



Car of the people

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THE ORIGINAL PEUGEOT 3008 was billed as a compact people-mover, but the new car market has shifted in the past few years, and the all-new second-generation Peugeot 3008 is a rather different animal.

Rather than a people-mover, it's now billed as a compact SUV-crossover—an expanding market in Europe. Rather than a Toyota Prius Plus rival, the 3008 is now going against the likes of Nissan Qashqai and Renault Kadjar, as well as the new Toyota C-HR we're also reviewing in this issue.

Whether it's through its innovative i-Cockpit, its good looks, or its high-tech kit, the latest 3008 clearly aims to establish itself as an important player in this marketplace. UK deliveries of the Peugeot start now, in January 2017, but we got to drive the car early at its launch in Italy last November.

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, but you'd

have to have seriously skewed taste if you didn't think the new Peugeot 3008 SUV is proportioned nicely. The elevated ride height and confident grille design give it a fashionable look, with the only design flaw being the tiny rear indicators. Peugeot could have made these larger within the otherwise attractive tail-light clusters.

The 3008 now has an interior that is on a par with premium executive cars. It comes kitted out with loads of tech and first class materials, and this adds to that quality car feel. Peugeot's latest i-Cockpit display, which comprises a small steering wheel with a 12.3in screen behind it, looks superb. The system means you can alter the arrangement of the dials, decide what is shown, and have satnav directions inside the driver's instrument binnacle.

Rear space is commendable. You'll get two adults in the back comfortably. Indeed, legroom and headroom is very good in the front and rear—even for six-foot-tall occupants. And the 520-litre boot, with the lowest loading height in its class, will swallow two flight cases, as well as a couple of smaller bags easily. The load capacity can be

increased to 1,670 litres with the seats folded.

The 3008 SUV's length has been boosted by 8cm over the original 3008 crossover model. The car now measures 4,450mm long, 1,840mm wide and 1,620mm tall. By comparison, the Peugeot's most obvious competitor, the Nissan Qashqai, is shorter, and less tall at 1,590 mm. Another other clear rival, the recently launched SEAT Ateca, is also shorter than the 3008 and just 1mm wider.

Pretty much everything can be operated via the Peugeot 3008's i-Cockpit. Screens and selector switches allow you to govern connectivity, satnav, driving modes and the car's safety systems. The principal screen, set above the steering wheel, has a graphical speedometer and tachometer. These change to smaller, side-view instruments if you want to use the display for the satnav's map.

What's more, the i-Cockpit allows you to choose if you want to make the screen graphics calm or busy. You can do this by using 'Relaxed' or 'Boost' modes, which also change the cheeps and chirps the car's gadgetry makes. Additionally, the two settings vary the aromas secreted by the 3008's

Peugeot 3008 1.6L BlueHDi
120 S&S 6-speed automatic

first
drive

fragrance diffuser. The Peugeot's optional 'virtual masseuse' gives a stronger back massage to the driver and front seat passenger with 'Boost' switched on, too.

We drove the 1.6-litre BlueHDi diesel engine with 120PS and automatic transmission. Behind the wheel, things feel dynamic, and the weighting of the steering is spot on. The car grips bitumen like a cat's claws cling on to flesh, and mid-range pulling

power is particularly good, so you can pick up the pace easily.

The six-speed Efficient Automatic Transmission is a slick-shifting unit, but stamp your foot on the gas and you'll become all too aware of the 3008 SUV's diesel propulsion. That said; the car still delivers a hushed ride for an oil-burner. Tyre roar and wind whistle is kept out of the cabin, too.

All this just adds to the new 3008's sense of

refinement. The Peugeot offers a composed ride with seats that provide the sort of comfort and support required for long distance motoring. Furthermore, the car's suspension sopped up some evil potholes on our Italian test route without complaining. Significantly, the new 3008 doesn't tip into bends. Indeed, body roll is very well contained. This surprised us, as SUVs aren't always the type of vehicle to stay so unruffled on twisty tarmac.

The new 3008 comes in four levels of trim: Active, Allure, GT Line and GT. Factory fitted safety kit on the Active includes automatic emergency braking and rear parking sensors. Choose the Allure and you get a Safety Plus pack, which comes with lane-keep assist, blind-spot detection and a reversing camera.

The GT Line hasn't got any extra safety equipment—just sportier looks, while the GT gets active cruise control. Peugeot expects 50% of British buyers to go for the Allure. It has all the safety kit you really need, and as with all 3008s, it has a top five-star Euro NCAP safety score.

A car can look great and have all the equipment in the world stuffed into it—but it's no good for a professional driver if it isn't economical and it doesn't drive decently. There are no worries to be had in this area with the 3008 SUV. The 1.6-litre BlueHDi 120 is forecast to be the most popular model in Britain.

Peugeot doesn't need a crystal ball to predict this. An average 67.3mpg and 108g/km of CO2 means low running costs for the auto, combined with punchy performance. Zero to 62mph is achieved in 11.6 seconds and the top speed is 115mph. Driving through bustling Bologna, followed by a speedy stint on the Autostrada Adriatica, then ending up on rolling rustic roads, gave us a real-world figure of 56.3mpg.

Peugeot 3008 1.6L BlueHDi 120 S&S 6-speed auto



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FACTFILE

PRICE	£25,045
ENGINE	1,560cc 4-cylinder 8v turbodiesel
Transmission	Six-speed auto, front-wheel drive
Power	118bhp @ 3,500rpm
Torque	300Nm @ 1,750rpm
0-62mph	11.6sec
Top speed	115mph
Fuel economy	67.3mpg
Combined CO2	108g/km
Length	4,450mm
Wheelbase	2,675mm
Width	1,840mm
Height	1,620mm
Loadspace	520 litres
Fuel tank capacity	60 litres
Warranty	3 years / 60,000 miles
VED Band	B

VERDICT

THE ALL-NEW PEUGEOT 3008 SUV ISN'T AS CHEAP AS ITS NISSAN AND SEAT adversaries. The entry price for the new model will be £21,795, but expect to pay around £25,000 for the 1.6-litre BlueHDi automatic we drove.

An entry-level Qashqai costs £18,545, and a basic new Ateca is priced at £17,990. But we think the 3008's extra cost is justified because it feels more upmarket inside than these two challengers. Materials include brushed chrome, large areas of carbon decoration and textiles. They even cover some areas less commonly found in SUVs, such as the dashboard inlay. It's all very contemporary and attractive.

The Peugeot is just as stylish outside, and it drives very well, while delivering a comfortable ride for all. Furthermore, it's economical and practical. All in all, there's no reason why the new Peugeot 3008 SUV shouldn't be a big seller in Britain.