

# PLUGGED-IN ELEGANCE

## *Range Rover Evoque P300e Dynamic SE*

**The Evoque has long been the Range Rover for those who want the badge without the battleship, the luxury without the land-yacht proportions. In its latest plug-in hybrid guise – specifically the Dynamic SE I had on test earlier this year – the P300e makes a strong case as the chicest, cleanest compact SUV on our roads.**

**F**inished in deep Tribeca Blue and riding on optional 20" Style 1085 wheels (a R5,000 extra), the Range Rover Evoque P300e Dynamic SE plug-in hybrid that we tested for a week earlier this year, looks every bit the sophisticated Sandton slipstreamer. It doesn't shout for attention – it doesn't need to. With its flush door handles, signature Pixel LED headlamps (R12,700), and coupe-like silhouette, the Evoque remains one of the prettiest SUVs in its class. Surprisingly, the optional sliding panoramic roof – a no-cost extra – further amplifies its stylish silhouette and lends the cabin an airier, more spacious feel.

The Dynamic SE trim is subtle in its embellishments, but there's a quietly confident athleticism, helped along

by those satin dark wheels and body-colour roof. It's as if it stepped out of a Soho boutique with just the right amount of tailoring.

### **CRAFTED FOR THE CONNECTED**

Inside, the Evoque continues the minimalist, modern Range Rover aesthetic. My test unit came trimmed in Ebony-grained leather, with tasteful Shadow Grey Ash veneer inserts (R1,100) – a premium and unfussy pairing. Unlike some rivals that chase tech excess, the Evoque's layout feels curated, almost Scandinavian in its clarity.

Taking centre stage is the elegant, curved 11.4" Pivi Pro touchscreen, now floating ever-so-slightly towards the driver like a thin slice of OLED magic. It supports wireless Android Auto and Apple CarPlay as standard, but the real trick lies in the simplified menu structure and snappy responsiveness. This is infotainment done properly.



ClearSight tech also makes an appearance here, including the digital interior rear-view mirror and the 3D surround camera system. The mirror, in particular, is a game-changer when the boot's fully loaded – although bifocal users might take a moment to adjust. Paired with the Head-Up Display (part of the R34,000 Technology Pack), the Evoque makes light work of urban navigation and tight parking garages.

#### WHISPERS AND WATTS

Under the bonnet sits a 1.5-litre three-cylinder turbocharged engine, paired with an electric motor and a battery pack large enough to offer up to 66 km of electric-only range – or about 47 km in real-world driving. Together, they produce 227 kW and 540 Nm, delivered to all four wheels via a nine-speed automatic gearbox. That's enough shove to get the Evoque from zero to 100 km/h in a brisk 7.2 seconds, which is hot-hatch territory in an SUV that weighs just over two tonnes.

What's more impressive, however, is how refined the powertrain feels. In EV mode, the Evoque glides through

traffic like a seasoned diplomat, entirely silent and serene. There's a sense of effortlessness when moving away from a stop, with only a faint whirr accompanying your departure. When the petrol engine joins the party, the transition is seamless – only the faint growl of the three-pot reminds you it's there.

Charging is equally painless: it supports DC rapid charging (up to 32 kW), which replenishes the battery to 80% in just 30 minutes. A full home top-up via a 7 kW wallbox takes just over two hours – ideal for overnight charging.

#### COMPOSED CONFIDENCE

On the road, the Evoque feels polished. On passive suspension, the ride is firm without being fussy – more composed than cushy, which is perfect for its positioning. There's a hint of tautness through the body when cornering, yet it remains plush enough over broken tar and suburban speed bumps.

It's not a driver's car in the traditional sense, but thanks to Torque Vectoring by Braking and Hill Descent Control, it has the tools to remain composed on a winding pass or during a muddy detour.







While most Evoques will probably never see proper off-road action, the inclusion of Terrain Response 2 means they could – and they'd likely do it with aplomb.

### TAILORED TECHNOLOGY

One of the highlights of this particular unit was the upgraded Meridian Surround Sound System (R18,000). With 14 speakers, a subwoofer, and all the psychoacoustic wizardry baked in, it delivers a listening experience that's rich and immersive. Podcasts sound like studio productions, while your go-to driving playlist transforms the cabin into a rolling concert hall.

Cabin Air Purification Plus also deserves a mention – especially in smoggy Jozi – actively managing CO<sub>2</sub> levels and airborne particulates to keep you breathing easy. Configurable ambient lighting with 10 colour options subtly underscores the Evoque's boutique-hotel atmosphere.

### PRACTICAL TOUCHES

Despite its sleek proportions, the Evoque remains a practical family proposition. The 472-litre boot is usefully

shaped, and with the rear seats folded, it opens up to 1,383 litres (wet volume). There's decent legroom in the second row too, and the optional powered tailgate comes standard – a boon when your hands are full with groceries or gym bags.

And speaking of everyday usability, the Evoque P300e can tow up to 1,600 kg and wade through 530 mm of water. So, while it may be more Maboneng than Makhonjwa, it's still a capable Land Rover at its core.

### IN SUMMARY

At R1,820,900 as tested, the Evoque P300e Dynamic SE sits at the upper end of the compact luxury SUV market. But with its mix of design, tech, hybrid refinement, and real-world usability, it feels worth every Rand, even if it does overshoot some rivals with a less conspicuous price tag. It's not the car for loud arrivals or racetrack antics. Instead, it's a quiet achiever: elegant, efficient, and perfectly dialled into the rhythm of modern life. ⑩

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