

# ISSUE 198

Leaf blindness, it strikes terror in the heart of the autumnal motorist. Keep the attacking hordes away from your car's windscreen by attaching hairdryers to the wing mirrors. Bye-bye certain death, hello good times. And so to Lifers

# Lifers



## ALPINA D3 P171

Just what is the point of the Alpina? Well, it seems it's all about the torque. And getting respect from the kids.



## ASTON VANTAGE P172

The Vantage heads to Silverstone to pay homage to the LMP1 Le Mans cars as they celebrate a series victory.



## ALFA ROMEO MITO P173

The diminutive Italian continues to charm, despite having a ride that's stiffer than an Englishman's upper lip.



## KIA SOUL P173

Prepare for more Soul searching as the Kia adapts to life in the city. This month, bringing up baby.



## EVO FQ-400 P174

The Lancer has been swapped for an Evo FQ-400. Which is a bit like going from decaff lattes to crystal meth.



## MINI CLUBMAN P175

Your feedback on life with the Clubman. Seems that skittish rear end has given you the jitters too.



## AUDI S4 AVANT P175

The S4 runs into an S5 in the same vermilion hue but with an altogether hipper stance. Damn that offspring.



## BMW X6 P176

It's never going to be an off-road vehicle, but why let such obvious facts get in the way of turning it into one.



## FORD KUGA P177

The capless refueling system is great because it means you can't put the wrong fuel in... what's that dear?



## CITROEN C3 PICASSO P177

A tale of wheels, storage space, intelligent bonnet release and a 'DARK' button. Beware the 'DARK' button!



## HONDA ACCORD P178

A car might laugh in the face of the Nürburgring, but five minutes with the kids and it'll be a defeated wreck.



## LR FREELANDER P179

This month there's a closer look at the stop-start tech and an appreciation of the Freelander's silent, refined manner.

## Alpina D3

### LIFE LINE

Alpina looks good, love the giant 'Dynamic' wheels

Argh, the diesel engine sounds bobbins

Yes, B-road corners are fun in this, diesel or no diesel

Effortless on the motorway, is very quiet and comfy



**WHY IT'S HERE:** ÜBER-COOL GERMAN TUNERS ALPINA TRY TO PROVE DIESEL IS WHERE IT'S AT **CONTACT US AT:** ALPINA.D3@BBC.CO.UK  
**ARRIVED:** APRIL 2009 / **SPEC:** D3 BITURBO SALOON / **PRICE:** £29,950 (OTR) £30,550 (AS TESTED) / **TEST MPG:** 27.8-56.0 / **BY:** JAMIE HIBBARD



THERE'S A BIG DIFFERENCE between how this car looks and how it sounds. Living with it for a month has been an education: kids at petrol stations always admire it, because it has real brand kudos and the body kit and wheels are properly striking. But then you start it up and it's ah, er, dieselly. Far from rorty, shall we say...

Yes, I understand the benefits of a diesel, and in my regular car in these pages, a Freelander, it makes an awful lot of sense. But in a thing this hard-looking? Not so sure.

Then you drive it, and all becomes clear. You forget that it's a diesel and

just get on with enjoying the driving sensation. Especially the awesome acceleration. The torque is very, very strong out of corners and equally good for overtaking in-gear, and the twin-turbo revs a lot faster and harder than any diesel has the right to. Remember that it's got 332lb ft of torque, which is 37lb ft more than a V8 M3. I actually call the torque Mr Torque. That effortless, mighty push deserves a 'Mr' in front of it.

The Alpina D3 makes a great deal of sense at £30k, when you look at the other cars in the price band. And it makes sense in my head now, too.



1 For some reason when I started driving the D3 I thought it was bigger than it is. Hence parking between two empty spaces. Got over it!



2 Love this front end, it looks pretty mean and makes you feel good walking up to it. Close to an M3 for kudos, and even more torque.



3 These wheels are great too. They're also pretty kerb friendly thanks to that large tyre overhang. Good in tight multistorey car parks.



4 This is where the Alpina started to make sense, out on country B-roads. The torque spits you out of these corners and it's genuinely fast.



5 You can cycle this little display for lap and 1/4 mile timers, plus other things like temperature and so on. This is the G meter. Useful!



6 Strips on either side of the centre wheel display are shift-up lights. It's a BMW sports wheel so good for an M3, maybe not so useful on a D3!