

Hitting the high



Notes

by Ian Lamming

Fact File:

Nissan Note
 Engine: 1.2 petrol
 Power: 80PS
 0-62mph: 14.7
 Top speed: 92
 Combined miles per gallon: 60.1
 Transmission: five speed manual
 Insurance: NA
 CO2 g/km: 109

IT'S good to end the year on a Note; whether it is a high or a low one remains to be seen.

Truth is, this particular Nissan is just the sort of vehicle that will be somewhere in the mid-range. That's not a criticism it's just where this hatchback is designed to be and there's nothing wrong with that either.

This country needs middle of the road hatches, real world vehicles people can afford to buy and run. It is never going to be a top C but neither will it leave you flat. Okay, that's all the terrible music puns over, promise.

In many ways the new Note – because there have been several before – is pretty impressive. Firstly, from the outside it is compact and modest in proportions, which is good for whizzing around chocker streets looking for a car park space.

But seldom have I come across a car with so much rear legroom, it's absolutely amazing. If you have to ferry around people – elderly folk who aren't as bendy as they were, or children with all their safety paraphernalia, then this has to be a good choice. And the rear space doesn't seem to have come at a cost. The boot is okay and front space equally accommodating – it's a veritable Tardis, Dr Who fans.

The interior is also nicely designed with a very attractive dashboard and one of the easiest satnavs on the market.

Nothing puts me in a gump more than a car that is difficult

to Bluetooth with your phone or a satnav that won't let you plumb in an address using the full postcode. The Nissan connects in seconds and the 3D satnav is a doddle. It is also simple to tune the radio – other manufacturers take note.

Now under the bonnet is a pretty small 1.2 litre petrol engine but the good news is that it only has three cylinders. This makes it sound better, feel torque and boosts economy. It is not going to out drag, well virtually anything, but it climbs the dales roads well and romps along the motorway at the legal limit.

You would imagine that such a car should be economical but it is just ok because you have to work the little motor hard to get anywhere quickly. You should get more on a long straight run but mixed motoring leaves the mpg in the 40s.

Handling and ride are safe, sprightly and very comfortable.

This is a Nissan so it is always going to be well built and easy to drive with a slick gearbox, light throttle and featherweight steering. The brakes need a bit of thump to activate but once you get used to them are fine.

The new look is tidy with striking lights front and rear and a curvy appearance that is very modern.

There is nothing to dislike about the new Note and it boasts many features that are commendable. It's as easy to drive as A,B,C – sorry about the pun, I lied.