

MAZDA2 1.5 90 PS

By Jim Mc Cauley



Mazda has sharpened the appearance of its latest Mazda2 supermini to follow the more assertive design language first seen in the Mazda6 and Mazda3. The re-work has given the car a more appealing visual character complemented by a readjustment of critical proportions. Not only does this add to the visual identity of the car but also provides for a longer wheelbase in a car that is 140 mm longer than its predecessor as well as being marginally taller.

The new design not only advances the exterior styling, but also benefits interior dimensions

with more room for both passengers and luggage.

While many supermini manufacturers are reducing engine capacity as well as the number of cylinders, Mazda has stayed with a proven 4-cylinder design of 1.5 litres capacity, but honed the engineering to provide a unit that offers the economy that all small car buyers are chasing as well as low running costs.

Engine in the test vehicle was the mid-output 90 PS unit which provides a 0-62 mph time of 9.4 seconds and a potential top speed of 114 mph. On road, and the dominant feature is the refinement of the car, both in engine and suspension, with the power unit always willing to maintain pace complemented by the precisely engineered feel of the 5-speed manual gearbox. Suspension is well balanced, maintaining excellent cornering support, but may not be as well appreciated by rear seat occupants. However, on smoother and less demanding motorway surfaces, the car could easily be in a larger class in terms of overall refinement.





And that larger car feeling is evident in the interior appointments with elements showing a strong association with all of the three prestige German brands. There is a blend of practicality in the design with pleasant aesthetics suggesting a refreshing free rein by the design team, and this adds to the character of the car. A clear speedometer dominates the binnacle with a static 7-inch colour infotainment screen mid dash and central console mounted controls easily navigated. These are also duplicated on the steering wheel.

For the occupants, front seats are comfortable and supportive while good access through the rear doors on this 5-door only model make life easy for adult travellers. And while rear leg room may only be minimally increased over the previous model, overall width is good with adequate provision for three people.

With regards to luggage, the boot provides a useful 280 litres capacity, but access through the wide hatch opening is over a high sill, and while the capacity can be extended to 950 litres with split folding rear seats, they sit proud when folded leaving the extended load bay stepped in the middle.

Although the 1.5 litre engine may not offer the sub 100 gms/km emissions of some 1.0 litre units, it comes very close with 105 gms/km, as well as a tantalising official combined fuel consumption of 62.8 mpg.

In terms of equipment levels, the test model was finished in 'Sport Nav' trim which includes the Lane Departure Warning System and Smart City Brake Support, which can automatically apply the brakes if the driver fails to respond in slow moving city traffic situations. This trim level also features automatic headlights and screen wipers as well as rear parking sensors. As the name suggests, it also features an integrated navigation system with three years free European map updates.

Overall, the new Mazda2 takes supermini quality to a higher level while demonstrating that to be environmentally friendly an engine does not have to be reduced in size. This 90 PS model, finished in 'Sport Nav' trim is priced at £15,395, with metallic paint on the test car adding £530. The car is in Band B for annual car tax of £20 and is in Group 16E for insurance purposes. Like all Mazda models, it is covered by a comprehensive 3-year / 60,000 mile warranty.