

Refreshed Hyundai Creta and Tucson

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You know how a small haircut can completely change someone's appearance? I know comparisons can be a bit cliché, but that's basically what Hyundai has done with the Creta and Tucson.

Small nips, tucks and changes have given these two SUVs beautiful fresh looks. We drove two of the new derivatives around Jozi on the open road to Hartebeespoort Dam as well on some gravel.

What's new?

Though it is small changes, both the Creta and the Tucson's minor exterior updates make them more visually appealing and they now seem to have followed more current trends which include sharper lines, larger grilles, sharp-looking lights, and new alloy wheel designs.

The facelifted Creta looks very similar to its predecessor. However, it boasts a new cascade grille with a chromed bezel, new fog lights, daytime running lights, and a new set of roof rails with a lower profile.



From the back, slight changes are noticeable such as tweaked tail light (with LED inserts), re-positioned reflectors, and a new rear skid plate.

Seeing that the Tucson's main competitors are the Toyota RAV, VW Tiguan, Mazda CX-5, and Nissan X-Trail, its sharper, high-tech looks bring it on par.



The Tucson range is now available in two new derivatives and a new seven-speed dual clutch transmission and eight-speed automatic transmission form part of the changes in this lineup.

Its interior is also new, sporting a redesigned dashboard with a floating seven-inch screen for its infotainment system that offers features such as Apple's CarPlay.



What's it like?

Both the Creta and the Tucson remain “Hyundai” to the core: the drive is comfortable and both vehicles have an upmarket feel. Handling is nice and firm. The Creta’s good ride quality and firm road holding are achieved by a McPherson strut front suspension with gas dampers. An increased caster angle delivers a more stable, smoother high-speed travel.

At the rear, revised geometries of the dampers used with the coupled torsion beam axle have delivered an increase lever ratio that generates gentle understeer for better cornering performance.

With 6:4 rear folding seats, space abounds in both models making it great family cars. The Creta comes with 190mm of ground clearance (30mm more than the Toyota C-HR and the Mazda CX-3) and the Tucson with 172mm of ground clearance.

How about engine and safety stuff?

The updated Hyundai Creta is powered by a 1.6-litre engine. The new Tucson range in South Africa features seven derivatives, with a choice between three engines – a naturally aspirated 2-litre petrol engine; a turbocharged 1.6-litre petrol engine; and a 2-litre turbocharged diesel – and three specification levels. All derivatives are front-wheel driven.



Safety features in both the Creta and Tucson include dual front and side airbags for driver and passenger, and curtain airbags for protection of rear passengers as well. They are also equipped with an anti-lock brake system (ABS) and electronic braking distribution (EBD).

Isofix latching points for child safety seats are also fitted to all Creta and Tucson derivatives.

Executive and Elite derivatives of the Tucson are equipped with blind spot detection and cross traffic alert, vehicle stability management that keeps the car stable on wet, slippery or rough roads, as well as hill-start assist control to prevent roll-back when pulling off against an incline.

What else?

The manufacturer has kept the same derivative lineup, engine, and gearbox choices, and specification configuration for the Creta range.

All three Creta derivatives are sold with the Executive level of standard features, which includes leather seats, leather-

cladding for the steering wheel, multi-function remote controls for the Bluetooth phone, sound and radio system, and an eight-inch touch-screen display for the infotainment system.

Navigation doesn't come standard with the Creta but can be added at a cost of +-R2,500.

The Creta and the Tucson's Executive and Elite derivatives come with rear parking assist sensors and the rearview camera.



How many bucks?

- Creta 1.6 Exec MT: R339,900
- Creta 1.6 Exec AT: R359,900
- Creta 1.6 Exec AT Dsl: R399,900

- Tucson 2.0 Premium (manual): R399,900
- Tucson 2.0 Premium (automatic): R419,900
- Tucson 2.0 Executive (automatic): R459,900
- Tucson 2.0 Elite (automatic): R499,900
- Tucson R2.0 Executive Turbodiesel (automatic): R529,900
- Tucson 1.6 TGDl Elite (Dual Clutch Transmission): R559,900
- Tucson R2.0 Elite Turbodiesel (automatic): R569,900

All prices include a five-year/90,000km service plan; a seven-year/200,000km warranty (comprised of Hyundai's five-year/150,000km warranty, with an extended two-year/50,000km drivetrain warranty); roadside assistance for five years or 150,000.

All service intervals are 15,000km, with a mandatory initial 5,000km service for the Tucson 1.6 TGDl Elite derivative.

Conclusion

The fact that 8,079 Cretas and 13,591 Tucsons have been sold since the cars initially launched, shows that they are much liked and trusted by South Africans. I'm pretty sure they will remain a firm favourite family vehicle and it'll be interesting to see if the Creta 1.6 Executive Dsl AT manages to give the new Renault Duster a go and also how the Tucson performs against its tough competitors in the SUV market.

ABOUT ILSE VAN DEN BERG

Ilse is a freelance journalist and editor with a passion for people & their stories (check out Passing Stories). She is also the editor of Go & Travel, a platform connecting all the stakeholders in the travel & tourism industry. You can check out her work here and here. Contact Ilse through her website here.

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