Skoda Octavia vRS Estate – Road Test

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SPEED AND SPACE FROM SKODA'S IMPRESSIVE OCTAVIA vRS ESTATE.

By Robin Roberts (and Motoring Milestones).

There's something attractive about being able to cover ground quickly but discretely.

This probably explains why specialist police units opt for the Skoda Octavia Estate vRS.

It's quick, very quick in the right hands and is roomy and comfortable for long stints in

service.



The technology under the bonnet and bodywork is straight out of the Volkswagen Group parts departments so it’s reliable as well.

Further down the ranks of regular users you will also see taxi fleets dotted with them and a few chauffeur services appreciate their big load capacity and performance, particularly sipping fuel.

Octavia is the most successful Skoda ever sold in Britain with over 500,000 delivered in four generations, and has picked up a clutch of awards for its family values as selected by an international group of Women Car of the Year judges.

There’s a big range with a hatchback sibling as well in SE, SE L and vRS trim levels and a new 4×4 version. There are 1.0, 1.4, 1.5 and 2.0 petrol engines along with new 2.0 diesels,

and the PHEV versions. This year it announced the latest expansion of the range with the introduction of new SportLine model showing off cosmetic touches inside and out and some practical pieces of extra kit.

Set to deliver an enhanced dynamic look, SportLine models feature black exterior detailing, a three-spoke multifunction sports steering wheel and sports seats with integrated headrests. Available as a hatch or estate, both can be ordered with the optional DCC Dynamic Chassis Control and a number of driver assistance systems.

We tested the PHEV model a few months ago and now we wanted to experience its sportier sibling, the 245 PS vRS. This finely tuned 2.0 litre petrol engined model has very strong pulling power from low revs and through its mid-range to its upper sector.



The power flows quickly and strongly and with a sweet set of gears in the automatic box there is no hesitation, just heady performance.

It’s on par with the quickest cars from Germany but also delivers very good fuel economy overall without really trying to save. No wonder professional users value the Octavia vRS.

They also like the excellent access from the back or the rear doors if you have long loads and when used five-up the occupants can easily climb in or out with big opening doors.



Front seats are carefully shaped for good support under the legs and around the ribs and in front the adjustment range is very good, but there wasn’t a lot of steering column adjustment. Those behind might find the support a little lacking.

Ride quality was firm but not uncomfortable although we could hear the suspension and tyres working over the tarmac and bad bumps, which were well insulated from the cabin most of the time.

Handling was faithful and not at all troubling and the roadholding felt surefooted even through bad corners.

For the driver, the major controls are light and precise, the DSG selector is just a slider on the central console ahead of the electric parking brake button. Steering is well weighted and the turning circle is good.

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Underfoot, the brakes do a great job slowing with just modest pressure and no drama.

From the driver’s seat you have excellent vision of gauges in front and the virtual cockpit display which can be changed to show a variety of features.

The large screen on the console is very clear and easy to use if a little distracting while heating and ventilation were effective and efficient with good output and directional controls.

Oddments room was reasonable throughout and there were plenty of places to plug in USB cables.

Visibility was generally good all round with deep windows, extremely good intelligent headlights which automatically dipped for oncoming vehicles and effective wash wipe system each end.

VERDICT

The Skoda Octavia Estate vRS is a generously sized car which can be easier to manage than many MPVs or SUVs.

Overall it felt well designed, trimmed and put together.

For: Sophisticated strong powertrain, smooth performance, economical, well-equipped, roomy for five people and luggage, good visibility, dynamic handling.

Against: Some road noise intrusion, rear seats lacked support, average warranty.



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

Skoda Octavia Estate vRS.

Price: £35,055 inc options.

Mechanical: 245 PS 4-cylinder, 1,948cc, turbo-petrol, 7-speed auto.

Performance: 155 mph, 0 – 62 mph 6.7 seconds.

Combined MPG: 48 mpg.

CO2 emissions: 160 g/km.

Tax costs: BiK company car tax 34%, VED First Year road tax £555, Standard rate £155.

Insurance Group: 25.

Warranty: 3-years/60,000 miles.

Size: L 4.71 m (15.45 ft), W 1.83 m (6.00 ft), H 1,46 m (4.79 ft).

Boot space: 640 to 1,700 litres (22.60 to 60.03 cu.ft).

Kerbweight: 1,457 kg (3,212 lb).