
MINI now available with Diesel - and Cabrio to come

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The MINI One D is the fourth model to make it into the MINI family. Staying true to the qualities that define MINI, go-kart handling, impeccable driving dynamics, big premium car build quality, head turning design and bags of personality - the six-speed MINI One D adds a torquey drive and impressive fuel economy figures.

As with the MINI One, MINI Cooper and MINI Cooper S, all types of people will own the MINI One D, young and old, male or female, singles or those with kids - there is no such person as a typical MINI owner. However, for those customers whose head says diesel yet heart screams MINI, the perfect dilemma buster has just hit the tarmac.

A unique point of interest about the MINI One D is that it is the first car in history of the brand to use a diesel engine.

So, why diesel and why now?:

In the UK, sales of diesel-powered vehicles are set to increase significantly over the next year. Christopher Macgowan, Chief Executive of The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) commented that "Diesel sales have increased for 30 consecutive months since September 2000;" and that, "They are expected to account for one third of all new cars in 2003."

Combine this forecast with a strong track record of growth in the supermini segment and the MINI

One D looks set to be the most wanted small diesel engined car in the UK.

Following 12.4 per cent growth in 2001, sales in the supermini segment rose 7.4 per cent in 2002 from 773,995 to 831,264. Nearly one third of all new cars registered last year was a supermini. Sales of diesel models were up 38 per cent in 2002 to 602,623 units making the market share of diesel models 23.5 per cent, the highest ever. (Source: SMMT)

Packing a punch - latest diesel technology:

MINI One D is a small diesel car that thinks like a big car. By using the latest all aluminium lightweight diesel engine with direct injection common rail technology, the MINI One D is able to keep weight to a minimum and power to the maximum. With a torque figure of 180Nm at just 2,000rpm, this little car punches above its weight when it matters - high torque at low revs making it the ideal car for city driving. Add into the equation outstanding fuel economy, 58.9 mpg on the combined cycle, a choice of six gears and a top speed of 103 mph and the MINI One D adds up to a diesel that sets new standards in its class.

From the exterior the new MINI One D stands out from the MINI One through its model designation at the rear, side sills carried over from the MINI Cooper S, a front panel with larger air intakes for the intercooler, and the tailpipe covered by the rear skirt. Inside, the MINI One D follows the classic but modern look of the rest of the MINI family. The MINI One D also benefits from the addition of an external temperature display incorporated into the rev counter which is fitted as standard on the MINI One D.

Safety and security remain high on the MINI One D's agenda. Due to the classic diesel trait of high torque at low revs, Automatic Stability Control + Traction (ASC+T), is fitted as standard to prevent wheelspin on slippery surfaces. As with all MINIs, four airbags, four disc brakes, Electronic Brake force Distribution (EBD), Cornering Brake Control (CBC) come as standard kit, making it one of the safest cars in its class as proved by its achievement of four stars in the demanding EURO NCAP crash test.

Finding a 'standard' MINI, or indeed any two MINIs that are exactly the same, is like finding a needle in a haystack. With literally tens of thousands of option combinations possible, MINI owners have embraced the opportunity to be individual with most customers spending an average of 18 per cent of the value of the car on options. Standard levels of equipment on the MINI One D are impressive for its class but the scope to individually tailor the car make it truly astonishing.

Despite the extensive option and accessories list, (the most expensive MINI to date in the UK totalled over £35,000), the MINI One D, priced at £11,385 on the road is just the job for customers who know that fuel economy and fun need not be mutually exclusive. Add into the equation MINI tlc, (an optional five year service pack for just £100) and residual values that similar cars visibly wince at, and the MINI One D adds up whichever way you look at it.

The worldwide success of MINI is good news for the UK as all MINIs including the new MINI One D are built at BMW Group's Plant Oxford facility. By June 2003 it is forecast that Plant Oxford will have built over 250,000 MINIs for worldwide supply since it started production in 2001. Over 60,000 of those MINIs have been delivered in the UK, making the UK the biggest market for MINI.

May 15th 2003 - No more speculation: BMW Group Board confirms decision to build a MINI Cabrio.

Munich. At this year's shareholder meeting on May 15th 2003, Dr. Panke, Director of the Board of BMW AG, announced that the MINI family will be expanded by a MINI Cabrio. This ends months of speculation about an open-top MINI variant. MINI is responding to many customers' urgent calls for a MINI Cabrio.

"The MINI brand is an important pillar of our premium brand strategy and we are continuing with our investments. I can hereby confirm that we will be expanding the MINI product range by a four-seater cabrio with the aim of gaining new customers in the open-top small car segment. The MINI Cabrio will become another highlight in the success story of the MINI brand," is how Dr. Panke explained the decision. The precise date when the MINI Cabrio will become available to customers has not been

fixed yet.

In the current year the focus is on the market introduction of the MINI One D. "With the MINI One D we are expanding the MINI model range in Europe. It is the first MINI with a diesel engine ever. We will make MINI even more attractive with this variant for the European markets, " stated Dr. Panke in his speech.

The decision to expand the MINI family comes at a time in which the sales figures confirm the brand's continued success. With more than 144,000 MINI automobiles sold last year, sales exceeded expectations by about 40 percent, continued Dr. Panke. In March of this year the 200,000th MINI was sold since market launch.

The strongest MINI market still is the 'home market' in Great Britain. In the first four months of this year more than 15,300 models were sold there. After the US with approximately 11,300 MINI models sold by the end of April, Germany remains the third-largest market with almost 9,300 units sold in the same period of time. This means that MINI was able to increase sales by a third in Germany compared to the first four months of the last year.

Text/Photo; BMW

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