

SPECIAL FEATURE: JEEP COMPASS, SUV OF THE YEAR

TIMES AUTO
AWARDS 2017

In partnership with **evo** | **FAST**



JEEP COMPASS

SUV OF THE YEAR

*Jeep Compass wins the SUV of the Year at the 10th Times Auto Awards
in partnership with evo India and Fast Bikes India*

JEEP COMPASS 2.0 MULTIJET II

Engine 1954cc, 4-cyl, turbo-diesel Transmission 6-speed manual Power 170.6bhp @ 3750rpm Torque 350Nm @ 1750-2500rpm
Weight 1537-1641kg 0-100kmph NA Top speed NA Price (ex-showroom Delhi) ₹16.29-21.92 lakh



THE DESIGN STORY

FASHION FADES, ONLY STYLE REMAINS

Coco Chanel's words may well have been with respect to the world of fashion, but is equally applicable to the Jeep Compass

DOESN'T THAT LOOK LIKE A BABY GRAND Cherokee? That's inevitably the first thought that will hit you if you've seen the bigger Jeep and are then looking at the Compass. The resemblance is quite clear and the made-in-India Jeep is all the better for it, for the Grand Cherokee is a grand looking car.

The silhouette of the Compass is both modern and athletic, with Jeep's use of strong fenders and a sloping roofline creating unexpected drama in the visual impact that the SUV has. With its fancy blacked out roof, A-, B- and C-pillars and that impressive seven-slat grille, the Compass won't be out of place on the fashion runway of contemporary vehicle design. At the same time, its classic Jeep attitude

and simplicity of form ensures that the Compass will remain stylish on high streets for a long time to come.

This striking form is carried on inside the Compass too. The design team's use of contemporary shapes on the dash and the door, combined with the selected use of piano black, makes it premium without shouting too much. Although the Uconnect infotainment system with its Apple CarPlay and Android Auto is full of functions, the large touchscreen of the system has been integrated into the design of the dash to create a striking interior.

Overall, the Compass is a handsome SUV that has been designed with enough flair to keep it stylish long after fashion has faded away.



POWER TO SPARE

PERFORMANCE IS BETTER THAN PROMISE

Joseph Pulitzer was bang on. Intent is good but it is the delivery of a promise that really separates the best from the rest

FOR ALL THE GOOD INTENT YOU MIGHT HAVE in your heart, unless it is matched by action in the real world it all comes to naught. Like Mr Pulitzer, we too know that all too often a promise remains but a promise, without performance. Thankfully, we can't apply that one on the Compass for this Jeep is power packed.

With the Compass you get a choice of two powertrains. First up, and this is no doubt the more popular one, is the one powered by FCA's famed two-litre MultiJet II turbo-diesel. It is extremely refined. Mated to a slick shifting 6-speed transmission, this four-cylinder unit puts out a healthy 170.6bhp and 350Nm of torque.

It feels properly brisk with very strong mid-range torque and should dispatch 100kmph on the speedo in almost 11 seconds. More importantly, for the SUV loving folks out there, you can stick it in fifth or sixth gear and cruise all day long. Alternatively, if you are in an enthusiastic mood, like we mostly are, you can go through the gearbox with its precise shifts and enjoy hustling the Compass along at quite a solid pace.

For the petrolhead, Jeep has a petrol engine with a choice between a 6-speed manual or a 7-speed dual clutch DDCT gearbox. The engine in question is the refined 1.4-litre MultiAir petrol with a variable geometry turbo and variable valve timing. The engine's maximum output is 161bhp and 250Nm.

Like its diesel avatar, the petrol powered Compass is very responsive too with 0-100kmph coming up in just 10.23 seconds. Turbo lag is minimal, and after 2000rpm the Compass surges ahead with urgency and stays in the power band all the way till 6500rpm. For those of you who enjoy your D-I-Y kits, the manual should fit in nicely with your lifestyle but if you feel the need for convenience in our crowded cities, then the 7-speed DDCT should save your left limbs a lot of trouble.



JURY ON THE COMPASS



SIRISH CHANDRAN

"Authenticity is a rare thing these days with cars masquerading as SUVs incapable of getting even the slightest bit muddy. Not the Compass. Staying true to its Jeep roots this SUV, with 4x4, can do some serious off roading, while on the road it blends awesome ride with stable handling for a very enjoyable dynamic experience. Without question the pick of the class in 2017."



SUDHIR SHARMA

"First it's very appropriately named. The Compass keeps you rooted to where you want to go. It is also a very well-designed silhouette, sophisticated, tight and not over the top. Ergonomics is very intuitive and very well placed. I was impressed by the fit and finish levels as well. Very well done and in a brilliant price package."



VICKY CHANDHOK

"It's been decades that a product in a price range offered value. The Jeep Compass was impressive from the looks up! While a little frugal in terms of luxury it simply impressed me with the ride and build quality on tarmac and off-road. In simple terms it was fantastic. It's been a while that an SUV shook up the Indian market like this, the Compass, certainly has!"

CAPABLE OVER CURVES

DON'T JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER

The anonymous English gent who came up with that would say the same of the Compass' ride and handling abilities

FLICKING THE COMPASS INTO THE RIGHT handed turn two and then on to the short straight before the tightening off-camber left hander of turn three at the Madras Motor Race Track (MMRT), the Jeep's poise is incredible. The body roll is controlled for an SUV this tall and even at speed it feels impressively planted with the all-weather Firestone tyres offering plenty of grip when pushing hard. They squeal only when pushed harder than you would push an SUV, even a compact monocoque-based SUV. On the long sweeping right-handed D of turns 6 and 7 at the MMRT, the Compass holds its line better than what you'd expect from an SUV where all the power was being sent to the front wheels with 4WD disengaged.

Amazingly, this handling prowess doesn't come at the cost of ride quality. To deal with variations in surfaces, Jeep has kitted out the Compass with Koni's Frequency Selective Dampers (FSD). These adjust the damping on the suspension almost in real time to firm things up over smooth surfaces and soften it all when the going gets rough. The Compass rides brilliantly. Nothing in this segment and very few in segments higher ride as well as this Jeep does. It almost glides over road irregularities. It really is that good. And the damping quality and refinement is also excellent, so the suspension doesn't audibly crash and hammer into undulations.

No, the Compass isn't a book you can judge by its SUV cover and dismiss as something that will do the ride part really well but not shine at the handling bit. For the Jeep Compass is outstanding at both.



JEEP COMPASS 1.4 MULTIAIR

Engine 1368cc, 4-cyl, turbo-petrol **Transmission** 6-speed manual/ 7-speed DCT
Power 161bhp @ 5500rpm **Torque** 250Nm @ 2500-4000rpm **Weight** 1537-1562kg
0-100kmph 10.23sec **Top speed NA** **Price (ex-showroom Delhi)** ₹15.16-20.26 lakh



GENUINELY 4X4

AUTHENTICITY CAN'T BE FAKED

Author Peter Guber could never have imagined how true this is of Jeep's new Compass

FOR THREE QUARTERS OF A CENTURY, JEEP has been indelibly connected to notions of freedom, adventure, passion, and above all, authenticity. They are after all the makers of the original 4x4. Even after decades, it is impossible to imagine a Jeep without go-anywhere abilities. The good bit is, you don't have to. For the Compass is a genuine off-road capable SUV and not just another soft-roader.

So much so that we didn't have to think twice before putting it on a rainswept beach in Goa when we went there to drive the Compass for the first time. Totally at place on the sandy surface compacted by rain, the Compass allowed us to edge close enough to the breakers to create waves of our own. Literally. Encouraged by our sandy adventure, we took the Compass into a forest filled with logs, rocks, inclines and slush.

Used to the soft-roading fare dished up by the others in its class, we came back impressed with how much the Compass could actually do without struggling, thanks to the Jeep's Active Drive that seamlessly switches between 2WD and 4WD on a need to engage basis and Jeep's Selec-Terrain on-demand 4x4 system that has four modes – Auto, Snow, Sand and Mud along with an AWD lock.

That is perhaps what's so special about the Compass. Jeep could have created a road-going SUV with just enough off-road prowess to get you home when the roads turned to gravel or through some accumulated water. Instead they have gone ahead and created the real thing with proper 4x4 abilities. Authenticity, after all, cannot be faked. Peter Guber would have been proud of this Jeep. ☒

JURY ON THE COMPASS



ANINDA SARDAR

"I love the wonderful blend of practicality and performance. For me, that is what really makes the Jeep stand out. I don't necessarily have to give up on one aspect to get the benefits of the other. It's an SUV that everyone in the family will be happy with, which in India is a sureshot strategy for success."



AKSHAI VARDE

"The Jeep Compass was such a perfect package of features and joy of driving that it instantly stood out for me. I think the ruggedness in its looks and the refinement in its drive was the combination I enjoyed."



BYRAM GODREJ

"The Jeep Compass feels like a capable off-roader but is comfortable, well appointed and available at a great price. Macho enough to look at as well but not too in your face either."





Above: (L-R) Rahul Pansare, head, marketing, FCA India and Kevin Flynn, president and MD, FCA India receive the award from industry expert Avik Chattopadhyay. On the right is Sushant Balsekar, head, PR and corporate communications, FCA India

AND THE AWARD GOES TO...

SWIMMING ISN'T EVERYTHING. WINNING IS

Olympic champion Mark Spitz's outline of the American competitive spirit is what Jeep's new Compass embodies

IT IS NEVER ENOUGH TO JUST DO SOMETHING.

The effort must always be better than the rest and that's what separates that effort as the best. It is this very spirit of competition that Jeep's new made-in-India Compass embodies. This SUV has sought to not just do the things that every SUV in its class is doing but to do them differently, and do them better.

Having impressed critic and consumer, evident from the fact that Jeep had sold more than 10,000 units within four and a half months of the Compass' launch at the end of July last year, the Compass has now bagged the coveted title of SUV of the Year at the 10th Times Auto Awards in partnership with evo India and Fast Bikes India.

Industry expert Avik Chattopadhyay handed over the trophy to the FCA team led by Kevin Flynn, president and managing director of FIAT Chrysler Automobiles (FCA), India at a glittering gala on February 7, 2018.

While the award is a recognition of the fact that the Compass is the best SUV in its class and will bring with it the inevitable pride and prestige of winning for the team that created the Compass, it is also a compass that SUV consumers will use to find their way in a sea of choices. Swimming with the pack therefore isn't everything. Winning is. ✕

"We are absolutely delighted to have won the 'SUV of the Year' award for the Jeep Compass from Times Auto in association with Evo India and Fast Bikes India. The Made-in-India Jeep Compass is a shining example of Jeep brand's commitment to product excellence and quality of engineering, which have proven to be worthy of this honour."

*Kevin Flynn
President & MD
FIAT Chrysler Automobiles, India*