



When you come right down to it, the story of this stylish Korean coupe is told two ways: by its gorgeous shape and black-over-black-and-red presence; and by its sticker: a base price of \$26,750. Add carpeted floor mats, a cargo net and an iPod cable, and the total climbs to \$26,940. What, you may ask... they could only think of less than two hundred dollars' worth of add-ons?

Well, yes, because it comes with all of the following already included for your \$26,750. Ready? Advanced safety technologies—standard—include electronic stability control, traction control, anti-lock brakes and electronic brake-force distribution with brake assist, along with the requisite front/rear/side airbags and active front head restraints. Standard comfort and convenience features include keyless entry, alarm, driver's lumbar support seats, leather-wrapped steering wheel and shift knob, a multipurpose information display panel, an audio system with AM/FM/CD plus XM satellite and interfaces for iPod and other MP3, Bluetooth™ for phone, steering wheel audio controls, power features throughout, fog lights up front and even a full tank of gas.

The Hyundai Genesis Coupe comes with either a 2.0L turbocharged four-cylinder or 3.8L V6 engine. The 2.0T is available in base, R-Spec and Premium form, and the 3.8L in Grand Touring, R-Spec or Track form. R-Spec and Track configurations sound as though they would boost the car's horsepower, but they don't: the 2.0T puts out 274 hp and 275 lb-ft of torque, while the 3.8L V6 pumps 348 hp and 295 lb-ft. These horsepower figures are for premium fuel, but the Genesis Coupe can run on regular, though with a loss of a few horsepower (14 lost on the 2.0L, but only four lost on the V6). Both engines are available with a choice of 6-speed manual or 8-speed automatic transmission.

Fuel mileage is 18 MPG city, 27 highway (manual) or 28 (automatic). This is the same for the R-Spec or Grand Touring 3.8L V6. The 2.0T four brings you 21/30 (manual) or 20/31 (automatic) city/highway fuel economy.

Our test car had the 3.8-liter V6 with R-Spec package and manual transmission. We're always happy to have a manual, especially on a \$25ish car that may need some extra finesse to eke out its power. But wait, this \$25ish car has 348 horsepower. Still nice to have the stick, but now it's just for fun and personal engagement.

The Genesis Coupe's also-welcome rear-drive layout is augmented by 5-link independent rear suspension and track-tuned McPherson strut front suspension (that's right—the R-Spec already matches the Track model here, while the GT version has a sport-tuned front). 19-inch alloy wheels and 225/40 (front) and 245/40 (rear) tires help you go. Brembo brakes help you stop. The Brembos are 13.4-inch in front, 13.0 in rear (same for the 2.0T, but larger than the 3.8L GT). Power is fed to the rear axle through a Torsen® limited-slip differential.

In addition to the many included features mentioned above, the R-Spec trim brought us sexy black leather seats with red cloth inserts, and R-Spec badges.

It's all backed up by Hyundai's famous 5-year/60,000-mile warranty, 10-year/100,000-mile powertrain warranty, 7-year/unlimited antiperforation warranty and 5-year/unlimited roadside assistance. If right about now you're thinking, how could I go wrong? Well, that's exactly why Hyundai introduced such superlative warranty coverage in their early days on our shores, when they were not well known. The fact that all this attractive, well-powered and well-equipped car is still available for just the mid-\$20s, with all that coverage, definitely warrants a closer look and your own test drive. ■

LOGBOOK NOTES

- This car is very attractive inside. VERY. It has a great combination of complexity and simplicity, with all sorts of forms and curves and intersections, buttons and gauges, shapes and points of visual interest, while all being simple to understand and utilize.
- The seats, in black leather with red cloth inserts, are attractive, but a little hard to adjust. We wish for power here. (We also note that we'd go to an upholstery shop and change the red inserts to red leather.)
- We received the car on a cold December day and went for the heat. There's one knob for fan, one knob for temp, and we like that simplicity, but there's no indication where you ARE on temp, so we don't know what to turn it to, if we want to concentrate on driving; zip it one way or zip it the other and check back.
- The center stack slopes back quite a bit, which leaves us groping for the shifter somewhere farther forward and up than where it is. Any owner would get used to it, but we're tall and have the seat way back, so for some it may only be moreso.
- Healthy rear 3/4 view. Really wide rear window and ample rearview mirror.
- So you like this car? You have 25 grand? You might be looking at a few others, but you will be back. So what's the bottom line? Your friends may tell you it's not their BMW, but we already knew that. We think these guys have a real winner on their hands. ■

