Stuck in traffic? It could be good for your relationship, new research

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As millions are predicted to take to the roads for the summer holidays on the busiest week of the year, new consumer research conducted by Gulf, the leading fuel brand operated by Certas Energy has found that for many drivers, it's about the journey and not the destination; presenting an opportunity to resolve life's greatest struggles all from the car seat…

Financial decisions (33%), family disagreements (29%) and relationship issues (22%) are among the big topics covered - all before they've pulled in to the first services.

Surveying 1,000 UK adults planning to drive to a UK or overseas holiday destination this year, Gulf's research paints a picture of the family car as the ultimate 'therapist's couch'.

Car Confessions
Asked why conversations flow more easily in the car, the top reasons Brits gave were:

1. No interruptions (48%)
2. Everyone in one space for a period of time (46%)
3. No phones or devices (39%)
4. No eye contact (32%)

I-Spy Snacks, Screens and Squabbles
For parents, the age-old challenge of keeping children entertained in the back seat is alive and well. A fifth (20%) look to phones and tablets to buy some peace, but old-fashioned methods are holding their own: 18% rely on sweets and snacks, 17% turn to travel games and 15% swear by spotting games – long live "I Spy"!

Stop, Shop and Go
Service stations are a major feature of the long drive on holiday. It's a chance to fuel-up, stretch legs, stock up on tasty snacks and buy last minute holiday essentials. When asked what matters most while stopping at the services, Brits on the roads reveal their main priorities.

Clean toilets were rated a top priority by 63% of drivers, service stations that offer a good range of food and drink came in second with 49% and good parking options ranked third (42%). A full range of fuels, customer service, family facilities and EV charging were among the other facilities drivers also appreciated most.

"*It's clear from the research that service stations are a big part of the summer holiday journey,"* says Niall Taylor, Senior Marketing Manager, Certas Energy UK Limited. "That's why a*t Gulf we ensure that we offer the very best service station experience and pride ourselves on great customer service.*"

The summer road trip, in numbers…
The journey:

- The average staycationer will travel 191 miles to reach their holiday destination – many will drive over 200 miles
- They'll make 1-2 stops along the way, with 38% stopping exactly twice and 34% stopping once
- Almost all respondents (97%) stated they were looking forward to their staycation drive – with only 3% dreading it

Car confessions — what Brits sort out en route:

- 46% have used a long journey to finalise holiday plans
- 33% have made financial decisions
- 29% have resolved a family disagreement
- 22% have made career decisions
- 22% have worked through relationship issues
- 11% have talked through a house move
- 5% have discussed university/career choices with their kids

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Why the car works

- 48% say no interruptions is the key
- 46% say it's simply having everyone together in one space
- 39% say it's the lack of phones and devices
- 32% put it down to no eye contact making tough chats easier

At the services

- 63% rate clean toilets as their top priority
- 49% want a good range of food and drink
- 42% prioritise parking
- 27% want a full range of fuels and good availability
- 11% now prioritise EV charging

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