



Urban NOMAD

Not only does it have one of the most interesting names for a car, but Nissan's Qashqai (pronounced Kash Kye) also sports some interesting features that are unusual for a car in its price category.

Its impressive array of comfort and convenience features such as Bluetooth connectivity, numerous storage solutions including a 14-litre cooled glovebox, impressive safety features that earned it a five star rating for adult protection in the acclaimed Euro NCAP safety tests and unique crossover design have won the Qashqai both critical and customer acclaim.

The Qashqai is available in three derivatives, the 1.6 Visia, 1.6 Acenta and 2.0 Acenta, with the 1.6-litre engine delivering 81 kW and 154 Nm, while the 2.0-litre model delivers a lively 102 kW with 198 Nm of torque.

It certainly brings something new to the market, particularly through its strong, distinctive design, which is somewhere between a traditional hatchback (always a popular choice), and a more robust, elevated SUV shape - ideal for a better view of the road.

Family safety

The Qashqai makes for a great family car, with safety one of the vehicle's key attributes. Active safety equipment includes ABS with brake assist and Dynamic Vehicle Control available in the 2.0i Acenta. These features provide traction no matter how tricky the conditions are.

Passive safety equipment starts with six airbags standard on all models. As well as dual stage driver and front passenger airbags, there are thorax side airbags mounted in the front seats and full-length curtain airbags on both sides giving extra protection for all occupants in a side impact. Active headrests are also included on the front seats, minimising the likelihood of whip lash injury in the case of rear impact.

More good news for families - the front passenger airbag can be deactivated to enable a rear facing child seat



to be used. The cut-off switch is located on passenger side of the dashboard and is accessible when the door is opened. It is activated using the vehicle key, so the bag cannot be switched on or off inadvertently.

The front suspension features a sub-frame mounted strut-type system with combined coil-over-strut assemblies and a forward lower link. The sub-frame has compliant rubber mounts to isolate road noise and vibration from the platform, improving both general refinement and ride comfort. A front anti-roll bar is attached directly to the strut assembly for more effective control of body roll under cornering, while high performance Sachs shock absorbers are fitted to maintain decent road-manners.

Inside, the Qashqai does not disappoint. A comfortable interior combined with easy access to controls makes for pleasant driving, and the improved road view comes without feeling one is sitting on top of the car. All round, purchasing a Qashqai is money well spent! □



Cheryl van der Merwe



Fast Facts

- ✦ It takes 10.5 man hours to build a Qashqai, including bumper mouldings, painting and axle production
- ✦ A Qashqai contains approximately 2 750 parts, depending on specification
- ✦ Each Qashqai receives 4 608 spot-welds in construction, administered by 298 robots
- ✦ The Qashqai was awarded the maximum five-star rating for adult occupant protection from Euro NCAP, with the highest ever recorded score for any vehicle
- ✦ The name Qashqai comes from the name of a desert dwelling nomadic tribe living near the Zagros mountains in South Western Iran
- ✦ The Qashqai is the first European vehicle to be built on the Nissan/Renault Alliance 'C' Platform