

Stars and their cars - Julie Mccrossin, Media Personality

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What was your first car?

It was a Fiat. It was 1972 and it was one model above the Bambino. It was little, square and fairly basic but I loved it. My choice was based totally on the advertising. At the time there was a very romantic advertisement with a couple driving around the cliffs of the Amalfi Coast and the tag line was: "Have a love affair with a Fiat." I remember it as my ticket to freedom. I was 17 and I had a little car of my own. It was fantastic.

What are you driving now?

Now I've got a Toyota Corolla station wagon. I'm a woman with two kids in my life and two labradoodles and it's kind of representative of a profoundly different stage in my life. It's a really reliable workhorse. It's about six years old and it's fantastic. I can't tell you how positive I feel about it.

What's your ideal car?

My dream car would be a dual-cab ute that had every possible safety feature, including airbags in every direction as well as a green-type engine. My most enjoyable time as a driver would have to be when I had a dual-cab ute. They're the most fantastic freedom machines.

What's your pet road peeve?

Homicidal tailgating. I do a lot of country driving and a lot of driving out west and across the metropolitan area of Sydney and I see an increasing amount of it. It's a form of road bullying. It always makes me feel those people are likely to be bullies in their domestic life. What really disturbs me is that I think in the last four or five years you do increasingly see young women doing it as well. The word "peeve" is too trivial for me. I think it actually causes genuine fear out on the roads and I think it's designed to do so.

Do you have a favourite drive?

I love the western division of NSW. I love it when you get past Dubbo, out towards Nyngan and beyond, when the road becomes dead straight, when you could wrap a rope around the wheel and open the windows and head straight ahead for ages.

Do you have a favourite road movie?

I would say the 1991 film *Thelma and Louise*, although I'm slightly edgy about it given they end up driving over a cliff – something I'd prefer not to do. Despite the ambiguous ending, the spirit of women desiring freedom and the power of friendship all associated with the freedom of the road is a very powerful combination.