

Home grown Refinement

MotorMadness

Ian Lamming test drives the Infiniti Q30

IT'S times like these that you can't help feeling a tinge of pride in the region.

Standing resplendent on the forecourt, lustrous paint shimmering in the pale light that dances across myriad curves – ooh I've gone all poetic – is the newest SUV to roll out of a North-East factory.

Owned by Japan, made in Britain, with a dash of German and French engineering thrown in for good measure, it's as good as anything posh on the market and looks better than most. This is the gorgeous Infiniti Q30 and it looks fabulous.

The small to medium sector of the burgeoning SUV market is far far too lucrative to go any longer without a presence so Nissan picked up the phone and asked for a bit of help from Renault and Mercedes to rush it to market.

But this is no cut and paste job; it looks and feels unique thanks to those magnificent Infiniti lines.

The boys and girls at Washington have done a grand job putting the Q30 together with lots of bits from the Mercedes GLA/A Class and some engine variants from Renault, including their stunning 1.5

litre diesel. This particular model is top of the range so it sports the 2.2 Mercedes diesel motor, four wheel drive and a seamless automatic box.

Interior is pure Infiniti and a better place to sit you would struggle to find. The level of quality soaks into your body by osmosis through uniquely designed Infiniti leather seats and via specially tuned suspension.

It bowls along without so much as a whisper and cossets all aboard with peerless levels of refinement.

A private drive, weathered over the decades, provides the perfect opportunity to test the Q30 off road – it's impressive.

The long travel suspension smooths out perfectly huge potholes that would normally dislodge vertebrae and shake fillings. If this shredded tarmac playground is anything to go by Q30 should handle the rough stuff just fine.

Like a lot of the world's best sportsmen who are born abroad but adopt this wet rock as their home, the Infiniti is a vehicle we should be proud to call our own.

Fact File

- Infiniti Q30 2.2D
- Engine: 2.2 litre diesel
- Power: 170PS
- 0-62mph: 8.3
- Top speed: 137mph
- Combined miles per gallon: 64.2
- Transmission: seven-speed auto
- CO2 g/km: 115

