

ALFA ROMEO 166 3.0-Litre V6 Sportronic



FEATURES	
BEST	WORST
Lively engine Comfortable and effortless open road cruising Impressive standard features	Brake pedal has an unprogressive feel Annoying noise and vibration at idle when using air-con

For the past couple of years the Alfa Romeo 166 has been the top of the range model from the Italian manufacturer. Accordingly, the 166 is a luxury vehicle offering a comprehensive equipment package, while maintaining the type of sports car handling and performance synonymous with the Alfa Romeo brand.

The recent release of the 2002 model Alfa Romeo 166 has seen the model receive a number of detail changes. New inclusions for the 2002 model 166 include a further equipment hike in addition to new suspension settings and 17 inch alloy wheels. The new 166 is claimed to offer improved road holding while providing a more comfortable ride.

In line with the previous model, the Alfa Romeo 166 is available with only one engine and transmission in Australia. The 166 is powered by a 3.0 litre V6 quad camshaft engine that produces 166 kW of power at 6200 rpm and a maximum torque figure of 275 Nm at 5000 rpm. While the power is unchanged from the previous model, the engine has been changed to meet new Euro 3 emission rules overseas, which has reduced emissions by up to 80 per cent.

Alfa Romeo's adaptive 'Sportronic' electronic automatic transmission complements the V6 engine and is standard fitment. It is a four speed transmission that allows the driver to choose between sequential manual operation and an automatic mode. When operated as an automatic, the gearbox continually adapts to the driving style and type of route in order to determine the desired gear and gearchange characteristics.

In line with the 166's position as the range topper for Alfa Romeo, it is equipped with a long list of standard equipment and luxury features. New inclusions for the 2002 model include a GSM digital mobile phone integrated into the dashboard as part of the Integrated Control System (ICS) and the electric seats gain a three memory setting for the driver's seat. The centre dashboard mounted ICS utilises an 8 cm LCD screen to control a number of major features in the Alfa Romeo 166. The ICS controls the audio system, trip computer, climate control and ventilation system and the mobile phone system. Other standard features include a hand crafted leather interior (seats, steering wheel and gearknob), electric and heated front seats with driver's seat memory, power windows, automatic climate control system, 17 inch alloy wheels

(including spare), remote controlled door and boot opening, electric door mirrors with demist function, 8 speaker sound system with remote CD stacker and trip computer, anti-theft alarm, cruise control and an immobiliser.

The level of sophistication available in the Alfa 166 is also born out in the array of safety features fitted to the vehicle. These items include ABS brakes, front seat belts which are equipped with pretensioners and are height adjustable, windscreen wiper rain sensor, fire prevention system, two front airbags and front seat side airbags.

The Alfa Romeo 166 retails for \$79,900, which does not include dealer charges or on-road costs. With such a comprehensive list of standard features, factory fitted options are limited to metallic paint and an electric sunroof.

With its plush leather interior and generous interior dimensions, the Alfa scores well on comfort and space. There is an excellent range of seat adjustment for the driver and both front and rear seating is generally well shaped and offers good support. The control layout is typical Alfa, smart and functional, although the left-hand indicator of our test vehicle failed to cancel after completing most left hand turns.

The Alfa 166 really comes into its own on the open road. The 3.0 litre engine is a powerful engine for its size and really does provide very relaxed and effortless cruising at legal highway speeds. When 'Drive' is selected, the Alfa tends to be a little reluctant to downshift, preferring to lug in a higher gear until provoked by nearly fully depressing the accelerator pedal. Manually operating the gearshift allows you to better control downshifting, which gives better engine response and improves driving smoothness.

When driving the 166 the sports nature of the model is immediately apparent. The combination of nicely weighted steering and quite firm suspension (without being harsh) gives the driver good feeling for the road and high limits of road holding. While the braking system is powerful, it lacks the pedal feel to be smooth in stop start driving.

SUMMARY:

The Alfa Romeo 166 is a stylish vehicle with the character of both a sports and a luxury car. It is lavishly equipped, a strong performer and very comfortable on the open road. The 2002 model is characterised by a number of detail changes.

ALFA ROMEO 166 3.0 litre V6

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE:

Type V6, DOHC, 24 valves
Capacity in litres 2.959
Induction Multipoint injection
Fuel recommendation PULP
Claimed max. power 166 kW at 6200 rpm
Claimed max. torque 275 Nm at 5000 rpm
Specific power output 56.1 kW/litre

TRANSMISSION:

Type 'Stepronic' four speed automatic
Driving wheels Front
Speed per 1000 rpm in top gear 39.3 km/h

WHEELS: Alloy, 17 inch

TYRES: 225/45 R17

STEERING:

Type Power assisted rack and pinion
Turns lock to lock 2.3
Turning circle (measured) 12.0 metres

DIMENSIONS:

Mass 1550 kg
Length 4720 mm
Width (incl. mirrors 1970 mm) 1815 mm
Height 1416 mm
Ground clearance (measured) 129 mm
Seating capacity 5
Fuel tank capacity 72 litres

TOWING:

Max. towed mass (trailer plus load) 1500 kg
Max. towball download 60 kg

NRMA THEFT RATING:

Points on 0-110 scale (high score best) 60.5

WARRANTY: Three years, 100,000 km

MANUFACTURED IN: Italy

TEST RESULTS

ACCELERATION:

50 - 80 km/h (in Drive) 4.4 sec
60 - 100 km/h (in Drive) 5.6 sec
0 - 80 km/h 7.0 sec
0 - 100 km/h 9.5 sec
0 - 400 metres 16.9 sec

FUEL CONSUMPTION:

Litres/100 km in city 13.6
Litres/100 km on highway 10.2
Litres/100 km overall 11.9

BRAKING:

Distance to stop from 80 km/h 27.3 metres

NOISE:

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

● Test vehicle supplied by Ateco Automotive Pty. Limited

Call NRMA Automotive Technical Services on 1300 655 443, should you require additional information on this vehicle, on other makes, or for general advice on automotive matters.