

LDV G10 2.4 2016 review | first drive

Peter Barnwell road tests and reviews the LDV G10 2.4 with specs, fuel consumption and verdict.

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Tried and true, the engine and gearbox in LDV's van fill the bill.

Vans are a necessity for many businesses and they can cost a bomb to buy and run.

A new Japanese-built van such as Toyota's Hi-Ace will set you back \$33,000 plus on-roads for the base petrol model. Go European with the new VW Transporter and you'll cough up \$37,000 plus on-roads for the base model diesel. Hyundai's base iLoad petrol is \$32,000-plus. Service and running costs vary greatly between brands.

A cost-conscious buyer could drive away in a well-used mainstream van or pay thousands less for the just released LDV G10, with 2.4-litre petrol engine and manual transmission, for \$25,990.

That makes this good-looking one-tonne van from Chinese automotive giant SAIC the cheapest among the medium-size vans.

LDV already has a 2.0-litre turbo/auto model here but this is the real worker's special with its Mitsubishi-designed 2.4-litre naturally aspirated engine and a five-speed manual driving the rear axle.

The engine has been around in many Mitsubishis for, dare we say, decades. So, it's tried and true, same for the gearbox.

No ANCAP crash rating is available for the G10. LDV's V80 van gets three stars but has far fewer safety features.

The G10 2.4 has two airbags in the cabin and fitment includes anti-lock brakes and stability control, rear camera with park assist, parking sensors and tyre pressure monitor.

There are large sliding doors each side and a high-opening tailgate. All doors are centrally locked and the load space has floor and side liners.

Two standard pallets could fit in the large 2365mm long load space with a

volume of 5.2 cubic metres. Payload is 1093kg and the towing capacity is 1500kg braked.

About the same size as a Ford Transit or Benz Vito, the G10 2.4 presents a good-looking face that makes some of the competition seem gawky.

Inside is the same story due to the G10's multiple guises as a van and people-mover.

There's a distinct passenger car look to the dash and all controls especially around the large central touchscreen.

Creature comforts include aircon, power windows, reasonable audio, Bluetooth phone and audio streaming and tilt-only wheel adjustment.

Suspension is MacPherson struts at the front and, at the rear, four leaf springs for handling heavy loads. There are disc brakes all-round, 16-inch alloys and a full-size spare.

The 2.4's outputs (105kW/ 200Nm) appear mild when the G10's tare weight is 1907kg. However, the five-speed gearbox manual is relatively low-g geared and progress is easy, even when loaded.

It would come back a few notches on the freeway toting a tonne, uphill with the aircon on. Combined fuel consumption is claimed at 11.5L/100km — a lot more than a diesel competitor would achieve but they cost a lot more. The tank holds 75L.

Driving

On the road, the G10 2.4 feels, well, like a van with a high seating position and good outward vision aided by large exterior mirrors. The steering wheel isn't as flat mounted as most of the competition and there's a light feel to all controls.

The turning circle is reasonably tight at 11.8m while the reversing camera and parking aids assist with getting into tighter spots. Performance is acceptable



and the engine doesn't feel as if it's working hard in general driving.

Even the rear leaf springs have a decent amount of compliance when unladen, though the van feels steadier with a load. Loading is easy through the three large doors.

Verdict

In the absence of a turbo diesel version, the 2.4 fills the bill as a cheap, practical delivery vehicle that is comfortable and easy to drive.

Specifications

Price from: \$25,990

Fuel consumption: 11.5L/100km (combined), 272g/km CO₂, Tank 75L

Seats: 2

Warranty: 3 years/100,000km

Service Interval: 12 months/15,000km

Engine: 2.378L 4-cyl unleaded, 105kW/210Nm

Transmission: 5-spd manual, RWD

Spare: Full size alloy wheel

Turning circle: 11.8m diameter

Dimensions: 5168mm (L), 1980mm (W), 1928mm (H)

What we like

- Affordable
- Easy to drive

What we don't

- Light feel to the controls
- Steering wheel not as flat-mounted as rivals