

Alpine A110 Légende GT 2021

It's a GT not only in name - once it gets a little help on the luggage front

WHEN HOLIDAY SEASON COMES AROUND, it's not uncommon to see **evo's** long-termers temporarily trading places, the cars with greater passenger and/or luggage space experiencing a period of higher demand. There's no doubt that it's extremely convenient to be able to make such easy swaps, but it can also feel a little bit like cheating and not very 'real world'. What if that less commodious car were your only car?

Or perhaps you'd simply much rather be driving that car than any other alternative available. It's for this reason that I decided to use 'my' Alpine for a week away this month. I knew driver and passenger would be fine - the GT's seats are comfortable on the long haul and the cabin is spacious enough to not feel claustrophobic. It was luggage that would be the challenge. The A110 has a boot front and rear, but both are modestly sized - a couple of three-quarter-full squashy weekend bags and a pair of day-sized rucksacks and you're pretty much done - so extra storage on the outside of the car would be very helpful.

There's no official solution (which seems like a missed trick), no mounting points for a roof rack either, and a rack attached with vacuum suction cups was quickly ruled out because of our car's matt paint. All of which led me towards a Boot-bag. It's a simple concept - a waterproof bag that straps to a car's bootlid - yet it works

exceptionally well. It takes less than five minutes to fit, the soft webbing of the straps and a non-slip mat between bag and car ensure there's no damage to paintwork, and with a similar capacity to a suitcase (there are 50 and 75-litre versions) it enables you to carry a generous amount of extra stuff. There was no discernable wind noise coming from it on the Alpine, either. In fact the only negative was losing the view out through the rear window, although it's reassuring being able to observe how the bag doesn't budge an inch, even when you're, ahem, 'stress-testing' it.

With tyre pressures increased to their upper recommended settings to better bear the full load, the seven-hour schlep from Cambridgeshire to the south-west corner of England proved entirely easy going, the 370 miles covered on a single tank of superunleaded thanks to a 40mpg average. Cornwall may not be packed with great driving roads, but in many ways that made the way the Alpine continued to conduct itself more impressive. For all its ability to engage and entertain when the time is right, it's also an undemanding sports car in which to do non-sporting journeys; never recalcitrant, inconvenient or frustrating.

Did that make taking the A110 instead of a colleague's saloon/estate/SUV a pointless exercise? Not at all, because it still added to the experience. Unlike, say, our woefully forgettable



Cupra Leon hatchback that I took to the Highlands last year, the A110 will always be inextricably linked with this holiday - for being the car that slipped effortlessly along the mirror-scrapingly narrow streets of old fishing villages, for the numerous conversations with strangers that it sparked, for being the appealing shape waiting for us at the end of each day out, and because we didn't take the easy option and swap it for a bigger long-termer. Even if, as it turned out, taking the Alpine wasn't the hard option at all.

Ian Eveleigh

Date acquired February 2022 **Total mileage** 9858 **Mileage this month** 1477
Costs this month £109.95 (Boot-bag)
mpg this month 37.9

