

Practical and luxurious Beemer that will turn heads

11 November 2012

Geraldine Herbert was utterly seduced by the BMW 640 Gran Coupe

There's an incessant whisper taunting me from my driveway; it's coming from the BMW 6 series Gran Coupe parked in it. A car so sublimely gorgeous it screams sophistication and begs to be driven; if it's a failing to be so utterly seduced by beauty, I confess total guilt.

With a sweeping contoured bonnet, heavily sculpted door sill and elegant lines, the Gran Coupe sets a new aesthetic standard and looks stunning from all angles.

BMW was not the first to take a coupe and stretch it to accommodate two more doors. It was the dazzling Mercedes CLS that established the idea of the "four-door coupe" and in doing so redefined the concept. Jaguar's striking XF quickly followed suit.

Power comes from either a 3 litre petrol, 330bhp or a 313bhp 640d. A range-topping 450bhp, 4.4-litre direct injection V8 is also available. All are matched to a slick eight-speed auto transmission.

On the road our 640 diesel is quiet and smooth. It will take you around town with ease and is surprisingly nimble. It manages to feel like a car half its size when thrown into a bend with gusto. The suspension strikes a near-ideal balance between ride comfort and the ability to limit body roll.

It's also shockingly fast, shooting from standstill to 100km in 5.4 seconds.

On the motorway it devours the road and overtakes with an engine noise to surpass any tune from the stereo.

The extensive use of aluminium in the body and chassis is an elegant solution to issues of weight and fuel. As a result, the 640d has a combined fuel consumption of 5.6 litres per 100km, surprisingly efficient for a car of its size. CO2 emissions are 148g/km which just nudges this coupe into Band C for motor tax and an annual bill of €330.

€97,960 would be enough to secure one of these beauties, but the range-topping 650i M Sport could be yours for €132,370.

The Gran Coupe is the last word in sheer opulence, with leather, chrome and wood finishes of the highest quality.

Impressively, you can [fit](#) four adults comfortably, and five at a squeeze. Even practicality is not compromised, and the boot has a capacity of 460 litres and can be extended to 1,265 litres when the seats are folded down.

The Gran Coupe is equipped with advanced technology that works to avoid a crash or, in the case of one, dramatically helps reduce injury. Passive safety aids include front airbags, side airbags, head airbags for front and rear seats and three-point automatic seatbelts for all seats while the active systems include traction control and electronic stability programming.

Two trims are on offer with the Gran Coupe, the SE and M Sport. Standard equipment is good, but as with most BMWs and other premium offerings, the extras cost -- reversing assist camera €508, park assist €878 and adaptive drive €5,237, while the adaptive LED lights are €2,565.

If you are [shopping](#) in the coupe aisle, it is also worth considering the Mercedes-Benz CLS 350 Sport (€78,970) or the Audi A7 3.0 TDI Quattro 313Hp (€78,930). At the other end of the budget there is always the Volkswagen Passat CC (€42,385).

The Gran Coupe may well be the best car BMW currently make. It manages to justify the enormous price with a sufficient dash of practicality and those stunning looks.

Saloons are practical; coupes are luxurious; BMW's Gran Coupe is both.



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