



MASERATI QUATTROPORTE 3.0 V6 DIESEL

Tim Barnes Clay tells us why the legendary Quattroporte outdrives all its would-be rivals

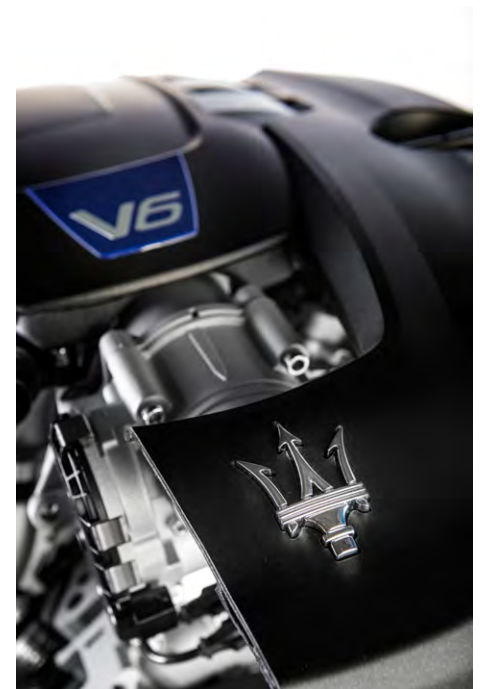
Maserati's Quattroporte had been a motoring legend for half a century. Many cars have tried to bring the fight to the Italian-made monster, but have never quite hit the mark. Luxury saloons such as Jaguar's XJ, Mercedes-Benz's S-Class, BMW's 7 Series, Audi's A8 and Porsche's Panamera are among the models currently aiming for the Quattroporte's super-stardom status.

The 3.0-litre diesel engine introduced to the Quattroporte has pushed the four-door car into another sphere of popularity, due to its relatively frugal running costs compared with its far thirstier petrol powered sister units. The high-end chauffeuring sector has already cottoned on to this – check out the posher end of airport arrival and departure drop off points and you'll see what I mean.

So, although it's good enough to transport people with a substantial serving of sophistication and style – and motor along without juicing-out too quickly – the Maserati Quattroporte 3.0 V6 Diesel will turn into a snarling sports car with a click of the fingers, too.

Thanks to its huge oil-burning lump and quick-changing eight-speed automatic transmission, the deluxe diesel car can reach 62mph in 6.4 seconds – onto an electronically limited maximum speed of 155mph. Bury your right foot into the deep carpet and the forces feel similar to a jet-airliner as it thunders down the runway for take-off.

The feeling is intense, but never does it get uncomfortable. Passengers are cosseted inside the high-quality leather, wood and metal wrapped cabin. The seats are well-cushioned and room is so good that even tall rear seat occupants can stretch their legs out. A three-seat rear bench comes factory fitted, and the boot will swallow up to 530 litres of luggage.



The only drawback about the Maserati Quattroporte 3.0 V6 Diesel is that it doesn't sound as good as its petrol siblings. The petroleum models crackle and pop on the downshifts and snarl menacingly, even at low speeds. The diesel sounds deep and commanding, but there isn't the same sense of theatre emanating from the oil-burner's quad trapezoidal tailpipes.

One of the best features of the Quattroporte, compared with cars that try to emulate it, is its agility. Despite its bulk, the sumptuous saloon feels like a light sport car when tackling snaking rural routes. Rapid changes of direction are simple and the steering responds quickly, enabling the Maserati Quattroporte 3.0 V6 Diesel to feel almost diminutive. It is certainly far better equipped to cope with twists and turns than would-be foes, such as Audi's A8 and Mercedes-Benz's S-Class. Only the Porsche Panamera and Jaguar XJ come close when it comes to dynamic driving ability.

In this life you get what you pay for, so it should come as no great shock that the Maserati Quattroporte 3.0 V6 Diesel isn't cheap. £69,565 will get you a brand new model without any extras. Costly options include a pair of individual rear seats (instead of the standard three), a premium stereo and four-zone climate control. However, the car's astonishing performance, flawless handling, its ultra-luxury cabin and decent interior kit – including sat nav, parking sensors and climate control – more than explain its price-tag.

So, if you're after an opulent four-door machine that's muscular, comfortable and efficient – and is as awesome to drive as it is to be chauffeured in – then the Quattroporte 3.0 V6 Diesel could be the car for you.

Meanwhile, stay tuned for the 2017 Maserati Quattroporte. This comes to the UK soon, featuring slight cosmetic changes. The quad trapezoidal exhausts have been kept, along with the rear lights of the present-day model. The front of 2017's Quattroporte is mostly unaffected, too, but there will be some new, sexy, alloy wheel designs, along with fresh colours for the luxury sports saloon. The 2017 Maserati Quattroporte line-up is also bringing some subtle alterations to the car's cabin.



Max speed: 155 mph
0-62 mph: 6.4 secs
Combined mpg: 45.6
Engine layout: 2987cc
6-cylinder 24v turbo diesel
Max. power (PS): 275
CO2: 163 g/km
Price: £69,565

