



**KIA SPORTAGE PLATINUM CRDi
WINNER OF THE OZROAMER
2013 AWD SUV UNDER \$60,000 AWARD**



OZROAMER 2013 AWARDS

by Chloe Fraser



Originally released in 2010 and first hinted at as the Kue concept car, star of the 2007 Detroit Motor Show, the Kia Sportage 2013 update is more of a mild update. After all why change a successful formula.

The external design with the now familiar Peter Schreyer grill treatment remains one of the best looking in its class. The frontal nose treatment, steeply raked 'C' pillar and compact almost coupe design is enhanced with integrated roof rails, rear spoiler and new HID headlamps, static cornering lamps and aero blade front wipers. The rear reflector cluster now incorporates fog lamps and a slight variation to the lower bumper design.

Inside the Sportage Platinum you want for very little. While it has all the gadgets and packed with features it is a little bland. The heated and ventilated front seats are comfortably clad in leather and the driver's seat is electrically adjustable. The lumbar support is manually adjusted. For all but the tallest drivers there is adequate seat travel and a general feeling of space surrounds the driver.



In front of you there is the now familiar thick-rimmed four-spoke leather steering wheel and the 'three-cylinder' instrument cluster, which have clear and precise graphics. The centre stack houses the Sat Nav system along with the audio connectivity etc.

The steering wheel, which houses controls for audio, cruise control and variable ratio steering is both height and reach adjustable and with the variance on seat movement its possible to obtain a very comfortable driving position. Visibility is good with the exception of a large blind spot with the rear 'C' pillars.

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Storage space within the cabin includes the large lockable glove box with cooling function, a large 6.0-litre centre console and four door pockets. Two large cup-holders are located between the gear selector and the centre console, while the folding centre armrest in the rear seat has twin cup-holders.

The 60:40 split rear seats are now heated and comfortable for two, but a little squashy for three as is normal in this class of vehicle. With the front seats all the way back knee room is a little cramped but there is adequate head, shoulder and leg room. There is a central arm rest with cup holders.

The top of the range Platinum we tested also comes with auto cruise control, rear view camera with in-mirror display, auto light control (dusk sensors), 6-function trip computer, sun visors with illumination and extension, dual zone full automatic climate control with seven vents, 6 disc CD changer with external amplifier & sub-woofer, panoramic sunroof, smart key with button start and windshield wipers with rain sensor.

Cargo capacity is among the best in class and ranges from 740 litres (SAE method) with the rear seats occupied to 1547 litres with the rear seats folded down.

Kia is keeping to its philosophy of a 5 star ANCAP safety rating and the Sportage comes standard with the customary long list of safety features including ABS with EBD & BA, ESC, TCS, HAC & ESS and DBC which limits vehicle speed to just 8km/h on steep descents, driver & front passenger SRS airbags, front side SRS airbags and curtain SRS airbags.

The 2.0-litre version of Kia's next-generation 'R' family diesel engine is a beauty and generates a highly competitive maximum power of 135kW (at 4000rpm) and 393Nm of torque from just 1800rpm. The 6-speed auto transmission is also a gem and works brilliantly with the engine. The key to this combination is the ease of driving. There is no jerky gear changes, plenty of power and the low down torque ensures smooth deriving at all times. It all just flows with a minimum of fuss.

The suspension and handling has been previously optimised locally for a unique Australian market. The end result is a Sportage with a focus on ride quality whilst also maintaining SUV agility and dynamics designed to meet the Australian demands. The end result is the handling for a medium priced AWD SUV is pretty good.

Being an AWD SUV the Sportage has a reduced ground clearance of only 172mm and with longer overhangs etc the Sportage is limited to forest roads, hard packed sand and dirt trails. If you take it too far off road the end result will not be pretty.



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Model	Sportage Platinum
Model Price	\$44,451 RDAP
Engine	2.0L CRDi 4 Cyl
Drivetrain	AWD 6 speed Auto
Power	135 Kw @ 4,000 rpm
Torque	392 Nm @ 1,800 rpm
Safety	5 Star ANCAP
CO2 Emissions	189 g/km
GVR	3 Star
Economy	7.2 L/100km (ADR comb)
Tow Capacity	Max 1600 kg
Tow Ball Rating	200 kg
Servicing	Capped
Warranty	5yr/Unlimited km with full roadside assist



Having said that though it handles itself pretty well on dirt where the Sportage was relatively surefooted and handled the bumps with ease. On sand it literally glides over the harder packed stuff while ground clearance is the only limiting factor in the softer dunes. The Sportage features Magna Powertrain's innovative, continuous and fully active AWD coupling system called Dynamax.

Dynamax continuously monitors driving conditions keeping the AWD system in a ready state for faster reaction to a change in surface or conditions. Maximum efficiency is achieved through intelligent control electronics, which provide the ideal amount of torque and traction for each and every driving situation.

The Sportage will tow a healthy 1600Kg braked with a tow ball weight of 200kg which makes it ideal for towing seadoos, mid range campers and caravans etc. The rear camera helps with hooking up whatever you are towing. In fact the diesel makes a perfect midsized tow vehicle. Many people would be better off with one of these than a bigger 4WD. The

So what did I think of the Kia Sportage Platinum. I really like the 'coupe' like styling and you can definitely notice the 'Australian Tuning' of the suspension. The Platinum 2.0L 'R' diesel with the 6-speed automatic has plenty of power and is super economical. It is amongst the best in class. Remember, this is a soft road AWD SUV not a 4WD. That is both good and bad, however the advances Kia has made in refinement and design far outweigh any loss of off road ability.

It is surprising just how versatile the Sportage is though and it should satisfy the adventurous nature of most buyers. It does exactly what you will expect of without fuss and is exceptionally easy to live with on a daily basis. It is a worthy winner of the 2013 AWD SUV under \$60,000 against some stiff competition especially from the Mazda CX5.



What's Good:

- Engine Transmission combination
- Stylish Looks
- Handling 'Australian Tuned'

What's Not:

- Atrocious 'C' pillar visibility
- Slightly bland inside
- Rear seat knee room

Overall OzRoamer Rating: 86/100

Behind the Wheel	9	Practicality	9
Comfort	9	Fit for Purpose	9
Equipment	10	Towing Ability	7
Performance	9	Off Road Ability	6
Ride & Handling	9	Value for Money	9