



Scottish Launch for the new AUDI TT

Published: November 23, 2014 By: Virtual Motorpix

Online version: <https://www.virtualmotorpixblog.com/scottish-launch-new-audi-tt/>



Audi TT S Line 2.0 TFSI 230 PS 6 speed at the UK launch in Scotland, November 2014

It was pouring with rain as we touched down at Glasgow airport earlier this month. The purpose of the trip was to test drive a batch of the latest Audi TTs, these cars being the third generation of the iconic sports coupés that first burst onto the stage back in 1998 (Gen.1) followed by the update in 2006 (Gen.2). The venue for the Scottish launch for the new AUDI TT was the Edwardian Scottish Mansion, Mar Hall, was located just 20 minutes from Loch Lomond and overlooking the River Clyde.



Different models of the new Audi TT lined up for the drive at Mar Hall, Scotland

The Gen.3 TT is an all-new model focussed on sportiness. Whereas the Gen.1 model was introduced at a time when Audi had just 17 models on the market, the TT was in 1998 a totally new concept. So positively was the TT received when it was first shown as a concept, that at launch, the final production model had hardly changed from the earlier concept.

With the Gen.3 model, its introduction comes at a time when Audi now has 47 models in the market and the company's position is firmly cemented as a premium sector manufacturer. Today, Audi is clearly pushing the strong link with its first TT model from 16 years ago, which it can justifiably now do, the model having built its own individual heritage in the last decade and a half.



#2 Audi R18 e-tron quattro in the pits during the 2014 Le Mans 24-Hour



Audi TT S line 2.0 TFSI quattro 230 PS S tronic - the new TT shares the headlamp style of the R18 race car

Whereas the 1998 model was thought to be quirky and a little innocent, first impressions of the 2014 TT are that it is sharper and more meaningful in appearance. Borrowing from the style of headlights as seen in the WEC R18 race car, the new TT also boasts twin vertical daylight running beams. The lightweight construction Audi Space Frame (ASF) is yet a further example of the technology shared with its racing siblings. A thin brake light runs across the width of the rear between the tail lamps and immediately below the extendable rear wing, which is a really neat feature.

A drive down the wet and winding country roads around Western Scotland soon showed that the new Audi TT is a pure driving machine, powerful and yet predictable. For instance, as one crested the brow of a short rise, or negotiated a sharp bend, unexpected standing water tested the resolve of both man and machine but the new TT handled these challenges



without breaking into a sweat. In a demonstration of technological excellence, as the TT approaches its high limits when turning into a corner, it begins to understeer ever so slightly. Thanks to a newly developed quattro all-wheel drive system, the new TT combines dynamic driving with safety. The all-wheel drive software controls the hydraulic multi-plate clutch differently depending on the driver's style and the setting of the control systems, ensuring ideal handling across a wide range of driving experiences.



Audi TT Sport 2.0 TDI ultra 184 PS 6 speed

The new TT is quite a different animal in that, despite being 21mm shorter than its predecessor, the wheelbase has been increased by 37mm to 2505mm resulting in a smoother and more predictable ride. This has meant that the front and rear overhangs are correspondingly shorter and is described as having a 'wheel at each corner'. The width too has been reduced by ten millimetres to 1832mm while the height remains unchanged at 1353mm. All of this tinkering with the car's dimensions means that the TT can boast a class-



leading Cd of 0.29 (in S line specification).

Three newly developed, four-cylinder engines will be available in the Gen.3 TT and these include a TDI and a TFSI for the TT, with the top-of-the-line TFSI for the TTS. All three engines at the launch displaced 2000cc, with power ranging from 184 PS to 230 PS. All three engines reflect the Audi philosophy of 'right-sizing' with forced induction replacing displacement and direct injection providing high engine efficiency. All engines comply with the Euro 6 emissions standard.



Audi TT S Line 2.0 TFSI 230 PS 6 speed (blue) and the Audi TT S line 2.0 TFSI quattro 230 PS S tronic (white)

The UK represents the highest sales of TTs in any market in the world, including Germany. Audi UK PR boss Jon Zammet puts this down to the high level of spec that is offered on the UK models. The key focus with the new TT was, though, to reduce the car's weight which



the engineers have done a fantastic job of, making the TT miles better than its competitors in this respect.

The sophisticated head lights stay on bright, and dip automatically when another vehicle approaches. An interesting feature was Audi's revolutionary high-tech binnacle, the 'virtual cockpit', which can be adapted to display its contents, as the driver wants it. This fully digital display incorporates the satnav as well, bringing this and other vital information directly into the driver's line of sight making it unnecessary to glance over to the centre console any longer.



Audi TT S Line 2.0 TFSI 230 PS 6 speed

Available at the UK launch were the 2-litre TFSI petrol engine, 2-litre Ultra TDI, and the 2-litre quattro petrol model. Of these three, the 2-litre quattro model was understandably the pick of the bunch, driven through Audi's legendary DSG 'box, although this is now called the



S tronic gearbox.

The 2-litre Ultra diesel model (6-speed manual) is the model that Audi is expecting to be its best selling TT model. Developing an impressive 184PS, this car is comfortable, taught, predictable and light to drive. The 'Ultra' tag points to the model's lightweight credentials, as electric seats here are an optional extra. The 2.0 TFSI petrol engine produces 230PS and having become used to the performance and torque qualities of Audi's diesel technology, the petrol model was refreshingly sparky. The 2-litre quattro was, as mentioned, the model that was the most popular on the day.

In some ways it is becoming harder to praise the ride of any of Audi's models because they are all so good that they have set the bar for other manufacturers to follow. One thing is for certain, with Audi having invested in this new model and by launching the one-make series in 2015, the TT is going to be around for many years yet.

TT cup 2015

Starting in 2015, Audi will launch another one-make cup in Germany, the Audi Sport TT Cup, following the successful introduction of the Audi R8 LMS Cup in Asia. The racing version of the new Audi TT with a weight of only 1125kg delivers 228kW (310bhp). By means of a so called push-to-pass function, the output of the 2-litre TFSI engine can be briefly boosted by 22kW (30bhp). The 4-cylinder TFSI and the six-speed S tronic adopted from the production model have remained almost unchanged. An active differential that is electronically variable from the cockpit ensures optimal traction at the front axle.



Audi Sport TT Cup for 2015

The winner of the new Audi Sport TT Cup series in 2015 can look forward to receiving support in Audi's successful GT3 sports car program, with promotion to the DTM or the WEC Audi team another possible dream for some. "The Audi R8 LMS in 2008 was the first race car we specifically developed for use by customer teams. With the Audi Sport TT Cup, quattro GmbH is now also offering the opportunity to enter racing with Audi," Dr. Wolfgang Ullrich, Head of Audi Motorsport revealed.

In some ways, the extreme rainfall, which over three days had dumped a month's worth of rain over western Scotland, provided excellent but testing driving conditions for the new TT. The Scots have a word for these grey, rainy conditions - 'drech' - and this seemed to sum up the dreary conditions perfectly.



Audi TT S line 2.0 TFSI quattro 230 PS S tronic

A land slip and the extreme conditions scuppered plans to have the opportunity of driving up a hill climb route with Audi rally legend Hannu Mikkola. Swallowing that disappointment, difficult as it was, allowed further time behind the wheel of each model around the local roads, which was no bad thing. That old adage of 'first is best' is never far away from the lips of many when comparing the 1998 TT with the new model, but this 2014 TT is one mean machine. The best way to find out, is to test drive one yourself.

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