



TO GET the full effect from reading this article, pull up a stool in front of your freezer, put on a wooly hat, open the freezer door, dim the lights and put on some background music that includes howling winds. This will give you the perception of being in the Arctic. Enjoy the ride.

BAIE OR Bust? No, this is not a typo, but the title to a series of reports on preparing for a trip to the James Bay area of Canada's frozen north (Baie is French for Bay).

We will be covering Baie or Bust with multiple features: this first one covers personal gear preparation.

My first excursion to the arctic was a month long trip in the summer of 1986. The expedition included three Series One 86s and became known as the '86 in 86" expedition. The trip originated in the UK and circumnavigated the northern parts on Scandinavia, (Sweden, Finland

and Norway). It left a lasting impression on me; especially the desolate, fragile beauty of the northern tundra. Traveling over the mid summer solstice meant that we enjoyed 24 hours of daylight, giving us the constant pleasure of viewing the fjords, globe flower meadows and constant annoyances from bugs and midges.

Having moved to the New World, visiting the Canadian arctic has been on the 'to do' list for some time. Why? Well, the arctic is one of the last really remote spots on the planet. Somewhere that is pristine, raw; absolute nature.

I came close with a trip to Nova Scotia, and a trip to Labrador and Newfoundland has been on the cards for some time. So an email from Ted Mathews (Land Rover Adventure Association) about a trip heading north in February immediately sparked my interest.

Another trip to the arctic, but this time it would be on a different continent and mid winter. Instead of globe flowers

and bugs, I'll have snow and Northern Lights.

Ted's trip this year was to head due north from the main urban areas of Toronto and Montreal and hugging the Quebec coast up the James Baie, staying with various Cree Indian communities.

The Municipality of Baie James is larger than many countries in terms of size, yet only a handful of mostly small Cree and a couple of Francophone communities can be found in isolated communities. All of the native communities were former Hudson Bay trading posts, with English as well as eastern Cree still being spoken.

The expedition planned to visit the communities of Wemiji and Chisasibi, both on the James Bay and Radisson, the site of the giant 'le Grande Dam 1' complex.

All these communities are reached by the only north/south gravel road running up from the more southerly portion of the province.

Planning for a long trip is

always part of the adventure and helps to build the excitement. Traveling with the possibility of extreme weather brings other considerations.

Your Land Rover is a very capable vehicle and has been tested in all the world's extreme weather conditions, plus environmental testing, but various enhancements can add to your personal well-being and that of your group. Special personal gear and provisions also become extremely important, especially when venturing into remote areas.

it's no catwalk

An arctic winter is as extreme as you might experience anywhere in the world. Preparation starts with area knowledge and experience. We were lucky as Ted Matthews had been to this area before and had first hand knowledge.

One thing was certain. We would need to take everything with us: fuel, food, supplies; there is no 24/7 convenience stores at these latitudes.

Going on an expedition is no place for the fashion conscious. You cannot make a fashion faux pas; all the clothing should follow form and function, not be a collection of high fashion regalia. Keep your favorite sneakers, Armani shirts and Versace denims back

BAIE OR BUST

In the first of a series of articles on overland travel in Northern Canada, Steve Hoare gives hints and tips on how to survive the extreme cold