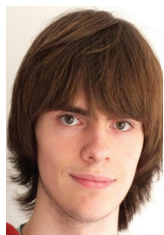




Review of the Vauxhall Grandland



By Fraser Lucas

LOOKS

Moving on from the last car's lack of distinctive appearance, the new Grandland adopts something more cutting edge and clean.

The Vizor design motif

features a bit of extra razzle-dazzle through the addition of a light up badge, while the body has a few sharp gashes amidst the plump proportions. The end result is far more appealing than before, as well as infinitely more noticeable. It's a weird feeling seeing one of the most unassuming car brands produce something that turns heads.

HANDLING AND PERFORMANCE

Driving around doesn't erupt with any feelings of exhilaration, though the Grandland never really needs to, seeing how this is meant as a family bus. Steering is light enough but lacks keenness and a deeply connected feel. In contrast, it does ride with a firm yet steady refinement that helps hugely in long journeys. Engines available include a 1.2 petrol mild-hybrid, granting 134 BHP. Some low speed use on the battery can be had, but nothing too substantial. Additionally, there is a 214 BHP electric version on offer as well, offering that extra bit of oomph.

PRACTICALITY

Beneath the skin, you'll find the Grandland is a Peugeot 3008, though Vauxhall has ensured it's just as different to its French brother inside as it is outside. It's well presented and crisp with sharp angles. The infotainment system is well sorted, even if it lacks some customisation. The increase in overall size also means the Grandland boasts a heap of room in every direction.

COST

Prices start at £34,700 for the 1.2 mild, which can cost up to £38,400. The battery packed variant is priced from £37,345 to £40,495. Unusually for a Vauxhall, the Grandland sits a bit higher up on the value ladder instead of being among the cheapest. Fortunately, it seems they're well aware of this, considering the amount of kit onboard. Adaptive cruise control and dual-zone climate control are just a couple of the many perks found.

VERDICT

While its drive doesn't prove to be as dynamic as its appearance, the Grandland does improve on its role as a family car specialist. Running costs are low, while the comfort is high. Not long ago, buying a Vauxhall typically didn't come with premium bells and whistles. It was all very much a back to basics, inoffensive choice. Now though, it's refreshing to see the brand come alive with a new sense of ambition in not only style, but also quality.