

Simply Stunning the new ford RS Focus

by Ian Lynas

Ford has produced a winner with their latest model to join the legendary RS family, the new Focus bearing the famous badging is the most advanced to date, packed with technology and driving aids. Yet despite it majoring on performance, it is also a five seater practical form of transport, certainly a car which will turn heads wherever it ventures.



German built and for the first time it features all wheel drive and an engine which is taken from the new Mustang. However a lot of work has been carried out to increase the power output to 350PS, that is on a par with a current British Touring Car Championship car.

With a top speed of 165mph there is nowhere in Northern Ireland possible to reach that level, even Kirkistown circuit would not be able to permit you to achieve this speed.

I suspect more important to most is the ability to get from rest quickly and with a high degree of safety. The sprint from rest to 62mph comes up in just 4.7 seconds.

There are four driving modes with this new RS model, Standard, Sport, Track and Drift. On the right hand drive press launch I used mainly the Standard mode which delivers an all round mix of comfort, road holding and performance.

A word of caution re Drift mode, enough to give your Granny a fright if she occupies the front passenger seat; on the other hand she just might want to have a go herself-you have been warned.

Later I was able to take a left hand drive version for four laps of Silverstone using again the Standard mode and the Sport mode.

Yet another treat was in store, the opportunity to sample drifting via the drift mode, an experience not for the faint hearted and one which will surely increase your tyre budget.

On the subject of rubber, two types of specially developed tyres by Michelin are available for the new RS, marking a long association with the French tyre company, the tyres specially created for this Ford model.

There is a choice of three distinctive style of wheels and one of the biggest surprises for me was to learn that this newcomer is built on a standard production line.

The exterior styling of the new RS shouts loudly, "I am to be driven" with aggressive styling nicely executed, a profile that is extremely aerodynamic and the chunky 19 inch alloys certainly are the icing on the cake.

As you would expect the emphasis on sport extends to the well appointed interior, on stepping onboard the hip hugging Recaro seats grip in all of the right places and the instrumentation and controls are well designed





and placed in the right places. Yes this is every inch a driver's car, it just beckons to be fired up and onto the open road where it's revised and stiffer suspension set up comes into its own.

The drive modes of course contribute in no small way to the overall quality of handling as does the all wheel drive system.

This is the car to enjoy and to feel confident with and safe behind the wheel when weather and road conditions are much less favourable.

However despite all the technology and AIDS put into the new RS one overriding word-respect. Drive the new RS in the correct manner and the rewards are great. I have to say that this is not only the best RS to date, but one of the

finest cars in this class that I have ever had the pleasure to drive.

The standard car is priced at £31,000 a lot of metal for the money. Need more then you can add a Luxury Pack which gives such items as sat nav, eight inch touchscreen, a superb audio system and from this Autumn SYNC3 will be offered.

Colour in my book is key for such a car and Ford offer a palette of five including the stand out Nitrus Blue. Worth noting at time of writing more than 3,000 orders were received and 61% of buyers opting for Nitrus Blue.

The new RS takes the honour of being the first global model and will be sold in 42 countries across three continents.

In bringing this high performance model to the customer, thousands of testing miles in a variety of temperatures were carried out at race circuits around the world.

Summing up, even a special exhaust sound was created for the new RS, a car with all wheels driving but with a RWD character.

