

Named and styled like the compacts, compares well with Escalade *by Joe Sage*

Cadillac sedans come in two sizes, utilities in four. Escalade has been established for 25 years as the biggest, while others have evolved, now unified as XT4, XT5 and XT6. (All have platform cousins across the GM family.)

XT6 holds a strong place in this lineup. Smaller crossovers are hot sellers in the general market, but for a Cadillac buyer who has set aside Escalade as being too big, XT6 is the biggest of the rest, still suiting the brand's personality well.

Of three trim levels, one has a 235-hp turbo-four, the other two a 310-hp V6, all offer enhanced

AWD, with the lower two also available as front-drivers. Top trim Sport, our sample, has the V6 and AWD-only. Those red Brembo performance brakes up front are a key differentiator for Sport, which also has real-time damping suspension, plus Sport Control and left-right twin-clutch AWD. Inside, its proud owner enjoy semi-aniline leather.

The XT6 with V6 has almost as potent a power-to-weight ratio as Escalade, though torque is much higher in the Escalade, trailering about double.

We were content from the moment we entered the XT6. Its presentation suggested everything

would work well, and it did (currently far less common than it should be). A \$2350 technology package on ours includes a digital rearview mirror camera, a feature we dislike and turn off, as it requires constant refocusing between distance and close.

XT6 offers four drive modes: Tour, AWD, Sport and Off-Road. We weren't likely to go off-road in someone else's luxury utility with 20-inch wheels, and Tour turns it into a front-driver, leaving AWD or Sport, as we'd always choose the distribution and grip of all-wheel. Any are fed through a conventional nine-speed automatic.

The powertrain quickly struck us as potent, the handling precise, cornering smooth and, if wanted, aggressive, with very effective brakes to back it all up—though front-drive-biased torque steer would

reveal itself in certain occasional conditions. Its V6 puts out acoustics almost as satisfying as a V8.

On a run up I-17, the automatic transmission became surprisingly active through Black Canyon to Sunset Point—a curvy two-lane, but generally a steady pace and steady climb. Paddle shift time.

Interstate traffic was fast and very steady at our turnaround to head back south, net result accelerating from dead standstill to full highway speed near-instantly. Here, power was still quite good, arguably all you need, but not a speck more.

Fuel economy as delivered sat at 19.7 mpg. In town use, it dropped into the 17s and stayed there up I-17. Then, after our descent, it had moved back up into the 19s. This seems pretty solid for a three-row luxury SUV, though we recently hit the 30s for a week in a similar-size-and-weight hybrid.

One other note: it was only in the 70s in early spring when we had this, yet the cabin was quite

stuffy and warm. Turning the fan up manually improved it, but we are curious whether this gets moreso in summer heat, or perhaps works harder.

GM is applying much focus to its electric future, but they are clearly still doing internal combustion powertrains right, and we're pleased to have this handsome, capable model still fresh in the market.

XT6 was new in 2019, as a 2020, basically taking the spot of the former wagon-like SRX after a few years' absence. XT6 styling, particularly from the rear, does not bear as distinctive a Cadillac look as XT4 and XT5, and its arrival may have been somewhat lost in these unusual pandemic years.

SRX had become Cadillac's biggest seller, at around 60,000 units a year in the US, almost hitting 70,000 in 2015. XT6 is now selling only about 20,000 in the US, though almost another 40,000 in China. That demand should keep it in our market long enough to get better noticed. Give it a look. ■

Our sample's Radiant Red Tintcoat is one of three new colors for XT6 this year. Cadillac's smallest crossover, the subcompact XT4, has already revealed a restyled face for model year 2024. Expect the same on XT5 and XT6 soon, too.



SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY.....	Spring Hill, Tennessee
ENGINE/TRANS BUILD.....	US / US
PARTS CONTENT.....	US/Can 39% / Mex 24%
ROWS / SEATS.....	three / six
ENGINE.....	3.6L V6 DOHC 24v, contin VVT w dir inj, cast alum block w iron bore liners, cast alum heads
HP/TORQUE.....	310 hp / 271 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO.....	na
TRANSMISSION.....	9-spd auto
DRIVETRAIN.....	AWD
SUSPENSION.....	F: MacPherson strut w direct-acting stblzr bar, contin damping control (on Sport trim); R: five-link indep, coils w stblzr bar, contin damping control (on Sport trim)
STEERING.....	var-asst rack & pinion w rack-mounted belt-driven elec assist
BRAKES.....	F: 12.6x1.9; R: 12.4x0.9
WHEELS.....	20-in alum alloy
TIRES.....	P235/55R20
LENGTH / WHEELBASE.....	198.5 / 112.7 in
GROUND CLEARANCE.....	6.65 in
TURNING CIRCLE.....	38.7 ft
HEADROOM (F/2/3).....	(snrf) 39.8 / 39.1 / 37.2 in
LEGROOM (F/2/3).....	41.2 / 39.1 / 29.5 in
CARGO CAPACITY.....	12.6 / 43.1 / 78.7 cu.ft
WEIGHT.....	4690 lb
TOW CAPACITY.....	(V6) 4000 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY.....	premium rec / 22 gal
MPG.....	18/25/21 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE.....	\$60,095
RADIANT RED TINTCOAT.....	1225
PLATINUM PKG: semi-aniline leather seating w chevron-perforated inserts all rows, French stitched leather-wrap horn pad cover, Modena leather-wrap wheel, leather-wrap instrument panel, console and door trim, premium floor mats front/rear.....	3800
SUPER CRUISE™ (subscrip req'd).....	2500
TECHNOLOGY PKG: HD surround vision and recorder, 8-in color gauge cluster w driver personalization, rear camera mirror w washer, heads-up display, rear pedestrian alert, auto park assist w braking.....	2350
NIGHT VISION.....	2000
DRIVER ASSIST PKG: auto seatbelt tighten, reverse auto braking, enhanced auto emergency braking, adaptive cruise.....	1300
SIX-PASSENGER SEATING.....	800
PREMIUM HEADLAMP SYSTEM.....	700
CARGO SECURITY SHADE.....	150
DESTINATION CHARGE.....	1395
TOTAL.....	\$76,315

2023 CADILLAC XT6 LINEUP

	FWD	AWD
Luxury.....	4-cyl \$48,595	\$50,595
Premium Luxury.....	V6 \$54,795	\$56,795
Sport.....	V6	▼ 60,095