

A SWIFT SHIFT

An able tourer in its own right, the Trakka Trakkadu Off Road is also at home on city streets.



There's little doubt that when the new Volkswagen T5 appeared on the scene it caused a sensation, not only as a light commercial vehicle but also as a people mover and, more importantly for us, as a weekend escape machine.

Earlier VW vans had a reputation as 'go anywhere' vehicles, and the T5 van stays true to the tradition. Not only does it come as a rear-wheel drive, it is also available as an all-wheel drive in the aptly-named T5 4Motion.

Trakka, which has converted many a VW van, was quick on the uptake, initially producing a Trakkadu VW T5 conversion

before tweaking the 4Motion's suspension to produce the Trakkadu Off Road. Of course, if that doesn't whet your appetite, then perhaps the striking window graphics designed by artist Dennis Baker, himself a Trakka Jabiru owner, will.

The metallic silver Trakkadu Off Road certainly raises an eye on the road.

WILLING AND ABLE

Equipped with a 2.5L 128kW turbodiesel engine (the largest in the VW stable) and six-speed manual gearbox, the Trakkadu isn't slow. It has plenty of torque (400Nm)

for handling steep and undulating terrain. Indeed, with its electronic rear differential lock, raised suspension, low ratio Seikel gearbox, Goodyear Wrangler tyres and Seikel snorkel, the Trakkadu Off Road can go just about anywhere, as long as it's at a sensible and steady pace.

The T5 is well suited to conventional driving. Complete with cruise control, power windows and mirrors, remote central locking, driver/passenger airbags and Electronic Stability Program (ESP), the VW has just about as many safety and comfort items as a sedan.

Right, from top: Three-burner cooktop in the kitchen with smoked glass flip-up lid; under-bed storage is accessible via the rear door; the front seats swivel to face the removable table.



We found driving the T5 fun. Its powerful engine makes highway cruising a breeze, it has no trouble keeping up with the traffic and the high travelling position loans panache.

Although the Trakkadu conversion isn't a large vehicle by motorhome standards, it has many advantages. The first is its size – the 4Motion moves easily around town and transports four people in comfort. The second is that it is fully equipped and ready to go.

MULTI-PURPOSE DESIGN

Trakka's layout is a rear-bed seat design. The two-person rear seat can move forward or

backwards, has two lap sash seat belts, and can quickly fold down to form a double bed. This design doesn't allow a walk-through in the van, but the distinct advantage for the passengers is that they face forward and are close to the front seats.

Additional height is achieved through an elevating roof (hinged at the rear). Other features that set this van apart are the gas cylinder locker on the offside and the Fiamma low profile awning.

Setting up the camper takes little time. Both driver and passenger seats swivel around, a single button raises the gas

strut-assisted roof and the rear seat can be made into a bed or slid back to give room around the bench. The kitchen is fitted along the offside, along with a small range of cupboards.

All the cabinetry in the Trakkadu is made from light Euro-Plywood finished in a high pressure laminate on both sides. Innotech drawers are fitted and all the doors are space saving roller shutters.

The windows have curtains fitted and the seating in our Trakkadu came with the optional leather/fabric combination.



An elevating roof provides almost 70cm of additional head room.

liked

Driving the VW T5 – it's a fun vehicle to get around in

The artwork on the windows looks good and hides the vehicle's interior

Setting up the bed for the night is quick and easy, and the rear seat can be slid forward or backwards to wherever is convenient

A roller shutter hides gear without encroaching on 'door opening' space

Comprehensive operating instructions

i would have liked

Reading lights for driver and passenger seats

More time to play – that's for sure

WITH ITS ELECTRONIC REAR DIFFERENTIAL LOCK, RAISED SUSPENSION AND LOW RATIO SEIKEL GEARBOX, THE TRAKKADU OFF ROAD GOES JUST ABOUT ANYWHERE

ACCOMMODATING INTERIOR

Catering in the Trakkadu Off Road is straightforward. The kitchen bench is fitted with a combo Cramer three-burner cooktop and stainless steel sink. Both have smoked glass lids. A flick mixer tap supplies 12V pumped water, which can run hot if you have the optional heat exchanger hot water system fitted.

Under the bench, behind the driver's seat, is the IndelB 85L fridge and just above the fridge is the Trakka-designed electrical control panel, which incorporates lighting, fridge and water pump controls. Tucked between the forward and rear seats is a table, which neatly clips onto a rail that runs along the kitchen bench to service the rear seat and/or the swivelled

driving seats. The table also attaches to the sliding door rail for outdoor entertaining.

There are three good sized drawers plus a small cupboard fitted into the kitchen bench – certainly enough for all the eating and cooking utensils. More storage is fitted at the rear end of the offside cabinet in the form of a small half-height wardrobe, also fitted with a roller shutter door.

Tucked into a rear corner is a small storage space. While storage in a motorcamper of this size isn't excessive, Trakka has made the best use of what's available.

In addition to those previously mentioned, there's a drawer under the rear seat plus an open area under the bed base in the rear.

Lighting in the Trakkadu consists of a



Above and top left: The rear seats convert to a double bed. Top right: An 85L fridge can be found in the kitchen. Above right: A rear wardrobe is provided for clothes.

fluorescent above the kitchen bench, halogen reading lights at the rear for reading in bed plus a couple of roof lights along the nearside. Neither the driver nor passenger seat get a reading light.

SUMMING UP

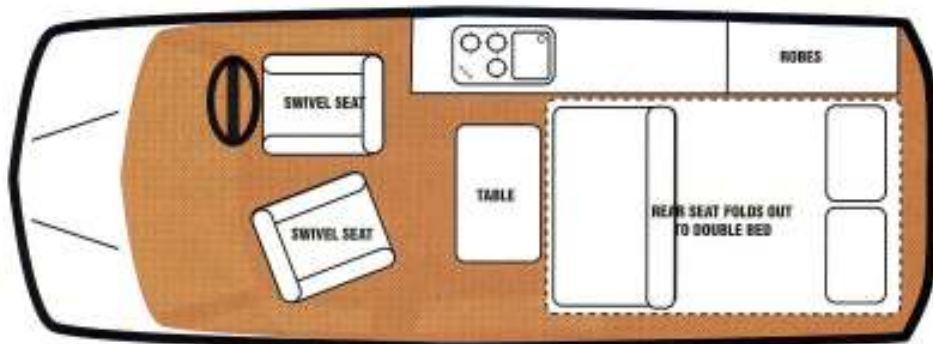
We should point out that while the base price of the Trakkadu Off Road is \$103,950, our review vehicle came with several extras, including some not previously mentioned, like the alloy wheels, diesel room heater

and towbar. While the Trakkadu Off Road won't suit everyone's motorhoming lifestyle requirements, it does add up to an exotic offroad package that can be used around the city roads without difficulty.

It's a great choice for exploring Australia's highways and byways.

Trakka, 9 Beaumont Road, Mt Kuring-gai, NSW 2080, (02) 9472 9000.

For more information, visit www.trakka.com.au



Trakka Trakkadu Off Road

BASE VEHICLE:
Volkswagen T5 4Motion

ENGINE:
2.5L turbodiesel

GEARBOX:
Six-speed manual

MAX POWER:
128kW@3500rpm

MAX TORQUE:
400Nm@2000-2300rpm

BRAKES:
Disc

TARE WEIGHT:
2407kg

GVM:
3000kg

EXTERNAL LENGTH:
17ft 4in (5.3m)

EXTERNAL WIDTH:
6ft 3in (1.9m)

INTERNAL HEIGHT:
4ft 8in (1.41m), roof down;
6ft 9in (2.05m), roof up

COOKTOP:
Cramer three-burner with sink

FRIDGE:
IndelB 85L 12V

MICROWAVE:
No

GAS:
One x 3.3kg

LIGHTING:
12V fluorescent and halogen

TOILET:
No

SHOWER:
External

HOT WATER:
Heat exchanger

FRESH WATER:
50L

GREY WATER:
38L

FULL VOLUME COMPLIANCE:
Yes

PRICE (AS REVIEWED):
\$118,710 including GST plus on-road costs