

Romantic Baja Adventure

By Ryan Howard



The road to Baja is a nostalgic one. You are out there, truly out there - not a cell tower in sight. It's raw, it's rugged and not for the faint of heart. There are miles and miles of unpredictability. You can get stuck out there for days until you are lucky enough to find 'local' help. It's one of the few places on earth

where you can truly go camping. And what is wild is finding others doing the same adventure as you. The unpredictability of the weather makes you appreciate those glassy warm mornings. The moody desert changes in an instant- rain and harsh unrelenting winds come with no warning.

Nobody has the same story. "How was the road in?" – most people ask along the way. Our trip was just over 2,000 miles in 10 days. We were searching for those perfect peeling right hand waves that we scored the years before. Will they be as perfect as we remember? Did the hurricane that hit in October mess up the sand? Still, we enthusiastically made the drive.

My girl and I headed out on Christmas day from Santa Cruz, Ca to avoid the chaotic Southern California traffic. The weather was calling to be mid 60s and a bit swell to compliment the nice conditions. Having recently partnered up with Four Wheel Campers, they graciously let us borrow a demo rig- a Ford F350 with a fresh Hawk Slide-in Camper. In the event we did get stuck- we were fully equipped.



The insulation package with an on-demand furnace and hot water shower, we could be exceptionally comfortable.

We knocked out the 18-hour drive to arrive at the beachfront campsite right at sunset to scope the surf. We were teeming with excitement and before the first light even arrived, we had our water boiling for our first morning coffee. Sitting there sipping and peeking out the window with a cotton candy sunrise, we witness the first perfect peeling right point break. The crew promptly suited up and we spent the next 3 hours trading off chest high perfect waves.



We were laughing, cheering, and announcing how incredibly tired and out of shape our paddling power was. Our group decided we wanted to explore a few other point breaks and packed up camp (15 minutes tops!).

We hit the dusty, washboard road and drove north. Nothing in sight for miles, then suddenly, you'll see another adventure seeker. The number of Four Wheel Campers we passed was astounding. A genuine sense of community- everyone was stoked on each other's rig!

We were confident that this setup was the ultimate way to do Baja. It was a slow rough drive with lots of go-arounds from previous storms, washing out massive parts of the road. We reached our most northern desired location in the afternoon. The tide was a tad high but the potential to be one of the longest point breaks I've ever witnessed. The camper set up with ease and we paddled out until sunset.

The tide was dropping, and the waves went from mush to all time. Baja delivering once again. We hunkered down for a couple days and cooked with friends, surfed for hours, and relaxed by the campfire trading stories.

By the third picture-perfect day, neighbors informed us there was weather coming – the potential to make the cuddy road we took in, unpassable. That next morning, we woke up to some moisture and decided to pack up and get to a more accessible area due to our friends only having a 2WD vehicle. As we were almost loaded up, those notorious torrential rain pours came in an instant. Fortunately, we made it to the new spot and set up camp. The rains let up that evening and as if they never happened and we woke up to a bluebird sky. There was even a touch of warmth and glassy conditions.

As the first wave set rolled through the lineup, and it was yet another perfect peeling right, we decided we would spend the remainder of the trip there. That day was impeccable- the clarity of the water was something I've never experienced in a non-tropical location. You could see all the bait fish swimming as you paddled and every line in the sand from the currents. Oh yeah, and the waves were unimaginable as well, breaking off a rock outcrop at the point and peeling all the way to the inside cove. The kind where you surf until you can't paddle anymore, and your legs are tired from standing. Those waves.



On our final evening, after days of scoring, I caught my best wave of the trip and sprinted back to the rig. It was almost sunset, and I had a question I've been pondering for a while. I waited on the cliff for my girl to catch a wave while watching the sunset. I watched her ride her last wave of the day and start walking up the path along the ridge. As she got closer, I knew this was the perfect moment to ask that question.

In her wetsuit with a board in hand I asked her to spend the rest of her life with me. She said yes. The ring – a beautiful blue sapphire the color of the ocean, and her eyes, slipped onto her hand. I couldn't have been happier at that moment and have been dreaming about for the past 4 years. We had an epic ending to a great trip in our temporary, borrowed home.

Thank you, Four Wheel Campers, for supporting me as a professional mountain biker and yet letting me test out this rig on a surf trip! My fiancé and I are incredibly stoked to be given the opportunity to build our own camper. We can't wait for March to start customizing our own! There are so many adventures to be had in the future and Four Wheel Campers will always be a part of our special trip. Over 2000 miles of great waves, friends and now a new chapter in life.