



For the active lifestyle

What exactly is a 'lifestyle' vehicle? Well, the Honda CR-V pretty much sums it up.

The Swindon-built Sport Utility Vehicle (SUV) is perfectly suited to many motorists' way of life. It behaves and drives like a 'normal' car; it has the space of an estate, as well as 4x4 safety, and enough grunt to tow a trailer, caravan or horsebox.

But what's so different about the 'all-new' CR-V? Not a huge amount actually. I mean, if it ain't broke, don't fix it. Nonetheless, there are a few improvements. And I got to sample these at its UK launch on the roads surrounding Scotland's Loch Lomond.

I discovered the fourth generation CR-V offers even more quality, practicality



Tim Barnes-Clay revels in the refinements of the new Honda CR-V

and refinement than its forerunner. And with environmental concerns of growing importance, the up-to-the-minute 2.0 i-VTEC and 2.2 i-DTEC engines emit significantly less CO2 than before. Also, for the first time in Europe, the latest CR-V is offered with a choice of two and four-wheel drive.

The new CR-V is available with four trim levels S, SE, SR and EX. I drove the 2.2 i-DTEC SE around the damp, misty, yet beautiful country roads of Dunbartonshire. The model's intelligent

multi info display, idle stop, climate control, cruise control and 17-inch alloy wheels made motoring effortless. The fitting of hill start assist was particularly useful considering the undulating environment I was in, and the SE's rain sensing auto wipers and dusk sensing auto lights successfully challenged the dark, drizzly weather.

The CR-V's 2.2 litre oil burner pulls nicely and, although its acceleration won't set your pants on fire, it's not sluggish. The SUV feels robust, and in slippery conditions the 4x4 traction gives you a sense of security – something many rural-based parents might well be glad of when taking their youngsters to country schools.

Of course, with the last few snow-ridden winters, motorists have realised the benefits of all-wheel drive and sales of 4x4s have been booming. Sure, there is a two-wheel drive CR-V now available, but if you live on a farm or need to tow a horse box, or you need to tackle narrow, sub-zero country lanes, then I'd recommend you consider the adaptable new four-wheel drive Honda CR-V as your main family vehicle.

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Room for everything including the kitchen sink



With the rear seats up the boot capacity is a spacious 589 litres, extending to 1669 litres when the seats are down. But what does this mean in the real world? Well, if you are a parent with a young family, you can chuck in not just one, but multiple folded buggies along with the week's shopping. With the seats folded down you can load a washing machine as well.