



## Weekend roadtest: Alfa Romeo Giulia Sprint

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**If it feels right, it's right - and that's a particularly apt saying when it comes to the Alfa Romeo Giulia.**



What's more, the sporting saloon looks striking outside and inside and when it gets moving this driver's smile widens still further.

Alfa Romeo has always enjoyed a strong sporting fan club, and I count myself as a member, as it delivers all you'd expect of a family car but with a sharper edge to its handling than many rivals.

Giulia has been a regular model in the range over the years and the latest incarnation comes with a choice of trim levels including some very high performance derivatives with petrol or diesel engines to satisfy the enthusiast or the economy-minded driver.

Our Sprint is one of the most popular in the line-up despite its near £38,000 price tag and that matches the Italian squarely up against challengers from Germany and the UK.



Standard equipment includes a 8.8 inch 3D navigation/info screen, 7-inch instrument cluster, bi-xenon lights, runflat tyres, cruise control with lane monitor and leather wheel and gear



knob. Extras on the test car amounted to £1,385 for the electrically adjustable seats, cold weather pack and steering wheel paddles for the manual automated control.



Under the long bonnet the compact four-cylinder 2.0 litre engine pushes out a well developed 200hp with 330Nm at 1750rpm and it's quick to get going, with smooth



with progressive

power and yet when you press the throttle really hard it produces a wonderful exhaust note as well.

It has very respectable but not outstanding acceleration, it covers ground quickly through the gears when overtaking and it cruises with quiet composure on main roads and motorways.



The automatic gearchanges are very smooth whether going up or down the box and the ratios are sensibly spaced to make the most of the 2.0 litre engine except we never got near the



WLTP average fuel consumption and struggled to see 31mpg overall even with some motorway miles factored into the test.

Braking was a delightful balance between power and precision and inspired confidence while the electric parking brake securely held it on our regular slope and the steering imparted great feedback with excellent directional control and no vibrations or kickback together with a reasonable turning circle.

Now, for such a sharp handling, agile saloon you'd expect a firm ride but the Alfa Romeo Giulia was extremely compliant and comfortable. You knew it was coping well with potholes and ridges but very few ever got into the cabin. This sets it apart from many rivals and means long journeys are less stressful.



The suspension's all-round capability is matched by some of the comfiest seats I have ever experienced. They not only snugly fit the occupant in the cushion and around the back but the headrest



is particularly soft and pillow-like but I would have preferred a longer cushion to support long thighs.

The electric adjustment is also an optional extra, which surprised me at this price.

The ride quality was good while handling was even more pleasing with excellent grip, feedback and surefooted behaviour which never gave a moment's concern.



The cabin was very easy to access with wide opening doors but once seated the headroom was tight for some users and the boot had a small opening but a large capacity behind it. Visibility was very good



all round with big windows, sensors front and back with a clear reversing camera, big wipers and effective washers as well as bright long range headlights.

Inside the fascia had large buttons and clear markings, very deep yet easy to read instruments and well placed secondary controls for indicators, wipers and the optional paddles for making the most of the automatic box. The wheelspokes carried the familiar phone and entertainment controls.



The central console provided a combination of touchscreen and remote operation and gave a variety of displays which could be simultaneously shown for convenience.

It was reasonably straightforward and always very clear.

The car's air conditioning was widespread, quick to change and gave excellent output, backed by four powered windows but no sunroof. Oddments room was excellent throughout.

Apart from when the engine was put under pressure, the Giulia's noise levels were all very low. There was background rumble from tyres but wind and mechanical noises were very



low.

The low noise level adds to the sense of refinement which really comes through with the powertrain's smoothness and the way all the secondary controls worked.



Combined

with the suspension's sophistication and composed ride you really feel this is a very well sorted saloon which fits like a glove and delivers a knockout blow to many rivals.

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**Fast facts:**

Alfa Romeo Giulia Sprint

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**Price:** £37,995 (as tested £39,380)

**Mechanical:** 200hp 4cyl 1995cc turbo-petrol, 8sp auto

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**Max speed:** 146mph

**0-62mph:** 6.6secs

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**Consumption:** 31mpg

**Insurance group:** 27

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**CO2 emissions:** 176gkm

**Bik rating:** 37%, £870FY, £150SR



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**Warranty:** 3yrs unlimited mileage      **Sizes:** L4.65m; W 1.86m; H1.44m

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**Bootspace:** 480 litres      **Kerbweight:** 1429kg

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**For:** Sophistication & refinement, very comfortable with particularly good seats, lively, quiet engine and smooth powertrain, sharp steering and strong brakes

**Against:** Small boot opening, limited headroom, expensive options, modest warranty.

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