

MOTORING MATTERS by Anthony Goodwin

EXEO - ANOTHER GREAT SEAT

Not wanting to do things by halves, SEAT has launched the new Exeo. Its styling is in keeping with smaller brothers with its arrow designed nose and the SEAT logo boot latch. Those with a keen eye will also notice its very close resemblance to one of the other Volkswagen group cars, namely the Audi A4.

Once inside the Exeo you can really see that SEAT have gone all out on the luxury feel and quality. Standard equipment includes 6 airbags, dual zone climate control, ABS with EBD and traction control. Another standard feature which I think was fantastic and so easy to use is the Bluetooth connectivity, just search for Bluetooth devices on your mobile and sync then you have a hands free kit already in the car. We had the Sports version on road test, so we got sports seats, dark tinted rear windows and sports suspension. Because the standard equipment is so high, the options list isn't the largest in the world. Although those who like

gadgets and something different can opt for the hi-tech solar sunroof - an exceptional new feature keeps the car interior cooler on hot days by activating the air vents and drawing cool ambient air through the cabin. The power is supplied by small solar panels located within the sunroof, so it doesn't drain the battery. This system works even when the engine isn't running, especially good when you park your car and can't find any shade.



So on to how it drives; we had the 2.0 TDi 16v 170 ps. At present you can choose from three diesels and one petrol engine. The petrol is a 2.0 TSI and delivers 200ps, the diesels are all common rail and have diesel particulate filters to help with those emissions. All of the engines comply with EU5



emission guidelines, this make the Exeo the first model in its segment to comply with these strict guidelines. At the moment you can only get the Exeo with a 6 speed manual gearbox, there is an automatic planned for release before the end of 2009. Road fund for the diesels are £125 per year for the 2.0 TDi 143ps and the petrol is £175 per year. I did like the sporty feel of the car and it certainly did pull away from traffic lights well, especially for a diesel. The sports suspension was sporty yet comfortable and dealt with bumps in the road with ease. I especially enjoyed driving it on

the motorways where I can see it living most of its life. Put the Exeo into sixth gear, turn on the cruise control and the fuel economy was a great 47.8 mpg, which for a car of its size is brilliant.

Safety features are highly regarded with the Exeo. Along with the standard airbags you can also get optional driver knee airbag. There is no Euro Ncap rating as yet but I am sure it will gain a 5 star rating. Insurance groups range from 12e to 14e which for a car of this size is very good.

Some interesting facts about the SEAT Exeo - well I think they are. It's only taken 18 months to develop and get into production. It takes 25.5 hrs to make each of the new Exeo. Working around the clock, a total of 1,200 trucks shifted part of the new Exeo facilities from Ingolstadt in Germany to Martorell and the Zona Franca plant in Barcelona in only eight weeks.

Prices start at £18,240 for the 2.0 TDi in S spec with the range topping 2.0 TDi SE Lux being £21,940.

EVSTORES START DELIVERIES OF ELECTRIC MYCAR

Deliveries of the electric MyCar have now started in London. Launched at the British Motor Show in 2008, the car went on sale earlier this year exclusively from evstores in Park Lane, Mayfair. Now production has started and vehicles are being delivered to delighted customers in London.

The MyCar has been under development for five years starting with the original styling concept by Giugiaro in Italy. The electric drive system was developed in Hong Kong with the help of the Polytechnic University and manufacturing is now under way in a dedicated plant in China. Using the light car concept the MyCar is available now and priced realistically at £9,995,- on the road. Its net weight is half of the lightest production car thus dramatically reducing its environmental impact. Evstores' General Manager Phil Retsas says the MyCar exemplifies the future of urban mobility: "Light electric cars make a lot of sense because they use less materials, are energy efficient and can be

priced realistically. Unlike many of the concepts that are being presented to the media by other car manufacturers the MyCar is available now at a price that is affordable and competitive'.



MORE COSTS FOR MOTORISTS

From October, drivers who defend themselves against a motoring charge will have to pay the bulk of their costs, even if found not guilty, say the Association of British Drivers. They will only be able to reclaim costs equivalent to the rate for legal aid, which is considerably lower than that applied by solicitors to private clients. So drivers who know they are innocent face the choice of pleading guilty and being punished for a crime they did not commit, or prove their innocence and be punished financially.

ABD spokesman Nigel Humphries comments: "This type of justice has no place in the 21st century. The new system is clearly designed to discourage drivers from seeking justice and is discriminatory against a large section of the population. Drivers are automatically assumed to be guilty, yet there have been many cases where drivers have been accused unjustly, especially for speeding. Local authorities often fail in their duty to provide and maintain the signs legally required to show what speed limits apply, and some speed measuring devices used by the police have been shown capable of giving seriously inaccurate readings.

FUEL FOR THOUGHT

With fuel prices once again on the rise, more motorists are looking for cheaper fuel. But STP say there is an easier answer. STP Petrol Treatment and STP Diesel Treatment are specially formulated to improve engine performance and can reduce fuel consumption by tackling the build-up of harmful deposits. Effective at cutting potential long-term costs is STP Diesel Treatment, which like the petrol variant, is specially formulated to remove varnish, carbon deposits and water from the fuel system, to prevent poor performance, corrosion and fuel wastage.

Ideally added every 1250miles/2,000km, Diesel Treatment also contains a cetane improver to enhance cold start performance, and will restore lost power and performance whilst reducing smoke and noise in the process.

Both fuel treatments are available in a 250ml bottle and are priced at RRP £3.99 and £4.49 for petrol and diesel respectively, which when added as recommended, amounts to a cost of just 2.4 pence per mile and 2.8 pence per mile.

