

# BRANDED

BY JOE SAGE

You'll find buzz in this issue about a new 2020 Ford Explorer and its ST and Hybrid variants, revealed in Detroit. But the first Ford utility in performance form is this 2019 Ford Edge ST.

Developed by Ford Performance, Edge ST adds an uptuned 335-hp 2.7L EcoBoost V6, a quick-shift 8-speed auto, sport suspension, low-profile tires and 20-inch wheels (Pirelli P Zeros and optional 21-inchers on our sample).

A base front-drive Edge SE runs \$29,995. It's three trim steps up to the ST at \$42,355, though ST includes AWD, which adds \$1995 to base models. The gap widens (see sidebar) with the addition of an ST brake package (odd not to be included). The priciest package is a mix of things we do or don't want, but as tested, we're now about 70 percent above the SE in cost—but also in performance and appeal (and you could shave it a bit).

The interior is handsome, ours black with white stitching and ST embossed seats (plus Ford Performance door sills—the vehicle is branded inside and out). Seat bolsters are exceedingly firm, though we got used to them fairly quickly.

Performance models are often ground-huggers, but one nice surprise in the Edge ST is that it actually adds ground clearance, moving from 8.0 to an

ample 8.2 inches, which along with the vehicle's short overhangs provides surprising approach/departure/breakover angles. The drivetrain has sport mode and selectable traction control. The AWD system reverts to front-drive on easy streets (while the new Explorer returns to rear-drive, a significant difference between the two). We did note considerable front-drive torque in the Edge ST, in such simple situations as freeway lane changes.

We spent more time than average in the owner's manual—to dismiss a screen demand to pair a device in order to dismiss a demand to pair a device (we generally keep our private info out of other people's vehicles); to verify that we could only hold a lower gear via manumatic paddles on a slick downhill if we were in sport mode (which might seem counter to descending a slick hill); or to find the heated steering wheel controls (temps were in the 30s), which required a deep screen dive (with gloves) and was easier to live without.

Ford Edge has always been a nice package, with headroom and legroom way above average in both front and rear, plus generous cargo space.

Overall, we're bullish on the ST performance and body packaging of the Edge, less so on implementation of some of its tech. Explorer's upcoming change back to rear-wheel drive brings back one distinct way for you to decide between that performance model and the Ford Edge ST. ■



## SPECIFICATIONS

<b>ENGINE</b> .....	specialty tuned 2.7L V6 EcoBoost turbo
<b>DRIVETRAIN</b> .....	intelligent AWD
<b>HP/TORQUE</b> .....	335 hp / 380 lb-ft
<b>TRANSMISSION</b> .....	quick-shift 8-spd automatic
<b>SUSPENSION</b> .....	ST-tuned sport suspension with monotube shocks. <b>F:</b> MacPherson strut, L-shaped lower control arm, 26mm stblzr bar; <b>R:</b> indep integral link, isolated subframe, 24.2mm 4.5Tmm stblzr bar
<b>STEERING</b> .....	elec power rack & pinion
<b>BRAKES</b> .....	<b>F:</b> 345mm x 32mm vented, 2x 48mm caliper <b>R:</b> 345mm x 19mm vented, 1x 38mm caliper
<b>WHEELS / TIRES</b> .....	(opt) 21" premium / 265/40R21
<b>LENGTH / WHEELBASE</b> .....	188.8 / 112.2 in
<b>GROUND CLEARANCE</b> .....	8.2 in
<b>HEADROOM (F/R)</b> .....	40.2 (37.7 snrf) / 40.3 in
<b>LEGGROOM (F/R)</b> .....	42.6 / 40.6 in
<b>SEATS / CARGO CAPACITY</b> .....	five / 39.2 / 73.4 cu.ft
<b>WEIGHT</b> .....	4477 lb
<b>FUEL / CAPACITY</b> .....	reg ok, prem recmd / 18.4 gal
<b>MPG</b> .....	19/26/21 (city/hwy/comb)

**BASE PRICE**..... **\$42,355**

**EQUIPMENT GROUP 401A:** alarm, garage door opener, wireless charging pad, evasive steering assist, panoramic roof, voice-activated touchscreen nav, hands-free foot-activated liftgate, adaptive cruise, remote start, auto-dim side mirror, cooled front seats, heated rear seats, enhanced active park assist.....5585

**WHITE PLATINUM METALLIC TRI-COAT**.....595

**ST PERFORMANCE BRAKE PKG:** 21" premium gloss black painted aluminum wheels, summer-only tires (w inflator & sealant kit), vented disc brakes F/R w 13.6" front rotors, red calipers, performance brake pads, vented brake shields, brushless radiator fan.....2695

**DESTINATION CHARGE**.....1095

**TOTAL**..... **\$52,325**

