

## MOTORING MATTERS by Anthony Goodwin

### THE KIA SORENTO RE-INVENTED

The new Kia Sorento has been designed in Kia's designed studio in California, a place where they know a thing or two about lifestyle SUV's. Now with a monocoque chassis, improved on road manners and increased off road equipment, the Kia Sorento definitely has a more premium feel and great value for money. Kia took it very seriously when they re-designed the Sorento - one question they asked was what do the customers demand from an SUV? One thing is 7 seats, you can also have a 5 seat version. Kia has been clever with how they have made space available for 3 rows of seats, including pruning interior components to maximise space. Our test model was the Sorento KX-2 so we had leather interior, cruise control, rear privacy glass and heated front seats.

Let's talk about the exterior firstly; the new family grille sets the tone of the Kia Sorento rugged but not too aggressive. They have lowered it by 15mm, lengthened it by 95mm and sits 19mm closer to the ground compared to the previous model. It's also more aerodynamic which helps with emission figures. As you go down the sides you see the extended wheel arches which lead nicely to the rear with its all new boot lid and light clusters, which on the top of the range model are LED lights. The new monocoque chassis means a great on road drive, with very little body roll too. I enjoyed driving the new Kia Sorento. On the motorway it was comfortable and the cruise control was brilliant. Around town the high seating position made



visibility clear and the rear parking sensors helped with getting into those tight spaces.

Interior looks are very impressive with leather from medium trim level up! All surfaces are tactile and have a premium feel to them; as you would expect they are also tough and easy to

clean for those who want to take it off road or for those with children. Standard equipment includes, leather trimmed steering wheel and gearshift, all round electric windows and gear shift indicator on manual models. I have said before in reports that I love this little touch, not only does it help with fuel economy it also means you drive greener as you are always aware of the correct gear you should be in. There are four trim levels the Sorento 1, KX-1, KX-2 and KX-3, the Sorento 1 is the base model and is the one model to be available in 2WD. Seven seats are standard on all diesel models.

As for safety the Kia Sorento is the third Kia to achieve a full 5 star Euro NCAP rating, with the upgrade of models this number will increase across the range. You get 6 airbags, ABS with EBD, active front head restraints and Electronic Stability control. There are 2 engines to choose from, the 2.4 ltr petrol version is only available as the Sorento 1, otherwise you have the 2.2 ltr CRDi engine. Here are some figures for you 2.4 ltr petrol top speed of 118 mph, 33 mpg and Co2 emissions of 203 g/km, this means road fund of £245 per year. The 2.2 ltr CRDi has a top speed of 118 mph, 43 mpg and Co2 emissions of 174 g/km so that's an impressive £180 per year.

Prices start at £20,495 for the Sorento 1 petrol version with the range topping Sorento KX-3 coming in at £29,795. All Kia models come with a 7 year 100,000 mile warranty. In my view this is a fantastic all round SUV with unrivalled warranty and is great value for money.

### SMARTER, SIMPLER NAVIGATION FROM MIO

Three new models of Navman series are about to go on sale. The Mio Navman 470, 475 and 575 come with in-built IQ Routes TM, an intelligent feature that anticipates congestion on roads at peak times, so they can be avoided. It uses real-life information collected from millions of drivers to calculate the best possible route, resulting in a faster and more efficient journey. The Navman range comes in two different screen sizes - the neat 4.3 inch Navman 470 and 475, and the bold 4.7 inch Navman 575, with 3D Junction Views for clear guidance at complex junctions, safety camera warnings and Text-to-Speech for spoken street names.

The new Navman series use a feature called LearnMe(tm), which, over time, recognises the roads you like to drive on. It then adapts

its route options to suit individual preferences. The Navman 475 and 575 also include live traffic information and updates, ensuring users are always informed of traffic alerts in real-time. Another first in sat-nav technology, these Navman devices allow customers to rent additional UK and international maps for a short period of time. This means no more buying extra maps for a one-off use, giving an ideal, cost-effective solution for short road trips and holidays. In addition, Mio Total Refresh Latest Map Guarantee allows new users to make sure that they have the very latest map available for their region upon purchase of a device - meaning the days of finding a route blocked by a brand new motorway, or encountering a dead end that wasn't there before are over.

### DARK DAYS FOR MOTORISTS

Petrol prices in the UK continue to rise and record high petrol prices within weeks are being predicted in what's being described as 'dark days for motorists' by the AA and the RAC. Soaring oil prices and the Chancellor's staggered introduction of the crippling 3p per litre fuel duty rise could push the price of petrol up higher than ever before. "It's now when, not if, petrol prices hit record levels," said Adrian Tink of the RAC.

Since mid-March, the average price of diesel has risen from 116.87p a litre to 121.56, adding £2.35 to the cost filling an average size tank tank. At the time of writing this article, average UK petrol prices have reached 120.53p a litre, up 4.44p on mid-March's average of 116.09p. Supermarkets continue to hold back on prices rises with Asda 2.5p below the UK average and, for the first time in months, all four majors have average petrol and diesel prices that undercut non-supermarket retailers.