



## Seat Tarraco

### Rounding up

Review | SUVs are popular. If a carmaker wants to be successful, it has to offer an SUV. Seat already did so with the compact Arona and the mid-size Ateca. Now Seat adds a big SUV: the Tarraco. This doesn't just complete the line-up of SUVs, it also introduces a new top model. Does the Tarraco convince as the ultimate Seat?

First the name. Up to now, Seats were named after cities in Spain. However, a search for "Tarraco" will not result in any city. Instead, Seat challenged customers to come up with a suitable name. Still, Tarraco is loosely based on Tarragona.



### Space

The Tarraco itself is also based on existing matter. Seat is part of the Volkswagen group and it offers a platform on which different cars can be developed with relative ease. The Tarraco sits on the so-called

"MQB" platform, with extended wheelbase. To prevent competing with other SUVs from the Volkswagen group, the Tarraco is smaller than models from the top segment, namely the Volkswagen Touareg and Audi Q7. Yet, this time the Tarraco is larger than its direct siblings: the Volkswagen Tiguan (+25 cm or +4 cm compared to the Tiguan AllSpace), Audi Q5 (+8 cm) and Skoda Karoq (+4 cm).

The cabin is filled with five or optionally seven seats. The space in the front is almost overwhelming. This is thanks to the very high seating position, the huge legroom and the ample space around the front seats. The legroom in the rear is excellent, provided the rear seat is moved all the way to the back. The optional tables in the rear are mounted so high that they don't hit the knees of the rear passengers when not in use (a mistake that other auto makers do frequently make). Head and legroom on the third row of seats is minimal, only small children fit here. This makes the Tarraco spacious, but not as impressive as the Alhambra which it succeeds.

"Because SUVs are more popular than MPVs, it was a logical choice to make the new top model a Sports Utility Vehicle"



## Trim levels

The Tarraco is meant to be Seat's top model, therefore it comes with all goodies and technology Seat has to offer. When it comes to active safety (preventing accidents), the Tarraco offers a very prominent Lane Assist (keeping within the markings on the road), Front Assist (automatic braking for bicycles and pedestrians), blind spot detection and traffic sign recognition. The "Xcellence" version offers adaptive cruise-control, with which the Tarraco can automatically keep a safe distance to the car in front. As to passive safety (handling an accident) the Tarraco can automatically call emergency services.

The optional "Beats" audio system sounds decent, but lacks character. It seems like the engineers mainly tried to avoid mistakes. The digital cockpit is very pleasant to drive with because the driver chooses which information is shown where and how.

## Engines

When the Tarraco was first announced, Seat said it was ready for alternative power sources. A plug-in hybrid has officially been announced. At the introduction early 2019, only conventional petrol and diesel engines are available. For petrol that's a 1.5 litre TSI (150 PS) and a 2.0 litre TSI (190 PS). The latter always comes with an automatic gearbox with dual clutch and four-wheel drive. The diesel engine is always a 2.0 TDI which develops either 150 or 190 PS. In this case the stronger version also comes with an

automatic and all-wheel drive as standard.



For this test, first the 190 PS strong version of the diesel engine was tried. It can best be described as "well behaved". When asking for performance the engine does deliver, but the automatic gearbox is hesitant (often accelerates from zero in second gear!) and always tries to lower fuel consumption. Yet, continuous high speeds on the open road are no problem. Even at 130 km/h the "Tarraco 2.0 TDI 4Drive" is comfortable and quiet; noises from the wind or tires are minimal.

The 1.5 TSI is expected to become the most popular engine. This is the base engine and it feels exactly like that. After a cold start it lacks refinement. When warm the powertrain is quiet, but it is always noticeable that the engine struggles against the huge weight of the car. Stepping on the gas means more engine noise, but hardly more speed. Even when driving calmly the engine has to work so hard that 8 litres per 100 km (35.1 mpg) was the best possible fuel economy. It's only when keeping the engine speed above 3,000 rpm that performance is adequate. However, this is tiresome and resulted in a final fuel economy figure of 9.5 litres per 100 km (29.7 mpg).



## Handling

As mentioned before, the Tarraco is available with four-wheel drive and thus the car has to feel at home both on paved roads and off-road. To offer the best possible handling, Seat opted for Dynamic Chassis Control (DCC). This means variable suspension that can adapt to various driving styles (sporty, comfortable) and conditions (snow, mud, etc.). The difference between the various modes is subtle. In fact, the Tarraco is always good natured, predictable and trustworthy.

When going off-road, the stronger engines are more suitable (lots of power at low revs) and make the Tarraco capable of climbing steep hills. Various electronic aids make off-road driving easier.



## Conclusion

Is the Tarraco a useful addition to the existing Seat line-up? And does the Tarraco distinguish itself from other SUVs from the Volkswagen group? The answer to both questions is: yes. To start with the latter: thanks to its sheer size the Tarraco is more spacious than models with a similar price tag, but not larger than models from a higher segment. This means the Tarraco is a rational choice, while Seat's playful image makes it attractive.

At the same time, the Tarraco is a useful addition to the current line-up. Up to now, the largest and most luxurious model was the Alhambra, and after nine years it desperately needed a replacement. Because SUVs are more popular than MPVs, it was a logical choice to make the new top model a Sports Utility Vehicle. On top of that, the Tarraco convinces as a top model with modern technology and good looks. The high seating position, high comfort levels and the mighty feeling while driving make the Tarraco a convincing top model. ■



# Specifications

## Seat Tarraco 1.5 TSI Xcellence

### Size and weight



Length x width x height	474 x 184 x 167 cm
Wheelbase	279 cm
Kerb weight	1.599 kg
Trailer	750 kg
Trailer - braked	1.800 kg
Fuel capacity	58 l
Luggage space	760/1920 l
Tyre size	235/50R19

### Engine and performance



Capacity	1498 cc
Cylinders / valves	4/4
Max power	150 PS @ 5000 rpm
Max torque	250 Nm @ 1500 rpm
Drive	front wheels
Acceleration 0 - 62 mph	9.7 secs
Top speed	201 km/h
Average mileage	6.3 l / 100 km
Mileage urban	7.9 l / 100 km
Mileage extra urban	5.4 l / 100 km
CO2 emissions	147 gr / km

### Price

Price	Â£ 30,410
Price base model	Â£ 28,320