

SUZUKI LIANA

1.6-Litre manual

FEATURES	
BEST	WORST
Spacious interior	Spacious interior
Level of standard equipment	Level of standard equipment
Comfortable ride	Comfortable ride

The small passenger car class is one of the most competitive segments of the Australian new vehicle market with a host of different makes and models all vying for a share of new vehicle sales. One of the latest offerings to the class is the Liana from Japanese manufacturer Suzuki.

The new Liana replaces the Suzuki Baleno range that proved to be quite a popular small car over the past few years. While the Baleno line-up consisted of a number of different body configurations, the Liana is available in only one body style that features four doors and a rear hatch. The Liana is quite a practical design that has a fairly high roof and the styling is in line with the current trend towards providing a more roomy interior.

The Suzuki Liana is powered by an all-aluminium 1.6 litre four cylinder engine. The engine uses 16 valves and electronic fuel injection to produce a modest 76 kW of power at 5500 rpm and 144 Nm of torque at 4000 rpm. The Liana comes standard with a five speed manual transmission; however, a four speed automatic gearbox is available as an option. The Liana is competitively priced, starting at \$19,990 for the manual model which includes a reasonably good list of standard inclusions. Optioning the Liana with an automatic transmission will cost an additional \$1900 and dealer charges and on road costs must also be added to these prices.

Some of the notable standard features fitted to the Liana include air conditioning, power steering, electric mirrors, engine immobiliser, remote central locking, power windows, AM/FM stereo with single CD, dual front SRS airbags and front seatbelt pretensioners.

The body shell of the Liana is of course an all-new structure that has been designed with front and rear crumple zones for occupant safety. Side impact beams are a feature of all doors, offering added protection. The overall level of finish displayed by the vehicle evaluated for this report was good and on par with most other small car offerings from Japanese manufacturers.

One of the main advantages of the high roof body design is that it allows plenty of head room for both the front and rear seat passengers. The seating position in the Liana is quite an upright one that allows a relatively unobstructed view to the front and sides of the vehicle. Vision to the rear is a little compromised by the rear seat headrests but still quite acceptable. The driver's seat is

height adjustable and has a considerable range of fore and aft movement. Head and leg room for the front seat occupants is good. The front seats are comfortable and provide adequate support for normal driving conditions.

Rear seat passengers also enjoy a generous amount of head and leg room for this class of vehicle, although the seat cushion is not sufficiently wide enough to comfortably accommodate three adults. The rear seats are a split fold design that may be reclined by a certain degree according to passenger preference. Additionally, the cushion and the backrest of the rear seat may be folded forward to increase the load carrying area in the Liana.

One of the most striking elements of the new Liana is immediately apparent once the ignition is turned on. Suzuki has done away with a traditional analogue display, instead choosing to equip the Liana with digital instrumentation. While the instruments are certainly clear and novel, I still prefer an analogue display. All the controls are within easy reach and their operation is straightforward. A tilt adjustable steering column helps the driver to find an appropriate driving position.

The Suzuki Liana uses McPherson strut suspension all round to provide a very comfortable and sure-footed ride. On the road the Liana feels well balanced and the power assisted steering is light to operate, while retaining an adequate amount of road feel.

Producing just 76 kW of power, the 1.6 litre engine is no world beater, as many of the Liana's competitors claim significantly higher outputs. Nevertheless, the Liana delivers reasonable performance that should satisfy the needs of many prospective buyers. One of the most annoying aspects of our test vehicle was a particularly stiff gearshift that made changing gears a bit of a chore. The gearshift may free up with more use as our vehicle had only travelled a couple of thousand kilometres.

The braking system of the Liana consists of front disc brakes and rear drum brakes. While brake pedal feel was good, ABS would be a welcome addition as it was very easy to lock the wheels when braking on a wet surface.

SUMMARY:

The new Suzuki Liana is one of the new-style high roof passenger cars and replaces the Baleno range. Featuring a good level of standard equipment, the Liana has a spacious interior and provides a comfortable ride. The 1.6 litre engine delivers modest performance.



SUZUKI LIANA

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE:

Type Four cylinder, 16 valves
Capacity in litres 1.586
Induction Multipoint fuel injection
Fuel recommendation ULP
Claimed max. power 76 kW at 5500 rpm
Claimed max. torque 144 Nm at 4000 rpm
Specific power output 47.9 kW/litre

TRANSMISSION:

Type Five speed manual
Driving wheels Front
Speed per 1000 rpm in top gear 33.8 km/h

WHEELS:

..... Steel 14 inch

TYRES:

..... 185/65 R14

Spare:

..... Matching size and type

STEERING:

Type Power assisted rack and pinion

Turns lock to lock 3.0

Turning circle (measured) 10.6 metres

DIMENSIONS:

Mass 1140 kg

Length 4230 mm

Width (incl. mirrors) 1690 mm

Height 1550 mm

Ground clearance (measured) 135 mm

Seating capacity 5

Fuel tank capacity 50 litres

TOWING: not recommended

NRMA THEFT RATING:

Points on 0-110 scale (high score best) 47

WARRANTY: Three years, 100 000 km

MANUFACTURED IN: Japan

TEST RESULTS

ACCELERATION: (wet road)

50 - 80 km/h (in 3rd) 6.3 sec

60 - 100 km/h (in 3rd) 8.7 sec

0 - 80 km/h 8.6 sec

0 - 100 km/h 13.7 sec

0 - 400 metres 19.2 sec

FUEL CONSUMPTION:

Litres/100 km in city 8.4

Litres/100 km on highway 7.8

Litres/100 km overall 8.1

BRAKING: (wet road)

Distance to stop from 80 km/h 40.3 metres

NOISE:

Interior at constant 80 km/h 68 dB(A)

● Test vehicle supplied by Suzuki Australia Pty Ltd