

Check out the Scion tC RS while you still can

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Rowing through the gears was made even more pleasurable with the rising tempo of the engine accompanied by an angry snarl of the exhaust.

One can forgo such delights by choosing the six-speed automatic with paddle shifters and dynamic rev management. It will add \$1,300 to the MSRP and another 25 kg to curb weight – and isn't nearly as much fun.

Handling, overall, isn't quite on par with its sibling – the track-ready, rear-drive FR-S – but the tC is still no slouch with its Macpherson struts with stabilizer bar in front, and double wishbone with stabilizer in rear, providing a good balance between everyday commuting comfort and flat, stable cornering when pushed a little harder. And the understeer isn't bad for a front driver.

Where the tC really steps up is in terms of practicality.

Its body shape, which is more angular and has a roofline that remains flat until well into the rear passenger compartment, is better able to accommodate rear passengers and cargo.

Swing open the big door, and the one-touch walk-in feature (with track and seat angle memory), makes it easy to get in and out of the back seats. Quarters are surprisingly roomy, with plenty of distance to stretch out your legs.

The rear bench is also recessed for the two outboard passengers. Headroom is adequate for adults of modest stature, but six footers will find it tight.

The 60/40 seatbacks fold to enlarge the tC's generous 417-litre cargo capacity. Being a hatchback, the rear hold is more versatile than in other coupes, and big enough for a pile of golf bags or couple of bikes.

I won't say the tC is an exceptional family ride, but it works. And after a week with the vehicle, we were sad to see it go – especially my kids, who appreciated its "hot wheels" custom look.

tC is one of the volume leaders in the Scion lineup, but at 1,179 units in 2014, that's small potatoes compared to the number of Corollas sold.

Which may be a blessing for the Scion brand, as it would quickly shed any 'cool factor' if legions of middle-aged office workers started snapping them up. Indeed, the relative scarcity of the tC makes it treat, in particular the RS 9.0 that's produced in such a limited run.

So check it out while you still can...

(Scion tC RS 9.0 2015 at a glance)

BODY STYLE: two-door compact coupe

DRIVE METHOD: front-en-

gine, front-wheel-drive

ENGINE: 2.5 Litre, DOHC, 16-valve inline four-cylinder (179 hp and 172 lb/ft of torque)

CARGO: 417 litres

FUEL ECONOMY: (six-speed

manual) 10.2/7.6/9.0 litres/100 km (city/hwy/combined)

PRICE: (with six-speed manual) base: \$21,710; (with RS 9.0 pkg, as tested) \$25,980

WEBSITE: www.scion.ca



Bright orange accents pop against the charcoal interior, giving the tC with RS 9.0 package a custom look. Standard fare is the thick, flat-bottomed steering wheel and well positioned controls angled towards the driver.



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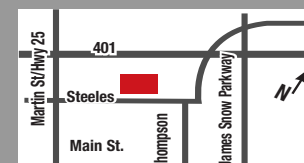
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