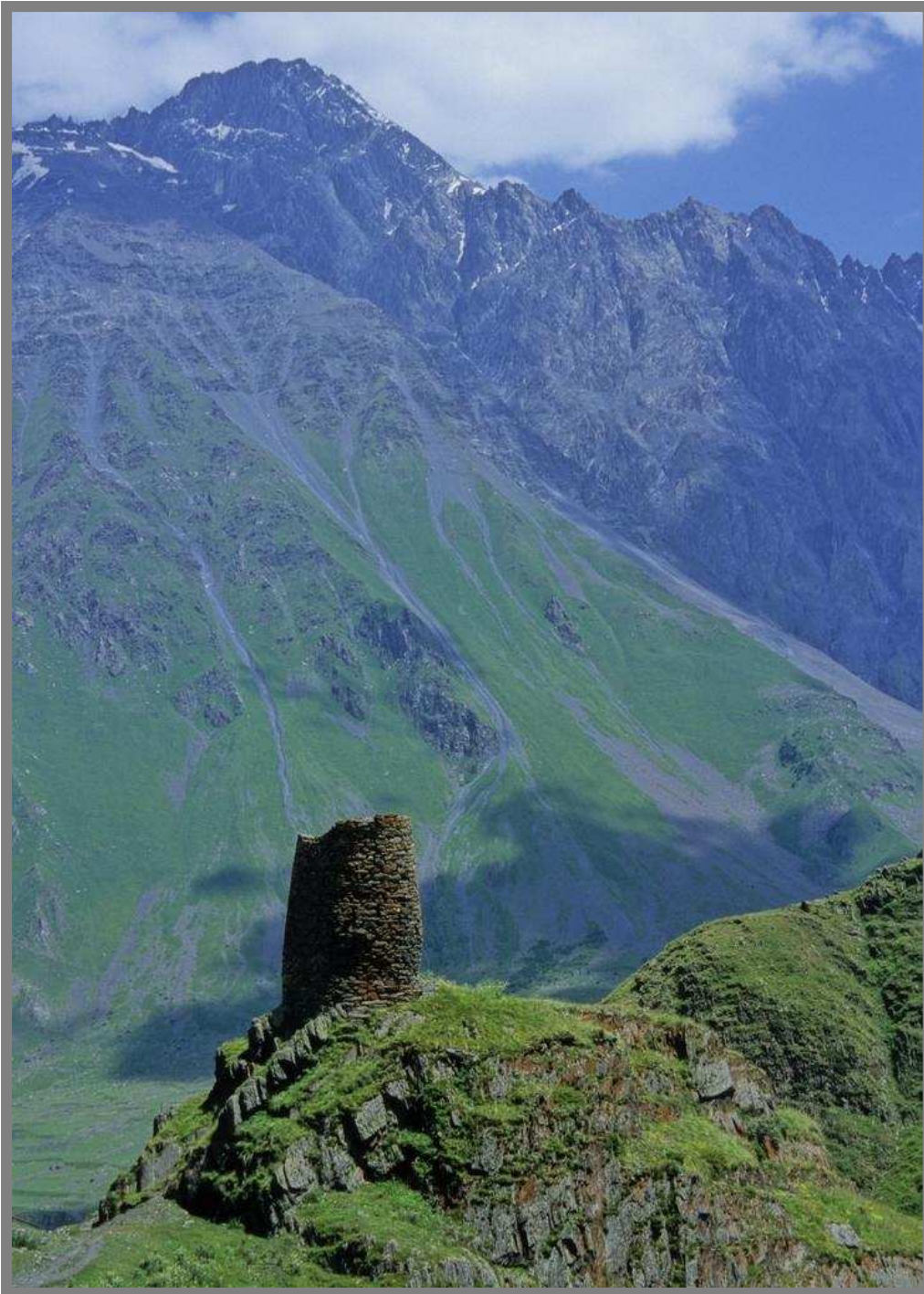


A photograph of a dry, cracked desert landscape. The ground is parched and broken into irregular, polygonal shapes. The color is a mix of light tan and brown. In the background, the terrain levels out slightly under a clear blue sky. A red, rectangular stamp is overlaid on the image, tilted at an angle. The stamp contains the text "BIELUGA" in a large, bold, serif font, and "EXPEDITION" in a smaller, bold, serif font below it.

BIELUGA
EXPEDITION



**BIELUGA
EXPEDITION**

BIELUGA Expedition 2006

- Itinerary:** 10 000 km (mainly on wheels).
Date: 28 June – 23 July 2006 (+/- 2 days – depending on the date of ferry departure from Odessa).
Participants: Experienced travellers only, the head of the team has to have the experience of at least three international expeditions.
Vehicles: 4x4, adjusted to off-road driving in very difficult conditions, fully equipped for expeditions.

BIELUGA EXPEDITION



BIELUGA Expedition 2005

International 4x4 expedition heading through the mountain, steppe and desert wilderness of Eurasia, via Krasnodar Krai, Caucasus, Stavropol Krai, the very heart of the Buddhist Kalmykia to Astrakhan and the shores of Caspian Sea. BIELUGA Expedition 2005 was the first part of the international information project on the most fascinating regions of the south-eastern Russia and Ukraine but it was also a great off-road adventure. The result of the expedition was the establishment of an exhaustive information background for the following trips and travels to the region.



In the course of the three weeks long expedition, the participants covered a 7500 km route driving through four mountain chains, the legendary Crimean steppes and the Kerch Strait. They also visited the sunny beaches of Black, Azov and Caspian Seas.

We slept in tents for the majority of nights, prepared our meals in the beautiful scenery of wild environment or tasted the specialities of the local cuisine.

We went for a hike to waterfalls and the Great Canyon, saw the famous strongholds in Khotyn and Kamyanets-Podilsky, visited Kharkiv, former Stalingrad as well as the extraordinary monuments of Crimea and Kiev. We then climbed to the Tepe Kermen, the cave city, where we discovered human remains.

And that was only the very beginning of the adventure! We got across the biggest rivers of Ukraine and Russia: Dniester, Dnieper, Don and Volga. We fought with scorching heat for many

days walking through the parched bottom of the prehistoric strait linking Europe and Asia. And to top it all, the last and the most difficult challenge: steppe and desert wilderness of Kalmykia.

Expedition 2005 was not only about braving nature's extremes, it was also experiencing the culture and religion of the East. During



the rally participants could observe Orthodox, Muslim and Buddhist traditions. They met Tatar, Adyghe and Khazar people, they spent nights near the campfires of Kalmykian shepherds, observing camels, wild horses and antelopes.

It's simply impossible to describe all the attractions of such an eventful expedition as one simply can't forget to mention the beauty of Odessa harbour, the exquisite wine and gorgeous women of Yalta or the wild parties Gelendzhik.

Dozens of BIELUGA stories are going to survive in campfire conversations and that's the biggest achievement of this expedition...

The second part of the expedition leading around the Black Sea covers Moldova, Georgia, the rocky borders of Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. The festive finish will take place in the only city in the world that's situated on two continents – Istanbul.

Thanks to satellite connection and GSM our struggles with wild nature, snow-covered mountain peaks and burning sun will be reported on in real time. Just like last year, every day on the websites of the Off-Road PL magazine and the official BIELUGA page there will appear hot expedition news and the next part of knowledge base with information on the covered stage, the country or region the expedition is as 3D satellite simulation of the area..

The itinerary of the second part of BIELUGA is longer and offers an even more diversified cultural and off-road experience. It will make you discover the unforgettable atmosphere of Caucasian mountain huts, the rocky towns of the Silk Road and the provinces of the exotic Orient. The chances are that it is going to be **one of the most interesting international expeditions** co-organized for many years now by the Warsaw Motoring Club Penetrator.

Our destination is Georgia. We are going to reach it via Moldova with its outstanding castles and famous vineyards. In order to embark on the ferry and sail along the northern shore of the Black Sea, we'll visit Odessa again. We are going to go safely past Abkhazia and land in the Georgian town of Poti situated in the Rioni river delta on the vast bog and swamps of the legendary Colchis. Thus, we are going to reach the same area as the Argonauts during their expedition and see the footprints of dinosaurs still distinctly visible.

On the same day we'll take the Inguri river canyon and head to Svaneti – the district lost between four and five thousand metres high snow-covered mountain tops. The following days will belong to Imereti and Kartli. We'll stop in the birthplace of Josef

Vissarianovitch Diougatchvili, commonly known as Stalin, and via the famous Georgian Route of War we'll get to the foot of the monumental Kazbek mountain where the mythical Greek Prometheus performed his penance for giving away to people the fire stolen to the gods.

We will also call at Tbilisi and Mtskheta, the religious capital of Georgia. In Kakheti - the land of milk and honey – we will rest after the difficulties of the first part of our itinerary and visit the oldest temples of Georgia following the steppe and semi-desert where the Russian army trained before the conflict in Afghanistan.



The next stage of our journey includes the Georgian cave cities, the valley of Kura river, Borjomi famous for its mineral water and the mountain route leading through the volcanic mountain chain so often hit by earthquakes.

On the following days, you can expect to see the rocky borders of Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria – breathtaking, exotic views and demanding terrain where drivers have to be extremely careful.

We will cross Tigris and Euphrates, get through the huge salt lake of Tuz Golu providing 60 percent of salt mined in Turkey, we will drop to Cappadocia and Ankara and after three weeks on the road we'll end our journey in Istanbul. From there, everyone will head in the chosen direction – to Greece, Croatia, Bulgaria or the south coast of Turkey.



**BIET
EXPEDITION**



This year we will get to the very heart of the High Caucasus – it's easy to imagine what climatic, weather and road conditions we are going to encounter, even in the summer. Because of that, we'll have to introduce restrictions for new participants. The highest peak on the picture is Elbrus and the plains in the background are part of the prehistoric strait we went through during last year's BIELUGA Expedition.





This year, too, there will be off-road driving for you – starting from gravel country roads and Shiraki Steppe through the Turkish rocky territories up to the High Caucasus where the mountain passes are situated on the altitude of 3000 m above sea level.

It is mainly for that reason and in order to maintain the great atmosphere of last year expedition that we are planning to introduce **restrictions for new participants**. Expedition will be open for teams from all countries provided the team leader participated in **at least three international expeditions**.

Expedition itinerary is almost **10.000 km** long, of which the majority will be covered by car within about 25 days. We are going to spend the nights in tents or in cars, except for the goodbye night and ferry freights. Just like last year, each team is going to prepare meals for themselves.



Visit the regularly updated BIELUGA website (www.bieluga.com)!

Read what our partners think of BIELUGA:

„BFGoodrich is a brand of tyres especially successful in off-road rallies and a five-time winner of the legendary Dakar rally – our engagement in BIELUGA Expedition is then a natural continuation of Michelin Group’s policy so far.”

Michelin Polska S.A.

„BIELUGA is one of the most interesting Polish expedition events that took place in 2005.”

Editorial team of the Off-Road PL magazine (Off-Road PL is the biggest Polish monthly on 4x4 vehicles)



**GA
TION**



„Organizers' competence and determination took me by absolute surprise. From the very beginning, from our introductory talks and first decisions I was 100 % sure the expedition would be a success.”

Dariusz Wałach, PR specialist, HP Polska



LU
XPED





„ Our co-operation during the expedition was very professional and businesslike. We are looking forward to the next expedition.”

Piotr Kapcio, home.pl owner(home.pl is an unquestionable leader on the Polish hosting services market)

www.bieluga.com

Click to visit Expedition's website

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All pictures come from BIELUGA 2005 and 2006 route | Photos: I.Kaliszewska, K.Tolwinska, P.Maciazek.