

Spruced up KB ups the stakes

 By [Henrie Geyser](#)

23 Sep 2015

The bakkie war in this country is set to become even more intense following Isuzu's introduction of a number of enhancements, new features as well as the addition of three new models to expand and strengthen its popular range of KB single- and double-cabs.

The three new models are a KB250 Fleetside Extended Cab, a KB250 Fleetside Double Cab and top-of-the-range KB300 LX Double Cab 4x4 with automatic transmission. The three new additions extend the KB range to 18 models with three body types - single, extended and double cab.

It's a popular boast in this segment of the market to describe bakkies as 'car-like' and high standards have been set by the likes of Volkswagen Amarok and Ford Ranger and double cabs, in particular, have become more like conventional passenger vehicles in terms of cabin comfort, ride quality, driver aids and safety.



The locally built Isuzu KB has a strong reputation for being tough and reliable workhorses but the addition of a higher-specced auto version certainly moves it firmly into the comfortable, car-like category as well.

At the media launch of the revamped KB range, I spent most of the time at the wheel of this pleasant flagship and although I am not by nature a bakkie fan, I was pleasantly surprised by its classy living quarters, fancy onboard kit and the way it behaved on stretches of sandy, rocky tracks, back roads and tarred motorways.

Like all bakkies it still feels a little bouncy and tail-end loose but this will no doubt improve considerably with a bit of weight on the back (the vehicles at the Media launch were all unloaded). This smooth five-speed auto shifter will certainly find

favour with the segment of the market that uses double cabs for fun rather than work.

The auto transmission is a good match for the 3.0-litre DTEQ turbo-diesel under its hood and the combination works well, whether the going gets rough or cruising along on the motorway.

In spite of its lively 130kW/380Nm output Isuzu claims a combined fuel consumption of 7.9 litres per 100km. Fuel consumption across the range varies from 7.7 l/100km to 8 l/100km (like all fuel consumption figures claimed by manufacturers, these figures are achieved in perfect laboratory conditions and should not be regarded as realistic road fuel usage).

The new features are particularly noticeable in the double and extended derivatives where a new standard feature is a class-leading touch screen infotainment system with satellite navigation, internet, WiFi, and smartphone integration. The screen - a 1080p high-definition TFT unit with a generous 6.5-inch dimension - also acts as the display when browsing, or using the DVD player.



It integrates with another new standout feature on all double Cabs: a Rear Park Assist reversing camera, which is not only very convenient when backing up - especially when hitching a trailer - but is also a valuable safety feature.

A passive entry and start system (PESS) is a keyless entry with Start/Stop ignition button which is now also standard on all LX-grade models with the four-door body style. Leather is now also an option on these derivatives. All double cabs are now armed with LED daytime running lights (replacing the fog lamps), and LED technology incorporated in the rear clusters.

Lower down the pecking order are the Fleetside worker bees operating in a segment where rugged reliability, load-carrying abilities and low operating costs are more important than cabin comforts but even though they are sans the real fantasies they all have a radio/CD with Bluetooth linking.

Not far behind the power outputs of the 3.0-litre are two models powered by an upgraded, high output version of the 2.5-litre DTEQ common-rail direct injection turbo-diesel that kicks out 100kW and 320Nm. The improved torque enables the payload of the single cab Fleetside model to increase to a class-leading 1 221 kilograms.



In the crucial field of safety and occupant protection all the LE and LX models and the two new Fleetside models now have electronic stability control (ESC) and by year-end (when this safety feature is added to the Fleetside single cabs) all except for a pair of base specification single cabs will be equipped with ESC.

ESC uses a network of sensors to determine the yaw angle of the vehicle - in other words, whether it is over-steering or under-steering, and commands the braking hardware and engine management to intervene individually or in tandem.

The KB range now has a full-house of the safety features not so long ago associated with smart sedans. As well as the new stability/traction control pairing, the triumvirate of ABS, EBD and EBA covers all models with the exception of 2.5 LEED (Low pressure turbo) models.



The two base models now have a height-adjustable steering column, and the LE versions also have cruise control. LX single and Extended Cabs, and all LE models look and feel more upmarket thanks to smarter fabric in the living quarters.

Already a strong player in the bakkie segment, the spruced up KB is sure to increase its grip on this market. All the KB vehicles come with a five-year/ 120 000km warranty and roadside assistance as well as a five-year/ 90 000 km service plan.

The models and prices are:

Single Cab

KB 250 Leed 4x2	R 219 400
KB 250 Leed F/S 4x2	R 241 500
KB 250 D-TEQ F/S (SAFETY) 4x2	R 270 600
KB 250 D-TEQ LE 4x2	R 307 600
KB 250 D-TEQ LE 4x4	R 357 400
KB 300 D-TEQ LX 4x2	R 355 700
KB 300 D-TEQ LX 4x4	R 410 000

Extended Cab

KB 250 D-TEQ F/S 4x2	R 317 000
KB 300 D-TEQ LX 4x2	R 394 200
KB 300 D-TEQ LX 4x4	R 451 800
KB 300 D-TEQ LX 4x2 Auto	R 407 500

Double Cab

KB 250 D-TEQ F/S 4x2	R 325 700
KB 250 D-TEQ LE 4x2	R 406 200
KB 250 D-TEQ LE 4x4	R 429 100

KB 300 D-TEQ LX 4x2	R 463 700
KB 300 D-TEQ LX 4x2 Auto	R 474 900
KB 300 D-TEQ LX 4x4	R 523 600
KB 300 D-TEQ LX 4x4 Auto	R529 700

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

- Lexus F-Sport: Winning hearts and wallets - 13 Mar 2018
- Kia Sportage gains Extra appeal - 20 Feb 2018
- Jaguar F-Type thrills with topless fun - 9 Feb 2018
- Elegant but pricey Discovery - 31 Jan 2018
- Sexy Aygo goes topless - 27 Nov 2017

[View my profile and articles...](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>