

Nice car, but why must I pay extra for red?

The Cadillac brand has been around for a long time and has usually been associated with avant-garde styling and plenty of muscle that appealed to the upper crust of society.

The brand has had its ups and downs, notably some less-than-stellar designs as well as quality issues, that hurt Cadillac's image. But recently the brand has undergone a revitalization that has definitely caught the attention of the public.

At the forefront of that revival is the CTS model, which now has three equally impressive siblings and one overpowering brother in the CTS-V with a 6.2-litre supercharged V-8 and 556 horsepower.

The CTS lineup also features the CTS Sedan and CTS Wagon.

But the newest member of the family – and perhaps the most impressive looks-wise – is the CTS Coupe. It starts at \$47,450, but that figure heads north, about as fast as the car accelerates, as you add options. My tester came in at \$57,700 before delivery charges, which pushes the price to \$59,250.

Of course, when you fork out almost \$50,000 on a base car, you get quite a long list of standard equipment that, in the CTS Coupe, includes eight-way power-adjustable heated front leather seats with power lumbar, a Bose 5.1 surround-sound audio system, EZ-Key keyless access and push-button start, Bluetooth, a tire-pressure monitor, stolen-vehicle tracking and stability-enhancement system — Stabili-Trak.



KEVIN MIO

Most of the additional cost on the tester was because of the preferred equipment group, which costs \$7,085. It adds a power sunroof, rear-vision camera, interior accent lighting, wood steering wheel, wood trim on the instrument panel, centre console, door trim and shift knob, heated/ventilated front seats, power telescopic steering column and a heated steering wheel.

The other visible addition is 19-inch polished aluminum wheels as part of the sports package (\$1,770).

The last extra is one that I really don't like, but it is something that more and more carmakers are doing. If you want the Crystal Red colour of the tester, you have to fork over an extra \$1,295.

Design

The CTS Coupe is a striking vehicle from just about every angle and is definitely a conversation starter. I had many discussions about that car, mostly positive, but several stood out because people asked me how I could see anything out the of the small rear window. Actually, the rear window is quite large and the view from inside is good.

However, when looking at the CTS Coupe from the rear, you can see why they would be asking that question, because the angle at which the window is placed makes it look like there is no way you can have a good view of approaching traffic.

From the front, the CTS Coupe grabs your attention for the right reasons, with a large front grill and oversized headlights. The rising beltline leads the eye to the rear, where you will find a large trunk lid and vertical tail lights. There's also a centre-mounted dual exhaust and oversized rear bumper that was yet another conversation starter.

One very cool design element is the lack of door handles. Instead, all you have is a button hidden on the door that pops it open. It's the same on the inside, with a button replacing the handle. Of course, designers took no chances and installed an emergency release handle on the inside – just in case.

The interior is well thought out, with nice seats, controls for the radio and climate system that are easy to use and operate, as well as steering-wheel-mounted controls for the cruise control, audio system and hands-free telephony.

Performance

Under the hood is a 3.6-litre V6 engine that delivers 304 horsepower and 273 foot-pounds of torque to the rear wheels of this two-door coupe.

It is mated to a six-speed automatic transmission that gets the job done very well and with little fuss, even when the engine is pushed.

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