

# The Cadillac of small SUVs BY JOE SAGE

Cadillacs of yore were flashy, showy luxury land yachts—huge sedans, coupes, convertibles—known as The Standard of the World, with few challengers. The world’s perceptions of luxury have been transformed, as has Cadillac.

As the 20th century eased into the 21st, they had thrown out dowdy old velour seats and threw on some Led Zeppelin. They got rid of their biggest sedans and brought in more crossovers. Only the big Escalade SUV survives. Today, there are three sedans in three sizes, then the Escalade and three smaller crossover SUVs, all new in the past few years. Ours is the smallest, the XT4, new in 2019. The new lineup is instantly familiar, each bearing the unmistakable Cadillac grille and crest.

The interior experience is reasonably premium, with a general feeling of spaciousness, plus exemplary legroom and headroom for such a small vehicle (classified variously as compact or subcompact/compact), though the seats felt narrow.

The screen interface is clean and complete. Climate control uses intuitive physical switches (and AC was very good during a very hot week). Drive mode has an atypical readout—as soon as you touch it, it changes to the next setting, before you can see what you were in. Another oddity is the start button, set on a section of the instrument

panel that angles away from natural reach. Audio is a Bose Centerpoint unit, which arrived set on Driver, not its best output to our ears, but totally rocking when set in Normal or Centerpoint.

Power and torque are strong for this weight—with the same turbo as the hot 2.0L midsize CT5 sedan and about the same weight—always delivering, in any drive mode. (The decklid bears a 350T badge, which represents engine torque in newton-meters, with a T for turbo. Enlightening? Or not?)

Our optional 20-inch wheels, though still bearing healthy sidewalls, gave us an extremely firm ride even on smooth asphalt, but changing from Sport to Normal drive mode reduced that, with performance still fine. The nine-speed automatic maintains consistently smooth power and torque through lane-change slaloms and freeway ramp acceleration. Though available with all-wheel drive, ours was a front-driver, but with accurate steering and sophisticated rear suspension that delivered no particular hint of torque steer.

As with high end Europeans, the line between luxury and premium is vague these days. Showy fluff is replaced by attention to powertrain and ride, a refined cabin, and a full range of user tech and features—with transparency of operational layers between the driver and the experience.

## SPECIFICATIONS

PLANT .....	Kansas City KS
ENGINE .....	2.0L turbo four, 16v DOHC dir inject
HP/TORQUE .....	237 hp / 258 lb-ft
DRIVETRAIN .....	FWD (AWD avail)
TRANSMISSION .....	Hydra-Matic 9T50 9-spd auto
SUSPENSION .....	F: MacPherson strut w coil-over spring, direct-act stblzr bar; R: 5-link indep w coils, fully isolated cradle
STEERING .....	elec variable-assist pwr rack & pinion
BRAKES .....	4-wheel disc, electro-hydraulic assist
WHEELS / TIRES .....	opt 20" alloy / P245/45R20 AS
LENGTH / WHEELBASE .....	181.1 / 109.4 in
TURNING CIRCLE .....	38.0 ft
GROUND CLEARANCE .....	6.7 in
HEADROOM (F/R) .....	39.4 / 38.3 in
LEGROOM (F/R) .....	40.4 / 39.5 in
CARGO CAPACITY .....	22.5 / 48.0 cu.ft
WEIGHT .....	(FWD Sport) 3710 lb
TOW CAPACITY .....	(w pkg) 3500 lb
FUEL CAPACITY .....	15.9 gal
MPG .....	24/30/26 (city/hwy/comb)

**BASE PRICE** ..... **\$39,795**

**CADILLAC USER EXPERIENCE:** embedded nav, AM/FM with connected nav w real-time traffic, Bose Centerpoint 13-spkr surround audio w aux amp .....1500

**ENHANCED VISIBILITY PKG:** power fold heated auto-dim mirrors, rear camera mirror w washer, auto park assist w brake, rear pedestrian alert, HD surround vision .....1500

**RED HORIZON TINTCOAT** .....1225

**WHEELS:** 20-in alloy w diamond cut, Titan satin finish ..1100

**DRIVER AWARENESS PKG:** Intellibeam auto-high beam, follow distance indicator, lane keep assist/dep warn .....470

**DESTINATION CHARGE** .....995

**TOTAL** ..... **\$46,585**

They don't even say Standard of the World now. But it's a nice badge and nice build for about \$40 grand, well in line with today's high standards. ■

