



Alfa Romeo Giulia Veloce 2.0 Turbo – Road Test

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Alfa's Veloce 2.0 Turbo Petrol 280 hp demonstrates its muscle to Robin Roberts (and Motoring Milestones)...

Executive cars behind their familiar badges and dark windows can be anonymous but that is never the case with the Alfa Romeo Giulia.

Launched in 2016 as the latest four-door saloon from the AR stable it has won numerous



European styling and performance awards and it led to the development of the Stelvio SUV as well.

The Giulia range in the UK is fairly small but significant with rear wheel drive and four-wheel-drive models for everyday and enthusiastic owners.

Our mid-range Giulia benefitted from the recent upgrade to an 8.8-inch touchscreen infotainment system, full wi-fi function with remote phone charging and over the air upgrades, emergency and call assist functions. Luxury touches now wrap the steering wheel and automatic selector knob in leather.

It looks stunning inside and out but more importantly it is also a very good drive. The familiar four-cylinder multijet petrol engine packs a good punch of 400 Nm (295 lb.ft) at 1,750 rpm if you want to use that.



Driven with restraint it is brisk but that changes when you floor the throttle to overtake slower traffic and the power pours out, quickly hitting the national speed limits accompanied with a delightful roar from the rear.



The absolute performance is very good and it still managed over 30 mpg, sometimes heading towards 35 mpg.

The 2.0 litre engine was not only strong but for most of the time was very smooth and generally quiet, but on a few occasions when steady running it suddenly and inexplicably dropped about 400 rpm and to all intents and purposes had a misfire.

Much of the liveliness of the Giulia is down to the excellent set of gear ratios in the eight-speed automatic transmission ideally matched with 400 Nm (295 lb.ft) of torque, which always seemed to have something to exploit a situation, whether easing through urban



traffic or extending the car on longer cross country trips, and the column paddles were delightful to use when desired.

Gearchanges up and down the box were very smooth, quick and quiet while the steering delivered excellent feedback without any vibration but I would have liked a tighter turning circle in confined spaces.

Underfoot, the big disc brakes hauled down speed very quickly, with utter control and no signs of fading after frequent application. The electric parking brake was strong and worked well with the stop/ start function of the engine/ transmission.

Secondary controls were grouped on the steering wheel spokes, fascia and central console worked well and the usual stalks operated bright main headlights/ indicators and very effective wash/ wipers.

Inside, the instruments were also well lit at night and the main gauges were big and clearly marked up for easy reading with between them a central multi-mode display to highlight chosen elements.

The new large touchscreen on the console top was bright but somehow managed to look cluttered when being used. It integrates with a user's phone which can be inductively charged if desired and the car is effectively a mobile hotspot for searching fuel stations, hotels and suchlike.



The car's climate control system was straightforward to use and very effective with a wide-ranging temperature control, distribution and output throughout the cabin without being too noisy. Our test car was fitted with optional climate and convenience packs at £2,390 on top of the standard on road price of £42,575. It was backed up by powered windows all round.

Oddments' spaces were a little challenging to find if you had anything larger than a small bottle or cup to put down.

The seats deserve special mention for their extreme comfort, support and adjustment in front including a retractable under-knee pad, the base cushion and back padding.



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Even those in the back remarked how comfortable they were.



Access was very good throughout unless you were very tall and might clip your head on the roof, but once seated the leg and headroom was good. The back seats take three fairly easily and I liked the versatility of the folding 40/20/40 seat backs which compensated in some way for the modest boot capacity with its low height and opening aperture.



On the road, the Giulia was lively and agile with no real vices apart from that wider than anticipated turning circle but its handling was faithful, the grip very good for a rear wheel drive saloon and it behaved impeccably if you lifted off mid corner and the nose tucked in.

It soaked up the bumps and potholes on the road and although it was firmer riding the comfort was good for occupants, thanks to the well padded seats, and limited body roll around bends.

VERDICT

The Giulia felt very well put together and beautifully finished but during test the remote boot opening decided to have a mind of its own and refused to open automatically without a



helping hand.

Together with the occasional misfire this detracted from the driving experience but I believe either would be corrected with a bit of TLC from a techie.

Then you'd have a sporting saloon with head-turning looks and which can make your heart beat a little bit quicker than most other executive saloons.

For: Lively performance with smooth automatic gearbox, strong progressive brakes, very comfortable and roomy, quiet and refined executive saloon.

Against: Small boot opening to low compartment, rough running engine at tickover during our test, cluttered display on instruments, large turning circle, considerable tax costs.



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

Alfa Romeo Giulia Veloce 2.0 Turbo Petrol Saloon

Price: £44,965 as tested

Mechanical: 280 hp, 4-cylinder 2.0 petrol, 8-speed automatic



Performance: 149 mph, 0 - 62 mph 5.7-seconds

Combined Cycle fuel consumption: 33 mpg on test, CO2 195 g/km

Tax costs: BiK company car tax rating 37%, VED First Year £1,345, then Standard rate annually for 5-years £490

Insurance Group: 25

Warranty: 3-years/unlimited miles

Size: L 4.65 m (15.26 ft), W1.86 m (6.10 ft), H 1.44 m (4.72 ft)

Boot space: 480 litres (16.95 cu.ft)

Kerbweight: 1,429 kg (3,150 lb)