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## The Greatest Hot Hatch Ever Made?

So, is it the greatest? Greatness in cars is rarely decided by lap times alone. It's about character, heritage and the way a car makes you feel. [Read the musings of a petrol-head on Page 3!](#)

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The roads around the Langkloof came alive on the evening of 5 April as more than 80 motorcycles rolled out from George Power Sports for the now well-known Ghost Run.

## GHOST RUN

Article: Johann van Tonder

This wasn't your typical breakfast run. As the sun dipped and the temperature dropped, riders headed over the pass toward Oudtshoorn and De Rust, settling into that familiar rhythm of night riding. There's something different about riding in the dark, tighter focus, cooler air, and a sense of shared adventure that brings a group together quickly. The route carried on to the stretch of road near Uniondale where the legend of the Uniondale Ghost, Maria Roux,

began. It's a quiet, slightly eerie spot at night, and a fitting halfway marker for the ride. From there, the group made their way into Uniondale itself, stopping at the well-known ghost statue before rolling into town. The evening wrapped up at the Hungry Ghost Restaurant, where riders warmed up, shared stories, and took part in a lucky draw with over 50 prizes up for grabs. But it was the camaraderie that defined the evening. Instead of rushing

back over the passes in the dark, the majority of the pack chose to stay over in Uniondale, enjoying the local hospitality before heading home the following morning. It was a spectacular turnout for a ride that perfectly balanced the thrill of the open road with the lingering legends of the Little Karoo.

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“Take a practical hatchback, add serious performance, sharpen the handling and suddenly you have a car that can embarrass sports cars while still carrying groceries.”

Article:  
Johann van Tonder



AUDI RS3 SPORTBACK

## Is it the **Greatest Hot Hatch** Ever Made?

The hot hatch is one of motoring's greatest inventions. Take a practical hatchback, add serious performance, sharpen the handling and suddenly you have a car that can embarrass sports cars while still carrying groceries. Over the years we've seen some truly legendary examples. But the question remains: is the Audi RS3 Sportback the greatest of them all? It's a bold claim, but the RS3 certainly has a strong case. At the heart of the RS3 Sportback is something increasingly rare in modern cars: character. Lots of it. Audi's 2.5-litre turbocharged five-cylinder engine produces around 294 kW and 500 Nm,

enough to launch the little hatch from 0–100 km/h in about 3.8 seconds. That's firmly in sports car territory.

But the numbers only tell part of the story. The real magic lies in the sound and the way the engine delivers its power. The off-beat firing order of the five-cylinder gives the RS3 its distinctive warbling soundtrack, something that traces its roots directly back to Audi's legendary rally cars of the 1980s.

If you grew up watching footage of the Audi Sport Quattro S1 dominating Group B rallying, that sound will be instantly familiar. The RS3 carries that heritage proudly into the modern era.

The latest RS3 isn't just quick in a straight line. Audi has added serious hardware to make it a genuine driver's machine. The big talking point is the RS Torque Splitter, which can actively send power to individual rear wheels. In simple terms, it means the car can rotate through corners in ways previous RS3s never could. It's also what enables the car's now-famous “RS Torque Rear” drift mode.

Yet despite all that performance potential, the RS3 remains incredibly usable. It's still a

hatchback with five doors, decent boot space and enough comfort to drive every day. Few cars combine supercar acceleration and everyday practicality this well.

There's another reason the RS3 feels special right now. It may well be one of the last combustion-powered hot hatches from Audi Sport. With Audi steadily moving towards an electric future, the RS3's charismatic five-cylinder engine could be living on borrowed time. Enthusiasts have been hearing that warning bell across the industry. The era of petrol-powered performance cars is slowly winding down. If the RS3 does end up being the final chapter for Audi's iconic five-cylinder hot hatch, it will leave the stage in spectacular fashion.

Of course, the RS3 isn't the only contender for the “greatest hot hatch ever” crown. The Mercedes-AMG A45 S might actually edge the RS3 in outright numbers. With over 310 kW and clever drift technology of its own, it's an engineering powerhouse. But its four-cylinder engine, while incredibly capable, simply doesn't stir the soul the same way Audi's five-cylinder does.

Then there are the legends. The Honda Civic Type R has long been regarded as the benchmark for front-wheel-drive hot hatches. It's razor sharp on track and hugely rewarding to drive. Yet its front-drive layout limits the kind of all-weather performance the RS3 delivers. And historically, you can't ignore cars like the Peugeot 205 GTI or the original Volkswagen Golf GTI, which arguably created the entire hot hatch genre in the first place.

So, is it the greatest? Greatness in cars is rarely decided by lap times alone. It's about character, heritage and the way a car makes you feel. The Audi RS3 Sportback ticks all those boxes. It has devastating performance, unmistakable sound and a direct link to one of motorsport's most exciting eras. More importantly, it feels like a celebration of everything that made petrol-powered performance cars special. Whether it is the greatest hot hatch ever is open to debate. But one thing is certain. The RS3 Sportback is very likely the last of a magnificent breed, and that alone makes it something worth celebrating.



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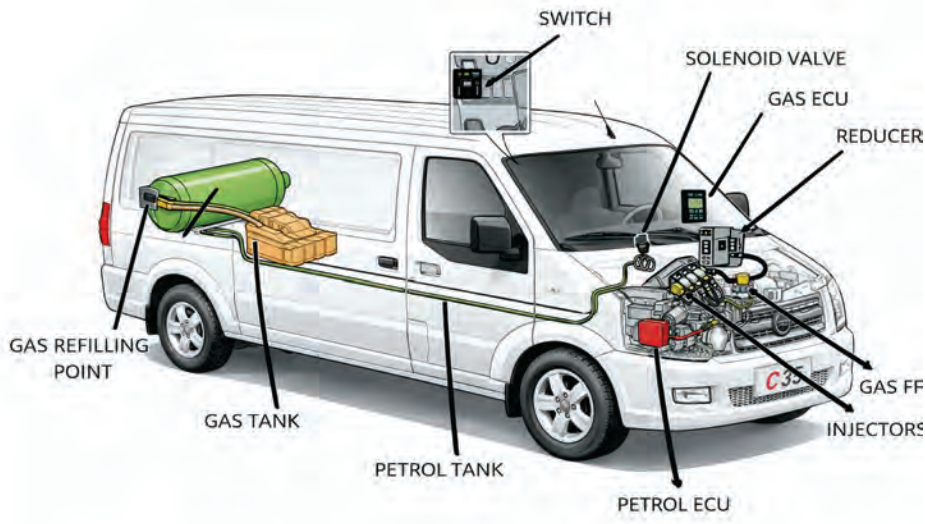
**Estiaan Boshoff 072 138 7777 - Garden Route**

**24/7**

# DFSK SA INTRODUCES LPG SOLUTION

as Fuel Prices Continue to Impact Businesses

Article: Sam Devon



As fuel prices continue to place pressure on South African consumers and businesses, DFSK South Africa has introduced an LPG Autogas conversion solution aimed at reducing operating costs and improving vehicle efficiency across its petrol range.

The move comes at a time when many customers are re-evaluating running costs, with a growing number of vehicle purchases being influenced by long-term affordability rather than upfront pricing alone. According to DFSK South Africa, the introduction of LPG Autogas is a direct response to market conditions, particularly where traditional fuel costs and the practicality of electric vehicles (EVs) remain key concerns. "Fuel prices are not coming down anytime soon, and expecting our customers to absorb those costs is not a strategy," said Gina Giani, CEO of DFSK South Africa. "We've made a clear decision — we will not let high fuel costs stop our customers from being

competitive." The LPG Autogas system enables DFSK petrol vehicles to run on a dual fuel setup, allowing drivers to switch seamlessly between petrol and LPG. This provides flexibility while delivering immediate cost savings.

**DFSK South Africa highlights several key advantages of the system:**

- Fuel savings of up to 30–50%
- Return on investment within 6–12 months
- No range limitations or charging delays
- Dual fuel capability for operational flexibility

The company confirmed that the LPG conversion is fully approved and, does not affect the vehicle warranty. Additionally, LPG's cleaner combustion properties may contribute to extended engine life. The solution is expected to appeal strongly to fleet operators, small businesses, and high-mileage drivers, where fuel costs have a direct impact on profitability. While electric vehicles remain part of the broader automotive future, DFSK South Africa believes that practical, cost-effective solutions are needed in the current market. "Evs have their place, but for many customers today, the barriers are still too high — from pricing to infra-

structure," added Giani. "What we're offering is a solution that works right now. Immediate savings, practical usage, and no compromise on daily operations." DFSK South Africa will roll out the LPG Autogas conversion across its dealer network, with options available for both new and existing vehicles. Customers will also have the ability to include the conversion as part of vehicle finance, making adoption more accessible.

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## INDUSTRY NEWS

Compiled by Carina van Tonder



# GWM's H6 PHEV

*The Haval H6 has already earned its stripes on South African roads by offering premium features without the German price tag.*

Now, GWM is evolving the formula with the H6 Plug-in Hybrid (PHEV), a vehicle designed to bridge the gap between traditional combustion and the electric future.

Under the skin lies GWM's Hi4 (Hybrid Intelligent 4WD) system, pairing a 1.5-litre turbo engine with dual electric mo-

tors. In its flagship 4x4 trim, the H6 PHEV produces a massive 268kW and 760Nm of torque. The standout feature is the 106km electric-only range. This allows the daily commute and school run to be completed without burning a drop of petrol. When it's time for a long-distance trek to Cape Town, the hybrid

system provides a total range of over 1,000km, removing the range anxiety typically associated with pure EVs.

The "Ultra Luxury" grade lives up to its name. The cabin is centred around a crisp 14.6-inch touchscreen and includes ventilated seats, a welcome relief during a coastal summer. Safety is

handled by a 540-degree camera and a full suite of driver assistance tech, ensuring peace of mind on narrow mountain roads.

**Pricing: H6 PHEV (4x2) R699,900 & H6 PHEV (4x4) R749,900 backed by a 7-year/200,000km warranty and an 8-year battery warranty.**



CFMOTO

## CFLite 250 Dual

*In a world where adventure bikes are becoming increasingly heavy, complex, and expensive, CFMoto has taken a refreshing turn with the new CFLite 250 Dual.*

It is an honest, lightweight dual-sport that feels specifically built for the gravel backroads rather than the high-speed motorways. At its heart sits a liquid-cooled 249cc single-cylinder engine. It isn't going to pull your arms out of their sockets, but it is punchy enough to handle the daily commute and still have enough "woema" to tackle a mountain pass on the weekend. The power delivery is smooth and predictable, making it an ideal entry point for those who are just beginning their journey into the dirt.

The "Dual" in the name is the real selling point here. The bike features long-travel suspension and a 21-inch front wheel: exactly what you need when the tar ends and the corrugated tracks begin. It is light enough to manhandle through a tricky sandy patch (or pick up when you inevitably drop it), yet stable enough at highway speeds

to not feel like a leaf in the wind. On the tech side you get a crisp TFT display and full LED lighting. These are premium features that usually carry a much higher price tag on rival brands. The ergonomics are upright and relaxed, giving the rider a commanding view over traffic or the trail ahead.

The reality of the South African market is that we need bikes that are cheap to run and easy to maintain. The CFLite 250 Dual fits that niche perfectly. It is a rugged, practical tool for the rider who wants to explore without the weight or the cost of a 1200cc beast. If you are looking for a nimble commuter that won't shy away from a Karoo gravel loop, this little 250 is arguably the smartest buy of the year.

# iCAUR 03T

## Retro-Inspired Electric SUV

The South African electric vehicle landscape is about to get a dose of character.

In May 2026, Chery Group's adventure-focused brand, iCAUR, will officially launch the 03T. It is a vehicle that swaps the soft, jellybean curves of modern EVs for a boxy, upright silhouette that feels far more at home in the rugged scenery of the Garden Route than a typical suburban runabout.

iCAUR will introduce the 03T in two distinct flavors. A 2WD Derivative equipped with a 66 kWh battery pack and a 4WD Derivative stepping up to a 70 kWh battery for those requiring extra grip and power. The mechanical foundation is solid. The SUV features a MacPherson strut front suspension and a multi-link rear setup, a combination that typically balances highway comfort with the stability needed for South Africa's diverse road surfaces.

Inside, the "retro" theme ends and high-tech utility takes over. The cabin is dominated by a 15.6-inch touchscreen that handles everything. iCAUR has packed the 03T with a comprehensive suite of assistance systems. Standard across both models are Adaptive Cruise Control, 540-degree Camera and Active Safety: Lane keep assist, forward collision warning, and electronic stability programme (ESP).

The 03T represents a shift for the local EV market, moving away from purely "eco-conscious" appliances toward vehicles with genuine personality and adventure credentials.



## INDUSTRY NEWS

Compiled by Carina van Tonder



## RENAULT R-SPACE LAB

*Rethinking how we use space*

*While much of the automotive world is focused on electrification and performance figures, Renault is taking a different approach with its R-Space Lab.*

Rather than chasing speed or autonomy headlines, this concept explores a simple idea: how people actually use the space inside their cars.

Roughly the size of a typical family crossover at 4.5 metres long, the R-Space Lab is built around flexibility. Its standout feature is a modular interior that prioritises practicality. The three rear seats are equal in size, so there's

no uncomfortable middle seat. They can slide forward to increase boot space or fold up to accommodate bulkier items. The front passenger seat can even move back into the second row, creating extra legroom or making it easier to interact with children.

Renault has also rethought the dashboard layout. By integrating airbags into the seats, the dash is cleaner and

more functional, with a fold-out glovebox that doubles as a small desk or footrest. A wide, curved openR panorama screen stretches across the cabin, handling most controls through a central interface that is designed to be intuitive and easy to use.

Inside, the R-Space Lab feels more like a lounge than a traditional car. A flat floor, large glass surfaces and slim

pillars create a bright, open environment, while rear doors that open to 90 degrees make loading passengers or cargo far easier.

It may not be heading to showrooms anytime soon, but the R-Space Lab offers a clear glimpse into how Renault sees the future of family cars: practical, flexible and designed around real life.



## FORD EXPANDS ITS TERRITORY

*The 1.8L EcoBoost SUV is Heading for SA*

*Ford South Africa has officially confirmed that the new Territory will be hitting local showroom floors in the coming weeks.*

For young families who need something bigger than a Puma but aren't quite ready for the ruggedness (or the price tag) of an Everest, this is the one to watch.

The heart of the new Territory is Ford's proven 1.8-litre turbocharged EcoBoost petrol engine. It delivers a healthy 138 kW and 318 Nm of torque, which should be more than enough for a fully loaded school run or a weekend trip to the coast. Interestingly, Ford has paired this engine with a seven-speed dual-clutch transmission (DCT). This is a move toward a more responsive, "car-like" driving experience compared to the traditional torque converters often found in this segment.

For the first time on this model, Ford is introducing app connectivity. This allows owners to link their smartphones to the car to interact with it remotely, a feature that has become a "must-have" for the modern, tech-savvy fa-

mily. On the safety and convenience front, the Trend and Titanium derivatives will feature adaptive cruise control, which takes much of the fatigue out of long-distance trips.

While the outgoing model had its fans, Ford is positioning this newcomer as a much more sophisticated "smart" SUV. Sunil Sewmohan, Director of Product Marketing at Ford South Africa, notes that the focus this time around is squarely on comfort and technology: essentially everything local customers have been asking for.

We are still waiting for the final pricing and full local specifications, but the first deliveries are expected very soon. If Ford can price this competitively against the likes of the Chery Tiggo 8 Pro and the Haval H6, they might just have a hit on their hands.

## MITSUBISHI Destinator

*The gap between a dedicated MPV and a full-sized SUV is often a tricky space to navigate, but the Mitsubishi Destinator arrives in South Africa with the intent of bridging it.*

Launched as a seven-seater designed for emerging markets, it brings a fresh alternative to families who need the utility of an Xpander but desire the more sophisticated presence of an Outlander.

Visually, the Destinator moves away from the softer lines of traditional people-movers. It carries a muscular, "monolithic" stance that feels right at home on the backroads. With generous approach and departure angles, this is a vehicle that won't shy away from the gravel stretches of the Seven Passes road or a weekend trip into the Karoo.

Power comes from a refined version of the 1.5-litre turbocharged engine found in the Eclipse Cross. Power Output and Torque figures sit at 120kW and 250Nm while Fuel Economy is a claimed 7.2 litres per 100km. The engine is paired with a CVT that has been tuned for smooth delivery

rather than aggressive sprints. For those opting for the top-tier Exceed model, five selectable drive modes (Normal, Wet, Gravel, Mud, and Tarmac) allow you to calibrate the powertrain to the specific surface underfoot, a feature that adds genuine value when the South African weather turns unpredictable.

The interior offers three-row seating is highly configurable, featuring a 40:20:40 split in the second row and a 50:50 split in the third. Whether you are loading surfboards or packing the week's groceries, the 25 different storage compartments ensure there is a place for the smaller essentials.

At a starting price of **R489,990** for the GLS and **R569,990** for the Exceed, the Destinator enters a competitive segment with a strong hand. Both models include a five-year/unlimited mileage warranty and a five-year/75,000km service plan.





## Lexus

# GX 550 SE

Artikel: Dirk Gallowitz

### PRYSE & WAARBORG

SE 7-sitplek:  
R1 829 000

Overtrail Off-Road 5-sitplek:  
R1 867 000

Die Lexus GX word verkoop met 'n 7jaar/100 000 km waarborg en diensplan wat ingesluit word by die verkoopprijs. Diensintervalle is elke 10,000km.

Toyota se luukse Lexus afdeling het einde laasjaar die nuwe GX model plaaslik bekendgestel. Ons kon onlangs die luukser GX 550SE model vir 'n week toets en was nogal beïndruk met die nuweling. Die nuwe Lexus GX deel 'n platform met Toyota se Land Cruiser Prado, maar waar die Prado meer gefokus is vir die gewone gebruiker, word die Lexus luukser verpak en toegerus vir die klient wat meer ingestel is op styl en luukseheid.

Een van die kenmerke wat die GX van sy Prado neef onderskei is die aandrywingstelsel. Anders as die Prado wat ook diesel aandrywing gebruik, het Lexus gekies om die GS slegs met 'n turboaangejaagde petrolenjien toe te rus. 'n Hibriede kragbron is blykbaar op die kaart vir later.

Ons toetsmodel was die GS 550SE model in pragtige wit afgewerk en was toegerus met die kragtige V6 3,4liter turbo-petrol enjin, soortgelyk maar met effe minder krag as die enjin wat diens

doen in die groter Land Cruiser 300 en ook die basis vorm vir die enjin in Toyota se GR Hilux bakkie wat aan die uitmergelende Dakar woestynwedrenne deelneem. Die enjin se 260kW en 650Nm piekkragte sorg vir wakker verrigting in die Lexus GX. Aandrywing na al vier die wiele is danksy 'n seepgladde 10-spoed outomatiese ratkas.

Terwyl die ekstra krag heerlik is vir vinnige verbystek, kom dit teen 'n premie met brandstofverbruik. Ons toetsmodel het met ooppad ry rondom 12L/100km gebruik en in stadsverkeer het dit opgegaan tot 'n gemiddelde verbruik van net onder 14l/100km.

Lexus SA het twee afwerkingsvlakke plaaslik beskikbaar gemaak. Die meer praktiese en veldry gerigte 5-sitplek Overtrail model het 'n voorkoms wat daarby pas en kom ondermeer met 'n dakrak, sleepstang en vasgeboude kanttrappe. Kleiner 18" wiele en veldrybande is veel meer vier-trek gemaklik

en die Overtrail is ook toegerus met al die toerusting en vier-trek stelsels soos ondermeer Toyota se bekwame MTS (Multi Terrain Select) stelsel wat "Crawl" Modus insluit, asook middel- en agtergemonteerde ewenaarslotte bied. Die tweede luukser model in SE gewaad, bied 7-sitplekke in 'n luukse beklede ruim kajuit wat onder meer 'n 21 luidspreker Mark Levinson klankstelsel insluit. Elektriese kanttrappe wat outomaties in- en uittrek wanneer die deure oopgemaak word en pragtige 22" allooiwiele wat die SE se luukse voorkoms buite af afrond. Steeds 'n rasegte 4x4 met lae-strek is die luukser GS550 in SE afwerking egter nie met hardebaard 4x4 toerusting soos MTS en Crawl modus toegerus nie. 'n Sleepstang is ook nie ingesluit nie.

Anders as die Prado kon die GX550 modelle nie toegerus word met 'n addisionele brandstoftenk nie en gegee die verbruik sal die 80liter standaard tenk 'n reikafstand van ongeveer 450

kilometer kan haal voor dit hervul moet word. Die GX550 SE se ruim moderne kajuit is onmiskenbaar Lexus-luukse en omvattend toegerus sodat geen opsionele ekstras nodig is nie. Die kajuit vertoon modern, is luukse bekleed met materiale van hoë gehalte en met kwaliteit vakmanskap afgewerk om elke rit spesiaal te laat voel vir insittendes. Op die pad was ons Lexus GX550 SE 'n heerlike ervaring om te bestuur. Ten spyte van die swaar lyf, was hantering gemaklik met goeie balans en greep veral op die teer. Die kragtige V6 turbo petrolenjien het verbystek teen ooppadspoed 'n fees gemaak. Ons het nog nie met die Overtrail weergawe kon ry nie, maar vermoed dat dit die keuse van meeste kopers sal wees.

# KIA TASMAN

Article: Johann van Tonder



The South African bakkie market is famously difficult to crack. We are a brand-loyal bunch, raised on a diet of Hilux, Isuzu and Ranger, where a double-cab isn't just a vehicle (it is a tool, a family wagon, and a status symbol rolled into one). Kia, long known for its polished SUVs and hatchbacks, has finally decided to throw its hat into the ring with the Tasman.

This isn't a soft-roader with a bed tacked onto the back. Developed from the ground up on a dedicated ladder-frame chassis, the Tasman arrives with the hardware required to survive the Karoo and the sophistication to handle the school run.

Under the hood, Kia has opted for its reliable 2.2-litre SmartStream turbo-diesel engine. Producing 154kW and 440Nm, it hits the sweet spot for local

conditions. The power is managed by an eight-speed automatic transmission that keeps the engine in its happy place. While many newcomers struggle with refinement, the Tasman's combination of double wishbone front suspension and a traditional leaf-spring rear axle suggests a ride that balances heavy-duty hauling with daily driver comfort.

Visually, the Tasman is a departure from the "me-too" styling of many modern pickups. It is a large machine, stretching over 5.4 metres in length. However, those dimensions serve a practical purpose. A healthy 252mm ground clearance ensures you won't be scraping the belly on rocky farm roads and with a wading depth of 800mm, it matches the segment leaders for water crossings. The load bin offers a volume

of over 1,300 litres which means there is plenty of room for camping gear or work supplies.

For those heading off the beaten track, the flagship X-Pro 4x4 models include an electronic rear differential lock and "X-TREK" mode. This is essentially a low-speed crawl control that manages the technical bits for you, allowing you to focus on your line through a donga or over loose gravel.

Inside, the Tasman feels less like a workhorse and more like a high-end SUV. The dashboard is dominated by a panoramic digital display setup, including a 12.3-inch driver cluster. It is a far cry from the utilitarian plastics of bakkies past. Kia has also loaded the Tasman with a full suite of safety tech. Features like adaptive cruise control, lane-keeping assist, and autonomous

braking are standard on higher trims, making those long hauls across the Langkloof significantly less taxing.

The range is logically structured to meet different needs and budgets. The **LX 4x2** is the entry point at **R 679,995**. The **SX 4x4** at **R 879,995** is the all-rounder, offering the security of four-wheel drive for the weekend adventurer while the X-Pro 4x4 at **R 999,995** is the flagship, kitted out with the best off-road hardware and styling cues.

The Kia Tasman is a direct challenge to the established order. By combining a proven drivetrain with a bold design and genuine 3.5-tonne towing capacity, it speaks the language of the South African buyer. Whether it can unseat the icons remains to be seen.



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*Since its local debut in 2020, the Renault Triber has carved out a specific niche in the South African landscape. With over 30,000 units sold, it has become a common sight on the suburban roads.*

# Renault Triber

**Article:**  
**Carina van Tonder**

It succeeded because it offered genuine seven-seater versatility at a price point that didn't break the bank.

Recently Renault has introduced a refreshed version under their new "Re-think" strategy. While the core mechanics remain familiar, the updates focus on a more mature design, significantly improved safety, and the kind of interior tech that modern families expect.

The most immediate change is the face. The new Triber adopts Renault's updated brand identity, featuring a bold piano black grille and a more muscular, sculpted bonnet. The redesigned bumpers and LED projector headlamps give

it a more assertive stance, leaning further into the SUV-inspired styling that South Africans favour. It retains a healthy 182mm ground clearance, which is more than enough for navigating gravel turn-offs or the occasional pothole. The roof rails are functional too, rated to carry up to 50kg.

Inside, the "budget car" feel has been dialed back. The dashboard is now a dual-tone affair with a cleaner, more ergonomic layout. The centerpiece is an 8-inch floating touchscreen that supports wireless Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, a vital addition for navigating the passes using live maps without fumbling for cables.

The seating remains the Triber's "party trick." The "Easy-Fix" third row can be removed entirely, transforming the car from a seven-seater people mover into a five-seater with a massive 625-litre boot. Whether you are hauling a full

cricket team or a month's worth of supplies, the modularity works.

Renault has notably bolstered the safety kit. Six airbags are now standard across the entire range (Evolution, Techno, and Iconic variants), which is a significant statement in this price bracket. They have also added a segment-first front parking sensor and a Tyre Pressure Monitoring System, providing peace of mind when long-distance cruising.

Under the bonnet, the 1.0-litre naturally aspirated engine continues its duties. Producing 52kW and 96Nm, it is a powertrain designed for efficiency and urban commuting rather than high-speed overtaking. It is paired with a five-speed manual gearbox, though the top-spec Iconic model offers an automated manual transmission (AMT) for those tired of the clutch in peak-hour traffic.

Expanding the range further, Renault

has also introduced the Triber Express III LCV, a locally enhanced light commercial vehicle aimed at entrepreneurs. By replacing the rear seats with a reinforced storage cage, Renault has created a 1500-litre load bay capable of hauling a 542kg payload. It retains the passenger model's 182mm ground clearance and 1.0-litre efficiency, making it a rugged choice for urban deliveries or service rounds. Crucially, the cargo cage and optional heavy-duty roof rack are manufactured in South Africa, tailoring the van to local demands while maintaining the comfort of the standard car's tech-heavy cabin.

The new range is priced competitively, starting at **R218,999** for the Evolution and topping out at **R259,999** for the Iconic. Each model comes with a 2-year or 30,000km service plan and a 5-year or 150,000km warranty.

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# DEEPAL

## Changan's Premium Power Move

Article: Johann van Tonder

It seems like every time we open a car magazine or scroll through Facebook, there is another new brand from the East trying to claim a stake in our driveways. But Changan isn't exactly a "newbie" in the global sense, and their premium sub-brand, Deepal, is something we need to pay attention to. It isn't just another budget hatchback with a tablet glued to the dash: it is a genuine attempt at high-end, futuristic mobility. When I first saw the Deepal S07 (the SUV version) that was designed by a team that includes former Lamborghini talent, I had to do a double take. And its a theme that continued through the week. Wherever we drove young boys next to the road would point excitedly

and give a thumbs-up. When parked people would walk up and compliment the sharp creases and the aggressive, wide-stanced silhouette. It has frameless doors, hidden handles, and often we were asked whether this was a Tesla. In our South African sun, the paint finishes look deep and premium. It doesn't have that "plastic is fantastic" vibe that some of the earlier Chinese exports suffered from. It looks planted, confident, and, dare I say, quite expensive.

Inside, Deepal has gone for a minimalist, button-free aesthetic that will feel familiar to anyone who has sat in a modern Volvo or Tesla. The materials are surprisingly high-end. There is a

mix of soft-touch surfaces, synthetic leather, and a massive panoramic roof that makes the cabin feel like a glass house. The centerpiece is a 15.6-inch touchscreen. But here is the clever bit, it's a "Sunflower" screen that automatically tilts up to 15 degrees toward the driver or the passenger. And it is the only screen in the car. Yes, there is no instrument cluster in front of the driver, but rather a massive head-up display (AR-HUD) that projects navigation instructions directly onto the road ahead.

Under the skin, the Deepal is built on an all-electric platform with a range of roughly 480 km, depending on how heavy your right foot is. It handles with

more poise than you'd expect from a heavy SUV, largely thanks to that rear-wheel-drive balance and a low center of gravity. It is quiet, refined, and lacks the "clunky" feel of some converted internal combustion vehicles.

The Deepal isn't just another "me-too" Chinese product. It offers a level of tech and design that would usually cost you double the price if it had a German badge on the nose. For someone who wants something that feels like the future, Deepal is a name that is going to be very hard to ignore. It is well-built and it might just shift the perception of Chinese luxury for good.

# Citroën BASALT

Artikel: Dirk Gallowitz & Carina van Tonder



Citroen Motors, deesdae in die Stellantis stal, het laat in Maart 2026 hul pragtige Basalt koepee kompakte SUV in Suid Afrika bekendgestel met twee modelle aanvanklik beskikbaar. Die Franse ontwerp wat in Indië in Stellantis se Tiruvallur aanleg gebou word, gaan nie net die koppe laat draai nie, maar met 'n intreeprys van net minder as R355,000-00, behoort dit ook kopers te lok wat in die strawwe finansiële plaaslike klimaat, na goeie waarde soek, sonder om styl en luuksheid in hul wiewe prys te gee.

Die koepee styl ontwerp van die Basalt trek aandag. In Suid Afrika sal dit meeding met die Tata Curve, Suzuki Fronx en Toyota Starlet Cross. Citroen het die twee afwerkingsvlakke, bekend as Plus en Max, verbasend genoeg vir die prysklas, redelik omvattend toegerus.

Die Citroen Basalt is 4352mm lank met 'n wielbasis wat 2651mm tussen die aste meet. Die bagasieruim, wat ook 'n

volgrootte spaarwiel dra, kan steeds 470liter hanteer. Grondvryhoogte word aangegee as 'n billike 180mm. Die kajuit kan 5 passasiers hanteer met genoeg kop-, been- en skouerspasie vir 3 middelgrootte volwassenes.

Die goedkoper Plus model kom met 16" allooiewiele en 205/60/R16 bande, LED projektor hoofligte, LED dagryligte, sleutellose toegang, lugversorging, spoedbeheer, 10" Infotainment skerm, 7" digitale instrumente paneel, 6-lugsakke, elektroniese stabiliteits beheer asook parkeersensors en 'n banddrukmonitor.

Die topmodel Max wat met 'n R15,000 pryslading kom, word ekstra toegerus met ondermeer leerbekleedsel vir die stuurwiel, 'n liggie in die bagasieruim, 2 extra twieters vir die 4-luidspreker klankstel, 'n elektro-chromatiese truspieël, 'n haafin antenna op die dak asook 'n tru-kamera stelsel.

Beide modelle se binneruime is afgewerk met 'n tweekleur swart en grys

bekleedsel, terwyl kopers kan kies tussen Polar White, Steel Grey en Garnet Red wat elk ook beskikbaar is met 'n opsionele ekstra swart dak en ook Cosmo Blue en Black Pearl bakkleure.

Beide weergawes van die Basalt word aangedryf deur dieselfde 1,2 liter turbo-aangejaagde

3-silinder petrol enjin wat in verskeie modelle met verskillende kraguitsette in die Stellantis stal diens doen, waaronder ook Citroen se C3 en Aircross modelle. In die Basalt lewer die enjin 81 kW en 205 Nm se piekkragte waar dit krag na die voorwiele stuur met behulp van 'n 6-spoed outomatiese ratkas.

Ons het die toetsrit in Gauteng se dun lug gedoen met die enjin en ratkas wat uitstekend gekombineer het vir 'n aangename rit-ervaring. Op die roete het die Basalt nooit na ekstra krag gesoek nie, selfs nie toe ons op die snelweg verbygesteek het nie. Amptelik word die Basalt se brandstofverbruik

aangegee as 6.3 L/100 km met 'n 45 liter kapasiteit vir die brandstoftenk.

Op die pad, wat grondpad, agterpaaie en snelweë ingesluit het, het die Basalt ons met gemaklike hantering, goeie stuurgevoel en terugvoer, uitstekende remme en goeie balans beïndruk. Die kajuit was ook relatief stil.

Algeheel, veral teen die prys, bied die Citroen Basalt 'n welkome alternatief in hierdie segment.

### Pryse en waarborge

**Citroën Basalt 1.2T Plus 6spd Outo**  
**R354 900**

**Citroën Basalt 1.2T Max 6spd Outo**  
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## BRANDSTOFPRYSE

### Is 'n Gebruikte EV jou antwoord?

In hierdie uitdagende ekonomiese tye waarin ons leef, begin al hoe meer motoriste ernstig kyk na elektriese voertuie (EV's). As jy die skuif oorweeg, kyk dalk na 'n gebruikte opsie.

Artikel: Johann van Tonder

Om watter rede ook al, is waardevermindering op nuwe elektriese motors in Suid-Afrika massief. 'n Gebruikte EV kan egter baie sin maak, afhangende van jou behoeftes en begroting. Na daardie aanvanklike val in waarde, kan die koopprys dikwels ooreenstem met (of selfs minder wees as) 'n soortgelyke brandstof-aangedrewe motor.

Die een onderwerp wat altyd opduik by gebruikte EV's, is kommer oor die batterylewe en die koste om dit te vervang. Hierdie vrese is egter grootliks ongegrond. Die meeste vervaardigers bied 'n 8-jaar waarborg op die battery (let wel: daar is gewoonlik beperkings op die kilometers). As jy dus 'n drie jaar

oue EV koop, het jy nog vyf jaar se dekking oor. Navorsing toon dat EV-batterye maklik 10 tot 12 jaar (of selfs langer) hou met minimale agteruitgang. Daar is talle werklike voorbeelde van elektriese motors wat reeds meer as 500,000 km op een battery gedoen het en steeds sterk loop.

Natuurlik pas 'n suiwer EV nie by elke leefstyl nie. Suid-Afrika is 'n land van lang afstande, en elektriese motors werk tans die beste as stads-pendelvoertuie, veral as 'n tweede motor in die huishouding. Die realiteit is egter dat sommige mense net een motor het. In hierdie geval is 'n PHEV (inprophibried) 'n al hoe meer aanloklike opsie

vir 'n een-motor huishouding. Hulle het genoeg elektriese reikafstand vir daaglikse bestuur. As jy tuis laai (geen spesiale toerusting is nodig nie, hoewel 'n bekostigbare "wallbox" vinniger laai), kan jy sowat 100 km per dag op een lading ry sonder om 'n druppel brandstof te gebruik.

Die groot voordeel van die PHEV is dat jy steeds 'n petroltenk het vir daardie lang ritte. Jy hoef nooit bekommerd te wees oor "reikafstand-angs" of om 'n laaipunt in die middel van nêrens te soek nie. Boonop kom die koopprys van hierdie motors voortdurend af, wat uitstekende nuus vir ons motoriste is.

Selfs met Eskom wat hul bes probeer

om ons by te kom, is die daaglikse loopkoste van 'n EV steeds baie goedkoper as 'n brandstofmotor. Onderhoudskoste is ook baie laag. My langtermyn-siening is dat Suid-Afrika altyd baie kwesbaar sal wees vir skommelinge in die olieprys en die dollarkoers. Ons het feitlik geen werkende raffinaderye meer oor nie, 'n situasie wat onwaarskynlik is om binne-kort te verander. Ons sal nog lank brandstofprodukte moet invoer.

Met dit in gedagte, is 'n EV of PHEV dalk net die regte manier om jouself te beskerm teen hierdie onvermydelike brandstof-skokke van die toekoms.

## Nuwe JMC Vigus dubbelkajuit bakkie

Artikel: Dirk Gallowitz

Jiangling Motors Corporation oftewel afgekort na "JMC" het laat in 2025 amptelik hul hertoetreding tot die Suid-Afrikaanse mark gemaak met die 5de generasie JMC Vigus werksbakkie. Ons was egter op 26 Maart 2026 by die bekendstelling waar die 6de generasie JMC Vigus dubbelkajuit bakkie met die leuse "Built for More" aan ons getoon was. Ons was baie beïndruk met die bougehalte en hoë vlakke van standaard toerusting wat ons daar gesien het.

Ons gaan eersdaags die geleentheid gebruik om hierdie bakkies wat in China as die "Baodian" bekend staan, plaaslik deur 'n strawwe 4-trek roete te neem om ook die 4x4 vermoë van hierdie bakkies te toets. JMC word plaaslik gerugsteun deur Salvador Caetano Auto SA wat ook GAC Motor in Suid Afrika versprei. Salvador Caetano is 'n reuse motorgroep met 'n omvattende infrastruktuur wat op 3 kontinente met etlike handelsmerke in meer as 40 lande besig is en jaarliks miljoene motors verkoop. Terloops in China se reuse mark is daar

een JMC bakkie in elke 4 wat verkoop word. Met miljoene eenhede wat oor die laaste 25jaar verkoop is, is JMC se rekord vir volhoubaarheid en betroubaarheid sedert 2001 behoorlik getoets en bewys in verskillende uitdagende toestande.

Die nuwe JMC is ontwerp en omvattend getoets, ook plaaslik, in buitengewone humiditeit, hitte, koue en hoogte bo seespieël in onder meer die Drakensberge, ten einde die diverse Suid-Afrikaanse omstandighede te kan baas-raak. Verder is die nuwe Vigus se bak gebou met 68% hoë sterkte staal en 'n onderstel wat JMC noem 'n "Fortress-Level Chassis".

Aandrywing geskied danksy 'n 2.5 liter NB25 4-silinder turbodiesel enjin wat 123kW (@ 3 400 rpm) en 430 Nm se piekkragte lewer. Krag word na die wiele gestuur met of 'n 6-spoed handratkas of 'n 8-spoed outomatiese ratkas. Die topmodel 4x4 dubbelkajuit JMC gebruik 'n BorgWarner 4-trek stelsel met 'n lae strek oordragkas. Die brandstof verbrandings effektiwiteit is byvoorbeeld meer as 30% wat beter is as al die huidige dubbelkajuitbakkies wat tans in SA verkoop word. Gevolglik gaan die

verbruik ook laer wees.

Die nuw JMC Vigus dubbelkajuit bakkie is 5 335 mm lank wat dit 15 mm korter maak as 'n Ford Ranger dubbelkajuit bakkie. Binne vertoon die kajuit modern met meer been- en kop spasie as meeste ander dubbelkajuit bakkies tans plaaslik beskikbaar. Die kajuit is goed uitgelê en omvattend toegerus met onder meer 'n 9.0 duim digitale instrumente paneel en 'n 12.8duim volkleur infotainment raakskerm vir die klank en telekommunikasie koppeling, asook die voertuig inligting waaronder ook die beelde van die tru-kamera vertoon word. Die stelsel word met parkeersensors bygestaan.

Die syfers vir die nuwe JMC Vigus se vragdra- en sleepvermoë is nog afwagting, maar ons vermoed dit sal soortgelyk wees aan ander dubbelkajuit bakkies met ooreenstemmende krag-syfers. Tydens die bekendstelling het ons spesifiek aandag gegee aan die bougehalte, deurskarniere en spesifiek hoe goed die deure se rubbers werk ten einde behoorlik te seël. Ons was beïndruk.

Die nuwe 6de generasie JMC Vigus 2,5 TD Dubbelkajuit 4x4 8-spoed outo-

maties het op die oog af die indruk geskep dat dit uitstekend sal meeding met soortgelyke dubbelkajuitbakkies tans in SA beskikbaar. Ons en ander media kollegas teenwoordig se prys raaiskote was dit dat die nuweling vir ongeveer R800,000 behoort te verkoop, maar staatsubsidies het waarskynlik die plaaslike prys baie laer gemaak!

Ons sal later kan getuig oor die ritgehalte, hantering en veldryvermoë van die 6de generasie JMC Vigus na ons dit bestuur het, maar met die inligting en indrukke soos tans aan ons bekend, is ons beïndruk.

Pryse is as volg:

**JMC Vigus 2.5TD DC (6-Spoed HandRat 4x2) - R 399 900**

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