

The New Mercedes-Benz B-Class

By Ian Lynas

THE arrival of the B-Class certainly opened up a new market for Mercedes-Benz; clearly the aim was to attract a new wave of customers and they did and I have to put my hand up and say I was one of them.



Like me the one thing that made the B-Class attractive was its ability to perform as an all rounder, yet it was a Mercedes and for many that really meant something.

However in the world of motoring nothing stands still and a few months ago a second generation B-Class was launched.

Recently I tried one and it is a giant step forward, not only in terms of equipment levels but the build quality is improved and yet it still maintains that key factor of being a great all rounder.

The model in question was the B 200 CDI Blue EFFICIENCY Sport powered by a 1,796cc diesel engine with a rather

modest 134bhp on tap. Performance is far from startling, with 62mph reached in a whisker over nine seconds from rest and a top speed of 130mph.

This is not a problem as the B-Class does not pretend in any manner to be a sports car, with its package of safety equipment and equipment levels it is a pleasant vehicle not only to drive but to be driven in.

We all yearn for economy and with a seemingly endless rise in fuel prices, buy the B-Class and your wallet will feel healthier, 67.3mpg is possible on the combined fuel cycle. The CO₂ rating is 121g/km and the insurance group rating is 20-21. All of this really does help to keep the cost of motoring down.

I must point out that the B-Class is not in the economy bracket when it comes to purchase. The version I tried has an on the road price of £26,160; however there was an array of options and the final figure came to £36,910.

I suspect that the model I sampled was loaded heavily by Mercedes just to let the likes of me see what an array of options can be added to further personalise your B-Class.

One feature that I really appreciated was the seven speed automatic transmission, this delivered seamless changes and as I drove the car in the crowded South of England it was a simple joy in traffic.

On smooth roads the ride was comfy, yet firm, but on less well looked after roads I did feel the bumps as the name of the B-Class I tried suggests – Sport. Yes the Sport version has sports suspension with a Selective Damping System and it rides some

15mm lower and while the big 18 inch bi-colour alloy wheels look superb and really adds to the overall package they are at their best over smooth surfaces.

I feel that all of the German carmakers tune the suspension of their cars to the ultra smooth road surfaces found in Germany and Austria.

Clearly by producing Sport versions of the B-Class the aim is to attract the younger driver and the B-Class is a perfect means of transport for the family.

I would add that it is a perfect car for downsizing; those who have enjoyed a larger Mercedes saloon will not be disappointed behind the wheel of the new B-Class; overall it is a good buy.

