

Ssangyong Stavic



By Godfrey Castle

“Only a mother could love it,” “Who died?” “Don’t knock it unless you’ve tried it.” These were some of the remarks we had when we put the SsangYong Stavic through its towing paces earlier this year. Yes, the shape is different and black does have certain connotations, but there are other colours that make it marginally more appealing. However, if it’s value for money and copious amounts of interior space that you’re looking for then the Stavic is at the top of the list. Think of the Stavic as a vehicle designed from the inside out: “Who cares what it looks like, it’s just sooo comfortable.”

What you get

The Stavic offers a third generation Mercedes-Benz engine featuring common rail diesel technology and gearbox. The 2.7-litre, five cylinder engine develops 121 kW at 4 000 rpm and 340 Nm of towing torque at only 2 400 rpm. It’s a rearwheel drive with a five speed T-Tronic gearbox.

The suspension is fully independent and wonderfully smooth, it has ventilated disc brakes all round for added safety and, with our test caravan in tow, recorded braking times from 100 km/h to standstill in 2.9 seconds.

The radio is an MP3 player, takes CDs and tapes and the tuner can be

controlled from the height-adjustable steering wheel. The instrumentation is easy to read, but is located in the centre of the dashboard, which takes some getting used to. Above the dashboard is a roof console with a multi-meter that digitally displays information, including the battery charge level – ideal for outdoors people.

The Stavic is also a five door, seven seater with seats that slide forward for added comfort and versatility. We liked the aeroplane styled tables mounted behind the leather seats, and the eight-way adjustable driver’s seat with a fold flat option. Added to this, the whole cabin benefits from air conditioning.

Another plus for caravanners is the high projection headlights with levelling – you won’t blind oncoming motorists when towing at night. Other features include an aerial built into the rear window, windscreen washers built into the windscreen wiper swing arms, electric windows and rear three-quarter opening windows.

For safety there are dual front airbags, side impact bars and pre-tensioning safety belts. All this with a three year 60 000 km maintenance plan and a 100 000 km factory warranty.

How does it tow?

We hitched up a Jurgens Penta (GVM 1 380 kg) and recorded a tail drop of

40 mm on the towball. The height of the towball stood at 410 mm and no additional drop plate was required.

The length of the Stavic compliments the straight line towing stability of this combination and we found it to be an exceptionally pleasant one to drive. The gears are well spaced – 42 km/h in first gear, 70 in second, 120 in third and a top speed of 145 km/h. Being diesel you can expect to get a fuel consumption as low as 13.6 l/100 km.

Verdict: This vehicle offers far more value at a lower price than some of the big name brands. If you can live with the unusual styling you’ll be very happy. Price: R299 900 ●

ENGINE Diesel

Cylinders/capacity	V6 /3565 cm3
Power I.S.O. (kW/revs)	190 @ 6 500
Torque (Nm/revs)	340 @ 3 200

TRANSMISSION

Shift type	5-Speed, auto
Drive wheels	rear

ACCELERATION (seconds)

0-100 km/h	19.05
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Hill Climb

200m climb over 2 km	1 min 34 sec
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OVERTAKING ABILITY (seconds)

60-80 km/h	5.40
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80-100 km/h	5.70
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FUEL CONSUMPTION (litres/100 km)

100 km/h	13.6
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