

# High and Mighty



Ian Lamming enjoys the spacious and affordable Ssangyong Turismo

It could have been a big mistake – asking a six-year-old which toys he would like to take to the Lakes. Of course, as all six-year-olds know, the answer is going to be “all of them”, and some were still unopened from Christmas and in very very large boxes.

Add in ten days clothing, clean washing ready to be ironed, food and drink for the family and the load just went from big to gargantuan.

This could have been a problem except the test car is a SsangYong Turismo, a veritable coach of a vehicle.

So behemoth is this people carrier that packing becomes a blasé affair, a package flinging, see where it lands, over in five minutes activity, not the 1,000 piece jigsaw arrangement of many normal sized cars.

The Turismo must be one of the longest vehicles I have ever driven and the seven passengers it accommodates each receive voluminous amounts of space. And it is comfortable space with individual leather seats up front, armchairs in the middle of the walk through cabin and a sofaesque bench seat in the third row.

The seats all tilt and slide so the back bench can be pushed a long way forward and folded flat to accommodate even more toys, clothes, food, etc. Its carrying capacity is absolutely superb.

Off walking in the Lakes the SsangYong also becomes the best changing room for donning the clobber. You simply climb in the back or the boot, sit on the comfy seats and get yourself dressed and undressed in the dry and warm – brilliant.

It is bus-like in size, so what is it like to drive?

Turismo must be the easiest, most comfortable and rewarding MPV I have ever driven. You feel so at ease that the miles fly by.

The smooth running diesel is not just powerful it is positively spirited; the thing flies up hills and down dales but the fuel economy stays resolutely in the mid-30s, which is impressive.

Winter, plus Lakes, equals ice, every driver’s spoil-sport. But the SsangYong has another card up its metaphorical sleeve – it is all wheel drive, including a low ratio crawler option. This dispenses with the slippery road conditions with ease and also allows on-muddy-verge forays safe in the knowledge that if it does get bogged down the all wheel drive will easily pull the big vehicle clear of trouble.

Old Turismo was not the prettiest of vehicles, in fact I have heard that even its mother couldn’t love it. The new one is much more conventional, smart even and looks absolutely fine.

Specification is amazing – heated leather seats including electric adjustment on the driver’s, cruise control, aircon, steering wheel mounted controls, touchscreen satnav, reverse warning beepers, six speaker stereo, cool privacy glass, electric windows and central locking, electrically operated and heated wing mirrors, alloy wheels, cubbyholes galore and the biggest armrest storage unit I have ever seen.

I don’t normally talk much about the price but in this case it is relevant. SsangYong Turismo is a brilliant car with top specification, amazing capacity and fabulous accommodation, yet it costs under £20,000. Now that is amazing. Oh, and the six-year-old? He loves it.

## Fact File

SsangYong Turismo

ES auto 4WD

Engine: 2.0 turbo diesel

Power: 155BHP

0-62mph: 14.2 secs

Top speed: 107mph

Combined miles per gallon: 36.2

Transmission: five-speed auto

CO2 g/km: 205