

Newest, smallest, hottest BY JOE SAGE

We had a big adventure for the launch drive of the all-new Hyundai Kona small SUV (see our May/June issue)—we flew to the Kona Coast on the Big Island of Hawaii, grabbed a sample in lively green Lime Twist, and drove all over the island—lava fields, rain forest coast, volcanic highlands, the works.

How do we top that on our home front? It's not hard. There are surely a great many people in the islands who would give anything to drive one of these to the red rocks of Sedona (and maybe the volcanic parks northeast of Flagstaff, too, given enough time).

Our sample this time came in a conservative dark gray suit. Or maybe not so conservative—this is called Thunder Gray, evoking the wild island energy as surely as Surf Blue and Pulse Red. We pointed north and let it roar.

As Kona has redefined the Hyundai crossover lineup—and, as a “small SUV,” size categories themselves—stormy-conservative Thunder Gray quickly expanded our impression of this perky ride. (All paints are available in all trims, except Lime Twist, which is available in top trim only; also, a black roof option is only

on a few lower-trim colors; and great lime accents on black leather interior are top-trim only and with Lime Twist or Thunder Gray paint only). At \$28,700 for the (fully equipped) Ultimate top trim, perky though it still is, being a little more stately is not out of line. And the fun quotient remains every bit as high.

The engine choice is easy for most buyers—175 hp (and 195 lb-ft of torque) for the 1.6L turbo vs 147 (and 132) for the less expensive 2.0L. Lower trims have the 2-liter, while upper trims have the turbo, so it comes down to cost. The tightest jump is from \$21,150 for 2-liter SEL to \$24,700 for 1.6-turbo Limited (FWD prices), or \$3,550—just \$60/month on a five-year loan. Find a cheaper coffee shop or hope for a \$15/week raise—here's your motivation.

Stated MPG proved accurate. Combining miles of Interstate at speed with thousands of feet of climb, plus several days of stop-and-go around town, we averaged 26.7 mpg.

Comfortable, roomy and quick, unless you have a family of six or need to tow, Kona hits a size and shape that should cover your needs. Smiles are included at no extra charge. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	1.6L turbo D-CVVT direct inj
HP/TORQUE	175 hp / 195 lb-ft
TRANS	7-spd DCT
DRIVETRAIN	AWD (FWD avail)
SUSPENSION	F: McPherson strut w coils, gas shocks, advanced valving, stblzr bar
	R: Multi-link (AWD); gas shocks, adv valving
STEERING	motor driven rack & pinion, column mt
BRAKES	F: vented 305mm / R: solid 284mm
WHEELS/TIRES	18x7.5 alloy / 235/45R18
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	164.0 in / 102.4 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	6.7 in
TURNING CIRCLE	34.8 ft
HEADROOM (F/R)	39.6 (38.0 w sunroof) / 37.8 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	41.5 / 34.6 in
CARGO CAPACITY	19.2 / 45.8 cu.ft
WEIGHT / TOW CAPACITY	3344 lb / not recmd
FUEL CAPACITY	13.2 gal
FUEL ECONOMY	AWD: 26/29/27 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE

ULTIMATE AWD W/LIME ACCENT INTERIOR \$28,700

INCLUDED W/ULTIMATE: Reverse park distance warning, color heads-up display (HUD), forward collision-avoidance assist w pedestrian detect, 4.2" color multi-info display, lane keep assist, 8" LCD touchscreen w embedded nav, driver attention warning, Blue Link® connected car system, high beam assist, wireless device charge, rain-sense wipers, Home-link® & compass, Infinity® 8-speaker premium audio w subwoofer & external amplifier.

CARPETED FLOOR MATS 125

DESTINATION CHARGE 980

TOTAL **\$29,805**

