

# WHEELS & CAR CARE

Money saving tips for snowbirds

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Corvette's new engine is GM's most powerful



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Special pullout section



Unmistakably a Cadillac, the second generation 2008 CTS version has been restyled inside and out and now offers all-wheel-drive.

Now with all-wheel drive...

## Cadillac CTS ready to take on Germany's best

JIM ROBINSON  
Metroland Media Group

The CTS was a turnaround vehicle for Cadillac and marked the realization that days of the Sedan de Ville and Eldorado were over. With its edgy styling and European sports sedan ride and go, the CTS was the harbinger for the DTS, Escalade and SRX that followed. Now the second generation CTS is about to arrive.

It features two versions of the 3.6-litre quadcam V6. With the standard V6 263 hp, 252 lb/ft of torque), the starting price will be \$38,900. And with the new direct-injection version (304 hp and 273 lb/ft), the list price will start at \$41,400.

There is a choice of a six-speed manual or six-speed automatic transmission. The automatic has a manual shift mode with digital gear readout on the dash between the speedo and tach.

And for the first time the CTS comes in rear— (RWD) and all-wheel-drive (AWD) configurations.

Fuel consumption for city/highway/combined is listed

for the standard V6 RWD as 11.8/7.5/9.9L/100 km and 12.3/8.0/10.4L/100 km for the AWD version. For the 3.6-litre direction injection the fuel numbers are 12.2/7.5/10.1L/100 km for the RWD and 12.5/7.5/10.3L/100 km for the AWD. The braking and steering systems for the CTS are all new, with extensive revisions made to the suspension to accommodate the larger rear track. There are also three different suspension settings from mild to wild.

The mild is the FE1 that gives a comfortable ride, while the FE2 is tauter and both suspensions are available with rear- (RWD) and all-wheel-drive (AWD). The wild one is called FE3 and it is very stiff with all the lessons learned from the V-spec Caddies.

At Mosport Racetrack to see what may have been Ron Fellows' last race on Canadian soil with the Corvette racing team, GM had a handful of 2008s including one with the FE3 and I grabbed it. FE3 is only available on the rear-drive CTS and features big monotube shocks, tower shock bars as well as lower stabilizer bars and significantly larger rotors for the brakes with cast iron calipers

instead of aluminum as with the FE1/FE2.

There are a number of really challenging roads around Mosport and one of my favorites slices through an old growth pine forest.

In manual select mode, the CTS launches with no squealing of tires thanks to traction control. Besides extra power, the direct injection and variable valve timing means fester response. Each shift just before the redline was swift, with no lurch which is a credit to these modern transmission/computer mapping units.

The CTS also comes standard with GM's StabiliTrak pitch and yaw control that senses when the car is at or about to go into a spin. Using brakes and engine retardation, you actually never know the system is there until you need it.

The engine subframe has six attachment points instead of the usual four. That and the rigid chassis imparts a feeling of solidity that, in turn, provides a sense of safety.

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