

Driving abroad offers only respite from high petrol prices

Motorists holidaying in France and Spain are the only drivers to find any real respite from UK petrol prices that have risen more than three pence per litre in the past month, says the AA Motoring Trust.

Despite a wavering in the price of crude oil, which hit an all-time high of 60 dollars earlier in July before falling to around 57 dollars, the mid-July average price of unleaded petrol has pushed through the 4-a-gallon mark to 88.7 pence per litre. Diesel has also risen three pence a litre to 92.7 pence.

However, this 11.4 per cent rise in the UKs petrol prices from January to July compared favourably to the 15 per cent rises in France, Germany, Italy and Switzerland. Spanish and Austrian petrol prices rose 19 per cent in the same period*.

Even so, UK drivers are now paying three pence per litre less for petrol in France and 17.5 pence per litre less in Spain.

"Drivers travelling into France this summer holiday will save themselves at least 1.20 each time they fill up while those at home can only hope that petrol prices come down as quickly as they went up, if crude oil prices continue to fall," says Bert Morris, director of the AA Motoring Trust.

Regional variations in the cost of UK petrol showed a curious change of fortune for East Anglia, from the most expensive region in mainland Britain in June to joint fourth place with the South East. This followed angry outbursts from the regions media and MPs at the cost of road fuel. Wales, despite its proximity to two oil refineries, is now the most expensive region for petrol in the country.

With petrol now averaging 88.7 pence per litre compared to 79.6 pence in January, individual motorists are now paying 97.42 pence month on petrol, compared to 87.43 at the beginning of the year. In households with two car-owning adults, this represents a 19.98 drain on family expenditure for the month.

The 9.1 pence per litre difference between January and current July prices means that UK motorists are now spending an extra 6.64 million extra on petrol per day.

NOTES TO EDITORS: [Fuel price reports are available here](#)

* Average petrol prices in Europe mid-January to mid-July 2005

Country	Petrol price - Jan 2005	Petrol price - July 2005	Percentage rise
United Kingdom	79.6 pence per litre	88.7 pence per litre	11.4%
Austria	0.89 (63.83 p/ltr)	1.06 (75.22 p/ltr)	19.1%
Belgium	1.12 (80.33 p/ltr)	1.25 (88.78 p/ltr)	11.6%
France	1.04 (74.59 p/ltr)	1.20 (85.52 p/ltr)	15.4%
Germany	1.06 (76.02 p/ltr)	1.22 (86.65 p/ltr)	15.1%
Netherlands	1.24 (88.93 p/ltr)	1.40 (99.15 p/ltr)	12.9%
Ireland	0.945 (62.00 p/ltr)	1.05 (74.79 p/ltr)	11.1%
Italy	1.08 (77.46 p/ltr)	1.24 (87.93 p/ltr)	14.8%
Spain	0.84 (60.25 p/ltr)	1.00 (71.31 p/ltr)	19.0%
Switzerland	1.37 (63.32 p/ltr)	1.58 (71.48 p/ltr)	15.3%

Please note sterling equivalent is set at Euro/ conversion rate at that time.