



Best wishes

WHAT'S MADE THE CHRISTMAS LIST



Geoff Gwilym VACC CEO

It's that time of year again when I get out the pencil and write my wish list to Santa. So, this is what I would like for Christmas this year.

1. Jobs — everyone impacted by COVID finds new employment or gets their old jobs (and hours) back.
2. Business — all businesses get back on their feet because we'd be lost without them.
3. Safety — everyone looks after their family and friends this festive season, especially around water.
4. Government — business and employment gets a boost because the government ditches payroll tax.
5. Youth — every young person has access to a decent job, because we all value training and apprenticeships.
6. Roads — a fair road user system for all, whether driving an internal combustion engine or electric vehicle.
7. Technology — all sectors of the auto industry get fair access to manufacturer data because vehicles are complicated these days.
8. Driving — everyone inspects their tyres, restraints, lights and brakes before heading off on holidays, or has someone do it for them.
9. Fun — the Aussie cricket team rules at the MCG again.
10. Dreams — oh, and I'd like a Lamborghini Aventador, please Santa.

However, you may — or may not — celebrate this season, enjoy the break and please be careful and considerate on the road.

Prepared by Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce in the interest of better motoring.

Share your thoughts
ceo@vacc.com.au



IAIN CURRY GETS ANSWERS

WRITE TO MOTURING AT
CARS@NEWS.COM.AU OR
 PO BOX 2808, GPO SYDNEY, 2001

My Nissan X-Trail is only a few months old, but when I start it from cold there's an engine knocking noise that lasts about two seconds. Once the engine's warm it doesn't happen again. My Nissan dealer said it's a common fault and there's nothing to rectify it. I find this strange and unacceptable.

Daryn Fenton, email

Without hearing how bad the knocking is it's hard to judge. Modern diesel engines — no matter how much better they are than previous ones — often still sound a bit clunky on cold starting. If the clunking continues when revving or driving I'd insist on a thorough investigation from Nissan. Monitor the noise and check it doesn't get worse: you've still got a very long warranty remaining. Perhaps insist on a different, high quality engine oil at your next service to see if that improves things.

AMERICAN BEAUTY

Re Big Numbers, forget about Toyota Corollas being around a hundred years from now. My great, great grandson will be driving my 1975 Ford F-100. It'll be clearing the highway of busted, rusted Corollas and dragging them off to the tip. Merry Christmas.

Jim Maddern, email

Well, that escalated quickly. All gone a bit Mad Max. Fair call, those old Ford trucks are solid rigs. I fear our government will legislate such vehicles off our roads before the tin worm gets them.

SWEDE THING

Re indestructible cars, my father's Volvo V6 sedan ran well after 350,000km despite not being treated well. It finally broke down at 375,000km to minor family celebration. A rusty wire running to the fuel pump was the cause and \$40 later it was back on the road. Great car.

Paul Hales, email

Old Volvos are true survivors. I notice 1970s and

1980s versions — the proper boxes — have become cult cars for the young. Great for travelling and surfers, they're near unbreakable and ooze Scandinavian cool. Ergo, it's hard to find a cheap one anymore.

PRICE DROP

Very little is mentioned about a car's resale or trade-in value after a certain time. My friends say they're acutely aware that brands such as Fiat, Peugeot, Skoda, Citroen, etc. are worth a lot less than Japanese or Korean equivalents after a few years. I'd like to see comparison charts so consumers aren't bitterly disappointed on value when it's time to upgrade.

Graham Barnes, email

You make a good point. Depreciation is the biggest financial hit you take as a car owner. Good infotainment, safety and warranty are key to resale values these days, as well as obvious things like the vehicle's brand image, mileage, service history and condition inside and out. While some websites and magazines give depreciation rates on used cars versus their new prices (the Toyota LandCruiser is the longstanding resale hero), it's merely guesswork suggesting the value of a new car in three or five years. Popular Toyotas, Mazdas and Hyundais have done well of late, while less mainstream choices such as the non-prestige Europeans you mention have historically suffered bigger hits. Interestingly, on our Car of the Year testing we were going to mark the Skoda Kamiq down for resale, but it transpired new Skodas are actually expected to hold their values very well.



Re your Isuzu D-Max vs VW Amarok answer last week, I don't doubt the D-Max has all the latest "bells and whistles" but I've had an Amarok V6 for three years and it's the most comfortable tow vehicle I've ever owned. That includes Ford Falcon V8s, Ford F-trucks and a GMC Sierra 2500HD pick-up. For bushfire relief early this year we towed large caravans (up to 25-foot) long distances; the Amarok did so effortlessly. Heaps of power, four discs brakes and drives as comfortably and quietly as a car.

Peter Buckingham, email

Despite its advanced years, the Amarok remains impressive, especially in V6 guise. For unladen driving, I reckon it still outperforms any other one-tonner on our market.

FEMALE PERSPECTIVE

Re dodgy car dealers your reply to last week's question was interesting, but I've another perspective which males like you need to understand. When I and most of my female friends go to have our car serviced, or get new tyres, etc. male mechanics and dealers see us coming. The brush can't be swished over all, but dodgy work, unrequired parts and overcharging happens all the time. We are sick and tired of these tactics. Hopefully as more females become mechanics the practice of treating women drivers as idiots will cease.

Faye Jones, email

I couldn't agree more. My wife gets me to deal with servicing and repairs on her car for this very reason. She's been ripped off in the past too, and puts it down to being female. I fear dodgy mechanics (and other trades, let's be honest) rip off anyone they think they can — the elderly, the inexperienced, the young. Trustworthy mechanics are out there, and we must be loyal when we find one.

LIMO LIFE

I'm considering buying a 1994 Lexus LS400 for the old school limousine look. Any dangers to look out for and what are servicing costs? Could it increase in value one day?

Dave Reid, email

Life is short, so why not? The LS400 will blow you away with its comfortable ride and cabin quiet — no wonder the likes of Mercedes and BMW knew they had to up their game when Lexus burst on the scene. They've generally proved very reliable too — it's a silky, unstressed V8 — but I'd definitely get a specialist to do a pre-purchase inspection and thoroughly test all electrics, as they're complicated and can get expensive. I wouldn't bank on much appreciation in future, but a good one will certainly hold its value. Servicing? Regular oil and filter changes are key.

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