

Don't let the downpour be your downfall

Meteorologists have claimed that the summer of 2015 has been the hottest recorded in many parts of Spain. Here on the Costas this has been reinforced by the very high energy-sapping humidity. Certainly of my 10 summers here I cannot recall the like and started to understand why some expats opted for holidays in the more unpredictable summers back in Northern Europe

The same meteorologists have also predicted that our penance for such glorious unending weather will be massive downpours of rain as summer turns to autumn and this is where we motorists have to be prepared

Tread carefully

My car went for its annual ITV the other week. I like to practice what I preach and keep the car up to scratch so was expecting no problems. Then the inspector ominously called me into the depths of the inspection pit and pointed to my rear tyres which from surface level apparently had loads of tread on them. The insides where the rubber literally meets the road were as bald as a Formula 1 car's slicks. Two new tyres later and I was legal again.

My old heavy rear wheel drive Mercedes E class has always had a tendency to fishtail around sharp roundabouts under acceleration so I was petrified as to what may have happened on a slippery surface. After weeks of no rain, the roads will be full of grease dumped by leaking oil from engines and exhaust fumes so chuck a load of water on this and we will all be skidding around with less grace than Torvil and Dean after a night out on the tiles. So don't leave it to chance as I did and check that your tyres have tread over the entire width of at least 1.5 mils

Windscreen woes

This week driving at dusk on the motorway the cars in front crested a ridge to be welcomed by the sun's rays slanting right into the drivers' eyes. On came the wash-wipes followed by the brakes; the windscreens were so full of built up muck and dead files that the wash water just smeared this across the glass. The drivers were blinded until the next dip when the sun's rays passed overhead. The experience of this many years ago sure made me realise that adrenaline is brown, so ever since I have developed the habit of using my wash-wipes every morning when setting off for the day so that my screen is always clean (don't you just love a smart-arse!)

Be seen

It no longer surprises me when assisting clients through the ITV inspection that the vast majority are unaware as to how to switch on their high intensity rear fog light; after all how

often do we use them over here? But in poor visibility conditions they might just save someone from driving up your rear end

Tailgating is a perennial issue on Spanish roads. We cannot change this only learn how to deal with it, but I must admit that it scares me to death when driving on motorways in heavy rain that the natives don't compensate for this by leaving extra distance between them and the car ahead when stopping distances are much greater. It is as mind-boggling as the motor bikers who wear no protecting clothing as neither they nor tailgaters can have the imagination to consider the potential consequences

Summer will soon be ending and we can expect road conditions to deteriorate significantly. Without good tyres, we will not hold the road either under normal driving and certainly not when braking. If your windscreen needs cleaning do it now, toothpaste is very good at removing the muck. Check that all of your lights work, not forgetting the rear fog and all brake lights.

All in all don't let the downpour be your downfall

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