

WHATCAR?

National - Apr 01, 2013

'Looks sporty, but isn't.'

What's new?

First drive



Toyota Etios Liva TRD Sportivo

What is it? Sporty looking version of the Liva with a bigger petrol engine under the hood **Price from Rs 6.13 lakh*** **On sale Now 0-100kph 11.88sec**

TOYOTA HAS EARNED a reputation for making sensible, practical cars that you buy with your head rather than your heart, and none of its models exemplify this better than the Etios and Liva. The flipside is that these cars are also seen as a bit boring. The car you see on this page is the company's attempt at injecting some excitement into its sensible family hatchback and in the process, boosting its brand image.

If you recognise this TRD Sportivo, it is because Toyota

launched it as a limited edition last year. But there are a few crucial differences between that car and this one. This new TRD is now part of the standard Liva line-up and comes with all the upgrades recently applied to the entire Etios and Liva range. The biggest change, however, is that it now uses the 1.5-litre petrol engine from the saloon, rather than the standard 1.2-litre motor.

The sporty add-ons include new bumpers, side skirt extensions, a rear spoiler and

smoked grey alloy wheels. On the inside, the Sportivo ditches the standard car's new beige colour scheme for a drab grey one, and oddly, uses a new steering wheel that is more bulky and less sporty than the standard one. In terms of equipment, it's got the same kit as a fully loaded Liva V SP.

So does it live up to its name? The 1.5-litre engine's 89bhp, combined with the Sportivo's light, 925kg weight, sounds promising, but in reality, the performance is nothing spectacular. It takes

off from rest promptly and is tuned so you don't have to shift gears too often, but the engine is not the smoothest or quietest. And since Toyota hasn't made any other mechanical changes, it feels exactly the same as a normal Liva when you're going around corners – which is to say that it is not very sporty. All said and done, this car is more about the image than the actual performance. And since the TRD's engine is bigger than 1200cc, it no longer qualifies for small car excise benefits. Rs 6.13 lakh is a lot to pay for a bit more power and cosmetic add-ons, so unless you simply must make the style statement, stick to the much improved standard car.

AMEYA DANDEKAR



Toyota has updated the cabin, but it's not as sporty as the exterior.



Stitched TRD Sportivo logo on seats.



89bhp 1.5-litre petrol engine.

BUYER'S FILE

Engine size	1.5 (P)
Price from	Rs 6.13 lakh*
Power	89bhp
0-100kph	11.88sec
Top speed	NA
Economy	NA
20-80kph in third	11.42sec