

Mitsubishi crosses over with the new ASX -by Liana Reiners

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Mitsubishi Motors South Africa is making its first foray into one of the fastest growing passenger car segments in the country with the introduction of the ASX compact crossover vehicle.

There are three models in the ASX range, all with two-wheel drive and powered by a 2-litre Mitsubishi petrol engine. This powerplant uses a unique variable valve timing system, known as Mitsubishi innovative valve timing electronic control system (MIVEC), to produce 110 kW of power at 6 000 r/min and 197 Nm of peak torque at 4,200 r/min. At the same time, fuel consumption is good, with the ASX using 7,5 litres/100 km.

Part of the reason for this frugality is the fact that the torque curve provides 85 % of peak torque from 2 000 r/min.

Two of the models in the ASX line-up have a five-speed manual gearbox, while the range-topper is fitted with a six-speed continuously variable transmission (CVT). The lightweight CVT offers better fuel economy, since the engine speed is held at the optimal level. This also results in a smoother driving experience and lower power loss compared to conventional torque converter automatic transmissions. The fuel consumption figure for the CVT is 7,6 litres/100 km.



The interior of the ASX is both attractive and practical. The rear passengers have ample leg- and headroom and the interior space configuration is easily adjusted. Both rear seats fold forward entirely and the boot space – which is normally 442 litres with the seats in place – is then completely flat and can hold 1 193 litres. There is also no lip at the entrance to the load area, making loading and unloading of heavy objects much easier.

The level of trim and standard equipment is high in all three ASX derivatives. Even the entry-level model features such niceties as rear park distance control, a leather steering wheel with audio controls, electric windows all round, foldaway mirrors, air-conditioning and 16-inch alloy wheels. Even the spare wheel is alloy.

Apart from these features, the next model in the line-up gains leather heated seats, 17-inch alloy wheels and an enormous panoramic roof with LED illumination. The panoramic roof extends all the way over the rear passengers, providing unlimited views of the sky and a true outdoor sensation. There are rain-sensing windscreen wipers, dusk sensing headlights, heated foldaway side mirrors, single-zone climate control and a keyless operating system with a start stop button for the engine.

Over and above all the equipment already mentioned, the premium CVT model has a more sophisticated nine-speaker audio system and super-wide HID headlamps with automatic self-levelling features as standard.

All models boast seven airbags, as well as Mitsubishi's patented reinforced impact safety evolution (RISE) technology to form a secure safety cell.

Prices start with the entry-level at R279 900, the mid-level at R299 900 and the high-spec model at R319 900.

