

Road beat: 'Genesis is now a world-class automobile'



Hyundai redefines its luxury car. Photos/Larry Weitzman

By Larry Weitzman

When Hyundai introduced its first upscale luxury sedan in 2008 as a 2009 model, the Hyundai Genesis, it took a few months before the public realized that a car company that started selling cars in the U.S. with the \$4,995 Hyundai Excel in 1986, could build a luxury car. The original Genesis turned out to be an incredible value. While sales for the first six months were slow, it soon became a huge success.

With the 2015 second generation Hyundai Genesis, Hyundai demonstrates that it can build some of the best cars in the world. The 2015 Genesis is now a world-class automobile, one

of the best cars the Road Beat has ever tested. When you consider its relatively low price, it may be the best.

From its all new long 118.5-inch wheelbase (up three inches) and wide track chassis, to its new beautifully flowing sculptured body with no resemblance to the first generation Genesis, this new Genesis makes a muscular statement to those European brands that Hyundai can do it better. It is a rather simple shape that starts with an aggressive snout of a grille. A single character line along its flanks defines its sleekness along with a beautiful window line that ends in a distinctive rear quarter window. There are no wasted curves or unnecessary clutter to otherwise mar this elegant design.



Specs and Techs

Price \$39,450 to about \$55,000

Engines

3.8L DOHC 24 valve V-6 311 hp@ 6,000rpm

293 lb.-ft. of torque @ 5,000 rpm

5.0L DOHC 32 valve V-8 420 hp @ 6,000 rpm

383 lb.-ft. of torque @ 5,000 rpm

Transmission

Eight speed automatic

Configuration

Longitudinal front
engine/Rear Wheel Drive/All
Wheel Drive

Dimensions

Wheelbase 118.5 inches

Length 196.5 inches

Width 74.4 inches

Height 58.3 inches

Track (f/r) 64.1/65.3 inches

Ground clearance 5.3 inches

Weight (RWD/AWD/5.0L)

4,138/4,295/4,541 pounds

Trunk capacity 15.3 cubic
feet

Fuel Capacity 20.3 gallons

Steering lock to lock 2.55
turns

Turning circle 36.2 feet

Wheels (3.8/5.0)

18X8/19X8.5f; 19X9r inches

Tires (3.8/5.0)

245/45X18/245/40X19f;

275/35X19r

Cabin volume 107.7 cubic
feet

Coefficient of drag 0.26

Performance

0-60 mph 5.89 seconds

50-70 mph level 2.97
seconds, uphill 3.86 seconds

Top speed electronically
limited to 149 mph

Fuel economy EPA rated at
18/29/22 mpg combined.

Expect 22-25 mpg in
suburban/rural driving.

32-33 mpg on a level highway

at 70 mph.

Its coefficient of drag of 0.26 is a testament to its cleanliness. Kudos to Hyundai.

It is a small full-size ride with a length of 196 inches and width of 74 inches while standing 58 inches tall. However, inside are a voluminous interior of 108-cubic-feet and a 15-cubic-foot trunk.

Powering the Genesis rear wheels is one of two engines, a 3.8L DOHC, 24 valve V-6 producing 311 hp at 6,000 rpm along with a peak torque value of 293 pounds at 5,000 rpm or a 5.0L, DOHC, 32 valve V-8 cranking out 420 hp at 6,000 rpm and peak torque of 383 pounds at 5,000 rpm. Unless you need to hear the sound of a wonderful V-8 engine go with the V-6 as was my test vehicle for reasons which I will explain later.

Performance for the V-6 is world-class with a 0-60 mph time of 5.89 seconds. Passing times also reflect world-class numbers of 2.97 seconds and 3.86 seconds in passing tests from 50-70 mph on level ground and up a 6 percent grade. While the V-8 may be a half a second or so quicker, it is hardly worth the loss in fuel economy or the extra cost of acquisition.

Hyundai's new eight-speed automatic is also worth mentioning with intuitive, silky shifts. Its ratios are perfectly spaced, allowing the engine to feel even more powerful than the numbers would indicate. And there are handy paddle shifters that can accommodate those enthusiasts who prefer the longer windy way home. This Genesis seriously rocks.

Eight speeds also mean good fuel economy. EPA says that you should expect 18/29/22 mpg city/highway/combined. In actual testing the Genesis returned on a level highway with the Smart cruise control set at 70 mph 32 mpg. During a 50-mile trip through Sacramento with 5 o'clock freeway traffic, which included 10 percent stop and go, the Genesis returned 31.4

mpg. Overall the Genesis averaged between 22-25 mpg, which is excellent for a 4,100-pound, 300 plus hp luxury car. No guilt here.

If there is a rub, some enthusiasts may say the new Genesis is too soft. That could be true if your intended purpose was to spend lots of time doing laps at Sonoma Raceway, Thunderhill or Laguna Seca. Sure you could have more fun in a Mini Cooper Turbo or a Golf R type or even an M series BMW, but that's not the reason most people buy a luxury ride, to do laps at the race track. But after tracking the Genesis in the tight twisties this Genesis acquitted itself quite well.

Genesis suspenders are state of the art Independent 5 link system at all four corners that include high performance gas shocks and coils. It also has solid stabilizer bars at both ends. The steering is an electric variable ratio power rack that is exceedingly quick at 2.55 turns lock-to-lock. Also adding to its handling credentials are 18 x 8 inch alloys plus 245/45 series rubber and a very wide track of 64 and 65 inches front and rear. By the numbers the Genesis should do corners like water in a hose. It almost does except for a bit of body roll and steering numbness. But the cornering power is there, it just takes a bit of driver concentration. Consequently it doesn't give you the feel of a true sports sedan. However, after spending a fair amount of time in the twisties, this Genesis would surprise most enthusiast drivers at the track because of its creds. Genesis performs.



Plenty of leg room no matter
where one sits.

But there are huge positives because of the Genesis advance suspension and those can be found in its near perfect ride quality. First the Genesis rides like it was built out of the amour plate from a battleship. It is that solid. It is one of the finest riding automobiles ever encountered by the Road Beat. It is extremely smooth, it absorbs road imperfections like a giant sponge and yet it has no float or wallow. It just simply levels any road. And finally Genesis is quiet, so quiet you have to think in a whisper.

Four big disc brakes with all the acronyms arrest the Genesis forward progress from 40 mph in a benchmark 40 feet. Besides every safety acronym and electronic intervention ever thought of by humankind, like blind spot warning and a super smart cruise control, Genesis adds one more, Lane Keep Assist. It's almost scary in what it can do. When activated it will actually vibrate the steering wheel and put slight pressure in the opposite direction of your drift if you leave a lane.

But wait there is more and this is the scary part. If you take your hands off the steering wheel while going down a freeway, after literally bumping off lane markers a couple of times as the system nudges the Genesis back into its lane, a warning light came on in the heads up display and in the TFT display between the tach and speedo saying "Keep hands on the steering wheel." What a great safety feature especially for texters or inattentive drivers. Genesis also has an auto emergency braking system. What a car!

Inside is a luxurious leather interior and soft touch materials everywhere. The one package I recommend, the \$3,500 Tech Package, (it has the lane departure warning and lane keep system) you get the upgraded leather seats with power side bolsters and seat cushion extender. They are comfortable. But the standard equipment list is so long with features like

standard heated front power seats, you might be overwhelmed with its standard features. Rear seating with the new longer wheelbase is massive and sublime as well. The trunk is well shaped and huge.

Hyundai has outdone itself. Genesis starts at \$38,000, plus a \$950 boat ride from Asan, Korea, for the base loaded V-6. Maybe using the word "base" is a misnomer, luxury is more appropriate. But wait, maybe I have saved the best for last. Genesis at \$40,500 becomes an all-wheel drive vehicle with extra standard features like heated rear seats, heated steering wheel and headlamp washers. If you want the V-8, it is still a bargain at \$51,500 considering its even more expansive standard equipment list. This is a vehicle that I am considering owning (in AWD).

There are two other option packages for the V-6, the Signature package (\$4,000) and Ultimate Package (\$3,500). Anyway you consider this new luxury ride; it is the new industry luxury value leader. You need to experience this car. It is so very impressive.

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.

Obesity epidemic affecting canines

By Michelle Castillo, CBS News

The obesity epidemic is affecting not only people but their

pets as well.

More than half the dogs and cats in the U.S. are at least overweight, and one out of five is obese, according to the Association for Pet Obesity and Prevention.

Just like their human companions, excess weight can bring on a host of health problems for pets. Being overweight can increase risk of osteoarthritis, insulin resistance, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart and respiratory disease, cranial cruciate or anterior knee ligament injury, kidney disease and some cancers. It can decrease an animal's life expectancy by up to 2.5 years.

Banfield Pet Hospital, which operates more than 850 veterinary facilities across the U.S., found that dog diabetes rose 32 percent between 2006 and 2010, while the number of cats with the disease went up 16 percent during the same time frame.

Read the whole story

Summer art festival schedule unveiled

Several outdoor art shows will be staged throughout the Lake Tahoe Basin this summer.

Pacific Fine Arts Festivals, the producer these art festivals, is putting on a variety of two- and three-day shows. The are designed to be family-oriented events.

The 2015 festivals include:

July

Homewood, July 3-5 – The 4th of July Fine Arts and Crafts Festival will bring together a group of more than 50 artists showcasing their assortment of collectable arts and crafts in a variety of media including paintings, ceramics, jewelry, woodwork, photography and much more from 10am-5pm. Homewood is located off Highway 89 at Homewood Mountain Resort, six miles southwest of Tahoe City.

Homewood, July 24-26 – Fine Arts and Crafts Festival will feature more than 50 artists showcasing an assortment of collectable arts and crafts in a variety of media including paintings, ceramics, jewelry, woodwork, photography and much more from 10am-5pm at Homewood Mountain Resort.

August

Homewood, Aug. 7-9 – Homewood Mountain Resort, Fine Arts and Crafts Festival hosts more than 50 artists showcasing handcrafted works from 10am-5pm.

Tahoe City, Aug. 14-16 and Aug. 21-23 – The Tahoe City Boatworks Mall hosts the Tahoe City Fine Arts & Crafts Festival. The seventh annual event is from 10am-5pm each day on the lawn area beside the indoor Boatworks Mall, adjacent to Tahoe City Marina overlooking the lake. Forty artists and crafters will showcase their handcrafted works.

Homewood, Aug. 28-30 – The Fine Arts and Crafts Festival brings together a group of 60 artists and craftspeople showcasing their wares from 10am-5pm.

September

Homewood, Sept. 4-6 – The Labor Day Fine Arts and Crafts Festival in Homewood gives visitors one last chance to enjoy unique creations from 60 artists and craftspeople from 10am-5pm at Homewood Mountain Resort.

Truckee, Sept. 12-13 – The Historic Downtown Truckee Arts &

Crafts Festival is hosted by the Truckee Downtown Merchant's Association and features the original work of more than 60 artists and crafters in downtown Truckee on the closed street of Bridge Street between Donner Pass Road and Jibboom Street. It is open from 10am-6pm Saturday and 10am-5pm Sunday.

Truckee shelter takes in dogs from Thailand

The Humane Society of Truckee-Tahoe has taken in three dogs rescued in Thailand.

Soi Dog, a Thai rescue organization saved the animals from an illegal dog-meat trade then worked with HSTT to shelter the trio and find them homes. They arrived in Truckee Jan. 18.

This is the first time HSTT has taken in animals from an international shelter. The Truckee shelter is one of two in the U.S. that Soi Dog has worked with. Soi Dog works with a handful of other countries to protect abused and neglected animals.

The dogs, named Flame, Mable, and Gypsy, were flown from Bangkok to San Francisco with flight volunteers arranged by Soi Dog. The medium sized, mix breed dogs between the ages and 2 and 3, have been adjusting well to their new beginning in the Sierra Nevada. One has already been adopted by a volunteer who helped transport them from San Francisco. Flame and Mable are still up for adoption.

Flame, Mable and dozens of other pets are available for adoption. They have been spayed, micro-chipped, vaccinated, and are heartworm negative.

For more information about adoption or contributing to the shelter's rescue efforts, call 530.587.5948.

Tahoe harpist on Grammy-nominated album



Michael Eardley and Anne Roos often collaborate.
Photo/Provided

By Kathryn Reed

Listen closely. Hear that harp? It's the delicate hands of Anne Roos making sweet sounds on those fine strings.

While this South Lake Tahoe resident has been playing the harp for more than 30 years, this is the first year she has been invited to the Grammy's. Roos contributed to one track of an album that is up for Best New Age Album.

"I'm very pleased with this album and really happy to be part of the project," Roos told *Lake Tahoe News*. "The music this gentleman put together is so lush, so full."

Ricky Kej is the composer and keyboardist, while Wouter

Kellerman is the flutist. “Winds of Samsara” is the album, with track No. 8 “Eyes of Wonder” where Roos comes in.

She is considered a sideman for her role. She was paid for her work, but does not receive royalties.

While Roos is rightfully excited about the honor, she is staying grounded. Even if the album wins, she will not take home a trophy, but instead will receive a certificate. She calls her seats at the Feb. 8 event in the peanut gallery, far from television cameras. And she doesn’t expect to be rubbing elbows on the red carpet with better-known musicians. In fact, she’s not sure if she will be on the red carpet.



Anne Roos often plays at venues on

the South Shore. Photo/Jarvis
Photography

New age and other less popular categories receive their awards earlier in the day. But she will be watching the main event from inside the Staple Center in Los Angeles.

“What I’m really looking at is this as a grand networking opportunity,” Roos said, adding, “And maybe to have the door open for other opportunities.”

There is no one person in particular she is looking to meet.

Roos didn’t know Kej before this encounter, but had heard of him through his work in Bollywood. Kej, who lives in India, was looking for a harpist and sent Roos a message via Facebook. Thus began their working relationship.

While it’s not unusual for musicians to record a track separately, Roos won’t do so from her home. She wants her music to have a higher quality so she goes to Tanglewood Productions in Reno where engineer Michael Eardley helps lay down the track.

The bulk of the time when Roos tells someone they are going to have to pay for studio time, that is the last she hears from them. Kej didn’t wince. It obviously paid off.

High Sierra Music Festival celebrating 25 years

String Cheese Incident is returning to the High Sierra Music Festival this summer where the band will headline two shows.

The 25th annual event is July 2-5 at the Plumas-Sierra County Fairgrounds in Quincy. The festival's silver anniversary will celebrate the festival's history and those who has helped create and sustain the legendary family-friendly, laid-back, Northern California vibe High Sierra is known for.

It has been 16 years since String Cheese Incident played this festival.

This year's lineup honors many of the artists who have been a part of the fabric of the festival over the years. The initial artist lineup includes Joe Russo's Almost Dead, Galactic, Shovels and Rope, The Wood Brothers, ALO, Nahko & Medicine for the People, The California Honeydrops, Barr Brothers, Pimps of Joytime, Surprise Me Mr. Davis, March Fourth Marching Band, The Slip, Omaha Diner featuring Charlie Hunter, Skerik, Bobby Previte & Steven Bernstein, Lukas Nelson & Promise of The Real, Rising Appalachia, Turkuaz, Steve Poltz, Sister Sparrow & the Dirty Birds, Living Daylights, Dan Bern, the Brothers Comatose, and Midnight North.

Ticket info and questions, go online.

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe



Jill

Jill has been overlooked among the playful kittens and more glamorous orange cats at the shelter. She has beautiful dark gray fur, but she is rather shy and hangs back a bit with new visitors. She does like to be held once she has a few minutes to get used to visitors, and would probably like a calm, quieter home. Jill is 4 years old.

Cat adoption fees are discounted at the shelter for the rest of January, just \$40.

Jill is spayed, microchipped, tested for FIV, and vaccinated.

She is at the El Dorado County Animal Services shelter in Meyers, along with many other dogs and cats who are waiting for their new homes. Go to the Tahoe animal shelter's Facebook page to see photos and descriptions of all pets at the shelter.

Call 530.573.7925 for directions, hours, and other information on adopting a pet.

For spay-neuter assistance for South Tahoe residents, go online.

– Karen Kuentz

A new way to savor Thin Mints all year

By Carly Ledbetter, Huffington Post

Every time Girl Scout cookie season comes around, we can pretty much count on losing money and gaining a few inches on our waist lines. And even when the season's over, we can still satisfy our hankering for the delicious cookies by drinking them as milk, ordering them online, and, as of Tuesday, buying them in the form of a candle.

Yankee Candle and Girl Scouts of the USA just announced the Girl Scout Cookies Limited Edition Candle Collection, otherwise known as the tastiest partnership ever and a great way to get the cookie without the calories.

The four fragrances, Thin Mint, Trefoils, Chocolate Peanut Butter and Coconut Caramel Stripes, will be sold on the Yankee Candle website, at over 500 Yankee Candle stores and some special retailers.

Read the whole story

Historic organ gathering dust at EDC fairgrounds

By Peter Hecht, Sacramento Bee

In 1865, an immigrant from Goteberg, Sweden, with a grand vision for music opened a modest cabinet-making shop at 24th and Mission streets in San Francisco.

John Bergstrom wouldn't be long known for cabinets. He became renowned as a designer and manufacturer of exquisite pipe organs. They were towering creations – virtual cathedrals of sound – that reached toward the heavens with gold-leafed hardwood and intricately stenciled and painted musical pipes.

Aided by water pressure, his organs' sophisticated labyrinth of keys, pedals and pumps powered levers, bellows and air valves into a stirring symphony. By the mid-1880s, Bergstrom had built an estimated 66 pipe organs. His wonders of craftsmanship became musical and spiritual hearths in churches from San Francisco to British Columbia and Mexico to Hawaii.

Now volunteers are trying to find a new home for one of his last surviving creations.

For more than 50 years, a majestic pipe organ built by Bergstrom about 1885 has sat forlornly in a warehouse at the El Dorado County Fairground in Placerville. Few people get to see the 20-foot-tall marvel that occupies about 400 square feet, with its pipes nearly touching the ceiling.

The organ, sold to the Placerville Federated Church for \$2,500 in 1904, is occasionally a backdrop for fairground events such as mineral and gem or home accessory shows that are held in the warehouse known as "the organ building." Often it is merely covered by a drape.

Read the whole story

Young women, men seek equal

roles at work, home

By Maanvi Singh, NPR

Young women these days are encouraged to lean in, to want and have it all. And national polls show the idea that a woman's place is in the home has been losing traction among young people since the 1960s.

Given the option, the majority of young men and women say they would prefer to share both work and domestic duties equally with their spouses, according to a study published in the February issue of the American Sociological Review.

More than 65 percent of first marriages today are between couples already living together. For millennials, cohabitation is almost a rite of passage.

So how come women are still under more pressure to leave work or switch to part time when they have kids, and still do more of the housework?

"Our work shows that most people want to have more egalitarian relationships, says Sarah Thébaud, a sociologist at the University of California, Santa Barbara, who co-authored the study. "But they may fall back on to traditional gender roles when they realize that egalitarianism is hard to achieve in the current workplace environment."

Read the whole story