

Teleportation Technology

*Motor
Madness*



Ian Lamming switches the light on the latest Audi Allroad

MY dad remembers the first electric bulb in his street; they all tramped round to watch it being turned on and off. He doesn't need to go far now to switch on his own LEDs; how quickly things have moved on.

My son, fed up with the daily commute no doubt, is obsessed with teleportation and when you think about it we have been sharing the dream since the 1960s and the molecular transporter installed on Star Trek's Enterprise – schoom.

As far as we know, we are not there yet but Audi's new A4 Allroad is the next best thing.

Consider this; one Friday this accomplished estate car with off-road pretensions takes us from the Lakes to Barnard Castle, on to Darlington, York and back to Barney, then to Keswick for pre-theatre dinner, a nice performance of the Secret Garden at the Theatre by the Lake, before returning home.

The really strange thing is that I remember very little about any of the journeys except to say they were swift, comfortable, relaxing and without fatigue. Few cars have this mile-chewing ability; it's uncanny but much-welcomed by the teleportation boy in the back.

In every way the A4 is a thoroughbred and it is the sum of its superlative parts that make it such a great car.

Allroad additions make it look a bit taller and more robust for off road antics – very smart, very purposeful.

The 2.0 litre diesel is relaxed and powerful, allowing Allroad to cover ground with alacrity.

The seven speed auto is the perfect companion and I love the stubby gearlever and paddleshift. There's also the ability to switch dynamics – sporty, normal, off-road – and there's even hill descent control to complement the Quattro all wheel drive.

It's only when the snow falls and freezes and the world slithers to a halt do you realise just how good this system is. While and old farm Land Rover tows white vans and hatchbacks up the slippery hill, A4 reverses away from the blockage with consummate ease and not so much as a twitch from the tyres.

In fairer conditions the Quattro helps the A4 perform like you would not believe as the 190PS turbo diesel thrusts it out of bends, driver gripping the delightfully tactile flat-bottomed chunky leather steering wheel, while your body is held in place by stunning sports seats.

Also helping to pass the time is the stupendous interior. Like it's not enough to have a satnav that seemingly looks down on you from space, with real pictures rather than mappy graphics, but this awesome display can be transferred to the dash and you can shrink the clocks for a wider display.

The way the interior is laid out, the easy to use mouse wheel, the gorgeous alloy switches and hi-tech infotainment – playing through a top spec, 19-speaker, 3D sound, Danish Bang

& Olufsen hi-fi by the way – is a feast for the senses and again goes to explain why time flies.

A4 is a long way from the first filament that entertained the previous generation and it has arrived in super-quick time.

If science does finally work out how to teleport it wouldn't surprise me if Audi had a hand in the technology. Now that is worth getting the neighbours round for.

Fact File

- Audi A4 Allroad
- Engine: 2.0 diesel
- Power: 190PS
- 0-62mph: 7.8secs
- Top speed: 136mph
- Combined MPG: 56.5
- Transmission: seven-speed auto
- CO2 g/km: 132
- Price: £39,475.00, as tested with extras £50,895.00