpaved surfaces. The latter is a heavy-duty version of the all-terrain type with thicker tread, primarily designed for wet & sticky situations as their name implies. BFGoodrich All Terrain, Bridgestone Dueler & Pirelli Scorpion & Yokohama All Terrain GO12/GO15 are the industry leaders.

When driving in the sand, the tyre pressure should be really low. A flatter & softer tyre makes driving easier and with the right (low) gear you will avoid getting stuck. Driving in hard packed corrugated gravel & dirt roads also requires lower than average pressure in order to absorb as much as possible the vibrations and shake downs of the bad terrain. A useful tip to know if you have lowered down enough the tyre pressure when driving in a nasty dirt road is to check your tyre to see how warm it is after driving for several

kilometres. If it is too hot, then you have to reduce the pressure more.

For travelers on motorbikes, it works pretty much the same way and the joke goes like this: when you see big bikes like a BMW GS1200 with slick street tyres, then you know what type of traveller is the owner of the bike. In case of extended off-road, a good set of off-road tyres with intermediate or maybe soft tread is the optimum solution.

In all cases & for all types of vehicles, you must keep in mind that your final choice should be a compromise between cost, longevity, durability & versatility of your selected set of tyres. You can't have different sets for different types of terrains, so the idea is to go for a combination of on & off road that will match most of the types of paved and unpaved surfaces you are going to encounter.



## **21. What types of spares & parts do I need to carry with me always & how to receive them overseas in case of emergency?**

The most basic spares you need to carry with are oil, fuel & air filters & driving belts (both A/C & timing belt). Anything else is an excess that you never know if you are going to use or maybe you can procure it locally, so again, there is no reason to carry it from home. An extra water pump, a clutch kit & maybe some bearings could be of some help but make sure -if possible- that you are going to use them.

In case of an urgent need of a specific part, there are a few ways to source it where you are. First of all, you have to locate it, make sure that it will fit (cross check the part number or the cross reference with your VIN or just call your local mechanic) and either buy it online or ask a friend to get it from a store or directly from the dealer in order to be 100% that they will give him the right part. Then, ask the person who will post it to remove all the original packaging & make it look second hand by applying some grease & dust or finding a way to make it dirty. Then create a fake invoice with a very low price & put it in (in case the customs will inspect it & make you pay import duties). However, outside of the package, make a note that it is send as a gift. Last step is to post it with DHL, putting your name as recipient straight to the local DHL office at the International Airport of the capital (don't forget to mention a phone number, so that they can let you know that they received a parcel for you). This way, you prevent your part from being stopped by the customs & if it is, you will be dealing with them directly. Posting with DHL is not cheap, but you know that you will have your part in less than 72 hours in any place in the world.

While in Zambia in 2013, we needed two different parts of relatively small

size. Our family posted them from Chalkida, our home town in Greece to Lusaka, the capital. We received them in less than 48 hours. Worth noting though that the shipping cost was a little bit higher than the actual cost of the parts.

Another solution (with the same or less risk to be stopped by customs but you skip the postage anyway) is for the part to be brought by a friend or family member who is coming to visit you.

## 22. What to do if my vehicle breaks down?

The best advice is not to panic. This has happened to almost all overlanders & every single one found a solution & moved on. So, you are not the first one to have a break-down.

Almost all countries around the world do have car/ moto dealers, mechanics & parts stores. It is a matter of time to find a mechanic who will have a look in your vehicle & repair it if it is possible. Finding the cause of the problem and sourcing the right parts might be the tricky part but if you don't drive an exotic (i.e. rare) car, in most cases, even if they cannot fix it, they will give you an idea of what is wrong and probably they will manage to repair it, if only temporarily.

Remember that the simpler your vehicle is (i.e. less electronics, electrical pump instead of electronic pump with common rail, etc.), the better chances you have the repair to be faster, easier & cheaper.

In cases that you need to source a part from your home country & know what spares & parts you need to carry with you, please refer to [FAQ 21](#).

## 23. How often shall I run the scheduled service in my vehicle?

Forget what the service manual says and make sure you change the engine oil & the fuel, oil & air filters more regularly than recommended.

The vehicle manufacturers design them for normal road conditions & usage, not to go overland. This does not mean that your motorbike or your camper van will not make it. But, you have to do your best and run the scheduled service more often than usual in order to keep them rolling as flawlessly as possible.

In almost all countries, you will manage to find official dealers of the biggest car & moto manufacturers as well as independent mechanics & parts store. Even in very poor countries like Bolivia, Cuba or Guinea, the big dealers do exist in the capitals in case you trust their services more or your vehicle is still on warranty.



## 24. How many litres of extra water & fuel do I need to carry with me?

It depends more on your travel style rather than your destination. Potable water & fuel are widely available everywhere in the world. A 20-litre water tank or plastic container is more than enough for two people & will normally last for 5-6 days under normal weather conditions (or 10 litres for 2 motorbikes). Same way, your vehicle tank is more than enough for normal driving.

The only reason for a gas station to get short on fuel is some occasional strikes that do not last for long in any case. As a general rule of thumb, even in remote places like Ruta 40 in Argentina, or the Dalton Hwy in Alaska, there is always a service station in every 300-400 km. Knowing your autonomy & making sure that you are always almost full, will save you from troubles. However, carrying a 20lt drum (or 5 litres for motorbikes) is not a bad idea & will give you more confidence along with increased autonomy when tackling with remote routes & isolated destinations.

On the other hand, if you are off-road addicts & you love to explore difficult and hard to access places like Turkana Lake in Kenya or the colourful lakes in South Bolivia, then you have to increase your drinking water & fuel availability by some means. An extra tank of 40-50 litres for water (5-10 litres extra for motorbikes) & 3 jerry cans of 20lt capacity or a 50-60 litres tank (10-15 litres for motorbikes) will normally allow you to venture for a while off-the-beaten track.

Those on motorbikes (not for all makes & models though) have the chance to install a bigger gas tank at the same place of the original, so increase their mileage autonomy without changing a lot their set up or needing to carry extra containers.

## 25. Do I need to equip my 4x4 with diff-lock, snorkel, winch & advanced recovery gear?

It heavily depends on your travel style rather than your destination. Most of the primary road networks worldwide are accessible by normal vehicles without needing to install any upgrades. You will be surprised to see what the locals drive & how they get by. Poorly maintained cars, cheap chinese motorbikes & bicycles is a common picture in almost all Africa.

But, even the remotest highways that connect two countries like the infamous Isiolo-Moyale stretch that links Kenya with Ethiopia is paved nowadays. Taking this into account, you should probably save your bucks for your actual trip rather than heavily modifying your vehicle for serious off-road.

Most probably, if you don't have plans to visit remote mountain destinations, explore the desert & attempt river crossings, you are not going to need a snorkel, a winch, a diff-lock, extra recovery hooks, sand ladders & lift-jacks.

But, if you belong to the category of overlanders who believe that mud is fun, no mountain pass should remain uncrossed and desert is their home on earth, then you have to invest on all the above extra gear without second thought not only for your personal safety but also in order to live up your overland adventure at its fullest.

Keep in mind that any 4x4 equipment, upgrades & installations are useless if you don't know how to use them. It is strongly recommended to take off-road driving & recovery classes as well as try your gear repeatedly back home before setting off, in order to make sure that it works flawlessly and you know what it is supposed to do.

Last thing to do is an extensive research on the routes you are planning to drive & check about the road conditions and how they are affected by the weather patterns and seasons changing. For example, check which passes turn to streams during the rainy season or are seasonally closed because of heavy snow or deep mud, if the roads are paved or not and if high clearance & all-terrain tyres are enough or whether 4WD is required as minimum, etc. In this way, you are more prepared and you have a better understanding what gear is essential.



## 26. What sorts of cooking gear & gas installation am I going to need while overlanding

Going overland is strongly related to camping life. So, a good set of cooking gear that will allow you to cook your favourite dishes almost anywhere is more than essential. Although eating out is an alternative, first it will heavily affect your daily budget & second it will make you put weight much faster & easier.

With a two-burner gas stove, a 4-5 litres pot, a 1-2 litres non-stick pan & a decent set of utensils, you can cook almost everything you can cook at home except recipes that require an oven. If you have extra storage & weight allowance, then you can add a pressure cooker, a food processor (or multimix), a cast iron skillet or stew pot (or both) & a BBQ grill for a complete outdoors cooking set.

This way, you can cook pretty much any dish such as pasta, rice, eggs, legumes, stews, soups; not to mention salads, grilled meat, fish, poultries and bread.

There are lots of stove burners but the most popular solutions are the one who works with natural gas (butane, propane or mix) & the multiple fuel one (gasoline, ethanol, kerosene, butane, propane, etc.). The former is cleaner & safer but you are restricted in terms of gas availability. On the other hand, the latter is way more flexible but definitely dirtier & nastier. A typical gasoline burner stove will leak, smell & will not burn clean (but it will burn).

Talking about gas stoves, some people prefer to go for the compact single-burner stoves with disposable butane bottles and some other go for the 8-10 kg gas bottles connected to heavy-duty two-burner stoves. Still, both solutions have their challenges. Using the former means that you always need to have an adequate number of bottles; however, these are not available everywhere. The latter might be more flexible by having a bigger reserve, but you have

to carry a set of compatible adapters & be able to find an LPG station or gas plant that will accept to fill it up. Although it is a common worldwide practice to exchange an empty gas bottle for a full one, finding a place to fill up your foreign bottle, even if you have the right adapter, can be quite a challenge.

Unfortunately, travellers on motorbikes don't have the same storage capacity to carry a proper cooking set but only small compact collapsible solutions, so our suggestions are limited to those who travel on 4x4s, camper vans & trucks.



## 27. Do I need a 12V refrigerator with compressor?

The main reason to have a 12V fridge with compressor is to keep your beers & milk cold. However, this type of fridge, which by the way is not cheap at all, can be found in the majority of the set-ups either in 4x4s or camper vans.

Taking into account that you will need around 500-800 EUR for a 40-50 litres fridge plus the power installation to keep it running 24/7, with the same money you can get a humble cooler & fill it up with ice. It is true that it is a hassle to keep looking for ice twice a week (you need roughly 2 liters of ice for 3 days) and a bit messy to empty the water but this is the alternative if you don't want to invest on a 12V fridge.

After all, it's a decision that primarily depends on your travel style & how much comfort & convenience you want in your overland routine; this type of equipment is really high in the list of good-to-have rather than must-have items of overlanders. Make sure that your model will run in 12/24V & 110/220V, so you are able to plug it in a campsite without draining your battery or maybe needing a solar installation.

Waeco, IndelB, ARB, Dometic, Engel, Edgestar & National Luna are some of the industry leaders.

## 28. Do I need a solar panel installation, and if yes, how do I set it up?

A solar panel installation guarantees that in most cases, you will be energy sufficient & fully autonomous for a long time (depending on the weather conditions & season you are visiting a country). However, it also means that you have to keep your vehicle constantly under the hot sun. So, at the same time you are trying to keep your battery full & the fridge cool, the sun is baking your car.

Given that a shady spot is usually the first thing that most travellers look for when parking or camping in a place, you then limit down the potential of your solar installation. On the other hand, if you cannot find a 110/ 220V plug to power all your devices while you are parked, then the solar energy is the best alternative -unless you don't have devices such as a 12V fridge that run continuously.

In order to build a solar power installation, you are going to need one (or more) solar panels, a charge controller (or regulator), a battery, an inverter -that is going to turn the battery's 12/24V into 110/ 220 V-, fuses, fuse holders & cables (usually 6-10 AWG). First thing to do is to measure & size your loads. This way, you know how big your battery needs to be, and as such, how big the solar needs to be in order to get it fully charged. Always keep in mind that a good quality battery should not reach a state of charge less than 50% if you want to keep it for a long time.

To do so, just divide the Watts of each device by 12 (Volt) in order to calculate your load size in Amper & then multiply with the hours that your devices will run. In case of a fridge, it is going to operate at least 12-16 hours depending on the ambient temperature. Lighting is not going to run for that long (maybe one hour in total) but charging your laptop or camera battery & running the

fan during a warm night will also add up.

As a rule of thumb & after some extensive research & experience, a 120-150 Ah Gel or AGM deep cycle battery along with a 200-250 Watt solar panel(s), a 15-20 Amp solar charger & a 500-800 Watt Inverter will give you the self-sufficiency you are looking for, for at least 3-4 days. If you are planning to charge your battery or your devices using other means (please see [FAQ 29](#)), then you can reduce your spending and go for a 90-120 Ah battery, a 180-200 Watt solar panel(s) & a 10-15 Amp solar charger.



## 29. How big my auxiliary battery should be & how do I charge it?

Any maintenance-free sealed deep cycle Gel or AGM battery between 100-150 Ah is more than enough for an overland trip (depending on your devices' loads). Usually, the more expensive it is, the longer it will last. Going for a cheap battery from China, you are running the risk to stay without energy when you need it & maybe ruin your equipment.

Always keep in mind that a good quality battery should be always fully charged & should not reach a state of charge less than 50%. A deep cycle battery is much easier to be recovered and charged after a full discharge, however its longevity is significantly reduced.

- Installing a solar power system is one way to keep your battery full at almost all times (depending on the weather conditions). Please see [FAQ 28](#).
- Using a split charge system, a Dual-Sense VSR or a solenoid, will enable you to charge your auxiliary battery directly from your car's alternator when it's running but it will isolate it from your primary battery when the auxiliary is running low in juice in order to ensure a full starting battery for the next morning.
- Another solution is a 12V smart charger (CTEK, NOCO, Black+Decker, Schumacher, etc.) but in this case, the battery must be totally disconnected from all other devices.
- Unless your fridge is not 12/24-110/220V, so you don't drain the battery when you are parked & plugged, you can separate it from your battery & install a 12/24-110/ 220 V power converter (with double Amp capacity of

the one that your fridge draws) that will be plugged in the wall when you are parked for a long time. This way, your battery stays untouched from the most “energy-hungry” device.

- Last resort is to include a generator in your camping equipment along with everything that comes with this solution.

## **30. Do I need to carry a generator?**

Taking into account that there are less expensive, less noisy, lighter, greener & cleaner solutions, carrying a generator along with fuel to run it and spares to service it, does not sound that appealing & cost efficient.

However, if you are planning to spend weeks at the Australian Outback, the dense jungle of Congo or explore the remote beaches of east Nicaragua, then having a generator is probably not a bad idea.

## 31. Shall I go for an awning?

A great awning for an overland trip will set you back around 600-800 EUR. Industry leaders of overland equipment like ARB, Alu-Cab & Rhino-Rack can provide you with an outstanding & extremely resistant product that for sure you will enjoy at its fullest. On the other hand, you can go for a DIY construction of a very similar to the industrial manufacturers quality with maybe half the money, or even less. A YouTube research will surprise you!

However, the most important thing to consider is not the actual cost of purchase or manufacture, but:

- whether you really need one
- how many times you are going to use it
- the maintenance needed from time to time
- the extra weight & volume adding up in your already heavy vehicle
- the temperatures in the places you are going to visit

Finding a shady spot is not a big deal in most of the cases but in hot countries like North Africa, any type of awning is a must if you wild camp. So, think twice whether you actually need one and whether there's another piece of equipment fitting better your needs & travel style.

## 32. Why invest on simplicity & minimalism?

A simply-built vehicle with a minimal set-up, basic equipment & light gear, makes your life easier in many ways.

A light vehicle is easier to be repaired, consumes less fuel & you can push it by hands easier in case of an emergency (especially motorbikes). A simplified & modest internal set-up can be maintained, upgraded, changed or repaired much easier & faster.

To not be confused though with low-key construction using cheap materials as this is not the case. Minimalism & simplicity is really hard to achieve and requires some deep thought, consideration & research.

Bear in mind that minimum 20% of the overland equipment, is never, or hardly ever, used but it does not belong to the must-have packing list (e.g. an awning). Plus, there are items that you might use every day but they can be replaced by simpler solutions, not necessarily cheaper. For example, a pasta strainer could stay home. Instead, you can just tip over the pot with the lid on top in order to empty the water (and the use of a towel).

Besides that, another 30% of the typical overland gear belongs to the category of must-have even if you will never use it or use it once such as a spare tyre or a set of emergency flares. This category takes up space, so you need to put some extra thought where to put the excess.

Sometimes, it is a trade between convenience and allowing some extra time & maybe effort; other times it is just a matter of a personal taste & how people prefer to travel. For example, instead of installing a water tank, a water pump & piping in order to have constant flow of water inside the van, you can get a 15 lt BPA-free plastic drum that you will fill up by putting it under any tap &

place it wherever you want -even inside the van- to wash your dishes.

According to our personal experience after 6 years of overland travel & based not only on vehicles we have personally owned and driven, but also on what fellow overlanders have shared with us, the ideal vehicle & set up can be summarized as:

- the smaller, the more flexible
- the more inexpensive, the more cost efficient
- the less modern, the easier to be fixed & maintained
- the bigger, the more expensive to be shipped
- the heavier and bulkier, the higher the fuel consumption



### 33. Does the size really matters?

It totally depends on your travel style & available budget. If you can afford a fully loaded BMW GS1200 or a MAN truck, then go for it. If you think that a humble Honda XR 250 or a Suzuki Grand Vitara will serve your overland purpose, then don't look any further.

For any choice you make, you don't need to defend yourself or apologize to anybody. Most of those who will criticize your decision for getting "such a big" or "such a small" vehicle would either never attempt to go overland or are so jealous of you.

Bigger size usually translates to more comfort, convenience & a bit of luxury. On the other hand, smaller vehicle means better fuel consumption, cheaper maintenance, inexpensive -and possibly faster- shipping & more flexibility.

The size of your engine, your weight & height and the final decision on your vehicle is the absolute trade-off for those who know. Balance your needs, decide for your travel style, check your bank account & take a decision that will heavily affect your overland life. Whatever you decide, always remember that there is no right or wrong choice.

## 34. Should I buy my overland vehicle locally or overseas?

If you are planning to travel for a period of a year -or less-, it is better to shop overseas. This way, you can skip the shipping expenses and part of the excess you would buy when at home. Most of the vehicles which are sold by other travellers, are already equipped with camping gear and you only need to bring your clothing & footwear.

Countries like Canada (certain provinces), USA (certain states), Peru, Chile, Mexico, Australia, New Zealand and some others, have established the appropriate legal framework for foreigners to buy & register a vehicle there.

If you want to travel for more than two years, it is better to buy your vehicle at your home country and set it up in order to serve you for the long term. This way, you can also park it temporarily, suspend your TIP, fly back home & return to carry on your trip.



## 35. How important is the night sleep?

Generally speaking, if the engine oil is important for the good condition of your motor, a good night sleep is equally important for your well-being. Waking up grumpy, stressed & tired is the worst way to start your day, so plan ahead and make sure you have done your best to prevent this happening.

While designing your final set-up for your camper van or you are about to decide which rooftop tent (for a 4x4) or a good 4 seasons tent (for a motorbike) to get, always put some extra thought on the bedding.

A professionally-made bedding base like the German Froli, a carefully selected set of mattress & pillows, a set of cotton bed sheets, a not very cheap synthetic sleeping bag and/ or a thick blanket, a mosquito net that fits over your bed, a 12V fan & a pair of earplugs are the essentials for a relaxing, stress-free night sleep (as well as a general purpose tarp for those on 2 wheels).

In general, a great night sleep guarantees a great morning which is all you need to start your day.

## 36. How to avoid putting weight (& why it is important to have a balanced diet while overlanding)?

Your health & general well-being while overlanding is heavily related to your nutrition so you must be very careful what you eat, when & how much. Along with your diet, extra focus should be given to some decent exercise if you want to avoid putting weight & have a healthy lifestyle during your travels. Since your shopping, cooking, and your lunch or dinner times are different than being back home, you should be careful what you eat & plan ahead.

Factors such as:

- Sitting for long hours
- Not being able to buy & cook exactly what you want to eat (this will occasionally happen)
- Changing seasons, time zones & territories faster than average

Will somehow influence your appetite & digestion. So, a healthy & balanced nutrition along with some light training is the least you can do to avoid putting weight, enjoy your trip & return back home same size you left.

A few tips are below:

- Eating out is the number one reason for getting fat. Cooking your own meals with the ingredients that you source locally is the best way to control your daily calories intake.
- Ditch processed or pre-cooked food. Always opt for freshly cooked meals even if it is pasta or rice with chicken.
- Eat fresh fruits & vegetables in a frequent basis, along with the main course

for better digestion.

- Daily exercise will keep you fit, even though surrounding environment and timing can be of a challenge sometimes ; having said that, jogging & jump rope can be done almost everywhere. In case you cannot do some daily work-outs, do things that you wouldn't do back home to replace them.

For example:

- If you're thinking of getting a taxi, prefer to walk a reasonable distance when staying in an urban environment (at least one way).
- Avoid getting the elevator and take the stairs, etc.

**Note:** Trying the local cuisine, eating street food & visiting local food fiestas is different than dining in a restaurant or eating junk food. We strongly recommend trying local cuisines, as well as asking for local recipes to try them while camping or back home! At the end of the day, eating what the locals eat is also part of the travelling experience.

## 37. What recipes to cook while camping/overlanding?

Any meal plan related to the popular Mediterranean diet guarantees a well-balanced diet full of vitamins and most of the necessary nutrients. A great advantage of the Mediterranean diet is that you can get almost everything that is included in it almost everywhere in the world.

Fresh fruits & vegetables, fish, whole grains & seeds, legumes, olive oil, nuts, dairy products & a bit of red meat are all available worldwide. You only need to know how to put them together in order to get the most out of them. Google search & YouTube videos are your best friends on this!

Needless to say that some practice at home before hitting the road is a must in order to master some go-to meals & learn how far you can go with your current cooking gear and how can you improvise without stay hungry!

## **38. What type of insurance will cover me personally while overlanding & what type of insurance can I get for my vehicle?**

A travel insurance that will cover your medical expenses overseas in case of an accident and has an emergency repatriation program is suitable for all overlanders. Be aware that your age & your country of origin may affect the final quotation as well as the means of transportation and your destination(s). World Nomads is one of the industry leaders & lots of overlanders have good stories to share.

Do read very carefully the fineprint and only sign it if it is clear and you feel confident that you understand what the contract does and what does not cover. Bear in mind that any vehicle-related accident presupposes that your vehicle is still registered in the country of purchase, the plates are valid & updated and an insurance is in effect.

With regards to your vehicle, some countries require you to have a road insurance whereas others don't apply such a condition for the foreign-plated vehicles. In case a car or moto insurance is mandatory, sometimes you can shop directly at the borders and sometimes you can purchase it online. Remember that they will only sell you a 3rd party liability insurance, not a full coverage insurance against collision, personal injury, theft, damages from uninsured motorist or comprehensive insurance (non-accident related damages).

In case you want your vehicle fully covered, there are companies that they will offer you a full international coverage for an insanely expensive premium (around 2.000 EUR for 6 months).

## 39. Which vaccinations do I need to do before visiting certain regions/ countries?

The necessary vaccinations depend mainly on the countries or entire regions you plan to cross and a visit to your local tropical diseases clinic is definitely a must in order to get the appropriate advice and treatment.

The usual shots you should take, will fairly protect you against yellow fever, hepatitis A & B, typhoid, tetanus, diphtheria, polio, rabies, cholera and meningitis. Since you cannot have all these shots on the same day, you should agree on a reasonable schedule with your doctor or GP in order to allow to your body plenty of time to react to all these antibodies received in a short period of time.

Remember that there is no vaccination against malaria, dengue fever and all the endemic viruses that arise from time to time like Ebola, Zika, etc. but only partial medication before and treatment after the conception (both with antibiotics).

**After all, these are only personal suggestions, not recommendations! Please get an expert's advice in order to have a better understanding & the most appropriate prevention against tropical diseases & viruses.**

## 40. What drugs should I carry with me & how shall I equip first-aid kit?

Paying a visit to your GP, as well as the local travel clinic is advised to be scheduled before purchasing any medicine.

However, a must-have list of drugs & medications should include light & strong antibiotics, antihistamine, painkillers, cortisol/ hydrocortisone shots, thermometer, anti-inflammatories, bandages & gauze pads, snake bite kit, bleeding control kit, antiseptic wipes, gloves & a pair of scissors.

Several companies with online & physical stores sell ready-made solutions in different shapes & sizes ranging in prices from as little as 5 EUR to 300 EUR and upwards.

**After all, these are only personal suggestions, not recommendations! Please get an expert's advice in order to have a better understanding & the most appropriate & professional support on equipping your first-aid kit.**

## 41. How important is the malaria prophylaxis?

Malaria prophylaxis consists of light antibiotics like doxycycline, mefloquine (Lariam) or Malarone that should be taken 1-2 weeks before visiting a malaria zone & up to 4 weeks after leaving from the area of risk. These types of drugs will kill the parasite of malaria before it reaches a dangerous development stage and probably save your life.

However, there are several types of malaria & a blood test will verify what exactly you got, how dangerous & deadly it is and what type of medications you need to take. Luckily, most of the African countries that belong to the malaria risk zone, are well prepared -sometimes way better than the European or North American travel clinics- for these types of diseases and will treat you for free or almost for free.

Be aware that the malaria prophylaxis is recommended for a limited amount of time. Taking antibiotics for a longer period of 1-2 months will seriously damage your liver. Taking the best precautions when entering & living in a malaria risk area is the best you can do to protect yourself from getting infected. Wear long sleeves & pants, sleep always with a mosquito net & use citronella infused products. Also, avoid mosquito repellents that include DEET in really high concentration like over 50% (especially if you are pregnant) since it is related with cancer, seizures or even coma after repetitive application.

**After all, these are only personal suggestions, not recommendations! Please get an expert's advice in order to have a better understanding & the most appropriate & professional support & medication against malaria.**

## **42. Do I need to carry a gun?**

No, you don't need. But even if you needed, no country will allow you to enter with a gun at your possession. In case you try to enter without declaring it & you are caught, then most probably the gun will be confiscated and you will end up in prison.

## **43. Should I carry a tablet or a laptop. Or both?**

Nowadays, tablets are extremely capable with fast processors, large screens, extended connectivity and as such, you can do with them pretty much whatever you do with a laptop. Accessories such as keyboards & pencils are also available & offer to the user additional capabilities, as well as filling the gap between the two markets.

On the other hand, a laptop is a great piece of technology with endless capabilities and the only restriction for an overlander (especially for those on motorbikes & bicycles) could be the volume & the weight. Though, for those who are seeking the best performance & need a tool to work, the OS will make the difference and help them to decide.

From our point of view, carrying both a tablet & a laptop is an excess and you are better off deciding before leaving home which one you will use more & go for it. If you add your smartphone in your final choice, then you are fully covered in terms of portable technology.

## 44. What type of camera gear do I need (drone included)?

The options are endless and the market is full of cameras that will fully cover even the most demanding overlanders who want to create a professional photo gallery in their websites.

The most important decision is what type of camera kit is going to satisfy your needs along with your travel style. If you enjoy to have a comprehensive album full of nice photos, then you have to consider going for a full kit with a camera body & separate lenses. Since the advent of mirrorless technology, you can choose between significantly smaller bodies than the usual DSLR but the same range of quality lenses. Full-frame mirrorless camera bodies are also available, so if you are a professional photographer, then you won't be disappointed.

However, a compact size camera like the Canon G7X Mark II will do a great job in terms of pictures quality without the need to carry a 3kg camera bag. Needless to say it is definitely cheaper too.

Additionally, the huge progress that takes place in the premium smartphones' market can offer you great options as well, so you can easily limit down your photo equipment in case you want to travel light or you have storage limitations.

The trade-off is what type of photographs you want to take, how keen you are on photo editing & how much time you typically allow for photos when you visit a nice place. Memories & experiences are better kept in our minds & we only need to live them intensively. The type of camera will only enable you to share them and maybe refresh your memory but the picture quality will not make any difference at the end of the day & a few will complain if your video

is not 4K.

With regards to drones, it is true that they offer a spectacular point of view especially since the video quality is constantly improved. If you can afford it, we would suggest to get one just for the sake of it!

However, there is a noteworthy restriction that you have to consider before purchasing one. Several countries all over the world do not allow to cross their land borders with a drone at your possession. You can always hide it & pass through but you must be always prepared what to do if they discover it accidentally. Confiscations, steep fines, temporary detention and maybe deportation is what usually happens in these cases (all these happened to a Swiss guy who had the smart idea to actually fly his drone while crossing the borders from Libya to Egypt in 2013). On top, in the most visited historical, cultural or natural monuments like Machu Picchu or the Iguazu Falls, using drones is strictly prohibited.



## 45. Why maintaining a personal journal while overlanding?

A digital or manual journal along with a very brief photo album -even with your smartphone camera- is a must-do while overlanding. You do not need to be a travel writer or a professional photographer. Just write down what impressed you, what you liked, what you enjoyed more, what was different & also avoid stressing any negative points or bad experiences (do mention them but not dramatize them).

An overland trip is an intense, fast, sometimes extreme & highly concentrated set of events that you will hardly have the chance to experience again. Documenting this part of your life & creating a vibrant memoir is the least you can do to keep it alive almost forever, as well as share it with your beloved friends & family members.



## 46. Do I need a webpage/ blog, Instagram account & Facebook page?

It really depends on your travel style, your marketing needs & the availability of internet worldwide. If you choose to design & plan your overland adventure along with some sponsors & companies that will support you, then you have to carefully market yourself & promote your trip through a website, a Facebook page & an Instagram account. A loyal & fast-growing audience that will be fed with fresh & exciting travel content, will enable you to expand your network, advertise your sponsors & potentially fund your trip. A decent laptop & a reliable internet connection are the basic requirements together with a good camera kit & a drone.

Sharing your trip through social media & magazines (especially if you are sponsored) is a proper job coming with responsibilities, deadlines and so on; lots of people decide to follow this path in an attempt to make their trip more financially sustainable. Employing all the online tools & making use of the available platforms & networks is the right way but be aware of the competition.

Unless you have other sources of financing your overland dream or you are not interested in sharing your trip online, then you do not need to make consistent & specialized use of any of these tools.

Note that having a Facebook/ Instagram account & just posting pictures or stories from time to time, it is totally irrelevant to the professional level that your sponsors require.

## 47. Why should I give to a family member power of attorney?

Being far away from your home country for a long time, means that you will not be fully available to sign documents or be present for certain types of legal matters when & if needed. By giving to a member of your family the power of attorney & allow them to handle all, or part of your legal cases while you are away (such as property managing, travel insurance claims, Carnet renewal and other financial, real estate and other issues), makes you more flexible.

General and special powers of attorney, allow the person you will appoint to act on your behalf in financial (or other) matters. If you're giving to your selected person broad powers, you'll need a general power of attorney but if you want to limit their authority to specific matters, you'll need a special power of attorney.



## 48. How can I find internet locally & how can I communicate with my people back home?

Your best bet will always be your accommodation's wifi network of (be it hotel, hostel or camping), as well as the public hotspots of public libraries, plazas & municipality halls. Wireless networking is everywhere -like Coca Cola- and in the majority of cases, you won't get disappointed by the availability or speed, even in countries you wouldn't expect it to be so good (i.e. parts of Africa, Central America & Asia). However, you shouldn't have too high expectations primarily because you will always find yourself sharing the available bandwidth with others. So, don't expect to upload 4K videos or download HD movies but welcome it as a great surprise whenever it comes. On the other hand, you will always be able to check your emails, do Skype calls with your family & friends, make a Facebook or Instagram post or follow your favourite travel forums & blogs.

A great advantage that previous generations of travellers did not have is the convenience of having your own internet directly at your unlocked smartphone. As long as your mobile phone can work with any local sim card, then you only need to buy a pre-paid card, load it with mobile data & surf the web with great 4G/ LTE speeds (mostly in the urban areas though). In developing or less developed regions than North America, Europe & Oceania, the purchase & registration of a sim card is really easy & straightforward and the cellular data packages really cheap.

Smartphone applications like Skype, WhatsApp, Viber, Messenger and so on, guarantee that there is more than one way to communicate with your favourite people back home. Additionally, all these applications can be loaded with credits and allow you to make direct to landlines/ mobiles calls if your friends or family are not familiar with the specific technology.

International SIM cards do exist & come with some benefits. First of all, you have one number that will work in all countries. So, everybody knows how to reach you, if needed. Practically this type of card searches for the best signal/coverage & gets hooked to the local cellular providers as if you had roaming activated in your home country sim card but with fixed rates. So, in every country you know exactly the charges & you can fully control your credits consumption. It is not a cheap option but definitely cheaper than paying a monthly subscription for a satellite phone that guarantees full coverage literally everywhere.

Co-working spaces & internet cafes (yes, there are some still around) are your last resort for quality internet & these are the places where you will get the best speeds & manage to work if your hostel's wifi is disappointingly slow.



## 49. What should I do with my vehicle which is registered in my home country?

In case you are going overland with your home registered vehicle, then you have to decide whether you will keep it registered at your national transportation authorities or suspend it & use fake plate numbers! No local customs or immigration officials will check if your vehicle registration is valid or not. Technically, they cannot do it but most important, they haven't thought that your registration & plates are fake in order to investigate it further. However, your travel insurance provider as well as the car or moto insurer will require your vehicle to be registered in order to approve any claim which is vehicle-related (or maybe not). In case it is not, most probably they are going to decline any claim no matter what happened to you.

Nevertheless, there are some benefits if you choose to cancel your plates & theoretically park your vehicle in your garage. Still, the authorities might look for you in order to verify the suspension of your vehicle's circulation but of course they will not be able to locate you in Africa, Asia or South America. Skip paying the mandatory annual road taxes, insurance & technical control is something to be taken into consideration especially if you will be away for more than 2 or 3 years & lots of Europeans travellers opt for this option.

All North American plated vehicles' owners need to renew their plates every year & a sticker with the date must be put on the plate. Remember that in some countries like the US, the plates belong to the owner, not to the vehicle. So, in several states, one can go from one vehicle to another with the same plate and arrange to get the sticker on his birthday which will be posted from a friend or family member to the country he is visiting. In some states, the vehicle must be also present which makes it at least inconvenient -if not impossible.

The idea to skip the annual renewal is pretty much the same but some corrupted police officers in South America who know this regulation & mostly target the citizens of the US, might give trouble to the travellers with American plates -even if they are not Americans. In this case, if you really don't want to renew (or simply you cannot) your plates, then just make a fake sticker!

## **50. What about paying taxes & social security benefits back home?**

In certain countries like Canada that provide its citizens with free healthcare & social security benefits, the people need to spend at least 6 months in the country to not miss such benefits. Before setting off, inquire to the local social security office & make sure you understand your rights & responsibilities. In some rare cases, a bridge insurance is suggested in order to be covered at all circumstances.

With regards to taxes, unfortunately there is not much you can do other than actually paying them (usually online). Tax authorities do not take into consideration where you have been staying throughout the year and -put it simply- if you earn money (i.e by renting, offering a service, or any other source), you have to declare it and pay the relevant tax. Last thing you want upon your return back home after a long overland trip are financial "surprises", so better make sure you pay all your taxes & debts on time & as required.

## 51. Shall I bribe or not (if it is asked or implied) & how shall I deal with corrupted officials?

There is no way an overlander will not to be stopped by a traffic, federal or municipal police especially when travelling with a foreign plated vehicle. Immigration, customs & sanitary officials as well as agricultural authorities also may signal to stop in order to check your documents & your vehicle.

The majority of the officials want to meet & talk with you, have a look at your documents & make sure that everything is in order. However, some are really nasty & will give a hard time to all sorts of travellers. You can understand a dodgy official from the way they speak, the way they check your vehicle & finally from their unbelievably rude requests. The same goes for those at border crossings & customs desks.

Almost all travellers have similar stories to share & all have faced the same dilemma; to bribe or not to bribe. When dealing with an unpredictable, rude & poorly educated official who still has authority over the traveler, the easiest thing to do is resist and not give them what they are after.

Keep in mind that every time you decide to bribe, not only you do not help the already corrupted system of a developing country to recover or progress, but you also allow all those spoiled and uneducated officials to be even more aggressive and bossy to the next traveller. After dealing with so many blockades and traffic policemen, we personally think that skipping the bribe is way easier than paying and you just need to find the way that suits to your travel style, your vehicle, etc.

In most cases, the key is to be legal, polite but persistent, serious but with a big smile and trying your best to waste their time as long as possible. Having your seatbelt fastened, all your documents sorted and carrying all the safety

equipment that is “surprisingly” required for the foreigners but not the locals (like triangles, fire extinguishers, vests, etc.) is what you could do to better defend yourself and cope with all the bullshit that most of the corrupted policemen will give you.

If they are persistent or get aggressive, you can request to contact your embassy. You can actually call them & ask for some advice & assistance or even pretend calling. This is a trick that works most of times & you can actually see how far they intend to go with their stupid claims (if you were fully legal, you didn't over speed, you had your seatbelt fastened, etc.).

Your last resort is to offer paying by credit card. Obviously, there is little chance a corrupted official will be equipped with a POS machine, so you buy some time & have more chances to be simply dismissed.

However, if you did break the law and you know it, there are two fee choices. The legal book value of let's say \$100 for speeding or the “I am your friend and the cost is \$50 but pay me cash”. If you have available time, drive to the police station which you have 50% chances to be in the wrong direction, pay the ticket & get your license back.

## 52. What is the "tourist tax"?

Every time you buy something from a local market or a food stall or pay for a service like a vehicle repair, you run the risk to be ripped off from a few cents to as much as they can extract from you. It is not a norm and most of the locals are honest & happy to see you shopping from their business. However, it happens from time to time to pay more than the locals do for a kilo of tomatoes, a pound of ground beef or a 5-litre jar of engine oil.

Apart from the daily purchases at the local stores & markets, the entrance costs in several top-notch landmarks and monuments like Machu Picchu or the Mayan pyramids of Palenque are different for locals and foreigners. In some cases, it can be only a 50% price difference but there are also cases where overseas travelers nearly pay off the GDP of the country (for example the train from Cusco or Ollantaytambo to Machu Picchu).

This is what is called "tourist tax" & most of the times, you will pay it without even noticing it. Asking for the price before shopping, bargaining hard or speaking the local language could be of some help but again, do not feel bad if you find out that you were overcharged in a municipal market or the local mechanic charged you 10 bucks more. The prices of fresh produce & handcrafts are ridiculously low, compared with the prices of North America, Europe & Australia/ New Zealand & you can shop the same quantities at similar or higher quality at the fraction of the cost in your home country.

Additionally, you have to deal with the fabricated misconception that you are the rich & they are the poor that unfortunately prevails, especially in communities with very low to no education & hardly any prospects or opportunities to make any significant progress (for the western standards). The fact that many popular destinations in Africa, South America & Asia have been colonised & abused by our ancestors, is something that locals will not

easily get over, so the “*tourist tax*” is a kind of a penalty or reminder for the overlanders (the country of origin is irrelevant since the lady that sells avocados at the municipal mercado will not ask you where you come from if she really wants to inflate the final price only because you don’t look like local).



## 53. Shall I visit or not the classic landmarks & monuments?

There are travellers who enjoy visiting museums & archaeological sites & others who don't. There are also overlanders who love off-road driving while others hate it. In the same sense, there are travellers who love the outdoors and others who like to explore all the local breweries & bars instead. Obviously, there are so many different types of overlanders with so diverse taste, interests & preferences.

Nevertheless, historical landmarks & natural wonders like Machu Picchu, Palenque, Iguazu waterfalls, Fitz Roy mountain, the Great Wall of China, the pyramids of Giza and so on, are popular for lots of different reasons. As a result, they attract millions of visitors all year round as they don't have low or high season.

There is a growing number of overlanders who constantly complain after their visit in a classic monument that was obviously overcrowded, busy & touristic. Please, keep in mind that in places like these, we are all tourists! You will also hear some trying to find reasons & arguments why not to visit an historical site and why it is better to skip it.

At the end of the day, it is your trip, your budget and your call. But, if you ask the people to describe how was their Machu Picchu or the Great Wall of China experience, the majority will be at least positive & you will hardly meet any people who had a really bad time or were totally disappointed.

After all, if you decide not to visit a famous monument, you will never learn if it was really worthwhile or not. However, don't try to argue that it is not worthwhile or touristic if you haven't been there or you cannot afford it.

## 54. How shall I design & plan my route in the countries to visit & for how long to go overland?

A thorough research about the countries you are planning to visit is essential before setting off. Points to consider and do some research include:

- Weather conditions through the different seasons
- Visas, where applicable & how to obtain them; including how long you can stay in a country or in a region
- Which places of interest you should not miss
- Road conditions

First, you will have to decide on the region you would like to visit, get some advice (but don't pay too much attention) from your country's foreign office, check all the available main as well as alternative routes, go through other traveller's websites & blogs to see what they did right & wrong, note down all the border crossings & finally decide your timeframe.

As for the latter, there is no right or wrong answer. Every traveller has their own limitations & restrictions & as such the time they will allow for going overland is totally personal and subjective. Your available budget, the seasonal weather conditions that make a place accessible or not & the visas which limit your staying in a place tend to be some of the key consideration points for such a decision.

Some travellers prefer to share their time between their favourite travel destinations and their home country, so they park temporarily their vehicle wherever it is allowed & fly back & forth every year. Some others, seem to

enjoy more “*traveliving*” around the world (i.e. slow nomadic full-time travel for an extended period of more than 4-5 years). Both categories will give you pros & cons for their choice. It is your decision for how long to go overland, how quickly you will feel homesick or how long your budget will last or how fast you will arrive in your final destination.



## 55. Digital or paper maps? Which is the best to carry in order to navigate?

Both types of maps are essential. In certain places when you will need help or you will find yourself lost, it is better to have a paper map when asking a local for directions. A paper map gives you a better idea of a country, it is slightly easier to design your route & it is really handy when you need to make some notes along the edges. Distances & geomorphology of the terrain are visible at a glance without needing to zoom in & out.

On the other hand, digital maps are also handy & they offer far more detail than the paper ones. The main advantage over paper maps is that all smartphone/tablet compatible maps come with Points Of Interest (POI) which are regularly updated. This makes life easier when looking for accommodation, gas station or an ATM in a big city. All in all, the cost of getting both kinds of maps is relatively small, so better opt for both.

Navigation is another plus of digital applications that do exist for smartphones & tablets. Generally speaking, there is an abundance of ways to navigate yourself when overlanding. A reliable GPS device with an updated set of maps is the primary solution that most overlanders use. A tablet (or smartphone) with applications like MAPS.ME, OSMAnd Maps, CoPilot GPS etc, is also a great asset. Finally, if you are Google Maps fanatics, then there is some good news for you. Google allows you to download parts of the country, use them offline & enjoy the Google experience that you are familiar with. Google tends to be better for urban navigation but OpenStreetMaps are far better when it comes to countryside & rural areas. Finally, there are tons of specialized applications for off-road driving, route tracking & navigation for experts, readily available online to purchase.

## 56. Is my GPS going to work in another country?

Absolutely yes. GPS devices have been designed to work worldwide. The only thing to do is to make sure that you have the appropriate maps for the countries you are planning to visit installed at your GPS. Industry leaders like Garmin & TomTom provide their users with their own official set of maps that they update regularly. For example, CityNavigator is the brand of the map sets for Garmin devices. Good news for Garmin users is that you can download & use sets of OpenStreetMaps, an open source project similar to Google but with way more detailed maps. OpenStreetMaps is ideal for off-road lovers, cyclists & trekkers because they include almost all the existing roads, trails & tracks. Simply visit the website <http://garmin.openstreetmap.nl>, select your country, download the .img file & load it on your Garmin mini SD card.

Remember that the most important thing for a set of maps is not the road network as this will barely change in a year but the POIs which are added continuously. The POIs will make your life easier & more convenient when you are in a new place so make sure that you update your maps regularly.



## **57. How can I get valid information & updates about my next destination & which types of resources should I trust more?**

Travel forums & communities like ADVRider, Horizons Unlimited & Expedition Portal, Facebook groups related to popular destinations (Africa, South America, Asia, Australia etc.) & other overlanders websites & blogs are the best sources for valid information & first-hand experiences. Especially Facebook travel groups usually offer the most updated travel information directly from the people who are currently travelling in a country. WhatsApp groups that travellers create are also very common and are extremely helpful to spread the word & share all the available information.

Be very cautious with the Google search results when looking for information about certain things. For example, if you are researching about 4x4 products or motorbike accessories, some of the results are biased, so remember to scroll down & check more pages than the first one. Besides that, if you are trying to book your flight tickets while your vehicle is in a container, remember to delete the cache memory of your browser every time you do a new search. In general, temporary memory & cookies influence all online searches, so be mindful of it & always keep your browser “clean”.

Finally, be very careful with the -usually off-putting- travel advice that your national foreign office will issue for certain destinations like Mexico, Colombia, Sudan etc. Read it but don't let it restrict your planning and final trip.

## 58. How can I adapt when returning back home after a long overland trip?

A long overland trip is an intense, fast, sometimes extreme & highly concentrated set of events that you will most probably never have the chance to experience again. The hardest & most challenging part of such a pursuit is to be present. This is a hard task in general, so in overland terms, it is even more difficult and harder to be achieved. The way you will experience and live during the trip will heavily influence your after-trip life.

The better way to enjoy such a trip & keep the memories alive for a long time is to live it as if every day was your last day on earth. If this intensive feeling will be combined with a conscious and anticipated life change along your way, then you have managed to explore & transform yourself at its fullest. Having said that, your return back home will not be easy especially when interacting with people who most probably have not changed at all (because they don't want or they don't need to change).

On the other hand, if this trip is a one-year break, then you don't need to be so nervous about your return. Your daily life, your friends & family, but most important, your previous point of reference will still be there to help you recover & adapt as fast as possible.

In any case, your primary goal must be one & only: to know precisely the reasons you are doing such a long trip, to be present & get the most out of it.

## 59. How can I help the local communities in the countries I visit (if you feel like)?

Along your way, you will come across several communities that are in need of all sorts of help. Most countries in Africa, Central & South America, Central & Southeast Asia are listed as fast developing by the international organisations, which is partially true. The truth is also that both very poor & undeveloped countries like Guinea, Burundi & Bolivia & the fast developing ones like Tanzania or India, none of them have the conveniences, services, accessibility & luxuries that the western world enjoys & it will be not soon before they achieve such living standards.

Lots of international & local organisations operate in all these countries and albeit the Ethiopian malnourished kids is a commonly used picture for all kinds of reasons, including marketing purposes, such images remain reality.

Our personal experience & piece of advice on helping local communities in poor countries (if you feel like it) is to make no financial contribution to such organisations but instead go & see yourself what they actually need and offer what you can. Instead of providing them with money, better visit the local rehabilitation centres & orphanages and take part in their programs or offer to pass any of your skills.

There is no better way than leaving something -especially intangible- in an underprivileged centre with orphans, HIV-positive, abused kids, etc. After having a first-hand experience on how the life is in such an organisation, you could hand them over an envelope with an amount of money having also a better understanding of how it will be used.

## 60. Should I take my pet along an overland trip?

Yes. If you think that you have enough resources to make it feel like home, then book an extra ticket! If you have enough space in (or on) your vehicle, if your budget can accommodate all its needs & if you think that it will enjoy such an adventure, then do not hesitate and include it in your final planning.

Remember that you will need to go through several customs & vet checks when crossing land borders, it will need to have its own "passport" & certificate of vaccinations & several countries might put it in quarantine until they grant its entry to the country.

But first thing to do is to watch the "Expedition Happiness" movie and see how a pet can affect your trip & why you have to be 110% sure that your pet will fit in your trip & you will be able to attend his needs with the most efficient way.



## 61. Is it possible for a family with kids to go overland?

Definitely yes. There is no better way for a family to grow & travel together at the same time. Sharing your time with your kids for such a long time during an overland trip is going to be an exciting part of your adult life. The younger the kids, the more unpredictable they are. Sometimes, you don't know how & if they will actually appreciate such an initiative, especially if they are young but one thing is for sure; it is going to be an epic adventure and it basically depends on you how they will perceive it.

The most important thing is to make sure that you can afford such an adventure & you can tolerate yourself and the kids under certain circumstances. Choosing an appropriate vehicle & ensuring that their fundamental needs will be met is crucial. Also, prior overland experience is advisable in order to know what to do in different circumstances you will face during your trip. After all, for sure the positive aspects are more than the negatives and it is totally up to you how to make overlanding an unforgettable experience for the whole family.

## 62. How many foreign languages do I need to speak?

Speaking English, French & Spanish will make you familiar & confident to travel & interact with the locals in all Africa, America, Asia & Australia/ New Zealand, which makes up more than half of the world!

Still, it totally depends on how you want to travel. There are plenty of travellers who speak nothing but their native language & manage to travel all around the world without having a single idea what is going around them but they still enjoy their trip. As long as they can cover their basic needs, they are fine. Body language is the best language to get along and there is no school to teach you this!

Some others take classes before visiting a country or after landing & try to communicate in a basic level with the locals. Language is part of the history of a nation and the best way to get to know the country you are visiting is by speaking its language. In cases like Greek, Chinese, Japanese, Amharic, Quechua, and so on, maybe it is not so easy or appealing but if you really want it, you will find the way.

However, speaking the local language will bring you closer to the country's (or region's) culture, will enable you to better communicate your needs & your own culture as well as interact & connect with the locals & even deal with a corrupted official.

In a nutshell, speaking the local language (if you want & can) will change your travel experience & has more positives than not speaking. Yet, it's also worth noting that this does not work the same for everybody and as such we don't see it as a requirement.

## 63. How a long overland trip may affect the general state of my health & well being?

Any change in our surroundings & living environment has direct & indirect effects in our physical & emotional health. Constant shifts in the time zones, climates, altitude & settings involve higher than average rates of adoption from our body & soul. For example, think about your digestion and how this is affected when you are going on short vacations. See a long overland trip in unfamiliar & unknown places -at least in the beginning- in a greater scale & get prepared accordingly.

Having a balanced diet & avoiding to put weight is the most important factor for your physical strength & stamina along with some regular exercise and training (wherever it is possible). Keep yourself always hydrated, don't skip breakfast, avoid to eat late at night, moderate your alcohol consumption & make sure that you sleep at least 6-7 hours allowing your body to rest as sufficiently as possible.

Do not change drastically your daily habits, however do ensure that they are adapted to your new lifestyle, when needed. For example, if you are a coffee addict, look for the best ground coffee & drink the same cups you would have been drinking back home. But, let's say, you are venturing up in the Andes range (from Ecuador down to Patagonia), then you have to include coca matte in your diet which means quite a lot of caffeine intake that must be somehow balanced.

Most probably, your general state of health will not significantly change or affected but you must pay attention on your well-being & the way you interact with your surroundings more than you were doing back home. If you are mindful about your diet & daily nutritional needs, then expect more changes or challenges in your mental condition rather than your physical.

A trip lasting more than one year involves a significant life change, which needs to be well thought before embarking on it. For example, some people cannot tolerate the lack of a reference point (be it their country, their hometown, their family or even their house); they only come to appreciate this ,only when they miss it. So, the challenges to realise what you are actually doing & be present in the moment, could occasionally become overwhelming or beyond your expectations or even personal competencies. Furthermore, there is always a possibility that you are not actually ready for such an intense experience either because it is not exactly what you were dreaming of or you were not ready for a such radical life change. In either case, you end up not enjoying it as much as you thought before starting your trip.



## 64. Which is an essential list of must-have gear & equipment?

There are 4 categories of items that you should consider carrying with you during your overland quest. The first category is the Must-Have overland stuff that you will use often & are going to cover your comfort & safety standards like your bed sheets & towels, your cooking gear, etc. The second category is another Must-Have list of things you must outfit your vehicle but you may never use them or use them once or twice. This list includes your spare tyres, tubes, snow chains, air compressor, tyre-repair kit, some car or moto parts, etc. The next list includes all the items which are essential but not must-have like a funnel (that can be replaced by a plastic soft drink bottle), a set of heavy duty chocks (that can be replaced by a rock), a set of levelling blocks (that can be replaced by a piece of wood), a solar shower, etc. The last category includes all these items that you don't actually need but you carry along just because they are considered as essentials. An awning that you will barely use or a high-lift jack are items that could easily be labelled as useless or just excess that empties your wallet & adds weight on your vehicle.

By applying the two months rule, you know how much excess you are carrying. If you have not used a certain piece of equipment that does not belong to the first two categories that mentioned above during your first two months of travels, then you probably don't need it (time of year & weather conditions need to be considered in this rule though).

Please find below some indicative tables with the Must-Have, Essential & Seasonal travel gear you may get with you. These are only suggestions, not recommendations and all depend on your travel style, the countries & the terrains you are going to tackle as well as the length of your overland adventure. What is excessive for one overlander, is a must-have for another!

All travellers regardless the vehicle they are on, they usually carry:

- All-seasons clothing & layers,
- Hiking/ running footwear,
- Smartphone & laptop and/ or a tablet,
- Camera kit (body, lenses, tripods, etc.),
- Navigation kit (GPS, paper maps, etc.),
- All necessary paperwork (passport, Carnet de Passage, national driving licence & International Driving Permit, vehicle registration, travel insurance, credit/ debit cards and vaccinations certificate).



## Recovery gear & personal safety equipment

Item	Price range	Car	Motorbike	Bicycle	Backpack	Must have	Essential	Seasonal
Sand ladders/ recovery tracks	⌘⌘	✓					•	
Winch	⌘⌘⌘	✓					•	
Hi-lift jack & hydraulic bottle jack	⌘⌘	✓					•	
Kinetic straps	⌘⌘	✓				•		
Bow shackles	⌘	✓				•		
Snatch blocks	⌘	✓					•	
Shovel	⌘	✓				•		
Pruning saw	⌘	✓				•		
Axe	⌘	✓					•	
Heavy duty gloves	⌘	✓				•		
12V heavy duty air compressor	⌘⌘	✓				•		
Tire repair kit/ Flat tire foam/ CO2 Compressed air cylinders	⌘	✓	✓	✓		•		
Snow chains	⌘	✓				•		•
Jump leads	⌘	✓				•		
Spare key	⌘	✓	✓			•		
Spare tire/ tube	⌘⌘	✓	✓	✓		•		
Tire gauge	⌘	✓	✓			•		
Fire extinguishers & warning triangles	⌘	✓				•		

## Recovery gear & personal safety equipment

Item	Price range	Car	Motorbike	Bicycle	Backpack	Must have	Essential	Seasonal
Helmet	⌘⌘⌘		✓	✓		•		
Protection gear (gloves, boots, etc.)	⌘⌘⌘		✓	✓		•		
Bluetooth communication device (in case of two bikes)	⌘⌘⌘		✓	✓			•	
Disc locks & lock cable	⌘		✓	✓		•		
Tire pump	⌘		✓	✓		•		
Fluorescent high-visibility vests	⌘	✓	✓	✓		•		
Rescue flares	⌘	✓					•	
Earplugs	⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓	•		

## Price range

⌘: Under 50 EUR

⌘⌘: Between 50 to 250 EUR

⌘⌘⌘: Over 250 EUR

## Tools, spare parts & hardware

Item	Price range	Car	Motorbike	Bicycle	Backpack	Must have	Essential	Seasonal
Set of tools	⌘⌘⌘	✓	✓	✓		•		
Spare parts (filters, belts, glow plugs, brake pads, wheel bearings, clutch master & slave cylinders, water pump, radiator cap, drain plugs, alternator, brushes, fuses, light bulbs, o-rings, gasket paste, etc.)	⌘⌘⌘	✓	✓			•		
Heavy duty wheel chocks	⌘	✓					•	
Cargo straps, ratchets, rope & net	⌘⌘	✓	✓	✓		•		
Foldable windshield sunshade	⌘	✓				•		
Tie wraps & bungee cords	⌘	✓	✓	✓		•		
Duct tape & insulation tape	⌘	✓	✓			•		
Electrical wire	⌘	✓	✓			•		
Grease & WD40	⌘	✓	✓			•		
Padlocks	⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓	•		
Funnel	⌘	✓					•	
Epoxy glue	⌘	✓	✓			•		
Water hose & hose clamps	⌘	✓				•		
Locking fuel cap	⌘	✓	✓				•	
Fuel & water jerry cans	⌘	✓	✓			•		
Fishing line	⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓	•		

## Tools, spare parts & hardware

Item	Price range	Car	Motorbike	Bicycle	Backpack	Must have	Essential	Seasonal
Bicycle spares (brake pads or discs, shift & brake cables, wheel bearings & cones, spare tire, spokes & tubes, front & rear axle freewheel, derailleur jockey wheels, chain lubricant, etc.)	⌘⌘			✓		•		
Chain oil	⌘			✓	✓	•		
Nuts & bolts	⌘		✓	✓			•	
Hidden kill switch (ask your electrician)	⌘		✓	✓			•	
Fuel & water tanks (over 50 lts)	⌘⌘		✓				•	

## Miscellaneous

Item	Price range	Car	Motorbike	Bicycle	Backpack	Must have	Essential	Seasonal
Travel guides & maps (paperbacks & ebooks)	⌘⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓	●		
First aid kit (antibiotics, antihistamine, painkillers, cortisol shots, thermometer, inflammatories etc.)	⌘⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓	●		
Games (playing cards, board games, crosswords, sudoku etc.)	⌘	✓					●	
Pens & pencils	⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓	●		
Notebook or diary	⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓	●		
Sewing kit	⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓		●	
Photo album with family & friends	⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓		●	
Sunglasses, hat & Buff	⌘⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓	●		●
Sun cream	⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓	●		●
Copies from original documents & passport photos	⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓	●		
Zippo lighter & waterproof matches	⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓	●		

## Camping & travel gear

Item	Price range	Car	Motorbike	Bicycle	Backpack	Must have	Essential	Seasonal
Camping table	⌘	✓					•	
Camping chairs	⌘	✓	✓			•		
Camping tent (with repair kit), sleeping bags & liner	⌘⌘⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓	•		
40-60lt Backpack	⌘⌘				✓	•		
Mosquito net & bug repellents	⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓	•		•
Flashlights & headlamps	⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓	•		
Camping lanterns & candles	⌘	✓					•	
Binoculars	⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓		•	
Solar shower	⌘	✓					•	
Laundry bag or barrel	⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓		•	
Foldable laundry sink & washing powder	⌘	✓				•		
General purpose heavy duty tarp	⌘	✓	✓	✓		•		
Micro fiber towel	⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓	•		
Toiletries (toothpaste, baby powder, etc.)	⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓	•		
Swiss-army knife/ Leatherman multi-tool	⌘⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓	•		
Gas stove top & gas bottle	⌘⌘	✓	✓	✓		•		
Cooking pots, plates, cutleries & cutting board	⌘	✓	✓	✓		•		

## Camping & travel gear

Item	Price range	Car	Motorbike	Bicycle	Backpack	Must have	Essential	Seasonal
Inflatable mattress & pillow	⌘⌘		✓	✓	✓	•		
Ziplocs	⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓		•	
Plastic bags & dry sacks	⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓	•		
Collapsible water bottles	⌘		✓	✓	✓	•		
Flip-flops/ sandals	⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓	•		
Water purifier/ ceramic filter & tablets	⌘⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓		•	
Baby wipes	⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓	•		
Hammock	⌘	✓			✓		•	•
Moonbag or small purse	⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓		•	
Raincoat	⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓		•	•
Lightweight airplane-type blanket/ pashmina	⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓	•		
Swimsuit	⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓		•	•
10-20lt Hiking backpack with rain cover	⌘⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓	•		
Bed sheets & pillows	⌘	✓				•		
Blankets	⌘	✓					•	•

## Electrical devices, electronics & power installation

Item	Price range	Car	Motorbike	Bicycle	Backpack	Must have	Essential	Seasonal
12V inverter	⌘⌘	✓	✓				•	
Solar panels	⌘⌘	✓					•	
Solar regulator/ charger	⌘⌘	✓					•	
Auxiliary 12V/24V batteries	⌘⌘⌘	✓					•	
Extension cable	⌘	✓	✓			•		
Dual-battery charging system or VSR	⌘⌘	✓					•	
Plug adaptors	⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓	•		
Camera/ laptop/ tablet chargers	⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓	•		
Power strip	⌘	✓	✓			•		
12V fridge	⌘⌘⌘	✓					•	
Card reader & memory cards	⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓	•		
USB flash drives & hard drives	⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓	•		
GPS tracking device (Spot messenger, inReach, etc.)	⌘⌘⌘	✓	✓	✓	✓		•	
VHF radio, walkie-talkie , or satellite phone	⌘⌘⌘	✓	✓	✓			•	
Rechargeable AA/AAA batteries & charger	⌘	✓	✓				•	

Figure 2 Travel Gear, Hardware & Equipment (Source: Traveliving | A Romantic & Practical Guide, N. Dimitriou, 2017)

## 65. Is diesel available worldwide?

Not only diesel is widely available, but also in most of the developed countries, you can find low-sulphur diesel (10 ppm or less) suitable for cars older than 2010. Diesel is always cheaper than gasoline & the only reason not being able to find could be some occasional national strikes. Diesel engines are considered more efficient & reliable, consuming less fuel & last longer than their gasoline counterparts.

The key drawback, applicable to modern diesel vehicles (2010 onwards), is the use of the Diesel Particulate Filter (DPF) that has been used by car manufacturers in an attempt to eliminate the toxic emissions and produce greener & cleaner cars. This specialized filter requires a specific driving style to be regenerated (and so be "cleaned") which is impossible in high altitudes, it is expensive to be replaced & moderates the torque & overall performance of your vehicle. The most important downside though is the fact that DPF cannot tolerate bad or contaminated fuel. Getting good clean diesel fuel is like rolling the dice.

For these reasons, modern diesel vehicles are not recommended for overland travel. However, some travelers do remove the filter from the exhaust & re-program the vehicle ECU to work without this filter in order to minimize the chances of having issues while travelling abroad.

## 66. Is Africa dangerous?

Africa consists of 54 internationally recognised countries. Some suffer from internal conflicts & terrorism, political unrest or unbearable living conditions, so not advisable to visit. They account to roughly the 30% of the continent's total size, although it is worth noting that changes are rapid & totally unpredictable. With some online research though you can easily conclude which countries are safe to visit and which not.

The rest of Africa remains an unspoiled place full of biodiversity & welcoming people. Travelling through the west & east coast, along with the southern part, can make up a great trip without needing to skip any particular countries/territories. If you add the north Muslim countries which are well-known for their hospitality together with the majestic Sahara Desert (for those who love sand dunes & the solitude of the desert), then you can easily overland for at least 3 years. From Morocco down to Nigeria is an easy route through mostly poor countries but full of happy people! The crossing of Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) can prove quite a challenge for the off-road aficionados, but after this, all the southern & eastern part up to Egypt & Israel is a piece of cake. The national parks & natural wonders together with the always smiling Africans can guarantee a memorable journey full of adventures.

Bear in mind that some parts in all the capitals should be avoided especially at night the same way you would avoid a bad neighborhood in New York, London or any other western capital.

## 67. Do I need to install or carry a portable toilet?

Portable toilet is a very personal matter that heavily depends on your travel style. Overlanders who go mostly for bush camping would say that it is not that important, but travellers with motorhomes find it necessary. For some, it is a luxury but for others it is a must; however, women do tend to need it more for obvious reasons.

Truth be told, it is a super convenient piece of equipment if you can fit it in your vehicle, without compromising your final set-up; however, you have to consider the regular maintenance required (like responsible disposal & cleaning) & the space that takes up. If you decide to get one, it would be better to go for a portable model rather than a fixed installation inside your vehicle. This way, you are more flexible when you need to empty or clean it.

On a final note though, think what the travellers on motorbikes & bicycles -who cannot have one for obvious reasons- do!



## 68. Do I need a GPS tracking device or a satellite phone?

A satellite phone & a GPS tracking device need an annual (or monthly) subscription to work, which in most cases does not come cheap. For example, a SPOT Messenger or a Garmin inReach (former DeLorme), will set you back roughly 300-500 EUR per year for the most basic personal subscription package. Satellite phone subscriptions are even more expensive.

The most important reason to get a GPS tracking device is to allow your family to know exactly about your whereabouts by sharing a link with a map that mirrors your location in real-time. In case you don't go off-road for more than one-two weeks, you are not going to see a value for your money by getting devices like these. Buying a local SIM card together with some data instead, will allow you to communicate with everybody when you get some signal. Additionally, applications like Find Friends on Apple devices can allow any connected account to track you in real-time for free!

Your travel style & the remoteness of your selected destinations may provide you with the answer of buying or not a survival kit like a GPS tracking device or a satellite phone but, generally speaking, they are not considered as must-have items assuming you travel through reasonably charted territories. Though, this is the type of travel gear to apply for a sponsorship since you don't want recurring expenses while overlanding. If you can have it for free (or almost for free), then why not?

Finally, the SOS Emergency button that these devices are equipped with will not work in remote places outside of North America or North Europe. In the rare case that it will work, be prepared to pay a fortune for your recovery, unless it is covered by your travel insurance.

## 69. What about laundry?

In almost all countries of Latin America, Asia & Africa, you should expect to find a laundry place, but not necessarily a laundromat. There, you can hand over your laundry bag, they will weight it & you arrange the pick-up date & time. Expect to pay between 1-4 EUR per kilo on average. In some rare cases, you will be charged by piece (e.g. in Brasil).

Always make sure you make a list of your clothing & bedding items beforehand & cross check upon receiving that you get all back. In most cases, there will be delays on promised time, so better allow 2-3 hours or even up to a day.

In Central & South America, the businesses use proper industrial or normal washing machines, and most probably they will wash your clothes together with others'. In Africa, locals do it manually (unless you are in a capital).

In case you cannot find a laundry service, the only alternative is to go for hand wash. One way is the famous laundry drum that you strap/ attach on your 4x4, let it rock while driving & rinse it after or just find a laundry sink in the camping and wash them with your hands. Whatever method you are going to employ, remember that drying is also important. If it is a rainy day, the humidity is insane or the place is too dusty, then you have to wait or work out other solutions. So, the laundry drum on top of the 4x4 sounds more like an urban myth especially if you don't have a single idea where you are going to spend the night & so put your line to dry your bed sheets & underwear.

# Epilogue

This book was started & finished in a campsite in Central Argentina during our 6-years overland trip around the world. In about 2 weeks, we managed to assemble a complete book that includes the most basic & reasonable questions that a future overlander may have. All answers are a product of either extensive experience or industry standards. Most important, all answers are honest & true without any intention to impress but only assist, motivate & inform fellow travellers.

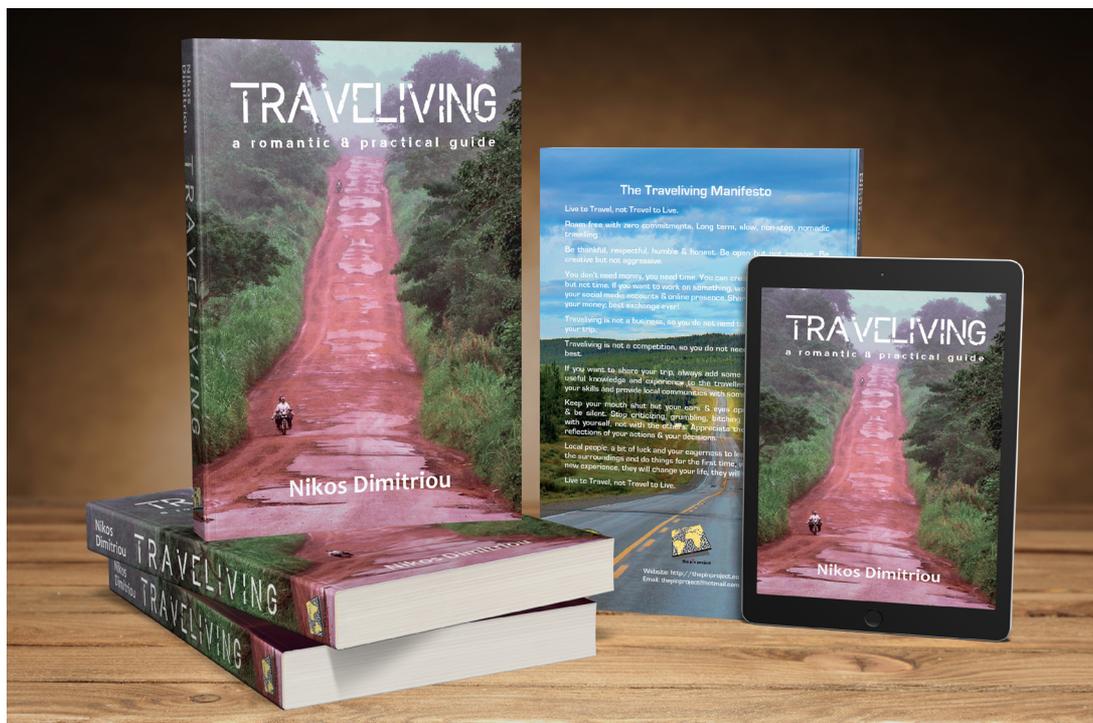
We don't consider ourselves authorities or experts. As mentioned many times in this book, we are neither the first, nor the last overlanders. We are just another couple of travellers with our very personal travel style & mentality, as everybody else out there.

Please consider the content of this publication as a tool that will provide you with some help & insight while preparing for your trip. We always had the writing skills to put things together. Yet, it took us a considerable amount of time to acquire this overland "wisdom". We did several mistakes because of ignorance, inexperience or just because we were young & naïve.

Finally, consider this book as an assembly of suggestions (or mistakes that you can avoid) rather than a rand or a bible so put down your own ideas & dreams and make it happen!

From the bottom of our hearts, **THANK YOU** for reading & sharing.

# Other Overland Travel Publications by The Pin Project



**TRAVELIVING** is our first **Overland Travel Romantic & Practical Guide** we published in late 2017. It consists of 320 pages with real-life stories, practical examples & numerous photos from the day we first considered to quit everything and travel overland until the day of its publication. **TRAVELIVING** is a collection of mistakes, misfortunes, critical decisions, sweet memories & life time experiences that changed our life completely & gave us the chance to introduce & define the term of **traveliving** in a comprehensive way (full-time slow nomadic overland travel without any time restrictions).

Like **69 FAQ Before Going Overland**, **TRAVELIVING** has been created during our long trip & it is available as an **eBook & hardcopy**. Please, [visit our website](#) & have a look.

**TRAVELEATING** is our **travel+food project** that we initiated in early 2018. After such a long & extensive overland trip, we are putting together our Mediterranean food culture along with the recipes that we collected & the local dishes we tried or our hosts cooked for us.

**TRAVELEATING** is a collection of travel recipes as well as camping food that we are preparing every day in our camper van. Simple, easy & fast dishes freshly cooked using ingredients that we source locally.

We regularly publish our recipes in the website we have created especially for this publication: <https://traveleatingbygeorgia.com>. You are more than welcome to check them & share with us your impressions & ideas.

**Georgia Micheli**

**PEANUTBUTTER COOKIES**

Peanutbutter	1 cup
Sugar	1/2 cup
Egg	1

**Mix, bake, taste**

**TRAVELEATING**

A tasteful blend of travel lifestyle & food culture  
Ένα γευστικό χαρμάκι ταξιδιού & τοπικών γεύσεων

# Acknowledgements

This book would not have been as exciting, charming and well presented as it is, without the invaluable help of some people who offered their personal advice and experience on some practical aspects, went through the initial draft and edited the context, provided us with their individual insight and feedback and finally made a great contribution.

**Mark Schneider** (originally from Canada) & **Yiannis Samaras** (originally from Greece) took care of the whole publication and contributed with their extensive travel experience as well as language skills!

We can only say a huge THANK YOU from the bottom of our heart for their dedication and determination on this project.

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And the trip goes on..