

NMEX checkman is performing the final inspection of the cylinder head for a Micra engine. He is on the lookout for burrs and casting concerns.

Wheels photo Neil Moore

## Nissan's Micra is tiny but big on value

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Micra is special, not only for its \$9,998 base price, but because we're getting it cheaper than any other market – even in Mexico where it's built.

And although this barebones model with five-speed gearbox, manual locks, rollup windows and no air conditioning may not appeal to all buyers, the mid-trim SV models starting at \$13,698 (also with five-speed manual) will find more takers. Add \$1,000 for four-speed automatic transmission.

These better-equipped Micras, which include air, power windows, keyless entry, Bluetooth, steering wheel controls and more, come in around the same price where some competitors' no-frills models begin.

So, kudos to Nissan for providing a good entry car for students and other first-timers, not to mention an alternative to going for a used car.

Of course, the company's ability to offer such penny-pinching transport relies heavily on controlling costs. One of these is transportation, and the central locations of Mexico's three Nissan plants are ideal for global access.

Labour is another reason. Mexican line workers, as you'd expect, earn significantly less than up here, but the cost of living is also far lower. NMEX wages are in line with other auto sector jobs, not to mention being nearly eight times the country's minimum wage.

Indeed, these are considered good jobs in what is largely a clean and safe city, and the workers here are as capable as in any other Nissan operation.

"At Nissan Mexicana, our principal strength is our people, our workforce – all of them have been deeply and consciously trained," said Armando Avila, V.P. of NMEX Manufacturing. "Through our 'One Team Spirit' mind-set, they recognize themselves as a key element of our company's success, which makes them feel proud of belonging to this great team."

The company also demonstrates a green ethic in a country often criticized for its lax environmental protection.

Aguas-1 recycles 100 per cent of waste materials.



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<sup>†</sup>On select models. \*Dealer is reimbursed for holdback included in invoice price.





The IFP\* Halton Hills\* WHEELS April 10, 2014





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