



The Generation Game

Ian Lamming test drives the new Vauxhall Corsa

Q UITE simply, we are not worthy. Five generations in 32 years, 12 million units sold to date including 84,000 whilst in the final year of its current guise; as mere mortals, who are we to comment, assess, or critique the latest Corsa.

Corsa (though in the UK one of those generations was actually badged Nova) has been a faithful friend, a cult car, an unmitigated success.

It has helped Vauxhall through thick and thin, has out sold every other car in the market and being GM's most profitable car.

What a daunting prospect then to meddle with its form, yet meddle the Griffin boffins have.

Presenting the new Corsa, a car that promises much and delivers everything. One look shows it is fresh and modern, contemporary and appealing to all generations.

But there is so much more to boast about including cleaner and more economical engines, a handling-boosting lower centre of gravity, improved driving dynamics and a much cheaper price tag than the stalwart it replaces.

Vauxhall has been making cars since 1903;

arguably the new Corsa is the most important yet, the meat and veg of the range, designed to appeal to private and fleet buyers alike in simply huge volumes.

Kerb appeal :- Where to start? I suppose kerb appeal or should I say showroom appeal must come first and the new Corsa offers three-door sporty or five-door practicality. There's a hint of Astra about the rear, elements of Cascada and Adam in the front and an overall air of familiarity to appeal to existing Corsa owners.

It is very much an evolution of a successful formula and the proportions are exactly the same. Its instantly recognizable but muscular and precise lines, coupled with trick parts such as the wing-shaped LED running lights, make it more of a head turner.

There are 14 colours to choose from, eight trim levels and goodness knows how many affordable accessories.

Heated windscreen is standard for the first time, which sorts out any fogging issues, and there's the chance to load Corsa with bi-xenon lights with cornering lamps, advanced park assist, front and





rear cameras, lane departure warning, collision alert, high beam assist and blind spot warning. Inside there are heated seats and steering wheel to keep your extremities glowing, touch screen, Bluetooth and DAB. There's audio streaming so you can use the satnav app on your phone. How modern is that?

Under the bonnet there is the choice of 1.0 litre and 1.4 litre petrol turbos or a 1.3 litre turbo diesel. Great emphasis has been placed on low down grunt, which makes small engines feel much bigger than they actually are while being more economical and cleaner to run.

Motors deliver the power via super slick six-speed manual gearboxes or a five-speed auto.

The interior is a revelation, oozing quality and offering the feel of a premium car at a fraction of the cost. Lavish specifications and the latest touch screen technology, coupled with tactile, soft touch materials give Corsa a high-end feel not normally associated with the sector.

All this and new Corsa is about a grand cheaper than the competition and between £1,000 and £1,500 less than the model it replaces, which will boost residuals and help with PCP (lease plans) and tax benefits.

Out in the fast lane: So what is it like on the road? Well the 1.4T does a fine job thanks to its 100PS motor and comfortable ride.

But, for me, the pick of the bunch would be the 1.0 litre, three cylinder turbo on 16in alloys, which comes with sports suspension. It's a beauty. The smaller motor not only pulls harder than its larger capacity sibling – it whops out 115PS – it sounds and feels more characterful, offers spirited performance and superb handling.

It is just so much fun, which is exactly what drivers are looking for nowadays, both young and old.

A great deal of time, effort and pride has gone into making new Corsa a laudable successor to a brand that is very much an automotive icon. We may not be worthy but Vauxhall's new baby certainly is.

Putting Corsa on the map: With a car this important it is only appropriate that at Corsa's launch it becomes a world record holder.

As countless motoring hacks and a GM test driver piloted the car thousands of miles around the UK, on-board transponders drew the largest piece of internet art in the world securing the model a place in the Guinness Book of Records.



Above: Lavish specifications and the latest touch screen technology, coupled with tactile, soft touch materials give Corsa a high-end feel not normally associated with the sector.