

The Alfa Romeo Giulietta TCT Lusso on Test

by Ian Lynas

STYLE is a key ingredient with the Alfa Romeo Giulietta, but now an addition to the mix, the new TCT (Twin Clutch Transmission).

After having spent some time behind the wheel of one powered by an eager two litre diesel engine I have to say at last there is a true competitor to the Golf.

In the past there have been doubts re Alfa Romeo regards build quality and after sales, that has all changed, build quality is right up there with the best and there has been a determined effort to raise the standard re after sales.

The Giulietta with its five door practicality and coupe looks is the safest car in its class, having a five star Euro-NCAP safety rating. The big story with Giulietta is the technologically advanced TCT semi-automatic transmission

Available in Lusso or Veloce trim levels on the Giulietta, the latest generation Alfa TCT dry dual clutch semi-automatic transmission is the class benchmark for its effectiveness in balancing high performance, low fuel consumption and low emissions, and is

combined in this Alfa with the 1.4 TB MultiAir 170bhp and two JTDM-2 170bhp engines.

This transmission delivers greater driving comfort and a sportier feel than conventional automatic transmissions with a torque converter, together with improved efficiency and lower fuel consumption.

The Alfa TCT improves fuel consumption with respect to corresponding manual transmission versions by exploiting integrated, smart engine and transmission electronics in order to optimise engine system performance and efficiency.

After having sampled the new system, begs the question why bother with a manual transmission?

Either all-automatic or sequential mode, that is the choice and you can manually manage the up and down position of the accurate, ergonomic shifter, with which steering wheel shift paddles may be combined.

Further more you can customise the car's dynamics using the Alfa D.N.A. driving selector to enhance its features of comfort, performance, safety and efficiency.



When combined with the two litre JTDM-2 170bhp diesel engine, 0 - 62 mph is improved from 8.0 seconds to 7.9 seconds; fuel consumption improves from 60.4 mpg to 62.8 mpg, while CO₂ emissions reach a record level for an engine of this power: 119 g/km (124 g/km with the manual gearbox).

Taking this into account Alfa will target the business user. Already about 70% of sales go to this sector.

Alfa TCT consists of two gearboxes in parallel, one for even gears and one for odd gears, each with its own clutch, which allows the selection and engagement of the



subsequent gear while the previous one is still engaged.

The gear is therefore changed with a simple, smooth yet very fast switching of the corresponding clutches, guaranteeing continuous torque delivery and therefore traction.

I was very surprised just how smooth and fast gear changes are with this car and the diesel engine with lots of torque deliver a very enjoyable driving experience. All of this makes a conventional automatic seem rather vintage.

With no end to rising fuel costs, fuel consumption is reduced by up to 10% compared to a traditional automatic gearbox and assisting in achieving this economy is Start&Stop, a function which is not always available with traditional automatic transmissions.

The version I tried was in Lusso trim, finished in Ghiaccio White and an option was the red sports leather upholstery (£1,700). My test car was also fitted with steering wheel paddles at a cost of £260; this left the final bill to £26,020.

A very well packaged car with style and pace, one with lots of street cred and in my book my favourite Alfa of the modern era.