

LIKES	DISLIKES
Strong engine performance with a broad torque delivery New aggressive styling Excellent interior space for a sports vehicle	PULP recommended for optimum performance Driveline a bit clunky Steel spare wheel

After spending quite a few years in the shadows of Holden and its popular range of Commodore family cars, Ford has struck back with an exciting new range of locally produced Falcon models. The BA model Falcon represents an investment by Ford in the order of \$500 million. The new models offer comprehensive styling, powertrain, suspension, interior and safety related changes, and look set to challenge Holden for sales supremacy in the family car class.

The styling of the new Falcon is a big improvement over the superseded AU series; however, perhaps the most significant upgrade has taken place beneath the skin of the Falcon. While the capacity of the six cylinder Falcon engine remains at 4.0 litres, it now features a four valve double overhead camshaft cylinder head and variable camshaft timing. Performance has been significantly improved with the base engine now producing 182 kW of power and 380 Nm of torque.

In addition to the standard six cylinder engine, Ford has added an optional turbocharged version of this engine to the line-up and there is a new 5.4 litre V8 engine (from Ford's Windsor plant in Canada). The turbocharged version of the in-line six cylinder engine uses an air-to-air intercooler and just 6 psi of boost to develop a whopping 240 kW of power. Equally impressive is the engine's very broad peak torque delivery. The engine develops its maximum torque, 450 Nm, from 2000 rpm all the way to 4500 rpm.

The turbocharged XR6 is a new addition to Ford's range of sporty Falcons, that complements its naturally aspirated six cylinder and V8 stablemates. Pricing for Ford's sporting XR Falcon range starts at \$38,155 for the naturally aspirated XR6, with the XR6 Turbo from \$44,640. A five speed manual transmission is standard on both models, although the new sequential sports shift automatic is available for an extra \$920.

The XR6 Turbo is specified with a high level of standard equipment and safety features. Some of the standard features include air conditioning, 17 inch alloy

wheels (16 inch steel spare), power steering, electric windows and mirrors, body kit, sports suspension, limited slip differential, cruise control, CD stereo, power windows, remote central locking and sports seats.

The body structure of the BA Falcon has undergone a number of changes that work together with various safety upgrades to provide improved levels of passenger safety. Some of the standard safety features include dual stage front airbags, traction control, anti-lock brakes, seatbelt pretensioners and steering wheel mounted stereo controls.

The BA Falcon has an abundance of interior space, as it really is a family size car. New interiors are both modern and functional, with the XR models featuring a distinctively sporty theme. One of the highlights of the interior is a new Interior Command Centre (prominently located in the centre of the dash) that clearly displays audio, heating and ventilation system information.

The XR6 Turbo is an exciting and a rewarding vehicle to drive. While the turbocharged engine is smooth and refined, it delivers a sizeable wallop in a very linear manner. The additional cost of premium unleaded fuel does have a negative effect on running costs. The manual gearbox of our test vehicle was pleasant enough to use, although the shift from fifth back to fourth is quite cumbersome. There were some clunks and driveline noises that detracted from what was otherwise a quiet and refined car.

The BA Falcon's new Control Blade independent rear suspension and sports settings give the XR6 a good handling package without sacrificing ride comfort. All-new brakes with a larger pad area and stiffer calipers provide reduced stopping distances and excellent resistance to fade.

SUMMARY:

Ford's new BA Falcon is set to take it to Holden's Commodore with an exciting range of new models. The XR6 Turbo is one new variant that bolsters Ford's sporting XR ranks. The turbocharged engine delivers strong performance in a very smooth and linear fashion. New exterior styling and a high level of comfort and space are highlights of the new model.



TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE

Type.....Six cylinder, DOHC, 24 valves
Capacity in litres 3.984
Induction.....Turbocharged, fuel injection
Fuel recommendation PULP
Claimed max. power.... 240 kW at 5250 rpm
Claimed max. torque.... 450 Nm at 2000 rpm
Specific power output 60.2 kW/litre

TRANSMISSION

Type..... Five speed manual
Driving wheels..... Rear
Speed per 1000 rpm in top gear 48.2 km/h

WHEELS

..... Alloy, 8 x 17 inch
Tyres 235/45 R17
Spare 16 inch steel wheel/tyre

STEERING

Type..... Power assisted rack and pinion
Turns lock to lock 2.7
Turning circle (measured)..... 11.5 metres

DIMENSIONS

Mass..... 1690 kg
Length..... 4944 mm
Width (incl. mirrors 2140 mm)..... 1864 mm
Height 1444 mm
Ground clearance (measured) 114 mm
Seating capacity 5
Fuel tank capacity 68 litres

TOWING

Max. towed mass (trailer plus load)... 1200 kg
Max. towball download (laden trailer)... 120 kg

NRMA THEFT RATING

Points on 0-110 scale (high score best) 70.5

WARRANTY Three years, 100 000 km

MANUFACTURED IN Australia

TEST RESULTS

ACCELERATION

50 - 80 km/h (in 3rd)..... 3.2 sec
60 - 100 km/h (in 3rd)..... 4.1 sec
0 - 80 km/h..... 4.9 sec
0 - 100 km/h..... 6.5 sec
0 - 400 metres 14.9 sec

FUEL CONSUMPTION (litres/100 km)

Best recorded during testing 10.4
Worst recorded during testing..... 14.6
Average on test 12.8

BRAKING

Distance to stop from 80 km/h... 26.5 metres

NOISE

Interior at constant 80 km/h 69 dB(A)

Test vehicle supplied by Ford Motor Company

Call Technical Advice on 1300 655 443 for additional information on this vehicle, and for other automotive advice.

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