

What kind of food sits well with driving?

- **Eating right is key when sitting at the wheel for hours**
- **Driving consumes between 1,000 and 1,350 kilocalories a day**
- **Pasta, rice, onions and tomatoes do not make good driving companions**
- **Dehydration is just as dangerous for a driver as being under the influence of alcohol**

Martorell, 23/07/2019. With the holiday season in full swing, many people are going to make long car journeys, and for these to go smoothly, it is very important to pay attention to what you eat before setting off and during your trip. Eating the wrong food can cause drowsiness, fatigue, anxiety or stomach upsets that affect your concentration, which can considerably increase the risk of having an accident. In the words of Dr. Mari Carmen López of the SEAT CARS medical centre, **“it's not good enough to tell yourself it'll go away soon; you have to be in full control of your faculties and stay as comfortable as possible, and that includes eating the right food.”**

Kilocalories at the wheel: Driving is an activity that burns from 1,000 to 1,350 kcal a day, similar to resting. For this reason, a driver does not require a large intake of food, but rather should limit it to 2,000 / 2,500 kcal per day. But **“you should never get behind the wheel on an empty stomach, as you could suffer low blood sugar and dizziness. Furthermore, hunger pangs diminish your attention span as you mind is on other things”**, explains Dr. López.

Small quantities at regular intervals: Large meals lead to drowsiness, abdominal pains, heartburn and gas, all symptoms that alter your ability to concentrate. After lunch, for example, it has been demonstrated that performance decreases by 10%. Dr. López recommends **“making frequent stops and eating small quantities, and after the main meal, walk around for 15 minutes or take a nap to clear your head.”**

Foods to avoid: Deep-fried, batter-fried, spicy food and sauces can become obstacles for safe driving. At the wheel it is also best to steer clear of rice, beans and pasta. As driving is an activity that does not require a significant calorie intake, it is best not to eat too many carbs as they cause bloating. Besides, they digest easily and make you feel hungry again very soon. Eating too much of citric fruits, onions and tomatoes, even though they are healthy, causes acid indigestion, so it is best to avoid them with a full day of driving ahead.

H2O, the essential fuel: According to a study published by Loughborough University (UK) and the European Hydration Institute, drivers who are not adequately hydrated makes mistakes similar to those with a blood alcohol level of 0.8 g/l, as if they had drunk 4 glasses of wine. The most common are involuntary lane departures, late braking reflexes and easing onto the shoulder. According to Dr. López, **“dehydration can lead to dizziness, vomiting and in the most extreme cases, loss of consciousness.”** For this reason it is essential to drink fluids, especially in hot weather and at each stop. Water is the best option, but it can be mixed with fruit juice or soft drinks. As far as caffeine goes, Dr. López points out that **“a couple of coffees or teas during the day might help you stay alert, but more than that can give you the jitters.”** Energy drinks while driving are absolutely inadvisable.

Can you eat or drink while driving?: Most European traffic rules do not expressly prohibit this. However, both can cause distractions and restrict freedom of movement. A study by the University of Leeds (UK) concludes that reaction time while eating goes down by up to 44%. In Spain, for example, drivers caught eating or drinking face a fine of €200; £100 in the UK and the loss of three points on their driving licence. Therefore, rest stops should be used to eat and replenish fluids.

Menu for drivers:

. **Breakfast:** Two slices of toast with cooked ham or cheese

Piece of fruit

Coffee or tea

. **In-between meal:** Vegetarian sandwich and water

. **Lunch:** Salad

Grilled or roast meat or fish

Fruit

Water and coffee or tea

. **Snack:** Fruit, yogurt and water

Dr. López suggests this menu because **“it supplies sufficient nutrients and is light enough to prevent heavy digestions and stomach problems.”**

SEAT is the only company that designs, develops, manufactures and markets cars in Spain. A member of the Volkswagen Group, the multinational has its headquarters in Martorell (Barcelona), exporting 80% of its vehicles, and is present in 80 countries on all five continents. In 2018, SEAT sold 517,600 cars, the highest figure in the 68-year history of the brand, posted a profit after tax of 294 million euros and a record turnover of close to 10 billion euros.

The SEAT Group employs more than 15,000 professionals and has three production centres – Barcelona, El Prat de Llobregat and Martorell, where it manufactures the highly successful Ibiza, Arona and Leon. Additionally, the company produces the Ateca in the Czech Republic, the Tarraco in Germany, the Alhambra in Portugal and the Mii in Slovakia.

The multinational has a Technical Centre, which operates as a knowledge hub that brings together 1,000 engineers who are focussed on developing innovation for Spain’s largest industrial investor in R&D. SEAT already features the latest connectivity technology in its vehicle range and is currently engaged in the company’s global digitalisation process to promote the mobility of the future.

SEAT Communications



Elisabet Anglada
Head of Content Activation
M/ +34 689 282 093
elisabet.anglada@seat.es



Vanessa Petit
Content Generation
M/ +34 680 153 938
vanessa.petit@seat.es



SEAT Mediacycenter