

The Potent S3 from Audi

I could not resist the opportunity to take the wheel of a member of the Audi A3 family, the potent S3 and what a performer it turned out to be.

Along with the Sportback version (5 door), my test car was in three door guise, Audi describe them as dynamic high flyers and these words fit perfectly.



The lines of the S3 are sharper, the grille is fitted with chrome plated vertical double bars and the bumper has a powerful spoiler lip. Chrome rings border the fog lamps and a platinum grey diffuser and oval exhaust tailpipes add further to the sports look.

The sports theme is carried to the interior with very comfy front bucket seats and the steering wheel covered in leather features a flat bottom.

The interior simply shouts quality and for those who have ever driven or owned an Audi it has that very distinct feel.

Right at the heart of this Audi a two litre TFSI petrol engine, yes a modest

capacity yet it produces an impressive 300PS, a lot of power from such a small package.

Linked to the power unit a six speed manual transmission which I found very smooth in operation and of course the S3 features Quattro, the four wheel drive system which aids handling in no small way and which is so reassuring to have when winter sets in.

Currently there are 43 models in the Audi range which carry the Quattro badge; in fact I find it difficult to imagine an Audi without such.

Now to performance and I am quite sure that the person who buys an S3 does so with this very much in mind. Rest to 62mph comes up in a mere 5.2 seconds and the top speed well over twice the legal limit; alas few will get to explore the top end potential of this Audi.

Despite this and taking into account the power available at the control of the right foot, economy was not as bad as I feared; during my week with the S3 I managed to average 32mpg. Audi quote a best figure of 48.7mpg.

I must warn the emission figure is quite high at 162g/km, but then that is to be expected with such a car.

I must say that my test car which was finished in Misano Red did attract a good deal of attention especially from other A3 drivers and with its chunky 18 inch alloy wheels which were fitted as an



option (£200) and worth every last penny.



The price of the S3 with the manual transmission, £29,820; however the final asking price with a number of options brought the figure up to £36,680.

Included in the option list, a technology pack costing £1,795, adaptive Xenon Plus headlights at £295 and this is one option I would be fitting as these lights proved super efficient and added greatly to the safety aspect of the S3.

Audi do offer a very comprehensive option list for their cars and this leaves the buyer to add his or her touch to make it a very special set of wheels.

My lasting impression of the S3 was two fold, its performance with superb handling and build quality which few carmakers can equal.

Ian Lynas