

5 reasons why the Alfa Romeo Stelvio is a great SUV



By [Ilse van den Berg](#)

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One of the semi-finalists in this year's [South African Car of the Year competition](#), sponsored by Autotrader, is the Alfa Romeo Stelvio. This is the car brand's first SUV, and an impressive one at that.

For a manufacturer to enter the realm of SUVs when other brands have been doing a great job at it for years is, well, interesting. And everyone's latched onto the trend as we've seen. There is usually much hype and even more opinions about whether it's a good idea for a brand to venture in a certain direction or not.

An Italian car brand with a great 108-year history in speed, handling and style, Alfa Romeo launched its Stelvio SUV roughly a year ago in South Africa. It was greatly anticipated - so much so that in 2017 more than 100 buyers confirmed orders before even taking the car for a test drive!



As you know by now, the car is named after the Stelvio Pass in Northern Italy, known for its incredible elevation of 2,757m and more than 75 hairpin bends. Without a doubt, the manufacturer wanted to show that it believes it's in the curves that a car shows its true colours. And that's where Alfa Romeo excels.

Five things to love about the Stelvio:

- **It's fast:** The makers of the Stelvio didn't disappoint when it comes to the SUV's speed. The Stelvio Super, powered by a 2.0-litre turbo (206kW/400Nm) engine and coupled to an 8-speed automatic transmission, tops out at 230km/h. The manufacturer claims it shoots from 0-100km/h in 5.7 seconds.

- **It's safe:** It may only weigh 1660kg (one of the lightest cars in its class), but the Stelvio recently gained the coveted Euro NCAP five-star rating and tops its category with a score of 97% for the protection of adult occupants. These results were achieved thanks to two fundamental features: the efficiency of its ultra-light body that is both rigid and tough and its wide array of safety devices. Noteworthy, among these, is the Autonomous Emergency Braking system (AEB), which comes as standard on every version.



- **It has a beast of a boot:** The Stelvio's boot space is something to write home about. An electrically operated tailgate and up to 525 litres of fully usable space that's made even more versatile by the independently folding rear seats, means you can just about fit anything in there - be it a wheelchair, a golf kit, catering containers (just go easy around those bends), or your puppies.
- **It's comfy:** With comfortable leather seats that support you (imagine going up or down the Stelvio Pass!), a height-adjustable driver seat, a central console with convenient turning knobs such as the Alfa DNA drive mode selector and infotainment controls, this SUV is comfy as can be.
- **It's, well, Italian:** At the heart of the Alfa Romeo brand lies "La Meccanica delle Emozioni" (the mechanics of emotions) and this responsive and agile SUV surely evokes emotion in the driver, delivering an exhilarating experience behind the wheel.

Things that are not so lovely

- Some elements on the steering wheel aren't my favourite. For example, the volume isn't controlled by buttons but instead a little wheel you need to roll up or down with your finger. Perhaps it's just something to get used to?

- I'm not a fan of the hard-top dashboard just because the car feels like it's luxurious and needs some softer finishing touches. But there is the option to add a leather dashboard.
- There seems to be a lack of clever storage space in the cockpit (perhaps due to the controls on the centre tunnel).

Pricing starts from R810,000 for the Super and the First Edition is priced at R946,000.

All Alfa Romeo Stelvio's feature a three-year/100,000 km warranty and a six-year/100,000km maintenance plan as standard.

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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