

VANLIFEZONE



Issue 1
09/2020

A PASSION PROJECT DEDICATED TO SHARING VANLIFE STORIES AND ADVENTURES

TIA & JORDAN

Freedom on the roads of
Australia

WHITE SPOT

Completely different
A movie about vanlife
in South America

COOKING IN A VAN

What you need to look out
for when you have a kitchen
in your van

VANLIFE SOLITUDE

Experiencing the world on
your own

EXPLORING HOME

Combining a positive mind
and an adventurous heart
Exploring Austria





ABOUT US...

Vanlifezone is a passion project dedicated to sharing vanlife stories and adventures.

It began in early 2020 as a small page on Instagram but soon gained a lot of momentum and is currently on the verge of hitting 10.000 subscribers. It seems appropriate to celebrate this round number with the release of the first digital issue of our magazine. Seven inspiring stories about very different topics related to living in a van and a delicious recipe await you in this issue.

The best thing about the stories is that they are your stories! You – our friends, our Vanlifezone-family – had total creative freedom to send in whatever you wanted with whatever images you wanted to accompany the text... And it turned out amazing!

Thank you so much and we cannot wait to read, see, hear and share more of your impressive stories!

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TIA & JORDAN Freedom on the Roads of Australia



Our van life journey began 5 years ago, back when a house was what we called home.

We're Tia and Jordan, a young couple who met in what you might say an unconventional way; not via a dating app, but a couch surfing one.

Our free-spirited souls connected and it wasn't long before we left the couch and the house it was in

and began road tripping together. Every weekend we'd go where our hearts lead us, whether that was sleeping on a sand dune by the sea, or dancing at a festival in Margaret River.

These experiences gave us a taste for wanting to be free on more than just the weekends.





We wanted to call the freedom of the open road our home, and so, our search for a new home (on wheels) began. This is when we met Stella, our 1975 VW Kombi.

After buying her, fixing her up and getting her ready for the openroad, we began our journey travelling in the North-West coast of Australia, where desert meets sea.

The rugged terrain was harsh, yet extremely beautiful, we were mesmerised by bright pink lakes, touched by the experience of hand feeding wild dolphins and amazed by some of the best surf spots in the world.

Since calling the freedom of the open road our home, we've felt more inspired than ever before; working towards our own goals, going with the flow and loving the freedom and joy it all brings.

This is only just the beginning... Come join us on our journey, discover how we made our dream a reality through experienceswe never expected, and what we learnt along the way.

STELLA - A 1975 VW T2 KOMBI OWNED BY TIA AND JORDAN

Vanlifezone

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FAYTH BELL VANLIFE AT AGE 17

My name is Fayth Bell and I am sharing my story about my experience with vanlife!

I left my small home town in Busselton, WA, Australia when I was 17. I just graduated school and worked my butt off to save any money I could.

I decided I was ready to leave the toxic town I had been living in to go out and explore my country and somewhat discover myself and who I am. All my friends were going into university but I knew that lifestyle was not for me.

So off I went, at 17 years old, saying goodbye to my family for who knows how long. It was scary but SO EXCITING.

It has been 2 years now of living on the road and I have met endless lifelong friends. I have experienced so many incredible things on the daily that have been absolutely life changing. This lifestyle is an absolute dream and I wake up every day feeling absolutely content with where I am in life and who I am. It's an extremely liberating feeling.

@Vanlifewithfayth
@Fayth Bell

I just wish to help inspire others to grow, change, get out of their comfort zones, travel, learn, laugh, cry and just be happy! And I truly think that vanlife does all of those.

VANLIFE IS THE BEST LIFE! And I can easily say I will be travelling like this for the rest of my life.



VANLIFE SOLITUDE



What do you get, when you mix solitude with the feeling of strangeness that's often associated with someone living in a mobile home somewhere abroad?

Let me describe to you the experience I had, after arriving in the Pindus National Park in northern Greece. Let's first draw the scene for you: At this point in my journey, I was already traveling

with my Van through Europe for about 6 weeks. What was however special, was how isolated I was for the first time on my travels. At that time of the year, the Park is nearly completely empty. You will see hardly anyone in the park at all. I found a wonderful, open spot in the middle of the mountains, next to a dreamy, small lake. I had my private little spot two meters away from a wonderful lake.



It even had a small island swimming in the middle of it, which I would proceed to claim as my private Island for the remainder of my stay.

Up until this point, the feeling of being a stranger in an unknown country was a permanent companion. Especially considering that I was still very new to the lifestyle of traveling in a van. The people I met across multiple countries did not speak my language, their culture was different from mine and even nature felt strange to me. This, of course, was nothing negative at all. The Goal of my Journey was after all to broaden my view on the world and to experiencing something different.

After about two days of not seeing another human something did however change inside me. I stopped feeling like a stranger and it somehow started to feel like I was familiar with everything around me. I went on long walks, bordering on hikes in length, through the Park and exploring the Greece countryside. The more time I spent with my thoughts the more content I grew with myself and the decisions that lead me to this place at that time. Bear with me on this one, but I stopped thinking about this place as a

different part of the world and just accepted it for what it was: Some part of this planet where I happened to be, just as my home was another part of the same planet.

Believe me when I say that I'm usually not the type for esoteric or spiritual thinking. This however felt special and there is just no other way to frame what I experienced there.

IT GAVE ME REAL COMFORT IN AN UNEXPECTED PLACE.

It gave me real comfort in an unexpected place. Looking back I am certain that the combination of being alone with your mind in a place where you might think of yourself as a stranger created a very special bond between me and everything surrounding me. It gave some grandiose feeling of connectedness.

I did not know it at the time, but I would make this experience multiple times afterward, always in similar situations: Being

removed from other people, really taking the time to reflect on my thoughts, and all that while in unknown places.

Hiking, Biking, or otherwise removing myself from the daily grinds was nothing new to me, as I often did that long before even thinking about buying a Van. Never before however did I experience this type of solitude and that's why it caught me off guard. The closest thing that I experienced comparable to this solitude was in a time when I lived in a very big

city and was wandering around at night through empty streets and seemingly deserted areas.

Other fellow Vanlifers would often tell me about similar experiences and thoughts when I told them of my time in the Pindus National Park. It sure seems that this is something most people who spend time removed from anything known and familiar can make and it's what I would call the best argument for traveling somewhere with your own home on wheels.



@deconfused

COOKING IN A VAN KITCHEN

Cooking in a van doesn't come without its challenges but there is no reason at all that this needs to limit your creativity and the delicious meals that come along with it. We could talk all day about cooking in a van (and we quite often do!) however, we will keep this brief and talk about the main things you need to know when cooking in your van.

SAFETY

The most important thing to mention is safety when cooking in a van, very serious accidents can occur to yourself and your van if you're not cautious. Firstly ensure any sources of heat, such as a stove top burner are safe and not going to cause any potential issues, also if using gas, ensure this is safe and the valve closed when not in use. Make sure your van kitchen is well ventilated, this will ensure there are no problems with mould in the van in the long term and no nasty cooking smells in the short term. Avoid clutter in your kitchen area, you don't want to be searching for somewhere to place a hot pan whilst in the middle of cooking.

LIMITATIONS

So many vans and campervan conversions we have seen are well equipped, but still come with limitations when it comes to cooking. There is limited water supply, making every drop rather precious so save water where possible and plan areas to top-up strategically. Gas supply can also be limited and in the recent pandemic some have struggled to get refills leaving them with very little supply, so be prepared to use sparingly. Power can also be a limitation, microwaves, slow cookers etc can pull on a lot of power and leave you with a flat battery if not careful. Vans are not the most spacious of abodes and because of this, storage can be an issue and it can be difficult to keep food fresh. A lot of vans have a coolbox or fridge and some have a freezer also. These are not always large and mean shopping locally and regularly may be required, as a bonus it will help to find new local ingredients and inspire new recipes.

ENJOY!

With all of this in mind meals do not have to be limited and unimaginative, we have seen cakes, sushi, tacos, pizza, smoothies and of course pancakes cooked in many van kitchens, sometimes you just need to be a little creative! Think outside of the box when it comes to cooking in a van, pizza cooked in a frying pan, bread made from 2 ingredients, make your own cashew milk.



OUR TOP KITCHEN ITEMS

We love to cook in our van and some things make it all a little more enjoyable, here are our top 5 items we couldn't live without in our van kitchen:

- 1.** Cast iron pan, every van kitchen needs a good pan. With the majority of meals being made on a stove top hob, the last thing you want is your pan breaking on your travels.
- 2.** Zyliss Easy Pull - this makes cutting and chopping a breeze and can even puree, best of all no power is required
- 3.** Spices - We have a good selection of herbs and spices in our van these can help make even the most simple meals more tasty
- 4.** Omnia Sweden Stove top oven, these are so versatile and the list of things that can be made in them seems endless.
- 5.** Finally, being British, no kitchen, even a van kitchen is complete without a kettle!

BE INSPIRED

If this has got you wanting to experiment in your own van kitchen then head on over to our website vanlifeeats.com or our Instagram [vanlife_eats](https://www.instagram.com/vanlife_eats) for cooking ideas, prepare to be made to feel hungry!

vanlifeeats.com
[@vanlife_eats](https://www.instagram.com/vanlife_eats)

HEARTY VEGETARIAN CURRY WITH CHICKPEAS, AUBERGINE & HALLOUMI

BY VAN LIFE EATS

We are not vegetarians but we love this recipe, it's hearty, full of flavour and really filling

Ingredients

1tbsp Olive Oil	200g Chopped tomatoes
1 Onion	200g Chickpeas
1 tsp chopped Fresh Ginger	1 Aubergine
2 Garlic cloves (chopped)	1 Courgette
1 tsp Garam Masala	½ cup vegetable stock
1 tsp light brown sugar	1 tsp chopped chili
Salt to taste	1 wedge of lime
1 Bay leaf	100g Halloumi cheese
1 ½ tbsp tomato puree	1 handful, chopped coriander



Method

1. Heat a deep saucepan over a medium heat and add a splash of olive oil followed by the diced onion. Cook for around 7 minutes

2. Add the garlic, ginger, garam masala, sugar and stir. Once the onion is coated add the tomato puree and the bay leaf and continue to combine the mixture.

3. Add the chickpeas, aubergine, courgette, chopped tomatoes, chili and stock. Bring to the boil and stir.

4. Reduce the heat and continue to stir until the juices thicken up

5. Meanwhile, slice the halloumi and in a different pan cook the halloumi over a high heat for around 3 minutes until golden brown on each side. Remove from the heat and cut into bite size chunks.

6. Remove the bay leaf and add the halloumi cheese

7. Add a squeeze of lime, a crack of salt & pepper and a handful of chopped coriander.

We served ours with 2 ingredient flatbread - the recipe can be found on our website at vanlifeeats.com.

vanlifeeats.com
[@vanlife_eats](https://www.instagram.com/vanlife_eats)

EXPLORING HOME

COMBINING A POSITIVE MIND AND AN ADVENTUROUS HEART

I have always been a person that would rather concentrate on the positive than the negative. So it's no wonder I try and make the best out of this current situation. In times like these there are things we may take away as learning lessons. With so many borders being closed and travel restrictions being imposed it becomes harder and harder to explore foreign countries and even if it was possible there is always that slight glimpse of a weird feeling left behind.

While being stuck in the middle of a pandemic, our eyes and hearts may sharpen for what is really important and we might be able to see the beauty in little things again. Like for example the beauty of exploring your very own home country.

Sure, travelling across the world may be adventurous and hold many new experiences, but on the other hand travelling within your home country is also an option to see things from a new perspective – that might at first appear very common and known.

And what better option could there be than taking a van trip throughout your beloved home country. Not only is a van trip an absolute safe way to travel currently, but also the coolest option to find hidden gems and awesome spots. So when university hit summer break in July this year, there was nothing I enjoyed more than going on a small road trip throughout Austria and learning new stuff about my home country.



Throughout this trip I realized how little I actually knew about these alps and beautiful spots that I always took for granted. I learned to find beauty in nature, hike up to huge waterfalls while overcoming my fear of heights, how to sneak your way around cows, drive through the beautiful Großglockner Hochalpenstraße and enjoy the view there, explore Hallstatt with so little visitors I would have never thought this was possible, take baths in refreshing austrian lakes like Zell am See and enjoy star bright nights. There is so much beauty all around us – we just have to look closely. So instead of being frustrated over the travel bans and restrictions, we should go on and explore the so thought known surroundings and make sure to open our hearts for the positive aspects within this situation. Adventures may also happen in your home country and maybe they will turn out a lot better than expected. For me the latter was definitely the case and I can only encourage you to take this article as an inspiration, pack your stuff, head off with your van and enjoy the loveliness of your home country!



www.sternenglueck-fotografie.at
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WHITE SPOT COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

WHY THIS JOURNEY SHOULD CHANGE OUR LIFE

My name is Tin (@tinbrendel), and I am an avid filmmaker from Erfurt in Germany. Since I was young, the camera means everything to me, today I am living in London, but our story started a little earlier.

I am Ariane (@arianitas_), a nature activist, and I come from São Paulo, close to the coast of Brazil. But we got to know each other in a completely different place.

We both participated in an eleventh-grade foreign-exchange-program in Palm Bay, Florida, in which we went to the same class. After that, we had a long-distance relationship from Germany to Brazil for over two years with more than 11,000 km distance. Between fantastic vacation visits, constant work, and hard video chats, we graduated from high-school. Freedom.

For us, there was somehow always the need to exit. Not only because of that but also for that reason, we considered New Zealand our dream: beautiful and incredibly far away. But everything was to turn out completely different.

This is it

We see many things today very different than before our trip. For us, this is especially the case for our approach to spontaneity and why Vanlife is perhaps all about it.

New Zealand was planned as well as we could. We bought a vehicle over the Internet, with a pickup in Christchurch. Before entering any plane, we created adapted maps, read several hiking guides, and downloaded navigation systems. Whereby much more only Tin would board a flight, Ariane had a completely different problem.

As a German, the application for a Work & Holiday Visa is easy, but for a Brazilian, it is the opposite. Three hundred spaces per year are awarded like lottery tickets, and while refreshing the websites on four computers at the same time, we felt more like we were in the Tomorrowland waiting queue.

Nevertheless, we prepared everything. You can also take care of a visa on the spot - even as a Brazilian, you can enter the country for 90 days in any case...

Tin is already in New Zealand and sits in the camper on the beach. It could hardly be more painful - Ariane is pulled off the plane before departure and is not allowed to start her 90 days because she has already applied for a visa. A world begins crashing. Ariane spends the next two days trying to convince the authorities at the airport of her stopover... Santiago de Chile. Just before her birthday, she flies back to São Paulo to avoid spending it between planes. When after more than a week, it becomes clear that all efforts are in vain, we make a difficult decision.

Tin is able to sell the camper back to the previous owners and flies to Santiago de Chile.





Back to zero

Here we are, Tin has flown halfway around the world, and Ariane is about 3 hours flight time away from home, carrying 10kg of pointless books, in a place about which we know nothing at all. We quickly understand that things are not easy here, either. After about five weeks, we manage to buy a car legally. After a short search, it was clear that in South America, you can't get around a four-wheel drive. We decide to go for a Dodge Ram 1500 Pickup Camper.

Two months after departure, we are through half of our budget for the entire year and still feel now more ready than ever.

Continuously further

The story just seemed too crazy to not make a movie out of it. The camera accompanied us constantly. But that was only the beginning of our 90-minute adventure, which we named „White Spot“ like the unexplored places on earth.

After a two-year long-distance relationship, we are facing again incredibly difficult situations. Several local confrontations and a broken car strengthens our bond and accelerate the year in the wild

into an immersive experience. Passing the small ridge between a nature-travel documentary and a story that lets your blood run cold, White Spot makes you want to break out of the system and travel the world.

„White Spot“ is available worldwide on iTunes, Apple TV, Google Play and Youtube premium since the beginning of June 2020 and can also be ordered as a DVD via Amazon. Our Travel-Guide will be published simultaneously.

White-Spot.info
@whitespotfilm
@tinbrendel
@arianitas_

VANLIFE HAS HELPED ME

My love for vanlife starts way back in my childhood. I feel like there are two specific childhood memories that may have started my passion for vanlife way before I even realized what vanlife was. The first memory is my mum, my dad and me going on camping trips every summer. Not in a camping wagon like everyone else, but in my dad's van. It was empty in the back, which made it possible to fit in a double sized sleeping mattress for my parents and a single one for me. We had a specialmade tent that could fit on the side of the van and voila; we had our camping setup. It was simple but it was great. I only have happy memories from our trips in that van.

The second special memory is from when I was a little older, probably around 12 years old. My dad is an upholsterer and one day he had some costumers, who had a big 4 x 4 range rover with a roof top tent. They were going to drive all the way from Denmark to Asia and I was so amazed by that. When I grew older, the thought of getting my own van crossed my mind more and more.

But then in the beginning of 2017 my life was turned upside down; my mum got diagnosed with incurable pancreatic cancer. My mum was my best friend and had always been by my side through everything so it took a toll on me. I stopped studying (I was doing a Master's in biology) because I felt that the right thing to do, was to be with my mum and stay by her side through everything she now had to go through. It was my turn to be there for her. My mum was sick for 20 months and I stayed by her side through it all. We tried to enjoy and live life as much as possible and we traveled together several times and supported each other during this hard time.

Going through all this at an age of 27 completely changed my mind set. I realized how vulnerable we are and that if you are dreaming about something you should just do it. What is the worst that can happen, right? In October 2018 she passed away. My life stopped. It was very hard on me. I got lost. I ran away from it all by traveling for several months but it followed me.

I realized that I had to deal with it. Grief. Here in 2020 I am still trying to figure out who I am after everything that happened, what do I want in life? How do I want to live my life? All these big questions fill my thoughts.

To be able to answer these questions I try to listen to my self and one day I realized that I needed to feel free in order to figure it all out.

And what better way to feel free than to have a van that is both your home on wheels and can take you anywhere you want to go.

So me and my boyfriend started searching for a van. In May 2020 we found the perfect van for us. She is a white Volkswagen T4 from 1995 with a pop-up roof. She had a kitchen setup in the back when we bought her but we did not like it so we decided to renovate her ourselves and transform her into the van we had been dreaming about.



Before we started renovating her, we went on several adventures – we simply could not wait. We spent the first one and a half month enjoying her, getting to know her and we had the time to figure out how we wanted her to look and what we wanted to change.

We have traveled most of Denmark, during these last months. It has been amazing to get to know our own country so well. There are so many hidden gems that we have never heard about and Denmark really has a lot to offer. It is also very easy to find great places to park, for example near the ocean since Denmark has 8750 km of coastline.

It has been a great summer full of adventure and happiness for us. Now in late July we finally started renovating her. We have painted the kitchen area petrol blue, changed the tabletop, made a new dinner table and put colorful wallpaper on the cabinet doors. We have changed the floor, given her curtains, taken out the toilet, because we would like the extra space and changed the fabrics on the seating area.

We have painted the fridge with magnet paint, painted the ceiling with chalk paint and now it is time to make her cozy and homie with shelves, plants and all the small things. We love doing the interior. When the winter comes, we want to paint her orange on the outside from the windows and down.

The most important thing that I want to say with this story is that you should follow your heart, go for your dreams and reach for the Moon. Always. If life is hard on you, try to stop and feel what you really want. Listen well and do it. I am still struggling a lot with the loss of my mum but vanlife has really helped me and calms me down in a way that nothing else can. My van is my safe place.



Vanlifezone

SHARE YOUR VANLIFE STORY WITH US!

Vanlifezone

Send an article about your vanlife adventure to **OFFICE@VANLIFEZONE.COM**


You have total creative freedom and can share any aspect or story about your experience of living in a van.

Make sure that you have no more than **1000 WORDS**

and that you include **MANY** high resolution **IMAGES**

By sending us the text and the images you confirm that we are allowed to use and alter them in any way necessary for our magazine. Since we value authenticity and want to share **YOUR STORY** we will try to modify as little as possible.

Use **#VANLIFEZONE** and tag and follow us **@Vanlifezone** on Instagram



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