Latest KIA Proceed GT-Line S – First impressions

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The KIA Proceed GT-Line S in its newest form tried for size by Robin Roberts (and Miles Better News Agency).

Having a finger in every pie is very satisfying for KIA with a huge range of models consistently leading to more UK sales.

Getting his slice of that pie was our road tester Robin Roberts who last week attended a media test driving day held at the famous Manor House Hotel in Britain's prettiest village, Castle Combe in Wiltshire.

(All words and photographs by Robin).

KIA's model range explosion over the years means they can always offer a wide range of buyers something and they are not hit too hard if tastes change and a design goes out of fashion.

With the resurgence of interest in estate cars for load-lugging over and above the more limited hatchback shapes it was natural that their highly successful Ceed family car would be joined by a 'bigger brother from the same mother',

And being KIA the styling progression is very important so the current five-door Proceed appeared as a semi-estate in 2018. Prior to that it had been a three-door hatchback and from 2015 it evolved into a boxy station wagon.

Now the current model, albeit five years old, is the most practical of the series and can still cut a dash in any situation. The familiar semi-estate or shooting brake so popular with the country-set will not take the biggest luggage loads of a full estate that usually has a more upright fifth door, but in reality who does need more than the Proceed's 1,545 litres (54.56 cu.ft) carrying capacity?


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For this year, KIA revamped their Proceed range and there are just two models on sale, the GT-Line from a little over £26,660 and for another £5,605 the GT-Line S which comes with bigger 18-inch alloys, large tilting and sliding sunroof, leather and suede upholstery, electric driver's seat, a 12-inch screen, smart parking, eight speakers Premium audio, wireless phone charging, four heated seats and blind spot detection.

We tested the GT-Line S with the familiar 1.5 litre turbo petrol engine and seven-speed dual clutch transmission, which is a very good combination offering either normal or sporting modes through a switch on the transmission tunnel and which transformed the car's responses as desired.

Power take up was extremely smooth, the changes quick and clean with an edginess once out of the normal setting accompanied by a subtle colour change to the main dials in front of the driver.

The main controls and the secondary switches on the wheel-spokes and console operated with hushed effectiveness, the brakes were very progressive and strong while the steering was sharp and vibration-free.

There was some noise as the engine was pressed to perform but it was not too intrusive and the automatic box was silent as well as smooth.

The front strut and rear multi-link suspension was a little noisy over bad surfaces and the accompanying road rumbles were ever present in the background.

Access into the cabin was easy and the seats were generously sized with a lot of adjustment range in front and even some good support for those behind. The combination of supportive and well shaped seats and the Proceed's suspension combined to produce a good overall ride.

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Putting things into the boot was also easy with a powered tailgate, low floor and reasonable size, quickly extending as the off-set split seat backs were dropped.



Oddments room was good throughout for family car as well and the Proceed lacks little in the way of equipment to make longer journeys pass without being bored with full I-phone and android compatibility, plug-in points and a really big infotainment display.

Visibility is generally good to front and sides with sensors monitoring the surroundings but the steeply sloping c-pillar and small rear window restrict what you can see over the shoulder or when reversing so the camera and parking sensors really come into their own.

VERDICT

The market for semi-estates or shooting brakes is comparatively small in the UK but this is a

big player in the sector and its rarity is a strong reason to buy at a competitive price. For those customers now fed up with driving commonplace expensive to run SUVs the latest Proceed is a tasty and more affordable option.

For: Stylish, very comfortable seating, good controls, smooth powertrain, quality finish, long warranty.

Against: Poor rear visibility, limited boot space four-up, some road and engine noise intrusion, firm ride.


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Fact file: KIA Proceed GT Line S 5-door semi-estate

Price: £32,270

Mechanical: 157 bhp 4 cyl 1500cc turbo-petrol, 7 speed DCT,

Maximum speed: 130 mph

0 – 60 mph: 8.8 sec

Consumption: 28 mpg

Emissions: 138 g/km

Insurance group: 19D

Tax costs: BIK 32%, VED £255FY, £180SR

Warranty: 7 years/ 100,000 miles

Size: L 4.61 m (15.12 ft), W 1.80 (5.91 ft), H 1.43 m (4.69 ft)

Luggage: 594 to 1,545 litres (20.98 to 54.56 cu.ft)

Kerb weight: 1,425 kg (3,142 lb)