

The Mitsubishi Xpander: An MPV with traditional versatility

 By [Naresh Maharaj](#)

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It's not every day that one comes across a multi-purpose vehicle that ticks all the boxes and at a very competitive price. The new Xpander combines traditional versatility and practicality of a multi-purpose vehicle (MPV) and has the sporty go-anywhere looks of an SUV. It's a seven-seater and is already taking the very competitive South African market by storm. I spent a week testing the Xpander and put the MPV through several tests and was more than impressed with the overall ride and handling, be it on gravel, rugged terrain as well as on tarred roads. The interior of the new Xpander might be all MPV, but the exterior screams SUV, so it's equally well suited to everyday commuting, family road trips and leisure activities. In addition, its stylish ruggedness and practicality means you can take on a variety of terrains in confidence, without having to compromise on comfort.



Source: [QuickPic](#)

“As the name suggests, the much anticipated Xpander is all about broadening one’s horizons, whether that be in terms of lifestyle choices, or family dynamics,” explains Nic Campbell, general manager of Mitsubishi Motors South Africa (MMSA). “With the introduction of this very exciting addition to our line-up, we hope to strengthen our positions in both the MPV and compact SUV segments of the local market.”

Muscular exterior

The all-new Xpander boasts the kind of exterior styling that will get you noticed, whether you’re pulling into the work car-park or stopping at a robot. A

t the heart of the modern look is Mitsubishi’s Dynamic Shield Design, which is intended to express protection. With sporty alloy wheels – 15-inch on the manual model and 16-inch of the automatic derivative – and wide flared fenders, the Xpander portrays toughness and power from the first glance. Crystal clear headlights, daytime running lights and L-illuminated LED taillights that extend onto the tailgate add to the overall look.



Source: [QuickPic](#)

The Xpander’s higher ground clearance of 205mm is another feature that is immediately noticeable and emphasises its sporty character. A high ground clearance helps when you are bundu bashing and have to clear rivers and streams.

‘Omotenashi’

Mitsubishi strongly believes in the principle of ‘Omotenashi’ – a Japanese word that captures the way in which Japanese hosts pay attention to detail and anticipate the needs of their guests. This approach is clearly evident in the cabin of the all-new Xpander, which provides ample space for up to seven adults to travel in comfort and style.



Source: [QuickPic](#)



Source: [QuickPic](#)

The flexible seating can be configured to suit a variety of needs, ranging from carrying passengers and luggage to transporting lifestyle-focused items. The second-and third-row seats have a 60/40 split, while the seats of the third row can be folded completely flat and stowed to create additional space in the cargo area.

Power and efficiency

There are two models in the local line-up. Both feature a 1.5-litre engine and the main difference between the two is the use of either a five-speed manual or a four-speed automatic transmission.

The all-new Xpander's smooth performance, low fuel consumption and reduced noise are the results of its highly durable 1.5-litre Dohc 16-valve aluminium block engine. With a fuel tank of 45l, average fuel consumption in a combined cycle is 6.9l/100km for the manual model and 7l/100km for the automatic derivative.

Safety first

Befitting its status as a people carrier, the all-new Xpander features a range of innovative safety features as standard. Designed to protect not only the driver and passengers, but other road users as well, these include airbags for the driver and front passenger, seatbelt pre-tensioners with force limiters, and an anti-lock braking system (ABS) with the electronic brake-force distribution.

Price (stc)

- Xpander 1.5L M/T: R299,995
- Xpander 1.5L A/T: R319,995

The Mitsubishi Xpander is covered by a three-year/100,000km manufacturer's warranty and a two-year/30,000km service plan. The price also includes five-year/unlimited mileage roadside assistance. Service intervals are set at 15,000km/one year whichever comes first.

ABOUT NARESH MAHARAJ

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