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REVIEW • MOTOR MATTERS 2016 KIA CADENZA

The Kia Cadenza joined the South Korean automaker's lineup in 2014 as its first full-size sedan. Though it's been joined by the larger, rear-drive K900 luxury four-door, the Cadenza still strikes us as the ultimate sedan in the Kia lineup. It's styled and packaged well, has a premium level of refinement, and proves that Kia should be taken seriously at the \$40,000 price point. Luxury badge or not, it can seem like a very good deal to a great many families and comfort-minded folks.

The Cadenza is closely related to the Hyundai Azera, but the two are well differentiated by unique exterior and interior treatments. The Azera's smooth, flowing design and deeply sculpted sheetmetal stand in contrast to the Cadenza's taut, more athletic look. Inside, there's a mix of traditional and forward-thinking design. The look is rich and finely detailed, with soft-touch and nicely grained materials for the upper dash, plus woodgrain for the steering wheel and dash and door trim. Controls and displays are laid out in a cockpit style, with plenty of supplementary steering-wheel controls.

The Cadenza feels quick and responsive relative to other large front-drive four-doors, but it's not a true sport sedan by any stretch. Power is provided by a 3.3-liter V-6, making 293 horsepower and 255 pound-feet. The V-6 doesn't make all that much torque at the low end of the rev band, which means that stepping away from a standing start, or up a steep hill, feels a bit

more sluggish than you'd guess from its power output—until the revs build, and then you rocket ahead. Steering lacks road feel and requires a lot of small corrections to stay on course on the highway. Still, when driven at anything but a sport-sedan pace, this is a car that feels confident on the back roads yet maneuverable in town.

The Cadenza has top-notch interior comfort, without those boat-like old-fashioned big-car motions. It's also luxury-car quiet inside. Get the Luxury Package and you'll have ventilated front seats, heated rear seats, and even an extendable driver's thigh bolster—something rare in this class of cars and something that will be appreciated by tall drivers. In back, the available panoramic roof really limits headroom, though.

Once you're in, this is a sedan, that won't let you down on the subtle details. The Cadenza is a very quiet-riding sedan, with almost no wind noise, and very little road noise, at highway speeds. Materials, and the leather upholstery, are very impressive throughout the cabin.

The Cadenza has earned top 'good' scores from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) in most tests but hasn't been subjected to the new small-overlap crash test, which mimics an impact with a telephone pole. Because of that lack of data, it's not eligible for the IIHS' Top Safety Pick awards. The NHTSA hasn't tested it at all.

Kia isn't actually calling the Cadenza a luxury sedan—just a 'premium' one. And it's in an in-between market niche that some shoppers might find just right. At

about \$34,000, the Cadenza includes lots of standard equipment and is quite the value considering it's about the same price as a well-optioned Optima (SX Limited), Accord, or Camry, all of which are smaller. With the Luxury Package and the Technology Package added to that, you get things like a panoramic sunroof, power retractable sunshade, Nappa ventilated seats, a heated steering wheel, 19-inch alloys, smart cruise control, blind-spot detection, and lane departure warning—all for about \$43,000.

The Cadenza gets Kia's UVO eServices system, which provides integrated roadside assistance, diagnostics, and other services, through a paired smartphone (no separate subscription is required). It also has Kia's eight-inch touch-screen system that responds well to natural voice commands and includes plenty of traditional physical buttons to back things up. Navigation is included as a standard feature, and it's one of the best systems on the market, with clear, colorful displays, live traffic information, and easy-to-intuit split-screen views. www.thecarconnection.com

2016 KIA CADENZA

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|---------------------|--|
| BASE PRICE | \$32,990 |
| EPA est. MPG | 19/28 |
| SPECS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •6-speed Shiftable Automatic •5 Yr./ 60000 Mi. •Bluetooth •V6 •Front Wheel Drive •5 Star Consumer Rating •Top-notch Interior Comfort |



CLICK and CLACK TALK CARS

by Tom & Ray Magliozzi

SITTING PARKED FOR EXTENDED PERIOD WILL NOT DAMAGE A CAR BY RAY MAGLIOZZI

Hi, Ray:

Dear Car Talk:

I own a Honda Fit that is included in the big air-bag recall. Honda has provided me with a loaner car while we wait for parts to fix the problem (thank you, Honda). When Honda gives you a loaner, you sign a statement agreeing not to drive your car at all. The recall notice from Honda also indicates that the Fit should not be driven until the repairs are made. My car has now been sitting in my garage for nearly three months. What damage might be happening to my car, if anything, because it has been sitting for so long? -- Fred

Nothing. The worst thing that will happen is that the battery will go dead and you'll lose all your radio presets.

It's possible that the belts will dry out a little bit and you'll get a small amount of surface rust on your brake discs, which will wear off in 20 minutes of driving. I guess if you're truly unlucky, a family of mice might move in and procreate under your hood. Even mice find the Fit roomy.

If you had written to us when you first parked the Fit, I would have suggested that you disconnect the battery. But it's kind of done that on its own. It's probably dead by now, and will need to be recharged. But that's not a big deal.

If it's not dead, I suppose you could run the engine for half an hour every other week or so. You're not supposed to drive it, but I assume there's no danger in starting it. Well, just to be safe, put on a football helmet and turn your head to the right before you turn the key.

But honestly, Fred, at this point I would do nothing; just leave it. When Honda calls you and says your parts are in, tell them to send

a tow truck to come and get it. After all, it's not safe for you to drive it, so they won't be expecting you to start it and drive it in.

And the tow-truck driver will jump-start the car if he needs to. Then Honda will recharge the battery when they make the repairs.

And then when your car is completely repaired, you can drive your loaner back to the Honda dealer, swap it for your car, and leave them the football helmet, too.

Keep your car on the road and out of the repair shop by ordering Click and Clack's pamphlet "Ten Ways You May Be Ruining Your Car Without Even Knowing It!" Send \$4.75 (check or money order) to Car Talk/Ruin, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803.

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