

All Pumped Up

Ian Lamming gets all pumped up over Seat's new SUV, the Ateca

NOW there's a first, a proper Seat SUV. But this vehicle is so much more than first time lucky because it is a cracker. Given the parent company, VAG, it's not that surprising; they have been doing 4x4s for a long time.

But that's not to detract in any way from the new Ateca which is new, fresh and standout good.

SUVs are now the big boys of the motoring world outselling every other sector. They are just so useful offering a much better view of the world than normal cars, great practicality and the ability to handle bad weather. They therefore help take the stress out of life and Ateca is right up there with the best of them.

It looks good, even a friend of mine who likes nothing but Land Rover liked it – high praise indeed. It isn't especially radical but it is well

proportioned and smart.

Inside is the same; really well made, superbly specified, with every toy the modern motorist demands and desires.

The colour screen in the dash not only responds to your touch but actually picks up the movement of your hand as you approach and projects necessary information to where your fingers are about to land.

All the Bluetooth interfacing web stuff is there allowing you to conduct all your business on digital devices through the car.

Hi-tech gubbins apart, this is still car and it drives supremely well. The 2.0 litre diesel is strong and economical.

The throttle and clutch are light and positive. The brakes are strong.

The ride is excellent. It soaks up the bumps but leaves sporty responses for those who enjoy the curves and the steering is as sharp as a kitten's tooth.

The tailgate is powered, which I love as it keeps my hands clean and I like clean hands.

The transmission tunnel storage has one of those natty phone charger pads and all the controls are easy to use and intuitive.

If this is Seat's first attempt at an SUV then it is a brilliant one. Makes you wonder what they will bring out next, but by this token you know it will be great.

Fact File

- Seat Ateca 2.0 TDI 4Drive
- Engine: 2.0
- Power: 150PS
- 0-62mph: 9.0 secs
- Top speed: 122mph
- Combined MPG: 55.4
- Transmission: six-speed manual
- CO2 g/km: 129

