Audi TT Roadster quattro – Road Test

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Audi TT Roadster 45TFSI 2.0 S-tronic 245hp Quattro.

By Robin Roberts (and Miles Better News Agency).

If you believe that life is a beach, then the Audi TT has been riding on the crest of a wave.

Its success over 21 years has been awesome and the envy of many manufacturers, not because it’s particularly clever but because it’s essentially simple and satisfying in any situation.

For a comparatively small car in the line up there’s a staggering 40-strong choice in two or all wheel drive, with Coupe or Roadster bodies, diesel or petrol engines attached to manual or automatic transmissions. No wonder you see so many on the roads.

The first Audi TT appeared in showrooms in 1998, was revised in 2006 and the current model on the newest VW Group MQB platform went on sale in 2014.

Today’s range may shrink as diesel engines seem doomed but the reality is the petrol engines are very good and a more compact series would bring substantial savings in manufacturing, so it could continue for many years.

With spring approaching I really took advantage of the latest Audi TT Roadster 45TFSI 2.0 S-tronic 245 hp with its fully electric folding canvas roof. Our short spell sunny days are lengthening and the ability to open-up or snuggly close the roof in a matter of seconds is one of the best features.

It is a highly sophisticated system which slightly drops powered windows while it stows behind a tonneau cover or reverses the procedure to securely close the glass against the roof sides. Wind and water-proof it's a delight to experience and use because its so refined.

That also extends to the powertrain and the very beefy 2.0 turbo-petrol engine with its seamless seven-speed direct shift gearbox, and the ability to fine tune responses with comfort, normal, dynamic and eco modes to make the most of any conditions and driver's character.



The upper ratios in the automatic box are overdrive and on long runs in the most miserly setting we saw near 40 mpg at times.

The instant punch of power if needed is there and the changes are silken and swift with little advantage gained in using the manual paddle shifts on the column for most occasions. Then sometimes you want to use them for the feel and fun of it and there is no drawback, just delight.

It’s quick and safe from standstill to the legal limit, cruises with utter composure and can be surprisingly economical when you want it to be.

I liked the very smooth, easy and feelsome steering and the way the brakes applied power without much effort and no drama. It also held on our steep slope when we tested the parking brake itself.

The big wheels and tyres did produce some road noise and on normal setting the ride was firm, noticeably softening in the comfort mode and firming up as we moved into the sportier side of the scale.

With its quattro, or four-wheel-drive, transmission and grip there is never a moment’s concern for its cornering ability on any surface and that is so reassuring in our climate in the UK. The highly developed system means there are nothing but benefits to be had and the whole car stays planted on the road and responds to the driver’s input with sharpness and confidence, and no concerns.

The road noise can be joined by a busy engine note when it’s stretched but that’s not really intrusive and with low wind or other mechanical sources the Audi TT Cabriolet is a quiet car despite its lack of a metal roof.



The two people inside certainly have a comfortable cabin, not ideal if you're over six feet tall however, but the backrests and cushions are well shaped and hold well with modest adjustment range. You can specify heated seats for the coldest conditions while the climate control is excellent with simple, efficient and effective output.

Oddments room was limited and a bit frustrating if you generally carry a few things on trips and the space for luggage or shopping in the boot was small and low.



Visibility was a slight compromise with the roof erect but much better when folded down; the lights and wipers were excellent. Our car came with over £8,300 of options, so you really can bespoke an interior.

VERDICT

The Audi TT has become an icon of the early 21st century, a future classic you can buy now and enjoy because it has few faults and none of these are more than irritating, a bit like sand in your shoes.

For: Excellent build quality, refined cabin and hood, sophisticated systems, comfortable seats, sharp handling, tenacious grip, quick and fairly quiet.

Against: Expensive options, modest economy, some road noise, small boot and oddments space, ungenerous warranty.



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

Audi TT Roadster 45TFSI 2.0 S-tronic 245hp, quattro.

Price: £47,460 as tested (see text).

Mechanical: 245 hp, four cylinder, 2.0 litre turbo-petrol, seven speed auto, quattro 4WD.

Max Speed: 155 mph, 0–62 mph 5.5 seconds.

Fuel consumption: Combined cycle 34 mpg.

Emissions and taxation: CO2 emissions 165 g/km (*dependent wheels & tyres*).

VED First Year road tax £530, Standard rate £145 + £310 annual supplement for five years as it costs more than £40k, BiK company car tax rate 37%.

Insurance Group: 43.

Warranty: Three years/60,000 miles.

Sizes: L 4.20 m (13.78 ft), W 1.97 m (6.14 ft), H 1.36 m (4.46 ft), boot space 280 litres (9.89 cu.ft), two doors/two seats.