

# KIA believes in 'purity'

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torque. A six-speed Sportmatic with manual shift mode is standard as is front-wheel-drive with all-wheel-drive available across the line up.

For 2015, Natural Resources Canada has mandated the "five-cycle" test that gives consumers more realistic fuel consumption figures

With the 2.4-litre, fuel ratings are 11.8/8.7L/100 km city/highway in FWD and 12.2/9.4L/100 km in AWD. The 3.3-litre does 12.7/9.0L/100 km in FWD and 13.4/10.0L/100 km in AWD.

For those who want to tow a small watercraft or snowmobile, the 2.4-litre and 3.3-litre, when properly equipped, can haul 748 kg (1,650 lb) and 1,588 kg (3,500 lb) respectively.

The AWD is an on-demand system that directs torque to the tire(s) with the most traction. The system now includes Torque Vectoring Cornering Control (TVCC) for added stability under cornering.

On the SX only is FlexSteer that enhances the electric power steering with a driver-selectable three modes – Comfort, Normal and Sport.

Normal is for every-day driving while Comfort is for highway cruising. Sport tightens steering wheel response to improve handling.

With a relatively long wheelbase (2,700 mm, 106.3 in) the Sorento can cruise all day in comfort. During my week with the SX, I couldn't really tell the difference between Comfort and Normal although I tried both in-town and on the highway.

Sport, however, does give a tauter feel to the steering wheel but it makes no sense to toss the Sorento around like a sports car, so I didn't.

The Sorento is a lot bigger than it

initially looks, thanks the Peter Schreyer styling making it still very much capable of carrying up to seven people in three rows of seats. The third row is optional on the LX-V6 and SX.

While cargo volume is listed as 2,051 litres for both seating variants, all models include a sizeable storage area beneath the cargo floor. If you order the third row seats, that space is used when the seat is folded and stored.

Even with leading edge suspension and damping technology, you wouldn't expect the Sorento to be nimble but I have to say, agile is more like it.

Travelling down a street near my home, another driver (on a cellphone of course) jerked into my lane. A stab of the brakes and a twist of wheel, and I avoided what certainly would have been a coming together had I been in my old seven-seat minivan.

A backup warning system is standard and you'll need it as (again), the Sorento is bigger than it looks.

A backup camera is found on the EX and SX but not the LX, but I'd like to see it standard on all Sorento models.

Traction control, ABS and electronic stability control are now Canadian government mandated but Sorento adds to this with its advanced Vehicle Stability Management, rollover protection and a hill-holder system Kia calls Hill Assist Control.

I've mentioned Peter Schreyer many times in other stories, whose styling genius has been turning Kia's pleasant cars into fashion statements.

Now president of Kia, he is still in charge of design and his philosophy is "absolute purity" must be visible in each styling element for the vehicle to come off as a whole.

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