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Vauxhall Corsa Red 1.4T Road Test

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It's a Corsa, of Course...



Put through its paces by Robin Roberts (and Miles better News Agency).

Sometimes it's what you know well which can give you the biggest surprise, like the Vauxhall Corsa Red...

The new Corsa Red comes from a very familiar range of supermini sized cars offering bog standard three or five door styles, with a range of petrol or diesel engines and an assortment of trim levels, so you are possibly spoiled for choice. The Corsa is the UK's second best selling new car behind the similarly sized Ford Fiesta.

The unique Corsa Red edition is actually available in two body styles, three and five door hatchbacks, and now forms part of a huge range of variants. Prices are £17,525 and £18,125.

These bring obvious sporting features such as a red paint-scheme, 17-inch diamond cut alloys on sports suspension, leather detailing on sports seats, dark-tinted rear windows, and very sophisticated infotainment system including the acclaimed OnStar assistance service with 24/7 on-call help for a variety of tasks.

These are in addition to comprehensive equipment, safety systems and driver comfort features found on other models in the Corsa line-up.

It is a very good offering at the price and it will not disappoint with performance either, judging by our week with the car.

The 1.4 litre turbo petrol engine is tried and tested, but coaxed to give a bit more than it has before now, with 150 hp – and it delivers strong pulling power from standstill, through the gears and along major roads.



It is very flexible in nature as well and this helped us achieve nearly 40 mpg overall without any effort, but a lot of smiles along the way.

The clutch had a longer than expected travel but it was progressive in take-up and the neat close gearchange quickly endeared itself with its precision.

The weight-adjustable power steering could be set for city or country modes, the turning circle was good and the feedback informative, so you always felt you knew where the wheels were pointing.

Match the powertrain and steering with the strong yet well-balanced brakes underfoot and the Corsa Red inspired confidence in its ability to keep you safe.



The roadholding never gave a moment's concern and its handling was sharp without being twitchy.

You could hear the suspension coping with the road beneath and while the ride was firm it was fairly comfortable despite the thin sports seats in the test car.

They had good adjustment range and, matched with the moveable column, the driver could enjoy a range of settings.



The major controls were complemented by good clear instruments ahead of the driver and a multi-function display for sound and integrated media.



Heating and ventilation was effective in front but struggled to keep those in the back comfortable. Oddments room was reasonable and the boot space good for shopping.

Boot space rises from a nominal 285 litres (10 cu.ft) to a maximum of 1,050 litres (37 cu.ft) but it's a bit difficult to access the rear seats in the three-door we tested.



Visibility was good throughout with deep windows, good wipers/ wash and bright headlights.

Apart from road rumbles the Corsa Red was a quiet car unless you really went for it in the lower gears, with wind and other mechanical noises very low.

VERDICT

As a three door easy and satisfying drive, the Vauxhall Corsa Red is very good and you might be tempted to take it on longer journeys as well as about town or weekend trips further afield. If you do, familiar journeys will suddenly seem fun again.

For: Powertrain, handling, refinement and economy



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Against: Road noise, awkward rear seats, modest bootspace.



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



Vauxhall Corsa Red 1.4T 3-door. Price: £17,525.

Engine/transmission: 1.4 litre 150 hp turbocharged petrol engine, six speed manual.

Performance: 129 mph, 0-62 mph: 8.9 seconds, 39 mpg.

Emissions and taxation: CO2 132 g/km, VED road tax £130, BIK company car tax 23%.

Insurance Group: 21E.

Warranty: Three years/60,000 miles.