



Vacation Driving Can Be Fun!

By MICHAEL FROME



Auto touring used to be an American sport; why not revive it this summer and add new excitement

IN THE EARLY DAYS of motoring, it was fun to get behind the wheel and drive someplace, no matter where. Touring was an adventurous type of how-to-do-it sport. Members of the driving set repaired their own cars (through necessity as well as choice) and on a cross-country run would send a "pathfinder" ahead to mark the course by painting telephone poles or strewing confetti along the roadway.

Such thrills are lacking now, and in a sense this is too bad. There ought to be some romance on the road and with one's car.

The truth is that driving can be a sporting part of a vacation trip, if you give it half a chance. And you can reduce your travel costs by knowing something about your car, or at least by taking a little interest in caring for it and driving it properly.

Automobile operation in dollars and cents totals

about 20 percent, or slightly more, of your total vacation expense, so there is a substantial amount of money involved. In fact, you may be able to decrease your gasoline consumption by getting five more miles per gallon—\$10 saved during a 1,000-mile trip, enough for a good dinner or an extra night's lodging.

For Better Fuel Consumption

Avoid these habits:

1. Fast starts and quick stops in traffic.
2. High-speed driving on the open road.
3. Buying expensive, high-grade fuels, unless recommended in the manual issued by the manufacturer of your car. Motor fuels are so refined the regular grade is now superior to the best of a few years ago.
4. Driving with underinflated tires.

Cultivate these habits:

1. Ease off on the accelerator when you see a red light—it may change so you do not have to stop at all.
2. Hold a safe, normal speed of 60 or 65 at the most.
3. Rely on standard-grade gasoline. Most cars will do just as well. You may lose a little in pickup, but you reach the destination just as soon.
4. Have tire pressure checked every time you buy gasoline.

Start by taking care of your car before you set out for distant parts. A motor tune-up alone will give you better consumption and smoother driving; new plugs, if they are needed, will pay for themselves in a few thousand miles. Have your garage lubricate your car and check brakes, ignition system, windshield wipers, steering gear, lights, and battery. Wheel balance and front-end alignment are important, too; a wheel out of alignment wastes gas, shortens tire life, and reduces driving safety. If your tires are wearing thin, shop around and replace them before you leave.

You do not need to change oil every 1,000 or 1,500 miles if your car is equipped with a good filter. An oil change is less necessary in long-distance touring than in local stop-go driving. One manufacturer now concedes an oil change every 4,000 miles will be adequate if you have a good filter,

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except under dusty motoring conditions.

Your car should be in excellent condition for fast driving anywhere, but especially on turnpikes where high speeds can be maintained steadily for hours. If your car is aging and in questionable condition, steer clear of turnpikes. At steady speeds over 50 miles per hour, radiators boil, engines throw rods, steering and brakes may fail, and worn tires blow out.

Note the accompanying table on the leading causes of breakdown in one year on the New York Thruway. Many could easily have been avoided.

Costly Motoring Miscues

Ten Leading Causes of Arrest on New York Thruway

1. Speeding	22,638
2. License violation	1,814
3. Equipment violation (lights, horn, etc.)	1,304
4. Registration violation	1,064
5. Failure to comply with trooper's orders	433
6. Failure to keep right	418
7. U-turn	418
8. Parking	287
9. One-way traffic violation	229
10. Changing lanes unsafely	223

Why Cars Break Down

Out of gasoline	16,178
Flat tire or blowout	14,905
Ignition trouble	3,062
Water required	2,600
Unable to start motor	1,625
Fan belt broken	1,284
Out of oil	1,071

Should you travel the turnpike route? There is no denying that turnpikes are fast and safe roads, but if you include one or more turnpikes in your itinerary, do not fail to allow for the toll in your budget. Incidentally, for 25 cents you can now purchase emergency breakdown-service insurance at toll gates on the New York Thruway and Pennsylvania Turnpike (possibly others soon) covering charges up to \$25 and valid for a 48-hour period.

With the advancement of the Interstate Highway System, free expressways—having the same characteristics as the toll roads—are appearing all over the country. Familiarize yourself with them.

How to Get the Most Fun Out of Your Vacation Dollar!

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