



18 SEP, 2020

MORE METAL FOR THE MONEY

Herald Sun, Melbourne

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[FIVE THINGS – LDV D90 DIESEL]



1. THIS IS A BIG VEHICLE

The LDV D90 is longer than a Toyota Prado, wider than a Ford Everest and higher than an Isuzu MU-X, making it a sizeable beast. It has a good degree of room in the front and back seats. Smaller adults will be happy in the third row, too. Loosely based on the LDV T60 ute, the D90 has rugged underpinnings with proper four-wheel-drive and the ability to tow up to 3100 kilos, matching the best in class.

2. YOU GET A LOT OF GEAR

The D90 has been on sale for three years, but the new diesel model is a fresh addition for 2020. Diesel power is only available in top-end Executive trim, which means you get a lot of gear for \$47,990 drive-away. Quality Continental tyres are wrapped around 19-inch alloy wheels, the central touchscreen is a massive unit with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, the tailgate has electric power, the leather seats have power adjustment and the steering wheel is heated. That's competitive kit for the money.

3. IT'S A SAFE BET

Chinese cars had a deservedly poor reputation for safety when they first arrived in Australia, but that's no longer the case. The D90 has a five-star safety rating, made possible by driver aids such as auto emergency braking, blind-spot monitoring, lane departure warning and more. Further peace of mind comes from a five-year, 130,000 kilometre warranty with roadside

assistance and the promise of a loan car if anything goes wrong.

4. BUT THERE ARE FRUSTRATIONS

The LDV matches or beats many rivals on paper, but there are oversights reflecting its relative lack of experience in vehicle manufacturing. A range-topping car should have satnav and digital radio connectivity these days, but they're noticeably absent. Head restraints on the back seats block rear vision as they don't fold out of the way, and the lack of a physical volume knob on the stereo makes adjusting the audio a nuisance, particularly for front passengers who don't have access to the steering wheel-mounted controls. The impressive suite of driver aids take over the digital dashboard display with

prominent warnings also blocking your view of important elements such as the speedometer.

5. IT'S AVERAGE ON THE ROAD

LDV's own twin-turbo diesel engine is a 2.0-litre, four-cylinder unit with impressive 160kW/480Nm outputs. Drivers coming out of refined petrol-powered cars might find it coarse, but it's no worse than ute-based rivals such as the Mitsubishi Pajero Sport. That said, there is a lot of turbo lag, and the eight-speed auto sometimes needs a moment to make up its mind. The D90's size helps iron out small bumps, but passengers might not like the nautical sensation of body roll in the bends. Gripes aside, the D90 is value-packed, worthy of a look by those on a budget.

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