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**THE NEW FIAT PANDA CROSS:**

**A CAR LIKE NO OTHER**

* **Based on the successful and hugely capable FIAT Panda 4X4, the new FIAT Panda Cross offers even more capability, attitude and fun**
* **'Torque-on-Demand' all-wheel drive, Electronic Stability Control, Electronic Locking Differential and Hill Descent Control all standard**
* **New Terrain Control selector offers the driver the choice of three driving modes depending on conditions**
* **Powered by uprated versions of the 1.3 MultiJet II turbo-diesel engine, now with 80hp.**
* **Oversized tyres, improved attack angles, increased ground clearance and additional component protection enhance all-terrain ability**

Being able to offer something truly unique in the increasingly competitive SUV segment is no small achievement but in the FIAT Panda Cross that’s exactly what you get – a car like no other! In 2006 SUVs accounted for around seven percent of the total car market in Europe whereas today they accounts for approximately 20 percent, and yet despite the proliferation of models in the past decade the new FIAT Panda Cross remains a truly unique offering by combining the genuine capabilities of a proper off-road vehicle with the efficiency and practicality of a versatile city car.

The technological upgrades of the FIAT Panda Cross make it the most capable vehicle in its class some margin – more so even than the award-winning FIAT Panda 4X4\* on which it is based - yet it is a car that could still be chosen purely for its low running costs, day-to-day practicality and general ease and pleasure of use. The aesthetic enhancements not only provide some visual clues to the all-road potential of the FIAT Panda Cross, they also perform the functional role of protecting its bodywork, lights and mechanical components, both in extreme off road conditions and the rough and tumble of city traffic. No other car can offer such extreme cross functionality, but then FIAT does have more than 30 years of experience in city car innovation: The FIAT Panda was first to be offered with all-wheel drive in its segment, as well as the first to be powered by diesel, methane and LPG. More recently it pioneered City Brake Control in its segment, a safety feature that is ideally suited to city cars but until that time reserved for larger luxury vehicles. It’s this reputation for practical innovation that has consistently kept the Panda amongst the best sellers in its class – it currently occupies the second spot in Europe, just behind its stable-mate, the FIAT 500.

The new FIAT Panda Cross builds on the combination of versatility and style which has always been a hallmark of the range-topping Panda 4X4 versions, ranging from the FIAT Panda 4X4 Steyer-Puch special edition of the late 80s to the previous-generation FIAT Panda Cross, which was first launched in 2006. In keeping with the distinctive looks of its predecessor, the front end of the new FIAT Panda Cross is dominated by a chunky new bumper which features scratch- and bump-resistant corner sections and a large, functional skidplate - finished in silver “ultrashine” and enhanced with cooling perforations in the Panda’s signature “squircle” shape. The skidplate is further embellished with a pair of easily-accessed tow hooks, finished in brilliant red, as well as new LED daytime running lights located in protective recesses. The new head-light clusters are framed with matte black surrounds and incorporate pronounced new fog lights, while the bonnet trim is also redesigned for the new FIAT Panda Cross.

In profile, the FIAT Panda Cross features protective wheel arch extensions, thick side mouldings with “ultrashine” inserts, matching roof bars and ‘Cross’ badging in the rear door inserts. The 15-inch alloy wheels feature a five-spoke V design and a burnished metal finish, while the rear end also benefits from some functional revisions, including a new bumper with “ultrashine” under-body protection, distinctive new light clusters and a chrome tail pipe.

The interior reflects the unique character of the FIAT Panda Cross every bit as much as the exterior: The seats are trimmed in bespoke natural fabrics with brown eco-leather bolsters (which match the brown door panels) while the dashboard is finished in a new copper colour to set off the striking new silver “ultrashine” finish of the instrument surround and audio system facia. The same finish is also used for the centre console, where the new Terrain Control drive selector – another segment first - is conveniently located.

Terrain Control offers FIAT Panda Cross drivers the possibility of adjusting the vehicle’s driving characteristics according to how it is being used: There are three modes: Auto, Off-Road and Hill Descent Control.

Auto mode, as the name suggest, automatically distributes the engine torque between the front and rear axles without requiring any input from the driver. On normal roads with good traction, the FIAT Panda Cross is 98 percent front-wheel drive but when a loss of traction is detected the system is capable of automatically reacting by redistributing the engine torque between axles in just a tenth of a second. The level of torque distribution is varied depending on the specific situation using an electro-hydraulically controlled, multi-plate central differential and is versatile enough to direct the entire torque output of the engine to the rear axle if necessary.

In Off-Road mode, the all-wheel drive function is permanently activated up to 50km/h to ensure the Panda Cross responds immediately and consistently to driver inputs: The Electronic Locking Differential (ELD) is engaged, ASR intervention is disengaged and to improve traction on slippery terrain (e.g. snow, ice, gravel or mud), the ESC system is employed to brake slipping wheels, thus transferring the engine’s torque to those wheels with the most grip.

Hill Descent Control (HDC) activates automatically when the speed drops below 15mph and remains in standby mode up to 50km/h. It employs the vehicle’s ESC sensors and ABS brake system to maintain constant speed and avoid unexpected yaw movements on tricky downhill terrain with unpredictable levels of grip, and requires no input from the driver other than steering actions.

The FIAT Panda Cross also benefits from versatile all-season 185/65R15 Mud & Snow tyres. Larger than those of the standard Panda 4x4, these tyres were specially developed to ensure optimum traction and responsiveness on wet and dry surfaces, as well snow-covered roads, while also ensuring excellent off-road performance. When combined with specific springs and redesigned bodywork, they help increase the ground clearance to 158 mm, while the improved attack angles of the FIAT Panda Cross are now close to those enjoyed by pure off-road vehicles: the approach angle is 24 degrees, the departure angle is 34 degrees and the breakover angle is 21 degrees, while the FIAT Panda Cross can tackle a maximum gradient of 70 percent and lateral gradients of up to 55 percent.

These figures aren’t just for bragging rights: The FIAT Panda Cross backs these numbers up by offering protective, steel, underbody shields to allow drivers to tackle genuinely tough terrain without damaging essential components, and the air intake duct for the engine is raised by 739mm to ensure the Panda Cross has no difficulty in fording the occasion river or flooded road.

Even the engine is upgraded for the new FIAT Panda Cross: The 1.3-litre MultiJet II Turbo-Diesel engine, with DPF as standard, enjoys a 5hp boost in power to 80hp at 4,000 rpm, while maximum torque is an impressive 190Nm at just 1,500 rpm. This second generation of MultiJet power units is equipped with a fixed geometry turbocharger and an intercooler and weighs just 140kg including all its ancillaries. It can propel the FIAT Panda Cross from 0-100km/h in 14.3 seconds and on to a top speed of 159km/h, and on the combined fuel economy cycle it returns 4.7 litres/100 km with CO2 emissions of 125g/km.

The FIAT Panda Cross offers a comprehensive list of standard equipment, including automatic climate control; Blue&Me™ Bluetooth connectivity with a USB port and steering wheel controls; a satellite navigation dock; heated electric door mirrors; remote central locking; split rear seat with rear head restraints; height-adjustability for the driver’s seat and steering wheel; front fog lights; a leather steering wheel and gear knob; ESC system complete with ELD and Terrain Control and specific 15-inch alloy wheels with a burnished finish and all-season 185/65R15 M+S tyres.

A comprehensive range of optional equipment and accessories is also available, including a Winter Pack (€350 - heated windscreen and heated front seats), rear parking sensors (€300), darkened rear windows (€200) and the innovative City Brake Control system (€300) which received a 'Euro NCAP Advanced’ reward for its contribution to road safety in 2013. This active safety system operates at speeds of up to 30km/h and employs a LIDAR laser sensor to detect the presence of vehicles or obstacles in front of the car and, depending on the data it receives from the ESC system, can automatically utilise the vehicle’s Automatic Emergency Braking (AEB), Brake Prefill and Brake Assist systems if the driver fails to intervene promptly. By deploying these emergency braking systems, the FIAT Panda Cross can then avoid or mitigate the consequences of a collision.

The 2014 FIAT Panda Cross goes on sale in the New Year priced from €22,745. For more information please visit [www.FIATpress.ie](http://www.FIATpress.ie) and for more information on the FIAT Panda 4X4 or the broader FIAT range visit [www.FIAT.ie](http://www.FIAT.ie).

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\* Top Gear magazine's ‘SUV of the Year’ 2012 and 4X4 Magazine’s ‘Mini 4X4' of 2014,