

# BEAT MOTORWAY MONOTONY THIS BANK HOLIDAY

Submitted by: Soup Ltd

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As 11 million motorists hit the roads, RAC Breakdown Cover (<http://www.rac.co.uk/breakdowncover/>) & Car Insurance (<http://www.rac.co.uk/car-insurance/>) and Expedia.co.uk (<http://www.expedia.co.uk>) launch 'My Way' – guiding drivers away from motorway jams

Congested motorways will cause travel misery as up to 11 million Brits take to the road over the May Day bank holiday, according to RAC.

May Day congestion is expected to build up on all major routes from Friday afternoon through late evening as people head off for the long weekend.

RAC is anticipating the heaviest traffic in South and Central England as motorists head towards the warmer coasts.

Monday evening and Tuesday morning will see greater volumes than normal as people make their way home or back to work.

In a bid to ease motorway monotony, RAC and Expedia are launching 'My Way' - a campaign designed to help motorists make the most of bank holiday trips by avoiding congestion hotspots. Motorists are invited to share their alternative routes and jam-busting tips at [www.rac.co.uk/myway](http://www.rac.co.uk/myway) .

The campaign kicks off with RAC's Patrol Approved alternative routes to stretches of five of the worst bank-holiday congestion hotspots in the UK:

- Bristol to Exeter via the M5
- Nottingham to Sheffield via the M1
- Manchester to Blackpool via the M6/M55 interchange
- London to Brighton via the M23
- London to Oxford via the M40

The alternative drives also include en route recommendations from Expedia, the UK's leading online travel company. These range from well-known sites such as LEGOLAND and Camelot Theme Park to hidden gems including Exeter's Underground Passages and the intriguing caves at Wookey Hole. For drivers wanting to break up their journey, My Way also includes a range of accommodation suggestions.

David Hawes, patrol manager for RAC said: "Getting stuck on the motorway is irritating at the best of times, and can make a disastrous start to a bank-holiday break. With so many great roads and picturesque drives to choose from in Britain our advice is to enjoy the drive.

"It's difficult to switch-off our association with road travel and traffic misery in the UK. However, holiday journey experiences can be improved with a bit of planning and the discovery of something new en route. We're really keen for motorists to join our 'My Way' campaign and share their

recommendations online at [www.rac.co.uk/myway](http://www.rac.co.uk/myway) ”

Jonathan Cudworth, head of product marketing for [Expedia.co.uk](http://Expedia.co.uk), said: “With 38% of Brits planning to take a break in the UK this year, the country’s motorways will certainly be feeling the strain, particularly at peak times such as Bank Holidays.

“There’s a huge variety of things to see and do up and down the country and My Way is about experiencing the journey, not just the destination. We want to encourage Brits to share their best adventures with other travellers so everyone can delight in what the UK has to offer.”

To find out how to avoid the most heavily congested sections of road and make the most of your journey, or for the chance of winning prizes worth £500 for sharing your recommendations, visit [www.rac.co.uk/myway](http://www.rac.co.uk/myway).

Route 1: Bristol to Exeter via Shepton Mallet and Honiton (Avoids M5)

Distance: 85 miles\*

Time: 2.5 hours (without stops)

Take the A37 from Bristol towards Shepton Mallet. Continue for approximately 30 miles until you reach the A303. Pick up the A303 and then continue onto the A30. Pass the M5 junction and continue onto the A3015. At the roundabout take the second exit onto the B3183, which takes you into the centre of Exeter.

To break up the journey, why not park up at Bowlish House and enjoy contemporary art and a restaurant serving locally sourced produce, or steam through the rolling Mendip countryside on a day out at the East Somerset Railway. Alternatively, go underground and marvel at the spectacular caves at Wookey Hole - home of the infamous witch of Wookey.

Upon arrival in Exeter, stay at the four-star Abode Exeter and enjoy a meal cooked by its two-Michelin starred chefs or discover the Underground Passages in the heart of Exeter city centre dating back to the 14th century.

Route 2: Nottingham to Sheffield via Ripley and Matlock (Avoids M1)

Distance: 47 miles

Time: 1 hour 35 minutes

From Nottingham take the A610 through Ripley to Ambergate. At Ambergate take the A6 to Matlock. At Matlock turn onto the A632 towards Chesterfield, enjoying beautiful scenery along the way. Once at Chesterfield, turn onto the A61 and head north past Dronfield and into the centre of Sheffield.

To break up the journey, stop at the Pig of Lead B&B in Bonsall for great local food and/or a night’s rest, or venture into the nearby Peak District for a whole host of activities from walking and cycling to climbing and caving.

Once you have arrived in Sheffield, why not book tickets for a show at The Crucible or The Lyceum, or if the sun is shining, take a stroll around the Sheffield Botanical Gardens. If you are staying in

Sheffield, try the four-star Leopold Hotel in the centre of town. Set in a converted 19th century school, this period hotel is a short stroll from the city's shops, bars and restaurants.

Route 3: Manchester to Blackpool via Burscough and Kirkham (Avoids M6 and M55)

Distance: 60 miles

Time: 1.5 hours

Take the A580 out of central Manchester joining the M6 at junction 23. Continue for approximately 5 miles and then exit at junction 27 onto the A5209, admiring the views towards Burscough. Turn onto the A59 and continue towards Preston for approximately 18 miles. In Preston, take the A5072 and then the A583. Continue for approximately 20 miles, past Clifton and Kirkham. Park Road will take you into the centre of Blackpool.

En route, visit Aerial Extreme for the ultimate adrenaline rush and to swing the largest adventure rope course in the UK, or go all medieval and watch a spectacular jousting tournament at Camelot Theme Park. Alternatively, stop in Preston and take a stroll or cycle along the Ribble Link, the first new canal to be built in 100 years.

Once in Blackpool, stay at the Barceló Blackpool Imperial Hotel - celebrating its 140th anniversary this year – and get up close and personal with the stars of stage and screen at the Louis Tussaud's Waxworks.

Route 4: London to Brighton via Godstone and Lewes (Avoids M23)

Distance: 63 miles

Time: 2 hours

Take the A23 from London to Purley. From Purley take the A22 towards Godstone, continuing through Godstone and East Grinstead towards Uckfield. When you reach Ridgewood, turn off onto the A26 towards Lewes. Continue on past Lewes and turn onto the A27 heading west towards Brighton. Just after you pass the University of Sussex, take the A270 into the centre of Brighton

If you've got bicycles onboard stop at Hedgecourt Lake near East Grinstead for a quick peddle break, or for a spot of pampering, retreat to the four-star Alexander House and Utopia Spa in Turners Hill. Visit Firlie Place in Lewes for a beautiful collection of English and European paintings, furniture and porcelain, or take a detour to Alfriston to visit Drusillas Park. This zoo is home to hundreds of fascinating and entertaining creatures – from the smallest reptiles to enormous crocodiles!

Stay at the four-star Royal York Hotel in Brighton. Housed in an 18th century townhouse, this boutique hotel is located on Brighton's seafront, a short walk from the Royal Pavilion and trendy shopping hub, The Lanes.

Route 5: London to Oxford via Henley-On-Thames (Avoids M40)

Distance: 65 miles

Time: 2 hours

Head out of London on the A4 through Hammersmith. Continue onto the M4 and turn off at junction 5. Continue along the A4 past Slough and Maidenhead and take the exit for the A404 toward Henley, Oxford. Take the A4130 through Henley-on-Thames to Wallingford. From Wallingford take the A4074 and A4144 to Oxford town centre.

For a day of adventure, head to LEGOLAND in Windsor. With over 50 interactive rides, live shows, Lego building workshops and driving schools. To break up the journey, stay overnight at the four-star Monkey Island Hotel. This centuries-old retreat is situated on Monkey Island and is connected to the quaint village of Bray-on-Thames, home to Heston Blumenthal's The Fat Duck restaurant.

Visit the picturesque house and gardens of Greys Court, a Tudor manor with a flat-brick maze, or call in at the three-star Springs Hotel and Golf Club for a round of golf or just to admire the view. It overlooks a spring-fed lake in its own majestic gardens.

Upon arrival in Oxford, drop your overnight bags at the five-star Macdonald Randolph Hotel before heading off to explore the historic university buildings.

To find out how to avoid the most heavily congested sections of road and make the most of your journey, or for the chance of winning prizes worth £500 for sharing your recommendations, visit [www.rac.co.uk/myway](http://www.rac.co.uk/myway).

Traffic hotspots

Holiday routes:

- Routes to the West of England and into South Wales (M4, M5, A303)
- Routes from Northern England to North Wales (M56, A55)
- Routes to the Lake District (M6, A590)
- Routes to Blackpool (M55)
- Routes between the Midlands and Norfolk (A47)

Routes generally busy:

- Roads radiating out from and around the M25 London Orbital motorway
- The M4 between London, the M4/M5 interchange at Bristol and into South Wales
- The M6 through the West Midlands from J5 – J10, J16 – J 19 and J31 – J32
- The M1 around Nottingham J25 – J27

Airports:

- M4 for Heathrow
- M23 for Gatwick
- M11 for Stansted
- M1 for Luton
- M56 for Manchester

## Rail:

Engineering works are taking place on many lines over the Bank Holiday weekend with trains replaced by buses for part of the journey.

For live up-to-the minute traffic and travel information motorists can call 64644 from a mobile\*\* or 09003 444999 from a landline.\*\*

-Ends-

For more information, image or to arrange an interview please contact:

Hill & Knowlton Deborah Hitchcock on 0207 413 3241/ 07764759983 dhitchcock@hillandknowlton.com

Expedia (c/o Golin Harris) Alastair Keeble on 0207 067 0632/ 07989 205 984/ akeebble@golinharris.com

RAC press office, Erik Nelson or Lucy Haughey on 01603 682264/07989 427086 or 01603 688891/07800 690149, email erik.nelson@norwich-union.co.uk or lucy.haughey@norwich-union.co.uk

## Notes to Editors:

\*All times and journey lengths for all routes are approximate estimations supplied by RAC's Route Planner ([route.rac.co.uk/](http://route.rac.co.uk/)).

\*\*calls from a mobile are charged at 60p per minute at all times, charges will appear on your network provider phone bill, alternatively you may call 09003 444999 from a landline, also charged at 60p per minute. All call charges are inclusive of vat at 17.5%.

Using a mobile phone incorrectly whilst driving can be dangerous and may endanger the safety of other road users. It could also be illegal. You should not hold a phone when driving, and should exercise due care and attention, even when using hands free equipment.

RAC recommends that you use 64644 to plan your journey before you depart, and park safely before using the 64644 service, or use a suitable hands free device.

## About RAC

With around seven million members, RAC is one of the UK's most progressive motoring organisations, providing services for both private and business motorists. Whether it's roadside assistance, vehicle inspections and checks, legal services or up-to-the-minute traffic and travel information - RAC is able to meet motorists' needs. RAC incorporates RAC Insurance.

RAC is committed to providing the very highest levels of service to its members and has been ranked first for customer service by J.D. Power and Associates' UK Roadside Assistance Study for the last three years.

Aviva bought RAC in May 2005. The acquisition brings together RAC's powerful brand and customer base with the expertise and leading position in motor insurance of Norwich Union Insurance (soon to be Aviva). Norwich Union is the UK's largest insurer, with a market share of around 15 per cent.

RAC is part of Aviva, the world's fifth largest insurance group which operates in 28 countries.

RAC's news releases and a selection of images are available from the internet press centre at [www.racnews.co.uk](http://www.racnews.co.uk).

About Expedia, Inc.

Expedia, Inc. is the world's leading online travel company, empowering business and leisure travelers with the tools and information they need to easily research, plan, book and experience travel. Expedia, Inc. also provides in-destination concierge service and activity desks for travelers. The Expedia, Inc. portfolio of brands includes: Expedia.com®, hotels.com®, Hotwire®, Egencia™ (formerly Expedia Corporate Travel), TripAdvisor®, Expedia Local Expert™, Classic Vacations® and eLong™. Expedia, Inc.'s companies operate more than 70 global points of sale in more than 40 countries, with sites in North America, South America, Latin America, Europe, Middle East, Africa and Asia Pacific. Expedia, Inc. is a component of the S&P 500 index. Expedia, Inc. partners with loyalty programme Nectar in the UK enabling its customers to collect 200 Nectar points on stand alone flight, hotel or car hire bookings and 1000 points on package purchases through [www.expedia.co.uk](http://www.expedia.co.uk). For more information, visit <http://www.expediainc.com/> (NASDAQ: EXPE)

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