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Home

Contents

Motoring Questions

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Maxey.co.uk is pleased to bring you the third in a series of question and answer features from Maxey's own 'Mr. Toad'. For legal reasons (and his own safety!), Mr. Toad will remain anonymous for now.

You can contact him here maxeytoad@hotmail.com

Don't be shy, send all your questions to the expert.

Maxey Motoring Questions answered by Mr Toad

More japes from Toad Hall.....

Q. Dear Mr Toad

We have two children aged nine and eleven and are considering one of the many 'people carrier' type vehicles as our next car, what do you recommend?

June, Maxey.

A. Well June, I have to admit I've never been fond of these vehicles and like most off-road 4 wheel drive cars, people tend to buy them as a 'lifestyle' statement rather than a need for their particular facilities. They tend in the main to be uneconomical, unwieldy, expensive to buy and poorly designed. Quite why with only two children you are considering one is



beyond me but if you are determined to have a van with electric windows I would look at the Toyota Previa (loads of room and space for luggage) or the Fiat Multipla (quite the most ugly vehicle on the road but, like me, supremely practical, relatively economical and a very comfortable ride!)



Toad

Q. Ah Bonjour, Toad

We are planning to go to France to ski. It is the first time our family has driven abroad, could you give us the essentials; you know, what we need to take?.

Maureen, High Street

A. Bonjour Maureen. As I motor through France to my frog pond in Provence I reflect that travelling through this delightful country is one of the few motoring pleasures left in life. Fabulous motorway system if you're in a hurry; beautiful villages, restaurants, and countryside if you're not. Apart from the obvious additional car and medical insurances there are a few other items you need to pack for a trouble-free trip. Spare bulbs, warning triangle and headlight deflectors are essential but also don't forget your snow chains; French police will not let you use some mountain roads without them! I've put our own checklist to travelling abroad in the post to you Maureen, have a good trip.



Toad

Q. Dear Frog

My husband has just retired and he is thinking seriously about buying either a caravan or a motor-home for future holidays, what would you choose?

Beryl, Maxey.

A. I have to confess Beryl that neither do much for me, I'm more of a 'villa with private Lily Pond' chap. But there is no doubt that a great many people get an enormous amount of pleasure dragging round aerodynamic beige boxes, to the frustration of most other road users. Continental touring however is a little different with enviable motorway systems, a network of well-run sites and some great locations around the Med. I suppose the caravan is ultimately more convenient because you can release your car from it; not the case with a motor-home. I confess, some years ago I did spend a few months in the USA driving from coast to coast in a Winnebago. That huge, beautifully made vehicle was actually very capable and equipped with every creature comfort known to man, not the normal converted minibus with an accordion for a roof.



It's Toad, by the way Beryl, not Frog....he's my younger cousin!

Q. Dear Mr Toad

I read somewhere that women driving alone can benefit from an inflatable man. This creature comes out of a briefcase and sits on the passenger seat, looking much like a male passenger. Do you know how much they are or where to get one?

Trudi, Peterborough

A. I would start in the 'marital aids' section of Exchange and Mart Trudi, then Ann Summers in Peterborough or contact Gillian Tayleforth (of Eastenders fame) It was alleged she'd inflated one not so long ago....



Toad

Q. Dear Toad

My Dad is the proud owner of a brown 1982-registered Ford Sierra 1.6 automatic that's only done 121,879 miles. I would imagine that these cars are becoming quite collectable now, what do you think its worth?

Jane, High Street

A. I need to know how much petrol is in the tank first Jane.



Toad

Q. Dear knowledgeable Toad

My boyfriend wants to buy an American car just like the one the plumber Gary Olsen used to drive in the TV sitcom '2.4 children'. What does he need to look out for?

Chardonnay, Torpel Way

A. An amount of money roughly equal to the GNP of a small third world country to run the car Chardonnay and whether counseling is available through the NHS. Try to explain that 2.4 children was a TV comedy, not real life. A television production company funded Gary Olsen's car, not a plumber.



That's all from Toad Hall for now....

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