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Volkswagen Arteon Shooting Brake PHEV – Brief Road Test

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Kim Henson samples this striking-looking 'estate' from VW...

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The European debut of the Arteon was in 2017, with a facelift applied in 2020. Five door hatchback and five door Shooting Brake estate models are offered today, both of which have received widespread praise for their innovative and adventurous styling, especially the Shooting Brake version. Both are built around VW's 'Modular Transverse Matrix' (MQB) platform.



'Elegance' and luxury 'R-Line' trim levels are offered. I am not going to list all the kit provided as standard, but all Arteons are packed with state-of-the-art useful features, including safety aspects of course, and the R-Line versions are particularly well-equipped.



I recently took advantage of the opportunity to briefly test drive the R-Line eHybrid 1.4 litre plug-in hybrid (PHEV) Shooting Brake variant.

This is powered by a transversely-mounted four cylinder, 16 valve turbocharged TSI petrol engine, working in conjunction with an electric motor fed from a lithium-ion battery, which is charged by plugging-in to the mains (estimated recharge time five hours from a 2.3 kW domestic socket, or 3.33 hours using a 3.6 kW wallbox).



The electric motor develops 115 PS (85 kW) and the combined power output of the petrol and electric propulsion units is 218 PS (160 kW), while total torque output is 400 Nm (295



lb.ft).

Power is delivered to the front wheels via a six speed DSG ('Direct Shift Gearbox') transmission.

Acceleration from rest to 62 mph is said to take 7.8 seconds, with a top speed of 138 mph. The car's CO2 emissions rating is 31 g/km, and the WLTP 'Combined' fuel consumption figure is 208.3 miles per gallon. In real world use this is a theoretical figure, and, as with all plug-in hybrids, the best overall consumption figures are achieved when the most is made of running the car on electric power. In that regard the city range (WLTP figure) of the car is stated as being 38 miles, so for many owners probably enough for daily local commuting, with occasional recharges.

Of course, at the moment one very big advantage of a PHEV compared with a 'pure electric' BEV ('Battery Electric Vehicle') is that you always have the petrol engine available to use when the battery power runs out, so you can confidently undertake long journeys without the fear of being stranded for want of electrical power.

The fuel tank capacity is 50 litres or 11 Imperial gallons, providing a theoretical driving range on petrol power alone of perhaps 450 miles or more.

Sleek

To my eyes, and those of other motoring writers who have commented to me, VW stylists have done a very good job with shaping the exterior of the Arteon, and the estate is even more sleek-looking than the hatchback.

From within the car I found the dashboard and instrumentation to be clear and easy to assimilate, with a usefully large (10.25 in) touch screen located in the centre of the fascia, and important information is relayed to the driver by the display ahead of the steering wheel.



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The front seats looked, and proved to be, comfortable, and those in the rear provided generous head and leg room for all occupants. In fact VW claims that rear seat legroom, at 1,016 mm (40 in) is best-in-class.

The load space is, of course, important in any estate car, and in this Shooting Brake the long, wide, flat floor of the luggage compartment offers bumper-level loading and easy accommodation of large items, the only restriction (height-wise) being the car's sharply sloping rear bodywork. The load platform is a very handy 2,092mm (nearly seven feet) in length.



I was impressed by the smoothness, quietness and efficiency of the car, and by the seamless automatic switch between electric and petrol power when on the move.

Acceleration was hushed and rapid when required, from rest and when mobile, and high speed cruising was a quiet, relaxed experience.

I found the car to be comfortable over all the road surfaces I found during my albeit brief spell behind the wheel; MacPherson struts are fitted at the front, with a multi-link set-up at the rear.



VERDICT

A good-looking, practical and effective vehicle, well-equipped and in terms of running costs economical overall, although pricey to buy, at £44,365.



Wheels-Alive Tech. Spec. in Brief:

VW Arteon R-Line eHybrid 1.4 litre plug-in hybrid (PHEV)



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Propulsion:

Petrol engine: 1.4 litre 16 valve four cylinder TSI

Electric motor: 115 PS (85 kW), powered by lithium-ion propulsion battery

Charging time: between 3.33 and 5.00 hours, depending on charging system

Combined power: 218 PS (160 kW)

Combined torque: 400 Nm (295 lb.ft)



Performance:

0 - 62 mph: 7.8 seconds

Top speed: 138 mph

CO2 emissions (WLTP): 31 g/km

Combined fuel consumption (WLTP): 208.3 mpg

Warranty: Three years/60,000 miles, but eight years/100,000 miles for the battery, three years for paintwork and 12 years for body protection.

Price: £44,365 (as tested, with extras, including acoustic pack, lighting upgrades and Kings Red metallic paintwork, among other items, £50,455).