

MOTERING MATTERS *by Anthony Goodwin*

MORE THAN A CONVERTIBLE...

The Saab 9-3 convertible is a stylish, yet practical, four seater car. Those who read Motoring Matters regularly will remember that I featured the 9-3 convertible earlier on this year and I did say that I would have a more in-depth review when I had the car for a whole week to test. So here is my review for you.

The Saab 93 has definitely got Scandinavian style, with clean lines roof up or down it certainly is a looker. The model we had on test was the fantastic 93 Aero 1.9 TTiD in white with a sand coloured hood. Lucky for me the week that we had the car the weather was kind and the sun was out most days so it was roof down driving for me. Even when it got a little chilly all I did was turn on the heated seats and the intelligent automatic climate control. The engine is one of Saab's best, it's the TTiD, and it's a two stage turbo. There is a smaller turbo which works up to 1800r/min, then the larger kicks in once you get to 3000 r/min, the larger one takes over all on its own. This means better performance and lower emissions. Fuel consumption

is good at 48.7 mpg and CO2 emission of 154; this means road tax is £150 per year, great for its size and performance. I can report that the twin turbos were great and worked well, especially when you want to overtake they kicked in quickly and with no turbo lag. On the motorway simply put on the cruise control and the car is comfortable and you can see the fuel savings.

Whilst we had the car I drove up to Manchester, not just a little pop to the shops trip! I can report that I arrived feeling the same as I left home, the car just ate the miles and even stuck in a little traffic I didn't get stressed. Getting out of the Saab in Manchester I had no aches or pains that you can sometimes get on long journeys. Having said that it was great on motorways you may be thinking so is it any good on those twisting a and b roads? The answer is yes, the sporty looks of the 93 convertible are not just for show. Saab has designed the car with driving and comfort at its core. For instance the steering rack is low mounted

which gives you excellent feel, precision and the power steering is progressive so you feel connected to the wheels at all times.

So what do you get as standard? Well, there is ESP, ABS and traction control along with rear parking sensors front fog lamps. As for inside the car you get all round electric windows, electric door mirrors and cruise control. Saab are well known for their safety and the new 93 convertible is packed full of safety features that include 6 airbags, they have head/thorax side airbags in the front seats. This is why it has achieved the same EuroNcap rating as the salon, a full five stars.

Prices start from £26,025 for the Linear SE 1.8t with fuel consumption of 47.9 mpg and co2 emissions of 186, road fund of £215. With the range topping Aero 2.8 V6 being £34,618 fuel consumption 28 mpg and road fund of £405. Our test model was £32,562. There is an extensive options list so you can personalise to your heart's content.



BENTLEY UNVEILS WORLD'S MOST LUXURIOUS CHARITY BUS

A former London Routemaster bus has been luxuriously restored by Bentley Motors and handed over to St Luke's hospice, based in Winsford, Cheshire. The project has taken 2000 hours to complete with 59 Bentley workers involved. Retaining many of the original features of the bus, adapted to the needs of St Luke's the bus has the leather for which Bentley cars are synonymous, hand stitched with the St Luke's and Bentley logos. Other skilled craftsmen from Bentley's woodshop, toolroom and maintenance departments developed bespoke work surfaces, rails, kitchen unit and shelves to help St Luke's staff in their public awareness and fundraising activities. The craftsmen are particularly proud of the "used ticket" bin, a feature at the exit of all Routemaster buses which has now been converted into a donation tin.

The Bentley production manager in charge of the project, Gary Lazenby, said: "This has been a real labour of love for all those involved. Bentley staff are incredibly proud of the cars we produce but applying those skills to a bus was a totally new experience for all. We are very grateful to the many local suppliers who provided materials free of charge to help make this iconic vehicle fit for a new lease of life."

The bus, named Luke, will be used as a travelling shop for colleges and universities as well as an education and awareness base to visit schools and other events. There will also be an on-board charity shop to help the hospice raise funds while on the road.



SAY HELLO TO THE NEW BABY KIA

When mum-to-be Sam Smyth felt the beginnings of labour at 02:00am on Sunday morning, she called her mother who came to the rescue in her Kia Carens.

Installed in the Carens, alongside expectant father Tony Richardson, a swift trip to Poole Hospital followed. However, baby didn't want to wait and at 04:30am things had progressed somewhat with Samantha giving birth to a healthy baby girl weighing in at 6lbs 7ozs in the back of the Carens.

The couple originally planned to call the new arrival Tilley, but to celebrate her unusual arrival into the world they decided that Kia was more appropriate.

Kia Motors (UK) Ltd. couldn't ignore the chance to give a youngster a helping hand in life and immediately stepped in with an unusual gift – a newly registered 2009 top-of-the-range seven-seat Kia Carens, valued at £17,995.

Happy mum of Kia, Sam, said; "I'm just so chuffed. I can't believe it. Thank you to Kia for arriving and to Kia for the car!"

