

JOH'BABYOIL

LAND ROVER DEFENDER

MODERN CONVENIENCES MAKE LIFE EASIER, BUT THEY ALSO DETRACT FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF HAVING THE MUD FLY IN YOUR FACE AS YOU RACE DOWN A RAIN-SOAKED ROAD. SO WHILE YOU MAY WANT AIR CONDITIONING WHEN YOU'RE AT HOME, ALL YOU NEED FOR A TRIP TO TIMBUKTU IS A VEHICLE WITH THE MOST BASIC OF AMENITIES.

Opportunity can arise in the most unexpected places. Take the example of this 1980 Land Rover Series III 109 that 29-year-old Frenchman Johan stumbled on—it had been sitting in a barn in southern France for 15 years. Despite a decade and a half of neglect, the Series III was in good shape—all it needed after all that time was a good servicing. Johan decided to leave most of the original engine components in place, only swapping out the original carburetor (replacing it with a Weber model) and adding an electric ignition. Other than these two components, Johan added nothing to the original 2.25-liter Series III engine. The rest of the vehicle has been left largely untouched as well, with no modern features—no electric windows, no power steering, no air

conditioning—except for a directional shock absorber and new suspension to prepare the vehicle for off-road adventures. The bodywork is also original. Johan did add a roof rack and some other useful features, such as extra lights, but the Series III has largely been left in the same condition as the day it rolled off the assembly line in 1980.

When he bought it, the Series III had 35,000 kilometers on the odometer, and Johan has doubled that mileage, for a total of 70,000 kilometers on the original odometer. And he hasn't had any problems with it in any of his travels, which include European destinations such as Luxembourg, Germany, Switzerland, Belgium, Holland and, of course, his native France. He plans to take the vehicle to more exotic destinations in the near future. For now he uses the refitted vehicle as his home on wheels that can take him anywhere he wants. In the future he plans to live and work entirely from his Land Rover. So instead of a home away from home, it will just be a home.



MANUFACTURER: Land Rover
MODEL: Defender Series III, 109
YEAR OF PRODUCTION/YEAR OF REBUILD: 1980
PREOWNER: Unknown
SEATS/BEDS: Two seats, one bed in the roof tent (140x190 cm)
CONDITION: Original
DRIVETRAIN: RWD and 4WD
ENGINE: 2.25L, 73 hp, petrol, Weber carburetor
AMOUNT OF MILES/KM: 43,495/70,000

COUNTRIES VISITED: Luxembourg, Germany, Switzerland, Belgium, Netherlands, France
FAVORITE FEATURE: No electrics = no problems
REBUILD—BODYWORK MODIFICATIONS: Original, plus roof rack, extra lights, a shovel, axe, etc.
REBUILD—CHASSIS MODIFICATIONS: Added directional shock absorbers, new suspension, Michelin tires O/R in 750-16, and a second fuel tank

REBUILD—INTERIOR MODIFICATIONS: Mostly original, vintage seat covers, 12V outlet for my smartphone; 220V power through converter, storage units, spare sleeping space
REBUILD—OTHER MODIFICATIONS OR NOTES: Jerrycans on the roof and the front bumper, air compressor
REBUILD—APPROXIMATE WORK HOURS: Unknown and ongoing process