


**A hotter, smaller hatch**  
Ford fires up a fierrier Fiesta.  
PAGE 2



**Embargo cargo**  
Will we be seeing some vintage Cuban-American cars soon?  
PAGE 2



**Designers unleashed**  
What will happen when Honda puts its creative team in the driver's seat?  
PAGE 2



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**Standard issue**  
Is it better to learn to drive on a manual transmission?  
PAGE 3

TEST DRIVE

## Midsize at Mid-cycle

### 2016 Nissan Altima 2.5 SR

DAN LYONS | text  
*Special to the Times Union*

The third year of Altima's fifth generation is marked by an added trim level, a styling refresh and a fistful of new (and newly available) safety technology.

The introduction of the SR brings the total number of Altima models to seven: 2.5, 2.5 S, 2.5 SR, 2.5 SV, 2.5 SL, 3.5 SR and 3.5 SL. The base MSRP is \$22,500, and the range-topping 3.5 SL checks in at \$32,090. My test drive this week was in the new 2.5 SR. With two options



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE MANUFACTURER

**2016 Nissan Altima 2.5 SR**  
MSRP: \$24,470 (2.5 SR) · As Tested: \$26,115

(LED headlamps (\$600) and floor mats (\$220)) and destination/handling charges (\$825), it had an as-tested price of \$26,115.

Styling refreshes come in many different forms, from mild to wild. Altima's 2016 look lands right in the middle of that mix; not a radical makeover, not a mere trim tweak. The V-Motion grille, LED boomerang headlights and a new fascia bring the Altima's front view in step with the company's "Energetic Flow" design language, which was first seen on Maxima and Murano. A restyled hood, fenders, rear fascia, deck lid and tail lamps round out the visual updating, along with fresh rim choices and a new, blue hue on the color charts.

SR models are distinguished visually by smoked headlight covers, fog lights, rear spoiler and 18-inch

**THE NISSAN ALTIMA** returns for the third model year of its fifth generation with styling refreshes and a seven different trim levels ranging in MSRP from a base of \$22,500 up to the 3.5 SL at \$32,090.

aluminum alloy rims. Other model-specific items include a sport suspension, paddle shifters, power driver seat with lumbar and special interior trim.

As the names suggest, buyers choose from two ranges of models, depending on engine choice. Nissan offers a 2.5L four-cylinder with CVT as the standard drivetrain. It's rated at 182 h.p. and 180 lb. ft. of torque. Fuel economy estimates are 26 city, 37 highway for SR models like my tester, and a skosh higher for the other 2.5 trim levels.

The step-up option is a 3.5L V-6, offering 270 h.p. and

251 lb. ft. of torque, which is expected to return 22 mpg city/32 highway.

While it's more than a second slower from 0 to 60 than the V-6 (low six second range vs. mid seven second range), the four cylinder motor feels respectably quick; capable of handling all normal driving situations. Fuel economy is quite solid, and my week behind the wheel netted 30 miles per gallon — right on the EPA combined average for this model. Nissan's Xtronic CVT electronically simulates stepped-ratio shifts. This is

*Continued on page 2*

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\* BASED ON 2013, 2014 AND 2015 NEW VEHICLE SALES PER AHM