



Porsche Macan

Tim Barnes-Clay takes on the blistering Macan, the latest assault on the compact SUV sector

The Porsche Macan is a thunderous, tarmac-shredding beast of a Sport Utility Vehicle (SUV).

Its name comes from the Indonesian word for tiger – and it is just as mighty and ready to pounce as the voracious big cat itself.

The Macan is a stunning car which manages to blend the driver appeal of Porsche sports cars with the sensible side that buyers of SUVs also need. It looks great, is beautifully built and is cost-effective too, so it won't cost an arm and a leg to run.

It is the first Porsche model to launch into the compact SUV segment, and, without

a doubt, it sets new standards in the field of driving dynamics and enjoyment – on motorway stretches, twisty country lanes and on uneven, unsealed, ground.

The sporting DNA of the Macan, as with all Porsche cars, is also instantly recognisable in the design. The premium motor is unequalled in its low, broad shape on the road. The wrap-around bonnet and faintly sloping roof line emphasize the overall impression of muscle-bound dexterity and hair-raising dynamics.

Many of the creative elements have been taken from other Porsche sports cars and improved for this vehicle, making it clear to see from the very

first glimpse that the Porsche Macan heralds the first sports car in the compact SUV market.

The spotlight on pace, power and potency continues into the Macan's cabin. Highly developed lines, precise transitions and first-rate workmanship create an easy on the eye mixture of athleticism, quality and elegance, while also subtly and stylishly highlighting the unrestrained posture of the car.

From the low front seats, the oblique centre console, the display and operation concept, through to the all-embracing range of customisation options, the interior offers both a sense of familiarity as well as noticeably new features.

In the driver's seat, you're aware that it supports and wraps around you like a true sports car's seat should. Your eye is instantly drawn to the multi-function sports steering wheel, the construct of which is based on the celebrated 918 Spyder.

Additional multi-function buttons fitted for the radio, telephone and on-board computer, together with the ergonomically-positioned shift paddles, make sure your hands are free to stay on the steering wheel. All this makes it easy to fully focus on the road ahead.

Three dials with a centrally placed tachometer unite to form the instrument cluster. The buttons for the most important functions come together in logical groups on the centre console, allowing for simple and intuitive operation of individual functions. And to the side is a high-resolution colour display.

My test car, the Macan S, came with a 3.0-litre V6 bi-turbo lump delivering 335 bhp. It also featured Porsche Traction Management active all-wheel drive with an electronically controlled, map-controlled multi-plate clutch.

This all-wheel drive is fitted on all Macan models. A seven-speed double-clutch transmission transfers power as required and



PORSCHE MACAN FACT BOX

Max speed: 158mph
0-62 mph: 5.4 secs
Combined mpg: 31.4
Engine: 2997cc 6 cylinder petrol
Max. power (bhp): 335
Max. torque (lb/ft): 339
CO2: 212 g/km
Price: £43,300

almost without any interruption to grip level. This results in searing acceleration and enables a 0 to 62 mph sprint of just 5.4 seconds. The mighty Macan then goes on to reach a top speed of 158 mph.

But perhaps more astonishing than these numbers are the fuel consumption figures, which manage to stay in the low 30s.

Indeed, behind its leather-swathed steering wheel, the Macan brings together the typical handling traits that Porsche has represented right from the get-go. It possesses maximum acceleration and braking values, almost cosmic engine power, acute dynamism and optimum steering accuracy.

Turn into a corner and the Porsche Macan responds with the same sportiness and poise as the mid-engined Cayman. Even better, you get the same impeccably-weighted controls that froth with feedback.

Staggeringly, even though the German

produced machine is as blisteringly impressive away from the beaten track as it is on it, none of its extraordinary dynamic achievements comes at the expense of the Macan's abilities as an enviable family run-around.

