

# MORE POWER, NEW PLATFORM

BY JOE SAGE

**W**e had recently driven both the new Subaru Legacy XT and Subaru Outback Limited at the Southwest Lifestyle Media Drive event (see our prior issue) for about 20 minutes each in town, then had a full week with the same Outback.

Both look very familiar but are completely new builds, with larger interior dimensions sitting atop the quieter, stiffer, safer Subaru Global Platform.

Both also have horsepower boosts. XT models (Legacy and Outback) get the brand's first turbo in over ten years, a 2.5L turbocharged boxer 4-cylinder with 260 hp and 277 lb-ft of torque (up from 256/247 with the prior gen's 3.6L 6-cylinder). Other trims have a 90-percent-new 2.5L 4-cylinder boxer with 182 hp and 176 lb-ft (up from 175/174).

All versions, in true Subaru tradition (BRZ sports coupe aside), are all-wheel-drive.

Our Outback Limited is the top of four trims bearing the 182-hp base engine. There are three XT turbo models for 2020—a Limited XT, this year a special Onyx Edition XT, and a Touring XT.

The 2020 Outback starts at \$26,645, topping out at \$39,695 for the turbocharged Touring XT model. Four option packages are reasonably priced from \$1400 to \$2995 (each including something irresistible, such as keyless entry in base models on up to a heated steering wheel in upper models).

Subaru's pioneering EyeSight driver assist tech, including advanced adaptive cruise and lane centering, is now standard across the Outback lineup. A new hands-free power liftgate is standard on most trims and available in the least costly option group on base models. A new high-definition 11.6-inch tablet-style touchscreen includes multimedia (and 12-speaker Harman Kardon audio) on upper trims and is available on other models.

All this, and starting price is up just \$300.

As is often the case, we found a few features dependent upon deep dives into the screen (e.g. auto start-stop defeat and heated seats) that we'd prefer were readily accessible buttons. And those deep dives are difficult in low-angle morning or evening sunlight, as the unshielded, slanted screen attracts a lot of glare. The audio on this upper trim does have knobs, though, always welcome.

Ground clearance (8.7 inches) is very healthy on the activity-oriented Outback, also with X-Mode for slick surfaces and inclines, and is action-ready with clever roof rails with retractable cross bars and tie-downs—and that hands-free rear liftgate.

This horsepower bump is modest, but we welcome it—and it not only got us swiftly through some tight situations in traffic around town, it has a great little growl that reminds us this is a serious mission-oriented vehicle. Grab and go. ■

## SPECIFICATIONS

<b>ENGINE</b> .....	2.5L DOHC 4-cyl DFI ETC boxer w alum block-heads, chain-driven camshafts
<b>HP/TORQUE</b> .....	182 hp / 176 lb-ft
<b>TRANSMISSION</b> .....	CVT w 8-spd man mode, paddles
<b>DRIVETRAIN</b> .....	Symmetrical Active Torque Split AWD
<b>SUSPENSION</b> .....	4-wheel independent: F: MacPherson strut w internal rebound springs, alum lower L-arms, coils, stblzr bar, liquid-filled engine mounts; R: double wishbone, coils, stblzr bar;
<b>STEERING</b> .....	elec-assist rack & pinion variable ratio
<b>BRAKES</b> .....	F: 12.4 vented disc, dual-piston calipers; R: 11.8 vented, single-piston calipers
<b>WHEELS / TIRES</b> .....	18x7 alloy, black / 225/60R18
<b>LENGTH / WHEELBASE</b> .....	191.3 / 108.1 in
<b>TURNING CIRCLE</b> .....	36.1 ft
<b>GROUND CLEARANCE</b> .....	8.7 in
<b>APPR / BRKOVER / DEPART</b> .....	18.6 / 19.4 / 21.7°
<b>HEADROOM (F/R)</b> .....	(w moonroof) 37.7 / 39.1 in
<b>LEGROOM (F/R)</b> .....	42.8 / 39.5 in
<b>CARGO CAPACITY</b> .....	32.5 / 75.7 cu.ft
<b>WEIGHT</b> .....	3730 lb
<b>TOW CAPACITY</b> .....	2700 lb
<b>FUEL / CAPACITY</b> .....	regular / 18.5 gal
<b>MPG</b> .....	26/33/29 (city/hwy/comb)

**LIMITED INCLUDES:** perforated leather-trim seats, gloss black w silver metallic finish interior trim, 18-in alum alloy wheels w black machine finish, 10-way driver w 2-position memory & 8-way passenger power seats, heated rear seats, rear AC outlets, hands-free power liftgate, keyless entry-start, reverse auto braking, side mirrors w 2-position memory & auto-tilt for right mirror when in reverse.

<b>BASE PRICE</b> .....	<b>\$33,445</b>
<b>OPTION PKG 34:</b> power moonroof, heated steering wheel, 11.6-in multimedia nav, Driver Focus.....	2045
<b>DESTINATION CHARGE</b> .....	1010
<b>TOTAL</b> .....	<b>\$36,500</b>

