

# ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

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## EVENTS, SHOWS, RACES, NEWS

AUCTIONS AND CONCOURS | PIR NASCAR & INDYCAR | LA AUTO SHOW | GOODGUYS  
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## VEHICLE DRIVES

2016 CHEVROLET CAMARO 48-STATE DRIVE: OUR LEG  
CHEVROLET | FORD | JAGUAR | LAND ROVER  
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RAM PROMASTER | SCION



2016 Chevrolet Camaro  
1LT V6 with RS Package

WE DRIVE 5 STATES OF GEN-6 CAMARO  
48-STATE "FIND NEW ROADS" LAUNCH EVENT:  
MINNESOTA-NORTH DAKOTA-SOUTH DAKOTA-WYOMING-UTAH

VEHICLES • EQUIPMENT • TECHNOLOGY • PEOPLE • EVENTS • DESTINATIONS • ATTRACTIONS

# Take the long way home. BY JOE SAGE

FOUR OF US TACKLE FIVE STATES FOR 1638 MILES IN THREE DAYS DRIVING TWO GEN-SIX CAMAROS, A V8 2SS AND A V6 1LT RS, DURING THE 48-STATE #FINDNEWROADS INTRODUCTION DRIVE

**W**e love the Western states for being big, beautiful and bold. Big enough, in fact, that decidedly Midwestern Minnesota is separated from us by as few as just three states: cross Utah and Wyoming, both in our Western neighborhood, add a dash across South Dakota, and you're in the Land of 10,000 Lakes.

We were about to put this to the test, in the all-new generation-six 2016 Chevrolet Camaro. We would vary from that plan a few ways. For one thing, we would run it in the westbound direction. We would fly to Minneapolis, our drive would end in Salt Lake City, and we'd fly back to Phoenix. And why do one Dakota when you can do two?

The plan was both simple and complex. Other than predefined Points A and B, a schedule and a new Camaro, we could do whatever we wanted. (We did have to stay in the US, thereby eliminating our longstanding idea of hitting the Dakotas, Manitoba and Saskatchewan all in one road trip.)

The overall event, branded "Find New Roads,"

had one Eastern and one Western route, 18 legs total, hitting all 48 contiguous states. Some 150 members of the media would take part over four weeks, for a total of about 160,000 miles—roughly equal to six and a half times around the globe. This event, as they say, would leave a mark.

The Eastern route actually ended in Phoenix and the Western route in Los Angeles (just in time for the LA Auto Show). Both started, as any all-American Chevy event surely must, in Detroit.

We considered legs in the Pacific Northwest, or across Texas to New Mexico. (The Phoenix leg ran a familiar route from Albuquerque, but mostly it conflicted with NASCAR at PIR). We decided to do the longest out of all 18 legs, by far. This would total 1638 miles as tallied by OnStar at its finish, compared to typically 450 to 650 or so for others.

Minneapolis is a nice, friendly place to start any trip. Then our route would give us a chance to watch America morph from the upper Great Lakes into the upper Great Plains into the Wild West, all

in one pass. Yes, a classic road trip. And really, what better way to get to know the new Camaro?

As fall was easing into winter, we were keeping an eye on weather forecasts, with indications we might get major snowstorms anywhere from Minnesota west. And we'd be driving high-powered rear-wheel-drive pony cars. We've done all this before, but were unsure whether we'd have summer tires, mud+snows or all-weathers. The verdict: all-weathers on the 1LT V6 Camaro RS and performance run-flats on the 2SS V8.

Camaro LT models come standard with 18-inch wheels and Goodyear Eagle Sport all-season tires; optional are 20-inchers with Eagle F1 Asymmetric all-season run-flats. The V8 SS comes with 20-inch wheels and Eagle F1 Asymmetric 3 run-flats.

(GM was watching the weather, too, and would have winter tires ready to install at the end of our run in Salt Lake City, before the next group headed north through Yellowstone to Montana—which would prove to be a really good move.)

#GoodEnoughMother star Rene Syler with the 2016 Chevrolet Camaro 1LT V6 with RS package (which conveniently bears her initials on its RS badge) as we approach 1267-foot-tall Devils Tower, Wyoming.



## MINNESOTA

**ARRIVAL.** We flew to Minneapolis midday, and by evening it had begun to snow—just light stuff, blowing through the city as we grabbed a bite with our hosts and others who would be driving versions of the same route. (Unlike on most launch drives, we never saw any of them again once we left).

This was fundamentally a single-driver-per-car affair, although we were allowed to bring a photographer or videographer along. We were going it alone but would caravan with Kristin Barclay—lifestyle blogger at *InDeepH2O* and *In Wheel Time* radio co-host in Houston—who also planned to solo. Before the starting flag dropped, Kristin had scored a partner: Rene Syler of New York—multi-channel star of *www.GoodEnoughMother.com* and former host of *The Early Show* on CBS.

**DAY ONE.** We would randomly draw keys in the morning, then load and go. There were V6 and V8 models, with both 6-speed manual and 8-speed automatic transmissions. We could freely swap among ourselves along the way. (An intriguing new four-cylinder turbo would not be part of this trip, nor would the convertible, launching soon.)

The prior evening's snow had let up by dawn, leaving things just a little chilly and wet for now.

We drew our key for a Jet Black Camaro 2SS V8 with an automatic. Kristin and Rene's was for a black 2SS V8 with 6-speed manual. This would be fine. The V8s would use more gas, of course—its 6.2-liter powerplant (originally developed for the new Corvette Stingray) pumps out 455 hp and 455 lb-ft of torque, while an LT's 3.6-liter V6 is a 335-hp, 284-lb.ft. unit—though the V8 has a cylinder deactivation feature at cruising speed. We would likely gas up four or five times over the next three days. (Fuel mileage ratings had not yet been released; figures came later—see specifications sidebar—with the V6 and V8 fairly close and the turbo four expected to top 30 MPG highway.)

Note: when you order your new Camaro, be

B-25 Mitchell Bomber at the thoroughly enjoyable and hospitable Fargo Air Museum in North Dakota.

aware that the V8 is known as an LT1 engine, not to be confused with 1LT and 2LT vehicle models—which have the 2.0T or V6, but *not* the LT1 V8.

As for transmissions, beyond style and feel differences, the V8 automatic hits 60 mph in just 4 seconds versus 4.3 for the manual (or 5.1 for a V6 auto vs 5.2 manual). At highway speeds for long stretches of our journey (and an exhilarating two-lane pace for the rest), this was not critical.

All the new Camaros are quick—for one thing, they are 223 to 390 pounds lighter than gen-five.

There are drive modes with either engine—sport, tour or snow/ice—and the SS also has a track mode. Hmm. Snow/ice might come in handy.

The Camaro SS adds a handling feature (mitigating its heavier V8), with Magnetic Ride Control available for the first time. This had been on only the Camaro ZL1 previously, though we're familiar with it from the sportiest Cadillacs. MRC adjusts to road conditions and driving style 1,000 times per second, setting magnetically damped shocks for optimum ride comfort and control.

We loaded our SS and were just about to fire it up, when there came a knock on the window. As fate would have it, we would now have four in our





party: John Coyle—automotive editor at Internet Brands in Los Angeles—wanted to double up. He had drawn the key for a Nightfall Grey Metallic Camaro V6 with RS package and was also already packed and loaded. We could take his dark grey RS or our black V8 (both automatics). All four of us wanted to try both engines, and the color would give us photo variety, so we opted for the RS.

The gen-six Camaro looks a lot like the gen-five at first glance, but it is totally new. Only two parts carry over: one rear bowtie emblem and the SS badge. The car sits atop the same platform as the red hot 3-Series-challenging Cadillac ATS, which has proven itself to us on both highway and track.

The 2016 Camaro's bodywork has taken cues from the new Corvette Stingray, notably the dramatic origami in its hood. Gen-six can be spotted by a narrower grille, which enhances the car's road-swallowing snarl. Taillights are rectangular like gen-five's final year, but have more shape and depth in their lenses. The instrument panel is completely reworked, a move we welcome.

GM is a master with styling evolution. Sometimes, they change a vehicle so much it's startling at first sight, then takes no time to look perfect, while its predecessor has suddenly grown dated. Other times—as with the new Camaro—it looks

familiar at first sight, then takes no time to reveal itself as completely transformed. Chevy has really nailed it here—100 percent Camaro DNA preserved, yet 100 percent new and exciting.

With four drivers and two cars, we had 32 ways we could allocate our seats at any one time—just a fun statistic, one of many on this trip. We would just go with the flow—and off we went.

We would have long stretches between towns on our route, and we had to think about where we would stay. We would use GM's OnStar system to book our rooms, but there was a cutoff time of 7pm on that, whereas we might otherwise drive well into the night, not sure (nor particularly caring) whether we'd make it to one town or another.

### NORTH DAKOTA

To include North Dakota, we headed toward Fargo on I-94. This was not necessary to reach our destination, but great for our personal maps—a state we'd never been to. It was also needed for the event itself, to pass through all 48 states—although someone from GM had already dashed out there the day before, in case none of us did.



It was easy to think Minnesota was in our rear

view mirror as soon as we left Minneapolis, and to start planning whether we'd make it that day to Deadwood, South Dakota, or just somewhere in North Dakota. In fact, it was close to four hours to the first state line and Fargo ND.

Despite having much ground to cover, we pulled off and headed to the Fargo Air Museum—which proved to be a gem. This friendly institution comprises two unassuming buildings at the edge of Hector International Airport, housing an impressive array of originals—from a B-25 Mitchell Bomber left in its last-flown condition, to a P-51 Mustang, UH-1 Huey helicopter, Douglas DC-3, Pitts Special biplane, F4U Corsair and much more—even a Minuteman II missile pointed skyward in the parking lot. Several beautifully restored vintage vehicles mingle with the aircraft.

Staff and board members at the Museum were so friendly, they not only gave us a tour of every feature, but also treated all four of us to lunch.

It's about 350 miles across North Dakota. We'd make good time on I-94, then head south about 45 miles short of the Montana line. Our fuel supplies were pretty well in sync, despite our differing engines—thanks to the V8's cylinder deactivation feature. Halfway across North Dakota, we exited at a "gas" sign and headed up Highway 11. We've

all been here: miles of "Are you sure it said this way?" But we forged ahead and found feed store pumps in Sanborn ND. Our new friends at this stop (who know a new Camaro when they see one) and the lonesome wail of a Union Pacific freight roaring past the grain silos continued to feed our appreciation of the Peace Garden State.

We spent some more time kicking around an abandoned farm and the local cemetery, but we knew we would have a lot to see in western South Dakota, and it was getting late. So we barreled on toward Belfield, North Dakota, where we would turn south. This would be our first road hotel night, and it was a little tricky to pin down our finish point by the 7pm OnStar deadline, as there were several towns we could end up in. We gained an hour on the clock in the western Dakotas, though, which certainly helped. We threw our dart at Deadwood, South Dakota and booked four rooms.

### SOUTH DAKOTA

It's too bad it was dark by now. We had left the Interstate behind, cruising increasingly curvy and hilly two-lanes, and the occasional dark-against-dark silhouette suggested we were missing some stunning terrain. One more reason to return.

We were gaining altitude since midafternoon, from 830 feet above sea level along the banks of the upper Mississippi River in Minneapolis, or just over 900 feet in Fargo, to 2585 feet in Belfield ND (55 feet shy of exactly half a mile high). Sturgis, South Dakota sits at 3422 feet, but we bypassed that for the moment and climbed through the night up increasingly winding and wooded two-lanes to Deadwood, elevation 4531—now getting chilly.

Deadwood is a popular destination, a historic Western town (we were almost in Wyoming at this point, transitioning away from the Great Plains) and—with a Kevin Costner-owned casino resort—home to our OnStar-booked hotel, a modern high-rise. We parked and packed it in.

Rene Syler and the 2SS V8 Camaro warm up on the cobblestone streets of Deadwood SD at dawn after shooting a video segment for #GoodEnoughMother.

**DAY TWO.** Rene had an East Coast video feed to perform at dawn, so we headed into downtown Deadwood in her Camaro SS, our first opportunity to switch to the V8 and stick. This much power could stall a lesser clutch, but we were impressed with the big V8's ability to handle slower speeds and 'round-town handling. Too often, some of the most powerful beasts we've driven might not be as much fun as they seem, on a daily basis. This car—tight downtown cobblestone streets, small parking lots and all—was very user-friendly.

We returned for a breakfast bite at the hotel, then headed out for our busiest sightseeing day.

### WYOMING APPETIZER

We had vowed to see Devils Tower in Wyoming, though not on our way to Utah. Familiar to everyone who's seen *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, this rugged volcanic plug was America's first National Monument. It would be a 150-mile detour, several hours out of our ambitious day, counting fuel, food, fun and photo stops. But well worth it. John Coyle was a great codriver for any number



### 2016 CAMARO LINEUP

#### 2016 CAMARO LT V6

ENGINE.....3.6L V6 24v DOHC DI VVT  
TRANSMISSION ....6-spd manual / 8-spd auto  
HORSEPOWER .....335 hp .....at 6800 rpm  
TORQUE .....284 lb-ft .....at 5300 rpm  
BRAKES: 4-wheel disc, ABS, Duralife rotors  
.....Brembo brakes available  
MPG .....Auto (reg) 19-23-28 city-hwy-comb  
.....Man (reg) 18-21-27 city-hwy-comb

BASE PRICE (1LT +V6 \$1495) .....\$28,190

#### 2016 CAMARO SS V8

ENGINE.....6.2L V8 16v DI VVT w cyl deact  
TRANSMISSION ....6-spd manual / 8-spd auto  
HD units; Active Rev Match on manual  
HORSEPOWER .....455 hp .....at 6000 rpm  
TORQUE .....455 lb-ft .....at 4400 rpm  
BRAKES: 4-wheel disc, ABS, Duralife rotors,  
Brembo 4-piston, 13.6" fr 13.3" rr  
BRAKES .....4-wheel disc, ABS;  
V6: Duralife rotors; Brembo available;  
V8: " ", Brembo 4-piston, 13.6" fr 13.3" rr  
MPG .....Auto (prem) 17-20-28 city-hwy-comb  
.....Man (prem) 16-19-25 city-hwy-comb

BASE PRICE (1SS) .....\$37,295

#### 2016 CAMARO LT 2.0L TURBO I-4

ENGINE.....2.0L turbo 16v DOHC DI VVT 4-cyl  
TRANSMISSION ....6-spd manual / 8-spd auto  
HORSEPOWER .....275 hp .....at 3600 rpm  
TORQUE .....295 lb-ft .....at 3000-4500 rpm  
BRAKES .....4-wheel disc, ABS  
MPG .....TBD

BASE PRICE (1LT 4-cyl) .....\$26,695

### SHARED SPECIFICATIONS

DRIVETRAIN .....RWD  
STEERING ..... rack, elec pwr, var assist  
LENGTH .....188.3 in (2.3" shorter)  
WHEELBASE .....110.7 in (1.6" shorter)  
WIDTH .....74.7 in (0.8" narrower)  
HEIGHT .....53.1 in (1.1" less tall)  
TRACK FR/RR 63.0/62.0 in (0.6"/1.0" narrower)  
CARGO CAPACITY .....9 cu.ft.  
FUEL CAPACITY .....19.0 gal  
FACTORY .....Lansing, Michigan



of reasons, not the least of which was that he provided our soundtrack, which put the upgraded Bose 9-speaker audio system to good use.

The 2016 Camaro has, in fact, paid extra attention to its own sound effects. Both the V6 and V8 have mechanical resonators that direct satisfying engine induction noise into the cabin, and have optional dual-mode exhaust, which bypasses the mufflers under acceleration, enhancing performance and sound effects. This setup lets you choose when to be stealthy and when to sound aggressive. (The 4-cylinder model will have its own system, which amplifies native engine noise.)

### SOUTH DAKOTA AGAIN

The Black Hills region of South Dakota and neighboring Wyoming is a treasure trove. We had lots of advice—biker's dream US 14 winding through Spearfish Canyon, 20 enticing but time-consuming miles that we'd have to save for another time, tall grass bison parklands and more. Instead, we

killed a few birds with one stone by heading to Sturgis—home of the Black Hills Motor Classic, better known as the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally—where we could grab a T-shirt at Harley-Davidson and lunch at the Knuckle Saloon, a teeming hive of activity during the Rally, but shared with us by just a few others on this off-season day.

The sun was low in the Western sky, and we had one more don't-miss stop to make—Mt Rushmore. We caught the presidential landmark in the day's very last rays, then got back on the hilly two-lanes—wrapping around to the south and west, catching a seldom-seen view of George Washington from behind—and headed toward Wyoming.

One last stop for gas in Custer SD gave us an unexpected highlight, as an enthusiastic young traveler knew exactly what he was seeing and gave the Camaros a thorough appreciation tour. His enthusiasm was so contagious, we gave him our own #FindNewRoads drive event T-shirt. Sales will surely see a spike when he turns 16.

Superstars in no need of an introduction: Washington, Jefferson, Teddy Roosevelt, Abe Lincoln, the 2016 Camaro RS and the Camaro SS, at Mt Rushmore National Memorial, South Dakota.



### WYOMING AGAIN

Wyoming does not have a lot of towns, nor a lot of roads, which is one of its biggest appeals. This stretch was presenting a challenge we knew we'd have all along, but if anything our timing had only gotten worse. We had a plane to catch in Salt Lake City early the next afternoon, and the whole Cowboy State to cross. (Note: despite that popular nickname, Wyoming is actually the Equality State—first to give women the vote, in 1869.)

If we stayed in Casper, our first opportunity, we would never make our flights in Utah, unless we resumed driving about 1am. If we drove all the way to Rock Springs, in southwestern Wyoming, we'd make our flights but not get to bed till 3am or so. And we had to make our OnStar hotel reservations by 7pm. Our flights were immutable, but sleep is a fungible resource, so we would miss most of Wyoming's scenery, driving through

to Rock Springs—or actually Green River.

This night run alone was about 500 miles and took about eight hours—more with a quick meal stop in Casper and a late night fuel stop in quiet little Lusk. If it had been snowing, all bets would be off. I-80 across southern Wyoming is so windy, in a blizzard they pull huge gates closed across all four lanes, and you have to just wait things out. But we had clear skies and clear sailing.

We pulled off the Interstate in the wee hours at our seemingly nondescript exit and hit the sack.

**DAY THREE.** The final morning's light revealed a surprise—our roadside hotel was tucked right up against Teapot Rock and the Sugar Bowl, two dramatic sandstone outcroppings in otherwise wide open southern Wyoming.

We fueled up and resumed our westward migration on I-80. To the south, the terrain jumped from prairie to Rockies as abruptly and definitively as the imaginary line on the map separating Wyoming from Colorado. Their 13,000-foot peaks glistened with new snowfall, as our own landscape began to evolve through more rock outcroppings toward the first foothills of Utah's Wasatch Mountains. We were now above 6000 feet.

### UTAH

Utah is, of course, one of the most geographical and geologically diverse states on the map. We entered at the notch where the southwest corner of Wyoming keeps Utah from being a rectangle, too. This brings us to Summit County, Utah—home to the Olympic-caliber slopes and jumps of Park City, a thriving resort town born as a silver, gold and lead mining town in 1869 (the same year Wyoming gave women the vote). Nestled in a rolling wooded mountain valley, with dramatic snow-capped peaks of the Wasatch Range looming behind, this area is much like the western slope of the northern Rockies over in Colorado (which

Long miles in the Camaro were as enticing on our last morning as on our first. Here, we check out the Teapot and Sugar Bowl in Green River, Wyoming.

loom some six hours east along two-lane US 40, back across more dusty Wild West plains).

Time was getting tight, but we had enough leeway to pull into Park City for lunch. (Yes, they do have brew pubs in Utah now.) From this point forward—a simple 45-minute drive from the heart of the mountains to Salt Lake City Airport—only two would be driving, so the other two realized it was five o'clock somewhere and fully enjoyed the pub. All four of us fully enjoyed the kitchen.

Finishing a launch drive is a familiar drill. Grab your bag, leave the car to a wrangler and bid a hasty goodbye at the airport. This one was different. A road trip'll do that to you. We would miss this particular group of fellow travelers. And we'd miss the new Camaro. Adiós till another time.

It's also routine to get home, unpack, get back to work, ready to move on to the next big thing. But waking in Arizona the next morning, we had the nagging feeling that the other three should be down in the hotel breakfast room and the two 2016 Chevy Camaros outside, ready to hit the road again. This had been a perfect combination of great people, roads and cars. ■

### OUR #FINDNEWROADS CARS

#### 2016 CAMARO V6 WITH RS PKG

ENGINE / TRANS	3.6L V6 / 8-spd auto
<b>BASE PRICE (1LT 2.0T)</b>	<b>\$26,695</b>
V6 ENGINE	1495
TRANSMISSION: 8-speed automatic	1495
EXHAUST: Dual-mode performance	895
RS PACKAGE: 20" premium aluminum wheels, HID headlamps, LED taillamps, RS grilles, decklid lip spoiler	1950
HD COOLING / BRAKE PACKAGE: External engine cooler, extra capacity cooling, Brembo brakes w 4-piston front discs	485
TECHNOLOGY PACKAGE: MyLink Radio, Bose 9-speaker premium audio	800
DESTINATION CHARGE	995
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$34,810</b>

#### 2016 CAMARO 2SS

ENGINE / TRANS	6.2L V8 / 6-spd manual
<b>BASE PRICE (2SS)</b>	<b>\$42,295</b>
EXHAUST: Dual-mode performance	895
AUDIO SYSTEM: MyLink Radio, nav, 8" touchscreen, AM/FM seek-scan, digital clock, Bluetooth streaming audio, voice-activated radio+phone, Apple CarPlay	495
BLACK METALLIC CENTER STRIPE	470
SUSPENSION: Magnetic ride control	1695
WHEELS: 20" premium aluminum	200
DESTINATION CHARGE	995
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$47,045</b>

