



A luxury motor with bags of class

MERCEDES

- Mercedes E250 CDI AMG Estate
- Engine: 2.1 twin turbocharged diesel
- Power: 204HP
- 0-60mph: 7.8 secs
- Top speed: 144mph
- Combined miles per gallon: 52.3
- Transmission: seven speed auto
- Insurance: 39
- CO2 g/km: 145

WHEN you have miles to munch there really is nothing better than a big Mercedes.

The German luxury car maker has been developing automotive flight for so long now that it just about thinks of everything.

The Mercedes E250 CDI AMG Blue Efficiency Sports Estate, say that in one breath, is steeped in Teutonic technology designed to keep you moving no matter how hard the world tries to stop you.

We are all used to front and side airbags (Mercedes invented them) but that's not enough for the new E Class, it comes with pelvis, knee and window bags, for

goodness sake.

But for them to be deployed you would have to be extremely unlucky as there are so many other gizmos under the skin to keep you free from crashing in the first place. This car virtually scans the environment, delves into the sinister depths of other road users' minds and makes sure you can side-step any erratic moves.

That means you can relax into the driving experience and what an experience that promises to be.

Pick any point on the test route out of the hat and this car is happy, contented, inspired; it's difficult to know where to start.

Well, this is North

Yorkshire so it has to look posh and the new lines and lights are just the job. The LED set up is on trend and even during the day turns heads with its starship appearance.

At nights it is a revelation with a daylight beam that moves to where you need it most.

E has always had class and the new look brings it nicely to the fore; it really is a striking car, particularly with the AMG 18in alloys and its long, low, swoopy lines. Gosh it looks grand outside the old hall.

The E250 CDI sounds like it should be powered by a 2.5 litre diesel but it's not.

It's a 2.1 but tuned to the teeth offering

204HP and the performance of a hot-hatch. It romps along the A66 and A1, it blasts through the Dales and down the A roads. But in town it is quiet and refined and the taxi heritage comes through with incredible manoeuvrability that belies its size.

The air suspension is simply superb at not only soaking up the bumpy stuff, of which there is plenty, but controlling the body perfectly. It's hard to believe that such a big car can feel this sporty, this sharp, this much fun, but it does.

Then there's the sheer convenience of a car equipped this well. The 3D satnav takes you door to door and if you need to

by Ian Lamming

unload, the boot hatch is electrically operated so there's no need to get your hands grubby. There are also lovely heated leather seats which move electrically for height and rake, dual zone climate control, a fantastic surround sound hi-fi with optional video in the back, and a general feeling of opulence which many up market manufacturers struggle to match.

So whether you are flitting round the block, hitting the road hard, or just out for a potter, there really is nothing better than a big Mercedes.