

Us and Our LEAF

ANDREA CHARLTON and ANDREW EVERARD (SHASA)

When did you first seriously think about buying an electric car?

We've been thinking about electric cars since Jeremy Clarkson first admitted on Top Gear that he was really excited about this new, cool kind of vehicle—it was a Tesla. If a cynical petrol head like Clarkson was getting excited it was time to pay some attention. Then Jack Egan let us have a drive of his Tesla on the way to the Jindabyne EV Day in April and I was hooked. Kathryn loaned us the SHASA LEAF to visit family in Canberra, and we realised that we could actually manage this. It was just a matter of finding a car to buy as supply was very tight by mid 2022.

What was it that got you excited about the car you chose?

To be honest, we were more keen on the idea of EVs than on this one in particular. Rob Ogilvie from Ion DNA pointed out that this might not be our forever car, but that since it would probably hold its value in the second hand market due to the tight supply we could consider trading it for another car with more range down the track as more choices became available here and waiting times shrank.

What's the best thing about being an EV driver?

Guilt-free motoring. We've been more and more concerned about our use of fossil fuels over the last two years. We've replaced the gas heating and cooking at home, installed solar panels and batteries, and added more home insulation and better window treatments, but it wasn't really enough. Now we feel better about our household emissions and are happier to travel to visit family and friends.

What's the best, or funniest, or most memorable comment you've received from someone else?

"You just picked it up this morning and you're about to drive from Canberra to Noosa. Are you nuts?"

Is there one negative you would like to mention?

Having to stop and charge every 150 km or so is not actually a negative, it's a great opportunity to rest, re-charge, explore small towns that have fast chargers, and chat with other EV drivers, and interested motorists. We've met some great folks on our travels.

What would be your advice to someone thinking about an EV right now?

Go for it. Every trip in an EV saves on carbon emissions while it saves you money. If you're planning a serious road trip in Australia, make sure your car is covered by NRMA for roadside assistance and towing. Always (really, always) check in the morning to make sure all the fast chargers you need to visit are in service and that the location isn't closed at the hours you need. Check the recent user comments. Be prepared to be flexible. And enjoy the experience!



