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El Camino Del Diablo, AZ

Chaser Trailer

<p>Vendor:</p> 	<p>Adventure Trailers</p> <p>Adventure Trailers, LLC 2277 La Crosse Ave, #302 Colton, CA 92324</p> <p>PHONE: 877-661-8097</p> <p>Email: info@adventuretrailers.com</p>
<p>Vehicle:</p>	<p>ARB 4x4Runner Test Vehicle and Expeditions West Tacoma</p>
<p>Cost:</p>	<p>Retail Price of \$3995 Assembled Delivery Charge: contact vendor Some options shown are available at additional cost * Pricing subject to change, contact vendor</p>
<p>Weight :</p>	<p>Dry Trailer Weight: 700 lbs. GVWR: 2,700 Lbs. Payload: 2,000 Lbs. Tongue Weight: N/A</p>
<p>Key Features :</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Long Travel Suspension 2. Airbag for adjusting payload and ride height 3. 19 Gallon Water Tank 4. (2) 20l Fuel Cans 5. Trailer brakes 6. Ultra High Quality Construction
<p>Expeditions West Product Rating (Rating definitions)</p>	

Quality: Superior materials and craftsmanship		Capability: Trailers can increase trail difficulty in some environments	
Durability: All hardware and materials exceed requirements		Value: Higher volumes allow lower construction costs. A real bargain	
Reliability: Complexity of any equipment reduces reliability rating.		Expedition Rating: Overlanding is what this trailer was designed for!	
Overall Rating			



Trailers for expedition travel

Why use a trailer?

1. Equipment Storage:

Most SUV's designed for technical trail environments have limited storage volume. In the case of a Jeep Wrangler or Toyota FJ40, a trailer can nearly double the available space. Families traveling in a compact SUV deal with the same constraints, and must resort to a roof rack with heavy tents and other equipment to allow for passenger room. A trailer is nearly always a better solution than a roof rack, unless very lightly loaded.

2. GVW Constraints:

SUV's also suffer from low payloads. In many models, three adults and a few bags can exceed the Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW) ratings for the vehicle. Adding aftermarket bumpers, winch, auxiliary fuel and water, etc. results in an overloaded vehicle. Overloaded vehicles will be more likely to break parts, etc. A trailer only adds tongue weight to the payload, which on the trailer is typically less than 200#. A well designed trailer can carry 1,000 lbs. or more over another axle.

Remember, never exceed the Gross Combined Vehicle Weight Rating (GCVWR) rating for the vehicle

3. Base Camp:

With payload and storage space freed up, you can keep the tow vehicle light and add trail modifications. Once in camp, you can drop the trailer and go explore more challenging terrain without all of the weight. A light vehicle always performs better.

4. The Integrated Camp:

Typically, a well designed expedition trailer will tightly integrate camping, cooking, sleeping and storage requirements. This can be difficult to accomplished in an SUV. The trailers primary function is to store gear and deploy into a tent, where the vehicles goal is to carry passengers and mount the drivetrain. That limits or complicates integrating camping features.

The trailer can be set-up in less than the time to deploy a typical family tent, and will have water, a kitchen, power, and sleeping accommodations all together.

accommodations all together.

5. Ready to go:

Most use their exploration vehicle as primary transportation during the week, which means lots of packing to get ready for a trip. With a trailer, everything can be packed and ready to go. That means water, extra fuel, all of the camping gear etc. That can make trip planning more enjoyable and the day of departure less stressful.

A trailer can also be an emergency life support. With the frequent natural disasters, just hook up the trailer and you will have food, water and shelter.

Critical Design Elements:

1. Suspension

Suspension design, travel and dampening cannot be overlooked in a trailer. Having towed several torsion style suspension trailers over the years, they should be limited to either smooth highway or slow speed technical trails. Anything over a crawl off-road will cause a torsion axle to destroy the contents of the trailer and transmit significant force to the tow vehicle. Torsion axles are typically limited to 1-2" of wheel travel, which compared to the 7+" in the tow vehicle makes the problem obvious. I have found that the trailer suspension must equal at least 80% of the wheel travel on the tow vehicle. The best way to accomplish this is with a trailing arm suspension, supported by coils or airbags and dampened by shocks.

2. Brakes

It is not common to see off-road trailers with brakes, but even one weighing less than a 1000lbs. should have them. It is not so important while on the road, but on loose, icy or muddy trails, the brakes are essential. Imagine how the rear of the tow vehicle would behave on a loose, cambered decent. The trailer will want to push the rear of the tow vehicle downhill.

3. When it rolls

The trailer should have a wide range coupler, which also allows the trailer to roll over completely. On a side hill, if the trailer does start to roll, it is better to let it go than stop and pull the tow vehicle over too. Most off-road trailer are tough and will see little damage in a light roll.

4. Draw bar length and weight distribution

Generally, you want the distance from the trailers wheel hub to the coupler to equal the wheelbase of the tow vehicle. A little longer is ok, and will help with stability and backing, but too long will cause the trailer to track outside of the vehicles line around corners.

In all cases, you want greater than 50% of the trailers weight to be forward of the axle, but not so much that tongue weight becomes excessive. A tongue heavy trailer will track properly, and handle as designed with little sway on the highway.



Prescott, AZ

The Beauty is in the Details

The design details of the Chaser trailer is what makes it so exceptional. The owner of Adventure Trailers, Mario Donovan is a life

The design details of the Chaser trailer is what makes it so exceptional. The owner of Adventure Trailers, Ivano Donovan is a life-long adventurer, having spent a large percentage of his years in Africa. Those types of travels have provided valuable experience into what works, and what does not in a trailer and camp.

The Chaser starts with its connection to the vehicle, which is accomplished with a multi-axis coupler, allowing the trailer to pivot left and right through a wide range (greater than 180 degrees) and pivot through a cross-axle ditch (up to 360 degrees) and travel through a gully _/ at greater than 180 degrees. There is also very little rattle, as is common with a pintle.

The coupler can also be removed completely from the trailer to help prevent theft, make more room in the garage, or to use a standard coupler.



Black Mountains, CA

A heavy duty, fully boxed frame houses the airbag fill valves (the white caps shown), and the controller for the lights, including a switch to turn on the running lights.



Visible in this photo is the all-steel swivel mount tube jack with large diameter wheel. I prefer an even larger pneumatic wheel, but have found that this unit works well too, and saves some ground clearance.

The jack can also be removed entirely with a tethered hitch pin.



On the drawbar is an optional nose box, which houses up to two deep cycle marine batteries.

Adventure Trailers uses the Lifeline model deep cycles, which is one of the highest quality units available, and is sealed.

Lifeline, Made in the U.S.A. GPL-31T
105 AMP Hours

The optional brake controller is also attached to the box, which features a break-away.



Just aft of the nose box, two optional 20L Wedco cans are stored in lockable steel baskets. The baskets will also accommodate a Scepter can.

After the fuel storage is an optional 19 gallon water tank with either battery operated or manual pump. I really liked the manual pump, and found that it easily met the needs of camping while conserving water and reducing complexity.



The trailer box is HD 14 gauge, powder coated steel, which is assembled from 7 total parts. This makes replacement easy if a panel or fender is damaged. Plated hinges and hardware prevent corrosion, and the adjustable lid hold-downs can be locked for security.

Two gas assist struts make it easy to lift the lid, even if a roof tent is mounted.



Full length footer rails support the Yakima feet and various bar lengths. Wider bars can be installed to accommodate bikes and kayaks. Numerous tent options are available.



The box is massive, with 46 cubic feet of storage. Tie downs help to secure the load, and an Engel fridge can be fitted. 12v outlets are wired and slick LED lights are in the corners to illuminate the cargo.



To ensure a water-tight compartment, thick automotive seals are used around the lid, and felt is used in the corners for compression. The lid hold-downs compress the seal and make the environment water and dust safe.

In the 150+ miles I traveled with the trailer on the El Camino Del Diablo trail, I had no dust ingress.

The rear of the Chaser includes LED lamps, and integrated 2" receiver. This is a great feature for mounting bike racks.

The suspension on the Chaser uses 23" long independent control arms with 7" airbags and Old Man Emu shocks. This image shows the trailer at nearly its lowest setting. It can be lifted another 5" from this height to accommodate tires up to 38" in diameter. Ground clearance is nearly 26" with that tire.

The airbags also allow adjustment to load, keeping the trailer level throughout the payload range.

The suspension really shines at high speeds, and soaks up whoops and corrugations as good as the tow vehicle. Pitch and sway are minimal, and the independent control arms greatly reduce side to side movement. It is also a joy to pull through the rocks, with high ground clearance and 32" tires.



Black Mountains, CA

Chaser™ Dimensions/Specifications

Overall Length	120 inches
Overall Width	64 inches

Overall Width	54 inches
Main Cargo Box	50W (top) 40W (bottom) x 26.25H x 72L
Nose Box	31W x 15W x 19H x 16.5L
Cargo box cubic capacity	46 cubic feet
Water Tank	19 gallons
Gas Cans	5 gallons each
Net weight lbs	700
Payload lbs	2000
Axle Weight Rating	3500
Ground Clearance	24" with 35" tires
Box material	14 gauge zinc coated gauge steel
Chassis material	2 x 3 x 1/8 zinc coated steel tube
Bumper material	2 x 5 x 3/16 zinc coated steel tube
Suspension	Trailing arm, air bag, shock absorber
Cargo box lid	Opening assisted with gas struts

Standard Features	Optional Equipment
• Patented trailing arm suspension	• Electric braked axle with break-away
• Airbag and shock absorber dampening	• Fully articulating couplers
• Bolt together steel panels	• 12 volt auxiliary battery system
• Heavy duty bumper with 2" receiver	• Solar panel & charge controller
• Durable powder coat finish	• Water tank
• Locking stainless steel hardware	• CARB approved 5 gallon gas cans
• Removable coupler system	• 11 lb DOT approved propane cylinder
• Rear 2" receiver for accessories	• Retractable awning
• Locking cargo box	• 2 burner stove & food prep surface
• Automotive weather-stripping	• Roof top tent
• Choice of many hub bolt patterns	• Portable hot shower units
• Removable 2" ball coupler	• Tent heater or evaporative cooler
• 7 Pin wiring including auxiliary	• Refrigerator/Freezer
• LED lighting	• Rear stabilizer jack
• Heavy duty rubber cargo bed matting	• Collapsible grills
• Removable tongue jack	• Sand Ladders
• Built in skid plate	• Recovery Equipment
• Side marker lights and reflectors	• Air compressors
	• Expedition equipment
	• Matching tires and rims
	• Gas strut assisted lid
	• Roof rack bars

Feedback from other testers of the Adventure Trailer Chaser:

Brian Mcvickers, 2001 Land Rover Discovery

"That trailer is pretty impressive, much easier to pull along than I would have thought. I sometimes forgot it was there. That night as I searched for camp near Secret Pass there was a spider web of trails, none of them marked and none of them on the maps! I spend a good 2 hours driving around a 5 square mile area looking for camp. Trying to inch closer to the on my . I never found camp, but I had a blast! I'd get to the end of a trail or to the end of the time I to exploring each trail, and then have to turn around! One trail put me on top of a narrow peak and the continuation of the trail looked ugly in the dark and went the wrong direction anyway. I turned around at the top of that peak with a nice 25 point turn! Going forward the front tires of the truck would over one side of the mountain and backing up would be over the other side. Oh, and did I mention it was 1:00am and dark out! What a blast!! Another trail went from an impressive grade to a straight up rock climb into nowhere. There was a trail there but I opted for another exciting -point turn around, this time on a grade, lots of fun!

Best of all was when I finally decided to make camp.

I'm sold on the convenience of roof top tents. Cover off, pull on the ladder and go to sleep regardless of the uneven rocky ground around you. I woke in the morning to myself at the base of a massive 200+ft cliff with spectacular mountain sunrise views all around. 15 minutes later the vehicle happened along to show me the way into camp...

It was also a treat to see Mario's shop. I told him that if I lived closer I would be applying for an apprenticeship!"



Secret Pass Trail, Arizona. Image: Chris Marzonie



El Camino Del Diablo

Summary:

Having pulled many trailers off-highway, including the VenturCraft, Jumping Jack and others, the Chaser trailer is without exception the easiest, safest and most capable on the trail. Towing a trailer can be a big compromise with lesser suspension designs, and ends up slowing down your progress and leads to damaged contents. While other trailers may have unique sleeping configurations, or more storage, the Chaser focuses on the critical aspects of expedition travel. Reliability, suspension performance, storage capacity and a place to sleep. The Chaser exceeds my expectations in all of those areas.

Look for more adventures with the Adventure Trailers Chaser soon!

You can also download my article on the Chaser trailer for Arizona Outdoorsman: [Page One](#) | [Page Two](#)

[Read the Press Release](#)

Full Disclosure: At Expeditions West, we take equipment reviews quite seriously, and don't mind saying if something doesn't work.

In this case, I helped design some of the aspects of the Chaser trailer, so naturally, I am pleased with the outcome. But this review, and my design input comes from over ten years of pulling off-road trailers across long distances, highways, 3+ trails and backing them up shelf roads. In addition to just my thoughts, I have included feedback from others who have used the trailer.

[Questions / Comments?](#)