



Volkswagen Jetta (2005 - 2011)

Old name, new chance

Review | Berlin has become "the" symbol of the new Germany. Old and new come together, east and west harmoniously together. This is exactly why this city is the stage for the introduction of the new Volkswagen Jetta; a name that Volkswagen has been using for a long time but which through time has had several different meanings. This middle-sized sedan was also known as Bora and Vento but is now again called Jetta. Does this car get a new chance under an old name?

The car chosen for this test is the Jetta with a 2.0-litre FSI petrol engine in Sportline-version. On the autobahn to Berlin it is obvious that the car is on home ground because the Jetta seems designed for these kind of long distances. The chassis is firm but never uncomfortable. At high speed the car is therefore stable and well controllable, which makes driving less strenuous.



The direct injected petrol engine (an invention of Volkswagen) is mainly made for flexibility and not so much for a lively character or aggression. This means that all gears have plenty of reserve available. Quick merging is no problem and also after that a very high cruising speed can be achieved, if necessary even

without changing down a gear. Whether it is 40 or 100 mph, the Jetta remains quiet and comfortable. Only way past 120 mph has it lost its oomph.

Berlin

After the freedom of the autobahn it is well worth keeping a good look at the speedometer. The engine is so powerful that it makes changing gears almost optional. In any gear the Jetta goes too fast almost unnoticed. Even in sixth gear the Jetta tootles along effortlessly. The gearbox operates light and accurately, as is characteristic for Volkswagen. Whoever keeps the engine revved up will be rewarded with more than a good performance. As a tourist in a strange city on an strange ring road this potential proves to be quite useful on more than one occasion when turning of an exit at the last minute (unfortunately the Volkswagen navigation system is not a 100% reliable).

A long boulevard runs from West to the former East-Berlin. Once past the former checkpoint an enormous pillar carrying the name Goldelse (golden angel) is supposed to impress the visitor. For the Jetta, the traffic chaos on the large square around it is just as interesting. Thanks to the relatively compact size the Jetta is manoeuvrable and has a good visibility. Although the Jetta is not a small city car, this new sedan lends itself well for city traffic.

Bode museum

The first destination is the Bode museum. The district around this art history museum is being renovated so radically that there is hardly any traffic there. Before the visit to the museum the road holding is tested to the limit on these wide and empty one-way streets. The car has a sporty undertone because of the Sportline chassis, but it remains comfortable. The test makes clear why Volkswagen put a second sedan on the market besides the Passat: a smaller car is more dynamic and that will appeal to a larger group of buyers.



Potsdamer platz

The route resumes via the almost compulsory Brandenburger Tor (see the portrait photo in the grey frame) to the Potsdamer Platz where the street image changes completely. Where once stood dull Eastern German buildings now room has been made for new buildings. As part of an architectural miracle of glass and steel a number of painted remnants of the Berlin wall are shown to the public (see panoramic photo). By parking the car here on the square the public can be questioned for their sentiments on the Jetta. Many people know that the car is not yet for sale and that raises all kinds of questions.



The question most asked is: "is this a Golf sedan or is it really a new car?". The design is brand new. The engines, the equipment and the chassis are all the same as the Golf. However, the line of the grille is continued lower to indicate that the Jetta is one step higher in the hierarchy. Furthermore, the long line that

runs from the headlights and goes along the side windows to the rear lights makes the Jetta look slimmer. The roofline is much lower than that of the Golf and that too makes this sedan more elegant than the hatchback.

Despite the low roofline, the headroom is fine because of the low placing of the seats. Compared to larger business sedans the space around the driver and the passenger is slightly less. This is where the Jetta belongs in the class of the Golf and not that of the Passat. The room in the back is so spacious that the Jetta exceeds many large sedans. Particularly the boot with its 527 litres is gigantic and it swallows the luggage and photo-equipment for this city trip with great ease.



Reichstag

The "Berlin in one day"-test drive ends at the decision makers and number crunchers of Berlin: the building of the Reichstag. On a quiet parking space it is time to reflect whether the Jetta is a sensible choice. A similar Passat is more expensive than a Jetta. For the same price other car makes too offer larger (although not necessarily more spacious) and/or faster sedans that have a higher regard in a company parking space.

Only on the way back it becomes obvious what the true value of the Jetta is. This is not a Golf sedan or a small Passat. Choosing a Jetta is choosing a feeling, just like a city leaves you with a feeling. Berlin has a rich history but at the same time it is a modern city filled with art and culture. The Volkswagen Jetta is solid and traditional but at the same time dynamic and modern. Particularly this feeling of reliability combined with progress will appeal to a large buyers group. In

short: an old name and a well-deserved new chance.



Conclusion

The conclusion after a stirring test drive through Berlin is that the new Volkswagen Jetta is not the most exciting car but it is a very good one. Everything works and it is hard to pinpoint any disadvantages.

In a category where supply is enormous the Jetta scores in first place with the sound Volkswagen-feel and the reliable Golf-technology. Added to that is a successful design and plenty of inside space. ■



Specifications

Volkswagen Jetta (2005 - 2011) 2.0 16v FSI Sport

Size and weight

Length x width x height	455 x 178 x 146 cm
Wheelbase	258 cm
weight	1.294 kg
Trailer	690 kg
Trailer - braked	1.400 kg
Fuel capacity	55 l
Luggage space	527 l
Tyre size	205/55R16

Engine and performance



Capacity	1984 cc
Cylinders / valves	4/4
Max power	150 PS @ 6000 rpm
Max torque	200 Nm @ 3500 rpm
Drive	front wheels
Acceleration 0 - 62 mph	9.2 secs
topspeed	211 km/h
Average mileage	8.1 l / 100 km
Mileage urban	11.1 l / 100 km
Mileage extra urban	6.3 l / 100 km
CO2 emissions	191 gr / km

Price

Price	Â£ 17,340
Price base model	Â£ 14,635