

Alpine Rovers? OK lets give them ago!

Well that's how that year's holiday started. We had been, as a family touring Europe for about nine years or so in our Land Rovers but this year as all of our three children had now grown up and gone their separate ways my wife Cy and myself decided to go it alone". We had heard only good things about Alpine Rovers through the Land Rover enthusiast grapevine and as they had an Alpine Tour on offer we thought we would give it a try. We had never visited the Alps and we really wanted to cross it of our list, so off we went.

It really was that simple, packed the Land Rover, drove on and then off a ferry and a long (ish) drive through France.

From the moment we arrived we were felt not only welcome but also part of a group of friends. Once off the tarmac and on those mountain tracks it was like being set free in a whole new world. There was no hurry and plenty of time for photo stops and we especially liked the Alpine Rovers rule "the pace is set by the slowest vehicle".

Wonderful views, great company, all gathered round the campfire in the evenings and what seemed to be never ending laughter really made it a trip to remember. That said the best bit, and I really mean this, was the driving. Hours and hours of tracks all different in their own ways and some quite challenging, I watch with great interest as the AR staff would stop and offer advice to some of the less experience drivers, in a way that was helpful and informative but without being in a nanny way.

At one point of the trip I had a problem with one of my doors, quite frustrating, as the Defender was not very old. When I pull up at the next stop I was preparing to strip the door down to find out what was wrong when David and Lloyd from the support vehicle asked me to step to one side and before I could get a brew on had stripped, repaired and reassembled the door. It was such a good job they did that I never had any further trouble from it. When another party member had a puncture in their D3 they hardly had time to get out before these two chaps had the vehicle in the air and the wheel changed.

So to summarise it was a trip we will never forget, we returned very relaxed and really did feel like we had an adventure.

The high point for me was one morning drinking my morning brew at about 6am watching two European wolves traversing down the side of a mountain. Something I will never forget.

Thank you Alpine Rovers.

