



48 States Lowest Fuel Consumption Guinness World Record Drive 3rd September - 25th September, 2008

Day One - The Tour Commences!

AT LAST!! The day has arrived for us to start our epic record breaking journey. Feelings of excitement, adventure, and relief to finally be making the VW Jetta TDI, our temporary home in the U.S.

The Team Our VW and Shell supporters were amazing. Jeff Bucaro, owner of Shell Chantilly station Virginia witnessed the filling of the fuel tank, signed and dated the tank seal, signed the fuel receipt, signed the official log book, verified the trip meter was set to zero and recorded the odometer reading. ALL Guinness World Record rule requirements. Friendly Shell attendant Tahir served us and proudly told us, 'Australia has the best cricket team in the world'. Thanks Tahir, but we already know that!

Rob Anderson Shell, and Jim Gill VW, joined us during the regulation process, ensuring we arrived at VW Head Office Herndon VA safely and on time for the webcast press conference. This is also the location where the official 'flag off' was scheduled.

The Force **A HUGE** thank you to the Herndon Police Department for their role in the record officialdom, especially Sergeant James Moore.

What happened next...

In 80 degree Farenheit temperatures, driving into a headwind, facing some serious traffic jams, mainly in New York – The drive beginning is off to a very interesting start!

Starting in Virginia , then driving through Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Connecticut and ending in Rhode Island at day end. Wow!!

The car is performing well, the fuel gauge is looking healthy and the drivers are still 'full of beans'.

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Day Two

Today we struck hazardous traffic conditions driving through Boston Massachusetts. A reminder to us of the huge population in the States. Around 150 million vehicles being driven approximately 12,000 miles each annually. All the more reason for us to be here and draw attention to fuel efficient, safe driving techniques! We are inspired by the many emails received from the American general public. Thank you for your interest in saving fuel (gas), saving money, and of course helping to reduce carbon emissions.

Geography

We departed Rhode Island and headed towards Boston Massachusetts, continued into Portsmouth New Hampshire, to Portland Maine (this is the most north east part of the US we will be visiting). We then performed a counter-turn heading into Concord New Hampshire. This was our SECOND official Guinness World Record scrutineering point. We were kindly assisted by independent witness, Concord Shell Manager, Bill Brooks. Next we drove into Vermont and crossed the state border back into New York, where we are now going to call it a night.

Mathematics

Results first fuelling stop, Shell Concord New Hampshire, for the VW Jetta TDI.

Using the Shell Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel.

Miles driven: 681.1 1096 kms

59.15 US mpg 71.03 IMP mpg 3.97 L/100km

There was more than quarter of a tank of Shell Diesel left!

Day Three

Geography

The temperature rose to a hot 88 degrees fahrenheit. Winds were a hazard en route, but once we turned south from Buffalo New York, heading for Cleveland Ohio, it became a battle ground. Facing strong headwinds you have to slow down to conserve energy. The faster you go the more wind resistance there is, using more power, and that comes from the fuel (gas) tank. We departed from Amsterdam New York amongst thick fog this morning slowing us down, number one priority is always safety.

Next came the rain, **FOUR SEASONS** in one day. Looking forward to tomorrow now! We are inspired by the many emails received from the American general public. Thank you for your interest in saving fuel (gas), saving money, and of course helping to reduce carbon emissions.

Mathematics

Results first fuelling stop, Shell Concord New Hampshire, for the VW Jetta TDI.

Using the Shell Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel.

Miles driven: 681.1 1096 kms

59.15 US mpg 71.03 IMP mpg 3.97 L/100km

There was more than quarter of a tank of Shell Diesel left!

***So close to Niagara Falls, but yet so far...when you are on a Fuel Economy World Record attempt, driving thousands of miles in just over 20 days, time doesn't permit for sightseeing.**

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Day Four

Can't believe it... Last night we met a girl in Toledo Ohio, Shannon, she comes from the same home town as us, Rosebud Victoria (Australia). A population of about 14,000 only - hasn't the world become smaller. She was traveling, met an American and was married! Needless to say she was happy to meet some fellow Aussies, and delighted we were in the States to assist with Fuel Economy education. A busy start to the day our number 2 tank refuel and TV and radio interviews as well. The scenery very serene, passing many cornfields, and various farming areas. The strong head winds proved difficult once more.

Has Chicago become a race track? We drove through just 5mph below the speed limit and it was like we were competing for the NASCAR title. You know, if these drivers followed the speed limit regulations, they would save an enormous amount of gas, and be more prosperous into the bargain. Needless to say there would be a positive improvement in exhaust emissions, traffic safety, traffic flow and passenger comfort.

Geography

Start point today Toledo, Ohio. We headed north east towards Detroit Michigan, performed a counter turn returning into Ohio, then drove in a westerly direction to South Bend Indiana. We followed the water line around Chicago Illinois, then headed in a north westerly direction to Rockford Illinois, calling it a night.

Mathematics

Results TANK NUMBER TWO, Shell Toledo Ohio, for the VW Jetta TDI.

Using the Shell Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel.

Miles driven: 815.3 1,311.82 kms

57.86 US mpg 69.49 IMP mpg 4.06 L/100km

Day Five

What a way to spend it, driving on a nice Sunday stroll across **FOUR** States of America, around 450 miles. The temperature a bit colder today, starting with a low 54 degrees Fahrenheit, good comfortable driving weather, we had the window down slightly...It's good to be alive. A combination of long open roads and more mountainous landscape was driven, in the comfortable VW Jetta TDI.

An obstacle today was the road camber affecting us majority of the way. It made for a very bouncy ride, not great for fuel economy. In these situations the car tires use a lot more energy, gripping the road to keep you safe and enabling you the smoothest drive possible. You guessed it; this additional energy comes from the fuel tank! We would like to say **THANK YOU** to Chris Dirks and Sarah Moon at Shell Clear Lake Iowa. They claim not only do they best quality fuel there, but the best made popcorn in Iowa.

Geography

Starting point Rockford Illinois, heading NW to Tomah Wisconsin. From here we took a SW direction to La Crosse Wisconsin, crossing the Mississippi river in a westerly direction to Rochester Minnesota, SW to Elkton Minnesota and W to Albert Lea Minnesota. We then took a southerly direction into the state of Iowa passing through Clear Lake and ending the day in Des Moines.

Mathematics

Results TANK NUMBER THREE, Shell Toledo Ohio, for the VW Jetta TDI.

Using the Shell Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel.

Miles driven: 2229.3 3,586.94 kms

59.19 US mpg 71.08 IMP mpg 3.97 L/100km

P.S. Happy Fathers Day! To all the dads and granddads in Australia, yes to you too John.

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Day Six

It's freezing this morning, 48 degrees Fahrenheit! Arriving and leaving Des Moines Iowa it was cold and wet. Off we go, out early to avoid possible traffic congestion. No windows open this morning, but heat on low in order to demist the car ensuring a good view of the road. We must have caught every red light in the city. On our way towards Omaha we passed through John Wayne's Birth place Winterset Iowa, and the famous Madison County. We came across some hilly terrain. People say the energy used climbing up a hill is recovered coming down a hill. Well don't believe them, not all hills come down at the same angle.

Did you know? When you drive down hill in a modern day car, (from year 1990 onwards), you should have your car in the highest, safest gear. This is because these cars have an electronic function that cuts off engine fuel supply under engine braking conditions (accelerator released and a gear engaged). Under such conditions your car uses less fuel than when it is coasting in neutral. Travelling through outback South Dakota, is reminiscent of driving through outback Australia. Many trucks on the road, and we have to say the drivers were most courteous.

Another great day driving through the US!

Geography

Starting point Des Moines Iowa to Council Bluffs Iowa

Across the Missouri River heading SW into Lincoln Nebraska

N to Sioux Falls South Dakota continuing through to Mitchell South Dakota, where we called it a day.

Mathematics

Results of refuel at Shell Mitchell South Dakota, for the VW Jetta TDI Clean Diesel.

Using Shell Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel:

Miles driven: 2753 4430 kms

58.78 US mpg 70.6 IMP mpg 4.003 L/100km

Day Seven

Early start on a brisk morning equals more 'pit stops', yes we are only human. The temperature plummeting to a low 39 degrees Fahrenheit! The restrooms in this part of the world are something else. In fact, you could say more luxurious than our accommodation overnight.

All we have done since leaving Mitchell South Dakota is **CLIMB!!** You know what it's like walking **UP** a hill, it takes a **LOT** of energy. Walking into the wind is even more exhausting, using **MORE** energy. The same prognosis applies to driving your car, the energy being in the form of fuel (gas). The beauty of performing a Guinness World Record Drive for the lowest Fuel Consumption, is it demonstrates a **REALISTIC** test of the car, VW Jetta TDI, the fuel, Shell Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel and the drivers, The Taylors. If you can choose the **RIGHT** car, the **RIGHT** fuel (gas), and use the driving tips in use by the Taylors, then you will see the benefits. **A comfortable ride + More money in your pocket + Better environment.**

Did you know? When you drive down hill in a modern day car, (from year 1990 onwards), you should have your car in the highest, safest gear. This is because these cars have an electronic function that cuts off engine fuel supply under engine braking conditions (accelerator released and a gear engaged). Under such conditions your car uses less fuel than when it is coasting in neutral. Travelling through outback South Dakota, is reminiscent of driving through outback Australia. Many trucks on the road, and we have to say the drivers were most courteous.

Another great day driving through the US!

Geography

Starting point Mitchell South Dakota traveling West to Rapid City, continuing to Spearfish South Dakota – En route

heading into Lyman County we crossed the Missouri River, Lake Francis Case, magnificent. South into Gillette Wyoming

North back to Spearfish South Dakota. Finally north towards Bellfield North Dakota

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Mathematics

23 USA States driven through to date:

1.Virginia 2.Maryland 3.Delaware 4.Pennsylvania 5.New Jersey 6.New York 7.Connecticut 8.Rhode Island
9.Massachusetts 10.New Hampshire 11.Maine 12.Vermont 13.Ohio 14.Michigan 15.Indiana 16.Illinois 17.Wisconsin
18.Minnesota 19.Iowa 20.Nebraska 21.South Dakota 22.Wyoming 23.North Dakota

Results of refuel at Shell Mitchell South Dakota, for the VW Jetta TDI Clean Diesel.

Using Shell Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel:

Miles driven: 2753 4430 kms

58.78 US mpg 70.6 IMP mpg 4.003 L/100km

Day Eight

We started the drive on Eastern time zone, then drove into Central time zone and we are now on Mountain Time zone. Tomorrow we have yet another time change, where we enter Pacific Time zone.

Holly Molly!!

So this morning we thought we would have a 'sleep in' and headed off from Miles City at a late 7am. Other lodgers had the same idea and we had some friends on the road. Driving through remote parts of the U.S. we tend to see the same cars on the road, and again at the same accommodation in the evening.

A pleasant 57 degrees Fahrenheit makes for a pleasurable start to the day. Before long the wind and the climbing started again, through the Rocky Mountains. We will always remember Montana for its spectacular hills and dreaded winds. Absolutely beautiful countryside, we both would like to return in the winter. As soon as we had that thought, down came the rain and there began the road works!.....In these conditions driving can be very dangerous, you have to be totally focused, observing the road around you and slow down.

An interesting fact: The real windy city with an average wind speed of 13.1 mph, Great Falls Montana owns the title of 'The windiest city in the U.S.' We stopped for a 'pit stop' along the highway 90 from Hardin, and were met with a sign warning us about 'rattle snakes'. Refueling of the car took place today, (please see Mathematics). We extend a big **THANK YOU** to Patty Fischer, Manager at Shell Hardin Montana. The **BEST** Shell station in Montana - Besides the Shell Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel we left with some beef jerky.

Geography

Starting in Miles City Montana we headed towards Billing, then slightly south to Hardin. We looped back west and ended up for the night in Missoula, what an amazing place.

Mathematics

With more than a **THIRD** of this mammoth Guinness World Record drive behind us, we are excited, but reality is there is still one heck of a **LONG** way to go.

24 USA States driven through to date:

1.Virginia 2.Maryland 3.Delaware 4.Pennsylvania 5.New Jersey 6.New York 7.Connecticut 8.Rhode Island
9.Massachusetts 10.New Hampshire 11.Maine 12.Vermont 13.Ohio 14.Michigan 15.Indiana 16.Illinois 17.Wisconsin
18.Minnesota 19.Iowa 20.Nebraska 21.South Dakota 22.Wyoming 23.North Dakota 24. Montana

Result of refuel at Shell Hardin Montana, for the VW Jetta TDI Clean Diesel.

Using Shell Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel:

56.68 US mpg 68.0 IMP mpg 4.15 L/100km

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Day Nine

OK another cold start, 34 degrees Fahrenheit . After a great meal last night and a good sleep we are rearing to get back on the road and continue the 'task at hand'. That is to break the 'US 48 State Lowest Fuel Consumption' Guinness World Record.

We have chosen the superb VW Jetta TDI, for it's fuel efficiency, reliability and durability. We insist on using Shell fuel wherever we drive in the world. On this occasion Shell Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel, and of course fuel efficient driving techniques, these are NOT rocket science (see Taylor's Tips).

We continued our drive through Montana climbing to an elevation of 4680 feet. This part of the world is absolutely stunning, what an amazing journey we are having. We crossed the border into Idaho, past Coeur D'Alene and onto Spokane Washington. Suddenly the terrain changed and we are on flatter, much dryer ground. The weather has warmed up, it is now a pleasant 77 degrees Fahrenheit (hooray!). There are also many more vehicles on the road.

Well, we had a false sense of security and we were faced with more tough mountain climbing from Pasco Washington, continuing all the way to Ontario Oregon. At one point through the Blue Mountains at an elevation of 4,193 feet.

We had a stop to buy refreshments and do a radio interview for Kristy Williams from DriveWiser, who runs a fuel efficient driving program in Eastern Canada and wants to pass on good 'efficient driving' stories to her readers. She wants us to come to Canada, well we are only an inch away on the map! We would love to visit Canada on our next adventure Kristy.

John: Every stop we make Helen is buying souvenirs to take back home to Australia. Do you know for every 100 lbs of weight in the car you can lose up to 2% of your fuel efficiency. So if you have items in your car that you aren't using such as your golf clubs, clothing, books and so on **THEN** get them out and you will save!

An interesting fact: Did you know, a deep crater reaching a maximum depth of 1,932 feet, Oregon's crater lake, is the deepest lake in the U.S.

Refueling of the car took place today at Kennewick Washington (please see Mathematics). I met a gentleman there who asked what language we speak in Australia?

Geography

Starting in Missoula Montana we headed north west to Coeur d'Alene, continuing to Spokane Washington. We traveled south to Pasco Washington and east to Ontario Oregon.

Mathematics

At today's refuel we had driven 4,213 miles at a cost of \$US 305.79.

27 USA States driven through to date:

1.Virginia 2.Maryland 3.Delaware 4.Pennsylvania 5.New Jersey 6.New York 7.Connecticut 8.Rhode Island
9.Massachusetts 10.New Hampshire 11.Maine 12.Vermont 13.Ohio 14.Michigan 15.Indiana 16.Illinois 17.Wisconsin
18.Minnesota 19.Iowa 20.Nebraska 21.South Dakota 22.Wyoming 23.North Dakota 24. Montana 25. Idaho 26.
Washington 27. Oregon

Result of refuel at Shell Kennewick Washington, for the VW Jetta TDI Clean Diesel. Thank you to Barb Sumner, Manager Shell Kennewick!

Using Shell Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel.

56.63 US mpg 67.89 IMP mpg 4.16 L/100km

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Day Ten

First thing before the sun was up we checked the VW Jetta TDI tire pressures. Then a great driving start heading from Ontario Oregon on Highway 95 past vast farming areas, on country roads, with houses scattering the landscape not dissimilar in style to what you see in country Victoria, Australia. Driving on mountainous roads the surfaces aren't always kind to tires. You require roughness for safety, enabling you more traction on the road.

If your tires are 'over inflated' you won't have the same control over your vehicle (especially if you hit water or oil on the road). If your tires are 'under inflated' you will lose fuel economy and they will wear out quicker. For every 1 psi your tires are 'under inflated', you can waste up to 3% of your fuel efficiency.

Imagine what the waste could equate to if just 50% of the US vehicle tire pressures are incorrect. Remembering there are 150 million vehicles on the road in the U.S. We had a couple of stops today and chats with the locals. We learn so much from them, about their part of the world. We bought a treat at one mini-mart. Our kids will want to live in America once they know – Yes you can buy 'Kraft Macaroni & Cheese crackers' here! (see photo gallery).

It is interesting to learn the effects of increased gas costs to their family life. 'They are all for saving money by driving smarter. The good thing is you don't have to wait for a miracle cure; we can all take responsibility and start now. The Taylors together with Shell, have put together Fuel Economy Driving Tips, see www.shell.com/us/fuelstretch, plus www.fuelacademy.com Taylor's Tips.

THANK YOU for your ongoing emails and words of encouragement. We loving hearing from our readers, please keep them coming.....

An interesting fact: In the 290 mile stretch between the Nevada towns of Fallon and Ely, US 50 crosses nine mountain ranges and a landscape where there is almost no sign of human trace. Refueling of the car took place yesterday at Kennewick Washington (please see Mathematics). I met a gentleman there who asked what language we speak in Australia?

Geography

From Ontario Oregon we drove in a southerly direction, re-entering the state of Idaho, to then cross back into the state of Oregon through the Mahogany Mountains, on to Jordan Valley. We traveled east to Burns Junction, then south to our stop tonight in Winnemucca.

Mathematics

Cost to date \$US 305.79.

28 USA States driven through to date:

1. Virginia 2. Maryland 3. Delaware 4. Pennsylvania 5. New Jersey 6. New York 7. Connecticut 8. Rhode Island
9. Massachusetts 10. New Hampshire 11. Maine 12. Vermont 13. Ohio 14. Michigan 15. Indiana 16. Illinois 17. Wisconsin
18. Minnesota 19. Iowa 20. Nebraska 21. South Dakota 22. Wyoming 23. North Dakota 24. Montana 25. Idaho 26.
Washington 27. Oregon 28. Nevada

Result of refuel at Shell Kennewick Washington, for the VW Jetta TDI Clean Diesel. Thank you to Barb Sumner, Manager Shell Kennewick!

Using Shell Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel.

56.63 US mpg 67.89 IMP mpg 4.16 L/100km

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Day Eleven

INSTANT UPDATE: 5,026 miles driven to date / Costing US\$ 362.44/ An average of 843 miles (1,356 kms) on every tank

We started the day of with a live radio interview by Alan Taylor, Car and Driver Radio. A fun show producing serious messages for motoring enthusiasts.

The weather was warm this morning and the drivers and the VW Jetta TDI lapped it up. The only disadvantage would be later in the day when we go to refuel. Ideally, the best time to fill your car is when it is cooler, usually early morning or late afternoon, once the sun goes down.

We made our way across the Nevada desert, noting we were on a two laned road this morning (luxury), at one stage sharing the road with none other than a 'rat'. On arriving into Truckee California, we came across an agriculture inspection and were pleased we didn't have to surrender our supply of bananas, our sustenance for the afternoon's drive.

The terrain changed to very harsh rock mountainous vast areas. Signs like Rock slide areas were evident. Additionally, there was the challenge of 'uneven pavement' areas, where the continual pounding on the road made our teeth chatter. We climbed and climbed through this tough but most scenic part of the States, ending up at Donner Summit, a height of 7,239 feet. We were heading to refuel in Reno Nevada, however our gas tank looked so healthy we reassessed, and decided to continue to Sacramento California.

See results below – We're excited!

By the way, **THANK YOU** for your ongoing emails and words of encouragement. We loving hearing from our readers, please keep them coming.....

Geography

We drove in a south-west direction from Winnemucca Nevada, through Reno Nevada continuing on to Sacramento California and calling it a day in Stockton California.

Mathematics

Cost to date \$US 362.44.

29 USA States driven through to date:

1.Virginia 2.Maryland 3.Delaware 4.Pennsylvania 5.New Jersey 6.New York 7.Connecticut 8.Rhode Island
9.Massachusetts 10.New Hampshire 11.Maine 12.Vermont 13.Ohio 14.Michigan 15.Indiana 16.Illinois 17.Wisconsin
18.Minnesota 19.Iowa 20.Nebraska 21.South Dakota 22.Wyoming 23.North Dakota 24. Montana 25. Idaho 26.
Washington 27. Oregon 28. Nevada 29. California

Result of refuel at Shell Florin Sacramento, for the VW Jetta TDI Clean Diesel. Thank you to Chanel Anderson, Duty Manager who was most helpful!

Using Shell Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel.

59.42 US mpg 71.37 IMP mpg 3.96 L/100km

48 States Lowest Fuel Consumption Guinness World Record Drive

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Day Twelve

INSTANT UPDATE: 5,499 miles driven to date / Costing US\$ 362.44/ An average of 843 miles (1,356 kms) on every tank

The weather hot on our departure from Stockton California, escalating in degrees as the day progressed, recording the top temperature of 97 degrees Fahrenheit. A far cry from being in Iowa at a low 34 degrees Fahrenheit! When traveling in the car on a long journey we always make sure we apply sun cream, and have plenty of water on board.

We made our way past orchards and vineyards, where great fruit and amazing wines are born. We traveled parallel with the Californian Aqueduct, meandered our way through, and climbed **MORE** mountains (which brought more ears popping!). Where did all these cars come from? We seemed to be in a remote part of the U.S; however traffic was converging from all directions? This is a wake up call for what is about to happen in the coming hours.

The wind was blowing and the landscape was a mask of dust as we made our way further towards our destination, Santa Monica. The traffic thickened and the navigating became more complex. It was a comforting thought to know we had our 'Navman' navigating system on board. This amazing tool traveled with us from Australia and was programmed for our Santa Monica address.

When you plan your journey and know where you are going, you can concentrate on the most important thing, **DRIVING SAFELY!** We arrived in Santa Monica, happy, relaxed and ready for a couple of days off the road to 'recharge the Taylor batteries'.

When tackling any major project to perform at your **BEST** there has to be an element of rest and recuperation factored in. Having an invitation to attend the VW Jetta TDI Launch in Santa Monica has given us this opportunity where we will be attending a press conference. Our VW Jetta TDI mobile home will also have a short break, to be serviced by the VW Dealership in Santa Monica, as per the Car Manufacturer's Recommendation. We will talk more about this in our next 'Blog' this coming Wednesday.

By the way, **THANK YOU** for your ongoing emails and words of encouragement. We loving hearing from our readers, please keep them coming.....

Geography

We drove in a south-westerly direction from Stockton through to Santa Monica California, to be greeted by fabulous sea and sun.

Mathematics

Cost to date \$US 362.44.

29 USA States driven through to date:

1.Virginia 2.Maryland 3.Delaware 4.Pennsylvania 5.New Jersey 6.New York 7.Connecticut 8.Rhode Island
9.Massachusetts 10.New Hampshire 11.Maine 12.Vermont 13.Ohio 14.Michigan 15.Indiana 16.Illinois 17.Wisconsin
18.Minnesota 19.Iowa 20.Nebraska 21.South Dakota 22.Wyoming 23.North Dakota 24. Montana 25. Idaho 26.
Washington 27. Oregon 28. Nevada 29. California

Result of refuel at Shell Florin Sacramento, for the VW Jetta TDI Clean Diesel. Thank you to Chanel Anderson, Duty Manager who was most helpful!

Using Shell Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel.

59.42 US mpg 71.37 IMP mpg 3.96 L/100km

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Day Thirteen

INSTANT UPDATE: 5,751 miles driven to date / Costing US\$ 414.29

We're back in the driver and navigator seat on our way to conquer a new Fuel Economy Guinness World Record in the U.S. **A BIG THANK YOU** - To VW Dealership, Santa Monica for giving our precious VW Jetta TDI the 'once over'. Craig Marshall was the man, and gave us the 'thumbs up' to continue on our journey with reassurances the car was in top condition. (You can see Craig in Photo Gallery).

We were honored to attend the VW Jetta TDI Clean Diesel Launch at Santa Monica. We believe in the Clean Diesel Technology and are thrilled to demonstrate it's capabilities on this mammoth realistic drive through the 48 US contiguous states. We chose the VW Jetta TDI for the challenge, and insisted on using Shell Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel. Up early to leave Santa Monica at the ungodly hour of 5am, our intention was to beat the Peak Hour traffic. Even so there is a high volume of vehicles on the road!

Did you know? With 9.8 million people, Los Angeles County California holds the title of the 'Most populous US County'.

Finally and happily we were able to leave behind the chaos of the city, to enjoy the peace and quiet driving through the Mojave Desert. We past an 'In 'n Out Burger' place along the way, making note of a 'must try' before leaving the States. Hours were spent climbing mountains in the San Bernardino area, with Sidewinder Mountain an elevation of 5,273 feet. We drove alongside numerous interstate goods trains transporting their heavy loads. The landscape was a picture of beauty with native plants and rocks surrounding us.

The temperature climbing to 96 degrees Fahrenheit, we found comfort with the window partly down, a cooling breeze filtering through keeping us comfy. We headed towards Kayenta Arizona, where we planned to stay overnight. On the way there were sign alerts of Elks, Cattle, Horses. Even indications of Dinosaur Tracks. What an amazing part of the world, we will be back.....

We reached Kayenta to find our confirmed booking was given away, and there was no other accommodation available in the area. After discussion, with some verbs added into the mix, we had no choice but to drive on. We reached our next state of recognition Utah, then continued onto Colorado where we sought sanction at a Casino Resort, just near Cortez. We called in a night zzzzzzzzzzz!

By the way, a big **THANK YOU** for your ongoing emails and words of encouragement. We loving hearing from our readers, please keep them coming.....

Geography

Leaving Santa Monica we drove in a NE direction to Barstow California. Then east to Needles California. Crossing the Colorado River into Arizona we traveled east to Kingman Arizona (our Shell refueling stop, see Mathematics), continuing east to Flagstaff Arizona. We proceeded north to Moenkopi Arizona and north east to Kayenta Arizona. To a new state, north east to near Bluff Utah. Back to Kayenta Arizona, and FINALLY in a north easterly direction, arriving near Cortez Colorado.

Mathematics

Cost to date \$US 414.29

32 USA States driven through to date:

1. Virginia 2. Maryland 3. Delaware 4. Pennsylvania 5. New Jersey 6. New York 7. Connecticut 8. Rhode Island
9. Massachusetts 10. New Hampshire 11. Maine 12. Vermont 13. Ohio 14. Michigan 15. Indiana 16. Illinois 17. Wisconsin
18. Minnesota 19. Iowa 20. Nebraska 21. South Dakota 22. Wyoming 23. North Dakota 24. Montana 25. Idaho 26.
Washington 27. Oregon 28. Nevada 29. California 30. Arizona 31. Utah 32. Colorado

Result of refuel at Shell Kingman Arizona, for the VW Jetta TDI Clean Diesel. Thank you to Jo Ann , Duty Manager who was most helpful!

Using Shell Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel.

57.28 US mpg 68.8 IMP mpg 4.1 L/100km

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Day Fourteen

INSTANT UPDATE: 6,585 miles driven to date / Costing US\$ 469.02/ An average of 844 miles (1,358 kms) on every tank

Arriving late in the pitch black the previous evening we found we were surrounded by – you guessed it – massive mountains! Very close to the Grand Canyon. What a blast. Heading from Colorado into New Mexico we spent time planning our next visit, committed to learn more about the history of the people and their land. The car is performing well and the drivers on top of the world. Our fingers are crossed for good weather conditions today, preferably some wind behind us for a change. The road surface plays havoc on the fuel economy, as we encounter lots of roadwork on our way (see Picture Gallery).

Did you know? Four Corners is the only point in the U.S. common to four states (New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona and Utah).

Perched at an elevation of 10,430 feet Alma Colorado is North America's highest city. The temperature is perfect, in the low eighties, so the air-conditioner is on low. We drove alongside the very historic Route 66, Casinos east and west off us, selling themselves.

Sadly, some parts of the route were marked with wooden crosses and flowers, a stark reminder of how important safe driving is. Also, the fact it doesn't just affect one person, but their loved ones as well. We drove further than we anticipated, the car was purring and the tank was feeling good. Finally, we stopped for refueling with 834.3 miles (1,343 kms) on the clock. See the results below...

Geography

Leaving Cortez Colorado we headed south crossing the New Mexico border towards Gallup New Mexico, then east to Albuquerque New Mexico, finally refueling and staying for the night in Santa Rosa New Mexico.

Mathematics

Cost to date \$US 469.02.

33 USA States driven through to date:

1.Virginia 2.Maryland 3.Delaware 4.Pennsylvania 5.New Jersey 6.New York 7.Connecticut 8.Rhode Island
9.Massachusetts 10.New Hampshire 11.Maine 12.Vermont 13.Ohio 14.Michigan 15.Indiana 16.Illinois 17.Wisconsin
18.Minnesota 19.Iowa 20.Nebraska 21.South Dakota 22.Wyoming 23.North Dakota 24. Montana 25. Idaho 26.
Washington 27. Oregon 28. Nevada 29. California 30. Arizona 31. Utah 32. Colorado 33. New Mexico

Result of refuel at Shell Santa Rosa New Mexico, for the VW Jetta TDI Clean Diesel. Thank you to Yvonne, Duty Manager who was most helpful!

Using Shell Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel.

59.27 US mpg 71.19 IMP mpg 3.96 L/100km

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Day Fifteen

INSTANT UPDATE: 6,585 miles driven to date / Costing US\$ 469.02/ An average of 844 miles (1,358 kms) on every tank

We set off from New Mexico crossing the State border into Texas to be welcomed by a beautiful sunrise. The VW Jetta TDI 'full' from it's big drink of Shell Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel the previous night. Temperate conditions, we are excited to be driving on the Historic Route 66 into Texas, the largest of the 48 US contiguous states.

As we drove through Texas the car didn't miss a beat, enjoying the change from rugged mountainous terrain over the past days, to vast open space with much flatter roads. There is a high volume of interstate trucks on the road, but we manage to share the highway, keeping our smooth driving with consistent rpm (revs) to enhance our fuel economy figures. As we drive towards Oklahoma City windmills stand powerful along the way, displaying the United States seriousness about energy conservation. Traffic congestion induced by roadworks makes for a slow entry to our overnight stop in Wichita, Kansas.

Did you know? There is a county in Texas named 'Loving' where in 2005 the population was just 67, making it the least populous U.S. County.

Geography

From Santa Rosa New Mexico we travelled east into Texas, changing to a north east direction into Oklahoma City. We then drove directly north to Wichita in the state of Kansas, stopping for the night.

Mathematics

Cost to date \$US 469.02.

36 USA States driven through to date:

1.Virginia 2.Maryland 3.Delaware 4.Pennsylvania 5.New Jersey 6.New York 7.Connecticut 8.Rhode Island
9.Massachusetts 10.New Hampshire 11.Maine 12.Vermont 13.Ohio 14.Michigan 15.Indiana 16.Illinois 17.Wisconsin
18.Minnesota 19.Iowa 20.Nebraska 21.South Dakota 22.Wyoming 23.North Dakota 24. Montana 25. Idaho 26.
Washington 27. Oregon 28. Nevada 29. California 30. Arizona 31. Utah 32. Colorado 33. New Mexico 34.Texas 35.
Oklahoma City 36. Kansas

Result of refuel at Shell Santa Rosa New Mexico, for the VW Jetta TDI Clean Diesel. Thank you to Yvonne, Duty Manager who was most helpful!

Using Shell Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel.

59.27 US mpg 71.19 IMP mpg 3.96 L/100km

Day Sixteen

INSTANT UPDATE: 7,366 miles driven to date / Costing US\$ 512.96

It's the last weekend of the summer and this morning we could feel the change in the air as we headed out of Wichita Kansas. Once more we were graced with the presence of an amazing sunrise. On the road we had a chat with Sam Memmolo for 'Sam's Garage', live radio segment. We stopped at Petticoat Junction for some 'Cowboy Coffee', then continued towards Shell Lenexa Kansas, our next refueling location.

Greeted by a very helpful young man Winston Edmiston, we proceeded to follow all the Guinness World Record procedures. On filling the tank with Shell Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel we were both ecstatic with the result of 60.80 US MPG. **Yeay!!!** We put the improvement down to changes in the terrain and more favourable weather conditions. Across the Missouri border and into the heart of Kansas City, our time management worked well and we avoided the peak hour craziness. From thereon heading to St. Louis we had no help in our challenge from the prevailing winds. To reach our 38th U.S. State, Kentucky, we needed to travel through Illinois once more, so we made today's destination Mt. Vernon.

Did you know? The geographic centre of the conterminous U.S. lies near Lebanon Kansas (approximately 150 miles north west of Wichita), so we were just about at the central point of the U.S.!!

48 States Lowest Fuel Consumption Guinness World Record Drive

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Song of the day: Show me the way to St. Louis, Show me the way.. (no American Idol contenders in this VW Jetta TDI)

Geography

Beginning in Wichita Kansas, we drove north east to Kansas City Missouri, through Columbia and onto St. Louis. Making our way to Kentucky we headed in a south east direction to Mt. Vernon Illinois, our respite for the night.

Mathematics

Cost to date \$US 512.96.

37 USA States driven through to date:

1.Virginia 2.Maryland 3.Delaware 4.Pennsylvania 5.New Jersey 6.New York 7.Connecticut 8.Rhode Island
9.Massachusetts 10.New Hampshire 11.Maine 12.Vermont 13.Ohio 14.Michigan 15.Indiana 16.Illinois 17.Wisconsin
18.Minnesota 19.Iowa 20.Nebraska 21.South Dakota 22.Wyoming 23.North Dakota 24. Montana 25. Idaho 26.
Washington 27. Oregon 28. Nevada 29. California 30. Arizona 31. Utah 32. Colorado 33. New Mexico 34.Texas 35.
Oklahoma City 36. Kansas 37. Missouri

Result of refuel at Shell Lenexa Kansas, for the VW Jetta TDI Clean Diesel. Thank you to Winston Edmiston, Manager who was fantastic, even with the flu!

Using Shell Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel.

60.80 US mpg 73.02 IMP mpg 3.87L/100km

Day Seventeen

INSTANT UPDATE: 8,137 miles driven to date / Costing US\$ 562.43

Emmy Awards: There is no acting when it comes to reducing your fuel consumption. It's ALL real!

So follow a few simple tips and start the journey. Remember to choose the right vehicle and use a good quality fuel.

On leaving Mt. Vernon Illinois the on-road conditions were dangerous with the heavy rain causing a very slippery road surface. We drove just under the speed limit keeping us and everyone else on the road safe. By the time we headed into Arkansas the weather had improved and the driving was relaxing with the VW Jetta TDI performing well. There was huge excitement building in the VW Jetta TDI today, thinking we might get closer to exposing the real secret of Colonel Sander's recipe. The moment we have been waiting for...we're in Kentucky now and the chicken does taste finger lickin' good, but still the names of the famous herbs and spices cannot be revealed. We leave the State of Kentucky full, satisfied, but with a heavier weight in the car. We had some very tricky navigating today, driving into FOUR new states as well as revisiting others.

Geography

From Mt. Vernon we drove south to Palleys Mill Illinois, then south east to Paducah Kentucky, continuing to Dyersburg Tennessee. Next west over the Mississippi River to Hayti Arkansas. A change of direction south west towards West Memphis Arkansas – Through Memphis Tennessee again and out onto the 55 South Highway stopping for the night in Canton Mississippi.

Mathematics

Cost to date \$US 562.43

41 USA States driven through to date:

1.Virginia 2.Maryland 3.Delaware 4.Pennsylvania 5.New Jersey 6.New York 7.Connecticut 8.Rhode Island
9.Massachusetts 10.New Hampshire 11.Maine 12.Vermont 13.Ohio 14.Michigan 15.Indiana 16.Illinois 17.Wisconsin
18.Minnesota 19.Iowa 20.Nebraska 21.South Dakota 22.Wyoming 23.North Dakota 24. Montana 25. Idaho 26.
Washington 27. Oregon 28. Nevada 29. California 30. Arizona 31. Utah 32. Colorado 33. New Mexico 34.Texas 35.
Oklahoma City 36. Kansas 37. Missouri 38. Kentucky 39. Tennessee 40. Arkansas 41. Mississippi

Result of refuel at Shell Winona Mississippi, for the VW Jetta TDI Clean Diesel. Thank you to Joyce Lattimer, Shell Duty Manager for her kind help.

Using Shell Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel.

59.33 US mpg 71.25 IMP mpg 3.96 L/100km

48 States Lowest Fuel Consumption Guinness World Record Drive

3rd September - 25th September, 2008

Day Eighteen

INSTANT UPDATE: 8,137 miles driven to date / Costing US\$ 562.43

It's great to be alive! Fabulous driving conditions in the U.S. We're looking forward to meeting more people from the South, they are 'real friendly'. We can't believe it – We've spent \$562.43 on Shell Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel, and driving in our fun VW Jetta TDI, we have visited 44 U.S. States. We have met loads of wonderful people and had a ball.

Factored in to today's schedule is a stop to try resurrect our laptop from it's dormant state. This is a real life project and there are no guarantees with technical equipment. The support documentation for Guinness World Records being our Holy Grail, of course we must ensure these all important files are backed up. Good luck for us, we met Brent Spencer, Ram Computer Services Hammond Louisiana, and he was able to jump-start our hardware. Thanks Brent! A crucial part of the Guinness World Record attempt is the planning, remembering we have to drive at least 15 miles in every U.S. State. Our 'Navman' (navigation system from Australia) has been a tremendous help. Additionally, for a project of this magnitude maps are an essential tool.

In our day-to-day driving life, and it doesn't matter what country we are driving in, before we get in the car we make sure we know where we are going. This is a most useful, SAFE DRIVING, FUEL SAVING Tip.

The driving continues from Mississippi into Alabama, through the tunnel and over the 'never ending' bridge crossing Mobile Bay. The first sign of coast, since leaving Santa Monica Los Angeles, and a welcome sight. With this luxury came many black insects (name unknown), splattering themselves against our windscreen. We called it a day, stopping at Montgomery Alabama overnight.

Did you know? North America's Nile – Stretching 3,740 miles the Mississippi-Missouri river system is the longest in North America.

Geography

We departed from Canton Mississippi heading south through Jackson/McComb, then crossing the border into Louisiana. Continuing south to Ponchatoula, south east to Slidell, back in the State of Mississippi. Past the NASA John C. Stennis Space Centre, north east to Mobile Alabama. From here we headed north east to Pensacola Florida. Now we must make our way to the next state to be visited, Georgia. This means we head north from Pensacola Florida continuing in a northerly direction to Barnett Crossroads Alabama. We continue north east to Montgomery Alabama where we stay overnight.

Mathematics

Cost to date \$US 562.43

USA States driven through to date:

1. Virginia 2. Maryland 3. Delaware 4. Pennsylvania 5. New Jersey 6. New York 7. Connecticut 8. Rhode Island
9. Massachusetts 10. New Hampshire 11. Maine 12. Vermont 13. Ohio 14. Michigan 15. Indiana 16. Illinois 17. Wisconsin
18. Minnesota 19. Iowa 20. Nebraska 21. South Dakota 22. Wyoming 23. North Dakota 24. Montana 25. Idaho 26.
Washington 27. Oregon 28. Nevada 29. California 30. Arizona 31. Utah 32. Colorado 33. New Mexico 34. Texas 35.
Oklahoma City 36. Kansas 37. Missouri 38. Kentucky 39. Tennessee 40. Arkansas 41. Mississippi 42. Louisiana 43.
Alabama 44. Florida

Result of refuel at Shell Winona Mississippi, for the VW Jetta TDI Clean Diesel. Thank you to Joyce Lattimer, Shell Duty Manager who was very helpful.

Using Shell Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel.

59.33 US mpg 71.25 IMP mpg 3.96 L/100km

48 States Lowest Fuel Consumption Guinness World Record Drive 3rd September - 25th September, 2008

Day Nineteen

INSTANT UPDATE: 8,999 miles driven to date / Costing US\$ 624.85

ONE REFUEL TO GO – ONE MORE U.S. STATE TO GO.

Thank you once more to all our family, friends, supporters for your emails, sharing your interest in fuel economy and offering continued support. We will personally respond to every message as soon as time permits. We left Montgomery Alabama heading towards Atlanta Georgia, adjusting our watches along the way to Eastern Standard Time (one hour forward). Our time management in place, this meant when we arrived into Atlanta Georgia we would miss the peak hour traffic.

The Terrain is very hilly and the VW Jetta TDI handles it beautifully, showing it's dynamic capability, one of this vehicles many attributes. Like yesterday, there were gusty winds that are not in our favour, slamming into the front of the car, slowing us down and zapping our energy.

We saw many cars with roof racks on today, and nothing being carried on them. **Did you know?** Car designers go to great lengths to make their vehicles aerodynamic as possible, as this reduces fuel consumption and increases vehicle speed for a given engine power. Even minor details such as the shape of the door handles are carefully designed to be aerodynamic as they make significant difference at high speeds. It comes as no surprise therefore that accessories such as roof-racks and bike carriers are disastrous for aerodynamics. At 75mph a roof rack will typically add around 20% to a car's fuel consumption. The effects of roof boxes and bike carriers are even greater. Our advice is, if you are not using a roof-rack, roof box, bike carrier – Take them off.

Making our way to refuel after driving 861 miles we turn into the Shell Station in Thomson Georgia. The Manager Rebecca Wallace almost fell over when she checked the Odometer reading, as she performed the witness duties in compliance with Guinness World Records procedures. The result was a fantastic 60.13 US MPG, we all let out a celebratory cheer! This is our last refuel before the finish line, in West Virginia this Thursday. We drove on stopping for the night in Charlotte North Carolina.

Geography

Leaving Montgomery Alabama, we headed in a north west direction to Columbia South Carolina, then north to Charlotte South Carolina where we stopped for the night.

Mathematics

Cost to date \$US 624.85

47 USA States driven through to date:

1. Virginia 2. Maryland 3. Delaware 4. Pennsylvania 5. New Jersey 6. New York 7. Connecticut 8. Rhode Island
9. Massachusetts 10. New Hampshire 11. Maine 12. Vermont 13. Ohio 14. Michigan 15. Indiana 16. Illinois 17. Wisconsin
18. Minnesota 19. Iowa 20. Nebraska 21. South Dakota 22. Wyoming 23. North Dakota 24. Montana 25. Idaho 26.
Washington 27. Oregon 28. Nevada 29. California 30. Arizona 31. Utah 32. Colorado 33. New Mexico 34. Texas 35.
Oklahoma 36. Kansas 37. Missouri 38. Kentucky 39. Tennessee 40. Arkansas 41. Mississippi 42. Louisiana 43.
Alabama 44. Florida 45. Georgia 46. South Carolina 47. North Carolina

Result of refuel at Shell Thomson Georgia, for the VW Jetta TDI Clean Diesel. Thank you to Rebecca Wallace Shell Manager, you're great!

Using Shell Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel.

60.13 US mpg 72.22 IMP mpg 3.91 L/100km

**48 States Lowest Fuel Consumption Guinness World Record Drive
3rd September - 25th September, 2008**

FINAL STATISTICS:

IT'S A NEW GUINNESS WORLD RECORD!!

Overall 58.82 US MPG

70.64 Imperial MPG

3.99 L/100 KM

11.04 Tanks of Shell Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel

Costing \$US 653.06

Average 853 Miles per Tank (1,373 Km's per Tank)

\$US 00.069 cents per mile

9,419 Miles driven

Geography

We left Bluefield Virginia traveling north to arrive in the last State, destination being Beaver West Virginia. Our last fill was at Shell Beaver West Virginia, using Shell Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel, for the VW Jetta TDI Clean Diesel. Thank you to Marilyn Allen for being our last scrutinizer, on this Guinness World Record Journey.

48 USA States driven through:

1.Virginia 2.Maryland 3.Delaware 4.Pennsylvania 5.New Jersey 6.New York 7.Connecticut 8.Rhode Island
9.Massachusetts 10.New Hampshire 11.Maine 12.Vermont 13.Ohio 14.Michigan 15.Indiana 16.Illinois 17.Wisconsin
18.Minnesota 19.Iowa 20.Nebraska 21.South Dakota 22.Wyoming 23.North Dakota 24. Montana 25. Idaho 26.
Washington 27. Oregon 28. Nevada 29. California 30. Arizona 31. Utah 32. Colorado 33. New Mexico 34.Texas 35.
Oklahoma City 36. Kansas 37. Missouri 38. Kentucky 39. Tennessee 40. Arkansas 41. Mississippi 42. Louisiana 43.
Alabama 44. Florida 45. Georgia 46. South Carolina 47. North Carolina 48. West Virginia