

# MITSUBISHI PAJERO / DELICA

The Pajero is one of the most iconic off-roaders ever built. Good looks, comfortable ride and accommodation mated with impressive capabilities off-road made the Pajero very successful in terms of sales.

The Pajero reviewed here would be the 1991 To 1999 Version. Note: the Pajero is called the Shogun in the UK and Montero in Spanish-speaking countries and the USA, due to the fact that the word Pajero refers to a male's genitals in Spanish!

The Pajero came in three body styles:

Short wheel base (SWB): not the most practical Pajero when it come to packing space, but very manoeuvrable around parking lots and in challenging off-road conditions – the latter due to it's great break-over angle. The SWB seats five occupants, but offer very little luggage space. When the rear seats are folded away however, the packing space become much more usable. If you want a off-road toy, do consider the SWB.





This is a face-lifted 3.5V6 SWB. The face-lift is sometimes also referred to as the "blister fender", due to the wider fenders.



LWB: This would be the most common Pajero, due to its practicality. Although it can seat seven occupants, the third row of seats is only suitable for children.



**SWB Convertible:** As per normal Pajero SWB, except that the roof is removable! The convertible versions are very scarce though and only came with a canvas roof, no optional hard top canopies are available.

The Pajero came in various specification levels, ranging from very basic with manual window winders and no air-conditioning to ultra luxurious that even had adjustable suspension, electric seats and a sunroof. Do avoid the base-spec versions, and even on mid-spec versions you have to make sure it has air-conditioning.



### **Pajero's came with petrol or diesel engines:**

If you want to buy petrol, refrain from the gutless 2.4 and 2.6 four cylinders. Even the 3.0 V6 is a bit short on power, while the 3.5 V6 offers very good performance, while the fuel consumption and used prices of the 3.5 are similar to the 3.0 V6 – so get the 3.5 V6! There was also a high-performance 3.5 V6 Evolution with 200kW produced in limited numbers and it only came in SWB form with a beautiful body kit. Official figures give a 0-100km/h sprint of 7.5sec, which is very quick for a full-blown off-roader! Mitsubishi SA only imported five Evo's when new, which makes it a highly collectable vehicle.

The diesel engines came in the form of a 2.5TD and 2.8TD. The 2.5TD are not much of a joy to drive due to its lack of power, but the 2.8TD has a much more usable 92kW / 294NM. So if you want a diesel, get the 2.8TD and avoid the 2.5TD.

Another vehicle worth mentioning is the Mitsubishi Delica which is basically a seven-seat Space Gear people carrier mated to a Pajero chassis.



This is a brilliant concept from Mitsubishi as it is basically the ONLY 4X4 people carrier in the world that has a low-range gearbox. Very clever! The Delica was never officially sold in the UK or South Africa, but there are plenty of good "grey imports" available. (The 4X2 Space Gear however was sold in South Africa meaning that body parts are available while the drive train parts can be easily

sourced from a Pajero). All Delica's came well equipped with luxuries, while the top-spec models had two sunroofs and electric curtains. Also worth noting is that the Delica (also referred to as the L400) came in a normal length wheelbase and a scarce LWB form, the latter offer more packing space. The tour operators in Namibia love the Delica's because of its roominess, seven seats and good off-road capabilities. The Delica was sold with a 2.5TD (avoid) and a 2.8TD while a petrol 3.5 V6 was also offered, all from the Pajero. A Delica is a vehicle I would personally like to be parked in my garage, as you could have HUGE fun off-road and on road trips with seven people on board in good comfort! \*Highly recommended to import.



Delica LWB (Note the longer section behind the rear wheels)

## Prices

\*A Pajero 2.8TD can be picked up for less than £1000 for high mileage examples but should you want one with low mileage, do not pay more than £3000.

\*The 3.5 V6 versions start at around £1500 while the Evolution's prices start at around £5000 due to its collector status.

\*Delica's can be bought for as little as £1000 and if you want one with low mileage £2500 should be sufficient.

# Notes on buying

\*Although a Pajero is a robust vehicle, avoid high-mileaged ones as there are plenty of low-mileaged ones available.

\*If the vehicle is a "grey import" from Japan it will show in kilometres on the odometer, not miles. Some Pajero / Delica's clocks have changed to indicate miles however. So, remember to ask the seller if the mileage on the clock is kilometres or miles.

\*The 2.8TD can have one big problem – a blown head gasket! Check under the oil filler cap for white mayonnaise and if there are any walk away or negotiate a huge discount!

\*On the V6 petrol versions you have to make sure it does not smoke. Let somebody rev it repeatedly while you stand by the exhaust looking for smoke. If there's smoke, say goodbye to the seller and walk away.

\*On petrol and diesel, manual or automatic, make sure the gearbox is OK. Auto's can sometimes suffer from "slipping" while the 2.8TD and V6's can eat gearboxes for lunch when driven hard. On the manual you have to listen for any strange noises, like a whine and make sure it has easy gear shifting. If there are any problems with the gearbox, avoid the car or negotiate a huge discount.

\*Make sure it has seven seats. (If it's a LWB Pajero)

\*While most Pajero's came with the "Super Select" 4WD system, the basic versions had a normal part-time 4WD system with 2H, 4H and 4L and with manual free-wheel hubs. The "Super Select" has 2H, 4H (which can be used on tarred roads) and 4L with centre diff-lock.

\*Many of the grey imported Pajero's does not have a rear diff-lock, and to make it capable off-road it really need a rear diff-lock. (most "grey imports has a limited-slip differential, which is crap) To make sure it has a rear diff-lock, check (or ask the seller over the phone) if it has a "R/D LOCK" on the lower section of the centre dashboard.

