

CLASSIC DRIVER

Driven: Volkswagen Scirocco R



This wasn't at all what I was expecting. Tune VW's four-cylinder turbo engine to 265PS, feed the result through the front wheels and you'll have a lumpy, track-day-only homologation special, surely? Absolutely not, as a trip to the [Le Mans Classic](#) was to prove.

It didn't help my perceptions that **Volkswagen** chose to debut the hottest **Scirocco** yet at last year's **Nürburgring 24 Hours**, where two closely related **GT24 Sciroccos** scored class wins, one of them finishing 11th overall out of 200 starters. Impressive stuff from the **VAG** empire, which generally leaves racing to **Audi** and **Seat**. But, as we know, a hefty budget and top-class preparation can make many a 'standard' car into a race-winner.

When the **Rising Blue** four-seat coupé arrived a few days prior to the planned French foray, it was giving little away of its 155mph potential. **Beastie Boys** apart, most things carrying the world-famous circular chrome badge exude taste and quality, the 'R' version being no exception.



There are many visual changes from standard, though: new front and rear bumpers; a new front grille; side skirts; wing mirrors; 5-spoke '**Talladega**' wheels; rear diffuser; rear wing and exhaust. That sounds a lot. However, in practice, the additions and changes are effortlessly integrated and enhance an already attractive design. **Le Mans** might be its destination, but it doesn't confuse the **High St** with **Les Hunaudières**, if you know what I mean.

Having eased myself into **Scirocco R** motoring gently, with a visit to [McLaren](#) and [Aston Martin](#) earlier that week, come Friday it was time to set the alarm clock for another early start.



The **Eurotunnel** beckoned, with a crossing booked for 07:00. Round trips to **Gaydon** and **Woking** had given me an introduction to motoring **Scirocco R**-style (fast, with a firm ride, impeccable build quality and superb sports seats). Six or so hours in the saddle on peerless **French autoroutes**, with a few twisty D-roads too, would reveal the car's true mettle.

For starters, it's quick. And, as I revealed in the opening paragraph, the delivery from the blown, **EA113**-series engine is creamily smooth, with peak torque of 350Nm (258lb ft) available from 2500 - 5000rpm. At 6000rpm you'll get the full 265PS - but, such is its flexibility, that from 2500rpm onwards the car can be coaxed or caned (depending on your mood) all the way to half-decent, three-figure speeds.

Motorway cruising at licence-safe averages in sixth (in our **DSG**-gearbox-equipped car) reminds me of much more expensive, bigger-engined multi-cylinder cars; you can set a handy pace, bowling along on a wave of torque, knowing that gaps in forward or rearward traffic can be increased/decreased at will. That's my sort of car.







And let me say at this point that on reasonable Tarmac it rolls along nicely with little road noise. I would venture - and another owner has concurred - that the R rides more smoothly than the standard [2.0TSI we tested last year](#). And this is on the biggest-possible, 19in wheels and 235/35 R19 tyres. Weird.

The standard-for-bigger-engined-Sciroccos **ACC (Adaptive Chassis Control)** has been tuned again for the R, so maybe it's that. More responsive steering apart, I found it difficult to tell an awful lot from the different (**Normal, Comfort, Sport**) settings and found **Normal** did the job perfectly well.



Venture off the autoroute and the car's a strong performer. You will be bumped around a bit, but the R's

standard-fit **electronic cross-axle traction control** (XDS) and EDL (**electronic limited-slip differential**) knocks out any impression of understeer from the powerful fwd coupé. I had the traction control light on a few times, mainly from bumpy roads causing wheels to leave the road – never from a surfeit of power.



If there is ever such a thing as an open, really smooth twisting road, the **Scirocco R** would be a joy, and well able to keep up with much more powerful opposition. Please don't take this as a criticism; it's just that haring along rural B-roads at breakneck speed will soon have you and your passenger thrown around the cabin. Or – perhaps deservedly – behind bars.

No, with their discreet good looks, surprisingly practical cabin for four adults and generous boot, all **Sciroccos** have a lot going for them. Add the irresistible charms of the mighty **R-spec** engine and you have a genuine mini, 'mini-supercar'.





I liked it a lot and can now see that the light at the end of the tunnel, far from signalling an oncoming train powered by weedy, small-capacity turbocharged engines, is a beacon of hope for the future. State-of-the-art, well-engineered, tuned 'fours' can really perform – and none more so than that in the **Scirocco R**.

*The car tested was a **Volkswagen Scirocco R 2.0-litre TSI DSG** in **Rising Blue** metallic with **'Kyalami'** cloth upholstery in **Titan Black** and **'San Remo'** Alcantara side bolsters in **Crystal Grey**. The UK basic 'on the road' price is £29,805. Optional extras fitted to this car included: RNS 510 DVD touch-screen navigation/radio/MP3 system with 6.5in colour screen and 30GB hard drive (£1295), alternative 'Talledega' 19in alloy wheels (£540), rear parking sensors (£355) and metallic paint (£430).*

Over nearly 1000 miles, the car averaged 26.7mpg (10.7l/100km).



*Text: Steve Wakefield
Photos: Classic Driver*

ClassicInside - The Classic Driver Newsletter
[Free Subscription!](#)
Gallery

Source URL: <https://www.classicdriver.com/en/article/driven-volkswagen-sirocco-r>
© Classic Driver. All rights reserved.