Renault’s crossover Captur pulls in Tow Car Prize

Friday 13 June, 2014

Renault’s ultra-adventurous Renault Captur beat a record number of cars to win its category in the influential Tow Car Awards 2014.

The all-new Captur 1.5 dCi 90 Dynamique MediaNav was named Best Ultralight Tow Car in the hotly contested competition, which sets out to identify and champion the best tow cars on the market every year for the UK’s thousands of caravanners.

A record 56 cars, the most since the Tow Car Awards started in 2007, were tested by experts from The Camping and Caravanning Club, Practical Caravan Club and What Car? in deciding the winners.

Judges said a towing limit of 900kg means the eye-catching Renault Captur should be right “at the top of their shortlist” for anyone with a trailer tent to tow. They added: “Stability at speed proved excellent, as the car felt solid at 60 mph and beyond. In the lane-change test, direct steering and well-controlled suspension kept car and trailer in line…the 30-60mph time of 19.4 seconds means you won’t be holding up traffic. Strong brakes stopped car and trailer from 30 mph in just 9.7 metres.Our practicality team found room for all the holiday luggage bar one item, and were impressed by the Captur’s high noseweight limit relative to its towing capacity.”

Captur is Renault’s first compact crossover, a stylish, innovative, fun to drive and keenly priced car that combines MPV versatility with SUV looks and family hatchback refinement, ride and handling.

Its performance placed it top of the category containing the stable’s own Dacia Logan MCV 1.5 dCi Laureate, plus the Alfa Romeo Giulietta 2.0 JTD-m2 150bhp Exclusive, Suzuki SX4 S-Cross, Peugeot 2008 1.6 eHDi 115 Feline, Skoda Rapid Spaceback 1.4 TSI SE DSG and Fiat Panda 4x4 1.3 Multijet.

Cars are tested in five different weight classes, with each going through the same exacting tests, towing a Swift Group caravan weighted to 85% of the car's kerbweight or a trailer weighing 800kg.

Acceleration and braking are measured using satellite tracking equipment. Stability is measured using data from the AL-KO ATC stability system, as well as the subjective impressions of a team of experienced drivers. A lane-change test reveals which cars will perform best in an emergency, with the same test completed three times at increasing speed. A hill-start test shows which cars can stop and start when towing on a steep slope.

Judges added: “We don't just test cars from behind the wheel. Our practicality judges look for those features which make towing easier, more convenient and safer.

“Even the keenest caravanner will spend far more time driving without a caravan or trailer rather than towing, so we look for cars which are enjoyable to drive and live with every day, relying on the expert reviews of What Car?'s road test team.”

The judges are either experts in towing, regular caravanners, experienced car testers – or all three. The panel is led by David Motton, Tow Car Editor of Practical Caravan and a former editor of Practical Caravan and What Car? as well as being a UK Car of the Year Juror.

For more information on Captur, with prices starting from £12,495 on-the-road, and the entire Renault range, visit www.renault.co.uk.

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