

Hyundai has been hard at work on EV development for years, delivering a fine lineup. This includes the IONIQ 5 in this issue, one of the best EVs we've driven. And it includes the big three-row IONIQ 9, winner of both the EV category and Vehicle of the Year overall at this year's NWAPA Drive Revolution comparo, also in this issue.

For years, most EVs spun off internal combustion equivalents (concurrent or prior). Then came newer independently conceived EVs. Now, might we be seeing the inverse of the original—internal combustion versions that are spun off an EV basis?

Hyundai still has internal combustion engineers hard at work, who bring us a new-for-2026 gen-two of the popular Hyundai Palisade—a gasoline-powered direct sibling of the award-winning IONIQ 9.

Palisade delivers the segment's solid formula—three-row 7-or-8-seat SUV, with passenger com-

fort, around-town utility, plenty of cargo and seating for a good road trip.

Two powertrains for the new Palisade are the 287-hp V6 in our sample or a 329-hp turbo-4 hybrid in Hybrid Blue versions. There is a lot of price overlap between the two—out of 21 total versions (13 standard powertrain, 8 hybrid), fully 17 have their prices interwoven, with the hybrids just a couple of grand higher than the V6s, though with fewer trim levels (four instead of seven).

Driven here is the also-new-for-'26 XRT Pro. V6-only, it's also the only trim available as AWD-only, which speaks to its multi-personality mission. XRT Pro increases ground clearance by an inch and has a rear electronic limited-slip diff, all-terrain tires, terrain modes, recovery tow hooks and a built-in hitch. Premium touches include leatherette seating, Bose premium audio and ambient lighting.

While we've seen glowing reviews from others (who may have done a start-it-once-then-cruise event), several attributes repeatedly caught our attention in a full week—an accelerator pedal that takes a special nudge to bring to life, power drops in cornering, occasional inability to get up to speed when joining aggressive traffic, jarring full stops several feet too early when backing into parking. Maybe it's just us. We'd suggest you pay attention to these while you test drive it. (Also try the locks.)

It's clear the Hyundai EV team has a lot of resources at its disposal, and they've thrown a lot at this segment. We found ourselves visiting an (unconfirmed) idea that development prioritized the IONIQ 9, with this the spin-off. But then there are the Hybrid Blue versions. Although there is no XRT Pro version of this powertrain, we (and you) might both do well to give those a drive, too. ■

Might internal combustion be an alternative powertrain?

BY JOE SAGE

Differing from the newest Santa Fe, which misses no opportunity to suggest the letter "H" in lighting, grille and other details, Palisade is more subtle. The front DRLs are the most distinctive style feature, indirectly echoing those of Hyundai Tucson and Santa Cruz.



SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	Ulsan, South Korea
ENGINE/TRANS BUILD	SKorea / SKorea
PARTS CONTENT	US/Can 1% / SKorea 90%
ENGINE	3.5L V6, MPI+GDI DOHC 24v, alum
HP/TORQUE	287 hp / 260 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	12.3:1
TRANSMISSION	6-speed auto
DRIVETRAIN	HTRAC AWD active on-demand
SUSPENSION	F: MacPherson strut w coils, stblzr bar; R: multlink indep, separated springs & shocks, stblzr bar, self-leveling
STEERING	rack & pinion, motor-driv, col-mt
BRAKES	F: 345 x 30mm vented; R: 325 x 20mm solid
WHEELS	18x7.5J alloy
TIRES	255/60 R18 108H all-terrain
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	200.4 / 116.9 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	(XRT Pro) 8.4 in
APPR / DEPART / BRKOVER	20.5 / 22.4 / 18.3°
TURNING CIRCLE	(XRT Pro) 39.0 ft
HEADROOM (F/2/3)	(sunrf) 40.1 / 40.0 / 37.7 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	44.2 / 43.0 / 32.1 in
CARGO CAPACITY	19.1 / 46.3 / 86.7 cu.ft
WEIGHT	4420-4872 lb
TOW CAPACITY	(w brakes) 5000 lb (w/o brakes) 1650 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	reg unl / 19.0 gal
MPG	16/22/19 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	\$49,370
CARPETED FLOOR MATS	245
DESTINATION CHARGE	1495
TOTAL	\$51,110

Note: sticker price varies from info below.

2026 HYUNDAI PALISADE LINEUP

V6: 287-hp 3.5L V6, 8-auto	FWD	AWD
SE	\$39,435	\$41,435
SEL 7p/8p	41,940	43,940
SEL Convenience	43,370	45,370
SEL Premium 7p/8p	45,300	47,300
XRT Pro	-	49,870
Limited	49,770	51,770
Calligraphy	54,560	56,560
Hybrid Blue: 329-hp 2.5L Turbo-4 hybrid, 6-auto	FWD	AWD
Hyb SEL 7p/8p	\$43,660	\$45,660
Hyb SEL Premium 7p/8p	47,020	49,020
Hyb Limited	51,490	53,490
Hyb Calligraphy	56,280	58,280