

LIMO-VAN

Stylish, spacious, versatile, frugal —what a combination! BY JOE SAGE

We co-drove a number of launch events with famed race driver, the late Denise McCluggage, highly flattered that *she* would ask *us*. It was always a good time, and it was inevitably punctuated by some rants—one of which was that sedans are a complete waste, because of all the unused space above the trunk area, that could be interior volume. Well, a minivan optimizes this.

Every vehicle has a defined zone and realm of purpose, some more specialized than others, many of them largely ignored. People buy sports cars even if not to race, SUVs even if not to go off-road, pickup trucks even if not to haul, and so on. But the minivan may hold a distinction as the vehicle type most likely to be driven as conceived.

An American mainstream mainstay, it is largely a self-sorting class—its advantages and purposes seem fairly obvious at face value, and the competitive set is quite lean. Avoiding the term “minivan,” Toyota calls Sienna an MPV (Multi-Purpose Vehicle). But then aren’t most? Among other vehicles in Toyota’s lineup with multiple purposes—SUVs and crossovers (it has close relatives in this issue), Sienna’s famous body shape, sliding doors and (to

a degree) seating are clear distinctions. And while Grand Highlander has three powertrains (standard, Hybrid and Hybrid MAX), the lower volume Sienna has the same powertrain as the midrange Grand Highlander Hybrid (the best power-MPG-price formula, by the numbers). And even then, there are a dozen variants of Sienna (see chart).

The Toyota Sienna can actually be a lot of fun to drive—with so much length behind you, it can feel like driving a limo, an elegant feeling in a quite affordable vehicle, itself a neat combination. Maybe it was our sample’s Midnight Black Metallic paint, or maybe it’s our area with all its showoffs and supercars, but there’s an appealing stealth aspect to this purposeful vehicle once you tune into that. (Speaking of stealth, as with many things, it can take driving one to realize they are everywhere!)

The transmission is an e-CVT, but we didn’t even notice it. Either it’s especially well done, which it probably is, and/or it’s just a type that is so suited to the task you wouldn’t think twice about it.

The steering and tight turns belie the vehicle’s size. With a turning circle just under 40 feet (our ideal benchmark being 36), the perception is likely

2025 TOYOTA SIENNA LINEUP

	SEATS	FWD	AWD
LE	8	\$39,485	\$41,485
XLE	8	44,295	—
	7	44,295	46,295
Woodland Edition	7	—	50,725
XSE	7	46,940	47,830
Limited	7	50,500	52,500
Platinum	7	56,445	57,205

attributable to its short overhangs. It feels both accurate and light on its feet. (The AWD version, by the way, even turns about a foot tighter.)

There are only a few major minivans now, but a range of reasons people stick with them—some “just because,” some preferring the style and format, some for the absolutely optimized interior volume, generally. Many value the main distinguishing feature—sliding rear doors. A few of the most dominant ones over the past several years have distinguished themselves by hybrid powertrains or by adding special features—maybe a reclining second row, maybe footrests, maybe a cooler, maybe even a vacuum cleaner in the back. Toyota Sienna at this point in time has all of these. Not content to rest on their laurels—having been at it a long time—they’re matching everyone feature by feature. Check it out. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	Princeton, Indiana
ENGINE	2.5L inline-four, 16v, DOHC, D-4S port-direct inject, var valve timing by intelligent motor (VVT-iE) intake, var valve timing-intelligent (VVT-i) exhaust
HP/TORQUE	189 hp / 176 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	14.0:1
MOTOR	perm magnet synchronous
BATTERY	nickel-metal-hydride (NiMH) 288V (40 cells) 650V system max
HYBRID SYSTEM NET HP	245 hp
TRANSMISSION	e-CVT
DRIVETRAIN	FWD
SUSPENSION	F: indep MacPherson strut, 27.2mm stblzr bar; R: multi-link w 15mm stblzr bar
STEERING	electronic power steering (EPS)
BRAKES	F: 12.9 vented; R: 13.5 vented
WHEELS/TIRES	20-in alloy / 235/50 R 20
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	203.7 / 120.5 in
HEADROOM (F/2/3)	40.1 / 39.3 / 37.4 in
LEGGROOM (F/2/3)	40.3 / 39.9 / 38.7 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	6.3 in
TURNING CIRCLE	39.2 ft
CARGO CAPACITY	33.5 / 75.2 / 101.0 cu.ft
TOW CAPACITY	3500 lb
WEIGHT	4725 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	87 oct reg unl / 18.0 gal
MPG	(FWD) 36/36/36 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	\$56,145
RV MIRROR: digital rear view mirror with Homelink universal transceiver	200
DOOR SILL PROTECTORS	95
REAR BUMPER APPLIQUE	69
CARGO TRAY	140
ALL WEATHER FLOOR LINERS W VC	260
WHEEL LOCKS	90
CONNECTED SERVICES: two addtl years of trial in addition to one included year: Drive Connect & Remote Connect	325
DESTINATION CHARGE	1450

TOTAL **\$58,774**

Note: sticker price varies from info at left.

