

Fisherman™



Trials course proved to be tricky for Discoverys



drive. Although not large by American standards, the V8 is large enough for my European taste, and its under-stressed nature means it will sit at 3,000rpm doing 70-75mph.

It isn't powerful though, conjuring just 188bhp from four litres, which seems like a tremendous waste of cubic centimetres, and you need the sport mode on the 'box to overtake traffic up hills. The four-speed autobox is good though, blending changes smoothly when moving and slipping easily from drive to reverse when manoeuvring.

But after 1,000 miles of driving, there was a slight whine coming from the transmission that certainly wasn't there when I collected the Disco, and it had got progressively louder as the miles rolled by under the wheels.

Discoverys are not so unusual that they attract attention, and most people seem to accept the Land Rover name as just another sport utility vehicle (SUV) – an expensive, prestigious one, but still just another name in



On top of the world: Dan pauses to reflect on Vermont's natural beauty from the vantage point of someone's Defender roof rack

an already crowded marketplace. Where Land Rover has a huge advantage over its American rivals is in its style. Jeep aside, American SUVs are badly styled pastiches of themselves, developing ludicrous power bulges and flared wheelarches with each new model incarnation. America builds few subtle, clever cars, and none of them are SUVs.

Land Rovers, on the other hand, are different. They're European – not Japanese or homegrown – which immediately puts them into a higher bracket of desirability. They have status, image and ability, and Land Rover expects North America to become its biggest export market by the end of the decade.

Leaving behind the humid, sweltering lowlands, I make my way up through Vermont, turning off the interstate and taking the US highways into the countryside. I immediately encounter another big problem with American roads – the



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