

The New VW Golf Cabriolet

QUITE a time has elapsed since Volkswagen produced a Golf Cabriolet; the good news is that the soft top is back, news that will be welcomed by many Golf fans. When last available in the UK market one out of every ten Golfs sold was a Cabriolet. In order to get acquainted with the new model I took the wheel of a 1.6 litre TDI BlueMotion Technology version.

With 105PS under the bonnet this member of the Golf family can sprint from rest to 62mph in 12.1 seconds and on to a top speed of 117mph.

Not exactly sports car performance, but after all on a sunny day with the hood down who wants to be driving rally driver fashion. No not at all part of the joy of driving a car such as the Golf Cabriolet is to not only enjoy the drive but to soak in the surroundings.

Allied to this very economical diesel engine (64.2mpg on the combined fuel cycle) is a slick five speed manual transmission.

Just like the hard top versions of the Golf build quality can only be described as superb. Few cars come close to the Golf in terms of build quality.

The moment I took the driving wheel that quality of build was transmitted, that is almost unique to the Golf.

The Golf Cabriolet in its latest guise was first shown last year at the Geneva Motor Show and the new two-door, four-seater, front-engined soft top joins the range alongside the Eos hard-top convertible.

So in the nine years since the previous model there has been the likes of the Eos hard-top convertible to provide that wind in your hair motoring.

Standard fitment for the new model an electrically-powered fabric roof which can be lowered in just 9.5 seconds including on the move at speeds up to around 18 mph.

No separate roof cover is needed, contributing to the very rapid opening time, and resulting in less boot space intrusion and meaning that even with the roof down; there is 250 litres of available space.

The Golf Cabriolet is some 20 cm shorter than the Eos, measuring 4,246 mm in length, 1,423 mm in height and 1,782 mm wide. The 2,578 mm wheelbase (same as Golf hatchback) ensures there is plenty of interior space for all four passengers; while a 50:50 split/folding rear seat and Easy-Entry function ensure maximum practicality and good access to the rear.

Looking at safety and the Cabriolet is no different in this respect to any other model in the Volkswagen family. An active rollover protection system is employed, ABS, ESP and front and side head/thorax airbags are also all standard.

Of course there are a choice of trim levels, S, SE and GT, all with a high level of standard specification, featuring 16-inch alloy wheels, and Bluetooth.

The SE features 2Zone climate control, cruise control, parking sensors and automatic lights while the GT adds a number of new items including sports suspension, Alcantara upholstery and 18-inch alloy wheels.

Many will recall the name Karmann; well the new Golf Cabriolet is built at what was their facility in Osnabruck.

All weather protection, I am assured by Volkswagen that the soft top fitted to their new car will keep you snug from what ever the elements might throw.

Ian Lynas