

Expect the Unexpected

MotorMadness



Ian Lamming takes a global look at one of the latest SUVs to hit the market

WHEN a self-confessed auto-file – I've just made that word up to describe someone who hates cars – actually notices your vehicle and comments favourably then it's clear the designers have done something right.

Sure enough, the new Infiniti Q30S is a fine looking motor, which must upset Mercedes no end because the GLA on which it is based isn't that shapely.

In fact, fine doesn't describe it sufficiently; it is fabulous, particularly with 19in alloys. It is incredible to see what Nissan has managed to do with the Q30S given the fact it was rushed to market to fill a very important slot.

Ironically, given the Brexit vote, and for how much longer only Nissan knows, Q30 is crafted in Washington and uses lots of bits from the Mercedes GLA/A Class and the option of an engine from Renault, the stunning 1.5 litre diesel.

You would expect, on paper, the better option to be the 2.1 litre diesel out of the GLA. But like many things in life, back to Brexit, you have to live with the unexpected. The 1.5 litre diesel is an excellent engine in whatever car it chooses to power.

In the Q30S it is simply brilliant offering as much silky smooth power as you could ever hope for but with 63mpg easily achievable. For me, that's a brilliant combination.

The six-speed manual box it is attached to is great as well. Add in clever fly-by-wire steering, that weights up the faster you go, and you have a great combination for a dynamic drive.

Infiniti has also done a splendid job with the interior, which feels lavish and modern. The satnav, like all Nissans, is standard-setting. It is just so easy to use. Press 'nav' on the touch screen, press destination, fill in the postcode and go. Why can't all satnavs be this easy?

All of these positives build a picture of a car that is very easy to live with. It is fun and frugal, dynamic and delightful, practical and precise.

If you are expecting a 'but' at this point you will be disappointed – I told you to expect the unexpected. There isn't one.

If I really try to find fault, really really try, then the heater controls are a bit low but that's about it and even then you soon adjust to it.

What you are left with is one of the best looking cars on the road, made in Britain with Asian and European co-operation – now there's a rare thing – that should be to the delight of those people who love cars and those who don't.

There's got to be a deeper message to the world in there somewhere.

Fact File

- Infiniti Q30 1.5D
- Engine: 1.5 litre diesel
- Power: 109PS
- 0-62mph: 12 secs
- Top speed: 118mph
- Combined miles per gallon: 67.3
- Transmission: six-speed manual
- CO2 g/km: 109