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The Outlander arrives

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When launched in 2001, it was originally known as the Mitsubishi Airtrek and was subsequently renamed as the Outlander in 2003. Now in its second generation the Outlander comes across as a smart butch looking SUV that has the Honda CR-V clearly in its sights. Offering the space of an SUV with compact exterior dimensions is what defines the Outlander. Place it next to its most immediate competitor and the Outlander looks more neatly styled than the slightly odd looking CR-V. Upfront it sports a typical split grille with a high bonnet line with aluminium skid plates on the big front bumper highlighting its offroad intent. Viewed from the side the car looks nice and sporty thanks to the rakish windscreen and the slightly arched roofline further complimented by the aluminium finish roof bars. Coming to the rear end, the car sports a split tailgate for more versatility with LED tail lamps adding a touch of class. The flared fenders look nice and filled with the 225/55 R18 tyres but it's yet to be seen if the Outlander comes with the same wheels in India.

Step inside the Outlander and you are greeted by a nice pleasant interior. The seats are comfortable and offer a commanding view of the road ahead. The dash is well laid out as well with decent storage place. The rear seats are pretty comfortable offering more than enough legroom. Another cool feature is that the rear seats can be slightly reclined as well. The rear also has a 40/60 split which operates at the touch of a button located in the boot. The Outlander in international markets comes with an extra row of seats at the back but will not feature the same in India as the spare tyre eats up that place.

Powering the Outlander in India will be a 2.4-litre MIVEC petrol engine which puts out 170 PS and a healthy 226 Nm of torque. However, thanks to the Indian fuel quality expect the motor to be detuned slightly. Being a softroader the Outlander features no low ratios but can be put into 50:50 four-wheel drive via a selector knob on the dashboard. In normal two wheel drive mode the power like the CR-V is transmitted to the front wheels only.

To tackle Indian conditions the Outlander comes equipped with Mc Pherson struts upfront and a multi link set up at the rear giving it a supple onroad ride and decent off road ability as well. Handling can be termed as predictable but not exactly in the same league as the CR-V. Only a proper road test can testify that though.

With spunky looks, well packaged interiors and a powerful motor the Outlander looks all set to give the CR-V a run for its money. We can't help thinking how the Outlander will fare with an oil burning unit getting the Chevrolet Captiva into the picture as well. What matters most though is how competitively Mitsubishi prices it.

