

Truck camper shines as outback base camp

The pickup truck camper put the term "recreational vehicle" in the American leisure-lifestyle language... and opened the road for the motor homes, mini motor homes and vans that were to follow in droves.

In fact, this vehicle (which rides piggyback on a standard pickup truck) became a status symbol when John Steinbeck wrote about his camper in the popular "Travels with Charlie."

Until recently this versatile RV had been overshadowed by more luxurious units. However, within the past several seasons the original self-contained, self-powered camper has seen a resurgence.

Combined with a rugged four-wheel drive pickup truck, the slide-in camping unit offers an off-the-road camper that can take you and most of the comforts of home almost anywhere.

New popularity

In this manner the pickup camper has found a new popularity with hunters, fishermen, backpackers and others who want a mobile base camp that can get them back into the country.

Most slide-in rigs provide water system, sink, gas range, self-contained electrical systems, and commodious bunks in the cab-over section. Depending on need, the camper can be equipped with a furnace, water heater, toilet and holding tank and a long list of luxuries to take the edge off roughing it.

There is a wide variety of truck campers available for the standard eight-foot pickup truck bed. A typical line is available from Coachmen, the largest selling brand of all types of recre-

ational vehicles. This company offers slide-ins from eight through 11 feet long (measuring from the front of the truck bed back). All have a spacious cab-over double bed, convertible dinette and plenty of storage space. Coachmen even has a special lightweight model for compact trucks.

Right unit for you

The type of unit right for you depends on the carrying capacity of your pickup truck and personal taste. For proper installation you will want to use chain or cable tie-downs that attach to the truck frame, and perhaps a shock absorber system.

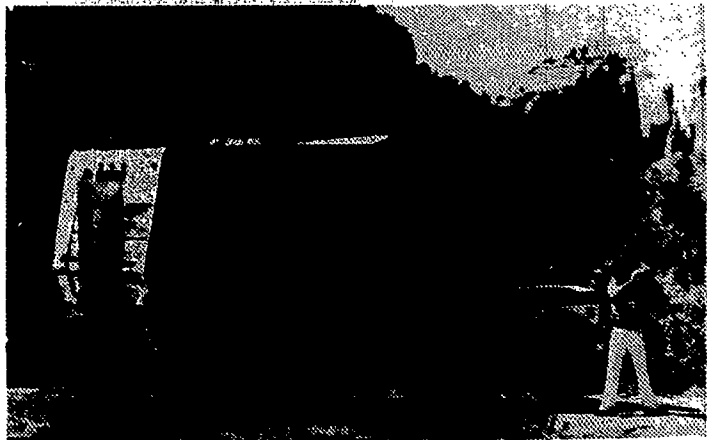
The correct mating of pickup and camper does not produce the type of vehicle that charges up mountains, but it will get the amenities of civilization farther into the wilderness than you might have thought possible.

Since this camper is easily removed from the vehicle, freeing the truck for other duties, it is one of the most economical RVs on the market—and certainly one of the most versatile. The initial investment for a new unit runs from \$2,000 to \$3,000. It stores on its own jacks when not in use, and can even be switched from one truck to another.

Anything you want

And, since today's pickup truck can be anything you want—from simple economy minded roadster to awesome four-wheeler—your home on wheels can be just as adaptable.

For the outdoorsman and his family who prefer camping off the beaten path, the versatile truck camper can be a made-to-order recreational vehicle.



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