Revised Renault Captur – Road Test

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Author: David Miles

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Updated Renault Captur Compact SUV wheeled out in the UK.

By David Miles (Miles Better News Agency).

Whilst the large all-new Koleos SUV has just been launched in the UK, Renault's first generation of SUVs, the compact Captur, has received a number of updates to keep it market-fresh.

Its styling and equipment changes mirror those of the Koleos and the mid-sized Kadjar but the engine and drivetrain choices remain the same as the outgoing versions across the 24 model line-up. But there are now five trim levels on offer including a new top of the range

Signature S Nav. Prices now start from £15,615 on-the-road and go through to £23,405.

The Captur has proved to be a huge sales success for Renault and it is Europe's best selling small SUV/Crossover with 215,679 sold last year. The Captur has become Renault's best selling passenger car in the UK with its 25,841 registrations last year, accounting for 30% of Renault's total passenger car sales. It competes against the likes of the Nissan Juke, Peugeot 2008, Suzuki Vitara, Vauxhall Mokka X and Crossland X to name but a few but there are more and more about to arrive on sale in this fast growing and competitive sector.



Styling changes Renault say give the latest Captur a bolder and more assertive look, including its signature two-tone body colour scheme, and three more new colours are added. Now there are 30 potential colour combinations to meet a customer's personal taste.

There are also seven different interior styling packs and six colours of exterior customisation packs.

The front grille gets a chrome strip in line with other new Renault models, and the Captur, to emphasise its SUV credentials (although all versions are only 2WD), has new skid plates on the front and rear bumpers. Now LED daytime running lights and optional LED headlights add to the upgraded look.

Front and side parking sensors, Blind Spot Warning, Hands-Free Parking and a fixed panoramic sunroof are available, as are three levels of Techno Packs ranging in price from £600 to £1,000, also a £100 Premium Pack, BOSE premium sound system at £350 and a space-saver spare wheel, which costs an extra £110.

The interior trim has received the most significant upgrade by replacing injection-moulded plastic with trimmed material and higher quality soft-feel plastics and trim inserts. The door panels for instance have improved trim and now seamlessly incorporate buttons and controls. The steering wheel and gearlever are trimmed in full-grain leather for higher grade models.

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The full line-up of specification levels are Expression+, Dynamique Nav, Dynamique S Nav, Signature X Nav and Signature S Nav, depending on the engine chosen.

The engine line-up remains as before. These are the best-selling turbocharged direct injection 0.9 litre three cylinder 90 hp and 1.2 litre four cylinder 120 hp petrol units, and two 1.5 litre four cylinder diesels with 90 and 110 hp. An electronic dual-clutch auto transmission is available for the petrol 120 hp and 90 hp turbodiesel units.

The CO2 emissions are as low as 95g/km and fuel economy of up to 78.5 mpg for the EU Combined Cycle. The lowest First Year rate VED road tax cost is £120 and the highest £160. Company car driver’s Benefit-in-Kind tax charges vary from 21 to 24%. Insurance groups

start at a low 8E and go up to 15E. The warranty cover is four years or 100,000-miles but the first two years have no mileage limit.

Jeremy Townsend, Renault UK's communications director, said at last week's media launch of the revised range that in the UK the Captur has a 50-50 sales split between retail and fleet customers, 60% of customers chose a petrol model over diesel, 18% of customers choose an automatic transmission model compared with 16% for the compact SUV sector as a whole, and 85% of customers go for the higher specced models so the Dynamique Nav and Dynamique S Nav versions will account for most sales.

The first model we tried during our brief test driving around the winding country Cotswold roads was the Capture Dynamique S Nav TCe 90 priced at £18,445 – and it's likely to be the most popular model in the UK.

The three cylinder turbocharged engine is widely used in the Nissan, Renault and Dacia ranges. It produces 90 hp and 140 Nm (103 lb.ft) of torque from 2,250 rpm, which is a little higher up the rev range than some other of these new generation small capacity petrol engines – where maximum torque can be produced from as low as 1,500 rpm. This means considerable use has to be made of the five speed manual gearbox at low to medium speeds to keep the unit operating in its most responsive powerband. A sixth gear would also help fuel economy and reduce engine noise at higher cruising speeds. Around town the unit is most at home and on the open road the acceleration felt sluggish. Top speed is 106 mph and zero to 62 mph takes a lengthy 13.2 seconds.

Officially this version will return 55.4 mpg in the Combined Cycle, and during our test driving using Cotswold country roads the figure achieved was 40.2 mpg. With CO2 emissions of 114 g/km VED road tax is £160 First Year rate and then £140 Standard rate for the second year onwards. Company car drivers will pay 21% Benefit-in-Kind tax and the insurance is a low Group 9E.

Generally the handling was surefooted and the ride compliant but not as refined as we

found driving the 1.5-litre 110 hp dCi turbodiesel model. With the extra weight of the four cylinder diesel unit and different damper rates the ride was more compliant and the car felt better balanced during cornering on the same test route.

The Captur with this engine also has significantly more torque at 260 Nm (192 lb.ft) from 1,750 rpm so it provided better engine response and it has a six-speed manual gearbox. Top speed is 112 mph and it is better for acceleration with a zero to 62 mph time of 11.4 seconds. Officially this engine will return 76.4 mpg in the Combined Cycle and we achieved 55.6 mpg. The CO2 emissions are lower at 98g/km so VED is £120 First Year rate and then £140. Company car drivers will pay 21% BiK tax and insurance costs more with a Group 15E rating.

With the same Dynamique S Nav spec level as the 90 hp petrol version we tried unfortunately this dCi 110hp turbodiesel costs £2,620 more to buy, but it will be popular with high mileage drivers because of the lower running costs. The same spec with the 90 hp dCi diesel unit still costs £1,920 more to buy than the 90 hp petrol unit, but again has lower running costs and more or less the same performance as the petrol unit. So in reality the less impressive petrol unit will be more popular for most customers just because of its much lower purchase price.

VERDICT

Plenty of choice, but think carefully about the version you prefer, and the cost of it, since price differences between some of the different spec models are huge…

For: Revised and refreshed for a competitive market sector, better quality interior trim, higher specification, wide range of models and options, practical with low running costs.

Against: Higher prices now than recently announced, diesel engines cost much more to buy than the petrol units but have lower running costs, fiddly infotainment system, needs a six speed gearbox for this engine to improve fuel economy and for better higher cruising speed refinement, a spare wheel is an extra cost option.



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

New Renault Captur Dynamique S Nav TCe 90. (Best selling model).

Price: £18,455.

Engine/transmission: 0.9 litre, three cylinder, turbo petrol, 90 hp, 140 Nm (103 lb.ft) of

torque from 2,250 rpm, five speed manual, 2WD.

Performance: 106 mph, 0-62 mph 13.2 seconds.

Fuel consumption: Combined Cycle 55.4 mpg (40.2 mpg on test).

Emissions and taxation: CO2 114g/km, VED £160/£140, BiK company car tax 21%. Insurance Group: 9E.

Warranty: Four years/100,000 miles.

Dimensions/capacities: L 4,122 mm (13.52 ft), W 1,778 mm (5.83 ft), H 1,566 mm (5.14 ft), boot/load space 455 to 1,235 litres (16.07 to 43.61 cu.ft), five doors/five seats.