

Kia's Picanto grows up – by Liana Reiners

The new Kia Picanto has been redesigned and re-engineered and promises South African more passenger comfort and increased cargo space. Compared to the previous model, the new Picanto is mature and handsome, rather than cute and friendly.

Picanto's new found maturity is also reflected in the interior, which offers numerous comfort and convenience features. These include manual air-conditioning, an under-floor trunk storage box, retractable dual cup holders and sun visors

with vanity mirrors. A clever new feature is the gear shift indicator on all manual models to encourage an economical driving style by prompting you to change gears at the optimum point in the rev range. Other features that are standard include AUX/iPod/USB connections for the radio CD player with MP3 compatibility.



Two engine derivatives are on offer. The first is a four-cylinder, 1 248 cc engine that generates 65 kW and 120 Nm of torque. The second is a three-cylinder, 998 cc unit that produces 51 kW and 94 Nm of peak torque. Both powerplants feature DOHC, dual CVVT (continuously variable valve timing), a cast aluminium block, off-set crankshaft, maintenance-free long-life timing chain and low-friction valve springs.

This combination of advanced technologies means that exhaust emissions have been significantly reduced, the

result being that the new Picanto line-up has a CO₂ rating of 117 to 144 g/km – depending on model and transmission. Fuel economy ranges from 4,9 to 6 liters per 100 km.

Every new Picanto features front-wheel drive and the standard transmission for all engines will be a five-speed manual with a high top gear ratio to optimise fuel economy and enhance refinement by reducing engine rpm during fast cruising. A four-speed automatic gearbox is also available on each engine.

Prices for the new Picanto range from R99 995 to R124 995.

