

General

- [What books did you read for your preparation?](#)
- [What countries are you visiting?](#)
- [Do you have any information about the ferry from Italy to Tunisia? How long does it take?](#)
- [I remember you were planning to go through Libya, which guide can you recommend?](#)
- [Do you have any tips for people that are looking at doing a similar trip?](#)

Car

- [What is a Carnet de Passage?](#)
- [How long did it take you to arrange the Carnet de Passage and how did you calculate the cost for the deposit?](#)
- [Why Toyota and not Land Rover?](#)
- [What does PZJ-75 stand for?](#)
- [What modifications did you have to do to your car?](#)
- [Anything you would change on your car, now that you have travelled with it for a few months? Electrics?](#)

Insurance

- [What car insurance do you have?](#)
- [What medical insurance do you have?](#)

General

What books did you read for your preparation?

We started reading the travel guide from Bradt for overlanders: [Africa Overland: 4x4 • Motorbike • Bicycle • Truck](#). A great book to start with.

What countries are you visiting?

We are visiting the following countries on the way (unless our route changes at the last minute): The Netherlands, Belgium, France (to visit family), Italy (visit friends), Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Turkey, Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya (visit friends), Tanzania (visit friends), Rwanda (visit friends), Mozambique, Malawi, Zambia, Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland.

Do you have any information about the ferry from Italy to Tunisia? How long does it take?

We booked the ferry via [aferry.com](#). The ferry we took left around 16:00 from Genova (Italy) and arrived at Tunis (Tunisia) the following day around 14:00. It took about 2-3 hours to get through customs. Be aware that at customs there are a lot of people trying to arrange the paperwork for you but that will cost you money of course. It is easy to arrange yourself, just follow the crowd and stand in several cues. First your car will be checked by a customs officer and then you need to get your GPS registered if you have one, nothing to it. After that you need to get the car papers and passport checked and stamped., you get some papers that need to be stamped at another "office" and of you go. Just ask at every office where to go next and after a few offices you are free to go.

I remember you were planning to go through Libya, which guide can you recommend?

The day we left for Tunis, Libya closed their border for EU citizens and we were hoping that the borders would open again once we were in Tunis. It took a month before the borders opened again but we already had left Libya.

The agency we were in contact with to arrange our guide for the trip in Libya was [Temehu](#). To be very honest, the people at the agency that we dealt with were great, I can really recommend them if you are in need for a guide. Despite the border issues they kept trying to get the visas arranged in time and pro-actively kept us up to date of the progress. The guide we were recommended by other travelers is Suliman and you could request him.

Do you have any tips for people that are looking at doing a similar trip?

Start reading the travel guide from Bradt for overlanders: [Africa Overland: 4x4 • Motorbike • Bicycle • Truck](#) to get a rough idea of what you need to look into or what you will end up dealing with in

case you decide to actually do such a trip. Another good starting point is of course the internet. Have a look at some [overlander's websites](#).

Just a few tips:

1. Leave on a trip like this with a well equipped and maintained car: shocks are fine, suspension is new or at least in good conditions, ideally leave on new tires and fresh batteries. We have met people that did not check their shocks and ended up destroying their car when avoiding an animal on the road.
 2. Leave enough space for souvenirs that you will buy on the road
 3. Tip would be for packing: [Eagle Creek](#) makes great pouches in different sizes and colors for packing your clothing. This way you don't have to go through everything to find a clean pair of socks.
 4. Take a long extension cord with you that takes different adaptors that are waterproof (to find in garden centers).
 5. Make the car dust proof: the amount of dust you will find on your trip is amazing and can even make you sick at one point. We found dust coming into the car from every side (everybody does btw). A break in Nairobi and a few rolls of duck tape and we minimized this problem for good.
 6. Label the electric cables so you know what cable is for what; handy in case something goes wrong or brakes down.
 7. Bring some luxury items from home, you will miss them at some point. For me it was the electronic toothbrush, god I miss it.
 8. Send yourself a copy/scan of all your important/official paperwork by email such as your passport, driving license, insurance policies, bank account details, etc so that in case you loose it all you can produce a copy by accessing all the information via email. Having a second copy on a USB stick and NOT loosing it allows you to access it in case there is no internet access.
 9. Print about 30-50 passport pictures before leaving, as you need them many times for visa applications and at some border crossings.
 10. Personal & vehicle fact sheet: at each border or check point, you might be required to provide your personal and vehicle information. It is useful to prepare such overviews in advance and print them - always much appreciated by the officials and it will save you some time. Include a color copy of your passport so you do not always have to handover your original.
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Car

What is a Carnet de Passage?

The Carnet de Passage is the international customs document which permits the temporarily duty free importation of road vehicles into certain countries of Asia, Africa, South America, to Australia and New Zealand. It entitles a person to take several trips with the same vehicle and is usually issued with one-year validity.

The Carnet de Passages is a guarantee for a foreign country that the vehicle will be re-exported within the time limit of duty free importation and if the vehicle can not be re-exported (e.g. total loss, theft), that all duties and taxes will be paid. The basis for the issue of the Carnet de Passages are International Customs Conventions.

(Source: [ADAC](#)).

Make sure to list all possible countries that you might want to visit even if you don't in the end because you will not be able to enter them if they are not listed. Arranging a new carnet de passage while on the road is possible but a slow process that will cost you valuable travel time and money!

How long did it take you to arrange the Carnet de Passage and how did you calculate the cost for the deposit?

The Carnet de Passage is something you arrange almost at the end of your preparations. We did arrange it approx. 3 weeks in before departing via [ADAC](#). That is where all Dutch overlanders will have to request it and it took only a few days to get it. The service from ADAC was great! Calculating the deposit looks complicated in the beginning but in our case was actually easy. Besides some fixed cost for issuing the document and the postal cost, the deposit depended on the most expensive country that we would pass through. In our case Egypt. The current market value of

the car determines the height of the deposit you need to transfer. Total cost is: Administration Fee + postal cost (back and forth) + highest rate for deposit (based on the countries you pass through).

Why Toyota and not Land Rover?

When making our selection we especially took into consideration the following elements: status of the engine, mechanical requirements such as suspension, battery system, raised air intake, wheel rims and tires, without forgetting sleeping and storage options, and finally comfort.

We chose for Toyota mainly because of the problems we experienced during our last trip through Namibia and South Africa. Within 4 days we ended up having to replace the V-strings, 2 tires and the heating system played tricks on us. Changing to a Toyota meant the end of the problems for the rest of our journey. Secondly, we wanted a vehicle that would allow us to sleep inside it as well as on top in the tent. Looking around at the different options, availability and pricing made us decide to get a [Toyota Land Cruiser](#) (PZJ-75).

What does PZJ-75 stand for?

PZJ and HZJ are engine indicators – the first letter tells you the engine type. Most of the engine of both types are identical, except that the PZJ is a 5-cylinder engine and the HZJ a 6-cylinder engine. The PZJ was only produced for about 2 years. We chose the PZJ as it was available and well equipped for the trip we had in mind. 6-Cylinders would have been nice but not available at the time we bought the car.

What modifications did you have to do to your car?

We bought a Toyota Land Cruiser that was already used for an overland trip to Asia and therefore fully equipped:

- 180L Diesel Long Ranger tank
- Eezi Awn rooftop tent
- 60L water tank
- internal storage boxes that can be re-arranged for sleeping
- 30L Fridge

New:

- Garmin GPSMAP® 60CSx
 - Headlights
 - Air compressor
 - Aluminum cases (lighter than the previous wooden cases) for storage in the car
 - Replaced the front window because of a crack
 - Added UV protective foil to the side and back windows
 - Cleaned the radiator
 - Replaced side panels in the car and back door for aluminum panels
 - Removed the rust on the bull bar and repainted it
 - Replaced the brake pads on the front brakes and checked the status on the rear tires
 - Replaced the tire valves
 - Protective plexiglas covers for the headlights
 - During the trip we replaced the 24V to 12V converter to charge the 12V battery (WAECO DC2412 40A) – this one can be used to convert 24V to 12V and to charge the battery
 - Redone the electric wiring for all accessories (12V)
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Anything you would change on your car, now that you have travelled with it for a few months? Electrics?

If we would start all over again, we would have preferred to have a 12V engine or have all accessories running on 24V (the engine of our car is 24V at the moment). Having different voltage for the engine makes the electrics a little more complicated and creates the need to convert 24V to 12V which could cause problems during the journey. If the converter brakes down (like happened to us) you are out of 12V power for many accessories. Temporarily draining one of the engine batteries is possible but not for more than a few hours. Finding a new converter that is capable of charging your auxiliary battery is not easy, even in Nairobi. When you do have a 24V engine it is easier to have 24V accessories and in case you really do need 12V, to convert to 12V from the auxiliary batteries.

Something else we should have done back home was creating a central "fuse box" and run all the accessories cables from there instead of having too many cables in the engine bay. Once the converter broke down I decided to create that central fuse box in Nairobi which was not easy since not everything you need is readily available simply because nobody seems to do this in Kenya. Finding the new converter was a real headache and took 6 weeks to get into the country via a local dealer. Back home you can order everything online or just visit a special 4x4 shop that understands what you want to do or can even give you proper advise!

Split charge and battery monitoring systems are usually also based on either 12V or 24V and not a mix of both. After traveling for a few months now with the car I would prefer a car that is completely 12V. Anything that brakes down during the trip is easier to replace.

Another thing we should have done, (and did in Nairobi) was adding a central charging point for power in the car like you usually see on camper vans. On many camping locations 220V is available so we added a battery trickler that charger the 12V auxiliary battery which provides power to the rest of the car (fridge, 12V-220V converter, lighting etc). The only thing I should have added is a 220V socket on the side of the car where we usually have the table and work on the laptop. 12V and 220V in the tent would have been nice too so you can watch a movie on your laptop without draining the battery or run a fan during the hot summer nights. Maybe I will add that once back home as it is pure luxury.

Where possible use LED lights inside and outside of the car. It uses less battery power and does not brake down easily.

Insurance

What car insurance do you have?

For Europe (including Tunisia) our existing Dutch insurance will cover the 4x4. Once we are in Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia we will get local insurance. In Kenya arranged car insurance that will cover us all the way to Cape Town (Comesa). This can also be arranges in Ethiopia.

What medical insurance do you have?

We took the [Global Traveler Insurance](#) from OOM Insurances in the Netherlands. This covers all we need for this trip (accept the car) and does not require having an insurance in the Netherlands already. In case we need to be repatriated to the Netherlands all medical costs are covered as well. This medical insurance can be for longer than 1 year.

Send us your questions! (Read FAQ first)

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