

2015 Toyota RAV4 Marks Two Decades as a Small SUV Pioneer

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The Toyota RAV4 got the whole compact crossover segment started 20 years ago as a new kind of vehicle that people didn't even know they wanted. But a lot of people wanted it enough to make the segment one of the largest today, with the current generation RAV4 one of its strongest sellers.

Now in its third season, the current-generation, RAV4 exemplifies the qualities that keep it a perennial hit. Customers love its sharp-edged styling and roomy, versatile five-seat cabin. The interior has a premium look and feel with soft-touch accents and driver-centric controls.

Sure to get attention in any weather, RAV4 drives into 2015 with a new Blizzard Pearl Premium Package for the RAV4 Limited grade. This special package dresses the already stylish RAV4 in Blizzard Pearl paint and new 18-inch machine-finished wheels with black painted pockets.

At the opposite end of the thermometer, new Hot Lava paint joins the lineup. The one-touch power liftgate with driver-selectable memory height settings, standard on the Limited, is now an option for the XLE grade. The XLE gets new 17-inch Superchrome alloy wheels for 2015.

The RAV4 is motivated by a responsive, fuel-efficient 4-cylinder engine mated to a standard 6-speed automatic transmission. Customers can choose between front wheel drive or the advanced Dynamic Torque Control All-Wheel Drive, the same system used in the new Highlander.

Shopping for the RAV4 is easier than ever, with three trim levels to choose from, including LE, XLE and Limited.

Cavernous Cabin

Though taking up a smallish parking space outside, the RAV4 is cavernous inside, with ample room for five adults and 38.4 cu. ft. of cargo capacity behind the rear seats. With the 60/40 split rear seats folded, that space expands to 73.4 cu. ft. Rear seat legroom is a competitive 37.2 inches.

The front seats feature a slim seat back design to enhance rear-passenger knee room. The rear seatbacks also recline several degrees for added passenger comfort. Rear privacy glass is standard on all RAV4 models. Retractable rear seat head restraints aid rear visibility.

Sitting at the wheel, the driver faces a sporty, asymmetrical, driver-centric dash panel. Controls fall within easy reach, and, thanks to enticing clear blue illumination for the dash and gauge panel, they're easy to see in ambient light conditions.

Information, too, comes within easy reach in the RAV4. Within the gauge cluster, directly in the driver's line of sight, a standard Multi-Information Display (MID) provides an array of information including, average fuel economy, instant fuel economy, distance to empty, selected gear, as well as warnings for low fuel, battery, tire pressure monitoring system and more. A button on the right-hand spoke of the steering wheel toggles through the MID's various screens. Other buttons and switches on the wheel control the audio system, Bluetooth® hands-free phone and audio streaming.

Economical Performance and Sport Mode, Too

Practicality meets fun with the RAV4's 2.5-liter direct-injection four-cylinder engine. Coupled to a standard 6-speed automatic transmission, the engine smoothly delivers 176 horsepower at 6,000 rpm and 172 lb.-ft. of torque at 4,100 rpm. With front-wheel drive, the RAV4 has EPA-estimated fuel economy ratings of 24 mpg city / 31 mpg highway. With Dynamic Torque Control All-Wheel Drive, the EPA estimates are 22/29 mpg, on regular-grade gasoline.

Feeling sporty? The RAV4 can play along. Choose Sport mode, and the RAV4 sharpens shift timing, throttle response, and steering feel. Downshifting will "blip" the throttle, as the driver in a stick-shift vehicle might do to maintain driving smoothness. And, on RAV4 models with Dynamic Torque Control All-Wheel Drive, Sport mode also alters torque distribution to enhance agility by reducing understeer.

Feeling frugal? Select Eco mode and the RAV4 optimizes powertrain operation to maximize fuel economy.

Inner Strength

The RAV4's smooth ride, handling agility and cabin quietness owes much to a body structure that makes extensive use of high-strength steel to provide a robust and stiff yet light platform. The MacPherson strut front suspension and a double-wishbone rear suspension let the RAV4 absorb bumps, ruts and railroad crossings with composure. A strut tower bar links the tops of the front strut towers to the main bulkhead, helping to increase torsional rigidity.

Vehicle-speed-sensitive rack-and-pinion electric power steering provides precision feel and quick response, and it has no messy hydraulic fluid to be checked or changed. The RAV4 LE rolls on standard 17-inch steel wheels with wheel covers and P225/65R17 all-season tires. The XLE upgrades to alloy wheels in the same size, while the Limited grade gets 18-inch machined-finish alloy wheels with P235/55R18 all-season tires.

Dynamic Torque Control All-Wheel Drive

The RAV4 shares a major bit of technology with its larger sibling, the Highlander. In fact, it was the RAV4 that debuted the sophisticated Dynamic Torque Control All-Wheel Drive system. By coordinating through a high-speed interactive management system with Vehicle Stability Control (VSC) and electric power steering systems, Dynamic Torque Control All-Wheel Drive enhances performance, handling and safety.

This advanced AWD system continuously monitors and controls the torque transfer between the front and rear wheels via an electromagnetically controlled coupling positioned in the rear differential. Dynamic Torque Control uses input from various sensors (vehicle speed, steering speed and angle, throttle angle and yaw rate) to actively govern torque distribution to the rear wheels, as needed.

Front to rear torque distribution can vary from 100:0 to 50:50, with front-wheel drive automatically engaged under normal driving conditions to help reduce fuel consumption. The system automatically shifts to AWD when accelerating to help prevent front wheel slippage, or when sensors detect wheel slippage.

When Sport mode is selected, torque transfer to the rear wheels starts from the moment the steering wheel is turned, to reduce the load on the front tires. If understeer develops, torque transfer to the rear wheels is automatically increased by up to 50 percent, further reducing front tire loading to provide enhanced lateral grip.

When tackling off-pavement driving or very slippery conditions, pushing an AWD Lock button fixes torque distribution at 50:50 at speeds up to about 25 mph to maximize grip. Above that, the system reverts to Auto mode.

Front-drive RAV4 models have their own special traction helper, called Automatic Limited Slip Differential (Auto LSD). Essentially a second layer of computer logic in the Traction Control system, Auto LSD can be engaged at speeds below 25 mph to provide the function of a limited-slip differential. Unlike Traction Control,

however, Auto LSD allows a measure of controlled drive-wheel slip to help the vehicle to dig out of difficult conditions, such as a sandy patch on an unpaved road, or a driveway covered with snow.

Toyota Value in Three Grades

Toyota's grade system makes it easy to spec out and order a RAV4. The LE is essentially a mono-spec vehicle that's very well equipped. Cruise control, backup camera, power side mirrors, power door locks and power windows and a manual tilt/telescope steering column are all standard, and the air conditioning system integrates a micro dust and pollen filter.

The RAV4 XLE adds a number customer-favorite amenities and design features whose true value easily exceeds the price difference from the LE. Outside, the look is sporty indeed with 17-inch alloy wheels, color-keyed heated mirrors with integrated turn signals, roof rails, chrome-accented grille and integrated fog lights.

Inside, premium bolstered sport seats with French stitching join a roster of luxury features, including dual-zone automatic climate control, a power moonroof and voice recognition control for the Entune system. Details make a difference, including driver's auto up/down window with jam protection, a cargo area cover and sun visor extenders.

A Taste of Luxury

The RAV4 Limited brings in the luxury of breathable SofTex trimmed seats, dash and door panels. The driver gets an 8-way power seat with memory and lumbar adjustment, and the front seats are heated. Added conveniences include the Smart Key system with push button start and remote power liftgate function, an auto-dimming rear-view mirror and SofTex-covered sliding center armrest with console storage compartment.

Exclusively for the RAV4 Limited, an optional Technology Package includes a Blind Spot Monitor with Rear Cross Traffic Alert, Lane Departure Alert and Auto High Beam. When the Blind Spot Monitor detects a vehicle in the adjacent lane, it alerts the driver using indicators on the side mirrors. If a turn signal is on when there is a vehicle in the blind spot of the driver's intended lane, the indicator on the corresponding mirror will also flash.

Rear Cross Traffic Alert uses radar sensors to detect vehicles approaching from either direction. The system provides an audible warning combined with flashing indicators in the outside mirrors. While driving 32 mph or above, Lane Departure Alert recognizes lane markers using a camera and alerts the driver when the vehicle deviates from its lane.

The Auto High Beam system uses an in-vehicle camera sensor to assess the brightness of street lights, environmental light and other vehicles' lights to automatically turn the high beams on or off as necessary.

Tune in With Entune

The RAV4 plays music just about any way you please, by offering four different Entune audio systems.

In the RAV4 LE, the standard Entune[®] Audio system features a 6.1-in. touchscreen, AM/FM/CD, Bluetooth[®] hands-free phone connectivity and audio streaming, iPod[®] connectivity and control, USB 2.0, AUX mini-jack, and six speakers. The Entune touchscreen, which also serves as the display for the standard backup camera, allows the driver and front passenger to operate the audio system and display HVAC settings, engage available navigation and access the Entune system.

Standard on XLE, Entune Audio Plus adds HD Radio with iTunes[®] tagging, SiriusXM Satellite Radio (with 3-month trial subscription) and HD Traffic and Weather (metro areas only).

In the RAV4 Limited (and optional for the XLE), Entune Premium Audio adds Navigation and the subscription-free Entune App Suite. Entune Premium Audio pairs with the user's mobile smartphone to provide a richer in-vehicle experience with fully integrated access to navigation, music and information services. Engaging mobile

apps include Bing™, iHeartRadio, MovieTickets.com, OpenTable®, Yelp, Facebook Places and Pandora®, plus real-time traffic, weather, fuel prices, sports and stocks. Customers can also download available Entune updates.

The top level of Entune is exclusively available as an option for the Limited, and it's a music lover's dream. The Entune Premium JBL® Audio with Navigation system brings your music to life with 576-Watts (max) pumped through 11 GreenEdge speakers, including a subwoofer. The 8-channel amplifier and Green Edge speakers reduce electrical draw on the vehicle compared to other systems of comparable output.

Safety Star

The 2015 RAV4 comes equipped with eight standard airbags:

- Dual stage advanced driver and front passenger airbags
- Front seat-mounted airbags
- First and second row side curtain airbags
- Driver knee airbag
- Front passenger seat cushion airbag.

Whiplash Injury Lessening (WIL) front seats are designed to help support the driver's and front passenger's heads during certain types of rear-end collisions.

Like every 2015 Toyota, RAV4 is equipped with the Star Safety System that includes:

- Traction Control (TRAC)
- Electronic Brake-force Distribution (EBD)
- Enhanced Vehicle Stability Control (VSC)
- Brake Assist (BA)
- Anti-lock Braking System (ABS)
- Smart Stop Technology (SST) **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 the powertrain for 60,000 miles and against corrosion with no mileage limitation.

The 2015 RAV4 also comes 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.

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