

Toyota Land Cruiser 80 series



This is one of the very best vehicles to export to South Africa! This is a vehicle that earned huge amounts of respect from every 4X4 owner, all over the world. It's seen by many 4X4 purists as the "last indestructible" luxury Land Cruiser Station Wagon ever produced. (series 70 SW not seen as "luxury" and 100 series not as quite as tough in extreme off-road conditions) Even car-critic Jeremy Clarkson from Top Gear owned one of these Land Cruisers!

There are many series 80's running around in South Africa, but they are very

scarce in the South African Auto Trader – their owners would not sell them.

The reason is that they seldom (if ever) break down, so the owners don't get rid of their 80-series Land Cruisers very easily which have taken them to desolated, far-far away places on a frequent basis without hassles. This also results in kilometre readings on the clock that show over 500 000km of hard off-road use, and it's only then when owners start thinking about selling it! I know about series 80 Land Cruisers that has done over a million kilometres...

Most Land Cruisers in the UK had an easy life on the other hand and are well priced. Because they are really large in size, making them only suitable for the open road and not for the small and narrow British city roads and parking spots, this results in many low mileage Land Cruisers for sale that were used to only tow horse boxes across muddy fields! And the other good thing is that all UK Land Cruisers

were highly specked, where most of the South African Land Cruisers were base GX spec. (only aircon and electric windows, and no turbo diesel option)

Two specification series 80's were available in the UK: the GS and the VX – and it is the VX you want, in 4.2TD guise. (a 4.5i petrol is also available, but the fuel consumption is quite high)

Very few 80 VX TDI's were exported to South Africa by Toyota SA, thus making them a VERY sought after vehicle, especially with low mileage. If you can manage find one in a good condition with low mileage in SA, be prepared to pay R200 000 to R250 000.



Note: 1995 to 1997 facelift-grille

So why do everyone want a

Cruiser 80 VX Turbo Diesel?



1989-1995 pre-facelift grille.

Lets start with the power: the 1995+ facelift had 125kW, 380Nm torque, 0-100km/h in 12,5 seconds and true top speed of 180km/h, (CAR Test ?????1996) not bad for a tank that weighs 2,5 ton!

They compared the L/C 80 VX's ride quality to that of a "vintage Rolls Royce", so good is it. It's my all-time favourite SUV!

But equally important is off-road capability. 3X diff-locks (rear, centre, and front) were standard on the face-lift versions. The front axle is also a solid axle, better suited for off-road use and stronger in abusive situations.

But the "cherry on the cake" is the high-spec level and comfort. Climate control, electric seats with leather, sunroof, dual airbags and ABS brakes, 8-seat configuration and some other things were all standard on the face-lift.

When I refer to "face lift", it's the models from 1995 to 1997 and had the big, oval "Toyota" badge on the grille (see pictures).

The "pre-face lift" ran from 1989 to 1995 (had TOYOTA written on the grille) and didn't had the same power output and specs as the face-lifts (e.g. No electric seats and the very important diff-locks were an optional extra, luckily most customers ordered the diff-locks on the pre-facelifts)

Prices

*Pre-1995 models can be bought for as little as £2000, but then its high milers with a potential hard life behind the back. Good one's can start at £3500, but remember it's the "old spec" then.

*Face lifts start at £3000, but then it's a 4.5 petrol. 4.2TDi's start at £4000 and can go up to a silly £10 000, depending on condition, colour and mileage. Here is a good example of a low-mileage bargain from the UK Auto trader website:

1996 TOYOTA LANDCRUISER VX Amazon TD 5dr Diesel Estate

Price: £4,600

Features:

- 90,000 miles
- Manual
- Red
- Diesel
- Estate
- 4164 cc



Full Description:

Glossary of Terms

90,000 miles with FSH, Red, 5 Door Estate, Diesel, Manual, ABS, Electrical adjustable seats, Adjustable steering column/wheel, Air conditioning, Alloy wheels, Anti theft system, full cream leather, Sunroof, 6cd changer, 7 seater, taxed and mot'd, good condition throughout. £4,600 ono.

Some notes:

-The big Land Cruisers are called the Amazon in the UK, while the smaller Colorado is actually a Prado.

-Because these vehicles don't show wear and tear easily, the mileage of some has been turned back. (spinning the kilo's on the clock) The only way one can verify the true mileage is with FSH (Full Service History). It's anyway a good thing to see whether it had all its services.

-These Land Cruisers are VERY popular with dodgy gypsies / pikey's who use them to tow their huge caravans, so beware from who you buy!

-“Jap imports” are available in the UK, but some of them are not that highly specked, so make sure of equipment level. The advantage on “Jap imports” is that they indicate in kilometres. These 'Cruisers usually have a little mirror on the left front fender.



Note the little mirror on the fender on this “jap import”.

-Although rust isn't a problem on these Land Cruisers, it can't hurt to check under the wheel arches and under-body for rust. Prepare for +-R13 000-R18 000 to fix this problem. (treat and cut out rust and full re-spray of car)

-Does every function work (e.g. Aircon or all electric stuff, like windows).
-How's the steering play, and does it pull to one side?

-How's the gearbox? Should be whine-free and easy to shift gears.
Also check the transfer box if it shifts easily into 4L.

-If it says LPG in the advert, it is the 4.5L petrol Land Cruiser which can be driven on petrol OR Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG). The vehicle has two tanks, petrol and LPG with a dashboard switch to change between the fuels. Unless you're going to use it for a long period in the UK, don't pay extra for this feature if you want a 4.5L petrol version. (gas is very cheap in the UK, but expensive in SA)

-To bring out the best from this Land Cruiser's, it need all-terrain or mud-terrain tyres and a slight suspension lift.