

Winning formula

BY JOE SAGE

Nissan Armada used to share its bones with the earlier midsize Titan pickup. After the Titan upsized in 2016, Armada in 2017 migrated to the platform of the global-but-not-sold-here Nissan Patrol, a full-size tough-duty utility highly coveted by the cognoscenti, maintaining a welcome body-on-frame build.

It remains a solid winning formula.

Armada has great numbers. Its traditional slab-sided form gives it generous interior di-

mensions—40-plus-inch headroom and legroom in two rows, plus a decent kid-size third row, and exemplary elbow room throughout.

Strong clearance, approach and departure specs make it a solid performer for tough off-road weekend duty. And it tows 8500 pounds (in both 2WD and 4WD versions). Brake controller and sway control are also available options for towing.

Though immediately familiar, the 2021 Nis-

san Armada has received significant restyling, tip to tail, notably a much evolved version of what remains a family-wide grille. (It's also the first Nissan to sport the updated Nissan corporate logo.) The interior features a redesigned center stack, built around a new 12.3-inch touchscreen. The engine is bumped this year from 390 to 400 horsepower.

Power, screen size and towing capacity all claim best-in-class status.

Armada's big 5.6L V8 provides grunt you are aware of even around town and can rely upon

in more challenging conditions. In line with its rugged build, Armada is a true 4x4, with a transfer case delivering 4HI, 4LO and crawl ratios via an easy-to-access console dial.

We gave the Armada a solid off-road run out toward Four Peaks—gravel roads and dirt trails, variously including high-speed stretches, off-kilter surfaces and significant wash damage from recent rains—and the vehicle was as tough as all comers.

We did no towing and carried no loads, but also never pampered nor restricted aggressive performance. Yet our readout was consistently about 15.2 MPG, respectable for a three-ton, three-row, 400-hp V8 beast—and right on target as rated.

Armada can be your go-anywhere do-anything vehicle, for when that's defined not as being as extreme as possible, rather a good healthy degree of extreme along with a good healthy degree of parenthood, executive duty or whatever your daily drill includes—tough and capable, with a respectable image.

In a lineup of six SUVs and crossovers, plus a new EV on the way, the Armada maintains a noteworthy traditional position. It's a big boy, with a 40-plus turning circle, a handful on a par with a big pickup. But it's here to



do a job, and it does it very well.

Ours was the SV model, second up out of four trims, not too fancy but with stance- and appearance-enhancing 20-inch wheels and a handful of other options added.

Higher trims add such amenities as quilted leather and rear seat entertainment.

Highly rated for reliability and starting under \$50 grand for a rear-drive S trim, Nissan Armada offers solid value and utility. It's no wonder we noticed a great many others sharing the road during our week with it. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

BUILD	body-on-frame
ENGINE	alum/alum Endurance® 5.6L V8 32v di, silent chain single stage valvetrain
HP/TORQUE	400 hp / 413 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	11.2:1
DRIVETRAIN	(opt) 4x4 snow mode, hill start assist, tow mode
TRANSMISSION	7-spd auto w overdrive, manual mode, rev-matching
TRANSFER CASE	4HI, 4LO, crawl
SUSPENSION	F: dbl-wishbone indep, twin-tube shocks, 36mm stblzr bar; R: dbl-wishbone indep, twin-tube shocks, 26.5mm stblzr bar
STEERING	eng spd-sens pwr rack & pinion
BRAKES	F: 13.8x1.2; R: 13.8x0.8, all vented
WHEELS	(opt) 20-in painted aluminum
TIRES	(opt) 275/60R20 BSW A/S
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	208.9 / 121.1 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	9.1 in
APPRCH / DEPART / BRKOV	20.8 / 22.2 / 20.5°
TURNING CIRCLE	41.3 ft
HEADROOM (F/2/3)	40.9 / 40.0 / 36.4 in
LEGROOM (F/2/3)	41.9 / 41.0 / 28.4 in
CARGO CAPACITY	16.5 / 49.9 / 95.4 cu.ft
WEIGHT / DISTRIB	5933 lb / 51/49%
TOW CAPACITY	8500 lb
FUEL CAPACITY	26.0 gal
MPG	13/18/15 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE (SV 4x4)	\$55,600
APPEARANCE PKG: 20" aluminum wheels, LED fog lights, power liftgate, auto-dim rear view mirror w Homelink	2500
CARPETED FLOOR MATS / CARGO MAT	320
ILLUMINATED KICK PLATES	390
DESTINATION CHARGE	1495
TOTAL	\$60,305

2021 NISSAN ARMADA LINEUP

S	RWD	\$48,600
	4x4	51,600
SV	RWD	\$52,600
	4x4	55,600
SL	RWD	\$56,000
	4x4	59,000
Platinum	RWD	\$65,000
	4x4	68,000

