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DS Automobiles DS3 Connected Chic Pure Tech 110 S&S – First Impressions

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Chris Adamson assesses this compact car with a very big name...

(All words and photographs by Chris).

If you are going to give a new model an extensive moniker such as the Connected Chic PureTech, then it has a big name to live up to - that's the task DS Automobiles has set for the latest addition to its popular DS3 hatchback line-up.

The new trim level for DS Automobiles best-selling model is positioned between the Chic and Performance grades and just as it says on the tin is designed to be both attractive and packed-out with the latest in connected technology.



It is certainly a stylish baby hatch from the eye-catching 17 inch black diamond-cut alloy wheels and contrasting bi-tone paint finish, including black roof and matching door mirrors (which look particularly good with the Ruby Red body colour) to the LED front fog lights and slippery body shape.

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Altogether it appears fresh, youthful and sophisticated - so that's one box ticked.

Inside, the rather busy packaging is wrapped up with a nice mix of quality feeling materials including Basalt cloth upholstery and gloss black surfaces, dark tinted windows, a chunky leather wrapped steering wheel, big and bold instrumentation and comfy seats.





The technological kit list runs to items such as the large Mirror Screen with Apple CarPlay and MirrorLink which appears to be the must-have in-car accessory of the moment, as well as a seven inch touch screen that operates everything from the satellite navigation to the audio (DAB radio with six speakers included), media integration and Bluetooth connection.

To this list you also add automatic air conditioning, rear parking sensors, alarm system and DS Connect which links to the emergency and assistance services.

Modest cabin accommodation (a little snug to squeeze into the rear seats) is supplemented by a very usable 285 litre (10.06 cu.ft) luggage area which is wide and deep, and can be extended with the 60/40 split rear seats which almost go flat.

On the Road

The DS3 is already well-known as being a finely balanced small car with very amenable handling characteristics and this continues through to the latest models.

From a choice of four engine options the example I tried used the turbocharged three-cylinder PureTech 110 petrol engine with automatic stop start.



This is a gutsy performer which, while it may not be the most potent, seems willing enough in all conditions and works well through the close ratio five-speed manual transmission that has enough life to make the DS3 appear quicker than the bare figures would suggest.

If the statistics are to be believed it also offers impressive fuel economy. With judicious use of the throttle, drivers should be able to get close to 50 mpg, if not better.

Pushing the DS3 hard on country lanes throws up a distinct tendency towards understeer which is what would be expected in this configuration, but the 17 inch tyres soon gain grip (with some accompanying road noise) and pull the whole thing round.



The installation of a sports tuned suspension consisting of MacPherson struts and coils at the front and deformable beam at the rear, gives it a firm but not unforgiving ride quality.

This is accompanied by a nicely weighted variable assisted power steering set-up that has just the right amount of pressure to give the enthusiastic driver confidence that it will response quickly to commands.

Verdict

I will admit that I am not one for lots of high tech toys; I prefer my cars to be all about the driving experience but, from my limited experience, the DS3 Connected seems to have almost everything a technophile iPad generation owner could wish for - and it's not a bad driving car either.

Priced at just over £900 above the standard Chic trim, the Connected version piles on over £2,000 worth of extra kit which sounds like a bargain for anyone who just can't drive without their sounds.



Wheels-Alive Tech Spec in Brief:

Vehicle: DS3 Connected Pure Tech 110 S&S

Engine: 1,199cc (three-cylinder turbo-charged direct injection petrol)

Transmission: Five speed manual

Power: 110PS @ 5,500rpm



Torque: 205 Nm (151 lb.ft) @ 1,500 rpm

Performance:

0-62mph: 9.6 Seconds

Top Speed: 118 mph

Fuel Consumption (Official Figures):

Urban: 53.3 mpg

Extra-Urban: 74.3 mpg

Combined: 65.7 mpg

CO2 Emissions: 100 g/km

Price (On the Road), from: £17,395 (£18,490 as tested)