



Mitsubishi Pajero Exceed

Manufacturer: Mitsubishi Motors, Sakahogi, Gifu, Japan

Engine: 3,200 cc turbo

Gearbox: 5 speed auto with SportsMode

Retail Price: NZ\$ 84,990.00

Tested: February 2009

Back in the 1980's one of the Road-Tests.com crew worked in the film and TV industry, at a time when technology was taking off. Take the video tape recorder; in the industry the key words were 'broadcast quality'. If it wasn't to that technical standard you couldn't either use it or transmit it. The VTR machines of those days weighed close on 1.5t, used 2" wide tape on reels that weighed 6kg each, needed 3-phase electricity and were the size of a large two door cupboard. And wouldn't fit in the back of the latest Pajero. Even with the seats laid flat. The slimline DVD player found as standard in roof of the Pajero is state of the art; wireless headsets and remote control unit, a far, far cry from the machines that were specified as 'broadcast quality' a mere 30 years ago...one of the Road-Tests.com is getting old. And that is why Mitsubishi has recently launched the upgraded Pajero. Apart from the DVD player, tweaks such as in side mirror indicators, raising the spare wheel unit by 150mm, improved display function and changes to suspension angles, 4x4 system and a few minor body enhancements are part of the improved package of Pajero. Those and the 4M41 engine; the lower emission, fuel efficient (by18%), diesel 4 cylinder turbo unit that is part of the package. Otherwise it's a Pajero, as we've come to know and love; brutally powerful, can pull 3.3t of weight – good for those horse boxes and boats – extraordinarily comfortable and now with high technology systems and the tiny DVD player. What more can anyone want?

The Fuel Facts...

- Pajero has an 88 litre fuel tank that should take you about 800km based on the claimed 10.5 L/100kms. Road-Tests.com managed 9.9L/100kms during our time the big rig, which is, frankly, exceptional economy.
- CO₂ emissions are stated at 243gm/km. Every 15,000km Pajero travels it will pump out 3.64 tonnes of carbon gas. Or \$ 91.00 of carbon credits.

PAJERO EXCEED...

Big is the name of the game here, large, in-yer-face big, yet classy, welcoming and ready for just about anything you care to throw at the 3.2L diesel powered Pajero.

Clamber into the spacious and welcoming cabin, sit back, feel the strength around you, relax, get comfortable, then start the engine. That's when you become aware that this is one solidly built vehicle, with power to match.



The quality of the leather is hard to miss, the finish of the interior matches this high standard – everything is in the right place and works well. Yes the petite testers had a little difficulty in gaining access to the Pajero, but once in smiles spread across faces as the comfort, driveability and finish of the SUV became apparent to them.

Front seats are electronically adjustable, the 2nd row of seats is also comfortable, the 3rd row is a temporary set mostly for the little ones to sit in. Although acceptably comfortable, adults in the trial found them a little, well, difficult – or was that just a mental thing?

In keeping with the improvements, grab handles are easier to hold on to with the sensible running board to help those who need assistance.



The centre dash unit is crafted with a subtle rise over the top of the digital data display, very svelte. The Rockford Fosgate sound system, complete with massive (naturally) sub-woofer in the rear load space creates opera house levels of listening pleasure with no distortion at maximum volume – none. Beware the kids with the \$ 3,000.00 sound systems in their old cars will, undoubtedly, become jealous. You, on the other hands smile at the joy.

The sound proofing in the cabin bans any rattle from the engine, indeed without the rev counter you might be forgiven for thinking the engine failed to fire. Select the drive and enjoy yourself; steering is surprisingly accurate for an SUV of this size, power is perfect, acceleration is more than adequate and above all the extraneous sound is effectively managed. Rock and roll is banished by the improved suspension. All round a very good package.



Why do you need a 7 seat large SUV like this? For all reasons, not least of which is the large boot which embarrassingly easily coped with the family shopping for four, golf clubs and kit bags of the usual Road-Tests.com tests. Mind you with the 3rd row of seats up, you can forget most of the above and settle for small loads instead. Tonneau cover is handy even if the glass is privacy darkened.

No doubt the Pajero can go to places we wouldn't have thought possible, but, as always, we leave the off-road stuff to our friends at NZ4WD magazine, who can tell you all about how good the Pajero is off-road.

Easy shift into 4x4 mode by the little lever – even on the fly, as they say. Plenty of cubbyholes, drink holders and the usual massive arm rest – split of course – bin are there. Bowing to the Japanese (and to be fair other) markets the removable ash tray is still included.

We liked the DVD player in the back, both 2nd and 3rd row seats can easily see the screen, although any more than two watching and you'll need to acquire more headsets or put up with a movie sound track rather than Vivaldi...

Pajero Exceed isn't an inexpensive ride by any stretch of the imagination, however Mitsubishi has loaded it with technology you can see and use, as well as plenty that sits in the chassis, running gear and suspension.

AND SO?

There will, apparently, always be a market for SUV's in New Zealand due, mostly, to our penchant for the outdoors, adventure lifestyle.

So it's no surprise that the Distributors will bring in large SUV's that can tow the toys, shift the family and act as a school run, shopping trolley vehicle to boot. Mitsubishi has the benefit of market penetration in a variety of global markets, some of which, like Russia and the Ukraine, might be a surprise that Mitsubishi are represented there, but no surprise that Pajero is a big seller there.

Did the Road-Tests.com crew appreciate the finer things of the Pajero? No complaints from the crew, the families or the Teen and Tot Testers, especially considering that the 3rd row isn't the most munificent we've encountered. Functional, yes – comfortable, well that's debatable.

The looks make Pajero enticing against some of the competition, as does the excellent fuel efficiency that the Road-Tests.com crew managed to extract.

All up then this is an SUV that deserves a second look.



THE SAFETY SIDE OF LIFE...?

NCAP Previous – and we stress this – previous Pajero achieved 4* ANCAP rating in testing. This new model has moved on since then, safety wise...

Airbags: Front and side and full length curtain airbags - 6

Electronic Systems: OK all this comes under Mitsubishi's All terrain Technology (MATT) ASC with Brake Assist, ABS

with EBD, Active Traction Control, Engine Braking Assist, Hill Hold Assist and Hill Descent linked to the ASC system. Lots there then....!

Others: Head restraint safety system, ISOFix in 2nd row (x2) and front fog lights, reversing sensors – and two in the spare wheel cover, excellent that! Rain sensors and BlueTooth™ capable.

Unsurprising to us that everyone who drove the Pajero felt safe as houses in it and welcomed the ASC and curtain airbags.

THE TECHNICAL THINGS...

Engine	3200cc, 4 cylinder turbo diesel
Gearbox	5 Speed auto with Sport Mode
Options	5: 3 – diesel / 2 - petrol
Power	150kW @ 3,800 rpm
Torque	448Nm @ 2,000 rpm (that's right!)
Kerb Weight	2,345kg
Gross V. Wt	3,030kg
Towing	3,300kg –braked / 750kg - unbraked
Tank Size	88 Litres



Brakes	Fr: 406mm ventilated disc / Rr: 400mm solid disc
Suspension Fr	Double Wishbone, coil springs, gas shocks, stabiliser bar
Suspension Rr	Independent Multi-Link, coil springs, anti-roll bar
Wheels 'n Tyres	18" x 7.5J alloy with 265/60R18 All-Terrain Tyres – full size spare
Load Space	1050L 3 rd row flat / 1758L 2 nd and 3 rd rows flat
Size (L, W, H)	4.90m Long / 1.87m Wide / 1.90m H
Ground Clearance	235mm
Angles	36.6° Approach / 25.0° Departure / 22.5 ° Rampover / max climb 35.0 °
Steering	Power assisted / 5.7m turning radius / 3.5 turns lock to lock

How We Conduct Road-Test.Com Tests...

In a phrase...with tenacity and time. The tenacity comes with our recognition that we go after the small things, as well as the large. Things that are understandably overlooked when buying for oneself but do affect the fleet-owner manager juggling the needs of multiple drivers. Things such as how much interior storage, etc. Time, is the time we are given to do that. We have the vehicles we test for at least a week—not a day or a drive round the block! And, yes, that does give us time to for all the Road-Tests.com team to sample the vehicle.