

Drunk drivers make Morris Minor a major menace

Henry Vaughan

The Morris Minor may conjure up images of Sunday drivers potting down quiet country lanes.

However, owners of the quintessentially English car are among the most prolific for drink or drug driving offences, according to a new study.

An analysis of data from six million car insurance quotes for 139 makes of cars over the past year found that Morris Minor drivers were, proportionately, among the worst offenders when it comes to drink or drug driving at the wheel.

The study, by the MoneySupermarket price comparison website, found that four out of every 1,000 owners had a drink or drug driving conviction in the past year.

Flashier models including Ferraris, Lamborghinis and Porsches came far lower on the list. Lotus sports cars, Daimlers, Deloreans, Hillman Imps and Hummers came among the makes in which no owners at all had convictions for drink or drug driving over the same period. One Morris

Minor driver, Chris Edmonds, 47, of Harrow, northwest London, said: "I had no idea I was part of a band of such lawless drivers!"

"I've never taken mine on the motorway as it struggles to get past 55mph and I've certainly never driven drunk or high on drugs. It just goes to show that appearances can be deceptive."

Considered a design classic, the Morris Minor was the first British car to achieve more than a million sales. More than 1.6 million were made between 1948 and 1972 and they regularly sell for up to £20,000.

The car has a top speed of 63mph and takes more than 30 seconds to get to 60mph and there are 8,000 left on British roads.

Emma Garland, data scientist at MoneySupermarket, said: "Never judge a book by its cover. Owners of classic Morris and MG motors are within the top ten of the highest drink and drug driving convictions, whereas flashier makes come in far lower on the list."

"There are a few possible reasons for

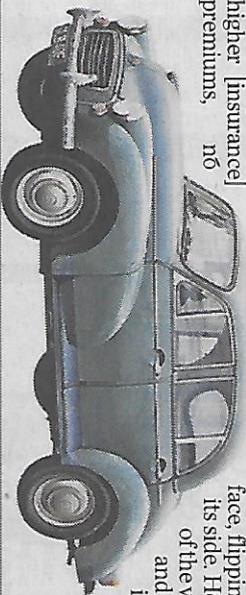
this, one being that those who own expensive supercars may be more cautious given their high value. It goes to show that you need to keep an eye on the road this festive season.

"As well as putting others at risk, drink or drug driving puts you at risk of a ban, a big fine and higher [insurance] premiums, no

matter what car you drive." In 2017, a retired Royal Navy pilot pleaded guilty at Somerset magistrates court to driving his Morris Minor 1000 after consuming too much alcohol.

The court heard that John Adams, then 68, had swerved to avoid another vehicle and collided with a rock face, flipping his 1966 model on its side. He was catapulted out of the vehicle on to the road and escaped serious injury but a blood

The Minor was the first UK car to hit a million sales



test showed that he was over the drink-drive limit.

Top spot in the study went to drivers of Panther cars, of which only about 1,500 were made at its Surrey HQ, with nine models produced between 1972 and 1990 and some selling for up to £100,000. A total of 33 per cent every 1,000 drivers had been convicted of drink or drug driving, by far the highest proportion of all makes of cars.

Drivers of Mahindra cars, which are made in India, were in second spot with 13 out of every 1,000 owners caught high or drunk at the wheel. Datsun drivers were in third spot, with seven out of every 1,000 drivers.

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