

Road beat: Cadenza – best Kia on the market



The Kia Cadenza elevates the carmaker's choices to a higher level. Photos/Larry Weitzman

By Larry Weitzman

When Kia came to the United States about 20 years ago, its only product was a no frills compact called the Sephia priced for thousands less than brand T or H. Now they have gone not just one better, but perhaps infinitely better with the all new Cadenza, and no I am not talking about a piece of office furniture to hold supplies.

Kia makes some great cars such as its highly rated and great looking Optima or its Sorento crossover, but this new Cadenza is their best effort yet and it's no wonder why Kia has become

one of the fastest growing car brands in the United States. Although its very shapely body is only a 195 inches long and only 73 inches wide (that's 5 inches longer and an inch wider than your average midsize), it meets the EPA's definition of a large car with a total interior volume of 123 cubic feet including 16 cubes of trunk.

And what an interior it is. Done in soft nappa leather, the front seats are simply sublime with enough rear seat room to handle the front line of the Sacramento Kings. Even the outboard rear seats are heated with the luxury package or in the limited model. Everything you touch is either soft touch or wood and it exudes luxury. In the tested limited model, there are no options, everything is standard including blind spot detection, lane warning departure, adaptive xenon HID headlights and the best laser (smart) cruise control ever encountered by the Road Beat. It is so quiet and noises are so muted, it feels more like a well-appointed bank vault.



Specifications

Price (with destination)
\$35,900 to about \$43,200

Engine

3.3L DOHC, 24 valve V-6 293
hp A 6,400 rpm
255 ft.-lbs. of torque @
5,200 rpm

Transmission

Six speed torque converter

automatic with paddle
shifters

Configuration

Transversely mounted front
engine/front wheel drive

Dimensions

Wheelbase 112.0 inches

Length 195.5 inches

Width 72.8 inches

Height 58.1 inches

Track (f/r) 63.0/63.0 inches

Weight (18"/19" wheels)
3,668/3792 pounds

Ground clearance 5.4 inches

Fuel Capacity 18.5 gallons

Cabin interior volume 106.8
cubic feet

Trunk volume 15.9 cubic feet

Turning circle 36.5 feet

Steering lock to lock 2.9
turns

Wheels (std/opt)

18X7.5/19X8.5 inch alloys

Tires (std/opt)

245/45X18/245/40X19 inch
radials

Performance

0-60 mph 6.34 seconds

50-70 mph 3.20 seconds

50-70 mph uphill 4.42
seconds

Top speed Way beyond sanity

Fuel economy EPA rated at
19/28/22 mpg

city/highway/combined.

Expect 33 mpg in highway
driving at legal speeds and

25-26 mpg overall in
suburban/rural driving.

The exterior is also strikingly beautiful with, soft well proportioned shapes and lines. Perhaps the only improvement could be made to the rear quarter window line that has an upsweep to it. A more level lower line might look better.

Under the hood is a silky, advanced 3.3L liter DOHC 24 valve V-6 that pumps out 293 hp at 6,400 rpm and peak torque of 255 pounds at 5,200 rpm meaning it is also making about 255 hp at that same rpm (one pound of torque equals one hp at 5,252 rpm). Even with a stratospheric 12:1 compression ratio, because of its advanced direct cylinder fuel injection and other design features it runs fine on regular gasoline. That power gets to the front wheels through a very smooth six speed auto cog swapper and it provides superb performance. Zero to 60 mph arrives in a near world class time of 6.34 seconds. And that was with having to modulate the throttle to prevent too much wheel spin (traction control was switched off). Passing times show the same moxie with a simulated 50-70 mph acceleration time of 3.20 seconds and the same run up a six percent grade only slowing that time to 4.42 seconds. And because of its quiet and unruffled nature, it goes about its business almost unfettered.

Fuel economy is another bonus. While the EPA rates the Cadenza at 19/28/22 mpg city/highway/combined, it averaged 26 mpg overall and achieved 33 mpg on a level highway at 70 mph. Even during performance testing it never averaged below 21 mpg. You can call it guiltless luxury. Another positive is the Cadenza's large 18.5 gallon fuel tank which equates to an over 500 mile cruising range.

All four corners are suspended independently, MacPherson struts up front and a multilink set up in the rear with coils all around and stab bars at both ends. A quick electric rack (2.9 turns lock to lock) performs the direction changes and

the whole set up is well balanced and provides responsive, powerful cornering. Helping in the direction changes are 245/40 series rubber mounted on wide 19 x 8.5 inch alloys. Standard rubber is 245/45 x 18 on 18 x 7.5 inch alloys that will also provide good cornering power. What I found surprising was how the Cadenza's cornering attitude remained flat when pushed hard in the twisties despite of a curb weight of nearly 3,800 pounds. Turn in is crisp and understeer is mild. It is a pleasure to drive aggressively. Turning circle is a tight 36 feet.

While the handling is very good, so is the ride quality and it is exceedingly quiet, so quiet you have to think in a whisper. There is little to no float while remaining supple and very compliant even over the smallest imperfections. On the highway it is solid like the aforementioned bank vault. At 70 mph there is no wind or road noise with the engine spinning an inaudible, low 2,000 rpm.

Braking is done by large four-wheel discs (front ventilated) that can arrest forward progress from 40 mph in a short 42 feet under perfect control. Besides all the safety acronyms you would expect such as ESC (electronic stability control), TCS (traction control), ABS, EBD, HAC (hill-start assist control), TPMS (tire pressure monitoring system), BAC (brake assist control), Kia adds a second stability control called VSM also known as vehicle stability management. It is a veritable alphabet soup of safety. Special mention needs to be made for the excellent high and low beam xenon HID active front lighting system that turns night into day which is especially appreciated when driving on dark rural roads. And if that doesn't float your boat, the eight air bags will.



The Cadenza is roomy.

Inside besides the wonderful luxurious interior which would be fit for cars costing thousands more in design, fit, finish and materials, is a superb dash with a seven inch TFT screen which appears as a large, centered analog speedo and data information center. The left flanking tach and right side ancillary gauges are analog with actual dials. But it is the way the information panel changes screens which is so cool like they are real pages flipping up and down. Then there is the gear indicator that acts like a rotating barrel indicator and appears to rotate horizontally and vertically depending whether going from park to drive (vertically) or going from sixth gear to fifth gear using the paddle shifter (horizontally). It is fun to see it work and it is the slickest system I have ever seen.

The standard sound/nav system is one of the best and easiest to use. Even the HVAC is controlled by separate large stylish buttons while the sound system has electronic knobs for tuning and volume although the knobs could be a bit larger.

Cargo volume is a very large 16 cubic feet, but while the trunk hinges are protected, they do intrude a bit. Rear seats do fold to expand the cargo space.

Pricing starts at \$35,100 for the premium model plus \$800 for the boat ride from Korea. There is only one option package called the Luxury package which stickers at \$3,150. My limited (denoted by SXL on the trunk deck) comes with no options, or

in other words, everything is standard, lists for \$42,400 plus the destination. My vote would be for the premium plus the luxury package. It's a lot of car for under \$40 large. Even the standard premium car, which leaves little to be desired, is a bargain in this class of cars.

Larry Weitzman has been into cars since he was 5 years old. At 8 he could recite from memory the hp of every car made in the U.S. He has put in thousands of laps on racetracks all over the Western United States.

Mixed-use retail likely at Ski Run-Hwy. 50



A developer bought this parcel from South Lake Tahoe for \$1.1 million. Photo/LTN file

By Kathryn Reed

One of South Lake Tahoe's prime pieces of real estate may be more than a plot of dirt 18 months from now.

Halferty Development Corporation out of Pasadena has until

June 1, 2016, to obtain a building permit for the nearly 1.5 acres at the corner of Highway 50 and Ski Run Boulevard and still retain incentives from the city.

The City Council on Jan. 20 unanimously agreed to sell the parcel to the developer for \$1.1 million. For that amount the city is also throwing in 12,000 square feet of commercial floor area (CFA) if the developer follows an agreed-upon timeline.

The property did not have any CFA or tourist accommodation units (TAU). It does have coverage and 88 parking spaces in the garage next door. How many more parking spaces it will have depends on the building and the design.

CFA and TAUs are commodities the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency came up with years ago to regulate growth, but instead have backfired a bit by creating a less than free market for development and value in items that don't exist elsewhere in the world.

The city acquired this property from the South Lake Tahoe Redevelopment Agency for \$800,000 after the state dissolved redevelopment agencies. At that time the council borrowed the money from reserves with the intent that it be returned to that pot. However, City Manager Nancy Kerry pointed out that this council may do what it likes with the \$1.1 million. The council did not discuss where the proceeds would go.

A mixed-use retail center with the possibility of tourist units on the second floor is one concept. The city has been promised a drive-through drug store will not be going there. Other developers have wanted to build one, and Halferty has experience doing so.

James Halferty was not available for comment. He was one of three developers vying for the land.

Mayor Hal Cole told *Lake Tahoe News* the Southern California

firm was chosen because it has the most experience, has the ability to start right away and came up with a price the city liked. Plus, Halferty was willing to give the city more control than the others.

"The most important thing is that it needs to look nice," Cole said.

He knows tenants will change through the years, but he wants a building that will last 50 years, not look dated and rundown. During council member comments Cole expressed his frustration with the Auto Zone and BevMo buildings looking like they could be built in any town. He wants a more rigorous design standard so there is more of a mountain feel to what is built going forward. He is proposing the Planning Commission have more input into design.

How many millions of dollars Halferty will invest remains to be seen.

And if lodging is part of the project, he will have to obtain TAUs. Kerry said the city would work with smaller hotels and those wanting to buy them to help make that a reality.

A possible use is some sort of food court that would be attractive to the summer beach crowd and winter skiers. It could be grab and go, as well as have areas to sit around fire pits.

"He said to the negotiating committee, 'What do you really want and I'll build it'," Kerry said. But with its being a small parcel, the options are somewhat limited.

There will be entrances off both streets. And pedestrians will get a crosswalk from this site to Ski Run Marina across Highway 50.

Opinion: Sandoval not following Republican script

By John L. Smith, Las Vegas Review-Journal

At least we now know why the Democrats didn't recruit a substantial candidate against Gov. Brian Sandoval in the last election.

It would have been hard to find anyone capable of running to the left of our popular Republican. But given the sorry state of Nevada's public education system, that might actually be a good thing.

The state possesses few viable Democrats with politics more progressive than those espoused Thursday by Sandoval in his State of the State, in which he called for a \$7.3 billion two-year budget. That includes \$1.5 billion in additional revenue: \$580 million in the "endless sunset" tax extension, \$80 million in increased cigarette taxes, and \$440 million from a new fee on business licenses.

A Republican suggesting a big bump in a business tax?

Read the whole story

LTCC denied 4-year pilot

school status

By Kathryn Reed

Lake Tahoe Community College is not one of the 15 two-year institutions that will be part of a pilot program to offer a four-year degree.

LTCC was one of 36 schools vying for this opportunity.

“The board, faculty, staff, students and administration are disappointed, although remain supportive of the California Community College baccalaureate pilot,” LTCC President Kindred Murillo told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The University of California and California State University systems need to find ways to accommodate more students. Allowing community colleges to offer four-year degrees would do that.

LTCC proposed a public safety administration degree.

The campuses and programs approved Jan. 20 are:

- Antelope Valley College – airframe manufacturing technology
- Bakersfield College – industrial automation
- Crafton Hills College – emergency services and allied health systems
- Cypress College – mortuary science
- Feather River College – equine industry
- Foothill College – dental hygiene
- Mira Costa College – biomanufacturing
- Modesto Junior College –respiratory care

- Rio Hondo College – automotive technology
- San Diego Mesa College – health information management
- Santa Ana College – occupational studies
- Santa Monica College – interaction design
- Shasta College – health information management
- Skyline College – respiratory therapy
- West Los Angeles College – dental hygiene.

The setback does not mean LTCC won't offer four-year degrees at some point. This has been Murillo's mission since arriving in South Lake Tahoe a handful of years ago.

"LTCC will continue our efforts to bring public undergraduate and graduate degree programs through the university center model," she said.

Through a more than \$5 million donation from Lisa Maloff the college within the next two years plans to begin construction on a standalone 5,500-square-foot university center. A university center is a location on a community college campus occupied by staff from four-year colleges who offer their programs locally.

SLT fills commission, committee assignments

Some fresh faces and seasoned veterans were appointed Tuesday by the South Lake Tahoe City Council to a variety of commissions.

- Michael Siracuse was appointed for a two-year term on the Airport Land Use Commission. Former Councilman Ted Long also applied. The council opted to have a vacancy on the commission instead of appointing Long.
- David Huber, Ketih Cloutier, Chip Henderson, Dale Rise and Randy Vogelgesang are on the Building/ADA Board of Appeals. This board still needs two physically handicapped members.
- Eleven applied for five Parks & Recreation Commission spots. Appointed were Rebecca Bryson, Peter Fink, Steven Knoll, Bonnie Turnbull and Scott Valentine.
- Fourteen applied for the Planning Commission. The appointees are Scott Blumenthal, Judy Brown, Shannon Eckmeyer, Dale Rise and Craig Woodward.

The council all rejiggered assignments for members.

- Hal Cole: City Selection Committee, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, Abandoned Vehicle Abatement JPA, Tahoe Prosperity Center, Successor Agency.
- Wendy David: Cal-Tahoe JPA, Clean Tahoe, Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce (non-voting), South Tahoe Public Utility District (liaison).
- Tom Davis: California Tahoe Conservancy, Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority, South Tahoe Chamber of Commerce.
- JoAnn Conner: Cal-Tahoe JPA, League of California Cities, Recreation JPA, Waste Management JPA.
- Austin Sass: El Dorado County LAFCo, Tahoe Transportation District, South Lake Tahoe Lodging Association.

The council kept with tradition of having the mayor and mayor pro tem be the Finance Committee. Davis and Conner will continue with the Airport Subcommittee Master Plan. New committees created Jan. 20 include: Parks-Recreation Master Plan Implementation Committee – Sass and Davis; Economic Development – Sass and David; LTUSD-LTCC Negotiating Committee – David and Conner; Development Committee – Cole and Sass.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe



- Barton Foundation raised \$63,000 during the Festival of Trees and Lights for Barton Hospice.

- The former Bank of America building in Stateline is about to be an El Dorado Savings Bank, which will leave a vacancy in the Bijou Center in South Lake Tahoe.
- Lack of snow has forced Tahoe Donner Cross County to close. To stay updated, go online.
- Tahoe Paradise Resort Improvement District's board meets Jan. 22 at 6pm at the Lake Valley Fire Station on Keetak in Meyers.
- South Tahoe High School basketball teams play Lowry on Friday. The boys are 6-2 after round one, STHS is 5-3. Girls tip off at 6pm, boys at 7:30pm. STHS girls are 4-4 and Lowry is 8-0. STHS girls are fighting hard for one of four playoff spots.

Demand for backcountry-like

terrain prompts resorts to up the ante inbounds

By Avery Stonich, Outdoor

When the new Kachina Peak lift opens at Taos Ski Valley this season, inbound skiers and riders will gain access to prime terrain once reserved only for those willing to hike to the top. The triple chair will whisk people up to 12,450 feet, just shy of the Kachina Peak summit, increasing Taos' advanced and expert lift-serviced terrain by 50 percent.

"Kachina offers an adventure similar to backcountry skiing and riding, and we know many of our visitors are actively seeking more of that type of experience," says Jesse Keaveny, chief marketing officer for Taos Ski Valley. "By adding the lift, we provide snowsports enthusiasts that thrill of untamed expert terrain, but in a more accessible – and controlled – way."

Taos isn't the only resort trying to bring backcountry-like experiences to its customers. According to National Ski Areas Association data, inbound snowsports visits dropped almost 10 percent from 2010-11 to 2013-14. While back-to-back dismal snow years in some regions (looking at you, California) take some of the blame, the improved performance of backcountry gear has allowed more skiers and riders to feed their stoke beyond resort boundaries. Backcountry gear sales have jumped nearly eight percent since 2011-12 and sales of hybrid alpine/AT boots have quintupled during the last four years, according to Snowsports Industries America.

Read the whole story

U.S. Treasury seeks to guard against illegal sports wagers

By Brett Wolf, Reuters

The U.S. Treasury Department's anti-money laundering unit may soon ask casinos to be on the lookout for illegal sports wagers flowing into the U.S. financial system, according to two sources familiar with the matter.

The goal is to stifle illegal sports bets that cause billions of dollars in funds, much of it with unknown origins, to move through the U.S. banking system, according to the sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they are not authorized to discuss the matter publicly.

Guidance from Treasury's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) is expected to highlight for casinos "red flags" signaling possible illicit sports betting activity so it can be reported to authorities. One example might be unusually large wagers, a sign that bets are being pooled, said one of the sources.

Read the whole story

Charges filed in 2006 EDC murder case

Three people have been arrested in connection with the November 2006 murder of El Dorado County resident Tobias Kaiser.

Eric Mehlmauer of Placerville was arraigned Jan. 20 on first degree murder charges and Ronald Garcia of Sacramento was arraigned on accessory after the fact.” Brian Daly was also arrested as part of this investigation but has not been charged with any offense.

Mehlmauer is accused of shooting Kaiser, who was a Somerset resident at the time, to death.

This case is still under investigation and anyone with any information is asked to contact Paul Moschini or John Gaines at 530.621.6472.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Study: Water stress takes toll on Calif.'s large trees

By Taylor Goldenstein, Los Angeles Times

Drought, fire-suppression techniques and changes in land use have made California forests denser with smaller trees and more susceptible to fast-moving wildfires, a study to be released Tuesday has found.

Researchers at UC Berkeley, UC Davis and the U.S. Geological Survey compared tree surveys conducted between 1929 and 1936 with surveys conducted between 2001 and 2010. They found that large tree density fell across California, with declines of as much as 50% in the Sierra Nevada highlands, the south and central Coast Ranges and Northern California. At the same time, the density of smaller trees increased dramatically.

The firemen are faced with this notion of when a fire is

reported and started, do they go out and ... put the fire out, or do they let it burn?

– Mark Schwartz, professor of environmental science and policy at UC Davis

Drier conditions caused by drought reduce water available for trees to grow while making it easier for fires to start and spread. Scientists say the changes raise crucial questions about how California manages its forest land to prevent and control wildfires as temperatures increase.

“The current drought in California highlights our need to understand the role of water balance in these systems and how it will be affected by global temperature rise,” said the study’s lead author, Patrick McIntyre. “Forests and woodlands cover a third of California, so this has important implications for our state.”

Read the whole story