



VOYAGES - AVENTURES - ÉVÈNEMENTS - COLLECTOR

TOYOTA LAND CRUISER

N°5



**POUR LE FUN
OU POUR LA PLAGE
LE FJ DE 4X4
EXTREME**



COLLECTOR
LE FJ 55
DU BARON



PRÉPA
UN 80
BIEN SUSPENDU



DOSSIER
TENTES DE TOIT
À COQUES RIGIDES

**ROAD
BOOK**
AUTOUR DU
MONT-BLANC

M 05958 - 5 - F: 6,20 € - RD



Texte et photos : Arys Panayotou

LES TENTES DE TOIT A COQUE RIGIDE

1^{ère} partie

Généralités et petits secrets

When starting to raid the rooftop tent is more significant, both in terms of comfort and in terms of security. It is clear that this type of equipment, the campsite is quickly installed, which releases more time to rest from a tiring journey.

There are two types of rooftop tents: flexible tents, soft tents or hard shell tents. For now, we'll be talking about hard top tents knowing that next article will be restricted to soft tents. This article will allow you to learn a little more about the different concepts proposed. It's sort of a prelude to the buying guide that will be a second component on rigid shells.

References, copies and fakes.

The two main leaders of the hard shell rooftop tents are James Baroud and Autohome. The first is Franco-Portuguese, the second is Italian. Both manufacturers offer excellent models to date, refer in this regard. Italian tents are on the market for over forty years; apart from a few esthetic changes, they did not undergo notable changes since we test. Franco-Portuguese tents appeared in the 90 years since we test them, they are constantly changing. Both manufacturers are waging a merciless war to conquer new market share: Autohome highlights seniority; James Baroud highlights its innovative spirit and its "special 4x4" orientation since 2011,

James Baroud is the number 1 rooftop tent in Australia; it is also in the process of becoming in the USA.

Then, after the two "giants" we found Trekking with his little Tango and Nait Up with its hybrid tent. Very intimate productions that cannot compete in any way with the Italian brands or Franco-Portuguese ... Much further back, is emerging in recent years a constellation of copies and Chinese counterfeits. Sold on the Internet by unscrupulous dealers, these counterfeits reflect the shape, color and even the logo of the above mentioned brands. Seduced by the mirage prices, more and more consumers fall into the trap and end up with products whose quality is below everything you could imagine. So a good tip: if you want to enjoy a roof tent, go through the official network.



3) Maggolina Airlander. The most famous rooftop tent in France. His crank opening mechanism was designed more than forty years ago. The manufacturer remains faithful despite some "small" malfunction

4) Columbus Classic Automatic first attempt of the company Autohome to draw a straight line from the famous Bivouac designed by Trekking in the 80's.



James Baroud Evasion. The First automatic tent with horizontal opening. When she appeared on the market in 2004, it was immediately acclaimed by all professionals 4x4. So much so that the manufacturer found himself quickly out of stock.



After some laborious years to make known its products, James Baroud is now the number one in Australia. A position he is about to reach the USA where one does not skimp on quality outdoor equipment.

Maggiolina Extrem. Coque bien profilée, lignes fluides sans aspérités : un design très esthétique qui n'a pas pris une ride.



General appearance and interior space: On a hard shell tent, the room (fabric part) is inserted between two half shells profiled . Some manufacturers like Maggiolina and James Baroud , offer models with luggage place on which to install a tire (not the rim) . This is an important advantage so you does not need to board in the cockpit a second wheel or on an additional wheel door. The hull strength and weight (polyester fiber , Carbon Fiber or poly carbonate) is essential , particularly in the context of a raid where the whole is much in demand (vibration and shock) . For now, the thickest shells (and despite the lightest) are James Baroud using similar to that of motorcycles helmets material (hence its light weight) with a density and rigidity superior to tents Italian or Chinese. The reliability of the closure system of the of the closure system will depend on the location and number of points fitted closures or not a double security. On Italian or Chinese tents , some users have had to add additional closures to prevent accidental opening of their tent.



Wrinkled appearance and flaccid fabric this Mag-giolina Air Top with automatic opening. . Nothing to do with the classical models of the range. An unusual model , probably handicapped by its price of around 3000 €.

Unknown problem by the Franco-Portuguese tents which are all equipped with double security.

Airlander or Extrem, Maggio on a "classic" The fabric is tensioned at all times.

Inside, beds with high density foam ensure a comfortable fit provided that the manufacturer has not skimped on the thickness of mattresses as is sometimes the case on Chinese models. In this case , it will invest in gym mattress foam density to associate the original mattress. The tents with a horizontal opening assuming an equal volume to those that open rear or side very much higher height provides greater comfort especially when you want to change in his tent.

The fabric

Sustainability and the comfort of your tent depend largely on the materials used for the room. In order for that to be truly successful , we must first take account of the specific tissue . Thicker at the end , from the quality mediocre at best , you can find anything on the market! A good painting should be resistant to tearing while combining the following: anti -UV, rot-proof , waterproof, breathable , reinforced stitching and sealed with aqua - bulk yarn protection ... All of which are often missing from data sheets of

many manufacturers . For now, the only really play transparency seems to be James Baroud to the point that the Franco- Portuguese firm claiming for years as a technical comparison to its competitors, who refuse ostensibly.

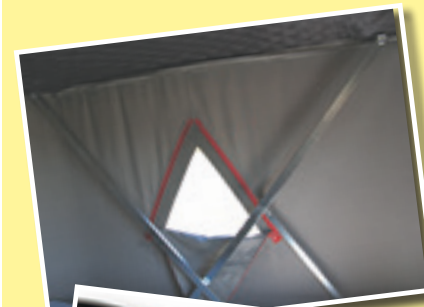
Ventilation and condensation

The quality of the room should not be limited to sealing criteria. It has to be optimal in terms of ventilation to avoid the effect of condensation. Ergonomics and design of openings and air vents are critical! As well as their number and arrangement. Unless you cut in a special membrane (and expensive!) As Goretex , the fabric of a single-walled tent is never completely breathable . So if the weather conditions are not favorable , the condensation is almost inevitable unless effective openings or VMC (mechanically controlled ventilation) are available as are found on boats or tents James Baroud . For a vent or a door to be truly effective, they must overcome beings mini awning (or awning protection). This protection prevents hearing or opens up the door even in heavy rain. "Traditional" tents used by hikers and climbers are all equipped with the famous awnings protections. It does not apply to



Air Top Maggiolina. The first automatic opening roof top tent of Autohome

even on the roof top tents , most of which have unprotected openings. To date , only James Baroud offers on all its tents vents and doors topped with mini awning with some models , a CMV driven by a photovoltaic system. In absolute terms, we can say that the Franco- Portuguese tents are better ventilated market .



The pantograph of a crack opening tent.

The crank ! An indispensable tool that we often tend to misplace.

Implementation and closure

Hard shell rooftop tents have the enormous advantage of being able to fold and unfold quickly and without complicated handling ... as long as the system implementation is not bad ! There are two opening systems " crank " or "automatic" . On the first system, the crank



Columbus Classic. Portfolio opening with two side doors. A good product that deserves some small improvements to be perfect .



Naït Up hussar . A hybrid tent that it is difficult to store in a well- defined category.This Product is probably great for camping at beach but is not suited to 4x4 .



Columbus Classic. It uses the same external design as Maggiolina .



Diferent variations of color for the same model . Here you can feel the Italian fiber and sense of estetic.

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Columbus Variant. This model differs from the previous by its large rear opening

acts on a link chain (like a bicycle chain). The latter in turn actuates the two compass (or pantographs) on the front and rear of the tent. These are the compass that will serve to fold or unfold the room. Despite the rave "testimonies" as found on the site of Autohome , this system has some weaknesses. During our travels, we met several times in travelers who have had problems with this type of mechanism . We have also participated three times in makeshift repairs on the track , and even though these incidents are not common, they are still very real. No such risk with other tents on the market that do not use anymore that assisted automatic opening cylinders. This is what we find on all tents James Baroud on Capri and the Tango of Trekking and on Columbus from Autohome. On automatic attempts , the opening is instantaneous. The deployment of the thrust chamber results of two or four cylinders gas will rise to the upper hull. For now, we have never found a problem on this type of model. Emphasize , in passing, that the hydraulic cylinders James Baroud tents are supported by a hinged arm reinforcement . This compass aluminum stiffens the assembly and allows the tent to cash unflinchingly strong crosswinds . One that we found neither on Italian or Chinese tents ... On automatic opening horizontal tents, closing is done by starting at the front end to the rear . On an automatic portfolio , simply fold down the rear . Once we got the hang of the tent can be folded by one person in less than a minute. You just



Columbus Carbon. Same construction as the Variant but with a carbon Shell. It costs a little more than 2,600 €. This is the most expensive one on the rooftop tent market.

need a little discipline and not block the lift cylinders with blankets or duvets.

The ladder

More or less voluminous on their design and weight the original ladders are often stowed rows are often within the tent is not always harmless. First it takes up space but mostly it can rip the nets , the fabric of the room or the headliner . James Baroud , has a bag cover of the ladder to protect the inside of the tent. But that does not solve the congestion problem . If you want the best from your tent and use it as a roof box "additional" , you may need to refer your interest on folding ladder Narbonne accessories . It is reliable , it has good width steps and it can be installed on the side of the tent with two brackets ...



Trekking Tango . One opening but a large rear awning that can ventilate the tent even when it rains in torrents . Hardly less well finished than Columbus, the Chinese tent is also much less expensive (just over 600 € difference).



James Baroud Evasion. Un produit «spécial 4x4» destiné aux utilisateurs les plus exigeants.



Trekking Capri. Another Chinese tent distributed by Trekking, this tent with side opening is associated with a good size annex . An innovative concept that , for the moment, we do not have much feedback .



James Baroud Explorer Evolution . This model takes the basic concept of this brand Reinforced ribbed shell, automatic opening, hyper gathered stretched fabric , openings protected by scoops , 3 adjustable rear doors lined foam mosquito net , luggage rack (or wheel carrier) , double safety locks and VMC. A model really built for raid ...



The openings in the Columbus and Magiolina are pretty basic . In case of rain, we have to close everything.

The mattress

Essential element of the bed the mattress needs to be thick enough and good density per square meter to ensure a comfortable fit. Some manufacturers still dare to deliver tents with mattresses 3 or 4 cm thick , but overall , serious brands do not provide mattresses lower than 7 or 9 cm.



All the " evolution" James Baroud models are equipped with the VMC.



James Baroud Discovery. 3 déclinaisons, de la Classic à l'Espace en passant par l'Evolution. Espace et performance sont encore au rendez-vous sur ces tentes portefeuilles que l'on a testé dans des conditions épouvantables.



overcome tees with a awning of protection. A little more useful when you're in the rain or snow.

The warranty of Maggiolina and Columbus from Autohome are guaranteed one year. Provided that the defect or malfunction to be accepted by the manufacturer. Trekking tents and tents Naït Up are also guaranteed one year. James Baroud offers 5-year warranty on its entire range , easily and without any restrictive clause like that " misuse of the product " is found in some manufacturers who claim to not assume any guarantee ...