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Vauxhall Adam Rocks Unlimited – Road Test

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The Vauxhall Adam Rocks Unlimited can be a reflection of your personality...

...says Robin Roberts (and Miles Better News Agency).

A car says a lot about its owner, so it is an expression which can be applied to nearly everyone, and that's really true about customers choosing from the Vauxhall Adam Rocks Unlimited range of compact three door city cars with 'Crossover' styling cues.

After the introduction of its new Adam city hatchback car for the second decade of the 21st century, Vauxhall set about making it highly individual and added the fabric sunroof Rocks



Unlimited series.

With that came the ability to pick and choose from the very extensive personalisation options and pack-list to create a model that goes a long way to being “your” car.

Essentially, there are nearly 30 models in the Adam range of hatchbacks and what they term ‘Crossover’, based on three trim levels which are developed into the more personalised Rocks and Rocks Unlimited series. Using 1.0, 1.2 or 1.4 litre engines from 70 to 150 hp customers can really individualise a model to their taste from a very wide range of equipment options at prices from £13,295 to £20,140.

To simplify, Rocks Unlimited adds: Anthracite-coloured protective mouldings for wheel arches, lower door and side sills, Anthracite front and rear bumpers with visible underbody protection, Dark tinted rear windows, 15 mm (just over half an inch) increased ride height, electric folding canvas roof insert, chromed upper side window moulding, chrome effect door sill covers, chromed insert in door handles and LED daytime running lights with LED rear tail lights.

The fitting of the On-Star navigation and personal assistance system is very highly recommended as it can even help if your vehicle is stolen.

It’s all about being seen in the Adam Rocks Unlimited and I can guarantee you’ll get noticed, particularly if you have bright colour paintwork, as mine did.



Our test car had the highly popular sub-litre 115 hp triple cylinder petrol engine with a six-speed manual gearbox, and it was fine for use around town and when driving two-up on open roads. But squeeze, and I mean squeeze, in rear passengers and its noticeably working harder and slower. Its Ecoflex power delivery and stop/ start ignition system made the most of the passive power and economy potential.



You can get away with this small engine in town because it's a lively and responsive unit with near instant pick up from traffic lights and with a moderately heavy foot I managed a respectable 44 mpg overall, even seeing it approach 50 mpg on open roads at times when cruising.

The slick, compact gearchange can be well used to make the most of the power and 170 Nm (125 lb.ft) at 1,800 rpm torque and you will not really be left hunting for a ratio to maintain progress in most situations - just plan ahead.

I really liked the power steering feedback and turning circle, and with the reassuring brakes underfoot it was effortless and fun at the same time.

Secondary controls were all grouped on the wheel-spokes or close to the driver, with a



good-sized infotainment display screen as well as simple but clear instruments on the fascia. Air conditioning was straightforward to operate and effective in the small cabin, and the quickly folding fabric roof insert was welcome on warmer days.

Our test car had the expensive advanced Park Assist system and I doubt its value on such a small car, but it may please some drivers and keep the attractive body pack damage-free.

This slideshow requires JavaScript.

Oddments room was modest in the cabin and most items would end up on the empty back seats or in the rear footwells. The boot was small unless you removed the parcel shelf or gradually extended capacity by folding the rear seat backs to be more useful.

Access for driver and front seat passenger was very good but those in the back had a job to slip into their seats and found leg and headroom was tight. It may be okay for children but would be a source of complaint from teenagers or adults.

Ride comfort was surprisingly good for its 2.32 m (7.61 ft) wheelbase, only severe bumps were felt, and it had little body roll or pitching on bends and during acceleration or braking. You could hear the system working away however and this detracted from its refinement.

Handling was responsive and surefooted irrespective of the road beneath the tyres, and the car could be deftly placed on twisting sections or even just slipping into a small parking space.

There was a small blindspot hidden behind the rear three-quarter panel but generally it had big windows and good wipers as well as bright LED bulbs for safety at night.

VERDICT

With a very high level of personalisation the Vauxhall Adam Rocks Unlimited is an attractive car, but you need to carefully pick the features you want, and then you'll really enjoy it as it



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should be a reflection of you, in theory!

For: Agile, comfortable for two, economical, smooth powertrain, well equipped, personalised styling.

Against: Small boot and oddments space, tight rear seat room, modest performance, road and engine noise intrusion.





Mini Milestones and Wheels-Alive Tech. Spec in Brief:

Vauxhall Adam Rocks Unlimited 115 hp.

Price: £18,810, (£20,225 as tested inc tech pack & advanced park assist).

Engine/transmission: 998cc, 115 hp, three cylinder, turbo-petrol engine, six speed manual.

Performance: 121 mph, 0-62 mph 9.9 seconds.

Fuel consumption: Combined cycle 57.6 mpg (44 mpg on test).

Emissions and taxation: CO2 emissions 112 g/km, VED road tax £160 First Year rate then £140 Standard rate, BiK company car tax rating 21%.

Warranty: Three years/60,000 miles.

Dimensions/capacities: L 3,747 mm (12.29 ft), W 1,721 mm (5.64 ft), 1,493 mm (4.90 ft), boot space 170 - 663 litres (6.00 - 23.41 cu.ft), three doors/four seats.