

WHEELS

All new Tracker is a must see

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the RAV4 at \$25,345 before options. And it's considerably less than \$38,915 for a Chevy Tahoe or (gulp!) \$63,795 for the Lincoln Navigator.

Along with the new exterior comes a new interior that is contemporary in terms of instrument placement and legibility, but it could use more colour than mid-grays.

Not lacking is interior volume. In the four-door with the rear seat up, there is 572 litres (20.1 cu. ft.) of space. With the 50/50 rear seat folded forward, cargo room almost doubles to 982 litres (34.7 cu. ft.). Suzuki vehicles traditionally offer lots of glass and the Tracker (and Vitara) is no exception. The driver/passenger's side windows are an example. Looking out the windows makes you feel like you're in a tour bus rather than a sport c ute.

The 1999 Tracker is just hitting dealerships now and McPake said they are being sold as fast as they come in.

Comments from buyers are varied, but many are commenting the Tracker is 'a great new design. It's a great new look. It's quieter and smoother,' he said.

While you can go for the 1.6-litre, 401-hp highway speeds means being able to stay with the pace and that means paying the extra \$230 for the bigger engine. Like most Suzukis, it revs fairly freely. Hard acceleration from rest results in acceptable acceleration, but it starts to scream as you approach 100 km/h and doesn't shift into over-drive.

It's not until you back into a garage that the compactness of the design comes through. Inside, it feels like it's much bigger than it really is. Part of that is the height of the roof coupled with the height of the frame off the ground. But the back

seats were big enough for me, so it has to be roomy.

Sitting on the showroom floor beside the similarly-sized and priced Chevrolet Blazer is going to be a tough call for any budget-minded consumer in a SUV frame of mind.

But given half a chance, and a lengthy test drive, the many sterling qualities of the Tracker (price and Suzuki robustness) should come to the fore.

"It's an all new Tracker. It's a must see," McPake said.

1999 Chevrolet Tracker at a glance

Body Style: Convertible and four-door sport utility vehicle
 front engine/four-wheel-drive

Engine: 1.6-litre DOHC inline four-cylinder (97 hp, 103 lb/ft)
 2.0-litre DOHC inline four-cylinder (127 hp, 134 lb/ft)

Fuel economy: 10.3L/100 km city, 8.3L/100 km highway

Price: Tracker four-door \$20,490.
 As tested \$26,200

Immediate competition:

Wilson's Canadian New Car Price Guide)	
Chevrolet Blazer	\$26,770-\$32,675
Honda CR-V	\$25,800-\$27,600
Jeep Cherokee four-door	\$24,895-\$30,245
Subaru Forester L	\$26,695-\$29,195
Toyota RAV4 four-door	\$23,975-\$25,245

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