



URBAN PRACTICALITY

2015 TOYOTA VIOS

2015 has been a good year for families and companies seeking sub-compact sedans. Not only have Asian manufacturers developed and launched plenty of models, but they have also been brought to our shores by the representative dealers. Naturally we took up the mission of comparing the models and one such task earlier in the year made us have a go at the third generation 2015 Toyota Vios.

VISUALS: The latest Vios has the new Toyota design language all over it- sharp angles, squinty-eyed head lamps, forward chin front bumper with large gaping grills and a squared off behind with large LED rear lamps. Despite the tall stature of the car, it has a sporty feel to it due to the sharply outlined profile the designers at Toyota tricked it out with. The wheels look a tad bit

small for the seemingly large vehicle. Inside, there is a lot of space - in the front, in the rear and in the trunk. Although there is no question of leg room availability in the rear, overly tall passengers in excess of 6 feet might have to be cautious about hitting the roof. The seats are otherwise the right kind of firm and are comfortable so that you do not tire out from excessive time in Dhaka traffic.

The dashboard, center console and door panels are cleverly contrasted with fake leather stitch effect plastic panels. Does look a bit tacky, but on the plus side, you can wash these regularly, keeping the cabin looking fresh as new always.

PERFORMANCE: Toyota's revolutionary VVT-I 1.5 litre petrol motor and a bullet proof four speed automatic transmission lays out a solid economi-

cal drivetrain platform that is built for moving people at all conditions. The Vios has the potential to survive Bangladesh's sultry humid summer, its incessant downpours, the floods that come with it and foggy winters. We are unsure how the vehicle will fare in the volatile political conditions though. The 107 BHP is just enough for zipping through urban traffic. Step on the right pedal and you'll notice the 103 lb-ft of torque shows up quite early in the RPM band. Even with a full air con blast and a loaded cabin, you'll not be hunting for more power to 'move forward'- that's what Vios means in Spanish.

HANDLING: We took the Vios through a rigorous road test filled with ludicrous speed bumps and pitfall sized potholes. Interestingly, we did not feel much - the soft-ish suspension conquers all that relatively well.

You would also be expecting some body roll from a tall car like Vios, but it does not hint at much sway in the corners either. Moreover, the heavily insulated cabin is quiet enough to deter the noise pollution outside.

We'll be honest about the brakes - they may as well be the best brakes in this segment. All around discs provide massive stopping power that tackles late braking and abusive repeated heavy braking.

VERDICT: The 2015 Vios rides and handles well, it is economical, comes with a bulletproof drivetrain and you can keep the interior as good as new even after years of abuse. Can't get more practical than that, really.

WORDS: MAHBUB HUSSAIN
PHOTOS: TASDID CHOWDHURY

SPECS

2015 TOYOTA VIOS

Engine: 1.5 liter 1NZ-FE 16 valve VVTI four cylinder (107 horsepower and 103 lb-ft torque @6000RPM)

Transmission: 4 speed automatic

Brakes: 4 wheel disc brakes (ventilated front, solid disc rear) with ABS/EBD

Features: Steering mounted audio controls, cupholders, third brake light, smart keyless entry, start-stop, halogen projector headlamps, leather insert interior, dual airbags.

PRICE: STARTS FROM 28.90 LAKH TAKA
For details, contact Navana Ltd.

FAMILY HAULER

2015 TOYOTA AVANZA

After the facelifted Avanza, Toyota's Multiple Purpose Vehicle (MPV), has become one of the hottest selling cars in the global market. In Bangladesh, two variants are brought in: 1.3L and 1.5L engines with automatic transmission. We got to review the 1.5L with automatic transmission, and we found it to be extremely practical. Passenger comfort especially, a thing that many vehicles in this category lack, was well taken care of.

Starting with the exterior, dimensions and design: the car we reviewed is the 2nd generation Avanza. Its slightly larger and wider compared to its predecessor. Another major difference between the two generations is the design makeover. The front got a Yaris-like snout making it look much better than the previous generation. The second thing that caught our



TEST DRIVE

attention were the arrow-like headlamps. The body used to be really plain in the previous generation but it now has curves, courtesy of subtle flame surfacing. The car really hulked up a bit. We would definitely want to know which gym it joined. The 15 inch alloys of the Avanza might look a bit out of place, but we made our peace with it since it helps keep the

Bangladeshi passengers will be able to squeeze in without making much effort. Both the S and TX model has power steering, electric windows and central remote locking as well as a 2nd set of AC vents for the rear, CD/AM/FM sound system, USB input and dual climate control.

A quick glance at the dashboard: it's a plastic affair, light grey plastic to be

VVT-I. The 3SZE and K3VE engines offer great mileage: with AC you can easily get 13 KM/litre urban mileage with mild traffic.

It was, surprisingly, a delight to drive. The shock absorber rebound rates are quite high which was evident after we drove smoothly over potholes and humps at more than average speed for Dhaka roads. The visibility is quite good. Any average Bangladeshi can see most of the hood from behind the steering wheel.

Verdict: Avanza is perfect if you want to build a fleet for your executives or if you have a tight group of friends with whom you frequently indulge on road trips, or even if you have a slightly bigger than average family. The base model (1.3L with automatic transmission) starts at Tk. 25.75 lakh and the premium one (1.5L with automatic transmission) is priced at Tk. 29.90 lakh. If you're looking for a no-frills automobile offering comfortable ride and decent fuel economy, then the Avanza is highly recommended.

WORDS: SHAHRIAR RAHMAN
PHOTOS: RAHIN SADMAN ISLAM



cost down and ensures soft ride quality for the passengers.

Now, time for the interior. Let's face facts: the Avanza is a utilitarian vehicle, so its primary purpose is to move people or luggage. The interior of the Avanza is nothing but utilitarian. The seatbacks are thin and the doors are trimmed to make more room for the 7 passengers inside the vehicle. Average

exact. The latest generation comes with dual airbags for both the driver and the passenger. It lacks Bluetooth connectivity, but that is excusable. The boot space can easily be doubled by folding the last row of seats. This makes your car really useful for carrying most sizes of luggage.

As mentioned before it comes with two different engines- 1.3L and 1.5L

THE OLDEST AND THE WISEST

NAVANA LIMITED

Interview with, Md. Hamdur Rahman
Head of Operation, Navana Limited

The market for cars in Bangladesh has come a long way since the early 1990's. With Toyota being one of the most popular brands in Bangladesh, Navana has been at the forefront of the automobile sector. How do you explain the tremendous success that Navana as a distributor and Toyota as a brand, has had in Bangladesh?

Toyota stands for three values, across all markets and all designs for all classes of vehicles - Quality, Durability, Reliability. Toyota maintains this with both production and service after sale, and these values are instilled into any Toyota dealership anywhere in the world. In Bangladesh, we try to ensure that anyone who buys a Toyota will continue to buy Toyotas over multiple generations. If you look at the market of cars in Bangladesh, in the 60's and 70's it was dominated by European and American cars. When the Corona RT40 was introduced, it was called a "toy car", but the reliability of the cars won customers over, which has continued since, building a reputation for Toyota in both the brand new car market as well as the reconditioned market. A large part of the market share is Toyota, and that shows the market preference for the brand.

Toyota has a brand loyalty that encompasses generational gaps and survives the test of time. What has Navana done recently to approach the younger crowd, who are perhaps working towards buying their first car in the near future?

We regularly run the Dream Car Contest and have activation programs with universities (such as the Admaker campaign) as well as through social media. Our social media presence is the largest in the automobile section, with over 800,000 likes on

our page, through which we bring changing trends in the global market to our younger audience. We realise that the decision making of what car to get for each family has changed to youngsters influencing quite a bit of it, so we are trying to capitalise on that.

What are the problems and lacking that you currently face in the market, as a distributor of brand new vehicles?

The political and socio-economic problems exist, but the biggest problem we face as brand new car dealer is the lack of coordination and planning



between the government and the importers. If you look elsewhere around the world, it is seen that other governments plan along with the importers and businesses in coming up with a plan for duty structures, or at least the importers can accurately predict the duty structures every budget year. However, here, we have to continuously adjust our pricing structure because of the lack of communication, and it is hurting our prospects.

WORDS: SHAER REAZ
PHOTO: RAHIN SADMAN ISLAM

SPECS



2015 TOYOTA AVANZA

Engine: 1500cc 4 cylinder 3SZE VVT-I gasoline engine (102 hp @6000 RPM, 100 lb-ft torque @4400 RPM); 1300cc 4 cylinder K3VE VVTI gasoline engine (90 hp @6000 RPM, 86 lb-ft torque @4400 RPM).

Transmission: 4 speed automatic.

Brakes: Disc brakes front, drum brakes rear, ABS.

Features: 7 seats; dual airbags; 4 speaker (1.3 Avanza) or 6 speaker (1.5 Avanza) stereo system with USB, Aux, and AM/FM/CD; LED brake light; rear wiper; 7 available colours.

PRICE: STARTS FROM 25.75 LAKH TAKA (1300CC)
For details, contact Navana Ltd.