



A big desert trip meant
RON AND VIV MOON
needed a quick and easy
accommodation option
– enter a new rooftop tent
from Tassie

UP AND AWAY

We do a lot of travelling these days. And, the more time Viv and I spend on the road the more important it is that the tent or camper we use can be set up quickly and easily.

With a Canning Stock Route trip looming – and Viv’s insistence she wasn’t going to sleep in a swag for five weeks – I needed a swift solution.

Enter Tasmania-based Complete Canvas and Upholstery, which has been in the tent-making game for more than 20 years. After visiting its Devonport factory we came away impressed and decided one of the company’s rooftop campers would be a great product for our desert trip.

The unit has a 2.2m x 1.4m all-aluminium and welded base. It can be mounted on roof bars – such as the Rhino Racks we have on our stretched Patrol – or mounted directly onto a canopy. We chose the latter as it seemed the easiest and would keep the whole unit as low as possible.

This base unit is fully lined with carpet to assist with insulation.

The tent can be mounted onto a set of roof bars or directly onto a canopy

The fully waterproof tent section is made from Bradmill Superdux 285g canvas. This material is mildew- and rot-proof and is available in 10 different colours. Two sandfly-screened windows, with zippered enclosures, at either end of the tent are standard and provide good ventilation to the sleeping area. Access to the sleeping area is via a large fly-screened entry door, which offers protection from mozzies and other insects.

The annex is spacious (main pic); access to sleeping quarters is easy (top left); the 100mm mattress is comfy (top right)



The standard annex walls are easily zipped on or off and there's a large entry door at one end and a screened window at the other.

To open the annex area more is an option, with extra zips on the corners of the walls at the door end. This allows the complete wall to be rolled up out of the way.

A full annex floor is optional (although we did without it), while a large wind-protector – that hangs from the unit's base and velcros to the end walls – stops wind blowing in under the vehicle. A zippered flap allows access to the canopy but we never used this option as there wasn't a need – we were only stopping in the one place for one or two nights.

The heavy-duty PVC, waterproof travel cover can also be used as an awning over the back, attached via a standard sail track. Each rung on the heavy-duty ladder has thick padding, which is appreciated when you have to climb up in bare feet. All zips are heavy-duty Paskal No.10 closures. The basic mattress is a 100mm foam unit.

The PVC travel cover can also be used as an awning by attaching it to the back of the unit

This can be upgraded to a 100mm 'comfort plus' foam mattress; our unit had the basic mattress fitted and was very comfortable.

With an all-up weight of 80kg this unit is well made, strong and reliable and will give years of trouble-free service.

This unit's real appeal, though, is how quickly it goes up and packs away. I doubt if we have ever tested a unit so easy to set up and stow – and we've tried a fair few!

The sturdy ladder has padded rungs (main pic); the entry rolls up out of the way (top centre); zips are tough (top right)





First up take down the ladder, which is held on by a couple of wing nuts – which never vibrated loose on our desert sojourn, even on hard-core corrugated sections of the Canning. Unclip the travel cover and fold that out of the way. Position and then climb the ladder. Grab hold of the rope and walk back down the ladder, holding the rope as you do. This unfolds the camper's tent section.

If you have the tent walls attached, as we did for the last trip, peg down the canvas at the corners to offer more stability. If you haven't got the walls zipped on it's best you peg down the rope – just in case the wind gets up during the night and the tent tries to fold in on top of you!

There are no poles to worry about, as internal struts support the tent. It's that easy.

Packing up is the reverse of the set-up procedure but takes a little more time as you have to tuck the tent walls into place. Once again, though, it is extremely quick and you are packed up and away in no time.

One of the major hassles when travelling with a rooftop tent is that you have to fold it

The unit is quick and easy to pack up making it ideal for those who only stop for one night

down before you can move it; with the ease and quickness this unit offers, that was never a problem.

The Complete Camper is priced from \$3500. The unit as tested, complete with annex walls, costs \$4500. Proudly made in Tasmania but shipped all over the country, the Complete Camper is a beauty and well worth considering.

For more information call Complete Canvas and Upholstery in Devonport on 03 6424 1168 or check out the website at www.rooftopcampers.com. 

Setting up the Complete Camper is a simple process (top pics); the unit's awning offers plenty of protection from the elements (main pic)