

X - Appeal

Built in the North, driven across the world, **Ian Lamming** assesses the latest SUV from Infiniti, the QX30

It's only one letter but it makes such a difference – X.

'X' should read 'cross' because that's what it means. While Infiniti's Q30 is more than happy to rumble across tarmac, the QX30 will venture cross-country. So the X could also be for 4X4.

Higher ride height and all wheel drive differentiate the two and for those who live in the country it is an obvious but no less brilliant addition to the range.

Time to mention but gloss over that 30 is a reskinned, tinkered with Mercedes GLA, mainly because it is better inside and out and spec for spec probably cheaper.

It's a nice thought that something this able and high quality is built up the road at Nissan's Sunderland/Washington plant, a factory that remains so central to the prosperity of the region. They even built a massive extension for this model that produced an extra 300 jobs. Keep up the good work people.

QX's real strength, for me, is the look. I love its lines, its curves, its proportions. It really is a fine and splendid looking car from any angle and much better than the model from which it was spawned.

Flowing wavy lines, a high stance, coupled to low roofline and reasonable girth make the QX both attractive and muscular at the same time. It would have you in a fight but you would enjoy the beating.

The interior is smart and well equipped too with swathes of leather, touch screen paraphernalia and a warm and welcoming ambience. It's a great place to be, particularly on long journeys, which it completes with aplomb.

For being taller on the road, it still handles the twists and turns exceptionally well.

Body control is spot on and there is no rocking or rolling of passengers or luggage; it is very stable.

Grip, oh yes, I like a bit of grip, is excellent thanks to intelligent all wheel drive. It is no better at The Times crossword for being all smarty-pants but it knows how to move around the power to maintain the maximum grip.

The 2.2 litre diesel has just enough puff and cruises economically enough, especially when you try – 51mpg, hurray.

This is mated to a very slick automatic box that is operated by the tiniest gear lever ever, which is much better than the column stalks some manufacturers prefer.

Q30 caught my eye when it was on the concept stand.

The real version differed little and the QX is simply brilliant at extending that success to the crossover sector – sheer genius.

Fact File

- Infiniti QX30 2.2D
- Engine: 2.2 litre diesel
- Power: 170PS
- 0-62mph: 8.5
- Top speed: 134mph
- Combined miles per gallon: 57.6
- Transmission: seven-speed auto
- CO2 g/km: 128

