

The New Toyota Yaris Offers Much More

by Ian Lynas



More and more people are turning to smaller cars, so why? From my own point of view it is partly down to parking. In our towns and cities parking spaces are getting smaller, so the logical thing to do if this is your problem is to down size.

However we still demand all of the creature comforts which come with a large car. In fact the small car market is ultra-competitive and a major player in this sector is Toyota, so when they launch a new model it is important.

First launched in 1999 the Yaris has been a firm favourite and now with the latest model the small car moves to a higher level.

The French built Yaris in our market is offered in a choice of grades with a price range; £12,495- £19,295; many may think that £19,000 is a lot to spend on a small car; but at this top end of the range, the level of equipment is very high.

In European terms one out of every four Toyotas is a Yaris with a continuing growth in hybrid versions.



In this respect Toyota has to be applauded in respect of hybrid technology. From the early Prius models to current Toyota models hybrids continue to flourish and with a growing anti-diesel stance, models such as Yaris hybrids are in pole position.

Worth noting the absence of diesel models in the new Yaris line-up which boasts six grades in our market.

In the UK market re the new Yaris Toyota is forecasting 40% hybrid sales, a figure which is expected to expand.

I had the opportunity to try the new Toyota in the Netherlands including the new 1.5 litre petrol engine and from my point of view I have to put the hybrid version as the best all-rounder.

The new model features some 900 new parts and over 90 million euros has been invested in bringing it to the market.

The styling is more dynamic than the outgoing versions and bi-tone colours are now a feature, this gives the Yaris a more quality look.

Toyota has placed the emphasis on multi technology, it is what most buyers demand today and in this respect owners of the new car will not be disappointed.



What makes the new model stand out from previous models, low noise levels; clearly the Toyota engineers have really worked hard in this area and another plus point, the power assisted steering has been enhanced.

All models in the new range feature Toyota Safety Sense; it is essential that a small car offers the same level of safety as larger cars. Customer peace of mind is assured with a comprehensive five year/100,000 mile warranty.

The grades offered in the UK- Active, Icon, Icon Tech, Design, Bi-Tone and Excel and for the sportier minded in our midst, a sporty version will be launched later this year linked to the WRC car. The GRMN will use a turbocharged 1.8 litre engine with 205bhp, a reinforced chassis, and performance brakes, tuned suspension, a Torsen LSD and 17 inch alloy wheels. This will be the first GRMN performance model to be marketed in Europe.

From the Icon upwards a new colour TFT multi-information screen, which I found to be a trifle on the small side.

Driving impressions – I found the one litre version lacking in terms of performance, so for

my money it has to be the 1.5 litre hybrid. Reasonable performance, rest to 62mph in 11.8 seconds and depending on wheel size 75 or 82g/km. Looking at official economy figures, 90mpg is quoted, but in the real world I suspect considerably less.

Summing up the new Yaris improves in all of the key areas, is a joy to drive in an urban environment and is equally capable on the motorway.

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