

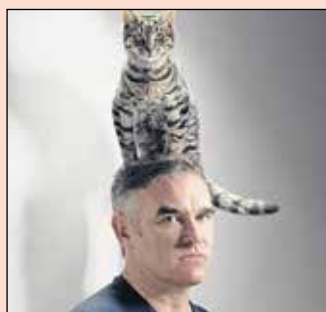
### Guess who's back?

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### Leather seats are murder

Is this man crazy for wanting vegan interiors?  
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### Farewell to Brock

Veteran auto writer and "Cannonball Run" author passes.  
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### TEST DRIVE

## 3, Times Two

### 2017 Mazda3 Four-Door Grand Touring

DAN LYONS | text  
Special to the Times Union

It's a refresh year for the Mazda3. Minor across the board changes mark the 2017 edition of Mazda's front-wheel-drive compact, which is offered in four-door sedan or five-door hatchback body styles. On the sedan side, three trim levels are available: Sport (MSRP: \$17,845), Touring (\$20,445) and Grand Touring (\$23,145). Hatchbacks have one more door (five) and one more trim level (four): Sport (\$19,095), Touring (\$22,245), Touring 2.5 (\$22,395) and Grand Touring (\$23,895). A six-speed automatic transmission can be added in place of the standard six-speed manual for an additional \$1,050. The exception is the Touring model, which is automatic only.

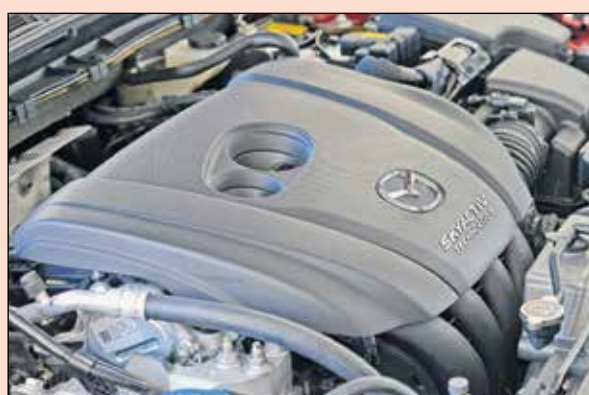
The \$28,230 sticker on my Grand Touring sedan tester included two trim packages. The Premium EQ

#### 2017 Mazda3 4-Door Grand Touring

MSRP: \$24,195 • As Tested: \$28,230

package adds LED daytime running lights, taillights, and (adaptive) headlights; navigation system, paddle shifters, and auto-dimming rearview mirror and a heated steering wheel (\$1,600).

The I-Activsense Safety package includes: lane departure warning and lane keep assist, automatic high beam control, smart brake support, traffic sign recognition



As Mazda's front-wheel-drive compact, the 2017 Mazda3 is offered in four-door sedan or five-door hatchback body styles. Sport and Touring four-doors are equipped with a 2.0L four-cylinder engine (left).

and adaptive cruise control (\$1,100).

Sport and Touring four-doors are equipped with a 2.0L four-cylinder engine, rated at 155 horsepower and 150 lb.-ft. of torque. The EPA says that the 2.0 will return 27 miles per gallon in the city, 37 highway (manual transmission); 28/37 (automatic). Grand Touring models get a 2.5L four, which makes 184 h.p. @ 5,700 r.p.m., and 185 lb.-ft. of torque @ 3,250 r.p.m. Fuel economy is estimated at 25/34 (manual), 27/36 (automatic).

Mileage Maximizers may wish to consider Mazda's i-ELOOP package (\$800). The regenerative engine braking system (active grille shutters are also included) increases the estimates by 1-2 mpg's.

The Mazda3 eagerly takes to curvy roads, and steering is precise, if a little light.

Most Mazda models have a sporty personality, which is best experienced when stirred by a stick (shift). Alas, my Grand Touring four-door was equipped with the automatic, but even so, the car's fun to drive attitude shown through. The larger 2.5L engine has low to mid 7-second speed from 0-60; respectably quick. The transmission gets from gear to gear smoothly in auto mode. The paddle shifters provided in the Premium Equipment package can be used for "manumatic" shifting. It's useful to hold the car in gear, keeping the revs up during spirited driving. But, it lacks the snap-speed, manual shift response of cars with a dual clutch transmission.

Continued on page 2

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\* BASED ON 2013/14/15 NEW VEHICLE SALES PER AHM