



# Surprise!

**Ian Lamming** stretches his legs in the latest SsangYong, the Tivoli XLV

**W**HEN a friend asks advice on how to replace her old 4x4, a premium marque at that, people may have been surprised with the recommendation.

Kids, dogs, parents, paraphernalia galore, there are few cars which can swallow it all – but the Turismo can; job done.

It's surprising then that I dare utter the name SsangYong in such reverent company but I dare, even though you could be suspicious of a car maker that has two Ss at the beginning and a capital Y in the middle.

But here is another Korean manufacturer with surprises up its corporate Asian sleeve.

The Tivoli did a similar shock job in the small SUV sector. It looked distinctive, drove incredibly well and was beautifully made.

Stop, stop now, my heart can't take any more surprises. But no, here comes the latest jolt the Tivoli XLV (extra large vehicle perhaps? I dunno, just hanging that one out there.)

It is a Tivoli but it is stretched, elongated, with a much larger and very welcome load bay. The extra length, coupled with class leading width, adds a greater sense of roominess that is a real boon and worth its weight in kids, dogs,

parents and paraphernalia. You are still going to need the Turismo, a useful seven seater MPV that comes with 4x4 and a huge boot even with all the seats down, for the heavy work. But XLV does a fine job in transporting five and their gubbins in style and luxury way beyond what you would believe in such a value for money package.

Quirky looks are jazzed up by smart paintwork, a white roof and glossy alloys. You certainly never lose it in the car park – I think mine was 'dandy blue'.

The interior drips toys, leather and even mood lighting. Touch screen dominates the dash and the air of quality is genuinely exceptional, as is the attention to detail, real premier league stuff. The dashboard has been inspired by the shape of the outstretched wings of a bird and the tactile nature of the interior is enhanced by the flat-bottomed chunky leather steering wheel and bucket seats. Great care has gone into providing internal storage and the centre console is large enough to house the ubiquitous iPad, proof that Ssangyong is keeping pace with the technological world.

The drive is equally impressive. The 1.6 litre

diesel is strong and smooth, willing and very economical. The six speed manual gearbox is precise, the handling secure and comfortable. It is a very easy car to drive long distance and great in town because the extra ride height affords a splendid view.

So next time you ask me advice on what car to buy, prepare to be surprised, because I was.

## Fact File

- SsangYong Tivoli
- Engine: 1.6 litre turbo diesel
- Power: 115PS
- Max Speed: 108mph
- 0-62mph: 12 secs
- Max towing weight: 1,500kg
- Transmission: six speed manual
- CO2 g/km: 117