

A Rack Upgrade For Everyone

By Taft Babbitt

Everyone loves a great roof rack! To be classified as a great rack, it needs both form and function.

Unfortunately, the stock FJ Cruiser rack has form, but falls short in functionality. The stock rack adds to the cosmetic appeal of the FJ but the design of it lacks full functionality, specifically in the front half of the rack.

Lucky for us, BajaRack out of Vista California, has created a great looking and fully functional solution that won't break the bank. BajaRack offers a modified version of The Mule rack specifically for the FJ Cruiser OEM rack. The rack is light, easy to install, and looks great. The BajaRack fits inside the front arms of the stock FJC rack and mounts with brackets along each side. At first, I wondered how the lines of The Mule and the stock rack would align, but once the rack was in place the lines looked great and gave my FJC a tougher, more complete and capable appearance. The airdam on the front of the BajaRack really seems like the finishing touch that the stock rack lines were missing.



The construction quality of the BajaRack is what we've come to expect as very picky FJC owners. The welds and powder coating were flawless in both quality and appearance. Installation took less than an hour by myself, even though the instructions warn that installation should be done by two people. The rack holds 300lbs and comes with a cargo net that looks great and secures gear well. There has been no noticeable change in wind noise at low speeds or highway speeds with the rack installed. In addition to making the front of the stock rack fully functional, the addition of the BajaRack allows you to move all your stock cross members to the rear. This increases the functionality and load bearing capabilities of that rear area over what you would be able to do if stock cross members were spread out evenly along the roof.



Get It!
BajaRack
www.BajaRack.com
760-621-0171

Loading the BajaRack is easy with the doors open and it holds an impressive amount of gear. I was able to fit a large spare gas canister, a thermos, firewood, and a duffle bag full of recovery gear without a problem. The BajaRack is a good place for gear that can treat the inside of your FJ roughly. The netting works well in securing your cargo, it's elastic and has plastic hooks which secure tightly to the rack. While securing all the gear with the cargo net (which is included in the rack) two of the plastic hooks did break. The

temperature was very cold that morning, about 12 degrees. We contacted BajaRack and they are shipping a new net, no questions asked. However, you should be careful when securing the hooks in cold temperatures. I did not use any additional means to secure the cargo and on both the trail and the highway all items stayed in their proper place.

The size of an FJC allows you to traverse trails and terrain that larger full size off-roaders would find difficult, but this trade off means less cargo space. Finding places for all the equipment needed for a safe and prepared wilderness experience can get challenging quickly and therefore makes the addition of the BajaRack almost a necessity, especially for longer expeditions. With great craftsmanship and excellent lines for a strong aesthetic appearance, the BajaRack is an extremely attractive option for the budget aware FJC enthusiast, costing only \$375.00.

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