

OCC OFF-ROAD TRAINING 101/201

Overlanding Discussion

NOTE: This is not a training course. –
Don't just talk or read, practice,
practice, practice

What is Overlanding?

- What do you hope to learn about or hear about today?
- Many opinions and definitions
 - Overlanding Expeditions vs Adventure etc.
 - Some walk/hike, bike, motorcycle (dual-sport)
 - Glamping
- Roadtrips vs. Overlanding
 - Interstate vs. backroads
 - Scheduled vs. no time constraints
- Similar discussion around the campfire
 - What is Off-roading? - Rock-crawling, mudding...
- Decide what it means to you!
 - It's your time, money and investment
 - I highly recommend you invest your brain in learning about the places (not just what to do/see but also what are the risks and dangers----be prepared!!!)
- Go Alone!?
 - It's acceptable if not encouraged. It's frightening. It's humbling. It's very rewarding
 - You will meet others along the way. This will define your trip more than anything!!!!
 - Organized group trips and commercial companies
- Bottom-Line
 - Overlanding is different...different mindset, different attitude, different approach...
 - It doesn't matter. Just get out. Can-do!
 - Remember it's about the journey, the adventure of traveling off-the-grid, out-of-the way, not merely the destination
 - TREAD LIGHTLY and Be a Great Steward!!!

Discussion Topics

- Vehicles: types, options
- Driving and off-road skills
- Where to go and where to camp
- Shelter
- Food
- Packing
- Communications
- Pets
- Hygiene
- BE PREPARED!!!
- Related activities
- Not discussed but important
- Resources

Equipment – it's not on the agenda!

- What do you need?
 - It's completely up to you
- Special topic but not a debate
 - Carry a gun?
 - Automatic arrest at many borders, even the ammo
 - If you do, don't tell anyone and certainly don't flaunt it

Vehicle – What's the best for Overlanding?

- GREAT (not good) working order is a must. Function, function, function
- 4x4 or not! – No, it's not a requirement
- Winch optional - even on a Corolla 😊
- Spares, fluids & fuel – different schools of thought
 - Octane vs. diesel, quality of fuels, filters, additives
 - What good is that jerry-can if you can't get the gas in your tank? hint: practice the trivial stuff
 - Brake pads/shoes are popular take along items (a lot of downhill braking. Remember you're vehicle is over-packed, needs more brake pedal)
- SAFETY
 - From vandals and thieves --- if they can see, it it's gone!
 - Block the windows, add extra locks, they take what's visible and easy
 - Traffic accidents – What do you do? What will you do?
- What you drive & what you take along should be appropriate for where you travel
 - If you take the one-of-kind be prepared to leave it behind
 - Toyota are ubiquitous world-wide (but are they all the same?)
 - Big shiny, show truck will draw attention
- Be prepared to break down and not have what you need

Driving and Off-Road Skills

- Stay in your comfort zone and use common sense
 - Safety conscious may save your life
 - NEVER DRIVE AT NIGHT!!!
- Hone and test your skills at club outings
 - More controlled environment
 - Other members are there to assist
- There are thousands of miles of good trails that don't require
 - 4-wheel drive
 - Advanced off-road experience
- Most important rules
 - Tread Lightly and everything that applies to the term
 - Bad behavior in remote places have serious consequences

Where To Go and Where to Camp

- There are thousands of miles of good trail
 - The internet is your best friend
 - Most of the best places don't require
 - 4-wheel drive
 - Advanced off-road experience
- In the USA: East vs. West
 - Nat Parks, BLM, Nat Forrest, State Parks all have different camping rules
- International
 - Passports, visa, length of stay, border crossings
 - Be polite, calm, confident but not too assertive
- Route Planning
 - Navigation: GPS is great but nothing beats paper and compass skills (people steal GPSs not maps)
 - Maps, maps, maps: Gazateers, topos...
 - Guide books such as Lonely Planet

Shelter

- Ground Tent
- In your vehicle
- RTT
- Trailer
 - Teardrop
 - Off-road
 - Travel
- Hostel, Motel, Hotel...
- Free places offered by fellow Overlanders

Food

- Be prepared to cook on a stove not a fire
 - Some of the best places do not allow fires or grills
- Refrigerator/freezer is my best investment
 - Freeze items ahead of time
 - Use dry-ice or block ice
 - Use multiple ice chest for specific purpose
 - All drinks in one; frozen stuff in another
- Learn the tricks from backpackers and others
 - Use the web
- Be aware of border crossings
 - Perishables, plants, fruits, veggies...crossing state-lines
 - Propane, wood, charcoal, gas

Packing

- Be self sufficient
- Group planning
 - Share resources vs. carry it all yourself
- Organize
 - Remove packaging
 - Everything in place; has a place; put back in place
 - VERY IMPORTANT: A “GO” BAG
- Don't over pack
 - Leave the kitchen sink at home
 - If your vehicle is sagging in the rear, you over-packed
 - Roof-racks, trailers, hitch-racks
 - Will they fit where you are going?

Communications

- Laptops and tablets
- Many options available
 - Satellite comm, ham, cell phone, internet cafe etc.
 - Personal Locator Beacon (PLB)
 - Some options require a subscription or service contract (what's your life worth?)
- Rent vs. buy
- What's important to you and your comfort zone dictates what you should research/purchase

Pets

- Rules vary everywhere – know them ahead of time
 - National Parks, state parks...
 - Vet cert for international travel

Hygiene

- It's a topic because...
- Personal – it's ok to be a little smelly but get naked (baby wipes, anti-septic, anti-bacterial, antifungal)
- Where will I wash my clothes?
 - In a creek, in a bucket, wherever you can
- Clean camp!
 - Bears, rodents and insects (they carry diseases)
 - I was attacked by a bear or you attracted a bear by leaving your food/trash out. What's accurate?
- DO NOT use soap or shampoo outside of a shower
 - Do you know why?

Be Prepared – More than ever!

- Medical
 - Emergencies, training, planning, medications
 - What animal (animal kingdom) kills the most number of people every year?
 - Training...learn first aid in a classroom
 - Prevention is best
- Local customs and culture
- Children are everywhere
 - They are the best beggars and thieves
 - Be nice but don't feed them!
 - Don't give money
 - Hard candy does wonders
- Bribes, Policia, drugs, thugs and crooks...you are a tourist and a target be aware

Related Activities

- Photography, kayaking, surfing, hiking, sightseeing, biking...
- Sharing the adventure
 - Blogs, trip reports, photos...
- Volunteer opportunities are everywhere and organized by fellow Overlanders

Not Discussed but Important

- Money and Budget
 - Planning / spending
 - Handling / converting
- Recent news, road-conditions, & history
 - Example of something we take for granted: A great trinket bought in one place could be an insult or represent an enemy in another

Resources – The internet, the internet, the internet and rallies too

- Expedition Portal.com
- <http://www.livingoverland.com/>
- Free Book - <http://liferemotely.com/>
- Mid-Atlantic Overland
- Northeast Overland Rally & Workshop, VT
<http://www.vermontoverland.com/neorw/>
- American Adventurist **Appalachian
Rendezvous, NC**