

INFINITI Q30 2.2D

By Jim Mc Cauley



With the arrival of the luxury brand Infiniti in Northern Ireland, one of its tempting offerings is the new Q30, the company's first global entry into the compact segment. Styling-wise, the vehicle is attractively sculpted with flowing body lines edged by sharp creases and a 'boomerang' 'C' pillar adding forward movement to the continuous chrome line scribing the tapering glass area.

Despite its Japanese roots, the Q30 is Infiniti's first ever vehicle to be built in Europe as a result of a £250 million investment in the parent company's production plant in Sunderland.

Available with a choice of petrol and diesel power units, test model was the 2.2 litre diesel, driving through its automatic transmission to all four wheels. This in-line four cylinder engine develops 168hp and covers the benchmark 0-62mph time in 8.5 seconds with a potential top speed of 134mph.

On-road, and the Mercedes based power unit is quiet at speed with the driving experience enhanced by its overall refinement, partly due to a well balanced suspension set-up that provides a comfortable ride, yet maintains good posture through corners despite being a marginally higher vehicle than a conventional hatchback.

Power delivery is via a 7-speed dual clutch transmission with the option of sharpening responses in its 'Sport' setting or reverting to manual control with the steering wheel mounted change paddles. A comfortable torque figure of 350Nm from as low as 1,400rpm makes for smooth and forgiving changes with the dual clutch set-up always holding the next gear in readiness for instantaneous changes without any significant drop in revs.

Steering is also more taut and responsive than in other range models driven from within the company, and the Q30 overall carries the brand



flag well as it moves into new territory and new beginnings in Northern Ireland.

Inside, and the flowing lines of the exterior continue as they sweep across the dash in a double wave pattern and fade as they terminate on the upper door panels. There is a feeling of confidence in the design of the vehicle where communication between the interior and exterior design teams has resulted in sufficient co-ordination to leave the occupants at ease in a comfortably holistic interior. Within the flowing lines, instruments and switch gear are traditionally placed with convenient controls set into the steering wheel spokes and electrically assisted front seat settings positioned in the door panel. In 'Premium Tech' specification, the interior is finished in black leather with the roof lining also in black.

While the list price for this 2.2D model in all-wheel drive nudges just over the £30,000 mark, the prospective purchaser must first stand back and add up what a competitor might cost as the Q30 in this specification level comes fully fitted with every conceivable extra. Safety and supporting technologies are at the fore with all-wheel drive, Electronic Brake Force Distribution and Vehicle Dynamic Control. Also standard are Forward Collision Warning and Stop, Lane Departure Warning, and Hill Start Assist as well as rear view camera, front and rear parking sensors, and automatic high / low beam. Other standard features include electronic parking brake, power front seats, dual zone climate control and Bluetooth connectivity.

On the environmental and economy fronts, the Q30 2.2D returns 57.6mpg on the official combined cycle, while a CO2 emissions of 129gms/km puts it in Band D for annual car tax of £110. the Q30 range opens at £20,550 with the model tested listed at £31,180. All versions are covered by the company's comprehensive 3-year /60,000 mile warranty.