

The Jeep Unlimited Rubicon, the ultimate expression of Jeep's four-door version of the classic original, equally at home on the road or off, upgraded for 2010 with a long list of standard and available features, pictured here in ultimate Rubicon trim level to smooth the road less traveled.



# Jeep Wrangler Unlimited Rubicon: The going gets tough

By **ROB BEINTEMA**  
*Carguide Magazine*  
*Metroland Media Group*

"Sorry, I hit a puddle," the guy from Chrysler admitted somewhat sheepishly.

I'd watched him return from the car wash, the iconic Jeep shape recognizable from a distance, the deep shade of Red Rock Crystal Pearl glistening and shimmering in the light as he neared.

The Jeep Wrangler Unlimited's squared-off profile was polished and near picture-perfect.

Umm, except for the mud splashed up the driver's side door.

"Don't worry about it," I grinned. "That's just the beginning."

Because, as soon as I spotted that splash of mud, it occurred to me that, instead of the usual pristine poses, it would be more photographically fitting to take shots of the Jeep in its natural element.

Dirty pictures, so to speak.

Dirt seems to be magnetically attracted to Jeeps. Which is understandable when you consider the brand's off-road pedigree, and the 70 year bloodline of this battlefield-born, all-purpose sport ute.

The Jeep Wrangler is easily recognized as the "classic Jeep". The "Unlimited" name, attached to a particular type of Jeep, refers to the recent addition of a stretched-out, four-door version that first debuted as a 2007 model at the New York auto show, four years ago.

At first glance, the Jeep Wrangler Unlimited might not be considered particularly unique since, despite its larger dimensions, it meticulously follows the old formula and traditional styling cues of the original two-door.

But Chrysler boasts that it is the only four-door, five-passenger SUV convertible on the market. And that specialized, SUV market, with true off-road emphasis, is fast becoming a monopoly, thanks to the thinning of the ranks—the diminishment of HUMMER and the uncertain future of Toyota's FJ Cruiser.

With more room for passengers and payload, the four-door formula seems to be working. In fact, I'd come to believe that I was seeing more Jeep Wrangler Unlimited four-doors out there than original two-door versions.

So, in an exacting scientific study, counting Jeeps spotted on the road whenever I sort of remembered to do so, I came up with a two-week tally— 42 two-door models compared to 26 four-door versions.

Okay, so I was wrong.

But considering the short time that four-door Unlimitees have actually been available, that's still a pretty impressive showing.

"Sixty percent of the Jeep Wranglers we currently sell are four-door Unlimited models," confirmed Daniel Labre, Chrysler Canada's National Product and Marketing Communications Manager. "And just this past March, we sold 1,160 units, an increase of 81 per cent compared with March 2009."

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