

Mazda CX-3 is a cross-over with style

 By [Henrie Geyser](#)

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The recently spruced-up Mazda CX-3 is a multi-role pleaser and the latest shining star in the fold of the once strong brand which is rapidly regaining individual market traction since moving out of the shadow of the Ford stable.



The CX-3 has been steadily muscling its way into the top echelon of the fiercely competitive light crossover/SUV market, thanks to its spirited performance, classier, less flamboyant hot hatch styling, passenger comfort, driving pleasure and multi-function appeal.

The looks department

In the looks department the CX-3 is much less in your face than competitors such as the Nissan Juke, Jeep Renegade, Renault Captur and Kia Soul and, although it is as talented as all the rest of these contenders, its appeal is projected in a much more subtle and mature manner.

Sure, the body curves are there, but smartly subdued; the ride is elevated but not so that it looks like it is hoisted up on stilts; the living quarters cheerful but tasty and well-furnished, but less clustered and easier to use than others in this segment.

Nifty nice-to-haves include a Bose sound system, head up display (HUD), leather and cloth seat combination, LED headlights, integrated navigation, power sliding and tilt glass sunroof, rear camera, R18" alloy wheels and privacy glass at the rear side and back.



I recently spent time in the company of the Individual Auto model which, like all six the models in the local CX-3 range, is powered by a two-litre petrol engine which pushes out 115kW and 2014Nm and is linked to a six-speed auto shift. It has a claimed top speed of 192km/h and a 0-100km/h sprint time of 9.5.

No robot racer

The Mazda is no robot racer but it feels more than lively enough, particularly through the corners now that its spirited character has been further enhanced with the addition of Mazda's SKYACTIV vehicle dynamics. Too technical to describe in detail here, the system ensures that the engine, transmission, chassis and body all work together to enhance ride quality – and it works well, without being intrusive, particularly through the corners.

The CX-3 grips the tarmac with pleasing confidence, the steering feels solid and positive and the auto shift is smooth and quick.

An addition to the range is a new flagship, the CX-3 2.0L Individual Plus which comes with advanced safety features such as smart city brake support (SCBS), adaptive LED headlights (ALH), lane departure warning (LDW), driver attention alert (DAA) and blind spot monitoring (BSM).

Range enhancements

Range enhancements include an exterior side door garnishing on the Individual (our test model) and Individual Plus derivatives as well as an addition of two new exterior colours, eternal blue mica and machine gray metallic.

The six-model CX-3 range varies in price from R284,800 to R380,600 and prices include a three-year unlimited kilometre factory warranty, three-year roadside assistance plan and a three-year service plan.

ABOUT HENRIE GEYSER

Henrie Geyser joined the online publishing industry through iafrica.com where he worked for five years as news editor and editor. He now freelances for a variety of print and online publications, on the subjects of cars, food, and travel, among others; and is a member of the South African Guild of Motoring Journalists. henrieg@iafrica.com

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