

SEAT Ibiza ST 1.6 TDI

By Jim Mc Cauley

Hot hatches have their appeal but ultimately may have to give way to family and business commitments – unless you can buy a vehicle that allows you to combine the need for speed with load carrying capabilities.



Enter the SEAT Ibiza ST whose 11 model range offers the VAG selection of petrol and diesel engines with the test model powered by the company's 1.6 litre turbo diesel. This 105 PS unit is the top performing diesel which takes the car to 60 mph in 10 seconds and onwards to a potential 117 mph.

Styling-wise, the lines of the hatchback model have been successfully teased out to offer a balanced and pleasant extension, providing the luggage space

that increases the appeal of the model. Tidy detailing including standard roof rails, twin exhaust pipes and 16-inch alloy wheels complete the attractive package without overstating its sporting aspirations.

On road, and the diesel engine performs well, ably held in line by its sports suspension. While this, and the snug fitting front sports seats add to the driving enjoyment of the car, suspension may be on the firm side for everyday use and not appreciated by passengers who prefer a more cushioned ride. Despite the increased length and added room over the hatchback version, the gains are in luggage space rather than passenger accommodation where rear seat space remains neat. However, the gains are in an additional 138 litres of luggage space compared to the hatchback with the possibility to extend to 430 litres with the rear seats folded.



Equipment-wise, the Ibiza ST in FR trim sits at the top of the specification offerings and while it is very well equipped, there are a number of desirable extras which are really needed to set the car off. Standard equipment includes 16-inch alloys, air conditioning, electric front windows and see-me-home headlights, with Electronic Stability Control, Electronic Differential Lock and a full complement of airbags on the safety list.

However, Bluetooth connectivity adds £410, rear parking sensors £215 and centre rear headrest £50.



Overall, the Ibiza ST offers a spicy alternative to the limited choice of supermini estates with superb handling and excellent performance adding driver appeal to its load carrying capacity.

Fuel consumption is given as 65.7 mpg on the official combined cycle, and with a CO2 emissions of 112 gms/km, the vehicle is in Band C for zero car tax in year 1 and £30 per annum thereafter. The 1.6TDI Ibiza ST in FR trim is listed at £16,380 and comes with a comprehensive 3-year / 60,000 mile

warranty, 12-year body warranty and 2-year roadside assistance. Insurance is set at 14E in the 50-group listing and for company car users, Benefit-in-Kind is 16%.