

Accord V6 — Honda's best-kept secret

By JIM ROBINSON
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The 2015 Honda Accord Coupe is based on the Sedan, but with a V6 engine and six-speed manual transmission, it is transformed into a very competent grand tourer.

The 2015 Accord V6 Coupe is one of Honda's best-kept secrets.

The EX-L V6 Navi, as it is more properly named, is more like a custom-build.

For instance, there are only three Accord Coupe trim levels – EX, EX-L Navi and the model tested here, the V6.

The first two come with a 2.4-litre direct injection inline four-cylinder with a standard six-speed manual or CVT transmission. The V6 gets the same standard manual, but there is an available six-speed automatic.

The 3.5-litre direct injection V6 is the biggest production engine Honda makes, with 278 hp and 252 lb/ft of torque.

On the V6 only, you'll find LED headlights and daytime running LEDs, 18-inch alloy wheels and Honda's excellent HomeLink info/navi system.

But more to the point, this is a surprisingly competent driver's coupe with the V6 and manual, as I was to find out recently on a Honda press event at Blue Mountain for the 2015 CR-V CUV and the 2015 Acura RLX Sport Hybrid.

Taking a family sedan and turning it into a sporty car seldom works well, but in this case it does.

The suspension is MacPherson struts with stabilizer bar but there is also a shock tower stress bar making for much increased rigidity. The rear is a stout multi-link independent system with stabilizer bar.

Instead of taking Hwy. 400 and Hwy. 26 over to Blue Mountain, I decided to take Hwy. 9 west to Airport Rd.

The latter runs straight north, but rolls up

and down through some of the greatest farm country in the province, made more beautiful with the fall colours in the trees.

The stubby manual shifter on the V6 is typically light, but not as much as on the Fit or Civic Si.

But like Fit and Civic Si, the clutch bite is at the top of the clutch pedal travel, which makes it easier to work in the city but the reverse is preferred by me, because it is easier to synchronize engine revs to the revolving speed of the gears.

You sit quite low down in the cabin, which imparts a "driver's" feeling. As you begin to push the envelope you find the placement of the shifter makes it possible to drop your hand and it lands directly on the lever.

There's a lot to see on this route such as a stop in at Creemore for lunch (no beer at the brewery as I was driving) or the quaint Olde Stanton Store on Airport Road just north of Hwy. 89.

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