

Private peek

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TEST DRIVE

Crossover Choices

2017 Mercedes-Benz GLC300 4MATIC Coupe

DAN LYONS | tex

Special to the Times Union

What do cars have in common with TV shows? Popularity in either leads to spinoffs. So it is that Crossovers — already a hybrid of two body styles — have spawned further variations. This week's test drive — the GLC300 Coupe — is a recent example of this. The new-for-2017 Mercedes is a member of a microsegment — Compact Luxury Crossover Coupes — which only has one other member at present — the BMW X4 (which goes by the handle of Sports Activity Coupe). Strictly speaking, neither car is a coupe (the traditional definition calls for a hardtop with two doors; both of these models sport four). Names notwithstanding, the GLC Coupe and X4 share similar styling themes and the same market space.



The GLC Coupe is offered in two models. The base GLC300 stickers for \$45,950 (compared to \$45,550 for

2017 Mercedes-Benz GLC300 4MATIC Coupe
MSRP: \$45,950 · As Tested: \$63,505

the X4 xDrive28i). A high performance AMG version is also available. The AMG GLC43 lists for \$59,650 (vs. \$58,100 for the X4 M40i). There are no trim levels; buyers build their vehicle by culling through the menu of options, and picking the packages and standalones that suit their needs. My test car, for example, was outfitted with five packages and six individual options, bringing the delivered price (including destination charge) to \$63,505.

Seen side on, the GLC Coupe's form shows a steeply sloped roofline, resolving in a noticeably bobbed tail. Rounding the roof instead of squaring it off makes the car's profile distinctive, though at the expense of some cargo capacity. The hold will hold 20.5-56.5 cubic feet of gear, depending on how you configure the seats. While smaller than many conventionally cut crossovers, it's bigger than the Bimmer (the X4 holds 17.7-49.4 cu. ft.) Rear seatbacks fold to a flat load floor (the front seats automatically slide up to allow the seatbacks to clear — a nice touch). Lifter height in back is somewhat high, a function, in part, of the 20-inch rims on my tester (18's are standard) . The curving roofline didn't present any head room issues in back for me. Rear legroom in back measures 37.3 inches, which



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE MANUFACTURER

THE NEW MERCEDES-BENZ GLC300 4MATIC COUPE is a compact luxury crossover whose only real competitor is the BMW X4. It's available in two models, as well as the high-performance AMG GLC43 version..

should be adequate for most adults, and is a 2½ inches more room than in the X4.

Up front, the Coupe offers a well-crafted, handsome cockpit. Atop the center stack is a touchscreen (either 7-inch or 8.4-inch) which serves as your display for the COMAND infotainment system. It's accessed by a console-mounted rheostat and surrounding buttons. The larger version of the high resolution screen is easy to see, but COMAND's operating design suffers from over engineering. Like many luxury cars, adjustments to controls often take more time than they would with a more conventional design.

The GLC Coupe's signature roofline and near flat

backlight create rear visibility issues for the driver. The option sheet offers some technology workarounds, and I'd consider blind spot assist (part of the \$1,250 Premium Package 1) and the Advanced Parking Assist Package (\$1,550) to be mandatory add-ons for this car. The latter bundles a highly useful, 360 degree, bird's-eye camera system along with parking sensors and an automated parking assist system. My test drive corresponded with the mid-March, 22-inch snow storm here in the Capital District. The rear window defroster proved no match for the heavy snow experienced during the height of that event. A rear window wiper would've been helpful, but isn't offered.

The GLC300 is a fresh take on the GLC platform, and a new option for trendspotting car buyers.

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