

Sportage fleet sets new world record

 By [Lauren Hartzenberg](#)

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To celebrate the launch of the new Kia Sportage, a fleet of them traversed the roads of six South African provinces with an aim to set an official record for the world's longest test-drive.



Travelling over 3,000 kilometers from Durban to Cape Point, the test drive relay wasn't only the longest in distance, but boasted the largest number of participants. Out of over 30,000 applications, 520 consumers were selected from across the country to test-drive a section of the route in the hopes of winning the all-new Kia Sportage.

The route was accompanied by representatives from US record officiator company RecordSetter, local and international Kia spokespeople and local celebrities. Also along for the ride were Instagrammers Lebo Lukewarm and Mike Eloff.

Not another car launch

It was a launch campaign with a difference. Typically, car launches involve an exclusive press junket, after which some motoring journos put 'pen to paper' and reveal their driving impressions of the new model in question. The majority of consumers can only read it... and weep. But this time things were different.

Not only did the average Joe have the opportunity to drive the Sportage prior to its media launch this past Friday, but they

were a part of something bigger: a new world record and a Kia Motors milestone.

Each test-driver received a RecordSetter badge and signed the bonnet of one of the cars, to be framed by Kia at a later stage. Kia Motors SA CEO Ray Levin was present to greet each driver and thank them for their participation. Little touches like these led to an event that was highly interactive and inclusive, and ultimately a lot of fun. After all, car launches come and go, but consumer experiences are forever.

“ Well done to everyone who took part in setting this record! 💎💎 It's been one crazy ride and we're proud to have been involved [#KIAWorldRecord pic.twitter.com/NJdlQ9Yp0k](https://twitter.com/NJdlQ9Yp0k)— *vida e caffè (@vidaecaffe)* [October 20, 2016](#) ”

On why the new Sportage was a good fit for this campaign, Christo Valentyn, PR and product marketing manager at Kia Motors South Africa said: “Apart from the Kia Rio, Sportage is our bestselling model. As such, there is significant interest and hype around the new model.

“We live our brand slogan – The Power to Surprise – and wanted to launch this amazing and exciting new model in a fresh, exciting and surprising way. The World's Longest Test Drive was the ideal fit not only for the product, but also for the launch, as it gave hundreds of consumers the opportunity to experience the car before it was launched, while setting a world record.”

Forward-thinking design

I joined in on the fun in Cape Town on the seventh and final day of the attempt. Arriving at the Kia dealership in Paarden Eiland, the excitement among the gathering of lucky motoring enthusiasts selected was palpable, with 'oohs' and 'aahs' continuing long after the drive was complete.

There was no denying the appeal of the suave SUV, both in the looks and performance department. When my stint in the new Sportage was over, I reluctantly strolled back to my own car, resenting it for its lack of comfort and refinement... and the absence of a wireless charging station.

“The Sportage stands out because of its forward-thinking and award-winning design, its exceptionally high levels of quality (tactile and perceived), its driving comfort and enjoyment, as well as its overall refinement. It takes Kia's global push to the top even further,” said Valentyn.

Check out the highlights from all seven days of the relay on the [dedicated website](#).
View the [image gallery](#).

ABOUT LAUREN HARTZENBERG

Managing editor and retail editor at Bizcommunity.com Cape Town apologist. Dog mom. Get in touch: lauren@bizcommunity.com

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