

Hyundai's i30N is more than a feeling

 By [Naresh Maharaj](#)

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Hyundai's tagline for the newly launched i30N is 'feel the feeling'. But after testing this speedster on a racing track and on tarred roads, the drive is definitely more than that.

It's more than a feeling. This car is fast, with a 2-litre, 202 kW turbocharged engine. But the handling around fast corners left me astounded and wanting more. The dual muffler exhaust sounds add to the pleasure of commanding a true high-performance vehicle.

Hyundai's first mass-produced high-performance car has finally arrived in South Africa and judging purely from the media attention, it's going to be a hit amongst race enthusiasts.



Image by Naresh Maharaj

Hyundai's i30N performance hatchback has been developed on three "cornerstones": Cornering, Race-track Capability and Everyday Sports Car. Advanced technology and a high level of driver customisation has been built into the i30N, which means it can play the role of a comfort-oriented commuter as well as a race-track ready performance car.

What does the 'N' stand for?

The 'N' stands for Namyang, Hyundai Motor's Global Research and Development Centre in South Korea, and for the world-famous Nürburgring motor racing complex in Germany, home to Hyundai's European Test Centre where the manufacturer's models built on the European continent are developed and tested.

The i30N underwent 10,000km of driving to test its durability.

The 'N' symbol also has another meaning that speaks to the car's track credentials. The letter is a depiction of a race chicane and represents the i30N's philosophy of translating the joy of negotiating winding motorsport tracks, to the fun of everyday road driving.

Are you ready?

To be quite honest, I was not too sure what to expect when I first got into the cockpit on the racetrack. I hit the throttle and shifted through the gears. The i30N's rev-matching function supported smooth gear shifting, while the over-boost function increases torque and acceleration. Corners come very quickly on track and the braking slowed the car down very quickly, leaving you ample time to hit the throttle again and out of the corner. Again....more than a feeling.



Image by Naresh Maharaj

That exhilarating feeling is enhanced by the car's sound from the dual muffler exhaust featuring the variable exhaust valve system, and the cockpit of the i30N shows key performance parameters through the new instrument cluster and the 8-inch free-floating screen's modes such as the G-Force meter for live tracking of performance.

Those feelings and emotions are even more intense in the i30N, which is equipped with a Performance Package that – apart from the other N-features – include the high-output 202 kW turbocharged engine, an Electronically Controlled Limited Slip Differential, a variable exhaust valve system and 19-inch alloy wheels with Pirelli P-Zero performance tyres.

Facts and features

- Hyundai Motorsport has been a highly successful participant and winner in the gruelling World Rally Championship since 2014, though Hyundai vehicles have competed in other competitions prior to that. Tested at the Nürburgring: Hyundai N's high-performance technologies were honed at Germany's world-famous Nürburgring race track in Germany.
- While it is based on the i30 five-door, the i30N boasts its own unique design. It shimmers with the blue colouring synonymous with Hyundai Motorsports race cars. The model has an enlarged version of Hyundai's defining Cascading Grille providing more air cooling to the engine and brakes.
- The i30N also has stylish 19-inch wheels with 235/35R19 Pirelli P-Zero high-performance tyres and red brake callipers featuring the N-logo. Aggressive bumpers with larger air intakes and a red character line, an aerodynamic rear spoiler with a triangular brake light, and a dual muffler exhaust complete the sleek, sporty look.

- Designed to deliver pure driving enjoyment, the i30N emphasises its emotional impact on drivers by measuring heartbeats per minute (BPM), rather than simply revs per minute (RPM).
- Buttons on the steering wheel alternate the i30N's five drive modes: Eco, Normal, Sport, N and N Custom. Each mode changes the car's character, adjusting the high-performance parameters of the vehicle, including its engine and rev-matching.
- The i30N boasts a top speed of 250km/h and goes from 0-100km/h in just 6.1 seconds. That is all thanks to the powerful T-GDi engine, generating 353 Nm torque from 1,500-4,700 r/min, reaching a maximum of 378 Nm for a brief period when in overboost.



Image by Naresh Maharaj

Verdict

The i30N takes true race capability to every-day driving. I literally threw the car around the corners at the racetrack and it responded with aplomb. Put pedal to the metal and just watch how quickly the i30N reached top speed. Everything from bumper to bumper screams 'high performance'. Add to this it's aesthetically good looks and you have a winner.

Hyundai is finally bringing its successes from motorsport to everyday life.



Image by Naresh Maharaj

Price

The Hyundai i30N goes on sale at a suggested retail price of R679,900, which includes a 7-year/200,000km warranty, roadside assistance for 7-years or 150,000km, and 5-year/75,000km service plan. Service intervals are 15,000km or once a year.

ABOUT NARESH MAHARAJ

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