

PEOPLE . PLACES

HOT ROADS - THE WORLD'S MOST DANGEROUS ROADS I

5x45' (ENG, GER, ITA, FRA)

A risky expedition along thoroughfares that harbor mortal danger for those who use them or live on them.

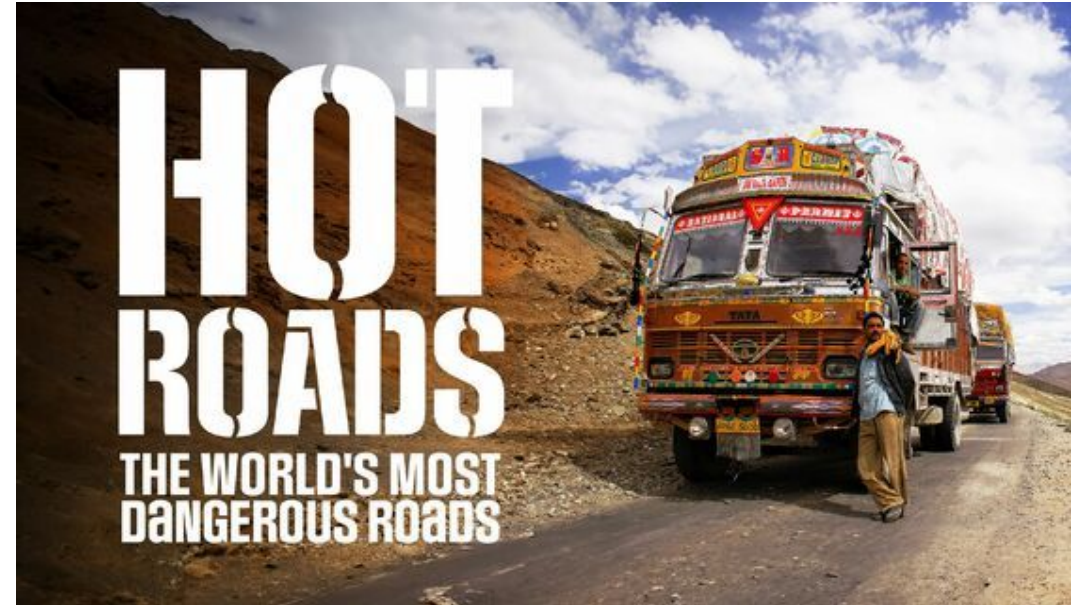
They run through deserts, ice and snow, deep in the jungle, along water and over mountains: the world's most dangerous roads. Many risk their lives along these roads. Yet for lack of alternative routes, locals continue to use them for transportation. This series tells stories that take place along the routes, of the people who live along them and for whom these are part and parcel of their personal destiny. The filmmakers tag along in the driver's seat of trucks, on the rear benches of busses and in the passenger seat of regular cars to experience the danger and beauty these roads offer from different perspectives – through the windshield and in the rear-view mirror simultaneously.

See also:

HOT ROADS II

HOT ROADS III

HOT ROADS IV



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Produced by: berlin producers

Partners: ZDF, arte

1. The Manahli-Leh Highway

It is a road of mountain passes and India's access to the roof of the world – the Himalayas. This 475-kilometre long route at the northernmost tip of the Indian subcontinent connects the cities of Manali and Leh at the heart of the Ladakh region. The term “highway” applies quite literally, since the route traverses five of the highest drivable mountain passes in the world. Crossing these passes is a challenge for both vehicle and man. The mountain peaks, still snow-capped even in the depths of summer, wide variety of vegetation and the fantastic and craggy landscape turn any journey into a captivating adventure.

2. The Nawabpur Road in Dhaka

In Bangladesh, the land with the highest density of population in the world, the daily struggle to survive is fought everywhere, including the streets. Nowhere do people drive as brutally and recklessly as here. In Bangladesh you drive on the road like others drive with a bumper car: if you need space, you simply ram the car driving next to you. The biggest bottleneck in the transport system is the historical old town of Dhaka. The traffic in Dhaka is everyday, normal madness. The film accompanies a rickshaw, a bus and a truck on their dangerous way through the streets of Dhaka and shows how it is possible to survive in what seems to be an uncontrollable chaos.

3. The Adriatic Highway

The “Adriatic Highway” is one of the most beautiful coastal roads in the world. The “technical masterwork” was built in the 1950s and 60s, at the time of Yugoslavian President Tito. Abounding in curves, the asphalt road stretches from Ankaran in Slovenia to Ulcinj in Montenegro. For many travelers, the highway is the absolute dream road. In dizzying heights, it hugs the steep cliffs lining the Adriatic Sea, winds through coves and bays, gardens and stony fields. Wonderful views of the blue sea, green islands, bizarre cliffs and Mediterranean cities and towns are typical of the highway. But with its numerous curves, the dream road also harbors many dangers.

4. The Smuggler's Route in Senegal

Most of the people in the Massina region of Mali in West Africa have no car of their own. Minibuses, pickups, trucks, horse- and mule-drawn carts commute between the towns. Market days always cause a great commotion: dealers and customers are about, and the streets of the markets burst into life. The road becomes a dangerous trap since the tracks – full of potholes and sharp edges – were not designed for the vehicles that travel on it. The vehicles themselves add to the risk. Masses of people who want to go the markets pile up with their goods in and on top of shoddily patched-up trucks and bush taxis. If you want to get somewhere, you hang on for dear life.

5. The Long Road to Siberia

The roads at the Arctic Circle are covered in ice and snow almost eight months out of the year. Conditions that would lead to a total collapse further south are routine for the experienced men of the High North on the road in their trucks. But the truckers work under the same time pressures as their colleagues in the warmer South: the goods must get to customers on time. The film accompanies truck drivers on their way from Nadym to Salekhard. He tells of their lives in the endless landscape of ice and snow.