

Review - Isuzu D-Max

Written by Wayne Lancaster
Friday, 23 August 2013 17:11



For many years the Isuzu D-max and Holden Colorado pick ups were basically the same truck with a different badge. Not any more, when Isuzu released the bigger, stronger, tougher D-Max last year the gap was widened between the two.

Ok so it does share some things with the Colorado like the platform, sub frame and interior dimensions but with a completely different drive train, suspension tuning and the fact it's now made in different factory makes it feel like a completely different truck to the Colorado.

Now the 4x4 Light commercial market in Australia is growing every year and I can see why the popularity is growing as these trucks are very versatile indeed they have big load and towing capacities so they make perfect work trucks but with 4 doors and 5 seats it makes them perfect for a weekend play thing as well specially if you want to go off road.



The D-Max is blessed with a big chrome grill and sloping headlight and says to me I mean business, I got plenty of looks during the week more so then I did with the Colorado. As with the Colorado the tray is big and can carry a tone so heaps of room for tools and your gear for that weekend away in the bush.

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Open the doors and you can see the similarities between the D-Max and Colorado, however the D-Max instrument cluster is more conventional looking instead of the Camaro inspired one in the Colorado.

The gauges are back lit is a sort of off white colour which looks really good specially at night and makes it easy to any time of the day. The LCD screen in between the Speedo and Tacho displays functions like fuel economy, transmission temperature and various other functions available via the right hand stalk.

It also displays a nice welcome message when you start the car and goodbye one when you turn it off which my daughter thought was cool.

The similarities with the Colorado continue across the dash (which is a sea of hard plastics which means durable to me) the stereo is exactly the same as the Colorado except for the continuation of the off white lighting on the text of the stereo.

The audio system is not to bad and has blue tooth integration for your phone which means you can put your phone away in the console and not have to worry about missing any calls. It also has USB connectivity via a cable you plug in.

The centre stack dials for the air con and the stereo buttons light up in red and make a great contrast to the off white lighting on the instrument panel and stereo text.



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The cloth seats are comfortable and offer decent support which is what you want in a work truck or your weekend cruiser, there is plenty of leg room to stretch out.

Back seat room has also been improved over the previous model and like the Colorado there's heaps of leg and shoulder room for 3 people in comfort, my kids never complained once about it and the side steps made it real easy for my mother to get mind you she doesn't have to duck when getting in.

The biggest differences between the D-Max and Colorado is under the skin, The D-Max has slightly different suspension tune which I found slightly more bumpier then the Colorado on certain stretches on road but then it felt more settled on others.



Under the bonnet is where the big difference is while previous model D-Max's and Colorado's shared the same running gear GM and Isuzu have decided to go their own separate ways with this model, while the Colorado get GM's new 2.8L duramax diesel the D-Max continues with the same 3.0L diesel the previous model had although it does pick up some improvements in power and torque.

With 130kW and 380Nm of torque the D-Max is just about a hundred Nm of torque down on the Colorado and other trucks in its class the D-Max's towing capacity is only 3.0 tonne which is 500kg short of the class leading towing capacity of 3.5 tonnes.

Although the D-Max does get along rather smartly for a diesel truck did notice the power difference between the D-Max and the Colorado other people may not though. The trade off to this is having better fuel economy though I averaged roughly 8.4L/100km for my week in the

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D-max which was slightly lower then the figures I returned in the Colorado earlier on this year.

Another difference between the two is transmissions while the Colorado has a 6 speed auto the D-Max makes do with a 5 speed.



The transmission is perfectly matched to the engine so the engine remains under stressed even at highway speeds.

Safety wise the D-Max comes loaded with features including ABS, EBD and brake assist, as well as traction control, six air-bags (dual front, curtain and side), seat-belt pre-tensioners and lap-sash belts for all passengers.

It does however miss out on rear parking sensors and a rear view camera something I think every truck should be fitted with so it does loose points there.

I didn't really get to test it out too much off road it does have high and low range 4wd which is accessed via a dial in the console but unlike the Colorado which shift on the fly 4wd you have to stop the D-Max and put it into park before you can select 4wd.

So after a week what do I think, The D-Max would be a great work truck while it can't quite match the class leading trucks for towing capacity it's no slouch either.

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[3 on the Tree](#) [3 on the Tree](#)