

Golf GTI lifts the bar

 By [Henrie Geyser](#)

24 May 2017

Volkswagen has rejuvenated its popular Golf range with some sporty makeup and fancy technology and a tot of extra vooma under the bonnet of the flagship GTI.



The most noticeable visual change is a narrower grille and headlights which stretch into the bumpers, a strip of small daytime LED lights up front and LED main lights on some of the more expensive models.

The biggest changes are in the living quarters where the Plain Jane instrument panel has been replaced by a large, full-colour touch screen with considerably improved user quality. This is particularly noticeable on the GTI model which I piloted at the launch drive between Port Elizabeth and Graaf-Reinet.

The stepped-up GTI now has an optional digital system which can be adjusted with the push of a button to full-screen road map, or to track style full-screen rev counter and speedometer.

Go-faster kit

Go-faster kit clearly announces the GTI's naughty character; sporty alloys, diffuser, narrow black grille and twin exhausts matched by a cockpit that is decked out with red trim racing seats and a sporty steering wheel.



The new Golf range offers the choice of three models – a 1-litre, a 1.4-litre turbo, and the GTI's 2.0-litre turbo. The star of the show GTI has also been given a moderate power injection to push it up to 169kW and 350Nm.

The new GTI is also kitted with three drive modes which change gear swap times, steering action and suspension settings, plus an Individual set-up which gives drivers a choice of setups to suit their mood. In Sport mode, the exhaust tone turns to a deep rumbling roar that is goose bump inducing.

But the biggest surprise is a new six-speed DSG automatic gearbox with the option of manual, race track-style flappies on the steering wheel. Although not a fan of any form of auto transmission, this transmission and gearing combination feels as if it was designed and handmade just for the GTI.

On the long stretches of light traffic tarmac between PE and Graaf Reinet there was ample time to experience the DSG in various modes and it didn't take long for me to fall for its charm – and that is rich coming from a 13-year stretch of GTI manual ownership.

Clings to tar like SARS to a refund payment

In “normal” setting the GTI already clings to the tar like SARS to a refund payment. It gets even better in Sport. The same goes for its direct steering and gear changes. VW says the new GTI will blitz the 0-100kmh stretch in 6.4 sec and top out at 248km/h.



VW is also offering a wide selection of optional extras which are as tempting as a cold beer at noon in the Namib Desert but they come at a price, so do the sums before signing on the dotted line.

The white coats at the Volkswagen plant at Wolfsburg have come up with yet another winner. The Golf GTI has for a long time been the benchmark by which all hot hatches are measured and the latest version lifts the bar even higher.

The GTI is priced at R545,800 which includes a three-year/120,000km warranty and a five-year service plan.

Foot note: In July the Golf family will be further extended with the arrival of the Golf R as well as VWS's hottest oil-burner, the GTD.

**[Henrie Geyser](#) was interviewed by [Henrie Geyser](#).*

ABOUT HENRIE GEYSER

Henrie Geyser joined the online publishing industry through iafrica.com where he worked for five years as news editor and editor. He now freelances for a variety of print and online publications, on the subjects of cars, food, and travel, among others; and is a member of the South African Guild of Motoring Journalists. henrieg@africa.com

- Lexus F-Sport: Winning hearts and wallets - 13 Mar 2018
- Kia Sportage gains EXtra appeal - 20 Feb 2018
- Jaguar F-Type thrills with topless fun - 9 Feb 2018
- Elegant but pricey Discovery - 31 Jan 2018
- Sexy Aygo goes topless - 27 Nov 2017

[View my profile and articles...](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>