Toyota bZ4X Touring – Road Test

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By Robin Roberts (and WheelsWithinWales)

Toyota offers a very wide range of models worldwide and never seems to hesitate hauling out yet another to meet owners' needs, as it has with the bZ4X Touring.



This is the longer estate version of the normal hatchback bZ4X and provides more luggage room but also importantly is fitted with a bigger battery and motor so for many it will be a better choice. The Touring comes with front wheel drive, as we tested, or a twin motor all-wheel-drive powertrain should you prefer for wintry roads.

The front wheel drive Design version is about £5,500 less than the all wheel drive Excel.

The 221 bhp motor gives respectable acceleration from rest and mid-range while allowing it to comfortably keep up with or pass motorway traffic.



But motorways can drag down range at an alarming rate in a battery electric vehicle and they are much better working on main roads and country B-roads.

In the bZ4X Touring you have immediate access to the paddle operated regeneration system and by varying the intensity it can even be driven with forethought and just one-pedal as it dramatically slows when the throttle is lifted.

If econ is not your style, there are normal, sporting and individual settings from which to choose, particularly if you tow.

The very comprehensive powertrain programmes can be accessed after a little homework and experimentation with the massive infotainment screen, but you may have to dive into a number of programme pools to find what you need.

A lot of the driver safety assistance systems, for example, have to be picked off each time you sit behind the wheel or they enter a default standard mode to meet European safety requirements. Annoyingly there is not one switch to permanently disengage them all if you don’t require them.

We have touched on the braking system through the regeneration setting but the normal footbrake is well balanced to slow it down with a lot of feedback and no grabbing or fade while the steering exhibited a big turning circle and lot of arm-twirling when parking or manoeuvring.

It was not affected by mid-corner bumps and the power assistance made easy work of town driving.

Secondary controls are a few stalks close to the column & wheel or buttons on the console and lower edge of the fascia, all well marked and softly assisted.

Instrumentation was minimal but very clear and the infotainment display in the centre of the fascia needed familiarisation to optimise its settings and importance for a driver’s

requirements.


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To benefit from connected features, select "Accept." By doing so, you agree to the Terms of Use and Privacy Notice.
Your vehicle data, including location, will be managed by Toyota and may be accessed by the Main Registered User (if any).
By selecting "Decline", the connected features of this vehicle will remain inactive.
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SYNC
Climate
AUTO
A/C
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Heating and ventilation was comprehensive, had good output and fairly easy to use once you became familiar with it. Powered windows were quick acting and tightly sealed.

Oddments room was very good for all users with big door bins, console recesses and seat pockets, a real family car in this respect.

The bootspace was fairly regular in shape, easily more than doubling capacity when the seatbacks were dropped.



Doors opened wide and had large apertures to ease access with big seats to take child seats and offer good leg and headroom for older passengers.

The seats were deeply padded, had plenty of adjustment range and yet securely located occupants, particularly infront.

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Visibility was good with a high riding position, low waistline to the cabin, good big washers and wipers and at night some very bright headlights.

The Toyota bZ4x Touring is a big car and the ride is generally good with a little tendency to roll about and even wallow over some surfaces but its damping was stiffer than we liked and it really did not like dealing with potholes or tarmac ridges which could be felt in the cabin. There was also a lot of road noise intruding as the electric powertrain is virtually silent and wind noise was low as well.

Handling was entirely safe and surefooted with no obvious vices and in fact it could be unchallenging, even unexciting. It just got on with whatever it was expected to do in an undramatic way.

We note that Toyota tends to do workmanlike interiors which need minimal attention and can take a battering over time, which is just as well as annual servicing means it comes with a ten year warranty.

VERDICT

Overall, the Toyota bZ4X Touring is an attractive proposition for anyone needing a roomy, versatile and not hideously expensive suv-cum-estate with a reputation for longevity.

For: Roomy & good access, comfortable seats, smooth powertrain, good visibility, good range, very well equipped, twin power cables.

Against: Jiggly ride over bad surfaces, big turning circle, uninspired very plastic interior.



Toyota bZ4X Touring Design

Fact file



Price: £45,995

Mechanical: 221 bhp motor, 71 kWh lithium-ion battery, front wheel drive

Max speed: 99 mph

0 – 62 mph: 7.3 secs

Range: 302 miles

Insurance group: 36E

CO2 Emissions: Zero

Bik rating: 4%, £10FY, £200SR

Warranty: Service activated 10 years/ 100,000 miles

Size: L 4.83 m (15.85 ft), W 1.86 m (6.10 ft), H 1.68 m (5.51 ft)

Bootspace: 669 – 1,700 litres (23.63 – 60.03 cu.ft)

Kerbweight: 1,965 kg (4,332 lb)

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