

Suzuki Grand Vitara

(second generation)



A big improvement over its predecessor, the Grand Vitara became bigger, much more up marked and comfortable than the first generation Vitara / Grand Vitara while it still retained good off-road capabilities with low range.

Safety equipment included ABS brakes and dual airbags on most of the Grand Vitara's. The luxury list also gained electric windows, power steering and central locking as standard features while aircon and leather seats were an optional extra. The interior is also very car-like

More powerful 1.6 (71KW) and 2.0 (94KW) four cylinder 16valve engines were introduced with fuel economy that is rather good for a 4X4. And a reworked 2.5 V6 (106KW) also joined the party that gave it good performance, but fuel consumption suffer when driven enthusiastically. There was even a 2.7 V6 (138KW) on the XL-7 version. The 2.0TD was never sold in SA, so parts would be a problem – avoid the diesel. An automatic is also available should you need one. wheel base (SWB) layout.

4 body styles were offered

1- 3 door convertible: Available from £1500 this is a brilliant off-roader that'll provide huge fun, whether its around town or on the open road. The canvas roofs which fold down behind the rear seats are also quite quick and easy to take down or to erect. The big integrated roll-bars prevent injuries during an accident or roll-over, making it a very safe convertible.

The convertible is available with a 1.6 and 2.0 engine.



2 -3 door estate: Should you fancy a SWB hard top 4X4, look no further. Less fun than the cabriolet, but should be more practical



3- 5 door estate (5 seater):

A comfortable and spacious small-SUV. It's also still easy to manoeuvre around town. This Grand Vitara is available with a 2.0 and a 2.5 V6 engine.



4- 5 door estate (7 seater)

Called the XL-7, this has three rows of seats in a much longer body. The appearance isn't to everyone's tastes however. Not a Suzuki I would personally buy.



the 1.6 / 2.0 versions are so scarce that it's impossible to get hold of one used, as their current owners won't sell them! The convertible's are the rarest of the lot, sometimes fetching over R100 000 for a 2002 model with well over 100 000km / 60 000 miles on the clock.

Possible modifications:

-The very first step would be (when the tyres are worn) to replace those dread full, useless-in-the-mud "highway tyres" with a set of all-terrain or mud-terrain tyres. I'm not talking about those huge tractor tyres, but a size similar to what the vehicle has, just a more "aggressive" tread patter.

-Simple "engine chip upgrades" are available for the Grand Vitara should you want more power. These upgrades usually result in an improvement in fuel consumption as well.

-For around R2500-R3000 you can get yourself a wrap-around, steel bull bar which makes it look very aggressive. (and prevent damage in a light accident)

-If you really want to impress off-road, invest in a diff-lock. LockRight diff-locks go for around R5000 in South Africa.

-A small suspension lift can also be a good idea.

Prices: The cabrio and hard top SWB versions are called the GV1600 and GV2000. (Referring to the engine size) The price difference between the GV1600 and GV2000 is so small that it's really worth going for the more powerful GV2000. Depending on mileage, age and condition you can pick up a GV1600 from around £1000 and the prices go into the £6000 territory. Do not however pay more than £3000 for ANY Grand Vitara, and at £3000 it must have really low mileage (e.g. 20 000miles) and air-conditioning. For £2000 you should be able to get hold of a decent, low mileage Grant Vitara anyway.

Very few 2nd generation Grand Vitara's were sold in SA due to very high prices when new. They are still very popular second hand however. 2.5 V6's are more commonly found than the 1.6 / 2.0 four cylinder versions on the used market, and