

REVIEW: The awe-inspiring Ford Ranger Raptor



By Imran Salie

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Ford's bakkie offering on local shores is steadily increasing. Soon the Blue Oval will [introduce the Ranger Platinum and Ranger Tremor in South Africa](#), both of which will be built locally as with the other models in the Ranger lineup.



And if you have been living under a rock, the Ford Ranger is the first bakkie to win the coveted South African Car of the Year award. Topping the impressive lineup of this formidable bakkie at the moment is the monstrously powerful Raptor, which has recently been nominated for an award in the Performance category of the aforementioned accolades.

I give the Raptor a description of powerful because it is at the moment the fastest bakkie in South Africa and the quickest to do the 0-100km sprint. This is an impressive feat considering the wide array of bakkies on offer in our country. For long the first-generation Volkswagen Amarok was the most powerful followed by the Jeep Gladiator.



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On test, the Raptor feels as powerful as its numbers suggest. A flat foot on the accelerator pedal propels the Raptor forward in an impressive manner for a vehicle of its size, and to top this off a nice roar is emitted from a set of twin exhaust pipes, which also visually gives the Raptor a sportier look. These exhaust pipes are electronically controlled and four selectable modes are available for different notes: Quiet, Normal, Sport, and Baja. One can select one of these options from the steering wheel.



The power of the Raptor is attributed to a 3l twin-turbo EcoBoost V6 engine that delivers 292kW and 583Nm. Mated to this engine is a 10-speed automatic transmission.



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To match its power is its road presence. The Raptor has flared-out wheel arches and the word 'Ford' in bold letters across its grill, extending from one C-lamp headlight to the other. Upping the rugged aesthetic on this sporty model are 17-inch all-terrain tyres that make driving over small potholes a breeze. These visual cues make the Raptor more distinguishable from its Ranger siblings and do a great job of aligning with its power outputs.

Red finishes adorn the Raptor's interior against black leather seats on the headrests, around the air vents, gear lever, and steering wheel. If drivers and occupants were not aware that they were driving a Raptor, the name is etched into the steering wheel and on the front seats. Smack bang in the middle of the dashboard lies a 12-inch infotainment screen with Ford's Sync 4A. A nice touch to the Raptor is a red centre marking on the steering wheel along with titanium shift paddles

that feel good to touch.



The cabin of the Raptor provides a decent amount of space for its driver and front passenger. Rear passengers that are tall (above 1.85m), however, will feel some squeeze for head leg room.

In the drive capability department, I found the Raptor to be well-equipped. The latest generation of the Raptor has a four-wheel drive system with an electronically controlled on-demand two-speed transfer case, combined with front and rear locking differentials. Seven drive modes are also on offer: Normal, Sport, Slippery, Rock Crawl, Sand, Mud/Ruts, and Baja.





Trail Control Technology, which is like cruise control for off-roading, comes with the Raptor as well.



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When it comes to suspension, the Raptor has lightweight aluminium upper and lower control arms, long travel front and rear suspension and refined Watt's link rear end. The other reason bumps and potholes are no match for this vehicle is down to Fox Live Valve dampers.

Fuel wise the Raptor disappointed with figures reaching up 17l per 100km when driving hard and unforgiving. With eco-driving practices, it can come down to the 13l per 100km range and maybe even lower, which is more respectable. Overall, the Raptor is one thirsty beast.

Price: R1,149,700.

ABOUT IMRAN SALIE

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