

# Foothold

Big news that (almost) needs no introduction by Joe Sage

We had met the new Nissan Titan XD several times already. Last summer, we toured the Cummins engine plant in Indiana, where its turbodiesel V8 was being developed. Last fall, we drove final preproduction units in the Texas Truck Rodeo, where it won the coveted Truck of Texas Award. And we covered its production launch event, held this winter in Arizona. The truck is built for tough duty, but there's nothing tougher than being a newcomer in the most loyally established vehicle segment possible. Even without all our familiarity, the new Titan XD comes to market looking like it fits right in.

To make a splash, Nissan has been clever to differentiate at launch. One distinction is that the first model to market—the Nissan Titan XD driven here—is a diesel, featuring a new-to-Nissan and in fact new-for-Cummins 5.0L V8 turbodiesel. Another is that it hits a balance point between nominal half-ton and three-quarter-ton domestic pickups, a care-

fully calibrated formula bringing a truck that specs higher than the volume market, yet maintains the kind of price range, heft and drivability buyers seek for everyday use.

All models at launch are full crew cab with six-and-a-half-foot bed, in five trim levels, of which our SL is next-to-top. An S model with 2WD starts at \$35,290. At \$5440 less than range-topping Platinum Reserve, our SL has remote start, a handsome leather interior, 20-inch wheels and Rockford Fosgate audio.

There's a PRO-4X model with an off-road emphasis at \$4060 less than our SL, but we took ours to a rocky trail, after some in-town familiarization. We had loved it in the Texas mud, rivers and boulder climbs, and we loved four-wheeling on our volcanic Arizona gravel and rocks. Tough duty is where 555 lb-ft of diesel torque really sinks its teeth in.

Around town, we would improve the aim of the backup camera's guidelines, and the action of the column shifter could be fine-tuned.

The Titan XD enters the realm with an air of great familiarity, yet we noticed many a pickup owner—compact or full-size, domestic and import—craning their necks for a better look.

Nissan will follow up with single-cab and King Cab models, some with an 8-foot bed. A gasoline model Titan revealed at this winter's shows will also arrive very soon. ■

## SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE.....	Cummins 5.0L 32v V8 Turbo Diesel
DRIVETRAIN.....	part-time 4WD
HP/TORQUE.....	310 hp / 555 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION.....	6-spd Aisin auto
TRANSFER CASE.....	4WD HI 1.000 / 4WD LO 2.717
ALTERNATOR / STARTER.....	200 A / 550 cold crank A
BRAKES.....	vented disc: F 14.17 / R 14.37
PARKING BRAKE.....	foot pedal / mechanical
BODY/CHASSIS:	Body-on-frame fully-boxed ladder-type, corrosion-resistant & high-strength steel
SUSPENSION:	Fr: double wishbone, 36mm stabilizer bar; R: multi-leaf w/solid axle, 18mm stabilizer bar
GROUND CLEARANCE.....	F: 9.0 in / R: 9.5 in
BED/CARGO AREA:	77.9" bed, Utili-track channel system, spray-in bedliner, 4 fixed tie-down hooks, 4 movable aluminum cleats, removable lockable damped tailgate, 110-volt outline right rear, cargo bed lights, LED lights under bed rail
TOWING:	11,638 lb, integrated gooseneck hitch, trailer sway control, 4- and 7-pin connector, receiver hitch, optional brake control and light function check, front tow hooks
WHEELS.....	20x7.5J machined alloy, full-size spare
TURNING CIRCLE.....	53.8 ft
WEIGHT / GVWR.....	7402 lb / 8990 lb
FUEL/CAPACITY.....	Ultra low sulfur diesel / 26.0 gal
MPG.....	n/a (heavy duty)
<b>BASE PRICE.....</b>	<b>\$55,030</b>
<b>CARPETED FLOOR MATS.....</b>	<b>200</b>
<b>DESTINATION CHARGE:.....</b>	<b>1195</b>
<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>\$56,425</b>

