

*If you're planning the great Aussie road trip, "don't forget the coffee machine or the poo chair."*

Those are the top tips from ex-Kalgoorlie chiropractor Jason Stanford (35).

Originally from NSW, Stanford operated a chiropractic clinic in Kalgoorlie for ten years. He also married a local girl and had 3 children, a girl and 2 boys, aged eight, six and three years. Stanford says, "we'd reached that point where life was easy and we were ready for a challenge."

Spending 7 months in a caravan with 3 children under 8-years old may not sound easy but Stanford and wife Natalie (34) say the twenty-five thousand kilometre adventure strengthened their family.

Having the family together day and night sharing all their experiences made them more self reliant. Stanford says, "We worked out how to spend every hour together and to keep it simple."

Departing Kalgoorlie on February 1, they travelled to Esperance then followed a mostly coastal route taking in Western Australia, Northern Territory, Queensland and New South Wales, arriving at Stanford's mother's Bathurst home at the end of July.



*L-R: Natalie, Ava, Jed, Kobe and Jason Stanford*

En route they met several other on-road families that became friends and sometime travelling companions and Natalie, a hairdresser, was soon bartering haircuts for freshly baked bread or bottles of wine and providing cappuccinos each morning.

Of the barter system Stanford says, “Every morning people lined up for coffee but the poo chair (collapsible chair with toilet seat) was the real crowd pleaser.” Apparently a shovel isn’t the only thing required to create a successful bush toilet.

Other successes such as catching Barramundi in the Ord River or using the kids’ boogie boards to get the car out of a bad bog became a part of their simpler lifestyle and Natalie says, “...you don’t waste anything, you really use everything you have.”

Stanford’s children also learnt to enjoy what they found around them and while the family agree the Kimberley and El Questro wilderness park were highlights, the children say their favourite things were Walpole’s Treetop Walk, fishing and climbing the rocks to get to the Bungle Bungles.

Deciding it’s time to settle again, the Stanford’s chose a small community and tropical location where they plan to keep their lives almost as simple as they were on the road. They recently purchased a Chiropractic clinic in Ingham, Queensland and will relocate in October.

