

BETWEEN THE FORD ENDEAVOUR AND THE MITSUBISHI PAJERO, THE FORD SCORES ON COMFORT WHILE THE MITSUBISHI IS MORE FUN TO DRIVE

Ouseph Chacko - Autocar India

If you want the best proper-body-on-ladder-frame SUV and have a budget of Rs 20 lakh or less, it's a toss-up between the Ford Endeavour and the Mitsubishi Pajero. Now powered by an even larger common-rail diesel motor, the Ford Endeavour Thunder+ is the reason why we brought these two SUVs together for a face-off. Power and gearing The Endeavour's new 3-litre motor doesn't disappoint. Refinement at idle is pretty good and the motor is very smooth when cruising. This is pretty much the case with the Pajero too, except it gets a bit boomy towards the top of its powerband.

At almost two tonnes, the Thunder+ is a big, heavy car but put your foot down and it lunges forward even from as low as 1,200 rpm. It has a massive 38.7 kgm of torque available at 2,500 rpm and once you're past 2,000 rpm, both power and torque ascend rapidly delivering a , strong, sustained shove. The motor, however, starts running out of steam once it closes in on 4,000 rpm.

The Pajero's gearbox is slick all you need to do to select a gear is tap the gear lever in the right direction. The Pajero surges forward on a tap of the throttle, but after the initial response there isn't much more by way of performance. Road manners Let's start with the Pajero's steering. It has almost no slack built in, is direct, perfectly weighted, and sends the car exactly where you want it to go. You have a sense of what both the front and the rear wheels are doing, there is almost no pitching and the brakes have bags of feel. Bump absorption is superb, and the Pajero is only pushed off its line by really large craters.

The Ford pitches a fair bit over bad roads and possesses none of the body control of the Mitsubishi and handling is nowhere as polished. Steering feel is decent and grip is good, but the Ford is sometimes reluctant to turn into a corner. A lot of the blame falls on that leaf spring rear suspension. . Comfort Where the Ford scores over the Pajero in this area, is the brakes, with the Japanese car taking longer to stop. The Ford is the better car to drive off-road thanks to fatter torque and greater ground clearance.

Unlike the Pajero however, you can't shift to four-wheel-drive on the fly Both cars have antiquated lever . type selectors for 4WD and low ratio mode. Not much has changed on the inside of the Endeavour Thunder+ but the freshened-up interior offered when the 2.5 motor was launched is comfortable and well-built. Verdict The Pajero may have fantastic ride and handling but it has an antiquated diesel motor and its interiors are old. It is reasonably comfortable, the refined diesel is relatively lag-free and it gets the job done.

However, the Ford is a genuinely fast SUV with little or no fuel penalty Its interiors are spacious and . comfortable and the dashboard and plastics have a solid, long-lasting feel.

Where the Ford falls short is in the ride and handling department. It doesn't drive anywhere as well as the Mitsubishi.

So while the Pajero is the better drive for sure, the Ford is the better car and cheaper as well.

