

Toyota Sequoia Rewrites the Rules About Full-Size SUV Versatility and Drivability

August 31, 2015

For families on the go to families that tow, the Toyota Sequoia, a full-capability SUV with seating for up to eight and a 7,400-lb. trailer capacity, remains the gold standard in comfort and versatility. An upgraded Entune[®] Multimedia systems for 2016 keeps them connected.

With a 381-hp V8 engine and available full-time four-wheel drive, the Toyota Sequoia is the full-size, full-capability SUV that drives and maneuvers with ease – on or off road. A four-wheel independent suspension system ensures adult-size room for the third seating row, along with ride quality that's downright luxurious. The expansive interior makes road vacations something to enjoy again.

Changes for the 2016 model focus on safety, convenience and connectivity. In the Limited grade, the new Safety and Convenience Package includes Blind Spot Monitor (BSM), two-position power memory driver's seat and memory outside mirrors.

The Entune Multimedia units in all Sequoia models introduce critical upgrades for 2016. The SR5 grade gets new standard Entune Audio Plus with Connected Navigation (Scout[®] GPS Link), which uses the customer's smartphone to provide navigation functionality through the head unit. All Entune units are upgraded to 2.5 version status, which adds Siri[®] Eyes Free mode to existing features and gives iPhone users even more versatility.

On the Entune Premium Audio with In-Vehicle Navigation and Entune Premium JBL Audio with In-Vehicle Navigation, the App Suite adds Slacker Radio and replaces Bing with Destination Search. The premium multimedia units offer 85 percent faster functionality thanks to new dual core processors, and iPhone users can now charge their phone using the USB port while using the Entune App Suite at the same time.

Built to Give ... and Take

A robust body-on-frame platform gives the Toyota Sequoia both exemplary capability and smooth, quiet ride comfort. Four-wheel independent suspension provides outstanding bump absorption on-road and excellent wheel articulation off-road. The available Multi-Mode 4-wheel-drive system uses a two-speed transfer case with a lockable TORSSEN[®] limited-slip center differential to apportion torque to the front and rear wheels. You can shift into low range on the move via a rotary knob, and lock the center diff with the push of a button.

Ready to Tow

The Sequoia's sole engine choice is the formidable iForce DOHC 5.7-liter V8 with 381 hp at 5,600 RPM and 401 lb.-ft. of torque at 3,600 RPM. Dual independent Variable Valve Timing with intelligence (VVT-i) and an Acoustic Control Induction System (ACIS) ensure ample torque across the engine speed range. Even with all its power, the big V8 uses regular-grade fuel. It's teamed to a six-speed electronically controlled automatic transmission.

For towing, it's not just about how much torque an engine produces, but also how quickly it produces it. The iForce V8 puts 90 percent of the peak torque – or 360 lb.-ft. – at your service at just 2,200 rpm. Compliant with the SAE J2807 towing standard, the Sequoia can tow up to 7,400 lbs., depending on model grade and equipment. Toyota engineered the Sequoia for the task. For example, the towing hitch is integrated into the frame as a single

unit. The transmission's driver-selectable Tow/Haul mode modifies shift points for optimal performance. Towing newbies and veterans alike will benefit from the Trailer Sway Control system, which uses the Vehicle Stability Control (VSC) to help counteract handling forces that can lead to trailer sway.

Added support for parking or trailer positioning comes from the standard rear view camera. The 3.3-inch display is built into the standard electrochromic auto-dimming rear-view mirror, which also integrates a compass and a map lamp. The camera display uses the larger navigation screen on vehicles so-equipped.

Handling It All

Large though it may be, the Toyota Sequoia handles with impressive agility. A 38-foot turning circle is one of the tightest in the class. Standard front and rear parking sonar sensors on the Limited and Platinum models alert the driver of the position of objects and their distance from the vehicle.

Braking power, too, is formidable, with 13.9-inch ventilated front disc brakes and 13.6-inch ventilated rear disc brakes — all using four opposed pistons. The Sequoia SR5 rides on 18-inch aluminum wheels with 275/65 R18 tires; Limited and Platinum grades roll on 20-inch aluminum wheels with 275/55 R20 tires. In keeping with the jeweled theme, the Platinum grade's wheels feature a diamond-cut finish.

The Sequoia Platinum grade steps into luxury territory with its load-leveling rear air suspension and Adaptive Variable Suspension. The latter is an electronic damper control system that offers driver-selectable settings for Comfort, Normal and Sport. The rear air spring suspension helps maintain appropriate ride height and chassis attitude when carrying heavy loads or towing.

Visibility is another Sequoia strength. Side-view mirrors on the Limited grade are power-retractable and auto-dimming and have built-in turn-signal lamps. The Platinum grade's mirrors up the ante with puddle lamps, position memory and reverse-linked tilt functions. Standard headlight washers help keep the lights shining brightly in sloppy weather.

The Family Room on Wheels

The Sequoia is a quiet, comfortable space for the family to spend time on the road. Its body contours reduce wind drag for an impressive 0.36 coefficient of drag (Cd), which is comparable to some smaller vehicles. The overall design and exterior features have been shaped to minimize wind noise, which helps keep the cabin serene.

Wide-opening rear doors ease passenger entry/exit and child seat installation. When folding the second- and third-row seats flat, the Sequoia can swallow up to 120.1 cubic feet of whatever you need to carry, even objects up to 11 feet long. Extra-large cup/bottle holders outnumber passengers two to one, and the Platinum grade adds two more for good measure.

With a 40:20:40 split, the second-row bench-type seat allows a variety of combinations, augmented by a seat-slide adjustment range of 5.9 inches. The middle row folds flat and there's a one-touch easy-slide feature to make it easy for passengers to enter the third row. Luxurious second-row captain seats are available for a seven-seat cabin.

The third-row seat, which is fully hospitable for adults, is split 60:40 and can recline. The third row also easily folds flat, a task made even more convenient by the available power tilting and folding feature. The rear liftgate features power sliding glass that can open separately, and the huge cargo area is equipped with handy hooks for grocery bags.

Toyota Safety

Like all Toyota models, the 2016 Sequoia is equipped with Toyota's STAR Safety System™, which includes:

Vehicle Stability Control (VSC), Anti-lock Braking System (ABS), Electronic Brake-force Distribution (EBD), Brake Assist (BA), Traction Control (TRAC) and Smart Stop Technology (SST) brake override. On 4WD models, TRAC is replaced by A-TRAC (Active-Traction Control). All models have a direct tire pressure monitoring system.

The Sequoia is equipped with a dual stage advanced front air bag system, seat-mounted side airbags for the driver and front passenger, roll-sensing side curtain airbags for all three seating rows, plus driver and front passenger knee airbags.

Making the Grades

The Sequoia SR5 starts as one of the best-equipped vehicles in its class. Standard amenities include a tilt/telescoping steering wheel with integrated audio and Bluetooth® hands-free phone controls; engine immobilizer with alarm; automatic tri-zone air conditioning; power tilt/slide moonroof; towing package; 8-way power driver's seat; fog lamps; a roof rack; running boards, and more.

The Sequoia Limited adds functionality with front and rear parking sonar; power rear liftgate with sliding window; power folding and reclining 60:40 split third-row seat and 20-inch alloy wheels. Limited also means added luxury with 10-way adjustable power driver's seat; heated front leather-trimmed seats, second- and third-row retractable sunshades and a leather-trimmed steering wheel.

It doesn't get any better than Platinum, and this Sequoia grade adds the luxury of a 12-way adjustable power driver's seat; rear load-leveling air suspension; power seat memory package and second-row heated seats. Additional technology on this top-line model includes Dynamic Laser Cruise Control and a Blue-Ray rear seat entertainment (RSE) system with a 9-inch LCD screen, separate rear seat audio system and dual wireless headphones. (The RSE is available for the Limited grade as an option.)

Tuning In with Entune

With Entune Audio, pairing a smartphone opens up a new in-vehicle experience with fully integrated access to navigation, music and information services. New for 2016, the Sequoia's Entune systems feature Siri Eyes Free mode.

The SR5 grade's standard 8-speaker Entune Audio Plus system combines a high resolution 6.1-inch touch-screen display, AM/FM CD player with MP3/WMA playback capability, SiriusXM All Access Satellite Radio (includes a three-month trial subscription), auxiliary audio jack, USB port with iPod® connectivity, hands-free phone capability and music streaming via Bluetooth wireless. The subscription-free Entune App Suite expands music choices with Internet radio, including iHeartRadio® and Pandora.

The Limited grade's Entune Premium Audio system includes MP3/WMA playback capability and 14 speakers including subwoofer. In the Platinum grade, Entune Premium JBL Audio with Navigation and App Suite provides the ultimate level of information and music. The system features a voice-activated touch-screen, integrated backup camera display, SiriusXM All Access Satellite Radio (includes three-month trial subscription) along with all features of the Limited grade's system.

Limited Warranty

Toyota's 36-month/36,000 mile basic new-vehicle warranty applies to all components other than normal wear and maintenance items. Additional 60-month warranties cover powertrain for 60,000 miles and corrosion with no mileage limitation. Toyota dealers have complete details on the limited warranty. The Sequoia will also come standard with Toyota Care, a complimentary plan covering normal factory-scheduled maintenance and 24-hour roadside assistance for two years or 25,000 miles, whichever comes first.