

2012 Toyota Venza Debuts New Three-Grade Model Line

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The Toyota Venza, which melds sport-sedan design with crossover versatility, debuts a new three-model grade strategy for 2012. Previously, the Venza had been available as a mono-spec model with several option packages. The 2012 Venza is available in LE, XLE and Limited grades, a model line change that aligns the Venza with other Toyota passenger vehicles, making it more convenient for customers. The LE and XLE models are available with all powertrain combinations: four-cylinder, V6, front-wheel drive (FWD) or all-wheel drive (AWD); the Venza Limited comes with the V6 engine only, in front-wheel drive or all-wheel drive configurations.

Developed specifically for the North American market, the Venza appeals to customers who prioritize bold, innovative design, a luxurious and refined interior, and excellent handling but still requires roominess and versatility. Venza provides SUV flexibility, specifically with its fold-flat rear seats, spacious cargo area, elevated driver sightline, available AWD and up to 3,500-lbs. towing capacity.

The Venza design was the creation of Toyota's Caltex Design studios in Newport Beach, Calif., and Ann Arbor, Mich. A 109.3-in. wheelbase, overall length of 189 inches and height of 63.4 inches give Venza about the same footprint as a midsize sedan. Caltex designers leaned toward a sleek sedan-like concept with a wide stance that featured a sporty exterior, but also included important SUV attributes, such as cargo space, towing capability and available all-wheel drive performance.

All aspects of Venza's engineering and design were targeted specifically for the North American market, where it is sold exclusively. Venza was primarily engineered at Toyota Technical Center in Ann Arbor, Mich. Venza is assembled at Toyota Motor Manufacturing Kentucky (TMMK), in Georgetown, Ky., also home of the Camry and Avalon. More than 70 percent of Venza's components come from North American suppliers.

Performance and Efficiency

The 2012 Venza offers both the four-cylinder and V6 models in FWD and AWD versions. Venza's standard 2.7-liter four-cylinder engine delivers 182 horsepower at 5,800 rpm and 182 lb.-ft. of torque at 4,200 rpm. The four-cylinder Venza is EPA-rated at 21 MPG city/-27 MPG highway for the FWD model.

The 3.5-liter V6 produces 268 horsepower at 6,200 rpm and 246 lb.-ft. of torque at 4,700 rpm. The V6 FWD model has EPA-estimated fuel economy ratings of 19 MPG city/26 MPG highway. Both engines are teamed with a six-speed sequential-shift electronically controlled automatic transmission with intelligence (ECT-i). The six-speed ECT-i provides an engaging driving experience and helps optimize fuel economy. Uphill/downhill shift logic selects the proper gear for driving conditions and helps provide moderate engine braking during downhill driving.

Venza's Active Torque Control AWD System optimizes torque distribution between the front and rear wheels to help ensure stable acceleration and smooth cornering on all road surfaces. AWD offers enhanced traction and helps provide excellent overall handling in inclement weather.

An available Towing Prep Package (V6 only) equips the Venza with an engine oil cooler, larger radiator fan and heavy-duty alternator.

Handling and Ride

Venza was designed with a lower center of gravity than typical SUVs to help provide dynamic handling, which is further enhanced by the large wheels and tires. The four-cylinder models ride on standard 19-inch, 10-spoke aluminum alloy wheels. Distinctive 20-inch five-spoke aluminum alloy wheels are standard for the V6 model.

Power-assisted, ventilated front and solid rear disc brakes are standard on all models.

Venza's body structure relies on high tensile-strength steel, gussets and crossmembers for its strength, rigidity and optimized weight. Front suspension consists of a rigid L-arm-type MacPherson strut with a stabilizer bar, and the rear suspension is a dual-link MacPherson strut setup with stabilizer bar. Electric power steering (EPS), with its ideally weighted steering effort, contributes to the Venza's spirited driving dynamics. EPS helps provide a more direct steering feel at both high and low speeds and provides just-right assist when maneuvering the vehicle into tight parking spaces.

Safety

Toyota's STAR Safety System is standard on all Toyota models and features enhanced Vehicle Stability Control (VSC), Traction Control (TRAC) Anti-lock Brake System (ABS) Electronic Brake-force Distribution (EBD), Brake Assist and the Smart Stop brake-override Technology (SST).

VSC automatically adjusts engine output and the vehicle's braking force at each wheel to help control loss of traction during cornering. TRAC helps maintain traction during challenging driving conditions. Brake Assist is designed to determine if the driver is attempting emergency braking. If the driver has not stepped firmly enough on the brake pedal to engage ABS, Brake Assist supplements the applied braking power until the driver releases the pedal. Smart Stop offers an additional level of safety by automatically reducing engine power when a vehicle's brake and accelerator pedals are applied simultaneously under certain driving conditions, helping to bring the vehicle to a controlled stop.

Hill-start Assist Control (HAC), also standard on all Venza models, temporarily provides pressure to the brakes while the vehicle is stopped on an incline to help ensure easier starting with no rollback.

Venza's comprehensive array of standard safety features provides seven airbags, including a driver's knee airbag, driver and front-passenger front-seat-mounted side airbags, and front and rear side-curtain airbags. Front seat-belt pretensioners retract the seat belt in a severe frontal collision, while the dual-stage force limiters help limit the seat-belt force applied to the driver's and front passenger's chests. Driver and front-passenger seats employ active headrests. If the vehicle is struck from the rear, a cable-actuated mechanism will move the headrest upward and forward to help limit movement of the occupant's head.

Comfort and Convenience

Venza's generous utility includes several clever storage locations and lighting. The adjustable center console features a sliding cover and armrest, three iPod/MP3 player holders with wire concealment features, and a large storage compartment.

The center-console compartment is also equipped with a USB port, auxiliary audio jack and 12-volt power outlet. The upper portion of the center console houses the gearshift lever for easy and comfortable driver reach. An on/off switch on the overhead console enables front seat occupants to operate all four personal overhead interior lights.

Interior storage is further complemented by a total of 10 front and rear beverage holders (six bottle holders and four cup holders). These include dual-illuminated sliding front cup holders in the center console, two in the rear seat armrest, and front- and back-door bottle holders.

Three-Grade Model Line

The 2012 Venza comes in LE, XLE and Limited model grades. The LE comes well equipped with standard dual-zone automatic climate control with air filter and second row seat vents; eight-way power-adjustable driver's seat; 3.5-inch multi-information display; a tilt/telescopic adjustable steering wheel with integrated audio controls; an overhead console with map lights; rear-seat adjustable personal reading lamps and three 12-volt

power outlets.

The LE grade's standard audio system includes an AM/FM six-disc, in-dash CD changer with integrated satellite radio, Bluetooth® hands-free phone capability with wireless music streaming via Bluetooth®, MP3/WMA playback capability, USB port with iPod connectivity, auxiliary audio jack, auto sound leveling, and six speakers. The available Convenience Package for the Venza LE adds a power liftgate and a rear back-up camera. The Preferred Package adds a panoramic glass roof with front power moonroof.

The Venza XLE provides a major luxury and convenience upgrade to the vehicle and includes such features as leather seating surfaces, steering wheel and shift knob; four-way power passenger seat; multi-stage heated front seats; satin mahogany wood-grain-style interior trim; anti-theft system with alarm and engine immobilizer; Smart Key System with pushbutton start and illuminated entry; power rear liftgate and a back-up camera. Also standard on the XLE is a multi-information display that can be customized to adjust the font size and content, and navigation voice instructions available in Spanish, French or English (XM Traffic is only available in English).

Aside from powertrain choices, the XLE offers two major options. The Premium Package that includes a panoramic glass roof with front power moonroof, a JBL® Synthesis surround-sound system featuring an AM/FM six-disc in-dash CD changer with integrated satellite radio, MP3/WMA playback capability, Bluetooth hands-free phone capability and audio streaming and 13 speakers. The Navigation Package includes a voice-activated touch screen DVD navigation system with integrated back-up camera, JBL® Synthesis surround-sound system featuring an AM/FM four-disc in-dash CD changer with integrated satellite radio, MP3/WMA playback capability, Bluetooth hands-free phone capability and audio streaming and 13 speakers .

The new V6-only, top-of-line Venza Limited combines the XLE Navigation Package and the panoramic glass roof with front power moonroof, and adds high-intensity discharge (HID) headlights with automatic high beams. The high beam feature detects oncoming vehicles and automatically switches the headlamps from high- to low-beam.

Customers looking for a pet-friendly vehicle will find a wide range of pet utility accessories available at Toyota dealerships. Among the available choices are a rear liftgate pet ramp, booster seat with harness, pet buckles and rear seat zipline-style harnesses, pet carriers and bucket seat, bench seat and hammock style waterproof seat covers.

Exterior Design

The Venza sports an aerodynamic shape with short overhangs, forward A-pillar, crisp character lines, and a low roofline. Continuous brushstroke lines run from the front grille to the D-pillar. A bold front end features a distinctive grille, headlights and fog lamps for a sporty yet refined appearance. From behind, Venza's sophisticated and confident appearance is completed with an angled rear hatch, spoiler and wide wraparound taillights that interconnect with the hatch door. Tight tire-to-body gaps contribute to the sophisticated, refined appearance.

The Venza design is highly practical, with a rear load-in height that is almost as low as that of the Sienna minivan. The generously sized liftgate opening enhances the vehicle's utility. An available power liftgate integrates jam protection that detects obstruction in the door's path and reverses the motor. Venza provides a low step-over height for improved ergonomics and because the closed doors cover the rocker panels, the driver and passengers are protected from accumulated road-dust while getting into and out of the vehicle.

Interior Design

The Venza interior is designed to enhance driving enjoyment and offer premium comfort. The available interior colors, ivory and light gray, are offered in fabric on LE and leather on XLE and Limited. The flow of the center console creates a unique "60/60" design that gives both the driver and front passenger the feeling that 60 percent of the space is accessible from their seating position. On XLE and Limited grades, the standard Optitron® speedometer and tachometer and multi-color center instrument panel display are paired with optional satin mahogany wood-grain style trim. Dual-zone automatic climate system controls are centrally located on the upper console, providing easy access for both the driver and front passenger.

Personal space lends overall comfort to the vehicle's interior. Measurements for head room, shoulder room, hip room and couple distance surpass competitive vehicles. Cargo-area utility is enhanced with fold-down 60/40 rear seats, one-touch fold-down seat levers and a tonneau cover.

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.

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