

# HONDA JAZZ

By Jim Mc Cauley



It may look vaguely familiar but the all-new Honda Jazz has been rejuvenated in a modern and youthful interpretation that immediately extends the appeal of the model. This third generation Jazz is totally new from the chassis up and offers unrivalled interior space for its sector as well as a new highly efficient engine and transmission choice. First launched the middle of last year, the sole engine choice is the latest and much lighter 1.3 litre i-VTEC engine, rated at 102 PS. While a newly developed CVT automatic transmission is available as an option, the

test choice had the new 6-speed manual gearbox, replacing the 5-speed unit of the previous model line-up.

Although the new car retains roughly the same proportions as the previous successful generation, it is slightly longer with major gains in cabin accommodation. But the eye catching feature of the car is the cleverly sculptured bodywork featuring a new front end design showing a strong family resemblance to the Civic hatchback. Although the silhouette of the car remains identifiable, the strong body character lines and sharper nose treatment add an urgency and dynamic thrust to the design with more than a hint of sporting character.

And the sporting feel continues in the interior with keyless entry on the test car and push button starting. The i-VTEC badging identifies Honda's clever valve system which aids both performance and economy, and power delivery is smooth and progressive with the gear selections engaging with neat precision.

A longer wheelbase and new suspension contribute to improved ride while overall response is firmer and more secure. The car is quite at ease in top gear on the open road, requiring a drop to 5th for brisk overtaking, while excellent all-round insulation elevates the





interior to that of a larger car. And in the Jazz, you can feel you are in a larger car as the increased body length contributes to an even more cavernous interior with gains for all occupants in terms of additional space. In particular rear seat passengers enjoy 115mm more leg room as well as more shoulder room.

The car also excels in terms of luggage space with an increase in boot space to 354 litres and the retention of the 'Magic Seats' in the rear. These flip-up seats can be configured in four modes including level fold-down to create a flat floor just over 1.5 metres long.

For the driver, a new dash layout with central infotainment touch-screen brings the layout up to modern expectations with clear analogue presentation in the main binnacle dials. For the driver chasing economy, there is the choice of an 'eco' setting as well as gear-change prompts and blue / green instrument rim lights to confirm economy status.

For night driving, headlight coverage is excellent contributing to the overall safety of the car which in all respects is of a high standard, scoring 93% in the new EuroNCAP ratings for driver safety. Among the standard safety features in all Jazz models is the 'City-Brake Active' system which operates at speeds below 20 mph and will alert the driver and apply the brakes if there is no immediate response to help prevent low speed accidents.

On the higher specification of the test car, Honda's 'Advanced Driver Assist System' (ADAS) was also fitted and includes Forward Collision Warning, Traffic Sign Recognition System, Speed Limiter, Lane Departure Warning, and High-beam Support System.

In terms of economy and running costs, the Honda Jazz with the 6-speed manual gearbox has an official combined fuel consumption of 55.4 mpg, and with a CO2 emissions figure of 120 gms/km, in in Band C for zero annual car tax.

While the Jazz range opens at £13,495, the test car in top 'EX Navi' trim with satellite navigation is listed at £16,605. The car is in Group 13E for insurance purposes and is covered by Honda's comprehensive 3-year / 90,000 mile warranty.