

Texas is practically a neighboring state. At least if you drive from the Arizona-New Mexico border to El Paso, your journey is only about 190 miles (or for a crow, about 135 miles). From Hoover Dam to Matamoros, on the other hand, is over 1500 miles. Yep, Texas is a big place. Nonetheless, from its dry ranch pickup country to its poshest urban boulevards, it holds a lot of characteristics in common with Arizona, when it comes to vehicle shopping.

The Texas Auto Writers Association (TAWA) held its annual Texas Auto Roundup in late April, at Texas Motor Speedway, north of Fort Worth. Members drive contenders back-to-back on public roads in the area, with appropriate vehicles also making it onto the track. Awards are given in 14 categories, based on size, performance, utility, green credentials and combinations thereof. Awards are also given for best new feature, best new interior and best value. The two ultimate prizes are for Car of Texas and Family Car of Texas.

There were 782 individual drives recorded. Each vehicle was driven by an average of 17 people. Eight vehicles logged more than 20 drivers: Ford Fusion Energi, Corvette Stingray Convertible, Lincoln MKZ, Fiat 500 Abarth and Jaguar F-Type convertible from the 2014 model year; and all-new 2015 models of the Hyundai Genesis Sedan, Chrysler 200 and Kia K900 (three we drove at launch and have covered in recent issues).

As you can see, the vehicles that are of top interest in Texas are also of top interest here in Arizona. Top awards went to:

Car of Texas:

2015 Hyundai Genesis Sedan
(2nd: 2014 Jaguar F-Type V8 S Convertible)

Family Car of Texas

2014 Chrysler Town & Country
(2nd: 2015 Hyundai Genesis Sedan)

Best New Feature

Ford Fiesta's 1.0 Liter EcoBoost Engine

Best New Interior

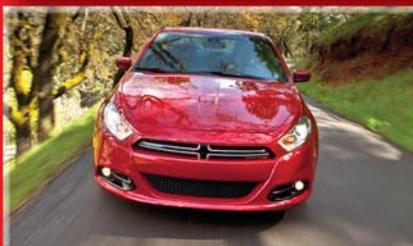
2015 Hyundai Genesis Sedan (also winner in the Mid-Size Luxury Car category)

Best Value

2014 Ford Fiesta ST (also winner in the Performance Compact category)

Next up is the TAWA Texas Truck Rodeo, held in San Antonio in October. ■

TAWA Texas Auto Roundup



WINNERS (top to bottom, left to right) • MID-SIZE LUXURY CAR and CAR OF TEXAS: 2015 Hyundai Genesis Sedan • FAMILY CAR OF TEXAS: 2014 Chrysler Town & Country • PERFORMANCE COUPE: 2014 Jaguar F-Type V8 S Convertible • PERFORMANCE SEDAN: 2014 Lexus IS 350 F SPORT • MID-SIZE CAR: 2015 Chrysler 200 • FULL-SIZE LUXURY CAR: 2014 Cadillac XTS Vsport Twin-Turbo Premium • COMPACT CAR: 2014 Dodge Dart SXT • PREMIUM COMPACT: 2015 Subaru WRX Limited • PERFORMANCE UTILITY: 2014 Jeep Grand Cherokee SRT • GREEN VEHICLE: 2014 Ford Fusion Energi Titanium.

