



Sunday drive: Skoda Kodiaq Sportline 2.0 TSI

Published: 6th January 2019

Author: David Miles

Online version: <http://www.wheelswithinwales.uk/sunday-drive-skoda-kodiaq-sportline-2-0-tsi/>

As an example of this fast changing world, Skoda recently introduced Sportline versions of their award winning large SUV - the Kodiaq, writes David Miles.



I was due to test the 1.4 TSI 150hp turbo petrol powered model, but that was substituted because under the WLTP changes it is due to be replaced by the Volkswagen Group's new TSI 1.5-litre 150hp, cylinder on demand petrol unit.

So a 2.0-litre TSI 180hp model with the new Sportline spec arrived instead so full marks to Skoda PR for keeping me mobile. However in this fast changing automotive world I've just



learned this engine is also due for replacement this year by a cleaner but more powerful 190hp TSI petrol engine which is likely to be a shade more expensive to buy. Current on the road prices covering 44 derivatives range from £25,770 to £40,170.

The core technical specification of this test model is 320Nm of torque from 1,400 rpm, Combined Cycle 38.2mpg, CO2 170g/km, top speed 127mph and a zero to 62mph acceleration time of 8.2 seconds.

Prices and final specification for the 136mph new Skoda Kodiaq vRS - the most powerful diesel production vRS model ever built - have been confirmed for its Spring delivery. The brand's first ever performance SUV will start from £42,870 OTR and comes with a comprehensive equipment list that befits its status as the new performance flagship of the Škoda range with its 240ps 2.0TDI engine, 7sp box and permanent 4WD.

Despite the engine changes, what we know about now is that the award winning Skoda Kodiaq can be a five or seven seat model depending on the spec chosen. These are SE, SE L, Scout, Sportline, Edition and L&K. A Kodiaq vRS 240hp turbodiesel high performance model shown at the recent Paris Motor Show will join the UK range this year.



Currently petrol engine options are 1.5 TSI 150 and the outgoing 2.0 TSI 180 I tried, and as of now diesel choices are 2.0 TDI 150 and 190hp. Four wheel drive is



available for all but the 1.5-litre TSI engines and the 2.0 180hp TSI petrol and 2.0 TDI 190hp turbodiesel models have a 7-speed DSG auto gearbox as standard.

The Skoda Kodiaq large SUV first arrived in the UK in 2017 and I haven't driven one since then. In the meantime it has received numerous awards based on its versatility, ability, price and specification. In recent times the SUV market in all areas has boomed for sales and SUV ranges from most brands have evolved with more engines, derivatives and additional higher and sports styling specification levels added.

Drive forward the Sportline versions which are seven-seater models with prices from £35,695 to £37,855. My test version, the 2.0 TSI 180hp auto 4WD costs £36,190.

The Sportline spec level, also used for other Skoda ranges, offers the dynamic styling of Skoda's performance models, but is focussed on practicality rather than speed. But there is certainly no lack of pace from the exiting 2.0 TSI 180hp turbo petrol engine and its slick auto 7-speed twin-clutch gearbox, with the 4WD system providing plenty of adhesion on our soaking wet winter roads.



For good measure it has a selectable off-road mode which includes hill descent control, so it's a very good comprehensive technical package.



With a healthy 320Nm of torque available from just 1,400rpm it is very responsive either travelling along winding country roads or during acceleration on fast open roads.

It cruises with absolute ease at 70mph plus being a petrol engine its very quiet at all speeds and in all conditions. With our traffic grid-locked pre Christmas driving conditions in stop-start town traffic is was a joy to use.

Another joy of driving was this model's very comfortable and compliant ride quality. For a big SUV fitted with eye-catching 20-inch wheels shod with low profile tyres it was a pleasure to travel in. It's more often-than-not the case that any car fitted with oversized wheels and skinny depth tyres the ride quality just spoils the ownership experience for a lot of people.

I just wish other Volkswagen Group brands using the same components adopted Skoda's ride quality and handling settings, it's just another example of how Skoda differs from its other family members of Audi, SEAT and VW brands.



I also wish the real-life fuel economy of the test vehicle was a bit better as it returned 29.7mpg, far short of the 38.2 official Combined Cycle figure.



The Kodiaq SUV Sportline, although sporty to drive if required, is all about Sports styling and equipment and it's a model path followed by most other mainstream manufacturer





s who have systematically added higher spec sportier looking variants to broaden the appeal of their model ranges. With full order books since it was announced, the Kodiaq Sportline exterior specification additions include deeper front and rear bumpers, additional black trim details including the radiator grille, roof rails, door mirror housings, window trims and rear diffuser which is flanked by two chrome trimmed exhaust tailpipes.

Inside changes include a leather bound flat bottomed sports steering wheel, carbon effect dashboard and door trim inserts, Alcantara trimmed



sports front seats, second and third row seats and door panels. There is also LED interior lighting, aluminium pedals, sports style dials and a Sportline plaque.

Away from styling more practical features include Care Connect connectivity, multi-function computer, Columbus sat-nav with a 9.2-inch touchscreen, DAB radio, Smartlink, cornering LED foglights, full LED headlights with adaptive function, LED daytime running lights, LED rear lights, cruise control, driving mode selector including an Eco setting, dual zone air con, electrically operated tailgate, very useful keyless entry and pushbutton start, auto lights and wipers and those nice unique Skoda touches of an umbrella in the front doors, removable LED torch in the boot and an ice scraper located in the fuel filler flap.



Although the vehicle has front and rear parking sensors a rear view camera would have been useful given its long length. But as always Skoda goes that extra mile to provide customer-friendly products which sets them apart from other VW Group brands as well as most other manufacturers.

The other benefits of this version of the Kodiaq are its seven seats arranged in three rows which provide numerous layouts for passenger and load carrying



combinations. The rear row of two seats are really only suitable for child passengers but with all seats in use there is still 270-litres of boot space.

Depending on whether the second and third row of seats are either up or down this goes up in stages to a maximum of 2,065-litres. For good measure it also has a braked towing weight of 2,000kg so it's a really useful workhorse as well.



I don't normally do any Car of the Year awards because what might be best for one person isn't suitable for somebody else. But in this case my SUV of the Year is the Skoda Kodiaq range because it just offers so much in terms of user-friendly functions, excellent ride comfort and interior space no matter what engine or spec level is chosen and all at competitive prices.



MILESTONES: Skoda Kodiaq Sportline 2.0 TSI, 180hp, DSG auto, 4x4, 7-seat large SUV
£36,190

Engine/transmission: 2.0-litre, 4-cylinder turbocharged direct injection petrol 180hp,
320Nm of torque from 1,400rpm, 7-speed DSG auto, 4WD

Performance: 127mph, 0-62mph 8.2-seconds, Combined Cycle 38.2mpg (29.7mpg on test)



CO2 170g/km, VED petrol First Year road tax £515, Year Two £140, BiK company car tax 35%

Insurance group: 23E Warranty: 3-years/60,000-miles

Dimensions/capacities: L 4,697mm, W 1,882mm, H 1,676mm, wheelbase 2,791mm, boot/load space 270 to 2,065-litres, braked towing weight 2,000kg, 5-doors/7-seats

For: Hugely versatile user-friendly roomy large SUV, comfortable ride, sharp handling, responsive high torque engine, smooth auto gearbox, high specification, attractive kerb appeal, wide range of models to choose from at competitive prices in its sector

Against: Real-life fuel economy, high-ish tax costs, no rear view camera as standard, ungenerous VW Group warranty.

© *David Miles*