

THE CAR MAN

Tim Saunders



Kia ProCeed GT

Estate cars are *passé*. Look around, there are 'shooting brakes' everywhere. This term is used for estates that resemble more of a coupé in terms of style and panache.

The latest such offering is the ProCeed GT Line from Kia, an elegant and eye-catching design for sure.

"ProCeed with care," laughs eldest daughter Harriett (8) – she's a clever little rascal. Her comment does make me question, though - where do these car names come from? Type Ceed into Google and beside the Kia link there is one to the Common Entrance Exam for Design. I'm not even 100% sure how to pronounce this name. Now if we were talking Seed I would know where I stand and it could relate to anything from gardening to tennis.

There's room inside for five adults and there's a nice large boot, which swallows the Friday night food shopping with ease. It's laden with goodies such as a heated steering wheel and heated front seats as well as all the usual electric windows and power folding heated wing mirrors.

The engine stop start in this car is extremely reliable, which makes for quite a surprise for me. Usually I find that this technology is quite the opposite. While there's a cruise control, it's a standard version rather than the more sophisticated type that automatically slows or accelerates the vehicle. This means that it cannot

be relied upon to stick rigidly to speed limits and if a gear change takes place the cruise control has to be reset. However, there's also a speed limiter and this should prevent speeds being exceeded.

Externally it scores well, the rear is particularly attractive with hints of Porsche about it. Inside, the leather seats are relatively comfortable. Both Harriett and I find that there's a bit of a curve in the seats where we would prefer straight backs.

The driving position is good and the six speed manual gearbox is pretty smooth. It is easy to reverse down the driveway thanks to the reversing camera.

But, when you push the start button there's a little welcome tune that I find irritating and Caroline says, "Ah, it sounds like the washing machine." Is this really what Kia wants to achieve?

FACTS AT A GLANCE

Kia ProCeed 1.6 CRDi GT-Line

Price: £24,690 on the road

Top Speed: 124mph

0-60mph: 10secs

Power: 134bhp

Economy: 47mpg

Watch the video at www.testdrives.biz