

Road Beat: Genesis G90 V-8, best sedan



The Genesis G90 V-8 is worth every penny. Photos/Larry Weitzman

By Larry Weitzman

I won't call the Genesis G90 V-8 the best car ever as I would currently give that title to the Lexus LC500 sports coupe which lists for about 30 large more. But the Lexus is basically a two plus two and not a super luxury sedan. Genesis G90 is designed to compete with other luxu sedans like the MBZ S550, BMW 7, Lexus LS500, Audi A8 and it not only succeeds, but when price is factored in, the G90 blows the other sedans away.

It's the best sedan, two door or four door, I have ever driven. It's a close call, between the G90 V-6 turbo and the

V-8, but my preference goes to the V-8. Here's why.

Genesis G90 is a big, beautiful, stately car with a more formal rear roof line. By big, wheelbase stretches out to 124 inches and its length is 205 inches, bigger than most of the competition. Yet it is svelte at 75 inches of width. Front end styling is aggressive with a big, mesh grille dominating and sleek fabulous multi headlamps. There is almost no chrome as it would only clutter and detract from its flowing shape. And it does flow as its co-efficient of drag is a low 0.27.

Powering this magnificent vehicle is a wonderful 5.0L DOHC, 32 valve V-8 that pumps out 420 hp at 6,000 rpm and a prodigious 383 pounds of twist at 5,000 RPM. The 365 hp G90 3.3 V-6T comes standard at a slightly lower price (\$3,500 less) and without the rear entertainment system in the G90 5.0L V-8. But herein lies an interesting conundrum. Even though the 3.3L turbo V-6 has 55 less hp, it's performance is virtually the same and that is because while the 3.3L turbo loses in the horsepower race, it actually makes more hp than the V-8 at lower rpms because it makes peak torque of 376 pounds at just 1,300 rpm and holds that number until 4,500. And while in my Road Beat on the G90 V-6 turbo was full of superlatives calling it the best sedan I had ever driven, and the best V-6 in production, there is just something about this incredibly sweet V-8 that adds something to the Genesis experience. But this is not the best V-8 in production as that would go to the Lexus LC500 471 hp 5.0L V-8. Also, normally aspirated.



Specifications

Price

\$69,050 - \$72,150 with destination

Engine

3.3L turbocharged, direct injected, DOHC, 24 valve V-6
365 hp @6,000

376 lb.-ft. of torque from 1,300-4,500 rpm

5.0L normally aspirated DOHC, 32 valve direct injected V-8 420 hp @ 6,000 rpm

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

Transmission

Eight-speed torque converter automatic with paddle shifters (on a limousine?)

Configuration

Longitudinal front engine/RWD/AWD

Dimensions

Wheelbase 124.4 inches

Length 204.9 inches

Width 75.4 inches

Height 58.9 inches

Track (f/r) 64.5/64.5 inches

Weight 4,630 pounds

Fuel capacity 21.9 gallons

Trunk capacity 15.7 cubic feet

Passenger capacity 113.2 cubic feet

Wheels (f/r) 19X8.5/19X9.5 inches

Tires 245/45X19/275/40X19
inches

Brakes (f/r) 14.2/13.4-inch
diameter; ventilated

Steering lock to lock 2.55
turns

Turning circle 39.2 feet

Co-efficient of drag 0.27

Performance

0-60 mph 4.85 seconds

50-70 mph 2.15 seconds

50-70 mph uphill 2.98
seconds

Top Speed Perhaps escape
velocity?

Fuel economy EPA rated
16/24/19 mpg
city/highway/combined.

Overall in rural and
suburban driving expect
22-23 mpg and on the highway
at legal speeds 31 mpg.

Genesis performance numbers are absolutely world-class with 0-60 mph coming up in just 4.88 seconds. And this Genesis tips the scales 4,751 pounds which makes its performance all the more gravity defying and remarkable. Passing times are also world class with a 50-70 mph runs on the level and up a 6-7 percent grade of 2.15 and 2.98 seconds respectively. The 3.3L turbo times were 4.81/2.48/3.19 seconds respectively. Almost virtually no difference. The V-6 eight-speeder is geared slightly lower than the V-8's eight speeder, which could explain the two tenths of a second difference in the passing times. But make no mistake, these are among the quickest cars on the planet, not just sedans, I am talking about all motor vehicles.

While the EPA fuel economy is rated at 16/24/19 mpg city/highway/combined, my testing showed much higher numbers. Overall in rural country, suburban driving the G90 V-8 averaged 22-23 mpg with significant use of that delectable throttle including all testing which included dozens of full throttle applications. It's a tough job, but someone has to do it. In a 20-mile two-way run on a level highway, the big G averaged 31 mpg with the engine spinning just 1,750 rpm. In a 260-mile round trip to Reno via Highway 50, the Genesis averaged 28.7 mpg. This Genesis is surprisingly economical, especially considering its size, performance and weight. It returned slightly better fuel economy than the V-6 turbo tested about a year ago. Fuel tank is a large 22 gallons so range extends out to 600 miles, a piece of cake in this vehicle, especially with a Motorman's Friend.

While the ride is on the softer side of life, handling it quite impressive with things like Dynamic Stability Damping Control, huge staggered wheels and tires (19 x 8.5 inches up front and 19 x 9.5 inches in the rear shod with 245/45 and 275/40 series rubber respectively), a wide track of 65 inches and quick is not slightly numb steering at 2.55 turns lock to lock. Grip is amazing and while there is some body roll, its cornering power will amaze you. Turning circle is 39 feet.

Ride quality is superb. Even abrupt speed bumps do little to intrude on comfort. It is just extremely smooth and quiet, although it lets you hear some of that beautiful V-8's music when you get your foot into it. This is a sublime automobile. I would expect nothing less from the best in class.

As to safety, this vehicle leaves nothing on the table with every acronym known to mankind. Brakes are large and very strong. Headlights are fabulous LED with auto high beams and dynamic bending, meaning they follow steering wheel inputs.

Inside is an interior bathed in soft, Nappa leather. It is simply elegant and sublimely comfortable. Mentioned must be

made of the mammoth rear seat leg room. It could double for a limo. Instrumentation is complete and well-designed including the heads-up display. You want for nothing.

The trunk is huge at 16 cubes.

The price of admission is almost reasonably and a bargain when compared to the competition at \$72,825 including \$975 for the boat suite from Ulsan, Korea. If you want all-wheel drive instead of rear-wheel drive, add \$2,500. Everything else is standard down to dual 10.3-inch, rear entertainment system. I spent some time looking for the hot and cold running water, I guess they left that off. This is a fabulous motor vehicle and when you factor in its incredible value, you have the best of the best. It doesn't get any better.

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.