

RECOMMENDED READING AND OTHER STUFF

Over the years, I have subscribed to several automotive publications. My first subscription was to "Road & Track", the year was 1962. That is how long I have been a car guy. I still have those magazines in a binder and I still look at them from time to time. Is it my imagination or have a lot of car magazines taken on a "corporate look"? I'm of the opinion that several car magazines today have the same look, design layout and somewhat similar content. Gone are the elaborate technical drawings and beautiful automotive artworks that we used to see in these publications. I have also noticed that some publications predominately test and evaluate high end cars that not everyone can afford. I miss the technical articles and graphics covering automotive systems that were written in layman's language that we used to see.

My current subscriptions are to "Automobile", "Auto Week", "Classic Motorsports", and "Hemmings Motor News". These publications seem to fill my needs and taste as a car guy. I just recently started the subscription to "Automobile", and was happy to see something a little different in the January 2010 issue.

The folks at Automobile magazine, with the help of Vincentric of Bingham Farms, Michigan, put together an article that was quite enlightening and entertaining to read. The article was titled "Motorist's Mecca"...Rate the States or "Driver's Hell". The article is a six page study on how every state stacks up against each other in respect to: COST OF DRIVING, HARASSMENT, AND AGGRAVATION. Here is how they broke it down:

COST OF DRIVING

- License Fees
- Gas Tax
- 5-yr taxes and fees
- % of toll roads

HARASSMENT

- States having red light cameras
- Speed cameras
- Max speed in the state
- Cops per highway mile
- States where you can't reduce points against your license
- License compacts (out of state tickets that follow you home)
- States where radar detectors are not legal

AGGRAVATION

- States with the worst road conditions
- States having annual inspections
- License Renewal (how often)
- Emissions check
- Required front plate
- Number of cars per mile

All this information was tallied for each state and an index number was calculated which thereby ranked each state. The object of all this was to find out where drivers were treated relatively well and where drivers are, as the magazine stated, "constantly given the shaft". Data was gathered from all fifty states and run through a formula to quantify the pain.

To sum it all up, the best state to drive in was Wyoming. Nevada ranked 20th and California ranked last.

Happy Motoring.....Ron Couturier

