

Equation

Southwest towns have lent their names to quite a few vehicles, the latest being VW's Taos, named in honor of John Muir, author of an indispensable service guide for early VWs, popularly known as "The Idiot Guide." (Muir lived in Santa Fe, but there has been some historical revisionism.)

VW Taos was first introduced in China in 2018, then revealed for the US in 2020 as a 2022 model—thus making our sample still all-new today.

Taos fits into the VW lineup two ways—it's a smaller alternative to the compact Tiguan, and it's widely stated to replace the VW Golf hatch in these SUV-crazed days, though the Golf R and GTI linger.

Among the broader Volkswagen Group family, at least in the US, arguably no two brands are more similar than Volkswagen itself and upscale Audi. Positioning the two against each other by brand

and content is a conundrum faced by many auto-makers with a similar standard-premium pairing, compounded by relatively similar styling across much of these two lineups.

With build quality, style and content high in both, it seems VW, the less expensive, works extra hard to draw a distinction. And that's where VW never lets us down, delivering a vehicle about on a par with an Audi of 'X' years earlier, at today's Volkswagen price, a great value formula.

Our sample here is a mid-level-of-three SE trim, also forgoing available all-wheel drive, in a wide range of models with a pleasing range of prices.

Styling is attractive, fuel mileage is stellar for a utility, ground clearance beats a hatch, and storage, leg- and headroom are ample (though we always hit our knee on the steering column upon entry).

A modest build has benefits. The screen, augmented by two knobs and subtle keyword buttons,

is above average for simplicity (though sometimes short on function). Climate controls follow suit.

Things we didn't like so well included seats we never got adjusted well for comfort (our time is limited, of course); jerky steering (at least in this front-drive version); and a turn signal enunciator that is so loud you'll have to hear it for yourself to see why it's worth a mention. Some of these you may get used to, or not.

The numbers tell the story on power—not a lot of horses, but then also not a lot of weight.

All in all, the new VW Taos is a handsome little guy with high utility—simple, neat and clean, not a luxury vehicle, but certainly not low end. ■

2022 VW TAOS LINEUP

S	FWD	\$22,995	AWD	\$25,040
SE	FWD	27,245	AWD	28,695
SEL	FWD	31,490	AWD	33,045

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE/TRANSMISSION BUILD	Mexico / Japan
ENGINE	1.5L turbo/intercooled 16v DOHC 4-cyl TSI, alum alloy block/head, cast iron 5-main bearing crank
HP/TORQUE	158 hp / 184 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	11.5:1
TRANSMISSION	8-spd automatic
DRIVETRAIN	FWD
SUSPENSION	F: strut-type w lower control arms, coils, telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar; R: torsion beam w coils, telescopic dampers
STEERING	rack & pinion, elec pwr assist
BRAKES	F: 12.3x1.0 vented; R: 10.7x0.4 solid
WHEELS / TIRES	7Jx18 alum-alloy / 215/5R18 a/s
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	175.8 / 105.9 in
TURNING CIRCLE	37.6 ft
APPRCH / DEPART / BRKOVER	17.3 / 24.8 / 18.0°
GROUND CLEARANCE	6.4 in
HEADROOM (F/R)	40.7 / 39.8 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	40.1 / 37.9 in
CARGO CAPACITY	27.9 / 65.9 cu.ft
WEIGHT	3175 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	reg unl / 13.2 gal
MPG	28/36/31 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	\$27,245
DESTINATION CHARGE	1,195
TOTAL	\$28,440



Welcome to a world where the roads are dry, the cars are slick and the destinations are limitless...



We drive customers to your business.

- Focused content delivered to a targeted, engaged audience
- Print-social-web advertising & promotional bundles
- Print-web special sections & sponsored content
- Custom publications, brochures and direct mail

sales@arizonadrivermagazine.com / main office: 480-948-0200
 www.arizonadrivermagazine.com / FB: @arizonadrivermagazine
 IG: @arizonadriver / TW: @arizonadriver / Pedal: @arizonadriver