

Vroom with a Q

Ian Lamming ...discovers a vroom with a Q

IF YOU have an obsessive nature then the instant fuel consumption readout can drive you crazy.

Anything more than a tiptoe of a ballerina on the accelerator and the thing plummets. Head-winds and gradients have the MPG figure falling south too and some cars, particularly heavy SUVs with the additional drag of all wheel drive, are virtually impossible to move without standing on the throttle.

Some SUVs, yes, many SUVs, perhaps, but not Audi's Q3 because it's a bowler. The 184bhp diesel is a superb powerplant and it picks up and retracts speed easily – hence it bowls along nicely with just a whiff of throttle.

What a relief to an old OCD skinflint like myself, particularly as the price of fuel is starting to rise again; have you noticed?

So this ability to reach cruising speed quickly and stay there results in some pretty impressive fuel figures with 50mpg easily achievable – and that's not for want of power as the 2.0 diesel hurls 184PS at all four wheels making it one speedy motor.

Audi was also sensible enough to stick some decent rubber on those wheels to allow the Q3 to make the most of the legendary Quattro

transmission. That combination means the Q sticks to the road in even the slipperiest conditions making it the perfect car for the countryside. Let's face it, in this country, you can count on one hand how many times our roads are snuff dry so the extra adhesion is always welcome all year round.

Q3 still looks contemporary, even more so thanks to the fresh front end grafted so naturally from the new Q7.

Inside is typically Audi with well thought out controls and functional dash. It is well made and equipped with multi-function centrally-mounted screen to operate everything from the satnav to the hi-fi.

Q3 gets driving modes allowing driver to swing from can't-be-bothered-comfortable to more-in-the-mood dynamic, sporting and involving. I left it on normal most of the time and its manners were peerless.

This particular variant came with a six-speed manual, which was fine, even though I am starting to favour autos in my dotage.

Powered rear tailgate operation, including from the key, is such a great feature and avoids any hand contact with a mucky lid – another blessing for an obsessive; cleanliness this time in case you couldn't guess.

Fact File

- Audi Q3 2.0 TDI
- Engine: 2.0 diesel
- Power: 184PS
- 0-62mph: 7.9secs
- Top speed: 136mph
- Combined MPG: 53.3
- Transmission: six-speed manual
- CO2 g/km: 140

