



SsangYong Tivoli will be game-changer for UK sales

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The SsangYong Tivoli SUV now arriving in dealerships is likely to be a game-changer in Britain for the Korean company.

Smartly styled both outside and in, with a strong equipment list and selling at a competitive price backed by a good warranty, the five-seat and five-door Tivoli will turn heads and open cheque-books.

Up to now, SsangYong has sold quirky cars which did not meet the critical demands of British buyers and were sometimes way off the pace in so many ways, but the Tivoli is a thoroughly modern B-sector SUV at a family friendly price.

It is based on SE, EX and ELX trim levels using 1.6 litre 128ps petrol or 115ps diesel engines with six-speed manual or automatic transmission, front or four-wheel-drive. Buyers can refine their Tivoli through a personalisation programme of additional equipment but all get seven-airbags as standard and a five-year unlimited mileage warranty while a tempting finance package will put you in the driving seat from £159 a month over three years and 30,000 miles in that time.

Even the entry level SE at £12,950 comes with weight selectable Smart steering, RDS/Bluetooth and a fuel-saving stop&go ignition system.



SsangYong Tivoli is important addition to range



The EX level gives the option of automatic transmission, leather upholstery, dual zone climate control and seven-inch touch-screen audio with rear view camera and heated front seats. The top ELX versions give widest choice of engines and transmissions, two or four-wheel-drive, different instruments with keyless starting, parking sensors, tinted glass, auto headlamps and wipers, TomTom navigation and specific personalisation options.

SsangYong Tivoli is most inviting newcomer to their range

The MyTivoli bespoke pack permits two-tone paintwork, red leather trim and more colours. Excluding the personalisation packs there are over a dozen models in the new Tivoli range between £13,000 and £19,500, with the EX series beginning at £14,600 and the ELX from £16,000. Basically the diesel versions are about £1,250 more than their petrol equivalents and the automatic is another £1,000 as well.

Steve Gray, marketing director of SsangYong Motor UK, said Tivoli was opening up a new market for the company as it had never sold a petrol-powered model before and believes the newcomer will account for 1,300 to 1,500 sales over the next 12 months, which will almost double what the brand sold in 2014 before Tivoli was on sale.

“The fact is we have had a lot of good enquiries about the Tivoli and I don’t think it’s unreasonable for its sales to climb to over 3,000 in a couple of years,” he said.

“We have 55 SsangYong dealers in the UK at the moment and we are talking to prospective dealers all the time so I think we will have 65 by the end of 2015 and a further ten over the following 12 months and this expansion will be key to lifting sales for the brand.”

New dealers to the brand are often solus operators who have extensive experience with used models and want a low-cost investment as a new franchise, which SsangYong is happy to see.



He added that market research suggested the EX would be the most popular but firm orders have biased towards the top of range ELX and many of those have come from ladies who appreciate its style and equipment.

The orders so far suggest the diesel engine will account for 60% of registrations, the 4WD models are only diesel powered and have proved popular as well with advance orders.

“There is no doubt the Tivoli will be a game-changer for SsangYong in Britain,” he concluded.

First impressions

The perceived best seller in the line-up will be the Tivoli ELX diesel, which delivers 115ps from 3,400rpm and 300Nm between 1,500 and 2,000rpm with a six-speed manual gearbox.

We managed over a short test route to push it over 40mpg but that is not to do it justice because it was well-gearred car with good getaway ability, flexible and useful mid-range power and composed on the motorway.



Big loadbed when seats are folded inside
Tivoli

The powertrain’s sophistication meant you could hear the big 18-inch wheels and tyres bumping over the road but its ride was not hard. It did a good job at absorbing the shocks and in fact it was too soft at times, rolling around tight turns and undulating over a series of dips and rises.

Good major and secondary controls were appreciated, the seats on the small side for some, but room was very good in the back trio of seats and total luggage capacity is huge.

A high waistline, thick C-pillars and small back window did not make for the best visibility



when pulling out into traffic and it was useful to have the reversing camera which is not on base models.

Tivoli looks different, distinctive front and back, and its interior trim is a major step up for SsangYong while its prices will please many families who need a roomy but not big SUV with a boot which rises from 423 to 1920 litres capacity.

Fast facts

SsangYong Tivoli ELX diesel manual front wheel drive

Price: £17,250

Mechanical: 4cyl 115ps 1597cc turbo-diesel, 6sp

Max Speed: 112mph

0-62mph: 12sec

Combined MPG: 65.7mpg (41mpg on test)

Insurance Group: 19

C02 emissions: 113gkm

Bik rating: TBC

Warranty: 5 years/ unlimited

For: Styling, roomy, powertrain and economy



High tail and thick roof pillars restrict vision



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Against: Road noise, handling, visibility