

Cadillac's new STS-V is a supercharged sedan fit for the devil

by Mark_Maynard

I think the devil drives an STS-V.

He used to drive a Coupe DeVille, as he did in the song by country crooner Joe Nichols. But Cadillac doesn't sell that big two-door anymore.

CADILLAC STS-V - Cadillac's new STS-V has great potential for American V-8 muscle car enthusiasts. CNS Photo courtesy of Cadillac. NHRA JACKET - The Wally Parks NHRA Motorsports Museum has added a new retro-style letterman jacket to its catalog. CNS Photo courtesy of Wally Parks NHRA Motorsports Museum. Now there's the fire-breathing, 469-horsepower, supercharged STS-V that's just the devil's kind of ride.

Loud and just a little on the trashy side, this swaggering rear-drive sedan is a General Motors muscle car at its best. And, at its best, it is still crude but effective when compared with the European "speed sedans," including the BMW M5, Mercedes-Benz AMG and Audi S6.

The base price of the STS-V is a bargain at \$77,090 when compared with those cars. It also includes a V-8 engine hand-built by one technician, a higher hood to cover the supercharger, huge Brembo brakes and a hand-cut, sewn and leather-wrapped interior. The price includes a \$2,100 gas-guzzler tax.

The Euro speed sedans are more refined in how they go fast. Peak power is in the higher rpm bands, around 6,000 and above. For example, the V-10, 500-horsepower M5 has peak horsepower at 7,750 rpm and 383 foot-pounds of peak torque at 6,100 rpm.

Cadillac bunches STV-V power at low rpms, so at every press of the throttle you can get a neck snap and tire chirp. The 439 foot-pounds of torque tops out at 3,800 rpm, but has 90 percent of that power from 2,000 to 6,000 rpm. Yee-haw.

Stick a pitchfork in the flank of this hot rod and there's a rush of supercharger whine and thundering horsepower. It'll do 0 to 60 mph in less than five seconds, GM says, but not how much less. The M5 will do 0-60 in 4.5.

Power to the rear wheels is transferred by GM's new six-speed automatic with Driver Shift Control. The transmission allows manual shifts, but the algorithm isn't particularly energetic nor are there calibrations to blip the throttle on downshifts. That's a little disappointing when it's time to play.

The suspension is tweaked with bigger springs and stabilizer bars to handle the big power. A faster steering gear and high-capacity steering cooler are also added. But I felt the steering overreacted and wasn't as smooth as it should be.

Same with the suspension. There could be more engineering attention to anti-dive when braking. And I was surprised to get so much tire squeal and body lean in cornering that was less than intense.

But the car has devilish good looks sitting at the curb and rumbling by in traffic. It gets noticed with its stainless steel wire mesh grille, aero body kit and handsome 19-inch Pirelli tires at the rear and 18-inchers at the front.

This car has great potential for American V-8 muscle car enthusiasts who like this kind of thing. Sure, these guys would like a Corvette, but the STS-V has 39 more horsepower than the '08 Vette, the cabin is large with great girth to the seats, thigh-supporting seat bottoms and plenty of shoulder room.

And they can bring friends along for the ride. The more the merrier when offering souls to the devil.

Copley News Service SPECS BOX

2007 Cadillac STS-V

Body style: five-passenger, rear-wheel sedan

Engine: 469-horsepower, supercharged 4.4-liter Northstar DOHC V-8

Transmission: Hydra-Matic 6L80 six-speed automatic with Driver Shift Control

Acceleration: 0 to 60 mph, less than 5 seconds

EPA fuel economy estimates: 14 mpg city, 21 highway; premium required

Length/wheelbase: 58.2/116.4 inches

Curb weight: 4,294.6 pounds

FEATURES

Standard equipment includes: keyless locking with push-button start, leather-trimmed seats with suede inserts, eight-way power front seats with lumbar, tilt-telescopic steering wheel, Bose 5.1 surround-sound audio, navigation system, power moonroof, leveling high-discharge headlights with washers, three-month subscription to XM Satellite Radio, and 14-inch Brembo high-performance, vented, cast-iron disc brakes with four-piston calipers

Safety equipment includes: Front, side and curtain air bags; tire pressure monitor; ABS; traction control; and StabiliTrak stability control

PRICING

Base: \$77,715, including \$745 and \$2,100 gas-guzzler tax

Options on test car: none

Where assembled: Lansing, Mich.

PLUSES: Bargain priced "speed sedan," easier to live with than a Corvette and more horsepower.

MINUSES: Crude but effective, when compared with the Euro competitors.

Be an NHRA letterman

The Wally Parks NHRA Motorsports Museum has added a new retro-style letterman jacket to its catalog of wearable apparel and other products.

Based on a jacket from the 1950s in the museum's collection, the new jacket features a soft wool weave and sleeves decorated with white leather edged with silver piping.

The chain-stitched logo on the back uses the NHRA's original-style lettering with the old Hollywood address. The left front chest is decorated with a sewn-on patch of NHRA's first logo used in 1951.

Besides the two leather-edged outside slash pockets, there's an ample inside pocket accented with wool for a wallet or cell phone.

The jacket is \$185, plus shipping and handling, for all sizes ranging from small to XXL, including tall sizes in large, XL and XXL. Order it online at <http://museum.nhra.com> or by telephone, (909) 622-2133.

Proceeds will benefit the museum, located at 1101 W. McKinley Ave., Bldg. 3A, Pomona, CA, 91768.

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