



PIONEER ONYX



# GAME CHANGER

THE PIONEER ONYX IS TOUGH AS GUTS AND READY TO TACKLE PRACTICALLY ANYTHING ON AND OFFROAD.

PICS MATT FEHLBERG AND NATHAN JACOBS





PIONEER ONYX



WORDS MICHAEL 'BORGY' BORG

**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** The high departure angles look good and work well; Midges are not a problem thanks to the ultra fine mesh used throughout; The perforated toolbox is ideal for storing wood and other dirty campsite paraphernalia.

## MEASURING UP

### HITS

- > Electric opening, with several manual back-up methods
- > Extremely well built and finished off
- > Provision for sleep apnoea machine

### MISSES

- > Simple electric opening, but still has several internal poles to adjust and set up
- > The awning needs to be detached before packing up, and is quite high to reach

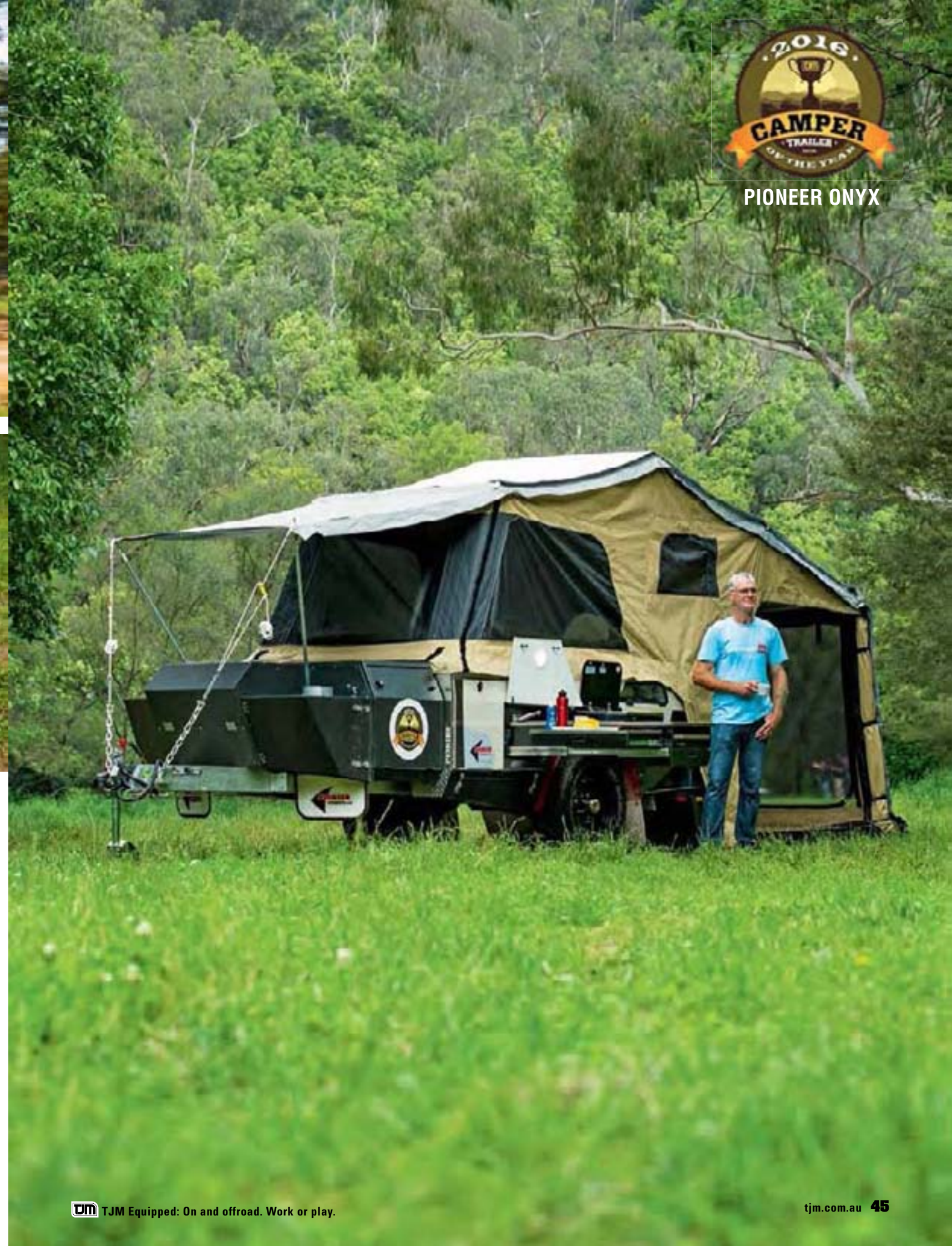


Offroad touring in Australia can be brutally demanding on the equipment, and I don't need to tell you how a mechanical failure, no matter how large or small, can put a dent in all your fun. That means choosing a camper that's not just tough, but proven, is vital for anyone who seriously wants to see the best of Australia. You'll also want something that's comfortable but easy enough to set up and operate so it doesn't become a hindrance rather than an asset to your trip. That's exactly where the Onyx from Pioneer Campers comes in. The Onyx has hit the nail on the head with its automated hardfloor design. Plus, it's jam-packed with features and options, and has the legendary engineering and reputation of Pioneer Campers in its corner backing it the whole way. It's been specifically built for those who want to tackle those big, iconic tracks, which are up there with the most demanding in the world. So let's take a closer look at the Pioneer Onyx...

### EASY SET UP

For any long-term trip to be enjoyable, a camper trailer's setup process needs to be easy. The team at Pioneer Campers has taken that to the extreme and basically made the Onyx set itself up. Okay, so maybe it doesn't do absolutely everything, but it definitely takes the manual labour out of the setup, that's for sure. In fact, we opened and closed this camper in pouring rain, and it was up there with the easiest of the lot! It's a fairly fail-safe design for a full electronic setup too, and by that I mean there are several backup methods of operating the camper manually if required. Despite the main tent flipping over on its own, there are a few poles inside that need manual adjustment. While it doesn't take long, it's a bit of a let-down with the simplicity side of things, in my opinion.

The kitchen is another smart design. It's as solid as a rock, and is as simple as sliding out the main kitchen unit and swinging the stove to







**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** There's full access to your gas supply at camp with ample on road protection; The Onyx rides on a full length chassis; Curved infills maximise the efficiency of the automotive dust-proof seals; The two-burner cooktop and sink have their own work areas; The kitchen's slender profile maximises internal storage space; External access to storage under the bed drops down for ease of use; Pioneer's own Grafta independent suspension is an enduring design.

the side, which saves a heap of space under the awning. The awning will take you roughly 15 minutes to erect, but I'd be lying if I said it wasn't a stretch to erect being so high up!

### LET'S TALK COMFORT

The team at Pioneer has gone above and beyond to make this a comfortable camper for those longer touring trips. The Onyx has all the sought-after features, but it's also got the practicality to go with it. Little things such as a provision for a Weber Baby Q, or even just a touch light at the kitchen, makes all the difference. The kitchen has loads of storage, a

cutlery drawer and separate bench space for its two-burner stove and sink. When it comes to choosing a bed, you have

the choice of either an innerspring or quilted foam mattress. Plus, there's even thought up a spot for a sleep apnoea machine, too!

The Onyx comes with a diesel hot water system, but if you want the ensuite you'll have to fork out a little extra, which comes as a surprise given the calibre of this camper. In saying that, it means you've got the choice between full canvas or one of those cheap but lightweight pop-up jobs.

There's also the option of having a full reverse cycle air-conditioner fitted as well, which is something you don't see every day in hardfloor campers.

### SELF SUFFICIENCY

The Onyx is built to go bush, and stay there.



Battery wise it's powered by two 110Ah AGM deep-cycle batteries, which are charged via a Redarc battery management system. It basically monitors and manages charge from the engine, as well as from the solar panel. The Onyx is also 240V compatible, and has 240V,



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### BEAR'S SAY:

The beautifully-presented Pioneer Onyx is reasonably priced and comes with a mechanical tilt. It has great weights, strength and facility, a full length chassis, a good departure angle and 12in electric brakes.

Finished to high standards, it rides on its own suspension and can be retrofitted with Pioneer's high tech innovations. The carrying capacity is huge for a hardfloor, and the kitchen is easy with practical lighting. The 2.4m awning needs removing at camp – give me the 2m option that stays on!



### COOKIE'S SAY:

The Pioneer is an excellent touring and offroad camper. The quality of the finish is high class; the paintwork looks great and things like pinchweld that contours to the doors show great care. I like the clever use of space that delivers extra storage and the use of aluminium up front for less on the ball.

The Onyx has lots of comforts like air-conditioning, and the 2.4m awning provides plenty of living though it must be attached each time. The replaceable panels, a chassis drawbar combo and the quality trailing arm suspension make it a very tough camper.



**RIGHT:** The kitchen is solid, simple and space-saving. **BELOW RIGHT:** The camper opens and closes on a dead-man's switch, which means to engage it you need to hold down the key, for safe operation when camping with kids.

## CTA SPECS

### PIONEER ONYX

- > **TRAILER**
  - Tare** 1050kg
  - ATM** 2000kg
  - Suspension** Grafta independent trailing arm suspension 2000kg rated with long life Kevlar dry bushes
  - Brakes** 12in Al-Ko electric drum
  - Coupling** Hitchmaster D035
  - Chassis** Heavy-duty hot-dipped galvanised chassis
  - Drawbar** 150x50x3mm
  - Body** Combination of 1.2mm Zincanneal and 2mm marine grade powder coated aluminium
  - Wheel/tyre** 265/75 R16 GT Adventuro AT tyres riding on six stud black Sunraysia steel rims
  - Style** Rear-fold hardfloor

- > **DIMENSIONS**
  - Box size** 3400x1740mm
  - Length (hitch to tail lights)** 4950mm
  - Tent** 5300x1700mm

- > **ACCESSORIES**
  - Gas cylinders** 2x9kg
  - Water** 120L stainless steel
  - Cooktop** Swing away two-burner stove
  - Kitchen** Stainless steel with Smev sink
  - Battery** 2x110Ah AGM deep-cycle

- > **PRICE AS SHOWN**
  - \$46,205

- > **ENQUIRIES**
  - To enquire about this camper, visit [www.campertraileraustralia.com.au/spec](http://www.campertraileraustralia.com.au/spec) or phone (03) 8373 7342

- > **CAMPERTRAILERAUSTRALIA.COM.AU**
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12V and USB outlets conveniently mounted at the bed heads.

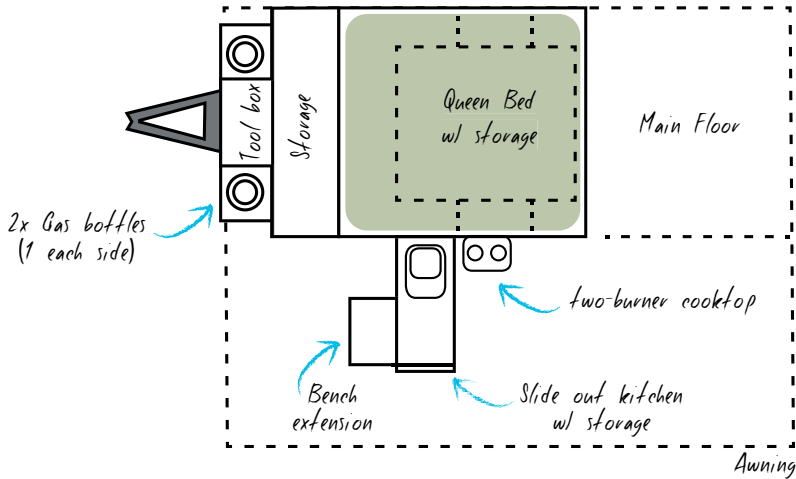
Storage is plentiful, especially for a hardfloor. You'll find about 560L of good usable storage under the bed, plus a drop-in storage box adds another 130L. That's not to mention the well designed front storage box, which has around 500L of storage and is home to two 9kg gas cylinders, three jerry cans and a 50L firewood box – like I said, not bad for a hardfloor camper!

### PROVEN BUSH-ABILITY

Pioneer Campers actually runs a camper trailer hire business as well, and the campers repeatedly tackle some of the toughest touring tracks in Australia. Now this really does help with their camper trailer development, and you can bet your bottom dollar they've learnt a few things in terms of bush-proofing a camper trailer! In fact, in a lot of ways, you could say the Onyx is over-engineered with things like a solid 51mm stub axle, which is actually built



by Pioneer themselves, and the use of 3t inner bearings and 2t outer bearings – not bad for a camper that only weighs 1050kg Tare! The full length hot-dip galvanised chassis measures in at 150x50x3mm, and you'll find all the standard offroad extras are there in fine form as well. An engineered rear recovery point is included, along with fully submersible LED tail lights. The screen mesh for the windows is also one of the finest



meshes we tested, so no midges are getting through when you're up north!

### THE VERDICT

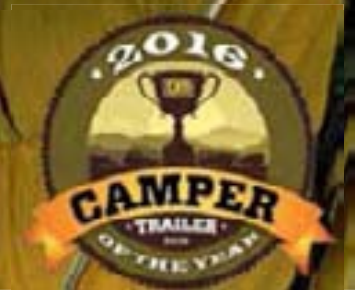
The Onyx is tough as guts, as comfortable as a Hilton hotel and, more importantly – it's proven. But if that's not enough, its stylish lines and superb manufacturing quality make it one of the



best looking campers on the block, and we all knows what that does for resale value.

In fact, while we're on the topic, the team at Pioneer goes to great lengths to ensure the resale value of your next Pioneer is never compromised. So there you have it, the Onyx offers everything you need in a luxurious offroad camper, and it does it in style! 

**CLOCKWISE FROM MAIN:** The canvas tent is made with downward facing seams. Water ingress won't be a problem; Alfresco dining or a private retreat. It's simply a matter of deciding on how far you wish to open the main door; The internal staircase increases the camper's internal dimensions.



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