



DODGE AVENGER

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puts the 'fun' in functional
PAGE 6



BIRTHDAY BOY

Honda's ASIMO robot celebrates
its 10th birthday
PAGE 7

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Ford's smallest car is big on content

By **JIM ROBINSON**
*Metroland Media Group
Carguide Magazine*

Ford's smallest car, the 2011 Fiesta, is in many ways its most ambitious.

Not only does Ford claim it gets the best highway mileage in the sub-compact segment (4.9L/100 km) but it offers 15 class-exclusive technologies including the SYNC human machine interface developed in concert with Microsoft.

But what really makes it ambitious is its size.

Let's face it. Whatever people want in the United States affects what we get here. Ford has had small cars before that came and went with the price of fuel. Also, the Europeans and Japanese have decades of building tiny cars whereas American buyers historically looked down on them.

The price of fuel, not just in North America, but around the world has changed that. In addition, technology has brought space-age driver aids within the financial reach of almost everyone on the planet.

Take the Fiesta.

Even the base \$12,999 sedan comes standard with Ford's AdvanceTrac that includes electronic stability control, traction control and anti-lock braking. There are seven standard airbags including one for the driver's knees.

The Fiesta was born about four years ago when the Mazda Demio was premiered at the Geneva Motor Show as the Mazda2. Back then, Ford and Mazda were very close partners and they shared much including the platform for the Mazda2.

But time and the fiscal meltdown of two years ago saw Ford and Mazda start going their own ways.

Comparisons between the two are inevitable.

The Mazda2 has a 1.5-litre engine producing 100 hp and 98 lb/ft of torque routing power to the front through a five-speed manual or four-speed automatic transmission.

Starting later with the Fiesta, Ford was able increase the engine size to 1.6-litres producing 120 hp and 112 lb/ft of torque and, crucially, the same five-speed manual but with a six-speed automatic.

The optional six-speed automatic has a fuel rating of 6.9/5.1L/100 km city/highway. If you opt up



With more than 500,00 sold since it was introduced this time last year, the 2011 Ford Fiesta (SES model shown) packs in 15 class-exclusive technologies and up to 4.9L/100 km highway fuel economy.

for the PowerShift with SFE Package mileage improves to 6.8/4.9/100 km city/highway for the automatic. Either way the automatic is better than the 7.5/6.0L/100 km for the Mazda. With the five-speed manual, it's a ying-yang with the Mazda returning 6.8/5.6L/100 km and the Ford, 7.1/5.3L/100 km.

The Fiesta SFE (Super Fuel Economy) Package includes underbody shields, lower grille blocker, spare wheel with wheel cap and cruise control along with the automatic trans all designed to lessen drag and improve mileage.

While there are only two trim levels for the Mazda2, there are five with the S, SE and SEL sedans and the SE and SES hatchbacks, the SES being test-

ed here.

Regardless of your age, if your life includes an iPhone, Blackberry, Android, you name it; the only Fiesta to consider is the SES.

The topline Fiesta SES (as tested) comes with a starting price of \$18,899. While it brings you heated seats, premium sound and fancy 16-inch wheels, it also includes Ford's SYNC, that integrates mobile phones with Microsoft developed onboard voice-activation and entertainment system.

It does more than listen to commands; it acts on them. For instance, if you receive a text message, you

See **LITTLE**, pg. 3

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