

# Black Wolf Turbo Tents on Test

We always like to test gear on long bush trips, so when we heard that two of our group would be bringing their Black Wolf Turbo tents on this adventure we grabbed a test one so that we'd have a trio to compare.

One of the party had just bought a Turbo 270 Lite. The 270 model is made by Black Wolf exclusively for the BCF chain and is a size between the Turbo 250 and the 300.

Another couple brought along their tried and tested Turbo 300 Canvas. The trio was complete when we picked up a test Turbo 300 Lite Plus.

What are the differences, you ask. The Turbo 300 measures three metres square when erected and has Rip-stop poly/cotton canvas fabric for the tent and the fly. It also has a large fly awning that's poled out, where the Lite 270 and 300 models have a smaller, free-standing awning that is held in place by a U-shaped frame above the doorway.

The Turbo 270 Lite measures 2.7 metres square and has lightweight Rip-stop polyester fabric for the tent and the fly.

The Turbo 300 Lite Plus has the same lightweight fabric and basic dimensions as the Turbo 300 Lite, but has an additional 1.8-metre 'room' attached to the rear wall. All Turbo tents have 2.1-metre headroom.

## Ups and Downs

Turbo Tents have the same folding framework design that sees the tent fabric suspended inside the frame. The fly clips over the top of the frame, leaving an air space between the fabric layers.

The 23mm aluminium tube frame consists of four, triple-jointed legs that fold, umbrella-like, and click automatically into their locked positions.



Two people can have a Turbo Tent erect in about the same time as they can the legendary OzTent.

The main difference is that the OzTent is an easier one-person erection and folding job than the Turbo Tent.

As with the OzTent the Turbo Tent is stable with only four corner pegs in place. Additional pegs and guy rope stabilising are included in the tent kit.



An advantage for the Turbo tent over the OzTent is that a folded Turbo packs into a bag that's between 1.2m and 1.45m long, letting it fit inside most 4x4 wagons. An OzTent is a roof rack proposition for most people.

A plus for the OzTent is a heavier floor section than the lighter weight floor of the Turbo.

The Turbo Tent fly is easily attached by throwing it over the tent frame and clipping it via plastic snap locks to the tent corners. The fly has guy rope gussets that have inbuilt rope pockets.

The Turbo 300 Lite Plus unfolds in the same way as the smaller Turbo models and the additional room section is unclipped from the frame, then laid out behind the main tent. Secondary framing that's very easy to fit holds the additional room erect.

## Living with a Turbo Tent

The Turbo 300 Canvas tent that our mates took along on this trip is one of the original models. It was originally delivered with plastic frame knuckles and a very tight-fitting fly that threatened to tear from the strain. Black Wolf replaced the knuckles with aluminium ones, when they became available and replaced the fly with a more generous one, free of charge.

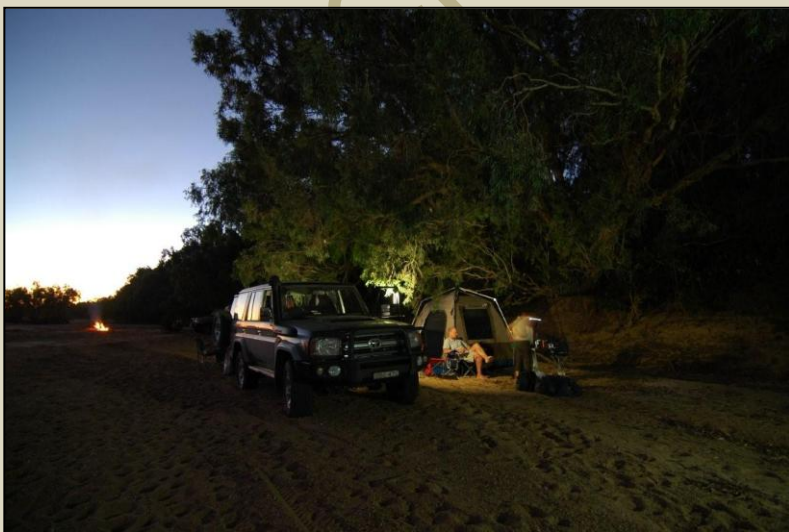
That tent has done many bush trips and is showing few signs of wear and tear.

Our mates were very interested in the Lite versions, noting that they were easier to fold up and had the advantage of roof ventilation that the original tents didn't have. However, they preferred the canvas model's poled-out, larger awning to the free-standing one on the Lite 270.

We evaluated the Turbo 300 Lite Plus in a mixture of weather conditions and found it very stable and relatively flap-free. In hot weather we didn't use the fly, so the roof vents were open to the sky.

We found that when we didn't need to use the back room, we could leave it rolled up behind the main rear wall. However, in strong winds and when there was a threat of rain the Plus needed the rear room erected for stability and to ensure a good fly fitment.

The large, meshed side windows and doorway gave ample ventilation, even with the fly in place. We appreciated the five stash pockets and the power lead entry flap.



The design of the Turbo tent puts maximum headroom in the centre of the tent, in contrast to an OzTent that has peak headroom across the width of the tent. If the sleeping arrangement is a pair of single beds that puts the centre corridor under the highest point in the tent. A double mattress forces some compromises on headroom. We found that the 300 size gave adequate space for a double mattress, but the 270 was better suited to twin beds.

Would we buy one? Yep, we did – a Turbo 300 Lite. We'll use it for trips where we don't want to fit the roof rack or where we're testing a vehicle that doesn't have one.

The RV5 OzTent will be our bush home on extended trips, where we have roof-carrying capacity.