

MURANO

An SUV with the Soul of a Sports Car

With its distinctive looks and signature burnt orange colour, the Nissan Murano took the SUV world by storm when it entered the market just over three years ago.





Cheryl van der Merwe

It was unveiled at Auto Africa 2004, and blends styling from other unique Nissan vehicles such as the sporty 350Z and the Pathfinder SUV, with the classic premium sedan. It sports the same engine as the powerful V6 unit found in the 350Z, and is coupled to a Continuously Variable Transmission (CVT), offering the best of both

manual and automatic transmissions.

The powerful aluminium V6 power plant is slightly tweaked to complement the smooth operation of the new transmission, but still delivers quite a kick with 172 kW of power at 6 000 r/min and a gutsy 318 Nm of torque at 3 600 r/min.

Seamless power transfer

The engine permanently drives the front wheels through the CVT, with All-Mode 4WD stepping in to override any traction problem on slippery surfaces. This transfer of power to more wheels is absolutely seamless and the driver will, in most cases, not even be aware of the fact that the Murano is kicking down on all fours.

The CVT makes for effortless driving at optimum engine performance and gives manual transmission effectiveness with the ease and comfort of totally seamless automatic transmission. This new form of 'one gear' transmission also offers a six-speed manual setting for more of a conventional feeling.



Driving the Murano is truly a pleasure, with a high vantage point offering a clear view of what's ahead, and a comfortable interior that is both luxurious and versatile. I especially enjoyed not having to pile all my driving accessories – such as handbag, cell phone, water bottle, diary, files, in-car snacks, etc. – onto the passenger seat, as there was ample, innovative storage space for the myriad items we seem to be unable to live without these days. The flat luggage space in the back is also useful, and is accessible when the rear seats are folded down and flat.

Although the Murano may look a little bulky from the outside, it certainly does not handle that way. Sport-tuned independent suspension in the front and rear make for almost sportscar-like handling, but with that added grunt one can only get from an SUV.

Nissan's outstanding record from a safety perspective is not compromised in the Murano, with powerful ABS brakes all round, which are linked to emergency brake assist and electronic brake distribution, and dual-stage front airbags, as well as driver and passenger side impact airbags, plus roof-mounted curtain side impact airbags in both the front and the rear, provide for additional safety in the event of a collision.

Although a little over three years old, the Murano still impresses with its unique styling, slick handling and high safety standards. Certainly not your average SUV! □