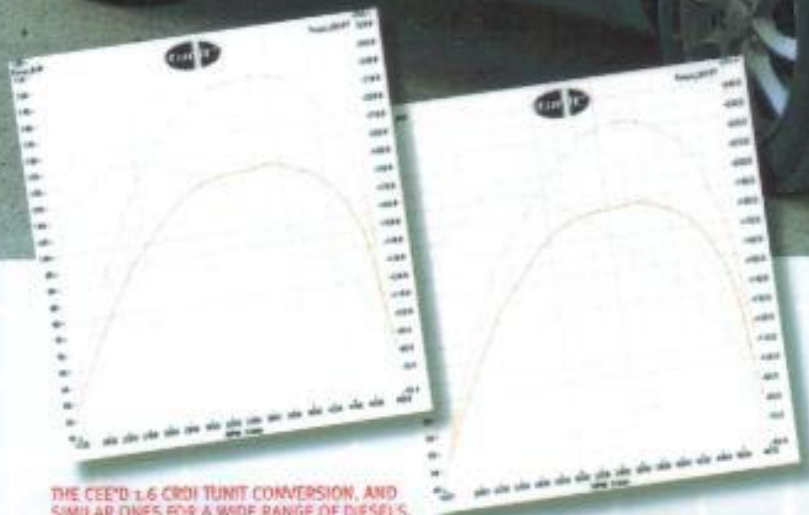
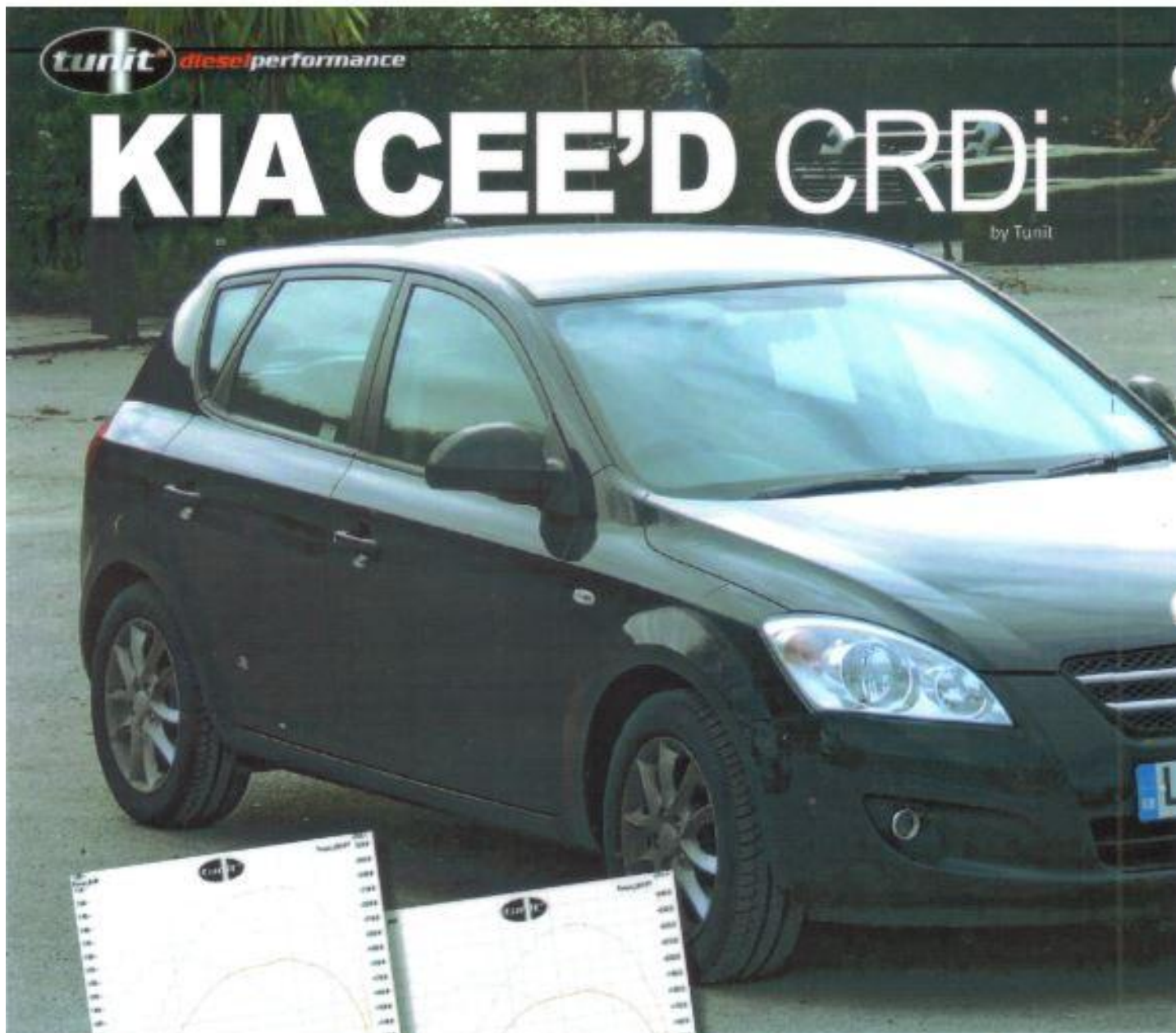


# KIA CEE'D CRDi

by Tunit



THE CEE'D 1.6 CRDi TUNIT CONVERSION, AND SIMILAR ONES FOR A WIDE RANGE OF DIESELS, COSTS £526, INCLUDING VAT AND POSTAGE. FULL DETAILS OF THE TUNIT RANGE AND THEIR NATIONWIDE NETWORK OF DISTRIBUTORS ARE AVAILABLE FROM THEM ON 0845 8381405 OR AT [www.tunit.com](http://www.tunit.com)

As well as being designed (mostly) in Europe, the cee'd is also being built in Europe – at a new, state-of-the-art plant in Slovakia – and being sold only in Europe. Replacing the Cerato in the 5-door hatchback C-segment – to compete with Golfs, Astras, Ford Focus et al – it's the most important car Kia have ever launched. So convinced are Kia of its quality, they're

backing it with a quite remarkable, fully-transferable warranty that covers the entire drive train for seven years/100,000 miles and the rest of the car, bumper-to-bumper, including paintwork, for five years. The anti-perforation warranty is ten years and they're throwing in three-years roadside assistance, just in case. To be honest, I was rather underwhelmed

when I first met it 'in the flesh' at the Press launch last year. It is visually pleasing rather than dramatic, but it grew on me as I came to appreciate the full package.

The first thing I noted was that the doors clunked solidly shut. Once in, a glance around the cabin was enough to tell me that much thought had gone into it. The clean exterior design is carried through, with a stylish centre console and well-placed instrumentation. The standard of 'fit & finish' is excellent and the switchgear operated positively.

Thanks to a long wheelbase, wide track and fairly high roofline, the cee'd seats five in reasonable comfort. The semi-bucket front seats have wide cushions and firm support, and the lumbar adjustment and 'active' headrests are standard, with the driver's seat adjusting for height. The 60/40-split rear seats can be folded flat, without the need to remove the headrests, to increase the already sizeable 340 litre boot to a maximum of 1300 litres.



Dials are clear and the dash is nicely laid out



Faux aluminium is the order of the day



"It's visually pleasing, rather than dramatic. But it grew on me as I came to appreciate the full package."

The standard specification is impressive. Even the entry-level 'S' models come with air conditioning and cooled glove box, a fully integrated MP3 ready RDS radio/CD player, steering wheel mounted audio controls, a rake/reach adjustable steering column, front electric windows, central locking with deadlock and six airbags. And there's lots more. For £750 extra, the GS adds more goodies, including 16-inch alloys, remote locking, body-coloured electric/heated door mirrors, a six-speaker high-quality sound system and USB and auxiliary audio ports. You can even play MP3 files directly from a USB stick, and full iPod integration arrives in the summer, at no extra cost. A further £1,000 buys you the LS, with fully automatic climate control, rear electric windows, front fog lights and half-leather upholstery.

In the UK, the range is based on those three trim levels and five engines: 1.4 (104bhp) and 1.6-litre (120bhp) petrol units, and of more

interest to What Diesel readers, two versions (89 and 113bhp) of an all-new, European-designed and built 1.6-litre turbodiesel. And there's a 2-litre turbodiesel with a 6-speed manual 'box due soon. (It already features in the newly arrived 3-door 'sports' hatch pro\_cee'd.) They're all pretty economical but best, of course, is the 1.6 CRDi with an outstanding combined fuel consumption of 60.1mpg. (Oddly, the 89bhp model is no better than the 113bhp.)

In the final analysis, it's down to your personal preference and whether or not you want to find another £750 for diesel power. As a What Diesel reader, you'll know that it's not just a question of recouping fuel costs to justify the price premium. You'll get more for a diesel when trade-in time comes round. I recall being impressed with the way the cee'ds drove and handled. Whilst many, if not most, C-segment cars have a solid beam rear axle that compromises both ride comfort and roadholding, Kia has opted here for a fully independent set-up, taking the Focus and Golf as their benchmark. They've also collaborated closely with Michelin to develop tyres that minimise rolling resistance (to improve economy and emissions) yet optimise roadholding and refinement.

It was hard to fault the cee'd. And that's

before I started comparing prices. A 1.4-litre S cee'd costs £10,995 on the road, whilst a top-of-the-range, 5-door 1.6 CRDi 113bhp will set you back £14,295. And it was the 113bhp 1.6-litre CRDi LS that Tunit borrowed to see what they could do with it.

Regular readers will know that Tunit always put vehicles on their ultra-accurate (±0.1 per cent) dynamometer before tuning, to make sure they're comparing apples with apples. As often happens, the resultant cee'd figures didn't match the manufacturer's, though in this case they were marginally better. Power was found to be 118.3bhp and torque 204lb ft. If the 1.6 CRDi performed well before Tunit got their hands on it, it was little short of spectacular afterwards. Power increased to 146.6bhp – nearly 25 per cent up – and at 246lb ft, torque was over 20 per cent up. Out on the real road, the cee'd was more responsive at all speeds. Power was delivered smoothly, with absolutely no hesitations or lag. More importantly, it came in earlier, giving much greater flexibility. So fewer gear-changes! The engine even sounded different and tick-over was constantly even. Incidentally, whilst Tunit make no claims as regards mpg, it's worth noting that over 120 fairly mixed, post-tweaking miles the cee'd showed an improvement of eleven per cent.



The cee'd is available with a choice of two CRDi units - 1.6 and 2.0