



Suzuki Ignis

MOTORING NEWS

It's very much a case of little and large as I've been driving two very different SUVs, both are from the same car maker.

Suzuki is one of those niche manufacturers whose products are familiar but uniquely different from the arguably big motor industry names.



Ignis interior

The newest addition to the Suzuki catalogue is the Ignis which, along with Fiat's Panda 4x4, has to be the smallest and quirkiest SUV available. With its upright and distinctive styling, don't be put off by the car's diminutive dimensions because once inside the cabin its vastness is remarkable. The Tardis effect is evident by not only the spaciousness for front passengers, but the amount of room at the rear which allows two adults to sit without feeling confined - and there's a reasonable amount of boot space.

Suzuki designers have accomplished much in squeezing the engine and gearbox under the short bonnet in such a way that the Ignis has one of the tightest turning circles, similar to that of a London Taxicab. Like a lot of SUVs and Crossovers, it can be specified with front-wheel drive or Suzuki's 4-mode ALLGrip permanent four-wheel drive system which is obtainable on the top range SZ5 model with its manual five-

speed transmission. An automatic version is available, in this case a five-speed automated manual but only on two-wheel drive variants.

The 1.2-litre Dualjet 4-cylinder petrol engine provides spirited performance, and there's even a 'mild hybrid' model to achieve low emissions and frugal economy. The ride quality is excellent, as is the seat comfort and general appointment of the interior of this very individual modest-size car.

four-wheel drive felt totally secure and never once compromised. With its direct feel steering and smooth six-speed manual gearbox, this roomy and well-appointed



Vitara S interior

Suzuki Vitara S



Not so small is the Vitara S which dimensionally is pitched against the like of an Audi Q3. A test run of some 800 miles in some of the winter's worst weather proved beyond all doubt this big Suzuki's standard fit all-wheel drive system. Impressive, too, is the performance from the 1.4-litre BoosterJet petrol engine which returned an average 45mpg.

Particularly notable about the Vitara S is its comfortable seats, along with a ride quality that's better than most of its competitors. Over snow-covered and sometimes flooded roads in the North of Scotland, the

SUV offers effortless long-distance motoring. Though with only 1.4 litres under the bonnet it requires a measure of anticipative driving, thus making it a driver's car.

With some rival SUVs costing around £10,000 or more than the Vitara S, this well-equipped Suzuki is excellent value. Okay, there is less padding to the dashboard, and the door pockets are formed from unadulterated plastic instead of being somewhat camouflaged, but this matters little in what can be termed as an honest-to-goodness SUV that seats four to five in comfort and with ample boot space.

Ignis (L 3700mm, W 1690mm, H1595mm, 65mpg) from £9,999 to £17,995.

Vitara S AWD (L 4175mm, W 1775mm, H 1610mm, 45mpg) from £21,999

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