

Luxury Yacht Battleship

BY JOE SAGE

The Infiniti QX80 is a proud beast, dominant on the road, carrying up to eight people and/or up to almost 100 cubic feet of cargo. The QX80 is built in Japan with body-on-frame construction based on the Nissan Titan full-size pickup. Its off-road capabilities have a solid foundation, from rear-drive bias (with near-perfect 52/48 weight distribution), to standard auto-leveling four-wheel independent suspension, clearing the road by 9.2 inches. 4WD models (the only kind in Limited top trim) have a pure four-high/four-low transfer case, snow mode and hill start assist—plus tow mode, as its roughly three-ton bulk can pull another 8500 pounds.

Infiniti QX80 is a hard-working SUV in a tuxedo. Tough, but luxurious. Luxurious, but tough.

Interior finishes are the typical Infiniti mix of multi-tone premium leathers, satin metals and rich, open-pore woods. We had the QX80 during the rarest of events, snow in the upper Valley, so we didn't need AC, but noted generous vents for all three rows. In the cold, we had solid heat, effective defrosting for the vehicle's large glass areas, and the indispensable (though perhaps *too* hot) heated steering wheel. Controls include a healthy mix of screen interfaces and manual knobs and switches.

Bottom line on features in any vehicle is that

whether they are mechanical, electronic, pneumatic, hydraulic, magic or otherwise, they should be intuitive. Whereas this vehicle is suitable for more than half a soccer team, we had with us this week just one 9-year-old soccer player, who happily took over the second row and quickly found everything he wanted, even in the dark—from entertainment to charging to heated seats to overhead lights—with no trouble or hesitation at all.

Our QX80 was a solid performer in heavy rain, snow and—most challenging of all—tire-grabbing and skate-inducing deep slush. It's quite maneuverable for a big three-row utility, taking half the space we had expected for foul-weather U-turns. Nissan-Infiniti is generally tops with backup cameras (including 360-degree views), though this one was less useful at night. The inside rear view mirror did not tilt up enough for a tall driver, but the attempt led us to discovering its exceptional super-wide rear video mirror.

You can get into a QX80 for \$65,400 (Luxe with 2WD, or 4WD for \$3100 more), with the same V8, full leather and more. The only other model, our top Limited trim (4WD only), at just under \$90,000, adds upgraded tech and creature comfort features inside and out, including a wide array of electronic handling and passive safety features, upgraded audio (both are Bose systems), a dual 8-inch theater package for the second row, model-specific 22-inch wheels, and available paint and interior

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	.....5.6L aluminum DOHC 32v dir inj V8
HP/TORQUE	.....400 hp / 413 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	.....7-speed auto w manual mode, adaptive shift control downshift rev matching
DRIVETRAIN	.....4WD
SUSPENSION	.....dual-flow path twin-tube shocks; F: double-wishbone, 36mm stblzr bar R: double-wishbone, auto-leveling, hydraulic body motion control system (delete stblzr bar)
STEERING	.....rack & pinion, speed-sensitive pwr assist
BRAKES	.....vented discs: F: 13.78x1.18" / R: 13.78x0.79"
WHEELS	.....22x8 dark forged alum alloy, full-size spare
TIRES	.....275/50R22 all-season
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....210.2 / 121.2 in
TURNING CIRCLE	.....41.3 ft
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....9.2 in
SEATING CAPACITY	.....8, or 7 w 2nd row captain's chairs
HEADROOM (F/2/3)	.....39.9 / 40.0 / 36.8 in
LEGROOM (F/2/3)	.....39.6 / 41.0 / 28.8 in
CARGO CAPACITY	.....16.6 / 50± / 95± cu.ft
WEIGHT / TOW CAPACITY	.....5926 lb / 8500 lb
FUEL CAPACITY	.....26.0 gal
MPG	.....13/19/15 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	.....\$89,800
ALL-SEASON PKG: A/S floor mats, cargo protector	.....355
PREMIUM PAINT: Anthracite Gray	.....500
DESTINATION CHARGE	.....1295

TOTAL\$91,950

colors specific to this trim—our sample's Anthracite Gray with Graphite/Stone interior. A handful of standalone options—from wireless smartphone charging, to wind deflectors, to a weight-distributing trailer hitch, to an attached tent—were surprisingly reasonable, keeping an every-bell-and-whistle build at about \$95 grand. ■

