

MOTORING MATTERS by Sandie Goodwin

CITROËN LAUNCHES NEW C5

With their strong green credentials, Citroen has created a strong line up of new models in recent years. Now the C5 is about to go on sale in the UK and once again Citroen have designed a car that is both green and a driver's delight. Many will remember the famous Citroen dancing robot, so in the latest new tv advertising campaign, Citroen have chosen to play off the reputation of their German rivals marketing the new C5 as "Unmistakeably German". Wagner's famous 'Ride of the Valkyries' provides the music as the hero drives his C5, as yet "unidentified", from a swashbuckling duel outside a snowy gothic castle to a traditional Bavarian hofbräuhaus, before joining the Autobahn to Berlin where he pulls up in front of the historic Brandenburg Gates. The narrator, Wolf Kahler, with German accent, introduces the campaign strapline, 'Unmistakeably German', wryly adding 'Made in France', to confirm that only Citroën could style such a car and provide the consumer with a strong and credible alternative.

At the UK launch, journalists soon discovered the new C5 is full of French flair. The spacious cabin is comfortable and has a quality finish, nothing looks "plasticky" as many front dashboards do these days. There is a wide range of equipment available to choose from; a driver's seat massager, lane departure warning system, acoustic laminated glass, self-levelling suspension, automatic electric parking brake and directional headlights. All models have at least seven airbags, ESP with traction control, automatic air-conditioning, speed limiter, cruise control, Adaptive Front-lighting System and Citroën's unique fixed hub steering wheel.

This car is sure to appeal to drivers who do a lot of long distance driving. The comfort levels are complimented by easy to use controls. Ambient lighting glows from both the dashboard and the doors. The instrument panel has aviation inspired annular needles with an electronic display integrated into the middle.

The C5 also benefits from a second generation fixed-centred controls steering wheel, putting many of the car's main functions, including cruise control, audio and telephone, right at the driver's finger tips. This fixed centre steering wheel also contains a specially created torso-shaped bag for ultimate safety. The car has been awarded a five-star Euro NCAP rating for adult occupant protection, making it one of the safest cars on the road.

The new C5 is offered in a choice of three trim levels – SX, VTR+ and Exclusive, and the C5 is extremely well specified. Cruise control and a speed limiter are fitted as standard, whilst most versions are equipped with an automatic electric parking-brake and hill-start assist. For ease



of parking and pedestrian safety, the C5 is also available with front and rear parking sensors, as well as a parking gap assistance system. Citroën's new-generation NaviDrive system, featuring a 7-inch colour central display screen and voice activation of the built-in GSM telephone, audio system and satellite navigation is an optional extra.

The C5 has a choice of two suspension set-ups. There is a conventional spring suspension strikes an excellent balance between practicality, driving pleasure and robust road-holding; or you can choose Citroën's highly acclaimed Hydractive self-levelling suspension which adjusts itself continuously and intuitively according to the road, driving conditions and the driver's motoring style, for a smooth ride.

Engine choices are the petrol 127bhp 1.8i 16V and 143bhp 2.0i 16V units, while there are four HDi diesel engines – 110bhp, 138bhp, 173bhp and V6 208 units – all fitted with a Diesel Particulate Filter System that virtually eliminates particle emissions. The C5 saloon will be joined by the Tourer, later this year.

Xavier Duchemin, Managing Director at Citroën UK, said: "The new C5 offers a sophisticated driving experience exemplified by its advanced vehicle technology, uncompromising safety features and its stunning design. Our customers want and deserve the highest standards in comfort, reliability, safety, performance and style. And with the new Citroën C5 that is exactly what we are offering."

CO2 FROM NEW VEHICLES DECREASES

Figures from the SMMT, show that each vehicle made in Britain requires half the energy to produce than it did just five years ago, saving an estimated 700,000 tonnes of CO2 a year. Total combined waste to landfill is also down by more than half, from 80,399 tonnes in 2000 to 39,862 tonnes in 2006. During the last ten years, significant and sustained progress has been made in cutting CO2 emissions from new cars. Among comprehensive figures in SMMT's latest CO2 report is the headline that average CO2 has fallen 13% since 1997. "Our latest CO2 report shows how far we have come, but also the challenges that lie ahead," said SMMT chief executive Paul Everitt. "Industry is bringing more new technologies to market. Encouraging consumers to embrace these and choose lower-CO2 emitting variants must be our priority. However, this is not a task for industry alone; car makers, government, fuel companies and new car buyers have a role to play in delivering lower carbon motoring."

FACTS AND FIGURES

- A 13% improvement in average CO2 reduction since 1997
 - 39.5% of new car market under 140g/km CO2 last year; just 3.9% in 1997
 - Band B emitting cars set to overtake Band G sellers for the first time in 2008
 - Diesel penetration at 40.2% in the UK; 26.5% in 1997
 - Diesel duty lower than petrol in all major European markets except the UK
 - Total CO2 emitted by cars has fallen 4.8% since 1997; 72.2 to 68.7 million tonnes
 - Government revenue from motorists up from £33.8 to £45.1 bn since 1997
- Paul Everitt added, "We shall be working with government to help shape the new car CO2 regulation, emphasising the need for appropriate lead-times, fines that are closely aligned to the market price of carbon and with suitable incentives for innovation. We will also be urging government to ensure that the diversity of the market and car manufacturing bases in the UK are protected."