

The Sporting Side of Octavia

by Ian Lynas

There is no escaping the fact that Skoda continues to spring surprises; today their cars are a far cry from models of yesteryear, cars that were scorned and the subject of

numerous jokes.

The modern day Skoda is a very different mode of transport and above all a range which offers true value for money.

Recently I got a taste of the sporting side of the brand when I spent a week in company with the Octavia vRS.

Right away you are thinking yet another taxi, nothing could be further from the truth. While on the subject of Skoda and taxis, just why do so many taxi drivers choose the Octavia? Simple it does the job and is thoroughly reliable.

My test car was diesel powered and not the most powerful version the vRS 230

with as the name suggests 230PS, enough to take you from rest to 62mph in under seven seconds and on to a top speed of 155mph.

So if you really want performance from an Octavia vRS then you must take the 230 route. I have to state that I was disappointed with the performance of the diesel version; it has the looks alright but lacks the poke.

Of course many may well be content to settle for this; at least Skoda offers the choice.

With the standard vRS comes a combination of sportiness, space and functionality. Based on the third-generation Octavia, the new vRS model made its world debut at the Goodwood Festival of Speed and on that occasion it did turn quite a few heads.

Skoda is renowned for delivering a good specification and the Octavia vRS is equipped with a host of standard features and with new technologies combining to make the car lighter and more affordable to run.

Choice comes into the equation and you can choose from hatchback and estate styles, my test car was in the hatchback style. With a large boot and even more space with the seats folded.

I suspect the buyer who decides on the vRS is first of all tempted by the styling of the car but the Octavia vRS is as practical and clever as the award-winning standard models.





Returning to load carrying ability, the hatchback offers 590 litres of boot space with the rear seats in position, while the estate delivers 610 litres of luggage room.

With the rear seats folded, the figures rise to 1,580 litres and 1,740 litres respectively.

At the heart of any car is the engine and the Octavia vRS is an engine line-up that

is frugal and clean.

Two units are available: 2.0 TSI petrol with 220PS, and the most powerful diesel engine ever to be offered in an Octavia in the form of a 2.0 TDI 184PS.

Both engines are available with the choice of a six speed manual transmission or a DSG automatic. A word of advice if you are seriously looking at acquiring an Octavia vRS than the automatic transmission is the way to go, so please dig a little deeper into the piggy bank, you will not be disappointed.

In order to fully exploit the vRS performance potential there is a new chassis set up that features a lowered ride height (12mm hatch, 13mm estate) and advanced multi-link rear suspension design. Electronic differential lock (XDS) is fully integrated into the car's electronic stability control (ESC) system, and helps improve traction in corners.

Summing up this member of the Skoda family is extremely well appointed, offers good roadholding and of course is highly practical.

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