



Seat Ateca

Sporty by nature

Review | Seat differs from other brands by its flair, sportiness and passion. At the same time, a Seat is just as rational as the average car. And those who are shopping for an SUV (Sports Utility Vehicle) are looking for exactly those things: a functional car that is special at the same time. So when Seat announced its first SUV it seemed like a natural combination. Now it's finally time for a test drive!

Sports Utility Vehicles look tough, as if they can conquer any jungle and cross every desert. But in fact these cars are bought for their space and practicality, yet in an original wrapper.

And when it comes to original designs, Seat has some history to look back on. Think of the highly original Toledo (2004 - 2009) and recently the Altea. In hindsight, these models may have been too different. Considering the current popularity of SUVs, the future looks much brighter for the Ateca.



Also, Seat chose the size of the Ateca wisely. The Seat is a bit smaller than the Tiguan from parent company Volkswagen. In that way competition within the same family is being prevented. Instead, the Ateca is between two segments. The Ateca is larger than a Vauxhall Mokka, Mazda CX-3 or Jeep Renegade, yet smaller than a Kia Sportage or Hyundai Tucson.

Spec levels

The Ateca boosts specific Seat looks with straight lines and Seat's trapezium shaped grille. However, the cabin could have been that of the average Volkswagen. Except for the Seat logo on the steering wheel, the Spanish manufacturer didn't go to any effort to hide the fact that the technology underneath comes from its German parent.



Having said that, Seat did get full access to all technology of the parent company. The test vehicle, a so-called "Xcellence" version, therefore offers luxury and safety features from a higher segment. Think about LED headlights, traffic jam assist, traffic sign recognition, all round cameras (360 degrees view while manoeuvring) and an automatic parking pilot.

The obligatory infotainment system is up to date as well, with support for Apple CarPlay and Android Auto. The "Seat Sound System" doesn't sound half bad, yet it is clear why no reputable audio specialist wanted to stick its logo on it.



The so-called "attention assist" is in fact more of a hindrance than a help. A system like this analyses the driving style and when differences occur beyond a certain threshold it concludes the driver is tired and needs a rest. However: in real life it also suggests to take a break when the driving style changes because of road conditions (from open roads to rural roads).

Space

For a car of this size the cabin space is fine, both in the front and the rear. Underneath the electrically operated (!) tail gate there's 510 litres of storage (expandable to 1,604). That isn't just big for a car in this segment, it's even bigger than the luggage space of some SUVs from a higher segment! Thanks to the high seating position, entering the car is easy and once at the steering wheel one has the sensation of operating a big, mighty vehicle.



strong. At high revs the turbo engine convinces with quick acceleration from high speeds. Thanks to the very long sixth gear the Ateca is pleasantly quiet and efficient on open roads.



The test drive took the Ateca from the Seat factory in Spain all the way to the North of Europe. Despite driving at high speeds for extended periods of time, the Ateca used just 6 litres per 100 km (47 mpg). An economy run resulted in 5 litres per 100 km (56 mpg). This great mileage is also thanks to "cylinder on demand". When little power is required, two of the four cylinders do not receive any petrol, which saves fuel.

Thanks to the relatively large fuel tank even the petrol version of the Ateca can cover long distances between refuelling (about 800 km).

Engines

Modern SUVs aren't tough working horses but instead just family cars. That's why Seat didn't fit the Ateca with big, mighty engines but instead with smart "downsized" engines. This means that thanks to turbos and other gadgets, Seat squeezes a lot of power from a small engine, while fuel economy is still excellent.

For this test drive the "1.4 TSI" was used, which develops 150 PS / 250 Nm. Even at low engine speeds the four-cylinder engine is powerful and torque



Handling

Seat's most distinctive quality is its sporty disposition. And that certainly shows in the Ateca! Thanks to firm (not hard) suspension the Ateca's handling is above average. On top of that the Ateca feels solid, as if the car was carved out of one massive piece. This also explains the great feedback in the steering wheel, which in turn gives the driver more faith in the capabilities of the car.

As standard, the Ateca comes with front-wheel drive. Only the diesel powered version can be fitted with four-wheel drive. Despite this, all versions feature an "off-road" mode in the trip computer that shows slope angles and other data. And of course every Ateca has fair ground clearance (187 mm) and large angles of decline and descent. This is why even the two-wheel drive test car felt right at home with nature during the photo shoot.



Conclusion

By its very nature Seat distinguishes itself with a sporty character. And by nature Sports Utility Vehicles (SUVs) combine sportiness and functionality. This means Seat and SUVs are a natural match. This shows first and foremost in superior handling. But the Ateca also convinces with space, modern engines and many safety features. It makes the Seat Ateca sporty by nature! ■



Specifications

Seat Ateca 1.4 EcoTSI Xcellence

Size and weight



Length x width x height	436 x 184 x 160 cm
Wheelbase	264 cm
weight	1.259 kg
Trailer	670 kg
Trailer - braked	1.800 kg
Fuel capacity	50 l
Luggage space	510/1604 l
Tyre size	215/50R18

Engine and performance



Capacity	1395 cc
Cylinders / valves	4/
Max power	150 PS @ 5000 rpm
Max torque	250 Nm @ 1500 rpm
Drive	front wheels
Acceleration 0 - 62 mph	8.5 secs
topspeed	201 km/h
Average mileage	5.3 l / 100 km
Mileage urban	INF l / 100 km
Mileage extra urban	INF l / 100 km
CO2 emissions	125 gr / km

Price

Price	Â£ 23,905
Price base model	Â£ 17,990