

Parting is such sweet sorrow

Some models departing the roster.

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Volvo goes electric

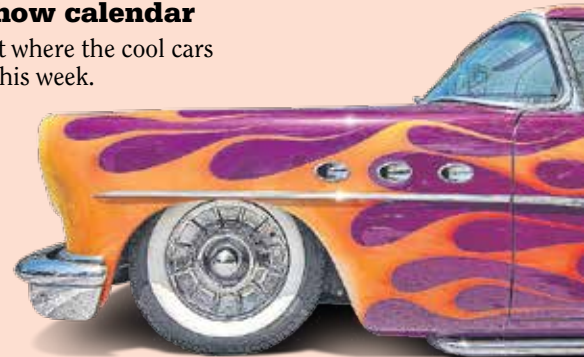
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Car show calendar

Find out where the cool cars will be this week.

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A more powerful Corvette on the way?

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TEST DRIVE

Traction Transaction

2017 Chrysler 300S AWD

DAN LYONS | text
Special to the Times Union

Changes for Chrysler's 300 in 2017 are split evenly between looks and technology. Three Hundred maintains its four-trim level lineup, starting with Limited (\$32,340), 300S (\$35,675), 300C (\$38,635), and topping out with Platinum (\$42,770).

V-6 buyers can substitute all-wheel-drive in place of the standard rear-wheel-drive for an additional \$2,500 on all models. A Hemi V-8 can be added to all rear-wheel-drive models for an additional \$3,000, on any model except Limited.

Even in its mildest trim, the Hemi V-8 is a muscular motor, with power ratings of 363 horsepower and 393 lb.-ft. of torque. Luxury-leaning cars like 300 are about abundance, and if your definition includes a comfortable excess of power, the Hemi

2017 Chrysler 300S AWD
MSRP: \$32,340 (base) · \$38,175 (S AWD)
As Tested: \$43,950

will not disappoint. However, the 300 is based on a rear-wheel-drive platform, which is traditional for full-size cars, but less than optimal for northeast winter driving. Choosing all-wheel-drive means that you'll have to forego the rumbly, torquey Hemi. Regrettable, yes, but what's lost in the transaction is offset by more traction.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE MANUFACTURER

THE 2017 CHRYSLER 300S is the maker's luxury-leaning full size sedan. Powered by a V-6 and based on a rear-wheel-drive platform, the 300S is also available with all-wheel-drive and a Hemi V-8 engine option... but not both.

Mind you, the six is no slouch. Rated at 300 horsepower and 264 lb.-ft. of torque in 300 Sport models (292/260 elsewhere in the lineup), it's well sized for the task at hand. The V-6 300 is respectably quick (likely a high six-second car from 0-60; about a second slower than the Hemi) and promptly responds when you need to pass. It cruises easily at highway- plus speeds and returns better mileage than the Hemi.

Where a rear-wheel-drive Hemi is EPA rated at 16 city/25 highway/19 combined, a V-6 powered 300 with RWD checks in with 19/30/23. AWD equipped V-6's are expected to give you 18 city, 27 highway, 21 combined. My recent test drive was in a V-6 AWD 300. In strictly 'round town driving I got 18 mpg's, and on long stretches on the Interstate I managed just under 30. Overall, a test with a heavy (80/20) bias towards freeway flying netted a combined average of 27 mpg's. The success of

the six in terms of performance and economy has much to do with its transmission. Both the six and eight are linked to Chrysler's eight-speed automatic.

Unusual about the 300's AWD system is that it's RWD-based, and maintains an RWD bias. In normal driving, the car operates in rear wheel drive. When added grip is needed, up to 38 percent of available torque can be transferred to the front wheels (many FWD based systems will push as much as 50 percent of the power rearward when needed). The system has an active transfer case and a front axle disconnect system. It reverts to RWD when practical, to

improve mileage and to maintain the rear wheel drive feel. Suspension choices on 300 varies with models chosen and also depends on your choice of RWD or AWD. The most performance-minded setup is reserved for V-8, rear-drive Sport models. The chassis tuning on

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The 300 has a classic, square-shouldered styling that is also easily (and endlessly) customizable.

Going down the road feelin'...good!

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