



## Ladies ONLY

### Living With.....the Kia Soul Burner

Weeks 2 -4

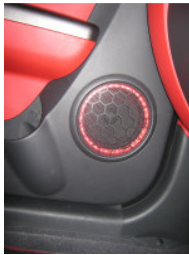
OMG. The Soul just grows on you, becomes a part of your day that you look forward to, getting into the Soul and driving to...anywhere. Work, Gym, School, Shopping; all are far more fun with Soul.

Where to start on the good things about Soul?

Safety is always at the forefront of our minds, especially when we have children. What do we like about Soul safety? The reversing camera in the rear view mirror. Just so simple and effective. Love it. Braking is excellent, despite the seemingly big wheels the Soul stops fast when we need it to. Steering – or handling as our male counterparts love to call it – is light and easy. So much so that parking, yes even in Westfield centres, is a breeze. Soul looks big, but is easy to manoeuvre and park.

Doors open quite wide at the back, wide enough to get baby seats in and out easily – and, of course, babies and small children. And we don't forget the older generation, who found getting into and out of Soul quite easy due, mainly, to the elevation of the car from the road.

Which leads us neatly to another of the Soul's facets; the higher driving position, which allows us smaller females to see more in front of us, which we feel makes us feel safer on the road.



And we love the sound system – not just the flashing lights in the front door speaker, although they are fun – the deep clear sound at all levels. And the ease of use of the sound system, the buttons are clearly marked and we liked the steering wheel controls.



Plugging our MP3 player in was very easy, especially for those of us who have not integrated these things into our lives completely.

What's missing then? Ironically the Soul needs BlueTooth. Just as we may not be conversant with all the latest technology, we are aware enough that a BlueTooth makes life not just easier but safer.

Soul has completed a fair few kilometres with us Ladies, taking the walking crew to the west of Auckland for one. We all found the Soul comfortable and no one complained over the lumps and bumps of the metal road to the base camp.



Not just that but we found that the boot is larger than it looks. All our kit (packs and boots) was easily swallowed up and no crushing either. We would have liked a pull over cover, but Kia reckons that the highly tinted privacy glass does the job quite well.

We did enjoy the 'hideaway' storage under the boot floor.

When that's full though – and it doesn't hold too much – what do you do next? Small, important point to us.

The seats are amazingly good: we Ladies often complain about high head restraints that push in on our heads. Indeed one of us is actually notorious in reversing the things to make life more comfortable. Not in Soul, the head restraints are very, very good. As are all the seats. Small point here, the front mats have a hooked anchor which combines with the grips under the mat to stop it sliding around. Simple, yet very effective.



Being Ladies we like other creature comforts too. The dash board bin – complete with catch – holds all kinds of useful items, including sunglasses, gym membership cards, lipstick, all those things we simply can't do without...

Soul attracts attention wherever you take it; admiring looks abound from other ladies out doing their everyday lives. Following one fitness class all the ladies came out to have a look at our black Soul Burner. And it was during the 'look around' session that we discovered some interesting opinions on Soul.



Roughly dividing the Ladies the above 35 generation really liked the looks, space, comfort, looks, style and the funky side of Soul, including, yes, those flashing speakers. The below 35 generation quite liked the technology, the funky interior, the front end, but were troubled by the back of the Soul, too un-funky for them.

We're doing some more running around in Soul before she goes back – sad moment that will be – but we hope to get a different colour version next time, if Kia let us, and see if that makes a different impression on the under 35 generation.

Meanwhile we are going to savour every moment we have with the Soul Burner and enjoy all those trips, long and short, while we can.

### **First Impressions**

**Oh gosh...**



The Ladies and I awaited the arrival of our Soul with eager anticipation, we had seen the TV ad's and agreed that the car looked funky, different and something that those of us young at heart would appreciate and enjoy.

The day arrived, it was in fact the Press Launch of the Kia Soul and we were to be among the first in New Zealand to have one to play with.

I have to admit I had set my heart on a red one (Burner, the top of the range vehicle comes in two colours, red and black) and was slightly disappointed when 'he' – the male Road-Tests.com editor – rocked up in a black one. He was, to put it mildly, like a 5 year old in a toy shop, and insisted on dragging me out to have a look at the car.



OK so it's black, but when I got into it and found the bright red parts of the interior I admit I cheered up. Soul has some neat electronic trickery fitted to Burner and 'he' lost no time in showing me how the main one worked. I, on the other hand, was still taking in the interior, the red dash, the very comfortable seats...a boon for me and for us girls...and of course the driving position, high up and able to survey the world beneath. Not quite but you get the picture.

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Finally I was persuaded to look at the electronic fun stuff, not least the one that had 'him' jumping up and down like a kid...the strobe lights fitted to the front door speakers. And yes I had to agree that they are something different, especially as the system links to the sound output so they flash in time to the music, in one mode. The speaker light system has two modes and a bright/dim control and of course off. At night these red lights are a lot of fun, especially if you pick the right music to get the

best out of them.

However, what was the electronic 'toy' that had me excited?



The rear view mirror. Or to be more precise the rear view camera that feeds to a crisp screen embedded into the rear view mirror.

I have to admit that this is one of the best features of the Soul. I and the other Ladies of the Road-Tests.com Ladies Only section are not terribly tall, so being able to check and view the rear of the car by using this mirror makes excellent sense to us. A vast improvement to other dash mounted rear view screens. From a safety perspective we can easily check for any children behind the car.

Over the next month we'll be bringing you our experiences of living with Soul, the bits we think are maybe not as good as we either expect or anticipated.

First impressions are often the ones that stay with us, and my first impression of Soul is that it is very different from most other cars we have driven. It is innovative, funky and easy to drive.