



GWM Ora 03 GT – Road Test

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Author:

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Here's a Chinese whisper - the GWM Ora 03 GT is a good modern BEV, writes Robin Roberts (and WheelsWithinWales).

To some it looks like a version of the MINI it has helped build in its homeland of China in a deal with BMW, but it comes at a price which really takes on the



bigger names.

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There are three models in the GWM Ora 03 range, and after the EV-grant the costs are £21,245 Pure, £25,235 Pro and GT at £29,245 with a 48 kWh battery in the entry model and 63 kWh battery in the others.

With the bigger battery in the test car the charging time from a 7 kW home unit is 7.2 hours and with a maximum 64 kW boost it is ready to go in 48 mins. The models with the smaller battery charge sooner but their range is substantially less.



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Our GT version came impressively equipped with a heat pump to extend range, big sunroof, vented massage front seats with memory, uprated trim and wheels as well as an electric fifth door. Strangely for any car in this class it was unusual not to have a rear wash/ wiper which it really needed.

GWM – Great Wall Motor Co. – started in 1984 making trucks and within ten years began assembling cars as well as pickups with vans appearing in Europe in 2006.

It now assembles cars in Bulgaria, Brazil, India, Thailand and Russia and has worked with BMW in China building the MINI and its badge is seen on the roads of 60 countries around the world. Ora is the first BEV it manufactured and launched in 2022 and now has representation at 40 sites in the UK, half of which are full dealerships.

We tested the predecessor to the Ora 03 in Spring 2023 tagged with the convoluted name of Funky Cat 1st Edition and generally liked the car despite it then not having full phone connectivity, a fiddly infotainment system and, you've guessed it, no rear wash/ wipe. Well, things have improved a good bit since.

You still cannot see out of the rear window on a dirty autumn day with spray sucked onto the glass but at least you have a lot of equipment to enjoy through the infotainment system which now works with a smartphone.

The heat pump helps increase the range and the Ora comes with AC & DC charging cables which not every BEV possesses.



It has a sit and start system so there's no need to insert a key for the motor to come alive but you must click in the driver's seatbelt to actually move.

A driver can select a range of driving modes to emphasise economy or push performance and even fine tune the feedback from the retardation to rescue a few more miles. The steering also has light, comfort or sport settings to help tailor the car to individual taste.

We played around with all the settings and found we could stretch it to a range of 220 miles while enjoying a fairly spirited sporty drive and safe surefooted front wheel drive handling, albeit with a bit of suspension noise and some shaking from the firm springing and large wheels and tyres.

The motor's response was good and powertrain smooth so it easily kept up with traffic and in town showed it had single-pedal driving ability and a good turning circle to park.

Secondary controls were all close to hand and fingers on the column, wheel and fascia although some stalks were not in direct line of sight and switches were partly hidden as well.

The driver had a good sized display in front of the wheel and larger screen for the infotainment in the centre of the dash and its responses have been sharpened over the Funky Cat launch model.

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Oddments room is just fair with plenty of compartments but they are all small



and that's the same with the bootspace for just a couple of cases unless you drop down the offset split seatback and then have a very decent capacity for a five-door hatchback. Behind the high rear sill, the boot-floor has a useful deep compartment for the two power cables and it has electric door operation.

Access was very good to boot or cabin but some might find legroom and shoulder space tight in the rear. The two front seats have a combination of electric and manual adjustment with a good range of settings and proved extremely comfortable and shaped to locate occupants.

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We liked the heating and surprising massage settings as well and normally only found in much more expensive luxury cars.

Generally, visibility was good in the Ora GT with a low waistline, good headlights and effective front wash/wipe system but it really needs a rear wash/wipe arrangement in the British climate. The reversing camera was useless on a filthy day and you couldn't see out of the window anyway in such conditions.



Noise levels were modest and confined to the suspension working away and tyres rumbling over surfaces with no real motor noise or wind waffling.

The suspension did a good job soaking up the bumps and there was modest body roll with a tendency to run wide on bends before easing off the throttle to bring it back on line in a very safe and sure manner.

VERDICT

At the price, the GWM Ora 03 GT is a good package with no real vices and a lot of virtues to value in what is becoming an expensive market.

For: Agile, lots of technology and features, comfortable seats, good range, smooth powertrain, good access, fair recharging time.

Against: No rear wiper affected visibility, road and suspension noises, small bootspace and tight in rear for three people.



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FAST FACTS

Model: GWM Ora 03 GT

Price: £29,245

Mechanical: 171 PS motor, ternary lithium 63 kWh battery



Max Speed: 99 mph

0 - 62 mph: 8.2secs

Range: 220 miles

Insurance Group: 30

C02 emissions: Zero

Bik rating: 3%, £10FY, £195SR,

Warranty: 5 years/ unlimited mileage & 8 years/ 100,000 miles battery

Size: L 4.24 m (13.91 ft), W 1.83 m (6.00 ft), H 1.61 m (5.28 ft)

Bootspace: 228 to 858 litres (8.05 to 30.30 cu.ft)

Kerbweight: 1,540 kg (3,395 lb.)