



Infantastico!

Review: Infanta off-road trailer

With more and more people becoming interested in the low-cost, self-sufficient approach to holidaying, we thought we'd make ourselves useful by hitching up an Infanta off-road trailer – a newish player in the trailer game – and telling you exactly what it's capable of.

Words and pictures by Grant Spolander.



If you ever have the pleasure of meeting a certain JW Swart – who founded Infanta Trailers four years ago – you’ll soon realise that he is a man unimpressed by impractical things. The layout of his workshop, the design of his house and the construction of his trailers all have one thing in common: functionality.

This pursuit of functionality is clearly evident in Infanta Trailers, as my wife (Sarah) and I were to find out as we hopped into SA4x4’s long-term Cruiser 70 SW and made our way to the Infanta workshop near Swellendam early one Friday morning. We introduced ourselves to JW and were given a brief overview of the trailer’s features. Trying to remember everything we’d just been told, we hitched up the trailer and set out for our testing grounds, a small farm called Citruspoort, some 20 km north of Swellendam, where one can find a scenic campsite and a 4x4 track, the Leopard Trail.

EXTERIOR

Despite the Infanta’s practical design, it’s still quite easy on the eye. But if you find curvy lines, colour coding and fibreglass panelling attractive, there’s a pretty good chance you may find the Infanta somewhat on the rough side aesthetically; however, if you want a trailer that looks as tough as the tracks



The kitchen door doubles as a sturdy counter top.

you drive it on, the Infanta will have you drooling like a *boerboel*.

Sharp lines, robust door handles (with lock and key), strong hinges and extensive use of aluminium checker plate give this trailer a diehard demeanour that insists: “Where you go, I go.”

INTERIOR

Unnecessary fripperies are few and far between inside this off-road trailer. Upon opening the two RHS doors you’re greeted with a simple, easy-to-navigate kitchen kitted out with easily-accessible utensils. The door adjacent to the rear of the trailer contains a built-in gas cooker (it’s

attached to the inside of the door so there’s no need to pull it out or pack it away), holders for plates, cups, mugs and spices, thick elastic bands that can be used to secure containers or items that need to be readily available, a fluorescent light, a 220 V power supply (if you’re hooked up to mains) and a breadbin – with a cover that doubles as a chopping board.

The other door, closest to the front of the trailer, reveals an abyss of storage space large enough to house a slide-out cooler box, pots, pans, additional plates and any further groceries you may have. On the inside of this door you’ll also find a durable sheath where cutlery is snugly stored. ▶



Left Kitchen utensils are all easily accessible.



Middle Space is a precious resource, little goes to waste in this trailer.



Right Cleaning dishes needn’t be a chore with this washbasin attachment.



Left Heavy-duty spring mounts bump up off-road confidence. Middle An exterior tap is conveniently placed to the right of the kitchen. Right The Infanta's standard tool kit is a simple but valuable standard feature.

A further two doors can be found on the opposite side of the trailer; with the tent erect these doors form part of the living area, behind them you'll find a mirror, fluorescent light, a 220 V and 12 V power outlet, plus a place to pack your clothes, shoes and toiletries.

Standing at the rear of the trailer is where you'll find the Infanta's true load-carrying capacity. A centrally-mounted door reveals a cavernous

you'll find even more storage space within a deep aluminium chest, where you can store your tools or any hard-wearing items, such as a braai grid.

Now for the burning question, this trailer obviously has the space, but can it take the load? Yes; with a spring weight rating of 1 800 kg the Infanta trailer can safely carry a hefty 1 180 kg, and can be taken through the toughest terrain you'd dare to tackle.

the Infanta's long leaf springs do an effective job of soaking up bumpy terrain and providing your cargo with a smooth ride.

The Leopard Trail boasts several narrow tracks, where the risk of soil erosion demands accurate wheel placement. As the Infanta's track width was similar to that of the Cruiser, there was no need to be constantly vigilant of the trailer's placement.

Thanks to the Infanta's aluminium construction and the generous use of marine plywood, the lightweight trailer is effortlessly pulled over challenging obstacles; and with a hearty ground-clearance figure of 320 mm, there's no cause for concern that the trailer will bottom out. Lastly, thick rubber seals on each of the doors ensure a tight seal, keeping the finest dust from reaching your stored possessions.

it can safely carry a hefty 1 180 kg

compartment that's sure to consume whatever you throw at it – tables, chairs and awnings are no match for this trailer's insatiable appetite.

The rear cargo area also includes permanent fixtures such as the wall-mounted water container (40-litre), a gas bottle, a deep-cycle battery with battery meter, and a fire extinguisher. If that isn't enough to rev your motor, then maybe the hidden tool/spares kit will.

This simple but ingenious idea came to JW the day he had to fork out R600 in Mozambique to pay a fine for having a burnt-out tail-light bulb. After that experience, JW decided to place a spares kit in each of his trailers which contains extra wheel bearings (with grease), light bulbs, fuses, a small bow-saw, axe, wheel spanner with sockets and insulation tape.

You may have thought that this was the end of the Infanta's cargo carrying abilities, but in the front of this trailer

ON-ROAD

Towing a trailer can be a costly affair; the added weight and wind resistance not only affects your vehicle's fuel consumption but its performance too; but with a tare mass of just 490 kg the Infanta off-road trailer posed little hindrance to our Cruiser's on-road performance.

Thankfully, at 1.8 metres wide, the Infanta is narrower than most modern vehicles, providing peace of mind that you won't find a cyclist pasted to a corner of the trailer on arrival at your overnight stop.

OFF-ROAD

With a suspension setup that includes ten 36" leaf springs (supported by 10 mm steel-plate braces), Safari shocks and the extensive use of high-tensile bolts, this off-road trailer was born for the rough stuff. When navigating a rocky off-road section,

SETTING UP

Once at our test site, the campsite that offered the best braai facilities happened to be the one on the steepest slope. Upon unhitching the trailer and engaging the handbrake, we dropped the two rear stabilising legs, locked them in place and used the jockey wheel to level the trailer by lowering the front end. Another ingenious yet almost obvious feature to be found on this trailer is a small, circular spirit-level (mounted close to the tow hitch); this simple addition makes the levelling process a quick operation.



Left These cupboards offer ample packing space for two people. Right The base tent can comfortably sleep two more adults.

By now JW's instructions were nothing more than a distant memory, so it was agreed that I'd open the rooftop tent while Sarah timed me with a stopwatch – this would demonstrate the ease or difficulty in operating the tent for newbie owners.

After loosening the eight cover straps, I rolled the tent cover forwards and tucked it neatly above the storage

compartment on the tow-hitch side. I then raised the tent by pulling on the built-in frame; with the tent now open, an upper sleeping portion (1.9 m x 1.4 m) and a lower living area (2.4 m x 2.1 m) is created – two aluminium poles with guy ropes are then used to tension the corners of this base tent.

Between the trailer and living area a specially designed channel

accommodates a seam portion of the tent; this effectively seals the trailer and tent together. See image illustrating on following page.

With no prior experience and with limited instruction, the complete setup process took me under three minutes to complete; however, JW and his son have, in expert fashion, got it down to around 30 seconds. ▶



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TEST DATA Infanta off-road trailer

COSTS

Standard model (without tent)	R79 914
Deluxe model (without tent)	R93 879
To hire (per day) out of season	R500
To hire (per day) in season	R650

CONTROLS

Brakes	Auto-reverse system
Suspension	Leaf spring
Wheels	Epoxy coated steel rims
Tyres	4x4 Continental World
Contact 245/75/15	

MEASUREMENTS

Height	1 500 mm
Length	3 400 mm
Width	1 800 mm
Track width	1 555 mm
Ground clearance	320 mm

WEIGHTS AND CAPACITIES

Tare	420 kg
GVM	1 600 kg
Water tank	40-litre

CONSTRUCTION

Chassis	Galvanised lip channel
Panelling	Aluminium
Interior	Wood (marine-ply)
220 V input	Yes
220 V outlets	4
12 V outlets	3
Full-size spare	Yes

STANDARD FEATURES

Water tank
Outside tap (gravity fed)
Washing basin with frame
No. 10 gas cylinder
Spade
Cooler box
Fire Extinguisher
Tool kit with spares
Plastic plates, cups, mugs and bowls
Deep-cycle battery

OPTIONAL EXTRAS

Rooftop tent	R10 830
Battery charger and monitor (CTEK and National Luna)	R1 311
Engel 60-litre fridge on rails (Deluxe model)	R6 726
Solar panel (55 Watt 12 V DC)	R5 472
Awning	R1 710
Nose cone	R4 389



Joining the tent and trailer.

CONCLUSION

Many overland travellers are still reluctant to tow a trailer, finding it to be more a curse rather than a blessing. To these folks, I have to admit that I agree... or rather, I used to agree; my camping experience with the Infanta off-road trailer has forced me to acknowledge the numerous pros associated with owning a trailer of this calibre.

To know that at any time you can hook up your trailer (no need to pack or hunt around for camping gear) and go on a trip – completely self-sufficient – is a pretty good feeling. I don't know about you, but if owning a trailer such as this means I get to spend more time outdoors, I'm sold! ■

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