

Audi's Supercar the R8 V10

WHAT a comprehensive range Audi offers and within the line-up is their supercar, although they seem to prefer to name it as a high performance sports car; in my book I put it firmly on the supercar list.



I discovered that the R8 is a very usable car, in fact one which you could drive every day; mind you not a lot of room for the shopping more like a small case and a weekend away.

However to explore the performance side of the car it would be advisable to take it to a race circuit like Kirkistown for a Track Day.

My test car was the Spyder version equipped with a glorious sounding V10 engine with a massive 525PS at the command of the right foot; specific output is 101PS per litre of displacement.

The performance from this engine is truly amazing, rest to 62mph comes up in 3.6 seconds and if you get the opportunity to try it on track, the top end performance is just shy of 200mph. These performance figures are for the S tronic transmission.

The Spyder has more specialties in store, the top compartment cover and the sides are made of CFRP; the top is cloth. Weighing only about 42 kg, it keeps the vehicle's weight and centre of gravity low.

When closed, the soft top tapers down to two long, slender fins. It opens and closes electro hydraulically within 19 seconds, even when driving at speeds of up to 31mph. When opened, it folds like a Z into its storage compartment over the engine. The compartment cover opens and closes on two seven-link hinges.

A headlining covers the frame of the top, which is fabricated largely from aluminium and die-cast magnesium. The soft top is quiet and fully suitable for high-speed driving.

The heated glass window, which is separate from the top, stands upright in the bulkhead between the passenger compartment and the engine compartment. It can be raised and lowered at the press of a switch, with the soft top up or down.

The aerodynamics of this Audi borrows closely from racing. Depending on the engine and body style, the coefficient of drag is either 0.35 or 0.36.

The exterior styling takes design cues from a racing car and the interior conveys a luxury-level racing atmosphere.





The large arc encircles the driver's area of the cockpit. It starts in the door and ends at the centre tunnel. The optional R8 leather-covered, multifunctional sport steering wheel with the rim flattened at the bottom sports the new R8 logo with the red rhombus.

What impressed me most about this Audi was the handling, just what one would expect from a high performance car and to support this an equally impressive braking system.

My test car was finished in a black exterior with the interior featuring fine Nappa leather and it had a number of options including, 19 inch alloy wheels, a black styling package, mobile telephone preparation and the Audi parking system.

This is one Audi with the real wow factor, not a car for the faint hearted.

Ian Lynas