

PEUGEOT 2008

By David M Ross

Crossover. A clever combination of attributes or neither one thing nor the other. It's said that the Peugeot 2008's main rivals are the Nissan Juke and the Renault Captur, but to me, it resembles neither. What it does look like is a jacked up MPV but, as Multi Purpose Vehicles appear to be currently out of fashion, I suppose I must settle for the Crossover designation.



But then is it what a vehicle is or what it does that really matters to buyers? I suspect the latter. And judged on that, the Peugeot 2008 has quite a bit going for it. Especially in today's traffic conditions where manoeuvring a large MPV-style vehicle can be problematical. And finding space to park one is often near impossible. So do we go for something smaller? Most do.

And that is where the 2008 scores. It's a remarkably compact vehicle but still a spacious one with plenty of room inside. The load area to the rear is easily accessed and quite commodious for this size of vehicle. And, with comfortable, supportive seating and classy interior trim, it serves well both for long and short runs. The latter including journeys around town.

The lofty driving position ensures an uninterrupted view of the road ahead and the controls work in a pleasant and entirely effortless manner.

As with most of today's offerings, the steering is light but reasonably communicative and the brakes are strong but progressive. As for the pickup, that depends of what engine you have selected but, in the test car, the lower powered of the two 1.6 litre diesels proved surprisingly strong although less so when up to speed and overtaking.



The test 2008 came with a five-speed manual gearbox instead of the more powerful version's six-speed but the gearing proved entirely adequate. The great thing is the diesel's lusty acceleration, its flexibility and relaxed cruising gait. I'm reliably informed the petrol engined versions tend to be a lot more fussy on longer runs.



While the 2008 sports off-roader looks, it is not offered with four-wheel drive but it does, in most versions, have Peugeot's Grip Control. This is largely software based but should help the car exit a muddy paddock. As for on-road grip, that is quite good but the more powerful version might get the front wheels scrabbling a bit.

Even with only 91bhp, the front wheels could slip under acceleration from low speed in the wet. In such a high set vehicle, body control is not particularly taut so the car can be a bit roly-poly if it is hurried through corners.

Where the Peugeot 2008 does seem to put one across its rivals is on equipment. The test car, in Allure trim, left me wanting for nothing but if I had specified the huge panoramic roof, that would have left me £400 the poorer. I admit to a dislike of these things.

There is a good choice of trims and several engine choices with both petrol and diesel. It's the same range of power units offered in the Peugeot 208 hatchback so all are well tried and tested. In fact, the 2008 rides on the same platform as does the 208 so it's no surprise it's so compact.



But, with practicality its priority, the 2008 can never be as much fun to drive as its little 208 sibling. Some might ask why a good-looking, comfortable and practical car needs to be fun to drive but my reply would be that boring cars are justboring. If something can liven up that essential journey, so much the better. It's something Peugeot is pretty good at.

Peugeot may not be a leader when it comes to residual values but with the 2008 being so compact yet spacious inside, it should be fairly well sought after on the second hand market.

If, like myself, most of your runs are on the open road, the more powerful, six-speed diesel-engined version could be the better choice, despite the additional initial cost.

The Peugeot 2008 Allure 1.6d is priced at £17,245 while the 115bhp version, also in Allure trim, is priced at £17,745.