

On test: The Mitsubishi Pajero Sport



By [Naresh Maharaj](#)

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My first impression when the Pajero Sport rolled into my yard was "Whew! It's big". The exterior has a commanding presence. The interior is spacious. And the ride just compliments the largeness of the vehicle. It's definitely a stand-out from the crowd. The Aspire nameplate has been a symbol of premium sportiness and technology for Mitsubishi. Mitsubishi Motors South Africa (MMSA), with its aggressive product offensive for 2022, is keeping to its promise of launching its own Aspire derivatives across its entire passenger vehicle line-up, the first being two Pajero Sport Aspire models.



Image credit: Naresh Maharaj

Says Jeffrey Allison, general manager: marketing at MMSA: "Since we first introduced the current-generation Pajero Sport in 2020 and subsequently added the range-topping Exceed to the line-up, the Pajero Sport has proven to have great aspirational value. In fact, most recently it won acclaim in the 2021 *Car Magazine* Top 12 Best Buy Awards by walking off with the silverware in the highly competitive Large SUV/Crossover category.'

Styling

A standout feature of the Pajero Sport is its Dynamic Shield front grille, giving it a stylish and modern appearance. This is complemented by strong yet flowing lines, rugged and durable finishes and an unmistakable SUV character that demands attention on the road.



Image credit: Naresh Maharaj



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In order to set Aspire models apart from the rest of the Pajero Sport range, add to their desirability, and emphasise their exclusivity, they are only available in Jet Black or White Diamond, with a two-tone roof. Black roof rails, a black front grille and 18-inch alloy wheels – also in black – complete the exclusive look.

Drivetrain

As with the existing models, Aspire derivatives are powered by Mitsubishi's 2.4L Mivec four-cylinder intercooled turbodiesel engine. With 133kW and 430Nm of peak torque on tap, it drives the wheels through an advanced eight-speed automatic

transmission. This pairing provides smooth acceleration and low-rpm, high-speed cruising that enhances driving efficiency.

The 4x4 Aspire features Mitsubishi's Super Select 4WD-II system, which delivers consistent performance in the most challenging driving conditions and over the most rugged terrain. Four selectable off-road modes – Gravel, Mud/Snow, Sand or Rock – ensure optimal engine output, transmission settings and braking for superior traction control over challenging surface conditions.

Interior

The seven-seater cabin of the Aspire models – and indeed the rest of the range – smacks of comfort and luxury. Key features include black leather seats, power slide and reclining function for the driver's seat, newly added power lumbar support, electric windows all round with one-touch auto up/down function, and dual-zone climate control with a rear ventilation duct for the second row of seats.

A multi-function leather-clad steering wheel places audio and cruise control settings at the driver's fingertips, while the full-colour digital instrument display ensures visibility of all relevant information.

The Pajero Sport also offers Bluetooth connectivity with hands-free voice control, coupled with Mitsubishi's advanced smartphone-link display audio (SDA) connected to a large eight-inch touch screen.

Safety

Occupant safety is ensured through seven airbags and Isofix child seat anchors. Active safety features include active stability and traction control (ASTC), an anti-lock braking system (ABS), electronic brake-force distribution (EBD), and an emergency brake assist system.

The safety package is rounded off with hill-start assist, trailer stability assist, auto levelling dusk-sensing LED headlights, front fog lamps, daytime running lights, rain-sensing windscreen wipers, rear park distance control and a rear-view camera for safer and easier parking.

Final words

"MMSA announced in January this year that the Aspire nameplate will be introduced across the Mitsubishi range. The launch of the two limited edition Aspire models within the Pajero Sport line-up brings a new level of exclusivity to discerning customers wanting to buy into the legendary Mitsubishi way of life, and who don't shy away from making bold choices in order to achieve their aspirations. Watch this space because there's plenty more to come," Allison concludes.

Pricing

- Pajero Sport 2.4L DI-DC 8AT (2WD) R654,995

- Pajero Sport 2.4L DI-DC 8AT (2WD) Aspire R674,995
- Pajero Sport 2.4L DI-DC 8AT (4WD) R704,995
- Pajero Sport 2.4L DI-DC 8AT (4WD) Aspire R724,995
- Pajero Sport 2.4L DI-DC 8AT (4WD) Exceed R739,995

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