

What does it feel like to own an EarthCruiser? Rick and Julie EC4

There's no easy answer to this. It's difficult to compare an EC to anything else. It really forms a class of its own. However, for me there are five things I love about my EC.

Firstly: the EC is totally self-contained. Its power (solar, AC, DC), drinking and grey water, fuel, cooking, storage, heating and sleeping systems are fully integrated. Everything works seamlessly and effortlessly, first time and every time. And you don't need an IT degree to operate the gear. Most of it is intuitive. Forget manual hand cranks and winders, if you were into *Transformers* when you were a kid, then the EC is the man-size equivalent! Within seconds of pulling up, the EarthCruiser's steps are down, its lid is up, its awning is out, and like the discrete bellhop at your favourite hotel, it's ready to offer you a cold drink along with every comfort and service. And without wanting to sound sexist, that on-board, ever-accessible shower and toilet is just so popular with the ladies!

Secondly: an EC is the ultimate freedom machine. Think *Cyborg*! It has awesome off-road capability—far better than any other “4WD RV” I'm aware of. It's just that bit shorter in length, width and height so it can fit into... well, pretty much anyway. It's just as at home being reverse parked in a tight shopping centre car park, or getting down a narrow beach or up a twisting mountain track. It's got an amazing turning circle so has unbeatable manoeuvrability. In an EC, you can literally head off for a day's “outing” or a picnic, and then in an impulsive flight of fancy, decide to stay a week. No going back to get things—it's all there with you.

Thirdly: security and safety. An EC provides great outdoor living camped with family or friends or by yourself. But when the chips are down and the weather is foul, you have everything you need easily accessible inside to sit out the storm, including a safe, warm and comfy bed. And the ability to climb from cabin to camper, and to even sleep or sit with the roof down if needed, provides unparalleled protection from the elements and security. Someone said that if there's a nuclear war, only a few things will survive including cockroaches and rats. You'd have to add the EarthCruiser to this! I guess it's not a bomb-shelter, but this is one tough rig.

Fourthly: quality. The EC reeks of quality and craftsmanship. This is a no-compromise unit. From the moulded fibreglass, excellent insulation, best-in-class choice of equipment, and enough stainless steel fittings that I thought seriously about buying into the nickel market!

Finally: the driving experience. This is an exhilarating rig to drive even down the highway. OK, it's not a sports car, but sports cars bring speeding tickets and, like trains on train tracks, restrict you to the road. The EC's 5 litre, 4 cylinder intercooled turbo common-rail diesel is one perky engine. And with its high driving position, forward control and air-suspension seats, it's a genuine pleasure to drive. And off the road, it soaks up the corrugations (washboard), sand dunes, mud, snow and water crossings with ease.

Finally, this is simply *one cool machine*. How can you put a value on these!

- You can look semi-drivers *eye-to-eye* heading down the highway
- You pull up in a line of traffic at the lights or a stop sign, and can see over the top and waaay ahead of everyone else
- When you want to change lanes, you don't have to fight to get across; the waters part just as they did for Moses
- You have an exhaust brake...I love my exhaust brake and I've never had one before; I'd buy an EC just for the exhaust brake! It's so cool sliding to a halt with the exhaust brake on!
- The super single military pattern tyres. You can almost convince yourself you're an APC driving down the road. OK, so there's no machine gun turret, but you have everything else!
- Lastly, just like superman, this is not a car, this is not a truck, it's not a 4WD or an RV—if you're the outdoors type, then this becomes nothing other than an extension of yourself—a real *machine*!

