



UberAir's concept taxi/aircraft

Traffic's Toll

Worldwide, the morning commute has never been worse. Our global guide to hot spots—and possible solutions.

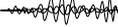
By Renee Morad

Self-driving cars certainly offer plenty of dreamy potential, particularly when it comes to traffic. With roadways becoming more efficient, we'll be scanning our smartphones or watching videos while cars that sync up to each other zip through downtown London. At least, that is the vision.

In the meantime, there is the very unpleasant reality of sitting and stewing in highway jams and city traffic for hours, trying our best to stay

cool while someone not so cool honks behind us. And, yes, it's all gotten worse, with traffic spiking 10 percent around the world since 2015, according to traffic navigation company TomTom.

We know the cause is generally the global economy's own success. "On one hand, many cities are seeing job growth, population growth and a boost in the economy," says Nick Cohn, senior traffic expert at TomTom. "On the flip side, it's almost impossible to see these benefits without



Worldwide, traffic congestion is up 10 percent since 2015.

also experiencing an increase in traffic.” But who has the strongest bragging rights to the worst commute in the world? (Hint: Drivers in that city waste almost 10 full days a year traffic.) And what are some of the worst cities doing about it? Here’s an overview that might be handy for executives who plan to visit or move to any of these cities.

Mexico City

Often called the world’s worst, with the average driver wasting 59 minutes a day in traffic. “The city has been growing a lot, primarily in outer areas that don’t have public transportation options,” says TomTom’s Cohn.

Bangkok

Drivers in Thailand’s capital log an average of 64 minutes a day during their commutes. “More people are buying cars, and the infrastructure’s not there to support them,” Cohn says.

Los Angeles

Recently chosen as a future test bed for UberAir’s futuristic flying taxis, but that’s years away. For now, prepare to sit in traffic: Trips that should take 60 minutes based on posted speed limits take, on average, 87 minutes because of congestion.

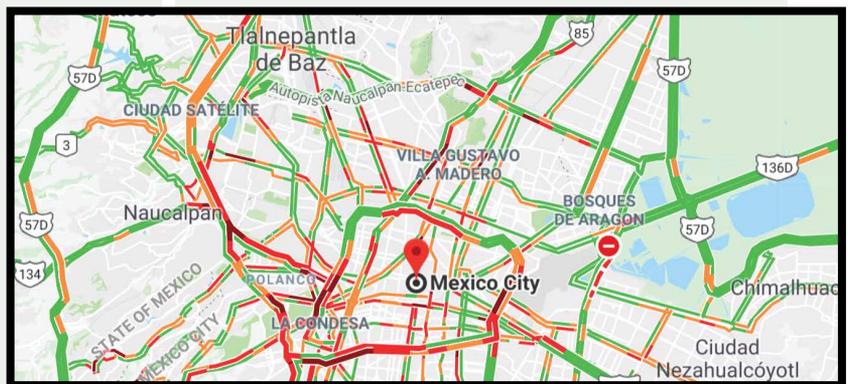
Boston

Though it has the second worst overall congestion rate in the US, according to global traffic analyst INRIX, it is on a fast track to improvement. It now uses data from traffic apps to reduce congestion as much

as 18 percent at some notoriously bad intersections.

Stockholm

To deal with congestion, the Scandinavian city introduced a toll for drivers who enter the city center—with higher prices for rush hour. Traffic dropped 20 percent.



New York

Great mass transit doesn’t solve everything: New Yorkers spend an average of 16 percent of their travel time during weekdays in traffic, says INRIX. An effort to introduce Stockholm-style tolls never got off the ground.

San Jose

With commuters spending roughly 32 percent of their travel time in traffic, the city implemented connected traffic lights and is developing self-contained “urban villages” to encourage public transportation and cycling. ●