

Style and Ability Hallmarks of the Maserati Levante

by Ian Lynas



The roots of Maserati can be traced back to 1926 and to competition in the Targa Florio and Italian Grand Prix of that year; these thoughts were in my mind as I drove the latest vehicle to bear the famous name across the North Yorkshire Moors.

I was behind the wheel of the new Levante, an SUV adorned with the famous Trident badge.

So why such a vehicle for a company famed for its sports cars, top end saloons and Grand Tourers? Simple answer really, the SUV is fast becoming one of the most sought after vehicles currently available.

Prestige brands such as Bentley and Jaguar are recent converts to this rather exclusive club and now Maserati has joined with its never to be disputed style and heritage.

All those years ago when the Maserati name took to the roads little did the Maserati brothers know just how far the horizons of motoring would grow, come to think of it no one in that era could have imagined a vehicle with such ability, style and sheer must have appeal.

Perhaps to illustrate the appeal of the new Levante in European terms Maserati see the new SUV taking 48 per cent of all the company sales and in their largest market the USA SUVs have huge appeal and again this vehicle with the Bologna emblem proudly on its grille is set for success.

With style that leaves George Clooney in the shade I took to the scenic but challenging roads of North Yorkshire, perfect to put the newcomer through its paces; however Maserati was most keen that I should have first hand experience the off road capability of their latest offering, so I found myself on the huge 14,000 acre Duncombe Park Estate where on an off road course their SUV more than proved its off road skills.





Now begs the question just how many owners will ever face the course that I did? I suspect very few, but Maserati have faith in their Levante and they were not shy in showing such.

Good news for those who like Italian automotive products the new Levante is Italian through and through and not like a number of other prestige vehicles which are manufactured beyond the borders of their own domain.

Sharing the same chassis, only 20 percent stiffer, than the Maserati saloons, this delivers excellent ride and handling.

With no fewer than five ride heights, the newcomer is prepared for what ever the conditions may be and there is even a parking ride height, all of which are electronically controlled.

Four drive modes designed again to suit the individual requirements s of the person behind the wheel and the intelligent Q4 tracking systems deliver safety and motoring pleasure with a capital P.

The exterior styling is bold with a grille of rather generous proportions and moving to the interior it is sheer quality, the perfect driving environment.

While Maserati has come late to this sector of the market, clearly they have learned taking I believe some inspiration from the Porsche Cayenne which they see as the major competitor.

For now in the UK market the sole power choice is a diesel engine with plenty of performance; 275bhp enough to sprint from rest to 62mph in 6.9 seconds and on to a top speed of 142mph where legal. Allied to the engine, the well proven eight speed automatic ZF transmission.

For those in the petrol power club do not be dismayed, such a power unit is to follow soon. Certainly introducing diesel first will be welcomed in the Northern Ireland market where it reigns supreme for now.



With the option of luxury packs to further enhance this vehicle, summing up the newcomer on the block is a sure winner and will attract new customers to the brand.

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