2006 Acura MDX: Luxury with a View by Hiteshbhoi

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You have to love the marketing guys. After all of the work of the design team, a new vehicle must pass through several rigorous channels including engineering, safety, performance, quality, durability, craftsmanship, government inspections, and management clearance, before even the first rivet is drilled or body panel painted. After all is said and done, the marketers get their chance to pitch the final product. In one word the MDX has been defined by these very same marketers: benchmark. Does the MDX live up to this all important designation? Acura would like for you to think so. Letâ€™s take a look at Acuraâ€™s 7 passenger luxury SUV to see if it truly does rise to the level of category leader.

The marketplace is flooded with SUVs. Despite high gas prices, the demand for high profile vehicles continues to remain strong, particularly in the sub-behemoth category which is anything smaller than an Expedition or a Tahoe. Still, some of these less imposing models are fuel eaters too, equipped with V8 engines and all the latest gadgetry. If you want to realize fuel savings in an SUV a compact Ford Escape Hybrid is just

about your only choice, plus a new Lexus model just now hitting showrooms.

I digress.

The Acura MDX, along with its less opulent sister the Honda Pilot, embodies a class of vehicles that offer four wheel drive capabilities for optimum on road duty as well as medium off road duty. If you want a trail rated luxury SUV, then the Jeep Gran Cherokee is more your style. The MDX just cannot go where the Jeep can go.

All comparisons aside, the Acura is definitely luxury with a high profile view. The standard equipment list is extensive and includes the following:

3.5-liter, 24-valve, SOHC V-6 engine

5-speed automatic transmission

Rack-and-pinion steering system and an all-independent front and rear suspension

4-channel Anti-Lock Braking System (ABS)

7-speaker sound system with AM/FM stereo, in-dash CD player, and XMÂ® Satellite Radio

Acura Navigation System with Voice Recognitionâ„¢; OnStarÂ®

Tilt steering, cruise control, a power sliding-glass moon roof

Electrically heated leather seating for front passengers

Power everything; windows, mirrors, door locks, etc.

Environmentally conscious SUV owners will enjoy the MDX for its recent Ultra-Low-Emission Vehicle (ULEV-2) designation, a first for any SUV. What this means is that the MDXâ€™s emissions ratings are extremely low, far below that of acceptable government levels.

The base MDX retails at a highly competitive $37,125 with fully loaded versions topping out just about forty five thousand dollars. Prices compare favorably with the Jeep Gran Cherokee, but the MDX undercuts BMW and Mercedes models by several thousands of dollars.

Acura recommends that owners use premium [91 octane] gasoline in their MDX. Delivering 17 miles city and 23 miles highway, the MDXâ€™s fuel economy is about average for a vehicle of its size.

While the marketers want you to think that the MDX is the benchmark by which all other SUVs must be measured against, it fails to deliver in the all important off road category. Still, Acura price, luxury, and quality is certain to be a draw for buyers interested in a vehicle that is just about as opulent as any production SUV.

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