

Curves in all the



right places

By Ian Lamming

Fact File

Infiniti Q50 2.2D

Engine: 2.2 litre diesel

Power: 170PS

0-62mph: 8.5

Top speed: 144mph

Combined miles per gallon: 64.2

Transmission: six speed manual

Insurance: 40

CO2 g/km: 114

A BRAND new model; now there's something a bit different.

Normally we get new versions of familiar names, updated variants, reworked and reheated models. But this time Infiniti has served up a helping of Q50 and it is fresh to the specials board.

So what is it? It's a fair question with Infiniti as it could be anything from a luxurious saloon to a large SUV which thinks it's a sports car.

This time the Q is a four door saloon and it is quite a looker. The buzz phrase on the packaging is that 'the perfect line is a curve' and designers have certainly got that right with the Q50.

This thing wiggles divinely from its curvaceous front to its voluptuous rump; a more striking saloon you would struggle to find. Every line is designed to appeal, to excite, to shine and Infiniti has certainly hit the mark with its aesthetics.

Inside is pretty special too with not one but two touch screens. The first controls the excellent satnav, the second you can use to manipulate the Bose hi-fi or order a pizza if you like. Very iPad.

The view is even better from the back seat and Q50 is a car I would be more than happy to be chauffeured in. The light floods in illuminating luscious leather and delightful

dash; the interior is difficult to fault and there is a more than useful boot with a ski-hatch for long stuff, in this case a roller on an extendable pole to paint my stairwell.

As the actual test begins I'm fair chomping at the bit and there's the rub. The 2.2 diesel is not the refined beast I was hoping for. There is plenty of power and torque and it flies merrily along the motorways, over the steeply inclined country roads and through the glorious Yorkshire Dales.

Given the performance the average fuel consumption of 58mpg is impressive too and to sharpen up handling there's the option to switch into sports mode. The six speed gearbox is both a surprise on this class of car and a mistake so opt for the seven speed auto if you like the look of the Q50. It is too vague and notchy to be any fun and comes with a heavy clutch, neither great on the open roads or in town.

If you don't fancy the diesel then there's also an interesting looking V6 petrol/electric hybrid which boasts some serious performance and a version with all wheel drive.

So Q50 is new and it is certainly different which is refreshing. I love the looks, the power and the economy and while the diesel manual leaves things wanting it also leaves me wondering what the auto and the hybrids are like, which has got to be good.