

City Dweller Car Review



Alfa Romeo Brera 1750 Tbi

By Tim Barnes-Clay, Motoring Journalist

This is a slightly schizophrenic car. From the front its shark-like face gives out a menacing vibe, but look at its backside and all the aggression has gone to reveal a fairly tame looking beast. Only the low stance of the Alfa and the four tailpipes give away the true nature of the car.

wife had to move her front seat forward quite a way, but nonetheless, everyone got in. Even the 300-litre boot just managed to swallow a folded pushchair. Mind you, I did have to shut the boot lid a few times to make sure it stayed in there, but the important thing for me was



I found the overall shape of the Alfa Romeo Brera quite pleasing, and it got looks of admiration from some people, but it wasn't quite the sports car I thought it would be.

Ride quality is not bad but the Alfa feels a tad cumbersome for such a small car and on bends it seems determined to lapse into understeer. It's fun to drive, don't get me wrong, but there's no blistering performance – it's just pleasantly quick with a 0-60mph sprint of 7.7 seconds, accompanied by a high pitched roar coming from the lovely tailpipes. The interior styling is simply exquisite with plenty of metallic finishes and all the dials and controls are slanted towards the driver in a really attractive, traditional, sporty way. There's even an oil temperature gauge and a very fashionable starter button. Add the fact that there's plenty of adjustment in both the driver's seat and the steering column, it's also an easy car to achieve a comfortable driving position in.

Of course this Alfa Romeo is by no means a family car and yet I managed to fit my two small children in the back. It was a hassle fitting the child seats in place and my

that the Brera proved versatile enough to be a big boy's toy, as well as have a family day out in.

But what exactly is under the bonnet of the Alfa Romeo Brera? Well, it has a 1750 Tbi petrol unit which has variable valve timing, direct fuel injection, a turbocharger and an ingenious 'scavenging' control system. This, says Alfa Romeo, improves air-flow through the engine and cuts down on turbo lag. The results are impressive with the 1.7-litre engine generating 197bhp and 320Nm of torque from 1,400rpm.

Despite the tempting engine and the lovely looks, the Brera has intimidating competition



PROS 'N' CONS

- Attractive ✓
- Good engine ✓
- Image ✓
- Fun ✓
- Won't retain value X

FACTS

- Max speed: 146 mph
- 0-62 mph 7.7 seconds
- Combined mpg: 34.9
- Engine: 4cyl, 1742cc, turbopetrol
- Power: 200bhp at 5000rpm
- Torque: 236lb ft at 1400rpm
- CO2: 189g/km
- Price: £25,205 approx



in the guise of the Audi TT, and the Nissan 370z. BMW's 1-Series Coupe and Peugeot's bizarre RCZ are also potential rivals. It also won't retain its value as steadfastly as its premium brand rivals, but starting at around £25,000, the Brera 1750 Tbi is not bad value for money. Its running costs shouldn't be too expensive either. The Co2 emissions are only 189g/km and I managed, even with a family on board, around 34mpg on the combined cycle.

So, if you're after a good looking, sporty car and you want something a little different then the Alfa Romeo Brera could be right up your street. The car makes you happy – it feels a sexy car to be in, and that, I suspect, is why people will buy it.



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