

JEEP RENEGADE 2.0 MultiJet

By Jim Mc Cauley



It's most certainly a Jeep, albeit a brand new model launching the brand into the compact SUV market. But in case you are in any doubt, it is branded from the bodywork to the mirrors on the outside and from the upholstery to the dash on the interior as well as a discreet image bonded into the corner of the windscreen.

It is also the first model from the Fiat Chrysler Automobile Group to be jointly developed in Italy and America, and the first Jeep to be built in Europe for sale in the USA.

But the market is wider than a trans-Atlantic span and it will see sales in 100 markets worldwide, so not only is it a first in many respects, but an important first that will maintain the progress of the company's recent sales success.

The styling is an interesting balance of square-cut ruggedness with chic styling elements, and sits with a very assertive presence even when stationary.

Available in two-and four-wheel drive variants and with a choice of petrol and diesel power units, test choice was the 2.0 litre turbo-diesel driving through a standard 6-speed manual gearbox with drive options for off-road use. This 140 hp unit takes the car from rest to 62 mph in just 9.5 seconds with the potential to reach 113 mph.

In mid range 'Limited' trim, it has keyless entry and push button starting which fires the diesel into life with a tad intrusive tick-over. However, on road, and the engine refinement improves to



maintain a quiet and restful cabin. With 350 Nm of torque available from 1750 rpm, progressing through the gears is a smooth and forgiving process while overall ride and cornering stance are commendable for a high bodied vehicle. In particular, the lack of significant roll between steering locks adds to the feeling of security on winding 'B' roads, yet the suspension response is not so firm as to be uncomfortable. Additional confidence is provided by the drive system which switches from majoring on front wheel drive to all-wheel grip as driving style and conditions demand.

Competent brakes provide additional security and the vehicle impresses overall as a desirable contender to fob off the competition from the likes of the Skoda Yeti and Nissan Juke.

Inside, and the square-cut styling of the exterior displays its interior advantage with excellent all-round room for front and rear occupants. Overall dash design is very much traditional with clear instrumentation and central infotainment touch screen. Luggage space over the full-size spare wheel location is a hatchback-sized 351 litres, but still sufficient for a generous week's groceries.

Equipment-wise, the 'Limited' model features stability control and twin front, side and curtain airbags with air conditioning, full length glass roof with sliding front panel and reversing sensors among the comprehensive list of equipment which also includes auto function of the lights and wipers.



On the economy and environmental fronts, the 2.0 litre diesel has an official combined consumption of 55.4 mpg, but a week's mixed high mileage use returned 45.2 mpg, a well above average of 82% of the official figure which is set by all manufacturers in far from real world conditions.

With a CO2 emissions of 134 gms/km, this version of the Jeep Renegade is in Band E for annual car tax of £115. The vehicle tested is priced at £25,395 and has achieved the maximum 5-star EuroNCAP rating. Warranty cover is for 3-years / 60,000 miles.