



Test Drives

Go ahead. Take one for a spin.

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BMW X3

BMW's entry into the volatile sport utility vehicle market, the versatile X3 is nothing like you've ever seen coming from the fertile minds



BMW X3

of Strausburg, Germany. The company's advertising slogan for the X3 is any weather, any corner, any pace, any passion; and once you've taken your seat behind the wheel of what is being called a sport activity vehicle, you understand what that slogan is meant to convey.

From a styling standpoint, the X3 is vintage BMW, with its familiar round, inset headlines and teardrop shaped grill almost smiling at you as you approach the vehicle. The X3's wide-set tires and athletic built frame communicate a sense of madcap adventure while retaining the BMW mystique that has bred one of the strongest automotive reputations in the world. Of course, the X3 has to be fun to drive, and fun it is. With the windows down and moon roof open, the X3 is a driving experience that is almost impossible to beat.

The X3 is at its best on curves and hills, when BMW's innovative handling system has a chance to truly shine. The system varies driving power between the front and rear axles, giving you maximum traction and handling when you need it. The system automatically adjusts to compensate for loss of traction on wet roads and difficult curves, providing an almost unbeatable handling experience.

Even on the toughest roads, it's almost never necessary to apply the brakes, even at higher speeds, when driving through sharp bends and intense turns. The X3 remains per-

fectly balanced throughout your drive and never feels top heavy. The X3's center of gravity is lower to the ground and spread out evenly thanks to the car's wide stance making a drive through uncharted territory fun and exhilarating. The X3 feels at-home running errands through the city as it does chasing antelope through rain forest of central Africa.

Under the hood, the X3 delivers the goods as well. The X3 comes with a choice between a 184 horse-power 2.5 liter six-cylinder engine or a 255 horse-power 3.0 liter engine that provide ample acceleration power as well as plenty of low-end torque for hauling heave loads.

On the highway, the X3 accelerates quickly and its agile handling allows the vehicle to be able to dart in and out when necessary. And, over hills, the X3 never feels like it's going to go air born, keeping its feet—wheels actually—firmly in touch with the pavement at all times where they belong.

However, the X3 versatility continue on into the ingenious transmission system. BMW has created their sport activity vehicle to be able to bounce between automatic and manual shifting. For those who enjoy manual shifting transmission, the X3 can be driven as a clutchless six-speed for optimum performance, while automatic transmission fans can utilize the five-speed Steptronic transmission system.

Leather upholstery, easy-to-understand panel controls and on-board GPS-Navigation system allow X3 drivers to stay on course and in total control of the automotive universe. To see where the X3 can take you, pay a visit to Tom Williams BMW at the Grants Mill Auto Mall in Irondale and get inside this ultimate driving machine.

CADILLAC SRX

Cadillac's new SRX sport utility vehicle expertly combines the classic style and grace that have become Cadillac with the spirited and enjoyable drivability that have come to define the modern automobile. The SRX,

Cadillac's entry into the volatile mid-size SUV market, debuted in 2004 and immediately made a huge splash and the automotive world, winning *Car and Driver* magazine's award for Best Luxury SUV in its first year of production.

At first glance, it's obvious the SRX is something different for Cadillac, even if it looks and feels familiar as well. From the familiar octagonal shaped, silver grill face with a classic center Cadillac emblem, to the sharp sloping angle of the automobile's hood, to the sturdy construction, the SRX is all Cadillac. However, at a smaller size than Cadillac's first SUV, the Escalade, the SRX has a sporty, muscular personality.

The SRX's interior is sleek and stylish, with sand-colored leather seats, tortoiseshell accents on the steering wheel, stereo surround and gear shift, and classic instrument panels that blend in with the car's dash rather than announce the presence with wild, outlandish color schemes. The SRX can be configured to seat five adults in the two-row seating plan or two more adults can fit comfortably in the third row seat. The third row seat can also be folded down, providing plenty of room in the back storage compartment.

One the road, the SRX is smooth as silk even as the SUV's fully capable engine provides enough power to meet any necessity. Available with either a six-cylinder, 3.6 liter engine with 260 horse power, or an eight-cylinder, 4.6 liter Northstar engine with 320 horse power, the



SRX can easily gain speed quickly to overtake any other car in highway traffic. The SRX takes very little time gaining speed on the interstate on ramp and can reach speeds of 75 or greater without much prodding.

Interstate travel may be where the SRX excels. With a beefy engine that can reach higher speeds easily, the SRX rides exceptionally smooth as the needle on the speedometer climbs the dial.

In addition, the SRX handles surprisingly well for an SUV, without much need to ride the brakes as you round curves. The SRX is built on a solid four-wheel independent chassis with anti-sway bars in the front and back of the vehicle, allowing for impressive driver control. The SRX also comes with Stabilitrak computer-controlled stability enhancement system adding to its superb handling.

Drivers will notice the SRX feels more like a conventional car than an SUV, which should entice those who are turned off by the intimidating hugeness of other SUVs, such as the Escalade. The SRX's is almost understated in its outward elegant character, hiding the high-performance side of its personality under the hood. If you would like to experience the SRX first hand, be sure to visit the sales team at Tom Williams Cadillac at the Grants Mill Auto Mall and find out for yourself how enjoyable this mid-size SUV can be.

DODGE MAGNUM

Forgoing the trend in slim, diminutive roadsters that are common in the high-performance world these days, Chrysler-Daimler is about to unleash something entirely different on the American car buying public. The Dodge Magnum is a brand new interpretation on the

American muscle car. Looking like some sort of wagon on steroids, the 2005 Dodge Magnum is a chunky piece of high performance perfection that has already impressed many behind-the-scenes players in the car business.

For instance, Benchmark Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep, General Manager Terry Spitzer says about the new Dodge Magnum, "This is the finest car I have ever driven and I've been in the car business all of my adult life." After getting behind the wheel of this car for the first time, you'll know that he wasn't kidding.

One of the longest cars in its class, Chrysler invites the curious to "open it up at both ends." The Dodge Magnum has a large back compartment with plenty of room for luggage, coolers and even a few surfboards while still leaving more than ample space for five fully grown adults. The car's back lift gate opens high and wide, allowing for easy loading and unloading as well.

Under the hood is where things get interesting. The Dodge Magnum's standard engine is a 2.7 liter V-6 engine with 190 horsepower at 6,400 rpm. Other options include a 3.5 liter V-6 with 250 horsepower, or the incredible 5.7 liter Hemi® with 340 horsepower and 390 pounds of torque at 4,000 rpm. This is the machine that Spitzer and his staff made available to us for a test drive.

Before you ever turn the ignition, you'll notice a few different things. First, the Mercedes merger has created some unique construction characteristics. The car features a high beltline that makes you feel like you are enclosed in one of the sturdiest cars on the road. The tapered hood line and stylish grill and headlights are more then reminiscent of styling characteristics of other Mercedes vehicles.

But of course, the real joy lies in driving the Dodge Magnum. For a larger car, the V-8 Hemi®—the most powerful engine in its class—has no problem propelling the car up to speed on the highway. For its size, this car is fast and



Lincoln Aviator

agile on the interstate. With its wheels-at-the-corners design, the stability of Magnum is impressive even as you take a corner at relatively high speeds. The Magnum's 50/50 weight distribution, real-wheel drive and five-link rear suspension provide a remarkably smooth ride while the car's construction keeps road noise to a minimum.

The Magnum also gets great gas mileage, capable of performing at 30 miles-per-gallon in highway traffic. When traveling with cruise control engaged, the Magnum's transmission can automatically switch from eight to six cylinders without notice, proving the car has smarts to go along with its brawn.

Available in an assortment of colors, including candy-apple red, with white leather interior accented in black and chrome, is built to make a statement with its physical beauty as well as its unequalled power.

LINCOLN AVIATOR

Taking their cues from their successful full-size sports utility vehicle, the Navigator, Lincoln recently unveiled the Aviator, a stylish and extremely drivable mid-size entry into the SUV market. The engineers and designers at Lincoln didn't try to reinvent the wheel with the Aviator. Instead the took many of the best design features from the Navigator, scaled them down in size, added a couple of new features to trim out the package and rolled it out onto the lot as an alternative to its bigger and bulkier relative.

The Aviator didn't sacrifice space, however, despite its smaller stature. The cargo bay has plenty of room for up to 7,100 pounds of what ever needs hauling around. Like many mid-size SUV's, the third row seat folds down easily for extra storage. Unlike many mid-size SUV's, the third row seat actually looks and feels like a full seat allowing the Aviator to comfortably seat



Dodge Magnum

seven adults.

The driver's seat is still high off the ground, giving the driver a bird's-eye view of traffic flow. While many mid-sized SUV's feel like you're driving a car, the Aviator is all SUV. The driving compartment being perched high above the road gives a feeling of invincibility.

Under the hood, the Aviator is really impressive, sporting a 4.6 liter DOHC 32-valve, eight cylinder engine which pumps out 302 horse power and 300 pounds of torque. Also featured in the Mercury Marauder, this motor can really crank out the juice, allowing the Aviator to easily overtake other vehicles in interstate traffic or accelerate on the on ramp, even while carrying a heavy load.

Essentially a mini-version of the Navigator, the Aviator is less wieldy to drive, and can fit easily into those tight parking spaces that seem to be off-limits to larger SUV's, a definite plus for those who spend a lot of time running errands or for those frequent trips to the grocery store. Its size also lends itself to better handling as well, an area in which the Aviator excels.

Built with sport-tuned four-wheel independent suspension, monotube shocks and stabilizer bars, the Aviator maintains its balance and handles itself in athletic fashion through curves and tight turns. Even though the Aviator is taller than other mid-sized SUV's, it never feels top heavy as it sprints around bends and twists in the road. In addition, the Aviator retains its smooth ride even on the toughest, pot-hole infested road surface.

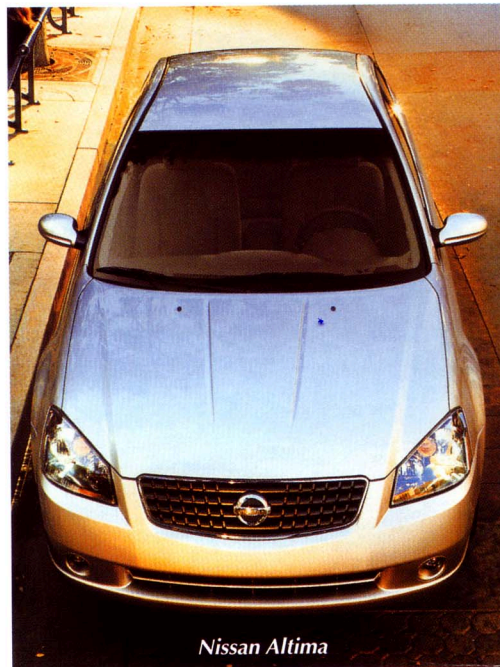
The interior is vintage Lincoln styling. Cream color leather seats, dash and accessories create a tranquil and inviting setting. Seat controls are located on the door panel for greater accessibility and, when the motor is disengaged, the seat automatically moves back making exiting the vehicle easier.

The Aviator's stereo components, temperature controls and other console components can be covered by a simple faceplate bearing the Lincoln name in chrome. This feature adds to simplicity and gracefulness of the interior of this impressive new mid-size SUV. To experience the Aviator, drop by Champion Lincoln Mercury on Center Point Parkway in the Huffman area for a test drive and see for yourself why the Lincoln Aviator is a truly pleasurable driving experience.

NISSAN ALTIMA

The engineers and designers at Nissan have revamped their Altima for 2005, adding a liberal dose of speed and performance to the classic mid-sized sedan. The new Altima comes with an authoritatively beefed-up engine that is a joy to drive just for the sake of driving.

At first glance, the Altima may be a bit too unpretentious for its own good. Classy and understated on the outside, the Altima 3.5 is a sheep in wool's clothing ready to pounce on



unsuspecting prey. The 2005 Altima 3.5 sports a 250 horsepower V6 engine producing 249 pounds of torque, more power than Nissan has ever outfitted the Altima with before.

The 5-speed manual transmission Nissan Altima goes from 0-60 in just under six seconds and the automatic version isn't far behind, giving the car plenty of juice to climb the on-ramp during rush hour and reach normal interstate speeds quickly.

Featuring the very same engine as Nissan's Z-series sports cars, it's no surprise the 2005 Altima has a generous dash of get-up-and-go. It's quick off the line and able to jump from intersection to intersection in surprisingly fast fashion.

The Nissan Altima has it down as far as handling as well. Just as comfortable on back roads as on the highway, the 2005 Altima features power rack-and-pinion steering, advanced

multi-link suspension and stabilizer bars to keep the car stable during a quick lane change or other defensive maneuver. The Altima's traction control system cuts back on engine power or shifts the automatic transmission at the first sign of wheel slippage to keep its grip on the road.

All of these features give the Altima superior handling through tight curves, sharp turns and stop-and-go traffic. Driving demanding roads is a pleasure in the Altima as its handling keeps drivers from having to apply too much brake pressure. The engine's agility and responsiveness bring the Altima back up to speed quickly as it comes out of turns and into straight-ways.

The 2005 Altima's interior has also been restyled, providing a comfortable and spacious environment from which to enjoy the car's new found sense of power and performance. Available with leather appointed seats, chrome accents and tastefully innovative dials and gauges, the Altima's class and dignity are on full display throughout. The information gauges, inspired by motorcycle gauges, are trimmed in chrome and add a touch of fun to the interior without sacrificing its class. Knobs and dials are big and round and are easily reachable while driving.

The steering wheel is exceptionally comfortable in the hands and the engine is immediately responsive to the slightest pressure on the gas pedal. And the Bose surround-sound stereo system with six-CD changer in the dash only add to the Altima's appeal.

To experience the all-new Altima for yourself, stop by Crown Nissan on Old Montgomery Highway in Hoover for a test drive and give it a workout on the interstate and demanding side roads surrounding Highway 31. Once you do, you'll be sold on the power and performance of Nissan's classy new sedan.

PONTIAC GTO

If you were of driving age during the 1960s or 1970s you probably remember Pontiac's classic muscle car, the GTO, fondly. For others, the hey-day of the GTO, with its cheap gasoline, wide-open roads and dimwitted traffic cops, is only the stuff of legend. Almost 30 years had passed since the last GTO rolled of the production line when Pontiac thankfully answered the prayers of gear heads

and power freaks alike with the all new GTO. If you have doubts about this car meeting your lofty expectations, drop in on the guys at Courtesy Pontiac in Trussville for a test drive. If you don't leave impressed, it's your problem.

Simply put, the Pontiac GTO, which debuted in its current form in time for the 2004 season, is awesome. Hidden under the hood is a 5.7 liter Gen III LSI V8 engine that just begs to be taken to the nearest drag strip. The six-speed—that's right six—GTO gets off the line quickly, going from 0-60 in only 5.3 seconds. And, the great thing about the GTO is the noise it makes. This car sounds like what an American car should sound like. The engine roars as you get it up to speed, shifting gears and enjoying the car's performance on the straight-aways.

The Pontiac GTO gets good gas mileage as well, topping out at an impressive 30 miles per gallon on the interstate, which is an area the GTO truly shines. With a speedometer that reads to 200 MPH, it's easy to get carried away in the GTO, which is almost the point.

But it's not all straight shots and pure speed that make this car fun to drive. The sleek-bodied

performance car is just as adept on the curves as well. The GTO's Bosch three-channel traction control system keeps the car stable and automatically adjusts when it detects a loss of traction in one or both rear wheels. And, the car's engine contains more than enough power to slingshot out of the curve right back up to speed.

As for it's styling, the GTO is sleek and stylish and larger than you might expect from most modern performance cars. Reminiscent of Pontiac's Grand Am, the GTO has enough room to fit four adults comfortably and is not so low to the ground that you have to fall into the seats. However, once you're inside, the GTO is all sports car.

The GTO's instrument panel and seats come in all types of funky color combinations



Pontiac GTO

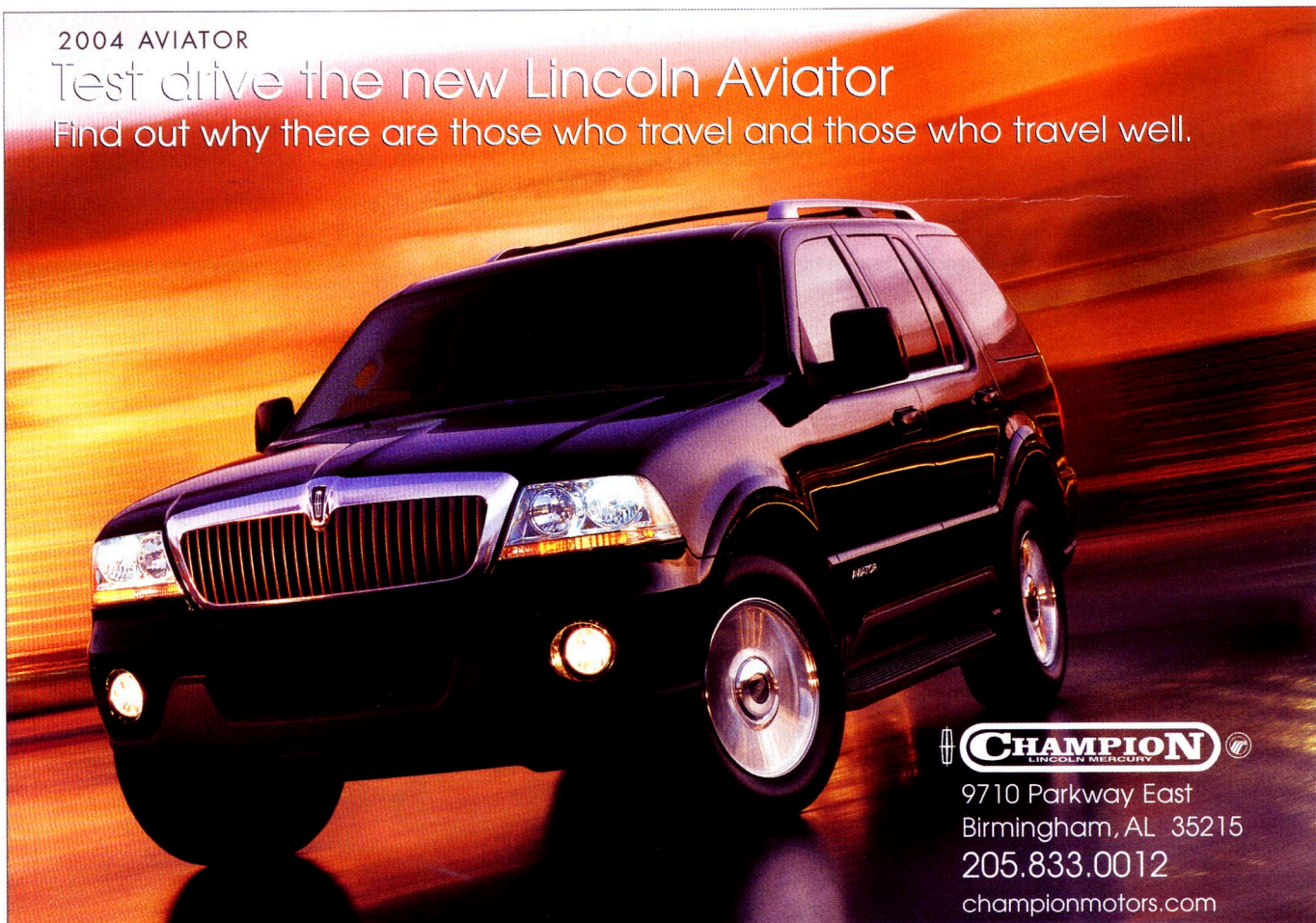
based on the car's exterior color. For instance, a Torrid Red exterior paint job comes with red instrument panel and red seats. Set against the car's gray steering wheel and accents, the combination is almost manic in its brightness. Other combinations include Impulse Blue Metallic, Barbados Blue Metallic, Yellow Jacket and Cosmos Purple Metallic, Quicksilver Metallic and Phantom Black Metallic. Any one of these colors is sure to get the GTO noticed.

Find out for yourself how much fun the new Pontiac GTO can be by test driving one at Courtesy Pontiac. Once you give it a whirl, you'll call home and tell your spouse exactly what you want under the tree for Christmas.

2004 AVIATOR

Test drive the new Lincoln Aviator

Find out why there are those who travel and those who travel well.



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