

A real head turner

Ian Lamming drives the Mazda CX-3

THERE are lots of reasons to buy a car – economy, emissions, performance, practicality – but the one we often push down the ranks? Looks.

If you are spending that much of your hard earned on metal, glass and rubber it needs to look nice.

The acid test is when you lock up and walk away. Do you pause for an extra look? Do you walk round to change the angle? Do you open the front door without giving the motor a second thought?

Mazda gives it a second thought and look what happens – their designers produce one of the best looking SUVs on the road in the new CX-3.

From any angle it just looks great, fabulous, all mean and moody and concept vehicle. It has presence and its sits squat on the road like it would be impossible to flip over in a wrestling match.

The wide track/low roofline, coupled with big wheels and low centre of gravity translates to a road car with impeccable manners and glue-like grip. There is no rolling through the bends either so the CX-3 is a spirited driver's car cross-country.

The 1.5 litre diesel has plenty of torque

too so there's bags of usable performance and great economy.

The all-new model comes with an 18-strong line-up priced from £17,595 to £24,695. There are five spec levels – SE, SE Nav, SE-L, SE-L Nav and Sport Nav. Inside is just as good as the CX-3 features MZD-Connect with seven-inch colour touchscreen and multimedia commander.

Sport Nav models feature Active Driving Display – a segment first head-up display system if you fancy being a fighter pilot.

Top of the range Mazda CX-3 Sport Nav is the first car in the class to come with LED headlights, signature LED rear lights; 18-inch Gun-metallic diamond-cut alloy wheels and chrome accent door sills – lovely and guaranteed to get heads swivelling.

User-friendly cabin layout boasts staggering standards of material, quality and design. Spec sheet is very long and comprehensive as is the exhaustive array of safety electronics.

So there are myriad reasons to plump for the new CX-3, including economy, emissions, performance, practicality, and you don't have to push aesthetics down the ranks.

Fact File

Mazda CX-3

Engine: 1.5 turbo

dieselPower: 105

0-62mph:

10.1secsTop speed:

110mphCombined

miles per gallon:

70.6

Transmission: six-

speed manual

CO2 g/km: 105

