



# Off-Road

## EXCELLENCE

Nissan South Africa launched the new generation Patrol at Auto Africa a few years ago, and although the vehicle sported a new look both outside and in, it remains as tough and unstoppable as ever. The product of Nissan's 50-plus years of creating authentic off-roaders with unparalleled ability, the Patrol is designed to go where no road exists, and with its extensive facelift enables it to do so with even more comfort, style and safety.



Cheryl van der Merwe



**T**he imposing look of Nissan's SUV flagship confirms that the Patrol means business. Compared to the previous generation Patrol, virtually every exterior panel was changed, with a face that's even bolder than before, yet still retaining the trademark 4x4 front end and headlight treatment now common to Nissan's new-generation sports utility line-up.

Under its streamlined skin the Patrol is as functional and capable as ever. Built on a ladder frame chassis for the ultimate in off-road ability, the Patrol nonetheless has

a sufficiently compliant suspension to provide a smooth on-road ride with handling to match. Solid axles coupled to long-travel coil springs make for exceptional articulation. A rear differential lock allows the driver to exploit traction to its fullest, there's low-range gearing to ensure that no incline is too steep for the Patrol to clamber up.

### Top honours

No-nonsense hardware is one reason why the Patrol has taken top honours in the most gruelling international



off-road motor sport events, and what's to be found under the bonnet is another - Patrol enthusiasts have the option of a lusty, state-of-the-art TB48DE 4,8-litre straight six-petrol engine boasting an array of high-tech features, or the uprated 3,0-litre intercooled turbo diesel.

The fuel-injected petrol engine, available with a five-speed automatic transmission, produces a potent 190 kW at 4 800 r/min, with massive torque of 425 Nm at 3 600 r/min. Double overhead camshafts activate four valves per cylinder and gets the added benefit of Nissan induction control system and valve timing control to optimise the torque characteristics.

On the up-rated ZD30 unit, power increases from 116 kW to 118 kW while the torque jumps from 354 Nm to 380 Nm – an eight percent improvement. Peak torque is reached at 2 000 rpm, but the improvement is noticeable all the way between 1 500 and 2 500 r/min – the typical working zone of a modern turbo diesel engine.

Although the Nissan Patrol remains a tough off-road vehicle at heart, Nissan believes there is no reason why users should not enjoy a little extra luxury while they explore. As a result, the latest generation Patrol has an up-

dated interior featuring better quality materials, greater comfort and more equipment.

Seats have been reshaped to offer greater comfort and support. The rear seats also slide forwards or backwards to create extra leg or luggage room as required. A seven-seat option is offered on the GRX model, in which the 3rd row seats can be lifted and fastened out of the way.

#### **A choice of two**

South African 4x4 enthusiasts can choose between the GL in petrol or diesel (both manual transmission), and the GRX in petrol tiptronic automatic transmission. Standard features on the GL models include driver and passenger airbags, in-dash radio/CD player, air conditioner, split/fold rear seats, cargo net and NATS security system with immobilizer, remote access and central locking.

The GRX model has a number of additional features for added luxury and convenience, including a sunroof, leather trim, wood grain effect, climate control and an in-dash radio incorporating a six disc CD changer. Side airbags provide additional peace of mind, a third row of seats provides extra passenger capacity, and audio and cruise control on the steering wheel are conveniently close at hand. 17-inch alloy wheels and a spare wheel cover complete the picture.

Technical specs and fancy gadgets aside, however, if conquering uncharted territory is your game, and you'd prefer to do it in rugged style and luxurious comfort, the Nissan Patrol definitely has your name on it! □

