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AUDI PUTS SOME BOOT INTO A3 WITH SALOON

ROAD TEST

AUDI A3 1.4 TFSI SALOON SPORT

Top speed: 135mph; MPG: 60.1; Emissions: 109g/km; Price: £24,304

Audi has given its A3 model a boot in the rear. After years as a hatchback, Sportback or cabrio, it is now also available as a saloon, and together with new S3 and S3 Sportback versions brings Audi's range to an astonishing 47 models.

At launch the A3 Saloon is available with 1.4 and 1.8-litre petrol engines or a two-litre diesel priced between £24,275 and £28,105 on the road. The car's lines have been subtly tweaked and it is lower, wider and longer than the A3 Sportback. Its 425-litre boot is also bigger than that of the Sportback.

Like its cousin, the VW Golf, the car's 1.4-litre petrol engine can close down two of its four cylinders under light load to aid CO2 and fuel consumption, which Audi claims to be 60.1mpg. We managed 44.7mpg without undue effort. On the road the premium ride and finish is obvious and the car feels like it's powered by a bigger engine. There is so little mechanical noise that all you can hear is tyre roar, which can be a bit intrusive on some surfaces.

Under most circumstances there is no lack of power – the engine produces 138hp and can accelerate to 62mph in a claimed 8.4 seconds. Only at motorway cruising speeds do you notice a lag of about two seconds before the engine responds to requests for more grunt. Refinement is excellent and the fit and finish as good as on high-end Audis.

Mike Stone



Premium ride: the new Audi A3 Saloon Sport is bigger than the Sportback and feels like it is powered by a stronger engine

V60 FIRING ON ALL CYLINDERS

ANYONE who wants a Volvo with a five or six-cylinder engine should hurry. Within two years, only four-cylinder examples will be sold.

The first of these newly designed motors (petrol and diesel 2.0s), go into British Volvo mid-sized S and V60s this autumn. After that, every Volvo will gradually get the same engines, in various states of tune.

Volvo insists they won't lose any go or refinement, while beating their predecessors'

ROAD TEST

VOLVO V60 D4 SE

Top speed: 139mph; 0-62mph: 7.6 sec; MPG: 67; Emissions: 113g/km; Price: from £29,745

economy and emissions figures. The bigger-selling diesels have fuel injection systems that work at very high pressures and every injector has a

computer, calculating the amount of fuel each of the engine's cylinders needs. Volvo claims that in the V60 D4 SE estate the result is a car that gets to 62 in 7.6 seconds, reaches 139mph and produces 113g/CO2.

The V60 is sold with either a six-speed manual or a new, eight-speed automatic. Volvo should save a packet by having two rather than eight engines but don't expect its often pricey cars to get cheaper as a result. This one costs about £315 more than its predecessor.

Martin Gordon



DAILY COMMUTE TAKES UP A YEAR OF YOUR LIFE

EVER felt you spend half your life getting to and from work? New statistics now reveal the amount of time that commuters really do consume in their quest to earn a daily crust.

Apparently, those who drive to work in the UK spend an average of more than one year and 88 days stuck in traffic jams over their working life. Put another way, that's roughly the same as the average UK employee's entire holiday entitlement over 16 years, and that's not even counting the parts of the journey when traffic is running free.

The study, by LHD Car Supermarket, asked 50 office workers to monitor their commuting time. They were then asked to subtract the time it would have taken them if there had been no cars on the road, leaving just the time spent in traffic.

The data revealed that the average worker spent 68 minutes per day stuck in congestion. This equates to 340 minutes per week and a staggering 272 hours per year. Over the course of a working life, four decades, this adds up to a whopping 453.33 days, nearly one and a quarter years. In fact, your average commuter could have voyaged

Average worker expects to spend at least an hour every day stuck in traffic

David Williams

IAM ROAD SAFETY WRITER OF THE YEAR



to Mars and be on the return journey in the time spent stuck in congestion.

One man who took part in the study said: "I know that on a good day I can get to work in 20 minutes, however, those instances are few and far between. Most days I can expect to spend at least an hour and a half in the car."

Another said: "Bad traffic can start the day poorly and can make an awful day at the office even worse. I swear, some days it would take me less time to walk to work."

A spokesperson for LHD Car Supermarket said: "Sitting in traffic jams has to be one of the most annoying aspects



of working life. The worst type of traffic is when you are trying to get home after a long day at the office. All you want to do is see your family and crash out on the sofa.

"Instead, you are moving at a snail's pace through mile after mile of congestion getting increasingly fed up at the benign conversation and poor music on the radio. At some point we've all convinced ourselves that we'll start walking or cycling to work, but then quickly change our mind the following morning when the weather is bad."

Of course, in London, we're slightly different. Only around 35 per cent of

people drive to work compared with a national figure of 76 per cent.

More people now cycle to work in the capital, and many of the 100,000 motorcycles registered in London are used for commuting, so at least those hours getting to and from your desk can be fun, too.

If local authorities provided more parking for bicycles and motorcycles it would be a win-win situation, tempting more commuters on to two wheels, while speeding up traffic for those who insist on four.

Follow David Williams on Twitter @dvwilliams



On parade: the Vanquish Volante

VOLANTE LICENSED TO THRILL

THE Lord Mayor's Show is always a hit in London and this weekend there's an extra reason to go; six gleaming Aston Martin cars from the firm's current line-up joining the parade.

At position 78 – in between First Aid Nursing Yeomanry and Canary Wharf – the cars should cause a stir and I'll be driving one of them, so give me a wave. The head of the procession departs Mansion House at 11am and (it's so long) the Lord Mayor's coach, which forms the "tail", departs at 12.11pm.

The entire show passes each point in an hour and a quarter, taking in points including St Paul's Cathedral and the Royal Courts of Justice, with the "tail" finally returning to Mansion House at 2.44pm. More at lordmayorshow.org/procession/2013/

Why Aston Martin? It's the firm's centenary this year, with special events taking place worldwide. Cars on show tomorrow include a Vanquish Coupe and new edition, the Vanquish Volante. DW

MOTORBIKE ADVENTURE IN AMERICA

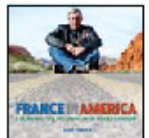
MANY travel adventures are inspired by books and France In America could prove just such a launchpad for the intrepid.

A sumptuous 400-page coffee table tome subtitled "A 21,000-mile USA Discovery on My Harley-Davidson", there are no prizes for guessing what it's about. What may surprise is the immaculate presentation, abundance of pictures and the engrossing story of this one-man trip, by author Gary France.

It begins just as Gary – partner-owner of a construction project management firm – turns

50. He decides to retire and celebrate his freedom by riding across the States. His journey is mapped out and described in engaging detail. His travels take him from Maine on the east coast, via New York, Indiana, Iowa, Wyoming and Utah to California, with numerous diversions en route. Total score: 27 states.

If you've ever had a biking bone in your body, his observations and honest style will whet your appetite to saddle up and ride off on your own adventure. Hardback costs £49.50 and softback £27.50. More on garyfrance.com



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