

Industry Profile: Supporter of the Local Music Scene Taboot Art

by Katie Flannery
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A few months ago I was walking down East Colfax and discovered a jewel on the corner of Colfax and Milwaukee: Taboot Art. I wandered in and found the store full of t-shirts and hoodies adorned with unique art as well as vintage clothing at very reasonable prices. As the weeks wore on, I kept noticing people all over town wearing Taboot t-shirts. I then learned that the store was sponsoring its own music and art expo in Denver. Not only was I excited to have such a great store in my neighborhood, I was inspired to know they were supporters of the local music scene.

One very hot July afternoon I walked to 3000 E. Colfax and sat down with Sutton, Tripp and furry-man Samson to talk about Taboot Art. The roots of the operation started ten years ago with Tripp in Boone, NC. As an enthusiastic fan of great music, Tripp criss-crossed the country to hear his favorite bands. Over the years Denver was a destination as well as a stop along the way where Tripp always felt at home. "I drove out to Denver three or four times in one month from North Carolina just for shows," laughed Tripp, "I've always loved Denver." After relocating to Colorado, Taboot Art occupied a warehouse space on 31st and Blake. "It was basically a print workshop with no storefront. We needed to have a customer base...a place where there would be foot traffic," said Tripp, "...and Colfax is certainly good for that," said Sutton as she gestured toward the street. Included in the Taboot family is partner and shirt printer Jeff Nesbit who placed the very first 1000 t-shirt order from Taboot and has been involved ever since.

Taboot is a screen-printing business that prints on t-shirts, hoodies, posters, stickers and more. They print for businesses, bands, promoters, venues and individuals. They have their own t-shirt and hoodie line that uses submissions from artists across the country. The shirts are printed in a limited edition and clothing collections are released seasonally. The fall collection will be released in early September and new to the compilation will be woman's skirts and dresses. There will be twenty new designs for fall including holiday cards set for October release. Last year the Taboot line of holiday cards was featured in the Rolling Stone gift giving section! Also available is locally crafted jewelry, gems and minerals from The Mineral Cache in Ft. Collins, vintage clothing, selections from Amerika and Neovolt clothing lines, and Lama Chodpa incense. Sutton explained that the incense is all organic, has been blessed by displaced Tibetan monks and the proceeds go to their monastery in Tibet.

Tripp and Sutton believe that the Denver local music scene is "wonderful and eclectic...we love it!" They both agreed that there is "good creative energy for both musicians and artists in Denver." To show their support of local music they had the Taboot Music and Art Expo on June 7th, which drew 500 people. Taboot prints t-shirts for Raq, Schmocter, Kinetix, Electric Mudd, (to name a few) and Tripp also designed the Colorado posters for the Disco Biscuits and the New Years Eve poster for Outformation. Not only does Taboot produce high-quality product, they support local music and are involved in the community with back-to-school supply drives. Look for them at local shows and national festivals - stop by the store to say hi, scratch Samson on the head and buy a t-shirt to show that Denver loves Taboot. Interested in Taboot for t-shirt, poster, handbill or sticker printing? Call the store at 303-296-3872. ◀

MySpace.com/TabootArt

Hitting the Road: Tour Vehicle Fuel Options for 2008 And Beyond - Part II

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Last month we covered the basics of calculating per mile costs when considering going on tour. We also covered how to find cheaper gas stations by using the Internet and gasoline alternatives such as E85 and even covered tour vehicle options. This month we're going to talk about diesel powered tour vehicles such as SUVs and vans.

Why consider diesel powered touring vehicles? Isn't diesel \$4.50+ a gallon these days? Here's why:

Diesel engines have been around a long time; designed in 1893 by Rudolf Diesel, with the first successful running prototype engine by 1897 (which was granted a patent the following year in 1898). Diesel engines are by virtue of design, mechanically simpler than gasoline engines and contain fewer moving parts. Diesel engines produce excellent power to weight performance figures. Diesel engines also last far longer than gasoline engines due to the lubricating nature of diesel fuel. In fact, while most gasoline powered vehicles are facing an engine rebuild at 200,000 miles, diesel engines are just breaking in and entering the middle years of their service life. Lastly, diesel engines can operate on inexpensive vegetable oil and bio-diesel fuel mixes.

\$0.50 per gallon? You bet!

Imagine if you could fill your fuel tank at \$0.50 a gallon. What today costs \$75 to fill the average 20 gallon tour van fuel tank (20 gallon tank x \$3.75 per gallon = \$75.00 per tank of gas) would only cost \$10. Huh? Seriously? Read on!

Here's a shortlist of some great diesel powered vehicles to look at if your band is in the market to buy a tour vehicle:

- Mid to late 90's to early 2000's Ford E-250 and E-350 diesel vans ranging in cost from \$2,000 and up
- Early to mid 2000's Ford Excursion SUV's ranging in cost from \$6,000 and up
- Late 90's to early 2000's Chevrolet Express 2500 / 3500 vans ranging in cost from \$3,500 and up
- Late 80's to early 2000's Chevrolet and GMC Suburban SUV's ranging in cost from \$1,500 and up
- Late 80's to mid 90's Chevrolet & GMC 2500 & 3500 vans ranging in cost from \$1,500 and up
- Old school buses bought at local auctions, Craigslist.com, or eBay ranging in cost from \$500 and up

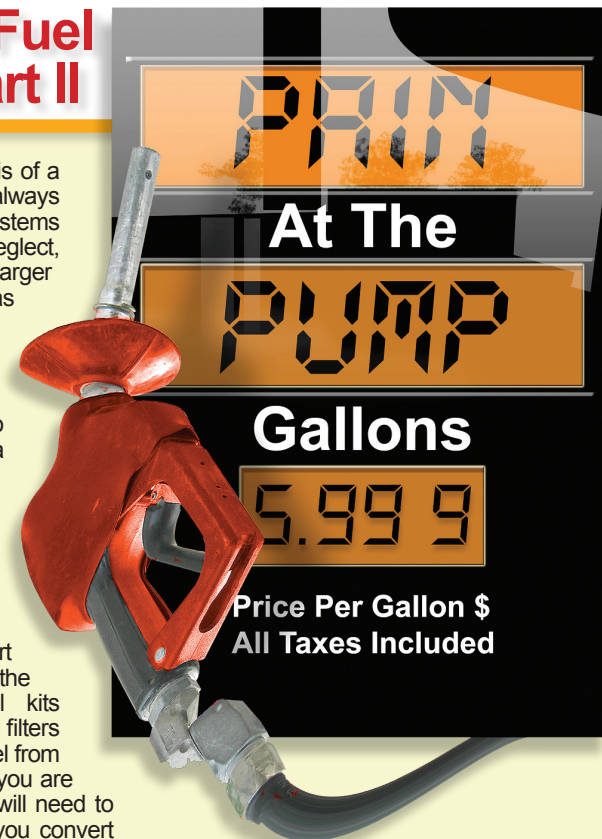
As mentioned above, high mileage on a diesel engine is not a bad thing but high

mileage on the body and chassis of a vehicle can be. So to begin with, always inspect any vehicle's brake systems and bodywork for evidence of neglect, repairs, or obvious damage. Larger diesel powered vehicles such as vans or SUVs also generally come with heavy duty axles, heavy duty brakes, and heavy duty transmissions which should all be inspected prior to any purchase. If in doubt, ask a trusted mechanic for help.

Now then, once you have a diesel powered tour vehicle and want to take the next step to converting to bio-diesel or go all the way and run on straight veggie oil, you will need to convert your fuel system with one of the many aftermarket commercial kits available which include extra fuel filters and a tank heater to keep the fuel from solidifying in colder weather. If you are going the bio-diesel route, you will need to also purchase a kit that helps you convert used fryer oil into actual bio-diesel. Why do you need to buy all this extra stuff? To keep your fuel system from getting gummed up, that's why!

Of course the cost of buying all of the necessary kits to convert your diesel powered tour vehicle can add up in cost. But the return on investment is enormous. The average conversion to bio-diesel or veggie cost for most diesel van and SUVs comes to roughly \$2000.00 when professionally installed. A gallon of pure veggie oil comes out to roughly \$0.50 when purchased in commercial quantities. Used fryer oil from restaurants is free and the process for converting into bio-diesel (a chemical process requiring additional chemicals such as lye and methanol) which again when purchased in bulk quantities results in a per gallon cost of roughly \$1.10 for home-made bio-diesel. With the cost of gasoline more or less stable at \$3.75 per gallon this year, the fuel costs of running a tour vehicle on veggie oil or bio-diesel are immense. Assuming an average fuel economy of 14 miles per gallon for the average diesel powered van or SUV, the per mile costs of operating on veggie oil are \$0.04 compared to \$0.27 per mile we calculated last month for the average gas powered tour van. Another way to look at it is that it costs \$10.00 to fill a 20 gallon fuel tank with readily available pure veggie oil on a converted diesel van or SUV and \$75.00 to fill a 20 gallon tank on a gas powered van or SUV. Big difference huh?

When you estimate that the average good condition diesel van or SUV will cost your band about \$5,000.00 and the conversion kit to run on bio-diesel or straight veggie oil will cost another \$2,000.00, your band will be



into the diesel powered tour van or SUV for \$7,000.00. Now let's assume that your band is going to take your newly converted diesel van or SUV on a 2 week 1,500 mile tour across 10 states. Your vehicle holds 20 gallons of fuel and gets 14 miles to the gallon for a total of roughly 280 miles per full tank of fuel and we already determined that it costs roughly \$10.00 to fill your fuel tank. Factoring in all the facts and figures you end up with your 1,500 mile two week tour tanking six full tanks of fuel...that's \$60.00 in tour fuel costs! Compare that to \$450.00 for six tanks of gasoline for the gas powered tour van or SUV. Big difference indeed!

Of course, running a tour vehicle on veggie oil or bio-diesel requires a little more work on your part. Buying bulk veggie oil, finding restaurants that will give you their used fryer oil all can be a challenge for the uninitiated so if your band is interested in learning more about bio-diesel or veggie oil conversions, there are plenty of bands here in Colorado that have already done it: Oakhurst, Potcheen, Elephant Revival Concept, and many others. Introduce yourself to these bands at their next show and ask questions. You will find these bands to be more than gracious in answering your questions on this topic. Also, as mentioned earlier, there is a wealth of information at your local library and on the Internet on diesel conversions to veggie oil and bio-diesel. We welcome any comments regarding this article. Please visit our website at ColoradoMusicBuzz.com and log onto our online forum and tell us what you think! ◀

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