

# NISSAN NAVARA

## ST-X 550 V6

If you've got a spare 61 grand you can join the queue for a Navara ST-X 550. This top-shelf ute is powered by a Renault V9X, single turbo, three-litre that produces a class-leading 170kW power at 3750rpm, with a hefty 550 Nm torque from a low 1750 rpm. Peak torque is available all the way to 2500 rpm and 500 Nm is available from 1500 rpm.



In addition to this impressive engine the ST-X 550 scores a seven-speed automatic transmission, along with ABS/EBD disc/drum braking, electronic stability control and an active limited-slip rear differential.

Standard equipment includes Nissan's Utili-Track load securing system, a tub liner, satin black sports bar with LED brake light, a hard tonneau cover linked to the remote central locking system, bonnet protector, front fog lights, headlamp washers, privacy glass, roof rails and V6 badging.

The badging is the only giveaway to the range-topping Navara's under-bonnet secret, until you stomp on the loud pedal, when hell breaks loose. Handling is typical Navara – among the best in the ute market – but with that much grunt on tap it's easy to get out of shape. On loose and slippery surfaces you'll need some judicious use of the 4WD selection dial, but it's a part-time 4WD system, so don't use it on high-friction surfaces.

The Navara ST-X 550 can tow three tonnes and when we checked it with only 1500kg behind we hardly knew the trailer was there.

Off road the low-speed torque means most obstacles can be conquered at idle revs and sand driving is a blast. The only downside of the engine was an irritating 'lag' between accelerator movement and engine response. The use of a big, single turbo involves compromise, we know, but we didn't expect such an old-fashioned response time from a brand new engine design.



## Potent V6 Diesel

The V9X engine was revealed at the Geneva Motor Show in March 2010, after a four-year development program by Renault Nissan Alliance engineers.

The engine is designed with an untypical 65-degree vee angle that offers a compromise between crankshaft balancing, crankshaft and cylinder block reliability and engine width, while still allowing sufficient space for the turbo-charger to be mounted within the vee.

The block is cast in Compacted Graphite Iron (CGI), a material that offers all the benefits of cast iron, including high levels of stiffness and noise absorption, but without the weight penalty.

The compression ratio is a relatively low 16:1, to benefit emissions, noise, vibration and harshness. The latest generation Bosch common-rail fuel injection uses piezo injectors and operates at 1800 bar injection pressure.



To achieve Euro 5 emissions compliance, the engineers opted for a cooled exhaust gas recirculation (EGR) system, a metallic oxidation catalytic converter and a catalytic diesel particulate filter (DPF) in the same container.

Periodically regenerating the DPF is done by post-injecting fuel via a seventh fuel injector positioned in the exhaust.



This system is automatically activated and is vastly preferable to regeneration by post-injection using the combustion chamber injectors, where contamination of engine oil by unburnt fuel is always a possibility. It also helps stretch oil change intervals to as much as 20,000 km for most customers.

