

# Travelling Tips From Cheap and Affordable Gold Coast Airport Car Hire Rentals Companies in Queensland

## What You Can and Can't Do in a Gold Coast Rental Car

Gold Coast Family Car Rentals prides itself on providing top service and best value for money deals, and they have gold medal Consumer Fairness status to prove it. However, CEO Darryl Essington-Wilson says disputes do sometimes arise when clients return hired vehicles, and they are usually because of misunderstandings regarding certain usage restrictions, and the higher bills that can result. Darryl says that all rental companies have restrictions on where their vehicles may be driven, with the smaller companies restricting users to local motoring only. Larger rental groups with multiple branch locations generally offer a wider scope of driving destinations.

Darryl says that apart from when you want a car, the next question that his staff asks customers is where they want to go in the car. This is an early opportunity to discuss any usage area issues, preventing post rental negativity. His staff often suggest expanded usage zones where they believe that particular customers might enjoy travelling to popular attractions or areas that are "out of town". All of Darryl's rental contracts clearly describe the permitted driving areas, whilst most other rental companies, make no similar specification, relying on the fine print of their rental terms and conditions. Not Just Anyone Can Drive the Car Letting just anybody drive the rental car could cause serious problems if something went wrong, including leading to the insurance on the car being cancelled, and any claim nullified. Darryl points out that this is why all those other than the principal driver who might drive the car at some point during the rental period also need to be registered when the rental contract is signed. Many operators require all drivers to be present, with their drivers' licences in hand, when the contract is signed, however, his company is happy to accept licence details over the phone for supplementary drivers.

Watch Where You Drive If a car rental company does not advertise that you can drive their vehicles "off road", or on beaches, they do not permit such activity.

The vast majority of rental companies do not allow their vehicles to be driven on unsealed roads, the more understanding rental companies have created exceptions to such a ban to allow for unsealed areas of roads under repair or for access to holiday resorts or private residences.

Darryl is only aware of a couple of rental companies that allow their cars to be taken on licenced car ferries, despite such vessels being an integral part of the Australian transport infrastructure.

In some areas, there are time of day restrictions in relation to rental cars – remote areas generally exclude driving between sundown and sun up. The issue is knowing whether you are in such an area.

Whilst there is reasonable freedom for cross border travel between Victoria, South Australia, NSW and Queensland, almost every car rental operator excludes cross border travel into or out of Tasmania, Northern Territory and Western Australia.

However, those who choose to ignore the challenges these terrains offer, and the restrictions placed by most car rental operations on where their rentals may be driven, could well find themselves in trouble when they check their account at the end of the rental period, as it could be a lot steeper than expected due to vehicle damage or for breaching the restrictions.

How Far Can You Go? Usage zones which set boundaries on the area within the rental car can be driven, and the distances that can be cover in a day or during the entire rental period, may differ from one car rental to another. In some cases, unlimited distance allowances are offered when the rental period is longer than 3 days. And it may sometimes be possible to extend usage zones for a single day or for the entire period at a small extra insurance cost. Darryl says in most cases these changes can be negotiated beforehand to fit a planned itinerary or phoned in if plans suddenly change. Drivers should always interpret unlimited distance allowances to mean "unlimited distance allowances within the permitted usage area".

Keeping on the Right Side of the Law Darryl warns that renters will end up carrying the bill (and the penalty points) should they contravene any road rules or traffic laws. When and how they pay is dependent on how and when they receive the ticket and fine. If the fine notice is attached to the car, or given to the driver in person, payment must be made directly by the driver before the expiry date on the notice. If this notification is ignored, both the authorities and the car rental operation will add penalties to the amount before it is deducted from the renter's credit card. If it's a camera fine, it will still ultimately reach the driver, but with steeper added costs. Generally, an unpaid parking fine will be sent to the rental company as registered owner, with a small additional fee added for a registration search. The rental company will add their service fee to this amount and charge the renter. Service fees vary between rental companies, some charging \$25 or less, others charging \$99 to \$150.

Speed camera fines require the rental company to make a statutory declaration as to the identity of the person responsible, statutory declaration fees vary from \$25 to \$250, depending on the rental company.

For those planning to travel in and around Gold Coast city and into the Gold Coast Hinterland in a rental car, learn more details about these restrictions, or book a guaranteed best value for money Gold Coast car rental, all it involves is booking online with Car Hire Gold Coast or Gold Coast Airport Car Rental, or call + 61 7 5508 3333. Pick up and drop off at the Gold Coast Airport can be arranged.

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