

Buying A Bit Of Nostalgia. 200 Tdi Discovery 1.

On Wednesday the 10th of November 1993 Lois and I test drove a Discovery and ordered a new three door Discovery 200 Tdi, Carrigada Green with Bahama Beige interior. We took delivery of the dark green vehicle, from Charlie Calafiore at Massaro Motors, on December the 24th – what a great Christmas present.

By the time Australia Day 1994 rolled around, just a few weeks later, the Discovery had been into Wonnangatta, conquered Blue Rag Range, had its 1500km first service and been fitted with a bull bar, snorkel and dual battery system. By the end of that year the ARB standard bull bar had been exchanged for an ARB winch bar, a Warn winch fitted, an aluminium roof rack bolted on, the Pirelli tyres swapped for BFGoodrich mud terrains, a C.B. radio and an HF radio installed.

In October 1994 the Discovery was lead vehicle in the first ever Land Rover Owners' Club of Gippsland trip. The vehicles on the trip were all quite new Discoverys and a Range Rover.

In 1995 we took the Discovery, by this time with upgraded coil springs and Bilstein shock absorbers, on a long service leave trip. During our many months away the vehicle crossed the Simpson Desert twice, firstly on the Madigan Line and French Line to Birdsville and returned to Alice Springs via Warburton Crossing, the Rig Road and the Ghan Line Track. We did this in company with another Series 1 Discovery, Mal Trull's gold V8 two door, that used quite a bit more fuel than the little 200 Tdi consumed. There were not so many people crossing the Simpson in those days and we had a brilliant adventure with our two Discos. On that long service leave Lois and I also went to the Kimberleys via the Tanami Road. Travelled through the Top End and came back to Victoria via various station tracks and dirt roads.

We loved the vehicle. It was strong, a delight to drive and served us very well in all types of terrain. We had very few mechanical issues considering the life it lead.

It is probably worth remembering the introduction of the Discovery. The Discovery Series 1 entered the U.K. market in late 1989 and for Land Rover it was a ground-breaking model. Essentially it was built on the Range Rover 100 inch platform with the same drive train and supple coil suspension. The Discovery opened up comfortable four wheel drive touring to a new set of customers. The company saw the Discovery as a competitor to the Japanese produced four



TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE

V8i

Aluminium construction, five-bearing crankshaft and self-adjusting hydraulic tappets.

Capacity: 3528 cc.

Bore: 88.9 mm. Stroke: 71.1 mm.

Compression ratio: 8.13:1.

Max. power: 115 kW @ 4750 rpm.

Max. torque: 260 Nm @ 3000 rpm.

Electronically-controlled hotwire fuel injection. Electronic ignition and engine management system.

91 RON unleaded petrol.

Major service intervals: 20,000 kms.

Tdi

Aluminium cylinder head, four cylinders in-line.

Capacity: 2495 cc.

Bore: 90.5 mm. Stroke: 97.0 mm.

Compression ratio: 19.5:1.

Max. power: 83 kW @ 4,000 rpm.

Max. torque: 265 Nm @ 1,800 rpm.

Intercooled and turbo-charged.

Direct fuel injection.

Major service intervals: 20,000 kms.

TRANSMISSION

Five-speed manual gearbox with transfer box giving permanent four wheel drive and lockable centre differential.

Choice of high (1.222:1) and low (3.320:1) ratios.

Gear ratios:

V8i: 1st, 3.321; 2nd, 2.132; 3rd, 1.397; 4th, 1.0; 5th, 0.77; reverse, 3.429.

Tdi: 1st, 3.692; 2nd, 2.132; 3rd, 1.397; 4th, 1.0; 5th, 0.77; reverse, 3.429.

SUSPENSION

Long-travel coil springs all-round.

Axles located by radius arms and Panhard rod at front, trailing links and central 'A' frame at rear. Two-stage hydraulic shock absorbers.

BRAKES

Power-assisted, dual-circuit disc brakes all-round. Pad wear warning system. Pressure-conscious relief valve on rear brakes. Drum handbrake acts on all four wheels via transfer box rear shaft.



Every detail of Discovery's interior is designed to fit into an integrated whole.



Optional rear seats convert your Discovery into a comfortable six or seven seater.



Rear seats fold away completely when not in use, leaving the load area unobstructed.

wheel drive wagons that were increasing their market share. Styling was quite revolutionary at the time and the interior design won awards. Due to the financial position of the company many of the parts in the Discovery came from other vehicles in the Rover Group fleet, famously the taillights came from the Austin Maestro van. The Discovery became an immediate marketing success for Land Rover and was highly praised by the motoring press. The early vehicles were three door only powered by the 3.5 litre Rover V8 petrol, there was a 2 litre petrol version offered in early production. The introduction of the 200 Tdi diesel engines broadened the appeal of the Discovery with a claimed fuel figure of 6.7l/100km and 265 Nm of torque, 5Nm more than the V8. In 1990 the five door variant became available.



The Discoverys, with the introduction of later models, became bigger, heavier, more mechanically and electronically complex and certainly more luxurious and expensive. Having had Discovery 1s and 2s plus Defenders (yes we have had far too many Land Rovers) when the Discovery 3s came out we moved to Defenders as a better choice for our type of travel at that time.

There has always been a nagging nostalgia for the nimble little Discovery 1. We had been on the lookout for a "hobby car", something to tinker with. I soon realized that my limited mechanical ability made it impossible to take on a big project. I needed something that just needed maintaining, not rebuilding.

In February 2016 I happened to walk into a friend's mechanicing business and spotted a white 1993 5 door Discovery 1, Tdi 200, sitting in a corner. It looked straight, the interior was completely original, it had not been modified or abused and was "For Sale". Road worthy, registered, five new tyres, two new batteries, new clutch, full history from the day it was ordered and it had travelled 242,000km. For most of its life it had belonged to a chap in our hometown (sold to him by Charlie Calafiore) and had been serviced by my mechanic friend.



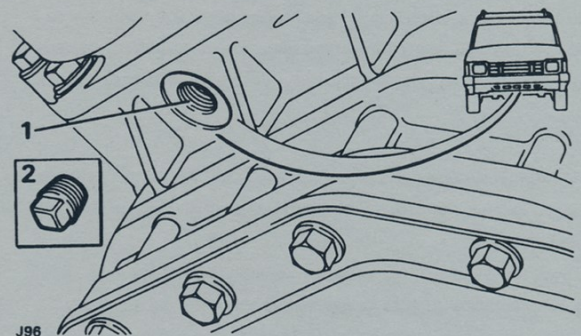
Reading the paper work with the vehicle we found that the Discovery was delivered to its first owner on the 28th of April 1993. It had been ordered with a Hayman Reece tow bar, rubber floor mats and an ARB bull bar. Those accessories were still on the vehicle. The purchase price in 1993 was \$53,425.

We took it for a quick drive and agreed to buy it. After a little price negotiation it was ours. There were things to do of course. We replaced the main hoses with modern silicone ones. Changed all the fluids and filters. Fixed the problem of not knowing whether you were selecting first or reverse with a new reverse gear plunger and spring. Cured an oil leak with a new rocker cover gasket. Replaced the leaking transfer case seal. We spent days polishing and detailing. Driving lights were put on and the ARB bull bar was repainted. It was missing one small piece of interior trim and I managed to get exactly what I wanted from a wrecked Discovery sitting in the yard at the rear of Sutton Motors Land Rover dealership in Alice Springs. As precautionary measures, we have more recently replaced the timing belt and water pump. And, touch wood, the vehicle has been running beautifully.

Is it as good as we fondly remembered?

Well , honestly it is. Certainly by modern standards the 2.5 litre diesel is noisy and slow, there is no mistaking the diesel rattle. The LT 77 manual gearbox needs to be treated with respect. There are the quirky things we had forgotten; for example the lack of a glove box and the unusual headlight and heater controls. The ignition key is in an awkward position on the door side of the steering column. Best of all are the wading plugs. If you don't know what they are ask someone who has been around Land Rovers for a while and be prepared for the debate about whether they were of any use and did anyone really bother with them. The owner's handbook devotes three pages to the use of wading plugs. The Discovery is comfortable and the driver vision is

Diesel engine wading plug



WADING PLUG FOR ENGINE FRONT TIMING COVER - 200Tdi MODELS - Fig. J96

WARNING: DO NOT work underneath the vehicle unless it is safely parked and the wheels chocked, or it is supported by heavy duty stands, otherwise the vehicle could move causing personal injury.

The timing cover can be completely sealed to exclude mud and water under severe wading conditions by fitting a plug in the drain hole (1) at the bottom of the cover.

A suitable plug (2) is supplied in the vehicle tool kit.



excellent. Everything works, the air conditioning, power mirrors and central locking. The vehicle still sits on the road well and the suspension soaks up the Gippsland bumps.

For us it is not a vehicle that will be optioned up as a bush car. It is so original that we intend to keep it just as it is. It has become my vehicle of choice for a quick trip to the shops. We even had DSCVRY number plates that had been on Lois' Discovery 2 and they now sit proudly on the vehicle. In the garage beside the Discovery 4 its design is still fresh, rather like the design of the classic Range Rovers, which in my opinion were the best looking and most practical vehicles Land Rover ever built.

With the all new Discovery due in showrooms soon it is interesting to reflect on the importance of Discovery in the touring 4x4 market place. They have always been extremely capable in showroom standard form. The photos and videos that Shaun Johnson showed of all new Discovery in action at Moab in Utah confirm that the new vehicle will live up to the reputation set by its predecessors.

By Greg Rose.



Special Announcement.

At the July meeting there will be an "New Discovery" on display. You will be able to look at it, touch it, sit in it, crawl under it. You can ask Charlie Calafiore questions about it. You could even place an order; I'm sure Charlie wouldn't mind!

If you cannot wait for the meeting the vehicle is currently on the showroom floor ready to be inspected.

Meeting Place: Gippsland Land Rover Showrooms.

Meeting Date: Monday the 3rd of July. Meeting Time: 8:00 p.m.

