

ROAD HUGGER BY JOE SAGE

It's been a couple of years now since Hyundai split Genesis off as its own brand. The former Hyundai Genesis became the Genesis G80 and the former Hyundai Equus the Genesis G90. Sales are at a niche level, and truly freestanding dealerships are slow to roll out—but enter the performance Genesis G70, and that pace may kick up a few notches, not only through demand for this model itself—major awards have come fast and furiously to the Genesis G70, with more on the way—but for the halo it shines on the overall brand.

Genesis has sport in its bloodlines, from the prior Hyundai Genesis Coupe (a two-door based on the sedan) and before that the Hyundai Tiburon.

The new four-door Genesis G70 is more grand tourer, though with a coupe-like silhouette. In this, it is much like the Kia Stinger, introduced earlier, and shares the same engine lineup, though it is shorter and lighter than the Stinger. The G70 also differs via luxury touches such as quilted Nappa leather seats and door panels (even in an available \$1500 Sport Package). The lineup starts at \$34,900 for a 2.0T with rear-wheel drive. Special editions

start as high as \$52,250. All-wheel drive, available on most, is a \$2000 item. A six-speed manual is available only on the RWD 2.0T Sport (\$37,900). Genesis G70 is strong, lightweight, has the speed and acceleration of a pricier car, and its turning circle is tighter than a Toyota Corolla Hatchback.

We had experienced the G70's nimble nature for an exhilarating stretch of mountain corner carving during the Run To The Sun comparo in Oregon last fall. This time, we would have a full week with it—and even took it on a quick dash to the coast.

We had a personal event to hit in San Diego on a Sunday, and though we had done a nonstop there and back last spring, arriving home at 5:30 am is fun, but not as much fun as it was in college. This time, we decided to do an overnight, maybe two, possibly in Yuma, or Gila Bend or El Centro.

Vehicle orientation is simple, with all adjustments and options very intuitively located and applied, above average for a contemporary interface. First is to turn off the easy access seats, which to us are like a party prank. The mildly-alternative shift interface is close enough to a standard setup

not to confuse a multiple-vehicle driver. Door handles are quite a reach, even if you're tall.

We zeroed out at the Scottsdale Airpark and hit the road about 6pm on Saturday, having decided to check fuel mileage, since this would be a long enough trip to make results meaningful.

We wouldn't get deep into hypermiling—we like to see what we can achieve with normal driving style. We were willing to try Eco mode, likely indistinguishable at highway speeds. But we tended to favor Smart mode, which gives you Eco when it can and an algorithm suited to your driving when it demands more, as Valley freeways always do.

Our mileage figures rely on the binnacle read-out. At 27.8 miles out, we were at 29.1 mpg and climbing—by 30.5 miles, we were at 29.5 mpg. A facetious mental tally suggested that by the time we got to San Diego, we should be getting about 360 mpg. In reality, we were at 30.2 mpg (against a 26 mpg highway rating) as we hit 43.0 miles in Avondale, where ten surface street miles dropped us to 27.3 mpg (against a 21 mpg combined rating).

The rest was all highway, much posted at 70-75 mph, aside from slow speeds through Gila Bend, two motel stops in Yuma, and quite a bit of local

surface street driving in San Diego.

Positive impressions of Genesis G70's performance, premium fit, finish and features as experienced in Oregon were all reconfirmed during our week here. Smart cruise is well implemented, recognizing what is or isn't in front of you and whether you're changing lanes, even through the steepest and most winding highway climbs in California. Road feel is strong. One startling detail is that the speedometer is marked in fixed increments from zero to 180, and yet the distance that marks 10 mph up to 60 suddenly marks 20 mph above that (it's not a graduated scale). Glancing at just ticks on the dial, you can easily accelerate from 50 to 60 to 80, thinking it looks like 50 to 60 to 70—a very odd and somewhat dangerous design.



The route ranges from 1700 feet above sea level in the north Valley, to 52 feet below sea level at El Centro in the Imperial Valley, to several thousand feet above sea level in the California passes.

Between elevation changes, curves and climbs that push the statutory engineering limits of Interstate Highway specs, and a schedule with little downtime, the smooth-running Genesis G70 aver-

SPECIFICATIONS*

ENGINE	3.3-liter VVT twin-turbo V6
DRIVETRAIN	RWD (AWD available)
HP/TORQUE	365 hp / 376 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	8-spd auto, paddles, rev-match
0-TO-60 MPH	4.5 seconds
SUSPENSION	F: MacPherson strut w coils and gas-charged dampers; R: 5-link independent
STEERING	rack mounted motor driven
BRAKES	Brembo ventilated F/R, sizes unknown
WHEELS / TIRES	19" alloy F: 225/40R19 / R: 255/35R19
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	184.4 / 111.6 in
TURNING CIRCLE	36.1 ft
GROUND CLEARANCE	5.1 in
SEATING / CARGO / WEIGHT	five / 10.5 cu.ft. / 3774 lb
FUEL CAPACITY	15.85 gal
MPG	18/26/21 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE (3.3T RWD)	\$43,750
INCLUDED:	Lexicon 15-sprkr audio w Quantum Logic surround & Clari-Fi music restoration tech
3.3T ELITE PKG:	Low beam assist, rain-sensing wipers, park distance warn, wide sunroof, wireless charge pad
3.3T PRESTIGE PKG:	Heads-up display, surround view monitor, Nappa leather seat surfaces w luxury quilting, heated rear seats, microfiber suede headliner
DESTINATION CHARGE	995

TOTAL	\$48,995
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* (Some specifications sourced from a variety of third parties; official information was incomplete for our early sample.)

aged 26.4 mpg for almost exactly 800 miles total, against an EPA combined rating of 21 mpg, at an average speed of 53.84 mph. That's a brag-worthy result for a car that can hit 60 mph from a standstill in just 4.5 seconds—all for \$43,750. ■

Accumulated Info

Trip **796.8** mi

Avg. **26.4** MPG

Timer **14:48** h

