

VW Golf turns up the heat

 By [Henrie Geyser](#)

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Volkswagen has added a double salvo of fire power to its popular Golf range with the addition of a sporty GTD diesel version of its iconic GTI and a new Golf R, the hottest Golf yet unleashed on the local market.



The new GTD is VW's only performance diesel hatch on the local market and is powered by the same two-litre, transverse mounted engine that drives the Passat and which produces 130kW and 350Nm which is good for a 0-100km/h sprint of 7.4 seconds and a top speed of 230km/h.

Although its performance is not quite as scorching as that of the GTI, the GTD clings to the tar with the same tenacity and it sprints out of the starting stalls with tonnes of low-down punch.

I drove the GTD along winding roads in the Western Cape and enjoyed its eagerness to play, particularly the confident way it sticks to the tar when you pour on the coals. It handles with the predictable confidence one would expect to find at the wheel of a much more expensive, larger sporty car.

Cheeky looks



The GTD sports the same cheeky looks as the GTI but with a few individual nuances such as a chrome strip that extends into the headlights, dual tailpipes and “Sevilla” 18-inch wheels. It also has the same air inlet openings in the front bumper, LED headlights and roof spoiler as the GTI.

Traditionally, the Golf R has always been the most powerful model in the comprehensive Golf range and the latest version further enforces that with 213kW and 380Nm on tap and a 0-100km sprint time of 4.6 seconds, ably assisted by a fast-shifting seven-speed DSG transmission.

The new R is rich in go-faster looks, including a new bumper design, tail pipes placed further to the outsides to make it look wider, exterior chrome matt mirrors and a choice of 19-inch wheel designs.

The hasty R is one of the most exciting cars I have driven in a long time. It goes like the clappers, the suspension is sporty without being thumpy, the brakes are really good and it handles like a go-kart.

Optional extras

In addition to the already full-house of features, optional extras on both sporty models include optional blind spot monitor with rear traffic alert as well as adaptive cruise control with front assist and autonomous emergency braking system.

As in all new Golf derivatives, the new infotainment systems, such as the 9.2-inch Discover Pro with gesture control are also available in the new Golf R. Standard on the Golf R is the active info display, panoramic sunroof and drive profile selection which includes the Sport HMI feature.



Adaptive chassis control is an optional extra on both Golf GTD and Golf R. In the Sport profile, the 'Sport HMI' of the infotainment system on the centre console shows current engine parameters such as power output and G-forces in play. A lap timer is included in all performance Golf models.

Optional extra safety features on both variants include blind spot monitor with rear traffic alert as well as adaptive cruise control with front assist and autonomous emergency braking system.

The Golf GTI and Golf R already make up nearly 60% of Golf sales in this country and the addition of the performance oil burning GTD and the hot R (which is the quickest version of the Golf range yet unleashed in this country) will boost the Golf's popularity even further.

Because of its well-established reputation for quality and sporty driving fun, the introduction of diesel and the smart technology it brings into this market segment, the Golf range will continue to boogie off the dealer showroom floors.

The models and prices, which include a five-year/90,000km service plan and a three-year/120,000 warranty, are:

- 2.0 TDI 130kW GTD DSG: R506,700
- 2.0 TSI R 213kW DSG: R647,300

ABOUT HENRIE GEYSER

Henrie Geyser joined the online publishing industry through iafrica.com where he worked for five years as news editor and editor. He now freelances for a variety of print and online publications, on the subjects of cars, food, and travel, among others; and is a member of the South African Guild of Motoring Journalists. henrieg@iafrica.com

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