



Iveco Daily

Ten years ago *What Van?* would never have entertained the idea of giving Iveco's Daily our Van of the Year award. Back then we were dubious about the build quality and felt that the vehicle lagged behind much of the competition.

How times have changed. Today's Daily is well-constructed and is gaining a reputation for reliability that matches or exceeds that of its rivals. These are among the reasons why it has won our top accolade for 2007.

Last year saw the rear-wheel drive Daily undergo a host of revisions including all-new exterior styling and a redesigned cab interior. There have been changes under the metal too, including a re-jigged, fully independent, front suspension system, bigger brakes and a strengthened van cargo box. All these alterations have worked, and worked well.

Daily customers can't complain about a lack of choice. Gross weights extend from 3.2 to 6.5 tonnes, buyers

can pick from vans, chassis cabs and chassis double cabs, and van load areas extend from 7.3m³ to an echoing 17.2m³. Across the range payload capacities run from 1,060kg to 3,640kg. Nor should Iveco's range of ready-to-go-to-work conversion be ignored.

There's a good spread of engine power outputs too and they're common rail diesel in all cases.

Married to a five-speed gearbox, the 2.3-litre HPI (High Performance Injection) is up for grabs at 96hp or 116hp. An HPT (High Performance Turbo) version of the same engine generates 136hp, the difference being that it's equipped with a variable, rather than a fixed geometry turbo.

Its 3.0-litre stablemate can be specified at 146hp (HPI) or 176hp (HPT) and comes with a six-speeder. A six-speed automated manual AGile box is listed as an extra-cost option and is one of the best boxes of its type available today.

ABS and EBD (Electronic Brake-force Distribution) both come as



standard. The latter prevents individual wheels from locking under heavy braking.

Electronic Stability Programme (ESP) is on offer as a modestly priced extra-cost option. It takes into account the height and positioning of any cargo being carried when trying to stop the vehicle turning over if the driver has to swerve suddenly.

It also includes a hill-holder function to stop you rolling backwards when you're trying to move away on an incline. Anti-Slip Regulation (ASR) is fitted too, and can be switched off.

New Cab

We were never that keen on the previous Daily's cab interior and the redesign is a vast improvement;

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accommodate coins for parking meters, pens and so on.

Good to see a pop-out cup-holder at each end of the dashboard. Good too to see chunky, user-friendly, heating and ventilation controls.

Look behind you and you'll see a mesh pocket on the bulkhead.

The seating is all-new and designed to provide better support than was available previously.

Newly-introduced optional extras include sat nav and an integrated Bluetooth hands-free phone system. It mutes the volume of the stereo when incoming calls are received or outgoing calls made.

Other safety-related options include audible rear parking sensors and even a camera system integrated into the van's high-mounted third brake light.

In recent months we've sampled a variety of different Daily models, including a 35S14 MWB high roof van with a 12m³ load bay. Its 136hp diesel offers ample performance right the way across the rev range and does so remarkably quietly.

A good all-rounder, the 3.5-tonner is as at home in city centres or on rural roads as it is on the motorway, and the five-speed box's overdrive top gear means that you don't miss the presence of a six-speed box too greatly. It offers a crisp dash-mounted gearchange too.

We've no quarrels with the van's manoeuvrability or with the handling, with the slight roll when you push it hard through corners proving to be



a good thing because it deters you from doing anything too silly when you approach the next bend.

On sale in the UK next year will be a high-rise 4x4 version of the latest Daily. It's capable of tackling extremely demanding off-road terrain and the amount of engine braking on tap when you're descending a steep, muddy slope has to be experienced to be believed.

Don't forget either that Daily is available as a minibus courtesy of Irisbus, Iveco's bus and coach arm.

The line-up includes an accessible 22-passenger 50C18 that recently made its first appearance in the UK. It will go on sale during the second quarter of next year and is likely to be supplied as a shell to UK bodybuilders who will complete the vehicle to customer specifications.

Running a Daily shouldn't break the bank. On standard models service intervals are set at 25,000 miles. The 2.3-litre units employ a toothed timing

belt that requires changing every 150,000 miles (or five years) while the 3.0-litres employ a 'for life' chain that has been tested at up to 218,000 miles.

One good reason for selecting Daily is the quality of Iveco's dealer network. With 100 points on the map, and plans to increase the total to 125, it provides light commercial operators with the sort of aftersales care long enjoyed by heavy truck owners.

That includes after-hours servicing — workshops may be open round the clock — and the ability to book vehicles in for work at comparatively short notice. Nor will dealer sales people run for cover if you want to talk to them about an unusual body conversion or a piece of specialist equipment you want mounted on your vehicle.

So if you're in the market for a big capacity panel van or a robust chassis cab, go and check Daily out. We doubt you'll be disappointed. ♦

especially the changes that have been made to the dashboard.

Large bins in each of the doors with room for a flask or a big bottle of water are supplemented by smaller bins higher up, and a lidded compartment in the middle of the dashboard will swallow a sheaf of A4 paper. The fascia also features a whole collection of small shelves and bins that can