

Appealing to professionals and young couples

• from PASSAT on page B16

Whether in Sportline or trim, the cabin is nicely done. The stylish dash is well thought out with all knobs, gauges and buttons easy to reach. Some observers think the dash material with its 'pebbly' appearance takes away somewhat from the elegance of the design, but I really don't have a problem with it.

The use of polished aluminum and wood grain trim as interior accents adds to the appeal of the cabin and the Nappa leather seats in my test vehicle were top grade. However, the seat material in the base model as driven at Testfest was just fine and I'd have no problem living with the Sportline trim level.

The sport-style driver's seat is heavily bolstered and I never really got it adjusted for a perfect fit. I suspect that was my doing rather than a design factor. Rear seat headroom was adequate and actually better than expected with the sloping coupe-style roof line, which is about 50 mm (two inches) lower than in the Passat sedan.

Legroom is also fine for rear-seat passengers, but this is truly a 2 + 2 design with buckets front and rear. With that in mind, it's clear that Volkswagen doesn't look at the CC as a true 'family car', but one that will appeal to professionals and young couples looking to move upmarket, perhaps from a Jetta or Golf.

The CC is another of the recent launches for Volkswagen, which help fill in gaps in the marketing jigsaw puzzle. It joins the Tiguan and Routan as new products that flush out the VW brand and keep consumers from crossing over to the competition when they outgrow their current vehicle.

I haven't driven the Passat V6, but some drivers may opt for that model just to get the 4Motion, which sure comes in handy on days like today when we experienced our first 'real' winter driving experience of the season.

However, after my two opportunities with the 2.0T, I was left with the impression that this was plenty of engine for me.

In AJAC testing, the CC produced a acceleration numbers of 7.9 seconds (0-100 km/h) and 5.9 seconds (80-120 km/h) and a braking number of 43.1m (100-0 km/h).

Fuel consumption ratings for the 2.0T are 10.8L/100 km (26 mpg) city and 7.1L/100 km (40 mpg) highway with an average of 9.1L/100 km (31 mpg). Premium unleaded fuel is recommended.

Tops in the acceleration test was the Nissan Maxima (boasting a 3.5L V6) with numbers of 6.4 and 4.6 seconds respectively.

The CC came away with the highest ranked interior of the bunch, although the cargo volume of 400L was lowest in class.

On the road, the Passat CC is a delightful car to drive and equally at home on the highway or back roads.

It has all the safety features expected of a sport sedan these days like Anti-slip Regulation (ASR), Electronic Differential Lock (EDL), Engine Braking Assist (EBA), Electronic Stability Program (ESP), Hydraulic Brake Assist (HBA), anti-lock brakes (ABS) and power assisted front vented disc brakes.

Ride and handling is a step above the regular Passat sedan as I remember it thanks in part to the sport suspension. The CC features independent front


MacPherson struts with stabilizer bar and the rear has a fully independent four-link setup with coil springs, telescopic shock absorbers and stabilizer bar.

On rough roads, the CC had a surprisingly comfortable feel, even with the sport suspension, which

often produces a firmer, choppy ride.

The 2009 Passat CC breaks new ground for Volkswagen with a European-styled sport sedan that has coupe-like looks and superb handling at an affordable price.

Das Auto is good!

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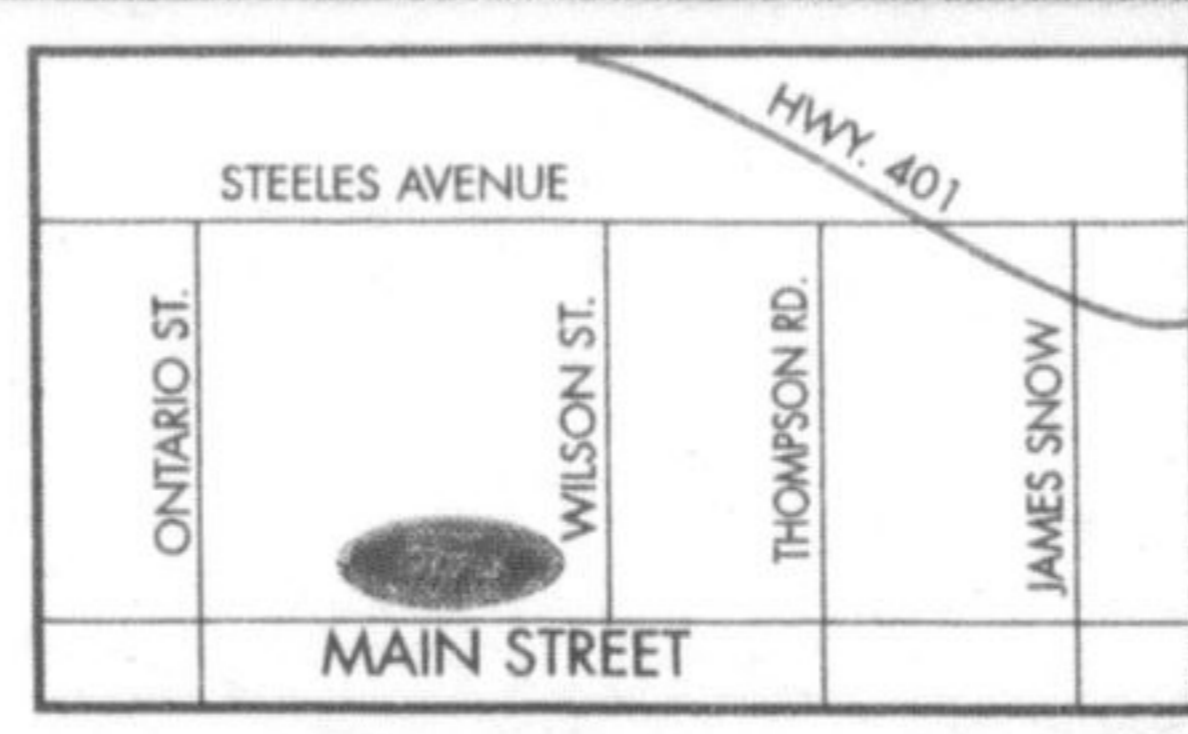
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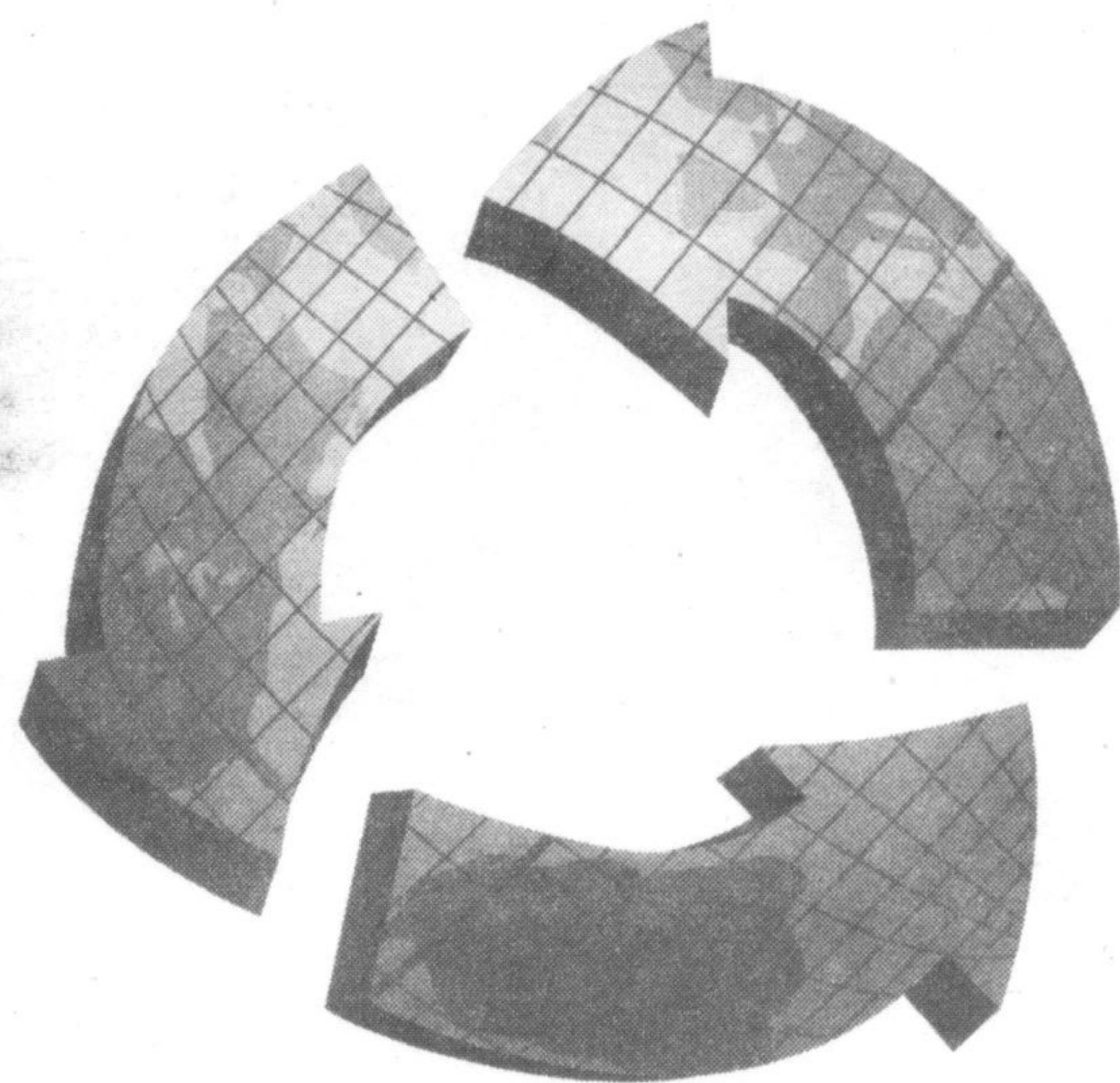
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